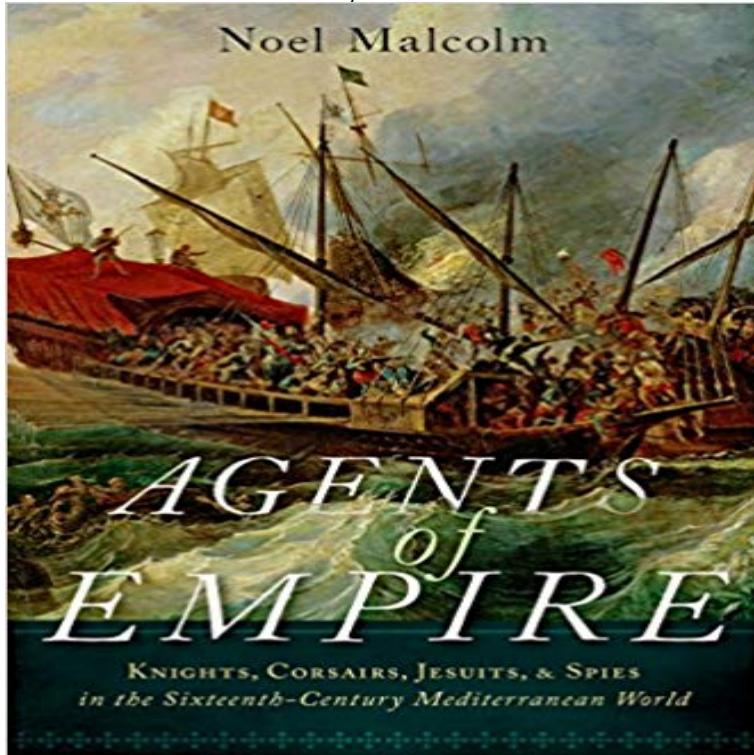


# Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean World



In the late sixteenth century, a prominent Albanian named Antonio Bruni composed a revealing document about his home country. Historian Sir Noel Malcolm takes this document as a point of departure to explore the lives of the entire Bruni family, whose members included an archbishop of the Balkans, the captain of the papal flagship at the Battle of Lepanto--at which the Ottomans were turned back in the Eastern Mediterranean--in 1571, and a highly placed interpreter in Istanbul, formerly Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire that fell to the Turks in 1453. The taking of Constantinople had profoundly altered the map of the Mediterranean. By the time of Brunis document, Albania, largely a Venetian province from 1405 onward, had been absorbed into the Ottoman Empire. Even under the Ottomans, however, this was a world marked by the ferment of the Italian Renaissance. In *Agents of Empire*, Malcolm uses the collective biography of the Brunis to paint a fascinating and intimate picture of Albania at a moment when it represented the frontier between empires, cultures, and religions. The lives of the polylingual, cosmopolitan Brunis shed new light on the interrelations between the Ottoman and Christian worlds, characterized by both conflict and complex interdependence. The result of years of archival detective work, *Agents of Empire* brings to life a vibrant moment in European and Ottoman history, challenging our assumptions about their supposed differences. Malcolm's book guides us through the exchanges between East and West, Venetians and the Ottomans, and tells a story of worlds colliding with and transforming one another.

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