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THE DEMANDS MADE ON VENETIAN TERRAFERMA SOCIETY
FOR DEFENCE IN THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY*

I *Introduction*

Between 1573 and 1645 the Republic of Venice faced no major Turkish attack on its maritime possessions, though it had to maintain vigilance against possible threats, just as it could not ignore the risk of an Ottoman landward assault on the Friulan frontier. The two full-scale wars that Venice fought in these decades – the war of Gradisca (1615-1617) and the war of the Mantuan succession (1629-1630) – were in fact against European, Christian enemies. They fit into a broader context of perennial tension, covering the first three decades of the seventeenth century, in Venice's relations with Italian and European powers, which in territorial terms focused especially on the Spanish Habsburg dominions bordering on the Republic's mainland possessions to the west, and the Austrian Habsburg, or archducal, lands sited to the northeast of the *terraferma*.

This essay is concerned with those wars and that context of tension. It does not deal with the strategic conduct of war, nor with the Venetian army's military profile and organizational structure, nor with the patriciate's relationship with the army and command, nor with the broader foreign policy scenario which these conflicts and

* This essay is primarily based on the research conducted for PETER JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society in the Venetian Terraferma, 1560-1630*, unpublished D. Phil. thesis, London University, 1983, which benefited greatly from the enthusiastic and far-sighted supervision of the late John Hale. Michael Knapton is responsible for adapting the presentation of that research in the light of more recent scholarly debate and publications, as well as for some more general rewriting. In the notes priority has been given to archival data over secondary literature. Though the work of authors well able to use Italian, the text is written in English as a modest encouragement to Italian historians towards more frequent presentation of their work in English.

tensions were part of.¹ It instead addresses the demands made for defence needs on the Republic's mainland subjects. Though largely decided by central authority, these duties were mostly performed under the direction or supervision of the mainland's ordinary city governors (the captain if the city was important enough to have both *podestà* and captain), while *provveditori*, *provveditori generali* or similar, often authorized to decide as well as to direct, came into play too in case of war or mobilization.²

Successive sections of the analysis are therefore dedicated to the following themes: the provision of horses, lodgings, food and fodder for troops in longterm quarters or in transit, especially as regulated by the *ordine di banca*; the satisfying of requests for carriage duties and labour services, especially for the army; the training and mobilization of auxiliary forces (cavalry, civic bombardier schools, rural infantry militia, galiots), together with the raising of regular and extempore horse and foot-soldiers among *terraferma* subjects. Though not primarily concerned with taxation and public finance, the essay perforce addresses them partially insofar as various defence duties were in the process of formal commutation into cash payments, and virtually all of them generated considerable monetary

¹ For these aspects see GAETANO COZZI, *Venezia dal Rinascimento all'Età barocca*, in *Storia di Venezia dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, 14 vols, Roma 1991-2002: VI. *Dal Rinascimento al Barocco*, eds Gaetano Cozzi, Paolo Prodi, esp. p. 65 ff. (pp. 3-125); GAETANO COZZI, *Venezia nello scenario europeo (1517-1699)*, in GAETANO COZZI, MICHAEL KNAPTON, GIOVANNI SCARABELLO, *La Repubblica di Venezia nell'età moderna. Dal 1517 alla fine della Repubblica*, Torino 1992, esp. pp. 69-116 (pp. 3-200); MICHAEL MALLETT, JOHN HALE, *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State. Venice c. 1400 to 1617*, Cambridge 1983, ch. 8-10; MAURO VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciducatale di Gradisca (1615-1617)*, «Ce fastu», 60/2 (1994), pp. 193-233, which makes systematic use of the detailed information in contemporary narrative accounts, especially F. MOISESSO, *Historia della ultima guerra del Friuli*, Venezia 1623; PAOLO CAVALIERI, *L'archivio della Camera dei Confini di Bergamo ed il confine occidentale della Repubblica di Venezia tra XVI e XVII secolo*, in *Alle frontiere della Lombardia. Politica, guerra e religione nell'età moderna*, ed Claudio Donati, Milano 2006, pp. 289-317. See also previous studies cited in these works, and the acts of the conference «Venezia non è da guerra». *L'Isonzo, la società friulana e la Serenissima nella guerra di Gradisca* (Gradisca d'Isonzo, 26th-27th October 2007 – expected publication, Udine 2008), especially those by Mauro Gaddi and Francesca Tamburlini where they indicate contemporary influences on Moisesso's writing.

² On governors, *provveditori* and institutional matters see AMELIO TAGLIAFERRI, *Ordinamento amministrativo dello stato di terraferma*, in *Atti del convegno «Venezia e la terraferma attraverso le relazioni dei rettori»*, ed Amelio Tagliaferri, Milano 1981, esp. pp. 23-26 (pp. 15-43), and M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, ch. 10.

costs. Mainland institutions covered these and other cash payments by the imposition of *gravezze*, roughly the equivalent of modern direct taxation, used to cover numerous costs of government and to a great extent extraneous to state finance's accounting and handling. Indeed, the overall weight of direct tax, especially on rural communities, far exceeded their share of the *gravezze* due to the state's mainland *camere fiscali*, or exchequers.

The analysis presented takes due account of the fact that many of the defence demands made of mainland subjects were a permanent obligation present in peacetime too. War scares and outright warfare however intensified their impact to a greater or lesser degree, and their escalation in both of the wars examined was very marked, partly because the risk of enemy attack on the *terraferma* extended to a much broader area than the primary focus of actual fighting. In 1615-17 that focus was the eastern, Friulan frontier with archducal territory; in 1629-30 it was in the central and western area of the mainland, between the Veronese and the Lombard provinces. But in each war there was also serious danger on the other of these two fronts, with further preoccupations concerning Papal Ferrara to the southeast. As a backdrop to the Mantuan war, moreover, there was the plague epidemic which swept across the mainland in 1630: it reduced the manpower to mobilize, sapped morale among both civilians and military, increased desertions and also the reluctance to serve – and multiplied the concerns all levels of public authority had to address.

By the early seventeenth century, in marked contrast with the situation observable a century earlier, Venice's resources and aptitude for the conduct of land war diverged at least partly from the general European experience as indicated by the ongoing historical debate about the rather elusive «military revolution». This divergence was made clear by the war of Gradisca and then the war of the Mantuan succession, even though peacetime spending by the state on the mainland army greatly increased in the early seventeenth century.³ The essay however demonstrates that Venice's mainland sub-

³ On the military revolution, see the discussion in LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *La «rivoluzione militare»: una prospettiva italiana, 1400-1700*, in *Militari in età moderna. La centralità di un tema di confine*, eds Alessandra Dattero, Stefano Levati, Milano 2006 (pp. 15-62), as well as

jects were nonetheless massively affected by demands supporting defence needs, quite in line with the destiny of their European contemporaries, and also that their contribution to such needs had important implications for the internal dynamics of the Venetian state.⁴ To give the most obvious example, in the mid 1620s formal militia enrolment and some sort of training (among the rural *cernide* and urban bombardier *scolari*) concerned perhaps 34,000 men, as against a total of roughly 300,000 men fit for military service, out of a total population of approximately 1,500,000 – though as we shall see, it was Venetian wartime practice in those years to mobilize much larger numbers of mainland subjects, organized into extempore forces. Indeed the incidence of demands on the rural population, for militia and other duties too, was proportionally higher than for citydwellers: an estimate relating the total numbers of rural militia and galiots, both regularly enrolled and reserves, to the adult males aged 18-45 in the Bergamasco countryside at the beginning of the seventeenth century indicates that about 40% of them were involved.⁵

the ample bibliography cited, esp. GEOFFREY PARKER, *The Military Revolution. Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, Cambridge 1988; *The Military Revolution Debate. Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, ed Clifford J. Rogers, Boulder-San Francisco-Oxford 1995. On state spending on the mainland army see LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *Stato, guerra e finanza nella Repubblica di Venezia fra medioevo e prima età moderna*, «Quaderni – Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche», 4 (2007), p. 95 (pp. 67-112): from D. 206,120 in 1587 to D. 506,229 in 1609, to D. 776,552 in 1633 (all figures in ducats of account: the equivalent sequence in index numbers based on wheat, with 1587 = 100, would read 100 – 269 – 323: see LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *Una finanza d'ancien régime. La Repubblica veneta tra XV e XVI-II secolo*, Napoli 2006, p. 38).

⁴ On these issues in a broader context see JOHN HALE, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620*, London 1985, esp. ch. 7; M.S. ANDERSON, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime, 1618-1789*, London 1988, esp. pp. 16 ff., 63 ff.; FRANK TALLETT, *War and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1495-1715*, London-New York 1992, esp. pp. 83-85, 148 ff., 178 ff.; DAVIDE MAFFI, *Il baluardo della corona. Guerra, esercito, finanze e società nella Lombardia seicentesca (1630-1660)*, Firenze 2007, esp. chs 2, 5-7; *Militari e società civile nell'Europa dell'età moderna (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, eds Claudio Donati, Bernhard R. Kroener, Bologna 2007, esp. GIORGIO CHITTOLINI, *Il «militare» tra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna* (pp. 53-102). For the Venetian mainland state an overview of some issues in MICHAEL KNAPTON, *Tra Dominante e dominio (1517-1630)*, in COZZI – KNAPTON – SCARABELLO, *La Repubblica... cit.*, pp. 413-419 (pp. 201-549), which also summarizes other aspects of mainland defence organization (*ibid.*, pp. 397-412).

⁵ For the numbers quoted see A. TAGLIAFERRI, *Ordinamento amministrativo*, pp. 39-41 (population and men fit to fight), and data taken from *Relazioni dei rettori veneti in terraferma*,

Extensive reliance by the patrician government of the Republic on its mainland subjects' loyal collaboration in defence organization, to the extent of arming a considerable number of them, obviously had major political importance. Furthermore, the sharing of the considerable weight of defence duties and the assignment of responsibility for discharging them had a significant bearing on relations between different mainland social orders and the institutions representing them. These tensions primarily concerned the urban élites and city councils on the one hand, and – on the other – the rural communities, and especially the *corpi territoriali* which had developed to represent them in the course of the sixteenth century. But there were local issues of contention on a smaller scale, particularly in the many circumstances in which single communities, or larger areas of provinces like the valley communities of Brescia and Bergamo's mountain hinterland (generally not part of the *corpi territoriali*), could claim partial or total exemption from defence duties by virtue of special privileges, whose formulation and very existence stimulated periodic disputes.

The balance in all these relations between elements of mainland society, as too in their relationship with the Venetian government, had already shifted significantly during the sixteenth century, with Venice inclined to give its rural subjects greater political credence and institutional recognition, especially via the *corpi territoriali*, and to introduce some redress of the unbalanced sharing of *gravezze* due to the state; these trends partially eroded the power of towns, their institutions and their élites, though without challenging their primacy. The government's reasons here were pragmatic: rural communities were being called on for major and lasting contributions to

14 vols, ed. Istituto di Storia economica dell'Università di Trieste, Milano 1973-79, *ad indicem*: the figures given by mainland governors oscillate somewhat, but a reasonable aggregate estimate is just over 5,000 *scolari*, and just under 29,000 *cernide*, including those raised in Cadore and the Vicentino's Seven Communes and *pedemonte*. Omitted from these figures are the many thousands of *cernide di rispetto* (on which see below) because not subject to regular training rules, and also the galiots, half forgotten in the preoccupation with land defence then prevalent, but running perhaps – on paper at least – to another 35,000 men; the inclusion of these elements explains the much higher datum for the Bergamasco in MAURICE AYMARD, *La leva marittima*, in *Storia di Venezia*, XII. *Il mare*, eds Alberto Tenenti, U. Tucci, pp. 445-446 (pp. 435-479).

defence needs in a century when general economic circumstances, especially the passage of control over vast areas of land from peasants to nobles and citizens, were greatly weakening their general resources and taxable wealth.⁶

As we shall see, the same dynamic of give and take in the relationship between Venice and *terraferma* society operated in the early decades of the seventeenth century, when – primarily because of escalating military costs – there was very considerable growth in the overall pressure exerted on mainland subjects by state and local tax, personal duties and services in kind. Further revision of such burden-sharing, though conducted amidst much animosity between social orders, generated risks but also opportunities for central government's assertion of its authority.

II *The Provision of Horses, Lodgings, Food and Fodder*

1) *Horses*

Though cavalry declined in tactical importance in the Venetian army as in others – the Republic's overall forces in the Gradisca war

⁶ On *corpi territoriali* and rural communities, as well as M. KNAPTON, *Tra Dominante e dominio*, pp. 469-470, 487-495, 507-514, see IDEM, *Il Territorio vicentino nello stato veneziano del '500 e primo '600: nuovi equilibri politici e fiscali*, in *Dentro lo «stado italoico». Venezia e la terraferma fra Quattro e Seicento*, eds Giorgio Cracco, Michael Knapton, Trento 1984 (pp. 33-115); SERGIO ZAMPERETTI, *Per una storia delle istituzioni rurali nella terraferma veneta: il contado vicentino nei secoli XVI e XVII*, in *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica veneta*, 2 vols, ed Gaetano Cozzi, Roma, Jouvence 1981-85: II (pp. 59-131); IDEM, *I «sinedri dolosi». La formazione e lo sviluppo dei corpi territoriali nello stato regionale veneto tra '500 e '600*, «Rivista storica italiana», XCIX (1987) (pp. 269-320), and more recent studies: ROBERTO BRAGAGGIA, *Il corpo territoriale bellunese nel '500-'600*, «Studi Veneziani», n.s. 45 (2003) (pp. 43-90); GERMANO MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali e proprietà contadina. Il caso veronese tra Sei e Settecento*, Milano 2002; IVANA PEDERZANI, *Venezia e lo «Stado de Terraferma». Il governo delle comunità nel territorio bergamasco (secc. XV-XVIII)*, Milano 1992 (also on jurisdictionally separate areas and their privileges); ALESSANDRA ROSSINI, *Le campagne bresciane nel Cinquecento. Territorio, fisco, società*, Milano 1994 (on jurisdictionally separate areas and their privileges, *ibid.* esp. pp. 274-284). See too LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *L'oro dello stato. Società, finanze e fisco nella Repubblica veneta del secondo '500*, Treviso-Venezia 1990, pp. 220 ff. (rural taxpayers), 259 ff. (privileges). On similar issues in the duchy of Milan see especially BARBARA MOLTENI, *I contadi dello stato di Milano fra XVI e XVII secolo. Note sulla formazione delle «amministrazioni provinciali» in età spagnola*, «Studi bresciani», n.s. IV/12 (1983), pp. 115-135, and the studies cited therein.

were about 10,000 footsoldiers and 2,000 horse – this seems not to have weakened greatly the government’s preoccupation with the availability of horses for wartime use, both for supply and equipment trains and as cavalry mounts.⁷ In September 1579, for example, the Senate had sought to promote the breeding of warhorses in the mainland and Istria, instructing rectors to inform local landowners and cooperate with the army collateral-general, who was to inspect stock; in 1589 it subjected exports of horses from the mainland to authorization by the captain of Padua or Verona and the collateral.⁸ Whatever the efficacy of these measures, the army’s needs were in fact largely met through government agreements with contractors, who in some cases imported animals from abroad.⁹ However foreign governments might obstruct this, as happened on the eve of the Gradisca war in 1614, when archducal officials at Gorizia and Tolmino blocked a small transaction with merchants of Gradisca and Gorizia.¹⁰

Occasionally, however, requisitioning became necessary as an alternative or complementary source of supply, especially when the prospect of actual hostilities increased needs and might make imports more difficult. With this in mind systematic surveys of horses available in the mainland provinces had already been made before the Gradisca war, as for example in the Bresciano, Bergamasco and Cremasco in 1607, with a view to their use in artillery trains.¹¹ Such a survey was conducted throughout the terraferma in 1616 with a view to both transport and cavalry use, with the former heavily predominant in the characteristics of the animals listed: for instance in the Padovano (less the Montagnana area) there were 6,336 horses suitable for transport and haulage, as against 717

⁷ L. PEZZOLO, *La «rivoluzione militare»*, p. 47, citing M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciduale*, p. 205.

⁸ VENEZIA, *Archivio di Stato di Venezia* (henceforth ASVE), Senato, Terra (henceforth ST), reg. 52, c. 244; reg. 59, cc. 45v-46.

⁹ For instances during the Gradisca war (early 1617), see ASVE, Senato, Dispacci, Provveditori da Terra e da Mar (henceforth SDP), filza 55, 21 Jan. & 23 Feb. 1617.

¹⁰ Report by the governor of Cividale: ASVE, Senato, Dispacci, Rettori (henceforth SDR), Udine (8 June 1614).

¹¹ ASVE: Senato, Secreta (henceforth SS), reg. 97, c. 140; SDP, filza 162 (20 Jan. 1607).

potential warhorses, while in the Polesine the latter totalled 276.¹² The census was duly followed, between 1616 and 1617, by requisitioning of animals from the Polesine, Trevigiano, Padovano, Vicentino, Feltrino and Bellunese. This served mainly but not solely for transport use, since the shortage of cavalry mounts became increasingly acute in the course of the war, as *provveditore generale* Antonio Lando admitted in September 1617 – no doubt partly because the ranks of both horses and men were thinned by epidemic disease in the summer and autumn of 1616. Documentation of September 1617 in fact refers to 183 warhorses acquired for cavalry use by government in the first four of the six provinces just mentioned.¹³

2) *Towns and Garrisons*

Whereas the provision of horses for Venetian defence needs was very often handled by contractors (who also became involved in supplying carts, wagons and manual labour, as we shall see below), it was virtually always left to officials – civilian or military personnel acting for Venetian government, and the mainland's civic and territorial functionaries – to deal directly with the very broad and weighty responsibility for providing troops, both in long-term quarters and in transit, with shelter, bedding, furniture, kitchen implements and firewood, as well as stabling and straw for their horses. These obligations had a markedly different impact on urban and rural areas.¹⁴

Until the war of Gradisca the mainland towns and cities were only marginally involved in providing such services for cavalry forces, essentially in the form of lodgings and stabling. Three of the largest cities housed the heavy cavalry when it gathered for yearly training and review, a practice which ended when it was disbanded

¹² ASVE: *Secreta, Materie Miste Notabili*, filza 66; SDP, filza 163 (14 May 1616), filza 56 (9 & 25 May 1617); *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, pp. 229-230; PADOVA, *Archivio di Stato* (henceforth ASPD), *Milizie*, b. 26, n° 2, b. 33 n° 10; VICENZA, *Biblioteca Civica* (henceforth BCVI), Arch. Torre, b. 492, n° 2 (3 Jan. 1617).

¹³ ASPD, *Milizie*, b. 26, n° 2; ASVE, SDP, filza 57 (8 Sept. 1617). On disease see M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciducatale*, pp. 215, 217.

¹⁴ For the experience of other Italian states at this time, see MARIO RIZZO, *Militari e civili nello stato di Milano durante la seconda metà del Cinquecento. In tema di alloggiamenti militari*, «Clio», 23/4 (1987), pp. 563-596.

in 1622. Regulations of 1592, apparently unchanged over the following three decades, specified a month's presence of the *gente d'arme* in Padua or Verona after Easter, and a similar period between October and November in Padua, Verona or Brescia. The consequent burden on the cities was limited: in duration, in numbers (around 1590 there were 472 men and perhaps double the number of horses), and in the weight of costs or dues, since lodgings and stables appear to have been funded by the state, with furnishings a possible expense for city authorities (but neither food nor fodder and straw).¹⁵ The presence of *cappelletti*, Balkan light cavalry with essentially policing duties in peacetime, seems to have added only marginally to cities' liability; the *cappelletti's* main sphere of activity was rural, but they occasionally used urban lodgings, and costs due to their presence there were met – for example – in 1587 and subsequently by the city of Brescia, and then by Vicenza in 1603-04 and 1606-07.¹⁶

Infantry garrisons, on the other hand, were a more general, continuous and burdensome presence in both cities and smaller fortress towns. Venetian authorities worried perennially about the military worth of garrison troops, and sought to prevent them from merging into civilian occupations and attitudes, though at the same time underpaying them and thus increasing the likelihood of such laxness; some reports in fact paint a sorry picture, of soldiers accompanied by wives or mistresses and maybe children, working at urban

¹⁵ The 1592 rules in ASVE, ST, reg. 62, c. 34; numbers around 1590 in ANTONIO DE PELLEGRINI, *Genti d'arme della Repubblica di Venezia. I condottieri Porcia e Brughiera, 1495-1797*, Udine 1915, p. 43. On lodgings and costs, see e.g. rules made at Verona in 1567 for the custody and replacement of furnishings, and proposals made in 1611 to increase lodging and stabling at Padua: VERONA, *Archivio di Stato* (henceforth ASVR), Antico Arch. Com., b. 118, n° 40, cc. 14-15; *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 141.

¹⁶ ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 117, n° 482, c. 18; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 216, n° 5, esp. cc. 119-120; BRESCIA, *Biblioteca Civica* (henceforth BCBS), Arch. Civ., n° 1055, reg. 2, c. 189v. At Padua *cappelletti* used lodgings and stables in the citadel left vacant by the heavy cavalry most of the year: ASVE, SDR, Padova, 11 Sept. 1602. On *cappelletti*, and the *uomini di campagna* who were the alternative for police work, see ENRICO BASAGLIA, *Il controllo della criminalità nella Repubblica di Venezia. Il secolo XVI: un momento di passaggio*, in *Atti del convegno «Venezia e la terraferma*, p. 70 ff. (pp. 65-78); CLAUDIO POVOLO, *Aspetti e problemi dell'amministrazione della giustizia penale nella Repubblica di Venezia, secoli XVI-XVII*, in *Stato, società e giustizia*, I, pp. 207-210 (pp. 153-258).

trades and neglecting their guard duties, perhaps with the connivance of their captains.¹⁷

Townsppeople were not usually required to contribute to garrisons' food needs, though in exceptional circumstances they might do so: during the Gradisca war, for example, Veronese guildsmen supplied the fortress of Peschiera with oil, vinegar and other foodstuffs, themselves bearing the cost of transport.¹⁸ The provision of shelter and furnishings for garrisons, in particular for a variable proportion of troops who were not quartered in lodgings belonging to the state, did however constitute a significant obligation on townsppeople (during the Gradisca war every soldier added to the garrison of Bergamo probably cost the city an additional 4 *scudi* p.a.),¹⁹ and the costs and consequent attrition obviously increased when the quarters and objects provided were damaged. Garrisons' presence indeed created a perennial risk for civilians of material damage and also personal violence, as mainland governors' reports and other sources make clear: the risk included murder, wounding, intimidation, arson, plundering, with such activities sometimes extended to the country, and with non-Italians, especially Corsicans, ill-famed for such excesses.²⁰

The tension connected with the presence of a garrison was anyway higher everywhere when war or war scares caused significant increases in garrison numbers, with proportionally greater risks of in discipline and damage. For example Dutch soldiers based at Padua during the Gradisca war set fire to the *gente d'arme's* lodgings and stables, causing damage for D. 1,700.²¹ Verona estimated damage done to lodgings by soldiers in 1629-1631 at D. 60,000 – the figure is very high, but it was the city closest to the theatre of war.²²

¹⁷ See M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 390 ff.

¹⁸ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 233.

¹⁹ The estimate was made by Mario Lanzi: BERGAMO, *Biblioteca Civica* (henceforth BCBG), Carte relative alla difesa del Bergamasco, 1616-17, c. 22.

²⁰ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 207, XII, p. 189, XIV, p. 89; ASVE: SDR, Padova, 29 Sept.-1 Nov., 1602, & Udine, 13 Apr. 1614; ST, reg. 80, c. 31, reg. 88, c. 121v.

²¹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 188.

²² ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 118, n° 35, 16 July 1631; LUCA PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano nella Verona del Seicento. Aspetti economici e logistici*, «Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni», 52 (2002), p. 103 and note 16 (pp. 101-126).

The presence of garrison soldiery was a greater source of potential tension in smaller towns, where the capacity of state-owned billets was often markedly insufficient. But garrison levels of the early seventeenth century often exceeded such capacity in major cities too, incidentally triggering some action to weed out the use of military quarters by non-military personnel, as happened at Verona in 1620-21.²³ Rather exceptionally, state funding created new lodgings at Rovigo in the early seventeenth century which were at least sporadically surplus to requirement. The town had no modern fortifications and was therefore usually ungarrisoned. However the Interdict crisis of 1606-1607 brought a temporary force there and caused the building of special housing for it, which after the crisis the Senate considered renting to townspeople. It no doubt came back into use for at least part of the considerable contingent present in Rovigo during the Gradisca war (infantry and cavalry totalling about a thousand towards the end of hostilities), and again in the 1620s – there were 666 foot there in June 1625.²⁴

Legnago, on the other hand, was a key fortress town with a permanent garrison, but the Gradisca war caused serious overburdening of its lodgings, with resulting damage not only to houses and civic finances but also to relations between Venetian authority and the town, which a June 1619 agreement between the two sought to improve. The town offered D. 70 a month towards repairing billets in the fortress, so as to maximize their use for lodging and limit the expense and inconvenience caused to the town and its small *contado* by having to rent other quarters. The agreement's efficacy over the 1620s may however be doubted, as a further pact between the two parties in December 1633 referred to previous troop concentrations in Legnago of as many as 1,200 men, and set a future limit of 300 for local finance's coverage of their housing costs, with state funds to cover any extra.²⁵

²³ ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 118, n° 35, 30 Jan.-2 March 1621; L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, p. 103.

²⁴ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VI, p. 168; VENEZIA, *Biblioteca del Museo Civico Correr* (henceforth BMCC), Cod. Cic., b. 2534, n° 93; see too MARIA TERESA PASQUALINI CANATO, *Una terra di confine: il Polesine durante l'interdetto (1606-1607)*, «Studi veneziani», n.s. 52 (2006), esp. p. 456 (pp. 445-462).

²⁵ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VIII, p. 153; ASVE, ST, reg. 89, c. 132; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 118, n° 35 (15 Dec. 1633).

Asola had a garrison of fifty to seventy men in the late 1590s, but these numbers were often considerably higher over the following decades (120 in October 1611, 512 in June 1625), whereas the capacity of lodgings in the fortress proper lagged far behind. In autumn 1611 they could still accommodate only fifty men, while the others lodged in billets rented by the civic authorities. Such renting was still widespread practice in 1621, causing serious damage there too to both the houses and civic finance.²⁶ Crema's experience was if anything worse, since its exposed position on the Milanese border meant reinforcement of the garrison at the merest whisper of war. In March 1605 there was room to lodge only twentyfour men in the fortress, but the garrison in the Interdict crisis numbered 340, and the cost to civic authority of lodging numerous extra troops sent there on three occasions between 1601 and 1613 was reckoned at D. 10,000. Tension and garrison numbers ran high through the Gradisca war and the following years too, with military lodgings occupying all the available houses and hostelries as well as space in friaries. As at Legnago, the town contributed money in the early 1620s towards building billets for 400 troops, but the garrison numbered 800 or more in 1625 and again in 1636, when it was still in scattered lodgings.²⁷

Even the much larger fortress city of Bergamo experienced similar difficulties. Garrison numbers oscillated between 650 and 825 in 1605-07, as against state-owned lodgings for 378 soldiers in December 1607, which the Venetian governors recommended increasing, and they indeed received a contribution of D. 1,000 from the city council for that purpose. By 1623 state lodgings could accommodate 1,350 men (soon to increase by 260), with 900 lodged in rented housing within the walls and the option of the city's renting rooms for 600 more in the suburbs – and indeed garrison numbers topped 2,000 in the mid 1620s.²⁸ As to Brescia,

²⁶ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, pp. 545, 548-549, 561; BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 2534, n° 93.

²⁷ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, pp. 102-03, 110, 113, 144, 172-173, 178, 217; BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 2534, n° 93. Interesting detail from Inquisition records on the provenance and daily life of garrison soldiers in S. PEYRONEL, *Frontiere religiose e soldati in antico regime: il caso di Crema nel Seicento*, in *Alle frontiere della Lombardia*, pp. 19-38.

²⁸ ASVE, SDR, Bergamo, 22 Dec. 1607; BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 2534, n° 93; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, pp. 221, 255, 280, 291, 296, 344, 401.

mobilization for war in 1629-1631 so filled the city with troops that state lodgings and rented civilian billets were eked out with accomodation in ecclesiastical buildings.²⁹ Verona's estimate of damage suffered through lodging troops in 1629-1631 has already been mentioned above; it is worth adding that from 1620 to 1625 it spent a total of D. 20,895 on lodging infantry, and D. 3,216 on lodging *generali*, whose annual cost rose to about D. 1,630 between 1627 and 1632, while spending on rented accomodation and furnishing for troops topped D. 13,000 in 1629-30.³⁰

3) *Cavalry and Rural Communities*

In country areas the main demands made on subjects concerned the needs of cavalry, and extended to the full gamut of services already mentioned, as regulated by the *ordine di banca*: shelter, bedding, furniture, kitchen implements and firewood, as well as stabling and straw – though the obligation might extend to partial provision for troops in town too (thus for example the supply of winter firewood to the forces guarding Verona, due from both city and *contado*, and straw provided for them only by the latter).³¹ Rural communities' liability also covered similar needs generated by senior civilian and military officials travelling in the provinces on public business, for example the enlisting and reviewing of local militia forces; claims of this type were also made by a variety of other officials.

This obligation was a perennially sensitive issue with the communities whose resources were exploited, because of the very weight of the demands made but also because other components of mainland society, especially the cities (with the exception of Brescia),³² were usually excluded from contribution to the *ordine di banca*. Venice

²⁹ BCBS, Arch. Civ., b. 1125 (6 June 1629).

³⁰ ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 114, n° 894 (13 Jan. 1629 – 13 Nov. 1630); L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, pp. 116-17.

³¹ G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, pp. 92, 96: in 1631 the provision of straw was cancelled, though the obligation to provide carts to carry it remained. There was a similar obligation on the Bergamasco rural areas for the winter firewood and charcoal of the city's garrison, reckoned to cost D. 300 p.a.: GIOVANNI DA LEZZE, *Descrizione di Bergamo e suo territorio 1596*, eds Vincenzo Marchetti, Lelio Pagani, Bergamo 1989, pp. 192, 195.

³² On the Bresciano see A. ROSSINI, *Le campagne bresciane*, p. 218 ff.

therefore sought to reconcile its rural subjects by setting limits to the numbers and demands of senior officials' entourages, as well as the frequency and duration of their travels, and it also struggled to enforce restrictions on the claims made by other officials like, for example, the *uomini di campagna* patrolling the Vicentino for policing purposes.³³ Obviously enough, the extent of demands of this sort increased considerably in the event of war, especially in the proximity of key strongholds and frontier territories affected by an unusually large concentration of forces.

Obligations of this type had accompanied the billeting of the Venetian army from its inception, and already in 1517 those due to the heavy cavalry had been commuted into a tax on the rural population, the *tasse di gente d'arme* (whose proceeds were also assigned by Venice to some other beneficiaries, such as militia captains and men variously recognized as meritorious).³⁴ Similar obligations by the same rural communities to other types of forces continued through the sixteenth century essentially as services in kind, regulated by the *ordine di banca*, which defined both free entitlements and the type and price of food and fodder to be made available for purchase, though day-to-day practice might vary from the rules, and it certainly maintained margins for friction between the forces billeted and the communities concerned. The Gradisca war in fact produced some adjustment of the rules. In 1616 the *provveditore* east of the Mincio, Girolamo Corner, reformulated them, for instance restricting to officers alone the right to beds fitted with sheets (changed monthly), in the lodgings provided for cuirassier companies.³⁵

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Venetian authorities often insisted that forces receiving these dues were to do so in kind rather than via money payments in lieu, and one result was that *corpi territoriali* officials assigned them a multiplicity of

³³ Thus a *ducale* in February 1590, insisting on the sole provision of lodgings and furnishings and citing a Council of Ten law of 1553 and orders of 1586-1587: BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 231, n° 3, cc. 57-58.

³⁴ L. PEZZOLO, *Loro dello stato*, pp. 49-50.

³⁵ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 234, n° 9, cc. 20v-21, correcting a 1607 ruling: ASVE, SDP, filza 162 (1 Aug. 1607). See too G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, p. 94.

material goods for daily use, as demonstrated by surviving inventories of bedsteads, mattresses, blankets, pans, roasting-spits, tankards, pails, tables, benches, stools, lanterns etc. – thus lists of things supplied in the Padovano to a *cappelletti* company in 1616, and to Corsican troops in 1618³⁶. Between 1619 and 1621, and perhaps previously too, the medley of furnishings and kitchen equipment supplied to a good many companies in the Padovano was actually leased by the Paduan *corpo territoriale* from Jewish dealers in the city ghetto like Elia Castello, whose rates for covering a company's needs were of the order of several ducats a month.³⁷ In other circumstances, though, money payments in lieu of at least part of the dues were practised, as seems to have happened from the 1580s with some *cappelletti* companies on policing duties. Such payments were covered – often as compensation following initial disbursement by the individual community concerned – by levies made by the *corpo territoriale* on all a given province's rural communities, apart from those with privileged status.³⁸

However, no rules or mechanisms of compensation can have covered the broader implications of billeting for community life, especially if the forces billeted were numerous. It was perhaps an opportunity for gain for a few, but surely almost always a source of disruption for most, as is proven for example by the outcry of complaint against the great material damage (including looting and extortion), physical violence and general tension caused especially by cuirassiers in the provinces west of the Mincio during mobilization at the time of the Interdict crisis in 1606-07.³⁹

4) *Lodgings During and After the Gradisca War*

The Interdict crisis had already raised the question of lodging light cavalry in cities, as a clash of wills between Vicenza and the

³⁶ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 290, n° 1137, cc. 1v, 4v.

³⁷ Ivi, cc. 12v-25v.

³⁸ Thus orders to the Vicenza and Verona governors in July 1586, and payments by the Paduan *corpo territoriale* in 1605, 1606 and 1616: BCBS, Arch. Civ., n° 1055, reg. 2, c. 241; ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 126, n° 562, c. 4, & b. 312, n° 1239, cc. 11-35, 108.

³⁹ ASVE: SS, reg. 98, cc. 49 & 90v-91v; SDP, filza 162, 7 May 1607, 20 & 30 June 1607, 9 July 1607.

provveditore generale Moro in April 1607 demonstrates.⁴⁰ Just a few years later the more real and lasting military needs generated by the Gradisca war faced Venetian government with the necessity, but also the political opportunity, of suspending the exemptions from lodging light cavalry normally allowed to cities and privileged rural areas jurisdictionally separate from the *contadi*. In April 1615 the *provveditore* Antonio Lando expressed strong concern about the provinces west of the Mincio, in particular the Bresciano plain communities, which were already obliged to cover the needs of *cappelletti* companies, extra troops at Orzinovi and forces in transit (including northern European troops expected for the Brescia garrison). He therefore suggested firstly that some companies be based east of the Mincio, for example in the Vicentino, and secondly that west of the Mincio the cities and the normally exempt mountain valley communities contribute too. He wanted the newly hired cuirassier companies to be actually housed in the cities, so as to reduce their potential for damage, with the cost of their lodgings, stables and furnishings borne by the urban inhabitants, and the other dues provided for by the rural communities.⁴¹

In July 1615 Senate orders in fact confirmed both Lando's April 1615 suggestions, though meeting with the predictable opposition of the city of Brescia, in line with other mainland cities.⁴² In May, meanwhile, cuirassiers had arrived in Verona for lodging there, with the city also expected to provide straw and firewood for them. But protests and counterproposals by the civic authorities, who stated their willingness to house generals and extra infantry instead, induced Lando to compromise: only exceptionally would cuirassiers in transit lodge in the city, and this would be paid for by the rural communities. By 1616, though, the city appears to have agreed to be used as a *place d'armes* for light cavalry, and had 540 locally raised cuirassiers and mounted arquebusiers lodged there.⁴³ Once the war

⁴⁰ ASVE, SDP, filza 46, 26 Apr. 1607. *Cappelletti* did in fact lodge in Vicenza at the inhabitants' expense between 1603 and 1607, and during the Gradisca war: BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 216, n° 3, c. 37v.

⁴¹ ASVE, SDP, filza 50, 15 Apr. 1615.

⁴² ASVE: SS, reg. 105, c. 90; SDP, filza 50, 15 Apr. & 3 July 1615.

⁴³ ASVR, Arch. Civ. Antico, b. 113, n° 1810, 13 May-15 June 1615; *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 224.

was over Verona tried to reassert its obligation to accommodate only *gente d'arme* for their training and reviews,⁴⁴ and at least some of the old privileges that had been suspended during the war were reinstated – thus the Val Brembana, for example, which in 1622 got Senate confirmation of its exemption from billeting troops and military personnel.⁴⁵

As these first data demonstrate, during the Gradisca war no area of the mainland seems to have escaped a heavy load of responsibility for lodging and provisioning soldiers, either resident or in transit; to give a further example, the *corpo territoriale* of the Padovano claimed to have spent D. 4,096 for this purpose in 1616-17.⁴⁶ But the greatest impact must have been in the northeastern provinces – the Trevigiano as a point of passage towards the war zone, and above all Friuli, whose agriculture was weak and whose own resources for victualling were therefore fragile.⁴⁷ As early as April 1615 the Senate ordered that fodder crops be obtained for the army from territories as far west as the Vicentino, adding in December the same year that gentlemen resident in Friuli were to be appointed to organize the provision of food and temporary housing.⁴⁸ The ordinary saleability of goods essential for military needs was suspended in over sixty Friulan communities, including a few recently taken from the Habsburgs, by an order issued on January 5th 1616 by the *provveditore generale* Barbarigo. After families had covered their own needs, and their possessions had been registered, they were to sell the state any surplus of wheat, barley, legumes, hay and straw, as well as carts and livestock including horses.⁴⁹ Provisioning nonetheless proved to be one of the major weaknesses of the organization of the Gradisca war, in both the Venetian and the archducal armies – a weakness which shocked the *provveditore* (and future Doge) Nicolò Contarini, and

⁴⁴ BCBS, Arch. Civ., n° 1055, reg. 2, c. 193.

⁴⁵ The dispute concerning the Val Brembana had started in the war-scare of 1606: BCBG, Registro ducali municipali, vol. II, c. 147; ASVE, ST, reg. 78, c. 75v, reg. 92, cc. 203v-204, & SDP, filza 50, 3 July 1615.

⁴⁶ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1219, c. 56.

⁴⁷ On Friulan agriculture see LUCIANA MORASSI, *1420/1797. Economia e società in Friuli*, Udine 1997, ch. III, as well as the frequent references in *Relazioni dei rettori*, I (*ad indicem*).

⁴⁸ ASVE, SS, reg. 105, cc. 92, 243.

⁴⁹ ASVE, SDP, filza 51, 5 Jan. 1616.

which he attributed at least in part to the ill-behaviour of those in the army responsible for organizing provisioning.⁵⁰

The provision of hay posed special problems: quite apart from peasants' inclination to hoard it,⁵¹ it was unsuitable for long distance transport, so that the great concentration of cavalry mounts and carriage animals in the war zone had to be supplied almost entirely from Friuli alone. Between late 1615 and early 1616 requirements ran at 60 *carra* a day for the 3,000 horses at Palma, and 15 *carra* a day for Udine, but this was only part of the total.⁵² Barbarigo did his best to alleviate the pressure of lodging and victualling troops on Friulan villages, suggesting they be granted financial help to meet the cost, and clarifying cavalry's maximum entitlements via the *ordine di banca* (including a five-mile limit on peasants' obligation to transport hay and straw).⁵³

The cessation of the Gradisca war left a difficult legacy in the matter of lodging obligations, especially as regards light cavalry. After two years' continuous provisioning at the service of a sizeable army, in September 1618 the Friulan rural communities pleaded exhaustion, declaring themselves unable to bear the D. 3,000 a year cost of *ordine di banca* dues for two companies of *cappelletti* at Palma and one at Codroipo. The overall effect of defence demands made on the *contadinanza* (the Friulan version of the *corpo territoriale*) was indeed such that it ended the war with major arrears in payments due to state finance – in 1619 its debt was over D. 22,000.⁵⁴

The problems with lodging were by no means confined to Friuli. A considerable proportion of the light cavalry hired specifically for war service – *cappelletti*, cuirassiers, mounted pistoleers – were reengaged after the signing of peace,⁵⁵ and the housing of

⁵⁰ M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciducate*, esp. pp. 218-19; M. MALLET, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 280-8 (also on difficulties in supplying weapons); GAETANO COZZI, *Il doge Nicolò Contarini. Ricerche sul patriziato veneziano agli inizi del Seicento*, Venezia-Roma 1958, p. 154 ff.

⁵¹ 387 *carra* were discovered in a single village in February 1617: ASVE, SDR, filza 55, 18 Feb. 1617.

⁵² ASVE: SDP, filza 51, 27 Jan. 1616; SDR, Udine, 15 Dec. 1615.

⁵³ ASVE, SDP, filza 51, 6 Jan. 1616.

⁵⁴ ASVE, SDR, Udine, 24 Sept. 1618; GIUSEPPE TREBBI, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797. La storia politica e sociale*, Udine 1998, pp. 276-77.

⁵⁵ ASVE, ST, reg. 89, c. 71v.

troops remained a more general source of tension. The Senate heard that communities sometimes offered less than generous provisions, or overcharged on corn sales in an attempt to recoup their expenditure,⁵⁶ but Venetian authorities also knew the other side of the story, and insisted in these immediate post-war years on protecting communities against damage or loss through their duty to sell certain goods to troops. Hay had long been something they were to be paid for, and in late 1621 firewood was added to the other commodities like fodder-corn and bed-linen they supplied only in return for money.⁵⁷

Another way of reducing the attrition generated by dues formulated in kind, and the ever risky direct dealings between troops and rural communities, was to regularize cash payments in lieu of kind – a practice already noted above, and one Venetian authority was soon to generalize, as we shall see. Thus the Veronese *corpo territoriale* acted in February 1619 to define the provision of *ordine di banca* for *cappelletti* temporarily present in the province, on duties like escorting public money or high-ranking officials. To spare the rural communities damage and extraordinary expense, such forces' needs would be met by special contractors, duly hired, whereas the *corpo territoriale* would itself pay the *cappelletti* ordinarily present in the territory a nightly lodging allowance (15 Veronese *lire*, doubled for officers).⁵⁸

Venetian authorities received both complaints and demands on the issue of lodgings from the rural communities and from the *corpi territoriali*. The Bresciano remained a particularly sensitive area: for example the *quadra* of Quinzano protested in April 1618 about a cuirassier company whose demands exceeded the *ordine di banca* rules. The Senate tried to relieve pressure on the Bresciano plain by insisting further, in August 1619, that the Valsabbia mountain community and other jurisdictionally separate territories pay shares of the expenses.⁵⁹ In the Vicentino the *corpo territoriale* had struck the same note in December 1618 – the fairness of sharing lodging costs

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, c. 126.

⁵⁷ ASVE, ST, reg. 91, cc. 247v-248.

⁵⁸ BCBS, Arch. Civ., n° 1055, reg. 2, cc. 191-193.

⁵⁹ ASVE: SDR, filza 167, 24 Apr. 1618; ST, reg. 89, c. 179.

with other social orders – in suggesting a partial remedy which accompanied a more general complaint about lodgings. The rural communities were then paying sixty *cappelletti* and a hundred cuirassiers D. 900 a month, plus illegitimate extras, and they were now to cover part of the cost of lodging 120 mounted pistoleers in the city. Vicenza on the other hand, rich and grossly undertaxed in their view, contributed nothing to the *ordine di banca* and little to the expenses of troops in transit between the western and eastern *ter-raferma*, and possessed recently vacated quarters in the suburbs suitable for troops then lodged in the rural communities.⁶⁰

The Paduan *corpo territoriale* made a general complaint in April 1619, detailing the recent costs (about D. 500-600 a month) of lodging *cappelletti*, cuirassiers and mounted pistoleers, mostly in the southern Padovano, which were added to the expense of providing for troops in transit and infantry based in the province.⁶¹ It followed this in 1622 with more figures and an explicit demand that social orders thereto exempt from the *ordine di banca* – the city and the clergy – pay their share: a forecast total of D. 7,558 due from the Padovano for *ordine di banca* over the year beginning in November 1621, one tenth of the sum due from the whole mainland, should be divided up on the basis of the *estimo reale* (based on taxable property, which was prevalently owned by citizens), thus leaving the territory with a mere 14% of the total.⁶²

5) Lodgings as Taxes

These demands by the mainland's rural communities in the immediate post-Gradisca war years in fact both triggered and accompanied a major change in Venetian policy over how to meet and how to share the costs of lodging troops, which more or less coincided with the disbanding of the anachronistic heavy cavalry.⁶³ After the lodging of light cavalry in mainland cities during the war, which was a first major breach in their claimed exemption from such obligations, *cappelletti* companies continued to be billeted at least

⁶⁰ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 216, n° 4, cc. 4-6.

⁶¹ ASPD, Arch. Civico Antico, Territorio, b. 290, n° 1135, cc. 22v-23.

⁶² *Ibid.*, n° 1140, cc. 19v-20.

⁶³ For the decision to disband see ASVE, ST, reg. 92, c. 156.

sporadically in them and at their expense, as documents for the years 1618-1620 demonstrate: thus for example Udine, Treviso, which rented a building specially and regulated fodder sales, and Bergamo, where there were also horse pistolers in May 1620.⁶⁴

In November 1621 the *provveditore generale* Paruta broke with preceding practice by ordering that in future light cavalry forces (primarily cuirassiers and mounted arquebusiers) should be ordinarily garrisoned in the mainland cities, which were thus subjected to obligations of lodging and stabling they had always adamantly opposed.⁶⁵ The rural communities were to remain liable to provide the services specified by the *ordine di banca* for troops in transit and for forces specifically based with them, for functions like policing the countryside and guarding borders. A second key feature of the change decreed by Paruta in 1621 was that services due to the troops lodged, in both urban and rural settings, were essentially commuted into a money tax to be paid to Venetian officials and distributed by them, with a view to diminishing the social inconvenience of the lodging system and to providing better for the troops. Hay in particular, from being a commodity rural communities had to supply in fixed quotas and at artificially low prices, became something troops were to buy on the open market with a special pay supplement.⁶⁶ Communities could opt to provide only lodgings and stabling in the narrowest sense, and borrow furnishings and utensils for the troops they lodged from stocks to be built up in the cities. These projected stocks and the special pay supplement were to be covered by a new lodgings tax, with each territory contributing on the basis of its assessed taxable wealth.

The initial coverage was for fifteen companies each of eighty cuirassiers and 153 mounted arquebusiers distributed among the mainland provinces, though by the mid-1620s the *cappelletti* too were probably receiving the special pay supplement.⁶⁷ The sums due

⁶⁴ ASVE, SDR, Udine, 24 Sept. 1618; TREVISO, *Archivio di Stato* (henceforth ASTV), Arch. Com., b. 339, 4 Oct. 1618 & 22 May 1619; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 369.

⁶⁵ ASVR, Arch. Civ. Antico, b. 113, n° 1624, 10 Nov. 1621 (also for what follows).

⁶⁶ On hay specifically see BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 211, n° 3, c. 16.

⁶⁷ ASTV, Arch. Com., b. 1336, n° 9, c. 5v; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 113, n° 1624, 1 May 1627.

for the *ordine di banca* or *alloggi di cavalleria* were certainly divided up between the territories in relation to their taxable wealth – from the Bresciano’s 25% to the Bassanese’s 0.5% – for the years 1627-29, with quarterly totals for the whole mainland of D. 14,400, D. 24,000 and D. 42,000 respectively in those three years (an average yearly rate of D. 107, 200, little different from the total of about D. 100,000 imposed in 1626).⁶⁸

The city governors’ reports and other sources show that cuirassier companies became a frequent presence in urban lodgings in the 1620s and 1630s, though their recruitment of outlaws and propensity for crime and violence perhaps belied the hope expressed in 1615 by *provveditore* Lando, that they would cause less damage in town than in the country.⁶⁹ There was action – in some cases at least with state funds – variously to buy, build, convert or rent billets and stables: thus at Bergamo, Treviso and Legnago.⁷⁰

Once the other cavalry units were normally housed in cities the *cappelletti* were the forces most regularly in contact with the rural communities, and it was perhaps principally with them that periodic tension continued, as shown for example by complaints by the Bresciano plain *quadre* of Rezzato, Gavardo and Nave in 1627, and by Lisiera (near Vicenza) in 1630.⁷¹ Such tension had also to do with the *cappelletti*’s police functions, and a similar nexus can be seen in attrition between rural communities and Corsican infantry – thus in the Veronese, where *cappelletti* and Corsicans were excluded in 1624 from action against smuggling on the northern mountain border.⁷² But frequent troop movements in these years guaranteed equally frequent demands by cavalry, and consequent risks of abuse. A Senate law of April 1624 tried to limit depredations and extortions by cavalry transiting in rural areas (they could only demand their daily allowance from one community every day), and complaints from the Padovano and Vicentino led to a ruling of July 1625 which

⁶⁸ L. PORTO, *L’esercito veneziano*, p. 116; M. KNAPTON, *Il Territorio vicentino*, p. 71, note 108.

⁶⁹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 213, VII, p. 338, XII, pp. 402, 490. For Padua, see also UDI-NE, *Archivio di Stato* (henceforth ASUD), Arch. Com., b. 150, n° 3.

⁷⁰ ASPD, *Milizie*, b. 33, n° 11; *Relazioni dei rettori*, VIII, p. 192, & XII, pp. 400-401.

⁷¹ ASVE, ST, reg. 98, c. 338v, reg. 103, c. 138.

⁷² *Ibid.*, reg. 94, c. 206.

sought to establish the duration of their travel on the main routes between the Veronese and Trevigiano, and also the places they were to use for overnight stops.⁷³

As we shall see, the establishment of a further military tax in money through the metamorphosis of the *ordine di banca* spurred the *corpi territoriali* to press harder for contributions towards it by other social orders, especially the cities, and they can only have been hardened in their resolve by the continuing pressure of Venetian demands for food and especially fodder. Worries about the Valtelline led the Senate in summer 1620 to order a census of the mainland's supplies of hay and grain, and certainly in Crema government authority purchased large quantities of hay in 1621 at set prices.⁷⁴ *Provveditore* Paruta's late 1621 decision concerning hay supply should have put an end to this system, but fear of speculative price rises in an open market induced his successors to reinstate both the code of regulated, artificially low prices imposed for purchasing it and the carriage obligations for its transport – while nonetheless maintaining the cavalry lodgings tax and troops' special pay supplement as introduced in 1621. Such purchasing remained current practice well beyond Venetian military debacle in the Mantuan war, documented for example by the accounts of the Padua *camera fiscale*. It was accompanied by sporadic dishonest behaviour by officials (as in the Bergamasco in 1630), as well as by scant cooperation by the rural population and therefore by drastic means of enforcement, as ordered by *provveditore* Erizzo in 1626.⁷⁵ At Crema in 1629 locals and Venetian authority clashed sharply, as the latter ignored complaints and enforced massive demands, stuffing hay into urban buildings temporarily used as barns – but then the cavalry failed to receive the wages with which to pay for it.⁷⁶

⁷³ BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, atti e terminazioni riguardanti la città di Bergamo, b. II, 2, n° 5; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 215, n° 7, 12 July 1625; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 113, n° 1624, 14 June 1632.

⁷⁴ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 211, n° 4, c. 29; CREMA, *Biblioteca Civica* (henceforth BCCR), Arch. Com., doc. cart., 18, milizie, 2.

⁷⁵ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 211, n° 3, cc. 16-17; BCCR, Arch. Com., doc. cart., 18, milizie, 2; BRESCIA, *Archivio di Stato* (henceforth ASBS), Stampe, b. 1, n° 12 (decreto del *provveditore generale* Erizzo, 15 Feb. 1626) & n° 24; ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 312, n° 1237, c. 185; BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. III, 2, nn. 4, 9.

⁷⁶ BCCR, Arch. Com., doc. cart., 18, milizie, 2; ASVE, SDR, Crema, 2 Jan. 1630.

Food supplies for troops in general, during a decade of more or less continuous mobilization, caused perennial problems which were worsened in the late 1620s by bad harvests and dearth, and became particularly acute in Friuli and the western provinces of the *terraferma* in the years 1629-30. They climaxed with the aftermath of military defeat in the conflict over Mantua and the advent of the plague, with the Bresciano and Veronese the refuge of numerous retreating troops they simply lacked the resources to feed.⁷⁷ But the problems had already been virtually insoluble before the debacle. Just after the bad harvest of 1629 Crema was a source of major anxiety for Venetian authority, with local food stocks then considered sufficient for civilians and military only till the following April. In August 1629 the *podestà* of Brescia was caught between the risk of rioting, unfed soldiery and the negative implications of extracting grain from the territory by force. A year later, in more desperate circumstances, his colleague in Bergamo ordered the delivery into town of the stocks of all foodstuffs in the territory, threatening the despatch of soldiers to burn farmland.⁷⁸

As already stated, the *corpi territoriali* were bellicose in demanding that other social orders contribute to the new lodgings tax covering the costs of quartering cuirassiers, mounted arquebusiers and, from around 1627, *cappelletti* too, though Venice adopted no uniform solution in reacting to their requests. It was perhaps easier to erode the privileges of exempt rural areas – in 1626 government ordered that in the Veronese the Valpolicella pay its share, for example – but when sharing between rural areas and cities was actually achieved, often after years of wrangling, it was much more the result of negotiation between the parties in conflict than of imposition from above. In 1623 the city of Treviso and the *podesterie* of the province were sharing the costs of housing *cappelletti* in Treviso, and thereafter the city contributed to the new tax; in the mid 1620s

⁷⁷ ASVE, SDR, Brescia, 4 June 1630; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 113, n° 1624, 15 Nov. 1632. See too PAOLO ULIVIONI, *Il gran castigo di Dio. Carestia ed epidemia a Venezia e nella terraferma, 1628-1632*, Milano 1989, esp. p. 25 ff. and passim.

⁷⁸ BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. II, 2, n° 9; ASVE, SDR, Brescia, 26 Aug. 1629 (and also the same *podestà*'s comments six months later: *Relazioni dei rettori*, XI, pp. 337-338), & Crema, 15 June 1629, 17 Sept. 1629.

Venice ruled that in the Bellunese it be paid on the basis of the *estimo reale*, thus involving the city; in 1627 Udine agreed to pay a share of the lodgings tax levied on Friuli.⁷⁹ In Feltre, though, the dispute was long, and Brescia too – although the only city with a long tradition of contributing to the costs of lodging cavalry, via the *tasse di gente d'arme* – dug its feet in, and was still resisting hard in 1627.⁸⁰

In December 1622 the *corpi territoriali* of the Padovano, Vicentino and Veronese asked Venice that all property holders of whatever social order pay shares of the new tax determined by their orders' percentages of the general *estimo*, as with other established taxes levied on property (the *sussidio* etc.). Venice reacted in June 1623 by merely temporarily lightening the tax totals demanded of the three provinces.⁸¹ Vicenza, the only major mainland city without modern fortifications, not only refused to reach an agreement but complied reluctantly with Venetian demands that it remedy the lack of lodgings specifically designated for military purposes, and tried its hardest to make the rural communities pay for light cavalry and *cappelletti* lodged in the city.⁸² Renewed Venetian indications in 1629 that sharing of the tax – between the provinces, and between their social orders – imitate procedure for the *sussidio* initiated a long legal tussle, which was ended in 1638 with settlement between the parties in both the Vicentino and Veronese. In the Bergamasco demands that the city pay, made in 1628 and explicitly referring to the 1622 demand just mentioned, were only satisfied in 1652, by a Venetian order that the tax be paid like the *tasse di gente d'arme*.⁸³

⁷⁹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 338, IV, p. 260; ASTV, Arch. Com., b. 339 (30 Aug. 1618), b. 1336, n° 9, c. 10, b. 340; on the Valpolicella ASVE, ST, reg. 96, c. 230. For the Bellunese see too R. BRAGAGGIA, *Il corpo territoriale*, p. 78.

⁸⁰ ASTV, Arch. Com., b. 1336, n° 9, c. 31; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 118, n° 214, cc. 98-103.

⁸¹ G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, p. 93.

⁸² BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 216, n° 1, cc. 5-6, n° 4, c. 22, & b. 231, n° 3, c. 23. On the eve of the war of Mantuan succession Vicenza showed reluctance to house more troops, and in the mid-1630s cavalry were still obliged to find their own accomodation: *ivi*, b. 224, n° 1, c. 29; ASVE, ST, reg. 100, c. 290.

⁸³ M. KNAPTON, *Il Territorio vicentino*, p. 108; G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, p. 95; I. PEDERZANI, *Venezia e lo «Stado de Terraferma»*, pp. 308, 313.

It is interesting to note that some of the changes described in this section reflect similar developments in the duchy of Milan, mostly dating to some years or even decades earlier, overall more uniform in their content and timing, and fruit of the efforts of the *contadi* – the duchy’s equivalents of the Venetian state’s *corpi territoriali*, which acted in a more concerted fashion than their Venetian ‘cousins’, though facing similar delaying tactics by the city authorities over the application of decisions reducing urban privileges. As from 1597 the system of the *egualanza* balanced out the costs of lodging troops borne by single rural communities through systems of sharing and reimbursement both within the single provinces and in the duchy as a whole; in 1604 village authorities were authorized to cover lodging costs by taxing citizens’ rural property too, albeit at a lighter rate; and from 1610 troops were lodged in towns as well, while during the seventeenth century the provision of victuals to troops in lodgings passed into the hands of contractors.⁸⁴

III *Carriage Duties and Labour Services*

1) *Introduction*

It was again mainly the rural inhabitants of the Venetian mainland state who were subject to a vast range of labour services and carriage duties directly connected with the organization of defence, requiring use of their own time and physical effort, tools of various sorts, carts and wagons, draught animals and sometimes even boats. These activities consisted of transport, excavation and building work in both the initial construction and the subsequent maintenance of city fortifications’ and other fortresses’ walls, gates, guardhouses, munition deposits, moats, ditches etc.;⁸⁵ a variety of carriage duties

⁸⁴ DOMENICO SELLA, *Sotto il dominio della Spagna*, in DOMENICO SELLA, CARLO CAPRA, *Il Ducato di Milano dal 1535 al 1796*, Torino 1984, pp. 58-59 (pp. 1-149); M. RIZZO, *Militari e civili*, pp. 585-586; CHIARA PORQUEDDU, *Amministrazione centrale e amministrazioni periferiche in Lombardia tra '500 e '600*, in *Comunità e poteri centrali negli antichi stati italiani. Alle origini dei controlli amministrativi*, ed Luca Mannori, Napoli 1997, pp. 80-86 (pp. 59-102); D. MAFFI, *Il baluardo della corona*, p. 280 ff.

⁸⁵ See e.g. the very detailed specifications made in 1591-92 for maintenance work at Verona: ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 276, n° 6/80, cc. 47-48.

for the army and also for a number of civilian officials, especially Venetian governors travelling to or from their *reggimenti* – an obligation closely linked to the duty of providing lodgings for the same beneficiaries, and similar to it in the limits Venice sought to set on those entitled to carriage services;⁸⁶ felling and transporting timber for Venice's arsenal, and support to saltpetre production (the provision of transport, lodgings, premises for production and storage).⁸⁷

Furthermore, though ignored in this essay, *corvées* connected with the upkeep of inland communications routes – roads, bridges, mountain passes and watercourses – also often had important military implications, as well as adding to the labour and carriage obligations more directly caused by defence needs.⁸⁸ War might indeed determine such *corvées*, as when *provveditore generale* Priuli demanded in September 1616 that a minor waterway between Cervignano and Muscoli be made navigable to ease the delivery of supplies to Palmanova.⁸⁹ And of course a major initiative like the deviation between 1599 and 1604 of the main branch of the river Po at Porto Viro, on the mainland's southeastern border with the Papal state, had manifest strategic importance.⁹⁰

Many of the carriage and labour dues listed above were sporadic in incidence or produced by single events, but they could mobilize

⁸⁶ P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, p. 129 ff. For the limits set see e.g. a 1599 ruling: ASVE, ST, reg. 69, cc. 183v-184. Villages round Portogruaro were to carry the belongings of a few, specified senior Venetian officials on their way to take up office, but only between Portogruaro and Udine, and with the explicit exclusion of other officials, *scolari* of the bombardier schools, etc.

⁸⁷ See RAFFAELLO VERGANI, *Le materie prime*, in *Storia di Venezia*, XII. *Il mare* (pp. 285-312), and previous studies cited there, esp. (for timber) *Dai monti alla laguna. Produzione artigianale e artistica del Bellunese per la cantieristica veneziana*, eds Giovanni Caniato, Michela Dal Borgo, Venezia 1988 (sections by MICHELA DAL BORGO), as well as P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, pp. 124-25; on saltpetre, W. PANCIERA, *Il governo delle artiglierie. Tecnologia bellica e istituzioni veneziane nel secondo Cinquecento*, Milano 2005, ch. 6; ID., *Ancien Régime e chimica di base: la produzione di salnitro nella Repubblica veneziana (1550-1797)*, «Studi Veneziani», n.s. 16 (1988), esp. pp. 58-69 (pp. 45-92), and P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, pp. 125-29.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-123.

⁸⁹ ASVE, SDF, filza 54, 13 Sept. 1616.

⁹⁰ PIERGORGIO BASSAN, *Il dominio veneto nel Bassopolesine*, I, Abano Terme 1972, pp. 131 ff., 179 ff.; CLAUDIO MANCIN, *Il delta del Po: genesi di un territorio. Il Taglio di Porto Viro nelle relazioni dei Provveditori (1598-1613)*, Taglio di Po, 2002.

thousands of men, with logistical implications on an immense scale. State finance on the whole contributed a modest share of the money spent on the work done, and it left *terraferma* subjects a very considerable burden to carry. As happened with lodgings, diversity of status in the face of such duties – especially the exemptions enjoyed by privileged rural areas – was a source of tension between different social orders, and direct contact between soldiers and civilians resulting from these duties, as for example in the transport of troops' possessions, created a perennial risk of friction.

For much of the sixteenth century the burden of labour service and carriage duties was largely a question of man-hours, but communities nonetheless faced significant monetary expenses, for instance in the form of bounty payments to encourage those charged with performing various of these duties, and their monetary side grew in importance especially at the end of the century. This happened primarily because Venice had gradually extended the geographical range of territories called on for major projects like big new fortifications.⁹¹ In the building of Palmanova from 1593 onwards, though Friulan carts and carters bore the brunt especially of early demands,⁹² the request for labour and carriage contributions from the whole mainland greatly boosted the use of contractors, already experimented with in other fortification work of the second half of the sixteenth century and now rapidly adopted wholesale. Such contractors were paid by the authorities of provinces too distant for the despatch of pioneers and vehicles to be practical, and they were fairly easily able to recruit workforce in the hardly prosperous vicinity of the new fortress-town, including neighbouring archducal territories. Also significant is the fact that, as well as labour and carriage contributions, Venice sought and obtained offers of money to help build Palma from mainland urban and rural institutions and patriotic individuals, though in some cases actual payment became the object of dispute and delay. That the building of Palma was on a different scale to previous work on fortifications

⁹¹ M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 425-26.

⁹² ASVE, ST, reg. 65, cc. 168v-169, reg. 68, c. 99v; *Relazioni dei rettori*, V, p. 48, XIV, pp. 44, 47-48.

is evident from the enormous total cost as reckoned in 1623, of D. 3.464.828.⁹³

Although the use of contractors was not a panacea, and involved the *corpi territoriali* in very considerable expenditure, the abundant documentation concerning the construction of Palma demonstrates to the full the weaknesses of direct provision of labour by the whole mainland – as many as 7,000 men at a time were requested. Distance between the provinces providing labour and the worksite caused major problems of efficiency and surveillance: the journey itself was wearing and costly (such pioneers and their animals had no right to *ordine di banca* while travelling); a considerable proportion of men designated failed even to reach the site while others failed to do the duty assigned to them, and this shortfall included men who absconded after pocketing an advance payment. There was indeed always a wastage rate debilitating the contingents despatched, enhanced by factors like workers' need to attend to their ordinary occupations and families (a need particularly strong for peasants, the vast majority of those sent), their perception of a hostile or exploitative environment, dangerous working conditions, delays or shortfalls in pay, or poor provisioning.⁹⁴ The food needs of the Palmanova workforce, for example, had initially to be covered – thus a Venetian order to Udine in December 1593 – by a thousand *stara* a day of bread baked in Udine. Though the nascent fortress town in due course acquired its own bakers, there remained a longer term problem of grain availability for both workforce and garrison in an area with weak local corn production, and in fact it continued partially dependent on imports from Venice.⁹⁵

The analysis that follows concentrates on those features of labour services and carriage duties which were most prominent in

⁹³ ASVE, ST, reg. 63, cc. 189-190, reg. 64, cc. 134, 164, reg. 65, cc. 216v-217, reg. 68, c. 120; ANTONIO MANNO, *Il governo del cantiere: istituzioni, patrizi, soldati, tecnici e operai durante la costruzione di Palmanova*, «Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti», 151 (1992-93), pp. 1073-76 (pp. 1061-1102).

⁹⁴ On the building of Palma see P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, pp. 161-177, which uses – amongst other sources – the early reports of *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIV; see too A. MANNO, *Il governo del cantiere*, esp. pp. 1085-1091; M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 418-420; L. PEZZOLO, *L'oro dello stato*, pp. 143-44.

⁹⁵ ASVE, ST, reg. 63, c. 169; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIV, p. 118.

demands made on Venice's *terraferma* subjects in the early seventeenth century. Though building work at Palmanova dragged on well into the new century, it was in fact the last of the major new mainland fortifications, its construction coinciding with heightened awareness of the risk to security on the weakly fortified and fragmented Friulan border – which was itself an issue of contention in the growing attrition between Venice and the Austrian Habsburgs that led to the War of Gradisca. Though work on fortifications certainly did not cease with completion of the main body of Palma, and fear of war triggered attention to the upkeep of existing fortifications (thus, for example, concern to free the ditch round Rovigo from obstacles in 1606),⁹⁶ what figured most strongly in these decades were carriage duties determined by war scares or actual fighting. As already stated, they were only very meagrely covered by state funds, and the cause of great expense for the *corpi territoriali* and thus for the single rural communities, some of which also paid bounty money to those who served.

Rules issued in November 1606, during the Interdict crisis, confirm that the hiring of extra troops or the switching of forces towards threatened areas – both of which might involve moving hundreds or thousands of men – greatly increased the burden of transport demands on rural communities. Venetian peacetime policy, confirmed by the Senate in March 1624,⁹⁷ was to transfer infantry companies regularly between centres, to prevent them becoming too *casalini*; the standard two carts used by such a company changing garrison after the normal period of two years were provided by the communities and paid for by the company captain. But it was the communities and the local Venetian *camera fiscale* which had to share the costs of shifting the possessions of an extraordinary company, or of an ordinary company transferred before the expiry of its two-year term.⁹⁸ And of course actual war or the risk of it vastly

⁹⁶ The ditch was in fact largely filled with houses built up against the city wall, and prudence suggested no large-scale demolitions: ASVE, SDP, filza 176, 24 Oct. 1606, and M. T. PASQUALINI CANATO, *Una terra di confine*, p. 456 ff. On similar action at Padua in late 1605, *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 101.

⁹⁷ ASVE, ST, reg. 94, cc. 53v-54.

⁹⁸ Thus an edict by *provveditore generale* Moro: *Statuti, ordini e parti concernenti il beneficio e buon governo del sp. territorio veronese*, Verona 1613, p. 228. His successor Barbaro later

increased transport needs for munitions, equipment, victuals, fodder etc.

What follows also highlights tendencies already observed a propos of lodgings. In the early decades of the seventeenth century these duties were transformed into obligations affecting mainland subjects in general, rather than just the rural communities, and they were also converted – here resembling the fortification work at Palma, too – into money taxes funding the provision of services by contractors.

2) *Carriage Services during the Gradisca War*

During the Gradisca war much of the demand for carriage services was not only located in Friuli but fell on Friulan rural communities. The scale of demand was considerable: in November 1616, for example, it was estimated that the cavalry then at Mariano, a key base of the Venetian army, needed one hundred *carra* of hay per day, to be brought from Cervignano,⁹⁹ and indeed in January 1616 the Friulan communities agreed to provide a hundred carts and wagons with which to supply headquarters. However exemptions were claimed by many privileged communities, with the effect of grievously overburdening the others, and the following December the Senate ordered them all to contribute, without exception.¹⁰⁰ This decision allowed the negotiation of new arrangements by February 1617: a total of 170 carts and wagons, divided into squads, with no more than two vehicles due from any single community now that exemptions were abolished, and payment of 6 s. a day rent from the state plus compensation for damage to vehicles or loss of animals (presumably a frequent risk). Drivers completing the journey from Cervignano to Mariano in two days (about 14 km as the crow flies, a reminder for historians of what distances meant!) were to be paid L. 4 a day, but risked the galleys if they absconded, something they might do if not paid daily, as claimed by the *provveditore generale* in 1617.¹⁰¹

confirmed the quota of two carts per company, reacting to complaints at excessive demands from the Padovano and Vicentino: BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 215, n° 7 (12 July 1625).

⁹⁹ ASVE, SDR, filza 55, 20 Nov. 1616.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, filza 51, 22 Jan. 1616; ASVE, ST, reg. 86, c. 312v.

¹⁰¹ ASVE: SDR, Udine, 9 Feb. 1617; SDR, filza 54, 2 Aug. 1617.

Venice of course demanded large quotas of carts and wagons with drivers from many other territories too. In May 1616 the governors of Treviso, Padua, Rovigo and Vicenza were told to send all available carts to transport munitions to Palma – a generic request, significantly later made proportional to each territory's contribution to the *sussidio*.¹⁰² Demands were also made of the Veronese and Bresciano, though vehicles in provinces west of the river Oglio were left free for possible needs on the frontier with Milan. The sixty carts requested of the Bresciano seem never to have been sent (the sources consulted nowhere mention Brescian vehicles present in the war-zone), since the city of Brescia objected that the horses would arrive exhausted and the wagons ruined, and offered D. 4,000 in lieu; the *corpo territoriale* likewise offered money instead of its share of twelve carts.¹⁰³ Fear of direct attack on the Feltrino and Bellunese seems to have spared these provinces demands for the Gradisca war-zone until May 1617.¹⁰⁴

Provinces from the Veronese eastwards sent carts rather than money, with the cities liable as well as the rural communities, and use of the *estimo reale* as the basis for sharing. The city of Padua fought first for sharing of the obligation to be conducted via the *estimo personale*, based essentially on capitation and thus weighted towards the far greater numbers of rural than urban inhabitants, and for payment by the rural communities alone. It then agreed to contribute as demanded by Venice for the second despatch of carts, in summer 1616, but sought to avoid liability for the first, spring contingent – an issue still unsettled in 1620.¹⁰⁵ Had the city paid according to its proportion of the *estimo reale*, its share would have been over four fifths of the D. 11,519 spent on the two contingents in 1616, but the *Collegio* compromised in 1620 by assigning half to the rural communities, and half to the city and clergy.¹⁰⁶ The

¹⁰² ASVE, ST, reg. 86, cc. 84v-85.

¹⁰³ ASVE, SDP, filza 163, 7 Apr. 1616, filza 164, 2 Dec. 1616 & 9 Jan. 1617; BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1024, c. 451v. On Verona's contribution, see L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, p. 107 ff.

¹⁰⁴ ASVE, SDP, filza 52, 25 May 1617.

¹⁰⁵ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1218, cc. 11-17; ASVE, ST, reg. 89, cc. 190, 201v-202, reg. 90, c. 83.

¹⁰⁶ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 290, n° 1139, c. 52; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 69, n° 532, c. 24.

Padovano also sent two more contingents in 1617 (sixty carts in the first, each with four oxen and two drivers).¹⁰⁷ The sums spent included what appears to have been compensation for the loss of animals and carts (D. 20 or little more for every horse), and the Padovano's estimated total expenditure for carriage duties over the whole war period was the very considerable sum of D. 22,246 – to which it would be reasonable to add the further costs created by wrangling and lawsuits.¹⁰⁸

The Vicentino sent more than 62 carts with four horses each in 1616, at high unit costs to the *corpo territoriale* (beyond the L. 6 a day paid by the state for every carter's fodder and food, and also bounty payments of the order of D. 12 a month from their communities of origin): D. 20 per cart, D. 20 per horse, D. 5 per driver, for total hiring expenses of D. 6,510 – a sum which would actually be higher if costs of repairing carts and stabling horses were added.¹⁰⁹ The city *colture* also sent a fair number of carts, and the city itself agreed to levy D. 6,000 as a contribution to the province's carriage duties, though this extra tax was paid with reluctance.¹¹⁰

3) *Towards the Use of Contractors*

A report written in January 1617 by a Vicenza city official on Vicentine and other vehicles and animals in the Gradisca war-zone is eloquent about the shortcomings of the direct provision of vehicles, animals and men by the subject provinces, incidentally confirming the criticisms we have just seen expressed in 1616 by Brescia. The horses rapidly became incapable of useful service: they were seemingly granted no stabling rights en route between their departure points and the war zone; after arrival they were stabled in the open, without straw and amidst filth, and often without fodder (even to the point of eating dung and wood), so that many died. This in turn hindered the use of the vehicles, anyway a prey to damage and thefts. Thirteen vehicles and their horses sent by the city of

¹⁰⁷ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1218, c. 46; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 492, n° 6, c. 12.

¹⁰⁸ ASPD, Milizie, b. 33, n° 10, & Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 290, n° 1140, c. 19.

¹⁰⁹ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 491, n° 5, c. 3; b. 217, n° 3, cc. 45-46; b. 491, n° 7, n° 9, n° 10.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, b. 491, n° 5, c. 3, 20.

Verona, on the other hand, were properly looked after and, significantly, had been provided at a total unit cost of D. 70 per cart per month by contractors, who were helped by an initial loan of D. 200 for every cart, and were also paid L. 6 a day per cart by the state. This, according to the Vicentine observer, was an example to imitate.¹¹¹

Truth to tell, Verona's contribution had been given only after Venice had ignored its protests at the request made (it was dishonourable to contribute to the same dues as the *contado*, it had no carts to spare etc. – this then became the reason for using a contractor), and it quarrelled with Venice over the use made of the carts provided. A special 1616 tax on the city's *estimo reale* raised D. 12,535 (enough for nearly 14 months' service), and in September 1617 Verona recalled the carters, who had been in service since October 1616, but a dispute then developed over payment for a period of duty till December 1617, imposed by Venetian authority.¹¹² Nonetheless, the difference in method of provision and quality of results was very clear, and Venice took due heed.

Transport needs for the Mantuan succession war brought similarly generalized demands on the mainland provinces to those of the Gradisca war. They were formulated in October 1629 by *provveditore generale* Erizzo, who again invoked provinces' shares of the *sussidio* as the criterion for dividing the burden. He furthermore demanded in December that the service be provided by means of contractors, paid D. 1 a day per cart by the state (a modest increase on the previous L. 6), and L. 12 a day by the *corpi territoriali* – a monthly rate of D. 58, which these latter in actual fact exceeded (thus the Padovano and Vicentino, which paid D. 77).¹¹³ There was

¹¹¹ BBVI, Arch. Torre, b. 492, n° 2 (3 Jan. 1617). These 13 were the city's share of a total of 60 requested from the Veronese in July 1616: ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 113, n° 1624 (16 July 1616), b. 69, n° 532, c. 4. See too L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, pp. 108-110, also for what follows.

¹¹² ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 69, n° 532, cc. 1, 4, 7, 11, 18v-19; b. 118, n° 214, c. 64 – the dispute was still unsolved in 1620, with Venice insisting Verona meet a debt of D. 2,028.

¹¹³ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1218, c. 70, n° 1219, cc. 70v, 74, 75v, 78; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 491, n° 2, c. 3, n°6, cc. 29v-32; L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, pp. 117-18.

still some minimal incidence of direct provision of carriage services, as by the suburbs (*chiusure*) of Brescia.¹¹⁴ And again there is evidence that contractors were not a panacea: the Veronese Bartolomeo Fortuna, hired by the Padovano and Vicentino, provided carts so small as to be useless, and Venetian authority ordered his replacement, but the opportunity for replacement was anyway an improvement on the scant efficiency of carts provided directly by the mainland provinces.¹¹⁵

As in the Gradisca war, costs were high: the Padovano alone had to find D. 1.260 a month in the early months of 1630.¹¹⁶ Again, as before, the mainland cities reacted differently to the call to contribute to the costs of providing carriage services. Verona imposed a special *dadia* on the basis of the urban *estimo reale*; quarrels developed about the size of the city's share in the Vicentino, Bellunese and Padovano, but Brescia was exceptional in trying to refuse outright.¹¹⁷

4) *Pioneers*

Less important than wheeled transport, less well documented, but nonetheless a necessary support to campaign activity were pioneers, drawn from rural areas for tasks like digging trenches, planting artillery, diverting streams, cutting firewood etc. – tasks that might also be demanded of militiamen, but were certainly destined to men described in the sources with such terms as *guastadori*, *segadori*, *spezzamonti* etc. Their duties had much to do with work at the sites and on the structures of major permanent fortifications, but they were also a necessary accompaniment to field armies.

The war scare was serious enough in early 1607 for the *provveditore* at Brescia to recruit 1,000 peasant pioneers to transport artillery.¹¹⁸ Rather weak documentation concerning the Gradisca war nonetheless shows extensive use of a significant number of pur-

¹¹⁴ BCBS, Arch. Civ., b. 1125, 3-7 May 1630.

¹¹⁵ ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1219, c. 74.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, c. 82.

¹¹⁷ ASVR, Antico Arch. Civ., b. 114, n° 894, 17 Feb. 1630; ASVE: ST, reg. 102, c. 211, reg. 103, c. 146, & SDR, Brescia, 4 Feb. 1630; ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1219, cc. 80v, 82.

¹¹⁸ ASVE, SDR, filza 162, 19 Nov. 1606.

posely enrolled pioneers, hardly surprising in a war in which both sides made much use of temporarily created or reinforced static defences – even though a complaint made to Venice towards the end of the war by the Venetian commander, Giovanni de' Medici, speaks of the lack of pioneers and of picks and spades without handles.¹¹⁹ The Friulan communities promised to maintain 400 of them for the duration of the war, mostly men from mountain villages or places recently conquered from the Habsburgs, but Venetian requests for service seem to have affected the whole of the *terraferma*. By February 1617 1,000 pioneers had been enrolled in the Padovano and Trevigiano; 80 of the latter were called on the following April, and in July more were demanded from west of the Trevigiano. In 1616-17 there was enrolment of 2,670 local pioneers, as well as cavalry and infantry, for the defence of the Veronese, and at least 600 men (the records are incomplete) for the same purpose in the Bergamasco.¹²⁰ Sporadic requests mobilized men over the post-war years, too – for instance Bergamasco pioneers were sent to the Valtelline during its occupation by French forces.¹²¹

There was then massive use of pioneers in the Mantuan succession war, with *provveditore generale* Erizzo demanding in August 1629 that all mainland rural inhabitants unfit to bear arms – though current rules excluded heads of household or men living alone, as in enlistment of the *cernide* – be recruited as pioneers in groups of fifty, each under a supervisor who would provide picks and shovels.¹²² The numbers enrolled were indeed high – 2,845 in the Brescian valleys, as reported in July 1630; 4,278 in the Trevigiano, according to the governor's report in 1631, though enlistment had proved difficult in the Padovano.¹²³ Some worked at fortifications in the Valcamonica and other northern valleys, others in the war-zone itself: the

¹¹⁹ M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 246.

¹²⁰ ASVE: SDP, filza 55, 14 Jan., 23 Feb. 1617, filza 56, 5 Mar. 1617, filza 57, 19 July 1617; SDR, Udine, 5 Feb. 1617. BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 3098, n° 41. On use of the pioneers see M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciducatale*, p. 224 and passim.

¹²¹ A decree by Bergamo's captain in June 1625 ordered deserters to return: BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. I, 1, n° 18.

¹²² ASVE: SDP, filza 73, 25 Aug. 1629; SS, reg. 132, cc. 260v-261 (the specification about who to exclude).

¹²³ ASVE: SDR, Brescia, 20 July 1630; SDP, filza 74, 18 Nov. 1629; *Relazioni dei rettori*, III, p. 190.

first groups were there right from the early autumn of 1629 (200 men from the Vicentino were sent to Mantua), and then 2,000 were required at Valeggio in April 1630.¹²⁴ Heavy demands on the Bresciano in particular, which by summer 1630 had sent pioneers to the base-camp and to a roving squadron of the army, as well as to Asola and Castelgiuffré, elicited complaints at the expense generated, and also resulted in the failure to send new contingents when required. There was a similar failure then by the Cremasco and Bergamasco too, and no doubt for all of them there were difficulties attributable to the plague.¹²⁵

IV *The Terraferma as a Source of Regular, Auxiliary and Extempore Forces*

1) *Introduction*

The issue discussed here is a very broad one, concerning Venice's use of mainland subjects in different types of forces: the regular army units – heavy and light cavalry, and infantry; permanent auxiliary bodies of militia; extempore companies of horse and foot soldiers raised in the event of major war-scars or actual wars – this last category having rather blurred edges of definition, liable to overlap with those just mentioned.¹²⁶

In the early seventeenth century the mainland was exposed to really major military threats for the first time after the Italian Wars, by then a distant memory of some seventy years before. Faced with the need to expand its land forces, both cavalry and infantry, Venice met with difficulties in recruiting in the other Italian states owing to jealousy by their rulers and the prior claims of Spanish or papal service, a problem already there in mid sixteenth century but now more acute. It reacted with a major policy innovation in the shape of the considerable calls it made on *terraferma* subjects (but not on Venetians). Some of them were reluctant to heed those calls, and some who did serve proved militarily mediocre, but overall it was a politically very significant phenomenon.

¹²⁴ ASVE: SS, reg. 132, c. 101; SDP, filza 74, 4 Oct. 1629, filza 76, 15 Apr. 1630.

¹²⁵ ASVE: SDR, Brescia, 15 June 1630; SDP, filza 77, 24 Aug. 1630, filza 175, 4 Sept. 1630.

¹²⁶ For what follows see M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, ch. 12.

Despite the abolition of the regular heavy cavalry that mainland nobles were traditionally associated with, *terraferma* recruits became a significant element of the light cavalry units used, and there was a similar trend in the infantry. Venetian practice in hiring foot-soldiers for mainland garrison duty had long preferred foreign captains, almost all of them from other Italian states, and able to draw rapidly on further manpower there if war required greater numbers. For the infantry, much more than the cavalry, the numerical gap between peacetime establishment and war needs was very marked, and now the need to increase its numbers greatly for both garrison and campaign service could not be fully met by these traditional sources. The shortfall was covered partly by enlisting north European soldiery (much practised during the war of Gradisca and equally in evidence in the 1620s), and partly by recruiting infantry within the mainland, thus overcoming past habits of mind – a degree of government diffidence towards use of its *terraferma* subjects who might be influenced by domestic ties, as well as their own apparently limited interest in serving. Men readier to enrol typically came from less settled and poorer environments than the mainland provinces, especially considering how real wages paid to infantry fell through the sixteenth century.

This policy innovation included seeking the further involvement of the minority of more martially minded *terraferma* nobles, in many cases able to raise troops through the power and patronage they exercised in their local environments, desirous of the prestige a military career gave, and able and willing to spend on troops under their command. Some of them were already linked by a family tradition of service to regular Venetian military employment: thus for example the Avogadro and Martinengo of Brescia, the Capra and da Porto of Vicenza, the Allegri, Pellegrini, Pompei and Sambonifacio of Verona, the Antonini, da Porcia and Savorgnan of Friuli, the Capodilista and Obizzi of Padua – among them families also linked to Venice by feudal investiture, though a significant number were not (but the heterogeneity of the mainland aristocracy and the nature of its overall relationship with Venice are a subject far beyond the thematic reach of this essay).¹²⁷

¹²⁷ See in general L. PEZZOLO, *Nobiltà militare e potere nello stato veneziano fra Cinque e Seicento*, in *I Farnese. Corti, guerra e nobiltà in antico regime*, eds Antonella Bilotto, Piero Del

Other *terraferma* nobles, particularly in the decades either side of 1600, were drawn by the opportunities of army careers offered by foreign rulers, especially north of the Alps – and thanks to military experience thus gained some could recruit foreign troops. The Gradisca war in fact forced mainland nobles engaged in military careers abroad to make a clear choice of loyalty: Venetian subjects were forbidden such service in August 1614, but even after war broke out some Friulan feudatories – who as such owed service to Venice, but looked favourably to the more gratifying general role and prestige accorded to their like in Austrian Habsburg lands – remained in what had become enemy employment or territory, defying threatened confiscation of their fiefs.¹²⁸

The policy change just outlined may be characterized as a choice that in a general sense built on bases already long established through organization of the mainland's potential for self-defence: the regularly constituted auxiliary forces, attention to which fills many pages of the *terraferma* governors' reports on leaving office, just as it generated a great deal of other documentation. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, when aristocratic society had probably digested the worst of the culture shock due to the fact that small firearms made it easy for commoners to kill their social betters in war, the Republic of Venice had in fact many decades' experience in enlisting and training its mainland subjects as auxiliary forces, principally infantry militia, bombardier *scolari*, galiots –

Negro, Cesare Mozzarelli, Roma 1977 (pp. 397-419), and further studies cited therein; on feudal families and their military careers, SERGIO ZAMPERETTI, *I piccoli principi. Signorie locali, feudi e comunità soggette nello Stato regionale veneto dall'espansione territoriale ai primi decenni del '600*, Treviso-Venezia 1991, pp. 351-54 and passim. For Friuli, see the detailed discussion in ANTONIO CONZATO, *Dai castelli alle corti. Castellani friulani tra gli Asburgo e Venezia 1545-1620*, Verona 2005; L. CASELLA, *I Savorgnan. La famiglia e le opportunità del potere*, Roma 2003; on the Antonini, a family of the Udine urban nobility rather than the Friulan feudal aristocracy, see the paper by Liliana Cargnelutti in «*Venezia non è da guerra*». For Verona, FRANCESCO PREMI, *Nobiltà veronese e mestiere delle armi tra Seicento e Settecento*, unpublished *laurea* thesis, Padua University, Faculty of Political Science, 2003-04.

¹²⁸ ASVE: ST, reg. 84, c. 117, reg. 86, c. 109v; SDR, Udine, 28 June 1616; M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciducatale*, pp. 209, 231-32 (the names of those defaulting, listed in June 1616); G. TREBBI, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797*, pp. 243-44, 261 ff.; the papers in «*Venezia non è da guerra*» by Claudia Bortolusso, Laura Casella, Antonio Conzato, as well as the very detailed analysis in A. CONZATO, *Dai castelli*, esp. ch. 10 & ff.

even though it had had much more sporadic experience of mobilizing them for combat, which had occurred mainly in connection with the war of Cyprus. In creating stable militia forces at the time of the Italian wars it had in fact been among the first Italian states to do so, in a process gradually involving the whole peninsula, and rounded off by their establishment in the duchy of Milan in the 1630s.¹²⁹

As with many other defence duties already analyzed above, these obligations lay primarily on the rural communities, though the bombardier schools were a specifically urban organization. The annual budget of Brescia's *camera fiscale* in 1609 is eloquent in demonstrating how little state finance contributed to the militia forces and, by implication, how much local finance had to spend in them. It in fact assigned little over D. 3,000 to the province's 4,000 *cernide* and 535 bombardier *scolari*, against D. 9,400 paid to the *cappelletti* based in the province and the *gente d'arme*, and D. 51,000 allocated to pay garrison infantry at Brescia, Asola, Pontevico, Orzinovi and Anfo.¹³⁰ As with other defence duties, the sharing of the weight of these militia obligations between different social orders was a matter of contention.

To these well-established auxiliary forces Venice also repeatedly added, in the first three decades of the seventeenth century, extempore cavalry and infantry drawn from the mainland, of varying degrees of military competence. These forces generally tapped resources separate from those used for the militia, though the exis-

¹²⁹ For recent studies of militia in Italian states of this period, see SARA PEDRETTI, *Ai confini occidentali dello stato di Milano: l'impiego delle milizie rurali nelle guerre del Seicento*, in *Alle frontiere della Lombardia* (pp. 177-200), and the bibliography cited there, especially CLAUDIO DE CONSOLI, *Al soldo del duca. L'amministrazione delle armate sabaude (1560-1630)*, Torino 1999; GIAMPIERO BRUNELLI, *Poteri e privilegi. L'istituzione degli ordinamenti delle milizie nello stato pontificio tra Cinque e Seicento*, «Cheiron», 23 (1995) (pp. 105-129), and MARIO RIZZO, *Istituzioni militari e strutture socio-economiche in una città di antico regime. La milizia urbana a Pavia nell'età spagnola*, «Cheiron», 23 (1995) (pp. 157-185). An overview with comparisons and bibliography extending to the European context in LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *Le «armi proprie» in Italia nel Cinque e Seicento. Problemi di ricerca*, in *Saggi di storia economica. Studi in onore di Amelio Tagliaferri*, ed Tommaso Fanfani, Pisa 1998 (pp. 55-72). On Venice's militia forces, see too P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, p. 231 ff.

¹³⁰ GIOVANNI DA LEZZE, *Il catastico bresciano di G. da L., 1609-1610*, 3 voll., ed Carlo Pasero, Brescia 1969-1973, I, pp. 481-518.

tence of registers such as those for the *cernide di rispetto* perhaps facilitated the task of drafting men.

In common with militia forces in general, the *terraferma* auxiliaries' civilian identity and preoccupations generally remained paramount. Their motivation in accepting enrolment, either voluntary or obligatory via a quota system, was strongly linked to the enjoyment of privileges not necessarily beneficial to society in general. Their exemption from at least some other defence duties burdened other subjects more heavily. Their right to bear arms had obvious implications for public order, and risked offering cover for the identity and ill-deeds of undesirables, including nobles' *bravi*. Members of the extempore units, however, enjoyed no such privileges.

Unsurprisingly, the military prowess of both ordinary auxiliaries and extempore troops was seldom more than modest. In the wars of the early decades of the seventeenth century, Venice used them to fill out regular troops, or to fill in for them temporarily until they arrived from elsewhere, or were recruited *ex novo*, but it tended overall to rely on them for more demanding campaign service than they were able for – there were moments of the Gradisca war when *cernide* and bombardier *scolari* made up a third of the total field force, and hastily raised infantry accounted for many more.¹³¹ The result was often a cruel demonstration of their poor competence and readiness – an outcome aggravated by the fact that the prospect of active war service drove many enrolled in the militias, and trained only insofar as modest peacetime instruction had taken place, to send paid substitutes to fight. Their experience of war was worsened by the fact that many fought far from home, since until the Gradisca war it was widely believed that militiamen were more serviceable if stationed outside their native districts. This belief was hardly supported by their efficacy in that war, which indeed prompted a captain of Verona in October 1616 to recommend limiting the use of auxiliaries to manning garrisons at home,¹³² and it seems to have resulted in efforts to use them closer to home in the Mantua war.

¹³¹ M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 329; the paper by Luciano Pezzolo (on infantry in general) in «*Venezia non è da guerra*».

¹³² *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, pp. 225-226.

2) *Venetian subjects among the regular troops*

At the end of the sixteenth century enlistment in the *gente d'arme* or heavy cavalry concerned a few hundred *terraferma* subjects; in 1590 there were 14 companies, totalling 535 men in theory and 472 in practice, and at the start of the Gradisca war there were 15 companies (12 led by mainland subjects) with 481 men.¹³³ The relationship between cavalry service and the mainland nobility was the prime reason why Venice maintained this force until 1622, for such anachronistic cavalry was justified by a social and political rather than a military function, at a time when combat required light cavalry armed with cuirass, pistol, arquebus, musket or carbine. The heavy cavalry was meant to offer nobles paid employment and an outlet for their martial energy and taste for antique chivalry, while it was long thought that its disbandment or radical reform would have endangered their relationship with government. Those serving received payment (and a pension to follow), though it was tacitly assumed they possessed some independent means; they had a right to lodgings etc. via the *ordine di banca* rules, and enjoyed extensive exemptions from indirect taxation, and rights to bear firearms, as well as the much prized privilege of being subject to the jurisdiction of the Venetian city captains, instead of the *podestà* and the ordinary courts of justice.¹³⁴

Whereas in the later decades of the sixteenth century Venetian authority had shown concern about an excessive presence of foreigners in the companies, in the early seventeenth century the main focus of government worry shifted to another issue already raised previously, that of the social origins of those enlisted – an issue at the heart of the heavy cavalry's *raison d'être*.¹³⁵ In a 1606 inspection of eight companies *provveditore generale* Moro reckoned that only

¹³³ See – also for what follows – A. DE PELLEGRINI, *Genti d'arme*, pp. 43, 151-153; M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 367 ff.

¹³⁴ Their rights and obligations were recodified in 1592: ASVE, ST, reg. 62, cc. 34-41. On the importance of soldiers' exemption from ordinary courts' jurisdiction and on the separate military justice system, see D. MAFFI, *Il baluardo*, p. 267 ff., and CHRISTOPHER STORRS, *Giustizia militare, militari e non militari nell'Europa della prima età moderna*, in *Militari e società civile*, esp. p. 576 ff. (pp. 573-609).

¹³⁵ P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, pp. 255-57; on the composition of the companies in the 1570s and later, see L. PEZZOLO, *Nobiltà militare e potere*, p. 412 ff.

about a third of the members were of noble or citizen rank, none of them really rich, and he commented on the fallen prestige of the profession, though also noting that the privileged position achieved by a few families in access to roles of command was a disincentive to service by others.¹³⁶ Reports of the years immediately following by governors of Padua and Verona strike the same note; they complain about the enlistment of men of low birth and suggest incentives to entice the highborn, as well as noting military shortcomings like the poor quality or even shortfall of horses, and absences of men from the prescribed musters.¹³⁷ In other words the heavy cavalry had by then lost most of its social and political justification, and the Gradisca war immediately made it clear that they were simply unsuited for tasks like patrols, guard duties and road-clearing, so much so that in January 1616 some were actually ordered to serve as cuirassiers; reports made during the war reveal heavy casualties and many desertions.¹³⁸ This was the prelude to the failure of post-war attempts to bring the companies back to respectable standards of men, horses and arms, and led to their disbandment and conversion into cuirassiers in 1622.¹³⁹

Though the end of the Gradisca war obviously meant much demobilization, and was followed by the disbandment of the *gente d'arme* just mentioned, mainland subjects remained a significant component of the cavalry maintained in peacetime. The light cavalry companies – cuirassiers, mounted arquebusiers and pistoleers, *cappelletti* – became a regular feature of the forces in permanent Venetian hire deployed in the mainland provinces, especially after the suppression of the heavy cavalry. A review book of 1617, documenting several companies of cuirassiers, arquebusiers and musketeers based at Padua, offers data concerning the place of origin of 84 individual cavalymen, about a third of whom were *terraferma* subjects – though this is isolated evidence. The infusion of disbanded

¹³⁶ ASVE, SDP, filza 45, 26 Oct. 1606; L. PEZZOLO, *Nobiltà militare e potere*, p. 407.

¹³⁷ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 116; IX, pp. 153, 210-211.

¹³⁸ ASVE: SS, reg. 105, cc. 305-306; SDR, Udine, 1 Aug. 1616; SDP, filza 54, 11 Aug. 1616, filza 55, 2 Jan. 1617, filza 58, 14 Nov. 1617.

¹³⁹ *Terminatione dell'illustrissimo Signor Gio. Da Mula, savio sopra la revisione et regolazione delle genti d'arme*, Venezia 1619; ASVE: ST, reg. 80, cc. 106-109v; SS, reg. 120, cc. 293v-296v; A. DE PELLEGRINI, *Genti d'arme*, pp. 160-161.

heavy cavalry into such units should have strengthened the native element somewhat, even though an opposite trend is suggested by orders given in 1627 to the *provveditore* of Palma and the captains of Padua and Verona – they were to prefer foreigners to mainland subjects in hiring cuirassiers.¹⁴⁰ However, despite the priority indicated by this order, one of the new bands of mounted arquebusiers created when the Senate ordered the strengthening of the light cavalry in June 1629 was commanded by Lodovico Maniago, and seems to have been recruited in Friuli.¹⁴¹

As to the *cappelletti*, entrusted in peacetime with key functions in preserving law and order and increased in number from 500 to 1,000 in 1589, they had purposely been drawn from Dalmatia and Albania, so as to overcome the weakness of local origins or sympathies characterizing the companies of *uomini di campagna* otherwise entrusted with that role.¹⁴² By September-October 1618, however, infiltration by mainland subjects had become enough of a risk to make it necessary to purge the *cappelletti* companies at Padua and Treviso, including the removal of Istrians, Lombards and others as a preliminary step to four companies' despatch west of the Mincio.¹⁴³

It was the Interdict crisis that brought an explicit change of official policy in using mainland subjects as regular infantry – a change anticipated in one or two specific situations, like for example Brescia's castle garrison, for which from 1600 the Senate had demanded companies of Venetian subjects, though excluding men from the Bresciano itself.¹⁴⁴ In actual fact the policy change signified accepting what was already happening, including the presence of numerous *terraferma* natives in foreign Italian companies already serving – a practice revealed by inspection in June 1606, and authorized the following month (though regular companies were ordered not to recruit *cernide*).¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ ASPD, Milizie, b. 26, n° 2; ASVE, ST, reg. 98, c. 304.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, reg. 102, c. 167v.

¹⁴² P. JANUARY, *War, Defence and Society*, p. 265 ff.; M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 377-78; and, more in general, E. BASAGLIA, *Il controllo della criminalità*, C. POVOLO, *Aspetti e problemi*.

¹⁴³ ASVE, ST, reg. 88, cc. 162, 204-205v.

¹⁴⁴ ASVE, ST, reg. 70, c. 139; see too *Relazioni dei rettori*, XI, pp. 271, 282.

¹⁴⁵ ASVE, SDP, filza 45, 2 June & 24 July 1606. Venetian artisans, militarily inept, were discovered in companies at Rovigo in late 1606; some had deserted, and the dismissal of the

Most of the regular infantry hired by Venice during the Gradisca war were of foreign provenance – 17,100 men from Alpine and northern Europe, and 13,300 from September 1615 onwards from other Italian states plus Corsica.¹⁴⁶ Those recruiting them however included mainland subjects like the Brescian Francesco Martinengo, who promised to raise 1,000 foot; moreover some apparent foreigners enlisted were not really or wholly such, as closer examination of the company of Bastian Gorin of Lugano showed in May 1616 – amidst Swiss, Germans and Lorrainers there were at least eighteen men who had lived and worked at least briefly in the *terraferma*.¹⁴⁷ It indeed appears that in overall terms an elusive but significant minority of the men enlisted in regular infantry companies around the time of the Gradisca war were from the *terraferma*. Governors' reports and troop lists referring to garrison forces, though erratically explicit about men's places of origin, in fact indicate the presence of mainland subjects, albeit usually employed far from their home areas so as to prevent the sort of ties between troops and local inhabitants that could prove damaging to security. This is what emerges from the sources about Padua in 1617 (and indeed early in the century too), about Crema in 1613 and Bergamo in 1614, and about Brescia, Orzinovi, Asola and Peschiera in 1618.¹⁴⁸

The sources are similarly reticent, though not totally so, about the use of Venetian subjects in regular infantry units during the Mantuan succession war. In the summer of 1629 *provveditore gen-*

rest was recommended: *ibid.*, filza 176, 9 Dec. 1606. On these matters see too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 348-49, with the hypothesis that towards the end of the sixteenth century Venetian subjects made up 20% of infantry captains and 15% of other ranks. For the debate over defence of the mainland in 1606, and in particular war councils involving the *provveditori di terraferma* and Venetian commanders, held at Verona in November 1606, see SERGIO PERINI, *Pericoli di guerra e piani difensivi della Repubblica Veneta durante l'Interdetto del 1606-07*, «Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti», 152 (1993-94), pp. 175-182 (pp. 149-182).

¹⁴⁶ See M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 328-329

¹⁴⁷ ASVE: ST, reg. 85, cc. 199v, 210, 215, 284; SDP, filza 163, 26 May 1616. On mainland nobles who raised and/or commanded infantry companies see too M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciduciale*, pp. 208-09.

¹⁴⁸ ASPD, Milizie, b. 26, n° 1, n° 2b; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, p. 143, XII, p. 336; ASVE, SDP, filza 167, 29 May 1618. On the risks of infantry merging into garrison towns' society, see e.g. *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 200; ASVE: SDP, filza 44, 6 June 1601; ST, reg. 86, c. 98.

erale Erizzo, in planning an infantry force of 10-12,000, stressed the importance of enlisting natives of the Republic as a counterweight to the north Europeans, who might defect to the German forces of the Habsburg enemy. That September there were at least 2,400 Venetian subjects among the almost 22,000 infantry assembled for review in the Veronese, and he hoped for more, hypothesizing – but as the most optimistic figure he could imagine – as many as 10,000 natives.¹⁴⁹ Data on the regular infantry in late 1629 show the generic category of Italians – unfortunately unrevealing about the proportion of Venetian subjects – as clearly numerically predominant: 1139 as against 845 north Europeans in the total of 2,416 at Crema in October, and 11,472 as against 3,109 north Europeans in the total of 18,573 at Valeggio in December. At Mantua in April 1630, however, the northern Europeans (very many of them French and Dutch) outnumbered the Italians 1,552-1,240.¹⁵⁰

3) *Cavalry reserve forces*

A minor feature of Venice's ordinary reserve forces on the mainland were cavalry units, a very insignificant presence compared to the peasant and urban infantry militias. Shadowy to the extreme in peacetime were the military obligations of *terraferma* feudatories, primarily Friulan lords, secular and ecclesiastical, and communities (some of whom had anyway commuted their service into a monetary due in case of war); these obligations were mostly for cavalry rather than infantry service.¹⁵¹ An attempt to field the Friulan feudal cavalry in the war of Cyprus had given disappointing results,¹⁵² but they were mobilized again in the early seventeenth century. They made a favourable impression on the governor of Udine in April 1607, and they were called on again for the defence of Friuli during the Gradisca war, in November 1615 – a demand for 244

¹⁴⁹ ASVE, SDR, filza 73, 8 July & 6 Aug. 1629.

¹⁵⁰ ASVE: SDR, Crema, 24 Oct. 1629; SDR, filza 74, 21 Dec. 1629; ROMOLO QUAZZA, *La guerra per la successione di Mantova e del Monferrato, 1628-31*, 2 vols, Mantova 1926, II, p. 87.

¹⁵¹ The Friulan forces were reckoned as 296 cavalry and 70 infantry in 1570, and as 260 horse and 68 foot in 1599: *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, pp. 78, 90, 115.

¹⁵² ANTONIO DE PELLEGRINI, *Timori dei turchi in Friuli durante la guerra di Cipro*, Pordenone 1922, pp. 23-24, & doc. i (p. 31); *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, p. 84.

horsemen, answered faster by the city of Udine than by some others. The light cavalry thus supplied appears to have offered useful service, since in 1618 *proveditore generale* Barbaro suggested negotiating with the Friulan communities (responsible for 90 horse) with a view to maintaining their forces on half-pay during peacetime.¹⁵³ Venice indeed called on vassals in other territories too to fulfil their military duties in both the Gradisca conflict and the war of the Mantuan succession, with limited success – though in the first of the two the feudatory of Mora, under Rovigo, offered to pay for 50 cuirassiers (an offer he then increased to 80).¹⁵⁴ Although called out for the Valtelline war in 1625, during the Mantuan war the Friulan horsemen seem to have been kept in reserve for the defence of their homeland.¹⁵⁵ Overall, however, such forces' military profile was shadowy in wartime as well as in peacetime.

A similar judgement may be applied all round to the cavalry academies which appeared and disappeared in mainland cities such as Padua, Udine, Verona and Vicenza in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They were intended to train young nobles in skills directly or indirectly useful to the military profession (horsemanship, the use of weapons, the construction of fortifications, mathematics and cosmography), so as to compete with the attraction exercised on them by foreign rulers' courts, and to offer them a positive outlet to energy that otherwise risked feeding local factions and violence.¹⁵⁶ The academies served in fact as little more than clubs or finishing schools for them, though a few of their members did grace the campaigning of the Gradisca war.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ ASVE: SS, reg. 98, cc. 60v-61; ST, re. 85, c. 190v; SDP, filza 51, 20 & 24 Jan. 1616, filza 53, 14 July 1616, filza 60, 25 Mar. 1618. See too A. CONZATO, *Dai castelli*, p. 259 ff., in great detail, and M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 379-380, also for what follows.

¹⁵⁴ ASVE, Secreta, Materie miste notabili, filza 63, Aug.-Nov. 1616. For 1629-1630, BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 3475, n° 18; ASVE, ST, reg. 102, cc. 81v-82v, 105v.

¹⁵⁵ G. TREBBI, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797*, p. 273; ASVE, SS, reg. 130, cc. 268, 281v-282, reg. 132, cc. 280v-281; ASUD, Arch. Com., b. 150, n° 6.

¹⁵⁶ JOHN HALE, *Military academies on the Venetian Terraferma in the early seventeenth century*, «Studi Veneziani», 15 (1973), pp. 273-295; ASVE, SDP, filza 44, 27 & 29 Mar. 1601; *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 186.

¹⁵⁷ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 173.

In the later sixteenth century Venice made two attempts at creating a light cavalry reserve force on a more general scale from among mainland subjects. The first seems to have got no further than a Senate decree of October 1579, which spoke of companies of volunteers in each province, their members subject to twice-yearly reviews by the Venetian captains of the cities; they were to have been paid only on active service, but would have enjoyed the right to bear firearms freely.¹⁵⁸

A similar project for a militia force of mounted arquebusiers was actually experimented with in the 1590s, on a similar organizational basis but with slightly greater inducements to serve. The 1579 conditions were rounded out by exemption from services and duties of a personal nature, a lifelong right to bear firearms after twelve years' service, and a little pay in money for lengthier peacetime reviews. The force started life in April 1592 with a pilot project in the Bergamasco's Val Seriana, worked well enough initially for ten further companies to be created in 1592-93 – in Friuli, the Padovano, Trevigiano, Vicentino etc. – and its members were given the further benefit of being placed under the city captains' jurisdiction. The Bergamasco company was used (and paid) for keeping law and order, and praised by the city's captain in May 1595, though more for its enthusiasm and skills in riding and shooting than its military discipline. Inspection of the companies between late 1595 and early 1596 however revealed a much more negative picture. They comprised many men of the lowest type, and were used by nobles to arm their retainers – something the rules had sought to prevent, in theory excluding retainers and demanding that the enrolled possess the means to pay for their own horses. The companies were consequently disbanded in haste in 1596, and the rights concerning firearms withdrawn – an interesting comment on Venice's current preoccupation with mainland law and order.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ ASVE, ST, reg. 52, cc. 243-44.

¹⁵⁹ ASVE, ST, reg. 62, cc. 120-121, 127v-128, 142v, reg. 65, cc. 67v-68v; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., b. 118, n° 125, 22 Sept. 1593; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, pp. 216-217; ASVE: Secreta, Capi di guerra, filza 4, Del Monte (29 Sept. 1595-11 Jan. 1596), & SS, reg. 90, c. 51. On law and order, C. POVOLO, *Aspetti e problemi*.

4) *Extempore cavalry*

In marked contrast with the shadowy profile of the cavalry reserve forces just discussed was the enhanced use of mainland subjects in extempore cavalry forces raised for war scares and actual war between the beginning of the seventeenth century and the end of the Gradisca war – in a sense the heirs of the militia forces experimented with in the previous decades. The term extempore – also employed with similar intent in a subsequent section on infantry – is used here in a deliberately loose fashion, and covers varied levels of military competence, ranging from the quasi-professional to the most elementary sort of home guard. What these forces had in common is the aspect central to this essay, that is the fact that they were the result of defence demands made on *terraferma* subjects.

In 1601 the Senate reacted to fears of Spanish attack by deciding to enlist 2,000 light horse (a third each of cuirassiers, arquebusiers and lancers), and recruitment was proceeding in the Padovano by the end of March. This process overlapped in time, and perhaps in substance, with offers made to government that spring by mainland cities and members of military families like the Martinengo and Savorgnan, to raise and pay for at least 1,800 light horse of unspecified provenance.¹⁶⁰

During the Interdict crisis, longer and more threatening, similar measures were adopted on a broader scale. Local nobles were sometimes called on for partly ceremonial, partly military duties, as at Verona in May 1606 (a bodyguard of fifty for the *provveditore generale*).¹⁶¹ That same summer seven *terraferma* towns and cities offered to finance a total of 675 light horse, and similar offers came from individual nobles; when in November general Del Monte suggested raising a thousand additional cuirassiers, he specified that half of them be foreigners – presumably the other half were to be natives. In 1607, although the Senate further encouraged Venetian subjects to offer cuirassiers, their deeds rather lagged behind their words of loyalty. Forces offered by Brescia, Verona, and Montagnana materialized and were deemed promising, but money problems were much

¹⁶⁰ ASVE: SDP, filza 44, 27 & 29 Mar., 5 Apr. 1601; Secreta, Materie Miste Notabili, filza 128.

¹⁶¹ ASVE, SDP, filza 45, 28 May 1606.

in evidence: they hindered the genesis of the Bergamo company, caused disputes over tax liability to fund the Brescian force between the city and Brescian military nobles who had raised their own companies, and led to all these units' immediate disbandment on the withdrawal of the Interdict.¹⁶² Mainland subjects were anyway an important component of some of these companies: the twentyfive Montagnana horsemen were «citizens», and though the forces at Crema and in the Bresciano certainly included foreigners, at Crema there were also members of the local *cernide* and bombardier school, as well as former *gente d'arme* and other locals who had been banished from the Cremasco.¹⁶³

At the start of the Gradisca war, in the escalation of raids and reprisals in the border area in late 1615, calls were made and met for extempore cavalry forces put together by Friulan nobles and the city of Udine.¹⁶⁴ During the war a few *terraferma* cities furnished light cavalry – for instance Bergamo 50 cuirassiers and Padua 100 (both forces fast weakened by desertions and sickness), Castelfranco 30 arquebusiers¹⁶⁵ – and individual subjects, with nobles like the Friulan Francesco Strassoldo and the Vicentine Francesco Porto prominent among them, offered bands of cuirassiers. This latter fact stimulated Venice to ask for more: in June 1616 the mainland governors were instructed to find nobles willing to raise 320 cuirassiers and 100 arquebusiers.¹⁶⁶ The slender evidence available suggests that

¹⁶² ASVE, Secreta, Materie Miste Notabili, filza 63, 2 May 1606, & reg. 25, c. 125 (Nov. 1606); ASUD, Arch. Com., b. 150, n° 6; ASVE, SS, reg. 97, c. 65, & SDP, filza 45, 18 Jan. 1607, filza 46, 14 May & 19 June 1607; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, p. 128 (most of the horsemen based at Crema had hired horses, and the governor saw little point in maintaining these cuirassier companies in service). See too S. PERINI, *Pericoli di guerra*, p. 157; LUCA PORTO, *La partecipazione dei veronesi alla difesa dello stato veneziano nel Seicento*, in *Militari in età moderna*, pp. 115-16 (pp. 115-125); A. CONZATO, *Dai castelli*, p. 264 n. 3 (Francesco Strassoldo's declared willingness to raise foreign arquebusiers or cuirassiers).

¹⁶³ ASVE, SDP, filza 45, 7 June 1606, filza 46, 2 Apr. 1607; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, p. 128.

¹⁶⁴ M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciduale*, pp. 202-03, 209; A. CONZATO, *Dai castelli*, pp. 248-250 and notes. See too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 347-48, also for what follows.

¹⁶⁵ ASVE: ST, reg. 85, cc. 250, 278, & SDP, filza 53, 10 & 27 July 1616; BCBG, Registro ducali municipali, II, c. 161; M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 347.

¹⁶⁶ ASVE: SS, reg. 105, c. 220; ST, reg. 85, c. 196v, reg. 86, cc. 121-122; SDP, filza 180, 20 Aug. 1616. On companies raised and led by mainland nobles, or raised by towns and led by nobles, see too M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciduale*, p. 208; L. PEZZOLO, *Nobiltà militare e potere*, pp. 415-16.

many in these companies were Venetian subjects – among them Paduans, including members of the city's military academy, but also men from Treviso, Bassano, Bergamo and Udine.¹⁶⁷ And a general muster conducted in the Veronese in 1616 resulted in the enlistment of an emergency cavalry defence force of 2,175 men by 1617; this precedent may indeed have inspired the wish of the Padovano's wealthier inhabitants, as reported in 1618 by the city captain, to serve in something different from the *cernide* – a desire he suggested take the form of their maintaining a horse in readiness for mobilization.¹⁶⁸

During the tensions of the 1620s there was only sporadic recourse to temporary cavalry forces involving mainland subjects: for instance 40 horsemen maintained by Udine from June to September 1625.¹⁶⁹ But during the Mantuan succession war Venice decided to raise major contingents of extraordinary militia, both cavalry and infantry. In late August 1629 *provveditore generale* Erizzo decreed the formation of a cavalry militia along the lines of the light horsemen enlisted by the governments of Parma, Tuscany and the Papal state, enrolling the more affluent inhabitants in district defence forces organized in companies, with native officers. The decree produced quick results, almost 3,000 men by mid September. Some, such as Verona's merchants, preferred commuting the obligation to a money payment, though the city's guilds agreed to furnish 25 arquebusiers and 25 cuirassiers.¹⁷⁰

Mainland governors' reports and other sources confirm the creation of a cavalry militia: thus in the Polesine, where it dated back to 1628, and in 1634 still had 400 men; in the Trevigiano, where the numbers raised by March 1631 were 2,156; in the Feltrino, albeit with fewer than 25 men; in the Bassanese (where the enlisted had been promised only local duties); in the Bresciano, where there were at least 441 men, and merchants did serve (while it proved dif-

¹⁶⁷ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 180; ASVE: ST, reg. 86, c. 232; SDR, Udine, 6-11 Sept. 1616, & Bergamo, 30 Aug. 1617.

¹⁶⁸ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 232, IV, p. 178; BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 3098, n° 41. Nothing seems to have come of the Paduan proposal.

¹⁶⁹ ASUD, Arch. Com., b. 150, n° 6.

¹⁷⁰ ASVE: SDP, filza 73, 25-27 Aug. 1629, filza 74, 17 Sept. 1629; SDR, Verona, 18 Sept. 1629.

ficult to enlist men in the valleys).¹⁷¹ Such «amateur cavalry» saw active service at the fortresses of Pontevico, Asola and Peschiera, as well as on the banks of the rivers Oglio and Adige, at least occasionally clashing directly with enemy forces (for example near Asola in October 1629), though losses attributable to the plague and then Venetian cost-cutting led to disbandment at least of the Bresciano forces in September 1630.¹⁷²

5) *The bombardiers*

The civic bombardier schools if the *terraferma* had developed piecemeal especially during the second quarter of the sixteenth century, and were a well-established institution by the early seventeenth century, present in every city or town of importance and in some of the minor fortress towns as well – thus Orzinovi, Palmanova and Peschiera.¹⁷³ In each, a commander and a small staff of *provisionati* taught the use of lighter firearms and artillery to *scolari*, whose numbers totalled about 4,300 in 1590, 4,469 in 1609, and probably a little over 5,000 by the mid 1620s, in schools of widely varying size (from Padua's 700-800 men to Peschiera's 30 or 40).¹⁷⁴ Smaller towns might in fact have difficulty in raising a suitable number of *scolari*: Rovigo's school also included men from Lendinara and Badia Polesine, and Palma's even trained peasants from nearby villages.

¹⁷¹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VI, pp. 229-230, 238, III, p. 190, II, p. 379. ASVE: ST, reg. 103, cc. 112v-113; SDP, filza 75, 19 Sept. & 11 Oct. 1629, filza 75, 21 Dec. 1629; SDR, Brescia, 20 July 1630.

¹⁷² ASVE, SDP, filza 74, 2 Oct. 1629, filza 175, 4 Sept. 1630, filza 75, 1 & 20 Oct. 1629, filza 77, 11 June 1630; BCBS, Arch. Civ., b. 1125, 1 Nov. 1629.

¹⁷³ Detailed studies are MANUEL RIGOBELLO, *Le compagnie dei bombardieri della Serenissima: il caso padovano*, in «Studi Veneziani», n.s. 50 (2005) (pp. 267-292), and LUCA PORTO, *La cittadinanza in armi: la confraternita dei bombardieri di Verona tra cinque e settecento*, in «Società e Storia», 119 (2008) (pp. 37-69), which anticipates his forthcoming monograph *Una piazzaforte in età moderna. Verona come sistema-fortezza*. See too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 404 ff.; LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *I contadini e la difesa del Friuli, 1470-1620*, «ALSA. Rivista storica della Bassa Friulana Orientale», 7 (Jan. 1994), p. 42 (pp. 40-48), on the Udine company; L. PORTO, *La partecipazione*, p. 117 ff. on the Verona company.

¹⁷⁴ Overall numbers from *Relazioni dei rettori*, I-XIV, *ad indicem* (the figures given oscillate somewhat, but a reasonable aggregate estimate is just over 5,000 *scolari*), and L. PORTO, *La cittadinanza in armi*, p. 53 (the 1609 datum); numbers at Padua and Peschiera in *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 101, X, p. 264; on organization, ASPD, *Milizie*, reg. 40, and L. PORTO, *La cittadinanza in armi*, *passim*.

This, though, was a special case (the fortress was vital, the townsmen few), and in 1597 the captain of Brescia dismissed from his city's school inhabitants of the Bresciano rural communities, which had requested this since already burdened by the labour and militia services everywhere demanded of peasants.¹⁷⁵

From the late sixteenth century Venice pressed for the gradual replacement of the arquebuses originally used by muskets: in 1594 the Senate required that a quarter of the *scolari* be trained to use by muskets, and by 1628 three quarters of the Bergamo company used them – though they were costlier than arquebuses, and had to be provided on loan at government expense, with some risk of the *scolari* considering them their personal possessions.¹⁷⁶ Training with various arms could be as frequent as weekly, stimulated by monthly competitions with prizes – thus according to rules made in 1590 for Bergamo, which also laid due stress on the school's role as a religious confraternity, with devotion focused on the figure of St. Barbara.¹⁷⁷

Previous regulations for Bergamo, laid down in 1578, sought to exclude from membership those of too high or too low social standing – nobles and citizens, servants and retainers etc. – so as to prevent infiltration and manipulation by the social élite and their paid dependents: Venice's target was respectable townsmen, with some political implications in terms of counterbalancing the power of the aristocracy in the urban environment. Detailed registers concerning the schools in Verona (for the late 1580s) and Padua (for 1607-1611, just prior to the Gradisca war) show a very wide variety of trades both among the ordinary *scolari* and the senior levels, from lieutenant to corporal¹⁷⁸ – incidentally with no prevalence of smiths, masons, stonecutters and carpenters, professions whose inclusion in the schools Venice had favoured at the time of the war of Cyprus.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 160, XIV, p. 70; BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1536, c. 73.

¹⁷⁶ ASVE, ST, reg. 63, c. 222, reg. 80, cc. 170v-171, reg. 92, c. 29; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 461, XI, p. 272.

¹⁷⁷ BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. V, n° 5 (the 1590 rules), & n° 2 (the 1578 rules); on the Orzinovi and Pontevico companies, BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1537, cc. 55, 148v-149; on Udine and Palma L. PEZZOLO, *I contadini*, p. 42.

¹⁷⁸ For the 1578 Bergamo rules, see note 177; ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., reg. 605; ASPD, Milizie, regg. 39-40.

¹⁷⁹ BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1537, cc. 55, 148v-149; *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 56.

But in 1607 the Vicenza company was criticized for the excessive poverty of many of those enrolled, liable to miss weekend training because busy out of town trying to turn a penny, and in 1626 most of the Peschiera men were fishermen or wage-labourers, with little military aptitude.¹⁸⁰

Scolari's inducement to enrol depended partly on the exemption granted them from personal taxes and services, which in some cases was extended to taxes levied on property and imposed via the *estimo reale* – thus at Brescia by 1594, at Vicenza by 1599, at Bassano (though within set limits) in 1605, but not for example in Belluno in 1617, given the town's overall weak resources of taxable property.¹⁸¹ In various places – Brescia in 1594, Verona in 1604, Padua in 1607 – special *dazio* privileges were added: the right to bring small quantities of wine, wood and wheat into town tax-free.¹⁸² Further attractions for *scolari* were the right to carry an arquebus, and subjection to the jurisdiction of the Venetian captain's court. This latter privilege was much prized and also much disputed, and in some cities quotas were established in the late sixteenth century allowing only part of the *scolari* to escape the normal jurisdiction of the *podestà's* and municipal courts (300 in each of Bergamo and Brescia, 500 in Verona). In 1625 the captain of Vicenza saw an increase from the current quota of 100 as the best way to encourage enrolment by respectable townspeople resentful of the civic courts dominated by the nobility.¹⁸³

All these privileges might be sought as an end in themselves, and in Padua too ordinary townspeople's membership of the school linked into a combination of their desire for privileges and their resentment of the social élite, but also to tensions between guilds-

¹⁸⁰ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 173, X, 338.

¹⁸¹ ASVE, ST, reg. 64, c. 160v, reg. 69, c. 148, reg. 75, c. 172, reg. 87, c. 332. Elsewhere exemption was denied the companies for special taxes: at Bergamo for a levy to finance work at Palma in 1611, and at Vicenza in 1616 to pay for the 400 infantry raised by the city for the Gradisca war: BCBG, Registro ducali municipali, II, c. 153; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 216, n° 3, cc. 21-22, 28.

¹⁸² ASVE, ST, reg. 64, c. 160v, reg. 74, c. 112; ASPD, Milizie, b. 65, n° 3, n° 4. In 1628 it was extended to Feltre in the form of a small annual *dazio* refund: ASVE, ST, reg. 99, c. 113.

¹⁸³ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, pp. 309-310, XII, p. 158; BCBG, Privilegia quaedam vallium bergomatium, cc. 309-311, 322-323; ASVE, ST, reg. 56, cc. 65, 125, reg. 57, c. 171.

men in general and *scolari*, so that there were as many as 800 of the latter in 1611.¹⁸⁴ Action was taken at Vicenza and Brescia to prevent the extension of the captain's jurisdiction over bombardier *scolari* to court cases concerning food – a commodity that a good many of them presumably dealt in in the pursuit of their trades.¹⁸⁵ It was at Vicenza, too, that there developed an additional corps of «old» *scolari*, who were supernumerary but continued to enjoy part of their colleagues' rights, and in many cases were far from old.¹⁸⁶ There was also some margin of overlap between membership of the schools and serious criminal activity, as in the case of Andrea Sala, who achieved ephemeral fame as an outlaw at Feltre in the 1630s.¹⁸⁷

The schools' military worth obviously depended greatly on the quality of their commanders and *provisionati*, and a Senate measure of 1599 against their absenteeism, neglect of duty and hiring of inadequate substitutes sounds a warning that a good many governors' reports echo.¹⁸⁸ Negative comments by governors in the early seventeenth century in fact pinpoint ills like their scant aptitude for instructing, old age, and favouritism in dealing with the *scolari*, as well as procedures in selecting them which overemphasized theory – issues faced by a Senate order of 1621 which demanded approval by the capital of those appointed, to counter the ill effects of bad nominations.¹⁸⁹

On special occasions the *scolari* were called on to perform extra duties, for example to man the gates of Crema in 1604 during the Archduke Maximilian's visit. War scares obviously brought requests for their services. At the beginning of the Interdict crisis 250 men from the Padua and Verona schools were selected for active service if required, and in June 1606 the Crema company replaced the peasant militia on garrison duty there, so as to allow them home for the

¹⁸⁴ M. RIGOBELLO, *Le compagnie padovane*, p. 282, who refers to *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, pp. 129-130 (later references *ibid.*, pp. 249, 260, 271-72, 294, 317-18, 383, 385-86).

¹⁸⁵ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 483, n° 12; BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1024, c. 356v.

¹⁸⁶ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, pp. 149, 318.

¹⁸⁷ GIGI CORAZZOL, *Cineografo di banditi su sfondo di monti. Feltre 1634-1642*, Milano 1997, p. 63 ff.

¹⁸⁸ ASVE, ST, reg. 69, c. 134.

¹⁸⁹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, II, p. 74; VII, p. 126; XI, pp. 193-194, 261; BCBSG, Raccolta di ducali, b. V, n° 32.

harvest. A few were required for service in the sea empire in February 1613 – the best 50 available, chosen from seven schools, were to go to Crete.¹⁹⁰

It was however the Gradisca war that gave them active service on an unprecedented scale, partly in reinforcing the western defences – thus Bergamo's *scolari* in Romano and Crema, or Brescians in August 1616 as part of a mounted escort for *provveditore* Bragadin travelling to Crema¹⁹¹ – but much more extensively in the Friulan war-zone. The numbers involved were fairly high: in January 1616 650 men were called up from five schools to serve as musketeers, for example, with the prospect of rotation every two months so as to make duty less onerous and unpopular. Though occasionally praised – for example for standing firm in a skirmish in July 1617, when Swiss infantry fled – the *scolari* were mostly commented on with disappointment in reports. Frequent, long delays in the turnover were probably partly to blame, but *provveditore generale* Lando suspected that many of those serving – old, sick, unsuited – were untrained, paid substitutes of the *scolari* ordinarily enrolled.¹⁹² His diagnosis is corroborated by a report from Brescia in September 1616 – fear of service in Friuli made recruiting *scolari* arduous, and caused some enrolled bombardiers and militiamen to change abode – and by the great difficulty met in despatching Paduan *scolari* in April 1617, whereas in 1616 it had proved a good deal easier.¹⁹³ The heavy death-toll among Padua's *scolari* serving in Friuli – but high mortality related to illness and also poor diet affected all troops sent there – in fact caused serious recruiting problems in the city in the immediate post-war years, and hardly surprisingly Venice was having to offer extra money in January 1618 to convince men from six mainland schools to serve at sea.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ ASVE: SDR, Crema, 20 May 1604 & 25 June 1606; SDP, filza 45, 21 May & 7 June 1606; ST, reg. 82, c. 185.

¹⁹¹ ASVE, SDP, filza 166, 29 Nov. 1617, filza 180, 20 Aug. 1616, filza 163, 14 Aug. 1616.

¹⁹² ASVE: ST, reg. 85, c. 246; SDP, filza 57, 14 July 1617, filza 56, 4 Mar. 1617; on the Verona company see L. PORTO, *La partecipazione*, pp. 121-22..

¹⁹³ ASVE: SDP, filza 164, 22 Sept. 1616; ST, reg. 87, cc. 78v-79; *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 166; on mortality in the army in Friuli see the papers by Luciano Pezzolo and Fabio Cavalli in *«Venezia non è da guerra»*.

¹⁹⁴ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, pp. 178-179; ASVE, ST, reg. 87, c. 269v.

The companies had however had time to reorganize by the time of the war of the Mantuan succession. *Provveditore generale* Erizzo's first thoughts of mobilizing the *scolari* in September 1629 had been in terms of 1,000 men.¹⁹⁵ Very little evidence has transpired of their actual use, though Erizzo reviewed 512 of them, in three companies, at his headquarters in November 1629, and in July 1630 he complained that the Legnago school had no *scolari* of sufficient worth for him to send to Mantua, in compliance with government orders. In Udine (and perhaps elsewhere) the *scolari* – then 400 in the company – were part of an extempore civic defence force.¹⁹⁶

As a brief post scriptum to this section, mention must be made of what is seemingly a unique case among mainland cities and towns with Venetian governors of some prestige. As well as its *scolari*, from at least the early 1560s Crema also had a civic night-guard force funded by a special tax; it complemented the town's regular garrison in manning the walls, and had 120 members in 1622. No doubt Crema's highly exposed position on the frontier with Spanish Lombardy is the underlying explanation for this situation.¹⁹⁷

6) *The organization of the cernide*

Far more numerous than the *scolari* were the rural inhabitants enrolled in the main territorial militia force, the *cernide*, whose 20,000 total membership in 1560 had already involved perhaps about one in every eight of the adults of arms-bearing age living in the *terraferma* countryside.¹⁹⁸ Numbers grew more or less in line with overall population increase: in 1589 they were estimated at 21,320, and there was a reserve force (of which more below) of over 13,000; by the mid 1620s they totalled about 29,000, and there were also numerous – but statistically shadowy – reserves.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ ASVE, SDR, filza 74, 17 Sept. 1629.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, filza 74, 21 Dec. 1629, filza 77, 4 July 1630; *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, p. 199. For later praise of the Verona bombardiers' prowess in the Mantua war by *Provveditore generale* Alvise Zorzi, L. PORTO, *La cittadinanza in armi*, pp. 54, 57-58.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, XIII, pp. 29, 63-64, 73, 169; ASVE, SDR, Crema, 10 Aug. 1606.

¹⁹⁸ On the *cernide* in general see M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 350-366, and also L. PEZZOLO, *I contadini*, p. 43 ff.

¹⁹⁹ For 1589, see M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 359-360; for numbers in the mid 1620s, see above note 5 and text corresponding.

As rules formulated in 1593 demonstrate, in theory the *cernide* had by then achieved a uniform, hierarchical organizational structure.²⁰⁰ Overall command of all the companies in one or more provinces was wielded by a colonel, often the professional soldier serving as the military governor of a major city like Padua, Verona or Brescia. Each side of the Mincio there was a sergeant major, he too an experienced soldier, responsible together with the colonels for inspecting the companies at regular intervals, and also for reporting to Venice's general of the infantry. Companies varied somewhat in size but generally numbered a few hundred, and drew together men from communities situated in the same area, which was subdivided for enrolment purposes into *quartieri*.

Single communities' obligations to provide militiamen were generally proportional to their share of their territory's *estimo*, but militia service also concerned many communities otherwise exempt from contributing to military dues and services. Many of those sited near borders which it was their duty to guard had initially been excluded – thus mountain areas like the Seven Communes in the northern Vicentino, Cadore, Schiavonia in northern Friuli. From the late sixteenth century onwards, however, Venice pressed to extend the militia to such areas, aware that the military training involved would make their defence of frontiers more effective. This resulted, for example, in the establishment of a new company at Tolmezzo in Carnia in 1588, which was very probably the effect of recognizing an existing force; it was privileged by being under no obligation to serve outside its place of origin.²⁰¹

Within each company the regularly salaried officers were the captain, the sergeant and the drummer, this latter local to the area. The first two were in charge of training, had to have appropriate experience in the regular infantry or the militia, and had to be from outside the area (they were in fact a mix of mainland subjects, men from other Italian states and Cypriots). Every company also contained unsalaried lesser officers, appointed among local militia men,

²⁰⁰ ASVE, ST, reg. 63, cc. 224- 232v, 237-240, 243-244, 246. These rules are the basis of all subsequent references in this section to required practice by the militia, unless specified otherwise.

²⁰¹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, p. 103; ASVE, ST, reg. 58, cc. 197v-199.

responsible not for military instruction but for keeping an up-to-date register of their men – something literacy levels probably made difficult – and supervising their weaponry: a corporal for every twentyfive or so men, and a head of hundred over every four or five corporals, with the provenance of the corporals fairly spread among the villages of the *quartiere*. Heads of hundred, corporals and ordinary militiamen were unsalaried but enjoyed privileges similar to those of the bombardier *scolari*, though less generous: no general exemption from ordinary civil jurisdiction, no extension of their tax privilege beyond taxes and dues levied on the person, the permission to bear arms essentially limited to when in the countryside (but in parts of the mainland carrying weapons was often habitual, almost universal). All these ranks up to corporal were also paid by their communities for the annual review at a daily rate from 12 *soldi* upwards.

The companies contained a mixture of arquebusiers, pikemen and musketeers, with the musket gradually supplanting the arquebus: the proportion of musketeers was raised from 10% to 20% in 1594, then to 30% in 1606, and from 1617 there was the progressive phasing out of arquebusiers. As well as arms, equipment included helmets, leather gorgets and – for file-leaders of pikemen – half-armour.²⁰² The yearly calendar of militia activity was split into three levels: five company inspections, in which each captain was to review and train his whole company together; two-monthly training sessions that he was to conduct with each hundred (in both cases avoiding the harvest season and midwinter, and also avoiding the use of fortresses and towns); and an annual joint review of each colonelcy's companies, lasting at least four days. Militiamen's absence from these occasions was penalized, severely so if it was repeated. The lower and upper age limits for initial enrolment were eighteen and thirtyfour, and the minimum normal term of service was fourteen years, after which militiamen had the right to the continuation of their privileges in retirement. Enlistment was limited to one man per family, and was to exclude heads of family, members of

²⁰² ASVE, ST, reg. 63, c. 222, reg. 76, c. 70; BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. II, 1, 4, n° 59, capitolo III; see too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 357.

the galiot reserve (which made enrolment in the *cernide* a sort of insurance policy against the considerable risks involved in being sent to sea), servants and retainers, those with no fixed abode, and men exempt from taxes and dues levied on the person.²⁰³

As well as the *cernide* companies proper, there emerged around the time of the war of Cyprus a reserve force, referred to in the sources as *cernide di rispetto*: men involved in some of the reviews but bereft of arms supplied by their communities, tax exemptions and the right to payment – all of which avoided hostility towards their existence by the communities.²⁰⁴ But the practical results were highly nebulous: some men had their own weapons, but by no means all, and they appear to have attended training with their company and their hundred at best (thus rules for territories west of the Mincio in 1587).²⁰⁵ Returning mainland governors however continued to mention large numbers of them: for instance 9,000 in the Veronese in 1620, and successive enlistments of 15,000 and 3,000 in the Bresciano in 1619 and 1624, some apparently used to garrison Asola and Brescia.²⁰⁶

As this brief analysis of the *cernide di rispetto* has just demonstrated, the actual operation of the militia system diverged significantly from what the rules envisaged, and this is testified for the ordinary *cernide* companies too by the great number and variety of comments made on them in the reports written by returning mainland governors, but also by other sources. The *cernide's* military potential suffered from various perennial weaknesses, including a high turnover rate; for example 1,228 names were struck off the Bergamasco registers between 1594 and 1598 (only 170 because of

²⁰³ Other circumstances were sometimes invoked as incompatible with enrolment, including tilling Venetian nobles' lands (in 1625 the Senate specified that exclusion from service was limited to nobles' stewards and bailiffs): ASVE, ST, reg. 96, c. 122. The ambiguous status of citizens dwelling in the countryside, and claiming exemption from typically rural dues, raised problems for militia service too – see reports from the Bresciano in 1602 (*provveditore generale Donà*) and the Bergamasco in 1623: ASVE, SDP, filza 44, 3 Jan. 1602; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 404.

²⁰⁴ See e.g. *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 77; XI, pp. 140-41; VII, p. 58; IX, pp. 134-135; XIII, p. 63.

²⁰⁵ BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. II, 1,4, n° 37 & n° 44; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 460.

²⁰⁶ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 245; XI, pp. 272-273.

death), as against the province's total of 2,100 *cernide*.²⁰⁷ A more general emergency could blow vast holes in the ranks: in 1629 the Friulan companies were barely up to half strength, as recent famine conditions had driven men in desperation away from their communities towards Udine and Venice.²⁰⁸

On a more everyday level, there were problems about organizing reviews: in finding rural rather than urban sites for them; in reconciling different communities' demands about where to hold them – demands primarily due to the disturbance and cost of journeying to them; and in limiting absences by those enlisted.²⁰⁹ Companies in the mountain areas seem to have suffered particularly from the limitations set on attendance and training by the distances to travel, and by the local population's priority attention to coping with general living conditions harsher than those of plainsmen.²¹⁰ When companies were created on the north Vicentino's mountain border, weak attendance and training noted in the 1620s were blamed specifically on many men's absence from October to May because of transhumance, while the military skills they did acquire were exploited as an aid to grain contraband.²¹¹

Mainland governors' and others' reports varied greatly both in their assessment of the companies' prowess, and in their comments on the officers, especially the captains, who were obviously an important element in determining that prowess. A selection of such comments limited to the decades from the 1590s onwards mingles praise with criticism, the latter focusing on issues like old age and poor health, too close links with the local environment or – more

²⁰⁷ ASVE, Secreta, Capi di guerra, filza 4, Del Monte, 14 Mar. 1599; see too L. PEZZOLO, *I contadini*, pp. 43–45 (the report on an inspection of the Friulan companies in 1587).

²⁰⁸ *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, p. 191.

²⁰⁹ See ASVE: SDR, Padova, 8 Dec. 1603, the use of town squares in Este and Monselice; ST, reg. 81, c. 202v, a dispute over the site among communities of the Valcamonica in 1612; *ibid.*, reg. 91, c. 62, objections by the Friulan community of Caprile to a five-mile journey for reviews in 1621; ASPD, Milizie, reg. 91, on 96 fines for absences by members of the Piove di Sacco company between August 1605 and January 1606.

²¹⁰ See comments on the Valbrenbana, the areas of Zoldo and Agordo, and the Feltrino in general – though some governors of Belluno and Feltre were more optimistic: *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 283; II, pp. 48, 56, 284, 295.

²¹¹ ASVE, Secreta, Materie Miste Notabili, filza 143.

often – bad relations with it.²¹² The Gradisca war resulted in wholesale dismissals: in 1619 nine of the thirtyfive captains were pensioned off on grounds of old age and disability.²¹³ Sergeants too could be a liability, and in July 1607 infantry general Del Monte lamented that they were poor wretches, dependent on the local nobility and devoid of military experience.²¹⁴

Problems of funding had a lot to do with the militia's shortcomings. State finance only covered a minority of the costs generated by the *cernide*: pay to officers down to the level of drummer, and the cost of ammunition used in training sessions. The communities on the other hand paid for arms' purchase and upkeep, travel expenses given to militiamen attending reviews, and accomodation given to captains and sergeants. Their respective shares of the bill in the whole mainland in the late sixteenth century have been estimated at D. 11,000 and D. 36,000 p.a., but the latter sum may very well be underestimated.²¹⁵

Arms – their purchase, custody and repair – were a key feature of spending by the communities. Armouries for their proper storage seem to have been rare (in 1603 the Camposampiero company was the only one thus equipped in the Padovano),²¹⁶ and costs beyond the communities' means were a perennial cause of shortfalls in the quality and quantity of arms – thus the Adria company in 1607, for example.²¹⁷ Most of the Trevigiano militiamen were unarmed in 1619, after much material including armour had been lost in the Gradisca war,²¹⁸ but a less exceptional and more permanent cause of difficulty in paying for arms over the decades analyzed here was Venice's demand to increase the proportion of muskets (a costlier

²¹² *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 214, II, p. 73. ASVE: Secreta, Capi di guerra, filza 4, Del Monte, Dec. 1593; SDP, filza 44, 7 Oct. 6 16 Dec. 1601; ST, reg. 78, cc. 104-105, reg. 82, c. 186v; SDR, Salò, 2 May 1628.

²¹³ ASVE, ST, reg. 89, cc. 117v-118v.

²¹⁴ ASVE, Secreta, Capi di guerra, filza 4, Del Monte, 21 July 1607.

²¹⁵ M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 361.

²¹⁶ ASVE, SDR, Padova, 8 Dec. 1603.

²¹⁷ ASVE, SDP, filza 176, 17 Jan. 1607. In 1603 a shortfall in the Riviera di Salò company's muskets and breastplates was blamed on the effects of a bad harvest on communities' finances: ASVE, Senato, Dispacci, Rettori, Brescia, 1 Mar. 1603.

²¹⁸ *Relazioni dei rettori*, III, p. 154.

weapon than the arquebus), significantly accompanied in its various stages – 1594, 1606, 1623 – by the availability of state loans to the communities.²¹⁹

They also bore a major burden of expenses associated with training and inspection. Though the 1593 rules prescribed no payment of militiamen by their communities for attending company reviews, in the Bergamasco in 1605 the total annual cost of such reviews was reckoned at about D. 500 – money ill spent, moreover, by the remoter villages, whose men actually passed most of the review day travelling. In 1623 *provveditore generale* Cornaro limited such costs in the whole mainland to two annual reviews, restricting the range of possible beneficiaries, but large sums paid by the Bresciano communities for reviews were still worrying the Senate in 1627.²²⁰

A further financial implication of the militia system was the loss of contributions to the various dues levied on the person, caused by the privileges allowed to men both serving and retired – something the captain of Verona quantified in 1611 as worth D. 4-5 per head p.a. This preoccupation stimulated subjects' requests to limit the numbers enrolled in the *cernide*, and Venice at least partly heeded them: in 1601, for example, a proposal to increase the Cividale del Friuli company from 140 to 200 was blocked.²²¹

7) *The cernide in action*

As well as training and inspection, the *cernide's* peacetime activity extended to occasional duties not dissimilar from those requested of the bombardiers, not necessarily wholly military in scope: for example police functions at fairs (thus at Bergamo in 1592 and Crema in 1606), and seemingly very occasional use in repressing crime; reinforcing garrisons in case of security alert (as in the Bresciano frontier fortresses in 1592, at Palmanova in the mid and late 1590s, at Brescia in 1599); escorting important travellers like the duke of

²¹⁹ ASVE: ST, reg. 67, c. 159, reg. 76, c. 70; SDR, Crema, 21 May 1623. In 1623 *provveditore generale* Cornaro sought a partial solution of the problem by ordering the communities to sell their arquebuses and reinvest in muskets: BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. II, 1, 4, n° 59, capitolo iii.

²²⁰ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 284; BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. II, 1, 4, n° 58; ASVE, ST, reg. 98, c. 254.

²²¹ ASVE, ST, reg. 71, cc. 90v-91.

Mantua on his passage through Friuli towards Hungary in 1601.²²² Such service was paid for by the state, and not intended to burden the rural communities (a principle reasserted in 1623),²²³ but they might be expected to contribute travel expenses, as when Vicentino militiamen were sent to Crema and the Bresciano in 1601.²²⁴

The beginning of the seventeenth century brought an escalation of decidedly military demands on the *cernide*'s services. In spring 1601 there was in fact fear of Spanish attack, and orders were issued in March to send 4,000 *cernide* to Crema and the Bresciano. In May 3,600 men (a third each from the Padovano, Vicentino and Veronese) were there, with the western mainland's militiamen held in reserve, partly to relieve their communities' expenses. By late June the *cernide* in service had all gone back to their fields, replaced by salaried infantry, and praised by the *provveditore generale* (the Vicentines and Veronese at least).²²⁵

Their mobilization in the Interdict crisis was on a grander scale. Their use at Crema in January 1606 actually pre-dated the proclamation of the Interdict, and in April they were called to reinforce the guarding of Brescia, Bergamo and Verona, with service interrupted in June for the harvest; in the same month orders were given to select 7,000 men from all territories east of the Mincio.²²⁶ As well as supporting security on the sensitive Milanese frontier, the militiamen played an important part in the Polesine, facing the Papal state. A special *provveditore* inspected all men aged from sixteen to fortyfive, adding 1,500 men to the 700 official *cernide* and the 600 enrolled *di rispetto*, though struggling against deficiencies in

²²² ASVE, ST, reg. 62, cc. 73v, 98, reg. 71, cc. 80v-81; BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1536, cc. 119v-120; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, p. 116, XIV, pp. 8, 69-70. On repressing crime see LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *L'archibugio e l'aratro. Considerazioni e problemi per una storia delle milizie rurali venete nei secoli XVI e XVII*, in «Studi Veneziani», n.s. 7 (1983, pp. 68-69 (pp. 59-80), C. POVOLO, *Aspetti e problemi*, p. 210 (in the example cited, the governors of Padua were authorized to use *cernide* or bombardiers in 1580), and M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 219-220.

²²³ BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1536, cc. 119v-120; BCBG, Raccolta di ducali, b. II, 1, 4, n° 59, capitolo v.

²²⁴ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 234, n° 8.

²²⁵ ASVE, SDP, filza 44: 21 Apr., 22 May, 9 & 20 June 1601.

²²⁶ ASVE: SDR, Crema, 16 Jan. & 29 Mar. 1606, Bergamo, 23 Apr. 1606; ST, reg. 76, c. 38v; SDP, filza 45, 7 & 22 June 1606.

training, availability of arms, and due attention and funding by local communities for their purchase, custody and repair.²²⁷ A general suggestion was made by *provveditore* Dolfin – though to no practical effect – for replacing costly foreign infantry with 6,000-8,000 specially trained *cernide*, in regular companies of 200, with their place in the militia to be filled by those enrolled *di rispetto*.²²⁸

The Interdict crisis drew Venice's attention to its mountain frontiers. Thus, for example, Valstagna, Oliero and Campolongo, privileged Vicentino communities at the mouth of the Valsugana and near the border, were sent arquebuses.²²⁹ The equally privileged and equally vulnerable Seven Communes, whose mountain territory comprised almost all the Vicentino's northern border, had previously accepted arquebuses, agreeing to distribute them for local defence, but not to train a militia. In the years between 1607 and 1615, worried by reports of Austrian arquebusiers in the Valsugana, Venetian authority pressed them to form a properly constituted force; the despatch of arquebuses and the offer of training overcame their reluctance with difficulty, but by 1614 the militia totalled 400 men in training with firearms, who were expected only to defend their own territory.²³⁰

Similar Venetian pressure was applied to yet other exempt mountain communities with sensitive borders. By 1613 Cadore had been convinced to accept arms and training from a salaried captain, but – despite repeated recommendations by the governors of Cividale – there seem to have been no similar developments in Schiavonia.²³¹

The Gradisca war produced massive mobilization of the *cernide*: orders were given in April 1615 to select 12,000 men, to be enrolled in four divisions of ten companies each, two on either side of the Mincio, and to be held in readiness.²³² *Cernide* from the Bassanese,

²²⁷ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VI, p. 139; ASVE, SDP, filza 176, 17 Jan., 2 & 10 Feb. 1607; see too M.T. PASQUALINI CANATO, *Una terra di confine*, p. 452 ff.

²²⁸ ASVE, SDP, filza 162, 14 Oct. 1606.

²²⁹ ASVE, ST, reg. 76, c. 166.

²³⁰ ASVE, ST, reg. 76, c. 138v, reg. 84, c. 174; *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, pp. 85, 162, 194-195, 212, 232.

²³¹ ASVE, ST, reg. 83, c. 178; *Relazioni dei rettori*, V, pp. 30, 41, 49-50, 65, 90, 103.

²³² ASVE, ST, reg. 85, cc. 54v-56; see too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 363-66, also for what follows.

Feltrino, Bellunese and Cadore – the latter two forces apparently of poor quality – guarded northern mountain borders close to home;²³³ Bergamasco and Cremasco militiamen were also spared service in Friuli, and reinforced the garrisoning of their local cities.²³⁴ From November 1615 onwards, however, those from other territories were sent to the war-zone (Istria included), where a total of 5,600 men – excluding those from the Trevigiano eastwards – are reckoned to have been draughted.²³⁵ The Friulan *contadinanza* promised Venice the service of 1,500 men, and they were deployed in garrisons and other guard duties at Udine, Palma, Monfalcone etc., as well as helping transport victuals for the regular forces.²³⁶

In January 1616 there were a total of 3,464 *cernide* present in the war zone, mainly from Friuli, the Trevigiano and the Veronese, out of an infantry total of 4,588 (not including the garrisons of Chiusa, Palma and Osoppo).²³⁷ In April 1616 the *cernide* present totalled 2,844 men fit to serve and 643 sick, while 254 had deserted and 94 died; by late 1617 they were little more than 2,000. Early enthusiasm to serve, as reported in September 1615 by the governor of Salò, had been dissipated by stories from the front and the real incidence of casualties, actually due more to bad living conditions than enemy action, so that subsequent despatches of men – from the Bresciano, Veronese and Padovano in late spring 1616, for example – met with considerable difficulty and included companies under strength.²³⁸ A report in August 1616 by *provveditore generale* Priuli on five Friulan garrisons with a paper total of 1,916 militiamen showed only 756 (39.5%) able to serve, with desertion by 179 (9.3%) as a further factor of loss to add to the 336 dead (17.5%)

²³³ ASVE: ST, reg. 85, c. 214; SDP, filza 178, 28 Dec. 1615, 7 Jan. & 30 Mar. 1616; see too ALESSANDRO SACCO, *La vita in Cadore. Aspetti del dominio veneto nelle lettere di capitani e vicari 1500-1788*, Verona 2007, pp. 16, 38, & notes 55, 165-66.

²³⁴ ASVE, SDP, filza 163, 8 & 31 May 1616.

²³⁵ ASVE, ST, reg. 85, c. 191; M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 363; see too M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-friulana*, p. 202.

²³⁶ ASVE, SDR, Udine, 8 Sept. 1615, 28 Apr., 25 Aug., 1 Sept. 1616, 5 Feb. 1617; see too G. TREBBI, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797*, p. 275.

²³⁷ L. PEZZOLO, *I contadini*, p. 45.

²³⁸ ASVE, SDP, filza 52, 11 Apr. & 19 May 1616, filza 163, 7-11 May 1616, filza 164, 22 Sept. 1616; *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 165, X, p. 79; L. PEZZOLO, *I contadini*, p. 46; G. TREBBI, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797*, p. 276.

and 645 injured (33.7%). The Padovano militia registers for the war years indeed show mortality rates of around 35%.²³⁹ The *cernide's* reluctance to serve and inclination to desert were further favoured by breakdown of the set periods for their relief and discharge, with some men's service running on beyond the four or six months promised to fourteen or fifteen.²⁴⁰ Such a combination of risks and malfunctioning of course favoured recourse by many *cernide* to paid substitutes, though this practice was officially sanctioned only for close relatives.²⁴¹

The Gradisca war experience with the *cernide* elicited proposals from Marcantonio Correr in 1618, whose overall thrust was to improve them, and thus cancel Venice's dependence on expensive and unreliable foreign troops – an unrealistic hope. He advocated valiant, wellborn, rich company commanders from among the mainland nobility, more numerous minor officers, better kept militia registers, an end to some villages' exemption and some villagers' elusion of service, more realistic training (to include periods of garrison service), inducements both to serve (subjection to the captain's jurisdiction) and to retire when too old (retention of privileges after discharge – something in fact already granted after fifteen years' service).²⁴²

In the fluctuating tension of the 1620s there was sporadic mobilization of the *cernide*: for example 200 Bergamasco militiamen were sent to the Brembate frontier area in November 1624.²⁴³ In the mid 1620s Venetian authority inspected the companies of the northern Vicentino border zone – the *pedemonte* area, the Seven Communes and Valstagna – and the serious failings found were at least partially redressed by 1628, thanks too to the distribution of new weapons by the state.²⁴⁴

²³⁹ ASVE, SDP, filza 54, 8 Aug. 1616. This percentage coincides with an estimate by a Venetian governor of Padua: *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 165.

²⁴⁰ ASVE: SDP, filza 177, 7 June 1617; ST, reg. 87, cc. 173v-174.

²⁴¹ ASVE, ST, reg. 87, c. 130v (rules for substitution).

²⁴² BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 2377, n° 2. Correr held various posts in or concerned with the mainland, including both *savio di terraferma* and *provveditore sopra feudi* in 1618: see the entry on him by ANGELO BAIOCCHI in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, XXIX, Roma 1983, pp. 500-503.

²⁴³ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, pp. 427-428.

²⁴⁴ ASVE, Secreta, Materie Miste Notabili, filza 143.

There was again massive use of militiamen in the Mantuan succession war, not only in and near the war-zone but in other areas judged sensitive; Friulan and Feltrino forces were indeed kept away from Mantua so as to guard the Austrian frontier (100 of the former were stationed at Marano in 1630).²⁴⁵ The *provveditori* Erizzo and Sagredo sought to keep *cernide* from west of the Mincio for use on the Lombard frontier, mindful of Friulan militiamen's greater courage than others' in the Gradisca war as proof that men served more willingly in their native regions. Their use in the frontier area and in the cities and towns (Asola, Orzinovi, Crema, Brescia) built up from June 1629; Bresciano men actually manned the garrison of Brescia itself from September 1629 till at least July 1630 unaided by professionals, and the captain of Brescia even considered them preferable to regular troops since they served less grudgingly – a view not shared by other Venetian officials.²⁴⁶

Frontier garrisons' strengthening with militia began as early as March 1629, and their recruitment in the Veronese was favoured – *provveditore generale* Erizzo commented – by the attraction of military pay in a period of poor harvests.²⁴⁷ In June 1629 4,500 *cernide* from the territories as far west as the Vicentino were part of a force of 7,500 men, formed to serve especially in the fortresses and thus free regular infantry.²⁴⁸ Inspections of all the mainland companies were ordered in July, with half the men to be selected for active service, and the Senate seeking to ensure the exclusion of new recruits, heads of household or other family members of men serving. Mobilization – 1,200 men from each territory east of the Mincio, barring Friuli – followed in September: Veronese men went to the Bresciano, and the Veronese itself was the destination of forces from the Vicentino and Padovano (who also served in the Verona garrison), and then too from the Trevigiano and Polesine, so that in December Erizzo inspected 37 companies totalling 8,401 men at Valeggio.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ *Relazioni dei rettori*, V, p. 268, II, p. 378; ASVE, ST, reg. 102, c. 205v.

²⁴⁶ ASVE: SDP, filza 73, 7 June & 15 Aug., 1629, filza 75, 6 Mar. 1629 & 7 Jan. 1630, filza 76, 27 May 1630, filza 175, 16 July 1630; SDR, Crema, 24 Oct. 1629, & Brescia, 23 Sept. 1629, 25 June 1630.

²⁴⁷ ASVE, SDP, filza 73, 6 Mar. 1629.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, June 1629.

²⁴⁹ ASVE: ST, reg. 102, c. 60; SDP, filza 73, July 1629, filza 74 (19, 27, 28 Sept., 21 Dec. 1629, 13 Jan. 1630), filza 74, 21 Dec. 1629, filza 77, 2 Aug. 1630; SDR, Verona, 1 June 1630.

Despite their numbers, however, the *cernide* at Valeggio posed all sorts of problems: the men sent in September and October had been called away from the grape harvest and winter sowing of grain, and included many heads of household (some of whom were released almost at once), while raids on the Veronese required the discharge of some locals to defend their home area.²⁵⁰ Venetian officials periodically criticized various units' military incompetence, and had difficulty in discharging men after their stipulated service because their replacements arrived but their pay did not (thus in December 1629, after three months' service by the first contingents called).²⁵¹

Naturally the plague of 1630 wrought havoc with communications, impeding the arrival of both payments and men, even from nearby.²⁵² Quite apart from the heavy death-toll due to plague, those who survived were subjected to quarantine regulations before returning home, and some tried to evade them.²⁵³ Others found unexpected duties imposed on them as a result of the plague – temporary work as bakers at Verona to fill gaps in the usual workforce in summer 1630, or as grape-harvesters in the eastern Veronese that autumn while subject to quarantine (the destiny of many of the 340 literally ragged survivors of the 1,200 men sent from the Padovano).²⁵⁴

8) *Extempore infantry*

In 1601 the Senate ordered the enlistment of extraordinary infantry companies of Venetian subjects, inviting *terraferma* nobles to recruit and command them. The Veronese Annibale Allegri actually had 500 men ready by mid-April, when they were sent to Peschiera to replace militiamen, and promises made by other nobles ran to 5,500 men, most of them intended to be Venetian subjects.²⁵⁵

The 1,635 militiamen originally sent to garrison Verona were reduced to 508 in August 1630, with 590 sick or convalescent, 404 dead and 133 deserters.

²⁵⁰ ASVE, SDP, filza 74, 4 Oct. & 1 Nov. 1629.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, filza 74, 8 & 19 Dec. 1629, 13 Jan. 1630; ASVE, SDR, Verona, 1 June 1630.

²⁵² ASVE, SDP, filza 76, 28 Apr. & 19 May 1630.

²⁵³ ASVE, ST, reg. 103, c. 255.

²⁵⁴ ASVE, SDR, Verona, 3 July and 17 Sept.-8 Oct. 1630.

²⁵⁵ ASVE, SDP, filza 44, 27 & 28 Mar., 19 Apr. 1601.

This switch in policy was confirmed in the Interdict crisis, when the extraordinary infantry forces raised had very little to do with troops contributed by mainland towns (only Este offered infantry in 1606-07),²⁵⁶ and was mainly linked to the role offered to the nobility. In August the mainland governors were called on to name subjects who could offer the Republic useful military service, and consequently sent in at least 92 names, among them men reckoned capable of raising troops, again including Annibale Allegri (said to be able to raise 1,000 foot).²⁵⁷

In September the Senate decreed the hiring of 6,000 native infantry, 4,200 of whom were to be from west of the Mincio, though excluding galiots, *cernide* and bombardier *scolari* so as to preserve those forces; it invited mainland nobles to volunteer to recruit them. Rapid initial response covered 4,400 men, but enduring silence from nobles in Treviso, Padua, Vicenza and Verona accentuated the role of their like west of the Mincio, who covered enlistment of a higher total than the 4,200 men initially specified. The end result was a key role for the Brescians Pietro Avogadro and Hieronimo Martinengo, each of whom undertook to raise 2,000 foot and was also authorized to include foreign veterans from the Flanders war – the sign of a more professional approach, confirmed by the hard bargain they sought to drive for pay (though the crisis perhaps ended before the agreements took full effect).²⁵⁸ There were also less professionally framed initiatives. In March 1607 the city of Bergamo got as far as naming nobles to supervise the arming of all able-bodied men, and the same month the Senate ordered a temporary militia of 500 men to be formed in Vicenza's *colture*, or suburbs.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁶ ASVE, ST, reg. 76, c. 57; S. PERINI, *Pericoli di guerra*, p. 157.

²⁵⁷ ASVE: Secreta, Materie Miste Notabili, filza 63, Aug. 1606; SDR, Bergamo, 11 Aug. 1606, & Crema, 12 Aug. 1606. See too L. PEZZOLO, *Nobiltà militare e potere*, pp. 410-11: in 1615 the Verona governors told Venice that Allegri, able to call on his *dipendenti*, hoped for the assignment of a command to his nephew.

²⁵⁸ ASVE; SS, reg. 97, cc. 117-119, 124, 127-130, 134; SDR, filza 45, 29 Sept. & 10 Dec. 1606, 22 Mar. & 10 May 1607 (the two Brescians were supposedly organizing their recruitment by late January 1607). See too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 326-27.

²⁵⁹ ASVE: SDR, Bergamo, 10 Mar. 1607; SS, reg. 98, cc. 37v-38.

During the Gradisca war Venetian demands for extempore infantry were very much greater. Among the companies hired or raised specifically for the war, there were units wholly composed of mainland subjects: as well as companies of outlaws seeking release from banishment (though many deserted),²⁶⁰ and Friulan infantry due via feudal obligations,²⁶¹ there were above all – as specifically requested by government – contributions of footsoldiers by *terraferma* cities and towns, presumably mostly Venetian subjects. Prompter in honouring their promises of a few dozen men were smaller places like Este and Montagnana (Este spent D. 645 in arming 50 men, and paid them D. 315 a month), though their companies were quickly reduced by sickness, death and desertion.²⁶² The larger contingents promised by the cities – Brescia's 1,000 men, Verona's 500, Vicenza's 400 – materialized slowly and partially. By May 1616 Brescia had furnished only 403 men, and took till June to decide on a tax to pay for them; by mid-July Verona had sent only 250, of whom a mere 38 were not then dead, deserters or sick, while Vicenza had sent 346, 80 of whom were alive, present and fit to serve, and it then had little wish to replace the casualties.²⁶³ Between late 1616 and early 1617 the cities agreed to commute the obligations contracted into monetary payments – monthly sums of D. 1,677 from Vicenza and D. 4,194 from Brescia, corresponding to infantry pay for the numbers they had promised – though Brescian civic finance was encumbered for several more years by financial arrangements made during the war.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰ ASVE, SDP, filza 177, 7 June 1617: by June 1617 only 20 out of 120 men remained. On the creation of a special magistracy in 1616 for authorizing outlaws' war service see E. BASAGLIA, *Il controllo della criminalità*, pp. 75-76. See too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 347-48, also for what follows.

²⁶¹ ASVE, SDP, filza 52, 18 Mar. 1616, filza 56, 15 Mar. 1617, filza 58, 17 Dec. 1617.

²⁶² ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 308, n° 1219, c. 55; ASVE, SDP, filza 52, 11 Apr. 1616, filza 53, 10 July 1616. On infantry sent by *terraferma* localities see too M. VIGATO, *La guerra veneto-arciducate*, p. 210.

²⁶³ ASVE: ST, reg. 86, c. 163v; SDP, filza 52, 19 May 1616, filza 53, 10-12 & 27 July 1616; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 216, n° 3, cc. 3-4; BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1024, cc. 455-456. Verona imposed special *dadie di soldati* in 1616 and 1618, for a total of D. 52,672: L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, p. 108 and n. 41.

²⁶⁴ ASVE, ST, reg. 86, cc. 266, 290v, reg. 87, c. 131 ff.; BCBS, Arch. Civ., reg. 1024, c. 456v.

More homespun and more akin to the existing militia were extraordinary defence forces raised by both towns and rural areas for local use, partly in Friuli – 600 musketeers in Cividale, the beginnings of a citizen militia in Udine, a force of 574 men local to the jurisdiction of the count of Porcia and Brugnera.²⁶⁵ But other places were also involved, including a central swathe of the mainland. In Padua there was a preliminary census of all fit men aged fifteen to sixty,²⁶⁶ and villages near the borders of the northern Trevigiano, the Vicentino, the Veronese and the Riviera di Salò were told to form special defence companies of men enrolled in neither the *cernide* nor the galiot militia, with captains of their own choice and weapons on loan. By March 1616 these instructions had turned into a force of 6,840 men in the northern Vicentino, from the Seven Communes and the foothill area west of the river Astico, to be supported by infantry promised by Vicenza to man the passes; the result in the Riviera di Salò was 6,000 men armed, including those in exempt communities, an extempore fortress at Limone and sentries at night along the bank of Lake Garda.²⁶⁷

Worries about Spanish attack on the western *terraferma* intensified from July 1616, and the extra vigilance consequently ordered included the enlisting of 500-600 short-term professional foot-soldiers and a census of all able-bodied men west of the Mincio not already part of the main or reserve *cernide*, to be organized under captains. The frontier of the Bresciano and Bergamasco was subdivided into stretches assigned to local nobles, who were given full control over the population, including the *cernide*; sources surviving for the Bergamasco show that over 5,000 men were enrolled there to fight with musket, arquebus or pike.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ ASVE, SDR, Udine, 8 July, 1 & 11 Sept. 1616; A. DE PELLEGRINI, *Genti d'arme*, pp. 147-148.

²⁶⁶ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 179.

²⁶⁷ ASVE, ST, reg. 85, cc. 217v-218; *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, pp. 238-239, X, pp. 86-88, 92. See too M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, pp. 364-66, also for what follows.

²⁶⁸ ASVE: SS, reg. 107, cc. 61v-62v, 74; ST, reg. 86, cc. 148v-149; SDP, filza 163, 10 Aug. 1616 and ff. BCBG, Carte relative alla difesa del Bergamasco, 1616-17, cc. 16, 75-79v, 85, 87, 90, 97. On the Bergamasco see too CRISTINA GIOIA, *Una fonte preziosa: memorie e lettere militari intorno alla città di Bergamo*, in *Alle frontiere della Lombardia*, pp. 318-323.

From that autumn such measures were also taken in at least part of the central and eastern *terraferma*, apparently with considerable success in the Veronese, which was divided into districts assigned to nobles who enrolled the men able to fight: 8,000 in the city, 20,000 in the country (armed by their communities at the cost of over D. 40,000) – a vast force, about seven times the size of the Veronese *cernide*.²⁶⁹ Some of them were sent towards the Cremasco on the occasion of an invasion scare on the mainland's western frontier in October and November 1617, which triggered the despatch of reinforcements especially to strongpoints near the rivers Oglio and Serio. These forces included men from west and also east of the Mincio, and though the terms used in the sources are ambiguous, it is most likely that some at least of those sent were not ordinary *cernide* – superior authority certainly had little confidence in their ability to fight.²⁷⁰

Given its exposed position, Crema itself saw great temporary mobilization of local inhabitants because of the war: a defence force of townsmen numbered 700 by late 1617, and subdivision of its territory under the control of nobles, as elsewhere, was proposed in September 1616. Furthermore, continuing apprehension immediately after the war led experts consulted to formulate various hypotheses for defending the town and its territory, with close attention to the available resources of men fit to bear arms (3,710 according to a list made in about 1621); citizens volunteered to organize the territory's defence in August 1618, when watch was being kept from church-towers.²⁷¹

During the early and mid 1620s there is only occasional evidence of temporary infantry forces of mainland subjects: for example a force of 2,000 men armed and enlisted in the Polesine in the second half of 1625 when there was a build-up of Papal troops at Ferrara for intervention in the Valtelline.²⁷² Around the same time

²⁶⁹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 232; BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 3088, 23 July 1617, & b. 3098, n° 41; it may be doubted whether full payment actually happened.

²⁷⁰ *Relazioni dei rettori*, IX, p. 232; ASVE, SDP, filza 166, 25-30 Oct., 30 Nov. 1617.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, filza 180, early Nov. 1617; BCBG, Carte relative alla difesa del Bergamasco, 1616-17, c. 137; ASVE, SDP, filza 180, 9 July & 16 Aug. 1618; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, p. 169.

²⁷² *Relazioni dei rettori*, VI, p. 205.

there had been a review of all men of arms-bearing age in the Cre-masco, with the raising of 2,700 extraordinary infantry and 800 caval-ry, and the territory divided into four quarters, each under a colonel; and in the Riviera di Salò insistence by the Venetian gover-nor had overcome the Riviera council's reluctance to buy arms for all men, obtaining the imposition of a special tax and the selection of a force of 4,342 men.²⁷³

When actual war again loomed on the horizon, in 1629, recent experience with the costs and problems of furnishing contingents of troops led all the *terraferma* cities to prefer offering Venice sums of money. This passed the burden of organizing recruitment over to central government, and also confirmed an important trend already evident in previous sections of this essay, for dues and services con-nected with defence to be commuted into money payments funded via taxation. As to the issue of mainland subjects' direct participa-tion in regular and extempore forces, this low profile of contingents raised by subjects looked likely to weaken such participation, though for example the Senate accepted an offer of companies levied, financed and commanded by some Brescian nobles.²⁷⁴

But in fact mainland subjects did participate in considerable numbers as extempore infantry, as a result of Venetian action to cre-ate a large native infantry force which would be armed only for the duration of the crisis, and receive none of the privileges of the *cernide*. As early as January 1629 the captain of Rovigo had raised a «voluntary militia» of 5,000 foot; invasion from the Ferrarese was thought possible, especially with the concentration there that sum-mer of Papal troops bound for Mantua, and the Senate sent to the Polesine 1,500 muskets and 600 pikes with which to arm the com-munities. From May to July there was action in the Cre-masco – local nobles in charge of arming the inhabitants, watchmen on the church-towers – and in the Bresciano and Bergamasco.²⁷⁵ In June 1629 3,000 men specially enlisted in the Riviera di Salò and the val-leys of the Bresciano and Bergamasco were mixed with 4,500 *cernide*

²⁷³ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIII, p. 182, X, pp. 119-120.

²⁷⁴ ASVE, SS, reg. 131, c. 155 (August 1629).

²⁷⁵ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VI, pp. 229-230; ASVE: SS, reg. 132, cc. 375v-376; SDR, Cre-ma, 30 May, 15 June, 1 July 1629.

from the territories as far west as the Vicentino, to serve especially in the fortresses and thus to free regular infantry.²⁷⁶

In July *provveditore generale* Erizzo recommended to the Senate defence measures similar to those in the Cremasco for all borderlands, to be coordinated by regional commanders and also to include road blocks, guarding of hilltops and passes, and the conversion of suitable buildings (churches included) into citadels. In the decree of late August already mentioned a propos of temporary cavalry, he ordered the division into districts of the whole *terraferma*, privileged areas included; a local noble in charge of each was to be responsible for enlisting in infantry companies, complete with officers and training routines, all the men fit to bear arms and not already in the bombardiers or *cernide*, nor able to provide a horse and so join the cavalry.²⁷⁷ Some poorer areas seem to have been encouraged by the despatch of firearms: from October 1629 to early February 1630 at least 800 muskets went from the Venetian Arsenal to the Feltrino, some for sale to individuals and others distributed free to communities unable to buy them.²⁷⁸

Initial hopes of thus raising 10,000 infantry cooled down by September to 6,000, and a Senate order of August 14th for two citizens from every major city to raise men met with a cool reception in Padua, Bergamo, Rovigo, Udine and Treviso, whereas within a month there were 426 from the Vicentino, 1,400 from the Bresciano (recruited via the Avogadro and Martinengo), and 780 from the Veronese.²⁷⁹ The latter were then augmented, since by late September Ludovico Nogarola and Gianpaolo Pompei had enlisted at least eleven companies (having promised 2,000 men between them); these Veronese companies probably had precedence in calls to serve in the war-zone, because raised near it, and they in fact served seven months in Mantua and key frontier posts nearby, though badly fed and paid well in arrears.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ ASVE, SDP, filza 73, June 1629.

²⁷⁷ ASVE, SDP, filza 73, July & 25 Aug. 1629.

²⁷⁸ ASVE, ST, reg. 102, cc. 54v, 205v, 219, 236v.

²⁷⁹ ASVE: SDP, filza 74, 17 Sept. 1629; SS, reg. 131, cc. 178v-179, & reg. 132, c. 151.

It was perhaps in this phase that 2,500 *cernite straordinarie* were raised in the Bellunese: *Relazioni dei rettori*, II, p. 104.

²⁸⁰ ASVR, Antico Arch. Com., reg. 606, letters of 29 Sept.-2 Oct. 1629, cc. 3, 10, & Mar. 1630; ASVE, ST, reg. 102, c. 205v; see too L. PORTO, *La partecipazione*, p. 122.

Venetian forces' retreat in early 1630 culminated in the withdrawal from Valeggio to Peschiera, triggering further alarms about invasion of the mainland and a proposal by the Senate to recruit yet more subjects to defend it. *Provveditore generale* Erizzo considered this proposal feasible among the Republic's Lombard subjects, whose hardiness and possession of arms contrasted with the shortage of arms and suitable commanders in the Veronese, and scant enthusiasm further east (evident in the vacancies in the *cernide* and extempore forces already commissioned). Recruiting was in fact launched in the territories from the Veronese westwards, raising – for example – 1,246 men in the Val Calepio and more than 4,000 in the Bresciano valleys and mountains; plague mortality was an added obstacle, and had supposedly reduced the men of arms-bearing age in the Veronese Monti Lessini from 2,500 to 150.²⁸¹ Forces were in fact raised in some eastern territories too: 4,401 men from the towns of the Trevigiano and 7,017 among the rural inhabitants, though neither the men nor their communities could afford to buy arms.²⁸²

The war also gave rise to attempts to organize the inhabitants of at least two mainland localities into civic defence forces. At Udine, the arrangements made to defend the city resembled those of previous wars, with 2,000 residents – including 400 bombardiers – divided into companies under captains. Verona, anyway much nearer the warzone, reacted to news of the loss of Valeggio with measures against the risk of invasion: on May 30th 1630 the city council appointed citizens to enlist all the city's men aged from fifteen to sixty, and others to lead companies of horse and foot drawn from the Veronese, though many of the practical implications and consequences of this decision, for example the provision of arms, remain unclear.²⁸³

9) *The galiots*

The galley militia of *terraferma* peasants first created in 1522 had shown serious practical shortcomings, to the point of being replaced in peacetime use during the subsequent decades by other

²⁸¹ ASVE: SDP, filza 77, 7 June & 10 Aug. 1630; SDR, Bergamo, 3 July 1630, & Brescia, 20 July 1630.

²⁸² *Relazioni dei rettori*, III, p. 190.

²⁸³ *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, p. 199; ASVE, SDR, Verona, 20 June 1630.

sources of manpower like convicts.²⁸⁴ Such use of convicts became an established ongoing practice, committing significant numbers of Venetian subjects to totally involuntary galley service. Mainland governors reported sporadically in the early seventeenth century on their involvement in procuring convict galley men, including foreigners (Germans sent via the Bellunese, Gonzaga subjects via Brescia),²⁸⁵ but mainly consisting of criminals condemned by *terraferma* courts in response to the Senate's invitation, periodically renewed, to condemn them to the galleys rather than to banishment or imprisonment.²⁸⁶ For example the *podestà* of Brescia in 25 months between 1608 and 1610 sent 298 convicts to the oar, his colleague in Verona in the same years more than 90, and the *podestà* of Vicenza in 1613-15 sent 62.²⁸⁷

The main peasant galley militia's resources had however been heavily drawn on during the war of Cyprus (1570-73), when the cities and towns – primarily their corporate bodies (guilds etc.) – had also been called on for quotas of rowers, and subjects normally exempt had been involved (for example the mountain population of Vicenza's Seven Communes). The cost to both urban and rural communities had been considerable, since they had had to make bounty payments well beyond normal monthly pay rates so as to entice volunteers for what was rightly famed as a dangerous activity. In the decades subsequent to that war, though in the event there was to be no further mobilization of any importance, the more or less regular updating of the lists of the peasant galley militia continued, with the replacement of the dead, the absent, the elderly, and those unsuited for health or other reasons. After actually mobilizing a few hundred

²⁸⁴ ALBERTO TENENTI, *Cristoforo da Canal. La marine vénitienne avant Lépante*, Paris 1962, p. 61 ff., esp. pp. 66-67, 74, note 12; L. PEZZOLO, *Stato, guerra e finanza*, p. 81 ff.; M. AYMARD, *La leva marittima*, pp. 440-450 (based essentially on the mainland governors' reports in *Relazioni dei rettori*); LUCA LO BASSO, *Il mestiere del remo nell'armata sottile veneziana: coscrizione, debito, pena e schiavitù (secc. XVI-XVII)*, «Studi Veneziani», n.s. XLVIII (2004), esp. p. 119 ff. (pp. 105-189).

²⁸⁵ *Relazioni dei rettori*, II, pp. 53, 76-77, XI, 217-218; G. DA LEZZE, *Il catastico bresciano*, I, p. 497.

²⁸⁶ ASVE, ST, reg. 52, c. 135; reg. 56, c. 154; reg. 87, c. 270v; reg. 96, cc. 132v-133. On this issue, see A. VIARO, *La pena della galera, La condizione dei condannati a bordo delle galere veneziane*, in *Società, stato e giustizia*, I, pp. 377-430.

²⁸⁷ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XI, p. 199, IX, p. 186, VII, p. 234.

mainland galiots in 1617, the Senate ordered a general revision of the lists in 1620, for instance, specifying the exclusion of those aged over 45.²⁸⁸ Subsequently to the Cyprus war, moreover, mainland governors consolidated the practice of maintaining a second, reserve list of peasant rowers, which further increased the overall numbers involved. The lists in the Vicentino totalled 9171 in 1603, and about 7,000 in the Padovano in 1606; those in the Bresciano in 1609 contained 2,000 ordinary galiots plus 3,480 reserves – figures repeated by a subsequent governor in 1613, with the comment that they referred to lists drawn up in 1601, overdue for revision; in 1612 the Trevigiano total – based on lists eight years old – was 6,100.²⁸⁹

Though the numbers just cited theoretically far exceed the 10,000 men enlisted in 1561 (the mainland total was maybe as high as around 35,000 in the first decade of the seventeenth century), mainland governors' reports for the 1620s almost totally omit reference to the galiots – mentions of 287 men enrolled in the Bellunese in 1621, and about 2,000 in the Veronese the same year are quite exceptional.²⁹⁰ Even if the revision ordered by the Senate in 1620 did take place, priority attention was to land defence. And well before the 1620s the lists anyway had very little real significance in terms of military utility, as the governors themselves admitted. Quite apart from the total lack of training of those enrolled, too infrequent checking and updating of the names meant that many men listed were actually no longer suited for service because they were too old and weak in health or even dead, or else had become heads of household. Alternatively they might be engaged in satisfying other demands by the state, as the captain of Vicenza remarked in 1596 a propos of the overlap between the province's galiot lists (then totalling 7,641) and pioneers sent to work at Palmanova.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ ASVE, ST, reg. 90, c. 81. On 1617 see L. LO BASSO, *Il mestiere del remo*, p. 133. On the Seven Communes see ELISABETTA GIRARDI, *Marinai di montagna. La leva da mar nei Sette Comuni durante la guerra di Cipro*, «Archivio Veneto», 165 (2005), esp. pp. 168-170 (pp. 139-179): Senate orders of Jan.-Feb. 1572 to all mainland governors to list and then to send men from the exempt communities.

²⁸⁹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 157, IV, p. 103, XI, p. 235, III, p. 138; G. DA LEZZE, *Il catastico bresciano*, I, p. 518.

²⁹⁰ *Relazioni dei rettori*, II, p. 73; *ibid.*, IX, p. 251; the estimate of 35,000 is based on consultation of *ibid.*, I-XIV.

²⁹¹ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 84.

V *The Broader Context: Social, Fiscal and Political*

1) *More burden than gain*

This essay has demonstrated systematically the very considerable extent to which the inhabitants of the *terraferma* contributed to the defence of the Venetian state in both peace and war in the early seventeenth century: carriage and labour services; the lodging of troops in town and country and provision for their needs; the recruitment of a growing proportion of the able-bodied men into a variety of armed forces, many of which were subject to at least rudimentary regular training and also saw active service.

As the analysis has shown *en passant*, local economic circuits could draw benefit from the extra pressure on mainland resources for defence purposes, since a significant part of such resources was recycled in such forms as the purchase or hire of the wherewithal for providing food, lodgings, vehicles and livestock, official pay for service in the armed forces (and also bounties given to substitutes), and so on.²⁹² But whatever the economic benefits subjects derived from military and related services during normal times, these were far outweighed by the negative implications during the two wars of the early seventeenth century, especially but not only for the provinces in the front line. War actually fought on or near home territory, as was the case with both these conflicts, in fact exacerbated all the risks of damage, as is evident from an order issued in January 1616, during the Gradisca war, by *provveditore generale* Barbarigo. He forbade soldiers to molest the civilian population, to damage crops and woodland, to set fire to dwelling-houses, and to steal from sellers of victuals.²⁹³ Such good intentions could hardly suffice, and in the Mantuan succession war dearth and disorganization certainly meant intermittent collapses of authority's capacity to enforce this sort of discipline, as witnessed by the unpaid and hungry troops who vented their fury by inflicting casual damage in the Bergamasco in 1629, well before the military debacle at Mantua and Valeggio.²⁹⁴

²⁹² On this subject, for state rather than local finance, see L. PEZZOLO, *L'oro dello stato*, ch. 4.

²⁹³ BCBG, *Raccolta di ducali*, II, 2, n° 3.

²⁹⁴ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XII, p. 467.

Even without considering the experience of war, there were very substantial negative connotations of the various duties linked with defence needs, in terms of material loss or damage to civilian society through theft, damage, dislocation and the like, quite apart from the danger to life and limb. The requests made of subjects in connection with defence were in fact widely perceived as burdensome, damaging or dangerous, and – as we have seen – reactions to them included reluctance, elusion and some degree of straight evasion, by such methods as claiming exemption, changing residence, deserting, etc. The more structural, long-term, negative consequences of defence demands also become apparent if we consider them in conjunction with the overall tax load they were anyway an important part of.

In July 1621 the captain of Verona claimed that over the previous two years 140 families, including about 550 agricultural workers, had emigrated from the Veronese to the Ferrarese and Mantovano for a combination of reasons: maltreatment by citizen landowners; high taxation on the rural population, part of it generated by providing cavalry and infantry companies – including garrison forces – with lodgings, stables and other requirements; and finally the ill-treatment suffered in fulfilling this obligation. In December 1627 one of his successors briefly told the same tale, of peasants who had fled from the Veronese to those territories driven by unbearable financial demands, and detailed data compiled that year by the *corpo territoriale* in fact quantify such emigrants from 1600 onwards: 6,169 men with their families and livestock. In June 1626 another captain had let tax figures talk: the total of *gravezze* to be paid had increased by 286% since 1580 (a multiple based on ducats of account, but still considerable – about 121% – if the data are expressed in terms of wheat), so that a peasant head of household, the captain reckoned, paid D. 8 of *gravezze* a year, and both individuals and rural communities were falling into debt. The *corpo territoriale* data of the following year indeed refer to arrears of D. 61,309 in payments due to it by the rural communities. And this sort of informal or floating debt was certainly only a minor part of their overall indebtedness.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ *Relazioni dei rettori*, VIII, pp. 251-252, 273, 283; G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, p. 125; also FRANCESCO VECCHIATO, *Il mondo contadino nel Seicento*, in *Uomini e civiltà agraria in territorio veronese*, ed Giorgio Borelli, 2 vols, Verona 1982: II, pp. 356-357 (pp. 345-

A similar message is conveyed by the January 1628 end of mandate report by the captain of Brescia, which he began by praising the territory's support to the army's massive presence there since 1600, calling it a «golden donkey» because of the costs it had borne in terms of lodgings, victuals etc., and also *gravezze*, with the province's share of the latter totalling a quarter of what the whole mainland paid. He feared the collapse of rural administrations under such a load, and identified much of both the cause and the potential remedy for imminent crisis in the functioning and malfunctioning of local public finance (the latter aspect was also touched on by his contemporaries in Verona and elsewhere). The *potenti* refused to pay their due of taxes to rural communes, and must be forced to. High spending and malversation in the latter's finances had much to do with litigiousness, but also with lodging the military, on which it was difficult to economize. The recent law forbidding the communities to borrow without the consent of Venetian authority was excellent but of dubious practicality, especially under the pressure of rising demands for lodgings, and the rural communes' certified debts through borrowing ran to D. 187,637.²⁹⁶ The law he referred to had been voted by the Senate in June 1627, and was followed the next month by the creation of an extraordinary magistracy to check spending by mainland *corpi territoriali* and communities. Requests by the communities to borrow literally poured in, peaking in 1629-1630 – from February to May 1629 alone the captain of Brescia alone authorized loans for D. 185,718.²⁹⁷

Though very large, the figures given above on borrowing obviously far understate the overall dimensions of the problem, even though the mainland governors' estimates of tax pressure on single peasant families may not be very reliable. Conditions in the

394); conversion from ducats of account to wheat based on L. PEZZOLO, *Una finanza*, p. 38. A similar estimate of yearly *gravezze* was made in 1623 by the captain of Vicenza – D. 4-6 p.a. for a rural wage-labourer: *Relazioni dei rettori*, VII, p. 293.

²⁹⁶ *Relazioni dei rettori*, XI, pp. 305-07; more detailed data, including estimates of the rural communes' indebtedness (300,000 *scudi* in 1625, just for the plains area), in MICHAEL KNAPTON, *Cenni sulle strutture fiscali nel Bresciano nella prima metà del Settecento*, in *La società bresciana e l'opera di Giacomo Ceruti*, ed Maurizio Pegrari, Brescia 1988, pp. 73-74, 79 (pp. 53-104).

²⁹⁷ GIGI CORAZZOL, *Livelli a Venezia nel 1591. Studio storico*, Pisa 1986, p. 109 ff.

Veronese and Bresciano – much exposed to defence demands through the direct presence of troops in the early decades of the seventeenth century – were certainly not wholly typical. But detailed data for ordinary tax levels in the Vicentino around 1630 confirm the social imbalance in sharing the costs of defence demands, and their high overall profile in rural areas' overall tax burden. State revenue and spending left local finance to cover most of the aggregate costs of government: rural taxpayers paid D. 28,500 of the total *gravezze* collected by the Venetian exchequer in Vicenza, and a further D. 68,000 of direct tax beyond that. The first figure included all the province's D. 15,000 annual share of the new lodgings tax, which had more than doubled their total of *gravezze* due to the exchequer, while the second figure included further costs connected with lodging troops (D. 8,700, compared with the city's D. 3,000), and D. 3,498 for the *cernide*.²⁹⁸

A broader analysis based partly on these same data, partly on Veronese figures, suggests that from the late sixteenth century to the 1620s spending on militia, troops' transit, carriage duties and upkeep of roads constituted at least a fifth of rural communes' spending, and was double their share of *gravezze* due to the Venetian exchequers. The Veronese data also show a progressive increase in rural communities' overall spending in the 1610s and 1620s, clearly caused by higher demands by the state, though to a considerable extent extraneous to state finance in the sense of money handled by the exchequers – and the very numerous references to the cost of defence dues and services in sections II and III of this essay are undeniable evidence of where those higher demands came from.²⁹⁹

Equally clear is the fact that in these same years the mainland contributed a higher proportion of the real, and not just nominal, increase in overall Venetian state income (the part that in the main-

²⁹⁸ MICHAEL KNAPTON, *L'organizzazione fiscale di base nello stato veneziano: estimi e obblighi fiscali a Lisiera fra '500 e '600*, in *Lisiera. Immagini, documenti, problemi per la storia e cultura di una comunità veneta. Strutture, congiunture, episodi*, ed Claudio Povolo, Lisiera (Vicenza) 1981, p. 402 ff. (pp. 377-418); IDEM, *Il Territorio vicentino*, p. 63.

²⁹⁹ L. PEZZOLO, *Una finanza*, p. 67 ff., 72 (fig. 4), 74. An interesting analysis of parallel trends, albeit with slightly different timing, in D. MAFFI, *Il baluardo della corona*, chs 6-7.

land was handled by the exchequers), which grew at an average of 2.7% p.a. from 1601 to 1630. The cost of the Gradisca conflict swallowed the contents of the war chest Venice had been setting aside after paying off the old consolidated public debt, and triggered a new cycle of government borrowing; the years immediately following the war brought the mainland higher rates of existing indirect taxation, and new or further taxes on such things as milling (*dazio macina*), wine (*dazio del ducato per botte*), transit duties on silk and leather, income from rentes (*livelli*), inheritance – much of it taxation directed at mass consumption.³⁰⁰

A point to emphasize further, in this context of greater tax pressure on *terraferma* subjects through both state and local public finance, is the impact of the commutation of defence duties into monetary obligations in the later part of the three decades examined. Practice current at the start of the period had of course already included money contributions from the mainland in the event of war, based on ordinary or extraordinary tax revenue raised by local institutions, but they were the result of a much more haphazard process of gift-giving often solicited by Venice, and often also overlapping with contributions of troops. The Interdict crisis had brought offers of money rather than troops from Belluno, Conegliano, Oderzo and Serravalle,³⁰¹ and the two years of the Gradisca war were the occasion of many more such offers, totalling roughly D. 300.000 (though the sum actually paid was probably less). They were made by towns like Treviso, Belluno, Sacile and Noale; various clergy, including the Patriarch of Aquileia; feudatories like the Savorgnan; the *corpi territoriali* of the Vicentino, Veronese and Bresciano; professional bodies such as notaries – and there were also gifts in kind (wheat from Udine, iron from the Valcamonica). Significant as a signal for the future was the Senate's consent, given to Vicenza in December 1616 and to Brescia in 1617, for the conversion of their previous offers of troops into money gifts, owing to the difficulties they had encountered in recruitment and

³⁰⁰ L. PEZZOLO, *Una finanza*, pp. 38-40, 53-54, 57, 78-79; L. PEZZOLO, *Il fisco dei veneziani*, pp. 75-76, 108-112, 116-119; G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, pp. 106-07.

³⁰¹ ASVE: SDP, filza 63, 22 Feb. 1607; ST, reg. 76, c. 167v, reg. 77, c. 26.

organization.³⁰² By the time of the Mantuan war, as we have seen, mainland institutions' preference for money payments over the complications of recruiting troops was very clear, and the cities, now systematically including the biggest, committed themselves to paying large sums – Brescia D. 40.000, Verona D. 30.000, Vicenza D. 24.000, Padua D. 18,000 and so on.³⁰³

There can be no doubting, therefore, that in most of the mainland increasing tax pressure to feed state finance via the *camere fiscali* was added to an already heavy burden of defence demands on the local sectors of public finance, as handled by rural communities and *corpi territoriali* but also by cities. The rural communities had indeed entered a phase of major indebtedness with the famine years of 1587-1593, and the crisis manifest in their finances in the 1620s was in part a carry-through from problems created then. The result of all this in local finance was chronic arrears, shortfall and default on many payments due, with borrowing a temporary solution which rapidly became a further problem. This trend was already evident in the 1620s, and was exacerbated by the additional spending needs and loss of income associated with the plague, so that it continued in the following decade.³⁰⁴

2) *Defence burdens and changing political relationships*

Despite the considerable strains generated by defence burdens over the decades analyzed in this essay, there are no known recorded instances of open rebellion against them by mainland subjects. The demands made of them and the damage they suffered produced a significant volume of protest by *terraferma* institutions to Venetian authority, usually in the shape of attempts to negotiate with it, with a view to diminishing the demands or to sharing them differently, and in the hope of obtaining redress for damage. An integral part of

³⁰² ASVE: SDP, filza 63, (offers of assistance 1615-1617); ST, reg. 86, c. 290v, reg. 87, c. 131. On Vicenza and Brescia, see above [text and note 264](#).

³⁰³ ASVE, SDR, Brescia, 23 Mar. 1630 & Verona, August 1629; BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 491, n° 6, cc. 15v-16v; *Relazioni dei rettori*, IV, p. 246; ASVE, ST, reg. 102, cc. 6v, 155.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, reg. 80, c. 326; ASVE, SDR, Crema, 21 May 1632; *Relazioni dei rettori*, I, p. 217, VII, pp. 293, 354, XI, pp. 277, 386-87, XIII, pp. 184, 202. See too G. CORAZZOL, *Livelli a Venezia*, p. 109 ff.; G. TREBBI, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797*, pp. 288-289 on Friuli; G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, pp. 94, 102-03, 125 on the Veronese.

this process, undoubtedly counterproductive in sheer terms of defence efficiency, were indeed the often long and acrimonious arguments over how to spread the weight of the demands made. Nonetheless, their effect was not only to challenge but also to alter substantially the established patterns of sharing the burdens of defence laid on different social orders, as well as to erode exemptions and privileges – processes parallel to the commutation of many dues into money levies.

Such alterations were largely gradual, and accompanied by negotiation, as happened with the shift of much of the responsibility for cavalry lodgings onto the cities, or with the coaxing used by Venice to extend to mountain communities the obligation to create *cernide* companies. It is however undeniable that there were major changes in the sharing of the burdens of defence, a process parallel to the commutation of many dues into money levies. Among Venetian authorities the most forthright support for change in this sense came from those most directly involved in coordinating the war effort, as happened with the introduction of the tax to replace cavalry lodgings in 1621, which was done through the initiative of a *provveditore generale*.

On 14th December 1629, indeed, *provveditore generale* Erizzo ordered a further step in the same direction: all the additional military activities undertaken during the period of emergency from the previous January onwards, and all those still to come – for lodgings, pioneers, carriage services etc. – should be shared out fairly between the mainland provinces on the basis of their taxable wealth as had been done for the provision of carts, and should be covered by special taxes, so as to avoid excessive burdens on the areas most directly involved by the war effort (in this case the Veronese and Bresciano).³⁰⁵ Marrying commutation of dues into money so explicitly and systematically with their sharing – between the mainland's single provinces, and between each province's social orders – on the same basis as established *gravezze*, was a sharp acceleration from the previous, gradual drift in those two directions over the previous decades, already a source of controversy. Erizzo's order was indeed

³⁰⁵ BCVI, Arch. Torre, b. 491, n° 2, cc. 5-6; L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, pp. 117-118.

opposed by various cities and *corpi territoriali*, becoming the object of Venetian attempts to recover sums due, and of course of endless dispute, both of which dragged on till the 1650s and beyond, apparently without ending in satisfactory compensatory payments.³⁰⁶

But the final destiny of this order does not diminish the importance of the trend it sought to accelerate. On the issue of sharing we have already seen how Venice sought to obtain contribution by cities to the provision of carriage duties, with the sharing of ordinary *gravezze* as the basis for allocating the burden, in both the Gradisca and the Mantua wars. Likewise it favoured – albeit in a piecemeal fashion, and seeking to avoid the use of blunt coercion – contribution by mainland cities to the new lodgings tax instituted in 1621, and especially the 1620s were a key period for protests, requests and negotiations relating to the distribution of defence demands in general.

Practical considerations were much in play in government's willingness to listen to requests for fairer sharing, as it became aware of the risks consequent on not alleviating the pressure of defence and tax demands on areas militarily at risk, and also on not lightening the burden on the rural population in general. The sharing of defence demands was in fact a question Venice simply had to tackle, as it tried to face the problem of local *terraferma* institutions' finances and indebtedness – a mingling of concerns evident in the printed collections of *ordini* for administrative practice especially concerning rural institutions, promoted by Venetian authorities in the mainland with a frequency of publication and overall bulk which both significantly increased in the early seventeenth century.³⁰⁷ And these questions inevitably overlapped with more general issues of tax sharing. A first, key issue was: should military dues commuted to money be paid for on the basis of the personal *estimo*, basically as a capitation tax which primarily affected peasants, or on the property-based *estimo reale*, which shifted the main burden onto citizens (or should these latter at least accept liability for part of it, though perhaps less than what hindsight indicates as their fair share)? Furthermore, when property transactions concerned mem-

³⁰⁶ L. PORTO, *L'esercito veneziano*, pp. 119-126.

³⁰⁷ For the example of *ordini* concerning the Friulan *Contadinanza*, see the paper by Raffaele Ganesini in «Venezia non è da guerra».

bers of different social orders, each with separate tax listing and set totals of each *gravezza* to pay, should that property remain liable to the taxes due to the original owner's social order? This second issue concerned primarily the rural communities, since shifts of land ownership from peasants to citizens had for decades penalized rural taxpayers, reducing their taxable wealth while their set totals of tax due to Venice had changed at best little or late, and creating a vast imbalance in fiscal pressure further aggravated by the taxes the communities themselves imposed.

During the first decade of the century the first issue was decided in favour of rural communities for such taxes paid to the Venetian exchequers as the *fabbriche di Legnago* and the *tasse di gente d'arme*,³⁰⁸ but it remained open for others, especially the taxes raised to face military demands but not handled by the state exchequers. In 1619 the captain of Verona, resuming matters already regulated by his predecessor in 1613 (but significantly without practical effect), decided to split the taxes for *cappelletti* etc., timber needed in the fortifications, carriage duties and rural communities' ordinary spending in general, assigning half each to the property and the personal *estimi*, and assigned taxes for galiots, pioneers and extraordinary needs solely to the latter.³⁰⁹ This was not the last word, however, and on both this and the second issue just posed, Verona again offers a good example. An agreement made in 1575 between the city and the *corpo territoriale* whereby property changing ownership thereafter would remain on its tax lists of origin even if they were not those of the new owner had proved a dead letter, and – the timing is significant – was reformulated in 1627 and finalized in 1633. It subjected land acquired by citizens since 1575 to the taxes usually paid by rural inhabitants and also permanently lightened part of the rural communities' overall load of *gravezze*. Equally important for their content and timing, similar

³⁰⁸ On *fabbriche di Legnago*, L. PEZZOLO, *L'oro dello stato*, p. 57; S. ZAMPERETTI, *Per una storia*, p. 113; on *tasse*, L. PEZZOLO, *L'oro dello stato*, p. 50. On Padua ASPD, Arch. Civ. Antico, Territorio, b. 111, n° 470, cc. 30-50, b. 308, n° 1218, c. 11; Milizie, b. 33, n° 1, cc. 1-7v. On Treviso ASTV, Arch. Com., b. 1336, n° 8, cc. 1-2. On Verona BCBS, Arch. Civ., n° 1055, reg. 2, cc. 148v-160; ASTV, Arch. Com., b. 1336, n° 7, cc. 11-20. On Brescia *ibid.*, c. 2v. See too I. PEDERZANI, *Venezia e lo «Stado de Terraferma»*, pp. 302-303.

³⁰⁹ G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, pp. 136-37.

decisions were made for the Bresciano in 1632 and the Vicentino in 1633.³¹⁰

Another feature of these tax-sharing issues, worth a brief mention, was the evergreen plant of mainland resentment at the drainage from the provinces' taxable wealth of property acquired by Venetians. It reappeared in these decades for instance in the form of demands, accepted by government, that such property pay *tasse di gente d'arme* – demands justified by the fact that this tax had left the sphere of local finance to become a *gravezza* officially paid to the provincial exchequers.³¹¹

The overall significance of the matters just discussed is that contingent circumstances – three decades of military readiness, including two periods of pressure further heightened by war fought on home ground – subjected the mainland's resources to lasting, major strain. They stimulated decisions and proposals by Venetian government at least partly tending to break down localism and promote administrative efficiency through uniformity, as with the evolution of carriage duties in wartime. Moreover – with rather more solid results – they generated pressure favouring the redistribution of the burdens connected with defence duties, a process inseparable from the broader issues of tax sharing. In doing this they also intensified the political relationship between government and a greater number and variety of *terraferma* institutions and interest groups.

This last result was also achieved by the use of so many mainland subjects in a direct military role, exposed to the risks of war but – in the case of the militiamen, urban and rural – gratified by the grant of privileges. An interesting twist to this closer relationship between government and its *terraferma* subjects concerns those exemptions, and the pressure we have seen exerted by mainland institutions to limit Venetian concession of fiscal and judicial privileges to militiamen. What Venice used as a substitute for payment, to lessen the financial burden of defence organization on state

³¹⁰ G. MAIFREDA, *Rappresentanze rurali*, p. 142 ff.; F. VECCHIATO, *Il mondo contadino*, pp. 357-358; M. KNAPTON, *Cenni sulle strutture fiscali*, pp. 68-69; IDEM, *Il Territorio vicentino*, p. 72.

³¹¹ ASTV, Arch. Com., b. 1336, Della città di Treviso..., c. 33 ff.; ASVE, ST, reg. 92, cc. 27v-28.

finance, in turn eroded the communities' resources subject to tax and personal duties, and weakened ordinary lawcourts' jurisdiction. On this issue government showed sensitivity by restricting the number of such privileges' beneficiaries, but its willingness to meet the interests of its subjects in arms where possible is also clear in other circumstances, as for example in its release of *cernide* from service at harvest time, and in its promises to limit militiamen's duration of service. Such promises were not always honoured, but Venetian patricians' reports and perception of behaviour by Spanish and Austrian Habsburg government at the time of the Gradisca war greatly emphasize a sense of difference from these governments' use of brutal coercion in the mobilization of militia and pioneer forces: thus the *provveditore oltre Mincio* and the *provveditore* at Crema in March 1617, and reports of January and April 1616 concerning events in Austrian territory.³¹²

Entrusting an increasingly high proportion of the mainland population with arms did not mean guileless Venetian confidence in their goodwill, despite copious rhetoric to the contrary, and government was well aware, for example, that mainland fortifications, especially citadels, could also offer defence against internal hostility.³¹³ The problem of confidence especially concerned its relationship with *terraferma* nobles. Though some were essential to Venice's war effort, others nourished clear, mostly passive but occasionally treacherous sympathy for foreign rulers; efforts by them to use militia forces to legitimize retainers' possession and use of arms were by no means rare; a great many were far more patriotic in words than deeds. Indeed, in arming so many of its subjects, and at least partly meeting primarily rural demands for redistribution of defence dues and taxes in general, Venice was also acting to limit the traditional power of nobles and cities – just as it was doing, between the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, by establishing tighter control over the administration of penal justice in the mainland, by

³¹² ASVE, SDP, filza 165, 11 Mar. 1617; filza 177, 20 Apr. 1616; filza 180, 7 Feb. & 10 Mar. 1617; *Relazioni dei rettori*, XIV, p. 134; BMCC, Cod. Cic., b. 2855, c. 92.

³¹³ On citadels, considered both as an aid to security and as a potential impediment to the recapture of a city lost to the enemy, see M. MALLETT, J. HALE, *The Military Organization*, p. 420 ff.

repressing noble violence, by drawing significant elements of the aristocracy into a closer relationship with the state which was more moulded in terms of clientage, by strengthening its overall political relationship especially with the élite elements of rural society strongly represented in the *corpi territoriali*.³¹⁴

Venetian diffidence of course had other strands to it, including well-grounded doubts about the extent to which peasants and urban workers really identified with the state and the cause of its defence, rather than with matters closer to home and to their skins and stomachs. Nonetheless the early decades of the seventeenth century saw the mainland's natives more directly responsible than ever before for its defence, in both peace and war. As often happened in the practice of Venetian government, here too – as with revisions in the sharing of defence duties – there was contingent pragmatism behind political choices which were presented in terms of the state's and its subjects' mutual affection. The Republic could no longer recruit with facility in the other Italian states, and arming its own subjects became a precondition for the more active foreign policy stance assumed in these decades. The modest standard of actual military performance, especially by auxiliary and extempore mainland troops, certainly limited field commanders' options in pursuing an attacking strategy and played a major part in forcing Venice to abandon that foreign policy stance, though regular forces and poor command were also heavily to blame – it is by no means a marginal detail that in the Gradisca war the percentage of militiamen deserting was if anything lower than among professional infantrymen.³¹⁵ There anyway remained the proof that Venetian subjects could be trusted with a large measure of the defence of the *terraferma* without fear of dangerous consequences for social and

³¹⁴ See LUCIANO PEZZOLO, *Esercito e stato nella prima età moderna. Alcune considerazioni preliminari per una ricerca sulla Repubblica di Venezia*, in *Guerre, stati e città. Mantova e l'Italia padana dal secolo XIII al XIX*, eds Carlo Marco Belfanti, Francesca Fantini D'Onofrio, Daniela Ferrari, Mantova 1998, esp. p. 19 (pp. 13-29); L. PEZZOLO, *Stato, guerra e finanza*, pp. 108-09; CLAUDIO POVOLO, *L'intrigo dell'onore. Poteri e istituzioni nella Repubblica di Venezia tra Cinque e Seicento*, Verona 1997, passim.

³¹⁵ L. PEZZOLO, *Stato, guerra e finanza*, p. 93; L. PEZZOLO, *I contadini*, pp. 46-47 (in April 1616 about 15% of the *cernide* at Mariano had deserted, as against 4% of the bombardier *scolari*, and nearly 25% of the recently enrolled professional infantry).

political stability, while a state for which historians are sometimes eager to diagnose political decline and rigidity at this rather early date, had in fact shown considerable initiative and flexibility in mobilizing mainland society's resources so massively for war, although subjecting both resources and political relationships to great strain.