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PRATO

Serie II – Atti delle “Settimane di Studi” e altri Convegni

50

RETI MARITTIME COME FATTORI
DELL'INTEGRAZIONE EUROPEA

MARITIME NETWORKS AS A FACTOR
IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



Atti delle “Settimane di Studi” e altri Convegni
50

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Selezione di ricerche

Selection of essays

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I testi pubblicati in questa collana raccolgono i risultati di ricerche originali attivate dalla Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini”, sulla base di un progetto varato dai suoi organi scientifici. Gli autori vengono selezionati a seguito di una Call for papers che indica gli obiettivi scientifici del progetto; la selezione è effettuata sulla base di proposte circostanziate contenenti indicazioni sulle questioni storiografiche che si intende affrontare, l'area e il periodo storico preso in considerazione e la tipologia delle fonti da utilizzare. La Giunta del Comitato scientifico, eventualmente integrata da specialisti, analizza le proposte e seleziona quelle ritenute più valide e coerenti con il progetto generale di ricerca. La commissione può anche decidere, ove lo ritenga opportuno, di effettuare inviti diretti a studiosi che si siano distinti per la qualità della loro produzione scientifica sul tema.

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Erik Aerts

A titolo introduttivo: 50 anni Datini

Nella storia recente, l'anno 1968 ha un significato affascinante ma rappresenta anche qualcosa di tragico. Quel periodo viene associato alla rivolta degli studenti che iniziò a Nanterre e si diffuse rapidamente in Francia e in altri paesi. Portò anche all'inizio e alla fine della cosiddetta Primavera di Praga nell'ex Cecoslovacchia. Negli Stati Uniti furono assassinati Martin Luther King e Robert Kennedy.

Il 1968 è stato un anno importante anche per Prato¹. Il 5 e 6 gennaio 1968 si riuniva per la prima volta il comitato scientifico dell'Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica. Un incontro così a ridosso dell'inizio dell'anno implicava chiaramente che fosse già stato fatto qualche lavoro preparatorio durante i mesi precedenti. Infatti, il 16 di ottobre del 1967, presso l'Azienda Autonoma di Turismo di Prato, in via Luigi Muzzi 51, si riunirono i rappresentanti degli Enti Promotori con all'ordine del giorno la costituzione di un Centro Internazionale di Storia Economica Medievale. Questo limite cronologico sarebbe presto decaduto e in pratica il periodo da studiare sarebbe stato esteso a tutta l'età preindustriale. Nel 1969 anche il termine "Centro" fu sostituito con "Istituto", soprattutto per distinguerlo dal Centro di Spoleto.

La vera forza trainante per la nascita dell'Istituto Datini fu Federigo Melis. Dal 1963 egli ricopriva la cattedra di Storia economica dell'Università di Firenze (dove rimase fino alla morte il 26 dicembre 1973). In una lettera del 18 novembre 1967 egli informò Fernand Braudel della sua intenzione di avviare una istituzione scientifica responsabile dell'organizzazione di un convegno internazionale con cadenza regolare. L'evento si sarebbe potuto tenere all'Archivio Datini di Prato "dove vi sono le sale sufficienti ed adatte per tenere annualmente una settimana di studio". Melis e Braudel si conoscevano dal 1954, periodo in cui Melis stava elaborando i progetti per la mostra dedicata all'Archivio Datini. A quel tempo, Braudel era già un "gran signore" della storiografia europea, autore di quello che divenne uno studio classico sul Mediterraneo e di una serie di importanti articoli pubblicati sugli *Annales*, la rivista storica più importante del mondo. Braudel accettò l'invito dell'amico e

¹ Questa piccola cronaca degli avvenimenti è basata in particolare sulle pubblicazioni dei professori A. ORLANDI (sul sito web <http://www.istitutodatini.it/> "Braudel, l'Istituto Datini e Prato 1954-1985") e G. NIGRO, *L'Istituto Datini e la storia economica (sec. XIII-XVIII)*, in *Dove va la Storia Economica? Metodi e prospettive sec. XIII-XVIII*, a c. di F. AMMANNATI, Firenze-Prato 2011 (Firenze University Press, Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini", Atti delle "Settimane di Studi" e altri Convegni, 42), pp. 3-12.

collega a presiedere il comitato scientifico del nuovo istituto e rimase in carica fino al 1984, anno in cui divenne membro dell'Accademia di Francia, carica incompatibile con la presidenza.

Melis e Braudel ricevettero immediatamente l'appoggio entusiastico di un gran numero di eminenti studiosi da Belgio, Francia, Germania, Ungheria, ex Jugoslavia, Portogallo, Spagna, Regno Unito, Unione Sovietica, Stati Uniti e naturalmente dall'Italia. L'aiuto e il supporto della città di Prato si rivelarono particolarmente preziosi e indispensabili per l'organizzazione delle Settimane di Studi e dei corsi di specializzazione per i giovani studiosi con ricorrenza annuale.

La prima Settimana si tenne nella primavera del 1968, dal 18 al 24 aprile. Nel suo discorso inaugurale del 18 aprile, Fernand Braudel sottolineò gli stretti legami di amicizia tra i membri fondatori e fece riferimento all'importante ruolo avuto da Federico Melis. Annunciò anche che sarebbe stata studiata l'economia di tutto "l'Ancien Régime" e che un posto di primo piano sarebbe stato riservato all'Italia per il semplice fatto che "toute l'économie d'Ancien Régime s'est d'abord créée ici" ("tutta l'economia dell'Antico Regime fu creata qui per la prima volta").

La scelta de "la lana" come tema centrale della prima settimana non fu certo una coincidenza. Braudel la giustificò con una domanda retorica: "l'industrie textile n'a-t-elle pas, à partir du XIIIe siècle et jusqu'à la révolution industrielle, été un élément décisif de croissance?" ("L'industria tessile dal XIII secolo alla rivoluzione industriale, non è stato forse un elemento decisivo per la crescita?"). Egli affermò con convinzione che "La laine est liée à l'histoire globale de la civilisation de l'Europe" ("La lana è legata alla storia globale della civilizzazione europea").

Nel frattempo è trascorso mezzo secolo e quest'anno celebriamo l'inizio della 50° Settimana. Per onorare Fernand Braudel come uno dei padri fondatori della nostra cerchia di amici dediti allo studio della storia economica, uno dei miei predecessori nella carica di Presidente del Comitato Scientifico, il Professor Wim Blockmans, ha suggerito di organizzare questa Settimana su un tema caro a Braudel: le reti marittime. Braudel è entrato nella nostra memoria collettiva con il suo meraviglioso libro sul Mediterraneo come una unità fisica e umana. Prendendo come punto di partenza il concetto che Fernand Braudel ha del Mediterraneo, la sua visione delle reti marittime regionali come opportunità di integrazione economica sarà applicata a diverse aree dell'Europa e al di fuori di essa. Da più di 30 anni ormai, coloro che fanno ricerca sulle città applicano il concetto di "sistemi di rete" ai legami commerciali complessi, caratterizzati da gerarchie di mercato. Non è facile applicare rigorosamente le vicende del Mediterraneo ad altre aree marittime e neppure la mera estrapolazione dei fatti da quel contesto. Comunque la visione e le idee di Braudel saranno presentate in una serie di relazioni che esploreranno le reti tra individui, ma anche tra città, corporazioni mercantili, porti e diverse alleanze politiche. L'attenzione sarà rivolta alle reti economiche, ma queste sono ovviamente intrecciate con gli sviluppi istituzionali, finanziari nonché culturali. Le reti marittime erano e sono ancora componenti vitali, indispensabili ed essenziali della globalizzazione. Oggi, il novanta per cento di tutto il trasporto mondiale di beni avviene per mari e

oceani. Naturalmente non vengono trasportati solo merci, prodotti e persone, ma si scambiano anche le idee, quindi le reti marittime sono una parte essenziale della nostra cultura e anche della storia della nostra civilizzazione.

Come funzionavano esattamente queste reti marittime, con i loro nodi e raccordi, le vie d'accesso e gli avamposti, i mercati e i partecipanti, i centri e le periferie, sarà spiegato molto approfonditamente dal Professor Michael North dell'Università di Greifswald. Egli ha scritto un bel libro su questo tema complesso ma affascinante, dallo stimolante titolo "Tra il porto e l'orizzonte", uscito originariamente in tedesco² ma con numerose traduzioni.

² M. NORTH, *Zwischen Hafen und Horizont. Weltgeschichte der Meere*, München 2016.

Michael North

*Mari connessi**

La Terra è un pianeta d'acqua. I tre quarti della superficie sono coperti d'acqua ed oltre il 90% dei traffici mondiali si sviluppa per via d'acqua. Nonostante il fiorire di studi sulla storia globale, i mari come strumenti degli scambi globali hanno attratto ben poca attenzione da parte degli storici. Negli ultimi quindici anni, tuttavia, singoli mari, come il Mediterraneo (Abulafia), il Baltico (North), l'Atlantico (Butel), l'Oceano Indiano (Pursel) o il Pacifico (Matsura) hanno trovato i loro autori¹. *Ispirati dal lavoro di Fernand Braudel* *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1949), quegli storici hanno tracciato l'identità di mari e oceani basandosi sulle loro caratteristiche fisiche ed economiche di lungo periodo². La visione di Braudel di un mare chiuso visto come una sorta di innesco geografico per attivare integrazioni economiche ha spianato la strada per costruire analoghi sistemi chiusi, come il Baltico, il Pacifico, l'Atlantico, i Mari del Nord e l'Oceano Indiano.

Il mio compito consiste nel confrontare quelle diverse ricostruzioni e comprendere in che modo i vari mari e oceani erano o divennero integrati e connessi³. E dunque, mi propongo di esaminare le reti che collegavano tra loro mari e oceani e producevano intrecci tra le diverse sfere commerciali.

Partirò parlando dei Vichingi, i primi mercanti e navigatori europei che collegarono mari e oceani attorno all'anno 1000. In seguito, mi soffermerò sui mercanti della Geniza, le compagnie Datini e i mercanti e marinai olandesi. Concluderò con la percezione dei mari attraverso il prisma delle vie marittime europee.

* Per una lettura e alcune osservazioni della prima versione del mio testo mi è gradito ringraziare l'amico e collega Salvatore Ciriacono.

¹ D. ABULAFIA, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean*, Londra 2011. M. NORTH, *The Baltic: A History*, Cambridge, MA 2015. P. BUTEL, *Histoire de l'Atlantique, de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, Parigi 2012. M.N. PEARSON, *The Indian Ocean*, Londra 2006. M.K. MATSUDA, *Pacific Worlds. A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures*, Cambridge u. a. ³2014.

² F. BRAUDEL, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, Parigi 1949.

³ Per le connessioni marittime, si veda M. NORTH, *Zwischen Hafen und Horizont. Weltgeschichte der Meere*, Munich 2016. *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe 1300-1600*, a c. di W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, Londra-New York 2017. *Oceanic Histories*, a c. di D. ARMITAGE, A. BASHFORD, S. SIVASUNDARAM, Cambridge-New York 2018.

I VICHINGHI

I Vichinghi, o Uomini del Nord, fanno la loro prima apparizione nelle fonti a partire dalla fine dell'ottavo secolo, quando attaccarono monasteri come Lindisfarne, sulla costa di Northumberland, nelle isole britanniche, (793) e San Filiberto, alla foce della Loira (799). Sono diverse le spiegazioni avanzate per la loro improvvisa apparizione. Tra esse la pressione demografica e la scarsità di terra che li spinsero verso il mare, la combattività dei giovani e il desiderio di un facile bottino. La leadership tribale (*chieftains*) doveva essere costantemente difesa e riaffermata. Tutto ciò richiedeva successo in guerra (con la reputazione che ne derivava) e un ampio seguito, che un guerriero manteneva solo grazie alla continua distribuzione del bottino. L'Impero dei Franchi, che all'epoca si stava espandendo, appariva un facile bersaglio per il saccheggio. Nonostante gli sforzi di Pipino e Carlo Magno, il loro territorio non era ancora consolidato, e tanto meno difendibile in ogni parte. Navi e conoscenze nautiche erano essenziali per il successo, e i Vichinghi li possedevano entrambi in abbondanza. Essi erano in grado di salpare o remare coi loro vascelli nel Mar del Nord o nel Mar Baltico senza aver bisogno di orientarsi attraverso punti di riferimento costieri. Con le navi più piccole erano anche in grado di penetrare nell'interno, dove neppure un porto fluviale era al sicuro dalle loro scorribande⁴.

I Vichinghi approfittarono moltissimo dell'espansione del commercio frisone, delle cui ricchezze erano facilmente in grado di appropriarsi. Dorestad, alla foce del Reno, e Domburg, sull'isola di Walcheren, si erano trasformati in centri commerciali dove i frisoni, inizialmente agricoltori e rivenditori, cessarono di considerare il mare come spazio economico marginale, e iniziarono a vivere esclusivamente di artigianato e di scambi. I Frisoni commerciavano con Franchi, Anglo-sassoni, Scandinavi e Slavi. Navigavano lungo il Mare del Nord e le Coste atlantiche, ma anche lungo il Reno, fino a Colonia e ancora fino in Alsazia per comperare vino o addirittura a Strasburgo, per procurarsi grano. Le merci principali, tuttavia, erano schiavi: dalle isole britanniche e dalle regioni del mar Baltico li portavano fino a Verdun, uno dei principali mercati di schiavi, o addirittura fino al Mediterraneo. A Verdun e a Venezia i Frisoni acquistavano i beni provenienti dall'oriente per venderli a nord o ad est.

Negli anni 830 e 840 gli attacchi dei Vichinghi su Dorestad furono innumerevoli. Ciò produsse l'immediata reazione dell'Impero Franco, i cui re cercarono di proteggere i propri monasteri e centri commerciali, mentre allo stesso tempo tentavano di coinvolgere sul piano politico alcuni capi dei Vichinghi, attivando e alimentando le rivalità fra di loro.

Gli invasori riuscirono a creare centri di potere non solo in Scandinavia, ma anche nelle isole del Mare del Nord. I re Danesi, che dalla loro base nello Jutland erano riusciti a sottomettere "chieftains" e case reali minori, inizialmente controllavano le isole vicine e il passaggio tra il Mar Baltico e il Mare del Nord. Gradualmente, es-

⁴ E' possibile reperire un efficace quadro delle varie aree di espansione e controllo dei Vichinghi in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, a c. di P. SAWYER, Oxford 1997.

si estesero la loro influenza verso sud, fino alla costa del canale inglese. Attorno alla metà del IX secolo, i Danesi avevano conquistato all'incirca metà della costa inglese, e fatto di York il loro quartier generale. I Danesi sfidarono anche i Norvegesi in Irlanda, stanziati nelle isole Orkney, Shetland e nelle Ebridi. Ciò nonostante, i Vichinghi continuarono a minacciare anche l'Impero Franco. Dopo la divisione dell'843, fu soprattutto il regno della Francia Occidentale ad essere soggetto alle incursioni vichinghe. Nell'845, essi risalirono la Senna fino a Parigi, e la città fu salva solo dal pagamento di un riscatto di 7.000 sterline d'argento. Nell'Ovest della Francia, furono realizzate fortificazioni per proteggersi dalle incursioni solo attorno agli anni 870.

Map. 1. Reti commerciali dei Vichinghi



Mappa da: *The Viking World*, a c. di S. BRINK, N. PRICE, Londra 2008, p. 506.

Successivamente, i Vichinghi spostarono le loro attività verso le isole britanniche, nelle quali i re anglosassoni erano riusciti a scrollarsi di dosso il predominio danese. Ma tra la fine del X e l'XI secolo i Danesi, sotto i re Sweyn Forkbeard e Canute il Grande riuscirono a ristabilire il predominio sulla Norvegia e sugli Anglosassoni, che da allora furono costretti a pagare un tributo annuale in

metalli nobili. L'importo del cosiddetto *Danegeld*, pagato in otto grandi rate fra il 991 e il 1040, ammontò, in totale, a 248.647 sterline d'argento, ovverosia quasi 60 milioni di penny⁵.

Le spedizioni e gli insediamenti nelle isole britanniche stimolarono i Vichinghi a spingersi ancora oltre verso Ovest, verso l'aperto Oceano Atlantico. Tuttavia, non è chiaro se nel X secolo, quando i Vichinghi attraversarono l'Atlantico, navigando dall'Islanda alla Groenlandia, si fossero resi conto che si muovevano in un oceano, e non su un certo numero di mari. I reperti archeologici rinvenuti in Islanda, Groenlandia e Nord America confermano la presenza in quelle aree, narrata anche nelle famose saghe. Tra la Norvegia, l'Irlanda e l'Islanda vi era un commercio quotidiano di armi, tessuti, miele, grano, legname, catrame e tele. Secondo la *Saga of the Greenlanders* e la saga *Eirik the Red's Saga*, in Groenlandia fu realizzato un insediamento vichingo. La *Saga of the Greenlanders* ci informa anche sui viaggi in Nord America, la celebre *Vinland*. Negli anni Sessanta del Novecento Helge ed Anna Ingstad scoprirono i resti di edifici nella Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland (edifici simili a quelli realizzati in età vichinga in Islanda e Groenlandia) e identificarono la località con la Vinland descritta nelle saghe. Tuttavia, gli storici sono più scettici. Poiché le saghe furono trascritte da racconti orali molte generazioni dopo l'evento narrato, non possono essere utilizzate per provare l'esatta collocazione dei siti che descrivono. Tuttavia, è evidente che, attorno all'anno Mille, gente proveniente dalla Groenlandia e dall'Islanda intraprese diversi viaggi lungo la costa esterna del Nord America fino al Golfo di San Lorenzo e anche oltre verso sud. Essi costruirono accampamenti, entrarono in contatto con i nativi e, probabilmente, si spostavano regolarmente verso il Labrador per ottenere legname.

In quella regione incontrarono i nativi:

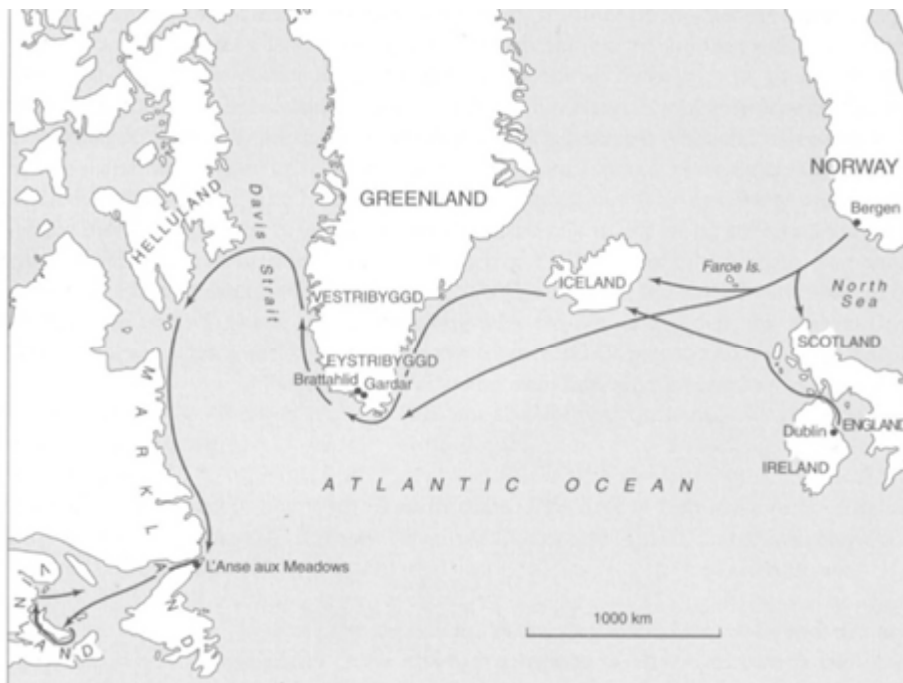
“Mentre facevano ritorno alla nave, videro tre collinette sulla spiaggia, nell'entroterra del promontorio. Quando si avvicinarono, videro che si trattava di tre barche coperte con funzione di nascondiglio, con tre uomini sotto ciascuna di esse. Divisero le loro forze e riuscirono a catturarli tutti, eccetto uno, che fuggì con il suo battello. Uccisero gli altri otto e tornarono indietro dal capitano. Osservando l'area, videro un certo numero di collinette più in alto sul fiordo, e ipotizzarono che si trattasse di insediamenti?”⁶.

Molti sopravvissuti raccontarono di queste prime avventure in Islanda e gli scrittori più tardi composero le saghe che oggi sono la principale fonte dei primi (documentati) incontri dell'Europa con l'America. Così, la mediazione dei Vichinghi tra le due sponde dell'Atlantico non produsse l'introduzione di nuove merci nelle loro comunità, ma sfociò nella narrativa. Coloro che rientravano in patria dedicarono il resto della vita a vantarsi dei grandi momenti che avevano vissuto, navigando attraverso i mari e scoprendo nuove terre, fino ad allora sconosciute.

⁵ G. HATZ, *Danegeld*, in *Von Aktie bis Zoll: Ein historisches Lexikon des Geldes*, a c. di M. NORTH, Munich 1995, p. 78.

⁶ *The Saga of the Greenlanders*, cap. 4, p. 10-11.

Map. 2. Esplorazioni e viaggi dei Vichinghi nell'Oceano Atlantico



Mappa da: *The Viking World*, cit., p. 562.

I paesi dell'Est e del Baltico offrivano significative opportunità per accumulare ed espandere la ricchezza. Pelli e pellicce provenienti dalle regioni orientali erano molto ricercate, nell'ottavo secolo, sui mercati occidentali e a partire da quel momento le risorse dell'Est furono sfruttate sistematicamente. Gli Svear (Sveroni) di Svezia, noti nelle fonti slave come Rus', o Varangi (Varjagi), erano particolarmente attivi in questo commercio. Essi erano stanziati a Starava Ladoga – a circa 15 chilometri dalla foce del fiume Volkov – lungo le rive del lago Ladova, del lago Ilmen e i tratti superiori del fiume Dnieper, il fiume Volga o il mar Caspio, dove vivevano a stretto contatto con Slavi, Finnici e Baltici. Raggiungevano il mondo arabo attraverso il fiume River, il Volga e il Mar Caspio, ottenendone in cambio (o rubando) grandi quantità di argento. Ciò è documentato da evidenze archeologiche⁷. Una fonte araba, composta dall'astronomo persiano Ibn Rustah parla dei Varangi in questo modo:

“Con le loro navi iniziarono ad effettuare incursioni contro gli Slavi, facendoli prigionieri e portandoli nella capitale Khazars e a Bolghar, dove li vendevano come schiavi. Essi non coltivano i campi, ma mangiano solo ciò che esportano dalla terra

⁷ J. SHEPARD, *The Viking Rus and Byzantium*, in *The Viking World*, a c. di S. BRINK, N. PRICE, Londra 2008, pp. 496-516. F. ANDROSHCHUK, *The Viking in the East*, in *The Viking World*, cit., pp. 517-542.

degli Slavi; le loro attività consistono esclusivamente nel commercio di zibellini, scoiattoli e altre pelli. Vendono queste pellicce ai loro clienti e in cambio ne ricevono una piccola fortuna che portano con sé legata alla cintura”⁸.

Un altro storico arabo, al-Masudi (ca. 896–956), descrisse un attacco agli abitanti del Mar Caspio nel decimo secolo. La flotta dei Varangi era già apparsa a Costantinopoli nell’860. La reazione di Bisanzio fu pacifica, con la stesura di accordi commerciali. A Kiev, altra roccaforte degli scandinavi in terre slave posta lungo il tratto medio del Dnieper, i Bizantini fondarono un insediamento commerciale, con una chiesa i cui servizi religiosi influenzarono i pagani a nord e la popolazione slava. I capi tribù dei Varangi si circondarono di seguaci scandinavi, uno dei quali, Rurik (c. 830-879) fu il fondatore della vecchia dinastia russa dei Rjurikidi. Rurik, con il figlio Oleg, costruirono roccaforti che riempirono di uomini in grado di mantenere il controllo del territorio⁹.

Uomini di mare e mercanti disegnarono la regione Baltica strutturando attorno ad essa centri di traffici multietnici. Ne risultò una pluralità di zone commerciali. Esse includevano la Scania nel Baltico occidentale, la costa meridionale del Baltico fino alla foce dell’Oder, la regione tra la foce dell’Oder e quella della Vistola, che includeva Curland e le due opposte isole di Gotland ed Öland; e inoltre la regione fra la Svezia centrale e il Golfo di Finlandia¹⁰. Mercanti, marinai e artigiani dei dintorni partecipavano ai traffici su lunga distanza, tra cui spesso anche quelli di schiavi. Frisoni e anglosassoni del Mare del Nord erano commercianti, come lo erano i mercanti arabi ed ebrei. Furono proprio questi ultimi a stabilire contatti con il mondo arabo e nei loro racconti richiamarono per primi l’attenzione sulla regione baltica. Ciò produsse una rete di centri commerciali. Il più importante di questi includeva Hedeby (Haithabu), al termine dello stretto di Schlei (Schleswig) (un importante centro di congiunzione fra i traffici del Mar del Nord e quelli del Baltico). Wolin, alla foce dell’Oder, e Truso, sul delta della Vistola, come Birk sul lago Mälaren, l’isola di Gotland, Staraya Ladoga in Russia, furono i punti di congiunzione fra i traffici del Mar Baltico e quelli del Mar Nero.

In effetti, la distinzione fra traffico e pirateria era piuttosto fluida, soprattutto quando concerneva beni intrinsecamente preziosi come gli schiavi. Così, per esempio, i mercanti-pirati slavi presumibilmente razziano a Hiddensee e Peenemünde ornamenti d’oro che erano stati prodotti da orafi scandinavi nel decimo secolo. D’altra parte, i beni scambiati regolarmente comprendevano grano, cavalli, miele, cera, pelli e ambra. Da occidente venivano armi, tessuti e macine, e inoltre contenitori di pietra ollare e pietra ollare dalla Scandinavia. Il sale veniva estratto dalle miniere o dalle saline costiere del Mar del Nord e dell’Atlantico, e successivamente introdotto sul mercato. Inoltre, artigiani locali e regionali producevano oggetti come i pettini.

Reperti archeologici e studi scientifici illustrano con grande evidenza l’estensione del traffico baltico, mentre ritrovamenti di mucchi di monete databili ci

⁸ Cit. in C. LÜBKE, *Das östliche Europa*, Berlino 2004, p. 109.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ J. HERRMANN et al., *Wikinger und Slaven: Zur Frühgeschichte der Ostseevölker*, Neumünster 1982, p. 125.

permettono di trarre conclusioni sul volume degli scambi e sui cambiamenti nelle rotte commerciali. Com'è facile immaginare, gli storici sono molto interessati al rinvenimento di consistenti quantità di monete avvenuti nelle regioni baltiche. Ad esempio, la crescente presenza (in quei ritrovamenti) di *dirham* arabi a partire dalla fine dell'ottavo secolo riflette il crescere dei traffici con il mondo arabo. Mentre la maggior parte dei *dirham* sono stati rinvenuti nell'area dell'entroterra del vecchio porto prussiano di Truso, a partire dal nono secolo il ritrovamento di monete arabe si sposta verso la Svezia e Gotland. Ciò dimostra che l'elemento capace di attivare questi scambi fu l'avanzamento e la diffusione dei Varangi in Russia. Monete in argento coniate dall'impero Samanide in Asia centrale, d'altra parte, erano accumulate in grandi quantità nei centri commerciali della Russia nordoccidentale come Staraya Ladoga, Novgorod, Polock, e Pskov e nelle regioni della Bulgaria del Volga. Fra i reperti, spesso troviamo frammenti d'argento lavorato che, assieme a pesi e bilance, talora ritrovate nelle strette vicinanze, offrono una evidente testimonianza del valore determinato dal peso e commercio di monete coniate, che potrebbe aver subito l'influenza dei sistemi di misurazione arabi¹¹.

Assieme all'argento, troviamo altri manufatti, come perle bianche provenienti dalle conchiglie di ciprea dell'Oceano Indiano. La loro successiva diffusione attraverso il Baltico e fino al Mar del Nord aiuta a dimostrare come i Vichinghi abbiano progressivamente consolidato il controllo sulle reti dei traffici di lunga distanza, divenendone al contempo dominatori.

I Vichinghi e i Frisoni, ma anche gli Slavi e i Baltici, misero in contatto varie sfere commerciali, svolgendo al contempo una funzione di mediazione. Le materie prime principali erano due. Innanzitutto gli schiavi; quel traffico attraversava le Isole britanniche, il Baltico, la Russia, il Mar Nero e il Mediterraneo. La seconda merce era l'argento arabo: esso fornì all'Europa le basi per una nuova economia monetaria, fondata sull'argento. Ciò stimolò lo sviluppo di mercati e centri commerciali, ma anche la creazione di stati, come in Russia, in Scandinavia e in Polonia. I tributi e il controllo delle forniture d'argento attraverso i traffici sulla lunga distanza costituirono elementi importanti per l'emergere di nuove élite, e per consolidare il loro status e il loro prestigio. Le due grandi direttrici delle rotte vichinghe - attraverso il Baltico fino al Mar Nero e dal Baltico verso la Spagna - gettarono le basi per il futuro commercio marittimo. Al contempo, mentre i Vichinghi collegavano mari e oceani, incontriamo un analogo sistema di reti arabe ed ebraiche nel Mediterraneo e nell'Oceano Indiano.

I MERCANTI DELLA GENIZA

Le attività commerciali ebraiche sono documentate dalle cosiddette "lettere della Geniza". Il nome deriva dal ritrovamento di materiali archivistici nella genizah o dispensa della sinagoga Ben Ezra di Al-Fustat (Antica Cairo, Egitto); essi mettono

¹¹ H. STEUER, *Geldgeschäfte und Hobeitsrechte zwischen Ostseeländern und islamischer Welt*, in "Zeitschrift für Archäologie", 12 1978, pp. 255-260. H. STEUER, *Gewichtsgeldwirtschaft im frühgeschichtlichen Europa: Feinwaagen und Gewichte als Quellen zur Währungsgeschichte*, in *Untersuchungen zu Handel und Verkehr der vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Zeit in Mittel- und Nordeuropa*, IV, a. c. di K. DÜWEL et al., Göttingen 1987, pp. 405-527.

in luce l'esistenza di un'ampia rete di rapporti commerciali. Grazie a questa documentazione e alle ricerche in particolar modo di Jessica Goldberg siamo in grado di ricostruire ora gli spostamenti dei mercanti della Geniza nel Mediterraneo e nell'Oceano Indiano¹².

Uno dei protagonisti di cui Jessica Goldberg ha ricostruito gli spostamenti e la rete di traffici da lui controllata fu Imran Musa. Nato a Kairouan, nell'odierna Tunisia, attorno al 1045 si trasferì ad Alessandria, sposò una donna di famiglia ebraico-egiziana e divenne membro della comunità mercantile ebraica. Navigò a lungo, con l'obiettivo di entrare in contatto con mercanti e i centri commerciali esistenti al fine di estendere le proprie reti di contatti personali e mercantili. Musa non soltanto visitò vari porti e produttori in Egitto, ma raggiunse via mare anche la Tunisia e la Sicilia araba, giungendo fino alla Palestina, allora detta Al-Sham.

I suoi viaggi erano finalizzati a specifiche attività e obiettivi commerciali: accompagnare la spedizione di merci – molto spesso lino – che avrebbero dovuto viaggiare verso occidente o di quelle che ne giungevano per il rientro; spostare moneta e sbrigare pratiche amministrative legate al trasporto¹³.

Trasportava monete da Mahdiya e Fustat per conto di altri mercanti, acquistava ammoniaca e pepe in Sicilia. Musa era ansioso di completare un viaggio da Alessandria in Sicilia e rientrare in Alessandria prima che si chiudesse la stagione di navigazione, e ciò lo spingeva ad accelerare le vendite. Generalmente, trascorrevano in famiglia la stagione invernale, in modo da vendere di persona alcune delle merci che aveva accompagnato lui stesso verso Occidente, affidando invece altri beni da vendere a soci che vivevano in aree più vicine ai mercati di sbocco¹⁴.

Tuttavia, non bisogna immaginare la rete di traffici sulla lunga distanza dei mercanti della Geniza come un viaggiare ininterrotto. Al contrario, i commercianti che compivano viaggi su lunga distanza percorrevano regolarmente solo poche rotte principali: Fustat-Kairouan, Fustat-Palermo, Kairouan-Al-Andalus, Kairouan-Palermo. Infatti, quando navigavano verso est, usavano parte del tronco principale della rotta Fustat-Damasco, ma di solito si fermavano a Tiro, o in qualche caso a Tripoli, il più importante porto per al-Sham (attuale Siria)¹⁵.

Per qualche tempo, gli storici hanno tentato di collegare singoli mercanti della Geniza con il commercio di beni di lusso (pepe, spezie e oro) nel mondo arabo-mediterraneo. Mercanti come Musa, tuttavia, testimoniano della grande importanza della produzione agricola; specialmente la produzione del lino aveva, nell'XI secolo, una grande influenza su cicli economici e rotte marittime.

¹² S.D. GOITEIN, *Letters of Jewish Traders*, Princeton 1973. J.L. GOLDBERG, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean. The Geniza Merchants and their Business World*, Cambridge 2012.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

Map. 3. Reti commerciali dei mercanti della Genizah



Fonte: J. GOLDBERG, *Trade and Institutions*, cit., p. xvii.

I mercanti di Fustat provvedevano alla maggior parte delle importazioni dello Shām meridionale, offrendo un mercato di sbocco mediterraneo ai beni prodotti in questa regione. Solo nel XII e XIII secolo l'intensificarsi della navigazione sul Mar Rosso e il Mar Arabico rese i costi di pepe, ginger e cannella più bassi e accessibili agli strati medi di consumatori; ciò spinse i mercanti della Geniza e i commercianti arabi fino all'Oceano Indiano.

Inoltre, l'espansione dei mongoli, basata sulla pax mongolica (c. 1200/50-1350) aprì a governanti, viaggiatori e mercanti europei i contatti e gli scambi commerciali con le terre occupate dall'Orda d'Oro, e oltre fino alla Cina. I viaggiatori della famiglia Polo sono i più noti, in mezzo ai molti mercanti dell'Italia settentrionale che commerciavano in Cina o in Asia. Il padre di Marco Polo, Nicolò, aveva già visitato la Cina con il fratello Matteo in varie spedizioni mercantili nel periodo compreso fra 1250 e 1269, prima che Marco Polo, intraprendesse, nel 1271, il viaggio che lo avrebbe portato, attraverso Seljuk, l'Asia Minore, l'impero persiano di Ilkhans, lungo la Via della Seta, fino alla residenza del Kublai Khan in Cina. Nel viaggio di ritorno, egli utilizzò la Via della Seta marittima, che lo riportò indietro attraversando l'Oceano Indiano, il Golfo Persico e il Mar Nero, fino a Venezia.

LE COMPAGNIE DATINI

Potrei, a questo punto, soffermarmi ad analizzare il ruolo delle compagnie delle repubbliche marittime di Genova e Venezia che, a partire dal XIII e XIV secolo, si divisero il mondo mediterraneo, collegandolo con le due aree orientale e occidentale. Essi integrarono le varie reti del Mediterraneo e le espansero innanzi tutto fino all'Atlantico e al Mare del Nord.

Poiché durante la Settimana avremo modo di ascoltare diversi contributi su Venezia e Genova e poiché sto concentrando le mie riflessioni sui protagonisti che hanno collegato i mari; e poiché, infine, siamo a Prato, focalizzerò la mia attenzione su Francesco Datini. In particolare, sulla compagnia Datini di Catalogna, che sembra un perfetto esempio di come mercanti e merci abbiano utilizzato e collegato i vari mondi marittimi. Grazie ad Angela Orlandi¹⁶ conosciamo molti particolari su questa compagnia, che aveva agenzie a Barcellona, Valenza, e Palma di Maiorca, punto di raccordo delle rotte che collegavano il Nord Europa al Mediterraneo, attraverso lo stretto di Gibilterra, oltre che punto di contatto con i ricchi mercati e i mercanti arabi dell'Africa settentrionale¹⁷.

Il commercio spagnolo era integrato nel traffico datiniano su lunga distanza, che si dispiegava al di là del Mediterraneo e dell'Atlantico. La Compagnia Datini inviava prodotti agricoli locali - seta, cotone, allume e materie tintorie - verso Bruges e, in cambio, le compagnie fiorentine dei Mannini, Caccini, Alberti e di Deo Ambrogi spedivano tessuti nordici (Wervicq, Kortrijk, Herentals), calze, biancheria, robbia, stagno e ornamenti verso la Spagna. I mercanti del gruppo Datini inviavano kermes, seta, piume di struzzo e cotone a Montpellier: prodotti, tutti, destinati al consumo locale e ai viaggi di ritorno verso Parigi, Bruges e Milano. A Barcellona, il principale prodotto che la compagnia Datini ne riceveva in cambio era il guado (o pastello) destinato alle botteghe di lana di Barcellona, Valenza, e Palma di Maiorca¹⁸.

Venezia riforniva Valenza e Maiorca di ciò che giungeva dal Vicino Oriente nonché dai molti vivaci mercati italiani, tedeschi e dei paesi balcanici, come specchi, carta, guado, rame, argento, galla, zucchero, cotone, cannella, ginger e pepe; in cambio mercanti ricevevano grandi quantità di lana, seta e pelli, caricati sulle galee insieme con panno per farsetti, zafferano, verdetto¹⁹, candele, giare di maioliche e cordami.

Non è un caso se nel marzo 1398 si disponesse di spedire immediatamente a Valenza i beni trasportati dalle galee a Maiorca, con qualcuna delle barche presenti in quel momento a Porto Pi. In questo modo quei beni sarebbero stati ricevuti e venduti prima dei concorrenti; infatti, prima di arrivare ai porti della costa meridio-

¹⁶ A. ORLANDI, *The Catalonia Company: an Almost Unexpected Success*, in *Francesco di Marco Datini. The Man the Merchant*, a c. di G. NIGRO, Prato-Firenze 2010 (Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini" - FUP), pp. 347-376.

¹⁷ G. NIGRO, *Gli operatori economici toscani nei paesi catalani a cavallo del '400: alcuni casi esemplari*, in *Aspetti della vita economica medievale: atti del Convegno di studi nel X anniversario della morte di Federigo Melis* (Firenze-Pisa-Prato, 10-14 marzo 1984) Firenze 1985, pp. 283-303, 287-288.

¹⁸ A. ORLANDI, *The Catalonia Company*, cit., p. 356.

¹⁹ Sostanza tintoria verde ottenuta trattando il rame con l'aceto.

nale del Turia le galee si fermavano a Maiorca e per qualche giorno anche ad Ibiza²⁰. In quel caso possiamo davvero dire che il tempo era denaro!²¹

Vi erano beni di consumo particolari, come le piume di struzzo, per il cui acquisto e distribuzione il ramo d'azienda maiorchino fungeva da mediatore in tutta Europa. Si usavano come decorazioni per cappelli ed elmetti. Giungevano dalle coste della Barberia ed erano condotte a Maiorca via mare da Alcudia ed Honaine e successivamente distribuite verso le regioni nordoccidentali dell'Europa e la Penisola italiana. Tra il 1396 e il 1398 l'azienda maiorchina acquistò da sola più di 36.200 piume, per un valore di quasi 1320 lire²².

Uno dei prodotti verso i quali il Datini mostrava particolare interesse era il kermes, un colorante rosso per tessuti. La compagnia catalana era la più vicina al Nord Africa, la Spagna meridionale e la Provenza, aree di origine del prodotto. Si trattava di kermes che competeva sul mercato con quello proveniente dal Mediterraneo orientale²³. Entrambi i tipi di kermes, occidentale ed orientale, trovavano la loro strada fino a svolgere la loro funzione bollendo nei calderoni degli esperti tintori europei di stoffe e di seta, che in questo modo ottenevano le tonalità e le sfumature più costose e ricercate del rosso: scarlatta, vermiglio, rosso sangue, porpora, rosa e molti altri²⁴. Uno dei vantaggi competitivi del gruppo Datini nei confronti degli avversari era l'abilità nell'ottenere informazioni aggiornate su tutti i fattori che potessero influenzare i prezzi: prodotti concorrenti e mercati, stime sulla produzione nelle varie aree e meccanismi più sottili, come tutte le informazioni che circolavano sui movimenti dei prezzi, il comportamento dei mercanti o le vicende politiche. All'inizio del 1397, quando i prezzi improvvisamente salirono dopo le notizie arrivate da Bruges, secondo le quali si prevedeva di realizzarvi ottimi profitti²⁵, i nostri mercanti furono pronti ad approfittare dell'occasione²⁶.

Nello stesso anno, la guerra marittima bloccava l'arrivo del kermes orientale su tutti i mercati dell'occidente; Francesco Datini e Cristofano Carocci risposero pronosticando un considerevole aumento dei prezzi e consigliarono ai soci di abbandonare la spedizione di ogni altra mercanzia, per concentrarsi sul kermes²⁷.

Quanto descritto è solo un rapido colpo d'occhio sulla corrispondenza datiniana e dimostra come le attività della compagnia catalana fossero intimamente connesse, attraverso il mare, con l'intero mondo del commercio europeo. In generale, la corrispondenza Datini, che documenta gli anni compresi fra il 1380 e il 1410, dimostra come l'Europa occidentale e meridionale e il Vicino Oriente fossero già

²⁰ A. ORLANDI, *Mercaderies i diners: la correspondència datiniana entre València i Mallorca (1395-1398)*, València 2008, p. 39.

²¹ EADEM, *The Catalonia Company*, pp. 357-358.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 358.

²³ F. MELIS, *Malaga nel sistema economico del XIV e XV secolo*, in *I mercanti italiani nell'Europa medievale e rinascimentale*, a c. di L. FRANGIONI, Firenze 1990, pp. 186-190.

²⁴ A. ORLANDI, *The Catalonia Company*, p. 368.

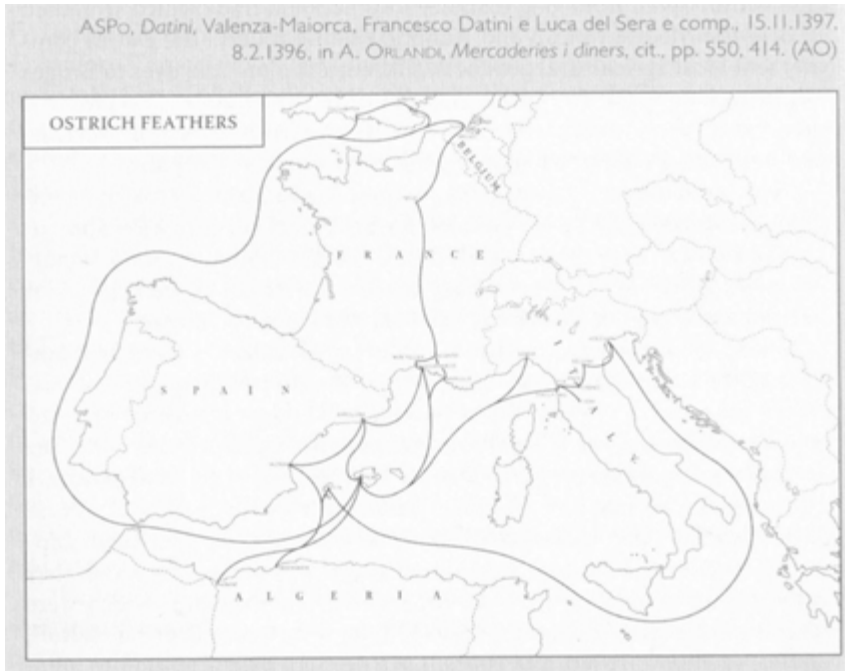
²⁵ EADEM, *Mercaderies i diners, lettera 169*, p. 425.

²⁶ EADEM, *The Catalonia Company*, p. 369-370.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 370. ASPO, Datini, Maiorca-Firenze, Francesco Datini e Cristofano Carocci e comp., 20.8.1397.

strettamente connessi da reti di comunicazione consolidate: una lettera da Venezia a Bruges (25 giorni) o a Londra (33 giorni), impiegavano un tempo non molto minore di quello che avrebbero impiegato per giungere a destinazione una lettera diretta a Rodi (29), Costantinopoli (38 giorni) o Acri (33)²⁸.

Map. 4. Reti commerciali di Francesco di Marco Datini



Mappa da: A. ORLANDI, *The Catalonia Company*, cit., p. 358.

LA COSIDDETTA INVASIONE NORDICA NEL MEDITERRANEO: L'ESEMPIO DEI PAESI BASSI

Nel fondamentale lavoro *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Fernand Braudel disegnò un quadro della “invasione nordica” nel Mediterraneo. Secondo Braudel, gli olandesi e gli inglesi invasero il Mediterraneo grazie alla superiorità dei loro velieri e mantennero il controllo per tutto il XVII secolo.

È celebre l'affermazione di Braudel secondo la quale “gli olandesi irrupero nel Mediterraneo come uno sciame di insetti pesanti che si schiantano contro i vetri delle finestre; il loro ingresso non fu né gentile né discreto. Accadde perché si trat-

²⁸ F. MELIS, *Intensità e regolarità nella diffusione dell'informazione economica generale nel Mediterraneo e in Occidente alla fine del Medioevo*, in IDEM, *I trasporti e le comunicazioni nel medioevo*, Prato 1984, pp. 179-223.

tava di uomini più crudeli dei pirati (era l'opinione dei portoghesi che, dopo il saccheggio "da nossa cidade" di Faro erano certo in posizione di saperlo bene)²⁹? O perché si facevano strada nel Mediterraneo sgomitando, come avevano fatto nell'Atlantico? Vi erano stati altri ritardatari, nel XIII e XIV secolo, non ultimi quei Catalani che erano stati costretti a conquistarsi a forza un ruolo di protagonisti con la pirateria. Gli inglesi non furono da meno. Non usavano i cannoni soltanto per forzare un passaggio attraverso lo Stretto e difendersi contro le galere spagnole. Attaccavano indiscriminatamente qualunque imbarcazione valesse la pena di essere catturata – turca, francese o italiana, per gli inglesi non faceva differenza – ed acquisirono rapidamente una cattiva reputazione. Anche gli olandesi ricorrevano frequentemente alla pirateria. Ben presto si associarono con i corsari della Barberia, e ne trasformarono le tattiche (come vedremo in seguito), organizzando sia questa attività che le loro puntate illegali nell'Atlantico a partire dal gran porto di Livorno".

Negli ultimi due decenni questa interpretazione è stata rimessa in discussione da una coppia di studiosi. Molly Green, ad esempio, ha dimostrato che la presunta invasione nordica in realtà non sarebbe avvenuta, dal momento che greci e ottomani avevano partecipato in larga misura alle reti di commercio navale intramediterraneo³⁰. Recentemente Colin Heywood ha suggerito una revisione del "carattere, scala e portata [della invasione nordica] sulla base di analisi dettagliate delle persone (e dei loro vascelli e viaggi)"³¹.

In questa occasione non ci possiamo addentrare in un esame particolareggiato; tuttavia possiamo suggerire qualche linea interpretativa per approfondire lo studio della presenza olandese nel Mediterraneo e analizzare le cause del suo successo.

Innanzitutto, dobbiamo riconoscere che gli olandesi collegarono il Mediterraneo con altri mari e oceani, approfittando della richiesta mondiale di materie prime. Il commercio e la navigazione del Baltico avevano già messo in crisi l'Hansa; olandesi ed inglesi rivolsero dunque la loro attenzione verso altri mari e oceani. Ad esempio, a partire dalla fine del XVI secolo, in un momento caratterizzato da una grave carestia nell'Europa occidentale e meridionale, gli olandesi sfruttarono il loro monopolio del commercio del grano nel Baltico per intensificare i rapporti commerciali con l'Europa del sud. Gradualmente, la gamma di merci coinvolte nel commercio baltico gestito dagli olandesi mutò di natura. I paesi baltici cominciarono ad importare beni di lusso, come spezie, zucchero, agrumi e frutta coltivata nell'Europa meridionale, ma anche tessuti; al contempo, controllavano non solo l'esportazione di grano e legname, ma anche l'importazione di beni lavorati occidentali e prodotti di lusso. Seguendo questi schemi di commercio e navigazione, gli

²⁹ F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, I-II, Londra 1972/73, II, pp. 634-635, ed. ital., p. 675; B. GOMEZ DE BRITO, *Historia trágico-marítima*, Lisbona 1904-1905, II, pp. 506-507, about 1604.

³⁰ M. GREENE, *Beyond the Northern Invasion: The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century*, in "Past & Present", 174, 2002, pp. 42-71. M. FUSARO, *After Braudel: a Reassessment of Mediterranean History between the Northern Invasion and the Caravane Maritime*, in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean. Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, a c. di M. FUSARO, C. HEYWOOD, M.-S. OMRI, Londra-New York 2010, pp. 1-22.

³¹ C. HEYWOOD, *The English in the Mediterranean, 1600-1630: A Post-Braudelian Perspective on the Northern Invasion*, in *Trade and Cultural Exchange*, cit., pp. 23-44, 44.

olandesi presero piede nel Mediterraneo: il fenomeno descritto appunto da Fernand Braudel come “l’Invasione dal Nord”³². Trasportavano beni – ad esempio sale e lana spagnoli in Italia – e rifornivano il Mediterraneo con pepe e spezie provenienti dalle Indie Orientali.

Il traffico olandese con il Mediterraneo e il Levante dipendeva dallo status della loro guerra con la Spagna. Il primo vascello olandese, che aveva a bordo un valore di 100.000 ducati d’argento destinati all’acquisto di spezie e seta ad Aleppo, raggiunse le coste siriane nel 1595³³. I mercanti veneziani, francesi e inglesi in Oriente ne furono infastiditi, anche se ciò non minacciava i loro consolidati rapporti commerciali con Venezia. Alla fine, la tregua di dodici anni sottoscritta tra Spagna e Repubblica olandese (1609-1621) consentì ai mercanti di quest’ultima nazione di penetrare nel commercio del Mediterraneo. Essi trasportavano beni – come si è già detto sale e lana spagnoli destinati all’Italia – rifornendo l’area mediterranea di pepe e spezie provenienti dalle Indie Orientali; acquistavano inoltre cotone e seta grezza persiana. Dopo quella tregua, il Trattato di Westphalia (1648) aprì ulteriori opportunità per gli olandesi nel commercio mediterraneo e ancor più levantino. Alla fine essi giunsero a controllare non solo il commercio della lana spagnola, ma anche del cammello turco e della lana di capra, e poterono così garantirsi un costante rifornimento di materia prima per i tessuti di lana e di cammello prodotti a Leiden; quei prodotti finiti erano poi rivenduti nel Mediterraneo e nell’Impero Ottomano.

In questo contesto, è necessario approfondire il tema delle relazioni fra olandesi e ottomani. Mercanti fiamminghi e olandesi erano già presenti nell’area anche prima dell’arrivo della famosa nave ad Aleppo nel 1595. Inoltre, la pirateria olandese si era insediata nel Mediterraneo. Anche se gli Olandesi non avevano ancora siglato un trattato con l’Impero Ottomano, furono autorizzati al commercio con quest’ultimo in occasione della Capitolazione Francese del 1569. Questo trattato commerciale (rinnovato nel 1581, 1597 e 1604) stabiliva che altre nazioni “che non avevano sottoscritto alcun trattato potevano commerciare alle stesse condizioni concesse ai francesi, utilizzando la bandiera della Francia”³⁴. Le relazioni politiche fra Olanda e Impero Ottomano si intensificarono dopo la cattura da parte degli olandesi di uno squadrone di galere spagnole in Sluis, nel 1604. A bordo vi erano circa 1400 rematori, molti dei quali erano galeotti musulmani provenienti dall’Impero Ottomano. Gli olandesi promisero di rimandarli a casa in cambio della libertà di commercio e del diritto di rifugio nei porti ottomani per le navi olandesi. Poiché i traffici si andavano intensificando, gli Stati generali predisposero una missione commerciale e nel settembre 1611 Cornelius Haga fu spedito ad Istanbul. Vi giunse nel marzo 1612, e vi soggiornò fino al 1639. Furono condotti negoziati con la Sublime Porta, che mostrò di apprezzare l’inclusione degli olandesi nell’elenco delle potenze privilegiate che commerciavano con l’Impero. Già il 6 luglio 1612 all’ambasciatore olandese fu consegnato un documento ufficiale. Quell’accordo includeva la libertà di commer-

³² F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*, I, pp. 615-42.

³³ M. NORTH, *Art and Commerce in the Dutch Golden Age*, New Haven-Londra 1997, pp. 33-34. J.I. ISRAEL, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740*, Oxford 1989, p. 55.

³⁴ A.H. DE GROOT, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic. A History of the Earliest Diplomatic Relations 1610-1630*, Leida 2012, pp. 52-53.

cio per gli olandesi nei territori ottomani, regolamentava i dettagli per lo svolgimento di tale commercio e definiva lo status legale dei mercanti olandesi nell'Impero Ottomano³⁵. Benché i progetti che avrebbero previsto una sistematica alleanza politica e militare tra Ottomani e olandesi non andassero in porto, quell'accordo fornì una base giuridica al commercio olandese. Tuttavia, la Sublime Porta divenne viepiù sospettosa quando gli olandesi aprirono un insediamento commerciale in Persia. Un altro problema era il destino dei marinai olandesi catturati dai pirati musulmani sulla costa barbaresca. In questo contesto, Haga cercò di negoziare per ottenerne la libertà e di trattare in merito con le autorità locali.

Inoltre, l'accordo del 1612 favorì l'insediamento di consolati olandesi nella regione, specialmente ad Aleppo, Algeri e Tunisi. Ulteriori consolati furono insediati a Cipro, Izmir e Gallipoli (ufficio): quest'ultimo assisteva le navi olandesi per le formalità del passaggio attraverso i Dardanelli.

In questo quadro non emerge a sufficienza il ruolo delle marinerie greca e ottomana, benché fossero proprio quei vascelli a trasportare la maggior parte delle merci nel Mediterraneo centrale e orientale, rifornendo Costantinopoli, capitale e grande centro di consumo, ad esempio, di grano proveniente dal granaio Egitto /Alessandria. Sarebbe inoltre necessario esaminare in modo più approfondito la cooperazione fra le marinerie dell'Europa Occidentale e il flusso regolare di traffico marittimo nell'Impeto Ottomano e nel Mediterraneo orientale.

Nello spiegare il successo olandese nel Mediterraneo e in altri mari, ci facciamo un'idea della connettività e dell'integrazione fra mari diversi. Una cosa indispensabile era un adeguato tonnellaggio delle navi. Grazie allo sviluppo di numerosi tipi di battello, i costruttori navali olandesi, a partire dalla fine del XVI secolo, avevano trasformato l'Olanda nella nazione leader in Europa per la cantieristica navale. Uno dei tipi di battello di maggior successo fu il *fluyt*, che, secondo il mito popolare, fu costruito per la prima volta in Hoom nel 1590³⁶. La cantieristica navale olandese e la stessa navigazione beneficiarono moltissimo dei *fluyt*, costruiti in gran numero sulla base di un design standardizzato e adatti alla maggior parte delle diverse tipologie di traffici. La standardizzazione delle fasi costruttive abbassò i costi di allestimento. Anche i costi di gestione di quelle navi erano bassi, grazie all'utilizzo di attrezzature tecniche di bordo, come il paranco, che consentivano dimensioni ridotte dell'equipaggio³⁷. Ciò significa che – in aggiunta agli altri fattori – gli olandesi erano in grado di offrire a mercanti e produttori, in patria e fuori, i costi di trasporto più bassi. Il volume di merci spostate via mare crebbe, e aumentò il tonnellaggio delle flotte commerciali (nel 1670 oltre 400.000 tonnellate), e così i costi di noleggio diminuirono³⁸. Dunque, l'investimento nel settore navale e il reclutamento della manodopera nell'ambito di un mercato del lavoro marittimo internazionale³⁹ erano anch'essi elementi cruciali per la connettività marittima.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-75.

³⁶ R.W. UNGER, *Dutch Shipbuilding before 1800. Ships and Guilds*, Assen-Amsterdam 1978, p. 36.

³⁷ M. NORTH, *Art and Commerce*, cit., p. 29.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁹ J. LUCASSEN, *The International Maritime Labour Market (Sixteenth-Nineteenth Centuries)*, in "Those Emblems of Hell?" *European Sailors and the Maritime Labour Market, 1570-1870*, a c. di P.C. VAN ROYEN,

Un altro aspetto del rapporto tra connettività marittima e successo olandese fu la combinazione unica tra commercio dei prodotti di massa e beni di lusso; in particolare, la crescente capacità di trasportare beni di consumo di massa consentì l'apertura di nuovi mercati nelle regioni periferiche dell'Europa e fuori d'Europa. I beni di consumo di massa, come grano, legname, aringhe, sale e zucchero potevano ora essere inviati verso mercati nuovi e distanti⁴⁰.

Fu importante l'accesso a questi prodotti alimentari e a materie prime industriali. È il motivo per cui il commercio e la navigazione spinsero l'Hansa, gli olandesi e gli inglesi verso altri mari e oceani. Ad esempio, abbiamo visto come, a partire dalla fine del XVI secolo, gli olandesi fossero in grado di esercitare il loro monopolio sul traffico del grano baltico al fine di intensificare i commerci con l'Europa meridionale, nel momento in cui si registrarono episodi di carestia nell'Europa meridionale ed occidentale. Gradualmente, la gamma di beni coinvolti nei commerci olandesi nel Mar Baltico cambiò. Seguendo quegli schemi commerciali e di navigazione, gli olandesi si conquistarono un punto d'appoggio nel Mediterraneo⁴¹. Essi trasportavano prodotti – ad esempio, sale e lana spagnola verso l'Italia – rifornendo l'area mediterranea di pepe e spezie provenienti dalle Indie orientali (già detto).

Inoltre, senza le materie prime della cantieristica navale, come legname, pece, catrame, nonché canapa e lino per funi e vele (prodotti, tutti, forniti dall'entroterra baltico), la navigazione globale olandese e inglese verso l'Atlantico o l'Oceano Indiano non sarebbe stata possibile. L'accesso a queste materie prime rese il Sound danese (Oresund), durante il XVIII secolo, il canale navigabile più affollato del mondo. Attorno al 1730 ogni anno erano circa 2.000 i battelli che attraversavano il Sound verso il Mar del Nord, per un carico trasportato di 400 mila tonnellate (che divennero 500 mila a partire dal 1750). Valori che superavano abbondantemente quelli della tratta degli schiavi sull'Atlantico⁴².

Inoltre, vi erano navi a vela finniche (la Finlandia, fino al 1917, era una provincia russa) che collegavano il Baltico ad altri mari e oceani. Le navi finniche erano specializzate nel trasporto di legname e catrame attraverso il Sound, ma a partire da una certa data cominciarono a trasportare sempre più frequentemente grano nel Mar Nero e nel Mediterraneo. Negli anni 1870, i caricatori finnici giocarono un ruolo importante nella rivoluzione del trasporto di merci attraverso l'Atlantico, trasportando grano da New York, Filadelfia e Baltimora verso l'Irlanda e i porti britannici sul Mar del Nord, ma anche petrolio verso l'Europa occidentale e fino alla

J.R. BRUIJN, J. LUCASSEN, *St. John's, Newfoundland 1997*, pp. 11-23 (Research in Maritime History, No. 13). K. DAVIDS, *Maritime Labour in the Netherlands, 1570-1870*, in "Those Emblems of Hell?" *European Sailors and the Maritime Labour Market, 1570-1870*, cit., pp. 41-71.

⁴⁰ W. BLOCKMANS, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *European Integration from the Seaside: A Comparative Synthesis*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe, 1300-1600*, a c. di W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, Londra-New York 2017, pp. 446-481, 454.

⁴¹ F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*, I, pp. 615-42.

⁴² Y. KAUKIAINEN, *Overseas Migration and the Development of Ocean Navigation. A Europe-Outward Perspective*, in *Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims. Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans and China Seas Migrations from the 1830s to the 1930s*, a c. di D.R. GABACCIA, D. HOERDER, Leida-Boston 2011, pp. 371-386.

regione baltica. Essi gestirono anche l'esportazione di legname (specialmente pino) dagli Stati Uniti Meridionali e dal Canada⁴³.

Infine, il mar Baltico fornì la base per gli scambi marittimi con altri mari e oceani. Ad esempio, l'Impero Russo tentò di connettere le province periferiche del Baltico con quelle del Pacifico. Dietro questo tentativo vi era l'idea di costruire una rete commerciale russa attraverso il Pacifico settentrionale, per rifornire di provviste gli insediamenti in Estremo Oriente e in Alaska e per collegarli con la California spagnola e Manila, ma anche col porto cinese di Canton (Guangzhou).

Per questo motivo, ufficiali navali tedeschi, come Adam Johann von Krusenstern ed Otto von Kotzebue, furono inviati, con le navi *Nadežda* (1803) and *Rurik* (1815) per costruire un passaggio dal Baltico, attraverso il Mare del Nord e l'Atlantico, fino al Pacifico. Benché le speranze di costruire un impero commerciale russo e un Oceano Pacifico russo siano fallite, le esplorazioni russe e i libri di viaggio di quei capitani ebbero un impatto duraturo sul pubblico europeo.

LA MEMORIA E LA PERCEZIONE DEL MARE

Queste ultime considerazioni conducono ad un ultimo aspetto della storia marittima: la percezione e la memoria del mare. Con la svolta storica marittima od oceanica, gli studiosi sono stati tentati di smantellare la visione mitica del mare inteso "come simbolo di follia, di femminilità irrazionale, di indisciplinata o romantica anti-civilizzazione" (in contrasto con la costruzione di una modernità razionale "radicata nella terra")⁴⁴.

Con la "storicizzazione dell'oceano" questi colleghi hanno tentato di decostruire le opinioni prevalenti in merito agli incontri, agli incroci e ai contatti sul mare superando il concetto di stato-nazione così come concepito nella tradizionale storia marittima. Uno dei libri-caposaldo di questo genere è stato "Black Atlantic" di Paul Gilroy⁴⁵. L'Atlantico nero potrebbe essere definito come una specifica entità moderna trans-culturale, rappresentata e allo stesso tempo largamente costituita da velieri: una sorta di "sistema vivente virtuale micro-culturale e micro-politico in movimento".

Oceani e navi sono quindi visti come spazi e luoghi di conflitto culturale, non meno che di cooperazione. Altri, come Markus Rediker, percepiscono invece l'Oceano come un virtuale "Atlantico Rosso", uno spazio marittimo caratterizzato da dinamiche rivoluzionarie, capitalismo emergente, violenza e resistenza (un Oceano Atlantico di lavoratori)⁴⁶.

⁴³ Y. KAUKIAINEN, *Sailing into Twilight: Finnish Shipping in an Age of Transport Revolution, 1860-1914*, Helsinki 1991, pp. 150-74.

⁴⁴ B. KLEIN, G. MACKENTHUN, *Introduction. The Sea is History*, in *Sea Changes. Historicizing the Ocean*, a c. di B. KLEIN, G. MACKENTHUN, New York 2004, p. 1-10, 2.

⁴⁵ P. GILROY, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*, Cambridge 1993, p. 17.

⁴⁶ M. REDIKER, *The Red Atlantic, or, 'a terrible blast swept over the heaving sea'*, in *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean*, a c. di B. KLEIN, G. MACKENTHUN, New York 2004, pp. 111-130. P. LINEBAUGH, M. REDIKER, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, Boston 2000.

Io stesso ho introdotto il concetto di regno della memoria (*lieu de mémoire*), preso a prestito da Pierre Nora⁴⁷, nella storia marittima ed ho esteso questo concetto al mare come regno della memoria. A mio parere il mare fornisce un eccellente esempio e può essere oggetto di studio per quella categoria di regni condivisi della memoria, luoghi di memoria condivisi, *lieux de mémoire divisés*, nei quali cultura, spazio e tempo si intrecciano.

Tuttavia, vale forse la pena di dividere la categoria “mare” in sottocategorie, come oceani e mari. Andando ancora più in profondità, potremmo studiare le linee costiere, gli stretti, ma anche battaglie navali e naufragi. Per quanto riguarda il tema di cui discuteremo (Reti marittime come fattori dell’integrazione europea), gli stretti, come Øresund, Gibilterra e i Dardanelli giocano un ruolo importante come regni della memoria⁴⁸.

Il Sound era, ed è tuttora, la porta di accesso dal Baltico al Mar del Nord e all’Oceano Atlantico e costituisce una delle vie d’acqua più trafficate al mondo. A dominare l’entrata e l’uscita dal Baltico è stato il castello di Kronborg ad Elsinore (Helsingør), collocato in un punto in cui lo stretto è largo solo 4 chilometri. Navi di tutte le nazioni hanno navigato attraverso il Sound, facendo di questo stretto un luogo di memoria condivisa per tutte le nazioni marinesche. Tuttavia, gli olandesi e più tardi gli inglesi e gli scandinavi hanno dominato le altre nazioni nel campo dei commerci. Dal momento in cui la Danimarca utilizzò quella posizione per controllare l’ingresso nel Mar Baltico, Kronborg e il Sound divennero oggetto di una lunga e aspra contesa fra Danimarca, Svezia, Polonia e Russia per il *dominium maris baltici*, mentre gli olandesi e gli inglesi si alleavano di volta in volta con le varie potenze marittime del Baltico. Tutti questi conflitti sono rappresentati nei media olandesi che finora hanno condizionato la nostra memoria del Sound. La memoria del passaggio attraverso il Sound non ci rimane solo nei registri dei pedaggi, ma anche nei quadri dei pittori, che fornivano ad ogni capitano un’istantanea dipinta della sua nave, un’immagine standardizzata del capitano.

Quegli esempi finnici risalgono agli anni Sessanta del 1800, quando il Sound cominciò ad essere percepito in una prospettiva meramente culturale. Poiché gli USA avevano rifiutato di pagare il dazio per il passaggio del Sound fin dalla metà del secolo, un accordo internazionale portò alla scomparsa definitiva di tale pedaggio. In compenso alla Danimarca furono pagati 35 milioni di rix-dollari da parte di tutte le nazioni marittime che commerciavano con il Baltico. Tuttavia, almeno per gli Scandinavi, il Sound come porta per l’Occidente era ed è tuttora un regno della memoria.

Con la costruzione dell’Øresund Bridge, inaugurato il 1 luglio 2000 da re Carlo VI Gustavo di Svezia e dalla Regina Margrethe II di Danimarca, il significato più profondo del Sound è cambiato di nuovo. La gente di Copenhagen si può ora tra-

⁴⁷ *Les lieux de mémoire*, I-VII, a c. di P. NORA, Parigi 1983-92. P. NORA, *From lieux de mémoire to realms of memory*, in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Vol. 1: Conflicts and Divisions*, a c. di P. NORA, L.D. KRITZMAN, New York 1996, pp. XV-XXIV.

⁴⁸ P. BORSCHBERG, M. NORTH, *Transcending Borders: the Sea as Realm of Memory*, in *Asia Europe Journal*, 8, 2010, pp. 279-292. O. LÖFGREN, *Regionauterna. Øresundsregionen från vision till vardag*, Gothenburg 2010 (Centrum för Danmarksstudier, 24).

sferire agevolmente in Scania, dove trova alloggi a prezzi accessibili, mentre gli svedesi dalla Scania si spostano per lavoro verso la Danimarca (sono circa 14.000 i frontalieri che ogni giorno attraversano l'Øresund Bridge). Scambiarsi "regionautes" reinventa la regione.

Anche lo **Stretto di Gibilterra** (14 km) è da sempre ricordato come oggetto di lotte continue. Appartenente all'Impero Almohade e più tardi al regno Nazari di Granada, Gibilterra fu spesso assediata e infine conquistata dalla Castiglia nel 1462, ma fu integrata nella Corona castigliana solo a partire dal 1502. Da quando Portogallo e Spagna si erano espansi verso il Nord Africa, entrambe le sponde dell'ingresso al Mediterraneo erano nelle loro mani (la Ceuta portoghese fu incorporata come risultato dell'unione delle due corone nel 1580). Questa dominazione fu messa in discussione solo dagli olandesi, durante la Guerra degli Ottanta anni. Tuttora, la memoria olandese di Gibilterra è legata alla Battaglia di Gibilterra del 1607, durante la quale una flotta olandese sorprese quella spagnola, ancorata nella Baia di Gibilterra.

Tuttavia, la presenza inglese a Gibilterra fu il risultato dell'occupazione del 1704. Ciò avvenne quando una coalizione anglo-olandese-asburgica, durante la Guerra di successione spagnola⁴⁹, assediò Gibilterra. Con l'apertura del Canale di Suez nel 1869 la Rocca (di Gibilterra) assunse una nuova posizione strategica nei confronti del traffico internazionale e degli interessi britannici in vista del loro passaggio verso l'India. Il valore di quella posizione aumentò durante le guerre mondiali. Quindi, la Gran Bretagna declinò il rinnovo della richiesta di sovranità sulla rocca da parte del regime di Franco, che chiuse il confine con atto unilaterale nel 1969. Solo dopo un incontro fra i due primi ministri britannico e spagnolo, assieme con il Primo Ministro di Gibilterra nel 2006 (18 settembre) le restrizioni spagnole sui traffici, sui voli e sulle chiamate telefoniche internazionali furono abolite⁵⁰. E ci stiamo chiedendo se e come la Brexit influenzerà la situazione di Gibilterra.

Anche lo **Stretto dei Dardanelli** è stato oggetto di continue lotte. A partire dalla Guerra di Troia, nel XIII secolo a.C. il controllo dell'Ellesponto era cruciale per Troia, che costringeva i marinai greci a sostarvi e approfittava dei ricchi traffici del Mar Nero⁵¹. Con la vittoria dei greci nella guerra di Troia, il controllo dello stretto e la possibilità di viaggiare senza limitazioni verso il Mar Nero fu vitale per il successo dei mercanti greci e l'espansione dei loro traffici. La fondazione di Costantinopoli nel 330 fu un effetto degli interessi strategici e politici tardo-romani nella regione. La città, un melting-pot di culture greca, romana e orientale fu tuttavia sfidata dalle repubbliche marinare italiane. Pisa, Genova e Venezia (secolo XI), non solo facevano affari in Bisanzio, ma chiedevano di poter passare liberamente verso i porti del Mar Nero. La guerra per Costantinopoli, occupata dai Veneziani dal 1204

⁴⁹ *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, a c. di D.J. VITKUS, New York 2001.

⁵⁰ D. ABULAFIA, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*, Londra 2012. M. GREENE, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean*, Princeton 2010 (Princeton Modern Greek Studies). P. HORDEN, *A Companion to Mediterranean History*, Chichester, West Sussex 2014.

⁵¹ Una buona panoramica di quanto segue in J.T. SHOTWELL, F. DEÁK, *Turkey at the Straits. A Short History*, New York 1971, pp. 1-31. C. KING, *The Black Sea: A History*, New York 2011.

al 1261, era anche, al contempo, una battaglia per il *dominium* del Mar Nero. In quell'area, Genova aveva stabilito la colonia di Caffa, come emporio di schiavi, zucchero e prodotti orientali. La situazione cambiò con l'espansione ottomana, quando il sultano Suleiman assediò e fortificò Gallipoli nel 1356. A quel punto, i turchi ottomani possedevano fortificazioni su entrambi i lati dei Dardanelli, per una larghezza di 1,5 km.

Dopo la caduta di Costantinopoli gli Ottomani stabilirono un nuovo sistema di controllo delle strade che portavano al Bosforo ed esclusero gradualmente le navi cristiane dal Mar Nero, ponendo fine anche alla colonia genovese di Caffa. L'espansione dell'Impero Ottomano comportò non solo il controllo del Mar Nero, ma anche del Mediterraneo Orientale. Coloro che intendevano commerciare con i porti del Mar Nero e del Levante dovevano ottenere concessioni che garantivano una giurisdizione extraterritoriale ai consoli concedendo privilegi speciali. La Francia fu la prima ad ottenere una cosiddetta "capitolazione", nel 1535, seguita nel 1579 dall'Inghilterra e dall'Olanda nel 1598 e 1612. Così, i Dardanelli furono riaperti: le navi potevano raggiungere Costantinopoli dopo aver sostato al castello di Gallipoli. Poiché il Mar Nero restava ancora interdetto alla navigazione degli europei, i mercanti europei dovevano noleggiare navi turche.

La situazione cambiò gradualmente e parzialmente durante il XVIII secolo. Nel Trattato di Kutchuk-Kainardji (1774) tra l'Impero Ottomano e la Russia fu concordata "una navigazione libera e senza impedimenti per le navi mercantili appartenenti alle due potenze contraenti"⁵². In seguito altre potenze europee ottennero il libero transito delle loro navi mercantili (Austria 1784, Inghilterra 1799, Prussia 1806). Sebbene il monopolio ottomano fosse stato interrotto per quanto riguardava le navi mercantili, l'Impero continuò a controllare strettamente e impedire il passaggio delle navi da guerra.

Ai Dardanelli, come negli altri stretti, erano presenti molte nazioni mercantili, nell'ambito delle quali oltre agli operatori commerciali gli stessi consoli giocavano un ruolo importante. Essi sarebbero stati i precursori delle missioni diplomatiche ed erano strettamente legati ai commerci. Quando l'Impero Ottomano garantiva le cosiddette "capitolazioni", cioè condizioni privilegiate di residenza e commercio per non musulmani, l'espansione dei traffici era spesso seguita a ruota dall'apertura di consolati ai Dardanelli e a Gallipoli. Inizialmente, un importante ruolo di mediazione fu svolto dai mercanti ebrei, che rappresentavano allo stesso tempo i diversi interessi commerciali europei. Succedeva abbastanza comunemente che un console fosse al tempo stesso rappresentante degli olandesi e dei francesi, oppure degli olandesi e degli inglesi. Oltre alle famiglie ebraiche, anche le cosiddette dinastie di Dragomanni erano cruciali nell'Impero Ottomano. Collegati alle ambasciate, lavoravano come traduttori e creavano reti familiari e fiduciarie nel Levante. Celebri famiglie di dragomanni, come gli Chabert (Sardegna), i Fonton (Russia, Danimarca, Svezia e Norvegia), o i Fornetti (Francia) svolsero un ruolo importante nel facilitare i diversi interessi commerciali ed evitare i conflitti commerciali nei Dardanelli⁵³.

⁵² J.T. SHOTWELL, F. DEÁK, *Turkey at the Straits*, cit., p. 21.

⁵³ Progetto di ricerca collaborativo "Consuls of 'The Dardanelles' and 'Gallipoli'", www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/Consuls_of_the_Dardanelles.pdf, updated Version n. 4 February 2013.

L'eredità visiva dei consolati è tuttora presente, ma meriterebbe, al pari delle relazioni consolari, ulteriori approfondite ricerche.

La memoria degli stretti nel XX secolo, tuttavia, è stata messa in ombra dalla battaglia di Gallipoli, nella quale una forza di intervento composta da britannici, indiani, australiani e neozelandesi cercò di aprirsi la strada nel 1915. Con oltre 200 mila vittime da entrambe le parti, la sconfitta britannica ha lasciato un ricordo speciale, celebrato tuttora come ANZAC-Day in Australia e Nuova Zelanda⁵⁴.

Ciò dimostra come la ricerca, nella storia marittima europea, deve fare i conti con memorie conflittuali e aggrovigliate. Mentre la natura fisica e topografica degli stretti come l'Øresund, Gibilterra e i Dardanelli non è sostanzialmente cambiata nei secoli, siamo testimoni del fatto che invece i loro ruoli e i loro status sono mutati in modo significativo nel tempo, in linea con uno specifico contesto culturale.

Gli stretti sono stati e rimangono nodi cruciali per l'integrazione marittima, ma anche luoghi di incontro di popoli, espressione del mutare di ruoli e percezioni attraverso la storia. L'Øresund e Gibilterra, ad esempio, sono divenuti simboli dell'identità e dell'integrazione europea, ma anche di protezione e disintegrazione. Come memoria collettiva, la storia è essenzialmente una ricostruzione dell'immaginazione umana che illustra come percepiamo le cose e gli spazi lungo il tempo e come applichiamo le nostre percezioni e memorie alla ricerca contemporanea.

Inserire le storie marittime regionali in una prospettiva internazionale comparativa è uno dei compiti principali delle nostre future ricerche. Indubbiamente le culture marittime si intrecciano e ciò che vi è di condiviso nelle memorie individuali di mercanti, navigatori, pescatori, ma anche schiavi, migranti e rifugiati merita un esame più approfondito. La Settimana Datini 2018 è quindi un passo nella giusta direzione.

⁵⁴ P. HART, *Gallipoli*, New York 2011. M.M. ILHAN, *Gallipoli: History, Memory and National Imagination*, Ankara 2014. R. BOLLARD, *In the Shadow of Gallipoli: The Hidden History of Australia in World War I*, Sydney 2013.

In che modo le rotte di navigazione sono servite come elemento di connessione?

How did shipping routes serve as a connecting force?

Luciano Palermo

*Il sistema degli scambi nel Mediterraneo occidentale
tra XIV e XV secolo e il porto di Roma*

La rete degli scambi commerciali incentrata sul bacino occidentale del Mediterraneo è stata oggetto, per le fasi comprese tra il XIV e il XV secolo e soprattutto per il periodo che può essere studiato attraverso la documentazione dell'Archivio Datini, di numerosi ed importanti analisi. L'obiettivo delle ricerche qui presentate è principalmente quello di riconsiderare, nella prima parte, gli studi effettuati attorno a queste tematiche e di mettere in evidenza le questioni lasciate aperte; e di prendere in considerazione, nella seconda parte, il ruolo di un particolare osservatorio, quello del porto di Roma. La documentazione che ci è pervenuta attorno alla movimentazione di navi e merci imperniata sullo scalo fluviale e marittimo di questa città ci permette, infatti, di cogliere meglio le forme e la portata della navigazione mercantile presente nel Mediterraneo occidentale, e ci consente di valorizzare quanto le fonti datiniane, già per altro ampiamente utilizzate dagli studiosi, ci aiutano a ricostruire dell'economia della città di Roma e del ruolo in essa del suo porto.

1. LA RETE DELLE CONNESSIONI ECONOMICHE

In uno dei suoi ultimi saggi, nel 1973, Federigo Melis metteva in evidenza alcune fondamentali caratteristiche del sistema degli scambi del Mediterraneo occidentale basso medievale. Prendendo spunto dallo studio dell'area catalano-aragonesa ("una grande comunità economica, che va dal Mar di Levante per tutto il Mediterraneo centrale ed occidentale, involgendo tutta la penisola Iberica, fino al Mare del Nord"), Melis delineava il ruolo delle principali piazze commerciali della penisola Iberica e delle isole Baleari, e analizzava i rapporti che esse intrattenevano con le corrispondenti piazze della penisola italiana e delle sue isole, senza tralasciare la presenza all'interno di quel sistema delle coste africane. In termini generali egli notava che in quel grande bacino marittimo risultavano collegati tra loro "popoli diversi, o meglio Stati diversi, senza cioè che vi sia unità politica", mentre una vera e significativa impostazione unitaria risultava "realizzata e sostenuta soprattutto in virtù delle forze economiche". Queste forze, secondo Melis, erano in grado di creare elementi di "coesione" o di "connessione"; e come prova di ciò egli riportava il fatto che l'area iberica poteva esercitare il suo "ruolo decisivo" grazie "al concorso di un'altra sponda, alla sponda italiana soprattutto, vigorosa con le sue potenze in riva allo

stesso mare”¹. Melis conosceva, naturalmente, assai bene il ruolo e i compiti dei sistemi politici e istituzionali nei processi economici e ha più volte esaminato la loro capacità di influenzare e talvolta determinare, con le loro decisioni, l’andamento dei mercati; e tuttavia egli vedeva nelle relazioni mercantili, e specialmente in quelle basate sul commercio marittimo, la presenza di energie e di culture fortemente innovative, che sotto la spinta di interessi reali erano capaci di creare nuovi strumenti economici e importanti reti di relazioni internazionali, nelle quali le nuove tecniche operative potevano essere sperimentate e attuate. Queste forze erano perfino in grado, in ultima analisi, di condizionare la volontà dei potenti e le loro relazioni politiche. Emergeva in questa immagine delle potenzialità presenti nell’economia degli scambi e del credito basso medievale la concezione dei processi economici elaborata da Werner Sombart, che Melis ben conosceva e apprezzava²; alla base di questi giudizi storici vi era, infatti, il principio che la razionalità del comportamento economico indirizzato al reperimento del profitto fosse comunque in grado di generare una rete di interessi dotata di una propria logica interna non sempre necessariamente collegata o parallela a quella degli apparati istituzionali; questi ultimi agivano sulla base dell’abilità politica dei governanti e dei rapporti di forza intercorrenti tra gli Stati; gli interessi mercantili e creditizi, invece, tendevano ad andare oltre tutto ciò, non sempre riuscendoci naturalmente, e creavano delle proprie reti di collegamenti economici e finanziari che sorgevano e si rafforzavano perché erano assistite dall’istinto e dalla capacità innovativa degli operatori commerciali e creditizi. Melis usava, come si è detto, il termine “connessione” per indicare questa rete di relazioni economiche e culturali tra popoli e Stati diversi, tutti affacciati sullo stesso segmento occidentale del Mediterraneo basso e tardo medievale; e si tratta dello stesso termine che, certamente non per caso, orienta questa giornata di studio, che chiede di appurare in che modo le rotte della navigazione siano servite come elemento, appunto, di “connessione” tra i paesi europei.

Le tesi di Melis sulla presenza e sulle funzioni di queste reti mercantili nel Mediterraneo occidentale, e sulla loro capacità di condizionare la realtà non solo economica ma anche politica e istituzionale di quelle epoche, non erano ovviamente isolate in quella stagione della ricerca storica. Erano gli anni in cui i grandi maestri della storia economica europea aggiungevano al tradizionale taglio giuridico degli studi sul commercio marittimo i dati che in grande quantità cominciavano ad essere raccolti negli archivi dei soggetti attivi in questo commercio. Oltre che dagli studi di Melis, il problema storico delle relazioni internazionali che intercorrevano nel Mediterraneo occidentale basso medievale veniva, infatti, affrontato in quei decenni da numerose ricerche³, molte delle quali confluivano negli atti dei Convegni dedicati

¹ Per queste citazioni v. F. MELIS, *L’area catalano-aragonesa nel sistema economico del Mediterraneo occidentale*, in IDEM, *I mercanti italiani nell’Europa medievale e rinascimentale*, a c. di L. FRANGIONI, Firenze 1990, pp. 230-231.

² Cfr. M. DEL TREPPO, *Federigo Melis, storico*, in *Studi in memoria di Federigo Melis*, a c. di L. DE ROSA, Napoli 1978, pp. 1-87.

³ Si veda, ad esempio, pur nell’ambito di una vastissima bibliografia, F. MELIS, *I rapporti economici fra la Spagna e l’Italia nei secoli XIV-XVI secondo la documentazione italiana*, in IDEM, *I mercanti italiani nell’Europa medievale e rinascimentale*, cit., pp. 252-253; A. BOSCOLO, *La Sardegna nell’economia del Mediterraneo occidentale dal periodo della supremazia pisana-genovese al primo periodo della dominazione aragonesa*,

alla storia della Corona d'Aragona o nei volumi delle Settimane di studio dell'Istituto Datini, di cui quest'anno si celebra appunto il cinquantenario. Si era in presenza di un significativo cambiamento, o meglio completamento, delle prospettive della ricerca storica attorno al commercio marittimo. Il metodo in precedenza largamente dominante, basato su analisi di tipo giuridico, all'interno delle quali venivano collocate, e quasi dedotte, le iniziative economiche degli imprenditori privati, veniva sostanzialmente reimpostato: l'indagine microeconomica veniva impiantata nello studio della documentazione prodotta dalla attività di singoli soggetti economici, di singole aziende, spesso di singole unità produttive e perfino di singole navi con i loro carichi, e con un procedimento induttivo si risaliva all'insieme dei comportamenti analizzati e alle modalità generali del funzionamento del sistema economico. Tutto ciò non rendeva, tuttavia, nel giudizio di molti studiosi, meno importante il ruolo delle istituzioni politiche e amministrative; anzitutto perché anche queste istituzioni erano, esse stesse, soggetti interessati all'espansione di queste reti di relazioni, per l'espansione politica che esse potevano favorire e per le ricadute di tipo fiscale; ma, in secondo luogo, queste stesse istituzioni non erano affatto estranee alle varie fasi della costruzione di queste connessioni, e se anche in alcuni casi potevano subire l'iniziativa innovatrice degli imprenditori, di fatto il loro appoggio o, al contrario, la loro eventuale ostilità si presentava come un elemento decisivo per il successo o per il fallimento dell'iniziativa imprenditoriale.

2. IL COMMERCIO MARITTIMO COME FATTORE UNIFICANTE

Questo incrocio tra la capacità innovatrice degli operatori mercantili e finanziari e le varie forme dell'intervento pubblico nella costruzione di questa rete di relazioni è emerso assai chiaramente negli studi dedicati ai vari paesi e ai vari centri mercantili che si affacciavano su questo particolare bacino del Mediterraneo. Analizzando la situazione dal punto di vista della penisola iberica Mario Del Treppo, ad esempio,

Cagliari 1958; IDEM, *La politica italiana di Martino il Vecchio, re d'Aragona*, Padova 1962; IDEM, *Problemi Mediterranei dell'Epoca di Pietro il Cerimonioso (1353-1387)*, in *VIII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, II, Valenza 1973, III, pp. 65-100; IDEM, *La mutación del siglo XIV en el Mediterráneo*, in "Cuadernos de Historia", 8, 1977, pp. 15-23; IDEM, *La prima politica mediterranea di Ferdinando I d'Aragona*, in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di studi sull'età aragonese*, Bari 1972, pp. 123-133; P. VILAR, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne*, I-III., Parigi 1962; C. CARRÈRE, *Barcelone, centre économique à l'époque des difficultés*, 1380-1462, I-II., Parigi 1967; C. MANCA, *Aspetti dell'espansione economica catalano-aragonese nel Mediterraneo occidentale. Il commercio internazionale del sale*, Milano 1966; IDEM, *Fonti e orientamenti per la storia economica della Sardegna aragonese*, Padova 1967; IDEM, *Il libro di conti di Miquel Ça-Rovira*, Padova 1969; M. DEL TREPPO, *L'espansione catalano-aragonese nel Mediterraneo*, in *Nuove questioni di storia medievale*, Milano, 1964, pp. 250-300; IDEM, *I mercanti catalani e l'espansione della Corona d'Aragona nel secolo XV*, Napoli 1972; J. Vicens Vives, *Evolución de la economía catalana durante la primera mitad del siglo XV*, in *Atti del IV Congresso di Storia della Corona d'Aragona (Palma de Mallorca, 1955)*, Barcellona, 1976, pp. 5-27; F.C. CASULA, *Carte reali diplomatiche di Alfonso III il Benigno, re d'Aragona, riguardanti l'Italia*, I-III, Padova 1970-1976; IDEM, *Carte reali diplomatiche di Giovanni I il Cacciatore, re d'Aragona, riguardanti l'Italia*, Padova 1977; IDEM, *Sardegna catalano-aragonese. Profilo storico*, Sassari 1984; M. TANGHERONI, *Aspetti del commercio dei cereali nei paesi della Corona d'Aragona*, Cagliari 1981; H. BRESC, *Un monde méditerranéen. Économie et société en Sicilie 1300-1450*, I-II, Roma 1986; si vedano, inoltre, i saggi presenti negli *Atti del 1° Congresso storico Liguria-Catalogna*, Ventimiglia-Bordighera-Albenga-Finale-Genova 14-19 ottobre 1969, a c. di G. PISTARINO, Bordighera 1974.

attribuiva gran parte del successo dei mercanti della Corona di Aragona alla loro capacità di attivarsi in modo coordinato, e alla possibilità che essi avevano di ricevere un significativo appoggio dalle istituzioni politiche⁴. E così le indagini condotte da Paulino Iradiel attorno all'esistenza di aree dominanti e di periferie dominate, hanno messo in evidenza le articolazioni interne, sia economiche che istituzionali, di questa area iberica proiettata sul Mediterraneo occidentale⁵. Altre ricerche hanno ulteriormente posto in luce come le strutture istituzionali, interessate a difendere i propri gruppi mercantili, utilizzassero, accanto alle tradizionali politiche protezionistiche, anche un ampio e solido sistema di relazioni diplomatiche e di consolati⁶. David Igual, a sua volta, ha messo in evidenza, prendendo spunto dalla situazione di Valenza, un ulteriore e fondamentale aspetto della creazione di questa rete di relazioni, e cioè la trasmigrazione dei ceti mercantili, che si trasferivano da una costa all'altra del Mediterraneo occidentale portando con sé le proprie tecniche operative e la propria cultura nazionale; e ha dimostrato come da tutto ciò potevano sorgere fasi di convergenza di interessi o, all'opposto, momenti di forte conflittualità⁷. E la movimentazione intramediterranea dell'élite economica non poteva, a sua volta, verificarsi senza l'accordo delle strutture istituzionali, come rivelano i voluminosi studi che Maria Dolores López Pérez e Damien Coulon hanno dedicato alla presenza

⁴ Cfr. M. DEL TREPPO, *I mercanti catalani e l'espansione della Corona d'Aragona*, cit.

⁵ Cfr. P. IRADIEL, *En el Mediterráneo occidental peninsular: dominantes y periferias dominadas en la Baja Edad Media*, in "Areas", 6, 1986, pp. 44-77; si vedano, inoltre, le impostazioni e i saggi presenti in *Identidades urbanas Corona de Aragon – Italia. Redes economicas, estructuras institucionales, función políticas (siglos XIV-XV)*, a c. di P. IRADIEL et al., Saragozza 2016.

⁶ Si veda, anche in questo caso nell'ambito di una vastissima bibliografia, A. RIERA MELIS, *La Corona de Aragón y el Reino de Mallorca en el primer cuarto del siglo XIV*, Madrid-Barcellona 1986; M.T. FERRER, *El Consolat de Mar i els consolats d'ultramar, instrument i manifestació de l'expansió del comerç català*, in *L'expansió catalana a la Mediterrània a la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, a c. di M.T. FERRER I MALLOL, D. COULON, Barcellona 1999, pp.533-579 (e altri saggi nel medesimo volume); EADEM, *Navegació, ports i comerç a la Mediterrània de la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, in *Comercio, redistribución y fondeaderos: la navegación a vela en el Mediterráneo*, Valenza 2008, pp. 113-166; A. RIERA MELIS, G. FELIU MONTFORT, *Activitats econòmiques*, in *Historia de Barcelona*, a c. di C. BATLLE et al., III, *La ciutat consolidada (segles XIV i XV)*, Barcellona 2001, pp. 139-272; P. IRADIEL, *Valencia y la expansión mediterranea de la Corona de Aragon*, in *En las costas del Mediterraneo occidental. Las ciudades de la Peninsula Iberica y del reino de Mallorca en la Edad Media*, a c. di D. ABULAFIA, B. GARI, Barcellona 1997, pp. 155-170; IDEM, *Napoles en el mercado mediterraneo de la Corona de Aragon*, in *El reino de Napoles y la monarquía de España entre agregación y conquista (1485-1535)*, Madrid-Roma 2004, pp. 265-289; D. PIFARRÉ I TORRES, *El comerç internacional de Barcelona i el Mar del Nord (Bruges) a finals del segle xiv*, Barcellona 2002; D. COULON, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d'Orient au Moyen Age, un siècle de relations avec l'Égypte et la Syrie-Palestine (ca. 1330 – ca. 1430)*, Madrid-Barcellona 2004; M.E. SOLDANI, *Il commercio internazionale all'epoca di Martino l'Umano*, in *Martí l'Humà. El darrer rei de la dinastia de Barcelona (1396-1410). L'Interregne i el Compromís de Casp*, a c. di M.T. FERRER I MALLOL, Barcellona 2015, pp. 519-532; EADEM, *Comunitat e consolati catalanocaragonesi in Toscana, Liguria e Sardegna nel tardo Medioevo*, Roma, 2014; si vedano, inoltre, vari saggi presenti in *Els catalans a la Mediterrània medieval. Noves fonts, recerques i perspectives*, a c. di L. CIFUENTES, R. SALICRÚ, M.M. VILADRICH, Roma 2015.

⁷ D. IGUAL, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV. Rutas, mercados y bombres de negocios en el espacio económico del Mediterraneo Occidental*, Valenza 1998; v. anche G. PETRALIA, *Banchieri e famiglie mercantili nel Mediterraneo aragonese. L'emigrazione dei pisani in Sicilia nel Quattrocento*, Pisa 1989.

della Corona d'Aragona nell'area magrebina e nelle altre coste africane e asiatiche del Mediterraneo centrale e orientale⁸.

E l'atteggiamento della "sponda" italiana non era molto diverso, come emerge dalla storia plurisecolare delle colonie mediterranee delle città mercantili italiane⁹. Anche le città mercantili della penisola creavano reti giuridiche, corporative e diplomatiche di protezione dei propri ceti mercantili, così come attivavano politiche economiche favorevoli alla collocazione delle proprie merci nei mercati internazionali e dirette al potenziamento del proprio ruolo nell'interscambio; tutte iniziative che sono state assai studiate, con ricerche dedicate a tutte le principali città mercantili della penisola e delle isole italiane, nel contesto delle numerose analisi dedicate alle strutture amministrative e istituzionali dell'autonomia comunale¹⁰. E sebbene le reti attivate dai comuni mercantili italiani non fossero inserite in un sistema statale dotato di un mercato interno significativamente ampio, qual era quello dei regni iberici e delle loro colonie, esse potevano tuttavia usufruire delle strategie operative maggiormente avanzate di quelle epoche e potevano utilizzare il circuito assai ampio delle aziende mercantili e delle loro filiali sparse in modo capillare lungo le coste del Mediterraneo occidentale e in tutte le sue isole maggiori¹¹. D'altra parte, gli italiani sapevano assai bene che i profitti, anche fiscali, generati dalle loro reti commerciali avrebbero condizionato e attenuato il comportamento talvolta ostile delle strutture istituzionali. Una lettera inviata nel 1401 da Roma alla compagnia barcelonense di Francesco Datini ci fa vedere come queste connessioni fossero operative di fronte alle difficoltà create dalle istituzioni politiche aragonesi e come si avesse

⁸ Cfr. M.D. LÓPEZ PÉREZ, *La Corona de Aragón y el Magreb en el siglo XIV (1331-1410)*, Barcellona 1995; D. COULON, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d'Orient au Moyen Âge*, cit.

⁹ Cfr., ad esempio, pur nell'ambito di una bibliografia assai vasta, il caso genovese studiato nei saggi raccolti in M. BALARD, *Gênes et la mer - Genova e il mare*, "Quaderni della Società Ligure di Storia Patria", 3, 2017, n. 1-2.

¹⁰ Si veda, per restare sul caso esemplare genovese, G. PETTI BALBI, *Negoziare fuori patria. Nazioni e genovesi in età medievale*, Bologna 2005 (con ulteriore bibliografia).

¹¹ Sulle presenze di mercati e banchieri italiani nelle città del Mediterraneo occidentale si veda, ad esempio, F. MELIS, *I rapporti economici fra la Spagna e l'Italia nei secoli XIV-XVI secondo la documentazione italiana*, in IDEM, *I mercanti italiani nell'Europa medievale e rinascimentale*, cit., pp. 251-276; P. MAINONI, *Mercanti lombardi tra Barcellona e Valenza nel basso medioevo*, Bologna 1982; G. NIGRO, *Els operadors econòmics italians als Països Catalans entre els segles XIV i XV. El cas de Tuccio di Gennaio*, in *València, un mercat medieval*, Valenza 1985, pp.49-60; IDEM, *Gli operatori economici toscani nei paesi catalani a cavallo del '400: alcuni casi esemplari*, in *Aspetti della vita economica medievale: atti del Convegno di studi nel X anniversario della morte di Federico Melis*, Firenze 1985, pp. 283-303; D. ABULAFIA, *Mercati e mercanti nella Corona d'Aragona: il ruolo economico degli imprenditori stranieri*, in *La Mediterrània de la Corona d'Aragó (segles XIII-XVI)*, XVIII Congresso di Storia della Corona d'Aragona, Valenza 2005, I, pp. 797-820; C. CUADRADA MAJÓ, A. ORLANDI, *Ports, tràfics, vaixelles, productes: italians i catalans a la Mediterrània baix-medieval*, in "Anuario de Estudios Medievales", 24, 1994, pp. 3-48; D. IGUAL, *La ciudad de Valencia y los Toscanos en el Mediterráneo del siglo XV*, in "Revista d'Història Medieval", 6, 1995, pp. 79-110; IDEM, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV. Rutas, mercados y hombres de negocios en el espacio económico del Mediterraneo Occidental*, cit.; IDEM, *Las relaciones financieras de una ciudad mediterránea: Valencia en la baja Edad Media*, in *Dinero, moneda y crédito en la monarquía hispánica*, a c. di A.-M. BERNAL, Madrid 2000, pp. 99-120; C. ZEDDA, *Cagliari: un porto commerciale nel Mediterraneo del Quattrocento*, Roma 2001; M.E. SOLDANI, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani nella Barcellona del Quattrocento*, Barcellona 2010; F. GUIDI BRUSCOLI, *Da comprimari a protagonisti: i fiorentini in Portogallo nel Basso Medioevo (1338-1520)*, in "eHumanista", 38, 2018, pp. 65-82.

fiducia nella forza vincente delle proprie capacità economiche e finanziarie: “*Avisati fumo de l’ordine fatto chontro a’ Taliani e chome el pedagio dura insino a Natale a uno anno, ma non credete duri la metà; avisateci che segue che veramente gran verghongna apare la loro di simile ordine*”¹².

Queste reti di connessione erano operative, dunque, su tutto questo ampio bacino marittimo utilizzato come via di comunicazione e di scambio. Se l’intero Mediterraneo era già apparso nelle opere di Fernand Braudel come un grande fattore di unificazione tra terre e popoli anche assai lontani tra loro, il suo bacino occidentale, a partire dal Canale di Sicilia, con le forti reti di interconnessione economica in esso presenti, costituiva da questo punto di vista un suo tratto del tutto speciale. La parte posta maggiormente a ridosso di Gibilterra era poi, sempre secondo Braudel, un canale della Manica mediterraneo: allungato in senso est-ovest e relativamente facile da attraversare in senso nord-sud, quel mare “nella massa continentale dei mondi iberico e nordafricano non è una barriera, bensì un fiume, che li unisce più di quanto li separa, che dell’Africa del nord e dell’Iberia fa un solo mondo”¹³. Quest’area era dotata, peraltro, di una collocazione geoeconomica del tutto particolare. Posta a ridosso dell’oceano Atlantico, l’ampia superficie marittima compresa tra la penisola italiana e lo stretto di Gibilterra era percorsa da imbarcazioni che congiungevano le terre europee ed africane che su di essa si affacciavano e le isole che in essa erano collocate; ma questo stesso bacino era anche necessariamente attraversato da linee di navigazione che provenendo da ogni angolo del Mediterraneo orientale seguivano la cosiddetta rotta delle isole, oltrepassavano quindi lo stretto di Gibilterra e raggiungevano i mari e i mercati del Nord Europa, con i quali i paesi mediterranei avevano strettissimi legami economici e culturali¹⁴.

3. LE TRE SPONDE DI MEDITERRANEO OCCIDENTALE

Assistita da una concentrazione eccezionalmente alta di fonti, giacenti negli archivi delle città mercantili e nei grandi archivi specializzati, quali quelli della Corona d’Aragona o di Francesco di Marco Datini, la ricerca storica ha messo in luce la fitta rete di scambi che sussistevano tra il Tre e il Quattrocento tra le tre fondamentali sponde, quella iberica e provenzale, quella italiana e quella africana, di questo mare; così come ha collocato nel contesto di questo sistema commerciale e finanziario le grandi e piccole isole in esso presenti, sia come luoghi di intermediazione tra i grandi centri di produzione e di consumo, sia anche come sedi di attività commerciali e bancarie autonome. Tutto ciò ha fatto emergere, ad esempio, insieme alla tradizionale collocazione economica della Sicilia, della Sardegna e della Corsica, il ruolo straordinario di Maiorca e, in generale, delle Baleari, quale perno, come hanno di-

¹² ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI PRATO (d’ora in avanti ASPO), 911, Agnolo di Ser Pino e Giuliano di Giovanni, lettera Roma-Barcellona del 28/06/1401.

¹³ F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà e imperi del Mediterraneo nell’età di Filippo II*, Torino 1982, I, p. 110.

¹⁴ Per una sintesi di queste problematiche v. M. TANGHERONI, *Il Mediterraneo bassomedievale*, in AA. VV., *Storia Medievale*, Roma 1998, pp. 463-491; e IDEM, *Commercio e navigazione nel Medioevo*, Roma-Bari 1996; cfr., inoltre, in questo stesso volume il saggio di Angela Orlandi.

mostrato David Abulafia, Giampiero Nigro e Angela Orlandi¹⁵, dell'intero movimento commerciale del Mediterraneo occidentale, sia nel suo andamento Nord-Sud che in quello Est-Ovest.

Le ricerche archivistiche dedicate alla navigazione commerciale presente in questo tratto di mare sono state anzitutto concentrate, come era del resto inevitabile, sugli operatori economici e in generale sulle compagnie mercantili e bancarie che agivano in questo sistema e sulle loro tecniche operative e contabili; è stato quindi analizzato il ruolo e il funzionamento delle località portuali grandi e piccole presenti nel circuito del Mediterraneo occidentale e nelle sue isole; sono stati poi presi in esame le caratteristiche dei mercati, della domanda e dell'offerta delle merci movimentate, dei luoghi di origine delle materie prime e dei prodotti semilavorati; e quando è stato possibile sono stati anche esaminati l'andamento dei prezzi, l'uso della moneta, il ricorso al credito e alle lettere di cambio; ci si è, infine, soffermati sull'evoluzione delle tecniche dei trasporti, e quindi sulle navi, sui costi dei noli e delle assicurazioni¹⁶. All'interno di questo ampio sistema commerciale marittimo la ricerca ha messo in luce anche le differenti funzioni ricoperte dalle varie aree economiche. Gli operatori che agivano a partire dalle località della sponda italiana, ad

¹⁵ D. ABULAFIA, *El comercio y el reino de Mallorca 1150-1450*, cit.; G. NIGRO, *Mercanti in Maiorca. Il carteggio datiniano dell'Isola (1387-1396)*, Documenti, Firenze 2003; IDEM, *Aspetti del movimento finanziario in area aragonese nella documentazione mercantile toscana (secoli XIV-XV). Una premessa: la lettera di cambio tra attività feneratorie e trasferimento di fondi*, in *Identidades urbanas Corona de Aragón – Italia*, cit., pp. 293-308; A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro: la corrispondenza datiniana tra Valenza e Maiorca (1395-1398)*, Valenza 2008; EADEM, *Aspetti del movimento finanziario in area aragonese nella documentazione mercantile toscana (secoli XIV-XV). Un caso di studio: l'andamento dei cambi tra Barcellona, Valenza, Palma di Maiorca*, in *Identidades urbanas Corona de Aragón – Italia*, cit., pp. 309-326; EAD., *La compagnia di catalogna: un successo quasi inatteso*, in *Francesco Datini. L'uomo, il mercante*, a c. di G. NIGRO, Firenze 2010, pp. 357-388; EADEM, *Le mercie di Palma. Il commercio dei veli di Maiorca di fine Trecento*, in *Dare credito alle donne. Presenze femminili nell'economia tra medioevo ed età moderna*, a c. di G. PETTI BALBI, P. GUGLIELMOTTI, Asti 2012, pp. 149-166.

¹⁶ Nell'ambito di una bibliografia assai ampia, in parte già qui sopra citata, v. F. MELIS, *I rapporti economici fra la Spagna e l'Italia nei secoli XIV-XVI secondo la documentazione italiana*, cit.; P. IRADIEL, *El segle XV. L'evolució econòmica*, in *Història del País Valencià*, a c. di E. BELENGUER, Barcellona 1989, II, pp. 267-291; IDEM, *El comercio en el Mediterráneo catalano-aragonés: espacios y redes*, in *Comercio y bombes de negocios en Castilla y Europa en tiempos de Isabel la Católica*, a c. di H. CASADO ALONSO, A. GARCÍA BAQUERO, Madrid 2007, pp. 123-150; J.-CL. HOCQUET, *Ibiza, carrefour du commerce maritime et témoin d'une conjoncture méditerranéenne (1250-1650 env.)*, in *Studi in memoria di Federico Melis*, Napoli 1978, I, pp. 493-526; D. IGUAL LUIS, G. NAVARRO, *Relazioni economiche tra Valenza e l'Italia nel Basso Medioevo*, in "Medioevo, Saggi e Rassegne", 20, 1995, pp. 61-97; S. R. EPSTEIN, *Potere e mercanti in Sicilia (secoli XIII-XVI)*, Torino 1996; E. CRUELLES, *La organización del transporte marítimo en la Valencia de la primera mitad del siglo XV*, in "Anuario de Estudios Medievales", 24, 1994, pp. 167-168; IDEM, *Los mercaderes de Valencia en la Edad Media (1380-1450)*, Lerida 2001; D. ABULAFIA, *Commerce and the Kingdom of Majorca: 1150-1450*, in *Iberia and the Mediterranean world of the middle ages: studies in honor of Robert I. Burns*, Leida 1996, II, pp. 345-377; A. RIERA MELIS, G. FELIU MONTFORT, *Activitats econòmiques*, in *Historia de Barcelona*, a c. di C. BATLLE et al., III, *La ciutat consolidada (segles XIV i XV)*, Barcellona 2001, pp. 139-272; D. PIFARRÉ I TORRES, *El comerç internacional de Barcelona i el Mar del Nord (Bruges) a finals del segle XIV*, Barcellona 2002. Si vedano, inoltre, gli studi, dotati di ulteriori ampie bibliografie di M. T. FERRER, *Catalan commerce in the late Middle Ages*, in "Catalan Historical Review", 5 2012, pp. 29-65; D. IGUAL, *Operadores económicos y espacios de comercio en el mediterráneo occidental (siglos XIII-XV)*, in "Revista de historia medieval", 15, 2006-2008, pp. 189-214; IDEM, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit.; M.E. SOLDANI, *Il commercio internazionale all'epoca di Martino l'Umano*, cit.; e i saggi presenti in *En las costas del Mediterráneo occidental. Las ciudades de la Península ibérica y del reino de Mallorca y el comercio mediterráneo en la Edad Media*, cit., e in *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna. Studi in onore di Geo Pistarino*, a c. di L. BALLETTTO, Genova 1997.

esempio, erano certamente privi del riferimento ad una unità politica complessiva, ma non per questo appaiono nella documentazione meno consapevoli delle proprie caratteristiche culturali economiche e linguistiche, come dimostra la stessa auto definizione di *Taliani* che, come abbiamo notato qui sopra, si incontra assai spesso nelle fonti da loro stessi prodotte; e tra queste caratteristiche propriamente italiane vi era la spinta alle innovazioni operative, attraverso le quali i mercanti erano in grado di attivare e utilizzare la propria rete di relazioni. Diverso era, invece, l'atteggiamento che si riscontra nella cultura degli operatori mercantili e finanziari iberici, che avevano alle proprie spalle delle solide strutture istituzionali, per di più dotate di ampi mercati interni generalmente ben protetti; e tuttavia gli elementi di forza si trasformavano talvolta in occasioni di debolezza, perché le potenzialità economiche create dall'espansionismo politico dei regni iberici e particolarmente dalla Corona d'Aragona potevano facilmente convertirsi, ad esempio, in momenti negativi in caso di guerra o di insufficiente capacità di controllo dei territori occupati, per non dire delle esazioni fiscali che l'espansionismo aragonese imponeva, come successe, ad esempio, nel corso del Trecento quando alle città della costa iberica furono richiesti particolari contributi per la costruzione della flotta destinata a combattere i genovesi¹⁷. Molti studi sono stati quindi dedicati anche al terzo lato del Mediterraneo occidentale, cioè alla presenza delle coste dell'Africa settentrionale nei progetti economici dei mercanti italiani ed iberici, e in particolare è stato analizzato l'interscambio che le materie prime e i prodotti semilavorati di origine africana inescavavano tra le località magrebine e i grandi centri mercantili europei¹⁸. Un significativo contributo alla conoscenza di questa ampia rete di interconnessioni commerciali è stato fornito, infine, dalla pubblicazione delle fonti e dalla elaborazione dei dati archivistici, a partire dalla documentazione tratta dall'archivio pratese di Francesco di Marco Datini, che proprio per la collocazione delle sue aziende e delle loro filiali aveva i suoi principali interessi, senza escludere ovviamente gli altri circuiti commerciali, largamente concentrati nel bacino del Mediterraneo occidentale¹⁹.

¹⁷ Cfr., ad esempio, le osservazioni di A. BOSCOLO, *La mutación del siglo XIV en el Mediterráneo*, cit.

¹⁸ Cfr., ad esempio, F. MELIS, *La lana della Spagna mediterranea e della Barberia occidentale nei secoli XIV e XV*, in IDEM, *I mercanti italiani nell'Europa medievale e rinascimentale*, cit., pp. 233-249; M.D. LÓPEZ PÉREZ, *La Corona de Aragón y el Norte de África: las diferentes áreas de intervención mercantil catalano-aragonesa en el Magreb a finales del siglo XIV y principios del XV*, in "Acta Histórica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia", 11-12, 1990-91, pp. 229-232; EADEM, *La Corona de Aragón y el Magreb en el siglo XIV*, cit.; M.T. FERRER I MALLOL, *La corona catalano-aragonesa, l'islam e il mondo mediterraneo: vent'anni di ricerche*, in *Corona d'Aragona e Mediterraneo: vent'anni di ricerche*, a c. di M.E. CADEDDU, "Medioevo saggi e rassegne", 25, Cagliari 2003, pp. 35-78; D. COULON, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d'Orient au Moyen Âge, un siècle de relations avec l'Égypte et la Syrie-Palestine*, cit.; I. HOUSSAYE MICHENZI, *Relazioni commerciali tra la compagnia Datini di Maiorca e le città del Maghreb tra la fine del Trecento e inizio Quattrocento*, in "Mercatura è arte". *Uomini d'affari toscani in Europa e nel Mediterraneo tardomedievale*, a c. di S. TOGNETTI, L. TANZINI, Roma 2012, pp. 149-178.

¹⁹ Cfr. F. MELIS, *Documenti per la storia economica dei secoli XIII-XVI*, Firenze 1972; IDEM, *Origini e sviluppi delle assicurazioni in Italia (secoli 14-16)*. 1, *Le fonti*, a c. di B. DINI, Roma 1975; F. GIUNTA, *Economia e storia della Sicilia trecentesca nei documenti dell'Archivio Datini*, in *Studi dedicati a Carmelo Trasselli*, a c. di G. MOTTA, Soveria Mannelli 1983, pp. 399-407; G. NIGRO, *Gli operatori economici toscani nei paesi catalani a cavallo del '400: alcuni casi esemplari*, cit.; IDEM, *Mercanti in Maiorca. Il carteggio datiniano dell'Isola (1387-1396)*, *Documenti*, cit.; M. TANGHERONI, O. VACCARI, *L'osservatorio datiniano di Livorno e la navigazione mediterranea tra Tre e Quattrocento*, in "Atti della Società ligure di storia patria", n.s., 32, 1992, n. 2, p. 141-164; *Ser Lapo Mazzei, lettere di un notaro a un mercante del secolo XIV, con altre lettere e documenti*,

4. LA NAVIGAZIONE MEDITERRANEA NEL CICLO ECONOMICO BASSO MEDIEVALE

All'interno di questa così ampia messe di studi e ricerche è sorto anche il problema di come collocare i dati che emergevano attorno alla navigazione commerciale del Mediterraneo occidentale nel contesto dell'andamento ciclico dell'economia europea basso medievale. È possibile individuare la presenza di una fase critica trecentesca anche lungo le rotte commerciali di questo mare? E qual è stato l'andamento del ciclo economico collegato alla navigazione marittima al passaggio dal Tre al Quattrocento? A queste e ad altre simili domande la storiografia ha provato più volte a rispondere, dando vita ad un dibattito di straordinario interesse sia scientifico che metodologico; e in questo dibattito il metodo maggiormente utilizzato è stato, in sostanza, quello di inserire la vita economica trecentesca e quattrocentesca dei grandi e piccoli centri urbani e portuali che si affacciavano sul Mediterraneo occidentale nel contesto generale della crisi europea basso medievale. Questa impostazione poneva, tuttavia, in via preliminare la questione, che non può essere data per scontata, del riconoscimento dell'esistenza effettiva di questa fase critica dell'economia europea. Federigo Melis, ad esempio, non ha mai individuato nelle fonti tre e quattrocentesche alcun segnale di un eventuale ripiegamento ciclico dei traffici commerciali, e ha utilizzato il termine "decadenza" per indicare ciò che accadde agli inizi del Cinquecento, quando i traffici nel Mediterraneo occidentale cominciarono, secondo le sue valutazioni, a perdere un po' della loro "consistenza"²⁰. Per ricordare una impostazione del tutto diversa, Ciro Manca vedeva, invece, proprio nel funzionamento del modello di sviluppo delle città marittime italiane basso medievali le ragioni e le origini della fase critica che avrebbe condotta alla trasformazione in senso capitalistico dell'intera economia europea o almeno delle sue componenti maggiormente sviluppate²¹. Se l'evoluzione economica delle città mercantili italiane, come è ben noto, è stata oggetto di studi assai accurati²², per quanto

a c. di C. GUASTI, I-II, Firenze 1880, rist. anastatica Sala Bolognese 1979; *Le lettere di Margherita Datini a Francesco di Marco: 1384-1410*, a c. di V. ROSATI, Prato 1977; *Le lettere di Francesco Datini alla moglie Margherita (1385-1410)*, a c. di E. CECCHI, Prato 1990; L. FRANGIONI, *Milano fine Trecento. Il carteggio milanese dell'Archivio Datini di Prato*, I-II, Firenze 1994; EADEM, *Milano e i paesi catalani nel carteggio di Datini di fine Trecento*, in "Archivio Storico Lombardo", 118, 1992, pp. 37-127; *Il carteggio di Gaeta nell'Archivio del mercante pratese Francesco di Marco Datini, 1387-1405*, a c. di E. CECCHI ASTE, Gaeta 1997; A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro: la corrispondenza datiniana tra Valenza e Maiorca (1395-1398)*, cit.; EADEM, *Aspetti del movimento finanziario in area aragonese nella documentazione mercantile toscana (secoli XIV-XV)*, cit.; EADEM, *La compagnia di catalogna: un successo quasi inatteso*, cit. (e altri saggi nel medesimo volume).

²⁰ Per queste citazioni v. F. MELIS, *L'area catalano-aragonese nel sistema economico del Mediterraneo occidentale*, cit., p. 230.

²¹ C. MANCA, *Un modello di sviluppo economico delle città marittime italiane dal XIV al XVI secolo*, in "Nuova Rivista Storica", LX, 1976, pp. 249-268 (con ulteriore bibliografia). Per il dibattito e la bibliografia relativamente alla crisi economica europea basso medievale sia consentito rinviare a L. PALERMO, *Sviluppo economico e società preindustriali. Cicli, strutture e congiunture in Europa dal medioevo alla prima età moderna*, Roma 2001; A. CORTONESI, L. PALERMO, *La prima espansione economica europea*, Roma 2014 (con ulteriore bibliografia).

²² Cfr., ad esempio, *Italia 1350-1450: tra crisi, trasformazione, sviluppo*, Pistoia 1993 (Centro Italiano di Studi di Storia e d'Arte); *Le Italie del tardo medioevo*, 3, Pisa 1990 (Centro di Studi sulla Civiltà del Tardo Medioevo di San Miniato); v., inoltre, le osservazioni di C. M. CIPOLLA, *La penisola italiana e la penisola iberica*, in *Storia economica Cambridge*, III, *La città e la politica economica nel medioevo*, a c. di M.M.

riguarda le altre regioni che si affacciavano sul Mediterraneo occidentale molte ricerche sono state dedicate soprattutto alla penisola Iberica e alle sue città portuali, con la formazione di ipotesi necessariamente non univoche; ed era inevitabile che ciò accadesse anche perché l'andamento del ciclo economico non è stato omogeneo e costante in tutte le località studiate, e soprattutto perché la specifica caratteristica dell'economia commerciale marittima è proprio quella di saper rispondere rapidamente alle situazioni critiche, rivolgendosi di volta in volta alle linee mercantili maggiormente in grado di produrre profitti, con la ricerca e l'apertura di nuovi mercati e di nuovi collegamenti; in ultima analisi la navigazione commerciale collegava in quelle epoche regioni e piazze commerciali spesso assai lontane tra loro e dotate di ritmi economici non necessariamente tra loro coincidenti²³. E a tutto ciò David Igual ha aggiunto l'opportunità di distinguere tra l'andamento economico dei mercati locali e quello dei mercati internazionali, spesso divergenti tra loro nei tempi e nei modi dell'apparizione delle fasi critiche e ha discusso a tale scopo il modello elaborato da Stephan R. Epstein nell'analisi dei modelli economici regionali e della loro evoluzione verso una maggiore integrazione, foriera a sua volta di conflitti tra operatori economici e di crescita della concorrenza, con l'instaurazione di quella che Epstein definiva come "crisi da integrazione"²⁴. Ma accanto a tutto ciò, è tuttavia opportuno osservare che spesso, soprattutto nel caso delle città portuali della Corona d'Aragona, il sopraggiungere di fasi critiche nel commercio marittimo non è stato giustificato dagli studiosi sulla base della analisi dei processi interni al ciclo economico, ma con giustificazione di tipo politico o militare, gravi ed importanti certamente, ma non sempre necessariamente collegate all'andamento generale del ciclo economico europeo. Questo metodo è stato applicato allo studio della stessa vita economica di Barcellona, con risultati, anche in questo caso, assai differenziati, sicché la navigazione commerciale di questo importante porto è apparsa agli studiosi di volta in volta toccata profondamente da fasi di ristagno o al contrario dotata di una sostanziale continuità nello sviluppo, ma quasi mai collegata all'andamento generale del ciclo economico europeo basso medievale²⁵.

POSTAN, Torino 1977, pp. 462-496; e di J. DAY, *Crisi e congiunture nei secoli XIV e XV*, in *La Storia*, I, *Il Medioevo*. I, *I quadri generali*, Torino 1988, pp. 245-273.

²³ V. L'impostazione della problematica e la rassegna degli studi presenti in P. IRADIEL, *La crisis medieval*, in *Historia de España*, a c. di A. DOMÍNGUEZ, Barcellona 1989, II, pp. 9-296; IDEM, *El siglo XV: expansió i crisi en la perspectiva economica*, in *Historia de la Corona d'Aragó*, a c. di E. BELENGUER, Barcellona 2007, pp. 305-349; D. IGUAL, *Crisis? Que Crisis? El comercio internacional en los reinos hispanicos de la baja Edad Media*, in "Edad Media. Revista de Historia", 8, 2007, pp. 203-223; IDEM, *Operadores económicos y espacios de comercio en el mediterráneo occidental (siglos XIII-XV)*, cit.; G. FELIU, *La crisis catalana de la baja edad Media: estado de la cuestión*, in "Hispania", 64, 2004, pp. 435-466.

²⁴ Cfr. S.R. EPSTEIN, *Freedom and Growth. The rise of states and markets in Europe, 1300-1750*, Londra-New York 2000, pp. 38-72; IDEM, *Potere e mercati in Sicilia. Secoli XIII-XVI*, Torino 1996; per il dibattito suscitato da queste tesi v. P. IRADIEL, *Metropolis y hombres de negocios (siglos XIV y XV)*, in "XXIX Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella: "Las sociedades urbanas en la España medieval", Pamplona 2003, pp. 277-310; D. IGUAL, *Crisis? Que Crisis?*, cit.

²⁵ Sul dibattito attorno agli aspetti mediterranei e marittimi dell'economia della Corona d'Aragona, e in particolare della città di Barcellona, si veda P. VILAR, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne*, cit.; Cl. CARRÈRE, *Barcelone, centre économique à l'époque des difficultés, 1380-1462*, cit.; A. BOSCOLO, *La mutacion del siglo XIV en el Mediterraneo*, cit.; J.E. RUIZ DOMÉNEC, *La crisis economica de la Corona de Aragón, realidad o ficción historiográfica?*, in "Quadernos de Historia", Anexos de la revista "Hispania", 8,

5. IL MEDITERRANEO OCCIDENTALE E IL PORTO DI ROMA

Un ulteriore contributo alla individuazione delle caratteristiche della navigazione commerciale nel Mediterraneo occidentale e della presenza in essa di fasi espansive o critiche può essere fornito dall'osservatorio di Roma e, in particolare, dall'intenso movimento di navi e di merci registrato nel porto marittimo-fluviale di questa città. Le vicende del porto di Roma, e di Roma stessa come città portuale, sono ovviamente molto presenti nella storiografia dedicata alla vita di questa città tra medioevo e rinascimento²⁶; ma queste stesse vicende meritano di essere ulteriormente valorizzate proprio nelle loro connessioni internazionali, oggetto del nostro odierno dibattito. Se, infatti, questa città utilizzava, da un lato, tutti i vantaggi economici che derivavano dal suo essere sede della curia papale, essa era anche una città perfettamente inserita nel contesto economico europeo basso medievale e rinascimentale, e il suo importante porto manteneva legami costanti e diretti con i maggiori e minori centri marinari e commerciali del Mediterraneo e in particolare con quelli presenti nel suo bacino occidentale qui in esame.

Questa rete di relazioni economiche, tradizionalmente presente nell'economia romana, ebbe una fase di notevole espansione dopo il ritorno della corte pontificia da Avignone, negli anni Settanta del Trecento, e ancor più dopo la fine dello Scisma d'Occidente, nel 1417. Per i valori simbolici di cui era depositaria, infatti, e per la corte pontificia di cui era sede, la città di Roma, perduta l'autonomia comunale e acquisito il ruolo definitivo di residenza dei pontefici e di capitale del loro Stato, divenne rapidamente la città europea maggiormente fornita, in quelle epoche, di aperture e collegamenti internazionali²⁷. Dotata, come nessun altro centro europeo, di

Madrid 1977, pp. 71-118; F. UDINA MARTORELL, *La mutacion de la secunda mitad del siglo XIV en la Corona de Aragon*, ivi, pp. 119-154; D. COULON, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d'Orient au Moyen Âge*, cit.; M.T. FERRER, *Catalan commerce in the late Middle Ages*, cit.

²⁶ Cfr. A. ESCH, *Le importazioni nella Roma del primo Rinascimento (il loro volume secondo i registri doganali degli anni 1452-1462)*, in *Aspetti della vita economica e culturale a Roma*, Roma 1981, pp. 7-79; IDEM, *Importe in das Rom der Renaissance. Die Zollregister der Jahre 1470 bis 1480*, in "Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken", 52, 1992, pp. 476-525; IDEM, *Roma come centro di importazioni nella seconda metà del Quattrocento ed il peso economico del papato*, in *Roma Capitale (1447-1527)*, Pisa 1994 (Centro di Studi sulla Civiltà del Tardo Medioevo di San Miniato), pp. 107-143; IDEM, *Roman Customs Registers 1470-80: Items of Interest to Historians of Art and Material Culture*, in "Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes", LVIII, 1995, pp. 72-87; IDEM, *Economia, cultura materiale ed arte nella Roma del Rinascimento. Studi sui registri doganali romani, 1445-1485*, Roma 2007; M.L. LOMBARDO, *La dogana di Ripa e Ripetta nel sistema dell'ordinamento tributario a Roma dal Medio Evo al sec. XV*, Roma 1978; EADEM, *Camera Urbis. Dohana Ripa e Ripetta. Liber Introitus 1428*, Roma 1978; L. PALERMO, *Il porto di Roma nel XIV e XV secolo. Strutture socio-economiche e statuti*, Roma 1979; IDEM, *Mercati del grano a Roma tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, I, Roma 1990; D. LOMBARDI, *Dalla dogana alla taverna. Il vino a Roma alla fine del medioevo*, Roma 2018.

²⁷ Il passaggio dalla fase comunale della storia della città a quella della signoria pontificia si veda A. ESCH, *Bonifaz IX. und der Kirchenstaat*, Tübingen 1969; IDEM, *La fine del libero comune di Roma nel giudizio dei mercanti fiorentini. Lettere romane degli anni 1395-1398 nell'Archivio Datini*, in "Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo e Archivio Muratoriano", 86, 1976-77, pp. 235-277. Sulla situazione della città nelle varie fasi del passaggio al predominio della signoria papale si vedano i saggi e le relative indicazioni bibliografiche presenti in *Alle origini della nuova Roma. Martino V (1417-1431)*, a c. di M. CHIABÒ, G. D'ALESSANDRO, P. PIACENTINI, C. RANIERI, Roma 1992; *Un pontificato ed una città:*

un gruppo dirigente proveniente da ogni angolo dell'Italia e dell'Europa, la città si avviò verso un lungo ed intenso processo di crescita, che nel periodo rinascimentale e poi ancora nella prima età moderna investì tutti gli aspetti della sua vita, dalla demografia ai consumi, dai commerci alla banca, dalla finanza pubblica all'urbanistica, dalle infrastrutture alla produzione di beni altamente specializzati²⁸. E se questa internazionalizzazione era implicita nei valori simbolici, insieme politici e religiosi, di cui la città era sede, essa era ulteriormente rinforzata dalle strutture economiche che sostenevano la corte pontificia. Il papato aveva rapporti finanziari con ogni angolo dell'Europa cristiana, anche e soprattutto per riscuotere i proventi che gli spettavano *in spiritualibus*, e i gruppi dirigenti curiali utilizzavano il sistema mercantile e bancario sia italiano che europeo per la gestione delle finanze ecclesiastiche, risultando in genere favoriti i banchieri connazionali del pontefice *pro tempore* regnante. In questo ampio coinvolgimento di soggetti aziendali posti al servizio della Chiesa Romana, cioè di quella che era in quelle epoche di gran lunga la maggiore organizzazione finanziaria europea, furono coinvolti per un breve periodo trecentesco i mercanti-banchieri napoletani, poi nel corso del Quattrocento i papi cominciarono a servirsi di operatori economici e finanziari toscani e genovesi e di altri centri mercantili e bancari italiani²⁹; lo stesso banco dei Medici, come è noto, sorse a Roma e non a Firenze³⁰. Queste presenze altamente specializzate moltiplicavano le occasioni commerciali e bancarie che nascevano e venivano portate avanti non solo nella curia ma nella stessa città e finivano per coinvolgere coloro che in essa producevano e consumavano. La curia e la città costituivano realtà economiche e sociali certamente distinte, ma era inevitabile che i processi economici internazionali attivati nell'ambito della corte del papa avessero una ricaduta immediata anche sulla città e sui suoi abitanti³¹. I capitali giungevano, dunque, a Roma inseriti nel circuito bancario e finanziario europeo della Chiesa; essi erano destinati ad alimentare i profitti dei

Sisto IV (1471-1484), a c. di M. MIGLIO, F. NIUTTA, D. QUAGLIONI, C. RANIERI, Roma 1986; e *Roma Capitale (1447-1527)*, cit.

²⁸ Cfr. L. PALERMO, *L'economia*, in *Roma del Rinascimento*, a c. di A. PINELLI, Roma-Bari 2002, pp. 49-92.

²⁹ Cfr., ad esempio, Y. RENOUARD, *Les relations des Papes d'Avignon et des Compagnies commerciales et bancaires de 1316 à 1378*, Parigi 1914; J. FAVIER, *Les finances pontificales à l'époque du Grand Schisme d'Occident (1378-1409)*, Parigi 1966; R. DE ROOVER, *Il banco Medici dalle origini al declino (1397-1494)*, Firenze 1970; F. PIOLA CASELLI, *L'espansione delle fonti finanziarie della chiesa nel XIV secolo*, in "Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria", 110, 1987, pp. 63-97; A. ESCH, *Das Papsttum unter der Herrschaft der Neapolitaner (Die führende Gruppe Neapolitaner Familien an der Kurie während des Schismas. 1378-1415)*, in *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel*, Göttingen 1972, II, pp. 713-800; IDEM, *Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma*, in "Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken", XLVI, 1966, pp. 277-394; IDEM, *Florentiner in Rom um 1400. Namensverzeichnis der ersten Quattrocento-Generation*, in "Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken", LII, 1972, pp. 476-525; L. PALERMO, *La finanza pontificia e il banchiere "depositario" nel primo Quattrocento*, in *Studi in onore di Ciro Manca*, a c. di D. STRANGIO, Padova 2000, pp. 349-378; I. AIT, *La dogana di S. Eustachio nel XV secolo*, in *Aspetti della vita economica e culturale a Roma*, cit.; EADEM, *Mercanti stranieri a Roma nel XV secolo nei registri della dogana di terra*, in *Forestieri e stranieri nelle città bassomedievali*, Firenze 1988, pp. 29-43.

³⁰ Cfr. R. DE ROOVER, *Il banco Medici dalle origini al declino (1397-1494)*, cit.

³¹ Sull'inserimento del sistema urbano romano nell'economia-mondo fiorentina e toscana v., oltre alle opere già citate di Arnold Esch, L. PALERMO, *L'economia*, in *Roma del Rinascimento*, cit.; v., inoltre, i capitoli dedicati a Roma (il V e il VI) in IDEM, *Sviluppo economico e società preindustriali*, cit.

mercanti-banchieri posti al servizio della curia, ma finivano anche per sostenere in modo diretto o indiretto il mercato romano, e contribuivano al sopraggiungere in città di materie prime e di beni semilavorati destinati ad essere consegnati agli artigiani locali (principalmente tessuti, cuoi, lana e spesso cotone, grano e altri beni alimentari, moltissimo vino, materiali da costruzione e così via) come anche di prodotti finiti da immettere direttamente nel ciclo locale dei consumi. Tutte queste merci arrivavano, tranne poche eccezioni, per mare fino alla foce del Tevere e sempre per via d'acqua risalivano il fiume fino a giungere dentro le mura della città. Per tutti questi motivi la realtà romana dei decenni finali del Trecento e iniziali del Quattrocento può essere considerata un osservatorio particolarmente importante anche per la storia della navigazione marittima del Mediterraneo occidentale; il porto di questa città risulta, infatti, collocato al centro di un'ampia rete di relazioni economiche che lo ponevano in contatto con tutti i grandi e piccoli centri portuali e mercantili attivi nel Mediterraneo occidentale.

6. LA COLLOCAZIONE GEOECONOMICA DEL PORTO ROMANO

La città di Roma era il punto di arrivo e di convergenza di due fondamentali linee di collegamento e di rifornimento che giungevano al suo porto e che erano, ovviamente, interconnesse tra loro. Una prima era costituita dai legami che essa intratteneva con il sistema commerciale ligure-tirrenico, all'interno del quale erano presenti grandi città portuali come Genova, Pisa, Napoli, Palermo, Cagliari, ma anche una miriade di grandi e piccoli punti di approdo collocati lungo la costa dalla Liguria alla Calabria e nelle grandi e piccole isole di questi mari. E all'interno di questo bacino ligure-tirrenico rapporti costanti e duraturi furono anche quelli che intercorrevano tra Roma e i porti granari della Tuscia, dai quali giungeva il rifornimento granario destinato agli uffici dell'Abbondanza della città³². Una seconda linea di collegamenti congiungeva, invece, Roma con i centri portuali della penisola Iberica e dell'Africa settentrionale, con navi che giungevano direttamente alla foce del Tevere o che passavano attraverso punti di appoggio intermedio, costituiti da porti che svolgevano le funzioni di ridistribuzione delle merci trasportate, e tra questi emergono soprattutto Genova, Pisa, Gaeta, Napoli e Palermo³³. In una lettera del 1400 i mercanti romani indicano i porti tirrenici collegati al meglio con quello romano: “*Se per Ghaeta non vi fosse per essere passaggio e le chose siano in buono pregio e sievi buono pas[saggio] per Pisa, chonprate la 1/1 di dette chose e mandate [...] a Livorno; se d'ave[ntura] in chostà fosse passaggio per Civitavecchia sarebbe meglio ch'altrove e vorremo tutto*”³⁴. Da questo testo, pur nella sua brevità, emerge chiaramente quanto il percorso marittimo delle merci condizionasse la loro presenza nel mercato romano; ed infatti, solo nel caso che i porti di sbarco delle merci fossero stati Gaeta o Civitavecchia i mercanti che opera-

³² Cfr. L. PALERMO, *Mercati del grano a Roma tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, cit.; IDEM, *L'approvvigionamento granario della capitale: strategie economiche e carriere curiali a Roma alla metà del Quattrocento*, in *Roma capitale*, cit., pp.145-206.

³³ Per questi collegamenti commerciali v. la bibliografia indicata qui sopra alla nota n. 26.

³⁴ ASPO, 911, Giuliano di Giovanni e Piggello Portinari e comp., lettera Roma-Barcellona del 25 aprile 1400.

vano nell'Urbe avrebbe desiderato la totale soddisfazione dei loro ordinativi, altrimenti si accontentavano di ricevere la metà dei quantitativi ordinati.

Una significativa, anche se incompleta, documentazione ha permesso di ricostruire la complessiva collocazione geoeconomica del porto romano, ma anche di individuare i soggetti attivi in questi commerci marittimi e i dati quantitativi relativi alle navi e alle merci che giungevano in città³⁵. Questa documentazione è stata anzitutto reperita nelle fonti camerale, cioè nei libri dell'amministrazione finanziaria della Chiesa, che registravano non solo i flussi finanziari in entrata e in uscita che la curia papale intratteneva con i mercanti banchieri operanti a Roma, ma anche la sostanza operativa di queste relazioni e la tipologia delle merci che attraverso le varie intermediazioni commerciali giungevano in città; e insieme ai nomi di questi operatori economici compaiono continuamente anche i nomi e alla patria di origine dei patroni delle navi che ricevevano il permesso di portare le loro merci a Roma³⁶. Un'altra fondamentale tipologia di fonti è costituita, poi, dalla documentazione doganale, cioè dai registri degli ufficiali e degli appaltatori che riscuotevano la gabella all'arrivo delle navi al porto di Ripa e Ripetta, dentro le mura della città; questi registri, che purtroppo non ci sono pervenuti in modo completo, contengono i dati quantitativi relativi alle navi con i loro patroni, alle merci, ai costi del trasporto, alle assicurazioni e così via³⁷.

Ma nei decenni compresi tra il Tre e il Quattrocento anche la documentazione conservata nell'Archivio Datini consente, e già molte ricerche sono state effettuate, uno studio assai approfondito di vari aspetti della storia economica romana e della presenza a Roma delle compagnie mercantili e bancarie italiane e delle forme della loro attività³⁸. Gli studi che Arnold Esch ha condotto sulla documentazione datiniana, arricchendo con essa i dati provenienti dalle fonti vaticane, hanno rivelato non solo la consistenza della presenza dei toscani e la varietà dei meccanismi economici da essi attivati, ma perfino la progettualità politica di quei mercanti, che vedevano con favore la fine del libero comune e la sottomissione della città al potere

³⁵ Sulla tipologia della documentazione disponibile si veda A. ESCH, *Le fonti per la storia economica e sociale di Roma nel Rinascimento: un approccio personale*, in *Economia e società a Roma tra Medioevo e Rinascimento. Studi dedicati ad Arnold Esch*, a c. di A. ESPOSITO e L. PALERMO, Roma 2005, pp. 1-31, e gli altri saggi presenti nello stesso volume.

³⁶ Per questa documentazione cfr. L. PALERMO, *Il porto di Roma nel XIV e XV secolo*, cit., e IDEM, *Mercati del grano a Roma tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, cit.

³⁷ V. le opere citate qui sopra alla nota n. 26.

³⁸ Cfr., ad esempio, F. MELIS, *Movimento di popoli e motivi economici nel giubileo del 1400*, in IDEM, *I trasporti e le comunicazioni nel Medioevo*, con una introduzione di M. MOLLAT, a c. di L. FRANGIONI, Firenze 1985, pp. 237-259; A. ESCH, *Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma*, cit.; IDEM, *Bonifaz IX. und der Kirchenstaat*, cit.; IDEM, *Florentiner in Rom um 1400. Namensverzeichnis der ersten Quattrocento-Generation*, cit.; IDEM, *La fine del libero comune di Roma nel giudizio dei mercanti fiorentini. Lettere romane degli anni 1395-1398 nell'Archivio Datini*, cit.; L. PALERMO, *Il porto di Roma nel XIV e XV secolo. Strutture socio-economiche e statuti*, cit., pp. 103 ss.; IDEM, *L'anno santo dei mercanti: dibattito storiografico e documenti economici sul cosiddetto giubileo del 1400*, in *Cultura e società nell'Italia medievale. Studi per Paolo Brezzi*, Roma 1988, II, pp. 605-618; IDEM, *I mercanti e la moneta a Roma nel primo Rinascimento*, in *Economia e società a Roma tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, a c. di A. ESPOSITO e L. PALERMO, Roma 2005, pp. 243-281. Notizie sul mercato romano sono, inoltre, assai ben presenti nelle opere e nelle edizioni del carteggio datiniano citate qui sopra nella nota n. 19.

del papa³⁹. Ma le stesse fonti datiniane hanno permesso di gettare uno sguardo non solo sulla Roma residenza dei papi e luogo privilegiato degli investimenti dei capitali forestieri, ma anche sulla città in quanto tale, sui suoi piccoli e medi operatori economici, spesso anch'essi di origine forestiera ma comunque abitanti nello spazio urbano romano, sulle loro attività e sui benefici che essi ricavano dalla presenza delle grandi istituzioni politiche, religiose e finanziarie. Anche in questo caso è stato fortemente trasformato e arricchito il quadro della vita economica della città, nei decenni a cavallo tra i due secoli qui considerati. È stato possibile, ad esempio, osservare come funzionavano i trasporti marittimi e come venivano attivati i preparativi economici in vista del giubileo previsto per l'anno 1400, e in realtà poi non più ufficialmente proclamato per quell'anno dal papa⁴⁰. Si è potuto, inoltre, collocare nella giusta evidenza, per alcuni decenni caratterizzati dalla assenza totale di fonti doganali o comunali, la proiezione internazionale del movimento portuale romano, i costi dei trasporti, i costi e i contenuti delle prime polizze di assicurazione stipulate per le navi dirette a Roma, i costi fiscali delle importazioni, i nomi e le attività di alcuni gruppi di operatori artigianali, i prezzi di alcune importanti merci e altro ancora⁴¹. La documentazione datiniana rivela, dunque, come già in quelle epoche gli operatori economici romani e forestieri si avviassero ad utilizzare le infrastrutture marittime e fluviali che facevano capo alla città, per inserirsi fruttuosamente in una rete assai ampia di collegamenti, che comprendeva le principali regioni economiche affacciate sul Mediterraneo; e questa apertura commerciale della città è ulteriormente provata dalla necessità che i gruppi dirigenti romani avvertivano in quegli stessi anni di rinnovare e rinforzare le strutture e le normative statutarie create attorno alla riscossione delle gabelle, sia di quelle di terra (nel 1398)⁴², che di quelle di mare (nel 1416)⁴³.

7. ROMA E LA PENISOLA IBERICA NEL CARTEGGIO DATINI.

I dati relativi alle relazioni commerciali tra Roma e la penisola Iberica sono reperibili in tutte le tipologie delle fonti conservate presso l'archivio di Francesco di Marco Datini. Sono rintracciabili, ad esempio, nei libri contabili provenienti dalle tre città iberiche sedi delle aziende del Datini, nei quali venivano registrati i movimenti di denari e di merci che in qualunque modo vedevano coinvolta la piazza romana; ma questi dati sono emersi anche nel carteggio specializzato, e soprattutto negli estratti-conto, già utilizzati per la ricostruzione di aspetti importanti delle attività portuali romane⁴⁴; e sono, infine, di fondamentale importanza anche le filze

³⁹ Cfr. A. ESCH, *Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma*, cit.; IDEM, *Florentiner in Rom um 1400*, cit.; IDEM, *La fine del libero comune di Roma*, cit.

⁴⁰ Cfr. F. MELIS, *Movimento di popoli e motivi economici nel giubileo del 1400*, cit.; L. PALERMO, *L'anno santo dei mercanti*, cit.

⁴¹ Cfr. L. PALERMO, *Il porto di Roma nel XIV e XV secolo*, cit., pp. 103 ss.

⁴² *Statuti delle gabelle di Roma*, a c. di S. MALATESTA, Roma 1886.

⁴³ M.L. LOMBARDO, *La dogana di Ripa e Ripetta nel sistema dell'ordinamento tributario a Roma dal Medio Evo al sec. XV*, Roma 1978; L. PALERMO, *Il porto di Roma nel XIV e XV secolo*, cit.

⁴⁴ Cfr. *Ibid.*, pp. 103 ss.

delle lettere commerciali, soprattutto quelle scritte a Roma. Delle oltre 1660 lettere inviate tra il 1383 e il 1410 da mercanti-banchieri residenti a Roma alle aziende Datini italiane ed iberiche, il gruppo più consistente è quello che raccoglie la corrispondenza con Pisa (625 lettere), seguito da quello con Genova (547 lettere) e con Firenze (392 lettere); e anche le lettere inviate alle aziende Datini da altre località, e in particolare quelle spedite da Gaeta, piazza commerciale strettamente collegata a Roma, trascritte e pubblicate da Elena Cecchi⁴⁵, aiutano ad individuare il ruolo del porto romano nel traffico commerciale del Mediterraneo occidentale. E il quadro complessivo è ancora più completo se si utilizzano i dati ricavati da altre filze di lettere che pur non provenendo da Roma riescono ugualmente ad illustrare alcuni significativi aspetti dei rapporti tra questa città e l'area Iberica. E se già in questi fondi emergono continui riferimenti alle relazioni che i mercanti operanti a Roma intrattenevano con le città e i porti del mediterraneo occidentale, si deve aggiungere che nelle filze del carteggio romano risultano poi presenti 90 lettere spedite da Roma tra il 1397 e il 1407 direttamente alle aziende catalane del Datini, e in particolare a Barcellona (61 lettere), a Maiorca (24 lettere) e a Valenza (5 lettere)⁴⁶, con un contenuto che fa riferimento immediato ai rapporti che Roma intratteneva con quelle località e con quelle rotte commerciali. L'analisi dei contenuti delle lettere presenti in tutte queste filze ha permesso di ricostruire gli spostamenti delle merci e del denaro dall'area iberica a quella romana, attraverso i passaggi intermedi dei porti di raccolta e di redistribuzione delle merci. È stato così possibile seguire le varie fasi del trasferimento delle merci da un mercato all'altro, il costo del trasporto, i gravami fiscali, i profitti realizzati dai mercanti banchieri, le tecniche dello spostamento del denaro, il ricorso alle lettere di cambio e molto altro ancora⁴⁷.

Le lettere spedite da Roma alle aziende catalane di Francesco di Marco Datini sono state trascritte e sono avviate alla pubblicazione. Non essendo questa la sede adatta per una analisi minuziosa dei dati commerciali, bancari e monetari offerti da questo carteggio, si può tuttavia accennare alla questione, già qui sopra richiamata, del sopraggiungere tra il Trecento e il Quattrocento di una fase critica nella navigazione commerciale mediterranea. Nel trattare anche sulla base di queste fonti questa specifica problematica, è necessario ribadire che non è strutturalmente possibile immaginare un modello ciclico comune dell'economia marittima mediterranea, nel quale si possano inserire, per deduzione, le posizioni dei singoli centri marittimi e commerciali; si tratta molto più semplicemente, ma anche più realisticamente, di individuare le caratteristiche del ciclo economico registrato in ciascuna città marittima e esaminare il contributo che essa ha dato all'andamento generale del commercio marittimo nel Mediterraneo occidentale. Il caso di Roma e del suo porto è da questo punto di vista particolarmente interessante. Nelle lettere inviate alle aziende catalane del Datini i mercanti annotavano, infatti, continuamente le ragioni che rendevano difficile o impossibile la movimentazione delle merci e del denaro, e se

⁴⁵ *Il carteggio di Gaeta nell'Archivio del mercante pratese Francesco di Marco Datini, 1387-1405*, cit.

⁴⁶ Cfr. ASPO, Datini, 911, 1000, 1076.

⁴⁷ Cfr. L. PALERMO, *Il porto di Roma nel XIV e XV secolo*, cit., pp. 103 ss.; IDEM, *I mercanti e la moneta a Roma nel primo Rinascimento*, cit.

alcune di queste ragioni sono certamente del tutto contingenti, altre sono invece da attribuire al passaggio di una fase economicamente critica.

Il primo fattore contingente era costituito dalle difficoltà che insorgevano nella gestione dei mercati da parte delle pubbliche autorità. Nelle lettere emergono, anzitutto, le incertezze di fronte alle quali i mercanti si trovavano dovendo affrontare le politiche protezionistiche dei governi: *“Per uno capitolo ci avete scritto in su la lettera de’ vostri di Maolicba siamo avisati de l’ordine fatto contro Italiani salvo genovesi, viniziani e pisani, il perché ci ditte soprastiamo di non mandare robe per vendere chostà e chosì faremo”*⁴⁸. Erano problemi che, come abbiamo avuto modo di segnalare qui sopra, i mercanti italiani si sentivano in grado di affrontare, ma l’impatto sul traffico commerciale non poteva che essere, almeno momentaneamente, negativo. Ma non solo i provvedimenti dei governi iberici influenzavano l’andamento degli scambi e quindi della navigazione commerciale, anche le istituzioni romane potevano generare situazioni di incertezza. A Roma, ad esempio, nell’anno 1400, si era diffusa l’attesa della proclamazione dell’Anno Santo, una grande occasione di afflusso di pellegrini e di affari per i mercanti; e dal carteggio emerge tutta la progettualità mercantile collegata a questo evento. Una lettera del 31 gennaio 1400 rivela come tutti aspettassero la decisione del papa e come tutti fossero d’accordo che *“s’el perdono va inanzì”* a Roma si sarebbero fatte grandi cose in termini di movimenti di merci. E scrivevano *va inanzì* perché, come ha appurato Arnold Esch, era dal 1390 che anno dopo anno Bonifacio IX prolungava gli effetti spirituali (e per i mercanti anche economici) del giubileo. Ma, dopo un decennio di continui rinnovamenti il papa non prolungò l’evento religioso anche per l’anno 1400: *“non è seguito che il papa l’abi prolunchato, chome arete veduto”*⁴⁹, scrivevano delusi i mercanti operanti a Roma, e dopo qualche mese confermavano *“il papa non bandì il perdono né bandirà ora mai”*⁵⁰, prendendo atto dell’impossibilità di condurre a termine le attività progettate.

E il mancato giubileo non era la sola preoccupazione dei mercanti romani, il commercio in quella città era fortemente dipendente anche dalle necessità di una delle maggiori strutture europee di consumo di beni e servizi, la corte romana, e in quel periodo la domanda espressa delle pubbliche istituzioni era spesso debole e ciò a sua volta determinava forti variazioni della domanda di moneta. Matteo de’ Ricci, ad esempio, scriveva a Barcellona nel luglio del 1401, proprio ponendo in relazione la domanda di beni di consumo esercitata dalla corte con il livello del costo del denaro: *“Non anno fatto altra virtù questi denari che detto vi si sia per altra e raxionate per lo poco si fa in corte, fino a tutto quest’altro si staranno freddi, poi a settembre ci si dovrà cominciare a fare dele cose, ed è pericolo il trovarci debito”*⁵¹. Altro elemento istituzionale negativo era naturalmente la guerra, e a Roma i mercanti registravano e comunicavano ai loro corrispondenti spagnoli che era in atto una lotta tra il papa e i Colonnese, *“la quale*

⁴⁸ ASPO, 911, Agnolo di Ser Pino e Giuliano di Giovanni, lettera Roma-Barcellona del 9 giugno 1401.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Antonio di Giacomo e Doffo degli Spini e comp., lettera Roma-Barcellona del 31 gennaio 1399 (1400).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Antonio di Giacomo e Doffo degli Spini e comp., lettera Roma-Barcellona del 24 aprile 1400.

⁵¹ ASPO, 911, Matteo de’ Ricci e comp., lettera Roma-Barcellona del 14 luglio 1401.

tiene impacciato e atenebrato tutto questo paese”⁵². E a tutto ciò si aggiungevano altri fattori negativi come il passaggio delle fasi di pestilenza, che non solo bloccava il traffico delle merci, ma anche l’organizzazione delle aziende, come accadde alla compagnia romana di Agnolo di Ser Pino e Giuliano di Giovanni: “E di Lucha nostro, che vi diciamo pensavamo mandallo in Cicilia, per anchora non v’è andato per chagione della moria è qui grande e per lli paesi d’atorno, il perché diliberiamo stare un pezo a vedere chome tutto seghue e quello dilibereremo sarete avisati”⁵³. Vi era poi la paura della pirateria, il prezzo alto delle assicurazioni, tutti fattori depressivi degli scambi con i porti occidentali.

Accanto a questi dati congiunturali, viene rivelata nelle lettere dei mercanti anche la presenza a Roma di un dato critico di tipo maggiormente strutturale, in grado di colpire i traffici commerciali con l’Occidente in modo più forte e continuo: per alcuni anni di seguito il mercato romano attraversò una fase di sostanziale deflazione, analogamente a quanto accadeva nello stesso periodo di tempo, come hanno appurato ad esempio gli studi di John Day⁵⁴, in molte altre regioni italiane ed europee. Il carteggio con la Catalogna è pieno di continue lamentele sugli sbalzi del valore della moneta, sulla sua scarsità, sulla caduta dei prezzi delle merci:

“Per alcuni bisongni suti ‘n questi di montarono forte questi e per ongni parte, poi sono pur bassati e stanno sì chome per li cambi vedrete, per ogni piccolo bisonigno gl’aremo per me’ valere”⁵⁵.

“Abbici a questi di charo denaro per alcuni bisongni e per ongni parte, poi sono bassati”⁵⁶.

“Questi denari sono stati in gran carestia, hora e’ son bassati chome vedrete”⁵⁷.

“Costi (cioè in Spagna) è larghezza di denari e qui (cioè a Roma) il contrario, chome per li cambi vedrete, e parci si manteranno buoni, perché ce n’è pochi e di bisonni pure creschon tutto di”⁵⁸.

I denari cari per i mercanti-banchieri talvolta anche buoni, perché erano loro ad offrirli sul mercato dei cambi e dei prestiti, ma tutto ciò portava i prezzi delle merci ad una congiuntura opposta. Sempre Filippo e Niccolò de’ Ricci scrivevano ai Datini della Catalogna: “Qui si solea mettere de’ panni di costi e farne utile, hora è passato il tem-

⁵² *Ibidem*.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Agnolo di Ser Pino e Giuliano di Giovanni, lettera Roma-Barcellona del 30 giugno 1400.

⁵⁴ Cfr. J. DAY, *Monnaies et marchés au Moyen Age*, Parigi 1994; IDEM, *Crisi e congiunture nei secoli XIV e XV*, in *La Storia*, a c. di N. TRANFAGLIA, M. FIRPO, Torino 1988, I.1, pp. 245-273; IDEM, *La circulation monétaire en Toscane au temps de Dante*, in IDEM, *Monnaies et marchés au Moyen Age*, cit., pp. 29-39; IDEM, *Moneta metallica e moneta creditizia*, in *Storia d’Italia*, Annali, 6, *Economia naturale, economia monetaria*, Torino 1983, pp. 339-360; IDEM, *The Medieval Market Economy*, Oxford 1987.

⁵⁵ ASPO, 1076, Agnolo di Ser Pino e comp., lettera Roma-Maiorca del 19 marzo 1401 (1402).

⁵⁶ ASPO, 911, Agnolo di Ser Pino e comp., lettera Roma-Barcellona del 19 marzo 1401 (1402).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Filippo e Niccolò de’ Ricci e comp., lettera Roma-Barcellona del 30 gennaio 1402 (1403).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, lettera Roma-Barcellona del 18 luglio 1402.

po ché n'anno le merchantie troppo chattiva condizione"⁵⁹. Ed ecco che in questi lunghi mesi di tendenziale depressione un'altra lettera ci rivela in una sola frase la strategia economica verso la quale la società romana degli Spini si sta orientando: rinunciare alle operazioni mercantili e concentrarsi sulle speculazioni finanziarie: "*Noy non ci impaciamo di mercha'tie nessuno e altro che di cambi non abiam bisogno*"⁶⁰. E tutto ciò non poteva non riflettersi sui ritmi della navigazione commerciale. Ma il contributo della piazza Romana alla fase critica era destinato a durare poco, e già ai primi del Quattrocento la città avviava quel lungo processo di crescita che l'avrebbe fatta diventare per alcuni secoli di seguito una delle maggiori capitali europee del lusso e della finanza.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, lettera Roma-Barcellona del 9 maggio 1403.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Antonio e Doffo Spini e compagni, lettera Roma-Barcellona del 31 gennaio 1399 (1400).

Angela Orlandi

*Between the Mediterranean and the North Sea:
Networks of Men and Ports (14th-15th Centuries)*

Scholars have by now adopted the expression “network system” to define the connections between cities, institutions, economic operators and so forth. Especially in the case of the networks of men, these connections are strengthened by various elements, such as business relations, family relationships, expertise, friendship and trust, to name the most important.¹

In the rich landscape of studies – beginning in the 1990’s – which have attempted to define the concept of network, we need cite here only the important contributions of Peter Stabel² and Wim Blockmans.³ In his research on Flemish cities and ports, the former introduces new factors relative to demographic variables, besides political, economic and socio-culture considerations, while the latter, in addition to movements of populations, proposes the identification and measurement of the progress of ideas, innovations and products between the different locations along the network.

In any even more recent era, work has been done that attempts to assess the impact of connections between cities and road or port infrastructure on the development of urban networks.⁴

Within this framework, we feel that it bears repeating that the main generators of movement were economic operators. The essential task continues to be the reconstruction of their actions and their choices, such as those of merchants of a particular network who preferred a certain itinerary or route over another on the basis

¹ Among the most recent studies that in particular provide detailed analysis of the possibility of applying social network analysis to the history of late medieval and early modern commerce, taking into account above all the networks built by single merchants, see *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE eds., London 2014, and A. ORLANDI, *Le prestazioni di una holding tardo medievale rilette attraverso alcune teorie di management e la Social Network Analysis*, in *Innovare nella Storia Economica: Temi, Metodi, Fonti*, Prato 2016 (Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini”), pp. 117-148.

² P. STABEL, *Dwarfs among Giants. The Flemish Urban Network in the Late Middle Ages*, Leuven 1997.

³ W. BLOCKMANS, *Des systèmes urbains: pourquoi?* in *Le réseau urbain en Belgique dans une perspective historique (1350-1850). Une approche statistique et dynamique. Actes du quinzième Colloque International de Spa des 4-6 septembre 1990*, Brussels 1992, pp. 111-124.

⁴ J. PREISER-KAPPELLER, *Introduction*, in *Harbours and Maritime Networks as Complex Adaptive Systems*, Mainz 2015 (Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum), pp. 1-24.

of available information, choices which in turn depended on the efficiency of their networks.⁵

In 2013 in a paper delivered in Lisbon, Wim Blockmans indeed began a reflection on the role played by port cities in the economic and culture integration of Europe.⁶ Two years later, a conference dedicated to the Castilian network addressed the topic from a general perspective, which moving beyond local conditions looked to ports as the impetus behind economic and social take-off, a phenomenon also evident in other maritime or land regions. The reconstruction proposed by the organizers touched on many themes, taking its cue from the administrative framework, with particular attention paid to legislation. The study then moved on to examine transportation and communication and ended by inquiring into the commercial and human relationships that emerged from port traffic.⁷ More recently, Blockmans, together with Mikhail Krom and Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz, has proposed an equally pluralistic approach, but extended to the broader European context. That essay analyzes the connections between cities, emphasizing that their institutional evolution was translated into maritime traffic and mercantile exchanges along the coasts of Europe. They thereby recommend a further examination of the topic in terms of financial activities, juridical norms, languages, architectural models and navigational routes. In other words, these writers have attempted to define the development of relations between ports, coasts, commercial routes, market hierarchies and urban networks, linking these to the “circumnavigating economy” proposed by Braudel.⁸

As hubs of a dense network, ports guaranteed connections between regions and areas quite distant from one another or separated by barriers of various kinds. Indeed the theme of communication is the only area of study that apparently presents no obstacles to viewing the Mediterranean as a unity, as is evidenced even in the evocative and controversial study of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell.⁹ If these two scholars, in contraposition to Fernand Braudel, maintain that the Mediterranean is “a corrupting sea” in that it is surrounded by different microcosms subject to easy division, they nonetheless use Braudel’s concept of connection to argue a kind of paradox: in the condition of immanent fragmentation, the simplicity

⁵ On these topics see A. ORLANDI, *Networks and Commercial Penetration Models in the Late Medieval Mediterranean: Revisiting the Datini*, in *Commercial Networks*, cit., pp. 81-106; EADEM, *A Man from Prato in the Maestrazgo. Tuccio di Gennaio, Wool Merchant*, in *Francesco di Marco Datini. The Man the Merchant*, ed. G. Nigro, Prato-Florence 2010 (Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini” – FUP), pp. 377-383; EADEM, *Le prestazioni di una bolding*, cit., pp. 117-148.

⁶ W. BLOCKMANS, *L’unificazione européenne par les circuits portuaires*, in *La ville médiévale en débat*, A. AGUIAR ANDRADE, A. MILLÁN DA COSTA eds., Lisbon 2014 (Instituto de Estudos Medievais de la Universidade Nova de Lisboa), pp. 133-144.

⁷ E. AZNAR VALLEJO, R.J. GONZÁLEZ ZALACAIN, *Prólogo, De mar a mar. Los puertos castellanos en la Baja Edad Media*, Santa Cruz de Tenerife 2015 (Servicio de Publicaciones Universidad de La Laguna), pp. 11-13.

⁸ W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Maritime trade around Europe 1300-1600*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade Around Europe 1300-1600*, W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ eds., New York 2017, pp. 3-4.

⁹ P. HORDEN, N. PURCELL, *The corrupting sea. A study of Mediterranean history*, Oxford 2000.

of connections between ports and therefore of interior traffic confer the character of substantial unity upon the great sea.¹⁰

These reflections suggest that we need to reconsider the concept of borders. Administrative, political, social, religious, geographic and economic borders were continuously overcome by the movement of men with their cultures, of pilgrims with their religions, of artisans with their skills, and of merchants with their goods. This phenomenon occurred both by land and by sea. Thus the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the North Sea were crossed by ships that moved from one shore to another, conveying transnational subjects thanks to whose constant comings and goings we have been able to create areas of contiguity, proximity and exchange.¹¹

This essay forms part of this historiographic framework, focusing on the relations that were established between ports, understood as hubs of multiple commercial routes. Our study aims to assess the role of maritime connections in the process of economic integration and cultural influences between different bodies of water. In particular, our analysis will attempt to identify the forms and connections between the various ports of the western Mediterranean, where ships sailing under a great variety of flags arrived and departed, and the ports of Bruges, Southampton and London. This inquiry will be carried out by paying particular attention to the ports of Barcelona, Valencia and Palma de Mallorca, required stopping points for most ships headed toward the North Sea.

The documentation used for this study primarily consists of commercial correspondence and account books from the companies of Francesco Datini. In spite of their known shortcomings, these sources contain a wealth of information: although what we possess of these sources today is most likely incomplete, the documents which we are able to consult present a reliable picture of commercial flows and mercantile and port interactions, as well as of the mechanisms that underlay these.¹²

¹⁰ M. PETRUSEWICZ, *Il Mediterraneo dopo Braudel: è possibile una nuova storiografia?*, in *Il Mediterraneo un incontro di culture*, F. CACCIATORE, A. NIGER eds., Rome 2007; S. BONO, *Il "Mediterraneo" in un mondo globale*, in *Società globale e Africa musulmana*, ed. A. BALDINETTI, Soveria Mannelli 2004, pp. 35-50; S. BONO, *Il Mediterraneo della storia*, in "Mediterranea - ricerche storiche", XI, 2014, n. 31, pp. 243-258.

¹¹ See also *Per vie di terra. Movimenti di uomini e di cose nelle società di antico regime*, ed. A. Torre, Milan, 2007, and the essay by G. Fiume, *A proposito di «A Companion to Mediterranean History»*, in "Quaderni Storici", LI, 153, 2016, n. 3, pp. 841-857.

¹² The following indicate the archival locations of the examined documentation: ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI PRATO (ASPO), *Datini*, 210, 211, 213, 216, 217, 223, 230, 234, 345, 357, 362, 377, 382, 383, 391, 397, 423, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 442, 504, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 530, 545, 546, 550, 558, 565, 576, 577, 584, 590, 598, 599, 602, 603, 608, 613, 614, 615, 616, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 648, 651, 652, 654, 656, 657, 658, 659, 661, 662, 663, 664, 666, 668, 670, 673, 676, 684, 686, 687, 688, 692, 606, 710, 711, 712, 713, 724, 727, 733, 734, 735, 739, 742, 744, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 757, 777, 778, 781, 782, 794, 800, 801, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 820, 821, 822, 824, 825, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 879, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 907, 914, 916, 917, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 941, 945, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 982, 988, 992, 994, 995, 996, 997, 1000, 1003, 1009, 1018, 1026, 1029, 1042, 1044, 1046, 1047, 1048, 1049, 1050, 1053, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1070, 1072, 1074, 1075, 1076, 1077, 1078, 1080, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1111, 1114, 1115, 1116, 1117, 1124, 1128, 1129, 1133, 1135, 1149, 1158, 1159, 1160, 1171.

INTO THE NETWORK OF MAJOR PORTS

Our sources cover the two decades from 1390 to 1411, allowing us to gain information on 1,229 journeys by ship to and from the Mediterranean that called at Bruges, London,¹³ Southampton and other minor northern ports. Although we have reason to suspect that more journeys than these in fact took place, the quantitative data drawn from these sources show the importance of Bruges (887 journeys/ships) with the respect to English ports, which are mentioned 324 times, of which 186 regard Southampton.¹⁴

Map 1 illustrates the intensity of movement among the 36¹⁵ Mediterranean and Atlantic landings that we have identified. It provides a synthetic overview which highlights the flows – and more specifically the frequency – of arrivals and departures between the various ports. Intermediate stopovers are not indicated, but only connections between two ports for each journey, understood as the principal points of arrival and departure.

The significant role played by the port of Genoa is evident (361 journeys with routes through Gibraltar), as is also the number of its connections with Bruges (223 journeys), which exceed those with England (138, of which 89 with Southampton).

With regard to Venice, at least 85 vessels sailed to or from Sluis, while only about 20 reached English ports. Pisa was linked to Flanders and Southampton by 52 and 26 journeys, respectively.

Naturally, many journeys between the ports of north-central Italy and Northern Europe included stopovers at one or more ports of Aragon-Catalonia; unfortunately our sources do not always provide these details. In the period under consideration, ships that began and/or ended their journeys in either Barcelona, Valencia or Palma de Mallorca to or from a Northern European port numbered 261.

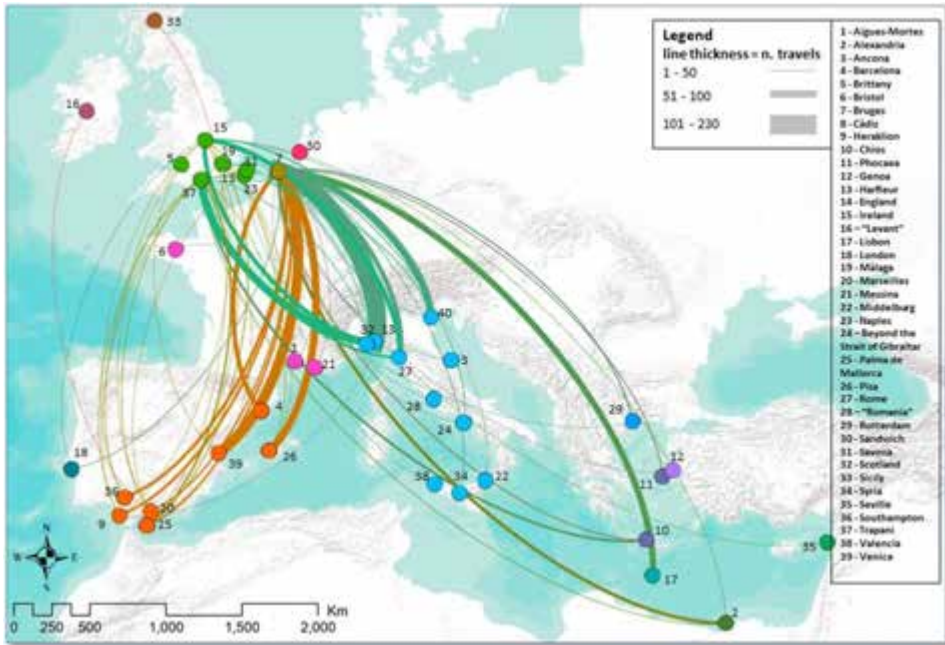
¹³ We have attributed to London all ship movements to and from the “Thames Riviera”, an efficient expression that refers to the navigability of the Thames, whose qualities enabled mercantile connections between the city and the coast. M. KOWALESKI, *The Maritime Trade Networks of Late Medieval London*, in *The Routledge Handbook*, cit., pp. 383-410.

¹⁴ According to our data, the average number of ships from the Mediterranean in the main English ports was about 15 per year. An older study based on fiscal sources affirms that at the end of the fourteenth century about 40 vessels entered the port of Southampton each year. These of course included the Hanseatic ships that are not indicated in our sources. A.A. RUDDOCK, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270-1600*, Southampton 1951. These data are confirmed by those examined by Enrico Basso in several duty records of the English city. Between June 1383 and June 1384, 36 ships entered the port, while 42 departed from it. A similar volume of traffic was recorded between 1387 and 1388. THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (TNA), *King's Remembrancer: Particulars of Customs Accounts*, E122, 138/11, Port: Southampton, 7RII (22/06/1383 – 21/06/1384); (TNA), *King's Remembrancer: Particulars of Customs Accounts*, E122, 138/16, Port: Southampton, 18/06/XRII – Michaelmas 12RII (18/06/1387 – 29/9/1388). I wish to thank Prof. Enrico Basso for having referred me to these two records.

¹⁵ The legend indicates 40 arrivals/departures. This is due to the need to include general routes such as England, the Levant, “beyond the Strait” and “Romania” (the area between Thessalonica and the Strait of the Dardanelles).

On these routes we also find connections with Málaga, which was still under Arab control, where ships loaded nuts and dried fruit destined for Northern European markets;¹⁶ in our period, vessels called here at least 17 times.

Map. 1. Network of major ports of the Mediterranean and Northern Europe (1390-1411)¹⁷



A role of some importance in this system of connections was also played by other ports in modern-day Andalusia, a region which linked the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Our sources report over 60 ships stopping at Cádiz and/or Seville on their way to Bruges and the English ports. The two Andalusian cities were not only used as transit ports: the wealth of products from their hinterland gave them com-

¹⁶ Much has been written on the commerce of nuts and dried fruit from the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada in northern markets: here we only cite the recent work by Enrico Basso, which in addition to providing a complete historiographic overview presents quantitative data on arrivals in Bruges and Southampton: E. BASSO, *Fichi e frutta secca dal Mediterraneo ai mari del Nord (secoli XIII-XVI)*, in *Fichi. Storia, economia, tradizioni. Figs. History, Economy, Traditions*, A. CARASSALE, C. LITTARDI, I. NASO eds., Ventimiglia 2016 (Centro Studi per la Storia dell'Alimentazione e della Cultura Materiale "Anna Maria Nada Patrone"-CeSa), pp. 75-96.

¹⁷ This map and the others that follow were made using the ArcGis 10.3 and Gephi 0.9.2 (Network Analyst open source) programs. I would like to thank my friend and colleague Federico Martellozzo for helping me prepare the maps.

mercial importance in their own right, making them destinations for acquiring cargo and starting points for mercantile journeys.¹⁸

The Mediterranean east of Sicily formed part of this network with the ports of Candia, Chios, Phocaea, Rhodes, Alexandria and Cyprus, which, together with those of “Romania” ensured the export of numerous products. Relations with these ports were frequent, with over 100 cases mentioned in our documentation.

Vessels which sailed along these routes were usually of considerable tonnage: ships, carracks and cogs. Aside from galleys, Genoa and Venice boasted the largest vessels: we find, for example, the carrack of Giovanni Oltramarino of Liguria, built in Harfleur in Normandy and with a capacity of 1,600 casks, or over 1,100 tons.¹⁹ Genoese ships rarely had a capacity of less than 1,000 casks: Francesco d’Asti and Luchino Salvatico had cogs of 1,200 casks, while in 1401 Stefano Grisolfi had a “new ship” built of 1,500 casks.²⁰

Among the various vessels that sailed under the flag of St. Mark, we find three of 700 casks that voyaged between Valencia and Bruges under the orders of Michele Durazzini, Daniello da Mulino and Santuccio di Benedetto, while Novello Lercaro’s cog often linked Southampton and Savona.

The fleets of Catalonia,²¹ Castile and Biscay sailed along Northern European routes with ships of low to medium tonnage. The Catalan vessel captained by Piero Arembao that journeyed from Valencia to Bruges in December 1394 had a capacity of 400 casks, while the Castilian ships of Arnao Berlinghieri and Filippo Quaratesi trading between Bruges, Valencia and Barcelona held between 350 and 400; likewise, the Biscayan vessels of Guglielmo Peris di Baiona, Gian Arriguzzo (named Santa Maria Maddalena) and Gianni Meglies could contain 300. Biscayan ships often specialized in the transport of certain goods, such as herring: in December 1398, Grazia Vacca of Bilbao brought some of this fish from Bruges to Palma de Mallorca in his “little boat.”²²

¹⁸ It is interesting to note that the Bay of Cádiz included a series of landings which made up a port system: the navigation of these closely linked ports revealed situations of cooperation and economic integration. R.J. GONZÁLEZ ZALCÁIN, *De puerto a puerto: Las relaciones entre los puertos de la Bahía de Cádiz (siglos XV-XVI)*, in *De mar a mar*, cit., pp. 147-177.

¹⁹ ASPO, *Datini*, 853, Giovanni Orlandini and Piero Benizi and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 16.05.1399. On the equivalents of casks with current measures of ship tonnage, see F. MELIS, *Werner Sombart e i problemi della navigazione nel Medioevo*, in *I trasporti e le comunicazioni nel Medioevo*, ed. L. FRANGIONI, Prato-Florence 1985 (Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini” – Le Monnier), pp. 3-68. More recent studies, although referring to later periods, have been made by J.L. RUBIO SERRANO, *Las unidades de medida españolas en los siglos XVI y XVII*, in “Revista de Historia Naval”, 6.20, 1988, pp. 77-93; F. VIEIRA DE CASTRO, *Os navios dos séculos XVI e XVII: linhas gerais de evolução, unidades de medida e arqueio*, in *Navios, Marinheiros e Arte de Navegar 1500-1688*, ed. F. CONTENTE DOMINGUES, Lisbon 2012 (Academia de Marinha) pp. 17-45.

²⁰ ASPO, *Datini*, 648, Giovanni Orlandini and Piero Benizi and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Florence, 02.02.1401.

²¹ On the Catalan fleet and the capacity of its ships, see F. MELIS, *L’area catalano-aragonese nel sistema economico del Mediterraneo occidentale*, in F. MELIS, *I mercanti italiani nell’Europa Medievale e Rinascimentale*, ed. L. FRANGIONI, Prato-Florence 1990 (Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini” – Le Monnier), pp. 215-231.

²² ASPO, *Datini*, 853, Giovanni Orlandini and Pier Benizi and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 06.12.1398.

From the Mediterranean these ships brought cotton from Alexandria and Cyprus; sugar; hazelnuts from Naples; wine from Calabria, Greece, Alicante and Andalusia; cooking oil from Mallorca; spices of all kinds; and “semenze”²³ and fruit from the agricultural regions around Valencia and Málaga. Florentine letters to Bruges and London never failed to indicate the prices of anise and cumin from Valencia, of rice, of “berlinghieri” saffron, of “orto”,²⁴ of Berber dates, of every sort of almond, of dried figs and of Muscat of Alexandria.²⁵ These prices were accurate, as these were products that were “consumed in great quantities,” in the words of the Ardinghelli merchants of London.²⁶

Noteworthy were also cargoes of materials destined for textile manufactures, such as alum from Phocaea and Chios,²⁷ soap from Seville and Valencia and oil from Andalusia used to grease wool. The high quality of Northern European woolen cloth is confirmed by the imports of kermes, a precious animal substance used as red dye: from London, our merchants reported the delivery of this product by galleys and other ships to Bruges and Southampton, in all its varieties – Provençal, Valencian, Sevillan and Berber. Indeed a price calculation for eight bales of Berber kermes sent to the Alberti of London allows us to reconstruct the means and costs of transportation of this regularly traded product. Once it reached Southampton, kermes – like other merchandise – was loaded onto a small boat, brought into port and placed in carts for the overland journey to London.²⁸

²³ The term “semenze” (“seeds”) usually refers to anise, cumin and almonds. Sometimes rice was included as well under this heading.

²⁴ ASPO, *Datini*, 885, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Barcelona, 26.03.1404. At that time, these were the prices of some spices and “semenze” in London: pepper 12½d. per pound, “beledi” ginger 18d. per pound, “colombino” ginger 16d. per pound, nuts (probably nutmeg) 22d. per pound; “galiga” and cloves 36d. per pound, mace 40d. per pound, fine cinnamon 12d. pound, common cinnamon 9d. per pound, Valencian anise 27s. per hundredweight; cumin 40s. per hundredweight; rice 8s. per hundredweight; almonds 15s. per hundredweight; “berlinghieri” saffron 10s. per pound, “orto” 8½ s. per pound. In Bruges on the same day, prices were as follows: ginger and “beledi” ginger 12-13 groats; “colombino” ginger 11 groats; “michino” 10 groats; cloves 30 groats; “paradise kermes” dye 14 groats. Prices of other products did not differ considerably. Given that the exchange rate between Bruges and London was £25 and 1/3 per écu and that the écu of the Flemish city was equivalent to 24 groats, the price in Bruges, in English currency, of “colombino” ginger was equal to 11.605d., a value lower than that of London, which, as we have seen, was 16d. ASPO, *Datini*, 855, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and Simone Bellandi and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 26.03.1404.

²⁵ In Bruges in January 1406, “sportino” was sold at 31 groats. ASPO, *Datini*, 855, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and Simone Bellandi and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 16.01.1406.

²⁶ ASPO, *Datini*, 885, Francesco Ardinghelli and Gherardo Davizi and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Barcelona, 07.09.1407.

²⁷ Among the most recent studies on eastern alum we wish to cite E. BASSO, *Prima di Tolfa: i mercanti genovesi e l'allume orientale*, in “Mélanges de École Française de Rome-Moyen Âge”, 126, 2014, n. 1, pp. 2-17.

²⁸ This was a sale of Berber kermes made by the Alberti company in London on behalf of its Valencian sister company and of the Datini company in the same city. The 562 pounds of dyestuff (net weight after deducting the first and second cloth wrappings of some bales) were sold to a “London commoner” who paid £188.16s.8d. From this amount was deducted £20.18s. for fiscal and general dues for transport to London; of this sum, £2.16s.7d. was for Alberti’s commission. Among

Ships sailing from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean brought Flemish and Brabantian fabrics, such as those from Wervicq, Courtray, Herentals, Mechlin and Lier. Naturally their cargo holds contained English wool,²⁹ as well as quantities of red and black cloth from Essex, “bianchetti” from Guilford,³⁰ scarlet cloth from London,³¹ twill fabric clothing,³² and fabrics from Winchester, the Cotswolds, Bristol, Scotland and Ireland.³³ As we might expect, there was no lack of products that were naturally brought from the north to the south: herring, squirrel fur coats, madder,³⁴ tinplate, pieces of tin,³⁵ copper,³⁶ brass barber basins,³⁷ and many other items.

Our sources are less eloquent regarding the movements of ships that connected Bruges with the Hanseatic regions. One example of this trade, though, is referred to in a letter of September 1394, in which the Mannini placed an order in Valencia for large quantities of almonds and rice which would be purchased from “German” merchants, whose arrival on more than 250 ships was expected.³⁸ This was information that travelled along the hubs of the networks and which inevitably affected prices on Flemish and Spanish markets.³⁹

the numerous expenses we note the price of 5s. to cover the cost of the boat that travelled 12 miles to bring the kermes to the port of Southampton; 10d. to transfer it from the boat to a cart; 1s.4d. paid to the weigher, together with a “tip” of 6s.8d. so that “he would weigh it properly.” The journey from Southampton to London cost 16s., to which must be added 4s. for accommodation and for the carter. Deducting expenses for the various fiscal dues, sale of the dyestuff produced earnings of £167.18s.8d. ASPO, *Datini*, 994, Calcidonio and Niccolao Alberti and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Valencia, 04.03.1398.

²⁹ ASPO, *Datini*, 885, Francesco Ardinghelli and Gherardo Davizi and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Barcelona, 07.09.1407.

³⁰ “Bianchetti” are pieces of unbleached cloth. ASPO, *Datini*, 885, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Barcelona, 03.05.1404. Essex cloth cost 12s. per dozen pieces, while high-quality “bianchetti” sold at 7-7¼ d. per ell.

³¹ ASPO, *Datini*, 1072, Calcidonio and Niccolao Alberti and partners to Francesco Datini and Cristofano Carocci and partners, London-Mallorca, 05.05.1399.

³² ASPO, *Datini*, 1072, Calcidonio and Niccolao Alberti and partners to Francesco Datini and Cristofano Carocci and partners, London-Mallorca, 05.05.1399.

³³ F. GUIDI BRUSCOLI, *I rapporti con il Nord Europa*, in *Francesco di Marco Datini*, cit., pp. 417-428, 421.

³⁴ On the types of madder, see *Ibid.*, p. 421.

³⁵ ASPO, *Datini*, 885, Giovanni Orlandini to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Barcelona. 03.05.1404. The cost of tin was 18½ - 19s. per hundredweight.

³⁶ Catalans in Bruges sent to Valencia above all copper in pieces because shipping it in sheet form required more costly processing. In November 1406, it went for between 22 and 24 sous on the Flemish market. ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco di Marco and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 15.11.1406.

³⁷ In November 1406 in Bruges, they sold for between 32 and 34 sous per hundredweight. ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco di Marco and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 15.11.1406.

³⁸ ASPO, *Datini*, 753, Luigi and Salvestro Mannini and partners to Francesco Datini and Andrea di Bonanno and partners, Bruges-Genoa, 07.09.1394; ASPO, *Datini*, 753, Luigi and Salvestro Mannini and partners to Francesco Datini and Andrea di Bonanno and partners, Bruges-Genoa, 26.09.1394.

³⁹ ASPO, *Datini*, 753, Luigi and Salvestro Mannini and partners to Francesco Datini and Andrea di Bonanno and partners, Bruges-Genoa, 01.01.1396; ASPO, *Datini*, 853, Diamante and Altobianco

This network, which was made up of long-distance routes and which we have defined as a “network of major ports,” is no doubt of great interest, even if our familiarity with many of its features may cause us to take it for granted. In any case, analysis of the navigational charts provides us with less expected and less known evidence. We learn from them that the movements of ships, men and goods were closely connected to the system of information which passed through the mercantile networks and which informed final decisions about ports and routes. They further tell us about phenomena of cultural influence due to recurring contacts between people, which could shape the knowledge and even the aesthetic and culinary tastes of those involved.⁴⁰

From the general picture that we have been able to form, it seems that attention was mostly paid to questions regarding the contractual and maritime details of each voyage. The flow of information within the network provides evidence of the power held by merchants to condition the provision of tertiary services: in 1395, for example, Nofri di Bonaccorso reported to his Florentine correspondents that a maritime insurance market was taking root in Palma de Mallorca. In that port, insurance premiums and companies were unlike their counterparts in Florence: in cases when time was of essence, it made sense to take out a policy in Palma, so as not to incur risk by leaving merchandise idle in warehouses.⁴¹ From this piece of information, merchants also learned that insurers on the island had begun accepting Florentine-style contracts.

Many letters confirm the great attention paid to the choice of type and quality of ships as well as of the routes to travel. In 1395, upon hearing of a shipwreck of a vessel that had left Flanders headed to Catalonia, Guido Caccini, in Valencia, was not particularly worried: he was certain that the ship in question did not contain his own or his clients’ goods. In Sluis, everyone knew that the unfortunate boat was a small one and that it “was in the hands of incompetents.”⁴²

A letter sent in the autumn of 1405 reveals that four Florentine companies in Bruges reserved the cargo holds of two Catalan ships for a minimum load of 1,200

Alberti and partners to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 16.07.1398.

⁴⁰ Some examples are the use of a foreign language; the use of oil for cooking, which Florentines helped to spread through Flanders and England; the close relationship that Tuscan merchants in Bruges formed with

Flemish painters; and, more generally, the cultural influences exerted by economic operators, whose commercial dealings contributed to the diffusion of Florentine tastes and fashion. On these points, see: E. AERTS, *Italian Presence in the Late Medieval Bruges Money Market*, Leuven 2010 (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), pp. 11-20; A. ORLANDI, *L'olivo e l'olio tra Mediterraneo e Mare del Nord (secoli XIV-XV)*, in *Ars Olearia. Dall'oliveto al mercato nel medioevo. Ars Olearia. From olive grove to market in the Medieval Age*, ed. I. NASO, Guarene (CN) 2018 (Centro Studi per la Storia dell'Alimentazione e della Cultura Materiale “Anna Maria Nada Patrone”-CeSa), pp. 107-122; EADEM, *Trascender las fronteras. El papel de los mercaderes florentinos en el intercambio económico y cultural (siglos XIV-XVI)*, in *Las fronteras en la Edad Media hispánica (siglos XIII-XVI). Revisión historiográfica de un concepto polisémico*, Seville, 24-28 October 2017, forthcoming.

⁴¹ ASPO, *Datini*, 666, Nofri di Bonaccorso to Francesco di Marco and Stoldo di Lorenzo, Mallorca-Florence, 19.02.1395.

⁴² ASPO, *Datini*, 1077, Guido Caccini and partners to Ambrogio di Lorenzo Rocchi, Valencia-Mallorca, 07.12.1395.

bags of wool and cloth as well as additional space for another 800 bags. The ship intended to stop at Barcelona before continuing to Porto Pisano, where it would either unload the goods or sail on to Piombino or Talamone.⁴³

Indeed this last example shows how the examined sources allow us to verify whether and in what way the network of major ports interacted with minor ones. Consideration of this question reveals facts of great interest. These cases involved connections between ports which were relatively close to each other and more or less important in terms of number of landings. These connections often set a dynamic network of men and goods in motion: it is clear that such traffic was never based on chance but was rather the result of operational choices made on a case-by-case basis by shippers and above all by merchants.

INTERCHANGEABILITY AND COMPLEMENTARITY OF MAJOR AND MINOR PORTS

We will now take a brief look at the Tyrrhenian coast of Tuscany, where, as the above example indicates, several smaller landings, such as the canal of Motrone and the ports of Piombino and Talamone, played complementary roles with respect to Porto Pisano (Map 2).

As Melis observed, even without its own fleet Florence was a maritime power which made skillful use of the ships of others, obliging them to use landings that suited its own interests. Unable to gain access to Porto Pisano, Florentines in Bruges required ships to sail to these minor ports.⁴⁴ This is precisely what occurred in May 1405 when the ship of Gherardo di Dono,⁴⁵ loaded with English cloth and wool and conveying the Orlandini and other Tuscan merchants based in the Flemish capital, had to dock at Piombino. The journey had been carefully planned: after unloading its cargo, the Catalan carrack was to take on 37 bales of paper and seven of cloth that would be sent from Florence to be transported to Barcelona.⁴⁶ Naturally such operations, especially frequent during the war between Florence and Pisa (1404-06), were a boon to the growth of Piombino, which had become independent in 1396; this traffic stimulated the improvement of its facilities for the reception of goods as well as its internal transport systems. Similar cases involved the hiring of Genoese, Venetian and Biscayan ships that agreed to anchor in other inconven-

⁴³ ASPO, *Datini*, 855, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini, Andrea Pazzi and partners, Francesco Mannelli and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 08.11.1405.

⁴⁴ On the role of Tuscan merchant-bankers in the Flemish city, see especially E. AERTS, *Italian presence*, cit.; F. GUIDI BRUSCOLI, *I rapporti con il Nord Europa*, cit., pp. 417-421; F. GUIDI BRUSCOLI, *Mercanti-banchieri fiorentini tra Londra e Bruges nel XV secolo*, in *Mercatura è arte*, L. TANZINI, S. TOGNETTI eds., Viella, Rome 2012, pp. 11-44.

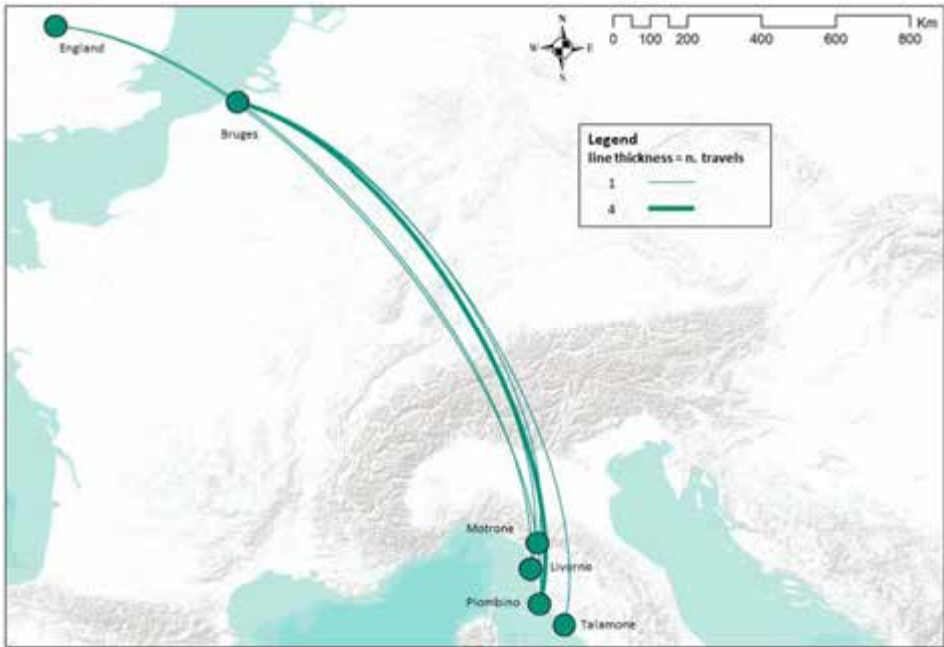
⁴⁵ Gherardo di Dono was a Catalan who possessed a ship with a capacity of 1,200 casks. F. MELIS, *L'area catalano-aragonesa nel sistema economico del Mediterraneo occidentale*, in F. MELIS, *I mercanti italiani* cit., p. 223.

⁴⁶ ASPO, *Datini*, 673, Ibo di Tommaso and Giovanni Cirioni to Francesco Datini, Piombino-Florence, 12.05.1405; ASPO, *Datini*, 907, Mariotto Ferrantini and Amoretto di Lorenzo and partners to Francesco Datini and Simone Bellandi and partners, Piombino-Barcelona, 25.05.1405; ASPO, *Datini*, 1000, Ibo di Tommaso and Giovanni Cirioni di Piombino to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Piombino-Valencia, 26.05.1405.

ient ports, such as Motrone, north of Viareggio, or Talamone, even farther south than Piombino, whose modest port was protected by a castle which overlooked the coast from a cliff.

The operations of these ports do not show signs of internal collaboration but rather reveal situations of essentially passive complementarity, completely subject to the political context and to the resulting decisions of merchants.⁴⁷

Map 2. **The ports of Tuscany (1390-1411)**

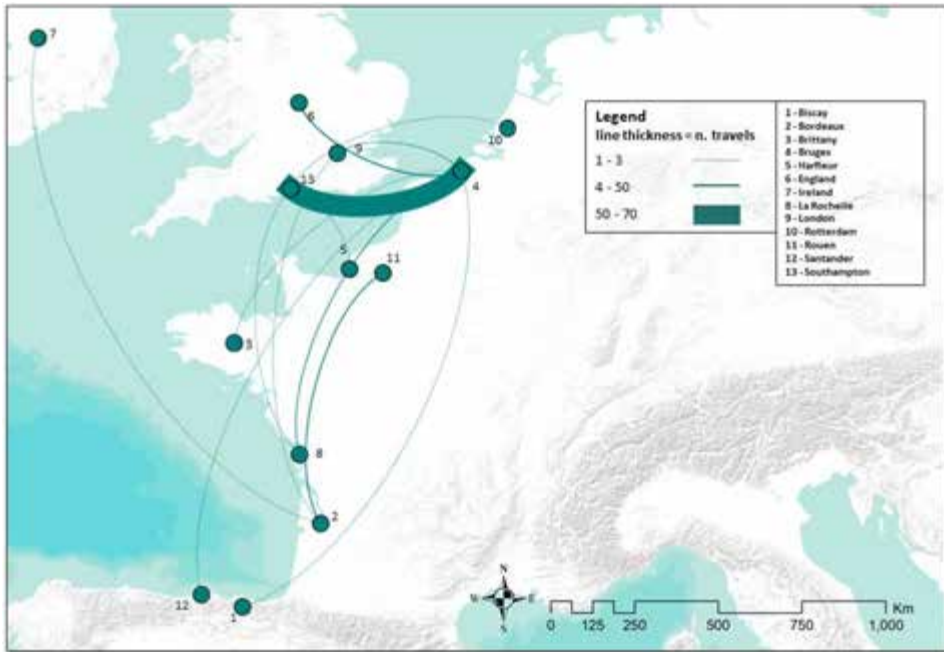


Regarding the ports of Northern Europe referred to in our documents, it seems that these relations of complementarity were quite similar to those of the ports of the Tuscan coast (Map 3).⁴⁸

⁴⁷ As early as April 1397, the long-standing conflict between Pisa and Florence caused the Mannini in London to give orders to the effect that if the ship *Polo Italiano*, which had been hired for Pisa, reached Palma de Mallorca without finding confirmation of an expected agreement between the two Tuscan cities, it was to continue its journey toward Venice. ASPO, *Datini*, 1072, Alamanno and Antonio Mannini and brothers to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Mallorca, 08.04.1397.

⁴⁸ Above all Map 3 shows that most ships coming from the south almost always stopped at the ports of Bruges and Southampton (in 70 cases). Journeys to the Atlantic coast of northern Spain were punctuated by ports of the *Marisma e costera de España*, where we find Bilbao and Santander. The significance of those landings, especially during the Hundred Years' War, derived from the sea and from their relations with the most important Atlantic and Mediterranean ports; indeed they became necessary stopping points for short-distance commercial navigation between Spain and Northern Europe, as well as a maritime route for pilgrims headed to Santiago de Compostela. Farther north, La

Map 3. The northern ports (1390-1411)



The choice of one port over another seems to have been based on considerations that were predominantly political: one need only think of Middelburg, well connected to Antwerp and playing an increasingly greater role in trade with England, as a potential alternative to the port of Sluis.⁴⁹ In 1409, when Genoa rebelled against French protection, Ligurian merchants were victims of retaliation throughout France and in Bruges as well. Yet as soon as local authorities understood the

Rochelle recorded the arrivals of ships (four journeys) from Bruges to load wine and iron. In the first decade of the fifteenth century, we encounter there Piero Nottone, Michele Aldobrandini, Damiano da Montalto and Federico Agardo; the last of these, at the command of a ship (1,200-cask capacity) built in Holland, was shipwrecked twice on his return to Sluis. Farther north again, in front of the coast of Brittany, was located the landing of Belle Île, which was often used by ships to shelter from storms. Moving still farther north we note Rotterdam, still a small fishing village, which hosted four Genoese ships that had weathered a storm. J.A. SOLÓRZANO TELECHEA, *La influencia del mar en la conformación de los puertos de La Marisma and costera de España en la Baja Edad Media*, in *De mar a mar*, cit., pp. 59-92, 62; M. TRANCHANT, *The Maritime Trade and Society of La Rochelle in the late Middle Ages*, in *The Routledge Handbook*, cit., pp. 352-365. ASPO, *Datini*, 856, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 26.02.1410; ASPO, *Datini*, 856, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Barcelona, 27.11.1410; ASPO, *Datini*, 664, Giovanni Orlandini and Neri Vettori and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, London-Florence, 24.09.1401, c. 1r.

⁴⁹ As early as 1401 our correspondents reported that the galleys were not able to unload their cargo because of “the shallow waters.” ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandi and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 11.07.1401.

risk that would be run if the Genoese moved their operations to the Zeelandic port, they quickly changed their tune.⁵⁰

Other important factors in this regard were problems brought about by the Hundred Years' War. Ships of the English and French navies patrolled the English Channel daily, attacking and plundering merchant vessels of medium and small dimensions which crossed that stretch of water. Only large Genoese carracks, which often sailed in convoy and were well armed,⁵¹ were able to elude the aggression of those fleets. At times, however, not even these defensive measures sufficed to protect their cargo. Merchants therefore decided to unload their more valuable goods at Harfleur, thereby reducing the risk of the passage.⁵²

On occasions when the unpredictability of a maritime voyage was great, merchants would weigh the option of transferring goods from Bruges to Catalonia overland, in spite of the higher costs.⁵³ In one case, merchants considered sending a valuable supply of cloth to Valencia by land, when news reached them of the strong presence of pirates in those seas.⁵⁴

Elements of interchangeability and complementarity for essentially political reasons are also apparent with regard to several ports on the coasts of Aragon-Catalonia as well. Indeed during the period under consideration, we have evidence and comments regarding several interdicts against Italian merchants and fleets re-

⁵⁰ In a letter sent to Valencia, Orlandini described the episode this way: "On the 30th of September, all the Genoese here were arrested and their goods confiscated because of the news that had arrived from Genoa." In a later letter, he made clear the consequences in case they failed to secure their release: "It will cause great damage to the country, because the Genoese are the ones who work the most." ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 08.10.1409; ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 28.11.1409; ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 23.12.1409.

⁵¹ ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 12.06.1410.

⁵² This is what was done in June 1405 by Bernabò D'Antù, Stefano Colombotto and Demorre di Campione, who, "out of fear of the English navy, [unloaded] all small-sized goods of great value in Harfleur, while they will bring the more voluminous merchandise here; yet fear of the English fleet is so great that they may decide not to come." Later, when the conflict prevented the Ligurian ships from landing in England, they had to sail to Sluis, which clearly had an effect on the Flemish market: "The arrival of these ships will bring down the value of the spices, since it is believed that not much will be delivered to England, as most of the Genoese are coming here. When the ships arrive we will let you know the price of each item, because the price of many goods will change." ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 30.06.1405; ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 21.03.1407.

⁵³ These were the words used by the Orlandini in Bruges to relate the news to the Datini company in Valencia: "You would do well not to send anything by sea, because the Channel is full of armed English and French ships, which are causing damage to everyone. The Channel cannot be entered or exited: the only vessels that can cross it are large ships that sail together in groups of two or three. In the absence of an agreement between the French and the English, it is therefore better to ship the goods overland." ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 21.05.1403.

⁵⁴ ASPO, *Datini*, 980, Giovanni Orlandini and partners to Francesco Datini and partners, Bruges-Valencia, 23.01.1400.

searched by Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, beginning with their first manifestations in the thirteenth century.⁵⁵ These were the result of protectionist policies, often temporary, which might significantly hinder the commercial activities of the banned traders. This happened at least twice to the Venetian fleet, first between 1395 and 1399 when it was prevented from entering the Valencian port,⁵⁶ and again between 1400 and 1402 when it was not allowed to land at Porto Pi, the main port of Palma.⁵⁷ In the first case the Venetians moved their operations to the port of Alicante, thereby increasing its status. With regard to the second ban, the alternative to Palma de Mallorca was simpler and more direct: the fleet turned to Ibiza.⁵⁸ The “salt island” thus replaced Mallorca for Venetian trade and related activities. Our sources indicate at least 28 connections between the Pityusic island and the ports of Northern Europe during the latter three-year period.

In these years, indeed, maritime and commercial networks based on Ibiza replaced, or at least challenged, those of Mallorca⁵⁹ – and in some cases even those of Valencia and Barcelona – in the great game of long-distance trade. As a result, Ibiza’s port underwent transformations that would allow it to play a more dynamic commercial role, even if these changes were not definitive.

THE POLYCENTRIC SYSTEM OF MINOR PORTS IN ARAGON-CATALONIA

Much more significant seems to be the function of the great number of minor landings – whether large or small, well known or obscure – along the coasts of Aragon-Catalonia. To examine their respective roles, we have compiled a database which contains the movements of the port systems whose main points of reference were the Balearic Islands, Sant Feliu de Guíxols (north of Barcelona) and Málaga. To the internal circulation of this system have been added data relative to relations with the ports of Northern Europe.

⁵⁵ M.T. FERRER I MALLOL, *Els italians a terres catalanes (segles XII-XV)*, in “Anuario de Estudios Medievales”, 10, 1980, pp. 393-466.

⁵⁶ A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro: la corrispondenza datiniana tra Valenza e Maiorca (1395-1398)*, Valencia 2008 (Universitat de València), p. 58; M.T. FERRER I MALLOL, *Els italians*, cit., pp. 461-465.

⁵⁷ The director of the Datini company in Barcelona gave the news to his colleague in Mallorca in these words: “It will soon happen that Venetian galleys and ships in general will not be able to land there or at any other place under the Crown of Aragon, except Ibiza. It might be a good idea to send one of our representatives to Ibiza, who can make arrangements for our goods arriving on the island.” ASPO, *Datini*, 1053, Francesco Datini and partners to Francesco Datini and Cristofano Carrocci and partners, Barcelona-Mallorca, 07.04.1400.

⁵⁸ On Ibiza, see the works of J.C. HOCQUET: *Ibiza, carrefour du commerce maritime et témoin d'une conjoncture méditerranéenne (1250-1650 env.)*, in *Studi in memoria di Federigo Melis*, Napoli 1978, pp. 491-526; IDEM, *Navires et transport international du sel en Méditerranée à la fin du Moyen Age*, in *Storia del commercio del sale tra Mediterraneo e Atlantico*, ed. S. PIRA, Proceedings of international conference Cagliari-Quartu Sant'Elena 28-30 April 1996, Cagliari 1997, pp. 17-42; A. ORLANDI, *Ibiza entre el Mediterráneo, el Atlántico y el Mar del Norte (siglos XIV y XV)*, in “eHumanista”, 38, 2018, pp. 48-64.

⁵⁹ For the role of Mallorca in international trade, see A. ORLANDI, *Palma di Maiorca e la rete dei porti balearici (secoli XIV – XV)*, in *Spazi economici e circuiti commerciali nel Mediterraneo del Trecento. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, Amalfi, 4-5 June 2016, B. FIGLIUOLO, G. PETRALIA, P.F. SIMBULA eds., Amalfi 2017 (Centro di Cultura e Storia Amalfitana), pp. 305-319.

The database totals 1,800 journeys, which are represented in Maps 4 and 5: this method of exposition seems to us the best way of grasping what we have called the polycentric system of the ports of Aragon-Catalonia, a series of landings, both large and small, which managed to build relations of operational collaboration. In the period under consideration, these ports evidently demonstrate an intriguing process of integration that in practice overcame many physical and virtual borders, in spite of political differences and often tense coexistence among ethnic and cultural groups. Geography accounts for this integration: these ports were united by belonging to a network of intensive long-distance traffic as well as by the pressure of economic interests, both of which stimulated mechanisms of cooperation rather than conflict.

Map 4 in particular illustrates the basic features of the routes and the intensity of commercial flows; it shows the predominant roles of Mallorca, Valencia and Barcelona in trade with Northern Europe.⁶⁰

A closer look at the data reveals that commercial flows between Palma (and other ports of the island) and the coast of Barcelona – the ports, that is, of Barcelona, Palamós, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Sitges and Tarragona – account for 1,090 movements, while flows between the former and the Valencian coast – the ports of Valencia, Alicante, Cartagena, Dénia, Gandia, Peniscola and Moraira – together with Málaga numbered 300 journeys.⁶¹

Even more notable within the context of this study is the picture provided by Map 5: the enlarged view with respect to the previous map highlights the frame-

⁶⁰ While R. De Roover held that Catalonia had a commercial deficit with Flanders, Melis had a different view, affirming that the former had a favorable trade balance. According to the Florentine historian, transfers from Bruges to Barcelona amounted to double those in the opposite direction. For 1438, during, that is, a later period, Francesco Guidi Bruscoli reports that transfers to Bruges were 80% greater than those to the Catalan city. R. DE ROOVER, *The Bruges Money Market around 1400*, Brussels 1968 (Pais de l'Academien), pp. 42-47; F. MELIS, *L'area catalano-aragonesa*, cit., p. 354; F. GUIDI BRUSCOLI, *I rapporti*, cit., p. 428. On Barcelonan commerce with the North Sea more generally, see also D. PIFARRÉ TORRES, *El comerç internacional de Barcelona i el Mar del Nord (Bruges) al final del segle XIV*, Barcelona 2002.

⁶¹ A portion of the data comes from the database used for the essay by A. ORLANDI, *Palma di Maiorca*, cit., pp. 304-307. Naturally, those not relative to this analysis have been excluded, while the remaining data have been integrated with those deriving from the extension of the time period under consideration and from new research. Many studies deal with Mallorcan commerce from a general point of view. We mention here M. BARCELÓ CRESPI, *La Ciudad de Mallorca y su proyección en el contexto del Mediterráneo occidental (siglos XIII-XV)*, in *La ciudad medieval y su influencia territorial*, ed. B. ARIZAGA BOLÚMBURU, Logroño 2007, pp. 111-136; EADEM, *Los contactos atlántico-mediterráneos en la Baja Edad Media: el caso mallorquín*, in *La Península Ibérica entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico siglos XIII-XV*, Jornadas celebradas en Cádiz, 1-4 de abril de 2003, ed. M. GONZÁLEZ JIMÉNEZ, Seville-Cádiz 2006, pp. 471-480. Several essays treating Mallorcan maritime relations with specific areas can be found in *El Regne de Mallorca: cruïlla de gent i de cultures (segles XIII-XV)*, XXVI Jornades d'estudis històrics locals, Palma, del 14 al 16 de novembre de 2007, ed. M. BARCELÓ CRESPI, Palma 2008. Among more recent works on Mallorcan navigation we note those of Antonio Ortega Villoslada, which almost always cover periods prior to 1350; among these, we refer the reader to A. ORTEGA VILLOSLADA, *Navegación mediterránea por el Atlántico. El caso de Mallorca (1230-1349)*, in "Minius", 21, 2013, pp. 45-60; IDEM, *Del Mediterráneo al Atlántico: apertura/reapertura del Estrecho de Gibraltar en la Edad Media. Estado de la cuestión*, in "Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Luliana. Revista d'Estudis Històrics", CCXXVI, 2011, n. 865, pp. 101-124.

work of the 24 ports mentioned in our sources.⁶² If we exclude Palma, Valencia and Barcelona, the remaining ports show intensive traffic, which is not only evident from the 136 journeys that we have reconstructed: all of these internal routes were characterized by a continuous movement of smaller boats, hinted at in our sources, which were everywhere ready to transfer people, mail and goods.

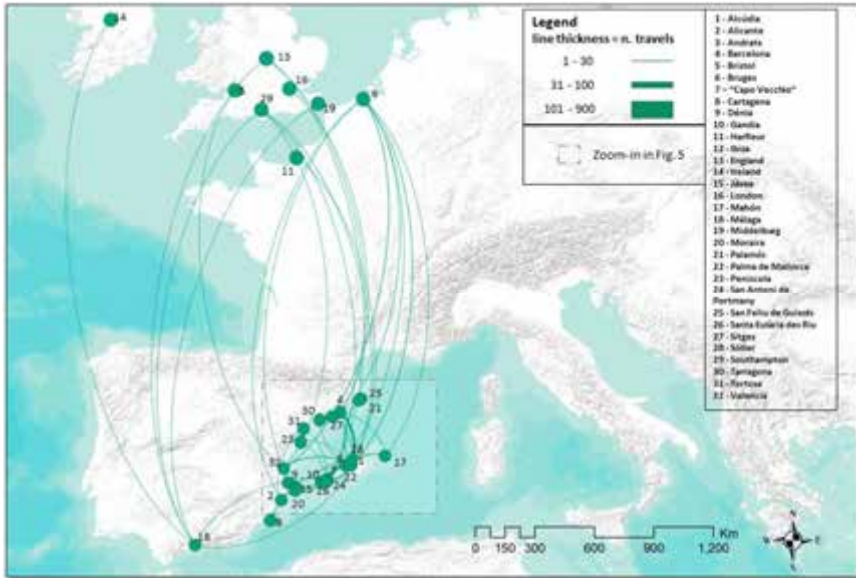
This particular network of minor ports carried out multiple functions which went well beyond the normal tasks of moving goods to and from the hinterland. They further carved out spaces in the panorama of long-distance trade through their involvement in an interesting process of replacement and integration with the other ports. From this point of view, they must be distinguished from that less important group of landings distributed along the coast, which are not indicated on our map: the latter functioned as points of reference for fishing operations, as places that could be used as stopping points for fresh water, and as centers that could be reached by small boats which satisfied the occasional needs of the agricultural populations of the hinterland.⁶³

⁶² Excluding the three main ones (Barcelona, Palma di Mallorca and Valencia), these ports are Alicante, Alcúdia, Andratx, “Capo Vecchio” (Ibiza), Cartagena, Dénia, Gandia, Ibiza, Jávea, Mahón, Málaga, Moraira, Palamós, Peniscola, Sant Antoni de Portmany, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Santa Eulària des Riu, Sitges, Sóller, Tarragona, Tortosa.

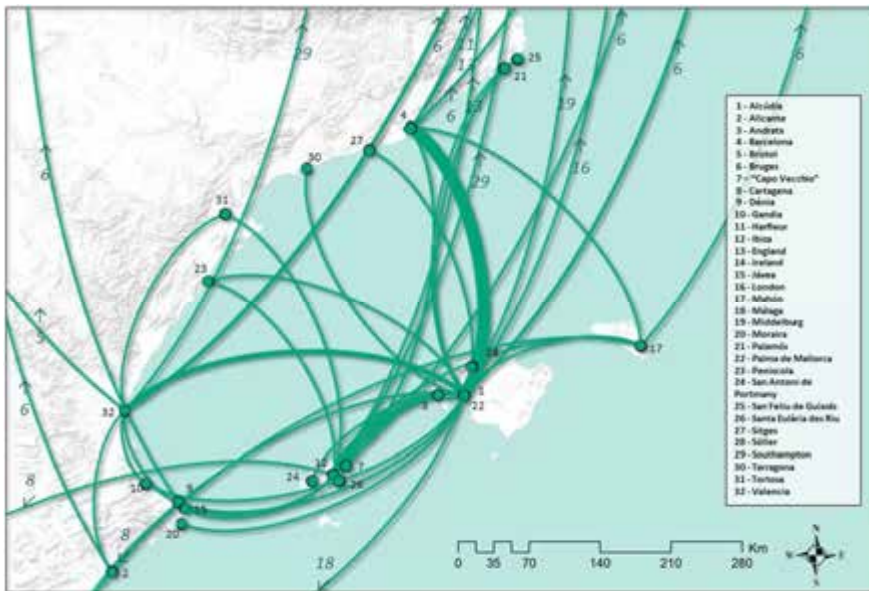
⁶³ Along the Valencian coast between Vinaròs and Cap de Cerver, between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, David Igual Luis has identified the existence of about 40 ports of different dimensions and importance that carried out connection services with Valencia or with other Iberian or international ports: D. IGUAL LUIS, *Non ha porto alcuno, ma sola spiaggia. La actividad marítima valenciana en el siglo XV*, in “Aragón en la Edad Media”, 2014, n. 25, pp. 101-134. See also, by the same author, *Valencia. Opportunities of a secondary node*, in *The Routledge Handbook*, cit., pp. 210-228 and *Red portuariay control marítimo en el reino de Valencia (siglos XIII-XV)*, in *Les territoires de la Méditerranée (XI^e-XV^e siècle)*, Rennes 2013, pp. 51-71; *Más allá de Aragón. Historia e historiografía de los mercados medievales*, in *Una economía integrada. Comercio, instituciones y mercados en Aragón, 1300-1500*, C. LALIENA CORBERA Y M. LAFUENTE GÓMEZ eds., Saragossa 2012, pp. 69-95, 73-77; *Red portuaria y control marítimo en el reino de Valencia (siglos XIII-XV)*, in *Les territoires de la Méditerranée (XI^e-XV^e siècle)*, ed. A. NEF, Rennes 2013, pp. 51-71.

⁶³ A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro*, cit., p. 58 and p. 408. On Valencian port and the port system based on it, see E. CRUSELLES, *El puerto de Valencia en el Mediterráneo medieval (siglos XIII-XV)*, in *Historia del puerto de Valencia*, ed. J. HERMOSILLA, Valencia 2007, pp. 63-125; R. FERRER NAVARRO, *Los puertos del reino de Valencia durante el siglo XIV*, “Saitabi”, 1975, n. 25, pp. 103-117. An examination of Catalan ports along the coast north and south of Barcelona is provided by M.T. FERRER I MALLOL in the essay *Navegació, ports i comerç a la mediterrània de la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, in *Comercio, redistribución y fondeaderos. La navegación a vela en el Mediterráneo*, Actas V Jornadas Internacionales de arqueología Subacuática, J. PÉREZ BALLESTER, G. PASCAL eds., (Gandia, 8 a 10 de noviembre de 2006), Valencia 2007, pp. 113-166. This writer notes about 50 landings of varying degrees of importance between Saint-Laurent-de-la-Salanque and Uldecona (both river ports).

Map 4. Ports on the coasts of Aragon-Catalonia in the system of routes toward Northern Europe (1390-1411)



Map 5. Ports on the coasts of Aragon-Catalonia in the system of routes toward Northern Europe (1390-1411) (detail)



Commercial traffic routes were determined by the operational choices of merchants, on one hand, and the actual movement of ships within the port network, on the other. Within this context, regular mercantile exchanges did not always involve the same ports: destinations changed on the basis of considerations that were more economic than political. Indeed with regard to the network of long-distance connections, such as that toward the North Sea, our sources show that in practice these routes were subject to significant changes, especially when they regarded the triangle consisting of the Barcelonan, Valencian and Balearic coasts.

As it was well connected to Valencia and Palma, Dénia sometimes functioned as a loading port for ships destined for Flanders. This was the case for rice, which was grown around the marshes of the Albufera and loaded onto vessels heading to the port of the Costa Blanca, where it was transferred to ships bound for Bruges.⁶⁴

When ships in Porto Pí were not able to complete their loads to bring to Flanders, they would stop in Dénia to fill their holds with the “semenze” that came there from the many landings along the Valencian coast.⁶⁵ In at least one case when no vessels were leaving Palma for the north, it was decided to send alum to Dénia, where a ship was ready to depart for Bruges.⁶⁶

We are, then, dealing with a port whose function was not limited to that of a loading dock for agricultural products and manufactures from its hinterland; rather, Dénia was a true hub within the entire port network. Replacing routine and important landings with others took place smoothly: this fact indeed provides us with the first piece of evidence for the efficient and collaborative interaction of these ports. When Luca del Sera in Valencia learned that four large and three small “Moor”⁶⁷ galleys were present near Alicante, he informed his colleague on Mallorca by means of one of the many ships present at port: planned deliveries of cargo to the southern coasts were immediately postponed and some goods were rebooked along safer routes and ports. Naturally ship captains made all the necessary adjustments, as happened the previous year to Berlinghieri Tomasi, who having just left the dock at Palma, suddenly headed back to the island to change his plans.⁶⁸

Other similar examples could be provided: the best known is that of the ports of Peniscola and Tortosa, which regulated the wool trade around Maestrazgo,⁶⁹ involving numerous other landings along the coast.

Alternatives for each shipment and the choice of a port and a vessel depended on a merchant’s capacity for observation and hence on the efficiency of his network. When merchants learned by letter that “few ships” would be arriving in Pal-

⁶⁴ A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro*, cit., p. 58 and p. 408.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 242 and p. 260.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 480.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 368.

⁶⁹ On the economic function of Peniscola and its port, see F. MELIS, *La lana della Spagna mediterranea e della Barberia occidentale nei secoli XIV-XV*, in F. MELIS, *I mercanti italiani*, cit., pp. 233-247; A. ORLANDI, *A Man from Prato*, cit., pp. 377-383 and C. RABASSA, *Funcions econòmiques del port de Peniscola durant la baixa Edat Mitjana*, in *La Mediterrània de la Corona d’Aragó, segles XIII-XVI & VII Centenari de la Sentència Arbitral de Torrellas, 1304-2004*, XVIII Congrès Internacional d’Història de la Corona d’Aragó, ed. R. NARBONA, Valencia 2005, 2, pp. 1269-1290.

ma from Pisa,⁷⁰ they took advantage of Giame Teriglio's presence in the nearby landing of Pollensa to send him a delivery of clubmoss and cloth to be loaded onto a Mallorcan vessel bound for the Tuscan city.⁷¹

Information networks kept operators continuously updated on every possibility of reducing transaction costs. It could sometimes happen that merchants were willing to accept a delay or change of port for reasons of safety or to allow other goods to be loaded.

Often operators took advantage of the obligatory return trips of ships, which offered space in their holds at discounted prices. This occurred once again in Mallorca, when Cristofano Carocci, wishing to benefit from a cheaper transportation rate, sent Berber kermes, "giannetti"⁷² and oil⁷³ to Dénia, casks of oil to Peniscola,⁷⁴ and dyer's woad to Gandia.⁷⁵ From each of these ports, the goods would then reach Valencia on one of the many boats that sailed along the coast. Similarly, merchants in Valencia relied on Tortosa for shipments of calves bound for the Pisan market.⁷⁶

In light of what we have seen, it is understandable that Ibiza too formed part of this virtuous network, which benefited its small landings, such as Sant Antoni de Portmany, to which many Berber products were shipped.⁷⁷

Movements of ships, then, were influenced not only by such known factors as the rhythms of navigation or the choices of ship captains, but also by a demand for transport that aimed at the most favorable solutions by taking advantage of an efficient information system and of a range of shipping possibilities. It was these mechanisms that created the polycentric system that we have outlined, the network of minor ports that were well integrated into the system of routes with the north.

⁷⁰ ASPO, *Datini*, 666, Nofri di Bonaccorso to Francesco Datini and Stoldo di Lorenzo and partners, Mallorca-Florence, 07.02.1394. The transcription of the document can be found in G. NIGRO, *Mercanti in Maiorca. Il carteggio datiniano dall'isola (1387-1396)*, II** Documenti, Prato-Florence 2003, (Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica-"F. Datini" – FUP), p. 466.

⁷¹ ASPO, *Datini*, 530, Ambrogio di Lorenzo Rocchi to Francesco Datini and Manno d'Albizo degli Agli, Mallorca-Pisa, 05.11.1395. The transcription of the letter can be found in G. NIGRO, *Mercanti in Maiorca*, cit., p. 795; ASPO, *Datini*, 530, Ambrogio di Lorenzo Rocchi to Francesco Datini and Manno d'Albizo degli Agli, Mallorca-Pisa, 13.11.1395. The transcription of the document can be found in G. NIGRO, *Mercanti in Maiorca*, cit., p. 801. Cristofano Carocci sent cloth to the port of Pollença overland.

⁷² In all likelihood "giannetti" were skins of unidentified animals. In the documentation they usually appear together with skins of beech marten or deer.

⁷³ A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro*, cit., p. 178; see also *Ibid.*, p. 148 and p. 185.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁷⁷ ASPO, *Datini*, 994, Giovanni di Gennaio to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Ibiza-Valencia, 05.12.1400; ASPO, *Datini*, 994, Tuccio di Gennaio to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Ibiza-Valencia, 14.05.1401; ASPO, *Datini*, 994, Tuccio di Gennaio to Francesco Datini and Luca del Sera and partners, Ibiza-Valencia, 07.11.1401; ASPO, *Datini*, 1072, Giovanni di Gennaio to Francesco Datini and Cristofano Carocci and partners, Ibiza-Mallorca, 10.05.1402. On this topic, see A. ORLANDI, *Ibiza entre el Mediterráneo*, cit., pp. 55-56.

CONCLUSIONS

The great number of ships that moved among the many ports along the coasts of the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the North Sea facilitated the introduction of features of complementarity and interchangeability. This integration guaranteed a system of routes that was not only efficient on a local level but was also useful for long-distance commerce.

The port system of Aragon-Catalonia constitutes a significant example of what we have seen. In this context of constant adjustment of routes and ship cargoes, necessitated by a variety of factors, this system shows how the mechanisms of complementarity between large and small ports were both efficient and routine. Operational collaboration between these ports was ensured by the regularity and frequency with which local fleets moved from one place to another. The tendency to replace one route with another resulted from the attention paid by operators to the movement of goods and to the need to distribute them efficiently. Landings at smaller and lesser known ports were necessary modifications with respect to traditional routes, which in the end guaranteed that goods reached their planned destination.

These dynamic networks had the further result of apparently expanding connections between areas of the hinterland and international commerce. Nuts and dried fruit from the vast and rich terrains south of Valencia were loaded together with the “semenze” produced by the same farmers of Arab origin onto the same vessels of small and medium dimensions: these in turn brought kermes, ostrich feathers, wax, Berber dates and products from southern Spain to loading ports for trade with Northern Europe. These small and medium-sized vessels moved through a network of routes, whose efficient complementarity between places of departure, intermediate stops and destination ports we are able to appreciate today.

The action of those ports – we are reminded of Alicante and Ibiza during the ban of Venetian merchants in Valencia and Palma – not only guaranteed the smooth functioning of international commerce but also sustained the mechanisms of economic integration among the various port centers and their respective hinterlands, given the ability of the former to receive men and goods from distant countries.

We are thus in agreement with those who maintain that institutional policies played an important role in this panorama, in particular their ability to make permeable the multiple material and immaterial borders that characterized those times.

Indeed such borders took the shape of weakly regulated markets, interference on the part of authorities, and conflicts between merchants and between ethnic groups, all of which rendered commerce quite complicated⁷⁸ but which were overcome in the end. The drive toward commerce and profit made these men flexible, able to take full advantage of economic and personal relationships to the end of simplifying problems and reducing obstacles. We have found cases in which some merchants shipped goods under the names of others if it was not possible to use their own, turning their colleagues into accomplices in abetting them to get around

⁷⁸ A. ORLANDI, *The Catalonia Company*, cit., pp. 371-378.

a prohibition or avoid a fiscal due.⁷⁹ The mechanisms of solidarity and collaboration, which were perhaps unique and unrepeatably among those not belonging to the same “nation”, formed the basis for overcoming much diversity and many potentially conflictual interests. This logic seemed to favor gradual processes of integration: as it was applied to every aspect of economic activity, it ultimately influenced – as we have seen – those same basic mechanisms which were able to regulate that other kind of network, namely, that of the ports which we have aimed to reconstruct. The features of the latter network underwent continuous mutation because of the changeability of routes and of the ships that frequented those ports; it was marked by that continuous mobility which was indeed dictated by the choices and information that passed among merchants from port to port.

⁷⁹ A. ORLANDI, *Mercanzie e denaro*, cit., pp. 36-37.

David Igual Luis

*Movimento portuale, reti marittime
e diversità dei mercati a Valenza nel XV secolo**

INTRODUZIONE

Nonostante l'evoluzione storiografica, alcuni classici nomi della storia economica che si sono dedicati allo studio dei mari e delle realtà circostanti continuano a essere riferimenti quasi essenziali. Non è un caso che il progetto di ricerca che si trova alla base di questa Settimana di Studi abbia dato un ruolo rilevante a Fernand Braudel¹. In una prospettiva molto simile, i due contributi con i quali sono iniziati i lavori del convegno hanno ricordato diverse volte sia Braudel che Federigo Melis, un altro grande storico che certo non poteva mancare in questa sede².

L'attualità di studiosi come questi non vuole dire, ovviamente, che le loro idee rimangano incontestabili. Tornare oggi a Braudel (o a Melis) significa a volte criticare le loro interpretazioni o utilizzare le loro vecchie ricerche come stimoli per far progredire la storiografia marittima e permettere una "rilettura" delle posizioni tradizionali³. Comunque sia, riflettere sulle grandi questioni proposte da questi storici, forse, potrebbe essere un modo per tentare di superare le opinioni secondo le quali, per esempio, la storiografia mediterranea sarebbe caratterizzata oggi da una certa

* Questa ricerca fa parte del progetto HAR2015-68209-P, finanziato dal Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad del Gobierno de España e diretto da Carlos Laliena Corbera (Università di Saragozza). Il testo riprende sostanzialmente il contenuto provvisorio della relazione che ho presentato durante la Settimana di Studi. Ringrazio la collega e amica Angela Orlandi per la traduzione della relazione dallo spagnolo e per la traduzione o la revisione linguistica delle parti che ho aggiunto o cambiato nella versione finale.

¹ Progetto di ricerca 2016-2018: "Reti marittime come fattori dell'integrazione europea", in "Il Datini. Notiziario della Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica 'F. Datini'", 57, 2016 <<http://www.istitutodatini.it/notiz/numeri/57.htm>> (ultima consultazione: 17 aprile 2018).

² Mi riferisco ai contributi di M. NORTH, *Prolusione: "Connected Seas"*, e di L. PALERMO, *Aspetti dei traffici commerciali internazionali nel Mediterraneo occidentale tra XIV e XV secolo*. Su Braudel in particolare, si veda anche A. ORLANDI, *Fernand Braudel, l'Istituto Datini e Prato, 1954-1985*, Prato 2016 <<http://braudel.istitutodatini.it/>> (ultima consultazione: 9 luglio 2018).

³ Come dimostrato da D. ABULAFIA, *El gran mar. Una historia humana del Mediterráneo*, Barcellona 2013, pp. 11 e 19-21; W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROSEWICZ, *Maritime trade around Europe 1300-1600. Commercial networks and urban autonomy*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade Around Europe 1300-1600*, ed. by W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM and J. WUBS-MROSEWICZ, Londra-New York 2017, pp. 1-14, soprattutto p. 4; e da P. IRADIEL, *La historia del Mediterráneo en la era de la globalización. ¿Tiene sentido hablar del Mediterráneo como unidad a lo largo de la historia?*, in *Ciutats mediterrànies: l'espai i el territori*, 2n Seminari Internacional (Barcelona, 22-25 de novembre de 2016), atti in corso di stampa.

impasse o, ancora peggio, da un bilancio confusionario e disorganico⁴.

Se riprendiamo la proposta su cui si fonda questa Settimana, mi pare proprio che l'obiettivo del nostro incontro scientifico sia mettere (o meglio, ri-mettere) al centro delle discussioni importanti temi e grandi problemi della storia economica marittima. Il mio contributo è stato inserito nella sessione dal titolo *In che modo le rotte di navigazione sono servite come elemento di connessione?*⁵. È stato dunque necessario affrontare alcune questioni: i collegamenti che costituivano una determinata rete marittima, le sue caratteristiche geografiche, la regolarità e la frequenza delle relazioni interne e l'importanza commerciale di tale rete⁶.

Per tutti questi aspetti, la città e il porto di Valenza, alla fine del Medioevo, forniscono argomenti interessanti. Inoltre, Valenza serve a mostrare altri fenomeni che dovevano essere affrontati durante questa Settimana: il ruolo dei porti come punti nodali di rotte marittime, la funzione di queste rotte come assi di collegamento (territoriale, economico e sociale), l'articolazione delle reti economiche con diversa proiezione, la natura e l'intensità dei flussi commerciali e la loro consistenza in varie categorie e tipi di mercato.

Le prospettive che si possono aprire partono dalla posizione che Valenza raggiunse nel corso del XV secolo, come spazio marittimo e commerciale intermedio a livello europeo e mediterraneo. Intorno alla città e al suo porto si creò un universo di relazioni che si muovevano su diversi livelli, da quello locale a quello internazionale. All'interno di questo universo si sono formate dinamiche tipiche di una vera e propria integrazione dei mercati⁷. Va tuttavia ricordato che la costruzione di tale panorama è stato il risultato di stimoli interni ed esterni provenienti principalmente da tre ambiti: 1) quello della città e del suo regno che era guidato da Valenza intesa come capitale politica ed economica; 2) quello della Corona d'Aragona, il quadro statale superiore a cui apparteneva il territorio di Valenza e con cui si stabilirono intensi contatti, specialmente con la Catalogna o Barcellona e con Maiorca; 3) quello delle regioni settentrionali dell'Italia attuale, i cui mercanti inserivano abitualmente la città nei loro sistemi di comunicazione, trasporto e affari.

Sempre in chiave marittima e commerciale, le caratteristiche principali di questi schemi e la loro evoluzione cronologica sono già state oggetto di numerose analisi che hanno anche evidenziato come Valenza sia entrata a far parte di reti di relazioni dai molteplici significati⁸. Pertanto, il mio contributo si propone un obiettivo più

⁴ P. IRADIEL, *La historia del Mediterráneo*, cit.; IDEM, *Presentación*, in IDEM, *El Mediterráneo medieval y Valencia. Economía, sociedad, historia*, Valenza 2017, pp. 29-37, 30.

⁵ Si veda il programma dei lavori della Settimana in <<http://www.istitutodatinati.it/temi/htm/temi50.htm>> (ultima consultazione: 10 luglio 2018).

⁶ *Progetto di ricerca 2016-2018: "Reti marittime come fattori dell'integrazione europea"*, cit.

⁷ D. IGUAL LUIS, *La difusión de productos en el Mediterráneo y en Europa occidental en el tránsito de la Edad Media a la Moderna*, in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee, sec. XIII-XVIII*, Atti della Trentaduesima Settimana di Studi dell'Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini" (Prato, 8-12 maggio 2000), a c. di S. CAVACIOCCHI, Firenze 2001, pp. 453-494, 477-489.

⁸ Ho sintetizzato gli studi che menziono in D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia: opportunities of a secondary node*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade*, cit., pp. 210-228. A proposito del concetto di "rete", in generale per la storia economica medievale e in particolare per il caso valenzano, si vedano anche: IDEM, *Más allá de Aragón. Historia e historiografía de los mercados medievales*, in *Una economía integrada*.

limitato: esaminare il movimento portuale della città come elemento che permette di riflettere sulle varie reti marittime e sui diversi mercati che hanno fatto perno su Valenza. A tal scopo, ho sviluppato un lavoro composito: da un lato, ho aggiornato la mia ricerca in materia, essenzialmente riferita alla seconda metà del XV secolo; dall'altro, ho raccolto dati di varia natura, studiati in modo frammentario da diversi autori, che riguardano l'intero Quattrocento e anche gli ultimi anni del Trecento e i primi del Cinquecento. Grazie a questo duplice punto di partenza, sono riuscito a raccogliere informazioni quantitative e qualitative che aiutano a precisare la funzione di Valenza nei circuiti marittimi alla fine del Medioevo e, in particolare, la sua posizione nelle gerarchie stabilite in questi circuiti. In fin dei conti, il suddetto movimento portuale è un'indicazione di base per differenziare un porto dall'altro e per misurare l'importanza reale che ciascuno di essi ebbe in quei tempi⁹.

VALENZA NEL QUATTROCENTO: TRA MEDITERRANEO E ATLANTICO

Negli anni a cavallo del 1400, il carteggio datiniano ci consente una prima possibile approssimazione sulla dimensione raggiunta dal porto di Valenza. La corrispondenza da Valenza a Maiorca trascritta da Angela Orlandi registra, per il porto valenzano, 300 movimenti di imbarcazioni in entrata o in uscita tra il febbraio 1395 e il marzo 1398. Di queste operazioni, che riguardarono principalmente navi e barche, 103 si realizzarono nel 1396 e 136 nel 1397¹⁰. Data la natura della fonte, un numero elevato di viaggi (più del 40 o del 50% delle provenienze o delle destinazioni) era logicamente con Maiorca. Ma questa documentazione mostra anche le rotte che collegavano in quel momento Valenza con altre coste: principalmente le Fiandre, la Barberia, Barcellona, Genova, Pisa, Gaeta e Venezia, ma anche la Galizia, Siviglia, la costa provenzale e le isole di Ibiza, la Sicilia e la Sardegna. In definitiva, secondo Orlandi, la documentazione datiniana avrebbe fatto emergere l'immagine di una Valenza ben collocata nel cuore delle principali correnti commerciali e di una vasta rete di rotte navali¹¹.

Alcuni dati specifici tratti dall'indagine di Orlandi sono significativi. Se i rapporti con le Fiandre ammontarono allora (1395-1398) a 31 viaggi (15 provenienze e 16 destinazioni), quelli con Genova furono 22 (3 provenienze e 19 destinazioni)¹². Nel primo caso, la frequenza dei collegamenti è conseguenza dell'importanza che, in genere, le fonti datiniane concedono agli scambi fiamminghi. Partendo sempre

Comercio, instituciones y mercados en Aragón, 1300-1500, coord. por C. LALIENA CORBERA y M. LAFUENTE GÓMEZ, Saragozza 2012, pp. 69-95, 73-77; e IDEM, *Red portuaria y control marítimo en el reino de Valencia (siglos XIII-XV)*, in *Les territoires de la Méditerranée (XI^e-XV^e siècle)*, a c. di A. NEF, Rennes 2013, pp. 51-71, 59.

⁹ W. BLOCKMANS, J. WUBS-MROSEWICZ, *European integration from the seaside: a comparative synthesis*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade*, cit., pp. 446-481, 462.

¹⁰ A. ORLANDI, *Estudi introductoris*, in *Mercaderies i diners: la correspondència datiniana entre València i Mallorca (1395-1398)*, a c. di A. ORLANDI, Valenza 2008, pp. 11-127, 57 e 102-120.

¹¹ C. CUADRADA, A. ORLANDI, *Ports, tràfics, vaixells, productes: italians i catalans a la Mediterrània baixomedieval*, in "Anuario de Estudios Medievales", 24, 1994, pp. 3-48, 13-18 e 44.

¹² A. ORLANDI, *Estudi introductoris*, cit., pp. 102-120.

dall'Archivio Datini, un altro sondaggio relativo al ventennio 1390-1411 ha dato notizie su 1.229 viaggi di imbarcazioni che, in andata o in ritorno dal Mediterraneo, toccarono Bruges, Londra, Southampton e altri porti nord europei. Di questi viaggi, 887 si riferiscono a Bruges e, nello spazio mediterraneo, 261 appartengono a spostamenti da o per Barcellona, Valenza o Maiorca¹³. Lo scalo barcellonese fu in un periodo più breve, 1396-1400, l'inizio o la fine di almeno 17 viaggi che sono stati testimoniati grazie a una parte del carteggio datiniano Bruges-Barcellona¹⁴. Nel caso dei rapporti Valenza-Genova, l'intensità del traffico trova conferma nello studio di due fonti fiscali genovesi: la dogana di Genova e il *Dricus Catalanorum*. Per gli anni 1376, 1377, 1386, 1392 e 1393, la dogana e il *Dricus* registrano 53 spostamenti marittimi tra la regione ligure (soprattutto Genova) e Valenza, il 40% di tutti i collegamenti con la Corona d'Aragona presenti in questi documenti. Alcuni anni dopo (1421, 1453 e 1454), i viaggi furono soltanto 13, ma continuano a essere il 40% dei movimenti verso le coste aragonesi¹⁵.

Durante la prima metà del XV secolo, la posizione marittima di Valenza si rafforzò. Ciò è dimostrato dal ruolo che la città svolse come mercato dei noli e delle assicurazioni, la maggior parte dei quali era correlata al traffico marittimo che toccava il suo porto. Attraverso i registri notarili locali, per il periodo compreso tra il 1404 e il 1451, Enrique Cruselles ha rilevato 742 testimonianze di operazioni che riguardano in vario modo movimenti di imbarcazioni: 407 si riferiscono a noleggi¹⁶ e 335 a assicurazioni¹⁷. La maggior parte di queste informazioni provengono dai protocolli di un solo notaio cittadino, Vicent Saera, specializzato nella sottoscrizione di atti con contenuto commerciale e finanziario. I suoi libri sono particolarmente ricchi di dati per la fase 1414-1441 e ancora di più per il decennio 1430-1440. In quest'ultimo periodo, infatti, si registrò il maggior numero di contratti annui prodotti dal notaio Saera: 62 assicurazioni nel 1438 e più di 20 noleggi all'anno nel triennio 1437-1439¹⁸. Questa abbondanza di notizie non sembra essere casuale: il ventennio 1430-1450 fu infatti un momento decisivo per il consolidamento

¹³ Le ultime cifre provengono ancora una volta da A. ORLANDI, in questo caso dal suo contributo a questa Settimana: *Tra Mediterraneo e Mare del Nord: reti di uomini e porti (secoli XIV-XV)*.

¹⁴ D. PIFARRÉ TORRES, *El comerç internacional de Barcelona i el Mar del Nord (Bruges) a finals del segle XIV*, Barcellona 2002, p. 31.

¹⁵ M. DEL TREPPO, *Tra Genova e Catalogna. Considerazioni e documenti (a chiusura del congresso)*, in *Atti del I° Congresso Storico Liguria-Catalogna*, Bordighera 1974, pp. 621-667, 638.

¹⁶ E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Hombres de negocios y mercaderes bajomedievales valencianos*, I-V, tesi dottorale, Università di Valenza, Valenza 1996, II, pp. 400-412.

¹⁷ IDEM, *La formación de un mercado subsidiario de aseguration en Valencia (finales del XIV-primer mitad del XV)*, in "Anales de la Real Academia de Cultura Valenciana", 67, 1989, pp. 229-274, 252. L'autore ipotizza che il numero delle assicurazioni sarebbe potuto essere pari a circa 500 se, nella serie di registri notarili analizzati, non mancassero i libri di alcuni anni e se altri si fossero conservati in modo migliore. Pertanto, se accettiamo questa interpretazione, le operazioni che investono i contratti di assicurazione e noleggio a Valenza nel 1404-1451 sfiorerebbero il migliaio.

¹⁸ IDEM, *La formación de un mercado de aseguration. La clientela mercantil de Vicent Çuera*, tesi di laurea, Università di Valenza, Valenza 1989, pp. 75-78 e 87-90; IDEM, *Hombres de negocios y mercaderes*, cit., pp. 401-404 e 408-410. Sopra il notaio Vicent Saera, si veda anche IDEM, *Los mercaderes de Valencia en la edad media (1380-1450)*, Lérida 2001, pp. 36-44.

dell'economia mercantile valenzana¹⁹.

Comunque sia, le 742 testimonianze che ho segnalato consentono di tracciare una mappa delle rotte valenzane in cui spiccano quattro grandi aree: Catalogna-Maiorca, Granada-Barberia, Sardegna-Sicilia-Napoli e il nord della Penisola italiana. Meno frequenti i collegamenti con l'Atlantico, in particolare con le Fiandre²⁰. Come elemento comparativo per la stessa epoca, segnalo come queste destinazioni e altre siano tipiche anche del commercio maiorchino. Per la prima metà del Quattrocento, le informazioni notarili locali e i salvacondotti concessi dalle autorità hanno permesso di contabilizzare 1.992 imbarcazioni, di tipologie e grandezze diverse, che erano in rapporti marittimi con Maiorca²¹. Per il loro significato quantitativo e qualitativo, meritano di essere evidenziati i 391 viaggi con il Magreb e i 71 con le Fiandre che emergono da alcuni rogiti notarili maiorchini del periodo 1403-1438²².

Tornando al caso di Valenza, tutte le sue rotte si svilupparono separatamente o con frequenti intersezioni reciproche, rispondendo a vari obiettivi commerciali. Ma il notarile del primo Quattrocento segnala alla fine, come la documentazione datiniana, una importante estensione della proiezione marittima valenzana, anche se questa appare dalle fonti notarili più orientata verso il Mediterraneo occidentale²³. Tuttavia, a Valenza come dappertutto, l'intensità dei diversi collegamenti non necessariamente deve essere direttamente correlata al loro peso economico sul mercato. Ovviamente, il numero dei trasporti su ciascuna rotta deve essere integrato, se possibile, da notizie sulle dimensioni delle navi che vi transitavano, sul volume delle merci trasportate e sul loro valore²⁴.

A questo proposito, Enrique Cruselles ha affrontato ancora una volta la questione sulla base delle assicurazioni marittime, in questo caso con dati che si riferiscono alla fine del XV secolo. Per questo periodo, già proiettato verso il Cinquecento, si conservano a Valenza i protocolli di un altro notaio specializzato in

¹⁹ P. IRADIEL, *El siglo de oro del comercio valenciano*, in IDEM, *El Mediterráneo medieval y Valencia*, cit., pp. 347-366, 353-358. Sul consolidamento allora di Valenza anche come mercato di assicurazioni marittime, si veda E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Los mercados aseguradores del Mediterráneo catalano-aragonés*, in *Riqueza del mar, riqueza dal mar. Secs. XIII-XVIII*, Atti della Trentasettesima Settimana di Studi dell'Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini" (Prato, 11-15 aprile 2005), I-II, a c. di S. CAVACIOCCHI, Firenze 2006, I, pp. 611-639.

²⁰ E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *La formación de un mercado de aseguración*, cit., pp. 118-144; IDEM, *Hombres de negocios y mercaderes*, cit., pp. 400-404.

²¹ P. MACAIRE, *Majorque et le commerce international (1400-1450 environ)*, Lille 1986, p. 253.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 322 e 411-412; D. ABULAFIA, *Un emporio mediterráneo. El reino catalán de Mallorca*, Barcellona 1996, pp. 274-277; IDEM, *L'economia mercantile nel Mediterraneo occidentale: commercio locale e commercio internazionale nell'età di Alfonso il Magnanimo*, in *La Corona d'Aragona ai tempi di Alfonso il Magnanimo*, XVI Congresso Internazionale di Storia della Corona d'Aragona (Napoli-Caserta-Ischia, 18-24 settembre 1997), I-II, a c. di G. D'AGOSTINO e G. BUFFARDI, Napoli 2000, II, pp. 1023-1046, 1039-1040.

²³ E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Jerarquización y especialización de los circuitos mercantiles valencianos (finales del XIV-primerá mitad del XV)*, in "Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia Medieval", 7, 1988-1989, pp. 83-109.

²⁴ P. SPUFFORD, *Power and Profit. The Merchant in Medieval Europe*, New York 2002, p. 342; M. DEL TREPPO, *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa al segle XV*, Barcellona 1976, p. 28; E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Comercio y mercado en tiempo de crisis (Los mercaderes valencianos y su Mediterráneo frente a la época de los Descubrimientos)*, ricerca inedita, Valenza 1991, p. 142.

contratti commerciali e finanziari: Jaume Salvador²⁵. Salvador compilò quattro libri di contratti assicurativi relativi al 1488, 1492, 1495 e 1499. Questa documentazione ha permesso a Cruselles di confrontare il numero dei contratti presenti nei registri con il loro valore monetario. La distribuzione delle cifre per rotta assicurata rivela che in effetti poteva esistere una disparità tra le due serie di dati. Ad esempio, mentre gli affari per la Sardegna, Sicilia e Napoli erano i più numerosi, quelli per il Nord Italia potevano essere di maggior valore per il rischio monetario che implicavano. La seguente tabella mostra i calcoli dell'autore per le aree geografiche ritenute per Valenza le più importanti nelle relazioni marittime²⁶:

Tab. 1. Assicurazioni marittime a Valenza (notaio Jaume Salvador, 1488-1499)

	1488		1492		1495		1499	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
<i>Sardegna-Sicilia-Napoli</i>	119	14.200	109	14.500	64	12.200	71	15.900
<i>Nord Italia</i>	68	20.600	27	10.000	37	29.800	12	11.000
<i>Catalogna-Maiorca-resto del Regno di Valenza</i>	83	6.800	71	5.300	47	7.300	32	4.500
<i>Francia meridionale</i>	26	5.400	18	3.100	29	9.100	32	6.000
<i>Nord Europa (soprattutto Fiandre)</i>	40	11.200	18	3.900	23	4.500	22	7.300
<i>Costa atlantica iberica</i>	29	5.700	59	11.600	30	8.400	26	3.500

Un semplice sguardo alla tabella, alle colonne che mostrano il numero dei contratti, suggerisce come il volume delle assicurazioni fosse negli anni indicati superiore a quello che abbiamo visto per la prima metà del XV secolo. I dati annuali totali sono ancora più chiari. Jaume Salvador stipulò 392 atti di assicurazione nel 1488, 337 nel 1492, 263 nel 1495 e 238 nel 1499. Anche all'inizio del XVI secolo, l'attività assicurativa di un altro notaio valenzano, Guillem Ramon Florença, fu notevole: 145 assicurazioni nel 1519 e 246 nel 1520. Pertanto, in soli sei anni, distribuiti in un periodo piuttosto lungo (1488-1520), conosciamo la registrazione a Valenza di 1.621 polizze assicurative²⁷. Anche i contratti di noleggio furono più numerosi. Nei suoi protocolli, tra il 1474 e il 1513, Jaume Salvador ne stipulò ben 740²⁸, con alcuni valori massimi che si avvicinavano o superavano i venti contratti l'anno come accadde nel 1488 e nel 1494²⁹. Così, nel periodo compreso tra il 1474 e il 1520 (46

²⁵ Sopra questo notaio, si veda D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV. Rutas, mercados y hombres de negocios en el espacio económico del Mediterráneo occidental*, Castellón 1998, pp. 72 e 115.

²⁶ E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Comercio y mercado en tiempo de crisis*, cit., pp. 11, 42, 66, 91, 100, 114, 142 e 227; IDEM, *Hombres de negocios y mercaderes valencianos en el tránsito al Mundo Moderno*, in *La burguesía española en la Edad Moderna*, Actas del Congreso Internacional (Madrid y Soria, 16 a 18 de diciembre de 1991), I-III, coord. por L. M. ENCISO RECIO, Valladolid 1996, II, pp. 623-631, 625-626. Nella tabella, nelle colonne di ogni anno, la colonna numero 1 corrisponde al numero dei contratti di assicurazione; la numero 2 al valore complessivo del denaro che rappresentavano (in ducati).

²⁷ IDEM, *Comercio y mercado en tiempo de crisis*, cit., p. 136.

²⁸ J. GUIRAL-HADZIOSIF, *Valencia, puerto mediterráneo en el siglo XV (1410-1525)*, Valenza 1989, p. 252.

²⁹ Si veda *infra* la tabella 2.

anni), le operazioni di assicurazione e noleggio note a Valenza sono 2.361.

La differenza tra questa cifra e quella rilevata durante i decenni iniziali del XV secolo, da documenti tipologicamente simili (742 testimonianze in 47 anni: 1404-1451), è palpabile. Tuttavia, come è consuetudine in queste situazioni, è difficile decidere se la distanza tra le due grandezze dipenda da questioni archivistiche e dalla formazione e conservazione delle fonti documentarie, dallo stato della storiografia o dalla realtà storica. Ma, per quanto ne sappiamo finora, il bilancio favorevole al secondo periodo coincide con altre notizie che collocano tra la metà e la fine del Quattrocento il mantenimento o addirittura la crescita spettacolare, a seconda dei casi, di alcune delle correnti marittimo-commerciali che convergevano su Valenza³⁰. Ciò non significa che, in una prospettiva di breve termine, non si possa rilevare una tendenza al ribasso del movimento portuale nei primi decenni del XVI secolo, rispetto agli ultimi decenni del XV. Il fenomeno annunciava i problemi che Valenza avrebbe avuto in futuro per mantenere i livelli economici raggiunti fino a circa il 1500³¹. In ogni caso, le assicurazioni e i noleggi citati dal 1474 al 1520 disegnano una mappa di rotte che, al di là delle loro particolari oscillazioni, continuarono a essere strettamente legate al Mediterraneo occidentale, sebbene le estensioni atlantiche (verso le Fiandre o le coste oceaniche della stessa Penisola iberica) fossero già significative³².

ROTTI LOCALI E MOVIMENTO ANNUALE DEL PORTO ALLA FINE DEL XV SECOLO

Il peso che le notizie notarili, assieme al carteggio datiniano, attribuiscono ai percorsi regionali e internazionali facenti capo a Valenza deriva dalla natura stessa di queste fonti³³. Ma questo non deve confonderci. Una parte non trascurabile dei movimenti del porto corrispondeva a trasporti a corto raggio, in molti casi di respiro locale, relativi al resto della costa del Regno di Valenza. Tali trasporti possono essere esemplificati al meglio da altre testimonianze scritte, in particolare attraverso i libri valenzani del cosiddetto *manifest de mar* o *peatge (pedaggio) de mar*. Il *manifest* è una fonte fiscale in cui venivano registrate le navi che attraccavano ogni giorno a Valenza, le merci che portavano e alcune tasse di competenza della monarchia che venivano pagate sulle imbarcazioni e il loro carico. Esso, pertanto, copre il traffico marittimo di importazione.

Fino al 1500, la documentazione del *manifest* è scarsa. Conosciamo solo pochi frammenti della prima metà del XV secolo e sette registri successivi al 1450 che,

³⁰ P. IRADIEL, *El siglo de oro del comercio valenciano*, cit., p. 353; D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 404-405.

³¹ E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, "Todo es cerrazón y noche". *La sociedad urbana valenciana en la encrucijada a los tiempos modernos*, in "Revista d'Història Medieval", 3, 1992, pp. 117-142; D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia: opportunities of a secondary node*, cit., pp. 213-214.

³² Riguardo la sopramenzionata mappa di rotte, si veda la tabella 1, assieme a E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, "Todo es cerrazón y noche". *La sociedad urbana valenciana*, cit., pp. 127-133, e D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 303-402.

³³ C. CUADRADA, A. ORLANDI, *Ports, tràfics, vaixells, productes*, cit., pp. 14-15; E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Jerarquización y especialización de los circuitos mercantiles valencianos*, cit., p. 84.

almeno in apparenza, dovrebbero consentire di ricostruire il controllo tariffario su tutte le entrate del porto. Questi ultimi registri corrispondono agli anni 1451, 1459, 1488, 1491, 1494 e 1499, ma solo due coprono un intero anno: il 1488 e il 1494³⁴. Oltre alla sua limitatezza, questa fonte ha altri problemi: da un lato, permangono dubbi sui criteri di redazione del *manifest* e sulla sua reale rappresentatività; dall'altro, benché questa documentazione sia stata già alla base di numerosi studi, ho riscontrato che alcuni dei dati pubblicati sono parzialmente errati³⁵. Ciò nonostante, in linea generale, le informazioni note fino a oggi sono ancora valide e sottolineano l'importanza della fonte. Innanzitutto, perché il numero degli arrivi al porto valenzano che questi registri evidenziano è considerevole: per esempio, nei libri relativi agli anni 1451-1494 (quello del 1499 è troppo frammentario), si sono contati 1.415 arrivi³⁶. Inoltre, se ci soffermiamo sui registri del 1488 e del 1494, è possibile evidenziare ulteriori quattro motivi che ribadiscono il grande interesse del contenuto di questi documenti.

Il primo è perché il *manifest* permette effettivamente di verificare l'intensità del trasporto locale. Nel 1488, su un totale di 559 arrivi di imbarcazioni a Valenza, il 45,5% proveniva dal territorio valenzano. Nel 1494, su 420 arrivi, l'origine valenzana rappresentava il 31%³⁷. Anche il numero assoluto di tali traffici interni è rilevante. Solo gli spostamenti dall'area settentrionale del regno, che oggi costituisce la provincia di Castellón, erano 135 nel 1488 e 70 nel 1494. A queste due cifre si può aggiungere quella che deriva da un altro volume del *manifest*, del 1491, che testimonia un centinaio di viaggi provenienti da quell'area. Così, in tre anni discontinui ma relativamente vicini alla fine del XV secolo (1488, 1491 e 1494), è possibile certificare circa 300 movimenti di imbarcazioni che andavano dalla costa di Castellón a Valenza³⁸.

Il secondo è che queste fonti agevolano la differenziazione – quantitativa e qualitativa – tra rotte a lungo e a corto raggio. A questo proposito, si può fare un confronto tra i viaggi da Castellón che ho appena citato e quelli che, provenienti dal centro-nord della Penisola italiana, si sono conclusi a Valenza. Questi ultimi partivano da Roma e dal Lazio, dalla Toscana, dalla Liguria e da Venezia. In linea di principio, le due zone si distinguono per la frequenza con cui appaiono nel porto valenzano. I numerosi ingressi marittimi da Castellón contrastano con quelli dalla

³⁴ D. IGUAL LUIS, *El mundo naval y el manifest de mar valenciano (1451-1494)*, in *Tripulacions i vaixells a la Mediterrània medieval: fonts i perspectives comparades des de la Corona d'Aragó*, Seminari Internacional (Barcelona, 25 i 26 de setembre del 2014), atti in corso di stampa.

³⁵ Ho spiegato i diversi problemi della fonte e dei dati che da essa provengono in D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 141-146; IDEM, *El mundo naval y el manifest de mar valenciano*, cit.; e IDEM, J. L. SOLER MILLA, *Una aproximació al comerç marítim de les comarques castellenenques (segles XIII-XV)*, in "Millars. Espai i Història", 29, 2006, pp. 93-132, 104-106.

³⁶ D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 143-145 e 182-183; IDEM, *El mundo naval y el manifest de mar valenciano*, cit.

³⁷ J. GUIRAL-HADZIOSIF, *Valencia, puerto mediterráneo en el siglo XV*, cit., p. 35; Y. AUFRAY, J. GUIRAL, *Les péages du royaume de Valence (1494)*, in "Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez", 12, 1976, pp. 141-163, 146-152.

³⁸ D. IGUAL LUIS, J. L. SOLER MILLA, *Una aproximació al comerç marítim de les comarques castellenenques*, cit., pp. 105-106.

Penisola italiana molto meno numerosi: 12 arrivi nel 1488, 11 nel 1494³⁹. Ma non solo. Gli spostamenti da Castellón, per quanto numerosi, sono stati effettuati da piccole imbarcazioni (per lo più liuti ma anche barche), e riguardavano l'importazione abbastanza omogenea di beni, soprattutto agricoli, di scarso valore unitario e commercializzati in piccoli lotti. I carichi italiani, invece, arrivavano su imbarcazioni più grandi (navi, galere e caravelle) ed erano costituiti da una gamma molto varia di prodotti, a volte per grandi quantità, tra i quali troviamo le merci di maggior valore sui mercati euromediterranei: lana, tessuti, tinture e spezie⁴⁰. Ulteriore elemento di diversità è l'entità del prelievo fiscale che derivava dai carichi. Nel 1488, per esempio, i 135 arrivi da Castellón dovettero pagare meno di 5 lire valenzane di imposte, rispetto alle 2.046 lire, 13 soldi e 6 denari che pagarono i 12 navigli italiani⁴¹.

Il terzo motivo riguarda la capacità dei *manifests* di mostrare l'azione e la vitalità umana all'interno delle reti marittime intorno a Valenza. Ogni dichiarazione di merce imbarcata è associata al nome del suo proprietario iniziale e, spesso, a quello del destinatario in città. Inoltre, ogni imbarcazione è anche identificata dal suo conduttore, nella qualità di comandante e/o armatore. Tutto ciò fornisce indicazioni sulla composizione delle flotte che hanno attraccato nel porto e sulle caratteristiche socioprofessionali dei responsabili. In questo senso, nei 420 arrivi totali nel 1494, si sono potuti individuare i nomi di 272 titolari di imbarcazioni⁴². Secondo questo libro, come secondo quello del 1488, alcuni di quei titolari giunsero a Valenza più volte, sia ripercorrendo le medesime rotte, sia moltiplicando i percorsi che facevano. Esempi del primo tipo (ossia della ripetizione degli itinerari) sono i sei padroni ciascuno dei quali nel 1488 fece tra i 5 e i 12 viaggi dal nord del regno a Valenza⁴³. Altri otto, nel 1494, in questo caso combinando le informazioni del *manifest* con i noleggi notarili, appaiono a Valenza tra le 2 e le 4 volte, attraverso rapporti con la Sardegna, la Sicilia e Napoli⁴⁴. Esempi del secondo tipo (ossia della diversificazione dei percorsi) sono i quattro marinai che, solo nel *manifest* del 1494, dichiararono un minimo di due scali a Valenza, provenendo da luoghi diversi: dalla Sicilia e dal porto saliero di La Mata (nel sud del Regno di Valenza), da Savona e da Cartagena, da Aigues-Mortes e ancora da La Mata, o da Tarragona e Cambrils (in Catalogna) e da Cartagena e Alicante⁴⁵.

Il quarto e ultimo motivo sta nella possibilità di utilizzare i dati dei *manifests* per provare a ricostruire il movimento annuale di navi nel porto o, almeno, il numero

³⁹ D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., p. 144.

⁴⁰ IDEM, *Great and small trade in the Crown of Aragon. The example of Valencia in the late Middle Ages*, in "Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum", 3, 2009, pp. 231-248, 241-242 e 244-246; IDEM, *La difusión de productos en el Mediterráneo y en Europa occidental*, cit., pp. 479-489.

⁴¹ IDEM, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., p. 172; IDEM, J. L. SOLER MILLA, *Una aproximació al comerç marítim de les comarques castellenques*, cit., p. 115.

⁴² Y. AUFRAY, J. GUIRAL, *Les péages du royaume de Valence*, cit., p. 160.

⁴³ D. IGUAL LUIS, J. L. SOLER MILLA, *Una aproximació al comerç marítim de les comarques castellenques*, cit., p. 109.

⁴⁴ I dati del *manifest*, in ARCHIVO DEL REINO DE VALENCIA (ARV), *Generalidad*, n. 4934, cc. 72r, 121r-122v, 127r, 145v-146r, 193v, 209r-210r, 213r-v, 251r e 256r (1494-II-22, IV-11, 16 e 28, VI-10 e 28, VII-5, VIII-17 e 22). I noleggi, in ARV, *Protocolos*, n. 2012 (1494-II-7 e 15, IV-22, 24 e 30, V-6, 26 e 27 e X-13).

⁴⁵ ARV, *Generalidad*, n. 4934, cc. 74r, 108v, 134r-136r, 138v-142r, 163v-164v, 166r-167v, 169r, 212v e 213-bis-v (1494-II-22, III-22, IV-21 e 24, V-14 - due arrivi - e 16, VII-2 e 5).

totale degli atti di trasporto marittimo registrati a Valenza in un anno. Naturalmente questo è possibile solo per i *manifests* completi. Li ricordo: 1488 e 1494. A tal fine, poiché la fonte è limitata al traffico marittimo di importazione e il suo contenuto continua a creare problemi, è necessario integrare questa documentazione con altre notizie di cui disponiamo. Da un lato, con i contratti di assicurazione e di noleggio del notaio Jaume Salvador, ai quali ho già accennato. Dall'altro, con due tipi di fonti che ritengo adeguate al mio scopo e che provengono dalla documentazione del *Baile General*, uno dei principali rappresentanti della monarchia a Valenza: 1) i salvacondotti o guidaggi che si concedevano alle navi che arrivavano in città; 2) le licenze di armamento delle navi che, al contrario, lasciavano il porto verso destinazioni che rendevano consigliabile l'armamento delle imbarcazioni⁴⁶.

Attraverso il confronto delle cinque serie di fonti (*manifests*, assicurazioni, noleggi, guidaggi e armamenti), ho ottenuto alcuni risultati che propongo con valore indicativo. Così, nel 1488, a partire dai 559 arrivi di imbarcazioni rilevati nel *manifest*, la loro integrazione con le altre fonti permette di elevare il numero di atti marittimi attestati a Valenza fino a più di 900. Nel 1494, i 420 arrivi del *manifest* e gli altri dati ci permettono di elevare queste operazioni a circa 700-800. In entrambi gli esempi, la stragrande maggioranza delle notizie localizzate riguardava movimenti da e verso il porto di Valenza. La tabella seguente mostra il dettaglio delle cifre:

Tab. 2. **Atti di trasporto marittimo registrati a Valenza (1488 e 1494)**

	Manifests	Assicurazioni ⁴⁷	Noleggi	Guidaggi	Armamenti	Totale
1488	559	392	22 ⁴⁸	8 ⁴⁹	2 ⁵⁰	983 ⁵¹
1494	420	circa 300	28 ⁵²	8 ⁵³	8 ⁵⁴	circa 764

⁴⁶ Relativamente ai salvacondotti del *Baile General*, si veda D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 71-72. Sopra le licenze di armamento, R. CARIÑENA BALAGUER, *Los llibres d'armaments: una fuente fundamental para el estudio del comercio valenciano en el Mediterráneo a lo largo del siglo XV (1406-1503)*, e A. DÍAZ BORRÁS, *El comercio valenciano con Berbería en la "Era de los Descubrimientos" a través de los llibres d'armaments. Una aproximación*, entrambi gli studi in *Congreso de Jóvenes Historiadores y Geógrafos. Actas* (Madrid, del 12 al 16 de diciembre de 1988), I-II, Madrid 1990, I, pp. 713-732 e 733-748.

⁴⁷ Come ho detto nel secondo punto del testo, le polizze assicurative di Jaume Salvador e i loro dati si conoscono grazie agli studi di Enrique Cruselles. I protocolli del notaio Salvador non segnalano documenti assicurativi per il 1494; occorre però ricordare che ce n'erano nel 1492 (337 contratti) e nel 1495 (263 contratti). Pertanto, a rischio di commettere un errore, ritengo che quelli del 1494 potrebbero essere circa 300.

⁴⁸ ARV, *Protocolos*, nn. 2005 (1488-I-16 - contratto incompleto - e 31, II-8 - due contratti - e 23, III-5 - contratto incompleto - e 28, IV-29, V-19, VI-18 e 23, VII-8, 15 e 17, IX-13, 18 e 27, X-11 e 27, XI-27 e XII-12) e 2006 (1488-XII-29).

⁴⁹ ARV, *Bailia, Lletres i Privilegis*, nn. 1158, cc. 522v, 541r-v e 542v (1488-I-11, II-21 e 25), e 1159, cc. 21r, 98r, 119r, 121v e 125v (1488-IV-18, VI-27, VIII-20 e 31 e IX-13).

⁵⁰ ARV, *Real Cancillería*, n. 701, cc. 283v-284r (1488-II-6 e X-27).

⁵¹ A questo totale si possono aggiungere ancora i dati di un'altra fonte fiscale valenzana (il cosiddetto *dret portugués*), dalla quale è stato possibile attestare l'arrivo di altre 5 navi in porto nel 1488 (M. R. MUÑOZ POMER, G. NAVARRO ESPINACH, D. IGUAL LUIS, *El comercio de importación portugués en Valencia, 1487-1488*, in *Os Reinos Ibéricos na Idade Média. Livro de Homenagem ao Professor Doutor Humberto Carlos Baquero Moreno*, I-III, coord. de L. A. DA FONSECA, L. C. AMARAL e M. F. FERREIRA SANTOS, Porto 2003, III, pp. 1121-1131, 1128-1130).

LO SCALO VALENZANO NEL CONTESTO DELLA CORONA D'ARAGONA

È noto che, nel Medioevo, la scarsità e la frammentarietà della documentazione hanno spesso reso impossibile ricostruire con assoluta certezza, in termini statistici e per lunghi periodi di tempo, il movimento di un porto⁵⁵. Si tratta della “consueta difficoltà di quantificare” di cui parlava Marco Tangheroni⁵⁶, applicata a questo tema specifico. Valenza non fa eccezione, naturalmente. Spero almeno che, come ho suggerito, i dati che ho offerto possano dare un’idea del volume degli atti marittimi che si concludevano in città e della loro ripercussione sulle fonti. Comunque sia, queste cifre hanno più senso se confrontate con quelle disponibili per altre aree. Un simile esercizio presenta ovvie difficoltà, ma diventa un compito essenziale se si vuole passare dai semplici numeri a tentare di valutare la posizione occupata da un porto come quello valenzano nell’ambito della circolazione marittima. Benché abbia già segnalato diversi elementi contestualizzanti e comparativi per il periodo compreso tra la fine del Trecento e la metà del Quattrocento, il confronto più rilevante per Valenza può essere fatto per gli ultimi decenni del XV secolo, quando i dati relativi alla città sono, come detto, più completi.

Senza uscire dal Mediterraneo, Genova e Roma consentono alcuni confronti poiché per i due porti disponiamo di informazioni fiscali provenienti da fonti simili al *manifest de mar* valenzano, sia per il loro contenuto che per le problematiche di tipo euristico⁵⁷. Nel caso genovese, purtroppo, ho potuto mettere a confronto solo il dato, parziale e molto tardivo, riferito al 1520. In quell’anno, mentre un *manifest* completo di Valenza registra 632 arrivi nel porto cittadino⁵⁸, i libri dei *carati maris* di Genova testimoniano 1.301 viaggi provenienti unicamente dalle coste europee del Mediterraneo occidentale, di questi 1.099 arrivavano dalle due riviere liguri⁵⁹; la dif-

⁵² ARV, *Protocolos*, n. 2012 (1494-I-7 e 15, II-7, 8, 15 e 20, III-10, IV-22, 24 e 30, V-6, 21, 22, 26 - due contratti - e 27, VI-3, 14 e 28, VIII-9 - due contratti, uno del 1494-IX-12 - e 22, IX-27, X-8 e 13 - due contratti -, XI-28 e XII-4).

⁵³ ARV, *Bailia, Lletres i Privilegis*, nn. 1160, cc. 841r, 889v, 909v, 916v, 931r-v e 946r (1494-V-13, VIII-1, IX-30, X-6, 15 e 16 e XII-2), e 1161, cc. 5r-6r (1494-XII-31).

⁵⁴ ARV, *Real Cancilleria*, n. 646, cc. 16v-28r (1494-I-7, II-4 e 8, VI-30, VIII-8, XI-13, XII-24 e 31).

⁵⁵ M. DEL TREPPO, *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa*, cit., p. 28.

⁵⁶ M. TANGHERONI, *Commercio e navigazione nel Medioevo*, Roma-Bari 1996, pp. 457-458.

⁵⁷ D. GIOFRÈ, *Il commercio d'importazione genovese alla luce dei registri del dazio (1495-1537)*, in *Studi in onore di Amintore Fanfani*, I-VI, Milano 1962, V, pp. 113-242, 116-119; A. ESCH, *Il ruolo del mare nell'economia di una città-corte in espansione: i registri doganali del porto di Roma (1445-1482)*, in *Ricchezza del mare, ricchezza dal mare*, cit., I, pp. 59-80, 60-67; IDEM, *La Roma del primo Rinascimento vista attraverso i registri doganali*, Milano 2012.

⁵⁸ E. SALVADOR, *La economía valenciana en el siglo XVI (comercio de importación)*, Valenza 1972, pp. 14-15 e 152-172.

⁵⁹ E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale, naviglio mercantile e consolati genovesi nel Cinquecento*, in “Rivista Storica Italiana”, 30, 1968, pp. 593-629, 600-601. Sull’andamento del traffico portuale genovese, si vedano più in generale P. MASSA PIERGIOVANNI, *Fattori tecnici ed economici dello sviluppo del porto di Genova tra Medioevo ed età moderna*, in *I porti come impresa economica*, Atti della Diciannovesima Settimana di Studi dell’Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica “F. Datini” (Prato, 2-6 maggio 1987), a c. di S. CAVACIOCCHI, Firenze 1988, pp. 169-214, 176-177; L. PICCINNO, *Il commercio marittimo e lo sviluppo del porto di Genova tra Medioevo ed età Moderna*, in “Quaderni dell’Università dell’Insubria. Facoltà di Economia”, 12, 2004, pp. 1-25, 1-11 <http://eco.uninsubria.it/dipeco/quaderni/files/QF2004_12.pdf> (ultima consultazione:

ferenza con il porto valenzano è significativa. Il caso romano, questa volta riferito alla seconda metà del Quattrocento, offre anche numeri superiori a quelli valenzani, ma non di molto: per il decennio 1470-1480, in sei anni e mezzo di registri della dogana di Ripa, appaiono circa 4.000 carichi di navi, con una media annuale di circa 600 imbarcazioni⁶⁰.

In ogni caso, rimanendo nel Mediterraneo, forse i parallelismi più significativi per Valenza sono quelli che si possono fare con Barcellona e Maiorca, gli altri grandi porti sul lato iberico della Corona d'Aragona. Ma la cronologia della fine del XV secolo impone di partire dal presupposto che, all'epoca, le tre città si trovassero in una situazione marittima diversa rispetto alla prima metà del secolo. Mentre a Valenza i segni di consolidamento e persino di un boom del trasporto nautico sono evidenti dal 1450, in quel momento a Barcellona e a Maiorca si registrava un calo più o meno radicale del traffico⁶¹. In ogni caso, però, i movimenti marittimi che convergevano nelle tre capitali non devono essere considerati completamente separati l'uno dall'altro: molti di essi incidevano proprio sui circuiti che collegavano i tre porti.

Per quanto riguarda Maiorca, e in assenza di ulteriori analisi, le informazioni pubblicate che ho consultato si prestano a pochi confronti. Tuttavia, dimostrano che centinaia e migliaia di atti marittimi si possono registrare anche sull'isola, seppure la loro portata sia talvolta inferiore a quella valenzana. Per mezzo di diverse fonti maiorchine, tra il 1448 e il 1531, Onofre Vaquer ha localizzato 1.374 viaggi di imbarcazioni che avevano come provenienza o destinazione Maiorca. La stragrande maggioranza è concentrata fino al 1500 e ancora di più fino al 1468. In questo quadro è possibile individuare alcuni valori massimi: più di 200 noleggi nel 1448-1500, 622 navi che toccarono il porto della città nel 1448-1468 e 290 assicurazioni stipulate da un solo notaio (Miquel Boix) nel 1457, anche se un altro notaio (Miquel Torres) ne registrò 800 nel 1524⁶².

Il confronto con le notizie di Barcellona è invece più fruttuoso. In primo luogo, perché a Barcellona esiste una documentazione che torna a essere analoga per certi aspetti ai *manifests de mar* valenzani. Si tratta dei libri del cosiddetto *dret d'ancoratge*, una fonte anche fiscale che registrava ogni giorno le imbarcazioni che attraccavano

12 luglio 2018); e EADEM, *Genoa. A city with a port or a port city?*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade*, cit., pp. 159-176.

⁶⁰ IDEM, *Il ruolo del mare nell'economia di una città-corte in espansione*, cit., pp. 60-62; IDEM, *Navi nel porto di Roma. Esempi di carichi di merci nei registri doganali del Quattrocento*, in *Medioevo, Mezzogiorno, Mediterraneo. Studi in onore di Mario Del Treppo*, I-II, a c. di G. ROSSETTI e G. VITOLO, Napoli 2000, II, pp. 93-103, 93-94. Il porto di Ripa era il porto fluviale romano dove si scaricavano le merci delle imbarcazioni provenienti dal Tevere o dal mare dopo aver risalito il fiume. Ovviamente, il mercato romano veniva rifornito anche dalle grandi navi che, non potendo risalire il Tevere, sbarcavano le loro merci a Civitavecchia o in altri porti italiani; quei beni, poi, arrivavano a Roma su altri mezzi di trasporto (A. ESCHI, *Il ruolo del mare nell'economia di una città-corte in espansione*, cit., pp. 62 e 65-66).

⁶¹ Ho riassunto queste situazioni divergenti e le loro ragioni in D. IGUAL LUIS, *En un temps de transició: el comerç de la Corona d'Aragó a la Mediterrània*, in *Ferran II i la Corona d'Aragó*, Congrès (Barcelona, 26-28 d'octubre de 2016), a c. d'E. BELENGUER CEBRIÀ, Barcellona 2018, pp. 117-135, 126-134. Su Valenza, naturalmente, si veda anche il secondo punto di questo stesso testo.

⁶² O. VAQUER BENNASAR, *El comerç marítim de Mallorca, 1448-1531*, Palma di Maiorca 2001, pp. 53, 56-57, 67-70, 123 e 126.

nel porto della capitale catalana⁶³. Per anni vicini ai due *manifests* di Valenza a cui mi sono principalmente riferito (1488 e 1494), l'*ancoratge* di Barcellona ci permette di calcolare un livello più alto di arrivi: 824 nel 1486, 677 nel 1491⁶⁴. Tuttavia questi sono molto più bassi di quelli che l'*ancoratge* ci aveva indicato per i decenni precedenti: nel 1439-1442 e 1446, questi arrivi a Barcellona superavano i mille all'anno e raggiunsero il massimo di 1.830 nel 1442⁶⁵.

I protocolli notarili apportano nuovi elementi, soprattutto per quanto riguarda i movimenti di media e lunga distanza. Ciò può essere dedotto dall'osservazione di determinate rotte e dalla frequenza degli spostamenti. Se alla fine del XV secolo Barcellona manteneva ancora collegamenti verso il Mediterraneo orientale (31 viaggi dal 1477 al 1504)⁶⁶, la capacità di Valenza di gestire viaggi diretti verso Oriente fu più ridotta, come tradizionalmente avveniva: non arrivano alla decina i noleggi e le assicurazioni studiati a Valenza che, tra il 1475 e il 1500, riguardavano quelle rotte⁶⁷. Verso le Fiandre, invece, il vantaggio valenzano sembra chiaro. In contrasto con le 6 operazioni che, in questa direzione, sono state documentate a Barcellona (1 nel 1478 e 5 nel 1490-1500)⁶⁸, solo i noleggi gestiti da aziende italiane a Valenza ammontarono a 48 tra il 1478 e il 1499, con una media annuale di 2-3 viaggi e un massimo di 6-8 tra il 1481 e il 1485. Contemporaneamente, nello stesso quarto finale del XV secolo, il numero massimo annuale di altre rotte valenzane era compreso tra i 6 e i 7 noleggi verso l'Italia centro-settentrionale nel 1495-1499, tra i 5 e i 6 per la Sardegna nel 1489-1496 e tra i 6 e i 7 verso Napoli nel 1485 e 1492-1494⁶⁹.

Infine, ancora utilizzando le informazioni notarili, se si tiene conto del valore

⁶³ Sopra l'imposta di *ancoratge* e i suoi fondi archivistici, si veda C. CARRÈRE, *Le droit d'ancrage et le mouvement du port de Barcelone au milieu du XV^e siècle*, in "Estudios de Historia Moderna", 3, 1953, pp. 67-156. Molto più recentemente, M. SOBERÓN RODRÍGUEZ, *El dret d'ancoratge de Barcelona a mitjans segle XV (1439-1446)*, tesi di laurea magistrale, Università di Gerona, Gerona 2016.

⁶⁴ M. SOBERÓN RODRÍGUEZ, "Que en ell stara segura la major nau del mon". Tràfic i evolució del port de Barcelona al segle XV, in "Quaderns d'Arqueologia i Història de la ciutat de Barcelona", 8, 2012, pp. 54-78, 72.

⁶⁵ IDEM, *El dret d'ancoratge de Barcelona a mitjans segle XV*, cit., p. 76; IDEM, "Que en ell stara segura la major nau del mon", cit., pp. 70-72.

⁶⁶ G. FELIU, *La crisis catalana de la Baja Edad Media: estado de la cuestión*, in "Hispania", 64/2, 2004, pp. 435-466, 460; M. DEL TREPPO, *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa*, cit., p. 27. In generale, sui rapporti economici e marittimi tra Barcellona e l'Oriente, si veda, per il Basso Medioevo, D. COULON, *Barcelone et le grand commerce d'Orient au Moyen Âge. Un siècle de relations avec l'Égypte et la Syrie-Palestine (ca. 1330 – ca. 1430)*, Madrid-Barcellona 2004.

⁶⁷ E. CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, *Comercio y mercado en tiempo de crisis*, cit., p. 126; D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 314-316.

⁶⁸ M. DEL TREPPO, *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa*, cit., p. 91.

⁶⁹ D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., pp. 314-336 e 369-418; IDEM, *Itinerarios comerciales en el espacio meridional mediterráneo de la Baja Edad Media*, in *Itinerarios medievales e identidad hispánica*, XXVII Semana de Estudios Medievales (Estella, 17-21 julio 2000), Pamplona 2001, pp. 113-158, 130; IDEM, *Comercio y operadores económicos entre Valencia y Cerdeña durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, in *Sardegna, Spagna e Mediterraneo. Dai Re Cattolici al Secolo d'Oro*, a c. di B. ANATRA e G. MURGIA, Roma 2004, pp. 33-56, 44-46; IDEM, *Mercaderes, comercio y transportes entre Valencia y Nápoles en el siglo XV*, in *Intercambi socio-culturali ed economici fra le città marinare d'Italia e l'Occidente dagli osservatori mediterranei*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi in memoria di Ezio Falcone (Amalfi, 14-16 maggio 2011), a c. di B. FIGLIUOLO e P. F. SIMBULA, Amalfi 2014, pp. 299-331, 327-331.

dei beni scambiati secondo i contratti di assicurazione e la loro distribuzione per itinerari, essi sottolineano ancora una volta l'importanza della piazza valenzana per certi ambiti. In questo caso, i dati che ho già indicato e che sono stati offerti da Enrique Cruselles per Valenza dal 1488 al 1499 possono essere confrontati con quelli di Mario Del Treppo per Barcellona relativi al periodo 1476-1493 e provenienti da quattro libri di assicurazione degli anni 1476-1482, 1477-1478, 1482-1486 e 1490-1493. A causa del diverso raggruppamento degli itinerari effettuato dai due autori, non tutti i dati sono pienamente comparabili. Quelli per i quali è possibile il raffronto li indico nella tabella sottostante, nella quale aggiungo per ogni intervallo temporale, il valore totale attribuito ai prodotti assicurati a Barcellona o a Valenza⁷⁰:

Tab. 3. Valori assicurativi a Barcellona e Valenza su diverse rotte (fine del XV secolo)

	<i>Barcellona, 1476-1493 (17 anni)</i>	<i>Valenza, 1488-1499 (11 anni)</i>
<i>Sardegna-Sicilia-Napoli</i>	34.000	56.800
<i>Nord Italia</i>	7.920	71.400
<i>Nord Europa (soprattutto Fiandre)</i>	5.079	26.900

Forse, l'adeguatezza di questa contrapposizione dei rischi assicurativi o degli importi che la giustificano sarebbe un elemento discutibile. Tuttavia, la grande sproporzione a favore di Valenza illustrata nella tabella può avere la sua spiegazione. Per Barcellona il periodo 1476-1493 è molto vicino alla guerra civile del 1462-1472, che alterò l'economia catalana, sia durante il conflitto che negli anni immediatamente successivi. Basta infatti guardare i valori delle polizze assicurative di Barcellona rilevati nelle fasi precedenti (ad esempio nel 1453-1461)⁷¹ per trovare cifre più alte. Ma, se ci concentriamo sulla prospettiva valenzana, la tabella ribadisce, rispetto a fonti e cronologie specifiche, quello che è stato uno dei fondamenti dello sviluppo commerciale e marittimo della città: il ruolo significativo che Valenza, all'interno della Corona d'Aragona, riuscì a ottenere per alcuni circuiti, soprattutto quelli diretti verso l'Italia attuale e, anche se un po' più tardi, verso le Fiandre. In questo contesto, per varie ragioni, Valenza ha potuto affermarsi per tutto il XV secolo come scalo per le grandi imbarcazioni, esattamente il contrario di quanto avvenne a Barcellona⁷².

Queste circostanze non devono però nascondere il fatto che, come abbiamo visto, anche in un momento in cui la posizione marittima di Valenza tendeva a essere buona, essa ricoprì un ruolo secondario su alcune importanti rotte internazionali (la

⁷⁰ Le cifre relative a Barcellona sono di M. DEL TREPPO, *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa*, cit., p. 129; quelle di Valenza provengono dai lavori di Enrique Cruselles, che ho già riprodotto nella tabella 1. Gli importi sono espressi in ducati. Cruselles li fornisce già in ducati; Del Treppo invece li offre in lire di Barcellona, così ho convertito le sue somme in ducati al tasso di 24 soldi per ducato. Tale equivalenza si trova in F. SEVILLANO COLOM, *Monedas que circulaban en el Mediterráneo a fines del siglo XV*, in "Anuario de Estudios Medievales", 10, 1980, pp. 699-732, 706.

⁷¹ M. DEL TREPPO, *Els mercaders catalans i l'expansió de la corona catalano-aragonesa*, cit., p. 129.

⁷² D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV*, cit., p. 63; M. SOBERÓN RODRÍGUEZ, "Que en ell stara segura la major nau del mon", cit., pp. 71-72.

rotta orientale) e il suo movimento globale di navi era inferiore a quello di altri porti iberici come Barcellona. Quest'ultima riflessione è valida se utilizziamo e diamo valore ai dati che emergono dall'*ancoratge* di Barcellona e dal *manifest de mar* di Valenza e se consideriamo valido il loro confronto. Insomma, le realtà talvolta contrastanti che ho appena descritto, insieme alle altre informazioni che ho fornito, consentono una migliore comprensione del ruolo svolto da Valenza nella Corona d'Aragona nel suo complesso e, su questa base, nel resto del mondo marittimo europeo e mediterraneo.

ALCUNE RIFLESSIONI CONCLUSIVE

Il testo ha confermato il buon inserimento di Valenza nelle reti di trasporto e di comunicazione del tempo. In particolare, sono stati presentati il rilevante ruolo della città per alcune rotte e quello secondario per altre. È stato infine dimostrato che il traffico portuale valenzano sembra essere stato sostanzialmente equivalente, o a volte chiaramente inferiore, al movimento navale di altre enclave. In conclusione, dal complesso delle argomentazioni sviluppate, emergono tre possibili considerazioni.

In primo luogo, le cifre accertate di centinaia o migliaia di atti portuali od operazioni marittime possono servire come riflesso del peso della proiezione marittima di Valenza. Come ho sottolineato in precedenza, anche in questo caso è impossibile calcolare quale sia stata la percentuale occupata dal commercio marittimo nel complesso dell'economia valenzana. I dati che ho offerto mostrano almeno come, soprattutto nel XV secolo, la storia della città sarebbe inconcepibile senza il quadro di riferimento mediterraneo e mercantile⁷³.

In secondo luogo, il contrasto tra le rotte regionali e internazionali (visibili soprattutto attraverso fonti mercantili e notarili) e le rotte locali (particolarmente apprezzabili dal *manifest de mar*) riproduce i due estremi entro i quali si muoveva economicamente il porto di Valenza: il grande commercio e il piccolo commercio. Per la realizzazione dei traffici era senza dubbio essenziale la funzione che gli altri scali del regno valenzano svolgevano, come sostegno o complemento al porto della capitale: tra il 1250 e il 1520 abbiamo documentato più di quaranta punti della costa che venivano utilizzati per il carico e lo scarico delle merci⁷⁴.

In questo contesto, Valenza fu capace di accedere a diverse reti economiche e a vari mercati. Lo testimoniano i prodotti molto differenziati che, sempre secondo il *manifest de mar*, si muovevano soprattutto sulle rotte locali o internazionali. Va in questa direzione anche il fatto che vi sia stata una sorta di ripartizione delle rotte e dei traffici fra i vari gruppi mercantili. Ad esempio, se le imprese e i mercanti valenzani, insieme a quelli del resto della Corona d'Aragona, erano maggiormente presenti nei rapporti di Valenza con il resto del suo regno, con la Catalogna-Maiorca, con Granada-Barberia e con la Sardegna-Sicilia-Napoli, sulle rotte verso il Nord Ita-

⁷³ P. IRADIEL, *El siglo de oro del comercio valenciano*, cit., pp. 347-366; D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia: opportunities of a secondary node*, cit., p. 210.

⁷⁴ D. IGUAL LUIS, Non ha porto alcuno, ma sola spiaggia. *La actividad marítima valenciana en el siglo XV*, in "Aragón en la Edad Media", 25, 2014, pp. 101-134, 105-110.

lia e le Fiandre, spiccava l'attività prioritaria di alcuni operatori stranieri con in testa gli italiani⁷⁵.

Tuttavia, nonostante queste distinzioni, il grande e il piccolo commercio, le rotte internazionali e locali, non sempre si sono mosse e sviluppate separatamente. Come ho dimostrato in altri studi⁷⁶, tra i macrocircuiti e i microcircuiti delle relazioni marittime valenzane abbondavano connessioni di vario tipo. Questi circuiti si integravano e si sovrapponevano piuttosto che stratificarsi. In questo modo, i cambiamenti nell'intensità, gli obiettivi e la natura di alcuni possono avere influenzato l'organizzazione di altri: il piccolo commercio rimase su scala valenzana animato dall'importanza del grande commercio e, a sua volta, la forza e la frequenza del primo furono in grado di compensare le oscillazioni dei traffici con il mondo esterno⁷⁷.

In terzo e ultimo luogo, il carattere della costa valenzana come punto di intersezione di numerose rotte, la sua condizione di area di convergenza di flussi di scambio variegati e le sue funzioni di spazio di consumo, esportatore e ridistributore di prodotti di diversa origine, sono alcune delle ragioni che giustificano l'ascesa della città negli ambienti mediterranei⁷⁸. Nel complesso, nel XV secolo, la concezione di Valenza come "grande mercato" si può intendere solo a partire dalla sua definizione di capitale di diversi mercati molto interconnessi tra loro. Da questo derivò un dinamismo globale, sostenuto dalla domanda permanente di consistenti quantità di prodotti e capitali di cui la zona valenzana era ben fornita⁷⁹.

La peculiarità del caso valenzano va ricercata in questi elementi. La si potrebbe anche cogliere nella capacità della città e del suo regno di sfruttare la somma degli stimoli che ho già menzionato nell'introduzione, interni ed esterni, e di assumere "la necesidad de competir en las distintas coordenadas del tráfico internacional"⁸⁰. A questo proposito, non si deve dimenticare che un aspetto chiave dell'intero processo vissuto da Valenza è stato la sua posizione strategica nei grandi "giochi dello scambio", come avrebbe detto – ancora una volta – Braudel. In questo senso, durante il Quattrocento, la città condivise con altri porti del sud della Penisola iberica i vantaggi del graduale orientamento dell'economia europea verso l'Atlantico e dell'intensificazione dei rapporti tra il Mediterraneo e l'Oceano⁸¹.

Non c'è dubbio che questa lettura globale è fondamentale per evitare che la raccolta dei tanti dati relativi a Valenza non diventi un semplice esercizio empirico o

⁷⁵ IDEM, *Valencia: opportunities of a secondary node*, cit., pp. 217-218.

⁷⁶ IDEM, *Great and small trade in the Crown of Aragon*, cit., pp. 234 e 237-242; IDEM, *Itinerarios comerciales en el espacio meridional mediterráneo*, cit., pp. 150-158.

⁷⁷ P. IRADIEL, *El comercio en el Mediterráneo catalano-aragonés: espacios y redes*, in *Comercio y hombres de negocios en Castilla y Europa en tiempos de Isabel la Católica*, ed. de H. CASADO ALONSO y A. GARCÍA-BAQUERO, Madrid 2007, pp. 123-150, 147-149; D. IGUAL LUIS, *Great and small trade in the Crown of Aragon*, cit., pp. 235-236.

⁷⁸ P. IRADIEL, *El comercio en el Mediterráneo catalano-aragonés*, cit., pp. 143-144.

⁷⁹ D. IGUAL LUIS, *Itinerarios comerciales en el espacio meridional mediterráneo*, cit., p. 126.

⁸⁰ P. IRADIEL, *El comercio en el Mediterráneo catalano-aragonés*, cit., pp. 143-144 e 149; IDEM, *El siglo de oro del comercio valenciano*, cit., p. 347.

⁸¹ D. ABULAFIA, *El gran mar. Una historia humana del Mediterráneo*, cit., pp. 409-418; D. IGUAL LUIS, *Valencia: opportunities of a secondary node*, cit., pp. 211-214.

la semplice espressione locale delle dinamiche generali⁸². Al contrario, il caso valenzano aiuta a spiegare la storia marittima del XV secolo, innanzitutto quella del Mediterraneo, che è anche la storia delle sue città e dei suoi porti⁸³. Se è vero che i maggiori scali mediterranei erano capaci di “dare il tono” all’economia del mare interno, è anche certo che questa economia era composta simultaneamente da altri porti che, come Valenza, non ne occupavano il primato gerarchico, ma potevano svolgere funzioni importanti⁸⁴. Insomma, Valenza contribuisce a esemplificare la diversità con cui si è costruito il mondo mediterraneo⁸⁵ e gli “orizzonti aperti” dei suoi mercanti⁸⁶, una diversità che esiste anche dal punto di vista temporale. Le fasi specifiche del commercio marittimo valenzano e le differenze della sua periodizzazione rispetto ad altre città forniscono argomenti utili sia per tracciare l’andamento ciclico dell’economia della fine del Medioevo che per confermare la difficoltà di trovare un modello comune per tutta l’Europa mediterranea⁸⁷.

⁸² P. IRADIEL, *Presentación*, cit., pp. 34-35.

⁸³ D. ABULAFIA, *El gran mar. Una historia humana del Mediterráneo*, cit., p. 650; P. IRADIEL, *La historia del Mediterráneo*, cit.

⁸⁴ Erano funzioni che ritengo simili a quelle “aree intermedie” definite, tanti anni fa, da G. ROSSETTI, *Incontro GISEM 1986. Relazione introduttiva*, in “GISEM 1984-1989. Bollettino”, 1, 1989, pp. 23-30, 26.

⁸⁵ D. ABULAFIA, *El gran mar. Una historia humana del Mediterráneo*, cit., p. 649.

⁸⁶ *Gli orizzonti aperti. Profili del mercante medievale*, a c. di G. AIRALDI, Torino 1997. Il concetto “orizzonte aperti” è stato utilizzato recentemente anche da A. MUSARRA, *1284. La battaglia della Meloria*, Bari-Roma 2018, pp. IX-XVI, soprattutto pp. XII-XVI.

⁸⁷ L. PALERMO, *Aspetti dei traffici commerciali internazionali nel Mediterraneo occidentale*, cit.; P. IRADIEL, *Presentación*, cit., p. 35.

Wendy R. Childs

England's Maritime and Commercial Networks in the Late Middle Ages

1. INTRODUCTION

England was on the edge of Europe, but tied to it by myriad links: political, diplomatic, dynastic, military, religious, ecclesiastic, intellectual, cultural, and commercial. As an island (or rather part of an island), England had to rely on the sea for all foreign contacts, except with Scotland, which was commercially of small importance and with which England was often at war. All other international contacts relied absolutely on maritime activity. This was underpinned by commercial shipping, which was, in turn, underpinned by England's large-scale exports of wool and cloth. Although England was a peripheral country to Europe, the extent of its direct and active commercial links serves to emphasise the scale and sophistication of developments in European trade by the end of the middle ages; it also illuminates the breadth of the available knowledge of Europe and of international affairs available not only in intellectual and political circles but also to people of lower ranks who travelled on a regular basis for commercial purposes.

The scale and extent of England's overseas commerce meant there were plenty of ships (English and foreign) to service all England's travel needs. Diplomats and royal messengers expecting to journey widely anywhere in northern Europe from Iberia to France, the Low Countries, Scandinavia and the Baltic would find plentiful commercial shipping on all these routes. They might take passage on a normal trading voyage or, being on the king's business, they might prefer to hire a whole ship. Royal administrators bound for Gascony or Calais had a similar choice. Military expeditions were a different matter. They had a narrower geographical focus to France, Flanders, or Iberia and a much greater demand for capacity. Even King Henry V, who kept a core of royal ships, did not have enough ships to transport an army. Again commercial ships were used. Kings arrested privately owned ships to be troop transports, temporarily pulling them out of the commercial networks, but using them on routes the masters and crews knew well. Churchmen en route to Rome or Avignon, scholars en route to universities, pilgrims to Rome or Jerusalem generally used the short crossing to the Low Countries or Calais, served by frequent sailings, before picking up land routes south and east. Here it was particularly easy for them to find a passage on a commercial vessel, but pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela had a service all of their own. By the fifteenth century there are arrangements which look like 'package tours' or even a 'ferry service' to La Coruña, as ship owners and masters bought licences to transport pilgrims directly from

English ports (mainly in the south and west) to Galicia. In the first half of the fifteenth century in busy Jubilee years (when St James's day fell on a Sunday and extra indulgences were offered) fifty or sixty English ships would take 2,000 to 3,000 pilgrims across the Bay of Biscay to La Coruña.¹ Although it was on the edge of Europe, England's commercial links were widespread, and all travellers to a variety of destinations could easily find commercial shipping on regular voyages with experienced masters and crews.

2. SOURCES

England's commercial networks are well documented in many records, English and non-English alike. Across Europe treaties and diplomatic documents, royal, princely and municipal records, notarial documents, lawsuits, literary references, tax impositions and private papers show the extent to which merchants moved around, and record the presence of English merchants abroad and of foreign merchants in England. England itself has few private commercial papers, unlike some of the rich private archives in, say, Florence and Prato, but its government was well organised and many official financial, judicial, and administrative records survive to allow a detailed study of the extent and structure of English trade. Among England's many records the customs accounts (which survive from the late thirteenth century in usable forms) are particularly useful for two reasons: they are national not just local accounts; and they offer the possibility of quantification on a national scale.

England's national customs system began with the taxation of wool exports in 1275. The system was steadily extended to include exports and imports by foreign merchants (1303), all cloth exports (1347) and finally (from the later fourteenth century) all goods including those of English merchants, at first intermittently then permanently under the tax of tonnage and poundage. By the fifteenth century, therefore, all England's foreign trade was liable to tax under one imposition or another. The trade was channelled through fifteen designated head ports, running from Newcastle in the north-east to Bristol in the south-west.² All exports and imports had to clear customs in these designated head ports and the customs collectors sent annual accounts back to the Exchequer. In the accounts the customs collectors recorded the names of the merchants liable for tax, the goods by amount and value, and the masters of ships involved. Some collectors also recorded the ships' names and home ports and sometimes their destinations and last ports of call.³ At the Exchequer the accounts were audited and summaries were enrolled.⁴

¹ W.R. CHILDS, *The perils, or otherwise, of maritime pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in the fifteenth century*, in *Pilgrimage Explored*, ed. J. STOPFORD, York 1999, pp. 123-143 (at 130-131).

² In the thirteenth and early fourteenth century there were some changes to the designated ports, but the number settled at fifteen, some of which opened 'member' ports if trade was busy enough.

³ THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, KEW, LONDON (TNA), E122 (King's Remembrancer's Customs Accounts) *passim*.

⁴ TNA, E356 (Enrolled Customs Accounts) *passim*. These have been recently calendared by S. JENKS, *The Enrolled Customs Accounts (TNA:PRO E356, E372, E364), 1279/80-1508/9 (1523/1524)*, List and Index Society, London 2004-13.

Of course the records are imperfect. They have to be used carefully. Not all information is available at the same date; it is easier to trace the goods taxed by the piece (wool, cloth, wine) than goods taxed by value; problems of licences of exemption, farming of taxes, negligence, corruption and smuggling have to be considered. Moreover, although the enrolled summaries are nearly complete, the original particulars of accounts sent in from the ports survive less well and have many gaps. Nonetheless there is enough good evidence to map out a national picture of the range and scale of England's trading networks. While the riches of municipal and legal archives allow quantification for the trade of cities and relatively small areas elsewhere in Europe (as for instance when the temporary imposition of a tax on English cloth at Bergen-op-Zoom reveals the important information that between 10,000 and 21,000 English broadcloths were imported there in 1495-9)⁵ the national picture is more completely quantifiable for England than for any other country in Europe. Here particular commodities by the piece and then all other commodities by value were burdened with consistent taxes all round the coast from Newcastle to Bristol.

3. PORTS

This national customs system concentrated England's overseas trade in certain centres (or nodes) more sharply than before. Most of the customs ports were chosen because they were already busy, but the government action in making them customs ports further enhanced their importance in the international network and drew trade away from neighbouring ports. From these head customs ports goods were distributed or collected by road, river, and coastal routes. Some ports, such as London, which was also a major political, administrative and religious centre, had a variety of economic interests, but others, such as Hull, overwhelmingly depended on the sea. The accounts show the relative importance of these English ports and thus those areas most exposed to foreign contacts and influence. London, unsurprisingly, was by far the busiest port. Four hundred and sixty two ships arrived in nine months alone in 1390; 215 arrived in 1480-1 with foreign-owned goods alone.⁶ London also had the widest range of contacts from Iceland to the eastern Baltic and the Mediterranean. Its dominance grew throughout the Middle Ages from handling around one third of England's foreign trade [by value] in the early fourteenth century to nearly two thirds by 1500.⁷ Other ports changed position over the years: Boston and King's Lynn on the east coast had been very important wool ports, but as the wool trade declined, Hull, Southampton, and Bristol became the largest re-

⁵ J.H. MUNRO, *Bruges and the Abortive Staple in English Cloth: an incident in the shift of commerce from Bruges to Antwerp in the late fifteenth century*, in "Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire", 44, 1966, pp. 1137-1159 (at 1153, 1157).

⁶ TNA E122/71/13; *The Overseas Trade of London. Exchequer Customs Accounts 1480-1*, ed. H.S. COBB, London 1990.

⁷ M. KOWALESKI, *The Maritime Trade Networks of Late Medieval London*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade Around Europe 1300-1600*, W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ eds., Abingdon 2017, pp. 383-410.

gional hubs of the fifteenth century. The provincial ports received many fewer ships than London. Hull, for example, received 80 to 90 arrivals a year in the late fourteenth century, and this dropped to only 40 in the hard times of the late fifteenth century. Each provincial port had its own characteristics and geographical interests, which we can illustrate from the customs accounts. Hull's main activity was to northern, Baltic and Low Country ports, but it also sent a regular group of up to ten ships a year to Bordeaux for wine and a few Hull ships went to the Basque Provinces in the 1390s.⁸ Southampton was the centre for Italian and Catalan ships that came to England. Bristol traded mainly in the Atlantic. Like Hull it sent ships to Iceland and Bordeaux; only very occasionally (as in 1468) a Bristol ship entered the Baltic;⁹ but Bristol had strong exposure to Gascony and to Spain and Portugal, especially after 1453 when the Iberian trade took the place of the lost Gascon connections.

4. SHIPPING

Customs accounts are important for providing insights into English shipping, which was flexible and abundant. The total numbers and tonnage of English shipping are not clear, but certainly there were many hundreds of vessels of decent size available to service England's large and regular trade.¹⁰ Impressments for the transport of troops show fleets of 150-200 frequently mustered (and for the Crécy campaign nearly 700 were used). In the 1300s England sent around 300 ships a year to fetch wine from Bordeaux. Some of these, even then, were capable of loading over 300 tons, although most loaded between 100 and 150 tons. In the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries most of the major ports could muster around twenty large ships in a decade and to these should be added hundreds more of smaller coastal and fishing ships (often under 10 but also up to 20 tons).¹¹ If needed, many of these could easily cross the Channel and North Sea for trade or as transports. Overall England's commercial shipping in the Middle Ages may at times have lain between 1,000-2,000 vessels, similar to the numbers in the Elizabethan shipping survey of 1582.¹²

⁸ TNA E101 (Exchequer Accounts Various: Bordeaux) passim; E122/59/23, 59/25, 159/11, 60/2.

⁹ *Calendar of Patent Rolls (CPR) 1467-1477*, London 1900, pp. 101, 168.

¹⁰ Data lists of English ships have been compiled by C. LAMBERT et al. in *The Merchant Fleet of Late Medieval and Tudor England 1400-1580*, available from the University of Southampton at www.medievalandtudorhships.org. Publication of the conclusions drawn from the data is due in 2019/20.

¹¹ For a discussion of the importance of coastal trade see M. KOWALESKI, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 224-32; for fishing fleets see W.R. CHILDS, *Fishing and Fisheries in the Middle Ages: The Eastern Fisheries*, in *The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300*, D.J. STARKEY, C. REID, N. ASHCROFT eds., London 2000, pp. 19-23 and M. KOWALESKI, *Fishing and Fisheries in the Middle Ages: The Western Fisheries*, in *The Commercial Sea Fisheries*, cit., 23-8.

¹² I. FRIEL, *The Good Ship, Ships, Building and Technology in England 1200-1520*, London 1995, pp. 32, 202.

Travellers on short routes to the Low Countries or Calais might have to wait only days for a ship to leave from their chosen port. Those travelling further might have to wait a few weeks, but would still have plenty of choice. They were able to travel with confidence, since the skills of the shipmasters and crews were honed through long and regular experience on the trade routes. The skills they developed have recently been analysed by Robin Ward and Maryanne Kowaleski, and a lively description of their abilities is in Chaucer's portrait of the Shipman in the Prologue to his *Canterbury Tales*, a man described as familiar with havens and harbours from Gotland to Finisterre.¹³ Analyses of the customs accounts illustrate the patterns of shipping. Voyages took place all year round. Tramping voyages continued to occur, but the customs accounts show clearly that in the fourteenth century and even more strongly in the fifteenth century, the larger English ships were employed on a type of liner trade, with frequent and regular long distance return voyages between their home ports and Bordeaux, Lisbon, Seville, Iceland or the Baltic ports. Shipmasters were active on these long-distance routes for decades and some seem to have become specialists on certain routes. For instance John Brand of Hull skippered vessels for at least thirty years to Iceland and Bordeaux (1443-73),¹⁴ and Henry Baillie of Hull, who was born in Stolp (modern Słupsk) in Pomerania, emigrated to Hull, and took an oath of allegiance to Henry VI in 1455, operated on the same routes for a similar period (1443-72).¹⁵ These long-distance, regularly travelled voyages were relatively safe and an analysis of Bristol voyages shows a very low loss rate across the Bay of Biscay in the 1480s. To assess possible loss rates a run of unbroken accounts is necessary, preferably with stated destinations and last ports of call, and for routes with an established liner service, rather than a tramping trade. Bristol provides this for the two years 1485-7.¹⁶ Although the relevant accounts cover only two years, they provide an interesting snapshot. They record 28 outward voyages to Lisbon, Seville, and Huelva by 16 different masters and ships. At the end of the two years eight of the outward ships had not yet returned, but five of these may be discounted as the outward voyages were so close to the end of the account in 1487 that their return could not be expected on that account (moreover of these five, at least three returned safely as the ships and masters appear in the next surviving account (1492-3). Of the remaining three ships (which sailed earlier and whose returns are not recorded within these two accounts), two at least returned at some time as they also appear in the account for 1492-3. They may well have been engaged on more complex voyages like that of the *Julian* of Bristol in 1453, which was freighted from Bristol to Lisbon, then to Ireland, Plymouth and either Harfleur

¹³ R. WARD, *The World of the Medieval Shipmaster*, Woodbridge 2009; M. KOWALESKI, *The Shipmaster as Entrepreneur in Medieval England*, in *Commercial Activity, Markets and Entrepreneurs in the Middle Ages, Essays in Honour of Richard Britnall*, B. DODDS, C.D. LIDDY eds., Woodbridge 2011, pp. 165-182; W.R. CHILDS, *The Shipman in Historians on Chaucer*, S. RIGBY, A.J. MINNIS eds., pp. 277-296 (at 288).

¹⁴ TNA E101/194/3, 195/19; BRITISH LIBRARY, LONDON (BL) Additional Ms 15524; TNA C61 (Gascon Rolls) 141 m. 5; W.R. CHILDS, *The Customs Accounts of Hull 1453-1490*, Leeds 1986, pp. 2, 18, 66, 73, 82, 89, 105, 139, 145, 153, 164, 185.

¹⁵ TNA E101/194/3, 195/19; BL Additional Ms 15524; TNA C76 (Treaty Rolls) 141 m. 34; W.R. CHILDS, *The Customs Accounts of Hull*, pp. 13, 22, 28, 123, 127, 153, 170; CPR 1452-61, p. 204.

¹⁶ TNA E122/20/4, 5, 7.

or Middelburg without touching again at Bristol.¹⁷ Only one ship therefore is untraceable. If it was lost this would suggest a loss rate of 3.5%, no worse than rates for the 17th and even 19th centuries.¹⁸ With experience of sailing the Atlantic from Iceland to the Iberian coasts, it is not surprising that some English ships and masters could be persuaded to explore the possibility of voyages to the African coast and that early forays towards Newfoundland are well documented.

5. CHANGING PATTERNS OF GOODS

Because customs accounts allow quantification, they show the movements in the relative importance of England's goods, ports, and overseas market areas, which are intimately linked. England's overseas markets changed from time to time according to what England had to offer as well as economic competition and political pressures. English exports included a range of agricultural good (grain, especially in the thirteenth to early fourteenth century, ale, bacon, firewood), fish, and minerals (tin and lead), but the major exports were wool and woollen cloths. These essentially dictated the structure and pattern of trade and there was a major shift from fleece wool to cloth in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Throughout the period most of England's wool went to the Low Country industries,¹⁹ so England and the Low Countries were always very closely tied in commercial matters. Cloth, however, could be sold much more widely, pulling English merchants, ships and shipmen to markets all over northern Europe; thus, as cloth exports rose, so the reliance on Low Country markets lessened and the importance of other markets grew. Low Country entrepôts always remained convenient, but more distant markets could supply England directly with raw materials such as dyes and wool-oil, timber, copper and iron, and luxuries such as linens, furs and wines.

The shift between wool and cloth is clearly shown by the customs accounts.²⁰ Wool exports averaged some 26,600 sacks a year in the late thirteenth century and rose to average 34,700 sacks in the first decade of the fourteenth century, sometimes reaching over 40,000 sacks in a single year. This was the product of some 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 sheep. It demanded hundreds of ships for carriage to the Low Countries and brought into England some £225,500 of silver annually. With this scale of income England could afford to buy any goods it wanted from raw

¹⁷ E.M. CARUS-WILSON, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages*, reprinted London 1967, pp. 106-108.

¹⁸ Loss rates are quoted as up to 4-5% on certain routes in the nineteenth century: R. DAVIS, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, reprinted with corrections, Newton Abbot 1972, p. 87. The rate for Bristol was higher in 1610-1620 at 10% a year: P.V. MCGRATH, *Merchant Venturers and Bristol Shipping in the early Seventeenth Century*, in "Mariners' Mirror", 36, 1950, pp. 79-81. In comparison, loss rates on the East Indies run for 1783-92 were lower for both English and Dutch vessels at 2.8% and 3.3% respectively: P.M. SOLAR, *Opening the East: Shipping between Europe and Asia, 1770-1830*, in "The Journal of Economic History", 73, 2013, n. 3, pp. 625-661 (at p. 639).

¹⁹ Some went through the Low Countries to other destinations (mainly Italy) and from the later fourteenth century perhaps 20% went to Italy directly by sea.

²⁰ Figures for wool and cloth exports are based on the data in E.M. CARUS-WILSON, O. COLEMAN, *England's Export Trade 1275-1547*, Oxford 1963.

materials (timber, iron, dyes) to the richest luxuries (silks, brocades, spices, wines). Wool exports temporarily dropped back in the 1310s and 1320s to the levels of the 1280s, recovered to a high level in the 1350s and 1360s (again sometimes reaching over 40,000 in a year), then dropped steadily away to average *c.* 8,000 sacks a year at the end of the fifteenth century. As wool dropped, exports of manufactured cloth began to rise. England had exported cloth for many years. In the thirteenth century English cloth had been bought in Italy and Iberia, but exports then declined in the later thirteenth century, presumably in the face of Flemish products. Despite Flemish competition, however, some cloth exports had continued into the fourteenth century and by 1347 the revival of exports was large enough and visible enough for the government to tax them. Thereafter we can trace their rise in the customs accounts. After a slow start after 1347, no doubt due to the disruption by the Black Death, exports rose quickly to reach 40,000 cloths before 1400 and, with ups and downs, nearly 60,000 in the 1440s and again in the 1490s. With this shift in exports, the pattern of English trade had to change. Flanders specifically forbade the import of English cloth and this encouraged English trade with other areas. Larger numbers of English merchants and ships went beyond the short hop to the Low Countries. And although the exports of cloth did not fully make up for the export of raw wool by weight until the beginning of the sixteenth century, the income from wool and cloth together continued to keep the English trade balance favourable throughout the fifteenth century.

The customs accounts do not tell us about the qualities and types of wool and cloth exported, but many other sources amplify our knowledge. English cloth was attractive. It varied in weight and type: a little top quality scarlet was produced, but most exports were in the middle broadcloth or lighter ranges. An important point to make is that much of English cloth was dyed and finished. The customs accounts, so useful for the scale of cloth exports, reveal relatively little about the final dyeing and finishing of the cloth. Sometimes they describe types of cloth (narrow cloths, blankets, russets, kerseys) and sometimes provenance (Guildfords, Exeter rolls, Coggeshalls), but mostly they simply describe the cloth by its three tax categories (*in grano*, *de dimidio grano*, and *sine grano*; that is whether or not any scarlet kermes dye, known as grain, had been used on the cloth). Some early writers on the cloth trade took *sine grano* to mean 'without dye', and thus believed that almost all English cloth exports were unfinished,²¹ but this is not so. Cloth *sine grano* could be any colour (including dyed red with madder) but had no admixture of the expensive kermes dye in it.²² The tax categories identified the cloth in this way, because it was assumed that the most expensive dye would only be used on the most expensive cloths, which could therefore bear a higher tax rate. English exporters paid 2s 4d

²¹ See for example G. SCHANZ, *Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters*, 2 vols Leipzig 1881, II, pp. 86-105; A. BEARDWOOD, *Alien Merchants in England, 1350 to 1377: their Legal and Economic Position*, Cambridge Mass. 1931, pp. 45-46, 162-5, 168-9, 171-172, 174-176. The meaning of *sine grano* has long been corrected: E.M. CARUS-WILSON, O. COLEMAN, *England's Export Trade*, pp. 14-15; J. MUNRO, *The Medieval Scarlet and the Economics of Sartorial Splendour in Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Europe: Essays in Memory of Professor E. M. Carus-Wilson*, N.B. HARTE, K.G. PONTING eds., London 1983, pp. 13-70 (at pp. 60-3), (Pasold Studies in Textile History 2).

²² For the expense of kermes see J. MUNRO, *Medieval Scarlet*, cit., pp. 39-52.

per cloth dyed wholly in grain, 1s 9d for cloth dyed partly in grain, and 1s 2d for cloths without any use of grain. Alien merchants paid at the rates of 3s 6d, 2s 7d, and 1s 9d.²³ The customs collectors recorded tax categories and were not interested in what colour the cloths were.

Many other records, however, reveal the English dyeing and finishing industries. English tax lists reveal not only dyers and listers but also fullers, walkers and shearmen among English occupations and surnames,²⁴ and large amounts of woad, alum, kermes and madder were imported for the dye houses. We can see the range of colours in records of sales. For example, in 1394-5 in York 3,087 cloths were exposed for sale of which 83 % were dyed in blues, reds, and greens; 12% were specified a 'white' (but not necessarily unfinished) and the colours of 5% are not stated.²⁵ Law suits in 1458 over alleged illegal sales (by alien merchant to alien merchant) in London show that Simone Larcario of Genoa had purchased 132 cloths of assize in a wide range of shades of blue, green, red, tawny and grey; not one was undyed.²⁶ In a further 45 cases in 1458 over illegal credit sales by Englishmen to Italians, at least 613 (73%) of the broadcloths sold to them were coloured; the colours of the rest were unspecified – none was said to be white.²⁷ Finishing by napping and shearing could take place before or after dyeing, or indeed be done twice, and it is unlikely that dyed cloth was not fully finished, especially if it was exported to destinations without highly skilled cloth industries of their own. Only in the second half of the fifteenth century did unfinished exports grow, in accordance with agreements made in the Low Countries. Antwerp in particular became a major centre for exports of unfinished English cloth, and even Flanders finally permitted English cloth imports, provided that the finishing was done by its industries.²⁸ The export of unfinished cloth to the Low Countries brought strong opposition from English finishers. Legislation forbade the export of yarn and unfinished cloth in

²³ E.M. CARUS-WILSON, O. COLEMAN, *England's Export Trade*, cit., pp. 14-15, 194-195.

²⁴ For example occupations at York in 1381 show 63 weavers, 14 dyers, 4 fullers (walkers) and 2 shearmen: C.C. FENWICK, *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381*, I-III, Oxford 2005, pp. 140-150.

²⁵ J. LISTER, *The Early Yorkshire Woollen Trade*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 64 (1924), pp. 47-95.

²⁶ TNA E159/235, Recorda Michaelmas mm. 16-21; Recorda Trinity mm. 21, 30-1, 33-4, 41, 43-4, 46-53, 54-5, 58, 61, 63; E159/236 Recorda Michaelmas mm. 18, 19, 20d, 25, 27-9, 32-40, 42, 44-6, 50-7, 60, 72, 86; Recorda Trinity mm. 5-6.

²⁷ TNA E159/235 Recorda Trinity mm. 21, 30-1, 33-4, 41, 43-4, 46-52, 54-5, 58, 61, 63; E159/236 Recorda Michaelmas mm. 18-19, 20d, 25, 27-9, 32-40, 42, 44-6, 50-7, 60, 72, 86; Recorda Trinity mm. 5-6. For the context of the prosecutions see W.R. CHILDS, "To oure losse and hindraunce": *English credit to alien merchants in the mid-fifteenth century*, in *Enterprise and Individuals in Fifteenth Century England*, ed. J.I. KERMODE, Stroud 1991, pp. 68-98.

²⁸ For the intimate connection of English unfinished exports and the Antwerp industry see H. VAN DER WEE, *The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy (fourteenth to sixteenth centuries)*, 3 vols., The Hague 1963, II, pp. 70, 100, 133; J.H. MUNRO, *Bruges and the Abortive Staple in English Cloth: An Incident in the Shift of Commerce from Bruges to Antwerp in the Late Fifteenth Century*, "Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire", 44, Brussels 1966, pp. 1143-7; IDEM, *Medieval Woollens: the Western European Woollen Industries and their Struggle for International Markets, c. 1000-1500*, in *The Cambridge History of Textiles*, ed. D. JENKINS, Cambridge 2003, pp. 228-386 at pp. 292-6; J. PUTTEVILS, *Merchants and Trading in the Sixteenth Century: the Golden Age of Antwerp*, London 2015, pp. 4-5, 20-22.

1467 and 1487,²⁹ but it was hard to enforce the regulations against the English Merchant Adventurers who wanted to export unfinished cloth, believing that the industries in Antwerp were better able to judge the fashions and colour demands of the eastern Continental markets.³⁰ Other markets continued to buy finished cloth. Italian and Iberian purchases show the great range of colours and Iberian royal purchases indicate high quality. The royal household of Navarre in the early fourteenth century bought at least three shades of red, three of green, four of blue, and turquoise and violet as well as browns, blacks, greys and finished whites (suitable for clothing the queen and infantas and for a gift to the Bishop of Bayonne). The Castilian monarchs between 1492-6 also bought English reds and greens. Italian merchants in London in 1458 handled blues (plunket and blod), greens (grass green, gaudy green, green medleys), reds (red and crimson), grey musterdevillers, and something called 'lion's skin'.³¹ In the absence of private mercantile papers it is not easy to be sure of the relationship of the English ports and the production in their hinterlands. Was England's cloth industry producer- or consumer-led? Port and hinterland are, of course, intimately linked and it is most likely that what reached the market was a blend of the two. It is not clear which dominated, but ultimately producers could only prosper if they offered goods that sold. In some records it is clear that overseas merchants wrote to their agents to specify the cloth they wanted. In 1458 a Toulouse merchant ordered three pink and one red cloth of England of specified (finished) quality from his contact in Pau and in 1470 Juan de Medina wrote from Lepe to Juan Seboll, his partner in London, to say that if Seboll was going to send more cloths to Spain he should send musterdevillers, fine Bridgewater straits, good kersies, white russets and bright greens.³² Similarly the exports of unfinished cloth to Antwerp at the end of the fifteenth century increased because the demands from Antwerp buyers were transmitted to English producers.

Many other patterns appear through the customs accounts. They show for instance the constant imports of industrial raw materials (dyes and mordants for the cloth industry, iron and timber) as well as luxuries (silks, spices, and wine) and small consumer goods (tiles, pots, locks, bells etc). They show the share of trade in the hands of English and foreign merchants and the share of trade carried by English and foreign shipping. English ships dominated few routes, except those to Bordeaux before 1453 and to Iceland for much of the fifteenth century. On all other routes they sailed alongside ships of other nations, which were also frequent visitors to English ports. The role that English ships played in different ports varied widely. Where customs collectors recorded homeports of shipping, as in Bristol and

²⁹ Statutes 7 Edward IV cap. 3; 3 Henry VII cap. 12: *Statutes of the Realm*, A. LUDERS et al eds., 11 vols., London 1810-28, II, pp. 422, 520; J. OLDLAND *The London Fullers and Shearmen, and their Merger to Become the Clothworkers' Company*, in "Textile History", 39, 2013, n. 2, pp. 172-192 (at 178-179).

³⁰ J.H. MUNRO, *Medieval Woollens*, cit., p. 286.

³¹ *Archivo General de Navarra. Catálogo de la Sección de Comptos: documentos*, J. CASTRO, F. IDOATE eds., 50 vols, Pamplona 1952-70, especially vols. 20-34 passim; A. DE LA TORRE, *Telas extranjeras en la Corte de los Reyes Católicos*, in *VI Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón, 1957*, Madrid 1959, pp. 831-839; TNA, E159 (King's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls), 235 Recorda Michaelmas mm.16, 18, 19.

³² P. WOLFF, *Three Samples of English Fifteenth Century Cloth*, in *Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Europe*, cit., pp. 120-125; *Calendar of Close Rolls 1468-76*, London 1953, no. 709.

Hull, these patterns of English and foreign shipping can be quite precisely plotted, where accounts record ships only by masters' names precise detail is lost (see Tab. 1).

Unfortunately London and Southampton are among those whose accounts rarely record homeports. Nonetheless, the names and cargoes allow a general picture to emerge and Professor Harding has estimated that up to 45% of shipping at London in 1390-1 might be from the Low Countries.³³ A rare account with homeports provides a sharper picture for London for 1480-1. The general pattern revealed in the customs accounts overall is as one might expect: ships of Holland, Zeeland, Germany and Baltic ports were particularly busy in English east coast ports while Iberians and Bretons were more frequent in the south-west and Italians used Southampton and London.³⁴ Foreign shipping movements in the accounts illustrate very well the extent and frequency of geographical contacts made in English ports but movements do not necessarily reflect the percentage of trade carried. Despite the level of foreign shipping and surges of foreign competition, English merchants held their own in cargo handling. They rarely handled less than 50 per cent of cloth exports and of inward and outward trade by value and often handled and carried over 60 per cent.³⁵ This is well illustrated by Hull, where local men supplied under 50% of shipping but controlled 60-80 % of trade (see Tab. 1 and 2).

³³ V. HARDING, *Cross-channel Trade and Cultural Contacts: London and the Low Countries in the Later Fourteenth Century in England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages*, C.M. BARRON, N. SAUL eds., Stroud 1995, pp. 153-168 (at 161-3).

³⁴ N.J.M. KERLING, *Commercial Relations of Holland and Zeeland with England from the late 13th Century to the Close of the Middle Ages*, Leiden 1954, pp. 222-3; J.D. FUDGE, *Cargoes, Embargoes, and Emissaries. The Commercial and Political Interaction of England and the German Hanse 1450-1510*, Toronto 1995, pp. 115, 117.

³⁵ E.M. CARUS-WILSON, O. COLEMAN, *England's Export Trade*, cit., pp. 75-111, 138-155.

Tab. 1. Examples of shipping movements the late fifteenth century in English ports from north-east to west

The totals are of movements (inward and outward). Percentages are of the legible ships; in most account the illegible names are few and it makes little difference to the percentages. Accounts cover full years (12 months) unless otherwise stated.¹

KINGSTON UPON HULL²

Date	Total mvts & %	Eng/Ch.Is/ Ir vessels	Foreign vessels					
			LC	Hans.	N.Fr	Breton	Basque	Scottish
1464- ¹	112	39 35%	37	5	6	2	2	21
1466 /	125	45 36%	80	5	6	8	2	19
147-2	83	37 46%	46	0	0	0	0	0
148 1-90	67 ³	36 54%	9	6	0	0	0	7

LONDON⁴

Date	Total mvts	Eng/Ch.Is/ Ir vessels & %	Foreign vessels						
			LC	Hans.	N.Fr	Breton	Basque Portuguese	Venice & S. Sp.	
1480-1 ⁵	424	155 37%	139	33	21	11	24	19	2

¹ Eng/Ch.Is/Ir = English/Channel Island/Irish; LC = Low Counties; N.Fr. = Northern French (Calais, Norman); Hans. = Hansard.

² These accounts are printed in *The Customs Accounts of Hull 1453-1490*, W.R. CHILDS ed., Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 144, Leeds 1986, pp. 65-120, 151-77, 202-24.

³ 3 ships illegible.

⁴ London petty custom accounts for 1470-1, 1472-3 and 1477-8 (TNA E122/194/19, 20, 23) survive and record 384, 398, 322 movements respectively. The tonnage and poundage account for 1487-8 (TNA E122/78/7) and the petty custom account for 1490-1 (TNA E122/78/9) show similar numbers. Unfortunately none of these accounts record the homeports of vessels. It is therefore impossible to compile accurate tables, but the masters' names indicate the rising Iberian trade: 38 vessels appear to have Basque masters and 9 have Portuguese masters in 1487-8; in 1490-1 the numbers are 85 and 13 respectively.

⁵ *The Overseas Trade of London. Exchange Customs Accounts 1480-1*, H.S. COBB ed., London Record Society 27, 1990. This petty customs account (TNA E122/194/24) is an exception in recording home ports of shipping, but (as a petty custom account) it does not record English- and Spanish-owned inward cargoes which did not pay this tax. Thus some English and Spanish inward vessels may also escape the record.

SOUTHAMPTON ⁶									
Date	Total mvts	Eng/Ch.Is/ Ir vessels & %	LC	Hans.	Foreign vessels			Ibetian	Venice/Genoa
					N.Fr	Breton			
1464-5 ⁷	175	>>>	<<<	2 ⁸	>>	18	<<	18	20
1487-8 ⁸	111	>>>	<<<		<<<	<<<	<<<	17	15

BRISTOL									
Date	Total mvts	Eng/Ch.Is/ Ir vessels	Gascon	Foreign vessels			Basque	Portuguese	
				Breton					
1485-6 ⁹	178	133 74%	0	0	0	39	4		
1486-7 ¹⁰	175	141 80%	2	0	0	28	1		
1492-3 ¹¹	186	131 70%	0	8	8	36	8		

⁶ Southampton accounts do not record home ports. It is often difficult to separate English, French, and Low Country ships by masters' names and impossible to suggest percentages. Italian and Iberian identification is secure.

⁷ The account covers 1 year 5 months; printed in *The Port Books or Local Customs -Accounts of Southampton for the Reign of Edward IV*, D.B. QUINN and A.A. RUDDOCK eds., 2 vols. Southampton Record Society 37-38, Southampton 1937-8, II pp. 203-15.

⁸ TNA E122/142/10.

⁹ TNA E122/20/5; 3 ships unnamed or illegible.

¹⁰ TNA E122/20/7; 10 ships unnamed or illegible.

¹¹ TNA E122/20/9; 3 ships unnamed and probably English.

Tab. 2. Examples of percentages of inward and outward cargoes owned by English merchants in the late fifteenth century

KINGSTON UPON HULL¹

Date	Cloth exports in whole cloths of assize		Value of exports in ££		Wool & fell exports in sacks		Wine imports in tuns		Value of imports in ££						
	T	E	T	E	T	E	T	E	T	E					
1464-5	880	760	86%	1239	1055	85%	227	227	100%	658	412	63%	2496	1640	66%
1466-7	374	326	87%	1108	806	73%	886	886	100%	301	265	88%	2294	1539	67%
1471-2	840	839	100%	1483	919	62%	666	666	100%	632	631	100%	2292	1881	82%
1489-90 ²	887	793	89%	869	551	63%	358	358	100%	0	0	-	2225	1038	47%

¹ These accounts are printed in *The Customs Accounts of Hull 1453-1490*, W.R. CHILDS ed., Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 144, Leeds 1986, pp. 65-120, 151-77, 202-24. T = total; E = English-owned; E% = English percentage of the whole.

² This account is damaged and £22 of import values and £29 of export values cannot be ascribed to particular merchants.

6. GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE OF ENGLAND'S TRADE NETWORK

In the thirteenth and early fourteenth century England's direct trade network was already wide. Whether goods were handled and carried by English or foreign merchants and ships, the network of direct contacts stretched from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean, but undoubtedly at this period the Low Countries dominated. By c. 1400, with the growth of cloth exports, England's trade was more evenly spread, English activity had increased beyond the Low Countries, and by the end of the fifteenth century there was a perceptible shift to the west. It may seem that English merchants and seamen were unadventurous in the thirteenth century, because their trade was so closely focussed on the Low Countries. And why should it not be? That was where English wool sold best and it also housed the great entrepôt of Bruges and the lesser ports of the Scheldt estuary, from which English merchants could obtain goods from all over the then known world. English ships and merchants could, therefore, make a good living just shuttling back and forth across the relatively risk-free Narrow Seas. However, there had always been some merchants who ventured further and as English exports moved from wool to cloth in the fourteenth century, so more merchants joined them, expanding especially into the Baltic Sea and Iberia, where they were well placed to benefit from the late-medieval Iberian economic expansion. In the last two centuries of the middle ages, therefore, England's regular direct maritime contacts were with very diverse places, from undeveloped Iceland to highly sophisticated Italy.

As well as this overall geographical expansion of English activity, England's trade network was also constantly shifting emphasis internally in response to economic and political pressures. To illustrate these short and medium term changes within the overall expansion, we need to look at England's contacts from north to south in a little more detail. To the immediate north was Scotland, but Anglo-Scottish trade was thin because of the Anglo-Scottish wars and Scotland's French alliance. Even in the 1460s, after the end of the Hundred Years War, relatively few Scottish ships came into English ports, preferring their well-established trade in the Low Countries.³⁶ Across the sea, Scandinavian links with Norway, Denmark, and Gotland remained from the Viking period. Scandinavian trade was still strong in eastern ports in the early fourteenth century, when ships of Trondheim and Bergen came to Hull and Lynn with stockfish, timber, butter and skins. English ships and merchants also sailed the route, but found themselves under increasing pressure from Hanseatic (especially Lübeck) expansion into Denmark and Norway in the late fourteenth century and Bergen (where Hanse merchants held a privileged position) became uncomfortable for the English. By c. 1400 some English merchants went directly to Iceland for their stockfish and the fifteenth century became known as Iceland's 'English century'.³⁷ Other English merchants, however, remained at

³⁶ For example, a number of Scottish ships came to Hull in 1465-67, but rarely in other years: W.R. CHILDS, *The Customs Accounts*, passim.

³⁷ E.M. CARUS-WILSON, *The Iceland Trade*, in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth century*, E. POWER, M.M. POSTAN eds., London 1933, pp. 133-182; G.J. MARCUS, *The Conquest of the North Atlantic*, Woodbridge 1980, pp. 125-154; W.R. CHILDS, *England's Icelandic Trade in the Fifteenth Century: the Role of the Port of Hull*, in *Northern Seas Yearbook 1995*, P. HOLM, O. JANZEN, J. THOR, eds., Esbjerg 1995, pp.

Bergen, especially those of King's Lynn who also worked extensively with Lübeck merchants. Anglo-German trade was also longstanding. Until the thirteenth century this had been mainly via the Rhine or through Hamburg, but as German merchants moved along the southern Baltic shores, so direct Anglo-Baltic trade increased there for timber, osmund, iron, copper and potash. Much of this trade was in Hanseatic ships until the mid to late fourteenth century, when (in the 1360s and 1370s) the English made a determined effort to expand into the Baltic and settled especially in Gdańsk. By the mid-fifteenth century, however, Hanseatic protective regulations (and some violence) had curtailed English activity in Baltic trade. Many fewer English ships and merchants sailed there, although English cloth exports continued to do very well, largely in the hands of Hanseatic merchants.³⁸ Further south, all the Low Country provinces attracted English trade. Flanders absorbed much wool, although it rejected English cloth; Holland and Zeeland took cloth (some to pass into Germany) and increasing amounts of wool for their developing cloth industry; Brabant likewise imported and transferred English cloth and Antwerp became a considerable centre for finishing English cloth at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century.

At Bruges, then Antwerp, and at smaller ports such as Middelburg, Bergen-op-Zoom, and Dordrecht English merchants bought in return all types of goods, some brought long distances from Scandinavia, Germany, Poland, Iberia and Italy and others produced in the Low Countries or nearby: linens, madder, onions, garlic, beer, tiles, pots, Liège metal work. Although England had to look further afield for cloth markets as exports rose, the Low Countries nonetheless remained a major focus for the English. To the south and west, France was much less important to England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries because trade was severely curtailed by the Hundred Years War. The capture in 1336 of Calais (which became England's wool staple from the 1360s) gave England a foothold on French territory and Henry V's conquest of Normandy reopened trade directly across the Channel, but in the late middle ages England's only important trade destination in France was Bordeaux in English Gascony. Gascon wine had attracted over 300 English ships a year to Bordeaux in the early 1300s (one third of the total shipping there at that time), but the beginning of the Anglo-French war had cut Bordeaux's wine exports by two thirds. This remaining trade, however, was dominated by the English. English ships carried between 70 and 85 per cent of Bordeaux's wine exports, and if ships of Wales, Ireland and Bayonne are included then ships of English territories exported 80-94 per cent.³⁹

The end of the Hundred Years War badly disrupted this trade again when England lost Gascony in 1453 and radically altered trade routes in the Channel and Bay

11-31, (Fiskeri- og Sofartsmuseet studieserie 5); A. Agnarsdóttir, *Iceland's 'English Century' and East Anglia's North Sea World in East Anglia and its North Sea World in the Middle Ages*, D. BATES, R. LIDDIARD eds., Woodbridge 2013, pp. 204-216.

³⁸ T.H. LLOYD, *England and the German Hanse 1157-1611*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 48-9, 50-172. See also S. JENKS, *England, die Hanse und Preussen. Handel und Diplomatie 1377-1474*, I-III, Köln 1992, passim.

³⁹ TNA E101/184/19; 185/7,11; 188/12; 191/3; 192/1; 194/3; 195/19; BRITISH LIBRARY, LONDON, Additional MS 15524.

of Biscay. But the political changes and subsequent truces brought compensation in the form of increased trade with Normandy, Brittany, La Rochelle and Castile. The re-opening of Anglo-Castilian trade was particularly important. Anglo-Iberian trade had been strong in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Much was with the Basque Provinces and dominated by the Basques, but the activity of English merchants grew in the mid-fourteenth century (somewhat earlier than it did in the Baltic). There is evidence for English activity in Castile 1311 and 1338, but it increased in the 1350s and English merchants were busy in Lisbon and Seville by 1369.⁴⁰ Trade with Castile, however, faded thereafter when Castile became an ally of France in the Hundred Years War in 1369. Some trade could continue during truces and Italian ships that called at Andalusian ports continued to bring southern goods, but it was not until the end of the war and the new treaty with Castile in 1466 that England's trade with Castile took off once more. In the 1480s and 1490s Basques flooded into London and an English 'colony' resident in Seville began to rival that in Lisbon. Anglo-Portuguese trade, already long-standing by the mid-fourteenth century, had benefitted from the Anglo-Castilian difficulties. It supplied many of the southern goods the English wanted (oil, kermes dye, fruit and wine); and the marriage of Philippa of Lancaster to João Aviz and subsequent Anglo-Portuguese alliances secured the trade. From the later fourteenth century English merchants established a permanent resident group in Lisbon.

On all these more northerly routes, of course, English ships sailed alongside those of other nationalities from all over Europe; only in their captive markets at Calais and Bordeaux did English merchants and ships dominate. Further south, however, the picture was different. As yet, the route into the Mediterranean was rarely sailed by English ships. Direct contacts were strong, regular and frequent, but largely handled by Italian ships and merchants, supplemented by those from Barcelona and the Basque Provinces. Italy as a historical, geographical and intellectual entity was very familiar to English people,⁴¹ but so also were the legal and political independence and varied commercial offerings of individual city states. The term 'Italy' was used alongside specific references to Italian cities. For example, in Chaucer's time merchants from Florence,⁴² Lucca, Genoa, Milan, Venice, Pisa, Pistoia, and Bologna might be found in London, and Chaucer was comfortable describing Dante as both 'the grete poete of Ytaille' and 'the wise poete of Florence'.⁴³ An

⁴⁰ CPR 1307-13, p. 375; *ibid.* 1338-40, p.1; W.R. CHILDS, *Anglo-Castilian Trade in the Later Middle Ages*, Manchester 1978, pp. 31-3; EADEM, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West: Portugal, Castile and England*, Porto 2013, p. 110.

⁴¹ G.B. PARKES, *The English Traveler to Italy. The Middle Ages (to 1525)*, Rome 1954, pp. 567-8.

⁴² For discussion of the Datini business in England see H. BRADLEY, *The Datini Factors in London, 1380-1410* in *Trade, Devotion and Governance. Papers in Later Medieval History*, D.J. CLAYTON, R.G. DAVIES, P. MCNIVEN eds., Stroud 1994, pp. 55-79.

⁴³ W.R. CHILDS, *Anglo-Italian Contacts in the Fourteenth Century*, in *Chaucer and the Italian Trecento*, ed. P. BOITANI, Cambridge 1983, pp. 65-87 at p. 69; *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, lines 1125-6, and *The Monk's Tale*, line 2463, in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L.D. BENSON, Boston 1987, pp. 120, 248; *A trade policy*, in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth centuries*, ed. R.H. ROBBINS, New York 1959, p. 170.

anonymous writer of verses on 'A trade policy' in the mid-fifteenth century included 'Italy' in his list of markets for English cloth:

'Prus-londe, florence, venyse and Iene,
Melane, Catelyn and all ytally.

The use of 'Italy' was not only a literary convention. The imposition of a tax on aliens resident in England in 1488 included every 'Venycian, Italyan, Januez, Florentyne, Mylener, Cateloner, Albertyn, and Lombard'; exemption from tunnage and poundage duties in 1488 was granted in response to a petition of 'mercatorum nationis Italiae, Venetorum vocatorum 'Venitians', Januensum vocatorum 'Janueyes', Florentinorum vocatorum 'Florentynes', Lucansium vocatorum 'Lucans'; and Professor Fusaro has drawn attention to the sense of unity and cooperation which could occur among the city states themselves when abroad.⁴⁴

A few individual English ships and masters can be traced in the Mediterranean from the late fourteenth century and a few English merchants travelled on the ships of Genoa, Venice, or Savona, even before the well-known expeditions of Robert Sturmy of Bristol took English merchants and ships into the Mediterranean,⁴⁵ but it was not until the sixteenth century that English ships became familiar there. Nonetheless in the early fourteenth century the anonymous author of *The life of Edward II* wrote rather oddly of large numbers of Englishmen in every country around the Mediterranean, well known for deceit and non-payment of debts;⁴⁶ but perhaps he meant pilgrims and churchmen?

Commercial networks of course extended beyond maritime areas into hinterlands, but it is not usual to find English merchants beyond the ports. It is true that Danzigers complained of English merchants travelling down the Vistula to Krakow (when they should go no further than Torun); probably more went into Flanders and northern Germany, given the intensity of activity in the Low Countries; possibly some English merchants went further into Gascony; but there is little evidence of merchants beyond Lisbon and Oporto, nor of ventures within Castile once trade was re-opened, unless merchants needed to seek help from royal courts. On the whole most English merchants did not go far from the coasts.

The documentary evidence for the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries shows a clear picture of steady geographical expansion of English commercial activity but within this general expansion, there were constant shifts of emphasis with short and medium term adjustments, as the above brief survey shows. The main pressures for these changes were changing commodities, economic competition, and political al-

⁴⁴ PROME, parliament of November 1487, C65/125, m.8; *Foedera, conventiones, litterae et cuinsumque generis acta publica ... ab anno 1101 ad nostra usque tempora*, I-X, ed. T. RYMER, The Hague 1739-45, V. iii. 188; M. FUSARO, *Political Economies of Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean. The decline of Venice and the rise of England 1450-1700*, Cambridge 2015, pp. 29-34.

⁴⁵ S. JENKS, *Robert Sturmy's Commercial Expedition to the Mediterranean (1457/8)*, Bristol 2006 (Bristol Record Society 58).

⁴⁶ *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, ed. W.R. CHILDS, Oxford 2005, pp. 108-111.

liances and wars. The relationships of each of these with the others and with other general and local pressures in individual markets were complex, but nonetheless, in broad and simple terms, it is possible to see that the most important pressures varied in different areas. In the north economic competition became the main problem. English ships and merchants, who had successfully followed the Hanse into the Baltic in the mid-fourteenth century, were then curbed there in the fifteenth century by Hanse protective restrictions (which sometimes spilled into violence); similarly the privileged position of the Hansards in Scandinavia gave them a competitive edge, which helped push the English into the direct Icelandic trade. Further south, in the Low Country trade, the most important overall pressure was probably the change in England's exports. Political pressures in Anglo-Flemish relations and the Burgundian take-over were clearly very important, but the shift from wool to cloth lessened the centrality of Flanders and made Holland, Zeeland and Brabant (especially Antwerp) more attractive, both as markets in themselves and as transit points to inland Europe. Further west politics and war played a particularly influential part. The Hundred Years War had had great influence on Anglo-Gascon and Anglo-Castilian trade and its end effectively re-orientated England's western trade. A major re-alignment took place with the loss of Gascony in 1453 and the new Anglo-Castilian treaty in 1466. The shift from Gascon to Iberian trade is especially clear at Bristol, where the customs accounts specify destinations of exports. There in the late fourteenth century nearly 50 per cent of cloth exports went to Gascony and 24 per cent to Iberia, evenly split between Castile (during truces) and Portugal; at the end of the fifteenth century 84 per cent went to Iberia (two-thirds now to Castile) and only 6 per cent went to Gascony.⁴⁷

For England's future trade the shift was extremely important as the whole of the Iberian Peninsula was re-opened to English activity, as were commercial opportunities there, just as Atlantic expansion began to take off in earnest in the 1480s.

Despite gaps in the records and changes in emphasis in the markets over time (as noted above), it is possible to make educated estimates for the overall importance of England's trading areas. On the whole the results are unsurprising. In the thirteenth to early fourteenth century England's overseas trade was widely spread but undoubtedly the Low Countries dominated; by the fifteenth century, however, with the growth of the cloth trade, the trade was more evenly spread.

⁴⁷ TNA E122/15/8; 16/2, 5, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19-23, 26, 28, 30, 34; 18/39; 19/11, 13-15; 20/1, 5, 7, 9; 40/12; 161/31. See Table 3.

Tab. 3. Destinations of cloth sent from Bristol in the late fourteenth and late fifteenth centuries¹

Date	Total	Destinations					Other
		Gascony	Spain	Portugal	[Iberia]	Ireland	
1370s ²	11443	5549 48%	948 8%	1896 16%	[24%]	1692 15%	1329 12%
1380s ³	12310	6640 54%	1282 10%	1611 14%	[24%]	1472 12%	1305 10%
1390s ⁴	22332	9396 42%	2627 12%	2004 9%	[21%]	5378 24%	2926 13%
1460s ⁵	4353	1207 28%	650 15%	1860 43%	[58%]	169 4%	466 11%
1470s ⁶	15043	2816 19%	5727 38%	3240 23%	[61%]	1376 8%	1758 12%
1480s/90s ⁷	17749	1152 6%	10730 60%	4328 24%	[84%]	1268 7%	273 2%

¹ The accounts are incomplete and cover only a few years within each decade. The numbers of cloths are, thus, only a fraction of total exports, but the percentages show the relative importance of the markets. The shift from Gascony to Iberia after 1453 is marked.

² TNA E122/16/2, 15/8, 16/5, 16/9 (1376-80). In these accounts 18 cloths were sent to Brittany and 1,310 (12%) were not assigned a destination.

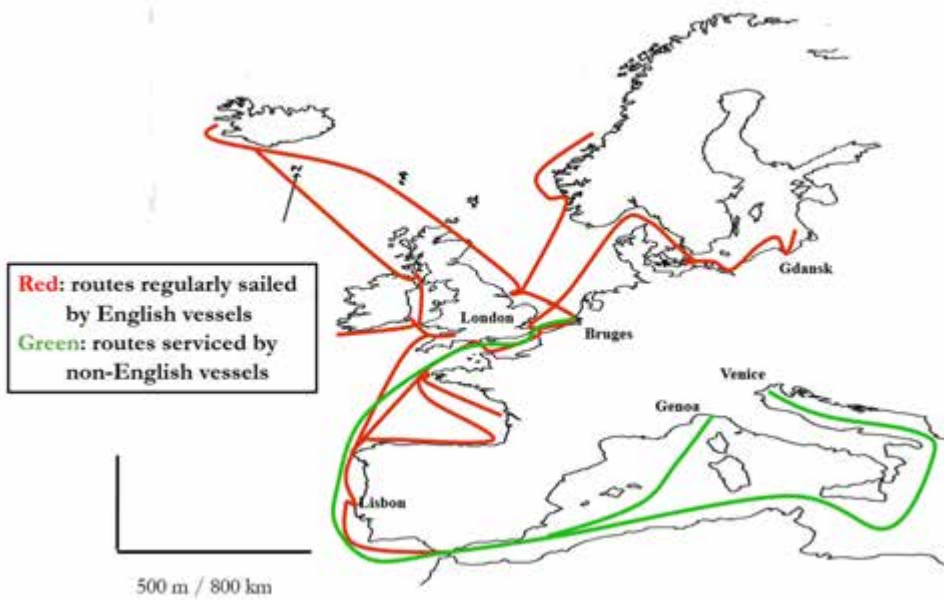
³ TNA E122/16/11, 16/13, 16/15, 40/12 (1380-83, 1386-7). In these accounts 540 were loaded for Genoa, 44 for NW France and 721 were not assigned a destination.

⁴ TNA E122/16/19-21, 16/23-24, 40/17, 17/1 (1390-92, 1398-9, 1399-1400). In these accounts 957 cloths were loaded for NW France, Flanders and Prussia and 1969 were given no destination.

⁵ TNA E122/19/1, 19/3, 19/4, 19/6. In the 1460s accounts are poor and none covers a full year. Of the 'other' cloths 449 were sent to Bristol's out-ports for onward transport.

⁶ TNA E122/19/7-8, 19/10-15, 18/39, 161/31. Of the 'other' cloths 972 were sent to Bristol's out-ports for onward transport.

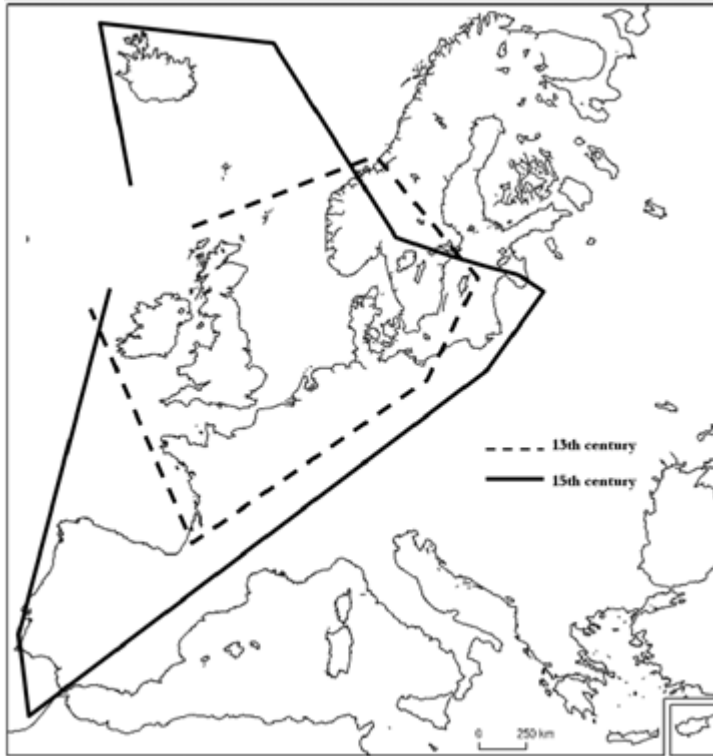
⁷ TNA E122/20/1, 20/5, 20/7, 20/9. Of the 'other' cloths 158 were sent to Bristol's out-ports for onward transport.

Map 1. England's regular trade routes in the 15th century

Eastward trade nonetheless remained very important because the Low Countries always took some 80% of English wool and at least 20 to 25% of English cloth went eastwards to the Low Countries, the Baltic or inland Germany (often in the hands of Hanse merchants). Westward and southward trade, however, became increasingly significant. Gascony always supplied some 90 per cent of England's wine. Italian ships by the mid fifteenth century often loaded 20 per cent of English wool and up to 25 per cent of English cloth exports for the Mediterranean (and also sent wool and cloth overland). Iberian trade had ups and downs, but grew in importance at the end of the fifteenth century, when Castilian merchants alone could export 10-15 per cent of England's cloth,⁴⁸ (to which must be added Portuguese exports and English exports to Iberia).

⁴⁸ W.R. CHILDS, *Anglo-Castilian Trade*, cit., pp. 89-91.

Map 2. Areas of regular direct contact for English shipping in the 13th and 15th centuries



7. IMPACT? INFLUENCES? INTEGRATION?

With a maritime network so widespread, constant and yet diverse, England can illustrate many of the themes proposed for discussion at the Prato 2018 conference, whether on practical organisational matters such as free trade or protection, on economic matters such as complementary markets, or more intangible matters of cultural exchanges and influences. To make comparisons we need to look beyond England (as this conference invites us to do), but here I will draw attention to a handful of topics from the English perspective.

The movement of people took place at all levels of society. The international exchange of 'high culture' that shaped much of English history took place among the higher ranks of society at court or within the church and universities and generally involved a smallish number of people. In these connections, however, commerce was important in that commercial ships carried the people, their ideas, books and luxury life-styles. Moreover, kings, nobles, diplomats and churchmen were accompanied by retinues, escorts and servants, thus regularly bringing lower ranks into the travelling class. Pilgrimage spread travel further down the social ranks and

military expeditions, rather intermittently, also brought thousands of Englishmen to France, Flanders, and Iberia. The movement of people was, however, even more integral to trade, and it was trade that arguably gave England its most regular and socially widespread connections abroad. Year after year hundreds of merchants and probably thousands of seamen moved between ports, staying for longer or shorter times, sometimes emigrating, marrying, bringing up families. Despite some brief flurries of anti-alien sentiments, port towns were cosmopolitan places.⁴⁹ Immigrants and visitors worked within broadly familiar commercial structures, but would have to learn to adapt to the variations in laws, regulations, practices and procedures of the ports they visited. They would both adapt to and absorb local practices, food, and styles, and take their own social practices with them.

1. Organisation

England's trade was strongly regulated. English kings imposed a national customs system and legislated on weights, measures, and qualities. They favoured regulation in order to protect their own trade income; after all they drew up to half their regular revenue from trade duties. They also legislated on who might handle exports, not always in favour of English merchants. It was the king's choice whether to favour English or foreign merchants, whichever best protected royal revenue. In 1303 the *Carta Mercatoria* favoured foreign merchants in return for extra customs duties⁵⁰ and at various times in the fourteenth century wool exports were placed in the hands of foreigners, but there was no sign in England of merchants surpassing royal power. English kings might consult them and might be influenced by merchant groups such as the Londoners, the wool exporters, the Italian companies, but the actions they took all served royal interests; they kept the regulation of international trade firmly in their own hands. Close contact between different regions does not seem to have radically altered political or legal structures to produce compatible systems in which the merchants worked. Although England used what it called 'law merchant' in urban courts and in royal courts where applicable, but this was not part of a pan-European code (except perhaps in the principles of speed, fairness and acceptable forms of proof), it was rather an adaption of common law courts to accommodate merchants' needs.⁵¹ An exception might be in the common use of

⁴⁹ For an overview of English port towns see M. KOWALESKI, *Port towns: England and Wales 1300-1540*, in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, 600-1540*, ed. D.M. PALLISER, Cambridge 2000, pp. 467-494.

⁵⁰ *English Historical Documents* vol. III 1189-1327, ed. H. ROTHWELL, London 1975, no. 91.

⁵¹ The text of the English *lex mercatoria* found in Bristol's *Little Red Book* has been edited and translated in M.E. BASILE, J.F. BESTOR, D.R. COQUILLETTE, C. DONAHUE JNR, *Lex Mercatoria and Legal Pluralism. A late thirteenth century treatise and its afterlife*, Cambridge Mass. 1998. For further commentaries see J.H. BAKER, *The Law Merchant and the Common Law before 1700*, in "Cambridge Law Journal", 38, 1979, pp. 295-322; C. DONAHUE JNR, *Medieval and Early Modern Lex Mercatoria: an attempt at the Probatio Diabolica* in "Chicago Journal of International Law", 21, 2004, pp. 21-37. For its working in London courts see *Calendar of Select Pleas and Memoranda of the City of London A.D.1381-1412*, ed. A.H. THOMAS, Cambridge 1932, pp. vii-xli (where Thomas still assumes the context of a pan-European law merchant, although he does not offer exempla).

the judgments of Oléron, which were widely known in the shipping world of northern Europe,⁵² but most merchants simply became adept at operating within the legal structures of the foreign country they were in. Just as they adapted to local currencies, weights and measures, they learnt how to use local systems rather than to copy or change them. As for business organisation, although English merchants were exposed to Italian business practices, they developed no great companies like the Italians, instead organising through small family businesses and partnerships more appropriate to its scale of trade. Nonetheless, English merchants were capable, on occasion, of raising great financial sums, as did William de la Pole and other financiers for Edward III.⁵³ They were also used to co-operative action through the Company of the Staple and (later) the Company of Merchant Adventurers. At the Staple they elected their own mayor, agreed their own regulations, and finally took over the financing of the Calais garrison from the Crown.⁵⁴ English merchants freely used credit, drew on Italian bankers if necessary, and adopted double entry book-keeping through Spain, calling it accounting in the 'Spanish method'.⁵⁵

2. Commercial interdependence

Commercial interdependence between England and its markets was widely visible. Bi-lateral interdependence was particularly strong on some routes, notably to Gascony and Flanders. England imported some 90 per cent of its wine from Gascony before 1453, sending in return cereals, fish, and (later) cloth. It rarely exported less than 80 per cent of its wool to the Low Countries, taking in return at first cloth and then a wide miscellany of general goods. In both areas political interests were also important, and trade was inextricably entwined with political relations between England and France. But, when political relationships turned sour, as when England lost Gascony in 1453, the complementary products often ensured that trade continued, although temporarily disrupted. England's Icelandic trade was similarly bound up with one major commodity – the import of stockfish – and the dominance of English merchants there led to the fifteenth century there being described

⁵² A. CORDES, *Lex Maritima? Local Regional and universal maritime law in the Middle ages*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade*, cit., pp. 69-85. For a detailed discussion of the Judgements of Oléron see K-F. KRIEGER, *Ursprung und Wurzeln des Roles d'Oléron*, Quellen und Darstellungen zur Hansischen Geschichte, Hansischen Geschichtsverein, neue Folge, Bd 15, Köln 1979. The best discussion in English of the origins and stemma of the Judgements is still in P. STUDER, *The Oak Book of Southampton of c. 1300*, I-II, Southampton 1910-11, II, pp. xxix, lxxi, 54-101.

⁵³ E.B. FRYDE, *William de la Pole. Merchant and King's Banker (†1366)*, London 1988.

⁵⁴ For the operation of the Calais Staple see A. HANHAM, *The Celys and their World*, Cambridge 1985, pp. 224-51; T.H. LLOYD, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 1977, pp. 225-57; J.H. MUNRO, *Wool Cloth and Gold*, Toronto 1972, pp. 127-53. For the development of the Merchant Adventurers, who were heavily dominated by the London Mercers, see E.M. CARUS-WILSON, *The Origins and Early Development of the Merchant Adventurers' Organisation in London as shown in their own Medieval Records*, in "Economic History Review", 4, 1933, n. 2 reprinted in *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, London 1967, pp. 143-182; A. SUTTON, *The Mercery of London. Trade, Goods and People, 1130-1578*, Aldershot 2005, pp. 235-349.

⁵⁵ *The Ledger of John Smythe 1538-1550*, ed. J. VANES, London 1974, p. 17

as ‘the English century’. Elsewhere trade links were less dominated by one commodity, but profits from England’s cloth secured the goods it could not produce itself. Geographical imperatives coloured these trade routes. Forest products and metals came from the Baltic; iron from the Basque Provinces, and kermes dye, olive oil, cork, fruits, and wines from southern Iberia. Although both England and Castile produced wool for Flanders, this seems to have been no problem, probably because the Castilian wool was introduced to take the place of English wool, rather than pushing it from the market.

Wider interdependence is especially clear in the cloth industry. The English industry had excellent supplies of domestic wool, but relied on Portugal and Andalusia for kermes dye; on Picardy, then Lombardy, then Toulouse for woad; on Iberia for wool oil, and (despite English deposits) on distant Asia Minor for alum. This pan-European inter-connection is even clearer in the Low Country cloth industries, which similarly depended on international supplies including even raw wool. Both England and Flanders then depended on international sales of their cloth, and might copy products to suit their markets: English cloth makers copied French styles with their chalons in the thirteenth century and their musterdevilliers in the fifteenth.

3. *Immigration*

The movement of people is integral to trade, and the movement of Englishmen abroad and foreigners to England as both visitors and immigrants is easy to find in many records. Trade was arguably the most important activity that exposed the largest groups of ‘ordinary folk’ to regular and widespread foreign influences. Many merchants and seamen were temporary residents in other countries, but visits were regular and frequent, year after year, and could last weeks or even months. Although turn-round times in ports could be short, charter-parties for large ships on major routes usually allowed for up to a month in port for loading and unloading, and ships might be delayed even longer by weather or the need for repairs. In these cases those aboard had plenty of time to absorb local customs and language, especially as some were regular visitors. Bristol’s shipmasters and seamen, for instance, were particularly familiar with Bordeaux, Lisbon and Andalusian ports. Similarly those from Hull regularly sailed to Iceland and Bordeaux. They came to know not only the seas, but the customs and people of the ports where they frequently stayed. Some merchants, factors and junior partners stayed longer, sometimes marrying abroad. Some emigrated for life. In England, Italian merchants were deeply embedded in London parishes; and regulations on hosting and the taxation of aliens in England show the range of foreigners living here in the fifteenth century.⁵⁶ In Portugal English merchants were resident in Lisbon, some staying long enough

⁵⁶ H. BRADLEY, *The Views of the Hosts of Alien Merchants 1440-1444*, London 2012 (London Record Society 46); J.L. BOLTON, *The Alien Communities of London in the Fifteenth Century. The Subsidy Rolls of 1440 and 1483-4*, Stamford 1998; J. LUTKIN, *Settled or fleeting? London’s Medieval Immigrant Community Revisited*, in *Medieval Merchant and Money. Essays in Honour of James L. Bolton*, M. ALLEN, M. DAVIES eds., London 2016, pp. 137-155.

to be granted tax exemptions and the right to bear arms in the city; and in London Bartholomew James, a well-established London merchant, described himself as 'born in Lisbon of an English father'.⁵⁷ To the east, John Kempe of King's Lynn spent years in Gdansk, where he married and had a daughter before bringing his wife home to meet his parents in 1431.⁵⁸

4. *Social and cultural practices*

These exchanges made ports very cosmopolitan places and social and cultural practices could easily spread, but how deeply did they become imbedded? The easiest influences to find are in material matters. Societies on both sides of the North Sea, for example, used similar food, clothes and fashions. The English began to drink beer and then to make it. They wore Flemish hats, built in brick, bought memorial brasses in the German or Flemish style in East Anglia, and at Ipswich Low Country influences are visible in its urban dramas. But how far artistic influences relate to trade is difficult to say. Flemish influences in English manuscript illuminations are clear from c. 1340-1370, but before then French and Italian influences were more important.⁵⁹ In the reverse direction and to Scandinavia, we can see reflections of English style in the octagon and choir of Trondheim cathedral and English-influenced painted altar frontals elsewhere in Norway;⁶⁰ English alabasters still grace Holar Cathedral, and traces of English romances can be found in fifteenth century Iceland.⁶¹ Changing artistic styles undoubtedly had something to do with ease of contact, but how much did it depend on trade? Memorial brasses could be imported, but manuscript illuminators were highly trained specialists who had to migrate. Language influences similarly raise questions. The greatest linguistic impacts in England came from invasions by Vikings and Normans, and many of the English merchant class would have spoken some French as well as English. Commercial influence was minor in comparison with that, but it did introduce new words. Imports brought their names with them: Baltic timber brought with it clapholt, righolt, and wainscot;⁶² Italian ships in Southampton brought words for handling cargo (stives, barkroll, arigon, pewtrelle) which were regularly used in local

⁵⁷ P. DE AZEVEDO, *Comercio anglo-português no meado do sec. XV* in "Academia das Ciências de Lisboa Boletim da Segunda Classe", 8, 1913-14, pp. 53-66; TNA PRO31/8/153; CPR 1441-6, London 1908, p. 435.

⁵⁸ *The Book of Margery Kempe*, trans. and ed. B.A. WINDEATT, Harmondsworth 1985, Book II, chapters 1-2, pp. 265-69.

⁵⁹ L. DENNISON, *Flemish Influence on English Manuscript Painting in East Anglia in the Fourteenth Century*, in *East Anglia and its North Sea World*, cit., pp. 315-35.

⁶⁰ D. KING, *Medieval Art in Norfolk and the Continent: an Overview*, in *East Anglia and its North Sea World*, cit., pp. 82-118 (at 89-118).

⁶¹ I am indebted to Maryanne Kowaleski for information on the English romances.

⁶² W.R. CHILDS, *Timber for cloth: changing commodities in Anglo-Baltic trade in the fourteenth century*, in *Cogs, Cargoes and Commerce: Maritime Bulk Trade in Northern Europe 1150-1400*, L. BERGGREN, N. HYBEL, A. LANDAN eds., Toronto 2002, pp. 181-211 (at 189-90).

accounts;⁶³ all ports show macaronic language in their customs accounts.⁶⁴ Many of the greatest intellectual and cultural influences that shaped English history tended to take place at the higher political, ecclesiastical and intellectual levels. All that commerce did here was to provide the means of transport for people, manuscripts and books.

8. CONCLUSION

England, as an island, depended on the sea for all its international contacts except those with Scotland. These contacts were underpinned by a large and flexible fleet of commercial shipping, which was itself underpinned by England's thriving exports of wool and woollen cloth. England's direct commercial networks stretched all over Europe. In the northern seas English ships and merchants were very active in the network, in Iceland, Scandinavia, the Baltic, the Low Countries, France and Iberia, always, of course, alongside other nationalities. Further south, England's direct maritime contacts with the Mediterranean were largely in the hands and ships of Italians, supplemented by Catalan and Basque activity, although a few individual English merchants and ships can be found there before the sixteenth century. Through its trade England was thus exposed to many international contacts. There were, of course, many other important channels of contact through court and church, but arguably commerce was the most important of all, providing not only the means of transport for all social ranks, but also (through seamen and port workers) drawing the largest numbers of the lower ranks of society into contact with other people and lands. English ports were thus exposed to a wide range of influences, yet one can ask how quickly this brought change. Although English ports were exposed to a wide range of influences, change beyond the material world was slow. Fashions, new goods, new words could be quickly adopted, but the structures of law, politics and language remained more stable. The commercial classes, after all, were a minority of the population and change beyond the material world moved more slowly.

One final point must be made. This overview shows England at the centre of its traditional commercial network – one that had been in existence for centuries; but all this was about to change. Atlantic exploration, predominantly by the Iberians, was already opening new routes to west Africa and the Atlantic Islands. By 1480 sugar already came directly to Bristol from Madeira (although not yet in Bristol ships);⁶⁵ Bristol merchants were sponsoring voyages into the North Atlantic;⁶⁶ and English ships were even rumoured to be seeking Andalusian pilots for West

⁶³ A.A. RUDDOCK, *The Method of Handling the Cargoes of Medieval Merchant Gallies*, in "Historical Research", 19, 1941-3, pp. 140-148.

⁶⁴ For an overview of how language might change and its time-scale, see A. NESSE, *Trade and Language: How did Traders Communicate across Language Barriers?* in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade*, cit., pp. 86-100.

⁶⁵ TNA E122/19/14, 20/5.

⁶⁶ G.J. MARCUS, *The Conquest of the North Atlantic*, cit., pp. 164-168.

Africa.⁶⁷ Once these new Atlantic routes became regularly sailed the whole shape of England's (and Europe's) trade networks would change.

⁶⁷ W.R. CHILDS, *Anglo-Castilian Trade*, cit., pp. 168-169.

Nenad Fejic

Extension, ramification, temporalité et dangerosité d'un grand réseau, situant Raguse (Dubrovnik) au point nodal des échanges entre la Péninsule Ibérique et l'Orient méditerranéen (XIII-XV siècle)

Les ambassadeurs ragusains envoyés en 1371 auprès du roi de Hongrie, reçurent du Sénat les instructions suivantes: « Vous devez dire à notre souverain, que nous ne pouvons vivre qu'en nous consacrant au commerce, que nous exerçons la majorité de notre commerce dans le royaume de Rascie et qu'à cause de la mauvaise situation qui y règne actuellement, à la suite des dissensions entre les barons, nous ne pouvons y déployer autant d'activités commerciales que par le passé, et que pour cette raison, les marchands ragusains se sont tournés vers la mer »¹. Ces paroles réellement prononcées ou simplement imaginées par le chroniqueur ont été souvent évoquées par les historiens, comme une sorte de condensé, exprimant une certaine hésitation de la part des Ragusains, à choisir la vocation du commerce maritime, alors que le commerce terrestre semblait être pour eux une vocation naturelle. Auraient-ils choisi volontairement le grand large, uniquement parce que la situation dans leur arrière-pays balkanique était devenue peu propice au commerce terrestre, qu'ils pratiquaient jusqu'alors ? Plutôt que de vouer au déclin le commerce terrestre des temps passés, il semblerait que le chroniqueur par cette pirouette, accrédite précisément la nouvelle vocation de Raguse, à partir du milieu du XIV siècle, la commune devenant un point de rencontre idéal des voies terrestres et maritimes du commerce, un point nodal donc, qui le resterait jusqu'à la fin du Moyen Age et bien au-delà. L'objectif de cette contribution est précisément d'illustrer cette vocation nodale de Raguse, dans les flux commerciaux maritimes, reliant le Levant au Ponant méditerranéen d'une part, et les deux en même temps, au grand arrière-pays balkanique d'autre part².

¹ *Diplomatarum relationum Reipublicae Ragusinae cum regno Hungariae*, éd. J. GELCICH, L. THALLOCY, Budapest 1887, pp. 48-54.

² La bibliographie historique des ouvrages consacrés aux rapports des Ragusains au commerce maritime dans le grand espace méditerranéen, tout en étant assez conséquente, n'atteint pas le volume de la bibliographie consacrée à leurs rapports avec l'arrière-pays balkanique ; et surtout cette bibliographie sur le commerce maritime est plus récente, développée particulièrement dans l'après-guerre, lorsque l'accès aux archives des grands centres méditerranéens (Venise, Gênes, Barcelone etc.) est devenu plus facile aux historiens des pays yougoslaves. Nous évoquons ci-dessous juste un choix de contributions plus récentes, qui ciblent particulièrement les réseaux maritimes de Raguse (Dubrovnik), insistant sur les itinéraires de navigation, l'arsenal et les infrastructures portuaires, les navires et les équipages. Les résultats de ces études précises et ciblées, sont incluses au fur et à mesure, et avec un certain décalage, dans les synthèses sur l'histoire générale ragusaine et c'est pourquoi nous considérons ces articles ponctuels plus à jour pour le sujet qui nous intéresse, et nous les évoquons, plutôt et plus souvent que les grandes synthèses. Voir surtout: B. KREKIC, *Le rôle de Dubrovnik (Raguse)*

1. RAGUSE, AU DEBUT JUSTE UNE MAILLE DU RESEAU VENITIEN ?

Une tradition, bien ancrée, même dans l'historiographie contemporaine, accrédite le rôle de Raguse comme étant celui d'une composante parmi tant d'autres, de l'immense réseau maritime vénitien qui couvrait tout l'espace méditerranéen et notamment, celui de la Méditerranée orientale. Evidemment, cette thèse est défendable jusqu'à un certain point. Si, d'après la chronique ragusaine, les deux communes se ressemblent par leurs origines respectives, la situation géographique et géopolitique de Venise, était nettement plus favorable, dès les premiers siècles du Moyen Age, lorsque celle-ci disposa de l'espace protégé de la lagune, alors que Raguse, se trouvait, dès ses débuts, entourée de puissances hostiles slaves dans l'arrière-pays³. Il est vrai qu'entre 1205 et 1358, Raguse fit partie de l'empire ultramarin vénitien: sa situation soumise à Venise se manifesta sur le plan politique, par la présence du comte vénitien à la tête du gouvernement ragusain, mais aussi sur le plan économique, par la limitation stricte, conformément à plusieurs traités vénéto-ragusains⁴, de la navigation ragusaine vers Venise, de l'importation des produits étrangers à Venise par les navires ragusains, du commerce entre étrangers et ragusains à Venise, et par les taxes sur les produits ragusains, importés à Venise, voire par les interdictions successives des régions entières de l'Adriatique septentrionale

dans la navigation des «*mudae*» vénitiennes au XIV^e siècle, dans *Travaux et mémoires* 8, *Hommage à M. Paul Lemerle*, Paris 1981, pp. 247-254. Réédité dans IDEM, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300-1600*, Aldershot 1997, XII; IDEM, *La navigation ragusaine entre Venise et la Méditerranée orientale aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles* dans, *Actes du IIe colloque international d'histoire. Economies méditerranéennes: Equilibres et intercommunications, XIII^e-XIX^e siècles*, Athens 1985, pp. 129-141, Réédité dans IDEM, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society*, XIII. IDEM, *Le port de Dubrovnik (Raguse), entreprise d'Etat, plaque tournante du commerce de la ville (XIII^e-XVI^e siècle)*, dans *I porti come impresa economica*, Florence 1988, pp. 653-673. Réédité dans IDEM, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society (1300-1600)*, cit. ; IDEM, *Ragusa (Dubrovnik) e il mare: aspetti e problemi (XIV^e-XVI^e secolo) dans Ragusa e il Mediterraneo*, éd. A. DI VITTORIO, Bari 1990, pp. 131-151. Réédité dans IDEM, *Dubrovnik: a Mediterranean Urban Society XV*. IDEM, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant*, Paris-La Haye 1961. Cet ouvrage est particulièrement précieux, parce qu'il contient un choix des registres d'archives de Dubrovnik concernant le Levant: de nombreux registres puisés dans ce livre nous ont servi à illustrer notre propos: les côtes des registres d'archives, sont alors accompagnés du numéro de registre dans l'ouvrage de Krekic: voir ci-dessous, à partir de la note infrapaginale n°13. N. FEJIC, *Construire et contrôler: le gouvernement de Dubrovnik (Raguse) face au défi de la construction et de la protection des infrastructures portuaires (XIV^e-XVI^e siècles)* dans Actes du XXXV Congrès de la SHMES, 5 et 6 juin 2004, La Rochelle 2004, Paris 2005, pp. 117-130; IDEM, *Dubrovnik et la mer (XIII^e-XV^e siècle)* dans *The Sea in History, Mediaeval World*, Suffolk 2017, pp. 191-201.

³ Voici en quels termes, le meilleur chroniqueur ragusain, Junije Rastic (Junius Restii), qui a vécu à la fin du XVII^e et au début du XVIII^e siècle, explique les différences fondamentales entre les situations géopolitiques respectives de Raguse et de Venise: *I Ragusei, fondati in terra ferma, attornati e continuamente vessati da potenze nemiche formidabili e barbare, furono obbligati con esatto contegno celar la propria ambizione, e benchè avessero mezzi di ja progressi per mare, non poterono prevalersi, come fecero i Veneziani, i quali, situati in quelle lagune, non temendo alcuno attacco dalle potenze barbare, che erano in terra ferma, sortivano con le armate in Levante, non azzardando che quei pochi legni; e se l'impresa riusciva, crescevan di stato, con l'occupazione or d'una or d'altra isola, e se erano fuggati, si ritiravan nelle proprie lagune, senza poter esser inseguiti da alcuno*, *Chronica Ragusina Junii Restii, item Joannis Gundulæ*, éd. SPERATUS NODILO, Zagreb 1893, p. 37.

⁴ En fait les termes du traité vénéto-ragusain de 1232, furent renouvelés en 1236 et 1252, sans modifications majeures. Ces traités ont été publiés plusieurs fois; voir par exemple dans: J. RADONIC, *Acta et diplomata Ragusina*, Beograd, 1934, pp. 21-24, 28-32, et. S. LJUBIC, *Listine o odnosajih izmedju Juznoga Slavenstva i Mletacke Republike*, Zagreb 1868, I, pp.46-49, 53-55, 82-85.

aux navires ragusains. Cependant l'hégémonie politique, et culturelle aussi, de Venise fut sous certains angles, favorable à l'essor économique de Raguse. Sans entrer dans les détails de l'ancien débat, à savoir si Raguse, entre 1205, à la suite de la Quatrième croisade et 1358, à la suite du traité de Zara, était souveraine ou bien soumise à Venise, car les arguments d'ordre juridique (statutaire), existent pour les deux thèses⁵, il faut constater que l'époque de la prépondérance vénitienne, a nettement favorisé la vocation maritime de Dubrovnik, et ceci bien avant que la commune ne se tourne vers la mer, selon les mots du chroniqueur Junius Restii, cités ci-dessus⁶. La construction des infrastructures portuaires, de l'arsenal, la participation aux galées vénitiennes, sont toutes confirmées encore au cours du siècle et demi de prépondérance vénitienne à Raguse entre 1205 et 1358. On peut donc affirmer avec certitude que la vocation maritime de Raguse est déjà bien établie au XIII siècle, et que les bases du riche réseau maritime de Raguse, datent de bien avant la reconnaissance de la souveraineté hongroise, après le traité de Zara en 1358.

Cependant, bien qu'il ait profité de l'antériorité du réseau maritime vénitien, et bien que la marine naissante ragusaine, ait été pendant longtemps incluse dans le réseau maritime de la Sérénissime, au fil du temps Raguse a constitué son propre réseau maritime en fonction de ses propres intérêts économiques, qui ne coïncidaient pas toujours et partout avec les intérêts de sa protectrice, et plus tard rivale, Venise.

2. UN RÉSEAU MARITIME RAGUSAIN PARTICULIER

Le grand historien de Dubrovnik, Barisa Krekic a signalé, il y a plusieurs décennies, que les hommes d'affaires vénitiens, bien que très tôt implantés à Raguse et surtout bénéficiant de l'acquisition de cette commune à la faveur de la Quatrième croisade, ont commis l'erreur fondamentale de ne jamais véritablement s'installer à demeure dans l'arrière-pays balkanique : et cela même au temps du réveil de l'activité minière en Serbie dans la seconde moitié du XIII siècle, et en Bosnie, dans la première moitié du XIV siècle. Rappelons au passage que les différentes séries de registres d'archives à Raguse, sont conservées globalement à partir du dernier tiers du XIII siècle. Cela permit au professeur Krekic d'argumenter l'absence des Vénitiens, ou leur réticence de s'engager davantage dans l'arrière-pays, par leur ignorance de la langue slave, ce qui n'était pas le cas de leurs anciens soumis, et nouveaux concurrents Ragusains, qui justement étaient le plus souvent de même origine, que leurs partenaires de l'arrière-pays et parlaient la même langue⁷. Cela se traduisait par la situation paradoxale, qui faisait que même dans les domaines éco-

⁵ Pour le statut juridique de Dubrovnik (Raguse), on peut consulter I. MITIĆ, *Dubrovačka država u međunarodnoj zajednici od 1358 do 1815 (L'État ragusain dans les relations internationales de 1358 à 1815)*, Zagreb 1988.

⁶ Voir note infrapaginale 3.

⁷ Voir à ce sujet particulièrement B.KREKIC, *Venetian merchants in the Balkan Hinterland in the Fourteenth Century, Wirtschaftskräfte und Wirtschaftswege, vol. 1: Mittelmeer und Kontinent; Festschrift für Hermann Kellenbenz. Beiträge zur Wirtschafts-Geschichte 4*, Nuremberg 1978 réédité dans IDEM, *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages*, Londres 1980.

nomiques les plus lucratifs de l'époque, notamment l'exportation du minerai d'argent, et surtout d'argent aurifère, dont les Balkans étaient devenus, avec la Bohême et l'Autriche, la première source d'approvisionnement de l'Occident au XV siècle⁸, les marchands Vénitiens ne participaient que depuis Raguse, en abandonnant aux Ragusains toutes les étapes intermédiaires en amont, y compris l'obtention et l'exploitation des concessions minières de la part des souverains serbes et bosniens, ainsi que le transport des métaux précieux depuis l'arrière-pays vers la côte. Les marchands vénitiens n'intervenaient donc dans le circuit des métaux précieux balkaniques, qu'à partir de Raguse, en les acheminant principalement sur leurs navires, vers la capitale lagunaire. Et en même à Raguse, ils subissaient déjà la concurrence des marchands ragusains, qui n'abandonnaient pas facilement le circuit lucratif du commerce des métaux précieux, en contrôlant souvent, par le biais d'une unique compagnie familiale ce circuit, depuis l'origine, dans l'arrière-pays balkanique, en passant par Raguse, jusqu'à son aboutissement à Venise. L'implantation des marchands et entrepreneurs ragusains dans l'arrière-pays balkanique, précède donc la constitution du réseau maritime ragusain de grande envergure, d'autant plus, comme il a été signalé, qu'au temps du premier éveil de l'activité minière en Serbie au XIII siècle, Raguse était encore sous la domination vénitienne qui entraînait sa vocation maritime.

Les destinations que cette commune devait intégrer dans son réseau maritime à la fin du XIV et au XV siècle, principalement les villes byzantines de Salonique et de Constantinople, faisaient déjà partie de son réseau terrestre établi, depuis le début du XIV siècle : en effet, les registres ragusains confirment l'existence d'un service de courriers, à la disposition du comte vénitien de Raguse (jusqu'en 1358) ainsi que de marchands locaux et étrangers qui désiraient entretenir des contacts soit avec le baïle vénitien à Constantinople, soit avec les partenaires, habitant la capitale byzantine, ou Salonique. Les courriers parcouraient des distances considérables, en un temps moyen, de deux semaines ou de quatre semaines, jusqu'à Salonique et Constantinople respectivement, bien que la durée pût aussi être abrégée, en cas d'urgence⁹. Il est bien évident, qu'une longue pratique d'un réseau terrestre, pouvait faciliter son branchement et son prolongement, par le réseau maritime, au moment où celui-ci cessait d'être limité et entravé par la Sérénissime, après la cessation du pouvoir vénitien à Raguse en 1358.

La progressive émancipation économique de Raguse, facilitée et accélérée par le passage sous la souveraineté de la couronne de Hongrie, après 1358, aboutit donc à la structuration d'un réseau maritime propre ragusain, de plus en plus indépendant des réseaux de navigation vénitiens, et notamment des galées de commerce qui jouaient encore un rôle important à l'époque de la prépondérance politique de Venise sur Raguse.

⁸ D. KOVACEVIC, *Dans la Serbie et la Bosnie médiévales*, dans « Annales, économies, sociétés, civilisations », 6, 1960, n. 2, pp. 248-258; B. BOJOVIC, *Entre Venise et l'Empire ottoman, les métaux précieux des Balkans XV^e-XVI^e siècle*, dans « Annales HSS », 6, 2005, pp. 1277-1297.

⁹ Pour les services de courriers terrestres entre Raguse, Constantinople et Salonique, voir: B. KREKIC, *Courrier traffic between Dubrovnik, Constantinople and Thessalonika in the First Half of the Fourteenth Century*, dans « Zbornik radova Vizantoloskog instituta », 1, 1952, pp. 113-120. Réédité dans IDEM, *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans*, cit.

3. L'EXTENSION PROGRESSIVE D'UN RESEAU MARITIME RAGUSAIN PROPRE, PRESQUE AUSSI IMPORTANT QUE CELUI DE VENISE

S'agissant de l'extension du réseau maritime ragusain, au cours des deux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge, son importance ne faisait aucun doute, ainsi que sa relative vulnérabilité, que nous aurons l'occasion de développer plus tard et dont la raison principale fut l'absence, surtout dans la navigation à long cours, d'une protection armée rapprochée. Il en allait tout autrement des galères vénitiennes, intégrées dans les convois réguliers qui partaient depuis la métropole lagunaire, vers l'Orient et l'Occident, et qui accueillaient au sein de leurs équipages des hommes armés, voire se faisaient accompagner de galères armées, associées aux convois uniquement à cet effet. Certes, il y eut dans l'installation du réseau maritime ragusain dans la Méditerranée une progression ininterrompue, dont il serait difficile de suivre toutes les étapes, mais qui à son apogée médiévale, vers la moitié du XV siècle, atteignait les destinations éloignées de la Méditerranée occidentale : certainement tous les grands ports de la Catalogne et les côtes de la Barbarie sur le versant méridional occidental, ainsi que de la Méditerranée orientale avec comme destinations les plus éloignées, Jaffa, Saint-Jean d'Acre, Beyrouth, Tripoli. Il faut aussi inclure parmi ces grandes extensions du réseau ragusain les îles Sporades du sud longeant la côte orientale de l'Asie Mineure, Constantinople et Péra, et au-delà du Bosphore, Caffa en Crimée, Tana au fond de la mer d'Azov, ainsi que Trébizonde sur la côte septentrionale de l'Asie Mineure. Dans ce réseau était évidemment incluses les îles de la Mer Egée, y compris à son extrémité méridionale, la grande île de Crète.

On voit donc, que globalement les réseaux vénitiens et ragusains coïncidaient, au XV siècle, à l'époque de la plus grande extension de ce dernier. Cependant, il nous semble qu'à l'intérieur de ces deux réseaux maritimes, qui se superposaient pratiquement, on peut chercher les points d'attaches qui étaient plus particulièrement importants pour la marine et le commerce ragusains, et où ces derniers étaient peut-être, parfois plus actifs que leurs homologues vénitiens. Nous pensons particulièrement aux ports d'Albanie (Valona, Spinariza) sur les côtes de la mer Ionienne, et au port de Corfou, dans l'île du même nom, qui dès 1386 appartient aux Vénitiens, ainsi qu'aux ports d'attache d'Épire, dans le golfe d'Arta, à Patras sur le golfe de Corinthe et à Glarenza.

4. UN RESEAU MARITIME EN EQUILIBRE, SITUANT RAGUSE AU POINT NODAL ENTRE LE LEVANT ET LE PONANT MEDITERRANEEN.

Cela nous amène au point central de notre argumentaire : il s'agit de voir si la ville de Raguse était, de par son site géographique, ainsi que de par sa vocation économique, un point nodal et un point de redistribution des biens, entre les deux extensions de son commerce maritime, celui du Levant et celui du Ponant méditerranéen. En effet, si l'on suit les contrats de nolis dans les registres ragu-

sains¹⁰, on voit que l'inclusion des navires ragusains dans les convois vénitiens, bien que présente, est plutôt caractéristique de la première période de la prépondérance vénitienne sur cette ville. Plus tard, après la reconnaissance de la souveraineté hongroise, (1358), bien plus nombreux étaient les contrats entre les patrons et les marchands de navires ragusains : bien sûr, il ne faudrait pas exclure ni le passage des convois de galées vénitiens qui continuent, ni surtout les contrats « mixtes » conclus à Raguse, entre les patrons ragusains et les marchands étrangers ou vice-versa, mais globalement, les ressortissants ragusains s'imposent sans aucun doute dans ces contrats, aussi bien en tant que marchands, qu'autant que patrons de navires en partance.

La navigation ragusaine, comme il a été déjà signalé, n'ayant pas bénéficié d'un système de convois à l'exemple de Venise, son réseau accuse, nous semble-t-il, certaines spécificités. D'une part, ce réseau paraît beaucoup plus dense et concentré, s'agissant des destinations proches de Raguse (notamment les côtes de l'Albanie, de l'Épire et de l'Apulie, et d'autre part, même les destinations plus éloignées témoignent des étapes plus courtes, effectuées « en saut de puce » d'une destination à l'autre, parfois très peu éloignées¹¹. Cette différence, qu'un regard même superficiel sur la carte, fait apparaître, s'explique facilement. Les « galées » vénitiennes, bien structurées et organisées, aux fonctionnalités bien établies d'avance, aussi bien par leurs parcours que par leurs cargaisons respectives étaient de grandes entreprises, qui mettaient en symbiose les intérêts de l'État vénitien, et des particuliers; Raguse, à elle seule, comme il a été signalé, ne disposait pas d'un système propre de « galées »: d'ailleurs, lorsque l'on tient compte de nombreux contrats d'affrètements de navires, conclus entre marchands et patrons à Raguse, aux XIV et XV siècle, on s'aperçoit que les désignations de « coque » et de « caraques » sont beaucoup plus nombreuses, que celles de « galères » réservées aux navires naviguant surtout à titre officiel, au service de la commune.

Dégager une quelconque régularité dans la nature des contrats maritimes conclus, conservés dans les registres à Raguse en terme de produits chargés, de date de cargaison, à l'image des galées vénitiennes, paraît une tâche assez difficile: cependant, les itinéraires qui s'en dégagent, permettent de postuler un véritable réseau maritime, au centre duquel se trouve Raguse, et de constater que les produits du Levant, étaient véhiculés vers le Ponant, soit en transitant par le port d'attache ragusain, soit directement. Cela faisait de Dubrovnik, non seulement le point de convergence de ses deux réseaux, du Levant et du Ponant, mais aussi le pôle de coordination et de distribution entre les deux réseaux respectifs, qui parfois se rejoignaient et s'enchaînaient en haute mer, sans même transiter par le port ragusain.

Globalement, on relève deux réseaux levantins ragusains, le premier proche, local, pourrait-on dire, et qui englobe, comme il a été signalé plus haut, les côtes alba-

¹⁰ Les registres sont conservés dans: DRZAVNI ARHIV DUBROVNIK, plus loin DAD (Archives d'État de Dubrovnik) sous différentes appellations qui seront citées dans leur versions intégrales respectives la première fois, et en abrégé, par la suite. B. KREKIC, *Le rôle de Dubrovnik (Raguse) dans la navigation des mers vénitienne*, citation complète note infrapaginale 2.

¹¹ Ceci est particulièrement vrai pour les distances peu éloignées de Dubrovnik, notamment vers le Levant sur les côtes albanaises et épirotes, où les étapes sont plus rapprochées, et où le va-et-vient des navires ragusains s'effectue à un rythme plus rapide.

naises et épirotes, sous tous les régimes, successifs, byzantins, épirotes, serbes et angevins. Ce réseau implique un va-et-vient incessant, quotidien d'embarcations transportant essentiellement les céréales et d'autres produits alimentaires, sans pourtant intégrer les destinations plus éloignées. Et puis il y a le véritable réseau levantin ragusain, qui commence au-delà des côtes épirotes, intégrant les côtes du Péloponnèse (Morée), avec comme principales escales, Glarenza, Modon et Coron, qui se prolonge en un réseau insulaire égéen et méditerranéen, où les îles de Crète, de Rhodes, de Chio et de Chypre ont la priorité absolue, en tant qu'escales et ports de bifurcation: plus précisément Crète, Rhodes et Chio vers des destinations continentales de l'Asie Mineure, à savoir Phocée, Altologo, et Palatia, ensuite Constantinople et la Mer Noire (plus rarement), et l'île de Chypre, vers le Proche orient (Tripoli, Beyrouth, Saint-Jean d'Acre et Jaffa), et l'Égypte, (Alexandrie et Damiette).

Le réseau du Ponant ragusain est moins dense et structuré : on pourrait dire aussi, qu'à la différence du réseau du Levant, il ne comporte pas un volet « local » avec les destinations exclusivement proches, et un volet « ultramarin », mais que les deux s'enchaînent le plus souvent, les destinations proches constituant des étapes incontournables vers celles, plus éloignées, d'un unique réseau ponantin. Les destinations proches du Ponant ragusain sont principalement constituées de ports de la côte orientale de l'Adriatique tels Split (Spalato) en Dalmatie, Senj (Segna) et Bakar (Buccari) sur le littoral croate, ensuite de l'ancienne métropole Venise, et surtout des ports de Pouilles, où s'arrêtent le plus souvent les navires ragusains en partance vers le Ponant : Bari, Barletta, Brindisi, Trani, Monopoli et quelques autres. A ces destinations proches du Ponant, s'enchaînent souvent des destinations plus éloignées, hors de l'Adriatique, le port de Crotone en Calabre, les ports siciliens, en premier lieu, ceux de Messine, de Palerme, de Syracuse et de Catane, plus au sud l'île de Malte et, comme ultime destination, les côtes de Barbarie, avec la ville de Tripoli, seule expressément évoquée dans les sources ragusaines. Enfin, l'extension vers le Ponant du réseau ragusain, comprend aussi la Catalogne et Valence mais, comme nous le verrons, au moment où nous traiterons de la *temporalité* de ce réseau, il concernait certes, les navires et les cargaisons en direction de Raguse, mais il était desservi en grande partie par les patrons et les marins catalans¹².

5. RAMIFICATION DES DEUX RESEAUX RAGUSAINS : DES LIENS ET UNE REELLE COMPLEMENTARITE ENTRE LES RESEAUX DU PONANT ET DU LEVANT

Une caractéristique du réseau ragusain, qui à première vue le distingue considérablement du réseau vénitien, est sa grande ramification: l'absence des grands itinéraires de galées de commerce, caractéristiques du réseau vénitien, est compensée, comme il a été déjà signalé, par un véritable foisonnement de petits parcours, de détours et de retours, parsemés de multiples escales, tout cela sans que l'on puisse véritablement dégager des itinéraires qui s'inscrivent dans la durée et la régularité,

¹² N. FEJIC, *Les Catalans à Dubrovnik et dans le bassin adriatique à la fin du Moyen Age*, dans « Anuario de estudios catalanes », 24, 1994, pp. 429-452. M. SPREMIC, *Dubrovnik e gli Aragonesi, 1442-1495*, Palermo 1986. D. KOVACEVIC-KOJIC, *Les Catalans dans les affaires de la compagnie Caboga (1426-1433)*, dans « Acta Historica et archaeologica medievialia », 26, 2005, pp. 759-766.

comme cela fut le cas des célèbres galées vénitiennes. Nous évoquerons quelques exemples de ces ramifications, et de la « porosité », entre les réseaux du Levant et du Ponant ragusain. Ainsi le 4 mai 1377, un marchand ragusain affrète un navire pour aller à Jaffa « avec des pèlerins et des marchandises »¹³: la première escale sur ce périple devait être Modon, en Morée, et ce n'est qu'à Modon que l'affréteur devait décider s'il poursuivrait la route, en passant par Rhodes et Chypre (Famagouste) ou par l'île de Crète (Candie): on voit, ici que l'itinéraire n'est donné que d'une manière indicative, et qu'il appartenait au patron de le préciser, au fur et à mesure de sa navigation: mais pour l'instant, il n'y a pas encore d'interférence des itinéraires du Levant et du Ponant. Il en va de même d'un voyage qu'un patron ragusain devait accomplir la même année: il devait se rendre d'abord à Venise, charger son navire de marchandises qu'il devait vendre à Senj (Segna) sur le littoral croate, y acheter du bois, qu'il devait transporter à « Tripoli de Barbarie »: mais au lieu d'aller jusqu'en Afrique du Nord, il a déchargé et vendu le bois dans l'île de Malte, en portant préjudice au marchand affréteur de son navire¹⁴.

Un peu moins de deux décennies plus tard, le 10 novembre 1394, les deux itinéraires du Ponant et du Levant, sont déjà étroitement reliés, donc inclus dans un même itinéraire: ainsi Antonius de Gurgolino de Bari, affrète une coque équipée de trente matelots à trois patriciens ragusains, pour aller à Venise, afin de charger des vases; ensuite la coque devait se rendre à Bari, où Antoine chargerait une quantité de vin, d'huile ou du sucre, suffisante pour remplir tous ces vases; la coque devait ensuite se rendre à Constantinople, ou à Péra pour y décharger ces vases¹⁵: voici donc un exemple encore relativement modeste de l'interdépendance des deux réseaux ragusains, du Ponant (Venise, Bari) et du Levant (Constantinople, Péra) au centre duquel se trouve Raguse, les deux réseaux étant intégrés dans un seul parcours, en partance de Raguse. Quelques décennies plus tard, le 19 juin 1409, un patron ragusain, met à la disposition d'un marchand grec un navire, pour « un voyage de six mois »¹⁶, qui ferait les escales suivantes: Corfou, Chio, la Syrie (sans plus de précision) et Alexandrie « vers la Barbarie »: il est à signaler que pour ce long voyage, aux étapes et à l'itinéraire incertains, aucune autre précision n'est donnée (notamment sur les produits transportés): il est juste précisé que l'affréteur assurera l'autorisation de voyager dans les pays sous interdiction pontificale. Nous voyons aussi que le patron ragusain, s'engage dans un véritable tour de la Méditerranée, pour un long périple, à l'itinéraire très flou: il est simplement précisé qu'il ne devait pas traverser « le détroit de Romanie », et qu'il incluait ainsi le réseau oriental et occidental ragusain, sans que les marchandises transportées soient précisées¹⁷.

Un des exemples les plus accomplis de synthèse entre les réseaux du Levant et du Ponant ragusain, nous est cependant fourni par un contrat du 2 avril 1443, entre un patron et un patricien ragusain: le patron devait se rendre d'abord dans la ville

¹³ DAD, *Debita Notariae (Deb. Not.)*, VIII, 36' (n° 322).

¹⁴ DAD, *Sententiae cancellariae (Sent. Canc.) II*, 36 (n° 324).

¹⁵ DAD, *Diversa Cancellariae (Div. Canc.)*, XXXI, 130'-131 (n° 454).

¹⁶ DAD, *Div. Canc. XXXVIII*, 75-75' (n° 565).

¹⁷ Nous aborderons le problème de la temporalité du réseau ragusain dans la section suivante.

de Senj (Segna) sur le littoral croate, où il devait charger le bois, qu'il devait rapporter à Raguse dans deux mois. Depuis Raguse, il devait repartir dans quinze jours vers Syracuse ou Palerme, où il disposerait de trente jours pour vendre le fret chargé à Raguse, et pour y charger d'autres marchandises, ainsi que « des passagers » (*homeni de passazo*), pour se rendre à Alexandrie ou Damiette. Là il disposerait encore de trente jours pour décharger ce fret, charger son navire de nouvelles marchandises, ainsi que de voyageurs, et repartir vers Raguse¹⁸. Ce réseau intégrait donc nettement les destinations du Ponant ragusain (Venise, Syracuse, Palerme) en même temps que celle du Levant ragusain (Alexandrie) en situant le port de départ au point nodal de ces deux réseaux.

Finalement, s'agissant de la ramification la plus occidentale du réseau du Ponant ragusain, atteignant la Catalogne et Valence, elle présente une spécificité, dans la mesure où elle est assumée par les marchands catalans (surtout de Barcelone et de Tarragone) qui embauchent des patrons le plus souvent catalans, mais parfois aussi ragusains¹⁹: cependant ces marchands et ces patrons participent aussi au réseau ragusain, dans la mesure où ils choisissent Raguse comme destination de leurs périples et de leurs affaires, et dans la mesure aussi où ils prolongent eux même, ce réseau depuis Raguse vers le Levant: évoquons deux cas, le premier datant de la fin du XIV^e siècle où un patron de navire ragusain, le 5 novembre 1387, se met au service de deux Catalans, « Raymundus Vilari et Antonius Oliveri », originaires de Barcelone, pour aller à Alexandrie, en passant par Modon et Rhodes, « pour vendre 200 milliers de marchandise »²⁰. A cet effet, il disposait de quinze jours. Fort probablement il s'agissait du corail, dans la mesure où les ressortissants des villes catalanes entretenaient depuis Raguse des rapports suivis avec leurs compatriotes d'un côté dans les villes catalanes et de l'autre en Egypte et en Syrie, ayant précisément comme objectif le commerce du corail: dans ce commerce Raguse servait de plaque tournante, d'où les marchands catalans acheminaient, le corail aussi bien vers le Levant que vers le Ponant: les fonds marins dans les parages de Raguse étaient riches en corail. Le deuxième cas date du 24 mai 1431, lorsque deux Catalans de Barcelone, « Bernardus Guasquillus et Johannes Ferrer », habitant Raguse, concluent un contrat pour « la vente du corail en Syrie, à Beyrouth, Damas, Alexandrie et ailleurs » et pour l'achat en Orient des produits que l'un des deux partenaires achèterait, pour les revendre à Raguse, le profit étant partagé à ration de trois quarts pour le « *socius stans* » et un quart pour le « *socius tractans* »²¹.

Au vu de ces cas typiques d'itinéraires, formant deux grands volets du réseau ragusain: celui du Ponant et celui du Levant, une conclusion semble s'imposer

¹⁸ DAD, *Diversa Notariae (Div. Not. XXVI)*, 181-181' (n° 1000).

¹⁹ Les séries d'archives ragusaines abondent en témoignages de séjours de ressortissants des pays et des villes de la Péninsule Ibérique: ainsi, on y mentionne expressément (en ordre décroissant, selon le nombre de citations): la Catalogne, Barcelone, Tortose, Majorque, Valence, l'Espagne, l'Aragon, Tarragone, Navarre, Portugal, Saragosse, Alicante, Castille; les villes sous le pouvoir catalan sont aussi mentionnées comme Perpignan, Narbonne, ou Cagliari en Sardaigne; voir plus dans: N. FEJIC, *Les Espagnols à Dubrovnik*, dans *Les Immigrants et la ville, insertion, intégration, discrimination (XII-XX siècles)* éd. D. MENJOT, J.-L. PINOL, Paris 1996, pp. 83-90.

²⁰ DAD, *Div. Not. X*, 4' (n° 387).

²¹ DAD *Div. Not. XVII*, 46 (n°790).

quant à l'extension de ce réseau. Selon toute évidence, l'extension du réseau maritime ragusain dans l'espace méditerranéen, en particulier dans la seconde moitié du XIV et au XV siècle, c'est-à-dire au temps où Raguse ne reconnaissait plus la souveraineté vénitienne, finit par atteindre la superficie de son ancienne métropole lagunaire. Cependant, la différence apparait, lorsque l'on évoque le volume des échanges²², et surtout la technique et l'organisation du réseau des échanges. Raguse n'a jamais mis au point une organisation structurée de réseaux correspondant aux galées de commerce vénitiennes, avec un procédé d'affrètement aux enchères des galères par les marchands, une mise à disposition tournante par tirage, des équipages de galères, des itinéraires précis, vers les grandes destinations de la mer Noire, de la Basse ou Haute Romanie, de Chypre, de Syrie, de Barbarie, et à partir du début du XIV siècle vers les Flandres²³. C'est l'absence d'un pareil réseau à Raguse, qui a contribué au fractionnement des itinéraires, et par voie de conséquence à une ramification accentuée des réseaux. Les galées de commerce vénitiennes, pouvaient, à un moment donné de leurs parcours respectifs, intégrer des navires voyageant seuls, et rejoindre avec eux Venise, tout en leur offrant leur protection armée : c'était par exemple le cas des galées de Mer Noire et de Haute Romanie vénitiennes, qui sur le chemin du retour, faisaient escale à Negrepoint, (Eubée), ou à Coron et à Modon en Morée, où elles étaient rejointes par des navires voyageant seuls, et qui desservaient les petits ports de Grèce, pour ensuite continuer de conserve leur périple vers Venise. La navigation ragusaine, ne bénéficiant pas d'un tel double dispositif, chaque navire qui s'engageait vers la Romanie, la Mer Noire, la Syrie ou la Barbarie se devait de desservir le plus grand nombre de destinations possible, en synthétisant les deux vocations, qui demeuraient bien distinctes dans la navigation vénitienne : celle de long cours et celle, desservant des destinations locales²⁴. Cela expliquerait la grande ramification du réseau ragusain au travers de la Méditerranée. Les patrons de navires ragusains avaient d'ailleurs peu de chances, sauf dans les parages immédiats de leur ville natale, de se joindre à d'autres navires de leurs concitoyens. Cela nous amène naturellement à deux autres volets du réseau maritime ragusain, la temporalité et la dangerosité.

6. LA TEMPORALITE DU RESEAU RAGUSAIN : DE LONGS VOYAGES, SANS VERITABLE RYTHME SAISONNIER

La temporalité du réseau ragusain, au vu des contrats de nolis entre les patrons et les marchands, dépendait apparemment peu du rythme des saisons. En effet, la présence des navires ragusains dans les galées régulières, en partance depuis Venise, au printemps et à l'automne, diminue considérablement, après la fin de la domina-

²² Le volume des échanges est certainement inférieur, aussi bien en termes de produits, qu'en terme de capitaux engagés. Pour Raguse, il est d'ailleurs plus facile, d'évaluer le volume du marché du crédit, grâce à la série très complète de *«Debita notariae»*, Voir par exemple: I. VOJE *Kreditna trgovina u srednjovekovnom Dubrovniku (Le marché des crédits à Dubrovnik au Moyen Age)*, Sarajevo 1976.

²³ F. LANE, *Venice, a maritime Republic*, Baltimore&Londres 1987, pp. 124-134.

²⁴ Effectivement, ce ne sont que les destinations les plus proches de Raguse, qui bénéficiaient de dessertes uniques et directes (notamment, les côtes de l'Albanie, de l'Épire et des Pouilles).

tion vénitienne sur Raguse, et les contrats entre patrons et marins ragusains, émail-
lent désormais les registres ragusains tout au long de l'année²⁵. Ces contrats sont
généralement discrets, quant aux dates précises de départ de Raguse, tandis que les
renseignements concernant la durée imposée de la traversée, sont pratiquement
inexistants. Il faut bien se résigner à la réalité, qu'il s'agit là de contraintes tempo-
relles sur lesquelles on n'avait vraiment pas de prise, la durée de navigation
moyenne vers les principales destinations du Levant et du Ponant, se situant dans
des fourchettes temporelles connues et admises dans la pratique et par conséquent,
passées, dans la plupart des cas, sous silence dans les contrats notariaux entre les
marins et les marchands ragusains. Par contre, les contrats abondent en données
temporelles, concernant la durée de séjours dans les ports d'escales et de destina-
tion, et précisent explicitement que ces séjours devaient servir principalement à la
cargaison de marchandises, à l'attente des passagers ou au paiement des nolis aux
patrons. Ainsi, dans le contrat déjà évoqué pour un voyage à Jaffa, il était précisé
que le patron mettrait à disposition son navire au marchand à Raguse « dès qu'il serait
de retour de Valone », sans préciser justement la date de ce retour, et qu'une fois at-
teint Modon, le patron pourrait décider s'il poursuivrait son voyage par « Rhodes et
Famagouste ou par Candie », et « qu'à Jaffa il devrait attendre quinze jours les passa-
gers, partis en pèlerinage au Saint-Sépulcre »²⁶. Un autre contrat, qui a donné lieu à
un contentieux devant le tribunal ragusain, entre le patron et la veuve d'un mar-
chand²⁷, évoque un voyage à Venise, une escale à Senj, un retour à Raguse, un nou-
veau départ vers « Tripoli en Barbarie », donc un voyage qui ne pouvait durer
moins de deux mois, sans aucune donnée chronologique précise cependant, sur la
durée. Sur le long voyage, qui devait mener un navire ragusain de Raguse à Venise,
puis de Venise à Bari et enfin de Bari à Constantinople on sait simplement qu'il de-
vait commencer avant le 8 décembre (1394), « et que le navire devait rester 40 jours
à Constantinople pour recevoir le nolis »²⁸.

Même, lorsque les traversées devenaient plus longues, et lorsqu'elles incluaient
dans un même parcours le Levant et le Ponant, les précisions chronologiques
étaient rares ou inexistantes. Le voyage d'un patron ragusain, commençant à Raguse
en juin 1409 qui englobait les escales de Corfou, Chio, la Syrie (sans escale précise),
et Alexandrie, devait s'accomplir en six mois et c'était la seule référence chronolo-
gique : ce délai dépassait certainement la durée du voyage, malgré l'importance du
parcours et incluait donc les durées de séjours dans les escales respectives²⁹. Enfin,
un contrat, passé le 2 avril 1443, entre un marchand et un patron ragusain, pré-
voyait que celui-ci parte vers Senj, avant la mi-juin, qu'il rentre ensuite à Raguse,
qu'il reparte vers Syracuse et Palerme, pour y rester trente jours, et qu'il se dirige
ensuite vers Alexandrie ou Damiette où il devrait rester aussi trente jours, avant de

²⁵ Une statistique complète des dates de départs des navires ragusains donc une répartition
saisonnnière détaillée des rythmes de navigation tout au long de la fin du Moyen Âge (après la fin de la
domination vénitienne), donnerait des résultats plus précis, mais elle reste encore à faire.

²⁶ DAD, *Deb. Not.* VIII, 36'.

²⁷ DAD, *Sententia Cancellariae (Sent. Canc.) II*, 36' (n° 322).

²⁸ DAD, *Div. Canc.* XXXI, 130-131', (n° 454).

²⁹ DAD, *Div. Canc.* XXXVIII, 75'-76' (n° 565).

rentrer à Raguse. L'unique référence chronologique explicite dans ce contrat, concernait l'appareillage depuis Raguse avant la mi-juin³⁰.

La pratique de ne pas préciser la date d'appareillage dans les contrats de nolis à Raguse, empêche donc de déterminer avec plus de précision les durées respectives des périodes au sein des deux réseaux maritimes majeurs de Raguse. Les durées de séjour dans les ports d'escales et de destinations sont cependant fournies en abondance, car elles reposaient pleinement sur les compromis entre le marchand et le patron, les deux cherchant à se protéger d'avance en cas d'imprévu.

Les seules exceptions, où l'historien est en état d'évaluer approximativement la durée du périple sur le réseau du Ponant, sont celles où l'on peut faire un rapprochement entre les sources des archives catalanes et ragusaines. En effet les dates consignées dans les contrats d'assurance et de nolis faits à Barcelone, peuvent être utilement comparées aux dates de l'octroi des sauf-conduits émis par les autorités ragusaines aux patrons des navires catalans : les délais entre la rédaction du contrat à Barcelone, et l'émission du sauf-conduit à Raguse, correspond logiquement à la durée de la traversée entre les ports catalans et Raguse. Evidemment, ces données sont plutôt approximatives car il n'est pas toujours certain que le voyage pouvait s'accomplir en droiture, étant donné que le patron pouvait aussi, volontairement ou sous contrainte faire une ou plusieurs escales entre les villes catalanes et Raguse, par exemple en Sicile ou dans les ports des Pouilles³¹. Il s'agit néanmoins d'une extension du réseau du Ponant ragusain, pour laquelle l'estimation temporelle est possible. Par contre, une estimation semblable, pour les durées de voyages vers le Levant méditerranéen, n'est pas possible, faute de documents conservés qui proviendraient des ports d'escales et de destinations du réseau levantin ragusain.

7. LA DANGEROUSITÉ DU RÉSEAU RAGUSAIN : UN VASTE ESPACE MARITIME QUE RAGUSE NE MAÎTRISE QUE TRÈS SUPERFICIELLEMENT

Les témoignages sont nombreux, quant à l'inquiétude qu'éprouvaient aussi bien les autorités communales, que les particuliers, face aux dangers auxquels étaient exposés les navires ragusains qui sillonnaient la Méditerranée. Le réseau maritime était, comme nous l'avons constaté, très étendu, et par conséquent, les possibilités de le protéger sur toute sa superficie, très limitées. À la différence des Vénitiens, les Ragusains ne disposaient pas d'escadres armées dans l'Adriatique, toujours prêtes à appareiller pour protéger leurs navires marchands, encore moins pour les accompagner, sur de longs périodes tout au long de leur vaste réseau. En cas de danger extrême, lors de la guerre de Chioggia, (1378-1381) au cours de laquelle elle faisait

³⁰ DAD, *Div. Not. XXVI*, 181-181' (N°1000).

³¹ Ainsi, en juin 1461, un contentieux opposa devant le tribunal civil ragusain, un patron à un marchand catalan. Le navire, parti de Tortose, essuya un orage dans le golfe du Lion, et le marchand exigea du patron de faire escale à Messine, pour décharger les sacs de laine qu'il transportait. Le patron jugeait l'escale à Messine préjudiciable à la marchandise, mais il dut se plier à la demande du marchand. Cela constituait une modification unilatérale des termes du contrat, qui ne put être résolue que devant le tribunal ragusain. N. FEJIC, *De la Catalogne à la Péninsule des Baléares, circulation des nouvelles au rythme des affaires (XIV-XV siècles)*, dans *La Circulation des nouvelles au Moyen Âge*, Actes du XXIV^e Congrès de la SHMES, Avignon juin 1993, Paris 1994, pp. 111-116.

partie de la coalition anti-vénitienne, Raguse comptait davantage sur le soutien de l'escadre génoise dans ses eaux territoriales, que sur sa propre force navale.

Néanmoins, la Commune avait à sa disposition quelques moyens de protection de son réseau, parmi lesquels on peut citer, l'intervention diplomatique occasionnelle auprès des pouvoirs dont se réclamaient les agresseurs contre les navires ragusains, les mesures de rétorsion contre les ressortissants des Etats et des communes d'où venaient ces agresseurs, la mise en garde de leurs propres ressortissants, patrons de navires et marchands ragusains, l'interdiction pure et simple de naviguer dans les parages menacés et en ultime recours, la mobilisation ponctuelle d'une galère armée pour poursuivre, arrêter et punir les agresseurs de leurs navires.

Les menaces contre les réseaux respectifs ragusains du Ponant et du Levant venaient plus souvent des entreprises individuelles de pirates, que des agressions corsaires suscitées ou pour le moins, tolérées par les Etats, bien que les Ragusains étaient souvent conscients des implications troubles des pouvoirs vénitiens, napolitains, catalans, dans ces attaques contre leurs navires. Les attaques se produisaient partout, sur toute l'étendue du réseau méditerranéen ragusain, bien que le plus grand nombre d'attaques consignées dans les registres, concernaient l'Adriatique, notamment la côte des Pouilles et la mer Ionienne. Nous rapportons ici quelques cas caractéristiques d'attaques de pirates, sur le réseau du Levant et du Ponant, sans aucune prétention à l'exhaustivité.

Le 27 avril 1331, tandis que la Commune était encore sous le pouvoir suprême de la Sérénissime, le Petit conseil dépêcha, aux frais de marchands locaux, deux navires, l'un vers le Levant, l'autre vers le Ponant pour prévenir les navires de ses ressortissants, de la présence des pirates³². En 1360, un navire ragusain a été victime d'une attaque pirate, dans les parages de Rhodes et plusieurs marchands ragusains ont été dérobés d'objets « en or, en argent, en cire et autres »³³. En 1426, une galère catalane, dont le patron était « Pierre Impastor » de Valence, s'en était pris à un navire ragusain qui rentrait de Roumanie, chargé de blé³⁴, et trois mois à peine plus tard, un corsaire, il s'agissait cette fois-ci de « Johannes Filingerius, patron d'une galère armée du roi d'Aragon », pilla un navire ragusain à Corfou, en emportant les marchandises d'une valeur de 900 ducats³⁵. De l'aveu des témoins de ces attaques de pirates, les navires ragusains avaient la réputation de transporter des biens précieux, et était à ce titre, des cibles privilégiées: Ainsi lorsque les corsaires se sont pris à des navires Ragusains, près de l'île de Lastovo, dans l'Adriatique, les témoins les ont entendus dire: « Allons capturer les navires ragusains qui sont riches, car un bateau ragusain vaudra plus que dix bateaux vénitiens »; près de la côte albanaise, l'équipage d'un navire de Corfou, attaqué par les corsaires, aurait entendu ces derniers dire: « Allons prendre deux ou trois bateaux ragusains, et nous serons riches pour le reste de nos jours »³⁶.

³² DAD, *Reformationes* X, 14^r (n° 154).

³³ DAD, *Distributiones testamentarum*, I, 5^r, a tergo, (n°242).

³⁴ DAD, *Lettere di Levante* X, 1-1^r, (n°733).

³⁵ DAD, *Lettere di Levante* X, 10^r-11, (n° 739).

³⁶ DAD, *Acta S. Mariae*, fasc. XV, (n° 791).

Exposés à de multiples attaques, les Ragusains envoyaient des émissaires auprès des pouvoirs dont dépendaient les agresseurs, exigeant fermement des sauf-conduits, voire lorsque les forfaits avaient été déjà commis, de justes compensations pour les dommages subis. Précisément, une instruction aux ambassadeurs ragusains envoyés en Sicile et en Catalogne, deux ans après l'attaque de Johannes Filingerius, témoigne de cette activité diplomatique³⁷. Lorsque ces émissaires accomplissaient avec succès leurs missions, ils obtenaient des sauf-conduits qui étaient précieusement conservés par le gouvernement, et parfois aussi confiés, contre des gages, aux patrons de navires ragusains: un sauf-conduit du roi d'Aragon fut ainsi prêté, contre un gage de 20 ducats à un patron ragusain qui partait en « Romanie » en 1429³⁸, et sept ans plus tard, à un autre patron qui partait « au Levant et en Sicile »³⁹: ni la Romanie ni le Levant n'incluaient les destinations portuaires où le roi d'Aragon exerçait directement le pouvoir: ces sauf-conduits étaient donc plutôt destinés aux corsaires qui sillonnaient tout l'espace méditerranéen, se réclamaient de son autorité, et devaient obéir à ses ordres, y compris à ceux de ne pas inquiéter, et de laisser naviguer en paix les patrons et les marchands ragusains.

Le gouvernement ne sollicitait d'ailleurs pas la bienveillance des pouvoirs souverains, uniquement lorsque ceux-ci pouvaient réfréner leurs sujets des attaques contre les navires ragusains, comme cela fut le cas de leurs démarches auprès du roi d'Aragon et de Naples. Ils s'adressaient volontairement aux pouvoirs souverains émergents, pour s'attirer leurs bonnes grâces. Ce fut le cas, comme il a été déjà remarqué, auprès du roi de Hongrie Louis I en 1371, mais aussi, au siècle suivant, auprès du sultan ottoman Murat II en 1430, auxquels les Ragusains expliquèrent qu'ils avaient besoin de « circuler et de faire du commerce, comme nous le faisons, les uns au Levant, à Alexandrie, à Damas, et dans d'autres pays du sultan de Babylone, les autres en Romanie et en Anatolie, appartenant à votre grande et excellente Seigneurie, d'autres encore en Occident, dans les terres des Francs »⁴⁰. La bienveillance d'un pouvoir souverain, était, de toute évidence, la garantie suprême.

Les mesures de rétorsion contre les marchands, ressortissants des pouvoirs auxquels appartenaient les corsaires qui s'attaquaient au réseau maritime ragusain, étaient un autre moyen de combattre ceux-ci: Ainsi, lorsque les pirates catalans en 1419, pillèrent un navire qui naviguaient dans les eaux de Curzola, non loin de Raguse, deux marchands partenaires, ressortissants catalans, l'un de Majorque, l'autre de Barcelone furent retenus à Raguse en tant qu'otages⁴¹ et, situation plus dramatique encore pour le commerce catalan à Raguse, lorsque en 1460, le gouverneur royal de la Catalogne, sous prétexte de combattre les corsaires génois, s'attaqua aux navires ragusains dans les eaux de Sicile, les biens de tous les marchands catalans qui résidaient à Raguse sans sauf-conduit, furent mis sous séquestre, à hauteur de

³⁷ DAD, *Lettere di Levante X*, 71-73', 74' (n° 768).

³⁸ DAD, *Cons. Rog. IV*, 82, 86' (n° 764).

³⁹ DAD, *Cons. Min. VII*, 30' (n°861).

⁴⁰ DAD *Lettere di Levante X*, 211' (N°779).

⁴¹ DAD, *Div. Not. XIII*, 33'-34.

1500 ducats, et le gouvernement ragusain envoya une lettre à la chancellerie royale d'Aragon⁴².

Cependant, la mise sous séquestre était une arme à double tranchant car, porter atteinte aux intérêts des marchands étrangers à Raguse, pénalisait indirectement les intérêts économiques de la commune, en détournant vers d'autres ports, les partenaires des marchands et artisans locaux. Les autorités ragusaines préféraient donc recourir aux avertissements adressés aux marchands, compatriotes des pirates ayant commis l'agression, et en premier lieu aux Catalans. C'est ainsi que, lorsqu'un navire ragusain fut pillé par les Catalans dans les eaux de Corfou, le Sénat ragusain envisageait d'appliquer les mesures de rétorsion contre un navire de Catalans ou de Siciliens dans le port de Raguse : mais il renonça à cette mesure extrême, et il se contenta de convoquer l'équipage du navire en question, et de lui exprimer son mécontentement suite à ce pillage⁴³. Quelques années plus tard, dans une instruction à leurs émissaires auprès de la République de Gênes, le gouvernement ragusain louait les effets de l'institution du sauf-conduit, rappelant que les Catalans en bénéficiaient amplement pour exporter la laine à Raguse, et, ajoutaient-ils, « s'il n'y avait pas de sauf-conduit, aucun navire catalan ne pourrait entrer dans le port (ragusain), car il subirait des représailles à cause des grands dommages que nous avons subis, et que nous subissons quotidiennement de la part de leurs galères et leurs fustes »⁴⁴.

Les mises en garde et les interdictions imposées aux patrons et marchands, de naviguer dans les régions infestées par les corsaires, étaient aussi un moyen de limiter la dangerosité du réseau ragusain. Il s'agissait d'une mesure qui devait protéger les intérêts des patrons de navires et des marchands, et accessoirement exercer une pression sur les pouvoirs qui contrôlaient les marchés exposés ponctuellement à ce genre de boycott ragusain : mesure appliquée depuis longtemps sur les marchés terrestres de l'arrière-pays balkanique, contrôlés par les pouvoirs serbes et bosniens, mais beaucoup moins efficaces sur les marchés maritimes méditerranéens, ceux-ci étant plus ouverts à la concurrence, et par conséquent, moins dépendants des velléités d'un seul fournisseur. Nombreux sont néanmoins, dans les sources ragusaines, les ordres péremptoires adressés aux marchands ragusains, soit de ne pas appareiller vers certaines destinations jugées dangereuses tant au Levant qu'au Ponant, soit de s'en éloigner au plus vite, et de rentrer dans les meilleurs délais à Raguse. Ainsi, le 16 août 1380, le Sénat ordonne d'inviter « tous nos hommes, qui sont du côté du Levant et du Ponant, à rentrer immédiatement à Raguse, sous peine de quatre hyperperes pour tout contrevenant »⁴⁵. A l'opposé, le 29 janvier 1429, le Sénat ordonne de retarder de huit jours le départ prévu de tous les navires vers la Romanie⁴⁶.

Finalement, comme ultime recours, il faut mentionner l'armement des navires destinés à pourchasser et punir les corsaires. Cette mesure s'appliquait le plus souvent dans des environnements maritimes proches, pratiquement au tout début des

⁴² DAD, *Cons. Rog.* XVI, 186.

⁴³ DAD, *Cons. Rog.* VI, 25.

⁴⁴ DAD, *Lettere di Levante*, XIII, 77-81.

⁴⁵ DAD, *Reformationes*. XXIV, 122'.

⁴⁶ DAD, *Cons. Rog.* IV, 85', n° 765.

réseaux respectifs du Ponant, jusqu'à la côte opposée des Pouilles, ou du Levant, jusqu'aux îles de la mer Ionienne et les côtes de l'Épire et de l'Albanie. Ainsi, le gouvernement décida le 27 janvier 1379 d'armer un navire et de l'envoyer en Orient « pour sauver des bateaux ragusains »⁴⁷. Quelques années plus tard, en 1383, le conseil Mineur décida d'armer une galère pour capturer un navire que le duc Louis I d'Anjou avait envoyé depuis les Pouilles vers Venise : au passage ces seigneurs angevins avaient en effet attaqué une île au large de la ville, suscitant la colère des Ragusains qui s'étaient promis de poursuivre les intrus, « jusqu'à la lagune de Venise si nécessaire »⁴⁸.

8. CONCLUSION

Tout prête à penser que le réseau maritime ragusain s'est développé progressivement à partir du réseau vénitien : c'est en effet au temps de la prépondérance vénitienne, que la ville s'est dotée d'une infrastructure portuaire conséquente, de l'arsenal, d'un port en eau profonde, d'une jetée au large du port, tout cela bien séparé par une enceinte, du cœur même de la ville⁴⁹. C'est aussi au temps de cette prépondérance vénitienne, que la marine et le commerce ragusain ont profité du passage régulier des convois de galères vénitiens, dont les navires, mais aussi les équipages locaux faisaient souvent partie. Mais, après s'être soustraite à la domination vénitienne en 1358, Raguse a développé quelques caractéristiques propres de son réseau, qui le distinguèrent sous certains égards du réseau vénitien, et que nous avons essayé de présenter dans cette contribution. C'était, tout d'abord, le fait d'avoir pleinement profité du site géographique, car la commune se trouvait au croisement des itinéraires terrestres balkaniques, et du grand itinéraire maritime méditerranéen partrant de Venise vers le Levant et le Ponant. En effet, comme il a été signalé, les hommes d'affaires de Venise, ne se sont que modérément impliqués à l'intérieur des Balkans. C'est ensuite le fait que certaines destinations proches de Raguse, notamment sur la côte, albanaise et épirote, ont été particulièrement fréquentées par les navires ragusains. On a essayé de présenter le réseau ragusain à travers ses quatre aspects principaux, l'extension, la ramification, la temporalité et la dangerosité : et on a pu constater là aussi, une certaine similitude, mais aussi des différences par rapport au réseau vénitien. En termes de similitude, il y a une extension quasi identique des deux réseaux dans le bassin méditerranéen, aussi bien au Levant qu'au Ponant. C'est en termes de ramification des deux réseaux, que la différence apparaît progressivement. En effet, les navires ragusains, notamment après la cessation du pouvoir vénitien, ont de moins en moins fait partie des galées vénitiennes : en même temps, comme il a été signalé, Raguse n'a jamais développé un système propre de galées. Cela a entraîné sur le plan pratique, un très grand éparpillement du réseau ragusain, une navigation qui, à en juger d'après les contrats

⁴⁷ DAD, *Reform*. XXIV, 22'.

⁴⁸ N. FEJIC, *Le séjour des seigneurs de la suite de Louis I d'Anjou à Dubrovnik (Raguse), dans Les princes et le pouvoir au Moyen Age, Actes du XXII Congrès de la SHMES*, Brest mai 1992, Paris 1993, pp. 107-115.

⁴⁹ IDEM, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) au Moyen-Age, espace de convergence, espace menacé*, Paris 2010.

d'affrètements, et les contrats entre marchands, incluait à chaque fois un grand nombre de destinations qui, même lorsqu'elles étaient éloignées de Raguse, étaient souvent très rapprochées les unes des autres: cette navigation « de porte à porte » semble bien refléter un système maritime, dans lequel, à la différence de Venise, l'État ragusain s'impliquait peu, et où tout reposait sur l'initiative des particuliers, en l'occurrence des patrons et des marchands. L'autre aspect de cette ramification poussée du réseau ragusain, est le fait que les deux volets du réseau, celui du Levant et du Ponant, à en juger d'après les contrats, se rejoignaient et se complétaient, sans forcément passer par le point « nodal » du réseau, c'est-à-dire par Raguse même. Les contrats, en effet, font état des itinéraires, qui rejoignent le Levant et le Ponant sans prévoir d'escale à Raguse. Sans pouvoir avancer des explications définitives, ce détail pourrait illustrer le fait que le réseau maritime ragusain s'est en quelque sorte hissé au-delà de la nécessité immédiate de fréquenter le port d'attache de ses navires, pour répondre à une dynamique propre, indépendante des besoins de la ville capitale: en d'autres termes l'extrême ramification du réseau ragusain, illustrerait la disproportion grandissante entre le rayonnement économique de la commune et l'importance de sa flotte marchande, au profit de cette dernière. S'agissant de la temporalité, on a pu constater que c'est la dimension la moins connue du réseau ragusain: en effet, si les contrats mentionnent assez régulièrement la durée de séjours dans les ports d'escales et les ports de destinations, la date du départ et la durée du voyage, sont des données très peu connues: là aussi on dénote une différence par rapport à la temporalité des convois vénitiens, dont les dates des départs et des retours, surtout printaniers et automnaux sont assez bien connus. S'agissant des dates de départs, qui ne sont généralement pas précisées dans les contrats, mais qui logiquement se situent aux environs des dates de rédactions de contrats d'affrètements des navires, elles n'accusent, à la différence des vénitiennes, que très peu de régularité, et se situent tout au long de l'année, au fil des quatre saisons. On peut regretter, s'agissant de l'aspect temporel du réseau, la quasi impossibilité de mettre en rapport les dates de départ et d'arrivée, fournies par des documents d'archives des villes que fréquentaient les navires ragusains. On peut mesurer le profit qu'on aurait pu en tirer, en se référant aux rares cas où les relevés comparatifs ont pu être faits, comme par exemple dans les sources catalanes, qui évoquaient les départs des navires qui étaient ensuite enregistrés par les autorités portuaires, lors de leur arrivée à Raguse. Le rapprochement entre les contrats de nolis faits en Catalogne, et les sauf-conduits délivrés à Raguse aux patrons catalans, permettent d'évaluer, approximativement, les durées respectives des périodes entre l'Occident lointain de la Méditerranée et Raguse. Enfin, la dangerosité du réseau ragusain, résulte de son extension et de sa ramification: déjà l'absence du système de navigation de conserve (galées) dans la pratique de navigation ragusaine, induit une certaine dangerosité. Au fur et à mesure que les patrons ragusains s'éloignaient de leur ville natale, ils devenaient des proies de plus en plus faciles de multiples attaques des corsaires et des pirates. Les témoignages en sont nombreux dans les registres gouvernementaux et judiciaires de la commune. Comment le gouvernement ragusain combattait-il ces attaques, et protégeait-il vraiment ses patrons et marins? A vrai dire ses moyens étaient modestes comparés à ceux dont disposaient les Vénitiens. Faute d'une escadre armée permanente, le gouvernement réagissait parfois

ponctuellement, en ordonnant l'armement d'une galère communale, pour poursuivre des pirates qui s'étaient pris aux navires ragusains : mais il est à noter que ces expéditions punitives se limitaient aux eaux proches de Raguse, généralement au plus loin, jusqu'aux côtes albanaises ou celle des Pouilles, sur la côte opposée de l'Adriatique. La menace de poursuivre les coupables d'une attaque contre un navire ragusain près de Sicile « usque ad columnas »⁵⁰, était proférée pour montrer une certaine détermination et une suite dans les idées plutôt qu'autre chose, et ne s'est probablement jamais matérialisée. Il y avait aussi les moyens diplomatiques plus feutrés, à l'égard des puissances protectrices des corsaires, tel le roi d'Aragon, dont les corsaires étaient souvent sujets, et que les Ragusains voulaient impliquer dans la protection de leur réseau maritime : ces missions diplomatiques régulièrement envoyées en Sicile, en Catalogne, ou vers les Pouilles, étaient plus efficaces que les menaces militaires. Il y avait aussi l'arme des représailles contre les ressortissants locaux, dont les compatriotes avaient attaqué les Ragusains en haute mer. Il s'agissait de marchands catalans, qui étaient souvent convoqués par le gouvernement ragusain afin de s'expliquer, mais celui-ci procédait rarement aux représailles directes, car celles-ci étaient contreproductives et nuisaient au commerce.

Il est donc légitime de conclure, que Raguse a construit au fil des deux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge, un puissant réseau maritime, qui s'étendait aussi bien au Levant qu'au Ponant. Ce réseau, bien qu'issu du réseau vénitien, a pu faire valoir au fil du temps, ses traits particuliers, qui le distinguaient du réseau vénitien, et correspondaient surtout à la vocation de Raguse qui était celle d'une plaque tournante, entre les routes terrestres de son arrière-pays, et le grand large, drainant les métaux précieux et d'autres produits de l'intérieur des Balkans, vers les marchés du grand espace méditerranéen, jusqu'à ses limites orientales et occidentales, et satisfaisant les divers besoins, bien au-delà de cette modeste commune adriatique. Cette tendance va faire de la flotte marchande de Raguse, comme l'a justement constaté Fernand Braudel, l'une des plus efficaces dans l'espace méditerranéen du premier âge moderne.

⁵⁰ Jusqu'au détroit de Gibraltar.

Renard Gluzman, Gerassimos Pagratis

*Tracking Venice's Maritime Traffic in the First Age of Globalization:
A Geospatial Analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

The lifeline of international trade is provided by shipping – a sector that is considered by scholars as one of the four cornerstones that fostered globalization. Today, shipping lines are said to operate in a borderless environment where economic priorities are dominant. In this sense, transport geography has largely surpassed political geography and geopolitics. However, until the mid-twentieth century, the prospects of shipping were tied down to the level of economic activity of the place of registry; thus, the interplay between political change, fleet nationality and the evolution of shipping networks was crucial.

The present collaborative work in progress is an empirical attempt to verify this interplay with regard to the decline of Venice as a provider of shipping services to large parts of the Mediterranean and Atlantic world in the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth century. While a general trend of decline is outlined in many scholarly works, the complexity of the subject and its particularities are largely ignored.¹ The yearly fluctuations in the volume and value of trade moving by sea are assessed only in relation to the auctioning of merchant galleys. Information on the movement of dozens of other round ships and hundreds of smaller vessels is so fragmented that, as yet, no scholar has put forward a comprehensive analysis of the fluctuations in Venice's marine traffic over time. For this reason the picture received, although significant and on the whole correct, oversimplifies the continuous interplay between Venice's geopolitics, the evolution of shipping networks and trading volumes.

On the basis of historical data on ship positions, extracted from archival sources, we create GIS-based online maps in order to conduct a geospatial analysis of the annual traffic intensity and movement patterns along regional and inter-regional sea routes linking the Venetian port system with Mediterranean ports. In

¹ The bibliography on these issues is very extensive: e.g., F.C. LANE, *Venetian Shipping during the Commercial Revolution*, in "American Historical Review", 38, 1933, n. 2, pp. 229-239; IDEM, *Venice, A Maritime Republic*, Baltimore-London 1973 (Johns Hopkins University), pp. 132-134.; G. LUZZATTO, *Navigazione di linea e navigazione libera nelle grandi città marinare del Medio Evo*, in *Studi di storia economia veneziana*, Padova 1954 (CEDAM), pp. 53-58; J.-C. HOCQUET, *L'armamento privato*, in *Storia di Venezia*, XII: *Il mare*, A. TENENTI, U. TUCCI eds., Rome 1991 (Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana), pp. 397-400; B. DOUMERC, *Le galere da mercato*, in *Storia di Venezia*, cit., pp. 357-393.

this sense, the platform “simulates” modern real-time technologies used to visualize shipping trends per vessel types.²

Our aim is to examine to what extent shipping within the Venetian maritime state remained a closed system. To do so, we address the following questions: How did political and economic factors, such as the oceanic discoveries, Ottoman expansion, piracy, and so on, affect the colonial–Venetian maritime network? How did ship-owners of different socioeconomic backgrounds and geographical origins negotiate their position within this maritime network? Related to these questions are the particular privileged-based legal status of a colonial ship, entangling empires and multiple identities, the practice of “flagging out”, and illegal traffic.³ The project aspires also to contribute to a discussion of larger issues related to the long-term effects of Venetian rule in its overseas territories on economic development, migration, cultural and ethnic identity in these possessions.

2. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

Spatial history is not a new field. In 1949 Fernand Braudel placed scale and spatial relations at the forefront of his magisterial study, which remains one of the discipline’s most influential works. Since Braudel’s analysis of communication lags,⁴ many historians have used the power of maps as presentation media to make spatial arguments. Recently, historians have been using GIS-based tools to detect sometimes invisible connections and to investigate how spatial relations stimulated cultural, social and political change, and how changes in technology, economy and policy created new spatial interrelations.⁵ In this context, density

² An interactive version of the trajectory maps (maps. 1-4) is available on the project’s website. Clicking on each one of the trajectories opens a text box with information on the vessel’s itinerary and the corresponding bibliographical note: <https://sites.google.com/view/venetian-shipping> (accessed 15th December 2018).

³ Venetian citizenship and belonging were handled and negotiated differently in different Venetian dominions. Cf. G.M. THOMAS, *Cittadinanza veneta acordata ai forestieri (1308-1381)*, in “Archivio Veneto”, 8, 1874, pp. 154-156; S.R. ELL, *Citizenship and Immigration in Venice, 1305-1500*, Chicago 1976 (University of Chicago); E. ASHTOR, *Ebrei cittadini di Venezia?*, in “Studi Veneziani”, XVII-XVIII, 1975-1976, pp. 145-156. D. JACOBY, *Citoyens, Sujets et Protégés de Venise et de Gènes en Chypre du XIII au XV siècle*, in “Byzantinische Forschungen”, V, 1977, pp. 159-188; IDEM, *Venice and Venetian Jews in the Eastern Mediterranean*, in *Gli Ebrei a Venezia: secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. G. COZZI, Milano 1987 (Edizioni Comunità), pp. 29-58; R.C. MUELLER, *The Venetian Money Market: Banks, Panics, and the Public Debt, 1200-1500*, Baltimore 1997 (Johns Hopkins University); E.N. ROTHMAN, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul*, Ithaca 2012 (Cornell University Press); B. ARBEL, *Venice’s Maritime Empire in the Early Modern Period*, in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797*, ed. E.R. DURSTELER, Leiden 2013 (Brill), pp. 125-253; G. CHRIST, *Transients on a Stepping Stone. Jews in Alexandria in the Late Middle Ages through Venetian Eyes*, in *Religious and Ethnic Identities in the Process of Expulsion and Diaspora Formation from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*, ed. N. STEFFANI, Turnhout 2015 (Brepols); K.E. LAMBRINOS, *Oi cittadini στη βενετική Κρήτη. Κοινωνικο-πολιτική και γραφειοκρατική εξέλιξη (15ος-17ος αι.)*, Athens 2015 (Academy of Athens).

⁴ F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Sian Reynolds trans., I, London 1973 (Harper Collins), pp. 355–378.

⁵ E.g., The Spatial History Project at Stanford University:

<http://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/index.php> (Accessed 15 July 2018).

maps and trajectory compilations are a highly effective means of showing vessel movement patterns. One such example is the data visualization of oceanic shipping routes of the fleets of Britain, France, Spain and The Netherlands, based on paths recorded in logbooks of ships sailing between 1750 and 1800.⁶

Unfortunately, very few logbooks in connection with Venetian shipping in the sixteenth century have survived.⁷ As far as Venice is concerned, information on galleys is relatively abundant and serial in nature, whereas that on the navigations of round ships is scarce, barely known and certainly not serial. Thus, any attempt to reconstruct historical maritime traffic has to start with the collecting of numerous fragmented pieces of evidence scattered across different sources and archives. The present project is distinguished by its adoption of a bottom-up approach that is strengthened by both narratives and visualizations.

In this paper, we present two trajectory maps, each one representing Venice's maritime traffic in the course of one calendar year. The first map covers the year 1497, and the second map shows Venice's maritime flows for 1514. The timeframe covers major geographical discoveries, Ottoman expansion, the struggle for hegemony in Europe, and the increased presence of other European powers in the Mediterranean. By comparing both maps, we are able to explore behaviour patterns and geographical coverage, as well as changing trends and anomalies in the shipping market over time. This information is complemented by an analysis of the maritime connections with the port of Candia, and the behaviour patterns of the Corfiot fleet in the year 1514.

Due to the piecemeal nature of the available sources, we had to make several informed guesses regarding the vessel's identity and itinerary. There is no certainty, for example, that a vessel captained by a Venetian-Cretan subject was Cretan. Likewise, the complete itinerary is generally missing, and the trajectory lines visuali-

⁶ Mapped. British, Spanish and Dutch Shipping 1750-1800: <http://spatial.ly/2012/03/mapped-british-shipping-1750-1800/> (Accessed 15 July 2018). On the basis of the same logbooks, a different visualization represents one hundred years of ship paths. It also allows the detection of seasonal patterns, as well as anomalies caused by the American Revolution or the Napoleonic Wars: <http://sappingattention.blogspot.com/2012/04/visualizing-ocean-shipping.html> (Accessed 15 July 2018). *Ibid.*, paths taken by American ships from about 1800 to 1860; the German merchant marine in the late nineteenth century, etc.

⁷ In this respect, the diaries of pilgrims and other travellers who embarked on Venetian vessels to and from the Levant are a valuable source of information. For a systematic analysis of the itineraries: R. GLUZMAN, *Between Venice and the Levant: Re-evaluating Maritime Routes from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century*, in "The Mariner's Mirror", 96, 2010, n. 3, pp. 262-292. Other indicative examples: the diary of Alessandro Magno, a nobleman who had documented his travels on Venetian ships during the 1550s; the diary of Francesco Grassetto da Lonigo, a chaplain who embarked on a Venetian war galley in 1511, contains a detailed account of the itinerary; the logbook of the ship *Giustiniana* (currently in preparation for publication) is a detailed description of a voyage to Cyprus in 1567; similarly, the diaries of Marino Sanuto include copies of letters written by various military and colonial officials, with details on their vessels' itineraries, see respectively: A. MAGNO, *Voyages: 1557-1565*, ed. W. NAAR, Paris 2002 (Scheda editore); F. GRASSETTO, *Viaggio di Francesco Grassetto da Lonigo etc.*, Venezia 1886 (Reale Deputazione Veneta sopra gli studi di storia patria); M. SANUTO, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto (MCCCCXVI-MDXXXIII)*, R. FULIN, F. STEFANI, N. BAROZZI, G. BERCHET, M. ALLEGRI eds., I-LVIII, Venice 1879-1903, XI, col. 847-850; *Ibid.*, XVI, col. 278-279; *Ibid.*, XXXIV, col. 30-31; *Ibid.*, col. 206-207; *Ibid.*, LVIII, col. 287.

ze maritime networks and connections but not necessarily accurate routes – what’s more, ships never sailed in straight lines.

Key

White trajectory: merchant vessel

Yellow trajectory: war vessel

Blue trajectory: foreign vessel

Pointer: violence at sea

Circles: shipwreck

3. TRENDS IN VENICE’S MARITIME TRAFFIC FOR 1497

In the early months of 1497, large parts of northern Italy suffered the effects of famine and the main sources of grain were Sicily, the Ottoman Empire and, to a lesser extent, Alexandria. In order to supply Venice with grain, the Republic signed contracts with ships’ captains and merchants. A deal mediated by Andrea Gritti, then resident in Constantinople, secured the shipment of 20,000 *stara* of wheat from Ottoman territories, on vessels that were licensed at his end.⁸

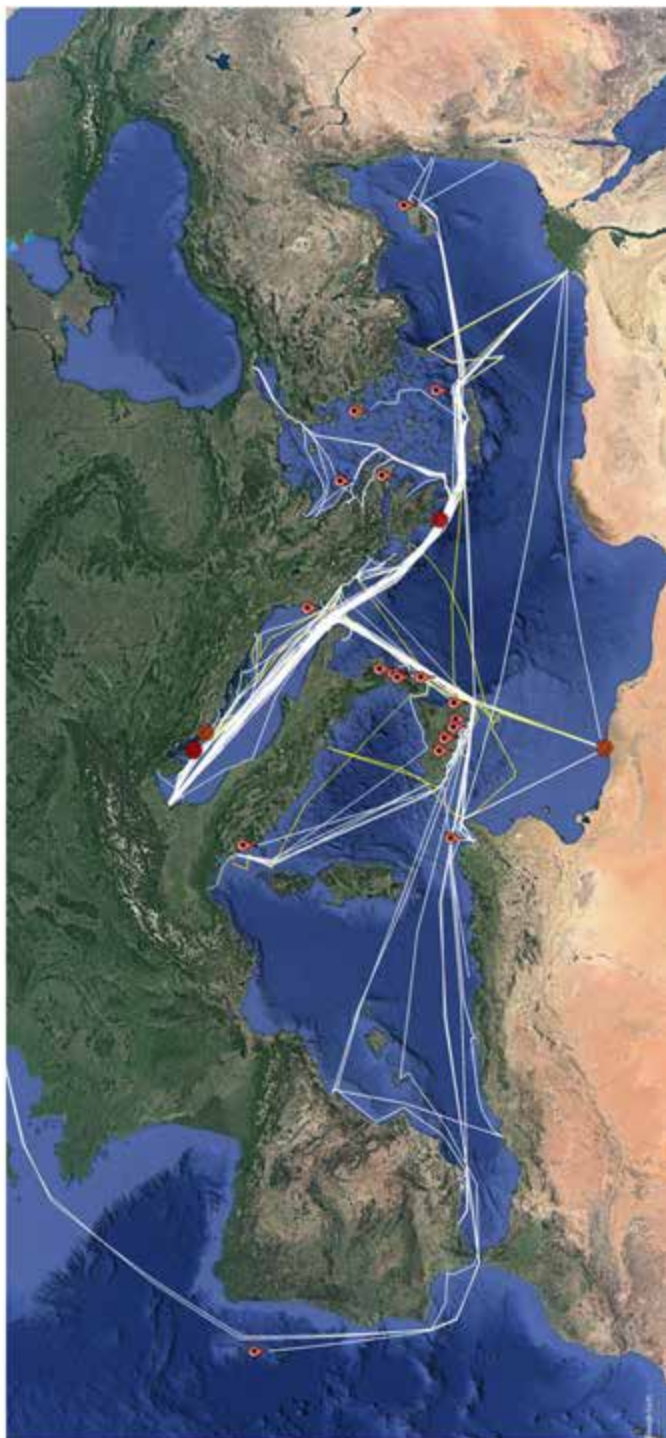
The French invasion of Italy and the onset of the Italian Wars (1494-1499), in which Venice became actively involved in March 1495, had intensified hostilities. In a parallel war against Florence, the Republic supported Pisa (1496-1499).⁹ The resultant financial burden depleted the public funds of the *Monte Nuovo*, which exceeded 1.6 million ducats. This was matched by the Senate’s all-too-frequent recourse to the *decime* (this tithe was applied no fewer than seventy times between 1482 and 1499).¹⁰

⁸ M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit. I, col. 459, 507-508, 605; see also: G. LUZZATTO, *Storia economica di Venezia dall’XI al XVI secolo*, Venice 1961 (Centro Internazionale delle arti e del costume), p. 171. Our sources do not indicate the exact grain outlets (*carricadori*) in Sicily and the Ottoman territories. The trajectories are based on Maurice Aymard’s study on the grain trade in the second half of the sixteenth century. The map on pages 40-41 shows the *carricadori* along the southern coasts of the island. Anchorages in the vicinity of Manfredonia, Barletta, Trani and Bari in Puglia were important grain providers. The principal *carricadori* in Ottoman territories were located in the internal channel between the Island of Negroponte and the mainland, Volos, Thessaloniki, and the Gulf of Patras: M. AYMARD, *Venise, Raguse et le commerce de blé pendant la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle*, Paris 1966 (S.E.V.P.E.N.), pp. 40-41.

⁹ Between April and June 1497, Venice negotiated peace with the French without any significant progress. It was not before 1 November, when the Kings of France and Spain signed a truce, that Italy breathed a sigh of relief. Venice and Milan joined the pact in early 1498: K.M. SETTON, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, I-IV, Philadelphia 1976-1984, II, pp. 483-507; G. LUZZATTO, *Storia economica di Venezia*, cit., p. 219; F.C. LANE, *Venice, A Maritime Republic*, cit., pp. 241-242.

¹⁰ R.C. MUELLER, *The Venetian Money Market*, cit., p. 239.

Map. 1. Venetian shipping trajectory compilation for the year 1497



Sure enough, the alarming rise in plunder and confiscation at sea and on land caused uncertainty in the markets. Seaborne trade in the Western Mediterranean was particularly hard hit. At least 15 grain-carrying vessels on the route from Sicily to Genoa were captured by the French.¹¹ Nine vessels laden with sugar from Madeira were attacked by French corsairs in the Ionian Sea; the majority escaped and sought shelter in Venice, Lesina (modern Hvar) and other ports.¹² Much of Venice's war effort was concentrated in the Tyrrhenian Sea, between March and April 1497.¹³

In June of the same year, whilst Venice was contending with the marauding French fleet, a territorial dispute between the Serenissima and the Ottoman Empire over Cattaro (modern Kotor) almost escalated to an armed conflict. In response, a squadron of Venetian light galleys commanded by Domenico Malipiero was ordered to leave Genoa immediately and sail directly to Cattaro, where it was deployed in patrol missions to protect the returning grain caravans, as well as Venetian possessions in Albania.¹⁴ Equally worrying were the raids in the Aegean Sea against small and medium-sized vessels, carried out by the notorious Ottoman privateer Admiral Kemal Reis and his fleet of two galleys, six *fuste*, a *barça* of 300 *botti* and several caravels.¹⁵

However, the Republic was particularly concerned about recent developments in La Rocella (modern Rocella Ionica) in the Sea of Calabria. Conveniently located on the route by which Sicilian grain reached Venice, the town was turned into a pirate haven for the notorious Spaniard corsair Piero Navaro. In the months of July and August, Venice's merchant marine lost 11 vessels in that area alone. The capture of a *maran* owned by Andrea Loredan q. Nicolò and a *navilio* of 250 *botti* captained by Zuane Fachin, carrying 6,000 ducats in cash and belonging to the same ill-fated merchant, had caused quite a commotion in the Senate.¹⁶

Violence and lawlessness on the high seas were on the rise, and to secure the main shipping routes three warships (the so-called *barçe di Comun*) were commissioned to escort the convoys of galleys and ships to the Levant, and to conduct patrol missions around Sicily. The *barça* commanded by Andrea Loredan q. Francesco (not to be confused with the ill-fated merchant) sailed to Sicily, while the warship *Pasqualiga* escorted the *muda* of galleys from Syria and Alexandria before it turned

¹¹ M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 626-627.

¹² *Ibid.*, col. 640.

¹³ Despite truce, war fleets attacked merchantmen. Venetian galleys were employed in the Ligurian Sea, which was teaming with Genoese and Spanish fleets: ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI VENEZIA (ASVE), *Senato Mar (SM)*, reg. 14, fols. 115v, 117v; ASVE, *Avogaria di Comun, Miscellanea Civile e Penale (ACMCP)*, bus. 4590, fasc. 3; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 329, 332, 451-452, 722-723; D. MALIPIERO [attributed to P. DOLFIN], *Annali veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500 del senatore Domenico Malipiero*, ed. F. LONGO, in "Archivio storico italiano", VII, Florence 1843, n. 4, pp. 630-633; K.M. SETTON, *The Papacy and the Levant*, cit., II, pp. 507, 509; R.C. MUELLER, *The Venetian Money Market*, cit., p. 239.

¹⁴ M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 643-644, 702-703, 709, 740, 743-744.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, col. 811.

¹⁶ ASVE, *SM*, reg. 14, fols. 115v, 117v; SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 722-723, 743, 771.

westward.¹⁷ The older *barza piccola* captained by Piero Contarini joined the *Loredana* at the island of Favignana (in the vicinity of Trapani Sicily) on 19 June. Contarini's ship was blown off course during a rough navigation from Malta to Syracuse. The ship, already half submerged, limped into the harbour of Zante and on 30 August the Senate ordered her decommission.¹⁸ Earlier, in July, the *barza Loredana* seized two vessels belonging to a corsair named Antonio de Marcho, off Cape Spartivento in Calabria; the captured vessels were sent to Syracuse. Meanwhile, the ascending galleys from the Barbary Coast fought with Navaro's *galion* and two *fuste* in La Rocella. Only when the *barza Loredana* launched a land assault on Navaro's men and terrorized the local population was order restored.¹⁹ Still in the month of August, part of the fleet of war galleys awaiting decommission was sent instead to the southern Aegean Sea, to secure the convoys returning from the Levant.²⁰

The lasting impact of these operations on the activity of the Venetian trading companies is amply attested by Andrea Loredan q. Nicolò's petition to the *Promediotori alle biave* (the magistracy regulating the import, storage and distribution of wheat, as well as other cereals and legumes). The merchant had undertaken to supply 40,000 *stara* of grain from Sicily and Negroponte. For this purpose, he leased many vessels, which he loaded with metals, including gold, and spices. Most of these ships were either captured, being easy prey for the powerful corsair Piero Navaro, or detained in various ports for months on end. Consequently, Loredan failed to fulfil his various obligations to the Serenissima.²¹

¹⁷ M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 607, 744, 767, 848.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, col. 741, 767-768.

¹⁹ The *barza di Comun* captained by Andrea Loredan left Venice on 18 April. It was commissioned to escort the *muda* of ships to the Levant as far as the Gulf of Otranto and proceed to Sicily. It stopped at Trapani, Piombino, back to Sicily and remained at anchor in the vicinity of the island of Favignana (16 June). Teamed with the *barza* of Piero Contarini, the warships sailed in the direction of Capo Bon (Funis), Lampadusa, Gozo (of Malta) and Syracuse, where the *Loredana* anchored until 18 July. Then, Loredan was instructed to patrol the seas south to Sicily as far as Tunis. He sailed in the direction of Cao Passera (the SE tip of Sicily), spotted suspicious vessels and chased them back as far as 70 Italian miles off Capo Spartivento (Calabria). The captured vessels were directed to Syracuse, where the *barza* anchored expecting the arrival of the galleys of the Barbary Coast; together they sailed to Tripoli (5 August). Loredan returned via Malta and Syracuse, and launched a land assault against the company of the corsair Piero Navaro in La Rocella: *Ibid.*, pp. 607, 744, 767-769, 745, 771-778, 848; D. MALIPIERO, *Annali veneti*, cit., p. 641.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 703.

²¹ A document approved by the *Collegio alle biave* attests 10 vessels that were licensed by Andrea Loredan to transport 30 *stara* of wheat from Sicily and 10,000 *stara* of wheat from Negroponte. It is assumed that at least two-thirds of these vessels sailed to Sicily:

1. Nicolò Buso di Maran – licensed 24 July to transport 3,200 *stara* wheat / captured on the outward voyage.

2. Zaneto di Jacomo – licensed 24 July to transport 2,200 *stara* wheat / consigned 5 October 1,761 *stara*.

3. Antonio di Michiel – licensed 24 July to transport 1,600 *stara* wheat / captured on the outward voyage.

4. Zuane di Michiel – licensed 24 July to transport 1,600 *stara* wheat / consigned 7 October 1,516 *stara*.

5. Piero d'Abramo – licensed 24 July to transport 4,200 *stara* wheat / consigned 20 November 4,111 *stara*.

As our map (Map. 1) shows, despite efforts to secure shipping, there were quite a few incidents in which *gripi* and *caravelle* owned by subjects of Venice were captured in the areas of Sicily, Calabria, Saseno (Albania), the Peloponnese and the Ionian and Aegean seas. Larger vessels were not immune from violent attacks either: the pilgrim galley captained by Alvise Zorzi fought with corsairs in the vicinity of Crete on its return voyage from Jaffa.²² According to our records, four Venetian round ships of over 300 *botti* were seized that year: *nave Contarina* of Stefano and Tadiò Contarini sons of Nicolò, captured by the French fleet in the vicinity of Piombino; *nave* of Zuane dal Cortivo, captured in Cao Passera by French corsairs; *nave Veniera candiota* of Domenico Venier son of Angelo from Crete, captured by the Ottoman fleet in the Aegean Sea; *nave* of Piero Contarini da le Malvasie captained by Zuane Querini son of Piero, captured by Zuane Perez in the vicinity of Tunis in the Barbary Coast.²³

Despite the intensification of hostility, traffic between Venice and Sicily was lively.²⁴ There was also a steady presence of Venetian round ships in the Tyrrhenian Sea; some were employed as grain carriers from Sicily to Pisa. The North African Coast was frequented by round ships of 600 to 800 *botti*, flying the San Marco flag; our sources indicate at least four such ships, of which one was licensed by Moorish

6. Felippo Brochetta de Francesco – licensed 27 July to transport 5,500 *stara* wheat / consigned 13 December 5,259 *stara*.

7. Felin Nordio – licensed 30 August to transport 3,500 *stara* wheat / consigned 3 March 1498 2,630 *stara*.

8. Antonio di Damian – licensed 30 August to transport 2,500 *stara* wheat / consigned 12 January 1498 2,831 *stara*.

9. Zuane Barbota – licensed 21 September to transport 1,200 *stara* / not consigned.

10. Isepo de Zuane – licensed 21 September to transport 3,200 *stara* / not consigned.

Another document attest however for the successful consignments of all vessels that were licensed by Stefano and Teodosio Contarini and Carlo Contarini q. Battista to transport 20,000 *stara* of wheat from Sicily or Negroponte:

11. Michiel di Stefano - licensed 14 August to transport 3,500 *stara* wheat / consigned 3,032 *stara* 18 December.

12. Luca de Nicolò Rochaza – licensed 6 September to transport 2,900 *stara* wheat / consigned 2,771 *stara* 31 October.

13. Antonio di Stefano – licensed 6 September to transport 2,500 *stara* wheat / consigned 2,358 *stara* 29 November.

14. Polo de Marin – licensed 6 September to transport 2,200 *stara* wheat / consigned 1,960 *stara* 3 January 1498.

15. Pasqual di Zuane – licensed 7 September to transport 2,600 *stara* wheat / consigned 1,829 *stara* 9 December.

16. Matteo di Tommaso – licensed 7 September to transport 3,200 *stara* wheat / not consigned.

17. Piero Contarini – licensed 26 September to transport 3,800 *stara* wheat / consigned 3,607 *stara* 22 December.

18. Antonio Zeran de Veglia – licensed 3 January 1498 to transport 3,500 *stara* wheat / consigned 3,190 *stara* 14 February.

ASVE, *Deliberazioni, Miste (CXDM)*, fil. 12, fasc. 11 con all.

²² It then resumed the voyage to Venice, stopping also in Candia (in Crete) and Lesina (Hvar): M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., col. 702-703, 728-732, 739, 845; D. MALIPIERO, *Annali Veneti*, cit., pp. 154, 158.

²³ M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 514, 523, 571, 605, 668-669, 739, 744, 772, 786-787, 817, 846, 849; *Ibid.*, p. 928; D. MALIPIERO, *Annali veneti*, cit., pp. 640-641.

²⁴ E.g., M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 535.

merchants to sail from Alexandria to Tripoli in North Africa.²⁵ In the same year there was an apparent dynamism of shipping in the Levant. Indeed, although there was political instability in Egypt²⁶ and Syria was stricken by plague,²⁷ the forecast of a bad year for investments in trade proved false. In 1497, four galleys sailed to Beirut and Tripoli, four to Alexandria, three to the Barbary Coast and three on the route called *trafego* (Tripoli, Tunis and Alexandria).²⁸

Apart from merchandise, ships were also transporting money. The silver coinage minted in Europe and sent to Egypt alone amounted to as much as 300,000 ducats. In spring, a galley bound for Alexandria carried well over 12 metric tonnes of silver coinage, although some of it returned to Venice.²⁹ The galleys and round ships heading for Syria carried 70,000 and 50,000 ducats respectively. The autumn *muda* to Alexandria was crowned with success and the returning convoy carried 4,320 *colli* of spices and additional 80 *colli* on a licensed ship (*nave a rata*). The galleys to Beirut returned with less, due to elevated freight rates in Syria (2,639 *colli* of spices and 220 *colli* of silk).³⁰

However, the late return of this *muda* also saw one of the biggest catastrophes of the decade, the wreck of two galleys at the entrance of Porto Cigala (modern Ćikat), in stormy conditions in November. The salvage attempts explain the anomaly we see on the map (Map. 1). Another insight is related to the traffic of round ships to the Levant: due to the aforementioned plague in Syria, the autumn *muda* of ships sailed only as far as Cyprus. Several other trends for the year 1497 are noted: the lines between Venice, Crete and Constantinople were maintained mainly by *gripi* and other small and medium-sized vessels. So far, we have found only one indication of a Venetian round ship that sailed in this direction.³¹

²⁵ ASVE, *SM*, reg. 14, fol. 114v; ASVE, *Procuratori di San Marco (PSM)*, *Misti*, bus. 43, fasc. XXV [4 June 1497]; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 404, 503, 523, 872, 949, 966; D. MALPIERO, *Annali Veneti*, cit., pp. 635, 641; G. PRIULI, *I diarii di Girolamo Priuli: aa. 1499-1512*, A. SEGRE, R. CESSI eds., vols. I-IV, 1912-1941, I, p. 67.

²⁶ The young Sultan was still fighting for his existence and almost at the end of his cruel and profligate career (he was assassinated in October 1498). According to Arnold von Harff's description, Egypt was in turmoil, foreign merchants were assaulted and beaten, and there were fights, plunder and ruin in the streets of Cairo: A. VON HARFF, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff*, London 1946, pp. 103-106.

²⁷ A report speaks of 400 casualties per day in Damascus alone, Venetian merchants fled to Cyprus: M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 739, 756.

²⁸ C. JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner: Économie maritime et pouvoirs à Venise (XVe-XVIe siècles)*, Leiden 2008 (Brill), pp. 66, 312.

²⁹ R.C. MUELLER, *The Venetian Money Market*, cit., pp. 234-235.

³⁰ ASVE, *SM*, reg. 14, fols. 115v, 117v; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 522-523, 845; G. PRIULI, *Diarii*, cit., I, pp. 73-74.

³¹ A ship (*Sanuda?*) captained by Urban di Orsi of Domenico Sanudo sailed from Venice to Constantinople: ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin (MG)*, bus. 9, 1497, n. 3.

Map. 2. Venetian shipping trajectory compilation for the year 1514



On the Atlantic front, two large ships, the *Foscara* of 3,000 *botti* and the *Pasqualiga* of 800 *botti*, completed a voyage to England, even though earlier that year the ship *Tiepolo* (or *Foscara*) was attacked by a French fleet and wrecked in the Bay of Biscay.³² Three other round ships were wrecked that year.³³

4. TRENDS IN VENICE'S MARITIME TRAFFIC FOR 1514

The early decades of the sixteenth century mark the transition from the coexistence of state-organized and private maritime transport to the domination of the latter. Only two galleys to Beirut were operating in 1514. The gradual abandonment of the convoys of galleys gave ship-owners from Venice's colonies and vessels flying other flags the opportunity to take into their own hands a greater share of the freights that had hitherto been transported predominantly by the Serenissima's galleys.³⁴ The events that led to the outbreak of the War of the League of Cambrai (1509-1516) and those that followed are well known, and there is no need to repeat them here. Instead, we have chosen to highlight several changing trends in shipping.

The loss of territories in the *terraferma* meant that Venice could no longer import grain from the Padovan and Polesine areas, and the crops in Cyprus provided an alternative source. In fact, they were exploited for that purpose, and Venice's easternmost island nourished the population of Crete as well. A new provision instructed ships bound for Syria to call in at Cyprus on the outward leg, and to load wheat and barley on the return voyage. In a letter to the Council of Ten (14 March), the Governor of Nicosia guaranteed to provide enough grain to fill twelve round ships.³⁵ The trajectory map for 1514 (Map. 2) suggests that the line Venice–Cyprus was exploited by round ships and medium-sized vessels chartered at both ends for that purpose.³⁶ Several ships managed to complete two round voyages to Cyprus in

³² *Nave Tiepolo (or Foscara)* of Hieronimo Tiepolo q. Andrea and Polo Foscari q. Urban wrecked in the Bay of Biscay in late 1496 or early 1497: ASVE, *SM*, reg. 14, fols. 137v-138r.

³³ *Nave Contarina* of Vido and Hieronimo Contarini sons of Priamo wrecked in the vicinity of Tripoli in North Africa; *nave Pisana e Contarina* owned by Nicolò Pisani q. Andrea and Alvise Contarini q. Ferigo Minoto wrecked in Sapienza off the coast of Modon in winter; *nave* of Zuane Castroliflaca from Crete wrecked in the vicinity of Zara in April: ASVE, *SM*, reg. 14, fol. 120r; ASVe, *CXDM*, reg. 27, fol. 122v; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., I, col. 605; D. MALIPIERO, *Annali veneti*, cit., p. 635; K.M. SEITON, *The Papacy and the Levant*, cit., II, p. 509.

³⁴ G.D. PAGRATIS, *Ships and Shipbuilding in Corfu in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century*, in "Storia Mediterranea", 22, 2011, pp. 237-246.

³⁵ M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., XVIII, col. 254, 257.

³⁶ Most probably, the biggest ships to stop in Cyprus in 1514 were the *Nicolosa* of 1,275 *botti* carrying 6,000 *stara* of wheat, and the bigger of the two *Bernarda* of 1,000 *botti*. For ships that sailed in this direction: ASVE, *CXDM*, fil. 32, fasc. 227, 302; *Ibid.*, fil. 33, fasc. 124, 357-358, 418, 462; *Ibid.*, fil. 35, fasc. 24, 269, 317, 319, 401; *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, reg. 16, n. 10; ASVE, *Capi del Consiglio di dieci (CapCX)*, *Lettere rettori*, bus. 288, nos. 91, 97, 99, 112, 118, 130; ASVE, *CapCX*, *Notatorio*, reg. 7, fols. 528, 540; ASVE, *PJM*, *Misti*, bus. 132, fasc. II; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., XVIII, col. 28, 257, 335, 375; *Ibid.*, XIX, 81, 224, 276, 328.

the same year and stopped in Syria at least once.³⁷ Other vessels combined a voyage to Cyprus with a shorter itinerary, such as Venice–Constantinople. With respect to our findings for the year 1497, there is an evident increase in the number of round ships that sailed to Constantinople.³⁸

Taking a different stance, one of the significant contributions of geospatial analysis is the identification of anomalous activities. While movement of ships along the established routes is generally predictable (as it largely follows a pattern consistent with Venice's sea laws), irregular movements of anomalous ships are less predictable. In 1514 the Republic was practically unable to police the seas and this, in turn, gave rise to illegal trade. The 500 *botti* ship captained by Luca Gobo sailed from Constantinople to Ancona carrying merchandise belonging to Anconians, Florentines and Venetians;³⁹ a *barzoto* licensed by merchants from Apulia carried salt from Ibiza to Lombardy via the River Po; the captain of a *marciliana* was forced to alter his course and stop at Lissa, where he was accused of engaging in illegal traffic between Pesaro and Ragusa. Other vessels completed their cargo in Ancona and in ports "*sottovento*" (the west coast of the Adriatic Sea). So great was the extent of illegal traffic from the Peloponnese to destinations in the Adriatic Sea that the Senate re-enforced the obligation for all ships to stop first in Corfu.⁴⁰ On 18 May, the Senate stressed the prohibition on such practices, with reservation in regard to olive oil, almonds, other nuts and chestnuts shipped to Alexandria, Crete, Beirut, and Venice. A few Dalmatian towns and Cattaro were granted privileges with respect to shipping their local products. The transport of wine from territories "*sottovento*" to Alexandria was authorized as well.⁴¹

Once again, the presence of sea rovers in the Eastern Mediterranean was alarming. Three French *barze* and Spaniard corsairs raided colonial-Venetian vessels and ships flying other flags.⁴² The evident risk in Syria moved the captain of a big Genoese ship to seek refuge in the port of Famagusta. Vessels that were not suffi-

³⁷ Such an itinerary was taken by the *Pasqualiga* of 900 *botti*; *Morosina* of 800 *botti*; that of Contarini of 600 *botti*; *Faliera e Dnoda* of 600 *botti*; *Semitecola* of 300 *botti*, *op. cit.*

³⁸ E.g., the *Mosta* of 400 *botti* and that of Luca Loredan of 500 *botti*; the ship of 600 *botti* of Piero de Nicolò Pezaro da Londra transported timber to Chios, and was expected to return with salumi from Constantinople and 6,000 *stara* of barely from Cyprus: ASVE, *SM*, reg. 18, fols. 51v, 57v; ASVE, *CXDM*, fil. 37, fasc. 33; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, XVIII, col. 383, 399, *Ibid.*, XIX, col. 82-83, 89, 357, 349.

³⁹ The ship-owners claimed that they obtained a special license to trade "*sottovento*": ASVE, *SM*, reg. 18, fol. 51v; ASVE, *CXDM*, fil. 33, 462; *Ibid.*, fil. 35, fill. 317, 401; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, XVIII, col. 383, 399.

⁴⁰ ASVE, *SM*, reg. 18, fol. 51v; ASVE, *CXDM*, fil. 33, fasc. 286; ASVE, *Provveditori al Sal (PSa)*, reg. 60, fols. 179v, 181v; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, *cit.*, XVIII, col. 383, 399; *Ibid.*, XIX, col. 81, 257-258.

⁴¹ ASVE, *SM*, reg. 18, fols. 58v-59r; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, *cit.*, XVIII, col. 201, 388; J.J. HANĚL, *Statuta et leges civitatis et insulae Curzulae, 1214-1558*, in *Monumenta Historico-Juridica Slavorum Meridionalium*, I:II, Zagreb 1877, pars 1, v. 1, pp. 241-242.

⁴² A Cypriot *caravella* heading to Crete was attacked by a French ship; two Venetian ships fought with a Spanish corsair based in Rhodes, off the northeast tip of Crete; Luca Gobo's ship had a fateful encounter with French warships in the vicinity of Cape Maleas; a *caravella* laden with wine and cheese was captured by a Biscayan *barzoto*; an unidentified *naveta* licensed to Alvise Pisani was captured in the Aegean Sea and sent to Rhodes to be sold: M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, *cit.* XVIII, col. 190, 253, 242, 272, 278-279; *Ibid.*, XIX, col. 232-233, 257.

ciently protected were retained in Cyprus for months. The trajectory map (Map. 2) represents the extent of violence at sea, as well as seven notable maritime disasters.⁴³

Arguably, foreign shipping companies controlled a larger share in the shipping market that connected Venice and the Levant with the western basin of the Mediterranean and Atlantic ports. We found indications of three *barzè* from Biscay, a ship captained by Luca da Lucari da Ragusa, and a vessel captained by Ortunio de Zauri that carried about 3,000 butts of wine from Crete to England and other destinations.⁴⁴ Our records do not mention even one Venetian ship that accepted such freights. Apparently, the presence of Venice's ships in Sicily and the Tyrrhenian Sea dwindled too. It is unclear what share of this traffic was still in the hands of the Venetians. We know for certain that a Spaniard and vessels from Puglia received safe conducts to complete their return voyage from Venice to Messina, Lipari, Siena and Trapani.⁴⁵

5. MARITIME CONNECTIONS WITH THE PORT OF CANDIA IN 1514

The wealth of literature on Venetian shipping is not sufficiently linked to documents existing in regional archives. Instead, it relies largely on sources of official character found in the Archives of Venice, in other words, produced by the centre of power.⁴⁶ For this reason, the picture that emerges is for the most part consistent with the Republic's protectionist policies in shipping and trade. Namely, Venice as principal port of call for Levantine goods in the Adriatic Sea, the ports of Crete (Candia, Rethymno, Sitia and Chania) as providers for the Republic's shipping interests, and Venetian patricians as protagonists in offering such services. Without dismissing these views entirely, we wish to re-examine government intervention in trade and shipping matters in the overseas territories on the basis of evidence found in regional rather than Venetian records.

⁴³ The ship captained by Zuane Moro son of Damian was wrecked in the vicinity of Lagusta in Croatia; the ship of 300 *botti* of Zuane Caxaruol son of Bortolo and relatives was wrecked in Istria on the return voyage from Constantinople in the winter; the ship *Contarina* of Bertuzzi Contarini son of Andrea & bros. was wrecked in the vicinity of Crete in the winter; a Candiot ship captained by Sfasi was wrecked in the Quarner in the winter; the ship of Nicolò Catelan from Crete, laden with wine and carrying 80 passengers, was wrecked in the vicinity of Ancona in the winter; the ship *Semitecola* of Galeazzo Semitecolo was wrecked on the sandbar in Venice in the winter; the ship *Molina* of 600 *botti* of Marco da Molin and Domenico and Fantino Malipiero captained by Nicolò Bianco was wrecked after combat with a Spanish corsair on the return voyage from Cyprus: ASVE, CXDM, fil. 37, fasc. 33; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., XVIII, col. 335; *Ibid.*, XIX, col. 45, 257-258, 328.

⁴⁴ ASVE, *Duca di Candia*, bus. 33 (Memoriali, Serie II), fols. 88v, 89v, 97r, 111r, 128v; M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., XVIII, col. 160.

⁴⁵ E.g., the records of the Venetian *Collegio* for this year: ASVE, *Collegio, Notatorio (CN)*, reg. 17, fols. 88r, 89v, 90r, 99r.

⁴⁶ On this subject: G.D. PAGRATIS, *Sources for the Maritime History of Greece (Fifteenth to Seventeenth Century)*, in *New Directions in Mediterranean Maritime History*, G. HARLAFTIS, C. VASSALLO eds., St. John's 2004, pp. 125-146; G.D. PAGRATIS, *Commercio marittimo e metodi di documentazione nelle isole veneziane del Mare Ionio*, in *Rapporti Mediterranei, pratiche documentarie, presenze veneziane. Le reti economiche e culturali (XIV – XVI secolo)*, G. ORTALLI, A. SOPRACASA eds., Venice 2017 (Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti), pp. 253-265.

Map. 3. A trajectory map visualizing maritime traffic flows in the port of Candia (Crete) for the year 1514



The archives of Venetian Crete (now located in Venice) are a rich and valuable source of information on the maritime history of the island, the surrounding region and the Mediterranean in general. The factual basis for the discussion at hand consists of the daily records of the Governor of Candia (*Duca di Candia*, series “*Memoriali?*”), which contain fragmented official reports. These records are sometimes discontinuous and sometimes in bad condition; gaps in coverage are therefore to be expected. To give an example, the series “*Memoriali?*” lacks information on the year 1497. On the other hand, the two registers covering the year 1514 are in a good state of preservation and include safe conducts inscribed to various vessels that stopped in the port of Candia. The vessels’ taxonomy and their next port of call are usually indicated too, and thus the maritime connections with the port of Candia for that year can be largely reconstructed.

Located at a crossroad between the Levantine ports, Constantinople and the western basin of the Mediterranean, the ports and harbours of Crete were important stopping points that connected regional and interregional routes. The island was excessively frequented by local and other merchant fleets. Indeed, our analysis for the year 1514 (Map. 3) shows that Candia was connected by sea with Canea (Chania); towns in the Peloponnese: Coron under Ottoman rule, Monemvasia, Napoli di Romania; and the islands of Stampalia, Skiros, Naxos and Sifnos in the Archipelago by small sailing vessels. Crete was also well connected with Rhodes and Cyprus. As mentioned already, many Greek commercial vessels stopped in Cyprus to load grain in 1514. Quite a few Venetian round ships stopped in Crete on their return voyage from Syria.⁴⁷ Venice and Crete were connected all year round by medium-sized vessels – *caravelle*, *gripi* and a *marano* – carrying cheese, wine and other local products.⁴⁸ Crete was connected with Constantinople by vessels flying other flags as well. We noted a ship from Lesina, another captained by Giorgio Capodassi, a Ragusan ship named *Santa Maria* captained by Andrea di Elia di Ragusa, and another captained by Martinum Pastalis. Similarly, a *gripeto* captained by Calbo Susso sailed from Crete to Syria and then to Constantinople.⁴⁹ The fact that the majority of the carriers transporting Cretan wine to England and Flanders were foreign is corroborated by evidence from the local archive.⁵⁰ In 1514, Crete was also connected to Messina, Ragusa and other destinations in the Adriatic Sea (the exact ports were not indicated).⁵¹ Our findings also suggest that Ragusan ships increased their activity in the Venetian port system and the Levant at the expense of ships flying the San Marco flag. Clearly, these assertions have to be complemented by scrutiny of the in-between years.

⁴⁷ Marco Contarini; Antonio Otobon; Nicolo Cipriano; Piero di Bartolo; Vicenio de la Riva: ASVE, *Duca di Candia*, bus. 33bis, fols. 18v, 20r, 30r-30v, 81r.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, fols. 18v, 20, 31r, 39v, 95r; ASVE, *Duca di Candia*, bus. 4, fol. 89v. A *gripi* chartered by Francesco Foscari q. Filippo completed the voyage in eight or nine days: M. SANUTO, *I diarii*, cit., XVIII, col. 434; *Ibid.*, XIX, col. 9, 257-258, 232-233. In the winter, letters from Venice were transmitted to Cyprus via Crete: ASVE, *CapCX*, *Lettere rettori*, bus. 288, n. 97.

⁴⁹ ASVE, *Duca di Candia*, buss. 4, fol. 89v; *Ibid.*, 33, fols. 102r, 112v, 129r, 135v.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, bus. 33, fols. 88v, 89v, 97r, 111v, 128v.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, bus. 33, fols. 95r, 103r, 110r, 122v-123r.

Map. 4. A trajectory map visualizing the regional preference of the Corfiot fleet for the year 1514



6. BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS OF THE CORFIOT FLEET IN 1514

The study of the movement patterns of the colonial fleets of small and medium-sized vessels can be considered as one of this project's major contributions. Indeed, as far as the period examined here is concerned, we know very little about the maritime activity of ships operating from ports under Venetian rule. Vessel tracking has the potential to define the regional preference of the various fleets under Venetian rule and to clarify in what way the territorial belonging of a shipping enterprise defined its activity. Questions raised are: To what extent was Corfu connected to a wider sea area by local rather than other ships? Did the fleet of Corfu become more regional over time, while other fleets showed a net increase in the share of other ports?

The following trajectory map (Map. 4) offers a glimpse at such an analysis, by representing the regional preference of the Corfiot fleet for 1514, based on records found in the regional archive of the island. A vessel typed as *xylō*, of about 63 tons, connected Corfu with Epirus; Saiada (Epirus); Saiada – Dalmatian Coast (Sklavonia); Saiada – Apulia; Apulia (Kastres); Otranto; San Cataldo – Otranto; Dragomestro (Aitolokarnania) – Venice; Taranto – Prevesa – Calabria; Lessio – Cattaro; Arta; Ambracian Gulf (“*kolpos tis Artas*”); Cephalonia (quite a few vessels carrying livestock – rams, goats); Katochi (Aitolokarnania) – Venice; Venice. Smaller vessels of about 31–39 tons connected Corfu with Lepanto, Zante and Venice. Other sources complement this information: a Corfiot *caravella* carried wine from Parga to Zara; other *caravelle* sailed to places unspecified in the Adriatic Sea; the *gripo* of Zacaria da Corfu set sail from Corfu to Alessandria and Cyprus; the Corfiot *navilio* of Zacaria Megagnani sailed to Rhodes and Damietta. Crosschecking of this information with data extracted for the year 1497 suggests a lack of connection by local vessels to destinations in Sicily (Cao Spartivento, Syracuse), Valona and Constantinople in 1514.⁵²

In fact, 1514 is a year of transition with respect to Corfiot shipping enterprises. The 18 May ban had significant implications for the local fleet in the following years. Previously, the particular confluence of historical circumstances allowed Corfu's commerce to deviate from the legal strictures imposed by Venice and to grasp the opportunity to promote Ottoman trade in Ancona and at the fairs in Lanciano and Recanati. But in 1514, when the Corfiots requested an exemption from the ban on trade in Lanciano and Recanati, they were denied it by the Venetian Senate. This clipped the wings of Corfu's shipping, which was just beginning “to become autonomous” and was starting to seek out new markets that competed with Venice. The importance the Corfiots attached to their request is demonstrated by the fact that although it was turned down, it was redrafted eight years later, as a proposal to allow one voyage a year to Recanati. Once again, however, the petition was rejected, even though the Corfiots reminded the Senate of the exemption it had granted to their Dalmatian colleagues to trade with regions of the “*sottovento*”. Needless to say,

⁵² These data are drawn from notarial documents in the Archive of the Prefecture of Corfu (GSA): G.D. PAGRATIS, *Trade and Shipping Corfu 1496–1538*, in “International Journal of Maritime History”, 16, 2004, n. 2, pp. 169–220; IDEM, *Ships and Shipbuilding in Corfu*, cit., pp. 237–246.

the ban was violated whenever the opportunity arose, and the following years were marked by a more intensive Venetian effort to control the entrepreneurial behaviour of Corfiot merchant-mariners.⁵³ In this respect, it would be interesting to produce similar trajectory maps for the subsequent years, so as to represent how the maritime connections of the islanders using local fleets changed.

CONCLUSIONS

The adoption of a bottom-up approach and the extraction of data on vessel movements from regional archives, strengthened by both narratives and visualizations, generate a more complex picture of Venice's maritime network than the one usually portrayed in scholarly works. The trajectory maps produced for the years 1497 and 1514 present changing trends along regional and inter-regional sea routes, influenced by both political and economic forces: such as a significant drop in the traffic of round ships to Constantinople two years before the outbreak of the 1499–1502 war, whereas commercial exchange between both capitals was lively in 1514; or the various political and climatic factors that affected the preferred grain outlets; or the Republic's dramatic abandonment of the Atlantic shipping lanes and the taking over of these by foreign shipping companies, etc.

The dramatic reduction in shipping services provided by Venetians in the western basin of the Mediterranean and beyond prompts reflection on the effects of a downturn in shipping on the political, economic and social life in Venice. However, it is worthwhile reminding ourselves first of the historiographical context within which the prediction of Venice's resiliency in the sixteenth century was made.

In the early twentieth century, scholarship ascribed what was then considered to be the decline of Venice and its merchant marine to the great oceanic discoveries and the consequent abandonment of the system of merchant galleys. While Albert H. Lybyer (1915) may deserve pride of place in postponing the decline of the Mediterranean spice trade to a much later period, it was only the work of Frederic C. Lane, first published in 1933, which granted this thesis substantial support through a careful assessment of the Venetian merchant fleet and its capacity over the centuries.⁵⁴ Lane stressed that the effects of the Portuguese discoveries on Venetian trade have frequently been misrepresented due to the failure to distinguish between long ships (galleys) and round ships. Historians confused the growth or decline in the size of galley convoys with that of Venetian shipping and the spice trade as a whole. Lane concluded that the decline of merchant galleys was disproportionately related to any decline in Venetian commerce in the first half of the sixteenth century.

Whereas Lane's conviction that the state merchant galleys had been superseded by private merchantmen in liner shipping is substantially correct, our findings sug-

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ A.H. LYBYER, *The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade*, in "The English Historical Review", 120, 1915, pp. 577–588; F.C. LANE, *Venetian Shipping during the Commercial Revolution*, cit.

gests that the round ships too experienced a considerable decline between the last years of the fifteenth century and 1514. Thus, the decline in the system of merchant galleys does seem to reflect a decline in other sectors of shipping.

To the contrary, some trends prove to be resilient, notwithstanding political unrest and imminent danger at sea: for example, more or less regular liner shipping services (galleys and/or round ships) to Syria and Alexandria; or all-year-round traffic between Crete and the ports of Rhodes, Cyprus, and Venice.

We have seen the potential of our methodology to contribute to a discussion on the role of Crete in the wider context of Mediterranean maritime networks. Similarly, study of the behaviour patterns of the Corfiot fleet adds a particular weight to the issue of ships' registry. We have seen too how Venice's subjects coped with an ad-hoc imposition that aimed to jeopardize their ongoing pre-Venetian connections. It remains to be seen in what way the maritime network represented older privileges, even multiple affiliations, in shipping and trade (e.g. with the Sublime Porte).⁵⁵

Clearly, it is impossible to draw conclusive conclusions on the changing patterns in Venice's maritime activity in this early stage of the project. First of all, the in-between years have to be included in our scrutiny. Secondly, it must be borne in mind that the ability of our sources to represent a comprehensive picture of shipping is limited. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to extend our research and include records found in other archives. Nevertheless, the preliminary results interact with recent scholarly works that seek to reach a more holistic understanding of Venetian overseas rule, by drawing attention to the mechanics of "brokering" empire against a backdrop of a complex geographical, cultural and traditional substructure.⁵⁶ In this perspective, our findings highlight the political-actor role of subalterns in creating spaces of opposition to the conceptions of the hegemonic geo-economic system.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ On the privileged-based nature of Venice's ships registry, see: R. GLUZMAN, *What Makes a Ship Venetian? (13th-16th centuries)*, in *Cultures of Empire: Rethinking Venetian Rule 1400-1700. A Festschrift for Benjamin Arbel*, G. CHRIST, F. J. MORCHE eds., Leiden forthcoming (Brill).

⁵⁶ M. O'CONNELL, *Men of Empire: Power and Negotiation in Venice's Maritime State*, Baltimore 2009 (Johns Hopkins University); E.N. ROTHMAN, *Brokering Empire*, cit.; G. CHRIST et al., *Trading Empire*, cit.

⁵⁷ Cf. D. CHAKRABARTY, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton 2000 (Princeton University Press).

Pierrick Pourchasse

*Les réseaux négociants européens et les échanges
entre la France et l'Europe du Nord (XVII^e -XIX^e siècles)*

Très tôt, la zone baltique s'est spécialisée dans l'exportation de produits fournis par le travail de la terre, par un sous-sol riche en matières premières et par l'exploitation de la forêt. Le grand commerce vers l'Occident a pris une importance considérable et a exercé son influence sur la production de toute la région¹. Par sa capacité à satisfaire la demande de l'Europe occidentale, le Nord a joué un rôle de première importance dans le développement économique des pays producteurs mais aussi des pays prestataires de services maritimes².

Le commerce du « Nord » est caractérisé par un déséquilibre majeur, les pays nordiques n'étant pas des clients de premier plan pour les produits manufacturés occidentaux. Mais, « répondant à la nécessité d'importer pour vivre par l'acte d'exporter davantage... le déséquilibre est devenu moteur et, tout compte fait, a gouverné un haut niveau d'emploi de la navigation et de masse des transactions »³. Au cours du XVIII^e siècle, la Baltique est ainsi devenue un marché de plus en plus ouvert aux produits occidentaux et aux marchandises coloniales.

L'ensemble du commerce baltique reste cependant marginal face au volume total de la production et de la consommation européenne. Il ne faut pas imaginer que l'Europe de l'Est et du Nord fournit aux pays occidentaux toute la nourriture et les matières premières dont ils ont besoin et reçoit en retour presque tous les produits industriels qui lui sont indispensables, accompagnés de sels, de vins et de produits

¹ A. MACZAK, H. SAMSONOWICZ, *La zone baltique, l'un des éléments du marché européen*, dans « Acta Poloniae historica », XI, 1965, pp. 71-99. Les auteurs reprennent la pensée de M. MALOWIST: « Dès la fin du XV^e siècle, ce capital, surtout le capital hollandais, y obtenait les matières premières indispensables à l'industrie qui se développait en Occident. La demande de matières premières a défini à son tour le système de production de la Pologne et dans les pays limitrophes où les grands domaines cultivaient les céréales pour l'exportation » (p. 73). Critique de cette théorie chez J. TOPOLSKI, *La Baltique fut-elle responsable de la régression économique en Pologne au XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles?*, in *Colloque La mer Baltique, zone de rencontres et d'affrontements, 1600-1945*, Strasbourg, 1978, pp. 8-17. Pour une vision nouvelle de l'impact du commerce baltique sur l'économie de l'Europe occidentale : J. W. MOORE, 'Amsterdam is Standing on Norway' Part II : *The Global North Atlantic in the Ecological Revolution of the Long Seventeenth Century*, dans « Journal of Agrarian Change », 10, 2010, n. 2, pp. 188-227, 196 et suiv.

² M. VAN TIELHOF, *The "mother of all trades". the Baltic grain trade in Amsterdam from the late 16th to the early 19th century*, Leiden, 2002.

³ M. MORINEAU, *Le commerce de la Baltique dans ses rapports avec le commerce hors de la Baltique (du milieu du XVI^e siècle à la fin du XVIII^e siècle)*, in *The interactions of Amsterdam and Antwerp with the Baltic region, 1400-1800*, Leiden, Martinus Nijhoff, 1983, pp 35-42.

coloniaux. L'Europe de l'Ouest et du Sud produisent la plupart des céréales et des matières premières nécessaires à leur consommation⁴. C'est notamment le cas de la France qui est un pays possédant un grand potentiel agricole et des richesses naturelles qui lui permettent de ne pas être dépendante des marchés extérieurs. Malgré ces avantages, les ports français ont des relations suivies avec les pays de la Baltique où ils commercialisent de nombreux produits et s'approvisionnent en munitions navales et, selon la conjoncture, en céréales. Ces échanges sont cependant organisés et contrôlés par des intermédiaires étrangers, notamment hollandais, ce qui préoccupe les autorités en ces temps mercantilistes⁵. Plusieurs projets visent à affirmer le commerce français dans le Nord. A la fin du XVII^e siècle, la « Compagnie du Nord », fondée par une décision royale de juin 1669, reçoit le privilège exclusif du commerce de tous les pays de Hollande, de Zélande, des côtes d'Allemagne, de Suède, de Norvège, de Moscovie et autres pays, terres fermes et îles du Nord⁶. Mais, dès 1672, le début de la guerre de Hollande oblige la Compagnie à suspendre ses activités. Ses vaisseaux ne reprendront plus la direction des mers septentrionales et l'entreprise est liquidée en avril 1677⁷. Au cours du XVIII^e siècle, la Russie, marché fabuleux pour les contemporains, fait l'objet d'un nombre considérable de mémoires préconisant le développement des échanges⁸ mais, malgré l'intérêt et les encouragements du gouvernement, la présence française en Baltique reste marginale tout au long de l'Ancien Régime.

Cette communication se propose de revisiter le commerce français avec le Nord sur une période de deux siècles en s'appuyant sur les comptes du Sund dont la totalité des données sont désormais à disposition de la communauté des chercheurs⁹. Comme nous le constaterons, plusieurs évidences sont à reconsidérer.

LES ECHANGES AVEC LE NORD

La balance du commerce

Au début du XVIII^e siècle, l'administration française met en place une balance du commerce dont les premiers états sont dressés en 1716. Les négociants du royaume sont astreints à déclarer dans les bureaux de l'administration fiscale, toutes les marchandises qu'ils envoient ou qu'ils reçoivent de l'étranger. Tous les trois mois, les receveurs doivent envoyer à l'administration générale des finances les copies exactes des déclarations faites par les commerçants à l'entrée et à la sortie, que

⁴ J.-A. FABER, *De Sontvaart als spiegel van de structuurveranderingen in de Europese economie gedurende de achttiende eeuw*, dans « *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* », 1, 1982, pp. 91-102.

⁵ La noblesse commerçante par l'abbé Coyer, Paris 1756: « Le commerce du Nord nous est aussi nécessaire que notre marine, puisqu'il en fournit les matériaux », (p. 96).

⁶ P. BONNASSIEUX, *Les grandes compagnies de commerce*, Paris 1892 (réédition New York 1969), p. 171.

⁷ P. BOISSONNADE, P. CHARLIAT, *Colbert et la Compagnie de commerce du Nord (1661-1689)*, Paris 1930.

⁸ Bibliothèque municipale de St Brieuc, manuscrit n° 83. A.D.L.A., C. 754, « Observations sur le commerce du Nord relativement à la France » (juin 1769). A. KRAATZ, *La Compagnie française de Russie, histoire du commerce franco-russe au XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles*, Paris, 1993.

⁹ <http://www.soundtoll.nl/index.php/en/onderzoek/zoeken-in-de-sonttol-database>.

les marchandises soient soumises ou exemptées de droits¹⁰ Les quantités déclarées sont additionnées et les états obtenus envoyés aux directeurs des Chambres de commerce pour qu'ils y portent les prix des marchandises. Le regroupement de toutes les informations recueillies permet d'établir la Balance du commerce de la France. Les données fournies de 1716 à 1780 par la source originale ont été publiées en 1957 par l'historien italien Ruggero Romano¹¹.

Les résultats obtenus par le bureau de la Balance du commerce ont toujours été suspectés d'infidélité. Dans un mémoire de 1784, Roland de la Platière déclare : « c'est grande pitié que ces balances du commerce que l'on fait dans les différents états ! Quand je vois tirer des résultats de ces ridicules pancartes qu'on dresse avec tant de travail et de netteté... »¹². Ainsi le poste « Nord » de la statistique se réduit aux récapitulatifs des échanges maritimes et ne prend pas en compte les marchandises d'un prix élevé, tout particulièrement les produits de luxe, passant par les foires allemandes (Leipzig, Francfort/Main) et ensuite redistribuées dans l'espace Baltique. D'autre part, outre les mauvaises déclarations des négociants et les négligences des commis, le problème de l'estimation de la valeur des marchandises est sujet à controverse. Les prix donnés ne correspondent pas aux prix réels et varient considérablement d'une Chambre de commerce à l'autre. Le but de la Balance étant d'obtenir un excédent favorable au commerce extérieur français, les produits exportés sont surévalués et la validité des résultats est très superficielle. Cependant, les données établies par la Balance du commerce de la France indiquent des rapports proportionnels, des ordres de grandeur, plutôt que des valeurs réelles. « Dans la mesure ou l'écart entre les différentes séries garde une certaine constance au cours du siècle¹³ », il est possible d'étudier l'évolution des relations commerciales de la France avec ses principaux partenaires. Selon Ernest Labrousse, il faut retenir des statistiques de la Balance comme « exprimant un mouvement à défaut d'un niveau »¹⁴.

Dans un article d'un grand intérêt¹⁵, Pierre Jeannin a étudié la place des marchés nordiques dans l'ensemble du commerce extérieur français au XVIII^e siècle à partir des données fournies par la Balance du commerce.

Tab. 1. **Part du « Nord » dans le commerce extérieur français**

	Importations	Exportations
De 1721 à 1740	7,4 %	8,2 %
De 1761 à 1780	11,8 %	21,3 %

¹⁰ M. MORINEAU, *La balance du commerce franco néerlandais et le resserrement économique des Provinces Unies au XVIII^e siècle*, dans «Economisch Historisch Jaarboek», 30, 1965, p. 179.

¹¹ R. ROMANO, *Documenti e prime considerazioni intorno alla « Balance du Commerce » dalla Francia dal 1716 al 1780*, in *Studi in onore di Armando Sapori*, I-II, Milan 1957, II, pp. 1267-1299.

¹² P. BUTEL, *La croissance commerciale bordelaise dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle*, Lille 1973, p. 5.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁵ P. JEANNIN, *Les marchés du nord dans le commerce français au XVIII^e siècle*, in *Aires et structures du commerce français au XVIII^e siècle*, éd. P. LEON, Lyon, 1975, pp. 47-74.

Les échanges avec le Nord sont en progression constante au cours du XVIII^e siècle. Seules les périodes de conflit provoquent des ruptures dans la croissance du commerce franco-baltique. Les importations augmentent respectivement de 275% entre les années 1720-1730 et 1748-1758 et de 408% entre 1720-1730 et la décennie 1770-1780 (valeurs médianes). La croissance des exportations est encore plus spectaculaire avec des augmentations respectives de 556% et de 888% pour les mêmes années, malgré les crises dues aux conflits qui affectent profondément le commerce français avec la Baltique au cours de cette période.

Le solde de la Balance du commerce avec le « Nord » apparaît constamment favorable à la France. Selon Gérard de Rayneval, agent français à Danzig, la France a livré en Pologne entre 1760 et 1771 pour 3 900 000 livres de marchandises en moyenne chaque année et, en retour, n'a acheté que pour 1 500 000 livres¹⁶. « Le caractère positif de sa balance commerciale dans ce secteur est accentué par le fait qu'à volume égal, une cargaison à destination du "Nord" (vins, produits coloniaux...) est plus chère qu'une cargaison de produits baltiques »¹⁷. Les chiffres donnés sont très certainement exagérés et, dans la réalité, l'écart est très probablement réduit et réversible lors des disettes¹⁸.

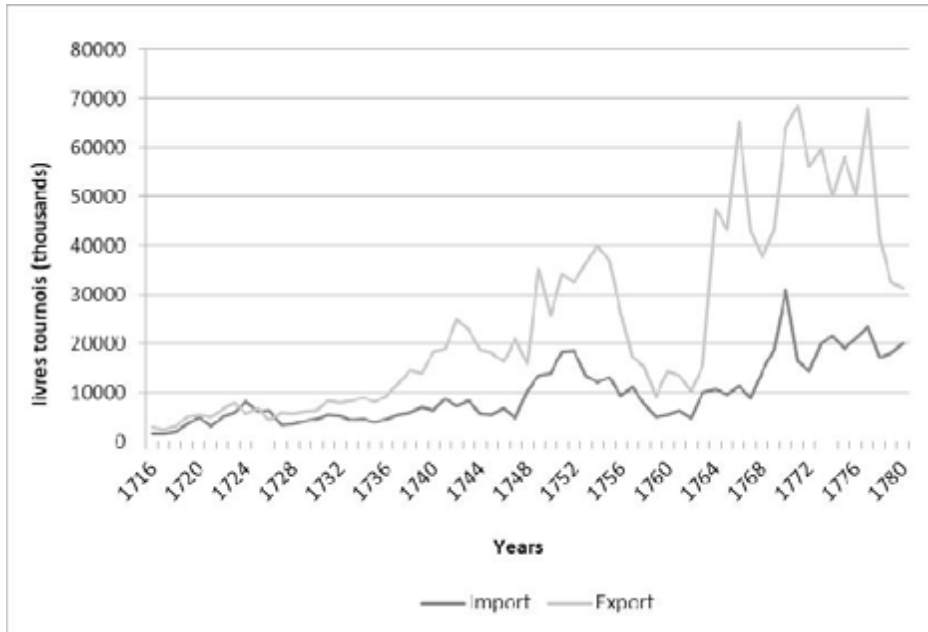
La situation de la Balance du commerce français avec la zone baltique est totalement différente de celle de ses voisins anglais et hollandais, qui sont gravement déficitaires dans leurs échanges avec le Nord. La capacité de la Baltique à importer des marchandises est limitée et les importations sont beaucoup plus faibles en terme de valeur que les exportations. Selon A. -E. Christensen, la valeur des produits exportés de la Baltique vers l'Europe de l'Ouest pendant la période 1560-1650 représente le double de la valeur des produits importés¹⁹. En outre, le surplus des exportations de la Baltique vers l'Occident tend à s'accroître au cours du XVIII^e siècle, du fait du développement des achats des matières premières pour la construction navale. Grâce aux vins, aux eaux-de-vie, aux sels et aux produits coloniaux, la France est donc en position favorable dans ses échanges avec le Nord.

¹⁶ E. CIESLAK, *Sea borne trade between France and Poland in the XVIIIth century*, dans « Journal of European Economic History », 6, 1977, n. 1, pp. 49-62, 58; K. RÖNNBÄCK, *Transforming consumption in the European periphery – colonial commodities in Scandinavia during the early modern era*, Paper to be presented at 12th European Business History Association conference, Bergen, Norway, August 22, 2008, p. 10. Klas Rönnbäck indique que le sucre en Suède est approximativement 50-70 fois plus cher que le même poids en céréales au milieu du XVII^e siècle. Ce ratio chute par la suite et au début du XIX^e siècle il est égal à 10.

¹⁷ M.-L. PELUS-KAPLAN, *Les Européens et la Baltique (1690-1790)*, dans « Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Moderne », 1-2, 1997, pp 99-129, p. 115.

¹⁸ M. MORINEAU, *La balance du commerce*, cit., p. 189.

¹⁹ A. -E. CHRISTENSEN, *Dutch Trade to the Baltic about 1600*, Copenhague-La Haye, 1941.

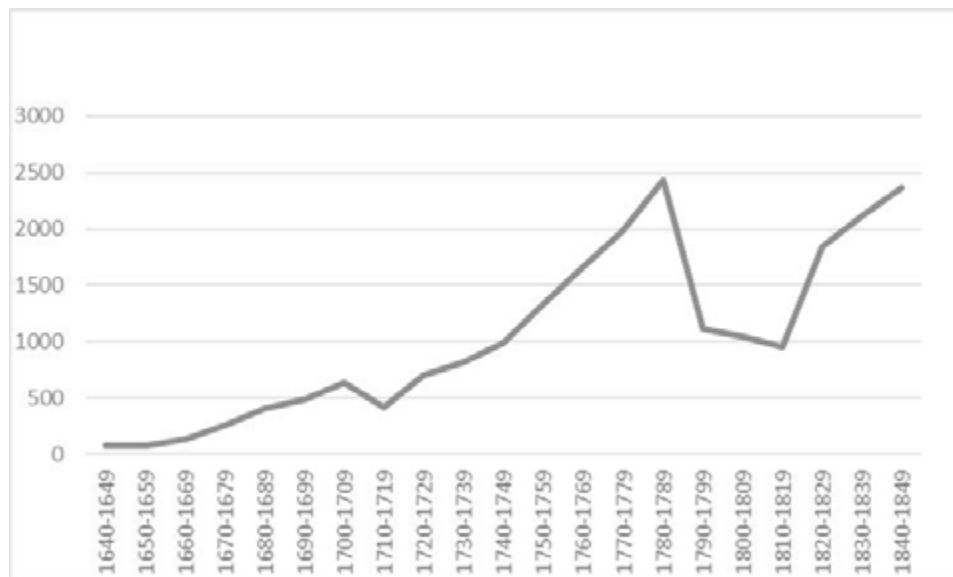
Graph 1. **Balance du commerce français avec le Nord**

Les principaux ports de départ vers la Baltique

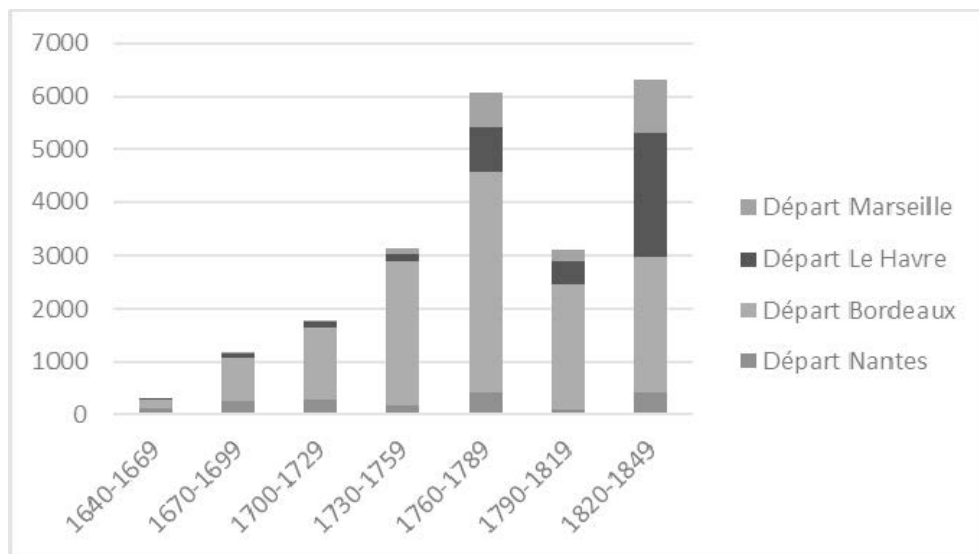
A partir des registres du Sund, les passages vers la Baltique des quatre plus grands ports français, c'est-à-dire Nantes, Bordeaux, Le Havre et Marseille ont été recensés. Le premier constat montre que le nombre de navires est en constante augmentation de 1640 aux guerres révolutionnaires et napoléoniennes qui marquent une rupture brutale des échanges économiques avec le Nord. Après la chute de Napoléon, l'activité repart et, à la fin de la décennie 1840, le niveau atteint est proche de celui des années 1780.

Les départs de France se caractérisent par une évolution de la place des différents ports dans les échanges avec le Nord. Au XVII^e siècle, Nantes et Bordeaux monopolisent les relations avec la Baltique. Cependant, progressivement, le port de la Gironde prend l'ascendant sur le port ligérien et, dans les années 1730-1770, Bordeaux concentre entre 80 et 90% des départs vers le Nord. A partir des années 1760, Le Havre et Marseille prennent de l'importance mais les guerres de la fin de siècle brisent cette croissance. Au XIX^e siècle la situation est totalement différente, Bordeaux et Le Havre font jeu égal (autour de 40%) alors que Marseille assure environ 16% du trafic, Nantes étant désormais un port secondaire dans les relations maritimes françaises avec le Nord.

Graph 2. Passages de navires à l'entrée de la Baltique au départ de Nantes, Bordeaux, Le Havre et Marseille



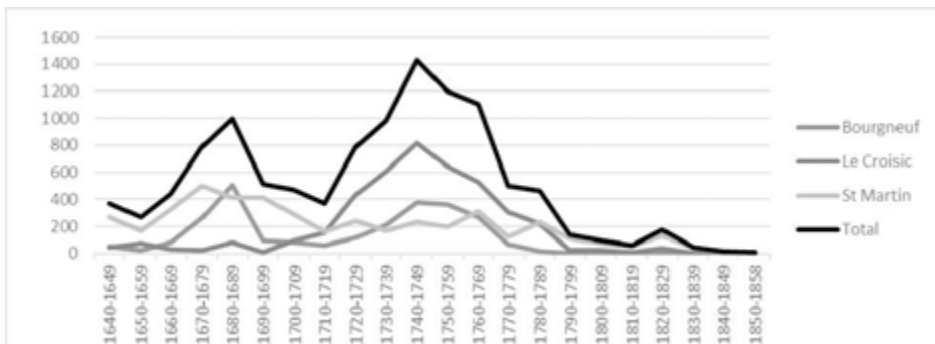
Graph 3. Les départs de navires vers la Baltique (1640-1849)



Cette évolution traduit les évolutions économiques du réseau portuaire français. Nantes et Bordeaux, privés de leurs relations privilégiées avec les colonies américaines sont sur le déclin alors que Le Havre, profitant de l'industrialisation de la vallée de la Seine et de sa proximité avec Paris, est en plein développement. En Méditerranée, Marseille conserve sa suprématie et, tirant profit du développement des échanges internationaux, accroît son activité vers le Nord de l'Europe.

L'étude des quatre premiers ports français au cours de la période 1640-1858 a permis de recenser 23.112 navires se dirigeant vers le Nord. A ceci, il est nécessaire d'ajouter les exportations de sel qui ne concernent pas ces ports majeurs mais qui représentent un trafic de grande ampleur. De nombreux petits havres de la côte atlantique, de la côte sud de la Bretagne à l'embouchure de la Gironde, expédient d'énormes quantités de sel vers l'Europe du Nord depuis le Moyen-Âge. A partir de la base Sound Toll Registers online, nous avons répertorié les départs des navires chargés de sel en provenance du Croisic, de Bourgneuf et de Saint-Martin-en-Ré, c'est-à-dire des trois plus importants centres exportateurs de la côte atlantique française. Au total, entre 1640 et 1858, 11.228 navires sont partis de ces trois ports pour livrer leurs cargaisons dans la Baltique.

Graph 4. Les passages de navires chargés de sel à l'entrée de la Baltique (nombre de navires)



L'évolution des exportations de sel vers la Baltique présente quelques particularités. La croissance est très forte dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle mais s'interrompt brutalement avec les guerres de Louis XIV, notamment la guerre de la ligue d'Augsbourg (1688-1697) quand la France est opposée aux grandes puissances maritimes, la Grande-Bretagne et la Hollande mais aussi la Suède et le Saint-Empire. La chute brutale des ventes de sel en Baltique à partir des années 1750-1760 est due à d'autres raisons, non plus militaires mais économiques.

Le commerce du sel est un élément de première importance expliquant l'expansion maritime des Provinces-Unies en Europe du Nord. Les navires hollandais qui livrent des marchandises en Europe occidentale viennent ensuite systématiquement charger du sel chez leurs correspondants des ports salicoles de la côte

atlantique française sans connaître généralement leur lieu de livraison. Pour ces « rouliers des mers », si le sel ne procure pas un fret très rémunérateur, il présente l'avantage d'être toujours disponible, de servir de lest, de se charger très rapidement et d'être facilement commercialisable en Europe du Nord. Les négociants des Provinces-Unies, ayant une parfaite connaissance des cours du sel dans les principaux ports importateurs cherchent à obtenir le prix le plus rémunérateur et donnent leurs instructions de livraison aux capitaines lors de leur passage en mer du Nord ou à Elseneur. Le temps gagné dans les opérations de chargement et de déchargement permet en outre aux navires de faire deux voyages, voire plus, entre la Baltique et l'Europe occidentale. Pour que le système fonctionne, il faut vendre rapidement et être très compétitif sur les marchés du Nord. Le prix du sel français doit donc être le plus bas possible²⁰.

Les chargements à destination de la Baltique dans le port du Croisic au cours de la période 1640-1858, montre l'importance des trafics de sel pour la navigation hollandaise²¹:

Tab. 2. **Origine des navires ayant chargé du sel au Croisic (1640-1858)**

Origine navires	Nombre	%
Autres ports du Nord	135	3,2
Danemark	128	3,0
Suède	141	3,4
Pologne	182	4,3
Prusse	235	5,6
Provinces-Unies	3154	75,1
France	56	1,3
Grande-Bretagne	116	2,8
Autres	53	1,3
	4200	

Le système se bloque à partir des années 1760. Les salines de l'Atlantique subissent une série de mauvaises récoltes au cours de la période 1763-1774 qui se tradui-

²⁰ P. JEANNIN, « Le marché du sel marin dans l'Europe du Nord du XIV^e au XVIII^e siècle », *Le rôle du sel dans l'histoire*, Travaux préparés sous la direction de Michel Mollat, Publication de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Paris-Sorbonne, Paris 1968, p. 78. « Dans certains cas, les prix du fret rendaient impossible, ou catastrophique pour le marchand, une importation de sel. » Mais, comme l'indique ensuite P. Jeannin à la page 79 du même article en parlant du sel méditerranéen, « le prix du fret couvrait en général un aller et un retour » et, ainsi « il n'y avait pas d'obstacle à charger du sel plutôt que du lest au retour. » Ceci devait être également le cas pour le sel de l'Atlantique.

²¹ Les multiples changements de frontières des pays riverains de la Baltique à l'époque moderne ont été pris en compte dans les statistiques présentées. Ainsi Stettin est intégré à la Suède jusqu'en 1720 puis à la Prusse, Greifswald à la Suède jusqu'en 1815 puis à la Prusse... Les autres ports du Nord concernent le Mecklembourg, les villes hanséatiques, le Hanovre... Ce choix peut-être discuté mais, en raison du très grand nombre de ports concernés, il s'est avéré nécessaire de faire un regroupement.

sent par une hausse considérable des prix. La France connaît une véritable pénurie d'autant plus que les stocks ne sont pas considérables, les enlèvements demeurant à un niveau très élevé depuis les crises des années 1750. L'arrêt du roi du 23 septembre 1770 interdit même les exportations. La Grande-Bretagne profite de la crise française pour imposer ses sels sur les marchés baltiques. Depuis le XVII^e siècle, les propriétaires de sauneries de la région du Cheshire investissent dans une production nationale exploitée sur des bases industrielles. Après avoir satisfait leurs besoins, les Britanniques sont prêts, à partir du milieu du XVIII^e siècle, à se lancer à l'assaut des marchés tenus par le sel de l'Atlantique d'autant que leurs prix sont très compétitifs. Le sel présente un autre intérêt, excessivement important pour les armateurs britanniques. Leurs navires fréquentent de plus en plus intensément la Baltique pour aller chercher des produits pondéreux et volumineux mais la plupart d'entre eux y entrent à vide. Le sel est la marchandise idéale pour éviter les problèmes du lest (frais et taxe de délestage...) et sa commercialisation permet de faire des profits supplémentaires tout en abaissant le coût des services de transport.

La guerre d'Amérique accentue la domination britannique sur le marché du sel. Les Anglais qui ont déclaré la guerre aux Provinces-Unies contrôlent désormais totalement les trafics en mer du Nord. Après le conflit, les armateurs hollandais, très affaiblis par le conflit, ne peuvent revenir à la situation antérieure et désertent les salines de l'Atlantique.

La navigation entre le Nord et la France

En 1661, Van Beuningen, ambassadeur des États-Généraux à Paris, assure à Jean de Witt, grand-pensionnaire de Hollande, que les vaisseaux des Provinces-Unies font les deux tiers de la navigation avec la France. Deux ans plus tard, un diplomate écrit : «La plus grande partie du commerce de France avec l'étranger se fait, excepté quelque peu de vaisseaux anglais par des vaisseaux hollandais et par la Hollande.»²² Selon Colbert, le dynamisme des Hollandais est une véritable calamité pour la France : «Leur industrie et notre peu d'intelligence a passé si avant que, par le moyen des facteurs et des commissionnaires de leur nation qu'ils ont eu pouvoir d'établir dans tous les ports du royaume, s'étant rendus maîtres de tout le commerce par la navigation, ils ont mis le prix à toutes les marchandises qu'ils achètent et à celles qu'ils vendent»²³. Ainsi, l'idée prévaut que les armateurs Hollandais contrôlent totalement le commerce français vers le Nord comme nous venons de le voir pour le sel. Cependant, si les navires français ne sont guère présents sur les routes maritimes vers l'Europe septentrionale, la domination hollandaise n'est pas si aussi écrasante que le perçoit l'opinion, notamment en ce qui concerne les exportations des quatre principaux ports français vers la Baltique.

²² J. MATHOREZ, *La pénétration des Allemands en France sous l'ancien régime*, Paris 1916, p. 261.

²³ P. CLEMENT, *Lettres, instructions et mémoires de Colbert*, Paris 1873, II, pp. CCLXIX et CCLXX.

L'absence de la flotte française

Jusqu'à la fin de l'Ancien Régime la navigation française vers la mer Baltique est particulièrement faible. Les rapports du consul d'Elseneur sont toujours aussi brefs: « de toute l'année, il n'est passé aucun vaisseau français »²⁴, « passé le Zondt 4.669 navires parmi lesquels il y a eu 2 vaisseaux français et 689 anglais »²⁵, ou « 6 vaisseaux français pour 1.100 anglais et 2.500 hollandais »²⁶... A la fin des années 1760, quatre à cinq navires français, au maximum entrent en Baltique chaque année alors que le nombre des Hollandais avoisine les 1.200, celui des Britanniques se situant entre 8 et 900²⁷. En temps de guerre, les navires français ne passent plus. Ainsi, au cours de la guerre de Sept Ans, de 1756 à 1763, un seul capitaine ose traverser la mer du Nord pour entrer dans les détroits danois.

Sur les 23.112 navires ayant chargé en France et recensés à l'entrée de la Baltique, seuls 1.485 battent pavillon français soit 6,4%. De plus, la grande majorité de ces navires sont passés en Baltique entre 1820 et 1858.

Tab. 3. Navires ayant chargé en France à destination de la Baltique

	Entrées Baltique	Origine France	%
1640-1819	15.506	339	2,2
1820-1858	7.606	1.146	15,1
	23.112	1.485	6,4

Comment expliquer cette absence des navires français sur les routes maritimes du Nord? De nombreux arguments sont régulièrement avancés mais la principale raison vient du monde négociant. La navigation vers le Nord est fortement concurrentielle et, pour être compétitif, l'organisation des trafics doit être parfaite à l'exemple de la navigation hollandaise. Pour les armateurs français, l'expédition de bâtiments dans cette direction a la fâcheuse propension à être largement débitrice dans les livres de compte. Bien souvent ce sont des problèmes d'affrètement qui poussent les bâtiments français à prendre la route de Hambourg ou de la Baltique. Ainsi, en 1775, « faute de navires étrangers à Bordeaux », les négociants de la ville expédient deux navires français pour Brême. A cette occasion, le vice-consul du

²⁴ ARCHIVES NATIONALES (AN), B1 485, Lettre de Hanssen du 27 février 1745.

²⁵ AN, B1 485, Lettre de Hanssen du 01 juin 1750. « Ces deux vaisseaux ont été la frégate nommée La Notre Dame commandée par le capitaine Pierre Ages qu'il a fait construire à Dunkerque pour le compte de ses bourgeois à Dunkerque chargée de cendres, planches et douelles allant au dit Dunkerque. La seconde, la galiote nommée Le Mercure de Dunkerque, capitaine Lambert Kemping chargée avec du sel pour Riga où il a chargé des chanvres, planches, douelles et cendres pour ladite ville ».

²⁶ AN, B1 485, Courrier de Hanssen du 21 janvier 1755.

²⁷ Remarque : dans l'article de P. BUTEL, *Le trafic européen de Bordeaux de la guerre d'Amérique à la Révolution*, dans « Annales du Midi », 78-1966, p. 60, les chiffres correspondent à l'aller et au retour c'est-à-dire que les navires sont comptés deux fois.

port hanséatique fait d'ailleurs remarquer avec politesse que le tarif du fret n'est guère compétitif²⁸.

Les négociants français préfèrent les commerces protégés à l'exemple des échanges avec les colonies. Les bénéfices du commerce du Nord, évalués de 6 à 7%, sont insuffisants « tandis que celui des colonies leur en donne 10, au delà du Cap de Bonne Espérance 12 et à la traite des noirs 18 »²⁹. Ainsi, le monde du négoce français ne s'intéresse pas aux trafics avec le Nord jugé trop peu rentables et le manque d'aide de l'Etat sert d'alibi pour expliquer sa passivité des armateurs. Au XIX^e siècle, la situation change avec la fin du commerce colonial protégé et la perte de Saint-Domingue. Les négociants s'intéressent désormais aux relations maritimes qu'ils ont jusqu'alors délaissées à l'exemple du commerce du Nord.

L'utilisation des intermédiaires étrangers ne concerne pas uniquement la navigation. Si l'importance de la marine marchande hollandaise décline dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle, le rôle financier d'Amsterdam reste prépondérant ; « c'est surtout le crédit, largement accordé par les riches banquiers d'Amsterdam, acceptant des lettres de change tirées sur eux de tous les coins de l'Europe qui lui conserva la plus grande partie de son ancienne importance internationale »³⁰. Le commerce de la France avec l'Europe du Nord s'organise ainsi autour de la place d'Amsterdam. Les achats de la Compagnie des Indes s'effectuent par l'intermédiaire de correspondants hollandais, même si la Compagnie a des fournisseurs privilégiés, parfois exclusifs, dans les autres pays du Nord.

Les flottes étrangères

Comme la flotte française n'entre pas en Baltique, les navires étrangers se chargent des relations maritimes entre la France et la Baltique. Pour étudier ces trafics et leur évolution, nous avons sélectionné quatre périodes de cinquante années.

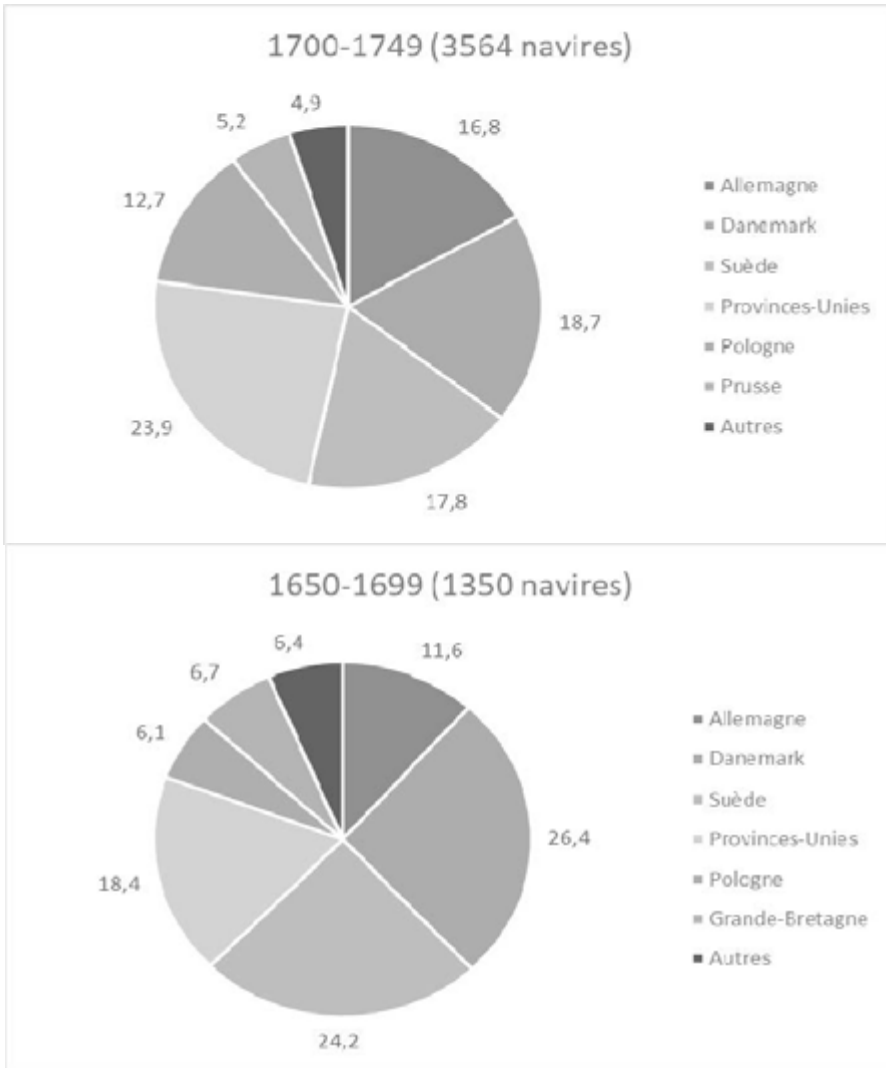
Au XVII^e siècle, les flottes scandinaves du Danemark et de la Suède représentent plus de 50% des passages au Sund au départ de Nantes, Bordeaux, du Havre et de Marseille devant celles des Provinces-Unies et des ports de la côte sud de la Baltique (principalement Lübeck). Ainsi les déclarations de Colbert sur l'écrasante domination hollandaise à la fin du XVII^e siècle oublient de mentionner l'activité des flottes suédoise et danoise qui sont très présentes dans les grands ports français. Dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, les Provinces-Unies prennent la première place avec près de 24% des passages mais leur domination n'est pas démesurée. Les navires scandinaves sont toujours présents ainsi que les navires allemands (Lübeck) et polonais (Danzig) qui jouent un rôle non négligeable sur les routes du Nord.

²⁸ ARCHIVES DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES, Nantes, Hambourg B-80, Courrier de Migault du 14 avril 1775. « un ou deux écus de fret de moins par tonneau fera toujours un grand objet pour le négociant d'ici. »

²⁹ AN B7 465.

³⁰ J. G. VAN DILLEN, *Amsterdam, marché mondial des métaux précieux*, dans « Revue Historique », CLII, 1926, p. 199.

Graph 5. Navires au départ de la France à destination de la Baltique

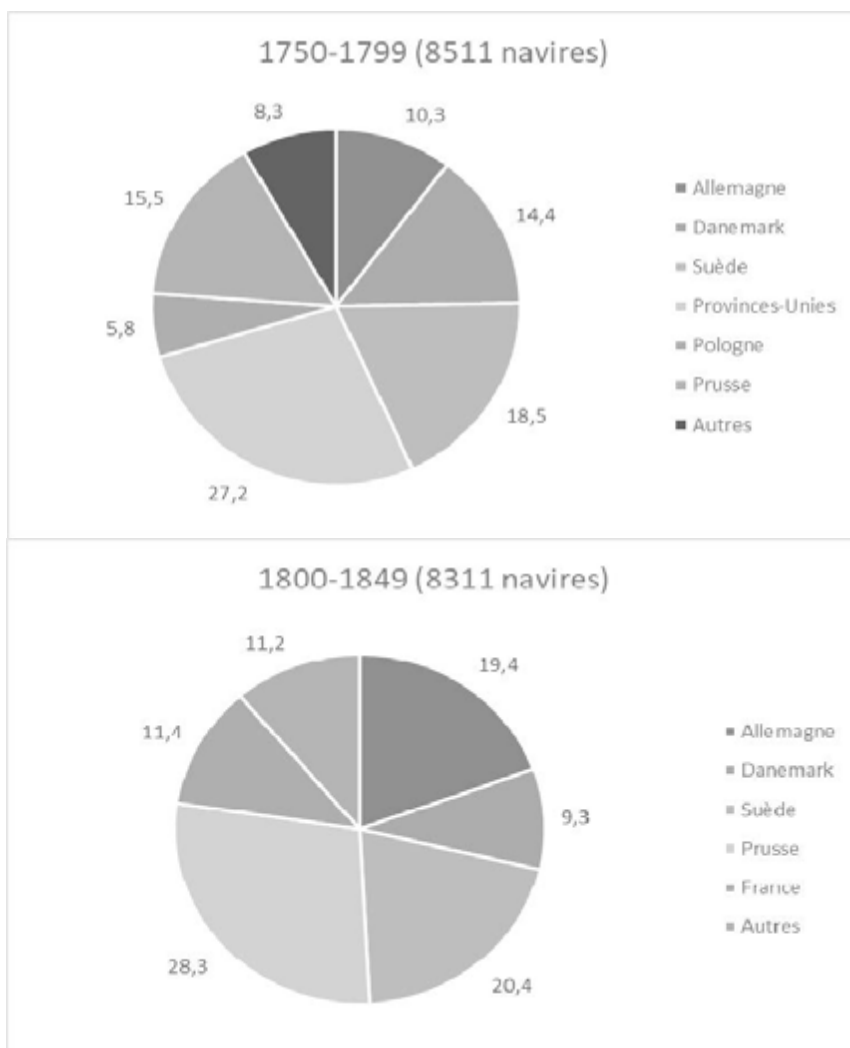


Les Provinces-Unies maintiennent leur place dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle tout comme la Suède. Le Danemark semble décliner mais les armateurs du petit royaume scandinave se spécialisent dans le tramping³¹ ce qui fait que leurs na-

³¹ L.-N. HENNINGSEN, *Provinsmatadorer fra 1700-årene*, Flensborg, 1985; P. POURCHASSE, D. ANDERSEN, *La navigation des flottes de l'Europe du Nord vers la Méditerranée (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, dans « Revue d'Histoire Maritime », 13, 2011, pp. 21-44.

vires ne recherchent pas systématiquement des affrètements vers le Nord et, au contraire, essaient de multiplier les voyages en Méditerranée ou en Europe occidentale. La grande nouveauté est l'activité de la flotte prussienne (navires de Stettin, d'Embsen et de Königsberg) qui représentent 15,5 % des passages vers la Baltique au départ de la France.

Graph 6. Navires au départ de la France à destination de la Baltique



La situation change complètement au XIX^e siècle. La flotte du nouveau royaume des Pays-Bas (ex Provinces-Unies) est devenue secondaire (3,5%). Outre la France qui commence à s'intéresser aux échanges avec le Nord (11,2%), la Prusse qui a annexé la Poméranie suédoise (mais perdu la Frise orientale) est devenue une puissance maritime de première importance pour le commerce français au passage du Sund. Sur l'ensemble des exportations coloniales françaises, les passages des navires du port prussien de Stettin tiennent la première place. Le roi de Prusse Frédéric II a de grandes ambitions pour la ville de l'Oder et « a dans la vue de faire tomber les raffineries de Hambourg et d'attirer dans ses Etats le profit que cette ville en retirait ci-devant, en a établi deux à Berlin et à Breslau où les sucres bruts qui arrivent par Stettin doivent être raffinés. Tout sucre provenant des raffineries étrangères est entièrement prohibé »³². Selon Coquebert de Montbret, consul de France à Hambourg, les faveurs accordées à Stettin sont la cause d'une diminution considérable du commerce dans la ville hanséatique³³. Si l'on additionne les navires prussiens et les navires provenant de très nombreux ports des côtes de la mer du Nord et de la Baltique de plus en plus actifs (Papenburg, Rostock, Greifswald ...), l'ensemble représente près de 48% des voyages au départ de France vers la Baltique.

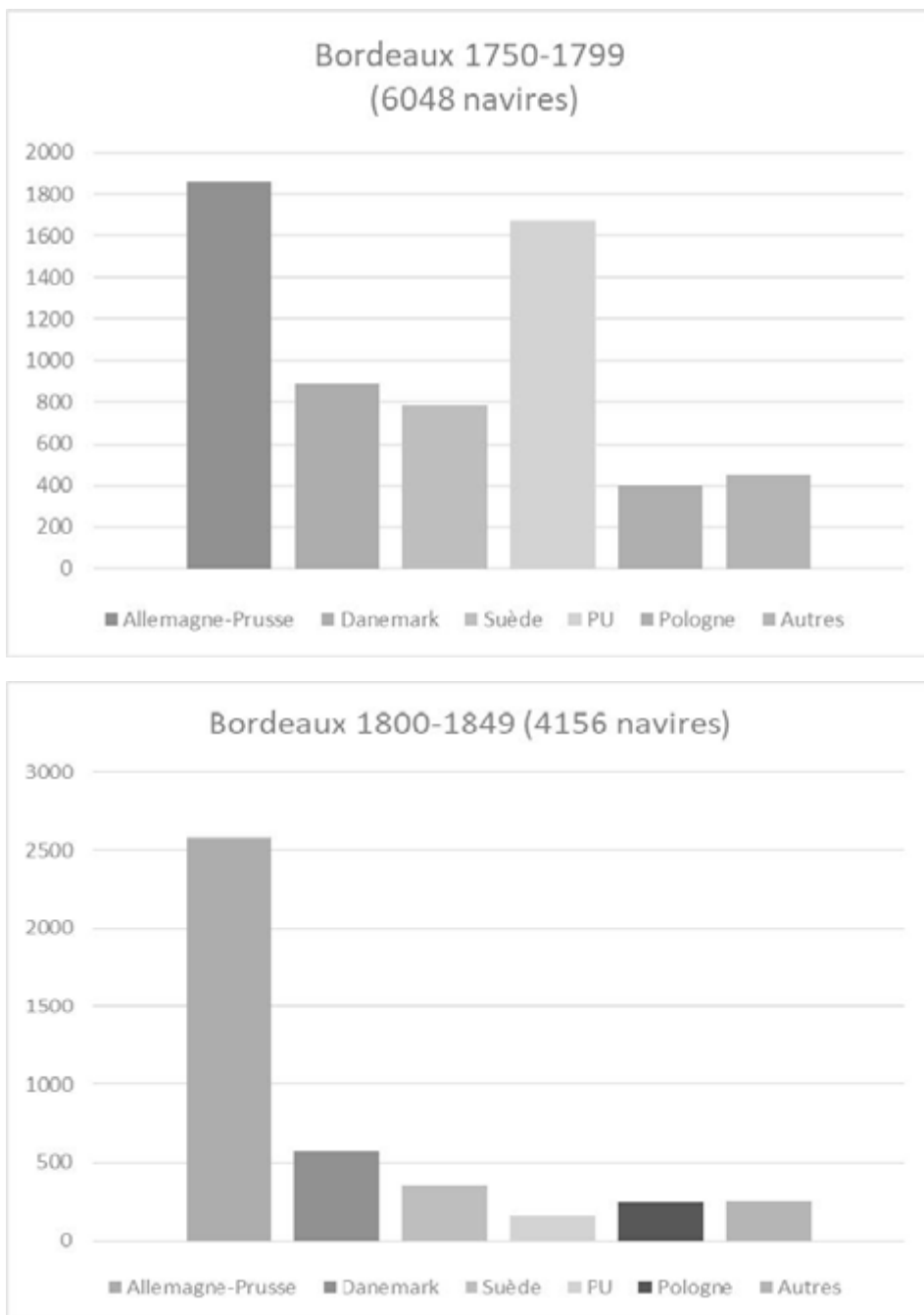
L'étude port par port donne des informations d'un grand intérêt sur les stratégies des différentes flottes du Nord dans leur navigation vers l'Europe occidentale. Les ports de la façade atlantique (Le Havre, Nantes et Bordeaux) et de la façade méditerranéenne (Marseille) évoluent différemment et ne sont pas fréquentées par les mêmes flottes. Pour que les données soient comparables au niveau du volume des trafics tout en tenant compte de l'évolution des frontières, nous avons concentré notre recherche sur la période 1750-1849.

A Bordeaux, la flotte des ports prussiens et des autres ports du Nord (Mecklembourg, villes hanséatiques) tient la première position sur l'ensemble du siècle (1750-1849) tout en augmentant le nombre de ses navires malgré la moindre fréquentation des rives de la Gironde par les navires du Nord. Toutes les autres flottes sont beaucoup moins actives. Si les Provinces-Unies représente près de 28% des départs dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle, la flotte du royaume des Pays-Bas atteint à peine 4% dans la première moitié du siècle suivant. La baisse du nombre de navires scandinaves est également très importante notamment pour la Suède dont le nombre chute de 45%.

³² AN, B3 426, Mémoire sur le commerce de l'Allemagne (29 juillet 1776).

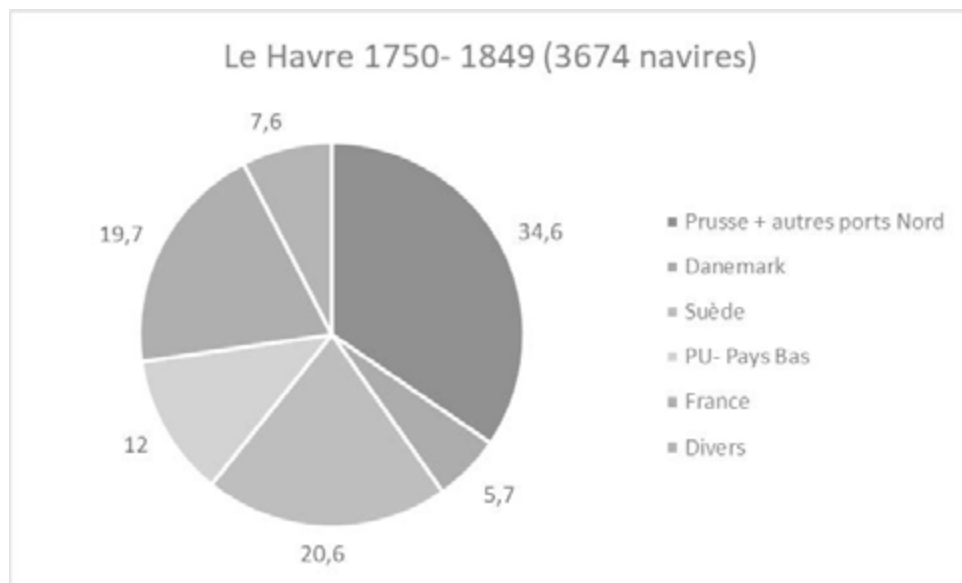
³³ AN, B1 611, Courrier du 6 janvier 1775.

Graph 7. Navires au départ de Bordeaux à destination de la Baltique



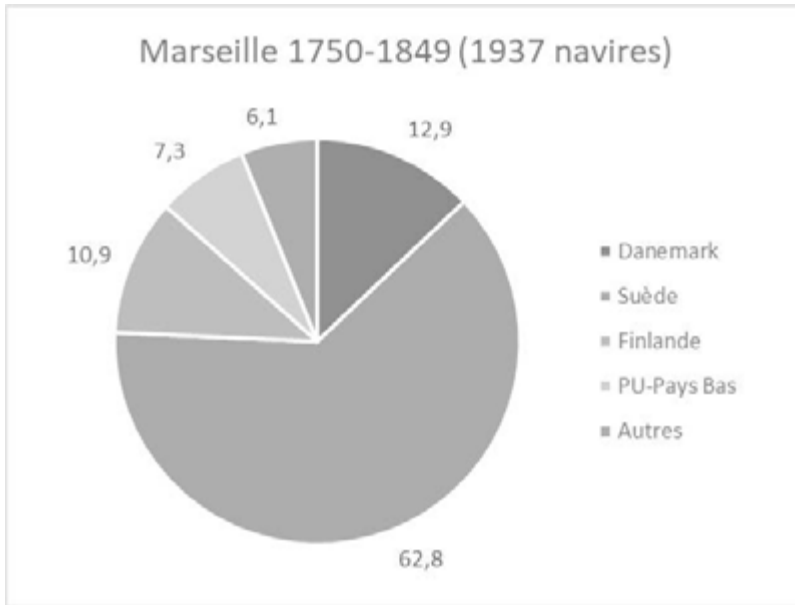
Au Havre, entre 1750 et 1789, la flotte des ports prussiens et des autres ports du Nord (Mecklembourg, villes hanséatiques) l'emporte très largement avec 34,6% des navires devant la Suède et la France qui font jeu égal autour de 20%. Dans le cas des navires français, il est à noter que 91% passent le Sund entre 1815 et 1849, marquant la volonté de la flotte nationale de se lancer sur les routes maritimes du Nord après les guerres révolutionnaires et napoléoniennes.

Graph 8. Navires au départ du Havre à destination de la Baltique



Les expéditions de Marseille vers le Nord sont totalement dominées par les flottes scandinaves. Si l'on additionne les navires danois, suédois et finnois (à partir de 1809, la Finlande est un grand duché autonome de l'Empire russe), ceux-ci assurent 86,6% des passages. Les armateurs et marchands suédois ont fait du grand port français de la Méditerranée leur grand centre de redistribution de leurs produits en Méditerranée et au Levant ainsi que le premier port de rechargement vers le Nord. A l'opposé des ports de l'Atlantique, les navires prussiens ne fréquentent pas Marseille (seulement 10 navires soit 0,5%).

Graph 9. Navires au départ de Marseille à destination de la Baltique



LES RÉSEAUX NÉGOCIANTS

Les communautés marchandes étrangères en France

Comme l'on se méfie plus des étrangers que de ses propres concitoyens, les négociants du Nord envoient leurs compatriotes dans les villes où ils ont des activités commerçantes. Les Provinces-Unies montrent la voie. Les négociants hollandais évitent les commissionnaires locaux et toutes formes de contact indirect, et comptent sur leurs propres réseaux³⁴ formés de membres des dynasties marchandes du pays envoyés en dehors de la République³⁵. En France, après les Hollandais, les Allemands arrivent en grand nombre. Les Scandinaves s'installent moins fréquemment, mais leur système consulaire leur assure un réseau bien structuré de commissionnaires dans les ports qui les intéressent. L'organisation suédoise est d'une grande efficacité. Tout d'abord, les consuls, dont le principal travail concerne les affaires du commerce, appartiennent obligatoirement au monde du négoce. Pour recruter des sujets d'origine scandinave et assurer une meilleure défense des intérêts nationaux, il est demandé au personnel consulaire de rédiger les rapports en langue

³⁴ G. MARTIN, *Nantes et la Compagnie des Indes*, Paris 1928, p. 76. « Les Hollandais avaient donc sur place, mieux que des courtiers, des associés et point ne leur était le plus souvent besoin de se déplacer ».

³⁵ J. ISRAËL, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, Oxford 1989, p. 367.

suédoise³⁶. Enfin, pour concentrer la vente des produits exportés au sein d'une même entreprise et ne pas diviser les commissions entre de multiples agents, le plus souvent étrangers, les navires suédois ne paient pas de droits consulaires si le consul du port de destination a la charge de la commission de la cargaison. Si les marchandises sont adressées à un commissionnaire autre que le consul, le règlement des droits devient obligatoire. Naturellement, pour éviter un double paiement, la majorité des négociants choisissent d'expédier leurs marchandises à l'ordre des consuls. Ainsi, dans tous les grands ports européens, des hommes d'affaires suédois immigrent pour occuper les postes consulaires et créer des maisons négociantes³⁷.

Les Français s'intéressent surtout au commerce colonial et le peu d'attrait qu'ils ont pour le grand cabotage vers l'Europe du Nord favorisent l'installation de ces communautés. Les autorités accordent des privilèges aux marchands étrangers depuis la fin du Moyen-Âge et leur situation juridique est très favorable³⁸. Quand ils arrivent dans un port, ils peuvent louer des locaux sans formalités particulières. Ce n'est qu'après une année de résidence qu'ils sont enregistrés dans le rôle fiscal local et qu'ils doivent payer la capitation, le dixième puis le vingtième. Ils sont soumis aux mêmes juridictions que les autres négociants. Ils participent aux réunions des commerçants locaux mais n'ont pas le droit de vote à la Chambre de Commerce. Jusqu'à la deuxième génération, ils restent étrangers alors que la troisième est considérée comme française si elle adopte la religion catholique³⁹.

Prenons l'exemple de Bordeaux qui possède des colonies étrangères hollandaises et allemandes depuis le XV^e siècle⁴⁰, même si les marchands sont alors peu nombreux en raison de la domination anglaise dans le commerce du vin. À la fin du règne de Louis XIV, l'intendant recense, outre seize Hollandais, seize autres négociants originaires du Nord de l'Europe : dix de Hambourg, deux de Brême, un de

³⁶ RIGSARKIVET Stockholm, Kommercekollegium, Huduarxivet EVI a: 347, Skrivelser från Konsuler Nantes, Courrier de Pierre Babut du 15 juillet 1775. « Le Collège Royal de Commerce me fait des plaintes sur ce que je lui écrit en français. Désormais, j'écrirai en suédois ».

³⁷ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, Corsairs and Commerce, The Swedish Consular Service and Long-distance Shipping 1720-1815*, Uppsala 2004.

³⁸ R. BLANCHARD, *Lettres et mandements de Jean V*, Nantes 1888-1895. Le duc Jean V de Bretagne « ...désiranz attraire tous bons marchands à venir fréquenter marchandement en nos pays spécialement veux des pays et villes de la Hanse d'Allemagne... considérant les grands profits que nous et tout le bien public de nostre pays pouvons avoir par le fréquentement des ditz Allemands... donnons et octroyons par ces présentes, sauvegarde à tous... ».

³⁹ F.-K. HUHNS, *Die Handelbeziehungen zwischen Frankreich und Hamburg, im 18. Jahrhundert*, Thèse, Hambourg 1962, pp. 34-36.

⁴⁰ P. BUTEL, *Les négociants allemands de Bordeaux dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle*, in *Wirtschaftskräfte und Wirtschaftswege, II: Wirtschaftskräfte in der europäischen Expansion. Festschrift für Hermann Kellenbenz*, Stuttgart 1978, pp. 589-611. M. ESPAGNE, *Bordeaux-Baltique. La présence culturelle allemande à Bordeaux aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, Paris 1991; W. HENNINGER, *Johann Jacob Von Bethmann 1717-1792. Kaufmann, Reeder und kaiserlicher Konsul in Bordeaux*, Bochum 1993; J. MEYER, *Négociants allemands en France et négociants français en Allemagne au XVIII^e siècle*, in *Allemands en France, Français en Allemagne 1715-1789*, Sigmaringen 1992, pp. 103-119; *Présence de l'Allemagne à Bordeaux du siècle de Montaigne à la veille de la Seconde guerre mondiale*, éd. A. RUIZ, Bordeaux 1997. K. WEBER, *Deutsche Kaufmannsfamilien im atlantischen Manufaktur- und Kolonialwarenhande: Netzwerke zwischen Hamburg, Cádiz und Bordeaux (1715-1830)*, Thèse, Hamburg 2001.

Danzig, un de Lübeck, un du Hanovre et un du Brandebourg⁴¹. Le groupe est caractérisé par sa jeunesse, l'âge moyen se situant autour de 28 ans. En effet, nombre de jeunes restent à Bordeaux après quelques années de formation dans les comptoirs négociants⁴². Cette première vague d'immigration se spécialise dans le commerce des vins soit comme marchands ou comme garçons de comptoir.

À la révocation de l'édit de Nantes (1685), beaucoup de Hollandais naturalisés regagnent leur pays alors que les Allemands semblent avoir prononcé plus facilement que les autres protestants étrangers les formules officielles d'abjuration⁴³. Au XVIII^e siècle, les idées religieuses deviennent plus tolérantes et les colonies hollandaises ou allemandes se reforment rapidement et prennent un grand développement.

Au début du XVIII^e siècle, les Hollandais sont les intermédiaires principaux dans le commerce des vins vers l'Europe du Nord, mais pour les acheteurs de Hambourg ou de la Baltique, l'installation d'informateurs dans ces places exportatrices permet d'avoir une bien meilleure connaissance des marchés ce qui explique la première immigration du XVII^e siècle⁴⁴. À partir de 1730, une seconde vague allemande débarque sur les rives de la Gironde. Ces nouveaux arrivants s'investissent non plus uniquement dans le commerce du vin mais surtout dans l'exportation des denrées coloniales vers le Nord de l'Europe⁴⁵, commerce jusque-là aux mains des négociants huguenots installés à Hambourg. Ils sont beaucoup plus actifs que leurs prédécesseurs, ces derniers ayant préparé le terrain en leur fournissant les informations nécessaires à la création d'une activité commerciale. En 1742-1744, trente-sept négociants allemands sont recensés à Bordeaux. Les Hambourgeois dominent nettement le groupe avec près de 60% des membres. La colonie allemande se renforce après la guerre de Sept Ans parallèlement au développement du commerce avec le Nord. Le nombre d'individus est difficile à connaître du fait des départs, des décès, des installations temporaires, des erreurs et des oublis dans les documents officiels... Dans les années 1780, le nombre d'immigrés allemands sur les bords de la Gironde peut être estimé à environ 150 personnes selon l'historien allemand Wolfgang Henninger, alors que Paul Butel avance un chiffre très inférieur, puisqu'il juge vraisemblable un groupe de 60 à 70 négociants⁴⁶. Une dernière grande vague d'immigration arrive après la guerre d'Amérique.

⁴¹ ARCHIVES DEPARTEMENTALES DE LA GIRONDE, C 4473. (en 1711, Nicolas Woldt de Hambourg arrive en France pour devenir garçon de comptoir à l'âge de 14-15 ans.

⁴² W. HENNINGER, *Johann Jakob*, cit., p. 40.

⁴³ J. MATHOREZ, *La présence*, cit., p. 177, Les lettres d'abjuration sont nombreuses dans les registres des paroisses.

⁴⁴ C. HUETZ DE LEMPS, *Géographie du commerce de Bordeaux à la fin du règne de Louis XIV*, Paris, 1975. p. 489. L'auteur remarque à la fin du XVII^e siècle, la venue régulière à Bordeaux de passagers en provenance de Hambourg pour choisir le vin sur place.

⁴⁵ P. BUTEL, *Les négociants allemands*, cit., p. 594.

⁴⁶ W. HENNINGER, *Johann Jakob*, cit., pp. 53-60. Henninger fournit une liste de cent cinquante noms. P. BUTEL, *Les négociants allemands...*, cit., p. 596.

Tab. 4. Croissance du nombre de négociants d'origine allemande à Bordeaux

Années	Arrivées d'immigrés	Etrangers nés à Bordeaux
1700-1709	8	2
1710-1719	10	2
1720-1729	6	3
1730-1739	20	3
1740-1749	17	1
1750-1759	22	1
1760-1769	33	2
1770-1779	36	
1780-1789	53	
1790-1799	5	

Source : K.WEBER, *Deutsche Kaufmannsfamilien*, cit. p. 181.

L'arrivée de communautés étrangères dans les ports européens résout les problèmes entre commettants et commissionnaires et donne naissance à un groupe d'hommes d'affaires investissant dans tous les domaines tout en mettant en place des réseaux négociants à l'échelle de l'Europe occidentale et même au-delà. Par un partage cohérent des tâches, les étrangers, soutenus par des réseaux et des liens familiaux, prennent en main le commerce européen dont ils connaissent mieux les usages⁴⁷.

Les communautés françaises dans le Nord

La révocation de l'édit de Nantes en 1685 a provoqué une vague d'immigration huguenote dans les pays du Nord. Si la France a perdu des gens de valeur, on peut cependant se demander si l'effet n'a pas été finalement bénéfique car ces immigrants installés dans les pays protestants ont conservé des liens, notamment commerciaux, avec leur patrie d'origine. La grande ville hanséatique d'Hambourg a accueilli nombre de ces migrants.

La communauté réformée française d'Hambourg réunit environ deux cents personnes dans les années 1770, sans tenir compte de la ville danoise d'Altona⁴⁸ qui offre encore une plus grande tolérance religieuse que la cité hanséatique luthérienne⁴⁹. Pour Klaus Weber, les persécutions religieuses sont le principal facteur

⁴⁷ F. CROUZET, *Le commerce de Bordeaux*, in *Bordeaux au XVIII^e siècle*, éd. F.-G. PARISSET, Bordeaux 1968, p. 260.

⁴⁸ Altona, proche de Hambourg, n'est naturellement pas un port de la mer Baltique, mais participe très activement au commerce du Nord. Plus que d'une zone géographique, le Nord doit être compris comme une zone économique regroupant les ports de la Baltique mais aussi les villes hanséatiques, les ports suédois et danois de la mer du Nord et la Norvège.

⁴⁹ K. WEBER, *Deutsche Kaufmannsfamilien im atlantischen Manufaktur*, cit., p. 261.

mais non le seul qui explique cette immigration huguenote⁵⁰. Certains membres de la communauté réformée hambourgeoise comme Chapeaurouge ou His viennent de Bâle et Genève où ils n'étaient naturellement pas persécutés⁵¹. L'aspect économique avec le développement des échanges maritimes entre le Nord et la France a sans doute joué un rôle non négligeable dans l'immigration des réformés français. Cependant, Hambourg, ville de stricte obédience luthérienne, n'accepte pas les calvinistes au sein de la bourgeoisie de la ville. Ces derniers sont contraints d'accepter le statut du contrat étranger, imposant des taxes supérieures à celles dues par les négociants locaux, et conservent la nationalité française.

Deux des plus importantes maisons de commerce de Hambourg, celles de Pierre Boué et de Pierre His, sont d'origine huguenote. À son arrivée à Hambourg, Pierre Boué s'établit comme négociant spécialisé dans le commerce maritime avec l'Angleterre, comme armateur et comme financier. Il dirige également avec son frère Jacques, le plus grand chantier de constructions navales de la ville hanséatique. En 1720, il a le projet de créer une compagnie d'assurances maritimes avec d'autres négociants mais le conseil de ville qui interdit les sociétés anonymes refuse la constitution de l'entreprise. Cependant, en 1765, l'entreprise participe à la première compagnie d'assurances de Hambourg sur les risques de mer et les incendies⁵². Pierre Boué entretient d'excellentes relations avec la France. Il est le correspondant de la Compagnie des Indes sur la place hanséatique à qui il fournit navires, mâts et autres produits du Nord. À partir de 1729, il fait des affaires sur les ventes de sucre avec le négociant et armateur Jean Pellet⁵³ qui lui ouvre le marché de la « *Compania Guipuzcoana de Caracas* » de Saint-Sébastien en Espagne à qui il livre des toiles, du goudron, du chanvre et autres marchandises. Pierre Boué semble un homme habile ayant d'excellentes qualités pour les relations publiques. En 1727, le rédacteur d'un mémoire sur les produits du Nord est élogieux envers le négociant hambourgeois : « Celui de tous dont j'ai tiré le plus de lumières par rapport à l'achat des mâts est le sieur Pierre Boué... Je suis persuadé qu'on aura peine à trouver dans le Nord un commissionnaire plus intelligent, plus exact et plus honnête homme... C'est de tous les négociants que je connais le plus sûr et le plus raisonnable »⁵⁴.

Bien que la plupart des Huguenots conservent leur nationalité d'origine et participent au développement du grand commerce maritime français, il est toutefois difficile de les considérer comme de véritables négociants français. Ils ont des activités qui touchent tous les pays de l'Europe du Nord, marient leurs enfants aussi bien en Allemagne, en Suisse, en Hollande, en Angleterre qu'en France et, les générations passant, s'assimilent plus ou moins dans leurs pays d'accueil. Ils utilisent leurs relations pour pratiquer le commerce de préférence avec la France mais aussi

⁵⁰ D'autre part, il ne faut pas oublier que les Allemands qui venaient en France étaient protestants et pratiquaient donc une religion qui était bannie dans leur pays d'accueil.

⁵¹ K. WEBER, *Deutsche Kaufmannsfamilien*, cit., p. 261.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁵³ J. CAVIGNAC, *Jean Pellet, commerçant de gros, 1694-1772. Contribution à l'étude du négoce bordelais au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris 1967, pp. 220 et suiv.

⁵⁴ AN, B1 451, Copenhague, Réponse concernant « le prix de toutes les marchandises qui se tirent du Nord propre à fournir les arsenaux de la marine du roi » du 5 août 1727.

avec l'Angleterre où l'immigration huguenote a également essaimé⁵⁵. Ils forment une communauté supranationale dont le point commun est le commerce. Un rapport des armateurs bordelais Journu et Risteau exprime la difficile définition de ces négociants huguenots. Ils indiquent tout d'abord qu'il existe des maisons françaises dans les ports du Nord qui font « ce que font les maisons étrangères installées dans nos ports, elles effectuent les commissions reçues de nos compatriotes » avant d'ajouter qu'elles « deviennent étrangères à la première ou à la deuxième génération »⁵⁶. Selon Herbert Lüthy, la révocation de l'édit de Nantes a abouti à la « constitution d'une société protestante de souche française rejetée hors des lois du royaume et, pour sa partie la plus agissante, hors de la nationalité française, société véritablement internationale dont les morceaux dispersés, en France et hors de France, étaient tous à des degrés divers étrangers à la société royale qui était la France légale »⁵⁷. À Hambourg, l'impossibilité d'obtenir le statut de citoyen de la ville a favorisé cette attitude. En Suède, où les Huguenots ont été naturalisés sans difficultés, les négociants se sont très rapidement intégrés à leur communauté professionnelle puis à la communauté locale.

Ainsi, les Huguenots ont donné naissance à des réseaux commerciaux entre la France et les pays protestants de l'Europe du Nord mais il est difficile de les considérer comme de véritables négociants français. S'ils favorisent l'arrivée de produits français sur certains marchés, leur présence ne contribue pas à l'arrivée de nouveaux compatriotes.

Hormis ces Huguenots, que l'on ne peut guère considérer comme des négociants français, il existe peu de maison de commerce véritablement françaises dans les ports du Nord. S'il est aisé pour un étranger de créer une maison de commerce en France, il semble difficile à un négociant français de s'installer à Hambourg. Les Français qui veulent s'établir dans la ville hanséatique ont deux solutions : soit devenir bourgeois de la ville (donc être naturalisé hambourgeois et prendre la religion luthérienne) soit « *s'engager encore par un contrat particulier appelé contrat étranger sans lequel ils ne sont pas admis à négocier* ». S'il devient bourgeois de la ville, le négociant, comme tous ses compatriotes, est soumis à un impôt annuel égal à un quart pour-cent (0,25%) de son bien. Les Français qui ne veulent pas se faire bourgeois doivent passer un accord avec le sénat pour déterminer le montant des taxes à payer. Quand le contrat est venu à terme, « le négociant est cité à la maison de ville pour renouveler son accord sur lequel on ne rabat jamais rien et qui est ordinairement augmenté et réglé à proportion du commerce qu'il a fait et qui est connu par la quantité de marchandises qu'il reçoit et qu'il expédie »⁵⁸. Pour les Hambourgeois, ce contrat est un avantage puisque les Français sont « exempts de toutes les fonctions et charges soit civiles et militaires »⁵⁹. Pour le consul Rochefort, le but du sénat de Hambourg est

⁵⁵ A.-C. CARTER, *Financial Activities of the Huguenots in London and Amsterdam in the Mid-Eighteenth Century*, dans « Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London », 19, 1959, n. 6, pp. 313-333.

⁵⁶ P. BUTEL, *La croissance commerciale bordelaise*, cit., p. 539.

⁵⁷ H. LÜTHY, *La banque protestante en France de la révocation de l'édit de Nantes à la révolution*, Paris 1959, p. 773.

⁵⁸ H. LÜTHY, *La banque protestante*, cit., p. 773.

⁵⁹ AN, B1 607 Reg. 1, Hambourg, Mémoire de mars 1741.

d'empêcher l'installation d'étrangers « pour que tout le commerce soit aux mains des Hambourgeois installés en France et résidant ici »⁶⁰.

La seule véritable maison de commerce française qui s'installe à Hambourg est la firme nantaise Grou & Michel qui y crée une filiale en 1734. En 1742, elle a entre les mains près du tiers des importations hambourgeoises en provenance de Nantes⁶¹. Cependant, l'entreprise se plaint continuellement du montant des taxes qu'elle doit payer et finalement cesse son activité en 1750. Pour échapper à ces taxes, Jogues, un autre négociant français, s'installe à Altona, ville voisine appartenant au Danemark⁶². Selon le consul, « son séjour à Altona ne l'empêche pas de venir tous les matins à Hambourg où il a conservé sa chambre. Il paraît tous les jours à la bourse où il négocie comme les autres et, après avoir expédié ses affaires, il retourne à Altona ». En réponse les magistrats de Hambourg lui saisissent ses meubles⁶³.

Au cours des premières décennies du XVIII^e siècle, plusieurs projets d'établissement de maisons françaises en Russie sont élaborés mais les expériences ne sont guère couronnées de succès. La seule entreprise qui semble s'être bien établie est celle de Raimbert à Saint-Petersbourg. La Compagnie des Indes le choisit comme commissionnaire pour l'achat de chanvre russe⁶⁴ et il reçoit également quelques commissions pour l'achat de fournitures de la Marine. En 1765, il déclare qu'il charge une vingtaine de vaisseaux par an. Raimbert a beaucoup de projets pour développer le commerce entre la France et la Russie. Il participe à un projet d'introduction des tabacs d'Ukraine en France « pour les substituer insensiblement à ceux de Virginie et du Maryland »⁶⁵. Il ne cesse de demander l'établissement de maisons françaises dans les ports de la Baltique et a même l'intention d'installer son frère à Riga⁶⁶. Cependant, selon le consul Lesseps, Raimbert regarde la Russie « comme une vache à lait » et cherche avant tout à éviter l'installation de concurrents français dans la capitale russe. Un autre diplomate note que « son avidité effraie les autres maisons » et l'accuse « d'intriguer à Paris pour empêcher en sous-main l'installation d'autres maisons »⁶⁷.

⁶⁰ AN, B1 607, Courrier de Rochefort du 17 octobre 1740.

⁶¹ G. TREUTLEIN, *Schiffart und Handel zwischen Nantes und dem europäischen Norden von 1714 bis 1744*. Thèse, Heidelberg 1970, p. 138.

⁶² AN, B1 607, Courrier de Jogues du 23 janvier 1741. Selon Grou & Michel, «Le commerce du sieur Jogues s'est borné à des achats de marchandises qu'on lui ordonne de France et d'Espagne ; il pouvait sans préjudicier à son commerce demeurer à Altona et nous pouvons vous assurer que nous avons été les premiers à le conseiller de prendre ce parti.» (Courrier de Grou et Michel du 27 avril 1744).

⁶³ AN, B7 350, Courriers de Lagau du 17 février et du 16 mars 1744.

⁶⁴ SERVICE HISTORIQUE DE LA DEFENSE, Lorient, 1 P 280, 1P 283, 1 P292.

⁶⁵ AN, B3 432, Mémoire sur les feuilles de tabac d'Ukraine du 2 juin 1758; AN, B7 414, Mémoire d'octobre 1760. A ce sujet: W. KIRCHNER, *Ukrainian Tobacco for France*, dans « Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas », 10-1962

⁶⁶ AN, B3 432, Mémoire de Raimbert (1765) et B7 425 (31/12/1765).

⁶⁷ J.-L. VAN REGEMORTER., *Commerce et politique: préparation et négociation du traité franco-russe de 1787*, dans « Cahiers du monde Russe et Soviétique », IV, 3-1963, pp. 230-257, 234.

Les affaires des Français semblent cependant difficiles par manque de moyens. Selon le consul de Lesseps, ce manque de moyens est dû au comportement fort dispendieux de ses compatriotes et à ce propos, il vise particulièrement Raimbert qu'il n'a pas en grande estime⁶⁸ : « Les négociants français... établis en Russie font des dépenses considérables, leurs profits doivent sans doute être proportionnés... Le bénéfice... et même au-delà est employé le plus souvent au jeu, à la dissipation ou à l'entretien extraordinaire de la maison »⁶⁹.

Ainsi, tout comme à Hambourg, la présence française en Russie est réduite. Les conséquences sur les échanges directs avec le Nord sont fortement préjudiciables aux intérêts nationaux. Les négociants français ont connaissance des opportunités commerciales du Nord. De nombreux rapports les informent des marchés et de l'intérêt des nations septentrionales envers les produits de France. Quelques négociants, sans aucune préparation et ne pouvant bénéficier des réseaux que possèdent leurs concurrents, tentent de faire « de bonnes affaires » en armant des bâtiments vers le Nord.

En 1723, trois navires français arrivent à Saint-Petersbourg, munis de lettres de recommandation du ministre de France auprès de la cour du tsar. L'affaire est catastrophique. Le premier navire, « suivant le discours du capitaine et du subrécargue a perdu dans cette entreprise plus de 40% de son capital ». Le second, selon « le rapport du sieur Garnier, directeur de la cargaison, a perdu plus de 25% ». Enfin, les armateurs ont été obligé de vendre le troisième à son retour en France car la vente a « à peine produit de quoi payer ce qui était dû aux équipages ». Les armateurs français pensaient que les Russes attendaient leurs produits avec impatience car les marchandises, dont « une partie n'était point propre pour ce pays », n'étaient adressées à aucun négociant de la ville. D'autre part, les capitaines refusent d'accepter le crédit d'un an « alors que c'est la coutume en Russie ». Les marchands russes et étrangers se donnent le mot pour refuser l'offre française, les cargaisons ne se vendent pas et les capitaines s'inquiètent car la mauvaise saison approche. Les maisons étrangères installées dans la place perçoivent la bonne affaire, d'autant plus que certaines marchandises sont périssables, et « les Français vendent une partie de leurs cargaisons à des marchands anglais, hambourgeois et hollandais »⁷⁰. Les navires, après un séjour inutile de près d'un an dans la capitale russe, repartent avec des marchandises invendues et le voyage, prévu pour cinq mois, dure quatorze mois.

L'ambassadeur français à Stockholm fait les mêmes remarques pour les navires français qui viennent en Suède: «Il vient ici de temps en temps quelques vaisseaux français, mais comme ils ne prennent aucune précaution d'avance, ni pour la vente de leurs marchandises, ni pour l'achat de celles du retour qui sont fort chères, ils ne trouvent aucun avantage dans leurs voyages, étant obligés de donner leurs vins et eaux-de-vie à perte.»⁷¹ En 1748 le consul de Bergen conseille aux négociants qu'il

⁶⁸ W. KIRCHNER., *Commercial Relations between Russia and Europe 1400 to 1800. Collected Essays*, Bloomington 1966, p. 290, note 40.

⁶⁹ J.-L. VAN REGEMORTER, *Commerce et politique*, cit., p. 234.

⁷⁰ AN, B3 432, Mémoire sur les bâtiments français entrés et sortis des ports de Russie depuis 1723.

⁷¹ AN, B1 1071, Courrier du 17 août 1720.

« faut absolument bien connaître la situation du pays et la faculté de ses habitants... vrai moyen de pouvoir travailler solidement et avec succès. Car tous les négociants qui, sur de simples avis ou par spéculation envoient des chargements ici pour vendre hors des navires s'en trouvent le plus souvent la dupe. » Les négociants norvégiens savent convaincre les étrangers, qui n'ont aucun établissement ou comptoir dans le pays, de vendre leurs marchandises à un prix médiocre alors qu'il faudrait « les déposer pour en faire la vente dans une saison plus propre »⁷².

Les tentatives françaises se heurtent aux maisons de négoce étrangères installées depuis longtemps dans les places du Nord, tout particulièrement en Russie. Théoriquement, à Saint-Petersbourg, le commerce de détail est aux mains des Russes, les étrangers ne s'occupant que du commerce de gros. Cependant, les marchands pétersbourgeois ne peuvent s'occuper de ce travail, leurs magasins, peu nombreux, étant en mauvais état ce qui pose des problèmes pour les vins qui « demandent à être continuellement visités et soignés ». D'autre part, « les particuliers qui composent le corps des marchands et des bourgeois de Pétersbourg étant presque tous pauvres et misérables ne sauraient faire des achats considérables »⁷³.

Le négoce anglais profite de cette situation et, contrairement aux négociants français, les maisons anglaises de Saint-Petersbourg forment une « colonie redoutable », dont le but est de défendre les intérêts communs et d'empêcher toute intrusion d'une autre communauté préjudiciable à ses activités. Elle profite de la faible présence française dans les places commerçantes du Nord pour dénigrer le commerce et les productions de France. La « désinformation » au sujet du commerce français est l'une de ses actions coutumières. Les négociants britanniques falsifient les factures des marchandises qui passent le Sund ou donnent des informations incorrectes sur la destination des navires. Ceci a pour but de convaincre les Russes que l'Angleterre est leur principal client et que les autres nations européennes sont de peu d'importance⁷⁴. De cette façon les Britanniques « jettent un voile impénétrable aux yeux de la nation russe sur nos consommations (celles de la France) des marchandises de ce pays »⁷⁵. Les négociants britanniques n'hésitent pas à utiliser des méthodes plus directes pour balayer les velléités du commerce français. Lors de l'expédition de 1723, ils craignent que l'arrivée du bateau de la Compagnie des Indes ne soit dû à la préparation d'un traité de commerce entre la France et la Russie. Pour contrecarrer cette tentative française, « on donne malicieusement au tsar des épreuves de vins et eaux-de-vie que l'on supposait avoir été rapporté de France par ces vaisseaux et qui étaient exécrables. On en fit porter dans toutes les maisons des seigneurs russiens qui en conçurent une si mauvaise opinion que l'on donnait alors à Pétersbourg le nom de denrée de France à toutes les mauvaises marchandises que les Anglais, Hollandais et Hambourgeois y avaient apportées.»⁷⁶ Ainsi, «les

⁷² AN, B3 418, Mémoire de Dechezault du 10 novembre 1748.

⁷³ AN, B3 432, Nouvelles sur le commerce de Russie du 27 août 1743. À la fin du XVIII^e siècle, une élite négociante russe a vu le jour et participe activement au commerce avec l'Occident.

⁷⁴ F. FOX, *A View of French-Russian Trade Relations in the Eighteenth Century: The Ms. Lx Gendre*, dans « Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas », 16, 1968, pp. 481-498, 486.

⁷⁵ AN, B7 414, Mémoire sur le commerce de Russie (8 février 1761).

⁷⁶ AN, B3 432, Mémoire sur les bâtiments français entrés et sortis des ports de Russie depuis 1723.

Russes croyaient ne pouvoir se passer des Anglais pour consommer leurs productions et trouvaient peu d'avantages dans des relations commerciales avec la France qui, leur achetant peu, leur vendait beaucoup et cher »⁷⁷.

CONCLUSION

Comment expliquer cette attitude peu dynamique du négoce français qui ne cherche pas réellement à créer des réseaux dans le Nord ? En mars 2003, lors d'une conférence sur l'influence française en Russie au XVIII^e siècle, l'historien américain Richard Hellie interprétait la réussite anglaise en Russie et les faibles performances des Français par des raisons culturelles. L'hégémonie britannique s'expliquait par le fait que les Anglais sont « meilleurs marchands » que les Français, font un meilleur usage de l'information, manient mieux les techniques commerciales, utilisent le crédit à leur avantage et affrontent mieux « la rudesse et les périls inhérents au commerce avec la Russie. »⁷⁸ Cette vision très réductrice souleva la réprobation du professeur François Crouzet pour qui les explications de la faiblesse française, étaient à chercher du côté de l'économie et non de la culture.

Plusieurs raisons peuvent être avancées pour expliquer ce manque d'investissement de la classe négociante dans le commerce du Nord. Tout d'abord l'antériorité : « le grand avantage que ces différentes nations ont sur nous ne vient que de ce qu'elles s'en sont occupées avant nous... »⁷⁹. Les Hollandais ainsi que les Anglais avec les célèbres « merchants adventurers » ont construit depuis longtemps de solides réseaux dans tous les pays de la Baltique. Ces premières installations étrangères s'expliquent par des besoins plus essentiels. La France dispose de richesses naturelles (forêts, minerais) et agricoles (céréales) plus importantes que ses voisins et s'intéresse donc plus tardivement et à plus petite échelle que ses concurrents aux produits en provenance de la Baltique.

Ces inconvénients ne sont cependant pas irréversibles comme les statistiques de passages le prouvent lors de la première moitié du XIX^e siècle. Par contre, les négociants français à l'affût de bonnes opérations éprouvent peu d'intérêt pour ce commerce qui réclame des investissements à long terme. Leurs tentatives montrent peu de suivi et d'ambition. Ce sont avant tout des essais où l'on espère gagner un maximum sans volonté d'organiser des structures pérennes pour prendre un main un marché et entrer en concurrence avec les réseaux étrangers. L'espace atlantique ou le Levant⁸⁰ offre d'autres possibilités et les négociants français préfèrent investir

⁷⁷ L.-P DE SEGUR, *Mémoires ou Souvenirs*, cit., p. 299.

⁷⁸ R. HELLIE, *Le commerce entre la France et la Russie au XVIII^e siècle*, colloque « L'influence Française en Russie » du 14-15 mars 2003, Université de Paris-Sorbonne, fondation Singer-Polignac.

⁷⁹ ARCHIVES DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES, Nantes, Elseneur vol. 1, Mémoire sur la navigation et le commerce des Français dans la Baltique et sur les moyens de les y encourager du 13 mai 1777.

⁸⁰ Les négociants français sont très présents au Levant et Marseille est le grand port de la Méditerranée. Une tentative pour établir des relations entre la Russie (et la Pologne) par la mer Noire a été organisée dans les années 1785-1787 avec l'appui des autorités mais celle-ci s'est soldée par un échec. D'une part, les produits livrés étaient de mauvaise qualité et, d'autre part, les prix n'étaient guère inférieurs à ceux de la Baltique. Une distance plus courte ne signifie aucunement des coûts moins élevés. Ce sont les réseaux, le volume des achats, la sécurité des transactions, la compétitivité

dans ce trafic qui présente le double avantage d'être protégé et d'offrir la possibilité de faire des opérations exceptionnelles. Le trafic du Nord tout au contraire est un trafic concurrentiel où l'on gagne pratiquement toujours mais sans risque particulier. La guerre était le seul moment où les négociants avaient la possibilité de faire de bonnes affaires mais, sans structures acquises, les Français ne pouvaient saisir ces opportunités. Fallait-il mieux investir sur des opérations bien ciblées, prendre des risques et espérer faire d'excellentes affaires ou investir sur le long terme, gagner peu mais régulièrement ?

des flottes...qui déterminent les prix et, pour les produits russes, la route du Nord, bien maîtrisée par les négociants occidentaux est sans contestation, la plus sûre et la moins coûteuse. Sur ce sujet : P. MASSON, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris 1911, p. 649 et suiv. ; J.-L. VAN REGEMORTER, *La Russie méridionale, la mer Noire et le commerce international de 1774 à 1861*, Thèse, Université de Paris I 1982 ; J. REYCHMAN, *Le commerce polonais en mer Noire au XVIII^e siècle par le port de Kherson*, dans « Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique », 7, 1966, n. 2, pp. 234-248 ; E. SCHNAKENBOURG, *Genèse d'un nouveau commerce : la France et l'ouverture du marché russe par la mer Noire dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle*, dans « Cahiers de la Méditerranée », 83, 2012, pp. 309-325.

Jari Ojala

*Maritime Information Networks between Northern and Southern Europe during the Eighteenth Century**

INTRODUCTION

“In 1766 a small vessel, the Carolus, sailed from Finland to Marseilles. The vessel was the first one from its home port to sail beyond the Baltic Sea – and even to the distant Mediterranean area. The tradesmen in its hometown of Kokkola (in Swedish Gamla-Karleby) had just obtained so-called staple rights, which allowed them to engage in foreign trade and shipping. To fit out and provisioning a ship for such a long voyage was exceptionally expensive and, thus, risky. The ship had been built in its home port at the owners’ own expense, and its valuable cargo of tar had been bought from peasants in the surrounding rural area – the cargo was about as valuable as the vessel itself. In practice, all merchants in the town owned small shares in the vessel. However, due to the valuable cargo and the price of the vessel itself, even small shares were expensive for relatively poor merchants in the town. Thus it is easy to imagine that the shipowners must have had reservations about the idea of sending the vessel on such a long voyage. The more so because none of the traders had ever visited the Mediterranean, no-one spoke French, nor did any of them know any businessmen in Marseilles with whom they might trade. It took about a month to deliver a letter to Marseilles – and it took another month to get a reply. Nevertheless the vessel was dispatched and months later it arrived in Marseilles, returning safely to its home port the following summer. The voyage was a success, providing to all who had invested to the ship and cargo with enormous profits.”¹

* This essay is largely based on earlier articles by the author: J. OJALA, *The Problem of Information in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Shipping: A Finnish Case*, in “International Journal of Maritime History”, 14, 2002, n. 1, pp. 189-208 and J. OJALA, V. LUOMA-AHO, *Stakeholder relations as social capital in early modern international trade*, in “Business History”, 50, 2008, n. 6, pp. 749-764. – I would like to thank the participants of the Datini conference “Maritime Networks as a factor in European Integration” for the most useful comments to further develop this article.

¹ The case of the *Carolus* is also discussed in: J. OJALA, *Approaching Europe: The merchant networks between Finland and Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*, in “European Review of Economic History”, 1, 1997, n. 3, pp. 323-352 and J. OJALA, *Tebokasta liiketoimintaa Pohjanmaan pikkukaupungeissa: purjemerenkulun kannattavuus ja tuottavuus 1700-1800-luvulla [Efficient Business Activity in Small Ostrobothnian Towns: Profitability and Productivity of Shipping by Sail during the 18th and 19th Century]*, Helsinki 1999 (SHS), p. 312.

How was it possible to send a ship from a northern port to the Mediterranean without any prior experience of such a business venture? Why did the merchants dare to take the risk? The answer lies in the organization of trade and shipping, and especially in the role played by information networks and specialization of shipping and trade. These are the topics to be dealt with in this short essay.

**

Shipping and trade between Northern and Southern Europe increased significantly throughout the 18th century. That is, before the first era of globalization during the following century.² This growth can be witnessed, for example, in the number of so-called Algerian passports given to Northern ships;³ in the rise of shipments between these areas witnessed in the Danish Sound custom records;⁴ and in the overall increase of trade and market integration during the period.⁵ In the late 18th century roughly one third of Swedish shipping tonnage participated in trading with Southern Europe.⁶ For Finnish shipping, this share was even higher: over half of Finnish tonnage returning to home ports in the late 18th century came from Southern Europe.⁷ As Table 1 shows, the share of Finnish tonnage was greater than the number of ships, both those departing and arriving ships. This therefore means that the ships engaged in Southern European trade were larger than those used mainly for North Sea and Baltic trade – although in practice the same vessels were frequently used in all three areas. These ships mainly carried home salt as a return cargo. Almost half of Finnish tonnage also carried cargoes to Southern Europe – as did the *Carolus* in 1766. Most often the outward cargoes also consisted of relatively cheap, bulk products such as tar and timber.⁸

Moreover, Northern ships were also widely used in freight-carrying tramp shipping in Southern Europe. The competitive advantage for Nordic ships was low capital and running costs: ships were built in domestic shipyards from cheap, soft timber, and also the salaries of sailors (and shipbuilders) were relatively low com-

² K.H. O'ROURKE, J.G. WILLIAMSON, *Globalization and history: The evolution of a 19th century Atlantic economy*, Boston 1999 (MIT Press).

³ L. MÜLLER, *The Swedish consular service in southern Europe, 1720-1815*, in "Scandinavian Journal of History", 31, 2006, n. 2, pp. 186-195.

⁴ J. ELORANTA, M.C. MOREIRA, & L. KARVONEN, *Between Conflicts and Commerce: The Impact of Institutions and Wars on Swedish-Portuguese Trade, 1686-1815*, in "The Journal of European Economic History", 44, 2015, n. 3, pp. 9-50 and M.C. MOREIRA, J. ELORANTA, J. OJALA, & L. KARVONEN, *Early modern trade flows between smaller states*, in "Revue de l'OFCE", 15, 2015, n. 4, pp. 87-109.

⁵ for example, G. FEDERICO, *How much do we know about market integration in Europe?* in, "The Economic History Review", 65, 2012, n. 2, pp. 470-497

⁶ E.F. HECKSCHER, *Den svenska handelsjöfartens ekonomiska historia sedan Gustaf Vasa*. Stockholm 1940 (Almqvist & Wiksells), p. 24.

⁷ Finland was part of the Kingdom of Sweden up to 1809.

⁸ SWEDISH NATIONAL ARCHIVES (SNA), Stockholm, Annual Reports to the Swedish Board of Trade, Foreign Trade, ser. 9, 1769–1789, 1795–1799.

pared to those of many other European shipping nations.⁹ In this tramp shipping particularly, the role of information was pronounced.

Tab. 1. **Shares of Finnish shipping tonnage departing and arriving to/from different sea areas in the period 1766-1799, (%)**

	N % from departed	Ton % from departed	N % from arrived	Ton % from arrived
Baltic Sea	34	25	32	23
North Sea	30	27	30	23
Southern Europe	36	47	38	55
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: SNA, Stockholm, Foreign Trade, ser. 9, 1769–1789, 1795–1799.

NOTES: In the table only three important shipping towns are included (Pietarsaari, Kokkola and Raahé, their Swedish names being respectively Jacobstad, Gamla-Karleby and Brahestad). These towns accounted for 20-30% of the Finnish shipping tonnage at the time. Note that only shipping with direct foreign trade is included, thus, tramp shipping is excluded

The demand for Northern commodities in the South and vice versa was undoubtedly the main reason for the growth of trade with Southern Europe. The trade between Portugal and Sweden, for example, grew from the late 17th century until the late 18th century due to increasing salt imports. This salt, however, was taken as a return cargo on board ships that first exported Swedish or Finnish products to the North Sea or Mediterranean areas, and were thereafter usually used for brief periods of tramp shipping before taking on salt as return cargo. Salt was in practice the only voluminous product that it made sense to carry from the Mediterranean to the North. During the seventeenth century the Dutch had carried the salt imports of Sweden, yet because the key aim in Swedish mercantilist policy was to reduce foreign shipping, Sweden managed to expand its own salt shipping from Portugal after the passing of the Navigation Act in 1724. During the 18th century roughly 90 per cent of goods traded between Sweden and Portugal were carried by Swedish (including Finnish) ships. Portugal also emerged as an important market for certain Swedish products: in the 1720s, for example, over 50 per cent of the Swedish export of boards went to Portugal.¹⁰ Throughout the eighteenth century, Sweden also managed to secure its shipping interests in the Mediterranean by mak-

⁹ J. OJALA, P. FRIGREN, and J. ELORANTA, *Lönade det sig att gå till sjöss? Arbetarnas löner till sjöss och på land i 1800-talets Sverige och Finland*, in "Historisk Tidskrift (Sverige)" 134, 2014, n. 3, pp. 434-461.

¹⁰ J. OJALA, L. KARVONEN, M.C. MOREIRA, J. ELORANTA, *Trade between Sweden and Portugal in the Eighteenth Century. Assessing the reliability of STRO compared to Swedish and Portuguese Sources*, J.W. VELUWENKAMP, W. SCHELTJENS eds, Leiden 2018, pp. 153-176.

ing treaties, paying tributes and maintaining political connections with the Corsair States of Northern Africa.¹¹

The salt imports, however, were presumably the least problematic for Northern shipowners: the low-cost return cargoes were usually bought at the ships' (shipowners') own expense when vessels were northward bound. Moreover, the exports of Swedish and Finnish goods were in most cases not especially challenging, as there was a growing demand for iron, tar, timber and other Northern goods in Southern Europe. From the perspective of information, however, the most complicated business was presumably tramp shipping; namely, carrying cargoes for freight earnings between foreign ports. The shipowners obtained most of their revenues from exports and tramp shipping – and occasionally by selling the ship in the second-hand markets. The import cargoes were less significant – although even importing salt was more profitable than to sail north in ballast.

Besides the old and established Swedish and Finnish trading houses, newcomers also participated in the trade in the Mediterranean, as witnessed in the introduction of this paper. Given the knowledge of the commodities potentially available for export, import or tramp shipping, the next step, ascertaining exactly who was trading in them, was especially challenging during the era when information delivery was even at its best slow, costly and unreliable.¹²

As the trade grew the demand for information also increased. In small-scale local trade the challenges of obtaining information were not problematic as distances were short and the parties concerned knew each other personally. Many authors have noted that due to the increase in trade during the early modern era, the costs of transactions also increased as more attention had to be paid to contracts, enforcement mechanisms and information gathering. Thus, the supply of information did not necessarily meet demand.¹³

According to the classic arguments by Ronald Coase and later developed by Oliver E. Williamson and in economic history especially by Douglass C. North, the perfect allocation of resources within the markets is impossible due to the costs of transacting. Transaction costs are incurred because the actors lack information, the information may be false or otherwise unreliable, or it is simply impossible to make the most appropriate use of the information available in the most appropriate way. Actors seek to find mechanisms to minimize the costs of transacting, and thus to make markets operate more securely, and to develop more efficient business activities. These mechanisms include hierarchical economic organizations, such as business enterprises, measures introduced by governments in order to ensure efficient economic activities through safeguarding property rights, and networks between the parties to the transactions. Market competition as such, however, can also en-

¹¹ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce: The Swedish Consular Service and Long-distance Shipping*, Uppsala 2004 (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis).

¹² J.J. MCCUSKER, *The Demise of Distance: The Business Press and the Origins of the Information Revolution in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, in "The American Historical Review", 110, 2005, n. 2, pp. 295-321; J. OJALA and V. LUOMA-AHO, *Stakeholder relations*, cit., pp. 749-764.

¹³ D.C. NORTH, R.P. THOMAS, *The rise of the western world: A new economic history*. Cambridge 1973 (Cambridge University Press), pp. 93-94; D. NORTH, *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance*, Cambridge 1991 (Cambridge University Press); J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit., pp. 189-208.

sure the efficient dissemination of information.¹⁴ The early modern business enterprises, however, were in most cases relatively small and unable to create international, hierarchical organizations – besides of chartered companies such as the Dutch and British East Indian Companies. Moreover, small states had only weak possibilities to secure businessmen's property rights abroad. Therefore, the networks between parties to transact became more pronounced in early modern shipping and trade.¹⁵

Acquiring relevant market information is, thus, a basic requirement for business efficiency.¹⁶ The problem is not only in obtaining it but also in ensuring its reliability and in putting it to good use.¹⁷ During the era when information channels were undeveloped, these problems were particularly pronounced. International trade during the 18th century is therefore a case in point through which to study in-depth the challenges of asymmetric information. The challenges can be divided into three categories: *availability*, *reliability* and *usability* of information.

AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Availability of information refers to trading parties' timely access to relevant information. In spite of evidence of an increase in the speed of information transfer already during the 18th century, and especially during the early 19th century before the telegraph was introduced, the information flows were still, even at best, slow and expensive.¹⁸ Thus undeveloped information channels and slow communications were the basic constraints on the availability of information.¹⁹

Yet during the 18th century – and even before – revolutionary innovations were in place to advance information gathering. These included circular letters and price

¹⁴ R. COASE, *The Nature of the Firm*, in "Economica", 4, 1937, n. 16, pp. 386-405; R. COASE, *The Problem of Social Cost*, in "The Journal of Law & Economics", 3, 1960, n. 1, pp. 1-44; R.A. POLLAK, *A Transaction Cost Approach to Families and Households*, in "Journal of Economic Literature", 23, 1985, n. 2, pp. 581-608; O. E. WILLIAMSON, *Transaction-cost economics: the governance of contractual relations*, in "The Journal of Law & Economics", 22, 1979, n. 2, pp. 233-261; D. C. NORTH, *Transaction costs in history*, in "Journal of European Economic History", 14, 1985, n. 3, 557-576;

¹⁵ C. ANTUNES, A. POLÓNIA, *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500-1800*, Leiden 2016 (Brill).

¹⁶ M. CASSON, *Information and Organization: A new Perspective on the Theory of the Firm*, Oxford 2001 (Oxford University Press).

¹⁷ J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit. pp. 189-208.

¹⁸ See especially: H. VINNAL, *Cost-distance ratio in change: Transmission rates of commercial correspondence in the North and Baltic Sea region, 1732-1808*, in "Scandinavian Economic History Review", 66, 2018, n. 3 (online); K. RÖNNBÄCK, *Transaction costs of early modern multinational enterprise: Measuring the transatlantic information lag of the British Royal African Company and its successor, 1680-1818*, in "Business History", 58, 2016, n. 8, pp. 1147-1163; M. EJRNAES, K.G. PERSSON, *The gains from improved market efficiency: Trade before and after the transatlantic telegraph*, in "European Review of Economic History", 14, 2010, n. 3, pp. 361-381; S.-R. LAAKSO, *Managing the distance: Business information transmission between Britain and Guiana, 1840*, in "International Journal of Maritime History", 16, 2004, n. 2, pp. 221-246; Y. KAUKIAINEN, *Shrinking the world: Improvements in the speed of information transmission, c. 1820-1870*, in "European Review of Economic History", 5, 2001, n. 1, pp. 1-28.

¹⁹ J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit. pp. 189-208.

currents which in the course of time developed into newspapers, affording opportunities to those included in the information networks disseminating information on trade.²⁰ Moreover, governments established ways to provide merchants with information; in Sweden and Denmark consular networks established in the Mediterranean area were especially important.²¹ These new modes of information transfer were created due to an increase in the demand for information.²² As trade expanded, more information was needed – thus, economies of scale led to a situation in which more efficient modes to transmit communication could be built.²³

Most importantly, specialized services in shipping and trade were developed, including agencies and brokerage firms – although the roots of these services go back to medieval times. This specialization in international trade and shipping services at least partially solved the challenges of information availability. In international trade, brokers and specialized merchant houses handled the transactions and also supplied information. They were middlemen between the original producers and the customers. In addition, they provided a network of contacts. As Mark Casson has noted, these actors, whether merchants or specialized brokers, handled basic information within the impersonal entrepreneurial networks of international trade. They did not usually handle the products physically but provided advice on where the products should be delivered. Specialized services lowered the costs of searching and identifying possible business contacts and, thus, reduced the uncertainties and risks involved in operations. Therefore specialized trade and shipping services can be characterized as intermediate co-operative modes that reduced transaction costs.²⁴

The intermediaries earning commission for taking care of business in foreign ports were already a familiar feature during the Middle Ages. The shipping services were initially provided by the trading houses engaged in these activities. The merchants in foreign ports attended to the clearance of the vessels, and charged a commission from this activity, known as an address commission. The specialized ship-brokers emerged from the late 17th century on.²⁵ These specialized services in shipping and trade were among the infrastructure that supported and shaped the economic activity; they co-ordinated the flows of resources (like capital, goods and

²⁰ C. LESGER, *The rise of the Amsterdam market and information exchange: Merchants, commercial expansion and change in the spatial economy of the low countries c. 1550-1630*, Aldershot 2006; J.W. VELUWENKAMP, *International business communication patterns in the Dutch commercial system, 1500-1800*, H. COOLS & al. eds, Hilversum 2006, pp. 121-134; W.D. SMITH, *The function of commercial centers in the modernization of European capitalism: Amsterdam as an information exchange in the seventeenth century*, in “The journal of economic history”, 44, 1984, n. 4, pp. 985-1005.

²¹ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls*, cit.

²² G. BAKKER, *Trading Facts: Arrow's Fundamental Paradox and the Origins of Global News Networks*, P. PUTNIS, C. KAULS, J. WILKE eds, New York 2011, pp. 9-54.

²³ H. VINNAL, *Cost-distance ratio*, cit.

²⁴ M. CASSON, *Entrepreneurial Networks. A Theoretical Perspective*, in *Entrepreneurial networks and business culture*, M. MOSS, A SLAVEN, C.E. NUNEZ eds, Seville 1998, pp. 13-28.

²⁵ J.F. MYRHE, *About Chartering and Shipbroking Business*, Copenhagen 1917; M.B. MILLER, *Ship Agents in the Twentieth Century*, in *Resources and Infrastructures in the Maritime Economy, 1500-2002*, G. BOYCE, R. GORSKI eds, St. John's 2002, pp. 5-22; R. DAVIS, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, London 1962.

information) and secured quick turnaround in the port towns.²⁶ In practice, however, turnaround times were seldom especially quick, and there were quite a lot of challenges in maintaining efficient flows of information and co-ordination in spite of these specialized intermediaries.

A wide variety of actors offered their services for trade and shipping, including brokers and agencies offering charter-parties between shipowners and charterers; houses specialized in transmitting bills of exchange and underwriting services; and ship's chandlers to offer provisioning and other supplies to vessels. The brokerage and commission payments usually included not only the costs related to acquiring and organizing freight shipments and cargoes, but also clearances and sometimes even the harbour fees and marine insurances. The competitive advantage for a shipbroker was the information (e.g. on customs, laws, commodity prices and so on) he possessed, and his ability to use that information.²⁷ Specialized shipping agencies and the networks created between them offered an institutionalized solution to reduce the costs of transactions. Especially important were the agencies located in certain commercial and financial centres (like London and Amsterdam), or in port towns with suitable geographical locations (like Falmouth, Queenstown or Cadiz), or in ports with normative, legal functions (such as the Danish Sound and Constantinople).

The trade and business contacts emerged from traditional merchant-adventurer types of organizations towards informal networks of practice in which parties to transactions did not (necessarily) know each other personally.²⁸ Thus shipping and trade services were at least moderately specialized during the eighteenth century. This is seen in the rarity of direct business correspondence between buyers or sellers of export and import cargoes, or between those providing and needing shipping services. In fact, earlier studies show that the bulk of the letters were sent to specialized agencies and brokerage firms specialized in information transmission. Moreover, in many cases ships' masters acted as the personal agents of shipowners to ensure reliability and honesty between the parties to transactions.²⁹

The parties to transactions gathered information through correspondence and circular letters sent by agencies and brokerage firms. These agencies and brokerage firms established formal and informal networks of communication in which this vital information on trade was transmitted. Access to an information network over time provided even more contacts, and some of the strategic actors came to occupy vital positions.³⁰

²⁶ G. BOYCE, *Introduction: Resource Flows and Maritime Infrastructures*, in "Research in Maritime History", 11, 2002, n. 22, pp. 1-4.

²⁷ M. CASSON, *Entrepreneurial Networks*, cit., pp. M. CASSON, *Entrepreneurial Networks*, cit.; J. OJALA, *Tehokasta liiketoimintaa*, cit., pp. 309-311.

²⁸ A. GREIF, *Reputation and coalitions in medieval trade: evidence on the Maghribi traders*, in "The journal of economic history", 49, 1989, n. 4, pp. 857-882; J.S. BROWN, P. DUGUID, *The Social Life of Information: Updated, with a New Preface*, Boston 2017 (2000, Harvard Business Review Press)

²⁹ J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit., pp. 189-208; J. OJALA, V. LUOMA-AHO, *Stakeholder relations*, cit., pp. 749-764.

³⁰ J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit., pp. 189-208.

The problem was not only one of obtaining information but also of the slow speed of communication. It took weeks rather than days to transmit data from important Mediterranean ports to the Northern extremities of the Baltic Sea. The time lag between sending a letter and getting an answer to it from a distant port could be at best weeks, but in the worst cases months. In one case, a Finnish businessman complained to his Portuguese business partner that he did not receive a circular letter dated in January until November.³¹

RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION

The very same innovations that advanced the availability of merchant information also played an important role in improving the reliability of information.³² Personal contacts between the parties to transactions ensured the reliability; this is born out by the longevity of business contacts. Namely, in many cases business contacts between distant trading houses lasted for decades or even over a century. Furthermore, parties to transactions were ready to continue with reliable, old business partners, even though more profitable ones were available, as personal commitment and long-term economic relationships were efficient ways to minimize the risks related to information.³³

The “weakness of strong ties”, however, might create challenges in cases of economic depression, as suggested by Mark Granovetter in his classic study. To a certain extent, however, the emerging brokerage firms and agencies were still impersonal in nature. In time, the parties involved in such contacts came to know a great deal about each other. As a result, these impersonal networks also acquired personal characteristics in the long run and eventually lowered transaction costs. Thus, frequency and repetition within the contacts were among the primary factors in building relationships and trust between the transacting parties.³⁴

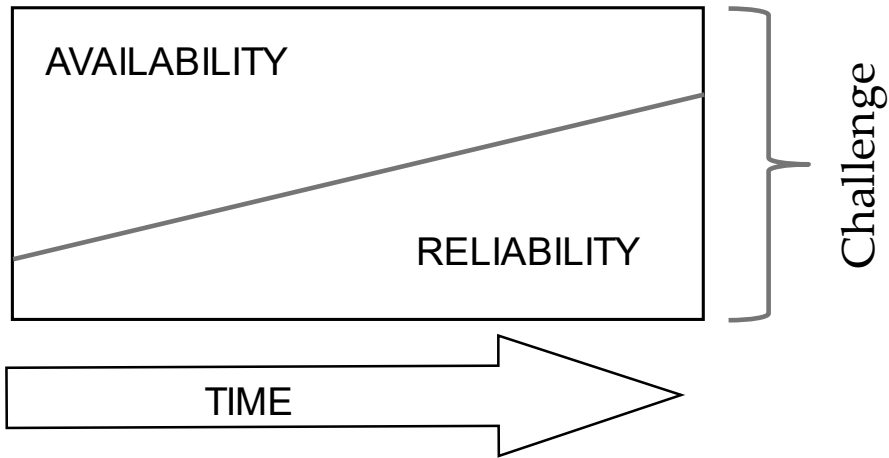
³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

³² H. VINNAL, *The world refuses to shrink. The speed and reliability of information transmission in North and Baltic Sea region, 1750-1825*, in “European Review of Economic History”, 18, 2014, n. 4, pp. 398-412.

³³ J. OJALA, *Tehokasta liiketoimintaa*, cit., pp. 311-319.

³⁴ M. GRANOVETTER, *The strength of weak ties*, in “American Journal of Sociology”, 78, 1973, n. 6, pp. 1360-1380 – See also: J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit., pp. 189-208; J. OJALA, V. LUOMA-AHO, *Stakeholder relations*, cit., pp. 749-764.

Fig. 1. Availability and reliability of information over time



Personalized networks were especially important in transferring information between parties to transactions; in this case shipowners and charterers. The very foundation of these networks was to serve as channels to provide reliable information, thereby reducing transaction costs caused by the asymmetric dissemination of information. For a shipowner and charterer it was vital to be a part of these information networks, and for a newcomer to be able to use some existing network.³⁵

The availability of information was at least partly solved through specialization of trade and shipping, namely, by established information networks. Later on technological development also reduced the challenge of obtaining information. Examination of the correspondence of shipowners suffices to show the challenges the entrepreneurs faced during the early modern era: how to select the most reliable and valuable information? Thus, whereas previously sheer availability of information might have been the key obstacle, now it was (also) its reliability – as indeed it is even today. Figure 1 aims to illustrate this challenge: in time the availability of information becomes less challenging, while its reliability may become more problematic. The shipowner, for example, could not be sure whether his business partner in some distant town was really acting in best interests of his principal. There are, indeed, some occasions in which a so-called “principal-agent” challenge occurred, when self-seeking agents tried to cheat their distant principals. Yet in practice such behaviour was fairly rare as the close networks of information were also quick to spread news of bad behaviour.³⁶

The key to understanding why and how these information networks proved reliable is resource dependency; the parties involved in the transaction were dependent upon the resources they provided to one another. Finnish shipowners and

³⁵ J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit., pp. 189-208.

³⁶ IDEM, *Tebokasta liiketoimintaa*, cit., p. 311; M. CASSON, *Entrepreneurial Networks*, cit., pp. 17-18.

exporters offered staples such as tar and timber that were needed in Southern Europe. They could offer these commodities, and also cargo capacity to carry tramp shipping at affordable prices, which made them valuable contacts for businessmen in the South. Conversely, Finnish merchant-shipowners were dependent on imports, exports and charter-parties offered by their Southern counterparts. In time, the parties to transactions had repeated dealings and they learnt more about each other over time – even though they did not necessarily knew each other personally. Moreover, the consular networks established by the Swedish government also ensured the establishment of trust between the transacting parties – especially as in many cases these consuls were local businessmen with whom the Swedish (and Finnish) merchants had transactions.³⁷ Among all parties, whether they were ship-owners, charterers, agents, brokers or ships' masters, reputation was invaluable: to maintain a good reputation also ensured future opportunities for in business.³⁸

USE OF INFORMATION

The availability and reliability of information are only pre-conditions for activities; ultimately it is a matter of how the information is used. The information obtained had to be assessed and analysed in one way or another. Thus, it was a question of business acumen: the ability to exploit available information and to explore new possibilities.³⁹ The long-term business relationships witness, on the one hand, the strategy of exploiting existing resources in businesses. Yet entrepreneurs were also constantly seeking for new opportunities, and their endeavours are apparent in the hundreds of letters sent to previously unknown businessmen. However, in most cases, new trade relationships were not achieved through these occasional contacts.

How then could a merchant-shipowner in the early modern era best use the information he possessed? These capabilities were a complex mixture already then – as they are today – of personal abilities, including formal education, experience, entrepreneurial mindset, and sometimes, pure luck – or misfortune. The training of the future merchants can be roughly divided into two categories: formal education and practical training as an apprentice. Most often the training was a combination of these, although it is evident that during the 18th century practical training was still preferred among the Finnish merchant families. Also, the (Swedish) merchant legislation favoured practical skills over formal education. In fact, practical training was considered indispensable, while formal schooling was not. According to the Swedish law of 1734, up to twelve years of practical training was required before one could obtain the right to be a merchant. In reality, a much shorter time was considered acceptable, and in the cases of the sons of merchant families the notion “of

³⁷ J. OJALA, *Problem of information*, cit., pp. 189-208

³⁸ Examples of using networks, for example, in J. OJALA, *Tebokasta liiketoimintaa*, cit., p. 335.

³⁹ D.J. TEECE, *Explicating dynamic capabilities: the nature and microfoundations of (sustainable) enterprise performance*, in “Strategic management journal”, 28, 2007, n. 13, pp. 1319-1350; M. CASSON, *The entrepreneur: An economic theory*. Totowa, New Jersey 1982 (Barnes & Noble Books).

being with his father since a small boy” was sometimes enough. The Swedish merchant law on practical training remained active in Finland up to 1879.⁴⁰

The merchant-shipowners had to be active in their networks, thus making use of information entailed hard work. However, the use of information was still constrained by its availability and reliability. The first of these meant that businessmen of the early modern era had to adjust their business operations to the speed of information transfer. That is, they were constantly forced to make long term plans. Even at the shortest, sending a vessel from Northern Europe to the South and back would take about half a year. But as ships were used to carry freight, this period was in many cases more than one year. Moreover, Finnish and Swedish shipowners had to take into account the forces of nature: in winter returning to the North was impossible due to the ice; storms were frequent in autumn and certain commodities like grain were needed especially in spring. The warehouses at home should be full when the vessels docked so that they could be loaded as soon as possible to reduce turnaround time and sent back to profitable business. Moreover the shipyards needed to be at the ready in case the vessels needed repairs. Thus correspondence with foreign business contacts formed just one part of the daily routines and long-term strategies of entrepreneurs engaged in foreign trade and shipping.

In spite of constant complaints from Finnish shipowners, for example, about the slowness of information flows – and sometimes even the challenges of reliability, there was in fact not much they could do to speed things up. In most cases letters including information on the export cargo was carried on board the same vessel that was carrying the cargo in question.⁴¹

CONCLUSIONS

The vessel *Carolus* made a successful voyage from the Northern shores of the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean in 1766-1767. How was this specific journey possible, how were the necessary contacts made? The answer lies in the complicated networks of information and the personal ties between the key parties involved. In this case, the answer is in the contact networks and role played by a certain Stockholm-based merchant house which had close contacts with Finnish merchants on the one hand, and with traders in Marseilles on the other. This Stockholm-based merchant house also owned a small share in the *Carolus* itself; thus, it was in the best interests of the owners of this Stockholm house to act in the best interests of the other owners of this business venture. Thus, this trading house acted as an intermediary that organized contacts, delivered letters and even organized a capable ship’s master from Stockholm for the *Carolus*, which sailed with and unexperienced crew from North to South and back.

The access, reliability and use of information were problems for merchant-shipowners during the 18th century. The solutions adopted were partly contradictory: the aim to reduce information asymmetry on the one hand, and this might incur

⁴⁰ J. OJALA, *Tehokasta liiketoimintaa*, cit., p. 270-276.

⁴¹ Compare, though, H. VINNAL, *Cost-distance ratio*, cit.

costs on the other. For example, using the services of specialized brokers and agencies certainly made information more easily available, but might at the same time pose challenges in terms of reliability of information. The merchant-shipowners therefore sought for long-term business contacts in which repeated dealings had created trust between the parties involved. Such contacts were preferred even if there were more profitable ones – but potentially unreliable – available.

In che modo i punti nodali hanno messo in relazione sfere commerciali diverse?

How did nodal points bring together different commercial spheres?

Louis Sicking

Funduoq, Fondaco, Feitoria
The Portuguese Contribution to the Globalisation
*of an Institution of Overseas trade**

INTRODUCTION

In many pre-modern commercial centres, communities of foreign merchants sharing the same background, that is sovereign, (city)state and/or language, which became known as nations (*nazione, naçad*), would operate from establishments or trading stations known under a variety of names like *funduoq, fondaco, feitoria* or factory. These establishments, can be considered as the logistic embodiment of nations.¹ Olivia Remie Constable has considered these trading stations as a ‘family of institutions’. She has traced the complex evolution, or genealogy, of this institutional family from the Greek *pandocheion* in Late Antiquity to the appearance of the *funduoq* throughout the Muslim Mediterranean following the rise of Islam.² With the appearance of European merchants at Islamic markets, the *funduoq* evolved into the *fondaco*, merchant colonies which facilitated trade and travel between Muslim and

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¹ I. ELBL, *Nation, Bolsa, and Factory: Three Institutions of Late-Medieval Portuguese Trade with Flanders*, in “The International History Review”, 14, 1992, n. 1, pp. 1-22.

² The meaning of the ancient Greek word *πανδοχείο*, still existing in the present Greek language, is the same as that of *FONDACO*. *FUNDUQ* is an Arabic word. Both words are of Greek origin. The latin transliteration of the word *πανδοχείο* to latin guides to *FONDACO*. The words *πρακτωρ* and *πρακτορείο* are ancient Greek words, but the new meaning of the *πρακτορείο* as an agency or factory is a neologism. Kind remark of Olga Katsiardi-Hering. See P. MOUKARZEL, *The Latin Traders in Egypt and Syria during the XIVth and the XVth Centuries: Privileged Communities under a Strict Control*, in *Mediterraneos An interdisciplinary approach to the cultures of the Mediterranean Sea*, S. CARRO MARTIN et al eds., Newcastle upon Tyne 2013, pp. 339-354, 341-342.

Christian regions.³ In the thirteenth century the *fondaco* also appeared in Italian overseas territories, such as the Venetian holdings in Byzantine lands, and in European cities like the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice.⁴

The *funduq* originated in part from the *caravanserai*:⁵ refreshment stations along caravan routes. *Funduqs* and *fondacos* existed around the Mediterranean throughout the Middle Ages, serving the ‘universal needs’ of travelers and cross-cultural long-distance traders. The names and functions of these institutions changed over time, yet some basic elements remained of continuous importance: the lodging of travelers, the provision of space for both commerce and storage, and the intervention of local governments in maintaining the functions of these facilities, including their administration and fiscal policies.⁶

Constable sees coherence and continuity from Late Antiquity throughout the Middle Ages, from the evolution of the *pandocheion* to the *funduq* and *fondaco*. However, she considers the start of the early modern era as a breach, or caesura, announcing ‘more rigid conceptions of self and ‘other’ in terms of both politics and religion, [...] and diminish[ed] [...] relevance of longstanding Mediterranean ideas and institutions.’⁷ Constable reasoned that

“The *fondacos* were western colonies in Islamic cities, but they were colonies without the apparatus and assumptions of colonialism. Although their presence benefited both foreign Christians and local Muslims, and facilitated commercial interaction between the two, the physical buildings were usually under the control of indigenous authorities and western traders could only reside and do business in the *fondacos* at the pleasure of local rulers. Overall, this was not a relationship shaped by European military and technological dominance. Even in the Crusader states – a region often cited as an early expression of European colonial ambitions – *fondacos* did not take a form consistent with what could be dubbed ‘colonial.’”⁸

³ O. CONSTABLE, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World. Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2003. See also G. JEHEL, *L’Italie et le Maghreb au Moyen Âge. Conflits et échanges du VII^e au XV^e siècle*, Paris 2001, p. 120. Compare P. HORDEN, N. PURCELL, *The Corrupting Sea. A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford and Malden MA 2000, pp. 397, 399 and R.S. LOPEZ, *Du marché temporaire à la colonie permanente: l’évolution de la politique commerciale au moyen âge*, in “Annales. Économies – Sociétés – Civilisations”, 4, 1949, n. 4, pp. 389-405, 404-405.

⁴ O. CONSTABLE, *Housing*, cit., pp. 153-157. P. SPUFFORD, *Power and Profit. The Merchant in Medieval Europe*, London 2002, p. 352.

⁵ *Caravanserai*, representing an oriental notion, is the term most used in Italian sources concerning the medieval settlements around the Black Sea. The other term used in these sources is *castrum*, which emphasizes the importance of defense. The term *funduq* or *fondaco*, representing a juridical notion, appears relatively late in these sources. Kind remark of S.P. Karpov. See for example S.P. KARPOV, *Grecs et Latins à Trébizonde (XIII^e-XV^e siècle) Collaboration économique, rapports politiques in État et colonisation au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. M. BALARD, Lyon 1989, pp. 413-424, 415.

⁶ O. CONSTABLE, *Housing*, cit., pp. 6-7. For an example of the fiscal intervention in case of the *fondaco* for the Germans in Venice: *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World. Illustrative Documents* R.S. LOPEZ, I.W. RAYMOND eds., New York 2001, pp. 85-86.

⁷ O. CONSTABLE, *Housing*, cit., p. 10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 357.

Constable concluded that ‘these two models [– the medieval model of *funduqs* and *fondacos* and early modern colonialism –] of economic and political mediation between locals and foreigners may, in fact, have been largely incompatible.’⁹

Before Constable, historians such as Philip D. Curtin and David Abulafia did not question the continuity between the medieval *funduq* and *fondaco* and the early modern factory. According to Curtin the first factories were founded in Flanders, mostly by foreign communities, like Catalans, Genoese, Venetians and the Portuguese.¹⁰ According to Abulafia, ‘The Catalan model for the creation of trading stations (*feitórias*) (under the authority of a Crown appointee) was adopted by the Portuguese as they sailed down the coast of Africa, creating trading stations in Arguin and Elmina (1481-1482).’ Abulafia concluded that ‘the *consulate* was not a medieval institution that withered away: it continued to provide a model for those who sought to make contact with new worlds around 1500’.¹¹ Interestingly, Curtin’s focus is on the southern European communities in Bruges, whereas Abulafia establishes a connection between the Catalans and the Portuguese with a particular focus on the role of consuls and consulates.

This begs the question whether or not continuity existed between the medieval *funduq* and *fondaco* on the one hand, and the early modern European factories overseas on the other.¹² Did the *funduqs* and *fondacos* remain a Mediterranean phenomenon that died out after a long tradition originating in Late Antiquity, or did the medieval Mediterranean model of *funduqs* and *fondacos* continue in the early modern era through its exportation or diaspora in the wake of European overseas expansion? In order to answer this question, the possible connections between the medieval *funduqs* and *fondacos* and the Portuguese *feitoria* in Bruges, and the later ones overseas will be investigated.¹³ The aim of this contribution is to test whether Con-

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111, 357.

¹⁰ P.D. CURTIN, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 4, 38. See for instance on the Genoese nation in Bruges B. LAMBERT, *De Genuese aanwezigheid in laatmiddeleeuws Brugge (1435-1495) Een laboratorium voor de studie van instellingen en hun rol in de economische geschiedenis*, PhD Gent University 2011, pp. 25-30.

¹¹ ‘It was probably with the same idea in mind, of creating a trading station perched on the edge of an alien empire, that Ferdinand and Isabella provided Christopher Columbus with letters addressed to the Great Khan, whom he hoped to find on his voyage across the Atlantic in 1492.’ D. ABULAFIA, *The Consular Networks in the Mediterranean: Function, Origins and Development in Mediterraneanum. Splendour of the Medieval Mediterranean, 13th-15th Centuries*, Barcelona 2004, pp. 339-351, 351.

¹² Examples of literature stressing continuity: G.V. SCAMMELL, *The World Encompassed. The first European Maritime Empires, c. 800-1650*, London 1981. F. FERNÁNDEZ-ARMESTO, *Pathfinders. A Global History of Exploration*, New York and London 2006.

¹³ The possible Italian and Catalan contributions to the transfer of the Mediterranean institutions to the Atlantic will not be discussed within the limited space of this paper. The Italian and wider Mediterranean contribution to Portuguese and Spanish overseas expansion is widely accepted. Fernández-Armesto, *Pathfinders*, cit., p. 119. V. M. GODINHO, *La Méditerranée dans l’horizon des Européens de l’Atlantique*, in ‘Revista de História Económica e Social’, 17, 1986, pp. 21-51, 29, 31-33, 46. P. RUSSELL, *Prince Henry ‘the Navigator’. A life*, New Haven and London 2000, pp. 58-59. For the transfer of the Portuguese fiscal system see Filipa RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Transferring European Fiscal System Overseas: A Comparison between the Portuguese Home and Colonial Fiscal Systems in La fiscalità nell’economia europea secc. XIII-XVIII = Fiscal systems in the European economy from the 13th to the 18th centuries: atti della “Trentanovesima settimana di studi”*, 22- 26 aprile 2007, ed. S. Cavaciocchi, 2008, pp. 545-567.

stable's model of 'institutional genealogy' can be applied to the Portuguese *feitoria* or whether some institutional connection can be detected between the Mediterranean *funduqs* and *fondacos* on the one hand and the Portuguese *feitorias* on the other.

A FEITORIA IN FLANDERS

To determine whether the Portuguese *feitoria* represents 'a missing link' between the medieval *funduqs* and *fondacos* and the early modern factories overseas, the focus will first be on Flanders: a region in which Portuguese merchants had conducted trade since the twelfth century.¹⁴ The county became one of Portugal's main trading partners till the end of the Middle Ages. In the wake of the presence of other foreign nations in Flanders' 'international' metropole, Bruges, the Portuguese gradually developed institutions to support this trade.¹⁵

Ivana Elbl has convincingly reconstructed the development of these institutions. She distinguished the *bolsa*, the 'nation' and the *feitoria* or 'factory'.¹⁶ Since the divergent views on the relevance of these medieval institutions for the early modern factories overseas may be partly due to misunderstandings about their meaning, it is important to properly clarify the distinctions between these institutions. The *bolsa* was a voluntary association of merchants involved in foreign trade, which was established under the patronage of the Portuguese Crown to serve the individual needs of the Portuguese trading community. The merchant nation comprised merchants from a geographical area speaking a common language. They were often subjects of the same political entity, in this case Portugal. The nation represented the corporate body to the host country's authorities. According to Elbl 'bolsa and nation were thus closely connected in their functions as representative bodies of the Portuguese merchants in Flanders. The *bolsa*, as an internal executive organ of the nation, received legal sanction from the Portuguese Crown; the nation was sanctioned by the host political authority.' The latter recognized the Portuguese nation in 1411. In 1438 the Burgundian Count of Flanders, Duke Philip the Good, granted the Portuguese nation the right to elect consuls – which represented the consulate of the nation – amongst the members of the community.¹⁷

Other foreign trading communities in Flanders (and elsewhere) were organized similarly, but the Portuguese case holds an original characteristic: the Crown became involved in foreign trade both as protector and regulator on the one hand, and as a direct participant on the other. The regulatory role of the king in the trade

¹⁴ F. MIRANDA, *Before the empire: Portugal and the Atlantic trade in the late Middle Ages*, in "Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies", 5, 2013, pp. 1-17, 6, 9.

¹⁵ A convenient schematic diagram of their presence is offered by O. GELDERBLON, *Cities of Commerce. The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250-1650*, Princeton 2013, pp. 110.

¹⁶ I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 12-15, 20-21 (citation). J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais à Bruges in International Trade in the Low Countries (14th-16th Centuries). Merchants, Organisation, Infrastructure. Proceedings of the International Conference Ghent-Antwerp, 12th-13th January 1997*, P. STABEL, B. BLONDÉ, A. GREVE eds., Leuven-Apeldoorn 1997, pp. 55-74, 56-58.

with Flanders was carried out by a so-called *feitor*, or royal factor, who acted as a business agent of the king. The use of the terms *feitor*, its plural form *feitores*, and *feitoria*, which is derived from *feitor*, has led to confusion amongst Portuguese historians like Oliveira Marques and Nunes Dias, as well as foreign historians like Philip Curtin, Bailey Diffie and George Winius. So as to avoid wading into this confusion, suffice it to say it resulted in an overestimation of the role of the Portuguese king in the Portuguese trade with Flanders. Elbl, whose vision is shared by most historians, including Sajay Subrahmanyam¹⁸, who convincingly unraveled this confusion by showing that the factor of the Portuguese king in Flanders was nothing else than the factor or agent of a company branch abroad, distinct from the main office. In other words, the *feitoria* in Flanders put the Portuguese Crown's direct involvement in the trade with Flanders 'on a formal business footing'.¹⁹

The distinction between the various Portuguese institutions in Bruges is furthermore supported by the location of these institutions in time. Contrary to what some historians, including Elbl, thought, there is no evidence of the existence of a house of the Portuguese nation prior to 1493.²⁰ This corresponds perfectly with the historical reality that Portuguese merchants preferred to stay in their usual local hostels.²¹ Private brokers-hostelers offered several advantages such as greater flexibility, stronger motivation to provide good service and insider familiarity with the prevailing market conditions.²² If a 'House of the Portuguese nation' did exist before 1493, which would not have been exceptional²³, Elbl may be right in concluding that it never 'fully acquired the function of a funduk or even a merchant hall'.²⁴

The political turmoil in Flanders at the end of the fifteenth century allows us to distinguish more clearly between the Portuguese nation and the royal *feitor*. As a consequence of the Flemish Revolt against Maximilian of Austria who was not recognized by the States of Flanders as regent of the young Philip the Fair, most for-

¹⁸ S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500-1700*, Chichester 2012, pp. 49-50.

¹⁹ See I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., pp. 3-6 for further details.

²⁰ A. VANDEWALLE, *Het natiehuis van de Portugezen te Brugge op het einde van de vijftiende eeuw in Getuigen in de polderklei. Huldeboek dr. Hist. Godgaf Dalle*, J. HERREGAT, F. BECUWE, J. VAN ACKER eds., Veurne 1990, pp. 171-180, 171, 173, 176. Former municipal archivist of Bruges, Vandewalle is most familiar with the sources relating to Bruges' local topography.

²¹ Some of the older literature has wrongly related houses of private Portuguese individuals in Bruges with institutions like the Portuguese nation or *feitor*. I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., pp. 16-18 based her arguments concerning the successive locations of 'the Portuguese House' partly on this literature and therefore is incorrect on this point. On these legendary locations see A. Vandewalle, *Het natiehuis*, cit., 171-180, 177-178. J. EVERAERT, *De Portugese factorijen in Vlaanderen in Feitorias. Kunst in Portugal ten tijde van de Grote Ontdekkingen (eind 14^{de} eeuw tot 1548)*, Antwerp 1991, pp. 42-52, 43. See also A. VANDEWALLE, *Introduction au colloque Flandre-Portugal 15^e-18^e siècle*, in "Handelingen voor het genootschap voor geschiedenis gesticht onder de benaming 'Société d'Émulation te Brugge'", 132, 1995, n. 3, pp. 221-230, 227-229 and A. VANDEWALLE, *De huizen "Poorteghale" en "den Schilt van Portugael"*, in "Archiefleven", 2, 1995, n. 4, pp. 6-7.

²² I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., pp. 16-17.

²³ Most Italian nations (Venice, Genoa, Lucca, Florence) did have proper houses in Bruges in the fourteenth century. P. STABEL, *De gewenste vreemdeling*, in "Jaarboek voor middeleeuwse Geschiedenis", 4, 2001, pp. 189-221, 212-213.

²⁴ I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., pp. 16-17.

eign nations left Bruges for Antwerp, which was to become the new international metropole of the Netherlands. This development was stimulated by Maximilian of Austria, who supported Antwerp in attracting the foreign nations with extensive privileges.²⁵ Some nations, amongst whom were the Portuguese, were invited to return to Bruges. To attract the Portuguese, Bruges offered them privileges and a residence that the city had bought for them in 1493 in the Ridderstraat to hold their meetings and to stock their merchandise. Interestingly the royal *feitoria* moved from Bruges to Antwerp in 1499, while the small Portuguese nation split up in 1510-1511. Following which, most of the Portuguese merchants also moved to Antwerp leaving but a few families to remain in Bruges until 1518.²⁶ All this points to the *feitoria* and the nation being different institutions.

A recent suggestion that the *feitoria* and the nation merged into one was based on the fact that in 1470, Álvaro Dinis, who appears as Portugal's most important merchant in Bruges, combined the functions of royal *feitor* and consul.²⁷ As in 1470, no less than four consuls were active²⁸, making it hard to believe that Dinis was able to control the nation on behalf of the king. This may have been the first time these functions were combined, but not the last. Around the middle of the sixteenth century the *feitor* occasionally acted as one of the consuls of the Portuguese nation, which was then based in Antwerp, but this did not imply that the royal factor controlled the nation.²⁹ In light of this, the idea that the *feitor* and the nation became one and the same must be dismissed.

Three phases can be distinguished in the interference of the kings of Portugal in the trade with Flanders. First, at least as early as the thirteenth century, the Portuguese kings stimulated and protected the trade of their subjects in Flanders. Second, in the late fourteenth century the Crown began trading with Flanders directly. This trade was carried out by the 1390's by royal envoys, shipmasters or agents on a

²⁵ J. MARÉCHAL, *Le départ de Bruges des marchands étrangers (XV^e et XVI^e siècles)* in IDEM, *Europese aanwezigheid te Brugge. De vreemde kolonies (XIV^{de}-XVI^{de} eeuw)*. Vlaamse historische studies 3, Bruges 1985, pp. 180-210. W.P. BLOCKMANS, *Metropolen aan de Noordzee. De geschiedenis van Nederland, 1100-1560*, Amsterdam 2010, p. 555-556. O. GELDERBLOM, *Cities of Commerce*, cit., pp. 28-29. B. WILLEMS, *Militaire organisatie en staatsvorming aan de vooravond van de Nieuwe Tijd. Een analyse van het conflict tussen Brabant en Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk (1488-1489)*, in "Jaarboek voor middeleeuwse geschiedenis", 1, 1998, pp. 260-286, 265. For the wider context see J. HAEMERS, *For the Common Good. State Power and Urban Revolts in the Reign of Mary of Burgundy (1477-1482)*, Turnhout 2009, and IDEM, *De strijd om het regentschap over Filips de Schone. Opstand, facties en geweld in Brugge, Gent en Ieper (1482-1488)*, Turnhout 2015.

²⁶ J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit., pp. 55-74, 57. A. VANDEWALLE, *Het natiehuis*, cit., pp. 173, 177.

²⁷ F. MIRANDA, *Portugal and the medieval Atlantic. Commercial Diplomacy, Merchants, and Trade, 1143-1488*, PhD Porto 2012, p. 196. Compare J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit., pp. 69, 71, 73-74 who does indicate Álvaro Dinis as consul and *feitor* in 1470, but considers both as separate institutions and doubts whether the latter played a role as protector of the Portuguese nation. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., p. 19, was thus incorrect that a royal factor never served as elected consul of the Portuguese in Bruges, but her argument that they were separate institutions remains valid.

²⁸ F. MIRANDA, *Portugal*, cit., p. 191.

²⁹ J.A. GORIS, *Étude sur les colonies marchandes méridionales (Portugais, Espagnols, Italiens) à Anvers de 1488 à 1567 Contribution à l'histoire des débuts du capitalisme moderne*, Leuven 1925, pp. 39, 41-42, 49, 51, 53-54. L. SICKING, *Los grupos de intereses marítimos de la Península Ibérica en la ciudad de Amberes: la gestión de riesgos y la navegación en el siglo XVI*, in *Gentes de mar en la ciudad Atlántica medieval*, J. SOLORZANO TELECHEA, M. BOCHACA, A. AGUIAR ANDRADE eds., Logroño 2012, pp. 167-199, 175-176.

venture basis. Third, in the fifteenth century, as the Portuguese expanded along the coast of Africa, the involvement of the Crown with the Portuguese trade in Flanders increased dramatically. African gold and valuable African commodities like ivory and sugar from Madeira were sold in Flanders.³⁰

How does the development of the Portuguese *feitoria* in Flanders fit into these phases? As the royal trade grew in the first half of the fifteenth century, the need for permanent representation became acute. The first *feitor* or royal factor in Bruges, Vasco Afonso, is mentioned in 1416-1417, who, according to Paviot – having more refined data at this disposal than Elbl³¹ – resided there permanently, which corresponds with the start of the third phase.³² As Flavio Miranda observed, in 1415 not a single merchant or ship from Portugal was recorded in Flanders, a result of all the ships being chartered to transport troops to Africa for the assault on Ceuta in that year.³³ Is it a coincidence that a *feitor* was appointed in Flanders in 1416? He may have been appointed to relaunch the Portuguese trade with Flanders, which, evidently, had come to a standstill.

Pedro Eanes, who had been responsible for delivering the dowry of Isabel of Portugal to Philip the Good after their marriage in 1430, was appointed *feitor* in 1441. Despite leaving office in 1443, possibly due to internal political problems in Portugal, he was involved in several business and financial transactions of the king. Besides acquiring luxury goods for the Portuguese court, he became involved in massive purchases of war materials, which could reflect a shift in the orientation of the Crown's interest in the trade with Flanders.³⁴ Perhaps from 1451, but certainly from 1456 onwards, a royal *feitor* permanently resided in Bruges once more.³⁵ From the middle of the fifteenth century onwards the rise of the African overseas trade changed the nature of the Crown's trade with Flanders. It became strongly oriented towards the purchase of products for the manufacture of armaments and merchandise for the African trade.³⁶ This increased the importance of the *feitoria* in Flanders in the second half of the fifteenth century.³⁷

³⁰ I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., pp. 2, 6. F. MIRANDA, *Before the empire*, cit., pp. 11-12.

³¹ See the source publication *Portugal et Bourgogne au XV^e siècle. Recueil de documents extraits des archives bourguignonnes (1384-1482)*, ed J. PAVIOT, Lisbon and Paris 1995, doc. n. 52 p. 181.

³² J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit., p. 71.

³³ F. MIRANDA, *Before the empire*, cit. p. 10.

³⁴ I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., p. 7. J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit., p. 71. Pedro Eanes also acted as secretary in the household of Isabel of Portugal. M. SOMMÉ, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XV^e siècle*, Villeneuve d'Ascq 1998, pp. 30, 102.

³⁵ J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit., p. 71. I. ELBL, *Nation*, cit., p. 8.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9. J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit., pp. 70-71. IDEM, *Bruges et le Portugal*, in *Les marchands de la Hanse et la banque des Médicis. Bruges, marché d'échanges culturels en Europe*, ed. A. VANDEWALLE, Bruges 2002, pp. 45-49, 45.

³⁷ J. PAVIOT, *Les Portugais*, cit. pp. 70-71.

FEITORIAS IN AFRICA AND ASIA

It was this institution, the *feitoria*, that was exported to Africa. The first one was located at Arguin island, off the coast of present day Mauretania, where the Portuguese went as early as 1441 or 1442.³⁸ Between 1445 and 1455 a fortress was built, which is considered the starting point of the *feitoria*.³⁹ In 1433, Prince Henry ‘the Navigator’ was granted a monopoly over the trade and territories in West-Africa, including the Atlantic islands, that remained in his hands until his death in 1460.⁴⁰ By the 1450’s the management of commercial monopolies was leased to private companies, like Prince Henry had done in 1455 with the trade at the Arguin *feitoria* over a ten year period. The factors of the leaseholders of the Arguin trade resided in the fortress and traded with Arabs and Africans from the African mainland,⁴¹ which implies that the trading station originally must have had some of the characteristics of a Mediterranean *fondaco*. After Prince Henry’s death in 1460 the Portuguese *feitoria* was brought under direct or indirect control of the Crown.⁴² The main ‘commodity’ traded at Arguin were slaves from Guinea imported by the trans-Saharan caravans. After attempts to acquire slaves by seaborne *razias* yielded meagre results, peaceful trading soon turned the island into the main center for the Portuguese slave trade between 1450-1464, and was responsible for several hundred slaves annually in the fifteenth century and up to 1340 per year in the 1517-1520 period.⁴³

A second *feitoria* in Africa was founded in 1482 at São Jorge da Mina (Elmina) on the Gold Coast. By now, the new king, João II (1481-1495), who, while still a prince, had taken control of the entire African enterprise by 1474, and combined ‘the Crown as business entity [that is the *feitoria*], and the Crown as imperial monopolist.’ The new installation was housed in a castle built partially from stones precut in Portugal, and its walls served both to protect the *feitoria* from native at-

³⁸ *Chronique de Guinée (1453) de Gomes Eanes de Zurara*, L. BOURDON, J. PAVIOT eds., Dijon 1994, p. 304, 310, n.1. On the importance of the island and its *feitoria* for the Portuguese A.R. DISNEY, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire. 2. The Portuguese Empire*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 31-32, 45-47. I. ARMENTEROS MARTINEZ, *Cataluña en la primera economía atlántica (c. 1470-1540)*, Barcelona and Lleida 2012, 69 n. 132.

³⁹ *Chronique de Guinée*, cit., pp. 295, 310 n.12. F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese in Western Africa. Empires, Merchants and the Atlantic System, 1580-1674*, Leiden and Boston 2011, p. 84. P. RUSSELL, *Prince Henry*, cit., pp. 206-207, 210. J.A.M. TORRES, *Politics and Colonial Discourse in the Spanish Empire: The African Atlantic Possessions, 1575-1630*, in “Jahrbuch für Geschichte Lateinamerikas – Anuario de Historia de America Latina”, 51, 2014, pp. 113-149, 122. Godinho dated the beginning of the *feitoria* between 1455 and 1461. See B.W. DIFFIE, G.D. WINIUS, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*, Minneapolis 1977, p. 98, n.7. An example of a reference to ‘feitoria de Arguim’ in a primary source to in 1508: I. ELBL, *The Volume of the Early Atlantic Slave Trade, 1450-1521*, in “Journal of African History”, 38, 1997, pp. 31-75, 36, n. 15.

⁴⁰ By his brother Duarte I according to B.W. DIFFIE, G.D. WINIUS, *Foundations*, cit., p. 65 and P. RUSSELL, *Prince Henry*, cit., pp. 92-93. By his father, King João I (1385-1433) according to F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese*, cit., p. 82.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 85 n.139. P. RUSSELL, *Prince Henry*, cit., pp. 206-207.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁴³ A.R. DISNEY, *A History of Portugal*, cit., p. 46. For a detailed analysis I. ELBL, *The volume*, cit., pp. 42-44, 63-66. P. RUSSELL, *Prince Henry*, cit., pp. 210-211.

tacks and ‘to serve notice on would-be traders’.⁴⁴ The king’s own employees were the only personnel authorized to trade there (until the late sixteenth century), which supports the argument in favor of the continuity between the *feitoria* in Flanders and those in Africa and Asia. The king also took control of the *feitoria* at Arguin.⁴⁵ While the first *feitoria* founded in Africa, the one in Arguin, resembled the Mediterranean *fondaco*, after 1460 the Crown took over control and it was thus the *feitoria* in its narrow ‘royal’ sense that was to multiply and further develop in Africa and Asia. In this respect one can agree with Diffie and Winius that these first African *feitorias* were ‘modeled to a large degree upon the one at Bruges’.⁴⁶

The government of both Arguin and Elmina had a similar structure: a captain, appointed by the king, who was responsible for all matters, including administration, defense, justice, trade and finance. His duties extended to diplomatic responsibilities; namely, the establishing and maintaining of relations with local rulers and serving as an intermediary in conflicts. Some of the captain’s functions are comparable to those carried out by consuls of merchant nations. In West Africa the captain often held the posts of *feitor* and *ouvidor* or high judicial official. The *feitor* was not only responsible for the trade on behalf of the Crown, but for controlling the private merchants who possessed royal licenses allowing them to trade. The royal monopoly was thus not completely closed to private entrepreneurship.⁴⁷

As the Portuguese moved down the African coast and rounded the Cape of Good Hope, they founded *feitorias* in São Tomé in 1509, and in the Cape Verde Islands of Santiago and Fogo in 1520 and 1535 respectively. The Guinea-Bissau region got a floating *feitória* at the mouth of the São Domingos River in 1534. *Feitorias* were opened on the Swahili coast (at Sofala, Mozambique and Malindi), and in India at Calicut in 1500 (although the latter turned out to be short-lived), at Cochin in 1503 and later on at several trading centres like Goa, Malacca, Ormuze, Ceylon and Ternate.⁴⁸ Filipa Ribeiro da Silva has argued that from the late fifteenth century onward, ‘the commercial and fiscal organization of the Portuguese Atlantic Empire shifted from a monopoly operated by commercial agents of the Portuguese Crown [i.e. *feitores*] to a trading framework controlled by private merchants and supervised by royal officials.’⁴⁹ The Crown gave highest priority to India, although even here

⁴⁴ B.W. DIFFIE, G.D. WINIUS, *Foundations*, cit., pp. 314-315 (citations). A.R. DISNEY, *A History of Portugal*, cit., p. 57. For the construction and its local context J. BATO’ORA BALLONG-WEN-MEWUDA, *São Jorge da Mina, 1482-1637 I*, Lisbon and Paris 1993, pp. 64-70.

⁴⁵ I. ELBL, *The volume*, cit., p. 62. I. ARMENTEROS MARTÍNEZ, *Cataluña*, cit., p. 100.

⁴⁶ B.W. DIFFIE, G.D. WINIUS, *Foundations*, cit., pp. 314-315.

⁴⁷ F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese*, cit., pp. 39-40, 82-83, 85 n. 139. B.W. DIFFIE, G.D. WINIUS, *Foundations*, cit., p. 310. I. ELBL, *The volume*, cit., pp. 55-56. J. BATO’ORA BALLONG-WEN-MEWUDA, *São Jorge da Mina*, cit., pp. 163, 170-171, 174.

⁴⁸ B.W. DIFFIE, G.D. WINIUS, *Foundations*, cit., p. 315. F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese*, cit., pp. 82, 85, n. 141. F. BETHENCOURT, *Political Configurations and Local Powers in Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, F. BETHENCOURT, D.R. CURTO eds., Cambridge 2007, pp. 197-254, 200-201. A.R. DISNEY, *A History of Portugal*, cit., p. 127. See for an example of the composition of the staff of a *feitória* that of Sofala which counted fifteen persons in 1506: V. RAU, *Feitores e feitorias – “Instrumentos” do comércio internacional português no século XVI*, in “Brotéria”, 81, 1965, pp. 458-478, 463-464.

⁴⁹ F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese*, cit., pp. 85, 92 (citation).

the royal monopoly was somewhat relaxed with regard to the trade of some spices in the course of the sixteenth century. In all the Crown transformed from a 'mercantile monarchy to a bureaucratic entity'.⁵⁰

At the same time the *feitoria* was adapted to fit African and Asian circumstances which were different from those in Europe: a different climate and environment, different peoples and cultures and related problems, conflicts and hostilities. In order to create conditions to foster trade and to acquire local riches and products and to sell European products, military and naval support was often indispensable. Furthermore the *feitorias* differed according to local society. In my view, this does not contradict Constable's approach of institutional genealogy as she recognized that alongside common features, the institutional group she investigated is also 'filled with diversity and variation'.⁵¹

In the more advanced markets, in India for example, *feitorias* resembled their Mediterranean predecessors, the *fundacos*, but in remote or hostile places, additional safety measures were necessary.⁵² For example, the conditions under which the Portuguese constructed Elmina castle clearly indicate that its walls were constructed with a mind to protect its inhabitants against local resistance. The combination of a factory and a fortress – J. Bato'ora Ballong-Wen-Mewuda uses the expression 'factorerie-forteresse' for Elmina⁵³ – does not represent something new. Christian *fundacos* in Muslim territories were often surrounded by walls. Fortification of factories also took place in the Greek world. The Venetians and Genoese for example each fortified their *fundacos* in Trebizond on the Black Sea in the fourteenth century.⁵⁴

An indirect argument in favor of continuity is also offered by Elbl's more recent observation that many historians tend to consider 'the overseas enterprise of the Portuguese Crown as a substantial innovation in commercial capitalism.' She argues instead that, in connection with its African enterprise, the decisions and strategies of the Crown 'were based on continuity with pre-existing practices and administrative methods, rather than on innovation and change.'⁵⁵ This evidence, alongside Constable's point⁵⁶ on the use of the term *feitoria* – derived from *feitor* in the Portuguese language and context and used in other languages like Dutch (*fac-*

⁵⁰ F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese*, cit., pp. 92-93.

⁵¹ O. CONSTABLE, *Housing*, cit., p. 7.

⁵² V. RAU, *Feitores e feitorias*, cit., pp. 458-478, 465-466. For a detailed description of the Portuguese administration of the settlements in West-Africa in the late 15th and sixteenth centuries see F. RIBEIRO DA SILVA, *Dutch and Portuguese*, cit., pp. 38-69, 82-93.

⁵³ J. BATO'ORA BALLONG-WEN-MEWUDA, *São Jorge da Mina*, cit., p. 65.

⁵⁴ S. KARPOV, *Grecs et Latins*, cit., p. 415.

⁵⁵ I. ELBL, *The Kings Business in Africa: Decisions and Strategies of the Portuguese Crown in Money, Markets and Trade in Late Medieval Europe*, L. ARMSTRONG, I. ELBL, M.M. ELBL eds., Leiden-Boston 2007, pp. 89-118, 90.

⁵⁶ 'The use of a particular word – and especially the adoption of a word from one language and context into another – demonstrates its utility and relevance as reference.' O. CONSTABLE, *Housing*, cit., pp. 5-6.

torij)⁵⁷ and English (*factory*) for overseas factories – does imply that an institution was meant with some functional continuity.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to determine whether or not a continuity existed between the medieval institutional family of *funduqs* and *fondacos* found in the Mediterranean, and overseas factories characteristic of the early modern period. Using Constable's model of institutional genealogy, I argued that the Portuguese *feitoria* should be considered the link between these institutions, thus confirming the visions expressed by Curtin, Diffie and Winius and others. The participation of the Portuguese Crown in long-distance or overseas trade, both with Flanders and West Africa, via *feitores*, complicated the argument. The royal *feitor* in Bruges was after all distinct from the Portuguese nation and consuls there. Nevertheless, it is clear that in the time of Henry the Navigator, the *feitoria* at Arguin possessed the characteristics of a *fondaco*, because private merchants used the *feitoria* to trade with locals from the African mainland. Following Constable's method, the use of the term *feitoria* further supports the argument of continuity. The Portuguese *feitorias* subsequently founded in Africa and Asia developed further according to diverse circumstances. In Asia, several resembled the *funduqs* and *fondacos* of the Mediterranean, that is they shared more or less the same functions. Furthermore, it is evident that the interference of the Portuguese Crown with long-distance or overseas trade is of medieval origin while medieval methods continued to be used overseas.

To what extent the Portuguese were inspired by the Catalans in the Mediterranean – as suggested by Abulafia⁵⁸ – has not been discussed here but remains an intriguing question. The Italians may also have served as inspiration for the Portuguese in the numerous locations where Italian nations could be found, Bruges not being the least example. Italians present in Portugal may also have been of importance in this respect.⁵⁹

Merchants operating at long-distances from their hometown or country, their rulers, and the rulers of the places where they traded, pursued their own interests in the trading stations known under a variety of names, including *funduq*, *fondaco*, *feitoria* and *factory*. In most cases at least two – the foreign merchants or companies and the local ruler – and in many cases all three parties benefited from these stations. These stations together represent the globalisation of institutions of overseas trade, a process to which the Portuguese made a significant contribution.

⁵⁷ The Dutch word 'factorij' is derived from the French 'factorie'. *Woordenboek der Nederlandse taal*. Although nowadays the French word is 'comptoir', in seventeenth-century French sources the word 'factorerie' was used.

⁵⁸ D. ABULAFIA, *The Consular Networks*, cit., p. 351.

⁵⁹ J. SEQUEIRA, F. MIRANDA, 'A Port of Two Seas' *Lisbon and European Maritime Networks in the Fifteenth Century*, in this volume.

Werner Scheltjens

*The Dutch Republic as Example of Maritime Transport Services Clusters
in Preindustrial Europe (ca. 1650-1800)*

INTRODUCTION

The distribution of commodities across long distances led to the emergence of maritime transport services clusters, i.e. spatially concentrated groups of rural and urban coastal communities within the same region, which specialized in the supply of transport services for the centres of preindustrial European trade. The historiography of local, regional and international trade networks tends to see such clusters as the logical result of the development of commercial networks rather than as a *condition sine qua non* for their emergence.¹ In a similar way, urban and regional historians pay attention to maritime transport only insofar as it provided employment and was part of the city or region's trades and industries.² It is, in fact, the history of preindustrial maritime labour, which has given the most significant impulses for research on the careers and employment patterns of sailors and shipmasters, their regions of origin, and the emergence of coastal communities with a primary focus on the maritime business.³ Van der Woude and Faber, for example, have outlined the existence of a 'reservoir of shipmasters' that accounted for the carrying-trade between Amsterdam and northern/northeastern destinations in their broad social

¹ W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas. Emergence, functions and structure of the Low Countries' maritime transport system ca. 1300-1850*, Leiden-Boston 2015, pp. 1-2.

² E.g.: R. WILLEMSEN, *Enkhuizen tijdens de Republiek: een economisch-historisch onderzoek naar stad en samenleving van de 16^e tot de 19^e eeuw*, Hilversum 1988, pp. 91-95.

³ P. BOON, *Bouwers van de zee: Zeevarenden van het Westfriesse platteland, c.1680-1720*, Den Haag 1996, pp. 81-140; K. DAVIDS, *Maritime labour in the Netherlands, 1570-1870*, in "Those emblems of bell?" *European sailors and the maritime labour market, 1570-1870*, P. VAN ROYEN, J. BRUIJN, J. LUCASSEN eds, St. John's 1997, pp. 41-71; R. GORSKI, *Maritime labour. Contributions to the history of work at sea, 1500-2000*, Amsterdam 2007; A. KNOTTER, *De Amsterdamse scheepvaart en het Noordhollandse platteland in de 16^{de} en 17^{de} eeuw. Het probleem van de arbeidsmarkt*, in "Holland", XVI, 1984, pp. 281-290; J. LUCASSEN, *Zeevarenden, Maritieme Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, Vol. 2: Zeventiende eeuw, van 1585 tot ca. 1680*, in L. AKVELD, S. HART, W.J. VAN HOBOKEN eds, Bussum 1978, pp. 126-158; J. LUCASSEN, *A Multinational and its Labor Force: The Dutch East India Company, 1595-1795*, in "International labor and working-class history", 66, 2004, pp. 12-39; J. VAN LOTTUM, *Across the North Sea: The impact of the Dutch Republic on international labour migration c. 1550-1850*, Amsterdam 2007, pp. 126-159; P. VAN ROYEN, *Zeevarenden op de koopvaardijvloot omstreeks 1700*, Amsterdam 1987; P.C. VAN ROYEN, *The "National" Maritime Labour Market: Looking for common characteristics*, in "Those emblems of bell?" *European sailors and the maritime labour market, 1570-1870*, P. VAN ROYEN, J. BRUIJN, J. LUCASSEN eds, St. John's 1997, pp. 1-9; J.L. VAN ZANDEN, *Arbeid tijdens het handelskapitalisme: Opkomst en neergang van de Hollandse economie 1350-1850*, Bergen 1991, pp. 55-74.

analysis of the rural area North of Amsterdam (Noorderkwartier) and the province of Friesland.⁴ The geographical concentration of this 'reservoir' changed in the course of the early modern period from the Noorderkwartier to Friesland around 1650 and Groningen around 1750. Maritime historians have explained this geographical shift as the result of increasing demand for smaller ships in Amsterdam, which were supplied by masters from Friesland and - later - Groningen. Alternatively, Van Zanden has explained this geographical shift in economic terms as the outcome of structural changes in the organisation of labour, arguing that the rise of wage labour opened the door for the development of a services sector as part of the local (rural) economy.⁵ To inhabitants of the coastal areas in the Low Countries, where water transportation was a vital part of everyday life in the peat-digging industry, the fisheries or the domestic carrying trade, the supply of maritime transport services was a logical choice.⁶

Although research into the maritime labour market and its spatial dynamics continues to produce valuable insights into this important aspect of the maritime transport sector,⁷ the rise and decline of maritime transport services clusters cannot be studied based on maritime labour market analysis alone.⁸ Recruitment patterns of seafarers to man the merchant fleet varied with the size of the ship and the routes sailed, and could include the immediate geographical surroundings of the shipmaster (captain) as well as distant places with an excess supply of labour. The geographical shift in the maritime labour market is not identical to that of the location of maritime transport services clusters. So, how can the rise and decline of maritime transport services clusters be explained? Could it be done perhaps in economic terms, as the result of changes in the cost of services or the cost of capital? The cost of services-model would argue that the enduring search for cheaper transportation forced the spatial development of the 'reservoir of shipmasters' from the Noorderkwartier in the sixteenth century to Groningen after 1750. But it cannot explain the presence of cheaper transporters in some ports and their absence in others. The cost of capital-model would assume that investors with their greater financial means would prefer to invest in larger ships than their 'less fortunate' colleagues in Friesland and the Province of Groningen. But it cannot explain why investors from Amsterdam would not invest in smaller ships themselves in order to

⁴ A.M. VAN DER WOUDE, *Het Noorderkwartier: Een regionaal historisch onderzoek in de demografische en economische geschiedenis van westelijk Nederland van de late middeleeuwen tot het begin van de negentiende eeuw*, Wageningen 1972, pp. 362-398; J.A. FABER, *Drie Eeuwen Friesland: Economische en sociale ontwikkelingen van 1500 tot 1800*, Leeuwarden 1973, pp. 264-292. The same line of reasoning can be found in: P. VAN ROYEN, *Zeevarenden*, cit.; J.L. VAN ZANDEN, *Arbeid*, cit.; P. BOON, *Bouwers van de zee*, cit.; M. VAN TIELHOF, *The 'Mother of all Trades': The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the early 19th Century*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002.

⁵ J.L. VAN ZANDEN, *Arbeid*, cit. 52; J. DE VRIES, *The Dutch Rural Economy in the Golden Age, 1500-1700*, New Haven and London 1974.

⁶ W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit. p. 15. Indeed, the sectors in which the division of labour caught on, were not only the agrarian sector and the textile industry, as De Vries seems to suggest. See: J. DE VRIES, *Rural Economy*, cit. pp. 119-174; J.L. VAN ZANDEN, *Arbeid*, cit. pp. 44-46.

⁷ E.g. J. VAN LOTTUM, *Across the North Sea*, cit.

⁸ The rest of this section is based on W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit. pp. 6-7.

keep the services sector in their own hands. In short, mainstream models do not pay enough attention to the space in which the carrying trade developed. The intimate link between the regional economy and the emergence of international transport services clusters is taken for granted rather than analysed.

1. THE 'DUTCH CASE'

A recent case-study on the Dutch maritime transport sector in preindustrial times⁹ – further referred to as the 'Dutch case' – has put space back in the front seat, showing that the structure of the regional economy and the size and scope of international trade networks determined the rise and decline of maritime transport services clusters in the Age of Sail.

Before 1400,¹⁰ rural coastal communities were interested for the most part in transporting their local produce to (potential) buyers in nearby centres of trade. Whether they were located directly at the waterfront or further inland, rural coastal communities had a simple social structure, completely centred on their own, local production. Sometimes these communities are depicted with the term *occupational community* to indicate that the entire local society was orientated on one single branch of industry.¹¹ Such communities – not more than settlements in their earliest form – developed in the Low Countries at places where sea or land offered the possibility to gain an income and thus to survive. Fishing communities were an obvious form of *occupational communities*, but settlements of peat-cutters could also be mentioned. Before 1400, shipmasters in such coastal communities hardly participated in the international goods trade.

Gradually (mostly after 1400), an increase in transport services for estuarine and coastal shipping can be observed in villages where the local production of fish, dairy or peat was the main occupation. A similar rise also occurred in a growing number of urban centres, where the economy was driven by the local production of goods and the development of regional distribution functions.¹² A process of labour division in the local community, facilitated by regional economic development, on one hand, and the rise of international maritime trade, on the other, formed the basis of these developments. In the case of *occupational communities* with an intrinsic transport need, such as the aforementioned fishing communities and settlements in peat-digging areas, the emancipation of the transport function was a logical possible outcome of the division of labour. Paraphrasing De Vries, one could describe this process as the transition from *subsistence* transport, which merely existed for the benefit of the local community, to *commercial* transport, that was not

⁹ W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit.

¹⁰ The following sections are based on *Ibid.*, pp. 27-65; W. SCHELTJENS, *Het ontstaan van een geïntegreerde maritieme transportruimte in de Lage Landen, ca. 1300-1800*, in "Revue belge de la Philologie et d'Histoire", 92, 2014, pp. 293-365.

¹¹ Based on: A. DE WIT, *Leven, werken en geloven in zeevarende gemeenschappen: Schiedam, Maassluis en Ter Heijde in de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam 2008, p. 15.

¹² Cf. H.J. SMIT, *Het Kamper Pondtolregister van 1439-1441*, in "Economisch-historisch Jaarboek: bijdragen tot de economische geschiedenis van Nederland", 5, 1919, pp. 209-296 there 211-212.

only at the disposal of the local community, but could also be hired by ‘third parties’. However, this outcome must not be understood in black-and-white terms. For centuries to come, the professional activities of commercial transporters would still be characterised by *pluriactivité*, or the combination of different income-seeking economic activities in the course of the year.¹³

Due to the emerging economic interaction with the surrounding areas, gradually the rural coastal communities became part of larger societal structures, which in turn facilitated the emergence of new ‘central places’, striving to confirm their regional dominance in the form of city rights. The emerging ‘central places’ brought about population growth and the development of a merchant class. For the most part, these merchants employed carriers from their own communities to execute interregional goods trade. However, geographical and technological circumstances allowing (i.e. if they had ships to do so), carriers from surrounding rural communities could participate in the interregional goods trade as well. Thus, rural communities could develop into full-fledged services suppliers.¹⁴

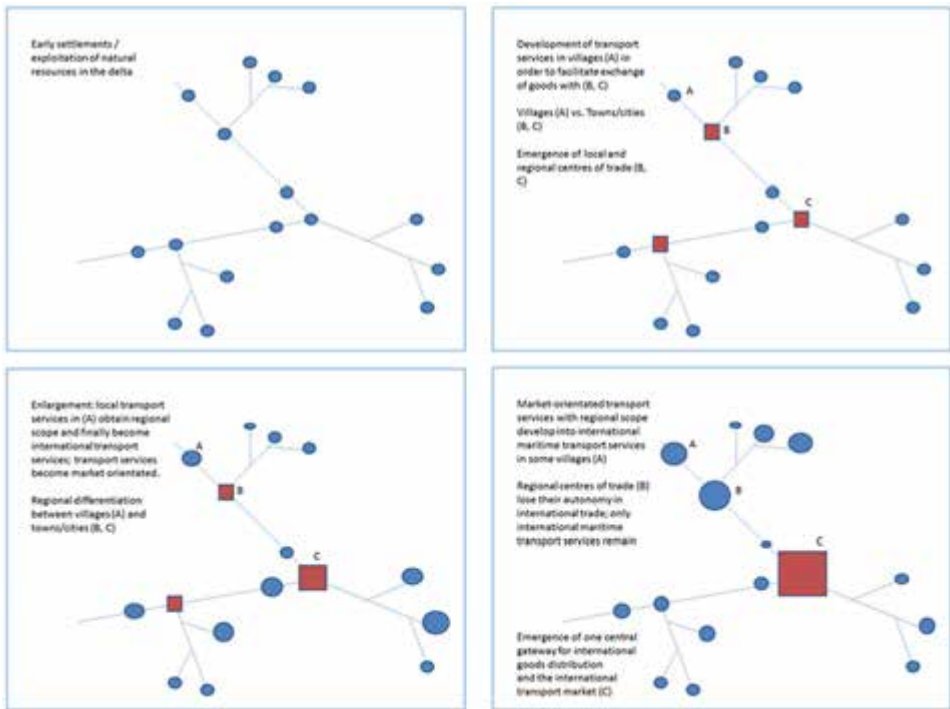
The period of urban development in the Low Countries in the late Middle Ages was followed by a period of infrastructural development. Cities remained the catalysts for the infrastructural changes. In the course of the sixteenth century, they started to function more and more as *gateways* for information,¹⁵ facilitating the establishment of more complex transport routes, which could be sailed by an increasing number of competing suppliers from the city and its rural surroundings. More and more, information and knowledge about markets and prices (of goods and services), as well as about the supply and quality of transport services, accumulated in cities. The informative function of cities had significant impact on the further evolution of the relationship between cities and rural areas and of the Dutch maritime transport sector. Maritime transporters from rural coastal communities, which had been attracted to cities in the wake of increasing demand for the rural area’s produce, now became active on shipping routes, which were no longer linked to their domicile. The ties between trade networks and transport systems loosened and an ‘autonomous’ maritime transport market started to emerge.

¹³ On the notion *pluriactivité* and its meaning in maritime-historical research, see: *Entre terre et mer. Sociétés littorales et pluriactivités (XVe – XXe siècle)*, G. LE BOUÉDEC, F. PILOUX, C. CÉRINO, A. GEISTDOERFER eds, Rennes 2004; T. SAUZEAU, *La pluriactivité des marins du long cours au XVIIIe siècle*, in “Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l’Ouest”, 120, 2013, pp. 65-78.

¹⁴ F. KETNER, *Handel en scheepvaart van Amsterdam in de vijftiende eeuw*, Leiden 1946, pp. 97-100.

¹⁵ C. LESGER, *Handel in Amsterdam ten tijde van de Opstand. Kooplieden, commerciële expansie en verandering in de ruimtelijke economie van de Nederlanden ca. 1550-ca. 1630*, Hilversum 2001, pp. 209-249; P. STABEL, *Dwarfs among Giants: the Flemish urban network in the Late Middle Ages*, Leuven-Apeldoorn 1997, pp. 137-175.

Fig. 1. Model for the emergence of a maritime transport sector



Based on: W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit., pp. 33, 37, 42 and 51

The period of infrastructural development reached its peak around 1650. Amsterdam and Rotterdam started to dominate the urban relations in the Dutch Republic and “many functions previously executed by the whole urban area” now shifted to these centres.¹⁶ The continuous development of Amsterdam and later Rotterdam into centres of European freight distribution found expression in population growth and in the increasing accessibility of these cities.¹⁷ Because of the dominance of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, rural communities and secondary cities in the same region gradually lost their autonomy in the organisation of international trade.¹⁸ This led to the final division between transport systems and trade networks. Secondary cities lost their independence as information centres for trade and

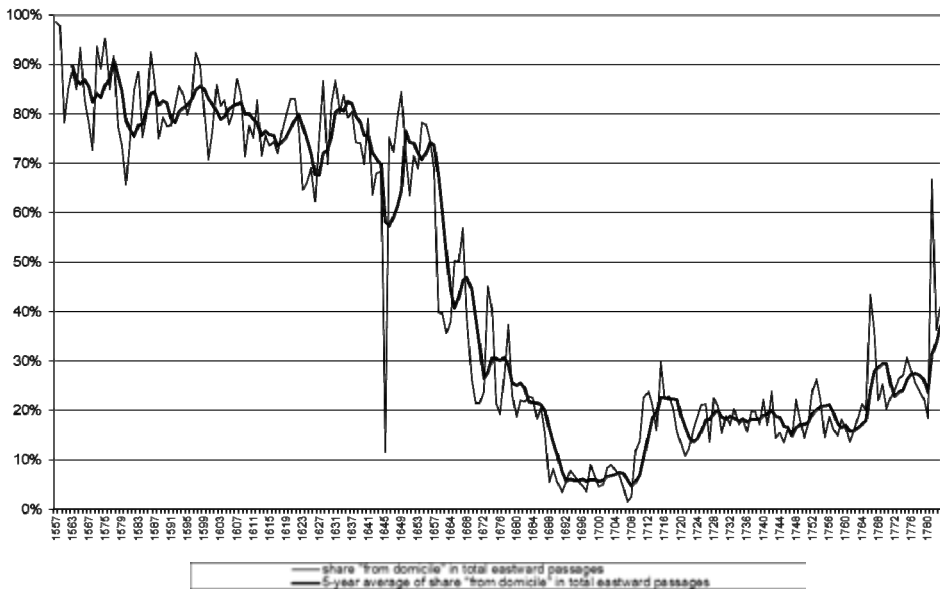
¹⁶ M. T HART, *De Nederlandse Republiek en de betekenis van steden*, in *Een wonder weerspiegeld: de Nederlandse Republiek in Europees perspectief*, K. DAVIDS, J. LUCASSEN eds, Amsterdam 2005, pp. 53-89 there 71.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁸ This shift is part of a broader process situated in the first half of the eighteenth century, of which the contours already became visible in the second half of the seventeenth century. See: *Ibid.*, p. 71.

transport. Their place was taken by one central *gateway*. Whereas at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the developing *gateway* system still had the form of a limited number of regional ‘meeting points’ of trade networks and transport systems, around 1700, the role of the remaining *gateway* had evolved to that of a single ‘meeting point’ of trade networks and transport systems for large coastal regions. This is clearly visible in the evolution of the share of shipmasters passing the Sound from their domicile in eastern direction between 1557 and 1800¹⁹.

Graph 1. Sound passages in eastward direction by Dutch shipmasters. Share of departures from their own domicile vs. total number of eastward passages



Source: *Tabeller over Skibsfart og varetransport gennem Oresund 1497-1660, I: Tabeller over Skibsfarten*, cit.; *Tabeller over Skibsfart og varetransport gennem Oresund 1661-1783 og gennem Storebaelt 1701-1748, I: Tabeller over Skibsfarten*, cit.; STRO. Graph published in W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit., p. 49.

Until 1660, circa 80% of all Dutch shipmasters left for the Baltic from their own domicile. Between 1660 and 1700 a complete turnaround occurred. Around 1700, only 5% of all Dutch shipmasters departed from their own domicile (see graph 1). The larger part of the shipmasters departed from Amsterdam, the only remaining *gateway* in the Zuiderzee. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the

¹⁹ *Tabeller over Skibsfart og varetransport gennem Oresund 1497-1660, I: Tabeller over Skibsfarten*, N. ELLINGER BANG, K. KORST eds., Copenhagen-Leipzig 1922; *Tabeller over Skibsfart og varetransport gennem Oresund 1661-1783 og gennem Storebaelt 1701-1748, I: Tabeller over Skibsfarten*, N. ELLINGER BANG, K. KORST eds., Copenhagen-Leipzig 1930.

share of shipmasters leaving from their own domicile to the Sound would stabilize at 15% to 20%. These developments obviously had consequences for the scale of the maritime transport sector in secondary cities and rural areas. Shipmasters of secondary cities, who originally served the carrying trade of their own city, lost their own, locally organised transport market due to the structural changes after 1660. Operational specialisation – or specialisation in the trade on certain routes and the transportation of certain goods – caused an absolute decline in this case. Possibly, the decline was strengthened by *business life cycle*-patterns, where the maritime transport sector was replaced by another business activity in bad times and thus could disappear within one generation. This, however, was less of a problem for the central *gateways*, as they had a much more diversified services supply. Similarly, for rural shipmasters, the change was not necessarily dramatic. The transport market moved, but their activities stayed the same, namely: supplying services to ‘third parties’, who (mostly) did not come from their own domicile. In this case, operational specialisation could have a positive effect. Indeed, several rural maritime transport communities were able to build a strong position in the international cargo trade on certain routes. However, as was the case with secondary cities, operational specialisation could also have a negative effect. The needs of the *gateway*, and the fulfilment of these needs, which was bounded by economic-political and physical-geographical circumstances, determined the routes and goods of the maritime transport communities serving this *gateway*. When changes occurred in the market, either due to long-term changes or because of external *shocks*, rural maritime transport communities quickly lost their market position.²⁰ When the spatial structure of an international trade network, in which a maritime transport community had taken up its place as services provider, changed under the influence of economic-political or physical-geographical factors, that maritime transport community was the first to suffer the consequences. When a domestic trade network, out of which a maritime transport community had developed, declined, the maritime transport community would also start to decline.

Based, among other sources, on the relatively dense information provided by the Sound Toll Registers Online (further: STRO),²¹ the ‘Dutch case’ has shown that shipmasters organized and executed their business in a particular spatial and temporal context, often recurring to collective strategies. Shipmasters’ movement trajectories were never truly unique nor isolated: exogenous as well as endogenous factors influence their occurrence and allow these trajectories to change over time. The exogenous factors comprise the political, economic and environmental framework in which the movement takes place. Disturbances such as bad harvests, warfare or blockade provoked temporary adaptations in the routes of shipmasters, but could also lead to permanent changes in the shipmasters’ operational strategies. The endogenous factors comprise the direct societal surroundings of the shipmaster, i.e. his environment of fellow masters from the same cluster, which exerted a signifi-

²⁰ For a case study on the Dutch grain trade in the eighteenth century, see: W. SCHELTJENS, *The Changing geography of demand for Dutch maritime transport in the eighteenth century*, in “Histoire & Mesure”, XXVII, 2012, pp. 3-47.

²¹ www.soundtoll.nl

cant influence on the choice of routes and cargo specialization of the individual shipmaster. Informal ‘rules of the game’ played a decisive role in the emergence, growth and decline of specialized maritime transport communities in the Low Countries. In the end, communities of maritime transporters could turn out to be more or less efficient, when dealing with external shocks and disturbances.

Tab. 1. Key data about the maritime transport communities of Groningen and Pekela

Period	Groningen					Pekela				
	TOT	3rd A	HR	HP	A'dam	TOT	3rd A	HR	HP	A'dam
1670-79	1	100%	0%							
1680-89	4	81%	19%	100%	68%					
1690-99	4	96%	4%	100%	94%					
1700-09	4	86%	14%	100%	86%					
1710-19										
1720-29	15	65%	35%	96%	52%					
1730-39	15	41%	59%	97%	28%					
1740-49	23	71%	29%	97%	52%	1	100%	0%		
1750-59	41	76%	24%	82%	51%					
1760-69	116	71%	29%	87%	36%	8	83%	17%	35%	51%
1770-79	132	67%	33%	78%	45%	62	68%	32%	56%	49%
1780-89	124	70%	30%	37%	42%	140	83%	17%	14%	57%
1790-99	119	78%	22%	44%	34%	161	89%	11%	16%	63%
1800-09	43	79%	21%	16%	46%	41	75%	25%	17%	67%
1810-19	95	90%	10%	71%	44%	121	89%	11%	7%	52%
1820-29	91	95%	5%	73%	38%	162	95%	5%	5%	37%
1830-39	89	9%	11%	69%	38%	225	97%	3%	7%	38%
1840-49	116	84%	16%	92%	35%	276	96%	4%	2%	35%
1850-56	138	92%	8%	90%	18%	387	97%	2%	4%	21%

Based on STRO. Legend: TOTAL = 10-year average of the total number of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Groningen or Pekela; 3rd A = share of passages to or from other areas than the homeregion (HR) of the shipmaster (here: Province of Groningen); HP = share of passages to the homeport of the shipmaster (as share of HR); A'dam = share of passages to or from the selected maritime transport communities' gateway (here: Amsterdam).

The ‘Dutch case’ contains different scenarios describing the rise and decline of maritime transport services clusters in the wake of changes in the structure of international trade networks or the regional economy. Some key data about two communities of the maritime transport services cluster in the north-eastern part of

the Netherlands, the city of Groningen and the peat-digging settlement of Pekela, show how structural changes in the regional economy could have a positive or a negative effect, provoking the rise of maritime transport services clusters in some areas and their decline in other. Additionally, a survey of long-term changes in the composition of the maritime transport community of the Frisian town of Hindeloopen between 1670 and 1790, based on information gathered from STRO, allows describing the impact of exogenous and endogenous factors on the rise and decline of one single maritime transport community.

The key data for the maritime transport community of the city of Groningen show (see Table 1):

- The transport community's rise from 1740 onwards, a period of decline during the first decades of the nineteenth century and then recovery from 1840 onwards. The 10-year averages of the number of passages through the Danish Sound by masters domiciled in the city of Groningen are indicative of the community's long-term development.

- The increasing share of transportation on routes that do not depart from or are destined to the home region of the masters, i.e. the Province of Groningen. This increase is shown as the 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Groningen, which depart from or are destined to 'third areas'.

- The long-term decline in the share of the *gateway* Amsterdam as one of the Groningen masters main destinations. The decline is visible in the 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Groningen, which depart from or were destined to Amsterdam.

- The decline of the home region (i.e. the Province of Groningen) as region of departure or destination in the shipping patterns of masters domiciled in the city of Groningen. The decline is apparent in the 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Groningen, which depart from or were destined to their own home region. The share of the homeport signifies the part of the transport services departing from or destined to the home region, which went to the shipmaster's domicile.

Similarly, the key data for the maritime transport community of the peat-digging settlement of Pekela show (see table 1):

- The transport community's rise from 1740 onwards, a short period of decline during the first decade of the nineteenth century, and sustained growth from 1810 onwards. The 10-year averages of the number of passages through the Danish Sound by masters domiciled in Pekela are indicative of the community's long-term development.

- The predominant share of transportation on routes that do not depart from or are destined to the home region of the masters, i.e. the Province of Groningen. The 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Pekela, which depart from or are destined to 'third areas' and do not call at ports in the home region, was high from the start and continued to increase well into the nineteenth century.

- The long-term decline in the share of the *gateway* Amsterdam as one of the Pekela masters main destinations. The 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Pekela, which depart from or were destined to Amsterdam shows this decline. As with Groningen, the decline starts in the second decade of the nineteenth century, when Amsterdam had definitively lost its previous position to competitors in the North Sea area, such as Rotterdam and Antwerp.

- The decline of the home region (i.e. the Province of Groningen) as region of departure or destination in the shipping patterns of shipmasters domiciled in Pekela. The decline is apparent in the 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Pekela, which depart from or were destined to their own home region. The share of the homeport signifies the part of the transport services departing from or destined to the home region, which went to the shipmaster's domicile.

Groningen and Pekela provide fine examples of the emergence of maritime transport services locations in rural coastal areas with a close connection to a major gateway for international trade (i.e. Amsterdam). In the case of Pekela, the settlement developed from scratch; in the case of Groningen, the small degree of autonomy of secondary cities can be readily observed. In both Pekela and Groningen, the intimate relation between regional economic structure and the supply of maritime transport services is clear. In Pekela, the emergence of the maritime transport sector coincided with rapid peat production increases, the development of a canal infrastructure for its distribution and the rapid growth of the demand for peat in Amsterdam and other major commercial centres in the Dutch Republic (see graph 2)²². The sustained growth of maritime transport services in Pekela, however, went hand in hand with the decline of peat production in the first half of the nineteenth century. During this phase, transportation services seem to have obtained greater value as a means to survive. Quite literally, the transport sector became detached from its origins.

Throughout the early modern period, shipmasters from Hindeloopen were the Dutch Republic's most famous timber transporters.²³ Operating mostly on behalf of merchants and entrepreneurs in North Holland, shipmasters from Hindeloopen transported large quantities of timber from Norway to Amsterdam since the sixteenth century.²⁴ The reputation built up by the local community of shipmasters triggered further specialisation in ship type, route and cargo.²⁵ For a significant period, shipmasters from Hindeloopen were considered 'the best in the business'; their knowledge and skill was recognised far beyond community borders. As a rule, the reputation of a local population of shipmasters was based on a small set of very

²² M.A.W. GERDING, *Vier eeuwen turfwinning: De verveningen in Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe en Overijssel tussen 1550 en 1950*, Utrecht 1995, pp. 69-71.

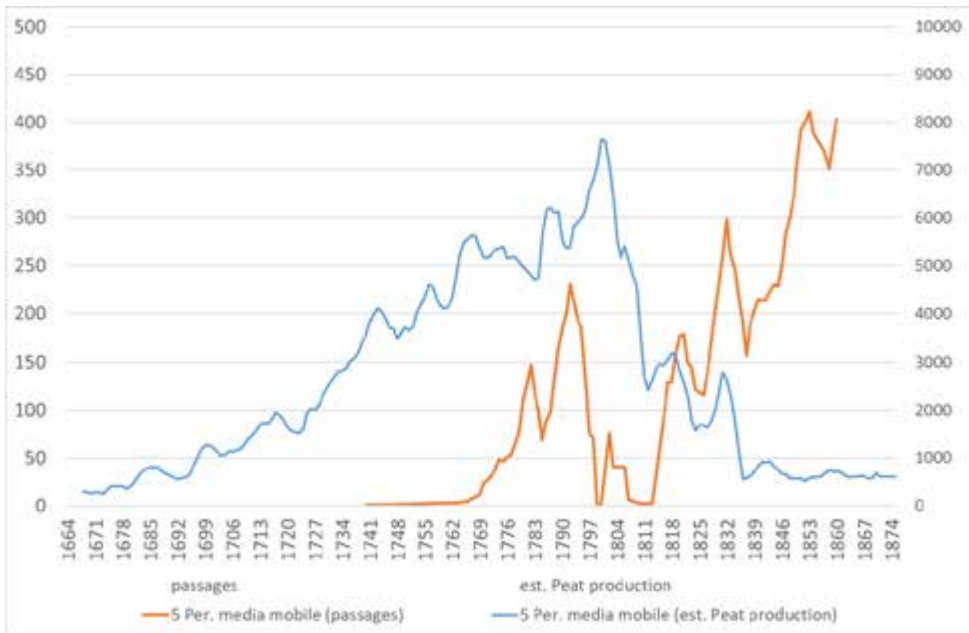
²³ S. LOOTSMA, *De Zeevaart van Hindeloopen in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*, in "Economisch-Historisch Jaarboek", 21, 1940, pp. 218-296.

²⁴ E. BOSSE, *Norwegens Volkswirtschaft vom Ausgang der Hansaperiode bis zur Gegenwart mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der internationalen Handelsbeziehungen. Erster Teil*, Jena 1916, pp. 87-94.

²⁵ For details, see W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit., pp. 146-154.

specific (repeated) actions. The primary effect of their successful implementation in daily operational practice was one of expansion: newcomers ('new' in graph 3), adhering to local institutions, made the existing population of shipmasters ('known' in graph 3) grow.

Graph 2. Peat production (right axis, in morgen) and maritime transport services (left-axis, in number of passages through the Danish Sound) in Pekela, 1664-1871



Based on STRO and M.A.W. GERDING, *Vier eeuwen turfwinning: De verveningen in Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe en Overijssel tussen 1550 en 1950*, cit.

Graph 3. Long-term development of the population of shipmasters of Hindeloopen, 1670-1790



Based on STRO. Published in W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas*, cit., p. 152.

This growth was accomplished within a locally endorsed framework of action. Within such local population of shipmasters, the chances to develop an alternative range of maritime transport activities successfully, parallel to the one in which the community had obtained its reputation were small. Indeed, both the process of emergence of a local community and that of its further development were highly path dependent. This, in turn, made local communities vulnerable to changing circumstances in commodity streams or in the community of shipmasters itself. When dramatic changes occurred in the supply of timber from Norway and new timber outlets were sought in the Baltic in the last decades of the seventeenth century, shipmasters from Hindeloopen were able to respond to this geographic supply shift and became the dominant transporters on the routes between the eastern Baltic (Narva, Vyborg, Riga, etc.) and the Dutch Republic in the first half of the eighteenth century.²⁶ Apparently, at that time, their reputation and skill was strong enough to deal with such significant changes.

Inevitably, at some point, saturation was reached. For the shipmasters of Hindeloopen this happened in the late 1730s. There was less and less room for new-

²⁶ T. LINDBLAD, *Dutch Trade in Narva in the Eighteenth Century*, in *Around Peter the Great: Three Centuries of Russian-Dutch Relations*, C. HORSTMEIER et al. eds, Groningen 1997, pp. 103-114.

comers (see graph 3) and specialisation became a negative factor for the maritime transport sector in the local community. In short, shipmasters' communities provided an informal framework for knowledge acquisition and exchange. Membership of the community was vital. It could have a positive effect, when community membership supported an increase in the benefits of competitive advantage, and a negative effect, when membership led to negative lock-in, leading to the fossilization of the community.

2. COMPARISON

Several questions arise with regard to the 'Dutch case'. Are the developments outlined above representative for other rural coastal areas as well? After all, the Dutch Republic was a 'modern' economy,²⁷ which may have preconditioned the birth of a maritime transport sector along its shores. Can the empirical findings about the 'Dutch case' be generalized to serve as theoretical framework for the emergence of maritime transport services clusters in preindustrial Europe? At first sight, the 'Dutch case' seems to comply rather well with the research results of a number of maritime historians, who have addressed the emergence of maritime transport services clusters in specific areas and locations across Europe in preindustrial times. However, the historiography of maritime transport services clusters in preindustrial Europe is unevenly divided. The 'Dutch case' has benefited from a relative abundance of previous research and quantitative data, especially with regard to Dutch transport and trade with the Baltic. Contrastingly, many rural coastal areas seem to have been largely neglected so far, whereas others have been the subject of different kinds of historical research, in which the areas' economic geography plays a secondary role. Moreover, historiographical interest in different aspects of the maritime transport business (seamen, *cabotage*, etc.) and rural coastal areas in preindustrial times takes many different forms, depending on its scientific context. In France, for example, where research on rural coastal areas (*les littorales*) and the societies making a living there is perhaps embedded more strongly in academia than anywhere else in Europe, the socio-cultural approach prevails. In many cases, one small area, one region, or even one place stands in focus, of which all different aspects of social and cultural life related to the sea are described. Often, much attention is paid to the lives and life cycles of 'maritime people' inhabiting rural areas across the French coastline and specialist terminology has been proposed to describe these people as members of a 'special class' of 'gens de mer', 'entrepreneurs de mer' or just 'marins'.²⁸ In short, French historiography of the littoral societies has produced an impressive body of micro-historical 'histoires totales' of small coastal areas and places and their inhabitants, but it has not been concerned with

²⁷ Cf. J. DE VRIES, A. VAN DER WOUDE, *Nederland 1500-1815. De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei*, Amsterdam 1995 [English version: *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815*, Cambridge 1997].

²⁸ E.g. *Entrepreneurs des mers. Capitaines et marinières du XVIe au XIXe siècle*, G. BUTI, L. LO BASSO, O. RAVEUX eds, Paris 2017; G. LE BOUËDEC, *Les Bretons sur les mers*, Rennes 1999; T. SAUZEAU, *Les marins de la Seudre, entre sel charentais et sucre antillais, XVIIIe-XIXe siècle*, La Crèche 2005.

the economic geography of the French (Atlantic and Mediterranean) coastline in the larger context of the European (maritime) economy.

Based on a comparison of the 'Dutch case' with descriptive accounts of the maritime transport sector in South-West France and South-West Sweden, this paper hopes to obtain a more diverse insight into the contribution and role of rural coastal areas and their urban *gateways* as catalysts for the rise and decline of regional maritime transport services clusters in the preindustrial European economy.

3. SOUTH-WEST FRANCE

A recent analysis of the role of Brittany (Fr. Bretagne) in the Bordeaux wine trade in the eighteenth century²⁹ has highlighted the characteristic features of the maritime transport services sector in a large coastal region stretching from the westernmost point of Brittany to the mouth of the Gironde. The regional economy was dominated by the wine trade from the Bordeaux area, on one hand, and the supply of sardines, oysters and Breton textiles as return cargoes, on the other. The main port in the commercial system of South-West France was Bordeaux; secondary centres of supra-regional commercial activity were Nantes, Lorient and, to some extent, Redon and Brest. Moreover, two ports further north, Morlaix and Saint-Malo, had strong connections with the wine trade in South-West France. These ports were described by Kimizuka as 'ports de commandement' and 'ports-donneurs d'ordre', which indicates that information about trade and transport accumulated in these ports; they served as regional markets for the supply of transport services. In Kimizuka's analysis, the focus lies on regional coastal traffic in South-West France, or *cabotage*, which was practiced by a large number of rural coastal communities depicted as "ports de service".

Kimizuka's survey reveals the existence of three regional cabotage services clusters: Blaye, Roque-de-Thau and Plassac (Estuary of the Gironde), the Côte des Abers and the Golfe du Morbihan³⁰. Moreover, the different attitudes of secondary ports and the impact of operational specialisation on these services clusters are revealed. Insofar as the attitudes of secondary ports is concerned, the predominance of Bordeaux increases in the course of the eighteenth century and provokes defensive reactions in the secondary ports. The latter, insofar as the size of their local *cabotage* fleet allowed them to do so, tried to keep the organisation of transportation services in their own hands. This was the case in Landerneau and Concarneau, who delivered local produce to Bordeaux in exchange for wine. However, the position of the secondary port of Redon was different: it did not have a large local *cabotage* fleet and, therefore, had to accept the services of surrounding small ports for its commercial activities.³¹ Regarding the impact of operational specialisation on transport services locations in South-West France, Kimizuka makes an interesting distinction between straightforward sailing on regular routes (*rotations régulières*), on

²⁹ H. KIMIZUKA, *Bordeaux et la Bretagne au XVIIIe siècle. Les routes du vin*, Rennes 2015.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 136; 147-155.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

one hand, and *tramping*, on the other. He argues that, in practice, both types of operations were combined and that both reveal the continued dependence on the Bordeaux wine trade as the driving force of the activities of *caboteurs* in South-West France.³²

Whereas Kimizuka's analysis identifies the different functions of ports in a regional system, but provides only scarce information about changes to it, the micro-historical research of Thierry Sauzeau has highlighted the impact of changes in regional economic structure and international trade networks on the maritime services locations in the Marennes, North of the Gironde.³³ Rather than maintaining a focus on shipmasters, like in the "Dutch case" or Kimizuka's analysis, Sauzeau deals with 'gens de mer' in general, i.e. with anyone engaged in maritime life in the rural coastal area depicted as Marennes. Significantly, Sauzeau shows the impact of exogenous and endogenous factors on the dynamics of maritime services in the Marennes between 1760 and 1860. In particular, he highlights the negative impact of the French revolution as external factor³⁴ and of *recul social* in the wake of a reorientation of Bordeaux' commerce towards the slave trade as an endogenous factor.³⁵ In the end, both factors provoked the reorientation of the 'gens de mer' of Marennes to novel activities such as the cultivation of oysters.

4. SOUTH-WEST SWEDEN

Every time, when the herring swarms 'suddenly' came to the shores of South-West Sweden, a rural coastal region with Göteborg and a number of smaller staple towns (Kungälv, Marstrand, Strömstad, Uddevalla) as its main urban centres, the entire region seems to have turned into a 'place-to-be' for fortune seekers. For as long as the herring was abundant in its coastal waters, South-West Sweden turned into a vital and attractive centre of economic activity. However, when the herring period came to a close and fisheries became less and less rewarding, the coastal region declined rapidly and went back to its previous state, waiting for the herring to return. Nine so-called 'Bohuslän herring periods', named after a Swedish province in South-West Sweden, have been identified in the past 1000 years, each of them lasting for several decades and followed by an interval period of 50 or more years.³⁶

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163.

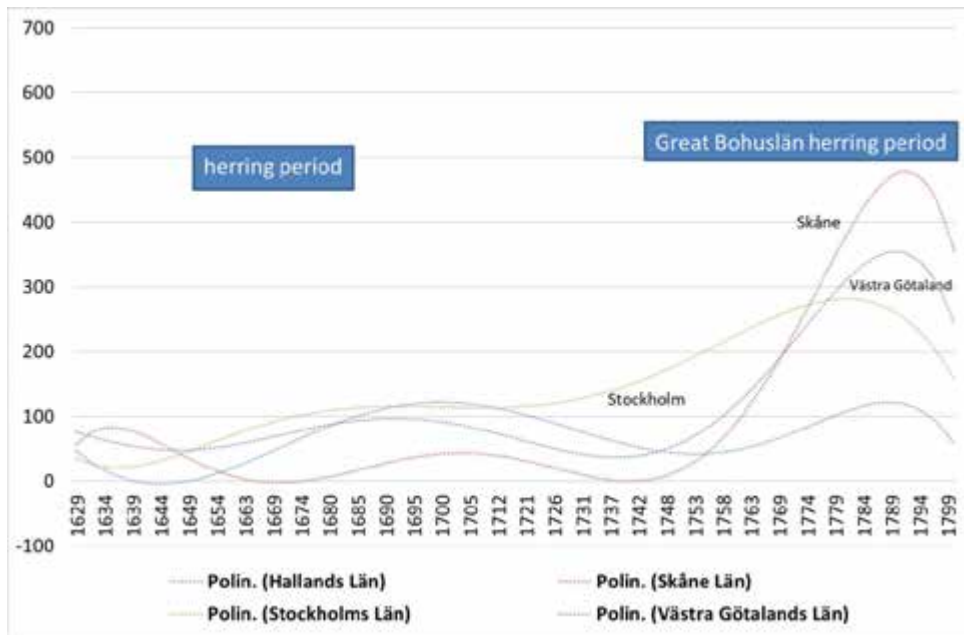
³³ T. SAUZEAU, *Les gens de mer du quartier de Marennes et l'institution des invalides de la Marine (milieu XVIIIe-milieu XIXe siècle)*, in "Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest", 120, 2013, pp. 179-192.

³⁴ IDEM, *Les marins*, cit., p. 42.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-32.

³⁶ J. ALHEIT, E. HAGEN, *Long-term climate forcing of European herring and sardine populations*, in "Fisheries Oceanography", 6, 1997, pp. 130-139.

Graph 4. Sound passages by Swedish shipmasters, 1629-1799 (polynomial trend)



Based on STRO.

Registrations of ships passing through the Danish Sound (in either direction) between 1629 and 1799 show clear increases in the activities of shipmasters from South-West Sweden during the herring periods of the latter part of the seventeenth century (ca. 1660-1680 according to Alheit & Hagen 1997) and in the second half of the eighteenth century (1747-1809). Different coastal regions dominated these herring periods: next to a considerable number of masters from Stockholm and its surroundings, the coastal communities of *Hallands Län* dominated the seventeenth-century herring period. Because Swedish masters benefited from tax-freedom in the Sound between 1645 and 1710, the registered number of passages by Swedish masters remains artificially low during the seventeenth-century herring period. During the herring period of the second half of the eighteenth century, which is known as the 'Great' Bohuslän herring period and is one of the best-documented herring periods of the pre-modern world,³⁷ coastal communities in *Västra Götalands Län* and *Skåne Län* realized the largest annual number of passages through the Danish Sound.

The 'Great' Bohuslän herring period (1747-1809) differed from previous periods because of the Swedish government's conscious efforts to make the herring-

³⁷ A. CORTEN, *Herring and Climate: changes in the distribution of North Sea herring due to climate fluctuations*, Groningen 2001.

based economic prosperity last. The Swedes attempted to capitalize on the herring period by using it as a means for increasing commerce and navigation.³⁸ Several coastal communities in South-West Sweden experienced intensive migration and rapid population growth. The fortunes of the 'Great' herring period had a direct effect on the urbanization process in the region.³⁹ Small west-coast towns like Strömstad, Marstrand and Kungälv experienced spectacular demographic growth. In Uddevalla, the large influx of immigrants created particular health and safety issues, which urged the local authorities to elaborate extensive *Regulations for ports*, published in 1771.⁴⁰ All of these changes in the urban environment were driven by the *herring fever* that South-West Sweden experienced during the 'Great' Bohuslän herring period. The *fever* found support in novel commercial regulations, such as the *Complete Regulations for the North Sea fisheries* (1774), which stated that "the fisheries should no longer be hindered by granting royal privileges or monopolies to individuals"⁴¹. The incentives of the Swedish government, which tried to make the herring-related prosperity last, facilitated the emergence of a shipping services industry in South-West Sweden during the 'Great' Bohuslän herring period. Gradually, the structure of shipping services started to change from short-track transportation of local natural resources to regular long-haul traffic between the Baltic, the Southern Atlantic coast and the Mediterranean.⁴²

Key data for the maritime transport community of Torekov, a coastal village in South-West Sweden (see table 2), show:

- The transport community's rise from 1750 onwards and a peak between 1770 and 1800. The 10-year averages of the number of passages through the Danish Sound by masters domiciled in Torekov are indicative of the transport community's long-term development.

- The predominant share of transportation on routes that do not depart from or are destined to the home region of the masters, i.e. South-West Sweden. The 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Torekov, which depart from or are destined to 'third areas' and do not call at ports in the home region, was more than 50% from 1750 onwards and continued to increase during the rest of the eighteenth century.

³⁸ A.V. LJUNGMAN, *The Great Bohuslän herring-fisheries*, in "Report of the Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries", IX, 1878, pp. 220-239.

³⁹ S. LILJA, *Small Towns in the periphery: population and economy of small towns in Sweden and Finland during the early-modern period*, in *Small Towns in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. P. CLARK, Cambridge 1995, pp. 60-76 there 60.

⁴⁰ A.V. LJUNGMAN, *The Great*, cit., p. 234.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁴² On the rise of Scandinavian shipping in the second half of the eighteenth century, see: H.C. JOHANSEN, *Scandinavian Shipping in the late eighteenth century in a European perspective*, in "The Economic History Review", New Series, 45, 1992, pp. 479-493.

Tab. 2. Key data about the maritime transport communities of Torekov

Period	TOTAL	3rd A	HR	HP	Gothenburg
1700-09	2	100%	0%		
1710-19					
1720-29	3	11%	89%	25%	43%
1730-39	24	62%	38%	8%	23%
1740-49	7	26%	74%	6%	50%
1750-59	16	56%	44%	20%	56%
1760-69	10	51%	49%	6%	64%
1770-79	61	67%	33%	7%	66%
1780-89	118	74%	26%	7%	65%
1790-99	84	80%	20%	6%	63%
1800-09	28	85%	15%	1%	74%
1810-19	7	61%	39%	7%	72%
1820-29	12	68%	32%	6%	37%
1830-39	5	71%	29%	17%	44%
1840-49	8	37%	63%	33%	0%
1850-56	10	8%	92%	62%	15%

Based on STRO. Legenda: TOTAL = 10-year average of the total number of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Torekov; 3rd A = share of passages to or from other areas than the homeregion (HR) of the shipmaster (here: South-West Sweden); HP = share of passages to the homeport of the shipmaster (as share of HR); Gothenburg = share of passages to or from the selected maritime transport communities' gateway (here: Gothenburg).

- The long-term increase in the share of the *gateway* Göteborg as one of Torekov masters' main destinations. The high share throughout the second half of the eighteenth century is followed by a sharp decline after 1800. The rise and decline are shown as the 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Torekov, which depart from or were destined to Göteborg.

- The decline of the home region (i.e. South-West Sweden) as region of departure or destination in the shipping patterns of shipmasters domiciled in Torekov during the 'Great' Bohuslän herring period and its recovery in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the community of Torekov itself had lost its significance. The decline is shown as the 10-year average share of passages through the Danish Sound by shipmasters domiciled in Torekov, which depart from or were destined to their own home region. The share of the homeport signifies the part of the transport services departing from or destined to the home region, which went to the shipmaster's domicile.

Torekov provides another fine example of impact of changes in the regional economic structure and in the structure of international trade on the emergence and functioning of maritime transport services clusters in rural coastal areas with a close connection to a major gateway for international trade.

CONCLUSIONS

The framework for the rise and decline of maritime transport services clusters in preindustrial Europe, which has been developed based on the 'Dutch case' and tested based on a historiographical survey, is deemed relevant for two reasons. First, it was shown that, in rural coastal areas, maritime transport services emerged as a result of a preceding process of specialisation, which replaced 'subsistence' transportation of the community's own production with 'market' transportation, or the delivery of transport services to any interested 'third' party. These transport services could obtain a truly maritime character. As time went by, many maritime transport businesses tended to fossilize in their specific market strategies. They declined and, eventually, they became obsolete when the spatial structure of production, consumption and trade changed. Others managed to move into a phase of sustained spatial integration. It was shown that the recurrent development pattern in which 'subsistence' transportation is replaced with 'market' transportation, and 'market' transportation could lead to maritime transportation services and the emergence of regional maritime transport services clusters, can generate different outcomes under different conditions. As such, the theoretical framework based on the 'Dutch case' provides a promising and original starting point for the assessment of the economic resilience of rural coastal regions in preindustrial Europe. In this context, the 'acquisition of agency' seems to play a pivotal role as driving force for the local emergence of maritime transport services in rural coastal areas. Second, the framework addresses the dominant epistemology of space, which neglects the role of littoral regions in early modern globalization and assumes that these regions were home to static, closed and underdeveloped societies. As such, it tries to overcome the limitations of current research on littoral regions, which focuses on selected areas with a very clear set of characteristics, one of which is their intimate relation with the sea, but does not offer an overarching view in which the dynamics of littoral regions are put in a broader context of regional economic development and changing structures of international trade.

Maria Ryabova

*Venetian Trading Firm of the Soranzo Brothers (1406-1434)
and Its Commercial Network**

1. INTRODUCTION. VENETIAN STUDIES AND THE NETWORK PARADIGM

Over the last few decades the range of research strategies available to historians has been considerably broadened thanks to the adoption of methods employed in other branches of science. These include but are not limited to the methodology of social network analysis (SNA), which has been developed by sociologists since mid-1950s and is based on the concept of social structure as a system of ties linking various social actors.¹ When applied to economic history, such an approach means shifting the focus of attention from individual economic entities, i.e., households, companies, banks, governments, etc., to the relationships existing between them.² The relevance of network analysis to this research field has been convincingly demonstrated in a number of studies drawing upon material from diverse chronological periods, geographical areas, and cultural settings.³ Recent publications by Francisco Apellániz,⁴ Andrea Caracausi,⁵ Stefania Montemezzo,⁶ and other scholars⁷ attest to the idea that the use of such methodology can be particularly appro-

* This research is prepared with the support of the Russian Science Foundation (Agreement № 14–28–00213 between the Russian Science Foundation and the Lomonosov Moscow State University).

¹ M. EMIRBAYER, J. GOODWIN, *Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency*, in “American Journal of Sociology”, 99, 1994, n. 6, pp. 1411-1454 (1411-1412); B.H. ERICKSON, *Social Networks and History: A Review Essay*, in “Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History”, 30, 1997, n. 3, pp. 149-157 (149); P.J. CARRINGTON, J. SCOTT, *Introduction*, in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, J. SCOTT, P.J. CARRINGTON eds., London 2011 (SAGE Publications), pp. 1-8.

² A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE, *Introduction*, in *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE eds., London 2014 (Pickering & Chatto, Perspectives in Economic and Social History), pp. 1-12 (4).

³ See bibliography in: *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5, 241-243.

⁴ F. APELLÁNIZ, *Venetian Trading Networks in the Medieval Mediterranean*, in “Journal of Interdisciplinary History”, 44, 2013, n. 2, pp. 157-179.

⁵ A. CARACAUSI, *The Wool Trade, Venice and the Mediterranean Cities at the End of the Sixteenth Century*, in *Commercial Networks and European Cities*, cit., pp. 201-222.

⁶ S. MONTEMEZZO, *Galley Routes and Merchant Networks between Venice and the North Sea in the Fifteenth Century*, in *Commercial Networks and European Cities*, cit., pp. 153-169.

⁷ G. CHRIST, *Beyond the Network – Connectors of Networks: Venetian Agents in Cairo and Venetian News Management*, in *Everything is on the Move: The Mamluk Empire as a Node in (Trans-)Regional Networks*, ed. S. CONERMANN, Goettingen 2014 (V&R unipress; Bonn University Press), pp. 27-59; D. PUGA,

priate with regard to the history of medieval and early modern Venice. The network approach seems well-suited to certain features distinguishing the social and economic development of this city-state. For one thing, there is a long tradition of representing the Venetian Republic as a model of social harmony and social cohesion maintained by a competent, benevolent, and sagacious ruling class, i.e., the patriciate, which in its turn stood united in selfless patriotism and remained unaffected by internal strife, clashes of interests, or factional conflict.⁸ Although modern historians acknowledge the influence of the so-called “myth of Venice”⁹ on this picture, it is generally accepted that, unlike the feudal elite in the other states of Europe, the Venetian patriciate was organized horizontally rather than hierarchically, or, more precisely speaking, that it was characterized by stronger horizontal ties between vertically-oriented clans;¹⁰ its members shared the same set of rights, privileges, duties, and responsibilities, and thus even the doge, the formal head of the Republic, was considered merely first among equals.¹¹ Seeing as the narrative sources of Venetian origin normally emphasize the solidarity of nobles and deny the existence of factions or other similar groups within the patriciate, it falls to the present-day scholars to reveal the hidden patterns of social interaction,¹² and network analysis may prove itself instrumental in fulfilling this task.

The social idiosyncrasy of the Republic was matched by the peculiarity of its economic structure. While in Tuscany the commercial revolution of the late Middle Ages led to the emergence of large banking and mercantile companies with branch-

D. TREFLER, *International Trade and Institutional Change: Medieval Venice's Response to Globalization*, in “The Quarterly Journal of Economics”, 129, 2014, n. 2, pp. 753-821.

⁸ E. MUIR, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, Princeton, NJ 1981 (Princeton University Press), pp. 13-62; D.E. QUELLER, *The Venetian Patriciate: Reality versus Myth*, Urbana; Chicago, IL 1986 (University of Illinois Press), pp. 3-28; J. MARTIN, D. ROMANO, *Reconsidering Venice*, in *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797*, J. MARTIN, D. ROMANO eds., Baltimore, MD; London 2000 (Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 1-35.

⁹ See the previous note and the following: G. FASOLI, *Nascita di un mito*, in *Studi storici in onore di Giacobino Volpe*, I-II, Florence 1958 (Sansoni), I, pp. 445-479; F. GAETA, *Alcune considerazioni sul mito di Venezia*, in “Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance”, 23, 1961, n. 1, pp. 58-75; J.S. GRUBB, *When Myths Lose Power: Four Decades of Venetian Historiography*, in “The Journal of Modern History”, 58, 1986, n. 1, pp. 43-94; D. RAINES, *L'invention du mythe aristocratique: L'image de soi du patriciat vénitien au temps de la Sérénissime*, Venice 2006 (Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, Memorie, Classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti, vol. CXII), I.

¹⁰ S. CHOJNACKI, *Patrician Women in Early Renaissance Venice*, in “Studies in the Renaissance”, 21, 1974, pp. 176-203 (203), reprinted in: IDEM, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrician Society*, Baltimore, MD; London 2000 (Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 115-131 (131).

¹¹ R. FINLAY, *Politics in Renaissance Venice*, New Brunswick, NJ 1980 (Rutgers University Press), p. 123; E. MUIR, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, cit., p. 273.

¹² S. CHOJNACKI, *In Search of the Venetian Patriciate: Families and Factions in the Fourteenth Century*, in *Renaissance Venice*, J.R. HALE ed., London 1973 (Faber and Faber), pp. 47-90; D. ROMANO, *The Limits of Kinship: Family Politics, Vendetta, and the State in Fifteenth-Century Venice*, in *Venice and the Veneto during the Renaissance: the Legacy of Benjamin Kohl*, M. KNAPTON, J.E. LAW, A.A. SMITH eds., Florence 2014 (Firenze University Press, Reti Medievali E-Book, vol. 21), pp. 87-102. Available online at: URL: www.ebook.retimedievali.it, http://www.rm.unina.it/rmebook/index.php?mod=none_Legacy_Kohl (last accessed 31.03.2018).

es in the principal European centers of trade,¹³ the Venetian men of affairs adhered to more flexible organizational practices. Many of them were individual merchants relying on a complex web of commission agents, factors, and other intermediaries to conduct their operations.¹⁴ The word *compa(g)nia* (company) referred in the Venetian context to a joint venture, i.e., a short-term business association created in order to carry out a single project or undertaking, for instance, a commercial voyage. Given that a collaborative enterprise was usually liquidated at the end of this project, the arrangement normally lasted no more than a few years.¹⁵ The niche of a more permanent business entity was occupied by a *fraterna* (from the Latin *frater* – “brother”), or a family partnership comprising brothers who retained joint ownership of hereditary property after their father’s death. The sons of the late *pater familias* became members of such partnership by default unless they initiated the division procedure, therefore *fraterna* constituted not only the most common form of business organization in the Republic but also one of the basic units of the Venetian society.¹⁶ The social and economic functions performed by the family of this particular type were inextricable, and its internal structure mirrored that of the patriciate itself insofar as the brothers possessed equal shares of patrimony and had equal powers to administer joint property. The dynamic interaction between individual merchants, family partnerships, and short-term companies lay at the heart of the Venetian economy,¹⁷ enabling it to swiftly adapt both to the changing market conditions and to the shifts in the political situation. At the same time, the complexity and the fluidity of the resulting system impede the application of traditional historical methods in its study and suggest that the economic structure of the Venetian Republic would be more adequately interpreted in terms of network approach.

¹³ R. DE ROOVER, *The Organization of Trade*, in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe from the Decline of the Roman Empire*, I-VIII, Cambridge 1941-1989 (Cambridge University Press). Vol. 3: *Economic Organization and Policies in the Middle Ages*, M.M. POSTAN, E.E. RICH, E. MILLER eds., 2nd ed., Cambridge 1965, pp. 42-118 (70-88); E.S. HUNT, *The Medieval Super-companies: A Study of the Peruzzi Company of Florence*, Cambridge 1994 (Cambridge University Press).

¹⁴ F.C. LANE, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice, 1418-1449*, Baltimore, MD 1944 (Johns Hopkins Press), pp. 93-100; R. DE ROOVER, *The Organization of Trade*, cit., pp. 88-90.

¹⁵ F.C. LANE, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice*, cit., pp. 92-93; IDEM, *Family Partnerships and Joint Ventures*, in *Venice and History: The Collected Papers of Frederic C. Lane*, Edited by A Committee of Colleagues and Former Students, Foreword by Fernand Braudel, Baltimore, MD 1966 (Johns Hopkins Press), pp. 36-55 (44-52).

¹⁶ M. FERRO, *Dizionario del diritto comune e veneto*, 2^a ed., I-II, Venice 1845-1847, I, pp. 772-774; A. PERTILE, *Storia del diritto italiano dalla caduta dell'Impero romano alla codificazione*, 2^a ed. riveduta e migliorata, I-VI, Turin 1892-1902, III, pp. 282, 322; C. FUMAGALLI, *Il diritto di fraterna nella giurisprudenza da Accursio alla codificazione*, Turin 1912; E. BESTA, *La famiglia nella storia del diritto italiano*, Padua 1933 (reprint Milan 1962), pp. 43, 207-209; *Gli statuti veneziani di Jacopo Tiepolo del 1242 e le loro glosse*, ed. R. CESSI, Venice 1938, pp. 124-125 (Lib. 3, cap. IIII); F.C. LANE, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice*, cit., pp. 87-90; IDEM, *Family Partnerships and Joint Ventures*, cit., pp. 37-44.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-54.

2. LIMITATIONS OF NETWORK ANALYSIS IN MEDIEVAL STUDIES. WHOLE-NETWORK APPROACH VS EGOCENTRIC APPROACH

As is often the case with research tools imported from other fields of science, the use of network analysis in medieval history encounters some limitations. First and foremost, this methodology sets high requirements for the quality of data used, meaning that the latter has to be accurate, relevant, consistent, and complete.¹⁸ Unfortunately, historic material surviving from the Middle Ages rarely meets the completeness criterion, which is considered vital by network specialists. As Bonnie H. Erickson rightfully noted, the loss of 10% of information would not necessarily be critical in a research employing traditional historical methods but would have a dramatic impact on the results of a network study if some of the unaccounted ties were of great structural importance.¹⁹ Due to the damage done by time and chance to primary sources, the medievalists usually deal with more or less representative natural samples, which inevitably leave out certain actors and relationships. In order for the history of Middle Ages to benefit from network analysis and the opportunities it offers, this circumstance needs to be temporarily set aside by implicit agreement between scholars.

However, apart from trying to reconstruct a whole network, there is also another strategy available to researchers. While in medieval studies it is rarely possible to gather data on the entire web of actors and their relationships, many types of primary sources allow a historian to explore so-called “egocentric”, or “ego-centered”, networks, which represent ties connecting a specified central actor, also referred to as “ego” or “focal subject”, with various individuals and entities denoted by the term “alters.”²⁰ A basic “first-order” or “1-degree” network of this kind comprises a central node (i.e., the ego), a number of other vertices (alters), and edges linking the former with these latter, but it can expand so as to include ties between different alters of the same ego or even all of the alters’ connections, becoming a “1.5-level” or a “second-level” network, respectively.²¹ The most obvious limitation of the egocentric approach is that it depends upon the experience of a particular focal subject and therefore offers a deeply personalized view of network structure.²² Nevertheless, the scope of this method can be broadened by merging multiple egocentric networks and comparing their

¹⁸ A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE, *Introduction*, cit., pp. 4-5.

¹⁹ B.H. ERICKSON, *Social Networks and History*, cit., p. 151.

²⁰ P.V. MARSDEN, *Recent Developments in Network Measurement*, in *Models and Methods in Social Network Analysis*, P.J. CARRINGTON, J. SCOTT, S. WASSERMAN eds., Cambridge 2005 (Cambridge University Press), pp. 8-30 (9); D.L. HANSEN, B. SHNEIDERMAN, M.A. SMITH, *Analyzing Social Media Networks with NodeXL: Insights from a Connected World*, Amsterdam; Boston, MA 2011 (Elsevier – Morgan Kaufmann), p. 36; A. MARIN, B. WELLMAN, *Social Network Analysis: An Introduction*, in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, cit., pp. 11-25 (20); B.L. PERRY, B.A. PESCOLIDLO, S.P. BORGATTI, *Egocentric Network Analysis: Foundations, Methods, and Models*, Cambridge 2018 (Cambridge University Press).

²¹ A. MARIN, B. WELLMAN, *Social Network Analysis: An Introduction*, cit., p. 20; D.L. HANSEN, B. SHNEIDERMAN, M.A. SMITH, *Analyzing Social Media Networks with NodeXL*, cit., p. 36.

²² B.L. PERRY, B.A. PESCOLIDLO, S.P. BORGATTI, *Egocentric Network Analysis*, cit., pp. 29-30.

properties, as is commonly done in modern sociology, where the networks of this type are studied with the help of surveys and questionnaires,²³ and the focal subjects are sampled from large segments of population.²⁴ In theory, collecting and processing egocentric data on every member of the group may ultimately lead to reconstructing the whole network since the latter consists of actors who are surrounded by their own egocentric networks, and thus the two network designs turn out to be interdependent and interrelated.²⁵ At the same time, with respect to the economic history of the late Middle Ages, the examination of stand-alone egocentric networks also appears worthwhile, especially if the lacunae in primary sources prevent one from taking a broader approach. To indicate just a few of its potentialities, this method permits to summarize heterogeneous data on the relations of a certain economic entity, be it a household, a firm, a bank, or even a government; to represent such material visually in a comprehensible form; to explore the structure of the resulting business network and its properties, such as size, density, or composition; and finally, to conduct the attribute analysis of individual ties, ranking them by their strength in order to reveal the “core” of the ego’s closest connections.

3. PRIMARY SOURCES ON THE SORANZO TRADING FIRM

The present study aims to contribute to the larger body of research on the Venetian commercial networks by examining the system of business relationships maintained by the Soranzo fraterna, a family partnership that operated during the first half of the 15th century and comprised brothers Donado, Giacomo (Iacomo), Piero, and Lorenzo Soranzo, sons of the late *miser* Vettor Soranzo of the San Samuele parish (*contrada San Samuele*). The activity of this trading firm is documented in its two surviving account books, which are commonly referred to as the *libro real vecchio* and the *libro real novo* (or the *libro reale vecchio* and the *libro reale nuovo* in the Italianized spelling), and which are currently kept in the custody of the State Archives of Venice,²⁶ along with some commercial letters pertaining to the Soranzo brothers and their business partners.²⁷ Being the smaller of the two ledgers, the *libro real vecchio* contains 51 leaves and has at least 16 missing, if one is to rely upon the original numeration; the entries in this book cover the period from 1410 to 1416. The manuscript of the *libro real novo*, which consists of 168 filled folios bearing dates from 1406 to 1434, is fully preserved and well-known to both accounting and

²³ P.V. MARSDEN, *Recent Developments in Network Measurement*, cit., pp. 10-18; IDEM, *Survey Methods for Network Data*, in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, cit., pp. 370-388.

²⁴ IDEM, *Recent Developments in Network Measurement*, p. 9; O. FRANK, *Survey Sampling in Networks*, in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, cit., pp. 389-403; P.V. MARSDEN, *Survey Methods for Network Data*, cit., pp. 371-372; B.L. PERRY, B.A. PESCOLIDIO, S.P. BORGATTI, *Egocentric Network Analysis*, cit., p. 20.

²⁵ P.V. MARSDEN, *Recent Developments in Network Measurement*, cit., p. 9.

²⁶ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI VENEZIA (ASVE), *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, *Libro real novo*, *Libro real vecchio*.

²⁷ ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 8, 13; *Miscellanea di carte non appartenenti ad alcun archivio*, 8.

economic historians. The attention on the part of the former is warranted by the fact that this ledger is generally considered the earliest extant Venetian example of double-entry bookkeeping and is mentioned as such in most treatises on accounting history.²⁸ With regard to the study of late medieval economy, the *libro real novo* provides a breadth of information on the flow of goods, the volume of trade, price movements, profit rates, various types of costs, etc., all of this data having enormous value for the researchers since the period it refers to is rather poor in the number of accounting sources surviving in Venice. Given that the Soranzo brothers had specialized in the import of raw cotton from Syria, their ledger has been cited not only by scholars exploring the Levantine trade in general²⁹ but especially by those who have been interested in this particular branch of commerce, like Wolfgang von Stromer³⁰ and Jong-Kuk Nam.³¹ The latter, for instance, has relied upon the *libro real novo* to demonstrate how the community of South German merchants residing at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* had functioned as the main outlet for cotton supplied from Syria and Egypt, and has identified many of the *fraterna's* German customers and the localities of their origin.³²

Despite frequent mentions of the presently discussed account books in various pieces of research, modern historiography lacks a comprehensive study of the Soranzo firm and its business activity, which is largely due to the irregular (or

²⁸ V. ALFIERI, *La partita doppia applicata alle scritture delle antiche aziende mercantili veneziane*, Turin 1891 (ristampa anastatica con presentazione di A. FAZIO, introduzione di V. CAPPELLETTI, Rome 1994), pp. 40-64 (esp. p. 42, note 2); H. SIEVEKING, *Aus venetianischen Handlungsbüchern. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Großhandels im 15. Jahrhundert*, in "Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich", 25, 1901, pp. 1489-1521 (1490-1491, 1502-1510); 26, 1902, pp. 189-225 (193); J. ROW FOGO, *History of Book-keeping*, in *A History of Accounting and Accountants*, R. BROWN ed., Edinburgh 1905, pp. 93-170 (100-107); F. BESTA, *La Ragioneria. Seconda edizione riveduta ed ampliata col concorso dei professori V. ALFIERI, C. GHIDIGLIA, P. RIGOBON. Parte prima: Ragioneria generale*, I-III, Milan 1909-1922, III, pp. 303-304; A.C. LITTLETON, *Accounting evolution to 1900*, N.Y. 1933, pp. 104-105; E. PERAGALLO, *Origin and Evolution of Double Entry Bookkeeping: A Study of Italian Practice from the Fourteenth Century*, N.Y. 1938, pp. 33-34; F. MELIS, *Storia della ragioneria: Contributo alla conoscenza e interpretazione delle fonti più significative della storia economica*, Bologna 1950, p. 533; S. SASSI, *Sulle scritture di due aziende mercantili veneziane del Quattrocento*, Naples [1950]; T. ZERBI, *Le origini della partita doppia: Gestioni aziendali e situazioni di mercato nei secoli XIV e XV*, Milan 1952, pp. 371-377; A. MARTINELLI, *Notes on the Origin of Double Entry Bookkeeping*, in "Abacus", 13, 1977, n. 1, pp. 3-27 (23-24).

²⁹ F.C. LANE, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice*, cit., pp. 155-157, 202-205; E. ASHTOR, *Profits from Trade with the Levant in the Fifteenth Century*, in "Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies", 38, 1975, n. 2, pp. 250-275 (271), reprinted in: IDEM, *Studies on the Levantine Trade in the Middle Ages*, London 1978 (Variorum reprints); IDEM, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton, NJ 1983 (Princeton University Press), pp. 257-261, 323, note 265, 382, 431.

³⁰ W. VON STROMER, *Die Gründung der Baumwollindustrie in Mitteleuropa: Wirtschaftspolitik im Spätmittelalter*, Stuttgart 1978, pp. 37, 54, 78-79, 82, 96, 101, 147.

³¹ J.-K. NAM, *Le commerce du coton en Méditerranée à la fin du Moyen Age*, Leiden-Boston 2007 (Brill; The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economics and Cultures, 400-1500, vol. 68), pp. 10, 30-34, 107-125, 219-220, 227-239, 384-396.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 389-394. For a detailed study on German merchants in Venice, see: P. BRAUNSTEIN, *Les Allemands à Venise (1380-1520)*, Rome 2016 (École française de Rome), see mentions of the Soranzo firm on pp. 281, 328, 333, 381, 398, 496, 509, 514-516, 518, 609.

anomalous, in the words of Reinhold C. Mueller³³) nature of the *libro real novo*. The more extensive of the two surviving Soranzo ledgers was not used to record the everyday facts of economic life but compiled from a number of accounting sources, including the *libro real vecchio*, in order to be presented at the Venetian court of the *giudici di petizion*. Although this conclusion had been first explicitly stated by Tommaso Zerbi in 1952,³⁴ the exact circumstances behind the creation of the manuscript remained unknown until the author of this paper was fortunate enough to discover four judicial decisions, or sentences (*sentenze a giustizia*),³⁵ pronounced by the *giudici di petizion* in the case of Vettor Soranzo, son of the late Donado, against his uncles Giacomo, Piero, and Lorenzo Soranzo. As it appears from these rulings, the controversy that lasted at least from 1429 to 1445 and brought about the compilation of the *libro real novo* originated when Vettor claimed full restitution of his mother's dowry and other funds belonging to his father *in proprio* or *in specialità* ("on his own behalf"), along with the profits gained from the investment of said funds in the commercial operations of the family partnership. In the course of the ensuing litigation, the parties to the trial and the court-appointed arbiters hired no less than two accountants, each of whom was tasked with preparing a so-called "extrato" or "estratto" (lit. "extract, excerpt"), i.e., a kind of expert opinion providing estimate of settlement due to the plaintiff. The *libro real novo* can be identified with one of these *extrati*, meaning that the accounts copied into the ledger were selected specifically for court purposes and are likely to misrepresent the financial result of operations conducted by the *fraterna* in the litigants' interests.³⁶ However, there is no doubt that the materials included in the book were retrieved by a forensic accountant from authentic financial documents and ledgers, therefore the deficiencies of the *libro real novo* do not impede using it to recreate the egocentric network of the Soranzo firm. In future, the network reconstructed with the help of this compilation may be inserted with additional information from the commercial letters of the Soranzo brothers and from the accounts of their agent Lorenzo Priuli,³⁷ and thus the scale of potential omissions and distortions suggested by the nature of the *libro real novo* may finally be revealed.

³³ R.C. MUELLER, *The Venetian Money Market: Banks, Panics, and the Public Debt, 1200-1500*, Baltimore, MD-London 1997 (Johns Hopkins University Press), p. 520, note 13.

³⁴ T. ZERBI, *Le origini della partita doppia*, cit., pp. 371-377.

³⁵ ASVE, *Giudici di petizion*, *Sentenze a giustizia*, reg. 68, ff. 21r-25v; reg. 98, ff. 156-160v; reg. 99, ff. 103v-105v, 170v-173v.

³⁶ See: S. KARPOV, M. RYABOVA, *Libri contabili della fraterna Soranzo nell'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, in "Thesaurismata: Bollettino dell'Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini", 45, 2015, pp. 171-179.

³⁷ ASVE, *Miscellanea di carte non appartenenti ad alcun archivio*, 8.

4. THE EGOCENTRIC NETWORK OF THE SORANZO FRATERNA

4.1 *Extracting Tie Data*

The data on the business relationships of the Soranzo fraterna is contained in nearly every entry of the *libro real novo*, but it can be most conveniently retrieved from the personal accounts, where it is presented in a systematic manner. It is worth mentioning here that, according to modern classifications, the term “personal account” refers to any account opened in the name of a certain individual, a business entity, or a public institution.³⁸ From a total of 1097 accounts existing in the Soranzo ledger,³⁹ 713 or 65% fall into this category, and only 384 (35%) are impersonal. In view of the objectives set in the present study, the author chose not to include into analysis the accounts of various officials and magistrates of the Venetian Republic, such as the *Chamera da imprestedi*,⁴⁰ the *Provededori dele blave*,⁴¹ the *extraordinarii*,⁴² and others (25 accounts altogether), those of religious and charitable organizations (11 accounts), as well as 43 bank accounts. Another group that has to be treated separately consists of three fraterna accounts,⁴³ an account entitled “Heirs of *miser Vettor Soranzo*” (“*Chomessaria de miser Vettor Soranzò*”),⁴⁴ 32 accounts opened in the names of brothers comprising the family partnership, i.e., Donado,⁴⁵ Giacomo,⁴⁶ Piero,⁴⁷ and Lorenzo Soranzo,⁴⁸ and two accounts of *Vettor di Donado Soranzo*.⁴⁹ While some of these were employed to register deals concluded by a certain member of the fraterna,⁵⁰ others are somewhat reminiscent of the modern capital and drawings account and were most likely created by an expert responsible for compiling the *libro real novo* in connection with the judicial proceedings.⁵¹

The remaining 596 personal accounts relate to individual men of affairs, family partnerships, or companies of merchants, and their holders constitute actors in the business network of the Soranzo fraterna. Interestingly, the average number of entries made in these accounts is only 3.8, or about 1.86 entries per debit column

³⁸ D. HOPKINS, H. RANDALL, *Cambridge International AS and A Level Accounting: Coursebook*, 2nd ed., Cambridge 2017 (Cambridge University Press), p. 45.

³⁹ ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, ff. 2s, 42d, 50d, 56s, 90d, 125d, 126d, 147d, 157d, 163s.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, ff. 5d, 165d.

⁴² *Ibid.*, ff. 31s, 45d, 52d, 54d, 55d, 69s.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, ff. 8s, 161s, 167d (account “Fraterna zioe ser Donado, Iachomo, Piero, Lorenzo Soranzo fo de miser Vettor”).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 160d.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 3d, 36s, 60d, 65s, 91s, 145s, 161d, 168s.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, ff. 16d, 139d, 147s.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, ff. 25s, 75d, 84d, 94s, 96s, 117d, 141d, 154d.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 27s, 94d, 100d, 124s, 146s, 151d, 155s, 156s.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 121s, 145d.

⁵⁰ For examples, see: *Ibid.*, ff. 36s, 117d, 154d.

⁵¹ For examples, see: *Ibid.*, ff. 65s, 168s.

and 1.94 per credit column, which is rather low in comparison with other types of accounts (for example, the average for merchandise accounts would be about 8.65, or 5.75 per credit and 2.9 per debit, and for bank accounts – 32.67, 14.07, and 18.6, respectively). Out of 596 personal accounts, 109 (18.29%) comprise three entries, 285 (47.82%) two, and 15 one entry, the total number of accounts with less than four entries equaling 409 or 68.62%. Though 32 accounts of this type contain more than 10 entries each, and the longest of them consists of 43 entries, overall the bookkeeping practices of the Soranzo *fraterna* display a tendency for a personal account to record operations involved in completing a single business transaction (i.e., a sale, a purchase, etc.).

Such pattern seems to fit into the description given to the Venetian accounting system by Frederic C. Lane, who coined the term “venture accounting” to stress out the fact that the 15th-century Venetian merchants had not balanced their books at regular intervals, like Florentines had, but had established the results of each business enterprise separately.⁵² For instance, the Soranzo brothers opened a special account for every overseas venture and for every lot of merchandise imported from the Levant. The debit of a merchandise account⁵³ contained all of the costs incurred in connection with a particular consignment, while the credit stated the amount and the contract value of the merchandise purchased by customers. It was only after the whole lot had been sold and the bookkeeper had received complete information on expenses that such an account was closed into the profit and loss account. Each entry in the credit of the merchandise account required a corresponding entry to be made in the debit of a buyer’s account.⁵⁴ Thus, the debit column of the customer’s personal account conveyed how much he owed to the *fraterna*, and the credit recorded the sums he paid. Once the payments received by the Soranzo brothers totaled the contract value of merchandise sold, the customer’s personal account was closed; if the holder failed to meet his obligations, the balance of his account was transferred to the account of bad debts (“*Debitori chattivi*”).⁵⁵ The same principles applied to the management of other personal accounts, with the obvious exception that, in the accounts for trade payables, the roles were switched, so the credit column stated contractual obligations undertaken by the Soranzo brothers, and the debit reflected the discharging of their liabilities.

The small average number of entries in the 596 personal accounts of the *libro real novo* has several implications for network research. First of all, the practice of using particular accounts to register a single business transaction makes it easier to group them by the kind of operations reported, and this procedure in turn opens the way for classifying the account holders according to the functional type of tie linking them to the Soranzo *fraterna*, i.e., according to one of the key attributes of a

⁵² F.C. LANE, *Venture Accounting in Medieval Business Management*, in “Bulletin of the Business Historical Society”, XIX, 1945, 5, pp. 164-173 (esp. 168), reprinted in: *Venice and History: The Collected Papers of Frederic C. Lane*, cit., pp. 99-108.

⁵³ For examples, see: ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo, ff. 10d, 11s, 12s, *et passim*.

⁵⁴ For examples, see: *Ibid.*, ff. 10d, 11s, *et passim*.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 157s, 160d.

business relationship. 596 personal accounts from the *libro real novo* can be divided into about 21 categories based on the entries' content, and though some of these groups consist of only one or two accounts, their number testifies to the variety of deals contracted by the Soranzo merchants. By far the largest category contains 333 accounts of customers who bought some merchandise from the *fraterna*, the turnover of these sales being as high as 8414.731 *lire di grossi* or approximately 84147 ducats. In contrast, there are only 56 accounts opened in the names of suppliers, the total of purchases registered in them barely amounting to 1131.587 *lire di grossi*, which is less than, for instance, the sum of private loans obtained and provided by the Soranzo merchants, according to 43 accounts of their lenders and borrowers (1191.976 *lire di grossi*).

The huge gap between the two most numerous groups of personal accounts does not convey the actual difference between the contract values of goods acquired and sold by the firm, as one might have expected. The discrepancy is due to the fact that the commodities offered by the *fraterna* at the Venetian market had mostly been imported from the Levant, therefore the costs of procuring them were entered in the account of a person responsible for a particular commercial venture, or voyage (*viazo*), be it a commission agent or one of the Soranzo brothers themselves.⁵⁶ Since the firm's overseas suppliers interacted with its main office through representatives and not directly, the *libro real novo* contains no personal accounts opened in the names of these oriental men of affairs and in general provides very little information on their identities and their relationship with the *fraterna*, making it impossible to include them in the egocentric network reconstructed on the basis of this ledger. To obtain more complete data on the firm's ties to Levantine traders, one would have to consult the accounts which the Soranzo brothers and their commission agents kept while residing abroad, and all of these materials except for the aforesaid records of Lorenzo Priuli (1409-1413)⁵⁷ seem to have either got lost or perished.

Apart from sales, purchases, and loans, personal accounts from the *libro real novo* report other less common types of business dealings, including, but not limited to, transactions performed under a commission agency contract (26 accounts) or under a joint enterprise agreement (6 acc.), operations with government bonds (16 acc.) and bills of exchange (12 acc.), barter deals (9 acc.), will execution (6 acc.), rendering of services (6 acc.), rental payments (4 acc.), and disbursement of dowry (2 acc.). Of particular interest are 46 accounts that each record two or more different types of transactions and thus do not conform to the general tendency for the personal accounts to register a single deal. A few of these heterogeneous accounts were retained perpetually or at least kept for prolonged periods of time, running up to dozens of entries, which is likely to indicate the existence of a stronger and more permanent connection than a purely business relationship. In fact, among the hold-

⁵⁶ For examples, see: *Ibid.*, ff. 65s, 69s.

⁵⁷ ASVE, *Miscellanea di carte non appartenenti ad alcun archivio*, 8.

ers of such accounts one finds Luca *di Leonardo* Donado,⁵⁸ who married Marcolina Soranzo, the sister of the four Soranzo brothers, and brothers Niccolò and Giacomo Priuli,⁵⁹ sons of Costantino and the *cognadi* (in-law relatives) of Donado Soranzo. While it is evident that the ties between these actors and the *fraterna* had a complex, multifaceted nature, the network approach in itself does not allow to determine which aspect of their relationship served as the driving force in creating and maintaining the linkage. In other words, it is unclear whether the pre-existing social and familial ties led to frequent economic interactions with a number of individuals, or the firm's business interests prompted the Soranzo merchants to seek certain matrimonial alliances. Solving this problem would require both the use of additional primary sources and the application of other research methods besides network analysis.

4.2 *Reconstructing the first-order business network*

In order to reconstruct the 1-degree network of the Soranzo merchants, the author integrated the contents of 596 personal accounts found in the *libro real novo* into a tabular database where each entry corresponded to a linkage between the *fraterna* and a certain actor, i.e., an account holder. This procedure entailed identifying partners with more than one account opened in their names and pooling information relating to them so as to obtain weighted data on the alters' attributes. The resulting first-order egocentric network, which is visually represented in Figure 1.1,⁶⁰ consists of 469 ties, the average number of personal accounts per holder being about 1.27. The abundance of overlapping vertices and edges makes this graph hardly readable, so the weak, insignificant, or occasional connections have to be filtered out to achieve a more meaningful and comprehensible visualization (refer to Fig. 1.2 for example). The set of attributes that characterize each of the ties forming the network includes those identifying the alters, such as the name of a counterparty, his or her city of origin, ethnicity, parentage (if known), and the style of address employed, and those describing the relationship itself, i.e., the duration of contact with the *fraterna*, the functional type of tie, the number of personal accounts an actor had in the *libro real novo* and whether or not they were balanced, the number and the volume of transactions recorded in these accounts, and the chosen form of payment.

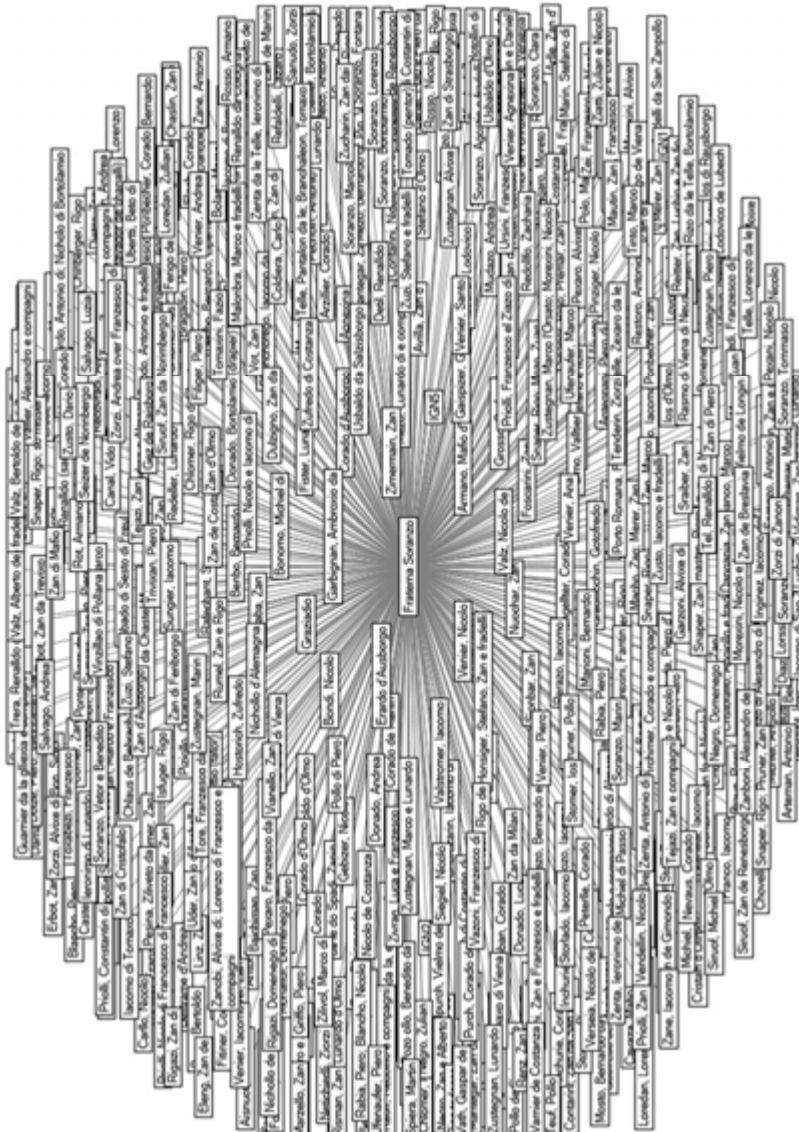
⁵⁸ ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo, ff. 80s, 83d, 89d, 109s, 123d, 151d, 165d (“Ser Lucha Donado”).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 100s, 123s (“Ser Nichollo e Iachomo di Priulli”).

⁶⁰ The network graphs in Figures 1.1 and 1.2 were created by the author with NodeXL. See: M. SMITH, A. CENI, N. MILIC-FRAYLING, B. SHNEIDERMAN, E. MENDES RODRIGUES, J. LESKOVEC, C. DUNNE, *NodeXL: a free and open network overview, discovery and exploration add-in for Excel 2007/2010/2013/2016, from the Social Media Research Foundation*. Available online at URL: www.smrfoundation.org (last accessed 30.06.2018).

Fig. 1.1. The First-Order Egocentric Network of the Soranzo Fraterna

Social media network connections



Created with NodeXL Basic (<http://nodexl.codeplex.com/>) from the Social Media Research Foundation (<http://www.smrffoundation.org/>)

provides opportunities for a deeper examination of this material, starting with its quantitative analysis, which finds itself considerably facilitated and encouraged within this methodological framework. In the particular case of the Soranzo *fraterna*, creating the database of the personal account holders has enabled the author not only to tabulate the geographical distribution of alters in the egocentric network but also to compute the number of accounts and accounting entries, as well as the approximate turnover of operations, for each of the groups united by common origin (see Table 1 in the Appendix and Figures 2.1, 2.2 below).

Fig. 2.1. Turnover of personal accounts in the *libro real novo* by the origin of their holders (in *lire di grossi*, approx.)

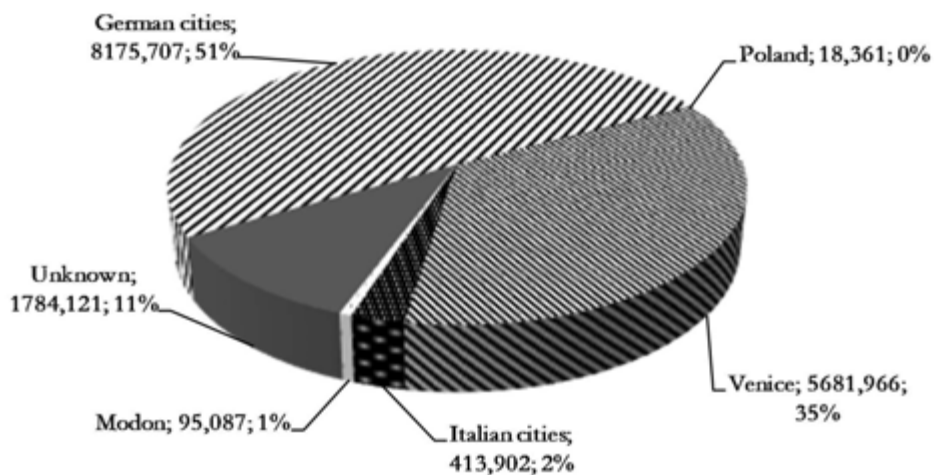
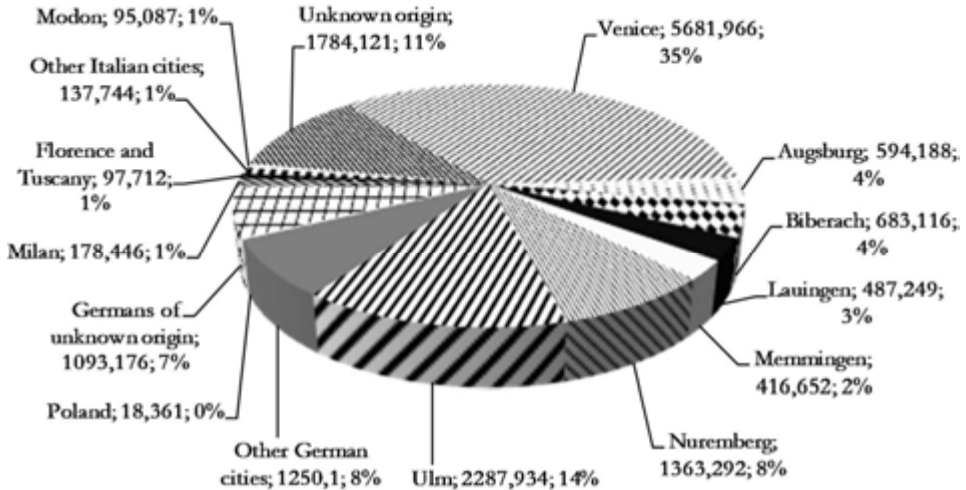


Fig. 2.2. Turnover of personal accounts in the *libro real novo* by the origin of their holders (detailed breakdown; in *lire di grossi*, approx.)



Obviously, the values presented in Table 1 are of approximate nature due to some limitations of the *libro real novo* as a historical source, and first of all to the fact that the individuals mentioned in the ledger are not always easily identifiable; for example, a number of variant spellings are usually found for foreign surnames and toponyms, and same person is occasionally referred to in several different ways. Furthermore, since only 195 account holders out of 469 (41.58%) have their provenance explicitly stated, the author has taken upon herself to single out the members of well-known Venetian families⁶² and to include 41 actors with German-sounding names into the category “Germans of unknown origin”, along with 4 people who are designated in the manuscript as “*todeschi*” or “*d’Alemagna*”. Although one cannot altogether avoid the risk of erroneous identifications, which would have resulted in some minor database inaccuracies, the general picture is rather clear, revealing the preponderance of German customers in the Soranzo trading network and the prominent position of merchants from Ulm, Nuremberg, and Augsburg within this group of foreigners. At the same time, the average number of accounting entries per person is much higher for Venetians than it is for Germans (6.74 *versus* 4.02, respectively), which can be interpreted in the sense that the Soranzo brothers interacted with their fellow compatriots on a more regular basis.

⁶² For reasons of convenience, a family name was considered Venetian if labeled as such in the Da Mosto guide to the Venetian archive. See: A. DA MOSTO, *L’Archivio di Stato di Venezia: Indice generale, storico, descrittivo ed analitico*, I-II, Rome 1937-1940 (Biblioteca d’arte editrice), T. I: *Archivi dell’amministrazione centrale della Repubblica Veneta e archivi notarili*, pp. 71-77.

In addition to its rich potential for the quantitative analysis of attribute data, the network approach permits one to evaluate the relative importance of actors and to rank them within the system of relationships. With respect to the Soranzo case, the most obvious criteria for assessing the strength of tie connecting an alter to the ego are the frequency of mutual interactions and the volume of operations. The first parameter is indirectly reflected by the number of personal accounts and entries contained in them, while the second can be measured with the approximate turnover⁶³ of the said accounts. The 5% of actors who rank highest according to these criteria and thus form the core of the Soranzo business network are listed in Table 2 (see Appendix). The above-mentioned Luca Donado holds the top spot in all three groups, making it hardly surprising that in the late 1420s the *giudici di petizion* appointed him one of the arbiters in the litigation between Vettor di Donado Soranzo and his uncles.⁶⁴ Other actors present in every column include Giacomo di Antonio Dandolo,⁶⁵ who married Marina Soranzo, Donado's daughter and Vettor's sister, in 1423; four German merchants, i.e., Johann Felle or Vöhlin⁶⁶ from Memmingen (*Zan Felle di Manin*),⁶⁷ Rigo Eleng from Ulm (*Rigo Eleng d'Ollmo*),⁶⁸ Rigo Snaper from Biberach (*Rigo Snaper di Brebrach*),⁶⁹ and Johann Dieter from Ulm (*Zan Dieter d'Ollmo*);⁷⁰ Venetian moneychanger Donado di Fellipo,⁷¹ and even one woman – Agnesina Venier,⁷² widow of Andrea, who named the Soranzo brothers executors of her will.

However, apart from the purely quantitative criteria cited in Table 2, ties within the Soranzo business network can also be assessed with respect to the nature of transactions carried out by the actors. The classification of partners according to the functional type of their relationship with the *fraterna* (see Table 3 in the Appendix) takes as a point of departure the content-based classification of personal accounts (see section 4.1 of the present paper). Since both rely on the type of business deals registered in the *libro real novo* as a criterion for forming groups, the actors fall into categories that essentially reiterate those of personal accounts and include, for example, customers who acquired merchandise from the *fraterna* (256 actors), the firm's suppliers (45 actors), commission agents (19 actors), lenders and borrowers (26 actors), investors partaking in operations with government bonds (15 ac-

⁶³ In the context of the present study, the turnover of a personal account was calculated as the sum of debit entries; balance entries were normally excluded, except for the balances transferred from Daniel Ziliol's *extrato* (ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo, ff. 2d-6s).

⁶⁴ S. KARPOV, M. RYABOVA, *Libri contabili della fraterna Soranzo*, cit., p. 174.

⁶⁵ ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo, ff. 100s, 115d, 133d, 144d, 162s.

⁶⁶ Identification proposed by J.-K. Nam, see: J.-K. NAM, *Le commerce du coton en Méditerranée*, cit., pp. 393-394.

⁶⁷ ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo, ff. 70d, 72s, 132s.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 70d, 72s, 98d, 107d, 124d.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 91s, 107d, 140d, 151s.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, ff. 53d, 70d, 73s.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, ff. 43d, 110s, 116s, 119d.

⁷² *Ibid.*, ff. 6s, 22d, 158s, 158d, 160s.

tors), service providers (6 actors), parties to bills of exchange (9 actors) and to barter deals (4 actors), joint enterprise partners (1 actor), *et al.* However, personal accounts opened in the name of the same person sometimes belong to two or more different content-based groups, revealing the heterogeneous character of operations conducted by the individual in question. Holders of such accounts make up the category of actors with multifunctional ties to the *fraterna*, along with partners possessing personal accounts of the mixed type.

Unsurprisingly, the group of 61 alters who interacted with the Soranzo merchants in several various capacities features some members of their inner social circle and extended family, including relatives by blood (for example, uncles Tommaso Soranzo⁷³ and Vido da Canal,⁷⁴ cousins Stefano *di Niccolò* Contarini⁷⁵ and Bartolomeo *di Tommaso* Soranzo)⁷⁶ and by marriage (i.e., the already mentioned Luca Donado, Giacomo Dandolo, and brothers Giovanni, Niccolò, and Giacomo Priuli). At times the individual's exact relation to the *fraterna* may remain unknown, but the nature of the transactions themselves implies social connection, as is the case with Agnesina Venier, whose will the Soranzo brothers executed, or with the unnamed prioress⁷⁷ of the San Lorenzo convent, where their sister Fontana⁷⁸ took the veil. At least 17 actors with multifaceted ties to the *fraterna* were foreigners, 12 of them Germans and 5 Italians, and while these men of affairs occupy a prominent place in the group, the business activities they engaged in appear significantly less diversified than those of the firm's Venetian partners. Like most of their compatriots, these foreigners generally bought articles of Levantine import (14 actors), the main difference being that, in addition, they also sold to the *fraterna* (3 actors) or bartered (10 actors) merchandise of their own. Less common for the members of this subgroup was to use various financial instruments, such as bill of exchange (*lettera di cambio*, 2 actors), guarantee (*proferta*, 2 actors), or loans (1 actor).

As for the remaining 31 partners who were linked to the *fraterna* with multifunctional ties but are not known to be related to the Soranzo brothers by blood or by marriage, their provenance is not indicated in the account books, therefore it is likely that the majority of them were Venetian citizens (*cives de intus* or *de extra*) or patricians. Their dealings with the firm demonstrate highly diversified and individualized combinations of business activities and operations, making it hard to detect patterns of economic behavior; the same applies to members of the Soranzo clan but not to the subcategory of foreigners. A cursory assessment of the subgroup constituted by the Venetians with multifaceted ties to the *fraterna* reveals the presence of actors involved in the day-to-day running of the Soranzo household, such

⁷³ *Ibid.*, f. 4s.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, ff. 56d, 115d.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 78s, 163d.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 5d.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 116d.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 112s, 149d.

as Dario Zusto,⁷⁹ the proprietor of storage facilities rented by the firm, Niccolò da Verseia,⁸⁰ *fameio* of Donado Soranzo, and a bunch of local artisans and shopkeepers (Carlo Coldiera,⁸¹ owner of a *botega*; Renaldo, *sartor a Rialto*;⁸² *choltrer* Andrea da Lorssa;⁸³ *drapieri* Luca and Francesco Zivran;⁸⁴ *miedego* Graziadio).⁸⁵ Two members of the group performed the duties of official brokers, or *sanseri*, at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, and this circumstance merits special attention since the law required the state-appointed intermediaries of trade to participate in every deal concluded with German merchants and worth more than 10 ducats.⁸⁶ Throughout the many years of their business career, the Soranzo brothers interacted with dozens of *sanseri*, the fees due to these latter having been regularly entered into the merchandise accounts, along with other expenses,⁸⁷ but only Bortolamio Alivoto⁸⁸ and Iacomo Perazo⁸⁹ had personal accounts in the *libro real novo*. Their particular closeness to the *fraterna* suggests the potential for illicit agreements not unlike those described by Philippe Braunstein in his recent book.⁹⁰

The central position held within the network by the actors with multifunctional ties to the ego finds reasonable explanation in the fact that concluding several deals of various types with a certain counterparty generally bespeaks coincidence of financial interests, mutual trust, and possibly even a social connection. However, a strong business relationship, though perhaps lacking meaningful social implications, can also emerge thanks to the recurring economic transactions of the same kind. For this reason, a comprehensive analysis of the Soranzo trading network would have to take into consideration the above-listed homogeneous categories of account holders (see Table 3 in the Appendix), especially the largest group comprising 256 buyers of goods. A brief survey of actors who engaged the firm exclusively to acquire merchandise shows that the absolute majority of clients (182, or 71.09%) made only one purchase, so they had no chance to form any sort of lasting connection with the Soranzo brothers. Nevertheless, the *fraterna* did gain some regular customers, and 14 buyers (5.47%), most of them Germans, concluded more than three deals each, the turnover of sales reported in their personal accounts amounting to 2156.807 *lire di grossi*, as opposed to 3155.659 *lire di grossi* spent by 182 one-time buyers. Hence it follows that though the Soranzo firm had access to a rather

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 95d, 163d.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 22d.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, f. 20s.

⁸² *Ibid.*, f. 152s.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, ff. 57s, 129s.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 97d.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 36d.

⁸⁶ P. BRAUNSTEIN, *Les Allemands à Venise (1380-1520)*, cit., pp. 121-123.

⁸⁷ For examples, see: ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14, Libro real novo, ff. 9s, 11s, 12s, *et passim*.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 35d.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 140s, 155d.

⁹⁰ P. BRAUNSTEIN, *Les Allemands à Venise (1380-1520)*, cit., pp. 123-126.

large and depersonalized distribution network, the ultimate success of its business strategy depended heavily on a small number of wholesale merchants strongly connected to the *fraterna*.

5. CONCLUSION

The network analysis initiated by the author in this study leaves plenty of room for the application of more specialized and sophisticated research procedures, as well as for the deeper interpretation of its results. At the present stage, the Soranzo business network comprises only actors of first order, i.e., those directly linked to the *fraterna*, and only those with personal accounts opened in their names. Its scope can be further broadened by adding bankers and individuals who did not possess their own accounts in the *libro real novo* but played important structural roles in the organization of commerce, like brokers and intermediaries of trade (*sanseri*), patrons of ships, or other actors mentioned in the entries recording overhead and transportation costs of merchandise. Nevertheless, the egocentric network reconstructed hitherto allows some new light to be shed on the patterns of economic interactions in the business circles of late medieval Venice. Since the data on the relationships maintained by the Soranzo trading firm (“the ego”) with its partners (“alters”) came from the accounting records, every known tie within the network manifested itself in the value of goods or the sum of money that had changed hands, and thus it possessed an inherent quantitative dimension. This has enabled the author to assess the strength of linkages by the number and the volume of transactions conducted with a given individual and to rank the actors accordingly, highlighting those who had invested most heavily in their dealings with the Soranzo merchants.

In addition to the quantitative criteria, the relationships within the network were also classified according to their functional types, which had been defined by the nature of deals concluded. This procedure brought into view the diversity of economic transactions performed by the firm and their mostly impersonal character, at the same time revealing the core of partners with strong multifaceted ties to the Soranzo *fraterna*. The composition of this group turns out to be remarkable in several ways. For one thing, it demonstrates the priority of relationships formed through marriage over those predetermined by kinship patterns. While in recent historiography it has been suggested that the acquisition of political and social advantages through matrimonial alliances may not have been a widespread phenomenon in late medieval Venice,⁹¹ the account books of the Soranzo *fraterna* provide one with vivid examples of the day-to-day economic cooperation between the in-laws who interacted much more tightly than blood relatives or members of the extended Soranzo clan. Furthermore, the core of the Soranzo network contains high percentage of foreigners, mostly South German

⁹¹ D.E. QUELLER, T.F. MADDEN, *Father of the Bride: Fathers, Daughters, and Dowries in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Venice*, in “Renaissance Quarterly”, 46, 1993, n. 4, pp. 685-711.

merchants residing at the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, which results from the fact that the family partnership invested the bulk of its capital in cotton trade. On the other hand, the regular and prolonged business contacts with a group of Germans acting as bridges to the rest of the community may have led to the emergence of permanent social linkages, and these latter may have, in their turn, prevented the *fraterna* from trying to broaden its specialization in order to adapt to the changing market conditions and to the shifts in the political situation. In this manner, the case study of the Soranzo trading network ultimately contributes to revealing both the organizational patterns of the Venetian trade in the Eastern Mediterranean and the underlying mechanisms of economic integration between the Venetian Republic, the Levant, and the cities of Southern Germany.

APPENDIX

Tab. 1. The Geographical Distribution of the Personal Account Holders in the *Libro Real Novo* of the Soranzo *Fraterna* (ASVE, *Miscellanea Gregolin*, 14)

Provenance of account holders	Number of account holders	Number of personal accounts	Total number of entries	Average number of entries per account holder	Total turnover of accounts (in <i>lire di grossi</i> , approx.)	Average turnover per account holder (in <i>lire di grossi</i> , approx.)
Venice	158	210	1065	6.74	5681.966	35.962
German lands, including:	200	257	803	4.02	8175.707	40.879
Ulm (<i>Olmo</i>)	34	49	183	5.38	2287.934	67.292
Nuremberg (<i>Norimbergo</i>)	30	43	145	4.83	1363.292	45.443
Augsburg (<i>Ausborgo</i>)	15	19	60	4	594.188	39.613
Biberach (<i>Brebach</i>)	9	14	61	6.78	683.116	75.902
Konstanz (<i>Chostanzà</i>)	9	11	31	3.44	209.273	23.253
Salzburg (<i>Salzisborgo</i>)	9	11	26	2.89	153.681	17.076
Regensburg (<i>Rausborgo / Renesborgo</i>)	7	8	23	3.29	183.458	26.208
Vienna (<i>Viena</i>)	7	8	19	2.71	106.057	15.151

Memmingen (<i>Manin</i>)	6	12	40	6.67	416.652	69.442
Lauingen (<i>Laibin / Longin</i>)	5	7	21	4.2	487.249	97.45
Breslau (<i>Breslavia</i>)	4	4	8	2	39.391	9.848
Cologne (<i>Chologna</i>)	4	5	18	4.5	166.036	41.509
Passau (<i>Passo</i>)	3	3	8	2.67	56.324	18.775
Fainboch (?)	1	1	2	2	38.296	38.296
Freiburg (<i>Feriborgo</i>)	1	1	2	2	2.837	2.837
Frankfurt (<i>Francho fort</i>)	1	1	3	3	10.207	10.207
Landshut (<i>Lanzuot</i>)	1	1	2	2	37.121	37.121
Lübeck (<i>Lubeck</i>)	1	1	2	2	13.698	13.698
Munich (<i>Munego</i>)	1	2	5	5	39.175	39.175
Neustadt (<i>Neustat</i>)	1	1	2	2	15.556	15.556
Nördlingen (<i>Norlin</i>)	1	1	3	3	43.49	43.49
Seresborgo (?)	1	1	2	2	7.5	7.5
Sipplingen (<i>Spilimbergo</i>)	1	2	6	6	31.45	31.45
Songar (?)	1	1	4	4	87.941	87.941
Strasbourg (<i>Strasborgo</i>)	1	1	2	2	3.17	3.17
Villach (<i>Villacho</i>)	1	1	2	2	5.439	5.439
Germans of unknown origin	45	48	123	2.73	1093.176	24.293
Italian cities, including:	28	36	100	3.57	413.902	14.782
Milan (<i>Milano</i>)	10	14	35	3.5	178.446	17.845
Florence (<i>Firenze</i>)	4	4	10	2.5	55.462	13.866
Ascoli Piceno (<i>Ascholle</i>)	2	2	5	2.5	9.837	4.919
Mantua (<i>Mantova</i>)	2	2	4	2	7.21	3.605

Bergamo (<i>Bergamo</i>)	1	5	18	18	29.297	29.297
Castel Maggiore (<i>Chastel Magor</i>)	1	1	2	2	4.91	4.91
Modena (<i>Modena</i>)	1	1	2	2	4.243	4.243
Pavia (<i>Pavia</i>)	1	1	4	4	4.183	4.183
Peraga (<i>Peraga</i>)	1	1	5	5.00	35.731	35.731
Pordenone (<i>Pordenon</i>)	1	1	1	1	2.805	2.805
Sesto di Friuli (<i>Sesto di Frenl</i>)	1	1	3	3	5.3	5.3
Spoletto (<i>Spollitti</i>)	1	1	2	2	4.59	4.59
Treviso (<i>Trevixo</i>)	1	1	5	5	29.638	29.638
Tuscany (<i>toschan</i>)	1	1	5	5	42.25	42.45
Modon	2	3	8	4	95.087	47.544
Poland (<i>Polana</i>)	1	1	2	2	18.361	18.361
Origin unknown	80	89	288	3.6	1784.121	22.302
Total / Average	469	596	2266	4.83	16169.144	34.476

Tab. 2. Top-5% of Actors in the Egocentric Network of the Soranzo Fraterna

Rank	By the number of accounts		By the number of entries		By the turnover of accounts	
	Name	Number of accounts	Name	Number of entries	Name	Turnover of accounts (in <i>lire di grossi</i> , approx.)
1	Donado, Lucha*	8	Donado, Lucha*	142	Donado, Lucha*	815.66
2	Felle, Zan	7	Venier, Agnexina*	77	Donado di Fellipo	526.476
3	Venier, Agnexina*	6	Dandolo, Iachomo*	40	Dandolo, Iachomo*	419.437
4	Belltrame d'Andrea*	5	Priolli, Zan di e fradelli*	30	Rumel, Zan e Rigo*	356.7
5	Dandolo, Iachomo*	5	Felle, Zan	28	Venier, Agnexina*	328.556
6	Eleng, Rigo*	5	Dieter, Zan*	25	Felle, Zan	307.246
7	Benbo, Bernardo*	4	Priolli, Nichollo e Iachomo di*	25	Zan di Piero	266.736
8	Donado di Fellipo	4	Eleng, Rigo*	23	Scharssso, Chorado	264.743
9	Priolli, Nichollo e Iachomo di*	4	Priolli, Chonstantin di*	23	Praun, Piero	251.308
10	Priolli, Zan di e fradelli*	4	Benbo, Lorenzo	20	Priolli, Chonstantin di*	244
11	Rabia, Piero*	4	Chorner, Alvixe*	20	Snaper, Rigo; Pruner, Zan	231.185
12	Snaper, Rigo*	4	Charllo, Nichollo	19	Rumel, Vielmo e Zan	227.809
13	Zan d'Ollmo	4	Chontarini, Zan fo di Nicholo	19	Dieter, Zan*	200.32
14	Chres, Lio Polldo*	3	Donado di Fellipo	19	Pexaro, Franzescho da cha da	190.933
15	Chorner, Alvixe*	3	Snaper, Rigo*	19	Dobratti, Iachomo e fradelli	190
16	Detil, Renaldo*	3	Soranzo, Agostin e fradelli*	19	Zan d'Ollmo	186.329
17	Dieter, Zan*	3	Belltrame d'Andrea*	18	Eleng, Rigo*	180.044

18	Donado, Andrea e Almoro*	3	Zusto, Dario*	17	Benbo, Lorenzo	176.29
19	Elsimer, Rigo	3	Hostorich, Zufredo	16	Chlomer, Ios	174.26
20	Granata, Nicholo	3	Pollo, Marcho	16	Soranzo, Agostin e fradelli*	166.605
21	Grazian, Andrea	3	Bertollin, Marcho di	15	Rosso, Armano	156.681
22	Hostorich, Zufredo	3	Donado, Andrea e Almoro*	15	Snaper, Rigo*	148.023
23	Rumel, Vielmo e Zan	3	Loredan, Zullian*	15	Mautin, Zan e chompagni	141.274
24	Scharssso, Chorado	3	Detil, Renalldo*	13	Bertolldo d'Olmo	139.618
<p>The spelling of personal names follows the <i>libro real novo</i> (ASVE, <i>Miscellanea Gregolin</i>, 14) * - Partners with multifunctional ties (See Table 3, row 12)</p>						

Tab. 3. Classification of the Personal Account Holders according to the Functional Type of Their Tie with the Soranzo Fraterna

№	Category name	Number of account holders	Number of entries			Total turnover of accounts (in <i>lire di grossi</i> , approx.)	Average turnover (in <i>lire di grossi</i> , approx.)
			Debit column	Credit column	Total		
1	Buyers of goods	256	396	477	873	7716.171	30.141
2	Suppliers of goods	45	76	85	161	1018.515	22.634
3	Commission agents	19	57	114	171	1229.568	64.714
4	Lenders / borrowers	26	62	57	119	833.956	32.075
5	Parties involved in operations with government bonds	15	22	22	44	415.613	27.708
6	Parties to a bill of exchange	9	9	10	19	163.242	18.138
7	Parties to a barter deal	4	6	7	13	40.2	10.05
8	Guarantors of payments	6	7	10	17	102.919	17.153
9	Service providers	6	7	6	13	19.808	3.301
10	Partners in a joint enterprise	1	2	2	4	2.325	2.325
11	Other	21	30	24	54	384.66	18.317
12	Partners with multifunctional ties	61	433	345	778	4242.167	69.544
13	Total / Average	469	1107	1159	2266	16169.144	34.476

Benedetto Ligorio

Un ponte tra ottomani e cristiani.

Il network degli ebrei di Ragusa tra Balcani e Adriatico (1585-1635)

1. LA RETE MERCANTILE DEI SEFARDITI BALCANICI

Gli studi sull'economia dei gruppi etnici e sulle diaspore commerciali sono stati oggetto nell'ultimo trentennio di importanti approfondimenti e si sono congiunti alle nuove questioni sollevate dalle ricerche sulle reti sociali e creditizie e sulla categoria degli ebrei ponentini come identità peculiare all'interno della più vasta diaspora sefardita¹. Le reti etniche strutturano relazioni di fiducia e scambio attraverso la copertura di postazioni chiave in ambito economico e sociale². Alla rete relazionale degli ebrei nella prima età moderna si sommano processi di acculturazione nelle città dove la minoranza etnica risiede e si riorganizza³.

Da Ragusa è possibile osservare che la cooperazione pragmatica e la reciprocità nei mercati adriatici perdurarono nelle comunità sefardite balcaniche per tutto il

¹ P. D. CURTIN, *Cross-cultural trade in world history*, Cambridge 1984; M. ROZEN, *La vie économique des Juifs du bassin méditerranéen de l'expulsion d'Espagne (1492) à la fin du XVIII^e siècle, La société juive à travers l'histoire*, a c. di S. TRIGANO, Parigi 1993, III, pp. 296-352; D. SORKIN, *The Port Jew: Notes toward a Social Type*, in "Journal of Jewish Studies" 50, 1999, pp. 87-97; J. ISRAEL, *Diasporas within a Diaspora*, Leiden 2001; E. BENBASSA, A. RODRIGUE, *Storia degli Ebrei sefarditi. Da Toledo a Salonico*, Torino 2002; E. OLIEL-GRAUSZ, *Networks and communication in the Sephardi Diaspora: An Added Dimension to the Concept of Port Jews and Port Jewries*, in *Jews and Port cities (1590-1990). Commerce, Community and Cosmopolitanism*, a c. di D. CESARANI, G. ROAIN, Londra-Portland 2006, pp. 62-76; F. TRIVELLATO, *The port Jews of Livorno and the global networks of trade in Early Modern Period, Jews and Port cities (1590-1990). Commerce, Community and Cosmopolitanism*, a c. di D. CESARANI, G. ROAIN, Londra-Portland 2006, pp. 31-48; B. LIGORIO, *Ragusa, il secondo ghetto. Una comunità di mercanti sefarditi nell'Adriatico orientale (1546-1667)*, in "Rivista di Storia del Cristianesimo", 14, 2017, n. 1, pp. 49-66; F. TRIVELLATO, *Il commercio interculturale. La diaspora sefardita, Livorno e i traffici globali in età moderna*, Roma 2017.

² H. E. ALDRICH, R. WALDINGER, *Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship*, in "Annual Review Sociology" 16 1990, pp. 111-135, 127; G. SAPELLI, *Sulla presenza ebraica nell'economia italiana. Note metodologiche*, in *Integrazione e identità. L'esperienza ebraica in Germania e Italia dall'Illuminismo al fascismo*, a c. di M. TOSCANO, Milano 1998, pp. 51-66, 53; E. IVETIC, *Tolerance towards the "others" in the cities of Venetian Dalmatia (1540-1645)*, in *Tolerance and intolerance on the triplex confinium. Approaching the "other" on the Broderlands Eastern Adriatic and Beyon 1500-1800*, a c. di E. IVETIC, D. ROKSANDRIĆ, Padova 2007, pp. 265-283; W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Maritime trade around Europe 1300-1600: commercial networks and urban autonomy*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe. 1300-1600*, a c. di W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ., Londra-New York 2017, pp. 1-14

³ M. BOTTICINI- Z. ECKSTEIN, *I pochi eletti. Il ruolo dell'istruzione nella storia degli ebrei (70-1492)*, Milano 2012.

XVI secolo fino alla prima metà del XVII secolo⁴. Del resto, ad eccezione della ricca aristocrazia ragusea⁵ e di alcuni banchieri, le restanti forze endogene del mercato interno alla Repubblica – artigiani, contadini e marinai – erano economicamente poco rilevanti rispetto ai mercanti ebrei.

Il peso del gruppo sefardita fu decisivo nel mercato di esportazione di prodotti da Ragusa verso Ancona e Venezia; esso non fu mai omogeneamente connotato da costituire un elemento separato sul piano economico dal resto del contesto della Repubblica⁶. Gli assicuratori delle merci degli ebrei erano per lo più cristiani; i vascelli erano ragusei o talvolta ottomani, mentre i fornitori del credito commerciale erano prevalentemente i nobili della Repubblica.

Il network commerciale raguseo univa ebrei, cristiani e musulmani in un ordito estremamente intricato. Gli ebrei erano presenti in una rete mercantile estesa sui Balcani e sull'Adriatico in cui spesso fungevano da mediatori sia per i correligionari che per altri operatori, favoriti dalla neutralità della Repubblica di San Biagio rispetto ai costanti conflitti tra Venezia e Impero ottomano. Il modello del cosmopolitismo mercantile raguseo fu caratterizzato dalla mediazione tra istanze, veneziane, turche, ebrae e slave, combinato a un pragmatico ossequio verso le potenze egemoni che si svolgeva a tutto vantaggio dell'economia della Repubblica⁷.

La presente ricerca intende porsi in continuità cronologica con l'opera di Tenenti, un classico della storia economica mediterranea sulle assicurazioni marittime ragusee tra il 1563 e il 1591. Infatti, fu proprio Alberto Tenenti a notare per primo il mutamento nella struttura economica ragusea verificatosi intorno al 1590⁸. La dinamica dell'affermazione dei sefarditi nei traffici commerciali fu un fenomeno che segnò la fine della fase dall'egemonia dei ragusei nei commerci marittimi. Tra il 1575 e il 1584 gli assicurati ebrei erano solo 5, l'anno successivo 6 mentre nel 1586 passarono a 11, ma furono gli anni Novanta del Cinquecento a segnare una svolta.

⁴ J. TADIĆ, *Jevreji u Dubrovniku do polovice XVII stoljeca*, Sarajevo 1937, pp.137-147; IDEM, *Doprinos jevreja trgovinas dalmatinski primorje u XVI i XVII veku*, in *Spomenica. 400 godina od Dolaška Jevreja u Bosnu i Hercegovinu*, Sarajevo 1967, pp. 33-46; IDEM, *Le commerce en Dalmatie et à Raguse et la decadence économique de Venise au XXVII siècle*, in *Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica veneziana nel XVII secolo*, Venezia-Roma 1961, pp. 237-274; B. KREKIĆ, *Gli Ebrei a Ragusa nel Cinquecento*, in *Gli Ebrei a Venezia (secoli XIV-XVIII)*, a c. di G. COZZI, Milano 1987, pp. 841-843.

⁵ Z. ZLATAR, *Dubrovnik's investments in its Balkan colonies 1594-1623: a quantitative analysis*, in "Balcanica" 7 (1976), pp. 103-116; IDEM, *Udio vlastele u Dubrova koj kreditnoj trgovini (1520-1623): kvantitativna analiza vjerovnika*, in "Anali Dubrovnik", 45, 2007, pp. 131-158; L. KUNČEVIĆ, in *The maritime trading network of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe*, cit., pp. 141-158.

⁶ B. TENENTI, *Ragusa e Venezia nell'Adriatico della seconda metà del cinquecento*, in "Studi veneziani", s. 2, 4, 1980, pp. 99-127; EADEM, *Componenti ed evoluzione dei tassi assicurativi mediterranei nel XVI secolo*, in *Aspetti della vita economica medievale*, Firenze 1984, pp. 345-360; A. TENENTI, *Il prezzo del rischio. L'assicurazione mediterranea vista da Ragusa (1563-1591)*, Roma 1985.

⁷ S. ANSELMINI, *Motivazioni economiche della neutralità di Ragusa nel Cinquecento*, in *Ragusa (Dubrovnik). Una Repubblica adriatica. Saggi di storia economica e finanziaria*, a c di A. DI VITTORIO, S. ANSELMINI, P. PIERUCCI, Bologna 1994, pp. 25-55.

⁸ A. TENENTI, *Il prezzo del rischio*, cit., p. 144

Si registrò infatti un incremento vertiginoso delle attività commerciali dei sefarditi a Ragusa. In appena un triennio i contratti assicurativi sulle merci degli ebrei passarono dai 10 nel 1588, per un valore assicurativo delle merci pari a 2.090 ducati⁹, ai 107 contratti del 1591 per polizze che raggiungevano i 72.632 ducati per le esportazioni verso Venezia e Ancona¹⁰.

L'ultimo decennio del Cinquecento fu quindi l'inizio di una espansione senza precedenti del commercio ebraico raguseo. Nel 1589 i mercanti ebrei ragusei assicurarono merci esportate verso Ancona per 2.025 ducati¹¹ e verso Venezia per 3.975 ducati¹²; l'anno seguente il volume totale delle assicurazioni commerciali era più che raddoppiato: 12.395 ducati di cui 6.445 verso Ancona¹³ e 5.950 verso Venezia¹⁴. Ma fu nel 1591 che fu raggiunto uno dei picchi più alti nelle esportazioni da parte degli ebrei. Si passò dai 12.395 ducati assicurati nell'anno 1590 a 72.632 ducati assicurati nel 1591, per un valore reale ipotizzabile intorno ai 140.000 ducati. La bilancia commerciale pendeva a favore dell'asse Ragusa-Venezia con 38.750 ducati assicurati¹⁵ contro 33.882 ducati verso Ancona¹⁶. Il fenomeno della crescita vertiginosa

⁹ DRŽAVNI ARHIV U DUBROVNIKU (DAD), *Noli et securitate not.*, 12, cc. 286v.-287v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 23, cc. 15r.-16r.; 22r.-23r.; 81r.-82r.; 87r.-88r.; 100r.-101r.; 106v.-107v.; 125v.-126r.; 147v.-148r.; 156r.-157r.

¹⁰ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 15, cc. 305r.-306r.; 306v.-307r.; 308r.-309r.; 311r.-312r.; 342r.-343r.; 345r.-346r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 5r.-7r.; 7v.-9r.; 10v.-11r.; 35r.-36r.; 37r.-38r.; 38v.-39v.; 40r.-41v.; 43r.-44v.; 26, 46v.-48r.; 48v.-49v.; 50v.-51v.; 58v.-60v.; 60v.-61v.; 62r.-63v.; 63v.-64v.; 68v.-68r.; 68r.-69v.; 70r.-71v.; 73r.-74v.; 75r.-76v.; 26, 76v.-78r.; 26, 81v.-82/a.r.; 26, 82/a.r.-84r.; 84/r.-85v.; 104r.-105r.; 104r.-105r.; 114v.-115r.; 116r.-117r.; 117v.-118v.; 119r.-120r.; 120v.-121v.; 121v.-123r.; 126v.-128r.; 128r.-129r.; 136r.-137r.; 166v.-168r.; 171r.-172r.; 174r.-175v.; 177r.-178v.; 190r.-191v.; 193r.-194v.; 195r.-196v.; 197r.-198v.; 198v.-199v.; 200r.-202r.; 202r.-203v.; 204v.-205v.; 207r.-207v.; 208r.-209v.; 211v.-213r.; 215r.-216v.; 218r.-220r.; 244r.-245v.; 241r.-242r.; 242r.-244r.; 250v.-252r.; 258r.-260r.; 261v.-262v.; 263r.-264v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 5v.-7r.; 7v.-8v.; 8v.-9v.; 10r.-12v.; 12v.-14r.; 14r.-15v.; 16r.-17r.; 17v.-18v.; 19v.-20v.; 44r.-45v.; 47v.-49v.; 50r.-51v.; 52r.-53v.; 54r.-55v.; 56r.-57v.; 59v.-60v.; 69v.-70v.; 27, 75r.-76v.; 77r.-78v.; 78v.-80r.; 84v.-86r.; 86v.-88r.; 89r.-90v.; 91r.-92v.; 93r.-94v.; 94v.-96v.; 96v.-98r.; 96v.-98r.; 100r.-101v.; 103v.-105r.; 105r.-107r.; 107v.-109r.; 109r.-110v.; 111r.-112v.; 113r.-115v.; 116r.-117v.; 125r.-126v.; 127r.-128v.; 128v.-130r.; 159r.-160v.; 164r.-165v.; 165v.-167r.; 167v.-168v.

¹¹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 24, cc. 114r.-115r.; 137r.-138r.; 185r.-186r.; 220v.-221v.; 222r.-222v.; 233v.-234v.; 287v.-288r.

¹² DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 24, cc. 138v.-139v.; 139v.-140v.; 168v.-169v.; 211v.-212v.; 213r.-214r.; 214r.-215v.; 235r.-236r.; 274v.-275v.; 276r.-277r.; 288v.-289v.

¹³ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 25, cc. 62r.-63r.; 65v.-67r.; 67r.-68r.; 122v.-124r.; 125r.-126r.; 131r.-132r.; 132v.-133v.; 142r.-143r.; 159r.-160r.; 162v.-163v.; 170r.-172r.; 187r.-188r.; 228r.-229r.; 25, 276v.-278r.; 296r.-297r.

¹⁴ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, cc. 18r.-19r.; 45r.-46r.; 58v.-59v.; 102v.-104r.; 119v.-120r.; 126v.-127r.; 128r.-129r.; 129v.-130r.; 136r.-137r.; 138r.-139r.; 161r.-162r.; 192r.-193r.; 273r.-274r.

¹⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, cc. 305r.-306r.; 306v.-307r.; 308r.-309r.; 311r.-312r.; 342r.-343r.; 345r.-346r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 10v.-11r.; 35r.-36r.; 37r.-38r.; 38v.-39v.; 43r.-44v.; 46v.-48r.; 60v.-61v.; 62r.-63v.; 73r.-74v.; 82/a.r.-84r.; 84/r.-85v.; 119r.-120r.; 126v.-128r.; 128r.-129r.; 136r.-137r.; 166v.-168r.; 171r.-172r.; 174r.-175v.; 177r.-178v.; 218r.-220r.; 241r.-242r.; 242r.-244r.; 250v.-252r.; 258r.-260r.; 261v.-262v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 5v.-7r.; 7v.-8v.; 8v.-9v.; 10r.-12v.; 12v.-14r.; 14r.-15v.; 16r.-17r.; 17v.-18v.; 19v.-20v.; 47v.-49v.; 50r.-51v.; 27, 69v.-70v.; 75r.-76v.; 77r.-78v.; 78v.-

dell'attività mercantile ebraica a Ragusa, si colloca proprio in contemporanea con la fondazione dello scalo portuale di Spalato che avrebbe dovuto costituire, nella proposta al Senato da parte di Daniel Rodriguez, il principale avamposto commerciale di Venezia in Adriatico orientale¹⁷. La conflittualità guerreggiata e non della Serenissima con la Porta e la perdita della fortezza di Clissa che controllava la via che dalla città di Diocleziano andava verso Sarajevo non permisero però a Spalato di raggiungere un volume di affari pari a quello di Ragusa¹⁸.

Fig. 1. Galeone Raguseo, Stagno (Ston) Chiesa di San Girolamo. 16° secolo



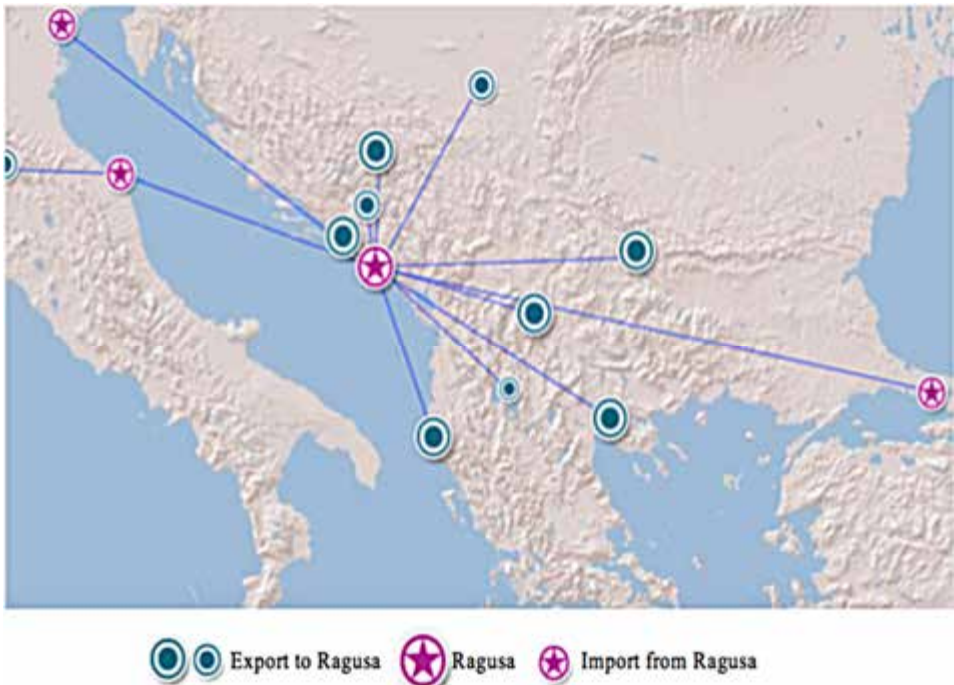
80r., 84v.-86r., 103v.-105r., 27, 113r.-115v., 116r.-117v., 125r.-126v., 128v.-130r., 159r.-160v., 164r.-165v., 165v.-167r., 167v.-168v.

¹⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 5r.-7r., 7v.-9r., 40r.-41v., 48v.-49v., 50v.-51v., 58v.-60v., 63v.-64v., 68v.-68r., 68r.-69v., 70r.-71v., 75r.-76v., 76v.-78r., 81v.-82/a.r., 104r.-105r., 104r.-105r., 114v.-115r., 116r.-117r., 117v.-118v., 120v.-121v., 121v.-123r., 190r.-191v., 193r.-194v., 195r.-196v., 197r.-198v., 198v.-199v., 200r.-202r., 202r.-203v., 204v.-205v., 207r.-207v., 208r.-209v., 211v.-213r., 215r.-216v., 244r.-245v., 263r.-264v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 44r.-45v., 52r.-53v., 54r.-55v., 56r.-57v., 59v.-60v., 86v.-88r., 89r.-90v., 91r.-92v., 93r.-94v., 94v.-96v., 96v.-98r., 96v.-98r., 100r.-101v., 105r.-107r., 107v.-109r., 109r.-110v., 111r.-112v., 127r.-128v.

¹⁷ G. NOVAK, *Židovi u Splitu*, Split 1920; D. KEČKEMET, *Židovi u provijesti Splita*, Split 2010²; R. PACI, *La 'scala' di Spalato e il commercio veneziano nei Balcani fra Cinque e Seicento*, Venezia 1971.

¹⁸ R. TOLOMEO, *Chiave di difesa e porta di Bosnia: la fortezza di Clissa*, in "Atti e Memorie della Società Dalmata di Storia Patria", s. 3, 1, 2013, pp. 31-72.

Fig. 2. Rete mercantile diretta di importazione ed esportazione di merci dei sefarditi via Ragusa



2. SOFIA-RAGUSA

Nella rete commerciale che collegava l'Europa balcanica a Costantinopoli un centro di altissima rilevanza era Sofia. Nel Cinquecento l'asse mercantile Ragusa-Sofia era ormai consolidato¹⁹. Il ruolo commerciale dei ragusei a Sofia e la stretta correlazione con gli ebrei della città bulgara può essere compreso analizzando l'attività del nobile Benedetto de' Resti che aveva tessuto nella città una rete d'affari che coprì gran parte dei Balcani orientali tra il 1588 e il 1605²⁰.

A Sofia era attiva negli ultimi decenni del Quattrocento una comunità di aske-naziti²¹, ma nel Cinquecento l'arrivo dei sefarditi a seguito della Battaglia di Mohács

¹⁹ M. MORONI, *Economie balcanico-danubiane e terminali adriatici. Reti mercantili tra Cinque e Seicento*, in "Proposte e ricerche. Economia e società nell'Italia centrale", 73, 2014, pp. 169-186.

²⁰ DAD, *Lettere di levante*, vol. 36, 86v, 129r.-129v.

²¹ F. ADANIR, *Religious Communities and Ethnic Groups under Imperial Ottoman and Hasburg Lands in Coparison*, in *The Historical Practice of Diversity. Transcultural Interactions from Early Modern Mediterranean to Postcolonial World*, a c. di D. HOERDER, C. HARZIG, A. SHUBERT, New York-Oxford 2003, pp. 54-86.

nel 1526 e del successivo *sürgüm* da Buda²² fecero pendere la bilancia commerciale in loro favore. Le componenti erano diventate tre: i sefarditi si sommarono agli ebrei tedeschi e alla componente romaniota²³.

I nuovi arrivati si inserirono abilmente nel mercato delle pelli in cooperazione con la rete di correligionari e parenti presenti nei Balcani e a Ragusa: Samuel Ergas, Salomon Oef, Abram Rubino, assicurarono merci per gli ebrei di Sofia destinate ad Ancona e a Venezia²⁴. Si trattava soprattutto di cuoi lavorati secondo la tradizionale arte conciaria bulgara che produceva pregiati cordovani ricercatissimi sui mercati della penisola italiana. Gli ebrei e i ragusei a Sofia erano spesso legati ad interessi comuni, ma a volte anche in concorrenza assumeva, senza che questo andasse discapito degli interessi della Repubblica. Ne è straordinaria testimonianza il registro a partita doppia di Benedetto Marino de' Resti²⁵.

Il commercio di Benedetto Marino de' Resti a Sofia coinvolse oltre ad altri ragusei ivi operanti, anche gli altri nobili della Repubblica: Vincenzo de' Pozza, Nicolò de' Menze, Giovanni de' Gondola, Giovanni de' Sorgo. Non solo, oltre a concludere affari con i bulgari e un corposo gruppo di mercanti ottomani, intrattene fitti scambi con almeno 26 mercanti ebrei. Le transazioni più consistenti in valori assoluti con gli ebrei a Sofia riguardarono gli acquisti di pellame e carisee per un totale di 812 ducati da Elia e Isaia Piade tra luglio e settembre del 1595²⁶ e dall'ebreo Caim tra ottobre e dicembre del 1597 per un totale di 1.833 ducati²⁷. I commerci con Caim alla fine del 1597 furono i più proficui sebbene non videro ulteriori sviluppi. L'ammontare complessivo degli scambi, che si sviluppano tutti in appena un quadrimestre, lascerebbe intendere che l'ebreo non risiedesse a Sofia ma fosse un mercante proveniente da una realtà economicamente più florida. Il mercante raguseo tornò a fare affari di una certa importanza con gli ebrei solo a partire dal 1599 quando a gennaio comprò pellame da Aron Ismael, per 150 ducati²⁸ e nella prima metà del mese di giugno concluse con questi un altro accordo commerciale

²² J. HACKER, *The 'Sürgün System' and Jewish Society in the Ottoman Empire during the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries, Ottoman and Turkish Jewry: Community and Leadership*, a c. di A. RODRIGUE Bloomington 1992, pp. 27-33; E. BENBASSA, A. RODRIGUE, *Storia degli Ebrei sefarditi*, cit. pp. 54-55.

²³ J. HACKER, *The Structure and Scope of Jewish Organization and self-Government in the ottoman Empire in the 15th-17th Centuries*, in *Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarihi Jongsresi: Trebliğler*, in "Türk tarih kutumu yayınları", a c. di V. MİLLETLERARASI, 26, 1990, n. 4, pp. 341-351, 344

²⁴ E. VEČEVA, *Ragusa e la Bulgaria nella storia degli altri Paesi*, in "Atti e memorie della Società Dalmata di Storia Patria", s. II, 13, 1990-1991, pp. 53-61.

²⁵ F. W. CARTER, *Dubrovnik. A classical City-State*, Londra-New York 1972; E. VEČEVA, *Benedetto Resti, un marchand de Raguse*, in "Atti e memorie della Società Dalmata di Storia Patria", s. 2, 13, 1988-1989, pp. 87-101; Benedetto de' Resti e suo padre Marino erano anche attivi ad ancona, dove furono tra i creditori della società di Paolo de' Giorgi per 350 ducati, al quale richiesero il saldo a seguito del fallimento della società. Per un breve cenno all'episodio si rinvia a S. BERTELLI, *Trittico Lucca, Ragusa, Boston. Tre città mercantili tra Cinque e Seicento*, Roma 2004, p. 169.

²⁶ DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c.90r.

²⁷ DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c.106r.

²⁸ DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c. 122r.

per 267 ducati e un altro con Caim Sanson per 268 ducati.²⁹ L'attività di Benedetto de' Resti coincise con una congiuntura economica particolare: tra la fine del XVI e l'inizio del XVII secolo l'economia della Porta viveva in piena inflazione tanto che l'aspro ottomano intorno all'anno 1600 si svalutò del 32%³⁰. Ne conseguì un generale incremento dei prezzi per i prodotti importati dai territori ottomani, aumenti che in parte erano bilanciati da un corso favorevole delle monete adriatiche³¹. Nell'estate del 1602 Moise Benasar vendette a Benedetto de' Resti merci per un totale di 232 ducati³² e Jacob Zonara per 135 ducati³³. L'ultima transazione di un certo rilievo tra il raguseo e gli ebrei in Bulgaria fu conclusa nel 1603 quando il de' Resti acquistò da Caim Sanson delle pregiatissime carisee turchesi per 260 ducati³⁴.

Il registro di Benedetto de' Resti è una testimonianza importantissima delle relazioni commerciali di un membro dell'élite ragusea nell'entroterra balcanico e nel suo complesso che offre la possibilità di approntare sia studi quantitativi di tipo squisitamente economico che analisi sociali sui legami con gli altri gruppi etnici.

Più in generale nei rapporti commerciali tra i ragusei e gli ebrei a Sofia non si nota mai una chiusura tra i due mondi e tra le rispettive reti. Spesso i contatti mercantili tra gli ebrei di Sofia e Ragusa erano caratterizzati da una netta interdipendenza reificata negli assi Sofia-Ragusa-Ancona e Sofia-Ragusa-Venezia³⁵. Solo quando si registrò un arretramento delle colonie dei mercanti della Repubblica di San Biagio si ebbero conflitti tra ebrei e ragusei che, come si è detto, rimasero nell'ordine della dialettica mercantile³⁶. Nel 1619, ad esempio, si ebbe una contesa relativa al controllo del mercato della lana che le autorità ragusee tentarono di dirimere il 23 luglio invitando le parti a vivere in pace senza tentare di costituire cartelli commerciali³⁷.

La presenza diretta dei sefarditi a Sofia era fondamentale per il controllo dei traffici commerciali verso Ragusa e in tal senso era importante stringere o rafforzare alleanze matrimoniali, come nel caso delle nozze nel 1626 tra Salomon Oef di Ragusa e sua cugina Donna Oef residente a Sofia. L'unione endogamica si perpetuava il network familiare attivo nella gestione dei traffici da Sofia ad Ancona via Ragusa³⁸.

²⁹ DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c. 142r.

³⁰ L'aspro ottomano agli inizi del Seicento passa da un cambio con il ducato di conto da 0,0125 a 0,0085; M. MORONI, *L'Impero di San Biagio. Ragusa e i commerci balcanici dopo la conquista turca (1521 -1620)*, Bologna 2011.

³¹ F. W. CARTER, *Dubrovnik. A classical City-State*, p. 381-385.

³² DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c.185r.

³³ DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c.185r.

³⁴ DAD, *Privata*, 43, Libro dell'amministrazione di Benedetto Marino di Resti, 1590-1605, c.192r.

³⁵ DAD, *Diversa Notaria*, 132, cc. 187v.-188r.; J. TADIC, *Jevreji u Dubrovniku*, pp. 218

³⁶ S. MÉZAN, *Les Juifs espagnols en Bulgarie*. Histoire. Statistique. Ethnographie, Sofia 1925, pp. 5-17; B. KREKIĆ, *The role of the Jews in Dubrovnik: Thirteenth-Sixteenth centuries*, in "Viator: medieval and Renaissance Studies", 4, 1973, pp. 257-272, 267.

³⁷ DAD, *Lettere di Levante*, 43, cc. 168r.-168v.; J. TADIC, *jevreji u Dubrovniku*, cit., pp. 217.

³⁸ DAD, *Diversa de Foris*, 93, cc. 246-248.

Nel 1641 gli ultimi coloni ragusei avevano ormai perso la loro posizione di privilegio sul mercato di Sofia e lamentavano che i funzionari locali ottomani pretendessero da loro il pagamento degli stessi tributi versati dagli ebrei e dagli altri mercanti stranieri nonostante i privilegi concessi del Sultano. Nel caso di mancato intervento da parte della madrepatria paventavano di essere costretti ad abbandonare il commercio a Sofia³⁹. In realtà si trattava di un ultimo tentativo di salvare quote di mercato residue. Le ribellioni, la peste e le imposte sempre più alte portarono alla riduzione del numero dei ragusei attivi nella città, sino alla scomparsa della colonia⁴⁰. Lo stesso peso economico di Sofia nel contesto balcanico si ridimensionò al punto che anche i contatti commerciali indiretti tenuti attraverso la rete ebraica si ridussero. Indice questo della periferizzazione dei mercati balcanici orientali per Ragusa e per i suoi ebrei, e al contempo segno evidente della crisi economica che aveva ormai travolto anche gli stessi mercati adriatici.

Fig. 3. SNA delle attività commerciali di Benedetto Marino Resti con gli ebrei a Sofia



³⁹ I. SAKAZOV, *Търговията на България с Анкона през 16 и 17 в.*, Sofia 1929; J. TADIĆ, *Јевреји и Дубровник*, cit., p. 217

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 218

3. VALONA-RAGUSA

A Valona, importante porto ottomano dell'Adriatico meridionale, all'antica ai romanoti subentrarono tra la fine del XV e gli inizi del XVI secolo⁴¹, i sefarditi e gli provenienti dal Sud Italia e da Ancona. La città si trasformò rapidamente in un importante centro multi-etnico con una componente ebraica che secondo alcune stime costituiva una fetta consistente della popolazione, almeno un terzo del totale. Indice dell'arrivo di un cospicuo numero di ebrei fu la costruzione di una nuova sinagoga agli inizi del XVI secolo⁴². Vi operarono almeno una decina di potenti famiglie di mercanti sefarditi: i Coduto, i Catinella, i Trinca, i Gratiano, gli Arach, i Benvenisti, i Mazza e i Cabiglio. La loro rapida ascesa era legata al ruolo di intermediari con gli ebrei macedoni e di Salonico con cui svilupparono considerevoli scambi e sul piano finanziario garantirono prestiti con interessi tra il 20% e il 30%⁴³.

Dalla seconda metà del Cinquecento i sefarditi a Valona raggiunsero una certa egemonia sugli altri gruppi ebraici e costruirono un network commerciale con i principali porti adriatici. La mediazione dei ragusei in questa fase si rivelò importantissima nel collegare i porti di Valona, Ancona e Venezia. Da Valona partivano per Ragusa carichi di pregiata seta d'Oriente, cui si aggiungevano cordovani, grano, valloanea e lana⁴⁴.

Esempio della rete mercantile che si sviluppava dalla città ottomana sono le assicurazioni ragusee, nel gennaio 1595 il noto mercante e rabbino Salomon Oef aveva provveduto ad assicurare al tasso del 3% il carico per 2.756 ducati⁴⁵ e nello stesso anno Daniel Coduto commerciò da Valona, via Ragusa con Ancona e con Venezia rasi, cammellotti e seta per un valore assicurativo pari a 1.838 ducati e Salomon Albala, con la solita mediazione di Salomon Oef, importò a Valona rasi per un valore assicurativo di 438 ducati sulla settia del rais Abdullah Pirus⁴⁶.

La fitta rete di legami personali e di relazioni economiche consentì agli ebrei e in particolare ai membri della famiglia Coduto di affermarsi come candidati privile-

⁴¹ B. KREKIĆ, *Gli Ebrei a Ragusa nel Cinquecento*, cit., pp. 835-836.

⁴² B. HRABAK, *Jevreji u Albaniji od kraja XIII do kraja XVIII veka i njihove veze sa Dubrovnikom*, in "Zabornik", 1, 1971, pp. 55- 98.

⁴³ *Ibidem*

⁴⁴ In due operazioni distinte entrambe datate al 27 luglio 1592 Sabatai Juda di Valona inviò ad Ancona grazie alla mediazione di Sabatai Ibuli a Ragusa 37 balle, contenenti 5.580 cordovani, sulla nave di Rusco di Giovanni ad un tasso assicurativo del 2,5% per un valore assicurato di 962 ducati; D. A. D., *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 28, cc. 108v.-112v.; Il 13 maggio 1593 Salomon Albala con la mediazione a Ragusa di Salomon Oef assicurò per 262 ducati le merci inviate da Valona ad Ancona. Lo stesso Salomon figurava inoltre tra gli assicuratori per una quota pari al 17% del capitale totale garantito; DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 19, cc. 100v.-102r.

⁴⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 30, cc. 149r.-150r.,152r.-173v.

⁴⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 156v.-158r.

giati per l'ufficio consolare a Valona nei secoli XVI e XVII⁴⁷. La cospicua quantità di missive indirizzata dal Consiglio maggiore e del Rettore ai consoli di Valona evidenzia il grado di integrazione degli ebrei nel tessuto economico della Repubblica e la loro peculiare opportunità di agire all'interno dei mercati ottomani per tutelare gli interessi di Ragusa⁴⁸. Il console veniva munificamente remunerato per la sua condotta esemplare e per i suoi preziosi servizi⁴⁹, soprattutto per le preziose informazioni sulle oscillazioni dei pezzi sulla piazza di Valona. La città ricoprì infatti un ruolo significativo nelle esportazioni ragusee prevalentemente dal 1593 al 1604 e tra il 1620 e il 1625. Una comparazione con i dati delle esportazioni degli ebrei ragusei verso Ancona e Venezia dimostra però chiaramente che Valona per quanto importante era ben lontana dall'aver un ruolo di primo piano nel mercato dei sefarditi ragusei in Adriatico. Per una comparazione, nell'anno 1600, il picco massimo delle esportazioni degli ebrei verso Valona, fu pari ad un valore assicurativo di 2.900 ducati⁵⁰, mentre gli stessi assicurarono merci verso Ancona per 24.422 ducati e verso Venezia per 14.321 ducati (vedi grafico 2).

Valona costituì dunque per Ragusa lo snodo commerciale per l'importazione di prodotti dall'impero ottomano, grano innanzitutto, ma anche pellami provenienti dall'entroterra balcanico e pegola⁵¹. Dunque la longeva presenza dell'istituzione consolare della Repubblica di San Biagio nella città albanese è interpretabile in tal senso.

Tab. 1. **Consoli ebrei della Repubblica di Ragusa a Valona**

Consoli ebrei della Repubblica di Ragusa a Valona		
Nome e cognome	Inizio ufficio	Termine ufficio
Isach Trincha	1527	-
Angelo Samuel	1541	1556
Jacob Coduto	1557	1580
Abram Coduto	1580	1609
Daniel Coduto	1609	1627
Angelo Coduto	1637	1646

⁴⁷ I. MITIĆ, *O konzularnoj službi Dubrovačke Republike*, in "Pomorski zbornik", 2, 1962, pp. 1733-1745; IDEM, *I consoli ragusei nel Mediterraneo*, in "Bollettino dell'atlante linguistico del Mediterraneo", 13-15, 1971-1973, pp. 449-453; IDEM, *Konzulati i konzularna služba starog Dubrovnika*, Dubrovnik 1973; B. KREKIĆ, *Gli Ebrei a Ragusa nel Cinquecento*, cit., p. 841.

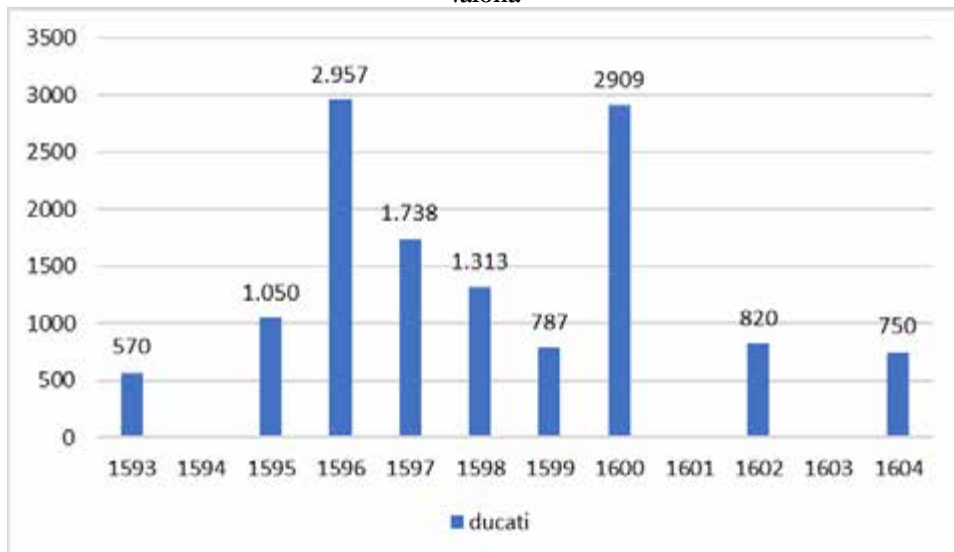
⁴⁸ DAD, *Lettere di Levante*, 42, 30r.-30v.

⁴⁹ DAD, *Lettere di Levante*, 42, c.268v.

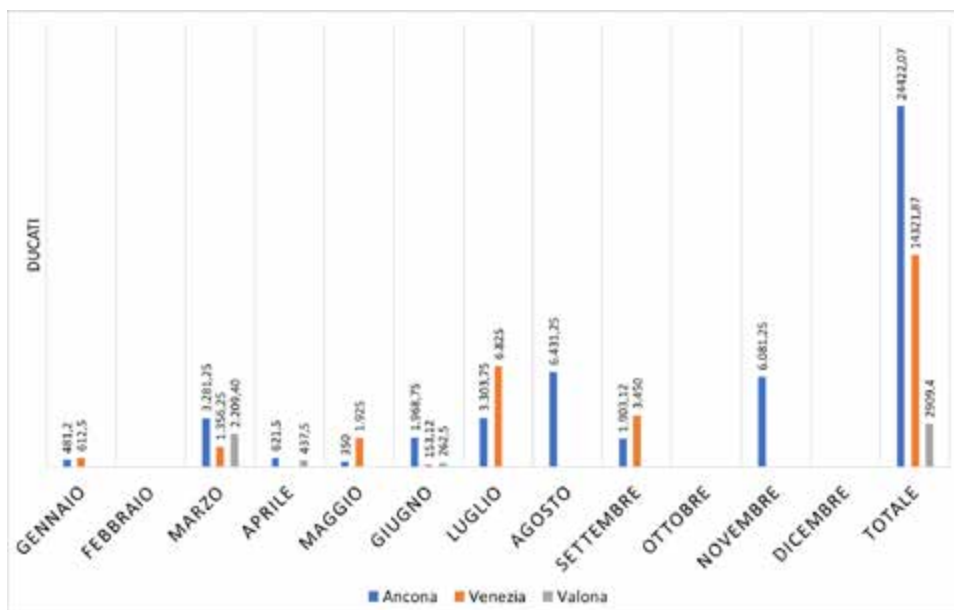
⁵⁰ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 40, cc. 199v.-200v., 200v.-201v., 201v.-203r., 214v.-215v., 252v.-253v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 41, cc. 48r.-49r.

⁵¹ Il commercio di pegola fu oggetto di particolari attenzioni da parte delle autorità ragusee che ordinavano periodicamente ai consoli a Valona di seguire minuziosamente le fasi di carico e le sorti dei bastimenti, a tal proposito nel marzo 1609 il rettore scrisse al console Jacob Coduto DAD, *Lettere di Levante*, 42, 11r.-12r. 27.03.1609 e 30.03.1609; una missiva dello stesso tenore fu inviata al successore di Daniel nell'ufficio consolare di Valona, Angelo Coduto DAD, *Lettere di Levante*, 47, c. 226v. 27.09.1637.

Graf. 1. Valore assicurativo delle merci esportate dagli ebrei sulla rotta Ragusa-Valona



Tab. 2. Comparazione delle assicurazioni sulle esportazioni dei sefarditi sulle Rotte Ragusa-Valona, Ragusa-Ancona e Ragusa-Venezia nell'anno 1600



4. RAGUSA-ANCONA

Ancona era il porto privilegiato per le esportazioni degli ebrei Ragusei in Adriatico. Un'attenta analisi dei documenti e una storiografia consolidata consente di affermare che quello tra la città dorica e la Repubblica di San Biagio era uno degli assi commerciali più forti dell'Adriatico⁵². Si trattava di un binomio che mise particolarmente in difficoltà Venezia tra la fine del Cinquecento e gli inizi del Seicento, tanto da indurre la Serenissima a tentare una guerra doganale nei confronti dei porti adriatici che ostacolavano la sua egemonia commerciale. La Repubblica di san Marco puntava a battere la concorrenza di Ragusa e di Ancona imponendo nel 1591 i *mezzi noli* un'imposta sui prodotti provenienti dagli altri scali portuali. A questa strategia di ridimensionamento dell'asse Ancona-Ragusa era strettamente legata alla creazione della 'scala' di Spalato, un progetto sottoposto al Senato dell'ebreo pontentino Daniel Rodriguez nel 1573 ma preso in considerazione solo nel 1588⁵³. La risposta dell'asse Ragusa-Ancona non si fece attendere⁵⁴. Nel 1591 Ragusa costruì un nuovo bazar per i mercanti turchi e nel 1594 Clemente VIII concesse libertà di commercio ad Ancona a tutti gli operatori, inclusi gli ebrei e i levantini, ed esentò da dazio tutte le merci che fossero giunte nella città delle Marche senza aver sostato presso altro porto⁵⁵. Nel 1592 a fronte di esportazioni verso Ancona per un valore assicurato di 23.092 ducati, gli ebrei importarono merci per 3.695 ducati⁵⁶. Le importazioni da Ancona erano dunque di gran lunga inferiori alle esportazioni e di solito riguardavano merci di pregio destinate al mercato interno: nel giugno 1592 Jacob Bencastiel si assicurò per 1.500 ducati per la seta caricata ad Ancona sulla nave di Colenda di Gregorio da consegnare a Ragusa al tasso del 2,5%⁵⁷; nel settem-

⁵² T. POPOVIĆ, *Dubrovnik i Ankona u jevrejskoj trgovini XVI veka*, in "Zbornik", 1, 1971, pp. 51-54; R. SAMARDŽIĆ, *Dubrovački Jevreji u trgovini XVI I XVII veka*, in "Zbornik", 1, 1971, pp. 21-39; S. ANSELMINI, *Gli ebrei marchigiani nella prima metà del Cinquecento*, cit., pp. 723-727; W. ANGELINI, *Tra Cinquecento e tardo Settecento: preparazione e maturità dell'attività mercantile degli ebrei ad Ancona*, *The Mediterranean and the Jews*, a c. di A. TOAFF, S. SCHWARZFUCHS, pp. 11-38; più in generale sui ragusei ad Ancona: C. MARINUCCI, *Mercanti ragusani ed ebrei ad Ancona nei rogiti del notaio Alessandro Postumi, 1600-1619*, in "Proposte e ricerche. Economia e società nell'Italia centrale", 25, 1990, pp. 194-214; sulle famiglie ebraiche attive ad ancona si veda il caso dei Coen studiato da L. ANDREONI, *Una nazione in commercio: gli ebrei di Ancona (sec. XVII-XVIII)*; e quello degli Oef e dei Maestro analizzato in V. BONAZZOLI, *Commerciare dal ghetto. La società Oef-Magistri in Ancona a metà '600*, Ancona 2000; C. MARINUCCI, *Mercanti ragusani ed ebrei ad Ancona nei rogiti del notaio Alessandro Postumi, 1600- 1619*, in "Proposte e ricerche. Economia e società nell'Italia centrale", 25, 1990, pp. 194-214.

⁵³ R. PACI, *La 'scala' di Spalato e il commercio veneziano nei Balcani fra cinque e seicento*, cit..

⁵⁴ IDEM, *La rivalità commerciale tra Ancona e Spalato (1590-1645)*, pp. 278-286; IDEM, *La concorrenza Ragusa-Spalato tra la fine del Cinquecento e il primo Seicento*, in *Ragusa e il Mediterraneo*, a c. di A. DI VITTORIO, pp. 185-196; prospettiva recentemente riproposta in S. F. FABIJANEC, *La développement commercial de Split et Zadar au XV^e-XVI^e Siecles. Un commerce transitaire entre l'Europe centrale et la méditerranée*, Parigi 2011, p. 174.

⁵⁵ M. MORONI, *L'Impero di San Biagio. Ragusa e i commerci balcanici*, cit., pp. 147-150.

⁵⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 59-60.

⁵⁷ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 85v.-87r.

bre dello stesso anno Abram Abenun per conto di Samuel Mazaod ebreo veneziano si assicurò per 1.006 ducati per la seta caricata ad Ancona da importare nel porto della Repubblica, sempre al tasso del 2,5%⁵⁸. La seta ovviamente non era l'unico prodotto che Ragusa importava dal porto dorico. E ancora il 18 dicembre Solomon Cabiglio, Jacob Danon e Moise Danon importarono a Ragusa per conto dell'ebreo Isach Sasso di Bitola, rasi per un valore assicurativo di 500 ducati caricati ad Ancona da Aron Amadio per conto di Joseph Misracu sul vascello di Marco di Giovanni⁵⁹. Simon Abencabillo nel 1593 esportava carta da Ancona a Ragusa⁶⁰. Nel 1595 Daniel Abeatar gestì un considerevole lotto lana che inviò negli empori della città dorica assicurandolo per 3.063 ducati al tasso del 3%. Tuttavia l'imbarcazione subì dei danni nei pressi dell'isola veneziana di Curzola e una parte delle lane divennero inservibili. Le procedure di indennizzo potevano richiedere anni e produrre intricati contenziosi. Il 22 agosto 1596 Daniel Abratar dichiarò di aver ricevuto dagli assicuratori il 9% del capitale assicurato⁶¹.

Anche le donne profittarono della rotta commerciale con Ancona usufruendo dei servizi dei procuratori a Ragusa per inviare merci nel porto dorico. Il 18 aprile 1590, Sara di Salomon Bensaal si assicurò per 400 ducati su 3 tavole di cammellotti inviate ad Ancona sul naviglio di Piero di Biagio al tasso del 2,25%⁶². Il 4 marzo 1591 Jacob e Moise Danon assicurarono altre 5 tavole di cammellotti per conto di Sara per altri 875 ducati⁶³. I Danon sembrerebbero i mediatori prediletti della sefardita: il 14 ottobre 1591 l'abile mercante ebrea si assicurò ad un tasso del 2,5% attraverso Moise e Jacob per altri 744 ducati su 8 tavole di cammellotti sulla stessa rotta. Le mercanzie furono valutate 1.487 ducati, dunque il valore assicurativo in questo caso ammontava al 50% del valore reale⁶⁴. Sempre il 4 marzo 1591 i fratelli Danon assicurarono per conto di Clara d'Aragona 6 tavole di cammellotti caricate sulla nave di Bartolomeo di Marino Macetovich al tasso del 3%, per l'equivalente di 1.137 ducati. Tra gli assicuratori figurava anche un nobile, Michele de' Sorgo, e i soliti mercanti assicuratori cristiani: Demetrio Serratura, Nicolò Caramunda, Aloisio Gigliati, Federico Ogerio⁶⁵. Anche Clara era un'abile mercante e non agiva esclusiva-

⁵⁸ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 195r.-196v.

⁵⁹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 274v.-276r.

⁶⁰ J. TADIĆ, *Jevreji u Dubrovniku*, p. 167.

⁶¹ Nondimeno il 30 marzo 1597 Daniel Abeatar denunciò gli assicuratori Giovanni Marino Eslavich, Nicolò Draghi, Nantolo de Nale, Bernardo Zuroni, e gli ebrei Abram Cusi, Jacob Danon come procuratore di Moise Danon per il danno subito a Curzola. A loro volta gli assicuratori replicarono di non essere tenuti ad ulteriori rimborsi, dal momento che la contestazione giungeva solo dopo la vendita delle merci da parte di Daniel mentre che l'assicurato era tenuto ad informare preventivamente gli assicuratori di eventuali spese aggiuntive e relativa alterazione delle mercanzie assicurate DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 116r.-117v., 32, 118r.-119r.

⁶² DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, cc. 67r.-68r.

⁶³ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, cc. 7v.-9v.

⁶⁴ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 105r.-107r.

⁶⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 5r.-7r.

mente sull'asse Ragusa-Ancona ma su un bacino più ampio. Il 12 giugno infatti sempre grazie a Jacob e Moise Danon assicurò al tasso del 6% per 437 ducati un carico di panni veneziani caricati nel porto di Ragusa sul galeone di Nicolò di Trifone da Perasto diretto a Costantinopoli⁶⁶. Accanto a queste figure femminili che agiscono come mercanti esperte, saltuariamente comparivano anche altre sefardite che operavano su valori ben più ridotti. Mira Cavaliero, ad esempio, che assicurò cuoi per Ancona per 44 ducati⁶⁷ o Luna di Joseph Gaon che il 29 dicembre 1595 assicurò una tavola di cammellotti al tasso del 3% per 219 ducati⁶⁸.

Le spezie provenienti dai mercati ottomani erano particolarmente ricercate nelle piazze dell'Adriatico occidentale. Accanto a modesti quantitativi di cannella⁶⁹, troviamo assicurazioni per cifre importanti relative al mercato del pepe. Nel quinquennio tra il 1591 e il 1595 Salomon Oef, Aron Abeatar Salomon Cabiglio, Moises e David Maestro ed altri assicurarono 48 balle di pepe diretto ad Ancona per un totale di 2.694 ducati⁷⁰. Anche la fascia di assicurazione dei chiodi di garofano era ampia: oscillava da un minimo del 33,33% fino al totale del valore reale che si aggirava intorno ai 262,5 ducati per collo. Nel solo anno 1595 furono assicurate partite di questa spezia imbarcate nel porto di Ragusa pari a 4.725 ducati che furono regolarmente consegnate negli empori di Ancona⁷¹.

L'indaco, ricercato colorante, fu assicurato dai sefarditi tra il 1589 e il 1596 per 1.825 ducati⁷². Nell'ultimo quinquennio del Cinquecento il valore di tale prodotto si aggirava intorno ai 219 ducati per collo e dai dati a disposizione è possibile dedurre che questo veniva assicurato salvo rare eccezioni tra il 60% e l'80% del suo valore reale. Le proporzioni del mercato d'esportazione cambiano prendendo in considerazione alcuni tra prodotti più commerciati dagli ebrei. Sabatai Ibuli, Salomon Oef e Joseph Benmelech (alias Giuseppe Benrei), insieme ai sefarditi nel 1592 esportarono ad Ancona 216 balle di cordovani per un valore assicurato di 6.594 ducati⁷³. Nell'arco temporale 1590-1595 gli ebrei Ragusei assicurarono cammellotti per

⁶⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 129r.-130v.

⁶⁷ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 109r.-110r.

⁶⁸ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 168r.-169r.

⁶⁹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 24, cc. 220v.-221v., 287v.-288r.

⁷⁰ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 58v.-60v.; 68v.-68r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 52r.-53v.; 54r.-55v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 69r.-70v.; 291v.-293r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 246r.-247r.; 248r.-249v.

⁷¹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 105v.-107v.; 134/a.v.-135v.; 152r.-153v.; 254v.-255v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 91v.-92v.; 165r.-166v.

⁷² DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 17, cc. 222r.-222v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 24r.-25r.; 291v.-293r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 29, cc. 161v.-162v. *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 247r.-248v. 250r.-251r.; 251r.-252r. *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 3r.-5r.

⁷³ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 26r.-27r.; 78v.-80r.; 80v.-82r.; 108v.-110v.; 110v.-112v.; 112r.-114r.; 114r.-115v.; 116r.-117v.; 119v.-121r.; 123r.-124v.; 128v.-130r.; 130v.-131v.; 145v.-147v.; 193r.-194v.; 206r.-208r.; 211r.-213v.; 28, 213v.-215r.; 246v.-248r.

39.389 ducati⁷⁴. Allargando la prospettiva all'insieme dei traffici nel triennio 1595-1597 l'asse commerciale ebraico Ancona-Ragusa registrò il maggior volume di esportazioni assicurate: 55.847 ducati nel 1595⁷⁵, 66.376 ducati nel 1596⁷⁶ e 50.810 ducati nel 1597 per un totale di 173.033 ducati⁷⁷.

⁷⁴ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, 67r.-68r.; 228r.-229r. *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, 5r.-7r.; 7v.-9r.; 48v.-49v.; 63v.-64v.; 68r.-69v.; 70r.-71v.; 81v.-82/a.r.; 114v.-115r.; 116r.-117r.; 120v.-121v.; 190r.-191v.; 193r.-194v.; 197r.-198v.; 200r.-202r.; 204v.-205v.; 211v.-213r.; 215r.-216v.; 244r.-245v.; 263r.-264v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 86v.-88r.; 91r.-92v.; 93r.-94v.; 96v.-98r.; 100r.-101v.; 105r.-107r.; 109r.-110v.; 111r.-112v.; 191r.-192v.; 206r.-207v.; 208r.-210v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 70v.-72v.; 142r.-143v.; 170r.-171v.; 202r.-204r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 29, cc. 26r.-27r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 30, 1r.-2r.; 85v.-86v.; 87r.-88r.; 91v.-93r.; 244r.-245v.; 246r.-247v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 132r.-133v.; 134r.-134/a.r.; 135v.-137r.; 137r.-138v.; 206r.-207r.; 207v.-208v.; 215r.-216r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 5r.-6r.; 23v.-24v.; 27v.-29r.; 30r.-31r.; 31v.-32v.; 165r.-166v.; 167r.-168r.; 168r.-169r.

⁷⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 30, cc. 127r.-128r.; 128v.-129v.; 147v.-148v.; 215v.-217r.; 227v.-228r.; 238r.-239v.; 239r.-239v.; 239v.-241r.; 241v.-242v.; 244r.-245v.; 246r.-247v.; 247v.-249r.; 250v.-252v.; DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 69r.-70v.; 105v.-107v.; 108v.-109v.; 132r.-133v.; 134r.-134/a.r.; 134/a.v.-135v.; 135v.-137r.; 137r.-138v.; 152r.-153v.; 170r.-171r.; 171v.-172v.; 173r.-174v.; 175r.-177r.; 177r.-178v.; 206r.-207r.; 207v.-208v.; 209v.-210v.; 210v.-211v.; 213v.-214v.; 215r.-216r.; 216r.-217v.; 220r.-222r.; 222r.-223v.; 223v.-225r.; 225r.-226r.; 226v.-227v.; 228r.-229r.; 240r.-241r.; 244v.-246r.; 246r.-247r.; 247r.-248v.; 248r.-249v.; 250r.-251r.; 251r.-252r.; 254v.-255v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 3r.-5r.; 5r.-6r.; 6v.-7v.; 8r.-9r.; 11r.-12r.; 22r.-23r.; 23v.-24v.; 24v.-26r.; 27v.-29r.; 30r.-31r.; 31v.-32v.; 45v.-46v.; 59r.-60r.; 62r.-63r.; 62r.-64v.; 75r.-76r.; 32, 82v.-84r.; 87r.-88v.; 89r.-90v.; 91v.-92v.; 93r.-94r.; 98v.-100r.; 106r.-107r.; 109r.-110r.; 116r.-117v.; 118r.-119r.; 135r.-136r.; 150r.-151v.; 165r.-166v.; 167r.-168r.; 168r.-169r.

⁷⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 181r.-182r.; 182r.-183r.; 183v.-184v.; 184v.-185v.; 191r.-192v.; 193r.-194r.; 202r.-203r.; 234r.-235v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 33, cc. 5v.-7r.; 18v.-19v.; 23r.-24v.; 24v.-26r.; 36r.-37v.; 39r.-40r.; 41v.-42v.; 49r.-50r.; 52v.-53v.; 53v.-54v.; 69r.-69v.; 75r.-76r.; 89r.-90r.; 90r.-91v.; 106v.-107v.; 109v.-110v.; 110v.-112r.; 112r.-113r.; 118r.-119r.; 128v.-130r.; 130r.-131v.; 133-134v.; 134v.-135v.; 136r.-137r.; 137r.-138r.; 138v.-139v.; 139v.-141r.; 145r.-146v.; 152v.-153v.; 155v.-156v.; 158r.-159r.; 159v.-160r.; 161r.-162r.; 162v.-163v.; 166r.-167r.; 169v.-170r.; 170r.-171r.; 171r.-172r.; 195v.-196v.; 200r.-201v.; 209v.-210v.; 210v.-212v.; 217v.-219r.; 219r.-220r.; 220r.-221r.; 221v.-222v.; 222v.-223v.; 227r.-228r.; 228v.-229v.; 229v.-230v.; 230v.-231v.; 233v.-234r.; 234v.-234v.; 235v.-236v.; 237r.-238r.; 241r.-242v.; 242r.-243r.; 244r.-246r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 34, cc. 21v.-22v.; 22v.-23v.; 28v.-29v.; 45v.-46v.; 47r.-48v.; 53r.-54v.; 54v.-56r.; 58r.-59v.; 60r.-63v.; 90v.-91v.; 109v.-110v.; 116v.-118r.; 19r.-120r.; 162r.-163v.; 167r.-168v.; 169r.-170r.; 170v.-172r.; 172v.-173v.; 173v.-175r.; 175v.-176v.; 177r.-178v.; 180r.-181r.; 181v.-182v.; 183r.-184r.; 184v.-185v.; 187v.-188r.; 194v.-195v.; 199r.-200v.; 235r.-237r.; 237v.-239r.; 254r.-255r.; 255r.-256r.; 258v.-259r.; 259v.-260v.; 260v.-261v.; 262r.-262v.; 263r.-263v.; 264r.-264v.

⁷⁷ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 35, cc. 53v.-55r.; 66r.-67v.; 85r.-86r.; 86r.-87r.; 87v.-88v.; 90r.-91r.; 92v.-93v.; 93v.-94v.; 97r.-98r.; 99v.-100v.; 100v.-101v.; 106v.-107v.; 108r.-109v.; 114r.-116v.; 128v.-129v.; 129v.-130v.; 134r.-135r.; 136v.-137v.; 138r.-139r.; 180v.-182r.; 182r.-183v.; 183v.-184v.; 185r.-185v.; 185r.-187r.; 187r.-188r.; 191r.-192r.; 195v.-196r.; 196v.-197r.; 197v.-198r.; 198v.-199r.; 219r.-220r.; 221r.-221v.; 245v.-246v.; 256r.-247v.; 247v.-248v.; 249r.-249v.; 250r.-251r.; 251r.-252r.; 252v.-253r.; 253r.-254r.; 256r.-257r.; 257r.-257v.; 258r.-258v.; 258v.-259v.; 259v.-260v.; 260r.-260v.; 261r.-261v.; 267r.-268r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 36, cc. 23r.-24r.; 24v.-25v.; 36v.-37v.; 38r.-39r.; 39r.-40r.; 44r.-45r.; 45v.-46v.; 46v.-47v.; 51v.-52r.; 52v.-53r.; 53v.-54r.; 55v.-56v.; 57r.-58r.; 68v.-69v.; 72r.-73r.; 84r.-85r.; 85v.-86r.; 86v.-87v.; 88r.-89r.; 124r.-125r.; 126r.-127r.; 129v.-130v.; 130r.-132r.; 141v.-142r.; 144r.-145r.; 173v.-175r.; 192r.-193r.; 195r.-196v.; 196v.-198r.; 202r.-203r.; 209v.-211r.; 214r.-215r.

Uno dei pochi registri doganali preservati nell'Archivio di Stato di Ancona relativo agli anni Trenta del Seicento⁷⁸ anche se non riporta sempre la tipologia dei prodotti, costituisce una preziosa testimonianza di una fase di depressione economica adriatica che coprì il decennio 1635-1644⁷⁹. Nel registro sono annotati alcuni colli contenenti rasi destinati al mercato della città dorica. Nel novembre 1635 furono registrate alla dogana in tutto 4 casse di rasi: una di Salomon Maestro⁸⁰, una dell'ebreo anconitano Cagli e tre destinate ai sefarditi Oef e Franco⁸¹. Nel gennaio dell'anno successivo gli stessi mercanti ricevettero ulteriori 3 casse⁸². Nel febbraio 1636 4 casse di rasi erano destinate a Salomon Maestro⁸³. L'ultima registrazione relativa agli ebrei riguarda una balla di fiandre importata da Moise Sepillo il 17 giugno 1636⁸⁴.

Nel decennio 1587-1596 gli ebrei inviarono merci ad Ancona per un valore assicurativo di 215.181 ducati⁸⁵, nel decennio 1597-1606 per 162.025 ducati⁸⁶, dal 1607 al 1616 143.034 ducati, dal 1617 al 1626 244.977 ducati⁸⁷. Il declino dei commerci delle esportazioni divenne palese a partire dagli anni Trenta del Seicento quando le assicurazioni sulle merci degli ebrei si ridussero a 69.507 ducati nel decennio 1627-1636, salvo una grande rispesa economica nel biennio 1633-1634 in cui gli ebrei assicurarono merci per 39.072 ducati⁸⁸. A cavallo degli anni Trenta la generale congiuntura economica negativa travolse anche i traffici adriatici e di conseguenza le assicurazioni di merci da parte degli ebrei verso Ancona si ridussero a 29.737 ducati nel decennio 1637-1646⁸⁹.

⁷⁸ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI ANCONA, ARCHIVIO COMUNALE DI ANCONA (ASAN, ACAN), *Dogana*, Registro delle entrate, fiere 1635-1637.

⁷⁹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 58-60.

⁸⁰ ASAN, ACAN, *Dogana*, Registro delle entrate, fiere 1635-1637, c.1r.

⁸¹ ASAN, ACAN, *Dogana*, Registro delle entrate, fiere 1635-1637, fol.1r.

⁸² ASAN, ACAN, *Dogana*, Registro delle entrate, fiere 1635-1637, fol.1r.

⁸³ ASAN, ACAN, *Dogana*, Registro delle entrate, fiere 1635-1637, c.4r.-5r.

⁸⁴ SSAN, ACAN, *Dogana*, Registro delle entrate, fiere 1635-1637, c.32r.

⁸⁵ 316 contratti assicurativi contenuti nei volumi DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 21-34.

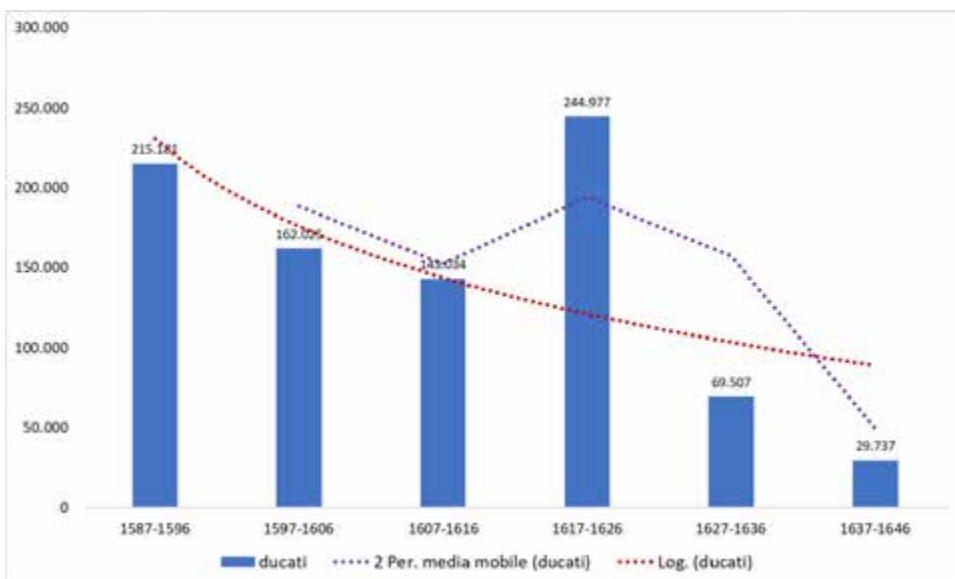
⁸⁶ DAD, *Noli e Securità not.*, 35-47.

⁸⁷ DAD, *Noli e Securità not.*, 48-52.

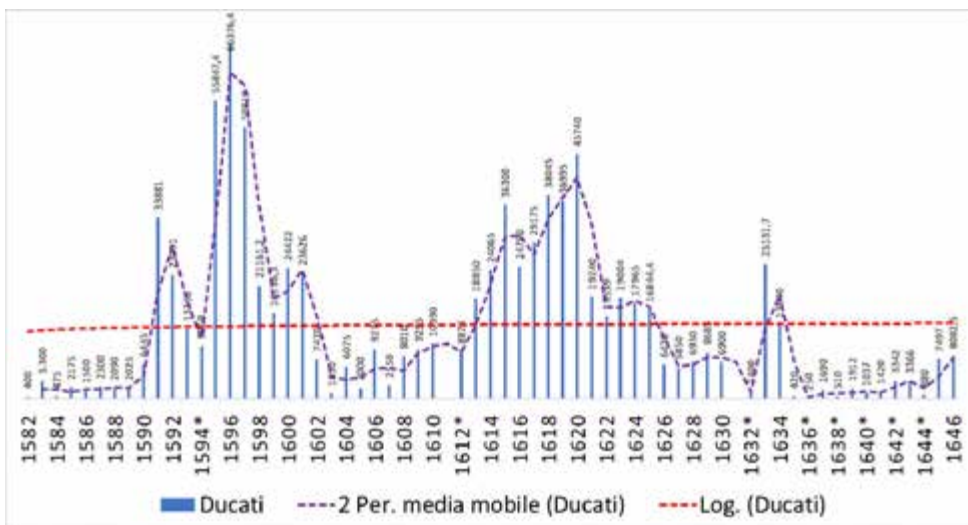
⁸⁸ DAD, *Noli e Securità not.*, 52-57.

⁸⁹ DAD, *Noli e Securità not.*, 57-59.

Graf. 3. Valore assicurativo delle merci esportate dagli ebrei sulla rotta Ragusa-Ancona (per decenni)



Graf. 4. Valore assicurativo delle merci esportate dagli ebrei sulla rotta Ragusa-Ancona (per anni)



5. RAGUSA-VENEZIA

La profonda compenetrazione dei mercati delle due repubbliche è l'evidente prova che la storia economica delle due città non può essere scissa⁹⁰. Una delle tante testimonianze della stretta interdipendenza delle economie adriatiche è la presenza del notevole Martolo de' Giorgi a Venezia. Il registro commerciale privato del nobile raguseo, che copre con dovizia di particolari il triennio 1580-1583 è una delle prove documentarie più evidenti del legame Ragusa-Venezia.

Il mercante raguseo commerciava con uno stretto gruppo di ebrei prevalentemente levantini e anconitani, appena sei, ma il valore complessivo dei traffici era abbastanza elevato. Con il levantino Joseph Sansone scambiò merci per un valore di 2.839 ducati nel 1580, di cui 1.179 per delle partite di cammellotti⁹¹. Il rapporto commerciale Sansone-de' Giorgi proseguì per tutta la permanenza del mercante raguseo a Venezia: nel 1581 conclusero affari insieme per 1.314 ducati, nel 1582 per 504 ducati. Nell'ottobre dell'anno seguente comprò con un anticipo di 154 ducati dal levantino veneziano 2/3 di una partita di cammellotti da inviare a Londra⁹². Il saldo, che ammontava a 789 ducati, fu versato dal de' Giorgi nell'aprile del 1584⁹³.

La partita doppia del de' Giorgi testimonia che talvolta i mercanti cristiani operavano per conto di un ebreo. È il caso dei soci Stefano Benincasa e Giovanni Napi di Ancona che il 24 e il 31 ottobre 1580 conclusero con il mercante raguseo due transazioni per un valore complessivo di 678 ducati per conto dell'ebreo Joseph Membre⁹⁴. Rispetto alla continuità di relazione con Joseph Sansone, i contatti dell'ebreo di Ancona Samuel Chresca furono invece solo occasionali. Con questi il raguseo concluse affari nel luglio 1581 per 300 ducati attraverso il banco di Angelo di Salomon⁹⁵. Sporadici furono anche i contatti con i fratelli Moise e Isach Versati di Venezia, circoscritti a una compravendita data tra il 18 e il 19 luglio 1582 che

⁹⁰ M. AYMARD, *Venise, Raguse et le commerce du blé pendant la seconde moitié du XVI siècle*, Parigi 1966; S. ANSELMINI, *Venezia, Ragusa, Ancona, tra Cinque e Seicento. Un momento della storia mercantile del Medio Adriatico*, Ancona 1969; A. DI VITTORIO, *Tendenze e orientamenti nella storiografia marittima ragusea*, in *Ragusa (Dubrovnik). Una Repubblica adriatica Saggi di storia economica e finanziaria*, a c. di A. DI VITTORIO, S. ANSELMINI, P. PIERUCCI, Bologna 1994, pp. 101-138; B. KREKIĆ, *Unequal rivals: essays on relations between Dubrovnik and Venice in the 13th and 14th centuries*, Zagreb-Dubrovnik 2007; E. IVETIĆ, *L'Adriatico come spazio storico transnazionale*, in "Mediterranea", 12, 2015, pp. 383-398.

⁹¹ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, cc. 2a-2b, 14a-14b.

⁹² DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, cc. 92a-92b.

⁹³ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, cc. 14a-18b.

⁹⁴ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, cc. 92a-92b.

⁹⁵ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, c. 35b.

ammontava a 545 ducati⁹⁶. Più frequentemente ricorrono all'interno della partita doppia i nomi di Laudadio Cagli di Ancona e di Salomon Cagli, con il primo raguseo concluse affari per 220 ducati tra il 1581 e il 1583⁹⁷, mentre relazioni commerciali più stabili e consistenti le intrecciò con Salomon Cagli: nel 1580 per 113 ducati⁹⁸, nel 1581 per 435 ducati⁹⁹ e nel 1582 per 571 ducati¹⁰⁰ e nel 1583 per 453 ducati¹⁰¹.

A partire dalla fine degli anni Ottanta del Cinquecento gli scambi commerciali degli ebrei ragusei con Venezia si intensificarono tanto da raggiungere livelli comparabili con quelli di Ancona. I legami tra gli ebrei delle due repubbliche erano così saldi che il valore assicurativo delle merci esportate verso la Serenissima superò quello delle mercanzie inviate ad Ancona in diverse occasioni. Nel 1589, 3.975 ducati verso Venezia¹⁰² a fronte di 2.025 verso Ancona.

L'operazione più corposa fu l'assicurazione di 20 tavole di cammellotti caricate a Ragusa da Jacob e Moise Danon, il 22 agosto 1591, sul naviglio di Luca di Giovanni Orebich. Inizialmente assicurati per l'equivalente di 4.208 ducati al tasso del 3%, ma il 4 settembre i due mercanti si resero conto di possibili passività nel caso di perdita parziale o totale del carico e provvidero ad estendere l'assicurazione per altri 427 ducati, sempre al tasso del 3%, per un totale di 4.635 ducati. A questo carico se ne sommava un altro sempre del 22 agosto da parte di Moise Danon per conto di Joseph Danon di 5 tavole di cammellotti assicurati alle stesse condizioni per altri 753 ducati. I tre fratelli Moise, Joseph e Jacob si ritrovarono dunque impegnati per un carico complessivo assicurato di 5.388 ducati. Nel caso dei cammellotti è possibile conoscere il valore reale della merce. Il prezzo di questa mercanzia nel 1591 oscillava tra i 200 e i 260 ducati per tavola. Il grosso delle esportazioni era costituito da pelli e cuoi. Nel 1591 assicurarono pellame verso Venezia per 7.356 ducati e nell'anno seguente per 6.174 ducati. Dai valori assicurativi i prodotti più redditizi erano dunque senza dubbio i cammellotti. Nel 1591 gli ebrei ragusei inviarono a Venezia 68 tavole di cammellotti per un valore assicurato di 9.601 ducati. I princi-

⁹⁶ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, c. 61b.

⁹⁷ DAD., *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, c. 27b.

⁹⁸ DAD., *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, c. 35b.

⁹⁹ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, cc. 38a-38b.

¹⁰⁰ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, c. 54a

¹⁰¹ DAD, *Privata*, 46, Quaderno dei debitori e creditori di Martolo de Giorgi a Venezia, 1580-1583, c. 54b.

¹⁰² DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 24, cc. 138v.-139v., 139v.-140v., 168v.-169v., 211v.-212v., 213r.-214r., 214r.-215v., 235r.-236r., 274v.-275v., 276r.-277r., 288v.-289v.

pali mediatori di questi particolari panni furono Jacob Danon, suo fratello Moise che solitamente operavano in società e Joseph Benmelech (alias Benrei).

Salomon Oef tra il 1589 e il 1595 monopolizzò le esportazioni di zafferano da Ragusa. Il sefardita era il principale mediatore di Baruch di Samuel Baruch e Caim Baruch di Salonico i quali inviavano le loro merci nella Repubblica di San Biagio e ivi le assicuravano per il successivo tragitto verso Venezia. In sei anni Salomon Oef assicurò 18 colli di zafferano per 6.109 ducati. Nel solo 1591 gli ebrei sefarditi di Ragusa assicurarono merci per, 38.750 ducati verso Venezia a fronte di 33.881 verso Ancona. Nel 1607, 6.675 ducati verso Venezia a fronte di 2.550 verso Ancona; nel 1619 37.105 ducati a fronte di 36.995 verso Ancona.

Nel 1617 il tentativo da parte di Venezia di estendere il blocco navale che coinvolgeva il litorale adriatico orientale anche a Ragusa, sfruttando l'occasione della guerra che vedeva la Serenissima scontrarsi con gli austriaci per la questione degli uscocchi, non sembra aver avuto particolari ripercussioni sui traffici commerciali degli ebrei con Venezia. Al contrario le loro esportazioni tra il 1616 e il 1617 non subirono particolari variazioni e nel 1618 erano in costante crescita. Nel 1616 gli ebrei ragusei assicurarono merci inviate nel porto della Serenissima per un totale di 12.930 ducati, nel 1617 per 12.170 ducati e subito dopo iniziarono a crescere: nel 1618 19.310 ducati e nel 1619 raggiunsero il picco di 37.105 ducati¹⁰³. Ancora nel 1626, 10.140 ducati verso Venezia¹⁰⁴ contro 6.430 verso Ancona e infine nel 1646, 25.368,6 verso Venezia¹⁰⁵ a fronte di 8.082 verso Ancona.

L'operazione più corposa fu l'assicurazione di 20 tavole di cammellotti caricate a Ragusa da Jacob e Moise Danon, il 22 agosto 1591, sul naviglio di Luca di Giovanni Orebich. Inizialmente assicurati per l'equivalente di 4.208 ducati al tasso del 3%, ma il 4 settembre i due mercanti si resero conto di possibili passività nel caso di perdita parziale o totale del carico e provvidero ad estendere l'assicurazione per altri 427 ducati, sempre al tasso del 3%, per un totale di 4.635 ducati. A questo carico se ne sommava un altro sempre del 22 agosto da parte di Moise Danon per conto di Joseph Danon di 5 cammellotti assicurati alle stesse condizioni per altri 753 ducati. I tre fratelli Moise, Joseph e Jacob si ritrovarono dunque impegnati per un carico complessivo assicurato di 5.388 ducati.¹⁰⁶ Nel caso dei cammellotti è possibile co-

¹⁰³ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 54, cc. 66r., 67r., 68v., 74r. 74v., 75r., 75v., 76r., 76v., 77r., 77v., 78r., 78v., 79r., 79v., 80r., 80v., 81r., 81v., 82r., 82v., 83r., 83v., 84r., 84v., 85r., 85v., 86r., 88v., 90r., 90v., 91r., 91v., 92r., 108v., 108r., 109v., 110r., 110v., 111v., 120v., 121r., 121v., 122r., 122v., 123r., 123v., 124r., 124v., 125r., 125v., 126r., 126v., 127r., 127v., 128r., 128r.-129r., 129v., 137r., 140v., 168v., 169r., 169v., 170r., 149b/r. 150b /r., 150b/v., 151b/r., 168v., 169r., 169v., 170r., 192v., 193r.

¹⁰⁴ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 57, cc. 1., 2r.-2v., 5r., 5v., 6r., 6v., 16v., 19r., 19v., 21r., 21v., 22r., 22v., 23r., 26r.-26v., 34r., 34v., 35r., 35v.

¹⁰⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 40, cc. 166v., 171r., 171v., 172r., 172v., 173r., 173v., 174r., 175r., 186v., 194v., 198r., 198v., 199r., 199v., 200r., 200v., 201r., 201v., 202r., 202v., 203r., 203v., 206r., 207r., 211r., 211v., 211r., 212r., 212v., 213v., 219r., 219v., 220r., 220v., 221r., 221v., 222r., 222v., 223r., 223v., 225v., 226v., 227r., 227v., 228r., 228v., 230r., 230v., 232r., 232v., 233r., 233v., 234r., 235r., 237r., 237v., 238r., 238v., 241r.

¹⁰⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 47v.-49v., 50r.-51v., 69v.-70v.

noscerne il valore reale. Il prezzo di questa mercanzia nel 1591 oscillava tra i 200 e i 260 ducati per tavola¹⁰⁷.

Il grosso delle esportazioni era costituito da pelli e cuoi¹⁰⁸. Nel 1591 assicurarono pellame verso Venezia per 7.356 ducati ¹⁰⁹ e nell'anno seguente per 6.174 ducati¹¹⁰. Dai valori assicurativi i prodotti più redditizi erano senza dubbio i cammellotti. Nel 1591 gli ebrei ragusei inviarono a Venezia 68 tavole di cammellotti per un valore assicurato di 9.601 ducati¹¹¹. I principali mediatori di questi particolari panni di lana furono Jacob Danon, suo fratello Moise che solitamente operavano in società e Joseph Benmelech. Nel 1591 Aron Amadio, Abram Abenun Joseph Benmelech e Menachem Moscato inviarono 30 colli di cordovani a Venezia¹¹², l'anno seguente Abram Abenun e Abram Cusi assicurarono 10 balle di cordovani di Abram Ganciu-la di Sarajevo e Raphael Soderin¹¹³. Nel 1595 le esportazioni salirono a 55 colli per 8.325 ducati di valore assicurato. Le transazioni erano tutte saldamente nelle mani di appena 5 operatori: Salomon Oef e due società, una costituita da Abram Cusi e Abram Abenun e l'altra dai fratelli Jacob e Moise Danon¹¹⁴. Joseph Benmelech, con rari interventi di Jacob Danon e Abram Calderon, controllava il mercato di esportazione di feltri verso le piazze veneziane. Nel solo 1595 assicurò 54 balle per conto di Aron Coen e gli eredi di Jacob Bencain¹¹⁵.

I mediatori erano prevalentemente Abram Abenun, Abram Cusi e Salomon Oef, mentre tra gli assicurati figuravano oltre al già noto Daniel Coduto di Valona, una piccola moltitudine di piccoli e medi mercanti ebrei dei centri ottomani. Talvolta nella polizza era riportata la loro città di provenienza, come nel caso di Melachia Tamer di Costantinopoli Elau e di Isach Araca di Valona¹¹⁶. Fruttuosa fu anche l'esportazione delle spezie, in particolare il pepe. Nel 1591 Aron Abeatar, i fratelli

¹⁰⁷ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 177r.-178v.; vol. 27, cc. 84v.-86r.

¹⁰⁸ B. HRBAK, *Дубровачка осигурања робе и бродова балканских и анадолских јевреја*, Banja Luka 2007.

¹⁰⁹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 43r.-44v., 46v.-48r., 26, 60v.-61v., 62r.-63v., 73r.-74v., 166v.-168r., 242r.-244r., 250v.-252r., 261v.-262v. *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 5v.-7r., 7v.-8v., 8v.-9v., 10r.-12v., 12v.-14r., 14r.-15v., 17v.-18v., 19v.-20v., 75r.-76v., 77r.-78v.

¹¹⁰ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 34r.-36r., 45v.-47r., 103v.-105r., 144r.-145v., 208r.-209v.

¹¹¹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, cc. 342r.-343r., *Noli et securitate not* vol. 26, cc. 119r.-120r., 136r.-137r., 177r.-178v., 218r.-220r., 258r.-260r. *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 47v.-49v., 50r.-51v., 78v.-80r., 84v.-86r., 103v.-105r., 113r.-115v., 116r.-117v., 165v.-167r.,

¹¹² DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, cc. 10v.-11r., 37r.-38r., 82/a.r.-84r., 84/r.-85v., 26, 128r.-129r., *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc. 128v.-130r.

¹¹³ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 28, cc. 162r.-162v., 259r.-260r.

¹¹⁴ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 30, cc. 131v.-132v., 193r.-194v., 210v.-211v., 257v.-258v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 31, cc. 41r.-42r., 42r.-43v., 43v.-45v., 45r.-46v., 31, 78r.-79v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, XXXI, 241v.-242v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 52r.-53v.

¹¹⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 30, cc. 119v.-120r.; 177v.-179r.; 30, 200r.-202r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 31, cc. 39r.-40v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 32, cc. 138r.-140r., 153r.-154r.

¹¹⁶ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 30, cc. 256r.-257r., 257v.-258v.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, cc. 2v.-3v., 4r.-5r., 5v.-6v., 6v.-8r., 84r.-85v., 87r.-87v., 187r.-188v., 188v.-190r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 32, cc. 37v.-38v.

Danon, insieme ad altri operatori minori, tra i quali Juda Falcon e Abram Abenun, assicurarono almeno 41 colli di pepe per gli empori della Serenissima¹¹⁷. L'anno seguente furono assicurati 30 colli, 19 dei quali da Cahim Aron di Salonicco per un valore assicurato totale di 1.900 ducati¹¹⁸. Mentre i restanti 11 furono assicurati da Abram Abenun e Abram Cusi per i coniugi Avelinda e David Iachia¹¹⁹. Salomon Oef tra il 1589 e il 1595 monopolizzò le esportazioni di zafferano da Ragusa verso Venezia. Il sefardita era il principale mediatore di Baruch di Samuel Baruch e Caim Baruch di Salonicco i quali inviavano le loro merci nella Repubblica di San Biagio e ivi le assicuravano per il successivo tragitto verso Venezia. In sei anni Salomon Oef assicurò 18 colli di zafferano per 6.109 ducati¹²⁰.

Rispetto alla fase espansiva dell'ultimo decennio del Cinquecento che vide un complesso panorama di protagonisti, le fasi espansive del Seicento furono caratterizzate dal predominio commerciale della famiglia Coen che giunse ad un livello di semi monopolio delle esportazioni verso Venezia e verso Ancona tra il 1616-1625. Il 13 maggio 1619 David Coen e suo figlio Aron assicurarono 10 balle di cuoi conci per 1200 ducati. In questo caso i due ebrei optarono per una copertura totale dei rischi di passività assicurando il carico per il 100% del suo valore reale ad un tasso assicurativo del 2%¹²¹. Il lotto di pelli faceva parte di un più ampio carico di pelli e cordovani gestito dai Coen dal valore assicurato complessivo di 3.575 ducati¹²². Il carico era solo uno dei tanti gestiti dai Coen tra il 1616 e il 1625 che fu un periodo di semi monopolio della famiglia sulle esportazioni dei sefarditi verso Ancona e Venezia.

Nel biennio 1630-1631 non ci furono assicurazioni verso Venezia da parte degli ebrei ragusei, ciò è dovuto alle ripercussioni sui commerci dell'epidemia di peste di quegli anni che decimò la comunità veneziana, portò alla perdita considerevole di mercanzie e costrinse alcuni ricchi mercanti ebrei levantini a lasciare temporaneamente la Serenissima¹²³.

Il commercio ebraico ebbe un ultimo grande impulso di sviluppo nel 1646 quando le esportazioni verso Venezia raggiunsero 25.369 ducati di valore assicurato e quelle verso Ancona 8.083 ducati¹²⁴, ma da quel momento, le registrazioni delle

¹¹⁷ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, cc. 305r.-306r.; 311r.-312r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, cc., 8v-9v.; 125r.-126v.

¹¹⁸ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, 221r.-223r.

¹¹⁹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, 256r.-258r., 260v.-261v.

¹²⁰ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 24, 168v.-169v., 213r.-214r., *Noli et securitate not.*, 25, 18r.-19r., 45r.-46r., 119v.-120r., 273r.-274r., *Noli et securitate not.*, 26, 38v.-39v., *Noli et securitate not.*, 27, 217r.-218v., *Noli et securitate not.*, vol. 29, 118r.-119v., 132r.-134r.; *Noli et securitate not.*, 31, 79v.-80v.

¹²¹ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 54, cc. 109r.

¹²² DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 54, cc. 108v., 109r., 109r., 110r., 110v., 111r., 111v.

¹²³ C. BOCCATO, *La mortalità nel ghetto di Venezia durante la peste del 1630*, in "Studi veneziani", n. 140 (1993), pp. 111-146; alcuni riferimenti in C. ROTH, *Gli ebrei in Venezia*, Roma 1933, p. 381; si veda anche R. CALIMANI, *Storia del ghetto di Venezia*, Milano 2001.

¹²⁴ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 60.

coperture assicurative divennero lacunose, con ampi vuoti cronologici. Occorrerà attendere il 1650 per vedere nuove assicurazioni di merci esportate degli ebrei¹²⁵. Dinamica analoga coinvolse anche i crediti commerciali¹²⁶.

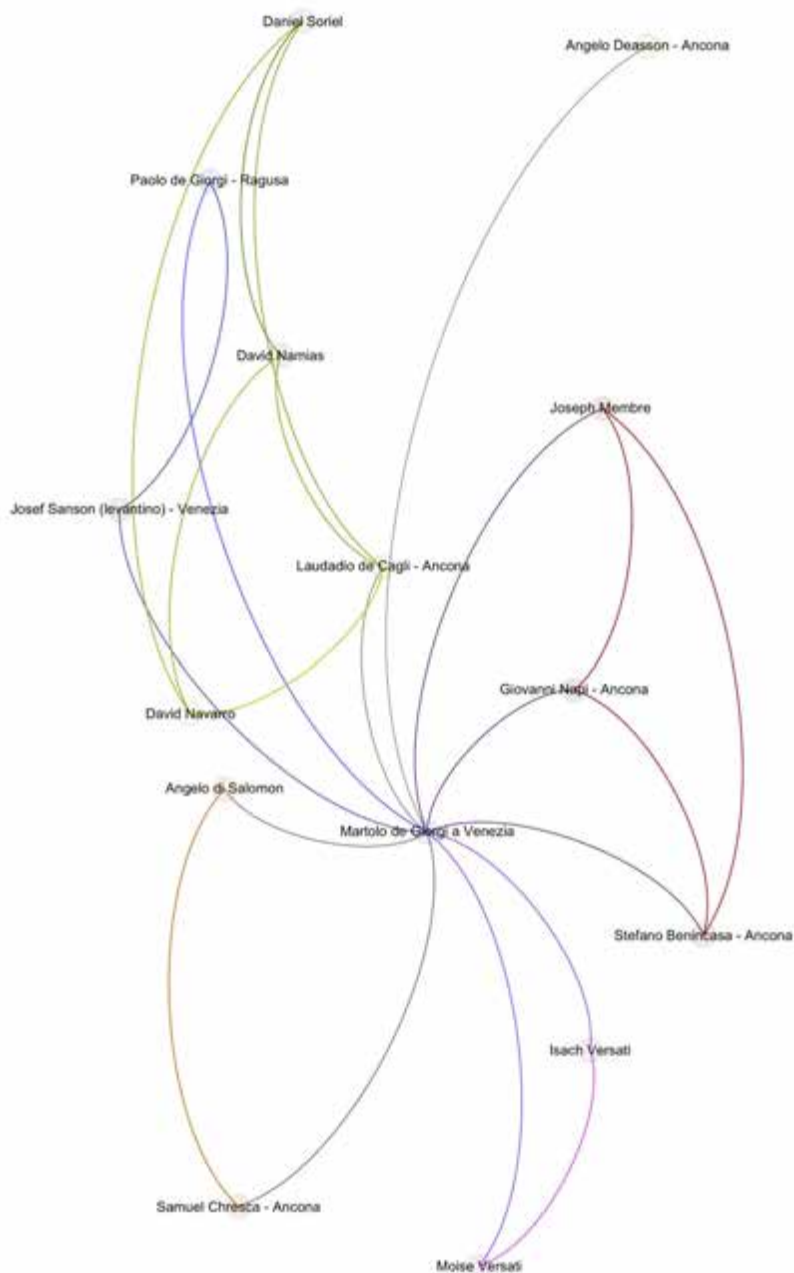
In conclusione, le crisi cicliche del Seicento, ritardate di qualche anno dall'efficiente sistema di scambi inter-adriatico travolsero Ragusa. Tuttavia il Seicento non fu, come recentemente dimostrato dal dibattito storiografico, un unico lungo secolo di crisi, bensì un alternarsi di momenti di depressioni economiche e fasi di relativa ripresa¹²⁷. La crisi che coinvolse Ragusa e di conseguenza l'economia ebraica, prima del terremoto del 1667 potrebbe essere considerata una crisi da ristrutturazione economica? Sappiamo con certezza che nuovi impulsi giunsero dall'arrivo di famiglie sefardite e di qualche famiglia askenazita dopo il 1667 ma solo uno studio quantitativo sull'economia ebraica nella seconda metà del Seicento e sulla prima metà del Settecento potrebbero fornire una risposta esaustiva.

¹²⁵ DAD, *Noli et securitate not.*, 61.

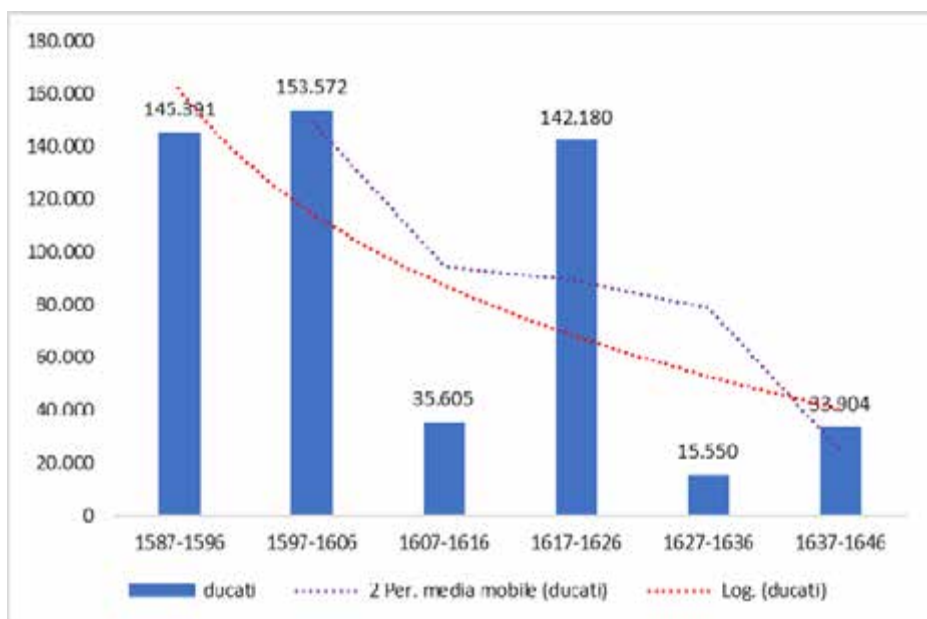
¹²⁶ B. LIGORIO *Primi studi sull'apporto degli ebrei all'economia della Repubblica di Ragusa*, in "Atti e Memorie della Società dalmata di Storia Patria", s. 3, 5, 2016, pp. 31-50.

¹²⁷ G. DE LUCA, *Le crisi economiche in età preindustriale. Un itinerario storiografico*, in *Dalle crisi alle età di Crisi: un discorso di economia comparata*, a. c. di A. DI VITTORIO, Torino 2014, pp. 19-48.

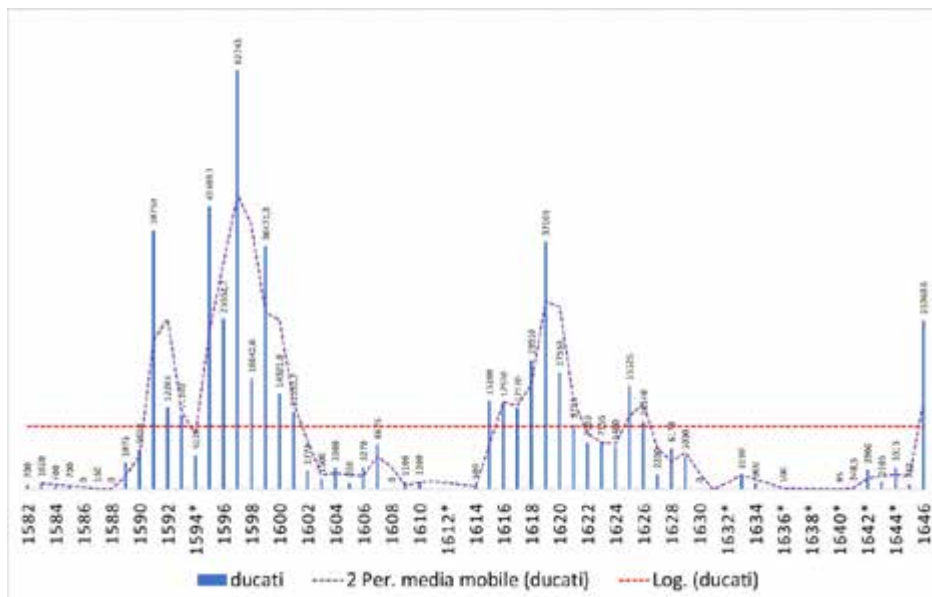
Fig. 4. SNA delle attività commerciali di Martolo de Giorgi con gli ebrei a Venezia



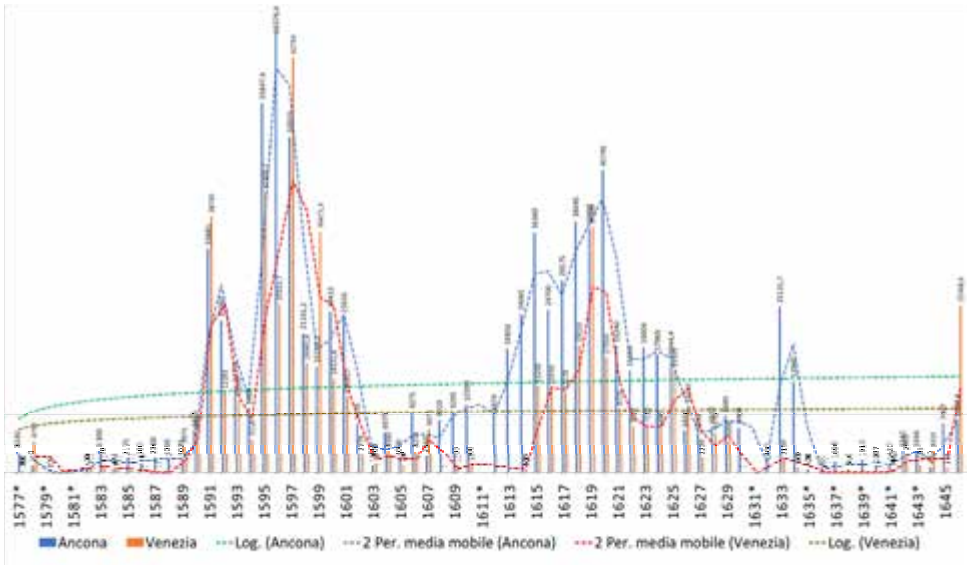
Graf. 5. Valore assicurativo delle merci esportate dagli ebrei sulla rotta Ragusa-Venezia (per decenni)



Graf. 6. Valore assicurativo delle merci esportate dagli ebrei sulla rotta Ragusa-Venezia (per anni)



Graf. 7. Comparazione delle assicurazioni sulle esportazioni dei sefarditi sulle Rotte Ragusa-Ancona e Ragusa-Venezia (per anno)



Luisa Piccinno, Andrea Zanini

Genoa: Colonizing and Colonized City?
*The Port City as a Pole of Attraction for Foreign Merchants (16th-18th centuries)**

THE PORT CITY BETWEEN COSMOPOLITISM AND INTERCULTURAL TRADE

The presence, either transient or stable, of foreign merchants in Mediterranean port cities and the links they established with local merchants have so far been poorly covered by historiography. As a matter of fact, most studies are confined to the late Middle Ages, and fail to investigate how this phenomenon progressed into modern age, when international scenarios and the role of port cities themselves were affected by the rise of the great national states, the shifting of all main traffic routes to the Atlantic, and the adoption of new mercantilist economic policies. Apart from its chronological limits, research has often been confined to some specific aspects, such as the settlement and location of foreign merchant colonies within an urban context, the establishment of formally recognized *nationes* and the rules governing their activities, as well as the specific business features of individual groups identifiable on a national, ethnic, or religious basis.¹

Only recently have some studies – mostly covering either intercultural and inter-confessional trade, or port cities, considered to be the hubs of transnational trade networks – dealt with the above subject, albeit in a non-systematic way.² As pointed out by Silvia Marzagalli – although specifically referring to the French case and inter-confessional trade –, scholars have rather focused on the patterns of commodity flows, rather than on the relationships among traders. As to modern age, if we look at the latter aspect, the prevalence of business relations and forms of association among individuals belonging to the same religion is quite evident. How-

* Luisa Piccinno wrote the first sections, and Andrea Zanini wrote the second one. The third section was jointly written by both authors.

¹ *La città italiana e i luoghi degli stranieri, XIV-XVIII secolo*, D. CALABI, P. LANARO eds., Rome-Bari 1998; *Comunità forestiere e “nationes” nell’Europa dei secoli XIII-XVI*, ed. G. PETTI BALBI, Naples 2001; *Trade, migration and urban networks in port cities, c. 1640-1940*, A. JARVIS, R. LEE eds., St. John’s 2008 (Research in Maritime History, 38); *Merchant colonies in the early modern period*, V. ZAKHAROV, G. HARLAFTIS, O. KATSIARDI-HERING eds., London 2012 (Perspectives in economic and social history, 19); M. GRENET, *La fabrique communautaire. Les Grecs de Venise, Livourne et Marseille, 1770-1840*, Rome 2016 (Collection de l’École française de Rome, 521).

² M. FUSARO, *Gli uomini d'affari stranieri in Italia*, in *Il rinascimento italiano e l’Europa*, F. FRANCESCHI, R. GOLDTHWAITE, R.C. MÜLLER eds., Vicenza 2007, pp. 369-395; *Religion and Trade: Cross-Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000-1900*, F. TRIVELLATO, L. HALEVI, C. ANTUNES eds., Oxford 2014; *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe, 1300-1600*, W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ eds., London 2017.

ever, in port cities, and especially in big trading centres, this was not always the case: relations among merchants of different nationalities and / or religions were not an exception, but rather the rule. It is therefore appropriate to investigate its causes and consequences from an economic, social, political, and cultural point of view.³ For example, with reference to business strategies, the establishment of business relations and corporate ties with members of one's family network undeniably helps reduce risks and, more generally, transaction costs. However, extending one's customer network to include foreign individuals, even those with different religions, is likely to promote turnover growth and is often key to enter new markets.⁴ A well informed choice must be made to take greater risks in exchange of competitive advantages through the harnessing of the so-called "strength of weak ties." As stated by sociologist Mark Granovetter, weak ties are essential for individuals as they are the means, or, more precisely, the opportunity to integrate into a community.⁵ Obviously enough, this process is rather limited and often difficult to quantify, due to the lack of available data. And yet, some evidence of it allows us to shed light on some of its typical features.⁶

More generally, large cities and especially port cities were by nature a pole of attraction not only for merchants and businessmen looking for opportunities to make money, but also for many other classes of workers with specific skills related to shipping, such as captains, sailors, and porters. Several factors used to play a key role in making a port more or less attractive than its direct competitors, namely: geographic location and positioning within the main traffic routes, connections with the hinterland and with the other national ports, operational facilities in terms of berths, storage areas and other services provided to both shipping and trade (i.e. *magistrature* – governing authorities – with specific skills, consulates, interpreters, mediators, etc.), to be seen in a highly dynamic and changing context over time. At the same time, also the origin and number of foreign merchants settling permanently in a port city tended to vary, as well as their positioning in the market and the density of ties with local traders. It is thus necessary to take due account of the

³ On the cosmopolitanism of the main marketplaces, see: S. MARZAGALLI, *Négoce et politique des étrangers en France à l'époque moderne : discours et pratiques de rejet et d'intégration*, in *Les étrangers dans les villes-ports atlantiques (XV^e-XIX^e siècle). Expériences allemandes et françaises* Paris, M. AUGERON, P. EVEN eds., Paris 2010, pp. 45-62; P. POURCHASSE, *Dynamism and integration of the North European merchants communities in French ports in the Eighteenth century*, in *Merchant colonies*, cit., pp. 45-59.

⁴ S. MARZAGALLI, *Commercer au-delà des frontières confessionnelles dans la France de l'époque moderne*, in *L'économie des dévotions. Commerce, pratiques et objets de piété à l'époque moderne*, ed. A. BURKARDT, Rennes 2016, pp. 348-349.

⁵ Indeed, according to Granovetter, while weak ties are "indispensable to individuals" and to their integration into communities, strong ties, breeding local cohesion, lead to overall fragmentation." (M. GRANOVETTER, *The Strength of Weak Ties*, in "American Journal of Sociology", 78, 1973, n. 6, pp. 1360-1380, 1378).

⁶ As Andrea Caracausi and Christof Jeggle pointed out, a quantitative analysis of trade flows and commercial networks makes sense only if the volume of available data has statistical relevance. Anyway, focusing on the concepts of "social network" and "social interaction" it is possible to shed light on the multiple ties among the main players of merchant networks. (A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE, *Introduction*, in *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE eds., London-New York 2014, pp. 1-5).

economic, political, and social motivations, which might have either positively or negatively affected these processes.

As to the above mentioned factors, it is first of all necessary to understand which ones were actually driving these individuals to permanently settle in a foreign city, rather than opting for a more occasional presence. Further, it must be verified whether there were any links or some sort of reciprocity with likely migration flows in the opposite direction. If so, what were their time patterns, or whether, as stated by Maria Fusaro, the balances were tipped, whereby “a strong Italian presence abroad in the Middle Ages was offset by the presence of foreigners in Italy, starting from the second half of the 16th century.”⁷ In particular, it seems appropriate to assess how much this decision was determined by the international reputation of the port city in question, in terms of trade and economic dynamism, as well as of opportunities to do business on site with good profit margins and limited risks. Further, the extent to which such reputation actually depended on the merchant network size, with the port in question as its focal point, should also be examined. All these elements were in turn closely linked to mercantilist policies implemented by the various governments. Through several types of actions – i.e. by granting privileges and tax exemptions, ensuring particular forms of legal protection in case of disputes, etc. – governments were likely to either foster or hinder migration. Policies of great openness towards foreign merchants were generally aimed at exploiting what Henry Méchoulan has defined, with reference to the Amsterdam case, as “les bénéfiques de la tolérance”, namely being able to increase trade by promoting the immigration of individuals with capitals and skills deemed instrumental to the objective to be pursued.⁸ The effectiveness of these policies, however, was in turn influenced by international scenario evolutions and by the economic policies implemented by nearby and / or competing port cities, which would often play a decisive role in driving the movements and decisions by foreign merchants. Finally, an analysis is required on the social structure and stratification of the merchant class characterizing the port city of immigration. This is essential to understand how many and which were the “spaces” taken up by local businessmen and those that could be allocated to foreign merchants, or filled by the latter group due to some competitive advantage. It is also possible to understand the degree of openness towards foreigners, in particular by looking at the number of companies or other business arrangements jointly set up between local and foreign traders.

In a port city, almost all trade interactions and operators were centred on the port. When a free trade area was granted, this trend was even more marked. There were, as known, several reasons why a state would decide to adopt this provision, including but not limited to demographic policies aimed to increase the city population, purely commercial purposes, and finally to increasing trade volumes by im-

⁷ Authors’ translation of M. FUSARO, *Gli uomini d'affari stranieri in Italia*, cit., p. 370.

⁸ H. MECHOULAN, *Amsterdam, XVII^e siècle. Marchands et philosophes. Les bénéfiques de la tolérance*, Paris 1993; R. DI TUCCI, *Genova e gli stranieri. Secoli XII-XVIII*, in “Rivista Italiana di Diritto Internazionale Privato e Processuale”, 2, 1932, pp. 501-518, 504.

plementing a duty-free regime up until the goods left the bonded warehouses to be sold again.⁹

While a duty-free zone did not always lead to the desired economic results, from a social point of view it undeniably contributed to more cosmopolitan port cities.¹⁰ For this reason, the analysis on the dynamics of a free port and the resulting presence of foreign merchants is deemed instrumental not only to the objectives of this work, but also for comparison purposes between geographically neighbouring ports which, for a certain period of time, introduced a duty-free-trade zone, even if only on paper.

GENOA AND THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN MERCHANTS

The presence of foreign businessmen in Genoa and, more generally, the structure of the merchant class, have so far been poorly investigated. Apart from some specific studies on the presence of Flemish, German, and English merchants,¹¹ plus some literature on the Jewish community, a total lack of historiographic investigations is even more evident.¹² Historians have for long focused on the entrepreneurial skills of Genoese merchants on the international stage, who from ‘colonizers’ became bankers. Other studies concerned the city and its port, but they were main-

⁹ The term free port is generally used when a port, or a part of it, is out of the customs border. More precisely, according to Ugo Marchese, if the exemption from customs duties is limited only to a specific area of the port, we should use the term duty free zone. (U. MARCHESE, *Il porto di Genova dal 1815 al 1891*, in *Archivio Economico dell’Unificazione Italiana*, s. II, IX, Turin 1959, p. 7).

¹⁰ R. ESCALLIER, *Le cosmopolitisme méditerranéen. Réflexions et interrogations*, in “Cahiers de la Méditerranée”, 67, 2003, pp. 1-13. For a deep analysis and comparison between the cases of Genoa, Leghorn and Marseilles, see: T.A. KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea. Policy and power in an early modern maritime Republic 1559-1684*, Baltimore-London 2005, pp. 151-185; A. IODICE, *Il porto franco, diffusione di un modello economico: politiche, attori, ideologie, mito. Due realtà a confronto: Genova e Marsiglia (1590-1817)*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Naples “Federico II” and University of Aix-Marseilles 2017; IDEM, *L’istituzione del porto franco in un Mediterraneo senza frontiere*, in “Politics. Rivista di Studi Politici”, 5, 2016, n. 1, pp. 19-33.

¹¹ M.C. LAMBERTI, *Mercanti tedeschi a Genova nel XVII secolo: l’attività della compagnia Raynolt negli anni 1619-20*, in “Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria”, n.s. 12, 1972, n. 1, pp. 71-121; J. ZUNCKEL, *Esperienze e strategie commerciali di mercanti tedeschi fra Milano e Genova nell’epoca della controriforma*, in *Commerce, voyage et expérience religieuse. XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles*, A. BURKARDT, G. BERTRAND, Y. KRUMENACKER eds., Rennes 2007, pp. 231-255; M.C. ENGELS, *Merchants interlopers seamen and corsairs. The Flemish community in Livorno and Genoa*, Hilversum 1997; E. GRENDI, *Gli inglesi a Genova (secoli XVII-XVIII)*, in “Quaderni storici”, 39, 2004, n. 1, pp. 241-278; G. PAGANO DE DIVITIIS, *English merchants in seventeenth-century Italy*, Cambridge 1997; G. GALLIANO, *Génova, encrucijada de gentes musulmanas durante los siglos XV-XVII*, in “Revista de estudios colombinos”, 6, 2010, pp. 25-29.

¹² C. BRIZZOLARI, *Gli ebrei nella storia di Genova*, Genova 1971; R. URBANI, *La formazione della “nazione” ebraica a Genova (secc. XVII-XVIII)*, in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di studi storici Rapporti Genova-Mediterraneo-Atlantico nell’età moderna*, ed. R. BELVEDERI, Genoa 1983, pp. 291-317; R. URBANI, M. FIGARI, *Considerazioni sull’insediamento ebraico genovese (1600-1750)*, in “Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria”, n.s. 29, 1989, n. 1, pp. 305-337; *The Jews in Genoa*, R. URBANI, G.N. ZAZZU eds., 2, 1682-1799, Leiden-Boston-Köln 1999; A. ZAPPÀ, “A riguardo dell’utile che alli pubblici introiti apportano gli Ebrei.” *Considerazioni socio-economiche sulla nazione ebraica a Genova tra Sei e Settecento*, in “RiMe. Rivista dell’Istituto di Storia dell’Europa Mediterranea”, 17, 2016, n. 2, pp. 75-112.

ly focused on the development of facilities – i.e. urban development, construction and expansion of port infrastructures such as docks, piers, warehouses –, and trade.

As Michel Balard pointed out with reference to the late Middle Ages and to the relations between Genoa and overseas cities, “Genoa, a colonizer in the East, is colonized by the Orientals.”¹³ The aim of this work is to verify whether and to what extent this concept is applicable also to the modern age and whether it involved a wider geographic area than the one examined by this French historian. We will therefore outline the features of the presence of foreign merchants in Genoa between the 16th and 18th centuries as a phenomenon complementary to the better known “diaspora” of Genoese businessmen. In this regard, it should be pointed out that expressions like “merchant settlements” and “communities of merchants” will be used indifferently, although specific historiography has shown that these settlement models were substantially different depending on the context.¹⁴ There are many elements to be considered. Currently available sources, although insufficient to acquire a full picture, do offer some useful information in order to shed light on some key features, as well as to define guidelines for further research in this field. It should be pointed out that, although in the period in question the citizens of other Italian states were obviously considered to be foreigners, in order to verify that Genoa was actually “colonized” by foreigners, it seemed appropriate to rather focus on those who came from other European regions.

One of the main problems when carrying out a study on foreign businessmen operating in Genoa in the modern age is to determine their numbers, and then assess their economic power. This is partly related to the policies implemented by the Republic of Genoa regarding foreigners: apart from some short-term measures to overcome critical periods – such as after the plague in 1656-57 – these policies were never characterized by marked openness, but rather by a general attitude of tolerance, sometimes beefed up with commercial privileges. No particularly favourable legal status was ever granted to foreigners under Genoese laws, which would never contain any reciprocity clauses concerning the treatment granted to foreign communities in Genoa and the one reserved to Genoese colonies in many foreign countries. As for checks on foreigners entering the city, the main distinction, which remained substantially unchanged over time, was between foreign residents and those simply transiting or on shorter stays in the city. No systematic census of foreigners was ever carried out.¹⁵

A first attempt to somehow tackle the whole issue, also aimed at strengthening public order and banning vagabonds and beggars from the city, dates back to 1628, when the *Magistrato della Consegna* was established. The tasks of this public authority included but were not limited to identifying all foreigners arriving in Genoa and issuing them a so-called *bolletta*, a temporary stay permit, with longer or shorter va-

¹³ Authors’ translation of M. BALARD, *Le minoranze orientali a Genova (secoli XIII-XV)*, in *La storia dei Genovesi*, III, Genoa 1983, p. 72.

¹⁴ V. ZAKHAROV, G. HARLAFTIS, O. KATSIARDI-HERING, *Introduction*, in *Merchant colonies*, cit., pp. 1-10; O. KATSIARDI-HERING, *Greek merchant colonies in central and south-eastern Europe in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth centuries*, in *Merchant colonies*, cit., pp. 127-139.

¹⁵ R. DI TUCCI, *Genova e gli stranieri*, cit., p. 504.

lidity depending on the reasons for staying in the city.¹⁶ Under the applicable regulations, foreigners were grouped into four different types, each of them duly recorded in a different log book: the first one referred to foreigners on a short visit, staying in Genoa only a few days, while waiting to continue their journey by sea or by land. This class of visitors was most probably the biggest one, especially in some periods of the year. For example, at the beginning of the 18th century, an officer checking travellers entering through one of the city gates, Porta di San Tommaso, in the western walls, was surprised by the large number of foreigners entering the city every day.¹⁷ The second group referred to foreigners who had to stay in the city for longer periods in order to finalise an agreement or for work. In this case, the *bolletta* could have a validity of up to twelve months, after which period, if one wanted to extend their stay, a proper extension had to be applied for. The third class concerned Jews, who were all listed in a separate register, regardless of the length of their stay. The fourth class was for some particular categories of craftsmen, who would typically come from abroad: i.e. stonemasons, marble workers, stucco workers.¹⁸

Then there were foreign craftsmen and merchants who would actually move to live in Genoa. In this regard, under the applicable Statutes of the Republic, after three years of residence, it was possible to acquire Genoese citizenship “by habitation.” This was especially relevant from a legal point of view, since it granted foreigners the so-called *privilegio del foro*, namely the possibility to appeal to the court for commercial disputes that was reserved only to citizens.¹⁹ This privilege did not actually imply full recognition of political citizenship, since government jobs were reserved for the noble class. At the same time, becoming a citizen of Genoa could nullify tax benefits granted to certain groups of foreigners.²⁰ In other words, maintaining one’s status of foreigner was no obstacle to doing business and financial activities. Conversely, acquiring the Genoese citizenship would often bring too few advantages when considering the tax burdens associated with it. In this, Genoa was

¹⁶ R. DI TUCCI, *Genova e gli stranieri*, cit., p. 517; E. GRENDI, *Gli inglesi a Genova*, cit., p. 242.

¹⁷ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI GENOVA (ASGE), *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1047, 7th November 1702. On this point there is only scattered information. For example, from 14th to 23rd March 1661, 87 French citizens entered in Genoa, but most of them were pilgrims on their way to or from Rome (ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1045, 23 March 1661). More than one century later, a Genoese magazine reported that in June 1788 there were several foreigners coming from different countries, especially from Hungary, who reached the city while completing the Grand Tour of Italy (“Avvisi”, n. 24, 14th June 1788, p. 185). During 1799, 646 foreigners arrived in Genoa, among them 281 from other Italian regional states, 206 from France, 43 from Switzerland, 28 from Spain, 26 from Austria (R. DI TUCCI, *Genova e gli stranieri*, cit., p. 518).

¹⁸ ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1045, “Regolamento circa li forestieri che alloggianno nella presente città tenuto dal Serenissimo Magistrato della Consegna.”

¹⁹ *Degli Statuti Civili della Serenissima Repubblica di Genova*, Genoa 1622, p. 92.

²⁰ There is very limited literature about Genoese policies on citizenship. For an overview, see V. PIERGIOVANNI, *Alcuni consigli legali in tema di forestieri a Genova nel Medioevo*, in IDEM, *Norme, scienza e pratica giuridica tra Genova e l'Occidente medievale e moderno*, Genoa 2012, pp. 251-262; G. CASARINO, *Tra “estraneità” e cittadinanza: mercato del lavoro e migrazioni a Genova (sec. XV-XVI)*, in “*Revista d'Historia Medieval*”, 10, 1999, pp. 85-121; E. GRENDI, *Gli inglesi a Genova*, cit., p. 242.

similar to other cities characterized by a mature economy, namely, in order to grow, it did not need to attract foreign operators on a stable basis.²¹

After the above introduction, it should be pointed out that after the loss of the archive held by *Magistrato della Consegna*, it is impossible to retrace the flows and quantify the number of foreigners in the city. Demographic sources do not help fill this gap. The government census ordered in 1680-81, for example, was not only incomplete (i.e. all data for one of the neighbourhoods are totally missing), but it was also biased by census takers carrying out their tasks in quite different ways: i.e., for some areas, a list of names was available indicating the nationality and the occupation; for others, instead, only the total number of foreigners or the number of households was reported.²² The situation is not very different for ecclesiastical records, such as the so called ‘states of the souls.’ Criteria for filling them were mostly affected by the personal sensitivity and the meticulousness of parish priests, and the information there contained mostly refers to non-Catholics. For example, in 1700, 32 Huguenots and two Flemish merchants, defined as “heretics”, were living within the city walls; in 1707, instead, the number of Protestants (including Huguenots) was 42, plus 28 Jews.²³ According to the information contained in a census seventy years later, there were in total 215 foreigners, including Jews, Protestants and heretics, out of a total population of 79,343 inhabitants.²⁴

By combining different sources with the data reported in some studies, it is possible to identify the most numerous national groups: the Germans and the Swiss were for sure among them, although in most cases their presence in the city was not linked to trade.²⁵ A significant number of both groups of nationals were serving in Genoa’s army; further, the Swiss were traditionally working also as dockers in the port.²⁶

²¹ M. FUSARO, *Gli uomini d'affari stranieri*, cit., pp. 375-379.

²² ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1092.

²³ ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1047 and 1049. Data are probably underestimated, as many priests did not register people belonging to other confessions.

²⁴ ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1053.

²⁵ E. GRENDI, *I Nordici e il traffico del porto di Genova, 1590-1666*, in “Rivista Storica Italiana”, 83, 1971, n. 1, pp. 23-71; M.E. GAZZOLA, *Rapporti tra la Repubblica di Genova e le città svizzere nel XVII secolo. Ricerche d'archivio*, in *Genova, la Liguria e l'Oltremare tra Medioevo ed Età moderna. Studi e ricerche d'Archivio*, a c. di R. BELVEDERI, Genoa 1981, pp. 361-409; P. FONTANA, “Non si può né devesi haver fede in chi ha a Dio negato.” *La presenza protestante a Genova e in Liguria tra il XVI e il XIX secolo*, paper presented at the conference *La Riforma e la nascita della società moderna*, Genoa, 20-21 October 2017 (in press). Among German merchants operating in Genoa there were the Raynolds (M.C. LAMBERTI, *Mercanti tedeschi a Genova*, cit.); the most important merchants from Switzerland were the De La Rües (C. AUBERT, *Les De La Rüe, marchands, magistrats et banquiers. Genève, Gênes, 1556-1905*, Lausanne 1984).

²⁶ Workers from Switzerland were employed as dockers in the “Caravana della Grassia” (the guild holding the monopoly on the transport of cured meat) and in the “Caravana dei facchini da Olio” (the guild holding the monopoly on the transport of olive oil). Membership to these guilds (about 30 men on the whole) was restricted to people coming from Domodossola, Mendrisio, Lugano and other Swiss valleys (L. PICCINNO, *Le Compagnie di facchini stranieri operanti nel porto di Genova (secoli XV-XVIII)*, in *Comunità forestiere e “nationes” nell'Europa dei secoli XIII-XVI*, ed. G. PETTI BALBI, Naples 2002, pp. 325-338). On the Swiss community, see L. CODIGNOLA, M.E. TONIZZI, *The Swiss community in Genoa*

The French were one of the most numerous groups of foreigners. 148 individuals were recorded in 1659, and three years later there were about a hundred of them.²⁷ Conversely, in 1699, according to the report of the local consul, the group of “notable” subjects of His Very Christian Majesty, the King of France, living in Genoa was made up of 52 individuals, a figure that practically did not change until the middle of the following century.²⁸ In these latter documents, only eminent fellow citizens were reported, in full disregard for any social stratification of foreign colonies, which, far from being homogeneous, were highly composite and socially articulated groups. Alongside the most prominent businessmen engaged in international trade and / or financial operations, and accounting for the foreign community elite from an economic and social standpoint, there were craftsmen, retailers and street vendors, servants and other workers who, despite their stable jobs in Genoa, would undoubtedly play a secondary role.²⁹

The city also attracted merchants from other Italian states, although in this case the information to date is quite incomplete. In 1678, for example, there were 81 individuals from Messina, 79 of them were Christians and 2 slaves. From the list available, it is evident that most of them were in Genoa for “negotij di mercantie” (on business).³⁰

As was the case in other marketplaces, the most numerous groups succeeded in establishing their own organizational structure and having their own consul accredited with the Genoese government, who would protect their economic interests and had jurisdictional powers to settle internal disputes. Until 1616, all merchants from northern Europe had only one common consul; from that year on, the Dutch began to appoint their own consul. They were followed some time later by the English. In the same period, the French also appointed their own consul. All this is evidence of the various national communities getting progressively settled in Genoa and of their increased economic weight.³¹

As far as Jews are concerned, the Genoese community, unlike those in other port cities, was made up of a small, stable core, backed up by a more or less numerous and fluctuating group of other Jews, depending on the period. In terms of social stratification, middle class members were prevailing, who were only partially

from the Old Regime to the late nineteenth century, in “Journal of Modern Italian Studies”, 13, 2008, 2, pp. 152-170.

²⁷ ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1045, 6th October 1659 and 17th May 1662. Among the 148 names listed in 1659 there was only one woman, while in 1662 there were only men. This suggests that these lists might have included only the breadwinners.

²⁸ R. BOUDARD, *Gênes et la France dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle, 1748-1797*, Paris-La Haye 1962, pp. 219, 233.

²⁹ R. BOUDARD, *Gênes et la France*, cit., pp. 233-234, 238-239.

³⁰ ASGE, *Senato, Sala Bartolomeo Senarega*, 1045, 24th October 1678.

³¹ E. GRENDI, *Gli inglesi a Genova*, cit., pp. 264-272. On the French case, see: G. FERRETTI, *La ricerca di un'alleanza: l'istituzione del consolato francese a Genova*, in *Genova e Francia al crocevia dell'Europa (1624-1642)*, Atti del Seminario Internazionale di Studi, Genova 25-27 maggio 1989, ed. M.G. BOTTARO PALUMBO, Genoa 1989, pp. 101-147; A. MÉZIN, *Les consuls de France au siècle des Lumières (1715-1792)*, Paris 1997, pp. 692-693.

involved in international trade³². As a matter of fact, the mercantilistic policies implemented by the Republic of Genoa would only occasionally aim to attract Jews to promote port activities and trade, as was commonly done in other Mediterranean cities.³³

Still with reference to religious minorities, Huguenots were another important group, who until 1685, the year when the edict of Nantes was revoked, were usually included among the French. However, after this date they tended to be identified as a separate group, sometimes together with English merchants.³⁴ Based on currently available information, the group of Protestant merchants, in particular Huguenots and Calvinists, was at the helm of important trading companies working on an international level and which, quite often, would maintain operations in Genoa for several decades.³⁵

From the above, although brief, outline, the cosmopolitan nature of the city is quite evident. However, the commercial vocation of the various foreign colonies, the balance of power between the different groups, their interactions with the Genoese merchant class and the effects on the city economy are still unclear. Thus, the free port provides a vantage point of view to shed light on these issues. Since its establishment, it became a pole of attraction for domestic and foreign economic operators.

MERCHANTS AND THE FREE PORT

The Free Port of Genoa dates back to 1590, when the Government of the Republic and Casa di San Giorgio agreed to grant free port rights for just one year to all the ships calling at Ligurian ports and carrying grains for at least two thirds of their cargo, in order to deal with a severe food scarcity affecting the whole Mediterranean area. Such provision was renewed a year later, although with a substantial change: it was no longer granted to all ports in the domain, but reserved only to the port of Genoa, the capital city. In 1609, this right was extended to almost all goods handled there, except for those coming from the other ports in the Republic. In

³² *The Jews in Genoa*, cit.; A. ZAPPÀ, “À riguardo dell’utile che alli pubblici introiti apportano gli Ebrei?”, cit., pp. 75-112. See also G. CALAFAT, *L’indice de la franchise: politique économique, concurrence des port francs et condition des Huijs en Méditerranée à l’époque moderne*, in “Revue Historique”, 686, 2018, n. 2, pp. 275-320.

³³ This concept, developed by Dubin with regard to Trieste and to the privileges allowed by the Habsburgs to Jewish merchants after the declaration of the free port, can be referred also to other port cities, such as Leghorn and Marseilles (L.C. DUBIN, *The Port Jews of Habsburg Trieste: Absolutist Politics and Enlightenment Culture*, Stanford 1999).

³⁴ E. GRENDI, *Gli inglesi a Genova*, cit., pp. 248-249.

³⁵ On the most important foreign trading companies, see H.-T. NIEPHAUS, *Genuas Seehandel von 1746-1848. Die Entwicklung der Handelsbeziehungen zur Iberischen Halbinsel, zu West- und Nordeuropa sowie den Überseegebieten*, Köln-Wien 1975, pp. 305-338 (Forschungen zur internationalen sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, 8).

1623, a “free, general and very general Free Port” was established which, following several renewals, remained in force until the fall of the aristocratic Republic.³⁶

The Free Port of Genoa was first established to meet contingent needs. However, over more than two centuries of existence it was also a significant economic policy tool specially designed to turn the port into a trading centre for the redistribution of goods throughout the Mediterranean. The rules governing its activities were rather confused, and mostly driven by the need to respond to the policies implemented by other competing ports, i.e. Nice, Marseilles, and especially Leghorn, as well as by the economic crises affecting traffics in the port of Genoa, rather than aimed at attracting a stable presence of merchants to the city. Indeed, whilst full tolerance was shown for foreigners of all religions in the 1590 edict announcing the entry into force of a free trade area for grains, with the establishment of the general free port in 1609 such opening disappeared, leaving room exclusively to the clauses relating to customs exemptions. In 1613, some Genoese merchants even asked the Dutch government to have all Dutch ports publish the conditions granted by the Free Port of Genoa in the hope of drawing the interest of northern merchants. A significant number of them, however, opted for Leghorn as their operational base, where they were granted more favourable tax facilities, thus using the Genoa port only for transit trade.³⁷

With the renewal of the free trade zone in 1654 for another ten years, free port policies changed again becoming more similar to those applied in Leghorn, which were clearly aimed at increasing its population. Indeed, the new regulations, which would be maintained more or less unchanged for some time later, contained a general invitation to every person of any nation, status, class, and condition to settle in Genoa for as long as they wanted, thus shelving the above mentioned provisions on the stay of foreigners. It further stated that even infidels and Jews could be admitted, notwithstanding any other specific rules issued by the Government of the Republic in this regard.³⁸ In particular, the provisions concerning the Jewish community do not seem to follow well-defined guidelines, unlike other ports such as Leghorn, where Jews could buy properties and be free to move without being forced to wear any distinctive signs.³⁹ Once again, however, there was no organic design with incentives and tax breaks for those who moved permanently to Genoa, unlike for example in Marseilles and Leghorn. Indeed, in the first case, policies launched by Colbert, and partly opposed by Marseilles merchants, aimed to foster the establishment in the city of a large group of foreign merchants including Ital-

³⁶ Temporary suspended in 1799, it was reopened in 1805 under Napoleonic rule, and then definitively abolished in 1872. See: A. BRUSA, *Dal Porto Franco della Repubblica genovese al franco dei giorni nostri*, in *Il Porto di Genova nella mostra di Palazzo San Giorgio*, Milan 1953, pp. 134-135; G. GIACCHERO, *Origini e sviluppo del Porto franco genovese. 11 agosto 1590-9 ottobre 1778*, Genoa 1972, pp. 51-59, 119; L. PICCINNO, *Economia marittima e operatività portuale. Genova, sec. XVII-XIX*, Genoa 2000, pp. 222-225; T.A. KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, cit., pp. 151-157.

³⁷ A. IODICE, *Il porto franco, diffusione di un modello economico*, cit., pp. 164-165.

³⁸ G. GIACCHERO, *Origini e sviluppo del Porto franco genovese*, cit., pp. 131, 150.

³⁹ C.S. TAZZARA, *The Masterpiece of the Medici: commerce, politics and the making of the free port of Leghorn (1574-1790)*, Stanford 2011, p. 80.

ians, Greeks, Swiss, Dutch, and above all Armenians.⁴⁰ In the second case, conversely, the measures launched by the Medicis and designed to populate Leghorn through the granting of exemptions and privileges to foreigners settling in the city led to an exceptional population increase: from 530 inhabitants in 1590 to around 28,000 in 1738.⁴¹

The Free Port of Genoa drew a relatively limited number of foreign trading companies compared to the other above mentioned ports – as will be explained below. However, the effects of this provision on the city fabric and on port operations were certainly significant. The extension of duty free rights to all product classes in 1609 changed the needs for and specifications of storage spaces, where “general cargo” – which would also include packed products with a high unit cost – unloaded in the Genoa port could be stored, and making it necessary to look for new storage areas even outside the port. Thanks to a constant flow of investments by Casa di San Giorgio (an institution in charge of free zone management), the warehouses designed for this purpose went from 1,700 square meters in 1609 to about 6,000 in 1675. In addition, following a new series of works that began in the 1720s, ten new quarters were built over an area of 13,000 square meters previously used for public ovens.⁴² Equally significant were the consequences of these measures on cargo handling operations in this area, which, similarly to what was done by the customs offices in Pisa, Milan and Venice, were exclusively allocated to foreign workers. The approximately 60 dockers of Compagnia dei Caravana, all from Bergamo, actually were the only ones authorized to carry goods within the free zone. They were often at odds with the local workers owing to the privileges granted to them.⁴³

By examining archival sources providing a detailed mapping of the tenants of these warehouses from 1670 to the 1740s, information could be collected on the number and origins of foreign merchants working in Genoa and their more or less continuous presence over time. This time span coincides with a period of port traffic growth, beginning after the 1656-57 plague, picking up in the seventies, and stopping in 1746, following the war of the Austrian succession. Several factors had contributed to this long positive economic cycle, such as a renewed interest of the Republic for shipping, also driven by the so-called ‘pronavalist party’, which was

⁴⁰ J.T. TAKEDA, *Levantes and Marseille: the politics of naturalization and neutralization in Early Modern France, 1660-1720*, in “Seventeenth Century French Studies”, 302, 2008, n. 2, pp. 170-181; A. IODICE, *Il porto franco, diffusione di un modello economico*, cit., pp. 166-167.

⁴¹ During the 1640s taxes on foreigners in Leghorn were almost half those charged in Genoa (L. FRATTARELLI, *Livorno 1676: la città e il Porto Franco*, in F. ANGIOLINI, V. BECAGLI, M. VERGA eds., *La Toscana nell'età di Cosimo III*, Firenze 1993, p. 890). See also G. CALAFAT, *Être étranger dans un port franc. Droits, privilèges et accès au travail à Livourne (1590-1715)*, in “Cahiers de la Méditerranée”, n. 84, 2012, pp. 103-122; C. TAZZARA, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, Oxford 2017.

⁴² L. PICCINNO, *Città, porto, economia locale. I progetti di ampliamento del Porto Franco di Genova tra Sei e Settecento*, in *Ricchezza del mare, ricchezza dal mare, secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. S. CAVACIOCCHI, Florence 2006, pp. 773-794.

⁴³ On the *Caravana* dockers and their longlasting activity in the free port of Genoa, see L. PICCINNO, *Economia marittima e operatività portuale*, cit., pp. 229-240.

fostering a domestic navy re-launching and, in particular, the aforementioned works to increase storage capacity in the free port area.⁴⁴

Tab. 1. **Warehouses in the Free Port of Genoa rented to local and foreign merchants (1670-1744)**

Year	No. of available warehouses	Rented to Genoese merchants	Rented to foreign merchants		% of warehouses rented to foreigners
			Total	In partnership with Genoese merchants	
1670	89	72	17	–	19.1
1676	104	86	18	–	17.3
1693	121	96	25	4	20.7
1703	149	123	26	4	17.4
1739	202	133	69	3	34.2
1744	239	175	64	3	26.8

Source: ASGE, *Banco di San Giorgio*, 183,00234-1, 183,00235, 3,00201, 3, 00202.

As can be seen from Tables 1 and 2, the increase in the number of available warehouses corresponded to an increase in the number of rents, although with different trends depending on whether the tenants were Genoese or foreigners. With reference to the latter group, the most significant growth was recorded between 1703 and 1739, when, following an increase in available warehouses, foreign traders took hold of another 43 storage spaces (+ 165.4%), compared to Genoese merchants whose number of warehouses remained substantially unchanged. As a result of this trend, in 1739 foreign traders held over a third of all warehouses. In the following period, when other 37 warehouses were opened, the number of warehouses rented by Genoese traders grew more significantly, increasing from 133 to 175 (+ 31.6%). This was also matched by a slight decrease in the number of warehouses rented by foreign merchants, which went down to 26.8%.

⁴⁴ G. FELLONI, *Organizzazione portuale, navigazione e traffici a Genova: un sondaggio tra le fonti per l'età moderna*, in *Studi in memoria di Giorgio Costamagna*, Genoa 2003, I, pp. 337-364; T.A. KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, cit. On the economic context of Genoa after 1746, see: F. VENTURI, *Genova a metà del Settecento*, in "Rivista Storia Italiana", 79, 1967, n. 3, pp. 732-795, 784-787; G. FELLONI, *Genova e la contribuzione di guerra all'Austria nel 1746: dall'emergenza finanziaria alle riforme di struttura*, in IDEM, *Scritti di Storia economica*, Genoa 1998, 1, pp. 297-306. On the *partito navalista*, see L. PICCINNO, *La riflessione economica in Liguria tra scienza e pratica (secoli XVI-XIX)*, in "Storia economica", 4, 2001, n. 2, pp. 279-327, 292-293.

Tab. 2. **Number of foreign merchants holding warehouses in the Genoese Free Port (1670-1744)**

Year	Foreign merchants			Total
	Holding one warehouse	Holding two warehouses	Holding three or more warehouses	
1670	11	3	–	14
1676	12	3	–	15
1693	10	4	2	16
1703	17	3	1	21
1739	26	15	4	45
1744	30	11	3	44

Source: ASGE, *Banco di San Giorgio*, 183,00234-1, 183,00235, 3,00201, 3, 00202.

Tab. 3. **Main foreign merchants holding warehouses in the Genoese Free Port and their fortunes (1739)**

Merchants	Nationality	Wealth (in Genoese liras)	No. of warehouses rented
David and Guglielmo André	Huguenots	200,000	2
Gio Sandelin	Huguenot	80,000	2
Paolo Maystre	Huguenot	52,000	2
Gio Batta David	French	50,000	2
Gio Biltres	English	50,000	1
Guglielmo Boissier, Bourguet e Pasteur	Huguenots	48,333	4
Beneamin Barbaud (*)	Huguenot	45,000	2
Nicolò Rei and brothers	French	44,000	2
Giovanni Lovat	French	40,000	1
Roberto Periman	English	40,000	2
Gio Galup and brothers	Spanish	37,000	1
Abram Racca	Jew	36,000	1
Angelo Del Mare	Jew	30,250	1
Giacomo Bover	Huguenot	30,250	2
Francesco De La Riva (°)	Huguenot	25,000	2
Abram Rosa	Jew	22,250	3
Gio Isacco da Moulin	Huguenot	20,000	2
Amico Rigot	Huguenot	15,000	1
Matteo Nadal	Huguenot	15,000	1
Moise Alvarez	Jew	12,500	2
Naville Brothers	Huguenot	12,000	1
Pietro Rouvier	Huguenot	12,000	1
Francesco Regny	French	10,400	1
Gio Sanxay	English	10,000	1

Source: ASGE, *Antica Finanza*, 509; *Banco di San Giorgio*, 3,00201.

(*) One of the two warehouses is rented in partnership with Biagio Calvi.

(°) One of the two warehouses is rented in partnership with Carlo Nicolò Zignago.

With reference to 1739 data, it is possible to reconstruct the hierarchy of foreign merchants holding bonded warehouses by looking at tax computations prepared for an extraordinary taxation in 1738 involving all assets worth more than 6,000 Genoese lire (see Table 3). As clearly pointed out by historiography, these figures, although only approximate, are anyway significant for wealth classification.⁴⁵ By limiting our examination to those who had assets amounting to minimum 10,000 Genoese Lire, a list of twenty-four names between trading companies and individual merchants can be drawn up.⁴⁶

The Huguenots, with twelve people and assets totalling about 554,600 Genoese lire, are undoubtedly the most significant group from an economic point of view, as also confirmed by their holding the first three places in such a ranking. Brothers David and Guglielmo André, whose ancestors had been working in Genoa since at least the sixties of the previous century, stand out among them with total assets worth 200,000 Genoese lire.⁴⁷ The French and the Jews, with four people each, and total assets amounting to 144,000 and 100,000 Genoese lire respectively, rank second, followed by the British who, although present with only three people, had total assets matching those of the Jewish merchants. Many traders would run more than one warehouse: for example, the company Guglielmo Boissier, Bourguet and Pasteur held four of them, and was most likely to use also other two warehouses independently leased by another member of the Boissier family, Giovanni *quondam* Gaspard.⁴⁸ Finally, two of the merchants in question, in addition to holding a warehouse in their own name, had another storage space rented in partnership with a Genoese merchant, such as in the case of the Huguenots Beniamino Barbaud, partnering with Biagio Calvi, and Francesco De La Rive, partnering with Carlo Nicolò Zignago.⁴⁹ These are not the only cases we have found, but the two most significant ones in terms of wealth of the foreigners involved. This would also suggest that some foreigners would settle in Genoa to expand their business networks also to groups with different religions, following specific business strategies.

Based on these data, we were able to map the number and origins of foreign merchants operating in the city and, more specifically, in the free port area. There are still many open questions about the scopes of their businesses, the nature and intensity of relationships with the other businessmen operating in the same marketplace, and in particular about conflicts, synergies, and the establishment of merchant networks. Answering all these questions will require specific case-by-case investigations. However, it is already evident that many foreigners would own warehouses in the free port area for long periods of time, sometimes even for a few decades. Using their links with their countries of origin, they would import prod-

⁴⁵ A. ZANINI, *Tra emergenze finanziarie e caute riforme: la politica fiscale della Repubblica di Genova nel XVII e XVIII secolo*, in *Genova abundat pecuniis. Finanza, commerci e lusso a Genova tra XVII e XVIII secolo*, Genoa 2005, pp. 58-69, especially p. 61.

⁴⁶ ASGE, *Antica Finanza*, 509.

⁴⁷ A. ZANINI, *Impresa e finanza a Genova. I Crosa (secoli XVII-XVIII)*, Genoa 2017, p. 33.

⁴⁸ ASGE, *Banco di San Giorgio*, 3,00201, cc. 11, 19.

⁴⁹ ASGE, *Banco di San Giorgio*, 3,00201, cc. 91, 176.

ucts from their lands of origin to Genoa, where they would then export Genoese products and / or imported goods (for example, colonial products). During the 18th century, in addition to international trade, the leading merchants would also be involved in banking or financial brokerage, which for many of them would later become their main business. This was particularly common among the Huguenots, such as the Andrés and the Boissiers, who were operating in Genoa as early as since the second half of the 17th century, but also the Maystres, or the French Regnys, who settled in Genoa more recently.⁵⁰

In general, this analysis shows that foreign merchants belonged to communities that had put down roots in Genoa to different extents. In addition to a consular office as mentioned above, some groups also had their own place of worship: this is the case for example of the French, with the chapel of San Luigi inside the church of Santissima Annunziata.⁵¹ At the beginning of the 18th century, even the different group of Protestants were allowed to have a common place of worship hosted by the English consul.⁵²

It is therefore evident that as far as Genoa is concerned, for sure, we cannot speak of colonization by foreign merchants. Although limited in number, some of these traders were quite important in terms of both financial resources and turnover. Despite the limited number of partnerships with local merchants, foreign traders do not seem to have been openly in competition with or operating against the local traders. When settling in the city, foreigners would bring their families and religious networks with them, which would then integrate with the vast merchant, financial and information network of Genoese businessmen, thus bringing economic benefits for everyone.

From this overview, therefore, some important elements emerge allowing us to shed light on the effective attractiveness of Genoa, with reference not only to port traffic, but also to the establishment of foreign trading companies. As mentioned above, in the period under consideration, the Republic failed to implement any specific policy designed to attract foreigners. A similar approach is also found with regard to the measures concerning the free port, mostly aimed at attracting ships. Most probably, and at least in the initial phase, the granting of duty free rights, especially to Northern Europe merchants, was also justified by political reasons. For example, the adoption of more incisive strategies to attract a stable presence of Dutch merchants might have been hindered by the fact that Genoa was, as is well known, under the influence of Spain.⁵³

In light of these considerations, the reasons for the settlement of foreign merchants in Genoa must be looked for in other areas. From the analysis carried out so far, different factors must have clearly played a significant role: such as the often mentioned availability of adequate spaces for the storage of goods; efficient port

⁵⁰ G. FELLONI, *Gli investimenti finanziari genovesi in Europa tra il Seicento e la Restaurazione*, Milan 1971, especially pp. 403-424; H-T. NIEPHAUS, *Genuas Seehandel von 1746-1848*, cit., pp. 305-338.

⁵¹ F. LELEUX, *Saint-Louis-des-Français de Gênes (depuis la fondation de cette église en 1662)*, in "Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique", 64, 1960, pp. 356-366.

⁵² E. GRENDI, *Gli inglesi a Genova*, cit., pp. 251-252.

⁵³ T.A. KIRK, *Genoa and the Sea*, cit., p. 164.

operations; numerous business opportunities offered by a dynamic market such as Genoa and its great mercantile traditions. Finally, it should not be forgotten that, unlike Leghorn, Genoa would enjoy a privileged position vis-à-vis the markets of the Po Valley and transalpine hinterland, and this factor contributed to further promoting its transit port function. The city is in fact a nodal point in a vast network of trade routes stretching to at least the whole of Europe. Therefore, both tangible and intangible elements would jointly contribute to convincing foreigners to settle in Genoa: in other words, the solid reputation enjoyed by Genoa in the international arena, at least in part, must have offset the lack of proper immigration incentive policies.

Francis Brumont

*Deux ports semblables, mais que tout oppose :
Bordeaux et Rouen au XVI^e siècle*

À première vue, Bordeaux et Rouen ont de nombreux points communs : situés au fond d'un estuaire, à plus d'une centaine de kilomètres de la mer, ces deux ports sont au débouché de voies navigables irrigant leur hinterland qui leur apporte les produits nécessaires à leur activité marchande et les débouchés pour ceux qu'ils importent. Ces deux cités sont dirigées et animées par une riche bourgeoisie tout à fait apte à financer les activités maritimes et ont attiré, de ce fait, un certain nombre de marchands étrangers, espagnols notamment, et italiens, qui les mettent en relation avec les secteurs de pointe de l'économie européenne à l'époque de la Renaissance. Cependant, en y regardant de plus près, on s'aperçoit qu'il s'agit là d'une impression fautive ; pendant longtemps, et jusqu'à l'époque qui nous intéresse, Bordeaux s'est contentée de reproduire la même activité, celle qui avait fait sa prospérité, c'est-à-dire la vente de son vin. Le meilleur connaisseur de l'économie maritime bordelaise à la charnière du Moyen Âge et des Temps Modernes, Jacques Bernard, a pu écrire : « vers 1520, le grand port de la Garonne restait voué aux trafics séculaires du cabotage le plus routinier, à l'écart des grands circuits transocéaniques »¹. Il ne faisait, ce disant, que reprendre le constat qu'avaient fait les anciens historiens de la ville Francisque Michel² et Théophile Malvezin qui a pu écrire : « Bordeaux resta étrangère aux voyages de long cours »³ tout en précisant : « Cette ville ne prit part à aucune de ces tentatives de colonisation qu'essayèrent quelques autres ports français ; elle se borna timidement à commanditer quelques navires pour la pêche à la morue »⁴.

En revanche, les historiens de la Normandie ont souligné l'ancienneté des entreprises lointaines de ses marins, non sans les enjoliver, voire en créer de toutes pièces⁵ ; ce qui est certain, en revanche, c'est que dans le dernier quart du XV^e

¹ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer à Bordeaux (vers 1400-vers 1550)*, Paris, 1968 (SEVPEN) p. 805.

² F. MICHEL, *Histoire du commerce et de la navigation à Bordeaux principalement sous l'administration anglaise*, Bordeaux, 1867-1870 (Delmas et Féret) 2 vol.

³ T. MALVEZIN, *Histoire du commerce de Bordeaux depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours. Deuxième volume. XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, Bordeaux 1892 (Bellier et C^{ie}), p. 159.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵ É. DE FRÉVILLE se fait l'écho de ces prétendues navigations, auxquelles il n'est parfois pas loin d'ajouter foi (*Mémoire sur le commerce maritime de Rouen depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'au XV^e siècle*, Rouen 1857, pp. 307-330).

siècle, si l'on excepte l'expédition de Béthencourt aux Canaries, les plaies de la Guerre de Cent Ans pansées, sont effectués les premiers voyages au long cours, au Cap Vert en 1483 et au-delà du Sund, dans la direction opposée, en 1488. Au début du XVI^e siècle, les nouveautés se succèdent : le Brésil, en 1503⁶, Terre-Neuve en 1507 ; « vers 1510, écrit Michel Mollat, que nous suivons ici, on trafique régulièrement au Maroc, aux Canaries, à Madère et jusqu'en Guinée »⁷. À partir de ce moment-là, le mouvement était lancé et l'on retrouvait des navires normands jusqu'à Sumatra, en Floride, au Canada ou en Islande, sans compter les expéditions annuelles à la pêche à la morue à Terre-Neuve. Le contraste est évident.

Pour tenter de démêler les causes de cette différence, il nous faudra, dans un premier temps, nous lancer dans l'étude des relations maritimes des deux cités et de la part qu'y prennent leurs marins et leurs marchands. Nous pourrions voir alors les spécificités de chaque port, les relations avec les ports voisins, avec lesquels il peut éventuellement former un complexe lié par des intérêts communs et la manière dont chacun s'adapte aux nouveautés du siècle, essentiellement le commerce transatlantique. Il sera temps alors d'envisager les causes profondes de ces différences et de montrer que, même si elles tiennent aux structures des activités commerciales de chaque ville, elles n'excluent pas les possibilités de changement, à plus ou moins long terme.

Pour ce faire, nous avons utilisé uniquement la documentation notariale conservée en abondance pour chacun des ports. En ce qui concerne Bordeaux, il s'agit essentiellement de polices de chargement ou connaissements, c'est-à-dire l'attestation, par le maître du navire, de ce qu'il y a chargé, pour qui et pour quelle destination, moyennant un fret qui est lui aussi précisé. Une partie de cette documentation a été publiée (sous forme de résumés des actes) par Jacques Bernard : pour la période 1500-1520, pour laquelle les registres de notaires sont suffisamment représentatifs, on compte environ 2500 de ces actes⁸. Pour ma part, j'ai dépouillé les registres des années 1521-1570 d'où j'ai extrait environ 10 000 connaissements, soit un total d'environ 12 500, pour autant de voyages, chiffre représentatif, même s'il ne représente qu'une assez faible partie des voyages effectués au départ de Bordeaux⁹. Il faut y ajouter, pour l'autre grande activité du port bordelais, c'est-à-dire la

⁶ C. MANEUVRIER, *Paulmier de Gonneville et le Portugal : un navigateur normand dans la première mondialisation*, dans «Revista de História da Sociedade e da Cultura», 16, 2016, pp. 95-109.

⁷ M. MOLLAT, *Le commerce maritime normand à la fin du Moyen Âge. Étude d'histoire économique et sociale*, Paris 1952 (Plon), p. 121.

⁸ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., tome III. Les actes concernant les Pays-Bas actuels pour la même période (855 documents) ont été publiés *in extenso* par M. DROST, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire du commerce des Pays-Bas avec la France jusqu'à 1585*. Tome II : *Actes notariés de Bordeaux. 1470-1520*, 's-Gravenhage 1989 (Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis), p. 591.

⁹ F. BRUMONT, *La géographie du commerce de Bordeaux au XVI^e siècle (vers 1490-vers 1570)*, dans *Les ports du Golfe de Gascogne. De Concarneau à la Corogne (XV^e-XXI^e siècle)*, éd. A. FERNANDEZ et B. MARNOT, Paris, 2013, pp. 79-94 et *De Burdeos a Amberes, Londres, Ruán y Bilbao : el comercio del pastel zindice de la coyuntura económica europea en el siglo XVI?*, dans *Comercio y cultura en la Edad Moderna*, éd. J.J. IGLESIAS RODRIGUEZ, R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA et M.M. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, Séville 2015, pp. 1159-1172.

pêche à la morue, des contrats de prêts à la grosse aventure destinés à la financer : on en compte environ 500¹⁰.

La documentation normande est essentiellement composée des registres des tabellions de Rouen, à partir de 1525 environ, et du Havre, à partir de 1571 ; elle est beaucoup moins abondante que celle de Bordeaux, non parce que le trafic y est moindre, mais parce que les registres y sont moins bien conservés¹¹. Il s'agit essentiellement d'affrètements et de prêts à la grosse aventure, au total environ 3000 documents. Une partie d'entre eux, ou du moins des résumés de ces actes, a été publiée. En 1917, Philippe Barrey s'est intéressé aux documents tirés des registres des notaires du Havre concernant les expéditions au Maroc, au Brésil et aux Antilles (entre 1570 et 1610)¹². Il publia le résumé de 113 actes, souvent des affrètements, pour la première destination et de 342 pour les secondes, la plupart étant des contrats au tiers, qui fournissent toute sorte de détails sur le coût de l'expédition, le nombre de marins, l'armement du navire, les intéressés au voyage et les conditions du partage.

En ce qui concerne les voyages à Terre-Neuve, un dépouillement exhaustif des registres des notaires de Rouen et du Havre a été effectué, pour le compte des Archives du Canada, par l'archiviste Monique Bois. Un résumé succinct de ces actes, essentiellement des prêts à la grosse aventure, est disponible sur le site des archives *collectionscanada.gc.ca*. Pour la période 1525-1600, ce sont plus de 3000 actes qui ont été ainsi répertoriés. Pour les autres destinations que Terre-Neuve, j'ai dépouillé les registres rouennais disponibles en ligne, c'est-à-dire la grande majorité d'entre eux, pour la période 1520-1570. Au total, en additionnant actes inédits et actes résumés, pour la période 1520-1600, nous aboutissons au total non négligeable d'environ 5000 actes, qui ne correspondent pas à autant de voyages, puisque, notamment pour les prêts à la grosse, plusieurs actes concernent le même navire et la même expédition.

I. DEUX PORTS SEMBLABLES

Situés à une bonne distance de la mer, Rouen et Bordeaux sont des ports fluviaux que les navires de haute mer peuvent atteindre sous certaines conditions de vent et de marée. Ils sont reliés à leur vaste hinterland par un fleuve et ses affluents, d'où remontent les denrées qu'ils vendent et où ils distribuent celles qui leur parviennent par voie maritime. Ces diverses activités ont permis d'ancrer le développement d'une bourgeoisie marchande solidement installée et capable de saisir les opportunités que l'ouverture des espaces maritimes offre à qui veut les saisir.

¹⁰ L. TURGEON, *Pour redécouvrir notre 16^e siècle : les pêches à Terre-Neuve d'après les archives notariales de Bordeaux* dans «Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française», 39, 1986, n. 4, pp. 523-549 et *Pêches basques du Labourd en Atlantique nord (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle) : ports, routes et trafics*, dans «Itsas Memoria. Revista de Historia Marítima del País Vasco», 3, 2000, pp. 163-178.

¹¹ Les registres des tabellions (notaires) de Rouen et du Havre sont disponibles en ligne sur le site des Archives Départementales de la Seine-Maritime (AD 76).

¹² P. BARREY, *Le Havre-maritime du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris 1917, 277 p.

1. Deux ports fluviaux

Nos deux ports sont situés à environ 120 km de la mer, mais les difficultés de la navigation y sont bien différentes : la Gironde, c'était ce que l'on appelait « la bonne rivière », la navigation s'y faisant à toute heure de marée avec suffisamment de fonds pour les navires de haute mer, tant et si bien qu'il n'est pas besoin de pilote¹³. Ce n'est que dans les années 1540, quand on verra apparaître sur les quais bordelais de gros vaisseaux en provenance de Lübeck, de Hambourg ou de Hollande, peu familiers de ces parages, que la nécessité s'en fera sentir. Au reste, les naufrages et incidents sont peu nombreux dans l'estuaire, moins nombreux sans doute que les heurts entre navires ancrés bord à bord et à la file dans la rivière en attente de chargement ou de déchargement¹⁴. Bien différente était la navigation en Seine, dont l'entrée était marquée par des bancs et par de forts courants, et où l'on ne pouvait se passer de pilote¹⁵. Les forts courants y modifient sans cesse les fonds, la marée provoque une forte vague, le mascaret, et la brume y règne souvent : aussi les échouages y sont-ils fréquents. Quelques passages sont particulièrement redoutés, comme la « traverse » de Quillebeuf, non loin de l'embouchure, un endroit où le mascaret se faisait encore sentir violemment. D'ailleurs Quillebeuf abritait une compagnie de pilotes expérimentés comme, un peu plus en amont, Villequier, également pépinière de pilotes. La remontée de la Seine se faisait en trois marées, avec arrêt obligatoire pendant les périodes de basse mer à Quillebeuf, Caudebec, et enfin à Jumièges ou La Meilleraye. Les navires calant plus de trois mètres ne pouvaient ancrer à Rouen, mais ils étaient très rares et ceux de 100 à 120 tonneaux y accédaient facilement, une taille courante pour des navires de commerce.

Si, au point de vue de son accessibilité, Bordeaux était favorisé, ce n'est pas le cas en ce qui concerne les équipements portuaires. En effet, contrairement à Rouen, Bordeaux ne disposait pas de quais et les navires devaient s'ancre dans la rivière, dans le chenal, le chargement et déchargement des navires s'y faisant grâce à de petites embarcations, les gabares, qui faisaient l'aller et retour entre les navires et la grève où des portefaix ou des charrettes prenaient sacs ou barriques pour les apporter vers les chais et entrepôts. On imagine aisément les difficultés de telles manœuvres, les risques encourus par hommes et marchandises, surtout quand de nombreux navires, comme cela arrivait peu après les vendanges, étaient réunis devant les Chartrons.

« Il est donc facile d'imaginer, écrit Jacques Bernard, le mouvement qu'une flotte d'une centaine de navires, enlevant 8 000 à 10 000 tonneaux, lesquels exigeaient des milliers de «tours» de charrette, et des centaines de tours de gabares ou de galupes, faisait naître sur la rive, où se manipulaient certains jours, mêlés aux sacs et aux balles de pastel, des centaines de fûts de vin, préalablement ouillés, sur le port même ou dans les chais, tandis qu'un mouvement inverse mettait à terre les pipes et les barriques de saumure, les sacs de

¹³ Sur tout ce qui suit, J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., pp. 89-126 et Carte n° 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88-89.

¹⁵ M. MOLLAT, *Le commerce maritime*, cit., pp. 358-373 ; A. SADOURNY, *Les transports sur la Seine aux XIII^e et XIV^e siècles*, dans «Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest», 85, 1978, n. 2, pp. 231-244.

grain, les charges de sel et de lest et les paques de draps, sous l'œil inquisiteur des mesuriers, compteurs, jaugeurs, marqueurs, 'searchers', visiteurs de la rivière, des receveurs de la coutume, des officiers de la ville et du seigneur duc, dans les allées et venues des marchands, des courtiers, des notaires, des bateliers, des arrimeurs et des marins, et de tout le badaud peuple accouru. »¹⁶

En revanche, c'est le long des *kays* de Rouen que pouvaient s'amarrer les navires, ce qui facilitait largement les opérations de manutention des marchandises. Certes, ils n'étaient pas pavés partout, étaient trop étroits car situés rive droite, entre la rivière et la muraille de la ville, pas assez longs (500 m en aval côté mer et 500 m en amont), encombrés par les marchandises en attente, ce qui retardait chargement et déchargement. Ces défauts étaient particulièrement flagrants pendant les foires et les édiles eurent beau légiférer, ils se perpétuèrent. Aussi, la ville vit-elle sans déplaisir se développer ses avant-ports, situés à l'embouchure, où l'on pouvait faire un premier transfert des marchandises sur des allèges, dont le déchargement était plus aisé et plus rapide. Le premier, Honfleur, existait de toute antiquité ou presque, rive gauche, et l'autre, en face, fut une création royale du début du XVI^e siècle, Le Havre, connu sous divers noms, Havre de Grâce ou Havre neuf ; en 1517, il était officiellement opérationnel et effectivement très rapidement les navires de commerce prirent l'habitude de s'y ancrer, alors qu'il avait été conçu comme un port de guerre. Lors des périodes de guerre, durant lesquelles les navires naviguaient si possible en convoi, parfois protégés par quelque vaisseau plus gros et mieux armé, c'est au Havre qu'ils se regroupaient. C'est ainsi qu'en décembre 1525, 35 navires s'y réunirent pour voguer de conserve jusqu'à Brouage, pour charger du sel, mais ils furent attaqués par 13 navires espagnols armés en guerre qui s'emparèrent du plus important d'entre eux, nommé la *Pensée*, dont la mission était de défendre les autres ; certains purent se réfugier dans le golfe du Morbihan et d'autres s'enfuirent quand ils virent l'ennemi¹⁷. Dans les années 1550, cette pratique se généralisa et même après la paix de Cateau-Cambrésis (1559), la part du Havre ne cessa d'augmenter, aussi bien pour les départs que pour les arrivées et ceci, comme nous le verrons, en étroite collaboration avec Rouen¹⁸.

Il s'agit là d'une situation bien différente de celle de Bordeaux qui n'a pratiquement pas de relation avec les quelques ports de la Gironde situés sur la rive droite, en Saintonge, pays ennemi jusqu'à la fin de la domination anglaise, ni avec le grand port de la Dordogne, Libourne.

2. Un hinterland bien drainé

Rouen, comme Bordeaux, sont les points de passage presque obligés vers l'intérieur ; si quelques voies terrestres existent de Dieppe, par exemple, vers les

¹⁶ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., p. 84.

¹⁷ É. GOSSELIN, *Documents authentiques et inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la marine normande et du commerce rouennais durant les XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, Rouen 1876, pp. 74-75.

¹⁸ M. MOLLAT, *Le commerce maritime*, cit., pp. 370-371.

Pays-Bas ou Paris, la majeure partie du trafic passe par les voies fluviales et donc par Rouen¹⁹. Sur la rive droite, en aval de Paris, par l'Oise et ses affluents on atteignait la Champagne et la Picardie, tandis que, en amont, l'Yonne ouvrait la voie vers la Bourgogne et le Lyonnais ; c'était là la grande voie économique qui reliait la Manche à la Méditerranée. Sur la rive gauche, par l'Eure jusqu'à Chartres, puis par la voie terrestre, on atteignait la vallée de la Loire. Rouen envoyait vers l'amont, outre les produits de l'industrie normande, les toiles et les draps, le fer, ceux qui arrivaient par la mer : les vins de Bordeaux et La Rochelle, le sel, le poisson, le pastel, les épices, les draps et le charbon anglais, etc. Elle en recevait les vins de Bourgogne et de France, dont une partie ne faisait que passer en direction des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre, et divers produits comme des matériaux de construction²⁰.

Fig. 1. Arrière pays des ports normands²¹



La Garonne offrait à Bordeaux les mêmes avantages, bien que le débit de ce fleuve soit beaucoup plus irrégulier ; il est normalement navigable jusqu'à Toulouse, où la navigation s'interrompt au gué du Bazacle et le Tarn jusqu'à Rabastens, mais l'été on ne peut souvent aller plus loin que Montauban, Moissac, voire Agen, en cas de grande sécheresse, l'apport du Lot, en aval de cette ville, maintenant toujours un

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 286-304 et Carte 7, p. 603.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 297-329.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 603.

débit suffisant entre Agen et Bordeaux²². Comme pour la Seine, la navigation était ralentie par divers obstacles, souvent d'origine humaine d'ailleurs (moulins, pêcheries, péages), mais il n'empêche que c'était le moyen le plus commode et le moins coûteux pour apporter à Bordeaux les vins et le pastel qui composaient la grande masse des produits circulant du Languedoc au Bordelais. Vers Toulouse, la variété des produits était beaucoup plus grande, car, si Bordeaux et ses alentours avaient peu à proposer, s'y entassait la masse des productions artisanales et matières premières des pays riverains de la Manche et de la Mer du Nord, le sel de Bretagne et de Saintonge, le poisson, les épices et produits méditerranéens et exotiques redistribués par les divers ports de la façade atlantique²³. C'est dire que la navigation était animée sur le fleuve aquitain, surtout en automne et au printemps quand elle était facilitée par l'abondance des eaux.

3. *Des capitaux abondants*

Quoique moins peuplée et moins commerçante que Rouen, Bordeaux abritait une bonne bourgeoisie marchande enrichie depuis des siècles par le commerce du vin et, plus récemment, du pastel, même si le plus souvent les marchands bordelais n'agissaient qu'en tant que commissionnaires pour les Toulousains, Rouennais, Parisiens, Flamands ou autres qui monopolisaient ce commerce. La possession d'amples propriétés urbaines et rustiques, des offices les plus lucratifs (Parlement), des prébendes ecclésiastiques, complétait les revenus dérivés du commerce. Aussi n'est-il pas étonnant de voir ces marchands se lancer sans tarder dans de nouvelles activités, quand celles-ci promettaient d'être lucratives. C'est le cas de la pêche à la morue à Terre-Neuve et également de la chasse à la baleine dans les mêmes parages, celle-ci étant à notre époque bien moins importante²⁴.

Grâce à l'abondance dans les registres des notaires du port des prêts à la grosse aventure, nous pouvons bien connaître l'origine des capitaux servant à armer les navires partant de Bordeaux pour les campagnes de pêche à la morue, même si un certain nombre de ces expéditions nous échappe. Ce n'est qu'à la fin des années 1520 (1527 et 1530) que les premiers navires armés pour Terre-Neuve se présentent, en vue de leur avitaillement, sur les quais de la Garonne ; ce ne sont là que des pionniers, et ce n'est qu'au milieu des années 1540 que leur nombre commence à croître, mais cela ne suffit pas à faire, loin de là, de Bordeaux « l'un des plus importants, sinon le plus important, des ports français » pour cette activité, comme l'affirme Jacques Bernard²⁵. Quoiqu'il en soit, ce qui nous intéresse ici, c'est l'origine des financements de ces campagnes de pêche qui mobilisent tout de même

²² J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., pp. 144-150.

²³ G. CASTER, *Le commerce du pastel et de l'épicerie à Toulouse de 1450 environ à 1561*, Toulouse 1962, pp. 313-375.

²⁴ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., p. 805-826 et *Les débuts de la pêche à Terre-Neuve vus de Bordeaux. 1517-1550 : bilan et perspectives*, dans *L'Atlantique et ses rivages. 1500-1800*, Bordeaux, 1984, pp. 11-48 ; L. TURGEON, *Pour redécouvrir notre 16^e siècle*, cit., et *Pêches basques du Labourd*, cit.

²⁵ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., p. 807.

une cinquantaine de navires par an²⁶. La réponse est simple : pratiquement tous ceux qui prêtent à la grosse aventure pour l'avitaillement des terre-neuviens sont des marchands bordelais²⁷. Une proportion (96%) à nuancer toutefois, puisque certains de ces navires vont également à La Rochelle où ils trouvent des financements complémentaires et, comme à Bordeaux, tout ce qui leur est nécessaire pour armer leur navire²⁸. L'intérêt moyen s'élevant à 29%, on comprend que ce type d'investissement nouveau ait pu intéresser la bourgeoisie bordelaise, plus habituée à des trafics routiniers de moindre rapport.

Ce n'est pas tout à fait le cas à Rouen, où nous le verrons, les activités maritimes sont plus diversifiées ; cependant, les marchands rouennais s'intéressent également à ce type de prêt, mais ils ne sont pas les seuls, d'autres villes étant aussi présentes sur ce marché.

Tab. 1. **Origine géographique des financeurs des voyages à Terre-Neuve (Rouen, 1540-1570)**

Origine	Orléans	Paris	Rouen	Tours	Troyes	Divers
Nombre de prêts	279	42	937	7	49	20

Les marchands et bourgeois de Rouen contrôlent assez largement (70% des prêts) le financement de la pêche à Terre-Neuve et les bénéfices qui en découlent ; les autres prêteurs sont assez souvent des marchands que l'on retrouve à Rouen pour d'autres activités : commerce du pastel et du vin pour les Orléanais et les Tourangeaux, commerce du sel pour les Troyens. L'intérêt de ces prêts est plus élevé qu'à Bordeaux (36% en moyenne) car les Normands doivent aller chercher leur sel en doublant la pointe bretonne, passage toujours délicat. Notons également qu'à la différence de Bordeaux, ces marchands financent aussi d'autres expéditions, dont certaines sont plus lucratives, vers les Amériques ou l'Afrique noire.

Malgré quelques différences mineures, nos deux ports partagent un certain nombre d'atouts communs, mais ils ne les ont pas valorisés de la même façon : Bordeaux continue à s'appuyer sur ses activités traditionnelles tandis que Rouen réussit à exploiter à fond les nouvelles chances qu'apportent l'ouverture des océans et la mondialisation des échanges.

II. LE « PARADOXE BORDELAIS »²⁹ : UN PORT SANS NAVIRES, NI MARINS.

Cette affirmation n'a rien d'une nouveauté : aux historiens que nous avons cités dans notre introduction, on pourrait ajouter Camille Jullian qui introduit en outre

²⁶ L. TURGEON, *Pêches basques*, cit. p. 166.

²⁷ 96% exactement (calcul portant sur plus de 550 prêts à la grosse aventure pour la période 1536-1565).

²⁸ L. TURGEON, *Pêches basques*, cit. p. 167.

²⁹ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., p. 17.

un élément d'explication : « les Bordelais, écrit-il, ne surent point tirer de l'admirable situation de leur ville, de son port abrité, de son fleuve accessible, des richesses de ses terres, tout le bénéfice qu'en eût recueilli une nation plus avisée et plus laborieuse »³⁰. Cette explication ne convainc pas Jacques Bernard, à juste titre, lequel comme Malvezin ou Michel, se contente d'enregistrer le fait, tout en signalant tout de même qu'un changement se produit à partir des années 1520 quand commencent à arriver sur les bords de la Garonne quelques produits exotiques et, un peu plus tard, quand les terre-neuviens commencèrent à en partir en assez grand nombre.

1. « *Le cabotage le plus routinier* »³¹

Les navires qui se pressaient sur la rivière venaient charger à Bordeaux en premier lieu du vin, vins de la sénéchaussée et vins de « haut pays », essentiellement de Gaillac, de Cahors et d'Agenais, et, à partir des années 1475-1500, du pastel, jusqu'au début des années 1560, date à laquelle les exportations diminuent fortement³². On pourrait y ajouter quelques produits de moindre importance, pruneaux de l'Agenais, plumes, dérivés de la résine des pins (térébenthine, brai, goudrons) et miel des Landes, copeaux de bois pour faire des peignes... et les céréales quand la demande est forte. Les navires qui venaient charger apportaient à Bordeaux et à son hinterland tout ce dont ils avaient besoin, mais comme ces cargaisons étaient moins volumineuses et que leur transport n'obéissait pas toujours au même mouvement saisonnier, beaucoup arrivaient sur lest, ce qui ne manquait pas de poser des problèmes lors du délestage.

Grâce aux innombrables connaissements qui peuplent les registres des notaires du port, il est aisé de dresser un tableau de la destination de ces navires. Nous ne nous lancerons pas dans l'énumération des quelque 220 ports vers lesquels sont envoyés des navires partis de Bordeaux entre 1500 et 1570, qui n'aurait guère d'intérêt, d'autant plus que nous ne pouvons prétendre à l'exhaustivité car, quoique fourni (11500 voyages environ), notre échantillon ne représente qu'une faible partie des expéditions (un cinquième? Un sixième?). Nous ne pouvons pas non plus être précis à l'unité près, car, dans de nombreux cas, minoritaires cependant, plusieurs destinations sont proposées au maître du navire : il doit passer d'un port à l'autre pour s'enquérir du meilleur prix. C'est assez courant pour le vin, ou le maître doit vendre, par exemple, *deçà le raz*, c'est-à-dire sur la côte nord de la Bretagne, en choisissant lui-même le ou les ports de destination, mais aussi pour le blé : si le prix n'est pas bon à Lisbonne, ou s'il y a trop de concurrence, on pousse jusqu'à Sanlúcar ou Cadix. Pour le pastel, la destination est le plus souvent unique, sauf en cas de guerre : on dit, par exemple, qu'on va à Douvres, mais c'est à Anvers ou Middelbourg, que le maître doit se diriger.

³⁰ C. JULLIAN, *Histoire de Bordeaux depuis les origines jusqu'à 1895*, Bordeaux, 1895 (Féret) p. 220.

³¹ J. BERNARD, *Navires et gens de mer*, cit., p. 805.

³² F. BRUMONT, *La commercialisation du pastel toulousain (1350-1600)*, dans «Annales du Midi», 106, 1994, n. 205, pp. 25-40.

Nous nous contenterons donc de repérer les grandes zones vers lesquelles se dirigent ces navires, ce que montre le tableau ci-dessous :

Tab. 2. **Destination des navires partant de Bordeaux (1500-1570)**

	Pays Basque	Poitou	Bretagne	Normandie	Picardie	Esp nord	Angleterre	Irlande	Ecosse	Pays-Bas	Portugal Andalousie	Total
NB	347	192	1896	2102	625	1483	2330	382	141	1856	195	11549
%	3	1,7	16,4	18,2	5,4	12,8	20,2	3,3	1,2	16,1	1,7	100

Il faudrait ajouter à ce total 6 voyages qui sortent de ces aires géographiques : un à Dantzig, et cinq au-delà du détroit de Gibraltar (un à Carthagène et quatre à Livourne). Leur inclusion dans le total ne changerait rien à nos conclusions : les navires qui chargent à Bordeaux se dirigent vers cinq grandes destinations, l'Angleterre, la Normandie, la Bretagne, les Pays-Bas et la corniche cantabrique, en fait sa partie centrale et orientale, car peu de navires (32) vont en Galice ; on pourrait d'ailleurs inclure dans cette destination ceux qui déchargent au Pays Basque nord, c'est-à-dire à Saint-Jean de Luz, car, en vertu des traités dits de Bonne Correspondance, le commerce est libre entre la Labourd et les autres provinces basques, même en temps de guerre.³³ L'Angleterre, les Pays-Bas et la Normandie viennent chercher sur les bords de la Garonne du vin et du pastel ; ce sont des destinations traditionnelles tout comme la Bretagne qui ne demande que du vin, comme l'Irlande, l'Écosse et la Picardie. En Espagne, la corniche cantabrique, porte d'entrée des marchandises destinées à Burgos et aux foires de Castille, reçoit du pastel et, les années de pénurie, du blé et des fèves. Enfin, le Portugal et l'Andalousie sont demandeuses seulement de blé.

Si quelques régions se distinguent par la multiplicité de leurs destinations, petits ports bretons et irlandais, par exemple, les autres « grandes » ont au contraire un port principal qui domine largement tout le reste : c'est Bilbao et son avant-port Portugaleta (717 envois), Rouen (1292), Anvers avec Arnemuiden et Middelbourg (1725) et enfin Londres (1427).

Le diagnostic fait par Jacques Bernard est donc juste : les relations maritimes de Bordeaux sont routinières, car elles sont commandées par le commerce du vin, actif déjà dans les mêmes directions depuis de nombreux siècles. Le pastel n'a guère apporté de nouveautés ; il a simplement intensifié les relations avec la Normandie, l'Angleterre et les Pays-Bas et les a bien développées, en revanche, avec la côte cantabrique, qui réclamait seulement auparavant des céréales, sous l'impulsion des marchands de Burgos et de leurs commis à Bilbao ou Santander. Notons toutefois que le fait que ces navigations soient qualifiées de cabotage ne signifie pas qu'elles étaient faciles ; de nombreux périls guettaient les marins, dans le Golfe de Gascogne comme dans la mer d'Irlande ou dans les brumes de l'Écosse. Il nous faut

³³ C. LUGAT, *Les traités de « bonne correspondance » entre les trois Provinces maritimes basques (XVI^e-XVII^e siècles)*, dans «Revue Historique», 623, 2002, pp. 611-655 et *Les Traités de Bonne Correspondance : une dérogation aux règles de droit maritime international? (XVI^e-XVII^e siècles)*, dans «Itsas Memoria. Revista de Estudios Marítimos del País Vasco», 5, 2006, pp. 301-308.

examiner maintenant un deuxième point, celui de la participation des navires bordelais à ces échanges, une participation que les historiens de la ville ont toujours considérée comme négligeable, nous l'avons dit.

2. *Un port sans navires et ni marins?*

Reprenons nos connaissances qui mentionnent systématiquement le port d'attache des vaisseaux qui viennent charger à Bordeaux. Nous négligerons les pays qui ne fournissent que quelques navires, l'Irlande (5), l'Écosse (1), l'Italie (1), le Portugal et l'Andalousie (5) pour nous intéresser seulement aux plus importants.

Tab. 3. **Port d'attache des navires chargeant à Bordeaux (1500-1570)**

	Pays Basque	Poitou	Bretagne	Normandie	Picardie	Bordeaux	Espagne	Angleterre	Pays Bas	Allemagne	Total
NB	485	1343	6037	1318	173	917	146	989	237	92	11745
%	4,1	11,4	51,5	11,2	1,5	7,8	1,2	8,5	2	0,8	100

Au-delà de la domination claire des marins bretons qui réalisent plus de la moitié des transports de vin et de pastel bordelais, la comparaison avec le tableau précédent montre que d'autres régions se chargent aussi de ces transports bien au-delà de ce qu'elles reçoivent : c'est le cas des pays allemands (essentiellement Hambourg), du Pays Basque, et surtout du Poitou, Aunis et Saintonge en particulier, avec les ports de la rive droite de l'estuaire (Meschers, Talmont), ceux de la vallée de la Seudre et ceux des alentours de Marennes et de Brouage, transporteurs plus spécialisés vers la côte cantabrique, mais ne négligeant pas les autres destinations, notamment les ports fluviaux que leurs petits navires atteignent aisément (Nantes, Redon, Rouen). Mais, même si tout cela a son intérêt, il nous faut nous pencher plus précisément sur le cas de Bordeaux dont les navires ont effectué plus de 800 voyages, les autres qui figurent dans le tableau provenant des ports de la Dordogne (Guîtres, Libourne) et de la Garonne (Langon). La part de Bordeaux n'est donc pas tout à fait négligeable : 800 voyages, c'est 10 à 12 par an dans nos archives, mais bien plus dans la réalité, puisque, nous le savons, notre base de données est loin de répertorier tous les voyages. En tablant sur 50 voyages effectués par les navires bordelais par an, nous serons sans doute plus près de la réalité ; ce n'est pas mal, surtout pour un port réputé pour n'avoir pas de navires.

Nous pouvons d'ailleurs avoir une idée approchée du nombre de bâtiments dont le port d'attache était Bordeaux, qu'il est possible de repérer lors de leur passage chez le notaire. Certes, ce chiffre n'est sans doute pas tout à fait exact, beaucoup de navires portant le même nom ; nous les différencions grâce au nom de leur capitaine, mais ceux-ci passant assez couramment de l'un à l'autre, il est possible que nous ayons comptabilisé deux fois le même navire. Quoi qu'il en soit, leur nombre est suffisamment élevé –plus de 400 vaisseaux différents pour toute la période– pour attester que Bordeaux avait des navires en assez grand nombre pour faire une partie de son trafic. L'examen de leurs destinations montre une préférence pour la côte cantabrique espagnole (46% des expéditions) et surtout pour Bilbao

(270 voyages), mais ils ne négligent aucune destination, avec une préférence pour les ports fluviaux (Rouen, Nantes, Redon, Londres). Deux navires bordelais sont même envoyés, l'un en Moscovie³⁴ et l'autre à Dantzig³⁵.

Ces navires sont conduits par des maîtres bordelais très actifs, ainsi qu'en témoignent ces quelques exemples : Arnaud Dutilh et Amanieu Pascau ont effectué, le premier, 34 voyages entre 1505 et 1531 et le second, 32 entre 1524 et 1550. En 14 ans, Guillaume Gyn et François Vallois ont conduit respectivement 31 (1538-1551) et 25 expéditions (1541-1554) et Jacques Nollean, notre capitaine le mieux représenté dans les registres des notaires bordelais, 40 entre 1525 et 1546. Comme dans tous ces cas, nous ne connaissons qu'une partie des transports qu'ils ont effectués, il est probable qu'ils n'arrêtaient guère, comme Étienne Matignon qui est parti 5 fois entre janvier et septembre 1548 ou Jean Catelan : 6 voyages de février 1547 à mars 1548. On ne peut nier dans ces cas qu'il s'agisse de marins expérimentés travaillant à plein temps. Les maîtres ayant coutume de recruter leur équipage au sein de leurs connaissances, en tout cas d'un cercle suffisamment proche, il est probable qu'il en est de même à Bordeaux : Bordeaux aurait donc eu, et des navires, et des marins.

3. Bordeaux et Terre-Neuve

Selon les auteurs que nous avons cités plus haut, la participation aux voyages à Terre-Neuve, et, particulièrement, à leur financement, est le seul élément de « modernité » du Bordeaux de la Renaissance. Sur la question du financement, nous avons indiqué plus haut que cela était hors de doute, puisque les marchands bordelais assuraient 96% des prêts aux navires qui venaient avitailler dans leur ville. Mais, il faut signaler aussi que quelques navires bordelais ont participé à cette nouvelle aventure. Le premier répertorié est la *servine* conduite en 1539 et 1541 par deux maîtres différents, bordelais, mais par la suite, leur présence est plutôt réduite. Laurier Turgeon a fait un recensement des ports d'attache des navires recensés à Bordeaux en partance pour Terre-Neuve³⁶. Pour la période 1544-1585, durant laquelle les pêches sont les plus actives, les Bordelais font une expédition sur cinq, face aux Basques qui envoient les trois-cinquièmes des navires qui se financent à Bordeaux. En chiffres absolus, inférieurs à la réalité, puisque L. Turgeon n'a dépouillé que deux années sur cinq, ce sont 409 navires basques contre 140 bordelais ; mais ces derniers envoient les meilleures années (1584 et 1585, par exemple) une vingtaine de bâtiments : ce n'est pas négligeable.

En somme, le port de Bordeaux n'est pas si indigent que la lecture des auteurs qui se sont penchés sur son cas pouvait le faire croire ; c'est que ses moyens ont paru peu en rapport avec l'important trafic qui animait les berges de la Garonne où un millier de navires pouvaient venir prendre leur charge les bonnes années et parfois

³⁴ ARCHIVES DÉPARTEMENTALES DE LA GIRONDE (ADG), 3 E 2418, f° 225 (24-05-1565).

³⁵ ADG, 3 E 2416, f° 328 (21-05-1563).

³⁶ L. TURGEON, *Pêches basques*, cit. , p. 167.

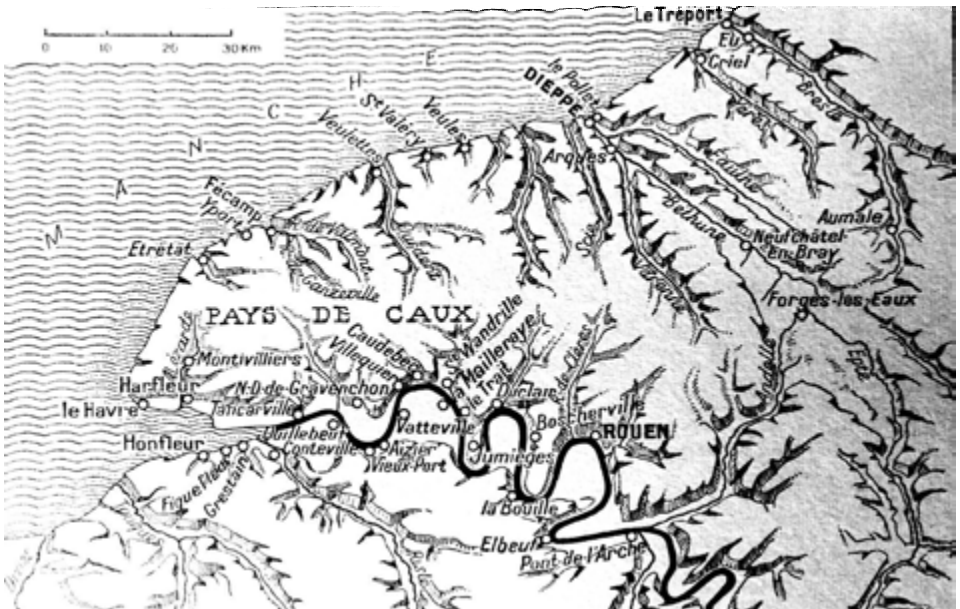
plus, auprès desquels les quelques dizaines de bâtiments dont le port d'attache était Bordeaux faisaient pâle figure, certes, mais ils assuraient leur part de trafic.

III. ROUEN, L'APPEL DU LARGE

Rouen présente une toute autre figure, en premier lieu, parce la cité normande est environnée d'une multitude de ports, de plus ou moins d'importance, qui sont à son service, ou du moins à celui de ses marchands et qui pallient aisément les déficiences de sa marine. En outre, depuis le début du XV^e siècle, les marins normands ont dépassé le cadre du cabotage, malgré l'intérêt que pouvaient représenter pour cette cité les destinations proches, France atlantique, Angleterre, Pays-Bas. Ils ont franchi le détroit de Gibraltar pour aborder dans les ports du Levant espagnol ou de l'Italie, ils ont emboîté le pas aux Portugais pour s'engager sur les côtes marocaines, puis de plus en plus vers le sud, vers la Guinée ou la Sierra-Leone ; les îles de l'Atlantique portugaise ou espagnole ne leur furent pas étrangères non plus et le Brésil rapidement atteint après sa découverte par Amilcar Cabral, le Brésil et les Antilles sans oublier Terre-Neuve qu'ils furent parmi les premiers à exploiter³⁷.

1. Un complexe portuaire

Fig. 2. Le complexe portuaire normand³⁸



³⁷ M. MOLLAT, *Le commerce maritime*, cit., pp. 237-267 et Carte 2, p. 597.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 596.

Contrairement à Bordeaux, Rouen n'est pas un port isolé : grâce à ses marchands, la ville domine et anime un ensemble de « petits » ports situés dans la vallée de la Seine et sur le littoral, même si les plus importants d'entre eux, Fécamp et surtout Dieppe, peuvent en partie échapper à cette influence.³⁹ Vue de Rouen, l'organisation de cette activité est simple : les Rouennais proposent des financements, affrètent les navires et en possèdent aussi une partie, à Rouen même ou dans les autres ports. Une vingtaine d'entre eux sont intéressés à ces activités, Rouen et Le Havre fournissant le plus grand nombre de navires, suivis par Jumièges et Honfleur. En ce qui concerne les maîtres et capitaines, d'autres noms de lieux apparaissent, ceux des ports qui s'égrènent le long de la rivière, où prospèrent de dynasties de marins, comme les Conihoult et les Boutart de Jumièges ou les Chefdhostel de Vatteville.

Vue de Bordeaux, la situation se rééquilibre en faveur des ports de mer : parmi les navires normands qui viennent y charger vin et pastel, ce sont Fécamp (516 chargements) et Dieppe (318) qui dominent, suivis de loin par Cherbourg (103), Rouen et Le Havre n'envoyant que quelques dizaines de navires sur les bords de la Gironde. Cela s'explique sans doute par le fait que les navires allant à Bordeaux sont affrétés par des marchands étrangers à la Normandie, des Flamands, des Toulousains ou des Bordelais, une économie que les Rouennais ne contrôlent pas. Ces derniers sont plus intéressés par les voyages transatlantiques, Brésil et Terre-Neuve⁴⁰, ou en direction de la Méditerranée. Ainsi, voir la circulation maritime depuis Rouen fausse notre vision et minore sans doute le rôle de Dieppe et de Fécamp. Cela ne fait que renforcer la différence entre Rouen et Bordeaux, ce dernier port ne pouvant compter que sur ses propres forces ou presque.

2. *Voyages au long cours*

Nous l'avons dit et répété, Rouen et ses ports associés se distinguent de Bordeaux par leur participation à des voyages au long cours, dépassant largement le cadre du cabotage –même si l'on entend celui-ci comme couvrant une vaste zone qui va de l'Andalousie à l'Écosse– des voyages en Méditerranée occidentale, en Afrique jusqu'à l'équateur, en Amérique, du sud du Brésil jusqu'aux côtes du Labrador. Certaines de ces expéditions ont même porté les marins normands bien plus loin, jusqu'à Sumatra⁴¹ ; mais, il n'est pas question ici de nous arrêter à l'extraordinaire, mais plutôt de nous en tenir aux voyages répétés, routiniers, dépassant les limites fixées ci-dessus. Les registres des tabellions rouennais, puis havrais fournissent un certain nombre d'indications, mais sont très incomplets, notamment

³⁹ M. TRANCHANT, *Les ports maritimes de la France atlantique (XI^e-XV^e siècle). Volume I. tableau géohistorique*, Rennes 2017, pp. 133-170.

⁴⁰ F. BRUMONT, *Les Normands à Terre-Neuve au XVI^e siècle*, dans «Annales de Normandie», 2, 2018, pp. 35-60.

⁴¹ Il s'agit de l'expédition du Dieppois Jean Parmentier, dont le voyage est venu à notre connaissance grâce à la publication de G.B. Ramusio (O. OKUNEVA, *Essai sur la carte de G. Gastaldi Brasil 'insérée dans Delle navigazioni et Viaggi' de G. B. Ramusio (1556 ; 1565 ; 1606)*, dans «Terra Brasilis (Nova Série)» 2013, pp. 1-22).

certaines années où ils manquent totalement. Il faudra donc prendre les chiffres ci-dessous pour ce qu'ils sont, de simples indicateurs, nous fournissant tout de même une idée des directions favorites du commerce rouennais.

Tab. 4. **Destinations lointaines : Rouen, 1520-1570**⁴²

Lieu	Andalousie*	Italie	Barbarie	Guinée	Madère	Canaries	Brésil
Nombre	15	6	15	26	17	15	63

* Andalousie orientale

Ne nous focalisons pas trop sur ces chiffres, car il est rare que les navires aient une seule destination, soit qu'une escale soit obligée ou traditionnelle : les navires qui vont au Brésil s'arrêtent bien souvent sur la côte africaine, soit au Cap des Trois Pointes (Bojador), soit au Cap Vert ; soit que le commis des marchands qui ont chargé le navire ait une certaine latitude pour s'arrêter là où il le jugera le plus profitable. De même, en ce qui concerne le Maroc, il est courant que des navires allant à Cadix soient envoyés à Assilah, Safi ou Agadir pour retourner ensuite vers les côtes espagnoles ou portugaises⁴³. Le navire se livrait alors à un véritable cabotage à partir de Cadix ou de Lisbonne, pouvant aller aux Canaries ou à Madère, ou franchir le détroit et visiter tous les ports de l'Andalousie orientale, sans généralement dépasser Alicante toutefois. En direction de Italie, on s'arrête parfois à Marseille, puis à Portobelo, mais le plus souvent à Livourne et Civitavecchia, avec rarement la possibilité d'aller jusqu'à Naples ou en Sicile.

La destination favorite des marchands rouennais se révèle pourtant être le Brésil, dès le milieu des années 1520⁴⁴, un vaste territoire mal contrôlé par les Portugais et où l'on allait chercher essentiellement le bois brésil qui permettait de teinter en rouge. Certaines années, comme en 1548-49 ou en 1565-66, une douzaine de navires au minimum partent pour cette destination, ce qui n'est pas négligeable. On est loin de tout cela à Bordeaux. Notons, cependant, pour l'anecdote, le départ, du Havre où il était venu décharger du pastel, de ce qui est peut-être le premier navire bordelais à avoir été aux Antilles : en juillet 1572, Jean de Gaignard, capitaine du *Cerf volant* de 70 tonneaux, dont le maître est Bernard Bottier, Bordelais lui aussi, se prépare à faire le voyage à la «terre des cannibales» (Brésil) et aux Indes occidentales (Antilles) ; l'homme important de l'expédition est le pilote Étienne Syeurin, dont on ne précise pas le lieu de résidence, qui recevra 200 livres tournois de « pot-de-vin » tandis que Bottier devra se contenter de 80⁴⁵. Ce voyage n'eut sans doute pas de lendemain, mais il s'inscrit dans un mouvement en direction des Antilles bien visible dans les archives du Havre.

⁴² J'entends par ce terme les navires qui vont au-delà de Cadix et je laisse pour le moment de côté Terre-Neuve.

⁴³ M. MOLLAT, *Le commerce maritime*, cit., pp. 246-248

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 252-257.

⁴⁵ ARCHIVES DÉPARTEMENTALES DE LA SEINE-MARITIME (ADSM), 2E70/6, vues n° 267 et 268 (26-VII-1572) et 2E70/7, vues n° 281, 282 et 284 (28-VII-1572).

En effet, après 1570, les relevés effectués par Philippe Barrey, pour Le Havre, complétés ponctuellement pour Honfleur par les travaux de Charles Bréard, indiquent un changement assez profond dans le commerce transatlantique⁴⁶. P. Barrey montre en effet l'attrait d'une nouvelle destination, les Indes du Pérou, c'est-à-dire les Antilles. Il est intéressant à cet égard de reproduire les données qu'il a publiées au sujet des voyages en direction de l'Amérique méridionale et centrale⁴⁷ :

Tab. 5. **Expéditions lointaines : Le Havre (1571-1588)**

Afrique, Antilles	Brésil seul	Afrique, Brésil	Brésil, Antilles	Antilles seulement	Total
125	70	25	7	33	260

Ainsi, le Brésil se trouve fortement concurrencé par l'attrait exercé par les îles, préfigurant ce qui sera la situation des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, puisque cette destination représente plus des trois-cinquièmes des voyages effectués au départ du Havre. On est également frappé par le nombre des voyages : 15 en moyenne par an, avec une pointe entre 1581 et 1585, années durant laquelle 114 navires furent envoyés en Amérique. Il faudrait ajouter à ces départs du Havre, ceux de Honfleur, connus partiellement, et qui sont au nombre de 80 pour l'ensemble de la période, dont 32 entre 1581 et 1585, soit pour ces cinq années, 28 par an en moyenne partant de ces deux ports. Philippe Barrey a également comptabilisé les navires quittant Le Havre pour le Maroc : ils sont 101 pour la même période, plus nombreux au début des années 1570⁴⁸. Ajoutons-y ceux qui, non moins nombreux, partent pour Terre-Neuve.

3. *Les Normands et Terre-Neuve*⁴⁹

Les Normands furent parmi les premiers à aller à Terre-Neuve : des voyages sont sûrement attestés en 1506 et 1508 et d'autres suivirent ; on peut estimer à une centaine le nombre de navires ayant fait le voyage durant les années 1520, mais ce chiffre peut être largement sous-estimé. À partir de 1540 environ, mais seulement pour certaines années, la documentation est abondante : en 1555, les sources rouennaises recensent une centaine de départs, mais nous ne savons rien de Dieppe, un port dont l'importance ne saurait être mise en doute. Les années 1560 marquent sans doute l'apogée de la pêche au XVI^e siècle : on peut penser qu'à cette période, 200 ou 300 navires partent en moyenne chaque année des ports normands pour Terre-Neuve ou pour pêcher directement sur les bancs, sans aller à terre, une

⁴⁶ P. BARREY, *Le Havre maritime*, cit., pp. 47-209 ; C. et P. BRÉARD, *Documents relatifs à la marine normande et à ses armements aux XV^e et XVII^e siècles pour le Canada, l'Afrique, le Brésil et les Indes*, Rouen 1889, xiii+291 p.

⁴⁷ P. BARREY, *Le Havre maritime*, cit., p. 70 ; après 1588, le nombre d'expéditions baisse fortement.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁹ F. BRUMONT, *Les Normands à Terre-Neuve*, cit.

modalité qui se développe à partir de 1555, et permet la participation de plus petits navires à cette activité. La plupart des ports normands y sont d'ailleurs impliqués, en fournissant des marins, nombreux dans la vallée de la Seine, des navires ou des capitaux. Il est certain que la contribution de la pêche lointaine à l'économie normande ne doit pas être négligée même si, devenant rapidement routinière, elle fait moins rêver que les voyages au Brésil ou aux Antilles. Les profits qui irriguent notamment l'économie rouennaise sont d'importance : les prêts à la grosse aventure rapportent autour de 30%, plus en période de guerre, pour une activité moins soumise aux aléas de la mer et de la guerre que les voyages au Brésil ou aux Antilles.

À partir de 1570 environ, plusieurs changements se produisent : l'activité fléchit sans doute légèrement, restant à un bon niveau jusque vers 1585-90, comme pour les autres destinations, mais, surtout, l'activité se concentre sur les ports côtiers, Fécamp, Dieppe et Le Havre ce dernier étant le seul pour lequel la documentation est assez abondante. Les navires qui partaient vers 1550 de Rouen ou des ports de la vallée de la Seine partent maintenant du Havre où se sont installés marchands, marins et capitaines. Il se crée alors une sorte de partage des tâches entre Rouen et ses avant-ports, Le Havre et Honfleur, ceux-ci armant pour Terre-Neuve, et finançant en partie les autres voyages, tandis que Rouen, tout en continuant à apporter des capitaux pour la pêche se concentrait sur les autres destinations, l'Espagne, le Maroc, l'Afrique, le Brésil et les Antilles, et assurait la commercialisation des produits tirés de l'activité maritime. Ce début des années 1570 apparaît pour Le Havre au moins, comme une période débordante d'activités, des navires partant dans toutes les directions, du plus près (l'Angleterre, les Pays-Bas, Brouage et Bordeaux) au plus loin, même s'il ne semble pas que les tentatives faites au début du siècle pour atteindre l'Asie du sud-est aient été renouvelées. C'est ainsi que pour la seule année 1572, outre les 56 voyages à Terre-Neuve, nous comptons 26 expéditions au Brésil et aux Antilles, 14 au Maroc et quelques autres en Guinée, 45 en Andalousie, 7 à Dantzig, sans compter les habituelles rotations vers les Pays-Bas, l'Angleterre, Brouage ou la côte cantabrique⁵⁰. À la fin de la période que nous étudions, des observateurs anglais notent qu'en janvier 1586, 90 ou 100 navires sont prêts à partir du Havre pour Terre-Neuve, certains passant par le Portugal⁵¹, tandis qu'en décembre de l'année précédente 80 navires marchands étaient arrivés d'Espagne, c'est-à-dire de Cadix et de Séville, et que fin janvier, 36 étaient prêts à y repartir, certains chargés en partie par des marchands anglais⁵². C'est dire que l'activité n'a pas faibli.

CONCLUSION

Bordeaux est un port que l'on pourrait qualifier de passif : ses marchands attendent l'arrivée des navires chargés de marchandises que d'autres ont affrétés ail-

⁵⁰ ADSM, 2E70/2 à 2E70/7 et 2E70/10 ; il s'agit de résultats incomplets provenant seulement des registres des tabellionages de Rouen et du Havre.

⁵¹ *Calendar of State Papers. Foreign, Elizabeth*, Volume 20, éd. S. CRAWFORD LOMAS, Londres 1921, (14-I-1586).

⁵² *Ibid.*, (31-I-1586).

leurs pour échanger ses produits contre ceux qui les attirent sur les bords de la Garonne, le vin, de tout temps, et, depuis relativement peu, le pastel. C'est une situation confortable, car le niveau des exportations bordelaises est bien plus élevé que celui de ses importations si bien que, même en cas de mauvaise récolte de vin, il y a toujours assez de navires pour apporter le poisson, les toiles et les draps, les épices, le blé le cas échéant, que Bordeaux se charge de redistribuer par l'intermédiaire de la Garonne et de ses affluents dans une bonne partie du Sud-Ouest de la France. Beaucoup de ses marchands se contentent d'être les intermédiaires des marchands toulousains, rouennais, parisiens ou autres et travaillent à la commission, n'agissant pour eux-mêmes que pour la vente de leurs vins. L'arrivée du pastel n'a pas modifié cette attitude routinière, car les Bordelais n'ont pas réussi, sauf exception, à s'immiscer dans le commerce de ce produit, se contentant d'agir comme commissionnaires pour le recevoir à Bordeaux et le réexpédier vers son destinataire final. Ce système leur procurant des revenus sûrs et réguliers qu'ils augmentaient par ceux propres à toute oligarchie urbaine (propriétés rurales, offices royaux, revenus ecclésiastiques), ils n'ont pas éprouvé le besoin d'en changer quand d'autres possibilités se sont présentées aux bourgeoisies des ports atlantiques. Ils se sont certes lancés dans la pêche à la morue, mais à leur mode, c'est-à-dire en faisant travailler les autres et en risquant simplement leurs capitaux ou plutôt une partie d'entre eux. Cela est peut-être un peu exagéré, mais non caricatural, surtout si l'on songe aux changements qui se produiront, un siècle plus tard ou un peu plus, quand à partir d'une situation qui n'avait guère évolué – la rente procurée par le commerce du vin –, les Bordelais surent se lancer dans l'aventure atlantique avec le succès que l'on connaît.

Si les Bordelais ont basé leur fortune sur la production agricole et la redistribution des marchandises, il en va tout différemment à Rouen et en Normandie où l'artisanat et l'industrie sont bien présents et conditionnent en partie l'activité maritime. Le textile en est l'élément phare avec ses draps exportés en masse dans la péninsule ibérique notamment et au-delà dans les colonies espagnoles ; cette production anime tout un commerce d'importation de laine d'Espagne et d'Afrique du Nord, de colorants, pastel, orseille (de Madère), brésil, indigo, et d'alun pour le mordantage de certains colorants, que l'on va chercher au-delà de Gibraltar, à Mazarrón, dans le sud-est de l'Espagne ou à Civitavecchia (alun de Tolfa). La sidérurgie, présente également dans de nombreuses zones rurales, est demandeuse de charbon, qui vient de Newcastle, et fournit toutes sortes d'objets comme des haches que les navires emportent en Afrique et au Brésil. On pourrait aussi évoquer la tannerie, demandeuse de cuirs *à poil* (bruts) que l'on rapporte d'Irlande, du Maroc ou du Nouveau Monde.

De par sa situation géographique, Rouen est, nous l'avons dit, la porte d'entrée des produits océaniques en direction d'une vaste région parisienne, comprenant aussi la Champagne, la Bourgogne, voire le Lyonnais, et la porte de sortie des produits de ces régions, essentiellement le vin. Les marchands de Rouen se chargent ainsi d'acheminer vins et pastels, draps et toiles anglaises et flamandes, épices et produits exotiques, sel, poisson et autres denrées vers l'intérieur, par la vallée de la Seine, et les vins de Bourgogne et d'Orléans vers l'Angleterre, les Pays-Bas ou simplement les villes voisines. Plus précisément, Rouen est le port de Paris, qu'il faut pourvoir en denrées alimentaires que sa banlieue ne lui fournit pas (vin, sel, pois-

son), en matières premières pour son industrie (laine, pastel), mais aussi en produits de luxe et exotiques, vins de Xérès et de Malaga, épices, or et ivoire de Guinée, perroquets et plumes du Brésil, marbre des Pyrénées pour ses palais, toutes sortes de produits qui apparaissent dans les registres du tabellionage et animent l'activité rouennaise, des denrées volumineuses, mais de peu de valeur, ou de faible poids, mais de grande valeur. L'ouverture des espaces océaniques et la croissance de la population et de la richesse de Paris se conjuguent pour faire la prospérité de Rouen et de toute la Normandie, car son port étroit et encombré n'arrive pas à satisfaire des besoins sans cesse croissants et diversifiés, si bien que Le Havre, Honfleur, Dieppe ou Fécamp peuvent accompagner Rouen sans la concurrencer, bien au contraire, et profiter ainsi de la prospérité générale dont l'élan ne se dément pas jusqu'à la fin des années 1580.

Manuel F. Fernández Chaves, Rafael M. Pérez García

Textiles Market in 16th-century Seville: Business and Mercantile Groups

MERCANTILE GROUPS IN 16TH-CENTURY SEVILLE AND EUROPE-AMERICA
TRADE: A NECESSARY HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REAPPRAISAL

The central role played by Seville in European-American trade in the 16th and 17th centuries is a historiographical commonplace; the city housed the Casa de la Contratación, which managed the trade monopoly, and was the port of departure and arrival, along with the subsidiary harbours in the Bay of Cádiz. The city's geographical position, linking the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, had already turned Seville into an international trade hub in the Late Middle Ages. This prompted the settlement of various foreign merchant communities, especially important among which were the Genoese and Florentines; less important such groups during the 15th century were the Bretons, English and Flemish. From within the Iberian Peninsula the most important communities were the Portuguese, Burgalese, Catalans, Valencians and Galicians.¹

In the course of the 16th century, these communities became more numerous and their economic activities more diverse. This was made possible by the opening of multiple overseas markets during the first half of the 16th century, which allowed European merchants to undertake highly lucrative economic activities in the New World, from the exploitation of precious metal to the production of sugarcane, pearls, dyes (brazilwood, cochineal), hides, silk and medicinal plants, among many others. Portuguese businessmen started playing a significant role in the Sevillian economy in the 1540s, especially in relation to the transatlantic trade in woad and slaves.² Other groups, which had previously played a secondary part in the Sevillian economy, such as the Flemish and French, were to increase their presence substantially from the 1560s onwards.³ The increasing presence of American merchants in Seville from the 1580s onwards suggests that a major economic transformation was underway with the emergence of important economic groups

¹ This work has been funded by the project “Mercados y tratas de esclavos en el Atlántico ibérico del siglo XVI” (HAR2016-78056-P), funded by the Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad del Gobierno de España. E. OTTE, *Sevilla y sus mercaderes a fines de la Edad Media*, Seville 1996.

² M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *La penetración económica portuguesa en la Sevilla del siglo XVI* in “Espacio Tiempo y Forma, Serie IV, Historia Moderna” 25, 2012, pp. 199-222.

³ E. CRAILSHEIM, *The Spanish connection. French and Flemish networks in Seville (1570-1650)*, Köln 2016.

capable of acting autonomously in the metropolis and other European markets, and in the colonies, especially Peru and Nueva España. If the presence of these groups in Seville is regarded as indicative of the existence of active demand factors with the ability to affect supply,⁴ the dramatic growth undergone by Flemish companies in Seville during the reign of Philip II has been interpreted as a clear sign of the increasing degree of control exercised by foreign agents over American trade, facilitated by a lack of domestic production with which to satisfy ever-growing American demand⁵ and by the inability of local mercantile groups (Sevillian and Andalusian, but also Toledoan and Burgalese) to play a major international role.⁶ Often, the proliferation of foreign mercantile and financial groups in 16th-century Seville has been explained in terms of “substitution”: for instance, when the Genoese gained royal consent to transfer silver abroad in 1566, they abandoned their previous transatlantic trading activities, which had been risky; for their part, the Burgalese, which had long been in control of Andalusian and Sevillian trade with the Netherlands, France and England, fell on hard-times as a result of the political-military events in the Netherlands and northern Europe from the 1570s onwards. It is widely held that the Flemish took advantage of these circumstances to take up the baton in Seville, and replace the Genoese and Burgalese in their traditional mercantile and financial roles.⁷

In our opinion, understanding of the Seville-based trade between Europe and America is still poor. Arguably, the most useful contribution to date was the work undertaken by the Chaunu on the fluctuations of commercial traffic with the Indies. Many traditional ideas, some of which we have just mentioned, are based on a weak empirical foundation, despite the enormous amount of economic data available in the Sevillian archives. It is obvious that the topic is of gigantic proportions, and that many basic research tasks remain incomplete. In this paper, we shall limit ourselves to exploring the relationship between international trade and the domestic production of textiles and other related products, such as dyes (chiefly woad), and trying to illustrate the coexistence of diverse mercantile and financial groups around this economic sector. Obviously, the exchange system rested on a substantial port infrastructure and extensive maritime networks; the complexity of maritime mercantile traffic which is explained in the following sections reveals the current shortcomings in historical understanding of maritime freight during this period.

⁴ L. GARCÍA FUENTES, *Los peruleros y el comercio de Sevilla con las Indias, 1580-1630*, Seville 1997.

⁵ A. GARCÍA-BAQUERO GONZÁLEZ, *Andalucía y la Carrera de Indias 1492-1824*, Granada 2002; A.M. BERNAL, *España, proyecto inacabado. Costes/beneficios del Imperio*, Madrid 2005, p. 189.

⁶ F. MORALES PADRÓN, *Historia de Sevilla. La ciudad del Quinientos*, Sevilla 1989, pp. 85-86; F. BRAUDEL, *El Mediterráneo y el mundo mediterráneo en la época de Felipe II*, Mexico 2005, vol. I, pp. 838-841.

⁷ F. MORALES PADRÓN, *Historia de Sevilla. La ciudad del Quinientos*, cit. pp. 81-82; G. JIMÉNEZ MONTES, *Sevilla, puerto y puerta de Europa: la actividad de una compañía comercial flamenca en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI*, in “*Studia historica Historia moderna*”, 38, 2016, pp. 353-386, especially p. 384.

BURGALESE MERCHANTS AND SEVILLE'S TEXTILES MARKET, CA. 1470-1550

In the late 15th century, prior to the advent of American demand, the Sevillian textiles market was mixed, in terms of both actors and products. It was possible to find English, Flemish (Courtrai), French (Rouen) and, to a lesser extent, Florentine cloth, while the presence of products from Perpignan, Valencia, Segovia, Baeza or Chillón also indicate the importance of domestic production. The trade in foreign products was controlled by Italian (Genoese, Florentine and Sienese), English and Castilian (mainly Burgalese) merchants, while Spanish textiles were traded by Castilians, Andalusians, Catalans, Valencian and Italian merchants. Concerning wool *camelotes* and silk (Genoese velvets, damasks) the dominion of the Genoese was clear, while trade in cotton (*fustanes*) and canvas – especially from France and the Low Countries (*angeos*, Rouennais canvas, Laval canvas, hollands, etc.) – was disputed by Genoese, Andalusians and Burgalese merchants.⁸ Natalia Palenzuela's work on the period 1470-1509 demonstrated the important role played by the trade in textiles (wool cloths, *fustanes* and canvasses) for the Burgalese networks in Seville and other European hubs;⁹ this trade was part of the international Burgalese commercial system so masterfully described by Hilario Casado.¹⁰

During the first quarter of the 16th century, the Sevillian textiles market was revolutionised by the Burgalese merchants, who imposed their control by bringing in massive imports of French and Flemish canvasses cloths. With the emergence of the American markets, the Burgalese, who had created a veritable transatlantic system fuelled by dyes (woad, orchil and brazilwood), sugar, spices and slaves, flooded the Sevillian market with textiles to meet both Andalusian and American demand. In the early years of Charles I's reign, between 1518 and 1525, the import of textiles became the main activity of the Burgalese community in Seville. According to our estimates, textiles accounted for 86% of the value of the trade conducted by Burgalese merchants in Seville during this period. The remaining 14% involved the circulation of other products, such as copper, alum and oil. Under textiles, the record indicates that canvas amounted to over 53% of imports, while English cloth amounted to under 2% and that from Courtrai under 1%; *estameñas* represented 6% and silk just over 3%.¹¹ It is clear that the Sevillian market was responding to ongoing changes in the European productive structure, but also to the active role played by Burgalese merchants as middlemen for European textile centres such as Nantes, Rouen, Bruges and Antwerp. Accounts dated to the 1530s refer to this process as a veritable flood of foreign canvasses, which led to the

⁸ E. OTTE, *Sevilla y sus mercaderes*, cit., pp. 158-161.

⁹ N. PALENZUELA DOMÍNGUEZ, *Los mercaderes burgaleses en Sevilla a fines de la Edad Media*, Seville 2003, pp. 139-150.

¹⁰ H. CASADO ALONSO, *El triunfo de Mercurio. La presencia castellana en Europa (siglos XV y XVI)*, Burgos 2003.

¹¹ R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *El capital burgalés y la conexión de Sevilla con el eje económico del norte de Europa a comienzos del reinado de Carlos I*, in *Andalucía en el mundo moderno. Agentes y escenarios*, J.J. IGLESIAS RODRÍGUEZ, J.J. GARCÍA BERNAL eds., Madrid 2016, pp. 35-57, especially, pp. 52-53.

destruction of the Sevillian local industry, which was incapable of competing against them.¹²

In the decades that followed, the Burgalese merchants took advantage of their strong position in the incipient world-economy, which then still revolved around Seville and Lisbon, to control the global redistribution of textiles and, using their position as middlemen, to pitch markets and products with one another for their own profit. The record for 1535 illustrates the distribution of the textiles market among different economic groups in Seville (Table 1).

Tab. 1. Textiles market in Seville in 1535. Distribution by economic groups

Economic group by origin	Mrs.	% value	Number of transactions	% transactions
Burgos	7,955,858	57.03	130	53.9
Castile (Espinosa)	1,287,592	9.23	12	5
Toledo	423,079	3.03	13	5.4
Biscay	563,596	4.04	13	5.4
Catalonia	186,784	1.34	6	2.5
Genoa	423,269	3.03	6	2.5
Baeza	8,760	0.06	1	0.4
Granada	40,000	0.3	1	0.4
Seville (major merchants)	1,456,462	10.44	13	5.8
Seville (other merchants)	1,602,839	11.5	46	18.7
TOTAL	13,948,239	100	241	100

ARCHIVO HISTÓRICO PROVINCIAL DE SEVILLA (AHPSE), *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 3308, 3309, 3312, 10557. Sample: 241 transactions.

Burgalese domination was overwhelming, and this has a lot to do with the sort of cloth that was being traded in Seville, as we shall see shortly. If their activity is added to that of the Castilian bankers Pedro and Alonso de Espinosa, the financial moguls of Seville during the reign of Charles V, and who were also involved in the textile trade,¹³ both groups controlled nearly 66% of all trade. The role played by other groups was secondary, but not negligible. Merchants from Toledo, Catalonia and Andalusia connected the production centres in the Iberian Peninsula (Perpignan, Valencia, Zaragoza, Segovia, Toledo, Baeza, Granada, etc.) with Seville and the Indies, opening the international markets to Spanish producers. However, by 1535, and for at least a quarter of a century, the Sevillian textiles market was dominated by French and Flemish canvas. These canvasses (largely rouennais, *angeos*, *bretañas*, and *hollands*) amounted to two-thirds of the overall value of trade in

¹² R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *Francisco de Osuna y los mercaderes. Espiritualidad, moral económica y pastoral católica pretridentina ante el mundo de los negocios*, forthcoming.

¹³ E. OTTE SANDER, *Sevilla, siglo XVI: Materiales para su historia económica*, Seville 2008, pp. 202-203.

textiles, while cloth (including products from Perpignan, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Valencia and Segovia), barely amounted to 11.7%; other textiles were clearly marginal, such as *estameñas* (3.2%), *camelotes* (0.5%), *fustanes* (just over 2%), and silk (velvet, satin, etc.), which barely amounted to 3% of the total. It is, therefore, clear that by 1535 the Burgalese were in total control of the import textiles market in Seville, owing to their virtual monopoly over the import of Flemish and French canvasses. As such, the Burgalese merchants were using Seville as a platform from which redistribute these canvasses in Andalusia and, especially, in America. The major Burgalese merchants in Seville – Alonso de Nebreda, Alonso Gómez de la Serna, Gregorio de Castro, Cristóbal Gutiérrez de Sanvitores, Juan de Escalante, Martín de Valcázar, Andrés de Lantadilla, Diego Díaz de Melgar, Pedro de la Torre and Lesmes de Palencia, among others – were directly involved in the transatlantic trade, and also had other Seville-based merchants who specialised in channelling goods towards the American markets among their customers.

In any case, Seville was for the Burgalese businessmen much more than simply a node in a wider export system between Europe and the Indies. Similarly, the Burgalese were much more than mere middlemen between French and Flemish production centres and Andalusian and American markets. Seville and Lisbon were key business and information centres for the Burgalese merchants, whence they could connect European production centres with the emerging American markets and the traditional, and seemingly insatiable, Indian markets.¹⁴ Seville and Lisbon were the ports of departure and arrival for the *Carrera de Indias* (the *Carreira da Índia* for the Portuguese), the hubs where the goods and information which the Burgalese needed to maintain their dominant mercantile and financial position over European production centres converged. Their control over the import of Atlantic dyes (woad, orchella, brazilwood, cochineal) put them in a strong position *vis-à-vis* the industrial centres, in combination with their ability to sell in Europe Indian canvasses (an important component in the Portuguese cargoes arrived via the Cape)¹⁵ or silk produced by the incipient industries in New Spain, and amounted to a serious attempt to gain overall control over the European textile sector, impose conditions on non-European producers, and use price fluctuation and global competition to their advantage. The activities of the Seville-based Burgalese merchant Juan de Escalante († 1543), who also had a strong presence in Lisbon, are a case in point.

Although more research is needed, it seems that in the long-term the Burgalese did not manage to impose their interests over those of Spanish and European production centres, nor to fully displace other mercantile groups which had, hitherto, played a secondary role. The evidence suggests that by 1550, although the Burgalese and other merchants from Castilla la Vieja still maintained a dominant position, the tide was beginning to turn, a tendency that was fully to crystallise in the second half of the 16th century. Traditional perspectives have stressed the rapid increase in Spanish textile production from the late 1540s onwards, as well as the

¹⁴ In this aspect, see H. CASADO ALONSO, *Los flujos de información en las redes comerciales castellanas de los siglos XV y XVI*, in “Investigaciones de Historia Económica”, 10, 2008, pp. 36-68.

¹⁵ J. GIL, *La India y el Lejano Oriente en la Sevilla del Siglo de Oro*, Seville 2011.

erratic economic policy in 1548-1558, which would have opened the Castilian economy to the influence of foreign agents.¹⁶ This allegedly erratic economic policy is often illustrated by the dispositions issued by the Castilian *Cortes* during those years. In our opinion, however, historians have greatly misrepresented the impact of these measures. At any rate, there is little doubt that the Sevillian global textiles market was undergoing significant changes. Table 2 presents the market share of various economic groups.

Tab. 2. **Textiles market in Seville in 1550. Distribution by economic groups**

Economic group by origin	Mrs.	% value	Number of transactions
Burgos	5.929.217	50,3	66
Castile (Valladolid, Medina del Campo)	1.292.806	11	11
Segovia	20.000	0,17	1
Toledo	661.011	5,6	5
Seville	2.444.972	20,74	29
Granada	590.302	5	2
Baeza	78.609	0,7	1
Catalonia	41.023	0,35	1
Portugal	3.798	0,03	1
Genoa	12.628	0,1	1
Florence	425.841	3,6	4
Flanders	60.401	0,51	3
Cristóbal Rayzer (german)	225.000	1,9	1
Total	11.785.608	100	128

ARCHIVO HISTORICO PROVINCIAL DE SEVILLA (AHPSE), *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 3373, 5886, 10577. Sample: 128 transactions.

Although Burgalese merchants controlled half the market, they had lost seven percent points of market share since 1535. Castilian merchants (from Valladolid, Medina del Campo and Segovia) had increased their presence by nearly 2%. In addition, this no longer involved only a single powerful family, like the Espinosas, but a number of different merchants competing to commercialise the region's products. Traders from Toledo and Granada had also consolidated their position, especially the latter, who dealt with Granadan silk. The arrival of agents from Portugal, Flanders and Germany (Cristóbal Rayzer was the Fuggers' representative in Seville) is also indicative of a new situation. Rayzer is first found selling *fustanes* manufactured in southern Germany on behalf of the Fuggers.¹⁷ *Fustanes* can be

¹⁶ J. LARRAZ, *La época del mercantilismo en Castilla 1500-1700*, Madrid 2000, pp. 26-33.

¹⁷ H. KELLENBENZ, *Los Fugger en España y Portugal hasta 1560*, Salamanca 2000, pp. 251-252, 288, 446-447, 484-488.

attested in Seville from the beginning of the century, and it is likely that at least some of the *fustanes* sold in Seville during the intervening decades also belonged to the Fuggers.¹⁸ Florentine merchants, on the other hand, could be found again in Seville, where they had been an important mercantile community in the late Middle Ages.

The slow transformation of the mercantile groups that participated in the Sevillian textiles market was related to other changes, in this case in the types of textiles which were being sold in the city. Although canvas was still the predominant commodity, amounting to 56.4% of textiles market volume (especially rouennais, which accounted for 24% of the overall value transacted), its market share had dropped by five per cent since 1535. Other traditional textiles, such as *estameñas* (0.75%), were about to disappear. Conversely, Granada silk (8,1%) and cloth (*paños*) (19%) were rapidly gaining ground. Cotton textiles (*fustanes* and *cotonías*, 2.5%), and textiles from Milan (around 1%), were, significantly, also present in Seville, although in small quantities. At any rate, the growth of silk (up by 5 per cent) and cloths (*paños*) (up by 8 per cent) indicates the beginning of a new phase in the evolution of the domestic textiles market. Although the cloth (*paños*) cargoes included some English goods from London, the most significant growth is attested among national production centres – Perpignan, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Valencia, Segovia, Baeza, Puertollano, and perhaps also Cuenca – which were increasingly important in meeting the demand posed by the Sevillian market.

As such, towards the mid-16th century, the increasing presence and diversity of foreign economic groups was not incompatible with a burgeoning domestic production, which up to that period was proving itself equal to competing with foreign products.

CASTILIANS, SEVILLIANS, FLEMISH AND PORTUGUESE AND THE IMPORT AND DISTRIBUTION OF TEXTILES IN THE 1570S

Between the 1550s and the 1570s, the market was to undergo important changes, although, in general, canvasses remained a very important commodity. In our 1577 sample, canvas accounts for 19% of total turnover, as we shall see shortly. We have examined records for 1577, including sales made on the previous year which were to be liquidated in 1577. The sample features the prices of wool, silk and canvas, as well as of other textile manufactures, such as smocks, rugs, gloves, shirts and bedlinen, among others. Other textile products were left out of the analysis because they belong, strictly speaking, to a different sector, and because

¹⁸ It is rather illustrative that one of the main traders in *fustanes* during the reign of Charles I was the Burgalese Diego Díaz (or Dias), agent of the Fuggers in Seville in the 1520s (H. KELLENBENZ, *Los Fugger en España y Portugal hasta 1560*, cit., p. 253): his involvement in the *fustanes* trade is documented, for instance, in 1520 (AHPSe, *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, leg. 3245, f. 381r-v). Other Seville-based Burgalese merchants such as Alonso de Nebreda, Antonio de Velasco and Cristóbal Gutiérrez de Sanvítores also sold *fustanes* in the city in the 1520s, the 1530s and the 1540s. Our sample for 1550 also attests to the Flemish merchant Enrique Ansemann being involved in the *fustanes* trade (AHPSe, *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, leg. 10557, f. 72r-v), illustrating one of the main vectors of the Sevillian economy during the reign of Charles I.

their share on the total turnover was negligible. The sample includes not only sales carried out in the city of Seville, but also transactions undertaken during the fair of Los Molares, a manorial town near Utrera and Seville; this fair was an important event in the exchange of textiles both on the regional scale and also for the Indies.¹⁹ In total, the sample includes textile sales worth 21,823,100.75 *maravedís*. In order to be as precise as possible, we have only taken into consideration those transactions whose records are complete, featuring both length of fabric sold and price per measurement unit (see Tables 4 and 5). Table 3 represents the aggregate value of transactions.

Tab. 3. Textiles market in Seville and Los Molares in 1576-1577. Distribution by economic groups

Economic group by origin	Mrs.	% value	Number of transactions	Economic group by origin
<i>Seville/Castile/Burgos</i>		36.59	28	21.37
-Pedro and Lope de Tapia	2,341,094			
-Antonio de Salinas and Miguel de Jáuregui	2,582,054			
-Francisco Morovelli	784,425			
-Miguel de Solórzano	795,789			
-Lesmes de Palencia	224,466			
-Juan Aranda de Gumiel	213,448			
Basque?				
-Bartolomé Sarriá de Abeça	1,043,927	4.78	1	0.76
Subtotal	7,985,203	41.37	29	22.13
Flanders	2,789,518	12.78	10	7.63
Seville	2,333,237,5	10.69	16	12.21
Seville/Baeza	2,113,172	9.68	22	16.79
Segovia	1,783,578	8.17	19	14.5
Toledo	1,431,539	6.55	10	7.63
Granada	521,110	2.38	1	0.76
Valencia	289,196	1.32	2	1.52
Utrera and Los Molares	125,415	0.57	11	8.39
Catalans	101,040	0.46	2	1.52
Others	112,193,25	0.51	5	3.81
Unknown	1,283,972	5.88	4	3.05
Total	21,823,100.75	100	131	100

Source: AHPSE: *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 6004, 6005, 6006, 9214, 9215, 9216, 7784, 7788, 19717; *Protocolos de Los Molares*, 23263P. Sample: 131 transactions.

¹⁹ This fair has been studied by A. MORENO CURADO, *La feria de la seda en la villa de Los Molares (siglos XV-XVII)*, Sevilla 2005.

The first group combines Sevillian, Castilians and Burgalese merchants; the Burgalese had been losing ground since the 1550s, but were still important in the city. These merchants, often based in Burgos or Medina del Campo (for instance, Simón Ruiz), had a strong presence in Nantes, Rouen and Flanders, while operating in the Sevillian market through agents, who also did business on their own behalf. The group is defined as Sevillian/Castilian/Burgalese because none of these merchants belonged to the traditional Seville-based families, but worked for them while taking advantage of already existing distribution channels for Flemish and especially Breton canvasses, and thus gained a prominent position in the Sevillian and American markets. According to the data, these merchants controlled 41% of the market, but continuing the previously detected downward trend. It is also true that the commercial landscape was by this time much more complex than before, in terms of both agents and commodities. At any rate, their continued activity in Seville demonstrates that the transfer of capital and mercantile know-how from the northern regions to Seville and its American trade did not come to an end with the decline of Burgalese merchant houses, but led to a complete transformation of the market and triggered the emergence of new mercantile interests. The Dutch wars accelerated this process, but this is not to say that the Burgalese merchants disappeared altogether, but that they reoriented their activity, using new agents and merging with Sevillian families, as has been amply demonstrated elsewhere.²⁰ Other authors have also detected this phenomenon in Medina del Campo,²¹ where investors also turned to Castilian and Andalusian production centres. Although it has been (rightly) argued that this was a reaction to the crisis of the Burgos-Bilbao-Flanders economic axis,²² it should be added that, even if economic flows along that axis were now much more difficult, the partial substitution of Flanders for Brittany and Rouen (centres which preferred dealing with Seville than with Castile)²³ allowed for the large-scale importation of canvas (not only French, but Flemish too) to continue. As such, the transformation of Castilians and Burgalese merchants into “Sevillians”, was an efficient response, as their continued dominance demonstrates, to the events along the North Sea. Basas rightly pointed out the need to study “the Sevillian history of the Burgalese, or the Burgalese phase

²⁰ R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *La trayectoria histórica de la comunidad mercantil burgalesa en la Sevilla moderna: ascenso social y mutación económica. El caso del mercader Alonso de Nebreda*, in *Andalucía en el mundo atlántico moderno*, cit., pp. 157-191. See also, *Los negocios de Alonso de Nebreda, mercader bugalés de Sevilla. La expansión del eje económico Flandes-Castilla-Florenia hacia las Indias en la primera mitad del siglo XVI*, in *Mercaderes y redes mercantiles en España, siglos XV-XVIII*, M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, B. PEREZ, R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA eds., forthcoming.

²¹ H. CASADO ALONSO, *Medina del Campo Fairs and the Integration of Castile into 15th to 16th Century European Economy*, in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee secc. XVIII-XVIII*, ed. S. CAVACIOCCI, Florence 2001, pp. 495-517, especially, pp. 514-517.

²² F.H. ABED AL-HUSSEIN, *El comercio de los géneros textiles: seda, paños y lienzos*, in *Historia de Medina del Campo y su Tierra. Auge de las Ferias. Decadencia de Medina*, ed. E. LORENZO SANZ, Valladolid 1986, vol. II, pp. 45-66, especially, p. 58, quoting F. RUIZ MARTÍN and A. GARCÍA SANZ.

²³ J.-P. PRIOTTI, *Conflits marchands et intégration économique (Bretagne, Castille et Andalousie, 1560-1580)*, in *Le commerce atlantique franco-espagnol. Acteurs, négoce et ports (XV^e-XVIII^e siècle)*, J.-P. PRIOTTI, G. SAUPIN eds., Rennes 2000, pp. 73-99.

of Sevillian history”.²⁴ By this time, the mercantile landscape was a good deal more complex, with new names, routes and profiles. The dominance of these merchants (who acted either directly, for instance the merchant Lesmes de Palencia²⁵ or by means of agents) was therefore not as overwhelming as that of the fully-Burgalese merchants in the central decades of the century, but it still was highly significant. This explains why, despite bankruptcies and unpaid debts, Simón Ruiz never lost interest in the Sevillian and American markets, to the perplexity of historians;²⁶ in fact, the obstacles that hampered the Flemish traffic and the increasingly hard negotiating stance of the Italians led these men to rely increasingly on the American market.²⁷ Our sample does not feature any French or Breton merchants from Saint-Malo and Vitré, who presented active competition to the Castilians in the Andalusian and American markets;²⁸ this absence is likely due to the small size of the sample and the fact that the French community tended to live in Sanlúcar (especially the Bretons) and Cádiz, although their activity in Seville is attested in the 1590s. We have also to ascertain to what extent Castilian and “Sevillian” merchants relied on Italian and Castilian financiers (for instance, the Ruiz, Maluenda, Quintanadueñas, and Espinosa de la Torre,²⁹ who had taken a very active part in the import of northern canvasses) and what was, therefore, their level of autonomy.

Canvas specialists operating in Seville during this period include Antonio de Salinas (probably of Burgalese origin)³⁰ and Miguel de Jáuregui, a leading canvas

²⁴ M. BASAS, *Mercaderes burgaleses*, quoted in R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *La trayectoria histórica*, cit., p. 158.

²⁵ Lesmes de Palencia’s professional longevity is remarkable; he features in the 1535 record, and his transactions can be traced back as far as the 1590s. According to E. Sanz, in 1567 he owed the Jorges two million *maravedies*. E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América en la época de Felipe II*, Valladolid 1979, t. I, p. 388. For his prior activities in the canvasses sector see E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., p. 200.

²⁶ E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América*, cit., pp. 236-248.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

²⁸ J.-P. PRIOTTI, *Plata americana, costes de transacción y mutaciones socio-económicas en el comercio hispano-francés (1570-1640)*, in *El sistema comercial español en la economía mundial (siglos XVII-XVIII). Homenaje a Jesús Aguado de los Reyes*, I. LOBATO FRANCO, J.M. OLIVA MELGAR eds., Huelva 2013, pp. 99-125. French and Breton merchants demanded payment in Spanish *reales*, which were highly appreciated in France, and never sold in instalments, a common practice among Castilian and Burgalese in Seville, according to our sample data.

²⁹ The bibliography about the significant Spanish colony in Nantes and Rouen is extensive: see, for instance, J. MATHOREZ, *Notes sur les rapports de Nantes avec l’Espagne (I)*, in “Bulletin Hispanique”, 14, 2, 1912, pp. 119-126; (II) 14, 4, 1912, pp. 383-407; and (III), 15, 1, 1913, pp. 68-92. M. MOLLAT, *Le commerce maritime normand au XV^e siècle et dans la première moitié du XVI^e siècle. Étude d’histoire économique et sociale*, Paris 1952. H. LAPEYRE, *Una familia de mercaderes*, cit., pp. 98, 323-330. H. CASADO ALONSO, *La Bretagne dans le commerce castillan aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, in *1491 La Bretagne, terre d’Europe*, J. KERHERVÉ, T. DANIEL eds., Brest 1992, pp. 81-98. Also, *Le commerce des “marchandises de Bretagne” avec l’Espagne au XVI^e siècle*, in “Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de L’Ouest”, 107, 2000, 2, pp. 29-50. See too, *Las colonias de mercaderes castellanos en Europa, in Castilla y Europa. Comercio y mercaderes en los siglos XIV, XV y XVI*, ed. H. CASADO ALONSO, Burgos 1995, pp. 15-56.

³⁰ The information available about this merchant is very limited, although we know of a Francisco de Salinas, who was a leading importer of rouennais canvas from 1560 onwards, and who in 1567 was deputy of the tax for the entrance and first selling (the *alcabala*) of canvasses to the city. He had started his career as an agent of the Ruiz between 1560 and 1561, and of Francisco and Andrés Maluenda from 1563. The letters written by the Ruiz mention “these Salinas”, so it is likely that

merchant who took the collection of the *alcabala* of canvas on lease in 1576;³¹ Antonio and Miguel's turnover in 1577 was 2,582,054 mrs. (11.83% of the overall value of transactions); Miguel de Solórzano worked for himself, but also on behalf of the Burgalese García and Miguel de Salamanca;³² Francisco Morovelli was a Florentine who worked for Simón Ruiz between 1571 and his death in 1585, and who occasionally worked in association with Pedro de Tapia,³³ whose brother Lope de Tapia was also a leading canvas dealer (in 1577 he sold canvas worth 2,092,944 mrs., 9.59% of the overall value of transactions). The Tapias also worked for Simón Ruiz, replacing Morovelli after his demise in 1585; Pedro and Lope de Tapia and Simón Ruiz also had the same agent in Nueva España, Pedro Sánchez Alemán; Lorenzo Sanz labelled them as Castilian,³⁴ although they appear to originate from Granada,³⁵ and the fact is that in terms of economic behaviour they fit the label. The Tapias also worked together with Miguel de Jáuregui and other merchants such as Diego de Rojas, and were heavily involved in the colonial market.³⁶ In conclusion, leaving aside the Flemish merchants, the leading group of canvas importers had grown around the Ruiz (Morovelli, the Tapias) and other Burgalese merchants; they often worked in association, doing joint investments in risky markets such as the slave trade; Morovelli joined the Tapias and the Jáureguis to send a slave ship to America, thus spreading the cost and the risk.³⁷ As we shall see presently, these traders, in collaboration with the Flemish merchants, also leased out the *alcabala* of canvas in the city, which had previously been controlled by the Burgalese.

Bartolomé Sarriá de Abeça o Abecia was, according to E. Lorenzo, a very rich merchant with a capital of 50,000 ducados. From 1561 onwards he is found dealing in canvas alongside his partner Francisco Arias.³⁸ Although Sanz considers him a Sevillian (he worked and lived in Seville), in a power of attorney from 1577 he declares himself to be a citizen of Vitoria, so he could have been excluded from the

Antonio and Francisco were related. Cfr. E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América*, cit., pp. 326-327.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 266-267.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 403. Between 1551 and 1554, Seville and Medina del Campo were the main nodes in Salamanca's commercial network (29% of the commercial transactions took place in Seville, and 27% in Medina del Campo, but between 1566 and 1569, 69.75% of their transactions occurred in Seville), cf. H. CASADO ALONSO, *Crecimiento económico y redes de comercio interior en la Castilla septentrional (siglos XV y XVI)*, ed. J.I. FORTEA PÉREZ, *Imágenes de la diversidad. El mundo urbano en la corona de Castilla (s. XVI-XVIII)*, Santander 1997, pp. 283-322, and here, pp. 299-300, 318, 321. See also, E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., p. 199. Also, C. URIARTE DE MELO, *Les contrats des compagnies de Burgos dans les échanges entre Rouen, Nantes et l'Espagne dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle*, in *Le commerce atlantique franco-espagnol*, cit., pp. 113-128.

³³ E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América*, cit., pp. 246-248, 276, 309-314.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 399. Pedro Sánchez Alemán was in Nueva España between at least 1582 and 1585.

³⁵ Based on the evidence presented by their descendants and examined in J. CARTAYA BAÑOS, "Que no concurren las calidades de limpieza". *Algunos expedientes sevillanos para las órdenes militares españolas en los siglos XVI-XVII*, in "Tiempos modernos", 23, 2011/2, pp. 1-24, here, pp. 9-10.

³⁶ E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América*, cit., pp. 276-277.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 312-313, 277.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

“Sevillian” group.³⁹ In support of this idea is also the fact that he had a close connection with the collection of sea-tithes, which indicates that he was still closely connected with the Cantabrian economic system. In contrast, he worked hand-in-hand with the “Sevillian” group, and the record attests to his association with Jerónimo de Valladolid, one of the Ruiz’s most important agents in Seville, along with Francisco Arias, who was also Abecia’s partner.⁴⁰ Furthermore, Abecia is found taking up the lease “of the rent of the entry duties on lace and all other related transactions” between 1577 and 1579, alongside Miguel de Jáuregui, Antonio de Salinas, Lope de Tapia, Francisco Morovelli and a group of Flemish merchants led by Juan de Bonsel,⁴¹ which demonstrates how close his relations with the group were.

A step below the Burgalese and their Castilian partners were the Flemish. Their share of the business is surprisingly small, if we stick to the idea of “substitution” advocated by the traditional thesis; there is little doubt that their market position had improved substantially but they were still far behind Castilian importers. In the 1550s, their market share was still negligible, but by the 1560s they had become significant importers of canvas and upholstery,⁴² controlling just under 13% of the market, second only to the Burgalese and Castilians, alongside whom they took up the *alcabala* of canvas, as previously noted. The most important Flemish merchant was Juan Bonsel, whose turnover in 1577 was 781,525 mrs.

Table 3 also illustrates how Sevillian merchants struggled to stay in the game, their market share dropping by approximately 10 per cent since 1550. The most important among them was the oil merchant Pedro Xuárez, whose market share in the canvas sector (in his case, only rouennais) amounted to 2.77% (580.884 mrs.). The involvement of an oil merchant in the canvas trade is of great interest; oil was one of the commodities sent to Northern Europe in exchange for canvas, and the practice is also attested for Simón Ruiz and his Seville-based firms⁴³ and for other Burgalese merchants in Seville throughout the 16th century. The remaining Sevillian merchants involved in the canvas trade led mid-sized enterprises; as we shall see shortly, in the cloth trade Sevillians seem to have chiefly carried out small transactions at the local level.

These groups, which largely specialised in canvas, controlled 64.84% of the transactions in our sample. Below them were the cloth merchants, another essential commodity for Spanish industry. Two important groups were the Baeza and the Segovia merchants, which jointly controlled 17.85% of the textiles market. The former group included the widow of Juan de Alarcón, Ana Pérez, and her partner, the Baeza-born Francisco de Galarza; they sold cloth not only from Baeza but also from Puertollano, Córdoba and, exceptionally, La Puebla de Montalbán. Ana Pérez

³⁹ AHPSE, *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 6005, f. 643r, he features as a citizen of Vitoria, receiving an annual rent of 15,663 mrs. from a lease on Castile’s sea harbours; the lease was managed by Juan Ochoa and other merchants, but was paid to Bartolomé Sarriá in 26-IV-1577.

⁴⁰ E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América*, cit. pp. 279-280.

⁴¹ AHPSE, *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 6004, f. 715r, 717v.

⁴² E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., p. 285-286.

⁴³ E. LORENZO SANZ, *Comercio de España con América...* cit. pp. 246-248.

also had connections with the Portuguese textiles market; her brother sold Ana's products in the Portuguese town of Mértola.

Even more active were the brothers Francisco and Cristóbal de Molina. Francisco de Molina was a *jurado* in Seville, and worked in partnership with his Baeza-based brother Cristóbal. In association with Portuguese businessmen like Antonio Faleiro, Cristóbal redistributed the Azores woad, sent by Francisco, in exchange for Baeza cloth.⁴⁴ They specialised in the distribution of cloth from Ciudad Real, Los Pedroches, Segovia and England and, occasionally, also dealt in Florentine *raja*; all their Castilian cloth was at least of a *veinteno* quality (i.e. cloth woven with 20 hundreds of threads). Their relationship with Portuguese woad dealers was very intense; as a result, the circulation of cloth from Baeza, Córdoba, Chillón, Agudo, Los Pedroches, Ciudad Real, etc. and that of woad were mutually dependent.⁴⁵ Payments for woad were partially made in cloth, which was afterwards sold in the textiles market. Between the 1550s and the 1560s, Portuguese and Italian firms were taking over the woad business, previously brought by the Burgalese from Toulouse and, to a lesser extent, from the Azores.⁴⁶ These Lisbon-based firms used woad and the credit that it provided to enter the textiles market and other economic sectors. The record attests to the activity of Milanese agents of the Affaitati in Lisbon, but their relationship with the Portuguese branch of these Lucchese bankers is unclear. It is, however, obvious that they played an important role as middlemen. In addition to merchants like Tomás Trusson, we are interested in Francisco and Andrea de San Julián, whose activities were analysed by Enrique Otte. The latter was in business with the Schetz bank, from Antwerp,⁴⁷ which is hardly surprising, since one of the Affaitati's most important branches was in that city, where they traded with Indian spices arrived via Lisbon; the firm went bankrupt in 1568.⁴⁸ As representatives of the Affaitati, the San Juliáns brokered loans with nobles and other important personalities of the kingdom, while also managing maritime insurance policies and tax leases. When the Affaitati ran into

⁴⁴ M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, *Antonio Faleiro de Acosta, mercader portugués de pastel, 1573-1583*, in *Andalucía en el mundo atlántico moderno. Agentes y escenarios*, pp. 59-85.

⁴⁵ E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, *El pastel de las ilhas atlánticas portuguesas y la producción textil en la Andalucía del siglo XVI*, in *Comercio y cultura en la Edad Moderna. Actas de la XIII Reunión Científica de la Fundación Española de Historia Moderna*, J.J. IGLESIAS RODRÍGUEZ, R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES eds., Sevilla 2015, pp. 525-538. Also, *Antonio Faleiro de Acosta*, in *Andalucía en el mundo atlántico moderno. Agentes y escenarios*, cit.

⁴⁶ About the Burgalese involvement in this sector, which led Gilles Caster to speak of a "Burgalese system", cfr. F. BRUMONT, "La commercialisation du pastel toulousain (1350-1600) in "Annales du Midi", 205, 1994, pp. 25-40, also *Bordeaux, porte de sortie du pastel toulousain (vers 1490-1570)*, in *Pays de cocagne. País de cocanha. Son histoire, ses légendes*, ed. J. FIJALKOW, Puylaurens 2006, pp. 117-139. For the Burgalese merchants and their control over the woad routes from Toulouse and their role as exporters of Castilian wool and importers of canvas from Rouen, Nantes and Flanders, see H. CASADO ALONSO *Finance et commerce International au milieu du XVIe siècle: La compagnie des Bernuy*, "Annales du Midi", 195, 1991, pp. 323-343. Also, *Le Rôle des marchands castillans dans la commercialisation internationale du Pastel toulousain (Xve et XVIe siècles)*, in *Second International Symposium Woad, Indigo and other natural Dyes*, D. CARDON et alii eds., Arnstadt 1995, pp. 67-70.

⁴⁷ E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., pp. 186, 225, 236, 253, 308, 315.

⁴⁸ V. VÁZQUEZ DE PRADA, *Letres marchandes de Anvers*, I-IV, Paris 1950, I, pp. 195-196.

trouble, the San Juliáns went to work on behalf of important Portuguese merchants like the Caldeira, who dealt in slaves and other goods.⁴⁹ These Italian bankers were replaced in the woad and the textiles business by Azores-based Portuguese merchants, which from then onwards held a virtual monopoly, and Castilian traders, who had close connections with cloth production centres. This process of substitution was complete by the 1570s. The merchant Bento Váz is a case in point; this Oporto-born and Seville-based merchant was connected with the Affaitati bank in Seville and with the San Juliáns, whom he partially replaced in the woad business.⁵⁰

Following these Seville and Baeza-based merchants who worked with Portuguese importers, we find the company led by the Segovia-born Francisco de Riofrío and Juan de la Puente,⁵¹ who held a virtual monopoly over Segovia cloth in the Sevillian market. Other Segovia-born merchants in operation in Seville and the regional and overseas markets were Pedro de Bilbao Lazcano, active in the 1570s, and Antón de Mesa, active in the 1590s.⁵² Until the 1550s their supply of woad relied on the Burgalese group,⁵³ but from the 1590s onwards they also began buying indigo off the Portuguese, another illustration of the progressive penetration of Portuguese dye merchants, who already controlled the supply of woad from the Azores in Seville and Lower Andalusia, into the Castilian economy.⁵⁴ Cloth from Segovia was highly appreciated in Seville and the American market, which explains the success of these merchants.

Also important were the Catalan merchants Salvi Xifre and Juan Bonet, and the Valencian Miguel Ángel Lambias, main representatives of the traditional Aragonese commercial colony in Seville.⁵⁵ They sold rouennais canvas, silk from Valencia,

⁴⁹ M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, *Capital y confianza. Enrique Freire, factor de los tratantes de esclavos portugueses, 1574-1577*, in *Mercaderes y redes mercantiles en España, siglos XV-XVIII*, M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, B. PÉREZ, R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA eds., forthcoming.

⁵⁰ M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, *La consolidación del capitalismo portugués en Sevilla. Auge, caída y resurgir político del mercader Bento Váz, 1550-1580*, in *Andalucía en el mundo atlántico moderno. Ciudades y redes*, J.J. IGLESIAS RODRÍGUEZ, J.J. GARCÍA BERNAL, J.M. DÍAZ BLANCO eds., Seville 2018, pp. 183-238.

⁵¹ Already attested by E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., p. 206. Cloth associated to the name “Francisco de Riofrío” feature in the fair of Los Molares as late as 1613, A. MORENO CURADO, *La feria de la seda*, cit., p. 108.

⁵² A. GARCÍA SANZ, *Paños segovianos para Sevilla e Indias, siglo XVI*, in *Andalucía, España, Las Indias. Pasión por la Historia. Homenaje al profesor Antonio-Miguel Bernal*, C. MARTÍNEZ SHAW, P. TEDDE DE LORCA, S. TINOCO RUBIALES eds., Seville, 2015, pp. 325-336, especially, pp. 331-337.

⁵³ H. CASADO ALONSO, *El comercio del pastel. Datos para una geografía de la industria pañera española en el siglo XVI*, in “Revista de Historia Económica”, 3, 1990, pp. 523-548.

⁵⁴ J.I. PULIDO SERRANO, *La penetración de los portugueses en la economía española durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVI*, in *Más que negocios. Simón Ruiz, un banquero español del siglo XVI entre las penínsulas ibérica e italiana*, ed. J.I. PULIDO SERRANO, Madrid 2017, pp. 267-312.

⁵⁵ For the activity of these merchants, see, J.M. BELLO LEÓN, *La presencia catalana en Andalucía a finales de la Edad Media*, in “Anuario de Estudios Medievales”, 40, 2010, 1, pp. 93-127. M. ROYANO CABRERA, *La comunidad mercantil de la Corona de Aragón afincada en Sevilla durante el reinado de Carlos I: el caso de Galcerán Desclergue*, in *El legado hispánico: manifestaciones culturales y sus protagonistas*, A. LOBATO FERNÁNDEZ, E. DE LOS REYES AGUILAR, I. PEREIRA GARCÍA, C. GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ eds., León 2016, vol. I, pp. 415-432. See also, *La comunidad mercantil catalano-valenciana afincada en Sevilla en la primera mitad*

cloth, *palmillas* and occasionally rugs from Hellín and Alcaraz, among other textiles.⁵⁶ According to our sample, their market share did not reach 2%, but it is likely that this is not representative, and that their activity was, in fact, more significant. At any rate, this and other evidence collected in Medina del Campo clearly indicate that Aragonese merchants were active in the Castilian markets, something which is somewhat at odds with the traditional thesis.⁵⁷

As noted, Toledo-based merchants continued acting as middlemen between the Central Plateau and the Sevillian market.⁵⁸ According to our data, their presence in the Sevillian market was discrete, and their operations were pretty much limited to facilitating the supply of Segovia cloth. They were, however, much more active in the fair of Los Molares, next to Utrera and near Seville, which were an important event for the regional and American textiles markets.⁵⁹ In the fair, Toledoans sold cloth from Cuenca, Las Navas, Brihuega, Soria and Ocaña; they dealt in many different cloth qualities including *bayetas*, *estameña*, sackcloth and *palmilla*, as well as canvas and cheap silk, such as *tafetán*. They are also attested selling superior quality cloth, for instance *venticuatrorenos* and *ventidosenos* cloth and *palmilla*. Their market share grew between 1550 and 1577, while that of Granada-based merchants, who specialised in silks (damasks and velvets), fell.⁶⁰ Although they do not feature in our sample, we know of the activity of other Segovia-based merchants in Los Molares and other similar fairs in Lower Andalusia, for instance Pedro Muñoz Hernández, active in the 1570s;⁶¹ this demonstrates that the crisis of the Castilian fair system and the decadence of northern fairs led merchants and producers towards the

del siglo XVI, in *Familia, cultura material y formas de poder en la España moderna. III Encuentro de jóvenes investigadores en Historia Moderna*, ed. M. GARCÍA FERNÁNDEZ, Valladolid 2016, pp. 121-130.

⁵⁶ In fact, Salvi or Salvador Xifre was the only seller of Catalan *rajás* (rascie), at least between 1579 and 1580, see E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., p. 205.

⁵⁷ F.H. ABED AL-HUSSEIN, *El comercio de los géneros textiles: seda, paños y lienzos*, in *Historia de Medina del Campo y su Tierra. Auge de las Ferias. Decadencia de Medina*, ed. E. LORENZO SANZ, Valladolid 1986, vol. II, pp. 45-66, especially, pp. 58-60.

⁵⁸ R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *Las ciudades de Sevilla y Toledo en la conexión de las redes económicas judeoconversas entre Castilla y América a mediados del siglo XVI*, in *Comercio y cultura en la Edad Moderna*, cit., pp. 846-858.

⁵⁹ Along with Cordoban merchants, the Toledoans brought a lawsuit concerning the payment of dues against the lord of the village, the 3rd Duke of Alcalá, which demonstrates the lord's interest in the fair, A. MORENO CURADO, *La feria de la seda*, cit., pp. 77-79.

⁶⁰ Granada silk, which had already been struggling for some time, ran into deep trouble in the aftermath of the Rebellion of the Alpujarras, but still had a market in Seville. For this crisis and the growth of the Levantine, especially Valencian, silk industry, see R. FRANCH BENAVENT, *El comercio y los mercados de la seda en la España moderna*, in *La seta in Europa, secc. XIII-XX*, ed. S. CAVACIOCCHI, Florence 1993, pp. 565-594. For the slow recovery of the Granada silk industry, see E. GARCÍA GÁMEZ, *Seda y repoblación en el Reino de Granada durante el tránsito de los siglos XVI y XVII*, in "Chronica Nova", 28, 2001, pp. 221-255, and also, R.M. GIRÓN PASCUAL, *Mercaderes de seda, "verlegers" y veinticuatro: los Castellano Marquina de Granada (1569-1644)*, in *Comercio y cultura en la Edad Moderna*, cit., pp. 405-419; for the importance of taxes as evidence for the activity of the silk industry, see, E. SORIA MESA, *El negocio del siglo. Los judeoconversos y la renta de la seda del Reino de Granada (siglo XVI)*, in "Hispania", 253, 2016, LXXVI, pp. 415-444.

⁶¹ A. GARCÍA SANZ, *Paños segorianos para Sevilla*, cit., p. 337.

southern urban industries, which offered profitable business opportunities beyond the export of textiles towards the Indies.⁶²

Finally, merchants based in Los Molares and Utrera had but little impact in the market; most of them limited their activity to selling a small amount of low-quality cloth and some silk in the fair, although some exceptions exist. The group “Others” includes a woad-importing Portuguese merchant called Gaspar Fernández Rubio, who worked in partnership with Francisco de Molina, as well as a merchant from Venice and another one from Córdoba. The small presence of Cordoban merchants is remarkable, given that a good deal of the dye brought to Seville was sold to Córdoba-based traders and dyers.⁶³ The entry “unknown” records the cargo of a Honduras-bound *nao*, whose owners do not feature in the record.

In this period, therefore, most foreign textiles were still being imported by Castilian and local merchants, resulting in an active trade both within the region and overseas. Although novel, this market was becoming increasingly integrated in the credit circuits of woad importers, a sector which was initially dominated by Seville- and Lisbon-based Burgalese and Italian traders, and later taken over by the Portuguese, a process of substitution that had fully crystallised by the 1570s. Finally, although cloth and silk had increased their market share, as well as gaining in terms of quality and variety, canvas was still a key commodity.

PRICE OF TEXTILES IN SEVILLE AND LOS MOLARES IN 1577

Table 4 presents an estimate of average textile prices in Seville in 1577 according to the available data (not all record entries feature this information). Information concerning the length of textiles sold is also partial; sometimes the record refers to the number of pieces or, in the case of canvas, bundles, instead of length. Records concerning cloth are always much more precise than those referring to canvas, which was often transacted wholesale (by the bundle). Similarly, canvas prices are expressed in terms of mrs./Flemish pound, which cannot be compared with the price of cloth, expressed in terms of mrs./*vara*. Sometimes, the price is expressed in terms of *real* per piece, as presented in Table 4. Whenever possible, the number of *varas* has been added up, but this can only offer a notional guide, which, moreover, only applies to part of the sample.⁶⁴ With these qualifications in mind, we can see that canvas amounted to 95% of all textiles sold, while cloth amounted to 4% and silk to 1%, based on those entries in which length is specified. It is worth stressing that these results are merely notional, but in any case the dominance of canvas seems overwhelming.

⁶² H. CASADO ALONSO, *Medina del Campo Fairs*, cit., pp. 515-517.

⁶³ M.F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, *Antonio Faleiro de Acosta*, cit. J.I. FORTEA PÉREZ, *Córdoba en el siglo XVI. Las bases demográficas y económicas de una expansión urbana*, Córdoba 1981.

⁶⁴ We do not compare the prices reflected in our sample with E. Otte's because we are focusing on a single year, and price fluctuations would tend to confuse the results. Moreno Curado also presents a list of prices for the fair of Los Molares, which is particularly accurate for 1613 (and some other related data for 1576), but we have decided not to go into comparisons for the reason stated above, A. MORENO CURADO, *La feria de la seda*, cit., pp. 99-100, 105-106, 117, 141-144.

Tab. 4. *Varas*, pieces and average price of textiles in Seville and Los Molares, 1576-1577

Textile	<i>Varas</i> or pieces	Average price mrs./ <i>vara</i> or piece
A) Cloth		
Camel hair	178 pieces	5,562.5
<i>Raja</i>	296.3	1,105
<i>Velarte</i>	371.63	858.5
<i>Vellón</i>	173.2	671.5
Cloth (unspecified)	1,971.28	665.39
<i>Vellorí</i>	52.5	629
<i>Palmilla</i>	337.9	603.7
<i>Bayeta</i>	535.85	356.42
<i>Carisea</i>	91.35	323
<i>Frisa</i>	327	296.87
<i>Jergueta</i>	10	272
<i>Estameña</i>	123.35	261.37
<i>Arpillera</i>	34.5	248.2
<i>Anascote</i>	14	238
<i>Fusta</i> (cotton-made cloth)	47	114
Subtotal A	4.379'86 <i>varas</i> 178 pieces	
B) Silk		
Velvet	360.46	986
Damask	284.95	748
Satin	99.6	744.6
<i>Tafetta</i>	40.8	252.9
Subtotal B	785'81 <i>varas</i>	
C) Canvas		
<i>Bocacías</i>	192 pieces	613.6 mrs. / piece
Holland	4,105.8	178.5
Rouennais	48,515	133.34
Naval (Laval)	4,951	81.2
<i>Melinges</i>	5,146.25	62.8
<i>Esguines</i>	41 pieces	1.787.5 mrs./pound
<i>Angeo</i>	10,430.68	56.5
<i>Brines</i>	916.75	55
<i>Samalones</i>	1,425	48.5
Subtotal C	112.442'65 <i>varas</i> 233 pieces	
TOTAL		117,614.26 <i>varas</i> 411 pieces

Source: AHPSE: *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 6004, 6005, 6006, 7784, 7788, 9214, 9215, 9216, 19717; *Protocolos Notariales de Los Molares*, 23263P. Sample: 112 transactions.

Tab. 5. Most highly priced textile products in Seville and Los Molares (in *varas*), 1576-1577

Origin Cloth	Mrs. / <i>vara</i>	Origin silk	Mrs. / <i>vara</i>	Canvas (origin unspecified)	Mrs. / <i>vara</i>
Riofrío and Segovia	1,394	Toledo (velvet)	1,292	Holland	178.5
Segovia	1,360	Toledo (velvet)	1,292	Rouennais	133.34
Florence (<i>rajá</i>)	1,326, 1,122, 1,054	Granada (<i>dos pelos</i> velvet)	1,224	Laval	81.2
Segovia de Pedro Muñoz	1,241	Valencia (satin)	816	<i>Angeo</i>	56.5
Segovia	1,224	Granada (damask)	748	--	--
Segovia Juan de Gumiel	1,112, 1,105, 1,088, 1,054	<i>Tafetán moruno</i>	374	--	--
Segovia Diego de Bilbao	1,037			--	--
Baeza 24no <i>velarte</i>	918				

Source: AHPSE: *Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla*, 6004, 6005, 6006, 7784, 7788, 9214, 9215, 9216, 19717; *Protocolos notariales de Los Molares*, 23263P. Sample: 112 transactions.

Mention must be made of the camel hair cloth of which 145 pieces are attested. Most of these pieces were imported by Castilian and Flemish merchants; only one piece is recorded as having been imported from Italy. No information exists about the origin of the rest.⁶⁵ Italy is also recorded as the origin of several pieces of Florentine *rajás*; these textiles were highly appreciated, and they fetched a high price (1,326 mrs./vara), at a level with the best cloth from Segovia. With these exceptions, most of the cloth on sale in Seville, for both the domestic and the overseas market, was produced domestically, and some production centres, such as Segovia, were particularly active. As pointed out by Ángel García Sanz, these cloths were highly appreciated both in Seville and the colonies,⁶⁶ but also elsewhere in the Iberian Peninsula. Segovian cloths fetch the highest price in the sample, and in no case did they sell for under 1.000 mrs.; those from Riofrío and the city of Segovia were known by the name of the manufacturer,⁶⁷ and were all of a *ventidoseno* quality. A consignment of *venticuatreño* cloth is attested; it was manufactured slightly to the

⁶⁵ Camel hair, also imported by Italian and Flemish merchants, was already known in Seville before 1577; see, E. OTTE, *Sevilla, siglo XVI*, cit., pp. 210-211.

⁶⁶ A. GARCÍA SANZ, *Paños segovianos para Sevilla e Indias*, cit.

⁶⁷ From the early 16th century the manufacture of Segovian cloth was supervised by the “facedores de paños” who endorsed the goods under their control by naming them after themselves, A. GARCÍA SANZ, *Mercaderes hacedores de paños en Segovia en la época de Carlos V: organización del proceso productivo y estructura del capital industrial*, in *Auge y decadencia de Castilla*, ed. A. GARCÍA SANZ, Barcelona 2016, pp. 139-161.

north of Segovia, in Villoria, and sold for 646 mrs./*vara* (the transaction involved 35.5 *varas*, sold for 29,900 mrs).

Second to Segovia cloth in terms of market value were the cloths from Baeza, which were sold for between 451 and 918 mrs./*vara*, an average of 678 mrs./*vara*. Cloths from Baeza were better quality than those from Segovia, as most of them were of *venticuatreño* quality, which fetched the highest prices among the Baeza cloths (between 918 and 782 mrs./*vara*). All these cloths were black or blue, and occasionally they made blue, green or black broadcloth. Below these cloths we find a *vellorí* cloth (not dyed) for 714 mrs. and Morisco cloths of *dieciocheno* quality, at 612 mrs./*vara*, that is, more expensive than the *ventidoseno* and *venticuatreño* quality cloth from Baeza. The Morisco cloths were dyed in various colours, including “blue”, “green”, “yellow and white”, and “red”. *Vellón* cloth from Baeza was between these last categories (between 612 and 748 mrs.) in terms of market value.

Other Andalusian production centres feature less prominently in our sample. The record features 10.25 *varas* of blue *catorceno* cloth from Córdoba, at 340 mrs./*vara*, sold in the fair of Los Molares. The weak presence of Córdoba cloth must be qualified, not only because Professor Fortea demonstrated that the city was a first-rate cloth producer, being closely connected with Portuguese woad and credit circuits,⁶⁸ but because, if other years are taken into consideration (1574-1575, 1578-1579), we find at least the sale of 236.5 *varas* for 114,724 mrs. Most of this cloth, however, was of a low quality: 205 *varas* of purple *dieciseiseno*, the rest being green and “yellowish” *catorcenos*, at an average of 385.3 mrs./*vara*. On the other hand, in 1577 the looms in the area of Los Pedroches produced better quality cloth, including a *venticuatreño* fabric at 850 mrs./*vara* (the transaction involved 35.24 *varas*, which sold for 29,892 mrs).

Production centres in the Southern Plateau reflect the high degree of specialisation in the Spanish textiles industry. Ciudad Real, Puertollano and La Puebla de Montalbán feature with an aggregate of 151,903 mrs. including *venticuatreño* cloth from Puertollano and Ciudad Real (at 986 and 629 mrs./*vara*) and a *frisa* from La Puebla at 170 mrs./*vara*. The average price of these cloths is 629 mrs./*vara*. As we shall see shortly, Alcaraz and Hellín specialised in rugs, which account for a significant 220,878.5 mrs. The most expensive of these was a 30 *palmos* rug from Alcaraz, with fetched a price of 12,000 mrs.⁶⁹ The sample also features 24 dozen gloves from Ciudad Real, at 40 *reales* (1.360 mrs.) the dozen.

Other wool-based cloths, such as *palmilla* and *bayeta*, had a strong market presence, as they were versatile, mid-priced commodities. The former, all of which were dyed green and/or blue, fetched a price between 272 and 816 mrs., while the latter sold for between 204 and 493 mrs. The lowest price corresponded to English black *bayeta*, while the highest was attached to a *venticuatreña bayeta*, also black. The remaining *bayetas* were purple, green, yellow and white, in different combinations,

⁶⁸ J.I. FORTEA PÉREZ, *Córdoba en el siglo XVI*, cit.

⁶⁹ In the last quarter of the 16th century, Alcaraz 30 *palmos* rugs sold locally for between 18 and 22 *ducados* XVI, J. SÁNCHEZ FERRER, *Alfombras antiguas de la provincia de Albacete*, Albacete 1986, pp. 125-126, so the price difference in Seville (where they sold for 32 *ducados*) was at least of 40%.

and sold for between 221 and 442 *maravedies*.⁷⁰ Even cheaper were the low quality *frisas* and *estameñas*, the origin of which is not specified; the former came in different colours, while the latter were generally brown, except for a yellow piece.⁷¹ *Cariseas* only came in black and white, although they were more expensive than *frisas* and *estameñas*. Other low quality cloths appear only in small quantities. *Arpillera* fetched a very low price, between 170 and 391 mrs./*vara*, as did *anascote*. *Fusta* (cotton-made cloth) features only once, with a sale of 47 *varas* at 114 mrs./*vara*. Similarly, *jergueta* features once, although it fetched a higher price (272 mrs./*vara*) than other low quality fabrics.

The presence of silk in the sample is fairly limited. This is remarkable, as it is known that they were widely commercialised and that they were in high demand. The most common types in the sample are velvet from Toledo and Granada, followed by satin from Valencia, and, far behind, other types. Silk came generally in black, blue and brown, with some exceptions which were dyed in “colours”, “red” and “yellow”.

Finally, the most common and cheapest type of fabric in the sample is canvas. The most common varieties are listed in Table 4, but other types are also attested. The most expensive type was Holland canvas, sold at an average of 178.5 mrs./*vara*, followed by rouennais canvas, at 133.34 mrs./*vara*, naval canvas (Laval), at 81.2 mrs./*vara* and *melinges*, at 62.8 mrs./*vara*, among others. Although holland canvas was highly appreciated, the greatest market share corresponded to rouennais, a result of its excellent quality/price ratio. This continued with a commercial tradition that linked the French and Low Countries Atlantic-facing coasts and the Iberian Peninsula. Other similar fabrics were of French origin, such as *angeo*, which came from Anjou (sometimes “Bloforte” – Beaufort – is mentioned as the origin of this commodity), *melinges* and *brines* from Maine and *laval* from Brittany, among others.⁷² How much of this canvas was re-exported is unclear. Our sample only records a cargo of canvas (1,989 *varas*, 1.78% of the total amount of the total known amount of canvas) loaded onto a Honduras-bound *nao*.

Castilian and Flemish merchants often cooperated in the canvas sector, selling and buying these fabrics with one another. This is largely due to the fact that the Castilians used previously-created distribution channels to direct these textiles to the Indies, and complemented their cargoes of French and Low Countries canvas with Castilian textiles, such as the aforementioned rugs and small quantities of cloth from Segovia and Baeza.

Therefore, hollands and Rouennais canvas were among the most widely commercialised types, including Holland doublets and flax tablecloths. The merchants who dealt in canvas also sold rugs from Hellín and Alcaraz, which were highly valued. Table 6 presents the high prices fetched by these Castilian

⁷⁰ These combinations were “black and brown”, “red”, “green and white”, and “white and brown”.

⁷¹ Colour mentions include “red”, “red and blue”, “brown”, “*frailesco*”, and “coloured”. We only know the provenance of those made in La Puebla de Montalbán.

⁷² For the denominations of French flax textiles, see H. LAPEYRE, *Una familia de mercaderes*, cit., pp. 458-463. Also, H. CASADO ALONSO, *Le commerce des “marchandises de Bretagne”*, cit.

manufactures, especially the rugs from Alcaraz.⁷³ However, none of them were as expensive as a “Turkish” rug sold by Lope de Tapia for 28,000 mrs.; the same merchant sold 16 other rugs, of an unknown origin, for 38,817.5 mrs. These merchants rarely sold finished products, such as shirts, and only Bartolomé Sarriá de Abeça is featured selling 355 men’s, woman’s and child’s shirts for different prices. Another exception concerns a cargo of table cloths (at least 48) and napkins, which fetched different prices (the information is highly fragmentary, and little more may be said for the moment). These pieces of clothing, along with gloves, mittens and ruffs, appear occasionally in small numbers, and we have decided to leave them out of the analysis. Other pieces of clothing, such as the aforementioned doublets, were being handled by Sevillian merchants along secondary distribution channels, which must not concern us here.

Tab. 6. Rugs sold in the Sevillian market in 1577

Seller	Alcaraz				Hellín			
	Number	<i>Palmos</i>	Total price (mrs.)	Price per rug (mrs.)	Number	<i>Palmos</i>	Total price (mrs.)	Price per rug (mrs.)
Alonso de Merlo (Sevillian)	1	30	12,000	12,000	-	-	-	-
=	3	20	15,750	5,250	2	20	7,500	3,750
=	3	15	8,156.25	2,718.80	12	15	26,112	2,176
Pedro Jiménez de Enciso (Sevillian)	4	30	48,000	12,000	-	-	-	-
=	4	25	36,000	9,000	-	-	-	-
=	4	20	21,000	5,250	-	-	-	-
Lope de Tapia (Castillian)	4	20	19,500	4,875	12	-	24,480	2,040
=	1	15	2,380	2,380				-
Total	24	-	162,786.25	-	26	-	58,092	-

AHPSE, Protocolos Notariales de Sevilla, 9215, 6005.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data presented, we must challenge the usual assumption that the Sevillian market was flooded by foreign commodities and merchants; the development of the Spanish cloth industry, and the production of silk in Toledo, Granada and Valencia, goes hand in hand with a proactive attitude on the part of

⁷³ For this, see, J. SÁNCHEZ FERRER, *Alfombras antiguas*, cit.

peninsular merchants to the commercialisation of these products. We do not want to deny the importance of Breton and Dutch canvas, but we should question the role played by foreign merchants in their traffic; as we have demonstrated, the participation of foreign merchants was generally related to other products, such as dyes, which introduced the Portuguese merchants into Spanish commercial circuits, or took place in association with other merchants, for instance the importers of Florentine *rajás*, in association with Catalan merchants, in the late 1570s, or the Flemish importers of canvas, who worked in association with Castilian partners. At the same time, while the canvas market always had a strong international flavour and was in the hands of transnational economic groups (largely Burgalese, Castilians and Flemish, whose weight grew over time, especially from the 1560s onwards – between 1550 and 1577 their market share increased by 12%), we must revise the alleged collapse of the Burgalese economic groups during the reign of Philip II; instead, what we see is a process of adaptation and alliance (often sealed by marriage) with powerful Sevillian merchants in response to increasing international competition⁷⁴. We must also highlight the development of textile production, both for export and the domestic market, in the crowns of Castile and Aragon. Throughout the 16th century, these products were distributed by merchants from Toledo, Baeza, Granada, Catalonia, Valencia and, naturally, Burgos, linking active production centres with the international markets via Seville. It seems clear that traditional commonplaces about the “stagnation” of pre-industrial production in Spain, and about the absence of a domestic market, will have to be revised. This work, which will be followed by more studies, has tried to explore the transformations undergone by an open and internationalised market, supported by a solid and highly diversified textile industry, and sought to develop a new chronological framework with which to gain a better understanding of its rhythms and circumstances.

⁷⁴ R.M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, *Mercaderes burgaleses en la Andalucía de los siglos XVI y XVII: procesos de enriquecimiento, ascenso social y ennoblecimiento*, forthcoming.

Joana Sequeira, Flávio Miranda

'A Port of Two Seas.'

*Lisbon and European Maritime Networks in the Fifteenth Century**

INTRODUCTION

For centuries “the Mediterranean was probably the most vigorous place of interaction between different societies”, David Abulafia has argued. It is said to have played a key role in the history of human civilization.¹ This notwithstanding the institutional and cultural differences which Christian, Jewish and Muslim traders encountered while criss-crossing Mediterranean waters, differences that have fuelled debate amongst economic historians. In some cases, however, no political or religious obstacles stood in the way of commercial exchange, resulting in late medieval port cities becoming instrumental for what Wim Blockmans has called “economic and cultural European integration”. In a nutshell, Blockmans argues that there is an alternative dimension to European integration that emerged not through military conquests or forced conversions, but through the ever-increasing movement of people and the exchange of commodities from different economic systems, in which port cities played a key role.² This being the case, this paper will focus on Lisbon – located outside the privileged milieu of multi-cultural interactions that was the Mediterranean Sea – and will strive to answer the question: did the mobility of merchants and their commodities in Lisbon bring meaningful contributions to this late-medieval European integration?

Historically, Lisbon has been at the crossroads of what nowadays we would call ‘international trade’. In the early twelfth century, while it was still under Islamic rule, its commercial relationships stretched towards the south of the Iberian Peninsula, from al-Andalus to the Maghreb, in north Africa, and the Mediterranean. This was achieved both over land and by sea, with Portuguese merchants engaging in

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¹ D. ABULAFIA, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean*, London 2011 (Allen Lane), p. 648. F. BRAUDEL, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, London 1973 (Collins).

² W. BLOCKMANS, *L'unification européenne par les circuits portuaires*, in *La ville médiévale en débat*, F. ANDREWS, A.M. DA COSTA eds., Lisbon 2013 (Instituto de Estudos Medievais), pp. 133-144.

cross-cultural trade both in Iberia and in other parts of Europe.³ By the end of the Middle Ages, the port of Lisbon had been established as the location where a large part of Portugal's overseas trade would take place, thus connecting the city to over fifty port towns – from Reval in the Baltic sea to Venice in the Mediterranean, including the Atlantic islands and Elmina in Western Africa.⁴

The title of this essay invokes a quote coined by Ovid, “a port of two seas”, which he used to describe the relationship between Constantinople and the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea. Although Lisbon only connects to a single ocean, the city soon became an important antechamber between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean in the later Middle Ages: that is, the confluence of two major, different yet complementary commercial systems, embodying distinct climates, agricultural production, food and cultures.

Over the last half-century, historians inside and outside Portugal have looked at Lisbon's overseas trade, the creation of merchant communities, the arrival of foreign traders, the development of institutions, and the royal and urban management of economic policies from different approaches. This include works produced on the binomial commercial relationships between Portugal and foreign territories (with Italy,⁵ Spain,⁶ England,⁷ Normandy,⁸ Flanders,⁹ and the Baltic¹⁰), on merchant

³ For example, in the twelfth century the merchants of our-day Algarve took their commodities to ports such as Montpellier, where they traded with Muslim, Christian and Jewish traders. B. OF TUDELA, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela. Critical Text, Translation and Commentary*, London 1907 (Henry Frowde).

⁴ A. ANDRADE, F. MIRANDA, *Lisbon. Trade, Urban Power and the King's Visible Hand*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe, 1300-1600: Commercial Networks and Urban Autonomy*, W. BLOCKMANS, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, M. KROM eds., London 2017 (Routledge), pp. 333-351, 344.

⁵ V. RAU, *Cartas de Lisboa no Arquivo Datini de Prato*, in “Estudos Italianos em Portugal”, 21-22, 1962-63, pp. 3-13; L. D'ARIENZO, *La presenza degli italiani in Portogallo al tempo di Colombo*, Rome 2003 (Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato); M. BERTI, *Le aziende Da Colle: una finestra sulle relazioni commerciali tra la Toscana ed il Portogallo a metà del Quattrocento*, in *Toscana e Portogallo: Miscellanea Storica nel 650° Anniversario dello Studio Generale di Pisa*, Pisa 1994 (Edizione ETS), pp. 57-106.

⁶ H. CASADO ALONSO, *El triunfo de Mercurio. La presencia castellana en Europa (siglos XV y XVI)*, Burgos 2003 (Cajacirculo); IDEM, *Genèse et fin des réseaux de commerce castillans dans l'Europe des XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, in *Réseaux marchands et réseaux de commerce. concepts récents, réalités historiques du Moyen Âge au XIX^e siècle*, ed. D. COULOUN, Strasbourg 2010 (Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg); J. HINOJOSA MONTALVO, *De Valencia a Portugal y Flandres. Relaciones durante la Edad Media*, in “Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia Medieval”, 1982, n. 1, pp. 149-168; IDEM, *Intercambios comerciales entre Portugal y Valencia a fines del siglo XV: el “dret portogues”*, in *Actas das II Jornadas Luso-Espanholas de História Medieval*, I-II, Oporto 1987 (Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica), II, pp. 759-779; F.T. BARATA, *Mercadores, mercados e investimentos comerciais: as relações comerciais luso-aragonesas na primeira metade do século XV*, in *Congresso internacional Bartolomeu Dias e a sua Época*, III, Oporto 1989 (Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses) pp. 161-176; IDEM, *Navegação, comércio e relações políticas. Os portugueses no Mediterrâneo Ocidental (1385-1466)*, Lisbon 1998 (Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Junta de Investigação Científica e Tecnológica); IDEM, *Portugal and the Mediterranean trade: A Prelude to the Discovery of the “New World”*, in “Al-Masāq”, 17, 2005, n. 2, pp. 205-219.

⁷ V.M. SHILLINGTON, *The Beginnings of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance*, in “Transactions of the Royal Historical Society”, 20, 1906, pp. 103-132. V.M. SHILLINGTON, A.B. CHAPMAN, *The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal*, New York 1907 (Burt Franklin); W. CHILDS, *Anglo-Portuguese Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, in “Transactions of the Royal Historical Society”, 2, 1992, pp. 195-219; EADEM, *Anglo-Portuguese Relations in the Fourteenth Century*, in *The Age of Richard II*, J. L. Gillespie ed., New York 1997 (Sutton Publishing), pp. 27-49; EADEM, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West: Portugal, Castile, and Eng-*

companies, traders and agents,¹¹ and on the influence of political powers on Lisbon's foreign trade.¹² However, most of the existing research is fragmented into geographical or thematic approaches, therefore not necessarily focussing on Lisbon, and failing to draw systematic connections between the Iberian, Atlantic, Mediterranean and African economic realities.

This chapter argues that late-medieval Lisbon rose to become a cosmopolitan centre of international trade, contributing to a change in commercial trading networks and consumption patterns. However, it also argues that the growth of trade contributed to competition between the traders, which sometimes had the opposite effect of causing traders to distance themselves from purported European integration. In order to do this, this study will examine fiscal, commercial, legislative, royal and judicial sources, extracted from the following collections and archives: chancelleries of the kings Afonso V, João II and Manuel (ANTT, Lisbon); parliamentary records (*Cortes*, ANTT, Lisbon); English Customs Accounts (TNA, London); *llibres de colleta* "Dret portugués" (Arxiu del regne de València); ledgers from the Archivio Salviati (Da Colle; Francesco di Nerone; Banco Salviati di Pisa); Fondo Estranei,

land, Oporto 2013 (Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales); E.M. CARUS-WILSON, *The Overseas trade of Bristol*, in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, E. POWER, M. POSTAN eds., London 1933 (Routledge), pp. 183-246; T.V. DE FARIA, F. MIRANDA, 'Pur bone alliance et amiste faire': diplomacia e comércio entre Portugal e Inglaterra no final da Idade Média, in "CEM/ Cultura, Espaço & Memória. Revista do CITCEM", 1, 2010, pp. 109-128.

⁸ R. FRANCISQUE-MICHEL, *Les Portugais en France, les Français en Portugal*, Paris 1882 (Guillard Aillaud).

⁹ E.V. BUSSCHE, *Flandre et Portugal*, Bruges 1874 (C. de Moor); A.H. DE O. MARQUES, *Notas para a história da feitoria portuguesa na Flandres, no século XV*, in *Ensaios de História Medieval*, ed. A.H. DE O. MARQUES, Lisbon 1965 (Portugália Editora), pp. 219-267; J. PAVIOT, *Les relations économiques entre le Portugal et la Flandre au XV^e siècle*, in *Congresso Internacional Bartolomeu Dias e a sua Época*, I-III, Oporto 1989 (Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses), III, pp. 531-540; F. MIRANDA, *Commerce, conflits et justice: les marchands portugais en Flandre à la fin du Moyen Âge*, in "Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest", 117, 2010, n.1, pp. 193-208.

¹⁰ A.H. DE O. MARQUES, *Hansa e Portugal na Idade Média*, cit.; F. Miranda, *Die Saga der portugiesischen Feigen. Der Handel mit dem Nord- und Ostseeraum im Mittelalter*, in "Hansische Geschichtsblätter", 133, 2016, pp. 77-97.

¹¹ V. RAU, *Uma família de mercadores italianos em Portugal no século XV: os Lomellini*, in "Revista da Faculdade de Letras", 22, 1956, pp. 56-83; EADEM, *Bartolomeo di Iacopo di ser Vanni. Mercador-banqueiro florentino em Lisboa nos meados do século XV*, in "Do Tempo e da História", 4, 1971, pp. 97-117; S. TOGNETTI, *Il Banco Cambini. Affari e mercati di una compagnia mercantile-bancaria nella Firenze del XV secolo*, Florence 1999 (Leo S. Olschki); IDEM, *Gli uomini d'affari toscani nella Penisola Iberica (metà XIV secolo - inizio XVI secolo)*, in "eHumanista", 38, 2018, pp. 83-98. J. SEQUEIRA, *A Companhia Salviati-Da Colle e o comércio de panos de seda florentinos em Lisboa no século XV*, in "De Medio Aevo", 7, 2015, n. 1, pp. 47-62; EADEM, *Michele Da Colle: um mercador pisano em Lisboa no século XV*, in *Con gran mare e fortuna. Circulação de mercadorias, pessoas e ideias entre Portugal e Itália na Época Moderna*, N. ALESSANDRINI, S. B. MATEUS, M. RUSSO, G. SABATINI eds., Lisbon 2015 (Cátedra de Estudos Sefarditas "Alberto Benveniste"), pp. 21-34; F. GUIDI-BRUSCOLI, *Bartolomeo Marchionni. "Homem De Grossa Fazenda" (ca. 1450-1530): un mercante fiorentino a Lisbona e l'impero portoghese*, Florence 2014 (L.S. Olschki). IDEM, *Da comprimari a protagonisti: i fiorentini in Portogallo nel Basso Medioevo (1338-1520)*, in "eHumanista", 38, 2018, pp. 65-82.

¹² A. ANDRADE, *A estratégia régia em relação aos portos marítimos no Portugal medieval: o caso da fachada atlântica*, in *Ciudades y villas portuarias del Atlántico en la Edad Media*, B. ARIZAGA BOLUMBURU, J. SOLÓRZANO TELECHEA eds., Logroño 2004 (Instituto de Estudios Riojanos), pp. 57-89; A. ANDRADE, F. MIRANDA, *Lisbon. Trade, Urban Power and the King's Visible Hand*, cit.

Banco Cambini (Ospedale degli Innocenti di Firenze); the *civiele sententiën* (Bruges); and chronicles.

PULL FACTORS

Chronicler Fernão Lopes described Lisbon and its port as a place of intense commercial contact, producing impressive numbers about the circulation of vessels on the River Tagus. In his work, Lopes claims that the port in Lisbon would hold, at times, as many as four to five hundred ships.¹³ Although the chronicler perhaps exaggerated numbers in terms of overseas trade, fifteenth-century Portugal did become partly responsible for the revival of European commercial exchange, thanks to the novelties shipped from the Atlantic islands of Madeira and the Azores, as well as from the markets of Western Africa. The overseas expansion played an important part in turning Lisbon into one of Europe's largest gateways, but its commercial relevance had begun far earlier, thanks to its long-standing tradition of foreign trade, its shipping capacity, and the existence of a diverse merchant community – composed both of Portuguese and foreign merchants. From a very early period, Portugal hosted Galician, Castilian, Cantabrian, Basque, Catalan, Valencian, Genoese, Florentine, Milanese, Venetian, English, Breton, Fleming and Hanseatic traders, as well as traders from other parts of Europe, while Portuguese merchants could also often be found in many other European ports.¹⁴

The long-standing importance of Lisbon as a European port having been established, what helped the city become a relevant socioeconomic node in European trade? Traditionally, historians tend to begin by considering Lisbon's purported privileged geographical setting and location. At the mouth of the Tagus – the largest river in the Iberian Peninsula – Lisbon is indeed at the crossroads of fluvial and maritime routes, aided by its estuary offering excellent conditions for anchorage, as shown by several sixteenth-century paintings.

Luisa D'Arienzo has stated that Lisbon's "felice posizione geografica" brought commercial benefits to the Portuguese city.¹⁵ However, although Lisbon's geographical position was indeed beneficial in connecting the north and the south, it also had some disadvantages. The winds and currents off the coast near Lisbon hindered navigation: experienced seafarers coming from the Mediterranean often preferred to sail away from the coast of Portugal, rather than approaching or stopping at any Portuguese port. Examples from the 1420s and 1430s demonstrate that

¹³ F. LOPES, *Crónica de D. Fernando*, 2nd ed., Lisbon 2004 (Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda), p. 6.

¹⁴ A.H. DE O. MARQUES, *Hansa e Portugal na Idade Média*, 2nd ed., Lisbon 1993 (Editorial Presença); F.T. BARATA, *Navegação, comércio e relações políticas*, cit.; F. MIRANDA, *Network Takers or Network Makers? The Portuguese Traders in the Medieval West*, in *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE eds., London 2014 (Pickering & Chatto), pp. 171-186; F. MIRANDA, D. FARIA, *Lisboa e o comércio marítimo com a Europa nos séculos XIV e XV*, in *Lisboa Medieval. Gentes, Espaços e Poderes*, J.L.I. FONTES et al. eds., Lisbon 2016 (Instituto de Estudos Medievais), pp. 241-266; A. ANDRADE, F. MIRANDA, *Lisbon. Trade, Urban Power and the King's Visible Hand*, cit., pp. 333-351.

¹⁵ L. D'ARIENZO, *La presenza italiana in Spagna al tempo di Colombo*, Rome 2010 (Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato), p. 84.

the Florentine galleys en route to England and Flanders rarely stopped in Lisbon, preferring to stop in Cadiz.¹⁶ Galleys, of course, were not well suited to deal with open waters – at least, in comparison with caravels, Portugal's major contribution to the shipping industry.

Since geographical determinism obviously does not fully explain Lisbon's integration in wider maritime networks, other approaches must be considered. Firstly, size: in the 1400s, Lisbon was the largest city in the Iberian Peninsula with approximately fifty thousand inhabitants – making it larger than Barcelona, Valencia and Seville.¹⁷ For this reason, Lisbon's urban growth prompted a wide, international supply chain to feed the city, attracting merchants from all four corners of Europe and the Mediterranean. Grain for bread arrived in Lisbon from the Baltic, Normandy, England and, on occasion, even from the Maghreb.¹⁸ Secondly, it was in Lisbon that the Portuguese crown established itself and its institutions, making it the capital of the kingdom from the second half of the thirteenth century, a factor that had both social and economic consequences. On the one hand, Lisbon hosted royal officials, urban oligarchs, noblemen and religious elites, with their growing habits of conspicuous consumption, satisfied mostly through the import of luxury commodities (sumptuous fabrics, reliquaries, books, glasswork, etc.).¹⁹ On the other hand, royal institutions benefited from revenue coming from the international trade, allowing for a particular sort of bidirectional relationship to be established between the crown and merchants: the negotiation of commercial rights.²⁰

In the Middle Ages, the Portuguese crown granted a whole array of commercial rights that went way beyond what, traditionally, merchants obtained through the acquisition of safe-conduct. The crown intensified the negotiation of commercial rights in the fifteenth century, aiming to attract wealthy foreign merchants capable of ensuring the flow of domestic production and overseas commodities. This payer-exclusivity of trade allowed the crown to gain immediate access to funds to finance its military operations in Morocco and to support the expeditions to explore the Atlantic.²¹ The list of monopolised products is extensive and includes commodities that were extremely important to the Portuguese economy, some of which will be examined further ahead.

In addition, the arrival and settlement of foreign merchants in Lisbon may also be justified by two additional factors: the wide variety of commodities at their disposal, and their intrinsic quality. The list of Portuguese commodities in Italian,

¹⁶ M.E. MALLETT, *The Florentine Galleys in the Fifteenth Century*, Oxford 1967 (Clarendon Press), *passim*.

¹⁷ A. ANDRADE, F. MIRANDA, *Lisbon. Trade, Urban Power and the King's Visible Hand*, cit., p. 336.

¹⁸ A.H. DE O. MARQUES, *Introdução à história da agricultura em Portugal*, 3rd ed., Lisbon 1978 (Edições Cosmos), pp. 166-189.

¹⁹ A.M.P. FERREIRA, *A importação e o comércio têxtil em Portugal no século XV (1385 a 1481)*, Lisbon 1983 (Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda), *passim*; J. SEQUEIRA, *A Companhia Salvati-Da Colle e o comércio de panos de seda florentinos em Lisboa no século XV*, cit., pp. 47-62; EADEM, *O Pano da Terra. Produção têxtil em Portugal nos finais da Idade Média*, Oporto 2014 (U. Porto Edições), pp. 153-160. F. GUIDI-BRUSCOLI, *Bartolomeo Marchionni*, cit., pp. 83-86.

²⁰ V. RAU, *Privilégios e legislação portuguesa referentes a mercadores estrangeiros (séculos XV e XVI)*, in *Fremde Kaufleute auf der iberischen Halbinsel*, H. KELLENBENZ ed., Köln 1970 (Böhlau Verlag), pp. 15-30.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

Spanish, English, Norman, Flemish and Hanseatic markets is extensive – the Bristol customs accounts for the second half of the fifteenth century, for example, includes dozens of Portuguese commodities, such as oranges, dates, marmalade, soap and vinegar, among others.²² From the list of commodities shipped to European and Mediterranean markets, at least six deserve careful analysis because of the quantity shipped, the quality offered, and the dimension of the commercial network formed.

Wine and olive oil were mainstays among Portugal's exports in the Middle Ages. Wine was shipped in very large quantities to almost every market in Atlantic Europe, with the English being its prime consumers.²³ Recent research carried out on the Bristol customs accounts demonstrates that, in the second half of the fifteenth century, Bristolians bought 18 per cent of their wine from Portugal, most of which came from Lisbon (see Tab. 1 below). Bristol's import of Portuguese olive oil reached 33 per cent in the customs accounts for this commodity, whereas wax and sugar exceeded the threshold of seventy per cent.²⁴ The availability and the price must have been factors influencing Bristolians to opt for Portugal for these commodities.

Tab. 1. **Correlation between the commodity and the amount imported from Portugal in the Bristol Customs Accounts, 1461-1504**

COMMODITY	IMPORTED FROM PORTUGAL
Wine	18%
Olive oil	33%
Wax	79%
Sugar	71%

Source: THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (TNA), E122, *Bristol Customs Accounts*.

Availability and surely the price of the product, but its quality, must have influenced the English merchants' choice of Portuguese commodities. In the fifteenth-century account known as *The Noumbre of Weyghtes*, it is said that:

“Also in Portugal the chief merchandise is sweet wine that grows within the land, that is to say bastard, ‘capryke’, ‘osey’, ‘raspey’, ‘reputage’ and ‘land’ wine. There is also olive oil growing which is most wholesome for men’s food and medicines; and when it is old it is

²² THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (TNA), E122, *Bristol Customs Accounts*.

²³ W. CHILDS, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West*, cit., p. 98.

²⁴ See forthcoming by F. MIRANDA, H. CASADO ALONSO, *Comércio entre o porto de Bristol e Portugal no final da Idade Média, 1461-1504*, in “Anais de História de Além-Mar”, XIX, 2018, pp. 11-36.

good wool oil. There is also wax, honey, dates and figs, pomegranates, oranges, litmus, lemons."²⁵

Late fourteenth-century Tuscan merchants had similar views about the quality of olive oil and other commodities. In 1399, in Lisbon, Bartolomeo Manni sent a letter to the Datini Company in Pisa in which the quality of the olive oil, honey, and even fish were underlined:

*"From here we bring olive oil and honey . . . And the salt that we buy here is perfect: it's white and good . . . Here they make large quantities of smoked sardine, . . . and they are big, like two or two and a half for each herring."*²⁶

The export of hides from Lisbon is another example of the city's integration in multi-layered, multilateral commercial networks, encompassing a vast area from Ireland to the Italian city-states. Portuguese hides have been recorded in Flanders from as early as the fourteenth century, and in England from the fifteenth century onwards.²⁷ This commodity also found high demand in Valencia in the second half of the 1400s. On 20th March 1497, for example, the *Dret Portugués de València* recorded a Portuguese vessel entering Valencia laden with hake, conger, sugar, 36 ox hides and a dozen kid (goat) hides.²⁸ With the development of the tanning industry in Tuscany as of the 1200s, higher demand for raw materials opened new commercial channels in the Atlantic markets.²⁹ Lisbon positioned itself at the centre-stage of this international trade in the fifteenth century, providing their Tuscan clients with Portuguese, Galician and Irish hides – with the majority being shipped on board Portuguese vessels.³⁰ The Salviati case-study (see Tab. 2 below) shows that 22 per cent of the hides imported by the company came from Portugal, and 13 per cent from Ireland – meaning that 35 per cent of this trade was managed through Lisbon.³¹

²⁵ Our translation from S. JENKS, *Werkzeug des spätmittelalterlichen Kaufmanns: Hansen und Engländer im Wandel von memoria zur Akte (mit einer Edition von The Nounbre of Weygbtys)*, in "Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung", LII, 1992, n.1, pp. 283-319, 307-308.

²⁶ Our translation from V. RAU, *Cartas de Lisboa no Arquivo Datini de Prato*, cit., p. 8.

²⁷ O. MARQUES, *Hansa e Portugal na Idade Média*, cit., pp. 30-34; W. CHILDS, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West*, cit., p. 97.

²⁸ ARXIU DEL REGNE DE VALÈNCIA, *Mestre Racional*, n. 12.125, f. 3v.

²⁹ T. ANTONI, *I costi industriali di una azienda conciaria della fine del Trecento (1384-1388)*, in "Bollettino storico pisano", 42, 1973, pp. 9-52.

³⁰ F. MELIS, *Di alcune figure di operatori economici fiorentini attivi nel Portogallo nel XV secolo*, in *I mercanti italiani dell'Europa medievale e rinascimentale*, L. FRANGONI ed., Florence 1990 (Le Monnier), p. 13; S. TOGNETTI, *Aspetti del commercio internazionale del cuoio nel XV secolo: il mercato pisano nella documentazione del Banco Cambini di Firenze*, in *Il cuoio e le pelli in Toscana: produzione e mercato nel tardo Medioevo e nell'Età Moderna*, ed. S. GENSINI, Pisa 1999 (Pacini), pp. 17-50, *passim*; J. SEQUEIRA, *Entre Lisboa e Pisa: alguns exemplos de viagens comerciais no terceiro quartel do século XV*, in *Ao Tempo de Vasco Fernandes*, ed. R.M. RIBEIRO, Viseu 2016 (DGPC, Museu Nacional Grão-Vasco, Projecto Património), pp. 173-185, 183-84; EADEM, *Comprar, organizar e expedir: mercadores pisanos no negócio internacional dos couros portugueses e galegos no século XV*, in "eHumanista", 38, 2018, pp. 131-145, *passim*; A. CARLOMAGNO, *Il Banco Salviati di Pisa: commercio e finanza di una compagnia fiorentina tra il 1438 e il 1489*, I-II, Pisa 2010 (Università degli Studi di Pisa), *passim*; F. GUIDI-BRUSCOLI, *Bartolomeo Marchionni*, cit., pp. 88-89.

³¹ A. CARLOMAGNO, *Il Banco Salviati di Pisa*, cit., I, pp. 325-326.

Tab. 2. Number (in pieces) and origin of hides sold by the Salviati Bank of Pisa, 1438-1485

Year	Maghreb	Portugal	Spain	Ireland	Sicilian	Sardinian	Other
1438-1445	-	320	208	-	-	790,3	3354
1446-1450	2229	9	1564	-	-	26,6	246
1451-1455	58	574	995	1998	-	-	266
1456-1460	574	160	0	106	50	-	-
1461-1465	-	500	707	0	689	105	-
1466-1470	2907	2960	-	1000	366	125	-
1471-1475	2078	1595	-	300	-	48	-
1476-1480	-	-	220	-	-	-	147
1481-1485	-	-	337,5	254	-	-	-
Total	7846	6118	4031,5	3658	1105	1094,9	4013

Source: A. CARLOMAGNO, *Il Banco Salviati di Pisa: commercio e finanza di una compagnia fiorentina tra il 1438 e il 1489*, I-II, Università degli Studi di Pisa 2010, I, pp. 325-326.

In fact, from 1450 to 1475, the Salviati company bought most of its hides from two markets: the Maghreb and Portugal (Tab. 2). These two markets surpassed any Spanish, Sicilian and Sardinian competition. After this period, foreign merchants found hindrances when buying hides from Portugal: in 1481, the crown issued a decree banning the export of hides, which lasted six years.³²

Along with wine, olive oil and hides, the importance of kermes (*kermes vermilio*, a red dyestuff), sugar, and slaves of course, should also be included in this discussion. Each in their own way, these represent different stages of Portugal's foreign trade and the widening of the country's commercial networks. Kermes was rediscovered as an export commodity in the second half of the fifteenth century. Again, *The Nourishment of Weyghtes* states that Portuguese kermes grew in the wild in the mountains of Sintra, and that it was of a high quality.³³ Dominique Cardon argues, for instance, that its rise in the trade might even be explained by the fact that Pope Paul II (1464-1471) changed the robes of cardinals from purple to red.³⁴

Departing from Lisbon, Portuguese kermes reached the markets of the Hansa, England and Tuscany.³⁵ Between 1459 and 1478, the Salviati Bank of Pisa bought 44 per cent of their kermes in the Maghreb and 33 per cent in Valencia, but the town of Sintra was also an important contributor, providing 23 per cent of this

³² H. da G. BARROS, *História da Administração Pública em Portugal nos séculos XII a XV*, 1-11, 2nd ed., IX, Lisbon 1945-1954 (Sá da Costa), pp. 265-268.

³³ W. CHILDS, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West*, cit., pp. 23-25.

³⁴ D. CARDON, *Le monde des teintures naturelles*, Paris 2014 (Belin) pp. 600-601.

³⁵ J. SEQUEIRA, *O Pano da Terra*, cit., p.114.

commodity.³⁶ According to Federigo Melis, the quality of Portuguese kermes could be measured by the price put on it, as the most expensive for consumers in the London market, and presumably to have been of the highest quality.³⁷

The introduction of sugar cane plantations in Madeira, in the first half of the fifteenth century, changed the way in which sugar was traded on the entirety of the European continent in the second half of the 1400s. Lisbon, once again, positioned itself at the heart of the trade. Although the 'sugar revolution' had begun in the mid-fifteenth century – in 1452, Prince Henrique, the Navigator, granted Diogo de Teive the privilege of installing the first sugar mill in Funchal; and, in 1466, the Portuguese brought the first black slaves to the island to work in the mills – it took several years for production to meet domestic and international demand.³⁸ In the second half of the fifteenth century, Bristolian merchants, for instance, bought sugar both in Lisbon and Madeira, but they seem to have only visited the Atlantic island once, in 1486.³⁹ That year, they bought more sugar in Madeira than in Lisbon (Tab. 3).

Tab. 3. **Bristolian sugar imports from Madeira and Lisbon and the duties charged in the Bristol Customs Accounts, 1468**

Origin	Quantity (cases)	Duties charged (£)
Lisbon	66,25	132,5
Madeira	232,25	443,25

Source: TNA, *E122, Bristol Customs Accounts*.

As the century progressed so did sugar production, as well as the role Lisbon took on in this international trade. In 1498, Madeira produced more than two thousand tons of sugar: 588 tons were sold to Flanders; Venice, Genoa and Constantinople each imported 191 tons; England about 90 tons; and Livorno just under 90 tons.⁴⁰ The importance of the sugar trade can be measured in many ways. For a period of 11 years after 1480, the Salviati Bank of Pisa made almost as much profit

³⁶ ARCHIVIO SALVIATI (AS), *Libri di commercio*, Serie I, 280, 281, 282, 286, 294.

³⁷ F. MELIS, *Di alcune figure di operatori economici fiorentini attivi nel Portogallo nel XV secolo*, cit., p. 14.

³⁸ A. VIEIRA, *A Madeira e o mercado do açúcar: séculos XV-XVI*, in *História do Açúcar: Rotas e Mercados*, Centro de Estudos de História do Atlântico, Funchal 2002 (Região Autónoma da Madeira. Secretaria Regional do Turismo e Cultura), pp. 55-89; J. R. MAGALHÃES, *O açúcar nas ilhas portuguesas do Atlântico, séculos XV e XVI*, in "Varia Historia", 25, 2009, n. 41, pp. 151-75. V. M. GODINHO, *Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial*, I-IV, 2nd ed., Lisbon 1991 (Editorial Presença), IV, pp. 73-93.

³⁹ According to the Bristol Customs Accounts from 1461 to 1504, Bristolian merchants bought sugar in Lisbon in 1466, 1469, 1471, 1474, 1475, 1486 and 1504. (TNA, *E122, Bristol Customs Accounts*).

⁴⁰ *Descobrimentos Portugueses. Documentos para a sua História*, ed. J. DA S. MARQUES, I-III, Lisbon 1944 (Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica), pp. 488-490; V. RAU, J. DE MACEDO, *O açúcar da Madeira nos fins do século XV. Problemas de produção e comércio*, Funchal 1962 (Junta Geral do Distrito Autónomo do Funchal), pp. 14-15.

from Madeira sugar bought in Lisbon than from the sugar they had sold in the previous 34 years from Palermo and Valencia combined (Tab. 4).⁴¹

Tab. 4. Profits on sugar sales, in *florini larghi*, by the Salviati Bank of Pisa, 1455-1489

Year	Sugar from Palermo	Sugar fino from Valencia	Sugar from Madeira
1455-1489	103.10.07	32.14.07	130.06

Source: ARCHIVIO SALVIATI, *Libri di commercio, Serie I*, 278, 283, 294, 301.

Next, Lisbon would become the centre of commerce of another important commodity, one with long-lasting implications for the whole of mankind: African slaves. After the first two Africans were captured in 1441, thousands would follow, brought to Portugal by force in the second half of the fifteenth century.⁴² In 1460s Lisbon, Pisan merchant Michele da Colle had a black Muslim slave who he later converted to Christianity through baptism.⁴³ From 1469 to 1473, along with other merchants, Lisbon merchant Fernão Gomes was granted the privilege of trading slaves from Western Africa; and, from 1486 to 1495, Florentine Bartolomeo Marchionni also obtained a contract allowing him to trade slaves, which he then shipped to Seville, Valencia and Florence. From 1486 to 1493, the Lisbon *Casa dos Escravos* (House of Slaves) records show that 3,589 slaves were registered as entering the market – each one of them valued at four thousand *reais*.⁴⁴ In the short-term, the slave trade contributed, among many other factors, to the success of the colonisation of Madeira, and to its economic development. In the long-term, it created shifts in transcontinental commercial networks, as well as in the economy, in society and in the culture of the empire and its colonies.

INTEGRATION AND OPPOSITION

Many foreign merchants chose the Portuguese capital as the location for their business operations and their homes. The existing records from the Portuguese chancellery provide a clear view of Lisbon's cosmopolitan atmosphere. During the reign of King Afonso V (r. 1438–1481), at least 143 foreign merchants requested safe-conduct, letters of protection and privileges to trade in the Portuguese capital for long periods of time, but since only a third of Afonso V's chancellery records have survived in the archives, historians suspect this number could have been much

⁴¹ AS, *Libri di commercio, Serie I*, 278, 283, 294, 301.

⁴² G.E. DE ZURARA, *The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*, 2 vols. London 1896 (Printed for the Hakluyt Society), chs. 17, 19.

⁴³ J. SEQUEIRA, *Michele Da Colle: um mercador pisano em Lisboa no século XV*, cit., p. 28; A.C. CARDOSO, *Os livros de contas do mercador Michele Da Colle (1462–63). Do registo contabilístico à atividade comercial e financeira na praça de Lisboa*, University of Porto 2016, p. 46.

⁴⁴ F. GUIDI-BRUSCOLI, *Bartolomeo Marchionni*, cit., pp. 118-34.

higher. The king granted these privileges to merchants of at least 15 different nationalities, as seen in Tab. 5.

Tab. 5. **Safe-conduct and letters of protection granted during the reign of Afonso V to foreign merchants (1438-81)**

Origin	Quantity
Castile	36
England	34
Genoa	20
Brittany	14
Galicia	11
Florence	7
Biscay	5
Unspecified	5
Piacenza	2
Granada	2
Asturias	2
France	1
Venice	1
Piemonte	1
Maghreb	1
Milan	1
Total	143

Source: ARQUIVO NACIONAL DA TORRE DO TOMBO, *Chancelaria de D. Afonso V, passim*.

Together, Castilian and English traders obtained nearly half of these royal privileges – 25 and 24 per cent respectively – a high percentage, which is perhaps explained by the long tradition of Anglo-Iberian commercial exchange, and certain

merchants' needs to seek protection following certain piratical attacks.⁴⁵ Genoese (14 per cent) and Breton (10 per cent) traders came third and fourth in quantity, revealing, once again, their historical commercial connections to Portugal. In the case of the Bretons, these were paramount in supplying grain to the city of Lisbon in the fifteenth century.⁴⁶ Florentine, Venetians, Piedmontese and Milanese traders can be found further down the list, although it is likely that their community in Lisbon was larger than what is shown in these records: the lack of a complete inventory of foreigners living in the city (the non-existence of certain records in Portugal), and the fact that some merchants co-operated with each other might help explain these disparities.

The arrival of foreign nations to Lisbon is preceded by these references and privileges. The Genoese arrived in 1270, the Florentines settled in 1338, and the English settled in no later than 1311, having established their factory in Lisbon in 1352.⁴⁷ To this list, one may add merchants who came from Normandy, Livonia and Prussia.⁴⁸

Many of these businessmen lived on Lisbon's riverfront and on the *Rua Nova dos Mercadores* (New Merchants' Street), making Lisbon considerably more cosmopolitan than the rest of the kingdom:⁴⁹

*“Turning left, one arrives at another street, one named New, New Merchants' Street, which is much wider than all other streets, ornate on both sides with beautiful buildings. Therein gather, every day, traders and folks from all parts of the world . . . because of the good amenities of the harbour and of commerce.”*⁵⁰

The Pisan merchant, Michele da Colle, left his hometown at a young age to gain experience as a merchant abroad. He lived in Valencia for five years before moving to Lisbon in 1462, where he rented a house on this street.⁵¹ The Fleming merchant Maarten Lem, a denizen of Lisbon, was one of his neighbours.⁵² It was not uncommon for foreigners to find female partners in Lisbon. Bartolomeo Marchionni, for instance, also a resident of the *Rua Nova*, had intimate relations with at least two Portuguese women, with whom he had a total of five children.⁵³

⁴⁵ H. CASADO ALONSO, F. MIRANDA, *The Iberian Economy and Commercial Exchange with North-Western Europe in the Later Middle Ages*, in *The World of the Newport Medieval Ship*, E. T. JONES, R. STONE eds., Cardiff 2018 (Wales University Press), pp. 205-227.

⁴⁶ A.H. DE O. MARQUES, *Introdução à história da agricultura em Portugal*, cit., pp. 89, 166.

⁴⁷ *Nova História de Portugal*, J. SERRÃO, A. H. de O. MARQUES eds., I-XII, Lisbon 1987 (Editorial Presença), IV, pp. 40-44; W. CHILDS, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West*, cit., p. 107.

⁴⁸ A. H. DE O. MARQUES, *Hansa e Portugal na Idade Média*, cit., pp. 100-109.

⁴⁹ A. J. GSCHWEND, K.J.P. LOWE, *The Global City. On the Streets of Renaissance Lisbon*, London 2015 (Paul Holberton Publishing).

⁵⁰ Our translation. from D. de GÓIS, *Descrição da cidade de Lisboa*, J. da F. Alves ed., Lisbon 2001 (Livros Horizonte), p. 50.

⁵¹ A. C. CARDOSO, *Os livros de contas do mercador Michele da Colle (1462-63)*, cit., pp. 47-48.

⁵² M. LEME, *Os Lemes - Um percurso familiar de Bruges a Malaca*, in “Sapiens: História, Património e Arqueologia”, 0, 2008, pp. 51-83, 45-48.

⁵³ F. GUIDI-BRUSCOLI, *Bartolomeo Marchionni*, cit., p. 26.

The settlement of groups of foreigners in Lisbon brought changes to the social and religious life of the city, and, ultimately, to the city's landscape. In the late thirteenth century, the Germans founded a brotherhood dedicated to St. Bartholomew; in 1414 the Flemings established a chapel dedicated to the Apostles (or the Holy Cross) and the Chapel of St. Andrew; in 1471 the English founded the Chapel of St. Dominic; whereas the Italians dedicated theirs, in 1518, to Our Lady of Loreto – the latter of which is still standing.⁵⁴

Alongside the existence of communities and places of worship, foreign merchants also established profitable collaborations with Portuguese Jews. Fleming merchant Maarten Lem, Lombard Lomellini and the Florentine Marchionni, for instance, all partnered up with Jewish businessmen Isaac Abravanel, Guedelha Palaçano and Moisés Latam. They all orbited around the crown and the royal family, providing banking services and partnerships in commerce.⁵⁵

Although foreign merchants encountered a favourable environment for their socioeconomic life and professional activities in Lisbon, they were not immune to hindrances and opposition to their presence in the Portuguese capital. The way these foreigners infiltrated the productive and distributive sectors of the city with their tentacles of economic power caused producers and merchants alike enormous discomfort. Robust merchant companies operating in Portugal took advantage of commercial privileges auctioned by the crown, seizing control over the production and distribution of many commodities. As a result, smaller traders – especially those who were Portuguese – would be excluded from profitable businesses. Perhaps used as a mechanism for financing public debt, the crown granted individual merchants or merchant companies monopoly over, for example, alum, coral, cork, hides, kermes, orchil, silk, soap, sugar, and woad.⁵⁶ Merchants channelled their dissatisfaction of these monopolies into parliamentary debates. In 1446, at the *Cortes*, the king heard butchers complaining that the monopoly on the trading of ox hides in Lisbon allowed the Genoese to buy the commodity below fair value. Nine years later, the problem persisted, and the butchers complained to the king once again, saying that the monopoly now granted to the Genoese and the Florentine traders did not allow freely to negotiate the hides to the highest bidder, and that this business was not profitable to them butchers nor to the crown. This time, the king replied by saying that his hands were tied, since the crown still owed the Italians money from his sister's wedding to Emperor Frederick III in 1452 – the Genoese

⁵⁴ A.H. DE O. MARQUES, *Hansa e Portugal na Idade Média*, cit., p. 100; W. CHILDS, *Trade and Shipping in the Medieval West*, cit., p. 119; N. ALESSANDRINI, *La chiesa di Nostra Signora di Loreto e la Nazione Italiana di Lisbona (sec. XVI-XVIII)*, in *Chiesa di Nostra Signora di Loreto 1518-2018. Una chiesa italiana in terra portoghese*, N. ALESSANDRINI, T. BARTOLOMEI, eds., Lisbon 2018 (Fábrica da Igreja Italiana de Nossa Senhora do Loreto), pp. 180-93, 181.

⁵⁵ M.J.F. TAVARES, *Os judeus em Portugal no século XV*, I, Lisbon 1980 (Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda), p. 280.

⁵⁶ An article on monopolies and public debt in late medieval Portugal is currently under preparation by the authors.

and Florentine merchants having lent the crown money to pay for Leonor's dowry.⁵⁷ Restrictions on the trading of hides remained until the early sixteenth century.

The production and trading of cork also led to intense debates with the king. In 1456, Afonso V granted a monopoly on cork to Flemish merchant Maarten Lem and Genoese merchant Marco Lomellini for a period of ten years. Almost two decades later, in 1475, in the *Cortes* of Évora, representatives of the urban councils addressed petitions to the king wherein they complained that it made no sense for the crown to concede monopolies on things God had given them for free – to produce cork all they had to do was go out and collect it from cork trees. Notwithstanding the arguments presented, the king rejected the petition to put an end to the monopoly by saying that it was more lucrative for the kingdom this way.⁵⁸

These kinds of complaints extended to other commodities, such as kermes and silk. Those operating outside the monopolies tried all sorts of arguments and legal approaches to overcome what they considered to be a significant problem. Unable to compete against the rich foreign merchants, representatives of the people in the *Cortes* of 1481/82 petitioned the king to decree the immediate expulsion of all foreign traders operating in Portugal.⁵⁹ Since none of the foreign merchants got expelled from Portugal, the king surely ignored their request.

Whether because of institutional inefficacy or some sort of animosity towards foreigners, customs houses in Portugal quite often created hindrances to foreign merchants. On a couple of occasions, English and German merchants submitted petitions to the king and urban councils complaining that sometimes customs officials robbed their commodities, reserved them for sale at a lower price to certain individuals without their authorisation, and even ignored them when they knocked on the door of the customs office during working hours.⁶⁰ The Germans, for instance, protested against unfair treatment, since customs officials charged them three to four times more than what Portuguese merchants would pay.⁶¹ On another occasion, the English also criticised the business relationship they had with the Portuguese Jews. In 1454, they claimed that the Jews were indeed their best clients for the cloth trade, but that they rarely paid their debts on time, which caused some animosity between them.⁶²

To what extent these examples show the integration of foreigners – or the opposite – is very hard to distinguish. From a certain point of view, the mercantile cosmopolitanism of Lisbon was not much different from that of Bruges in the mid-fifteenth century. The crown, the city and society seemed open enough to the idea

⁵⁷ H. DA G. BARROS, *História da administração pública em Portugal nos séculos XII a XV*, cit., IX, pp. 265-68; J. SEQUEIRA, *Comprar, organizar e expedir*, cit., pp. 131-32.

⁵⁸ See A. ANDRADE, F. MIRANDA, *Lisbon. Trade, Urban Power and the King's Visible Hand*, cit., p. 341.

⁵⁹ ARQUIVO NACIONAL DA TORRE DO TOMBO (ANTT), *Cortes*, m. 3, n. 5.

⁶⁰ See the examples given in A. ANDRADE, F. MIRANDA, *Lisbon. Trade, Urban Power and the King's Visible Hand*, cit., pp. 346-347.

⁶¹ J. DA S. MARQUES ed., *Descobrimientos Portugueses. Documentos para a sua História*, cit., supl. vol. 1, 356 and ff.

⁶² M.J.F. TAVARES, *Os judeus em Portugal no século XV*, cit., I, p. 296.

of welcoming foreigners and one can very rarely find (unsuccessful) attempts to hinder their presence in the kingdom.

CONCLUSION

In the mid-sixteenth century, chronicler Damião de Góis wrote that Lisbon was one of two cities in the world that, from its port, was capable of summoning the Atlantic, Africa and Asia in a huge embrace.⁶³ This was not merely a matter of geographical determinism, the fact that the city was well located between the north of Europe and the Mediterranean, or between Europe and Africa. It was mostly a statement buttressed on the fact that the city had a good port, shipping infrastructures (shipbuilding, merchant ships, warehouses), royal protection for foreign merchants, quality commodities at a low cost, and novelty products (from the Atlantic islands and Western Africa). In addition, merchants could find a good number of conspicuous consumers in Lisbon, mostly amongst the members of the court and clergy. For most of the Middle Ages, merchants found Lisbon to have an open, culturally diverse environment created by the relatively peaceful coexistence between different cultural and religious groups. The cases of opposition towards foreigners and Jewish merchants mentioned earlier in this chapter are not significant enough for one to argue that there was a lack of tolerance in Lisbon. What existed was, of course, economic competition between merchants. All of this contributed, nonetheless, to the positioning of Lisbon at the centre-stage of multiple commercial systems, and to making it one of the first global cities.

Late-medieval European integration, as discussed in the introduction to this essay, is rather different from the integration that came about through the European Union in the twentieth century. However, if the mobility of merchants and their commodities did contribute, in any way, to its primeval existence in the late Middle Ages, Lisbon was surely at the forefront of this development. However, the following centuries would bring more disintegration than integration in Portugal – with the expulsion of the Jews, the Muslims, the rise of the Inquisition, and, of course, the rise of slavery.

⁶³ The other was Seville. D. DE GÓIS, *Urbis Olisiponis Descriptio*, Lisbon 2002 (Guimarães Editores), p. 83.

Gelina Harlaftis

*Black Sea and its Maritime Networks, 1770s-1820s.
The Beginnings of Its European Integration*

The approach of the “Black Sea history” introduces in the historical studies of southeastern Europe, the History of the Sea and/or Maritime Economic History, which during the last twenty years has taken off internationally along with Global History and Global Economic History.¹ Up to the present day there is a very limited number of studies on the history of the Black Sea as a whole, on its port-cities, or on its peoples.² Some are voyage accounts of reporters that travel through the nations of the area.³ The histories that exist are mainly political, cultural or environmental histories with the state or the region as the unit of research.⁴ They all carry out insightful studies but the sea is either invisible or just part of the scenery. The usual way is to have fragmented histories squeezed in political borders and regions that expand and contract according to political struggles.

¹ G. HARLAFTIS, *Maritime History or the History of thalassa*, in *The New Ways of History*, G. HARLAFTIS, N. KARAPIDAKIS, K. SBONIAS, V. VAIPOULOS eds., London 2009 (IB Tauris), pp. 211-238.

² The only holistic academic approach is by CH. KING, *The Black Sea. A History*, Oxford-New York 2004, mainly a political and social history, that has certainly turned its back to the sea. Most of the works on the Black Sea as a unit are either for the ancient times on archaeology or for the very recent times on strategy, security and natural resources. Few works study Black Sea history during the eighteenth to the early twentieth as a whole or parts of it as a unit of research. See E.Y. ÖZVEREN, *A Framework for the Study of the Black Sea World, 1789-1915*, “Review”, 20, 1997, 1, pp. 77-113; *Europe and the Black Sea Region. A History of Early Knowledge Exchange (1750-1850)*, D. GUTMEYR, K. KASER eds., Zurich 2018 (Lit Verlag). There are very few studies for Black Sea port cities. See for example P. HERLIHY, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914*, Harvard 1986 (Harvard University Press); Ç. KEYDER, E.Y. ÖZVEREN, D. QUATAERT, *Port-Cities in the Ottoman Empire: Some Theoretical and Historical Perspectives*, “Review”, 16, 1993, n. 4, *Port-Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean 1800-1914*, pp. 519-558. There are more on its people or on diaspora groups. See for example, A. FISHER, *Between Russians, Ottomans and Turks: Crimea and Crimean Tatars*, Istanbul 1998 (The Isis Press); *Οι Έλληνες της Αζοφικής. Νέες προσεγγίσεις στην ιστορία των Ελλήνων στη Νότιο Ρωσία [The Greeks of the Azov, 18th-beginning of 20th century. New approaches to the history of the Greeks in South Russia]*, E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS eds., Athens 2015, (Hellenic National Foundation). The above literature is far from exhaustive. There is a rich literature, mostly from a national or ethnic perspective and on local languages. See www.blacksea.gr.

³ N. ASCHERSON, *Black Sea*, London 1995.

⁴ See for example A. KAPPELER, *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History* 2001, (Longman); *Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700-930*, J. BURBANK, M. VON HAGEN, A. REMNEV eds., Bloomington and Indianapolis 2007, (Indiana University Press); *Religions and migrations in the Black Sea region*, E. SIDERI, ELENI, L.E. ROUPAKIA eds., Cham, Switzerland 2017 (Palgrave Macmillan); There is also work on cultural and environmental history: C.E. CORDOVA, *Crimea and the Black Sea: an environmental history*, London 2016, (IB Tauris); I. BELLÉR-HANN, C.M. HANN, *Turkish region: state, market & social identities on the east Black Sea coast*, Oxford 2000 (James Currey).

From the last third of the eighteenth century to the early twentieth century the Black Sea coastal line witnessed an unprecedented commercial revolution as it was transformed to an international market with global linkages with the Mediterranean sea, the northern European seas, the Atlantic and the Indian ocean. Despite its importance, the Black Sea region is barely included in the discourse of the economic and social history as neither its qualitative or quantitative history is really known to the wider or specialist public of the West. The gap in our knowledge and weak academic communication of scholars in historical studies within the Black Sea countries, has come to fill the interdisciplinary and inter-university project “The Black Sea and its port-cities, 1774-1914. Development, convergence and linkages with the global economy” that run from 2012 to 2015 and has uncovered a large pool of archival resources from all countries.⁵

The Black Sea to many historians is no more than a geographical term. A sea excluded from international trade until 1770s, developed its sea trade and maritime networks in an unprecedented rate to become in the next 150 years the largest grain producer of the world, supplying western European populations during the era of industrial revolution. In 1770 there was no big city on its western, northern and eastern coastline apart from Keffe in Crimea. The only old, century-long, cities were in the south coastline, in the present day Turkey, particularly in the Pontic area, from Sinop to Trabzon. This changed within a few decades. From 1770s more than 24 port-cities mushroomed in the coastline of the Black Sea attracting hundreds of thousands of immigrants mainly from central and southeastern Europe. The Black Sea coastline became a “a land of prosperity” for these immigrants, what the United States became one hundred years later.

The Black Sea, became centre of attraction for economic immigration from the whole region of central and south-eastern Europe. Its port-cities, became cosmopolitan places, “melting pots” of ethnic minorities: Russians, Greeks, Tatars, Ukrainians, Polish, Bulgarians, Germans, Jews, Armenians. A sea monopolized by the Ottoman Empire until 1770s, opened to the world within the framework of Russian colonization in its northern and eastern coasts and Romanian and

⁵ This project was included in the Action “Thales”, financed by the Greek National Strategic Reference Framework, the E.U. and the Greek Ministry of Education. The project was led by the Department of History of the Ionian University, with the author as co-ordinator, a collaboration, on a national level, with the University of Crete, the National Hellenic Research Foundation, the Institute for Mediterranean Studies-FORTH, the University of Thessaly and the University of the Aegean. On an international level, it collaborated with 23 academic institutions – Universities, Research Institutes and Archives – from the Black Sea countries, that is Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia, as well as from Moldavia, Norway, Italy, Israel and the United States. The collaborating group consisted of the following academic institutions: Boğaziçi University, Bilkent University, Düzce University and 19 May University from Turkey, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Varna University from Bulgaria, “Dunarea De Jos” University of Galati from Romania, Moldavian Academy of Sciences from Moldavia, State Archives of Odessa, State Archives of Nikolayev, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, University of Berdyansk, University of Mariupol and University of Kharkov from Ukraine, Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow), Southern Russia Academy of Sciences (Rostov-on-Don), State Russian University of Human Studies, European University of St. Petersburg and State University of St. Petersburg from Russia, Elia State University (Tbilisi) from Georgia, Jerusalem University from Israel, Southern State Connecticut University from U.S.A and Maritime Museum of Bergen from Norway. For the books and databases of the Black Sea port-cities see www.blacksea.gr.

Bulgarian nationalization in the western one. Main agents of economic integration in all port cities proved to be the mobile groups of the so-called people of the classic diaspora like the Greeks, Jews and Armenians, as well as those of other central European groups. It was these mobile entrepreneurial groups that undertook the control of external trade and shipping and those that developed maritime and commercial networks and the linkages to the western European economy. The linkages to the West triggered development and convergence of regional markets in the global economy.

This paper examines the first 50 transitional years of a sea of isolation to a sea of internationalization. It provides analytical tools to reveal the mechanisms of how this was done. To do so it places in the centre of the analysis the sea. By using the approach of maritime history, an analysis beyond political borders, it follows the glance from the sea and its effects on land. In this way it examines the shipping movements of cargoes and people *on the sea* and the development and impact of this development *around the sea*, on the Black Sea maritime regions, the port cities that grew and the entrepreneurs that triggered this growth and established its maritime networks.

To that end, the **first** section of the paper will indicate the approach to the analysis of the Black Sea history. Although all regions will be briefly analyzed the first maritime region that developed international export activities, the northern coast, will be more closely examined. The **second** section will examine movements on the sea. This section will present the rising importance and consolidation of Ottoman and Venetian/Greeks as main sea carriers and traders of the Black Sea in the last third of the eighteenth century, beginning of the nineteenth century. The **third** section analyses the developments around the sea. It brings out the commercial revolution of the northern coast during the period under examination, and focuses at the Russian port cities and their overall development. The **fourth** section examines the importance of foreign traders at the northern coast that built up international trading houses with large entrepreneurial networks that proved pivotal in developing its maritime networks and integration of the Black Sea in the European economy.

1. BLACK SEA HISTORY: AN APPROACH

How do we approach the history of the sea? How does one trace continuity and change in the history of the sea? It is of course what man did **on the sea** (ships, seamen, navigation, seacade, war, piracy); **around the sea** (port cities, islands, maritime communities, shipping businesses), **in the sea** (fishing, maritime resources); **because of the sea** (maritime empires, international maritime institutions and policy) and **about the sea** (the myths and poems of a sea, impact of the sea on the art, maritime culture).⁶ How does then man affect the path of

⁶ G. HARLAFTIS, *What is Maritime History*, in "First International Symposium, In memoriam Skip Fischer, 25-26 April 2018, Centre of Maritime History, Institute for Mediterranean Studies-FORTH", under publication in the "International Journal of Maritime History" 2019.

history at land from the sea? We shall look at the first two dimensions to trace the maritime networks of the Black Sea.

On the sea, history has been seen through maritime voyages, explorations through the structure of the sea. Sailing on the sea and discovering the sea routes, the winds, the currents, the safe anchorages, the depths, the rocks, the islands, the sandbanks, the ice, has not been the concern of most of historians. It has been considered self evident. The discovery of navigating a water mass, however, has been the outcome of a knowledge of decades, centuries and has meant the sacrifice of hundreds, of thousands of seafarers. Maritime voyages, exploration and establishment of maritime empires determine change in and around a sea/ocean disturbing its continuity. The Venetians and the Genoese developed their maritime empires in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea before the 15th century, the Portuguese in the Indian ocean, the Spaniards in the Atlantic in the 16th century, the Dutch in the 17th century and the British after. Maritime empires were a European act and characterize the history of the expansion of Europeans in all seas and oceans. The Black Sea has some peculiarities. It was a limited sea and no grand voyages are known apart from its ancient mythical voyage by the ancient Greeks, that of the ship *Argo* with its seamen, the Argonauts, that went to a far away land of prosperity to grab its wealth, the golden fleece. Colonialism of its coastal area after the Genoese and the Venetians, however, came from land powers after the 15th century, the Ottomans from the South (15th to the eighteenth century) and the Russians from the North and the East (eighteenth to twentieth centuries).

The Ancient Greeks named the Black Sea with a euphemism, Euxine Pontus, which means a Hospitable sea or a sea friendly to strangers, meaning exactly the opposite. The Black Sea, Mare Nero of the Venetians and the Genoese, the Kara Deniz of the Ottomans, the Chernoe More of the Russians, the Schwarzes Meer of the Austrians is said to have taken its name of its waters subject to storms although to many seafarers navigation in the Black Sea was much easier than that in the Aegean, as it is free of islands and rocks. Its longest width from the western coast to the eastern one is 627 miles, and its greatest length from Odessa to the southern coast is 333 miles. The narrowest passage between North and South is from the southern coast to Crimea, where it does not exceed 144 miles.⁷ It connects with the Mediterranean by the straits (Bosporus, the sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles) and on its north-east it connects with the Sea of Azov with Kerch straits.

To reach the Black Sea was the desire of Russian monarchs since the 17th century. The change of the number, type, nationality of vessels on the sea came from developments at the northern coast of the Black Sea, a sea described until then as an "Ottoman lake". This was the result of the Russian geopolitical and economic strategy for colonial expansion and economic power that began from the time of Peter the Great and was consolidated during the reign of Catherine II. Furthermore, Russia's colonial policy in the South can be seen in the wider context of the Eastern Question and Russia's attempt to provide, as a great European power, 'protection' to a select minority of the Ottoman Empire with the aim of expanding its influence into the neighbouring state. The geopolitical activities of

⁷ *The Black Sea Pilot*, London 1884 (Hydrographic Office, Admiralty), third edition, p. 1.

Russia have been described as that of “two crabs probing the claws of the Ottoman crab in the Danubian and Caucasian sectors and steadily pushing it back”.⁸ The ascension of Catherine the Great to the throne spurred further the expansionist policy of the Empire that witnessed some of its great victories in the two Russo-Ottoman wars of 1768-1774 and 1787-1792 by which they acquired the “New Russia” or Novorossiia, and a great frontage to the Black Sea which covered its northern and northeastern coast. Catherine gave priority to the Black Sea: that involved the so-called Greek plan by which it was conceived that Russia should help the Christians in the Balkans and Greece, seek free navigation in the Black Sea and advance to Constantinople.⁹

Still, in the 1770s and 1780s when the Russians pushed in the Black Sea, the area was still *terra incognita*. The history of the Black Sea has been marked by its geographic antithesis: its extremely narrow passage in the south (the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and Bosphorus) that connects to the rest of the seas and oceans and its vast hinterland in the north that made it an “avenue” between Asia and Europe. And the Sea, is after all, a difficult one. The navigator needs landmarks at sea to see his way. The peaks of the mountains or hills, islands or capes with lighthouses are excellent “route-marks” that guide the seafarers. The lack of mountains, however, on the vicinity of the sea in the west and northern coast (see Map 1) along the scarcity of good anchorages causes problems to navigation. The navigator of the Black Sea should know well its shores to approach them. Only in Crimea there are recognizable mountains, in the eastern Caucasian coast and in the southern coast with the easily recognizable mountains (Map 1).

The sea “is short and troublesome” according to the British pilots and is difficult to enter from the Bosphorus. A large number of long and big rivers have their mouths in the Black Sea, in the northwest, the Danube, Bug, Dniester and Dnieper, while in the Azov the river Don. The rivers are frozen for 3-4 months and the melting of the ice during spring causes strong currents to the sea. One of the strongest currents comes from the straits of Kerch caused by the river Don; it heads to the Crimea, it meets with the waters of Bug, Dniester and Dnieper and unites southward with that of the Danube towards the Bosphorus. This combined with strong northerly winds makes entrance to the Black Sea very difficult. Lack of wind off the coast of Crimea, for example, produces equally great problems as the currents drive the vessel off the coast which can make long boards out to the open sea without being able to approach the shore for days.¹⁰ North-easterly winds bring clear weather and cold in winters, while north-westerly winds bring fog and moist weather; both winds were good usually for sailing vessels. The steady northerly winds, instead, often caused tens of vessels to pass weeks waiting for the wind to change in the Dardanelles and in the Bosphorus in order to be able to enter the sea.

⁸ J.P. LE DONNE, *Geopolitics, Logistics and Grain: Russia's Ambitions in the Black Sea Basin, 1737-1834*, in “International History Review”, 28, 2006, n. 1, pp. 1-41.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

Map 1. The geography of the Black Sea and its port cities



To enter the Black Sea one has to go through the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus. Navigation through them was (and still is) a complex and difficult operation during the time of sail.¹¹ The Straits are 40 miles long, varying from three quarters of a mile to two miles in width, with a strong current always running through to the south, at a rate of 2 to 4 miles an hour. The wind that often blows to the same direction proved a great hurdle for sailing ships that wanted to proceed to the north towards the Black Sea and they frequently had to wait at the entrance to the Straits. Access from the Black Sea ports to the northern side of the Straits could prove even more ominous. The flat and rugged coast could become very dangerous in conditions of fog, when the Master could not locate the passage. Signals and life-saving boats were of little help in sailing the Straits. But lack of wind is an even worse enemy to the sailing ship. To help these vessels to proceed, the inhabitants of some villages at the entrance of the Dardanelles, had boats or barges led by tow horses against the stream.¹²

¹¹ For a thorough analysis on the navigation of the Black Sea see A. DELIS, *Navigating perilous waters: routes and hazards of the voyages to Black Sea in the 19th century* in *Linkages of the Black Sea with the West. Trade and immigration*, M.C. CHATZIOANNOU, A. DELIS eds., Corfu, forthcoming, (Black Sea Working Papers, www.blacksea.gr), volume 7.

¹² *Sailing Directions for the Euxine or Black Sea and the Seas of Marmora and Azov; embracing also the navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus*, London, 1853, (James Imray), p. 2.

Map 2. The four Black Sea maritime regions



The Black Sea consists from the articulation of many maritime regions that share a common hinterland and characteristics. Using the concept of “region” from economic geography, I have distinguished four maritime regions in the Black Sea. By the first third of the nineteenth century in the four maritime regions four main transport systems developed to serve the needs of the sea transport of short and long distances with maritime networks within, between and beyond the maritime regions (Map 2).

The **first** maritime region that the sailing vessel found entering was the western coast of the Black Sea. In the southwestern coast Varna and Burgas developed later as the main ports and the northwestern maritime region of the Black Sea that includes mainly the ports of the Danube, Galatz and Braila, and Costantza.¹³ In 1800s the American navigating guidelines wrote that there were no safe ports during the winter on the western coast of the Black Sea.¹⁴ When the vessel passed from the present day Bulgarian coast, from Agathopoli (Akteboli or Aktarpolee) the Master could distinguish the remarkable mountains at the distance behind, the little harbor of Vassiliko to reach the gulf of Burgas which is the only part of the western coast of the Black Sea with good anchorages. The sailing ship heading north passes from Sozopol to Messembria before reaching Varna and further on the Baljik bay with a good anchorage.¹⁵ When Captain Yannakis from Mesembria entered the Black Sea on 2 May 1794 from Constantinople with his caique and a crew of six ,heading for Russian ports he knew his whereabouts, as he carried the coastal trade

¹³ *Port-Cities of the western shore of the Black Sea: Economic and Social Development, 18th-early 20th centuries*, C. ARDELEANU, A. LYBERATOS eds., Corfu 2017, (Black Sea Working Papers, www.blacksea.gr), volume 1.

¹⁴ H.A.S. DEARBORN, *A memoir on the commerce*, vol. 2, 14.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 14-24.

of the western coast for a long time.¹⁶ The coast from Vassiliko to Baljick had a substantial local fleet engaged in the Black Sea trade as it was serving for centuries the coastal trade to Constantinople. This area was only integrated in the international sea trade with the West in the second half of the nineteenth century.

When Captain Thodoris from Hydra entered the Black Sea on 1st of June 1782 with his ship (of a type called *Çamlıca*) he headed for the Danube.¹⁷ A “road” sign to the entrance of the Danube is an island, two miles long and half a mile broad; the Serpent’s island, which the modern Greeks called “Fidonisi”, and the ancient Greeks Lefki (The White). The Danube has three mouths which are blocked by extensive sand banks. Sulina is the middle entrance to the Danube, but it still had many problems of navigation as vessels were unable to proceed up the river loaded, and had to be unloaded to lighters, called *schleps*. With contrary winds the passage upriver could take a month or more. The main ports of the area were river ports, Braila and Galatz, both insignificant villages that after the 1820s grew to become vibrant cities, centres of grain exports later in the nineteenth century. Flats in the river which impeded navigation in the Sulina branch later were removed by the European Commission that was formed after the Crimean war. Even so, the river was always subject to change and new shoals often formed. From the Kilia mouth of the Danube there were only 80 miles to Odessa.

The **second** maritime region covers the port-cities of the northern coast of the Black Sea, Odessa, Kherson, Nikolayev, Evpatoria, Sebastopol and Theodosia (Map 3).¹⁸ Heading to Odessa was also a clear navigation from the Bosphorus. The city, was only a fort called Kodjabey. Approaching Kodjabey was tricky as travelers of the time reported. Between the Danube and the Dnieper the shore is low and difficult to distinguish. Off the gulf there were variations of depth “which might sometimes cause great uneasiness to the seaman in thick weather”.¹⁹ Sailing vessels need depth and the masters had to make sure that they were in good distance from

¹⁶ OTTOMAN ARCHIVES OF PRIME MINISTRY, Divan-i Hümayun Kataloğu İzn-i Sefine (A.DVNS.İZN.d), vol. 1. The information is found in the database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*, Research Programme “History of Greek Shipping, 1700-1821”, entrepreneurial project “Pythagoras P”, Ionian University, financed by the Greek Ministry of Education/EU 2004-2006, www.marehist.gr. The research project co-ordinated by Gelina Harlaftis at Ionian University, was made from a team of twenty researchers that carried out combined research in twenty-five Archives in seventeen cities and towns: Istanbul, Venice, Trieste, Malta, Messina, Naples, Livorno, Genoa, Marseilles, London and Amsterdam, along with those of Athens, Thessaloniki, Herakleion, Corfu, Cephalonia and Hydra. *Amphitrite* includes Ottoman Greek and Venetian Greek ships in Mediterranean ports from 1700-1821.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*. For types of ships during this era see A. DELIS, *Τύποι πλοίων της ναυτιλίας των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821* [Types of Ships of Greek Shipping, 1700-1821] in *Η ναυτιλία των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821* [Greek Shipping, 1700-1821. The Heyday before the Greek Revolution], G. HARLAFTIS, K. PAPAΚONSTANTINOY eds., Athens 2013 (Kedros Publications), pp. 469-540.

¹⁸ For this area there are three books from the Black Sea project: the first one is *Port-Cities of the northern shore of the Black Sea: Institutional, Economic and Social Development, 18th-early 20th Centuries*, E. SIFNEOS, O. IURKOVA, V. SHANDRA eds., Corfu, forthcoming, (Black Sea History Working Papers, www.blacksea.gr), forthcoming, volume 2; the second one by E. SIFNEOS, *Imperial Odessa: Peoples, Spaces, Identities*, Leiden 2017 (Brill); the third one by A. SYDORENKO, *The economic and social development of the Crimean city-ports during the second half of the 19th century*, unpublished ph.D. thesis 2017 (Department of History, Ionian University).

¹⁹ *The Black Sea Pilot*, cit., p. 33.

the shore in order to have the secure depth. Odessa, 31 km north of the estuary of the Dniester river at other western end of the northern coast, established in 1794, grew out to become the largest port-city not only of the area but of the total Black Sea. In 1800 it was not so, however. Henry Dearborn wrote “the coast offers but few places favourable for landing. The country is devoid of trees and very flat...The road to Kodjabey nearly equi-distant between the mouths of the Dnieper and the Dniester, is safe for men of war. There is a light house, a small fort and two villages there.”²⁰ The city developed amazingly quickly. Situated upon a hill, which descends rather abruptly towards the sea it was easily spotted by the 1820s where port infrastructure was well provided, with moles, breakwater mooring buoys etc. It developed maritime connections with western European port cities from its very inception. Captain Panagis Kourtellis from the island of Cephalonia with his ship named “S. Michel” arrived from Odessa to Genova on 9 April 1802 with 3,500 Ottoman kilos of grain. It took him two months to reach Genova with a crew of 11.²¹ Equally, captain Stathis Petalas Maratos from the island of Ithaca with his ship “Penelope”, a polacca, reached Livorno from Odessa in 17 April 1803 along with tens of other Ionian vessels. It took him three months to reach Livorno coming from Odessa having passed firstly from the islands of Ithaca, Corfu and Paxoi. Captain Stathis carried a Russian flag on his ship so probably he or some relative of his was established either in Odessa or Taganrog.²²

Kodjabey that became later Odessa, was finally chosen by Russian officials after twenty years of trial and error as to the choice of the best site for a big port city. They first promoted the sites in the end of the waterways of Dnieper and Southern Bug. Russian officials firstly promoted Kherson (founded in 1778) on the river Dnieper, 3 miles upriver from its estuary (guarded by the fort of Ochakov), on the right bank of the Dnieper, and Nikolayev (founded in 1789) 20 miles from its mouth on the junction of the Inhul river (tributary of Southern Bug) and Southern Bug. All this area, next to the Moldavian and Polish borders profited from the fertile hinterland and the navigable waterways.

Kherson on the western part of the northern coast was the first port to develop.²³ On the other eastern end Taganrog was the other port that developed during this time. On 5 October 1784 the Ottoman Greek Captain Dimitris from the Aegean island of Psara entered the Black Sea heading for Kherson with his ship (of the type *çertik*) and a crew of 16.²⁴ The return from Kherson to Constantinople

²⁰ H.A.S. DEARBORN, *A memoir on the commerce and navigation of the Black Sea, and the trade and maritime geography of Turkey and Egypt*, Boston 1819, vol. 2, p. 5.

²¹ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI GENOVA, Ufficio di Sanità Arrivi di Capitani e Padroni, 1684, database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*, Research Programme “History of Greek Shipping, 1700-1821”, entrepreneurial project “Pythagoras I”, Ionian University, financed by the Greek Ministry of Education/EU 2004-2006, www.marchist.gr.

²² ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI LIVORNO, Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità Maritima, 704/186r in database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*.

²³ V. KONSTANTINOVA, I. LYMAN, *Kherson, the City of «the Glorious Past»* in *Port-Cities of the northern shore of the Black Sea*, cit., vol. 2

²⁴ OTTOMAN ARCHIVES OF PRIME MINISTRY, A.DVNS.İZN.d, vol.1 in database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*.

“may be effected, with a good north wind, in sixty hours; that from Taganrog requires five or six days” wrote in the 1810s a contemporary.²⁵

Nikolayev situated on the right bank of the Southern Bug became the arsenal of the Russian Navy after the Order of Duke Potemkin of August 27, 1789 which says: “[from now on], a new shipyard on the Ingul should be called the city of Nikolayev.” Nikolayev was excluded from international commerce as Duke Potemkin regarded Nikolayev to be “a grand admiralty and the cradle of the new Russian Black Sea fleet.” From Nikolayev the local products were delivered by cabotage to Odessa and other ports on the Black Sea as well as to the Podolia Gubernia, Polish Kingdom and inner parts of the Russian Empire. However, despite the favourable conditions for the port development, a serious natural obstacle was the shallowness of waters of the only entrance to both ports from the side of the Black Sea through the Ochakov Bar and the Dnieper-Bug estuary.²⁶ Odessa then, superseded both Kherson and Nikolayev and became a pole of attraction, apart from Russians, for the ubiquitous Greeks who numbered among its first arrivals, along with the Serbs, the Bulgarians, the Germans, the Jews, the Italians, and very few French and British.

After the final conquest of Crimea, a number of ports were established for commercial and strategic reasons, as the Crimean ports had the advantage of never freezing. Evpatoria and Sebastopol were established in 1783, while the old city of Theodosia, (the Caffa of the Genoese and Keffe of the Ottomans) retook its Byzantine name. The Crimea is a peninsula that extends about 180 miles from east to west and 100 miles from north to south. The ports however, remained as intermediate transit ports serving the northwestern and northeastern areas. The ports were also directly connected with the West: Captain Andrea Voco of Dimitri (known as Miaoulis, a hero of the Greek Revolution twenty years later) from the Aegean island of Hydra, on 20 October 1803 arrived to Genova coming from Sebastopol with his large nava *Achille* and a crew of 54.²⁷

Evpatoria or Koslov was an intermediate port, an easy anchorage for smaller vessels; from Odessa eastwards, could be easily seen from the large dome of its mosque.²⁸ Further south, Sebastopol, had an excellent geostrategic position, about 160 miles from Odessa, from the mouth of the Danube, and from Sinope.²⁹ With an excellent port Sebastopol was opened for “all the nations being on friendly terms with the Empire, and having an advantage of trading with our subjects” by the Manifest of February 22, 1784 signed by Catherine II. In 1785 all the wharves in Crimea, including Sebastopol, were exempted from customs fees for five years starting January I, 1786. However, according to Catherine II’s Decree of May 27,

²⁵ H.A.S. DEARBORN, *A memoir on the commerce*, vol. 2.

²⁶ L. LEVCHENKO, *The Nikolayev International Port: An economic history, late 18th-early 20th centuries in Port-Cities of the northern shore of the Black Sea*, cit., vol. 2.

²⁷ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI GENOVA, *Ufficio di Sanita Arrivi di Capitani e Padroni*, 1686, database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*.

²⁸ *The Black Sea Pilot*, cit., p. 51.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

1794, Sebastopol became a Naval base for the Russian fleet interchanging this role with Nikolayev in the course of the following decades.³⁰

The **third** maritime region includes the eastern coast of the Black Sea. It is subdivided into two maritime regions, that of the Azov Sea, including the port-cities of Kerch, Berdyansk, Mariupol, Taganrog and Rostov-on-Don, and the southeastern maritime region of the eastern coast of the Black Sea, including the port-cities of Novorossiysk and Batoum (that developed later in the nineteenth century). On 4 October 1784 Captain Giorgakis from Mykonos with his ship (of a *geç* type) and a crew of 11 seamen entered the Black Sea heading for Taganrog.³¹ From Kerch strait to the Don is about 160 miles.³² Near the main mouth of the Don river lies the town of Taganrog. The shallowness of its roadstead meant that the anchorage ground used by large sailing ships is about 25 miles from the port. All communication with the shore was carried out by oared boats and lighters.³³ “Peter’s forepost”, was one of the first established in 1698 and coming in and out of Russian jurisdiction until 1774 when it became definitively part of the Russian Empire. Taganrog received a large number of Greek immigrants.³⁴ A second wave of immigrants arrived between 1780s and 1810s in Taganrog and in the lists of the Greek Magistrate of the town for 1795 to 1804, there were about 600 registered Greek merchants. At about the same period the Greek population, mainly from the Ionian and the Aegean islands consisted of about 1600 individuals, an exceptionally high number given the small size of the city (7,000).³⁵ The Azov Sea, regarded as a lake attached to the Black Sea, continued to be the first area to attract immigrants. Mariupol, established in 1771 on river Calmius received in 1778 a population of 10,000 Greeks from Crimea in a forced immigration by the Russians³⁶. New Nahichevan very near (merged later to Rostov on the Don established in 1768) received a population of 10,000 Armenians, also in a forced population movement from Crimea.³⁷

³⁰ L. LEVCHENKO, *The Nikolayev International Port*, cit.

³¹ OTTOMAN ARCHIVES OF PRIME MINISTRY, A.DVNS.İZN.d, volume 1, in database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*.

³² *The Black Sea Pilot*, cit.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

³⁴ E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS, *The Greeks of the Azov* cit.

³⁵ STATE ARCHIVES OF THE ROSTOV OBLAST (GARO), f. 579, op. 3, d. 2, ‘Lists of merchants, petit bourgeois and foreigners, 1795-1802 and 1803-1804 of the Greek Magistrate’. See also E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS, *Entrepreneurship at the Russian Frontier of International Trade. The Greek Merchant Community/Paroikia of Taganrog in the Sea of Azov, 1780s-1830s in Merchant ‘Colonies’ in the Early Modern Period (15th-18th Centuries)*, V. ZAKHAROV, G. HARLAFTIS, O. KATSIARDI-HERING eds., London 2012, (Chatto & Pickering).

³⁶ I. PONOMARIOVA, *Mariupol at the end of the 18th and 19th century*, in *Οι Έλληνες της Αζοφικής. Νέες προσεγγίσεις στην ιστορία των Ελλήνων στη Νότιο Ρωσία [The Greeks of the Azov, 18th-beginning of 20th century. New approaches to the history of the Greeks in South Russia]*, E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS eds., Athens 2015, (Hellenic National Foundation).

³⁷ Sarkis Kazarov, *Armenian merchants in the Nabichevan-on-Don and their role in the commercial development of the Azov-Black Sea region in Between Grain and Oil from the Azov to Caucasus: The port-cities of the eastern coast of the Black Sea, late 18th-early 20th centuries*, G. HARLAFTIS, V. KONSTANTINOVA, I. LYMAN eds., Corfu, forthcoming, (Black Sea History Working papers, www.blacksea.gr), volume 3.

Taganrog became the first Russian port-city to reopen and develop since the 1770s and remained the biggest port of the Azov from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. It was transformed the main gateway to the West as it served a vast hinterland. The enormous size of the Russia's territory and the disparity of its population suggest the importance of transport for its economic development. Efficient transportation network was pivotal for the development of its regions. The hinterland of the eastern coast was blessed by a large and complex river system and was mainly connected with internal waterways. Long-haul trade took place through the rivers Volga and Don and their tributaries and canals, while short overland transport was by wagon. Through various types of barges and wooden river crafts, grain was moved in bulk mainly by waterways. The cargoes were flowing down stream to the ports mainly via rivers and canals and to a lesser extent by oxen-wagons. Land transport could take easily place on the steppes only during the dry summer season and with horse-drawn sleighs during the winter as there was a non-existent road system. The mud from the rains and melting of ice of spring and autumn made "roads" impossible.³⁸ Any upstream movements in the waterways took enormous effort of horse and human labour. Volga's basin is divided in the upper, central and lower part along which his multiple tributaries provided navigable waterways of 3,690 km long connecting the area from Urals to Taganrog. The river Don with its tributaries covered about 1,400 km of navigable routes.³⁹

Going south the Causasian coast of eastern shore from Kerch strait to Batoum the captain encountered no anchorage or safe place apart may be from Poti. The only secure shelter place of the whole coastline, however, was Batoum lying in an extensive plain backed by terraced mountains. It was also a nodal place for of internal communication with Georgia, Armenia and Persia.⁴⁰

The **fourth** maritime region includes the southern Black Sea ports Trabzon or Trebizond, Samsun, Giresun and Sinop, that is the southeastern shore that concentrated the main Ottoman ports of the region and of course Constantinople/Istanbul.⁴¹ This is also called in the British pilot books as the "Anatolian" shore. The coastline was devoid of ports or harbours but the mountains behind neutralized the effects of the winds, although there were violent westerly winds prevailing.⁴² On 17 November 1780 the Ottoman Greek Captain Yanni sailed with his three masted ship (a galley with both sails and oars about 30-

³⁸ A. KAHAN, *Russian Economic History. The 19th century*, Chicago 1989, (The University of Chicago Press), pp. 27-33.

³⁹ MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS AND CARTOGRAPHY, *Statistical Review of Railways and internal Waterways of Russia* [Министерство путей сообщения, Отдел статистики и картографии, Статистический обзор железных дорог и внутренних водных путей], St. Petersburg 1900, pp. 118-119.

⁴⁰ *The Black Sea pilot*, cit., p. 111.

⁴¹ *The Economic and Social Development of the Port-Cities of the Southern Black Sea Coast, Late 18th – Beginning of the 20th century*, E. ELDEM, V. KECHRIOTIS, S.LAIYOU eds., Corfu 2017, (Black Sea History Working papers, www.blacksea.gr), volume 5.

⁴² *The Black Sea pilot*, cit., p. 167.

40 meters) from Constantinople to Trabzon.⁴³ Trabzon or Trebizond built “on a rocky table land sloping somewhat towards the sea”⁴⁴ was the chief transit port, the gateway of land and sea routes between Central Asia and Europe. Trabzon along Samsun, Giresun and Sinop were inhabited by Turks, Greeks and Armenians. Sinop had the safest anchorage between the Bosphorus and Batoum and it had dockyards where some of the finest ships of the Ottoman navy were built.⁴⁵

2. ON THE SEA: SHIPPING IN THE BLACK SEA

Every sea at crucial moments of change had its seafarers that developed maritime transport systems, mechanisms with which they were able to integrate the produce of the hinterland of the sea with the international markets. The main seafarers of the Black Sea up to the early nineteenth century were Ottoman Greek and Venetian Greek seafarers. What Greeks did was to first develop maritime transport systems in their islands and small port towns in the Aegean and Ionian seas. During this period Greeks were mainly Ottoman, Venetian, Ionian/British, Russian and Austrian subjects and traded both towards the Black Sea and to the Western European ports where they were described as ‘Greco/Greek’ at a time when no Greece existed.⁴⁶ It was the international conjuncture at that time which allowed for the great leap forward leading to the rise of the shipping businesses of the “Greci” as they are recorded in the western Mediterranean archives.⁴⁷ The eighteenth century is characterised by competition amongst the Great Powers for control over the Mediterranean and expansion to the East to penetrate the lands of the Ottoman Empire; the Hapsburgs and the Russians by land and the English and the French by sea. Despite the penetration of the British, the French remained the main carriers of the Levant sea trade up until the Napoleonic Wars. The colonial expansion of the British in the Mediterranean triggered the Anglo-French wars and the continuous warfare between the two Great Powers left space for the rise of the commercial and maritime activities of the local Levant seafarers at the last third of the century.

The main cargoes transported from the Eastern Mediterranean to the West were grain, cotton and olive oil. The opening of the Black Sea market after the two Russo-Ottoman wars of 1769-1774 and 1788-1792, the penetration of the Russians to the northern coast of the Black Sea and the imperial Russian policy to draw

⁴³ OTTOMAN ARCHIVES OF PRIME MINISTRY, A.DVNS.İZN.d, volume 1 in database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*.

⁴⁴ *The Black Sea pilot*, cit., p. 114.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁴⁶ *Η ναυτιλία των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821* [Greek Shipping, 1700-1821. The Heyday before the Greek Revolution], cit.; G. HARLAFTIS, S. LAIOU, *Ottoman State Policy in Mediterranean Trade and Shipping, c.1780-c.1820: The Rise of the Greek-Owned Ottoman Merchant Fleet*, in *Networks of Power in Modern Greece*, ed. M. MAZOWER 2008, (Hurst), pp. 1-44.

⁴⁷ G. HARLAFTIS, *The ‘eastern invasion’. Greeks in the Mediterranean trade and shipping in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries*, in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Brandel’s Maritime Legacy*, M. FUSARO, C. HEYWOOD, M. OMRI eds., London 2010, pp. 223-252.

Greek settlers from the Greek archipelago to southern Russia increased the sea trade from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. This was a critical turning point that led to the accumulation of capital and business know-how, and further more to the exit from the Eastern Mediterranean into the international markets and the consolidation of a worldwide entrepreneurial network. Greeks retained strong ties with their local communities of origin, in the Aegean and the Ionian seas, from where they absorbed capital, human resources and commodities. At the same time they were assimilated into the host societies of southern Russia and became involved in the economic, political and social sphere. The unprecedented commercial traffic established Greek diaspora communities in the West, involved in trade, shipping and finance in Trieste, Malta, Livorno, Marseille, Barcelona and Amsterdam. By 1821 the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence, the international entrepreneurial network of the Greek maritime and commercial diaspora had been established in the main European port-cities, which together with the sailing shipowners based in the Aegean and Ionian islands dominated the trade and shipping of the area.⁴⁸

The fleet of the Greeks compared well with those of the other main European nations in the eighteenth-early nineteenth century Mediterranean shipping. It consisted in the 1780s of 650 large merchant vessels of an average size of 125 tons; in fact it was the only substantial fleet of the Levante, and mostly under the Ottoman flag.⁴⁹ At the same time the most important Mediterranean fleets of Western Mediterranean were those of Spain, France, the Italian States, the Habsburgs and of Ragusa. The fleets of the Spaniards and French at that time, however, were not involved in the Mediterranean trade; it was more an Atlantic and transatlantic fleet involved in the colonial trade of both countries. Out of the fleets of the Italian States only the fleets of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies and Venice owned ships that were involved in the long-haul trade of the Mediterranean. The other fleets like those of Genova, Tuscany or the Papal State, consisted of small ships involved in the local and peripheral trade of the Italian peninsula and central Mediterranean. The fleet of the Greeks was the fifth largest of the Mediterranean in the 1780s; it indicated a remarkable growth by growing fivefold from the mid-eighteenth century to the 1820s; from 188 ships in 1750 to 945 in 1821.⁵⁰

The fact that Greek shipping companies from the Ionian and Aegean seas developed fleets engaged in the long-haul trade of the Mediterranean competing successfully against the French, the Spanish, the Italians, the British and the French meant that they were competitive. The competitiveness of an economic sector proves its ability to supply goods and services in a market with efficiency and at a low cost. The shipowners of the islands of the Ionian and Aegean seas whether un-

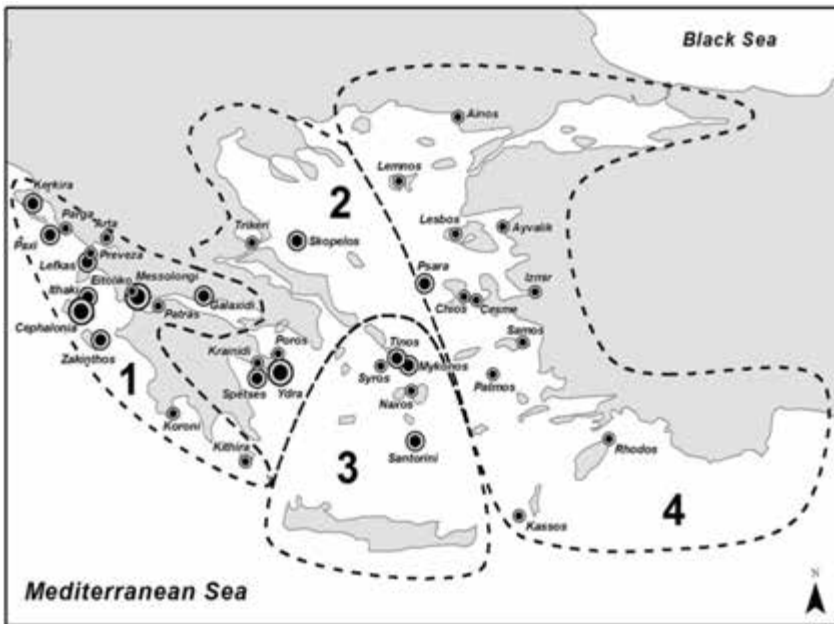
⁴⁸ G. HARLAFTIS, *Mapping the Greek maritime diaspora from the early 18th to the late 20th century* in *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks. Five Centuries of History*, I. BAGHDIAZT MCCABE, G. HARLAFTIS, I. MINOGLU eds., Oxford 2005 (Berg Publications), pp. 147-169.

⁴⁹ G. HARLAFTIS, *The 'eastern invasion'. Greeks in the Mediterranean trade and shipping in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries* in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, M. FUSARO, C. HEYWOOD, M. OMRI eds., London 2009 (I.B. Tauris), pp. 223-252.

⁵⁰ G. HARLAFTIS, *The 'eastern invasion'*, cit.

der Ottoman, Venetian, French, Russian or British conquest operated their sea trade in an integrated economically maritime area. The fact that for centuries the islands were under various conquests meant that the seafarers of the area developed their own institutions on every island that conformed to Mediterranean shipping practices. They were part of an integrated maritime market as is pictured in Map 3 whose inhabitants communicated in the ports they traded developing and exchanging common business practices that in the age of empires knew no political borders. This market that has also been described as a “dispersed maritime city”⁵¹ was composed by four districts: the Ionian Sea (pictured as number 1 in Map 3), the Western Aegean (number 2), the Central Aegean (number 3) and the Eastern Aegean (number 4). In each district several maritime centres developed, as are pictured in the map according to their importance during the period 1700-1821. In fact 38 islands and/or port-cities developed as maritime centres owning fleets during the period under examination, developing important shipping family businesses owning deep-sea going vessels.

Map 3. The four maritime districts of the northeastern Mediterranean, 1700-1821



Source: *H ναυτιλία των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821* [Greek Shipping, 1700-1821. The Heyday before the Greek Revolution], G. HARLAFTIS, K. PAPAΚONSTANTINOY eds., Athens 2013, (Kedros Publications).

⁵¹ In Greece the historian Spyros Asdrachas coined the phrase “dispersed maritime city” to stress the unity of these islands; see V. SFYROERAS, A. AVRAMEA, S. ASDRAHAS, *Maps and Map-Makers of the Aegean*, Athens 1985, pp. 235-248. See also E. KOLODNY, *La population des îles de la Grèce. Essai de géographie insulaire en Méditerranée orientale*, Aix en Provence 1974, vol. 1-3.

In the eighteenth century there were about 900 shipping families in the Ionian Sea and another 900 shipping families in the Aegean Sea that manned and managed hundreds of shipping firms.⁵² The shipping families acted in tight shipping business groups according to the maritime region and the island/maritime centre they came from. By maritime centre I mean an island or port-town that had a fleet of at least ten deep-sea going vessels for more than one generation; and by generation we mean an average of thirty years of professional activity.⁵³ The activities of the shipping families in the maritime centres acted as mechanisms that ensured the cohesion of maritime regions and their linkages and triggered both the development of local economies and the wider maritime regions. Members from a great number of these families were settled in the Azov and Odessa.⁵⁴

Tab. 1. Voyages of Ottoman ships in the Black Sea trade, 1780-1820

	1780-1820	% to total
Ottoman Greek ships	1411	73%
Muslim ships	526	27%
	1937	100%

Source: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi [Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministry], Bab-ı Asafî Divan-i Hümayun Kalemleri Ek kodları, İzn-i Sefine Defterleri (BOA.A.DVNS.IZN.d) I-II-III-IV-V, 1780-1822, database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*, in H. VELİ AYDIN, *Ελληνες έμποροι και ναυτικοί στη Μαύρη Θάλασσα 1780-1820* [Greek merchants and seamen in the Black Sea 1780-1829], in *Η ναυτία των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821*, cit., pp. 683-721.

Tab. 2. Origin of captains trading in the Black Sea, 1780-1820

Maritime area	Number of ships	% to total
Eastern Aegean	243	33%
<i>Northeastern Aegean</i>	220	
<i>Southeast Aegean</i>	23	
Western Aegean	184	25%
<i>Northwestern Aegean</i>	114	
<i>Southwestern Aegean</i>	70	
Central Aegean	131	18%
Ionian	67	10%
Black Sea	74	10%
Sea of Marmara	30	4%
Total	729	100%

Source: the database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*, Research Programme “History of Greek Shipping, 1700-1821”, entrepreneurial project “Pythagoras I”, Ionian University, financed by the Greek Ministry of Education/EU, 2004-2006, www.marehist.gr.

⁵² *Greek Shipping History*, cit.

⁵³ G. HARLAFTIS, H. BENEKI, M. HARITATOS, *Ploto, Greek shipowners from the late 18th century to the eve of WWII*, Athens 2003, (ELIA/Niarchos Foundation), (in Greek and English), p. 17.

⁵⁴ E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS, *Entrepreneurship at the Russian Frontier*, cit.

Greeks were the seafarers of the Ottoman Empire and in the Black Sea, as Ottoman subjects, they had a near-monopoly. It is no wonder then that from 1780 to 1820 from almost 2,000 voyages to the Black Sea 73% were found to be Ottoman Greek vessels, which means that they dominated the sea trade of the area (Table q).⁵⁵ An unprecedented upsurge is indicated in the high time of the Napoleonic wars. After the Russian conquest of the northern coast as we have seen a large population of Greek seafarers from the Aegean and Ionian seas were established in the newly founded Russian port cities. Their ships were thus able to carry both the Russian and Ottoman flags that were the only really ones to trade freely in the Sea until the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 which freed the sea to all nations.

As Table 2 indicates one third of the sailing vessels trading in the Black Sea originated from the eastern Aegean and most importantly from the northeastern Aegean due to the geographic proximity. The sailing ship owners were mainly from the island of Psara, the main maritime centre of the area with experienced seafarers in the Mediterranean long haul trade. Other captains from this region were also from the town of Ainos in Thrace, the islands of Thasos, Chios, Lesbos, Lemnos and from Smyrna. From the southeastern Aegean, ships from the fleets of the islands of Patmos, Rodos and Samos were also involved in the Black Sea trade. 25% of the captains that traded to and from the Black Sea originated from the Western Aegean. Most of those involved in the Black Sea trade originated from the northwestern Aegean, mainly the islands of Skopelos and the little town of Trikeri opposite the mainland, off of the Gulf of Volos. Both were and remained main maritime centres of this area. In the southwestern Aegean captains originated from the islands of Hydra and Spetses.

The main maritime centres of Central Aegean were Mykonos and Santorini, the origin of 18% of the captains that traded from this area to the Black Sea. 10% of the captains originated from the Ionian islands and its traditional maritime centres: Cephalonia, Ithaca, Messolonghi, Galaxidi. Local Black Sea seafarers were Ottoman Greeks of the southwestern coast of the Black Sea, what was then known as the eastern Rumelian coast: Mesembria, Vassiliko, Aktarpolee. It is clear that the maritime connections of Black Sea with the western Mediterranean at such an early stage were steadily developing from local island Greek-owned fleets carrying the trade between the Ottoman and the Russian Empire to the West.

⁵⁵ H.V. AYDIN, *Έλληνες έμποροι και ναυτικοί στη Μαύρη Θάλασσα 1780-1820 [Greek merchants and seamen in the Black Sea 1780-1829]*, in *Η ναυτιλία των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821 [Greek Shipping, 1700-1821. The Heyday before the Greek Revolution]*, cit., pp. 683-721.

Tab. 3. Arrivals of Ottoman Greek and Venetian/Ionian Greek ships to the Black Sea ports, 1780-1820

Area/port city	Number of ships	% to total
Northern Coast	216	50%
<i>Kherson</i>	38	
<i>Odessa</i>	150	
<i>Crimea (Kozlov, Sebastopol)</i>	28	
Eastern Coast	200	46%
<i>Taganrog</i>	150	
<i>Azov</i>	50	
Western Coast	14	4%
<i>Burgas</i>	14	
Southern coast	1	
<i>Trabzon</i>	1	
Total	431	100%

Source: the database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*, Research Programme “History of Greek Shipping, 1700-1821”, entrepreneurial project “Pythagoras I”, Ionian University, financed by the Greek Ministry of Education/EU, 2004-2006, www.marchist.gr.

Tab. 4. Ottoman Greek and Venetian/Ionian Greek ships from the Black Sea to Mediterranean ports, 1780-1820

Destination	Number of ships	% to total
Constantinople	679	76%
Ionian islands	52	6%
Genova	55	6%
Livorno	48	5%
Venezia	9	1%
Malta	47	5%
Marseille	1	0%
Total	891	100%

Source: the database *Amphitrite 1700-1821*, Research Programme “History of Greek Shipping, 1700-1821”, entrepreneurial project “Pythagoras I”, Ionian University, financed by the Greek Ministry of Education/EU, 2004-2006, www.marchist.gr.

50% of the destination of Ottoman-Greek and Venetian/Ionian Greek ships sailing to the Black Sea were to the northern coast, mainly to Odessa and Kherson and lesser to the Crimean ports. An almost equivalent amount of ships arrived to Taganrog in the Azov, and only 4% of the total voyages were directed to the western and southern coast (Table 3). On the return voyages the Ottoman Greek and Venetian/Ionian Greek vessels headed to Constantinople (from where no further evidence to the next destination is available), to the Ionian islands, to Malta, to Livorno, to Genova and much less to Marseille or Venice (Table 4). International trade to the western and southern coast at this stage was insignificant.

3. AROUND THE SEA: PORT CITIES

When the Russians pushed into the Black Sea, the commerce and shipping of the area was confined in the hands of the Ottoman and Venetian subjects, a significant number of which seem to have been of Greek origin.⁵⁶ Since the vast area, apart from the Crimea, was steppe land, almost entirely unpopulated, and the fertile soil uncultivated the first concern of the Russian government was to stimulate population growth by attracting immigrants using land, agricultural equipment and even building materials as inducements. In addition to encouraging central Europeans and Balkan people, they encouraged as well the population of the Ionian and Aegean islands that had the advantage of maritime entrepreneurship and large merchant fleets.⁵⁷ A fixed colonisation policy developed by the Russian officials to support the multi-ethnic composition of the southern areas in order to exploit the special abilities of each ethnic group in order to ensure economic development. The Russian governors attributed economic characteristics to every ethnic minority group. The Imperial government believed that a heterogeneous ethnic population was necessary to develop the farming, industry and sea trade. In this way the ethnic groups who would be encouraged to immigrate were thought to serve as an example to stimulate the Russian population to develop similar activities. It was believed that the Greek presence would enhance the development of sea trade since the Greeks were a ready force who would diffuse their know-how in trade and shipping and would assist to the formation and training of the future Russian shipping.⁵⁸ The expansion of Russia along the southern and the eastern coasts of the Black Sea took place during the Age of Empires; a period of intense competition between the colonial Western European powers to acquire new lands for exploitation of economic sources.

The development of grain exports via the Black Sea was a central choice of Russia's strategy to create a new economic zone, where the hinterland would provide grain from the cultivation of the steppes and the formation of the port-cities would become the export gateways of the hinterland.⁵⁹ The unpopulated

⁵⁶ O. HALENKO, 'Έλληνες επιχειρηματίες και ναυτικοί στις βόρειες ακτές της Μαύρης και Αζοφικής θάλασσας την περίοδο της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας και των ρωσικών κατακτήσεων, 15ος-18ος αιώνας [Greek entrepreneurs and seamen in the northern shores of the Black and Azov seas during the period of Ottoman and Russian conquests, 15th-18th centuries in *The Greeks of the Azov, 18th-beginning of 20th century. New approaches to the history of the Greeks in South Russia*, E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS eds., Athens 2015, (Hellenic National Foundation), pp. 245-263. See also H.V. AYDIN, 'Έλληνες έμποροι και ναυτικοί στη Μαύρη Θάλασσα 1780-1820 [Greek merchants and seamen in the Black Sea 1780-1829], in *Η ναυτία των Ελλήνων, 1700-1821 [Greek Shipping, 1700-1821. The Heyday before the Greek Revolution]*, cit., pp. 683-721.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ D. SHERRY, *Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast, 1860-1865*, in "Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History", 10, 2009, n. 1, pp. 7-30.

⁵⁹ N.V. RIASANOVSKY, *A History of Russia*, New York/Oxford 1993, fifth edition (Oxford University Press), pp. 254-275; V.N. ZAKHAROV, *Vneshnetorgovaya deyatel'nost' inostrannykh kuptsov v portakh Azovskogo i Chornogo morei v seredine i vtoroi polovine XVIII v. [The development of foreign trade by foreign merchants in the Azov and the Black Sea ports in the second half of the eighteenth century]*, in "Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta", ser. 8, Istorica, 4, 2004, pp. 85-102; P. HERLIHY, *Odessa: a history, 1794-1914*, Cambridge MA 1986, (Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute).

steppe land had a great and unexploited advantage. This steppe that extends in the hinterland of the northern coast formed by the black earth, the *chernozem*, fertile land, excellent for grain that became principally the granary of the Russian Empire and eventually of Europe.⁶⁰ Hundreds and thousands of tons of wheat, rye, oats, and barley were increasingly harvested every year in a region that covered an area of 270,000,000 acres and which by the beginning of the twentieth century “if farmed to its fullest extent, could more than feed the whole population of Europe”.⁶¹

It was the development of the port cities that formed the nodes between hinterland and foreland. As we have indicated the Black Sea consists from the articulation of many maritime regions. Central to this analysis are the concepts of region and port is the development of maritime transport systems that make trade and shipping happen. We use the concept not of land region, as is more commonly used, but that of maritime region. A similar concept of a maritime region has been used in his recent book by Werner Scheltjens, where he makes the unit of research the Dutch Deltas to explore the maritime transport systems and to “capture regional economic dynamics as well as changes in the structure of trade networks and transport systems”. According to Scheltjens, “Transport systems are complexes of physical attributes (rivers, roads, canals, seas, etc.) and communities populating them, thus allowing for the exchange of people, goods and information between the locations of a trade network. The delta is deemed to be an appropriate geographical unit for a comprehensive economic-geographical analysis of the Dutch maritime transport sector before 1850”.⁶²

Sea ports are fundamental to understand maritime transport systems. According to the economic geographer B.S. Hoyle, an important division in port geography is between those elements that have to do with land side, the **hinterland** and those that have to do with maritime side, including the waterfront of the port and **the foreland**.⁶³ A “hinterland” can be described as an organized and developed land space which is connected with a port by means of transport.⁶⁴ Very important to the connections of the port with the hinterland are land and river connections. The hinterland covers a productive area which produces goods to be transferred to the sea port that forms the export gateway. The supply of goods and the level of exports is not only depended from the level of production but can be confined or controlled by state, economic and geostrategic policies. The concept of “foreland” as opposed to that of hinterland, is what lies in front of the port, the shipping connections of a port. It is mainly the land areas on the seaward side of the port;

⁶⁰ D. MOON, *The Plough that Broke the Steppes. Agriculture and Environment on Russia's grasslands, 1700-1914*, Oxford 2013, p. 1.

⁶¹ E.K. REYNOLDS, *The Economic Resources of the Russian Empire*, in “Geographical Review”, 1, 1916, n. 4, pp. 249-265.

⁶² W. SCHELTJENS, *Dutch Deltas. Emergence, Functions and Structure of the Low Countries' Maritime Transport System, ca 1300-1850*, Leiden/Boston 2015 (Brill), p. 9.

⁶³ B.S. HOYLE, *Maritime perspectives on port and port systems: the case of East Africa* in *Brides of the Sea. Port cities of Asia from the 16th-20th centuries*, ed. F. BROEZE, Kensington New South Wales 1989 (New South Wales University Press).

⁶⁴ G.G. WEIGEND, *Some Elements in the Study of Port Geography*, in “Geographical Review”, 48, 1958, n. 2, pp. 185-200.

the other ports with which a port is connected with sea routes, where cargoes are shipped or transhipped by either coastal or deep-sea going vessels.⁶⁵

Map 4. The hinterland of the northern coast of the Black Sea

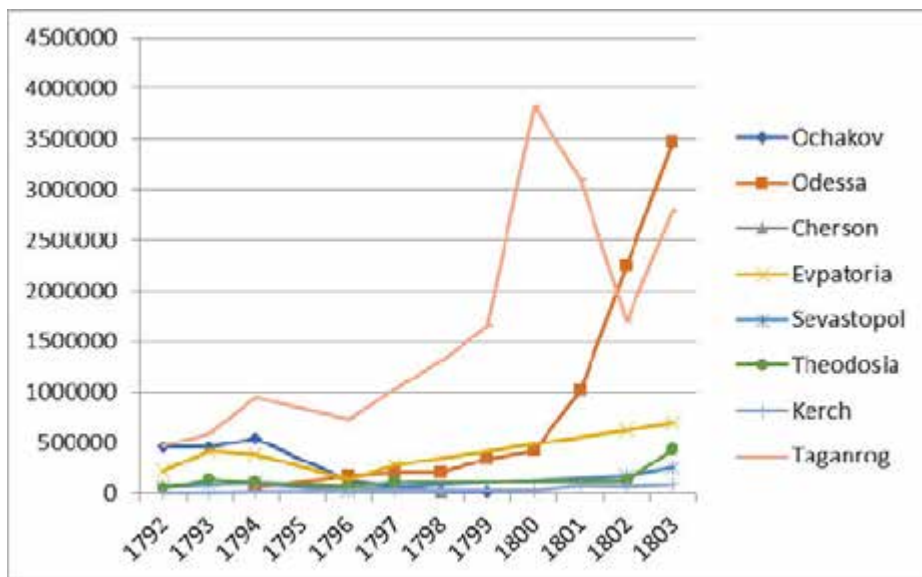


Source: Black Sea project, www.blacksea.gr. Map made by Mitia Frumin, 2016.

Behind the northern coast there was a vast hinterland that was getting cultivated for grain exports and the ports that were developing as they became the export gateways (Map 4). In all these port cities it was the port function that furnished the wealth of the city. Graph 1 indicates the first decades of slow development, from 1792 to 1803. It is indicative that Ochakov and Kherson had a very brief presence in the export trade and did not become big export ports. Kherson along with the Crimean ports of Sevastopol, Theodosia and Kerch remained at low levels. Kozlov/Evpatoria seems to have a steady increase and this is probable due to its site, serving as a transit port of the exports from Dniester to Dnieper. What is clear at this early stage, however, is the advantage of the eastern part, of the Azov Sea. This is the area that developed first and Taganrog figures as the prime export port-city of all the northern coast in the eighteenth century. Its primacy, however, was soon overtaken by Odessa who indicates a vertical rise after the turn of the century.

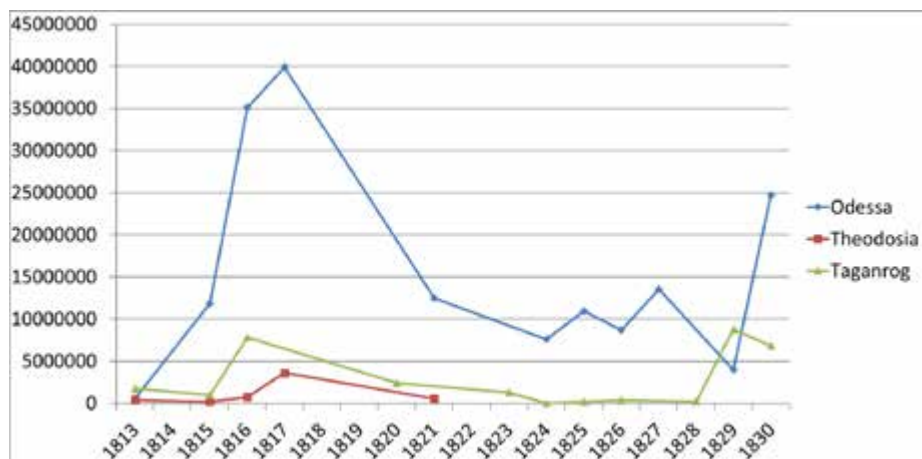
⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

Graph 1. The increase of the grain exports of Southern Russian ports



Source: Y. POSPELOVA, *Становление внешней торговли России через Азовские и Черноморские порты в последней четверти XVIII-начале XIX века* [Formation of foreign trade of Russia through the Azov and Black Sea ports in the last quarter of the 18th-early 19th century], Ph.D. thesis, 2012, (Moscow Region State University, Moscow).

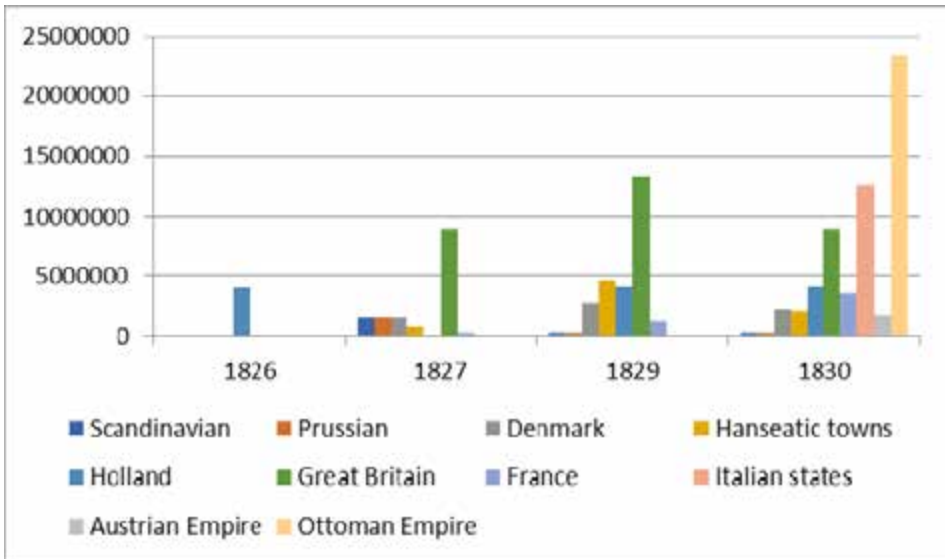
Graph 2. The increase of grain exports of the main Russian port-cities



Source: 1812-1829: *Государственная внешняя торговля в разных ее видах. Foreign Trade of the State in its various Regions*, published by the Department of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Finances.

Graph 2, presents the period 1813-1830. After a correlated unprecedented upsurge before the end of the Napoleonic wars, indicative in Odessa, there is a sharp decline only to reach an upward trend in the next Russo-Ottoman war of 1828-1829. Exports witnessed a sharp rise maafter the Napoleonic wars and a downfall in 1820. The sharp fluctuations of the export trade of Russia to the West were normalized only after 1829 with the Treaty of Adrianople that opened up the navigation of the Black Sea to all nations. The trading partners of southern Russian exports during this early period were the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain, the Italian States, France, Holland, followed by Prussia, the Austrian Empire, Denmark, the Scandinavian and Hanseatic countries (Graph 3). Southern Russia was transformed as UK's main grain supplier, particularly after 1846-1847, when the Corn Laws and Navigation Acts were abolished. Due to the fact that Corn Laws forbade the direct imports of grain to Britain, until then grain was shipped to entrepots established in Italian, French and Dutch ports only to be re-exported to the British ports. It has been estimated that annual re-exports during the first half of the nineteenth century were substantial and could reach from 100,000 to 200,000 imperial quarters⁶⁶.

Graph. 3. Grain exports from Southern Russia 1826-1830 (value in rubles)



⁶⁶ S. FAIRLIE, *The Anglo Russian grain trade, 1815-1861*, Unpublished PhD thesis 1959, (London School of Economics and Political Science), 173.

4. AROUND THE SEA: THE FORMATION OF THE MARITIME NETWORKS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADING HOUSES

All the port cities planned by Russian politicians were filled by entrepreneurial immigrants of ethnic minorities from central and southeastern Europe. The Russians new well that the merchant communities demonstrated flexibility and were prepared to move to new markets. The maritime linkages of the Black Sea were organized by foreigners established in the newly founded ports. The trading and shipping businesses that made the exports happen belonged mainly to the mobile groups of families of Greeks, Jews and Armenians, along with Germans as others from central Europe.⁶⁷ In fifty years, from the 1770s to the 1820s, they were able to develop linkages to the hinterland and thus be able to collect the harvest through the very difficult conditions of the primitive Russian South. One has to remember that grain came down through rivers with navigation difficulties, non-existent roads and harsh weather conditions as from November to March everything was covered with ice, and the rivers and the Azov Sea were frozen. The merchants and seafarers of the area kept available fleets of small sailing craft to bring the produce from the river estuaries to the ports and available sailing ships to transport them abroad. Business was difficult; entrepreneurial risk had to be minimized somehow and information of prices in far away markets to be available at a time when letter-writing was the only means of communication. The formation of systems of communication that made the whole procedure of purchasing and bringing the produce from the hinterland to the port, promoting it to other ports in the foreland and selling is what we have described as “entrepreneurial networks.”⁶⁸

It was these mobile entrepreneurial groups that undertook the control of trade, shipping and finance, establishing networks and linkages with the global economy. They all proved the catalysts for the trade apogee and contributed significantly to the evolution of the port-cities. Among the business groups of the various ethnic minorities that inhabited the newly formed South Russian port-cities, the Greeks excelled in the first half of the nineteenth century by controlling more than half of the whole external trade. They continued the same business in the second half of the century, albeit the fierce competition of the Jewish trading companies, handling at least one third of the total south Russian production and carrying with their ships more than half.⁶⁹

New material from the Russian statistics has provided us with new information on the importance of the Greek trading companies not only in the South of Russia but in the whole of the Russian Empire. Table 5 includes data we have processed from all the first guild merchants of the Russian Empire that had a turnover of over 50,000 rubles (or £8,000). During this period, in order to carry out trade in the

⁶⁷ V. KARDASIS, *Diaspora Merchants in the Black Sea: The Greeks in Southern Russia, 1775–1861*, Lanham, MD 2001 (Lexington Books); G. HARLAFTIS, *A History of Greek-Owned Shipping*, London 1996 (Routledge), pp. 3–38.

⁶⁸ G. HARLAFTIS, *Mapping the Greek maritime diaspora*, cit.

⁶⁹ EADEM, *A History of Greek-Owned Shipping*, cit., chapters 1–3.

Russian Empire, a merchant had to register in one of the “guilds”; merchants were divided into three “guilds” and registration in those guilds was open to all who could pay the guild tax.⁷⁰

Tab. 5. **First guild merchants engaged in Russia’s external trade, 1813**

NAME OF MERCHANTS	ORIGIN	IN WHICH PLACE OF TOWN IS SOLD	IMPORTS	EXPORTS	TOTAL
Mella Pavel	Greek	Radziwilow (Radyvilov) and Odessa	251920	945921	1197841
Katsari Diamandi	Greek	Odessa and Taganrog	208545	826426	1034971
Dimasi Nikolai	Greek	Taganrog	378090	454356	832446
Pitako Grigorii	Greek	Odessa and Taganrog	276856	502167	779023
Yanopulo Vasilii	Greek	Odessa	294302	369705	664007
Stefanaki Ivan	Greek	Taganrog	163709	302041	465750
Paleolog Dmitri	Greek	Odessa	155097	251688	406785
Skufi Ivan	Greek	Odessa	21589	372387	393976
Dulchyn Efstfii		Odessa	242248	141862	384110
Kaliantzi Fedor	Greek	Odessa	196882	182796	379678
Zaharov Leontii	Greek	Taganrog	138207	231258	369465
Reno Ivan		Odessa	62725	287094	349819
Mareli Mikhail		Odessa	33984	288795	322779
Iorgashi Ivan		Odessa	32015	280700	312715
Bobovits Cima		Evpatoria		291920	291920
Kiparissi Spiro	Greek	Odessa	32370	258882	291252
Zotov Dmitri		Odessa	22573	252064	274637
Domerchikov Vassili		Taganrog	40900	223043	263943
Petrocochino Efstratii	Greek	Odessa		261406	261406
Magula Mari	Greek	Taganrog	59840	201523	261363

Source: 1812-1814: *Государственная внешняя торговля в разных ее видах. Foreign Trade of the State in its various Regions*, published by the Department of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Finances.

In 1813 as is evident from Table 5, more than two thirds of the twenty most important merchants of Southern Russia, that belonged to the first guild and were engaged in the export trade of the northern coast, were Greeks and handled 70% of the value of the total trade. Who were these merchants and where did they come from? We can distinguish two phases and two groups of Greek traders. The first wave of Greeks were mainly seafarers and was directed from 1770s to 1800s, to the eastern part of the northern shore, namely the Azov region, and more particularly Taganrog. These were mostly shipmasters and shipowners from the Ionian islands

⁷⁰ A.J. RIEBER, *Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia* 1982, (University of North Carolina Press), p. xxiii.

and the seafaring islands of the Aegean. It has been calculated, for example, that out of 200 merchants that were established in Taganrog between 1795 and 1803, 53% came from the island of Cephalonia and 45% from 12 Aegean islands and particularly from Santorini, Psara and Hydra.⁷¹ They were all established either in Taganrog or Odessa and they came from Cephalonia and various Aegean islands. The most important merchant of that period is Pavel Mela from a commercial family from Epirus.

The second wave of Greek merchants, were established in Odessa and Taganrog during the 1810s and 1820s; Evstrati Petrocockino from the island of Chios belongs to this group. Apart from Petrocockino, who seems to be the first of the powerful group of Chiot merchants to be established there (see Table 5), Ambrosios Skaramanga and Alexander Mavro were established in Odessa as First Guild merchants in 1814, Anton Galati in 1817, Igor Ralli and Grigori Marasli in 1818, Theodor Rodocanachi and Dimitri Skylitzi in 1822.⁷² These merchants, before establishing themselves in Odessa or Taganrog, were in Constantinople and were involved in the Ottoman trade during the Napoleonic wars. Katerina Galani has revealed recently that between 1799 and 1813 the above developed a close relation with the British Levant Company based in Constantinople. The Chiot merchants like Ralli, Scaramanga, Petrocockino, Galatis, Mavrogordato, Frangiadis, Negroponte, Paspatis, Baltadgis, the Cephalonians Dendrinis, Panas, Rossolimos, along with the Melas, Marasli and others sent and received cargoes for the Levant company, without, however, being officially merchants of the Levant Company.⁷³ They were most probably involved in the grain trade from South Russia, as immediately after their involvement with the Levant Company they were established in Russia. Among the top Greek merchants in Odessa and Taganrog, after 1820s, are found the Chiots Rodocanachi, Ralli and Skylitzi. At the same period, their involvement with the Levant Company turned them to London. In 1818 the Ralli brothers were established there, whereas in the 1820 the merchant house of Petrocockino, Galati and Kondostavlos is established in London.⁷⁴

Using shipping movements, 20 years ago, I have identified the importance of the Chiot and Ionian networks in the trade and shipping of southern Russia with the Western European port cities.⁷⁵ The networks, however, that stemmed from the analysis of shipping movements, did not reveal the importance of the trading companies in southern Russia. What the archival evidence from the Russian

⁷¹ E. SIFNEOS, G. HARLAFTIS, *Entrepreneurship*, cit.

⁷² L. BILOUSOVA, *Odessa: Register of merchants of 1st, 2nd, 3rd guilds in alphabetical order*, Государственный архив Одесской области, *State Archives of Odessa Region*.

⁷³ K. GALANI, *British trade and shipping in the Mediterranean in the Age of War, 1770-1815*, unpublished ph.D. thesis 2011 (University of Oxford), pp. 294-303.

⁷⁴ For the Ralli Bros see K. VOURKATIOTI, *Ο οίκος των Αδελφών Ράλλη (c. 1814-1961). Το αρχέτυπο μιας ελληνικής επιχείρησης της διασποράς* [The House of Ralli Bros (c. 1814-1961). The Archetype of a Greek Diaspora Firm], (Unpublished PhD thesis, Panteion University, 2004), pp 8-45, 85-135. For the others K. GALANI, *Η Ελληνική κοινότητα του Λονδίνου τον 19ο αιώνα. Μια κοινωνική και οικονομική προσέγγιση* [The Greek Community in London in the 19th century. A Social and Economic Approach], “Τα Ιστορικά”, 63, 2016, , pp. 43-68.

⁷⁵ G. HARLAFTIS, *A History of Greek-Owned Shipping*, cit., chapters 2 and 3.

archives brings out is the fact that the trading companies that traded in Russia, with origin from Chios, Cephalonia or elsewhere, traded in all the port cities, that is in both the Odessa and Azov region. Despite their internal competition, they collaborated, imitated and complemented each other acting as a business group handling the grain exports from Southern Russia to the West along the whole area combining trade, shipping and finance.⁷⁶ It was they that formed the “Chiot entrepreneurial group” that grew into prominence during the period 1820s-1860s established not only in Odessa, Taganrog and Constantinople but also in Trieste, Livorno, Marseille, London and St. Petersburg.

By 1860 among the top twenty Russian trading companies of the whole of Russia stood the companies of John Ralli, Theodor Rodocanachi and John Scaramanga.⁷⁷ At the same year, in the top twenty trading firms in Southern Russia more than half are Greeks and include the trading companies of the Chiots Scaramanga, Ralli and Rodocanachi and of the Cephalonians Vagliano and Avgerino. Altogether they carried trade worth more than three million sterling pounds. It is thus not surprising that the members of the Greek business group of Southern Russia that established themselves in the City of London in the 1820s, got immediately access from the Black Sea to the Baltic Exchange and the Bank of England, where they were considered and treated as a tight business group, among the main traders of Russia that integrated the Black Sea markets with western Europe.⁷⁸

CONCLUSIONS

This paper examined the first 50 transitional years of the Black Sea, a sea of isolation, named as “Ottoman lake” to a sea of internationalization. It followed the glance from the sea and its effects on land. In this way it examined the movements *on the sea* and their development and impact *around the sea*. The Black Sea excluded from international trade until 1770s, developed its sea trade and maritime networks in an unprecedented rate to become the largest grain producer of the world, supplying the West during the era of industrial revolution. This came as a result of dramatic changes on the sea and around the sea. Still, despite the importance of the maritime networks and the impact of the sea dimension on land and the development of port cities, the element of the sea is still underresearched. Recent research on Ottoman, Ukrainian, Russian and western European archives has

⁷⁶ K.GALANI, G. HARLAFTIS, *Trade and finance between London, Constantinople and Southern Russia: The Greek business group in the 19th century*, paper presented in the European Business History Association, Utrecht 2014.

⁷⁷ Государственная внешняя торговля в разных ее видах. *Foreign Trade of the State in its various Regions*, published by the Department of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Finances., 1860.

⁷⁸ G. HARLAFTIS, *A History of Greek-Owned Shipping. The Making of an International Tramp Fleet, 1830 to the present day*, London 1996 (Routledge); G. HARLAFTIS, *Creating Global Shipping: Aristotle Onassis, the Vagliano Brothers and the Business of Shipping, c.1820-1970*, Cambridge 2019 (Cambridge University Press).

enlightened the opening of the sea in the 50 years from 1770s to 1820s, when it was still mainly the Ottoman and Russian flags that were permitted to sail.

On the sea, history has been seen through maritime voyages and maritime empires. Sailing on the sea and discovering the sea routes had dramatic effects as non-existent port-cities sprang along the coast and knowledge of navigation increased. Changes in the Black sea were triggered from the colonialism of the Russians, a land empire. Without really a merchant fleet, it gave privileges to seafaring and trading populations of the Ottoman and Venetian Greeks to its newly conquered northern coastline: central Europeans as cultivators, Jews and Armenians as traders and Greeks as sea carriers. Greeks, the traditional seafarers of the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea had consolidated themselves as the “fleet dei Greci” in the Mediterranean of the eighteenth century. It was only natural after the opening and growth the northern Black Sea coast that they became the main carriers of the sea trade of the area sailing within and out of the Black Sea. Every sea, at crucial moments of change has its seafarers to develop maritime transport systems mechanisms with which they were able to integrate the produce of the hinterland of the sea with the global markets.

Around the sea, port cities formed the nodes between hinterland and foreland, provided the connectivity of the maritime regions. The dynamics of maritime transport, activated by developments in shipping that led to the emergence of maritime transport and port systems. Port activity has usually been measured by the flow of cargoes and ships. The first port cities to develop in the northern coast was at the western point first Kherson and then Odessa and on the eastern side Taganrog. It was through these ports that grain, which became the primary produce later was exported to western European ports like Venice, Malta, Livorno, Genoa or Marseille. The trading and shipping businesses that made the exports happen belonged mainly to the mobile groups of the so-called people of the classic diaspora like the Greeks, Jews and Armenians along with others from central Europe like Germans and Poles and southeastern Europe like Bulgarians and Serbs.

With the glance from the sea one can trace developments at land clearer and beyond the sometimes myopic glance of national histories. The Black Sea belonged to the people that moved on it and around it, increasing its connectivity with the land and the river routes, triggering chain reactions and unprecedented changes on an economic, social and political level not only on the hinterland behind but through the vast water space to the foreland beyond.

*In che misura il libero scambio e il protezionismo facilitarono
l'integrazione di reti marittime?*

*To what extent did free trade and protection facilitate
the integration of maritime networks?*

Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz

*Maritime Networks and Premodern Conflict Management on Multiple Levels.
The Example of Danzig and the Giese Family*

The enchanting town of Prato was the home to one of the most recognizable faces of merchants in medieval commercial networks in southern and western Europe: Francesco Datini. Several of the presented papers have at least touched upon the activities, background or heritage of our patron host and maritime networks in the Mediterranean. In my contribution, I would like to direct you northwards, to the Baltic and North Sea areas, to analyse some aspects of the networks there and make a closer acquaintance with the people who were part of them. In the medieval and early modern period, these areas were the stronghold of the Hanse, an organization of traders and cities that was in many respects a unique and paradoxical phenomenon. To highlight some of its features: it relied on small-scale business partnerships, a high degree of trust and cooperation between traders and their home cities; it operated as a political power without a legal status; there was no formal head of the organization, but regular meetings of members (Hanseatic diets) were organized, and there was shared supervision over Hanseatic settlements abroad, the largest being the so-called *Kontore* in London, Bruges, Bergen and Novgorod; it was a medieval phenomenon, but it survived well into the early modern era; it was based in cities where Low (northern) German was spoken and northern German law applied, yet through its overland and maritime connections it extended well into the Novgorod hinterland and into the Mediterranean.¹ And finally, there is the paradox of networks: while the personal and urban Hanseatic networks were of vital importance to the traders enjoying the privileges of the Hanse, if one asked them directly how they would describe themselves, they would not identify themselves solely or even primarily as Hanseatic traders. They also operated within the frameworks of their cities, regions and states. My main point in this paper is that maritime networks should be considered together with these frameworks, as they all provided the merchants valuable experience and knowledge necessary for their operations.²

¹ See R. HAMMEL-KIESOW, *Die Hanse*, 2nd ed., Munich 2002; S. SELZER, *Die mittelalterliche Hanse*, Darmstadt 2010; C. JAHNKE, *Die Hanse*, Stuttgart 2014; J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *The Hanse in medieval Europe: an introduction*, in *The Hanse and late medieval Europe*, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, S. JENKS eds., Leiden 2013, pp. 1-35; J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *The late medieval and early modern Hanse as an institution of conflict management*, in "Continuity and Change", 32, 2017, n. 1, pp. 59-84.

² See the contributions in VOLKER HENN AND JÜRGEN SARNOWSKY eds., *Das Bild der Hanse in der städtischen Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, *Hansische Studien* 20, Trier 2010.

How can we unravel all these networks? The key is to take specific cities, and, whenever possible, also specific traders in them, as starting points and examine them with a research question in hand. Here, I will tackle the topic of maritime networks of cities and traders, and zoom in on the role they played in dealing with conflicts in the medieval and early modern era. In particular, I will focus on my findings related to the city of Danzig (Gdańsk), which was simultaneously a member of the Hanse, a highly autonomous urban hub in the province of Royal Prussia, and a major port under the Polish Crown.³ I will use one specific mercantile family that operated in large parts of the Baltic and North sea areas as a recurrent illustration to discuss some aspects of conflict management occurring at these levels. This paper is one of the first exploratory presentations of a new research project, which I will briefly outline below.

CONFLICT MANAGERS AND THE PREMISES OF A NEW PROJECT

Let us begin by taking a closer look at another face, the likely familiar image of Georg Giese, who was a burgher of Danzig in the sixteenth century. His portrait by Hans Holbein, which was painted in the 1530s while Giese resided in the *Kontor* in London, is one of the most often reproduced images of a northern European merchant. To many, Giese has come to be seen as the epitome of a Hanseatic trader. This is due, on the one hand, to the numerous details and symbols of mercantile life that appear in the portrait, such as letters, scales, a seal with a merchant mark as well as an account book, all depicted in the setting of a trader's office. On the other hand, the fame of the image comes from the masterful quality of the painting itself, which Holbein wanted to use to attract new customers among the Hansards who did their business and stayed in the *Kontor*.

³ I use the name Danzig for the late medieval and early modern period, following the use in the primary sources of the inhabitants of the city. For the modern city and the seat of the archive and library, Gdańsk is used. On the huge historiography of Prussia and Poland, see the overviews and references in J. MALLEK, *Opera selecta. Polen und Preussen von 15. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, Toruń 2011; E. KIZIK, *Prusy Królewskie. Społeczeństwo, kultura, gospodarka 1454-1772*, Gdańsk 2012; R.I. FROST, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania: Vol. I: The Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1385-1569*, Oxford 2015.

Fig. 1. Georg Giese, Gemäldegalerie Berlin, nr. 586

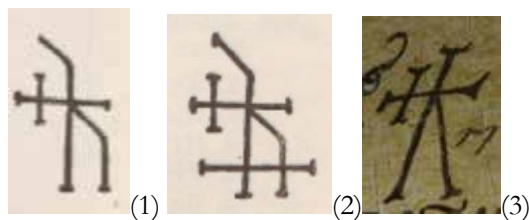


Art historical analyses have provided many insights into the artistic and technical aspects of the painting and, to some extent, into the life of Georg Giese himself. Attention has been drawn to the fact that he holds a letter in his hands which was probably sent by his brother, a bishop and friend of Nicolaus Copernicus and Erasmus of Rotterdam.⁴ With the topic of our conference as a backdrop, and with my focus on conflict management in particular, several additional observations can be made: this elder brother Tiedemann was not only a learned clergyman with legal experience from the Roman Rota, but also a diplomat on behalf of both the city of Danzig and the Polish king (its sovereign). When we zoom in on the letter in the painting, we read the words ‘to hande’, which meant

⁴ ARCHIWUM PAŃSTWOWE W GDANSKU (State Archive in Gdańsk), henceforth APG, 300 R/LI 28; T. BORAWSKA, *Rodzina Giesów w Gdańsku w XV i na początku XVI wieku*. Toruń 1973, here pp. 133-144; EADEM, *Tiedemann Giese (1480-1550) w życiu wewnętrznym Warmii i Prus Królewskich [Tiedemann Giese (1480-1550) in the Internal Affairs of Warmia and Royal Prussia]*, Olsztyn 1984; W. SZCZUCZKO, *Giese (Gyse) Jerzy (1497-1562), kupiec i burgrabia gd.*, in *Słownik biograficzny Pomorza Nadwiślańskiego*, vol. 2, Gdańsk 1994, p. 53; T.S. HOLMAN, *Holbein's Portraits of the Steelyard Merchants: An Investigation*, in “Metropolitan Museum Journal”, 14, 1979, pp. 139-158; S. BUCK et al., *Hans Holbein the Younger, 1497/98-1543: Portraitist of the Renaissance*, The Hague 2003; H. FREYTAG, *Das Bildnis eines Danzigers, von Hans Holbein gemalt*, in: “Zeitschrift des West-preussisches Geschichtsvereins”, 40, 1899, pp. 107-115.

that it was to be delivered to Georg personally and was thus confidential. The implication is that this is sensitive information from home, which could be family, city or even large-scale political news. Georg presented himself as a typical Hanseatic trader, spending years abroad to build up trade networks and wealth, and thus operating in a foreign political context. At the same time, he was well aware that he would be returning to Danzig to get married to a daughter of a patrician from another Hanseatic town in Prussia, Thorn (Toruń): hence the carnations in the picture, which were a symbol of his engagement. While continuing to do business from Danzig, Giese would eventually become a city councillor, judge and arbitrator, as well as envoy to Prussian regional meetings and Hanseatic regional meetings. There, commerce and politics were intertwined to uphold the autonomy of cities and the region itself under the Polish Crown. Georg would have probably been pleased to know that one of his sons would become secretary to the Polish king and a champion of Danzig's commercial and political interests, while another would become a burgomaster in Thorn. In any case, Georg saw a nephew become a frequent envoy to the Danish king, a cousin represent the city in Hanse matters and Crown affairs, and another family member negotiate privileges in Portugal.⁵

A highly significant point that has to be made in the context of this paper is that all members of the family were performing urban diplomacy as side jobs, next to sitting on the urban council or conducting trade. You could call them a family of multitaskers, as the collective number of roles and linkages is quite striking. Family ties were obviously very important to Georg: apart from his brother's letter in the painting, merchant marks tell a story here. We know from other sources what the merchants mark of his deceased father (1) and of his other elder brother, Albrecht (2), looked like. Georg's mark in the painting (3) is a variant of his kin's.⁶



⁵ T. BORAWSKA, *Rodzina Giesów*, cit.; A. GIESE, *Die Danziger Patrizier familie Giese*, in "Danziger familiengeschichtliche Beiträge", 2, Danzig 1934, pp. 111-121 and 3, 1938, p. 6; K. MIKULSKI, *Adel und Patriziat im Königlichen Preußen vom 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert. Versuch einer Bestimmung ihrer Beziehungen zueinander*, in "Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung/Journal of East Central European Studies", 49, 2000, n. 1, pp.38-51.

⁶ The merchant marks of Georg's father and brother are from Giese, *Die Danziger Patrizier familie Giese*, and Biblioteka Gdańska PAN Ms 807. It was usual that merchant marks within families resembled each other, see T. HIRSCH, *Handels- und Gewerbegeschichte Danzigs unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens*, Leipzig 1858, p. 224.

Apart from continuity and importance of family ties, this choice also suggested the continuation of the mercantile – and maritime – connections. Specifically, it could refer to the business connections his father had established between Danzig and London, as well as to many places in the North Sea and Baltic Sea.

In short, the painting and the example of the Giese family demonstrates two themes which are of interest in this paper concerning networks and actors. First of all, the networks in which Georg operated existed at the family, city, regional, Hanseatic and state level, spanning the Baltic and North Seas. This translated into both opportunities and the calculated possibility of having to deal with conflicts at these levels. Secondly, Georg and his family members (i.e. ancestors, contemporaries and successors) all combined various roles in their lives. These roles ranged from business, city administration, pastoral care and legal and humanist science to urban and state diplomacy. Juggling roles also occurred on the female side of the family: Georg's widowed mother combined raising ten children and running the family business, while his wife probably maintained valuable political and commercial links with Thorn, her hometown. Exposure to various contexts and the performance of various roles made them well equipped to manage all kinds of conflicts. It has to be underlined here that, in both aspects, Georg and his family should be seen as an illustration, not an exception or a stand-alone case study.⁷ The patriciate in Danzig consisted in the sixteenth century of 23 families, but for instance councillors were recruited from 72 families which were in various ways also involved in regional and overseas trade.⁸ The interlacing of networks has been discussed extensively for various traders and cities in the Baltic and North Sea areas. To date, the multiplicity of roles in conflict management tied in to all these networks has not been a subject of a thorough analysis.

This second theme constitutes the very core of my 2018-2023 NWO VIDI (Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research) project, in which three team members will analyse conflict management in commercial cities in northern Europe, at the intertwined micro-, meso- and macro-scales. The framework of commercial cities has been chosen because it allows the discussion of mobility and migration, as well as economic, political, legal, social and cultural complexities. The concept of conflict is thus broader than what is usual in socio-economic history, or discussions of commercial cities. I have presented the research agenda of this project in detail elsewhere.⁹ Here, I would like to put forward three points which

⁷ For instance, the network and actions of the Ferber family in Danzig has been studied extensively, see E. BOJARUNIEC, *Social advancement among patrician Families in Gdańsk in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period as exemplified by the Ferber family*, Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis, 29, 2015, 150-170; H. ZINS, *Ród Ferberów i jego rola w dziejach Gdańska w XV i XVI w.*, Lublin 1951. Also, Jan von Hoefen (Dantyszek) or Georg Klefeld and their networks could be good examples. The networks were interrelated, see H. SAMSONOWICZ, *Geografia powiązań rodzimych patrycjatu gdańskiego w średniowieczu*, in *Venerabiles, in Nobiles et Honesti. Studia z dziejów społeczeństwa Polski średniowiecznej*, A. RADZIWIŃSKI et al eds., Toruń 1997, s. 319–325 and P. SIMSON, *Geschichte der Stadt Danzig*, Danzig 1903, 363.

⁸ *Historia Gdańska II*, 1454-1655, Gdańsk 1982, pp. 208-215.

⁹ J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Conflict management and interdisciplinary history: Presentation of a new project and an analytical model*, in "The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History", 15, 2018, n. 1, 89-

will inform the analyses in the overall project, and which are of relevance to this paper.

1) In order to tackle the dynamic of multi-level conflicts taking place in various spheres of premodern urban life, a more comprehensive concept than ‘conflict resolution’ is needed. While this is the dominant term in social sciences and social-economic history, it does not take enough into account that conflicts were not only resolved. Consequently, I propose a model of historical conflict *management* consisting of prevention, provocation, maintenance of the status quo, escalation and de-escalation, in addition to resolution. These should be seen as elements, not stages in conflict management.¹⁰

2) Economic, and also commercial history, has in recent years put much emphasis on institutions, including those handling conflicts. The people behind these institutions, i.e. the faces of conflict management like Georg Giese and his family members, have not received such attention. Yet in order to understand the functioning of institutions, the actors behind it have to become more visible. And, in the case of commercial cities engaged in maritime trade, it is important to underline that these people were part of various networks at the same time. Within these networks, they could exchange both mercantile and conflict management know-how.

3) To date, separate roles like lawyers, councillors or diplomats have been scrutinized in the context of the overall changes occurring in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in particular the rise or transformation of states with strong sovereigns. But, as the example of the Giese family demonstrates, these roles at the urban level were not ascribed as exclusive to one person. They could be stages in a career, or co-exist alongside other roles. My point is that these interconnections of networks and flexibility of roles in conflict management were the strength of Hanseatic commercial cities. Specifically, they allowed flexibility, exchange of information in the very well-developed culture of written communication and frequent face-to-face meetings (the aforementioned Hanse and regional diets), and the growth of versatile experience. The lack of one specialization was not seen as hindrance, but an advantage in the Hanse in the late Middle Ages and the sixteenth century.

The project will explore these issues in depth, and thus the current paper should be seen as a starting point of discussion.¹¹ Nevertheless, I do want to present some initial results and show how these multitasking conflict managers operated in the networks of the Baltic and North Sea areas. As mentioned earlier,

107. Compare also F. MIRANDA, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ eds. *Merchants and Commercial Conflicts in Europe, 1250-1600*, special issue of “Continuity and Change”, 32, 2017, n. 1.

¹⁰ Different than in for instance the hourglass model in O. RAMSBOTHAM, T. WOODHOUSE, H. MIALL, *Contemporary conflict resolution*, Malden 2016, 4th updated edition.

¹¹ As the paper was written in the first months of the project, I make primarily use of secondary literature, published sources and only some archival sources. The references to my own articles are signposts to more extensive primary source discussions.

the empirical foundation is to a large extent derived from the activities and interests of the citizens of the Hanseatic city of Danzig.¹²

In the following, I will briefly discuss the various levels at which these versatile northern European conflict managers operated. From the point of view of citizens of a Hanseatic city, there were five levels: the urban, regional, Hanseatic, state level (i.e. the interaction with the sovereign and officials acting on his behalf), as well as the 'inter' level of politics (i.e. the interurban, interregional and interstate dealings with non-Hanseatic city councils, foreign overlords and rulers).

THE CITY

Within the city of Danzig in the second half of the fifteenth and in the sixteenth centuries, the most important institution was the great (broad) municipal council. Until 1526, the power was in the hands of the council proper, with four (rotating) burgomasters and a total of nineteen councillors drawn mainly from the mercantile patriciate (the First Order). There was also a Bench of twelve aldermen with a judge (Second Order), which at first had only judicial functions. After the Third Order of lesser merchants and craftsmen joined in 1526, the broad council of the three orders governed the city. This broad council combined administrative, legislative, political and judicial functions.¹³ As is well known, in this period there was no division of power similar to our modern *trias politica* – or apparently, no need to divide it. There was, however, a division of competences. For example, the Bench of aldermen adjudicated as a rule in the first instance and rendered arbitration, while the council proper functioned in the second instance. In practice, however, there could be exceptions to this rule. The proclaimed aim was to handle matters – often framed as conflicts – in an efficient way. Recurring examples are commercial conflicts, shipwreck issues, bankruptcies or inheritance matters.¹⁴ This

¹² The model of conflict management, and the project altogether, were conceived on the basis of my previous research done on conflict *resolution* in Danzig and the Hanse, and were prompted by the conceptual gap in the analyses of premodern conflicts. See J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *The Hanse as an institution of conflict management*, cit., pp. 59-84.

¹³ C. BIERNAT, *Recesy gdańskich ordynków, 1545-1814*, Gdańsk 1958.

¹⁴ H. SAMSONOWICZ, *Wer traf die Entscheidungen in den selbstverwalteten Städten des mittelalterlichen Polen?*, in *Rechtstadtgründungen im mittelalterlichen Polen*, ed. E. MÜHLE, Cologne 2011, p. 383; R. CZAJA, *Grupy rządzące w miastach nadbałtyckich w średniowieczu [The governing groups in the Baltic towns in the Middle Ages]*, Toruń 2008; J. TANDECKI, *Aufbau der Verwaltung und der Gerichtsbarkeit in den preussischen Grosstädten im Mittelalter*, in *Preussische Landesgeschichte: Festschrift für Bernhart Jähmig zum 60. Geburtstag*, U. ARNOLD, M. GLAUERT, J. SARNOWSKY eds., Marburg 2001, pp. 247-252; C. BIERNAT, *Recesy*, cit.; D. KACZOR, *City constitution, municipal laws and public order in sixteenth-century Gdańsk*, in *New Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Gdańsk, Poland and Prussia*, ed. B. MOŻEJKO, London 2017, pp. 127-141. On the municipal organization of cities using Saxon law, see E. ISENMANN, *Die deutsche Stadt im Mittelalter 1150-1550. Stadtgestalt, Recht, Verfassung, Stadtregiment, Kirche, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft*, Köln 2010. On the historical records of the Danzig council, see M. GRULKOWSKI, *Gdańsk chancellery and registers in the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries*, in *New Studies*, pp. 47-59 and P. OLIŃSKI, *Die Danziger Stadtbücher im 14. und der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, in *Verwaltung und Schriftlichkeit in den Hansestädten*, ed. J. SARNOWSKY, Trier 2006.

means that people who were active in these bodies gained insight and experience with respect to handling a variety of matters.

The most visible part of the activities of the members of these institutions is conflict resolution. It takes up the most space in the sources, and has received the most attention from researchers – both due to the topics they have investigated (commercial and social relations), and the conceptual apparatus used, where ‘resolution’ is the established term. However, also on this city level, one can speak of prevention (drawing up laws and regulations), provocation and escalation (in many cases opting for costly, exhausting and relation-damaging litigation), maintenance of the status quo (when matters were adjourned endlessly), and de-escalation (by means of trying to find a solution and taking measures to prevent a re-eruption of conflict, for instance by having the parties take an oath of peace or, conversely, by expelling someone from the city to be rid of the problem). These activities, in addition to the traditional category of resolution, should therefore be given more space and extra attention in the project.

Overall, the principle of overlapping jurisdictions, competences and functions existed in Danzig, just like elsewhere in Europe at the time. There were also other institutions – and thus individuals – who were part of this overlap. Starting in the second half of the fifteenth century, that is, from when Danzig became part of the Polish Crown, a representative of the king was present in the city (*Burggraf*). He was also a member of the mercantile patriciate, i.e. coming from one of the several families involved in trade, administration and politics at the highest level, many of whom became ennobled.¹⁵ In the sixteenth century, the burgomaster and his deputy had their own judicial competences, and another organ – the *Wette* – gained power and prominence in dealing with criminal matters. Based on a previous administrative urban division, there was also a separate Bench of alderman for matters concerning the Old City, previously an autonomous entity and as of the mid-fifteenth century a neighbourhood in the Main City of Danzig. Also, while secretaries and the so-called syndics were not full members of the council, they took part in the sessions (and as we shall see, performed tasks outside of the city) and brought in learned expertise: after all, they were the only ones with legal degrees, obtained in Cracow, Leipzig, Rostock or further abroad.¹⁶ Finally, there was an economic institution that supervised the collection of mooring fees, the so-called *Pfablckammer*. Although it was not primarily a judicial body, conflicts could occur within their sphere of competences. And, perhaps even more significantly, it was led by two councillors from the magistrate, again according to the principle of rotation.¹⁷ The extent of the group in Danzig, their embeddedness in the networks

¹⁵ BIBLIOTEKA GDAŃSKA PAN, henceforth BG PAN, Ms. 616; M. BISKUP, *Starostowie-Burgrabiowie gdańscy w latach 1455-1506*, in “Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne”, 6, 1954, n. 1, pp. 42-59; K. MIKULSKI, *Patryzjat*, cit., p. 42.

¹⁶ *Hanserecesse/Hanserezesse*, 4 series, 26 volumes Hanserecesse/Hanserezesse, Leipzig 1870–1970, henceforth HR 2:3 nr. 288§49; HR 3:1 nr. 334§§23–24; HR 3:3 nr. 352§§23, 114, 116–119; HR 3:7 nr. 39§§14–22; HR 3:7 nr. 40§§4-5; HR 3:7 nr. 45§§14–18.

¹⁷ Z. ZDRENKA, *Rats- und Gerichtspatryzjat der Rechten Stadt Danzig, Teil II:1526–1792*, Hamburg 1989; IDEM, *Glówne, Stare i Młode Miasto Gdańsk i ich patryzjat w latach 1342–1525* [Gdańsk’s Main, Old and Young Towns and their patricians: 1342-1525, Toruń 1992; D. KACZOR, *Herrschaft und Verbrecher*.

of the Hanse and the region and the way they juggled their roles will be the subject of investigation in the project.

However, it can already be pointed out that movement between the various bodies was the very feature of these institutions. It can be seen as motion in two directions: ascension in career steps towards more advanced positions, and rotation between the functions. To take the Giese family as an example, Georg and his cousin Tiedemann started as aldermen on the Bench at the ages of 38 and 34, respectively, after gaining experience as merchants. After 9-14 years, they became judges there, which meant that they were presiding over the meetings. The next step on the ladder was to become councillor, 2-3 years later. Some of these councillors would eventually become burgomasters, the highest position in the city, for example, the aforementioned cousin or Georg's son Konstantin. This climbing of the ladder meant that they were familiar with various types of conflict and ways of handling them, as well as with the increase of scale and complexity. At the same time, the rotating of functions was just as important: as councillors, they would become acquainted with spheres of urban life and hold responsibilities connected to upholding and expanding the infrastructure of the harbour, for instance. Some councillors and burgomasters would become representatives of the king in the city, *Burggraf*: this included our Georg, when he was in his late fifties, and a couple other members of his family. While this was seen as an honourable function, it was a career or function option, not the highest attainable role. An important note about this mobile system has to be made: even though the members of these institutions may seem to have been partly limited to the patriciate, as the same names keep occurring in the historical record, no direct kin were in fact allowed to sit on the council at the same time (a rule that was probably frustrating to large families, like the Giese). Moreover, the introduction of the Third Order in 1526 gave other city dwellers a voice in decisions concerning changes of laws and regulations, for instance, and expanded the pool of know-how, as the new members brought concrete examples – such as conflicts between butchers or bakers – with them to the council table. This Third Order strove for the formalization of arbitration performed in various parts of the city by its members from 1545 on; this could be seen as an upward legal mobility of the whole group of craftsmen. Some of the members of the Third Order would become members of the council proper.¹⁸

This Third Order constituted a bridge to the rest of the city, and it draws our attention to the fact that not all matters were dealt with on the council or before the *Wette* or *Burggraf*. It was also common for 'good men' to perform (informal) arbitration and mediation in the neighbourhoods, which would then be registered in the books of the Bench of aldermen. The rules of conduct that were developed in these neighbourhoods were used in discussions on the revisions of the law governing in Danzig and in Prussia. Similarly, priests could play such a role in the

Der Danziger Strafvollzug in der Frühen Neuzeit, in *Kulturgeschichte Preußens königlich polnischen Anteils in der Frühen Neuzeit*, S. BECKMANN, K. GARBER eds., Tübingen 2005; J. KAUFMANN, *Studien zur Geschichte der Altstadt Danzig*, in "Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins", 55, 1913; E. KEYSER, *Die Gerichtsbücher der Altstadt Danzig*, in "Mitteilungen des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins", 23, 1924, pp. 31-32.

¹⁸ C. BIERNAT, *Recesy*, cit.

parishes, as part of their pastoral care. In the sixteenth century, many of the provosts were educated in universities, also in (canonical) law, and they too engaged in revisions of the law and regulations.¹⁹ Furthermore, while the skippers of ships calling at Danzig and elsewhere had no formal judiciary competences, there were no obstacles to them performing the role of an arbiter if their reputation and the situation allowed it. As we will see in the following sections, it was also possible and apparently normal for the city council to draw from this pool of burghers for tasks abroad. All of this means that the category of Danzigers who were tasked with managing conflicts at various levels should be seen as broader than just the city council.

However, the crux of this discussion – even though it is divided for analytical purposes into the urban, regional, Hanse and state levels – is that this urban environment, with its exposure to various issues and internal mobility, was not a closed urban system if we look at it from the point of view of maritime networks and conflict management. These varied urban conflict managers were active at all levels, and moved between them in a similar way as they did within the city.

THE REGION

From the point of view of the participation of Danzigers in conflict management in multiple roles and guises, the regional level can be seen in a twofold way: the meetings of the Prussian Council and the Prussian Estates, on the one hand, and the regional meetings of the representatives of the Prussian Hanseatic cities Danzig, Elbing and Thorn, on the other. In all these contexts, Georg Giese and other members of his family were clearly very active.

The Prussian Council was a political body in Royal Prussia whose main task was to safeguard the autonomy of the region. It had developed from the Prussian Confederation (a cooperation of nobility and cities, founded in 1440), which opposed the policy of its then-sovereign, the Teutonic Order. It was comprised of voivods, castellans, chamberlains, bishops of Warmia and Kulm as ecclesiastical and secular overlords, as well as two or three representatives from each of the cities of Danzig, Thorn and Elbing. In the sixteenth century, the council was presided over by the Warmia bishop, which shows the importance of the post (Georg's brother Tiedemann was first bishop of Kulm, then of Warmia). It was a body with no external political power, i.e. it was not supposed to carry on international politics. Yet it was the highest echelon of power in Prussia when it came to internal affairs like taxation, the minting of coins or legislation.²⁰

¹⁹ *Historia Gdańska II*, 1454-1655, Gdańsk 1982, pp. 266-288; T. BORAWSKA, *Życie umysłowe na Warmii w czasach Mikołaja Kopernika*, Toruń 1996.

²⁰ B. ŚLIWIŃSKI, B. MOŻEJKO, *The political history of Gdańsk from the town beginnings to the sixteenth century*, in *New Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Gdańsk, Poland and Prussia*, ed. B. MOŻEJKO, London 2017, 37; R. CZAJA, *Miasta pruskie a Zakon krzyżacki. Studia nad stosunkami między miastem a władzą terytorialną w późnym średniowieczu* [Prussian towns and the Teutonic Order. Studies on the relationship between towns and territorial authorities in the late medieval period], Toruń 1999.

In these matters, however, the Council had to consult the representative body in Prussia, the Estates (created already in the fourteenth century). The Estates met on average four times a year, and consisted of officials from the cities as well as members of the nobility. The meetings were usually held in Marienburg (Malbork) and Graudenz (Grudziądz), and here, also external affairs like foreign policy or overseas commerce were discussed. What appears then as an inland body was at the same time very much a forum for discussions on the maritime interests and networks of the cities of Danzig, Elbing and Thorn, as well as of the nobility engaged in the profitable grain trade from the Baltic region.²¹ Matters regarding these cities were high on the agenda, including private warfare going on in the region and affecting commerce, or matters of legislation (Kulm law) which then had an impact on the urban law and regulations. The meetings were partly geared towards the resolution of problems, but even more towards preventing them or channelling them towards other bodies. This part of the activities of the Estates will be to the focus of close examination during the project, as the forum is a very good example of how urban, regional, state and also overseas interests were intertwined, and how conflict managers operated at a group and personal level.

Georg Giese was a frequent envoy of Danzig to the meetings of the Prussian Estates. He had close connections to Thorn, with his wife originating from there and his son eventually becoming a burgomaster in the city. His fraternal tie with the bishopric in Kulm and later Warmia must have also been seen as an asset. He managed his brother's commercial affairs, and that gave him social and political capital in matters concerning the city of Danzig. Furthermore, his branch of the Giese family became ennobled in the sixteenth century, which might have enabled closer contact with the nobility in the Prussian Council and the Estates.²²

He was also sent by Danzig to the meetings of the Prussian Hanseatic cities, where the affairs of this part of the Hanse were discussed and the shared position for the general meetings was prepared and discussed. These meetings could at times overlap with the meetings of the Estates, and it is clear that the same representatives were sent to both meetings, which suggests that cohesion was sought. The Hanseatic regional meeting was also a very important forum for the exchange of information related to Hanse trade and privileges, and if internal tensions arose between traders from the Prussian Hanseatic cities, it was also a forum of conflict management. The policy was to resolve the matters through arbitration and mediation rather than litigation. At the same time, the fact that these meetings were held regularly (the envoys knew each other well and could communicate decisions to their hometowns as well as keep the overall regional and state context in mind) functioned as a mechanism of conflict prevention and again, if needed, of delegation of further conflict management to appropriate bodies. Stalling conflict resolution in such a way could be at times an effective tool in letting tempers cool down.

²¹ H. SAMSONOWICZ, *Rola Gdańska w życiu stanowym Prus Królewskich i w życiu politycznym Rzeczypospolitej* [The role of Gdańsk in the administrative life of Royal Prussia and the political life of the Republic] in *Historia Gdańska II, 1454-1655*, ed. E. CIEŚLAK, Gdańsk 1982, pp. 260–288.

²² T. BORAWSKA, *Rodzina*, cit., p. 143.

THE HANSE

The general Hanse level can be split equally into two parts, though both parts were very much interconnected: the Hanse diets and the way in which the *Kontore* were run. Envoys from Hanseatic cities also met regularly: in some periods every year, in other periods every couple of years. Most diets were held in Lübeck, but there were also meetings in Bremen, Cologne, Lüneburg, etc. These meetings lasted for weeks, and included their own rituals and ways of demonstrating both unity and status differences within the Hanse. They involved the presence of dozens of prominent men in the host city, who stayed in taverns and met in the city hall.²³ A variety of matters were discussed, including shared privileges and regulations, foreign policy, the shipment of goods, prices, quality of goods, reaction to or imposing blockades, the organization of settlements abroad, breaches of rules and expulsion of individual traders and cities from the Hanse (a last-resort measure, which was rarely implemented). In other words, all aspects of the functioning of the Hanse as a maritime and, more generally, commercial and political network were scrutinised and shaped there.²⁴ Conflicts at the individual level, between Hanseatic cities or with non-Hansards, as well as large-scale political and economic clashes, were debated in detail to reach common decisions or decide on further procedure. The envoys brought specific matters to the table. For instance, in 1535, representatives of Danzig produced claims by our Georg Giese and other citizens on past damages committed by Hollanders which had not yet been repaid.²⁵ Concerning matters within the Hanse, there was a strong drive to find consensus or, if this was not possible, to stall a matter. A good example of this is the almost 80 year long ‘sitting order’ conflict between envoys from Danzig and Königsberg at the Hanse diets, which ostensibly was about status at the meeting table, and in fact reflected the changed political sovereignty of both cities. As such, it was intractable, but ways were found to maintain the status quo and keep negotiations about other matters going.²⁶ Also, there were many mechanisms to prevent internal conflicts that kept each other very well informed. On the other hand, shared decisions could also be reached to escalate a conflict with foreigners, by imposing trade bans during a war, for instance. In all these matters, the Hanse diet could thus function as a forum for conflict management for the envoys and the cities they represented.

The representatives of cities usually did not have full plenipotence of their councils: they were to take the Hanseatic decisions (*recessè*) home for ratification, and thus a mechanism of control, autonomy and, if needed, postponement was

²³ T. BEHRMANN, *Über Zeichen, Zeremoniell und Hansebegriff auf hansischen Tagfahrten*, in *Die hansischen Tagfahrten zwischen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, ed. V. HENN, Trier 2001, 109-124

²⁴ *Die hansischen Tagfahrten zwischen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, ed. V. HENN, Trier 2001; *Flandrischer Copiar Nr. 9. See- und Schifffrechtsbestimmungen*, C. JAHNKE ed. and trans., Lübeck 2003.

²⁵ HR 2:2 nr. 494; *Niederländische Akten und Urkunden zur Geschichte der Hanse und zur deutschen Seegeschichte*, RUDOLF HÄPKE ed., I-II, Munich, 1913 (henceforth NAU) 1 nr. 256.

²⁶ J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Mercantile conflict resolution in practice: connecting diplomatic and legal sources from Danzig c. 1460-1580*, in *Understanding the Sources of Early Modern and Modern Commercial Law: Courts, Statutes, Contracts, and Legal Scholarship*, H. PIHLAJAMÄKI, A. CORDES, S. DAUCHY eds., Leiden 2018, pp. 7-31.

employed by the cities. Still, this does not mean the envoys were powerless. Quite the contrary, we find mostly burgomasters and prominent councillors on the list of attendees, among them members of the Giese family. Secretaries and syndics could also come, but they were not always as welcome because the cities limited their voting rights even further.²⁷ On the whole, envoys from Danzig, for instance, had detailed instructions on what to promote and what to resist, but the idea was that they should try to reach those goals in a flexible manner. In other words, they were to negotiate with the other participants and, if necessary, yield to demands for the greater common good.

It is striking that, for a long time, little research had been done into the background of the Hanse envoys. Recently, this has changed and the findings are fascinating.²⁸ It appears that there was a far-reaching stability in the pool of attendees, i.e. the same people went to meeting after meeting. Consequently, they knew each other quite well, which could help in negotiations and facilitated the flow of information. Secondly, many of them were migrants from one Hanseatic city to another, or married to daughters of the patriciate from another city. This meant that they functioned as a network at the level of the Hanseatic diets: a maritime kinship and mobility network, as many came from Baltic and North Sea cities directly involved in maritime trade. When it comes to our Giese family, we see marital connections with Thorn (Georg's wife) and Zwolle (his sister). A position has been put forward that envoys were selected by the city councils precisely on the basis of their personal extensive networks.²⁹ This would mean that there was a very pragmatic policy of employing networks on various levels. An argument for this position is that internal political changes on the city council do not seem to have significantly affected the choice of who was sent.

The *Kontore* were special bodies within the Hanse: they *did* function as legal units with their own seals, coat of arms and treasury. They could, on the one hand, be seen as places where Hanseatic traders from various cities stayed together (though this could take various forms: from closed compounds in Novgorod to scattered lodgings in Bruges), but also as congregations of people. Surely, their primary objective was to conduct trade on foreign ground, within the protected framework of privileges. But the *Kontore* were also very important information hubs on matters which could range from the best prices for woollen cloth to political news on uncooperative kings or the ramifications of the introduction of Lutheranism. Also, the members of the *Kontor* were governed and adjudicated by a selected group of aldermen, who at the same time played an active and prominent role in international politics (see the last section). We will focus on the information

²⁷ HR 2:3 nr. 288§49; HR 3:1 nr. 334§§23–24; HR 3:3 nr. 352§§23, 114, 116–119; HR 3:7 nr. 39§§14–22; HR 3:7 nr. 40§§4–5; HR 3:7 nr. 45§§14–18; BEHRMANN, *Zeichen*, p. 116.

²⁸ D.W. POECK, *Die Herren der Hanse. Delegierte und Netzwerke*, Frankfurt am Main 2010. Compare M. PUHLE, *Hansische Ratssendeboten und ihr sozialer und politischer Hintergrund. Braunschweig und Magdeburg im Vergleich*, in *Die hansischen Tagfahrten*, Henne ed., pp. 65–73.

²⁹ D.W. POECK, *Die Herren*, cit., p. 270.

and internal conflict management aspects here, as they tie in with the Hanse diet and urban levels.³⁰

The dissemination of information was a very important function of the *Kontore*. They had their own administration, sending out and receiving letters and copies of letters and privileges. Both on the private and collective level, even very specific mercantile writs were usually accompanied by at least a few lines regarding the current political situation, changes in the legal regulations in the host country or on weather conditions, which were vital for shipping. This information was sent to the hometowns of the merchants residing in the *Kontore*, to the Hanse diet and, if appropriate, to the other *Kontore*. A lot of these writings were dispatched by sea, with the merchants ships, so this is a very good example of a maritime *information* network. Recent research both on the Hanse and medieval economy in general has underlined that it was not capital as such that lay behind advances of commerce and economy, but the access to and spread of information. This well-oiled communication machine, one of the Hanse's trump cards, made it possible to evaluate options in all spheres of the life of merchants, and thus push the ubiquitous limits of risk and uncertainty somewhat further.³¹ This was also of importance to conflict management: information coming from several sources could help reveal rising tensions even in distant maritime connections, and thus prevent conflicts in a timely way or de-escalate them. On the other hand, news of goods scarcity on European markets, for instance, could be a useful tool to escalate conflicts and thereby achieve the aim of securing a better deal with the rulers of the Low Countries, England, Norway or Novgorod, as will be discussed below. Danzigers were present in all four large *Kontore*, but the most significant group was in Bruges and London. Georg Giese had his portrait taken while in London, but he was also active in the Low Countries. Administrators were merchants with yearlong experience which went beyond commercial know-how. There are several examples of *Kontor* administrators in Bruges (later moved to Antwerp) who came from Danzig, and who thus combined commercial activities with keeping unity and peace within the settlement. Much effort was put into preventing and de-escalating both internal and external conflicts, as in the Portinari case in the 1470s when a ship was captured by Danzigers on its way from Bruges to Italy. There, *Kontor* diplomacy included dealing with the pope.³² Some of these Hanseatic diplomats and administrators later became councillors in a city. A man by the name of Hinrik Castorp from Dortmund, for instance, was an administrator in Bruges who later became Lübeck burgomaster. He hammered on the importance of good diplomacy

³⁰ N. JÖRN, *Die Herausbildung der Kontorordnungen in Novgorod, Bergen, London und Brügge im Vergleich 12-17. Jahrhundert, in Prozesse der Normbildung und Normveränderung im mittelalterlichen Europa*, D. RUHE, K.-H. SPIESS eds., Stuttgart 2000, pp. 217-235; M. BURKHARDT, *Kontors and Outposts*, in *A Companion to the Hanseatic League*, ed. D.J. HARRELD, Leiden 2015, pp. 127-161. See also the matter of the Bruges *Kontor* alderman from Danzig in J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Connecting diplomatic and legal sources*, cit., pp. 7-31.

³¹ S. JENKS, *Capturing opportunity, financing trade*, *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe 1300-1600*, W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, London 2017, pp. 56-76.

³² B. MOZEJKO, *Maritime Gdańsk in the second half of the fourteenth and the fifteenth century: The phenomenon of privateer Paul Beneke and the great caravel Peter von Danzig*, in *New Studies*, pp. 102-113.; J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Connecting legal and diplomatic sources*, cit.

and conflict prevention, and his favourite saying was 'It's easy to start war, but it costs a lot to stop it in an honourable way'.³³ This means that at a city level, *Kontor* administrators brought with them a combination of very international experience of trade, maintaining complex maritime networks and dealing with conflicts.

THE STATE

Danzigers operated not only in the Hanse network, but were also subject to a sovereign, the Polish king. Until the middle of the fifteenth century, Danzig and Prussia were under the Teutonic knights, but due to a string of conflicts regarding, among other things, commercial and tax matters, Danzigers turned to the Polish king. After a lengthy war, they attained far-reaching autonomy within the rising state of the Polish Crown.³⁴ This move had several consequences: political, economic and legal-social. Politically, it entailed protection of the Polish sovereign and it was a clear signal that the city was not part of the Holy Roman Empire (though the emperor kept 'forgetting' this well into the sixteenth century). At the same time, it placed the city (along with Thorn and Elbing) in the political and regional context of Royal Prussia. Consequently, it was on the other side of the border from (also Hanseatic) Königsberg, which was under the Teutonic Order and, from 1526, Ducal Prussia – hence the 'sitting order' dispute mentioned above. From the economic point of view, it gave Danzig access to a huge hinterland producing grain, i.e. the main export product of Danzig merchants to western Europe. For the Polish Crown, the harbour and granary infrastructure of Danzig meant access to the economic networks of the Hanse and the maritime connections of the city in general, including the Low Countries, England and Scandinavia. It is clear that the harbour in the Baltic became very important to the King. The legal and social consequences were that the city was now under Magdeburg (Kulm) law, with inheritance rules stemming from Flemish law and at the same time the Polish king as a supreme instance of appeal, in carefully circumscribed cases. Danzig and Royal Prussia were to be governed by people born in the region (the so-called 'indygenat'), i.e. of German origin with the explicit argument that they knew the local circumstances best, in addition to the established rights. In the sixteenth century at least part of this elite was fluent in Polish and very knowledgeable of the Polish political and economic affairs, since they had studied in Cracow, served the King and went on missions to negotiate the range of the autonomy of the region with the sovereign.³⁵ Again, all these spheres were arenas of conflict management, which was conducted by specific people.

If we look at the Danzig example, such tasks were given to city councillors, syndics and burgomasters, often in a combination of 2-3 people. The sources from

³³ G. NEUMANN, *Hinrich Castorp: ein Lübecker Bürgermeister aus der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Lübeck 1932.

³⁴ B. ŚLIWIŃSKI, B. MOŻEJKO, *The Political history*, cit.

³⁵ E. KIZIK, *Prusy*, cit.; A. SUCHENI-GRABOWSKA, *Zygmunt August Król Polski i Wielki Książę Litewski, 1520-1562*, Kraków 2010; JUSTYNA WUBS-MROZEWICZ, *Danzig (Gdańsk): seeking stability and autonomy*, in *Maritime Trade*, W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ eds., cit., pp. 248-272.

the sixteenth century show that this combination encompassed not only mercantile-administrative aspects, but also learned expertise of civil as well as sometimes ecclesiastical law. The meetings had a ceremonial nature where the mutual relations were confirmed, but where first and foremost concrete matters were discussed. The envoys also received lengthy instructions from the city council, and sent back regular reports, which at times showed the frustrations of the Danzigers with the futility of their efforts.³⁶ Such meetings could also be risky: for instance, in 1569, a nephew of Georg, councillor Albrecht Giese, as well as three other prominent Danzig burghers (burgomasters and syndic), were incarcerated under the pretext of having offended the Polish king, while the general matter was the extent of the Prussian and Danzig autonomy.³⁷ All in all, however, their tasks were usually to prevent conflicts or de-escalate, pointing towards the economic interests which benefitted from a lack of conflicts, or convincing the king to maintain the status quo rather than take a rash decision. The overall aim of Danzigers was to maintain autonomy and stability, and conflict management was a prime tool for achieving this aim.

Clergy, like the bishops of Kulm or the archbishop of Warmia, could also play a vital role in this process. While the archbishopric was part of Royal Prussia, it was also a special, autonomous entity within this framework. Still, the connections were very close: its ecclesiastical and simultaneously secular overlords, the archbishops, were often burghers of Danzig and had often embarked on their careers as provosts for one of the Danzig churches. The family, political and even business ties were very close, as the example of Georg Giese shows: as mentioned earlier, his brother Tiedemann (whose letter is probably depicted in the painting,) would become bishop of Kulm and archbishop of Warmia. Several times, Tiedemann championed the autonomy of Royal Prussia and Danzig. He took special pains to explain to the new king what 'indigenat', i.e. the right to have 'indigenous' office holders, entailed for the royal policy (to no avail, as would become clear in the course of the sixteenth century). Here, we see a conflict manager at work: preventing clashes which could – and would – ensue if outsiders started to mingle directly in Prussian affairs.³⁸

Finally, at this royal and state level, it is noteworthy that the king drew directly from the pool of knowledgeable, educated sons of Danzig patricians to fill his administration. A good example here is the son of Georg, also named Tiedemann, who, thanks to his legal expertise, diplomatic skills and probably also the family connections, became one of the secretaries of the Polish king.³⁹ The close intellectual and diplomatic connection between Danzig and the capital of the Crown was probably enhanced by the existence of the university in Cracow, which many Danzigers attended. But it also shows the appreciation of the personal, commercial networks and the access to information which Danzigers brought to

³⁶ A part of such sources was lost during WW II, but there are copies and summaries.

³⁷ BG PAN Ms. Uph. fol. 31; *Historia Gdańska II*, p. 303.

³⁸ APG 300,29/452 fol. 45; BG PAN Ms. 1804; BORAWSKA, *Giese*, pp. 275-8.

³⁹ *Danziger Inventar, 1531-1591: Mit einem Akten-Anhang*, ed. P. SIMSON, Cologne 1913, henceforth DI, nr. 7668; P. SIMSON, *Geschichte II*, cit., p. 275.

the court. These individuals played a double role, probably to the full knowledge of the king: they translated the interests and wishes of the king in the relations with Prussia and Danzig, but at the same time actively furthered the interests of the region. This bridge function was apparently appreciated from both sides, and grew from an informal arrangement to a permanent position, because it proved effective in soothing ruffled feathers at the court (e.g. by providing gifts to strategically chosen nobles). Such translators, whether in the literal sense of the word or political-economic, were valuable regulators of conflicts such as the monopoly of Danzig traders in exporting grain from the city. It is interesting to see that the king did not confine himself to official titles like ‘lawyer’ or ‘administrator’, but chose his representatives on the basis of their capacity and connections. An illustration of this is his personal doctor, Johann Liberhant, who doubled as diplomat on the international scene: he was sent on secret missions.⁴⁰ Hereby, we move to the level of:

‘INTER’ POLITICS: INTERURBAN, INTERREGIONAL, INTERSTATE⁴¹

The king made frequent use of Danzigers to pursue his diplomatic goals in large-scale politics.⁴² Several members of the Giese family were sent to Scandinavia or England, sometimes together with a representative of the Polish or Prussian nobility. Sources show that this owed itself to the former’s knowledge of the macro and micro commercial interests of the Polish Crown, in the sixteenth century paired for at least some of them with legal education, probably also their language skills (part of the education of many Hanseatic merchants) and also political savvy. Danzigers, who regularly attended the Hanse and Prussian Estates meetings, were well familiar with negotiations. If we take a look at the instructions they received from the king for missions to Denmark, for instance, or when they asked for his support, it is clear that their primary task was to contain conflicts; not so much resolve them – that was often impossible within a single mission or with solely diplomatic means – but to push them in a certain direction, de-escalate them or, conversely, make diplomatic threats coated with promises of commercial advantages.⁴³

Danzigers also participated in large-scale politics as representatives of the Hanse, though always with the hometown as a backdrop. The Hanseatic interests

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

⁴¹ Just as ‘national’ or ‘transnational’ are not appropriate for the late Middle Ages and the sixteenth century, so does in fact ‘international’, as research for this article made me realise. I plead guilty for having used it myself in past publications.

⁴² Traditional diplomatic or political history usually does not include such diplomats, see J. WATKINS, *Toward a new diplomatic history of medieval and early modern Europe*, in “Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies”, 38, 2008, n. 1, pp. 1-14; M. EBBEN, L. SICKING, *New diplomatic history in the premodern age. An Introduction*, in “Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis”, 127, 2014, n. 4, pp. 541-552. Compare here *Historia dyplomacji polskiej vol. I*, Warszawa 1982, where urban diplomats are not considered.

⁴³ APG 300,29/249 fol. 160-171, 261; APG 300,R/Ii,5 HR 3:8 nr. 257; HR 3:8 nr. 356; HR 3:8 nr. 452; HR 3:8 nr. 505; HR 3:8 nr. 577; HR 3:9 nr. 116.

vs. hometown interests balancing act was part and parcel of how the Hanse operated. As representatives of the Hanse, they visited coronation ceremonies, peace talks and perhaps most important to them, negotiations for trade privileges.⁴⁴ It is astounding with how much ease they moved from issue to issue, and from location to location, given the dire travelling conditions at that time, both by land and sea. Being part of and maintaining a maritime network was so self-evident that it was hardly talked about in such terms in the sources. Symptomatically, Hansards on the whole rarely used it as a term of self-description in internal communication. It was in contacts with others that it was employed, discussed and sometimes explained in circumspect terms. As Hansards, Danzigers like Georg Klefeld had the task of negotiating the best conditions possible for all Hanse privilege holders or for a specific group within the Hanse. Klefeld (1522-1576), a syndic and later burgomaster with a legal training, proved to be an effective negotiator with the English (and a very effective PhD candidate: he obtained the degree in Orleans, having passing through there on the way back from negotiations in England, as was not unusual in the sixteenth century).⁴⁵

Peace was more profitable than war for traders, so prevention and de-escalation often had priority, but the Hanseatic conflict managers did not shy away from provoking or escalating conflicts either. This included the imposition of trade blockades, the moving of their settlement elsewhere (for instance, the Bruges Kontor was temporarily moved many times to Aardenburg, Utrecht, Deventer and eventually Antwerp) in order to exert pressure, or the outright declaration of war.⁴⁶ In all these situations, the Hanseatic diplomats also served as councillors, burgomasters or secretaries in their home cities, where they had tasks which included the management of small-scale conflicts, like inheritance cases, before one of the courts.

These urban diplomats operated not only on behalf of a sovereign or the Hanse, but also on behalf of the city proper. In the sources, we can see Danzigers like the councillor Albrecht Giese (nephew of Georg) being sent to Copenhagen, Stockholm or London, for instance, to deal with matters like arrested ships or goods, privileges for this specific city, or negotiations which would allow the city to stay out of a large-scale conflict.⁴⁷ The boundary between Hanse interests and the interests of a particular city could be flexible and changeable, depending on how the situation developed. It is striking that the Danzig city council sent not only people involved in the urban magistrature, but also merchants who were *not* sitting on the council, but who had gathered large commercial expertise or combined trade with legal studies. An example of this was Jakob von Barthen, a wealthy cloth trader with some legal university experience and a reputation of a 'good man' and tough negotiator. After being sent on several missions, von Barthen apparently

⁴⁴ For instance HR 2:5 nr. 255–258, HR 4:1 nr. 102, HR 4:2 nr. 611 § 29; HR 4:2 nr. 625.

⁴⁵ P. SIMSON, *Geschichte II*, cit., pp. 27, 22, 321-22.

⁴⁶ V. HENN, *Der 'dudesche kopman' zu Brügge und seine Beziehungen zu den 'nationes' der übrigen Fremden im späten Mittelalter*, in *Kopet uns werk by tyden': Beiträge zur hansischen und preussischen Geschichte. Walter Stark zum 75 Geburtstag*, N. JÖRN, D. KATTINGER, H. WERNICKE eds., *Schwerin* 1999, cit., pp. 131-142.

⁴⁷ DI nr. 4676.

developed a taste for the legal and diplomatic profession and returned to university to get a doctorate in law.⁴⁸

The bottom line here is that there was pragmatic openness as to who could function as a conflict manager, and the important aspect was the right experience and proven skills. Looking at it from a collective perspective, conflict managers in Danzig had a vast know-how on dealing with all kind of conflicts: individual, group and large-scale, and they were able to accumulate this know-how in the context of their own city, the Hanse and with the backing or orders of their king. Consequently, they had a very large tool box of conflict management at their disposal. In my opinion, this variety and flexibility of roles of conflict managers, and hence skilful conflict management, was a very important aspect of the working of the Hanse.

EPILOGUE AND CONCLUSIONS

Conflict management was seen for a couple of centuries as a flexible affair, conducted by a group of people in various capacities. The striking point is that these individuals almost always did so while also working in other occupations, primarily as merchants, clergy or doctors. Even lawyers had other tasks on the side, such as business or medicine. In 1556, representatives of the Hanse cities found it was time for there to be a permanent figure who would be the face of the organization and who would perform many of the high-profile conflict management tasks. They chose Heinrich Sudermann (1520-1591), an experienced *Reichskammergericht* (imperial court) lawyer and a syndic (i.e. diplomat trained in law and experienced in commercial affairs) from Cologne who would thereafter obtain the title of Hanse syndic. His task portfolio included diplomacy on behalf of the Hanse, attending Hanse meetings, visiting the *Kontore* and supervising the building of a new *Kontor* seat in Antwerp. Later, a request was added that he write the history of the Hanse and draw up sea law (both of which came to naught).⁴⁹ The increasingly exasperated and exhausted Sudermann stated that he was no expert of sea law, but to stall matters, he stated that he would make an attempt. In 1575, Sudermann had issued a lengthy writ lamenting that he was fed up with all the travelling on behalf of the Hanse, with his personal business and family life suffering tremendously under this burden, and voiced his general unhappiness with his full-time job. In other words, he thought it was much better that many people combined these tasks with their proper business or occupation. Conflict

⁴⁸ P. SIMSON, *Geschichte II*, cit., p. 178.

⁴⁹ DI, Anhang nr. 13, 33, 37; J.P. WURM, *Die Korrespondenz des Hansesyndikus Heinrich Sudermann mit dem königlichen Statthalter in Schleswig und Holstein Heinrich Rantzau 1579-1591*, in *Das Gedächtnis der Hansestadt Lübeck*, M. HUNDT, R. HAMMEL-KIESOW eds., Lübeck 2005, pp. 491-515; L. ENNEN, *Der hansische Syndikus Heinrich Sudermann aus Köln*, in "Hansische Geschichtsblätter", 6, 1876, pp. 1-58; K. FRIEDLAND, *Der Plan des Dr. Heinrich Sudermann zur Wiederherstellung der Hanse. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der hansisch-englischen Beziehungen im 16. Jahrhundert*, in *Mensch und See-fahrt zur Hansezeit*, ed. A. GRABMANN, Cologne 1995, pp. 37-102.

management, apparently, worked at best collectively in the Hanseatic north: too much pressure on one individual brought him to the brink of a burnout.⁵⁰

Returning to the image of Georg Giese, I would like to draw your attention to a finding art historians have made. Something is wrong here. The angle of the room is not correct, the corner of the table protrudes toward the viewer in a rather weird way, and both his seal dangling at the back and lopsided scales next to it are tilted in a way that is physically impossible. They hang next to Giese's motto: 'No joy without sorrow'. The off-balance presentation of elements of mercantile life is not a token of a lack of skill of Holbein: quite the contrary, he did it on purpose and his visual tricks are also known from another famous painting. The huge 'The Ambassadors' in the National Gallery of London, where a French ambassador and a bishop are depicted with an anamorphic skull at the bottom, is a reminder of the finality of life.⁵¹ In the case of the Giese portrait, these irregularities draw the viewer to the painting, stir an interest and impart a feeling of movement and possible lack of balance under the veneered, still image. I would add that this search for balance, so central in medieval thought, and the realization that it was a result of constant movement and change and was therefore fragile, was very fitting to the mindscape of merchants at the time. They were involved in several balancing acts between various levels of activities, various networks to which they belonged, and the various roles they performed. Not least of which in their capacity as conflict managers.

⁵⁰ DI, Anhang nr. 38 (1575).

⁵¹ <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/hans-holbein-the-younger-the-ambassadors>.

Tab. 1. The Giese family tree

		Some members of the Giese family and their geographical connections	
I.	Tiedemann in Uno (Westphalia)		
II.	Tiedemann, c. 1430 in Danzig, d. 1465 + Margrethe Rogge; alderman in the St. George brotherhood		
III.	(Alix + Johann) Tiedemann (IIa), ca. 1442-1505 + Nathalie Monich; Barbara Bischof; alderman, councillor, judge, envoy to the Prussian Estates, envoy for the king	Albrecht (IIIb), 1499 + Elisabeth Langenbecke merchant, councillor London, Lübeck, Königsberg, Riewol, Vilnius, Kovno, Lublin, Cracow, Poznan, Silesia, Tübeck, Königsberg, Riewol, Vilnius, Kovno, Lublin, Cracow, Poznan, Silesia	
IV.	Tiedemann (IVa), 1491-1556 + Ursula von Suchten; Barbara von Schilling merchant, burgomaster, Burggraf, diplomat, envoy to Antwerp, envoy to the Prussian Estates and to Hanse diets	Hans, a priest	
		Albrecht (IVb), 1474-1484-1507 + Katharina Ketting, alderman	
		Hermann 1484-1528 + Katharina Feldstete	
		Georg (IVb), 1497-1562 + Christine Krüger, alderman, councillor, Burggraf, envoy to the Estates meetings London, Thorn	other: Anna + Johanna Skutten Brigitta + Eberhard Rogge Elisabeth + Hans van Löwen from Holland Katharina + Willen Wicherling from Zwolle Michel, Lithuania Martin, England
V.	Heinrich merchant and diplomat, Portugal	Albrecht (Vb), 1524-1580+ Barbara Niederhoff; councillor, studied in Greifswald, Wittenberg, Heilsberg; envoy to the Polish court, Lübeck and Denmark; crucial in the 1559 negotiations with the Polish king about the autonomy of Danzig (imprisoned along with Konstantin Ferber, Johann Proitz, Georg Kiefeld); co-founder of the gymnasium	
	Georg; Tiedemann, d. 1564 + Katharina Ferber (daughter of Eberhard)		
	Konstantin, 1542-1605 + Elisabeth Bombach, alderman, judge, councillor, burgomaster, Burggraf		
		Tiedemann (Vb), 1543-1582, secretary of the Polish king; burgomaster in Danzig; studied in France	
		Michel, 1545-1606, court of the Prussian Duke in Königsberg	
		Alexander, 1555-1588, burgomaster in Thorn	of late: Albrecht, employed by the Bishop of Płock Christina + merchant from Thorn

Guillaume Calafat

*Un réseau corse entre l'Afrique du Nord et l'Europe.
Commerce maritime, institutions et enrichissement
au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*

En 1609, le capitaine Guillaume Foucques, originaire de La Rochelle, était pris avec son navire et son équipage par quatre vaisseaux de Tunis¹. En ce début du XVII^e siècle, la Méditerranée occidentale était en effet une région risquée, marquée par des attaques récurrentes de corsaires chrétiens et musulmans. Rapidement libéré grâce à un échange de prisonniers, Foucques présenta au roi de France Henri IV un mémoire destiné à relater les « grandes cruautéz » des « pirates Turcs » dans lequel il nommait, dans des pages extrêmement véhémentes, des marchands et des marins provençaux et languedociens qu'il accusait d'« intelligence » avec les corsaires tunisiens:

« Ceux-cy – écrivait-il – sont habitans de Marseille, et y en a mesmes de ladite ville et de la coste de Provence, et ne se passe guères de choses qui viennent en leur notice dont ils ne donnent advis à Thunes, et mesmes qui ont leurs frères, cousins et neveux françois renégats y demeurans, à qui ils donnent tous les advis qu'ils peuvent »².

Le mémoire de Foucques, qui circula largement et fut imprimé (ou réimprimé) en 1612, dénonçait explicitement le support technique fourni par certains négociants marseillais à la flotte tunisienne qui acheminaient dans la province ottomane du matériel de construction navale (bois, mâts, fer, clous, chaînes, plomb, poudre, étoupes) et favorisaient ainsi la constitution d'une marine tunisienne redoutée. En outre, le capitaine rochelais vilipendait le rachat, par ces mêmes commerçants marseillais, de marchandises et de navires – espagnols, italiens, français, flamands, vénitiens – pris par des corsaires tunisiens, vendus à l'encan à Tunis, puis écoulés dans le port toscan de Livourne, où, écrit Foucques, « tout est bien venu et receu »³. Apport de compétences techniques et recel constituaient à cette époque deux types

¹ J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit sur les relations franco-tunisiennes au début du XVII^e siècle*, dans « Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée », 20 (1975), pp. 105-130.

² *Mémoires portants plusieurs advertisements presentez au Roi par le Capitaine Foucques, Capitaine ordinaire de sa Maïesté en la marine du Ponant, après estre délivré de la captivité des Turcs, pour le soulagement des François, et autres nations Chrestiennes, marchands, et matelots, qui trafiquent sur mer: avec une description des grandes cruautéz, et prises des chrestiens par les pirates Turcs de la ville de Thunes, par l'intelligence qu'ils ont avec certains François renégats*, Paris, Guillaume Marette, 1612; transcrit dans P. GRANDCHAMP, *La France en Tunisie de la fin du XVI^e siècle à l'avènement de la dynastie hassinite*, Tunis 1920-1933, vol. 3, pp. 388-396, 392.

³ *Ibid.*

d'accusations fréquemment portées aux marchands et aux marins européens actifs dans le commerce de « Barbarie »⁴.

Lorsque Foucques rédigea son mémoire en 1609, des débats très vifs animaient alors les milieux négociants marseillais, divisés depuis la première moitié du XVI^e siècle en deux camps : l'un favorable au maintien du commerce avec les provinces ottomanes d'Afrique du nord, et l'autre impliqué dans le commerce du Levant, d'Espagne et d'Italie⁵. Dans une lettre imprimée, datée de Lyon le 26 août 1610 et qui proposait une véritable petite histoire des relations commerciales entre la France et Tunis au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, un certain « J.D.S. », Marseillais installé à Lyon (sans doute un membre de la famille d'origine pisane des Della Seta), comparait les deux types de commerce :

« *Quant au négoce de Barbarie, il consiste en cuirs, cires, laynes, barbes et corails, quand la pesche en est establie (...). En tout ce négoce, depuis Tripoly de Barbarie jusques au destroit de Gibartar, on ne scaurait employer cent mil escus au plus toutes les années (...)* [Ce n'est] *qu'un monopole, le levain des larcins des corsaires* »⁶.

En revanche, le commerce du Levant trouvait davantage grâce aux yeux du marchand installé à Marseille :

« *Quant à celuy de Levant, auquel je comprens celui d'Italie et d'Espagne pour recevoir aussi bien que l'autre du mal de la Barbarie, consiste en soyes, cochennille, indiques, cotons, laynes, huiles, galles, especeries, perles, pierreries, cuirs, marroquins et autres peaux de prix, toute espèce de droguerries et autres choses précieuses que produisent le Levant et les Indes ; ce négoce est de telle importance que, de toutes parts du Royaume, les Français et estrangers y acourent par la porte de Marseille, et pour le moins il s'y employe la valeur de trois millions toutes les années. Le négoce de Levant, d'Espagne et d'Italie est ouvert et libre à tout le monde, et c'est celuy qui faict grandement valloir la grandeur et les droicts de sa Majesté* »⁷.

« L'entretenement du négoce de Barbarie [était] la ruine de celuy du Levant » d'après l'auteur du mémoire, et une conclusion s'imposait donc naturellement, à savoir la prohibition pure et simple du commerce avec l'Afrique du nord, « avec commandement à tous François de se retirer et ne fréquenter directement ou indirectement en laditte Barbarie, à peine de confiscation de corps et de biens »⁸. On

⁴ W. KAISER, *Asymétries méditerranéennes. Présence et circulation de marchands entre Alger, Tunis et Marseille*, dans *Les musulmans dans l'histoire de l'Europe. I. Une intégration invisible*, éd. J. DAKHLIA, B. VINCENT, Paris 2011, pp. 417-442, 437-438.

⁵ J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., p. 106.

⁶ *Factum pour le procez des notaires contre les procureurs touchant leur préséance*, s. l. n. d. (le titre de cette lettre imprimée est erroné); transcrit dans *Mémoires de Philippe Prévost de Beanlien-Persac (1608-1610 et 1627)*, éd. C. DE LA RONCIERE, Paris 1913, pp. 228-264 (p. 260). Dans les années 1560-1570, Jacques de la Seta s'était établi à Marseille où il était à la fois membre de la Compagnie du corail marseillaise et représentant de la confrérie napolitaine pour le rachat des captifs (P. MASSON, *Les Compagnies du corail : étude historique sur le commerce de Marseille au XVI^e siècle et les origines de la colonisation française en Algérie-Tunisie*, Paris 1928, p. 26).

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 260-261; et J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., pp. 106-107, n. 6.

⁸ *Factum*, cit., p. 263.

retrouve cette comparaison au désavantage du commerce avec le Maghreb dans un « Cahier de Doléances » que le Bureau de Commerce et le Conseil de ville de Marseille présentèrent au roi Louis XIII en 1611 et où il était écrit que le « négoce de Barbarie (...) est utile à peu et si ruyneux à tous »⁹. Le commerce avec l'Empire ottoman était d'ordinaire considéré par les financiers du Royaume de France des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles comme gourmand en argent et en or, et donc peu conciliable avec les thèses bullionistes ambiantes qui prônaient l'accumulation d'un stock monétaire et de métaux précieux à l'intérieur de l'État ; en outre, les intérêts particuliers des marchands impliqués dans ce négoce avaient la réputation d'être contraire à l'intérêt public¹⁰. Aussi, le commerce entre Marseille et l'Afrique du Nord était-il souvent décrit par ses détracteurs comme « disharmonieux ».

Dans le mémoire de Foucques, comme dans la lettre lyonnaise de J.D.S., deux personnages se voyaient directement accusés de profiter du commerce des captifs et des retombées économiques de la guerre de course. Il s'agissait d'Antoine Lovico et d'Antoine Bérengier, deux commerçants mêlés à toutes les tractations diplomatiques du Conseil de ville de Marseille avec les « puissances » (c'est-à-dire le pacha, le dey, le bey et le Dīwān) de Tunis au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles¹¹. En 1607, Henri IV en personne enjoignit aux autorités de Marseille de s'en remettre pour négocier avec la province de Tunis à « Anthoine Lovicq ou Bérenguer, corsous naturalizés et habitants en nostre dicte Ville de Marseille, quy ont demuré long temps en ce païs et y ont acquis grand crédit »¹². Il faut entendre ici crédit dans les deux sens du terme, c'est-à-dire au sens d'un crédit économique (ces deux hommes avaient d'importantes liquidités) et d'un crédit social (ils jouissaient d'une bonne réputation auprès des autorités de Tunis). Rapporté dans le *factum* lyonnais, un dicton provençal circulait d'ailleurs à Tunis chez les captifs chrétiens d'après lequel le dey de Tunis en personne, Kara 'Uthmān Dey (souvent appelé « Carassoman » dans les sources européennes), tenait les deux hommes en grande estime au point d'écouter voire de suivre systématiquement leurs conseils: « Si Béringié et Lovico voullé, Carassoman ren non farié » (« si Bérengier et Lovico le voulaient, Kara 'Uthmān ne faisait rien »)¹³.

Comment Lovico et Bérengier parvinrent-ils à obtenir ce capital social et économique à Tunis ? Par quels mécanismes les deux marchands corses naturalisés purent-ils occuper une place privilégiée et reconnue dans le commerce maritime entre l'Afrique du nord et l'Europe du sud au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles ? Cet article propose de décrire et d'analyser les dispositifs politiques, diplomatiques et économiques utilisés ou mis en place par un groupe de négociants spécialisés dans le commerce maritime entre Tunis, Livourne, Marseille et la Corse. À travers

⁹ J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., p. 109; W. KAISER, *Les "hommes de crédit" dans les rachats de captifs provençaux (XVI^e-XVII^e siècles)*, dans *Le commerce des captifs. Les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerranée, XV^e-XVIII^e siècle*, éd. IDEM, Rome 2008, pp. 291-319, 314.

¹⁰ Voir notamment les remarques critiques d'Antoine de Montchrestien, *Traité de l'économie politique* [1615], éd. F. BILLACOIS, Genève 1999, p. 361.

¹¹ Sur les « puissances » de Tunis, voir T. BACHROUCH, *Formation sociale barbaresque et pouvoir à Tunis au XVI^e siècle*, Tunis 1977, pp. 45-56.

¹² J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., pp. 107-108.

¹³ *Factum*, cit., p. 242; cité également dans J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., p. 108, n. 11.

l'histoire des parcours de Lovico et de Bérengier, il s'agira de mettre au jour les multiples facteurs conjoncturels et organisationnels ayant contribué à la structuration et à l'enrichissement de ce que nous appellerons un « réseau corse » en Méditerranée occidentale. Une première section de cet article portera sur une institution clé des relations diplomatiques et commerciales entre l'Afrique du nord ottomane et l'Europe occidentale, à savoir le consulat de la nation française à Tunis. Un second point tâchera de montrer comment la mainmise sur deux institutions, en l'occurrence les compagnies du corail marseillaises et le consulat de France, a joué un rôle déterminant dans l'ascension sociale, économique et politique de Lovico et Bérengier, avec la protection et l'appui de personnages influents en France comme dans la province de Tunis. Enfin, un troisième temps visera à décrire et analyser les formes d'alliances inter-religieuses et les complémentarités commerciales et institutionnelles qui ont permis l'enrichissement mutuel et simultané des différents membres du réseau dans différentes places méditerranéennes.

1. LE CONSULAT DE FRANCE ET LA PROVINCE OTTOMANE DE TUNIS AU DÉBUT DU XVIII^E SIÈCLE

Le commerce maritime entre la province ottomane de Tunis et l'Europe est bien documenté grâce aux actes de la chancellerie du consulat de France. En 1577, l'écuyer marseillais Louis D'Ariès obtint du roi de France Henri III les provisions de consul « à Tunis, la Goulette, et Tripoli de Barbarie »¹⁴. Sa tâche était à la fois de veiller au bon déroulement du commerce français – essentiellement marseillais et provençal – dans cette région de l'Empire ottoman, comme de s'assurer du respect des « Capitulations » (*ahdnāme*), les privilèges octroyés par le sultan aux membres de « nations » étrangères. Le Royaume de France et l'Empire ottoman avaient en effet noué des relations militaires, diplomatiques et commerciales précoces et étroites au cours du XVI^e siècle : dans les « échelles » du Levant (à Alep, Alexandrie, Tripoli de Syrie) puis d'Afrique du nord (à Alger et Tunis), ainsi que le disposaient plusieurs articles des « Capitulations », les consuls de la « nation française » se virent ainsi garantir d'amples pouvoirs de juridictions sur leurs ressortissants¹⁵.

¹⁴ ARCHIVES NATIONALES, PARIS (désormais ANP), *Marine* B7 49, « Consuls à Tunis et Tripoli: Provisions de Consul à Tunis, la Goulette, et Tripoli de Barbarie pour le Capitaine Louis Dariès », f° 2; ARCHIVES DEPARTEMENTALES DES BOUCHES-DU-RHONNE (désormais ADBR), *Amirauté de Marseille et des mers du Levant*, 9 B 1 +, « Enregistrement des édits, lettres patentes, ordres du roi, ordonnances et commissions de l'amiral, actes administratifs divers et privés », f° 486; BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE (désormais BNF), *Ms. Français*, 18595, « Traité des consuls de la nation française aux Pays étrangers, contenant leur origine, leurs établissements, leurs fonctions, leurs droits, émoluments et autres prérogatives (...) par P. A. [Pierre Ariste] » [1667], ff° 102-104. Devenu en 1584 deuxième consul de la ville de Marseille, Louis d'Ariès tenta d'imposer la Ligue à Marseille et fut pendu en 1585 (W. KAISER, *Marseille au temps des troubles. Morphologie sociale et lutte de factions, 1559-1596*, Paris 1992, p. 268).

¹⁵ Y. DEBBASCH, *La nation française en Tunisie (1577-1835)*, Paris 1957 (Sirey), pp. 13-30 ; G. POUmarede, *Naissance d'une institution royale: les consuls de la nation française en Levant et en Barbarie aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, dans *Annuaire-Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de France – année 2001*, Paris 2003, pp. 65-128 ; J. ULBERT, G. LE BOUËDEC, *La fonction consulaire à l'époque moderne. L'affirmation d'une institution économique et politique (1500-1700)*, Rennes 2006 ; *De l'utilité commerciale des consuls. L'institution*

Cette juridiction s'exerçait principalement de deux manières : d'une part, une juridiction, dite *volontaire*, renvoyait aux compétences notariales et à l'enregistrement d'actes de divers types (obligations, testaments, procurations, contrats, authentications, etc.) ; d'autre part, une juridiction, dite *contentieuse*, permettait au consul de trancher les différends entre Français et, plus largement, entre marchands et marins chrétiens¹⁶. En effet, jusqu'à l'arrivée d'un vice-consul hollandais, Caspar Van Aken, en 1616, puis l'appointement par la *Levant Company* du consul anglais William Cooke, en 1622, le consulat de la nation française fonctionnait comme seule instance d'enregistrement des demandes de marchands, de marins et de captifs originaires d'Europe occidentale, en particulier des États italiens et de l'Espagne¹⁷. Sa chancellerie était donc un passage obligé pour la certification et l'adjudication de certains biens ou le recouvrement des dettes de marchands qui commerçaient avec l'Europe occidentale ou, comme le disaient les sources, avec « la terre des Chrétiens »¹⁸. Les négociants et les armateurs musulmans de Tunis y recouraient eux aussi, en particulier lorsqu'ils affrétaient des navires, qu'ils vendaient ou échangeaient des captifs ou qu'ils avaient des intérêts à faire valoir dans une transaction avec des commerçants européens¹⁹. Archivés depuis l'an 1582 et conservés aujourd'hui au Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes, ces actes de chancellerie ont été précieusement inventoriés par Pierre Grandchamp dans les années 1920 et ils demeurent sans conteste l'une des principales sources pour écrire l'histoire des acteurs du commerce extérieur de Tunis au XVII^e siècle²⁰.

En ce début de XVII^e siècle, les relations entre la province ottomane de Tunis et la France n'étaient guère au beau fixe. Du côté français et marseillais, on reprochait aux corsaires tunisiens de capturer des embarcations provençales, de piller leurs cargaisons et de réduire en captivité leur équipage ; en somme de contrevenir manifestement aux ordres du sultan contenus dans les Capitulations, renouvelées en 1597. Du côté tunisien, on accusait tout autant les marins français d'attaquer les navires nord-africains et turcs et de dissimuler leurs forfaits en arborant des bannières

consulaire et les marchands dans le monde méditerranéen (XVII^e-XIX^e siècle), éd. A. BARTOLOMEI et alii, Rome-Madrid 2018 [http://books.openedition.org/efr/3253].

¹⁶ G. CALAFAT, *La juridiction des consuls français en Méditerranée: litiges marchands, arbitrages et circulations des procès (Livourne et Tunis au XVI^e siècle)*, dans *De l'utilité commerciale des consuls*, cit., pp. 155-172 [http://books.openedition.org/efr/3295].

¹⁷ Sir G. FISHER, *Barbary Legend: War, Trade and Piracy in North Africa*, Oxford 1957, pp. 198 et 307 ; G. VAN KRIEKEN, *Trois représentants hollandais à Tunis (1616-1628)*, dans « IBLA: Revue de l'Institut des belles lettres arabes », 39, 1976, n. 1, pp. 41-71.

¹⁸ Sur le rôle juridique et économique des chancelleries consulaires françaises, voir Y. DEBBASCH, *La nation française*, cit., pp. 212-226 ; J. ULBERT, *Qu'est-ce qu'un chancelier de consulat ? Une approche par les textes de droit français*, dans « Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines », 128, 2016, n. 2 [Online: http://journals.openedition.org/mefrim/2892 ; DOI : 10.4000/mefrim.2892].

¹⁹ Voir notamment D. PANZAC, *Le contrat d'affrètement maritime en Méditerranée: droit maritime et pratique commerciale entre Islam et Chrétienté (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, dans « Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient », 45, 2002, n. 3, pp. 342-362.

²⁰ P. GRANDCHAMP, *La France en Tunisie*, cit. Ces onze volumes cherchaient à démontrer l'ancienneté de la présence française en Afrique du nord, dans le but explicite de justifier par l'histoire l'entreprise coloniale.

ennemies, italiennes ou espagnoles. En outre, des Musulmans de Tunis ramaient comme esclaves dans la chiourme les galères du roi de France²¹. Au printemps 1605, après avoir obtenu le renouvellement des Capitulations par le jeune sultan Ahmed I^{er}, l'ambassadeur François Savary de Brèves se rendit directement à Tunis et Alger pour y négocier des traités bilatéraux de paix et de commerce et tenter de pacifier les relations entre les provinces ottomanes et la France. C'était là une stratégie diplomatique nouvelle depuis l'intégration des provinces nord-africaines au sein de l'Empire ottoman. Désormais, les Français, suivis des Hollandais et des Anglais, dédoublaient les accords : les Capitulations du sultan garantissaient leurs droits au Levant, tandis que des traités spécifiques, au statut juridique et diplomatique débattu par les théoriciens du droit des gens, étaient négociés avec les autorités des provinces nord-africaines. Par la suite, au cours des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, cette diplomatie commerciale des traités de paix et de commerce allait devenir l'une des modalités nécessaires de la négociation entre les États d'Europe occidentale (France, Provinces-Unies et Angleterre au premier chef) et l'Afrique du nord ottomane²².

Durant son séjour à Tunis, De Brèves constata la faible autorité du pacha, qui représentait théoriquement le sultan dans la province ; à l'inverse, il observa la grande influence d'Uthmān Dey²³. Le pouvoir de ce dernier s'était vraisemblablement affirmé à partir de 1593, à la faveur d'une révolte de la milice des janissaires (le *jund*) qui le porta à la tête de la province en lui attribuant le titre de « dey ». Ce terme honorifique, qui signifie « oncle maternel » en turc, désignait depuis la reconquête ottomane de Tunis par Sinān-Pasha, en 1574, les chefs des sections des janissaires²⁴. Cantonnant le pacha à un rôle symbolique et administratif, 'Uthmān Dey réussit habilement à satisfaire les attentes des janissaires comme des armateurs de navires. Il s'entoura d'officiers dévoués et gouverna avec prudence, si bien qu'il parvint à transmettre le pouvoir à son gendre, Yūsuf, dey de 1610 à sa mort en 1637, considéré dans les sources européennes comme le véritable « gouverneur » de la province de Tunis²⁵. Après les guerres et les sièges hispano-ottomans des années

²¹ F. SAVARY DE BREVES, *Relation des voyages de Monsieur de Brèves, tant en Grèce, Terre Sainte et Aegypte qu'aux royaumes de Tunis et Arger, ensemble un traité fait l'an 1604 entre le roy Henry le Grand et l'empereur des Turcs, et trois discours dudit sieur, le tout recueilly par le S. D. C.*, Paris, N. Gasse, 1628, pp. 308-309.

²² C. WINDLER, *La diplomatie comme expérience de l'Autre. Consuls français au Maghreb (1700-1840)*, Genève 2002, pp. 223-245; G. CALAFAT, *Ottoman North Africa and ius publicum europæum: The case of the treaties of peace and trade (1600-1750)*, dans *War, Trade and Neutrality. Europe and the Mediterranean in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*, éd. A. ALIMENTO, Milan 2011, pp. 171-187.

²³ F. SAVARY DE BREVES, *Relation des voyages*, cit., pp. 307 et 309-310.

²⁴ G. YVER, *Dey*, dans *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, First Edition (1913-1936) : [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_SIM_1878].

²⁵ ARCHIVES DE LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE ET D'INDUSTRIE DE MARSEILLE (désormais ACCIM), J. 1887, «Commerce de Barbarie – Tunis: Correspondance avec Yssouf Dey»; S. BOUBAKER, *La Régence de Tunis au XVII^e siècle: ses relations commerciales avec les ports de l'Europe méditerranéenne, Marseille et Livourne*, Zaghouan 1987; A. RAYMOND, *Tunis sous les Mouradites: la ville et ses habitants au XVII^e siècle*, Tunis 2006; IDEM, *Une liste des deys de Tunis de 1590 à 1832*, dans «Cahiers de Tunisie», 32, 1960, pp. 129-136. Sur ces stratégies de promotion politique des mamelouks au sein des «maisonnées» des beys et des deys de Tunis, voir M. OUALDI, *Esclaves et Maîtres. Les mamelouks des beys de Tunis du XVII^e siècle aux années 1880*, Paris 2011, p. 65.

1570, et malgré les épidémies de peste récurrentes, Tunis connut sous les deys 'Uthmān et Yūsuf, de 1593 à 1637, une importante croissance économique et démographique. Durant cette période, la ville compta vraisemblablement jusqu'à 80 000 habitants, ce qui en faisait l'une des cités les plus peuplées de Méditerranée occidentale²⁶. La province accueillit en outre des milliers de « Morisques » expulsés d'Espagne en 1609 qui importèrent dans la région de nouvelles techniques agricoles et artisanales. 'Uthmān et Yūsuf firent par ailleurs construire mosquées, écoles, souks, bagnes et mausolées, qui transformèrent considérablement la capitale de la province²⁷. Les deux deys investirent massivement dans l'armement naval, bâtissant une flotte puissante et crainte partout en Méditerranée. Si les galères de Bizerte n'hésitaient pas à affronter celles des chevaliers de Malte, les prises effectuées par les navires corsaires visaient surtout les petites embarcations italiennes qui naviguaient en mer Tyrrhénienne et dans le détroit de Sicile : outre le profit tiré des marchandises capturées, le butin humain alimentait une économie de la rançon profitable pour les deys, les armateurs et les intermédiaires chrétiens et musulmans spécialisés dans le commerce des captifs²⁸.

2. DE LA « MAGNIFIQUE COMPAGNIE DU CORAIL » AU CONSULAT : LES PARCOURS DE LOVICO ET BERENGIER

La présence influente d'un réseau corse à Tunis s'affirma précisément au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, sous les gouvernements d'Uthmān et de Yūsuf Dey. Précisons d'emblée que par « réseau corse », il ne s'agit nullement de décrire un groupe clos et homogène, mais plutôt de désigner un espace relationnel et évolutif composé d'acteurs unis par une pluralité de liens (sociaux, économiques, affectifs)²⁹. Ce réseau n'était donc en aucun cas réservé exclusivement aux seuls marchands corses : outre des bourgeois de Marseille ou des marchands de Lyon, des négociants et armateurs ligures et toscans, des marins grecs, ainsi que des marchands musulmans et juifs commerçaient régulièrement avec les Corso-Marseillais de Tunis. À cette flexibilité, s'ajoute le fait que des dissensions entre marchands corses pouvaient donner lieu à des rivalités tenaces qui interdisent de penser ce groupe comme

²⁶ T. BACHROUCH, *Formation sociale barbaresque*, cit.; Ahmed Saadaoui, *Tunis ville ottomane. Trois siècles d'urbanisme et d'architecture*, Tunis 2001; A. RAYMOND, *Tunis sous les Mouradites*, cit., p. 249.

²⁷ Ibn Abī Dīnār Muḥamad Ibn Abī al-Qāsim, *Al-Mu'nis fī ikhbār Ifriqiyā wa Tūnis*, Muhammad Shammām, Tunis 1967; traduction M'hamed Ouarghammi, thèse de doctorat, Université de Nice, 1987-1988; M. OUALDI, *Esclaves et Maîtres*, cit.

²⁸ W. KAISER, *Les "hommes de crédit"*, cit.; W. KAISER, G. CALAFAT, *The Economy of Ransoming in the Early Modern Mediterranean. A Cross-Cultural Trade Between Southern Europe and the Maghreb (16th-17th centuries)*, dans *Religion and Trade: Cross-Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000-1900*, éd. F. TRIVELLATO, C. ANTUNES, L. HALEVI, Oxford 2014, pp. 108-130; D. HERSHENZON, *The Captive Sea: Slavery, Communication, and Commerce in Early Modern Spain and the Mediterranean*, Philadelphie 2018; G. FIUME, *Redenzioni islamiche (Sicilia, XVI-XVII sec.)*, dans « Quaderni Storici », 52, n. 3, pp. 825-854.

²⁹ Selon la définition qu'en donnent J.M. PODOLNY, K.L. PAGE, *Network Forms of Organization*, dans « Annual Review of Sociology », 24, 1998, pp. 57-76 (p. 59); voir également les remarques éclairantes de C. LEMERCIER, *Analyse de réseaux et histoire*, dans « Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine », 52, 2005, n. 2, pp. 88-11, 88.

harmonieux ou nécessairement solidaire. Si, comme nous le verrons, une commune origine corse constitue bien un élément fédérateur du réseau, elle n'en est en aucun cas une condition absolue ni exclusive³⁰.

Lorsqu'il aborda dans la province ottomane, Savary de Brèves observa l'entregent d'un « Corse », ami d'*Uthmān* Dey et « autrefois consul de [la] nation à Tunis »³¹. Il s'agissait d'Antoine Lovico (parfois écrit Lovic ou Ludovic), « pratic des coutumes & meurs du peuple, aimé du dit Cara Osman, & de toute la milice »³². Savary ne l'appréciait guère. Il l'accusait d'avoir cherché à s'enrichir au moment des négociations diplomatiques menées à propos de la libération des esclaves français détenus dans la province. L'ambassadeur n'était pas le seul à avoir du ressentiment vis-à-vis de Lovico: comme les libelles et factums de Guillaume Foucques et de « J.D.S. » en témoignent, plusieurs négociants ou marins défavorables au maintien des relations commerciales avec l'Afrique du nord dénonçaient publiquement, à Marseille comme à Lyon, la connivence des deux marchands corses naturalisés français, Antoine Bérengier et Antoine Lovico, avec les corsaires et les autorités de Tunis³³. Dans le mémoire imprimé à Lyon en 1610, Bérengier était présenté comme un « fils de Corse de basse condition (...) [ayant passé à Tunis] la pluspart de sa jeunesse, et pris avec ces corsaires une longue habitude »³⁴.

La présence de Bérengier à Tunis est attestée dès le début des années 1590 : de juillet 1591 à février 1592, il officiait en effet comme chancelier du consulat de France dans la province nord-africaine³⁵. Bérengier était le fils d'Anthonorsou Bérengieri, marchand corse qualifié dans un acte de 1591 d'« agent de la Compagnie du corail »³⁶. Cette célèbre Compagnie avait été fondée en 1553 par Tommaso « lou Corsou » Lincio (Lencio ou Lenche), Corso-Marseillais originaire de Morsiglia, village sis au nord-ouest du cap Corse. Marin et armateur, Tommaso Lincio avait pris le parti de la France lors des guerres d'Italie ; installé à Marseille au début des années 1530, il se livra tôt à divers trafics avec l'Afrique du nord, négociant aussi bien des épices sur les marchés d'Alexandrie, que des armes à Alger. Ses relations privilégiées avec les autorités ottomanes lui permirent non seulement de prendre en charge de nombreuses opérations lucratives de rachats de captifs, mais aussi de recevoir de la part des autorités d'Alger – et au détriment des Génois – le privilège des pêcheries du corail dans les mers d'Annaba³⁷. Devenu un riche armateur, allié

³⁰ Voir à ce sujet les remarques d'A. MOLHO, D. RAMADA CURTO, *Les réseaux marchands à l'époque moderne*, dans « Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales », 58, 2003, n. 3, pp. 569-579 (et le numéro tout entier consacré aux «réseaux marchands»); ainsi que F. TRIVELLATO, *The Familiarity of Strangers. The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period*, New Haven 2009, pp. 11-12.

³¹ F. SAVARY DE BREVES, *Relation des voyages*, cit., p. 327.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 341.

³³ *Mémoires portants plusieurs advertissements*, cit., p. 392.

³⁴ *Factum*, cit., p. 230.

³⁵ CENTRE DES ARCHIVES DIPLOMATIQUES DE NANTES (désormais CADN), 712PO/1/403 (II), actes du 3 juillet 1591 au 16 février 1592.

³⁶ CADN, 712PO/1/403 (II), actes du 23 avril 1591 et du 11 septembre 1592.

³⁷ P. MASSON, *Les Compagnies du Corail*, cit., pp. 16-19; F. BRAUDEL, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, Paris 1966, II, p. 310 ; W. KAISER, *Marseille au temps des troubles*, cit., pp. 157-158.

aux plus grandes familles de Marseille (tels les Forbin ou les Riqueti), naturalisé et soutenu par le Roi de France, Lenche obtint à partir de 1553 une série d'autorisations nécessaires pour transporter des matériaux de construction navale en Afrique du nord afin de pêcher le corail et de réparer les navires corailliers³⁸. Il fit par la suite édifier en 1561 le Bastion de France, une pêcherie de corail qui donna très rapidement d'importants bénéfices et qui devint, à l'instar de la Tabarka génoise, l'une des plaques tournantes du commerce entre l'Afrique du nord et la France durant l'époque moderne³⁹. À la fin du XVI^e siècle, Antoine Lenche, neveu du fondateur de la Compagnie, comptait ainsi parmi les cinq plus grandes fortunes de Marseille, achetant de nombreuses maisons dans la ville et obtenant les plus hautes charges municipales⁴⁰.

D'autres compagnies rivales se formèrent sur ce modèle : ainsi, le 20 décembre 1586, des Corses naturalisés déposèrent à Paris les statuts d'une Compagnie de pêche au cap Nègre. Pour maintenir leur quasi-monopole, les Lenche pouvaient néanmoins se prévaloir du soutien des autorités d'Alger, et en particulier de celui du puissant gouverneur de la province, devenu amiral de la flotte ottomane, 'Ulūdġ 'Alī (surnommé Occhiali dans les documents italiens)⁴¹. La restauration du pouvoir royal à Marseille, à l'issue des troubles de la Ligue, permit aux Corses, malgré l'assassinat d'Antoine Lenche en 1588, de renforcer leurs positions au sein des différentes compagnies de corail, et notamment en direction de Tunis. Plusieurs Corses naturalisés, originaires du cap Corse, tels les Gasparo, les Porrata, les Cipriani, obtinrent dès lors des parts dans la nouvelle association formée en 1594⁴². En 1603, c'est Antoine Bérengier lui-même, qualifié en 1593 de « marchand résident » dans les actes de chancellerie du consul de France, qui reçut du roi la concession du fortin de « Caudegrand », sur la côte tunisienne⁴³. Il créa une nouvelle compagnie en association avec le Sieur de Soubeyran, un proche du duc de Guise, gouverneur de Provence et Amiral des Mers du Levant, et un autre Corse naturalisé, Antoine Lovico, décrit dans certains documents comme son « frère »⁴⁴.

³⁸ ADBR, *Amirauté de Marseille et des mers du Levant*, 9 B 1 +, «Enregistrement des édits... cit.», ff° 114, 115v, 120v.

³⁹ P. MASSON, *Les Compagnies du corail*, cit., p. 189; C. DE LA RONCIERE, *Histoire de la marine française*, Paris 1910, pp. 71-74; P. GIRAUD, *Les Lenche à Marseille et en Barbarie*, dans «Mémoires de l'Institut historique de Provence», 13, 1936, pp. 10-57; 14, 1937, pp. 107-139; 15, 1938, pp. 53-86; W. KAISER, *Marseille au temps des troubles*, cit., pp. 157-161; M. VERGE-FRANCESCHI, *La Corse enjeu géostratégique en Méditerranée et les marins Cap Corsins*, dans «Cahiers de la Méditerranée», 70, 2005, pp. 85-99; M. VERGE-FRANCESCHI, *Les Lenche de Morsiglia et la magnifique Compagnie du corail à Marseille, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, dans *Le corail en Méditerranée*, éd. M. VERGE-FRANCESCHI, A.-M. GRAZIANI, Ajaccio 2004, pp. 65-94.

⁴⁰ P. MASSON, *Les Compagnies du corail*, cit., p. 41; W. KAISER, *Marseille au temps des troubles*, cit., pp. 54, 56, 59, 65.

⁴¹ P. MASSON, *Les Compagnies du corail*, cit., p. 35.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 48; voir également P. GIRAUD, *Les Lenche à Marseille*, cit.; M. VERGE-FRANCESCHI, *Les Lenche de Morsiglia*, cit.

⁴³ BNF, *Ms. Français*, 5809, «Formulaire à l'usage des notaires de la chancellerie royale», f° 149.

⁴⁴ BNF, *Ms. Français*, 16146, «Dépêches originales de divers ambassadeurs et agents français à Constantinople. I Années 1605-1611», «Lettre de Guillaume Fouques à Henri IV, le 24 mai 1609», f° 249: «nous avons trouvé un nommé Monsieur Berengier, corse de nation, qui ce dit en ambassade de Vostre Majesté pour tirer les François de ceste captivité, accompagné d'un nommé Lucdovicq, son

Fils d'Augustino Lovico, agent de la Compagnie du corail des Lenche mort à Tunis en 1575, Antoine Lovico était originaire de Rogliano au cap Corse. Il commença à faire des affaires à Tunis dans les années 1570-1580, en tant que « représentant des Sieurs Lencho et Porrata » de la « magnifique Compagnie du corail »⁴⁵. Il avait épousé Renée Martin, issue d'une puissante famille de marchands et d'écuyers de Marseille, et faisait des affaires avec ses beaux-frères, Thomas et Jean Martin⁴⁶. Thomas n'était autre que le propriétaire de l'office du consulat de France à Tunis depuis 1585⁴⁷. Perdue un temps en 1591 en raison de sympathies protestantes, il récupéra la charge en 1595 et la légua à ses fils, Pierre puis Lange. Le consulat était alors un office vénal que les marchands pouvaient acheter et volontiers utiliser à leur profit⁴⁸. En somme, le consulat de la nation française de Tunis était, au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, une affaire de familles liées à la Compagnie du corail et aux soutiens du roi de France à Marseille. Lorsqu'en 1625, le consulat échappa aux Martin et passa dans les mains d'une autre famille, le fils d'Antoine Lovico, Jean, tenta de décrédibiliser le nouveau consul en l'accusant à demi-mots, dans une lettre adressée au Bureau du commerce de Marseille, d'incompétence et de concussion⁴⁹.

Installé à Marseille, Martin confia la charge effective du consulat à des commis négociants⁵⁰. Lovico (en 1597-1598, 1602-1603) et Bérengier (1603-1605) exerçaient ainsi la charge de vice-consul à Tunis, occupant une position cruciale à l'interface du commerce entre la province ottomane et l'Europe. Si Bérengier fut actif à Tunis de 1603 jusqu'en 1625, Lovico mourut quant à lui en 1610⁵¹. Son beau-frère, Jean Martin, « écuyer de Marseille », frère du propriétaire du consulat de Tunis, fut alors mandaté par sa sœur Renée comme « curateur testamentaire des héritiers des biens » de son défunt mari. Martin arriva en septembre 1611 à Tunis pour recouvrer certaines créances et s'acquitter des dettes. Les actes conservés à cette occasion montrent que Lovico commerçait directement avec le dey *Kara*

frère, lesquelz avoient amené avecq eux quarante six Teurcs de vostre ville de Marseille pour eschange des François».

⁴⁵ CADN, 712PO/1/402 (I), acte du 28 août 1590.

⁴⁶ J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., p. 108, n.11. Je n'ai pas pu déterminer si le Marseillais Balthazard Martin, qu'Antoine Bérengier décrit dans les actes de la chancellerie du consulat de Tunis comme son « cousin », était apparenté aux beaux-frères de Lovico, mais cela semble probable et pourrait expliquer que les documents de l'époque apparentent volontiers Lovico et Bérengier.

⁴⁷ ADBR, B 3339, f°460v-461v, 27 avril 1585; ANP, Marine, B7, 49, f°6.

⁴⁸ Y. DEBBASCH, *La nation française*, cit., pp. 182-183; G. POUMAREDE, *Naissance d'une institution royale*, cit., p. 99.

⁴⁹ ACCIM, J 1445, «Consulat de Tunis», «Lettres des députés et des négociants de la nation (1621-1692)», lettre de Jean Lovico du 30 juillet 1627: «Je vous assure, Messieurs, que c'est la plus grande honte du monde de voir le peu de compte qu'ils font ici de maintenir la paix, à faute qu'il n'y a personne ici qui sache défendre la cause, car le Consul [Jean-Baptiste Maure] est tellement timide qu'il ne leur ose parler (...). Je vous assure, Messieurs, qu'il serait fort à propos que l'on députât ici quelque honnête homme, et qu'il n'eut point de négoce en ce pays, afin que son intérêt particulier ne l'empêchât pas de faire ce qu'il devrait».

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁵¹ J. PIGNON, *Un document inédit*, cit., p. 108, n. 11.

'Uthmān, l'homme fort de la province, ainsi qu'avec ses fils⁵². Il s'était spécialisé dans le rachat des produits de la course et dans le commerce des captifs à une époque où le chroniqueur tunisien Ibn Abī Dīnār (qui écrit à la fin du XVII^e siècle) rapporte que « les prises en mer augmentèrent d'une manière indescriptible »⁵³. En 1605, 50 % des cargaisons de bateaux écoulées sur le marché de Tunis étaient vendues par 'Uthmān Dey – le chiffre monte à 75% en 1608⁵⁴. Lovico commerçait également avec le successeur d'Uthmān, Yūsuf Dey. Il entretenait en outre d'étroites relations avec Ustā Murād, né Benedetto Rio, génois converti et redoutable marin, proche de la maisonnée de Yūsuf Dey et appelé à lui succéder⁵⁵. De 1605 à 1610, Ustā Murād apparaît à de nombreuses reprises dans les actes de la chancellerie du consul français de Tunis, où il vend et revend navires et butins de la course, devenant l'un des principaux interlocuteurs des institutions publiques et des intermédiaires privés – et de Lovico au premier chef – dans le commerce des captifs⁵⁶.

Outre ses relations étroites avec les autorités de la province et les associés de la compagnie du corail, Lovico utilisait les services de marins marseillais et cap-corsins afin d'effectuer la liaison entre la province de Tunis et les ports provençaux et italiens. La place tenue par les Martin dans la gestion du consulat de France de Tunis, ajoutée aux bonnes relations avec les principales autorités de la province ottomane, furent les deux ingrédients essentiels qui permirent à Lovico de jouer un rôle économique et diplomatique de premier plan dans la région. Lovico pouvait également compter sur son frère, Valerio, installé à Livourne puis Bastia, et sur son cousin Giacomo Lovico, qui résidait à Bastia puis à Marseille. Les trois hommes s'étaient spécialisés dans le lucratif rachat des nombreux captifs génois et corses à Tunis. Ces rachats passaient par la plateforme de Tabarka, située à l'est du Bastion de France, au niveau de la frontière entre les provinces d'Alger et de Tunis⁵⁷. L'îlot gouverné par les Lomellini, remplissait des fonctions analogues aux concessions françaises et constituait pour ces dernières une rivale de poids – aussi bien pour le commerce du

⁵² CADN, 712PO/1/405 (IV), actes du 15 septembre 1611 au 8 mai 1612.

⁵³ Ibn Abī Dīnār, *Al-Mu'nis*, cit., p. 326.

⁵⁴ S. BOUBAKER, *La Régence de Tunis*, cit., p. 46.

⁵⁵ J. PIGNON, *Osta Moratto Turcho Genovese, Dey de Tunis (1637-1640)*, dans « Cahiers de Tunisie », 3, 1955, n. 11, pp. 331-362; S. BONO, *Genovesi islamizzati in Tunisia nei Secoli XVI-XVIII*, dans *Rapporti Genova-Mediterraneo-Atlantico nell'età moderna*, éd. R. BELVEDERI, Gênes 1989, pp. 331-351; A. TEREZONI, *Dalla schiavitù alla Reggenza di Tunisia. Benedetto d'Arri Ligure di Levanto (1574-1640)*, Gênes 2003.

⁵⁶ CADN, 712PO/1/403 (II), actes du 16 juin, 19 juillet et 21 juillet 1599.

⁵⁷ Archivio di Stato di Genova (désormais ASG), *Riscatto Schiavi*, Senza Numero, O, «Frammento di registro copialetere»; registre dans lequel les lettres des «Protettori» génois au Gouverneur de Tabarka évoque fréquemment Lovico, décrit comme « console della nazione francese» et Berengier; à Alger, le principal agent des Génois est le Vénitien Bartolomeo Soma. Lovico prend une commission de six *scudi* par rachat d'esclave; Bartolomeo Somma reçoit lui dix *scudi* par tête (lettre des *Protettori* à Giacomo Salvago, gouverneur de Tabarka, 5 août 1604). Voir également P. GOURDIN, *Tabarka: histoire et archéologie d'un préside espagnol et d'un comptoir génois en terre africaine: XV^e-XVIII^e siècle*, Tunis-Rome 2008, pp. 530-531 et 535.

blé et du corail, que pour celui des peaux, des cuirs, du bétail et des chevaux⁵⁸. En novembre 1606, Antonio avait demandé à son cousin Giacomo de récupérer à Bastia ses créances auprès de captifs corses rachetés. Le gouverneur de la Corse, Agostino Palseno, écrivait alors au *Magistrato del Riscatto* que Giacomo arrivait dans l'île pour y « récupérer une grande somme d'argent » due pour le rachat de trois captifs originaires d'Olmata, au cap Corse⁵⁹. Quelques mois plus tôt, en août, Lovico donnait une autre procuration à son cousin pour aller recueillir la succession de son frère Valerio à Livourne⁶⁰. Avec le rachat des captifs, Antonio et Valerio s'étaient également spécialisés dans le commerce des soieries, des cuirs et des laines entre Tunis et Livourne. Comme le rapporte le *factum* lyonnais de « J.D.S. » : « on avait encore tiré preuve que les marchandises déprédées estoient ordinairement acheptées à Tunes et traffiquées à Ligorne par la Compagnie de Lovico et Béringier »⁶¹. Les frères Lovico octroyaient également des prêts pour les capitaines et patrons de barques qui commerçaient entre les deux villes, comme en témoigne un acte qui stipule que le patron génois Bartholomeo Matallana se reconnaissait débiteur de 325 écus d'or d'Espagne à payer à Livourne à Valerio Lovico, le frère d'Antoine⁶². Les liens familiaux de Lovico, ses alliances avec les Martin, couvraient de la sorte l'espace commercial formé par le quadrilatère Tunis, Marseille, Livourne et la Corse génoise.

Si l'on s'en tient aux mémoires et aux lettres écrits au début des années 1610 par Foucques et « J.D.S. », cet espace commercial profitait donc à un groupe qui était parvenu à occuper des positions éminentes au sein de deux institutions en particulier : les Compagnies de corail et le consulat de France à Tunis. Ces marchands étaient eux-mêmes liés voire apparentés à des entrepreneurs qui avaient su profiter des soubresauts des guerres d'Italie et de la guerre de Corse des années 1550 en se livrant au trafic d'armes avec les gouverneurs d'Afrique du Nord, obtenant ainsi des positions avantageuses pour commercer⁶³. Or, au-delà des accusations portées à l'endroit de Lovico et Béringier, les mémoires des années 1610 sont également intéressants pour les conceptions économique-politiques qu'ils véhiculaient. Le *factum* lyonnais s'avère, de ce point de vue, très riche : comme on l'a vu, il opposait en effet le monopole du commerce de Barbarie à la liberté du commerce du Levant. Autrement dit, le texte de « J.D.S. » estimait que le marché entre Marseille et Tunis était déséquilibré parce qu'il était dans les mains d'un nombre très limité d'agents, liés par des liens familiaux ou par leur origine, qui contrôlait l'information et le prix

⁵⁸ J. PIGNON, *Gênes et Tabarca*, cit., p. 27; W. KAISER, *Suspendre le conflit. Pratiques de neutralisation entre chrétiens et musulmans en Méditerranée (XVI^e-XVII^e siècles)*, dans *Les ressources des faibles : neutralités, sauvegardes, accommodements en temps de guerre, XVI^e-XVII^e siècles*, éd. J.-F. CHANET, C. WINDLER, Rennes 2009, pp. 277-290 (ici pp. 283-285).

⁵⁹ J. PIGNON, *Gênes et Tabarca*, cit., pp. 83-84, doc. LXVIII. Sur le *Magistrato del Riscatto* génois, voir : L. LO BASSO, *Il prezzo della libertà. L'analisi dei libri contabili del Magistrato per il riscatto degli schiavi della Repubblica di Genova all'inizio del XVIII secolo*, dans *Le commerce des captifs*, cit., pp. 267-282; et désormais : A. ZAPPÀ, *Mercanti di uomini. Reti e intermediari per la liberazione dei captivi nel Mediterraneo*, Novi Ligure 2018.

⁶⁰ CADN, 712PO/1/403 (II), acte du 21 août 1606.

⁶¹ *Factum*, cit., pp. 243-244.

⁶² CADN, 712PO/1/402 (I), acte du 27 août 1590.

⁶³ R. EMMANUELLI, *Gênes et l'Espagne dans la guerre de Corse, 1559-1569*, Paris 1963, pp. 137 et 156-161.

des commissions, en fixant non seulement le montant des voyages, les pourcentages pris pour le rachat des captifs, mais aussi les modalités mêmes de ces transactions. Il n'existait donc pas d'institution permettant un marché ouvert dans le commerce entre Marseille et Tunis au début du XVII^e siècle, ce qui ne signifie pas que le pouvoir politique, ou bien des organisations concurrentes (notamment des compagnies de corail rivales), n'aient pas tenté de mettre en place des dispositifs destinés à rompre ces monopoles économiques. De ce point de vue, loin de faciliter les échanges impersonnels ou un accès impartial à l'information économique et à l'arbitrage des différends, le consulat de Tunis renforçait les positions acquises par un petit groupe de négociants au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles⁶⁴. C'est à l'aune de ces biais et des profits induits que générerait l'institution consulaire qu'il faut aussi lire les luttes entre familles marchandes pour l'obtention de l'office.

3. ALLIANCES INTER-RELIGIEUSES ET ENRICHISSEMENT RÉCIPROQUE

Les parcours de Lovico et Bérengier furent également rendus possibles par une conjoncture politique et diplomatique favorable à leur ascension sociale et économique. À l'instar de nombreux Corses impliqués dans le négoce avec l'Afrique du nord, les deux commerçants bénéficiaient d'abord de la relative faiblesse du contrôle et de la souveraineté génois sur l'île qui leur laissait une grande latitude pour nouer des alliances marchandes à une époque de recomposition des rapports de force entre puissances en Méditerranée⁶⁵. Par ailleurs, les Corso-Marseillais avaient noué des liens (militaires puis commerciaux) anciens et solides avec l'Afrique du nord ottomane⁶⁶. Cette bonne connaissance de la région était un atout décisif pour le rachat des captifs qui supposait à la fois du crédit, de l'entregent et des relais des deux côtés de la Méditerranée : ces opérations complexes, dans un contexte de méfiance réciproque et de guerre permanente, permettaient des gains importants par le biais de commissions atteignant parfois 30% du montant de rachat⁶⁷. L'autre force du réseau corse était la protection dont il jouissait au sein du consulat de France : instance de certification et de validation des contrats et de règlement des différends, la chancellerie du consulat de Tunis servait surtout les intérêts des associés de la

⁶⁴ La pratique du commerce par le consul perdura presque tout au long du XVII^e siècle à Tunis (et plus généralement dans les consulats français du Levant), malgré les défenses répétées du pouvoir royal d'exercer le négoce. La fixation d'appointements et l'arrêt du Conseil de juillet 1691 contribuèrent – certes imparfaitement – à réduire cette pratique (Y. DEBBASCH, *La nation française*, cit., pp. 182-191). Sur la thèse selon laquelle les consuls seraient l'une des institutions caractéristiques d'une supposée « divergence juridictionnelle » entre l'Europe occidentale et l'Empire ottoman, voir T. KURAN, *The Long Divergence. How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East*, Princeton 2010, p. 198-202 et 229.

⁶⁵ Sur ce contexte propice de relatif équilibre des puissances méditerranéennes, de la fin du XVI^e et du début du XVII^e siècle, voir notamment M. GREENE, *Beyond the Northern Invasion. The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century*, dans « Past and Present », 174, 2002, pp. 42-71.

⁶⁶ Des alliances qui remontaient notamment à l'alliance franco-ottomane durant les guerres d'Italie, où de nombreux soldats corses s'engagèrent contre les Génois et les Espagnols. Voir : F. BRAUDEL, *La Méditerranée*, cit., I, pp. 145-146 ; M. VERGE-FRANCESCHI, A.-M. GRAZIANI, *Sampiero Corso, 1498-1657 : un mercenaire européen au XVI^e siècle*, Ajaccio 1999.

⁶⁷ W. KAISER, G. CALAFAT, *The Economy of Ransoming*, cit.

Compagnie du corail. Les mémoires et factums des années 1610 se plaignaient ainsi du « monopole » exercé par les Corses naturalisés avec le soutien de certains marchands et officiels intéressés à Marseille. Ce « monopole » avait également une traduction juridictionnelle puisque Lovico et Bérangier, en tant que vice-consuls, avaient le pouvoir de juger les différends entre marchands européens sur la place de Tunis⁶⁸. Par opposition au commerce du Levant, censément ouvert et libre, le négoce avec l'Afrique du nord était biaisé au bénéfice de quelques-uns – ce que le *factum* lyonnais n'hésitait pas à qualifier de « corruptèle »⁶⁹. Derrière cette accusation très forte, s'exprimait à la fois une conception ouverte et libre du commerce maritime, mais aussi le reproche explicite d'alimenter la guerre de course tunisienne, en favorisant le recel du butin.

La suspicion d'une collusion directe avec les corsaires musulmans de Tunis allait de pair avec une franche accusation d'impiété. Aussi, le *factum* lyonnais affirmait-il que « Lovico disait assez librement que parmi les Turcs, il était vraiment Turc, et parmi les Chrétiens, il faisait le Chrétien, avec mille autres impiétés »⁷⁰. Quant à Guillaume Foucques, il expliquait dans son mémoire que Lovico, Bérangier, mais aussi les Martin parlaient « la langue turquesque » (plus probablement l'arabe que le turc ottoman ici), jetant de la sorte un soupçon implicite sur une possible conversion à l'Islam⁷¹. Dans sa lettre au Roi, il accusait Lovico, Bérangier et Soubeyran d'importer des chaînes et des armes de Marseille, et de fondre des canons au profit des Tunisiens. Plaidant pour une intervention militaire destinée à châtier la province ottomane comme les associés de la Compagnie du corail, Foucques précisait qu'il ne fallait pas avertir les Marseillais, « car ils sont plus Mores que François »⁷². S'il faut évidemment prendre avec précaution ces témoignages, la collusion entre le consulat de France et les autorités tunisiennes était également observée par le vice-consul hollandais Van Aken qui expliquait, en 1617, que « ces consuls de France dépendent plus des puissances ici que de leur propre Seigneur »⁷³.

Cette entente, voire cette coalition avec les pouvoirs locaux constitue l'un des facteurs prépondérants qui expliquent les succès des Corses à Tunis au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles. Elle fut notamment permise par des liens familiaux noués dès le milieu du XVI^e siècle : plusieurs textes accusaient en effet les Lenche de disposer sur place, en Afrique du nord, de l'appui de membres de leurs familles convertis à l'Islam – les « renégats » des sources européennes⁷⁴. Le *factum* lyonnais ajoutait qu'à Tunis, on pouvait voir des « Chrestiens et des Turcs estroitement unis d'amitié et d'intelligence » qui s'entendaient notamment sur le partage et la revente des pro-

⁶⁸ Par exemple: CADN, 712PO/1/404 (III), 29 août 1603, 24 novembre 1603, 6 janvier 1604.

⁶⁹ *Factum*, cit., p. 229.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁷¹ *Mémoires portants plusieurs advertissements*, cit., p. 395.

⁷² BNF, Ms. Français, 16146, «Lettre de Guillaume Foucques... cit.», f° 249v.

⁷³ K. HEERINGA, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Levantschen handel*, La Haye 1910-1966, vol. I/2, p. 711: «dese France consuls dependeeren meer de coningen alhier als van hunnen heer ende meester».

⁷⁴ BNF, Ms. Français, 17329, «Mélanges sur les Finances, la Marine, les Pêches et le Jansénisme», «Pièces relatives au Bastion de France et à la pêche du corail sur les côtes de Barbarie», f° 410.

duits de la course⁷⁵. Guillaume Foucques écrivait ainsi que certains marchands de Marseille renseignaient même les corsaires tunisiens sur les trajets des embarcations provençales. Il ne manquait pas de préciser que leurs « frères, cousins et neveux » s'étaient convertis à l'Islam⁷⁶. Avec les Génois et les Ligures, les Corses islamisés apparaissaient très fréquemment dans les actes de la chancellerie du consulat de France, qualifiés de « renégats » ou reconnaissables à la *nisba* « Corso » ou « Qūrçū », cette composante de leurs noms musulmans qui rappelait leur origine⁷⁷. 'Uthmān et Yūsuf Dey avaient volontiers promu autour d'eux d'anciens esclaves afin d'affaiblir le pouvoir de la milice turque et d'asseoir leur autorité sur la province. Leurs maisonnées étaient composées de « mamelouks », ces serviteurs convertis à l'Islam et maintenus dans un statut de dépendance qui ne leur interdisait nullement une importante mobilité sociale et politique⁷⁸. Les actes de la chancellerie du consulat de France montrent que ces Musulmans d'origine corse conservaient des relations, parfois fort étroites et régulières, avec leur famille demeurée dans l'île. En 1594, un certain « Morato Corssou », nommé dans sa jeunesse Antonio Orssatone, originaire de La Rocca, au sud-ouest de l'île, donnait une procuration à son frère Guglielmo pour recouvrer des créances en Corse. Il était qualifié *oḏa-baṣḥī*, c'est-à-dire commandant d'une chambrée de janissaires, un titre de haut rang dans la milice locale qui donnait accès au Dīwān, le conseil de gouvernement à Tunis⁷⁹. En 1597, un autre Corse de Sartène, Kā'id Rodouane, chargeait sa mère Adriana di Pietro di Guglielmo de recevoir à Quenza, en Corse du sud, l'argent que lui devait un esclave corse racheté à Tunis⁸⁰.

La conversion ne signifiait en aucun cas la rupture des liens avec la famille et la terre d'origine. Bien au contraire, les parentèles corses chrétiennes et musulmanes permettaient des enrichissements spectaculaires, appuyées sur quatre places essentiellement. À Tunis (et dans une moindre mesure à Alger), les Corso-Marseillais de la Compagnie du corail et les convertis commerçaient des captifs, des produits de la course et des marchandises locales. Ce négoce supposait le maintien d'une activité corsaire qui allait de pair avec l'ascension militaire et politique de certains Corses islamisés dans l'armée navale de la province ottomane. À Marseille, des Corses naturalisés, ayant pris le parti de la France contre les Génois et les Espagnols lors des guerres d'Italie, finançaient la Compagnie du corail, occupaient les plus hautes charges municipales, bénéficiaient de la protection diplomatique du roi de France en Méditerranée et contrôlaient le consulat de Tunis. La Corse, et notamment la région du cap Corse, fournissait en Méditerranée un important contingent de marins et d'armateurs qui s'occupaient du transport et des liaisons maritimes. L'expertise navale et militaire des Corses était particulièrement réputée et recherchée, aussi bien

⁷⁵ *Factum*, cit., p. 229.

⁷⁶ *Mémoires portants plusieurs advertissements*, cit., p. 392.

⁷⁷ S. BONO, *Genovesi islamizzati*, cit., pp. 334-335. Sur la *nisba* des mamelouks à Tunis, voir: M. OUALDI, *Acteurs et objets de procédures d'identification: les mamelouks au service des beys de Tunis (XVII^e-XIX^e siècles)*, dans « Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée », 127, 2010, pp. 159-174.

⁷⁸ M. OUALDI, *Esclaves et maîtres*, cit.

⁷⁹ CADN, 712PO/1/403 (II), acte du 4 août 1594.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, acte du 3 novembre 1597.

dans les États italiens, qu'en France, en Espagne et en Afrique du nord. Il n'est ainsi guère étonnant qu'on retrouve des Corses à Rome, Naples, Venise, Valence, Madrid, Séville, Cadix, jusqu'à Alger au Maroc, au Pérou et dans l'océan Indien⁸¹. Enfin, le port toscan de Livourne, où de nombreux soldats, marchands et marins corses s'établirent à partir de la fin du XVI^e siècle, devint également l'un des lieux privilégiés du recyclage du butin de la course tunisienne. Un fonctionnaire toscan expliquait même, en 1616, que ces produits achetés aux « infidèles », à Tunis comme à Alger, étaient depuis toujours légalement vendus et écoulés dans « l'escale franche » (*scala franca*)⁸². Enrichi conjointement par la course chrétienne, le port de Livourne était aussi un important espace d'échanges et de ventes des captifs et des esclaves musulmans.

Cette complémentarité entre les places – ou ce « monopole » selon ses détracteurs – offre un élément d'explication du succès et de l'enrichissement mutuel de marchands qui surent tirer profit de leurs bonnes connaissances du marché, qui monnayaient leurs relations politiques et leurs expertises militaires et qui s'occupaient, en outre, du transport et de l'assurance de marchandises dans une mer qu'ils contribuaient en partie à rendre risquée et violente. Les quatre frères Manfredini, originaires de Morsiglia au cap Corse, offrent un bon exemple de ces solidarités lucratives : durant les années 1610, Rocco était négociant et assureur, installé à Livourne depuis le début du XVII^e siècle, à l'époque où le port toscan connut une importante croissance démographique et économique, suite aux privilèges accordés par le Grand-duc de Toscane Ferdinand I^{er}⁸³. Il possédait plusieurs navires qui s'occupaient de la liaison entre la Toscane et l'Afrique du nord ottomane. Son frère, Manfredino, était capitaine et négociait avec la Compagnie du corail marseillaise, fréquemment au service d'Antoine Lovico. Il vivait entre Tunis et Livourne, où il finit par résider après la mort de Rocco. Un troisième frère, Antonio, était décrit comme « *cavaliere* » à Livourne. Il croisait en Méditerranée, en particulier au Levant, contre les « Infidèles » musulmans et grecs qu'il capturait et ramenait dans le bague du port toscan. Un quatrième frère converti, Murād Qūrçū, était quant à lui un important marchand et armateur dans la province ottomane d'Alger : il s'occupait de revendre ou d'échanger avec ses frères les produits de la course algéroise⁸⁴. À Li-

⁸¹ A.-M. GRAZIANI, *La Corse génoise. Économie, société, culture. Période moderne (1453-1768)*, Ajaccio 1997, pp. 23-31; E. SOLA, J.F. DE LA PEÑA, *Cervantes y la Berbería. Cervantes, mundo turcoberberisco y servicios secretos en época de Felipe II*, Mexico 1996; S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *Empires between Islam and Christianity: 1500-1800*, New Delhi 2018, pp. 64-66..

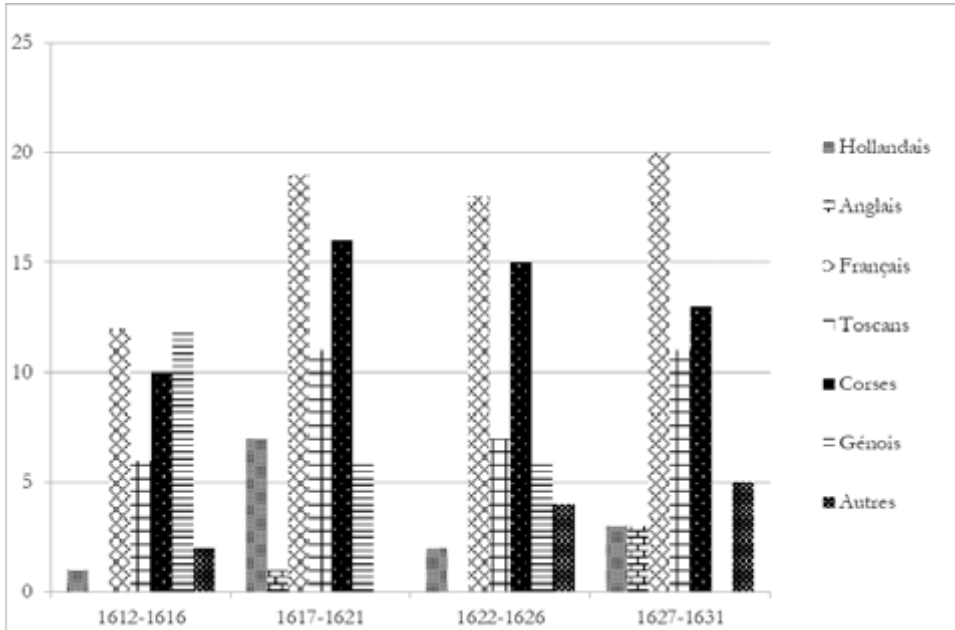
⁸² ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI FIRENZE (désormais ASF), *Notarile Moderno, Protocolli (NMP)*, Marco Tartaglia, 5625, f° 4-4v: « e quando ci siano comparse robe di presa compere in paesi di infedeli e specialmente à Tunis, Algeri o altri luoghi di Barberia et altri ci habbia preteso o fatto rappresaglia ne ha portato sententia contro dalli Signori Consoli di Pisa ».

⁸³ Sur la croissance livournaise à cette époque, voir L. FRATTARELLI FISCHER, *Livorno città nuova: 1574-1609*, dans « Società e storia », 46, 1989, pp. 873-893; EADEM, *Lo sviluppo di una città portuale: Livorno, 1585-1720*, dans *Sistole/Diastole: Episodi di trasformazione urbana nell'Italia delle città*, éd. M. FOLIN, Venise 2006, pp. 271-333.

⁸⁴ Sur cette fratrie: ASF, NMP, Claudio Ciuppi, 5624, n° 125, f° 114; ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI LIVORNO (désormais ASL), *Capitano, poi Governatore ed Auditore* (désormais CGA), « Suppliche », 2602, n° 517; ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI PISA, *Consoli del Mare*, « Suppliche », 975, n° 181; *Ibid.*, 976, n° 252; ASF, NMP, 13340, Francesco Ambrogì, n° 201, f° 185-185v; ASF, *Medico del Principato*, 2312; ASF,

vous, les frères Manfredini faisaient valoir leurs titres de noblesse et finançaient avec ostentation la construction de chapelles. Ils continuaient, à l'instar de Rocco, de transférer de l'argent en Corse, à leur famille mais aussi dans les villages et les hameaux du cap Corse, notamment en faveur du couvent des Servites de Marie à Morsiglia⁸⁵.

Graph. 1. Navires arrivés à Livourne en provenance de Tunis (1612-1631)⁸⁶



Originaire lui aussi de Morsiglia, Carlo di Lorenzo (ou Lorenzi) fut élu au sein du Conseil des cent citoyens de Livourne dès son institution en 1604. Lorenzi et Manfredini étaient beaux-frères : ils avaient tous deux épousé une fille de Matteo di Terenzio Mellini, influent inspecteur des douanes de Livourne et agent de confiance du Grand-duc Ferdinand I^{er} dans le port toscan⁸⁷. Riche de 9 000 écus au début des années 1620, Lorenzi commerçait tout aussi bien avec des négociants et des capitaines corses qu'avec des Français, des Génois, des Grecs, des Juifs, des Hollandais

Mediceo del Principato, 6416, ins. 11 «Manfredini»; ASF, NMT, Matteo Ciupi, 14186, n° 29, f° 66-69; F. DE LA VEGA Y TORAYA, *Chronica de la Provincia de Castilla, Leon y Navarra, del orden de la Santissima Trinidad, Redempcion de Cautivos, Tercera parte*, Madrid 1729, p. 66.

⁸⁵ ASF, *Notarile Moderno Testamenti*, 5631, «Marco Tartaglia», f° 92.

⁸⁶ R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico nel XVII secolo. Naviglio e commercio di importazione*, Bari 2007, p. 203 (fondé sur ASF, *Uffiziali di Sanità*, 136-225).

⁸⁷ ASF, NMT, Francesco Ambrogi, 13342, n° 51, f° 74; ARCHIVIO STORICO DIOCESANO, LIVOURNE (désormais ASDL), *Registro dei matrimoni*, 1, f° 8; ASDL, *Registro dei matrimoni*, 2, f° 13.

ou des Anglais⁸⁸. Jusqu'à sa mort en 1631, il exerça de nombreuses charges publiques dans le port toscan, où il était l'un des plus riches négociants. En 1597 et 1598, à l'âge de vingt-sept ans, il avait vécu treize mois à Tunis pour ses affaires⁸⁹. Trois ans plus tôt, on trouve également sa trace au Bastion de France à Massacarès, près d'Annaba, où il tenait les livres de compte de la Compagnie du corail⁹⁰. Dans la province ottomane où il se forma au métier de négociant à l'instar d'autres marchands cap-corsins, Lorenzi pouvait compter sur des Corses appartenant à la maisonnée de Ramaḍān Bey, bey de Tunis de 1593 à 1613, qui œuvrait à cette époque à l'ascension de plusieurs de ses « mamelouks »⁹¹.

C'est en effet lors de son séjour en Afrique du nord que Carlo di Lorenzo fit la connaissance de Murād Qūrçū, futur bey de Tunis de 1613 à 1631. Il le décrivait comme « l'esclave de Ramaḍān Bey, qui s'appelait à l'époque Kā'id Murād, Corse ». Il ajoutait que, lorsqu'il était à Tunis, « Murād Bey vivait alors dans la maison de Ramaḍān Bey, qui lui avait donné en mariage l'une de ses filles »⁹². Comme son nom l'indique, Murād était originaire de Corse, sans doute du village de Levie, au sud de l'île. D'après une chronique romancée, il s'appelait Giacomo Santi (ou Santo) et avait été capturé par des corsaires de Tunis alors qu'il était âgé de neuf ans, ce qui ne l'empêchait pas de conserver des liens étroits avec sa famille, avec ses nièces et neveux corses notamment⁹³. Le Kā'id Murād Qūrsū occupa, de 1604 à 1609, le poste stratégique de douanier de Tunis, ce qui lui permit de nouer des contacts étroits avec le milieu des marchands chrétiens de la province, et notamment Lovico et Bérengier⁹⁴. Sans doute avec l'accord de Yūsuf Dey, Murād succéda à son maître en 1613 comme bey de Tunis. Il mena de nombreuses opérations à l'intérieur du pays pour mater les tribus dissidentes et lever l'impôt. Fort de ses succès militaires et de son crédit partout dans la province, la Sublime Porte lui octroya ainsi le prestigieux titre de « pacha » en 1631 qui lui permit de légitimer sa position et de fonder

⁸⁸ ASF, NMP, Cesare Martinuzzi, 9449; ASF, NMP, Franco Ambrogi, 13338; ASF, NMP, Marco Tartaglia, 13765.

⁸⁹ ASL, CGA, « Atti Civil », 75, affaire n° 207, interrogatoire du 23 décembre 1624; CADN, 712PO/1/403 (II), actes du 13 décembre 1597 et du 3 février 1598.

⁹⁰ ARCHIVES DEPARTEMENTALES DE L'ISERE, 2 E 960, « Giornale tenuto per me Carlo de Lorenzo per conto de li magnifici signori de la compagnia vecchia de coralli ». En 1627, Lorenzi donne un mandat à Gaspard Porrata, neveu de l'ancien gouverneur de Massacarès, Giovanni, pour s'occuper de ses affaires à Marseille (ASF, NMP, Diacinto Paganelli, 13583, n° 44, f° 41v).

⁹¹ M. OUALDI, *Esclaves et Maîtres*, cit., p. 65.

⁹² ASL, CGA, « Atti Civili », 75, affaire n° 207, interrogatoire du 23 décembre 1624: « Che esso sa che Moratto Bei in quel tempo che esso testimone si ritrovava in Tunis, stava in casa di Ramadan Bei, quale gl'haveva dato una sua figliuola per moglie ».

⁹³ *Histoire des révolutions du royaume de Tunis au XVII^e siècle. Une œuvre de Guilleragues?*, éd. P. SEBAG, Paris 2003, pp. 54-62. La « nièce » de Murād Bey s'appelait Lucia de Senti; elle épousa le marchand Anton Marco Pietro (ASDL, *Registro dei matrimoni*, 1, f° 116 – Carlo di Lorenzo était leur témoin de mariage). Le neveu du bey de Tunis s'appelait Alessandro et était décrit dans les actes de la chancellerie du consulat de France de Tunis comme venant « delle Vie », autrement dit de Levie, ce qui semble donc confirmer la chronique.

⁹⁴ CADN, 712PO/1/404 (III), actes du 9 décembre 1604, 25 février 1605, 5 mai 1605.

une véritable dynastie de beys qui perdura jusqu'à l'avènement des Husseinites au début du XVIII^e siècle⁹⁵.

Si la distance géographique entre l'Afrique du nord et l'Europe méridionale était certes réduite, la menace corsaire et l'état de guerre latent dans la région y rendaient les circulations de personnes et de choses particulièrement dangereux. Ce risque avait un corollaire économique, en l'occurrence d'importantes « plus-values marchandes » permises par les profits tirés des déplacements d'un point à l'autre de la Méditerranée⁹⁶. Le réseau établi entre Tunis, Marseille, Livourne et la Corse offrait à ce titre plusieurs garanties au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles : la connaissance et la fréquentation d'une pluralité de contextes sociaux, des protections politiques et diplomatiques, des appuis institutionnels, des liquidités ainsi qu'une flotte de capitaines et de marins expérimentés. Dans cet espace de transaction complexe, l'efficacité du réseau corse résidait dans sa capacité à s'adosser, à différentes étapes du trajet et des échanges, aux institutions du commerce, telles que le consulat, les bureaux des douanes (à Tunis ou Livourne), ou la Compagnie du corail. Ces compétences étaient nouées par une variété de liens sociaux forgés à l'échelle transrégionale à partir d'un mixte de situations conjoncturelles ou contingentes (apogée du *corso*, guerres de Corse, captures) et d'opportunités (vente d'armes, alliances politiques et religieuses, protections). Ces liens dépassaient le seul domaine de la marchandise : les parentèles corses n'excluaient pas des alliances matrimoniales ouvertes avec des familles marseillaises, toscanes ou tunisiennes qui permettaient d'obtenir de solides protections et d'accéder à des postes politiques élevés et stratégiques.

Les solidarités au sein du réseau n'étaient pas dues à une cohésion forgée *a priori* ou à une pseudo-homogénéité « identitaire », mais plutôt à une crédibilité fondée sur des relations suivies et des enrichissements réciproques. Ceux-ci rendaient possibles des ascensions sociales et politiques qui, à leur tour, renforçaient et stabilisaient les positions économiques et institutionnelles en différents points du réseau. Ces fortunes n'étaient cependant pas réservées aux seuls Corses. Dans la famille Rio, le père Francesco était établi à Levanto, en Ligurie ; il négociait avec son fils, Benedetto, alias Ustā Murād. Un autre fils, Bartolomeo s'était installé quant à lui à Tunis puis à Livourne, où il écoulait les produits de la course tunisienne et s'enrichissait dans le commerce des captifs⁹⁷. En 1624, un envoyé en Afrique du nord au service de Venise expliquait ainsi que les produits de la course nord-africaine étaient négociés et vendus par des marchands « livournais, corses, génois,

⁹⁵ J. PIGNON, *Osta Moratto*, cit., pp. 335-336; S. BOUBAKER, *Négoce et enrichissement individuel à Tunis du XVII^e siècle au début du XIX^e siècle*, dans « Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine », 50, 2003, n. 4, pp. 29-62, 37; A. RAYMOND, *Tunis sous les Mouradites*, cit., 26.

⁹⁶ L'expression « plus-value marchande » fait ici référence à F. BRAUDEL, *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XV^e-XVIII^e siècle*, tome II: les *Jeux de l'échange*, Paris 1979, p. 183 ; elle a utilement été reprise dans l'analyse socio-historique de l'économie de l'enrichissement proposée par L. BOLTANSKI, A. ESQUERRE, *Enrichissement. Une critique de la marchandise*, Paris 2017, pp. 385-387.

⁹⁷ De nombreux exemples dans ASG, *Riscatto Schiavi*, 24, « Lettere inviate al Magistrato da parte di particolari giusdicenti del dominio genovese e consoli genovesi di Tabarca ed Algeri »; et J. PIGNON, *Osta Moratto Turco*, cit.

français, flamands, anglais, juifs, vénitiens »⁹⁸. Il n'était pas rare que des opérations de rachats de captifs fussent en effet conjointement organisés par des Génois, des Juifs et des Corses⁹⁹. Le rédempteur de captifs Pierre Dan mentionnait lui aussi, quelques années plus tard, les « marchands de Gênes, de Ligorne, de Corse » spécialisés dans la revente des butins corsaires¹⁰⁰. De fait, les actes de la chancellerie du consulat de Tunis montrent que Corses, Juifs, Ligures, Morisques et Grecs commerçaient volontiers ensemble entre Livourne et Tunis. Ces associations flexibles, au-delà des seuls critères de parenté ou de religion, constituent sans nul doute un bon indicateur de la complexité d'un commerce transméditerranéen qui nécessitait une addition de compétences spécialisées – en particulier dans le cadre du délicat – mais lucratif – commerce des captifs¹⁰¹.

Au cours des années 1620, la force du réseau corse commença à s'éteindre. Plusieurs hypothèses pourraient être avancées pour expliquer ce phénomène, à commencer par le raidissement des relations entre la France et l'Afrique du nord, des épisodes de peste violents, le réarmement naval de Gênes, ou encore la concurrence de nouveaux acteurs commerciaux, notamment juifs et anglais. Il n'en demeure pas moins que l'ascension économique et politique de certains marchands corses, fondée sur des connexions militaires, politiques et diplomatiques, ainsi que sur des alliances inter-religieuses, laissa des traces matérielles durables. Les Lenche étaient consuls de Marseille – une belle place de la ville porte leur nom aujourd'hui. Les Porrata de Morsiglia, installés à Marseille et qui gouvernaient la Compagnie de corail tunisienne à la fin du XVI^e siècle faisaient partie des citoyens de la ville. Giovanni Porrata était recommandé par le sultan ottoman en Afrique du nord et il jouissait, comme l'explique une chronique, d'un grand crédit « chez les Infidèles »¹⁰². À Livourne, les Manfredini ou Carlo di Lorenzo, faisaient partie de l'élite citadine et furent élevés à la charge de « gonfaloniers » de la ville, la plus prestigieuse dans le port toscan : leurs armes apparaissaient dans plusieurs églises et autels qu'ils avaient contribué à fonder¹⁰³. À Morsiglia ou à Centuri, au cap Corse, des tours privées littorales ou des chapelles d'églises, témoignent de la richesse de ces familles corses qui, dans leurs testaments, ne manquaient pas de transférer de l'argent dans leurs villages

⁹⁸ G.B. SALVAGO, « *Africa ovvero Barbaria* ». *Relazione al Doge di Venezia sulle reggenze di Algeri e di Tunisi* [1625], Padoue 1937, p. 80.

⁹⁹ Voir, pour toute une série d'opérations: CADN, 712PO/1/407 (VI), ff° 15-20v, actes du 27 novembre 1615; f° 44, acte du 14 janvier 1616 (contrats entre les Génois Bastiano Bianco, Bartolomeo Avenzino, les Corses Santo Semidei, Manfredino Manfredini, les Juifs David Machoro, Jacob Attias, Abram David Valensin, le Portugais Giorgio de Vega Pinto).

¹⁰⁰ P. DAN, *Histoire de la Barbarie et de ses corsaires* [1637], Paris, 1649, pp. 429-430.

¹⁰¹ La corrélation entre spécialisation commerciale et complexification des réseaux est une hypothèse avancée par A. MOLHO, D. RAMADA CURTO, *Les réseaux marchands*, cit., pp. 577-578.

¹⁰² J.-B. L'HERMITE DE SOLIERS, *La Ligurie française contenant les eloges, et genealogies, des princes, seigneurs, & grands personnages issus de l'Etat de Genes ; lesquels ont esté affectionnés à la Couronne de France ensemble, leurs armes, blazonnées en taille douce ; avec les couronnes, manteaus, colliers, timbres & autres ornemens*, Arle, 1658, Porratta.

¹⁰³ ASL, *Comunità*, 1684, f° 28, 38v.

d'origine, de financer des messes ou des chapelles latérales¹⁰⁴. À Tunis, des Corses islamisés faisaient partie du Dīwān, occupant les plus hautes fonctions et protégeant certains membres de leurs familles demeurés catholiques. On peut d'ailleurs admirer dans la capitale tunisienne le beau mausolée (*turba*) des beys mouradites, qui rend notamment hommage à Murād Qūrçū, le fondateur de la dynastie¹⁰⁵. Ces différentes traces, pour la plupart encore visibles aujourd'hui, signalent l'enrichissement réciproque des principaux négociants du réseau ; elles témoignent plus largement de la croissance simultanée de places portuaires connectées par l'activité des marchands et des marins corses au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles.

¹⁰⁴ ASF, *NMT*, 5631, Claudio Ciuppi, n° 61, f° 91 ; ASF, *NMT*, Matteo Ciupi, 14186, n° 29, f° 66-69 ; ASF, *NMT*, Matteo Ciupi, 14186, n° 43, f° 111 ; ASF, *NMT*, Francesco Ambrogio, 13342, n° 51, f° 74.

¹⁰⁵ A. SAADAOUÏ, *Tunis. Architecture et art funéraires : sépultures des deys et des beys de Tunis de la période ottomane*, Tunis 2010, p. 136.

*Quali caratteristiche dello scambio culturale o di prodotti particolari
sono serviti a integrare le reti marittime?*

*Which features of cultural exchange served to integrate maritime networks
or were their particular products?*

Richard W. Unger

Markets and Merchants:

*Commercial and Cultural Integration in Northwest Europe, 1300-1700**

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries commercial exchange increased in northwestern Europe. Trade increased and expanded around the North Sea and eastward to the Baltic and southward along the Atlantic coast.¹ Markets for goods showed the first signs of interdependence, of integration. The growing volume and value of commerce made feasible and advisable the creation of networks through which participants could exchange information as well as carry out transactions. The flowering of commercial connections was promoted by a long term rise in population which indicated and was a result of a sustained increase in output of a broad range of goods, including foodstuffs, and also the ability of the expanding transport network to deliver supplies where demand existed. In the thirteenth century a pattern emerged which would become the norm in succeeding centuries. Economic integration and, in its wake, cultural integration in northwestern Europe was underway.

MARKET INTEGRATION: THEORY

The concept of market integration had been long known. There is a continuing question of how best to measure the phenomenon. Alfred Marshall in the late nineteenth century discussed the effects of trade on prices. He noted the tendency of prices to come together in two different markets thanks to trade between them. That would, he theorized, be especially true for goods which are similar in character, easily described and travel well. His example was grain.² The theory of the single price forms the basis for measuring integration. The tendency of prices to equalize or not equalize among the urban markets of northwestern Europe makes possible measuring the intensity of commercial ties and so to explore the foundation for cultural exchange.

* I am grateful for the suggestions and comments of Maryanne Kowaleski and those who raised questions during the discussion in Prato.

¹ R. HAMMEL-KIESOW, *Lübeck and the Baltic Trade in Bulk Goods for the North Sea Region 1150-1400*, in *Cogs, Cargoes, and Commerce Maritime Bulk Trade in Northern Europe 1150-1400*, L. BERGGREN, N. HYBEL, A. LANDEN eds., Toronto 2002, pp. 83-88. N. HYBEL, *The Grain Trade in Northern Europe before 1350*, in "The Economic History Review", 55, 2002, n. 2, pp. 219-247.

² A. MARSHALL, *Principles of Economics*, eighth edition, London 1920, pp. 270-273.

There has been considerable work in recent decades on market integration. My own work on the topic was originally concentrated on connections between the Baltic and the Low Countries beginning in the fifteenth century.³ The work later expanded and was joined by other studies of market integration.⁴ Examining the results of that earlier work and combining it selectively with some new calculations on regional developments has the potential for yielding some better understanding of the emergence of maritime networks and its timing in late medieval and Renaissance northwestern Europe.

Grains were the most widely traded goods in the period. There is much more and more consistent price data for them than for other goods. The data is in general easily available through the Allen-Unger Database of prices, standardized to volume of grain and cost in quantities of silver.⁵ Because of the range of uses of grains, the relative ease of shipping the product and its geographical scope the grain trade is more easily studied than any other in the period. Prices for grain before 1300 are extremely rare. While a single series for wheat in southern England stretches well back into the thirteenth century there is no corresponding data to compare with those numbers.⁶ It is really only in the fifteenth century that figures for a number of towns are available. The quantity of data increases over later centuries. In all cases, however, there are gaps in series. Those can be a single year here and there but also a decade or two missing, the sources for prices being lost for one reason or another. Such gaps can throw some results into doubt. What appears to be the case in a table or a graph may be created by a simple lack of information so care is needed in evaluating the numbers.

³ R.W. UNGER, *Integration of Baltic and Low Countries Grain Markets, 1400-1800*, in *The Interactions of Amsterdam and Antwerp with the Baltic Region, 1400-1800*, ed. J.M. VAN WINTER, Leiden, 1983, pp. 1-10. R.C. ALLEN, R.W. UNGER, *Breath of the Market for Polish Grain 1500-1800*, in *Baltic Affairs Relations between the Netherlands and North-Eastern Europe 1500-1800*, J.P.S. LEMMINK, J.S.A.M. VAN KONINGSBRUGGE eds., Nijmegen 1990, pp. 1-18. The later, more specific studies of market development in medieval and early modern Europe in different parts of the region and with different categories for selecting the scope of research include: R.W. UNGER, *Feeding Low Countries Towns: the Grain Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, in "Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire", 77, 1999, n. 2, pp. 329-358. IDEM, *Sources of food supplies for European capitals in the eighteenth century*, in "Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome, Italie et Méditerranée", 112, 2000, pp. 577-587. IDEM, *Thresholds for Market Integration in the Low Countries and England in the Fifteenth Century*, in *Money, Markets and Trade in Late Medieval Europe Essays in Honour of John H. A. Munro*, L. ARMSTRONG, I. ELBL, M.M. ELBL eds., Leiden 2007, pp. 349-380. IDEM, *Maritime Transport and the Integration of Low Countries Grain Markets in the Late Middle Ages*, in *Food supply, demand and trade Aspects of the economic relationship between town and countryside (Middle Ages - 19th century)*, P. VAN CRUYNINGEN, E. THOEN eds., Turnhout 2012, pp. 101-122.

⁴ Most notably C. VAN BOCHOVE, *The economic consequences of the Dutch: economic integration around the North Sea, 1500-1800*, Amsterdam 2008. Also for Spain, R. GRAFE, *Tracing the Market the Empirical Challenge*, Princeton 2012, and V.N. BATEMAN, *The Evolution of Markets in Early Modern Europe, 1350-1800: A Study of Wheat Prices*, in "The Economic History Review", 64, 2011, n. 2, pp. 447-471, among others.

⁵ Allen-Unger Global Commodity Prices Database (<http://www.gcpdb.info/>). Accessed March 20, 2018.

⁶ Prices from southern England are those reported by J.E. THOROLD ROGERS, *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England from the Year after the Oxford Parliament (1259) to the Commencement of the Continental War (1793) Compiled Entirely from Original and Contemporaneous Records*, Oxford 1882, who used the records of a number of different institutions, most of them in or near London, as his sources.

MARKET INTEGRATION: DATA

The general indication is a rise and then decline of integration of markets in northern Europe from 1300 to 1700.⁷ The difference in the average price of wheat in northwestern Europe to the average price of wheat in Baltic ports tended to go up from the middle of the sixteenth century, the opposite of expectations. As markets integrate the prices should move together and prices should converge. In the absence of any barriers to trade the ratio should be unity and the difference should tend to zero. Of course transportation costs would dictate some difference between prices in two markets and the gap created by the expense of moving the good could and did vary over time. Even so, if markets became more integrated the expectation is that rises and falls in prices in two places should follow the same pattern. Deviation from a consistent pattern, the rise in prices for wheat in the west compared to those in the northeast in the sixteenth and more so in the seventeenth centuries, suggests anything but a smooth path to integration. Wheat prices which survive from towns in the Baltic are few before 1700 so the commodity is not the best indicator of the tendency toward integration. Rye was the more common grain export from the Baltic to western Europe and for it the pattern is more clear. The difference in the average of rye prices in western ports compared to the average in Baltic ones was low and somewhat consistent in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and then began to decline in the middle of the seventeenth. Taking the ratio of average prices in the Baltic to average prices in western ports for the two grains generates results which are not entirely consistent with the comparison of the differences in the price averages. The ratio tended toward unity for part of the sixteenth century and for rye it was true again in the second half of the seventeenth century. The ratio of average wheat prices showed a decline to 1600 but remained well above one down through the seventeenth century. The sporadic nature of wheat price data for the Baltic region helps to explain the confusing results.⁸

Taking wheat prices in eighteen different markets comparing them to prices in southern England, the latter because it provides the longest and most complete data series for the good, yields little indication of a move toward integration.⁹ The use of a five-year moving average of the ratio smooths out some but not all of the extreme swings in the relative prices in markets. [See Graph 1] Even with smoothing it is clear that the mid fifteenth century dramatic increase in wheat prices in Leiden influences results considerably. Still there are signs of a movement toward integration in the seventeenth century, moving back to the situation in the fifteenth. Since ratios are made up of two numbers changes in the denominator heavily affect the result. [See Graph 2] The rise in the price of wheat in southern England in the sev-

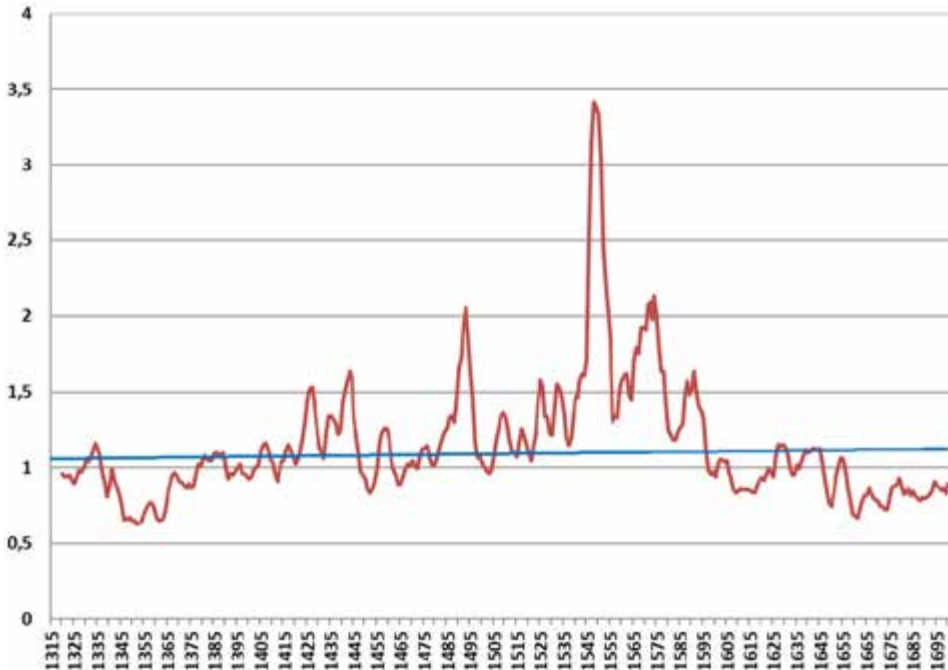
⁷ G. FEDERICO, *How Much Do We Know About Market Integration in Europe?*, in "The Economic History Review", 65, 2012, n. 2, pp. 470-497, 491, in large part agrees though noting how difficult it is to make a definitive statement.

⁸ R.W. UNGER, *Maritime Transport and the Integration of Low Countries Grain Markets*, cit., pp. 104-106.

⁹ The eighteen are Amsterdam, Angers, Arnhem, Bruges, Chester, Cologne, Douai, Edinburgh, Exeter, Frankfurt, Leiden, Lier, Louvain, Strasbourg, Tours, Utrecht, Würzburg and Winchester.

enteenth century is an explanation for the fall in the ratio to the average price in the other eighteen markets but the fact that the other markets did not respond by shipping grain to London to take advantage of rising prices there and so raise prices proportionally in their own markets is a further indication of a less than fully integrated market in wheat in northwestern Europe by the seventeenth century.

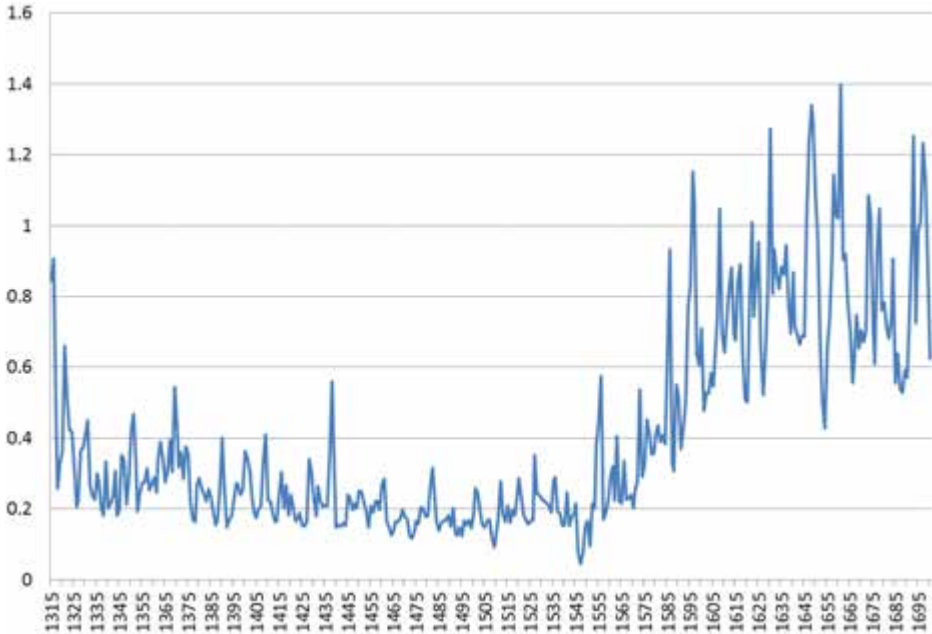
Graph 1. **Ratio of Average Price of Wheat in 18 Markets to Price in Southern England (five-year moving average) with exponential trendline**



Market integration tends to reduce price fluctuations, imports or exports to other sites in order to fetch higher prices serving to soften swings. Variance measures the degree of fluctuation and data for the ratio of averages of wheat prices in those eighteen markets to prices in southern England produces similar results to the series of five-year moving averages. [See Table 1] The measure is an indication, even if a poor one, of trends in market efficiency.¹⁰ The 100 years from 1521 to 1620 were stormy ones. The variance drops back to a low level for the rest of the seventeenth century, back to levels not seen since the fourteenth and early fifteenth.

¹⁰ G. FEDERICO, *How Much Do We Know About Market Integration*, cit., pp. 484-485.

Graph 2. Prices of wheat in Southern England (grams of silver per litre)



Tab. 1. Variance in the Average Ratio for Wheat Prices in Eighteen Markets to Prices in Southern England

1320-1420	0.019
1421-1520	0.069
1521-1620	0.355
1621-1700	0.022

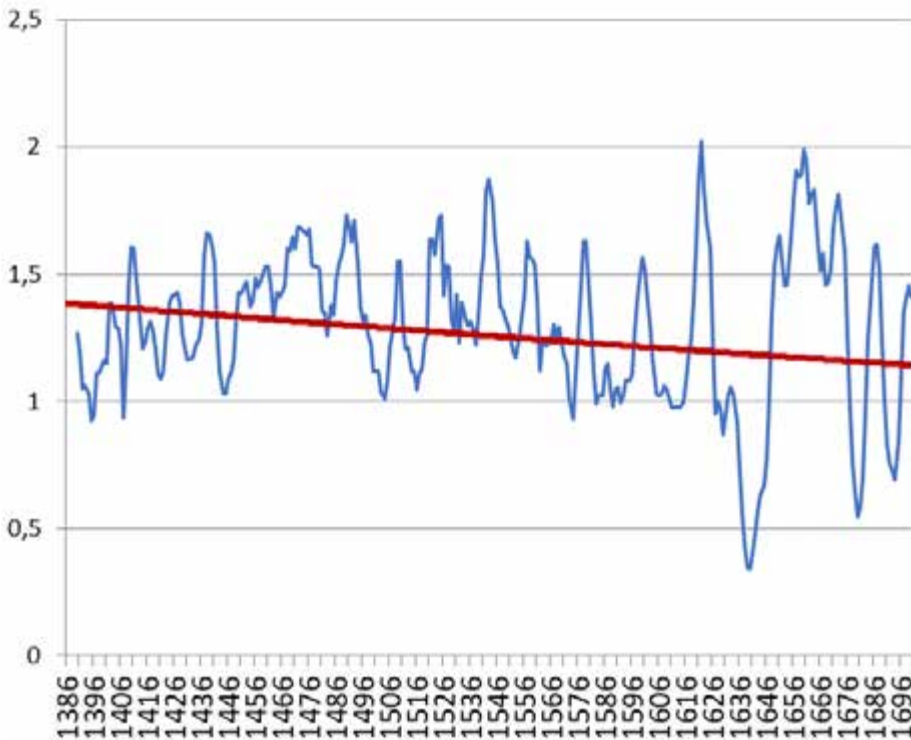
Source: Allen-Unger Global Commodity Prices Database (<http://www.gcpdb.info/>). Accessed March 20, 2018.

Rye prices are not much more help in measuring market integration. For southern England, a region with relatively high incomes for northern Europe, the price data for the seventeenth century have so many gaps that the series from there can not be used as a basis for comparison. Instead the price series from Strasbourg is the denominator of the ratio of the average of prices in eighteen markets. Some of the eighteen are different from those used for wheat because of the availability of data. Included in this case are four sites in eastern Europe. Ports like Gdansk and Rostock would have been sources of rye imports into western Europe in the seventeenth century and before.¹¹ For rye there are extensive fluctuations in the ratio of

¹¹ The eighteen markets are Amsterdam, Angers, Antwerp, Arnhem, Bruges, Brussels, Cologne,

the average to prices in Strasbourg. [See Graph 3] Even so there is a more distinct trend toward unity even though fluctuations increase for the second half of the seventeenth century. The pattern with wheat prices is somewhat reproduced with low levels of variance from 1421 to 1520. The figure rises after that with the last eighty years of the seventeenth century generating a considerably higher number. [See Table 2] The sharp rises in the price of rye at Strasbourg in the seventeenth century and so the swings in the denominator help to explain the higher variance. [See Graph 4]. Despite those source-related effects for rye prices there is more reason to believe that the tendency over the long run, despite difficulties, was toward increasing market integration.

Graph 3. Ratio of Average Price of Rye in 18 markets to Price in Strasbourg (five-year moving average) with exponential trendline



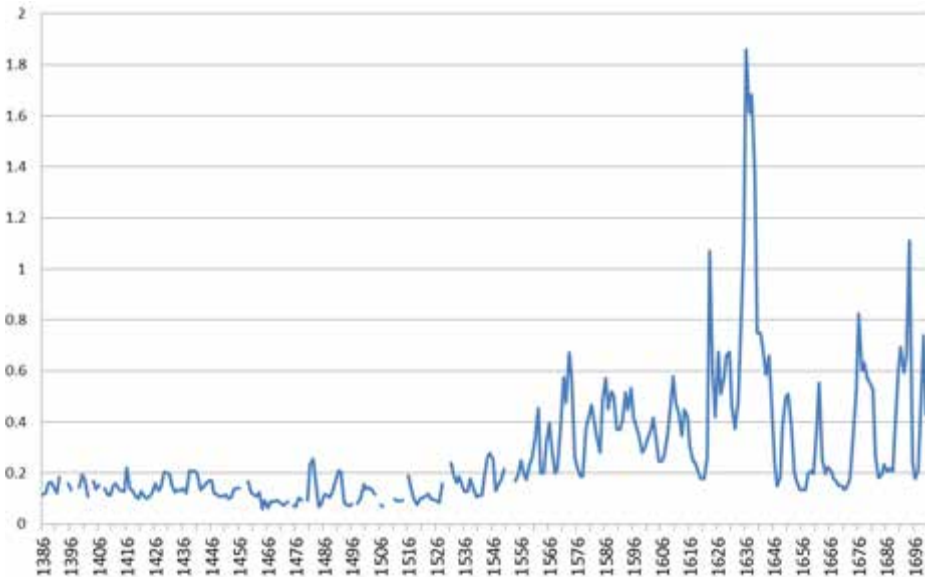
Coutances, Frankfurt, Gdansk, Leiden, Leipzig, Louvain, Paris, Rostock, Southern England, Warsaw and Wurzburg.

Tab. 2. **Variance in the Average Ratio for Rye Prices in Eighteen Markets to Prices in Strasbourg**

1386-1420	0.122
1421-1520	0.105
1521-1620	0.147
1621-1700	0.356

Source: Allen-Unger Global Commodity Prices Database (<http://www.gcpcb.info/>). Accessed March 20, 2018.

Graph 4. **Price of Rye in Strasbourg (grams of silver per litre)**



INTEGRATION OF REGIONAL MARKETS

Stephan Epstein toward the end of the last century argued that the economies of certain regions became more integrated in the closing centuries of the Middle Ages. The rising importance of regional fairs, he explained, was because they functioned as sites connecting two or more of those relatively more integrated regions. A number of fairs appeared in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries at places that had not previously had much of a role in trade. That was evidence that some regions were enjoying rising levels of integration.¹² If he was correct then not looking at the overall picture but rather zooming in on smaller geographical areas might

¹² S.R. EPSTEIN, *Regional Fairs, Institutional Innovation, and Economic Growth in Late Medieval Europe*, in “The Economic History Review”, 47, 1994, n. 3, 459-482.

well produce more promising results. The data on prices, examined in certain novel ways, tends to support his conclusions with implications for the extent of commercial connections and also cultural influence.

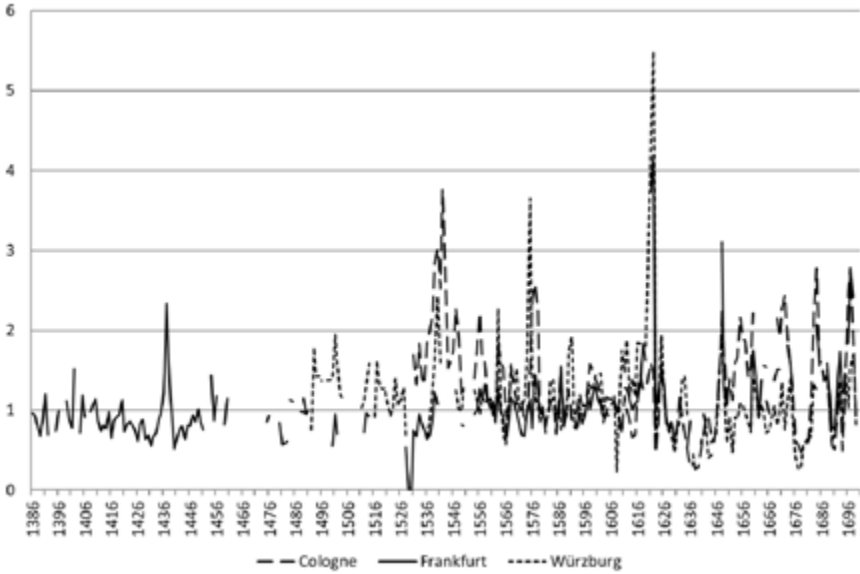
Using the ratios of prices of rye to those in Strasbourg a comparison of three other towns in the valleys of Rhine and Main, towns relatively easily accessible to each other by river, shows curves following very similar patterns.¹³ [See Graph 5] The 1622 Wurzburg figure does create considerable distortion but otherwise the commonality of the movement of prices is clear. For wheat, where more extensive data are available, some similar results emerge. For eight towns in the Low Countries the middle of the sixteenth century was a time of unstable prices, easily attributed to a combination of weather shocks and civil war. [See Graph 6] Prices in Douai remained consistently lower than in London and for that matter in towns to the north, though, by the seventeenth century it too seemed to be falling into line with the rest of the Low Countries with variations and prices similar to the rest. For four towns in the Rhine and Main valleys the pattern in wheat prices was similar. The 1547 Cologne price does distort the picture but at the same time indicates that the mid sixteenth century was a period of disruption in markets. [See Graph 7] For four towns in Britain the pattern for wheat prices is repeated. [See Graph 8] Edinburgh is an outlier when surviving data begin to appear in 1557 but in the course of the seventeenth century the town falls into line with the others. There is also disruption in the mid sixteenth century with Exeter prices swinging dramatically higher for a short time in the 1560s and then falling back into the general pattern.

Statistically rather than graphically correlations of prices in nearby markets produce further confirmation of a pattern of increasingly strong regional integration, supporting Epstein's argument. For shorter periods of time the indications are even stronger. For the long fifteenth century prices for towns in the Low Countries show strong correlations and when broken down into sub-periods of 1384 to 1477 and 1478 to 1520 the rising coefficients become more obvious. The move toward integration was, of course, not as strong with some pairs of towns as with others. Even so the pattern of a strongly developing regional market in the Low Countries, even over a period of disruption from foreign and internal wars, seems clear. The results hold for both wheat and rye.¹⁴

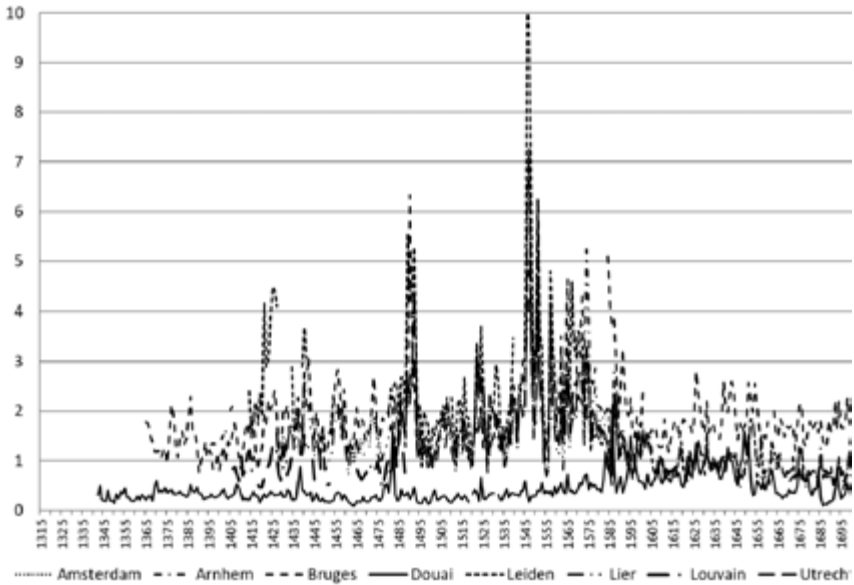
¹³ The three other towns in the river valleys were Cologne, Frankfurt and Wurzburg.

¹⁴ R.W. UNGER, *Feeding Low Countries Towns*, cit., 348-353.

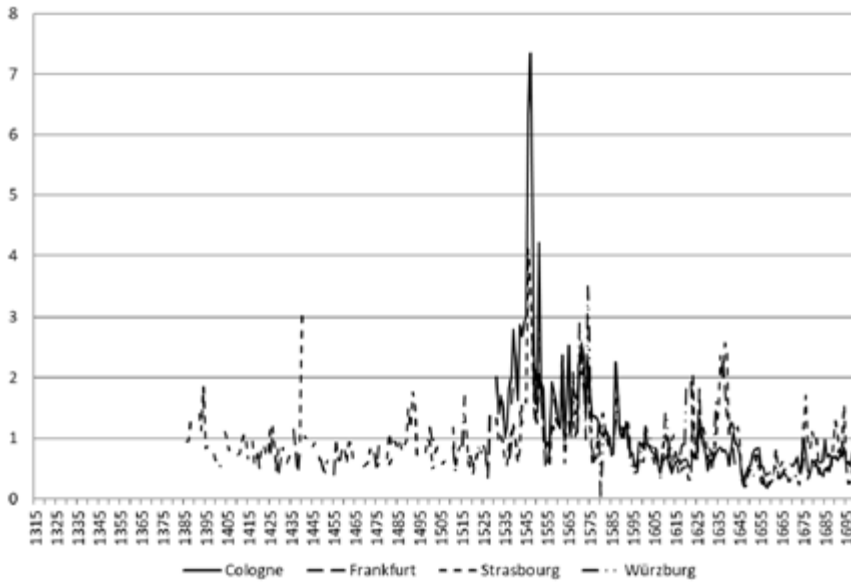
Graph. 5. Ratio of rye prices in 3 Rhine-Main Valley markets to prices in Strasbourg



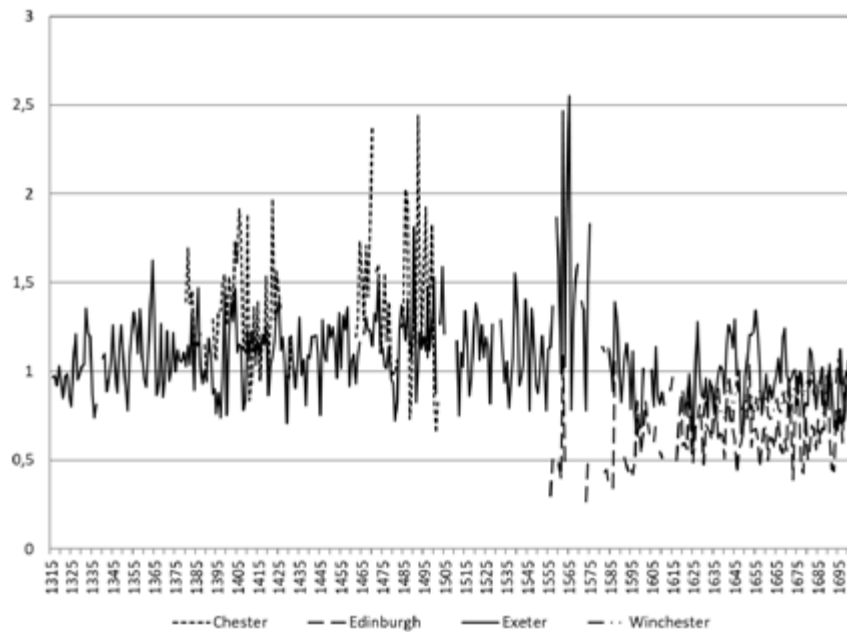
Graph. 6. Ratio of wheat prices in 8 Low Countries markets to prices in Southern England



Graph. 7. Ratio of wheat prices in 4 Rhine-Main Valley markets to prices in Southern England



Graph. 8. Ratio of wheat prices in 4 British markets to prices in Southern England



Looking beyond the Low Countries and placing the correlation of grain prices between pairs of cities in a hierarchy of the level of correlation generates some groupings. In that exercise covering the years from 1260 to 1510 there are different results for wheat and rye because data come from different cities for the two types of grain. For wheat there are towns like Exeter and London which appear to be part of the same market. There are also clusters of towns, for example, in the Low Countries counties of Brabant, Flanders and Holland. There are exceptions to the pattern with some towns near each other showing lower correlations than with the big cities of the region, that is London and Paris. That result may reflect the ease of shipping from one place to another, that is on the presence of a convenient maritime connection.¹⁵ For wheat a comparison of towns in the northwest with those in Iberia produces signs of little or no correlation, the expected result at least for the late Middle Ages. For rye there are indications of at least two clusters of towns, the first in the Low Countries and the other in and near Bavaria. There is the same seemingly contradictory result of certain pairs of towns close geographically but not close in the pattern of price formation. The Low Countries produce some examples.¹⁶

Tab. 3. **Pearson Correlations between Pairs of Cities**

Wheat Prices	Dates	Pearson R
Southern England and Exeter	1316-1700	0.94
Amsterdam and Leiden	1467-1700	0.84
Amsterdam and Bruges	1462-1700	0.79
Utrecht and Douai	1462-1700	0.65
Strasbourg and Cologne	1531-1700	0.58
Rye Prices		
Frankfurt and Strasbourg	1350-1700	0.84
Paris and Angers	1580-1700	0.64
Wurzburg and Strasbourg	1471-1700	0.60
Arnhem and Amsterdam	1544-1700	0.51
Wurzburg and Cologne	1531-1700	0.50
Amsterdam and Gdansk	1538-1700	0.49
Brussels and Bruges	1401-1500	0.47
Paris and Strasbourg	1520-1700	0.30

Source: Allen-Unger Global Commodity Prices Database (<http://www.gcpdb.info/>). Accessed March 20, 2018.

¹⁵ J.A. GALLOWAY, *One Market or Many? London and the Grain Trade of England*, in *Trade, Urban Hinterlands and Market Integration, C.1300-1600: A Collection of Working Papers Given at a Conference Organised by the Centre for Metropolitan History and Supported by the Economic and Social Research Council, 7 July 1999*, ed. J.A. GALLOWAY, London 2000, pp. 36-39, 42.

¹⁶ R.W. UNGER, *Maritime Transport and the Integration of Low Countries Grain Markets*, cit., pp. 110-111.

The results are similar for the longer period. Comparisons are made using pairs of towns in a similar way for as long as there are two surviving price series with a limited number of gaps. [See Table 3] Towns close to each other and with easy access one to the other produce very impressive levels of correlation for wheat prices. Even where transport between the two was not as simple, for example Utrecht and Douai, the relationship of prices proves relatively strong. For rye prices the numbers are not as impressive. The strongest correlation, between Frankfurt and Strasbourg, presumably indicates the value of being close to each other on the same river. At the other extreme the low correlation between Paris and Strasbourg rye prices indicate that what regional markets were emerging depended very much on easy transport links, that is on waterways be they rivers or seas. Paris prices were more closely related to those in Angers, two towns which did not enjoy the luxury of a riverine connection such as that of Würzburg and Strasbourg. The data strongly suggest that instead of a large single market in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there was rather the emergence of a series of regional markets in northwest Europe. The most notable example with roots extending back to the thirteenth century was one around the southern North Sea and English Channel with London relying on suppliers not only close to the city but also in northeastern France and even the Low Countries.¹⁷ Those same regions, if market conditions changed, could also be recipients of grain from farmland in southeastern England close to London.¹⁸

The result from the comparison of rye prices in Amsterdam and Gdansk from 1538 to 1700 suggests a connection of the same magnitude of that between Brussels and Bruges and between Würzburg and Cologne, two cases where the distance was considerably less and where rivers and canals afforded reasonable to good access for inland vessels. The correlation between the Dutch centre of trade to northeast Europe and the Baltic port supports the argument that while regional markets emerged in the late Middle Ages the connections between those clusters of towns increased over time and that there was a much larger market emerging across northern Europe thanks to maritime shipping. Vessels sailing the North Sea and into the Baltic were creating a more unified northern European market in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.

There is a consistent problem and a serious one with establishing the trend toward commercial integration between the Baltic and western Europe. While there may be some, even if sporadic, data about prices it is only in the rarest of cases before the seventeenth century that there is any surviving evidence at all of the volume of goods traded. English customs accounts start at end of the thirteenth century and become very helpful for the fifteenth and beyond. They can give early indications of volume. The tolls collected by the king of Denmark in the Øresund began even in the fifteenth century but it is the second half of the sixteenth before

¹⁷ J.A. GALLOWAY, *Metropolitan Food and Fuel Supply in Medieval England: Regional and International Contexts*, in *Food Supply, Demand and Trade: Aspects of the Economic Relationship between Town and Countryside (Middle Ages - 19th Century)*, P. VAN CRUYNINGEN, E. THOEN eds., Turnhout 2012, pp. 9-10.

¹⁸ D. KEENE, *Medieval London and Its Supply Hinterlands*, in "Regional Environmental Change", 12, 2012, n. 2, pp. 263-270.

surviving records offer consistent and sustained annual data. Numbers for some commodities turn up in some ports in northern Europe now and again before the eighteenth century but those records are typically sporadic and the taxes they report were often levied for a short time for special reasons.¹⁹ Data on commodity flows can leave false impressions about levels of or the direction of integration. There was a boom in Baltic trade for Dutch merchants and shippers in the closing years of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century. The rise of the Dutch, their emergence as prominent economic and political players in Europe and beyond, is attributed to the success in the so-called mother trade to the Baltic.²⁰ Despite Milja van Tielhof's pushing the study back into the fifteenth century it is really after 1570 when the Sound Toll records become abundant enough to have some reliable knowledge about the scale of the exchange, something which Aksel Christensen showed effectively and in considerable detail. There was trade in grain from the Baltic before the Danish levies began, carried presumably in cogs from German ports. There are indications from a few sources that exports from Poland to the Low Countries were underway in the fifteenth century.²¹ How sustained and how large they were is impossible to isolate. There is seemingly no way to know what was new in the sixteenth century and what was substitution of one route for another or substitution of one group of merchants for another and of one network for another. There must be doubt about how novel was the Dutch trade boom and about the impact of the trade on the integration of markets. It is certain, however, that there were clear and obvious and extensive cultural spinoffs from that commercial connection.

TRADE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

The trading relations yielded cultural influences, directly and indirectly. The networks of merchants, traders and shippers created pathways for the exchange of a long and varied list of practices and of goods which were cultural markers, embodying alien patterns of action which people, over time, adopted and made their own. Despite the ups and downs, there was a long term trend toward growth in exchange within regions at the end of the Middle Ages and across northern Europe in

¹⁹ C.E. HILL, *The Danish Sound Dues and the Command of the Baltic: A Study of International Relations*, Durham (NC), 1926. N.E. BANG, K. KORST, *Tabeller over Skibsfart Og Varetransport Gennem Øresund 1661-1783 Og Gennem Storebalt 1701-1748 = Tables De La Navigation Et Du Transport Des Marchandises Passant Par Le Sund 1661-1783 Et Par Le Grand-Belt 1701-1748*, 2 vols., Copenhagen 1930. S. JENKS, *Das Danziger Pfundzollbuch Von 1409 Und 1411*, Cologne 2012.

²⁰ On the development of the trade see A.E. CHRISTENSEN, *Dutch trade to the Baltic about 1600 : studies in the Sound Toll Register and Dutch shipping records*, Copenhagen 1941. M. VAN TIELHOF, *De Hollandse Graanhandel, 1470-1570: Koren Op De Amsterdamsse Molen*, The Hague 1995. EADEM, *The "Mother of All Trades": The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century*, Leiden 2002. Sound Toll Registers online, a project of the University of Groningen and Tresoar, Frisian Historical and Literary Centre at Leeuwarden: <http://www.soundtoll.nl/index.php/en/welkom> Accessed April 4, 2018.

²¹ For example, H. SAMSONOWICZ, *Untersuchungen Über Das Danziger Bürgerkapital in Der Zweiten Hälfte Des 15. Jahrhunderts, Abhandlungen Zur Handels-Und Sozialgeschichte*, Weimar 1969, pp. 28, 35, 37.

the Renaissance. Producers and consumers in different places became more dependent on each other for supplies of goods. The fluctuations and variations in production and consumption make it difficult to discern long term trends.²² While market integration may be hard to chart there was a growing interdependence of markets. Their extent of integration was a sign of trade even if the volume might not show a linear rising trend. The existence of persistent if not always expanding connections was a positive force for the creation of networks among merchants and for laying down the foundation for cultural exchange. Contact for the transmission of cultural practices did not require consistent commercial connections. Even sporadic connections could prove effective. The degree of market integration did not determine the character and extent of influence across distance. The more extensive trade relationship, however, the greater were the opportunities and the greater the impetus for cultural exchange.

At the end of the last century there was significant research concentrated on common features of the culture prevailing in different jurisdictions around the North and Baltic Seas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Lex Heerma van Voss was the leader in the effort, shown in the book he edited with Juliette Roding.²³ The thirty essays, which grew out of a conference, explored a broad range of aspects of topics from architecture to painting to music to drama to engineering to religion and piety to migration to philosophy to trade as well as commerce and business practices. Ranging from 1550 to 1800 the writers relied on different kinds of sources, in some cases concentrating on specific time periods and geographical areas and in some taking on larger questions of the cultural unity or disunity of the lands around the North Sea. The authors agreed on the primacy of economic relations in creating the common features they identified. Among them there was little if any discussion of the mechanisms which translated economic contacts into common cultural features. The strong relationship was not questioned. That volume continued a pattern established in earlier works of seeing the area around the North and Baltic seas as a region with common characteristics. In the papers in both a 1988 festschrift for professor J. A. Faber²⁴ and a 1990 collection from the Institute of Northern and Eastern European Studies at the University of Nijmegen²⁵ many different authors pointed to aspects of contact, economic, social and cultural, and the results of those contacts. While it seems more than a coincidence that the organization of research and the publication of findings was centred in the Netherlands, interest in the phenomenon of a common culture around the northern seas of Europe extended to scholars from different countries as shown in the periodic publications of the International Society for the History of the Northern

²² J.A. GALLOWAY, *One Market or Many?*, cit., p. 42.

²³ *The North Sea and Culture (1550-1800): Proceedings of the International Conference held at Leiden 21-22 April 1995*, L. HEERMA VAN VOSS, J. RODING eds., Hilversum 1996.

²⁴ *From Dunkirk to Danzig. Shipping and Trade in the North Sea and the Baltic, 1350-1850. Essays in Honour of J. A. Faber on the Occasion of his Retirement as Professor of Economic and Social History at the University of Amsterdam*, W.G. HEERES, L.M.J.B. HESP, L. NOORDEGRAAF, R.C.W. VAN DER VOORT eds., Hilversum 1988.

²⁵ *Baltic Affairs Relations between the Netherlands and North-Eastern Europe 1500-1800*, J.P.S. LEMMINK., J.S.A.M. VAN KONINGSBRUGGE eds., Nijmegen 1990.

Seas of Europe.²⁶

For all those examining exchange in early modern northwest Europe defining what might be meant by a cultural unity in the region is a daunting if not impossible task. The concept is elusive because of its scope and the potential variety. While common characteristics may be easy to find in a region or area it is difficult to measure their depth or extent or to set levels of such characteristics which might serve as tests or measures for a cultural unity. In various categories, in religion, language, demography, art, sensitivity of various sorts, social policy many similarities emerged over time. For that there is general agreement and extensive documentation. Those similarities are most obvious for the seventeenth century and for areas close to the sea. The signs of integration of Amsterdam and Gdansk grain markets at exactly the time of the emergence of more practices in common in the Netherlands and along the south coast of the Baltic supports the argument for the economic roots of cultural exchange, and more specifically roots in trade in goods.

Communication is one way in which a cultural unity can emerge and merchants were the logical agents of communication in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. They travelled widely and many took up permanent residence in foreign lands. Dealing with people in those unfamiliar environments, they had to develop a common language to exchange information. Literacy and education were a by-product of commerce in medieval and early modern Europe with only migration proving a stronger force for the transmission, merging or imposition of other cultures on existing ones. Resident Dutch merchants, for example, in Baltic ports like Gdansk carried on a regular correspondence with merchants and family back in the Netherlands, among other things reporting on conditions economic and political.²⁷ Many examples of such exchanges or of exposure to the culture of others with merchants as agents fill the volumes on relations of the Netherlands with lands to the east published in the 1980s and 1990s. The same, to a lesser degree, is true of essays in a volume dealing with commercial and cultural contacts between Britain and Poland from the Middle Ages to the late eighteenth century.²⁸ Similarly there was extensive diffusion of technology through networks in northwestern Europe. The best known and documented case was in the adoption of northwestern European practices forced on Russia to the degree possible by Tsar Peter the Great around 1700. It was exceptional. Voluntary imitation of techniques was much more common.²⁹

The connections around the North and Baltic Seas, the emerging common features, suggest that it was the networks that grew up out of trade in the region which

²⁶ The organization, a product of the Cold War, lost its principal function of bringing together scholars from both sides of the Iron Curtain and has gradually faded in importance. See also more generally D.G. KIRBY, MERJA-LIISA HINKKANEN-LIEVONEN, *The Baltic and the North Seas*, London-New York 2000.

²⁷ H.E. VAN GELDER, *Zestiende-eeuwsche koopmansbrieven*, in "Economisch-Historisch Jaarboek", V, 1919, pp. 136-191.

²⁸ *Britain and Poland-Lithuania: Contact and Comparison from the Middle Ages to 1795*, ed. R.W. UNGER, Leiden; Boston 2008.

²⁹ C.A. DAVIDS, *The Rise and Decline of Dutch Technological Leadership: Technology, Economy and Culture in the Netherlands, 1350-1800*, Leiden-Boston 2008, pp. 269-364.

were the starting point for the integration of more than just markets. Commercial exchange became cultural exchange. The connections among the lands on the shores of the North Sea varied in intensity and in direction over the years from the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries so the progression of cultural influence has not been unidirectional nor was it universal. The growing power of governments and their commitment starting in the early nineteenth century to create unified national states should not, however, obscure the ease with which people, ideas and daily practices moved in the wake of trade before 1800. Two obvious cases, with the potential for many more examples, illustrate the possible relationship between commerce and culture.

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL INFLUENCE: THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE

The most obvious sign of a late medieval network created by commerce and concomitant political interests was the Hanseatic League. It started as another group of cities seeking to identify common interests and to use their limited political and military power to defend those interests, mostly to do with trade. They could do that in north Germany because the early thirteenth century ruler, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, had freed the towns from his grip to create political allies. He needed support for his ultimately unsuccessful struggle against leagues of Italian towns. Commercial networks overlapped with social networks in Hansa towns, the two being closely linked.³⁰ The expansion in trade coincided with improvements in shipbuilding technology in north German towns in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Technical change in ships contributed to falling transport costs. The cog appeared as a long-distance carrier, probably originating in southern Denmark, around 1200.³¹ It proved to be very efficient at carrying bulky goods and since larger versions proved seaworthy it afforded scale economies.³² The use of the cog as well as a growing variety of ship types, in some cases related to the cog, on longer-distance voyages suggest that there were some improvements in navigation.³³ Dangers at sea were also reduced to some degree by an increase in political

³⁰ U.C. EWERT, S. SELZER, *Social Networks*, in *A Companion to the Hanseatic League*, ed. D.J. HARRELD, Leiden 2015, pp. 162-193, 166-193.

³¹ O. CRUMLIN-PEDERSEN, *To Be or Not to Be a Cog: The Bremen Cog in Perspective*, in "International Journal of Nautical Archaeology", 29, 2000, n. 2, pp. 230-246. IDEM, *Die Bremer Kogge - Ein Schlüssel Zur Geschichte Des Schiffbaus Im Mittelalter*, in *Die Kogge Sternstunde Der Deutschen Schiffsarchäologie*, G. HOFFMANN, U. SCHNALL eds., Hamburg 2003, (Schriften Des Deutschen Schifffahrtsmuseums), pp. 256-271. C. JAHNKE, *Zur Interpretation Der Ersten Lübecker Schiffsiegel*, in "Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde", 88, 2008, pp. 9-24. IDEM, *Und Kein Ende Anmerkungen Zu Den Thesen Von Reinhard Paulsen Und Detlev Ellmers*, in "Zeitschrift für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde", 91, 2011, pp. 305-320.

³² J. LUCASSEN, R.W. UNGER, *Shipping, Productivity and Economic Growth*, in *Shipping and Economic Growth, 1350-1850*, ed. R.W. UNGER, Leiden-Boston 2011, pp. 12-17.

³³ D. ELLMERS, *The Cog as Cargo Carrier*, in *Cogs, Caravels and Galleons: The Sailing Ship, 1000-1650 Conway's History of the Ship*, R. GARDINER, R.W. UNGER eds., London 1994, pp. 29-46, 40-43. A. SAUER, *Das "Seebuch": Das Älteste Erhaltene Seehandbuch Und Die Spätmittelalterliche Navigation in Nordwesteuropa*, Hamburg 1996.

stability, at least relatively, and that trend would continue over time thanks in part to the actions of the confederation of towns.

The League did have sporadic meetings of representatives from member cities though attendance varied, membership was loosely defined and joint action depended on the willingness of each town to participate. The institution is best known for its political activity where it enjoyed considerable success in the second half of the fourteenth century. The confederation of cities did gain concessions from monarchs. At four trading posts in Bruges, London, Bergen and Novgorod merchants from member towns enjoyed tax privileges along with extraterritorial legal rights. The status of the four factories made possible channelling trade through them, creating in the process islands of north German practice and culture around northern Europe. With commercial connections came influence which left its mark on life in the region. Merchants from north German towns settled in ports around the Baltic and North Seas. That Hansa diaspora brought with them their own cultural practices in everything from language to architectural styles to eating habits, each having an impact on life in their newly adopted locations.³⁴ Just one of many examples was the late fifteenth century experimentation in England with using tile stoves for heating rooms, something novel in the island kingdom. The practice came from the Rhineland with traders being the source both of the idea and of the tiles themselves, the latter being part of a growing trade in higher quality ceramics. The pattern in England was typical of the Baltic as well where stoneware from the Rhineland and the technology of Hansa towns in the production of stove tiles came to predominate. People in the northeast used vessels for meals which were not only in design but also in style and decoration the same as those used in the major centres of the League. The topics of the stove tiles even changed in the Baltic with the Reformation as they did in places like Lübeck and Cologne.³⁵ Tiles were not the only cultural markers of Hanseatic influence. The use of bricks and the design of buildings made with bricks was another contribution throughout northern Europe of the commercial connections of the merchants from League towns.³⁶

While the League saw its solidarity wane through the end of the Middle Ages, thanks to a considerable degree to the ability of monarchs to increase their authority over towns within their realms, a new challenge for the organization, not so much to its commercial but its cultural role, emerged after 1517. The overwhelming majority of the north German towns which played the central role in the League,

³⁴ M. NAUM, *Migration, Identity and Material Culture: Hanseatic Translocality in the Medieval Baltic Sea*, in *Comparative Perspectives on Past Colonisation, Maritime Interaction and Cultural Integration*, A.L. MELHEIM, H. GLØSTAD, Z. TSIGARIDAS GLØSTAD eds., Sheffield, UK; Bristol, CT 2016, pp. 129-148.

³⁵ D.R.M. GAIMSTER, *Cross-Channel Ceramic Trade in the Late Middle Ages: Archaeological Evidence for the Spread of Hanseatic Culture to Britain*, in *Archäologie Des Mittelalters Und Bauforschung Im Hanseraum: Eine Festschrift Für Günther Fehring*, G.P. FEHRING, M. GLÄSER, D. MÜHRENBURG, W. MÜNS, O. PELC eds., Rostock 1993, pp. 252-260, 256-258. IDEM, *The Baltic Ceramic Market 1200-1600: Measuring Hanseatic Cultural Transfer and Resistance*, in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe Forging European Identities, 1400-1700*, R. MUCHEMBLED, E.W. MONTER, H. ROODENBURG eds., Cambridge 2007, 32-55. Gaimster did find resistance to the adoption of Hansa ceramics and Hansa habits of eating in Novgorod, the furthest east of the outposts of the League, 55-58.

³⁶ B. AYERS, *The German Ocean: Medieval Europe around the North Sea*, Sheffield 2016, pp 99-107.

joined in the Lutheran Reformation.³⁷ While that proved no barrier in Russia where there was already a religious distinction with the prevailing orthodox Christianity nor in Scandinavia where the kings reformed their churches, it did create problems in western Europe where the Roman church remained the dominant religious authority. Lutheran merchants from League towns living in England and the Low Countries found themselves at odds with local religious practice. The early sixteenth century Low Countries ruler, the Habsburg Charles V, in his role as the Holy Roman Emperor was engaged in wars in Germany to suppress Lutheranism. He also wanted to make the lands he ruled in the Netherlands into examples of adherence to the established church. That implied stamping out any Reformation tendencies. At the same time the merchants from League cities were an integral part of the commercial networks of Antwerp, the most populous and prosperous town in his lands on the North Sea coast. Those traders were potential purveyors of the Lutheran contagion.³⁸ The emperor, while displeased with having resident potential agents of reform with the possibility of influencing religious practice in his lands, did not pursue a policy of expelling Protestant merchants. Maintaining commercial networks proved more important than religious or political considerations. Similarly in England Henry VIII suspected and even took action against Hansards resident in the London Steelyard, the League trading post, for disseminating Protestant works. It seems all but certain that in fact the merchants did do exactly that. Certainly the men, and they were all men in the factory, did have Lutheran works in their possession for their own use. That such works would find their way outside the confines of the Hansa factory suggests that the residents had previously proven a source of material with a potential to influence English culture. Any possible friction over religion disappeared when the English king decided, for reasons of state, to reform the church in his British lands which meant the source of conflict with Lutheran Hansards disappeared.³⁹ In 1598 his daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, would withdraw the privileges the Steelyard enjoyed, that for commercial and not cultural reasons.⁴⁰

The network of Hanseatic League towns was a source of significant cultural influence which grew out of and at the same time was part of commercial connections.⁴¹ An outstanding example of such effects is the development of hopped beer brewing in northern Europe from the thirteenth through the seventeenth century. The ability of brewers in first Bremen, then Hamburg and then a number of other towns along the north German coasts of both the North and Baltic seas to produce a reliable drink flavoured with hops created an export good which found markets, starting in around 1200, in the Low Countries and England and Scandinavia. Major

³⁷ P. DOLLINGER, *The German Hansa*, Stanford, CA, 1970, pp. 320-323.

³⁸ For example, P. GEYL, *The Revolt of the Netherlands, 1555-1609*, second ed., London 1958, pp. 53-58.

³⁹ J.D. FUDGE, *Commerce and Print in the Early Reformation*, Leiden ; Boston, 2007.

⁴⁰ On Anglo-Hanseatic relations in the second half of the sixteenth century see M. NORTH, *The Hanseatic League in the Early Modern Period*, in *A Companion to the Hanseatic League*, ed. D.J. HARRELD, Leiden 2015, pp. 101-124, 106-115.

⁴¹ On the general impact of resident merchants and their practices around the North Sea in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as seen through the prism of archaeological evidence see B. AYERS, *The German Ocean*, cit., pp 147-193.

exporters were Bremen and then Hamburg for western markets, Wismar for northern ones and Gdansk for eastern ones. The beer that went to the Hansa factory in Bergen had to be more heavily hopped to survive the voyage and remain palatable for long periods of storage. The practice led to a still-surviving preference in southwestern Norway for beers with a more bitter taste. The quantities shipped, for example to Amsterdam from Hamburg, were in the millions of litres annually in the late fourteenth century.⁴² Not only did the north German towns export beer but they also exported the methods of making hopped beer. Brewers in the Low Countries, England, many other parts of Germany and in lands further east imitated the style of beer that came from the Hansa towns. The beer that was the norm for Hamburg brewers became the norm for all beer makers by the seventeenth century from Ireland to Russia and from Bohemia to Sweden.⁴³

The Hanseatic League faded in importance in the sixteenth century and all but disappeared in the seventeenth. The rising power of Renaissance states and the hostility of monarchs like Charles V and Elizabeth I certainly contributed to its demise. So too did the development, or rather adoption, of business practices from the Mediterranean. The use of correspondents or agents in other ports from the sixteenth century on decreased the need to travel. The combination of greater standardization of legal practices and growing public authority meant there were more reliable methods of enforcing agreements. A common or almost common legal regime for shipping, was taking shape already in the thirteenth century. Governments beyond those of cities took on the role of protector of their merchants, though admittedly often to the detriment of foreign merchants. There was over time easier access to capital and, copied from southern Europe, maritime insurance to protect capital. From 1609 the Amsterdam exchange bank, to be followed by similar ones elsewhere in the north, offered ways to transfer funds from one merchant to another safely and consistently. All those improvements in business methods and changes in the political landscape made possible and promoted the potential for success of networks of individual merchants or families of merchants. They also decreased the need for a league of cities to support those merchants.

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL INFLUENCE: THE CULTURAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE DUTCH

A second example of integration, the emergence of networks across northern Europe and of resulting cultural influence comes from the northern Netherlands. Again it was seaborne transport which contributed to commercial success. Dutch shipbuilders created a hybrid form of construction which brought together the de-

⁴² R.W. UNGER, *Beer in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Philadelphia 2004, pp. 60-61. IDEM, *A History of Brewing in Holland, 900-1900: Economy, Technology, and the State*. Leiden; Boston 2001, pp. 31, 131, 253. IDEM, *The Trade in Beer to Medieval Scandinavia*, in "Deutsches Schifffahrtsarchiv", 11, 1988, pp. 249-258.

⁴³ R.W. UNGER, *Technical Change in the Brewing Industry in Germany, the Low Countries, and England in the Late Middle Ages*, in "The Journal of European Economic History", 21, 1992, pp. 281-313.

sign features of the cog and Mediterranean vessels.⁴⁴ The former helped to create a spacious hold for more cargo for each metre of length and the latter made building and repairs simpler while lessening the need to reinforce the hull. While the relatively long fluyt gained the most notoriety the design was one of a number that offered Dutch shippers a range of options of vessels suited to specific trades and so more efficient in carrying goods.⁴⁵ The advantages offered were most obvious in trade to the Baltic but applied as well to an expanding range of trades where the Dutch participated or came to dominate in northern waters and beyond.

The late sixteenth century boom in shipping through the Sound, carrying French and Portuguese salt and Dutch herring to the Baltic in exchange for grain, brought Dutch cultural and political influence. Well before that expansion in those trades Low Countries merchants and traders had carried on extensive exchange around the North Sea. Commerce between the Netherlands and the kingdom of Norway-Denmark led to Dutch participation in capital markets there and to influence on wages and prices, on migration patterns and on internal politics.⁴⁶ The Dutch were consumers of Scottish coal. In part it was the tax regime which led them to prefer sources in the Firth of Forth. The architecture of villages there such as Culross and Alloa show Dutch influence.⁴⁷ The seventeenth century brandy industry of the lower Loire valley depended on Dutch capital and consumers for its existence and durability.⁴⁸ Dutch trade and prosperity was the envy of other states in northwestern Europe in the seventeenth century. The efforts of Cromwell's England and Louis XIV's France, under the guidance of finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, to undermine the dominance of the Republic through political, military and economic policies are clear signs of both resentment and admiration. The reactions came in the wake of the rapid rise of Dutch trade in the first half of the seventeenth century and, with that boom, the development of a thriving network of merchants and traders spread across northern Europe. The Dutch guilder was, if not the common currency, at least the standard by which all others were measured. The influence of the Dutch in technology came along with Dutch investment in a broad range of enterprises throughout the region. Often investment went to developing resources in countries like Sweden and Norway to supply the Dutch market. Funding went to potential competitors for Dutch firms, as with putting money into the English and Swedish East India Companies, where the goal was simply profit. Influence extended to art. Dutch architects and artists brought their skills and styles to other countries.⁴⁹ The extent of Dutch influence led to Am-

⁴⁴ T.J. MAARLEVELD, *Double Dutch Solutions in Flush-Planked Shipbuilding*, in *Crossroads in Ancient Shipbuilding: Proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology, Roskilde, 1991*, ISBSA 6, ed. C. WESTERDAHL, Oxford 1994, pp. 153-63.

⁴⁵ A. WEGENER SLEESWYK, *De Gouden Eeuw Van Het Fluitschip*, Franeker 2003.

⁴⁶ C. VAN BOCHOVE, *The economic consequences of the Dutch*, cit., pp. 83-87, 101-106, 210-218 and *passim*.

⁴⁷ R.W. UNGER, *The Dutch Coal Trade in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, in "Mededelingen van de Nederlandse Vereniging voor Zeegechiedenis", 43, 1981, pp. 6-14, 10-12.

⁴⁸ H. DE BRUYN KOPS, *A Spirited Exchange: The Wine and Brandy Trade between France and the Dutch Republic in Its Atlantic Framework, 1600-1650*, Leiden; Boston 2007.

⁴⁹ A classic case is reported in J. RODING, B. NOLDUS, *Pieter Isaacs (1568-1625): Court Painter, Art*

sterdam's dominance of the art market in northern Europe until it was supplanted by London after 1660.⁵⁰ It is highly unlikely that any of those cultural effects would have emerged without the presence of Dutch merchant networks.

CONCLUSIONS

The Dutch in the seventeenth century were the extreme case of deep cultural influence that grew out of networks created among merchants which in turn grew out of integration of markets through trade. There were small and often fleeting indications of what could happen in the early Middle Ages. In the years before 1300 the role of governments and religious institutions, often the same thing in the period, was more obvious than they would be later. The political and environmental instability of the early Middle Ages meant connections were intermittent. Growth in trade in the thirteenth century, when a more benign climate combined with more efficient shipping, indicated what might be possible. The recovery in the total size of the economy, even if slow, after the dramatic decline in population in the second half of the fourteenth century opened the doors to a greater number of and more intense commercial connections. What had been underway in the high Middle Ages became the norm in the sixteenth and even more in the seventeenth century. The impact of those trading connections and of the people involved in them proved to have many and varied ramifications. The scale of the influence of commercial connections on life in early modern northwestern Europe is all too easy to underestimate. Simple day-to-day matters like the use of words common in the region depended on exposure to others living around the North Sea.⁵¹ At the other extreme the complex interaction of states, their political alliances, their internal political struggles and even their religious practices depended on what was known of others in the region, the information brought embodied in the goods and individuals moving around the northern seas of Europe.

Over time smaller political units got subsumed in larger duchies and kingdoms. In 1200 there were many local strong men, lords whose power was geographically circumscribed. Trade was also limited with exchange beyond regions being unusual. That isolation and insularity broke down gradually because of the integration, first, of regional markets through the close of the Middle Ages and, second, the integration of those regional units as they in turn became part of markets covering not only more of northern Europe but also covering parts of distant continents. The creation of closer commercial ties in regions along the Rhine and Main, in the Low Countries and across the English Channel and North Sea laid the foundation for cultural exchange within limited geographical areas. The expansion of commerce after 1500 led to the integration of those regional markets with each other and so to

Dealer and Spy, Turnhout 2007.

⁵⁰ D. ORMROD, *The Origins of the London Art Market, 1660-1730*, in *Art Markets in Europe, 1400-1800*, M. NORTH, D. ORMROD eds., London 1999, pp. 167-186.

⁵¹ L. HEERMA VAN VOSS, *North Sea Culture, 1500-1800*, in *The North Sea and Culture (1550-1800): Proceedings of the International Conference Held at Leiden 21-22 April 1995*, J. RODING, L. HEERMA VAN VOSS eds., Hilversum 1996, pp. 21-40, 22-28.

greater exchange of a varied range of cultural markers.

Local strong men still remained powerful at the end of the seventeenth century. Regional loyalties remained strong. Even the most prominent example of a centralizing minister of an absolutist monarch, Colbert, still had to go begging to regional assemblies to get badly needed tax income to support his monarch's policies. The process of integration and unification was not complete by any means even in 1700. By then, however, maritime exchange had led to significant changes in the character of society and the structure of political institutions. The process toward unification in language, culture, politics was haltingly underway in the fourteenth century and by the seventeenth it was moving forward dramatically, a result of the activities of merchants and the networks they created based on trade across seas. When the Lejonkulan Theatre, next to the royal palace, the second theatre in Stockholm, opened in 1667 it was a sign of increasing sophistication and propriety, of the kingdom joining into the culture of Europe. The players on the new stage spoke a language the audience could easily understand: Dutch.⁵²

⁵² B. ALBACH, *Langs Kermissen en Hoven ontstaan en kroniek van een nederlands toneelgezelschap in de 17de eeuw*, Zutphen 1977, P. 151.

Leos Müller

Swedish Trade and Shipping in the Mediterranean in the 18th Century

The history of “Northern invasion” in the Mediterranean in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is a well-known narrative of the early modern Mediterranean history. Dutch, English and French merchants, goods, and vessels swarmed the Mediterranean Sea and replaced to a large extent the Venetians, Genoese, Catalans and other Mediterranean commercial polities.¹ Much less attention has been paid to the “Scandinavian invasion” in the Mediterranean basin in the next century; even if when we look at the extent of shipping, significance in salt trade, voluminous imports et cetera, the Scandinavian share of the business became impressive. From being relatively invisible in Mediterranean ports about 1700, Swedish and Danish ships were among leading carriers in the 1780s and 1790s.

Entries in the port of Marseilles illuminate well this development. Between 1709 and 1792 there were registered 1,466 entries of Swedish ships and 1,453 of Danish ships. In total 2,919 Nordic vessels entered the Mediterranean’s most important port. This may be compared with 3,363 Dutch and 2,749 English entries.² Undoubtedly, in the eighteenth century “Northern invasion” continued from Scandinavian countries. It was not a steady increase. Much of the growth took place in the last three decades of the century, and was related to wars between the French, English and Dutch. But the wars are not the single explanation. There were other factors that had to be taken into account to understand the growth in Scandinavian trade and shipping.

This paper focuses predominantly on Sweden. The narrative will be complemented by case of Denmark when relevant. By the end of the century, the two Scandinavian countries employed similar strategies and policies and they often collaborated in the area, to protect their commerce and shipping.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century Sweden had two different strategies regarding the Mediterranean Sea. The first one concerned the eastern Mediterranean, Sweden’s relations with the Ottoman Empire and its interest in the Levant trade. The strategy was based in Sweden’s sharing foreign policy interest with the Ottoman Empire – Russia was their joint enemy of both. But there was also interest in trade with the Levant. The second strategy predominantly concerned the

¹ For example, M. GREENE, *Beyond the Northern Invasion. The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century*, in “Past & Present”, 174, 2002, pp. 42-71.

² CH. CARRIERE, *Négociants marseillais au 18^e siècle: contribution à l'étude des économies maritimes*, Marseille 1973, p. 1061.

western Mediterranean, Iberian Peninsula and northern Africa. Here sea salt and Sweden's exports were in the focus. Iberian and Mediterranean salt was for Sweden a strategic commodity and much of the state's trade policy in southern Europe was shaped with regard to salt. From the mid-century tramp shipping became the major factor of the rising activity of the Swedes and Danes in the Mediterranean. The growth in shipping was related to Scandinavian kingdoms' treaties with north African polities, and to the fact that Sweden and Denmark avoided the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), American Revolutionary War (1776/78-1783) and, until 1805-1807, the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The Danes and Swedes were neutrals which gave them a competitive advantage in wartime.

THE LEVANT CONNECTION

Between 1700 and 1721 Sweden was involved in the Great Northern War with almost all its neighbors in northern Europe. The major combatants were Charles XII's Sweden and Peter the Great's Russia and the war took mainly place in the territories of Poland-Lithuania and Russia. Sweden's defeat in 1709, at Poltava, southern Ukraine, was the turning point of the war. After the battle, Charles XII retired with his remaining troops onto the Ottoman territory. He stayed there in the years 1709-1714, ruling his distanced northern kingdom from Bender in present-day Moldova. The purpose of Charles XII's stay in Bender was to hammer out a military alliance with the Ottomans. This failed and at the end relations between Charles XII and his increasingly hesitant hosts became tense. He returned to Sweden to continue the war against Russia and Denmark. But the fact that the Swedish royal court for a couple years was located on the territory of the Ottoman Empire facilitated contacts, networks and knowledge exchange. A great number of Swedish travelers visited Levant and Palestine, some looking for Biblical antiquities other for commercial opportunities.³

In 1718, Charles XII was shot in his campaign against Norway (then part of the kingdom of Denmark) and Sweden searched for peace. In 1721 it signed peace with Russia confirming the loss of Baltic provinces. The outcome of the war established a new situation in northern Europe; Russia was the new great power while Sweden became a minor third-rank power. In the Age of Liberty (1720-1772), the period of the proto-parliamentary rule, the political power in Stockholm shifted from the king to the estates (*riksdag*). The new regime of the so-called Cap Party pursued peaceful relationships and cooperation with Russia. But the situation changed in the mid-1730s. A new political party, the so-called Hat Party, initiated a new anti-Russian policy. A part of it was once again an alliance with the Ottomans. Nevertheless, to establish diplomatic contact with the Sublime Porte Sweden had first to settle Charles XII's old debts from the Bender years. The debt issue was settled by a

³ See *Karl XII och svenskarna i Osmanska riket*, Å. KARLSSON, K. KRONBERG, P. SANDIN eds., Stockholm 2015, L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce: the Swedish consular service and long-distance shipping, 1720-1815*, Uppsala 2004, p. 56.

promise of supplying a fully equipped warship to Sublime Porte, and in 1737 trade treaty with the Ottoman Empire was signed.⁴

An outcome of the treaty was the Swedish Levant Company. It was a controversial enterprise. First there was a concern if Sweden, indeed, needed a trade with the Levant. Levant goods (silks, cotton textiles, et cetera) were perceived as an unnecessary luxury. Instead of imports of luxury goods from the Levant the state should promote domestic textile production, the critics said.⁵ The second issue was: how should the Levant trade be organized? The Hat Party proposal of chartered company followed closely the example of the English Levant Company, but many merchants were critical to it. The Dutch Levant trade was free and it seemed to work well. The champions of the charter model won and on 20 February 1738, the Swedish Levant Company was founded.

The company charter shows that its organization was a compromise. It applied only to the Levant coast – leaving Swedish trade and shipping in the remaining parts of the Mediterranean free. In addition, private merchants could trade on the Levant coast if they applied for trading license from the Levant Company. The size of the company was limited if we compare with the Swedish East India Company (SEIC), another Swedish chartered company. While the capital stock of SEIC was five and half million *daler silvermynt*, the capital stock of the Levant Company was only 200,000 *daler silvermynt*.⁶ Yet, we have to stress here that the two chartered companies had completely different business strategies. SEIC traded in Chinese products (tea, porcelain, silks, spices and similar). The business strategy was based on re-exports of the Chinese products to western-European wealthy markets: the Dutch Republic, Southern Netherlands, France and Britain. And the investors were originally wealthy foreigners (bankers from Antwerp, Gent, and Amsterdam) with knowledge of and contacts in re-export markets. The biggest investors in the Levant Company were Stockholm merchants: Thomas Plomgren, Gustaf Kierman, Johan Clason and Samuel Worster.⁷ And the targeted consumers were Swedes – a relatively poor and limited market.

It did not work well. The problem was not only the limited domestic market but also the composition of Swedish goods for the Levant. Whereas Dutch, French, and English Levant merchants traded in highly valued commodities (textiles, metal products, industrial goods), Swedish trade was based on typical Swedish export goods: bulky iron and naval stores. While the Dutch used bar iron as ballast

⁴ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 57, T. ELIASSON WESTRIN, *Anteckningar om Karl XII:s orientalska kreditorer*, in “Historisk tidskrift”, 20, 1900, pp. 1-56, *Minnet av Konstantinopel. Den osmanskturkiska 1700-talsamlingen på Biby*, ed. K. ÅDAHL, Stockholm 2003.

⁵ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., pp. 70-71.

⁶ E. OLÁN, *Sjöriparna på Medelhavet och Levantiska kompaniet. Historien om Sveriges gamla bandel med Orienten*. Stockholm 1921, p. 59, M. ÅBERG, *Svensk handelskapitalism – Ett dynamiskt element i frihetstidens sambälle? En fallstudie av delägarna i Ostindiska kompaniets 3:e oktroj 1766–1786*. (licentiate, unpublished), Göteborg 1988, p. 31.

⁷ *Gustaf Kierman*, urn:sbl:11472, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* (O. JÄRSKIÖLD), retr. 2018-03-30. *Thomas Plomgren*, urn:sbl:7333, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* (E.-B. GRAGE), retr. 2018-03-30. *Clason, släkt*, urn:sbl:14865, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* (F. CLASON), retr. 2018-03-30.

– free of fright cost – the same commodity was the major traded item for the Swedes.

In 1756 the company charter was withdrawn and Swedish trade with the Levant was set on free foot. During its eighteenth years, the Swedish Levant Company sent out only fourteen ships to Smyrna, its major destination in the Ottoman Empire.⁸ The failure of Sweden's Levant trade contrasts with the success of Swedish trade and shipping in the western Mediterranean and Iberian Peninsula, with hundreds or registered arrivals annually.

SALT AND SWEDISH TRADE POLICY AFTER 1721

The salt connection between Sweden and southern Europe is a bit of a puzzle. On the one hand, Sweden has always been dependent on imports of salt. There is a lack of domestic salt sources. The brackish character of the Baltic Sea water together with cold climate hinders sea salt harvesting. On the other hand, Sweden could import salt from nearer sources than from Portugal and the Mediterranean. French, British even German salt was an alternative. The trade pattern with the sea salt of southern European origin was established in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the Dutch skippers and merchants took French Atlantic and Iberian salt as return cargo to the Baltic.⁹

Salt was a strategic commodity. It was crucial for the preservation and storage of food: fish, cheese, butter, meat, etc. In many countries, the dependence of ordinary people on salt made the commodity a favorable target of taxation (e.g. France). In Sweden, the state policy surrounding salt has been characterized as the first “welfare state” policy.¹⁰ The government considered it important to keep salt prices low and supplies sufficient. This also means that much of trade policy at the seventeenth and early eighteenth century related to salt, its carrying, supplies, prices, and security of the salt trade.

During the Great Northern War Sweden once again became dependent on the Dutch supplies. In 1709, Denmark re-entered the war of the side of Russia and the Danish navy and privateers were chasing Swedish vessels in the North Sea and in southern Baltic. The Swedes disappeared from the Sound Toll register, being replaced by the Dutch who dominated the strategically important imports of salt from Portugal.

After the war the Dutch were accused of increasing salt prices, moreover, pocketing freight money for carrying cargoes to Sweden. Recent research has found little evidence for the claims, but the critique worked in the Swedish parliament.¹¹ Already in 1721, the protection of Swedish shipping interest against the Dutch was

⁸ E. OLÁN, *Sjörövarna på Medelhavet*, cit., p. 63.

⁹ J.I. ISRAEL, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740*. Oxford 1989, pp. 49-51.

¹⁰ S. CARLÉN, *Staten som marknadens salt. En studie i institutionsbildning, kollektivt handlande och tidig välfärdspolitik på en strategisk varumarknad i övergången mellan merkantilism och liberalism 1720-1862*. Stockholm 1997, pp. 48-56.

¹¹ E. LINDBERG, *The Swedish Salt Market during the Great Northern War*, in “Scandinavian Economic History Review”, 2009, n. 2, pp. 191-206.

discussed. In 1724, after a drawn-out debate, the Swedish parliament enacted so-called *produktplakatet*, the most important measure of Swedish shipping policy in the eighteenth century.¹² The produktplakatet was modeled according to the English Navigation Acts from the mid-seventeenth century; it was a Swedish Navigation Act. It prohibited imports of goods on the ships that did not belong to the producer's country nor were registered in Sweden. Regarding salt from southern Europe, it meant that it only could be carried on Swedish, Portuguese or Mediterranean vessels. The Act excluded the Dutch from the carrying business to Sweden. A direct trade to Sweden on Portuguese, Spanish or French ships was very limited, consequently, Sweden's carrying trade to southern Europe effectively became a monopoly of Swedish ship owners.¹³

An immediate outcome of the Swedish Navigation Act was the collapse of Dutch shipping to Sweden. In 1719 and 1720, the Sound Toll Register reported about a hundred Dutch ships going to Sweden proper. In 1725 and 1726, the number of Dutch ships registered in the Sound for Sweden declined to six and three respectively.¹⁴ At the same time, the number of Swedish-registered vessels in long-distance trade increased from 228 in 1723 to 480 in 1726.¹⁵

The Act and its benefits and disadvantages had attracted much attention, both in the political and economic debates in eighteenth-century Sweden and among historians. Especially its long-term impact on the development of Swedish shipping has been debated. In the eighteenth century the struggle was between the Act's advocates, often wealthy merchant tycoons and ship-owners from Stockholm, and the Act's opponents, representing small merchants from provincial towns. The first group was linked to the Hat Party, bound to Sweden's mercantilist policy. The second group represented the Hats' political opposition. The most renowned representative of the Act's enemies, the Finnish priest Anders Chydenius, called it, "The source of the state's misery" (*Källan till rikets van-magt*) in his pamphlet from 1765, claiming that the Act caused a salt shortage and high prices. Undoubtedly, the Act entailed an immediate increase in numbers of ships sailing to southern Europe but it cannot, by far, explain the increase in Swedish shipping in the area. In fact, the major increase in shipping under Swedish flag took place in 1770-1800, almost fifty years after the introduction of the Swedish Navigation Act.

¹² There is an extensive literature on the Swedish Navigation Act. Here I mention only the key works: E.F. HECKSCHER, *Produktplakatet: Den gamla svenska sjöfartspolitikens grundlag*, in *Ekonomi och historia*, Stockholm 1922, IDEM, *Den svenska handelsjöfartens ekonomiska historia sedan Gustaf Vasa*, Uppsala, 1940, S. CARLÉN, *An institutional analysis of the Swedish salt market, 1720-1862*, in "Scandinavian Economic History Review", 1994, n. 1, pp. 3-28, IDEM, *Staten som marknadens salt*, cit. and most recently E. LINDBERG, *The Swedish Salt Market during the Great Northern War*, cit.

¹³ For The Portuguese trade with the Baltic see, A.S. RIBEIRO, A. POLÓNIA, C. ANTUNES, M. NOGUEIRA, *Portugal and the Baltic Trade. An Overview, 1634-1800*, in *Seaports in the First Global Age, Portuguese Agents, Networks and Interactions (1500-1800)*, A. POLÓNIA, C. ANTUNES eds., Porto, 2016, pp. 111-160.

¹⁴ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 62.

¹⁵ E.F. HECKSCHER, *Den svenska handelsjöfartens ekonomiska historia*, cit., p. 22, L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 142, table 5.5.

The Swedish ships going to southern Europe required also additional institutional arrangements. First, there was the security of Swedish vessels and seamen. They were threatened by North African corsairs and the state had to secure the situation.¹⁶ Second, there was the issue of promotion of Swedish export trade in the area. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries security of Swedish ships and seamen was guaranteed by convoying. In 1724, the same year as the Navigation Act was passed, the Convoy Office (Konvojkommisariatet) was founded in Gothenburg, Sweden's major port on the west coast. The office was a collaboration between the Swedish Royal Navy, that provided convoying naval vessels, and merchant representatives. A special duty on foreign trade was introduced to cover the Convoy Office's outlays. Nevertheless, the convoying was perceived as an expensive and inefficient system. In similarity with many other countries, Sweden entered negotiations with the North African states, to sign peace treaties and to secure its shipping in this way.

There were four states in question: Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and Morocco. The negotiations with Algiers started in 1726. Sweden was represented by George Logie, a Scottish merchant with great experience of Mediterranean commerce and politics. The peace, trade and shipping treaty between Sweden and Algiers was signed in April 1729, by the Swedish emissary and Dey of Algiers.¹⁷ Logie was appointed the first Swedish consul to Algiers. In practice, the treaty established a Swedish consulate in Algiers, the so-called Algerian passport system, and special gift-exchange with Algiers—more properly Swedish bribes to Algiers. The Swedish gifts to Algiers consisted mainly of arms, gunpowder and naval stores, useful goods for the Algiers corsair fleet.

The same George Logie then negotiated the treaty with Tunis, in 1736, and Tripoli, in 1741. It took additional almost thirty years for the treaty with the biggest North-African state, Morocco. While Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, formally were provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Morocco was an independent state, a sultanate with a distinct identity. There were Swedish seamen captured by the Moroccan corsairs as late as in the 1750s (Marcus Berg 1754-1757). It was signed in 1763 on for Sweden very expensive terms. It is worth to notice that the Swedish system of peace treaties with the Barbary states was launched earlier than the Danish one and Sweden, in the first half of the eighteenth century, was more active in the Mediterranean shipping than Denmark.¹⁸

In addition to the peace treaties with the Barbary states, the Swedish Board of Trade continued to build up a network of Swedish consulates around the northern Mediterranean coast. Between 1700 and 1750 Swedish consulates were established in Cadiz, Livorno, Marseilles, Venice, Smyrna (see the Levant Company), Malaga,

¹⁶ J. ÖSTLUND, *Saltets pris. Svenska slavar i Nordafrika och handeln i Medelhavet 1650-1770*, Lund 2014.

¹⁷ For a review of the history see J.H. KREUGER, *Sveriges förhållanden till barbarestaterna i Afrika*, Norstedt, Stockholm, 1856; L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., pp. 55-61, *Sveriges Traktater med främmande magter. Jemte andra dit hörande handlingar*. vol. 8, 1723-1771, Stockholm 1922, pp. 99-106.

¹⁸ On the Danish system see D.H. ANDERSEN, H.-J. VOTH, *The Grapes of War: Neutrality and Mediterranean Shipping under Danish Flag, 1747-1807*, in "Scandinavian Economic History Review", 2000, n. 1, pp. 5-27. D.H. ANDERSEN, *The Danish Flag in the Mediterranean. Shipping and Trade, 1747-1807*, I-II, Copenhagen 2000.

Alicante, Tripoli, Cagliari, Barcelona, Genoa, Naples, and Cette (Sete) and Montpellier.¹⁹ The purpose naturally was to promote Swedish trade and shipping, to help Swedish captains and crews and to provide useful business information to Sweden.

What marked Sweden's trade policy after 1721 was activism, mercantilism and focus on southern Europe. First, it was a reaction to the changed status of Sweden. From being a seventeenth-century great power, a guarantor of the Westphalian Peace, and a large east-looking territorial state, Sweden turned into a maritime state, with significant commercial interests in the west and south. Salt trade and supplies did play an important role in Sweden's activities in southern Europe, but it was far from the only factor. Searching markets for domestic export commodities and security of Swedish shipping in southern Europe were, too, important.

In a theoretical perspective, the policy entailed a transfer of transaction and protection costs from individual actors – merchants and ship owners – to the protective Swedish state – the institutions of the Navigation Act, the Convoy Office, and consular services. Plausibly, the transfer reduced transaction and protection costs of Swedish actors in comparison with other trading nations made the Swedes more competitive.²⁰ But, the costs of the Convoy Office and the intense debates about benefits and costs of the Swedish Navigation Act appear to point in another direction.²¹

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMODITY EXCHANGE WITH SOUTHERN EUROPE

What was the actual development of the trade between Sweden and the Mediterranean and the Iberian Peninsula? Looking at the trends of the trade will unveil that mercantilist policy was only one of many factors that affected Sweden's exchange with the area. Let us begin with the salt.

In the case of salt, it is evident that other forces than protectionist Swedish policy played a significant role. There was a significant increase in salt imports to Sweden and the relative prices appear to decline over the century.²² Between 1740 and 1800 the salt imports doubled, from about 150,000 barrels to 300,000 barrels. Nearly all this salt arrived from southern Europe: a half from Portugal and another half from the Mediterranean. The share of French and British salt diminished in the course of the century.

There is a strong complementarity between the Mediterranean and Portuguese salt supplies. When imports for Portugal declined, imports from the Mediterranean went up, and on the contrary, when import from Portugal went up, the supplies from the Mediterranean declined. These shifts could depend both on weather (a rainy season in Portugal could destroy the salt "harvest") as the security situation in the Mediterranean Sea.

¹⁹ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 42.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-166.

²¹ K. ÅMARK, *Sveriges statsfinanser 1719–1809*. Stockholm 1961, pp. 762-775.

²² S. CARLÉN, *Staten som marknadens salt*, cit., pp. 255-262.

But demand in Sweden increased steadily. We will find the explanation on Sweden's west coast. From about the mid-century, larger and larger quantities of salt went to the west coast. By the 1790s, as much as one-third of the salt imports ended there. This is clearly related to the boom of herring fisheries in Bohuslän between 1750 and 1800. By the same time salted herring and fish oil became very important export products. The boom in herring fisheries and consequent increase in salt supplies has nothing to do with mercantilist policy or introduction of protectionist Navigation Act. The explanation is natural increase of fish stock. Notably, a large share of the salt fish from Gothenburg and Bohuslän was exported to southern Europe and the West Indies.²³

Tab. 1. Annual salt imports to Sweden according to the country of origin (1,000 barrels)

Year	French or British salt	Mediterranean	Portuguese	Total
1738/40	23.4	41.2	72.1	138.4
1741/45	23.9	47.0	73.3	146.1
1746/50	26.4	77.1	76.2	180.8
1751/55	21.2	95.2	66.1	183.1
1756/60	27.6	34.0	133.9	195.8
1761/65	30.4	89.4	171.8	292.1
1766/70	16.1	104.4	81.3	202.4
1771/75	11.4	189.2	70.1	271.0
1776/80	8.5	128.3	105.3	242.3
1781/85	8.9	123.1	199.0	331.2
1786/90	13.2	169.3	101.4	284.2
1791/95	2.4	142.6	163.3	309.7
1796/1800	0.8	118.0	186.9	308.1

Source: *Historisk statistik för Sverige*, del 3, *Utrikeshandeln 1732-1970*, Stockholm 1972, p. 141, table 1.11.

Imports of salt required vast carrying capacity. Comparisons between incoming tonnage from southern Europe and the volumes of salt imported to Sweden indicate that nearly all incoming carrying capacity was occupied by salt.²⁴ Of course, salt was not the only item arriving from southern Europe. Wine, fruits (fresh and dried), olive oil, colonial goods, textiles, and other items also were aboard of Swedish ships coming from the Mediterranean and Iberian Peninsula. These goods did not require much carrying capacity but they were highly valuable. The registered trade value of salt was minimal even if it was an important source of revenue (due

²³ S. HÖGBERG, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet. Stapelvaror i svensk export och import 1738-1808*. Stockholm 1969, pp. 174-177.

²⁴ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 140, table 5.4.

to the big volumes). In the trade statistics from the 1770s, a period when the salt imports were much larger than at the beginning of the century, the salt accounted for above 5 percent of the tax value of Sweden's total imports. For comparison, colonial goods (tobacco, sugar, coffee, cotton, etc.) requiring much less carrying capacity accounted for about 17 percent, and even silks accounted for 4 percent value of imports.²⁵ The discrepancy between required carrying capacity and import values and tax revenues indicate problems with the profitability of Sweden's salt imports. Unfortunately, we have no studies of profitability of this trade.

Swedish exports to southern Europe consisted of a limited number of bulky products: iron, naval stores, and sawn goods. Bar iron was the most important item but in comparison with other commodities the least dynamic one. Since the beginning of the seventeenth-century bar iron was the backbone of Sweden's export trade. It made up at least a half of export value during the eighteenth century, with the majority of iron exported to England. Nevertheless, southern Europe was seen as a prospective market. Already in 1724, the authorities debated southern Europe's potential market of Swedish iron.

Looking at southern Europe's share in Sweden's total iron trade it was about 10 percent from the beginning of the century until the 1760s. It increased to 20-30 percent between 1770 and 1800. The increase in iron exports to southern Europe compensated for the decline in iron trade in western Europe, especially the Dutch Republic.

Tab. 2. Sweden's iron trade to southern Europe 1725-99 (annual averages in ship-pounds)

Year	Portugal	Spain	France	Other Mediterranean	Levant
1740-44	26500	800	6500	8700	1200
1745-49	15700	200	4000	10800	1300
1750-54	18100	1000	7200	8700	700
1755-59	15700	1400	3700	7100	
1760-64	18100	1800	3400	8700	
1765-69	19500	2600	8400	8000	
1770-74	21100	2500	23800	13800	
1775-79	24900	1800	22000	22600	
1780-84	39300	3500	38800	13300	
1785-89	25900	2900	72100	18900	
1790-94	31700	2500	26900	23200	
1795-99	28900	3800	12300	14000	

Source: K-G. HILDEBRAND, *Fagerstabrukens historia. Sexton- och sjuttonhundratalet*. Uppsala 1957, pp. 92, 96, and 134. Sum of Portugal, Spain France, Levant and other Mediterranean figures differs from southern Europe, however the difference is marginal (1 ton=7.4 shippounds)

²⁵ *Historisk statistik för Sverige*, del 3, *Utrikeshandeln 1732–1970*, Stockholm 1972, p. 156, table 1.24.

Two major markets for Swedish iron in southern Europe were Portugal and France. Evidently, a part of the Swedish bar iron with destination Lisbon went to Brazil. The importance of France increased after the mid-century and especially from the 1770s when France began to import large quantities of Swedish bar iron. In fact, much of the increase in iron imports between 1770 and 1800 is related to the French demand. From less than 1,000 tons of bar iron in mid-century France increased its imports to 5,000 tons between 1780 and 1784 and almost 10,000 between 1785 and 1789, buying more than a half of Swedish iron exported to southern Europe. Spain had a well-developed and protected iron production and so the Spanish market was always less important than that of Portugal or France, in spite of Spanish colonial empire, in spite of the role that Cadiz had in Swedish long-distance shipping. We may notice also the Levant Company exports in the 1740s.

In spite of the fact that bar iron was Sweden's major export item, accounting for a half, at least, of Sweden's exports it was not an easy-to-sell commodity. It competed with protected domestic iron industries in Spain and France. It competed with cheaper Russian iron arriving both from northern Europe and from the Black Sea. Moreover, the Swedish iron traders competed with Swedish iron carried by Dutch and English ships as ballast merchant, and the cheap Russian bar iron that reached the Mediterranean on English and Dutch ships. In contrast to import trade, regulated by the Swedish Navigation Act, and excluding so the Dutch and English from carrying of salt, foreigners were free to carry Swedish iron to the Mediterranean.

The second important export commodity group was naval stores. Sweden, or more exactly Finland (then a part of Sweden) was one of the leading tar and pitch producers in the world. As opposed to iron or other goods that could be produced everywhere, Sweden had a natural comparative advantage in the production of tar and pitch. It had large easily accessible woods where timber could be transformed into exportable commodities. As the sea-borne trade increased in significance and navies became sinews of maritime power, the demand for tar and pitch was insatiable. The fluctuations in the tar and pitch trade appear to correlate with the wartime periods. The strategic naval stores from the Baltic also explain France's, and Spain's interest in trade with Sweden.²⁶

Between the 1740s and 1800, Sweden's exports of tar to southern Europe multiplied, from about 10,000 barrels to 30,000 barrels. The periods of Seven Years' War, American Revolutionary War, and French Revolutionary Wars testified about significant increases. The sales of pitch increased too, from about 5,000 barrels to 10,000 barrels in the same period. Southern Europe accounted for between 20 and 30 percent of Sweden's total sales of tar, and about 40 percent of pitch.

Finally, there were sawn goods. The volume of sawn goods exported to southern Europe increased significantly during the eighteenth century. It increased from 30,000 dozen deals at 1750 to over 80,000 by the mid-1770s, to decline again during the French Revolutionary Wars to 40-60,000 dozen deals. In similarity with iron, Lisbon initially was the major destination, but in due time Marseilles, Cadiz,

²⁶ S. HÖGBERG, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet*, cit., pp. 145-146, L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 137.

and Livorno became important destinations. The structure of the Swedish trade in Lisbon in 1750 shows that sawn goods made up roughly a quarter of Sweden's export value.²⁷

Concerning markets for sawn goods, southern Europe was Sweden's most important market. Yet, exports of sawn goods to southern Europe was a strange business. First, there are remarkable differences between destinations for sawn goods origination in different parts of Sweden. For Stockholm, southern Europe accounted for a half or more of sawn goods exports. In 1731-1735, 51 percent of the Stockholm sawn goods went there, in 1751-1755, as much as 76 percent, and in 1781-85, as much as 78 percent. Sawn goods from Gothenburg were exported mainly to nearby Britain. And regions in southern Sweden: Småland, Gotland and Blekinge, exported timber to the southern Baltic.²⁸

How shall we explain the fact that Stockholm exported sawn goods to the most distanced markets, while the Gothenburg on the west coast exported sawn goods to nearby England? There are two features that will help us to understand the paradox. Partly, deals were used as stowing material for iron cargoes. Bar iron was simply too heavy for loading a vessel and it had to be balanced by a lighter commodity. Yet this is not enough explanation. Major markets for iron was England, while, the majority of sawn goods went to the Mediterranean. Moreover, many ships from Stockholm, northern Sweden and Finland sailed to the Mediterranean loaded only with sawn goods.

The Swedish historian Staffan Högberg observed a striking difference in the organization of bar iron exports and exports of sawn goods. Regarding iron, the trade was carried out by specialized iron exporters who paid freight to ship-owners. In this way, the economics of shipping and the economics of iron trade were separated. But cargoes of sawn goods were usually owned by ship-owners. About 80 percent of owners of sawn goods sent to Portugal in 1760-1780 were, too, ship-owners of the ships carrying these goods.²⁹ This indicates that the trade in sawn goods was, probably to a large extent, complementary to shipping business. Ship-owners had difficulties in finding suitable cargo to southern Europe, thus they loaded their ships with sawn goods, apparently not a very profitable commodity but cheap to acquire and easy to sell. Shipping business and trade in sawn goods were intermixed, making it difficult to separate profits made in timber sales. The linkage between trade in sawn goods and Swedish carrying trade in southern Europe may also explain the paradoxical strong role of Stockholm in this business. Stockholm was the center of Swedish shipping business, home of biggest ship-owners. Unfortunately, there are no detailed studies of the profitability of Swedish firms trading with southern Europe that could unveil the business logic of this trade. The overall picture, the volumes, and directions of trade are known, but we do not know how profitable or loss-making the businesses were.

We may notice that the overall values of Sweden's trade with southern Europe (the Mediterranean, Iberian Peninsula and France) were relatively meager, especially

²⁷ L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 103.

²⁸ S. HÖGBERG, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet*, cit., p. 138.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-129, table 4.7.

when we look at the imports. If we exclude France, the statistical values for import trade stay at about 5 percent. This is an astonishingly low figure, regarding the active mercantilist policy in the Mediterranean. This is even more astonishing if we look at the total tonnage under Swedish flag employed in the area. In spite of the relatively modest trade values, something between one fourth and one-third of the Swedish tonnage was employed in southern Europe (table 3). The reason for Swedish ships to be there was not Swedish commodity trade but tramp shipping.

Tab. 3. Swedish shipping in southern Europe 1739-1753 and 1769-1813 (France, Spain, Portugal and the Mediterranean)

Period	Incoming (annual averages in heavy lasts)	% of Swedish tonnage	Outgoing (annual averages in heavy lasts)	% of Swedish tonnage
1739/43	9456	35.5	9829	34.4
1744/48	10620	32.9	9066	25.5
1749/53	14250	41.5	13535	34.5
1769/71	17793	27.1	16194	22.0
1774/75	22995	40.1	22443	35.4
1776/80	19884	28.7	18932	26.6
1781/82	21112	26.2	23111	25.2
1787/88,90	20192	37.7	17107	34.4
1791/95	16840	30.4	24914	28.4
1796/00	16173	25.8	20102	21.5
1801/05	15280	22.2	19782	19.5

Source: E.F. HECKSCHER, *Den svenska handelsjöfartens ekonomiska historia sedan Gustaf Vasa*, Uppsala 1940, p. 24.

SWEDEN'S NEUTRALITY AND SWEDISH SHIPPING IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

The Swedish Navigation Act has been pointed out as the pillar of Sweden's eighteenth-century shipping policy. Its major purpose was to replace the Dutch shipping in carrying of Portuguese and Mediterranean salt to Sweden after the Great Northern War. In this meaning the major measure of Sweden's eighteenth-century shipping policy concerned, indeed, trade with southern Europe. However, the Act itself was just an expression of Swedish mercantilism, it was not related to the economic rationale of this trade. The outdrawn struggles and ongoing attempts to abolish the Navigation Act during the whole century indicate, in fact, that the Act was perceived by many as an inefficient and costly institution.

Nevertheless, the long-term development of Swedish shipping industry in southern Europe does not necessarily relate to the Navigation Act, as suggested by Heckscher. There were two other key factors. First, the Swedish shipping had low

running costs in comparison with other marines. In 1768, the Swedish economist Johan Westerman (ennobled Liljencrantz) wrote an interesting work on comparative advantages and disadvantages of Swedish shipping, which paid much attention to conditions in the Mediterranean. The reason naturally was the significance that the Mediterranean carrying trade had for the Swedish merchant marine. He focused very much on the issues of crew costs, ship-building, and running costs. And obviously, the Swedish sailors and ships were cheaper. The advantage was not so apparent regarding the shipbuilding, in spite of the fact that Sweden was the producer of naval stores and sawn goods. Yet, Westerman paid also much attention to commodity structure of Swedish trade, import and export duties, etc. In spite of an interesting contemporary comparison of different merchant marines, he does not provide a conclusive explanation of the economy of Swedish shipping.

It seems to me that in the volatile conditions of the international trade in the eighteenth century the pure focus on cost and income balance of shipping does not help much. Instead, I would like to point out the role of protection costs of shipping as the second crucial factor for the understanding of the place of Swedish carrying trade in the Mediterranean. The ships under Swedish flag had two major advantages regarding protection costs: the peace and trade treaties with the Barbary states, and Sweden's neutrality in the conflicts between France, Spain, and Britain. The protection of Swedish flag unquestionably reduced the risk of losing cargo to corsairs and belligerents. This entailed also lower insurance premiums in comparison with the competition. Freight rates doubled during the wartime periods, which mean that neutral ships could double their incomes. The risk-reducing strategy and low protection costs appear also being the competitive advantage of Swedish shipping in southern Europe.

Evidence for the protection cost argument is the close correlation between the activity of Swedish ships in southern Europe and the fluctuation between war and peace times. The best source for tracing such a correlation is registers of Algerian passports. As mentioned above the passports were introduced by the peace treaties between Sweden and the Barbary states. The issuing of the passports was strictly controlled, to avoid abuse of neutral Swedish flag. Thus the registers are a reliable source.

According to the regulations, southern Europe here was understood as all destinations beyond Cape Finisterre in north-western Spain.³⁰ This means, actually, that all Swedish vessels sailing in the Mediterranean, nearby Iberian Peninsula, in the Atlantic, and the Indian Ocean were registered in Algerian passport registers. The Swedish Algerian passport registers cover the period between 1739 and 1831 and contain information on 30,546 passports, representing the number of Swedish voyages (realized or intended) beyond Cape Finisterre. The registers include information on the name of the ship, tonnage, captain, ship-owner, home port, number of guns, destination, and date of issue and return of the passport.

The data indicates there had been no big increase in Swedish shipping until the 1750s. There were about 150 Swedish ships per annum applying for the passport. It

³⁰ *Reglemente om Algeriske Sjöpass, 12 januari 1730*, R.G., MODÉE, *Utdrag utur alle ifrån 1729 års slut utkomne Publique handlingar, Placater, Förordningar... Etc.*, Stockholm 1746, pp. 803-807.

seems also that the policy implemented in the decades after 1721 did not leave such a deep impact in this dataset. The situation became to change in the years of the Seven Years' War, in which Sweden participated in Prussia, but it did not engage in maritime warfare. There was an increase of voyages during the Seven Years War from 156 voyages in 1756 to 212 in 1764. The next significant boom occurred during the American Revolutionary War, from 222 voyages in 1775 to 441 in 1782, and the third increased during French Revolutionary Wars, from 257 voyages in 1792 to 717 in 1804. Peace periods 1763-76, 1783-1793 show stagnation and decline. The fall in 1788-90 is related to the interruption of Swedish foreign trade during the Russo-Swedish War 1788-1790. The correlation between wartime and increases in the number of voyages and stagnation or declines in the number of voyages during peacetime confirms that the Swedes effectively exploited neutrality.

Another evidence of the close correlation between Swedish shipping activities and naval conflict is the data on entries of ships entering the Mediterranean ports. The best data available are the entries in the port of Marseilles between c. 1710 and 1790 (for details see the introduction above). The two Scandinavian flags (Danish and Swedish) made for almost 3,000 entries. There is a clear correlation between the Scandinavian activities and Anglo-French conflicts, with large activity especially during the American Revolutionary War.

The data confirm that Swedish carrying business was increasingly important and neutrality of the flag did play an important role. Yet, the number of voyages or entries does not say anything about how this business was organized on a daily level, what kind of ships were employed and how big crews were. All this is of importance for the understanding of how the carrying trade functioned.

Tab. 4. Swedish Algerian passports returned, according to the date of return, 1777-1785

Year	Totally issued	Returned same year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	Fifth year	Sixth year
1777	253	29	162	44	8	3	1
1778	287	41	128	45	22	3	1
1779	282	40	122	67	20	6	5
1780	320	40	172	68	21	3	1
1781	373	49	190	85	22	4	3
1782	441	25	267	74	20	11	2
1783	339	35	208	50	23	4	2
1784	370	44	225	48	17	7	2
1785	389	49	192	96	10	3	4
Total	3054	352	1666	577	163	44	21
	100%	11.5%	54.6%	18.9%	5.3%	1.4%	0.7%

Source: Algerian passport registers, Kommerskollegium (Board of Trade) Huvudarkivet, Sjöpassdiarier, C II b, (Swedish National Archives, Stockholm), 1777-1785. The difference between total numbers of issued passports and the sum of returned passports is explained by missing return dates. Some passports were never returned.

Table 4 indicates the average length of Swedish voyages to southern Europe. The table is based on Algerian passports issued between 1777 and 1785, the extended years of the American Revolutionary War, and it includes information on over 3,000 voyages. It looks at the year of the return of the passport.

An interesting question of the economy of Swedish shipping in southern Europe is the comparative productivity of Swedish ships. A standard comparative measure of productivity in shipping is the tons-per-man ratio or men-per-100-tons ratio. Such ratios have been established both for a long-term increase in labor productivity of European shipping and for comparative purposes of situations in different merchant marines and different areas.³¹ To calculate it we have to have a picture of average tonnages and average crew on Swedish ships employed in southern Europe.

Swedish vessels sailing to southern Europe were large in comparison with other marines. The average tonnage of vessels in my sample of 1,257 vessels was also about 90 lasts, (c. 220 metric tons). For comparison, the English ships sailing to the Mediterranean had tonnages between 100 and 150 tons. Yet it should be noted that there were in English tonnages big differences among the different destinations; for example, vessels employed in the coal trade between Newcastle and southern England were much bigger than 100-150 tons.³² These in average big Swedish vessels were manned by comparatively small crews (about 14 men), giving ratios of 20-23 tons per man.³³ The averages of English, Dutch and French ratios varied between 10 and 18 tons per man. The total labor productivity in Sweden's Mediterranean shipping was also very high. But this cannot be seen as a prime competitive advantage of the Swedes. The high labor productivity was related to the problematic composition of Swedish cargoes – bulky and cheap commodities requiring big transport capacity. Moreover, the averages veil great variance among vessels. There were many small crafts carrying valuable cargoes (packets). But Swedish vessels carried also bulky grain cargoes from Sicily or salt cargoes from Spain, Sardinia, and Sicily. Thus, the impressive figures of productivity ton per man indicate competitiveness of Swedish shipping, but they also hide the problem of Swedish export-import composition.

The eighteenth-century shipping combined high volatility on demand side with stable costs of the business. Demand for transport and profits were unpredictable due to the political situation. As mentioned, wartimes could fetch doubled freight rates in comparison with peacetime. This was matched by stable and predictable running costs (capital costs, shipbuilding costs, and low wages).

³¹ See for example J. LUCASSEN, R.W. UNGER, *Labour productivity in Ocean shipping, 1450-1875*, in "International Journal of Maritime History", 2000, n. 2, pp. 127-141.

³² For details of the analysis see L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 154-159.

³³ The data are based on a sample of 150 Swedish ships entering Cadiz 1777, 1785 and 1795. L. MÜLLER, *Consuls, corsairs, and commerce*, cit., p. 157. The exact figure is 14.2 men per vessel. A sample of 117 Swedish vessels entering Marseilles in 1750-1762 gives an average of 14.7, indicating a small decline in men per ship between 1750-62 and 1777-1795. The database of Swedish ships entering Marseilles 1750-62 has been kindly provided by Xavier Labat Sait-Vincent.

Due to the fact that an average ship had a long life,³⁴ the shipbuilding costs over the years of a ship's life (annual depreciation of capital) were low. The combination of long-term predictable costs (capital costs, wages, outfitting costs, repair costs, insurance premiums, charges, and duties), and speculative and unpredictable incomes is typical for the shipping industry. In this sense, the situation of Swedish vessels in the Mediterranean 1750-1800 did not differ from present-day shipping business. This also indicates that the carrying trade under a neutral flag was a highly speculative business. The few existing studies on company level appear to confirm this picture.³⁵

To get a more exact picture of the profitability we need more studies both on the national and company level. Undoubtedly the income from shipping activities was significant even on the level of the national economy. And it is the most probable explanation of why the Swedish-and Danish-vessels were so prominent in the late eighteenth-century Mediterranean. It is estimated, that during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars the freight income from Swedish shipping made a half of Sweden's total export income.³⁶

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In spite of the geographical distance, the economic contacts between Scandinavian countries and the Mediterranean were strong. The position by the late eighteenth century was an outcome of different factors: foreign policy, mercantilism, development of commodity market, neutrality of Swedish and Danish flags, as well as environmental change.

The political interests did, indeed, played a crucial role in shaping the conditions of this exchange, even if they did not provide a profitable economic basis for it. There was the factor of Sweden's foreign policy, looking for allies in the Ottoman Empire, France, and Portugal. There was the ambitious trade policy of Swedish mercantilism, of "salt-welfare", of promotion of iron exports, and building up a merchant marine. But the mercantilist policy was highly controversial and criticized by contemporaries. It does not explain the expansion in the late eighteenth century. More reasonably this was connected to the demand for salt on herring-fishing Sweden's western coast, and the demand for Danish and Swedish neutral shipping capacity in wartime.

In the paper, I stressed the difficult composition of Sweden's trade, with its bulky and relatively cheap export and import commodities, and regulated markets. It was a combination of commodity trade and the tramp shipping in the Mediterra-

³⁴ J. KILBORN, *Fartyg i Europas periferi under den industriella revolutionen. Den svenska utrikes handelsflottan 1795-1845*. (licentiate, unpublished) Göteborg 2009, p. 47.

³⁵ For Swedish-Finnish firms see J. OJALA, *Productivity and Technological Change in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Sea Transport: A Case Study of Sailing ship Efficiency in Kokkola, Finland 1721-1913*, in "International Journal of Maritime History", 1997, n. 1, pp. 93-123. For Danish firms see O. VENTEGODT, *Redere, rejser og regnskaber. Et par flensborgske partrederiregnskaber 1783-1812*. Flensborg 1989.

³⁶ L. SCHÖN, *En modern svensk ekonomisk historia. Tillväxt och omvandling under två sekel*. Stockholm 2000, p. 60.

nean, around the Iberian Peninsula and even across the Atlantic that made Sweden's trade in southern Europe viable. In tramp shipping, Sweden could exploit its peaceful relations with the North African states and its neutrality in Anglo-French Wars. We might conclude that Swedish and Danish protection costs in this kind of trade were competitive in comparison with other nations. Yet this was not an exclusive or original strategy. The Dutch were major neutral carriers for longer time. They disappeared first in 1780, due to the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War.

The neutrality of the Scandinavian flags was a competitive advantage until 1806-1807. Then Denmark and Sweden were drawn into the wars with disastrous consequences. With the arrival of Pax Britannica, in 1815, the markets for neutral carriers disappeared and so did the Scandinavian ships in tramp shipping in the Mediterranean. The structural shifts in European and global trade and shipping in the nineteenth century confirm that the eighteenth-century shipping and trade between southern Europe and Scandinavia were related to the specific historical situation. In the late nineteenth century, the Scandinavian shipping once again became more global, but the Mediterranean did not play a significant role in this narrative.

Scambi intercontinentali

Intercontinental exchanges

Stefania Montemezzo

Ships and Trade: The Role of Public Navigation in Renaissance Venice

INTRODUCTION

In the 15th century, Venice was one of the main gateways for long-distance trade between Asia and Europe. To distribute Oriental spices and goods, Venetian merchants travelled across Europe via both land and sea routes.¹ While the land routes crossed several borders, the sea routes allowed for a quicker and safer means of transport, particularly over longer distances.

At the end of the 13th century, Venice had developed a naval trading system that was organized as two branches. The first and most commonly used branch was the private navy. This sector was organized and managed by private entities; it operated mostly within the Mediterranean basin and used different types of ships (usually with a large tonnage known as *cocche*). Thanks to the private navy, Venetian traders were able to move any kinds of goods to and from the city: from spices to expensive textiles, but also bulkier goods such as timber, minerals, olive oil, and wine.² From the early 14th century onwards, the private system was supported by a newly born public navy, the so-called *mude* or *sistema di galera*. Every aspect of this system was controlled by the Venetian Senate – from the number of ships for a single trip to the number of stopovers that had to be scheduled – and it relied exclusively on merchant galleys (*galere da mercato*). The aim was to create lines that could guarantee regular and relatively safe connections to the most important trading hubs of the time on the Mediterranean shores as well as in Northern Europe. During the more than two centuries of activity of the public navy, the Republic of Venice was able to establish seven lines. The *mude* of Romania (Constantinople, plus Tana and Trebizond on the Black Sea), Beirut (Syria), and Alexandria (Egypt) were directed at the Orient, whereas the *mude* of Aigues Mortes (Marseille, Aigues Mortes, and Barcelona) and Fiandra (Bruges and England) went to the West. In the 1460s another line was added, the *muda del Trafego*, in response

¹ Among others, for a general reference: F. C. LANE, *Venice: A Maritime Republic*, Baltimore, MA 1973 (The Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 66-81, 124-131.

² C. JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner. Économie maritime et pouvoirs à Venise (XV^e-XVI^e siècles)*, Leiden 2008 (Brill), pp. 40-43.

to requests from the North African partners.³ The galleys mainly transported goods with high added value such as spices, silk, and other strategic products.⁴

The public control of the navy was also linked to the social functions that it covered. Almost all the social classes of the city were represented in the crew, and for every one of them there were advantages in using the system and in keeping it working.⁵ For the *patriciate*, these journeys, besides the obvious commercial possibilities, were a safer apprenticeship period for the younger merchants who could practice the trade at first hand. For the *scions* of noble but ruined families, there was the possibility of embarking as *nobeli de pope* or arbalesters to practice trade, and, in the meantime, receive a salary. For the *popolani*, it was possible to get a job onboard as an oarsman, trumpeter, or fishermen while carrying out some small trades on the side (which was usually forbidden to those who were not noble). The need to build and repair ships also involved the Arsenal, and this created jobs for almost all the inhabitants of the surrounding neighborhood (Castello).⁶

The structure of trade that the galley system offered was linked to different advantages, which had strategic importance, particularly when trading abroad. Firstly, special terms and duties were offered to merchants trading on State ships: Exemptions from custom duties were, for instance, granted to Venetians for two months after their arrival in Bruges, and no ship was allowed to sail from Venice to Northern Europe in the period following the departure of the *muda*, granting the galley merchants an edge over the other Venetian traders.⁷ Yet, the formal and informal support offered to the individual merchant was even more important once he had arrived at a foreign market.⁸ As a reward for the risks and the expense

³ A. SACERDOTI, *Note sulle galere da mercato veneziane nel XV secolo*, in "Bollettino dell'Istituto di Storia della Società e dello Stato", IV, 1962, pp. 80-105; C. JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner. Économie maritime et pouvoirs à Venise*, cit., p. 91; B. DOUMERC, *Venise et l'émirat hafside de Tunis (1231-1535)*, Paris-Montreal 1999 (L'Harmattan), pp. 53-72; G. LUZZATTO, *Navigazione di linea e navigazione libera nelle grandi città marinare del Medio Evo*, in *Studi di Storia economica veneziana*, Padova 1955 (CEDAM), pp. 53-56; B. DOUMERC, *Il dominio del mare*, in *Storia di Venezia. Dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, IV, *Il Rinascimento. Politica e cultura*, A. TENENTI and U. TUCCI eds., Rome 1996 (Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), pp. 113-180.

⁴ The Venetian public navy has been widely analyzed in D. STÖCKLY, *Le système de l'Incanto des galées du marché à Venise (fin XIII^e-milieu XV^e siècle)*, Leiden 1995 (Brill) and C. JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner. Économie maritime et pouvoirs à Venise*, cit., pp. 63-178.

⁵ The social representation and the accessibility to the public, and private, Venetian navy has been widely explained and contextualized by CLAUDE JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE (*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25, 289-298).

⁶ A. SACERDOTI, *Note sulle galere da mercato*, cit., pp. 93-94; C. JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner. Économie maritime et pouvoirs à Venise*, cit., pp. 24-25.

⁷ P. STABEL, *Venice: Where North Meets South*, in *Renaissance Venice and the North. Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer and Titian*, B. AKEMA and B. L. BROWN eds., London 2000 (Thames and Hudson), pp. 31-33; J.M. MURRAY, *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism, 1280-1390*, Cambridge 2005 (Cambridge University Press), pp. 223-224.

⁸ Among others: A.A. RUDDOCK, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270-1600* Southampton 1951 (University College); A. WANDEWALLE, N. GERNAERT, *Bruges and Italy*, in *Bruges and Europe*, ed. V. VERMEERSCH, Antwerp 1992 (MercatorFonds), pp. 182-205; D. ABULAFIA, *Cittadino e denizen: mercanti italiani a Southampton e Londra*, in *Sistema di rapporti ed élites economiche in Europa (sec. XII-XVIII)*, ed. M. DEL TREPPO, Napoli 1994 (Liguori), pp. 273-292; J.A. VAN HOUTTE, *L'attività delle élites meridionali nei grandi centri commerciali dei Paesi Bassi tra il XIII e il XVI secolo*, in *Sistema di rapporti ed élites*

incurred by the investors, the Senate was ready to offer tangible assistance to Venetian traders,⁹ laying the basis of a network of links and nodes ready to be used by the seasonally mobile merchants.¹⁰

The functioning of the public navy has been explained by historiography, however, what is not as clear is the influence that the public navy had on the private merchant firms operating in Venice.

Thanks to the study of accounting ledgers written by Giovanni Foscari in the 1460s¹¹ and by Alvise Michiel in the 1470s, the paper aims at understanding the role of the public navigation system in Renaissance Venice from the point of view of the merchant firms of the city. The essay is based on two case studies. Firstly, I will briefly outline how traders were able to access the public navy and how they used the system, using the case of Giovanni Foscari. Secondly, thanks to the Alvise Michiel case, I will approach the issue of the impact of the public navy on the activity of the merchant firms.

1. A GLIMPSE INTO THE SYSTEM: THE FOSCARI LEDGERS

How did Venetian merchants contribute to maintaining the public navy? From a practical point of view, the involvement of Venetian traders in the public navy started a few months before the departure. A few months before the weighing anchor, the Senate published *Incanti*, the documents used for public announcements. They regulated all the main aspects of the navigation, the working relations on board (with specifics on salaries and on the rights of the workmen), and the amount of food that had to be served on the different tables. These public auctions were usually published in Rialto, where the nobles interested in the galleys could make a bid. The development of outbids may have varied in the different periods depending on the interest in the lines, the international situation (such as an approaching war), or the agreement between the *patroni*, the charterers, who wanted to keep the outbids at a low level.¹² This is what very likely happened in 1463, when

economiche in Europa, pp. 259-272; P. STABEL, *Venice: Where North Meets South*, cit., pp. 31-43; A. VANDEWALLE, *Les nations étrangères à Bruges*, in *Les marchands de la Hanse et la banque de Médicis. Bruges marché d'échanges culturels en Europe*, Oostkamp 2002 (Stichting Kunstboek), pp. 27-42; G. NORDIO, *La colonia mercantile veneziana nella Londra di metà Quattrocento: attività commerciali e movimento anti-alien*, in *Politiche del credito. Investimenti, consumo, solidarietà: atti del congresso internazionale, Asti 20-22 marzo 2003*, G. BOSCHIERO, B. MOLINA eds., Asti 2004 (Arti Grafiche TSG), pp. 222-240; B. BLONDÉ, O. GELDERBLOM, P. STABEL, *Foreign Merchant Communities in Bruges, Antwerp and Amsterdam*, in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, V. 2, *Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700*, ed. D. CALABI, Cambridge 2007 (Cambridge University Press), pp. 154-174.

⁹ C. JUDDE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Naviguer, commercer, gouverner*, cit., pp. 44-48; B. DOUMERC, *Le galère da mercato*, in *Storia di Venezia. Dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, XII, *Il mare*, A. TENENTI and U. TUCCI eds., Rome 1991 (Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), pp. 357-396.

¹⁰ S. MONTEMEZZO, *Galley Routes and Merchant Networks between Venice and the North Sea in the Fifteenth Century*, in *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE eds., London 2014 (Pickering & Chatto), pp. 153-170.

¹¹ The transcript of the books is published in *Giovanni Foscari. Viaggi di Fiandra, 1463-1464 e 1467-1468*, ed. S. MONTEMEZZO, Venice 2012 (La Malcontenta).

¹² D. STÖCKLY, *Le système de l'Incanto*, cit., pp. 51-53.

Giovanni Foscari – a member of one of the best known, most important, and richest families of the Venetian *patriciate* – became one of the *patroni* of the galleys sailing for Flanders, paying only 7 ducats for renting the ship, while the other charterers paid only a token amount of 1 ducat.¹³

The *Incanto* document from 1463 published by the Senate follows a well-established formula, stating that 500 ducats had to be paid by the *patrono* to the Arsenal for outfitting the boat, which had to be delivered during the month of April; that every *patrono* had received a *donum* of 4,000 ducats from the State as an incentive – since the war with the Ottomans was indeed coming, and investing in a ship, which could have been confiscated and used for military purposes, represented a valid risk (which is probably why on Giovanni's second trip to the North, the *donum* increased to 5,500 ducats¹⁴) – ; and including the order that the loading had to follow, alongside other details such as the stopovers, the treatment of the crew, and the election of officials.¹⁵

The boat was rented unrigged and it was up to the charterer to get it ready for travel. That is why the State required the *patrono* to prove before the *Avogaria de Comun*, within eight days from the auction, his financial coverage. Very often this coverage was supplied by a management society created for the purpose that lasted as long as the journey and was called the *Compagnia di galera*.¹⁶ In the Foscari case, this kind of company was in place for both journeys. The expenses that the *patrono* had to face for the journeys (counting the salaries for the crew, the expenses for their board, and the ship) mounted to around 8,000 ducats, which represented almost a quarter of the entire turnover from the trips.¹⁷ Paying in advance such a sum would have been risky, if not impossible, for the Foscari *fraterna*. For this reason, Giovanni decided to create a management society that could help him cover these expenses. These types of society were divided into 24 shares, called *carati*, which were owned by shareholders called *parvenevoli*. The account books show that Foscari decided to keep 2/3 of the society for himself, while selling the remaining third to other Venetian merchants. Also, these companies were used to strengthen social and economic links, since most of the investors were previous partners and family members.¹⁸

Once the necessary capital had been raised, the debts paid to the Arsenal, and his financial position had been certified by the State, Foscari moved on to taking care of the crew and loading the cargo. The months before departure would have been chaotic for the traders involved, since they were embarking on more than a year-long commercial trip.

¹³ ASV, *Senato Mar*, reg. 7, c. 112r. Four years later, in 1467, despite the war, the price paid by Foscari for the *Incanto* increased to 180 ducats. ASV, *Senato Mar*, reg. 8, c. 119v.

¹⁴ ASV, *Senato Mar*, reg. 8, cc. 116v-119v.

¹⁵ ASV, *Senato Mar*, reg. 7, cc. 109r-112r.

¹⁶ C. JUDGE DE LARIVIÈRE, *Navigation, commerce, gouverner*, cit., pp. 200-204

¹⁷ S. MONTEMEZZO, *Galley Routes and Merchant Networks*, cit., p. 159.

¹⁸ EADEM, *Fra pubblico e privato: la fraterna veneziana nel commercio del secondo Quattrocento*, in “Ricerche di storia economica e sociale”, III, 2017, pp. 7-34.

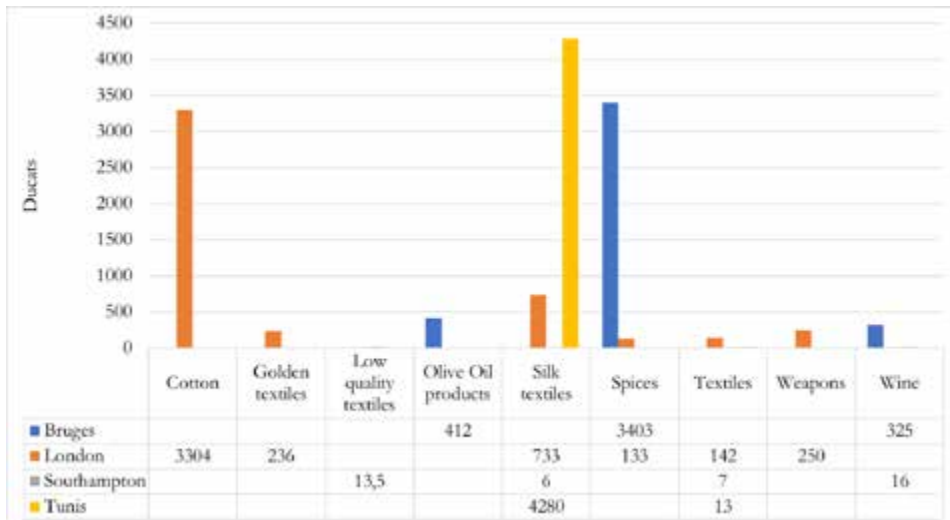
Before analyzing the use that Giovanni Foscari made of the public galleys, some background information on his story is perhaps warranted. Giovanni was the descendant of Marco Foscari, the brother of Francesco, who was the *doge* between 1423 and 1456.¹⁹ Due to the temporary exclusion from politics that affected the family after the deposition of Francesco as *doge*, Giovanni renounced his political career very early on, devoting his life to trade together with his brother Alvise. The firm he managed was the typical *fraterna*: a family business with no branches abroad, managed by kin living under the same roof, and relying for the most part on agents for international affairs. The sources used to analyze his activity are two ledgers written during two different voyages to Flanders and England on a State galley that record the deals made by Foscari both as a merchant (and agent) and as *patrono* (responsible, then, for the single ship, *Foscara*, which was named after him). The accounts presented in the books are gathered in a single manuscript and refer to merchandise charged on board the *Foscara* (and for which Foscari was responsible in most cases) and merchandise loaded on one of the other ships of the *muda*, the convoy of galleys,²⁰ by resident merchants, as well as all the accounts related to the salaries of the crew and payments for the support of the ship.

In terms of the merchandise, the circuit used by Venetian merchants makes this quite evident. Products from the Orient such as pepper, silks, and wax were taken to Bruges and London together with Venetian products such as low-quality cloth, berets, and wine. To guarantee high profits and uphold a continued presence in the Northern markets, restrictions, put in place by the State, were placed on the merchandise that could be loaded on board: Precedence was indeed given to high-value products such as silk and spices, and only when these had all found a place on board could other products – such as Italian cloth – be loaded. The Foscari ledgers show us that this rule was indeed respected: During the second trip, around 16,000 of the 18,813 ducats for sold items came from Oriental products such as spices, cloth, and cotton. These were sold mainly in Bruges, the highest consumer of spices and cloth, and secondly in London, where cotton and smaller quantities of spices were sold in exchange for woolen cloth and raw wool (see graph 1, Foscari trip 1 sales and graph 2, Foscari trip 2 sales). For both trips, Bruges was the main gateway for Venetian traders: Despite the growing importance of the English markets (Southampton, in particular), until the end of the century, Bruges remained one of Venice's most important commercial partners.

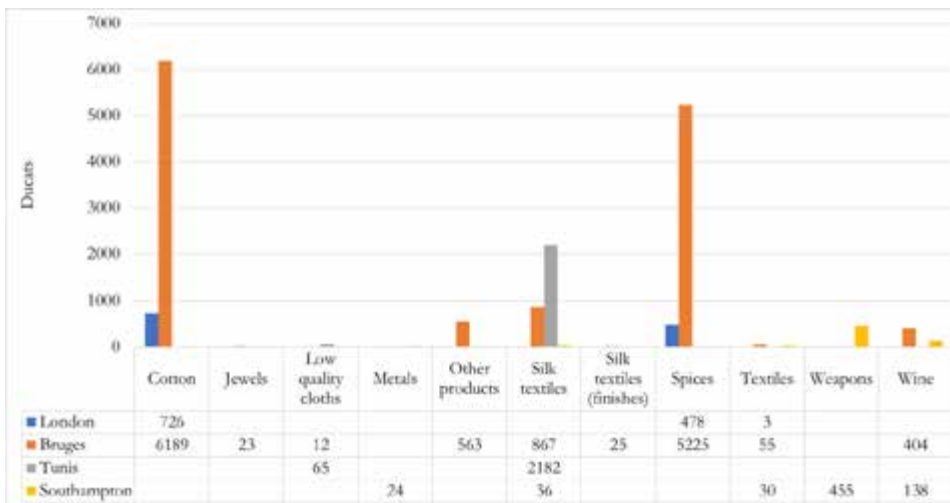
¹⁹ D. ROMANO, *The Likeness of Venice: A Life of Doge Francesco Foscari*, New Haven and London 2007 (Yale University Press); G. GULLINO, *La saga dei Foscari. Storia di un enigma*, Sommacampagna 2005 (CIERRE).

²⁰ Goods sent by boat were frequently divided among different ships in order to avoid the loss of the whole shipment in the case of shipwreck.

Graph 1. Foscari trip 1 (sales)



Graph 2. Foscari trip 2 (sales)



In terms of exports, more freedom was given to private merchants. The value of the merchandise exported from London and Bruges was far less than that of the imports: Flemish and Dutch cloth, amber, and English woolen cloth were the majority of the cargo. The cargo was also integrated with goods bought in the North African ports during their return travel. Slaves, horses, and leather were then bought in Tunis and shipped directly to Venice.

Besides the merchandise, the ledgers also provide information on the partners Venetians used while travelling in Flanders and England. Bruges, also thanks to a longer tradition in terms of relations with Venice, is the city where Venetian traders are shown to be most at ease. Thanks also to the use of local intermediaries, imposed by the law, they were able to get deep access to the market, dealing directly with local traders and bankers, and to largely use financial tools that were typical, in this period, of the Italian context.²¹ Thanks to the strong Italian presence in the area and a robust economic development, Flanders was one of the places in the Europe of the time where it was possible to use of financial and banking tools (as *giroconto*, bills of exchanges and letters of credit). While in the Mediterranean basin and England, indeed, payments were almost exclusively made in cash or via barter; in Bruges, Venetian merchants were able to use the entire array of financial tools available both to Italian and local bankers.²² On the other hand, at this point in time, the English context proved to be more difficult: Here, the main partners and intermediaries were other Italians, with a total absence of commercial and financial contacts with locals.²³

The regularity and the safety guaranteed by public navigation favored the creation of a circular trade route between the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, placing Venice and Italy at the very center of international European trade. A cluster of private and public interests pushed the Venetian traders into using the public lines, particularly for Northern Europe, as a tool to maintain contacts with both local and Italian merchants, while promoting the strategic position of Venice as one of the main intermediaries in the Western world for Oriental products.

2. BETWEEN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INTERESTS: THE MICHEL FAMILY FIRM

Economic, financial, and social reasons pushed Venetian merchants into supporting public navigation for over two centuries. If the general reasons for private merchants contributing to the *mude* system have been clarified, what remains unclear is the impact that the system had on single firms. To analyze this matter, I will use a specific case study of a Venetian firm operating in Venice in the decade from 1470–1480. The source I will refer to is the firm's ledger, kept in the form of double-entry bookkeeping. Accounts are relative to trades, agents, personal expenses, and taxes. In addition, the accounts for the first and last years are not complete.

The firm was managed by Alvise Michiel, a rich Venetian *patrizio*, who operated in the main Mediterranean ports and European cities thanks to an extensive

²¹ For a general picture of the economic situation of Bruges in the 15th century, see: P. STABEL, J. PUTTEVILS, J. DUMOLYN, B. LAMBERT, J. MURRAY, G. DUPONT, *Production, Markets and Socio-economic Structures II: c. 1320-c. 1500*, in *Medieval Bruges: c. 850-1550*, ed. A. BROWN-J. DUMOLYN, Cambridge 2018 (Cambridge University Press), pp. 196-267.

²² J. A. VAN HOUTTE, *L'attività delle élites meridionali nei grandi centri commerciali dei Paesi Bassi*, cit., pp. 259-272; P. STABEL, *Venice: Where North Meets South*, cit., pp. 31-43; A. VANDEWALLE, *Les nations étrangères à Bruges*, cit., pp. 27-42.

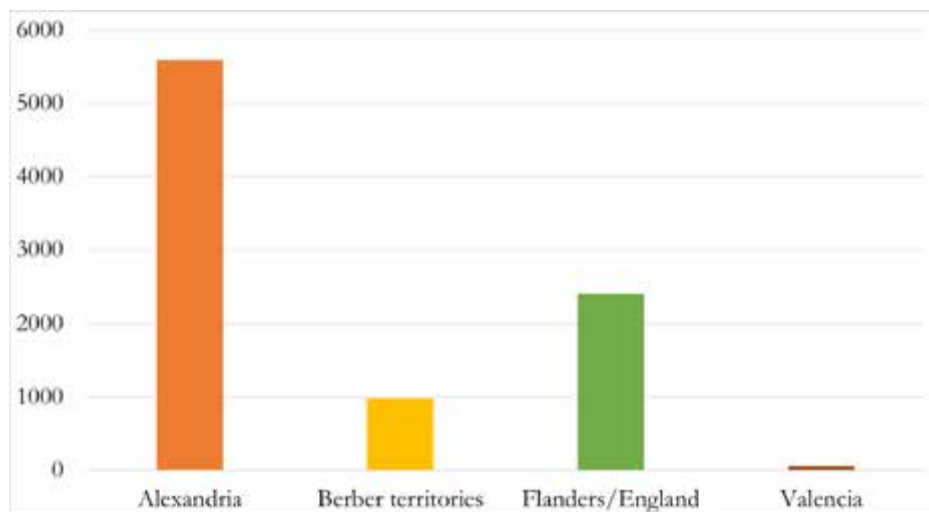
²³ S. MONTEMEZZO, *Galley Routes and Merchant Networks*, cit., pp. 153-170.

network of agents (mostly belonging to the family such as sons, brothers-in-law, etc.). The cooperation with agents and the trust that the merchant had in them allowed the system to work: Cloth was indeed sent to Egypt as well as minerals and oil from Puglia following specific requests from the agents (mainly the Alexandrian agent who was Michiel's brother-in-law).

Thanks to the firm's documents, we know that the main trading cities of the time that were then able to generate lucrative trade during the war against the Ottomans were Alexandria, Tunis (or the Berber territories), and Syria (even if exchanges in these ports appear to be troubled) in the Mediterranean context. We also need to add Flanders and England to the list, as they were the main exporting cities for Levantine products.

The use Michiel made of the *galere di stato* was not extensive; however, it shows regularity. In the period from 1470–1481, Michiel transported approximately 7,000 ducats of merchandise with the public navy. The largest share of this sum was spent on purchasing pepper (as at that time it was probably the most lucrative type of good to trade) for almost 3,000 ducats, and selling Italian cloth, copper, tin, and ginger. Pepper was bartered when possible with Italian cloth that was dyed following the trends in the Egyptian markets (thanks to the indications given by the agent in Alexandria), but most commonly it was paid for in cash. Big quantities of ginger (amounting to almost 1,000 ducats) were sent to Flanders, while copper and tin were sent to Egypt and Barbary. The Venetian firm made use of the public galleys a minimum of two times a year up to a maximum of four, for three main destinations: Flanders and England; the Berber territories; and the Mamluk territories (mostly Alexandria) (see graph 3 and table 1).

Graph 3. State galleys, main directions



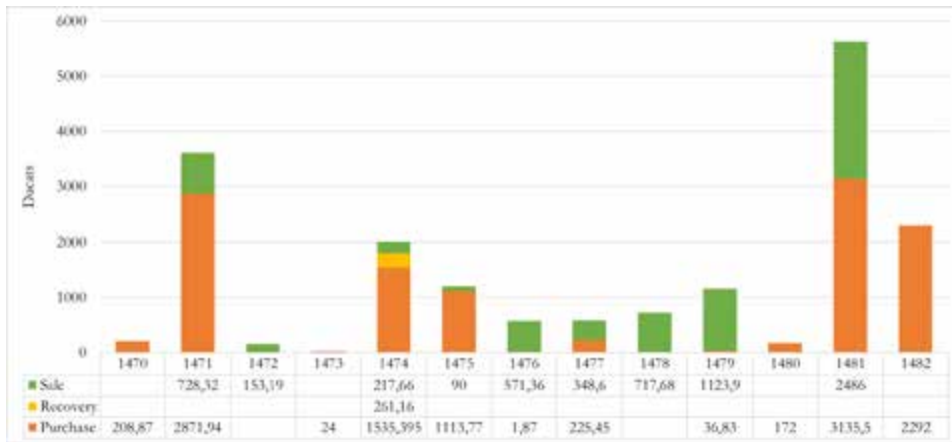
The value of the merchandise loaded on State galleys amounted to about 7,000 ducats (without considering the *noli*, the freight, and all the other expenses), with a total of 75,000 ducats invested in purchases over the entire period (both via land and sea routes). These figures are not that impressive and highlight how the actual value carried via public navigation was not high, especially when compared to the sums invested in private navy commerce.

The bulk of Michiel's maritime trade was, however, carried out with the private navy. Goods valuing 25,000 ducats were shipped in the 10 years of activity, showing the composition of Michiel's commercial capital more clearly. Due to the difficulties in obtaining pepper (smaller quantities than usual came from Egypt, while almost nothing arrived from Syria), Michiel decided to create an alternative trade circuit that relied almost exclusively on private navigation. The merchant started to import olive oil from Puglia (plus that arriving from the Marche region and Garda lake via land routes), half of which was then sold in Venice (a big part of it to German traders, while the rest was sold to the State and local artisans for the production of soap and other uses), with the other half being sent to Barbary and Egypt.²⁴ Olive oil was used as a currency and exchanged in Venice for tin and copper. Copper was purchased by the Germans of the *fondaco*, the same merchants who were buying olive oil from Puglia and Marche, and it was then exported to Alexandria, together with Alpine cloth. As noted, here these two goods, together with almonds from Puglia, were used to buy the scarce and expensive pepper that was available in Alexandria and Cairo. Despite efforts to export goods to Alexandria to finance purchases, the balance of payments remained heavily upset in favor of the outflows.

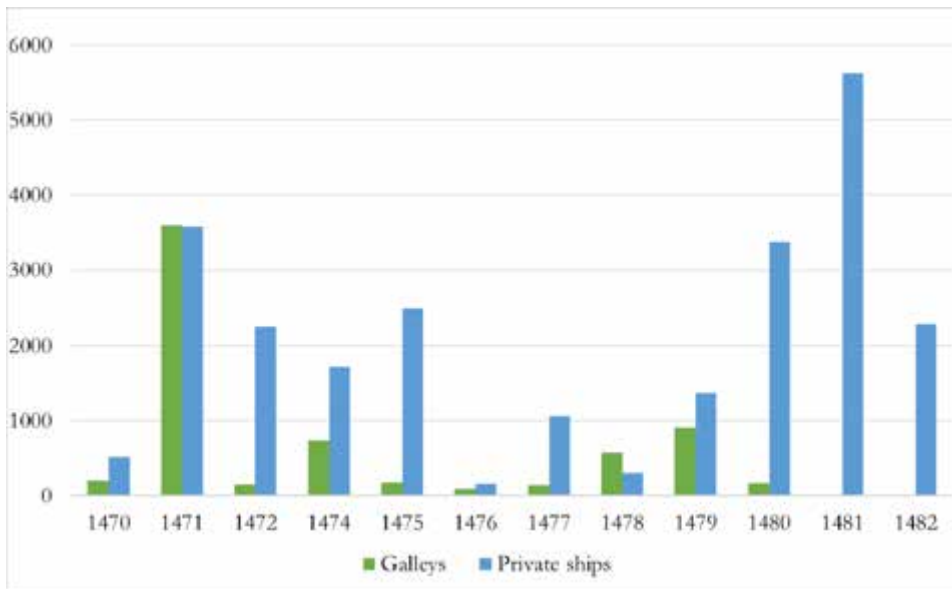
These numbers become more understandable if we consider the peculiar period in which this firm was operating. Venice was involved in the first war against the Ottomans, which of course meant not only general problems arising with commercial connections, but also a cut in the number of ships that could operate in the Mediterranean setting. The galleys going toward the Orient could be confiscated and used for military operations, while of course the risk of losing the cargo due to an attack from the enemy was much higher. This is also the reason why almost all the investments made by Michiel in the State galleys were for hubs that were not close to the war zone such as Alexandria in Egypt, the Berber territories, and Flanders. This fact is also sustained by what we saw happening in the *Incanto* for the Foscari case: War was a disincentive for investment in the public navy, since the many advantages that it brought were outweighed by the risk of seeing the ship attacked, confiscated, and used for military purposes.

²⁴ S. CIRIACONO, *L'olio a Venezia in età moderna*, in *I consumi alimentari e gli altri usi*, in *Alimentazione e Nutrizione*, secc. XIII-XVIII, S. CAVACIOCCHI (ed.), Firenze 1997 (Le Monnier), pp. 301-312.

Graph 4. Galleys use (ducats)



Graph 5. Michiel's seaborne trade (ducats)



The distribution of the purchases and sales during the years of activity show strong discontinuity (see graphs 4 and 5). An accumulation of Oriental goods was made periodically (in 1471, 1474-1475, 1480-1481) to build up a supply for the years in which arrivals tended to be scarcer (such as 1472 and 1473, and from 1476 to 1479). These inconsistencies in purchases and sales are very likely linked to the developments of the Veneto-Ottoman war that had consequences in terms of the

direction of the traders' investments, but also in terms of their distribution networks and typology.

Tab. 1. **Public lines used by the Michiel firm**

Year	Destination	Capital invested, partial (ducats)	Capital invested, total (ducats)
1470	Alexandria	208.87	
	Flanders	59.5	
	Venice	20	288.37
1471	Flanders	389	
	London	339.32	
	Alexandria	2871.94	3600.26
1472	Flanders	153.19	153.19
1474	Flanders	164.5	
	Valencia	56	
	Venice	260.035	480.535
1475	North Africa	90	
	Flanders	93	
	Southampton	1020.77	
	Venice	90.12	1293.89
1476	Alexandria	159.2	
	North Africa	41.83	
	Flanders	50.33	
	Venice	371.56	622.92
1477	North Africa	428.24	
	Flanders	20.04	
	Sicilia	121.9	570.18
1478	Alexandria	1.75	
	North Africa	418.33	
	Venice	306.6	726.68
1479	Alexandria	248.83	
	Venice	911.9	1160.73
1481	Alexandria	2100.5	2100.5

CONCLUSIONS

Historiography has long emphasized the role of the State lines for the commercial development of Venice. The public system did indeed have a fundamental role in keeping the commercial system active and regular, while providing the State with

strong control over the navigation routes, a steady flow of work for the Arsenal, and good fiscal entries. Moreover, the efforts to keep the system functioning pushed the Venetian government into maintaining good political relationships with foreign powers in order to protect their traders and interests.

The Foscari case allowed us to underline this aspect by showing the integration of the Flemish and Venetian economies. The institutional intervention of the Venetian State since the 14th century favored the interests of its merchants by establishing commercial treaties and implementing the State lines so that they targeted the Flemish territories. The agreements made with the Flemish power led not only to the presence of Venetians in Bruges, but also increased the integration of the two economic systems, making the Venetian merchants increasingly reliant on local intermediaries, correspondents, and bankers. Bruges, thanks to the regular connections offered by the Republic, remained the most important hub until the end of the 15th century for Oriental products and financial operations. On the contrary, this kind of integration was not apparent in the English context, where all the partners were Venetians or Italians. England proved to be, despite this lack of integration with locals, a growing market for Venetians.

The personal and financial commitment made by Giovanni Foscari, as with all the other *patroni*, demonstrates the importance, real or perceived, of the public navy for the noble class, which was at the time the main force in the long-distance Venetian trade. However, the nobles did not shy away from using the private navy for their trade. With the Michiel case, it was possible to see that the use of public galleys was quite regular, even though the private navy had a fundamental role in the development of maritime trade, particularly in difficult times. Galleys were used, whenever possible, to stock up on Oriental products that were later slowly sold to foreign merchants (mainly Germans and the Flemish) at high prices. Even when the investment in public galleys was low due to the difficulties arising from war and the scarcity of Oriental merchandise, the traders tended to invest with regularity, probably trying to keep the system going while waiting for better times. On the side, merchants were able to create new commodity chains thanks to the reliability of the private navy, which allowed them to reach ports that both were or were not included in the public lines' destinations.

The weight that the public and private navy had on the trading societies in Venice appears to be, for the second half of the 15th century, outbalanced in favor of the latter. Even more so when considering the kind of historiographical attention that the galley system has obtained, with respect to the private sector. For this reason, in my opinion, further research on private companies and the use and functioning of private vessels for trading is needed to better understand the influence that the private navy had on the development of the Venetian business and economy in the Renaissance.²⁵

²⁵ As an example, see the article by Renard Gluzman and Gerassimos Pagratis in this volume.

Renato Ghezzi

North Italian Ports and the Levant in the 16th and 17th Centuries

1. INTRODUCTION

Following the gradual establishment of the Atlantic routes and the definitive assertions of Holland and England, the Mediterranean lost its central position and the international trade system changed profoundly.¹ In their analyses of these changes, which first became evident towards the end of the 1500s and were consolidated in the following century, the attention of historians has concentrated at length on the inversion of the spice routes and the massive introduction of English and Dutch manufactured goods in the Ottoman countries, held to be clear proof of Venice's progressive decline. In reality, as important as they may be, these are only a few aspects of the evolution of the traffic between the Levant and the Italian peninsula. Anatolia, Syria and Egypt were not only important intermediaries in the commerce with Persia, the Indies, Sudan and Ethiopia, but they also produced many manufactured goods and raw materials essential for Western industries, enough to spark a heated rivalry among the Italian merchants to have an privileged position in the Ottoman *scale*.²

Due to the lack of congruent and consistent serial data, import businesses from the Eastern Mediterranean are still, however, little known today. Just as, in the absence of comparative analyses of the business activities of the main Italian ports, it is not possible to fully evaluate the effects of the Italian maritime crisis and the progressive advance of the Nordic ships over the Mediterranean routes. In the attempt to help partially bridge these gaps, the chapter aims to offer a diachronic assessment of the role of trade with the Levant in the activities in the ports of Genoa, Livorno, and Venice in the 16th and 17th centuries.

¹ U. TUCCI, *Traffici e navi nel Mediterraneo in età moderna*, in *La penisola italiana e il mare. Costruzioni navali, trasporti e commerci tra XV e XX secolo*, ed. T. FANFANI, Naples 1993, pp. 57-70.

² The *Scale* were business centers for the Ottoman Empire frequented by Western buyers. They all met at the unloading points, in most cases the ports used by the caravan and maritime trades. For example, Tripoli in the 16th and Smyrna in the 17th century, and the maritime trade for Constantinople between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. At times they were established in two centers, such as Cairo and Alexandria, both stable over the centuries. In alternative there was Aleppo with its external Syrian ports. They were all, finally, places of exchange for complementary goods and the demands of various economies, otherwise they would have held no purpose. M. FONTENAY, *Le commerce des Occidentaux dans les échelles du Levant au XVII^e siècle*, in *Relazioni economiche tra Europa e mondo islamico secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. S. CAVACIOCCHI, I-II, Florence 2007, II, p. 502.

2. THE SOURCES

The development of long-haul trading in Genoa's port in the 16th and 17th century was recognized by Edoardo Grendi, through analysis of the proceeds derived from the *jactus navium*, a tax weighted on the owners of ships with a carrying capacity of over 1,500 *cantari* (71 tons), which amounted proportionately to the dimensions of the hulls.³ Registrations of payments were collected in the *cartulari* and *manuali* of the *Padri del Comune*, the magistrates charged with collecting the taxes, in which there are records of the ships that reached Genoa, their tonnages,⁴ the ship-owner's name, the nationality and the taxes they were subject to.⁵ From 1528 to 1591 the ship's port of origin was always indicated, in the following years this information was no longer reported: it appeared again only after 1658.

The useful sources for a quantitative reconstruction of the port's activity in Venice are more fragmented. The notarial acts⁶ and the documents of an administrative nature are very important. In particular, the business summary reports of the mercantile sector and the commodities entering and leaving the port, which cover, however, only short periods of time. There are also the chronicles and correspondence of the merchants, in some cases very precise, which can provide important indications of the main maritime trade networks and their evolution.⁷

³ The *jactus navium* was a tax on waste dumped into the sea by the ships, whose proceeds were used to free the port of waste materials accumulated on the sea floor, hindering its practicability. The smaller ships, with a carrying load of less than 71 tons, were exempt from paying this tax. Instead they had to pay an anchoring tax, the so called *schifato*. E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale, naviglio mercantile e consolati genovesi nel Cinquecento*, in "Rivista Storica Italiana", LXXX, 1968, n. III, pp. 593-638, 596-607. On the evolution of the trade of Genoa's port in the 11th-14th century see R. S. LOPEZ, *Market expansion: the case of Genoa*, in R. S. LOPEZ, *Su e giù per la storia di Genova*, Genoa 1975, pp. 43-62; G. PISTARINO, *Genova medievale tra Oriente e Occidente*, in "Rivista Storica Italiana", LXXXI, 1969, pp. 45-73; G. PISTARINO, *La storiografia marittima su Genova medievale*, in *Tendenze e orientamenti nella storiografia marittima contemporanea: gli Stati italiani e la Repubblica di Ragusa (secoli XIV-XIX)*, ed. A. DI VITTORIO, Naples 1986, pp. 3-28.

⁴ Intersecting the data originating from the *Padri del Comune* registries with other sources (particularly the *Registri della Sanità* and notarial acts), Edoardo Grendi found a consistent underestimation of the ship loads in the 17th century, with which a systematic reduction of taxes was allowed. To calculate the merchant ships tonnage arriving in Genoa he increased this by 20%. In this way, the average load of the ships engaged in business along the long-haul routes reaching Genoa proved equal to 153 tons, a lower value than that I noted for the ships arriving in Livorno in the 1600s (185 tons). E. GRENDI, *I nordici e il traffico del porto di Genova: 1590-1666*, in "Rivista Storica Italiana", LXXXIII, 1971, n. I, pp. 23-71, 38-57; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico nel XVII secolo. Naviglio e commercio di importazione*, Bari 2007, pp. 19-41.

⁵ The *Padri del Comune* were the main magistrates of Genoa. In 1588 they were divided into independent bodies: the *Conservatori del Patrimonio*, which superintended the arts, managed road networks, aqueducts, and urban cleanliness; the *Conservatori del Porto e del Molo*, which took care of the port's infrastructure and issued anchorage permits. G. FELLONI, *Organizzazione portuale, navigazione e traffici a Genova: un sondaggio tra le fonti per l'età moderna*, in *Studi in memoria di Giorgio Costamagna*, ed. D. PUNCUH, Genoa 2003, pp. 337-364.

⁶ R. GHEZZI, *Le fonti notarili e il commercio marittimo tra Tirreno e Adriatico nel XVII secolo*, in "Studi Urbanati", 33-34, 2004, pp. 465-478.

⁷ U. TUCCI, *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien, Andrea Berengo (1553-1556)*, Paris 1957.

Finally, some very useful information comes from the reports by foreign residents about the state of business activities in the main markets of the Ottoman empire.⁸

The series related to the import businesses of Livorno were reconstructed thanks primarily to the examination of the *Registri della sanità*.⁹ According to predominant medical theories of the time, the plague was caused by invisible contaminating atoms that could be transmitted not only by living beings but also by many objects, merchandise, or other materials.¹⁰ The captains who reached Livorno from the Levant, from Northern Africa, or from other suspect countries, therefore had to provide detailed notes on the port of departure, the crew's state of health and that of eventual passengers, on the route followed and the merchandise transported, after first having declared basic generalities and the name and tonnage of their ships. By consulting these documents, it was possible to individuate the different types of ship which passed through the port of Livorno in the 17th century and to classify them based on tonnage, nationality, and by their port of origin. Examining their loads therefore made it possible to make some quantitative estimates on the volume of imports from the ports of the Levant.

3. GENOA'S PORT ACTIVITY

The sequences of *iactus navium* span, without any significant interruptions,¹¹ the period comprised between 1537 and 1666. They show a growth trend in Genoa's businesses, culminating in the years 1551-1555. There was then a diminution, which lasted until 1586, followed by a sharp rise which peaked in 1592, when the levels reached the highest of the century. Up until the 30s the Genoese fleet assured close to three quarters of the port trade.¹² Participation by the other nations grew progressively, and in the 60s it became predominant.¹³ Ragusa's merchant ship fleets were the business leaders of Genoa's port industry until the 90s, when they were joined by the Nordic, English and, above all, Dutch ships, which had an important role in the growth of the 90s, constituting approximately 25% of the port's incoming trade.¹⁴

Between the geographical areas which fed the most consistent flow of trade, the Italian ports stood out, especially those in Sicily. The merchant ships arriving from the island's ports made up 42% of the total tonnage of the sailing ships

⁸ F. C. LANE, *La marine marchande et le trafic maritime de Venise a travers les siècles*, in *Les sources de l'histoire maritime en Europe du Moyen Age au XVIII^e siècle*, ed. M. MOLLAT, Paris 1962, pp. 7-32.

⁹ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI FIRENZE (ASF), *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 136-225.

¹⁰ C. M. CIPOLLA, *Il burocrate e il marinaio*, Bologna 1992, p. 45.

¹¹ The only data missing, for the entire period, refer to 1540, 1542, 1547, 1549, 1555, 1561, 1595, and 1598. E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., tavola I, p. 637 e E. GRENDI, *I nordici*, cit., pp. 65-66.

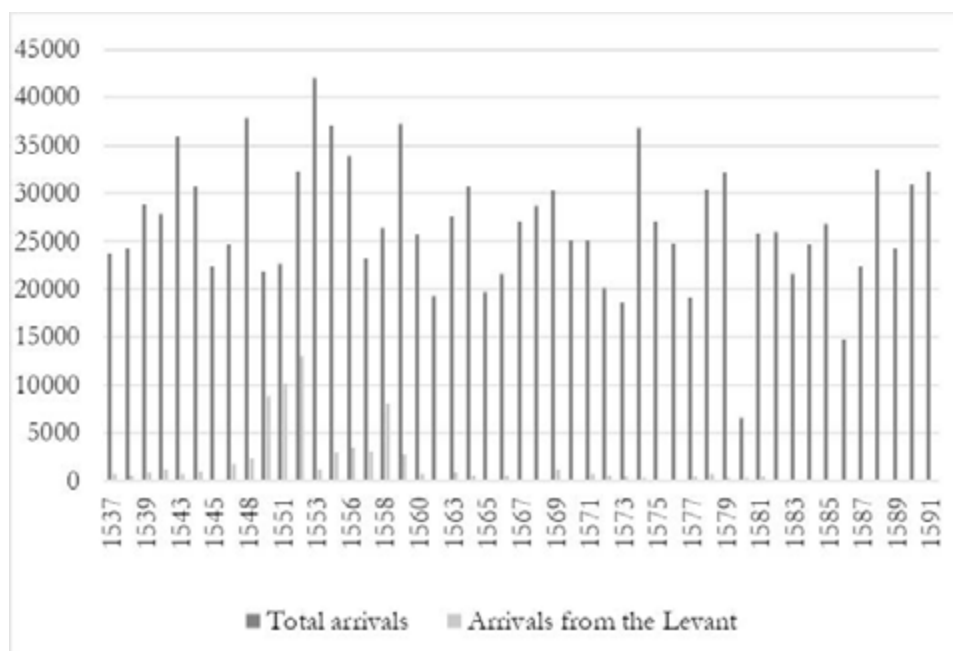
¹² Excluding smaller boats, that were used for cabotage, in the early decades of the 16th century the total tonnage of Genoa's merchant fleets was roughly 15,000 tons, similar to that of the Venetian fleet. L. PICCINNO, *Genoa: a city with a port or a port city?*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe 1300-1600*, W. BLOCKMANS, M. KROM, J. WUBS-MROZEWICZ eds., London 2017, pp. 159-176, 165.

¹³ C. COSTANTINI, *La Repubblica di Genova*, Turin 1986, pp. 167-169.

¹⁴ E. GRENDI, *I nordici*, cit., pp. 23-65.

registered as arriving in Genoa from 1537 to 1591.¹⁵ Furthermore, there were important arrivals from Castile ports (38% of the total tonnage for incoming ships from 1537 to 1591). In contrast, the connections with the Levant were weak. From 1537 to 1588, 240 merchant ships arrived from the Eastern Mediterranean, and their tonnage contributed to only 5% of the total port activity.¹⁶

Graph 1. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving in Genoa, 1537-1591



Source: E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., pp. 593-638.

The high levels of trade in the years 1550, 1551, 1552, and 1558 are essentially explained by the poor grain harvests in Sicily. The business of cereals was the activity which mainly characterized the port of Genoa. Sicily was the main supply source,¹⁷ and when its contributions diminished, the Republic organized a complex provision plan with the Ottoman storage sites and in 1558, a special pass was given to Mahomet Cilibi of Mytilene so that he could transport grain to Liguria.¹⁸ When the crisis ended, relations with the Levant went back to their normal, modest levels.

¹⁵ The tonnage being referred to here is equivalent to 2,000 pounds in weight or 28 cubic feet (913 liters) in capacity (*tonneau de Bordeaux*). M. MORINEAU, *Jauges et méthodes de jauge anciennes et modernes*, Paris 1966.

¹⁶ E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., p. 637, tavola I.

¹⁷ On average, Genoa imported 6,500 *mine* of grain from Sicily every year, which in volume constituted for roughly 20% of the port's total trade. E. GRENDI, *Traffico, naviglio*, cit., pp. 591-638.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 604 e 624.

The early decades of the 1600s marked the beginning of a new ascending phase, culminating in 1620. The following years saw a decrease in the incoming port business, remaining at a low until 1628, when a new growth trend started, which had a secular peak in the biennium 1630-1632. In contrast, the 40s saw a drop which became a huge collapse during the plague of 1656-1657.¹⁹ Beyond the circumstantial aspects, the mid-century saw an inversion of this trend, but the revival of businesses was indeed slow and uncertain. In 1660 the total of the ship loads arriving in the port was still inferior by a third compared to that which was recorded in the period between 1651-1655. In the period between 1661-1665 it did not pass more than 80% of the level prior to the plague.²⁰

In comparison to the preceding century, the leading trade managers of Genoa did not record significant changes. The import of grain reached a peak in 1629 and in 1631, when they represented 40% of the incoming loads to the port, which then settled at 20-25% in the following twenty years.²¹ The routes for Sicily and the Iberian Peninsula continued to be those most used and supplied the grain, wool, and silk trades. Trade with the Italian peninsula increased the role of ports in Puglia, where primarily grain and oil were loaded, and, above all, the arrival of ships from the port of Livorno increased, and which became, for Genoa, the main market for the supply of merchandise from the Levant.²²

4. LIVORNO: BETWEEN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE ATLANTIC

As Fernand Braudel and Ruggero Romano showed, the roots of Livorno's achievement of the 17th century have distant origins.²³ In fact, they go back to the reign of Cosimo, the first grand duke of Tuscany (1537- 1574), who introduced the political system to create a new economic center between Pisa and Livorno for the state. To initiate this project, two proclamations were released in 1547 and 1548, which favored the area's general population and especially the inclusion of new artisans from Pisa and Livorno, entrepreneurs, and vendors. Contemporarily, an impressive construction plan was sent out, necessary to improve the defense structure of Livorno, to render it more accommodating, to create new business infrastructure, and new connections inland.

To eliminate "...the disorder which results from the diversity of laws and orders..."²⁴ on March 16, 1566 a tax act was finally issued for a complete restructuring of customs regulations. In it, again there can already be seen a few elements characteristic of the free port regime which would be established by the end of the 1600s.

¹⁹ E. GRENDI, *I nordici*, cit., pp. 48-57.

²⁰ C. COSTANTINI, *La Repubblica di Genova*, Turin 1986, p. 309.

²¹ L. PICCINNO, *Economia marittima e operatività portuale. Genova sec. XVII-XIX*, Atti della Società ligure di storia patria, Nuova Serie, vol. XL, fascicolo 1, Genoa 2000, p. 59.

²² E. GRENDI, *La repubblica aristocratica dei Genovesi*, Bologna 1987, pp. 324-327.

²³ F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises à l'entrée du port de Livourne (1547-1611)*, Paris 1951, pp. 44-53.

²⁴ ASFI, *Auditore delle Riformazioni*, 118, cc. 70-99.

The city's modernization works continued under the guidance of Francesco I, Cosimo's successor until, following the changes in international equilibrium after Lepanto, and with the temporary interruption of the Atlantic route of pepper arriving in Antwerp from Lisbon, the prospect of the opportunity to make the new Tuscan port a central point for stocking and distributing the spices arriving from the East and West arose, to the detriment of Venice. In 1575, negotiations commenced with the sultan, to obtain confirmation of the business privileges which had been given to Florentine traders the century before. A year later, a diplomatic mission was sent to King Sebastian of Portugal to obtain the monopoly of the pepper trade.

This plan did not end well. Negotiations with Mohammed II were halted, relations with Spain worsened, the difficulties of Venetian businesses in the Levant were rapidly overcome, so much so that by the end of the century the Republic of San Marco returned to having control of the spice market and a predominance in the Mediterranean.

However, by the time of the death of Francesco I, the port had been expanded by the construction of a pier, large new warehouses for stocking goods, and new grain wells had been built. The city's walls had been completed and the ground-work for a city center began to take effect. Consequently, Livorno found itself in the best condition to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the international situation in the early 90s of the 16th century's. At the time, the Italian peninsula and many other Mediterranean countries suffered the consequences of the series of poor harvests which caused severe famines in 1590-1591, 1596, and again in 1600-1601. With great timing, on September 3rd 1590, Ferdinand I gave orders to stock up on grain in Poland, in Gdansk, in Hamburg, Holland, France, and England.

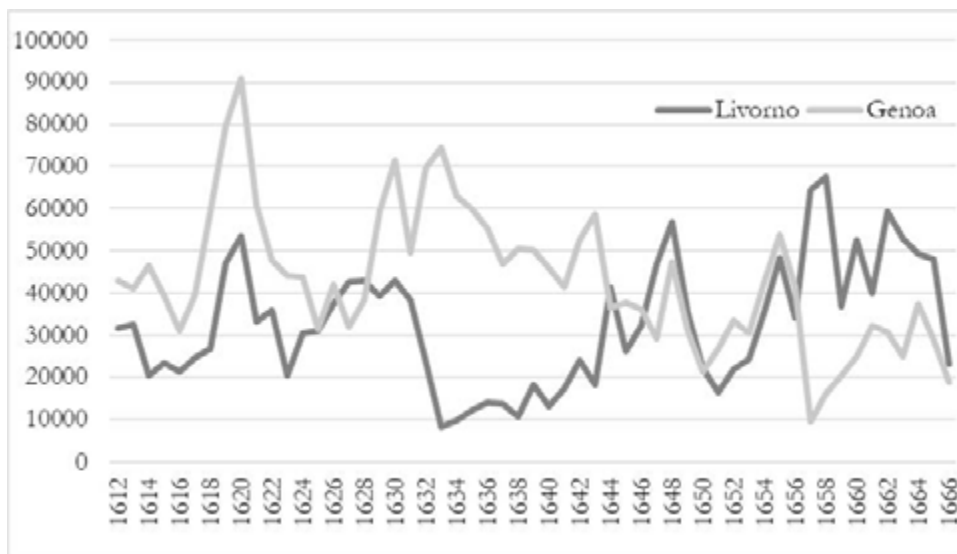
At the end of the 1500s, Livorno maintained interests not only with North West Europe. It had fairly close ties to the Ottoman Levant, especially Alexandria in Egypt, though as Braudel and Romano wrote, "...en définitive, Livourne elle-même est mal rattachée à la Mer Orientale. Pendant duze ans, en effect, de toute le Méditerranée à l'est de la Sicilie, elle n'aura reçu que quarante navires. Est-ce crainte de représailles à la suite de excès de la course toscane dans le Levant? Ou conséquence de la faillite des negotiations turco-toscane de 1577? En tout cas, la géographie et la conjoncture aidant, c'est vers l'Océan et ses valeurs montantes que Livourne se tourne."²⁵

In the 17th century, the arrivals of sailing ships engaged in long haul trade started from relatively low levels, very similar to those found by Braudel and Romano at the end of the 1500s. They then began to become more frequent: from 1612 to 1666 they increased at an annual average rate of 8%.²⁶

²⁵ F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises*, cit., p. 44.

²⁶ R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196.

Graph 2. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving at Genoa and Livorno, 1612-1666



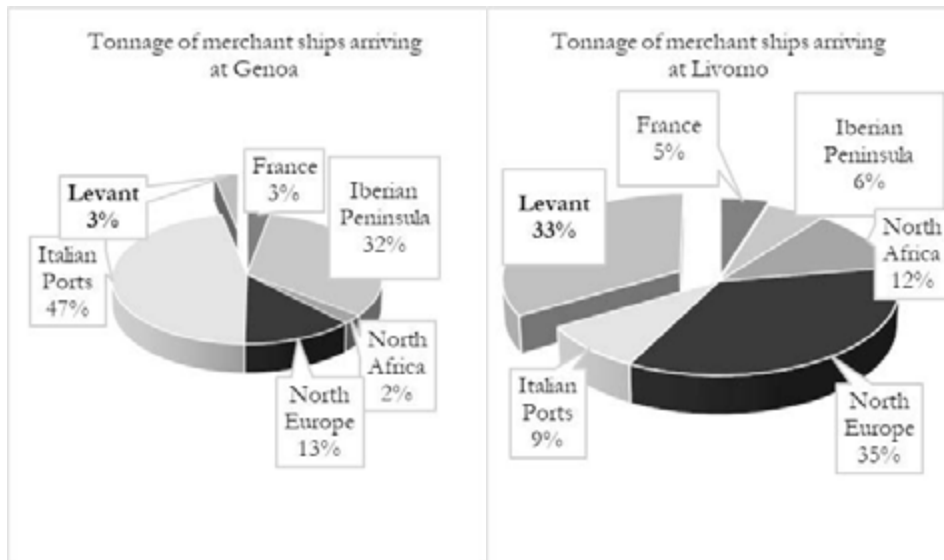
Sources: ASF1, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 136-225; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 19-111; E. GRENDI, *I Nordici*, cit., pp. 65-66.

Until 1650, the frequency of arrivals at Livorno was still noticeably inferior to that of the port of Genoa. From 1658 onwards, the comparison was reversed, and Livorno claimed primacy between the two ports. From 1658 to 1666 the documents related to the incoming merchant ships to Livorno were 2,359, with a total loading capacity equal to 429,962 tons. Those associated to the ships reaching Genoa were 1,833, with a total carrying capacity of 233,859 tons.

If we observe the ships' points of origin, the differences between the business activities of the two ports are quite evident.²⁷

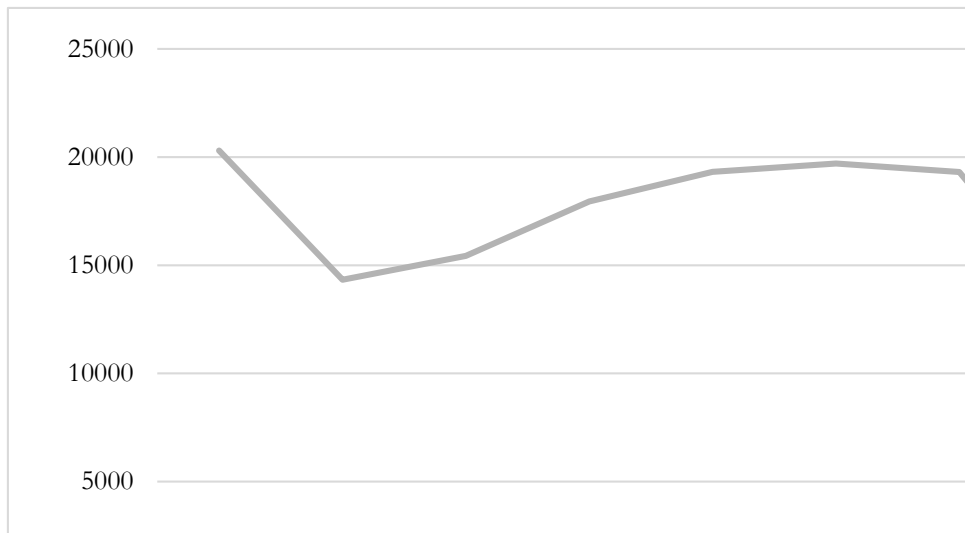
²⁷ Graph 3.

Graph 3. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving at Genoa and Livorno, 1658-1666



Sources: ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 209-225; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196; E. GRENDI, *I Nordici*, cit., p. 70.

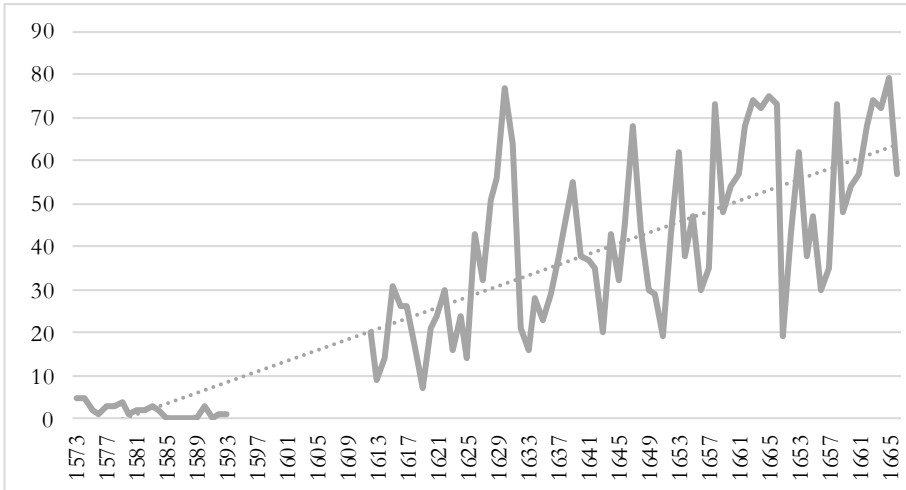
Graph 4. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving from the Levant, 1658-1666



Sources: ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 209-225; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196; E. GRENDI, *I Nordici*, cit., p. 70.

As has been seen, while Genoa's businesses of the 1600s were definitely oriented towards the other Italian ports and the Iberian Peninsula, the *scale* of the Levant had an important role in the port business of Livorno. Thus, business between Livorno and the Eastern Mediterranean increased as the 17th century advanced.²⁸

Graph 5. Merchant ships arriving at Livorno from the Levant, 1573-1666



Sources: F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises*, cit., pp. 43-44; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196; ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 209-225.

It is significant that of the total of 7,729 ships registered by the officials of Livorno in the period 1612-1666, 4,531, or rather 59% of them, originated from the Ottoman Empire or from its vassal states. More precisely, 3,476 (the net majority) left from the ports of the Levant, while the role of North Africa in the trade system appears decidedly inferior.

The transport of merchandise from the Levant to Livorno was carried out by Atlantic type (ships or vessels) or Mediterranean boats. In both cases, the Tuscan merchant ships were in a net minority.²⁹

Among the Mediterranean ships reported by the sources, French predominance was clear (80% of the cases). The Atlantic ships, which played a leading role in these deals³⁰ were, in the majority, English and Dutch.

²⁸ Graph 5.

²⁹ The Livorno shopkeepers were not, however, completely passive, rather they were direct participants in the expenditures for the construction of numerous ships. It can therefore be affirmed that Tuscany had its very own merchant fleet with a foreign flag.

³⁰ Overall, the Atlantic ships constituted 69% of those which arrived from the Levant in the period 1612-1666.

To deal with the competition and to control freight costs, the English gradually abandoned the armed merchant ships and entrusted their business in the Mediterranean area to smaller units with reduced crews, escorted, however, by war ships.³¹ The first protected convoy arrived in Livorno on the 15th April 1651, after that date, arrivals followed regularly until 1666.

The convoys generally came from London or from the Southern English ports. At times, the English ships crossed the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean by themselves or in small groups. Immediately after having passed Gibraltar, they made a stopover in a Spanish port to meet with other merchant and military ships which escorted them as far as Livorno.

On the extreme opposite side of the Mediterranean, the ports of departure for the English ships were Constantinople and, above all, Smyrna; only in a few cases, and in extreme circumstances, did the escorted convoys sail from Alexandretta and Saint John of Acre.³²

The first Dutch war ships following the cargo ships arrived in Livorno as early as 1629. Also in this case, however, the practice of making a convoy of the merchant ships headed towards Livorno only became general practice after the first half of the century.³³ From 1612 to 1650 the *ufficiali di Sanità* registered the arrival of only one protected convoy; in the following period (1651-1666) 36 such arrivals were registered. Almost all, save rare exceptions, originated from two cities only: Amsterdam (20 arrivals) to the West, and Smyrna (14 arrivals) to the East.³⁴

The insertion of Livorno on these routes³⁵, and the reinforcement of ties with Anatolia constitute two of the most important new elements in the trade network that formed around the port of Livorno in the 17th century. Thanks to this new geography of commerce, the scale of imports from the Levant began to grow again, reaching its peak around the 50s, then stabilizing with decidedly higher averages compared to those of the first half of the century.

5. THE LEADERSHIP OF VENICE

At the end of the 1400s, the prosperity of the port of Venice was founded on its supremacy in maritime trade with the Levant, and especially in that of the spice trade, originating from the Indian Ocean, through Syria and Egypt: the Venetian merchants controlled over 70% of European imports.³⁶ In the next century, the wars against the Ottoman Empire (1499-1503 and 1536-1540), had serious effects

³¹ G. PAGANO DE DIVITIIS, *Mercanti inglesi nell'Italia del Seicento*, Venice 1990, pp. 59-72 e EADEM, *Il porto di Livorno tra Inghilterra e Oriente*, in "Nuovi Studi Livornesi", I, 1993, pp. 43-87.

³² R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 41-65.

³³ From 1612 to 1650 only 3 Dutch war ships to arrived in Livorno accompanying merchant ships. In the second half of the century 119 arrived.

³⁴ R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e l'Atlantico. I commerci olandesi nel Mediterraneo del Seicento*, Bari 2011, pp. 99-105.

³⁵ P. MALANIMA, *I commerci del mondo nel 1674 visti da Amsterdam e da Livorno*, in *Ricerche di Storia Moderna IV in onore di Mario Mirri*, ed. G. BIAGIOLI, Pisa 1995, pp. 153-150, 165-166.

³⁶ F. C. LANE, *La marine marchande*, cit., pp. 7-32; M. O'CONNEL, *Venice: City of merchants or city for merchandise?*, in *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade*, cit., pp. 103-120; D. ABULAFIA, *Il grande mare. Storia del Mediterraneo*, Milan 2013, pp. 436-441.

on the state finances, as well as causing the loss of strategic bases in Modone and Corone in Morea and the advancement of the Ottomans in Syria and Egypt, which marked a standstill in the economic growth for the Serenissima. Venice was able to overcome this situation however, by showing a great capacity to adapt in the face of an international trade system that was rapidly changing. Between 1540 and 1570 the Venetian merchant fleet doubled and in the last three decades of the century the port's business, also thanks to the contribution of foreign ships, reached its highest levels for the entire century.³⁷ The scarce quantitative data about the commercial activities of the port demonstrate this expansive tendency. Between 1582 and 1602 the customs revenues from business grew constantly, in particular the duty of 6%, which was applied to goods imported from the Levant, increased about three-fold. In the period 1586-1595, merchandise arrived at an average of 1,110 tons from the Dalmatian ports every year. From 1592 to 1595 imports from those areas at a yearly average of 1,700 tons.³⁸ The annual imports of oil from Candia and Puglia passed from 3,400 tons in the period from 1580 to 1585 to reach 5,000 tons in the years 1593-1598. Arrivals of cotton from Cyprus and Syria were, on average, around 1,700 tons annually, returning to the levels recorded at the end of the 15th century.³⁹ Imports of raw silk from Syria were around 100 tons yearly between 1590 and 1595, and then around 150 tons in the following five years.⁴⁰ There is no existing continuous line to describe the development of the spice trade. There are no complete series of records that allow us to describe the evolution of the spice trade; various testimonials show, concordantly, that these trades returned to flourish. In this period, the Atlantic route became more difficult to sail for the Portuguese ships which became, after the union between Portugal and Spain, the targets for privateer attacks by the English and Dutch fleets. As a result the ancient caravan routes, which from Mesopotamia led all the way to the market-place of Aleppo, where the Venetian merchants held a preeminent role, enjoyed a revival in a historical period when their major rivals, the French, were penalized by religious wars and by the Franco-Spanish conflict.⁴¹

Contingent events played a role in determining the prosperity of Venetian trade at the end of the 1500s, but at the root of Venice's supremacy in the Eastern Mediterranean was its close ties with the German market. The great textile industries of Ulm and Augsburg were big buyers of Ottoman cotton. Persian silk was greatly sought after by the manufacturers of Cologne, Frankfurt, and Nuremberg. An ulterior element of strength was constituted by the ability of Venetian merchants to export numerous products that were much in demand in the Ottoman markets. Some products were re-exports, such as German knives and

³⁷ F.C. LANE, *Venetian Shipping During the Commercial Revolution*, in "The American Historical Review", 38, 1933, n. 2, pp. 219-239.

³⁸ D. SELLA, *Commerci e industrie a Venice nel secolo XVII*, Venice 1961, p. 2.

³⁹ IDEM, *Dal Rinascimento al Barocco. Economia e finanza*, in *Storia di Venice*, Treccani e-book on demand.

⁴⁰ Only a small part of the raw silk imported from the Levant was destined for Venetian manufacturers, the greater part was re-exported. IDEM, *Commerci e industrie*, cit., p. 2 e p. 112.

⁴¹ F.C. LANE, *The Mediterranean Spice Trade: Further Evidence of its Revival in the Sixteenth Century*, in "The American Historical Review", 45, 1940, n. 3, pp. 581-590.

linens or English Kersey wool yarns, but the highest percentage of products which arrived in the Levant were made in Venice. Among these were finest wool cloths, silk fabrics, mirrors, glass, sugar and soap.⁴²

The favorable situation was soon interrupted at the beginning of the following century. In the decade following 1602, according to data processed and deriving from anchorage tax revenues, the volume of traffic recorded in the port of Venice diminished by 40%. The drop accentuated around 1620, simultaneously with the economic crisis that affected all of Europe and, above all, the German market, which was damaged by the Thirty Years War (1618-1648).⁴³ In this period, Venice certainly suffered the effects of losing its primacy in the spice trade. This was a direct consequence of the definitive stabilization of the trade routes that circumnavigated Africa and The Cape of Good Hope by the English and the Dutch. The greater competition from the French, English and Dutch merchants brought about, furthermore, a reduction of trading spaces within the Mediterranean and especially in the Levant.⁴⁴

The decline in arrivals of silk from Aleppo was drastic: in 1597 imports had reached 174 tons, in 1605 they fell to 52 tons, in 1613 to 37 tons, to then remain stagnant at these levels until the 17th century.

These trades, however, cannot be considered fully representative of the evolution of the businesses of the *Serenissima* in the Levant. If we move from the Adriatic to Livorno, we again find an analogous decline.⁴⁵

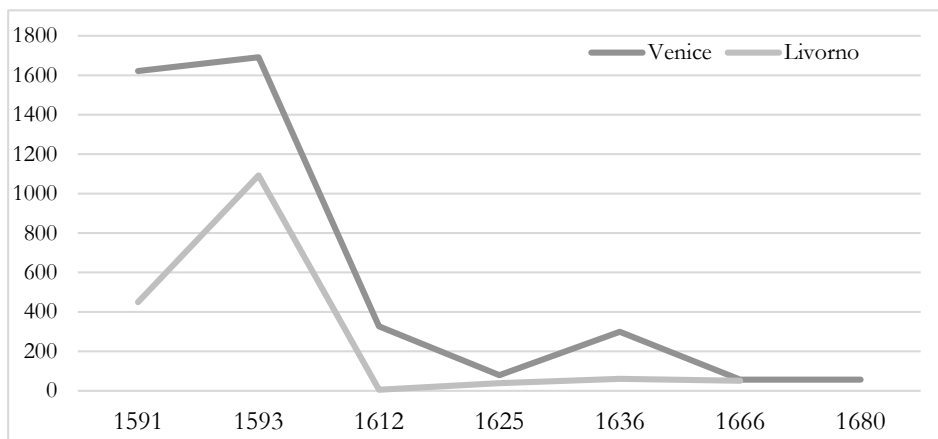
⁴² The market of Aleppo alone took in over 6,000 pieces of fine wool cloths and 70,000 pieces of Venetian silk. D. SELLA, *Commerci e industrie*, cit., p. 13.

⁴³ F. C. LANE, *Storia di Venice*, Turin 1978, pp. 465-487.

⁴⁴ O. L. BARKAN, *Le déclin de Venise dans ses rapports avec la décadence économique de l'Empire Ottoman*, in *Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica Venicena nel secolo XVII*, Conference proceedings June 27 – July 2 1957, Venice 1961, pp. 275-279.

⁴⁵ Graphic 6.

Graph 6. Silk imports from Syria, 1591-1680



Sources: F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises*, cit., p. 43-44; D. SELLA, *Commerci e industrie*, cit., pp. 110-113; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 231-281.

At the end of the 16th century, Aleppo was the largest trade market of the Levant.⁴⁶ Its fortunes were tied to its trade with Persia, from where the silk headed to Venice and Livorno came.⁴⁷

The connections with the Orient were assured by the caravans that passed through the plains as far as Mosul, then followed the route of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to Baghdad.⁴⁸

During the lengthy conflicts between the Turks and the Persians (1589-1628) these trails became ever less secure: the recurrent passage of the troops heading to Persia from Aleppo caused increasing alarm to the merchants, while Baghdad, a hub of fundamental importance in trade with Central Asia and the Far East, was unsettled by the frequent armed encounters, passing into the hands of one army or the other, alternately.⁴⁹ The continuation of the conflict and the consequent climate of tension had strong repercussions on the Syrian ports, and the trade in Persian silk was further damaged by the increase of import taxes imposed by the Ottoman Empire. When the conflict finally ended, and Baghdad was definitively conquered by the Turks, trade with Persia took place with greater tranquillity once again.

In the meantime, however, the caravan routes had moved further North, over the roads leading to Smyrna. Furthermore, as a result of the agreements signed by Persia with Holland and England, silk also began to be sent towards the Indian

⁴⁶ F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà e imperi del Mediterraneo nell'età di Filippo II*, I-II, Turin 1986, I, pp. 608-609 e P. MASSON, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVII^e siècle*, Paris 1896, p. 371.

⁴⁷ P. MASSON, *Histoire du commerce français*, cit., p. 378.

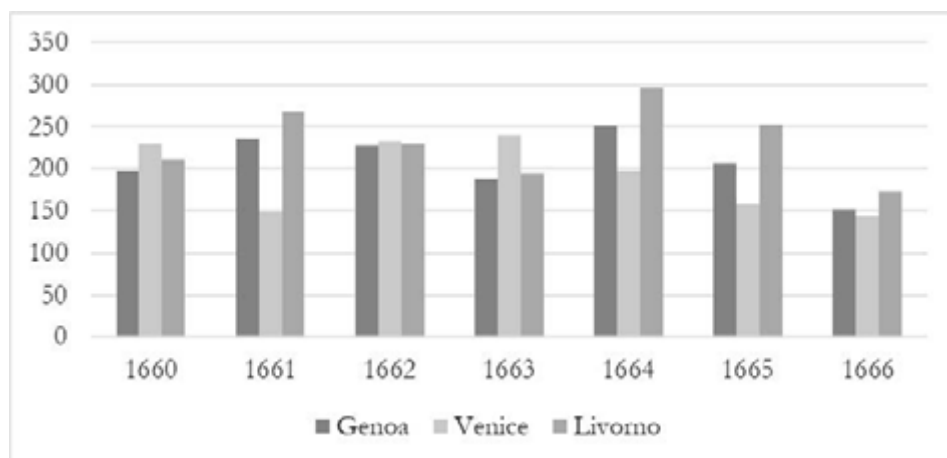
⁴⁸ Another route existed, which crossed the desert and led directly to Baghdad. This trail could only be taken once a year, after the rainy season, when the wells were full. R. PARIS, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, V, *De 1660 à 1789. Le Levant*, Paris 1957, p. 419.

⁴⁹ P. MASSON, *Histoire du commerce français*, cit., pp. 372-273.

Ocean, in exchange for drugs and spices.⁵⁰ Consequently, in the 17th century, trade between Aleppo and the West slowed down.

Most representative of Venice's port activity in the 17th century is a document from the *libri di costituiti*, kept by the *Ufficio dei provveditori alla sanità*. It indicates the number and the origin of the ships arriving in the port of Venice between 1st March 1660 and February 28th, 1667.⁵¹ The levels of incoming traffic to the Adriatic port are similar to those recorded, during the same period, for Genoa and Livorno: from the Eastern Mediterranean 291 merchant ships, principally originating from Constantinople and Smyrna (31% of the total) arrived in Venice. Traffic from the Levant accounted for 18% of the incoming port trade, a lower volume compared to that recorded in Livorno, where in the same time-span 461 merchant ships originating from the Levant (28% of the total) were recorded.

Graph 7. Merchant ships arriving in Genoa, Venice and Livorno, 1660-1666

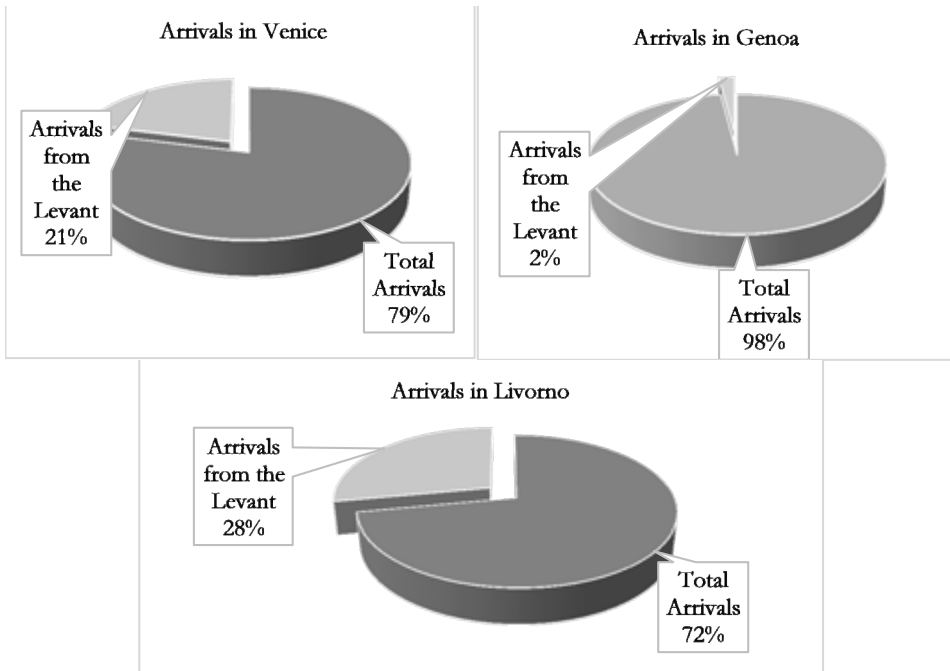


Sources: E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., pp. 593-638; ASFi, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 210-220; ASVE, *Senato mar*, 575, Scrittura dei 5 savi alla mercanzia, 11 giugno 1670.

⁵⁰ P. MASSON, *Histoire du commerce français*, cit., p. 373.

⁵¹ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI VENEZIA (ASVE), *Senato mar*, 575.

Graph 8. Merchant ships arriving in Venice, Genova and Livorno, 1660-1666



Sources: E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., pp. 593-638; ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 210-220; ASVE, *Senato mar*, 575, Scrittura dei 5 savi alla mercanzia, giugno 1670.

Limited to the period between 1658 and 1661, sources also provide some quantitative data concerning the merchandise which was effectively unloaded in Venice.⁵² In the mid-1600s, Venice imported close to 22,500 tons of merchandise from the Levant (Dalmatia, Balkan regions, Greek islands, Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt), Livorno only 4,800 tons.

This data is only apparently surprising. In reality, it reflects the different roles played by the two ports in Mediterranean trading. Livorno essentially proved to be an international port for storage and exchange. The Northern merchant ships, which guaranteed most of its connections with Anatolia, Syria and Egypt, used Livorno as a midway stopover on longer voyages headed towards the Atlantic, where they carried the larger part of their cargoes.

Venice was not only a great emporium, that is, a place of intermediation in exchanges. In the 17th century it was still an active industrial center, capable of providing for its own trade network. In this exchange system, the regions of the Levant certainly had an important role, mainly because they were able to furnish

⁵² Table 7.

many of the raw materials necessary to the manufacturers in Venice and on the Venetian mainland.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the 17th century international trade underwent progressive changes following the expansion of the Atlantic trade network, and the definitive assertion of the fleets of the United Provinces and England. In particular, the intensification of the routes circumnavigating Africa, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, allowed the Dutch and English to establish and consolidate direct contacts with the merchants of the Far East. This marked the inevitable decline of the role of intermediaries, held for centuries by the merchants of Venice and Genoa. The arrival of spices of Atlantic origin did not mean, however, the decline of the trade in the Mediterranean. According to the estimates of Ludwig Beutin, in 1634 the total amount of tonnage of the ships of the United Provinces engaged in the Mediterranean represented approximately one twelfth of the total volume of their entire merchant fleet and it was double that of the fleets involved in business with the East Indies.⁵³ Between 1663-1669, 48% of London's exports and re-exports were headed towards the Mediterranean. The quota destined for North America, the West and East Indies, was just 9%.⁵⁴

As has been seen, the Atlantic ships had an important role in the port business of Genoa, though it was Livorno that gained greater advantages from their growing presence along the routes leading to Constantinople and Smyrna. Thanks to its port structures and its customs regulations, but also thanks to its geographical position, Livorno was able to consolidate its position in the network of great trade traffic between the Atlantic, the Italian peninsula and the Levant.

Nevertheless, in the mid-1600s, it was again Venice that attracted greater imports from the Ottoman countries. In the period 1658-1661, despite the negative effects of the long war of Candia (1644-1669), imports from the Levant constituted 60% of incoming goods passing through the port's customs.

Domenico Sella has underlined the importance of Venetian imports of raw Egyptian sugar in the first half of the 1600s,⁵⁵ a *Nota dei colli e mercanzie capitate da Levante l'anno 1680* lists numerous other goods arriving from the *scale*.⁵⁶ Among these were, above all, leather;⁵⁷ *bufalini* from Egypt, *vaccini* from Constantinople, *cordovani* and *vacchette* from Smyrna; wax, cotton and *galla* from Syria; wool, linen,

⁵³ L. BEUTIN, *La decadence économique de Venise considérée du point de vue Nord-Européen*, in *Aspetti e cause*, cit., pp. 87-108, 92.

⁵⁴ C. WILSON, *England's Apprenticeship, 1603-1763*, London 1965, p. 162.

⁵⁵ D. SELLA, *Commerci e industrie*, cit., pp. 53-56.

⁵⁶ ASVE, *Senato mar*, 575, Scrittura dei 5 savi alla mercanzia, 11 giugno, 1670.

⁵⁷ The importance of leather in the *ancien régime* society was widely documented. J.H. PARRY, *Le vie dei trasporti e dei commerci*, in *Storia Economica di Cambridge*, IV, Turin 1975, pp. 178-252; D. SELLA, *Industrial raw materials in the import trade of northern and central Italy during the XVIIth century*, in "The Journal of European Economic History", 33, 2004, n.1, pp. 59-70.

zafferanone,⁵⁸ and ashes from Alexandria, used in the production of glass. Finally, it is important to indicate that the decline of business with the Indies did not signify a break in trades crossing the Red Sea at all. From the port of Moka in Yemen products from Arabia, such as medicinal drugs, perfumes, and most of all rubber, used in the preparation of fabric dyes, continued to reach Cairo and therefore the Mediterranean.

APPENDICES

Tab. 1. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving in Genova, 1537-1591

Years	Total arrivals	Arrivals from the Levant	Years	Total arrivals	Arrivals from the Levant
1537	23,777	667	1568	28,733	0
1538	24,301	572	1569	30,210	1,286
1539	28,781	858	1570	25,016	0
1541	27,828	1,239	1571	25,111	762
1543	35,928	667	1572	20,156	572
1544	30,639	1,048	1573	18,679	429
1545	22,348	0	1574	36,786	381
1546	24,683	1,763	1575	27,065	191
1548	37,929	2,382	1576	24,778	0
1550	21,871	8,910	1577	19,203	476
1551	22,681	10,197	1578	30,353	667
1552	32,307	13,008	1579	32,116	286
1553	42,075	1,239	1580	6,671	286
1554	37,119	3,002	1581	25,826	429
1556	33,927	3,526	1582	26,017	0
1557	23,253	3,145	1583	21,585	0
1558	26,446	8,100	1584	24,683	0
1559	37,262	2,764	1585	26,779	0
1560	25,683	667	1586	14,819	0
1562	19,346	95	1587	22,443	0
1563	27,637	858	1588	32,545	953
1564	30,639	572	1589	24,301	0
1565	19,727	0	1590	30,925	0
1566	21,585	572	1591	32,307	0
1567	27,065	0			

Source: E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., pp. 593-638.

⁵⁸ Extracted from a plant that only grew along the Nile shores, it was used in the textile industry to produce a range of colors such as bright red and pale pink.

Tab. 2. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving at Genoa and Livorno, 1612-1666

Years	Genoa	Livorno	Years	Genoa	Livorno
1612	42,894	31,570	1640	45,841	13,203
1613	41,166	32,418	1641	41,394	17,298
1614	46,499	20,448	1642	52,746	23,913
1615	39,118	23,283	1643	58,688	18,243
1616	30,920	21,393	1644	36,552	41,238
1617	39,564	24,543	1645	37,576	26,118
1618	59,421	26,748	1646	36,053	32,103
1619	79,682	47,223	1647	29,058	46,908
1620	90,896	53,523	1648	47,412	56,988
1621	60,782	33,048	1649	31,419	35,568
1622	47,728	35,883	1650	21,130	22,338
1623	44,100	20,448	1651	26,640	16,353
1624	43,797	30,528	1652	33,528	22,023
1625	31,298	31,158	1653	30,274	24,228
1626	41,857	37,458	1654	42,568	35,568
1627	31,785	42,498	1655	53,999	48,483
1628	38,199	42,813	1656	41,391	33,993
1629	59,327	39,348	1657	9,283	64,548
1630	71,412	42,813	1658	16,107	67,698
1631	49,526	38,403	1659	20,281	36,828
1632	69,770	23,598	1660	24,788	52,578
1633	74,571	8,163	1661	32,145	39,978
1634	62,933	9,738	1662	30,595	59,193
1635	60,077	12,258	1663	24,895	52,893
1636	55,497	13,833	1664	37,306	49,428
1637	46,943	13,518	1665	28,837	48,163
1638	50,486	10,683	1666	18,905	23,203
1639	50,103	18,243			

Sources: ASF1, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 136-225; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 19-111; E. GRENDI, *I Nordici*, cit., pp. 65-66.

Tab. 3. Tonnage of merchant ships arriving at Genoa and Livorno from the Levant, 1658-1666

Years	Genoa		Livorno	
	tons	% of total arrivals	tons	% of total arrivals
1658	672	4.17	20,307	29.99
1659	1,270	6.26	14,332	38.91
1660	766	3.09	15,435	29.35
1661	1,239	3.85	17,955	44.91
1662	325	1.06	19,320	32.63
1663	630	2.53	19,708	37.26
1664	1,008	2.70	19,316	39.07
1665	1,533	5.31	12,415	25.77
1666	0	0	6,296	27.13
Total	7,443	3.18	145,084	33.74

Sources: ASF, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 209-225; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196; E. GRENDI, *I Nordici*, cit., p. 70.

Tab. 4. Merchant ships arriving at Livorno from the Levant, 1573-1666

Years	Arrivals	Years	Arrivals	Years	Arrivals
1573	5	1610		1647	68
1574	5	1611		1648	44
1575	2	1612	20	1649	30
1576	1	1613	9	1650	29
1577	3	1614	14	1651	19
1578	3	1615	31	1652	43
1579	4	1616	26	1653	62
1580	1	1617	26	1654	38
1581	2	1618	17	1655	47
1582	2	1619	7	1656	30
1583	3	1620	21	1657	35
1584	2	1621	24	1658	73
1585	0	1622	30	1659	48
1586	0	1623	16	1660	54
1587	0	1624	24	1661	57
1588	0	1625	14	1662	68
1589	0	1626	43	1663	74
1590	3	1627	32	1664	72
1591	0	1628	51	1665	75
1592	1	1629	56	1666	73
1593	1	1630	77	1651	19
1594		1631	64	1652	43
1595		1632	21	1653	62
1596		1633	16	1654	38
1597		1634	28	1655	47
1598		1635	23	1656	30
1599		1636	29	1657	35
1600		1637	38	1658	73
1601		1638	45	1659	48
1602		1639	55	1660	54
1603		1640	38	1661	57
1604		1641	37	1662	68
1605		1642	35	1663	74
1606		1643	20	1664	72
1607		1644	43	1665	79
1608		1645	32	1666	57
1609		1646	45		

Source: F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises*, cit., pp. 43-44; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196; ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 209-225.

Tab. 5. Silk imports from Syria, 1591-1680 (tons)

Years	Venice	Livorno
1591	1,622.00	450.00
1593	1,692.00	1,093.00
1612	327.60	6.06
1625	80.00	39.27
1636	300.00	60.61
1666	57.00	51.10
1680	57.00	0.00

Sources: F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises*, cit., p. 43-44; D. SELLA, *Commerci e industrie*, cit., pp. 110-113; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 231-281.

Tab. 6. Merchant ships arriving in Genoa, Venice and Livorno, 1660-1666

Years	Genoa		Venice		Livorno	
	Total arrivals	Arrivals from the Levant	Total arrivals	Arrivals from the Levant	Total arrivals	Arrivals from the Levant
1660	197	4	230	45	211	54
1661	236	5	149	40	267	57
1662	228	3	232	47	229	68
1663	188	3	240	43	195	74
1664	251	4	198	46	296	72
1665	207	7	157	32	252	79
1666	151	0	144	38	173	57
Total	1,458	26	1,350	291	1,623	461

Sources: E. GRENDI, *Traffico portuale*, cit., pp. 593-638; ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 210-220; ASVE, *Senato mar*, 575, Scrittura dei 5 savì alla mercanzia, giugno 1670.

Tab. 7. Imports from the Levant, 1658-1661 (tons)

Years	Goods shipped to Venice	Goods shipped to Livorno
1658	5,564.51	1,799.82
1659	6,061.65	1,405.83
1660	5,341.84	603.41
1661	5,557.67	1,011.35
Total	22,525.67	4,820.41

Sources: ASFI, *Ufficiali di Sanità*, 210-220; R. GHEZZI, *Livorno e il mondo islamico*, cit., pp. 115-196; ASVE, *Senato mar*, 575, Scrittura dei 5 savì alla mercanzia, 11 giugno, 1670.

Helmut Rizzolli, Federico Pigozzo

*Economic and Social Aspects of the Trade
of Luxury Goods between Africa and Europe: Ostrich Feathers**

In Europe, from the mid-thirteenth century, iconographic sources testify to the use of ostrich feathers for the decoration of military headgear as a representation of the high lineage and military virtues of the possessor. At that time, it was customary for armoured knights, to place a crest of various types at the top of their metal helmet, some of these were created from the wings of birds of prey adorned with feathers from peacocks or other local birds, or with the more exotic ostrich feathers. A fine example of a crest of this type can be admired in the manuscript of the *Annali genovesi* by Caffaro which is preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France: a knight wears a “Topfhelm” on his head which is decorated with a small stuffed bird whose tail is made of white feathers which are longer than the helmet itself and which probably came from an ostrich.¹ This identification seems more certain in the illustrations of knights in the *Chansonier* from the second half of the thirteenth century which is preserved in the same library² or in the French manuscript *Li livre des ansienes estoires* dated around 1285, preserved in the British Library.³ Finally, it is most certainly an ostrich feather that adorns the helmet of a knight in the *Roman de Tristan* written in Arras at the end of the thirteenth Century.⁴

There is multiple evidence of the use of ostrich feathers in the fourteenth century. Between 1307 and 1342, Charles Robert of Anjou, king of Hungary, commissioned the making of a silver coin bearing on one side, a helmet topped with an ostrich head with two long feathers on either side. Edward the English Plantagenet Prince, the Black Prince, was customary to use three ostrich feathers in his coat of arms and during the period when he was Duke of Aquitaine (1362-1372) he commissioned the making of a gold coin (*pavillion*) which portrayed him standing, surrounded by four long feathers placed on typical cartouches bearing the German

* Translated by Roseann Dignall (BA Hons, LTCL), ESOL teacher at Centro Linguistico di Ateneo, University “Ca Foscari” of Venice.

¹ BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE (BNF), *Latin*, 10136 (B), c. 141v. The participation of around thirty different hands show that this text was drafted over a period of time ranging from the late twelfth century to the late thirteenth. It is therefore difficult to accurately date the miniature described here (*Annali genovesi di Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori dal MXCIX al MCCXCIII*, ed. L. T. BELGRANO, Genoa 1890, pp. XXIV-XXVII).

² BNF, *Français*, 844, *Chansonier*, c. 49v.

³ BRITISH LIBRARY, *Additional*, 15268, cc. 81v, 103r.

⁴ BNF, *Français*, 776, c. 154r.

motto “Ich dien” (I serve). In 1368, the Duke of Savoy, Amadeus VI purchased eight ostrich feathers for his own helmet in view of his participation in a tournament organized by the Viscount of Milan⁵ and in May 1386, Lord of Verona, Antonio della Scala, carried 200 ostrich feathers with him which were to donate to the best fighters of the huge army that was about to attack the enemy city of Padua.⁶

The raw material for the decoration of military headgear was made available thanks to Mediterranean commercial networks. During the Middle Ages large regions of North Africa, Syria and the Euphrate valley were populated by a subspecies of the ostrich, the *Struthio camelus syriacus*, characterized by its smaller dimensions in comparison with its Central African relatives and which became extinct in the mid-twentieth century.⁷ This variety still appeared to be widely spread in Egypt and in the Arabian Peninsula during the fourteenth century⁸ and its presence is recorded by Christian travellers, such as the Italian pilgrim Leonardo Frescobaldi⁹ or by Muslims, such as the Moroccan explorer Ibn Battuta.¹⁰ The larger subspecies *Struthio camelus camelus*, more appreciated for the length of the feathers, was widespread in vast areas of the regions south of the Sahara desert, from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans. This species still exists today despite having suffered a progressive and severe reduction of its population.¹¹

THE TRANSPORT ROUTES FROM AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN PORTS TO NORTHERN EUROPE

The large white ostrich feathers, much appreciated in Europe, were torn from male specimens, while the greyish feathers of the females were less used. These reached the Mediterranean ports through three main commercial routes.

Although the medieval chronicles report ostrich specimens in Morocco and in the Algerian highlands,¹² the most consistent western supply came from caravans that crossed the Sahara heading north, touching the towns of Agadez (Niger), Ghat

⁵ L. CIBARIO, *Della economia politica del Medio Evo*, Turin 1839, p. 563.

⁶ G.M. VARANINI, *La crisi decisiva della signora scaligera. Esercito e società nella guerra contro Padova*, in *La guerra scaligero-carrarese e la battaglia del Castagnaro (1387)*, G.M. VARANINI and F. BIANCHI eds., Vicenza 2015, pp. 59-91.

⁷ T.J. ROBINSON, C.A. MATTHEE, *Molecular genetic relationships of the extinct ostrich, Struthio camelus syriacus: consequences for ostrich introductions into Saudi Arabia*, in “Animal Conservation”, 2, 1999, n. 3, pp. 165-171.

⁸ N. MANLIUS, *The ostrich in Egypt: past and present*, in “Journal of Biogeography”, 28, 2001, n. 8, pp. 945-953.

⁹ LIONARDO DI NICCOLÒ FRESCOBALDI, *Viaggio in Terrasanta*, in *Pellegrini scrittori. Viaggiatori toscani del Trecento in Terrasanta*, A. LANZA, M. TRONCARELLI eds., Florence 1990, pp. 189, 191.

¹⁰ I. BATTUTA, *Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, ed. H. A. R. GIBB, London 1929, p. 107.

¹¹ J.-M. THIOLLAY, *Severe decline of large birds in the Northern Sahel of West Africa: a long-term assessment*, in “Bird Conservation International”, 16, 2006, pp. 353-365.

¹² M. LOMBARD, *La chasse et les produits de la chasse dans le monde musulman (VIII^e-XI^e siècle)*, in “Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations”, 24, 1969, n. 3, pp. 572-593, 578-579.

(Libya), Ghadames (Libya) and which converged mainly at the port of Tunis.¹³ Other western supply routes followed the Atlantic coast or reached Sijilmassa and Tahert, then passed the Atlas Mountains and replenished the numerous ports of the current Algerian coast¹⁴.

From here the feathers were sold by the Aragonese merchants, who transported boxes full of feathers to the island of Mallorca or to the Spanish ports.¹⁵ Sometimes the feathers reached the main Italian ports through direct imports, such as the transfer route from Susa (Tunisia) to Genoa operated in 1470 by Giovanni Gregorio Stella¹⁶ or the trade between the various ports of the “Barberia” and the Pisan Port, which in 1460 were subject to an import tax of 4%.¹⁷

A second important route crossed Egypt and, exploiting the course of the Nile, linked the capture areas of the ostriches which were in the current regions of Sudan and the Horn of Africa to the large commercial city of Cairo¹⁸. From here, the feathers were taken to the port of Alexandria, where they replenished the western galleys: a Venetian commercial *tariffa* which already existed in the fifteenth century, offers precise indications on the importation of feathers from Egypt detailing wholesale prices and tares useful for the determination of the toll duties.¹⁹

The third supply route departed from the Horn of Africa, circumnavigated the Arabian Peninsula and through the Persian Gulf entered into the Euphrates delta to reach the commercial city of Basra. From there, the caravans steered away from the usual caravan tracks and headed to Aleppo, a logistic hub of primary importance

¹³ M. PRAX, *Commerce de l'Algérie avec la Mecque et le Sudan*, in “Revue de l'Orient et de l'Algérie: bulletin de la Société orientale”, 5, 1849, pp. 337-348; M. ABITBOL, *Le Maroc et le commerce transsaharien du XVII^e au début du XIX^e siècle*, in “Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée”, 30, 1980, pp. 5-19.

¹⁴ I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Datini, Majorque et le Maghreb (14^e-15^e siècles). Réseaux, espaces méditerranéens et stratégies marchandes*, Leyde 2013, pp. 224-231.

¹⁵ M.D. LÓPEZ PÉREZ, *La Corona de Aragón y el Magreb en el siglo XIV: 1331-1410*, Barcelona 1995, pp. 365, 525; I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Le commerce des plumes d'autruche de l'Afrique subsaharienne aux marchés européens (fin XIV^e-début XV^e siècle)*, in *Le commerce du luxe: production, exposition et circulation des objets précieux du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, N. COQUERY, A. BONNET eds., Paris 2015., pp. 16-26.

¹⁶ R. URBANI, *Ricerche d'archivio nei rapporti tra Genova ed il Nord-Africa alla fine del Quattrocento*, in *Ricerche d'archivio e studi storici in onore di Giorgio Costamagna*, Rome 1974, pp. 139-145, doc. 4, 144-145.

¹⁷ *Traité de paix et de commerce, et documents divers concernant les relations des Chrétiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique septentrionale au moyen-âge*, ed. L. DE MAS LATRIE, Paris 1866, pp. 334-335; M. AMARI, *I diplomi arabi del R. archivio fiorentino: testo originale con la traduzione letterale e illustrazioni*, Florence 1867, doc. IX, pp. 66-67.

¹⁸ A. DAVID, *The Mercantile Activity of Avraham Colon in Sixteenth-Century Egypt*, in “Pe'amim”, 51, 1992, pp. 107-123; IDEM, *The Role of Egyptian Jews in Sixteenth-Century International Trade with Europe: A Chapter in Social-Economic Integration in the Middle East*, in “From a sacred source”: *genizah studies in honour of Stefan C. Reif*, B. OUTHWAITE, S. BHAYRO eds., Leiden-Boston 2011, pp. 117-118.

¹⁹ A. SOPRACASA, *Venezia e l'Egitto alla fine del Medioevo. Le tariffe di Alessandria*, Alessandria 2003, *Tariffa Arimondo*, p. 439, II.16.

towards the Mediterranean:²⁰ from Syria, the feathers were then traded at the port of Tripoli and finally reached Venice by sea via Cyprus.²¹

The supply routes were not always feasible due to war or to the presence of commercial restrictions. On the western route, for example, the obstacles set up by Aragonese merchants against foreign commercial competition often forced Italian economic operators not to take supplies directly from African ports, but instead to use Spanish intermediation: so the Tuscan merchants had to set up a base in Mallorca to obtain the feathers they sold to Italy or France,²² while the Lombard merchants had to go to Valencia to supply the port of Genoa.²³ In Venice too, the prolonged interruption of galley navigation to Syria and Egypt may have provoked the temporary rarefaction of feathers. Lorenzo da Pavia writes in a letter from April 1501: “*I have searched the whole of Venice without success for it has been 3 years that the Galleys do not sail.*” (*ò cercato tuta Venecia in modo che non se ne trova perché l'è 3 anj che le galee non àno navegado*).²⁴ At that time the Venetian authorities encouraged multiple supply channels, attempting to intercept even the supplies coming from Maghreb through the Tyrrhenian Sea: a shipment of feathers organised by the Datini company from Mallorca to Venice was noted in 1396²⁵ and in the sixteenth century the import duty on feathers imported from the Venetian mainland was even five times lower than those arriving from Alexandria.²⁶

The logistical hub ports of Majorca, Genoa and Venice constituted both the points of destination for African exports and the points of origin of the supplies to the Northern European markets. Between 1397 and 1401 agents of the Tuscan Datini company supplied their Tuscan partners established in Bruges from Mallorca,²⁷ while the port of London was supplied with ostrich feathers in 1470 by Baldassarre Squarciafico, and in 1484 by Enrico Camilla and Geronimo Salvago all from Genoa.²⁸ Even Bartolomero di Pasi's *tariffa*, which was published in Venice in 1503 but is in reference to the situation in place at the end of the fifteenth century, mentions ostrich feathers as one of the most sought-after goods in Bruges and Antwerp, thus advising exportation with the annual convoy of Muda.²⁹ In 1516, individual English merchants had dozens of feathers on the London Bridge.³⁰

²⁰ *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, H. İNALCIK, D. QUATAERT eds., New York 1994, p. 340.

²¹ *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien Andrea Berengo (1553-1556)*, ed. U. TUCCI, Paris 1957, pp. 266.

²² I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Datini, Majorque et le Maghreb*, cit., pp. 222-223.

²³ P. MAINONI, *Mercanti lombardi tra Barcellona e Valenza nel basso Medioevo*, Bologna 1982, pp. 65-66, 74-75, 114, 132.

²⁴ *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia. Documents for the History of Art and Culture in Renaissance Mantua*, C.M. BROWN, A.M. LORENZONI eds., Genève 1982, doc. 37, p. 54.

²⁵ I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Datini, Majorque et le Maghreb*, cit., p. 501.

²⁶ ALESSANDRO MOROSINI, *Tariffa del pagamento di tutti i daci di Venetia*, Venice 1525, pp. 9 e 27.

²⁷ I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Datini, Majorque et le Maghreb*, cit., p. 223, note 178, pp. 521-522, 525.

²⁸ A. NICOLINI, *Commercio marittimo genovese in Inghilterra nel Medioevo (1280-1495)*, in “Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria”, 121, 2007, n. 1, pp. 215-328, 281-282.

²⁹ BARTOLOMEO DI PASI, *Tariffa de pexi e mesure. Con gratia et privilegio*, Venezia 1503, pp. Hi-Hii.

³⁰ *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, ed. J. S. BREWER, II/II, London 1864, *Revel Accounts n. 9*, p. 1509.

It is certainly more difficult to reconstruct the terrestrial trading routes: in the early decades of the fifteenth century, Lombard merchants, established in Savona Nicola da Montiglio and his brother Francesco used the port of Genoa for their supplies of ostrich feathers purchased in Valencia, as did Giovanni da Corteregina, an agent of the Milanese merchant Antonio Rabia, for shipments from Valencia to Milan.³¹ Venice obviously supplied its nearest Italian regions as demonstrated by a commercial transaction with Padua from 1401³² or the correspondence from the 15th-16th century between the marquises of Mantua with their procurators in the lagoon city³³. However, there is evidence that the Venetian market also supplied regions north of the Alps: purchases of feathers in Venice are testified to in the fifteenth-century account books of the dukes of Austria³⁴ and in the letters of Albrecht Durer to his friend Willibald Pirckheimer of Nuremberg.³⁵ The *Tariffa oder Uncostbüchlein von allen Waren in Venedig*, published in Frankfurt in 1572, explicitly cites ostrich feathers among the goods that the German merchants could find in Venice.³⁶ Instead, from Antwerp the feathers travelled south towards Cologne, as evidenced by the letters of the Ravensburg merchant Hans Hillenson from the early 16th century.³⁷

FEATURES OF THE RAW MATERIALS AND MARKETING METHODS

Due to the extreme delicacy of the feathers, it is unlikely that the birds were killed during bloody hunts with dog packs and lances, as was a customary practice in Europe and depicted in the engravings of Antonio Tempesta, for this would risk the precious goods for export getting broken or stained by blood in an irreparable way. As some images of the early twentieth century show, animals could be caught without the shedding of blood and tied at the legs to prevent escape or defensive jumps.

³¹ P. MAINONI, *Mercanti lombardi tra Barcellona e Valencia*, cit., pp. 65-66, 74-75.

³² F. PIGOZZO, *Appunti sul commercio veneziano di piume di struzzo fra medioevo e prima età moderna*, in "Archivio Veneto", ser. VI, 16, 2018, forthcoming.

³³ In 1496 Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, wrote to her attorney Giorgio Brognolo asking for both white and black pens (C. ZAFFANELLA, *Isabella d'Este e la moda del suo tempo*, in *Isabella d'Este. La primadonna del Rinascimento*, ed. D. BINI, Modena 2001, p. 217) and in 1501 another of her emissaries, Lorenzo da Pavia, complained about the scarcity of ostrich feathers on the Venetian market (*Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia*, cit., docc. 36-37, pp. 54-55). Then in 1593 Quattrocchio, the "pennecchiaro" of the Gonzaga court, exported as many as 900 large feathers from Venice to Mantua (M. SERMIDI, *Il carteggio tra Venezia e Mantova (1588-1612)*, Cinisello Balsamo 2003, doc. 206, p. 166).

³⁴ W. MALECZEK *Die Sachkultur am Hofe Herzog Sigismunds von Tirol († 1496)*, in *Adelige Sachkultur des spätmittelalters. Internationaler Kongress Krems an der Donau 22. bis 25. Sept. 1980*, Vienna 1982, p. 153.

³⁵ ALBRECHT DÜRER, *Schriften und Briefe*, ed. E. ULLMANN, Leipzig 1978, pp. 112-114, 118.

³⁶ *Tariffa Oder Uncostbüchlein, von allen Waren in Venedig: So auß und ein geführt mögen werden, durch Teutsche, und andere Nationen; Auch was breuch und Zoll in Venedig darinn gebraucht warden*, Nürnberg 1572, p. 47v.

³⁷ A. SCHULTE, *Geschichte der Großen Ravensburger Handelsgesellschaft 1380-1530*, II, Stuttgart-Berlin 1923, p. 218.

Once carefully plucked from the slaughtered animal, the feathers were collected in bundles³⁸ and inserted into wooden crates, as testified to in 1470 by a Genoese merchant in Sousse, Tunisia (*capsia una in qua erant plures matii plumarum strutii*).³⁹ The use of rigid enclosures was essential to prevent the breakage of the rachis or the tearing of the barbs during long journeys across the desert on the back of camels. For greater protection of the goods, there are accounts from the sixteenth century of the use of sheets of paper placed inside the boxes to divide the goods, (*governamele ben in cartta*).⁴⁰ In the large trading centres of the North African coast where the goods were still being sold wholesale, the product underwent an initial cleaning process, which was necessary to remove the accumulated sand and dirt (the feathers exported from Alexandria, for example, were *spazade*, meaning cleaned).⁴¹ The long transfers and the equally long storage periods put the feathers at risk as they could easily be attacked by moths⁴² or perish.⁴³

Before being sold for retail in European ports, the feathers were subjected to a more thorough washing process with warm water and soap this was essential to remove the dust and saltiness accumulated during the journey: in this way they regained their original shiny appearance. A high temperature wash would have removed the dirt more quickly, but would have irreparably damaged the feathers, causing their sale value to drop.⁴⁴

THE REVOLUTION OF COLOUR

Towards the end of the 14th century, iconographic sources begin to show traces of a revolution in the trade of ostrich feathers. In the Oratory of San Giorgio in Padua, between 1379 and 1384, Altichiero di Zevio depicted Saint George dressed in knight armour wearing a helmet decorated with a two-tone feather, red on the left half and white on the right. Other varieties of colour are illustrated in the

³⁸ *Maci due de pene de struzo* (*Quaderno di bordo di Giovanni Manzini prete notaio e cancelliere (1471-1484)*, ed. L. GRECO, Venice 1997, p. 59); *mazi dusento de pene de struzo* (*Traité de paix et de commerce*, cit., VII, *Republique de Venise*, doc. XXV, p. 269).

³⁹ R. URBANI, *Ricerche d'archivio nei rapporti tra Genova ed il Nord-Africa*, cit., doc. 4, p. 144.

⁴⁰ *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien Andrea Berengo (1553-1556)*, cit., doc. 99, p. 112.

⁴¹ A. SOPRACASA, *Venezia e l'Egitto alla fine del Medioevo*, cit., p. 439, II.16.

⁴² In a letter from Valencia to Mallorca, an agent from the Datini company asks a colleague to procure feathers "that they should be big and well thick and that they should not be camolate", that is, infested with moths (I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Le commerce des plumes d'autruche de l'Afrique*, cit., p. 25). In a chest of the Estense wardrobe in 1494, several ostrich feathers damaged by moths were found: "*Una capsia dipinta cum pene di struzo bianche et tincte de più colori et assai di tarmate et guaste*" (G. CAMPORI, *Raccolta di cataloghi ed inventarii inediti di quadri, disegni, bronzi, dorerie, smalti, medaglie, avorii, ecc. dal secolo XV al secolo XIX*, Modena 1870, doc. II, p. 33).

⁴³ In the correspondence of the German merchant Hans Hillenson of 1507, he complains of the failure to sell a cargo of feathers coming from Antwerp in Cologne, because the product is likely to have been damaged in storage (A. SCHULTE, *Geschichte der Großen Ravensburger Handelsgesellschaft*, cit., doc. 89, p. 446).

⁴⁴ M. SERMIDI, *Il carteggio tra Venezia e Mantova*, cit., doc. 310, p. 206.

miniatures of some manuscripts produced in the Lombard area, dated between the seventies and eighties of the fourteenth century. In a battle scene illustrated in the *Guiron le Courtois* in the *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, a knight is wearing a helmet decorated with a plume containing a green feather placed between two red feathers while another knight wears a typical *Topfhelm* on his head which is richly decorated with a plume containing a green feather placed between two blue feathers. Finally, there is also a knight without armour, wearing a *zuccotto* hat, which in the front part has an eye-catching red ostrich feather⁴⁵. Likewise, a manuscript on the Search for the Holy Grail, produced for the Visconti court around 1380, shows a knight wearing a long light-blue feather on his *Topfhelm*, while in another scene the hero Galaad is depicted wearing a helmet, on which stands a solemn composition of three plumes containing red feathers sometimes combined with either blue or green feathers⁴⁶. Within a very short time, during the late eighties, these decorations show a further enrichment with the composition of tricoloured plumes. The *Cronaca universale* of the *Universitätsbibliothek of Kassel*, written in Bavaria around 1385, illustrates a warrior wearing a small helmet adorned with white, red and black feathers, while in front of him another knight is depicted with a helmet decorated with two red feathers.⁴⁷

The presence of coloured feathers in these new iconographic models shows how rapidly the trend spread and how fast the commercial contacts between Mediterranean ports, Atlantic ports and Central Europe were. In fact, during the eighties of the fourteenth century, an elaborately decorated breviary was written in the Belgian abbey of Saint Bavone of Ghent which depicts a man in full-length armour wearing a helmet on which a long, red ostrich feather is attached. Other illustrated characters wear blue feathers on felt hats.⁴⁸ To give another example, a fresco from around the year 1400 in the church of San Procolo in Naturno, in the Tyrolean Alps, depicting *I Re Magi* shows a knight in armour with his head covered in a cloth cap, adorned on the front by a long two-tone feather, white on the left and red on the right, thus replicating the colouring technique used twenty years earlier in the Oratory of San Giorgio in Padua.

The early appearance of coloured feathers in the Northern Italian market is well documented by the correspondence of Tommaso di Giovanni, trade agent for the Datini company in Milan, who in 1396 communicated the arrival of 400 ostrich feathers from Brescia (*asa' belle e conpartite bene di cholore, co 150 bianche, 100 rose e resto s' nero e verde e azzurre e alchuna berettina conpartite*). The businessman wrote that as the city was by then overflowing with such a precious product, he advised that it should be exported in order to gain a profit: it was therefore decided that it should

⁴⁵ BNF, *Département des Manuscrits, Division occidentale, Nouvelle acquisition française*, 5243, cc. 38r, 55r, 65v.

⁴⁶ BNF, *Département des Manuscrits, Division occidentale, Français*, 343, cc. 8v, 26v, 49v.

⁴⁷ UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK OF KASSEL, 2° Ms. theol. 4, c. 46r.

⁴⁸ HARVARD UNIVERSITY, HOUGHTON LIBRARY, ms Lat. 267, cc. 64r, 195r, 333v.

be sent to Avignon for the French market.⁴⁹ The origin of Datini's supplies suggests that Venice was the place where the feathers were processed. A Venetian inventory of hats and bags from December 1, 1401 shows how common compositions with feathers which had undergone colouring were: Giovanni d'Andrea dai Veli, not an international merchant but a simple retailer, supplied a workshop in Padua with 42 large ostrich feathers and 69 medium-sized feathers, all of which had been coloured, as well as 44 small feathers and two bunches of damaged feathers.⁵⁰

The practice of colouring the feathers was quickly established and there remains trace of practical indications on the use of colourants in a 15th century Bolognese manual: here one is advised to immerse both sides of the feather in the colouring liquid and then to dry the feather. Repeating the procedure over and over again is advised in order to fix the colour.⁵¹

It is very important to underline the fact that the processing and modification from an aesthetic point of view of the feathers that was taking place in Venice gave rise to a new product which had a much greater commercial appeal to that of the more common untreated product. This permitted the Venetian merchants to resell feathers in the same areas that had supplied them in their natural state, in a wide range of colours, ranging from pink to yellow and from light blue to green: this is very well evidenced in the correspondence of Adrea Berengo in the mid-sixteenth century, where he requests his Venetian business partner to send coloured ostrich feathers to be sold in Aleppo.⁵²

THE ECONOMICS OF THE EXCHANGES AND DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TRADE OPERATORS ON THE OPPOSITE SHORES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Since ostrich feathers constituted a rare commodity, the written documentation that document the detail of their trade and allow the margins of profitability to be retraced are also rare. On short routes, for example from the port of Genoa to Milan, one could obtain a modest but relatively safe mark up: some German merchants in the early sixteenth century obtained an 11% gain on the sale of "*strusso federan*".⁵³ Although we have seen that in 1368 Amedeo VI of Savoy paid the beauty of two and a half florins for eight feathers to be put on his crest,⁵⁴ the

⁴⁹ *Milano fine Trecento. Il carteggio milanese dell'Archivio Datini di Prato*, ed. L. FRANGIONI, Florence 1994, I, doc. 460, pp. 333-334, doc. 472, pp. 346-348, doc. 488, pp. 363-364, doc. 490, pp. 364-365 e doc. 509, p. 380.

⁵⁰ F. PIGOZZO, *Appunti sul commercio veneziano di piume di struzzo*, cit..

⁵¹ M.P.H. MERRIFIELD, *Original Treatises: Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries on the Arts of Painting, in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems*, II, London 1849, cap. 176, p. 477; *Il Libro dei colori: segreti del secolo XV*, O. GUERRINI, C. RICCI eds., Bologna 1887, p. 149.

⁵² *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien Andrea Berengo*, cit., doc. 99, p. 112.

⁵³ A. SCHULTE, *Geschichte der Großen Ravensburger Handelsgesellschaft*, cit., doc. 45, p. 287.

⁵⁴ L. CIBARIO, *Della economia politica del Medio Evo*, cit., p. 563.

correspondence of the Milan branch of the Datini company from the late fourteenth century offers many more details on the then current prices. In a letter dated March 31, 1396, the agent Tommaso di Giovanni wrote that the coloured feathers imported from Brescia cost 32 *lire* per hundred, thus corresponding to 5 feathers a gold florin, but the Milan market was not willing to pay more than 25 *lire* per hundred, or 6 feathers a florin,⁵⁵ the same price documented in Venice in December 1401.⁵⁶ The same agent, urged by his head office to sell the goods anyway, on October 30, 1396, explained that the goods were not in demand in the city (*qui non nno quello spaccio credete*) and warned that to sell them by force (*a vollelle vendere quando non sono domandate*) meant that no more than one florin on average could be made for every 6.7-6.9 ostrich feathers. The agent's bitter conclusion was that a saturated market as was the one in Milan, was in danger of producing a loss-making trade (*ma qui, quando una cosa non chiesta e vollella pur vendere, si chomviene gittar via. Fate ora chome vi pare*)⁵⁷. In the summer of 1507, a similar situation occurred to the German merchant Hans Hillerson who bought 282 ostrich feathers at the price of 1 gold florin per *mass*⁵⁸ in Antwerp and sent them for sale to Cologne: here, however, the market price was only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a florin per *mass* and so the batch of feathers had to be sent back to Belgium.⁵⁹ Finally, in 1553, Namerio Varioti, a trade agent in Venice for a Jewish merchant, received 25% on the earnings but also paid back 25% of the losses on the sale of a batch of ostrich feathers from Egypt.⁶⁰ In all the cases examined, the margins of gain or loss on local routes, ranging to a few hundred kilometres, fluctuated within a range of between roughly 10% and 25%.

Of course, the percentage gain on long-distance exchanges were quite different. According to the so-called *Tariffa Arimondo* of the late fifteenth century with regards to the prices of goods in Alessandria, the white feather, which had already been cleaned (*spazada*) of the dirt of the desert, had a price ranging from three to four ducats, with a tare of 10% (*vuol valler 3 duc. in 4 e dässe 110 per C*).⁶¹ The uncoloured white feather, therefore, could be purchased in the African port at a cost which was four or five times lower than the sales price of the finished coloured product in Italy.

Finally, it should be considered that war events could drastically reduce the supply of feathers in the west, causing prices to rise significantly. For example, in November 1553, a few years after the conclusion of a long Venetian-Turkish war over the control of the Peloponnese peninsula, the Cairo merchant Giuda Castro sent a batch containing less than 50 kg of ostrich feathers to Venice⁶² valued at as

⁵⁵ *Milano fine Trecento. Il carteggio milanese dell'Archivio Datini*, cit., pp. 346-348, n. 472.

⁵⁶ F. PIGOZZO, *Appunti sul commercio veneziano di piume di struzzo*, cit..

⁵⁷ *Milano fine Trecento. Il carteggio milanese dell'Archivio Datini*, cit., pp. 430-431, n. 581.

⁵⁸ Weight units used in Germanic countries, corresponding to approximately 1.5 kg.

⁵⁹ A. SCHULTE, *Geschichte der Großen Ravensburger Handelsgesellschaft*, cit., doc. 89, p. 446.

⁶⁰ A. DAVID, *The Role of Egyptian Jews in Sixteenth-Century International Trade*, cit., p. 117.

⁶¹ A. SOPRACASA, *Venezia e l'Egitto alla fine del Medioevo*, cit., p. 439, II.16.

⁶² The total weight of the shipment is quantified in 104 *ratl*. The *ratl* was a measure of weight that varied from 300 to 450 gr (E. ASHTOR, *Levantine Weights and Standard Parcels: A Contribution to the Metrology of the Later Middle Ages*, in "Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies", 45, 1982,

much as 116 Venetian gold ducats and 20 Egyptian gold *maidini*.⁶³ Considering that the large white feathers of male ostriches today weigh between 80 and 100 grams,⁶⁴ it is possible to calculate with great approximation a unit price of uncoloured feathers of one ducato every 4 pieces, if not more.

Lastly, commercial partnerships and the use of intermediaries were important: at the end of the XIV century, the Florentines did not have a fleet of commercial ships as Venice did, they used the intermediation of the Aragonese merchants and above all of the Jewish merchants.⁶⁵ It has been calculated that the Mallorcan subsidiary of the Datini company received 45% of its supply of African feathers from Jews. In Egypt too, there is evidence of the important role played by Jewish merchants in sending ostrich feathers to the west. The *genizab* of Cairo has surrendered important evidence in this sense from the sixteenth century, as is clear from the correspondence of Abraham Colon or Giuda Castro.⁶⁶

CONCLUSIONS

As from the end of the 15th century, ostrich feathers began to become widely used in fashion in the European markets and ended up having the monopoly in decorations in male fashion. In Italy, ostrich feathers began to be used in the making of fans for the most refined noblewomen: in 1501 Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, was looking for black and white feathers in Venice to make a fan (*per fare uno ventaglio*)⁶⁷ and another fan with black feathers was present in the 1516 list of the treasures of the Duchess of Ferrara Lucrezia Borgia.⁶⁸

In European courts, feathers found a progressive use even in theatrical sets: this happened in 1501 in Ferrara, where the *Sala delle udienze* in the *Palazzo della Ragione* di Ercole I d'Este was reconverted into a theatre;⁶⁹ and it happened also in 1511 in England, where Henry VIII buys ostrich feathers for the staging of the traditional *Twelfth Night* celebration (which corresponds to the Epiphany).⁷⁰

Much more evident changes were seen in the Germanic world with the spread of the Basque beret fashion, which was positioned to fall softly on one side of the head. This new style of headgear was unable to support the ostrich feather in a straight position, as was the fashion during the Middle Ages so laying a decorative

n. 3, pp. 471-488, 472-473; W. HINZ, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte, Umgerechnet ins metrische System*, Leiden 1955, p. 29).

⁶³ A. DAVID, *The Role of Egyptian Jews in Sixteenth-Century International Trade*, cit., p. 117.

⁶⁴ Z. BRAND, S.W.P. CLOETE, *An exploratory analysis to determine the impact of fixed effects and to establish genetic parameters across six types of ostrich feathers*, in "South African Journal of Animal Science", 45, 2015, n. 1, pp. 20-29, tab.2 p. 25.

⁶⁵ I. HOUSSAYE MICHIEZI, *Le commerce des plumes d'autruche de l'Afrique*, cit., pp. 22-23.

⁶⁶ A. DAVID, *The Role of Egyptian Jews in Sixteenth-Century International Trade*, cit., pp. 116-118.

⁶⁷ *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Paria*, cit., p. 243.

⁶⁸ G. CAMPORI, *Raccolta di cataloghi ed inventarii inediti*, cit., doc. III, p. 36.

⁶⁹ F. CRUCIANI, C. FALLETTI, F. RUFFINI, *La sperimentazione a Ferrara negli anni di Ercole I e Ludovico Ariosto*, in "Teatro e Storia", 9, 1994, pp. 131-217, p. 144.

⁷⁰ *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, cit., *Revel Accounts n. 3*, p. 1497.

feather horizontally on the upper part of the headgear became popular. However, this was a bourgeois fashion, no longer a noble and military prerogative, and which soon moved from male to female headgear. The commemorative medals of Gaspar von Frundsberg and his wife Margherita Firmian in 1529 illustrate this new fashion, showing how feathers had now become the object of both male and female ornamentation. Margherita's wide-brimmed hat which has numerous white ostrich feathers, is very similar to the one depicted in the painting of "Judith with the head of Holofernes" by Lucas Cranach – *il vecchio*.

The new bourgeois fashion was affirmed and developed thanks to new supplies of feathers, coming not only from the caravan routes of Africa in the 16th century, but directly from the East or the Americas thanks to the new naval routes. Gradually the city shops were filled with ostrich plumes and feathers, but of a great variety of tropical American, African and Asian birds. These exotic feathers were no longer a product intended for a narrow male elite, but became a decorative object of common use even among women. The considerable change in the offer of plumage is clearly documented in Venice, one of the main sales hubs: in December 1549, in fact, the inventory of the Venetian comb workshop, "*Croce*" lists the incredible figure of over 7,000 various bird feathers of the most varied shapes, colours and sizes (*negre rize lavorade, folle lavorade, fine negre lavorade, grise lavorade, rize lavorade bianche, bianche lavorade, penachini bianchi lavoradi e infine penne de caravana*).⁷¹ In the same period the Venetian merchants could afford to produce coloured ostrich feathers no longer destined to decorate hats, but simply to be used as writing instruments (*mandame 4 pene de struxo da scriver*)⁷².

With the modern era, the medieval concept of ostrich feather as a representative object of knightly virtue, of nobility and courage in battle, has now disappeared and the decorative and aesthetic use of the feather now prevails over every ethical and symbolic consideration.

⁷¹ G.L. RESTELLO, *Spiegel und Toilettenutensilien in Venedig zur Zeit der Renaissance*, in "Italienische Forschungen", 1, 1906, pp. 187-387, doc. V, pp. 358-360.

⁷² *Lettres d'un marchand vénitien Andrea Berengo*, cit., doc. 99, p. 112.

Paolo Calcagno

*Attraverso la porta di Lisbona: i generi coloniali
volano del commercio luso-genovese tra XVII e XVIII secolo*

1. Una storiografia sedimentatasi negli ultimi decenni del secolo scorso – ormai da ritenersi superata – aveva descritto Genova come un porto decadente nel Mediterraneo dei secoli XVII e XVIII. Con le sue rielaborazioni statistiche, Edoardo Grendi aveva ravvisato una “coerenza recessiva” nel movimento portuale a partire dagli anni Trenta del Seicento (soltanto in parte mitigata da un leggero recupero nell’ultimo quarto del secolo)¹; mentre più apertamente Paola Massa aveva parlato per il Settecento di una “profonda decadenza economica della città”². Anche secondo Luigi Bulferetti e Claudio Costantini, che pure si erano ben documentati sull’attività del porto franco lungo il XVIII secolo, Genova e le sue Riviere in quel secolo avevano smarrito la loro vocazione marittima³. Invece uno storico “dilettante” come Giulio Giacchero non aveva ceduto alla tentazione di mettere a confronto i fasti della potenza coloniale tardo-medievale con la desolazione della Genova settecentesca⁴; ma l’assenza di un quadro teorico e interpretativo storiograficamente solido ne aveva compromesso l’autorevolezza. Il presente lavoro, sulla scia di altri studi che hanno riletto secondo nuove chiavi di lettura la storia della città e della sua élite mercantile⁵, intende soffermarsi su un altro aspetto della vita commerciale dello scalo genovese, finora trascurato e in grado di ribaltare i giudizi negativi cui abbiamo accennato: l’esistenza e il funzionamento di *network* capaci di porre in collegamento gli Oceani con il Mediterraneo, e di rimettere sul mercato i prodotti provenienti dalle colonie extra-europee, destinati a rivoluzionare i consumi dai vertici fino alle basi della società⁶.

¹ E. GRENDI, *Traffico e navi nel porto di Genova fra 1500 e 1700*, in IDEM, *La Repubblica aristocratica dei genovesi: politica, carità e commercio fra Cinque e Seicento*, Bologna 1987, pp. 345-349.

² P. MASSA, *Lineamenti di organizzazione economica in uno Stato pre-industriale: la Repubblica di Genova*, Genova 1995, p. 171.

³ L. BULFERETTI, C. COSTANTINI, *Industria e commercio in Liguria nell’età del Risorgimento*, Milano 1966.

⁴ G. GIACCHERO, *Economia e società del Settecento genovese*, Genova 1973.

⁵ Cfr. ad esempio L. LO BASSO, *Diaspora e armamento marittimo nelle strategie economiche dei genovesi nella seconda metà del XVII secolo: una storia globale*, in “Studi storici”, 56, 2015, pp. 137-156; da una prospettiva un po’ particolare, un analogo ripensamento del cliché tradizionale si può trovare in P. CALCAGNO, *Fraudes maritimes aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles: un voyage dans les sources génoises*, in “Cahiers de la Méditerranée”, 90, 2015, pp. 215-236.

⁶ Sull’argomento, il punto di partenza è senz’altro D. ROCHE, *Storia delle cose banali: la nascita del consumo in Occidente*, Roma 1999; ma si veda anche M. CARMAGNANI, *Le isole del lusso. Prodotti esotici, nuovi*

Tabacco e zucchero furono gli indiscussi protagonisti, nel nuovo sistema intercontinentale di scambi: agenti di transculturazione, elementi costitutivi di quel mondo globalizzato in cui le cose e le abitudini si spostano da una cultura all'altra diventando parte di quella di arrivo (e cambiandola profondamente)⁷, generarono grandi profitti per i mercanti mediterranei, stimolando la creazione di reti commerciali a lungo raggio. Il consumo di tabacco, a Genova, è documentato fin dai decenni a cavallo tra il XVI e il XVII secolo, ma è con il XVIII secolo che si generalizzò: “in oggi s'è talmente avanzato l'uso del tabacco sottile che vedesi comunemente praticato anco dalla più infima plebe”, ragionava il governo genovese alla fine della primavera 1720. La documentazione doganale – ampiamente utilizzata in questo lavoro – attesta una discreta presenza di tabacco sulle navi provenienti da Lisbona (il “tabacco brasiliano in corda” era una delle tipologie più diffuse in città); ma nel pieno Settecento le provenienze nordiche (Amsterdam, Dunkerque) presero il sopravvento, specie per quanto riguarda il tabacco “rapé”, destinato a diventare quello maggiormente consumato⁸. Attraverso la porta di Lisbona, invece, ad approdare nel Mediterraneo dalle piantagioni brasiliane era soprattutto lo zucchero, che a partire dai decenni finali del XVII secolo dilagò anche a Genova. Come si dirà meglio più avanti, già nel 1680 le navi più capienti in ingresso nel porto cittadino arrivavano dalla capitale del regno portoghese, cariche di zucchero per conto di alcuni dei principali negozianti locali. Questi traffici poggiavano su relazioni molto salde sull'asse Lisbona-Genova, che mettevano in collegamento l'Atlantico con i principali scali mediterranei, e che coinvolgevano anche operatori di altre piazze (nonché di altre confessioni religiose). In rapporto a quanto detto all'inizio a proposito della *vulgata* storiografica sull'economia marittima della Repubblica della piena età moderna, visto il rilievo quantitativo del tabacco e dello zucchero nel movimento portuale della Superba è plausibile affermare che questi prodotti non solo fecero da volano alle relazioni luso-genovesi, ma più in generale diedero una spinta decisiva alle attività commerciali e marittime, veri pilastri del sistema economico genovese ancora nel XVIII secolo.

Grazie alla forte produzione del Brasile (a cui si affiancò nel corso del Seicento quella delle Antille francesi e inglesi)⁹ lo zucchero – sul quale concentreremo

consumi e cultura economica europea, 1650-1800, Torino 2010, e da ultimo F. TRENTMANN, *L'impero delle cose. Come siamo diventati consumatori. Dal XV al XXI secolo*, Torino 2017.

⁷ T. BROOK, *Il cappello di Vermeer. Il Seicento e la nascita del mondo globalizzato*, Torino 2015, p. 135. «Merci globali», le ha definite Sebastian Conrad: *Storia globale*, Roma 2015, pp. 134-136. Si veda anche B.W. HIGMAN, *The Sugar Revolution*, in “The Economic History Review”, 53, 2000, n. 2, pp. 213-236.

⁸ P. CALCAGNO, L’*“Impresa generale del tabacco”*. *Come Genova provò a sfruttare a fini fiscali uno dei massimi processi di mondializzazione degli scambi tra XVII e XVIII secolo*, in “Nuova rivista storica”, CI, 2017, pp. 457-488; L. LO BASSO, *«La porte d'Italie». Marchandises coloniales et transculturation dans le port de Gênes au XVIII^e siècle: l'exemple du tabac*, in *Circulation, métissage et culture matérielle (XVI^e-XX^e siècles)*, a c. di M. FIGEAC, C. BOUNEAU, Parigi 2017, pp. 145-160. Si segnala l'uscita del volume di S. LEVATI, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, Roma 2017.

⁹ M. CARMAGNANI, *Le isole del lusso*, cit., pp. 153-169. La redditività dello zucchero delle colonie di Francia e Inghilterra dipendeva dall'adozione di nuove tecniche di coltivazione, dalla riduzione dei noli e dei premi delle assicurazioni marittime. Francesi e inglesi (e ovviamente olandesi) rifornivano in primo luogo il Nord Europa, dove le importazioni di zucchero aumentarono di dieci volte nel corso del XVIII secolo, ma naturalmente le loro navi ne portavano anche nel Mediterraneo. Sulla piazza di

l'attenzione in questo contributo – fu il primo genere a trasformarsi da bene di lusso in sostanza comune, e per certi versi in una “necessità fondamentale”¹⁰. In realtà l'origine della pianta era bengalese¹¹, e prima che gli europei impiantassero monoculture nel continente americano – scrivendo “un capitolo fondamentale della storia politica, economica e sociale”¹² – lo zucchero passò prima per l'Europa mediterranea attraverso gli arabi, e poi per le isole atlantiche di Madera, delle Azorre, delle Canarie, di São Tomé attraverso quei portoghesi che ne avrebbero per l'appunto determinato il grande *boom* della prima età moderna¹³.

Pertanto, Lisbona per i consumatori europei fu la porta dello zucchero fin dal XV secolo, quando si istituzionalizzò la rotta che univa quel porto alle coste occidentali dell'Africa e alle produttive isole dell'Atlantico; ma si aprì completamente alle città del Vecchio Continente nell'ultimo quarto del Cinquecento, quando si ebbe il primo grande sviluppo delle piantagioni brasiliane – con una produzione che decuplicò in pochi anni, e che superava di venti volte quella fissata un secolo prima dal governo portoghese per le anzidette isole¹⁴. Poi, tra 1650 e 1710, un nuovo grande balzo in avanti: da 4.000/5.000 a 25.000 tonnellate annue; e nel corso della prima metà del XVIII secolo un'altra quadruplicazione. Sarà proprio questa la fase della nostra osservazione: quella tra la “crescita straordinaria” seicentesca e l’“universalizzazione del suo consumo” nel corso del Settecento, che fa dello zucchero, come ha scritto Daniel Roche, “l'aliment totem des Lumières”¹⁵. Un incremento spettacolare legato anche al cambio della destinazione d'uso di questo genere, da prodotto di farmacia a derrata alimentare capace di sostituire gli altri dolcificanti¹⁶. Una “spezia araba” – per dirla ancora con Massimo Montanari – che entrò tardi in cucina, tra la fine del Medioevo e l'inizio dell'età moderna¹⁷,

Lisbona, a smistare zucchero verso i mari del Nord vi erano anche gli «amburghesi»: in una lettera del console veneziano dell'8 maggio 1722 leggiamo che “li zuccheri qui godono tuttavia l'esenzione de dritti fora del Regno, per il che li amburghesi continuano far grosse spedizioni” (ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI VENEZIA (ASV), *Cinque savi alla mercanzia*, prima serie, 694). Sulla “guerre du sucre” tra i portoghesi e i “nordici” vedi F. CROUZET, *La guerre économique franco-anglaise au XVIII^e siècle*, Parigi 2008.

¹⁰ S.W. MINTZ, *Storia dello zucchero. Tra politica e cultura*, Torino 1990, p. XXIV.

¹¹ Fernand Braudel ricorda che la canna era originaria della costa tra il delta del Gange e l'Assam (*Civiltà materiale, economia e capitalismo [secoli XV-XVIII]. Le strutture del quotidiano*, Torino 1982, p. 199).

¹² M. MONTANARI, *La fame e l'abbondanza. Storia dell'alimentazione in Europa*, Roma-Bari 2012, p. 150.

¹³ Prima ancora che in Europa, la canna era stata importata in Cina, dove venne acclimata fin dall'VIII secolo: ancora nel XVII secolo, gli olandesi della VOC compravano zucchero della zona del Kuang Tung, vicino Canton (F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà materiale, economia e capitalismo*, cit., p. 199).

¹⁴ C. FURTADO, *La formazione economica del Brasile. Un modello di storia economica*, Torino 1970, p. 73; ma si veda anche la chiara sintesi, più recente, di F. MORELLI, *Il mondo atlantico. Una storia senza confini (secoli XV-XIX)*, Roma 2013, pp. 82-92.

¹⁵ M. CARMAGNANI, *Le isole del lusso*, cit., pp. 157-158. L'aumento della produzione dello zucchero brasiliano fu mediamente del 2,4% annuo nei due secoli compresi tra il 1580 e il 1780 (M. FUSARO, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, Roma-Bari 2008, p. 64).

¹⁶ G. REBORA, *La civiltà della forchetta. Storie di cibi e di cucina*, Roma-Bari 1998, p. 127. Nel X secolo lo zucchero compariva nella farmacopea della Scuola salernitana.

¹⁷ M. MONTANARI, *La fame e l'abbondanza*, cit., pp. 149-150. Nel 1572 il cartografo Abramo Ortelio osservava che «lo zucchero un tempo era reperibile solo nelle botteghe dei farmacisti, che lo tenevano per i malati, [mentre] oggi lo si divora per ghiottoneria. Ciò che un tempo serviva da medicina, serve oggi da cibo».

candidandosi successivamente a diventare uno dei principali simboli della globalizzazione economica, complemento irrinunciabile degli altri prodotti esotici che genereranno la nuova cultura alimentare europea: tè, caffè, cioccolata.

2. Nel corso del XVII secolo, la riconfigurazione del Brasile all'interno del sistema imperiale portoghese ebbe delle ricadute sul ruolo di Lisbona, definendone la fisionomia di centro di raccolta e di smistamento dello zucchero in Europa¹⁸. Il maggiore produttore mondiale visse infatti una storia travagliata, nell'intermezzo asburgico della Corona portoghese e durante la cosiddetta *Restauração*: gli attacchi olandesi, che portarono alla perdita momentanea di Pernambuco (1630-1654) e all'occupazione di Luanda in Angola (la base principale del commercio degli schiavi che sorreggeva l'economia di piantagione), penalizzarono il porto lusitano¹⁹. Ma a partire dalla seconda metà del secolo fu proprio la grande colonia americana a riequilibrare la bilancia commerciale portoghese danneggiata dalla riduzione dei traffici con l'Asia, e a guadagnarsi in questo modo un'importanza sempre maggiore nell'economia atlantica in generale²⁰. Certamente la scoperta delle miniere d'oro e di diamanti costituì un avvenimento importante ai fini dell'inserimento del Brasile nei circuiti di scambio mondiali; ma se l'impero dei Braganza si presentava ancora nel XVIII secolo come "un sistema economico in grado di offrire buone opportunità di guadagno"²¹, ciò si doveva alla fortissima disponibilità dello zucchero delle piantagioni (e degli schiavi per coltivarle).

Il nuovo orientamento dei portoghesi verso Occidente si manifestò concretamente nel 1649, quando fu costituita la *Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil*²², con l'obiettivo di fornire aiuto militare alle navi che da Lisbona partivano verso le coste di Rio, Bahia e Pernambuco. Sorta sotto forma di società anonima per azioni cui potevano accedere sia i sudditi della Corona sia gli stranieri (con una partecipazione minima di 20 *crúzados*), attirò subito l'attenzione della qualificata "nazione" genovese residente nella capitale lusitana. Come vedremo dettagliatamente più avanti, una compagnia di soci originari di Genova partecipò alle attività della *Companhia* fin dalla sua fondazione; ma l'interesse dei genovesi per lo zucchero risaliva per la verità al

¹⁸ Come ha segnalato recentemente Daniel Strum, molto zucchero brasiliano di contrabbando raggiungeva però anche Amsterdam senza toccare i porti portoghesi (*O comércio do açúcar. Brasil, Portugal e Países Baixos [1595-1630]*, Rio de Janeiro 2012).

¹⁹ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo: reti commerciali e strategie politico-diplomatiche (1650-1700)*, in "Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche", 28, 2013, p. 300 (con bibliografia in nota). Come sottolineano le due autrici di questo saggio, quello che va dal 1668 ai primi anni del XVIII secolo rappresentò un periodo complesso della storia portoghese, durante il quale le difficoltà interne dovute alla recente indipendenza dalla Spagna e i conflitti esterni combattuti nei territori extraeuropei resero difficile la normalizzazione del nuovo regime dei Braganza (cfr. anche C.A. HANSON, *Economy and Society in Baroque Portugal: 1668-1703*, Minneapolis 1981).

²⁰ F. MAURO, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII^e siècle (1570-1670). Étude économique*, Parigi 1960; da ultimo, *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion (1400-1800)*, a c. di F. BETHENCOURT, D. CURTO, New York 2007. Federica Morelli ha affermato che «a partire dalla metà del Seicento il Brasile divenne il centro degli interessi portoghesi», vero «nucleo strategico dell'impero lusitano» (*Il mondo atlantico*, cit., p. 86).

²¹ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., pp. 317-318.

²² Lo studio più importante su questa compagnia è quello di L. FREIRE COSTA, *O transporte no Atlântico e a Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil (1580-1683)*, Lisbona 2002.

Medioevo (quando ancora la produzione americana non era stata avviata): la storia degli insediamenti europei nelle Canarie fu dominata dagli abitanti della Superba, e a Madera essi continuarono ad operare anche quando divenne portoghese attraverso le naturalizzazioni²³. In seguito, la materializzazione del “grande affare” brasiliano non passò sottotraccia: “la presenza genovese a Lisbona assu[n]se una particolare forza nella sua espansione atlantica, principalmente legata alla produzione e al commercio dello zucchero”²⁴. La scelta degli operatori della città ligure fu precisa: mantenersi ai margini del grande commercio che passava dal Capo di Buona Speranza, concentrandosi invece su uno dei maggiori affari della nuova economia globale; d'altronde, uno dei grandi progetti del ceto di governo patrizio, a metà del XVII secolo, quello della *Compagnia marittima di San Giorgio*, mirerà proprio a inserirsi nella rotta verso il Brasile²⁵.

Dai tempi di Emanuele Pessagno²⁶, a Lisbona era insediata una cospicua colonia genovese dalle spiccate doti marinesche. Con l'inizio dell'età moderna, il ruolo dei suoi membri si fece via via più decisivo: come già da tempo facevano in Spagna, essi si misero a prestare denaro ai reali e ad acquisire titoli di debito pubblico della Corona portoghese (*i tenças*); al tempo stesso, li si trovava a gestire banchi di cambio e ad amministrare le dogane²⁷. Era una presenza stabile, visto che partecipavano attivamente alla vita delle confraternite della chiesa “italiana” di Nostra Signora di Loreto²⁸ e si sposavano con donne del luogo – instaurando alle volte rapporti molto stretti con la corte, fino a diventare *fidalgos* della Casa Reale e commendatori dell'Ordine di Cristo²⁹.

Quella dei genovesi era la colonia italiana più importante, all'interno del tessuto socio-economico di Lisbona, e si rafforzò ulteriormente nel corso della “monarchia duale” (cioè dell'incorporazione del Portogallo nei domini degli Asburgo di Spagna)³⁰, fino a imporre la propria supremazia sui milanesi e sui fiorentini, i quali avevano partecipato dall'inizio e con successo al nuovo commercio di lungo corso con le Indie orientali³¹. In particolare, nel “secolo delle compagnie” (il XVII), i mercanti

²³ G. REBORA, *La civiltà della forchetta*, cit., pp. 125-126. Nel XV secolo un ramo della famiglia Lomellini si trasferì nell'isola di Madera, arricchendosi considerevolmente (N. ALESSANDRINI, *La presenza genovese a Lisbona negli anni dell'unione delle Corone [1580-1640]*, in *Genova y la Monarquía Hispánica [1528-1713]*, a c. di M. HERRERO SÁNCHEZ, Y. ROCÍO BEN YESSEF GARFÍA, C. BITOSI, D. PUNCUH, Genova 2011, p. 75).

²⁴ Ancora N. ALESSANDRINI, *La presenza genovese a Lisbona negli anni dell'unione delle Corone*, cit., p. 75.

²⁵ LO BASSO, *Diaspora e armamento marittimo*, cit., pp. 141-142.

²⁶ Esempio precoce di navigatore globale, capace di spingersi a bordo delle sue galee fino al Mar Nero da una parte e all'Inghilterra dall'altra, all'inizio del XIV secolo venne insignito dal re Dionigi di Portogallo del titolo di ammiraglio del mare.

²⁷ N. ALESSANDRINI, *La presenza genovese a Lisbona negli anni dell'unione delle Corone*, cit., *passim*.

²⁸ Sarà proprio un genovese, Antonio Maria Ferrari, a donare 6.200 lire per la ricostruzione della chiesa dopo l'incendio del marzo 1651.

²⁹ È il caso di Antonio Maria Conti Ventimiglia, il quale ebbe in sposa Antonia de Miranda.

³⁰ N. ALESSANDRINI, *Vida, história e negócios dos mercadores italianos no Portugal dos Filipes*, in *Portugal na Monarquia Hispánica. Dinâmicas de integração e conflito*, a c. di P. CARDIM, L. FREIRE COSTA, M. SOARES DA CUNHA, Lisbona 2013, pp. 107-134.

³¹ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., p. 307.

della Superba misero in atto progetti ambiziosi, sull'asse Portogallo-Liguria: all'inizio degli anni Quaranta i fratelli Bartolomeo e Giovanni Battista Laviosa, insieme al citato Antonio Maria Conti Ventimiglia, inviavano zucchero e spezie verso Genova al loro agente comune Pelegro Peretti³²; e a far parte della *Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil* con un investimento di 3.000 *crúzados* da 400 *reis* entrò da subito la società, tutta genovese, composta Gio. Gerolamo Gheresi, Nicolò Micone e Francesco Andrea Carrega³³. Per garantire la regolarità dei viaggi verso il Brasile, i genovesi fornirono anche navi alla *Companhia* lusitana, che a statuto aveva previsto l'armamento di 36 navi di grossa portata, e l'organizzazione di due convogli annuali di 18 navi ciascuno, ma che alla prova dei fatti patì una cronica sottocapitalizzazione³⁴: nel 1651 due navi genovesi parteciparono alla spedizione della “frota do açúcar”; nell'ottobre 1654 entrarono in porto a Lisbona quattro galeoni noleggiati da Stefano Pallavicino³⁵; e nel 1669, a Cesare Gheresi fu concesso di mandare in qualunque porto del Brasile la sua nave *Bom Jesus e S. Antonio* con il capitano Antonio Vaz Quaresma e farla ritornare “fora do corpo da frota e Armada do comboj ao tempo que lhe bem estiver com a carga de assucares e mais fazenda que lhe parecer”.

3. Proprio i nomi delle navi e dei loro capitani, nonché quelli dei mercanti che ricevettero la merce a Genova, permettono di ricostruire almeno in parte la fitta rete di contatti, taluni a base familiare, che tenevano in piedi uno dei principali traffici mondiali dell'epoca. Gli studi di Nunziatella Alessandrini hanno mostrato che dopo la sospensione della compagnia Gheresi-Micone-Carrega, nel 1665 se ne formò un'altra in cui Gio. Gerolamo Gheresi venne sostituito dai fratelli Cesare e Gio. Tomaso Gheresi, i quali si servivano – tra le altre – della nave *Nostra Signora di Loreto* (non a caso lo stesso nome della chiesa degli italiani a Lisbona), comandata da Gio. Agostino Germano³⁶. Dalle indagini condotte sul libro mastro della famiglia Carrega risulta che nel 1680 a Genova vennero fatte arrivare partite di zucchero da Lisbona attraverso la nuova società (di cui faceva ancora parte Nicolò Carrega) e che a trasportare la merce era stata proprio la *Nostra Signora di Loreto* del Germano³⁷.

³² N. ALESSANDRINI, *La presenza genovese a Lisbona negli anni dell'unione delle Corone*, cit., p. 92.

³³ Vedi in particolare IDEM, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII: elementi di commercio globale*, in “Storia economica”, XVIII, 2015, n. 2, pp. 275-298. Nicolò Micone presentò un'istanza alla Corona perché gli italiani che erano entrati a far parte della *Companhia* godessero degli stessi privilegi degli operatori portoghesi, e in particolare perché gli agenti della compagnia Gheresi-Micone-Carrega potessero restare in Brasile fintantoché le merci là inviate fossero state interamente vendute.

³⁴ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., p. 305.

³⁵ L. FREIRE COSTA, *Genoveses nas rotas do açúcar: a intromissão em exclusivos colonias portuguesas (c. 1650)*, in *Genova y la Monarquía Hispánica*, cit., pp. 915-932.

³⁶ N. ALESSANDRINI, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII*, cit., p. 283; N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., p. 306.

³⁷ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI GENOVA (ASG), *Manoscritti*, Famiglia Carrega, 884. Ad inviare lo zucchero da Lisbona (5 casse “di più qualità” pagate lire 2.780) furono per la precisione Cesare e Gio. Tomaso Gheresi. La *Nostra Signora di Loreto* era solita trasportare merce anche al ritorno, dal porto di Genova alla capitale lusitana: nel 1665 e nel 1676 sono documentati due viaggi con calze di seta da uomo, calze di seta da donna, corallo, balle di seta grezza e altro ancora (N. ALESSANDRINI, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII*, cit., pp. 287-288). Quanto a Gio. Agostino Germano, un

Una nave capace di coprire l'intera rotta di questo commercio tra Atlantico e Mediterraneo, se nel 1670 Cesare Gherzi ricevette per essa la stessa autorizzazione ottenuta un anno prima per la *Bom Jesus e S. Antonio*³⁸.

Se un Germano comandava una delle navi dello zucchero di fine XVII secolo, dei Germano spesso ne erano acquirenti nel porto della Superba, a configurare non solo delle convergenze societarie di carattere familiare tra Lisbona e Genova, ma pure delle polifunzionalità all'interno di famiglie mercantili che si occupavano alternativamente di armamento, trasporti, commercio. Dal registro della *venuta magna* di Occidente, risulta che nel 1680 la nave con il carico più consistente fu quella di Anton Maffei proveniente da Lisbona³⁹, e tra i compratori dello zucchero che trasportava figurano Gio. Antonio e Felice Germano, a cui andarono 24 casse. Ma la lunga lista dei mercanti che a Genova aspettavano l'arrivo della nave ci fornisce altre indicazioni importanti, ai fini della ricostruzione dei *network* che gestivano questi traffici: 5 casse vennero comprate da Gio. Enrico e Francesco Maria Carrega; 2 casse vennero registrate in conto di una società Micone e Olivieri⁴⁰; e quantitativi di tutto rispetto (rispettivamente 11 e 36 casse) furono acquistate da due membri della famiglia Cambiaso – Sebastiano e Gio. Maria – la quale qualche decennio più avanti sarà indicata dal console genovese a Lisbona come una delle “quattro o cinque case” dei “principali della nazione”⁴¹. Due altre corrispondenze di questo tipo, tra opera-

coevo di primo piano quale Carlo Targa, autore di un importante trattato sulla contrattualistica marittima, lo tratteggiava come il paradigma del perfetto capitano, “nostro nazionale, non mai abbastanza lodato” (cfr. L. LO BASSO, *Gente di bordo. La vita quotidiana dei marittimi genovesi nel XVIII secolo*, Roma 2016, pp. 69-70).

³⁸ Si veda: N. ALESSANDRINI, *Consoli genovesi a Lisbona (1650-1700 ca.)*, in *Los cónsules de extranjeros en la Edad Moderna y a principio de la Edad Contemporánea*, a c. di M. HERRERO-SÁNCHEZ, M. AGLIETTI, Madrid 2013, pp. 201-211.

³⁹ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389. Le importazioni, all'interno dei registri doganali del porto di Genova, si differenziano per *venuta Occidente* e *venuta Oriente* e per *venuta magna* (imbarcazioni di grande tonnellaggio) e *venuta parva* (imbarcazioni di piccolo cabotaggio). I registri sono conservati nel fondo del Banco di San Giorgio, l'ente che a Genova e nel territorio della Repubblica riscuoteva i dazi sui traffici commerciali. Su questa istituzione sui generis all'interno del panorama istituzionale genovese, vedi G. FELLONI, *'A profile of Genoa's "Casa di San Giorgio", a turning point in the history of credit*, in “Rivista di storia economica”, 23, 2010, pp. 335-346; da ultimo, una lettura originale del Banco come un antecedente medievale delle *corporations* dell'età moderna è contenuta in C. TAVIANI, *La Casa de San Giorgio de Génova y las orígenes de las corporations europeas en la edad moderna*, in *Républica y republicanismo en la Europa moderna (siglos XVI-XVIII)*, a c. di M. HERRERO-SÁNCHEZ, Madrid 2017, pp. 507-527.

⁴⁰ Degli “Eredi Miconi” sono registrati anche in un altro elenco, quello dei mercanti che riesportarono lo zucchero arrivato a Genova a bordo di una nave il 2 maggio 1712 (ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715; ma vedi anche più avanti). Nunziatella Alessandrini sostiene che Nicolò Micone, da Lisbona, corrispondesse a Genova con il fratello Bartolomeo e i nipoti Gio. Batta e Nicolò; mentre il socio di Francesco Maria Carrega a Genova era un Tomaso (forse il titolare del libro mastro che abbiamo consultato per questo studio): in effetti Gio. Batta Micone si ritrova tra i mercanti che depositarono zucchero nel “rastello della seta” (“con beneficio del porto franco”) nel 1675 (ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 2).

⁴¹ ASG, *Archivio segreto*, Lisbona, lettere consoli, 2659. Lettera del 28 maggio 1737. Altri membri della famiglia (“Gio Andrea Cambiaso e figli”) vennero richiamati dalla Casa di San Giorgio in quanto proprietari di tre casse di zucchero che nel 1727 avevano “superato il termine del periodo stabilito dal regolamento in vigore per beneficiare del porto franco” (ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 52). Stesso discorso vale per i Mongiardino: “Lazaro Mongiardino e figli” erano particolarmente attivi

tori presenti a Lisbona e acquirenti a Genova, riguardano i Ravara e i Castro. La prima famiglia replicava lo schema organizzativo dei Germano: dalla documentazione dell'archivio della "chiesa degli italiani" sappiamo che un Pietro Francesco Ravara arrivò nel 1669 a Lisbona e sposò la figlia del medico del re⁴²; mentre se ci spostiamo a Genova troviamo Carlo Giuseppe Ravara tra i mercanti che comprano zucchero dalla nave di capitano Maffei nel 1680 (4 casse), e soprattutto possiamo rintracciare una nave di capitano Bartolomeo Ravara in ingresso in porto il 2 maggio 1712, proveniente da Lisbona e carica – come sempre accadeva, tra XVII e XVIII – di zucchero⁴³. Quanto ai secondi, se alla metà degli anni Settanta del XVII secolo provveditore della chiesa di Nostra Signora di Loreto era Gio. Tomaso de Castro, genovese⁴⁴, a Genova altri Castro risultano aver ricevuto zucchero sia nel 1680 (Gio. Andrea e Gio. Batta, ben 53 casse), sia nel 1712 (Nicolò Maria, il quale riesportò la merce verso Napoli e Ancona)⁴⁵.

Gheri, Micone, Carrega, Germano, Cambiaso, Mongiardino, Ravara, Castro⁴⁶. Incrociando informazioni a disposizione sull'attività dei genovesi sulle due piazze è possibile individuare alcuni esempi di "società familiari", accomunate dal territorio di origine inteso come comunità di appartenenza, e per le quali i legami di sangue costituivano una risorsa preziosa per la conduzione degli affari e la circolazione di informazioni, esperienze, *know-how*⁴⁷. D'altra parte, la documentazione doganale dell'Archivio di Stato di Genova svela i nomi di altre famiglie di mercanti coinvolte in maniera sistematica nel commercio dello zucchero. Nel 1680, Nicolò Canepa si ritrova una prima volta nel libro mastro Carrega per aver venduto zucchero per un valore di 85:10 lire da riesportare verso Piacenza⁴⁸, e successivamente a chiedere uno sconto doganale alla Casa di San Giorgio per tre casse che erano giunte a bordo della nave *Città olandese* e che avevano subito un'avaria durante il viaggio ("resta-

a Lisbona negli anni Trenta del Settecento, ma già nel marzo 1708 un Nicolò Mongiardino comprò nel porto ligure zucchero scaricato dalle navi *Castagna* e *Città di Genova* (ASG, *Archivio segreto*, Lisbona, lettere consoli, 2659; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 401/5).

⁴² N. ALESSANDRINI, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII*, cit., p. 284.

⁴³ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715. Un Gio. Batta Ravara è indicato tra i mercanti genovesi a Lisbona di maggior spicco nella citata lettera consolare del 28 maggio 1737.

⁴⁴ N. ALESSANDRINI, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII*, cit., p. 290.

⁴⁵ Tra l'altro, lo zucchero riesportato ad Ancona partì da Genova a bordo dell'imbarcazione di un certo "patron Mongiardino": un'altra famiglia a dimostrarsi attiva in questi traffici a livello di compravendita e di trasporti.

⁴⁶ Per completare l'elenco andrebbero aggiunti gli Olivieri, che nel 1680 risultavano in società con i Micone sulla piazza di Genova (vedi sopra), e che il console genovese a Lisbona menzionava nel 1737 tra le "case" mercantili principali, in società con i D'Andrea (ASG, *Archivio segreto*, Lisbona, lettere consoli, 2659). Le informazioni scritte dal rappresentante consolare della Repubblica scaturivano dalla richiesta dei Collegi di governo di sensibilizzare i più facoltosi cittadini residenti nella capitale portoghese in vista delle "rilevanti spese" per "la prossima canonizzazione della beata Cattarina da Genova protettrice della Serenissima Repubblica, [...] non meno in Roma ch'in codesta Dominante".

⁴⁷ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., p. 310.

⁴⁸ ASG, *Manoscritti*, Famiglia Carrega, 884.

no bagnate dall'acqua salsa e per tal caosa mal conditionate")⁴⁹. Gio. Francesco Marana si assicurò 36 delle casse giunte a Genova con capitano Maffei nel 1680; e in una "nota" dello zucchero introdotto tra il novembre 1706 e il marzo 1708 è presente un'apposita sezione dedicata a questa famiglia (le altre due sezioni sono occupate dalle registrazioni relative ai Germano – di nuovo! – e ai Lagomarsino)⁵⁰. Altri operatori implicati in prima linea in questi traffici erano i Labaino, i Geirola e i De Ferrari: nei primi due casi vi sono riscontri e corrispondenze tra la registrazione dei proprietari dello zucchero introdotto nel 1675 nel "rastello della seta" e quella degli acquirenti della nave di capitano Maffei giunta in porto cinque anni dopo⁵¹; mentre un Desiderio De Ferrari fece entrare anch'egli una cassa nel rastello della seta nel 1675, e nel maggio 1679 chiese di essere esentato dalle spese doganali per 2 casse giunte "quasi intieramente bagnate dall'acqua marina" a bordo della nave del capitano francese Chivier⁵². Infine non vanno dimenticati i "fratelli Rivera", i quali acquistarono zucchero – per riesportarlo in Lombardia – da entrambe le navi in ingresso nel porto di Genova il 2 maggio 1712: quella di Bartolomeo Ravara e quella di Gio. Lorenzo Viviano (due dei maggiori capitani dell'epoca)⁵³.

Tra i più "longevi", invece, sicuramente vanno annoverati i Celesia: un Gio. Batta Celesia comprò 5 casse da capitano Maffei nel 1680 e inviò dello zucchero a Roma attraverso il patrone Restano nel 1712; un Paolo, nel 1766 risultava proprietario di 15 casse custodite nel "portofranco degli zuccheri", arrivate qualche tempo prima "da Lisbona con nave Speranza"⁵⁴. Altre famiglie molto attive, tra commercio e navigazione, furono i Prasca, con la nave di capitano Benedetto *Nostra Signora di Buon Hore* giunta a Genova il 4 luglio 1701 con alcune casse di zucchero per il "parente" Giacomo Filippo⁵⁵; e gli Assereto, con Carlo, che nel 1675 fece passare per il rastello della seta tre casse di zucchero, e con un capitano di cui non è precisato il nome di battesimo che nel 1712 ne caricò una certa quantità di quello sbarcato dalla nave di Bartolomeo Ravara per condurlo in Sicilia⁵⁶. Niente affatto improvvisata, nel comprare e movimentare la preziosa merce brasiliana, anche una delle principali

⁴⁹ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 36, 2880.

⁵⁰ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 401/5.

⁵¹ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 2.

⁵² ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 2; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 36, 2880.

⁵³ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715. Fra coloro che comprarono zucchero giunto a bordo di entrambe le navi figura anche il mercante (tedesco?) Antonio Brauer. Una trentina d'anni prima di quella di Gio. Lorenzo, navigò da Lisbona a Genova la nave di Gio. Giacomo Viviano, che nel 1680 trasportò zucchero per conto di vari mercanti, tra cui i "soliti" Gio. Antonio e Felice Germano e un Gio. Nicolò Marana (ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389).

⁵⁴ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 14. Oltre a Celesia, tenevano parecchie casse di zucchero in portofranco negli anni 1766-1767 anche Antonio Maria Alizeri, Antonio Recco, Gio. Batta Gervasone, Gio. Batta Rossi, Gio. Francesco Bacigalupo e la società Rolandelli-Basso. È opportuno ricordare che Lisbona, tra i porti atlantici, prevaleva ancora nettamente quanto a provenienza delle navi in ingresso a Genova nel periodo 1781-1789 (L. BULFERETTI, C. COSTANTINI, *Industria e commercio in Liguria*, cit., p. 165).

⁵⁵ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1397. Altro zucchero giunto a Genova con la nave del Prasca fu acquistato da Felice e Giuseppe Germano e da Gio. Francesco Marana.

⁵⁶ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 2; *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715

società mercantili israelite della Genova settecentesca, la “Roses e Mineses”: da un elenco delle merci relativo agli anni 1728-1735, i membri di questa compagnia risultano tra i principali acquirenti di zucchero all'interno della loro comunità⁵⁷, e – al pari di Gio. Andrea Cambiaso e figli – nel 1727 vennero invitati da San Giorgio a recuperare il loro zucchero per la sopraggiunta scadenza del “termine del periodo stabilito dal regolamento in vigore per beneficiare del porto franco”⁵⁸.

Nel Mediterraneo delle barriere fluide, questo importante commercio generò dunque sinergie interculturali. Alle differenze confessionali, si sommarono talora quelle di carattere “nazionale”, come dimostra la storia dei genovesi e dei fiorentini a Lisbona. Questi ultimi avevano svolto un importante ruolo all'interno dell'economia portoghese fin dagli esordi extraeuropei, mettendo a disposizione i capitali per i viaggi di esplorazione e coordinando l'introduzione delle merci coloniali (spezie *in primis*) nei mercati europei⁵⁹. Nel corso del XVII secolo, la loro posizione di preminenza, sulla piazza di Lisbona, era stata scalfita proprio dalla dirimpiente ascesa della colonia genovese. Ma nella seconda metà del secolo una società composta da Francesco Pardini e Luigi Scarlatti era riuscita ad entrare all'interno della *Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil*, intrattenendo rapporti con i “colleghi” genovesi Gheresi-Micone-Carrega⁶⁰ – e i due fiorentini, già nell'agosto 1652, inviarono a Genova “per conto e rischio del signore Lazzaro Vigo genovese” 2 casse di zucchero⁶¹; altri mercanti della capitale granducale ad operare a stretto contatto con quelli della Superba furono i Ginori, attraverso una società gestita prima da Lorenzo e poi da Nicolò e Gio. Francesco⁶².

Complice lo strabiliante aumento della produzione, e la facilità con la quale il ceto mercantile locale lo introduceva in città, lo zucchero era ormai diventato un bene largamente diffuso tra la popolazione; ma all'interno dell'élite genovese il consumo continuava ad essere molto ampio (anche ai limiti dello spreco): dalla nave di Anton Maffei (1680) venne scaricato zucchero anche per il reverendo Gio. Stefano Fieschi come “procuratore della compagnia del Gesù”⁶³; e poco meno di dieci anni prima (1671) a Genova, al fastosissimo matrimonio tra Giovanni Andrea III Doria

⁵⁷ ASG, *Archivio segreto*, Hebreorum, 1391. Ringrazio Andrea Zappia per avermi gentilmente trasmesso i risultati delle sue elaborazioni su queste carte.

⁵⁸ Lo zucchero rimasto nello spazio del porto franco rappresentava il “resto di casse 24 venute da Lisbona con nave Campobello” (ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sale 37, 52). A proposito di ebrei e zucchero, è bene sapere che in Brasile era operante la più grande comunità sefardita del Nuovo Mondo (M. FUSARO, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, cit., p. 58).

⁵⁹ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., p. 296.

⁶⁰ N. ALESSANDRINI, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII*, cit., p. 289.

⁶¹ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Cancellieri, sala 35, 499. Il trasporto delle due casse di zucchero venne fatto sulla saettia *Santissima Trinità* di patron Giovanni Micone, di proprietà di Ansaldo Pallavicini (anche i Micone, dunque, erano mercanti operanti tra Lisbona e Genova e al contempo uomini di mare impegnati a collegare la lunga rotta che univa i due porti tra Atlantico e Mediterraneo).

⁶² N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., pp. 308 e sgg. Nel 1675 i Ginori scrissero da Lisbona al nobile genovese Francesco Maria Sauli col fine di velocizzare la partenza di una nave carica di merce.

⁶³ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389. Fieschi acquistò al contempo 5 “rolli” di tabacco, a dimostrazione ulteriore che il suo uso era dilagato tra il clero, non solo genovese (cfr. CALCAGNO, *L'Impresa generale del tabacco*, cit., specie pp. 472-475).

Landi ed Anna Pamphilj era possibile ammirare alcune sculture effimere realizzate con “finissimo e bianco zucchero: statue, aquile, e palombe di così vaga e natural forma fabbricate che l’arte di gran lunga superò la finezza della materia”⁶⁴. Lo stesso Giovanni Andrea, nell’aprile 1680, chiese ed ottenne la franchigia per 3.000 libbre di zucchero per “uso di sua casa”⁶⁵. Non si deve dimenticare, d’altra parte, che per quanto se ne fosse ormai imposto un utilizzo di tipo gastronomico, ancora nella piena età moderna lo zucchero continuò ad essere utilizzato anche come medicinale: fa riflettere il fatto che nel 1675 l’ospedale genovese di Pammattono disponesse di 14 casse di zucchero nel rastello della seta in regime di porto franco⁶⁶.

4. Se Lisbona era la porta dello zucchero proveniente dall’Atlantico, Genova fu sicuramente una delle protagoniste della sua riesportazione nel Mediterraneo⁶⁷. Dalle indicazioni che abbiamo già fornito, si è visto che dal porto della Superba la merce in arrivo dal Portogallo – qualora non fosse destinata al consumo interno – si dirigeva sia verso l’entroterra (Piacenza, Lombardia) sia verso altri porti tirrenici (Roma⁶⁸, Sicilia). Ma le fonti doganali – in particolare quelle relative agli spazi adibiti a porto franco – permettono di conoscere con maggior precisione il raggio della distribuzione genovese dello zucchero: la citata nave *Castagna* e la *San Francesco* di capitano Calcagno, in ingresso in porto nel marzo 1708, scaricarono casse che furono poi inviate in Lombardia, in Piemonte, a Viareggio, a Livorno, in Corsica, a Roma, a Cagliari, a Napoli, in Sicilia, ad Antibes, e all’interno del dominio territoriale a Savona, Pietra, Alassio, Sanremo, Chiavari, Sestri levante⁶⁹; i Marana, oltre alle destinazioni “usuali” di Savona, Antibes e Roma, riesportarono negli stessi anni zucchero verso Civitavecchia⁷⁰. Insomma, Genova seppe inserirsi benissimo nei traffici globali in espansione tra Sei e Settecento; e nell’ambito della circolazione mondiale dei beni coloniali provenienti dal Nuovo Mondo svolse il ruolo di “porta d’ingresso per buona parte degli Stati italiani e per una larga fetta del Mediterraneo Occidentale”⁷¹.

In questo quadro, occorre interrogarsi sulla posizione acquisita, nello stesso periodo e negli stessi traffici, dagli altri grandi scali portuali del Mediterraneo occidentale, parimenti incentivati da apposite regolamentazioni di porto franco. Per un confronto preciso avremmo bisogno di studi specifici e di ricognizioni incrociate in

⁶⁴ L. STAGNO, *Committenze artistiche per il matrimonio di Anna Pamphilj e Giovanni Andrea III Doria Landi (1671)*, in *The Pamphilj and the Arts: Patronage and Consumption in Baroque Rome*, a c. di S. LEONE, Chicago 2011, pp. 55-75.

⁶⁵ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 36, 2880.

⁶⁶ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 2.

⁶⁷ Per una comparazione, si veda il ruolo di redistribuzione nei mari del Nord svolto dal porto francese di Nantes (M. VILLERET, *Le goût de l’or blanc. Le sucre en France au XVIII^e siècle*, Rennes 2017).

⁶⁸ Già nel 1641, Antonio Maria Conti Ventimiglia fece partire da Lisbona due navi (la *Henderver* e la *Hendimion*) cariche di zucchero da vendere a Roma (N. ALESSANDRINI, *La presenza genovese a Lisbona negli anni dell’unione delle Corone*, cit., p. 92).

⁶⁹ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 37, 2715.

⁷⁰ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 401/5.

⁷¹ Applicato al tabacco e agli anni Sessanta del XVIII secolo fa un discorso analogo L. LO BASSO, «*La porte d’Italie*» cit.

diverse sedi archivistiche, ma sulla base di alcune prime annotazioni storiografiche è possibile avanzare qualche supposizione. Nei decenni a cavallo tra il XVII e il XVIII secolo, presi in esame in questa sede, Marsiglia non aveva forti contatti con Lisbona⁷². Il porto francese cominciò ad incrementare le importazioni di zucchero nel secondo quarto del Settecento, e il totale delle riesportazioni passò dal 46% nel 1728-1731 al 73% nel 1772-1775⁷³. “Marsiglia invade le aree mediterranee e gli Stati italiani” solo verso la fine dell'*ancien régime*: nel 1766 ben 6.000 tonnellate raggiunsero la penisola⁷⁴. “La grande ricchezza delle portate dei mercantili in provenienza da Lisbona” era già stata segnalata, nel loro studio sul porto di Livorno, da Fernand Braudel e Ruggiero Romano⁷⁵. Nell'ultimo ventennio del XVI secolo, per la verità, questo sistema di scambi era entrato in crisi, ma con l'inizio del XVII secolo i traffici tra il Portogallo e il porto toscano tornarono a rianimarsi – soprattutto per merito del naviglio nordico⁷⁶. Per lo zucchero, dopo aver guardato a lungo ad Alessandria d'Egitto, a partire dal 1650 i mercanti livornesi si rivolsero alla piazza lusitana; e l'arrivo a Livorno, in quegli stessi anni, dell'agente di Giovanni IV Pedro de Silva Enriques – il quale ricoprirà anche il ruolo di console della “nazione” portoghese – contribuirà a rafforzare i già avviati commerci di zucchero⁷⁷. Mancano informazioni precise sull'andamento dell'affare durante i decenni della crescita produttiva brasiliana tra Sei e Settecento, sennonché Jean Pierre Filippini ha scritto che nelle parti centrale e finale del XVIII secolo “il Portogallo [ricoprì] un ruolo molto secondario nell'attività del porto labronico”, con “scarse esportazioni” di pepe, vino e zucchero⁷⁸.

Non ci sono elementi sufficienti per affermare che Genova diresse da protagonista la distribuzione dello zucchero in Italia e nel bacino tirrenico nel momento di massima intensità del flusso dall'Atlantico; per adesso solo qualche indizio sembrerebbe indicare che questo ruolo di *pivot* del porto ligure si esprimesse compiutamente dopo una precedente parentesi livornese e una successiva parentesi marsigliese, non a caso in coincidenza con un forte rilancio della cantieristica pubblica e privata⁷⁹. Ancora a metà del XVIII secolo, a sentire un osservatore attento degli affari commerciali quale Carlo Ginori,⁸⁰ i genovesi “si son resi quasi proprio [padroni] delle

⁷² M. JANIN-THIVOS, *Les échanges du Portugal en Méditerranée au XVIII^e siècle vis de Marseille*, in *Le Portugal et la Méditerranée*, Lisbona-Parigi 2002, p.177-197.

⁷³ G. RAMBERT, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, Parigi 1959, pp. 389-391.

⁷⁴ M. CARMAGNANI, *Le isole del lusso*, cit., p. 164.

⁷⁵ F. BRAUDEL, R. ROMANO, *Navires et marchandises à l'entrée du port de Livourne: 1547-1611*, Parigi 1951.

⁷⁶ R. GHEZZI, *Il porto di Livorno e il commercio mediterraneo nel Seicento*, in *Livorno 1606-1806: luogo di incontro tra popoli e culture*, a c. di A. PROSPERI, Torino 2009, p. 328.

⁷⁷ F. ZAMORA RODRIGUEZ, “Nervo deste Reyno”. *La red europea de agentes de la Companhia Geral de Comércio do Brasil*, in “Topoi. Revista de História”, 36, 2017, pp. 666-689; IDEM, *La “pupilla dell'occhio della Toscana” y la posición hispanica en el Mediterráneo occidental (1677-1717)*, Madrid 2013, specie p. 44.

⁷⁸ J.P. FILIPPINI, *Il porto di Livorno e la Toscana (1676-1814)*, I-III, Napoli 1998, I, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁹ Cenni sull'argomento in L. LO BASSO, *La costruzione della nave “Nostra Signora dell'Apparizione e S. Pietro” (Savona, 1671-73)*, in *Saper fare. Studi di storia delle tecniche in area mediterranea*, Pisa 2004, pp. 85-125.

⁸⁰ Cfr. A. ALIMENTO, *Tra “gelosie” personale e “gelosie” tra gli Stati: i progetti del governatore Carlo Ginori e la circolazione della cultura economica europea e politica a Livorno (1747-1757)*, in “Nuovi Studi Livornesi”,

Spagne e di Portogallo, ove fanno delle loro manifatture [...] il maggior esito e ne ritraggono tutti i prodotti che dall'Indie ne porti de suddetti due Regni si asportano; onde è che raramente qui [a Livorno] veggionsi comparire i suddetti ricchi prodotti che consistono dal Portogallo in zuccheri, tabacchi del Brasile..."⁸¹. Di sicuro, quantunque la cabina di comando si trovasse a Genova, contrariamente da quanto affermato dalla storiografia tradizionale⁸² nella gestione di questi lucrosi traffici non c'era conflitto tra operatori genovesi e operatori livornesi, ma semmai collaborazione. Per il XVII secolo, sappiamo che gli stessi Ginori, in contatto con la società Ghersi-Micone-Carrega, utilizzavano a Lisbona navi genovesi per far arrivare mercanzie a Livorno (e per trasportarle da Livorno al Portogallo)⁸³; e l'agente Enriques sfruttò i suoi contatti con il console genovese Gavi "para el alquiler de naves genovesas con el objetivo de realizar el circuito Génova-Lisboa-Madeira-Rio de Janeiro-Bahia"⁸⁴. Ma più in generale le indicazioni contenute nei contratti di assicurazione marittima e in quelli di noleggio concedevano ai capitani in partenza dal porto lusitano la possibilità di toccare indistintamente Genova e Livorno⁸⁵: nel registro della *venuta magna di Occidente* del 1680 compare tra gli altri Johan Scolt "amborghese", il quale dichiarò di provenire da "Lisbona e Alicante" con la sua *Profeta Daniele*, scaricò diverse merci (oltre al solito zucchero, anche tabacco, "legno campuccio", indaco, cocciniglia ecc.) e denunciò ben 230 casse "per transito per Livorno"⁸⁶. E in quello spazio integrato alto-tirrenico, in cui i due porti seppero sviluppare una sorta di complementarità, capitava anche che lo zucchero arrivasse a Genova da Livorno: come ad esempio il 27 giugno 1707, quando il patron Leonardo Codevila ne scaricò una partita da riesportare in Piemonte e Lombardia⁸⁷.

La storia di Lisbona, "port of Two Seas"⁸⁸, è strettamente intrecciata a quella del Mediterraneo. Prima potenza coloniale, nel corso del XVI secolo rese accessibili i prezzi delle tanto agognate spezie asiatiche; e in seguito, quando si volse sempre

XVI, 2009, pp. 63-95. Membro di un'importante famiglia del patriziato fiorentino, Carlo era figlio del Lorenzo citato poco fa, attivo a Lisbona dove ricoprì anche la carica di console della "nazione" fiorentina (e poi trasferitosi a Livorno nel 1688 per svolgere il ruolo di provveditore della dogana).

⁸¹ ARCHIVIO GINORI LISCI, *Affari di governo*, 18. "Proposizioni sopra il commercio di Livorno col Regno di Portogallo", 7 luglio 1749. Ringrazio Luca Lo Basso per avermi segnalato questa preziosa documentazione.

⁸² Cfr. su tutti G. GIACCHERO, *Origini e sviluppo del porto franco genovese: 11 agosto 1590-9 ottobre 1778*, Genova 1972.

⁸³ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo*, cit., p. 315. Renato Ghezzi ha individuato diverse decine di navi genovesi sulla tratta Lisbona-Livorno già nella prima metà del XVII secolo – e si sorprende che Edoardo Grendi abbia dipinto negativamente questo periodo della storia del porto di Genova (*Il porto di Livorno e il commercio mediterraneo nel Seicento*, cit., pp. 327-328).

⁸⁴ F. ZAMORA RODRIGUEZ, *La "pupilla dell'occhio della Toscana"*, cit., p. 44. Sulla fitta corrispondenza dei consoli Gavi di Livorno sono state condotte recentemente molte importanti ricerche (cfr. per le potenzialità di questa fonte C. BITOSSI, *L'occhio di Genova. Livorno nella corrispondenza dei consoli genovesi nell'età moderna*, in *Livorno 1606-1806*, cit., pp. 86-94).

⁸⁵ T. KIRK, *Genoa and Livorno: Sixteenth and Seventeenth-century Commercial Rivalry as a Stimulus to Policy Development*, in "The Journal of Historical Association", 281, 2001, pp. 3-17.

⁸⁶ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 1389.

⁸⁷ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 38, 401/5.

⁸⁸ Vedi la comunicazione di Joana Sequeira e Flávio Miranda in questo stesso volume.

più decisamente verso l'Atlantico, permise la generalizzazione dei consumi di tabacco e zucchero. Ma la sua mediazione commerciale fu fondamentale anche per altre merci coloniali che cambiarono gusti e stili di sociabilità: cacao e vaniglia ad esempio, che fin dalla fine del Seicento compaiono nei carichi delle navi provenienti dal Portogallo. Ad acquistarli, inizialmente, erano soprattutto nobili, come Settimana Spinola e il marchese Invrea⁸⁹; ma nel secolo successivo a Genova si potevano vedere in azione i primi "cioccolatieri" – segno di una maggiore diffusione del prodotto: uno di questi, Angelo Mangini, si trovò nel 1798 a chiedere il "dissequestro" di una partita di cacao⁹⁰. Produzione, trasporto marittimo, commercio, redistribuzione: per arrivare dalla terra al consumatore i nuovi generi di origine americana necessitarono di una organizzazione economica complessa, di natura in parte pubblica e in parte privata, con un raggio di azione globale e in grado di funzionare in maniera coordinata nei diversi snodi della lunga rotta che collegava l'Oceano al *Mare Nostrum*. Ripulendo Genova dall'etichetta – un po' troppo frettolosamente affibbiatale – di porto decadente (di un Mediterraneo decadente) potremo cominciare a farne un buon osservatorio della cruciale mondializzazione degli scambi di età moderna, nei suoi molteplici risvolti economici, sociali, culturali.

⁸⁹ Si trattava di merce scaricata dalla nave *Profeta Daniele* nel 1680: Settimana acquistò un sacco di cacao e un sacco di vaniglia, mentre il marchese Invrea si assicurò una "cassa di cioccolata" (ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Gabelle, sala 36, 2880).

⁹⁰ ASG, *Banco di San Giorgio*, Cancellieri, sala 35, 1658.

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negli affari commerciali dei Genovesi in Oriente*

INTRODUZIONE: IL CORALLO COME MERCE DI SCAMBIO NEI TRAFFICI MONDIALI

“Sogliono venire a vendere in Livorno tutte le coralline napoletane, corse e genovesi, poiché non solo si compra per le fabbriche che vi sono, ma di più vi è sempre commissione per le fabbriche di fuori e specialmente di Venezia e Genova. Ogni corallina suol portare fra le 30 e 50 libbre di corallo buono e circa il doppio di raspato”. Così rispondeva, il 23 maggio 1760, il console sabauda a Livorno Antonio Rivarola all’interrogazione della corte di Torino, a proposito di un possibile sviluppo della pesca del corallo nel Regno di Sardegna. Oltre ad inviare puntuali informazioni sul sistema piscatorio e sul conseguente commercio, il nobile corso, attento osservatore della realtà che lo circondava, spiegava in quell’occasione che la maggior parte dell’oro rosso prendeva la via dell’Oriente “colle Compagnie dell’Indie, e il maggior spaccio se ne fa ne’ seguenti paesi: al forte San Giorgio, alla costa del Comorandel, Bengala, Surat, Bombay e colonie inglesi nell’Indie”. Il corallo, una volta pescato e lavorato nel Mediterraneo, era spedito “di qui per Londra e da colà per mare a detti luoghi. Si riceve in ritorno diamanti greggi che si vendono in Londra”¹. Insomma, si trattava con tutta evidenza di un grande affare per gli *bombres de negocios* dell’epoca, ma che aveva antiche e remote origini. A conferma di tutto ciò, già qualche anno prima, precisamente nel corso del 1747, il governatore di Livorno Carlo Ginori sottolineava, in una lunga e articolata memoria, che tutto il commercio con l’Asia, da sempre fondamentale per l’economia europea, era in mano alle grandi compagnie commerciali olandesi, francesi e inglesi e che per questo sarebbe stato utile da parte dei sudditi toscani inserirsi in tale lucroso affare, proponendo una compagnia livornese, che avrebbe dovuto sfruttare, previo accordo con la Porta otomana, la via tradizionale del Mar Rosso e dell’Egitto, non mettendosi pertanto in concorrenza con le altre potenze europee. L’idea di Ginori era di raccogliere i prodotti asiatici a Gedda e da qui tramite “bastimenti sottili trasportare le merci a Suez e da qui in soli tre giorni di carovana, che vi è già stabilita [...] si conducano sopra cammelli al Cairo [...] di dove per il fiume Nilo possono essere tragittate fino alla sponda del Mare Mediterraneo al luogo detto di Alessandria, da dove quasi ogni

¹ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI TORINO (ASTO), *Paesi, Sardegna, Materie Economiche, categoria XVIII*, marzo 1, fascicolo 21. Una libbra genovese era pari a 317,664 grammi, pertanto il ricavato della pesca si aggirava tra i 9,5 e i 16 Kg circa per ciascuna corallina.

mese vi sono più navi che vengono direttamente a Livorno”². Con questa strategia, bastava pagare il 3% di dritto al Cairo (dopo aver pagato già il 15% a Gedda) e attraverso quattro agenti distribuiti rispettivamente ad Alessandria, Suez, Gedda e Goa (in alternativa Surat o Macao), la compagnia avrebbe trattato tutte le merci orientali: dalle spezie alle tele di cotone, dalle porcellane ai diamanti. Tutti prodotti che fin dall’età classica alimentavano il commercio tra Europa e Asia.

Secondo l’illuminato governatore labronico, ogni anno transitavano verso Oriente, sempre attraverso la via egiziana, un’enorme quantità di panni di lana, stagno, piombo, carta, ambra, pezzi da otto reali e soprattutto corallo. Queste merci, una volta giunte a Gedda potevano essere commerciate con facilità verso il porto di Surat e da qui prendere la via di Goa e di Macao. In sostanza, per il Ginori mettere le mani su questo circuito, significava poter ottenere lautissimi vantaggi per tutta l’economia toscana e mediterranea più in generale. Il marchese Ginori, non a caso, proprio in quegli anni aveva provveduto ad inserirsi nell’affare della pesca del corallo formando una propria squadra di coralline, che aveva la loro base operativa a Cecina, feudo dello stesso nobile fiorentino. Questi, in un’altra lunga memoria relativa ai commerci con la penisola iberica, teneva a specificare che l’oro rosso, tramite Livorno, avrebbe potuto raggiungere l’India attraverso la via di Alessandria o Smirne, oppure per mezzo del commercio di Lisbona e della Spagna, “che oggi faciasi da Genovesi [...] che si son resi quasi proprio”, e per tali ragioni proponeva al governo di Toscana di trovare nuovi accordi commerciali con il regno del Portogallo³.

Al tempo del Rivarola e del Ginori, dunque, l’impresa del corallo si imperniava principalmente sulle rotte inglesi, ma in precedenza, ricordavano i due aristocratici italiani, tutto si muoveva verso Goa e le Indie portoghesi, a partire da Lisbona. In cambio si ottenevano “mussolina, diamanti greggi, cannella, pepe, gommalacca”. Il corallo, inoltre, era spedito dagli armeni, “che si stabiliscono a negoziare in Livorno”, verso il Levante ed in particolare: il Cairo, Aleppo, Smirne e Costantinopoli⁴. In queste poche e sintetiche note, sia il conte Rivarola e sia il marchese Ginori, ci spiegano dunque in maniera molto efficace quell’antico e fruttuoso commercio sul quale Francesca Trivellato ha acceso i riflettori della storiografia nel 2009, nel suo noto volume, basato in larga misura sulla storia della compagnia commerciale sefardita Ergas & Silvera⁵.

A sostegno dell’importanza del ruolo mondiale del commercio del corallo si aggiungono in questa sede alcuni inediti pareri raccolti dal Ministero degli affari esteri

² ARCHIVIO GINORI LISCI DI FIRENZE (AGL), IV, 0, *Affari di Governo*, b. 18, “Memoria per formare una Compagnia di Commercio in Livorno e Trieste per l’Indie Orientali, Coste d’Africa e dell’Arabia Felice”, 22 maggio 1747. Su Ginori di veda la voce nel Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani di O. GORI PASTA (vol. 55, Roma 2000, pp. 32-35); A. ALIMENTO, *Tra “gelosie” personali e “gelosie” tra gli stati: i progetti del Governatore Carlo Ginori e la circolazione della cultura economica e politica a Livorno (1747-1757)*, in “Nuovi Studi Livornesi”, XVI, 2009, pp. 63-95.

³ L. GINORI LISCI, *La prima colonizzazione del cinese 1738-1751*, Firenze 1987, p. 34 e pp. 58-60; AGL, IV, 0, *Affari di Governo*, b. 18, “Sopra il commercio da potersi fare col Portogallo”, 7 luglio 1749.

⁴ ASTO, *Paesi, Sardegna, Materie Economiche, categoria XVIII*, mazzo 1, fascicolo 21; F. TRENTMANN, *L’impero delle cose. Come siamo diventati consumatori. Dal XV al XXI*, Torino 2017, p. 9.

⁵ F. TRIVELLATO, *Il commercio interculturale. La diaspora sefardita, Livorno e i traffici globali in età moderna*, Roma 2016.

del regno di Francia il 22 febbraio 1746. Secondo queste testimonianze, ogni anno partiva da Lisbona un vascello da guerra diretto a Goa, sul quale i mercanti potevano imbarcare merci diverse, tra cui il corallo proveniente da Genova, con un pagamento di un nolo pari a 300-350 lire tornesi per ogni tonnellata. Il viaggio di andata e ritorno – quest'ultimo prevedeva la tappa a Bahia in Brasile – durava in tutto circa 18 mesi, ma permetteva di portare merci a Lisbona per un valore complessivo di circa due milioni di lire di Francia, comprendenti: spezie, tele di cotone, porcellane e diamanti indiani. A queste merci, nel corso del XVIII secolo, si aggiunsero via via sempre più gli ingenti carichi di oro e diamanti provenienti dalle ricche miniere brasiliane, del valore annuo, sempre secondo gli informatori francesi, di 2.150.000 lire tornesi⁶. Un affare globale eccezionale, sui cui tutte le potenze mondiali avrebbero voluto mettere le mani⁷.

Se non fossimo ancora pienamente convinti dell'importanza del corallo nei circuiti degli scambi mondiali, ci viene in supporto anche la fonte letteraria. Nel noto *Manoscritto trovato a Saragozza*, di Jan Potocki, è descritta nella *Sesta giornata* la storia del bandito Zoto, il quale fin da bambino, dopo essersi imbarcato sul pinco del padrone Lettereo, destinato alla pesca del corallo, al contrabbando e alla pirateria, fece una crociera verso le Bocche di Bonifacio, dove si incontrò con “più di sessanta barche intente alla pesca del corallo” e dove, inoltre, Zoto pescò l'oro rosso immergendosi per quattro giorni, tuffandosi e nuotando “come il più spericolato” dell'equipaggio⁸.

Se le notizie narrateci dal Rivarola e dal Ginori, confermate dai francesi, ed evidenziate anche da Potocki, costituiscono una sorta di *sequel* del volume di Francesca Trivellato, relativamente poche e frammentarie sono le testimonianze storiche su quel che accadde su questo tema prima della nota storia della Ergas & Silvera e delle grandi grandi compagnie commerciali. Chi, oltre agli ebrei, agli inglesi, ai francesi e agli olandesi, aveva partecipato al traffico mondiale dell'oro rosso pescato nel Mediterraneo? Il marchese Ginori, come visto, non aveva avuto dubbi: furono i mercanti genovesi che, fin dal medioevo, controllavano in buona parte, sia la pesca e sia il commercio del corallo diretto in Oriente. Proveremo pertanto in questa sede, alla luce di una ricca ed inedita documentazione privata, a mostrare in che maniera, tra la fine del XVII e gli inizi del XVIII secolo, funzionava nel dettaglio il circuito mondiale del corallo, gestito dai nobili aristocratici della Superba, coadiuvati da altri importanti *négociants* italiani⁹. Utilizzeremo pertanto in questa sede, come modello di riferimento interpretativo, la storia della compagnia commerciale specializzata dei fratelli Nicolò e Pietro Francesco Fieschi, che nacque proprio grazie alla forte do-

⁶ ARCHIVES NATIONALES DE PARIS (AN), AE/B/III/385, memorie del 1737, del 1746, del 1786 e del 1790 sul commercio del Portogallo.

⁷ Sulla *Global History* e in particolare sulle merci globali si veda S. CONRAD, *Storia globale. Un'introduzione*, Roma 2015, pp. 134-136.

⁸ J. POTOCKI, *Manoscritto trovato a Saragozza*, Parma 1990, pp. 91-93.

⁹ Sul concetto di rete esiste oggi una corposa letteratura; mi limito in questa sede a citare una recente, anche se parziale, messa a punto di N. FERGUSON, *La piazza e la torre. Le reti, le gerarchie e la lotta per il potere. Una storia globale*, Milano 2018, pp. 15-66 e rispetto alle reti commerciali si veda *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, a c. di A. CARACAUSI, C. JEGGLE, Londra 2014.

manda asiatica del *corralium rubrum* del Mediterraneo, comparata anche all'iniziativa mercantile di un altro operatore genovese: Marcello Durazzo.

La storia del corallo fin qui anticipata, oltre a fornirci una serie di informazioni e di dettagli altamente raffinati sul piano storico, ci suggerisce altresì alcune importanti considerazioni di ordine storiografico.

La tradizionale visione classica che prevedeva la fine del Secolo dei Genovesi nel 1627, oggi appare superata. Non solo il periodo d'oro non si chiuse in tutta evidenza con la famosa *quiebra*, ma anzi gli storici, a partire da una felice intuizione di Braudel, individuano, tra la seconda metà del secolo e la prima parte del XVIII, un nuovo rilancio del Secolo dei Genovesi, che si differenzia dal precedente per le sue intrinseche caratteristiche globali, che solo in parte erano già state espresse nella prima versione. Se dunque, tra la nascita della simbiosi ispanica del 1528 e la crisi finanziaria del 1627, i connotati del "Siglo" erano in prevalenza europei e mediterranei, nel periodo successivo, compreso tra i primi anni Sessanta del Seicento e la guerra di Successione spagnola, il ruolo dei Genovesi appare oggi più ampio e articolato, grazie allo studio derivato dalla documentazione privata; imperniato su una rete commercial-marittimo-finanziaria che collegava le diverse economie-mondo dell'epoca: da quella euro-americana a quella africana, da quella islamica-ottomana a quella indiana; e da quest'ultima fino a quella cinese. Un circuito, che almeno per alcuni decenni, ci appare in diretta connessione, grazie al ricercato sistema informativo, organizzato nei secoli dagli stessi operatori liguri sparsi diasporicamente in tutto il globo¹⁰.

LE VIE DEL CORALLO: DAL MEDITERRANEO ALL'INDIA

Le origini della pesca del corallo nel Mediterraneo si perdono nell'antichità, quando tale attività era già praticata da greci, fenici e romani. Se per l'età classica le testimonianze scritte ed archeologiche sono alquanto limitate, per le epoche successive, per converso, le prove storiche sono assai numerose. Sappiamo che a partire dal X secolo, grazie all'apporto arabo – su questo si veda la preziosa testimonianza di Al-Muqaddasi¹¹ – e poi alle marinerie italiane, la pesca del corallo venne assiduamente praticata nelle acque spagnole, in quelle della Provenza, sulle coste della Penisola e nei mari delle maggiori isole (Sicilia, Sardegna e Corsica), oltre che sulle coste del Nord Africa¹². Tra i più assidui pescatori vi furono, fin dal XII secolo, gli abitanti della costa ligure, così come attestano le fonti notarili relative ai marinai di Portofino, piccola località della Riviera di Levante¹³. Nel corso dei secoli successivi, alcune marinerie liguri di ambo le riviere si specializzarono sempre più in questo tipo di attività, tanto che Grendi la definì nel 1982, una sorta di "transumanza del

¹⁰ Su queste tematiche rimando al mio L. LO BASSO, *Diaspora e armamento marittimo nelle strategie economiche dei genovesi nella seconda metà del XVII secolo: una storia globale*, in "Studi Storici", 56, 2015, n. 1, pp. 137-155.

¹¹ A. FENIELLO-A. VANOLI, *Storia del Mediterraneo in 20 oggetti*, Roma-Bari 2018, p. 83.

¹² *Dizionario di commercio dei signori fratelli Savary*, Venezia, 1770, vol. II, p. 32.

¹³ O. PASTINE, *Liguri pescatori di corallo*, in "Giornale Storico e Letterario della Liguria", III-IV, 1931, pp. 169-185 e pp. 287-310.

mare”, considerato che ogni anno, in primavera, partivano da queste località (a Ponente: Diano, Cervo, Laigueglia e Alassio; a Levante: Portofino, Rapallo e Santa Margherita) anche fino ad alcune centinaia di coralline, per spostarsi nelle zone di pesca, per poi far ritorno a casa all’inizio dell’autunno, prima che i tempi della navigazione consigliassero lo “sciverno”¹⁴. Come è noto, dalla ormai ricca bibliografia edita, i genovesi tra XV e XVI secolo divennero i pescatori più presenti sui banchi coralliferi della Corsica, della Sardegna, in particolare nelle zone di Alghero e dell’isola di San Pietro; delle coste africane nelle zone di Marsacares (La Calle) e di Tabarca, soprattutto dopo che questa isoletta fu concessa nel 1544 in *asiento* dal re di Spagna alla famiglia Lomellini¹⁵. Vista l’importanza di questa attività, pertanto, coloro che avevano degli interessi in tale affare provarono ad imporre regimi di sfruttamento monopolistici. Tale sistema era destinato ad avere una lunga vita, almeno fino al XIX secolo, e ad alimentare numerose controversie politiche tra gli Stati, come quella sopravvenuta tra i regni di Francia e delle Due Sicilie durante la Restaurazione, a proposito dell’esclusivo sfruttamento del tratto costiero attorno a La Calle¹⁶, che a partire dal 1741 era stato per lungo tempo nelle mani della *Compagnie Royale d’Afrique*.

L’oro rosso (*corallium rubrum*) pescato, fin dal medioevo, confluiva nelle botteghe dei maestri corallieri genovesi, i quali dopo averlo lavorato opportunamente, provvedevano, in società con i mercanti, quasi sempre appartenenti alle grandi famiglie nobili, a rivenderlo verso i mercati orientali¹⁷, tanto da costituire una delle poche merci utili negli scambi commerciali tra Europa ed Asia, secondo un sistema in cui a prevalere era ancora il baratto con le spezie, tele di seta e cotone, destinate a essere distribuite dai mercanti italiani e provenzali in tutta Europa, secondo la moda del momento, a partire dai porti di Tripoli di Siria, Alessandretta e Alessandria d’Egitto¹⁸. Tali proficui scambi proseguirono ed aumentarono, quando nel corso

¹⁴ E. GRENDI, *Una comunità alla pesca del corallo: impresa capitalistica e impresa sociale*, in *Studi in memoria di Luigi Dal Pane*, Bologna 1982 pp. 445; IDEM, *Il Cervo e la Repubblica. Il modello ligure di antico regime*, Torino 1993, pp. 131-161.

¹⁵ F. PODESTÀ, *La pesca del corallo in Africa nel Medioevo e i Genovesi a Marsacares*, Genova 1897; IDEM, *I Genovesi e le peschiere di corallo nei mari dell’isola di Sardegna*, Torino 1900; P. GOURDIN, *Tabarka. Histoire et archéologie d’un preside espagnol et d’un comptoir genois en terre africaine (XV^e-XVIII^e siècle)*, Roma 2008; L. PICCINNO, *Un’impresa fra terra e mare. Giacomo Filippo Durazzo e soci a Tabarca (1719-1729)*, Milano 2008; G. DONEDDU, *La pesca nelle acque del tirreno (secoli XVII-XVIII)*, Sassari 2002, pp. 191-220.

¹⁶ O. LOPEZ, *S’établir et travailler chez l’autre. Les hommes de la Compagnie Royale d’Afrique au XVIII^e siècle*, thèse de doctorat en histoire, Université Aix-Marseille, 2016.

¹⁷ O. PASTINE, *L’arte dei corallieri nell’ordinamento delle corporazioni genovesi (secoli XV-XVIII)*, Genova 1933; *Mirabilia coralii. Manifatture in corallo a Genova, Livorno e Napoli tra XVII e XIX secolo*, a c. di C. DEL MARE, Napoli 2010.

¹⁸ B. LIVERINO, *Il corallo dalle origini ai nostri giorni*, Napoli 1998; E. ASHTOR, *Pagamento in contanti e baratto nel commercio d’oltremare (secoli XIV-XVI)*, in *Storia d’Italia, Annali 6. Economia naturale, economia monetaria*, Torino 1983, pp. 361-396. Sulle difficoltà incontrate dai mercanti europei negli scali di Siria, “i porti mal sicuri; le condotte, la lunghezza del viaggio di terra, l’avarizia de’ ministri turcheschi, et altri accidenti ancora”, si veda la straordinaria relazione di Giovanni Francesco Sagredo del 15 maggio 1612. ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI VENEZIA (ASVE), *Collegio Relazioni*, b. 31.

del XVI secolo le spezie presero la via di Lisbona, a seguito dei viaggi asiatici intrapresi dai portoghesi¹⁹.

Fin dall'età antica, il corallo del Mediterraneo terminava il proprio cammino in Persia, India, Himalaya e Cina. Già considerato un sacro amuleto contro il "male", divenne oggetto di moda (assieme alle perle), soprattutto dopo l'affermazione del buddismo, che dall'Asia centrale penetrò in Cina, in Tibet e in Mongolia²⁰. Nei secoli successivi il corallo si diffuse enormemente nella cultura tibetana per abbellire i monili o le vesti delle donne; come medicinale e come amuleto, mettendolo in bocca ai defunti, per tenere lontani gli spiriti maligni. Tale credenza era diffusa trasversalmente tra il Tibet, l'India e il mondo europeo, considerati i ritrovamenti di pezzi di corallo anche nelle tombe celtiche. All'epoca di Marco Polo, così come lui stesso fece scrivere ne *Il Milione*, in Tibet, "provincia grandissima", si commerciava corallo "che costa molto caro perché ne fanno collane per i loro idoli e per le loro donne ed è un segno di gioia" e si potevano trovare, interessanti per il mercato europeo, grandi quantità di "giambellotti e drappi d'oro e di seta"; inoltre, sempre secondo il mercante veneziano, in Tibet crescevano "molte spezie che mai furono vedute in queste contrade"²¹.

Marco Polo aveva individuato, tra XIII e XIV secolo, le modalità dello scambio commerciale tra Europa e Asia, che prevedeva traffici a lungo raggio, in parte via terra e in parte via mare, gestiti da mercanti di diverse provenienze, diverse culture, diverse religioni. Con il noto mercante veneziano trovava già piena applicazione il concetto storiografico di "commercio interculturale", divenuto oggetto di studio a partire dal pionieristico lavoro di Curtin; elaborato in seguito, anche sul piano metodologico, dall'approccio scientifico di Francesca Trivellato, che ha saputo coniugare la dimensione storica "macro" a quella "micro"²².

La "follia del corallo" esplosa in Oriente, fortunatamente per i mercanti europei corrispondeva in modo speculare alla "follia delle spezie" diffusa in Occidente, così come ci ha ben spiegato Fernand Braudel. Le spezie, assieme al corallo, furono il motore dell'economia mondiale tra medioevo e prima età moderna. L'Europa – sempre per usare le felici parole di Braudel "ha avuto a lungo una vivissima passione per il pepe e le spezie: cannella, chiodi di garofano, noce moscata, zenzero"²³. Questa passione terminò quando di fatto, nel corso del Seicento, gli olandesi riuscì-

¹⁹ F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà e Imperi del Mediterraneo nell'età di Filippo II*, Torino 2010, I, pp. 584-614. Si veda anche l'esempio del mercante di origine fiamminga Jacob van de Couteren attivo nei commerci di corallo e pietre preziose a Goa all'inizio del Seicento. G. Winius, *Portogallo, Venezia, Genova ed il commercio delle pietre preziose al principio dell'età moderna*, in *Rapporti Genova-Mediterraneo-Atlantico nell'età moderna*, a c. di R. BELVEDERI, Genova 1989, VII, pp. 117-126.

²⁰ L. BOULNOIS, *La via della seta. Dèi, guerrieri, mercanti*, Milano 2016, pp. 166-177

²¹ M. POLO, *Il Milione*, a c. di A. LANZA, Pordenone 1991, p. 146

²² P.D. CURTIN, *Mercanti. Commercio e cultura dall'Antichità al XIX secolo*, Roma-Bari 1988; F. TRIVELLATO, *Il commercio interculturale*, cit.; E. BENBASSA, A. RODRIGUE, *Storia degli ebrei sefarditi. Da Toledo a Salonico*, Torino 2004; F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà materiale, economia e capitalismo (secoli XV-XVIII)*, II. *I giochi dello scambio*, Torino 1982, pp. 98-102; S. CONERMAN, *L'Asia meridionale e l'Oceano Indiano*, in *Storia del Mondo*, 3. *Imperi e Oceani 1350-1750*, a c. di W. REINHARD, Torino 2016, pp. 447-513; H. FURBER, *Imperi rivali nei mercati d'Oriente, 1600-1800*, Bologna 1986.

²³ F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà materiale, economia e capitalismo (secoli XV-XVIII)*, I. *Le strutture del quotidiano*, Torino 1982, p. 195; W. SOMBART, *Dal lusso al capitalismo*, Roma 2003, p. 68.

rono a trasportare in Occidente quantità di spezie sempre maggiori, facendone abbassare il prezzo sui mercati, permettendo di fatto a tali prodotti di entrare nelle cucine dei ceti popolari. Non essendo più bene di lusso, cessò la moda delle spezie e ne iniziarono altre. Tanto è vero che, se nel corso del XVI secolo il corallo era scambiato con il pepe e con altre spezie, a partire dalla seconda metà del XVII secolo l'oro rosso cominciò ad essere scambiato a Goa con i diamanti, secondo il modello interpretativo ben spiegato da Francesca Trivellato a proposito del circuito mercantile della ditta Ergas & Silvera.

Nel XVI secolo, nonostante dopo il 1517 l'Egitto fosse passato sotto il controllo degli Ottomani, la via tradizionale delle spezie prevedeva la partenza in primavera dalle coste indiane islamizzate del Coromandel e del Malabar, grazie alle fiorenti marinerie del Gujarat, verso i porti di Aden, al-Shir, Suakin e Gedda (così come narratoci dal marchese Ginori). Le merci successivamente seguivano la via di Suez o El-Tor (Al-Tour) e da qui in una decina di giorni i carichi giungevano dapprima al Cairo e poi ad Alessandria. Le spezie nella fattispecie provenivano a loro volta dalla zona indonesiana, da Malacca, da Giava e dalle Molucche. In alternativa, il cammino delle merci d'Oriente poteva transitare da Bassora e Baghdad, grazie alle carovane di cammelli²⁴, per poi confluire nell'importante mercato di Aleppo; e infine giungere nei porti siriani di Tripoli (oggi in Libano) e Alessandretta (oggi in Turchia), dove i mercanti, provenzali e italiani perlopiù, le avrebbero caricate per l'Occidente²⁵. In cambio gli europei riuscivano a collocare sul mercato asiatico poche merci richieste: prodotti tessili, ma soprattutto corallo e argento, secondo uno schema interpretativo molto caro a Carlo Maria Cipolla²⁶. Le basi commerciali del Levante formavano in tutta evidenza quelle che Reinhard ha definito di recente "aree di contatto" tra le diverse culture²⁷.

Con l'arrivo di Vasco da Gama a Calicut (oggi Kozhikode), avvenuta nel corso del mese di maggio del 1498, la storia dei commerci euroasiatici si modificò seppur con lentezza. In maniera progressiva, ma ci volle quasi un secolo, le merci orientali presero la via dell'Occidente a bordo delle navi portoghesi e Lisbona divenne la porta d'Europa. Quando il Da Gama avviò la trattativa con il principe di Calicut, sapeva con certezza che tra le merci desiderate vi fosse il corallo, così come lo stesso *Zamorin* fece scrivere nella lettera trasmessa al re del Portogallo²⁸, confermando a distanza di secoli quello che già Marco Polo aveva raccontato agli europei. Diversi decenni dopo, quando ormai gli stessi portoghesi si erano stabiliti definitivamente a

²⁴ Le carovane erano composte di circa 1000 cammelli ed ogni cammello poteva portare fino a circa 220 kg, pertanto ciascuna carovana era in grado di trasportare 220 tonnellate di prodotti orientali. S.F. STARR, *L'illuminismo perduto. L'età d'oro dell'Asia centrale dalla conquista araba a Tamerlano*, Torino 2017, pp. 48-57.

²⁵ F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà materiale, economia e capitalismo (secoli XV-XVIII)*, II, *I giochi dello scambio*, cit., pp. 98-102; S. CONERMAN, *L'Asia meridionale*, cit., pp. 447-513.

²⁶ C.M. CIPOLLA, *Conquistadores, pirati, mercatanti. La saga dell'argento spagnolo*, Bologna 2011; M. GREENGRASS, *La cristianità in frantumi. Europa 1517-1648*, Roma-Bari 2017, p. 30.

²⁷ W. REINHARD, *Introduzione. Imperi, oceani e il resto del mondo, Storia del Mondo*, 3, *Imperi e Oceani 1350-1750*, a c. di W. REINHARD, Torino 2016, p. LVI-LVIII.

²⁸ S. SUBRAHAMANYAM, *Vita e leggenda di Vasco da Gama*, Roma 2016, p. 139 e P. FRANKOPAN, *Le vie della seta. Una nuova storia del mondo*, Milano 2017, pp. 258-259.

Goa, i mercanti, soprattutto quelli italiani, sapevano che lo scambio di merci dovesse essere incardinato sull'argento e sul corallo.

Francesco Carletti, mercante fiorentino, noto soprattutto per aver scritto i *Ragionamenti del mio viaggio intorno al mondo* pubblicati postumi nel 1701, sottolineava che tra le merci più importanti che giungevano a Goa da Lisbona vi era proprio il corallo, che veniva scambiato grazie ai mercanti indiani che “dalla Cambaia [Cambay] vengono a Goa [e] portano inoltre gran quantità di diamanti”²⁹. Corallo per diamanti: oltre ad una notevole quantità di tessuti di cotone che vengono dal Gujarat e che, sempre secondo Carletti, prendono nomi diversi: “canichini, boffettani, semiane et altro”³⁰. Si era pertanto potenziato, già alla fine del XVI secolo, un circuito commerciale, che connetteva lo spazio mediterraneo con la prima globalizzazione³¹. D'altra parte, come ha osservato Serge Gruzinski, è tramite il mare, e il commercio marittimo in particolare, che si è giocata “la mondializzazione europea” del globo³². Il cotone divenne, nel giro di circa un secolo, uno dei motori dell'economia euroasiatica, grazie alla crescita della domanda da parte dei consumatori europei, i quali ne apprezzavano la bellezza dei colori, la resistenza e la comodità: non vi era guardaroia inglese o olandese – scrive Trentmann – che non prevedesse la presenza dei calicò indiani. La presenza di questi ultimi modificò profondamente il gusto nell'uso dei colori nell'abbigliamento europeo, che fino a quell'epoca era dominato dal nero, dal bianco e da qualche sfumatura di grigio e di marrone³³.

Lo scambio delle merci suggeritoci da Carletti avveniva a Goa, capitale dello Stato portoghese in India fin dal 1530, e nuova area di contatto interculturale, la quale appariva ai viaggiatori come un luogo ameno, tropicale, con lunghe spiagge e un terreno rossiccio, ricco e fertile con un clima umido che si interrompeva con l'arrivo dei monsoni verso giugno, quando il porto fluviale diventava pressoché inutilizzabile fino a fine estate³⁴.

Quando nel settembre 1698, giunse a Goa Placido Ramponi, inviato del granduca di Toscana Cosimo III, per occuparsi del monumento dedicato a Francesco Saverio, osservò che la capitale portoghese era “lontana dal mare 25 miglia, alla quale si va pel rio Mondovi, che ha il suo sbocco al mare”³⁵, era un ottimo porto natu-

²⁹ F. CARLETTI, *Ragionamenti del mio viaggio intorno al mondo*, Milano 2015, pp. 174, 185; *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Roma 1970, vol. 20, p. 139-143. Sul tentativo mediceo del primo Seicento di inserirsi nel commercio delle pietre preziose con l'India si veda il recente F. GUIDI BRUSCOLI, *Tra commercio e diplomazia: mercanti fiorentini verso l'India alla ricerca di pietre orientali per la cappella dei principi di Firenze (1608-11)*, in “Archivio Storico Italiano”, 4, 2017, pp. 689-709.

³⁰ F. CARLETTI, *Ragionamenti*, p. 173.

³¹ G. BUTI, O. RAVEUX, *Corail*, in *Dictionnaire de la Méditerranée*, a c. di D. ALBERA-M. CRIVELLO-M. TOZY, Arles, 2016, p. 309; J. OSTERHAMMEL, N.P. PETERSSON, *Storia della globalizzazione*, Bologna 2005, pp. 7-15.

³² S. GRUZINSKI, *Abbiamo ancora bisogno della storia? Il senso del passato nel mondo globalizzato*, Milano 2016, p. 109.

³³ F. TRENTMANN, *L'impero delle cose*, cit., pp. 56-60.

³⁴ F. CARDINI, A. VANOLI, *La via della seta. Una storia millenaria tra Oriente e Occidente*, Bologna 2017, p. 272-274; M. ANGOT, *Histoire des Indes*, Parigi 2017, pp. 544-545.

³⁵ C. SODINI, *I Medici e le Indie Orientali. Il diario di viaggio di Placido Ramponi emissario per conto di Cosimo III*, Firenze 1996, p. 89; M. MONETA, *Un veneziano alla corte Moghul. Vita e avventure di Nicolò*

rale, difeso da “due buone fortezze [...] acciò che qualche flotta di navi non possano liberamente fare sbarco e saccheggiarla”. Il fiume era “largo in vari luoghi circa un quarto di miglio nel più stretto, e va col flusso e reflusso del mare ogni sei ore” e pertanto le navi per entrare dovevano tenere conto delle maree. A Placido Ramponi la città parve “grande quasi come la città di Pisa ma aperta e senza mura dalla parte di terra”, mentre le difese e l’ingresso si trovavano dalla parte del mare. Goa era altresì ricca di chiese dei diversi ordini religiosi, ma per importanza e bellezza svettava la cattedrale di Santa Catarina, che era anche la sede dell’arcivescovo più importante d’Asia ed era dotata di un grande mercato di merci e di schiavi; inoltre, sempre secondo Ramponi – che ne restò abbagliato – “ogni otto o dieci giorni venivano carovane di 20 o 30 barche, l’una carica di telerie, cotone sodi e filati, pepi e droghe in quantità grandi scaricate e ricaricate e andarsene chi per parte dell’India, che per l’altra”. La città era piena di magazzini, frequentati da mercanti, che “vanno vestiti alla portoghese”, con vestiti leggeri e accompagnati da due servitori “mori”, uno dei quali portante l’ombrello per il sole. La via principale, molto lunga, era piena “di cassoni di Coccim, colmi di biancheria, turbanti e tele dipinte, e panni da negri per il Brasil e le navi, che di Goa tornano a Lisbona, fanno scalo al Brasil, e li lasciano detti panni e telerie di cotone bianche e dipinte con utile di uno a tre”. Un grande emporio euro-asiatico, che in alcuni momenti si arricchiva della presenza dei mercanti del Gujarat, i quali commerciavano “sacchetti pieni di mazzi di perle di tutte le grossezze, e bisagli di diamanti, rubini, smeraldi e [...] altre pietre preziose; e dei mercanti cinesi che vendono porcellane “di tutte le sorti, finezze e colori e grandezze, drappi e broccati fatti con arabeschi di foglio dorato, e altre telerie fini”. Questi mercanti che provenivano dall’Impero Celeste “vogliono della loro mercanzia quel prezzo che chiedano, altrimenti non vendono; il loro vestito è tutto in un pezzo, curiosi nell’andatura, fini nel contrattare, e libidinosi”³⁶. Goa portoghese era dunque un grande mercato globale, ricco di una consistente presenza di mercanti residenti di diverse etnie e religioni, che costituivano – sempre secondo la felice formula di Reinhard – i “gruppi di contatto” tra le diverse economie-mondo.

Proprio nella capitale asiatica – Roma d’Oriente, come viene talvolta definita nelle fonti – si realizzavano gli scambi principali tra il corallo, le pietre preziose e i tessuti indiani, attraverso diverse reti mercantili che si incrociavano e si sovrapponevano, secondo i meccanismi commerciali ormai consolidati nella seconda metà del XVII secolo³⁷. Uno di questi *network* presenti all’epoca era quello dei genovesi.

UNA COMPAGNIA SPECIALIZZATA: I FRATELLI FIESCHI IN INDIA

Dopo gli splendori raggiunti nel corso del XIII secolo, grazie all’elezione di ben due papi di famiglia, Innocenzo IV e Adriano V, i Fieschi, originari da Ugo *Fliscus*

Manucci nell’India del Seicento, Torino 2018, pp. 85-89; S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *Mondi connessi. La storia oltre l’eurocentrismo (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, Roma 2014, pp. 183-219.

³⁶ C. SODINI, *I Medici e le Indie Orientali*, cit., pp. 89-96.

³⁷ S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *Comment être un étranger. Goa-Isfahan-Venise. XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles*, Parigi 2011, pp. 57-65; M. ANGOT, *Histoire des Indes*, cit., pp. 454-455.

dei conti di Lavagna, avevano attraversato nel corso dell'età moderna momenti difficili, come la congiura del 1547, che ne avevano determinato una parziale estromissione dal gruppo dirigente della Repubblica di Genova. Il 20 giugno 1661, all'epoca dell'iscrizione al *Libro d'oro* della nobiltà dei fratelli Luigi di anni 28, Nicolò di anni 22, Giovanni Battista di anni 15 e Pietro Francesco di anni 10, tutti figli di Ugo e di Maria Spinola³⁸, le vicende economiche e sociali della potente famiglia si erano in parte offuscate e avrebbero ritrovato lustro, grazie alle attività di Nicolò e di Pietro Francesco, quest'ultimo destinato a ricoprire anche incarichi di prestigio all'interno dell'apparato di governo genovese, tra cui ricordiamo la carica di Governatore di Corsica. I due fratelli, entrambi battezzati nella parrocchia di S. Siro a Genova, erano di due generazioni diverse, ma uniti, non solo dai legami di sangue, ma a partire dagli anni '80 del XVII secolo, dai comuni interessi affaristici, legati allo sfruttamento della pesca del corallo, agli scambi intercontinentali e al mondo dell'armamento marittimo. D'altra parte, il gusto per il commercio globale derivava, molto probabilmente, dalle attività paterne, giacché sappiamo che lo stesso Ugo nel 1648 tentò, assieme ad altri genovesi residenti a Lisbona, di dar vita ad una Compagnia delle Indie, ma senza ottenere risultati incoraggianti³⁹.

Il 27 febbraio 1680, Nicolò Fieschi entrò formalmente nell'impresa dell'oro rosso, firmando un contratto di società con il coralliere Giovanni Batta Riva, "per aprire nella presente città di Genova un fondo o sia fabbrica di coralli"⁴⁰. Il capitale del nuovo negozio era calcolato sulla base di 6.000 pezzi da otto reali, di cui 4.000 spettanti al Fieschi e 2.000 al Riva. La nuova impresa, nata per durare due anni, ma con possibilità di rinnovo, poggiava sul capitale e sul circuito internazionale di Nicolò e sui contatti del Riva con i pescatori di Cervo e Laigueglia. Riva avrebbe dovuto nella fattispecie occuparsi "in la compra e fabbrica di coralli", non potendo per tutta la durata della società acquistare o vendere l'oro rosso per proprio conto. Due anni dopo, per poter meglio operare sul mercato, e nello specifico per meglio investire nel trasporto marittimo del pescato, i due fratelli Fieschi sottoscrissero un atto di società tra loro, con un capitale di lire 100 mila, da dividersi metà per uno, per la durata di cinque anni⁴¹. In definitiva, le due compagnie di commercio avrebbero dovuto integrarsi: da una parte il Riva, che si occupava di comprare, lavorare e vendere il corallo; dall'altra Pietro Francesco, che aveva numerosi interessi nelle peschierie in Corsica ed aveva inoltre rapporti con gli operatori del mondo della navigazione genovese; il tutto avrebbe ruotato sulle capacità gestionali di Nicolò e sui suoi contatti con la rete mercantile italiana, portoghese, sefardita e indù.

Con la creazione della "compagnia di commercio" tra i due fratelli Fieschi, si fondevano le tradizionali capacità manageriali dei finanzieri genovesi, basate sulle

³⁸ ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI GENOVA (ASGE), *Archivio Segreto, Nobilitatis*, b. 2836, 20 giugno 1661.

³⁹ ASGE, *Archivio Segreto, Secretorum*, b. 1572; L. LO BASSO, *Diaspora e armamento marittimo nelle strategie economiche dei genovesi nella seconda metà del XVII secolo: una storia globale*, in "Studi Storici", 56, 2015, pp. 137-156, 141.

⁴⁰ ASGE, *Notai Antichi*, notaio Gio. Agostino Savignone, f. 7870, 27 febbraio 1680 e ARCHIVIO PRIVATO FIESCHI (APF), f. 7, n. 1.

⁴¹ APF, f. 16, n. 29, 20 luglio 1682.

reti familiari⁴² - anche se non sono l'unica opzione, come ricorda Braudel - e le naturali doti interculturali, che fin dal medioevo caratterizzavano il *modus operandi* dei mercanti liguri. Ogni qual volta il mercante genovese fiutava l'odore del denaro, eliminava automaticamente tutte le barriere culturali e religiose e cominciava a collaborare con mercanti provenienti da tutte le parti del mondo, a patto che questi rispettassero l'accordo fiduciario e la correttezza dei conti.

Con l'inizio dell'attività nel 1682 fu aperto un relativo libro contabile, con la scrittura del capitale per lire 100.000, concernente la fondazione della compagnia "fraterna"⁴³. Fin dai primi atti contabili, si vede molto chiaramente come i fratelli Fieschi operavano sul mercato, principalmente al fine di coadiuvare il "negozio dei coralli". L'acquisto dell'oro rosso avveniva in collaborazione con il Riva, seguendo canali di rifornimento diversificati: se si guarda alle partite di acquisto, contabilizzate tra il 3 ottobre 1682 e il 16 aprile 1683, si osserva che furono fatte compre per lire 107.309:19:8 (moneta di conto di Genova), da due mercanti, forse provenzali, chiamati nel conto David e Bernard, i quali si erano procurati il grezzo dal Bastion de France; dai padroni rivieraschi di Cervo e Laigueglia, come Giovanni Preve e Stefano Viale; da Stefano e Pietro Francesco Lomellini di Tabarca e infine da un tal Pietro Meirado, che vendeva corallo pescato in Spagna direttamente a Pietro Francesco Fieschi⁴⁴. Ma non è tutto. Il conto dei coralli prosegue, vergato sulle carte del libro mastro fino alla fine del 1685.

Nel giro di circa tre anni furono acquistati coralli per più di un milione di lire, con un notevole incremento di acquisti nel corso del 1685, quando dalle registrazioni sembra esserci anche un maggiore frazionamento dell'elenco dei venditori, sempre più di frequente comprendenti padroni di Laigueglia e di Cervo, così come si attesta nei numerosi atti notarili. Dalla registrazione contabile, iniziata il 12 febbraio 1685, capiamo inoltre che quasi sempre erano gli stessi padroni a consegnare il corallo grezzo a Genova, percependo dai Fieschi il nolo e la provvigione per il trasporto⁴⁵.

Nella medesima contabilità è possibile vedere inoltre in che modo i Fieschi integravano l'impresa del corallo con le altre attività: commercio di indaco, seta (probabilmente scambiata con l'oro rosso) e soprattutto investimenti nei cambi

⁴² C. ALVAREZ NOGAL, L. LO BASSO, C. MARSILIO, *La rete finanziaria della famiglia Spinola: Spagna, Genova e le fiere dei cambi (1610-1656)*, in "Quaderni storici", 42, 2007, n. 1, pp. 97-110; F. BRAUDEL, *Civiltà materiale, economia e capitalismo (secoli XV-XVIII)*, II. *I giochi dello scambio*, Torino 1982, pp. 136-139.

⁴³ APF, "Libro del negotio de signori Nicolò e Pietro Francesco Fieschi cominciato il 25 agosto 1682".

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, c. 3 dare 3 ottobre 1682. Negli anni Novanta del XVII secolo Nicolò Fieschi era uno degli appaltatori delle peschierie di Tabarca, tramite i mediatori Giulio Cesare e Gio. Batta Valdetaro. APF, f. 7, n. 8b, 26 luglio 1699. Sugli appalti di Tabarca nel XVIII secolo si rimanda a L. PICCINNO, *Un'impresa fra terra e mare*, cit. Tracce di acquisti di Gio. Batta Riva dai padroni di Laigueglia e Cervo si trovano in ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI SAVONA (ASSV), *Notai Distrettuali*, notaio Francesco Maria Marchiano, f. 2245, 29 ottobre e 15 dicembre 1683 (ringrazio Paolo Calcagno per avermi segnalato il documento).

⁴⁵ APF, "Libro del negotio de signori Nicolò e Pietro Francesco Fieschi cominciato il 25 agosto 1682", c. 180.

marittimi⁴⁶, il cui esperto era Pietro Francesco, così come si ricava anche dal suo libro mastro personale degli anni 1678-1682⁴⁷.

Il più giovane dei fratelli Fieschi era, prima dell'inizio della compagnia del corallo, un abile investitore nel settore dell'armamento, sia mediante cambi marittimi, sia attraverso l'attività assicurativa del suo agente Luca Mortola. L'attività di prestito lo aveva messo in contatto con i più importanti capitani delle grandi navi genovesi dell'epoca: tra i quali Gio. Lorenzo Viviano della *Santa Rosa* e Pietro Bianco del vascello *Nostra Signora dell'Apparizione e S. Pietro*. In molti altri casi, l'attività di prestito aveva messo Pietro Francesco in affari con capitani che coprivano le rotte per Smirne, oppure con i padroni rivieraschi, spesso provenienti proprio dalle comunità dedite alla pesca del corallo; o ancora in quegli anni Pietro Francesco era solito assicurare imbarcazioni (o stipulare cambi marittimi) cariche di corallo tra il Bastion de France, Tabarca e Genova⁴⁸.

Con l'inizio della compagnia, l'abitudine ad investire sulle coralline anche con i cambi marittimi divenne sempre più frequente. D'altra parte, prestare i soldi ai corallatori era funzionale al mantenimento dei vincoli relazionali, che creavano dipendenze economiche tra i padroni marittimi di Cervo e Laigueglia e gli stessi Fieschi. Se un padrone di corallina, alla fine della stagione di pesca, non riusciva ad ottemperare agli obblighi del contratto di cambio marittimo, si metteva nelle condizioni di saldare il debito mediante la cessione di ulteriore corallo, che come in Oriente diventava una vera e propria moneta. Tra questi padroni vi erano: Lorenzo Arimondo di Cervo, che aveva avuto un prestito a cambio di lire 800 sulla sua corallina sulla rotta Laigueglia-Alghero all'8%; Gio. Geronimo Arimondo, con lire 500 sulla corallina *Nostra Signora del Rosario* all'8% tra Genova e Bosa e Bernardo Dotto con lire 750 al 16% sulla rotta da Genova e Tabarca e ritorno⁴⁹.

Una volta acquistato il corallo grezzo, che prendeva nomi diversi a seconda della qualità, colore e grandezza (terragno, barbaresco, torriglioni, ricaduti, sangue, moro, stramoro, negro carbonetto, netto, intranetto, camolato, ecc.)⁵⁰, veniva lavorato dalle manifatture impiantate a Genova, Pisa-Livorno o Marsiglia. In generale, e questo vale anche per il coralliere Riva, la lavorazione consisteva nel creare delle perline bucate in modo da formare i "paternostri", molto richiesti in Asia, o le "olivette"; mentre più raro era l'invio di vere e proprie sculture di corallo, più apprezzate in Occidente che in Oriente, dove al limite, specialmente in Cina, venivano spediti blocchi di corallo grezzo ancora attaccati alla roccia⁵¹. Il filo per confezionare i "pa-

⁴⁶ L. LO BASSO, *Il finanziamento dell'armamento marittimo tra società e istituzioni: il caso ligure (secc. XVII-XVIII)*, in "Archivio Storico Italiano", 647, I, 2016, pp. 81-105.

⁴⁷ ARCHIVIO SPINOLA DI PELLICERIA DI GENOVA (ASPG), n. 14.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, cc. 11-17-21-72 e 152; sulle dettagliate vicende del capitano Bianco rinvio a L. LO BASSO, *A vela e a remi. Navigazione, guerra e schiavitù nel Mediterraneo (secc. XVI-XVIII)*, Ventimiglia 2004, pp. 68-82.

⁴⁹ ASPG, n. 49, cc. 31 e 105; APF, "Libro del negotio de signori Nicolò e Pietro Francesco Fieschi cominciato il 25 agosto 1682", c. 34.

⁵⁰ B. LIVERINO, *Il corallo*, cit., p. 48 e F. TRIVELLATO, *Il commercio interculturale*, cit., p. 301; T. FILOCAMO, *Le vie del corallo nel Mediterraneo medioevale*, Napoli 2010, pp. 115-119.

⁵¹ "Forma il corallo una parte del traffico dei Marsiliesi. A Marsiglia, e a Genova se ne formano collane, e braccialetti, che si spacciano molto bene nel Levante", in *Dizionario di commercio dei signori fratelli Savary*, Venezia 1770, vol. II, p. 35.

ternosti” proveniva, nel caso dei Fieschi, dalla Germania, assieme ad una certa quantità di tele, che transitavano attraverso Bolzano, per poi arrivare via terra fino a Genova.

Negli anni Ottanta, la compagnia Fieschi si occupava quasi esclusivamente dell’acquisto del corallo e della sua lavorazione, mentre il vero e proprio commercio verso l’Asia cominciò, così si ricava dai documenti, a partire dalla metà degli anni Novanta, quando nell’archivio di famiglia compaiono le polizze di carico spedite verso Lisbona e da qui per Goa⁵². Il 24 settembre 1697, alla fine della stagione di pesca, furono imbarcate a Genova sulla nave *Nostra Signora del Carmine e Sant’Antonio Abate* del capitano Gio. Batta Lanfranco, 32 casse di corallo, da consegnarsi a Lisbona ai signori Giacomo Filippo Pinceti e Giacomo Francesco Ghersi. Poche settimane dopo, furono spedite sulla nave *Santa Rosa* del capitano Viviano altre 28 casse di corallo, in parte grezzo, da consegnarsi a Pietro d’Oleolis, per un valore complessivo di lire 20.603. L’anno successivo, 1698, molte altre casse di corallo partirono per conto della compagnia Fieschi, marchiate “+NF/GBR”, imbarcate sulla *Capitana* della Repubblica al comando di Gio. Batta Marcenaro, con nolo di 9 pezzi da otto reali per cassa. Il corallo era stato dato in consegna al tenente, Gio. Batta Luigetti, e allo scrivano della nave, Bartolomeo Migone, “per doverne per li medemi coralli procurar l’esito loro in detto luogo [di Lisbona] al mio maggiore vantaggio possibile”, specificando inoltre i prezzi: “Per le mezanie servavi di governo di non rilasciarle a meno di pezzi 9 sino a meno di pezzi 8 da otto reali la libbra, un colore per l’altro e moneta di qui di Genova, e per le grossezze pure non dovrete lasciarle a meno di pezzi 24 da otto reali la libbra”. Si trattava di corallo inviato dal Fieschi a Lisbona, in modo da poter saldare alcuni debiti che aveva sia con Pinceti e Ghersi, sia con Pietro d’Oleolis. Ed ancora, 1699, altre sei casse imbarcate sulla nave *Principessa di Toscana* del capitano Benedetto Prasca; dieci ulteriori casse caricate sulla nave *Nostra Signora di Loreto e San Francesco Saverio* del capitano Gio. Batta Germano, di cui una, la numero 11 di corallo camolato, del valore elevato di lire 7.500⁵³.

I vascelli, che da Genova portavano il corallo a Lisbona, dovevano arrivare rigorosamente prima della partenza della flotta *da India*, che di solito salpava attorno al 25 marzo di ogni anno, in modo da poter giungere a Goa, prima dell’arrivo della cattiva stagione, che come è noto teneva bloccato il porto della capitale orientale portoghese. Placido Ramponi era partito da Genova il 31 dicembre 1697 ed era arrivato a Lisbona, dopo varie traversie l’11 marzo 1698, giusto in tempo per potersi imbarcare per Goa il 25 dello stesso mese⁵⁴. Padre Ippolito Desideri, uno dei più noti missionari gesuiti diretti in Asia, invece, era salpato da Genova il 23 novembre 1712 a bordo della nave *Nostra Signore delle Vigne* del capitano Viviano. “Piacque a Dio in questo viaggio di dare occasione d’un continuo esercizio di conformità del suo Divin volere” – scrisse il Desideri nella sua straordinaria relazione del viaggio che lo avrebbe condotto fino in Tibet, sulla via del corallo – perché “continue furono le tempeste, orribili le agitazioni del mare, e ostinata; sì la contrarietà, come

⁵² APF, f. 45.

⁵³ APF, f. 45, 10 marzo, 10 maggio 1698 e 2 gennaio, 10 settembre e 5 dicembre 1699.

⁵⁴ C. SODINI, *I Medici e le Indie orientali*, cit., pp. 79-80.

ancora l'incostanza de' venti". Nonostante si trattasse solo del Mediterraneo le condizioni di viaggio apparivano alla fine dell'autunno alquanto proibitive, tanto che il 2 dicembre capitò "una sì fiera, e sì violenta tempesta, che il capitano mandò a pregar tutti noi Padri, che unissimo insieme a far orazione e a far gli esorcismi della Chiesa istituiti contro le tempeste"⁵⁵. Se poi, scampato il pericolo si arrivava tardi a Lisbona, bisognava aspettare l'anno successivo, così come era capitato nel 1697 al padre Antonio Alfatio, il quale sottolineò però come i portoghesi imbarcavano sulle navi molti passeggeri, fra cui molti condannati all'esilio dalla giustizia, che morivano durante il viaggio "per la grande puzza e fetore che vi è in dette navi", pertanto consigliava agli altri religiosi in viaggio di pagarsi a bordo "un camerotto, il quale per l'ordinario costa sessanta e settanta mila reis, che son doppie di Spagna 28, come vogliono altri sessanta mila reis per la spesa di cibaria"⁵⁶.

La distribuzione del corallo, una volta giunto a Lisbona, poteva contare su una rete, che possiamo definire italiana, formata da mercanti di origine genovese, come i diversi membri della famiglia Ghersi, tra cui Gio. Tommaso era il più influente e noto, ma anche da fiorentini, come Giovanni Francesco Ginori, vero e proprio fulcro di molte attività commerciali e finanziarie (incassava ad esempio le lettere di cambio provenienti da Goa) legate allo *shipping*, distribuite tra il commercio di merci orientali e il traffico degli schiavi. Per tali motivi Nicolò Fieschi scelse, optando come d'abitudine per il miglior agente sulla piazza, proprio il Ginori, tenuto conto che questi godeva di fiducia e buoni rapporti con Francisco de Castro, forse ebreo, importante mercante di Goa. Da ciò si comprende molto bene come la rete della "nazione" italiana, che aveva una sua sede di riferimento nella chiesa di Nostra Signora di Loreto, era strategica nel commercio interculturale con gli operatori portoghesi, ebrei e indù residenti in India, imperniato sullo scambio corallo-diamanti⁵⁷. Alcuni di questi mercanti genovesi erano stati coinvolti nel 1697 nella compagnia privilegiata, fortemente voluta da Goa, per lo smercio di tessuti, corallo, metalli preziosi e spezie, che ereditava le funzioni di una prima compagnia fondata nel 1692, quasi si trattasse di una sorta di Compagnia delle Indie portoghesi⁵⁸.

⁵⁵ ARCHIVUM ROMANUM SOCIETATIS IESU (ARSI), *Provincia Goana e Malabarica*, n. 71, p. 3; *Il nuovo Ramusio. I missionari italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal*, vol. II, a c. di L. PETECH, Roma 1953, p. 124; A. LUCA, *Nel Tibet ignoto. Lo straordinario viaggio di Ippolito Desideri S.J. (1684-1733)*, Bologna 1987; E.G. BARGIACCHI, *A Bridge Across Two Cultures. Ippolito Desideri S.J. (1684-1733). A Brief Biography*, Firenze 2008; G.C. ROSCIONI, *Il desiderio delle Indie. Storie, sogni e fughe di giovani gesuiti italiani*, Torino 2011, pp. 70-72 e C. FERLAN, *I gesuiti*, Bologna 2015, pp. 67-95.

⁵⁶ ARCHIVIO DELLA PROPAGANDA FIDE (APFi), *Scritture riferite nei Congressi*, Indie Orientali, vol. 4, cc. 693r-v.

⁵⁷ N. ALESSANDRINI, A. VIOLA, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo: reti commerciali e strategie politico-diplomatiche (1650-1700)*, in "Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche", X, 28, 2013, pp. 295-322; N. ALESSANDRINI, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII: elementi di commercio globale*, in "Storia Economica", XVIII, 2015, n. 2., pp. 275-298; APFi, *Scritture riferite nei Congressi*, Indie Orientali e Cina, vol. 6, c. 117r, 24 marzo 1692.

⁵⁸ ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO ULTRAMARINO (AHU), *Conselho Ultramarino, Índia*, cx. 72, doc. 40 et doc. 73; S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *L'Empire portugais d'Asie 1500-1700*, Paris 2013, p. 321; J. ROMERO MAGALHÃS, *As tentativas de recuperação asiática*, in *História de expansão portuguesa*, vol. III, *O Brasil na balança do Império (1697-1808)*, a c. di F. BETHENCOURT, K. CHAUDURI, Lisboa 1998, pp. 46-47.

Il corallo, assieme all'argento e a molte altre merci, prendeva la via dell'India a bordo delle navi portoghesi, le quali, così come scrisse il padre Orazio della Penna, "ogni anno per ordinario si partono dal Regno del Portogallo per le Indie, s'incamminano a loro viaggio da gli 8 fino a 15 marzo, e vanno a dritto cammino per tutto il mese di luglio a costa di Malindi e Monsabicchi e da quei luoghi veleggiavano a drittura a Goa fino a 15 settembre e se per disgrazia dette navi non fossero partite dal Portogallo fino a maggio, non possono più partire"⁵⁹. La flotta riusciva a ripartire da Goa tra la fine di dicembre e la prima metà di gennaio di ciascun anno, e dopo aver fatto scalo a Bahia in Brasile, rientrava in Portogallo tra il mese di ottobre e quello di novembre.

Il viaggio di ritorno di Placido Ramponi iniziò il 20 dicembre 1698 e si concluse a Lisbona, dopo la consueta tappa a Bahia, solamente il 24 ottobre 1699⁶⁰. In quegli anni non sempre le navi portoghesi riuscivano a raggiungere Goa. Secondo la testimonianza di padre Giuseppe Porzio, del 19 aprile 1694, il viaggio della nave *S. Francesco Borgia*, partita da Lisbona il 25 marzo 1693, si interruppe al Capo di Buona Speranza perché incontrò "difficoltà sì grandi che per tutte le diligenze fatte, e tentate dall'arte nautica non fu mai possibile montarlo; tempeste formidabili, correnti contrarie, piogge a diluvio furono la cagione che la nave non seguisse il suo viaggio per Goa, quando dopo sei mesi meno quattro giorni di penosa navigazione, cioè 21 settembre 1693 la nave delle Indie fece ritorno a Lisbona tutta piena di mestizia"⁶¹.

Nel caso della compagnia Fieschi sappiamo con certezza che diverse casse di corallo partirono per le Indie tra il 1695 e il 1698, così come è possibile dedurre dalle poche polizze di carico rinvenute nell'archivio di famiglia. Il 20 marzo 1695 il solito Giovanni Francesco Ginori imbarcò nove casse di corallo sulla nave *Nossa Senhora de Boa* da consegnarsi a Goa ai signori Pedro Fernandez Rocha e Joa Machado. Dalle note allegate del 5 aprile 1695 è altresì possibile ricavare tutte le spese accessorie del trasporto del corallo: sbarco e trasporto delle casse dalla nave in arrivo da Genova alla Casa da India; il dazio relativo; costo della pigione del magazzino della Casa; imbarco sulla nave per l'India e i noli. Per l'anno 1698 vi sono altre tracce di invii, da parte di Giacomo Filippo Pinceti sulla nave *Capitana*; nove casse spedite da Gio. Batta Riva sulla nave *Nossa Senhora des Necessidades*; nove casse imbarcate sulla nave *Bon Jesus*, più altre 18 casse dirette a Calla e Vitola Camotim⁶². Secondo un documento riepilogativo del 29 luglio 1704, quando gli affari della compagnia Fieschi cominciarono ad accusare i primi problemi, furono spediti coralli a Goa per un valore complessivo pari a lire 314.566:5, in larga misura scambiati con diamanti e tele di cotone, anche se da queste merci, secondo il parere del Fieschi, "non si è ricavato di gran lunga le spese di tutti quelli coralli che si sono man-

⁵⁹ *Il nuovo Ramusio. I missionari italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal*, cit., p. 228; P.J.A. GUINOTE, *Ascensão e declínio da Carreira da Índia (Séculos XV-XVIII)*, in *Vasco da Gama e a Índia*, Lisboa 1999, II, pp. 7-39; C.R. BOXER, *The Carreira da Índia, 1650-1750*, in "The Mariner's Mirror", 46, 1960, pp. 35-54.

⁶⁰ C. SODINI, *I Medici e le Indie Orientali*, cit., p. 72-73; S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *L'Empire portugais d'Asie 1500-1700*, cit., pp. 314-315.

⁶¹ APF, *Scritture riferite nei Congressi*, Indie Orientali e Cina, vol., 6, c. 404r-v.

⁶² APF, f. 45.

dati in Goa⁶³. Secondo un'anonima memoria, consegnata nelle mani del marchese Ginori negli anni Quaranta del XVIII secolo, pare che i 5/6 dell'intero corallo pescato del Mediterraneo fosse venduto nel sub-continente indiano e che di anno in anno, il prezzo in Asia dell'oro rosso oscillasse di quasi l'80%, tanto da creare pesanti ripercussioni, sia sulle merci da comprare in cambio, sia sulla gestione della pesca, con particolare ricaduta sui guadagni dei padroni e dei marinai delle coralline⁶⁴.

I corrispondenti dei Fieschi in India erano proprio i Camotim, Mhamai Kamat, una delle più importanti famiglie di Goa, durante il lungo regno del Sultano Moghul Aurangzeb, che all'epoca era riuscito a conquistare anche il regno di Golconda, da dove provenivano i diamanti⁶⁵. I Kamat furono gli interlocutori privilegiati dei mercanti italiani nell'interscambio corallo-diamanti. Dalla documentazione, oltre ai già citati Calla e Vitola (Vitula o Wisula), compare anche Gopala, tra i maggiori mercanti di corallo. I Camotim sapevano adoperare lettere commerciali anche nelle diverse lingue europee, tra cui il francese, l'inglese e naturalmente il portoghese, così come si ricava da una lettera scritta da Gopala il 30 dicembre 1701 a Nicolò Fieschi, che la ricevette solamente il 23 gennaio 1703, e dalla quale si ricavano dati preziosi. Secondo il mercante indiano, il corallo era stato venduto ad un prezzo "non così vantaggioso" a diversi mercanti tra cui cita: una cassa a Ballagatinho Fiado e 17 casse ai mercanti Diogo Antonio de Miranda, Narna Nocique, Massanea Rauto, Narna Santos e la ditta Mateu e Batista Fiado. Inoltre, questi mercanti si erano lamentati della scarsa qualità del prodotto ricevuto, pieno di buchi (*esburacado* o camolato) e pertanto non particolarmente apprezzato. Si chiedeva di inviarne per il futuro di qualità superiore, ben pulito e con un bel disegno dei rami. In cambio il Camotim aveva provveduto ad inviare tre bisagli (sacchetti) di diamanti e rubini di gran qualità, diretti a Giacomo Filippo Pinceti. Infine, segno che lo scambio non fosse solo con i diamanti, Gopala scrisse che erano state spedite diverse cotonine; mentre non era riuscito ad imbarcare la cannella ed il pepe per mancanza di spazio a bordo delle navi *Nossa Senhora de Peidade das Chagas e São António*⁶⁶.

Proprio il Pinceti di Lisbona, pare essere il mediatore di riferimento di Nicolò Fieschi, nella ricezione delle merci giunte dall'India, ma anche di quelle che provenivano dal Brasile. Nei primi anni del nuovo secolo, mentre in Europa si ricorreva nuovamente alle armi per dirimere questioni dinastiche, il commercio dei coralli sembrava non dare più quegli utili, tanto che Giacomo Filippo Pinceti, il 22 maggio 1703, consigliava a Nicolò Fieschi di provare ad investire nel commercio del tabacco e dello zucchero brasiliano, perché in quel momento a Goa, per poter meglio

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 29 luglio 1704.

⁶⁴ AGL, I, 1, b. 3, Scritture e documenti della Cecina, "Memoria sopra la pesca, e vendita del corallo per la colonia di Cecina".

⁶⁵ Secondo il padre teatino Giovanni Appiani nel 1697 "l'imperatore del Gran Mogol regnante per nome Aurengzeb è maomettano, già molto vecchio, uomo di grande ingegno, che ha saputo, parte colla forza delle armi, parte colle sue arti scaltrissime, soggettare immediatamente al suo dominio quasi tutti i principi e regni dell'India". APFi, *Scritture riferite nei Congressi*, Indie Orientali e Cina, vol. 40, c. 330v-331r; A. ERALY *Il trono dei Moghul. La saga dei grandi imperatori dell'India*, Milano 2013, pp. 329-452.

⁶⁶ APF, f. 45, 30 dicembre 1701. F. TRIVELLATO, *Il commercio interculturale*, cit., p. 209. A. DAS GUPTA, *Merchants of Maritime India 1500-1800*, Aldeshot 1994.

vendere o barattare corallo, era spedirne delle qualità “moro, negro, strafino e so-prafino”; mentre per quanto concerneva l’acquisto di diamanti, il Pinceti suggeriva di fare molta attenzione perché non sempre le pietre preziose erano di qualità eccelsa in rapporto al prezzo richiesto dai mercanti indiani⁶⁷. Pochi mesi dopo, in un’altra lettera, è lo stesso *négociant* di Lisbona a spiegarci come funzionava lo smercio dei diamanti arrivati da Goa. In genere, il Pinceti provvedeva a vendere i diamanti a Lisbona, destinati ad alimentare le lavorazioni di Anversa o Amsterdam; oppure provvedeva a spedirli a Genova, dove il Fieschi li rivendeva ai gioiellieri⁶⁸.

Il 22 gennaio 1704, appena arrivate le navi da Goa, il Pinceti si premurò di avvertire Nicolò Fieschi che aveva ricevuto una mezza cassa di tele di cotone del valore di 1.475 pezzi da otto reali. In questo caso il mercante di Lisbona suggeriva di investire maggiormente nel commercio delle tele indiane, ormai da decenni molto richieste sul mercato europeo, grazie alla loro poliedricità d’uso e alla bellezza dei colori⁶⁹. Nella stessa lettera segnalava per contro come il commercio dei diamanti nell’ultimo anno fosse decaduto, con una svalutazione di circa il 40% nelle vendite. Per tali ragioni talvolta era preferibile vendere i diamanti a Lisbona in cambio di zucchero brasiliano, più commerciabile sul mercato genovese. Nonostante queste difficoltà, lo stesso Pinceti continuò a trattare in contemporanea sia tele di cotone e sia diamanti, sempre in affari con i Camotim⁷⁰.

I diamanti, una volta giunti nelle mani di Nicolò Fieschi, venivano preferibilmente venduti ai gioiellieri di Parigi⁷¹. Nella capitale francese il referente di fiducia era Filippo Alvarez, forse un altro ebreo, il quale comprava pietre preziose anche da Venezia, dal nobile Leonardo Venier, e le rivendeva ad Anversa. Alvarez di solito preferiva saldare direttamente l’acquisto al Fieschi, ma senza nessuna dilazione, per non dovere pagare nessun interesse al genovese, tanto che in una lettera dell’8 febbraio 1705, gli ricordava “come lei sa benissimo, un mercante ha li quattrini hoggidì e non li ha più domani”⁷². I prezzi dei diamanti erano molto variabili a seconda delle tendenze del mercato e della qualità delle pietre, ma indicativamente nel gennaio 1700 un sacchetto imbarcato sulla nave del capitano Germano era stato valutato 2.500 pezzi da otto reali, mentre un altro più piccolo, caricato sulla nave *Santa Rosa*, solamente 400 pezzi da otto reali.

La rete mercantile dei Fieschi passava anche da Livorno e si imperniava nella figura di Abram Sulema, uno dei più importanti esponenti della comunità ebraica

⁶⁷ APF, f. 45, 22 maggio 1703. ASGe, *Archivio Segreto, Lettere consoli a Lisbona*, b. 2659.

⁶⁸ APF, f. 45, 30 novembre 1703; T. VANNESTE, *Global trade and commercial networks: Eighteenth-century diamond merchants*, London 2011.

⁶⁹ P. HAUDRERE, *Naissance du goût de l’Inde en Europe (XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, in *Le goût de l’Inde*, a c. di G. LE BOUËDEC, B. NICOLAS, Rennes 2008, p. 11; S. BECKERT, *L’impero del cotone. Una storia globale*, Torino 2016; B. LEMIRE, *Revising the Historical Narrative: India, Europe, and the Cotton Trade, c.1300–1800*, in *The Spinning World. A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200–1850*, a c. di G. RIELLO, P. PARTHASARATHI, Oxford 2009; *Les Compagnies des Indes*, a c. di R. ESTIENNE, Parigi 2017, pp. 202-206.

⁷⁰ APF, f. 45, 25 marzo e 5 novembre 1704.

⁷¹ *Le commerce du luxe à Paris aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles. Echanges nationaux et internationaux*, a c. di S. CASTELLUCCIO, Bern 2009. Su Parigi come centro della moda europea si veda F. TRENTMANN, *L’impero delle cose*, cit., pp. 62-63.

⁷² APF, f. 45, 8 febbraio 1705.

dell'epoca. La fitta e un po' ripetitiva corrispondenza, che si dipana attraverso gli anni 1703-1706, ci evidenzia un quadro mercantile ancora più articolato rispetto a quello che abbiamo visto fino ad ora. I diamanti, ma anche rubini e perle, che arrivavano da Goa, venivano rivenduti dal Sulema ai suoi corrispondenti ebrei, perlopiù residenti a Venezia. Il 20 giugno 1703, il noto mercante livornese evidenziava, in una sua missiva diretta al Fieschi, come il sacchetto numero 19, fosse di elevata qualità, perché conteneva sia diamanti di ottima fattura, sia preziose perle di Hormuz, nonché magnifici rubini. Abram Sulema era ancora indeciso, in base alla redditività dell'operazione, se inviarli per la lavorazione a Venezia o procedere ad una lavorazione in loco. Dalla medesima lettera apprendiamo, inoltre, che il Sulema riceveva con regolarità dal Riva e dal Fieschi anche casse di corallo, da vendersi a Smirne, grazie alla mediazione dei mercanti armeni⁷³. Dalle numerose lettere del Sulema è possibile infine ricavare dati interessanti sul mercato internazionale dei diamanti: pare che in quegli anni il prezzo in India fosse cresciuto del 30% e questo provocava problemi enormi nella vendita sui mercati europei, costringendo i mediatori a guadagnare meno sulle transazioni.

Come detto parte del corallo condotto a Livorno veniva inviato a Smirne, attraverso navi che di solito erano provenzali o genovesi ed in cambio il Riva faceva arrivare a Genova una buona quantità di seta. Nel porto ottomano operavano per la compagnia Fieschi, sia diversi mercanti armeni, sia il fratello di Abram Sulema, sia il genovese Giorgio Maria Tagliaferro. Questi, il 16 gennaio 1704, era giunto a Smirne, dopo essere passato da Venezia. Già lungo il tragitto aveva provato a vendere il corallo ad alcuni mercanti "mezzi turchi e armeni" che però non avevano voluto nemmeno vederli "perché troppo di color rosso". Alla fine aveva provato a scambiare l'oro rosso con tessuti di cotone, mentre attendeva con fiducia l'arrivo della carovana persiana. Sugeriva al Fieschi, per il futuro, di inviare con la nave del capitano Castagneto coralli non troppo scuri, in modo da poterli barattare facilmente con tessuti di seta⁷⁴, cedendo pertanto ai gusti dei locali. Alcuni mesi dopo, lo stesso Tagliaferro segnalò l'arrivo a Smirne della carovana di Persia, ricca di seta, cotone, spezie e rabarbaro e scrisse che pertanto avrebbe provato ad utilizzare come merce di scambio sia l'argento e sia il corallo, entrambi richiesti dai persiani⁷⁵. Oltre al Tagliaferro, gran parte dell'oro rosso veniva smerciato a Smirne attraverso "l'Armeno", il quale non era altro che il potente conte Veligian Sceriman, la cui famiglia aveva una rete mercantile che andava da Livorno a Venezia; da Roma a Vienna e da Amsterdam a Madras⁷⁶.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 20 giugno 1703; L. FRATTARELLI FISCHER, *Vivere fuori dal ghetto. Ebrei a Pisa e Livorno (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, Torino 2008, p. 195.

⁷⁴ APF, f. 45, 16 gennaio 1704.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, 13 settembre 1705.

⁷⁶ S.D. ASLANIAN, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean. The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa*, Berkeley-New York-Londra 2011; M. SANACORE, *Splendore e decadenza degli Sceriman di Livorno*, in *Gli armeni lungo le strade d'Italia. Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Torino, Genova, Livorno, 8-11 marzo 1997)*, Pisa-Roma 1998, pp. 127-130; O. RAVEUX, *Les Arménieniens et la Méditerranée, médiateurs techniques entre Orient et Occident dans l'indiennage au XVIII^e siècle*, in *Le goût de l'Inde*, cit., pp. 44-51; sui rapporti tra Sceriman e Riva si veda la dichiarazione stilata dal notaio Gio. Giuseppe Giuliani di Livorno il 7 dicembre 1705 in APF, f. 45.

La via di Livorno, per i Fieschi, entrò in crisi nel corso del 1705, quando i rapporti tra il Fieschi e il Sulema si modificarono a causa della lite che il nobile genovese aveva iniziato con il Riva, che si concluderà con il sequestro dei beni e l'incarcerazione del coralliere⁷⁷. Gli affari si conclusero definitivamente con il decesso di Nicolò Fieschi avvenuto nel corso del 1709. La via del corallo, che si dipanava in una rete commerciale che da Lisbona andava fino Goa e da Livorno fino a Smirne⁷⁸, continuò a prosperare grazie ad altri operatori, tra i quali gli Ergas & Silvera, ma con ancora un contributo di mercanti genovesi, giacché sappiamo che, un altro importante membro del patriziato della Superba, Marcello Durazzo vendeva casse di corallo in India, tramite la ditta di Lisbona Barducci e Giudici, presente anche nella rete degli Ergas & Silvera; ai padri gesuiti presenti a Goa; e acquistava diamanti e pepe, attraverso Siro Maria e Francesco Maria Vaccari di Lisbona.

UN AFFARE TRA I TANTI: MARCELLO DURAZZO, I GESUITI E IL MERCATO DEL CORALLO

Marcello Durazzo (1634-1717), marchese di Gabiano, era nella seconda metà del XVII secolo uno dei più noti membri del patriziato genovese, nonché uno dei più innovativi imprenditori dell'epoca, giacché assieme alle tradizionali speculazioni, imperniate sul debito pubblico dei diversi Stati e sul circuito delle fiere dei cambi, investiva notevoli capitali nell'armamento marittimo e nei commerci intercontinentali⁷⁹. Tra i molteplici affari, alla fine della sua carriera, Marcello Durazzo, oltre ad essere uno dei finanziatori di John Law, decise nel 1714 di inserirsi nel commercio del corallo, di cui molto probabilmente conosceva bene l'importanza, anche perché nel suo palazzo di via Balbi a Genova risiedeva in affitto proprio Nicolò Fieschi. Trattandosi di un nuovo commercio, decise di prendere contatti con il padre Henrique Pereyra della Compagnia di Gesù a Goa, sfruttando i buoni rapporti che lo stesso Marcello aveva con i gesuiti, grazie alla mediazione dei suoi due figli entrati nell'ordine. Attraverso la ditta italiana di Lisbona, Barducci e Giudici, Durazzo aveva spedito le prime casse di corallo, nella speranza che il padre Pereyra potesse venderle con buoni risultati in India. Il 18 gennaio 1714 ricevette la prima lettera del gesuita, il quale, pur sostenendo che fungeva da procuratore per numerosi mercanti che si trovavano a Londra, Amsterdam, Livorno e Genova, rispondeva che non avrebbe potuto occuparsi in maniera continuativa degli affari del Durazzo, ma che avrebbe provveduto a metterlo in contatto con la ditta indù Ragunatto e Sadaixina Naiques di Goa⁸⁰.

I primi risultati della vendita dei coralli arrivarono a Genova soltanto alla fine del 1714, allorché il 15 dicembre Marcello Durazzo scrisse ai Barducci e Giudici di Lisbona, rassicurandosi del fatto che con la flotta del Brasile, che portava in Europa

⁷⁷ APF, f. 7.

⁷⁸ ASGE, *Notai Antichi*, notaio Gio. Francesco Tavarone, f. 9542, 25 aprile 1709 e ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI FIRENZE (ASFI), *Notarile Moderno*, Testamenti forestieri, f. 16.

⁷⁹ L. LO BASSO, *Capitani, corsari e armatori. I mestieri e le culture del mare dalla tratta degli schiavi a Garibaldi*, Novi Ligure 2011, pp. 17-39.

⁸⁰ ARCHIVIO DURAZZO GIUSTINIANI DI GENOVA (ADGG), *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 135.

discrete quantità di zucchero, tabacco e polvere d'oro, quest'ultima venduta dal Durazzo alla zecca di Venezia, sarebbero giunti da Goa due sacchetti di diamanti che erano "parte del ricavato dei coralli". Dopo aver chiesto l'invio dei preziosi a Genova, con le prime navi inglesi o francesi transitanti da Lisbona, Marcello confermava ai suoi agenti in Portogallo che avrebbe inviato altro corallo ai Naiques di Goa. Nella stessa data, il Durazzo scrisse anche al padre Pereyra, ringraziandolo per aver venduto il corallo e per avergli suggerito il contatto con i Naiques, di cui avrebbe desiderato sapere di che "nazione" fossero, ma che ad ogni modo egli ci avrebbe collaborato, facendoli divenire "gli amici di Goa", perché aveva piena fiducia nei membri della Compagnia di Gesù⁸¹.

L'attività nel commercio del corallo di Marcello Durazzo era, al contrario di quella dei fratelli Fieschi, collaterale e limitata rispetto alle altre e molteplici iniziative che il nobile genovese intraprendeva, ma per contro essa ci ha lasciato tracce documentarie di qualità superiore, se paragonate a quelle derivate dalle attività dei Fieschi. Se si analizza il flusso della corrispondenza in uscita del marchese Durazzo, si osserva che, negli anni compresi tra il 1714 ed il 1717, furono inviate 1.065 lettere e di queste solo il 3% prese la via di Lisbona e soltanto l'1% la via di Goa; mentre ad esempio una mole importante di missive (il 20%) prese la strada di Roma, ma altresì di Firenze, Venezia, Napoli e Milano: queste ultime località rappresentavano congiuntamente circa il 60% del volume delle lettere spedite dal nobile genovese. L'affare del corallo, in buona sostanza, occupava solo una piccolissima fetta (il 4%) della vita economica del Durazzo, risultando pertanto un'attività meno stabile e continuativa rispetto a quelle gestite dai fratelli Fieschi⁸². A partire dalla prima spedizione del 1714, i contatti diretti con i Naiques si manifestarono solamente tra la fine e l'inizio di ciascun anno, seguendo i cadenzati tempi di andata e ritorno delle flotte: ciascuna operazione tra l'invio del corallo e il ritorno dei diamanti, sempre con missive al seguito, impiegava almeno un anno intero.

In maniera del tutto episodica, Marcello inviò già nel corso del 1713 una cassa di corallo a Cadice ai corrispondenti Cardinale e Lagomarsino, chiedendo loro di venderla in America. E non solo. All'inizio del 1715 il Durazzo tornava a disquisire in tema di corallo con gli amici gaditani: "Tengo qui altra partita di coralli mezzanie di colori alti, o sia fini, desidero sapere se costà possa intraprendere la vendita, o pure se converrà navigarli per le Indie, e per qual parte per cavarne buono costrutto"⁸³. Da quel momento in poi la via americana del corallo non fu seguita ulteriormente, mentre proseguì l'avventura delle spedizioni per Goa. La cassetta del 1713 però nel frattempo, dopo due anni, era stata venduta in America; in cambio, il Durazzo aveva fatto arrivare a Genova 50 mazzi di vaniglia, in quel momento molto richiesta in Europa.

Dalle lettere del Durazzo si vedono e si comprendono meglio i meccanismi fiduciari che sono alla base dei commerci. Il marchese, quando volle cimentarsi nel

⁸¹ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 212, c. 74.

⁸² Le statistiche sulle lettere inviate da Marcello Durazzo sono costruite sui copialettere nn. 212-213-214.

⁸³ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 212, c. 88 e c. 114; n. 136, lettera di Cardinale e Lagomarsino del 4 luglio 1715, giunta a Genova il 12 settembre dello stesso anno.

commercio del corallo, scelse all'inizio la ditta Barducci e Giudici di Lisbona, molto attiva in tali traffici e anche in contatto con gli Ergas & Silvera; ma già nella lettera spedita a Goa il 17 gennaio 1715, manifestava alcune perplessità su questi mercanti, a causa di una mancata spedizione di diamanti con le navi dell'anno precedente; pertanto prese contatti con i fratelli Siro Maria e Francesco Maria Vaccari, sempre di Lisbona. Gli stessi, qualche anno dopo, poco prima del loro fallimento, furono a loro volta sostituiti nel 1723 dai figli dello scomparso Marcello, con il mercante Giuseppe Maria Bonarota, a causa di una serie di partite di coralli mai pagati⁸⁴. Da ciò si comprende bene come i Durazzo fossero attenti ad ogni segnale che portasse alla mancanza di fiducia nei corrispondenti e come fosse necessario avere nelle diverse città una rete di agenti, gli uni pronti a vigilare e, eventualmente, a sostituire gli altri⁸⁵.

Per anni Marcello reclamò dai Barducci e Giudici l'invio di un sacchetto di diamanti, il quale, nonostante anche la sentenza favorevole emessa da un tribunale commerciale portoghese, non giunse mai a destinazione, sancendo pertanto la fine dei rapporti commerciali.

Solitamente i mediatori italiani di Lisbona prendevano una commissione su ciascuna operazione del 2%, così come si ricava da una lettera del 29 marzo 1718, quando morto Marcello, il figlio Giacomo Filippo, assieme al fratello Giuseppe Maria, fu costretto a rinegoziare i rapporti d'affari con tutti i corrispondenti del padre⁸⁶. Inoltre, dalle lettere dei Durazzo si comprendono meglio le dinamiche del mercato relative alle merci scambiate con il corallo. I diamanti erano senza dubbio la principale merce, ma dalla corrispondenza appare chiaro come non sempre le pietre ricevute a Genova fossero di alta qualità e pertanto in molti casi fosse più conveniente importare dall'Asia tele indiane, ma soprattutto pepe; oppure talvolta convenisse vendere il corallo a Lisbona e con il ricavato fosse più opportuno acquistare nella capitale portoghese: zucchero, tabacco e oro provenienti dal Brasile.

Dopo il 1718, i rapporti intercontinentali intrapresi dai Durazzo si rovinarono. Giacomo Filippo Durazzo, principale erede di Marcello, cominciò a chiedere agli "amici di Goa" d'inviare diamanti di migliore qualità, o altrimenti di provvedere a fornire altre merci. Alle reiterate richieste, i mercanti indù risposero con invii di pepe e di mussoline del Bengala, ma proprio queste ultime fecero rovinare definitivamente i rapporti di fiducia, perché secondo i Durazzo, erano troppo presenti sul mercato europeo e pertanto vennero giudicate un pessimo affare. Nel febbraio 1720, inoltre, i Naiques furono avvisati che, se non avessero inviato diamanti di alta qualità, i Durazzo non avrebbero più inviato una sola libbra di corallo in India. Infine, segno anche di una minore fiducia dei mercanti indiani nei confronti dei figli di Marcello, i Naiques, a partire dal 1719, manifestarono a loro volta insofferenza, perché il corallo ricevuto a Goa non era quello richiesto sul mercato, mentre al contrario per Giacomo Filippo i "colori erano perfettissimi". I cattivi rapporti fiduciari, ormai ai minimi termini, fecero pertanto terminare nel 1723 l'esperienza commer-

⁸⁴ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 212, c. 79; n. 217, lettera del 14 settembre 1723.

⁸⁵ Sul tema della fiducia tra mercanti si veda W. KAISER-G. BUTI, *Moyens, supports et usages de l'information marchande à l'époque moderne*, in "Rives Nord-méditerranéennes", 27, 2007, pp. 7-11.

⁸⁶ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 215.

ciale, basata sullo scambio corallo-diamanti⁸⁷. Proprio la conclusione degli affari tra i Durazzo e i Naiques di Goa evidenzia quanto fosse determinante l'aspetto fiduciario e il conseguente rispetto che ci doveva essere negli affari: in questo caso si è visto come da una parte furono i Durazzo a mostrare insofferenza per la presunta bassa qualità dei diamanti, ma per converso gli stessi Naiques avevano mal accettato la morte di Marcello, definito nella lettera del 18 gennaio 1719, "il miglior corrispondente nostro in Europa"⁸⁸.

In conclusione, se appare chiaro che i mercanti italiani, e tra questi i genovesi, furono tra gli europei più presenti sul mercato indiano di Goa fin dal XVI secolo, emerge evidentemente che la compagnia dei fratelli Fieschi, vissuta tra la fine del XVII e gli inizi del XVIII secolo, fu un unicum per durata ed intensità dei commerci, nonostante la documentazione d'archivio sia nel complesso frammentaria e lacunosa. Quando con la morte di Nicolò si esaurì l'esperienza del commercio intercontinentale dei Fieschi, subentrarono, sfruttando la medesima rete commerciale, gli Ergas & Silvera, capaci poi di ampliare lo smaltimento del corallo mediterraneo in Asia, attraverso la Compagnia delle Indie britannica. In contemporanea, vi fu, come abbiamo visto, un altro tentativo genovese di inserimento in tali traffici, la cui presenza fu però episodica e non continuativa, operato sviluppando un sistema di rete commerciale alternativa, che sfruttava il contatto personale che Marcello aveva con la Compagnia di Gesù. Come infine agissero nel contesto indiano i gesuiti, in rapporto all'uso del corallo, non solo per scopi decorativi, è tutta un'altra storia, che meriterebbe di essere raccontata⁸⁹.

⁸⁷ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, nn. 216-217. Giacomo Filippo nel 1719, inoltre, entrò nella nuova società che rileva la gestione di Tabarca: L. PICCINNO, *Un'impresa fra terra e mare*, cit.

⁸⁸ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 137.

⁸⁹ ADGG, *Archivio Durazzo*, n. 535, c. 153-c. 232 e c. 454; *Ibid.*, n. 213, 22 dicembre 1716; G. TASCHARD, *Il viaggio di Siam de' padri gesuiti mandati dal re di Francia all'Indie, e alla China*, Milano 1693, p. 91; S. SITZIA, *Il voyage de Siam del gesuita francese Guy Tachard*, in "Storia urbana", 151, 2016, pp. 99-129.

FRANCIS BRUMONT, Deux ports semblables, mais que tout oppose: Bordeaux et Rouen au XVI^e siècle

Les deux grands ports de la façade atlantique française ont de nombreux points communs, notamment la facilité des relations avec leur hinterland. Mais, au XVI^e siècle, ils ont eu un destin bien différent : le commerce bordelais n'a pas connu beaucoup de changement, sauf sa participation à la pêche à Terre-Neuve, et c'est un port avec peu de bateaux et peu de marins. Rouen est à la tête d'un ensemble de ports complémentaires et a participé très rapidement au commerce lointain, en Afrique et en Amérique (Brésil, Antilles) tout en jouant un grand rôle dans la pêche à la morue. Bordeaux est un port passif, qui attend que les navires viennent charger les produits que proposent ses marchands (vin, pastel) et qui reçoit ce qu'ils apportent pour les redistribuer dans son hinterland. Rouen doit approvisionner Paris et la région parisienne, apporter des matières premières pour l'industrie normande et chercher des débouchés pour ses productions : ce port s'est donc rapidement tourné vers les destinations lointaines où il pouvait satisfaire les besoins de son économie.

The two major ports on the French Atlantic coast have many points in common, including the facilities of relations with their hinterland. But, in the sixteenth century, they had a very different destiny: the Bordeaux trade has not seen much change, except for its participation in codfishing in Newfoundland, and it is a port with few boats and few sailors. Rouen is at the head of a set of complementary ports and has participated very quickly in distant trade, in Africa and America (Brazil, West Indies) while playing a big role in the cod fishery. Bordeaux is a passive port, waiting for the ships to load the products offered by its merchants (wine, pastel) and who receives what they bring to redistribute it in its hinterland. Rouen must supply Paris and the Paris region, bring raw materials for the Normandy industry and look for outlets for its productions: this port has therefore quickly turned to distant destinations where it could satisfy the needs of its economy.

¹ In questa sezione del volume abbiamo inserito gli abstracts inviatici dagli Autori.

GUILLAUME CALAFAT, Un réseau corse entre l'Afrique du Nord et l'Europe. Commerce maritime, institutions et enrichissement au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles

Cet article présente un réseau de négociants et de marins corses actifs en Méditerranée occidentale au tournant des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, en particulier à Tunis, Marseille, Livourne et en Corse génoise. À partir de factums et de mémoires du début du XVII^e siècle, d'actes notariés et des archives de la chancellerie du consulat de France à Tunis, il montre que plusieurs familles de marchands corses, pour certains naturalisés à Marseille, pour d'autres convertis à l'Islam à Tunis, occupaient des positions politiques et économiques de premier plan tout autour de la Méditerranée. Présentant plusieurs carrières de négociants, l'article avance différents facteurs au fondement de cette réussite, à savoir le trafic d'armes et de corail en Afrique du nord, la création puis la mainmise sur la compagnie du Corail marseillaise, l'achat du consulat de Tunis, l'existence d'une flotte marchande efficace et expérimentée, ainsi que des relais financiers et marchands en Corse et en Toscane permettant d'entretenir et de recycler les produits de la course (marchandises comme captifs). Cet enrichissement ostensible à Tunis, à Marseille, à Livourne et au Cap Corse, faisait l'objet d'inimitiés manifestées dans des libelles qui pointaient l'impiété religieuse et l'injustice du monopole.

Enrichissement ; guerre de course ; Méditerranée occidentale ; corail ; consulat

Quest'articolo presenta una rete di mercanti e marinai corsi attivi nel Mediterraneo occidentale tra il Cinque e il Seicento, in particolare a Tunisi, Marsiglia, Livorno e nella Corsica genovese. Sulla base di factums e memoriali del primo Seicento, di atti notarili e dell'archivio della cancelleria del Consolato di Francia a Tunisi, esso mostra che parecchie famiglie di mercanti corsi, alcuni naturalizzati francesi a Marsiglia, altri convertiti all'Islam a Tunisi, occupavano posizioni di primo livello tanto politico quanto economico intorno al Mediterraneo. Presentando varie carriere di mercanti, l'articolo esamina diversi fattori quali base di questo successo, cioè il traffico di armi e coralli in Nord Africa, la creazione poi il controllo della Compagnia del Corallo marsigliese, l'acquisto del Consolato di Tunisi, l'esistenza di una flotta mercantile efficiente ed esperta, così come le attività finanziarie e mercantile in Corsica ed in Toscana che permettono di mantenere e riciclare i prodotti del corso (sia merci che cattivi). Questo arricchimento ostentato a Tunisi, Marsiglia, Livorno e Capo Corso fu oggetto di inimicizie testimoniate dalle accuse d'empietà e di monopolio.

PAOLO CALCAGNO, Attraverso la porta di Lisbona: i generi coloniali volano del commercio luso-genovese tra XVII e XVIII secolo

Un ritorno alle fonti alla luce delle nuove suggestioni della world history e della storia culturale attenta ai consumi generati dalla circolazione globale delle merci ha permesso negli ultimi anni di riscoprire il ruolo di Genova quale centro di redistribuzione dei prodotti coloniali in età moderna. In particolare, furono le nuove piante americane ad alimentare un intenso flusso verso l'Europa e il Mediterraneo, approfittando della "porta" di Lisbona e del suo contatto diretto con le piantagioni del Brasile. Proprio nella capitale lusitana, con sempre maggior vigore

a partire dalla metà del XVII secolo, gli operatori genovesi furono capaci di concentrare i loro interessi mercantili e di attivare fruttuosi contatti con i loro corrispondenti nella Superba, per far convergere a Genova – in buona misura attraverso navi comandate da capitani genovesi – zucchero e tabacco. Ciò configura l'esistenza di gruppi imprenditoriali polifunzionali che si dedicavano in maniera coordinata all'armamento, ai trasporti, al commercio. Soprattutto il primo dei due prodotti menzionati invase il porto ligure nei decenni finali del Seicento, grazie all'esistenza di network collaudati e cementati da legami familiari. Con attenzione alla dimensione diacronica del problema, il saggio prova a ricostruire la cronologia della preminenza mediterranea nel commercio dello zucchero, a livello di porti e a livello di élite mercantili. Gli studi effettuati finora, suffragati da importanti acquisizioni tratte dalla documentazione doganale e dalla corrispondenza privata, attestano l'assoluta leadership genovese nei decenni centrali del XVIII secolo, quando la produzione brasiliana crebbe in maniera dirompente facendo dello zucchero uno dei maggiori "affari" commerciali dell'epoca.

Un retour aux sources à la lumière des nouvelles interrogations de la world history et de l'histoire culturelle attentive aux changements provoqués dans la consommation par la circulation globale des marchandises a récemment permis de redécouvrir le rôle de Gênes comme centre de redistribution des produits coloniaux au cours de l'époque moderne. Il s'agit notamment des nouvelles plantes américaines qui ont alimenté un intense trafic vers l'Europe et la Méditerranée, en profitant de la "porte" de Lisbonne et de sa connexion directe avec les plantations du Brésil. Avec une vigueur croissante à partir du milieu du XVIIe siècle, des opérateurs génois ont pu concentrer leurs intérêts négociants dans la capitale portugaise et établir des contacts fructueux avec leurs correspondants dans la Superba. Leurs affaires consistaient à rediriger le sucre et le tabac américains vers Gênes, dans une large mesure avec des navires commandés par des capitaines génois. Ce commerce montre l'existence de groupes d'entrepreneurs multifonctionnels se consacrant de manière coordonnée à l'armement, au transport et au commerce. Grâce à l'existence et à l'activité de réseaux structurés par des liens familiaux, le sucre a notamment envahi le port ligure durant les dernières décennies du XVIIe siècle. Dans un cadre diachronique, cette contribution tente de reconstituer la chronologie de la prééminence méditerranéenne dans le commerce du sucre, au niveau des ports et au niveau des élites marchandes. D'importantes découvertes dans les archives douanières et la correspondance négociante privée confirment le leadership absolu de Gênes dans les décennies du milieu du XVIIIe siècle, lorsque la production brésilienne s'est développée fortement, faisant du sucre l'une des plus grandes "affaires" commerciales de l'époque.

WENDY R. CHILDS, England's Maritime and Commercial Networks in the Late Middle Ages

England was tied to Europe by many links: political, diplomatic, dynastic, ecclesiastical, intellectual, cultural and commercial. For all these links (except those to Scotland) it had to rely on the sea and commercial shipping. At the end of the middle ages England's commercial network was geographically extensive and illustrates a number of the themes of the Prato conference 2018. This paper, basing its analysis on England's national customs accounts between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, briefly examines England's ports as commercial nodes (of which

London was the busiest, with Hull, Southampton and Bristol becoming the main regional hubs by the fifteenth century), its shipping (which provided both liner and tramping services and sailed all year round), and its exports (which shifted from wool to woollen cloth over the period). It then focuses on the range of markets with which English merchants and ships had direct maritime contacts. These stretched from Scandinavia in the north (including Iceland in the fifteenth century) to the eastern Baltic, all around the North Sea and the Channel, into the Bay of Biscay and along the Atlantic coasts of Iberia to Lisbon and Seville. Direct contact with the Mediterranean remained in the hands of Italians, Catalans and Basques. There were clear shifts in emphasis in these markets over the centuries in response to changing commodities, pressures of economic competition, changing alliances and war. Ports were cosmopolitan places and thus exposed to many external influences, but while it is easy in England to discern material influences and some additions to language, political and legal structure largely remained of their region.

L'Angleterre était attachée à l'Europe par liens politiques, diplomatiques, dynastiques, ecclésiastiques, intellectuels, et commerciaux; pour tous ces liens (ceux avec l'Ecosse excepté) il faut compter sur la mer et les navires commerciaux. A la fin du moyen âge, le réseau commercial anglais était étendu géographiquement et il peut éclairer plusieurs thèmes de la conférence Prato 2018. Cette communication, fondée sur les archives des douanes anglaises du treizième au quinzième siècle, examine d'abord brièvement les ports anglais (les nodes commerciales), dont Londres était le plus mouvementé et Hull, Southampton, et Bristol devenaient les plus grandes nodes régionales au quinzième siècle. Donc elle examine les vaisseaux (qui fournissaient des lignes régulières et qui naviguaient toute l'année), et les exports (qui changeaient peu à peu de la laine aux draps de laine). Finalement elle concentre sur les régions et marchés ou les marchands et les navires anglais faisaient les contacts directs. Ces contacts s'étendaient de Scandinavie au nord (l'Islande aussi au quinzième siècle) jusqu'à la Baltique à l'est; tout autour du Mer Nord et la Manche; à travers du golfe de Gascogne et le long des côtes atlantiques de l'Ibérie jusqu'à Lisbonne et Séville. Les contacts directs méditerranées restaient dans les mains des Italiens, Catalans et Basques. Il y avait des changes constantes parmi les marchés pendant les siècles à cause des commodités qui changeaient, des pressures de la concurrence économique, des alliances politiques et la guerre. Les ports étaient, donc, les endroits cosmopolites, et exposés à beaucoup des influences du dehors. On peut facilement discerner en Angleterre les influences matérielles et aux activités populaires, mais les structures politiques et juridiques restaient plus particulières aux régions.

NENAD FEJIC, Extension, ramification, temporalité et dangerosité d'un grand réseau, situant Raguse (Dubrovnik) au point nodal des échanges entre la Péninsule Ibérique et l'Orient méditerranéen (XIII-XV siècle)

L'auteur se penche sur quatre différents aspects du réseau maritime ragusain : l'extension, la ramification, la temporalité et la dangerosité. Au travers de ces quatre aspects dont les spécificités sont étudiées séparément, on dresse le tableau de l'ensemble du réseau. Chacun de ces aspects a été fortement influencé par le site géographique et les vicissitudes historiques de la ville, que l'auteur rappelle au début : le réseau maritime ragusain est né sous la domination vénitienne, (1205-1358), au carrefour des routes terrestres qui dès le XIV siècle véhiculèrent les

produits, notamment les minerais d'or et d'argent de l'arrière-pays balkanique vers l'Adriatique. L'extension du réseau ragusain est donc précoce, et elle ne cède en rien au réseau vénitien, incluant deux grands volets du Levant et du Ponant. La particularité du réseau ragusain, par rapport à celui de Venise, est que ses deux extensions, se rejoignent et se complètent souvent en haute mer, ne passant pas par la ville slave : cela montre que la marine ragusaine, a relativement tôt dépassé par son volume et son incidence les seuls besoins de son port d'attache. La ramification du réseau ragusain, est la conséquence de l'abandon du système des « mudae » à Raguse au profit de l'entreprise maritime individuelle, ce qui rendait l'entreprise plus précaire, et obligeait à multiplier les escales pour rentabiliser l'entreprise. La temporalité du réseau ragusain, est moins dépendante du rythme des saisons, les navires ragusains appareillant pendant toute l'année, aussi bien en été qu'en hiver. La dangerosité du réseau, est la conséquence d'un désengagement de l'Etat ragusain, qui n'était pas impliqué dans l'entretien du réseau, sauf en de rares occasions, lorsque les marins et les marchands étaient victimes de pirates, ce qui l'obligeait à organiser des poursuites, des repréailles ou des missions auprès des pouvoirs dont ces pirates étaient ressortissants.

The Ragusan maritime network gradually developed from the ancient Venetian one, at the time of Venetian preponderance (1205-1358). But, at the end of the Venetian domination, the Ragusan network developed some characteristics of its own, presented in this contribution. The characteristics of the network are here presented through its four mains aspects: extension, ramification, temporality and dangerousness. In terms of extension, both in the East and in the West of the Mediterranean, the Ragusan maritime network had great similarities with the Venetian one. It is in terms of ramification, that the differences gradually appear. As the Ragusan vessels could no longer benefit from the "mudae" system, their network became widely dispersed, and included a great number of destinations, even if these destinations were sometimes very close to each other. The practice of "door-to-door" navigation was thus characteristic of the situation, where the State was less or not at all involved, and where everything depended on the initiative of the merchants and the captains of the vessels. The other aspect of the advanced ramification was that the two parts of the Ragusan network, the Eastern and the Western one, sometimes crossed on the high seas, without necessarily joining the nodal point, that is the port of Ragusa: this extreme ramification, illustrates the growing disproportion between the needs of the city, and the volume of its merchant fleet in favour of the latter. As regards temporality, although the contracts regularly mention the length of the stays in the ports, they hardly ever mention the duration of the journey. The dangerousness of the Ragusan network results from its extension and ramification, and from the fact that Ragusans lacked permanent armed vessels to protect this network. They fought against the threats of pirates and corsairs essentially by sending diplomatic missions to foreign powers.

MANUEL F. FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES, RAFAEL M. PÉREZ GARCÍA, Textiles Market in 16th-Century Seville: Business and Mercantile Groups

This work offers a new interpretation about the main groups implicated in the textile trade in Seville during the 16th century, proposing a new chronology concerning the substitution processes happened between them and the nature of the importance of those groups. This is specially clear in the longer endurance of

the activity of castilian and mainly burgalese merchants in the importation of canvas, and also is remarkable the growing importance of the Castilian production of clothes and silk (also in the Valencian case), covering an increasing share of the Peninsular and the American demand, existing cases of cooperation between those different groups. It is also one of the main objectives of this article to study the typology of the textiles sold in the Sevillian market, as well as the evolution in prices, lengths and colors, bearing in mind that we are not only dealing with the local market, because Sevillian market was intrinsically linked to the Americas market. To do so, we have analyzed the notary records using data from three different years, corresponding to 1535, 1550 and 1577. The last of them incorporates also part of the sales made in the Los Molares Fair, important for the Sevillian market and also headed towards de American market. The results confirm the importance of the importation of bretons and hollands canvases, nuancing the role of the foreign merchants in their introduction, and the best sellers textiles such as cloths, canvases and silk are also compared in their respective importance and participation in the market share.

El presente trabajo ofrece una nueva interpretación sobre los principales grupos que se dedicaron al comercio textil en la ciudad de Sevilla durante el siglo XVI, proponiendo una nueva cronología en los procesos de sustitución y en la naturaleza del protagonismo en este mercado de cada uno de ellos. Ello es especialmente claro en la mayor duración de la actividad de los grupos mercantiles castellanos como el burgalés en el protagonismo del mercado del lienzo, así como en la importancia creciente de la producción castellana de tejidos de lana y seda en el caso también valenciano, que cubrían un sector creciente de la demanda peninsular y americana, dándose también casos de cooperación entre unos grupos mercantiles y otros. Se atiende igualmente a la tipología del textil vendido en el mercado sevillano, así como a la evolución en precios, longitudes y colores del mismo, sin olvidar que no hablamos solo de un mercado local, sino también orientado a las Indias. Para ello se ha realizado un análisis exhaustivo de la documentación de protocolos notariales en tres catas correspondientes a 1535, 1550 y 1577, incorporando en este último año parte de las ventas efectuadas en la Feria de los Molares, importante complemento al mercado sevillano y también muy orientada hacia las Indias. El resultado confirma la importancia de la importación de lienzos bretones y holandeses, matizándose el papel de los comerciantes extranjeros en su introducción, y se efectúa una comparación entre los diversos tipos de textil más vendidos, respecto a su importancia y cuota de mercado, a saber, lanas, lienzos y sedas.

RENATO GHEZZI, Italian Ports and the Levant in the 16th and 17th Centuries

The chapter analyzes, from a diachronic perspective, the role of trade with the Levant in the port industries of Genoa, Livorno, and Venice in the 16th and 17th centuries. An historical period in which the international trade system underwent substantial changes. From the expansion of the Atlantic routes to the official claim by the United Provinces and English, to the Italian Mariner crisis and the gradual advance of Nordic fleets along the Western Mediterranean routes. The Atlantic ships had an increasing influence on Genoa's port industry. It was, however, Livorno who gained the most advantage from the presence of Dutch and English merchant ships along routes which met at Alexandretta in San Giovanni of Acre, at

Constantinople, and most of all, at Smyrna. If Genoa's businesses remained decisively aimed towards the Iberian Peninsula and the Italian ports, the businesses with the Levant were important for Livorno's port and its ties to the Eastern Mediterranean, which intensified with the advancing of the 17th century. Thanks to the port structures, its customs regulations, its geographical location, Livorno was able to establish its position as a stopover in the network of important trades between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Despite the constant growth of the Tuscan port, it was however the Republic of San Marco to gain most of the imports from Ottoman countries. Venice, as opposed to Livorno, was not only a great emporium, a place of intermediation exchanges. By the 17th century, it was still an active industrial center capable of providing its own trade network. Through this exchange system, the Levant regions surely had an important position because they were able to supply large amounts of raw materials necessary for the town manufacturers and the Venetian mainland.

Il capitolo esamina, in prospettiva diacronica, il ruolo svolto dai traffici con il Levante nell'attività dei porti di Genova, Livorno e Venezia nei secoli XVI e XVII, in un periodo storico in cui il sistema degli scambi internazionali subì importanti mutamenti, in seguito all'espansione delle rotte atlantiche, all'affermazione definitiva delle Province Unite e dell'Inghilterra, alla crisi delle marine italiane e alla progressiva avanzata delle flotte nordiche lungo le rotte del Mediterraneo orientale. Le navi atlantiche ebbero un'importanza crescente nel movimento del porto di Genova, fu comunque Livorno a trarre i maggiori vantaggi dalla presenza dei mercantili olandesi e inglesi lungo le rotte che conducevano ad Alessandretta, a San Giovanni d'Acri, a Costantinopoli e, soprattutto, a Smirne. Se i commerci di Genova rimasero sempre decisamente orientati verso la Penisola iberica e i porti italiani, i commerci con il Levante furono importanti per il porto di Livorno e i suoi legami con il Mediterraneo orientale si intensificarono con l'avanzare del XVII secolo. Grazie alle sue strutture portuali, ai suoi regolamenti doganali, alla posizione geografica, Livorno riuscì a consolidare la sua funzione di scalo intermedio nella rete dei grandi traffici tra il Mediterraneo e l'Atlantico. Nonostante la costante crescita del porto toscano, era comunque la Repubblica di San Marco ad attrarre le maggiori importazioni dai paesi ottomani. Venezia, a differenza di Livorno, non era soltanto un grande emporio, un luogo cioè di intermediazione degli scambi, era, ancora nel XVII secolo, un attivo centro industriale, in grado di alimentare una propria rete di commerci e, in questo sistema di scambi, le regioni del Levante ebbero sicuramente una funzione importante, perché erano in grado di fornire molte materie prime necessarie alle manifatture cittadine e della Terraferma veneta.

RENARD GLUZMAN, GERASSIMOS PAGRATIS, Tracking Venice's Maritime Traffic in the First Age of Globalization: A Geospatial Analysis

The present collaborative work in progress is an empirical attempt verifying the interplay between political change, fleet nationality, and the evolution of shipping networks. On the basis of historical data on ship positions retracted from archival sources, we create GIS-based online maps to conduct a geospatial analysis of the traffic intensity and movement patterns along the regional and inter-regional sea routes that connected the Venetian port system with the Mediterranean ports, with special attention to the Eastern Mediterranean. In this sense, the platform

“simulates” modern real-time technologies used to visualise shipping trends per vessel types.

Venice offers a good example of a maritime power that experienced much contrasted geopolitical contexts in the wake of the Portuguese activities in the Indian Ocean. Although the events that followed did not disrupt the Levant trade for long, they toppled Venice’s anachronistic political and economic conceptions. This period saw the gradual disappearance of the merchant galley system and a deep economic crisis in Venetian private shipping and shipbuilding industries.

We wish to examine to what extent shipping within the Venetian maritime state remained a closed system? How did political and economic factors, such as the oceanic discoveries, the Ottoman expansion, piracy etc. affect the colonial–Venetian maritime network? How did shipowners from different socioeconomic backgrounds and geographical origins negotiate their position within this maritime network? In this sense, the project strives to contribute to a discussion of larger questions related to the long-term effects of Venetian rule in its overseas territories on the economic development, immigration movements, cultural and ethnic identity.

Nel Mediterraneo della prima età moderna la geografia dei trasporti era maggiormente determinata dalla geografia politica e dalle attività economiche svolte nel luogo di provenienza degli imprenditori marittimi, nonostante i larghi margini di flessibilità che offriva loro la superficie del mare. Questa constatazione vale anche per Venezia, un caso che presenta, però, tante variazioni collegate alla geomorfologia dello stato Veneto, ma anche all’effetto che i cambiamenti politici e la tecnologia marittima ebbero sulla formazione delle rotte delle navi. Il nostro studio costituisce il primo passo di un lavoro collettivo che tenta di esaminare l’interazione tra cambiamento politico, nazionalità delle flotte ed evoluzione delle reti marittime. L’originalità del progetto sta nella combinazione tra ricerca tradizionale e tecnologia moderna. In particolare abbiamo tentato di rappresentare dati che riguardano il movimento delle navi, raccolti in fonti archivistiche e/o bibliografia secondaria, su mappe costruite in base al sistema d’informazione geografica (G.I.S.). Con la conversione di questi dati in immagini-mappe dinamiche, abbiamo cercato di registrare nello spazio la densità geografica e il tipo del commercio marittimo che le navi facevano su rotte regionali e interregionali. È stato reso così possibile distinguere le varie tendenze nella navigazione, a seconda del tipo della nave; Si tratta di osservazioni che non sarebbe stato facile fare se avessimo seguito i metodi tradizionali della ricerca. Sulla base di quanto detto il nostro studio punta a rispondere ad una serie di questioni come le seguenti: in che misura i cambiamenti politici ed economici ebbero effetto sulla formazione di reti marittime nello stato veneziano? Quanto chiuso era il sistema della navigazione veneziana? Come si differenziavano le rotte in base al tipo delle navi e allo status delle navi o/e dei proprietari della nave? Quanto venivano rispettate le politiche mercantili veneziane dai loro sudditi e dagli stranieri?

GELINA HARLAFTIS, Black Sea and its Maritime Networks, 1770s-1820s. The Beginnings of Its European Integration

The approach of the “Black Sea history” introduces in the historical studies of southeastern Europe, the History of the Sea and/or Maritime Economic History, which during the last fifteen years has taken off internationally along with Global

History and Global Economic History. The Black Sea to many historians is no more than a geographical term. A sea excluded from international trade until 1770s, developed its sea trade and maritime networks in an unprecedented rate to become in the next 150 years the largest grain producer of the world, supplying western European populations during the era of industrial revolution. This paper examines the first 50 transitional years of a sea of isolation to a sea of internationalization. It provides analytical tools to reveal the mechanisms of how this was done. To do so it places in the centre of the analysis the sea. By using the approach of maritime history, an analysis beyond political borders, it follows the glance from the sea and its effects on land. In this way it examines the shipping movements of cargoes and people on the sea and the development and impact of this development around the sea, on the Black Sea maritime regions, the port cities that grew and the entrepreneurs that triggered this growth and established its maritime networks.

L'approccio alla "Storia del Mar Nero" ("Black Sea history") si inserisce nel filone degli studi storici riguardanti l'Europa sud-orientale, la Storia dei mari e degli oceani (History of the Sea) e/o la Storia economica marittima che – insieme alla Storia globale e alla Storia economica globale – hanno riscosso un crescente successo nel panorama accademico internazionale durante l'ultimo quindicennio. Per molti storici, il Mar Nero non è altro che un mero termine geografico. Escluso dai traffici internazionali fino agli anni '70 del Settecento, il bacino vide – nel corso dei seguenti 150 anni – uno straordinario sviluppo dei traffici e delle reti marittime, divenendo la maggiore area di produzione di grano al mondo, principale fornitrice del cereale per le popolazioni dell'Europa occidentale nell'epoca della rivoluzione industriale. Il contributo prende in esame i primi 50 anni della transizione di questo mare da "isolato" a "internazionale", offrendo strumenti d'analisi per comprendere le meccaniche di tale fenomeno. Al centro dello studio, il mare stesso: seguendo un approccio metodologico tipico della storia marittima, e trascendendo dunque i confini politici, la ricerca elegge il Mar Nero ad osservatorio privilegiato, dal quale gettare uno sguardo verso terra. In accordo con questa prospettiva, il contributo esamina i movimenti di merci e persone sullo specchio d'acqua, così come l'impatto dello sviluppo economico sulle regioni marittime del Mar Nero, l'espansione delle città portuali, e i profili degli imprenditori che avviarono tale crescita, tessendone le nuove reti marittime.

DAVID IGUAL LUIS, Movimento portuale, reti marittime e diversità dei mercati a Valenza nel XV secolo

Lo studio esamina il movimento portuale di Valenza durante il XV secolo come elemento che permette riflettere le varie reti marittime e i diversi mercati che si sono concentrati sulla città. A tal scopo, si è realizzata una ricerca diretta in archivio, essenzialmente riferita alla seconda metà del XV secolo. Si sono raccolti anche dati di varia natura, analizzati in modo frammentario da diversi autori, che riguardano l'intero Quattrocento e anche gli ultimi anni del Trecento e i primi del Cinquecento. Grazie a questo duplice punto di partenza, è stato possibile raccogliere informazioni quantitative e qualitative che aiutano a precisare la funzione di Valenza nei circuiti marittimi alla fine del Medioevo e, in particolare, la sua posizione nelle gerarchie stabilite in questi circuiti. Il risultato dell'analisi viene mostrato attraverso tre punti: 1) l'evoluzione di Valenza nel Quattrocento, con

attenzione specifica per i circuiti regionali e internazionali che sono testimoniati dalle fonti mercantili (datiniane) e notarili (valenzane); 2) il peso delle rotte locali che si osserva in alcune fonti fiscali valenzane della fine del XV secolo, fonti che permettono anche di offrire calcoli su quale poteva essere il numero annuale di atti marittimi che si contrattavano a Valenza; 3) alcuni confronti con altri porti mediterranei, innanzitutto con Barcellona e Maiorca, con la finalità di capire meglio il ruolo marittimo svolto da Valenza.

El estudio examina el movimiento portuario de Valencia durante el siglo XV, como elemento que permite reflejar las diversas redes marítimas y los diversos mercados que acabaron focalizándose alrededor de la ciudad. Para ello se ha realizado una investigación archivística directa, referida esencialmente a la segunda mitad del siglo XV. También se han puesto en común datos de naturaleza variada, analizados de manera dispersa por distintos autores, que atañen a todo el Cuatrocientos e, incluso, a los años finales del Trecentos y los iniciales del Quinientos. Gracias a este doble punto de partida, ha sido posible recoger informaciones cuantitativas y cualitativas que ayudan a precisar la función de Valencia en los circuitos marítimos del final de la Edad Media y, en particular, su posición en las jerarquías establecidas en esos circuitos. El resultado del análisis se expone a través de tres puntos: 1) la evolución de Valencia en el siglo XV, con atención especial a los circuitos regionales e internacionales que las fuentes mercantiles (datinianas) y notariales (valencianas) testimonian; 2) el peso de las rutas locales que se observa en ciertas fuentes fiscales valencianas de finales del siglo XV, fuentes que permiten también ofrecer algún cálculo sobre cuál podía ser el número anual de actos marítimos que se contrataban en Valencia; 3) algunas comparaciones con otros puertos mediterráneos, especialmente con Barcelona y Mallorca, con el objetivo de comprender mejor el papel marítimo desempeñado por Valencia.

LUCA LO BASSO, Traffici globali. Corallo, diamanti e tele di cotone negli affari commerciali dei Genovesi in Oriente

La storia dei traffici globali tra XVII e XVIII secolo vista attraverso la rete mercantile dei fratelli Fieschi, incentrata nel commercio del corallo costituisce di fatto il prequel dell'ormai classico e noto studio di Francesca Trivellato relativo al commercio interculturale e alle diaspore mercantili. Gli operatori genovesi, lungi dall'essere scomparsi dopo il 1627, hanno avuto la forza nella seconda metà del secolo di creare nuovi network mercantili di livello globale al pari di altri operatori (ebrei ad esempio). A partire dagli anni '60 e per alcuni decenni prodotti genovesi - carta e tessuti- prendevano la via delle Indie, assieme agli schiavi africani, e al ritorno per contro le navi trasportavano tonnellate di argento assieme e molte merci coloniali destinate ad alimentare gli scambi con il Levante. In questo quadro di commerci si inserisce la vicenda dei fratelli Nicolò e Pietro Francesco Fieschi. Membri di una delle più antiche famiglie nobili genovesi, alla fine degli anni Settanta, entrarono nel commercio mondiale del corallo.

Come è noto all'epoca una grande fetta della pesca di tale prodotto era nelle mani delle marinerie liguri. I Fieschi pertanto potevano avere accesso facile al corallo grezzo, che come sappiamo, grazie alla mediazione ebraica di Livorno, veniva spedito via Lisbona a Goa in cambio di diamanti e altre merci coloniali. Per evitare la mediazione ebraica, almeno in parte, i Fieschi impiantarono a Genova una

manifattura di lavorazione del corallo, che avrebbe dovuto produrre oggetti da spedire direttamente a Lisbona, sfruttando al massimo il grande flusso di vascelli genovesi, all'epoca molto presenti sulle rotte verso il porto lusitano. Da Lisbona, grazie alla presenza di altri operatori italiani colà attivi, il corallo prendeva la via di Goa, dove veniva scambiato con i diamanti, tele di cotone e spezie. In definitiva, tra la seconda metà del XVII secolo e i primi decenni del secolo XVIII i mercanti genovesi, non solo non si erano defilati dai grandi traffici mondiali, puntando esclusivamente sulle rendite, ma trovarono un nuovo slancio commerciale derivato dalle nuove opportunità offerte dalle connessioni di un mondo sempre più globalizzato.

L'histoire du trafic mondial entre le XVII^e et le XVIII^e siècle vue à travers le réseau de marchands des frères Fieschi, centré sur le commerce du corail est en fait le prélude à l'étude désormais classique et bien connue de Francesca Trivellato sur le commerce interculturel et le commerce des diasporas. Les opérateurs génois, loin de disparaître après 1627, ont eu la force dans la seconde moitié du siècle de créer de nouveaux réseaux mondiaux de marchands comme d'autres opérateurs (juifs par exemple). A partir des années soixante et pendant quelques décennies, les produits génois - papier et textiles - ont suivi la route des Indes, avec les esclaves africains, et sur leurs navires de retour ont transporté des tonnes d'argent ainsi que de nombreux biens coloniaux destinés à alimenter le commerce avec le Levant. L'histoire des frères Nicolò et Pietro Francesco Fieschi fait partie de ce cadre de commerce. Les membres d'une des plus anciennes familles nobles génoises, à la fin des années soixante-dix, sont entrés dans le commerce mondial du corail.

Comme on le sait bien à l'époque, une grande partie de la pêche de ce produit était entre les mains des pêcheurs ligures. Les Fieschi avaient donc un accès facile au corail brut, qui, comme nous le savons, grâce à la médiation juive de Livourne, a été envoyé via Lisbonne à Goa en échange de diamants et d'autres biens coloniaux. Pour éviter la médiation juive, au moins en partie, les Fieschi ont mis en place une usine de traitement du corail à Gênes, qui devait produire des objets destinés à être envoyés directement à Lisbonne, tirant le meilleur parti du grand flux de navires génois, à l'époque très présents sur les routes vers le port de Lisbonne. Depuis Lisbonne, grâce à la présence d'autres opérateurs italiens actifs sur place, le corail a emprunté la route de Goa, où il a été confondu avec les diamants, la toile de coton et les épices. En bref, entre la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle et les premières décennies du XVIII^e siècle, les marchands génois, non seulement ne se sont pas distancés du grand trafic mondial, se concentrant exclusivement sur les loyers, mais ont trouvé une nouvelle impulsion commerciale dérivée des nouvelles opportunités offertes par les connexions d'un monde de plus en plus globalisé.

LEOS MÜLLER, Swedish Trade and Shipping in the Mediterranean in the 18th Century

This paper analyses the rise of Swedish trade and shipping in the Mediterranean in the eighteenth century. It focuses on three factors that shaped Sweden's role in the area: foreign policy interest, foreign trade policy (mercantilism), and commodity demand and supply. The foreign policy interest is represented by attempts to build an alliance with the Ottoman Empire against Russia. An outcome of this was the short-lived Swedish Levant Company. The second factor relates to Sweden's mercantilist policy in the Mediterranean, embodied in the Swedish Navigation Act,

trade and peace treaties with the North-African states, and the consular services in southern Europe. Sea salt was in the core of this policy—a strategic commodity in northern Europe. Southern Europe, too, was important market for Swedish exports goods: iron, tar and pitch, and planks.

The most outstanding feature of the Swedish (and Danish) trade in southern Europe was, however, the rise of tramp shipping. It is argued here that the most important factor behind the Scandinavian tramp shipping in the Mediterranean was Swedish and Danish neutralities in eighteenth-century wars (1756-1763, 1778-1783 and 1793-1815).

Questo articolo analizza la crescente presenza della marina mercantile svedese nel Mediterraneo del XVIII secolo. Si concentra sui tre fattori principali che spiegano questo fenomeno: la politica estera svedese, la politica del commercio estero (mercantilismo) e il mercato di sale marino e la domanda di prodotti baltici nel Mediterraneo. La politica estera svedese aveva come scopo di creare e mantenere un'alleanza coll'Impero ottomano contro la Russia. La Compagnia svedese del Levante fu uno dei risultati di questa politica, benché avesse una breve durata. Il secondo fattore riguarda la politica mercantilistica svedese nel Mediterraneo. Tra le varie manifestazioni di questa politica furono le leggi sulla navigazione, i trattati di pace con gli stati Barbareschi e la fitta rete consolare nel Mediterraneo. Uno dei prodotti chiave nello scambio tra la Svezia e il Mediterraneo fu il sale marino, una merce strategica nel nord Europa. Anche l'Europa meridionale e Nord Africa era un mercato importante per le esportazioni svedesi: ferro, catrame e vari prodotti di legno. Comunque, la caratteristica più rilevante del commercio svedese (e danese) nell'Europa meridionale nel settecento è stato l'incremento di navigazione tramp. Il fattore più importante per la crescita di questa presenza scandinava nel Mediterraneo fu la neutralità svedese e danese nelle guerre del XVIII secolo (1756-1763, 1778-1783 e 1793-1815).

STEFANIA MONTEMEZZO, Ships and Trade: The Role of Public Navigation in Renaissance Venice

The paper aims at understanding the role that public navigation played for the Venetian merchant firms in the Renaissance. Thanks to the use of accountability, two case studies will be analysed to understand the involvement of private traders in the State galley system and their impact on the operations of the city's business in the late 15th century.

Il presente contributo intende analizzare il ruolo che il sistema di navigazione pubblica a Venezia ebbe sull'operato delle compagnie commerciali impegnate nel commercio internazionale, tra Medioriente ed Europa.

Grazie a studiosi come Gino Luzzatto e Frederic Lane, la storia del commercio veneziano tra il XV e XVI secolo è ben conosciuta. Una commistione di capitali privati e partecipazione statale nell'economia resero Venezia uno dei maggiori porti per il commercio euroasiatico, rendendo la città il punto di contatto dei circuiti mercantili nordeuropei, mediterranei e asiatici. Spezie, sete, cotone e pellami pregiati arrivavano ai porti asiatici grazie alle vie carovaniere terrestri e alle galere dall'India, permettendo ai mercanti veneziani, e italiani, di importare tali prodotti in Occidente, esportando al contempo ambre, lane e stoffe provenienti dall'Europa. Al centro di questo flusso di merci e capitali stava il Senato veneziano, che proprio grazie al controllo delle vie di navigazione

intendeva regolare il flusso mercantile. Nonostante il trend generale dell'economia veneziana e il ruolo del Senato sia stato chiarito dalla storiografia, una minore attenzione è stata finora prestata al ruolo effettivo avuto dai viaggi pubblici sull'operato delle compagnie commerciali.

Seppure l'intervento dello Stato nell'istituzione dei viaggi pubblici fosse forte (l'intera organizzazione era infatti regolata nel dettaglio dal Senato), limitando l'iniziativa privata al suo interno, diede però ai mercanti veneziani la possibilità di beneficiare: di una buona regolarità di collegamento marittimo; di maggiore sicurezza per le merci caricate su questo tipo di nave (armate, assicurate, facilmente difendibili e manovrabili); della presenza di ufficiali ed equipaggi praticamente sotto il controllo dello Senato; di stabilità dei prezzi e dei tassi di cambio (sempre più legati alla stagionalità di arrivi e partenze). Grazie all'analisi di due casi studio, le fraterne Foscari e Michiel nella seconda metà del Quattrocento, il paper intende mostrare come le aziende commerciali veneziane, furono in grado, utilizzando la navigazione pubblica e di integrare diversi mercati. Nel mezzo Venezia che, con altre città italiane, riuscì a gestire per lungo tempo questi flussi e gradualmente a immettere i propri prodotti degli scambi internazionali (come nuove stoffe di produzione veneta), creando anche commodity chains che aiutarono il sistema commerciale veneziano a sopprimere ai flussi altalenanti di produzione e approvvigionamento.

JARI OJALA, Maritime Information Networks between Northern and Southern Europe during the Eighteenth Century

International trade during the 18th century is a case in point through which to study in-depth the challenges of asymmetric information. The challenges can be divided into three categories: availability, reliability and usability of information. This article discusses the organization of trade and shipping between Northern and Southern Europe. The access, reliability and use of information were problems for merchant-shipowners during the 18th century. The solutions adopted were partly contradictory: the aim to reduce information asymmetry on one determinant, might incur costs on the other.

El comercio internacional durante el siglo XVIII es un ejemplo de cómo estudiar en profundidad los desafíos de la información asimétrica. Los desafíos pueden dividirse en tres categorías: disponibilidad, confiabilidad y facilidad de uso de la información. Este artículo analiza la organización del comercio y el transporte marítimo entre el norte y el sur de Europa. El acceso, la confiabilidad y el uso de la información trajeron problemas para los navieros mercantes durante el siglo XVIII. Las soluciones adoptadas fueron en parte contradictorias: el objetivo de reducir la asimetría de la información en uno de los determinantes podría incurrir en costos en el otro.

ANGELA ORLANDI, Between the Mediterranean and the North Sea: Networks of Men and Ports (14th-15th Centuries)

Il contributo prova a riflettere su come alcuni processi di integrazione economica assicurati dagli scambi commerciali siano stati influenzati dalle reti di mercanti, dalle diverse funzioni e dimensioni dei porti, dalle diverse collocazioni delle rotte che si muovevano tra Mediterraneo, Atlantico e Mare del Nord. I porti, le rotte e le imbarcazioni, la mentalità e la cultura degli operatori economici sono le tre

principali chiavi di lettura di questa indagine. Si tratta di uno studio che prova a osservare, confrontandoli, ambiti marittimi estremamente differenti soprattutto per quanto riguarda la dimensione degli scali e l'importanza dei percorsi che su di essi facevano perno.

L'abbondanza di natanti che si spostavano tra i numerosi approdi, rese agevole l'introduzione di elementi di sussidiarietà e di sostituzione tra un porto e l'altro, garantendo sistemi di rotte efficaci in sé, ma anche utili alla navigazione dei beni su lunga distanza. In forme diverse ciò accadeva lungo le principali coste del Mediterraneo, dell'Atlantico e del Mare del Nord.

In questo quadro ci siamo soffermati in modo più approfondito sul "sistema policentrico" catalano-aragonese. Esso, nel giuoco dei continui aggiustamenti di percorsi e carichi di nave, mostra come i meccanismi di sussidiarietà tra grandi e piccoli porti fossero efficienti quanto abituali. Vi era una collaborazione operativa tra gli scali assicurata dall'abitudine e dalla frequenza con cui la marineria locale si muoveva da un luogo all'altro.

Fattori di vario tipo, anche se prevalentemente economici e politici, costringevano spesso i mercanti e le loro imbarcazioni a modificare rotte e carichi. Questi squilibri congiunturali trovavano meccanismi di riequilibrio nella disponibilità di tanti scali minori, nell'intenso movimento di imbarcazioni, nei processi decisionali degli operatori economici più avvertiti che, grazie all'efficienza delle loro reti tra uomini e imprese, beneficiavano di notizie tempestive in grado di assicurare decisioni altrettanto rapide ed efficienti.

This essay examines how the various processes of economic integration brought about by commercial exchanges were influenced by networks of merchants, by the different functions and capacities of ports, and by the various locations of routes established between the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the North Sea. The ports, the routes and ships, and the mentality and culture of the economic operators represent the three main themes of this study; it aims to observe and compare maritime environments which were completely different from one another, especially in terms of the size of the ports and the importance of the commercial itineraries based on them. The many ships that moved among these numerous landings facilitated the introduction of a system of complementarity and interchangeability among the ports, which guaranteed a network of routes that were efficient in their own right as well as useful for commerce over long distances. In different ways such a system was established along the main coasts of the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the North Sea. Within this framework, we have looked in detail at the "polycentric system" of Aragon-Catalonia. In a context of continuous adjustments of routes and of ship cargoes, this network shows how the mechanisms of complementarity between large and small ports were both efficient and routine. Operative collaboration between ports was ensured by the ability and frequency with which local fleets moved from place to place. Various factors, usually of an economic or political nature, often forced merchants and their ships to modify their routes and their loads. Unforeseen complications found prompt resolution in the availability of many minor ports, in the intensive movement of ships, and in the swift decision making of the best informed economic operators: thanks to the efficiency of their networks of personnel and companies, the latter indeed benefitted from timely information, enabling them to change their plans rapidly and efficiently.

LUCIANO PALERMO, Il sistema degli scambi nel Mediterraneo occidentale tra XIV e XV secolo e il porto di Roma

Nel bacino marittimo del Mediterraneo occidentale era attiva, tra XIV e XV secolo, una fitta rete di rapporti commerciali, le cui caratteristiche sono state oggetto di studi assai accurati. Le tre aree regionali che si affacciavano su questo mare, quella iberica e provenzale, quella italiana e quella africana, e tutte le isole che in esso erano presenti erano dotate di numerosi e importanti punti di approdo ed erano collegate tra loro da una fitta rete di scambi. E non venivano spostate solo le merci e il denaro, anche gli uomini e le loro culture si trasferivano da un luogo all'altro e davano così il proprio contributo alla formazione di una vasta area di conoscenze e interscambi comuni. Il saggio prende in considerazione le caratteristiche di questa rete di connessioni economiche e culturali, e analizza, in particolare attraverso l'uso della documentazione dell'Archivio Datini, il ruolo del porto di Roma in questo sistema di scambi e i collegamenti che i mercanti e banchieri che agivano in questa città intrattenevano con i centri mercantili iberici.

Between the 14th and 15th centuries, a dense network of trade relations was active in the maritime basin of the western Mediterranean, the characteristics of which have been the object of very accurate studies. The three regional areas that overlooked this sea, the Iberian and Provençal, the Italian and the African, and all the islands that were present in it, were equipped with numerous and important landing points and were connected by a dense network of exchanges. And not only goods and money were shifted, even men and their cultures moved from one place to another and thus made their own contribution to the formation of a vast area of common knowledge and interchange. The essay takes into consideration the characteristics of this network of economic and cultural connections, and analyzes, particularly through the use of the Datini Archive, the role of the port of Rome in this system of exchanges and the links that merchants and bankers who acted in this city entertained with the Iberian mercantile centers.

LUISA PICCINNO, ANDREA ZANINI, Genoa: Colonizing and Colonized City? The Port City as a Pole of Attraction for Foreign Merchants (16th-18th centuries)

Port cities were by nature a pole of attraction for merchants and businessmen looking for opportunities to make money. At the same time, the origin and number of foreign merchants settling permanently in a port city tended to vary over time, as well as their positioning in the market and the density of ties with local traders. To investigate this topic it is necessary to take due account of the economic, political, and social motivations, which might have either positively or negatively affected these processes. As Michel Balard pointed out with reference to the late Middle Ages and to the relations between Genoa and overseas cities, "Genoa, a colonizer in the East, is colonized by the Orientals". The aim of this work is to verify whether and to what extent this concept is applicable also to the modern age and whether it involved a wider geographic area than the one examined by this French historian. In particular we outline the features of the presence of foreign merchants in Genoa between the 16th and 18th centuries as a phenomenon complementary to the better known "diaspora" of Genoese businessmen.

Le città portuali rappresentano per loro natura un polo di attrazione per mercanti e uomini d'affari in cerca di occasioni di guadagno. Allo stesso tempo la provenienza e l'entità numerica dei mercanti stranieri che decidono di insediarsi stabilmente in una città portuale tendono a variare nel tempo, così come il loro posizionamento sul mercato e la densità dei legami con gli operatori locali. Per analizzare tale fenomeno si rende necessario tenere nella dovuta considerazione le motivazioni di carattere economico, politico e sociale che influenzano positivamente o negativamente il fenomeno in esame. Come ha affermato Michel Balard con riferimento all'epoca tardomedievale e ai rapporti tra la città ligure e l'oltremare, "colonizzatrice in Oriente, Genova è colonizzata dagli orientali". Obiettivo di questo lavoro è quello di verificare se e in quale misura tale concetto è applicabile anche in età moderna e con riferimento ad un ambito territoriale più ampio rispetto a quello esaminato dallo storico francese. Questo saggio si propone di delineare le caratteristiche della presenza dei mercanti forestieri a Genova tra XVI e XVIII secolo quale fenomeno complementare alla più nota "diaspora" degli uomini d'affari genovesi.

PIERRICK POURCHASSE, Les réseaux négociants européens et les échanges entre la France et l'Europe du Nord (XVII^e -XIX^e siècles)

La France est un pays qui possède un grand potentiel agricole et des richesses naturelles qui lui permettent de ne pas être dépendante des marchés extérieurs, notamment des matières premières du Nord. Les ports français ont cependant des relations suivies avec les pays de la Baltique où ils commercialisent de nombreux produits et s'approvisionnent en munitions navales et, selon la conjoncture, en céréales. Le solde de la Balance du commerce apparaît constamment favorable à la France, contrairement à ses voisins anglais et hollandais qui sont gravement déficitaires dans leurs échanges avec le « Nord ». Grâce aux vins, aux eaux-de-vie, aux sels et aux produits coloniaux, la France est donc en position favorable dans son commerce avec l'Europe du Nord. Ces échanges sont cependant organisés et contrôlés par des intermédiaires étrangers. Cette communication se propose de revisiter le commerce français avec la Baltique sur une période de deux siècles en s'appuyant sur les comptes du Sund dont la totalité des données sont désormais à disposition de la communauté des chercheurs. Comme nous le constaterons, plusieurs évidences sont à reconsidérer.

France was a country that had great agricultural potential and natural resources that allowed it to not be dependent on external markets, especially raw materials from the North. French ports, however, maintained close relations with the Baltic countries where they marketed many products and obtained supplies of naval stores and, depending on the economic situation, cereals. The Trade Balance with the "North" appeared constantly favorable to France, unlike its English and Dutch neighbors which were seriously deficient in their trade with Northern Europe. Thanks to wines, brandy, salts and colonial products France was thus in a favorable position concerning its exchanges with this area. This trade was nevertheless organized and controlled by foreign intermediaries. This paper proposes to revisit the French trade with the Baltic over a period of two centuries by using the Sound Toll Accounts whose entire data is now available to the research community. As we will see, several evidences are to be reconsidered.

HELMUT RIZZOLLI, FEDERICO PIGOZZO, Economic and Social Aspects of the Trade of Luxury Goods between Africa and Europe: Ostrich Feathers

In Europe, in the Middle Ages, ostrich feathers were used for the decoration of military headgear, as a representation of the high lineage of the possessor and his military virtues. They were imported from the coasts of West Africa, from Egypt and Syria into Italian and Spanish ports and from there exported to England and continental Europe. Venice, at the end of the fourteenth century, began to color feathers and soon the new fashion was spread throughout Europe. The feathers were no longer placed only on top of the knights' helmets, but also on the caps of the richest bourgeois. During the fifteenth century, even women began to use ostrich feathers on their hats or in their fans. When European ships reached America, Central Africa and the islands of the Indian Ocean, a huge amount of exotic bird feathers became available and ostrich feather fad spread through the population.

Nell'Europa medievale le piume di struzzo furono usate per la decorazione dei copricapi militari, come simbolo dell'alto lignaggio del possessore e delle sue virtù militari. I mercanti italiani, catalani ed ebrei le importavano dalle coste dell'Africa occidentale, dall'Egitto e dalla Siria nei porti italiani e spagnoli e da lì le riesportavano verso l'Inghilterra e l'Europa continentale. Alla fine del XIV secolo Venezia sviluppò la tecnica di colorazione delle piume e in breve tempo la nuova moda si diffuse in tutta Europa. Le piume non decoravano più solo gli elmi dei cavalieri, ma ornavano sempre più di frequente i berretti dei borghesi più ricchi. Nel corso del XV secolo anche le donne iniziarono a usare le piume di struzzo sul cappello oppure nei ventagli. La versa svolta si ebbe tuttavia quando le navi portoghesi e spagnole raggiunsero l'America, l'Africa centrale e le isole dell'Oceano Indiano: allora una enorme quantità di piume di uccelli esotici cominciò ad affluire sulle piazze europee e la moda delle piume di struzzo si diffuse in ampi strati della popolazione.

MARIA RYABOVA, *Venetian Trading Firm of the Soranzo Brothers (1406-1434) and Its Commercial Network*

This paper contributes to the discussion of merchant networks in late medieval Europe by presenting a case study of the Soranzo fraterna, a Venetian trading firm which comprised brothers Donado, Giacomo (Jacopo), Piero, and Lorenzo Soranzo and operated in the first half of the 15th century, specializing mainly in the import of raw cotton from Syria. The author applies the methodology of social network analysis (SNA) in order to reconstruct the egocentric (ego-centered) network of ties linking the Soranzo firm (“the ego”) with its partners and clients (“alters”). The data on business contacts maintained by the fraterna is retrieved from the larger of its two surviving ledgers, commonly referred to as the *libro real novo* (1406-1434), and integrated into a database where each entry corresponds to a single relationship between the Soranzo brothers and a certain counterparty. The author then proceeds to examine the properties, composition, and structure of the resulting 1-degree egocentric network, putting a special emphasis on the geograph-

ical distribution of actors, since it demonstrates how the flows of goods imported from the Levant connected Venice to other centers of commerce and production. Subsequently, the alters are ranked by strength of their tie to the ego based on such criteria as the frequency of contact and the volume of operations, and the firm's business relationships are classified by their functional type according to the nature of transactions completed. The network core composed by actors with strong multiplex ties to the Soranzo fraterna contains high percentage of foreign merchants, specifically Germans, leading the author to believe that while trade relations were often predetermined by kinship patterns and common origin, prolonged business contacts between individuals from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds could sometimes result in the emergence of new social linkages, facilitating integration between various regions of Europe.

Quest'articolo contribuisce alla discussione delle reti mercantili nell'Europa del tardo Medioevo presentando un caso studio della fraterna Soranzo, un'azienda commerciale veneziana che comprendeva i fratelli Donado, Giacomo, Piero, e Lorenzo Soranzo ed operava nella prima metà del XV secolo, specializzandosi principalmente nell'importazione di cotone grezzo dalla Siria. L'autore applica la metodologia dell'analisi delle reti sociali (social network analysis, SNA) per ricostruire la rete egocentrica (egocentrata) dei legami che collegavano l'impresa dei Soranzo (Ego) con i suoi partner e clienti (alter). I dati sui contatti d'affari mantenuti dalla fraterna vengono recuperati dal più grande dei suoi due libri mastri sopravvissuti, comunemente segnalato come il "libro real novo" (1406-1434), e integrati in un database dove ogni voce corrisponde a un singolo legame tra i fratelli Soranzo e una delle loro controparti. L'autore procede quindi ad esaminare le proprietà, la composizione e la struttura della rete egocentrica risultante di primo grado, ponendo l'accento particolare sulla distribuzione geografica degli attori, poiché quest'ultima dimostra come i flussi di merci importati dal Levante collegavano Venezia ad altri centri di produzione e di commercio. Successivamente gli alter sono classificati in base alla forza del loro legame con l'Ego avvalendosi, come criteri, della frequenza dei contatti e del volume delle operazioni, ed i legami dell'impresa sono raggruppati secondo il loro tipo funzionale, condizionato dalla natura dei contratti conclusi. Il nucleo della rete, formato da attori con forti legami multifunzionali alla fraterna Soranzo, contiene un'alta percentuale di mercanti stranieri, particolarmente tedeschi, portando l'autore a concludere che mentre i rapporti commerciali erano spesso predeterminati dai vincoli di parentela e dal origine comune, i contatti prolungati tra mercanti provenienti da ambienti diversi potrebbero talvolta dare luogo all'emergenza di nuovi collegamenti sociali, facilitando l'integrazione tra varie parti d'Europa.

WERNER SCHELTJENS, The Dutch Republic as Example of Maritime Transport Services Clusters in Preindustrial Europe (ca. 1650-1800)

The maritimisation of the preindustrial European economy led to the emergence of coastal regions, specialising in the supply of transport services for the novel centres of European maritime trade. Characteristically, such regions could emerge when at least two conditions were met: an initial link with a (supra)regional centre of trade, on one hand, and a regional economy producing commodities in demand at these centres, on the other. At first, the supply of maritime transport services

complemented these commercial contacts; later, it became the major occupation of fully-developed preindustrial transport services clusters.

In 'Dutch Deltas', it was argued that dependency on regional economies and international trade networks determined the structure and success of Dutch maritime transport services clusters until the late seventeenth century. Then, the development of the information function of cities provoked the increasing complexity of the commercial system. The ties between trade networks and transport systems loosened and an 'autonomous' maritime transport market developed. Maritime transport communities in cities and villages became competitors on the maritime transport market that was increasingly concentrated in a few central gateways, such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Access to the maritime transport market and information about the demand and supply of maritime transport services became crucial for the prosperity of maritime transport communities.

By means of a comparative analysis of the 'Dutch case' with the Saintonge in South-West France and Bohuslän in South-West Sweden, this paper analyses the rise and decline of maritime services clusters in preindustrial Europe. The leading question for this comparative analysis is: Was the 'Dutch case' exceptional or can similar developments be recognised in other parts of Europe as well? A survey of the regional economic origins of communities of maritime transporters is combined with analyses of their operations and institutions. Relying on primary sources, the paper addresses the contribution of a great many 'anonymous' people, that literally connected the 'nodes' in international maritime trade networks, but whose contribution to the preindustrial European economy has been assumed a priori rather than thoroughly investigated.

La transition vers le transport maritime dans l'économie de l'Europe préindustrielle a provoqué le développement de régions littorales, qui se spécialisaient dans l'offre de services de transport pour les nouveaux centres de commerce maritime européen. L'apparition de telles régions a été favorisée d'une part au moins par un lien initial avec un centre de commerce (supra)régional, et d'autre part par une économie régionale produisant les facilités demandées par ces centres. Au début, offrir des services de transport maritime favorisait ces contacts commerciaux ; plus tard, cette offre devenait l'activité principale de groupes bien développés de services de transport maritime préindustriel.

Dans 'Dutch Deltas', il a été prouvé que la dépendance des économies régionales et des réseaux de commerce international avaient une influence sur la structure et le succès des groupes de services de transport maritime des Pays-Bas jusqu'à la fin du XVIIe siècle. A ce moment le développement de grandes cités comme centres d'information commençait à modifier le caractère du système commercial. Les liens entre les réseaux de commerce et les systèmes de transport devenaient de moins en moins étroits. Un marché 'autonome' de transport maritime se développait. Les communautés de transport maritime dans les cités et villages des Pays-Bas devenaient concurrentes sur un marché de services de transport, qui se concentrait de plus en plus dans quelques ports centraux, entre autres Amsterdam et Rotterdam. La prospérité des diverses communautés de transport maritime dépendait de la possibilité d'accès au marché de transport maritime et de l'information commerciale concernant l'offre et la demande de services de transport maritime.

A partir d'une analyse comparative du 'cas hollandais' avec la Saintonge dans le Sud-Ouest de la France, et Bohuslän dans le Sud-Ouest de la Suède, cette contribution présente une analyse du

développement de groupes de services maritimes en Europe préindustrielle et essaie de déterminer si le 'cas hollandais' était exceptionnel ou pas. L'analyse des origines régionales de communautés de transport maritime est combinée avec une analyse de leurs opérations et de leurs institutions. Ainsi, cet article révèle la contribution d'un grand nombre de marins (gens de mer) 'anonymes', qui établissaient des liens entre les grands centres de commerce maritime. Souvent, leur contribution à l'économie de l'Europe préindustrielle a été supposée a priori plutôt qu'analysée en détail.

JOANA SEQUEIRA, FLÁVIO MIRANDA, 'A Port of Two Seas.' Lisbon and European Maritime Networks in the Fifteenth Century

With the development of research in economic history, historians are now testing the hypothesis that maritime networks and port cities contributed to the phenomenon of European integration. This essay applies a holistic approach to discuss how the city of Lisbon, located outside the privileged setting of multicultural interactions that was the Mediterranean Sea, became appealing to merchants from far and wide in late-medieval Europe. To do so, it examines a whole array of commercial, normative, fiscal, royal and judicial sources from European archives to discuss if it is possible to observe this phenomenon of European integration in fifteenth-century Lisbon. It first presents and analyses examples of meaningful pull factors, and then it debates elements of integration and opposition in Portugal's main port city. Although Lisbon grew to become a cosmopolitan city of merchants, the rise of trade also turned into a factor of intense competition, which sometimes pushed traders in the opposite direction of a purported European integration.

Con lo sviluppo della ricerca relativa alla storia economica, gli storici stanno attualmente verificando l'ipotesi di come le reti marittime e le città portuali abbiano contribuito al fenomeno dell'integrazione europea. Questo saggio applica un approccio olistico per discutere di come nell'Europa tardo medievale la città di Lisbona, posta fuori da quello scenario di interazioni multiculturali rappresentato dal Mar Mediterraneo, divenne interessante anche per i mercanti più distanti. Per fare ciò vengono esaminate una serie di fonti fiscali, commerciali, normative, reali e giudiziarie provenienti da alcuni archivi europei per discutere se sia possibile considerare questo fenomeno di integrazione europea nella Lisbona del XV secolo. In primo luogo si presentano e analizzano esempi significativi di fattori di attrazione, quindi si discute relativamente agli elementi di integrazione e resistenza nella principale città portuale del Portogallo. Sebbene Lisbona stesse diventando una città cosmopolita di mercanti, l'ascesa del commercio si trasformò anche in un fattore di confronto e rivalità, che a volte spingeva i commercianti nella direzione opposta a quella di una presunta integrazione europea.

LOUIS SICKING, Funduq, Fondaco, Feitoria. The Portuguese Contribution to the Globalisation of an Institution of Overseas Trade

How did European merchants organize their trade over long distances? What means did they have at their disposal? How did they cooperate and reduce their

risks in a world full of danger in the form of war and violence? A particular kind of institutions contributed importantly to the organisation of overseas trade: funduqs and fondacos which originated around the medieval Mediterranean. These institutions provided merchants overseas with all kinds of rights and facilities. Besides legal protection these institutions offered lodgings, inns and taverns, warehouses, ovens, baths, brothels and chapels. These institutions came to play a major role in the international or cross-cultural trade across the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Did these medieval institutions provide a model for early modern European expansion overseas? Olivia R. Constable, who studied 'the diffusion of this institutional family' from Late Antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages, concluded that there is no continuity with early modern factories overseas. Other authors, on the contrary, do take continuity between the medieval funduqs and fondacos and the early modern factories overseas for granted. This article aims to contribute to the debate on these institutions by reconsidering and extending Constable's model. This will be done by looking at the Portuguese feitoria, which may be considered as the missing link between the medieval Mediterranean institutions known as funduqs and fondacos and the early modern factories overseas. This allows to shed new light on relations and entanglements between different seascapes and thus to contribute to the fields of new institutional economics and global history.

Comment les commerçants européens ont-ils organisé leur commerce sur de longues distances? Quels moyens avaient-ils à leur disposition? Comment ont-ils coopéré et réduit leurs risques dans un monde plein de dangers sous la forme de guerre et de violence? Un type particulier d'institutions a contribué de manière importante à l'organisation du commerce outre-mer: les fondouks et les fondacos qui ont pris naissance autour de la Méditerranée médiévale. Ces institutions fournissaient aux commerçants outre-mer toutes sortes de droits et de facilités. Outre la protection légale, ces institutions offraient des logements, des auberges et des tavernes, des entrepôts, des fours, des bains, des bordèles et des chapelles. Ces institutions ont joué un rôle majeur dans le commerce international ou interculturel à travers la Méditerranée et la mer Noire. Ces institutions médiévales ont-elles été un modèle pour l'expansion européenne outre-mer à l'époque moderne? Olivia R. Constable, qui a étudié «la diffusion de cette famille institutionnelle» de l'Antiquité tardive à la fin du Moyen Âge, a conclu qu'il n'y a pas de continuité avec les premiers modernes outre-mer à l'époque moderne. D'autres auteurs, au contraire, prennent pour acquis la continuité entre les fondouks et les fondacos médiévaux d'une part et les premiers comptoirs outre-mer à l'époque moderne d'autre part. Cet article vise à contribuer au débat sur ces institutions en reconsidérant et en étendant le modèle de Constable. Ceci sera fait en considérant la feitoria portugaise, qui peut être considérée comme le chaînon manquant entre les institutions méditerranéennes médiévales connues sous le nom de fondouks et fondacos et les premiers comptoirs outre-mer à l'époque moderne. Cela permet d'apporter un éclairage nouveau sur les relations et les enchevêtrements entre les différentes mers et de contribuer ainsi aux domaines de la nouvelle économie institutionnelle et de l'histoire globale.

RICHARD W. UNGER, Markets and Merchants: Commercial and Cultural Integration in Northwest Europe, 1300-1700

Between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries commerce in northern Europe expanded and contracted. The long term net effect of the trade increase was an overall substantial impact on the economy and on the culture of the lands around the North and Baltic Seas. The development of interdependent markets can be indicated by examining the tendency of prices to converge in different places. Relying on previous research and novel ways of constructing indices using price data from a number of ports in northern Europe it is possible to confirm both the long term direction, with ups and downs, toward market integration as well as the emergence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of regional markets in certain food grains. The emergence of those integrated markets had a significant cultural impact because of the trading connections which brought new goods and the presence of foreign visitors, including resident merchants, who brought new practices and ideas as well as living evidence of different ways of life.. The spread of religious ideas and beer consumption in the wake of the growth of trade carried on by people from towns of the Hanseatic League in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and of the spread of art, architecture and language in the wake of the commercial success of the Dutch in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries serve as just a few examples of the cultural integration which was a consequence of emerging commercial ties.

Entre le XIIIe et le XVIIe siècle, le commerce dans le nord de l'Europe se développa et se contracta. L'effet net à long terme était une augmentation des échanges et d'un impact global substantiel sur l'économie et sur la culture des terres autour du Mer du Nord et la Mer Baltiques. Le développement de marchés interdépendants peut être indiqué en examinant la tendance des prix à converger dans différents endroits. S'appuyant sur des recherches antérieures et de nouvelles façons de construire des indices à partir des données de prix d'un certain nombre de ports du nord de l'Europe, il est possible de confirmer à la fois l'évolution à long terme, avec les hauts et les bas, vers l'intégration des marchés et aussi l'évolution des marchés régionaux dans les XVIe et XVIIe siècles pour certaines céréales alimentaires. L'émergence de ces marchés intégrés a eu un impact culturel significatif en raison des liens commerciaux qui ont apporté de nouveaux biens et la présence de visiteurs étrangers, y compris les commerçants résidents qui ont apporté de nouvelles pratiques et idées ainsi que des preuves vivantes de différents modes de vie. La propagation idées religieuses et consommation de bière à la suite de la croissance des échanges commerciaux des habitants des villes de la Ligue Hanséatique aux XIVe et XVe siècles et de la diffusion de l'art, de l'architecture et du langage dans le sillage du succès commercial des Hollandais aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles, ne sont que quelques exemples de l'intégration culturelle, conséquence des liens commerciaux naissants.

JUSTYNA WUBS-MROZEWICZ, Maritime Networks and Premodern Conflict Management on Multiple Levels. The Example of Danzig and the Giese Family

This article argues that a novel way to analyse maritime networks in premodern northern Europe is to trace the activities of people involved in conflict

management. These people were traders, magistrates, judges, urban diplomats: sometimes all comprised in one person or a family. Specifically, if we take the Hanseatic city of Danzig and the Giese family as an example, it becomes apparent that these 'conflict managers' operated on various levels: the city, the region, the state, the Hanse and on the level of politics and economic policy between states and cities. Economic interests and conflicts were intertwined with political, social and cultural matters, and should be investigated together. The conflict managers could combine knowhow from all these spheres and put it to good use not only in resolving conflicts, but also in managing them in various ways. The article is one of the first studies in a new research project.

Cet article soutient qu'une nouvelle façon d'analyser les réseaux maritimes dans l'Europe du Nord pré-moderne est de retracer les activités des personnes impliquées dans la gestion des conflits. Ces personnes étaient des commerçants, des magistrats, des juges, des diplomates urbains: parfois tous ces rôles étaient combinés en une personne ou en une famille. Plus précisément, si nous prenons l'exemple de la ville hanséatique de Dantzïg et de la famille Giese, il apparaît que ces «gestionnaires de conflits» opéraient à différents niveaux: la ville, la région, l'État, la Hanse et au niveau politique et politique économique entre les États et les villes. Les intérêts économiques et les conflits étaient étroitement liés aux questions politiques, sociales et culturelles et devraient être examinés ensemble. Les gestionnaires de conflits pourraient combiner le savoir-faire de toutes ces sphères et en faire un bon usage, non seulement pour résoudre les conflits, mais aussi pour les gérer de diverses manières. L'article est l'une des premières études dans un nouveau projet de recherche.

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