

The *H*istorical Review  
La Revue *H*istorique

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VOLUME VII (2010)

Institut de Recherches Néohelléniques  
Fondation Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique

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VOLUME VII (2010)

Published with the support  
of the  
*Lilian Voudouri Foundation*

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© INR/NHRF 2010

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ISSN 1790-3572

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National Hellenic Research Foundation

*The Historical Review* is an annual refereed journal of historical research in the human sciences published by the Institute for Neohellenic Research / NHRF

*La Revue Historique* est une revue annuelle de recherche historique en sciences humaines publiée par l'Institut de Recherches Néohelléniques / FNRS

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## *Special Issue / Numéro Spécial*

NETWORKING AND SPATIAL ALLOCATION AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN,  
SEVENTEENTH-NINETEENTH CENTURIES

### Preface

This volume of *The Historical Review / La Revue Historique* is the outcome of two components, both based on the work of the Section of Economic and Social History at the Institute for Neohellenic Research (INR), National Hellenic Research Foundation.

The first of these components consists of the papers from a workshop held at the INR in Athens, 4-5 April 2008, entitled “Social Groups and Practices of Trading in the Mediterranean, 17th-19th centuries”, organized by Dr Evrydiki Sifneos and myself. The organizing partners of the workshop were: the INR; the Centro Interdipartimentale di Studi Europei e Mediterranei, Università di Trieste; the Istituto di Studi sulle Società del Mediterraneo of the CNR, Naples; the Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche, Università di Bari; and the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l’Homme (MMSH), TELEMME, Université de Provence (Aix-Marseille).

The meeting was realized within the framework of the European programme “Citizens and Governance in Knowledge Based Society”, RAMSES2 Network of Excellence (2006-2010). During its five-year time span, the RAMSES2 programme on the Mediterranean gave the opportunity to a vast number of scholars from different academic and cultural institutions to meet and exchange ideas on three thematic axes: “Memories”, “Conflicts” and “Exchanges”. Having coordinated, on behalf of the MMSH, such a valuable think tank from various disciplines for all these years, special credit must be conferred on Professors Robert Ilbert, Thierry Fabre and Brigitte Marin. In the Athens workshop – an integral part of the “Exchanges” axis of the programme – seventeen historians from Greek, Italian, French and British academic and cultural institutions participated as speakers and convenors; aside from those whose papers are published here, Helen Beneki (Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation), Professor Tullia Catalan (Università di Trieste), Professor Paolo Malanima (ISSM-CNR), Professor Biagio Salvemini

(Università di Bari) and Dr Biagio Passaro (Università dell’Abruzzo “Gabriele d’Annunzio”, Pescara) were also in attendance.

The second component of this volume is the outcome of research done by some of the members of the Section of Economic and Social History at the INR: Dr Dimitris Dimitropoulos, Dr Eftychia Liata and Dr Ioli Vingopoulou. The research projects of this Section focus on mapping out people – as individuals, communities, groups – in society. These projects cover the period of the Ottoman occupation of Greek lands up to the creation of the Modern Greek State (sixteenth-nineteenth centuries). The objectives are to examine developments in the economy and in demographics (population growth and urbanization), and to consider economic changes and the interactions of those changes.

What is the main link that joins the Athens workshop papers to the three in-house papers? All contributors build on solid and extensive documentation. They trace the networking of people and places around the Mediterranean. The authors propose that the spatial allocation of economic activities in the Mediterranean presents particular features based on geographical characteristics and on mutual contacts between individuals and groups. Sites and spaces are here understood as having been constructed by social agents and at the same time conditioned by political upheavals and crises.

The subject explored in the Athens workshop was the social and economic world of merchants in the Mediterranean. This was a world that evolved from business organization and the formation of networks beyond the limits of imperial or national boundaries. From early modern times up to the industrial era, a “unified economic world” had been created in Europe through commercial transactions, currencies and the ethics of business transactions. Far from claiming a Braudelian unity, the Mediterranean was a place of exchange of goods, commercial and technical practices and migrations. Cross-Mediterranean and intra-Mediterranean trade was halted in many cases due to political upheavals, the creation of new nation-states and the slow dissolution of the great empires. The main thematic units of the workshop were:

a) Merchants under foreign dominion and as foreign dominion; the role of merchants who operated in markets that had different ethnic, national and political structures than their own, for example the world of commerce under the dominance of the Ottomans, Venetians, Genoese, Hapsburgs and Greeks (sixteenth-twentieth centuries), as well as merchants as a dominant élite in various markets.

b) Networking as a systematic organization pattern for exchanging information, and the assessment of forms of collaboration and competition among various religious and ethnic minorities and groups; the scrutiny of the transformations and adaptations of mercantile firms, and of ethnic networks through individual strategies and collective economic behaviour; merchants as social agents in a comparative perspective creating and affecting institutional and network hierarchies from the old regime to modern times.

c) Crises (economic, natural) as a decisive factor in the course of trade in the Mediterranean: causes and effects; the investigation of entrepreneurship through individual or collective reactions and adaptations to these crises. For this theme a vast variety of sources and bibliography – merchants' archives, commercial and consular correspondence, manuals of commerce, geography books, port archives and more – has been exploited in order to investigate merchant activities in the Mediterranean from within, forming a kaleidoscope of empirical work.

In an attempt to combine the papers of this volume, we discover an interesting outcome: the familiarity of certain issues among them. Merchant houses and firms were the wheel for the rise of merchant capitalism and were represented in merchants from nation-states and merchants from Mediterranean regions that were in the throes of state formation. The development of merchant capitalism around the Mediterranean connected ports, cities, merchants, and agricultural and industrial regions based on networks and on the evolution of the market economy. This procedure contributed to the picture of unity of space so familiar from the Braudelian tradition. Economic geography, on the other hand, thinks of space as heterogeneous and tries to understand interdependencies between places and individuals and different processes. The spatial allocation papers herein offer the canvas to build on such interdependencies.

The rise of the modern merchant in the Mediterranean evolves in Tonia Kioussopoulou's argument for the emergence of a potent social group based on economic power and social relations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, on the eve of the fall of Byzantine Constantinople. Gilbert Buti explores the strategies used to overcome and cope with external crises by French merchants – a dominant group *par excellence* – in the eighteenth-century Mediterranean. In search of an indispensable, ethical way to conduct commercial activities to avoid economic crash, Sébastien Lupo goes to the heart of business in order to examine the expansion from Marseille to Smyrna of the potent Roux merchant house. Michèle Janin-Thivos examines

business correspondence in the minority language of a former seaborne empire, analyzing the linguistic abilities of Portuguese merchants involved in Mediterranean networks and their evolution throughout the eighteenth century. Giovanni Lombardi portrays Naples as a cosmopolitan port-city in the modern era, presenting its banking, notarial and ecclesiastical archival sources and focusing on the seventeenth-century international merchant house of Raillard. Annastella Carrino describes the role of the eighteenth-century petty merchants from the coastal area of Liguria, trading and competing among great merchant dynasties, from local trade to large-scale trade. Eftychia Liata has created a meticulous study of an early eighteenth-century Venice-based merchant of silk and colonial goods, a man of Greek-Spanish origin who adopted short-term commercial ventures and commission trade across the Mediterranean to control risk; in the course of his years in Venice, he made use of his Greek identity to support his trade activities.

Networking and ethnic business prevail in the papers that bring to light the importance of business groups in foreign markets. Katerina Galani tracks the emergence of newcomers – Greek and American merchants – in the port of Livorno in the turbulent years of the Napoleonic Wars. Marco Dogo indicates religious tolerance on the part of the Hapsburg Empire as an important factor for stabilizing Greek merchants in eighteenth-century Trieste as part of a trade colonies' network in the Balkan area, helping to overcome external threats in the course of trade. My own paper explores the economic migration of Greek merchants in the Mediterranean in response to international trade, taking advantage of their Ottoman past and their trade experience in the Italian Peninsula to establish themselves in England in the nineteenth century. Evrydiki Sifneos examines Greeks as a foreign economic dominion in South Russia and elsewhere through the business history of a family firm, analyzing the flexibility of the firm in order to adapt to changing environments from the nineteenth century well into the twentieth.

The combination of spatial allocation and economic activities in the Mediterranean prevails in the last group of papers. Idamaria Fusco analyses silk throwing in the region of Calabria in the nineteenth century, its expansion and the technological renovation that favoured the arrival of foreign entrepreneurs in the area. Katerina Papakonstantinou investigates the rise and fall of a small Greek port, Messolonghi, in the course of the eighteenth century in relation to Western Mediterranean demand, introducing spatial allocation in local maritime activity.

Ioli Vingopoulou highlights the connectivity in the region of Thrace across the Roman roads of the *Via Militaris* and the *Via Egnatia* from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century through the different types of lodgings used by travellers. Dimitris Dimitropoulos gives a detailed analysis of a settlement complex, as well as spatial allocation of Christian and Muslim settlements, in the heart of the Greek mainland in the early nineteenth century.

From the publication of Fernand Braudel's massive work on the Mediterranean, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (1949) and his *Civilization and Capitalism* (1967) to Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (2000), two exemplary orientations about the Mediterranean world, there is a time gap of approximately half a century. From the absolute praise and sovereignty of the Mediterranean to the "The End of the Mediterranean" – to quote a title from Horden and Purcell referring to the apparent fading of influence of Braudel's *Méditerranée* – to the decline of interest, on the part of historians and geographers, in *The Corrupting Sea*, during this half century a massive quantity of documentation, interpretation and criticism regarding the Mediterranean has accumulated. There is no way to disregard it, but to elaborate and elucidate it, and that is a key point of this volume.

Maria Christina Chatziioannou



LES HOMMES D’AFFAIRES BYZANTINS ET LEUR RÔLE POLITIQUE  
À LA FIN DU MOYEN ÂGE<sup>1</sup>

*Tonia Kioussopoulou*

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RÉSUMÉ: Vers la fin du Moyen Âge, pendant la deuxième moitié du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle et la première moitié du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, le fameux ordre byzantin, la “taxis”, l’équilibre disons, sur lequel se basait pendant des siècles entiers la société byzantine, était menacé par l’apparition de couches nouvelles, d’hommes nouveaux, qui revendiquaient leur appartenance à cet ordre. Pendant le XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, ceux qui assistaient l’empereur dans l’exercice de son pouvoir, ceux qui faisaient partie de son entourage, les “archontes” des sources écrites, constituaient une couche qui ne correspondaient pas tout à fait à l’ancienne aristocratie byzantine. Leur place sociale était comme dans le passé, déterminée par leur puissance économique et par les relations directes qu’ils entretenaient avec l’empereur. Sauf, qu’à présent cette puissance économique s’appuyait essentiellement sur les activités commerciales. Une nouvelle aristocratie, une aristocratie montante, résidait à Constantinople, ayant absorbé un grand nombre des anciennes familles aristocratiques de la ville, et formait avec eux la couche dirigeant de la société byzantine. L’orientation politique et les besoins de cette aristocratie est devenue un facteur décisif en ce qui concerne le caractère de l’État byzantin au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle.

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Je vais parler des hommes d’affaires byzantins avant la chute de Constantinople et de leur rôle politique. Ce que je vais montrer c’est précisément comment la présence de ces hommes d’affaires<sup>2</sup> était un facteur décisif pour la transformation de l’État byzantin.

Avant d’exposer mes données, je dois expliquer pourquoi je me suis intéressée au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, à une époque que l’historiographie de Byzance

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<sup>1</sup> Cette communication est essentiellement basée sur le livre: Tonia Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός. Πολιτική εξουσία και ιδεολογία πριν από την Άλωση* [Empereur ou administrateur. Pouvoir politique et idéologie avant la chute], Athènes 2007. Je me permets donc de ne faire que les références bibliographiques les plus nécessaires.

<sup>2</sup> La bibliographie sur les hommes d’affaires byzantins est riche. Voir, à titre indicatif, N. Oikonomides, *Hommes d’affaires grecs et latins à Constantinople (XIIIe-XVe siècles)*, Paris et Montréal 1979; Angeliki Laiou-Thomadakis, “The Greek Merchant of the Palaeologan Period: A Collective Portrait”, *Πρακτικά της Ακαδημίας Αθηνών* LVII (1982), pp. 96-132 [*Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium*, London 1992, no. VIII]; D. Jacoby, “Les Génois dans l’empire byzantin. Citoyens, sujets et protégés (1261-1453)”, *Storia dei Genovesi* IX (1989), pp. 264-265 [*Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean*, London 1997, no. III]; Nevra Necipoğlu, “Constantinopolitan Merchants



méprise en tant qu'une époque de déclin accéléré. En fait, il n'y avait plus un empire. Mais il y avait certainement un État pour la nature du quel nous ne connaissons pas grand chose. Il y avait surtout une société qui était déchirée par des conflits politiques et idéologiques et par des contradictions vives, dues aux changements profonds, qu'elle ne pouvait pas toujours suivre. Ce sont exactement les signes de changements et ces contradictions que j'ai trouvé intéressants pour mieux saisir la société byzantine, ses permanences ou ses possibilités. En plus, le XVe siècle était une époque transitoire et son étude nous permet de réfléchir en tant qu'historiens sur la question majeure concernant la transition d'une ère à l'autre dans la partie orientale de la Méditerranée.

Tout cela donné, j'avais commencé à étudier le XVe siècle byzantin, ayant fait deux acceptations initiales. La première était que la chute de Constantinople était non seulement un fait militaire de première importance, mais aussi un fait politique qu'on doit analyser sous l'aspect des conflits politiques de l'époque pour le comprendre. La deuxième était que Byzance était toujours, et surtout pendant l'époque tardive, une partie intégrante du monde européen, c'est pourquoi on doit prendre en considération l'histoire parallèle des États européens, et en premier lieu l'histoire des villes italiennes avec lesquelles il était en contact économique et culturel.

Pendant les XIVe et XVe siècles les territoires byzantins se limitaient de plus en plus.<sup>3</sup> La juridiction de l'empereur byzantin était circonscrite dans la ville de Constantinople et ses environs. Du point de vue géographique, l'État des derniers Paléologues n'était en réalité qu'une ville-état. Je me suis donc posée la question si l'État byzantin s'est en même temps transformé en une ville-état du point de vue politique. Or, des textes proprement politiques

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and the Question of their Attitudes towards Italians and Ottomans in the Late Palaeologan Period", *Πολύπλευρος νοϋς. Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag*, éd. Cordula Scholz et Georgios Makris, Munich et Leipzig 2000, pp. 251-263. Parmi les hommes d'affaires byzantins le cas de Loukas Notaras est le mieux étudié; sur lui et la famille de Notaras voir Oikonomides, *Hommes d'affaires*, pp. 19-20; plus récemment voir K.-P. Matschke, "The Notaras Family and its Italian Connections", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* XLIX (1995), pp. 59-72; *id.*, "Personengeschichte, Familiengeschichte, Sozialgeschichte. Die Notaras im späten Byzanz", *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna. Studi in onore di Geo Pitarino*, éd. Laura Balletto, Vol. II, Gênes 1997, pp. 787-812; Th. Ganchou, "Le rachat des Notaras après la chute de Constantinople ou les relations 'étrangères' de l'élite byzantine au XVe siècle", *Migrations et diasporas méditerranéennes (Xe-XVIe siècles)*, éd. M. Balard et A. Ducellier, Paris 2002, pp. 149-229.

<sup>3</sup> Sur un aspect général de cette période historique, voir I. Djurić, *Le crépuscule de Byzance*, Paris 1996.

n'existent pas et pour répondre à cette question on est obligé de trouver les outils opérationnels pour tracer les transformations éventuelles à travers les sources disponibles.

Le conflit le plus documenté est celui entre les unionistes et les contre-unionistes. C'est à travers de ce conflit qu'on puisse dresser les grandes lignes de cette époque transitoire. Nous savons que les Paléologues face aux Ottomans cherchaient à obtenir l'aide militaire du pape et des souverains occidentaux; à ce propos ils avaient accepté l'union des Églises malgré l'opposition ferme d'une grande partie des dignitaires ecclésiastiques et des intellectuels qui se sont constitués en un mouvement anti-unioniste.

Face aux unionistes qui plaidaient en faveur de l'unification du monde chrétien en s'appuyant sur des arguments d'une culture commune et de la continuité entre la Rome ancienne et la Rome nouvelle, les contre-unionistes brandissaient le risque de voir s'altérer leur foi, et par conséquent leur identité.<sup>4</sup> C'est ainsi que le "latinisme", conçu comme une trahison de la foi orthodoxe, que les contre-unionistes attribuaient à leurs adversaires est devenu avec le temps une accusation grave du fait qu'il désignait non seulement la détermination d'une personne par rapport à l'union mais aussi ses relations envers son propre héritage culturel. La question de l'union révèle le fossé qui séparait deux mondes en Byzance tardif ou plutôt deux façons de concevoir le monde: la façon conservatrice attachée aux traditions et la façon disons moderniste tournée vers l'ère nouvelle qui s'annonçait. À mon avis, la querelle entre unionistes et contre-unionistes pendant le XV<sup>e</sup> siècle était une querelle politique et fait écho au conflit qui opposait deux groupes au sein de la classe dirigeante byzantine avec pour enjeu la manière avec laquelle s'exerçait le pouvoir et leurs positions respectives après la conquête turque qui semblait à tous inévitable.

En effet, ce que l'on observe au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, c'est que les archontes et l'empereur entrent en conflit avec l'Église, parce qu'ils ont une autre conception de l'État. Très schématiquement, si les archontes s'efforçaient de promouvoir à l'époque un État "séculier" qui garde résolument ses distances avec l'Église, le Patriarcat, de son côté, dans le contexte de l'expansion progressive des Ottomans et de la pénétration de l'Église catholique dans les régions relevant de sa juridiction, devait absolument assurer l'unité de son territoire, pour des raisons à la fois économiques et idéologiques. Il

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<sup>4</sup> Sur le conflit entre unionistes et contre-unionistes pendant l'époque examinée ici voir l'étude récente de Marie-Hélène Blanchet, *Georges Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400-vers 1472), premier patriarche de Constantinople sous la domination ottomane. Personnage mythique, personnage réel*, Paris 2008, où toute la bibliographie relative.

sentait par ailleurs que son avenir résidait dans la péninsule balkanique et en Russie, où son influence était incontestée et donnait une impression d'universalité. Dans le conflit qui l'oppose aux archontes, ce sentiment et/ou ce besoin d'universalité a joué un rôle capital en suscitant, sur le plan politique, l'illusion que l'Empire byzantin œcuménique pouvait renaître, et que l'Église, dont l'autorité avait été ébranlée, pouvait retrouver son prestige d'antan. D'aucuns pensent que le cercle étroit du Patriarcat cultivait une "utopie orthodoxe".<sup>5</sup> Cette utopie avait des tenants et des aboutissants politiques, dont la dépréciation du pouvoir impérial, l'existence politique du "royaume des Romains", tel que l'avaient modelé les derniers Paléologues, formulée par les officiers ecclésiastiques. L'accusation de "latinisme", donc, lancée par les érudits ecclésiastiques, conférait des dimensions idéologiques au retranchement de l'Église. Au XVe siècle, ce projet trouvait une expression claire dans son conflit avec les archontes, la stratégie consistant à agiter la menace de la ruine morale et réelle de la "race" des Orthodoxes afin d'en assurer l'impact maximal auprès des fidèles.

J'ai parlé du plan politique des Paléologues et je trouve utile à ce propos d'analyser ici la notion de patrie.<sup>6</sup> Pendant l'époque tardive, et surtout après le XIIIe siècle, il paraît que la notion de patrie est devenue plus large que celle des époques précédentes. Le mot s'est mis à évoquer une liaison réciproque entre l'homme et le lieu de son origine. Le lieu acquiert ainsi des connotations qui ne sont plus uniquement géographiques. Il prend aussi dans plusieurs cas des sens politiques et culturels, qui non seulement permettent l'identification d'une personne, mais ils sont des éléments constitutifs de son identité. Le lieu par excellence qui définit à cause de son prestige ses habitants est Constantinople. À l'inverse, un lieu se définit par la valeur des ses habitants, de chacun parmi eux et de tous dans leur ensemble. De toute façon, le mot "patris" prend de plus en plus un sens émotionnel.

<sup>5</sup> P. Gounaridis, "Ιωσήφ Βρυνένιος, προφήτης της καταστροφής" [Joseph Bryennios, un prophète du désastre], 1453. *Η Άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης και η μετάβαση από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεώτερους χρόνους* [1453. La chute de Constantinople et la transition du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne], éd. Tonia Kioussopoulou, Hérakleion 2005, pp. 133-145.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, "Greco, Hellènes et Romains dans l'État de Nicée", *Αφιέρωμα στο Νίκο Σβορώνο* [Hommage à Nikos Svoronos], Vol. I, Réthymno 1986, pp. 248-257; *id.*, *Γένος Ρωμαίων. Βυζαντινές και νεοελληνικές ερμηνείες* [Genre des Romains. Interprétations byzantines et néohelléniques], Athènes 1996. Voir aussi Tonia Kioussopoulou, "Identités byzantines", *Historiein* II (2000), pp. 135-142.

Ce n'est pas le fait du hasard si le lieu qui devient une patrie est la ville.<sup>7</sup> Les textes de l'époque témoignent d'un lien spécifique que les habitants d'une ville développaient avec l'espace urbain. Il s'agissait plutôt d'un patriotisme de la ville dont le contenu, et cela fait la nouveauté, était clairement politique et séculier. La formation d'une ville-patrie se basait évidemment sur le rôle important que les villes jouaient à cette époque. Je crois que l'appropriation d'une ville en tant que patrie exprime l'angoisse de la classe dirigeante, ou d'une de ses parties, de survivre en tant que telle à cette confrontation.

Si on étudie les textes de l'empereur Manuel II Paléologue, et surtout ses oraisons, on constate que ce que l'empereur considérait comme patrie, soit une ville, sa ville natale, soit une région, avait un contenu purement politique, c'est-à-dire la patrie correspondait au territoire sur lequel s'exerçait un pouvoir politique donné. En plus cette patrie se caractérisait de sa propre histoire, à savoir de son passé prestigieux. Nous constatons qu'à travers ses discours publics l'empereur tentait de propager la territorialisation d'un sentiment d'appartenance.

La notion de patrie telle que la concevait Manuel nous rappelle l'idée de la patrie qu'on développait pendant la même époque en Occident, liée à la formation des monarchies nationales, qui revendiquaient la territorialisation et par conséquent la sécularisation de la patrie. Il est connu que c'était pendant les premiers siècles du Moyen Âge que l'ancienne "patria communis" est montée au ciel; le chrétien était alors devenu le citoyen d'une cité d'un autre monde, tandis qu'à partir du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle la patrie correspond de nouveau à une unité politique, voire terrestre.<sup>8</sup>

Tout cela donné, la question que je me suis posée est si Manuel Paléologue visait à organiser un État sécularisé, et si on peut dire ainsi "national". Il n'y a aucune doute que ni Manuel ni son successeur au trône Jean VIII Paléologue avaient l'illusion d'un empire œcuménique. Les territoires byzantins se

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<sup>7</sup> Angeliki Konstantakopoulou, *Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλονίκη. Χώρος και ιδεολογία* [Thessalonique byzantine. Espace et idéologie], Ioannina 1996, pp. 197 sqq.

<sup>8</sup> E. Kantorowicz, "Pro patria mori in Medieval Political Thought", *American Historical Review* LVI/3 (1953), pp. 472-492 [*Mourir pour la patrie et autres textes*, Paris 1984, pp. 105-141]. C'est sur cette étude classique que se basent les études récentes. À titre indicatif voir Dominique Jogna-Prat, "Constructions chrétiennes d'un espace politique", *Le Moyen Âge* CVII/1 (2001), pp. 49-69; P. Monnet, "La patria médiévale vue d'Allemagne, entre construction impériale et identités régionales", *Le Moyen Âge* CVII/1 (2001), pp. 71-99; G. Chittolini, "The Italian City-state and its Territory", *City-states in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy*, éd. A. Molho, K. Raaflaub et J. Emlen, Stuttgart 1991, pp. 589-602.

limitaient de plus en plus et, comme nous l'avons noté, la juridiction de l'empereur était circonscrite dans la ville de Constantinople et ses environs; sans aucun doute, du point de vue géographique, nous l'avons déjà remarqué, l'État de derniers Paléologues était une ville-état. Dans des telles circonstances je trouve très probable que les Paléologues s'orientaient vers une nouvelle organisation de leur État, imposée par le danger ottoman, mais surtout par les nécessités sociales de l'époque.

Les derniers empereurs byzantins se sont appuyés sur la couche sociale des hommes nouveaux, qui avec les membres des familles aristocratiques traditionnelles composaient l'élite constantinopolitaine. Ceux qui assistaient l'empereur dans l'exercice de son pouvoir, ceux qui faisaient partie de son entourage, les "archontes" des sources écrites, constituaient une couche qui ne correspondaient pas tout à fait à l'ancienne aristocratie byzantine. Leur place sociale était comme dans le passé, déterminée par leur puissance économique et par les relations directes qu'ils entraient avec l'empereur. Sauf, qu'à présent cette puissance économique s'appuyait essentiellement sur les activités commerciales. Il est bien connu que pendant toute l'époque tardive le commerce byzantin était important, mais limité à certains produits et joué un rôle subsidiaire par rapport au grand commerce italien.<sup>9</sup> Les entreprises byzantines pour mieux rapporter avaient besoin de la collaboration avec les Latins. N. Oikonomides nous a montré que beaucoup de membres de la grande aristocratie terrienne ont à cette époque modifié leur comportement économique investissant dans le commerce pour pouvoir compenser la perte de leurs terres.<sup>10</sup> Mais dans l'entourage du palais on rencontre aussi des personnes issues des familles plus modestes, qui étaient étroitement liés avec l'Occident sur le plan économique et dont leur survivance économique dépendait dans une large mesure de leurs relations avec la tiare pontificale. Nous constatons, en effet, qu'une nouvelle aristocratie, une aristocratie montante, résidait à Constantinople, ayant absorbé un grand nombre des anciennes familles aristocratiques de la ville, et formait avec eux la couche dirigeant de la société byzantine.

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<sup>9</sup> Angeliki Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System: Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* XXXIV-XXXV (1980), pp. 177-222 [*Gender, Society and Economic Life*, no. VII]; *id.*, "The Greek Merchant". Parmi les études les plus récentes voir K.-P. Matschke, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries", *The Economic History of Byzantium, from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, éd. Angeliki E. Laiou, Washington, DC, 2002, pp. 463-495, et dans le même volume, *id.*, "Commerce, Trade, Markets, and Money, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries", pp. 771-806, où toute la bibliographie antérieure.

<sup>10</sup> Oikonomides, *Hommes d'affaires*, pp. 119-123.

Cette aristocratie avait des liens économiques et culturels étroits avec les villes italiennes, surtout Venise et Gênes, et elle défendait la politique unioniste de Manuel et de Jean Paléologue. Une de mes conclusions donc appuyée sur le fait que les Paléologues menaient une politique qui ne s'intéressait pas à un compromis avec l'Église concerne l'hypothèse que leur approche vers l'Occident, au lieu d'être seulement la preuve de l'affaiblissement de l'État byzantin, est aussi le signe d'une tendance de la sécularisation du politique. Je pense que leur idée de la patrie nous permet de vérifier la validité de cette hypothèse. Ceux qui parlaient d'une "patria communis", comme Manuel Paléologue, et ils se référaient à une patrie territorialisée, une patrie dont le contenu était politique, ils cherchaient la formation d'une entité politique sur la base de la langue grecque et de l'histoire qui les distinguaient des autres. Il est à noter que ceux qui étaient pour une patrie commune se croyaient des Hellènes. Si nous constatons que ceux qui parlaient le grec cherchaient à obtenir une expression politique, nous pouvons compléter notre hypothèse formulée plus haut de la façon suivante: l'époque obligeait les derniers Paléologues à construire un État "séculier" et "national", un État des Hellènes qui était nécessaire pour la survivance de l'élite constantinopolitaine. Les autres, autour du cercle patriarcal, restaient fidèles à l'idée de l'empire. Pour eux la patrie était le pays natal, une "patria propria", aux traits uniquement culturels, car elle était le noyau du "genos" chrétien.<sup>11</sup>

Et pour arriver à une dernière question: pourquoi les archontes et l'empereur ont-ils défendu Constantinople, "leur patrie", au lieu de la céder aux Ottomans? Un de ses défenseur, par exemple, était Loukas Notaras, un homme de confiance de l'empereur qui, nous le savons, se trouvait en contact avec les Ottomans, mais qui avait aussi des relations étroites avec

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<sup>11</sup> En 1415, le moine Iossif Bryennios (N. Tomadakis, "Ιωσήφ του Βρυεννίου δημηγορία συντομωτάτη... *Περί του της Πόλεως ανακτίσματος*" [Discours bref de Joseph Bryennios... "Sur la reconstruction de la Ville"], *Περί Αλώσεως της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* [Sur la chute de Constantinople], Thessalonique 1993, pp. 243-252) forçait les Constantinopolitains de donner de l'argent pour la fortification de la ville, qui était leur "patrie, leur mère et la nourrice de tous les chrétiens". D'après lui, la ville était la maison de ses habitants qui étaient obligés de la protéger de la même manière qu'ils doivent protéger leur foyer. Constantinople en tant que patrie était pour Bryennios sa ville natale, mais avec une dimension morale. Elle était aussi le centre religieux de tous les chrétiens. Le mot employé par Bryennios est "genos", la "gens", des orthodoxes, qui constituait une collectivité chrétienne, avec pour son territoire Constantinople. Le texte de Bryennios, entre autres textes des intellectuels ecclésiastiques, nous montre la conception d'une patrie définie par le religieux, dont la défense était une obligation morale, dans la perspective de renforcer la communauté orthodoxe.

les Génois et les Vénitiens. Il était citoyen génois et il avait ses comptes dans la Banque de San Giorgio. Cet homme important, les sources disent qu'il se trouvait juste après l'empereur dans l'échelle sociale, bien qu'il puisse partir en Italie, avait fait le choix de participer personnellement à la défense de la ville. D'après les historiens de l'époque il a combattu pour "sa patrie, son empereur et sa famille".

En fait, il ne s'agit ni d'une question rhétorique, ni d'une réponse évidente. Si on dépouille les sources écrites avant et après 1453, on constate des points de vue différenciés là-dessus. Il est certain que la fin politique de l'État byzantin a influencé retrospectivement le regard des intellectuels et que à cause de cela il paraît comme si l'on ne défendait pas tous avec le même motif la capitale. Mais, la territorialisation d'un sentiment d'appartenance révélé avant la chute était, comme je le suggère, une prise de position politique claire.

C'est exactement cette territorialisation d'un sentiment d'appartenance et d'autre part l'hypothèse formulée sur les indices dispersées dans les sources, concernant l'existence d'un conseil municipal qui m'ont permis de conclure que l'État byzantin avait tendance à devenir une ville-état du point de vue politique. Mais les Ottomans qui ont accéléré cette évolution, étaient les mêmes qui l'ont freiné en conquérant Constantinople.

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STRATÉGIES MARCHANDES AU TEMPS DES TROUBLES  
ET DES INCERTITUDES.  
LE CAS DE LA FRANCE MÉDITERRANÉENNE AU XVIII<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE

*Gilbert Buti*

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RÉSUMÉ: Si l'échange est central dans l'économie d'Ancien Régime, les pratiques marchandes s'inscrivent dans un monde économique incertain qui impose aux acteurs des adaptations à des marchés instables. Ces comportements sont particulièrement sensibles lors de crises d'origines diverses qui affectent les places commerciales. La lecture de ces temps troublés, brouillée ou guidée par des informations issues de plusieurs canaux, conduit alors l'entrepreneur, seul ou en concertation avec un réseau de partenaires, à infléchir ses actions et à procéder à d'incessants ajustements. En retenant comme observatoire la France méditerranéenne du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, dominée par le poids des négociants et marchands de Marseille, il est possible de décrypter, à l'occasion de quelques temps forts – peste de 1720, crise frumentaire andalouse de 1753 ou guerres révolutionnaires – les agissements de ces hommes, de percevoir leurs anticipations, leurs prises de décisions et stratégies pour réaliser un “honnête profit” ou éviter un “bouillon”.

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Qui entend définir un port en Méditerranée, c'est-à-dire un point d'ancrage pour les échanges, aboutit à la conclusion – tout au moins pour les temps modernes – selon laquelle un port est d'abord un espace en perpétuelle recomposition. Cette reconstruction permanente qui affecte plus généralement encore les franges maritimes découle dans une large mesure des crises et des troubles de diverses natures inhérents à l'économie d'Ancien Régime définie comme un “monde de l'incertitude”;<sup>1</sup> elle résulte assurément des réactions soudaines, peu préparées ou mûrement réfléchies, des principaux acteurs économiques que sont les marchands et négociants.

Dans le cadre de cette rencontre centrée sur les pratiques du commerce en Méditerranée, je me propose de présenter à grands traits la nature de ces crises qui brouillent la bonne marche des affaires et en modifient quelquefois leur conduite, puis de saisir les réactions des acteurs économiques en période de turbulence, qu'ils soient sur les quais, dans leur boutique ou au comptoir, pour examiner enfin les principales mesures adoptées, les stratégies mises en œuvre, quelles soient individuelles ou collectives – si stratégies il y a.

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Yves Grenier, *L'économie d'Ancien Régime. Un monde de l'échange et de l'incertitude*, Paris: A. Michel, 1996.



Cette approche, qui privilégiera l'observatoire marseillais au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, ne prétend aucunement constituer une étude fouillée et exhaustive destinée à dégager une chronologie fine de tous les comportements des agents économiques, mais entend simplement exposer un panorama de ceux-ci, qu'ils soient le fruit de ripostes collectives ou d'attitudes individuelles.

### *Crises et troubles des échanges*

“Crise. Quand on prononce ce mot, est-on bien d'accord, sur ce qu'il veut dire ou sur ce que l'on comprend sous ce terme très usité, trop usité?”<sup>2</sup> s'interrogeait déjà Clément Juglar en 1862. Parmi les diverses réponses qui ont été apportées nous ferons nôtre celle, déjà ancienne mais toujours opératoire, d'Ernest Labrousse pour qui “le mot crise s'entend comme un accident brusque et limité, comme un épisode intercalé entre une période de prospérité et une phase de dépression”.<sup>3</sup>

Ces accidents, qu'annoncent parfois certains symptômes, ont des conséquences qui affectent l'épiderme des échanges mais qui atteignent aussi le tissu économique en profondeur. À ces ruptures franches et soudaines, il faut ajouter les perturbations et périodes de turbulences qui, bien que moins cassantes, n'en désorganisent pas moins et quelquefois durablement les échanges.

Ces crises et autres troubles ont des origines anthropiques ou non. Ainsi, figurent au premier chef les facteurs naturels et notamment les caprices climatiques comme le fameux hiver 1709-1710 qui frappa en profondeur le royaume de France mais plus superficiellement ses franges littorales ouvertes aux apports extérieurs; ce fut pour Marseille une occasion, parmi d'autres, d'assurer le ravitaillement des provinces intérieures. La cité portuaire n'était pas à l'abri de perturbations naturelles plus lointaines ainsi qu'en témoignent les effets de la sécheresse andalouse de 1753 et ceux du séisme de Lisbonne de 1755.<sup>4</sup> Bien que la malveillance humaine n'y soit pas toujours étrangère nous pouvons également porter sur ce registre certaines catastrophes sanitaires; on songe à l'épidémie de peste de 1720-1721 qui eut Marseille pour épice centre avant de ravager une partie de la Provence et qui entraîna la fermeture du port pendant plusieurs mois.

<sup>2</sup> Clément Juglar, *Des crises commerciales et de leur retour périodique en France, en Angleterre et aux États-Unis*, Paris 1889, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Camille Ernest Labrousse, *La crise de l'économie française à la fin de l'Ancien Régime et au début de la Révolution*, Paris 1944, p. II-III.

<sup>4</sup> Michèle Janin-Thivos, “Réaction et réactivité du monde des marchands devant le tremblement de terre de Lisbonne”, *Rives nord-méditerranéennes* XXVII (2007), pp. 51-84.

Les facteurs politiques –guerres et tensions diplomatiques, éphémères ou durables, entre Versailles et La Porte– perturbèrent également, à des degrés divers, la circulation maritime et les transactions marchandes tout au long du XVIIIe siècle. Les opérations militaires qui ponctuent le siècle, avec “course européenne” et “piraterie barbaresque”, entravèrent à plusieurs reprises les échanges maritimes; blocus des littoraux, prises de navires, confiscation des cargaisons et capture des équipages étaient autant de risques qui participaient à cette incertitude des échanges et aux calculs des entrepreneurs.

Enfin, également en lien direct avec l’action des hommes, des troubles commerciaux et bancaires furent à l’origine de graves dysfonctionnements des activités marchandes. Parmi ces crises aux facettes multiples et aux mécanismes imbriqués les rendant délicates à décrypter,<sup>5</sup> mentionnons simplement la “famine monétaire”, cette pénurie de métal blanc préjudiciable au bon déroulement du commerce avec les Échelles du Levant, ou encore les crises du crédit comme celle que connut Marseille en 1729-1731, bien avant le krach des courtiers de 1774<sup>6</sup> qui atteignit en profondeur les échanges avec le Levant tandis que la lointaine économie de plantation des Îles d’Amérique montrait les premiers signes d’essoufflement.

Ces diverses turbulences qui ont affecté la place marchande provoquèrent, de manière plus ou moins durable, la désorganisation des circuits commerciaux. L’insécurité des transports, la réduction des approvisionnements, les brutales fluctuations des prix, la paralysie des transactions et de tout trafic maritime ou, au contraire, leur soudaine accélération en sont autant de signes forts qui conduisent parfois à des bilans de faillite.

Les marchands et les négociants marseillais –à la fois assureurs, armateurs, banquiers et grossistes– durent s’adapter à ce monde incertain et faire face à des marchés instables. Ces hommes, qui se retrouvaient quotidiennement à la Loge établie au rez-de-chaussée de l’Hôtel de Ville, tenaient le port et contrôlaient également la ville ainsi que l’atteste leur présence, directe ou plus feutrée, dans les principales institutions urbaines à commencer par le Conseil de Ville. Seuls, avec leurs collaborateurs directs ou en concertation avec un réseau de partenaires proches ou plus lointains qu’unissaient souvent des liens familiaux et confessionnels –on songe à l’internationale huguenote

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<sup>5</sup> Charles Carrière, *Négociants marseillais au XVIIIe siècle. Contribution à l’étude des économies maritimes*, 2 volumes, Marseille: Institut Historique de Provence, 1973, et pour une mise au point complémentaire on lira du même auteur “Réflexions sur les crises commerciales au XVIIIe siècle”, *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* (1977), pp. 3-15.

<sup>6</sup> Marcel François-Xavier Emmanuelli, *La crise marseillaise de 1774 et la chute des courtiers*, Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1979.

de Genève, d'Allemagne méridionale et de Languedoc pointée jadis par Herbert Lüthy<sup>7</sup> ils furent amenés à infléchir leurs pratiques, à procéder à d'incessants ajustements et à ouvrir de nouvelles voies. Pour ce faire ils disposaient de plusieurs leviers.

#### *Moyens mobilisés par les acteurs des échanges*

Les négociants marseillais n'apportèrent pas de réponses uniques aux troubles qui perturbèrent leurs affaires; d'aucuns agirent de manière individuelle tandis que d'autres privilégièrent des actions collectives en actionnant des leviers institutionnels, marchands ou municipaux, locaux ou "nationaux", voire transnationaux.

Face à des difficultés d'origine économique et commerciale ils tendirent à mobiliser en priorité des structures locales. Ainsi, s'assurèrent-ils du contrôle de l'approvisionnement en grains de la ville et de la surveillance de leurs sorties en période de pénurie.<sup>8</sup> Les difficultés alimentaires de 1679 furent l'occasion de mettre en place une commission spéciale pour assurer le ravitaillement de Marseille. Cette commission, appelée Bureau des Intendants de l'Abondance, était alors composée de gentilshommes et de bourgeois ainsi que d'un ou deux négociants retirés des affaires et d'un âge avancé. Renouvelé chaque année, le Bureau effectuait les achats, assurait la distribution et veillait à briser toute tentative d'accaparement afin d'écarter le spectre de la famine. Fortement sollicité lors du "grand hyver" de 1709-1710, sa réorganisation en 1723 montre une plus large ouverture au monde de la marchandise avec désormais cinq négociants chargés de tenir les comptes des opérations engagées.

La Chambre de Commerce constituait également un instrument de première importance aux mains des négociants pour obtenir les aménagements souhaités en période troublée. Afin de soutenir la pratique de la caravane maritime en crise au lendemain de la Guerre de Sept Ans, les négociants obtinrent par l'intermédiaire de la Chambre consulaire une suppression de droits et une réduction de taxes pour lutter, selon eux, "à armes égales" contre la concurrence étrangère, en particuliers celle des Ragusains.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert Lüthy, *La banque protestante. De la révocation de l'édit de Nantes à la Révolution*, Paris: SEVPEN, 1961.

<sup>8</sup> Gilbert Buti, "La traite des blés et la construction de l'espace portuaire de Marseille (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle)", dans Brigitte Marin et Catherine Virlovet (éds), *Nourrir les cités de Méditerranée. Antiquité – Temps modernes*, Paris et Aix-en-Provence: Maisonneuve et Larose – Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme, 2003, pp. 769-799.

Un siècle plus tôt, les négociants marseillais hostiles à l'édit d'affranchissement du port décidé par Colbert en 1669, avaient exigé et obtenu par le même canal institutionnel la mise en place d'une imposition de 20% *ad valorem* sur les marchandises du Levant introduites dans le royaume par des étrangers; cette protection était à leurs yeux le moyen d'écarter la menace d'une concurrence jugée déloyale ou tout au moins d'anticiper des risques insupportables.

Les principaux acteurs économiques de la place se tournèrent également vers le Parlement de Provence pour exercer une pression jusqu'au sommet de l'État royal. Ces démarches s'effectuaient plus aisément lorsque des liens étroits unissaient cette institution aux principaux acteurs commerciaux de la place, comme Joseph Fabre, député du commerce délégué auprès du Conseil du roi au début du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Ils agirent ainsi pour obtenir la levée de la fermeture du port décidée après la contagion de 1720 et pour repousser les demandes appuyées de ports voisins comme La Ciotat, ou plus lointaines comme Agde et Sète, désireux de nouer des liens durables avec la Méditerranée arabo-musulmane et d'ébrécher par-là le monopole de fait de Marseille avec le Levant.

L'intervention directe du pouvoir central était naturellement recherchée lorsque les difficultés étaient d'ordre politique et militaire. Ainsi, l'Amirauté et les bureaux de la Marine furent sollicités pour mettre en place, en période de conflit, des convois afin de protéger les navires de commerce à destination de la Méditerranée orientale. Toutefois, force est de reconnaître que ces escortes militaires n'eurent qu'un succès limité. D'une part, les convois étaient payants et relativement lents –les bâtiments devant régler leur marche sur le plus lent d'entre eux. D'autre part, la pratique était préjudiciable aux objectifs des marchands pour lesquels la rapidité d'arrivages isolés favorisait un "grand coup" à l'inverse de ceux des convois porteurs de fortes quantités de marchandises. Nombre de marchands eurent tôt fait de mettre en balance les services rendus et la note à payer. L'amende imposée par le pouvoir central à ceux qui refusaient de se glisser dans les convois, le risque d'être capturé et la hauteur de la prime d'assurance ne dissuadèrent pas les entrepreneurs les plus téméraires désireux de livrer dans les meilleurs délais des marchandises devenues rares sur la place. "L'incertitude et le risque, caractéristiques fortes de l'économie d'Ancien Régime, accroissent les chances de profit du détenteur d'avance."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Grenier, *L'économie*, p. 418.

Les assurances constituaient sans nul doute, surtout en temps de guerre et pour les expéditions maritimes lointaines, le moyen le plus banal de rechercher une protection ou tout au moins une garantie. Rien de très original dans cette pratique attestée localement depuis le XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle.<sup>10</sup> C'est à la Loge ou chez les notaires qu'étaient traités les contrats d'assurance aux primes variant selon la conjoncture mais dont les taux enregistrèrent une progressive baisse au fil du siècle.<sup>11</sup> À Marseille, qui était devenue depuis le XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle une importante place d'assurance, "les marchands y étaient presque toujours réciproquement assurés et assureurs".<sup>12</sup> Ponctué à la fois de ruines et de profits inespérés, le marché des assurances maritimes connut, notamment dans la seconde moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, des tentatives de concentration de la part de puissants négociants comme les Rabaud-Solier et Favre-Dragon; ces essais n'eurent cependant pas de suite et l'ancienne architecture resta inchangée: les courtiers continuèrent à offrir des assurances rédigées par les notaires et signées par les négociants.

Toujours dans le cadre de troubles d'origine politique, des démarches furent entreprises auprès du pouvoir central afin d'obtenir la signature d'accords avec les Régences du Maghreb dans le but d'épargner les navires battant pavillon français d'attaques barbaresques.<sup>13</sup> Face à ce péril chronique, des requêtes furent également adressées par les Marseillais aux responsables de l'Ordre de Malte par le biais de la Chambre de Commerce et des bureaux de Versailles. Pour gêner les opérations des "États corsaires" et empêcher la constitution d'une flotte ottomane qui pourrait menacer les entreprises maritimes marseillaises en Levant, les "vaisseaux de la Chrétienté" – ceux du corso maltais – étaient invités à se montrer plus souvent pour assurer la police des mers et décourager toute entreprise "infidèle".<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> L. A. Boiteux, *La fortune de mer. Le besoin de sécurité et les débuts de l'assurance maritime*, Paris: SEVPEN, 1968, et Andrea Addobbati, *Commercio, rischio, guerra. Il mercato delle assicurazioni marittime di Livorno (1694-1795)*, Rome: Ed. Storia e Letteratura, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Gaston Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, Vol. IV: 1599-1789, Paris: Plon, 1954, p. 581.

<sup>12</sup> Archives de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Marseille-Provence (ACCI), H. 91. Assurances maritimes, 1723.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Panzac, *Les corsaires barbaresques. La fin d'une épopée, 1800-1820*, Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1999.

<sup>14</sup> Michel Fontenay, "Les missions des galères de Malte, 1530-1798", dans Michel Vergé-Franceschi (éd.), *Guerre et commerce en Méditerranée (IX<sup>e</sup> - XX<sup>e</sup> s.)*, Paris 1991, pp. 103-122.

Ces réactions collectives qui sont les plus apparentes voire les plus spectaculaires, ne sauraient masquer les agissements individuels. Ceux-ci, prenaient appui essentiellement sur les rouages de l'entreprise et ne se privaient pas de mobiliser les compétences des régisseurs ou *coagis* des commandites installées dans les Échelles du Levant, sans omettre celles de certains capitaines de navires ou subrécargues chargés des transactions.<sup>15</sup> Ces actions s'effectuaient au sein de réseaux marchands unissant, le temps d'une opération, des partenaires de toute confiance. Nous pouvons d'ailleurs nous interroger sur la pertinence du terme "stratégie" pour qualifier ces comportements; en effet, ce terme qui tend à renvoyer à une complexe et longue maturation ne recouvrait pas toujours les réactions des acteurs des échanges. La lecture de correspondances marchandes laisse entrevoir ces tâtonnements, interrogations et supputations des entrepreneurs avant la prise de décision; la collecte de l'information était à la base de la construction des choix effectués.

L'information était en effet au cœur des usages marchands. Si la gestion du temps et la prise d'initiatives par les acteurs du commerce passaient ordinairement par une "bonne correspondance" c'était encore plus vrai en temps de crises et de troubles, c'est-à-dire dans un contexte d'accès limité à l'information et de rumeurs permanentes.<sup>16</sup> L'information, qui s'apparente à bien des égards à une "marchandise", ne serait-ce que par son coût, était essentielle pour engager une opération, effectuer un arbitrage et agir au plus vite, c'est-à-dire avant les autres.

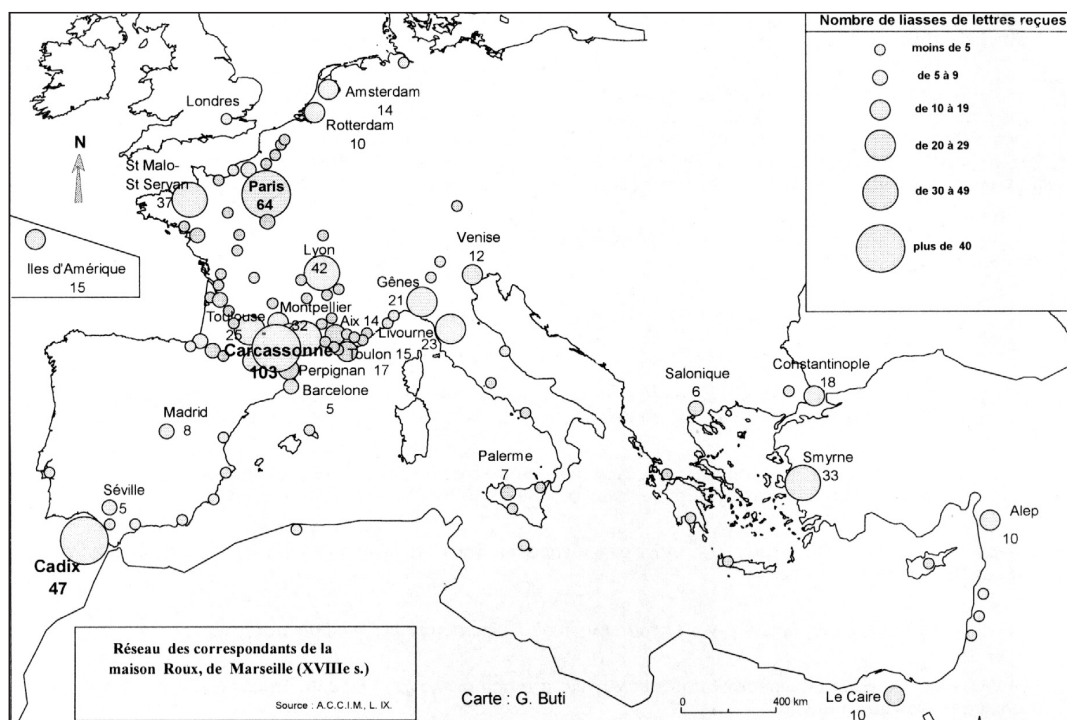
Tel est le rôle de l'abondante correspondance de la maison Roux de Marseille avec des confrères établis dans l'ensemble de l'espace européen et du bassin méditerranéen fréquenté par des capitaines de navires marchands qui faisaient également office d'informateurs avertis.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Mélissa Manugerra, *Paroles d'outre-mer au XVIIIe siècle. Lettres de capitaines de navires à leurs armateurs marseillais*, Mémoire de master d'histoire, Université de Provence, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Sur cette thématique on pourra se reporter au numéro spécial "Informazioni e scelte economiche", *Quaderni storici* CXXIV/1 (2007), et à celui "Moyens, supports et usages de l'information marchande à l'époque moderne", *Rives nord-méditerranéennes* XXVII (2007). Voir également Dominique Margairaz et Philippe Minard (éds), *L'information économique au XVIe-XIXe siècle*, Paris: Comité pour l'Histoire économique et financière de la France, 2008.

<sup>17</sup> Voir ci-dessus l'intervention de Sébastien Lupo à propos des liens épistolaires entre les Roux de Marseille et leur commandite de Smyrne, Garavaque et Cusson.

Carte 1. Localisation des correspondants des Roux de Marseille au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle.

### Pratiques marchandes

Les pratiques mises en œuvre pour contourner les obstacles et faire face à la désorganisation des affaires aboutirent parfois à des changements d'orientation durables. Lorsque les conflits perturbaient "le cours ordinaire des choses" et affectaient directement les activités de la place, les marchands usaient de moyens variés, en rien originaux, souvent éphémères et abandonnés lorsque la situation redevenait normale. Ainsi en était-il du chargement de marchandises sur des navires battant pavillons "neutres" – ceux des Nordiques (Danois, Suédois...), par exemple– ou de l'usage d'un autre port, fut-il concurrent, à l'instar de Livourne mis à contribution par les négociants marseillais pendant la Guerre de Sept Ans jusqu'à devenir une sorte de succursale temporaire.<sup>18</sup>

L'appel à un "prête-nom" pour le transport de marchandises et l'utilisation de discrets points de rencontres –criques du littoral provençal, îles de

<sup>18</sup> Charles Carrière et Marcel Courdurié, "Les grandes heures de Livourne au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'exemple de la Guerre de Sept Ans", *Revue historique* CCLIV/1 (1975), pp. 39-80.

l'Archipel ou des Baléares... – pour de furtifs échanges interlopes contournant une législation jugée contraignante faisaient partie de l'arsenal ordinaire des hommes d'affaires. Une entrave durable dans la circulation pouvait conduire à modifier des voies habituelles d'approvisionnement; ainsi, lorsque des flottes ennemies bloquaient Cadix et le détroit de Gibraltar, des Marseillais qui attendaient la "délivrance" d'une partie des "fruits et trésors des Indes" optaient pour la voie de Bayonne et l'utilisation de la route terrestre.

Enfin, la longueur d'un conflit et le poids de l'incertitude conduisaient quelquefois les armateurs à vendre leurs navires restés au loin, notamment au cours de campagnes caravanières: les risques de prise et une trop longue immobilisation du bâtiment –après un temps de gardiennage– expliquent ces décisions. Ainsi, lors de la Guerre de Sept Ans, de nombreux propriétaires provençaux se défirent de leurs bâtiments ancrés dans le port d'Alexandrie, en les cédant à des acquéreurs ottomans lors de transactions passées devant la chancellerie de France.<sup>19</sup>

La course fut-elle envisagée comme activité de substitution au commerce en période de guerre? À vrai dire, les négociants de Marseille suivirent peu cette voie empruntée à la fin du XVIIe siècle par les "Messieurs de Saint-Malo".<sup>20</sup> On relève seulement quelques traces de ce choix d'armement "en guerre et marchandises" pendant la Guerre de Succession d'Espagne, effectué par des négociants associés, pour le financement des opérations, à des institutions locales comme la Chambre de Commerce.<sup>21</sup> Au reste, si le petit cabotage eut un rôle compensateur à compter d'avril 1793, lorsque le grand armement fut brisé par la mise en place du blocus anglais, il ne pouvait prétendre remplacer les échanges du long cours.

Les marchands adaptèrent également leurs pratiques pour exploiter au mieux de leurs intérêts une crise lointaine. Pour eux une crise "chez les autres" constituait alors à bien des égards "l'anti-crise" source de profits. Tel fut le cas de la crise frumentaire andalouse de 1753.<sup>22</sup> Le schéma n'a rien d'extraordinaire: une brutale période de sécheresse ("absence de la rosée

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<sup>19</sup> Service historique de la Défense, département Marine, Toulon, 1R1-2. Main courante d'Alexandrie (1755-1764).

<sup>20</sup> André Lespagnol, *Messieurs de Saint-Malo. Une élite négociante au temps de Louis XIV*, 2 vols, Rennes: PUR, 1997.

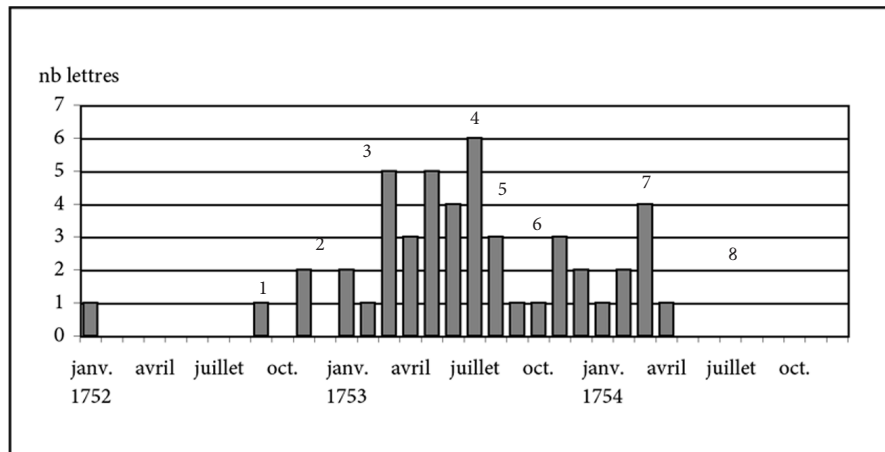
<sup>21</sup> Archives départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône, IXB. Amirauté du Levant.

<sup>22</sup> Gilbert Buti et Charles Carrière, "Crise frumentaire et commerce international au XVIIIe siècle. Marseille et la crise andalouse de 1753", dans Jean-Louis Miège (éd.), *Les céréales en Méditerranée. Histoire, anthropologie, économie*, Marseille: CNRS Éditions, 1993, pp. 109-128.



du Seigneur”), des récoltes compromises, une hausse du prix des grains, l’appel aux blés de mer et l’écoute marseillaise pour faire face à la menace de disette. La fébrilité des correspondances marseillaises illustre l’intérêt porté aux difficultés andalouses. Une lecture attentive des lettres reçues par la maison Roux de Marseille –puissante maison peu attirée habituellement par le commerce des grains considéré à juste titre comme “risquable et aléatoire” – permet de décrypter les agissements de ces hommes, de percevoir leurs anticipations, leurs prises de décisions et les moyens mis en œuvre pour réaliser un “honnête profit” ou éviter un “bouillon” par manque de prudence ou surcroît d’audace.

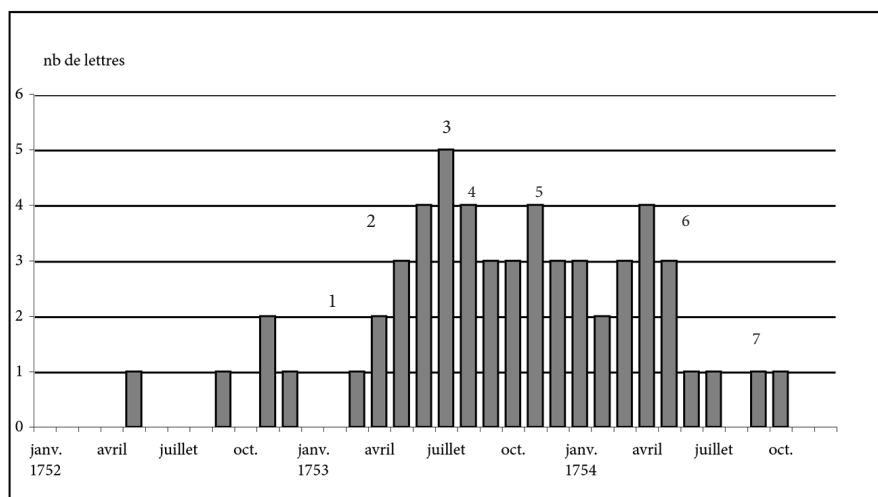
Graphique 1. Lettres expédiées par Didier de Cadix aux Roux de Marseille.<sup>23</sup>



1. Pluies rares. 2. Faibles récoltes? 3. Manque de grains et possibles coups? 4. Achats.  
5. Ventes. 6. Paiements. 7. Faiblesse des pluies. 8. Pluies et perspectives de bonne récolte.

<sup>23</sup> ACCI, L. IX. 812. Cadix, Didier (1752-1754).

Graphique 2. Lettres expédiées par François de Keyser (Séville) aux Roux (Marseille).<sup>24</sup>



1. Risque de sécheresse? 2. Manque de grains et spéculations. 3. Achats. 4. Ventes.
5. Paiements. 6. Nouvelle sécheresse? 7. Retour de la “rosée du Seigneur”.

Les négociants croisaient minutieusement leurs informations avec celles puisées auprès de confrères et de capitaines de navires de commerce et recherchaient l’association d’hommes de “toute confiance” pour prendre ou suspendre une décision. Ils mobilisaient les flottes des petits ports voisins pour faire face à la rigidité des structures locales en matière de transport, et ce d’autant plus aisément qu’ils figuraient parmi les quirataires ou copropriétaires de ces flottes de service. La rapidité d’intervention étant essentielle pour vendre au meilleur prix –soit au prix haut faut-il le préciser dans un logique marchande en rien humanitaire malgré un discours épistolaire empreint de compassion pour les malheureux Andalous– les envois de grains s’effectuaient sans passer par Marseille pour éviter la quarantaine aux infirmeries de la cité. D’aucuns n’hésitaient pas à “camoufler” l’origine véritable des grains pour répondre au plus vite aux demandes pressantes des acheteurs.

<sup>24</sup> ACCI, L. IX. 875-876. Séville, François de Keyser (1740-1784).

Cependant, une fois la menace écartée les marchés retrouvaient leurs situations antérieures sans grandes modifications et les marchands leurs pratiques habituelles, sinon leur routine. En revanche, et en optant pour une autre échelle de lecture, certains comportements entraînèrent des changements structurels conduisant à l'inversion de courants commerciaux, à la modification de productions manufacturières et la participation à de nouveaux trafics.

Ainsi, au début du XVIIIe siècle les négociants marseillais durent faire face à une crise du marché du moka ottoman à la suite de mesures de restriction de sorties de l'Empire décidées par le sultan de Constantinople. Après d'infructueuses tentatives de négociations, les Français, à commencer par les Malouins, acclimatèrent des plants de caféiers, dérobés en Arabie, dans les îles de l'Océan Indien, puis dans celles de la Mer des Caraïbes. À partir de 1735, c'est le café des plantations des Antilles que les négociants marseillais distribuèrent sur les marchés méditerranéens, marché levantin compris. Ainsi, une riposte marchande concertée, une "guerre du café", aboutit en quelques années à une totale et durable inversion d'un courant commercial.

La crise de la draperie languedocienne destinée au marché levantin, crise ressentie dès le milieu du XVIIIe siècle et aggravée après 1770, conduisit les acteurs des échanges à modifier leur offre pour l'adapter aux goûts des autres.<sup>25</sup> La difficulté de maintenir une "économie de la qualité"<sup>26</sup> amena certains négociants à diversifier leur offre pour satisfaire la demande d'une clientèle plus large. Ces changements s'effectuèrent à la suite de débats entre marchands marseillais diffuseurs de produits finis, manufacturiers de Languedoc et régisseurs établis dans les Échelles du Levant à l'écoute des goûts des consommateurs.<sup>27</sup>

Par ailleurs, l'essoufflement de l'économie de plantation dans les Îles françaises d'Amérique, à partir des années 1780, se traduit pour les négociants par un manque à gagner dans les retours des Antilles. Pour y remédier, d'aucuns s'engagèrent résolument dans la traite négrière:<sup>28</sup> tel est le sens de "l'explosion" des expéditions en direction de Guinée, Mozambique et Angola, alors que se développaient – à Marseille comme à Nantes au même moment – de vertueux discours hostiles au "commerce circuiteux".

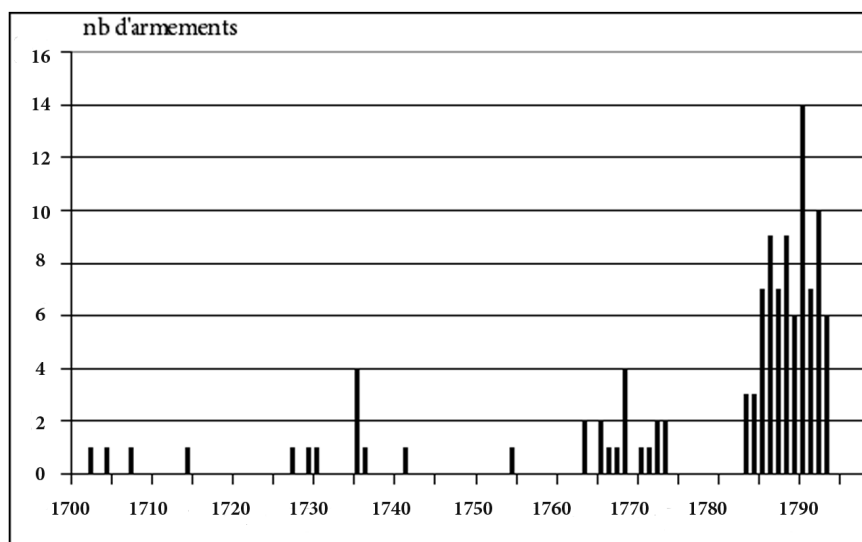
<sup>25</sup> Charles Carrière et Michel Morineau, "Draps du Languedoc et commerce du Levant au XVIIIe siècle", *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale* XLVI/1 (1968), pp. 108-121.

<sup>26</sup> Lucien Karpik, "L'économie de la qualité", *Revue française de sociologie* XXX (1989), pp. 185-210.

<sup>27</sup> Gilbert Buti, "Des goûts et des couleurs. Draps du Languedoc pour clientèle levantine au XVIIIe siècle", *Rives nord-méditerranéennes* XXIX (2008), pp. 125-140.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*, "Marseille, port négrier au XVIIIe siècle", *Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire* XI (2007), pp. 162-178.

Graphique 3. Marseille et la traite négrière au XVIIIe siècle.



De manière plus feutrée, les périodes de turbulence favorisèrent également de nouvelles orientations. Ainsi, les Roux se dégagèrent progressivement de la marchandise et subirent de leur plein gré la force d'attraction du triangle bancaire, peu méditerranéen, représenté par les places de Londres, Amsterdam et Paris. D'autres acteurs du négoce tendirent à se spécialiser, les uns vers l'armement maritime,<sup>29</sup> d'autres vers l'assurance, d'autres enfin vers l'industrie naissante; ainsi, pendant les événements révolutionnaires et à la suite de la paralysie du trafic portuaire, certains entrepreneurs envisagèrent de nouvelles trajectoires et optèrent résolument pour la production industrielle qui n'était jusque-là qu'un soutien du grand négoce (savonniers, huiliers et autres "chimistes" des rives de l'étang de Berre...)<sup>30</sup>

Ces comportements observés en temps de crise ne doivent pourtant pas occulter l'inaction de nombre d'acteurs des échanges, voire de la majorité d'entre eux. Les pratiques de quelques-uns, si séduisantes fussent-elles, ne sauraient être présentées comme exemplaires et représentatives de l'attitude

<sup>29</sup> Roland Caty et Eliane Richard, *Armateurs marseillais au XIXe siècle. Histoire du commerce et de l'industrie de Marseille (XIXe-XXe siècles)*, Vol. I, Marseille: Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Marseille, 1986.

<sup>30</sup> Xavier Daumalin, Nicole Girard et Olivier Raveux (éds), *Du savon à la puce. L'histoire industrielle de Marseille du XVIIe siècle à nos jours*, Marseille: Jeanne Laffitte, 2003.

générale des acteurs de la place. Ne rien faire, attendre et laisser passer l'orage constitua aussi une façon de faire, peu spectaculaire sans doute et que l'on aurait pour cela tendance à ignorer, mais qui fut largement et sciemment répandue.<sup>31</sup> À la fin du XVIIIe siècle Jean-Baptiste Chauvet, installé à Marseille après un court séjour aux Antilles, traversa la période révolutionnaire sans pouvoir ou vouloir réagir aux évolutions en cours, en maintenant pour son entreprise une logique de répétition et de reproduction.<sup>32</sup> La trajectoire de ce marchand ordinaire dans la tourmente révolutionnaire n'a rien d'exceptionnelle. Aveuglement personnel face à des événements d'une rare gravité ou pragmatisme marchand? L'inertie comme réaction des acteurs en temps de crise? Assurément.

Tout au long du XVIIIe siècle, les maisons de négoce présentes à Marseille furent confrontées à des turbulences passagères et à de brutales crises, exceptionnelles ou récurrentes. Elles y apportèrent des réponses multiples, variées, collectives ou non, calculées au sein de la seule entreprise ou élaborées dans le cadre de réseaux constitués, en rien vraiment originales. En l'absence de véritable régulation, la flexibilité des comportements et l'adaptation aux caprices de marchés instables caractérisent les pratiques de ces acteurs.

Sans proposer de bouleversements techniques ou d'innovations majeures, les négociants furent contraints à des ajustements permanents, dans une temporalité marquée par "le risquable et l'aléatoire", qui conduisirent parfois à de nouvelles orientations.

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*MMSH - UMR TELEMME*

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<sup>31</sup> Jean-Pierre Hirsch, *Les deux rêves du commerce. Entreprise et institution dans la région lilloise (1780-1860)*, Paris: EHESS, 1991.

<sup>32</sup> Boris Deschanel, *La société Chauvet et Cie. Des négociants marseillais dans la tourmente révolutionnaire (1789-1795)*, Mémoire de master d'histoire, Université Paris 1, 2008.

“VOUS M’AVÉS SI FORT IMPOSER DE NE PAS RÉPLIQUER...”  
RÉSEAU ET HIÉRARCHIE DANS UNE COMMANDITE MARSEILLAISE  
À SMYRNE AU XVIII<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE

*Sébastien Lupo*

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RÉSUMÉ: Le Levant est un marché de prédilection pour les négociants marseillais. En 1759, la puissante maison Roux de Marseille crée *ex nihilo* une commandite à Smyrne dont les régisseurs sont de jeunes marchands de leur connaissance. La commandite est une structure commune dans le négoce du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, pourtant les Roux l'utilisent avec parcimonie. Ce choix particulier, alors que l'Échelle est largement pourvue en maisons françaises, peut paraître curieux du fait de “la régression longue” du commerce marseillais levantin dans la deuxième moitié du siècle. L'exposition aux risques du fait de l'investissement direct peut trouver sa justification dans le contrôle opéré sur les régisseurs smyrniotes par les majeurs marseillais. Or, la hiérarchie est perturbée par la distance et les difficultés de communication entre les deux ports. La correspondance passive montre les tensions et les difficultés croisées des majeurs pour imposer leurs volontés et des régisseurs pour proposer de nouvelles affaires. On y comprend également que l'enchâssement de cette relation commerciale dans des liens sociaux plus larges est complexe et joue souvent en défaveur des régisseurs, dont l'audace négociante semble progressivement sacrifiée sur l'autel du contrôle réticulaire exercé par les marseillais.

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Au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Marseille bénéficie d'un “monopole quasi absolu”<sup>1</sup> pour les marchandises du Levant grâce au droit de 20% qui les frappe, depuis 1669, si elles sont déchargées par des vaisseaux étrangers ou en dehors du port provençal.<sup>2</sup> La France profite, en outre, à partir de 1740, de nouvelles capitulations négociées avec l'Empire ottoman qui lui accordent l'équivalent de la clause de la nation la plus favorisée.<sup>3</sup>

Dans ce contexte, il n'est pas étonnant que la puissante maison Roux ait noué des contacts avec Smyrne dès le début de son histoire: elles sont

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Carrière, *Négociants marseillais au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Contribution à l'étude des économies maritimes*, Marseille: Institut Historique de Provence, 1973, p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> La mesure concerne également Rouen dont l'éloignement de la Méditerranée s'avère rédhibitoire.

<sup>3</sup> R. Paris, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille, 1660-1789. Le Levant*, Vol. V, Paris: Plon, 1957, p. 98.

attestées dans les archives dès 1730,<sup>4</sup> deux ans après la création de la société. Marseille devient alors un port mondial<sup>5</sup> tandis que Smyrne s'affirme comme une synapse d'importance pour l'Anatolie et les routes caravanières.<sup>6</sup> Il faut cependant attendre 1759 pour que les Roux y créent une commandite.<sup>7</sup> Or, cette date peut, à bien des égards, paraître défavorable. Le traité de Versailles de mai 1756, scellant l'alliance entre Bourbons et Habsbourgs, froisse la Sublime Porte. Les marchands français ont à subir, à l'occasion, l'ire des autorités ottomanes en violation des capitulations.<sup>8</sup> La navigation en Méditerranée souffre également des conflits qui opposent la France à l'Angleterre de 1756 à 1763 ou la Russie aux Ottomans de 1768 à 1774. Économiquement, Charles Carrière et Marcel Courdurié parlent d'une "régression longue"<sup>9</sup> du commerce levantin dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Il y avait déjà à cette époque 27 négociants et 23 commis de la nation française dans le port anatolien. La décision d'installer une commandite en 1759 à Smyrne peut donc paraître paradoxale, d'autant que Garavaque et Cusson est une des plus importantes commandites du Levant<sup>10</sup> avec 60,000 livres de capital partagées entre les Roux de Marseille, les Cusson de Carcassonne, une famille de marchands-fabricants drapiers, et Pierre-Paul Garavaque, un jeune marchand désargenté marseillais de 24 ans<sup>11</sup> dont les Roux avancent la participation.

<sup>4</sup> Il s'agit du Fonds Roux conservé aux Archives de la Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Marseille Provence (désormais ACCIMP).

<sup>5</sup> Gilbert Buti, "Marseille au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Réseaux d'un port mondial", dans M. Collin (éd.), *Ville et port (XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle-XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994, pp. 209-222.

<sup>6</sup> Elena Frangakis-Syrett, "Le développement d'un port méditerranéen d'importance internationale. Smyrne (1700-1914)", dans M.-C. Smyrnelis (éd.), *Smyrne, la ville oubliée?, 1830-1930. Mémoire d'un grand port ottoman*, Paris: Autrement, 2006, p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Cette création s'inscrit dans la matérialisation des rapports de domination économique entre Marseille et le Levant, elle n'est donc pas en soi étonnante. Cf. Charles Carrière et Marcel Courdurié, "L'espace commercial marseillais aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles", dans P. Leon (éd.), *Aires et structures du commerce français au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Colloque national de l'Association des Historiens Économistes, Centre d'Histoire économique et sociale de la région lyonnaise, Lyon 1973-1975, p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, p. 104.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Carrière et Marcel Courdurié, "Un sophisme économique. Marseille s'enrichit en achetant plus qu'elle ne vend (Réflexions sur les mécanismes commerciaux levantins au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)", *Histoire, Économie et Société* III/1 (1984), p. 9, note 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>11</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, lettre des Échevins de la Chambre de Commerce de Marseille en date du 21 mars 1759.

La nouvelle économie institutionnelle fournit une clé de compréhension possible. Selon Oliver Williamson, les transactions courantes, requérant des investissements importants et dont le résultat est incertain, sont l’apanage des entreprises hiérarchiquement organisées.<sup>12</sup> Dans le cas de Garavaque et Cusson, nous avons effectivement un marché traditionnel, soumis à une plus grande incertitude en cette deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle et des régisseurs smyrniotes qui doivent rendre des comptes à leurs majeurs marseillais. Peut-on historiciser la théorie d’Oliver Williamson? Le caractère hiérarchique de la commandite explique-t-il le choix des Roux d’implanter une société à Smyrne?

À partir de la correspondance passive de Garavaque et Cusson associée aux pièces comptables et administratives contenues dans le Fonds Roux,<sup>13</sup> il s’agit de déterminer la réalité du lien unissant majeurs et régisseurs, puis d’évaluer la qualité de leurs relations et enfin de comprendre les mécanismes d’expression hiérarchique dans ce réseau de 1759 à 1772.

#### *Inertie épistolaire, routine négociante*

L’échange de lettres constitue l’élément essentiel de la relation entre les majeurs marseillais et leurs régisseurs levantins. Par ces dernières circulent les flux d’informations nécessaires à l’établissement des choix commerciaux qui mobilisent l’entreprise.

La première difficulté réside dans la distance qui sépare les deux places: plus de 2000 kilomètres à vol d’oiseau. La “voie de Vienne”<sup>14</sup> traverse plusieurs frontières politiques voire de civilisation. Nos négociants l’utilisent avec parcimonie. En l’absence d’indications explicites systématiques, on peut se référer à la présence de lettres en colonnes<sup>15</sup> dont le souci d’économie de papier correspond bien aux contraintes de poids imposées par cette méthode. On la retrouve essentiellement au début de la commandite (jusqu’en 1761) et en 1771, c’est-à-dire deux périodes où la voie de mer se trouve menacée respectivement par les Anglais et les Russes. Quelques mentions viennent compléter ce comptage. Il n’en demeure pas moins que cette méthode est très minoritaire dans le corpus Garavaque. Ce choix procède, outre des problèmes de coût

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<sup>12</sup> On trouve cette thèse largement exposée et citée, en langue française, dans M. Granovetter, *Le marché autrement*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2000, pp. 93-94.

<sup>13</sup> Soit 545 courriers répartis en huit liasses de ACCIMP, LIX/737 à LIX/744, LIX/41 et LIX/1038 pour les pièces comptables et administratives.

<sup>14</sup> Il s’agit de la malle-poste “terrestre”.

<sup>15</sup> Il s’agit de lettres de petit format (19 par 23 centimètres) dont l’écriture, très serrée et de petite taille, se répartit en deux colonnes.



déjà évoqué, du manque de sûreté offert par la malle-poste. La répartition en colonnes sur du papier fin permet des pliages plus complexes et donc de passer plus efficacement inaperçu dans une liasse de courriers.<sup>16</sup> La lettre particulière du 22 avril 1762 s'avère assez explicite sur les limites de la voie de Vienne:

Je répond à la lettre dont vous m'avez honoré le 30 décembre dernier voye de Vienne, et comme je ne puis par cette voye entrer dans bien des détails sur les sujets dont il y était question, je vous diray seulement que nous aurons de quoy fournir à l'engagement que vous avez pris particulier avec Mr Martin.<sup>17</sup>

La prétention dont fait preuve le régisseur prouve que cette méthode n'était pas exempte d'espionnage. Ainsi, la majeure partie des courriers transitaient par voie maritime, ce qui ne présentait pas les mêmes contraintes en termes de coût ou de papier employé.

Refuser d'utiliser la voie de terre signifiait, cependant, s'exposer aux risques maritimes et donc à une plus grande incertitude sur la vitesse d'acheminement. Outre de la confiance nécessaire dans la personne du capitaine, l'échange se trouvait tributaire des fortunes de mer rencontrées par le bateau, de ses éventuelles relâches, sans oublier le risque de perte... Pour palier à cela, la stratégie choisie par les régisseurs consistait à envoyer dès que l'occasion s'en présentait des duplicatas voire des triplicatas de leurs missives. Par exemple, entre juillet 1759 et décembre 1760, un quart des courriers conservés comportent explicitement une ou des copies de leurs prédécesseurs. Le record en la matière se trouve dans celui du 11 mai 1762,<sup>18</sup> puisqu'il s'agit d'un quintuplicata. De plus, une même lettre pouvait contenir la quatrième retranscription d'un message, suivie de la troisième d'un autre, du deuxième d'un précédent et ainsi de suite, avant d'arriver à des propos originaux, un peu à la manière des poupées gigognes. Par la suite, la marque de la duplication se fait moins évidente ce qui brouille les comptages. Les occurrences de quadruplicatas ou triplicatas deviennent rarissimes. La paix advenant, de telles redondances ne sont sans doute plus nécessaires. L'envoi habituel d'un double est toutefois attesté. Par exemple, le 6 mars 1766, Garavaque et Cusson s'étonne du silence roussien à propos d'une précédente lettre alors qu'elle "a cependant passé en original et copie par les capitaines

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<sup>16</sup> Je tiens à remercier Monsieur Gilbert Buti pour m'avoir soufflé cette hypothèse lors d'une de nos rencontres.

<sup>17</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

Gurard et Garan”.<sup>19</sup> Une analyse plus sérieuse du corpus conservé fait ressortir une très grande fréquence d’expéditions de copies ou de lettres originales. Pour l’évaluer rigoureusement nous avons comptabilisé l’écart en nombre de jours qu’il y a entre les dates des courriers qui se suivent. Lorsque nous avons trouvé une mention explicite au courrier précédent, nous avons pu établir l’écart certain entre eux deux. Malheureusement, ce genre d’annotations n’est pas systématique. Pour une bonne part de cette correspondance, nous n’avons que des écarts bruts, c’est-à-dire tels qu’ils apparaissent dans le corpus Garavaque et Cusson. Un très faible écart brut sera donc malgré tout révélateur d’une fréquence forte (mais qui du fait de lettres perdues a pu l’être encore plus). En revanche, l’élévation de ce dernier n’apporte aucune précision tangible. Le diagramme obtenu<sup>20</sup> confirme l’impression d’anarchie. Les courriers de la société sont expédiés à un rythme soutenu. L’écart zéro correspond ainsi à deux lettres de la même date, soit expédiées à des titres différents (une lettre de la société pour la maison Roux frères, doublée d’une seconde destinée à Pierre-Honoré Roux), soit envoyées par deux méthodes différentes (une voie de Vienne, l’autre voie de mer, ou alors par deux capitaines différents). La lecture du diagramme prouve trois choses: l’absence de rythme évident, le grand nombre d’écarts strictement inférieurs à sept jours et la relative homogénéité de la correspondance pendant douze années. Le mode d’expédition choisi provoque donc une frénésie d’envois.

S’il y avait adéquation entre le volume d’affaires et ce dernier, il devrait y avoir des aspérités marquées dans ces diagrammes, du fait même de la labilité du négoce. Or, il n’en est rien. La lecture précise des lettres couvrant les 18 premiers mois de la société éclaire cet apparent paradoxe. Non seulement les régisseurs envoient des copies, mais comme une partition de thèmes et de variations, ils ne cessent de répéter les mêmes choses sous différentes modalités. Ici, l’annonce d’une vente future, là, le résultat de cette vente, un peu plus tard, le bilan après paiement. Si les affaires sont au calme, les régisseurs s’en plaignent, proposent de nouveaux arbitrages, évoquent des rumeurs qui courent dans la place... Ainsi, quel que soit le contexte, les lettres se remplissent et sont expédiées inlassablement vers les majeurs marseillais. Charles Carrière évoquait dans son œuvre fondamentale que ce rythme soutenu consistait en “une lettre environ par semaine”.<sup>21</sup> Si l’on croise nos données brutes et certaines, nous arrivons à une proportion d’un courrier sur

<sup>19</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/740.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Annexe 1.

<sup>21</sup> Carrière, *Négociants*, p. 784.

deux qui est espacé de moins de sept jours de son prédécesseur. Elle dépasse les 56% si l'on y inclut ceux séparés de sept journées. C'est donc un torrent de lettres qui se déverse entre Smyrne et Marseille. L'évaluation du volume d'écrit confirme cela. En pondérant le nombre de feuillets par la taille des pages,<sup>22</sup> on aboutit à une moyenne de six pages par lettre, soit le double du mode rencontré dans la correspondance entretenue par les Roux avec la maison Verduc Vincent de Cadix. Il ne se passe pas un événement à Smyrne sans que les Roux n'en soient avertis à plusieurs reprises et souvent dans les moindres détails.

Cette masse d'écrit permet aux nouvelles de ne pas se perdre en chemin. Cependant, ce système n'autorise pas de véritable fluidité dans les échanges. Dans le sens Marseille-Smyrne, les régisseurs débute leur courrier par l'énumération des lettres qu'ils ont reçues et auxquelles ils vont faire suite, une sorte d'accusé de réception. La mise en série de ces indications donne à nouveau une impression d'anarchie. Il n'est pas rare de trouver l'accusé réception de quatre lettres et plus. Au lieu d'avoir un système de transmission fluide, les échanges épistolaires procèdent par à-coups. On retrouve la même caractéristique que précédemment, c'est-à-dire une certaine homogénéité pendant douze années, les valeurs se dispersant généralement entre 25 et 50 jours, accompagnée, au demeurant, par la carence de valeurs-types clairement définies. Tout au plus, la valeur de 45 jours apparaît-elle comme le pivot de nos comptages. Dans le sens Smyrne-Marseille, nous n'avons que très peu d'indications dans le corpus, la faute au manque de zèle des commis marseillais. Nous n'avons que 13 mentions sur une année, de septembre 1768 à octobre 1769. On obtient une moyenne de 46 jours et une dispersion de 29 à 66 jours.

Par conséquent, il apparaît clairement que lorsque la maison Roux expédiait un courrier, elle n'était pas en mesure d'évaluer précisément la date où ses envoyés en prendraient connaissance. Si maintenant on essaie de reconstituer un ensemble complet fictif, à partir des "moyennes" que l'on a pu établir précédemment, on se rend compte qu'une proposition expédiée de Smyrne puis évaluée à Marseille, mettra en moyenne plus de 90 jours (97 pour être "précis") pour faire la navette entre les deux places. Il ne s'agit que d'un ordre de grandeur, mais cela montre malgré tout l'inertie certaine d'un système où toutes les décisions prises par les régisseurs doivent être

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<sup>22</sup> On dénombre pas moins de six formats dans la correspondance Garavaque. La taille 19 par 23 centimètres, qui constitue le standard pour les envois par la malle-poste, a été choisie comme référence.

approuvées par les commanditaires. On comprend, dès lors, qu’à la moindre nouveauté Pierre-Paul Garavaque prenne immédiatement sa plume, y compris si la veille ou l’avant-veille une lettre est déjà partie à destination de Marseille. En trois mois, une situation favorable peut largement connaître plusieurs révolutions, pour reprendre le terme employé par les négociants. D’ailleurs, la correspondance particulière recèle une remarque, pour le moins acrimonieuse, sur les manquements roussiens à cet impératif de célérité: “Vos lettres que nous recevons voye de mer sont toujours dattées 8 à 10 jours avant celles des autres de sorte que nous n’apprenons pas par votre voye les nouvelles que tout le monde reçoit.”<sup>23</sup> Les difficultés de communications entre Marseille et Smyrne induisent donc une incertitude et une inertie importantes qui ne paraissent pas modérées au cours des 13 années d’existence de la commandite.

Institutionnellement, l’édifice de Garavaque et Cusson paraît optimal pour entretenir des échanges entre les places provençale et anatolienne. Établir une commandite permet de contrôler depuis Marseille le choix des intermédiaires au Levant. S’associer à une maison languedocienne sécurise a priori l’approvisionnement du comptoir en drap, un produit aussi nécessaire “que le pain”<sup>24</sup> à Smyrne.

Le premier objet de l’activité, tel qu’il est exposé dans un mémoire instructif donné aux régisseurs, réside dans le placement de fonds en Orient,<sup>25</sup> ce qui n’est guère audacieux, mais finalement adapté aux contraintes. L’analyse de l’activité proprement marchande fait apparaître certaines spécificités. Garavaque et Cusson travaille très peu à la commission.<sup>26</sup> Deux états des marchandises de sorties (celles qui sont exportées depuis Smyrne) montrent que les majeurs sont intéressés à plus de 70% des produits en valeur. Ainsi, les comptes courants entre Garavaque et Cusson et leurs commanditaires marseillais sont très largement représentatifs de l’activité globale de la société.<sup>27</sup> Leur observation fait ressortir l’absence d’impact réel des guerres sur l’activité smyrniote et une baisse significative au cours des dernières années.<sup>28</sup> Or, cette évolution ne recoupe pas les chiffres établis par Elena Frangakis-Syrett

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<sup>23</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 22 avril 1762.

<sup>24</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre du 3 octobre 1760.

<sup>25</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, mémoire instructif pour Messieurs Garavaque et Cusson.

<sup>26</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 28 avril 1764.

<sup>27</sup> Nous avons des séries continues pour 1761, 1764, 1765, 1766, 1771 et 1772. Pour 1763 et 1767 nous avons que six mois d’archivés. Enfin, nous avons à déplorer trois lacunes pour 1760, 1762 et la période allant de 1768 à 1770.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Annexe 2.

pour le commerce entre Marseille et Smyrne.<sup>29</sup> Face à la grande variété des produits traités dans le port anatolien,<sup>30</sup> les Roux font le choix d'une double spécialisation. Marseille expédie des draps (près de 75% de la valeur des marchandises envoyées) et Smyrne exporte des fibres textiles (à plus de 63%), très majoritairement du coton. La baisse des cours du drap à Smyrne explique la baisse en volume du commerce d'entrée. Grâce aux pièces comptables, on peut, en effet, reconstituer les prix de vente des ballots de londrains seconds et de londres larges dont la valeur moyenne passe sous les 450 piastres en 1763. Pour faire face à cette nouvelle donne, au cours des deux dernières années de la société, l'activité se concentre dans la vente des draps de la manufacture royale de Pennautier. Ces produits, à la haute qualité garantie et réglementée, se vendent 30% plus chers mais dans des volumes moindres.

Le commerce de sortie s'avère encore plus atone. Par exemple, en 1771 et 1772, les retours en marchandises vers Marseille présentent un retard de 25,000 piastres par rapport aux entrées. Cela provient d'un double décalage. Tout d'abord, à plusieurs reprises, les régisseurs mettent en doute les compétences de leurs majeurs pour juger de la qualité des produits levantins comme les noix de galle ou le fil de chèvre de la province d'Angora, et donc en tirer le plus de bénéfice possible.<sup>31</sup> Les propositions diverses, et répétées, des régisseurs pour diversifier les échanges notamment vers le trafic d'espèces<sup>32</sup> restent lettres mortes. Ainsi, les régisseurs smyrniotes n'apparaissent pas comme une force de proposition. Malgré l'inertie du réseau Garavaque-Roux leur autonomie demeure très limitée, ce qui illustre la force de la hiérarchie qui le charpente.

<sup>29</sup> E. Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700-1820)*, Athènes: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992, pp. 142 et 144.

<sup>30</sup> Daniel Panzac, "Activité et diversité d'un grand port ottoman. Smyrne dans la mémoire du XVIIIème siècle", *Mémorial Ömer Lüfti Barkan*, Paris 1980, p. 31.

<sup>31</sup> "Cet article de sortie est un des plus considérables retours de cette échelle, un des plus lucratifs, mais il demande d'être traité par des personnes qui en ont une connaissance parfaite pour en obtenir le prix que la qualité mérite, quoique vous ne manquiez pas messieurs de beaucoup de lumière et de connaissance pour toute sorte de marchandises nous pensons que n'ayant pas beaucoup d'usage de cet article vous pourrez n'en pas tirer tout le party que tirerait un négociant connaisseur de cet article." Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre du 2 juin 1760.

<sup>32</sup> En définitive, on ne relève que quelques envois pour moins de 13,000 piastres entre 1765 et 1766. Les demandes très insistantes en 1767 ne sont pas suivies d'effet. Cf. ACCIMP, LIX/741, lettres des 20 mars et du 25 juillet 1767.

*Du négoce à l’horticulture. Des liens sociaux complexes*

Les relations commerciales hiérarchisées entre Garavaque et Cusson et les Roux s’insèrent dans des jeux de liens sociaux plus larges. Lors de l’établissement de la régie de Smyrne, en 1759, la maison marseillaise s’intitule Pierre-Honoré Roux et fils, le patriarche étant secondé par ses associés de fils Jean-Baptiste Ignace et François de Paule. En 1762, après la retraite de leur père, ils sont rejoints par leur frère, François-Marie, avant que le benjamin, Thomas-Boniface, ne fasse de même en 1767. La pérennité de la société est donc assurée par un renouvellement endogène mais aussi par la présence de Pierre-Honoré Roux qui, malgré sa prise de recul, garde la haute main sur les affaires de la maison jusqu’à sa mort en 1774.<sup>33</sup> Le leadership dans la maison marseillaise est donc plus complexe que ne le laisse supposer son intitulé.

Guillaume Cusson est un des fils de Paul Cusson. On retrouve la correspondance entre ce dernier et la maison Roux dans les archives de la Chambre de Commerce et d’Industrie de Marseille de 1748 à 1771.<sup>34</sup> On sait de lui que c’est un “entrepreneur de la manufacture royale de Pennautier”.<sup>35</sup> Par la convention sans date signée par Garavaque et Lieutaud (le commis prévu par la maison Roux), on sait que Guillaume Cusson se trouvait déjà à Constantinople<sup>36</sup> avant la création de la commandite. En fait, il remplace son parent dont le nom apparaît comme futur régisseur dans la sollicitation du certificat d’installation aux Échelles auprès du ministre de la Marine,<sup>37</sup> mais qui se désiste en sa faveur le 14 février 1759.

Pierre-Paul Garavaque ne présente pas les mêmes possibilités financières. La lettre du 4 juin 1766 révèle que ce n’est qu’à cette date qu’il s’avère en mesure de payer “le restant de sa mise de fonds” dans la société, soit 4000 piastres. Il semblerait donc que sa désignation en tant que régisseur ait été guidée par d’anciennes relations familiales,<sup>38</sup> plutôt que par des considérations économiques. Obséquiosité ou réalité, il note, dans sa lettre du 25 juillet 1767, que la commandite n’est soutenue par la famille Roux que pour garantir son

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<sup>33</sup> F. Rebuffat, *Répertoire numérique des archives de la Chambre de Commerce et d’Industrie de Marseille*, Marseille 1965, p. 90.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 101 et 113.

<sup>35</sup> Charles Carrière et Michel Morineau, “Draps du Languedoc et commerce du Levant au XVIIIème siècle”, *Revue d’histoire économique et sociale* XLVI/1 (1968), p. 121.

<sup>36</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, convention sans date.

<sup>37</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, lettre du 31 octobre 1757.

<sup>38</sup> Le thème de l’amitié entre Garavaque et les Roux parsème la correspondance étudiée. Il s’agit aussi, cependant, d’un lieu commun des échanges épistolaires entre négociants.

avancement.<sup>39</sup> On comprend néanmoins que la proximité familiale explique l'architecture du réseau et que des relations personnelles, entre les différents protagonistes, peuvent donc intervenir.

La correspondance en est l'expression directe par sa dualité. En plus des lettres de société qui comportent classiquement tout ce qui a trait aux affaires, aux spéculations, aux projets, aux arbitrages ou aux partenaires à contacter, on trouve dans le corpus conservé dans le Fonds Roux 111 lettres "particulières", soit un cinquième du total. Elle se distingue par leur format, leur graphie très particulière, la signature, qui se réduit à l'un ou l'autre des régisseurs que ce soit Pierre-Paul Garavaque ou Guillaume Cusson, et parfois par leur destinataire, Pierre-Honoré Roux en lieu et place de Roux frères. Ces courriers confirment qu'en dehors de la commandite, les parties prenantes se connaissent personnellement.

L'étude plus précise de cette correspondance particulière atteste les liens amicaux entre les Roux et Garavaque dont le ciment est l'horticulture. Dans le courrier du 4 mai 1761, le régisseur prend acte de la commission dont ses majeurs le chargent: leur envoyer "6 griffes renoncules appelées bostangy bachy",<sup>40</sup> une fleur fort rare. Cet achat, de peu de conséquence, mobilise de nombreuses ressources réticulaires. Ces bulbes proviennent de Santorin, une petite île des Cyclades, en marge des grands flux commerciaux.<sup>41</sup> Pour accéder à de tels produits, le régisseur fait donc appel aux bons offices du Révérend Père "Sigala, supérieur des Jésuites" de Smyrne, une de ses connaissances qui provient justement de cette île. Aussi surprenant que cela puisse paraître,<sup>42</sup> à partir de cette date, rares sont les courriers particuliers qui ne comportent pas une mention relative à ces fleurs, aux réseaux spécifiques qu'il faut mobiliser, à la rareté de telles ou telles griffes, aux différents problèmes d'acclimatation, ou à la sociabilité des jardiniers à Smyrne comme à Marseille.

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<sup>39</sup> "Je sens parfaitement que l'objet de ce comerce est celui qui vous intéresse le moins et que vous ne le soutenés que pour notre avancement." Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/741, lettre du 25 juillet 1767.

<sup>40</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre particulière du 4 mai 1761.

<sup>41</sup> "Les occasions de Santorin étant rares on les paye un peu cher." Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre particulière du 4 mai 1761. De même les liaisons postales ne sont pas courantes avec l'île, ainsi Garavaque remarque qu'il "est si difficile de faire parvenir des lettres à Santorin". Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 28 avril 1764.

<sup>42</sup> La précision des indications horticoles anéantit l'hypothèse d'un langage codé prenant le jardinage comme inspiration en vue de maquiller un trafic interlope, comme cela peut se pratiquer à Cadix avec le commerce des piastres.

Ainsi, progressivement, les personnes et les places qui interviennent dans ce trafic de bulbes sont de plus en plus nombreuses. Outre le père jésuite, le régisseur bénéficie de l’aide du Chancelier de la Nation française lors de son proconsulat.<sup>43</sup> Y a-t-il une mauvaise récolte à Santorin? On en tire de Chypre, où “on les cultive en plein champ”.<sup>44</sup> Il s’agit également d’un marché très organisé, disposant de “catalogue” sous la forme de “tableau de fleurs desséchées”<sup>45</sup> associées aux griffes correspondantes. L’objectif de ces passionnés d’horticulture est, en effet, de faire pousser les fleurs les plus rares et les plus curieuses. C’est l’intérêt des griffes chypriotes que l’on a “jamais entendu nommer”. “Bostangy”, “gerard petra”<sup>46</sup> ou “sept étoiles l’africain”<sup>47</sup> attisent les convoitises de nos négociants-horticulteurs, quel qu’en soit le prix.<sup>48</sup> Aussi, ce commerce de fleurs dépasse assez rapidement le strict cercle garavaco-roussien que l’on rencontre dans la correspondance de la société et peut servir à étendre le réseau de la commandite:

Comme c’est à vous particulièrement à qui je suis redevable des éloges aussi flatteurs qu’agréables du respectable corps des fleuristes, ce sera aussi à vous comme un des membres distingué à qui j’aurai l’honneur d’adresser mes très humbles remerciements heureux si les soins que je me donne peuvent aboutir à embellir leur parterre, mais plus heureux encore si comme commissionnaire de leur part, ils voulaient bien aussi ne pas oublier que je suis en même temps commissionnaire en Levant pour vendre des draps et acheter des cottons et qu’il pourrait peut être convenir au respectable corps des fleuristes de me faire les fonds de l’achat des griffes en draps, cochenille ou indigo...<sup>49</sup>

Ce commerce s’avère ainsi moins anodin qu’il n’y paraît a priori. Il n’y a qu’un pas entre la passion horticole et les relations de négoce que Garavaque espère bien franchir.

Cela doit être mis en relation avec l’existence de ces propos légers y compris en période de tensions entre majeurs et régisseurs. La lettre du 14

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<sup>43</sup> “Je vous réserve pour l’année prochaine de celles que le chancelier m’a données.”

Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 24 novembre 1764.

<sup>44</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 20 août 1764.

<sup>45</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 14 avril 1763.

<sup>46</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 28 avril 1764.

<sup>47</sup> Une “grande fleur blanche”. Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 14 avril 1763.

<sup>48</sup> Dans la lettre du 19 septembre 1767, Pierre-Paul Garavaque évoque un prix de près de 30 livres pour les griffes les plus rares. ACCIMP, LIX/741.

<sup>49</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 14 mars 1765.



mars 1765, que nous venons de citer, prouve la dualité du lien qui unit les frères Roux et Pierre-Paul Garavaque. Tandis que la relation strictement commerciale, intrinsèquement hiérarchique, est tendue, celle plus personnelle (concernant les fleurs) ne paraît pas en souffrir, comme si ces deux modes procédaient d’instances différentes. Pour reprendre les distinctions de Karl Polanyi et de Conrad Arensberg,<sup>50</sup> on pourrait penser que dans le premier cas, n’intervenaient que les seuls mécanismes de l’“échange”, régents par des principes strictement économiques, défavorables aux régisseurs, et que dans le second, il s’agissait plutôt de “réciprocité”, entre des groupes symétriques sans distinction de classes, c’est-à-dire des négociants marseillais horticulteurs, où les échanges s’avèrent nettement plus équitables.

L’étude plus spécifique de la correspondance de 1764 confirme la dichotomie entre les affaires courantes et les négociations entre associés. À la véhémence des lettres particulières répond la neutralité des courriers de la société. Dans sa lettre du 21 août 1764, Pierre-Paul Garavaque l’affirme explicitement: “Nous allons répondre séparément aux lettres des affaires, aux objections que vous nous avez faites touchant la position de notre établissement.”<sup>51</sup> On comprend alors que cette correspondance s’inscrit également comme un moyen de médiation interpersonnelle: la différence d’écriture prouve qu’il n’y a pas de médiation par le commis aux lettres et que l’autre associé peut ne pas être informé de ce qui se dit dans cette relation parallèle. La complexité est de mise dans l’expression de la hiérarchie au sein de Garavaque et Cusson.

#### *De la hiérarchie encastrée*

La structure de la commandite étudiée fait appel à des personnes qui se connaissent, voire qui ont déjà lié affaire depuis longtemps. Toutefois, la distance et la différence de point de vue qu’elle implique accroît l’incertitude pour les majeurs qui ne contrôlent l’activité que par le biais de leurs régisseurs. On a déjà vu qu’en matière d’initiative commerciale, les commanditaires ne laissent que très peu de marge de manœuvre. Cette méfiance, mêlée de prudence, est-elle généralisée dans les rapports entretenus par les deux structures?

Un des premiers aspects concerne l’étendue du réseau. Dès 1759 et le mémoire instructif,<sup>52</sup> les Roux fixaient le cadre pour Constantinople en conseillant de se

<sup>50</sup> F. Dupuy, *Anthropologie économique*, Paris: Armand Colin, 2004, pp. 16-17.

<sup>51</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739.

<sup>52</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, mémoire instructif du 28 août 1759.

rapprocher d’Arnaud frères et Cie. Cette maison constitue le pendant levantin de celle de Jean-Baptiste Arnaud de Marseille. Ainsi, les majeurs veulent recréer la proximité qui existe entre maisons marseillaises à travers leurs commandites. On retrouve la problématique de la dissonance cognitive (*cognitive balance*) qui conduit un agent disposant de deux liens forts à vouloir unir ces deux autres personnes ou groupes par un lien positif afin d’éviter qu’une “tension psychologique” ne s’installe.<sup>53</sup> Cependant, le lien fort dont peuvent disposer les majeurs et celui qui les unit à leurs régisseurs ne sont pas de la même nature. Le second est perturbé par la distance, les difficultés de communication et des intérêts qui, vus de Smyrne, peuvent diverger. Ainsi le 1 décembre 1760, la commandite affirme à propos d’Arnaud frères de Constantinople: “Ces Messieurs sont fort près de leurs intérêts et nous osons dire d’une correspondance aigre et impérieuse. Nous avons plus à nous louer de M. Conte et Compagnie avec lesquels nous entretenons une correspondance unie.”<sup>54</sup> Il en va de même avec Martin qui dispose lui aussi d’une maison constantinopolitaine. À l’annonce d’un rapprochement après l’arrêt de Conte et Compagnie, Pierre-Paul Garavaque ne peut s’empêcher de faire remarquer “les grandes variations” et les “ordres ambigus”<sup>55</sup> de ce partenaire. Lorsque Paul Cusson propose d’envoyer des draps à Constantinople, le retour devant passer par Smyrne et Garavaque et Cusson, il réaffirme sa méfiance: “Je vous réitère aussi que je ne verrais pas avec plaisir que vous fissiez cette affaire avec Martin. C’est un homme si difficile et qui nous a tant lassé et inquiété que je ne voudrais avoir à faire avec luy que sous de bonnes conventions...”<sup>56</sup> Ainsi, on comprend qu’il y a, en effet, un problème de dissonance. La commandite et les majeurs ont leurs propres réseaux de partenaires. Ils tentent de les faire coïncider, mais ce n’est que par des arguments d’autorité que Roux impose ses choix. On peut lire la tension entre deux réseaux dissemblables, qui ne devraient faire qu’un, dans la lettre du 8 septembre 1762:<sup>57</sup> “M. Martin aurait trouvé difficilement ailleurs des avances aussi fortes [...]. Je suis fâché de la négligence de Conte à vous écrire et d’autant plus surpris qu’il est très exact à notre égard vous devés aussy pour le bien de notre maison ménager cette correspondance qui fortifiera celle de Martin.”

Il faut donc régler un nouveau litige avec Martin mais Conte n’apparaît pas nécessairement comme le substitut le plus valide pour les Roux. Ainsi, l’encastrement des relations Roux-Garavaque et Cusson ne doit pas faire

<sup>53</sup> Granovetter, *Le marché*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>54</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre du 1 décembre 1760.

<sup>55</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 28 avril 1764.

<sup>56</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 24 novembre 1764.

<sup>57</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738.

croire à une totale confiance des majeurs pour leurs régisseurs. Ces derniers aimeraient avoir le contrôle de leurs relations avec le reste des places levantines, surtout avec Constantinople. Par exemple, concernant un projet de transfert de fonds vers la capitale, la société smyrniote estime que ce n'est ni aux amis (en l'occurrence la famille Stamma), ni aux Roux d'entretenir une "double correspondance", "nous aurions soin de cela, et vous ne vous entendriez qu'avec nous".<sup>58</sup> Par conséquent, les régisseurs aimeraient se positionner comme des *brokers*, "le seul lien, le passage obligé, entre deux groupes qui par ailleurs s'ignorent".<sup>59</sup> En l'occurrence, l'artificialité de la proposition ne lui a pas permis d'avoir de suite.

Toutefois, tout ne procède pas des seuls Roux. Le cas du Languedoc s'avère tout autant problématique. Paul Cusson n'apparaît pas dans les documents que nous avons dépouillés comme un des principaux fournisseurs d'étoffes, si ce n'est en toute fin de période lorsque les Roux spécialisent leur activité avec leur commandite autour des draps de Pennautier. Auparavant, la commandite ne trouve que l'expression d'une "convenance réciproque"<sup>60</sup> à commercer avec Paul Cusson pour des produits en définitive peu lucratifs.

D'ailleurs, pour relancer le commerce de draps dans le marasme (ou plutôt la baisse des cours) qui suit la paix de 1763, c'est Guillaume Cusson qui profite d'un voyage familial pour démarcher de nouveaux fournisseurs. Il semblerait donc que cette partie du réseau dépende à la fois de la famille Cusson et des marseillais. L'entreprise du carcassonnais se solde par un échec. Les languedociens attendent des temps plus heureux où "le fabricant" pourra "trouver son compte à envoyer des draps au Levant". Cela signifie que dans ce cas de figure, l'activité de la société repose seule sur l'activité des Roux. Devant les reproches de ces derniers, Guillaume Cusson répond depuis Carcassonne par une fin de non-recevoir où perce une certaine hostilité:

Dans un article de votre lettre du 17 vous me dittes que vous êtes ennuiés de supporter à vous seul tout le poids de la Maison de Smyrne et que si Messieurs Paul Cusson et fils, mes parants et mes amis ne prenent point le parti d'y faire un travail suivi, vous laisserés tomber cet établissement. Vous [...] seriés certainement bien les maîtres, mais je vous avouerai que j'en serais bien fâché, parce que je me flatte que pour peu que la draperie fasse quelque augmentation à Smyrne notre maison recevra beaucoup des adresses de ce pays-ci,

<sup>58</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre du 21 février 1761.

<sup>59</sup> Claire Lemercier, "Analyse de réseaux et histoire", *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* LII/2 (2005), p. 93.

<sup>60</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre du 22 avril 1762.

mais il ne faut point croire que mes parants et encore moins mes amis veuillent s’exposer à perdre partie de leurs biens pour procurer à notre maison un travail qui leur serait infructueux, il vaut encore mieux que les uns et les autres se réservent pour des meilleurs tems et ils vous prouveront alors, Messieurs, qu’un associé comme moi ne doit point être à charge.<sup>61</sup>

Aussi, en parlant de lui-même et de ses commanditaires marseillais, Garavaque affirme en 1764: “Nous pouvons bien dire que nous avons été les dupes de Messieurs Paul Cusson et fils pendant les 5 premières années, à cause du peu de travail qu’il a fait avec notre maison.”<sup>62</sup> L’intégration, pour ne pas dire l’encastrement, des fournisseurs languedociens au sein même de la société devait assurer un afflux régulier de marchandises. Face à la rationalité économique de recherche des profits maximaux, les solidarités sociales pèsent bien peu dans l’esprit des Cusson, qui profitent de l’activité roussienne tout en justifiant leur propre retrait. Face à de telles divergences de vue, on peut douter de l’harmonie régnant entre associés.

Au lieu de faire confiance aux envoyés qu’ils ont choisis, les Roux cherchent à corroborer leurs dires par d’autres maisons. Ainsi, lors d’un litige entre majeurs et régisseurs relatif au renouvellement de la société et au montant des dépenses autorisé pour les commandités, les Marseillais contournent leurs régisseurs par des indications d’Arnaud frères et Cie de Constantinople, ce qui a le don de les froisser: “Je regarde comme une chanson ce qu’Arnaud vous a dit que sa maison de Constantinople en avait de reste de 1500 piastres dites luy de ma part que cela n’est pas possible et que quoique je sois à Smyrne je sais fort bien tout ce qu’il faut à Constantinople.”<sup>63</sup> Loin des lieux communs obséquieux qui parsèment les lettres du Fonds Roux, la correspondance Garavaque prouve que toutes les parties prenantes se méfient l’une de l’autre pour ne pas dire plus. Le régisseur marseillais développe toute une littérature à l’encontre de Guillaume Cusson. La première occurrence de reproches se montre relativement modérée. “Cusson fait bien tout ce qu’il peut mais on ne peut pas s’en rapporter entièrement sur lui”,<sup>64</sup> note-t-il après avoir évoqué les compétences du nouveau commis recruté en 1763. La charge se précise quelques mois plus tard:

Tout ce que vous me dites de M. Cusson n’est point nouveau pour moy, ni pour tous ceux qui le connaissaient bien dans ce pays et par

<sup>61</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/203, lettre du 29 octobre 1763.

<sup>62</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 31 mars 1764.

<sup>63</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 20 août 1764.

<sup>64</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 14 avril 1763.

conséquent j'étais fâché qu'il allât se faire connoître à Marseille ou il n'aura pas donné une grande idée des régisseurs de votre maison. Je vous dois au reste des remerciements de ce que vous avés bien voulu en suggérer toutte autre de moy à vos amis.<sup>65</sup>

En fait, les reproches convergent depuis Marseille et Smyrne. Comme on l'apprend dans la lettre du 9 février 1764, Guillaume aurait un peu trop claironné que, par sa venue, il procurerait de nouveaux fournisseurs à sa société, là où les Roux avaient échoué.<sup>66</sup> Son peu de modestie s'associe à son caractère dépensier. Pour Garavaque, Cusson ne lui sert "presque à rien et fait augmenter de beaucoup les dépenses"<sup>67</sup> de la maison. Aussi, il oppose un refus catégorique lorsqu'il apprend que le second fils cadet de Paul Cusson doit être envoyé à Smyrne, "n'ayant nullement besoin de nouveaux mangeurs et de membre inutile".<sup>68</sup> Cette critique revient à plusieurs reprises. La défiance de Garavaque vise également la compétence de son associé, semble-t-il à raison. Ainsi, suite à des erreurs répétées dans la tenue de la caisse, Garavaque décide de s'en charger et "de l'ôter à Cusson",<sup>69</sup> jugeant que pour éviter d'être dupé il faut une bonne connaissance de la place. Or, "il n'est pas trop facile d'apprendre à lire et à écrire les langues de l'Orient c'est là l'ouvrage de 10 ans des jeunes de langue à Constantinople qui ne font autre chose".<sup>70</sup> S'agit-il d'une remarque ironique à propos de Cusson qui a, en effet, séjourné à Constantinople avant de rejoindre la place de Smyrne, mais qui s'y fait aussi facilement bernier? On est assez loin de "la bonne union et de la bonne concorde" entre régisseurs évoquées dans le mémoire instructif de 1759.<sup>71</sup>

Les Roux font preuve de la même minutie dans l'examen des agissements de "leur" régisseur, Pierre-Paul Garavaque. Loin de constituer un blanc-seing, cette relation particulière leur procure un moyen de contrôle plus approfondi. On pourrait penser que la différence d'âge constitue une clé de

<sup>65</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 5 décembre 1763.

<sup>66</sup> "J'ai appris par vous et par Cusson son retour à Marseille et le peu de succès de son voyage. J'ai toujours pensé qu'il ne servirait qu'à le faire connaître et ce n'est pas ce qu'il y avait de plus nécessaire mais ce que je trouve de déplacé dans sa façon de faire c'est d'avoir dit inconsidérément qu'il venait procurer des amis à notre maison. Je sens combien de pareils propos doivent vous avoir déplu." Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 9 février 1764.

<sup>67</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 5 décembre 1763.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 31 août 1765.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, mémoire instructif du 2 avril 1759.

compréhension, mais les frères Roux ne jouissent d’une autonomie de façade qu’à partir de 1762. Nous avons déjà montré comment l’autonomie dont disposait la commandite s’avérait réduite. Le point le plus sensible demeure cependant le niveau des dépenses personnelles et d’entretien des régisseurs. Assez régulièrement, on lit en creux des récriminations contre des dépenses jugées superflues, des cartes à jouer<sup>72</sup> en 1761 ou des frais de séjour en dehors de Smyrne lors d’une épidémie de peste<sup>73</sup> en 1766. Dans le mémoire instructif de 1759, les majeurs avaient précisé dès le premier article que les régisseurs devaient observer “l’économie” dans leur ménage car “c’est le premier profit”.<sup>74</sup> Aussi, est-ce sur ce point-là qu’éclate un véritable différend lors des discussions pour la nouvelle convention en 1764. Les frères Roux veulent taxer les dépenses smyrniotes à partir de 200 piastres par régisseur. Pierre-Paul Garavaque se défend en exposant le cas de Rostan qui autorise ses propres collaborateurs à “prendre toutes les années pour les dépenses particulières jusqu’à 500 piastres sans intérêt”,<sup>75</sup> et de n’en compter un (à 6% l’an) qu’au-delà de cette somme. À l’occasion, le régisseur se fait grandiloquent:

Vous m’avez si fort imposé de ne pas répliquer sur tout ce que vous me dites de nos dépenses tant générales<sup>76</sup> que particulières que je ne devrais plus avoir le courage de vous en parler, vous me permettrés cependant d’avoir encore avec vous cette dernière explication, après quoy je vous assure que je me conformeray à tout ce que vous voudrés.<sup>77</sup>

La menace de départ et d’arrêt de la société constitue un lieu commun des récriminations smyrniotes lorsque les pressions hiérarchiques se font trop fortes comme en 1763 après l’incendie de Smyrne qui, en augmentant les loyers, génère des surcoûts pour les Roux. Face à l’attention vétilleuse des majeurs, le ton peut s’avérer assez virulent:

Les testaments et les lettres assommantes finiront s’il a lieu à la liquidation de cette première société, il me déplaît bien fort d’être obligé de vous les faire, mais comment m’en dispenser si vous remplissez des pages et des pages à discuter des matières de petite conséquence telles que celles d’une bonification sur le magasinage de la cochenille sur un relevé de compte de filé rouge où il y a une erreur de 250 piastres qui ont été faits par inadvertance.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/737, lettre du 9 juillet 1761.

<sup>73</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/740, lettre particulière du 29 mars 1766.

<sup>74</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/1038, mémoire instructif du 2 avril 1759.

<sup>75</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 28 avril 1764.

<sup>76</sup> En effet, dans la lettre du 5 décembre 1763, Roux se plaignait des frais de magasinage.

<sup>77</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre du 20 août 1764.

<sup>78</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 14 mars 1765.

Pour faire plier leurs envoyés récalcitrants, les Roux usent de leurs connaissances familiales pour faire pression. Ainsi, à propos des dépenses de maison, ils font appel à la mère de Garavaque:

J'ai vu que vous aviez fait part à ma mère de la lettre que je vous avais écrite, où je vous parlais des dépenses qu'il nous fallait faire pour la maison et que les ayant trouvées exorbitantes, elle pensait comme vous qu'il fallait absolument les réduire, son opinion dans cette occasion ne peut servir de rien, attendu qu'elle ne sait ni ne connaît la position d'une maison de commerce à Smirne, ainsi tout cela ne fait que la chagriner [...] Comme je connais sa sensibilité, je vous prie de luy cacher ce qui se passe entre nous attendu qu'elle ne peut savoir les véritables griefs que vous avez contre moy.<sup>79</sup>

Cusson subit le même sort après son voyage infructueux en France et ses réponses quelque peu vives aux Roux. Dans sa lettre du 22 août 1764, l'antipathie est réciproque:

Il est bien fâcheux pour moi qu'un malentendu m'occasionne de si vifs reproches de la part de mon père, et il faut que vous lui aiez fortement écrit contre moi, car il me donne un furieux savon par sa lettre du 6 juillet [...] Je vous avoue que je ne me serais point attendu à cela de votre part.<sup>80</sup>

Or, cette acrimonie, ces plaintes où les régisseurs en sont réduits à demander des égards,<sup>81</sup> tout disparaît après que le bilan des cinq premières années ait révélé un joli bénéfice.<sup>82</sup> Ni la baisse de l'activité révélée dans les pièces comptables, ni la mauvaise faillite de Paul Cusson à Carcassonne en 1771<sup>83</sup> ne réveilleront pareilles tensions.

<sup>79</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739, lettre particulière du 24 novembre 1764. Les Roux feront preuve de ténacité et parviendront à imposer le seuil des 200 piastres dans la convention du 18 décembre 1769 dans ACCIMP, LIX/1038.

<sup>80</sup> ACCIMP, LIX/739.

<sup>81</sup> "Je vous prie de me ménager un peu plus à l'avenir et de ne pas augmenter par des salades semblables l'ingratitude du séjour de ce pays-ci où il faut avoir l'esprit tranquille et content pour y gérer les affaires comme il faut." Tiré de ACCIMP, LIX/738, lettre particulière du 5 décembre 1763.

<sup>82</sup> Le bilan de liquidation au 31 décembre 1764 fait apparaître un solde positif de 23,817 piastres. Sachant que l'investissement initial était de 12,000 piastres, on peut comprendre qu'une rentabilité de 20% par an ait de quoi calmer les inquiétudes des différents protagonistes.

<sup>83</sup> En effet, le solde des biens de la société ne laisse que 25% à ses créanciers. D'après ACCIMP, LIX/744, lettre du 8 mars 1771.

Cette étude a montré la complexité d’un agent économique, en l’occurrence une commandite, dont l’activité n’est pas seulement réductible à la recherche rationnelle du profit. Malgré la baisse de l’activité, les propositions régulières des régisseurs ne rencontrent que peu d’écho. La dissymétrie hiérarchique en faveur des majeurs ne varie aucunement. L’inertie de la structure de commandement qui filtre à travers la correspondance semble conduire à cette limitation drastique de l’autonomie des régisseurs.

Or, cette hiérarchie n’empêche pas les litiges, les frictions entre partenaires même si, en dernière analyse, les majeurs ont le dernier mot. Ici, l’existence de liens sociaux en dehors de la seule relation majeurs/régisseurs, altère le rapport de force puisqu’elle fournit aux majeurs des moyens de pression qui n’ont rien de légal ou d’économique, la pression parentale, mais qu’en retour, Garavaque dispose de moyens de médiation par Pierre-Honoré Roux pour s’opposer aux directives de ses fils.

En définitive, même si cette commandite doit sa création à la préexistence de rapports sociaux entre les différentes parties prenantes, son principal était demeure, sur le long terme, la réussite économique plus que la confiance “sociale”. Ces travaux donnent clairement la sensation que l’économique prend le dessus (tout en n’étant pas exclusif) sur la sociabilité entre négociants, perturbée par la distance, pour justifier l’existence de cette commandite. Ainsi, la théorie d’Oliver Williamson ne rend compte qu’imparfaitement des principes qui ont guidé l’activité de Garavaque et Cusson. La rationalité économique et les conséquences de l’encastrement se conjuguent de manière aléatoire et propre aux acteurs en présence pour expliquer leurs choix dans un monde non-ergodique.<sup>84</sup>

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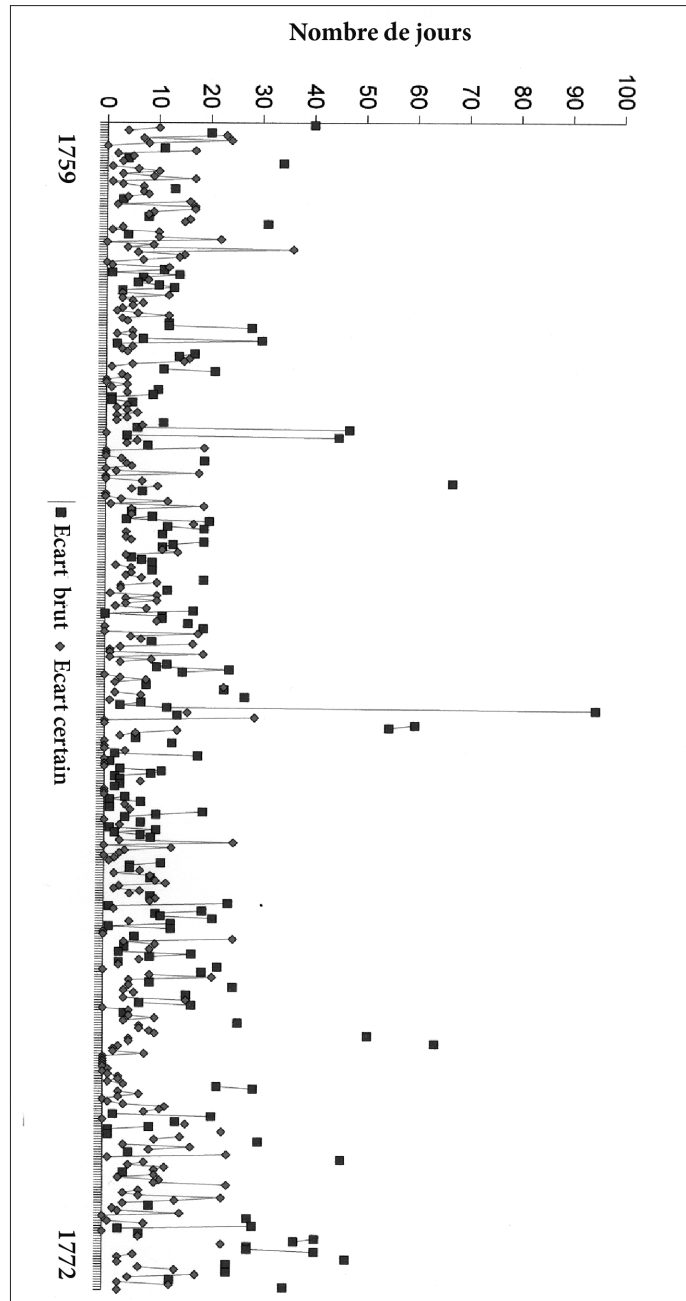
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<sup>84</sup> Ce terme est emprunté à Douglass North qui introduit le concept de non-ergodicité de notre monde dans le discours économique. Cf. D. North, *Le processus du développement économique*, Paris: Éditions d’Organisation, 2005.



## Annexe 1

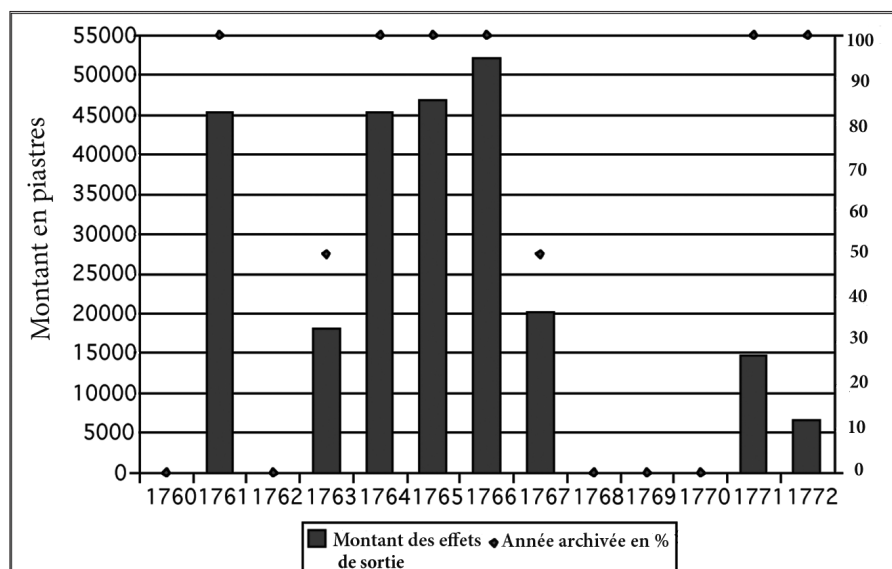
Évolution de l'écart en jour entre deux courriers consécutifs de la maison  
Garavaque et Cusson de Smyrne (1759-1772)



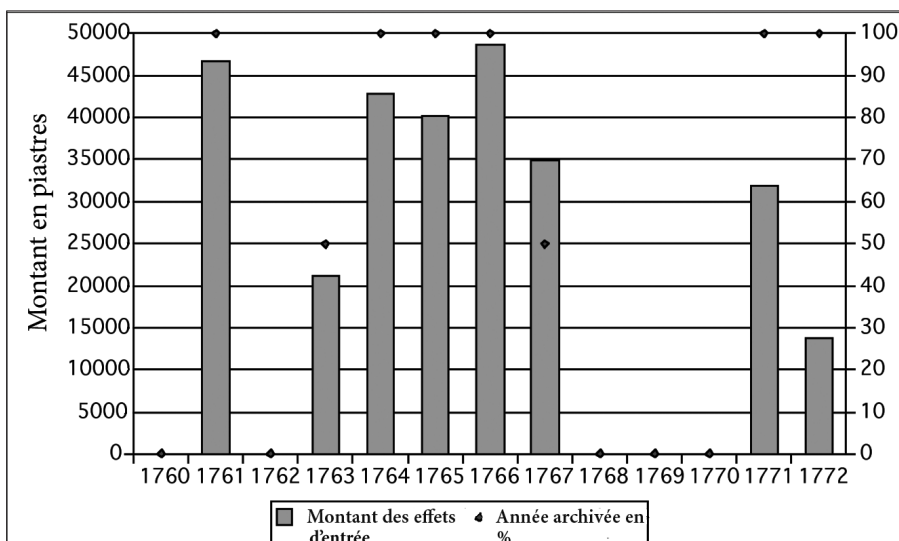
Annexe 2

Évaluation de l’activité de Garavaque et Cusson par les comptes courants de la maison Roux

Évolution du montant des effets de sortie auxquels sont intéressés les Roux (1760-1772)



Évolution du montant des effets d’entrée auxquels sont intéressés les Roux (1760-1772)





PRATIQUES COMMERCIALES, PRATIQUES LINGUISTIQUES.  
LES LANGUES DU COMMERCE ENTRE GÈNES ET LISBONNE  
(FIN XVIIe-DÉBUT XVIIIe SIÈCLE)

*Michèle Janin-Thivos*

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RÉSUMÉ: L'évaluation des savoirs marchands à l'époque moderne a conduit depuis quelques années à une relecture des correspondances commerciales. La dimension linguistique a peu été abordée alors que la maîtrise des langues étrangères est indispensable au négociant qui s'installe à l'étranger, autant pour traiter ses affaires que pour se tenir au courant des usages du pays. La question de l'apprentissage et de la maîtrise des langues étrangères retiendra d'abord l'attention dans cet article. Puis, l'étude de la correspondance d'un marchand portugais installé à Marseille permettra d'analyser l'usage différencié en Méditerranée occidentale par les réseaux avec lesquels il est en contact.

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Malgré leurs spécificités très locales, les marchands et négociants de l'époque moderne ont développé des pratiques d'échanges culturels nécessaires à leur insertion dans des réseaux plus larges. En Méditerranée, les outils linguistiques indispensables à ces contacts ont été envisagés comme celui de l'usage généralisé de l'italien, produisant progressivement une sorte de lingua franca<sup>1</sup> mal définie parce que par essence mouvante, adaptable à toutes les situations. Sans nier le recours à cette pratique, l'attention portée aujourd'hui par les historiens à la culture et à la formation négociante amène à s'interroger sur la maîtrise des langues étrangères par les marchands, question dont l'étude a été à peine abordée par les linguistes.<sup>2</sup> La place des langues étrangères était pourtant déjà envisagée dans l'édition de 1723 du *Parfait négociant*<sup>3</sup> de Savary qui précise:

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<sup>1</sup> J. Dakhliya relève que la lingua franca a été perçue "comme une sorte d'évidence, d'élément d'arrière-plan à l'histoire du commerce, à l'histoire de la circulation des hommes et des marchandises. En tant que tel, il n'a pas émergé comme objet d'études pour les historiens", dans [www.strabon.org/edito/](http://www.strabon.org/edito/); J. Dakhliya, *Lingua franca, histoire d'une langue métisse en Méditerranée*, Arles: Actes Sud, 2008. Voir aussi B. Abderrazak, "Brève mise au point sur la lingua franca en Méditerranée", ainsi que le débat in *Trames de langues. Usages et métissages linguistiques dans l'histoire du Maghreb*, éd. J. Dakhliya, Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> En particulier dans l'article fondamental de Maria Colombo Timelli, "Dictionnaires pour voyageurs, dictionnaires pour marchands, ou la polyglossie au quotidien au XVIe et XVIIe siècle", *Linguisticae Investigationes* XVI/2 (1992), pp. 395-420, et les *Quaderni del CIRSIL*, accessibles sur [www.lingue.unibo.it/cirsil](http://www.lingue.unibo.it/cirsil).

<sup>3</sup> Première édition 1675.

Pour qu'un marchand soit véritablement réputé habile homme et capable d'entreprendre et de faire toute sorte de commerce soit de mer soit de terre, il doit savoir plusieurs choses comme la tenue des livres, changer les monnaies, la législation et les règlements de l'art commercial des différents pays, les langues étrangères usitées dans le commerce (italien, espagnol et allemand).

Il s'agit là d'une formation minimale à ses yeux puisqu'il ajoute qu'il n'est pas nécessaire que le marchand soit bien savant. La maîtrise des langues étrangères tient donc une double place dans ce processus: elle participe au développement de leur savoir-faire, de leur pratique professionnelle, d'une mise en œuvre spécifique au monde du commerce à l'oral et à l'écrit dans le cadre d'une professionnalisation qui s'affirme. Mais elle élargit leurs savoirs en général, leur culture et leur ouverture sur le monde. On s'interrogera ici sur l'entrée des langues étrangères dans ce double processus de formation, sachant que bibliographie et sources sont réduites.

La réflexion sur la maîtrise des langues étrangères s'inscrit dans une problématique que l'historiographie a exploré depuis les années 1980 autour des ouvrages spécialisés au monde du commerce que sont les manuels de marchands et les dictionnaires de commerce. L'étude de ces outils particuliers, depuis les travaux de J.-C. Perrot,<sup>4</sup> a mis en évidence la création d'un vocabulaire commun au monde du négoce, l'importance des mots et leur "régularité" pour toute une profession qui avait besoin de références communes, l'usage de la langue française en étant souvent le véhicule. Les manuels de marchands recensés à l'échelle européenne du XVe au XIXe siècle par les équipes constituées autour de J. Hoock et P. Jeannin ont permis d'analyser l'évolution des savoirs d'un monde qui se professionnalise et formule une demande de formation dans un sens plus pratique, plus technique (maîtrise du calcul et de mathématiques adaptés au négoce, de l'écrit et de la correspondance). Le monde du négoce exprime ses propres exigences, une volonté de se dégager d'un enseignement "humaniste" classique plus généraliste où seules les langues mortes, le latin particulièrement, tenaient une place fondamentale. Ces travaux ont été prolongés par J. Hoock et J. Bottin vers la relecture des correspondances commerciales afin de mettre en évidence les mécanismes d'accès et diffusion de l'information, mais aussi d'analyser les formes épistolaires en s'interrogeant sur la nature de la communication pour déterminer l'impact réel des savoirs sur les pratiques commerciales en usage. L'aspect linguistique dans la transmission de

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Claude Perrot, "Les dictionnaires de commerce au XVIIIe siècle", *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* I (1981), pp. 36-67.

l'information, comme dans la pratique de l'activité négociante ou même dans la culture des négociants étudiés par F. Angiolini et D. Roche, n'a pas donné lieu à des réflexions précises en dehors de quelques remarques limitées comme celles de P. Molas i Ribalta<sup>5</sup> sur l'Espagne. En revanche, au Portugal, la diffusion du portugais comme lingua franca d'un vaste empire commercial et maritime a davantage retenu l'attention, par exemple sur le rôle des traducteurs-interprètes ainsi qu'à celui des difficultés de communication entre élites marchandes indiennes et Portugais,<sup>6</sup> par exemple.

L'analyse de la pratique linguistique des marchands est en effet rendue difficile par le manque de sources directes: la maîtrise orale ne laisse quasiment aucune trace, les correspondances commerciales peuvent parfois donner un éclairage limité sur la pratique de l'écrit, seule la mise en place de structures d'enseignement spécifiques fournirait des réponses plus précises, mais elle est souvent tardive. Peut-on malgré tout dégager des hiérarchies entre les langues comme nous y invite Savary, certaines indispensables au commerce et d'autres qui resteraient secondaires, en particulier dans le cadre de la Méditerranée occidentale? Sous la forme orale ou écrite, cette maîtrise des langues étrangères est particulièrement indispensable au négociant qui s'installe à l'étranger, autant pour traiter ses affaires que pour se tenir au courant des usages du pays; elle conditionne à court et moyen terme son insertion dans les réseaux d'affaires ou à plus long terme son aptitude à se fondre dans le cadre local. Le marchand peut, certes, avoir recours à des intermédiaires spécialisés, mais la nécessité de les contrôler dans une profession où la confiance s'appuie souvent sur le secret, implique une connaissance minimale de la langue vernaculaire. On envisagera donc ici l'usage des langues vivantes dans les pratiques professionnelles des marchands à travers l'exemple du portugais –langue marginale en raison de la faible présence des marchands portugais dans cet espace méditerranéen– en portant attention principalement à la correspondance commerciale d'une maison portugaise installée à Marseille dont le courrier échangé traduit la nécessité du recours au plurilinguisme.

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<sup>5</sup> P. Molas i Ribalta, "Le marchand espagnol entre le XVIe et le XVIIIe siècles", dans F. Angiolini et D. Roche (éds), *Cultures et formations négociantes dans l'Europe moderne*, Paris 1995, pp. 61-74.

<sup>6</sup> Luis Frederico Dias Antunes, "Au-delà de l'écriture. Formes de communication et intermédiation entre indiens et autorités coloniales au Mozambique (XVIIIe siècle)", *IICT*, actes de conférence, Lisbonne 2006 (à paraître).

*L'apprentissage des langues vivantes dans le processus de formation des marchands*

Dans le monde du commerce, la technique d'apprentissage des langues étrangères est celle de l'immersion et imprégnation qui privilégie l'oral sur l'écrit. Comme l'écrit J. Locke en 1690, "Les langues en effet s'apprennent par routine, par habitude, par mémoire et on les parle parfaitement bien que lorsqu'on a entièrement oublié les règles de grammaire." Le recours à un domestique étranger ou à un maître de langues, pratique imitée de celle de l'aristocratie, peut se rencontrer dans les familles de négociants aisés. Mais pour la plupart, l'apprentissage se fait empiriquement, par l'acquisition de la compréhension orale de la langue vernaculaire, avant d'approfondir. Ainsi, maîtriser le portugais parlé est une nécessité pour les marchands français qui veulent faire du commerce depuis Lisbonne en direction du Brésil. J. B. Merindol, marchand marseillais installé à Lisbonne témoigne ainsi de ses difficultés d'adaptation:

Une fois qu'on sait les prix du pays, il n'est pas difficile de vendre, et si je savais la langue du pays, je serai en état de faire ce commerce aussi bien que ces Messieurs. Je commence à barbouiller quelques mots de portugais, je n'aurai pas tant de difficulté à l'apprendre.

Son attitude sans aucune inhibition face à la nécessité d'apprendre une langue étrangère est largement partagée à l'époque moderne dans un monde où l'on doit souvent "barbouiller" quelques mots d'un patois presque étranger dès que l'on a franchi les limites de son village. Cet apprentissage *sur le tas* caractérise l'ensemble de la formation des marchands qui privilégie l'expérience acquise au détriment de la connaissance théorique. Dans une société largement marquée par l'atavisme professionnel, apprendre le métier de son père consiste à être embauché dès l'âge de dix ans environ, parfois dans une succursale étrangère pour parfaire la formation aux langues et à la technique commerciale. Au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Lisbonne est encore un lieu d'accueil pour de jeunes commis en apprentissage qui outre le négoce, y apprennent l'anglais plus que le portugais.<sup>7</sup> Un rapport inégal semble d'ailleurs s'y être déjà établi entre les langues: la maîtrise de l'anglais ou du français suffit pour commercer.

<sup>7</sup> "Comme il était peu versé dans les langues anglaise et portugaise, ni dans le commerce de Lisbonne et que pour l'en mettre au fait cela requiert nos peines et soins, led Bernard en reconnaissance s'engage de travailler à toutes mes affaires..." cité par J.-F. Labourdette, *La nation française de Lisbonne*, Paris: Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, 1988, p. 479.

Pourtant au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, le plurilinguisme semblait la règle en Europe<sup>8</sup> comme le prouve l'édition des premiers ouvrages de formation aux langues étrangères –qui utilisent le latin comme référence et proposent entre trois et six langues en “autoformation” sans maître. Toute une gamme d'ouvrages destinés aux marchands est disponible alliant formules de dialogues “dans la boutique” et textes modèles pour maîtriser les pratiques commerciales à l'écrit. Avant l'imprimerie, il existait déjà une tradition de manuels de conversation juxtaposant plusieurs langues, mais leur diffusion s'est amplifiée à partir de l'édition du premier manuel destiné aux marchands et voyageurs: le célèbre ouvrage de Noël de Berlaimont, *Colloquia cum dictionario*, qui connaîtra 250 éditions jusqu'en 1759. C'est un dictionnaire plurilingue organisé en dialogues qui comprend également des lettres commerciales et des contrats modèles. Il fut d'abord publié en flamand et français,<sup>9</sup> puis augmenté de l'espagnol, du latin, de l'italien, de l'allemand, etc. La première édition comprenant le portugais apparaît en 1598, sans doute en raison des besoins liés à la présence des nouveaux-chrétiens d'origine portugaise installés à Amsterdam depuis 1593 et particulièrement actifs dans le commerce des épices. Cette édition témoigne du fait que le portugais est bien au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle au moins, une langue du commerce, mais sa part se réduira dans les publications et traductions à vocation strictement commerciale ultérieurement.

En effet, tandis que se multiplient au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les glossaires, lexiques et grammaires trilingues<sup>10</sup> qui iront en se spécialisant et deviendront de plus en plus portatifs au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les marchands peuvent disposer désormais de meilleurs instruments pour parfaire leur maîtrise des langues étrangères, orale et écrite, en toutes circonstances. On en trouve les traces dans les descriptions de leurs bibliothèques, possession d'ouvrages indispensables qui restent parfois purement des outils linguistiques, mais qui sont souvent de type mixte en intégrant de nombreux documents commerciaux traduits ou de véritables traités de correspondance commerciale.<sup>11</sup> Les progrès de la

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<sup>8</sup> À partir de la première publication du Calepino, les dictionnaires se multiplient destinés à l'apprentissage des langues “sans maître”. Il faut attendre 1595 pour que le portugais apparaisse dans une version “latin-japonais-portugais” destinée aux missions dans l'empire, puis en 1621 pour le latin, l'espagnol et le portugais.

<sup>9</sup> Première édition en 1530 à Anvers.

<sup>10</sup> Oudin César, *Thrésor des trois langues, française, italienne et espagnole*, 3 éditions de 1616 à 1627.

<sup>11</sup> L'inventaire des biens du négociant de Lisbonne Antoine Darrot, 1784, dans les Archives Nationales, Paris, permet de constater que sa bibliothèque comprend des ouvrages variés nécessaires au commerce comme la “science des négociants” et “les



formation dans les établissements spécialisés amènent le développement de méthodes d'apprentissage des langues, comme celles pour apprendre l'italien ou l'espagnol, publiées à partir de 1665 par les jansénistes,<sup>12</sup> qui connaîtront des traductions en Europe encore au XVIIIe siècle. On note toutefois, le retard du portugais dans ces publications: s'il existe bien un dictionnaire anglais-portugais, il faut attendre la seconde partie du siècle pour qu'un dictionnaire français-portugais soit réalisé<sup>13</sup> et la publication de l'ouvrage *Mestre francês, verdadeiro método para aprehender o frances*, qui permet l'apprentissage du portugais au français et inversement. Quant à la demande de traduction d'ouvrages spécialisés comme le *Dictionnaire de commerce* de Savary, elle n'aboutit pas au XVIIIe siècle et les Portugais doivent avoir recours aux ouvrages publiés à l'extérieur jusqu'à la fin du siècle. Le français, l'anglais, l'italien, fournissent des modèles de correspondance commerciale, de nombreuses traductions bilingues, trilingues existent dans la Péninsule ibérique. Le manuel de Domenico Darseni, bien diffusé en Espagne, répond à un réel besoin de formation technique comme le précise l'auteur:

J'ai décidé de céder aux vœux de mes disciples et de leur offrir dans un style simple, clair et précis, une série de lettres donnant des avis ou traitant des commissions d'expéditions d'envois et de lettres de change pour qu'ils puissent non seulement apprendre l'italien ou le français mais aussi trouver dans ces exemples des formules leur permettant de traiter plus facilement de tous les aspects du commerce entre les nations.

sans que le portugais trouve une place.

Pourtant, désormais les marchands eux-mêmes forment aux langues étrangères à travers leurs propres institutions. Au Portugal au milieu du XVIIIe siècle, la demande sociale amène à la création de l'École de Commerce

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opérations de change" et à la pratique des langues étrangères (grammaires anglaise, italienne, française et dictionnaire de l'Académie Française, un dictionnaire italien et le *Mestre francês*).

<sup>12</sup> Frigny de Lancelot, *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre plus facilement et en peu de temps la langue espagnole*, 1665, 1667, 1681.

<sup>13</sup> Lettre de Curraud, marchand français de Lisbonne à son correspondant à Marseille (31-1-1752), dans le Fonds Roux LIX-999, Chambre de Commerce et Industrie de Marseille, "Mr Verduc Vincent de Cadix nous demande différents livres en portugais; nous avons déjà vu le plus fameux libraire qu'il y a icy qui m'a dit n'avoir jamais eu le dictionnaire français et portugais...nous ne pouvons promettre à présent que la grammaire portugaise et française"; il l'envoie à Verduc pour la somme de 1120 réis, "On travaille à l'édition d'un grand dictionnaire portugais et français mais il ne pourra être achevé qu'à la fin de l'année."

de Lisbonne par la Junte de Commerce de la ville qui allie formation commerciale et langues étrangères avec un enseignement du français et de l'anglais. Cette politique est désormais relayée par le pouvoir politique qui veut dynamiser le commerce portugais. Elle sera continuée et amplifiée à la fin du siècle en appui aux initiatives locales. À Portimao, par exemple, en 1798 les autorités réclament une politique d'information en direction des négociants étrangers afin qu'ils y établissent des correspondants; pour faciliter "le commerce avec les nations étrangères, il faudrait faire instruire un jeune dans les différentes langues, anglaise, hollandaise et française". De ce rapide bilan, on peut retenir la difficulté des marchands portugais à utiliser leur propre langue pour développer leurs affaires. Tout les incite à se former en une langue étrangère: l'espagnol, du fait de la domination politique du Portugal par l'Espagne jusqu'à 1640, l'anglais et le hollandais par la présence commerciale dominante de ces nations à Lisbonne même, le français enfin lorsque son usage se répand comme langue technique ainsi que du commerce et qu'il s'impose dans les échanges internationaux par la mode. Toutefois, l'exemple de l'installation du marchand portugais Vicente Manem à Marseille à la fin du XVIIe siècle révélé par sa correspondance apporte quelques nuances sur la présence du portugais en Méditerranée occidentale.

*Pratiques linguistiques et réseaux commerciaux à travers la correspondance de Vicente Manem*<sup>14</sup>

L'utilisation du portugais en Méditerranée est en effet réduite puisque les marchands portugais semblent s'être détournés de cette zone géographique très tôt pour la "mer océane". Durant l'époque moderne, particulièrement sous la domination espagnole, les maisons portugaises sont rares, servent de prête-noms à des entreprises étrangères, ce qui s'amplifiera durant une large partie du XVIIIe siècle pour les Hollandais et Anglais. Il faudra attendre les années 1780-1790 pour qu'un certain renouveau des activités commerciales et des agents portugais soit enregistré. La présence des marchands portugais est donc difficilement repérable pendant presque deux siècles, en dehors d'un exemple fourni par le port de Marseille entre 1694 et 1705. À cette date, Vicente Manem de Souza, fils d'un négociant de Lisbonne dont les activités sont liées au commerce colonial, se fixe près de la Loge de Commerce, au cœur de la ville et des activités marchandes, avec sans doute de fortes recommandations des marchands marseillais commerçant avec le Brésil

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<sup>14</sup> Fonds Ferrari-Froissart, dans les Archives Municipales de Marseille. Vicente Manem désormais Vincent Manem.

et le Portugal comme les Lambert, Tiran, Brémond ou Beaumont et la puissante famille des Doléolis dont un des membres est à cette date consul français à Bahia. Ses activités de marchand-banquier<sup>15</sup> centrées sur Marseille rayonneront sur une zone qui va de la rivière de Gênes à Lisbonne, mais mobilisent des réseaux de correspondants bien au-delà dans toutes les régions en relation avec Marseille (Levant, Barbarie, Espagne, ensemble de la France et les ports d'Europe du nord). Il s'insère socialement dans la ville par son mariage en 1696 avec Marie Marthe Blanc, qui appartient à une famille de négociants marseillais particulièrement actifs au Levant,<sup>16</sup> ce qui lui permet d'intervenir commercialement dans une région d'où les Portugais sont de fait exclus. Malgré cette intégration dans la ville, il n'est pas naturalisé et reste un "marchand portugais", même si la traduction de son prénom en Vincent ou de son nom en Manenq le rend difficilement repérable dans les sources locales. Cela se vérifie dans la correspondance échangée avec son père à Lisbonne qui lui écrit en portugais, mais aussi à celle qu'il reçoit en différentes langues de ses nombreux correspondants. Les mentions qu'il porte lui-même sur l'ensemble de son courrier pour indiquer la date de réponse sont toujours écrites en portugais. Pourtant, il doit utiliser le français dans ses relations familiales et dans ses affaires sur place – ce qui nécessite au minimum la maîtrise de ces deux langues, mais de plus il semble capable d'en utiliser d'autres, au moins d'en maîtriser la compréhension écrite. L'état de cette correspondance mérite l'attention car il semble que ce soit un cas rare d'échange "plurilingue" à Marseille: puisqu'au cours du XVIIIe siècle, toutes les maisons marseillaises<sup>17</sup> qui font du commerce avec Lisbonne, quels que soient leurs intermédiaires, utilisent exclusivement le français dans leurs courriers. De même, les maisons françaises en activité à Lisbonne ne commercent qu'en français.

Les lettres reçues par Vincent Manem durant les quelques années où il se trouve à Marseille permettent de constater que ses correspondants manient eux-mêmes plus ou moins bien portugais et autres langues. La rédaction du courrier peut être le fait du marchand lui-même, ou d'un commis qui traduit le texte fourni par son maître. En ce cas, la qualité de l'écrit et de la maîtrise de la langue vérifierait les aptitudes de l'employé et c'est certainement le cas dans certaines maisons disposant d'un véritable "bureau" avec des commis spécialisés dans des aires géographiques précises. Toutefois, dans ce courrier

<sup>15</sup> Il s'associe en 1700 avec son beau-frère Pedro António Frois, arrivé du Portugal.

<sup>16</sup> Son frère Jean-Baptiste sera consul à Alep de 1698 à 1707.

<sup>17</sup> Vues dans le Fonds Roux.

pourtant très répétitif, on peut relever les marques personnelles d'un échange qui font exclure cette solution, l'insistance sur les liens directs étant souvent marquée. Et dans tous les cas, que ce soit l'employé ou le marchand lui-même qui tienne la plume, le courrier adressé à Vincent Manem reflète le soin pris à l'acquisition et au maniement des langues étrangères dans ces maisons marchandes. D'ailleurs, les pratiques différenciées ne tiennent pas tant au rédacteur de la lettre qu'à un certain usage régional de ces langues ou social. On peut noter les variations de formulation des adresses: le "Ao senhor Vicente Manem e Souza que Deos guarde, Marselha" signale le Portugais qui écrit du Portugal ou de Gênes, alors que les maisons très internationalisées de Gênes ou Livourne adresseront un courrier à "Monsieur Vincent Manem, marchand banquier à Marseille" portant une adresse impeccablement rédigée par un rédacteur certainement français. Quant au courrier confié à poste, il porte des mentions destinées à permettre la localisation du lieu de résidence: "rue de la salle" ou "au bout de la rue des auffiers" et n'est utilisé que par les correspondants proches de Toulon.

La langue utilisée dépend de l'origine géographique du correspondant, mais pas uniquement. Avec le Portugal, c'est très largement et naturellement le portugais qui est le plus utilisé. Ainsi dans la correspondance familière et commerciale qu'il entretient avec son père, Joseph Manem, "homen de negócio" de la place de Lisbonne, un négociant banquier lié avec le Brésil qui a des relations puissantes. C'est aussi dans cette langue que les marchands portugais du nord du pays (Cellorico, Bragance, Porto) échangent avec lui une correspondance financière et commerciale qui comporte de nombreuses connotations familières attestant de liens de proximité. Plusieurs d'entre eux nés en Espagne, connaîtront des procès d'inquisition, ce qui permet de les classer dans la catégorie des nouveaux-chrétiens.<sup>18</sup> Leurs affaires (commerce de la morue, du tabac) s'insèrent dans le commerce de l'Europe du nord; le procès de l'un d'entre eux, Pedro Furtado, révèle sa connaissance de la langue anglaise et ses liens avec ce pays, ce qui favorisera la fuite de sa famille de Porto vers l'Angleterre.

Une autre partie des contacts de Vincent Manem comprend des marchands français fixés au Portugal, parfois correspondants des maisons de Cadix. Ceux qui cherchent à nouer des affaires avec lui sans sembler le connaître personnellement utilisent le français, comme Avril, le consul

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<sup>18</sup> Les nouveaux-chrétiens, descendants de juifs convertis, peuvent judaïser et être alors poursuivis comme hérétiques par l'inquisition ou être des catholiques sincères. Ils peuvent parfois faire un retour au judaïsme après leur émigration; voir C. L. Wilke, *Histoire des juifs portugais*, Paris: Chandeigne, 2007.

de Porto, tandis que ceux qui échangent des nouvelles sur la santé de son père, les événements familiaux ou politiques et marquent une plus grande proximité, manipulent plusieurs langues (français, portugais ou espagnol). Le lien personnel détermine l'usage de la langue utilisée dans les affaires; les Bellet, Lalande, Garnier, fixés à Lisbonne, en relation étroite avec son père Joseph, utilisent naturellement le portugais avec lui, tandis que les relations strictement commerciales des autres se font dans la langue d'origine du marchand. La sûreté de la pratique commerciale exige que toute ambiguïté soit levée sur la qualification d'un produit, les mesures et quantités qui peuvent parfois être interprétées différemment. Le marchand préfère alors s'exprimer dans sa propre langue pour être sûr d'être bien compris: c'est donc à celui qui reçoit le courrier de devoir s'assurer de la traduction précise. À Marseille où il n'existait aucun interprète officiel de portugais, l'usage voulait sans doute que l'on s'adresse à un intermédiaire bilingue, marchand reconnu ou religieux, par exemple. Jusqu'à la fin du XVIIe siècle, de nombreux marchands marseillais et provençaux étaient intéressés au commerce de Lisbonne et l'on peut penser qu'une communication orale basique était possible. En revanche, lorsqu'il s'agissait d'acte officiel, la traduction devant un officier s'imposait, ce qui nécessitait le recours aux services du consul<sup>19</sup> de Lisbonne, dont la place et le rôle se définissent durant cette période: c'est lui qui traduit et authentifie les actes –avant l'institution régulière d'un chancelier recruté pour les traductions, au départ parmi les marchands de la place maîtrisant portugais et français. Le consul Lescolle témoigne en 1699 de sa responsabilité dans le maniement des langues et des conséquences sur les activités commerciales entre France et Portugal et réciproquement:

Et si je ne possèdois la langue portugaise come je la possède, et ne l'écrivois de mesme, je me trouverois bien embarrassé (...). S'est un point très essentiel à un consul de sçavoir escrire et parler la langue du pays où il réside à cause des traductions de françois en portugais et de portugais en françois, parce que, comme il me passe journellement par les mains quantité de papiers pour faire traduire come lettres de change, contracts à la grosse, contracts de rente, transactions, procès verbaux, comptes de marchands, procurations, etc...qui viennent de France et qu'il faut traduire en portugais ou qui se font icy qu'il faut traduire en françois. Si l'on ne sçait bien les deux langues, un consul pouroit estre surpris par l'ignorance ou la malice du traducteur qui

<sup>19</sup> Il existe à la fin du XVIIe siècle des consulats à Lisbonne et Porto, ainsi qu'à Madère, Bahia, mais assurés de manière moins régulière. Au XVIIIe siècle celui de Porto est honorifique.

peut changer la substance des mots et leur donner un sens contraire car il faut que le consul légalise et signe tout, et donne son attestation comme les traductions sont en tout et par tout conformes aux originaux, et s'il laissoit couler une fautte, il en pouroit naitre de grands inconvenients.<sup>20</sup>

Les échanges commerciaux avec le Portugal sont rendus plus difficiles par ces problèmes linguistiques qui conduisent à des frais et des délais supplémentaires pour faire attester les actes. Lorsqu'il s'agit de litiges impliquant des marchands portugais, en cas de déclaration d'avarie par exemple ou de contestation d'un contrat mal rempli, il y a recours au tribunal du judiciaire de la conservatoire française où un juge portugais, conservateur de la nation française, représente les intérêts français. Cette situation rend le règlement encore plus long, plus coûteux et plus délicat en raison des pratiques tatillonnes de l'administration portugaise. Ainsi, la difficulté à s'insérer dans des réseaux commerciaux ne s'explique pas uniquement par le manque de complémentarité économique mais également par les différences culturelles dont la langue est le support. L'installation de Vincent Manem à Marseille doit donc permettre à des marchands français de contourner une partie de leur handicap pour poursuivre leurs affaires entre les deux pays.

Mais la position de Vincent Manem le place au cœur d'un réseau commercial centré sur Marseille qui fait communiquer les régions les plus lointaines (bois, sucre, tabac du Brésil) avec le Levant (café, blé, textiles) et l'Atlantique (textiles, blé). Sa propre activité entre "la rivière de Gênes" et Lisbonne fonctionne avec des relais que sont Nice et Toulon à l'est de Marseille pour des produits plus variés. Les échanges portent sur les achats agricoles de l'arrière pays provençal (olives, vinaigre, câpres, fruits), sur les produits manufacturés du Piémont ou de Provence (papier, cartes à jouer, soies de Turin, etc.). Il sélectionne ses correspondants dans cette zone en fonction de recommandations en chaîne élaborées par son père au Portugal, ou par l'intermédiaire de maisons étrangères (françaises, anglaises, hollandaises, italiennes). La diversité des langues utilisées dans sa correspondance traduit l'intégration à des réseaux différents. Ainsi, son principal correspondant à Villefranche de Nice, port franc, actif et attractif, est Daniel Arrio (Arroyo) da Costa qui entretient une correspondance soutenue, avec de nombreuses allusions au père de Vincent comme ami et partenaire qu'il semble connaître personnellement. Il utilise une langue qui mélange parfois de l'espagnol au

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<sup>20</sup> Mémoire de Lescolle, Archives Nationales, cité par Labourdette, *La nation française*, p. 269.

portugais, contaminée par quelques mots de français ou d'italien; ainsi le mot "sucre" revient assez fréquemment écrit parfois "asucré" ou "assucar". Sa maîtrise des langues à l'écrit ne lui permet pas d'écrire en français, même s'il le comprend, comme il l'indique à son correspondant. Et lorsqu'il est malade, la tenue des lettres par un employé fait apparaître une maîtrise du portugais écrit bien supérieure à la sienne. Daniel Arroyo da Costa, dont le patronyme est partiellement portugais (da Costa), est donc sans doute un de ces marchands nouveaux-chrétiens ou juifs installés dans la ville depuis que les autorités savoyardes ont confirmé en 1618 la reconnaissance d'une communauté juive renforcée par l'immigration en 1669 des familles réfugiées d'Oran. Une partie des correspondants de Vincent Manem est donc formée par ces nouveaux-chrétiens d'origine espagnole et portugaise.

C'est aussi le cas de ses correspondants de Gênes, les frères João et Nicolão de Castro, qui échangent du blé, de la cire et des produits de luxe (gravures, livres, ambre) contre du bois brésil, des sucres, tabac, indigo et rocou<sup>21</sup> dans des circuits commerciaux plus complexes qui transitent par Nice, Toulon, Marseille et Lisbonne jusqu'à Hambourg et la Hollande et impliquent des maisons anglaises (Lambert et Basket) ou juives (Arias, Barzilay ou Gabriel de Medina) de Livourne. Ils révèlent la place tenue par le portugais dans leur correspondance en signalant qu'en raison de leur absence, l'envoi du courrier a été perturbé et laissent supposer qu'une partie de leur correspondance est tenue par un commis ne maîtrisant pas cette langue. Ils recommandent une de leur connaissance pour sa maîtrise du français et du portugais, montrant ainsi que de Gênes, l'usage de ces deux langues dans les affaires est un atout. Ils manifestent un attachement envers leur langue maternelle qui n'est pas seulement affectif, mais qui semble définir pour eux un espace de confiance dans leurs affaires. Vincent Manem bénéficie de ce préjugé favorable pour le développement de ses activités et s'appuie sur un réseau de nouveaux-chrétiens qu'il a développé depuis Lisbonne et depuis Marseille autour de liens privilégiés basés sur l'usage d'une langue commune. De Marseille, Vincent Manem met ainsi en relation les nouveaux-chrétiens d'Italie, de Bayonne, d'Amsterdam et d'Hambourg, avec ceux du Portugal comme Alexandre Pimentel, "homen de negócio" associé à son père Joseph pour le monopole de la vente des cartes à jouer au Brésil –après le tabac et d'autres spéculations. Leur correspondance permet de suivre le départ d'Alexandre pour Marseille, Nice enfin Gênes, ainsi que le repli de ses affaires lorsque

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<sup>21</sup> Le produit n'est pas très bien connu en 1698 comme en témoigne la nécessité d'expliquer la provenance et traduire le terme en italien "terra oriana".

toute sa famille subit à la fois la répression de l'inquisition et les contrôles de l'administration royale pour lutter contre la contrebande avec le Brésil. En 1705, il ne restera pas grand-chose de leurs activités. Toutefois, on ne peut réduire le réseau commercial de Vincent Manem à un réseau strictement communautaire, d'une part parce qu'il ne semble pas que sa famille soit nouvelle-chrétienne<sup>22</sup> et d'autre part en raison de la place réduite de Livourne dans ses échanges. De plus, les travaux les plus récents<sup>23</sup> montrent bien que les réseaux improprement qualifiés de "communautaires" des juifs italiens sont en réalité très imbriqués dans des réseaux anglais ou autres.

Cette imbrication des origines se vérifie également dans le cas de Vincent Manem, puisqu'une grande partie de ses correspondants de Gênes à Marseille utilise le français. C'est le cas de la maison Scudamore et Henshaw, sans doute anglaise, qui entretient des liens plus ambigus dans un contexte d'inquiétude politique centrée sur l'entrée dans "la grande alliance" du Portugal en 1703. La situation de Vincent Manem se trouve fragilisée, et son correspondant évoque le moyen de continuer les affaires liées "aux amys de Londres" "sans vous mettre en danger". La situation après le traité Methuen est difficile pour un marchand portugais en France, et son correspondant l'interroge même sur ses intentions, "nous vous prions de nous dire sur quel pied vous pourriez rester à Marseille". Cette maison souhaite maintenir ses activités avec lui et propose au besoin d'utiliser le "nom de quelque italien comme Nicolão de Castro" pour jouer le rôle d'intermédiaire. Les enjeux du commerce de ces maisons internationales dépassent très largement le cadre des conflits politiques du temps et nécessitent des travestissements, des emprunts d'identité, des stratégies qui ne les enferment pas dans des considérations nationales. La position de Vincent Manem lui permet encore d'intervenir, comme le réclame à plusieurs reprises François Sauvaire de Toulon, dans des affaires mettant en jeu les relations complexes autour du radoub et de l'équipement des navires français et étrangers, les prises, les prisonniers et avaries de bateaux anglais, suédois ou hollandais. Les activités de cette maison nécessitent un constant contact avec des capitaines étrangers pour leur fournir du ravitaillement, racheter des cargaisons ou des navires. Le courrier de F. Sauvaire souligne les difficultés de traduction qu'il rencontre –par exemple devoir faire traduire la lettre d'un capitaine anglais

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<sup>22</sup> Les lettres venues du Portugal témoignent de l'importance de la répression inquisitoriale durant les années 1700-1704, mais si son père est emprisonné, c'est dans les geôles de l'État pour une affaire de contrebande de tabac.

<sup>23</sup> F. Trivellato, "Les juifs portugais entre Lisbonne, le Portugal et la Méditerranée (1650-1750)", *Arquivos* XLVIII (2004), pp. 171-182.



avec lequel il ne pouvait s'entretenir, correspondre avec un capitaine suédois, etc. Les relations qu'il entretient avec Vincent Manem semblent ici d'une nature particulière, puisqu'il ne s'agit pas d'acheter des produits coloniaux, mais plutôt d'assurer la "logistique" de ses activités avec des capitaines et marchands étrangers. Les compétences linguistiques de Vincent ou ses capacités d'ouverture à l'international sont davantage en jeu. F. Sauvaire le sollicite comme intermédiaire dans nombre de ces actions, ainsi pour trouver une maison d'Amsterdam où le second de ses fils pourrait "apprendre diligemment la langue, lire et écrire le hollandais" dans une famille catholique et ainsi, ajoute-t-il, "il vous serait plus utile aux commissions". Le montant de la somme proposée pour l'hébergement est trop élevé à ses yeux, il réclame des aménagements et confie le soin des discussions à V. Manem "ce que je vous prie luy vouloir écrire". Sans en déduire que celui-ci maîtrise le hollandais, il semble en tout cas disposer des relais sûrs dans ce pays, contrairement à un marchand français de Toulon au même moment. La fréquentation des marchands d'Europe du nord à Lisbonne lui a sans doute donné des clefs pour communiquer avec eux. F. Sauvaire semble avoir conscience que ses propres difficultés linguistiques limitent le développement de ses affaires et s'engage dans une attitude audacieuse par la formation d'un de ses fils au hollandais, cette langue très "exotique" sur le littoral provençal.

L'amplitude des relations commerciales et amicales que Vincent Manem a forgées en grande partie depuis Lisbonne, s'est renforcée par celles dont il bénéficie grâce à sa belle-famille (Blanc et Agneau): du Caire, d'Alep, il reçoit les courriers en français de ses parents, courrier d'un grand format, de grande qualité d'écriture, fournissant de bonnes informations sur les produits du Levant mais qui semble peu productive directement sur le plan commercial. On peut alors remarquer la différence de niveau de langue selon les catégories sociales, puisque les capitaines de navires rédigent leurs courriers dans leur propre langue (allemand pour un capitaine allemand de La Ciotat ou italien pour un capitaine de Gênes, etc.), alors que les négociants s'enorgueillissent de manipuler directement une ou plusieurs langues. De Nice, Jean et son neveu Marcel Maissière lui écrivent quelques lettres dans un excellent français, tandis que le "maître patron" Pierre Suquet s'exprime, lui, dans un médiocre français "provençalisé". La correspondance échangée avec Valery et Supriani qui administrent les droits dans le port franc à Nice et se vantent d'avoir "des biens au soleil", est explicitement d'un autre niveau et traduit une organisation professionnelle plus élaborée: "Nous dirons encore par advis comme dans nostre bureau s'escrit continuellement tant pour italie, france et provance quatre sortes de lengagiers, françois, portuges, espagnol

et italien luy ayant divers amis français particulièrement qui aiment qu'on luy écrivent en spagnol ou en pourtoghois." Bien que la correspondance de Vincent Manem ne reflète pas une mode qui serait à la pratique du portugais par certains Français, on ne peut qu'être surpris de cette affirmation car l'apprentissage du portugais relevait de l'exploit. Mais quelques familles de Marseille ou La Ciotat installées au Portugal, comme les Curraud, Merindol, Beaumont un peu plus tard, pouvaient échanger une partie de leur courrier dans cette langue. Cela semble assez peu probable toutefois; l'allusion porte peut-être sur des familles de nouveaux-chrétiens installés alors dans le sud-ouest de la France.

Cette citation conduit à une autre observation: sur ce segment commercial qui va de Gênes à Lisbonne par Marseille et met en relation non seulement l'Italie, la France et la Provence, mais encore le Portugal et au-delà, la pratique des marchands liés à Vincent Manem révèle la quasi-absence de l'usage de l'italien, face au français, au portugais ou même à l'espagnol. Il s'agit, il est vrai, d'un réseau enraciné dans une culture portugaise, même si nombre d'entre eux, nouveaux-chrétiens ou juifs, sont installés en terre italienne depuis longtemps et y font une part essentielle de leur trafic. Pour ceux-là, les intermédiaires italiens comme les Manzoni, Beroardi et Medici dont les noms apparaissent dans ces correspondances, sont installés à Lisbonne; quant aux marchands piémontais ou turinois, ils sont encore nombreux au Portugal. Or, on constate que Vincent Manem ne s'appuie pas sur ces Italiens avec lesquels il est peut-être en concurrence. En revanche, il semble avoir développé des liens avec des marchands français originaires de Rouen, Lyon ou Marseille fixés à Lisbonne ou Porto, et s'appuie sur la langue française dans ses échanges avec eux, les met en relation avec le Levant tandis que de Marseille, il cherche à écouler les produits du Brésil. La place du français est donc centrale dans ses échanges et le choix de Marseille ne doit rien au hasard. Port franc, actif, bien que fortement concurrencé par Gênes sur la même gamme de produits, il offre aux marchands du Portugal une opportunité pour s'ouvrir aux produits de Levant contre des produits du Brésil, tout en s'assurant un ravitaillement en produits alimentaires et manufacturés plus variés. Toutefois, la conjoncture tardive n'est guère favorable à ce développement et le sort de cette maison portugaise sera scellé par le développement des hostilités autant que par les accords commerciaux signés entre Portugal et Angleterre.

### Conclusion

Cette correspondance témoigne donc de la présence du portugais en Méditerranée, comme langue de commerce en liaison avec la forte implantation des nouveaux-chrétiens originaires du Portugal dans les réseaux marchands. Mais après une période de forte visibilité au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle dans la partie orientale (Thessalonique, Smyrne, Constantinople, etc.), puis en Italie (Pise, Ferrare, Venise, Livourne), à partir du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle c'est surtout la communauté de Livourne créée en 1593 qui sera le relais pour la diffusion du portugais. Cette langue se maintient dans les actes officiels de la communauté juive de la ville jusqu'en 1787, date à laquelle l'italien sera imposé. Le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle amorce donc un lent déclin pour des juifs dits "Espagnols" qui sont en fait souvent des Portugais d'origine, remplacés peu à peu par des familles originaires du reste de l'Italie ce qui pousse à l'abandon d'une langue devenue étrangère. Les juifs, descendants de ces familles portugaises, perdent l'usage du portugais pour leurs affaires. Cette langue est désormais cantonnée à la sphère privée, à la communication interne et familiale sous forme orale le plus souvent. Les affaires commerciales comme celles de la communauté, se traitent alors plus souvent dans ce judéo-espagnol qui s'élabore au sein de la diaspora séfarde, nouvelle lingua franca née du brassage des différents dialectes ibériques où le castillan est majoritaire,<sup>24</sup> le portugais ne se maintenant que sous forme d'un vocabulaire d'appoint. Et lorsque Livourne essaime à Tunis (1609 et à Alep, Thessalonique, Smyrne) par exemple, c'est l'usage de l'hébreu, de l'arabe, de l'espagnol puis de l'italien (1820) qui s'impose; seul le "ladino" se maintiendra dans la partie orientale de la Méditerranée sous la forme d'un dialecte réservé aux locuteurs d'origine séfarde, ce qui permet de continuer à traiter certaines affaires dans le plus grand secret. Mais l'abandon du portugais comme langue de commerce en Méditerranée par les juifs séfarades s'est effectué dans la seconde moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle en partie en raison du tarissement de l'émigration<sup>25</sup> et de l'insertion dans des réseaux marchands de plus en plus internationalisés, tout comme à Amsterdam, Hambourg ou Londres, d'autant que ces négociants furent souvent les agents les plus actifs des maisons anglaises.

L'usage du portugais se réduit désormais aux échanges internes au Portugal où il est même fortement concurrencé par l'implantation de ces nations étrangères qui monopolisent le commerce du Portugal en

<sup>24</sup> Wilke, *Histoire*, p. 80.

<sup>25</sup> La loi de 1773 permet l'assimilation des nouveaux-chrétiens, tandis que l'activité de l'inquisition est limitée.

Méditerranée. La correspondance de Vincent Manem est donc un rare témoignage d'un moment charnière dans les liens commerciaux entre Portugal et Méditerranée, avec une quasi-unique tentative pour une maison portugaise de s'établir à Marseille, d'y développer un large réseau, de jouer un rôle d'intermédiaire entre Méditerranée et Europe du nord. Elle traduit aussi une volonté de s'appuyer sur un réseau de nouveaux-chrétiens à partir de ce port, dans une certaine concurrence avec Livourne, mais sans résultats tangibles sur la durée. Il faudra attendre l'émergence de nouveaux marchands portugais vers la fin du XVIIIe siècle pour qu'une visibilité limitée soit à nouveau donnée à cette langue: Marseille accueillera alors un interprète et un consul pour le Portugal et le Danemark à la fois.

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PEOPLE, THEIR EXPERIENCES AND MERCHANT PRACTICES  
IN A PORT-CITY:  
NAPLES AS A MEDITERRANEAN CROSSROADS IN THE MODERN AGE

*Giovanni Lombardi*

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ABSTRACT: Naples, the densely populated capital of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, was a multi-ethnic city in the early Modern Age. The people who lived and worked there intertwined the events of their lives through commercial and maritime activities, identifying themselves in relation to merchant and craft guilds, religious and charitable institutions, national lodges and cultural associations, as well as family networks and economic interests. At this Mediterranean crossroads, co-existence followed complex logics affected by diverse presences and intercultural influences. An opportunity emerges from an examination of these realities from a perspective favouring extroversion: to construct a Mediterranean network among scholars and to encourage synergies among them. In this sense, Neapolitan research sources – which offer an imposing documentation often difficult to utilise – can give unexpected results. Yet what are the underlying problematic areas; what are the possible research instruments and strategies? The second half of the seventeenth century is a fertile terrain for a working theory, exemplified by and illustrated through the case of the House of Raillard. This family enterprise – international in character – intersected the history of the city, linking merchant experiences and businesses in Naples and elsewhere. From this emerge events and personalities, behind which notations of activities pursued and horizons perceived wait to be explored.

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Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Naples was a kaleidoscope of the Mediterranean. The historiography of this period has evaluated institutional and cultural courses of action, religious aspects, and social and economic processes – with discordant interpretations. In general, however, there is agreement on the importance of this capital city on the geopolitical scene of the Modern Age, its relevance as an emporium, its demographic weight and, in particular, its capacity as a maritime crossroads to attract immigration. When the Spanish Viceroy Pedro Álvarez de Toledo (1532-1553) arrived, this man who symbolised the consolidation of the Spanish crown over the Italian dominion found a reality much different from that of other cities of the *monarquía*: the population of the Kingdom was about 1,600,000 in 1532, with Naples passing from 150,000 inhabitants at the beginning of the century to more than 200,000 c. 1547. Before the conclusion of that century, Naples would become the most populous city in Christendom after Paris.<sup>1</sup>

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\* For a better translation and a smoother reading, accounting and archival information has been simplified where possible, and transcriptions, often of names, translated from the

It would be inopportune to hazard a historical synthesis of the capital and its Mediterranean dimension,<sup>2</sup> as this would inevitably make banal a complex history upon which others are more deeply measured. More simply, we would like to encourage an approach that involves planting one's feet firmly in "things archival" and looking at the Mediterranean through the concrete details of life in Naples. Tracing relational networks, as well as presences, settlements, taxation and inheritance related matters, hegemonies, personal histories, commercial practices, and the experiences of the people living in the capital – of either established or temporary residence – can not only round out the history of the city, but can more specifically offer shores, footholds and perspectives for those who carry out research in other contexts. To approach these themes, however, a pervasive documentary network would be very useful.

First of all, it is important to note that Naples had no cadastre, due to the taxation privileges conceded to the city, first by the Aragonese (1443-1501) and then by the Castilians (1503-1707); therefore, we are lacking an instrument that translates *par excellence* the settlements of communities and "nations", their patrimonies and activities, relations among groups, and relations between those groups and the urban space.<sup>3</sup> Approaches to these

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seventeenth-century Italian have been homogenized, with respect, naturally, for the academic requisites of the text; for these modifications, the author is solely responsible.

<sup>1</sup> C. J. Hernando Sánchez, *Castilla y Nápoles en el siglo XVI. El virrey Pedro de Toledo*, Junta de Castilla y León 1994, pp. 242-243; *id.*, *El Reyno de Nápoles en el Imperio de Carlos V. La consolidación de la conquista*, Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> For a reflection on this, see M. Petruszewicz, "Il Mediterraneo dopo Braudel. È possibile una nuova storiografia?", in F. Cacciatore and A. Niger (eds), *Il Mediterraneo. Incontro di culture*, Rome: Aracne, 2007, pp. 117-128.

<sup>3</sup> There are no systematic registers showing the geographical and occupational distribution of these foreign communities in Naples, communities which are otherwise quite diverse in relevance and internal cohesion. The interpretive model of Jean-François Chauvard – in which cadastral sources and parish documentation are decisive for interpreting processes of settlement – is exemplary; see Jean-François Chauvard, "Scale di osservazione e inserimento degli stranieri nello spazio veneziano tra XVII e XVIII secolo", in D. Calabi and P. Lanaro (eds), *La città italiana e i luoghi degli stranieri, XIV-XVIII secolo*, Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1998, pp. 85-107. The lack of a cadastre – none was ever compiled – was peculiar to Naples. This absence derives from the statutes of the capital city and from the privileges that were recognised as part of Neapolitan citizenship: Neapolitans were exempt from the payment of hearth tax from 1442 onwards, a privilege confirmed by Charles V. *Prammatiche* [Praxes] 3 and 4 of *De contractibus* of 1609, relating to the creation of a public records office of property contracts, were disregarded; only in 1786 was an archive of this

themes, at least during recent decades, have been relatively few; insofar as the study of foreign communities is concerned, one historiography in particular has focused on the role of the élites, their enfeoffment and their representation.<sup>4</sup> In reality, these foreign communities were not merely islands stitched together by the urban layout: there was commixture among the social groups. There were poles of attraction rather than topographical demarcations. Religious and charitable institutions and national lodges provided outlines of affiliations and linguistic affinities, as well as cultural, economic and geographic backgrounds. The sodalities of San Giacomo della Spada, the Madonna del Pilar, the Madonna di Montserrat, Sant'Anna dei Lombardi and San Giorgio dei Genovesi, as well as the brotherhoods of the Greeks and Germans, all evoked reciprocities, which accompanied the social amalgam: these were cultural affinities that intertwined.<sup>5</sup>

Returning to the world of commerce as a world in movement – as a place of intercultural cross-pollinations – to social groups taken together as a complex whole, the synergetic consultation of three documentary poles of diverse nature is, in contrast, concrete and practicable, each manifesting an internal coherence and continuity that permits converging readings made up of reciprocal cross-referencing between those sources: that is, the banking, notarial and ecclesiastical poles.

The Historical Archives of the Banco di Napoli are perhaps the most original lever on this path. Comprised of some 300 rooms, these are probably the largest historical banking archives of the Modern Age, safekeeping the documents of eight public banks founded in the Mediterranean capital between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Monte della Pietà, later

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type established. Concerning material evidence, the urban palimpsest of Naples is extremely rich; however, changes towards the end of the nineteenth century, military conflicts and, above all, government policies that have been followed since the most recent postwar period (leading to the destruction of *fondachi*, residences, churches and chapels – and their archives) have rendered ancient settlement patterns even more anonymous.

<sup>4</sup> For the ripe fruit of this attention, see G. Brancaccio, “*Nazione genovese*”. *Consoli e colonia nella Napoli moderna*, Naples: Guida, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> For interesting and unexplored information regarding the system of solidarity of the Genoese Nation (the national lodge in Naples) and its ties to the institutions of the Republic of Genoa, see the Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli (ASBN); the Archivio Storico del Banco del SS. Salvatore (BSalv), *pandetta* II, 1670, m. 53, Monastero Annunziata Torchini di Genova, f. 765, Annunziata di Savona, f. 766; Archivio Storico del Banco di S. Giacomo (BsG), *pandetta* I, 1703, m. 195, f. 255, Ospedale degli Incurabili di Genova; f. 256, Ospedale di S. M. della Misericordia di Genova; f. 349, Ufficio de poveri di Genova; f. 495, Regia corte - conti eletti de genovesi.



renamed Banco della Pietà (organised 1539-1584), Monte dei Poveri, later known as Monte e Banco dei Poveri (set up and recognised 1563-1609), Banco Ave Gratia Plena, also known as Banco dell'Annunziata (established in 1587), Banco di S. Maria del Popolo (1589), Banco dello Spirito Santo (1590), Banco di Sant'Eligio (1592), San Giacomo e Vittoria (1597) and Banco del SS. Salvatore (1640).<sup>6</sup> This kind of social and economic registry accounts for a myriad of registered names, thousands of accounting, patrimonial and estate documents, and millions of bills of exchange and certificates of credit. The tiniest disbursement, great movements of money, foreign exchange transactions,<sup>7</sup> as well as the accounts of individuals, institutions and the Royal Court, were all handled by these banks.

What provides documentary depth to these sources is the widespread use of *polizze* or *fedi*, which were certificates of credit widely circulated in Naples, almost as if they were paper money: a kind of *cheque ante litteram*. Whoever had money in the bank could give a certificate for an amount up to an account's covered limit; unlike modern cheques, however, these certificates not only showed the reason for payment but also included additional transaction details, such as endorsements, numbers of other bank accounts, references to notarial acts and other third-party documents, and explanations of reasons for payments: they include annotations regarding salaries, large contracts, daily expenses, slaves, naval armaments, objects of daily use, dowries, and more. Just as do great historical events, matters of everyday life leave their traces in banks: in the background we see a simply amazing fiduciary fabric regulated by laws and customs which guarantee the circulation of the *fedi* or certificates of credit. These *fedi* express collective interests, the background of clients, and often the contiguity and the distribution of social bodies.<sup>8</sup> It is truly an accounting of descriptive force! As an example, the Banco di San Giacomo was located

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<sup>6</sup> The Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli was established by decree of Ferdinand I of Bourbon in 1819. The Banco dell'Annunziata failed in 1702. Ferdinand IV merged the remaining seven banks in 1794, forming the Banco Nazionale di Napoli, which gave rise to the Banco delle Due Sicilie in the French period (1806-1816). The documents of the original banks have been inventoried at about 194,000 units (in addition to 236 parchments); however, the inventory is continuously being verified and expanded. A small number of other bank volumes are kept at the Archivio di Stato di Napoli (ASN).

<sup>7</sup> Naples was an interesting money market centre; see L. De Rosa, *Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo tra crescita e decadenza*, Milan: Mondadori, 1987.

<sup>8</sup> P. Avallone and G. Lombardi, "The Historical Archive of the Banco di Napoli: A Primary Resource for Social and Economic History from a Mediterranean View", *Banking and Finance in the Mediterranean: A Historical Perspective*, Annual Conference of the European Association for Banking and Financial History e.V., Malta (1-2 June 2007), forthcoming.

contiguously with buildings representing the powers that be – in the port, at its *fondachi* (plural of *fondaco*: a building reserved for foreign merchants, with lodgings, warehousing and places for negotiations) and on Rua Catalana (then populated by Genoese, Florentines and Greeks) – and the bank's account holders included the Royal Military Fund, merchants, financiers, businessmen, *asientistas* (merchants sharing a granted monopoly), consuls, sea captains, ship fitters, ship-owners, insurers, companies and artisans. These clients included Flemings, Germans known as *Renani* (“Rhiners”), “people of the Empire”, English and Spanish, Portuguese of Jewish ancestry, people from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and, naturally, Neapolitans. Within the multi-faceted Venetian profile, the complicated mimesis of the Levantine or Greek presence emerges: we find Venetians from Greece who hailed from Candia (Heraklion), Zante (Zakynthos), Cephalonia and Corfu.<sup>9</sup> Analogously, the Banco di Sant’Eligio reflected the food provisioning and real estate markets well, offering an impressive mapping of shops and houses through the registration of rental agreements.<sup>10</sup> An immediate consequence of the opening of a General Treasury account at the Banco dello Spirito Santo was the attraction of new account holders from among the contractors to the Court. The details are there to see, but for an overview we need to look from afar.

Notaries possessed unparalleled information about their clients – even that which was of utmost secrecy – and they were among those playing a leading role in the credit market. For these reasons – and in order to secure new clientele – archives of deceased notaries were the object of purchase and sale. Neapolitan notaries in the 1600s followed the traditional usages of Byzantine origin, with apprenticeships at notary offices and time-honoured customs – unlike other Italian centres such as Genoa, Milan and Pisa, which

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<sup>9</sup> It is by no means an easy task to define such presences. Moreover, some minorities of the Eastern Mediterranean enjoyed Neapolitan citizenship. For a wider reflection, see D. Livanios, “The Quest for Hellenism: Religion, Nationalism and Collective Identities in Greece (1453-1913)”, *The Historical Review / La Revue Historique* III (2006), pp. 33-70.

<sup>10</sup> Concerning information on real estate in bank records, only one study of this element exists: E. De Simone, “Case e botteghe a Napoli nei secoli XVII e XVIII”, *Rivista internazionale di storia della banca* XII (1976), pp. 77-140; data are also presented in G. Lombardi, *Tra le pagine di San Biagio. L'economia della stampa a Napoli in Età Moderna*, Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2000. Furthermore, we highlight the propensity – in particular among foreign entrepreneurs – to lease property in the city while eventually purchasing property outside, especially when there was an opportunity for productive investment; cf. ASN, Notai del '600, Giuseppe Cerbino, *fascio* 531/19, 15 March 1680, and ff. 196 seqq. (regarding the Englishman Hatton, the milling sector and the right to engage in bread-making in a villa near Naples).

had boards of notaries, as well as schools. Perhaps because of this, empirical research prompts us to study the lives of individual notaries, including such details as their *banca* (the office where they practised), the channels habitually used in their work, and their transmissions of records with other notaries.<sup>11</sup>

Ultimately, and with immediate evidence to be found among parish documents, the registries of the Roman Catholic Church reveal social microfibres, origins, family distributions and family alliance strategies.<sup>12</sup>

From these three poles, an incisive domino effect is generated, providing access to information about information, which gets pertinently sorted out in the most disparate sources and archives: paths of research able to shine light on mercantile firms and other entrepreneurial ventures. The approach suggested in this paper is a particularly advantageous way to carry out research on the period extending from the second half of the 1600s to the first decades of the 1700s. Justification for this is found in the intrinsic characteristics of the sources and of their accessibility. This “work space” is exploited in function of other considerations, however. Historiography has prevalently paid attention to the first part of the century and to the Spanish viceroyalty; furthermore, after the terrible pestilence of 1656, a deep reshuffling of Neapolitan society took place, with phenomena still to be investigated, such as immigration, the plurality of the productive and commercial hierarchies, the re-registration of merchant and craft guilds, the reinterpretation of citizenship, the repositioning of this maritime crossroads inside more general international dynamics, etc.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> G. Borrelli, *Notai napoletani tra Seicento e Settecento*, Naples: Arte Tipografica, [1995]. The transmission of notarial records followed protocols which permit researchers to trace client activities. To give an idea of the documentary mass of the notarial patrimony – and its importance – it is sufficient to note that, according to a rough subdivision, the ASN conserves 6000 volumes for the 1500s, 30,000 for the 1600s, and 1500 for the 1700s (notarial records dating up until 1750 are on deposit at the ASN). I am grateful to Dr M. R. de Divitiis, director of the ASN, for this information.

<sup>12</sup> The Roman Catholic Church focused attention on the Kingdom of Naples – formally a papal fief – as an important place to test Catholic reforms, which had consequences for administrative structures, immigration, merchant laws and family networks. With regard to archives, besides the fundamental Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli (ASDN) and the Vatican Archives, we also call attention to scattered sources and material evidence – often forgotten but whose existence we have verified – among parishes, congregations, chapels, hospitals and individuals.

<sup>13</sup> Concerning merchant and craft corporations, see G. Lombardi, “Societas, mestieri e assistenza a Napoli in Età Moderna”, in E. De Simone and V. Ferrandino (eds), *Assistenza, previdenza e mutualità nel Mezzogiorno moderno e contemporaneo*, Pubblicazioni DASES, Milan: Franco Angeli, 2006, Vol. I, pp. 111-128.

The pestilence was in fact a dramatic caesura in the history of the capital. The first signs of an imminent epidemic appeared at the beginning of 1656. Government leaders, the viceroy *in primis*, downplayed the danger. Political worries and considerations led to temporising and to concealing that which was to soon become evident. Bank documents from those months show that merchants were intent on business as usual, starting up enterprises and ventures in preparation for the spring, when fairs and the climate were to have revived maritime and land transport. Bills of exchange were discharged; accounts were settled with the Dogana Grande (the Great Customs House), with the *fondachi*, and with the ancient dockyard alongside the market (which had just been renovated after the uprising of 1647-1648). Rents were paid and daily life went on as usual. Yet, for some months, problems with food provisioning had already been evident, the cost of foodstuffs had increased, and some people had begun to suffer from hunger. Only afterwards were those signals understood as a prelude to the epidemic.

Having shown its first signs in January, the plague was virulent by May. Just when new harvests were expected, the city was struck. Aside from the provisioning of the most elementary foodstuffs, and the activities of a small number of merchants in possession of a “bill of health”, business came to a halt. Coastal patrols and *cordons sanitaires* were employed to stop fugitives and smugglers.<sup>14</sup> In order to circumscribe the danger of contagion, several countries blocked trade relations and commercial traffic with the Kingdom. Ships from Livorno, Genoa and Venice, routinely present in the port of Naples and other ports in the region, stopped coming. Overland trade with Rome also ceased, as well as maritime commerce with Sicily and the Levant. Many people were involved in collecting cadavers and in sanitary operations – from men of the local population to convicts and slaves – while sailors recuperated the bodies of those swept from the sewers into the sea, or thrown into the sea by those who had speculated on fugitive smuggling. On 30 May, the Deputation of Health ordered the 29 *ottine* [districts] of the city to each elect a representative to inspect jointly neighbourhood dwellings and streets with their *ottina* captain in order to find the sick and provide cleaning and burial services. One of those responsible for this prophylaxis was the royal printer Egidio Longo, already in the front line during the uprising of Masaniello,

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<sup>14</sup> Payment in favour of the captain of the *ottina* of Porto, Giuseppe Valiero, for the provision of *feluche* [cocked hats] to sanitary guards; cf BSalv, g. 1656, m. 62, d. 36, 21 June.

captain of the *ottina* of San Biagio – the printing and silk district – and the only one able to print posters, announcements and other information.<sup>15</sup>

Shops were deserted, in a city that had become a lazaretto. A small sampling from the parish of San Gennaro all’Olmo (located within the *ottina* of San Biagio) shows that widows and widowers were among those married in 11 of the 14 marriages celebrated in that parish from the end of October to the last days of December of 1656; from this part of the population, more than 400 of those who had died were printers, booksellers, illustrators and engravers, as well as their relatives – people connected with printing and the world of books.<sup>16</sup>

The crisis blotted out the signs of economic recovery that had followed the uprising of Masaniello, the Peace of Westphalia, and treaties such as that published in Italy on 1 July 1651 regarding navigation and commerce (which had apparently revived Hispano-Dutch cooperation).<sup>17</sup> The worst finally passed and normal day-to-day activities of city life resumed. The “Italian

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<sup>15</sup> “To the Health Deputies, 60 ducats...to Egidio Longo, *ottina* captain, for public service on behalf of the entire city, as payment for the hire of horses to pull carts and coaches of cadavers and for the accumulated debts of the *ottina*, and for coachmen and gravediggers...and for whatever more might occur or might be necessary for the public health” (BSalv, g. 1656, m. 62, d. 60, 26 June). “To the Health Deputies, 75 ducats to be paid to Egidio Longo for the printing of, and the paper for, 1500 notices of instructions for inspections, cleaning and quarantine; that is, 1250 printed in booklet form and 250 on two large sheets of ‘reali’ paper, which were posted on the streets of this city” (BSalv, g. 1656, m. 63, d. 75, 30 October).

<sup>16</sup> C. F. Riaco, *Il Giudicio di Napoli. Discorso del passato contagio, rassomigliato al Giudicio Universale. In cui si specificano le qualità, e numeri de’ morti, con tutti gl’ accidenti intervenuti. Opera del molto reverendo Padre D. Carlo Francesco Riaco, S.T. e U.I.D. Abbate, rettore curato di S. Sapienza di Polina, In Perugia, per Pietro di Tomasio, 1658*. To be more exact, the author wrote: “The printers were crushed by the press of the plague, and while the contagion was oppressing them, a book was published listing the dead, among them engravers, illustrators, the sons of booksellers, and daughters, agnates, and first cousins, and workers, surpassing one thousand four hundred” (p. 239); but an errata note (unnumbered page) mentions elsewhere that this figure should have read “four hundred”.

<sup>17</sup> “De nautis, portibus prohibitos et commercio inter Holandiam et status regis, Pragmatica VI”, *Pragmaticae, edicta, decreta, regiaque sanctiones regni neapolitani, pluribus additis, cuiusque locis optima methodo, et labore collatis per U.I.D. Blasium Altimarum advocatum neapolitanum, deputatum per Regium Collaterale Consilium, cum superintendentia Ill. D. Caroli Calà, Ducis Diani, Collateralis Consilarii, Regiam Cancellariam Regentis, & C. Tomum Primus, Neap. MDCLXXXII, Officina Typographica Iacobi Raillard eiusdem sumptibus, cum privilegio, ff. 719-720* (copy in the Archivo General de Simancas, Secreterias provinciales, libro 22).

bridge” in the Mediterranean once again found Naples: the epidemic had more than halved the population,<sup>18</sup> and the capital was busy reorganising its people, rebuilding its economy and rearranging its manufacturing and commercial sectors. With the generations that had vanished, technical knowledge and experience had also disappeared, along with human energies and customary work practices – legitimated over many years – which had become part of the collective heritage.

New immigrants found a world decomposed, without its original architecture. Dozens of silk experts and silk merchants came to the maritime crossroads that was Naples. Genoese, Venetians and Florentines, who had led the city’s silk manufacturing capacity to almost 5000 looms in the 1500s,<sup>19</sup> ceded space to Germano-Flemish dynamism and the commercial leadership of the English. A glance through the register of the Arte della Seta (silk guild) is sufficient to form an idea. To the Florentines, Genoese, Messinese and Sardinians were added “people of the Empire”: Flemings such as Filippo di Mes, Giovanni and Andrea van Woosel, the Grutters and Pietro Voyret; Lyonnaise such as Francesco Gerin; Venetians such as Guglielmo Samuelli, followed by his nephew, the public prosecutor Vincenzo Samuelli (consul of the silk guild from 1683 to 1684); the Spanish merchant of Pamplona Antonio de La Carrera; second generation immigrants such as the Neapolitan citizen Francesco van Haelst, son of a foreign consul; political personalities such as the lawyer-merchant Pietro Emilio Guaschi; and Florentines such as Alessandro Federighi (consul of the silk guild from 1679 to 1680) and Vincenzo del Beccuto (consul from 1688 to 1689).<sup>20</sup> Many, however, worked without membership in merchant or craft guilds and without legal title to their shops, managing

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<sup>18</sup> Considered to be in the range of 300,000 to 350,000; although diverse estimates are not lacking, the magnitude is clear. See I. Fusco, *Peste, demografia e fiscalità nel Regno di Napoli del XVII secolo*, Milan: Franco Angeli, 2007.

<sup>19</sup> F. Battistini, “La tessitura serica italiana durante l’Età Moderna. Dimensioni specializzazione produttiva, mercati”, in L. Molà, R. C. Mueller and C. Zanier (eds), *La seta in Italia dal Medioevo al Seicento*, Venice: Marsilio, 2000, pp. 335-351, in particular p. 339.

<sup>20</sup> ASN, Arte della Seta, Libro delle matricole IX (microfilm), 1660-1705, in particular ff. 1v, 8, 20, 41v, 58, 60, 65v, 66, 72v, 85v, 115v, 116v, 118v, 123, 153 and 188. Regarding Vincenzo Samuelli, cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, 36, Libro delle matricole 1662-63. Regarding Alessandro Federighi, cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, 36, Libro delle matricole 1662-63. Regarding Federighi and del Beccuto, cf. Archivio Storico del Banco della Pietà (BP), *pandetta* II, 1696, m. 203, f. 312, Deposito del patrimonio d’Alessandro Federighi e Beccuto. On Vincenzo del Beccuto, cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, 36, Libro delle matricole 1662-63. Giovanni and Andrea van Woosel were registered among the silk merchants of the silk guild on 29 November 1674; cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, Libro delle matricole XI, f. 198.

business activities and monopolies and financing raw materials and looms, as well as the work of master craftsmen and labourers, of wholesale dealers and retail merchants, and of *fondachi* directors. This was not a completely new phenomenon but was a *modus operandi* that rapidly gained force and led to changes in the merchant and craft guilds, in institutions, and in matters of taxation and citizenship. Many came on the scene in this way, and often through the use of proxies: there were ship captains; well-off Venetians such as Alessio Foscari; Londoners such as Melchisedech Benedetti, who by the end of the century had looms for producing stockings; Spanish such as the Galician Benito Enriquez Flores of Pontevedra; Burgundians such as the glove-fabric merchant Francesco Miritati; and Flemings such as Claudio Faure and Marco Simone Pietro Baes, proxies for the Duke of Medina de las Torres. Often temerarious, many were reminiscent of the “merchant adventurer class” of whom Pirenne spoke in regard to the capitalistic spirit and the formation of the bourgeoisie.<sup>21</sup>

The experience of the House of Raillard is emblematic. Giacomo Raillard arrives in Naples c. 1664, coming from Augsburg (Germany). His wife, Maria Schortemel, was Belgian: with her, he had a son named after himself. In 1664, he traded in books between Lyon and Naples.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, as wrote a privileged witness: “Almost all the booksellers had gone to settle their accounts in the book of life, and were often well-accompanied by neighbours and that this was truly the situation became clear immediately after the contagion, when neither books nor bookshops [and] neither booksellers nor neighbours were to be found.”<sup>23</sup> Raillard acted as business agent for an uncle of his who lived in Basel, for whom he traded in garnets and crystals. He also traded in woven fabrics, amber, silver and gold, silk stockings and shirts, as well as hardware items and fox furs; he paid duties, he paid dyers, he carried out maritime importing.<sup>24</sup> He knew the marketplace and the few trading houses that

<sup>21</sup> H. Pirenne, *Storia d'Europa dalle invasioni al XVI secolo*, Florence: Sansoni, 1967.

<sup>22</sup> “[Paid] to Antonio Bonito, 50 ducats for Giacomo Raillard. He declares this to be the completion [payment] of 154 ducats and 3.11 tari [5 tari = 1 ducat]...for the total price of many groups of books of various authors, bound in green roan [sheepskin leather and] provided to [the] library of the Congregation of the Oratory of Naples, [all of which] don Giacomo of Lyon arranged to be provided. Said price includes the cost of the books as well as charges for insurance, packaging and binding. And this payment is made by the librarian of said library, and with money belonging to the aforementioned Congregation and destined for this purpose.” (BP, g. 1665, m. 564, d. 50, 14 November).

<sup>23</sup> Riaco, *Il Giudicio*, pp. 278-279.

<sup>24</sup> For Giacomo Raillard of Basel, cf. BsG, g. 1675, m. 390, d. 370, 12 September. For

survived the epidemic – such as the House of Beruliet, from which originated Beruliet & Imbrecht –<sup>25</sup> as well as new enterprises. At customs houses and at the *fondachi*, he came to know contractors to the Court, entering into the relational substratum which animated trade exchanges.

The shores of the Rhone were familiar to Raillard. Lyon was a cornerstone for book printing as well as silk production – and in Naples there was a hunger for silk. Influenced by both fashion and the economy, in an aesthetic climate between late Baroque and avant-garde Rococo, vertical segmentation of silk products grew, ranging from luxury items such as taffetas to more common fabrics: trimmings and frills such as *zagarella* edging, silk thread, and widely used light fabrics such as *passementerie* trimming. Naples imported, but also exported: to France, England and Poland, and even to Spain and Portugal; to Cadiz, Valencia, Seville and Lisbon. Silk pervaded the city, reflecting the social reshuffling underway and taking on new symbolic significances. A Neapolitan citizen belonging to the Nation of Genoa (the national lodge in Naples) highlighted:

In former times, gold brocade or velvet palls at funerals were the exclusive prerogative of kings and princes of royal blood. For vassal Barons there were velvet bordered palls of *ormesino* [a light silk fabric] or an inferior fabric, but only in times of war. Today, this is not only the prerogative of Lords, but also of simple gentlemen, and not only of simple gentlemen, but also [of] merchants.<sup>26</sup>

In this climate, Raillard was in partnership with Gillio de Gastines, the principal agent in Naples of Antonio Magliabechi, the noted librarian of the

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book importations from Lyon, cf. BP, g. 1665, m. 564, d. 50, 14 November. For other transactions, cf. BsG, Libro maggiore II, 1670, m. 78, ff. 974, 1619.

<sup>25</sup> Antonio Beruliet (foreign consul of the silk guild from 30 April 1653) and Samuel Beruliet assumed the monopoly of the lumber trade from the late 1620s to the late 1630s, with strong interests in Puglia, and were linked above all to the food provisioning market. Cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, Consolato II, nn. 27 & 31. On the consulship of Antonio Beruliet, cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, Consolato II, no. 27. On Samuel and Antonio Beruliet and the lumber trade, cf. ASN, Regia Camera della Sommaria: Council, v. 37 (34), 39 (23); Council of 31 May 1627 to 23 March 1639. Powers of attorney of the Berulietts are in ASN, Notai del '600, Nr Giovanni Batta Ricciardo, *fascio* 351/1 1643; for additional notarial records of the Berulietts, cf. Archivio di Stato di Caserta, Notai, Nr Domenico Antonio Notarnicola, year 1667, *corda* 5197, *scheda* 434, *ad vocem*. For exchanges between Raillard and Beruliet, cf. BsG, g. 1675, m. 390, d. 10.-15, 26 October.

<sup>26</sup> G. B. Spinelli, *Arte del comporre lettere italiane...*, Naples: per Luc'Antonio di Fusco [printed or outsourced by said Fusco], 1678, p. 169.



Grand Duke of Tuscany:<sup>27</sup> the brothers Gillio and Carlo de Gastines, from the Jewish community in Livorno, shuttled between the ports of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Raillard also collaborated with Sebastiano van Dalen, a businessman born in Hamburg – whose roots extended into the thriving merchant world of the Elba estuary and who had close ties in the Flemish community of Naples. Van Dalen helped him to strengthen relations with Genoa.<sup>28</sup> The activities of Raillard and his associates revolved around the trading hub of Livorno; they crossed the Mediterranean and opened breaches for Atlantic and Northern European trade.<sup>29</sup> Raillard's work and his cultural background linked him to the Neapolitan group of Rhenish and Flemish merchants and financiers. He collaborated with the Grutter brothers, born in Cologne of a German father and a Flemish mother, and who had emigrated to Naples, where Francesco Grutter had become consul of the Flemish merchants of the silk guild during the 1670s. The Grutters had projected their first business activities with Cologne, Amsterdam and Antwerp and had later appointed business agents in Cadiz, Lisbon, Venice and Livorno.<sup>30</sup> The brothers

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<sup>27</sup> Magliabechi and Raillard had a long-standing business relationship and correspondence; for an overview, see Lombardi, *L'economia della stampa*.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. BsG, g. 1665, m. 304, d. 172.4.10, 24 October, and general ledgers referring to Raillard, ff. 1015 and 1757. The House of van Dalen exported silk stockings and other items in exchange for precious metals and stones, jewellery, fabrics, linens and other goods mainly from North Sea markets. The brothers Sebastiano and Guglielmo van Dalen were registered at the silk guild in 1667 and became suppliers to the Court. Guglielmo died in August 1677, and his business affairs were assumed by his brother Cornelio and his nephew Agostino, an apprentice; the van Dalens were business partners with Arnold Varmont (a silk merchant in Naples) and Hugsman from Brussels; see also G. Borrelli, *La borghesia napoletana della seconda metà del Seicento e la sua influenza sull'evoluzione del gusto da Barocco a Rococò* (Part VI/2), Milan 1991, *passim*; and ASN, Notai del '600, Nr Carlo Celso di San Giorgio, fascio 358/33, f. 286, 26 October 1679, there indicated. Within these circles, we observe a phenomenon deserving further research: various individuals of German ancestry declare themselves to be Flemish and there is a jurisdictional forum for people who were naturalised or who had foreign consorts. One member of these groups was Marino Gheldof, who was active in the Venetian marketplace, trading in precious metals and stones, jewellery and objects of art.

<sup>29</sup> On Raillard and Invitti, with reference to merchants active in Livorno, see BsG, g. 1670, m. 346, d. 926.2.15, 8 August; as well as BsG, g. 1670, m. 346, d. 724, 8 August. At the same bank and in the same six-month period we also see various other accounts: Francesco Bourel, Simon Giogalli of Venice and Flaminio Buonvicino (f. 992); Paolo Soldanelli, Geher & Lauber, Gio Cristoforo Hochicher and Sebastiano Vandale (f. 1127); Guglielmo Samuelli (f. 1079); Gio van den Eynden (f. 1177); and Carlo Invitti (f. 1113).

<sup>30</sup> On Giovanni Michele and Francesco Grutter, see ASN, Arte della Seta, Libro delle

Francesco and Giovanni Michele Grutter did business with the English, as well as with fellow countrymen such as Ruggero van Viorb and Cornelio van Limmen, and with the Armenian Stefano Arachel, an importer of fabrics, precious metals and stones, and jewellery. They were relatives of the Strasser family, in particular of Lotario, resident in Cologne, from whence they had immigrated, and Pietro, resident in Naples and active in the Neapolitan marketplace.<sup>31</sup> However, Raillard's business contacts in Cologne also passed through Simone and Francesco Bourel.

In 1671, Raillard established himself in the booksellers' district of San Biagio in the very heart of Naples, surrounded by the great Banco della Pietà, the records office of the silk guild and various *fondachi*, as well as the shops of dyers, weavers, paper manufacturers, printers and engravers. He was located near the Jewish ghetto, where taffeta as well as English and Flemish fabrics were sold. All this forms part of an interesting fiduciary and credit network.<sup>32</sup> He took on local labourers, summons masters and workers from Provence and hired Germans such as David Reisen ("Teuton").

In the spring of 1672, a master weaver and loom constructor from Roanne, Roberto di Noyon – a "Frenchman, [and] master of manufacturing English-style stockings" – came to work for the House of Raillard. He was

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matricole XI, f. 1v, 6 October 1660, and f. 188, 21 April 1672, respectively. Michele worked at the fairs in Novi with Giacomo Raillard and imported books and typographic materials from Venice for him; see ASN, Notai del '600, Nr F. Sansone, 569/25, f. 6, 9 February 1694. Giovanni Michele Grutter, a money changer and financier who traded principally in textiles, was active in the Venetian book market and managed a book-related business for Raillard and for Giambattista Decimo of Rome, an established publisher and bookseller in Naples. On family alliance strategies, see also ASN, Notai del '600, Nr Carlo Celso de Giorgio, 358/32, f. 312, 5 November 1678. For useful, although sometimes imprecise information, see Borrelli, *La borghesia* (Part IV), 1989, pp. 7-27; (Part V), 1990, pp. 43-59.

<sup>31</sup> Giovanni Michele died in 1688; Francesco, the Duke of Santaseverina, in 1690. Heir of both and son of Francesco, Antonio Grutter transferred to Oppido Cascani, obtaining tax benefits from feuds and contracts. Grutter's new status accompanied him in his business dealings: he maintained his citizenship, trading house and residence in Naples, while gaining control of the grain trade from Oppido. In 1726, he left a vast inheritance.

<sup>32</sup> Raillard received a loan of 3000 ducati (cf. BP, g. 1671, m. 645, d. 3000, 14 November), referred to in a notarial act of Notary Carlo Celso of San Giorgio dei Fiorentini Road, and sent the money to Vincenzo Reij (BP, g. 1671, m. 642, d. 3000, 18 November), who had worked in the Kingdom for more than 20 years, financing business activities, trading in textiles and importing veils from Poland, and who was active in food provisioning and was linked to Joachim van Dalen, Cornelio van Viechenhort (or Vannicurt, Vannichirort, perhaps Flemish) and to other protagonists of trade with Flanders, the Hanseatic cities and the Adriatic, English and Levantine marketplaces.

accompanied by his sons, Ludovico and Michele, who arrived from Cannes with other family members as well as skilled workers. This is an example of mobility that became migration; among the archival details, we see how a family business started up.<sup>33</sup> The factory had 19 looms, some purchased in Rome, others constructed or rented. The objective was to produce long and short silk “English-style” stockings. During the first half of the century, stockings had been exported from Naples via Livorno, but now the flow was reversed. Raillard acquired the monopoly – *jus prohibendi* – on the production of stockings.<sup>34</sup> He imitated foreign-made stockings, modernized production and tried to oust some imported products from the marketplace, but the success of this strategy was anything but guaranteed. A weaver from London with French colleagues had tried in vain to carry out the same strategy in Livorno in 1665, risking grave bodily harm and running up against decisive and unscrupulous English protectionism.<sup>35</sup> The vicissitudes of Raillard and the new immigrants clearly demonstrate the situation in Naples: low barriers to market access, destructured merchant and craft guilds (including the powerful silk guild) and social mobility. The innovations introduced in Naples by Raillard were admired:

I'll say something else, worthy of note: silk stockings used to be made by women, [each] using two tiny *ferretti* [metal needles]. Was it then such recklessness on the part of that very perspicacious English [inventor] to assemble a machine with 3040 *ferretti* in the form of needles, so that one hand movement marvellously produces 500 pieces of knitted fabric of more or less fine [quality]? This contrivance puts together more pairs of English-style stockings in two days than could be previously made in twenty days. I confess that having seen this instrument in the house of Mr Giacomo Raillard, a German, I judged it to be a more admirable invention than the printing press or the clock; it's something that one can only believe if one sees it and observes it carefully. And that which most amazed me was that certain

<sup>33</sup> For a reflection on the family-company node, see P. Malanima, *Tipi d'impresa prima della Crescita Moderna*, Naples: ISSM-CNR, [www.issm.cnr.it/asp/cv/malanima/dati/impres2.pdf](http://www.issm.cnr.it/asp/cv/malanima/dati/impres2.pdf) (page visited 1 July 2008).

<sup>34</sup> The *jus* was sold by Marco Antonio Ariano. All but unknown to researchers, Ariano was involved in various business ventures, from retailing activities to supplying lead to the Royal Mint; see, for example, BsG, 1677, *pandetta* II, f. 1512; as well as BsG, g. 1677, m. 398, d. 28, 13 October. For accounts between Raillard, Marco Antonio Ariano, Roberto de Noyon and other businessmen, cf. BsG, g. 1675, m. 388, d. 54.2.10, 22 November; BP, g. 1679, m. 755, d. 35, 26 October; and BsG, g. 1675, m. 382, d. 300, 25 February.

<sup>35</sup> G. Pagano de Divitiis, *Il commercio inglese nel Mediterraneo dal Cinquecento al Settecento*, Naples: Guida Editori, 1984, pp. 160-161.

young women work there with great ease and ability. What more can be said?<sup>36</sup>

The French concentrated on the weaving and keeping the looms in good working order, while Raillard took care of the trading activities, anticipating capital needs, and the food and lodging for his partners and their families and workers. Frenchmen who produced English-style stockings in Naples under the management of a German: this is the Mediterranean! The initial figures are interesting: there were about 1500 ducats in costs for the silk and a little more than 1000 ducats in expenses related to retaining the services of Noyon (including food and lodging), without counting the operational costs of the looms.<sup>37</sup> The most precise reference is the Royal Chamber of the Sommaria, the financial and tax tribunal of the Kingdom, whose presence constituted an additional sign of the loss of effective control on the part of the merchant and craft guilds, as well as the existence of new institutional counterbalances. Almost all the collaborators of Raillard were newly immigrated. His was a typical merchant approach: diversifying interests, seeking compensation through bills of exchange as well as goods, conciliating operations during single business trips in order to lower costs, reducing risks and increasing profits, and detecting and evaluating the possibilities of new projects.

These were frenetic years: in the second quarter of 1675 alone, Raillard moved more than 20,000 ducats at the Banco di S. Giacomo.<sup>38</sup> He had an

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<sup>36</sup> C. Celano, *Avanzi delle poste del signor Carlo Celano. Parte seconda. All'Illustrissimo signore D. Fabrizio Caracciolo Duca di Girifalco, Marchese dello Stato di Soreto, utile sig. delle Baronie di S. Vito, Cenàdi, Motta Caracciola, e Prataria, del Consiglio di Stato di S. M. Cattolica nel Regno di Napoli, e prefetto dell'Annona della città, e del Regno, Napoli, appresso Antonio Bulifon, 1681*, p. 223. At roughly the same time, in 1671, stocking looms were brought to Lucca by the English mechanic Fluy; see R. Berveglieri and C. Poni, "L'innovazione nel settore serico. I brevetti industriali della repubblica di Venezia fra XVI e XVII secolo", in Molà, Mueller and Zanier (eds), *La seta in Italia*, pp. 477-508, in particular p. 496, with reference to the interesting contribution of R. Sabbatini, *L'innovazione prudente. Spunti per lo studio di un'economia d'Ancien Régime*, Florence: Le Lettere, 1996.

<sup>37</sup> ASN, Notai del '600, fascio 462/7, ff. 74-77.

<sup>38</sup> For Raillard's transactions with Giovanni Michele and Francesco Grutter, Piatti and Pietro Paolo Mariani of Venice, Francesco Bourel, Marchetti, Mariotto Talocci and Giovanni Ardeando in Livorno, Carlo Invitti, G. C. Cattaneo, Carlo Arici, Sebastiano Ball, Broching, Littleton Apton, Sebastiano van Dalen, the Spinolas, the brothers Johan, Antonio and Baldassarre Vannoselli (transcription of van Hosen) and others, see, for example, the entries indicated in BsG, Libro delle matricol, 1675, I semester, ff. 1199, 2311; as well as BsG, Libro delle matricol, 1675, II semester, f. 959. Marchetti died in 1677 and

intense financial transaction activity with Goffredo Spinola, the German merchant Giorgio Velz,<sup>39</sup> the Genoese Giovanni Carlo Cattaneo, Vincenzo Piritei<sup>40</sup> and Domenico Breven. For “coloured merchandise”, he worked with the influential Fasano as well as rich dyers and silk merchants. He maintained regular correspondence with the Venetian Carlo Arici, a native of Bergamo who is linked to currency exchange for Livorno and ports of call in the Adriatic.<sup>41</sup> He associated with the directors of the silk customs house, the management of which had been contracted out to van den Eynden & de Roomer.<sup>42</sup> The customs

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was succeeded by his son Giovanni Pietro; cf. ASN, Notai del '600, Nr Carlo Celso de Giorgio, 358/31, f. 555, 8 December 1677.

<sup>39</sup> Registered among the silk merchants on 27 September 1681; cf. ASN, Arte della Seta, Libro delle matricole XI, f. 222.

<sup>40</sup> Piritei carried out maritime trade, with interests in Livorno and on the Adriatic Sea. He worked with Raillard for at least 15 years. He was an art merchant; see, for example, “1027/1027 To Vincenzo Piritei = two hundred ducats and for this to Luca Giordano, paid as the price for two paintings, both [measuring] nine palms, that is, one of St Lorenzo, and [the other of] the martyrdom of St Pietro Vestorini, and [both] delivered; and for this to = Vincenzo Piritei = for those same 200 ducats” (BsG, g. 1665, m. 304, d. 200, 7 November, f. 108v).

<sup>41</sup> Arici speculated on foodstuffs and was a contractor to the Royal Court, textile merchant, financier and ship-owner, as well as a representative of English and Venetian trading houses and a trader of Spanish and Sicilian corals; cf. ASN, Patrimonio, diversi, 230/Ledger account of the paper of the Royal Court; 245/Acts of the tax authority and Carlo Arici 1677 [referred to the financial and tax tribunal of the Kingdom], Dipendenze, semester I, 383/IV; Archivio Storico del Banco del Popolo (Bpop), Libro maggiore, II semester 1677, f. 491; ASN, Regia Camera della Sommaria, Carte Reali, years 1611-1694 (with one document dated 1536), b. 40, Ristretto de Reali ordini from 1536 to 1694, Libri de regali ordini di sua Maestà, Carlo Arici ff. 282, 352, 362, 377, 389 and 421. The business partners Carlo Arici and Francesco Saminati acted as proxies for the brothers Francesco and Giovanni Saminati of Livorno, as well as for the Florentine Guido Maria Arezzi; they also collaborated with the money changer Migliorotti, with whom they were partners, and to whom they were united by kinship ties. A partner of Carlo Arici, Santi Maria Cella, was a “resident” (that is, an appointed agent) of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and was related to an old and respected Spanish family. He had come to Naples before 1656 with the older Giambattista Cella. His sumptuous residence was flanked by that of his brother Gianpiero. After he died in 1680, Pietro Andrea Andreini succeeded him as appointed agent of the Grand Duke. Among the Florentines known to Andreini were Tommaso and Giuseppe Tirone, inhabitants of the Greek neighbourhood of Naples, who had gone from managing the trading houses of others to making their own investments in foodstuffs and military supplies.

<sup>42</sup> Ferdinando van den Eynden was a native of Antwerp, trader and financier, owner of various businesses, at the lead of an important charitable institution created by the masters

duties were often compensated for by the delivery of goods, above all undershirts and stockings. It was a traditional procedure, in consonance with the rising popularity of silk in the clothing sector, but is also a sign of contiguity between customs officials and merchants. In these interstices of concrete everyday life, in the comings and goings of workers, labourers and businessmen – in the tangle of relationships intercepted through the story of Raillard – confiscations, customs clearances, trade arbitrations, guarantees and transfers of assets were handled with attention given to citizenship and membership in “nations” (the national lodges in Naples). The sorting out of matters of citizenship and “nationality” was not only a question of theoretical and normative status, but was also manifested concretely in privileges, living conditions and commercial rights, and in symbolical and social universes<sup>43</sup> such as the professional sodalities. Citizenship and “nationality” were also factors of importance during political crises. As Neapolitan citizens, many of those registered were permitted to “carry out business by means of agents and proxies” and enjoyed enviable legal and tax conditions: protections that reinforced the penetration and consolidation of a broader market than that purely urban, as in the obvious case of the fair markets and foreign exchange activities.

The many French presences in Naples were scattered. The House of Raillard became one of the meeting places of Francophone circles, maintaining this connotation even during years that were complicated for French immigrants, such as those of the War of Messina (1674-1678).<sup>44</sup> In

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of velvet-making; his son Jan inherited the estate and the company in 1630 and continued business activities in collaboration with the great entrepreneur and ship-owner Gaspare de Roomer of Antwerp, naturalised in Naples. Experts in food provisioning, financing and in naval armaments, the de Roomers and the van den Eyndens were great art merchants.

<sup>43</sup> For a fundamental perspective, see P. Ventura, “Il linguaggio della cittadinanza a Napoli tra ritualità civica, amministrazione e pratica politica (secoli XV-XVII)”, in G. Petti Balbi and G. Vitolo (eds), *Linguaggi e pratiche del potere*, Salerno: Laveglia, 2007, pp. 347-375. For a more general view, I refer back to the recent discussion concerning the positions of Simona Cerutti and Peter Sahlins on the subject of citizenship and *diritto di albinaggio* (the right of a state to take possession of the inheritance of a foreigner who had died without a testament or legitimate heir). My thanks to P. Ventura and B. Salvemini for their suggestions.

<sup>44</sup> With the war, there were anti-French retaliations; see L. A. Ribot García, *Monarquía de España y la guerra de Mesina (1674-1678)*, Madrid: Actas, 2002. Concerning the ties of Giacomo Raillard with the Francophone world, we note, for example, that Raillard was a witness at the baptism of some of Bulifon’s children (Parish of San Gennarello all’Olmo, Battesimi. Dal 1656 al 1687, f. 109) and was also a witness at the wedding of Giambattista Brison of “Lyon of France” on 28 March 1683 (Parish of San Gennarello, Libro dei

1673, Raillard began a collaboration with Antonio Bulifon di Chaponay, a notary's son who came to Naples from the Dauphinate about 1670. The silk and book-trading circuits intersected. With Bulifon, Raillard opened one of the best printworks in the Kingdom and perhaps Italy and was able to compete with many printers located north of the Alps; Bulifon concentrated on publishing and social climbing, which he realised by frequenting the Court. In the meantime, Raillard's printing activities opened up relationships with political, administrative and cultural leaders in Naples. Unlike most Neapolitan printers, Raillard had a type-font foundry and may have introduced the use of Dutch typefaces. He earned an enduring reputation:

Giacomo Raillard was truly one of our greatest printers [and] his editions unquestionably earn us much glory. He used clear and sharp type fonts, optimal [qualities of] paper, and paid great attention to the correction of [the texts in his] books. Some of his works were printed in tiny characters, yet they were so clear and sharp that they cause no discomfort to readers, not even to those who are short-sighted. He also had high-quality Greek-type fonts and [produced] very beautiful tooled adornments for [his] books. His emblem was a Mermaid with the motto "Not always harmful".<sup>45</sup>

Bishop Giuseppe Sanz de Villargut chose Raillard as printer for his diocese of Pozzuoli. Raillard gained recognition for his successful printed works, which enjoyed a large circulation and were of good typographic quality.<sup>46</sup> He wed the Neapolitan Maria Agropoli.<sup>47</sup> He was related by marriage to Giovanni Battista Joppel, a well-off importer from the community of San Giorgio dei Genovesi, originally from Castello di Fossanova in Liguria.<sup>48</sup> In 1693, he was a deputy of the SS. Sacramento at the church of San Gennarello all'Olmo, counted among the "magnificent" masters of the editorial and printing arts of the Kingdom: in this one office he united religious participation, social recognition and

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matrimoni dal 1656, cit. f. 76); for archival details and contextualization, see Lombardi, *L'economia della stampa*.

<sup>45</sup> L. Giustiniani, *Saggio storico critico sulla tipografia del Regno di Napoli*, Naples: Vincenzo Orsini, 1793, pp. 178-179.

<sup>46</sup> A fine exemplar of *Pragmaticae, edicta, decreta* can be seen at the Archivo General de Simancas, Secretarias provinciales, libro 22. (See also note 17 above.)

<sup>47</sup> Libro dei matrimoni dal 1656, f. 80v. Bernardo Michele Angelo Antonio, son of Giacomo Raillard and Maria Agropoli, born on 25 December 1685 (Battesimi. Dal 1656 al 1687, f. 139).

<sup>48</sup> Joppel married Anna Maria Raillard, sister of Giacomo, in 1686; in attendance were Romans, Florentines and the Frenchman Giovanni di Muntme of Lyon.

professional achievement as a guild member.<sup>49</sup> He threw himself into a new enterprise in 1695, with the influential Piedmontese printer Luigi Michele Mutij and the importer and paper manufacturer Giovanni Vernuccio, a native of the Italian paper-manufacturing region of Marche on the Adriatic Sea. Raillard took over a paper mill belonging to Giuseppe Piccolomini d'Aragona, Prince of Valle; however, the operation represented a threat to those who enjoyed situation rents connected to importation from the Papal States, Genova and the Levant.<sup>50</sup> Raillard left on a business trip. The capital city was then torn to pieces by pro-French and pro-Austrian factions – and Raillard had relatives in both France and Germany. Raillard returned later.<sup>51</sup>

As a backdrop to those years, the experience of Raillard included a matrix of business ventures with England, guided by Neapolitan residents such as: George Davies, Consul of England from 1671 to 1702; Giovanni Bernardiston; Ball; the firm John Smith, John Footh & Co.; and Thomas Hatton and his partner W. Hyde.<sup>52</sup> Raillard's business networks included many people of

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<sup>49</sup> ASDN, Santa visita del cardinale Giacomo Cantelmo, Vol. III, ff. 585-593, in particular f. 590 (the visitor referred to a notarial act of the Neapolitan notary Andrea Passaro).

<sup>50</sup> The death of Vernuccio resulted in the closing of his company; cf. ASN, Notai del '600, fascio 1347/4, Nr Domenico Cavallo, ff. 66v-70v; ff. 208-214; acts dated 8 and 13 May and 11 September 1695.

<sup>51</sup> The traceability of merchants was controlled by the Sommaria, the financial and tax tribunal, to which the *ottina* captains communicated every departure: in the background there were procedures for the necessary authorisations (cases of protest have made identification possible, for example, regarding this departure of Giacomo Raillard); see *Istruzioni della numeratione del Regno di Napoli con le regole antiche di detta numeratione. E con li decreti, decisioni, e declarationi fatte per la Regia Camera della Sommaria nell'anno 1661 nel Tractatus de numeratione personarum per focos, seu familias, in universitatibus Regni, pro onerum personalium, realium, et mistorum solutione, ac de modo procedendi ad dispunctionem iurium regij fisci, & universitatum, cum instructionibus Regiae Camerae, antiquis, & recentioribus, ac adnotationibus, & decretis generalibus eiusdem supremi tribunalis, auctore Ioanne Bernardino Manerio. Neapoli, MDCXCVII, ex typographia Caroli Porpora, & Io: Dominici Pietroboni, expensis Caroli Porpora.*

<sup>52</sup> George Davies came into conflict with the government as a result of speculative activities and forbidden business connected with the War of Messina. In 1679, he was arrested for confessional reasons, yet he remained one of the principal businessmen in the Neapolitan marketplace. He died in Livorno in 1705; see Pagano de Divitiis, *Il commercio inglese; id., Mercanti inglesi nell'Italia del Seicento. Navi, traffici, egemonie*, Venice: Marsilio, 1990; *id., Verso i mari del Nord. Mediterraneo ed Europa settentrionale in Età Moderna*, Rome: Donzelli, 2005. In 1687, in order to return to London, the wealthy English Consul Hatton had wanted to cede his residence-and-trading-house, located at the Castle Square in the port, to his colleague Stevenson. Hatton remained in Naples, however, as the



reference who were protagonists in the Neapolitan marketplace: Giovanni Piatti, a Venetian of great prestige, resident in Naples and business associate of his brother Bartolomeo in Munich;<sup>53</sup> the Fleming Giovanni Cristoforo Velsche; the merchants Gaspare Schroe, Megalt and Large Bartol; in Rome, Giacomo Giaccherino and Giuseppe Veneglia; on the Adriatic horizon, the banker-merchants Migliorotti & Uberti, with ties to the area of Lecce (Puglia); in Palermo, Nicola Broccoli; in Genoa, Tomase Acton, Giovanni Georg Hienlein and Agostino Olivieri; in Livorno, Mariotto Talocci, as well as the banker-merchants Salviati & Strozzi, C. John Broching, Littleton and Upton,<sup>54</sup> and the financier Carlo Invitti.<sup>55</sup> Raillard collaborated with the

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representative of the ship captain Matthia. He also represented Wadham and Windham of London, and Guglielmo Langford in Lisbon. When he ceded his business interests, in part to the young Joseph Cousladil, he had slaves, cabriolets, an art gallery, and goods from across the Atlantic and from Alexandria, Egypt. The most important English company in 1709, Fleetwood & Peers, was located in the same neighbourhood and was managed by the future consul Fleetwood. On the Hattons – including Timoteo, the oldest, and Guglielmo – see also the following (the transcriptions of names vary and the degree of kinship between persons is not always clear): ASN, Notai del '600, Nr Giuseppe Cerbino, *fascio* 531/32, 1693, *ad vocem*, in particular ff. 43-133, and *fascio* 531/19, *ad vocem*. On Ball and other English merchants, see also H. Roseveare (ed. and author of the introduction), *Markets and Merchants of the Late Seventeenth Century: The Marescoe-David Letters, 1668-1680*, Oxford University Press 1991, *passim*.

<sup>53</sup> His blood relative Francesco Piatti was Consul-General of the Venetian Nation in Naples; cf. BsG, g. dated 1705, m. 560, *passim*.

<sup>54</sup> Regarding Anthony Upton, a business relation of the Bathursts in Seville, and of Charles and Leonora Marescoe, see Roseveare, *Markets and Merchants*. Neoportus Littleton – dedicated to the Maltese routes – collaborated with John and Pietro Bridges, John Young, C. John Broching, William Hortis, William Seles, William Giffort in Palermo, and with Charles Balles, Consul in Messina. Littleton was a business partner of Tommaso Carneschi, a Florentine resident in Naples.

<sup>55</sup> The Invittis began their aristocratic ascent at the end of the 1600s. On Carlo Invitti, see, for example, ASN, Regia Camera della Sommaria, Carte Reali, years 1611-1694, b. 40, Ristretto de Reali ordini dal 1536 al 1694, Libri de regali ordini di sua Maestà, p. 554, copy of the Royal Paper dated 17 May 1694, which commands that the office of the inventory of food provisions of the city of Salerno be sold, and that the payment be applied to the account of Carlo Invitti for that which he was owed by the Royal Court, as indicated above on f. 418 (v. XII). As well, see the entry of 374.4.13 ducats of 5 September, transferred to Invitti in favour of Raillard (account numbers 1455/1015, respectively) in BsG, g. 1665, m. 304; “To Carlo Invitti one thousand six hundred and seventy ducats and for this to Giacomo Railardo [sic] paid with 1000 sequins...given in exchange for the fair at Novi next Easter at 167 percent in return for providing bills of exchange on demand 1670 ducats.” (BsG, g. 1675, m. 386, entry of 1670 ducats dated 12 February).

Venetian Pietro Marchetti, a Neapolitan citizen from Bergamo who had a spacious residence-and-trading-house. Marchetti's trade activities ranged from brocades to gold and silver leaf, and from raw silk to silk clothing and woollen fabrics; he exported to Flanders, Holland, Silesia, Bavaria, France and Switzerland; he imported precious metals and stones, jewellery, manufactured goods from England, and waxes; in Italy, he had business associates in Venice, Fabriano, Bergamo, Genoa, Livorno and Rome; he did business with Giovanni Carlo Cattaneo, the Ansaldis in Livorno, the firm Pollir & Viati of Nuremburg, Isaul Histis of Amsterdam, Francesco Uberti of Venice, and Giacomo Perasca of Cremona; and, as would be expected of a man in his position, he received income from real estate holdings and investment in public debt.

When Giacomo Raillard passed away, his pro-Austrian son Bernardo Michele Angelo Raillard obtained the newspaper monopoly, in 1713. The newspaper business was in crisis, and the company began to fail: costs were high and there were political risks as well. The prestige of the House of Raillard was weakened but not destroyed: important editions were in print, they had high-quality engraving plates and they had a qualified clientele. But then there was a confiscation. Among the creditors was Giacomo Raillard Jr, arriving on the scene from Augsburg; he had business ventures and holdings in Switzerland, France and in the Empire, and he did business in Venice and Chioggia, where he traded in swords, razors and various other goods. He demanded 1000 German thalers – 1500 Neapolitan ducats – as inheritance from his Belgian mother.<sup>56</sup> The Spanish government in the Kingdom had come to an end in 1707, Naples was the third largest European city after London and Paris, and once again had over 200,000 inhabitants. The dimension of a multi-ethnic presence emerged not as a sociological variant but as an innate element of the city. The lives of people produce paper, and this paper becomes the bread of historians.

*Translated by Stéphane Fournier*

ISSM-CNR

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<sup>56</sup> Paolo de Matteis – a famous painter who was a frequent guest of Raillard – was sent by the governing delegate of the Belgian Nation to appraise 22 paintings of the residence-printworks. Cases of type fonts were confiscated, along with presses, textile looms and newspapers. Madame Agropoli initiated the recovery of the company, began production of type fonts, and arrived at an agreement with the Sommaria, as well as her creditors, regarding conditions for rejoining her sons in Paris; ASN, Pandetta comune 2209/115, *passim*.



RESSOURCES “NATIONALES” ET RESSOURCES LOCALES.  
LES “GÉNOIS” SUR LES ROUTES TYRRHÉNIENNES  
ENTRE LE XVIII<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE ET DÉBUT DU XIX<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE\*

*Anastella Carrino*

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RÉSUMÉ: L'image historiographique classique présente l'économie du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle comme une grande machine produisant le développement mais en même temps la domination, l'émargination et l'exclusion. Au sommet, on trouverait des puissances indubitablement supérieures du point de vue de la capacité productive, commerciale, politique et militaire; à l'autre extrémité, des espaces secondaires résiduels praticables par des sujets dénués de toute ambition, relégués dans des circuits locaux, en se situant souvent sur la ligne de faille entre licite et illicite. Accueillant les suggestions offertes par des études récentes, l'essai tente de nuancer et de complexifier cette image d'un espace hiérarchiquement rigide aux logiques préétablies. Une part très consistante de l'expansion commerciale méditerranéenne au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle se soustrait à la domination des places marchandes et des mercantilismes impérieux, et a pour protagonistes des sujets, des lieux et des pratiques non-orthodoxes, souvent dépourvus de capitaux remarquables, de savoirs codifiés et de protections publiques solides. Les Génois ici décrits ont très peu à faire avec les grandes dynasties marchandes qui avaient placé leur ville au cœur des trafics de la fin du Moyen Âge et de la finance du début de l'époque moderne. Il s'agit de micro-marchands provenant de bourgades côtières liguriennes, qui émergent néanmoins du va-et-vient du petit cabotage pour s'imposer en tant que protagonistes d'une part significative du commerce en grand, en inventant des manières de pratiquer le négoce, des instruments inédits pour acquérir des informations et de la confiance. Leur inscription au sein de l'espace maritime est plurielle; leur présence dans les grandes places marchandes est rendue possible entre autres par leurs liens jamais distendus avec leurs petites patries; l'assomption d'un cadre de légitimité et légalité n'ayant rien à voir avec le formalisme juridique du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle produit quoi qu'il en soit des règles reconnaissables et en quelque sorte officialisées de l'*ars mercatoria*. Il en résulte une Méditerranée marchande où foisonnent acteurs, pratiques et lieux extraordinairement diversifiés. En passant sous silence cette réalité, on risquerait de méconnaître son fonctionnement à un moment crucial de sa transformation.

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*Dans l'enchevêtrement des “nations”*

La marine marchande des Génois ruine complètement la nôtre. Ils emploient au transport des blés, des huiles, des cendres, de soude, des laines à Marseille au-delà de 120 bâtiments, tous de grosse portée et qui peuvent se comparer à plus de 180 des nôtres. Mais leur avidité

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\* Je remercie Jean-Luc Defromont pour sa consulence linguistique.

n'en reste pas là: les circonstances des deux dernières guerres [on est en 1786] et la liberté illimitée qu'on leur accorde de porter en France tous les produits des autres Pays de la Méditerranée, les ont engagés à multiplier ces bâtiments [...] Ils ont des ressources immanquables pour leur procurer des nolis de préférence aux français [...] Si l'on n'apporte pas bientôt un remède convenable à ce mal qui augmente tous les jours, on ne verra plus naviguer dans quinze ans d'ici le Pavillon français dans ces mers.<sup>1</sup>

Les Génois [...] ont dans le commerce des ressources que nous n'avons pas...<sup>2</sup>

On voit avec bien de regret que les Génois se sont rendus maîtres absolus du commerce des huiles dans la Méditerranée; qu'eux seuls les fournissent aux savonneries de Marseille... Ils se présentent hardiment sur les plages ou les côtes dangereuses. Ils y affrontent tous les périls, s'en tirent assez heureusement parce que chacun étant intéressé au succès, concourt volontiers de son travail...<sup>3</sup>

Il s'agit là d'images qu'il convient sans nul doute de replacer et interpréter dans le cadre de l'univers conflictuel où se mesurent les mercantilismes tardifs du XVIIIe siècle. Elles ne sont cependant pas dénuées de fondement, car les langages et les outils mêmes de l'historiographie permettent de les confirmer en soulignant la nouvelle hégémonie de Gênes, qui prend des formes tout à fait inédites bien éloignées de celles qui avaient marqué son ancienne splendeur. Les contemporains le soulignent avec inquiétude, remarquant avec surprise d'une part la distance qui sépare le nouveau Gênes tant des modèles marchands canoniques que de son propre modèle précédent, et d'autre part son habileté à occuper quoi qu'il en soit des positions de prééminence dans la foisonnante Méditerranée du XVIIIe siècle, en plein et nouvel essor, une mer rien moins qu'homogène, difficile à schématiser en termes de dominés et dominants.<sup>4</sup>

Mais, au-delà des généralisations alarmées des contemporains, est-il possible dans ce contexte de parler de *Gênes* et des *Génois* – ainsi que le

<sup>1</sup> Archives de la Chambre de Commerce et Industrie de Marseille (ACCIM), H 124 bis, Huiles étrangères, "Réflexions sur le commerce des huiles à Marseille par les Génois", jointes à la lettre écrite par M. Perrin de Naples, le 29 juillet 1786.

<sup>2</sup> ACCIM, K 134, Correspondance consulaire. Naples, 13-3-1773.

<sup>3</sup> ACCIM, H 124 bis, Huiles étrangères, "Mémoire sur le commerce des huiles", s.d.

<sup>4</sup> Une base documentaire fondamentale pour cette analyse est offerte par les Déclarations de Santé que les capitaines des navires arrivant à Marseille remettaient à l'Intendant du Bureau de Santé maritime du port. Cette source, extraordinaire pour sa richesse et sa continuité temporelle (1709-1852), est conservée sous la cote 200 E, 474-604, auprès des

fait une littérature qui les regarde de loin (depuis Marseille, Paris, Naples, Livourne)– comme on peut parler des *Français* et des *Napolitains*, détenteurs de privilèges et particularismes fournis par leur “nation” d’appartenance?

C’est en réalité une question problématique, car la “nation” des Génois renvoie à une réalité faible –dotée d’une médiocre capacité à produire des ressources juridiques et identitaires–, à la capitale d’une république (dominée par le patriciat génois) et à une grande place marchande qui finit par entrer en concurrence avec son propre territoire. Mais ce handicap, loin de les arrêter, semble en quelque sorte leur offrir une plus grande liberté de mouvement: ils réussissent en effet aisément à s’immiscer dans les cadres nationaux en train de se définir et redéfinir au gré des politiques néo-mercantilistes, et qui se coupent, se superposent et se heurtent au sein de l’espace qu’ils fréquentent. Et ils parviennent à le faire aux différents niveaux des classifications que ces mêmes politiques produisent: 1. de l’appartenance des navires; 2. de l’appartenance des hommes; 3. de l’appartenance des marchandises. Chacune desquelles produit des règles, des inclusions et des exclusions.

1. C’est une opinion répandue dans la Méditerranée que “li Genovesi sono furbi, vogliono camminar con due bandiere, lo che è proibito dalle ordinanze del re, e da quelle di Francia, ed Inghilterra, ed ogni potenza, li soli Genovesi hanno questo costume, e lo mutano ad ogni lor piacere, e come li torna conto...”<sup>5</sup> En effet, en 1740 –à l’issue d’une série longue et compliquée de cas d’utilisation du pavillon de complaisance de la part des *Génois*–, la République promulgue une loi défendant “a qualunque cittadino o suddito della Serenissima Repubblica...l’inalberare o far inalberare sopra qualunque bastimento nazionale altra bandiera che non sia quella della Repubblica Serenissima”.<sup>6</sup> Cette loi ne fut jamais appliquée.

Mais les choses ne sont pas si simples. D’une part, on constate un va-et-vient complexe de responsabilités et d’intérêts de la part tant des soi-disant

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Archives Départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône de Marseille (ADBdR). Les allusions à ces déclarations ne seront pas citées en note.

<sup>5</sup> Archivio di Stato di Genova (ASG), Archivio Segreto, b. 2644, Consoli delle Due Sicilie, Napoli, 20-4-1736. Les exemples proposés par la correspondance consulaire sont continus. Voir Archives Nationales de Paris (AN), Affaires Étrangères (AE), B I 591-601, Correspondance consulaire. Gênes (1757-1792), *passim*; ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2621, Lettere di consoli. Francia, 12-5-1723 et 13-3-1726; ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2622, Lettere di consoli. Francia, 13-10-1759, 2-7-1760, 1-11-1760, 18-4-1761, 15-5-1762, 28-9-1764; ADBdR, C 4290, Relations et incidents diplomatiques. Agents diplomatiques, 1761.

<sup>6</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, f. 1721, Maritimarum.

Génois que des Français. Il arrive souvent –aussi souvent que s’en plaignent les consuls français en poste à Gênes– que les *Génois* embarquent un matelot français (complaisant) et utilisent sa présence pour faire naviguer leur bateau sous pavillon français dans les mers et les ports de France.<sup>7</sup> De même qu’il arrive que “dans les périodes de conflits, Gênes neutre [ne manque pas de rendre] service à Marseille, tout en tirant avantageusement profit de l’opportunité qui s’offrait: c’est sous son pavillon que l’on peut faire naviguer des navires marseillais”.<sup>8</sup>

D’autre part, les consuls génois, pour ne pas entraver des trafics qui les concernent aussi directement, ne s’opposent pas aux manèges de leurs compatriotes. Leurs plaintes insistent plutôt sur les droits dus au consulat, que les capitaines liguriens, arborant des pavillons de complaisance, tentent de contourner. C’est notamment en ce sens qu’ils sollicitent des mesures législatives<sup>9</sup> de la part de la République, qui –au lieu d’exiger le respect de la malheureuse loi de 1740– promulgue dans les années 1760 un nouvel arrêt, plus réaliste, contraignant les bâtiments génois à payer les droits à leurs consuls, “con qualunque bandiera vengano”.<sup>10</sup> Dans une oscillation souple et mobile entre licite et illicite, typique du monde du négoce d’Ancien Régime, les institutions génoises ne sanctionnent pas frontalement la fraude, fixant même le cadre au sein duquel elle peut éventuellement se produire et confiant en fin de compte aux consuls la tâche de seconder ce jeu.

2. Non contents d’utiliser des pavillons de complaisance pour leurs navires, les *Génois* se lancent hardiment dans le marché des nationalités d’Ancien Régime, jonglant avec des provenances différentes, plurielles, changeantes au gré des circonstances. On trouve certains d’entre eux, tels les Maglione, Pagliano, Benza (dont les noms sont parfois francisés en Mayon, Payan ou Bense), établis à Naples en tant que marchands se réclamant de la “nation” française auprès du consulat de France.<sup>11</sup> Dans celui-ci ou d’autres consulats et vice-consulats étrangers du Mezzogiorno, ainsi qu’à Marseille, on se plaint des *Génois* –dans les faits, les mêmes Maglione, Benza, etc.–

<sup>7</sup> AN, AE, B I 591-601, Correspondance consulaire. Gênes (1757-92), *passim*.

<sup>8</sup> Ch. Carrière, “Les relations commerciales entre Marseille et Gênes au XVIIIe siècle”, *Actes du 1er Congrès Historique Provence-Ligurie*, octobre 1964, Aix, Marseille et Bordighera 1966, p. 237.

<sup>9</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2622, Lettere di consoli. Francia, 1759-1778 (Benedetto Luxoro); 1768-1776 (Francesco Gazzino); 1766-1784 et 1785-1799 (Nicolò Pagano).

<sup>10</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2622, Lettere di consoli. Francia, 8-5-1762.

<sup>11</sup> AN, AE, BI 867-903, Correspondance consulaire. Naples, 1672-1792, *passim*.

qui se font souvent passer pour ce qu'ils ne sont pas en exhibant de faux passeports, lesquels semblent circuler assez librement. En 1760, on apprend que les *Génois* achètent de faux passeports napolitains pour se livrer à la contrebande du tabac;<sup>12</sup> huit ans plus tard, on découvre à Porto Maurizio, lieu d'origine de plusieurs d'entre eux, situé sur la Rivière ligurienne, une fabrique de contrefaçon de passeports.<sup>13</sup> Le consul français à Gênes déplore en 1770 la “facilité avec laquelle l'on accorde des passeports dans les bureaux de l'Amirauté de France à des marins [génois pour la plupart] qui les demandent sous des noms empruntés”.<sup>14</sup>

3. Avec la même fréquence et facilité, ils trichent, semble-t-il, sur les marchandises: sur leur quantité, qualité, provenance. Les consuls français, espagnols, napolitains, s'en plaignent souvent, les accusant de se livrer à la contrebande, de mêler la bonne huile avec la mauvaise,<sup>15</sup> d'utiliser des barils “fabbricati con malizia e arte”,<sup>16</sup> de charger du blé dans les Pouilles en le faisant passer pour du blé levantin en vue de contourner les interdictions du gouvernement napolitain concernant l'exportation céréalière,<sup>17</sup> ou au contraire de transporter de l'huile grecque en la faisant passer pour de l'huile de l'Italie du Sud, afin d'éviter de payer les droits frappant les huiles du Levant acheminées jusqu'à Marseille à bord de navires étrangers.<sup>18</sup> C'est pour faire face à cette dernière fraude, d'ailleurs fort fréquente sur les quais de la ville phocéenne, que la Chambre de Commerce finit par délibérer (en 1746, 1762 et encore en 1786) qu'on réputerait systématiquement du Levant les marchandises “lorsqu'elles seront amenées des pays étrangers dans le royaume si le contraire n'est justifié par des certificats en bonne forme des magistrats des lieux d'envoi et des consuls de la nation française, s'il y en a d'établis, et payeront en conséquence un droit de 20%”.<sup>19</sup> Mais les mesures de ce type ne s'avèrent

<sup>12</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, f. 2622, Lettere di consoli. Francia, 1-11-1760. Voir aussi ADBdR, C 4290, Relations et incidents diplomatiques. Agents diplomatiques, 1761.

<sup>13</sup> AN, AE, B I 893, Correspondance consulaire. Naples, 30-1-1768.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, B I 596, Correspondance consulaire. Gênes, 15-10-1770.

<sup>15</sup> ACCIM, “Mémoire”, 29-7-1786.

<sup>16</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2622, Lettere di consoli. Francia, 8-5-1762.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, b. 2645, Serie Consoli delle Due Sicilie, Napoli, 4-11-1766.

<sup>18</sup> ACCIM, “Réflexions”; et K 143, Consulat de Messine, 25-2-1780, 11-3-1786, 13-5-1786, 14-7-1787, 11-9-1790, 30-10-1790.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, I 51, Recueils divers, 1762; AN, AE, B III 185, “Inspection du commerce de Marseille, 1788-1798”, Vol. 61. Voir aussi: P. Boulanger, “De la tromperie sur la marchandise au XVIIIe siècle ou a commerce interlope des huiles du Levant à Marseille de 1784 à 1790”, *Provence historiques* 130 (1982), pp. 409-430.



jamais résolutive. Jean-Baptiste Lallement, vice-consul français à Messine de 1773 à 1792, semble obsédé par la question –ce qu’explique entre autres son point d’observation privilégié.<sup>20</sup> C’est en effet à Messine, stratégiquement placé entre le Levant et la France et sous le régime de port franc, qu’ont lieu nombre des transvasements entre les bateaux provenant des ports levantins et ceux appareillant pour Marseille, et que se consomment ces contrefaçons sur qualité, quantité, provenance et destination des marchandises, bête noire du vice-consul français. Dans ses lettres, on perçoit l’impuissance d’un homme souvent parfaitement conscient de la fraude perpétrée sous ses yeux. Bien qu’il ne dispose pas de preuves lui permettant de la démasquer, il en est cependant convaincu: “C’est sur Gênes qu’il faut veiller. C’est là que se machine la fraude, et l’on ne me persuadera pas facilement que cette ville consomme la quantité d’huile de Morée que je vois passer annuellement.”<sup>21</sup> Certes, les Français ne sont pas étrangers à ces manèges, à différents niveaux: c’est ce que soutient Lallement, qui dénonce par exemple les savonniers de Marseille, complices, à ses dires, des *Génois*.<sup>22</sup>

La carte de la nation –d’autrui– est également jouée par ces *Génois* pour pénétrer dans les principales places marchandes auxquelles aboutissent les routes tyrrhéniennes, notamment Naples et Marseille. Nombre d’entre eux s’installent dans le grand port provençal, où ils briguent dès que possible citoyenneté et naturalisation. Le 26 janvier 1742, on délivre par exemple un certificat de citadinage à Barthélemy Bensa (de Porto Maurizio) et Jean Luc Peragallo (de Camogli), “négociants génois demeurant à Marseille”,<sup>23</sup> attestant qu’ils habitent cette ville depuis au moins 12 ans et sans interruption, selon le témoignage de certains négociants marseillais.<sup>24</sup> En 1767, Barthélemy Bensa neveu demande sa naturalisation;<sup>25</sup> en 1776, on délivre le certificat de citadinage à Marie Hyacinthe Pagliano, veuve de Jean, née à Laigueglia;<sup>26</sup> en 1788, on ouvre le testament de Jacques Léonard Peragallo, “citoyen marseillais” et époux de Marie Madeleine Belleville, issue d’une famille de

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, K 143-144, Correspondance consulaire. Messine (1763-1792).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, K 144, Correspondance consulaire. Messine, 25-1-1786.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, K 143, Correspondance consulaire. Messine, 25-2-1780, 11-3-1786, 13-5-1786, 14-7-1787, 30-10-1790, 11-9-1790.

<sup>23</sup> ADBdR, Amirauté de Marseille, 9 B, Lettres du roi, 28-6-1740, f. 551v.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Tables des enregistrements des étrangers, B 127, Registre Corsica, 26-1-1742, f. 143 et v.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, B 130, Registre Bertin, 1-12-1767, f. 298.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, B 135, Registre Létitias, 9-8-1776, f. 274v-275v.

négociants marseillais;<sup>27</sup> en 1779, Jean-Baptiste Alassio, natif de Cervo et demeurant à Marseille depuis 1760, obtient le droit de citadinage;<sup>28</sup> en 1786, Jean-Baptiste Berardi, né à Oneglia et arrivé à Marseille en 1774, devient à son tour citoyen marseillais;<sup>29</sup> en 1817, Étienne Musso (de Laigueglia), “résidant à Marseille”, dicte ses dernières volontés devant un notaire marseillais.<sup>30</sup> En 1821, le “citoyen marseillais” Barthélemy Peragallo<sup>31</sup> décède à Paris; en 1823, on rédige l’inventaire *post-mortem* de Mathieu Pagliano, “négociant résidant à Marseille”, où il est mort.<sup>32</sup> Plus en général, à partir du milieu du XVIIIe siècle, les “Tables décennales des Actes de l’État civil”<sup>33</sup> mentionnent plusieurs naissances, mariages et décès concernant les familles Benza, Chiappa, Gazzino, Maglione, Pagliano et autres *Génois*. En même temps, les *Guides marseillais* mentionnent nombre de marchands et négociants liguriens établis à Marseille.

D’autres *Génois* parviennent à devenir citoyens napolitains, ce qui représente une condition fort convoitée et difficile à obtenir, entraînant des privilèges fiscaux et de for. C’est entre autres le cas d’Étienne Musso (de Laigueglia) à la fin du XVIIIe siècle;<sup>34</sup> de Gio. Andrea et Bartolomeo Pagliano, de Francesco Maglione et Ambrogio Cordiglia (tous originaires de Laigueglia) au début du XIXe siècle.<sup>35</sup> Un autre moyen, singulier, de pénétrer dans la capitale méridionale consiste à le faire en tant qu’“étrangers” rattachés au Consulat de France à Naples. À la fin du XVIIIe siècle, on y rencontre trois natifs de Laigueglia: le négociant et futur consul Domenico Cordiglia (qu’on retrouvera); le négociant Louis Chiappa, immatriculé auprès de ce même consulat;<sup>36</sup> enfin le négociant Benoît Maglione, compatriote de Cordiglia et de Chiappa, qui y déclare la naissance de sa fille, née du mariage avec

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Contrôle des actes, 2 C 1588, Successions, notaire Renvoy, 23-1-1877.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Tables des enregistrements des étrangers, B 136, Registre Necker, f. 226 ; et 373 E, notaire Besson, f. 137.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, B 140, Registre Parlamentum, f. 60.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 381 E 321, notaire Barthélemy, 29-7-1817.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 358 E 311, notaire Audibert, 5-6-1821; et 12 Q 9 299, Actes Civils Publics, 1821.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Q 92 103, Actes Civils Publics; série XII a9 18/1; et 370 E 136, notaire Beachier, 20-5-1823.

<sup>33</sup> Conservées auprès des ADBdR.

<sup>34</sup> A. Maglione, *Vingt ans d’Histoire du Pays de Laigueglia*, Marseille 1914, p. 129.

<sup>35</sup> Archivio di Stato di Napoli (ASN), Tribunale di commercio, MNF 8, Vol. 1889, 1813, ff. 21-26; 1816, ff. 75-78.

<sup>36</sup> Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris (MAE), Consulat Général de France à Naples, Registres d’immatriculation d’État civil, 1799, cité par M. Rovinello, *I “francesi” nella Napoli dell’Ottocento*, thèse de doctorat, Université de Bari/EHESS-Paris, 2006-2007.

Mme Geronima Chiappa, elle-même originaire de Laigueglia ainsi que les témoins Jean André et Dominique Pagliano, négociants vivant à Naples.<sup>37</sup> Au cours des mêmes années, Jacques et Barthélemy Pagliano signent une lettre de “négociants français” au consul de France, où ils regrettent le prochain départ de M. MacKan, représentant français à la cour napolitaine, et louent l’activité qu’il a exercée en leur faveur.<sup>38</sup> En 1818, Jacques Philippe Pagliano est à son tour immatriculé auprès du consulat français de Naples.<sup>39</sup>

Dans ces places marchandes, certains de ces *Génois* parviennent à embrasser une brillante carrière. Les sources marseillaises présentent comme glorieuse l’entreprise de Dominique-André Strafforello (de Porto Maurizio), qui en 1782, avec son associé Peragallo (de Camogli), met à la disposition des échevins ses rapports avec la finance et le négoce génois et rend possible un emprunt considérable (de 7 millions de livres) de la part des maisons de commerce liguriennes, nécessaire à la Municipalité pour l’achat des terrains de l’Arsenal:<sup>40</sup> une opération politique et spéculative colossale qui bouleverse l’espace urbain marseillais et implique des institutions, des sujets, des intérêts énormes. À Naples, on rencontre d’autres *Génois* prospères participant aux affaires politiques et économiques de la capitale: en 1810, Gio. Andrea Pagliano est élu juge du Tribunal de Commerce;<sup>41</sup> en 1818, Bartolomeo Pagliano, en tant que titulaire de la perception des droits indirects, est frappé par un arrêt du roi déclarant nul tout crédit avancé par des particuliers concernant les approvisionnements ou services rendus pendant l’occupation militaire.<sup>42</sup> Toujours en 1818, la maison Maglione apparaît parmi les cinq “firme di piazza”<sup>43</sup> pour l’huile à Naples.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>37</sup> MAE, Correspondance consulaire et commerciale, Vol. 40, Naples (1812-1813); et Consulat Général de France à Naples, État civil, Actes de naissances, ff. 17v-18, cité par Rovinello, *I “francesi”*.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 38, Naples (1793-1805), f. 78.

<sup>39</sup> Consulat Général de France à Naples (CGFN), Registres d’immatriculation des français à Naples, Vol. I, 16-4-1818, cité par Rovinello, *I “francesi”*.

<sup>40</sup> AN, H 1355, Terrain de l’arsenal, H 1329, “Déclassement de l’arsenal et vente à la ville”; Archives Municipales de Marseille (AMM), BB 216, ff. 146-150v; DD, 25-12-1781, 10-10-1790; AA 7, rég. VI, f. 129; ADBdR, C 3891, Arsenal, “Dossier de l’emprunt”, 1781-1782.

<sup>41</sup> G. Russo, *La Camera di Commercio di Napoli dal 1808 al 1978*, Naples 1985, p. 271.

<sup>42</sup> MAE, Correspondance consulaire et commerciale, Vol. 42, Naples, f. 116, dépêche du 8-11-1818.

<sup>43</sup> Il s’agit des signatures universellement acceptées à Naples dans le virement des effets cambiaires et commerciaux concernant l’huile.

<sup>44</sup> Russo, *La Camera di Commercio*, p. 81.

*Histoires de consuls*

Tous les comportements et les formes du négoce dont il a été question jusqu’ici ne concernent pas un domaine purement particulier, séparé et distinct du cadre public et des institutions censées le surveiller et le sanctionner. Ils caractérisent non seulement les marchands mais aussi les consuls de la “nation” génoise, qui partagent avec les premiers origines et conditions et ne cherchent même pas, on vient de le voir, à démasquer fraudes, contrebande et contrefaçons, veillant seulement à ne pas laisser échapper les droits consulaires qui leur reviennent.

En effet, les consuls génois, issus du milieu marchand, continuent à pratiquer l’*ars mercatoria* et à être nommés par les marchands mêmes – nomination que la Serenissima se borne à ratifier.<sup>45</sup> Tout cela fait très souvent d’eux des personnages ambigus et contradictoires, impliqués dans mille affaires compliquées. Les histoires d’un Francesco Gazzino ou d’un Domenico Cordiglia nous le confirment.

Francesco Gazzino, “natif de Palme, diocèse de Gênes”<sup>46</sup> dans les années 1740, est fils d’Ambrogio négociant. La Ambrogio Gazzino e figli, qui s’installe à Gênes, dispose d’une solide base de capitaux, d’affaires en France, en Espagne et au Portugal, ainsi que dans plusieurs régions de la Péninsule italienne, enfin de deux savonneries à Marseille dépendant d’une société en commandite, la Silvy et cie,<sup>47</sup> du nom d’un des commis de la maison-mère. Les frères de Francesco, quant à eux, vivent à Palerme, où ils gèrent une autre maison, sous la raison sociale de Gazzino e figli. Partenaire de son père et de ses frères, Francesco s’installe aussi pour son compte à Marseille où il investit dans le commerce du blé.<sup>48</sup> Et c’est là qu’il devient en 1768 consul de la République de Gênes, à l’issue d’un bras de fer avec son prédécesseur, Benedetto Luxoro, qui traverse à l’époque une mauvaise passe financière et s’est vu pour cette

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<sup>45</sup> Giovanni Brancaccio, “Nazione genovese”. *Consoli e colonia nella Napoli moderna*, Naples 2001, p. 34; R. Zaugg, *Stranieri di antico regime. Dialettiche conflittuali e trasformazioni istituzionali nella Napoli del Settecento*, thèse de doctorat, Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane, Université de Naples Federico II, 2007-2008, Introduction.

<sup>46</sup> ADBdR, 380 E 264, notaire Salomé, 1744, f. 61.

<sup>47</sup> ADBdR, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 325, Enregistrements des actes déposés au greffe. Dépôts de bilan, cautionnement, affirmations de voyages, actes de sociétés en dissolution, 19-4-1769.

<sup>48</sup> ASG, Giunta di Marina, Corrispondenza di Consoli nazionali ed esteri, b. 10, Consoli del Regno di Napoli, 14-10-1768.

raison destitué de ses fonctions avant l'échéance de sa charge<sup>49</sup> et qui, pour la récupérer, inaugure une œuvre méthodique de dénigrement de Gazzino.<sup>50</sup>

Les problèmes, néanmoins, ne découlent pas tant des faussetés présumées colportées par Luxoro que des difficultés financières liées aux affaires concernant directement le consul Gazzino, ainsi que son père et ses frères. Il contracte des dettes qu'il est toutefois en mesure d'acquitter dans un premier temps, sans compromettre son rôle de consul,<sup>51</sup> grâce entre autres aux pressions exercées par des négociants liguriens en sa faveur auprès des autorités compétentes. Il s'agit de Leonardo et Domenico Strafforello, Bartolomeo Benza de Porto Maurizio, Giacomo et Domenico Peragallo de Camogli, et Francesco Pagliano de Laigueglia, parmi les négociants les plus actifs et renommés de la Rivière à Marseille. Dans cette ville, d'ailleurs, les consuls semblent en mesure de rester en fonction nonobstant des vicissitudes bien plus graves que celles de Gazzino: des personnages très controversés tels De Pavola<sup>52</sup> ou Bartolomeo Coment, tous deux consuls (respectivement de Raguse et de Venise) à Marseille, maintiennent leur charge en dépit des faillites respectives et des scandales auxquels ils sont mêlés.<sup>53</sup> Si la situation devient de plus en plus difficile pour Gazzino, il peut cependant continuer à exercer ses fonctions et fréquenter la Loge marseillaise, car il parvient à satisfaire ses créanciers et ne se voit pas contraint de déposer le bilan, bien que Benedetto Luxoro –protagoniste au même moment d'une faillite "honteuse" –<sup>54</sup> s'obstine à envoyer à droite et à gauche des lettres soutenant le contraire et réclamant pour cette raison son expulsion de la Loge.

1775 est l'année du désastre: les trois maisons de la famille Gazzino, de Marseille, Gênes et Palerme, sont emportées par une série de faillites en cascade. Le 7 juillet 1775, Francesco dépose son bilan par-devant le greffe du Tribunal de Commerce de Marseille.<sup>55</sup> Comme il est en mesure de régler

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, b. 11, Consoli del Regno di Napoli, 26-1-1769.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9-1774.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-3-1773, 17-4-1773.

<sup>52</sup> De Pavola, consul de Raguse, est mêlé en 1759 à "une affaire d'armes qu'il faisait passer clandestinement au 'chef des rebelles' de Corse. Quelques mois après, il consentait à garder 40 balles de laines soustraites à leurs créanciers par deux banqueroutiers frauduleux de Naples [c'est la célèbre affaire Brun et Morillo], et l'ambassadeur des Deux-Siciles devait intervenir pour que ces marchandises fussent placées sous séquestre." (Carrière, "Les relations commerciales", p. 534).

<sup>53</sup> ASG, Giunta di Marina, Corrispondenza di Consoli nazionali ed esteri, b. 11, Consoli del Regno di Napoli, 26-1-1769.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-6-1774.

<sup>55</sup> ADBdR, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 326, Enregistrements des actes déposés au

au moins une partie de ses comptes, il reste en fonction quelques mois encore. Mais son rôle de consul est désormais compromis: les lois de Gênes défendent à tout banqueroutier de remplir des fonctions publiques et de jouir de tous les bénéfices de la République s’il n’a pas entièrement honoré ses créances; lois renforcées par un arrêt du roi de France, daté du 7 janvier 1730, interdisant à qui fait faillite, fût-il français ou pas, d’entrer à la Loge avant d’avoir acquitté toutes ses dettes. L’accès à ce lieu incontournable du négoce marseillais lui étant prohibé, Gazzino ne peut plus suivre de près les affaires des négociants génois ni les siennes: les pressions des autres négociants en sa faveur se relâchent. Le 26 janvier, il écrit aux “Serenissimi” de la République de Gênes, les remerciant de lui avoir conféré le poste de consul, se vantant par la même occasion d’avoir procuré à la ville de Marseille –dans une conjoncture difficile– le ravitaillement nécessaire en blé,<sup>56</sup> et soutenant son innocence dans la faillite des maisons de commerce de la famille. D’ailleurs, comme Carrière l’a remarqué, un passif de 600,000 livres sur un actif de 500,000 déclaré par Gazzino au greffe du Tribunal de Commerce marseillais, “révèle qu’au fond de l’affaire il était victime”.<sup>57</sup>

Mais son parcours ne s’achève pas là. En 1780, on le retrouve à Palerme<sup>58</sup> en tant qu’associé d’une société en commandite avec Garibaldi (de Chiavari)<sup>59</sup> et Weynier, sous la raison sociale de Francesco Gazzino e compagnia.<sup>60</sup> une fois sa carrière de consul révolue, il poursuit néanmoins celle de négociant.

L’histoire de Domenico Cordiglia, consul génois à Naples, n’est pas moins paradigmatique. Pendant la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle, les Cordiglia, originaires de Laigueglia, élargissent progressivement leur rayon d’action: une maison de commerce à Laigueglia, d’autres à Naples, Tarente (dans les Pouilles), Gênes, en association avec d’autres compatriotes, les Maglione à

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greffe, 7-7-1775 ; et C 4290, Relations et incidents diplomatiques. Agents diplomatiques, 1775.

<sup>56</sup> ASG, Giunta di Marina, Corrispondenza di Consoli nazionali ed esteri, b. 11, Consoli del Regno di Napoli, 26-1-1776.

<sup>57</sup> Carrière, “Les relations commerciales”, p. 247.

<sup>58</sup> ASG, Giunta di Marina, Corrispondenza di Consoli nazionali ed esteri, b. 11, Consoli del Regno di Napoli, 14-10-1775.

<sup>59</sup> L’un de ses frères, ayant la nationalité française, devient après beaucoup d’insistances vice-consul français à Savone dans les années 1780 (AN, AE, B I 596-597, Correspondance consulaire. Gênes). On compte parmi leurs descendants le bien plus célèbre Giuseppe, le héros des deux mondes.

<sup>60</sup> ADBdR, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 327, Enregistrements des actes déposés au greffe, 24-8-1780.

Naples et les Musso à Gênes.<sup>61</sup> La diversification de leurs stratégies utilise aussi l'option de la nationalité étrangère: à Naples, Domenico Cordiglia se fait passer pour français, pratique plutôt répandue, on le verra, parmi ses compatriotes. Et c'est en tant que tel qu'il est expulsé du Royaume en 1793: John Acton communique à la commission chargée d'identifier et d'expulser les Français que "informato il Re che il Genovese chiamato [Domenico] Cordiglia abbia non solo adottato le massime e i principi francesi, ma si faccia lecito con audacia e impudenza di tenerne discorsi analoghi per sedurre chi lo ascolta, è Sua Sovrana volontà che la Giunta gli faccia sentire di dover escire dai dominj della S.M."<sup>62</sup> Quelques années plus tard, Cordiglia retourne cette situation à son avantage: en 1798, se présentant comme une sorte de héros qui a souffert "sei anni di persecuzioni" dues au "Tiranno delle Sicilie", lequel, "ancora [con] un piede sul suo soglio cadente", "non avea dissimulato", "che la persona di Cordiglia aveva il merito di essergli odiosa", il demande à être nommé consul de la République ligurienne à Naples.<sup>63</sup> Son "deciso patriottismo"<sup>64</sup> l'emporte sur les excellents atouts d'un autre prétendant à la même charge, Stefano Musso, négociant de Laigueglia. Ce dernier a l'avantage de résider de façon stable à Naples depuis longtemps, de ne s'en être jamais éloigné, d'y avoir "esercitato onoratamente la mercatura" et "coltiva[to] la corrispondenza con molti negozianti di questa Piazza e di quasi tutti i paesi della Riviera di Ponente, godendo appresso di essi pieno credito".<sup>65</sup> De plus, presque toute la communauté de patrons et marchands de Laigueglia, de Cervo, de Diano et de Alassio, se range derrière lui.<sup>66</sup> Mais les véritables cartes maîtresses de cette partie sont autres: on a en effet besoin dans ces circonstances de personnages marqués du point de vue politique, si bien que c'est Cordiglia qui assume finalement la charge de consul à Naples.<sup>67</sup> C'est toutefois une victoire éphémère que la sienne: deux ans plus tard à peine, il est expédié à Ostende,<sup>68</sup> tandis qu'à Naples, une fois passée l'urgence, on nomme justement Stefano Musso, considéré comme plus fiable

<sup>61</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, p. 130.

<sup>62</sup> ASN, Esteri, 543, Espulsi di Francia.

<sup>63</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2957, Governo Provvisorio, 17-2-1799.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 28-2-1798.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-2-1799.

<sup>66</sup> Les 164 signatures de soutien à sa candidature représentent une liste extraordinaire de noms pour qui souhaite étudier ces groupes (*Ibid.*, 12-2-1798; 16-2-1798).

<sup>67</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2646, Serie Consoli delle Due Sicilie, Napoli (1794-1805); ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 1-2957, b. 1-2959, Governo provvisorio.

<sup>68</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2646, Serie Consoli delle Due Sicilie, Napoli (1794-1805).

et engagé dans la réalité commerciale de la place. Le renvoi de Cordiglia de Naples en tant que consul n’implique pas pour autant son éloignement en tant que négociant: la maison de commerce des deux natifs de Laigueglia, la Maglione e Cordiglia,<sup>69</sup> demeure en effet dans la capitale méridionale où elle continue à prospérer.

La place de Marseille, théâtre d’une politique matrimoniale avisée entre familles de négociants liguriens participant au monde du négoce marseillais et exposants français de ce même monde, est également centrale dans la géographie des stratégies de Domenico Cordiglia: sa fille Margherita épouse un négociant de Laigueglia vivant depuis plusieurs années à Marseille, Pierre-Jean Pagliano. Leur fille, Marie-Élisabeth Pagliano, se marie à son tour avec un autre membre de cette société bigarrée du négoce ligurien, Francesco Rocca, de Loano, tandis que leur fils, Mathieu Pagliano, convole avec Eugénie, la fille de Barthélemy Roux (appartenant à l’une des plus importantes familles de négociants marseillais), qui devient aussi la belle-sœur d’Argentine Rocca, mariée à son frère Octave Roux.

C’est sous un jour tout à fait différent –mais pas pour autant plus limpide et linéaire– qu’apparaît le profil des consuls français, qui sont devenus depuis Louis XIV de véritables officiers du roi et ont perdu leur nature originaire de représentants des marchands, élus par ces derniers.<sup>70</sup> Prenons le cas de ce Jean Baptiste Lallement si activement engagé dans la tentative de démasquer les tromperies commises à Messine par les patrons-marchands liguriens. Fils de bourgeois, il embrasse la carrière bureaucratique sans jamais s’impliquer personnellement dans le monde du commerce. Chancelier du consulat à Raguse de 1758 à 1763, puis à Naples jusqu’à 1775 (il y est également chargé du consulat *ad interim* pendant certaines périodes), il finit ensuite par être nommé vice-consul à Messine, où il demeure jusqu’à sa nomination en tant que consul-général à Naples en 1792. Arrivé dans la capitale méridionale au mois de mars 1793, il devra toutefois repartir en automne avec ses compatriotes chassés du Royaume. Lallement ne reviendra plus à Naples, mais il conclura sa carrière comme ministre plénipotentiaire à Venise, de 1794 à 1797, année de son départ à la retraite. Bien que sa “conduite n’[ait] pas toujours été sans reproche”<sup>71</sup> –au cours des mois passés à Naples, par exemple, il a le temps de destituer un chancelier du consulat pour le remplacer par un de ses fils, âgé

<sup>69</sup> ASN, Tribunale di Commercio, MNF 8, Vol. 1889, 1814, ff. 21-26; 1816, ff. 75-78.

<sup>70</sup> Les mêmes caractéristiques distinguent les consuls de la Naples bourbonienne.

<sup>71</sup> A. Mézin, *Les consuls de France au siècle des Lumières (1715-1792)*, Paris 1977, p. 372.



de seize ans à peine – sa correspondance touffue dessine l’image d’un homme remplissant son devoir avec conscience et méticulosité.

Ils contrefont passeports, arborent pavillons de complaisance, se livrent à la contrebande de marchandises; en qualité de consuls, ils ne peuvent, ne veulent ou ne doivent pas veiller attentivement au caractère licite des opérations de négoce se déroulant sous leurs yeux, et ils sont eux-mêmes impliqués dans des faillites. Le stéréotype des *Génois* est-il donc confirmé? Peut-on en conclure qu’il subsume tous leurs caractères et résume leurs vices et vertus? Vues de plus près, les choses semblent en réalité plus compliquées – comme il est coutume de dire. Seuls certains d’entre eux, et seulement de façon partielle, semblent correspondre au profil singulier d’hommes sans scrupules qu’ébauchent, en gros, les contemporains.

En premier lieu, ils sont à certains égards moins “originaux” qu’on pourrait le croire. Tricher sur la quantité et la provenance des marchandises, utiliser des pavillons de complaisance, contrefaire des passeports, chercher à contourner l’acquittement des droits à payer sur les marchandises, ce sont là des pratiques assez diffuses dans le monde du négoce sous l’Ancien Régime. Deuxièmement, ils ne se conduisent pas tous de la même façon. Absence de scrupules et désinvolture dans les affaires ne caractérisent – bien que de façon voyante – que certains groupes de *Génois*.

Il est toutefois possible de leur trouver des traits communs, se présentant d’ailleurs comme des particularités: ces *Génois* ne sont presque jamais de Gênes mais ils proviennent de centres portuaires de la Rivière ligurienne avec lesquels ils maintiennent un rapport très fort. Certes, il ne s’agit pas d’une exception à strictement parler: diasporas commerciales et gravitation autour des centres d’origines constituent un phénomène commun dans les milieux marchands. Par exemple, les attitudes des protestants étrangers installés à Marseille – introvertis et autosuffisants, de grosse envergure et disposant de leurs propres réseaux – sont conformes à ce même modèle.<sup>72</sup> Mais il s’agit d’ordinaire de centres offrant des ressources considérables, auxquels il peut s’avérer utile de demeurer attaché. Ce n’est pas le cas de ces *Génois*: ils conservent un lien très étroit moins avec Gênes, comme on pourrait s’y attendre, qu’avec leurs lieux d’origine, de minuscules foyers de compétences, aventurisme et initiative marchande. Et ce sont ces simples villages, très faibles en termes démographique, institutionnel, commercial

<sup>72</sup> A. Carrino, “Una ‘folla’ mercantile fra pratiche e identità. Nella Marsiglia settecentesca risalendo il Tirreno”, dans B. Salvemini (éd.), *Lo spazio tirrenico nella “grande trasformazione”*, Bari 2009, pp. 217-238.

et de capitaux disponibles, et jouissant souvent d’une longue histoire de limitations commerciales de la part de la *Dominante*, qui s’avèrent en mesure de les marquer de façon extraordinaire.

Dans ces lieux, gardiens d’un capital relationnel important, qui suggèrent des attitudes et tissent des solidarités, nouent des parentèles et sanctionnent des alliances, se forment des noyaux denses cimentés par des rapports de confiance et de secours réciproque se traduisant en ressources de parenté et d’affaires. C’est à partir de ces lieux que ces *Génois* parviennent à s’insérer dans une spatialité vaste, polycentrique, où chercher occasions, marchandises et rapports, qui va des grandes places marchandes (Messine, Naples, Marseille) à des plages (calabraises surtout) sans aucune structure ni équipement portuaire, des “ports de campagne” dirait-on, néanmoins capables de produire de considérables volumes de trafics.<sup>73</sup> Cette projection ample ne rompt jamais, pour ces patrons, marchands et consuls, le contact avec les lieux d’origine, à partir desquels elle rayonne et sur lesquels elle reflue. Ces lieux, jamais abandonnés, jamais vidés d’hommes ni dépourvus de fonctions, esquissent la géographie des trafics et des affaires de leurs marchands, en la déformant et en l’orientant de façon particulière; ils forment les profils et marquent les rôles.

À Porto Maurizio et à Laigueglia, deux des viviers les plus significatifs des *Génois* des routes tyrrhéniennes au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et au début du XIX<sup>e</sup>,<sup>74</sup> se définissent différents types de marchands, de critères de choix, d’occupation d’espaces et d’objectifs à atteindre. La “respectabilité” du groupe de négociants de Porto Maurizio; les formes non-aventureuses de leurs pratiques; la séparation entre armement, navigation et négoce; les modalités assez canoniques de leurs affaires les distinguent beaucoup des patrons de Laigueglia, qui semblent en revanche mieux correspondre à l’image dénoncée et crainte par les observateurs.

#### *La force des lieux faibles. Porto Maurizio*

Deux types distincts de protagonistes des flux tyrrhéniens sont présents à Porto Maurizio. Un groupe de capitaines-patrons naviguent en droiture entre Porto Maurizio et Marseille, convoyant pour leur compte des quantités

<sup>73</sup> Voir sur ce point A. Carrino et B. Salvemini, “Porti di campagna, porti di città. Traffici e insediamenti del Regno di Napoli visti da Marsiglia (1710-1846)”, *Quaderni storici* CXXI (2006), pp. 209-254.

<sup>74</sup> Auxquels on peut ajouter Zoagli (pour les Chighisola), Camogli (pour les Peragallo), Sturla (pour les Doderò), etc.

plutôt modestes d'huile, probablement des "huiles de la Rivière": ce sont les Garibaldi, Aicardi, Carrega, Rubaldo, Ricardi, Amoretti, Ranisio, Ricca, Berio, etc. Outre ceux-ci, d'autres patrons issus de la côte provençale voisine transportent eux aussi de petites quantités d'huile de Porto Maurizio à Marseille, également pour leur compte. Ils arrivent de Cannes, tels les capitaines Fort, Maunier et Jourdan; d'Hyères, tel Brouquier; d'Agde, tels Nicolas et Bonnefoux. Ces flux n'ont que de faibles conséquences sur les formes d'agrégation et de réciprocité. Le groupe de capitaines-patrons de Porto Maurizio ne semble justement pas faire "groupe"; on ne trouve pas dans la documentation de traces significatives des liens de parentèle, solidarité, affaires qui les unissent. Ils n'établissent pas non plus de rapports stables avec Marseille; l'arrivée dans le port provençal n'implique pas l'entrée dans la ville; ils restent sur les quais, où ils vendent leur cargaison avant de repartir immédiatement. Il faut effectuer, semble-t-il, un plus large détour pour pénétrer dans la grande place marchande en provenant de Porto Maurizio.

C'est ce que font d'autres individus aux profils et destins différents, pour qui ce même lieu d'origine devient fondamental afin de nouer des liens d'affaires et de solidarité forts et durables: il s'agit des Benza et des Strafforello, au sujet desquels les sources sont fort prodigues en informations. Ils sont très actifs le long des côtes du Mezzogiorno et, au fur et à mesure que leur volume d'affaires augmente, ils étendent aussi le rayon géographique de leurs trafics, entretiennent des rapports intenses avec Marseille –débouché privilégié de leurs produits et stratégies–, distribuent les membres de leurs familles entre le village natal et la ville phocéenne, et maintiennent entre les deux pôles des liens réciproques très forts. Ils s'allient entre eux et fondent dans leur patrie, à Marseille et ailleurs, des maisons de commerce également reliées entre elles.

Parmi les Benza, mentionnons Joseph et Jean-Baptiste, patrons de navires transportant à Marseille de modestes quantités d'huile qu'ils vendent pour leur compte, comme les autres capitaines-patrons de Porto Maurizio. Mais les ressemblances s'arrêtent là, car la famille Benza a un profil plus articulé et dispose de ressources plus diversifiées. Tandis que Joseph et Jean-Baptiste sillonnent la mer, à partir de 1730, d'autres hommes de la famille s'établissent à Marseille. En 1740, Barthélemy Benza demande la citoyenneté marseillaise, ainsi que son associé habitant comme lui la paroisse de St Martin, Jean-Luc Peragallo, originaire de Camogli (tout près de Porto Maurizio). Ils sont définis dans un acte de l'Amirauté de Marseille du 28 juin 1740 comme "négociants génois demeurant à Marseille".<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> ADBdR, 9B, Amirauté de Marseille, 28-6-1740, Lettres du roi, f. 551.

Les Benza sont très liés non seulement avec les Peragallo mais aussi avec les Strafforello, autres négociants de Porto Maurizio. Pendant la première moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, deux noyaux de la famille des Strafforello se distinguent, celui de Tommaso et celui de Domenico, descendants de ce Tommaso Domenico (né en 1647), qui avait jeté les fondations des activités et de la fortune commerciale et financière de la famille; fortune bâtie entièrement sur la terre-ferme, sans participer à titre personnel à la navigation. Côté Marseille, un cousin de Tommaso et Domenico, Leonardo, s'établit dans la ville phocéenne en 1746 (c'est-à-dire à la même époque que les Benza et les Peragallo). C'est là qu'il épouse en 1756 une autochtone qui lui apporte une dot de 60,000 livres, et dont il a quatre enfants.<sup>76</sup>

À Porto Maurizio demeurent entre autres les cousins Gian Antonio et Domenico, qui créent un réseau dense et articulé de maisons de commerce, lequel a son barycentre dans le lieu d'origine, s'étend jusqu'à Gênes et Marseille et englobe les Benza, les Peragallo et la branche marseillaise de la famille Strafforello. Voici les faits.

Gian Antonio Strafforello de Domenico et Domenico Strafforello de Leonardo, Leonardo et Bartolomeo Benza, Giuseppe et Nicolò Riccardi de Gio. Batta fondent le 9 novembre 1736 une maison de commerce à Porto Maurizio sous la raison sociale de Gian Antonio e Domenico Strafforello, Benza e compagna.<sup>77</sup> La durée prévue est de six années renouvelables, et le capital initial de 300,000 *lire* de Gênes. Domenico Strafforello est l'associé principal, celui qui prend sur soi tous les risques sociétaires. Le même jour, les mêmes associés fondent aussi une société de négoce à Marseille, sous la raison sociale de Bartolomeo Benza e Conti, dirigée par Bartolomeo Benza et Antonio Maria Conti.<sup>78</sup> Un mois plus tard, ayant découvert que Conti se livre à des affaires illicites, les associés l'excluent de la maison marseillaise, dont ils modifient la raison sociale en Bartolomeo Benza et cie et confient la direction à Bartolomeo Benza et Gio. Luca Peragallo. Elle dépend de la Gian Antonio e Domenico Strafforello, Benza e compagna de Porto Maurizio;<sup>79</sup> la durée est de trois ans à renouveler, le capital de 45,000 livres tournois. Ses régisseurs doivent présenter annuellement les livres comptables à la société de Porto Maurizio d'où provient le capital initial, et qui prend sur elle les risques. La

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 354 E, notaire Aubin, 13-6-1756, f. 332; 364 E 421, notaire Cousinéry, 17-2-1786, f. 21; et 22 F 15.

<sup>77</sup> Archivio di Stato di Imperia (ASI), Fonds notarial de Porto Maurizio, notaire Dacorone, 9-11-1736, acte no. 58.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, acte no. 59.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-12-1736, acte no. 67.

même structure et le même rapport avec la société mère de Porto Maurizio caractérise une autre maison fondée par les mêmes associés le 1 mars 1737 à Gênes, la Giuseppe Benza, dirigée par Giuseppe Benza, déjà résidant dans la capitale, puis, après sa mort, par Bartolomeo Benza;<sup>80</sup> la durée est toujours de trois ans et le capital de 120,000 *lire*. Le 11 mai 1743, à l'échéance, on confirme la société de Marseille, cette fois sous la direction exclusive de Peragallo, car Bartolomeo Benza est passé à Gênes; sa raison sociale devient Gio. Antonio e Domenico Strafforello e Peragallo. À l'échéance suivante, la maison-mère de Porto Maurizio sera renouvelée de même que ses succursales. La maison de Marseille sera liquidée en 1790, avec un capital de 240,000 livres tournois.<sup>81</sup>

Au cours de la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle, tant les Benza que les Strafforello et les Peragallo constituent à Marseille de nouvelles maisons, qui s'adjoignent à la première succursale marseillaise de la maison-mère de Porto Maurizio. Pour ce qui concerne les premiers, après la Benza et cie,<sup>82</sup> et la Benza, Paggi et Marganti,<sup>83</sup> dissoute en 1754,<sup>84</sup> Barthélemy Benza fonde avec Jean-Luc Peragallo la Benza et Peragallo,<sup>85</sup> pour s'associer ensuite avec un neveu homonyme naturalisé en 1767:<sup>86</sup> ils créent ensemble la Benza oncle et neveu qui fera faillite en 1769 avec un passif de 250,000 livres.<sup>87</sup> Barthélemy oncle meurt la même année, désignant comme héritière sa femme marseillaise Thérèse Arnoud.<sup>88</sup> Son neveu ouvre la Benza et fils,<sup>89</sup> qui passe à ses enfants; au début du XIXe siècle, la société se voit contrainte d'interrompre ses activités quand Thomas, le fils de Barthélemy neveu, suspend ses paiements et dépose son bilan auprès du greffe du Tribunal de Commerce de Marseille.<sup>90</sup>

Quant aux Strafforello, Dominique et Barthélemy – deux des quatre fils de ce Léonard qui s'était établi à Marseille en 1746 et de Gabrielle Léger – constituent

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-3-1737, acte no. 96.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-5-1743, acte no. 622. On garde la trace de la maison de Marseille au moins jusqu'aux années 1760 (ADBdR, 354 E 192-196, notaire Aubin, 1745-1761).

<sup>82</sup> ADBdR, 354 E 193, notaire Aubin, c. 412.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 322, Enregistrements des actes déposés au greffe, 22-5-1754.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 354 E 192, notaire Aubin, f. 62.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, B 130, Registre Bertin, 1-12-1767, f. 298.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 577, Enregistrements des actes déposés au greffe, 17-5-1769.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 351 E 1176, notaire Hazard, 17-7-1769.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 326, Enregistrements des actes déposés au greffe, 17-5-1769.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 floréal an VIII, 18 messidor an VIII.

une société sous la raison sociale de Strafforello frères.<sup>91</sup> Dominique, prenant pour femme une Peragallo à Marseille, s’associe à son tour en 1780 avec deux de ses beaux-frères dans la constitution d’une autre société, la Strafforello et Peragallo –succédant à la Strafforello, Peragallo & Cornet–<sup>92</sup> qui organise des expéditions de marchandises vers les Antilles et l’Océan Indien.<sup>93</sup> À partir des années 1780, les Peragallo sont en outre partenaires de la Sabin, Peragallo et cie<sup>94</sup> et de la Belleville, Fourrat et Peragallo.<sup>95</sup>

La structuration solide du réseau sociétaire se reflète sur l’organisation des trafics de Strafforello et compagnie le long des routes tyrrhéniennes, qui semble laisser très peu au hasard. D’autant plus qu’il s’agit surtout de commerce céréalier –relativement plus surveillé et réglementé que celui d’autres marchandises– qu’ils établissent entre les Pouilles et la Sicile d’une part et Marseille d’autre part, à bord de bateaux commandés par des capitaines provençaux ou napolitains.

Parmi les Strafforello comme parmi les Benza, certains finissent par acquérir notoriété et prestige à Marseille. L’action de ce Dominique-André Strafforello qui, avec son associé Peragallo, avait contribué à procurer à la Municipalité de Marseille les capitaux pour l’achat des terrains de l’Arsenal, lui vaudra une notice dans le tome XI (dédié aux *Biographies*) de *L’Encyclopédie Départementale des Bouches du Rhône*, où il est défini comme “appartenant au haut négoce”.<sup>96</sup> Barthélemy-Thomas Strafforello sera à son tour membre de la Chambre de Commerce de Marseille (1804-1814 et 1818-1830);<sup>97</sup> en 1814, il sera décoré du titre de chevalier et en 1824, de celui d’officier de la Légion d’Honneur.<sup>98</sup> Dominique et Jean-Baptiste Thomas Benza seront inclus dans la

<sup>91</sup> AMM, 2 G 33, Emprunt forcé, 1793.

<sup>92</sup> *Audition au Précis pour le sieur Augustin Lepetre...Contre Les sieurs Strafforello, Peragallo & Cornet...*, Aix: chez la veuve de J. David & Esprit David, 1758.

<sup>93</sup> ADBdR, 364 E 316, notaire Cousinéry, f. 42; ACCIM, H 41, Colonies. Compagnies des Indes (1784-89), f. 893; AN, 8 AQ 356 et AQ 19.

<sup>94</sup> ADBdR, Tribunal de Commerce, 13 B 331, Enregistrements des actes déposés au greffe, an V.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Les Bouches-du-Rhône. Encyclopédie Départementale publiée par le Conseil Général avec le concours de la ville de Marseille et de la Chambre de Commerce*, sous la direction de Paul Masson. 2ème partie: *Bilan du XIXe siècle*, Vol. XI: *Biographies*, par Henri Barré, Marseille 1913.

<sup>97</sup> L. Bergasse, *Notice historique sur la Chambre de Commerce de Marseille (1599-1912)*, Marseille 1913.

<sup>98</sup> ADBdR, 1 M 115, Dossiers de la Légion d’Honneur, 1824.

liste des commerçants notables de la ville, dressée le 5 mai 1829.<sup>99</sup> Ils semblent jouir d'une richesse considérable, à en juger par l'inventaire des propriétés immobilières de Jean-Baptiste Thomas, dénombrées entre 1819 et 1838.<sup>100</sup>

Mais leur succès personnel et leur pleine inclusion dans le monde du négoce marseillais, ainsi que la fondation de nouvelles sociétés marseillaises autonomes par rapport à Porto Maurizio, n'affaiblissent pas les liens durables avec le lieu d'origine et les compatriotes. Leurs familles continuent à se marier et à s'associer entre elles à Marseille, à faire des affaires ensemble, à entretenir des relations très étroites avec ceux qui sont restés au pays.

Un seul exemple suffira: le réseau tissé par la correspondance que Domenico Strafforello, depuis Marseille, adresse à ses cousins et à d'autres partenaires commerciaux à Porto Maurizio, témoignant des mille affaires en commun, d'un échange continu d'avis, de conseils, de visites, de crédits, de marchandises, etc.<sup>101</sup> Prenons deux différents échantillons: sur l'ensemble des lettres que Dominique écrit de septembre à décembre 1788, plus de la moitié sont adressées à Porto Maurizio; entre 1804 et 1807, il envoie lui-même à Porto Maurizio les trois-quarts de ses missives: à ses frères Leonardo et Tommaso, à son cousin Girolamo, ainsi qu'à Gio. Batta Benza et à d'autres commerçants du lieu, tels les Gastaldi, les Ferrari, etc.<sup>102</sup>

#### *La force des lieux faibles. Laigueglia*

D'un tempérament entièrement différent sont les natifs de l'autre grand réservoir de *Génois* sur les routes tyrrhéniennes, avec leurs pratiques qui déterminent une façon tout à fait particulière, effilochée et aventureuse, de faire négoce. Ils ont en commun avec les natifs de Porto Maurizio un lien fort et constant avec leur lieu d'origine: dans ce cas, Laigueglia.

C'est dans ce village côtier de la Rivière du Ponant que vivent les familles Chiappa, Cordiglia, Gaggino, Maglione, Musso, Pagliano et Preve: tous patrons et marchands, vigoureusement apparentés entre eux et liés par des formes d'investissement à même d'impliquer la plupart de la communauté. Voyons comment.

Autour de la construction d'un bateau se constitue une société composée d'un premier groupe de personnes qui y investissent des capitaux

<sup>99</sup> Musée de la Chambre de Commerce et de l'Industrie de Marseille.

<sup>100</sup> ADBdR, Familles diverses. Benza, 20 F 269.

<sup>101</sup> ASI, Archivio Privato di Domenico Strafforello, 25 vols (1780-1829), *Corrispondenza privata di Domenico Strafforello* (1788-1789, 1804-1814), Vols 23 et 24.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

(généralement partagés en 24 quotes-parts) et tirent des profits du nolisement à un autre groupe d'investisseurs. Ces derniers constituent ce qu'on nomme la *colonna*, c'est-à-dire une forme d'entreprise processuelle, avec des investisseurs qui entrent et qui sortent, activée à l'occasion de chaque voyage du bateau.<sup>103</sup> Il s'agit d'“un contratto di società particolare” entre patron, marins et marchands, dans lequel le premier fournit le bateau, les deuxièmes “l'opera, la fatica, ed industria loro”, tandis que “i mercanti vi pongono i danari, o effetti del capitale apprezzati”; les risques, les dommages et les profits sont en commun, subdivisés en fonction des quotes-parts attribuées à chaque sujet.<sup>104</sup> Un des maires de Laigueglia au cours de la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle nous en explique le fonctionnement:

I capitani hanno per la maggior parte un capitale detto altrimenti fondo o colonna. Questo fondo si forma di una determinata quantità di azioni denominate parti [...] che il capitano si procura da più particolari [...] I fondi ossia capitali così formati restano a disposizione del capitano che può farne quel prudente uso che conosce più convenevole agli interessi de' suoi partecipi, a cui alla fine di ciascun viaggio è in dovere di rendere esatto conto del risultato de' suoi impieghi [...] I marinai che formano l'equipaggio di questi bastimenti non sono già salariati, ma partecipano per una parte nel profitto di ogni viaggio.<sup>105</sup>

Les livres comptables des patrons de Laigueglia recensent méticuleusement ces formes d'investissement. Prenons celui de Gio. Andrea Preve, qui couvre la période de 1737 à 1779. Son auteur commence par répertorier les noms des *caratisti*, à savoir ceux qui contribuent à équiper le bâtiment; il suit, à l'occasion de chaque voyage, la formation de la *colonna*, avec l'indication des capitaux investis par les *colonnisti*; une fois le bateau rentré au port, il rédige le compte rendu de la vente du produit et effectue la subdivision entre

<sup>103</sup> On en trouve plusieurs exemples dans: Archivio Privato Preve, Laigueglia, Libro di conti del padrone Gio. Andrea Preve qm Marco, 1737-1802; Libro di conti di Domenico Preve qm Giulio Cesare, 1815-1879; Mastro di Domenico Antonio Maglione di Diego, 1774-1779 (je remercie Luca Lo Basso pour m'avoir fourni une copie de ces trois documents); Biblioteca Civica Berio, Gênes (BCBG), Copialettere Maglione, mr X 5-9, Libro mastro, 1807-1811; mr X 5-10, Libro dei conti, 1811-1816. Sur le fonctionnement de la *colonna*, voir ACCIM, “Réflexions”. Voir aussi L. Lo Basso, “Il sud dei Genovesi. Traffici marittimi e pratiche mercantili tra l'Italia meridionale, Genova e Marsiglia nel Settecento”, *Lo spazio tirrenico*, pp. 239-262.

<sup>104</sup> L. Gatti, *Navi e cantieri della Repubblica di Genova (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, Gênes 1999, p. 119. La cite les *Ponderazioni sopra la contrattazione marittima del giureconsulto Carlo Targa*, publiées à Gênes en 1692.

<sup>105</sup> Cité par Gatti, *Navi e cantieri*, pp. 120-121.



*caratisti*, *colonnisti*, patron et marins (ces derniers participant seulement par leur travail). Détaillons le compte rendu d'un de ces voyages: le 1 mars 1739, le patron Preve constitue une *colonna* "per andare in viaggio con suo pinco a Dio piacendo". Il dresse alors la liste des sommes d'argent rassemblées par le biais de la *colonna* ou "a cambio marittimo", en plusieurs monnaies dont il fournit la conversion en *lire* de Gênes. De retour de voyage (dès 1739, il s'agit plutôt de traversées vers la Calabre pour charger de l'huile et la transporter à Gênes et à Marseille), le patron note le profit de la vente de l'huile, il en déduit le capital et partage ce qui reste entre les *caratisti*, les *colonnisti* en question, ses marins et soi-même, proportionnellement aux quotes-parts de chacun.<sup>106</sup> Lorsque le patron Preve cesse en 1762 de sillonner la mer, il investit considérablement dans des quotes-parts de bâtiments et de *colonna* d'autres voyages de patrons de Laigueglia, et en rend compte ponctuellement dans son livre.

À bord des bâtiments (pour la plupart des pinques) armés et financés de cette façon, les capitaines et patrons de Laigueglia naviguent et commercent à leur compte, en esquissant une géographie tout à fait différente que celle des marchands de Porto Maurizio. Ils descendent la Mer Tyrrhénienne à la recherche de marchandises et de vendeurs, souvent en *caravane*,<sup>107</sup> puis remontent vers Gênes, Laigueglia et Marseille, parfois sans avoir *a priori* un ordre de denrées, mais en fonction des occasions locales.

Souvent leurs pinques font voile vers la Calabre pour se procurer de l'huile. Ce sont ces *Génois* qui "inventent" l'huile de Calabre, jusqu'à en devenir les "principaux accapareurs",<sup>108</sup> en incitant les paysans et les propriétaires à déraciner les mûriers –devenus peu productifs à cause de la concurrence de la soie brute de l'Italie du Nord– pour planter des oliviers.<sup>109</sup> En Calabre, ils ne se cantonnent pas aux côtes mais pénètrent dans les réalités locales jusqu'à l'arrière-pays et finissent par y installer des maisons de commerce: Antonio Pagliano à Pizzo; Giovanni Andrea Maglione d'abord à Palmi, ensuite à

<sup>106</sup> Archivio Privato Preve, Laigueglia, Libro di conti del padrone Gio. Andrea Preve qm Marco, 1737-1802, 2 f.

<sup>107</sup> "On appelle faire la caravane" –explique un mémoire français de 1766– "aller à l'aventure le long d'une côte, de port en port, de plage en plage, pour y effectuer le chargement en détail à mesure qu'il se présente des objets à bon marché." (AN, AE, B III 407, "Mémoire", 1766).

<sup>108</sup> R. Liberti, *Il grande flagello nella Piana di Gioia*, Oppido Mamertina 1984, p. 107.

<sup>109</sup> A. Placanica, "I caratteri originali", *Storia d'Italia. La Calabria*, éd. P. Bevilacqua et A. Placanica, Turin 1985, p. 87. Voir aussi D. Ciccolella, *La seta nel Regno di Napoli nel XVIII secolo*, Naples 2003.

Monteleone.<sup>110</sup> Ils trouvent aussi des interlocuteurs et des investisseurs en Calabre: les fonds notariés calabrais témoignent des affaires qu’ils font avec un groupe d’entrepreneurs locaux –notamment Bagalà et Parpagliolo– qui jouent le rôle d’intermédiaires entre eux et les petits et grands producteurs de la région, y compris les feudataires, et investissent aussi “a cambio marittimo”, dans les *colonne* ou dans les assurances maritimes, permettant ainsi l’apport de nouveaux capitaux et l’accroissement du chiffre d’affaires des Liguriens.<sup>111</sup> Des fois, cependant, ces affaires n’arrivent pas à bon port. Le fonds napolitain du Supremo Magistrato di Commercio regorge de traces de contentieux entre les entrepreneurs, les feudataires calabrais et les patrons-marchands de Laigueglia. C’est entre autres le cas, en 1784, d’un procès entre les princes Spinelli et Giacomo Maria Maglione au sujet du paiement de 400 “some” d’huile;<sup>112</sup> ou de celui intenté par Giovanni Andrea Maglione, qui réclame un paiement de la part de Domenico Bagalà.<sup>113</sup>

Mais les rapports avec le Midi de l’Italie ne se limitent pas à la Calabre huilière. Les patrons-marchands de Laigueglia vont aussi charger des denrées dans les Pouilles, où ils installent des maisons de commerce, à Tarente surtout, débouché sur la Mer Ionienne des produits de la région et du versant ionien de la Calabre: c’est ce que feront Jean-Dominique Cordiglia et Thomas Gaggino, neveu d’Étienne Maglione.<sup>114</sup> Dans ces lieux, leurs présences sont plutôt discrètes. Les maisons de commerce qu’ils y fondent ne sont pas enracinées dans le territoire, ni destinées à perdurer, contrairement à celles implantées à Naples ou à Marseille. Elles sont plutôt des pivots, quoi qu’il en soit fondamentaux, voués à canaliser les marchandises et les ressources pour gérer des flux plus longs, provenant du Levant, avec lequel ils ont des rapports également assidus.<sup>115</sup> D’où les soupçons, certainement fondés, de faire passer le blé des Pouilles pour du blé levantin ou l’huile orientale pour de l’huile napolitaine.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, *passim*.

<sup>111</sup> Archivio di Stato di Reggio Calabria, sezione di Palmi, Fonds notarial de Palmi, notaire Colloridi, 1656-1672, *passim*.

<sup>112</sup> ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, Pandetta Vassallo, f. 10/34.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 78/17.

<sup>114</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, p. 130.

<sup>115</sup> La *Santé*, par exemple, enregistre au milieu du XVIIIe siècle, les arrivées à Marseille de bâtiments commandés par des Maglione, provenant de Smyrne et Constantinople.

<sup>116</sup> ACCIM, “Réflexions”; et K 143, Correspondance consulaire. Messine, 25-2-1780, 11-3-1786, 13-5-1786, 14-7-1787, 11-9-1790, 30-10-1790.

Le premier cas est, entre autres, celui des deux patrons liguriens Carlo Antonio et Giacomo Maglione, dont l'un commande le pinque *La Madonna del Rosario* et l'autre *La Madonna del Carmine*. Bien que le gouvernement napolitain ait défendu en 1763, à la suite de la disette, l'exportation de blé du Royaume, les deux patrons en achètent dans les Pouilles un lot important (qu'ils diront provenir du Levant) et le chargent sur deux bâtiments napolitains affrétés à cet effet. Avec leur chargement illégal, les deux Maglione cinglent vers Messine où ils transvasent le blé sur leurs pinques. Mais ils sont surpris et dénoncés au Fisc Royal, la cargaison est confisquée et ils sont arrêtés. Le consul génois à Messine, informé de l'incident, s'emploie à les sauver des dispositions les plus sévères, parvenant à obtenir pour eux rien moins que l'absolution. Une fois leur liberté recouvrée, les deux patrons regagnent même leur cargaison illégale: s'appuyant sur les prérogatives du port franc de Messine, ils revendiquent avec succès la propriété du blé confisqué.<sup>117</sup>

C'est pour sa part dans une affaire de trafic d'huile qu'est impliqué le patron Étienne Maglione. Le 20 août 1785, le vice-consul français à Messine, Jean-Baptiste Lallement, écrit au secrétaire de la Marine de Sa Majesté le Roi de France pour accuser Maglione d'avoir acheté quelque 600 quintaux d'huile à deux bâtiments grecs et de les avoir transportés à Tarente pour en occulter l'origine avant de les envoyer à Marseille en les faisant passer pour de l'huile des Pouilles, afin d'éviter le paiement du droit de 20% prévu pour les huiles du Levant arrivées à Marseille sur des bâtiments étrangers. La lettre est transmise à la Chambre de Commerce, qui –loin de s'étonner de ce type de combine– fait alors surveiller l'arrivée du pinque de Maglione. *L'Immaculée Conception* touche au port le 31 octobre 1785. Le patron déclare à l'intendant de la Santé être parti de Tarente, avoir accosté à Messine et finalement à Marseille. Convoqué par la Chambre, il ne peut pas nier avoir acheté de l'huile du Levant, mais il prétend qu'il l'a débarquée à Laigueglia et que son chargement est désormais exclusivement composé d'huile achetée à Tarente. Après l'intervention des autorités génoises en défense du patron Maglione, la Chambre se borne à le condamner à une amende, une somme modeste –qui ne devait d'ailleurs pas le décourager de continuer ses tromperies.<sup>118</sup>

L'intense fréquentation des côtes du Mezzogiorno entraîne pour ces patrons-marchands –bien plus que pour ceux de Porto Maurizio– des rapports

<sup>117</sup> ASG, Archivio Segreto, b. 2634, Consoli delle Due Sicilie, Messina, 4-11-1766.

<sup>118</sup> ACCIM, "Réflexions"; ACCIM, B 64, Correspondance active de la Chambre, 7-11-1785; et B 19, Délibérations de la Chambre, séance du 1-2-1786. Sur cette affaire, voir aussi Boulanger, "De la tromperie sur la marchandise".

avec Naples. Au cours de la seconde moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, ils y fondent des maisons de commerce: la Pagliano e Tubino, la Domenico Pagliano, la Maglione e Cordiglia.<sup>119</sup> Et ils semblent pouvoir compter sur de solides appuis dans la capitale méridionale, comme ce sera le cas pour Francesco Maglione, le représentant d’une maison de commerce homonyme qui se trouve mêlée à un contentieux avec un négociant libraire, Balthazar Borel, né à Naples de père français. En tant que créancier de la maison Maglione, Borel traduit en justice François Maglione suite au non-paiement d’une traite tirée sur son représentant légal à Naples, et demande l’intervention du consul français.<sup>120</sup> Bien que Borel –personnage connu et respecté à Naples– possède la traite protestée et soit en mesure d’exhiber une lettre dans laquelle Maglione le prie de patienter et garantit l’imminence du paiement, sa requête d’aide adressée au consulat reste sans réponse. En même temps, à la faveur de leurs amitiés dans le milieu, François Maglione et son frère obtiennent avec une rapidité extraordinaire la nationalité française, tandis qu’Auguste, le fils de François, est immatriculé dans les registres consulaires après deux ans seulement de séjour à Naples.<sup>121</sup> C’est pourquoi la sentence n’étonne personne: les trois juges nommés par le consulat (dont l’un n’est pas français non plus, mais suisse) donnent raison au néo-“Français” Maglione.<sup>122</sup>

D’autres marchands de Laigueglia vont installer leurs maisons de commerce à Marseille: la Veuve Pagliano et fils, la Maglione et Morro, la Chiappa, Canale et Tubino, la Pagliano de Mathieu; voire à Gênes, où sont sises la G. B. Maglione et la Morro e Cordiglia.<sup>123</sup> Il arrive aussi qu’ils fassent parler d’eux dans le monde du négoce marseillais. C’est le cas de la Veuve Pagliano et fils, gérée par l’épouse de feu Giuseppe Pagliano qui avait eu le courage et l’intelligence de continuer le commerce qu’il faisait.<sup>124</sup> Elle envoie l’un des ses fils à Hambourg pour un apprentissage –on est au début des

<sup>119</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, p. 129.

<sup>120</sup> Le recours à la juridiction extraterritoriale pour régler les conflits représentait pour les étrangers –ou, comme dans ce cas, pour ceux qui étaient présumés tels– une ressource précieuse mais non unique. En d’autres cas, ils pouvaient en effet juger plus opportun, en s’appuyant sur le caractère pluriel de la justice à l’époque moderne (notamment en matière commerciale), de faire recours aux tribunaux locaux. Sur ces questions, liées à la présence de la “nation” française à Naples, voir Zaugg, *Stranieri*.

<sup>121</sup> CGFN, Registres d’immatriculation des Français à Naples, Vol. II, 15-3-1836.

<sup>122</sup> ASN, Tribunale di Commercio, Sentenze, b. 586, f. 302. L’histoire est reconstruite dans Rovinello, *I “francesi”*, pp. 465-467.

<sup>123</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, pp. 129-130.

<sup>124</sup> ADBdR, C 4150, Lettre de M. le Baron de Breteuil, 20-9-1785.

années 1780–, mais il y mène une vie dissolue et gaspille l’argent paternel. Sa mère ne se borne pas à le faire rentrer, mais lui intente un procès par-devant le Tribunal de Commerce de Marseille en demandant qu’il soit déchu de ses droits et emprisonné au Château d’If.<sup>125</sup>

À Laigueglia, les plus importantes maisons de l’époque sont la Maglione e Musso et la Chiappa e Maglione (qui voit aussi la participation d’Étienne Musso).<sup>126</sup> Ici, en outre, les achats et les ventes immobiliers, les assurances maritimes, les opérations de crédit impliquant les Chiappa, Maglione, Cordiglia, Pagliano, Preve et Musso dominant le fonds notarial.<sup>127</sup>

C’est le cas non seulement à Laigueglia mais aussi en Calabre, à Naples, à Marseille et à Gênes où, nonobstant les rapports avec les réalités et les groupes d’affaires locaux, ils maintiennent une introversion très accentuée, conjuguant une politique matrimoniale endogamique avec des liens d’affaires, de crédit et de solidarité, difficiles à démêler.

Les enchevêtrements parentaux sont parfois inextricables à Laigueglia, à Naples ou à Marseille. À Naples, par exemple, les associés Francesco Maglione et Ambrogio Cordiglia sont respectivement beau-père et gendre; Louis Chiappa, immatriculé auprès du consulat de France, est l’époux de Maria Maglione; François Maglione est marié avec Nicolina Preve; tandis que Benoît Maglione, de Jérôme et Paola Chiappa, est le beau-frère de Jean-André Pagliano et a pris pour femme Geronima Chiappa, la fille de Giacomo et Maddalena Preve. La fille de Benoît et Geronima deviendra la femme de Joseph Musso. En outre, parmi les enfants de Lorenzo Preve et Martina Maglione, résidants à Laigueglia, Antonietta épouse Giovanni Antonio Stalla de Laigueglia, mais habitant Marseille; Annetta, Francesco Maglione à Laigueglia; Maria, un homme de la famille Pagliano résidant à Messine; Maddalena, Giacomo Chiappa à Laigueglia; et Clara, Stefano Musso à Naples.<sup>128</sup>

Soutenus par les liens parentaux qu’ils alimentent à leur tour, les rapports d’affaires sont très serrés. Mentionnons, à titre d’exemple, le réseau sociétaire pour lequel François Maglione de Pierre-Jean remplit plusieurs fonctions: réseau incluant Jean-André Musso de Laigueglia, Étienne Musso de Naples, Jean-Baptiste et Augustin Maglione de Gênes, les deux frères Cordiglia de

<sup>125</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, p. 129.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Archivio di Stato di Savona, Fonds notarial de Laigueglia, notaire Maglione, 1713-1729, f. 2205; notaire Preve, 1713-1785, f. 2753; notaire Garassino, 1782-1790, f. 4278, 1791-1797, f. 4279.

<sup>128</sup> Maglione, *Vingt ans*, p. 84 et note 48.

Marseille, François Maglione de Marseille, et Jean-Baptiste Pagliano, ses oncles, Jules-César Preve de Messine, son beau-frère, Étienne Maglione de Laigueglia.<sup>129</sup> Un autre exemple efficace du réseau vaste mais entièrement interconnecté qu'ils ont tissé nous est fourni par le Grand Livre de Giacomo Maglione.<sup>130</sup> Ses notes témoignent de rapports d'affaires, entre autres, avec Girolamo et Filippo Morro à Gênes, Francesco Maglione à Livourne, Simone Maglione en Sardaigne, Stefano Musso à Naples, la maison Maglione, Morro et cie à Marseille, la société Santino Maglione et cie à Sète, Giovannella Maglione à Alassio (sur la Rivière): tous de Laigueglia.

D'ailleurs, l'observation de la route suivie par leurs pinques met encore une fois en évidence la centralité persistante de Laigueglia: quand ils remontent la Mer Tyrrhénienne en faisant voile vers Marseille avec leur cargaison, ils font souvent étape chez eux pour se renseigner sur la situation du marché, savoir si d'autres compatriotes viennent de partir pour Marseille, et donc s'il ne convient pas d'attendre quelque temps avant d'aller décharger à leur tour. Laigueglia, plaque tournante de leurs affaires et de leurs trafics, fonctionne aussi comme une sorte de bourse informelle des marchandises.

Dans cette Méditerranée plurielle, il n'y a pas seulement de la place pour les “nations” surveillées et protégées par les néomercantilismes des États territoriaux insérés dans les circuits solides de l'échange, qui occupent les lieux structurés et institutionnalisés de l'espace marchand. À côté de celles-ci s'imposent des présences qui, peu équipées du point de vue commercial et faiblement protégées sur le plan institutionnel, parviennent néanmoins à se ménager des espaces tout sauf marginaux et à occuper des positions de prééminence ou de monopole presque absolu (comme c'est le cas pour l'huile de Calabre). Le plein XIXe siècle modifiera les règles du jeu. Mais il s'agit là d'une autre histoire; à raconter ailleurs.

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>130</sup> BCBG, Copialettere Maglione, mr X 5-9, Libro Mastro, 1807-1811.



G. A. MELOS' TRADING NETWORK (VENICE, 1712-1732):  
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AND TEMPORARY PARTNERSHIPS

*Eftychia Liata*

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ABSTRACT: The subject of this article is the life and especially the commercial activity of a Greek merchant of the diaspora, Georgios Antonios Melos. In the 1670s, at a young age, he left his native Athens and emigrated to Spain, the country of his mother's origin. He first worked on the behalf of Spanish traders as a travelling merchant and also as an independent trader travelling to various markets in the Levant. He would soon have his own shop of colonial goods in Madrid, where he lived with his family until roughly the early eighteenth century. From 1712, now alone subsequent to the death of his family, he made Venice his home and initiated a commercial collaboration with his two brothers in Nauplion. For 20 years (he died in 1732), Georgios Melos engaged in varied and profitable commercial activities, mainly as *corrispodente* for other merchants, Greek, Italian and Spanish, but also on his own account, participating in a dense commercial network that spread to markets in Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, Italy and Spain. His case is representative of that of a medium-scale Greek commercial operator in the second half of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth.

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“If you can't sell, change tactics and maybe your fortunes will change.” Such was the advice of Konstantinos Oikonomos of Smyrna to his partner Ioannis Kokkonis in Constantinople, when the latter was struggling to sell copies of *Rhetorikai* by the same Oikonomos.<sup>1</sup> This practical advice, which the scholar was borrowing from merchant lore, sums up the way in which certain professional tactics – widely deployed through the ages and across every level of the market – could be used to help get sales moving.

When we speak today of modern-day commercial networks, we tend to think of them as something static, functioning – if not exclusively, at least increasingly – with the help of technology, as communications have been carried out, with the passing of time, by telegram, telephone or email. It requires a certain stretch of the imagination to reconstruct in our minds – with the aid of our archival sources, of course – the workings of such trading networks in times past (and the further back we go, the harder this

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<sup>1</sup> Konstantinos Oikonomos o ex Oikonomon, *Αλληλογραφία* [Correspondence], Vol. 1: 1802-1817, ed. K. Lappas and R. Stamouli, Athens: Research Centre for Medieval and Modern Hellenism, Academy of Athens, 1989, p. 228.



becomes), particularly since our knowledge of the past necessarily relies on the availability of surviving sources. Whether involving a host of centres or based around a single centre, a trading network is both the precondition for, and the result of, collaboration among many persons who, while installed in or travelling around diverse geographical locations and performing various individual roles, nevertheless work in a coordinated fashion to serve either their own economic interests, arranging affairs within their own commercial network, or the interests of third parties, as links in networks run by others.

This study aims to contribute to the debate regarding commercial networks, which in the past 20 years in particular has found, in Greece too, increasingly fertile ground for historical research.<sup>2</sup> While discussion of trading networks has been a fairly recent undertaking, the phenomenon itself is ancient and, of course, not exclusive to the Greek business world. Furthermore, the fact that a substantial portion of research has focused on the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries should not be taken to imply that this is when such phenomena first appeared or that there was any particular surge in this kind of activity: it simply means that we are availed of evidence for this period.

In those exceptional cases when we are fortunate enough to have access to such material as commercial records from earlier periods, we come across evidence for such phenomena from as far back as the late Byzantine period. To limit our scope to the Mediterranean basin, we may cite the case of the Venetian merchant of Constantinople Giacomo Badoer, whose account books furnish us with a wealth of information regarding the geographical network for the trading of goods (though not the related human network) in the wider region of the Levant in the period 1436-1440.<sup>3</sup>

When it comes to the modern Greek period, our evidence starts to become more substantial from the late seventeenth century onwards, as the sources, which are scant and infrequent to begin with, become steadily more numerous in the mid-eighteenth century and, especially, the nineteenth, as Greek commerce experienced a phase of rapid growth and began to assume other dimensions and new orientation, shifting from the markets of Western

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<sup>2</sup> For a coherent and concise treatment of the Greek commercial diaspora and trading networks in the sixteenth-nineteenth centuries, including bibliography on the subject, see S. I. Asdrachas *et al.*, *Ελληνική οικονομική ιστορία, ιε' -ιθ' αιώνας* [Greek economic history, fifteenth-nineteenth century], Vol. 1, Athens: Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2003, pp. 159-160 (N. E. Karapidakis), pp. 240-247, 461-481 (O. Katsiardi-Hering).

<sup>3</sup> G. Bertelè (ed.), *Il libro dei conti di Giacomo Badoer (Costantinopoli, 1436-1440)*, Padua 2002.

Europe, and particularly the ports of the Italian Peninsula, to the commercial centres of the Balkans and, above all, Central Europe. The surge in Greek trading relations with Central Europe in the nineteenth century<sup>4</sup> had its roots in Venetian Greek trade of the seventeenth century and, above all, the eighteenth.<sup>5</sup> It is to this field that we shall attempt here to contribute some

<sup>4</sup> Important in this regard is the appearance of research, mostly in the form of doctoral dissertations produced in recent decades in the history departments of Greek universities, which has reaped rich harvests and shed light on the range and diffusion of Greek trade in this part of Europe. The citation of these studies is unnecessary here, as they can easily be accessed through the graduate programmes of the relevant departments; however, a rough overview of this emerging bibliography may be consulted in the recent, unpublished doctoral thesis of Ikaros Mantouvalou, *Όψεις του παροικιακού ελληνισμού. Από το Μοναστήρι στην Πέστη. Επιχείρηση και αστική ταυτότητα της οικογένειας Μάνου (τέλη 18ου-19ος αιώνας)* [Views of Hellenism abroad: from Monastiri to Pest: the business ventures and bourgeois identity of the Manos family (late eighteenth to nineteenth century)], University of Athens, Department of History and Archaeology, 2007. A. Diamantis, *Τύποι εμπόρων και μορφές συνείδησης στη Νεώτερη Ελλάδα* [Varieties of merchants and modes of consciousness in Modern Greece], Athens 2007, discusses the features and growth of Greek trade, as it evolved in the markets of Central Europe and the Italian Peninsula, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

<sup>5</sup> Besides scattered information about Greek merchants and trade in this period drawn primarily from the unsystematic and fragmentary publication of their correspondence (K. D. Mertzios, "Εμπορική αλληλογραφία εκ Μακεδονίας (1695-1699)" [Commercial correspondence from Macedonia (1695-1699)], *Μνημεία Μακεδονικής Ιστορίας* [Monuments of Macedonian history], Thessaloniki 1947 (2007), pp. 209-255; *id.*, "Το εν Βενετία Ηπειρωτικού Αρχείου" [The Epirote archive in Venice], *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* XI (1936), pp. 1-351; *id.*, "Εμπορική αλληλογραφία εκ Θεσσαλονίκης" [Commercial correspondence from Thessaloniki], *Μακεδονικά* VII (1966), pp. 94-147), systematic study of Greek-Venetian trade in the eighteenth century is rare, with the sole exception of the ground-breaking dissertation by S. I. Asdrachas, *Patmos entre l'Adriatique et la Méditerranée Orientale pendant la deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle d'après les registres de Pothitos Xénos*, Paris 1972, which has not, however, been properly exploited since it remains unpublished and difficult to find. In some articles aspects of the activities of the Greek merchants Selekis-Sarou, Taronitis and Peroulis have been presented either partially or along general lines: V. Kremmydas, "Ιστορία του ελληνικού εμπορικού οίκου της Βενετίας Σελέκη και Σάρου. Μια στατιστική προσέγγιση" [The history of Selekis and Saros, a Greek commercial enterprise in Venice: a statistical approach], *Θησαυρίσματα* XII (1975), pp. 171-199; P. Michailaris, "Ανέκδοτες επιστολές (1695-1696) του Μιχ. Ν. Γλυκύ στον Μιχ. Σταμ. Περούλη" [Unpublished letters (1695-1696) from M. N. Glykys to M. S. Peroulis], *Θησαυρίσματα* XIII (1976), pp. 245-257; *id.*, "Η εμπορική εταιρική συνεργασία του βενετικού οίκου Ταρωνίτη-Θεοτόκη και των αδελφών Γ. και Θ. Γεωργίβαλων (1732-1737). Ο ρόλος και η δράση του εμπορικού πράκτορα Δημ. Χαμόδρακα" [The commercial

data, focusing on a very specific angle: to be precise, our object of enquiry will not be manifestations of the large-scale commerce of the day or one of its more eminent players. The individual we shall examine below<sup>6</sup> belongs most probably to the middle ranks of the merchant class and is surely a representative type to be found widely in this period, thereby providing us with a good yardstick for the subjects of this stratum. It will provide us, in other words, with a clearer picture of this socio-economic sphere, particularly since the archival evidence is so scarce.

The case of Georgios Antonios Melos, like that of Pothitos Xenos, belongs to the Mediterranean rather than continental network for the movement of people and goods. However, Melos and Xenos differ from one another in a number of key structural respects, as well as the circumstances of their particular sphere of trade. Xenos' area of trade gives us a glimpse of some of the structural features of the Greek world of commerce in the Mediterranean in the second half of the eighteenth century. Based in Patmos, Xenos bought local produce from the islands of the Aegean and the ports of Asia Minor and the Egyptian littoral, transporting and selling them in Italy. There he bought

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association between the Venetian company Taronitis-Theotokis and the brothers Y. and Th. Yeorgivalas (1732-1737): the role and activity of the business agent D. Hamodrakas], *Μνήμων* VIII (1980-1982), pp. 226-302. Michailaris has also gathered material from the rich archive of the Peroulidis family housed in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV). However, this archive and that of other Greek merchant families, such as Karagiannis and Maroutsis, await systematic and exhaustive investigation. For a preliminary presentation of the now accessible archive of the great Epirote merchant family, the Maroutsis, also in the ASV, and an assessment of its significance for the history of the Greek community and the culture of the Greek diaspora in Venice more generally, see C. Maltezos, "Η οικογένεια Μαρούτση στη Βενετία" [The Maroutsis family in Venice], *Καθημερινή* (2-7-2006), "Τέχνες και Γράμματα", p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> The rich archive of G. Melos, which he himself bequeathed to the Greek community, has been occasionally presented according to various thematic interests and theoretical approaches. The purely economic side of the archive has been treated in the following studies: D. H. Gofas, *Η φόρτωση επί του καταστρώματος* [Loading on the deck], Athens 1965, pp. 117-118, 139, 140; *id.*, "Ελληνικά εξαγωγικά κατά τας αρχάς του 18ου αιώνας κατ' ανέκδοτον εμπορικήν αλληλογραφίαν" [Greek exporters at the end of the eighteenth century according to unpublished commercial correspondence], *Επιθεώρησις Εμπορικού Δικαίου* XXIV (1973), pp. 316-334; E. D. Liata, "Ένας έλληνας έμπορος στη Δύση. Πορεία μιας ζωής από τον 17ο στον 18ο αι." [A Greek merchant in the West: the course of a life from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries], *Ροδωνιά. Τιμή στον Μ. Ι. Μανούσακα* [Rodonia: in honour of M. I. Manousakas], Vol. 1, Rethymnon 1994, pp. 279-297; *id.*, "Νιόςπραματευτής στη Δύση. Παραλλαγή σε μια παραλογή" [A young merchant in the West: a parallel in a narrative song], *Θησαυρίσματα* XXXIV (2004), pp. 273-292.

locally manufactured products, which he then sold in the markets of the Levant. He was more of a travelling salesman than a sedentary businessman, working within the context of an agrarian economy in the Aegean, with its ports and markets. This agrarian economy underwent monetization on the basis of trade and shipping.

Melos seems to have been a quite different kind of merchant. Active in the first half of the eighteenth century, he was based in Venice, directing commercial operations that radiated from the East to the West. However, he played a totally different role to that of Xenos, working mainly as a commercial representative.

On examining the trading network of Melos,<sup>7</sup> whose total business activity extends in time over the last three decades of the seventeenth century and the first three decades of the eighteenth, we are in fact seeking to decouple the working mechanisms of the trading networks from the space and time dimension defined above. In following the career of Melos, it is useful to know, from the outset, certain key data from his life in order to better understand and interpret his actions and choices, weighing his personality against more general phenomena and the reality of his day. Likewise, an examination of the specific will enable us to extract and project interpretations onto the wider scene.

Georgios Antonios Melos, the fourth son of a large family originating from Thebes, was born in Athens around 1647, as we learn, indirectly, from his will and the date of his death.<sup>8</sup> At the age of 23 or thereabouts he had to

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<sup>7</sup> The all-embracing, although brief treatment of the issue in the present study is based on the investigation and use of data gleaned from the archival material in its entirety. The detailed citation of technical references to each document would simply weigh down the presentation of my research with unnecessary data, without adding meaningfully to the content. Therefore, reference to a particular document in the file will only be made where necessary, e.g. when an extract from a document is translated, or where the document is a frequently cited source, such as a will. It goes without saying that the work has been based primarily on financial documentation in the Melos Archive (registers and papers), supplemented by his rich correspondence. According to the new guide to the archive, the registers or files which constitute the archival sources used for the preparation of this study are identified as Αρχείο Ελληνικού Ινστιτούτου Βενετίας (EIB) [Archive of the Hellenic Institute in Venice], Οικονομική διαχείριση 1, αρ. 118α', K1-K13 and Θ1-Θ10; see C. Maltezos, *Οδηγός του Αρχείου* [Guide to the Archive], Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia, Venice and Athens 2008, pp. 237-240, and for their corresponding numbering in the old index of K. Kavakos, see pp. 366-367.

<sup>8</sup> The Italian will of Georgios Melos was drawn up on 12 September 1732 and is held in the ASV, Notai di Venezia (not. Emilio Velano). Testamenti, b. 1009, fasc. 169. A

leave Athens “because of their misfortunes,” as he himself states – though it is unclear whether these misfortunes were of a family nature or concerned the misfortunes more generally of Athenians living under the misgovernment of the Turks – and in April 1670 we find that he was in Venice, paying his *luminaria* to the Greek community, perhaps with the intention of settling permanently there, although shortly afterwards he left for Spain, the country of origin of his mother, Ursola de Macri<sup>9</sup> (whose Hellenized name was Orsa Makri). He ended up staying there for the next 40 years, working in commerce, initially as a travelling merchant on behalf of others, though also perhaps on his own account, transporting goods around the markets of the Mediterranean basin. Thus, in 1671, on his way from Venice he stopped off at Corinth where he was hosted for some days in the “mansion” of his uncle Nikolaos before continuing his business travels (though it is not known where he proceeded to).

A few years later, in March 1678, we find him again on his travels in the Mediterranean, as *sopracarigo* accompanying goods from Rosetti to Tripoli in North Africa. We would have known nothing of this phase of his career if the records had not preserved an account of an incident involving the capture of the ship by pirates close to the island of Symi. He pursued compensation for his lost goods through the courts, until the following year when his claim was rejected.<sup>10</sup> In early 1680 he returned to Madrid, where he appears to have remained until the early years of the eighteenth century. Once again, we learn more of his subsequent social and professional life in Spain thanks to his own account: he married a Spanish woman from a well-to-do family and fathered two children by her. Thanks to his prosperous marriage, he was able to set up his own business in the centre of Madrid, at Puerta del Sol, where he traded

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Greek translation of the will can be found in K. D. Mertzios, *Ο Μικρός Ελληνομνήμων* [Hellinomnimon minor], fasc. 2, Ioannina 1960, pp. 100-105.

<sup>9</sup> Although there exists no bibliographic or archival evidence, there are indications – such as the Spanish background of Ursola, who married in Thebes Antonios Melos, who was of Albanian extraction, or the Spanish wife of Nikolos Melos in Athens – that permit us to suggest that in seventeenth-century Attica and Boeotia there still survived families reaching back to the period of Catalan occupation in the fourteenth century. The family connection of G. Melos with Spain clearly explains, in addition, his original decision to settle and pursue his business career there and not in Venice, the obvious choice of Greeks living and working abroad in this period.

<sup>10</sup> On this adventure and its final outcome, as well as for the presentation of all the relevant evidence, see K. Dokos, “Μια υπόθεσις πειρατείας κατά τον 17ον αιώνα (1672-1680)” [A case of piracy in the seventeenth century (1672-1680)], *Θησαυρίσματα* II (1963), pp. 36-62.

in colonial products and ran a network of agents and associates in various locations, both in Spain and beyond.<sup>11</sup>

It is hard to form any clear picture of Melos' Spanish period, as his own references to this phase in his life are meagre and stem only from archival evidence from his subsequent Italian period. Accordingly, the lack of continuity in the evidence means that we can only follow his life and career in Spain fragmentarily, with jumps in time and substantial gaps in our knowledge, leaving us with a number of moments and places, but not clearly set out sequences and routes.

Unlike his somewhat vague reference to the nature of his trade, the archival evidence reveals more about his associates and the geographical range of his operations: the space within which he operated was the Kingdom of Spain and various commercial centres of the Italian Peninsula (Cadiz, Alicante, Livorno, Genoa); the region of Greece and the Levant in general do not appear to be included within his sphere of business, at least until the early years of the eighteenth century. As for his associates, most seem to have been either Spanish (Matteo de Manuel, Diego de Garay, Pablo Tadeo, David de Mirman, Cottardo Ghiglione, Miguel Chuco, the Necco brothers and others) or Italian (Anzelo Zambelli, Urri and others).

Although we do not possess sufficiently detailed data to allow us to substantiate fully his precise professional status in Spain, apart from indirect evidence and his own account preserved in his correspondence with his brothers, we can nevertheless assume that he achieved a degree of success. The reason for his decision to leave Madrid surely lies elsewhere, probably personal or family misfortune: the death of his wife and children – between 1704 and 1707 – and his own poor health must have played a critical role in his decision to emigrate, particularly when, in 1705, he learnt that his two younger brothers, Nikolos and Michalis, were alive and living with their mother in Anapli (Nauplion).<sup>12</sup> This protracted silence and seeming

<sup>11</sup> The data are derived from the unpublished Spanish will of G. Melos, drawn up in December 1707 (whether on the occasion of some trip or his final departure from Madrid is not known), located among his papers: EIB, Οικον. Διαχείρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ2, file 2.

<sup>12</sup> On the establishment of the Melos brothers in the Peloponnese and information related to their sojourn there, see E. D. Liata, "Όψεις της κοινωνίας τ' Αναπλιού στις αρχές του 18ου αι. (Με αφορμή μια διαθήκη)" [Views of society in Anapli in the early eighteenth century (according to a last testament)], *Άνθη Χαρίτων* [Anthi Chariton], Venice 1998, pp. 243-270; *id.*, "Ένα εργαστήρι τ' Αναπλιού στη βενετοκρατία (1712-1715)" [A workshop in Anapli during the Venetian period (1712-1715)], *Ναυπλιακά Ανάλεκτα* III (1998), pp. 230-258; *id.*, "Τεκμήρια για την αθηναϊκή κοινωνία στις αρχές του 18ου αιώνα. Η

indifference regarding the fate of his relatives (presumably the result of some kind of dispute with his family that led him to depart for foreign lands and break off relations) hardly seems to explain his actions satisfactorily; besides matters of personality or family relations, we need also to consider the general signs of the times.

Regardless of whether his departure from his family environment was a personal choice or just the chance result of the course his career and events took him, driven by personal strife rather than regained affection, Melos – now aged over 60 – abandoned his business ventures and headed back to his relatives in Greece. Accordingly, in the summer of 1710, having sold off all his property and leaving his few outstanding business affairs in the hands of his associates, he departed from Madrid and, passing through Rome and Genoa, arrived in Venice in October of the same year. He did not adjust to the new location easily, and was in no hurry to start up business, as is evident from a letter he wrote to his associate in Spain, Cott. Ghiglione, in which he says that he does not know the language well and is not in a position “to converse about business”.<sup>13</sup>

During this phase of readjustment, between September 1711 and August 1712, Melos went on a business fact-finding mission around the Peloponnese with his brothers, with whom he planned to organize a business partnership. Thus, when he returned to Venice he was ready to enter into new commercial ventures. He used his enforced stay in the lazaretto (quarantine area) as an opportunity to find a place to live, with the help of two fellow Greeks of Venice, Kakavakis and Komitas. Of the houses he was offered, he chose to take that of Glykis – although more expensive than the others, it was better situated.<sup>14</sup> This is where he settled after leaving the lazaretto, together with his young assistant, Anargos Psaros, whom he had brought with him from Nauplion.

From this point on, thanks to more fully preserved records, we can trace in considerable detail Melos’ life and career. However, before examining

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αθηναϊκή αστική φορεσιά” [Traces of Athenian society in the early eighteenth century: the Athenian town dress], *Μνήμων* XI (1987), pp. 32-53.

<sup>13</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α’, Θ7, file 31. In addition to Greek, Melos spoke and wrote Spanish well; he learnt whatever Italian he knew once he had settled in Venice. In connection with Melos’ knowledge of languages, the testimony of Argyros Bernardis is revealing: “and when you want to send me a letter, ask someone to write the name and address in Italian”, cited in Dokos, “Μια υπόθεσις πειρατείας”, p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> The rent at the Glykis house was 340 ducats per year for two rooms – habitation and storeroom – and board for himself and his assistant. The contract was signed in September 1712. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α’, Θ1, file 3.

more closely his commercial activities in Venice, it is worth giving an overall outline of his career up to the time of his death. While his collaboration with his brothers appears to have progressed well for over two years, the reconquest of the Peloponnese by the Turks in 1715 meant that silk exporting activity was banned and Venetian trade in the region ground to a halt.<sup>15</sup> Having relied solely on his collaboration with his brothers, Georgios Melos was forced – following the captivity of Michalis and death of Nikolos – to abandon his commercial business in the Peloponnese and, disillusioned with the general outcome of his affairs, considered (in February 1716) leaving Venice. In the end he decided to stay on in Venice, continuing his commercial activities with other associates in other regions. In the Peloponnese itself he was able to maintain trade contacts via his brother Michalis, following the latter's release from captivity, once the Turks reopened the port of Patras for commerce in 1717. Thus the merchants of the Peloponnese resumed commerce with Venice, trading not only in silk, but also olive oil from Attica, as Athens was on the rise commercially during this period. Of course, traders needed to buy the “cooperation” and friendship of the Turkish officials in the region in order to ensure that they could ply their trade unhindered. It was at this time that the merchants of Ioannina appeared on the stage, bringing Venetian goods to the Peloponnese and purchasing silks that were then exported to Venice via Corfu. At this time, Georgios Melos made attempts (though, as it turned out, unsuccessfully) to revive his trade links with the region, but his brother and only associate for this part of the world proved lacking as a businessman and consequently, in 1722, Georgios Melos brought an end to all his commercial activities in the Peloponnese.

In the same period he initiated shipments of goods – which became frequent between 1716 and 1718 – to Madrid via the Necco brothers of Genoa, as we shall see later. However, trade in this direction was solely export, and Melos operated exclusively as the recipient of other merchants' orders, primarily from the Necco brothers. A restless spirit and indefatigable businessman, Georgios Melos in 1718 expressed to his collaborators – despite his advanced age, being by then over 70 years old – the desire to accompany the goods to Cadiz in person, as had been his wont, but he was forced to cancel this trip on account of the deterioration of his health (he suffered from chronic gout). A few years later (1723) he was forced to retire, writing

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<sup>15</sup> On his brothers' adventures during the war in the Peloponnese and trade-related issues at that time, see E. D. Liata, “Μαρτυρίες για την πτώση τ' Αναπλιού στους Τούρκους (9 Ιούλη 1715)” [Evidence for the fall of Anapli to the Turks (9 July 1715)], *Μνήμων* V (1975), pp. 101-156.



to his collaborator Nicolò Frangelà that sickness and old age did not allow him to undertake trade on behalf of others in the future, since he could no longer leave the house and conduct his business in person, as he had always done in the past. He did not retire completely from his business activities, however, until the end of 1730; thereafter, his only concern was to close all open accounts, asking his partners to settle their accounts and refusing categorically to consent to any proposed collaboration. He died in September 1732, at the age of 85.

According to his will, his only valuable assets were 1358 zecchini, which he kept at home, and 4000 ducats deposited at the Zecca at 3% per year. In addition, there was the accumulated debt of his nephew Leonardos Perdikaris valued at 1465 ducats, which he asked the executors to remit. He also felt obliged to declare, as his final duty and in recognition of his wife (and in this way discharging his debts to her), that his property had derived from her dowry, which he had increased by commercial investment both in Spain and Venice.

A general review of these 20 years of Melos' commercial dealings shows that at the end of his life he was in possession of a cash capital of only 2253 zecchini and no other types of assets. This means that he either reinvested his profits in trading or in small-scale lending to individuals. In only one case, at the start of his business in Venice, did he invest with a ship loan of 1400 zecchini in two vessels heading for markets in the Levant. In addition, we have no information about or indications of consumer spending on the acquisition of goods associated with social status. Given his way of life in Venice (a boarder in a single chamber), plus the fact that his will did not mention either household goods or valuable items, it can be assumed that beyond the necessary expenses for clothing, his expenditure over all these years on goods associated with social display was nought – which at least must indicate a deficiency in the archival evidence. He did not, then, invest in real estate or precious goods; he did not practise usury systematically beyond investments in commerce; he saved or accumulated in his home the hard currency of the day, the zecchini, or deposited his money to accrue interest in the Zecca of Venice.<sup>16</sup>

On the other hand, expenses of a charitable nature, in other words, benefactions evidently designed to confirm his social standing, are not entirely

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<sup>16</sup> In this respect, as a type of merchant Georgios Melos was located at the opposite end of the spectrum from P. Xenos who, with a house and family in Patmos, in addition to making purely financial investments and hoarding his money, spent large amounts on home furnishings, valuable objects, expensive clothing, and consumer goods more generally. In this way Xenos conformed to the widespread habits of certain social groups

absent.<sup>17</sup> The professional merchant, especially the travelling merchant and large-scale merchant, was the most cosmopolitan of all professionals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and enjoyed a place of distinction in the social hierarchy. But Melos' position was subject to continuing uncertainty and had to be defended at all times in a highly competitive field in order to maintain his overall image as a player in the economic and social scene. In addition, the bequests made by Melos to ecclesiastical institutions or for religious purposes – especially as there were no descendants who would presumably be interested or would be mandated by the testator to be interested in the maintenance of his personal or the family memory – were recorded according to the standard norms of the time. Only one desire was expressed, although we do not know whether it was realized, namely, that he be granted the privilege of burial in the centre of the church of San Giorgio; the desire itself may imply his social distinction within the Greek community.<sup>18</sup>

As a supplement to the biographical sketch of Georgios Melos, we may also mention his active participation in the life of the Greek community, with

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and his behaviour can be seen in turn as a product of collective behaviour. See Asdrachas, *Patmos*, chapter 10.

<sup>17</sup> Both throughout his life and in his will, Melos made gifts and benefactions to individuals and church or cultural foundations in Thebes, Athens, Ioannina, Nauplion, Venice and to the Megaspeleion Monastery. In addition to his will, see also E. D. Liata, “Ο Γεράσιμος Θηβών (1722-1734) και έπειτα Π. Πατρών (1734-1759) και η ανακαίνιση του Μητροπολιτικού ναού της Θήβας” [Gerasimos of Thebes (1722-1734) and later of Patras (1734-1759) and the restoration of the cathedral of Thebes], *Θησαυρίσματα* XII (1975), pp. 155-171; G. S. Ploumidis, “Σχολεία στην Ελλάδα συντηρούμενα από κληροδοτήματα Ελλήνων της Βενετίας (1603-1797)” [Schools in Greece maintained by bequests by Greeks of Venice (1603-1797)], *Θησαυρίσματα* IX (1972), p. 244.

<sup>18</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more generally, to possess the status of a merchant lent a particular prestige and social distinction, and demanded appropriate treatment of those so esteemed, both in their lifetime and afterwards. This is confirmed not only in the case of Melos, but also in that of another merchant, Michalis Voyiatzis of Kalamata. When in 1689 the latter was in Venice for professional reasons and fell ill, he drew up his will, in which he expresses the wish, in case he died while in Venice (which in fact came to pass only a few days later), that they “bury [me] as befits a merchant, with the bishop and as many priests as my trustee, kyr-Panayiotakis, deems appropriate and to escort me with the banner of the church of San Giorgio”. A. Fotopoulos, “Ανέκδοτα έγγραφα από το αρχείο της οικογένειας Μπενάκη της Καλαμάτας” [Unpublished documents from the archive of the Benakis family of Kalamata], *Μεσσηνιακά Χρονικά* III (2003-2007), p. 178. For information concerning the manner of burial of the Greeks in Venice, see E. Liata, “Μνείες θανάτων Ελλήνων της Βενετίας από τα ταμιακά βιβλία της Ελληνικής Αδελφότητας των ετών 1536-1576” [References to deceased Greeks of Venice in the fiscal records of the Greek brotherhood for the years 1536-1576], *Θησαυρίσματα* XI (1974), pp. 191-239.

his election to various offices: he was on several occasions elected member of the Quarantia, one of the two Governatori, and one of the twelve Degani della Banca, but he was never elected to the highest office of the Guardian Grande, although he was several times a candidate.<sup>19</sup> It is worth noting his election in 1716 as a member of the Rappresentati di Napoli di Romania, that is one of the seven-member delegation from Nauplion – not Thebes (the place of his family's origin), nor Athens (his birthplace and place of residence in his youth), but Nauplion, a city where he had never lived, but had visited briefly for the first and only time, as we have seen, in order to meet his family. He was a representative of the town where his siblings resided and where he had set up trade relations, and it was precisely these economic relations and professional ties that played a key role in his election as a suitable representative and not the concept of a homeland. It was in this way that the Athenian Melos entered into the quasi-institutionalized community of traders from Nauplion.

Melos also made his presence felt in the Greek community of Venice, at all levels throughout his life, through his social and philanthropic activities. He was well disposed to help both financially and morally, support newcomers, act as guardian to young students, offer charity to the poor, assist in the ransoming of slaves, act as mediator in legal disputes, and make donations to schools and churches in his many "homelands": Thebes, Athens, the Peloponnese and beyond. In short, he participated fully as a social being, a pious "greco" and "honest businessman" who had made a comfortable life for himself, but with the misfortune of being without an heir. He was generous in spending his material and spiritual resources for the sake of his compatriots; he was a small-scale benefactor who divided his charitable works among a variety of small-scale benefactions. As such, the information we possess about his activities, drawn mainly from his rich correspondence, is valuable for our understanding of the social involvements of this type of merchant who belonged to the Greek diaspora in the early eighteenth century.

In contrast to this evocation of his quality of life, in the following pages we will be concerned with the purely professional side of his activities, drawing primarily on the strictly financial data in the archive and using the correspondence only for supplementary material. Let us clarify at the outset that the case of a Greek merchant will concern us here as a type and not as an individual personality, since Georgios Melos can be made to stand for a

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<sup>19</sup> At different places in the books of the Archive of the Greek Community in Venice: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 2, Κ41; Οργάνωση 1, Κ1; Οργάνωση 2, Κ25; Οργάνωση 3, Κ8 και Κ9.

representative example of small- and medium-scale traders operating in the Venetian sphere and for this reason can be considered a good observatory for the study of attitudes and practices in the commercial world of his time. This study is also offered, thanks to the sufficiency of the evidence, as an investigation of the mode of operation for commercial networks, not only in terms of their horizontal relations but also vertical, from the highest to the lowest economic strata of traders or commercial enterprises, in order to establish the convergences between them or the differences with regard to the operational modes and mechanisms of these networks.

Georgios Melos was born, lived and died in an era of social and political ferment, a transitional period for the economic situation of the Greek people under foreign rulers – whether alternating or stable. A particular feature of this time was the restless mobility of these subject people, among others as well, within the Mediterranean basin and their steady but also intensifying and ever-expanding engagement in economic activities such as trade and shipping, which took them beyond traditional agriculture and animal husbandry.<sup>20</sup> The aptitude for commercial enterprises penetrated and spread to all levels of society, regardless of the pre-conditions for the ultimate success or otherwise of the endeavour. Amidst this indiscriminately generalized thirst for predictable and quick wealth from trade would emerge the success stories of those who enjoyed a business career characterized by both continuity and development throughout the eighteenth century and, in the case of some, even into the nineteenth. But for most, business ventures would remain an occasional private engagement that would not continue beyond the individual's lifespan.

Although involved in trade exclusively and without interruption for some 60 years, Melos never sought to create, or never had the opportunities or suitable conditions in which to create, a commercial business with prospects for continuity and, even more importantly, with growth potential.<sup>21</sup> Although

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<sup>20</sup> The full treatment by Asdrachas *et al.*, *Ελληνική οικονομική ιστορία*, pp. 34-45 (S. Asdrachas), sets the framework of the general economic factors, spheres of influence and geography, as they developed, became intertwined and gave shape to the Greek economy in the modern period.

<sup>21</sup> Disillusioned by his collaboration with his brothers and having experienced the disappointment of the ambitions he had attached to them, Georgios Melos expressed his bitterness and indignation in a letter to Nikolos: "I have one life and I don't want to lose it thanks to business; I don't have children and, if I came here, I did it for your sake.": EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 19-7-1713; relations between the brothers had not improved a year later, since Georgios would complain adamantly to his brother

the scale of his trade was not huge, the geographical range of his activities reached across almost the entire Mediterranean, from Spain and Sicily to the Italian markets and the Ionian Islands, to the Peloponnese and Smyrna and as far south as the markets along the Barbary Coast. In the Venetian period of his life and work, which is of concern to us here, Melos turned his hand to various sectors of trade. The result was his composite image as merchant, agent and broker. In what follows we will look more closely at this tripartite character.

It is worth noting from the start that compared to other contemporary Greek merchants of Venice – the Peroulis, Kapetanakis, Kothonis, Taronitis, Karagiannis and Maroutsis families to mention only a few – who were primarily traders and only incidentally and occasionally acted as brokers for others, Melos functioned mainly as a correspondent-agent, creating in this capacity a link to other commercial networks. Even as an established merchant in the Venetian market he negotiated all trade deals in person, and yet for his business to function it was necessary that he organize a network of trade partnerships, building on trust and honesty, as well as the competence of his associates. As we shall see later, he created his own small networks, whenever and wherever they were needed to facilitate his work and strengthen his role and position in the major commercial networks of which he was a part.

Before we treat in detail Melos' principal role as a commercial correspondent-agent, let us look at the economic range and volume of commercial transactions in which he engaged for his own account. Departing Nauplion in August 1712 for Venice, he left his brother Nikolos 4772 reals for immediate investment in silks, and another 3139 in reserve, making a total of 7911 reals. From the first account<sup>22</sup> that Nikolos sent his brother the following year, it appears that until March 1713 he had invested 6420 reals in silk (the purchases plus the cost of transportation to Venice). The balance is favourable for Georgios Melos with a remainder of 1491 reals still in Nikolos' possession.

In addition, a few months later, in September 1713, Georgios Melos drew up the "balance of his business", in accordance with which he kept in his trunk 10,000 ducats in various currencies and another 2000 ducats in the "banco". Adding to this amount what some people in Venice owed him, estimating what he expected to receive from the sale of the silk, madder and cotton thread which he had in his shop, and subtracting 2593 ducats which he owed to others, indicates that his overall commercial capital in cash,

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that he had deceived him when he promised at the start of their collaboration that "You would invest my money, and I came here and am spending what I have to hand.": EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Κ12, letter dated 25-10-1714.

<sup>22</sup> The evidence is drawn from the document of N. Melos dated 22-3-1713. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ1, file 3.

stock and debt to be collected amounted to 40,621 ducats.<sup>23</sup> Let us retain this amount to compare it with the final account he drew up at the end of his life as recorded in the *maestro* and in his will.

Table 1 sets out the scattered economic data contained in the registers, invoices of orders and Melos' correspondence, where each transaction made on his account was recorded throughout the period of his life in Venice.

Table 1

Commodity	Quantity	Amount received in ducats	Date of transaction	Comments
coffee	2405 ltr. 520 ltr.	1130 260	1714/5, Feb. 1717, March	from Alexandria via Livorno
flax	1209 ltr. (2 balls)		1715, Aug.	same shipment with incense (see below)
incense	1261 ltr. (3 crates)	569	1715, Aug.	same shipment with flax (see above)
ivory	774 ltr. (17 tusks) 2130 ltr. (30 tusks)	289 817	1715, Aug. 1715/6, Feb.	from Alexandria to Venice
madder	3 packages	—	1713, Oct.	from Zakynthos; lost in shipwreck
mirrors	4 chests	243 <sup>1</sup>	1729/30, Feb.	joint venture with S. Kapetanakis; from Livorno to Cadiz
pearls	8 cases	2121	1718, Sept.	from Livorno to Spain
silk, Chinese	370 ltr. (1 package)	2960 <sup>2</sup>	1719, April	joint venture with L. Kapetanakis; from Genoa to Livorno
silk, Peloponnesian	6000 ltr. (20 packages)	11,000	1713, Sept. 1715, May	sent by N. Melos in various shipments on different ships
steel	7385 ltr. (14 cases)	601	1717, June	from Venice to Cadiz
"various merchandise"	3 chests	278 <sup>3</sup>	1727, Nov.	joint venture with S. Kapetanakis; for Cadiz to P. Kapetanakis, who sent the money to L. Kapetanakis (Livorno), who invested it in mirrors

NB: a) ltr. = *litre venete*, Venetian pound.

b) <sup>1,2,3</sup>: denote the portion that represented Melos' share.

c) The total gross earnings from expenditure – not profits – amounted to 20,268 ducats.

<sup>23</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ2, document dated 14-9-1713, file 3.

We may conclude from the Melos documents, as from Table 1, that the primary product around which his commercial activities in the Peloponnese were centred was silk and the main, if not exclusive, suppliers were his brothers. Let us very briefly trace how the Peloponnesian silk was procured and made its way from the Peloponnese to Venice, as far as can be reconstructed from the Melos Archive. In the appropriate season, Nikolos Melos went in person to the villages and “closed his deals”. That is to say, he purchased the quantities of silk he wanted in advance,<sup>24</sup> taking care to be there at the same time as the other merchants, since a coordinated procedure of pre-purchasing the silk kept the producers from modifying their prices however they wished and thereby making the prices prohibitive to small-scale merchants and buyers who arrived later. However, some large-scale foreign traders had no qualms about violating this procedure and would visit the silk-producing villages even earlier, taking advantage of the producers’ need for cash. They would transact even earlier pre-purchases, thereby pushing up the prices to such a level that the next buyers would be forced either to withdraw or accept the elevated price.<sup>25</sup>

When the silk, whether from the region of Kalavryta or Mystras, was ready, the producers or their associates, or even more rarely the buyers themselves, arranged for their transport from the villages to Patras.<sup>26</sup> Thence

<sup>24</sup> As he wrote in his letters dated 22-6-1713, 11-7-1713 and 1-8-1713. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', 08, file 4.

<sup>25</sup> On 27 June 1714, Michalis Melos wrote to Georgios: “and it annoys me that you did not write earlier to Nikolos to find money with a bill of exchange and to get it on your account, but you waited until the last minute. In the Peloponnese, you always have to plan ahead to buy goods and even then you might not get what you want. Getting there to buy in good time is the practice of some foreign traders, who give 1/2 or even 3/4 a real per oka over what the traders of the Peloponnese give for the goods, and these men are working for Genova, or Livorno or Venice.”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', 05.

<sup>26</sup> Indeed, Georgios Melos was uncompromising on this subject: “Once again I tell you not to leave the silk in the hands of others, just take care to load it yourself, and mine as well, and stay another ten days in Patras so they get to Zakynthos,” he wrote on 6 July 1714 to Nikolos, and returned to it with the same intransigence again on 11 August 1714: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12. The centralized collection of Peloponnesian silk at Patras was a long-established practice stemming from the first period of Turkish rule and was renewed in the *kanunname* of 1716 for the second period of Turkish rule, without the 30 intervening years of Venetian occupation having changed the way in which the product was distributed, because this served well the tax demands of both rulers. For the relevant rulings in the Ottoman texts, see E. Balta, “Οι κανονναμέδες του Μοριά” [The *kanunnames* of Morea], *Ίστωρ* VI (December 1993), pp. 33-35, 54.

the silk was shipped to Zakynthos, where it was received by Angelo Foskardi and Petro Venetanto, associates who trans-shipped the merchandise to Corfu, and from there it would normally continue on the same ship as far as Venice or, less usually, it would be again shipped before arriving at its final destination. This was the usual route used for transporting silk from the Peloponnese to Venice, although sometimes for economic reasons, or to move it more quickly, or on account of political factors, Zakynthos was bypassed and the merchandise was transported directly to Corfu from Patras. But the merchants in Venice did not recommend this route to their collaborators, discouraging it as high risk.<sup>27</sup>

It is clear that at all the transit points there were facilitators who collaborated with the merchants and undertook, whenever the merchandise was unaccompanied (which was usually the case), to look after the shipment or smooth the journey's continuation according to written instructions. Such instructions had in most instances been sent ahead or accompanied the goods, having been delivered by the merchant-agent to the captain and entrusted to his care. These facilitators undertook the necessary bureaucratic steps and paid the required fees, which they charged to the merchant in addition to their own commission, usually 2% of the value of the merchandise in the bill of lading which they handled. Before leaving this part of Georgios Melos' business activities, it should be noted that he had a shop in Venice that was used as a temporary storehouse for goods in transit, which he had either received or was intending to dispatch, since he was not engaged in retail

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<sup>27</sup> "Don't ever again send stuff here from Patras, because the risks are great," wrote G. Melos from Corfu en route to Venice; and he returned to the subject on 19 October 1712, after he had reached Venice: "Don't send anything to Corfu, because there are many dangers there." He himself, together with some companions, crossed from Corfu to Otranto, accompanied by two Venetian ships and from there they continued their journey to Venice. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Κ12. On the importance of Corfu as an entrepôt and as a hub for sailings to and from Venice, from the sixteenth century onward, see G. D. Pangratis, "Το Κοινοβούλιο των Μυτιληναίων στην Κέρκυρα (1548-1549)" [The *Consulate of the Mytilinians on Corfu (1548-1549)*], *Ενώ και Εσπέρια* IV (1999-2000), pp. 22-44. On the harbour as it was in the seventeenth century, see A. Nikiphorou, "Η διακίνηση του εμπορίου στο λιμάνι της Κέρκυρας κατά τον 17ο αιώνα" [The trans-shipping of goods at the harbour of Corfu in the seventeenth century], in A. Nikiphorou (ed.), *Κέρκυρα, μια μεσογειακή σύνθεση. Νησιωτισμός, διασυνδέσεις, ανθρώπινα περιβάλλοντα, 16ος-19ος αι., Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, Κέρκυρα 22-25 Μαΐου 1996* [Corfu, a Mediterranean synthesis: island identity, junctions, human environments, sixteenth-nineteenth century: proceedings of the international conference, Corfu, 22-25 May 1996], Corfu 1998, pp. 81-100; also Asdrachas *et al.*, *Ελληνική οικονομική ιστορία*, pp. 231-232.



business. The goods he traded were sold wholesale, as we have seen already and will see again below, to merchants either in Venice or other markets.

Of the triptych of Melos' activities – general merchant, agent and financial broker – the first does not appear to have been a systematic concern and in any case his involvement in it lessened during the last decade of his life. If his commercial involvement in Venice had a vigorous and optimistic start, its prospects were checked by the change in the political situation in the Peloponnese, and it was perhaps in any case late for the elderly Melos to undertake a new beginning with a fresh orientation, even if he did initially make an attempt.

The sector to which Melos devoted his energy most intensely and regularly throughout the course of his professional career was that of *corrispodente*.<sup>28</sup> The role of agent was his main occupation and brought him limited, but secure and predictable profit. As *corrispodente* of the Greek merchants, he undertook on the part of third parties – not necessarily only long-term collaborators, but occasional ones as well – to receive their goods for sale in the Venetian market, or to forward them to another market either within or outside Italy and/or to buy Venetian goods on a third party's account and dispatch them to destinations and persons designated by the third party. Trust in this type of brokerage was, moreover, a firm policy of many merchants, as Nikolos clearly formulated in a letter: "Brothers, what can I say? The brokerage of merchandise is the best business in the world, whenever someone's got goods to send you, or you send them goods at guaranteed prices, and the goods are received in lazaretto."<sup>29</sup> We should not take this view for a conservative, personal opinion of a small-scale merchant who operated on the margins of serious commercial activity. Rather, trade brokerage was a widespread practice among businessmen both large-scale and small, and to act as an agent guaranteed a limited yet steady and largely risk-free income, something not to be scorned. In fact, even the leading merchants or commercial companies were occupied with trade brokerage well beyond the eighteenth century.

Having decided on this course, Melos endeavoured to engage the partnership of many merchants, including powerful ones, and did not hesitate to build up a network that reached across the entire Mediterranean region. It is important to consider that in the formation of such networks, a key factor beyond that of family relations was one's place of origin. Bearing

<sup>28</sup> On the role of the *sensali*, the formal agents in markets in the West, see O. Katsiardi-Hering, *Η ελληνική παροικία της Τεργέστης, 1751-1830* [The Greek community of Trieste, 1751-1830], Athens 1986, pp. 399-403.

<sup>29</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ8, letter dated 26-2-1713 (= 1714), file 4.

this in mind, we would locate Georgios Melos within the context of the Athenian and later, by transfer, the Naupliote network of merchants who were active in the eighteenth century between Venice and the Levant.

Naturally, there were parallel networks active at the same time in the same, or at least overlapping, areas. These had some common collaborators, but as teams they operated independently without professional interaction. For example, Melos never had any professional relationship with the Peroulis family, Athenian merchants who were recognized by all their contemporaries as the paradigmatic Greek merchant princes, and they were indeed noblemen, with whom everyone wanted to do business of some sort. In addition, he does not seem to have collaborated with or even attempted to penetrate the famously dynamic Epirote commercial network. In contrast to his brothers in the past, Georgios Melos had no joint business with merchants of the Kothonaïos or Maroutsis families, who constituted a constant and active commercial presence in Venice and elsewhere throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Melos based his commerce on a flexible network of merchants, agents and suppliers – Greeks, Italians and Spaniards. The whole ensemble of individuals with whom he was involved can be classified into the following groups:<sup>30</sup>

- 1) The permanent associates with whom he had purely professional relations.
- 2) The occasional associates with whom he had small-scale dealings on a trial basis or in exchange for some service he provided them.
- 3) A world of friends and acquaintances with whom he maintained mainly social relations and corresponded, making use of them as sources of information without their collaboration developing into a formal business relationship of any sort.
- 4) Finally, a circle of peers with whom he probably collaborated at some time, in some way.

Next, we refer to Melos' associates briefly as a whole, but classified in a different way:

- 1) Merchant-buyers to whom Melos sold the goods he received in Venice.
- 2) Merchant-suppliers from whom Melos bought whatever goods his associates outside Venice ordered.
- 3) *Corrispodenti*-agents-recipients of goods.

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<sup>30</sup> On a basic register of a businessman in that period, see Asdrachas *et al.*, *Ελληνική οικονομική ιστορία*, pp. 471-472 (O. Katsiardi-Hering).

- 4) Insurers.
- 5) Travelling merchants: those who accompanied the merchandise, captains who oversaw commercial interests.
- 6) Friend-informants.
- 7) Secretary-assistants.

The information drawn from this particular archive, when properly sifted and organized, can help us outline the mechanisms by which a certain type of commercial network, such as that of Georgios Melos, operated. Despite its peculiarities, and even though Melos' network cannot be classified among those of the leading businessmen of his day, his network nevertheless shares common features with larger networks, as we would logically expect.

In the 20-year period between 1712 and 1732, Melos had dealings with 37 different individuals or companies (Fratelli..., Compagni...), Venetian merchants exclusively, to whom he sold whatever merchandise he received from his associates outside Venice, either on his own account or that of a third party. Let us now examine in Table 2 who these individuals were and what the nature of Melos' dealings with them was.

Table 2

Buyers	Date of transaction	Commodity : Quantity	Comments
Andrico, Franc.	1719, Aug.	madder : 228 ltr.	
Baretta, Giampaolo	1714, Oct.	silk from Kalavryta : 1327 ltr.	
Batistolis, Bastian	1716, Oct.	flax : 498 ltr.	
Bechiri, Marcantonio	1715, May	wool : 3 balls	
Besano, Giuseppe	1716, Sept.	silk from Mystras : 168 ltr.	
Chenderi, Gianetto	1716, May	silk : 180 ltr.	
	1716, July	silk from Kalavryta : 268 ltr.	
Cohen, Giacob	1718, Oct.	silk from Mystras : 1 package	

Buyers	Date of transaction	Commodity : Quantity	Comments
Dadia, Giacomo	1715, Sept.	ivory : 774 ltr. (17 tusks)	
		ivory : 2130 ltr. (30 tusks)	
Dalapinia, Paolo	1713, Nov.	silk : 1 <i>colletto</i>	exchange
Duadone, Fancesco	1715, March	coffee : 407 ltr.	
Filossi, Giambattista	1715, May	silk from Kalavryta : 1196 ltr.	
	1716, July	silk from Kalavryta : 554 ltr.	
	1716, Oct.	silk from Kalavryta : 477 ltr.	
	1719, Aug.	silk from Kalavryta : 300 ltr.	
Fleischer and Zimmerman	1717, April	silk from Kalavryta : 271 ltr.	
Gioia, Francesco-Alessandro	1716, March	silk : 1 package	
Koudouniolas, Alexandros and Christophoros	1718, Oct.	cotton : 44 balls	
Maggi, Filippo	1712, Nov.	silk : 211 ltr.	exchange for fabric
	1715, May	silk : 237 ltr.	
Malasioti, Giampaolo	1713, Sept.	silk : 3 <i>colletti</i>	exchange for fabric
Martinelli, Juanne Martin	1714, July	silk : 2070 ltr. (9 packages)	
Menini, Michelangelo and Domenico	1715, March	wool : 773 (3 balls)	
Pelegrini, Paolo	1712, Dec.	silk : 9 packages	partial exchange for fabric
	1713, Nov.	silk : 1 package	
	1720, Sept.	silk : 4 packages	
Petrini, Giovanni-Domenico	1715/6, Feb.	silk : 5 packages	half exchange for fabric

Buyers	Date of transaction	Commodity : Quantity	Comments
Pichini, Giacomo	1719, Aug.	madder : 172 ltr.	exchange for 12 dozen fezes
Privato, Madelin	1715, Nov.	flax : 1 package	
Sanjonio, Giampaolo	1714, Aug.	silk from Kalavryta : 1 ltr.	
Scala and Carli	1719, April	silk from China : 1 ball	
Schwagen Brothers	1717, May	sponges : 3 balls	
Silvestrini, Giambattista	1715, July	<i>strizi marini</i> : 2100 pieces	exchange for 126 ltr. theriaca
Stingler, Giovanni-Martin	1715, July	coffee : 964 ltr.	
Tassi, Angelo	1715, Nov.	flax : 1 ball	
Teabon, Daniel	1717, April	braid trim : 4849 ltr.	
Tinfel, Zuanne-Alberto	1715, July	coffee : 389 ltr.	
Tomasini, Bernardo	1717, April	coffee : 3 packages	
Tomasini, Giacomo	1715, Oct.	incense : 1261 ltr.	
Torn, Alvise	1716, March	silk : 1 package	
Ungaro, Giovanni-Maria	1713, Nov. 1714, Oct.	silk from Kalavryta : 14 ltr.	purchase in 5 instalments
Venturi, Ruselo	1719, Aug.	madder : 336 ltr.	
Zefferelli, Daniel	1717, April	coffee : 4 packages	

NB: ltr.= *litre venete*, Venetian pound.

Among the individuals with whom Georgios Melos had dealings appear the names of well-known big businessmen in Venice, such as Giambattista Filossi, Giovanni-Maria Ungaro, Paolo Pelegrini and Paolo Dalapinia, who was considered to be “the best businessman in *merceria* [haberdashery]”, and others,<sup>31</sup> as Georgios Melos would write to his brother. Melos was always personally involved with the negotiations and sales of merchandise to the merchants without the intervention of an agent or aid, and for this reason, when on account of his health or advanced age he could no longer manage his business in the same manner, he discontinued this part of his commercial activities.

He did not have regular buyers but preferred, as is clear from his registers, to address himself to a new customer for each sale. He would sometimes divide the same merchandise from one shipment between two or three different buyers in an attempt to guarantee in this way the greatest profit by finding a better sale, if he was not satisfied with the first buyer and hoped to attain a better price by approaching another buyer. This practice carried with it a risk, however, since he could incur a loss rather than profit if in the meantime – even if the time lapse between two deals was short – the market prices changed on account of a superfluity of goods available, or decrease in demand, and instead of increasing, the price would fall. In only a few instances did Melos deal more than once with certain merchant-buyers: twice he did business with three merchants (G. Chenderi, G. Dadia, F. Maggi); three times he sold merchandise to Pelegrini and four times to Filossi. It is worth noting in particular the case of the Venetian merchant G.-M. Ungaro with whom Melos had contracted an agreement in the autumn of 1713 for the provision by March the following year of 14 packages of silk (known as a *colletta*) from Kalavryta. In fact, Melos would sell him the agreed-upon quantity in five instalments, but spread out until October 1714, and payment for the purchase was made in instalments until December 1714. It should be noted that Ungaro was one of the five merchant-buyers with whom Melos had collaborated from early on and with such regularity, but he struck a business arrangement of this kind only with him. The commitment to provide such a large quantity of silk within a period of only six months – even if in the end he did not manage to keep it, and nearly doubled the time required to fulfil the agreement – might be accounted for by demand and have been the buyer's request. However, it might also have been the Greek merchant's initiative, if he was optimistic about his debut on the Venetian

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<sup>31</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 14-10-1712.

market and wanted to establish a dynamic presence. He would therefore have wanted to guarantee a stable buyer from amongst the most important names in Venice who would absorb the continuous flow of large quantities of silk from the Peloponnese which he had hoped would be arriving.

The goods Melos sold to the Venetian merchants included products from the markets of the Orient, but mainly from the Peloponnese and Smyrna: small quantities of wool, madder, coffee, cotton, flax, sponges, wax and incense and, of course, large quantities of silk, from Kalavryta, Mystras and once from China. Payment was usually in cash within a period of a few months, but in a small number of cases merchandise was exchanged for various Venetian goods, mainly fabrics, but also theriaca (opium) and Egyptian fezzes, which were supplied by the Venetian merchant-buyers themselves.

With the exception of these few cases of merchant-buyers who also served as suppliers for Georgios Melos, usually the suppliers and buyers were different people. In the course of a 20-year period, Melos collaborated with 23 merchant-suppliers, all of whom were Venetians except for Rallis Notaras, a silk producer and large-scale silk merchant in Trikala, in Corinthia. Let us now turn to Table 3 to consider Melos' suppliers and the goods they supplied.

Table 3

Suppliers	Date of transaction	Commodity	Quantity
Bacarin, Pietro	1725, Aug.	rosaries	3775 dozen
Cavallaro, Simon	1717, May	steel	7385 ltr.
Gasparini, Gasparo	1715/6, Feb.	pearls	8615 ltr.
	1716, May	pearls	3862 ltr.
	1716, July	pearls	707 ltr.
Giambelli, Inassio	1720, April	cloth	76 bracci
Giannini, Pichin	1716, Nov.	coloured paper	48 risme
	1717, Apr.	coloured paper canvas	12 risme 24 bracci
Gulielmi, A. and Baluardi	1720, March	steel	5374 ltr. (2 chests)
Maggioni, Juanne	1715, July	garnets and rubies	80 mazzi
	1716/7, Feb.	garnets and rubies	

Suppliers	Date of transaction	Commodity	Quantity
Orti, Giacomo	1722, Aug.	pearls	6107 ltr.
Pasquinelli, Giovanni-Maria	1714, Oct.	satin in various colours	132 bracci
Provedan, Pedro	1716, Dec. 1721, Apr.	pearls pearls	2402 ltr. 6672 ltr.
Regatini, Giorgio Tomaso (eredi di...)	1721, Oct. 1722, July 1723, Oct.	steel steel steel	9026 ltr. (15 chests) 2130 ltr. (4 chests) 10,921 ltr. (20 chests)
Salchi, Domenico	1725, March	paper	12 mazzetti
Saquedel, Juanne	1724, July 1725, Aug.	rosaries rosaries	2008 dozen 750 dozen
Scala, Giorgio	1713, Feb. 1714, June	fabric fabric	135 bracci 60.5 bracci
Scarello, Cristoforo	1721, Aug. 1723, Dec.	general "merchandise" and fabric	7.5 bracci
Scotti, Bernardo	1717, April	orpiment and vitriol	
Straus, Bernardo	1722-1725	garnets, rubies and pearls <sup>1</sup>	
Valle, Bartolomeo	1723, April	different types of paper	
Valle, Pedro	1723-1724	garnets, rubies, pearls and rosaries <sup>2</sup>	
Vichelli, Giampietro	1720, May	nails	24,000
Zelo, Giambattista	1714, Oct.	braid trim	24 ltr.
Zigala, Giovanni-Maria	1713/4, Jan.	rifles, pistols, spades, needles	

NB: a) *litre venete*, Venetian pound.

b) <sup>1</sup>, <sup>2</sup>: Melos purchased these items on different dates.



As a rule, Melos carried out only a single transaction with each of his suppliers, as he did with his buyers. There were only a few exceptions to this. He approached six traders on a second occasion to obtain a particular item; and in three instances he bought merchandise from only two traders – Gasparo Gasparini and the firm Eredi di G. T. Regatini. It is interesting to note that he often came into contact with different sources to procure exactly the same merchandise, and this, in fact, without any great period of time elapsing between the purchases. Melos' strategy of systematically selecting different sources for his trading transactions and maintaining a steady relationship with particular traders in only very few instances is related both to the type and volume of his business dealings and to particular qualities of the given individual. The fragmentariness of his business affairs, the variety of the items traded, the preferences of purchasers and, above all, Melos' concern to respond in the best way possible to the demands of his associates all obliged him to pursue quality in combination with a low price; that is, he not only conducted market research but also opted for "multi-fragmentation", selecting different individuals both for purchases and sales. He based both the satisfaction and broadening of his circle of associates on this practice. In other words, he increased his profits by acting as intermediary.

In keeping with this line of action and in contrast to his buyers, Melos always paid directly and in cash, as he believed that exchange in kind and purchases with deadlines were disadvantageous, both because of the financial expense incurred and the waste of time that came with this type of transaction. For this reason he preferred going to the Rialto in person, with cash in hand; he characteristically wrote his brother that "I want you to know that whatever I buy for you I buy in cash, and you have a serious advantage in finding good deals, as I walk every day like a skinner with bag in hand",<sup>32</sup> thus giving us a vivid image of the commercial world of Venice.

The items supplied and the orders placed by his associates exhibited great variation. These included a wide range of fabrics, yarns and threads, a variety of glasswork items, an array of stationery, household goods, metal products, different types of weaponry, ironmongery, as well as books, pharmaceutical products and many other items. At this point, it should be noted that Table 3, as well as the table itemizing traders and purchasers (Table 2), were compiled using data in Melos' *maestro* and reproduce the information concerning both the people and the merchandise in the manner in which it had been recorded. However, the file also contains scattered data located in consignment

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<sup>32</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 22-5-1714.

contracts or in letters to his associates, which do not mention the names of merchant-buyers or suppliers of the merchandise.<sup>33</sup> Consequently, under no circumstance should one consider Table 3 to be complete; rather, it provides a part – certainly the largest – of Georgios Melos' turnover.

In order to guarantee the quality or type of item ordered, the agent often turned to a *mostra*, or sample, of the merchandise whenever this was possible, or to their precise description in cases where the items could not be sampled. The commissioning agent sometimes followed this practice as well, in order to update associates on some new product available on the market or suggest something in its place that was considered better or was the only item available on the Venetian market.<sup>34</sup>

The role of correspondent-agent bore Georgios Melos satisfactory profits. He chased after business, his level of activity remarkable for his age; his commission was steady at 2% above the total value (*ad valorem*) of the merchandise, and thus the agent's percentage of profits was not subject to fluctuation (in contrast to the trader's), being linked as it was to the purchase price, extra costs and the selling price of the product.

In comparing the sales with the purchases he carried out as intermediary, it turns out that the former significantly outweighed the latter in terms of both volume and value. Certainly, despite his clearly expressed esteem for intermediation, when Melos originally began his trading activity with his brothers, his ambition had been to become very active as a merchant of silk, a

<sup>33</sup> For example, in the letter-invoices – one of the many such cases – itemizing different types of fabrics which G. Melos sent to Nikolos on 10-9-1714, we find recorded the quality, quantity and price of the goods, but not the supplier. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ2, file 5.

<sup>34</sup> For a historical treatment of the role of the sample in commercial transactions from antiquity to the nineteenth century, see D. H. Gofas, *Δείγμα. Ιστορική έρευνα επί του ελληνικού δικαίου των συναλλαγών* [Sample: an historical study of Greek commercial law], Athens 1970. Let us look at some of the very typical samples in the Melos Archive: in an order for fabrics, N. Melos (30-9-1713) described to his brother a “mauve fabric from Pergamon, not very dark and dyed with indigo blue. Francessetti has some fabric of this quality in his shop and everyone is buying it...”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ8. In another invoice also from Nikolos (1-9-1712) we find “fabric of the londrin type in a brown colour. Go to Scarello's shop and ask for a sample of what you want to buy. This shop too is beneath the arches of the Rialto.”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ8, file 4. Finally, on 26 December 1716 Michalis Melos in Smyrna ordered from his brother in Venice, “ivory tobacco boxes similar to the above samples [he has sketched the design – oval – and the size he wants], six dozen, with designs inside: female figures and other patterns”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ5.

Peloponnesian staple. However, his aspirations were thwarted – not on account of the fall of the Peloponnese to the Turks, but much earlier, owing to poor communication and a problematic partnership with his brother Nikolos.<sup>35</sup> A basic factor for the success of a commercial partnership was strict adherence on the part of the *corrispodente* to the orders of his merchant boss. Of course, this absolute dependence and absence of free initiative on the part of the trader's associated correspondent often boomeranged and had an adverse effect on their commercial activity. The golden mean was to be found somewhere in between: the associate needed to conform, on the one hand, to the orders of the merchant “master”, but be primed, on the other, to take advantage of the opportunities presented in the local market, which did not permit any delays owing to time-consuming, correspondence-based agreements.<sup>36</sup> In short, there had to be readiness and flexibility. However, Nikolos Melos appeared not to possess these attributes, a fact that often gave his brother occasion to criticise him, or whenever he did take the initiative his actions did not meet with the approval of Georgios, who viewed them as bad choices.<sup>37</sup> This kind of

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<sup>35</sup> It is worth having a look at how G. Melos had imagined his business career in Venice and how it evolved in practice: “You wrote that the silk from Mystras was very good, but I had ordered you not to get it for me since I knew it was poor; but since you knew it was good why didn't you go and get me 1000 okas? You wrote that you went to Agia Varvara on the 6th of December and got me 295 okas and I can't understand why you got that since you were supposed to go one month earlier and you would have got me 700 okas, but you justify yourself by saying that as soon as the villagers saw you coming early they would raise the price. I had hoped you would get me this year 2000 okas of silk with my money so that I would be taken seriously in the marketplace. If I brought money with me when I was there, it was because I wanted to buy you merchandise and send it to you from Venice, and I wasn't interested to make a profit of 4%. I didn't come here to make only 200 ducats a year, I came to invest my money and make 2000 ducats. And if I knew it would be like this I would not have come to Venice but would have thought otherwise, because it is my pleasure that you do what you promise to do.”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 23-9-1713.

<sup>36</sup> We offer one example of the two brothers' collaboration. In a letter dated 14 September 1712, Nikolos wrote to Georgios that he did not purchase wheat in June when the prices were low because he did not have an order from him and so he lost a good opportunity since the prices immediately escalated, as he reports much later, on 31 January 1712 (= 1713). EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ8, file 4.

<sup>37</sup> For example, Nikolos' initiative to invest in a ship, loan money which his brother had left him to purchase silk, was stoutly deplored by Georgios. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 16-2-1713. Nikolos' reply, written on 20 June 1713, reveals the problem of the time-lag in communication between transactions: “On the 18th of this month the *San Buonaventura* arrived and I received the orders and all your letters and saw

relationship among associates did not constitute an exception, however, and was frequently observed in other commercial undertakings as well – at least insofar as the surviving evidence allows us to determine.<sup>38</sup>

In drawing to a close this section on the Venetian merchants with whom Melos associated in his capacity as trader-agent, I shall yield to temptation and pose an unanswerable (at least for this project) question: to what extent were the particular traders with whom Melos associated also purchasers or suppliers for other Greek traders active in Venice at the same time? That is, did the Greek commercial networks show a preference for or a clustering around particular Venetian traders? And concomitantly, another question arises: what did these people represent within the commercial world of Venice? An affirmative response to the first question would indicate cohesion among the members of the Greek community beyond the community framework, as well as the operation of the ethnic group in particular fields of activity in the city where its members had settled, such as in the economy and, additionally, in roles of economic leadership (in other words, that they had entered into the ranks of the economic *élite*). This is also traceable through an examination of the relationship between those traders who had settled in Venice and their partners in Greece.

Any answer or conjecture we may give in response to these questions, however, presupposes a broadening of the field of research and a comparative approach between other contemporary Greek commercial archives, as well as, undoubtedly, knowledge of the archives of the Venetian traders of the period. However, this broader questioning moves beyond the limited thematic framework of the present study.

#### *Correspondent-intermediaries*

As already mentioned, in order to ensure the smooth functioning of his commercial network, Georgios Melos collaborated with and employed

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that you have relieved me of the right to conduct our dealings with Genova and Livorno, and I, brother, will do whatever you command me to do.”: ΕΙΒ, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', ©10. In this case, as often happened, the reason for their misunderstanding was the poor timing of revisions intended to cancel, change or delay a previous order, or to hurry or supplement another, according to the movement and prevailing demand in the market for which the particular goods were destined.

<sup>38</sup> For another good example of similar problems, see V. Kremmydas, *Εμπορικές πρακτικές στο τέλος της Τουρκοκρατίας. Μυκονιάτες εμπόροι και πλοιοκτήτες* [Mercantile practices at the end of the Ottoman period: merchants and ship-owners from Mykonos], Athens 1993.

various people as his correspondents (*corrispodenti*) outside Venice. They carried out, on his behalf, the work that he did on the part of others: they accepted merchandise he sent on his own account from Venice or at the behest of another person, in the aim of either selling the merchandise on the spot or forwarding it to another market, in the care of another one of his merchant-associates. They were nodal agents and not auxiliary figures in his world of trade. Let us see in Table 4 who these people were.

Table 4

Associates of G. Melos	Place	Time of association
Borelli, Filippo and Giovanni	Modena	1722, 1724, 1728
Boyer, Veran and Cia	Smyrna	1716
Gerenis, Nikolos	Alexandria	1724
	Cairo	1726
	Livorno	1727
Finochetti and Gaspari	Livorno	1718
Fragelà de Michel	Livorno	1713-1726
Fragelà, Zuanne	Cadiz	1717
Fragelà, Nicolò	Livorno	1726-1732
Kapetanakis, Leonardos	Livorno	1714-1732
Kapetanakis, Pavlos	Cadiz	1717-1728
Mantelos, Ioannis	Patras	1713
Merano, Giannandrea and Marcello	Cartagena	1717
Necco, Juan-Tomaso	Genoa	1716-1731
Necco, Manuel	Genoa	1713-1720
Pavia and Riso	Cartagena	1716

Associates of G. Melos	Place	Time of association
Pratti, Pietro	Parma	1722-1730
Salama and Flores	Alexandria	1712-1728
Sibton, Zacob and Men	Alexandria	1714-1715
Sunina, Abraam	Rosetti	1715
Foskardi, Ang. and Ventanto, Petro	Zakynthos	1713-1715

This category of Melos' associates included nineteen people (or companies) distributed geographically as follows: five in Livorno; three in Alexandria; two in each of Genoa, Cadiz and Cartagena; and one correspondent in each of the remaining markets, that is, in Modena, Parma, Rosetti, Cairo, Smyrna, Patras and Zakynthos. It is also the case with Melos' correspondents that the people recorded in the table were not his only associates in this capacity; however, it is certain that they were the most important and most professional practitioners in this field. There is evidence that Melos occasionally employed various other figures from his broader circle, mainly for smaller tasks. He had a limited – in terms of time and finances – association with most of these intermediaries, using them to move around in markets where he did not carry out steady and continuous financial transactions. They were figures who as a rule had been recommended to him by traders he knew, by his long-standing associates, and who, in offering their services to Melos – not disinterestedly, of course – had hoped to continue their collaboration with him.

He did, however, have a steady collaboration with specific people in whom he took stock to carry out his business affairs and who were active in markets that also comprised the basic structure of his network. Let us see, then, through specific situations, how certain commercial networks intertwined or touched on each other and, at the same time, follow some of the trade routes to and from Venice. Angelo Foskardi and Petro Venetanto acted as Zakynthos correspondents for Melos – and not only. They exclusively received the silk products that arrived from Patras and undertook the task of forwarding them to Venice, either via Corfu or by ship sailing directly from Zakynthos to Venice. The consigners of the silk were Melos' brothers Nikolos and Michalis from Nauplion, and Rallis Notaras from Trikala in Corinthia.

This “silk route” was eventually closed to traffic – at least in Melos’ case – following the recapture of the Peloponnese by the Turks.

On four occasions between 1722 and 1728, F. and G. Borelli in Modena, Italy, received merchandise sent by Melos and forwarded it to Pietro Pratti in Parma, who in turn sent it to J. T. Necco in Genoa, in six consignments, between 1722 and 1730. From 1716 through 1731, J. T. Necco acted as the main Genoa correspondent for Georgios Melos – and for many other traders, both Greek and non-Greek – a position his brother Manuel Necco had previously held, initially working with Nikolos and then with Georgios Melos. As transporters, the Necco brothers received merchandise from various cities in Italy through two main routes: Venice→Livorno→Genoa and Venice→Modena→Parma→Genoa. As a rule, the aim was to forward this merchandise to Cadiz or Cartagena. It was not rare, however, that at the behest of their associates they undertook the sale of some of the merchandise on the spot. Georgios Melos’ *maestro* reveals that over the course of their approximately 15-year business relationship, he sent Necco 45 consignments of a variety of types of merchandise (mainly steel, glassware, imitation pearls, feeding bottles) and in the cases where Necco sold merchandise on the spot, he sent Melos the sum he collected either in cash or directly by bill of exchange. In the cases where the final destination of the merchandise was Madrid, the Necco brothers of Genoa sent it to Juan Martin Necco, their third brother, who had settled there permanently.

On the other route, when merchandise was forwarded through Livorno – a port that had been a commercial hub for Western trade since the sixteenth century, and in particular for Greek trade mainly from the mid-eighteenth century onwards –<sup>39</sup> Melos’ correspondent in that city was Nicolò Fragelà, a nephew of Fragelà de Michel, with whom Melos had collaborated between 1716 and 1725. Melos had had a steady and exclusive business relationship with Fragelà de Michel, who had handled a total of 13 consignments of merchandise originating from Venice, Smyrna or Alexandria; this merchandise was either sold on the spot or forwarded to markets in Spain. Following his death, his nephew and business successor Nicolò Fragelà carried out 6 business transactions in total by order of Melos during the period 1726-1732. These concerned the forwarding of merchandise to Cadiz (to Giovanni Fragelà and Pavlos Kapetanakis), the receipt and sale of a quantity of coffee arriving from

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<sup>39</sup> D. Vlami, *Το φιορίνι, το σιτάρι και η οδός του Κήπου. Έλληνες έμποροι στο Λιβόρνο, 1750-1868* [The florin, the wheat and Garden Street: Greek merchants in Livorno, 1750-1868], Athens 2000.

Alexandria and, finally, the collection of bills of exchange from traders in Livorno on behalf of Melos.

Melos' main correspondent in Livorno was Leonardos Kapetanakis, with whom he had a close and varied business collaboration. At times he sent him various items to be sold in Livorno; in other instances, he sent him goods for transit; and there were also situations in which he gave him the order to invest – but not particularly large sums – in the purchase of merchandise or in commercial voyages.

Another member of the Kapetanakis family, Pavlos, was based in Cadiz. From 1717 to 1728 he received nine consignments with a variety of goods, sent by Melos through the routes we looked at above, and took action for their sale. He sent the sums collected through these sales (in various currencies, mainly Spanish) to Melos either directly by way of various people or through Leonardos Kapetanakis in Livorno. On some occasions – but not regularly – the merchandise was loaded onto ships in Venice, with Cadiz or Lisbon being the direct destinations. Melos' correspondent ensured that any of the Venetian merchandise not absorbed by the Spanish market was forwarded to the *flota*, the commercial convoy, using either the same ship or through trans-shipping, so as to be sold in the markets of the West Indies.

It is understood that none of the people mentioned above who were active in some capacity was an exclusive associate of Melos – not even his brother Nikolos. Every trader, in accordance with his business savvy, capabilities, social position, drive and financial policy “spun” his network of associates using a dense or thin web, selecting few – but financially strong – traders, or, conversely, many medium-sized ones. In the most ideal of situations, he integrated people from all levels into his business circle. In other words, a commercial network could be limited, cohesive and financially strong, or extended, thin and with economically weaker pockets. Of course, there was no shortage of cases – mainly in the area of large-scale trade – where a commercial network was concurrently extended, dense and strong, the direct result of the personality of its creator, his financial standing and his selected strategy. The trader Georgios Melos, as we shall see below, appears to have sought a mixture of the two different models without, however, succeeding.

### *Insurers*

The evolution, or “professionalization” of trade brought about the acceptance and institution of certain basic rules, which, although they had existed in former times, had had limited, occasional and lax enforcement. This situation had arisen because these rules and their effects upon the improvement of



trading practice and the safeguarding of the interests of the parties involved had not become accepted or entrenched. The rules in question were related to the insuring of merchandise being transported. This was a practice that was certainly very old but not generalized across all strata of the world of commerce and the entire spectrum of commercial activity. Small traders had not considered it necessary to insure goods being transported on every occasion and/or in their entirety, and this concerned not only transport on land but also by sea; they risked the maximum, a potential catastrophe or the loss of their merchandise for the sure – yet small – profit they would make by saving on insurance.

Both attitudes concerning the issue are found expressed in Georgios Melos' large archive – and in particular in his verbose and information-rich correspondence. On the one hand, there were trader-associates of his who preferred to send him merchandise uninsured – a view and action to which he was absolutely opposed, and for this reason he insisted upon emphasizing to them in his letters that he did not accept anything uninsured from anyone.

Completely synchronized with and informed about how the large European markets operated, and having decades of personal experience in the field behind him, Melos understood fully that insurance constituted a necessary part of commercial action, and for this reason he “didn't waste the horseshoe for the nail”, as he noted to an associate in his typically proverbial speech. The Melos traders of the Peloponnese also regarded the insuring of merchandise or money sent by their brother from Venice as necessary: “... and everything must be insured, and that by 10% over what it costs; I don't want you to send me anything without insurance...”<sup>40</sup> Nikolos Melos would regularly repeat with almost every order he placed.

The Georgios Melos Archive includes 96 insurance documents, though it is not necessarily implied that this was the total number of such documents. These cover the period of time he was active in Venice – that is, from November 1712 through January 1732. The data one obtains from these documents, in combination with everything related to insurance mentioned in his correspondence and, most importantly, in the records of insurers in his *maestro*, reveal to us some of the commercial practices in this sector.

Immediately upon settling in Venice and initiating his trading activities with the Peloponnese, Georgios Melos never questioned the need to insure the merchandise, and it is for this reason that he upheld this principle with consistency from the beginning of his life to the end, associating, in fact,

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<sup>40</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K7, letter dated 25-9-1713.

with some of the biggest insurers on the Rialto. The strategy he pursued was the following: as a rule, especially in the early years, he would in most cases spread the premiums for the goods he transported between two to four people. He would “get security” for various quantities of the same or different types of merchandise. These items, however, were loaded onto the same vessel and formed part of the same consignment and also shared the final destination. It was more advantageous, he wrote, to get insurance in the Calle, as Taronitis did, than to arrange it himself; in other words, he preferred the official insurers who worked in the service of Venice to the independent trader-insurers on the market. Despite all of this, however, he did not avoid these insurers, as evidenced by his papers.

In Venice he insured not only merchandise that was to leave from there, but also shipments that his associates were to make from other markets/ports (“ritorno di...”) with Venice or some other point as their destination. This insurance was either fixed, for a certain load on a specific ship departing from and arriving at a particular port, or open, up to a specific monetary limit and with “sopra qualsi voglia” loading. When this clause appeared on the insurance document, it meant that the trader for whom the insurance had been arranged could load whatever merchandise he wished until the sum was reached, whenever he wished to do so and “on ships, marsilianas [Venetian ships] or any other vessels under our flag or another friendly flag”, as Melos clarified in his writings to his associates who were merchandise transporters.<sup>41</sup>

In the event that one had taken out insurance for loading from a specific port and the loading did not take place, then the insured party was subject to a fine of 0.5% above and beyond the total amount of insurance. Insurance was proportional, added to the total value of the insured product and was variable, as it depended upon various factors: it was linked to the location and nationality of the ship, the product being transported, the season, the route and, first and foremost, political circumstances. Thus, several months prior to the outbreak of the war in the Peloponnese and faced with the threat and certainty of danger, the cost of all insurance premiums related to ports in that area saw a marked increase in excess of 20%, and despite this no insurers were found who were willing to underwrite the risk, even though the high premiums were especially enticing.

In spite of the fluctuations for the reasons mentioned above, Melos was able to take up insurance, on a regular basis, at a percentage that varied from

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<sup>41</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 5-4-1715 to Foskardi and Venetanto.

3% to 5%, the most common figure being 4-4.5% for merchandise and 2% for monetary sums, “gold and silver”.<sup>42</sup> A case of a shipwreck and fraudulent insurance claims, as recorded in our trader’s archive, presents much interest concerning the different ways of thinking found within the world of trade. On 23 May 1713, Nikolos Melos expeditiously wrote to his brother to say that they had just been informed in Nauplion that the vessel carrying a shipment of various merchandise as well as money, and on which he had loaded two packages of silk, had been wrecked outside Methone. At once, many of those who had had uninsured merchandise on the ship scrambled to notify their correspondents in Venice to “get security”, hoping that the news would be delayed in reaching that city, and thus they would be able to cover a part of the damage that had been caused by collecting on the insurance. Nikolos informed his brother that if he so desired he could also act accordingly, even though his own view – clearly expressed – was that this was “daylight robbery”. Of course, Peloponnesian cunning was thwarted by the operational mechanisms and protection system of the Venetian trading business, with

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<sup>42</sup> The insurance policies recorded in the Melos Archive are at much higher rates than those taken out by P. Xenos in the second half of the eighteenth century, which fluctuated between 0.5-2.5% above the value of the goods. In Melos’ case, moreover, the tendency was for the total value of the goods to appear as lower than the actual value, whereas the opposite was true in the case of Xenos, where the goods were insured at a rate higher than the actual market value; see Asdrachas, *Patmos*, chapter 7. Let us consider, however, several instances from the Melos Archive of the insurance practices mentioned above. On 6 February 1712 (= 1713) Georgios wrote to his brother Nikolos the following: “I wanted to get you insurance on the boat which sior Sadias is sending, but I did not manage since many others had got it already. Do not load anything of mine on that [ship].”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α’, Κ12. In addition, on 12 July 1719 he updates his brother Michalis who is in Trikala, Corinthia: “I took out insurance for a total of 1600 ducats at the Calle di Scurità so that you could load from Vostitsa, Patras and Zakynthos on whatever vessel it happens to be, except for a barca or Londra. And if you want to send merchandise to Corfu, go ahead and send it but write first to Mantelo or someone else for them to insure it for you. I made the insurance for 3.5% and if I can I will get more [...] and when you send merchandise to Zakynthos, write to sior Foskardi to make out the bill of lading for as much as he thinks necessary.”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α’. In another instance, N. Melos loaded three packages of silk at Nauplion destined for Venice and wrote to his brother: “I am sending it to Zakynthos to sior Foskardi and sior Venetanto for them to send uninsured since I do not know whether you renewed the insurance in Zakynthos. In Nauplion they will be loaded with insurance for 2000 ducats which you have procured.”: EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α’, Θ8, file 4, letter dated 23-1-1713 (= 1714). On shipping insurance in Venice more generally, see Alberto Tenenti, *Naufrages, corsaires et assurances maritimes à Venise, 1592-1609*, Paris 1959.

the news concerning the shipwreck reaching Venice first; thus no insurer fell into the trap. In any event, for Georgios Melos, as in the case of many other traders, it was also a matter of commercial ethics: "...let alone how can someone take out insurance and with what conscience when he knows that it has been lost," he would write to his brother two months later.<sup>43</sup>

We have said that Melos used both Venetian public insurers and private ones. According to his archive, he worked with a total of 42 "insurance offices" or insurers, but not with the same frequency and duration in every case. He enlisted the services of many of these only on occasion and, in fact, during the first years of his relocation to Venice there were times when he alternated insurers and later abandoned them, confining himself to a specific number of well-known, highly prestigious Venetian insurers. The list of those with whom he had a very frequent and steady business relationship included Gian-Maria Gianelli (April 1715 - May 1716), with 9 insurance policies; Juan Mariani (March 1714 - October 1718), with 16 policies; Andrea Bonifacio (April 1720 - September 1722), with 14 policies; Antonio Tagliapiera (1713-1719), with 31 policies; and Tagliapiera and Bonifacio (1723-1732), with 33 policies. Melos had a more infrequent and smaller-scale relationship with Aron Uziel (or Visel), Giacomo and Fratelli della Scala, Antonio Zuanelli, Giovanni-Battista Meratti and some Greek traders who on occasion had also acted as insurers,<sup>44</sup> such as Ioannis Dekas, Georgios Zandiris, Leonardos Kapetanakis, Antonios Kontostavlos, Andreas Kothonis, Georgios Stamatelos, Konstantinos Selekis and Michail Peroulis.

It is certain in the case of insurers as well that the above-mentioned individuals were not the only ones with whom Georgios Melos associated. It is without doubt that a number of people – those not recorded in his archives – have eluded us. However, even if they had been included, it appears that they would not have added anything substantially important or ground-breaking to the picture that we have sketched.

#### *Travelling Merchants – Goods Escorts – Captain-traders*

Within the general category of merchants with its many and varied operators, we may also include individuals whose work was in some way auxiliary, in

<sup>43</sup> N. Melos' letter is dated 23-5-1713 and the reply from G. Melos 17(= 28)-7-1713. EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ8, file 4, and K12, respectively.

<sup>44</sup> The phenomenon of insuring shipments assumed a new form and widened to embrace all the commercial ports of the Italian Peninsula from the end of the eighteenth century: see Asdrachas *et al.*, *Ελληνική οικονομική ιστορία*, pp. 478-479 (O. Katsiardis-Hering).

that they performed jobs that facilitated commercial transactions. Merchants employed these individuals either occasionally or systematically depending on circumstances as they arose, or they resorted to them out of necessity in order to gain time or money and thereby overcome unforeseen bottlenecks in the normal functioning of their trade. Georgios Melos was among those merchants who took advantage of the services of such individuals, both traders who acted as escorts, accompanying goods from market to market, or others who were simply acquaintances and friends who were travelling and whom he entrusted to carry small objects, money, business letters or verbal orders to colleagues and friends either outside Venice or in the reverse direction.

The first group of professional travelling merchants, which should be distinguished from that including itinerant traders in retail goods, was often active in particular markets and followed fixed routes: some to destinations in what is today the Greek State, others to Smyrna, others to the Barbary Coast and still others to the Iberian and Italian Peninsulas. All these carried out orders or the shipment of goods on behalf of their client in the context of a formal association with him on a professional basis, involving all that such an arrangement meant in that day, in other words payment of a fee in return for services.

The second group was made up primarily of people from Melos' narrower or wider social context, people in his closest confidence or recommended by trusted colleagues, and they generally offered their services without payment, or in return for a favour. Unlike the first category of travelling merchants who at that time were vital links in the chain of commerce, those involved only occasionally and in various ways in the world of trade functioned in an ancillary fashion, assuming tasks that could easily be done by the members of the first category. Some specific examples drawn from our merchant's world will show the practical application of what has been referred to so far only generally. Georgios Rembos, a Greek merchant in Venice, undertook in the summer of 1715 to accompany to Alexandria some of Melos' fabric in order to deliver it to Souninas for sale; he also carried with him an amount of cash, which Souninas was to invest in coffee or ivory.

In addition, when in August 1728 Mihos Dimos (or Dimas) departed from Venice, he had in his possession three zecchinia from Melos with the charge to purchase with them, upon his arrival in Zakyntos, a quantity of local fabric. Dimos replied to Melos in early September that even though during his eight days on the island he had sought out the fabric in question among the manufacturers, because he failed to find any which met with his satisfaction, he did not make the purchase. The reason for the scarcity and

poor quality of the particular type of fabric was an epidemic that did not allow people to interact and thus work together as usual: "...until now people have not turned their hands to big jobs on account of the plague and have avoided gathering together for joint efforts, such as those mainly performed by women".<sup>45</sup> This one sentence speaks volumes about the nature of small industry! However, since Dimas had to depart, he left the money with a friend, Georgios Koutouzis, and instructed him to execute the order once the situation in the city and market had returned to normal. Indeed, we learn from another document in the Archive that the order was finally executed and the fabric sent to Venice through the agency of Angelo Foskardi.

Melos had a purely professional relationship with Georgios Kladakis, a travelling merchant who operated between Smyrna and Venice, at least during the mid-1720s. Let us see how Melos operated in one case of his collaborations with Kladakis. In June 1725, Kladakis departed from Venice for Smyrna taking with him a chest with 124 litres of theriaca to sell on behalf of Melos. He was charged to invest the money in a specific amount of alacan (a type of cotton fabric), which he was to supplement with up to 100 reals, if necessary, and to send the cloth to Livorno to Frangelà de Michel. If he failed to sell the theriaca while he was in Smyrna, he was to leave it with Stanos Themelis, who would act on his behalf. However, the intervention of a third party was not necessary since Kladakis managed, with great effort and the aid of his friend Panayiotis Politis of Lefkada, to sell the theriaca and purchase the alacan, which he sent to Livorno. The entire process was executed in approximately six months.<sup>46</sup>

These examples are quite indicative of the intertwined relations in the commercial world, but also of the flexibility and cohesion of commercial networks. In the Melos Archive we find some of the Greek merchants familiar to us from other sources working systematically or occasionally with Melos as travelling merchants: Dem. Angravaris, Nikolos Gerenis, Nikolos Dendritsis, Theodosios Kakouris, Leonardos Kairis, Leonardos Korner, Giannakis Kalamitsiotis, Giorgakis Kladakis, Pantelis Lignos, Giorgakis Manolis, Theodosios Tzikaliotis and Anargos Psaros.

A common practice – and not only in this period – was for ship captains to act as traders or agents for goods, thereby playing a direct part in the commercial process. They both transported commodities as freight and

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<sup>45</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ1, file 4, letter dated 1-9-1728.

<sup>46</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ1, file 1, and K11, K12, for the relevant correspondence between Kladakis and Melos.

reaped a profit from commercial transactions either on their own account or on behalf of others. In a very few cases Melos collaborated on commercial ventures with such captains: in May 1715 he sold to Captain Giacomo Bartolo a package of silk from Kalavryta, for which he received half the amount in cash and the remainder through a bank deposit. In another case (February 1716/7) he gave Francesco Rossi, whose boat he used many times to transport goods, a quantity of mirrors to sell at Cadiz or Lisbon and give the money to Pavlos Kapetanakis in Cadiz. Finally, in 1717 and 1718 he invested 236 ducats in bottomry (*cabio maritime*) on the vessel of Luigi Viani, which was travelling from Venice to Thessaloniki.

Lastly, there is the category of occasional traders who should not really be considered as a necessary, organic part of the trade networks, but who made their appearance in commercial transactions in order to satisfy other types of financial needs. Thomas Petrou, for example, a farmer in Argos, sent his son Nikolos to study in Venice and entrusted his custody to Melos. In order to cover part of his son's expenses in the years 1714-1715, Petrou sent to his son's guardian four packages (*colletti*) of silk in three instalments, from the sale of which Melos would keep what he had spent on the young student. This was in fact a mixed transaction, a form of barter with partial payment in kind. Melos undertook a similar form of exchange from time to time with Thodoris Masios, Kallinikios Lavriotis and Leonardos Perdikaris.

Even by the most relaxed criteria, none of the individuals involved can rightly be added to the community of traders, and consequently their commercial transactions are noted not as basic, cohesive elements in the operation of a network, but as supplementary to it. By contrast, key individuals in the trade arena were the "postmen", the couriers of that time. It is known that such people, beyond delivering mail, transported news, money and goods in small quantities, thereby also playing the role of a trader. The Melos Archive reveals such a case: Lorenzo Bandini served as "courier" between Venice and Florence, and only once did Melos entrust him with a ball of silk to send to Leonardos Kapetanakis in Livorno.

### *Friend-informants*

An important element in the successful outcome of a merchant's business arrangements was timely and reliable information, not only directly related to the commercial profile of a place, but also concerning whatever was happening in the prevailing political and social climate that could also impact trade. The merchants and their affiliates kept in touch about their merchandise and also about the conditions of trade, such as the movement of prices and goods

(subjects which had always been of interest to Venetians concerned with the state of play of the economy),<sup>47</sup> but also about the movement of people: who was going where, who had arrived and from where, what news did he bring, who was *corrispodente* of whom, who was trustworthy, and who not, who respected the world of commerce, and who did not.

However paradoxical it may appear, integrity (in other words, a good name) pulled the same weight in the market as did commercial ability. In other words, the titles “honourable”, “most honourable”, “most noble”, etc., preceding a merchant’s name were not mere formalities in a trader’s correspondence, but possessed real meaning. The choice of one or the other epithet was not random, but carefully made to fit a particular individual.<sup>48</sup>

Georgios Melos was quite well-informed through his network and he himself was conscientious about keeping his associates informed about the market in Venice, despite his brother Nikolos’ complaints about incomplete information sent, which had consequences for his own performance. The availability of news, of both special and general interest, was among the desiderata of every merchant, especially when the source was people outside the trade, who were considered more reliable and more objective if they were not involved in commercial activities and not competitors, and their sincerity uncompromised by conflicting interests that would lead to the concealment or misrepresentation of key information.

With this goal in mind, Melos asked Angelo Zambelli, who was in the service of the Venetian consul in Genoa, to inform him of whatever news arrived from Spain about the political situation there. Furthermore, highly interesting and revealing of Melos’ regular and good-quality information about what was happening in the market in Madrid during the period of 1710-1721 is provided in his albeit sparse correspondence with José Grange, an old partner from the Spanish period of his life.

In the early days of his residence in Venice, Melos was updated about the commercial situation in Corfu by Anastasios Nikolopoulos, who upon informing Melos, requested in turn information on the prices in Venice. It is important to note that these two were never associates in a business venture.

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<sup>47</sup> On the importance of staying up-to-date and exploiting every kind of information in the economic fortunes of Venice, see Pierre Sardella, “Nouvelles et spéculations à Venise au début du XVIe siècle”, *Cahiers des Annales* I (1948), pp. 5-85.

<sup>48</sup> E. D. Liata, “Με μυστικές γραφές και τίμιες οι εντιμότατοι πραγματευτές αλληλογραφούν και νεγκοσιάρουν τον 18ο αιώνα” [With “confidential” and “honourable writing”: honourable merchants correspond and do business in the eighteenth century], *Μεσαιωνικά και Νέα Ελληνικά* VIII (2006), pp. 301-316.



The examples cited here can only be taken as suggestive since the information network of our merchant was quite wide, and the sources which fed him regularly, but also sporadically, with all sorts of news were spread across almost all markets in the Mediterranean. He did not appear to have such sources in Central Europe and the Balkans, that is, areas where Melos was not professionally active. In contrast to Melos, the case of Demos Kastrisios shows a merchant based in Thessaloniki who was active in the Italian markets as well as in the Balkans (Wallachia) and Smyrna, creating in this way an extensive trading network, as emerges from his published correspondence from the last decade of the seventeenth century, which constituted a varied and valuable source of business news.<sup>49</sup>

Merchants repeated news that they considered important (mainly commercial in nature) for their associate in two or three communications sent consecutively, so as to guarantee that the information reached its destination, even if one letter was lost. This habit is sometimes a source of confusion for the present-day researcher on account of the different manner in which the same information was expressed from communication to communication, with the result that one might even think that different information was being conveyed.

Apart from a merchant's regular and loyal associates for whom providing information to the "boss" was considered part of their duty, a world of relatives and friends acting as sideline operators for the merchant class also assisted by providing direct or indirect (and typically free-of-charge) work for mutual acquaintances. When the opportunity arose, it was to such reliable people that merchants would turn to transfer funds, valuable objects or confidential letters, in other words, items which they would not have wanted to be lost or mislaid.

They even accepted to lend money at the behest of their merchant-friend – not of course without reimbursement in this case – or to give currency to a person who happened not to have a circle of acquaintances to support him in a market, or because he was a newcomer, or lacked the necessary introductions which would make the local merchants trust him. Sometimes friends of the merchant were recruited, as mentioned above, to convey small objects or goods in small quantities (a few metres of fabric, for example) from one place to another in order to save the merchant transportation costs.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Mertzios, "Εμπορική αλληλογραφία εκ Μακεδονίας (1695-1699)", pp. 246-254.

<sup>50</sup> An example from the Melos Archive clearly reveals this sort of behaviour: after his captivity following the fall of Nauplion and his subsequent ransoming and liberation, M. Melos found himself in Smyrna in a sorry economic state. In an attempt to start up some business dealings there, he turned for support and economic assistance to his brother,

Thanks to their execution of such small-scale services, such people, who played a minor or completely insignificant role for large-scale merchants, were of particular importance in the world of the medium- and especially small-scale traders to whom they offered a significant contribution.

The involvement of mutual friends, the desire for collaboration or the continuation of collaboration with new faces are clearly neither unprecedented nor unique practices; rather, they are enduring features of trade, confirmed by examples of merchants both before and especially after the time in which Georgios Melos was active.<sup>51</sup>

### *Secretary-assistants*

Amidst the variety of commercial personnel and indeed among the main associates of a merchant – both large- and smaller-scale – are those who performed the functions of assistant and secretary, and whose main concern it was to keep the financial ledgers and correspondence of their employer. They were usually young people who were paid an annual (or more rarely monthly) wage and came from the environment of the merchants' relations or friends. They were always individuals who could be trusted and possessed some degree of education, at least facility in reading and writing, and knowledge of the mathematics necessary for trade.<sup>52</sup> Their service at the master-merchant's side was simultaneously an apprenticeship, that is to say, an initiation into the secrets of the profession on a prescribed path toward their active involvement in trade. Thus, either when he considered himself ready and the time right, or at the initiative of the merchant employing him, the apprentice passed to the next stage and assumed a direct role in commercial ventures, first as his master's envoy, acting on behalf and in accordance with his instructions. The length of time an individual served at this stage depended on his skills

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writing, "I am sending you another order to buy me some things and put them in a small chest and give it to some friend of yours to bring directly. I am now without any cash and have borrowed 25 reals from kyr-Pantelis.": EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', 05, letter dated 23-12-1716; see also pp. 171-172 below.

<sup>51</sup> For example, we find a similar phenomenon expressed in the correspondence of merchants from Mykonos in the late eighteenth century; see Kremmydas, *Εμπορικές πρακτικές* (1993), esp. pp. 100-101.

<sup>52</sup> The role of the secretary-assistant in all its dimensions is neatly illustrated in the example of Stamatis Petrou, associate of A. Korais; see P. Iliou, *Σταμάτης Πέτρον. Γράμματα από το Άμστερνταμ* [Stamatis Petrou: letters from Amsterdam], Athens: Ermis, 1976. See also Kremmydas, *Εμπορικές πρακτικές*, pp. 181-184; Vlami, *Το φιορίνι*, pp. 139-140.

and maturity, the circumstances and the personality of the employer. The competence of the young trader, the adequacy of his business knowledge and success of his apprenticeship alongside the experienced trader are the main factors that contributed to his full independence and ability to take initiatives in the commercial sphere. Promotion was not always without resistance on the part of the masters. Typical of this tension are the complaints expressed by businessmen of Ambelakia concerning the demands of assistants, described as young people who “nowadays after doing a bit they get ideas into their heads and do not perform the service which a servant performs”.<sup>53</sup>

During the last two decades of Melos’ trading activity, we have documentation for his employment of three successive secretary-assistants. When he left Nauplion in 1712 he brought with him the young Anargos Psaros as secretary and assistant. But soon after that time, and certainly from 1716 to at least 1723, Psaros assumed the role of travelling merchant on Melos’ behalf, charged with trips to Livorno, Alexandria and Cairo, either accompanying goods for sale or to invest capital he carried with him in commodities available in those markets.<sup>54</sup>

Psaros’ successor to the position of secretary-assistant was another young man, the Athenian Nikolos Gerenis, who would remain in Melos’ service until 1724, when he too followed in Psaros’ footsteps and begin taking commercial trips on behalf of Melos and/or others to roughly the same places as had been the destinations of his predecessor.<sup>55</sup> After Gerenis’ “upgrading”, Melos, now in the twilight of his life and career, employed Rodis Bozikis as his secretary for a short time. This young man left the service of the elderly Melos once the latter ceased his active involvement in commerce entirely. Equipped with good references from his former employer, he travelled to Cadiz in order to work alongside Pavlos Kapetanakis. Once again we observe the network of acquaintances at work. Among Melos’ papers, both loose documents and registers, the handwriting of the three successive secretaries is discernible in addition to Melos’ own style.

<sup>53</sup> S. I. Asdrachas, *Ελληνική κοινωνία και οικονομία, ιη και ιθ αιώνες* [Greek society and economy, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries], Athens: Ermis, 1982, p. 150. The same is true for guilds, where the rhythm and mode of internal mobility was monitored by a charter, see *id.*, *Ζητήματα ιστορίας* [Historical problems], Athens: Themelio, 1983, pp. 98-102, 227.

<sup>54</sup> When the Ottomans captured Nauplion in June 1715, A. Psaros, who happened to be there on business, was taken captive but managed to escape in transit. On his experience of the war and his captivity, see Liata “Μαρτυρίες”, pp. 111-113, 129-132; see also *id.*, “Νιόςπραματευτής”, pp. 286-289.

<sup>55</sup> On the brief, novelesque life of the luckless Gerenis, see Liata, “Νιόςπραματευτής”.

Although perhaps peripheral to our main concern with the operation of a particular commercial network, let us dwell briefly on the importance attributed by merchants to the good recommendations that would guarantee both the start and course of a career. Recommendations and indeed letters of recommendation which a young trader would procure from reliable people in the world of commerce were a necessary prerequisite for winning acceptance by and support from fellow merchants. Recommendations were something like an informal passport for entry into a particular commercial society when the merchant was “new to the place”.

With regard to recommendations, Melos appears to have been generous. On many occasions he recommended individuals willingly and with gusto, especially new traders, beginners or outsiders to a particular market, or even aspiring traders. He recommended them to friends or acquaintances who could be of assistance, persons that he knew esteemed him and valued his opinion. There are quite a few cases – besides that of Rodis Bozikis – of associates, friends or mere acquaintances for whom Melos put in a good word when it was asked of him. There is no need to enumerate names of individual cases, but it is worth mentioning one or two examples that are indicative of the type of recommendations and the perceptions of the business community with regard to this issue.

Michalis Melos, after his experiences as a captive following the fall of Nauplion to the Ottomans and his subsequent release, found himself in Smyrna, miserable and destitute, a stranger among strangers in a city which was considered, given the conditions at the time, one of the most “difficult” and “closed” markets for small and inexperienced businessmen.<sup>56</sup> In his effort to find his own niche in the market in order to make a simple living, Michalis appealed for assistance to his only protector, his brother Georgios, imploring him: “Send me a letter addressed to kyr-Delurie or kyr-Veran Boyer and Cia; in these letters mention to them that I can have credit, because it is a shame every time there is a business opportunity for

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<sup>56</sup> On Smyrna's notable commercial development in the eighteenth century and its role in the large-scale export-import market between East and West, see E. Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the 18th Century (1700-1820)*, Athens 1992. On the particularly strong economic and social position of Smyrna's commercial middle class, its role as a self-conscious player in the spread of Enlightenment values in the East and its members' claim to have a share in socio-political authority, see the discussion in P. Iliou, *Κοινωνικοί αγώνες και Διαφωτισμός. Η περίπτωση της Σμύρνης (1819)* [Social conflicts and Enlightenment: the case of Smyrna (1819)], Athens: EMNE-Mnimon, 1986.

me to be unable to take advantage of it.”<sup>57</sup> In addition, when two other Greek traders, Malakis Katritsis and Demos Kakavakis, acquaintances but not close associates of Georgios Melos, arrived to assume jobs in Alexandria, they were equipped with the best recommendations from Georgios Melos to the worthy merchant Pantelis Lignos to assist them and encourage them to behave as if Melos himself were present.

Georgios Melos had himself been “patronized” in this climate of professional and patriotic solidarity by the brothers Maroutsis and by Sadias, associates of his brother Nikolos, when as a newcomer to Venice, he was in need of social supports in order to gain a foothold and be accepted by the commercial community. With a deep sense of obligation to them, especially to Sadias, Georgios Melos wanted to reciprocate the favour and for this reason insisted to Nikolos that if he had any business in Nauplion he should not hesitate to collaborate with Sadias’ brother located there, because both were notable and reliable persons, especially the one located in Venice, who in addition to what “he had done” was a trusted and honest man.<sup>58</sup> This relationship of interdependence is a common phenomenon among merchants, whereby the old and revered merchants work as links for their inexperienced colleagues, who in turn would later perform the same supporting role for others of the same or lower economic rank.

Apart from the vertical economic stratification of the merchant class, there was also a horizontal hierarchization based on the qualitative assessment of its members. In this alignment of those involved in commerce, the young, the inexperienced and small-scale operators sought to situate themselves alongside the “good bosses”, those with not only financial but also moral clout in society, in order to apprentice themselves to them and collaborate with them, knowing that their own progress and success in the commercial sector largely depended on such outstanding individuals. Therefore, merchants exchanged information and cross-checked the rumours or opinions that circulated in the market about those active in it, and they made judgments and evaluations, both positive and negative, about such people in order to

<sup>57</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Θ5, letter dated 23-12-1716; see also note 50.

<sup>58</sup> EIB, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', Κ12, letter dated 14-10-1712. Among the ethical values and qualities distinctive to a good merchant, such as those which appear in Melos’ correspondence, but also existed more widely in the estimations of the entire merchant class, the most esteemed are honesty, discretion, fairness and industry, followed by modesty, moderation and sobriety, virtues not always taken for granted, but nonetheless revered among men of the trade.

protect themselves and safeguard others from those with a bad name in the business world.

Such information is not, of course, missing from Melos' correspondence. We saw that Sadias was a "good merchant", and Thodoris Masios was also singled out in Trikala in Corinthia; and the noble Notaras family, also in Corinthia, were big businessmen who enjoyed the general admiration of all those involved in the production or marketing of silk and were sought-after associates for this reason. The general impression is that small traders in particular pursued collaborations, albeit limited, with several or at least one of the powerful, large-scale traders of their era.

The reasons for this were clear, if various. They were above all economic: such associations offered more opportunities, security and ease in financial transactions, support in finding solutions to financial impasses, protection against misjudgements and pitfalls which were part and parcel of the profession, and so on. But there were also social reasons: the mere fact that a small-time trader collaborated with a well-known merchant, regardless of the degree of their association, was enough to upgrade the former's station in society, to set him apart and lend him an authority and invigorated influence not only in the world of commerce, but across the social spectrum of his local setting more generally, since something of his illustrious patron-associate now reflected onto the more modest trader. Moreover, the socio-economic status of the wealthy merchants and the ethics that governed their class required them to behave as protectors of those who were connected to them through mutual economic interests.<sup>59</sup>

Of course, the desire for such associations was not always feasible. Proof of the difficulty lies in the fact that Georgios Melos, although until the end of his life he would occasionally pursue partnerships with some of the great Greek merchants of his day, never managed to forge commercial dealings with them. With the exception, as we have seen, of Kapetanakis and to some extent the Notaras family in the Peloponnese, Melos never collaborated with any of the leading Greek names in Venice: the Peroulis, Maroutsis, Karagiannis and Taronitis families and others of their kind remained outside his commercial network, and he was never able to penetrate theirs, maintaining instead purely social relations with some of them.

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<sup>59</sup> On the mentality of the great merchants, see also Asdrachas, *Patmos*, chapter 10, and on the economic features of this same group, see for example *id.*, *Ελληνική κοινωνία και οικονομία*, p. 472.

The particular case of Melos' association with the Kapetanakis family allows us to follow how such relationships operated not only according to the economic but also the social and ethical rules which governed family networks at the micro-level. It was with the Kapetanakis family that Melos was associated through family relationships (as a godfather), and immediately after he ceased to collaborate with his own brothers he strengthened his professional relationships with almost all members of the Kapetanakis family, enjoying continuous, steady and good commercial associations with them throughout the Venetian period of his life.

However, even if Melos failed to forge the kind of professional relationships he desired with many of the great Greek merchants in Venice, this did not prevent him from winning the respect and friendship of some of them and boasting about his relationships with them.<sup>60</sup> In conclusion, throughout his professional career in its Venetian phase Georgios Melos moved in the middle stratum of the world of commerce, forging associations primarily with men of his own status, the exception being the Kapetanakis family, who acted more as his *correspondenti* and recipients of his goods than as partners in business ventures.

But Melos enjoyed his own social and economic standing in another category of smaller merchants, many of whom sought partnership with him, and mostly successfully. Let us look, though, at some of the unsuccessful proposals. When Ioannis Gasparis set himself up as a businessman at Smyrna, he proposed that Melos assume the role formerly played by his brother Michalis, who had returned to the Peloponnese, and act as a correspondent in that city. Melos did not act on Gasparis' proposal. In early 1715 and in view of the war, P. Lignos suggested to Melos that they initiate joint business ventures in Egypt in an effort to substitute the emerging market of the Barbary Coast for the now-lost Peloponnese market. Melos was open to discussing the proposal, but the time was not right as the sultan had temporarily (in 1716) prohibited the import of Venetian goods to countries under his dominion. Another trader in Arta, Anastasis Antonopoulos, suggested collaboration with Melos in 1721 – although we do not know whether this was done out of esteem for Melos or to repay a debt – but this was to be another proposal not taken up by Melos.

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<sup>60</sup> For example, he wrote to his brother Nikolos that L. Kapetanakis and Count Taronitis honoured him with their friendship and did not omit to “inform [him] promptly” about every silk market at which they conducted business. ΕΙΒ, Οικον. διαχειρ. 1, αρ. 118α', K12, letter dated 15-5-1714.

A proposition made by Theodosios Tzikalios, who in 1718 established himself at Smyrna in order to engage in trade, was clearly one of reciprocity. Tzikalios stated openly to Melos that he was available for any service in return for the debt he owed him for standing by him as a father during his stay in Venice. By contrast, the desire of the brothers Ioannis and Spyros Milidonis of Corfu in 1722 to initiate a partnership with Melos in which they acted as his suppliers of goods from Corfu and the Peloponnese was a purely professional proposition, which, nevertheless, did not bear fruit.

The above examples are only some of the direct proposals for collaboration suggested to Melos. The Archive reveals a number of people indirectly suggested by third parties as potential partners, but in most of these cases there was no response from Melos. The elder trader's hesitation in initiating collaborations with new associates, especially in the last decade of his life, should be attributed to his advanced age, which offers a satisfactory explanation for the limitations he placed on his business involvements and the financial contraction of his ventures.

Ultimately, this entire microcosm on the periphery of trade – with its occasional, small-scale, unmethodical commercial operations, and despite its marginality and secondary role in the commercial process – in fact constitutes an organic part of the trade networks by serving to facilitate and contribute, at least to a certain extent, to their proper functioning.

By way of drawing a close to our description of the commercial network – a network, as we have seen, which was both flexible and highly diversified – and one of its members, Georgios Melos, a dynamic Greek merchant in Venice during the first half of the eighteenth century, I would like to highlight one more element of his professional profile. Melos did not work directly with merchants who were connected with workshops, with the exception of his brothers Nikolos and Michalis, who had a workshop in Nauplion and for whom he was the sole supplier of Venetian wares during the period from the end of 1712 to spring 1715. The Melos brothers received and stored at their shop the array of goods sent from Venice. Of these some were destined for the local retail market, others to be sold wholesale to other workshops, or to travelling salesmen and pedlars, and still others for shipment to trade fairs across the Peloponnese. In parallel, they received orders from other merchants and transferred them to Georgios for execution. In brief, the Melos brothers worked as provider-suppliers for merchants and workshops, dealing in Venetian commodities, which through their network were diffused throughout the entire area.



Through the case of Georgios Melos I believe we have managed to retrace a clear and satisfactory outline of the practices and modes of operation typical of a Venetian merchant in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Trade between the Levant and Europe was conducted through an intricate network of trade relations operating at three intertwined levels: large-scale trade in the hands of a limited number of great merchants, among whom were included a few Greeks; a denser mass of medium-sized merchants, who best characterized trade in this period; and finally a loosely defined world of small-scale traders and speculators, often active as such only occasionally and attached parasitically to the two overlying levels. All categories of traders, but most of all the two lower strata, operated simultaneously as representatives of different people without restricting their activities to bilateral relations. In other words, they served many masters, but were at the same time served by and involved with other people and were thereby part of the fabric of both polycentric and monocentric networks, supporting the structure of commerce.

Georgios Antonios Melos, merchant-traveller in the last decades of the seventeenth century, an established dealer in Madrid and then in Venice during the first decades of the eighteenth century, was a citizen of the world with a varied life, who could almost be called an adventurer, a self-made merchant of diaspora Hellenism. He ran his course and completed the cycle of his 85 years modestly and unglamorously, without biological or professional heirs, a restless spirit, a man of an age characterized by decisiveness, taking his life in his hands and fashioning his own destiny away from his homeland and far from sovereigns and sovereignties. He lived and travelled as a free person, taking advantage of that latitude and the opportunities offered by everything within the framework and political constraints of the time.

Could we, ultimately, accept the proposition that the merchant of the diaspora Georgios Melos, and so many merchants before and after him, eroded the power system prevailing in their places of origin? The answer is twofold: no, because the ruling system (Ottoman in this case) interfered with its subjects' economic roles, including those related to commerce; yes, because these roles allowed the creation of economic power in the conquered societies, which in turn contributed to the sense of identity of the subject peoples.

Insofar as the conquered were ranged against a society that was entirely conquering, yet not entirely exploitative, one could objectively inscribe commercial activity among the factors that eroded the conquerors' system; and one could connect these with other parallel or converging "erosions", ranging from the world of warlike societies to the world of reforming (or at the same time revolutionary) political thought, an advanced sector of a

learned tradition. We should not forget that the merchants too participated in a kind of learning: empirical, in that it dealt with economic practicalities (since their economic theory was also of a practical sort), but also potential (as well as actual). Their learning may not have allowed them full understanding, but still encouraged them to attach great importance to education. They acted on this priority by making education one of the focuses of their benefactions.

It is within the analysis offered above that I locate the position of our merchant as well: modest but steady and creative in the exercise of his trade, he too contributed alongside those who worked with the sword, the pen and the *zygometro*, patient as a woodworm, to undermine the foundations of the Ottoman Empire and helped bring about its downfall.

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THE NAPOLEONIC WARS AND THE DISRUPTION  
OF MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING AND TRADE:  
BRITISH, GREEK AND AMERICAN MERCHANTS IN LIVORNO<sup>1</sup>

*Katerina Galani*

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ABSTRACT: The end of the eighteenth century was marked by the outbreak of the French and Napoleonic Wars waged across Europe and the Mediterranean. They ushered in a political and economic crisis that disrupted the established patterns of shipping and trade. The turbulence of war created a new equilibrium among existing players and new entrants, who competed over a share of the Mediterranean market. Based on archival material from the quarantine station of Livorno, one of the most significant Mediterranean entrepôts, the paper investigates the adaptation of traditional and ascending maritime powers to the upheaval and the economic crisis generated by the Napoleonic Wars. While British merchants and ship-owners searched for alternative, safer ports to relocate their trade, the newcomers – the Greeks and the Americans – profited from their neutrality and entered the Livornese market.

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Crises striking in societies, be they political, demographic, ecological or epidemic, disrupt the routine of everyday life and have a strong impact on the economic activities of both communities and individuals. Although crisis has *per se* a negative connotation, as it encompasses the unexpected, the extreme and risk, it also provides a unique opportunity to reshuffle the cards and establishes a fresh status quo in which new players are allowed to enter the game and profit therein.<sup>2</sup>

The second half of the eighteenth century and the turn of the nineteenth was a very turbulent era, marked by a series of crises on a world-wide range. Profound changes took place, and war appears to have been the catalyst.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is a preliminary study on the port of Livorno conducted during the completion of my doctoral thesis under the title “British Shipping and Trade in the Mediterranean in the Age of War (1770-1815)”. It was presented at the workshop “Social Groups and Practices of Trading in the Mediterranean, 17th-19th centuries”, held in Athens, 4-5 April 2008. The workshop was funded by RAMSES2 and was successfully organized by Maria Christina Chatziioannou and Evrydiki Sifneos on behalf of the Institute for Neohellenic Research.

<sup>2</sup> M. Stopford, *Maritime Economics*, London 1997, pp. 139-148, on the variables that affect shipping demand and supply and more broadly on the “prime movers” of historical developments; C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914*, Oxford 2004, pp. 5-7.

The American War of Independence breached the political and mercantile relations of metropolitan Britain. On the other side of the chessboard, the French Revolution and the political and military upheaval that followed ushered in the Napoleonic era with military operations spreading out across continental Europe and the Mediterranean. This was indeed a transitory period when the equilibrium of the old powers was disrupted; France and Britain competed over political and economic predominance, and the battle took place on more than one front.<sup>3</sup>

International conflicts sparked off easily in the age of mercantilism due to the struggle of states over colonies and trade. At the same time, the manifestations of warfare drew heavily upon the key principles of mercantilism. The series of blockades imposed during the Napoleonic era reflected the intention of the belligerents to prevent the enemy's exports rather than to assure their own imports. An outstanding example that illustrates such a policy took place in 1809-1810. A food shortage in Britain as a result of poor harvests was mitigated by direct imports from France in the midst of the war between the two countries. Any intention to impede the enemy's alimentation and drive him to surrender was not considered as an option at the time.

In this context, it was of vital importance for the belligerents to control the Mediterranean, which was the frontier and the oldest traditional market. Despite the expansion into the colonial markets of the periphery, intra-European trade was still the most significant in terms of value and volume throughout the eighteenth century. As Patrick O'Brien stressed, during the 1790s 76% of European exports were directed within Europe, ceding only a small share in total economic activity to the trade with the periphery. In the same vein, transcontinental trade at this early stage allowed Europeans to refine their taste with exotic foodstuffs, while Europe and the Mediterranean remained the primary market for staples.

In a competitive freight market which expanded across the world, warfare in the Mediterranean disturbed existing patterns and created opportunities to which ship-owners responded. War brought about a series of changes, such as fluctuation in duties, prohibitions of trade and increases in transport, agency and insurance costs. It also intensified the need for information that was not only related to the market supply and demand but also to military

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<sup>3</sup> J. Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century*, London 1986; R. Findlay and K. O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty: Trade, War and the World Economy in the Second Millennium*, Princeton University Press 2007, pp. 227-428.

operations and the perils of war. It is no coincidence that *Lloyd's List* and other contemporary maritime gazettes were thoroughly updating the list of ships captured as prizes by the ever-growing menace of privateers. Moreover, consular correspondence across the Mediterranean and beyond Gibraltar included detailed information about the naval operations and the course of warfare. However, freights were soaring under such perilous conditions and the slumps and booms that are clearly seen in the trade statistics of this period boil down to substantial albeit precarious profits.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the naval activities, a new cycle of mercantile activities was now put forward to accommodate the fleet and soldiers stationed in the Mediterranean. Naval victuals and stores gave a new boost to shipping and trade, and the British Admiralty established a special Board of Transport in 1794 to organize the transport service and cater to the British Navy wherever it was engaged. The Admiralty and the Board relied heavily on private contractors, amongst which ship-owners who were involved in the transport and victualling of the navy and soldiers at war.<sup>5</sup> The Henleys, ship-owners from Derby and one of the very few commercial houses of the eighteenth century whose business records have been published, demonstrate this involvement of private ship-owners in the transport service. In the heyday of their business, between 1775 and 1830, they deployed ships in the coastal coal trade, in the West Indies, the Baltic and the Mediterranean particularly for transport. It remains to be established whether the Henleys were the rule or its exception, but nevertheless their case illustrates how the transport service lured a number of ship-owners into Mediterranean trade.

The existing literature has made several attempts to gauge the economic impact of the Napoleonic Wars on trade, producing so far controversial or uncertain findings. The blockades, smuggling, corruption, and detours in sea and inland routes have all been factored in to detect whether growth was slowed down if not damaged by the intermittent wars, as well as their effect on the welfare of the belligerents. In addition, economic historians have worked extensively on the repercussions of the Napoleonic era on a number

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<sup>4</sup> C. K. Harley, "Ocean Freight Rates and Productivity, 1740-1913: The Primacy of Mechanical Invention Reaffirmed", *The Journal of Economic History* XLVIII/4 (1988), p. 854; Stopford, *Maritime Economics*, pp. 105-106; R. Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, London 1962, p. 256; E. B. Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808*, Oxford 1960, pp. 17-18.

<sup>5</sup> C. Wordsworth, R. Knight and M. Wilcox, *Sustaining the Fleet, 1793-1815: War, the British Navy and the Contractor State*, Woodbridge 2010.

of industries and trade both in Britain and France, but shipping has been understudied to the present day.

This paper will attempt to investigate the adaptation of traditional and ascending maritime powers, namely the British, the Greeks and the Americans, to the economic crises generated by the Napoleonic Wars in the Mediterranean using the nodal port of Livorno – Leghorn to the British – as a case study. While Britain strove to overcome the shock of war and maintain her thriving trade and shipping by implementing a series of economic and political measures, the Greeks, as local carriers in the Mediterranean, entered the maritime trade and gradually consolidated one of the most sizeable and financially productive fleets. It is noteworthy to mention that by the end of the French Wars the fleet under the Ottoman flag had doubled. To this we should also add the Greek-owned vessels operating under Venetian, Russian and Jerusalem flags. The emergence of the Greeks as a significant local maritime power was not unforeseen. For a long time they had been apt seafarers of the Ottoman and the Venetian Empires, accustomed to the culture and practices of shipping and sea trade.<sup>6</sup> The geographical determinism of the numerous islands and the coastlines they inhabited naturally led them to engage in coastal trade and make their living as mariners, merchants, ship-builders, etc. In the course of the eighteenth century, favoured by the political and economic conjuncture, they broadened their scope of activity, stretching as far out as Latin America and paving the way for the golden era of Greek shipping in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

While introducing the key players in the Mediterranean under study, we should include another Atlantic actor, i.e. the Americans; a neutral power in the Anglo-French rivalry, they grasped the opportunity to enter the Mediterranean market, creating or reinforcing existing networks of trade with the ports which were traditionally engaged in Atlantic trade.<sup>7</sup> Their appearance in Southern Europe was also a by-product of warfare, which explains its limited duration. When the British regained control of the Mediterranean there was hardly any scope left for the US vessels. Despite the limited time span of the Americans in Livorno, it serves as an interesting case

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<sup>6</sup> M. Greene, “Beyond the Northern Invasion: The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century”, *Past and Present* CLXXIV/1 (2002), pp. 42-71; M. Fusaro and A. May, “Les Anglais et les Grecs. Un réseau de coopération commerciale en Méditerranée vénitienne”, *Annales* LVIII/3 (2003), pp. 605-625; and M. Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants*, Princeton University Press 2010, pp. 110-137.

<sup>7</sup> For the Americans in the Mediterranean, see J. A. Field, *America and the Mediterranean World, 1776-1882*, Princeton University Press 1969, pp. 3-103.

study to probe their adaptation to the local, Mediterranean conditions, as well as their relations with their long-established friends and foes, the British.

An intersecting study of British, American and Greek shipping in the Mediterranean is now feasible, since the Greek fleet of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth has been documented in the Amphitrete database, which includes over 24,000 entries of Greek ships from more than 15 major Mediterranean ports. This quantitative endeavour, which questions and reshapes the existing apprehension over the scope and scale of Greek maritime activity in the eighteenth century, will be used as a benchmark for the study of the British and American presence in the Mediterranean.

At this point, we should take the opportunity to specify whom exactly we identify as “Greeks” in the historical conjuncture of the eighteenth century. In the absence of a national Greek State, which was founded only in the 1830s after the Greek War of Independence against the Ottomans, the use of the word “Greek” without the obvious reference to a national state might seem premature. Nevertheless, identifying the Greeks in the records did not seem to pose a problem. This is the exact term that, according to the archival evidence, was used across the Mediterranean, by all port officials, to identify captains coming from the dominion of the Ottoman or the Venetian Empires. As Gelina Harlaftis has consistently argued, the Greeks were in fact both Ottoman and Venetian subjects, originating broadly from what is currently known as Greece and the coastline of Asia Minor.

It is not within the purpose of this paper to define what it was that constituted the Greek nascent identity at the time, but its existence seems to be indisputable, acknowledged across the Mediterranean. It must have been on the grounds of language and religion that captains entering the Mediterranean ports were (self-)identified and registered as Greeks. However, it remained a fluid identity, as Greeks could adopt in the future a Russian, Ottoman, Greek-Ottoman or Venetian identity. There are cases in the archives where a single person had borne all of those at some point during his ventures. Additionally, an identity referring to the place of birth could also be used when entering a port. Nevertheless, Greeks even prior to the formation of a national state, under different political dominions and across political borders seem to have shared a sense of communality together with common business practices, cultural and linguistic ties and have worked in partnership with those considered as members of the same ethnicity.

In the meantime, the Greeks interacted and competed with the British particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century. As friends and foes, they were British agents or even vice-consuls in the Levant, residents in British colonies such as Port Mahon, trade partners or rivals. By the



early 1830s the Greeks and the British dominated the grain trade across the Mediterranean and into the Black Sea. It was during the Napoleonic period that the foundations of this trade were laid. Grain shortages from the continental blockade and military operations caused rising grain prices and freights and an increase in ship movements. The Greeks had unhindered access to the Black Sea and to the Russian granary after the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji in 1774, which allowed Greek ships bearing the Russian flag to cross the Dardanelles. The British were granted access to the Black Sea in 1802, but remained largely dependent on the Greeks to carry grain to the entrepôts of the Western Mediterranean as naval victuals or imports to Britain.<sup>8</sup>

The ascent of the Greeks at the time was not only favoured by the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji, as is traditionally asserted in the literature, but also by the innovative policy implemented by Selim III. A series of administrative reforms in the Ottoman Empire aimed to strengthen the position of the Ottoman mercantile fleet against its international rivals in the competitive Mediterranean shipping and trade. Certain measures sought to consolidate a group of non-Muslim merchants entitled to trade with Europe under favourable terms, like the ones the Ottoman Empire had been granting to European merchants through commercial treaties. It was only sensible that the Greeks, due to their prior experience as seafarers and merchants, would benefit from such a policy, which seems to have created, on behalf of the Ottoman Empire, the institutional framework for the boom in Greek shipping.

The above-mentioned three actors, the British, Greeks and Americans, sprang from the archival material as significant factors in the maritime activity of Livorno. What is even more important is their engagement in shipping and trade both across and beyond the Mediterranean. A comparative study of these three ethnic groups provides an insight into the maritime history of the Mediterranean, into the notions of continuity and change and the adaptation to economic crises. Affected by the political and economic conditions at the turn of the century, a new equilibrium was set, with old and new players trying to win their share of the market.

#### *The Role of Livorno in Times of Peace and War*

Quantitative data from the port of Livorno, one of the most vibrant commercial hubs in Southern Europe, will help us detect the impact of the Napoleonic Wars and the blockades in shipping and trade. The port of Livorno was free from customs due to the policy of the Grand Duchy

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<sup>8</sup> A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, London 1964, pp. 180-181.

of Tuscany, which tried to facilitate trade and attract ever-more foreign merchants. It was made clear to the Hapsburg Empire that Tuscany was lacking the infrastructure and the natural resources to support a competitive local industrial production, and therefore, alternatively, there was more scope for mercantile activities, in particular accommodating transit trade. It was not just a matter of a provincial strategy, but more or less part of the strategy of Maria Theresa to permeate the Mediterranean, proclaiming a number of free ports such as Fiume and Trieste in the early eighteenth century. Within this framework attention was diverted to catering for shipping and trade and an elaborate infrastructure was provided, including a number of lazarettos (quarantine stops) and warehouses that could store and preserve products for up to a year.<sup>9</sup> Livorno turned into a key port both for the Italian Peninsula and for the redistribution of cargoes in the Mediterranean.<sup>10</sup> In addition, it acted as an entrepôt linking Europe with the colonial market of North America and facilitating transit trade carried out largely by foreign merchants. British, French, Spanish, Austrians, Scandinavians and Greeks, together with Italians, included Livorno in their trade networks. It is no coincidence that Livorno was called the “Italian Marseille” since shipping and trade were comparable to those of the biggest French port during the years of the Napoleonic Wars. Just after the outbreak of the wars, in 1794 and 1795 the total number of vessels calling at Livorno rose to 1135 and 1048 respectively, from 527 and 646 for the years of peace 1791 and 1792. In the course of the wars, the number of arrivals fluctuated but still remained above the equivalent mean average for the years prior to the wars. Despite French occupations after 1796, Livorno sustained its maritime traffic along with an elevated volume of imports of cotton and grain, which were the primary cargoes in the Mediterranean.

#### *The British in Livorno*<sup>11</sup>

In the second half of the eighteenth century the British mercantile fleet was the largest in Europe with 882,000 tons, according to the estimates of Ruggiero Romano for the year 1786. In the Mediterranean the business organization

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<sup>9</sup> D. Panzac, *Quarantaines et lazarets*, Aix-en-Provence 1986, pp. 173-176.

<sup>10</sup> For its role as a redistributive centre and a Mediterranean emporium, see Fr. Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*, New Haven 2009, pp. 102-112; P. Herlihy, “Russian Wheat and the Port of Livorno”, *The Journal of European Economic History* V/1 (1976), pp. 45-68.

<sup>11</sup> P. Scrosoppi, “Il porto di Livorno e gli inizi dell’attività Inglese nel Mediterraneo”, *Bollettino Storico Livornese* IV (1937), pp. 339-380; M. D’Angelo, *Mercanti inglesi a Livorno, 1573-1737*, Messina 2004; *id.*, “The British Factory at Leghorn in the XVIIIth Century: A Kind of Chamber of Commerce cum Consulate”, in C. Vassallo (ed.), *Consolati di Mare and Chambers of Commerce*, Malta 2000, pp. 113-126.

of British trade was diverse: free traders operated simultaneously with the decadent Levant Company, which held the monopoly of trade in the Eastern Mediterranean. During the hazardous years of war, part of the trade was also carried out by privateers who were operating side by side with the Royal Navy. From the quarantine records of the port of Livorno, one can identify all these different business practices; ships hired by the Levant Company were entering the port escorted by naval convoys, together with British free traders and privateers bearing the letters of marque vessels *in corso e mercanzie*, as it is often stated in the archives.<sup>12</sup> The port of Livorno had long accommodated British maritime interest in the region, acting simultaneously as an entrepôt and a commercial link between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic markets.<sup>13</sup> In addition to exporting British cloth and other manufactures, re-exports formed a big part of British trade in the port. In particular, British ships were deployed in a triangular trade carrying primarily salted fish and other colonial products such as sugar, coffee and tobacco from America to Livorno, from where they would be diffused to the ports of the Levant and North Africa. Therefore Livorno was a significant port within the context of both European and colonial trade.

#### *The Greeks in Livorno*

For the Greeks, Livorno was considered an ideal stepping stone to the markets of the Western Mediterranean and even to markets located beyond the Strait of Gibraltar. As will be stressed in the course of this paper, the ascending Greeks followed the steps of other foreign nations operating at the port, who were caught in war at the turn of the nineteenth century; Livorno was an easy and obvious place for Greeks to set up trade because they were able to adopt the existing maritime and commercial apparatus and networks.

A number of Greek merchants had settled in Livorno from the early eighteenth century, originating primarily from the western coast of Greece and the islands. However, it was not until 1747 that the Greek mercantile community grew stronger and played a significant role in the grain trade that was carried out in Livorno. The commercial treaty of 1747 signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Grand Duchy granted the minimum 3% duty

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<sup>12</sup> Archivio di Stato di Livorno (ASL), Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima, F 623-705.

<sup>13</sup> G. Pagano de Divitiis, "Il porto di Livorno fra Inghilterra e Oriente", *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* I (1993), pp. 43-87; M. C. Engles, *Merchants, Interlopers, Seamen and Corsairs: The "Flemish" Community in Livorno and Genoa*, Hilversum 1997, pp. 21-46.

to products traded between Tuscany and the Ottoman Empire. The Greeks now had an additional motive to use the Tuscan port with its warehousing facilities and connections with both Western Europe and the Atlantic trade.

*The Americans in Livorno*<sup>14</sup>

The nature of the port, its connection with the Atlantic market and its uninterrupted traffic during the years of war and turbulence in Southern Europe account for the sudden appearance of American ships in the early nineteenth century (see fig. 1). Right after American Independence, American shipping and trade was disrupted once it lost the British protection that had been indulged so far. With the advent of the nineteenth century, just as local, neutral carriers profited from the conditions of war, the Americans saw in the Mediterranean a new arena to expand their maritime activities and called at a number of Mediterranean ports such as Livorno, Bordeaux and Smyrna, which had already been involved, prior to the war, in transatlantic trade. Especially in 1806 and 1807 with the continental blockade and the British counter-blockade imposed by the Orders in Council to retaliate Napoleon's attempt to cut off British trade, American ships arriving at Livorno reached the significant number of 137 and 138, when the equivalent arrivals for the British had dropped to zero and the ascendant Greeks were at 116 and 36 respectively.<sup>15</sup> In 1808 and 1809, Thomas Jefferson imposed an embargo on all American ships according to which they were not allowed to call at any foreign port. The embargo was soon revoked but American shipping in the Mediterranean was further hindered by the British. American ships were captured despite their neutrality and American sailors were impressed as they were considered deserters from the Royal Navy. "Fighting for free trade and sailors' rights" led to the Anglo-American War of 1812-1815, which suspended the American penetration into the Mediterranean.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the Americans remained active until the end of the Napoleonic Wars, when Britain regained its supremacy and outdid its rivals.

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<sup>14</sup> For an all-round presentation and evaluation of American shipping, see C. A. Keene, "American Shipping and Trade, 1798-1820: The Evidence from Leghorn", *The Journal of Economic History* XXXVIII/3 (1978), pp. 681-700.

<sup>15</sup> ASL, Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima, F 623-705.

<sup>16</sup> R. D. Paine, *The Old Merchant Marine*, New Haven 1919, chapter VI.

*Historical Background: The French Occupations of Livorno*

Napoleon occupied Livorno for the first time from 1796 until 1797, striking a blow to the character of the free port that Livorno had acquired since 1692.<sup>17</sup> The British were warned of the approach of the French troops and fled to the islands of Corsica and Elba in search of shelter to avoid being captured or molested. Until that point British merchants had played a dual role in the Tuscan port by procuring the Italian market and importing products both from the Atlantic and Britain for re-export to the Eastern Mediterranean. They returned to the city in 1797 right after the first French occupation ended. The Greek merchants in the port-city remained intact, if not favoured, by the new political conditions. Meanwhile, Livorno was blocked by a number of British naval ships, which disrupted the commercial activity of the port, causing the drop in the total number of ships entering the port to 457 for the first year of the occupation.<sup>18</sup> In 1799, after a brief break in the siege of Livorno, the port was once again under French occupation for a few months when Napoleon declared war against Austria. The strategic importance of Tuscany made its occupation significant for the course of the war and the expansionist plans of the French Empire. In October 1800 Livorno fell for a third time into the hands of the French; in 1801 it was declared the Kingdom of Etruria and granted a regime of self-government, which was, however, bound to accommodate French interests.<sup>19</sup> With the exception of the spell of the Peace of Amiens in 1802-1803, the British seemed to have retreated from their position in Livorno, seeking more favourable conditions for trade and shipping eastwards. It was during this last phase, when both belligerents imposed blockades in 1806 and 1807 respectively, that smuggling reached its peak. The Kingdom of Etruria turned a blind eye to contraband trade despite the protests of France. Nonetheless, it is very difficult to gauge the extent of smuggling, as it is a clandestine business in the first place and therefore no public ledgers were kept. However, all contemporary sources stress its magnitude and estimate that occasionally it equalled legal trade. Even though the contraband trade cannot be factored in a quantitative analysis, we must

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<sup>17</sup> For an account of the successive occupations during the Napoleonic Wars, see D. Vlami, *Το φιορίνι, το σιτάρι και η Οδός του Κήπου. Έλληνες έμποροι στο Λιβόρνο, 1750-1868* [The florin, the wheat and Garden Street: Greek merchants in Livorno, 1750-1868], Athens: Themelio, 2000, pp. 113-131.

<sup>18</sup> See fig. 2 for the overall port traffic.

<sup>19</sup> M. D'Angelo, "The Mid-Mediterranean as an Alternative Market: British Merchants, Ships and Merchandises during the Napoleonic Wars", *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference of Maritime History*, CD, Corfu, 21-27 June 2004.

bear it in mind, especially since it mostly referred to the import of British products to the Italian Peninsula and also affected trade throughout the Mediterranean, wherever the continental blockade was imposed.

The hybrid Kingdom of Etruria lasted only until 1807, when it was annexed to the French Empire, and the period spanning from 1809 to 1814 was characterised by the implementation of the French mercantilist laws of trade. The state of being a free port was officially abolished in 1810, but its repercussions were alleviated by acknowledging Livorno as an entrepôt under the control of the French authorities. In 1814 the Conference of Vienna restored the Hapsburg-Lorena dynasty in Tuscany; the news was received with great relief by the merchant community of the port-city. On 1 May 1814 war ended for Livorno and the Lorena dynasty returned to the throne. After a turbulent period of political and economic instability, Livorno appeared to regain its position in the Mediterranean market.<sup>20</sup>

#### *Resource Description and Analysis*

This paper focuses on the ship movements in the port of Livorno with a special interest in interpreting the trends of shipping during the Napoleonic Wars. To this end, data have been drawn from three different archival sources in an attempt to best construct an overall picture of the shipping activity in Livorno. A new time series spanning from 1767 until 1815 was put together, based on the quarantine records from the two lazarettos operating in Livorno during that period. The records are held in the Archivio di Stato di Livorno under the title *Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima*. The lazaretto of San Rocco was responsible for all ships carrying a *patenta neta*, a clear sanitary pass, while the lazaretto of San Leopoldo received all ships bearing a *patenta brutta*, an unclear pass.<sup>21</sup> From this record we were able to compile a data set of 4000 entries covering 48 years with the exception of 1811 to 1813 due to archival constraints. This corpus is a detailed register of British, Greek and American ships entering the port, with additional information about ship names, types, captains, cargoes, ship routes, duration

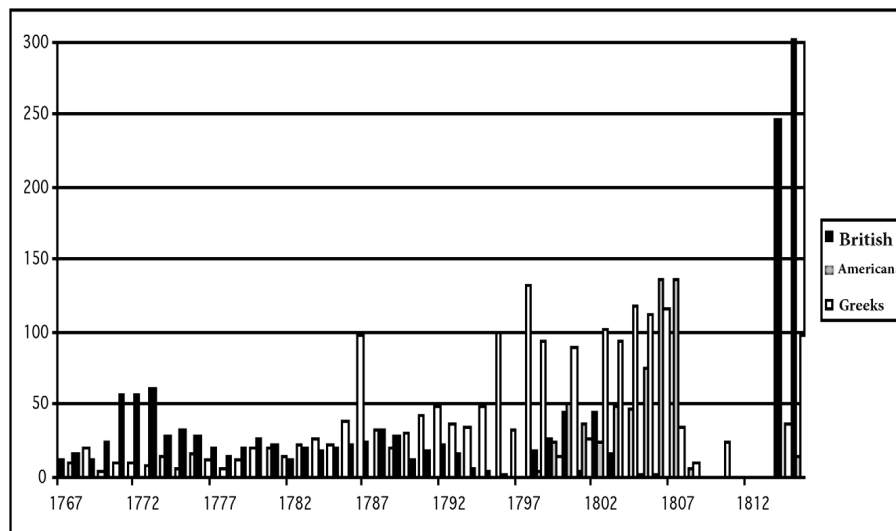
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<sup>20</sup> *Id.*, “British Trade and Merchants in the Mid-Mediterranean: An Alternative Market during the Napoleonic Wars”, in C. Vassallo and M. D’Angelo (eds), *Anglo-Saxons in the Mediterranean*, Malta 2007, pp. 97-113.

<sup>21</sup> J. Howard, *An Account of the Principal Lazarettos in Europe: With Various Papers Relative to the Plague together with Further Observations...*, Warrington 1789, p. 7; Th. MacGill, *Travels in Turkey, Italy and Russia during the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806*, London 1808, pp. 183-184.

of voyages, crew sizes, consigners, etc. The data set was compared to the aggregate statistical tables published by Jean-Pierre Filippini in the 1980s. Filippini drew his tables, organized on the basis of ships' flags and/or ship types, from the records of the French authorities during the occupations of Livorno. A true statistical fever had overwhelmed the French administration, which ordered its consuls across the Mediterranean to provide tables not just for French trade and shipping but – for comparative purposes – for the maritime activities of other nations engaged in the Mediterranean as well. A third archival source was retrieved from the Archivio di Stato di Livorno in a series of files under the name *Governo civile e militare di Livorno*. These are in fact some stray statistical tables registering the ship entries in Livorno for the years 1797, 1798, 1802 and 1805. The tables refer both to entries of ships grouped in terms of flags and also in terms of types, where the distinction between naval and mercantile ships has proven exceptionally valuable. These tables were put together by the French authorities of Livorno in an attempt to chart the shipping activity in the port.

Fig. 1. Arrivals at the port of Livorno, 1767-1815.



Source: ASL, Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima, F 623-705.

The above figure contains all entries to the port of Livorno from 1767 to 1815, and it is plotted for British, American and Greek ships depending on

their flag or the stated origin of the captain where appropriate. It must be taken into account that only the larger vessels, namely brigs, polaccas and ships, are included in the statistics since our interest lies with the deep-sea voyages across the Mediterranean and beyond the Strait of Gibraltar. Smaller vessels, which were mostly engaged in coastal trade and largely belonged to the local Tuscan fleet, are therefore excluded from the figures. At this point it is interesting to highlight that the types of large vessels mentioned above were by and large deployed by all three national groups with minor technical variations, a fact that points to the adaptation of shipping to local conditions.<sup>22</sup>

Looking at the maritime activity in the long run, the British had a long-lasting presence in the port of Livorno, which is in accordance with the existing literature that describes the Tuscan port as the “British hub” in the Mediterranean since the 1700s. With rising number of entries for the years around 1770 British ships had a more or less stable presence in Livorno. Towards the last two decades of the eighteenth century the Greeks seem to have penetrated the Livornese market, while their operations appear to have been more prone to yearly fluctuations, for example rising to 101 arrivals in 1795, just to drop to 33 the next year and then shoot up to 133 in 1797.

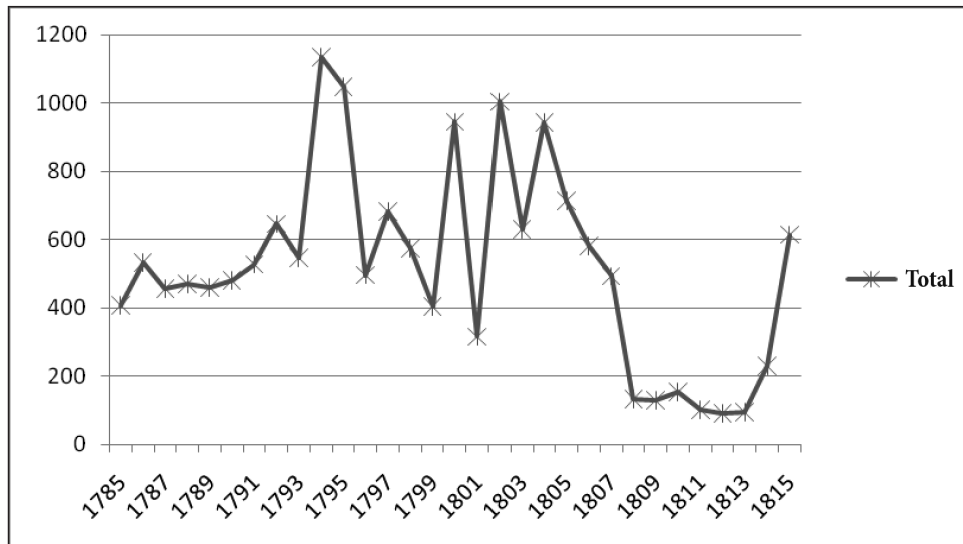
Another interesting point that is raised from the sanitary records is the sudden appearance of the Americans for a few consecutive years at the turn of the nineteenth century. They are recorded entering the port right after the first occupation of Livorno, when the British had fled. From that point onwards their presence in the port increased steadily. The establishment of an American network seems to have attracted ever-more Americans, who, according to the archives, mostly originated from the ports of Salem, Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Unfortunately, missing sources generate a lacuna from 1808 to 1813, and attempts have been made to complement the lapse from alternative archival material, as will be shown below. Nevertheless, a limited American presence is expected in this period due to the Jefferson embargo and the outbreak of the Anglo-American War in 1812.

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<sup>22</sup> A. Delis, *Ερμούπολη (Σύρος). Το ναυπηγικό κέντρο της ιστιοφόρου ναυτιλίας, 1830-1880* [Ermoupoli (Syros): the shipbuilding centre of tall ships, 1830-1880], Ph.D. thesis, Ionian University, Corfu 2010. For a detailed typology of Mediterranean and North Atlantic vessels, see pp. 218-245.



Fig. 2. Arrivals at the port of Livorno: the overall number of ship entries.



Source: for the overall number of entries: J.-P. Filippini, "Il movimento del porto di Livorno durante il primo periodo lorenesse, 1731-1801", *La Toscana dei Lorena. Riforme, territorio, società*, ed. Z. Ciuffoletti and L. Rombai, Vol. I, Florence 1989, pp. 76-77.

Plotting the shipping statistics for the nationalities under study along with the total number of ship entries in the port of Livorno reveals similarities in terms of the trends of arrivals. The peak of 1794 reflects the adaptation of the Tuscan port to the outbreak of the French Revolution and the disrupted trade of Marseille that relocated eastwards. Subsequently, the first French occupation caused a drop in the number of ships' arrivals followed by another fall in the second occupation in 1799. The last occupation in 1801 and the establishment of the Kingdom of Etruria caused a steep fall in the overall movement at the port. The Peace of Amiens raised the port traffic in 1803 until the imposition of the continental blockade, which led to a downward trend. For the following years until the end of the wars, according to the available data, ship entries remained fairly stable for Americans and Greeks despite the fluctuations in the total arrivals. This corroborates the argument that neutral powers stepped in and extracted a share of the Livornese market.

In an attempt to follow more closely the ramifications of war on the maritime activity in Livorno, we narrow our period of study to the years of the Napoleonic Wars. It is evident that the biggest plunges occurred with the French occupations of Livorno. Right after the first attack, in 1797 the British entries in the port were null, as one might have expected, since the British

mercantile community was transferred eastwards. In the following years there seemed to be a “numb” movement in the port, while the continental blockade imposed by Napoleon from 1806 and onwards may have further repressed British entries to Livorno. However, just before the end of the Napoleonic Wars, in 1814 and 1815, British entries to Livorno reached the astronomic figures of 248 and 306 respectively, announcing the return of the British and the restoration of their maritime activities in the port-city. Never before had their presence been so strong in Livorno, and according to supplementary archival sources the trend remained upward in the aftermath of the war, indicating that it was not just a reaction to the defeat of Napoleon.

One does not fail to observe (fig. 3) that the Americans made a strong appearance in Livorno exactly at the moment when the British had retreated in the early 1800s, and this is a point that needs further investigation. Livorno had always been a port open to the Atlantic; colonial products were brought in by the British, warehoused and re-exported across the Mediterranean. It is highly likely that the Americans saw warfare as an opportunity to break into the Italian market, which was up to then confined to British shipping due to the Navigation Laws. After all, the United States was a neutral country and until the outbreak of the Anglo-American War in 1812 it expanded its trade networks to a number of European ports which had Atlantic trade ties.<sup>23</sup> Even though there was an extended contemporary debate on the connections between the British and the American mercantile fleet, especially in relation to the American sailors who were considered deserters from the Royal Navy, this is not endorsed by archival research.<sup>24</sup> Based on the data from the quarantine records, where the ships can be identified by their name and captain, the American vessels which were recorded entering Livorno after 1800 were cross-checked with the ones listed as British in the data set. It is interesting that no concurrences appear. This shows that an independent American mercantile fleet was crossing Gibraltar during the war and calling at Livorno.<sup>25</sup>

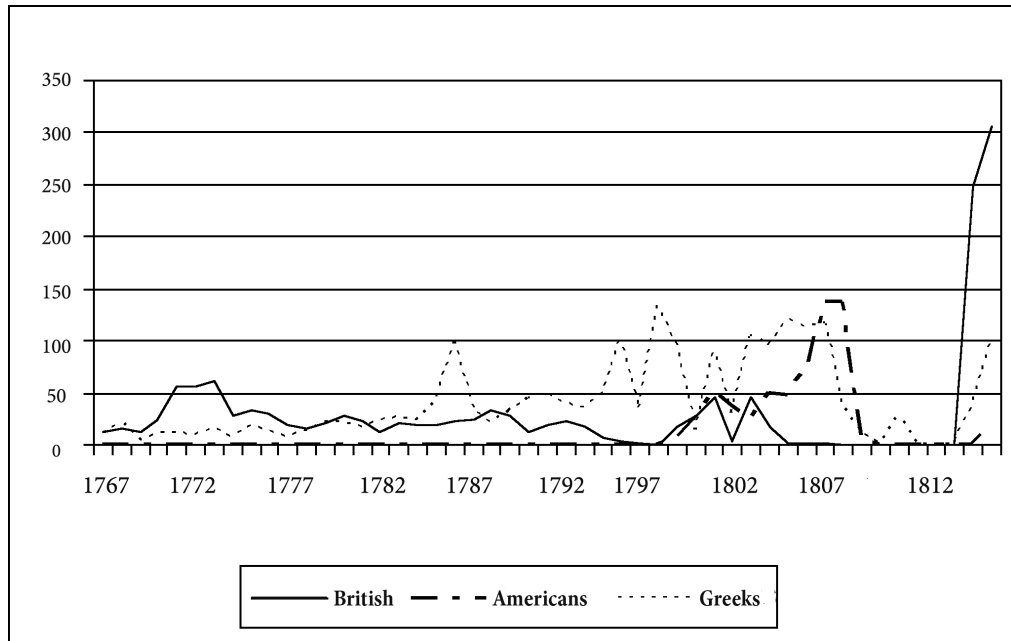
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<sup>23</sup> S. Marzagalli, *Les boulevards de la fraude. Le negoce maritime et le blocus continental, 1806-1813*, Villeneuve D’Ascq 1999, pp. 91-92.

<sup>24</sup> J. Black, *America as a Military Power: From the American Revolution to the Civil War*, London 2002, p. 44.

<sup>25</sup> On the home ports of the American vessels calling at Livorno, see Keene, “American Shipping and Trade”, p. 687, table 1.

Fig. 3. Arrivals at Livorno, 1767-1815.



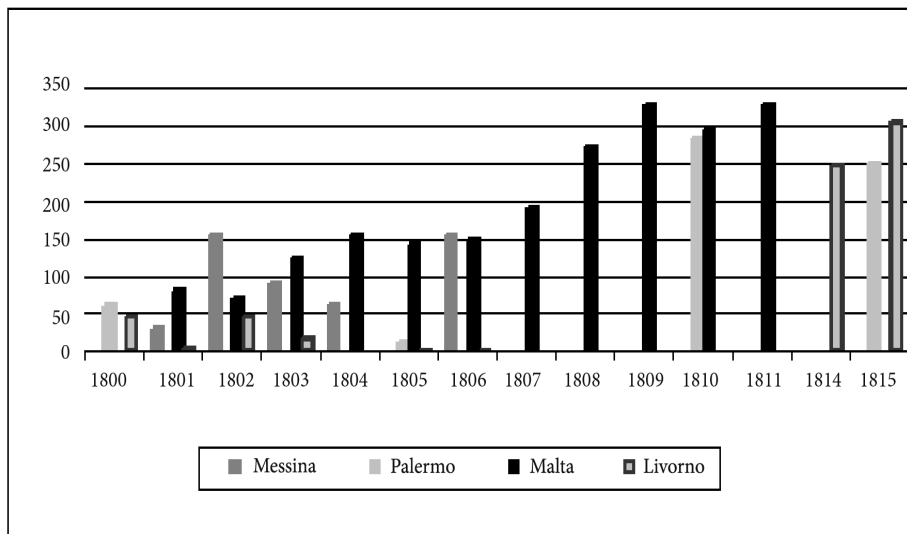
Source: ASL, Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima, F 699-705.

At the same time, the Greeks seem to have filled in part of the gap that was created by the retreat of the British from Livorno during the French occupations. There was a Greek mercantile community housed in the port-city, which facilitated the further engagement of Greek ships in the Italian Peninsula, especially since they had the privilege of being considered as neutral carriers in belligerent waters. Although they appear to have entered the port as early as 1767, which is the starting point of this database, they showed a significant increase in arrivals from 1793 onwards. The blockade and the revocation of the status of free port for Livorno seemed to have influenced the Greek maritime activities for a few years. However, after the end of the Napoleonic Wars they maintained their trade networks in Livorno.

But the question still remains: what happened to the British merchants who were operating in Livorno and the Mediterranean more generally? Was their shipping and trade disrupted by the Napoleonic Wars and the continental blockade? It turns out that the Mediterranean market was still profitable, if not more profitable now during the Napoleonic Wars, which created opportunities for transport services and soaring freights. The British did not flee the Mediterranean, especially since a large part of their naval fleet

was stationed in Southern Europe. On the contrary, they adopted a more flexible policy, moving eastwards to safer ports, out of French reach. In effect, either they populated ports which were well known to them from the past or created from scratch new maritime and naval bases.

Fig. 4. British arrivals in Mediterranean ports, 1800-1815.



Sources: ASL, Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima, F 623-705; M. D'Angelo, *Mercanti inglesi in Sicilia, 1806-1815*, Milan 1988, pp. 220, 223, 225.

As shown in figure 4, Livorno in the crucial war years was replaced by other port-cities such as Messina and Palermo in Sicily, where the British had settled before the war, and Malta, which emerged temporarily during the Napoleonic era as the most significant British hub in the Mediterranean.<sup>26</sup> It is noteworthy that the ports which were the most frequented in this period were actually operating both as commercial and naval bases. The case of Malta is one of striking development. Its maritime activity steadily rose from year to year, with a peak of 330 entries in 1809. What is of even greater

<sup>26</sup> For an overview of the role of Malta in Mediterranean trade, see J. Debono, *Trade and the Port Activity in Malta, 1750-1800*, Malta 2000; M. D'Angelo, *Mercanti inglesi a Malta, 1800-1825*, Milan 1990; X. Labat Saint Vincent, *Malte et le commerce français au XVIIIème siècle*, Vol. II, Ph.D. thesis, Université Paris IV-Sorbonne 2000; S. Fiorini and V. Mallia-Milanes (eds), *Malta: A Case Study in International Cross-currents*, Malta 1991; and D. Gregory, *Malta, Britain and the European Powers, 1793-1815*, Cranbury, NJ, 1996.

significance is the disappearance of Malta from the foreground by the end of the Napoleonic era, when it no longer served British interests. With the end of the war, the shipping and trade from Malta moved back to Livorno, which demonstrated a spiking increase in British ship entries. Sicily, as has been pointed out in the existing literature, seemed to be equally important to Malta. The port of Palermo showed an impressive number of arrivals and together with Marsala and Mazara, from where wine was exported, were the ports of call for the British ships. After all, Messina and Palermo had hosted British mercantile communities, which formed part of a network spreading out in the Mediterranean.

### *The Riddle of the Data*

In an attempt to sketch a more complete view of the ship movement in the port of Livorno, more than one archival source was employed in order to supplement the others. In figure 5, the sanitary records from the lazarettos of Livorno are plotted together with the official statistical figures registered by the French administration and the reports of French consuls for the British ships, which were published by Filippini. Although the different data sets refer to the same set of years, there are some significant disparities that have to be further examined.

All in all, the French source shows a much stronger presence of British shipping for the years that preceded the first occupation of Livorno in 1796 with significant differences in the nominal figures compared to the quarantine records.<sup>27</sup> The following year, 1797, British ships did not call at the port, which was now considered as enemy ground. At the turn of the century British maritime activity tried to recover until the continental blockade, which likely accounts for another quite dramatic fall in 1806. In the meanwhile, in 1802, the ceasefire that was implemented briefly by the Peace Treaty of Amiens seems to have allowed a respectable 230 British ships to enter once more the port of Livorno.

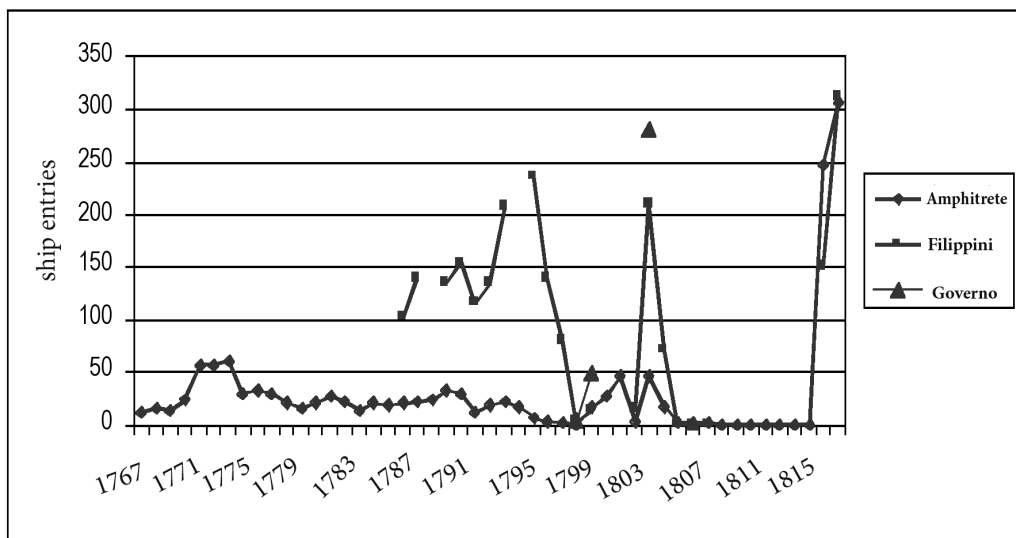
How we can interpret the different data sets in a supplementary way and account for the disparities remains in question. The riddle becomes more

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<sup>27</sup> The high figures for the English delivered by Filippini have caught the attention of other scholars, who treat them cautiously. Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*, p. 135, points out that “the figures [for the years 1700, 1715, 1730, 1735] are incredibly high” and juxtaposes more moderate approaches, such as L. Santini, “I protestanti a Livorno nel periodo mediceo-lorenese”, *I Valdesi e l'Europa*, Torre Pellice 1982, pp. 351-387, here p. 365, where he states that the English vessels constituted 30% of all foreign entries in the port during the second half of the 18th century.

complex when we use Filippini’s table to counter-check the Greek entries and discover a complete accordance of the data with those deriving from the sanitary records from the Archivio di Stato di Livorno.<sup>28</sup> One potential explanation might lie in the fact that the quarantine registers would normally include ships arriving from “suspicious” ports, and these would be predominantly all ports of Eastern Europe, where plague was endemic. At least this was the case for the quarantines in other Mediterranean ports. But this does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation for Livorno, since a substantial number of registered British ships had declared as port of provenance either British or Atlantic ports. More specifically, while 60% came from within the Mediterranean, a good 38% of British ships entering Livorno originated from the Atlantic, plus 3% originating from the Baltic and North Seas. This distribution gives hard evidence that all British ships entering Livorno would be recorded in the quarantine registers irrespective of their port of provenance.

Fig. 5. The riddle of the data.



Comparative sources: Amphitrete database; Filippini, “Il movimento del porto di Livorno”, pp. 147-151; ASL, Magistrato poi Dipartimento di Sanità marittima, F 699-705, Governo civile e militare di Livorno.

<sup>28</sup> G. Harlaftis and S. Laiou, “Ottoman State Policy in Mediterranean Trade and Shipping, c. 1780-c. 1820: The Rise of the Greek-owned Ottoman Merchant Fleet”, in Mark Mazower (ed.), *Networks of Power in Modern Greece: Essays in Honour of John Campbell*, London 2008, pp. 7-9.

The archival material from the port of Livorno is extremely rich with information about shipping and trade for British, Greeks and Americans, who are the three nationalities under study. This paper has presented only a small portion with the intention to quantify and chart the movement of ships in the port and investigate the disruptions that economic and political crises, and more specifically the French and Napoleonic Wars, brought upon the port. Old and new players co-existed in Livorno, employing similar tactics to overcome the difficulties. The British concentrated on safer ports, from where they could continue their maritime activity, while the Greeks followed the exact opposite course, moving westwards and expanding their networks and sea routes to the coasts of Spain, Gibraltar or even further, for example to Latin America. Profiting from soaring freights and the rivalry between the British and the French, the Americans made a brief appearance for a few consecutive years calling at Livorno, which had already developed trade ties with the Atlantic. As was also the case with the Greeks, their neutrality was their passport in the Mediterranean and assured profitable business even with a short life expectancy.

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“A RESPECTABLE BODY OF NATION”:<sup>1</sup>  
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND HIGH-RISK TRADE:  
THE GREEK MERCHANT IN TRIESTE, 1770-1830

*Marco Dogo*

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ABSTRACT: After focusing on the concept of the Greek merchant in the light of Habsburg mercantilist policies in the second half of the eighteenth century, the paper tries to evaluate the importance, in three respects, of the religious freedom that was granted to the Greek merchants who settled in the port-city of Trieste. First of all, the “confessional nation” was the institutional configuration by which Austrian authorities contrived to stabilize and control immigrant colonies. Secondly, being attached to a local church and to a wider religious community was, for the immigrant Greek merchants, a matter of both identity and adaptation, as can be seen through the analysis of naturalization acts and testamentary dispositions. The allocation of testamentary bequests affords a glimpse of the map of the nation in the mind of the Greek merchant. Thirdly, and perhaps most interestingly, the network of migrant merchant/religious colonies made business run, compensating for the normal underdevelopment of credit and communications and the recurrent crises (mainly wars, epidemics and bans on certain goods) that made trade both risky and alluring.

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I am going to present the reader with certain facts and thoughts concerning the relation between religious freedom and commercial development in the Upper Adriatic at a time when Greek human capital was greatly appreciated by the Habsburg authorities as a dynamic factor in the internal and, in particular, the external trade of the empire.

The Greek settlement in Trieste – Greek in the sense of “Eastern Orthodox Christian”, thereby including both a Greek ethnic component and a Slav one (or Illyric in the Austrian terminology) – can be traced back to the beginning of the 1750s. This was plainly the result of Maria Theresa’s granting of religious freedom, in 1751, to those Greeks who would establish themselves in the city for purposes of trade.

I shall not discuss here the immigration flow into Trieste, which has already been studied by Olga Katsiardi-Hering. Rather, I should like to consider the point of view of the Austrian authorities, as neatly summed up

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<sup>1</sup> Pasquale de Ricci, Consigliere d’Intendenza, Trieste, 1772.



in a comment made by the Government Commissioner, Pasquale de Ricci, in 1772:

The Greeks and the Illyrics [“an ignorant and distrustful people”, he added a few lines later] have so far not formed a respectable Body of Nation; but they are able to do so, and the time is perhaps not far off; it is a help, therefore, that they find in Trieste a more appreciative stay than in Venice, Livorno and Ancona, where the respective Princes outdo one another in enticing them with every possible lay and ecclesiastical privilege.<sup>2</sup>

In short, Pasquale de Ricci was suggesting that the Austrian authorities outbid the competitors in order to secure the Greek merchants to Trieste, and that the best way to do this would be to offer them a considerably greater degree of religious freedom. Why was Greek human capital so appreciated?

One hypothesis, to which I shall return later, is that the commercial success of the Greek merchants and other migrant minorities was due to their capacity to make the most of situations which, no matter how prolonged, were nonetheless exceptional, such as customs privileges, recurrent epidemics, export bans, wars, piracy, etc. Hypothesis or not, this was certainly how the merchants perceived themselves. When the Greeks and the Greek-Illyrics fought for the control of the church they shared, they appealed to the Austrian authorities and demonstrated their respective contributions to the empire’s trade. It was the year 1780. In the petitions of both parties, the showpiece was a table that represented the quantity and value of the goods introduced into the free port in the preceding 16 months “from the prohibited parts of the Levant”, namely from ports infected at that time by the plague.<sup>3</sup>

If the authorities prized the Greek merchants, why was the offer of religious freedom so much appreciated by the merchants? The economic value of religious freedom can be gauged by many a Dalmatian-Greek merchant, subject of Venice, opting for Trieste, as well as by the sluggish growth of the twin free port of Fiume, where the Catholic hierarchy was powerful enough to impose restrictions on the Greeks and other non-Catholics.

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<sup>2</sup> “Li Greci e li Illirici (gente ignorante e diffidente) non formano fin’ora un Corpo di Nazione rispettabile, ma possono formarlo, e l’epoca non è forse lontana; giova dunque, che incontrino in Trieste un soggiorno più grato, che in Venezia, Livorno, e Ancona, dove li rispettivi Principi li invitano a gara con li possibili privilegi laici e ecclesiastici.” Archivio di Stato di Trieste (AST), Intendenza Commerciale, b. 63, n. 22.

<sup>3</sup> The display, made up of commercial success and wealth, culminated in the two large petitions of April-May 1780. AST, Cesareo Regio Governo, b. 68.

In the 1770s the commercial profile of Fiume was taking shape as a mainland/maritime interface for the wheat of southern Hungary. The new business opportunities thereby created attracted to Fiume a group of Greek merchants, already active in Austro-Turkish mainland trade. In 1775 they asked permission to settle in the city and build a church there. The local authority expressed itself in favour, with the classic argument that Fiume needed to develop its trade, and those people were the experts, “particularly practised in the profitable trade with Hungary” [particolarmente applicata all’interessante commercio dell’Ongaria]. So, for the benefit of the state, it was advisable that they should be granted religious freedom, “in the same way as not only in Trieste, but in yet other ports of the Catholic profession, even that of Ancona in the Papal State” [così come non solo a Trieste, ma in più altri porti di Catolica Professione, e fino anco in quello di Ancona Stato Pontificio].<sup>4</sup> One notices that the line of thought concerning the relationship among religious freedom, commercial development and competition in the Adriatic was exactly the same as that adopted by Pasquale de Ricci three years earlier. Nevertheless, the Greek merchants in Fiume did not obtain permission to build a church. They tried again ten years later, threatening to move to Trieste if religious freedom were to be denied them.<sup>5</sup> They were a group of 18 merchant-householders “of non-united Greek Rite”, three of whom were ethnic Greeks, respectively from Candia, Ephesus in Asia Minor, and Ioannina in Epirus, while the others were Illyrics, almost all from Sarajevo.<sup>6</sup> In their appeal to the government, the immigrants put forward arguments known to be convincing: the property possessed *in loco*, the fortune in business, the ferries on the River Sava, the trade handled between Hungary and Italy.<sup>7</sup> This time they were authorised to build their church; but in the years following, their relationship with the city still remained clouded by the obstructionism of the local Catholic Church.

<sup>4</sup> Ljubinka Toševa Karpowicz, *Pravoslavna opština u Rijeci (1720-1868)*, Belgrade and Rijeka: Eparhijski upravni odbor, Eparhije gornjokarlovačke i Srpska pravoslavna crkvena opština, 2002, pp. 32-34 (from the Archive of the Srpska pravoslavna crkvena opština in Rijeka).

<sup>5</sup> Having other ports to apply to was the Illyrics’ strong point in their bargaining with Austrian authorities on issues pertaining to confessional autonomy.

<sup>6</sup> Karpowicz, *Pravoslavna opština*, p. 102.

<sup>7</sup> “Conscrizione delle famiglie greche, che si scoprino in Fiume, e fassione della loro facoltà dell’anno 1785”: the document is kept in the State Archives in Zagabria and was published by Mita Kostić in the appendix to his essay “Srpsko trgovačko naselje na Rijeci u XVIII veku”, *Istoriski časopis* VII (1957), unpaginated insert between pp. 51-52.

### *Institutions*

Let us look, then, at the relations between the Greek religious community and the imperial institutions in Trieste. One must remember that Maria Theresa was conscious of who would respond to the offer of religious freedom. The promise had been sought by high dignitaries of the Greek – or more exactly Greek-Illyric – church, resident in Hapsburg territory, who guaranteed that many rich merchants from Turkey and the Venetian lands would be pouring into Trieste, as in fact happened. This ecclesiastic support of mercantile immigration is understandable, since the commercial successes of the faithful would bring prestige to that same Greek-Illyric ecclesiastic hierarchy. Also, one should not forget that this hierarchy exercised spiritual control over the Illyric regiments on the military frontier. The Greek-Illyric church was an imperial institution, not the vulnerable guide of a migrant community. This explains the preference that the Hapsburg authorities gave to the Greek-Illyrics, when these and the Greeks fought for supremacy in the church they shared. The Greeks, who outdid the Illyrics both demographically and economically,<sup>8</sup> had asked to be delivered from the jurisdiction of the Illyric Bishop of Karlstadt and to be able to “depend solely on a foreign bishop of the Levant”. They were very harshly admonished: “It must be known to them that neither the preceding nor the new sovereign laws, nor even the Edict of Tolerance itself, grants to any of the tolerated religions dependence on foreign bishops.”<sup>9</sup>

The struggle between the two ethnic components of the Greek religious community, however, should not obscure what, inside the regulated Austrian society, they had acquired in common and would preserve even in separation. Respectability and public recognition were the basic needs of the immigrant Greek merchants, or at least of their élite. Initially – when that very respectability was in doubt – such an aspiration was collectively pursued, as a religious community gathered around a church. Later, when the religious community was by then a normal, accepted fact in the urban scene, the search for visibility became more individual: large houses, honours conferred, club membership. But the cornerstone of success had been

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<sup>8</sup> The Greeks boasted a volume of business four times larger than the Illyrics’ in Levant trade, not to speak of the trade with Italy, where the Illyrics were well-nigh absent.

<sup>9</sup> “Dovrebbe essergli noto che né le precedenti né le nuove sovrane leggi, né perfino lo stesso Editto di Tolleranza accorda a veruna delle Tollerate Religioni la dipendenza da vescovi stranieri.” AST, Cesareo Regio Governo, b. 67, Government communication to the Attorneys of the Greek Nation, 17 February 1782.

laid, literally, in 1753 with the foundation of an actual church, visible and accessible from the public thoroughfare. The particular position of the Greeks in Trieste is worth clarifying. When, in the autumn of 1781, the Edict (Patent) of Tolerance was published, the Governor of Trieste, Count von Zinzendorf, had 12 copies of it passed on to the presidents of the two nations, Greek and Illyric, recently segregated. In the accompanying letter, tactful in tone, he took pains to reassure the two Orthodox Triestine nations concerning their acquired rights. He explained that not only would “this new concession not restrict the broader privileges already conceded beforehand”, in particular the Theresian privilege of 1751, but that the Josephan Edict actually implied the confirmation of that Theresian privilege, and so exempted the two nations from seeking its confirmation from the new sovereign.<sup>10</sup> Nor was this explanation unimportant, because the Josephan Edict concerned the free *private* practice of religion, while the Theresian privilege granted a *public church*, a privilege which the Orthodox Triestines had enjoyed conjointly for 28 years and which they would continue to enjoy separately with the construction of a second Orthodox church.<sup>11</sup>

As a civic institution, the Greek community was from the outset awarded controlling functions over the flock of the faithful. Much more than the parish priest, it was the lay head, or governor, of the nation who guaranteed to the Austrian authorities the morality, the good behaviour and the economic usefulness of the “co-national” residents and especially of those immigrants, Ottoman or Venetian subjects, who sought to settle in the city. At the beginning of the 1770s a new element of control was to be added to the community’s self-surveillance. Through an adverse effect of the Austro-Turkish trade agreements, the Ottoman merchants enjoyed preferential tariffs in Hapsburg territories. Thus they found it profitable to keep a foot in both camps, having the headquarters of the firm in Smyrna, for instance, and the branch office in Trieste. The Austrian authorities were worried lest gold should flow abroad through such channels, so they began to pressurise

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<sup>10</sup> AST, Cesareo Regio Governo, b. 67: 3 November 1781, publication of the Imperial rescript (“Patent of Tolerance”) of 13 October; 17 December 1781, communication of Count von Zinzendorf to the Governors (presidents) of the two nations: “Tale nuova concessione non restringe privilegi più ampli stati preventivamente già conceduti, così, rispetto ad esse Nazioni Illirica e Greca cessa la necessità di implorare da S. M. la conferma del Privilegio statogli accordato nell’anno 1751, col quale gli era stata accordata la chiesa pubblica che qui esiste, mentre il medesimo viene ad essere confermato dalla Patente suddetta.”

<sup>11</sup> The church of St Nicholas, inaugurated in 1795.

the merchants who operated permanently in the free port to apply to become naturalised Austrian subjects. For this to be granted, the petitioners were obliged to transfer to the city the headquarters of their own business, to transfer their families as well, and in particular to “get themselves in land” [*possessionarsi*], i.e. to acquire real estate. For the immigrants, applying for naturalization was a matter of opportunity, to be weighed up in terms of duty fares and respectability. The acts of naturalisation are an important source as regards the subjective identity and the objective provenance of the immigrants.

### *Identity*

The identity of the Greek immigrants acquired a more precise profile when the Austrian authorities, in 1781, recognised two distinct nations: the Greek Nation and the Illyric Nation (or Greek-Illyric Nation) – two distinct ethno-confessional communities, each with its own charter and administrators, both of Greek Rite. Despite this, in dealing with the authorities in matters of naturalization protocols or registered partnership contracts, the Illyrics, just as much as the Greeks themselves, would declare themselves “Greek-Illyric”, “Greek”, “Oriental Greek” or “of Greek Rite”, in keeping with the traditional concept of Orthodoxy. When it came to wills, however, both Illyrics and Greeks were very careful to leave what they had to their own, the former to the Illyric, or more often the Greek-Illyric Nation, the latter to the Greek, or more often the Greek-Oriental Nation – or even, in a fit of pedantry, “to the Greco-Greek priests” and “to the poor of the Greco-Greek Nation”.<sup>12</sup>

As for their geographical provenance, the Greek immigrants mostly came from Venetian Dalmatia, from the Bocche di Cattaro, from the Ionian Islands and from the port of Smyrna. However, they also came from every corner of Turkey-in-Europe and Turkey-in-Asia, from “Seraj in Turkish Bosnia”, as well as from Trebinje in Herzegovina, from the Ragusa/Dubrovnik tributary vassal of the Ottomans, from Epirus and the Peloponnese, from Crete and the Archipelago, from Istanbul and even from Anatolian Brussa.<sup>13</sup>

Although by the late 1770s it had become usual for the immigrants to Trieste to normalize themselves as Austrian subjects, it seems that assimilating

<sup>12</sup> “Alli sacerdoti greco-greci”, “ai poveri della Nazione greco-greca”. AST, Archivio notarile, Testamenti (AnT), b. 2, f. 214, Antonio Papà (1785).

<sup>13</sup> On the provenance of the Illyrics, see M. Dogo, “Una nazione di pii mercanti. La comunità serbo-illirica di Trieste, 1748-1908”, in R. Finzi and G. Panjek (eds), *Storia economica e sociale di Trieste*, Vol. I: *La città dei gruppi, 1719-1918*, Trieste: LINT, 2001,

into the adoptive country did not weaken their identity references. A study of the affective and spiritual geography of the first generation of Orthodox merchants in Trieste is made possible by the fifty-odd wills written in Greek or in Cyrillic Slavonic, or more often dictated to a notary in Italian, by retailers and wholesale dealers, by captains and ship-owners, in the thirty-or-so years bridging the two centuries. The allocation of testamentary bequests affords a glimpse of the map of the nation in the mind of the Greek merchant.

### *The Geography of Faith and Business*

To begin with, the testator's birthplace, sometimes called “patria” (fatherland), is signalled by bequests to relatives: Trebinje, Metsovo, Santa Maura, Koron and St John in the Morea, Candia, Zea in the Archipelago, Smyrna and Cismé, and the family diasporas in “Bucureste di Valachia”, the Sirmio and Amsterdam.

In some cases the birthplace is signalled by bequests to religious institutions: the church of St George in Candia, the church devoted to the Virgin Mary in Metelino, the Monastery of Savina and the church of St Nicholas at Boka Kotorska, the three churches of Bianca at Castelnuovo, the five churches of Ioannina (the Cathedral, St Nicholas, St Athanasius, St Marina and the “Perivlepton”), the church and the monastery on the island of Ioannina on Lake Pamvotis, the Monastery of the Holy Virgin at Tossolia and the church of the Blessed Virgin Crisoviza, as well as the constellation of monasteries all around. In 1805 the merchant Nicolò Papà from Ioannina took care to link the bequests<sup>14</sup> to the celebration of masses in his own memory, but he also left, out of non-clerical philanthropy, 300 florins to indigent unmarried girls, and to the indigent youth for the payment of their *haraç*,<sup>15</sup> the annual tribute or poll tax, which, by the way, would end up in the treasury of Ali Pasha, at the time lord and master of Ioannina and Epirus.

Then there were the bequests to the holy places of Eastern Christianity, common to both Greeks and Illyrics: the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the monastery of Mount Sinai and those of Mount Athos; and then the particular objects of the testator's devotion within his own confessional community: the Greek Hospital and College in Smyrna, the Church of St John the Theologian

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pp. 573-602; on the provenance of the Greeks, see, in the same volume, Olga Katsiardi-Hering, “La presenza dei Greci a Trieste. Tra economia e società”, pp. 519-546.

<sup>14</sup> AST, AnT, b. 8, f. 978.

<sup>15</sup> “Alle povere figlie nubili...e ai poveri figlioli per pagare li suoi Carazzi ossia l'annuo Tributto.” AST, AnT, b. 8, f. 978.

in Patmos, the Bishop of Modon (who was well known in Trieste for having laid the foundation stone of the new Greek church of St Nicholas in 1784), the church of St Elias in Zara, the churches of St Nicholas in Fiume and Karlstadt and the Monastery of Gomirje in Croatia.

The document that best conveys the geography of the nation in the mind of a Greek-Illyric merchant is the testament of Pietro (Petar) Palicuccia. Born in Ottoman Herzegovina, he had traded for 30 years in Trieste, exporting grain and tobacco from Hungary and the Levant. He became moderately rich and in 1801, feeling tired, he sent for a notary, dictated his will and, being illiterate, signed the deed with a cross. In his will<sup>16</sup> he left four-fifths of his assets to his heirs and reserved the fifth part, amounting to 6000 florins (or €180,000 nowadays, with all due approximations), for a long list of beneficiaries, consisting of the poor, the churches, the monasteries and above all the schools of the nation [*della nazione*]. The line of bequests ran from Fiume towards the Croatian hinterland, to Gomirje, Karlstadt, Zagreb, Koprivnica and Kostajnica, then it turned eastward along the military frontier to Karlowitz in the Sirmio; from there it turned southward intersecting Bosnia – Sarajevo or “Serraglio”, Seraj – and Herzegovina – Mostar, Kosijerevo, Dobrićevo –, finally reaching the sea at Ragusa and Ulcinj. The institutions that benefited – among them the “scuola nazionale illirica” at the *mitropolija* of Karlowitz – were all situated in well-defined places along or near the river or land caravan routes between Hungary and the high Adriatic and between Bosnia and the low Adriatic. I am not able to say whether it was the map of devotion that adapted itself to the map of trade, or vice versa; in any case, not a single florin would get lost in the fulfilment of Palicuccia’s bequests.

Incidentally, the factual possibility of carrying out the bequests was not the only economic implication of the feeling of belonging to a widespread confessional diaspora. Some of the biggest bequests (such as in the wills of the Greeks Giovanni Andrulachi,<sup>17</sup> 1800, and Giovanni Carciotti,<sup>18</sup> 1811) to religious institutions in Ottoman territory were fixed in piastres, more exactly in “Piastre del *Gran Signore*”, that is the sultan, which were presumably available at the testator’s firm branches in the Levant or in the Balkans. Perhaps it was because he had no piastres at his disposal that in 1797 Nicolò Platarà left 500 florins to “the poor of my fatherland in Ioannina”, recommending that they be changed into piastres to be distributed “to true poor beggars, not to the Phanariots!”<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> AST, AnT, b. 7, transcribed (1802) in the Tribunale Commerciale e Marittimo, Testamenti, b. 152.

<sup>17</sup> AST, AnT, b. 7, f. 703.

<sup>18</sup> AST, AnT, b. 11, f. 1246.

<sup>19</sup> “Ai veri poveri questuanti, e non già ai fanariotti.” AST, AnT, b. 6, f. 628.

One can gauge the fluidity of the immigrants’ investments between the two worlds from the case of Michiel and Antula Aroni, of Smyrna. In 1792 the couple had been dwelling in Trieste for some time when Michiel went back to Smyrna on business and died there. Four years later, in dictating her will,<sup>20</sup> the widow made much of the capital she had inherited from her husband and was about to leave to her children. Besides a share in a Triestine company amounting to 10,000 florins, it consisted of a sum of 24,100 piastres (or *kuruş*<sup>21</sup>) in Smyrna, invested in a bakery, a mill, some real estate, and a share in the Bellagura firm (incidentally, the Bellaguras were an outstanding family both in business and in the community, in Smyrna as well as in Trieste).

Risk was not always crowned with success, as is shown by the moving case of Filippo Cetcovich. He came to Trieste from Boka Kotorska in the last decade of the eighteenth century and rapidly built up a good reputation. His name is in Pietro Palicuccia’s will, as fiancé to Palicuccia’s daughter and testamentary executor. In the following years, he was a shareholder in several insurance companies. At the time of the third French occupation (May 1809) Filippo Cetcovich was among the most prominent members of the Illyrian community and a member of the Church Chapter. In 1814 he wrapped up his business and, still young, he made his will.<sup>22</sup> In his preliminary dispositions he contrived to leave a 200 florin donation to the city’s hospital, to the poor of the Illyrian Nation, to St Spiridion Church in Trieste and to St Nicholas Church at Boka Kotorska. To his heirs – his wife and six children – he left two houses, some ownership shares on cargo boats and some credits. But, alas! – so warned the testator – in the account register the executors were to find:

...many debts caused by the numerous adversities that have stricken me in the past critical circumstances, that is to say,  
 – by paper money [i.e. the paper florin or *banco-zettel* the Austrians started to print in the late 1790s, so fuelling a sweeping inflationary process],  
 – by sea privateers, corsairs [mainly licensed by the British during the Napoleonic Wars],  
 – by the burdensome and disproportionate war contributions [imposed by the French upon the city of Trieste at three different times, the heaviest being the last one],

<sup>20</sup> AST, AnT, b. 6, f. 568, Antula Aroni.

<sup>21</sup> *Kuruş, gurus*, from *Groschen*. At that time about three piastres could be changed for an Austrian *Taler*. On the exchange rates of the Ottoman piastre, see Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

<sup>22</sup> AST, AnT, b. 11, f. 1353.



- by the loss of my 30,000 piastres' capital in the company in Smyrna [Austrian concern about dependence on external trade markets was not unfounded],
  - by the loss of the capital I had in the company with Giorgio Merchich [bankrupted a couple of years earlier],
  - by the loss of 1000 *cetvert* of wheat from Taganrog [that means that Filippo Cetcovich had lost some 200 metric tons of wheat, which incidentally equals the cargo of a medium-tonnage brigantine at that time],
- while, on the opposite side, my credits are mostly uncertain...<sup>23</sup>

### *The Religious Community and High-risk Trade*

Why, then, did a church assume so much importance for the Greek merchants, just as it did for other migrant mercantile minorities? There is no indication that success in business was experienced by the Greek merchants as confirmation of having been divinely chosen or as an experience clothed in some religious significance. Success was pointed to by them as evidence of their usefulness to the state and adhesion to the values of belated Hapsburg mercantilism, and that was all.

Whenever political change preceded social development, the Greek merchant moved in to fill the deficit in human capital. This holds true for the mercantilism inaugurated by the Hapsburgs with the trade convention of Passarowitz, when they had neither commodities nor merchants; for the free navigation in the Black Sea and through the Straits, which Russia acquired when she had grain to export, but neither ships nor sailors; and also for the exportation of grain from southern Hungary, for which the landed Magyar nobility had no entrepreneurial capacity. And then, when communications between markets were disrupted by temporary Ottoman bans on certain goods, or by epidemics, wars or naval blockades, or by underdeveloped communications as between Hungary and Fiume, what was adversity for many meant huge profits for the lucky few who were able to circumvent the obstacles.

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<sup>23</sup> "...molti debitti caggionati da moltissime disgrazie accadutemi nelle passate critiche circostanze, cioè dalla carta monetata, dai corsari del mare, dalle gravose e sproporzionate contribuzioni belliche, dalla perdita del mio capitale di Piastre 30/m. nella Comp.<sup>a</sup> di Smirne, dalla perdita dell'altro capitale nella Comp.<sup>a</sup> con Giorgio Mercich, dalla perdita di mille Cetvert grano di Taganrog... ed all'opposto li miei crediti in maggior parte sono incerti."

Fifty years ago Traian Stoianovich, in a memorable essay,<sup>24</sup> put forward the thesis that in high-risk trade, as was possible in the Adriatic-Danubian-Balkan-Aegean area in the second half of the eighteenth century, it was precisely confessional solidarity and community connections that supplied a competitive edge. In the absence of a credit system, for example, community solidarity made cross-sharing in trade and insurance capital easier. The network and branches of a large family commercial house allowed business to carry on even when the payment system was obstructed by wars and epidemics. As Olga Katsiardi-Hering’s research<sup>25</sup> shows, the profits, accumulated in one sector, once reinvested in limited partnerships, became the starting capital for the sons, the nephews and above all the sons-in-law of the merchant-adventurer. Philanthropy itself was economically rational within a system that attributed high value to community prestige and reliability. And here I may conclude, having quoted two authors to whom this paper of mine owes more than one idea.

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<sup>24</sup> Traian Stoianovich, “The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant”, *The Journal of Economic History* XX/2 (June 1960), pp. 234-313.

<sup>25</sup> See note 13.



Fig. 1. “Iantina et ses environs”, in F.-C.-H.-L. Pouqueville, *Histoire de la régénération de la Grèce, comprenant le précis des évènements depuis 1740 jusqu'en 1824*, 2nd edition, Vol. I, Paris: chez Firmin Didot Père et Fils, 1825.



Fig. 2. “Janina et ses environs” [closer view of city and lake], in Pouqueville, *Histoire*.



MEDITERRANEAN PATHWAYS OF GREEK MERCHANTS  
TO VICTORIAN ENGLAND

*Maria Christina Chatziioannou*

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ABSTRACT: This article refers to the emergence of the Greeks as a small ethnic group of merchants in Victorian England and proposes comparisons with other trading groups in London, developing three main points. The first section configures trade migrations in the relevant historiography and argues the link between ethnic community, family firms and individual entrepreneurs in Greek commercial networks; the second section indicates common characteristics of Greek immigrants in England: their Ottoman past and their trade experience in the Italian Peninsula; and the third section concludes with two representative case studies, one of a medium-sized merchant house, and the second representing the longer-lasting and more successful case, a firm that diversified into a global network in direct response to nineteenth-century “Anglobalization”.

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*Unreal City*  
*Under the brown fog of a winter noon*  
*Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant*  
*Unshaven, with a pocket full of currants*  
*C.i.f. London: documents at sight*

These lines are quoted from T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, perhaps his most famous work, a controversial poem that details the journey of the human soul searching for redemption. An American-born British subject, T. S. Eliot identified a model Mediterranean merchant and placed him in a well-known port city, Smyrna, which was famous throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries for the export trade of raisins. Numerous Greek and foreign merchants gathered there, anticipating prices and cargoes for Western Europe. Eliot chose a real Greek merchant, Eugenides, most probably to be identified with Eugenios Eugenides (1883-1954), who originated from Thrace but was established in Constantinople at the turn of the twentieth century. His main business activity started with trading and importing timber from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean.

At the time T. S. Eliot published *The Waste Land*, in 1922, Eugenides was preparing to set up his business in Piraeus, Greece. In the same period and corresponding to his entrepreneurial activities, he obtained a diplomatic

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assignment as consul of Finland in Piraeus,<sup>1</sup> combining personal economic interests with foreign diplomatic representation in his country. Eugenides became an exemplary agent in the Mediterranean. From Piraeus he moved to Egypt, then to South Africa and finally to Argentina. Soon after World War II, he established in Genoa the international Home Lines Company (1946). Finally, in 1953, he re-established his business in Greece, becoming one of the first Greek ship-owners to repatriate.<sup>2</sup> So, Eugenides' liners linked the Mediterranean with the Atlantic.

We could justly argue that Eugenides had nothing to do with Smyrna's raisins, as T. S. Eliot pointed out, not even with Peloponnesian currants, which were one of the predominant import products from the Eastern Mediterranean to Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century. But poets are not bound by factual accuracy or realistic details. Eugenides can be considered as a Greek entrepreneur who thrived in the Mediterranean. It was in the Mediterranean where he accumulated his business culture – in Constantinople – and from there he expanded to the global economy. His entrepreneurial path was based on the commodification of goods and services.<sup>3</sup> It involved economic migration, geographical transfer of business activities and personal intuition. Above all, he exemplified the role of the agent, the intermediary of the capitalist economy.

The type of trader-entrepreneur that Eugenides represents at the end of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth had a strong legacy, formed over time by socio-economic conditions and interpreted accordingly by historiography. It evolved from the previous Greek merchant-entrepreneur of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who traded various import-export commodities and rarely specialised. Their role as intermediary merchants in the foreign trade of the Ottoman Empire has been well documented. The majority were merchants who relied on local products of the Mediterranean region, such as Smyrna raisins, Smyrna cotton, Egyptian cotton and Patras currants, and depended on them in order to expand their entrepreneurial activities. They were all exposed to international demand and faced a high

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<sup>1</sup> *Επετηρίς Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών, 1929* [Yearbook of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1929], pp. 350-351.

<sup>2</sup> For information on his life and deeds, see the entry “Ευγένιος Ευγενίδης” [Eugenios Eugenides], in K. Vovolis, *Μέγα ελληνικών βιογραφικών λεξικών* [Large Greek biographical dictionary], Vol. I, Athens [1958], pp. 565-580.

<sup>3</sup> On global capitalism, see the introduction in Peer Vries, *Via Peking back to Manchester: Britain, the Industrial Revolution, and China*, Leiden University 2003.

degree of inter-ethnic and international competition. It was a large, uneven group that consisted of big-, medium- and small-scale merchants.

Eugenides' personal itinerary represents some critical issues regarding Greek trader-entrepreneurs as a non-unified body in the Mediterranean: economic migration as an entrepreneurial venture, the role of several Mediterranean economic centres, such as Constantinople, and Italian ports as cosmopolitan maritime-trading centres characterised by pragmatism and pluralism, as well as being foyers of knowledge and entrepreneurial know-how. Eugenides' story is one of many that unfolded in the Mediterranean and determined the fame of "The Corrupting Sea", as the cradle not only of civilisation but also of trade and entrepreneurship. The Mediterranean is a transnational node that links distinct peoples and cultures, a geographical entity that has been described as a "universe", in which people migrated to and fro: a "universe" that was integrated into the world economy and the globalised market. Following Braudel's path, new generations of scholars have analyzed *la Méditerranée* as an organizing concept in the world of exchanges, a world that developed through utilizing business organization and networks, a world that surpassed sovereign national boundaries. From early modern times until the industrial era, a non-unified economic world had been created in Europe through commercial transactions, practices and the ethics of business dealings. This geographically structured thesis has been challenged in recent decades by social anthropologists and historians of earlier periods.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Getting Settled in England: The Prerequisites*

Around the third decade of the nineteenth century a small ethnic group of merchants began to come into view in Victorian England, the Greeks. It was a group that believed that the growth of trade was among the most important factors in the process of economic development.<sup>5</sup> The Greek immigrants to England settled in major economic centres, such as London, Manchester and

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<sup>4</sup> Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000. The same authors continued their critical views on Braudel and the Mediterranean in the AHR forum "The Mediterranean and 'the New Thalassology'", *American Historical Review* CXI/3 (2006), pp. 722-740.

<sup>5</sup> Before that, a scanty presence of Greeks in the late seventeenth century has been confirmed, as visitors and isolated residents in London and elsewhere. J. Harris, "Silent Minority: The Greek Community of Eighteenth-century London", in D. Tziouvas (ed.), *Greek Diaspora and Migration since 1700: Society, Politics and Culture*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, pp. 31-43.



Liverpool, and formed ethnic-religious communities as institutions. Their settlement in England began in the second decade of the nineteenth century, driven by economic reasons and coinciding with the establishment of the Greek State (1828). They were represented collectively by State diplomatic representatives, while the Greek Orthodox church and their private and public lives were regulated by an inter-community set of formal and informal laws.

The business group that prevailed within the London Greek community took advantage particularly of three import commodities that created geographical diversification for Greek networks in English markets: silk from the Ottoman Empire for the provisioning of the English silk industry; currants, the main export product of the Greek State after the 1840s; and cereals for the populous English realm after the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846. Cotton was imported to Liverpool from the USA. However, the American Civil War (1861-1865) and the blockade led to a major reform of this market and increased cotton imports from Egypt and India. After the 1870s and up to World War I, the London Stock Exchange became an important factor in the British economy in trading stocks and shares issued by numerous joint-stock enterprises, and this became another entrepreneurial field for Greek businessmen, creating new ethical issues in the Greek mercantile world.<sup>6</sup>

The origins of these merchants were mostly economic hubs within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. What is interesting to note is that most of these family firms were already in the second phase of their entrepreneurial expansion around the 1830s, having accumulated capital and knowledge in the Eastern Mediterranean. These Ottoman-based firms (Constantinople, Smyrna) had already experienced market conditions in Italian port-cities (like Trieste and Livorno) and Malta and had already established relationships with foreign merchants. The experience that these relationships bore can be thought of as a form of capital, part and parcel of their trade capital. Social capital incorporates social norms, attitudes, values, language and culture.

The concept of social capital in combination with personal networks has been elaborated on by sociologists and economists. Social capital, in the form of close ties to family and community, may produce benefits by raising utility and by raising profits (by reducing the cost of transacting business due to higher trust). Several studies have examined the impact of social capital on the accumulation of human capital.<sup>7</sup> The analysis often takes for granted

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<sup>6</sup> Maria Christina Chatziioannou, "Relations between the State and the Private Sphere: Speculation and Corruption in Nineteenth-century Greece", *Mediterranean Historical Review* XXIII/1 (2008), pp. 13-14.

<sup>7</sup> In his pioneering article, Coleman examines three forms of social capital – expectations and obligations, information channels and social norms – by engaging "new institutional

two behavioural assumptions: either the emigrants maximize individual utility with no concern for the welfare of others, or migration is part of a collective welfare maximization process in which all migration externalities for emigrants and non-emigrants are internalized.<sup>8</sup>

A number of studies have documented the importance of personal relationships in economic activity. When formal arrangements were difficult to access, or too costly, personal relationships provided valuable channels of information, implementing the terms of an agreement, based as they were on familiarity, trust and, if necessary, by punishing a cheating party by excluding him from the flow of regular transactions. In the Ottoman Empire and the Greek State personal relations have strongly determined the evolution of all kinds of private and state institutions. It is well known that cohesive ethnic groups dispersed among many countries have historically been successful at identifying and securing business opportunities. Like the Chinese in East Asia or Greek-Epirotes and Greek-Chiot families in the nineteenth century, or any other of many historical examples, the members of these groups usually share a geographical origin, common language and religion.<sup>9</sup> These groups showed a preference for personal and informal agreements. Their strategies made clear that they were exploiting the personal connections between group members to overcome obstacles to information and adjustment in new environments. The importance of personal networks, which emerges from the firms' operations within the Mediterranean area, makes the case for characterizing networks as intermediate forms of organization, while Ottoman-Greek networks, like those of East Asia, were the only forms of "economic institutions" engaged in international competition.<sup>10</sup>

The organization of trade by different ethnic groups presents a range of common characteristics that have existed for long periods, as is the case of

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economics with sociology"; J. S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital", *American Journal of Sociology*, supplement, XCIV (1988), pp. 95-120. From the recent bibliography, see Nan Lin, *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action (Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences)*, Cambridge University Press 2002.

<sup>8</sup> M. Schiff, "Trade Migration, and Welfare: The Impact of Social Capital", Policy Research Working Paper 2044, The World Bank Development Research Group, Trade, January 1999.

<sup>9</sup> For the Chinese diaspora networks, which present similar characteristics to the Greeks, see A. McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diaspora, 1842 to 1949", *The Journal of Asian Studies* LVIII/2 (1999), pp. 306-337.

<sup>10</sup> The abuse of historical data or evidence by certain economists/economic historians has been disputed; see M. Casson and Mary Rose, "Institutions and the Evolution of Modern Business: Introduction", *Business History* XXXIX/4 (1997), pp. 1-8.

the business structure. Economic migration was part and parcel of trading. The type of the migrant-merchant differs little from that of the entrepreneur, in the sense that both apply strategic choices concerning the place of emigration and the kind of economic activity to be followed in the new place of settlement.<sup>11</sup> The success of the migrant-entrepreneur is not only illustrated by such impressive careers as the Rothschilds of Jewish background, or, in the Greek case, that of S. Sinas in Vienna, originally from the Vlach-populated Moschopolis, or A. Syngros and the Ralli brothers from Chios, but can be identified in strategic choices of medium-sized merchants as well. The central role of certain migrant-entrepreneurs inside the ethnic/religious/family network or community is indisputable, giving a prototype pattern of social and economic behaviour or forming a trajectory to depend on.

The Jews, a diaspora group *par excellence*, established themselves in the London business community as Sephardic and Ashkenazi networks from the seventeenth century. Their business activities were associated primarily with international trade and financial exchanges linked with Jewish networks based in Amsterdam. Eighteenth-century London was the centre of brokering, and the business community developed strong religious and family ties keeping Jews separate. Through a long procedure of political upheavals, economic demands and entrepreneurial ingenuity, Jews cropped up in financial and commercial activities in London and major economic centres in England.<sup>12</sup> Still, the role of leading figures such as the Rothschilds, Francis Pereira, a leading broker of Bank of England shares in the eighteenth century, and a few others shaped entrepreneurial behaviour and patterns affecting other Jewish merchant-entrepreneurs, as well as the mode in which the Jew was represented and perceived in British society.<sup>13</sup>

From the historiographical discussion on diaspora networks, I will touch upon the link between ethnic community, family firms and individual

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<sup>11</sup> Maria Christina Chatziioannou, "L'emigrazione commerciale greca dei secoli XVIII -XIX. Una sfida imprenditoriale", *Proposte e ricerche* XLII/1(1999), pp. 22-38.

<sup>12</sup> Ann M. Carlos and Larry Neal, "The Micro-foundations of the Early London Capital Market: Bank of England Shareholders during and after the South Sea Bubble, 1720-25", *Economic History Review* LIX/3 (2006), pp. 498-538.

<sup>13</sup> A number of studies are dedicated to the house of Rothschild: B. Gille, *Histoire de la Maison Rothschild*, 2 vols, Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1965-1967; N. Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild*: Vol. I: *Money's Prophets, 1798-1848*, Vol. II: *The World's Banker, 1849-1999*, London: Viking-Penguin, 1998; H. H. Kaplan, *Nathan Mayer Rothschild and the Creation of a Dynasty: The Critical Years, 1806-1816*, Stanford University Press 2006.

entrepreneurs;<sup>14</sup> that is, the legacy of certain persons inside the ethnic group and their impact on the formation of networks and communities. The London Greek community in the nineteenth century was a business community. It was a traders' community from the 1830s up to the 1870s and later on transformed into a group of entrepreneurs linked to the stock exchange and maritime business. Around this hub of Greek merchants and a few Greek diplomats, a number of other individuals were gathered of the same ethnic origin, like scholars, artists and teachers, and to a large extent depended on them. The central role of certain migrant-entrepreneurs inside the ethnic/religious/family network or community is indisputable, giving a prototype pattern of social and economic behaviour or forming a trajectory to depend on.

I wonder whether a more appropriate way in the study of Greek business activity in England is as a corporate entity referring to business groups and business communities, or as networks and individuals. The absence of individuality in many studies of corporate units places the historian in much more anxiety than the economist. While the historian struggles with the rhetorical narratives for individual entrepreneurs and firms, at the same time he has to examine critically exemplary case studies, as well as to evaluate information regarding public appraisal and social reception of the biographical data of the firm in question. How did social capital, local tradition and moral values influence the development, structure and functions of various firms? A combined methodology seems to be appropriate especially in cases where small groups, like the Greeks, are examined and where cultural characteristics were predominant in the formation of networks, community bonds and hierarchies, as well as entrepreneurial behaviour.

All relevant case studies affirm a performance which could not have materialised in a non-diasporic context. Diaspora business activity of the nineteenth century is seen through the lens of its impact on national economies, either that of the home country or that of the host countries. At this point my argument regards formal and informal alliances that could be obtained through the following sources:

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<sup>14</sup> Apart from the historical approaches to the Greek diaspora, a recent approach to the Jewish Sephardic diaspora in Livorno offers interesting points: Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009.

- a) Ethnic-religious groups
- b) Kinship bonds and family partnerships
- c) State support: home country/host country

Now, regarding the case of the relevant Greek case studies, the home country's economy started from 1828, while the main actors of the Greek diaspora had already been present in international economic milieux and had formed trade networks in the Mediterranean from the eighteenth century. A missing subject from the relevant bibliography is the study of British state policy towards small groups of foreign merchants like the Greek Orthodox group, dispersed in small communities or as individuals in England, as well as the role of religious differences in commercial exchanges. A relevant recent historiography relates to other small merchant groups coming from the East/Levant/Orient: the Armenians and the Muslim trade networks in England in the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> According to John Scholes' manuscript dated to the 1870s, an informal register of foreign merchants in Manchester, it seems that the Greek migrants there were considered as belonging to the "Orient". Greek, Armenian and Ottoman identity in the trading world of Manchester was defined initially by the place of origin and the main place of transactions. From the early nineteenth century Armenians had been moving to London and Manchester from Constantinople, alongside the Greeks, mainly as silk merchants. It can be assumed that in the early years of settlement Greeks and Armenians led parallel lives in Manchester due to their common origin in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>16</sup> The establishment of the Greek State and the organization of diplomatic and consular representation in England after the 1830s gave a decisive blow to separating the identities of these merchants.

The majority of the Greek merchants who arrived in London, Manchester and Liverpool in the early nineteenth century shared some common characteristics before coming to England:

- a) An Ottoman past: the majority were born in regions of the Ottoman Empire, had participated in the external trade of the Ottoman Empire and had acquired trade know-how in Constantinople and Smyrna. The activities

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<sup>15</sup> F. Halliday, "The Millet of Manchester: Arab Merchants and Cotton Trade", *British Society of Middle Eastern Studies* XIX/2 (1993), pp. 159-176; Aliye Mataraci, *Trade Letters as Instances of Economy, Ideology and Subjectivity*, Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Maria Christina Chatziioannou, "Greek Merchants in Victorian England", in Tziovas (ed.), *Greek Diaspora*, pp. 45-60.

of the Greek traders were the link in the chain of the movement of trade from the East to the West.

b) The Italian Peninsula trade experience.

The development of Greek enclave communities in the Italian Peninsula can be examined as the main analytical axis because of its three main characteristics:

1. The sequential advantage: these communities constituted early organized *loci* of Greek emigration outside the Ottoman Empire. We mainly refer to Venice, Livorno and Trieste.<sup>17</sup> We observe, however, that during the eighteenth century there was an increase and intensification of economic activities, directly associated with the Ottoman economy and serving mainly the maritime transit trade. The Mediterranean ports of the Italian Peninsula had open, extra-dependent economies and did not belong to a nation-state. The activities of Greek immigrants were usually the link in transit trade. Nevertheless, the level of their social, economic and cultural exchanges was notably higher than that of the first emigrants' place of origin. Immigrants from different parts of Greece and Ottoman territory met and mingled for the first time. Through family ties and by capitalizing on family relations, since the first corporate core of most economic activities was the family itself, immigrants of different origin coexisted and competed in Italian ports that were *insulae* of a capitalistic economy.

2. The geographical advantage: the Italian Peninsula and especially the ports where Greek immigrants settled lay at the heart of the Mediterranean world, where businesses could penetrate other economic centres, such as Venice-Amsterdam, Venice-Vienna, Trieste-Vienna, Livorno-Marseille, Livorno-London. During the pre-industrial period the expansion of an enterprise was directly associated with geographical distance and means of transport. The commercial connections of Greek communities in the Italian Peninsula encompassed not only the Eastern Mediterranean ports, extending to the Black Sea and the Azov Sea, but also contacts – particularly from the northern part of the Adriatic Sea – with cities and markets in the

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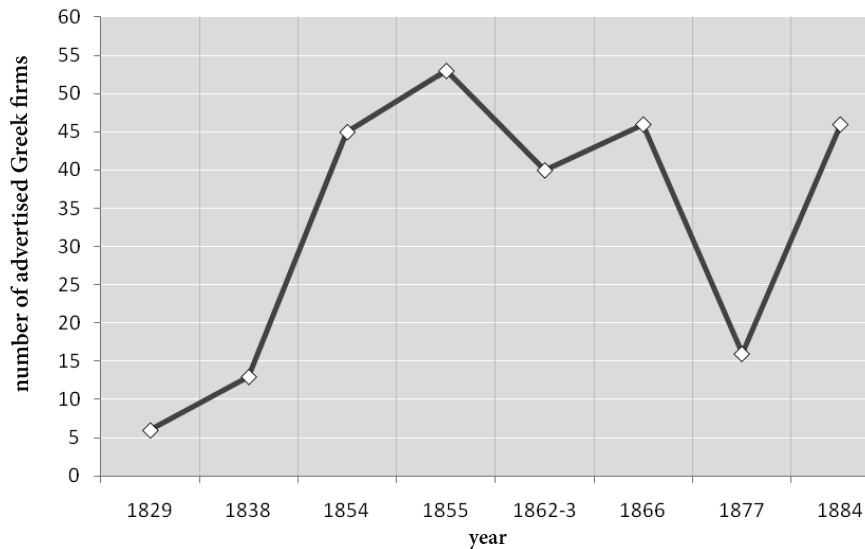
<sup>17</sup> Artemis Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, *Η ελληνική κοινότητα της Βενετίας (1797-1866)* [The Greek community of Venice (1797-1866)], Thessaloniki 1987; Olga Katsiardi-Hering, *Η ελληνική παροικία της Τεργέστης, 1751-1830* [The Greek community in Trieste, 1751-1830], 2 vols, Athens 1986; Despina Vlami, *Το φιορίνι, το σιτάρι και η οδός του Κήπου. Έλληνες έμποροι στο Λιβόρνο, 1750-1868* [The florin, the wheat and Garden Street: Greek merchants in Livorno, 1750-1868], Athens: Themelio, 2000. See also herein the articles by E. Liata and M. Dogo.

Balkans and Central Europe, which produced a complex web of sea and land communications.

3. The cultural advantage: the settlement of Greek immigrants in ports of the Italian Peninsula, as an opportunity for acquiring trade know-how and social experience, became a structural element in the formation of the Greek entrepreneur. In other words, it created trade culture. We can follow the return of expatriates from the Greek communities of the Italian Peninsula to the newly founded Greek State, as well as their resettlement in other European economic centres. Within a dense network of exchange and migration, we can trace the transfer of capital, the transfer and diffusion of economic know-how concerning commercial practice and the organization of commercial enterprise, as well as of fields of technical expertise such as wooden shipbuilding or in the textile industry.

Fig. 1.

Total number of Greek firms registered and advertised in London directories, 1829-1884.



Source: see Table 2.

In Figure 1, based on indexing a series of London directories from 1829 to 1884, we notice that in the period 1854-1884<sup>18</sup> 40-55 Greek firms were registered and advertised alphabetically in their pages, usually under the general category “Merchants”. The figure refers mainly to London-based firms. The rather sharp decrease in their number in the 1870s must be considered accidental. This overall small number of firms accords with the known numbers of the Greek population in London for the period 1841-1881, ranging from 167 to 470 people.<sup>19</sup>

### *The Representative Case Studies*

What is the main link that joins Eugenios Eugenides of the twentieth century to the Geroussi and Ralli brothers of the nineteenth century? All of them started their businesses in the Ottoman Empire and especially in the Eastern Mediterranean. They form part of a corpus of representative examples of commercial firms and family capitalism whose entrepreneurship was built on intermediation. The role of intermediary reduced the probability of unsuccessful trade that arose in direct trades. Their efficiency depended on various socio-economic and political variables, but as intermediaries they were more competent in matching buyers and sellers.<sup>20</sup> This competence was based in the Mediterranean area – as their place of origin, place of training and place of production and consumption of commodities. The Mediterranean was the source of their trade capital, that is, the knowledge of how to trade goods on the international market as well as the formation of their social capital.

The Geroussi merchant house<sup>21</sup> is an example of a family network that came into being in Smyrna and Trieste before the Greek Revolution, in 1821, subsequently expanded to the Aegean port of Syros and finally moved to

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<sup>18</sup> For the general utility of these “Yellow Pages” of their time, see P. J. Atkins, *The Directories of London, 1677-1977*, London: Mansell, 1990.

<sup>19</sup> D. Magriotis, “Η δημογραφική ιστορία της ελληνικής εμπορικής παροικίας του Λονδίνου (1837-1881)” [The demographic history of the Greek merchant community of London (1837-1881)], *Ta Historika* III/6, (1986), p. 367.

<sup>20</sup> G. Jones and Mary Rose (eds), *Family Capitalism*, London: Frank Cass, 1993, pp. 1-16; Th. F. Cosimano, “Intermediation”, *Economica*, new series, LXIII/249 (1996), pp. 131-143.

<sup>21</sup> Maria Christina Chatziioannou, *Οικογενειακή στρατηγική και εμπορικός ανταγωνισμός. Ο οίκος Γερούση στον 19ο αιώνα* [Family strategy and commercial rivalry: the Geroussi house in the nineteenth century], Athens: Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 2003.



Patras, the export port for Greek currants. Its trade capital consisted of liquid assets, a network of personal relationships and the essential know-how that had been acquired through international transactions in Smyrna and Trieste. On this basis the three Geroussi brothers established their family network during the years 1823-1835. They exported agricultural raw commodities (valonia, raisins, silk, sponges, cotton) and imported colonial goods and manufactures (coffee, sugar, lumber boards, nails, paper, ropes, cloth) from Smyrna to Trieste.

The Greek War of Independence (1821-1829) caused political, economic and national upheavals in local and international relations with serious consequences for all Greek merchants trading in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Geroussi brothers, together with other conational merchants, survived wartime implications and found a temporary new commodity to trade: war canons that were sold as scrap in Trieste. Special partnerships were established *ad hoc* in order to organize the diving for, collecting and maritime transport from the south-west Peloponnese to Trieste. The Geroussi brothers participated with a 20% share in 1826 and a 50% share in 1827 for a mixed capital gain of 15-30%. These temporary lucrative opportunities gave extra capital to merchants with meagre financial resources.

The Geroussi house can be classified as a group of medium-sized merchants who were active in the early nineteenth century in the maritime trade of the Eastern Mediterranean. Its activities place it among the merchants who extended the limits of local trade within the Ottoman Empire: it became involved in international transactions through the security of the family network and the Greek communities in the port-cities of Ottoman Smyrna (multi-ethnic) and Hapsburg Trieste (free port) in the early nineteenth-century protected economic milieu, characterized by the absence of a strong entrepreneurial majority.

The family enterprise is one of the most durable structures in Greek society and the economy. Microanalysis of this enterprise reveals general issues, such as: the importance of personal relations in economic transactions; the strategy of trade capital in Ottoman and Greek lands, in combination with the distinctive means of transaction; the complementary operation of shipping and insurance-credit enterprises; and the importance of economic agency in European ports, such as Trieste, the most eastern city of the Italian Peninsula and a precious port of the Hapsburg Empire at that time.

Thus, the organization of the merchant house can be analysed on the basis of the fact that the geographical structure of the family network based in the Mediterranean from the early nineteenth century was the decisive

element of this type of enterprise. In Smyrna, Syros and Trieste the three brothers managed their capital – already in the second generation – through multiple short-lived commercial collaborations, which brought to light a number of merchants whose economic activities ran parallel to the Greek War of Independence and the Russo-Turkish War (1828-1829). Over and above these upheavals, the presence of one member of the Geroussi family in Trieste enabled the house to create a profitable system of intermediation services for merchants in Ottoman and Greek lands.<sup>22</sup> The Geroussi house did not achieve an international commercial presence by default; it upgraded its commercial presence in Europe, with the settling of family members of the third generation in England, taking advantage of an external factor – the first dynamic export product of Greek agriculture, currants – and an internal advantage, the skilful management of their trading capital.

The merchant house of the three brothers was dissolved after they were all established in the Greek city of Patras in 1835-1838. They all acquired land with vineyards and exported currants, starting with their most familiar Western port, Trieste. The next step was to acquire a family agent in London, the largest consumer market for currants after the 1840s. By 1858 Themistocles Geroussi, belonging to the third generation of the family firm, had already established an office in Broad St, which escaped anonymity by appearing in a legal procedure in Guildhall after three robbers broke into the premises.<sup>23</sup>

The Geroussi family is mentioned in London in J. S. C. Morris, *The Business Directory*, 1862-1863, 1866 and 1884. In the period 1858-1880 the third generation of Geroussis already had family agents established in London and Liverpool. In Liverpool they received agricultural goods by means of British agents (Leyland, Collings, Glynn, Burns, Papayanni, Bibby, Potter, Andrew, Melhuish). Their import cargoes from Patras, passing through Sicily (Catania, Messina, Girgenti), consisted of products that they knew well from their Mediterranean experience (currants, valonia, figs, olive oil, nuts, lemons).<sup>24</sup> The geographical diversification of the family firm was accomplished by

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<sup>22</sup> The Geroussi house belongs in the typology of international commercial houses, that is to say commercial enterprises that operated simultaneously in two or more countries. S. Chapman, “The International Houses: The Continental Contribution to British Commerce, 1800-1860”, *The Journal of European Economic History* VI/1 (1977), pp. 5-9.

<sup>23</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, no. 28553 (28-6-1858).

<sup>24</sup> Index of Greek merchants/receivers of merchandise in the port of Liverpool compiled every decade from the *Customs Bills of Entry* (1840-1880). I thank Gelina Harlaftis for the use of this source (mf in photocopies) from her private library.

transferring all their trade capital from the Greek State and focusing on a major Greek export commodity with a big consumer market; England was consuming foodstuffs and raw materials in increasing numbers throughout the nineteenth century. Consequently, a number of Greek merchants of the same or larger funds as the Geroussis would conclude their entrepreneurial itinerary from the Mediterranean in England in order to supply this demand.

Examining the above-mentioned London directories from 1829 to 1884 there is one firm, Ralli Bros, and a family name, Ralli, that prevails throughout the examined period (see Table 1).

Table 1

Ralli firms/number of annual references in London directories, 1829-1884

No.	Ralli firms	Number of references
1	Ralli, A.	1
2	Ralli, Antonio & Co.	4
3	Ralli Bros	8
4	Ralli, Const. & Sons	1
5	Ralli, Const.	1
6	Ralli, Pandia Theodore	4
7	Ralli, Theodore	1
8	Ralli, Theodore & J.	1
9	Ralli & Mavrojani	6
10	Ralli & Sons	1
11	Ralli & Tamvako	1

The Ralli brothers held a central role in the London Greek community. The fact that the Ralli were among the earliest Greek arrivals in London, the most renowned and successful paradigm, as well as an enduring focal point for other Greek migrants, often leads to a misleading view of the Greeks and the Ralli brothers as identical in England. There is also confusion of people with the same name and surname, for example at least three Pandia Ralli were active in business at the same time. Nonetheless, all of them were born in the Ottoman Empire before the advent of the Greek Revolution and dispersed in Mediterranean trading centres – Constantinople, Malta, Livorno and Marseille – before establishing themselves in London around 1818. One of their first

business acquaintances in London was Nathan Meyer Rothschild. The reason for this was to open a credit account with his house in the new, promising market of London. The circular letter bears the date London, 1 January 1819: “We beg to inform you, that we have this day formed an establishment in the City, under the firm Ralli & Petrocochino. At foot, you have the signature of our mr. Giovanni Ralli, to which we crave your attention, our Eustratio Petrocochino being absent his signature will follow in due course.” Indeed, in a later circular of 17 May 1819, together with Petrocochino’s signature, followed an indication of their nexus to the East: “You will see by the enclosed Letter, that our respective houses of Constantinople are answerable, and guarantees for all transactions in our Establishment in this City.” The two partners of the London firm participated in two respective merchant houses in Constantinople: Pandia Jean Ralli & Cie and Petrocochino & Argenti.<sup>25</sup> As far as the continuation of their Constantinople branch offices is concerned, it seems that, through commercial *Annuaire*s of the city, at least a Ralli Han (building), several other buildings and some members of the family were trading there in the period 1881-1901.<sup>26</sup> It is difficult at the moment to identify the late nineteenth-century Ralli in Constantinople, but their trades were the same as elsewhere throughout the nineteenth century: they were merchants of foodstuffs (cereals, flour, salted fish) and iron and metals, as well as bankers. One of them possessed there the capital of 25,000 Turkish liras (575,000 francs) in 1890.

Unfortunately, the Ralli brothers’ business records were destroyed during World War II, so details of their trade not only are scarce, but also get mixed in a labyrinth of entrepreneurial actions of a multi-branched family with similar names. It appears that their earliest trade was in silk, which no doubt included exports of raw silk from Constantinople to England. The Ralli then took a strong trade interest in the export of Russian grain from the Black Sea ports to England. Return cargoes to the Black Sea and the Middle East were British manufactured goods (cottons).<sup>27</sup>

From the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, Greeks and Greek-speaking subjects of the dissolving Ottoman Empire continued to migrate to England as merchant-entrepreneurs. Some of them became employees in the long-lasting and prosperous Greek merchant house of the Ralli brothers.

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<sup>25</sup> Rothschild Archive, London, A. XI/112/43.

<sup>26</sup> See Table 3.

<sup>27</sup> S. D. Chapman, “Ralli, Pantia Stephen (1793-1865)”, “Ralli, Stephen Augustus (1829-1902)”, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press 2004; online edition, January 2008.

This firm, one of the best examples of multinational companies, constitutes a distinctive example in business history of an international company of Greek origin.<sup>28</sup> I would also suggest that the main connecting node in the Greek communities and networks in England, as well as an essential agent with the Greek State, were the Ralli, who employed a number of Greek migrants to work in their branch offices and provided information not only to their own entrepreneurial network but also to the Greek State.

The German population in London rose from 16,082 in 1861 to 27,290 in 1911, while the Italians counted some 10,000 people by the dawn of the twentieth century.<sup>29</sup> A large number of all these foreigners were employed in various middle-class occupations. There is a point of difference with these numerically strong foreign communities, as the Greek group configured a predominantly business community whose main activity up to the last quarter of the nineteenth century was the provisioning of foodstuffs and raw materials to the British Empire. This economic procedure was well known from their past experience within the borders of the Ottoman, Russian and Habsburg Empires. The most successful of them, like the Ralli, diversified into a global network under British governance, in direct response to a British-centred globalism.<sup>30</sup>

The Ralli pathway throughout the nineteenth century reveals family adaptations and hierarchical leadership within the Greek community embedded in the London business community. The liberal British political and economic climate offered conditions conducive to business competition for such newcomers as the Germans and Greeks. Competition with other foreign communities, as well as inside the same ethnic-religious group, developed mostly in the field of business activities, and the most successful and enduring enterprises were to go through a process of social and cultural integration into bourgeois British life.

*Institute for Neohellenic Research / NHRF*

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<sup>28</sup> G. Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals: British Trading Companies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 24-25.

<sup>29</sup> R. Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain*, London: Abacus, 2004, p. 185.

<sup>30</sup> "Anglobalization" is a term utilized in international politics referring to British imperialism, used by the economic historian Niall Ferguson.

Table 2  
Greek firms in London, 1828-1884

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm <sup>31</sup>	Year(s) of operation	Source <sup>32</sup>
1	<i>Adamidi, C. R.</i>	MRC	1838	2
2	<i>Agelastos, Petrocochinos &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
3	<i>Agelastos, A. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
4	<i>Alexiadi, Delta &amp; Co.</i>	MRC MRC	1854 1855	3 4
5	<i>Anagnostopulos, Georgio</i>	MRC	1884	10
6	<i>Argenti, Sechiari &amp; Co.</i>	MRC MRC MRC	1854 1855 1855	3 4 5
7	<i>Athanasiu, Geo.</i>	MRC	1884	10
8	<i>Avgerino &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
9	<i>Boyazoglu, Nicholas</i>	GMRC-SHP MRC	1877 1884	8 10
10	<i>Balli, Alexander</i>	MRC GMRC-SHP MRC	1866 1877 1884	7 8 10
11	<i>Balli, Alexander &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
12	<i>Balli, Xenophon</i>	MRC MRC MRC MRC MRC	1854 1855 1862-1863 1866 1884	3 4 6 7 10
13	<i>Baltazzi, J. Angel</i>	MRC	1828	1

<sup>31</sup> MRC = Merchant, SHP = Shipper, GMRC-SHP = General Merchant Shipper,  
CBK = Cotton Brokers

<sup>32</sup> 1829 *Robson's Guide for London* = 1  
1838 *Pigot and Co. Directory and Topography, London* = 2  
1854 *Watkins's London Directory* = 3  
1855 *Post Office London Trades' Directory* = 4  
1855 Fr. Kelly, *Post Office London Directory* = 5  
1862-1863 J. S. C. Morris, *The Business Directory* = 6  
1866 J. S. C. Morris, *The Business Directory* = 7  
1877 *Post Office Directory of the Merchants and Manufacturers of the United Kingdom,*  
London, Kelly & Co. = 8  
1880 *Kelly's Directory (Liverpool)* = 9  
1884 J. S. C. Morris, *Business Directory* = 10

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
14	<i>Baltazzi Sons &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
15	<i>Bolomachi, Adamantio J. M. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
16	<i>Buba Bros</i>	MRC	1854	3
17	<i>Cambouroglou, Leno &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1855	4
18	<i>Carajanaki, Demetrius G.</i>	MRC	1866	7
19	<i>Caralambi, E.</i>	MRC	1854	3
20	<i>Caralli, Geo J.</i>	MRC	1866	7
21	<i>Carati, Antonio Alexander</i>	MRC	1866	7
		MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
22	<i>Cassaveti &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1884	10
23	<i>Cassaveti Bros &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
24	<i>Cassavetis, D. G. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1838	2
25	<i>Castanos, Geo</i>	SHP	1877	8
26	<i>Cavafy, George John</i>	MRC	1854	3
27	<i>Cavafy, George John &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1866	7
28	<i>Cefala, Spiridione G.</i>	MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
29	<i>Chiriaco &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
30	<i>Christodulo &amp; Sugdury</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
31	<i>Coronios, T. J. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1855	4
32	<i>Coucoulas, Ach. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
33	<i>Couvela, Demos</i>	MRC	1854	3
34	<i>Couvela, Demos &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1855	4
35	<i>Cuppa, Yerassimo Z.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1884	10
36	<i>Damala, Emanuel</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
		MRC	1884	10
37	<i>Deliyanni, Nicholas</i>	MRC	1884	10

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
38	<i>Demetrio di A. Sons</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1855	5
39	<i>Eustathius, El. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
40	<i>Eustratiadi, A.</i>	MRC	1866	7
41	<i>Fachiri, Andrew &amp; Son</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
42	<i>Fachiri, N. P.</i>	MRC	1866	7
43	<i>Franghiadi Bros</i>	MRC	1828	1
		MRC	1838	2
44	<i>Franghiadi &amp; Rodocanachi</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
45	<i>Frangopoulo</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
46	<i>Frangopoulo, Agelasto &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
47	<i>Galatti, John</i>	MRC	1866	7
48	<i>Galatti, Pandia S.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
49	<i>Galatti, Sergio</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
50	<i>Gedeon &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
51	<i>Georgacopoulo, Alex</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
52	<i>Georgacopulo, Panagopulo &amp; Co.</i>	MRC-SHP	1877	8
		MRC	1884	10
53	<i>Georgiadi, Demetrius</i>	MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
54	<i>Geralopoulo, Constantino</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
55	<i>Gerussi, Aristomenes M.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1884	10
56	<i>Gerussi, Themistocles M.</i>	MRC	1866	7
57	<i>Giallis, John</i>	MRC	1866	7
58	<i>Glavkopidi Bros</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
59	<i>Ionides &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1838	2
		MRC	1862-1863	6
60	<i>Ionides, Sgouta &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4



No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
61	<i>Lapoulide &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1828	1
		MRC	1838	2
62	<i>Lascardi &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
63	<i>Lascardi, G. P.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
64	<i>Lutrari, Michel &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
		MRC	1862-1863	6
65	<i>Matzas, Constantine</i>	MRC	1866	7
66	<i>Mavro, Basili</i>	MRC	1866	7
67	<i>Mavro, Valieri &amp; Co.</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
		MRC	1884	10
68	<i>Mavrogordato, Emanuel</i>	MRC	1884	10
69	<i>Mavrogordato, John</i>	MRC	1828	1
70	<i>Mavrogordato, John Michael</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1855	5
71	<i>Mavrogordato, M. F.</i>	MRC	1854	3
72	<i>Mavrogordato, M. F. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
73	<i>Meimaroglu, Hercules</i>	MRC	1866	7
74	<i>Melas Bros</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
75	<i>Messinesi, Aritomenes</i>	MRC	1884	10
76	<i>Negroponte, P. C.</i>	MRC	1838	2
77	<i>Negroponte, S. J.</i>	MRC	1866	7
78	<i>Nicolopulo &amp; Chrissoveloni</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
79	<i>Nicolopulo Bros</i>	MRC	1866	7
80	<i>Nicolopulo, D. &amp; Sons</i>	MRC	1884	10
81	<i>Nicopulo, George &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
82	<i>Pana, Foca, Cremmidi &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
83	<i>Pana, Cremmidi &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
84	<i>Pappacalo &amp; Bridge</i>	CBK	1880	9
85	<i>Papadachi Bros</i>	MRC	1884	10
86	<i>Paspati, M. F. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
87	<i>Pervanoglu, John A.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
88	<i>Petrides, Demetrius N. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
89	<i>Petrocochino &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
90	<i>Petrocochino, Alex</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
91	<i>Petrocochino Bros</i>	MRC	1884	10
92	<i>Pezzali, D. S.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
93	<i>Polimeni, A.</i>	MRC	1884	10
94	<i>Pontifex &amp; Wood</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
95	<i>Protopazzi &amp; Co.</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
96	<i>Protopazzi Bros</i>	MRC	1884	10
97	<i>Psara, Paul N. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
98	<i>Psychari, Anthony</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
99	<i>Psycha, Edward</i>	MRC	1855	5
100	<i>Ralli, A.</i>	MRC	1838	2
101	<i>Ralli, Antonio &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
102	<i>Ralli Bros</i>	MRC	1828	1
		MRC	1838	2
		MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1855	5
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
MRC	1884	10		
103	<i>Ralli, Const. &amp; Sons</i>	MRC	1855	4
104	<i>Ralli, Const.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
105	<i>Ralli, Pandia Theodore</i>	MRC	1838	2
		MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1855	5
106	<i>Ralli, Theodore</i>	MRC	1866	7
107	<i>Ralli, Theodore &amp; J.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
108	<i>Ralli &amp; Mavrojani</i>	MRC	1838	2
		MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
		MRC	1884	10
109	<i>Ralli &amp; Sons</i>	MRC	1854	3
110	<i>Ralli &amp; Tamvako</i>	MRC	1828	1
111	<i>Rizo Sons &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
112	<i>Rodocanachi, Emanuel</i>	MRC	1866	7
113	<i>Rodocanachi, John</i>	MRC	1884	10
114	<i>Rodocanachi, Leone &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
		MRC	1855	5
		MRC	1884	10
115	<i>Rodocanachi, Peter P. &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
		MRC	1884	10
116	<i>Rodocanachi Sons</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
117	<i>Rodocanachi Sons &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1855	5
		MRC	1884	10
118	<i>Sagrandi, Pandia Eustratio</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1855	5
119	<i>Scaramanga &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
120	<i>Scaramanga, G.</i>	MRC	1884	10
121	<i>Scaramanga, George Emanuel</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
122	<i>Schilizzi &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
		MRC	1884	10
123	<i>Schilizzi &amp; Vuros</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
124	<i>Schilizzi Bros</i>	MRC	1884	10

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
125	<i>Schilizzi, Theodore F.</i>	MRC	1884	10
126	<i>Sechiari Bros &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
127	<i>Sevastopulo, Constantine &amp; Mark</i>	MRC MRC	1862-1863 1866	6 7
128	<i>Sevastopulo, D. S. &amp; Co.</i>	GMRC-SHP MRC	1877 1884	8 10
129	<i>Sevastopulo, Demetrio</i>	MRC	1866	7
130	<i>Sevastopulo, Mark</i>	MRC MRC	1854 1855	3 4
131	<i>Sinanides, Paris</i>	MRC MRC	1854 1855	3 4
132	<i>Sotirichos, Const.</i>	MRC	1854	3
133	<i>Spartali &amp; Co.</i>	MRC MRC MRC	1862-1863 1866 1884	6 7 10
134	<i>Spartali &amp; Lascaridi</i>	MRC	1855	4
135	<i>Spartali, Theodoridi &amp; Lascaridi</i>	MRC	1838	2
136	<i>Spiliadi, Demetrio</i>	MRC	1884	10
137	<i>Spiropulo, George Emanuel</i>	MRC GMRC-SHP	1884 1877	10 8
138	<i>Tamvaco &amp; Micrulachi</i>	MRC	1838	2
139	<i>Tamvaco, Micrulachi &amp; Mavrogordato</i>	MRC MRC MRC MRC	1854 1855 1862-1863 1866	3 4 6 7
140	<i>Theodoridi, John &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
141	<i>Triandi Bros</i>	MRC	1884	10
142	<i>Tzocanaki &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1884	10
143	<i>Tzocanaki, Demetrius</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
144	<i>Vagliano Bros</i>	MRC MRC GMRC-SHP MRC	1862-1863 1866 1877 1884	6 7 8 10
145	<i>Valaority, Pericles</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
146	<i>Xenos, Aristides &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
147	<i>Zanzi, Alex</i>	MRC	1855	4

No.	Name of firm	Type of firm	Year(s) of operation	Source
148	<i>Zarifi Bros</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		GMRC-SHP	1877	8
		MRC	1884	10
149	<i>Zarifi Bros &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
150	<i>Zerlendi, Nicholas M.</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8
151	<i>Ziffo &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1838	2
152	<i>Ziffo Sons</i>	MRC	1884	10
153	<i>Ziffo Sons &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
154	<i>Zizinia Bros</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1855	4
		MRC	1862-1863	6
155	<i>Zizinia &amp; Co.</i>	MRC	1866	7
156	<i>Zygomalas, Nicholas George</i>	MRC	1854	3
		MRC	1884	10
		MRC	1862-1863	6
		MRC	1866	7
157	<i>Zygomalas, Nicholas George &amp; Co.</i>	GMRC-SHP	1877	8

Table 3<sup>33</sup>

**Ralli merchants in Istanbul (1881-1883)**

1. Ralli (A. S.) et Cie, banquiers, Ralli Han, R. Fermeledjiler, négociants en fers et métaux, R. Sirkédji Iskéllesi, S.
2. Ralli (Antoniadis), négociant en farine et blés, R. Kildj Ali Pacha, 32, G.
3. Ralli (Const.), Hasta Hané Han, 43, G. – Dom: R. Télégraphe, 14, P.
4. Ralli (R.), local Barry.
5. Ralli (D.), négociant, Kourchoum Han, 14, G.

**Ralli merchants in Istanbul in 1891**

1. Ralli et Cie NC, maison de banque et de courtage. Société Française en commandite simple au capital élevé le 1er Mars 1890 à livres turques 25,000 (575,000 francs), Mehmed Ali Pacha Han, 16, 1er étage, G. – Dom: R. Syra Selvi, 37, P.
2. Ralli (A. S.) et Cie, NC., banquiers, négociants en fers et métaux, R. Sirkédji Iskéllesi, S.
3. Ralli (Antoniadis), courtier en cereales, Haviar Han, 10, G.
4. Ralli (D.), negociant, Kourchoum Han, 14, G.
5. Ralli (Dimitrio), cassier de la Maison Stefanovitch, R. Mezarlik, 2, P.
6. Ralli (Etienne), secretaire du club de Constantinople, P.
7. Ralli (Mme H. D.), R. Kiosk Imperial, 63, a Arnaoutkeuy.
8. Ralli (Stephani), poissons sales en gros, R. Meihame, 26, 28, S.

**Ralli merchants in Istanbul in 1901**

1. Ralli (Const. D.) banquier, Yacoub Han, 3, G. – Dom R. Syra Selvi, 37, P.
2. Ralli (Dimitro), caissier de la Maison Stéfanovich.
3. Ralli (Mme E. A.), propriétaire, R. Ainaly Tchechmé, Maison Ralli, 8, P.
4. Ralli (Etienne), membre du club de Constantinople. – Dom: à Moda, Kadikeuy.
5. Ralli (L.), propriétaire, R. Agha Hamam, 3, P.
6. Ralli (Famille), R. Tchakmak, 25, P.
7. Ralli (Sava), habits indigènes, R. Bit Bazar, 49, S.
8. Ralli (L.), inspecteur à la dette publique ottomane. – Dom: à Halki.

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<sup>33</sup> I assembled these data with the kind assistance of Dr Aliye Mataraci. *L'indicateur ottoman annuaire almanach de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature*, 2ème année, Constantinople: Cervati Frères & D. Fatzea, 1881; *L'indicateur ottoman illustré. Annuaire-almanach du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature*, Constantinople: Cervati Frères & D. Fatzea, 1883; *Annuaire oriental du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature*, Constantinople: Cervati Frères & Cie, 1891; *Annuaire oriental du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature*, Constantinople: The Annuaire Oriental & Printing Company Limited, 1901.



MOBILITY, RISK AND ADAPTABILITY OF THE DIASPORA MERCHANTS:  
THE CASE OF THE *SIFNEO FRÈRES* FAMILY FIRM IN TAGANROG (RUSSIA),  
ISTANBUL AND PIRAEUS, 1850-1940

*Evrydiki Sifneos*

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ABSTRACT: The records of the *Sifneo Frères*<sup>1</sup> entrepreneurial family allow us to focus on the evolution of a family business against varying political and institutional contexts and to highlight the performance of Greek economic “expansionism” in Russia. With the family firm’s integration into ship-ownership and industry, we can capture its flexibility in order to adapt to changing environments. This firm reaffirms the key role of the entrepreneur and the comparative advantage of the Greek merchants in Russia *vis-à-vis* other foreign entrepreneurs. Given its medium size, it highlights the performance of similar houses that shaped the mass of the Greek diaspora’s business, from which meagre documental evidence has been preserved.

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*Issues of Scale and Scope*

The family firm was founded in 1850 in Taganrog,<sup>2</sup> South Russia, a port on the Azov Sea that had gained significant importance in the grain trade with Europe after the Crimean War. It began as an import-export activity, focusing on the importation of very popular Mediterranean products and the exportation of grain to European markets.<sup>3</sup> Its size was recorded as second class, trailing a group of capital-intensive firms, a good proportion of which were Greek.<sup>4</sup> It soon possessed an iron barge in order to guarantee transport of the foodstuffs to the ports, because of the lack of efficient infrastructure and means of transport in the area. In the 1870s, if not immediately after

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<sup>1</sup> Evrydiki Sifneos, *Έλληνες έμποροι στην Αζοφική. Η δύναμη και τα όρια της οικογενειακής επιχείρησης* [Greek merchants in the Azov Sea: the power and the limits of a family business], Athens 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Sifneos Family Archive and Institute for Neohellenic Research / NHRF (INR), incoming correspondence, letter from Panayiotis Sifneos to his brother Theodore in Taganrog, Russia, 15 January 1852.

<sup>3</sup> Sifneos, *Έλληνες έμποροι*, table 3, Imports and Exports of the Sifneo Frères, 1883-1898, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library (FCOL), London, Annual Series, Russia, Report by Consul Wagstaff on the Navigation and Trade at the Ports of the Sea of Azoff for the Year 1886.



the establishment of the firm, it opened a commercial branch in Istanbul, a strategic port that regulated and controlled the flow of grain from the Black Sea to the European markets. Its capital growth and performance were slow until members of the second generation assumed the firm's leadership.<sup>5</sup> New ideas and fresh strategies, including grain speculation, were developed in that period, policies that created friction and led to the firm's dissolution in 1898 and to its rebirth under the leadership of the successors of one of the two initial founders. At the end of the nineteenth century the firm added to its assets two second-hand British steamships and thus guaranteed control of the secure transportation of its own staples, as well as those of others, to the destination ports. Ship-owning reinforced travelling and galvanized the cosmopolitan outlook of the entrepreneurs. It also offered the device for the firm to continue its activities and survive the turbulence of World War I (1914-1918) and the Russian Revolution (1917). It provided the necessary means to overcome the restrictions posed by national boundaries, geographical seclusion due to war or threat of war and arbitrary Revolution measures that threatened property rights. The performance of the firm during the years 1899-1910 was very successful.<sup>6</sup> It gained membership in the first-class export houses and had good yearly results estimated at an average of 14.5% on its invested capital.

World War I and the closure of the Dardanelles led to the isolation of Russia from international world trade.<sup>7</sup> The firm and some of its administrators remained working in Russia and lost their links with the outside world, while under the Bolshevik regime exportation of grain by private entities was prohibited. Evolution was "locked" in the Russian framework, and growth continued by diversifying into transport (with four new steam barges) and by buying a brick factory.<sup>8</sup> The firm opened new branches within Russia, in the ports of Yeisk and Mariupol. The other members of the firm's administration were appointed to Turkish and Greek ports, trying to develop commercial and entrepreneurial opportunities by promoting new products (tobacco, sugar and caviar) and by managing the family's steamships in and out of Mediterranean waters. World War I and Greece's involvement in it from 1916 made Mediterranean voyages extremely dangerous and led one of the

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix, Table 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> On the closure of the Dardanelles during the Balkan Wars, see M. Harvey, *The Development of Russian Commerce in the Black Sea and its Significance*, Ph.D. thesis, University of California 1938, pp. 306-330; see also Sifneos, *Ελληνες έμποροι*, pp. 209-221.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 4, pp. 209-239.

firm's steamships to Argentina, transporting cargoes of grain from La Plata to the British islands, in order to avoid the Mediterranean.

New investment opportunities were explored with the end of the war and the international occupation of Istanbul. Greek entrepreneurs, backed by the foreign presence and the departure of the Turks from Istanbul, were tempted by new business opportunities, including investment in industry, shipyards, ship-owning and commercial enterprises.<sup>9</sup> The defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor in 1922 had severe repercussions on the economic aspirations of the Greeks based in Istanbul or Asia Minor. The nationalist policy of the Young Turks hindered their commerce by banning their transactions and disfavoured their commodities. This shrinking of commerce led to the closure of the Istanbul branch in 1922. Inspired by the security and confidence shown towards the emblematic figure of the Greek statesman Eleftherios Venizelos, the family developed industrial expansion projects in Greece by supporting two industries, Salonica Refrigerators Ep. Charilaos SA and the oxygen and acetylene factory Eolos SA in Piraeus.<sup>10</sup> The latter was a medium-sized industry in a newly settled area of chemical plants in Piraeus, equipped with modern technology and a small number of workers. Despite the difficulties presented by the political and economic controversies of the inter-war years and the 1929-1932 economic crises, the firm presented a stable growth and positive results throughout the period 1924-1940. Its dividend sharing policy was conservative, and the firm was highly oriented to reinvesting its gains, renewing its machinery and buildings, training its workers and following a social welfare attitude towards them.

### *The Geography of Human Mobility*

Mobility proved to be a central factor of entrepreneurial success, a consequence of the entrepreneur's capacity to seize and create opportunities for profit. The first generation of the *Sifneo Frères* migrated from Lesbos, their native island, which is situated in the North-Eastern Mediterranean, to the Azov Sea via Istanbul in the 1840s, where commercial training guaranteed social ascension and transactions in grain made considerable fortunes.<sup>11</sup> The restricted resources of the island, wiped out by physical disasters such as earthquakes, and the loss of the agricultural yield for several years drove the

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 5, pp. 247-309.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 6, pp. 311-353.

<sup>11</sup> A. Syngros, *Απομνημονεύματα* [Memoirs], ed. A. Angelou and Maria Christina Chatziioannou, Vol. I, Athens 1998, pp. 145-221.

male population away from Lesvos to Istanbul, Russia, Romania and later Egypt.<sup>12</sup> The family's network offered jobs in Istanbul and first experiences with seafaring and commerce in the fierce waters of the Black Sea. The family had already experienced losses from seafaring in the Black Sea, when the eldest brother was lost in a shipwreck. His younger brothers later established the Sifneo Frères firm in Taganrog, Russia.

The journey from the capital of the Ottoman Empire to the Azov Sea was full of hazards and inconveniences, due not only to weather conditions but also to the shallowness of the sea depth in the Azov.<sup>13</sup> Previous travelling experiences to these trading posts, as supercargoes or as "guest traders", helped to accumulate skills in the methods of travelling and intermediating between buyers and sellers. Furthermore, the acquisition of means of transport, as part of the strategy of the trading firm, allowed its continuity and expansion, as it increased the family control over intermediation and the carrying of commodities. The possession of sailing barges was characteristic of all trading companies in Taganrog, a necessity in order to surmount difficulties caused by the lack of transportation and local entrepreneurship. The acquisition of modern steamships at the end of the nineteenth century, serving the routes of the grain trade between the Azov Sea and the European ports, intensified the mobility of the managers of the family firm and their families and strengthened contacts with the European capitals and ports of first and second order. Long stays or short stopovers in London, Liverpool, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Marseille, Catania, Palermo, Piraeus and Smyrna allowed the broadening of views and the expansion of a cosmopolitan spirit among the leading figures of the family firm.<sup>14</sup> This experience was also shared by women, who travelled as businessmen's wives and who were strongly concerned with the family firm's assets not only as part of their family's welfare but as shareholders too.<sup>15</sup>

Frequent mobility formed part of the strategic appointment of the firm's managers to capital trading ports in order to supervise its transactions and

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<sup>12</sup> Evrydiki Sifneos, *Λέσβος. Οικονομική και κοινωνική ιστορία, 1840-1912* [Lesvos: economic and social history, 1840-1912], Athens 1996, pp. 253-276.

<sup>13</sup> Jules de Hagemeister, *Mémoire sur le commerce des ports de la Nouvelle-Russie, de la Moldavie et de la Valachie*, Odessa 1835.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Vasileios Sifneos during the Paris Exposition Universelle to his parents, 30 June 1900; letter from Marietta Sifneos in Paris to her cousin Sapfo, 26 February 1907. Sifneos Family Archive and INR.

<sup>15</sup> Sifneos, *Έλληνες έμποροι*, chapter X, "Γυναίκες και επιχειρηματικότητα" [Women and entrepreneurship], pp. 355-393.

administrate the company's offices.<sup>16</sup> Two of the brothers of the second generation stayed at the headquarters in Russia, while the third one was sent to Istanbul and the fourth moved to Piraeus. The Istanbul branch of the family firm, with its strong network of suppliers and customers in the Ottoman Empire, served to distribute imported goods from Russia and to supply a significant portion of imported Mediterranean products. Mobility was intensified at critical moments of political crises and anticipated disastrous events, such as the closure of the Dardanelles in 1912, the outbreak of World War I and the defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor (1922).

Table 1 demonstrates the movements of the firm's managers dictated by strategies of advancement and expansion. It reveals the delegation and organizational skills of its entrepreneurs. It stresses the foresight capacities of its leaders and their fruitful decision-making, which proved to be proficient in all aspects.

Table 1

Mobility, decision-making, conjuncture and aim of the *Sifneo Frères* leaders  
(Grey indicates the movements of the first generation,  
and white of the second generation.)

Year	Name	Mobility	Decision-making	Conjuncture	Aim
1845	Theodore Sifneos	Lesvos-Istanbul	commercial apprentice	expansion of grain trade with the East	to become a trading employee
1850	Theodore Sifneos	Istanbul-Taganrog	to strengthen import and export activity between Istanbul and Taganrog, Russia	opening of the Azov Sea trade after the Crimean War	to establish a trading firm in Taganrog
1856	Zannos Sifneos	Lesvos-Taganrog	partnership in one of the Sifneo Frères firms		invigoration of the firm's administration, delegation of duties

<sup>16</sup> Sifneos Family Archive and INR, incoming correspondence among the four brothers-administrators, 1898-1919.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Mobility</b>	<b>Decision-making</b>	<b>Conjuncture</b>	<b>Aim</b>
1878	Theodore Sifneos	Taganrog-Istanbul	avoid risk due to war	Russo-Turkish war, closure of the Dardanelles, recession of the grain trade in Taganrog (1880-1884)	to open a new branch in Istanbul and strengthen trading activities within the Ottoman Empire
1878-1884	Zannos Sifneos	Taganrog-Istanbul	to administer the branch in Istanbul	recession years and years of the Depression in Europe	to secure the flow of commodities among Russia, the Ottoman Empire and the European ports
	Theodore Sifneos	Istanbul-Taganrog	to administer the Taganrog headquarters		
1897	Vanias Sifneos and Vassas Sifneos	Marseille-Taganrog	to enter the family business on behalf of the second generation	war between Greece and Turkey, bankruptcies of Greek houses in Taganrog	improvement of selling methods, grain speculation
1899	Vanias Sifneos	Taganrog-Rostov	to liquidate their parents' firm	Boer War drives British steamships out of the Azov trade	birth of the Theodore Sifneos trading firm in Rostov and grain speculation
	Vassas Sifneos and Mikias Sifneos	Taganrog-Marseille-Taganrog	managers of the Taganrog headquarters		to manage the new firm that retained the old name
	Apostolos Sifneos	Istanbul	manager of the Istanbul branch		

<b>Year</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Mobility</b>	<b>Decision-making</b>	<b>Conjuncture</b>	<b>Aim</b>
1899-1902	Mikias Sifneos	Taganrog-London-Amsterdam	to purchase two steamships	the Greeks become leading figures in the Azov Sea's maritime trade	intermediation in trade and ship-ownership
1912-1914	Mikias Sifneos	Taganrog-Greece	to sail the steamship out of the Black Sea to the Mediterranean	Balkan Wars, closure of the Dardanelles	to explore enterprising opportunities in Greece
1914-1918	Vassas Sifneos	Taganrog  Istanbul-Piraeus	purchase of barges and brick-factory ownership  election to the Greek Parliament	World War I, isolation of the Russian headquarters, requisition of their steamship by the Greek government	to expand within Russia  to open a trading post in Piraeus
1919	Vassas Sifneos,	Taganrog-Piraeus	evacuation of the Greeks of Taganrog on the family's barge	Bolshevik victory over the anti-revolutionary forces and occupation of Taganrog	salvation of the family
1922			closure of the Istanbul branch	defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor, reduction of Greek commerce in Istanbul	to withdraw to the Greek market

Year	Name	Mobility	Decision-making	Conjuncture	Aim
1924-1940	Vassas Sifneos, Mikias Sifneos, Aristeides Sifneos	Piraeus	establishment of the Eolos SA oxygen and acetylene factory and Salonica Refrigerators Ep. Charilaos SA		to invest in industry and ship-owning
	Apostolos Sifneos	Lesvos	farming estate		to develop a multi-dynamic farm and a poultry estate

Source: Sifneos Family Archive and INR, incoming correspondence, 1845-1940.

### *Risk and Adaptability*

Foreign entrepreneurs operating in Russia were faced with high levels of risk, due to various reasons.<sup>17</sup> Some did not even depend on the political

<sup>17</sup> For a varied literature on foreign entrepreneurship in Russia, see Frederick V. Carstensen, "Foreign Participation in Russian Economic Life: Notes on British Enterprise, 1865-1914", *Entrepreneurship in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union*, ed. Gregory Guroff and Frederick V. Carstensen, Princeton 1983, pp. 140-157; John P. McKay, *Pioneers for Profit: Foreign Entrepreneurship and Russian Industrialization, 1885-1913*, Chicago and London 1970; Alfred J. Rieber, *Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia*, Chapel Hill, NC, 1982; William L. Blackwell, *The Beginning of Russian Industrialization, 1800-1860*, Princeton 1968; Thomas C. Owen, "Impediments to a Bourgeois Consciousness in Russia, 1880-1905: The Estate Structure, Ethnic Diversity and Economic Regionalism", *Between Tzar and the People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia*, ed. Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow and James L. West, Princeton 1991, pp. 75-89; Arcadius Kahan, "Notes on Jewish Entrepreneurship in Tsarist Russia", *Entrepreneurship in Imperial Russia*, pp. 104-124; Victor Zakharov, "Vneshnetorgovaya deyatelnost' inostrannykh kuptsov v portakh Azovskogo i Chyornogo morey v seredine i vtoroy polovine XVIII v.", *Vestnik Mosk. un-ta Istoriya*, series 8, IV (2004), pp. 85-102; Svitlana Novikova, *Vnesok grekiv u rosvitok torgovo sudnoplavstva azovs'komu mori (druga polovina XIX-pochatok CC st.)*, Ph.D. thesis, Kiev: Institute of History, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, 2005. See as well the recent publications of the Forum on the Economic Development of the Port Cities of the Azov Sea and the Greeks, organized in Rostov, 9-12 December 2009, all in *The International Journal of Maritime History* XXII/1 (2000): Gelina Harlaftis, "Economic and Social Development of the Port Cities of the Sea of Azov

and economic conditions of the country in which they operated. It is well known and proved to be a painful experience for the merchants that Russia's trade remained dependent on Ottoman and Turkish policy and the state of Russo-Turkish relations.<sup>18</sup> Not only the interruption of maritime navigation in war periods, but also the threat of closure of the Dardanelles, would cause incalculable losses to the Russian economy: consequent stoppages of shipments, hindrances such as the disruption of lighting, tremendous increases in the cost of freight and reduction in the volume of goods exported, as well as the ruin of merchants and several firms.

Another obstacle proved to be the difficulties in the navigation and full exploitation of the Azov Sea due to adverse navigating conditions, the shallow depth of its waters and the climatic conditions that allowed commerce to operate only nine months a year.<sup>19</sup> More serious was the admitted low level of organization of the markets and the lack of credit institutions in almost all of the Russian ports until the 1870s.<sup>20</sup> The grain trade and the setting of its prices in the international market, adjusting to global demand and supply and not according to the conditions of the Russian yield, often caused serious losses and bankruptcies among the export firms.

The Western businessman would find Russia a rather "strange" country for conducting trade endeavours. Many restrictions existed concerning the quantity of the imported and exported goods, prescriptions concerning the people to whom one could buy or sell, limits in travelling possibilities and the establishment of monopolies. Difficulties in commercial understanding derived not only from language barriers but also from practices that revealed

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and the Greeks in the Long Nineteenth Century: An Introduction", pp. 239-240; *eadem*, "Trade and Shipping in the Nineteenth Century Sea of Azov", pp. 241-251; Katerina Papakonstantinou, "Russian and Ukrainian Archives and the Creation of Databases on the Greek Population and their Economic Activities in the Nineteenth Century", pp. 252-258; Evrydiki Sifneos, "Merchant Enterprises and Strategies in the Sea of Azov Ports", pp. 259-268; Vassilis Colonas, "Architectural Expression of the Greeks in the Nineteenth-century Cities of the Azov Sea Region: The Case of Taganrog", pp. 269-278.

<sup>18</sup> On the importance of the Dardanelles in the mid-nineteenth century crisis, see Vernon J. Puryear, *England, Russia and the Straits Question, 1844-1856*, Berkeley 1931; *id.*, *International Economics and Diplomacy in the Near East, 1834-1853*, Stanford 1935, pp. 146-179.

<sup>19</sup> Don Francisco Baguer y Ribas, *Memoria sobre el comercio de los puertos del Mar Negro, del Azov y del Danubio*, Madrid 1832, p. 62; Sifneos Family Archive and INR, *Accounts of Profit and Losses, 1883-1909*.

<sup>20</sup> FCOL, Annual Series, Russia, Report of Consul H. Carruthers on the Trade and Commerce of Taganrog for the Year 1867.



a different commercial ethos.<sup>21</sup> Extensive cases of bribery of officials were often reported.<sup>22</sup> All of these inconveniences, and in particular the way in which the State interfered by altering the “laissez-faire” notion they had of trade, discouraged the potential Western businessmen from breaking into the Russian market.

On the contrary, Greek merchants were in a more advantageous position. Greek seamen had had the privilege of navigating the Black and Azov Seas as Ottoman subjects or bearing the Russian flag long before their European competitors.<sup>23</sup> It was easier for them than for Western merchants to work with the local population and to understand local cultural patterns, since religious affinity allowed them to come closer and penetrate the countryside in search of grain.

The main responses of the Sifneo Frères family firm to reduce risk can be explored in three directions:

- By combining import and export trading operations, which reduced the dependence of the firm on one type of commercial activity and reduced the danger of bankruptcy, which was imminent with grain price fluctuations. The entrepreneurs searched for other products of high demand, such as Mediterranean fresh and dried fruit, but also export commodities, such as red and black caviar, which attained good prices in Europe and America and had a stable or growing demand.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> W. Kirchner, “Western Businessmen in Russia: Practices and Problems”, *The Business History Review* XXXVIII/3 (Autumn 1964), pp. 315-327.

<sup>22</sup> An example was the well-known fraud at the Customs House of Taganrog (1881), in which several Greek trading houses and Russian officials were implicated. See FCOL, Annual Series, Russia, Taganrog, Report by Consul Wooldridge on the Trade and Commerce of Taganrog and Other Ports of the Sea of Azov for the Year 1881; Gelina Harlaftis, “Russian Port Customs, Anton Chekhov and Maris Vagliano, the ‘Emperor’ of Azov Sea: Confronting Institutions in the Russian Empire, 1880s”, paper given at the annual conference of the Economic History Society, University of Durham, 26-28 March 2010.

<sup>23</sup> From the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji (1774) to the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) the Black and Azov Seas were visited mostly by ships flying the Ottoman or the Russian flags. The Porte gradually granted the privilege of navigation through the Dardanelles to subjects of other nations (Austria 1783, Britain 1799 and France 1802), but the chaotic maritime situation during the Napoleonic Wars impeded once more the area’s direct communication with the West. During this period most vessels that visited the Russian ports were either Ottoman or Russian.

<sup>24</sup> Sifneos Family Archive and INR, Accounts of Profit and Losses, 1883-1909.

- Integration into shipping<sup>25</sup> reduced the cost of the transport component in the setting of prices. It allowed not only control over the quality of the commodities during their transport but also aggregate profit from the exploitation of two different sources of entrepreneurial activity, i.e. commerce and transport. These two activities operate in a complementary way, for when shipping rates rise, the profits of intermediation reduce and vice-versa.<sup>26</sup> So, the entrepreneur who is at the same time a trader and a ship-owner loses from the trading activity, but to offset this gains from the increased shipping rates. Thus in all cases, the family firm experienced high profitability.

- The combination of intermediation and brokerage services. The increasing amount of brokerage services, in which small capital was involved and the reseller bore few risks, proved to be a successful strategy for the firm. During the period of the administration of the firm by the second generation, when brokerage services attained 60% of its total profits, the company achieved greater profitability.<sup>27</sup>

It was not only strategic choices that gave fruitful results but the actual capacity of the family firm to respond to the challenges of inhospitable environments that counted. The *Sifneo Frères* family firm developed networking arrangements among their members that provided high levels of confidence, capital resources and dynamic decision-making based on mutual understanding that evolved from the paternalistic model to participative and more successful management.

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<sup>25</sup> Sifneos, *Έλληνες έμποροι*, table 11, the Fleet of the Sifneo Frères, 1899-1919, p. 185.

<sup>26</sup> Mark Casson, "The Economic Analysis of the Multinational Trading Companies", *The Multinational Traders*, ed. Geoffrey G. Jones, London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 29-31.

<sup>27</sup> See Appendix, Table 2.

## Appendix

Table 1

Capital and profit accumulation of the Sifneo Frères family firm in silver rubles,  
1890-1909

Year	Capital	Net profits	Rate of return on capital employed in %
<b>1st generation</b>			
1890	236,195.64	18,960.72	8.03
1891	226,971.33	20,924.46	9.22
1892	246,486.27	(missing)	-
1893	265,388.44	18,594.86	7.00
1894	278,557.57	13,482.58	4.84
1895	248,791.71	-1685.95	-0.68
1896	236,597.47	13,420.53	5.67
1897	225,653.30	60,741.54	26.92
1898	285,191.30	29,366.14	10.30
<b>2nd generation</b>			
1899	187,941.49	10,865.31	5.80
1900	223,619.68	30,000.00	13.42
1901	253,619.68	15,000.00	5.91
1902	247,439.11	34,000.00	13.74
1903	285,029.03	59,860.09	21.00
1904	322,414.25	30,000.00	9.30
1905	356,687.85	65,000.00	18.22
1906	376,042.44	46,000.00	12.23
1907	425,838.89	98,304.91	23.09
1908	531,752.53	87,000.00	16.36
1909	622,642.25	149,093.90	23.95

Source: The Sifneo Frères Balance Sheets and Accounts of Profit and Losses, 1890-1909, Sifneos Family Archive and INR.

Table 2  
Distribution of yearly profits in silver rubles, 1883-1909

Year	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1883	33.00	26.04	15.87	0.73	16.43	7.93	37,992.66	10,021.31	27,971.35
1884	49.14	23.19	0.05	-3.94	22.95	8.61	29,027.40	8812.71	20,214.69
1885	51.84	24.32	-7.31	3.65	21.44	6.06	32,154.26	9439.35	22,714.91
1886	37.22	0.13	14.00	0.57	20.17	27.91	34,961.18	10,486.68	24,474.50
1887	27.35	17.24	15.85	1.43	24.54	13.59	50,407.08	9372.81	41,034.27
1888	64.21	27.44	-1.00	0.00	4.19	5.16	24,492.06	11,665.76	12,826.30
1889	62.54	15.62	-70.13	4.63	53.17	34.17	20,482.09	-774.21	21,256.30
1890	29.50	22.65	-16.94	1.00	47.79	16.00	34,742.52	12,781.80	18,960.72
1893	35.01	24.36	2.20	0.00	28.89	9.54	34,243.64	15,648.78	18,594.86
1894	37.98	-1.21	0.19	12.69	25.69	24.66	29,834.48	16,351.90	13,482.58
1895	102.67	3.36	-20.17	38.16	37.95	-61.98	12,796.78	14,482.73	-1685.95
1896	66.85	30.00	-9.30	27.04	11.34	-25.93	28,420.37	14,999.84	13,420.53
1897	41.44	16.78	7.88	12.23	14.31	7.36	74,875.67	14,134.13	60,741.54
1998	23.15	23.70	13.30	-10.99	9.20	41.64	35,702.01	6335.87	29,366.14
1899	39.95	49.79	25.05	-34.92	-10.42	30.55	20,083.65	9218.34	10,865.31
1900	42.36	25.15	5.33	-16.10	2.06	41.20	40,354.57	10,354.57	30,000.00
1901	59.20	-7.07	0.24	0.30	3.25	44.08	27,840.70	12,840.70	15,000.00
1902	82.77	1.22	0.04	3.67	5.59	6.71	49,826.68	15,826.68	34,000.00
1903	76.14	-0.65	6.03	18.34	3.95	-3.81	49,860.09	-10,000.00	59,860.09
1904	96.00	-4.45	6.66	22.43	-15.32	-5.32	48,598.80	18,598.80	30,000.00
1905	75.96	-4.26	0.20	23.48	-6.95	11.57	85,568.32	20,568.32	65,000.00
1906	40.14	1.86	0.36	15.42	-2.07	44.29	69,183.68	23,183.68	46,000.00
1907	97.67	2.87	3.15	-2.41	-6.21	4.93	126,244.40	27,939.49	98,304.91
1908	65.44	0.71	3.27	14.91	-6.70	22.37	114,667.80	27,667.80	87,000.00
1909	66.99	0.56	0.75	25.71	-4.45	10.44	184,058.90	34,965.00	149,093.90

- A: percentage of commission trade on gross profits
- B: percentage of import trade on gross profits
- C: percentage of export trade on gross profits
- D: percentage of grain trade on gross profits
- E: percentage of currency trade on gross profits
- F: percentage of other activities on gross profits
- G: Gross profits
- H: Administration expenses
- I: Net profits

Source: The Sifneo Frères Balance Sheets and Accounts of Profit and Losses, 1883-1909, Sifneos Family Archive and INR.

THE SPREAD OF TECHNOLOGY THROUGH COMMERCIAL NETWORKS  
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY:  
FOREIGN MERCHANT-ENTREPRENEURS AND CALABRIAN SERICULTURE  
AMID CHANGES AND CONFLICTS

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ABSTRACT: In the first half of the 1800s, silk throwing in Calabria expanded and was technologically renovated due to the contribution provided by foreign labour. This favoured the arrival of foreign merchant-entrepreneurs, who brought further expansion and new changes to methods of production. Those changes, even if they were not always received with enthusiasm by the local population, strongly influenced Calabrian silk throwing, encouraging local mill owners to imitate the example of the foreigners. Silk throwing grew and was renewed mainly in the Reggio area, a region close to Sicily and to the port of Messina. The proximity to Messina and its port, particularly active in the 1800s, constituted a unique advantage for silk throwing in the region.

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*Introduction*

This work takes as its starting point a research project still ongoing, which has, however, already furnished some preliminary results.<sup>1</sup> The aim of the research is to analyse the economic and technological evolution of the silk industry in Calabria, a region of Southern Italy, from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth.<sup>2</sup> In this essay we will provide some preliminary

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<sup>1</sup> We refer, in particular, to the following essays by I. Fusco: "Trattura e tecnologia in Calabria nella prima metà dell'Ottocento", in I. Fusco (ed.), *La seta. E oltre...*, Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2004, pp. 109-160; "Gelsi, bachi e seta in Calabria tra passato e presente", *I Frutti di Demetra. Bollettino di Storia e Ambiente* (2004), no. 4, pp. 43-46; "Centri urbani, manifatture e salute pubblica nella Calabria di metà Ottocento", *I Frutti di Demetra. Bollettino di Storia e Ambiente* (2005), no. 6, pp. 23-26; "La trattura della seta in Calabria. Rinnovamento tecnologico e crescita tra Sette e Ottocento", *Società e Storia* (2005), no. 109, pp. 503-540; "Industrie urbane, conflitti e salute nella Calabria dell'Ottocento", *Meridiana. Rivista di Storia e Scienze Sociali* (2006), no. 57, pp. 85-110; "La Calabria della seta. Una regione del Mediterraneo", co-authored with A. Marcelli, forthcoming in the proceedings of the international convention *Making Waves in the Mediterranean*, Messina and Taormina 2006; "La Calabria e la seta. Una lunga storia dai molti risvolti", introductory essay to D. Gaudio, *La seta. Uno sguardo al passato*, Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2007, pp. 13-24.

<sup>2</sup> Over the course of centuries, there have been numerous publications on the silk

conclusions regarding technological change recorded in Calabria during the course of the first half of the nineteenth century with respect to one of the phases of silk production, namely silk throwing, in which the silk thread is unravelled from the cocoon before it is then twisted, dyed and woven.

This paper examines a specific area of Calabria, that of the Province of Reggio, in particular the strip of land that faces onto the Strait of Messina. It was there that technological change would first be realised, and in a more rapid way – but why precisely in the Reggio area? This was because this area – thanks to its proximity to Messina and its port –<sup>3</sup> had unique characteristics associated with a greater opening up to the Mediterranean and to its commercial and technological exchanges. Due to this opening up, and due to its close ties with the Sicilian area of Messina, the Reggio area would receive new technology, which would then renovate the silk throwing industry in a more rapid and radical manner compared to other Calabrian areas. This technological renewal would favour the growth of the silk throwing industry in the region, which eventually would also be positioned to attract raw material (silk cocoons) from the rest of Calabria.

During the first half of the 1800s, silk throwing became a key economic sector for the Province of Reggio, stimulated by both the increase in international demand for spun silk and the possibility of having Calabrian silk converge on international markets via Messina. The great potential for silk throwing in the Reggio area, together with the opening up of the region to the

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sector in Italy. Regarding silk in Calabria during the 1800s, here we mention only the essay of P. Bevilacqua, “Uomini, terre, economie”, in P. Bevilacqua and A. Placanicca (eds), *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'Unità ad oggi. La Calabria*, Turin: Einaudi, 1985, pp. 115-362.

<sup>3</sup> On the port of Messina and on commercial relations between the Sicilian port and Reggian Calabria, see R. Battaglia, *Porto e commercio a Messina nei rapporti dei consoli inglese, francese e piemontese (1840-1880)*, Reggio Calabria: Editori Meridionali Riuniti, 1977; *id.*, “Il commercio della Calabria attraverso il porto di Messina (1839-1840)”, *Archivio Storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* LIII (1986), pp. 81-121; *id.*, “La ‘conurbazione’ commerciale dell’area dello stretto’ nell’Ottocento”, *Archivio Storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* LVIII (1991), pp. 121-150; *id.*, *Mercanti e imprenditori in una città marittima. Il caso di Messina, 1850-1900*, Milan: Giuffrè, 1992; M. D’Angelo, “Aspetti commerciali e finanziari in un porto mediterraneo. Messina (1795-1805)”, *Atti dell’Accademia Peloritana* LV/16 (1979), pp. 201-247. As well, see the following two essays by R. Battaglia: “Filande calabresi e capitali messinesi a metà Ottocento”, *Messina e la Calabria dal Basso Medioevo all’età contemporanea*, in the proceedings of the First Calabrian-Sicilian Conference, Messina: Società di Storia Patria, 1988, pp. 497-514; and “L’industria della seta a Villa San Giovanni tra Otto e Novecento”, *Archivio Storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* LXIV (1997), pp. 175-194.

Mediterranean, favoured the arrival of foreign merchant-entrepreneurs, who then promoted further technical improvements and who even undertook a leadership role for local manufacturers. All this permitted Reggian spun silk to compete successfully against other silks of excellent quality, such as those manufactured in France. Nonetheless, such rapid growth, together with the radical changes that the area underwent due to the arrival of foreign merchant-entrepreneurs, led to numerous and inevitable conflicts with the local population.

Thus far, a few “prejudices” regarding the isolation of Calabria have been raised for discussion, highlighting the diversity among the different Calabrian areas. In the second part of this essay, we will briefly discuss the technological renovation from the end of the 1700s to the beginning of the 1800s – which took place above all in the Reggio area – and the consequent growth of silk throwing in the area, closely connected to those technological changes and to the opening up of the region to the Mediterranean and its exchanges. In the third part, we will analyse a few cases of foreign merchant-entrepreneurs who were present in Calabria because of the possibilities that the Reggio area offered for silk exportation, as well as the changes that these entrepreneurs brought to silk throwing in the region. On the one hand, these changes – together with increased silk throwing – served as models for the other manufacturers in the area, while on the other hand, they generated numerous conflicts at the local level.

#### *Calabria: “An Island without Sea”?*<sup>4</sup>

By the 1800s, Calabria was already traditionally considered an “isolated” area. This was especially due to its numerous orographic and infrastructural limits: first, because of the presence of high mountains – the Apennine Range, very near to its coasts; second, because its coasts were malarial and of difficult access; third, because of the lack of roads; and fourth, because of the absence of ports and secure docking facilities. As Giuseppe Carelli wrote in 1858, “the construction of a port on the shores of Calabria bathed by the Tyrrhenian Sea has always been the beseeching prayer of all mariners”, adding that the coast “from Naples to Messina, even though there are many coves and bays, doesn’t yet have even one port worthy of the name”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> P. Matvejević, *Mediterraneo. Un nuovo breviario*, Milan: Garzanti, 1991, p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> G. Carelli, “Ragguaglio di alcuni principali porti, fari e lazzeretti de’ Reali Domini di qua dal Faro”, *Annali Civili del Regno delle Due Sicilie* CXXVII (September-October 1858), p. 40.



As a result of the orographic and infrastructural limits just indicated, Calabria lacked active commerce. As well, maritime navigation consisted of small-scale coastal shipping towards Naples or Sicily, which included much contraband. In general, Calabria was difficult to reach, whether by land or sea. All these conditions made the region one that was often virtually closed to trade, especially international trade, which favoured isolation.

However, the isolation of Calabria was in contrast with its geographic position. The region, stretching out into the Mediterranean and surrounded by the sea, actually offered a position favourable to navigation and maritime commerce. As Domenico Muratori noted in 1838, Calabria had “advantages” that should have favoured the development of commerce, such as its location between the Ionian Sea and the Mediterranean; moreover, Calabrian territory was abundant in timber, a useful raw material “for the construction of *legni* [wooden boats] of any size”, and was rich in products “that are sought after by the most far-off Nations”.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of such “advantages”, Muratori reminds us that the Calabrian fleets, although numerous, lacked large boats or at best were equipped with “small numbers of wooden boats apt for coasting, not long-distance navigation”.<sup>7</sup>

What then, according to Muratori, were the causes of this considerable indifference of the Calabrian population towards commerce? Muratori dwelled on the lack of ports and of any other “place of secure anchorage” where boats “could stay without danger during the loading of goods”.<sup>8</sup> To this he added the “lack of necessary knowledge of the subject matter (commerce), which is truly the case among our people”: “...ignorance,” he affirmed, “hinders us from calculating the immense advantages that could be obtained if this course were followed with the guidance of science, and with the wisdom that comes from experience”.<sup>9</sup> Finally, he mentioned “bad faith and the spirit of fraud and deceit” as well as “mutual distrust” which “make the founding of business firms infrequent and difficult, without which no relevant enterprise can be undertaken”:<sup>10</sup> in a few words, it was a problem of mentality. In sum, the Calabrian population – people of the land rather than the sea, farmers and shepherds rather than merchants and fishermen –

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<sup>6</sup> D. Muratori, “Discorso letto dal presidente nella tornata generale de’ 30 maggio 1838”, *Atti della Società Economica di Calabria Ulteriore Prima* 1/5 (1839), pp. 118 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.



Fig. 1. The Three Calabrias: Calabria Citeriore (Cosenza), Calabria Ulteriore Seconda (Catanzaro) and Calabria Ulteriore Prima (Reggio).

Source: "Regno delle Due Sicilie, Domini al di qua del Faro" (1870), in I. Principe, *Carte geografiche di Calabria nella raccolta Zerbi*, Vibo Valentia: Edizioni Mapograf, 1989, p. 261.

seemed little inclined to commerce due to limits that were both cultural and infrastructural.

Nevertheless, the conviction that Calabrians were people of the land and not of the sea, and that Calabria was an isolated land, perhaps needs to be reconsidered. First of all, the idea of “one” Calabria is not historically valid; instead, it would probably be more correct to speak of “diverse” Calabrias, each one profoundly different from the others: the Cosenza area, the Catanzaro area, and the Reggio area.<sup>11</sup> The distinctness of each did not correspond only to the traditional historical subdivisions of Calabria: the Province of Citeriore (the Cosenza area), the Province of Ulteriore Seconda (the Catanzaro area) and the Province of Ulteriore Prima (the Reggio area).<sup>12</sup> In fact, a detailed consideration of silk thread production technologies in the 1800s, in conjunction with a closer examination of the silk sector, reveals a correspondence between the historical subdivisions of the diverse areas of Calabria and an economic subdivision that responded to different markets: the Cosenza and Catanzaro areas responded to the Neapolitan silk thread market, while the Reggio area responded to the Sicilian market.<sup>13</sup>

It is the Reggio area of Calabria that is of most interest, that which in other studies we have defined as “the Calabria of the sea” and which could also be defined as “the Calabria of the Mediterranean”:<sup>14</sup> that is to say, that part of Calabria more open to international commerce and less “isolated”. Of course, the Reggio area suffered from problems of isolation that were similar to the rest of the Calabrian territory. In 1865, the Chamber of Commerce, Trades and Professions of Reggio Calabria stated:

This province, lapped by sea waves for a distance of 220 kilometres on its eastern, southern and western coasts, unfortunately does not have even one port, nor any other refuge that nature or the skills of man might offer. There is no infrastructure that might facilitate the loading of ships, with the exception of a broken-down dock in Reggio, in no way conducive to good fortune.<sup>15</sup>

In that same year of 1865, lighthouses were scarce: there were only two, one near Reggio and the other near Scilla, which resulted in dark, risky coasts

<sup>11</sup> For additional detail, cf. Fusco, “Trattura e tecnologia”, p. 109 ff.

<sup>12</sup> See fig. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Fusco, “Trattura e tecnologia”, pp. 139 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Fusco and Marcelli, “La Calabria della seta”, pp. 31 ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Seconda relazione della Camera di Commercio ed Arti di Reggio (Calabria) al Ministero di Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio su l'andamento industriale e commerciale della provincia per l'anno 1864*, Reggio Calabria: Tipografia di Domenico Siclari, 1865, p. 7. The

and frequent shipwrecks, especially on winter nights.<sup>16</sup> It was not that the construction of a port at Reggio had not already been contemplated, yet such a port, “planned so many times, and so eminently necessary, had always encountered insurmountable obstacles”.<sup>17</sup>

In short, the difficulties the Reggiano population faced in order to carry out commerce along their own coasts were undeniable. Yet, in the case of the Reggio area, this infrastructural isolation was compensated in part by a unique advantage: the nearness of Sicily and its active port of Messina. And it was, in fact, through Messina that the Reggio area opened up to international commerce and to innovation. As the permanent secretary of the local Economic Society affirmed in 1854: “...[our] proximity to the city of Messina, graced by a free port, has without doubt extended our commercial relations”.<sup>18</sup>

The Reggio area was not, then, one of direct commercial relations, given that the Calabrian area lacked effective infrastructures, but rather a “mediated” commerce, taking place largely through Messina. This was true not only for the entire first half of the 1800s, but also for a good part of the second half. In fact, even in 1864, the Chamber of Commerce, Trades and Professions of Reggio Calabria affirmed that commerce extending outside the Province of Calabria was being developed through Messina.<sup>19</sup> This “dependence” of the Reggio area on Sicily would be partially overcome perhaps only with the advent of the railway in 1883, which partially modified Calabrian commercial routes, providing overland access to the north of Italy. The railway signalled the end of numerous small Calabrian businesses: in fact, it would cause

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Chamber of Commerce, Trades and Professions of Reggio Calabria was founded on 23 October 1862 under provisions of the law dated 6 July of the same year and – as was the case for all Italian Chambers of Commerce – was responsible for representing commercial and industrial interests at the provincial level to the central government.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> “Rapporto del segretario perpetuo alla Società economica della Provincia di Calabria Ulteriore Prima nella generale adunanza de’ 30 maggio 1854”, *Atti della Società Economica della Prima Calabria Ulteriore I/1* (1855), p. 39. Each provincial-level economic society developed propulsive and policy-orientation functions *vis-à-vis* the government for economic matters: cf. *Le Società Economiche alla prova della storia (secoli XVIII-XIX)*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Chivari, 16-18 March 1991, Rapallo: Azienda Grafica Busco Editrice, 1996; and M. M. Augello and M. E. L. Guidi (eds), *Associazionismo economico e diffusione dell’economia politica nell’Italia dell’Ottocento. Dalle società economico-agricole alle associazioni di economisti*, 2 vols, Milan: Franco Angeli, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> *Seconda relazione della Camera di Commercio*, p. 64.

the disappearance of the small merchant marine (*marineria*) of the area, which until then had been active between Calabria and Sicily.<sup>20</sup> Yet, until the construction of the railway, such “dependence” would characterise the Reggian silk business.

In the case of Reggian silk throwing, however, such “dependence” would show itself to be particularly beneficial, and in a double sense: firstly, it would permit the silk to find satisfactory placement in the international markets; secondly, it would favour the arrival in Calabria of foreign entrepreneurs and personnel competent in the production technologies already spread elsewhere in Europe, individuals who would bring economic growth and innovation to the area and who would also develop a leadership role in relation to the local population. Such an inflow of foreigners would transform the Reggio area into a leading area for the production of silk thread, and, in particular, of a distinctive type of thread produced with more innovative methods, of better quality and more sought-after in the international markets.

*The First Foreigners in Calabria: Technological Changes and the Growth of Calabrian Silk Throwing from the End of the 1700s to the Mid-1800s*

Let us begin by briefly analysing the technological changes that took place, above all in the Reggio area, from the end of the 1700s to the mid-1800s. In those years, Calabria received production technologies that had already spread elsewhere on the European continent and that would favour the development of Calabrian silk throwing.

In reality, the production of silk thread in Calabria at the end of the 1700s was still tied to old technologies, which yielded a Calabrian silk of poor quality and low competitiveness in the international markets. As Domenico Grimaldi observed in 1780, while the “Piedmontese style” or “small reel” silk throwing (known as *alla piemontese* or *ad aspo piccolo*) was the system already extensively used in the Mediterranean, especially in the various silk production localities of France, in the area of Valencia in Spain,<sup>21</sup> and even in nearby Messina,<sup>22</sup> Calabria remained faithful to the rather antiquated

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<sup>20</sup> L. Nostro, *Libro primo. Notizie storiche e topografiche intorno a Colonna Reggina, antica città sul Cenide prima dell'era volgare*, Reggio Calabria: Tipografia Ca. Francesco Morello, 1923, p. 159.

<sup>21</sup> D. Grimaldi, *Osservazioni economiche sopra la manifattura e commercio delle sete del Regno di Napoli alle sue finanze & c.*, Naples: Giuseppe Maria Porcelli, 1780, pp. 28-29, note 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

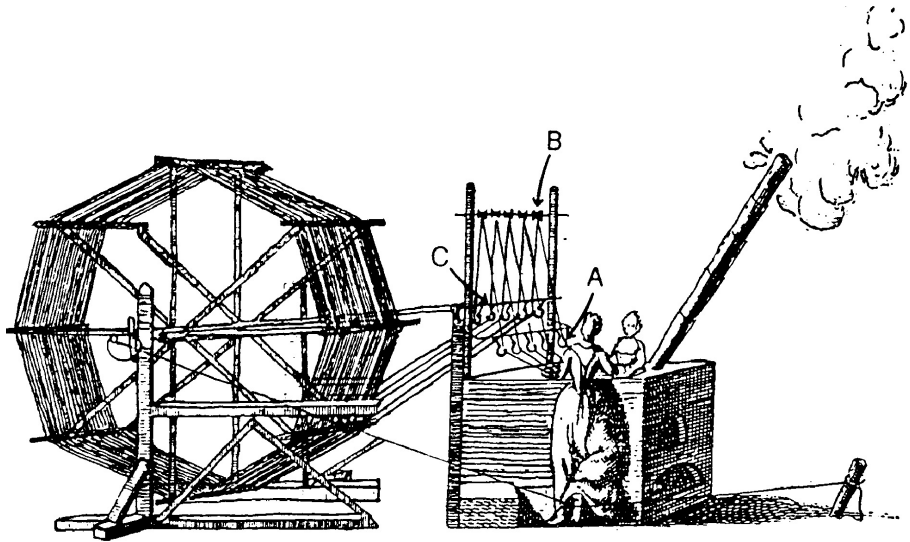


Fig. 2. “Calabrian style” or “big reel” silk throwing (called *trattura alla calabrese* or *trattura ad aspo grande*).

Source: <http://www.unicz.it/lavoro/MALANIMA.htm>.

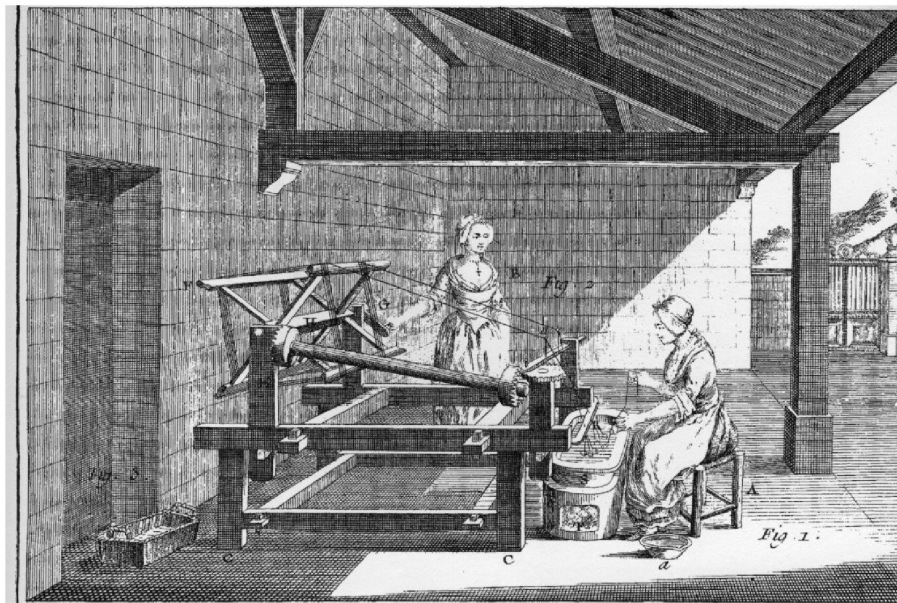


Fig. 3. “Piedmontese style” or “small reel” silk throwing (called *trattura alla piemontese* or *trattura ad aspo piccolo*).

Source: “Recueil de planches, sur les sciences, les arts libéraux, et les arts mécaniques, avec leur explications. Art de la soie”, *L'Encyclopédie Diderot & d'Alembert*, Paris: Bibliothèque de l'Image, 2002 (reprint), p. I, fig. 1.

method called “Calabrian style” or “big reel” silk throwing (*alla calabrese* or *ad aspo grande*).<sup>23</sup>

The two manufacturing techniques differed in several respects: in the dimension of the reel upon which the silk thread was wound; in the quantity of silk cocoons used to form each thread – less in the case of “small reel” production; in the temperature of the water contained in the silk-throwing basins (*bacinelle*)<sup>24</sup> – excessively hot in the “big reel” system; and in the diverse productivity of the two systems – greater in the case of the “Piedmontese style” technique. Besides, in the case of “big reel” production, the filaments thrown from the cocoons were not intertwined together before being wound on the reel; in addition, in the case of “small reel” production, the labourers employed were mainly female and better trained.<sup>25</sup> As a result of all of this, the final product of each of the two techniques was quite different. The silk obtained from the “small reel” system – referred to as “organzine” or “royal” silk – was qualitatively better, more uniform and fine, with a decisively higher price, and was particularly sought-after for warp yarn; the southern silks, of the Calabrian variety, thrown on big reels, were used as weft as they were “thick, fibrous and irregular”.<sup>26</sup> The difference was noted at the time of weaving: if the thread employed as the warp yarn was from “big reel” production, the resulting fabric was “heavy”, full of filament ends, lacking “a bright and brilliant colour”, and not very “durable”, characteristics that were opposite to those of fabric obtained from “royal” silk thread.<sup>27</sup>

The superiority of the “small reel” method was evident to contemporaries in the silk trade. At first, however, this new method did not manage to spread in the Kingdom of Naples, particularly in the Reggio area. This was principally because – until the abolition of the silk production tax (*arrendamento*) in September of 1805 –<sup>28</sup> the government had continued

<sup>23</sup> The reel – called *aspo*, and sometimes *mangano* – was a kind of wheel around which the silk thread was wound as it was unravelled from the silk cocoon. Regarding the two methods of throwing, see figs 2 and 3.

<sup>24</sup> The silk-throwing basins consisted of small tubs, filled to the brim with hot water, in which the silk cocoons were immersed; the heat of the water melted the sericin, that is, the substance which holds the strands of silk together around the chrysalis to form the cocoon.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Fusco, “La trattura della seta”, p. 521.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* The weft (also called woof) consists of a series of threads placed on the loom at right angles to the other threads (the warp), which are interlaced together to form the desired design.

<sup>27</sup> Grimaldi, *Osservazioni economiche*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. I. Fusco, “Attività produttive e fiscalità in Calabria tra XVI e XVIII secolo. II

to exercise a strict control over southern silk production, requiring that all silk cocoons be brought to “big reel” facilities, where they were processed under the supervision of a royal functionary.<sup>29</sup> Notwithstanding, some initial changes were accomplished in the Reggio area even before 1805, due to the arrival of foreigners who were experts in the new techniques.<sup>30</sup>

As a matter of fact, the first attempt at introducing the “small reel” method probably took place in 1790 or 1791, when, thanks to a royal loan, production of organzine was started in the silk throwing mill belonging to the Caracciolo brothers in Villa San Giovanni, close to the city of Reggio, and perhaps also due to the collaboration of a priest, a certain Petrucci originally from Gorizia.<sup>31</sup> It is probable, however, that the successful introduction of new methods of silk throwing would wait some years more, when – because things were not going well for newly established mills – recourse to the counsel of a certain Francesco Bal was taken, a man “considered to be an intendent, probably because he was Torinese”.<sup>32</sup> Bal disembarked in “Villa” in April of 1792 under the sponsorship of Tommaso Caracciolo, obtaining full management responsibility for the Caracciolo silk mill within approximately one year of his arrival on Calabrian soil.<sup>33</sup>

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settore serico”, in G. Anania (ed.), *Scelte pubbliche, strategie private e sviluppo economico in Calabria. Conoscere per decidere*, Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino Editore, 2001, pp. 206-207. The term *arrendamento* (from *arrendar* in Spanish), used in the place of *affittare*, signified the subcontracting of rent collection, granted by the government to some private individuals known as *arrendatori* in exchange for a fixed fee or royalty (L. Bianchini, *Storia delle finanze del Regno delle Due Sicilie*, ed. L. De Rosa, Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1971, p. 262). On this topic, see L. De Rosa, *Studi sugli arrendamenti del Regno di Napoli*, Naples: L'Arte Tipografica, 1958.

<sup>29</sup> The reasons for a rigid government control resided in the government’s requirement that the taxes due on silk production (*arrendamento*) be collected more easily, and that the government monopoly over silk production be preserved. In fact, silk thread was sold to a royal buyer and then sent to Naples (Grimaldi, *Osservazioni economiche*, p. 5).

<sup>30</sup> It should be borne in mind that the arrival of those foreigners in Calabria in those first years was first and foremost thanks to the support of local entrepreneurs and the central government. In the case of the entrepreneurial merchants mentioned in the following paragraph, however, there was a spontaneous movement of individuals to Calabrian soil because they believed they could make a profit by establishing silk works there.

<sup>31</sup> For more details, see Fusco, “La trattura della seta”, pp. 523 ff.

<sup>32</sup> M. C. Lamberti, *Splendori e miserie di Francesco Bal, 1766-1836*, Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1994, pp. 144-145.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 150 ff.

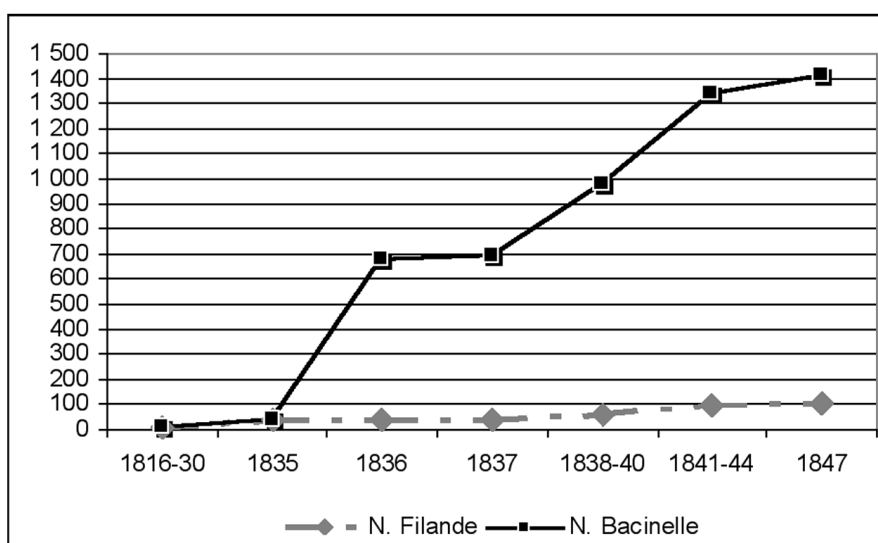


This was the most important moment for the innovation of silk throwing in the Reggio area. It was a time of rupture with the past, in which the new “small reel” method finally superseded the old “big reel” system. In fact, once adopted at the Caracciolo silk mill, the “small reel” technique spread throughout the Reggio area within a few years.

The expansion of “small reel” silk throwing in the Reggio area during the course of the first half of the 1800s was tied to the technological changes just described. In fact, the international demand for silk, which experienced a strong increase during all that half century, was mainly aimed at the type of silk thread produced with the new techniques, a demand which arrived in Reggio through the port of Messina, from where Calabrian silks were sent out to various European destinations.<sup>34</sup>

For additional detail, the following figures show the magnitude of the expansion of “Piedmontese style” silk throwing in the Province of Calabria Ulteriore Prima.<sup>35</sup>

Fig. 4. “Piedmontese style” silk throwing mills (*filande*) and the number of silk-throwing basins (*bacinelle*) in Calabria Ulteriore Prima (1816-1847).<sup>36</sup>



<sup>34</sup> For more details, see Fusco, “La trattura della seta”, pp. 516 ff.

<sup>35</sup> Figs 4 and 5 are based on data found in *ibid.*, table 1, p. 505.

<sup>36</sup> The term *filande* refers to silk throwing mills.

Fig. 5. Production of organzine in Calabria Ulteriore Prima from 1816 to 1847 (in kilograms of silk).



As can be inferred from the figures above, the Reggio area experienced a growth in “Piedmontese style” silk throwing mills in the first half of the 1800s, especially from the early 1830s onwards; the number of silk-throwing basins or *bacinelle* (fig. 4) corresponded to a resulting quantity of silk production (fig. 5). This growth is evident even in relative terms, that is, with respect to population growth in the province.<sup>37</sup> The population grew more slowly than silk throwing mills and their respective means of production (silk-throwing basins); furthermore, the production of organzine also increased in per capita terms during the course of the years examined. This growth was influenced – and not in small measure – by the opening up of the Reggio area to the Mediterranean, as well as to the technical knowledge that voyaged on board its sea-going vessels.

#### *Foreign Entrepreneurs in Calabria amid Innovation and Conflicts*

As we have seen, an increase during the entire first half of the 1800s in “small reel” silk throwing production – particularly in demand in the international markets – took place in the Reggio area, where it became possible to produce silk of good quality and at competitive prices. In fact, quality was guaranteed

<sup>37</sup> In this regard, see Fusco, “La trattura della seta”, table 2, p. 508.

by the fact that the most innovative production techniques were spreading throughout the territory, and because the workforce dedicated to silk thread production was becoming skilled at those new techniques. In addition, silk mills managed to produce good-quality silk at moderate cost. In the first place, this was possible because of the abundance of competent labour: the local population offered itself at low cost on the labour market since other *in loco* work opportunities were not easily found; and secondly, thanks to the abundance of raw material (silk cocoons). The Reggio area, in fact, enjoyed conditions that were especially favourable for the development of mulberry growing and silkworm breeding. In particular, the climate was mild; moreover, the presence of high mountains close to the coast discouraged the population from dedication to other agricultural activities, and instead encouraged the spread of mulberry tree cultivation, which – unlike other types of plants – grew even at higher elevations. The raw material, however, also came from the rest of Calabria: during the course of the 1800s, in fact, the presence of numerous and active silk throwing mills in the Reggio area began to attract silkworm production from the other areas of Calabria.<sup>38</sup>

The conditions just described made the Reggio area a privileged one for silk throwing. It was not a coincidence, then, that during the course of the 1800s, various foreign merchant-entrepreneurs devoted to the production of silk – and often to silk trading – thought of starting up their own production activities in this region which offered them first-rate possibilities for profit-making. Thus, in 1847 and 1848 some foreign merchant-entrepreneurs arrived in Calabria in order to establish their own silk throwing mills. The area of interest was the whole Reggio area; however, Villa San Giovanni – a small Calabrian locality on the Strait of Messina – was to become the principal centre for silk throwing. By way of example, a few cases of such merchant-entrepreneurs are discussed below.

In 1847, the permanent secretary of the Economic Society, Pietro Greco, mentioned the “establishment of certain foreign industrialists in Villa S. Giovanni”.<sup>39</sup> Those entrepreneurs, he stated, “attracted primarily by the expertise and honesty of certain silk mill owners, have taken factories on their own accounts and have called upon persons who understand the silk industry according to the true principles of science to provide the best management”.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Fusco and Marcelli, “La Calabria della setta”, p. 40

<sup>39</sup> P. Greco, “Relazione de’ lavori della Società Economica di Calabria Ultra Prima compiuti nell’anno 1846 (letta nell’adunanza generale de’ 30 maggio 1847)”, *Atti della Società Economica della Prima Calabria Ulteriore* III/2 (1847), p. 50.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

Only one year later, in 1848, the provincial intendent reported to the competent government minister that the presence of those foreigners had contributed to improving the manufacture of silk thread in the region, as well as to spreading the new methods among the local workers.<sup>41</sup> Specifically, he spoke of “various English businessmen”<sup>42</sup> who had installed silk throwing mills in Villa San Giovanni. He referred to a certain Barker and to a certain Thomas Hallam, who had built a total of 10 mills in Villa San Giovanni by about 1847 – which then corresponded to almost one quarter of the 44 silk throwing mills present in that small locality.<sup>43</sup> Thanks to those two Englishmen, he continued, “Villa” was affirming itself as the centre of Calabrian silk throwing, hosting almost half of all the silk mills in the Reggio area.<sup>44</sup>

We know little of Barker, but more information can be found regarding Hallam, known in the area as “the Englishman”. Hallam arrived in Messina between 1843 and 1847<sup>45</sup> and not by chance went from there to Calabria. There, he confirmed “the favourable conditions of [the] land and climate for the development of silkworm breeding” and consequently did his best “to propagate the cultivation of the white mulberry tree in the province”. He also set up “various silk throwing mills in Villa San Giovanni, in the village of Gaz[z]i (in the environs of Messina), and in Messina itself”.<sup>46</sup> Before founding his silk mills, he made various forays into Calabrian territory.<sup>47</sup> He had visited diverse localities in Calabria: in Reggio, in Cosenza, and in Scilla – but only in Villa had he been “welcomed by all, with open arms”.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Archivio di Stato di Napoli (ASN), Ministero di Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio (MAIC), envelope 239, fasc. unnumbered, f. 123r/v (letter from Intendent G. Demarco to the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce; Reggio, 15 January 1848). The intendenza was an administrative structure present in every province, directed by a Council of Intendence, which was, in turn, headed by the figure of the intendent.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> “Stato di tutte le filande esistenti nel primo distretto di Reggio a tutto li 30 dicembre 1847” (Reggio, 30 April 1848) (from the Intendence), in ASN, MAIC, envelope 239, fasc. II, ff. 1r/v - 1 bis r.

<sup>44</sup> In Villa there were 44 silk throwing mills (*filande*) out of a total of 102 in Reggio (“Stato di tutte le filande”).

<sup>45</sup> The year 1843 was deduced from Hallam’s own words (“Incartamento relativo alla quistione della filanda del Signor Hallam posta nell’abitato del comune del Villa S. Giovanni”), letter from Thomas Hallam to the director of the Royal Secretariat of the Interior, Messina, 20 November 1852; in ASN, MAIC, sheaf 516, fasc. 10, ff. 28-40), while 1846 is the date referred to in Nostro, *Libro primo*, p. 155.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

Initially, in 1848, he had leased some already existing silk mills: one “from *padron* [owner] Francesco Santoro, and then another from *padron* Santo Coppola”.<sup>49</sup> However, because he had wanted to use coal to heat the water in the silk-throwing basins, he encountered numerous obstacles at the local level: the population and the authorities of Villa were in fact afraid, not only that the steam boiler could explode, but also that the smoke emissions from the combustion of coal could be damaging to the public health.<sup>50</sup> Hallam’s first silk throwing mills were located inside the urban centre,<sup>51</sup> which meant that they more easily encountered opposition from the local population. It was actually because of that opposition that Hallam preferred to temporarily suspend his plan to use coal and to use charcoal instead.<sup>52</sup> Only in this way did he manage to obtain permission to carry out his business operations.<sup>53</sup>

Yet this was only a temporary solution for a period of time in the 1850s, after which we know that Hallam “began to buy extensive plots of land [...] and to construct a large steam-fired silk throwing mill”.<sup>54</sup> In the 1870s, we find Hallam engaged in the production of silk in a steam-fired plant located in the open countryside,<sup>55</sup> which boasted two innovations with respect to the former plant (still in operation): in the first place, coal was finally being used; secondly, the steam boiler was no longer used exclusively for heating the water for the silk-throwing basins, but was also used for turning the reels.<sup>56</sup> We are, in short, in the presence of a “modern” steam-fired silk throwing mill,<sup>57</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>50</sup> ASN, MAIC, sheaf 516, fasc. 10, ff. 28-40 (letter from the intendent of Prima Calabria Ulteriore to the director of the Ministry and the Royal Secretariat of the Interior; subject: “Per la filanda del Signor Hallam in Villa S. Giovanni”, Reggio, 13 April 1853).

<sup>51</sup> Archivio di Stato di Reggio Calabria (ASRC), Prefettura, Inventario 14, envelope 35, fasc. 377 bis, ff. unnumbered (report from the *decurioni* [members of the municipal council] to the mayor of Villa San Giovanni, 24 October 1852).

<sup>52</sup> ASRC, Prefettura, Inventario 14, envelope 35, fasc. 377 bis, ff. unnumbered (letter from Thomas Hallam to the intendent of the Province of Reggio, Villa San Giovanni, 11 April 1853).

<sup>53</sup> ASRC, Prefettura, Inventario 14, envelope 35, fasc. 377 bis, ff. unnumbered (letter from the director of the Ministry and the Royal Secretariat of the Interior to the intendent, Naples, 30 April 1853).

<sup>54</sup> Nostro, *Libro primo*, p. 156.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. fig. 6.

<sup>56</sup> ASRC, Tribunale Civile, Reggio Calabria, Inventario 65, envelope 786, ff. 111r - 124v (expert testimony delivered to the president and the judges of the district court of Reggio, opened at Villa San Giovanni on 2 January 1863 and closed at Reggio on 11 March 1863).

<sup>57</sup> To better explain this difference, sources often mention the term *filanda a vapore*

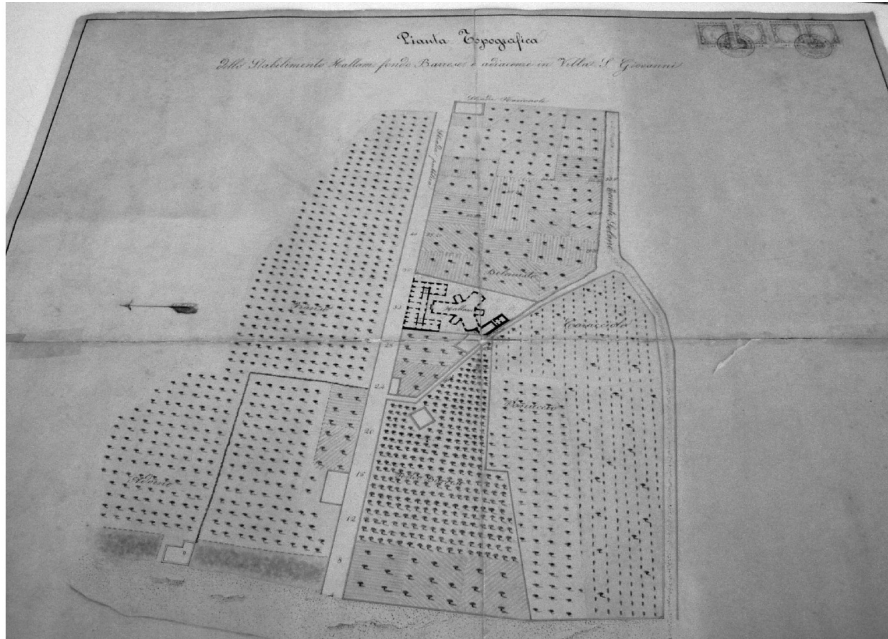


Fig. 6. Thomas Hallam's silk throwing mill.

Source: ASRC, Prefettura, Inventario 14, envelope 35, fasc. 377 bis, ff. unnumbered.

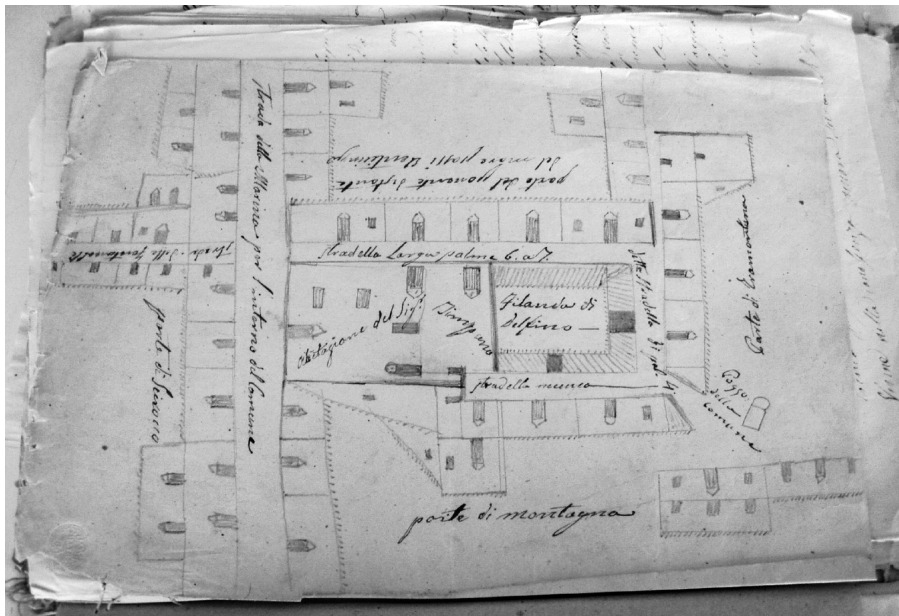


Fig. 7. Silk throwing mills in Catona in 1852.

Source: ASRC, Inventario 50 bis, envelope 1, fasc. 20, ff. unnumbered.

which produced a silk of excellent quality, able to “withstand competition against the most valuable raw silks of France and of upper Italy”,<sup>58</sup> so much so as to merit a medal at the International Exposition held in London in 1862.<sup>59</sup>

In addition, the steam-fired boiler represented the motive power behind two of Hallam’s other activities: grain grinding and sulphur pulverization.<sup>60</sup> Actually, Hallam was not only involved with sericulture, but also with the exportation to England of *agrocotto* (a citric juice concentrate used for industrial food preparation), as well as with sulphur and flour trading<sup>61</sup> directly to Marseille, in France.<sup>62</sup> If what was written about Hallam was true, those businesses made him a wealthy man who built “a princely palace”<sup>63</sup> for himself; and all his commercial dealings surely took place via Messina.

Hallam continued his activity as silk mill owner until 1874, the year of his death,<sup>64</sup> but his silk throwing mills were not abandoned. Indeed, he was succeeded in the business by a nephew of his, James Edward Eaton, son of his sister, who had “wanted to follow in the footsteps of his uncle, and who maintained the silk mills in Calabria and Sicily until the end of his days”.<sup>65</sup> In fact, Eaton’s principal residence was located in Messina, having married a certain Miss Oates there, but after becoming ill, and in the last days of his life, he preferred retirement in Villa “to feel more tranquil” and “to find health”.<sup>66</sup> It had also been in Villa where Eaton had inherited the grain grinding and

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[steam-fired silk throwing mill], though this refers not so much to factories in which machinery was powered by coal combustion, but rather to factories known in Calabria as *opifici a fuoco diretto* [directly fired mills], in which the coal was used only to heat the water contained in the silk-throwing basins.

<sup>58</sup> *Seconda relazione della Camera di Commercio*, p. 27.

<sup>59</sup> ASRC, Prefettura, Inventario 8, b. 73, no. 2211 (“Esposizione internazionale a Londra. Medaglie e menzioni agli espositori della provincia di Reggio”, “Notamento degli individui che inviarono degli oggetti all’esposizione di Londra del 1862”, Reggio, 30 May 1863).

<sup>60</sup> *Seconda relazione della Camera di Commercio*, table VII, p. 27.

<sup>61</sup> Nostro, *Libro primo*, p. 156.

<sup>62</sup> *Seconda relazione della Camera di Commercio*, statistical maps, table VI, unpaginated.

<sup>63</sup> Nostro, *Libro primo*, p. 156.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* Actually, it is not clear whether Eaton was really a nephew of Hallam or whether he was the representative of another important English businessman. We are presently carrying out additional research regarding this matter.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

trading business of his uncle.<sup>67</sup> In short, the bond to Villa would not be broken until 1902, the year of his death.<sup>68</sup>

In the meantime, a role in the activities of the family was being played by a certain Herbert Oates (“son of George”), also called “the Englishman”, a relative of Eaton. In fact, we find him managing a silk throwing mill in the centre of Villa in 1889<sup>69</sup> when he was 36 years old: he had come from Messina but was resident in Villa.<sup>70</sup>

In brief, the activity of the “Englishmen” continued on through the course of centuries, managing to attract foreign labour<sup>71</sup> and to transfer technology to the Calabrian territory. Those merchant-entrepreneurs played a leading role in the economy of the region. As recorded by Luigi Nostro, “The example of the enterprising Englishman [Hallam] served as an incentive and as noble competition” among all the manufacturers in the region “and important silk throwing mills quickly sprang up on the outward-looking Calabrian coast, as well as in the province of Messina, their raw silks competing with those of Piedmont and of Cevennes, and superior to those of Lombardy, of Veneto and other centres of production.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, within 50 years, almost 20 steam-fired factories had sprung up in Villa: one thinks of the steam mill owned by the Caminiti family, the one owned by the Lofaro family from Acciarello, the one belonging to Calabrò, to Domenico Lofaro, to the Sergi uncle-and-

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<sup>67</sup> ASRC, Prefettura, Inventario 17, b. 277 (“Comitato peritale per l'accertamento della tassa sulla macinazione dei cereali nella provincia di Calabria Ulteriore Prima”, municipality of Villa San Giovanni, fiscal year 1876, “Molino inglese a vapore di James Eduardo Eaton”).

<sup>68</sup> After Eaton's death, writes Nostro (*Libro primo*, p. 157), “Villa [San Giovanni] entered gradually into decline, first with the closure of the silk throwing mills and a few years later due to the terrible cataclysm (the earthquake of 1908) which damaged if not destroyed the grain grinding mills and the pasta factory.”

<sup>69</sup> ASRC, Tribunale Penale, Reggio, Inventario 68, envelope 593, fasc. 5485, ff. unnumbered (trial record no. 108 of the Legion of Royal Carabineers, Villa San Giovanni, 2 July 1889).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* (record of lawsuit or verbal accusation; Villa San Giovanni, 4 July 1889).

<sup>71</sup> In 1889, for example, we find Sicilian workers at Oates' silk throwing mill in Villa San Giovanni: a certain Teresa Paladino, age 40, born in Castrogiovanni (today Enna) and resident of Villa San Giovanni, employed as a silk throwing worker (*filandiera*), accused of having robbed a certain quantity of silk cocoons, and a certain Rosina Arena, age 24, born in Messina and resident of Villa San Giovanni, responsible for inspection of workers when they were leaving the silk mill (*Ibid.*, “Esame di testimone senza giuramento”, Villa San Giovanni 4 July 1889).

<sup>72</sup> Nostro, *Libro primo*, p. 155.



nephew team, to the mill owned by Belmusto, and to the one belonging to the Santoro family.<sup>73</sup> These factories were able to attract “all the silk cocoons from the three provinces [of Calabria], from Sicily, from the region of Naples, occasionally from Lombardy, and sometimes even from Constantinople and Salonika”, and would make Villa “renowned in all the world”, to the degree that some called her “the little Manchester of Italy, or the city of silk”.<sup>74</sup>

On the other hand, the “Englishmen” were not the only foreigners to establish their own silk throwing mills in the Reggio area, nor were they the only ones to bring innovation into the region. We mention just one example here, that of Giuseppe Fumagalli, a native of Milan who settled in Villa in the mid-1800s.<sup>75</sup> About 1857, he claimed “to have found [...] a new way to construct stoves for silk spinning and for their improvement, with a positive fuel savings”, for which he requested a ten-year patent licence permitting an exclusive use of the new system.<sup>76</sup> The Economic Society confirmed that this new system indeed represented an effective improvement and expressed support for his request.<sup>77</sup> From the description supplied by the Economic Society, the advantages of the new system were evident: product improvement (silk of better quality), as well as process improvements (a savings of fuel of more than double and reduced production time, that is, more product in less time). The impossibility of using coal, perhaps the only limit of the new type of stove, did not in the end represent a real problem for the Reggio area, rich in woods and forests.<sup>78</sup> As well, the use of this stove spread to other manufacturers in the region.<sup>79</sup>

In conclusion, we can confirm that the arrival of those foreign merchant-entrepreneurs in the Reggio area represented a positive element for the economy of the region. Their arrival brought work, wealth and technology to a territory that, at that time, did not offer many other alternatives to its own population. Those foreign merchant-entrepreneurs contributed to making

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> It should be kept in mind that in the mid-1800s, that is, before the unification of Italy, a Milanese was actually a “foreigner” in Calabria.

<sup>76</sup> ASRC, Intendenza, Inventario 50 bis, envelope 88, fasc. 4, ff. unnumbered (record of the ordinary meeting of the Economic Society on 17 November 1857).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> For more detail, see Fusco, “La trattura della seta”, pp. 530 ff.

<sup>79</sup> *Seconda relazione della Camera di Commercio*, p. 27.

local silk throwing grow and improve so that Calabrian silk thread could better compete in the international markets.

These entrepreneurs were not always received with open arms by the local population, however. The most evident example was that of Hallam, the individual who most incisively affected the local reality. As we have already mentioned, in order to investigate the territory, Hallam first visited various urban centres in Calabria; nevertheless, “he was not well received because it was said that silk mills would stink!”<sup>80</sup> It seems that he was well received only in Villa, as has already been commented on.

Still, we know from our sources that Hallam had to face numerous problems even in Villa, not only because of the silk throwing mill which was established inside the urban centre, but also because of the new factory which he built in the open countryside: in this last case, he was accused by the owner of an adjoining property of having damaged her plants with the smoke emissions from his silk processing.<sup>81</sup> In those years, setting up a mill to manufacture silk – a rather frequent activity in the Reggio area – could give rise to not a few conflicts. Moreover, those conflicts were encouraged by the crowding of numerous silk mills into the small urban centres of the Reggio area, whose population was concerned about the possible health problems that might result from smoke emissions and from the discharged waste water from silk production.<sup>82</sup> Frequently, those silk factories sprang up alongside (when not actually inside) residential dwellings. As one reads repeatedly in the source literature, at the beginning of the 1850s, the industrial landscape in the area of the Strait of Messina had changed: in the Reggio area, silk throwing had become “widespread”.<sup>83</sup> In Catona, for example, a small locality in the area of the Strait, “at every short distance there was a silk mill” and the larger part of those production structures were located within the urban centre.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Nostro, *Libro primo*, pp. 155 ff.

<sup>81</sup> ASRC, Tribunale Civile, Reggio Calabria, Inventario 65, envelope 786, ff. 100r-108v (“Verbale di perizia redatto da’ chimici Signori Vincenzo Dedomenico, Valentino Basile e Nicola Macrì di Reggio nella causa tra Suor Vittoria Barrese ed il Signor Tommaso Hallam di Villa S. Giovanni”, record opened in Villa San Giovanni on 2 January 1863 and closed in Reggio on 12 March 1863).

<sup>82</sup> On the health problems that silk throwing mills could bring, and on the conflicts that resulted between mill workers, local administration officials and the general population in Calabria in the 1880s, see Fusco, “Industrie urbane”, pp. 85-110.

<sup>83</sup> ASRC, Inventario 50 bis, envelope 1, fasc. 20, ff. unnumbered (letter from Giuseppe Delfino, owner of a silk throwing mill in Catona, to the intendent, 23 June 1851). For more detail on Delfino, see Fusco, “Industrie urbane”, pp. 94 ff.

<sup>84</sup> ASRC, Inventario 50 bis, envelope 1, fasc. 20, ff. unnumbered (report from the

Many silk factories were established in those years as a result of the possibilities for profit-making that the area of the Strait – as well as Messina and the Mediterranean – offered to local sericulturists and to all the foreign entrepreneurs who had decided to move there. Neither were those entrepreneurs discouraged by the hostility that they often encountered at the local level, a hostility that gave life to long and complicated conflicts, for the most part resolved by local government administrators in favour of the silk mill owners; moreover, the presence of silk throwing mills inside urban centres was considered by local administrators to be a necessary evil in towns that owed their livelihoods to silk throwing, an evil in which those same administrators had not a few personal interests.<sup>85</sup>

### *Some Concluding Observations*

What conclusions can we draw from this essay? In the first half of the 1800s, silk throwing in Calabria expanded and was technologically renovated thanks to the contribution provided by foreign labour. This would favour the arrival of foreign merchant-entrepreneurs, who would bring further expansion and new changes to methods of production. Those changes, even if they were not always received with enthusiasm by the local population, would strongly influence Calabrian silk throwing – in general, on a positive note – encouraging local mill owners to imitate the example of the foreigners.

Silk throwing grew and was renovated mainly in the Reggio area, above all because it was an area quite “far” from the “isolated” Calabria (which also underwent renovation in those years<sup>86</sup>). It was, instead, close to Sicily and to the port of Messina. The proximity to Messina and its port, particularly active in the 1800s, constituted a unique advantage for the region. Given the lack of inland communication routes and the lack of ports of call along the Calabrian coast, the little Sicilian city was the principal, if not the only real outlet for Calabrian goods, not of least importance silk, which was transported to Messina in small boats, where most was subsequently re-exported. Through the port of Messina, Calabrian silk could sail the seas to France, Great Britain, and even the United States of America.

A luxury good such as silk would, in fact, not have had a future had it been relegated to the inland areas of Calabria, a sparsely urbanised

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intendent to the water-and-roads engineer entrusted with verifying the status of Delfino’s silk throwing mill; Reggio, 11 June 1852). See also fig. 7.

<sup>85</sup> Fusco, “Industrie urbane”, pp. 91 ff.

<sup>86</sup> Fusco and Marcelli, “La Calabria della seta”, pp. 45 ff.

region without large centres of consumption and inhabited mainly by an agricultural population whose use of silk was limited to production rejects. The demand for silk, which increased during the entire first half of the 1800s, came principally from outside, reached Calabria above all by sea, and was “mediated” through the port of Messina.

In brief, the opening up of the Reggio area to international markets through Messina allowed the silk throwing industry in the area to expand and renovate. Foreign merchant-entrepreneurs chose to move to Calabria because there they found fertile land for their business ventures, above all thanks to the outlet for commerce offered by the Reggio area.

In conclusion, commerce, foreign merchant-entrepreneurs and the spread of technology are indispensable concepts, in our opinion, in order to correctly read the events of Calabrian silk throwing in the 1800s.

*Translated by Stéphane Fournier*

ISSM-CNR



THE PORT OF MESSOLONGHI:  
SPATIAL ALLOCATION AND MARITIME EXPANSION  
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

*Katerina Papakonstantinou*

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ABSTRACT: The main argument of this paper is that the spatial allocation of economic activity was reflected in shipping activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. Different but geographically near areas developed interwoven economic activities. In that sense this paper examines the economic relations among the merchant marine of Messolonghi, a small port in western Greece, the exporting port of Preveza in Epirus and the needs of Malta and Livorno for certain goods during the eighteenth century. Messolonghi, Preveza and Malta formed a triangle of commercial activities based on the different requirements and potential of each area: in products, people, capital and vessels.

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The rise of the Greek merchant marine is dated to the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> While 100 years later, during the Greek Revolution of the years 1821-1830, the fleets from the islands in the Aegean, namely Hydra, Spetses and Psara, became famous for their participation in the war, at the beginning of the eighteenth century it was the ships from the Ionian that visited Western Mediterranean ports. Ships from the Ionian Islands, which were then under Venetian rule, travelled to Venice and the ports of the Adriatic even earlier, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George Leon, "The Greek Merchant Marine (1453-1850)", in Stelios Papadopoulos (ed.), *The Greek Merchant Marine, 1453-1850*, Athens: National Bank of Greece, 1972, pp. 32-43, reissued as Georgios Leontaritis, *Ελληνική εμπορική ναυτιλία (1453-1850)* [The Greek merchant marine (1453-1850)], Athens: EMNE-Mnimon, 1987, pp. 3-10; Gelina Harlaftis, "The Fleet 'dei Greci': Ottoman and Venetian Greeks in the Mediterranean Sea-trade, Eighteenth Century", in Michela d'Angelo, Gelina Harlaftis and Carmel Vassallo (eds), *Making Waves in the Mediterranean*, Messina and Taormina, forthcoming; *id.*, "The 'Eastern Invasion': The Greeks in Mediterranean Trade and Shipping in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries", in Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood and Mohamed-Salah Omri (eds), *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2010, pp. 223-252.

<sup>2</sup> Christa Panagiotopoulou, "Έλληνες ναυτικοί και πλοιοκτήτες από τα παλαιότερα οικονομικά βιβλία της ελληνικής αδελφότητας Βενετίας (1536-1576)" [Greek sailors and ship-owners from the older economic books of the Greek fraternity of Venice (1536-1576)], *Θησαυρίσματα* XI (1974), pp. 284-352; Chryssa Maltezu, "Τα πλοία της μονής Πάτμου (16ος-17ος αι.)" [The ships of the Monastery of Patmos, sixteenth-seventeenth

However, they started to participate actively in European trade during the eighteenth century, partly due to the start of the Industrial Revolution and the growing needs of European countries for raw materials and foodstuffs.<sup>3</sup>

Dutch, French and British ships had been sailing in the Mediterranean since the seventeenth century, until then satisfying the needs of European markets for raw materials and foodstuffs.<sup>4</sup> During the eighteenth century Northern European presence in the Mediterranean became intense and permanent.<sup>5</sup> Their trading activity in Mediterranean waters was often

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centuries], in the proceedings of the international symposium, *I. I. Moni Ag. Ioannou tou Theologou: 900 Years of Historical Evidence (1088-1988)*, Patmos, 22-24 September 1988, Athens: EBMM, 1989, pp. 115-125; Gerassimos Pagratis, *Θαλάσσιο εμπόριο στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κέρκυρα (1496-1538)* [Sea trade in Corfu under Venetian rule (1496-1538)], Ph.D. thesis, Ionian University, Corfu 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Harlaftis, "The Fleet 'dei Greci'".

<sup>4</sup> On the discussion regarding the presence of Northern European captains in the Mediterranean from the seventeenth century, see Colin Heywood, "The Realities of Braudel's 'Northern Invasion': The Mediterranean Voyage of the *Prudence* of London, 1628-30", in Fusaro, Heywood and Omri (eds), *Trade and Cultural Exchange*, pp. 23-44.

<sup>5</sup> There is a long list of publications on the European presence in Mediterranean waters during the eighteenth century. On the French presence, see Paul Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris 1911; Yolande Triantafyllidou-Baladié, *Το εμπόριο και η οικονομία της Κρήτης από τις αρχές της Οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας έως το τέλος του 18ου αιώνα (1669-1795)* [Trade and economy in Crete from the beginning of Ottoman rule until the end of the eighteenth century (1669-1795)], transl. M. Gyparakis and A. Karastathi, Heraklion: Vikelaia Vivliothiki, 1988, pp. 67 ff.; Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, Leiden: Brill, 1999; Xavier Labat Saint Vincent, *Malte et la commerce français au XVIIIe siècle*, Ph.D. thesis, Université Paris IV-Sorbonne, 2000. On the British presence in the Mediterranean, see G. Pagano de Divitiis, *English Merchants in Seventeenth-century Italy*, Cambridge 1997, pp. 117-123; M. D'Angelo, "In the 'English' Mediterranean (1511-1815)", *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* (2002), pp. 271-285; Miquel Àngel Casanovas Camps, "The British Presence in Menorca during the XVIII Century", *International Maritime Economic History Association, Proceedings, 4th International Congress of Maritime History*, CD, Corfu, 21-27 June 2004. On the presence of European traders in the Eastern Mediterranean, see Vassilis Kremmydas, *Συγκυρία και εμπόριο στην προεπαναστατική Πελοπόννησο, 1793-1821* [Conjuncture and trade in the pre-revolutionary Peloponnese, 1793-1821], Athens: Themelio, 1980; Leontaritis, *Ελληνική εμπορική ναυτιλία*, p. 10; Elena Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700-1820)*, Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992; Nikos Svoronos, *Το εμπόριο της Θεσσαλονίκης τον 18ο αιώνα* [The commerce of Thessaloniki in the eighteenth century], Athens: Themelio, 1996, pp. 170 ff.; Elena Frangakis-Syrett, "Commercial Practices and Competition in the Levant: The British and the Dutch in Eighteenth-century Izmir", in Alastair Hamilton, Alexander H. de Groot and Maurits H. van den Boogert (eds), *Friends and Rivals in the East: Studies in Anglo-Dutch Relations in*

interrupted by wars, such as the Seven Years' War, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars; during these war periods Northern European ships withdrew from the Mediterranean, leaving space for local maritime powers to distinguish themselves in long-distance trade.

While ships from the Ionian Islands were trading in the Adriatic, ships owned by captains originating from Aegean ports and islands were active on north-south routes leading from the ports of the Black Sea to Istanbul and from the Ottoman capital to Thessaloniki, Volos, Cyprus, the coasts of the South-eastern Mediterranean and Egypt. They circulated mainly in Ottoman waters while transporting foodstuffs and especially wheat to the capital.<sup>6</sup>

The ports and islands of the Ionian Sea were under different political and economic regimes. Ships owned by captains originating from the Ionian Islands which were under Venetian rule were obliged to travel to Venice in order to be taxed and then to continue to their destinations.<sup>7</sup> Venetian maritime and commercial policy was often oppressive, although during the eighteenth century those measures became less restrictive because of the gradual decline of the Serenissima.

The coasts opposite the Ionian Islands, those of Epirus, Akarnania, Aetolia and the Peloponnese, were under Ottoman economic and political

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*the Levant from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century*, Leiden: Brill, 2000, pp. 135-158; *id.*, "Networks of Friendship, Networks of Kinship: Eighteenth-century Levant Merchants", *Euroasian Studies* I/2 (2002), pp. 183-205; Silvia Marzagalli, "Establishing Transatlantic Trade Networks in Time of War: Bordeaux and the United States, 1793-1815", *Business History Review* LXXIX (Winter 2005), pp. 811-844.

<sup>6</sup> Leontaritis, *Ελληνική εμπορική ναυτιλία*, p. 27; Georgios Salakides, "The Provisioning of Istanbul with Wheat in Turbulent Times: Yenisehir in Thessaly at the End of the 18th Century", *Balkan Studies* XLIII /2 (2002), pp. 129-149.

<sup>7</sup> Andreas Andreadis, *Περί της οικονομικής διοικήσεως της Επτανήσου επί Βενετοκρατίας* [On the economic administration of the Ionian Islands under Venetian authority], Athens 1914, Vol. I, p. 78; Olga Katsiardi-Hering, *Λησμονημένοι ορίζοντες ελλήνων εμπόρων. Το πανηγύρι της Senigallia (18ος-αρχές του 19ου αι.)* [Forgotten horizons of Greek merchants: the fair of Senigallia (eighteenth-early nineteenth century)], Athens: Karavias, 1989, pp. 85 ff.; Massimo Costantini, "Η εμπορική πολιτική της Βενετίας έναντι των κτήσεών της στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο" [Venetian trade policy towards its dominions in the Eastern Mediterranean], in A. Nikiphoros (ed.), *Κέρκυρα, μια μεσογειακή σύνθεση. Νησιωτισμός, διασυνδέσεις, ανθρώπινα περιβάλλοντα, 16ος-19ος αιώνας* [Corfu, a Mediterranean synthesis: island identity, junctions, human environments, sixteenth-nineteenth century], proceedings of the international conference, Corfu, 22-25 May 1996, Corfu 1998, pp. 74-75; Frederic C. Lane, *Βενετία, η θαλασσοκράτειρα* [Venice, the maritime republic], transl. K. Kouremenos, ed. G. D. Pagratis, Athens: Alexandria, 2007, pp. 105, 584-585.



rule. Sailors and captains from the Ionian Sea travelled to both Venetian- and Ottoman-controlled areas for trade.<sup>8</sup> Although the Venetian and the Ottoman territories seemed to belong to two different worlds, people originating from both areas were often relatives and partners.<sup>9</sup> During the first half of the eighteenth-century captains from Cephalonia and Zakynthos [Zante] in the Venetian area and Aetoliko and Messolonghi on the Ottoman coast owned small boats capable of coastal navigation and local trade. By the middle of the century, however, captains originating from those places began to sail to various ports of the Adriatic Sea and the Western Mediterranean. Such ports as Trieste, Senigallia and Ancona in the Adriatic but also Valetta in Malta, Naples, Genoa and Livorno [Leghorn] were often visited by captains from Cephalonia and Messolonghi. When Trieste,<sup>10</sup> Senigallia and Ancona became free ports they attracted more and more ships from the Ionian Sea,<sup>11</sup> which then travelled even further, to Livorno, since it offered good economic opportunities as another free port and an English entrepôt.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> K. A. Stassinopoulos, *Το Μεσολόγγι, Τ. α': Η λιμνοθάλασσα* [Messolonghi, Vol. I: The lagoon], Athens 1925, p. 79.

<sup>9</sup> Vassilis Kremmydas, *Το εμπόριο της Πελοποννήσου στον 18ο αιώνα, 1715-1792 (με βάση τα γαλλικά αρχεία)* [Trade in the Peloponnese in the eighteenth century, 1715-1792 (based on French archives)] Athens 1972, p. 302; Katsiardi-Hering, *Λησμονημένοι ορίζοντες*, p. 85.

<sup>10</sup> Olga Katsiardi-Hering, "Greeks in the Habsburg Lands (17th-19th Centuries): Expectations, Realities, Nostalgias", in Herbert Kröll (ed.), *Austrian-Greek Encounters over the Centuries: History-Diplomacy-Politics-Arts-Economics*, Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2007, p. 148, mentions that: "Merchants from Messolonghi 'discovered' Trieste's low prices during their visits to the open commercial fair held annually in Senigallia, to the north of the Papal port of Ancona. In 1742 they purchased cheap ironware and timber at the fair; on their next journey, they loaded their ships with currants, a new import, which they daringly exchanged for a quantity of timber in what was, after 1719, the free harbour of Trieste. Other Greeks were not slow to follow their lead, sailing into Trieste's still natural harbour overlooked by the medieval quarter of San Giusto from Messolonghi, but mostly from the Ionian Islands, Epirus, Roumeli, the Peloponnese, Crete and the Aegean islands."

<sup>11</sup> Trieste became a free port in 1719, Senigallia and Ancona in 1732.

<sup>12</sup> Livorno became a free port in 1676. See Despina Vlami, *Το φιορίνι, το σιτάρι και η οδός του Κήπου. Έλληνες έμποροι στο Λιβόρνο, 1750-1868* [The florin, the wheat and Garden Street: Greek merchants in Livorno, 1750-1868], Athens: Themelio, 2000, pp. 53-65; Pagano de Divitiis, *English Merchants*, pp. 117-113.



Map 1. Islands and ports in the Ionian Sea.

During the eighteenth century Greek maritime trade flourished. Seafarers from certain ports and islands were specialized in trading cargo from specific places. Products and places were interwoven. People from one place undertook the transportation of goods produced in neighbouring areas. Captains and sailors from Messolonghi traded wood from the area of Preveza, and captains from Hydra, Spetses and Psara traded wheat from Thessaly. The lack of a developed interior road network and the difficulties of transport on the mainland shaped traffic in the Southern Balkans. Since the Greek Peninsula is surrounded by sea, the majority of transport was organized by sea, because small ships could easily load cargo from every small port or bay. Mountains shaped the physical environment in which people organized their economic and social life.<sup>13</sup> Traversing the mountains was slow and expensive, and thus

<sup>13</sup> Fernand Braudel, *Η Μεσόγειος και ο μεσογειακός κόσμος την εποχή του Φιλίππου Β΄ της Ισπανίας* [The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world during the age of Philip II of Spain], transl. K. Mitsotaki, Athens: MIET, 1991, Vol. I, pp. 47-49; Max Derruau, *Ανθρωπογεωγραφία* [Anthropogeography], transl. G. Prevelakis, Athens: MIET, 2007, pp. 216-217, 223-224, 241.

products were instead transported to the nearest bay or port.<sup>14</sup> Messolonghi, Nafpaktos, Preveza and Sagiada were the ports in Aetolia and Epirus that linked mountainous areas with the sea.

The main argument of this paper is that the spatial allocation of economic activity is reflected in shipping activities.<sup>15</sup> From the bibliography it is known that certain areas created a network of interwoven economic activities: areas of production and areas of transport – terrestrial and/or maritime transport.<sup>16</sup> During the eighteenth century certain areas, ports and islands were specialized in maritime trade. Such maritime centres include, amongst others, Messolonghi, Hydra, Spetses and Psara. Messolonghi flourished between 1713 and 1815, while Hydra, Spetses and Psara showed growth in maritime activity during the years 1790 to 1815.<sup>17</sup> I will try to investigate that evolution using statistical data from the Amphitrete database, which was established for the purposes of the “Greek Maritime History, 1700-1821” research project conducted at the Ionian University during the period 2004-2007 under the supervision of Gelina Harlaftis.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Lois Lambrianidis, *Οικονομική γεωγραφία. Στοιχεία θεωρίας και εμπειρικά παραδείγματα* [Economic geography: elements of theory and empirical examples], Athens: Patakis, 2007, p. 61.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon L. Clark, Maryann P. Feldman and Meric S. Gertler, “Economic Geography: Transition and Growth”, in Gordon L. Clark, Maryann P. Feldman and Meric S. Gertler (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Economic Geography*, Oxford University Press 2003, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Clark, Feldman and Gertler, “Economic Geography”, p. 8; Paul Krugman, “Where in the World is the ‘New Economic Geography’?”, in Clark, Feldman and Gertler (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Economic Geography*, p. 53.

<sup>17</sup> Katerina Papakonstantinou, “Malta and the Rise of the Greek-owned Fleet in the Eighteenth Century”, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* XVI/1-2 (2006), p. 204.

<sup>18</sup> The research project was financed by the Pythagoras Programme of the Greek Ministry of Education and the European Union. See Gelina Harlaftis and Sophia Laiou, “Ottoman State Policy in Mediterranean Trade and Shipping, c. 1780 - c. 1820: The Rise of the Greek-owned Ottoman Merchant Fleet”, in Mark Mazower (ed.), *Networks of Power in Modern Greece: Essays in Honor of John Campbell*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, pp. 1-44. The scope of the project was to identify the captains and the ships that could have been part of the Greek fleet in the eighteenth century. The project was led by Gelina Harlaftis and myself (as the post-doctorate researcher). A team of 20 people worked on different archives, namely in Venice, Trieste, Naples, Messina, Valetta, Genoa, Livorno, Marseille, London, Amsterdam, Athens, Cephalonia, Corfu, Thessaloniki, Heraklion and Istanbul. Data were retrieved mainly from the quarantine registers of the port-cities, the Scule Piccole e Suffragi of Venice, the Venetian consuls based in Trieste, Cephalonia and Ancona, the juridical archives in Thessaloniki, the Ottoman archives in Heraklion, and the archives of the Prime Minister’s Office in Istanbul related to navigation licences and

I will use the concept of “maritime area” in order to show the geographical entity of certain areas.<sup>19</sup> The Ionian Sea forms a maritime area with unified and interrelated economic activities. To that maritime area belong the Ionian Islands (until 1799 under Venetian rule), the coasts of Epirus, Akarnania, Aetolia and Phokida, and the northern coast of the Peloponnese, that is the Gulfs of Patras and of Corinth, and the western coast of the Peloponnese; that area was under Ottoman rule with the exception of the city of Preveza, which was under Venetian rule. The shores and islands of the Ionian Sea belonged to two different authorities for long periods and had different economic and political characteristics, but the facts that they were neighbours and had access to the same sea present them as a unified area, especially if we take into consideration that people needed to communicate, to trade and to take advantage of the different possibilities the two regimes offered. Although the eastern coast of south Italy and Sicily also belong to the Ionian Sea, I do not include them in the same maritime area, because they do not appear to have had related economic activities and strong connections to the above-mentioned area.

In the present paper economic activities will be examined from a maritime perspective, and the interconnection of areas will be made through maritime transport as an economic activity that determines people. If we examine closely the routes of ships with captains originating from specific places, we can extract some conclusions regarding the economic functions of certain areas. The case study under examination will be the maritime activity of the port of Messolonghi.

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licences to enter the Black Sea issued by the Ottoman admiralty. During three years of research more than 15,000 ships were registered for the period 1700-1821. Ships were selected according to the name of the captain and the mention of his origin as “Greco” in the sources and/or the name of the ship. Mentions of ships have been recorded annually, so there is repeated information for a single ship, trading in the Western Mediterranean ports, paying the fee at the Scuole Piccole e Suffragi or being issued a navigation licence in Istanbul.

<sup>19</sup> Fernand Braudel described the Mediterranean as a cluster of smaller seas in which life is the product of the interconnection of land and sea; Braudel, *Η Μεσόγειος*, pp. 9-10. Gelina Harlaftis distinguishes six geographical maritime areas; Gelina Harlaftis, Manos Haritatos and Helen Beneki, *Πλωτά. Έλληνες καραβοκέρηδες και εφοπλιστές από τα τέλη του 18ου αιώνα έως τον Β΄ Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο* [Ploto: Greek ship masters and ship-owners from the end of the eighteenth century until World War II], Athens: ELIA, 2002, p. 16.

*Ships with Captains Originating from Messolonghi*

The port of Messolonghi is located on the northern shore of the Gulf of Corinth, opposite Patras. It is located to the west of Nafpaktos [Lepanto], which was the main port of the area during the seventeenth century. For uncertain reasons Nafpaktos declined as a maritime centre, and the maritime activities of the area shifted to Messolonghi and nearby Aetoliko, also located in the lagoon of Messolonghi. Messolonghi has a natural port inside the lagoon and its hinterland is mainly plains producing a variety of agricultural products, while the nearby mountains had prosperous stock-raising. The port of Messolonghi, like the Bays of Aspra Spitia or Itea eastwards in the Gulf of Corinth, is the terminus leading from the highlands to the seaside.<sup>20</sup>

Not much is known about the increase in the long-distance maritime activity of Messolonghi and Aetoliko. It seems that the emergence of their fleet followed that of Cephalonia and Zakynthos. For that reason it is said that the development of Messolonghi and Aetoliko is connected with the maritime activity of sailors and captains from Cephalonia and Zakynthos, two of the Ionian Islands under Venetian rule, because they invested in the Ottoman areas in order to avoid the Venetian restrictions in shipping and trade.<sup>21</sup>

Regarding the fleet of Messolonghi, until recently only a list with ships and captains dated to 1764 was known:<sup>22</sup> the Venetian Consul John Lappos, based in Messolonghi, compiled a list of 48 ships of 6490 tonnage in total from Messolonghi and 29 ships of 4633 tonnage from Aetoliko. The importance of the port of Messolonghi is evident by the fact that the Venetian authorities established there in 1729 a sub-consulate, which belonged to the consulate of Nafpaktos until 1739 and then to that of Patras.<sup>23</sup> A variety of European

<sup>20</sup> Kremmydas, *Το εμπόριο της Πελοποννήσου*, p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> Stassinopoulos, *Το Μεσολόγγι*, p. 81; Dimitrios K. Dimitrakakis, *Τα οικονομικά του Μεσολογγίου (1740-1826)* [The finances of Messolonghi (1740-1826)], Athens 1939, p. 26; Serafim Maximos, *Το ελληνικό εμπορικό ναυτικό κατά τον 18ο αιώνα* [The Greek merchant marine during the eighteenth century], ed. and intro. Lukas Axelos, Athens: Stohastis, 1976, pp. 48 ff.; Katsiardi-Hering, *Λησμονημένοι ορίζοντες*, p. 91.

<sup>22</sup> Constantinos Sathas, *Ειδήσεις τινές περί εμπορίου και φορολογίας εν Ελλάδα επί Τουρκοκρατίας* [News on commerce and taxation in Greece under Ottoman rule], Athens: Notis Karavias Reprint, 1977, from the *Οικονομική επιθεώρηση* [Economic review] of 1878-1879, p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> Stassinopoulos, *Το Μεσολόγγι*, p. 86; Dimitrakakis, *Τα οικονομικά του Μεσολογγίου*, pp. 23 ff.; Maximos, *Το ελληνικό εμπορικό ναυτικό*, p. 26; Georgios A. Siorokas, *Το γαλλικό προξενείο της Άρτας (1702-1789)* [The French consulate in Arta (1702-1789)], Ioannina: Society for Epirot Studies, Foundation for Ionian and Adriatic Spaces, 1981, p. 56.

ships arrived in the Gulfs of Patras and Corinth in order to load wheat from the northern shore or from the Peloponnese.<sup>24</sup> Trade in wheat was illegal in many cases, since the Ottoman authorities often prohibited exportation of the product – although Ottoman local officials permitted exportation after being bribed. The loading of wheat onto the European ships was made by ships from Messolonghi that were active in smuggling. It is estimated that about 15% of the French ships carrying wheat from the Peloponnese or Aetolia to Marseille had taken part in smuggling.<sup>25</sup> European and Greek ships collaborated in order to export products, legal or illegal, from the western part of the Greek Peninsula.

Although it is not known when and under what circumstances the fleet of the port of Messolonghi had been created, there is evidence that it was destroyed on 10 April 1770 during the Russo-Turkish War, also known as the Orlov Revolt. It is mentioned that the fleet had been burnt out by pirates from Dulcino, who arrived in Messolonghi and totally destroyed all ships that were anchored in the port in April 1770.<sup>26</sup> In his letter to the Duc de Choiseul dated 22 April 1770, Pouqueville mentioned that the French Consul Rose in Patras informed him that he saw the city of Messolonghi burning for three days, and that, other than the city, 80 ships that were anchored in the port were burnt by the pirates.<sup>27</sup>

From the Amphitrete database, it seems that in the period after 1774 ships from Messolonghi continued visiting the ports of Valetta, Livorno and Trieste, carrying cargoes of wheat, cheese and wood (see fig. 1). The merchant marine of Messolonghi continued its presence in the waters of the Western Mediterranean until the 1810s. The data show that the number of ships from Messolonghi declined for a period of about 10 years;<sup>28</sup> the Venetian Consul

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<sup>24</sup> Vlami, *Το φοιρίνι*, pp. 94-96.

<sup>25</sup> Kremmydas, *Το εμπόριο της Πελοποννήσου*, p. 109.

<sup>26</sup> Michael B. Sakellariou, *Η Πελοπόννησος κατά την δευτέραν τουρκοκρατίαν (1715-1821)* [The Peloponnese under the second Ottoman rule (1715-1821)], Athens 1939, p. 179; Constantinos Sathas, *Τουρκοκρατούμενη Ελλάδα, 1453-1821* [Greece under Ottoman rule, 1453-1821], Athens 1962, pp. 491-501; *id.*, *Ειδήσεις τινές περί εμπορίου*; Andreas K. Giannakopoulos, “Ανέκδοτα ναυτικά έγγραφα εκ Πατρών (1810) εκ των αρχείων του Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών Γαλλίας” [Unpublished maritime documents from Patras (1810) from the Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs], *Πελοποννησιακά* I (1975), p. 67; George A. Siorokas, *Η εξωτερική πολιτική του Αλή Πασά των Ιωαννίνων. Από το Τιλσίτ στη Βιέννη (1807-1815)* [The foreign policy of Ali Pasha of Ioannina: from Tilsit to Vienna (1807-1815)], Ioannina 1999, pp. 383, 389.

<sup>27</sup> F. C. H. L. Pouqueville, *Voyage de la Grèce*, Paris: Firmin Didot, 1826-1827, Vol. III, pp. 532-533; Stassinopoulos, *Το Μεσολόγγι*, p. 108.

<sup>28</sup> Those 10 years of decline include the Russo-Turkish War, known as the Orlov

John Lappos mentioned 48 bigger and smaller ships and boats in 1764,<sup>29</sup> while in the Ampitrete database we find larger ships capable of longer voyages to more distant areas. In 1762 the number of ships mentioned in the sources is 39; during the period 1754-1769 the number of ships from Messolonghi that appear in various archival sources varies between 16 and 39. After a period of about 10 years during which the fleet seems to have decreased, ships from Messolonghi appear more often in archival sources, in numbers that vary from 15 to 32 during the period from 1781-1798; for about 9 years, from 1784 to 1793, the number of ships from Messolonghi mentioned in the sources remains stable at about 29-32, and we can assume that this would be the number of bigger ships from Messolonghi that were travelling abroad each year at the end of the eighteenth century.

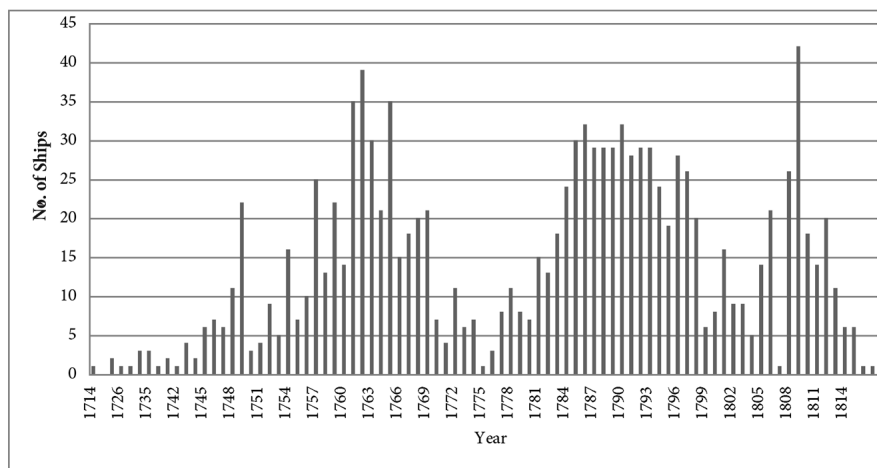


Fig. 1. Number of ships from Messolonghi, 1700-1821.

Source for figs 1-11: Ampitrete database, "Greek Maritime History, 1700-1821" research project, Ionian University, 2004-2007.

Revolt, during which the city of Messolonghi seems to have been destroyed. On the Greek entanglement in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774, see, amongst others, Pantelis M. Kontogiannis, *Οι Έλληνες κατά τον πρώτον επί Αικατερίνης Β' Ρωσοτουρκικόν πόλεμον (1768-1774)* [The Greeks in the first Russo-Turkish War during the reign of Catherine II (1768-1774)], Athens 1903, reprinted by D. N. Karavias, Athens 1989, p. 89; Dionysis Tzakis, "Ρωσική παρουσία στο Αιγαίο. Από τα Ορλωφικά στον Λάμπρο Κατσώνη" [Russian presence in the Aegean: from the Orlov Revolt to Lambros Katsonis], in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού, 1700-2000* [History of Neohellenism, 1700-2000] ed. V. Panayotopoulos, Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2003, p. 115; Nikos Rotzokos, *Εθναφύπνιση και εθνογένεση. Ορλωφικά και ελληνική ιστοριογραφία* [National awakening and nation building: the Orlov Revolt and Greek historiography], Athens: Vivliorama, 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Sathas, *Ειδήσεις τινές περί εμπορίου*, p. 43.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the fleet from Messolonghi seems to have faced a decline; the number of ships after 1809 falls, a fact that could be connected with the politics of the local pasha, Ali of Ioanina.<sup>30</sup> Dodwell mentioned in 1806 that:

the oppressive government of the Pasha has however considerably diminished their commerce, and since I was at Mesaloggion, I understand that the number of their vessels are reduced to half...[Now] they have twelve large merchant vessels of three masts, which traffic with the west and thirty smaller ones with two masts, which carry on their commerce with the Ionian islands.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, Pouqueville mentioned that in 1813 the captains from Messolonghi owned 20 merchant ships and 40 *brazzeres* (small boats).<sup>32</sup> Ali Pasha had good economic relations with British traders who built a factory in Patras in 1808.<sup>33</sup> After 1810 the commercial centre of the area moved towards the Ionian Islands, which were by then under British rule. The growing importance of the port of Patras and of the British Ionian Islands decreased the commercial and maritime importance of Messolonghi, which could not adapt to nor take advantage of the changing political and economic environment.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> In the bibliography it is mentioned that in the early nineteenth century Ali Pasha took measures against the port of Messolonghi and its fleet in order to promote English commerce through the port of Patras; see Stassinopoulos, *Το Μεσολόγγι*, p. 114, and Siorokas, *Η εξωτερική πολιτική του Αλή Πασά*, pp. 383-384. In the recently published archive of Ali Pasha no such mention is registered; see Vassilis Panayotopoulos, Dimitris Dimitropoulos, Panagiotis Mihailaris (eds), *Αρχείο Αλή Πασά Γενναδείου Βιβλιοθήκης. Έκδοση-Σχολιασμός-Ευρετήρια* [The Ali Pasha archive at the Gennadius Library: edition-comments-indices], 4 vols, Athens: Institute for Neohellenic Research / NHRF, 2007-2009.

<sup>31</sup> Edward Dodwell, *A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece during the Years 1801, 1805 and 1806*, London 1819, pp. 92-93.

<sup>32</sup> “Les Missolonghites etaient gouvernés d’après leurs coutûmes, sous la souveraineté du sultan, ils avaient des capitalists, ainsi qu’une marine de vingt vaisseaux marchands et de quarante brazzeres, lorsqu’en 1804, la ville fut envahie par le satrape de Janina, et detachée, ainsi que l’Etolie, du sangiac de Negrepont.”; Pouqueville, *Voyage de la Grèce*, p. 532.

<sup>33</sup> Siorokas, *Η εξωτερική πολιτική του Αλή Πασά*, pp. 383-384.

<sup>34</sup> On the changing economic environment of the area after 1800 and the incorporation of the Ionian Islands and their shipping into the British Empire, see Panayiotis Kapetanakis, *Η ποντοπόρος εμπορική ναυτιλία των Επτανήσων την εποχή της Βρετανικής Κατοχής και Προστασίας και η κεφαλληνιακή υπεροχή (1809/15-1864). Στόλος και λιμένα, εμπορεύματα και διαδρομές, ναυτότοποι και ναυτικοί, επιχειρηματικότητα και δίκτυα, κοινωνία και πλοιοκτητικές ελίτ* [The deep-sea going merchant fleet of the Ionian Islands during the time of the British conquest and protection and the Cephalonian prominence



*Seafarers from Messolonghi*

The only evidence we have regarding the source of the ships is the origin of the captains, who were listed in the quarantine registers of various ports of the Western Mediterranean. An example from Valetta in Malta, “A di 21 Giugno 1741 Capito la martegana greca nominata Spiridione padronata la padrona Demetrio Agiomavriti da Misselongi”, informs us that for the local authorities Messolonghi was a known port or that they registered what the captain had declared. For people living in preindustrial societies, local origin determined their identity. For a maritime society, the name of the port or island of origin determined their maritime identity and capability in sailing. In this framework, in the quarantine registers of Valetta the name of Messolonghi is very often mentioned.

Captains originating from Messolonghi appear in the quarantine registers of Valetta, Genoa, Livorno and Marseille, and the archival sources of Trieste, Venice and Ancona. The sources selected for the “Greek Maritime History, 1700-1821” research project provide a certain image of the travels of captains from Messolonghi. Since Western European and Ionian Island sources were mainly used, the picture that emerged presents a fleet of ships from Messolonghi travelling mostly westwards for the period under examination, that is 1700-1821. Although Messolonghi was under Ottoman rule, captains from this particular port do not seem to have travelled in Ottoman waters. However, if we examine the data more closely, we see that during the period 1805-1813, when data from Ottoman archives are available, the majority of ships from Messolonghi was issued navigation licences from the Ottoman authorities; out of 109 entries in the database, 78 (71.5%) licences to enter the Black Sea or to sail in the Aegean Sea were issued. That means that the nature and the density of the archival sources in certain periods shape a specific picture. Ships from Messolonghi took part in maritime trade on both sides of the Greek Peninsula, entering the Black Sea, from where the majority of wheat was exported, and shipping it towards the west.

Regarding the collective behaviour of the captains originating from Messolonghi, it seems that they had created networks of information and collaboration, since most of the ships frequented the same ports, carrying the same products addressed to the same receivers. The small society of

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(1809/15-1864): fleet and ports, cargoes and sea-routes, maritime centres and sailors, entrepreneurship and networks, society and ship-owning élites], Ph.D. thesis, Ionian University, Corfu 2010, pp. 14-61.

captain-traders of the port-city of Messolonghi was based on information and connections with distant markets in order to continue trading.

During the period under examination captains from Messolonghi often and regularly visited ports in the Mediterranean or were issued navigation licences in Istanbul. The high number of ships from Messolonghi in the sources is depicted in the statistical data (see fig. 2). From 1742 ships from Messolonghi showed increasing activity in maritime trade with some peak years, such as 1765, 1786 and 1809. These three dates are peak years around certain periods, such as 1749-1773, 1776-1797 and 1799-1815. Those periods are characterized by wars, such as the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), the Russo-Turkish War (1768-1774), the French Revolution (1792-1802) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). We could assume that war periods were flourishing years for ships from Messolonghi. Indeed, the best year for the whole period under examination is 1786, while the war between Venice and Tunis was in progress and the port of Valetta became the base of operations for the Venetian navy.

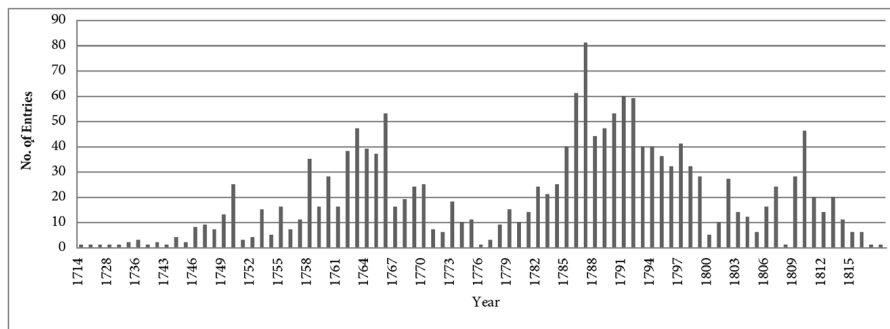


Fig. 2. The mobility of ships from Messolonghi, 1700-1821: arrivals and departures.

In order to find out what kind of trade captains from the port of Messolonghi exercised, we have to search out which ports they travelled to. In 1765 the majority of ships from Messolonghi, that is 41 out of 45 ships (91%), visited Valetta, the port of Malta in the Central Mediterranean; in 1786 (the peak year in arrivals for ships from Messolonghi) 52 ships out of 81 (64%) visited Livorno, while only 25 (30%) arrived in Valetta. In 1809 25 ships from Messolonghi out of 46 arrived in Valetta, while 21 arrived in Istanbul coming from the Black Sea. During the peak years the most visited ports were Valetta<sup>35</sup> and Livorno.<sup>36</sup> During the eighteenth century Valetta had become

<sup>35</sup> Labat Saint Vincent, *Malte*, pp. 209-210; Papakonstantinou, “Malta”, pp. 200-202.

<sup>36</sup> On Greeks active in Livorno, see Vlami, *To φιορίνι*, pp. 53-65. On the British

an important entrepôt, while Livorno was the main port for British trade in the Mediterranean; efforts of the local authorities permitted ships from the Eastern Mediterranean to visit and trade in those important ports (see fig. 3).

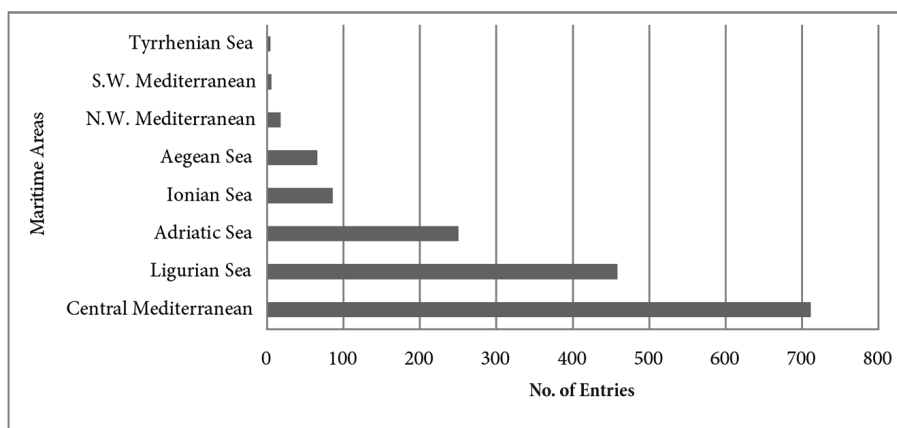


Fig. 3. Most visited maritime areas, 1700-1821.

From figure 4, it is clear that ships from Messolonghi visited often and regularly the two ports of Valetta and Livorno during the whole period under examination. In 1759 they visited Tripoli and after 1750 they travelled to Livorno quite often. The port of Livorno was known to many Greek captains from the beginning of the eighteenth century, and it seems that this was the most distant port they reached until the 1770s, when they started visiting Toulon in 1783, and Marseille, Barcelona and ports in the Atlantic Ocean in the 1790s. At the end of the eighteenth century, when the American and French Revolutions and the Napoleonic Wars broke out, captains from Messolonghi visited more distant ports in the Western Mediterranean, probably because of the high profits made by supplying blocked ports and areas in need of food. On the other hand, sailing longer distances towards the west became a reality for Greek ships quite late in the eighteenth century, when the economic realities changed and the European markets needed their services.

presence, see Pagano de Divitiis, *English Merchants*, pp. 117-123.

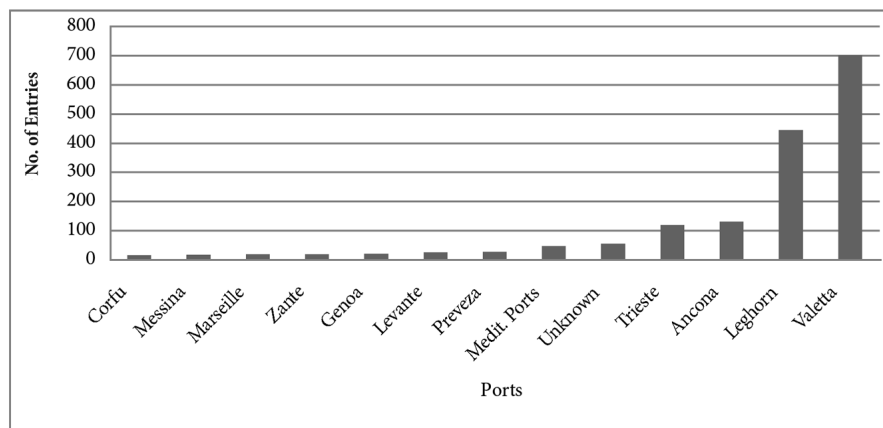


Fig. 4. Captains originating from Messolonghi and their destination ports, 1700-1821.

If we analyse the visits to the port of Valetta by ships from Messolonghi, we see a picture of sharp fluctuations during the eighteenth century (see fig. 5). Archival data from Valetta are quite complete and the image that appears must be close to reality, though, of course, we must take into consideration that next to legal trade the same seafarers were active in contraband and smuggling.<sup>37</sup> Malta had close relations with the Ionian Islands and the west coast of the Greek Peninsula, since from that area the authorities of Malta imported wheat, fruits, cheese and timber for local needs; the islands of the Maltese archipelago, Malta, Gozo and Comino, are small and without enough resources for the subsistence of the population.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, the flag of Malta was often flown by Greek ships, especially those from Messolonghi, in order to provide them easy access to Western European ports.<sup>39</sup> It is noteworthy that until 1723 captains from Messolonghi formed the only Greek presence on the island. After that date ships from Messolonghi formed more and more of a minority regarding the number of Greek ships arriving at the island, since the majority belonged to captains with origins from the Aegean Sea, especially at the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Kremmydas, *To εμπόριο της Πελοποννήσου*, p. 302.

<sup>38</sup> Papakonstantinou, "Malta", pp. 205-210.

<sup>39</sup> Maximos, *Το ελληνικό εμπορικό ναυτικό*, pp. 47-48; Kremmydas, *Το εμπόριο της Πελοποννήσου*, pp. 244-245.

<sup>40</sup> Papakonstantinou, "Malta", pp. 208 ff.

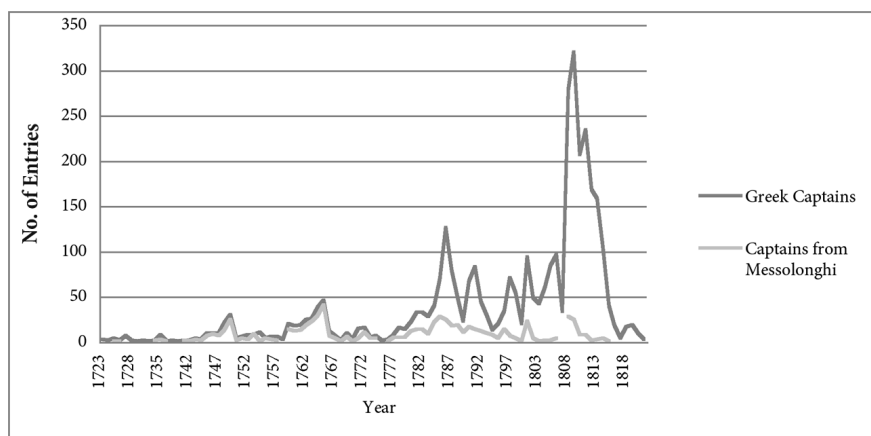


Fig. 5. Valetta as a destination for ships from Messolonghi and Greek ships in total, 1723-1821.

Livorno was visited by captains from Messolonghi in the second half of the eighteenth century; 1786 was the peak year with 51 arrivals<sup>41</sup> (see fig. 6). From 1750 onwards ships from Messolonghi started gradually visiting the port, and after 1786 their number also started gradually to decline. After 1786 arrivals of ships from Messolonghi did not follow the general trend of Greek ships that continued visiting Livorno;<sup>42</sup> figure 6 provides sharp differentiations in arrivals due to the war period, which had a strong impact on Livorno and its trade after 1793.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Vlami (*To φιορίνι*, p. 109), based on data from J.-P. Filippini, “Il movimento del porto di Livorno durante il primo periodo lorenese (1737-1801)”, in *Atti del Convegno di Studi. La Toscana dei Lorena. Riforme, territorio, società*, Grosseto, 27-29 November 1987, Florence 1989, pp. 49-80, provides the same picture; while Vassilis Kremmydas, *Ελληνική εμπορική ναυτιλία, 1776-1835* [The Greek merchant marine, 1776-1835], Athens: Emporiki Bank of Greece, 1985, Vol. II, pp. 108, 110, gives the same number of 51 arrivals of Greek ships in Livorno. According to Kremmydas, in 1816 more than 140 Greek ships arrived in Livorno, in 1817 more than 119, in 1818 122 ships, in 1819 112 ships and in 1820 91 ships.

<sup>42</sup> In the Amphitrete database, for many ships arriving in Livorno we do not have the captain's origin, that is about 36.1% of the total (795 entries out of 2197). It is possible that many of the ships that continued to visit Livorno were owned by captains from Messolonghi.

<sup>43</sup> Vlami, *To φιορίνι*, pp. 108-131. On the Greek presence in the port of Livorno, see also Harlaftis, “The ‘Eastern Invasion’”, and *id.*, “The Fleet ‘dei Greci’”.

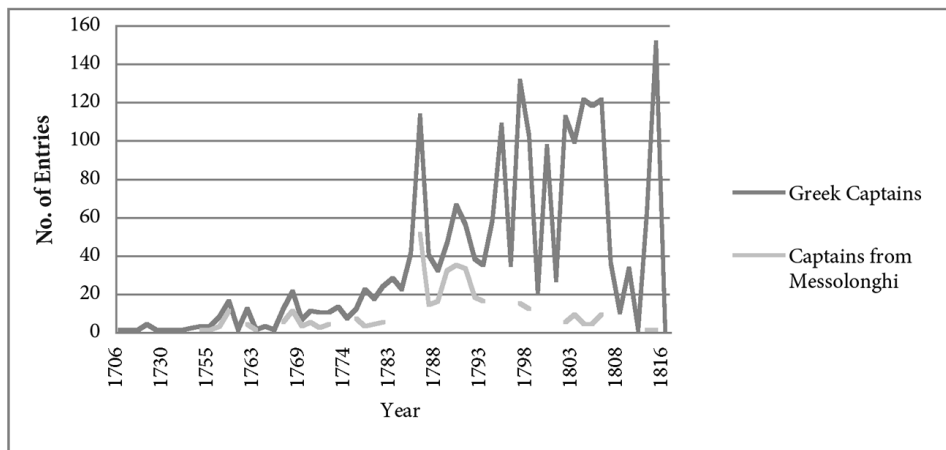


Fig. 6. Livorno as a destination for ships from Messolonghi and Greek ships in total, 1706-1816.

In order to understand the specific routes that ships from Messolonghi followed, we have to look at the cargo they carried. They transported products that had a high demand in different European ports. Livorno had become after 1766 the main entrepôt for wheat.<sup>44</sup> Malta imported a variety of products, especially wheat and timber. The archival sources usually mention the cargo in detail, but in rare cases indicate the weight and the volume of the cargo. We can only use the number of references to the cargo without being sure of its quantity. We have also to note that wheat usually did not form the only cargo of the ships. The majority of ships carried a variety of products in smaller or bigger quantities.

Captains originating from Messolonghi carried to Malta foodstuffs such as cheese, wheat and corn, raw materials such as tobacco, wood and wool, and industrial and handicraft goods such as leather and overcoats (see fig. 7). The foodstuffs were the products of local agriculture and stock-raising, which found an export market on an island that did not produce enough food to support its population.<sup>45</sup> The main product that was transported to Malta during the whole period was wheat; there were certain years that flourished, especially 1749, 1759, 1762, 1767, 1786, 1791 and 1797, periods that were characterized by problems in the destination market, and periods of more general turbulence in the economic environment of the Mediterranean.

<sup>44</sup> Vlami, *To φιορίνι*, p. 96.

<sup>45</sup> Asterios Arhontidis, *Η Βενετοκρατία στη Δυτική Ελλάδα (1684-1699). Συμβολή στην ιστορία της περιοχής του Αμβρακικού Κόλπου και της Αιτωλοακαρνανίας* [Venetian rule in western Greece (1684-1699): contribution to the history of the Ambracian Gulf area and Aitoloakarnania], Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 1983, pp. 90 ff.

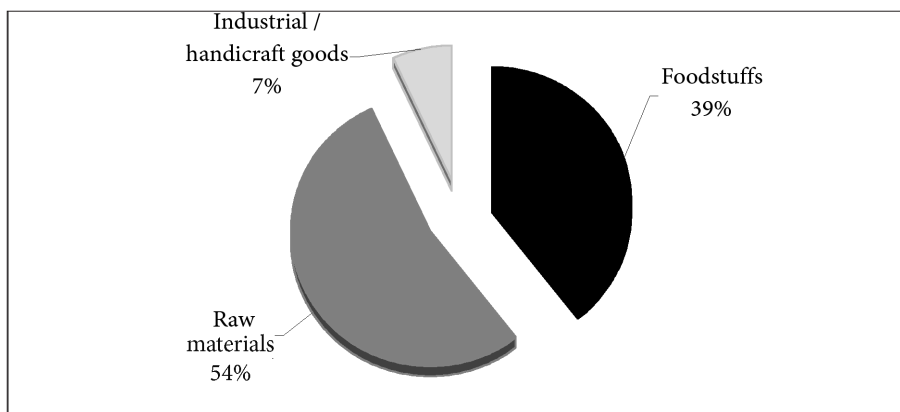


Fig 7. Cargo transported to Valetta by captains from Messolonghi, 1700-1821.

Olive oil does not seem to have had a permanent market in Malta. At the same time, ships from Messolonghi carried olive oil to Trieste, but the picture of only occasional visits remains the same. Instead of olive oil, wheat and other foodstuffs such as cheese, legumes, wine and spirits, olives, etc., were welcomed in the market of Valetta, and ships originating from Messolonghi frequently carried such cargoes. There seems to have been a specialization in certain markets and cargoes. In Valetta certain people were the main receivers of the products, and in many cases the buyers of the wheat were the two cities of the island of Malta, Valetta and Mdina. Regarding the raw materials, mainly wood was transported to Malta, but also wool on a regular basis. Construction wood was an important product for the authorities of Malta and firewood for the entire population of the island. As for the industrial and handicraft goods, they were mainly processed leathers produced in the tanneries of Epirus, Aetolia and the Peloponnese.

During the same period, although less frequently and without the continuity of the commercial relations with Malta, ships originating from Messolonghi also visited Trieste. The main products carried to the local market were foodstuffs such as cheese, lemons, olive oil, wheat and currants; raw materials such as wool and yarn were also transported, although less often. Some products consistently found buyers during the whole period, while others ceased to appear in the archival sources; it could be a coincidence, but also evidence of the changing demands of a fluid economic environment.

Captains originating from Messolonghi transported wheat to certain ports more often than to others. During the period 1700-1821 they transported wheat mainly to Valetta (74% of entries of wheat cargoes was transported to Valetta), to Trieste (11.64%), to Genoa (3.7%), to Livorno (3.4%), to Marseille (2.91%) and to other ports less often. Compared to the general picture of Greek shipping in the same period, Greek ships were transporting wheat mainly

to Valetta (37.31% of the Greek ships), while in second place comes Genoa (18.56%), followed by Marseille (4.61%), Trieste (4.16%) and Livorno (1.22%). This means that captains from Messolonghi were carrying wheat more often to certain ports, while the majority of Greek captains followed other routes. In both cases, Valetta remains high in the number of visits from Greek captains originating from various places.

Captains from Messolonghi travelled on the same routes, sometimes organizing their trips in convoy (*caravane*), not only because of the fear of corsairs but also because not all of them knew the way.<sup>46</sup> New captains had to learn from the older ones. Their ships met at the same ports and they departed from the same areas. In figure 8 the areas of departure for the ships from Messolonghi are mostly ports from the Ionian Sea that were familiar to them.

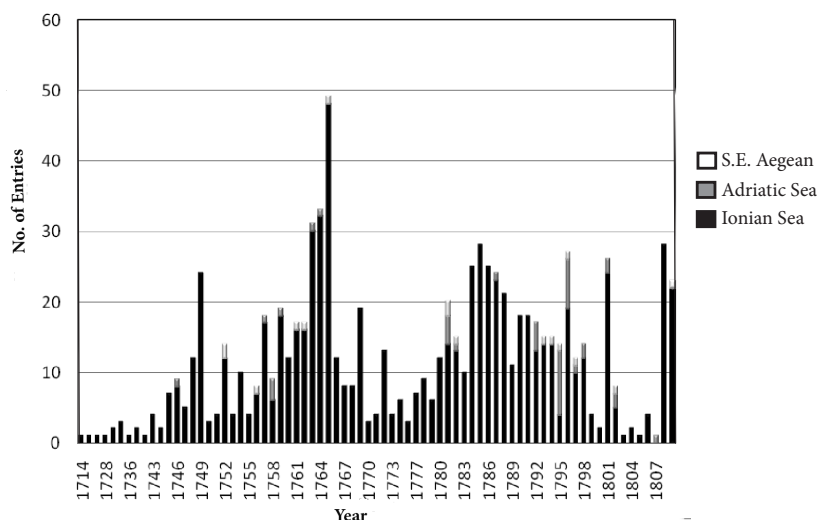


Fig. 8. Areas of departure for ships with captains originating from Messolonghi, 1714-1809.

Captains from Messolonghi did not frequent the ports of the Aegean Sea, although at the beginning of the nineteenth century the maritime centres of the area emerged; captains from Hydra, Spetses, Psara and many other Aegean islands and ports were transporting wheat from Volos, Asia Minor and Black Sea ports towards the Western Mediterranean. Captains from Messolonghi frequented the port of Preveza<sup>47</sup> but also other ports in the Ambracian Gulf (Gulf of Amvrakikos), such as Salaora, Arta and Kopraina (see fig. 9).

<sup>46</sup> Harlaftis, "The 'Eastern Invasion'", p. 17.

<sup>47</sup> On the traffic in the port of Preveza, see Georgios Papageorgiou, "Ηπειρωτικά λιμάνια στην ύστερη Τουρκοκρατία. Η περίπτωση της Πρέβεζας" [Ports in Epirus at the end of Ottoman rule: the case of Preveza], in *Ήπειρος. Κοινωνία – Οικονομία, 15ος-20ός αιώνας. Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Ιστορίας* [Epirus: society – economy, fifteenth-twentieth centuries: proceedings of the international history conference], Ioannina, 4-7 September 1985, Ioannina 1987, pp. 139-170.



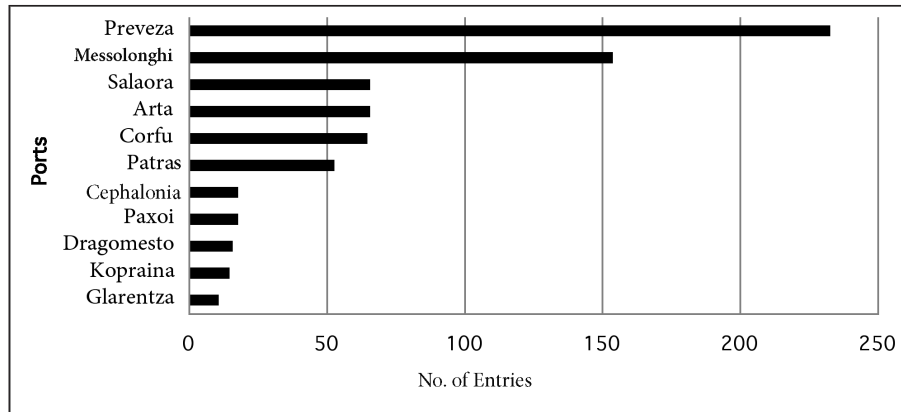


Fig. 9. Ionian ports of departure of ships with captains originating from Messolonghi, 1714-1809 (in total numbers).

The preference for the port of Preveza continued during the entire period (see fig. 10), but there were some peak years: 1765, 1772, 1785, 1790, 1796 and 1801. In those years ships from Messolonghi were exporting wood and firewood<sup>48</sup> to Valetta. Only in 1785 was wheat also exported from Preveza to Valetta.

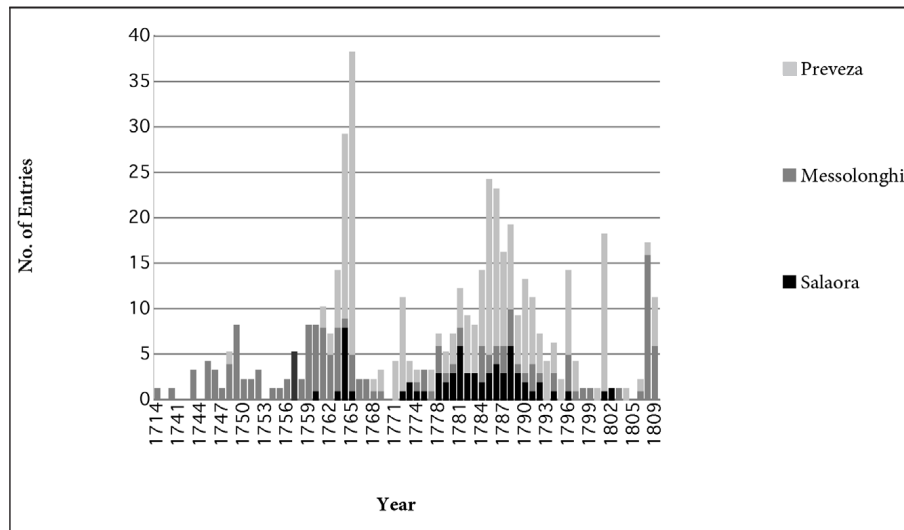


Fig. 10. Ionian ports of departure of ships with captains originating from Messolonghi, 1714-1809 (by year).

<sup>48</sup> On the exploitation of forests in the area of the Ambracian Gulf and the area of Preveza, see Helen K. Giannakopoulou, *Γαλλοελληνική εκμετάλλευση δασών στη Δυτική Ελλάδα (1710-1792)* [French-Greek exploitation of forests in western Greece (1710-1792)], Athens: EKPA–Library of Sofia N. Saripolos, 1987.

The same products were exported from Preveza, mainly towards Valetta. The island of Malta imported mainly foodstuffs, especially wheat, raw materials (wood and firewood) and handicraft products (leather). Captains from Messolonghi seem to have specialized in trading cargo from a certain area, that is the Ambracian Gulf and especially the port of Preveza, carrying it to Malta. In that sense Messolonghi and Preveza belonged to the same maritime area and developed interrelated economic activities (see fig. 11).

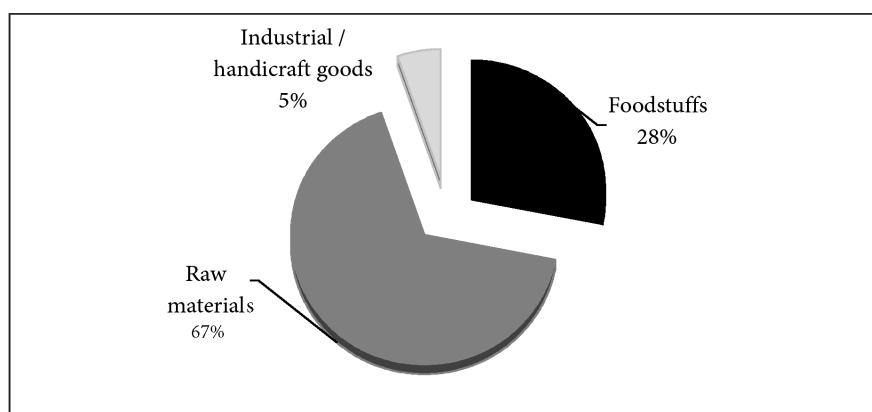


Fig. 11. Products exported from Preveza by ships with captains from Messolonghi, 1714-1809.

The period under examination was a turbulent period; at the end of the eighteenth century wars provoked shortages of foodstuffs. Captains from Messolonghi traded foodstuffs from the area of Epirus, Aetolia and the Peloponnese, exporting wheat from Arta and Preveza in Epirus and from Livadia and Messolonghi on the northern shore of the Gulf of Corinth. During the eighteenth century their main area of departure remained the Ionian Sea, while at the end of the century the main exporting areas for wheat became the Aegean ports (Volos, Smyrna, Thessaloniki) and the Black Sea ports. Captains from Messolonghi continued visiting Valetta and Livorno, two main markets for wheat where they had long-standing contacts. Times changed by the beginning of the nineteenth century, and their main competitors in Valetta and Livorno were captains from the Aegean who transported Aegean and Black Sea wheat. They specialized in trading wheat and adjusted to the new circumstances.<sup>49</sup> Captains from Messolonghi were slow in adapting to those changes; they did not compete effectively with captains from the Aegean and they remained outside the new economic environment the British rule of the Ionian Islands had created. For these reasons their fleet declined.

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<sup>49</sup> Captains from Cephalonia, on the other hand, engaged in the Black Sea wheat trade from the beginning of the nineteenth century; Kapetanakis, *Η ποντοπόρος εμπορική ναυτιλία*, pp. 45, 155.



ROUTES ET LOGEMENTS DES VOYAGEURS  
DANS LA RÉGION DE LA THRACE  
(XVI<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLES)

*Ioli Vingopoulou*

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RÉSUMÉ: Parmi l'ensemble des récits de voyage qui se rapportent à la Thrace, nous examinerons des textes représentatifs –allant du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle– et nous rechercherons les chemins et les différents types de logements dans lesquels les voyageurs séjournaient. La plupart des voyageurs citent simplement les villes et les villages par lesquels ils sont passés, sans préciser où ils ont logé. Durant toute la période qui nous occupe, la *Via Militaris* et la *Via Egnatia* demeurent les artères principales de passage et de déplacement, bien qu'à partir du XVIII<sup>e</sup> et surtout au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, les itinéraires empruntent d'autres voies à travers la Thrace elle-même. Aux XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles, un grand nombre de voyageurs consignent des détails au jour le jour sur les logements de presque chaque étape et, très impressionnés, décrivent le système d'hébergement en vigueur à cette époque dans l'Empire ottoman, avec ses édifices philanthropiques tels les *kervansarays*, *khāns* et *'imārets*. Assez souvent, en ville ou dans les villages, ils sont hébergés chez l'habitant, soit recommandés, soit par nécessité. Peu à peu, alors que les voyages évoluent et que les textes deviennent plus complexes quant aux renseignements qu'ils fournissent, les références aux conditions de ces voyages se font de plus en plus rares et ce petit détail du logement des voyageurs se perd. D'ailleurs, au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, les structures de logements philanthropiques ne fonctionnaient plus et, en raison du changement de système concernant la facilité, la rapidité et la sécurité des voyages, un nouveau type d'accueil s'était développé pour les étapes de repos, avec des auberges privées, des relais de poste (*menzilhānes*), des cafés dans lesquels s'arrêtaient les voyageurs. Toutefois, en fonction des raisons de leur voyage, ils citent aussi des *khāns*, des maisons, des cabanes, des tentes militaires et autres.

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La Thrace est, en principe, la région d'Europe orientale qui a pour frontières la mer Égée, l'Hellespont, la mer de Marmara, le Bosphore et la mer Noire, tandis que l'arrière-pays s'étend jusqu'à la plaine nord du mont Rodope. Cependant, le destin géographique de la Thrace varie en fonction des traités historiques. À partir du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, elle devient, dans son ensemble géographique, une région particulièrement importante, d'une part à cause de sa proximité par rapport aux trois grandes villes de l'Empire ottoman, la capitale Constantinople-Istanbul, Thessalonique et Andrinople-Edirne, et, d'autre part, parce qu'elle possédait un remarquable réseau routier sur lequel circulaient armées, hommes et produits envoyés de la capitale vers les provinces de l'empire ou inversement, et qu'elle constitua le point principal

de l'avancée de la domination ottomane dans la région des Balkans pendant de nombreux siècles.

La recherche dans la base de données de l'Institut de Recherches Néohelléniques a fait apparaître à peu près 800 titres d'ouvrages – en comptant les rééditions et les traductions – se référant aux toponymes de Thrace (au Nord, à l'Est et à l'Ouest). Sur l'ensemble de ces ouvrages, nous examinons certains textes représentatifs de différentes périodes et nous cherchons les chemins et les différents types de logements dans lesquels étaient hébergés les voyageurs.

On peut faire un certain nombre de remarques au sujet des vocables qui, à travers nos sources, désignent les logements. La construction de lieux d'hébergement pour la sécurité des commerçants et des ambassadeurs devint nécessaire dès le XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. D'abord furent construits les *'imārets*, rencontrés en Thrace,<sup>1</sup> puis les *kervansarays*<sup>2</sup> et les *khāns*. Au-delà des confusions et des fausses interprétations – puisque ces logements avaient, plus ou moins, des buts différents –<sup>3</sup> nous ne sommes pas en mesure de constater à quel point leur aspect a changé au fil du temps. À l'époque ottomane, les *khāns*, distants en général d'une journée de marche, soit une trentaine de kilomètres, servaient d'étape ou de refuge.<sup>4</sup> Les *kervansarays*, bâtiments destinés à héberger les

<sup>1</sup> A. Mehlan, "Die Handelstrassen des Balkans während der Türkenzeit", *Südostdeutsche Forschungen* IV (1939), p. 234, et sa traduction grecque, "Οι εμπορικοί δρόμοι στα Βαλκάνια κατά την Τουρκοκρατία" [Les routes commerciales dans les Balkans durant la période de l'occupation turque], *Η οικονομική δομή των Βαλκανικών χωρών στα χρόνια της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας (15<sup>ο</sup>-19<sup>ο</sup> αι.)* [La structure économique des pays balkaniques durant la période de l'occupation ottomane (XV<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)], introduction, sélection des textes Sp. Asdrachas, Athènes: Éd. Melissa, 1979, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Parmi les différentes écritures du terme –*caravansérail*, *karawanserai*, *karavansaray*, *caravansaray*– connues par la bibliographie européenne, on adopte le *kervansaray*; J. W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, Istanbul 2000, p. 642. Les termes d'origine arabo-turque et perse sont écrits comme dans l'*E. I.<sup>2</sup>* (*Encyclopédie d'Islam*, nouvelle édition, éd. E. van Donzel, B. Lewis et Ch. Pellat, Leiden et Paris 1960).

<sup>3</sup> Voir *khān* routier et *khān* urbain dans l'article "Khān" de l'*E. I.<sup>2</sup>*. Pour se faire une idée plus complète sur ces constructions, voir aussi les articles de "Bimaristan", "Funduk", "Khayar", "Karwan" et "Wakf" de l'*E. I.<sup>2</sup>*, ainsi que R. Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1962, pp. 111, 171, 457, 483.

<sup>4</sup> *E. I.<sup>2</sup>*, article "Khān", et T. Stoianovich, "Model and Mirror of the Premodern Balkan City", *La ville balkanique, XV<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> s.*, Studia Balcanica, Vol. III, Sofia 1970, p. 93. Pour les *khāns* et les *kervansarays* de l'époque ottomane et surtout pour ceux de la Turquie européenne –à part une présentation de Paschalis Androutsis, *Χάνια και παραβανσεράγια στον Ελλαδικό χώρο και στα Βαλκάνια* [*Khāns et kervansarays dans l'espace grec et dans les Balkans*], Thessalonique: Organismos Provolis Ellinikou Politismou, [2004] – ainsi que N. Göyünc le mentionne dans, "Ottoman Kervansaray from the XVII<sup>th</sup> c.", *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art*, Budapest 1978, p. 391, il n'existe pas de

caravanes, sont souvent confondus avec les *khāns*. Dans la majorité des cas, les voyageurs ne faisaient pas de distinctions et parlent toujours de *kervansaray*. Leur savoir en la matière se limite à la particularité des *kervansaray* en tant que fondations pieuses. En dehors des *khāns* et des *kervansarays*, les voyageurs passaient la nuit dans les hôpitaux ou *'imārets*.<sup>5</sup> La décadence de l'Empire ottoman, les guerres, le changement du système concernant la facilité, la rapidité et la sécurité des voyages ainsi que la disponibilité des étapes de repos (auberges privées, relais de poste) entraînèrent une carence de ces bâtiments. À partir du XIXe siècle, les voyageurs s'arrêtent obligatoirement au relais de poste pour changer les chevaux et logent tantôt dans les *khāns* ou les cafés qui les côtoient, tantôt passent la nuit dans des auberges privées.<sup>6</sup>

Un grand nombre de voyageurs, du XVIe siècle surtout et du XVIIe siècle, décrivent ces *kervansarays*,<sup>7</sup> ces hôpitaux<sup>8</sup> ou *'imārets*<sup>9</sup> à un certain moment

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travaux approfondis comme ceux qui ont été écrits sur les *kervansarays* de la période des Seldjouks et de la Turquie anatolienne; cf. K. Erdmann, *Das anatolische Karavansaray des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Istanbul Forschungen, Vol. XXI, Berlin 1961; K. Özergin, "Anadolu'da Selçuklu Kervansarayları", *Tarih Dergisi* XV/20 (1965) pp. 141-170; O. Turan, "Selçuk karavansarayları", *Belleter* X (1939), pp. 471-496; T. A. Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey: An Architectural and Archaeological Survey*, Londres 1987.

<sup>5</sup> Sur les *khāns*, les *kervansarays* et les *'imārets*, voir aussi G. Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, Baltimore 1971, pp. 455-457; S. Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520-1650*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 27-30; B. Ünsal, *Turkish Islamic Architecture*, Londres 1959, pp. 48-56; S. K. Yetkin, *L'architecture turque en Turquie*, Paris 1962, pp. 104-163; Ch. Zarkada, "Τα χάνια της Ξάνθης" [Les *khāns* de Xanthi], *Archaeologia* XIII (1984), pp. 80-82; et Nina Ergin, Christoph Neumann et Amy Singer (éds), *Feeding People, Feeding Power: Imārets in the Ottoman Empire*, Istanbul: Eren Yayınları, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Mehlan, "Οι εμπορικοί δρόμοι", pp. 384-385, et C. Jireček, *Die Heerstrasse von Belgrade nach Constantinopel und die Balkanpasse*, Prague 1877, p. 136; cf. R. Walsh, *Narrative of a Journey from Constantinople to England*, Londres: Frederick Westley and A. H. Davis, 1831, pp. 125-126.

<sup>7</sup> P. Belon, *Les observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Indée, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays estranges...*, Paris: Guillaume Cauellat, 1553, pp. 56v-68v. (p. 60, transcrit "carbaschara"); "Viaje de Turquia", *Türkiye'nin dört yılı, 1552-1556*, Istanbul s.d., pp. 55-57; L. Bassano, *I costumi particolari de la vita de Turchi, descritti da M. L. Bassano de Zara*, Rome: Antonio Blado Asolano, 1545 (p. 45, transcrit "charvosaranzi"); Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Lettres du baron de Busbecq... / traduites en Francois... par M. l'Abbe De Foy*, Paris 1748, pp. 49-51; W. Mitrowitz, *H Κωνσταντινούπολις κατά τον 16ον αιώνα (1591-1596)...* [Constantinople durant le XVIIe siècle (1591-1596)...], trad. I. Ep. Dryscou, s. l.: Papapavlos & Cie, 1920, pp. 43-61.

<sup>8</sup> Busbecq, *Lettres*, p. 54.

<sup>9</sup> G. Postel, *De la République des Turcs, et là où l'occasion s'offrira des meurs et loy de tous Muhamedistes, par Guillaume Postel cosmopolite*, Poitiers: Enguilbert de Mamet, 1560, p. 60.

de leur récit, au début ou dans les chapitres d'intérêt général ou encore à l'occasion d'un logement concret, et se dispensent ainsi de nous donner ce genre d'information à chaque étape de leur trajet. Alors que d'autres sources citent expressément l'existence de toutes sortes d'hébergements (*khāns*, *imārets*, *kervansarays*), nos voyageurs, aux XVI<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles, parlent presque exclusivement d'*imārets* et de *kervansarays*.<sup>10</sup> Ce n'est qu'à la fin de la période qui nous occupe, à partir du début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, qu'on trouve chaque fois l'utilisation adéquate du terme (*khān*, *menzil* ou autre).

La plupart de ces voyageurs citent simplement les villes et les villages par lesquels ils sont passés, sans préciser leur logement: nous supposons donc, pour certains d'entre eux, que la référence faite à la ville ou au village y présuppose un séjour prolongé. Dans d'autre cas, ils parlent en détail de la ville et de ses logements, mais sans préciser où ils logent, bien qu'ils disent avoir quitté la ville le lendemain.

Nous ne présenterons pas les logements de Constantinople, car ceux-ci abritaient non seulement des voyageurs dont les trajets passaient par la Thrace, mais aussi ceux qui arrivaient par d'autres voies, maritimes ou continentales. On notera aussi l'absence de certains toponymes<sup>11</sup> où, d'après quelques sources, il y aurait eu un endroit où loger. Cela est dû, d'une part, au nombre limité de références et, d'autre part, aux problèmes d'identification de ces toponymes. Une recherche diachronique couvrant le plus possible de textes relatifs à la région en question devrait permettre des conclusions définitives à ce sujet.

Malgré la désertion et la ruine du pays provoquées par les longues guerres durant les premières années de la domination ottomane, l'important réseau routier de la région demeure la trame empruntée par les missions militaires et diplomatiques et, naturellement, par le commerce vers et en provenance de la capitale de l'empire.<sup>12</sup>

Dès le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, les voies les plus fréquentées furent la *Via Militaris* et la *Via Egnatia*.<sup>13</sup> La première, partant de Belgrade et passant par Nis, via

<sup>10</sup> Ekrem Hakki Ayverdi, *Avrupa'da Osmanli Mimari Eserleri, Bulgaristan-Yunanistan-Arnavutluk*, Istanbul 1982; et Androudis, *Χάνια*.

<sup>11</sup> Comme par exemple les toponymes: Melikadinovo, Caristran, Selim pasa, Uzundzovo, Popovica, Novi Han, Piri pasa et autres.

<sup>12</sup> Pour une première présentation des relations de voyages qui se rapportent à la Thrace grecque, voir Ioli Vingopoulou, "Περιηγητικά κείμενα. Πηγές της ιστορίας της Θράκης" [Relations de voyages. Sources sur l'histoire de Thrace], *Θράκη. Ιστορικές και γεωγραφικές προσεγγίσεις* [Thrace. Approches historiques et géographiques], Athènes: FNRS, 2000, pp. 137-168.

<sup>13</sup> Les œuvres importantes en ce qui concerne les routes du Sud-Est de l'Europe

Sofija, arrivait à Plovdiv. Au-delà de cette ville, la route gagnait Edirne. De là, toujours en direction du sud-est, la route dite «impériale» parce qu'elle était empruntée par le sultan quand il allait de Constantinople à son ancienne capitale, mais aussi route commerciale et route stratégique par où passaient les troupes partant en campagne en Europe, aboutissait à la capitale des Ottomans.<sup>14</sup> La *Via Militaris* de Sofija à Constantinople, la plus fréquentée des itinéraires continentaux dans le Sud-Est européen, offre une pluralité de sources qui nous permettent de croiser nos informations. La *Via Egnatia* était la route la plus courte de Durrës et Thessalonique vers Constantinople et l'Orient. À l'époque romaine, la construction d'une telle voie était prescrite par le système économique.<sup>15</sup> À l'époque byzantine, cette voie, qui traversait le «thème» du Boléron, Mosynopolis, Serres et Strymon ainsi que celui de Thrace, garde son importance.<sup>16</sup> En revanche, sous la domination

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pendant l'occupation ottomane sont: 1) Mehlan, "Οι εμπορικοί δρόμοι", pp. 369-407, d'où sont tirées les notes de cet article; 2) Jireček, *Die Heerstrasse*; 3) Olga Zirojevic, "Zur historischen Topographie der Heerstrasse nach Konstantinopel zur Zeit der Osmanischen Herrschaft", *Études Balkaniques* 1 (1987), pp. 81-106, 2 (1987), pp. 46-64; 4) Ami Boué, *Recueil d'itinéraires dans la Turquie d'Europe*, Vienne 1854; ainsi que 5) F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, Paris: Ar. Colin, 1982, pp. 256-266.

<sup>14</sup> Boué, *Recueil*, pp. 38-50, 65-75; Jireček, *Die Heerstrasse*, pp. 113-138. Sur les toponymes aussi bien de la *Via Militaris* que de la *Via Egnatia* nous avons consulté les cartes: V. Dousmani, *Τοπογραφικοί και στατιστικοί χάρτες απο της κοιλάδος του Αξιού μέχρι του Ευξείνου και από του Αιγαίου μέχρι του Δουνάβειως* [Cartes topographiques et statistiques de la Vallée de l'Axios au Pont-Euxin et de la Mer Égée au Danube], Athènes 1917; *General Karte von Südost Europa*, K.u.K. Militär-Geographisches Institut, Vienne 1889-1914, no. 44° 42' "Adrianopel", 42° 41' "Kavala", 43° 41' "Xanthi", 42° 42' "Philippopol". Pour le contrôle étape par étape de l'itinéraire des voyageurs, quant à la durée de celui-ci et la validité du témoignage en ce qui concerne leurs arrivées et leurs départs, les *Δρομοδείχτης* [Guide routier] ci-dessous se sont avérés très utiles: *Δρομοδείχτης* dans Jireček, *Die Heerstrasse*, pp. 167-169; *Δρομοδείχτες τών ακόλουθων όκτώ ήμερών. Μεθ' αξιολόγων ύποσημειώσεων τοϋ καθενός μέρους τής Πελοποννήσου, Βοιωτίας, Άττικής, Θεσσαλίας, Ήπείρου, Μπόσνας, Μακεδονίας και Θράκης* [Guide routier d'un voyage de huit jours avec des remarquables commentaires dans chaque endroit du Péloponnèse, Béotie, Attique, Thessalie, Epire, Bosnie, Macédoine et Thrace], Venise 1829.

<sup>15</sup> Polyxeni Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi, *Εγνατία Οδός. Ιστορία και διαδρομή στο χώρο της Θράκης* [Route Egnatia. Histoire et parcours dans l'espace de la Thrace] Athènes: T.A.P.A., 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Très utile pour le réseau des routes et leur importance: Th. Papazotos, "Ανίχνευση τοπογραφική της Ανατολικής Θράκης" [Investigation topographique de la Thrace orientale], First International Symposium for Thracian Studies, *Byzantine Thrace: Image and Character*, Komotini, 28-31 May 1987, *Byzantinische Forschungen* XIV (1989), pp. 543-566; Catherine



ottomane, les routes acquièrent une double utilité, militaire aussi bien que commerciale.<sup>17</sup>

Au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle et surtout au XVII<sup>e</sup>, le trajet maritime allant de l'entrée de l'Hellespont jusqu'à l'embouchure de la mer Noire est décrit dans les textes des voyageurs qui avaient pour destination ou pour point de départ la capitale de l'empire. Ainsi, pour les villes de la presqu'île de Thrace, nous avons de nombreux textes qui proviennent des missions diplomatiques, ou bien des textes simplement descriptifs, sans toutefois qu'aucun d'eux ne se réfère aux nuits passées en ville, et à cette époque, on continue à faire des descriptions géographiques et historiques de la Thrace<sup>18</sup> qui ne correspondent pas à des voyages réels.<sup>19</sup> L'ensemble des textes de cette période concernant la Thrace et que nous avons étudiés se monte à peu près à une centaine. À mesure que le courant «voyageur» s'intensifie et s'étend, au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, aux territoires sous domination ottomane,<sup>20</sup> que les possibilités de déplacement n'engendrent

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Asdracha, *La région de Rhodopes aux XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Athènes: Verlag de Byzantinisch-Neugriechischen Jahrbücher, 1976, pp. 24-25, 30-31.

<sup>17</sup> Boué, *Recueil*, pp. 144-155, et entre autres T. Stoianovich, "A Route Type: The Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule", *The Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule (1380-1699)*, éd. Elizabet Zachariadou, Halycon Days in Crete II, Symposium, 9-11 January 1994, IMS, Rethymnon: Crete University Press, 1996, pp. 203-216; et Vas. Demetriades, "Vakifs along the Via Egnatia", *The Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule*, pp. 85-95. Sur les *kervansarays* d'après le voyageur ottoman Evliya Celebi, voir Ilknur Kolay, "Ottoman Caranserais on Via Egnatia within the Borders of Present Day Turkey", *Via Egnatia Revisited: Common Past, Common Future*, Proceedings of the VEF Conference, Bitola, February 2009, Driebergen: Via Egnatia Foundation, 2010, pp. 45-54. Un article analytique sur le réseau routier en Thrace durant le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle: Ev. Dimitriadis et G. Tsotsos, "Δίκτυα επικοινωνιών και γεωγραφικός χώρος στη Θράκη κατά τον 19ο αιώνα" [Réseaux communicatifs et l'espace géographique de Thrace durant le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle], *Thrace Post-Byzantine (XV<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> s.)*, Actes III<sup>e</sup> Symposium International des Études Thraciennes, éd. K. Manaphis, Komotini: Édition de la Région de la Macédoine de l'Est et de la Thrace, 2005, pp. 571-598.

<sup>18</sup> Exemple caractéristique de ce genre: Fermanel, Fauvel, Baudouin et Stochove, *Observations curieuses sur le voyage du Levant...*, Rouen: Antoine Ferrand, 1658.

<sup>19</sup> Le nombre de plus en plus grand des récits de voyage dans la première moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle trouve un remarquable inventaire et une analyse exceptionnelle dans Elisabetta Borromeo, *Voyageurs occidentaux dans l'Empire ottoman, 1600-1644. Inventaire des récits et études sur les itinéraires, les monuments remarquables et les populations rencontrées (Roumélie, Cyclades, Crimée)*, [Paris et Istanbul]: Maisonneuve & Larose et l'Institut français d'études anatoliennes, 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Sur l'évolution du courant "voyageur", voir Ioli Vingopoulou, "The Greek World as seen by Travellers, 15th-20th Centuries: Historical Introduction", *Greek Civilization through the Eyes of Travellers and Scholars: From the Collection of Dimitris Contominas*, comp. Leonora Navari, Athènes: Kotinos et Oak Knoll Press, 2003, pp. 28-63.

plus les dangers des siècles précédents (élimination de la piraterie), que les missions scientifiques se multiplient, que l'intérêt archéologique des voyageurs grandit et que se développent de nouveaux centres économiques, le nombre de voyages sur les deux routes qui nous intéressent se réduit.<sup>21</sup> Ainsi, la soixantaine de textes du XVIIe siècle que nous avons étudiés et qui se rapportent à la Thrace nous livrent-ils surtout des témoignages qui reconstituent la trame de l'espace humain et de l'espace habité: l'histoire politique, le commerce, les constructions, les collectivités religieuses et les coutumes des peuples, alors que les renseignements sur les conditions du voyage terrestre et, par extension, les détails sur le logement des voyageurs diminuent considérablement. Dans de nombreux voyages à destination de la capitale de l'Empire ottoman qui suivent la route maritime jusqu'au détroit de l'Hellespont, nous remarquons que, pour la dernière partie du périple, la route terrestre était préférée (de Gelibolu à Constantinople). Au XIXe siècle, la Thrace se trouve dans la zone politiquement la plus sensible de l'Empire ottoman déclinant, là où les tendances expansionnistes des pays slaves se heurtent aux efforts de la Porte pour affaiblir et étrangler les sentiments nationaux des différentes minorités. La crise d'Orient et la guerre russo-turque rendirent encore plus aigu le problème du démembrement de la Thrace et de la sécurité du réseau routier. En ces temps troublés, la région est traversée par des dizaines de voyageurs dont la plupart, sous couvert d'études scientifiques, sont chargés d'une mission politique spéciale. Les rives du Nestos jusqu'au détroit des Dardanelles et jusqu'à l'embouchure du Pont-Euxin, ainsi que les routes qui conduisent à la capitale en traversant la partie nord (actuellement en Bulgarie) de la Thrace, sont consignées en détail, alors que les villes/étapes qui se trouvent sur les grandes artères terrestres et sur les routes secondaires ne sont citées que fortuitement, dans des remarques ou des descriptions, ou encore s'inscrivent dans le cadre d'itinéraires qui font l'objet d'études très spécifiques. Relations de voyages dues à des membres de missions militaires ou à des secrétaires d'ambassade, articles de correspondants de presse, journaux de voyage avec récits personnels, points de vue particuliers sur les fluctuations politiques de la région, statistiques géographiques, études archéologiques et ethnographiques, cartographies au service d'opportunités

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<sup>21</sup> Sur le XVIIIe siècle, la bibliographie la plus complète des relations de voyages avec présentation résumée du contenu et de l'itinéraire est dans Julia Chatzipanagioti-Sangmeister, *Griechenland, Zypern, Balkan und Levante. Eine Kommentierte Bibliographie der Reiseliteratur des 18. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols, Eutin: Lumpeter & Lasel, 2006.

politiques et nationales: tels sont les produits – en dehors des ouvrages purement de voyage – figurant dans le matériel à étudier sur le XIXe siècle.<sup>22</sup>

Entrecroisant villes et voyageurs, l'énumération ennuyeuse, mais toutefois indispensable des relations des XVIe et XVIIe siècles concernant la *Via Militaris* présente de nombreux témoignages sur le sujet que nous examinons. Cependant, à mesure que les textes deviennent plus complexes quant aux renseignements qu'ils fournissent, ce petit détail du logement des voyageurs se perd.<sup>23</sup> La *Via Egnatia* était la seule route en Thrace du Sud traversée par les voyageurs et, durant le XVIe siècle, seulement 6 voyageurs la parcourent, tandis que 60 relations se réfèrent à la *Via Militaris*. Pour ces deux siècles, nous devons établir une distinction entre les voyageurs: ceux qui ont traversé la région que nous étudions et qui nous ont laissé des relations écrites de leur voyage ou de leur séjour en ces endroits, et ceux qui ont simplement décrit ces lieux sans les avoir traversés. Il y a donc: des délégués politiques (ambassadeurs, escortes d'ambassadeurs, baillis, consuls et courriers), des marchands, des chroniqueurs, des religieux, des hommes de science, des pèlerins et, naturellement, des voyageurs sans statut défini. Durant le dernier quart du XVIIe siècle, nous avons aussi les premières relations orientées surtout vers un intérêt archéologique. L'intérêt croissant porté à l'archéologie se retrouve dans les textes et modifie la nature des renseignements sur les conditions du voyage. Au XVIIIe siècle, les textes ne se limitent pas à enregistrer simplement l'itinéraire. Le récit se disperse,

<sup>22</sup> Ioli Vingopoulou, "Οι ταξιδιώτες το 19ο αιώνα. Ένα πολυμορφικό αφήγημα" [Les voyageurs du XIXe siècle. Une narration multiforme], *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού, 1770-2000* [Histoire du Neohellénisme, 1770-2000], Vol. V, Athènes: Ellinika Grammata, 2004, pp. 390-394.

<sup>23</sup> Les toponymes des villes et villages sont cités avec le nom et la prononciation actuels valables. Pour l'indentification des toponymes, cf. Karl Nehring, *Iter Constantinopolitanum. Ein Ortsnamenverzeichnis zu den kaiselichen Gesandtschaftsreisen an die ottomanische Pforte, 1530-1618*, Munich 1984 (Veröffentlichungen des Finnisch-Ugrischen Seminars an der Universität München, Serie C, Band 17). Très utile aussi, H. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna, geographisch Beschrieben von Mustafa Ben Abdalla Hadschi Chalfa*, trad. J. von Hammer, Vienne 1812, et bien sûr, Ag. Azelis et Julia Chatzipanagioti, "Verzeichnis von Ortsnamen und Unterkunftsangaben in Reiseberichten des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts über die südliche Balkanhalbinsel und das östliche Mittelmeer", *On Travel Literature and Related Subjects: References and Approaches*, éd. Loukia Droulia, Athens: INR / NHRF, 1993, pp. 157-320. Instrument de travail d'une importance capitale, sur l'indentification des localités et des bâtiments de logements, reste St. Yerasimos, *Les voyageurs dans l'Empire ottoman (XIVe-XVIe siècle). Bibliographie, itinéraires et inventaire des lieux habités*, Société Turque d'Histoire, Serie VII, no. 117, Ankara 1991.

se concentre surtout sur les événements survenus dans la région, sur les antiquités et assez peu sur les bâtiments ottomans, parce que les intérêts se diversifient et que la production d'ouvrages de voyage a pour objectif de toucher un vaste public de lecteurs. Ce changement caractéristique, nous le rencontrons dans de nombreuses œuvres de cette époque (par exemple, l'ouvrage scolastique de R. Pococke, qui eut un grand retentissement et détermina les relations de voyage ultérieures de même type; ceux de P. Lucas, J. Dallaway et J. B. Lechevalier).<sup>24</sup> Pour cette période, nous avons choisi de nous rapporter à des exceptions et à des descriptions d'un genre particulier, tandis que nous avons les premiers itinéraires (tantôt à objectifs politiques – missions diplomatiques de Russie en direction de la Sublime Porte –, tantôt à intérêts commerciaux, mais rarement archéologiques) en direction ou en provenance du Nord de l'actuelle Thrace turque et en direction ou en provenance des côtes de la mer Noire. Le grand nombre de textes du XIXe siècle, de même que la diversité des écrivains-voyageurs, des trajets, des objectifs et des contenus, ne nous permettent pas, dans cet article, d'en faire une présentation complète. À titre indicatif, nous avons choisi quelques récits de voyages du XIXe siècle, représentatifs du changement qui survient alors dans la manière de présenter la description des événements du voyage. Deux ouvrages clairs et déterminants (A. Viquesnel et A. Boué) qui, bien que provenant de voyages à visées scientifiques et politiques particulières, ne rentrent pas dans les chroniques de voyages, présentent de manière détaillée les routes, les trajets et surtout le paysage naturel de la Thrace, sans parler, à de rares exceptions, près des lieux d'hébergement urbains et villageois.<sup>25</sup> Les membres des missions militaires demeurent généralement dans leurs tentes,

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<sup>24</sup> R. Pococke, *Voyages de R. P. ...en Orient, dans l'Égypte, ...la Syrie, la Grèce, la Thrace &... , traduits de l'anglais...*, Vol. V, Paris: J. P. Costard, 1772, pp. 381-397; P. Lucas, *Voyage du Sieur Paul Lucas, fait par ordre du roy dans la Grèce, l'Asie Mineure, la Macédoine et l'Afrique*, Paris: N. Simart, 1712; J. Dallaway, *Constantinople ancienne et moderne et description des côtes et isles de l'Archipel et de la Troade*, Vol. I, Paris: Denné, [1799], pp. 210-215; et J. B. Lechevalier, *Voyage de la Propontide et du Pont Euxin...*, Paris: Dentu, [1800], Vol. I, pp. 4-9, 19-21, Vol. II, pp. 369-376.

<sup>25</sup> A. Viquesnel, *Voyage dans la Turquie d'Europe. Description physique et géologique de la Thrace...*, Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1868, Vol. I, pp. 333-341, 367-371, 397-400, Vol. II, pp. 131-450, 486-536, 30 planches à la fin du volume indiquant les routes; Boué, *Recueil*, pp. 93-106, 120-163, dans lequel il note rarement les *menzil* (relais de poste); cf. C. Heywood, "The Via Egnatia in the Ottoman Period: The *Menzilhānes* of the *Şol Kōl* in the late 17th/Early 18th Century", *The Via Egnatia*, pp. 129-144.

hors des villes (C. Sayger),<sup>26</sup> rarement dans des *khāns* (B. Nicolaidy),<sup>27</sup> ou bien ils sont hébergés ou, encore, ils dorment dans des cafés-relais qui se trouvent sur les grandes artères (A. Slade).<sup>28</sup>

La liste qui suit concernant les deux voies (*Via Militaris* et *Via Egnatia*) est détaillée pour le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle et en partie pour le XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, mais quant aux siècles suivants, elle est purement indicative et accompagnée d'extraits de textes choisis.<sup>29</sup>

#### La *Via Militaris*

*Sofija*: Parmi les voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> et du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle qui mentionnent la ville dans leurs relations, Schepper (1533) demeura au logis du Seigneur Benedicto de Georgis, marchand ragusin; Chesneau (1547) n'y reste pas à cause de la peste; Erizzo (1558) logea dans un hôpital; Palerne (1582), chez une jeune grecque du faubourg; Austell (1585) chez un marchand ragusin; Mitrowitz (1591) dans une auberge; Lescalopier (1574) dans un village proche, qualifié par lui-même de grec (c'est-à-dire chrétien orthodoxe). Burbury (1664) fut hébergé chez le métropolitain, et Blunt (1634)<sup>30</sup> fait référence à plusieurs *kervansarays* et *khāns* de la ville. Enfin, au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Blanqui (1841) habita au konak du gouverneur.<sup>31</sup>

*Ihtiman*: Schepper (1533) se reposa quelque temps dans l'*imāret*, mais il passa la nuit dans un village voisin.

<sup>26</sup> C. Sayger, *Relation d'un voyage en Romélie*, Paris: Firmin Didot frères, 1834, pp. 12-130; il arrive en Thrace par la route de Bourghas à Andrinople, de là il va à Demotica (Didymoteichon), Kirk Kilise, Viza (Vizyi) et revient à Andrinople pour repartir vers Jamboli et Bourghas.

<sup>27</sup> B. Nicolaidy, *Les Turcs et la Turquie contemporaine...*, Vol. I. Paris: F. Sartorius, [c.1859], pp. 260-316.

<sup>28</sup> A. Slade, *Records of Travels in Turkey, Greece etc and a Cruise in the Black Sea with the Capitan Pacha...*, Londres: Saunders and Otley, 1854, pp. 271-365.

<sup>29</sup> Les dates du voyage suivent entre parenthèses le nom du voyageur. Les références bibliographiques des voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle sont données à la fin de cet article.

<sup>30</sup> H. Blunt, *A Voyage into the Levant: A Brief Relation of a Journey... from England by the Way of Venice, into Dalmatia, Sclavonia..., Macedonia, Thessaly, Thrace, Rhodes...*, Londres: A. Crook, 1664, p. 31.

<sup>31</sup> J. Ad. Blanqui, *Voyage en Bulgarie pendant l'année 1841...*, Paris: W. Coquebert, 1843, p. 185.

*Trajanova Vrata*:<sup>32</sup> Cinq voyageurs la citent comme étape de nuit et l'un d'eux dit avoir logé chez les gens du pays.<sup>33</sup>

*Vetren*:<sup>34</sup> Sept voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle en parlent; seul Zen (1550) demeura chez des chrétiens, mais pas confortablement, et Palerne (1582) raconte que de là à Raguse, faute de *kervansarays*, il logea chez des paysans.

*Pazardžik*: Sur quinze voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle,<sup>35</sup> seul Schepper (1533) campa la nuit dans le local d'un *'imāret*, et Dernschwam (1555) rapporte qu'il y avait deux *kervansarays*, dont celui d'Ibrahim Pasha qui est mentionné aussi par Deshayes de Courmenin (1621).<sup>36</sup>

*Calapica*: Gassot (1547) copia à la lettre le récit de Ramberti (1534), ainsi aucun d'eux ne parle-t-il du genre de logement.

*Plovdiv*:<sup>37</sup> Parmi les vingt voyageurs<sup>38</sup> qui citent leur halte et leur séjour en cette ville, Schepper (1533) préféra passer la nuit «vers la sortie de la ville, dans le jardin d'un couvent de derviches»; Zen (1550), bien qu'il cite les *kervansarays* de la ville, fut, comme Canaye (1573) reçu chez un marchand ragusin et, à son retour, il logea dans un *kervansaray* dans lequel il remarqua la présence de femmes turques; Mitrowitz (1591) passa la nuit dans un *khān*.<sup>39</sup> Faisons un saut jusqu'au début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, car c'est dans la relation de Galt (1810) que nous lisons pour la première fois que les étapes et le repos des

<sup>32</sup> Nommé dans les textes: Capi Dervent, Del Vento, Dervent, Dervient, Clissura.

<sup>33</sup> Il s'agit de: Zen (1550), Pigafetta (1567), Canaye (1572), Lescalopier (1574), Wyts (1572).

<sup>34</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Wetri, Asarzuck, Gelderbend, Vatern, Casal del Vento.

<sup>35</sup> Il s'agit de Curipeschitz (1530), Ramberti (1534), Gassot (1547), Chesneau (1547), Zen (1550), Pigafetta (1567), Canaye (1573), Gerlach (1573) Wyts (1572), Besolt (1584), Mitrowitz (1591), Dousa (1597), Lescalopier (1574).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Androudis, *Xánia*, p. 126; L. Deshayes de Courmenin, *Voyage au Levant fait par le commandement du Roy en l'année 1621*, Paris: Ad. Paupinart, 1624, p. 74; les autres étapes sont Sophie, Ictiman, Capili Dervent, Philippopoli, Hermanli, Andrinople, Absa, Chiourli, Selivrée. C'est probablement dans un de ses *kervansarays* que logea Blanqui (1841): Blanqui, *Voyage*, p. 241.

<sup>37</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Philippopolis, Philippe, Philibee, Plaudi; cf. *E. I.<sup>2</sup>*, article "Filibe"; G. Tsoukala, *Ιστοριογραφική περιγραφή τής επαρχίας Φιλιππουπόλεως* [Description historique et géographique de la région de Philippoupolis], Vienne 1851, Thessalonique 1980; et Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 52.

<sup>38</sup> Aux voyageurs mentionnés ci-dessus (note 35), ajoutons Favolio (1547), Busbecq (1554), Müntzer (1556), Lescalopier (1574), Ranzo (1575), Contarini (1579), Palerne (1582), Austel (1587).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Androudis, *Xánia*, p. 124.

voyageurs se font dans les relais de poste.<sup>40</sup> En revanche, Slade (1829) fut très bien accueilli chez un marchand grec et, dans les environs de la ville, il logea une fois dans un *khān* et une autre fois dans la hutte d'agriculteurs bulgares.<sup>41</sup> Le pasha de la ville fit loger Blanqui (1841) chez le directeur de la poste.<sup>42</sup>

*Klokotnica*:<sup>43</sup> Schepper (1533) passa la nuit dans sa tente et Canaye (1573) dans la forêt voisine; les autres ne disent rien à propos de leur logement.

*Konuš*:<sup>44</sup> Aucun des voyageurs qui y séjournèrent ne parle de sa nuitée.

*Harmanli*: Parmi les treize voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, Schepper (1533) dormit dans sa tente hors de la localité, Mitrowitz (1591) dans une auberge et Dernschwam (1555) remarqua la présence de différents marchands dans le *kervansaray* et il y vit vingt-quatre cheminées.<sup>45</sup> Notons que Burbury (1664) ainsi que Deshayes de Courmenin (1621) disent qu'ils ont couché en cette ville. Au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Slade (1829) logea aux environs d'un village, dans un *khān* dont il nous donne une description assez pittoresque.<sup>46</sup>

*Svilengrad*:<sup>47</sup> Treize voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle y passèrent la nuit. Canaye (1572), Zen (1550), Gerlach (1578) et Pigafetta (1567) parlent du *kervansaray*, et Burbury (1664) trouve lui aussi l'occasion de parler de ces édifices.<sup>48</sup> Schepper

<sup>40</sup> John Galt, *Voyages and Travels in the Years 1809, 1810, 1811, Containing Statistical, Commercial and Miscellaneous Observations...*, Londres: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1812, p. 321.

<sup>41</sup> Slade, *Records*, pp. 282-287.

<sup>42</sup> Blanqui, *Voyage*, p. 250: "...chez le directeur de la poste, qui nous céda son appartement composé de deux pièces sans meubles et sans lit".

<sup>43</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Somitsche, Schemutse, Somitz, Semische, Sememnce, Semische, Klokodnicze, Chémiché.

<sup>44</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Cognuzza, Comis, Komus, Konisch, Conosch, Coumousch, Conar, Cognus.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Androudis, *Χάνια*, p. 129, et Konstantina Filopoulou-Desylla, *Ταξιδιώτες της Δύσεως. Πηγή για την οικονομική ζωή της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας στους χρόνους του Σουλεϊμάν του Μεγαλοπρεπούς (1520-1560)* [Voyageurs de l'Occident. Source sur l'histoire économique à l'époque de Soliman le Magnifique (1520-1566)], Université d'Athènes, Bibliothèque S. Saripolou, Athènes 1987, pp. 70-71.

<sup>46</sup> Slade, *Records*, pp. 280-281.

<sup>47</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Mustapha Capry, Mustaphae pontem, Musapha Bascha Tywpri, Mustafa Bascha Kupri, Mustafabristi, Mustapha wascha Dchupri, Mustaffa Basscha Tgiupri; cf. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 49.

<sup>48</sup> J. Burbury, *A Relation of a Journey of the Right Honourable My Lord Henry Howard from London to Vienna, and thence to Constantinople...*, Londres: T. Collins and I. Ford, 1671, pp. 18-141; les autres étapes mentionnées de son voyage sont: Kupra Basha, Ictiman, Kistersent, Sakurambeg, Dartarbastek, Philippopolis, Papazli, Ormandli, Mustapha-

(1533), plus descriptif, dit avoir passé la nuit dans «une maison qui avait été construite pour la retraite de ceux qui faisaient le dit pont et, ayant fait tendre les pavillons, il y est demeuré toute la nuit». Au XIXe siècle, Slade (1829)<sup>49</sup> logea aux environs, dans un café.

*Edirne*:<sup>50</sup> Vingt-deux voyageurs du XVIe siècle s'y arrêtaient. Parmi ceux-ci, Schepper (1533) fut l'hôte d'un seigneur florentin, Canaye (1572) passa la nuit chez Giovanni de Raguse, Ranzo (1575) chez son tchaouch, Contarini (1579), Palerne (1582), Curipeschitz (1530) citent les *kervansarays*, mais ne précisent pas s'ils y séjournèrent; Dernschwam (1555) décrit le *kervansaray* d'une manière détaillée, même s'il ne cite pas son nom.<sup>51</sup> Blunt (1634) séjourne dix jours dans la ville, Deshayes de Courmenin (1621) parle des grands avantages que les voyageurs tiraient de la charité des Turcs, et Burbury (1664) reste un mois dans son campement à la sortie de la ville; Covel (1675) séjourna trois mois en cette ville sans préciser son logement, tandis que Galland (1673) et toute la suite de l'ambassadeur furent logés près de la ville à Bosna Kioi, et Covel (1675) à cause de la peste, resta au village Karaağaç, près de la ville, et dans sa tente;<sup>52</sup> Gédoyen (1623), parlant de son séjour, nous donne quelques détails uniques sur la manière dont les Turcs traitent les chevaux en arrivant dans les *kervansarays*.<sup>53</sup> Bien que De La Motraye (1708) soit resté une quinzaine de jours dans la ville, ce sont surtout ses goûts de collectionneur d'antiquités et les évolutions de la politique qui dominent

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Bascha-Cupri, Adrinople, Hapsa, Baba, Borgas, Chiurlu, Selymbria, Ponte Grande, Ponte Piccolo.

<sup>49</sup> Slade, *Records*, p. 280.

<sup>50</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Adrianopel, Drinopolo, Andrianopoli, Hadrianopoli, Endrene, Trinapol, Adrianopel, Andrenopoli, Heidriane; cf. Chalfá, *Rumeli und Bosna*, pp. 11-12; *E. I.*<sup>2</sup>, article "Edirne"; et N. Nikolaidi, *H Αδριανού μας* [Notre Andrianou(polis)], Vols I-II, Athènes 1993, et sur les logements, Vol. I, p. 113-117.

<sup>51</sup> Il s'agit probablement de celui de Rüstem Pasha, œuvre de Sinan, cf. Androudis, *Χάνια*, pp. 116-117, et Filopoulou-Desylla, *Ταξιδιώτες*, p. 71, note 160.

<sup>52</sup> J. P. Grémois, *Dr. John Covel. Voyages en Turquie, 1675-1677*, Réalités Byzantines 6, Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1998, p. 85; Covel donne aussi un croquis de la région, *ibid.*, pp. 78-81; J. Ch. Scheffer, *Journal d'Antoine Galland pendant son séjour à Constantinople*, Vol. I, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1881, pp. 89-90.

<sup>53</sup> A. Boppe, *Journal et correspondance de Gédoyen "Le Turc". Consul de France à Alep, 1623-1625*, Paris 1909, pp. 55-57; le voyageur durant son parcours logea à Sophie, Chtiman, Bazaegic, Philipopoli, Papazli Chemiché, Harmanli, Mustapha Chupri, Apsé, Eski Baba, Caristran, Ciorli, Selivrée, Buyuk et Koutchouk Tchekmedgé et Rodosto sans nous donner de détails sur ses logements.



dans ses descriptions, qui ne font pas la moindre allusion aux logements.<sup>54</sup> Bien que la ville ait été une étape intermédiaire de son voyage triangulaire en Thrace orientale, Pococke (1738), mentionne parcimonieusement ses lieux d'hébergement, comme dans toutes les autres descriptions des étapes de son parcours.<sup>55</sup> Dans la très remarquable et très singulière chronique de voyage épistolaire de Lady Montagu (1717), nous retenons la description de la riche maison dans laquelle elle séjourne: la façade en bois, les cours intérieures avec galeries, les appartements particuliers des femmes, l'ameublement du «sofa», les riches étoffes, les plafonds peints et les bassins en marbre qui impressionnent tant la voyageuse européenne.<sup>56</sup> D'après sa chronique de voyage, Sayger (1829) loge dans sa tente militaire, mais il décrit l'ensemble des bâtiments de Rüstem Pasha et déclare: «On peut les considérer comme des abris hospitaliers pour les étrangers qui arrivent dans la ville sans y avoir ni parents ni amis», tandis que Slade (1829) reçoit l'hospitalité du consul anglais.<sup>57</sup> Incapable de trouver une auberge habitable, Blanqui (1841) accepte finalement pour asile «une loge du grand Han, dit de Rustan Pasha, un vieux caravansérail...».<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> A. De La Motraye, *Travels through Europe, Asia...*, Vol. I, Londres 1723, pp. 281-299, et nous lisons la même chose à propos des autres villes de Thrace comme Hrakleia (Eregli), Raidestos (Tekirdağ), Gallipolis (Gelibolu) ainsi que chez L. F. comte de Ferrières-Sauveboeuf, *Mémoires historiques, politiques et géographiques des voyages... faits en Turquie, en Perse et en Arabie, depuis 1782, jusqu'en 1789...*, Vol. II, Paris: Chez Buisson, 1790, pp. 170-176, 246, 249-255.

<sup>55</sup> Pococke, *Voyages*, pp. 381-397. Dans aucune des étapes (Petit Pont-Grand Pont-Camourgat-Selivree-Chourley-Borgas-Baba-Hapsa-Andrinople-Ahercui-Demotica-Ouzoun Cupri-Jeribol-Rodosto-Gallipoli) de son parcours il ne précise ses logements sauf les fois où il note qu'ils ont campé en dehors de la ville, dans les champs. Il mentionne un *khān* en dehors d'Andrinople "for the grand signor's camels".

<sup>56</sup> Mary Montagu, *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Montagu*, éd. R. Halsband, Vol. I, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, pp. 341-345.

<sup>57</sup> Sayger, *Relation*, pp. 27-29: il confond les deux édifices car il s'agit de Rüstem Pasha Kervasarayi et de Küçük Rüstem Pasha Hani, œuvres de Sinan au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, destinées à deux différentes fonctions; cf. Androudīs, *Χάνια*, p. 116, et Slade, *Records*, p. 278.

<sup>58</sup> Blanqui, *Voyage*, pp. 269-270: "nous trouvâmes une couche de fumier de plus de 40 cm de hauteur, due au séjour de plusieurs centaines de corneilles qui y avaient établi leur domicile de temps immémorial. Il ne fallut pas moins de trois heures pour les premières opérations d'assainissement; Après quoi, lorsque j'eus fait acheter en ville les nattes, un peu de vaisselle et les éléments primitifs du mobilier indispensable, il nous fut permis de prendre un peu de repos."

*Havza*:<sup>59</sup> Parmi les onze voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle qui y sont passés et ont mentionné le lieu, Zen (1550) logea hors de la localité, Canaye (1572) et Curipeschitz (1530) citent les petits *kervansarays*, alors que les autres n'en soufflent mot. Covell (1675) séjourne dans le fameux *kervansaray* de Sokollu Mehmet Pasha, dont plusieurs voyageurs des XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles font mention.

*Babaeski*:<sup>60</sup> Sur les dix voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle qui mentionnent le *kervansaray* d'Ali Pasha, Schepper (1533) est le seul à dire avoir logé dans une maison déserte avant la ville, tandis que des siècles plus tard, Slade (1829) passe la nuit dans un relais de poste.

*Lüleburgaz*:<sup>61</sup> Sur les quinze voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle qui y passèrent la nuit, Canaye (1573), Austell (1585), Gerlach (1578), Palerne (1582) citent le fameux *kervansaray* de Sokollu Mehmed Pasha; les autres ne parlent pas de leur nuit, et Schepper (1533) logea dans une école d'enfants. Galland (1673) précise qu'ils ne furent pas logés dans le «chan» car il était occupé par une grande affluence de monde, mais Covell (1675), lui, séjourna dans le «magnifique *kervansaray*» mentionné aussi par Blunt (1634) et Deshayes de Courmenin (1621) ainsi que par Slade (1829).<sup>62</sup>

*Çorlu*:<sup>63</sup> Six voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle disent y avoir passé la nuit. Certains, comme Blunt (1634), parlent du *kervansaray* mentionné par Busbecq (1554), et Schepper (1533) logea dans un *imâret*. Galland (1673) note que l'ambassadeur fut logé une fois dans un appartement de la mosquée, qui était petite et jolie, et une autre fois dans une maison que son tschaoush avait trouvée. Obligé

<sup>59</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Haffsa, Hawsa, Hapsa, Habska, Avsa, Haffsada, Habsala, Apsé, Absa. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 22; I. Spatharis, "Η Ανατολική Θράκη κατά τον Εβλιγιά Τσελεμπήν, Τούρκον περιηγητή του XVII αιώνας" [Thrace orientale d'après Evliya Celebi, voyageur turc du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle], *Thrakika* IX (1938), pp. 23-25.

<sup>60</sup> Androudis, *Χάνια*, p. 120; Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 22; Spatharis, "Η Ανατολική Θράκη" (1938), pp. 26-30.

<sup>61</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Bergas, Bergasch, Pirgas, Borgaz, Bergase. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 20; *E. I.<sup>2</sup>*, article "Lüleburgaz"; I. Spatharis, "Η Ανατολική Θράκη κατά τον Εβλιγιά Τσελεμπήν, Τούρκον περιηγητή του XVII αιώνας" [Thrace orientale d'après Evliya Celebi, voyageur turc du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle], *Thrakika* VII (1936), pp. 166-172; et Androudis, *Χάνια*, pp. 117-119.

<sup>62</sup> Grémois, *Dr. John Covell*, pp. 65-67; Scheffer, *Journal d'Antoine Galland*, p. 89; Deshayes de Courmenin, *Voyage*, pp. 81-82; Slade, *Records*, pp. 360-361.

<sup>63</sup> Nommée dans les textes: Czorli, Sorlith, Schurli, Chiruli, Churlik, Ciorli; Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 19; *E. I.<sup>2</sup>*, article "Çorlu"; Spatharis, "Η Ανατολική Θράκη" (1936), pp. 162-166; Androudis, *Χάνια*, p. 120.

de rester dans la ville, Slade (1829) a de grandes difficultés à se loger, n'ayant trouvé de logement ni à la poste-café, ni même chez un chrétien.<sup>64</sup>

*Silivri*:<sup>65</sup> Les vingt-deux voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle qui y passèrent la nuit ne citent pas le lieu exact de leur séjour, malgré une certaine référence aux *kervansarays* et à l'*imāret* de cette ville. Belon (1547) dit: «nous avons logé là-bas». Covel (1675) arrive à «Selibria» après s'être arrêté dans une localité appelée Kallikrateia, renommée pour son vin, et Galland (1673) précise qu'ils ne furent pas logés dans le grand *khān* parce qu'il était occupé, mais qu'on le mit [l'ambassadeur] dans la maison d'un particulier; à leur retour, ils sont quand même logés dans le *kervansaray*.<sup>66</sup>

*Büyük-Çekmece*:<sup>67</sup> Sur les dix voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, Zen (1550) logea dans un *imāret*, et sept autres citent le fameux *kervansaray*, parmi eux Canaye (1573), Gerlach (1578) et Dernschwam (1553), qui le décrit en détail.<sup>68</sup> Covel (1675) note qu'il y a plusieurs *kervansarays* et dit que dans l'un d'eux, «nous couchâmes». Au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Slade (1829) trouve refuge au «café qui appartient au *khān* de la poste».<sup>69</sup>

*Küçük-Çekmece*:<sup>70</sup> Schepper (1533) et Bernardo (1591) logèrent à l'hospice «Abdusalem»; Zen (1550) à l'*imāret*, de même que Busbecq (1555); Canaye (1573) se reposa un peu dans un *kervansaray*; Ranzo (1575) y logea aussi, ainsi que Celini (1582), qui précise que le sien était magnifique, peut-être le même que celui que Deshayes de Courmenin (1621) qualifie ainsi: «le plus commode que nous ayons rencontré, parce qu'il y a des chambres, & que les

<sup>64</sup> Slade, *Records*, pp. 361-362.

<sup>65</sup> Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 60; Spatharis, «Η Ανατολική Θράκη» (1936), pp. 158-162.

<sup>66</sup> Grémois, *Dr. John Covel*, pp. 39-55; et Scheffer, *Journal d'Antoine Galland*, pp. 119 et 87: «dont la plus belle chambre où coucha S. E. avoit les fenestres tout à jour et estoit toute en ruine».

<sup>67</sup> Nommé dans les textes: Czekmetze, Behutzenighe, Pontigrando, Biucchegneghy; Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 60; Spatharis, «Η Ανατολική Θράκη» (1936), pp. 155-158; et Androudis, *Χάνια*, pp. 121-122.

<sup>68</sup> Sur ce *kervansaray*, cf. E. Yüsel, «Büyük-Çekmece'de Türk Eselerleri», *Vakıflar Dergisi* IX (1971), pp. 95-108.

<sup>69</sup> Grémois, *Dr. John Covel*, pp. 35-39; Slade, *Records*, p. 363: «the cafench belonging to the menzil khan, at Buyuk Tchekmedge, six hours from Constantinople gave us shelter for the night».

<sup>70</sup> Nommé dans les textes: Kuczuk Czekmedi, Ponte piccolo, Guschuk Cscickme, Ponte Piculi; Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 60; Spatharis, «Η Ανατολική Θράκη» (1936), pp. 154-165.

chevaux ne sont pas pêle-mêle avec les hommes... et qu'il est un peu relevé, ce qui rend la vue fort agréable vers la mer».<sup>71</sup> À cette première étape de son parcours, Covel (1675) donne tous les détails sur les différentes fonctions et les différents services pour les besoins des voyageurs et loge dans un hôpital, tandis que Galland (1673) passe deux fois la nuit dans un petit sérail du Grand Seigneur, et que Burbury (1664) reste deux jours dans son campement, à deux heures de distance de la capitale.<sup>72</sup>

*Yeşilköy*: Ranzo (1575) logea chez un gentilhomme grec.

### La *Via Egnatia*

Six voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>73</sup> seulement relatent leur trajet sur la *Via Egnatia* en direction de Constantinople. Suivons surtout la description que Cavazza composa pour le voyage de Bernardo (1591), la seule parmi celles du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle à être analytique et détaillée à propos de ce trajet, et celle de Belon (1547) qui en eut une bonne expérience. Le même trajet fut réalisé au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle par Clarke (1802), qui se réfère souvent au voyage de Belon, par Rawlinson (1816) ainsi que par Galt (1810) et Nicolaidy (c. 1859).<sup>74</sup>

À Kavala (dernière étape avant la région de Thrace), Belon (1547) resta sûrement trois jours à l'*imāret* d'Ibrāhīm Pāsha.<sup>75</sup> À cette occasion, il décrit l'institution et de quelle manière l'hospitalité des Turcs se manifeste dans les *imārets* et dans les *kervansarays*, de même qu'il nous fournit des informations très importantes sur la nourriture et les repas habituellement offerts dans ceux-ci à tout homme de passage, indépendamment de sa religion. À Yeniséa, Bernardo (1591) loge dans un *imāret*, et ce n'est qu'à deux heures de la ville, au *khān* de Caraguiozlu, que Nicolaidy (c. 1859) eut et décrit une aventure de voyage due aux conditions climatiques. À Porto Lagos,<sup>76</sup> Belon dit: «nous sommes logés là», et quant à Celini (1582), il y débarqua en provenance de

<sup>71</sup> Deshayes de Courmenin, *Voyage*, pp. 87-88.

<sup>72</sup> Grémois, *Dr. John Covel*, pp. 25-35; et Scheffer, *Journal d'Antoine Galland*, pp. 85-86, 120; Burbury, *A Relation of a Journey*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>73</sup> Il s'agit de Belon (1547), l'auteur du "Viaje de Turquia" (1555), Calonas (1582), Celini (1582), Bernardo (1591), Gradenigo (1597).

<sup>74</sup> [G. Rawlinson], *Selections from my Journal during a Residence in the Mediterranean*, Londres: W. Clowes and Sons, 1836, pp. 86-96; Galt, *Voyages and Travels*, pp. 240-253.

<sup>75</sup> Ayverdi, *Avrupa'da*, p. 236.

<sup>76</sup> I. Spatharis, "Η Δυτική Θράκη κατά τον Εβλιγιά Τσελεμπήν, Τούρκον περιηγητή του XVII αιώνας" [Thrace occidentale d'après Evliya Çelebi, voyageur turc du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle], *Thrakika V* (1934), pp. 212-214.

Thassos. Alors que Belon (1547) campa à Komotini,<sup>77</sup> Celini (1582) dit avoir logé assez confortablement, et Bernardo (1591), trouvant les deux *kervansarays* pleins, campa à une demi-heure de là, à l'ombre des arbres. Clarke (1802) séjourna en cette ville dans un *khān*, mais fut hébergé dans la maison d'un agriculteur musulman dans un village voisin et fut impressionné par son comportement désintéressé, tandis que Cousinéry (1780), lui, passa une nuit chez un juif.<sup>78</sup> À Makri,<sup>79</sup> ce même voyageur se reposa dans un tekké, et Clarke (1802) dans un *khān*. À Phérres,<sup>80</sup> dont parlent trois voyageurs du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, seul Celini (1582) dit avoir logé dans un *kervansaray*; Cavazza (1591), quant à lui, se repentit d'avoir traversé la rivière, d'avoir dîné et de s'être reposé à l'ombre des chariots. Rappelons, à ce sujet, que d'après nos sources, les voyageurs faisaient souvent les trajets d'été dans la fraîcheur de la nuit, se reposant pendant les heures chaudes de la journée. Clarke (1802) parle du *kervansaray*, mais on remarque qu'il précise qu'il n'est là que pour les chevaux. Bien que Belon (1547) ait exploré suffisamment le territoire et la région d'Ipsala,<sup>81</sup> il ne dit rien des logements, mais Bernardo (1591) logea dans les appartements réservés à des personnages d'une certaine importance dans le *kervansaray* d'Ibrāhīm Pasha. À Ineçik,<sup>82</sup> Celini (1582) dort dans une mosquée et Belon (1547) dit laconiquement: «nous logeâmes» tandis que Rawlinson (1816) note que le *khān* – peut-être le même que celui qui est mentionné par Grisebach (1839) –<sup>83</sup> était le meilleur de tous ceux qu'il avait connus durant son trajet. À Tekirdağ,<sup>84</sup> Zen (1550) et Celini (1582) parlent de l'*imāret* et du *kervansaray*; Bernardo (1591)

<sup>77</sup> Commercina et Kymurgina dans les textes. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 69; Spatharis, “Η Δυτική Θράκη” (1934), pp. 195-207; Androudis, *Χάνια*, p. 216.

<sup>78</sup> Edward Daniel Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa...*, Vol. VIII, Londres: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1818, pp. 79-85. À la fin du volume l'auteur donne une planche de la route de Thessaloniki à Constantinople précisant la durée des distances; E. M. Cousinéry, *Voyage dans la Macédoine...*, Vol. II, Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1831, p. 76.

<sup>79</sup> Makrotichio dans le texte. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 69.

<sup>80</sup> Nommée comme Virra dans H. Pernot, *Robert de Dreux, Voyage en Turquie et en Grèce du R. P. Robert de Dreux*, Paris: Éditions Belles-Lettres, 1925, p. 86, et comme Fairy dans Clarke, *Travels*, pp. 88-90.

<sup>81</sup> Cypsella. Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna*, p. 64.

<sup>82</sup> Aigneçik. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>83</sup> H. Grisebach, *Reise durch Rumelien und nach Brussa im Jahre 1839*, Göttingen 1841, p. 119. À Kesan, le voyageur nous parle d'un *khān* tout neuf aux plusieurs commodités mais sans fenêtres: *ibid.*, p. 129; Galt (1810) était aussi impressionné par le *khān* à Kesan: Galt, *Voyages and Travels*, p. 244.

<sup>84</sup> Rodosto. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

resta toutefois trois jours au *kervansaray* de Rüstem Pasha, ainsi que De Dreux (1665). Belon (1547) campa dans la plaine et Baltimore (1763) fut accueilli chez le curé catholique.<sup>85</sup> C'est ici à Rodosto que Clarke (1802) et Grisebach (1839) restent dans un *khân*, et Clarke nous parle de la différence entre ceux-ci et les *kervansarays*.<sup>86</sup> Les autres étapes de la *Via Egnatia* jusqu'à Constantinople ont déjà été évoquées plus haut.

Nous remarquons donc que dans nos sources, nous n'avons pas trouvé suffisamment de détails concernant les différentes fonctions et les différents services offerts dans les *kervansarays*, les *khâns* et les *'imârets* (arrivées, paiements, repas, domestiques). Il n'y a pas d'informations, non plus, sur les autres voyageurs, les marchands itinérants, les pèlerins, les militaires, les paysans qui logeaient en même temps que nos voyageurs dans ces endroits. Ce n'est que dans les textes du XIXe siècle que nous trouvons, de manière sporadique, des détails sur les hommes dans les lieux d'hébergement. Les textes du XVIe siècle, et surtout ceux qui demeurèrent inédits et furent publiés ultérieurement, conservent des détails au jour le jour sur les logements de presque chaque étape. La plupart du temps, les villes sont citées comme une étape pendant le voyage, mais il n'y a aucune référence au genre de logement. Les missions diplomatiques et les suites des ambassadeurs logent soit dans leurs propres tentes, soit dans les grands *kervansarays* connus qui se trouvent sur le réseau routier; elles demeurent rarement chez l'habitant ou ailleurs, et cela dans des conditions exceptionnelles. Petit à petit, alors que les voyages évoluent et que les recherches archéologiques absorbent l'intérêt des voyageurs et du public des lecteurs, les références aux conditions de ces voyages diminuent, les étapes sur les trajets deviennent prétexte à tout autre sorte de renseignement. La *Via Militaris* et la *Via Egnatia* demeurent, pendant toute la période qui nous occupe, les artères principales de passage et de déplacement, bien qu'à partir du XVIIIe siècle, les trajets empruntent d'autres directions à travers la Thrace elle-même. Si, dans les textes du XVIe siècle, nous glanons ici et là des descriptions très détaillées sur les *kervansarays* et sur d'autres types d'établissements philanthropiques (*'imârets*) – du moins quant à leur forme et à leur fonction –, aux siècles suivants, ce genre de descriptions disparaît presque totalement. Durant les premiers siècles, les

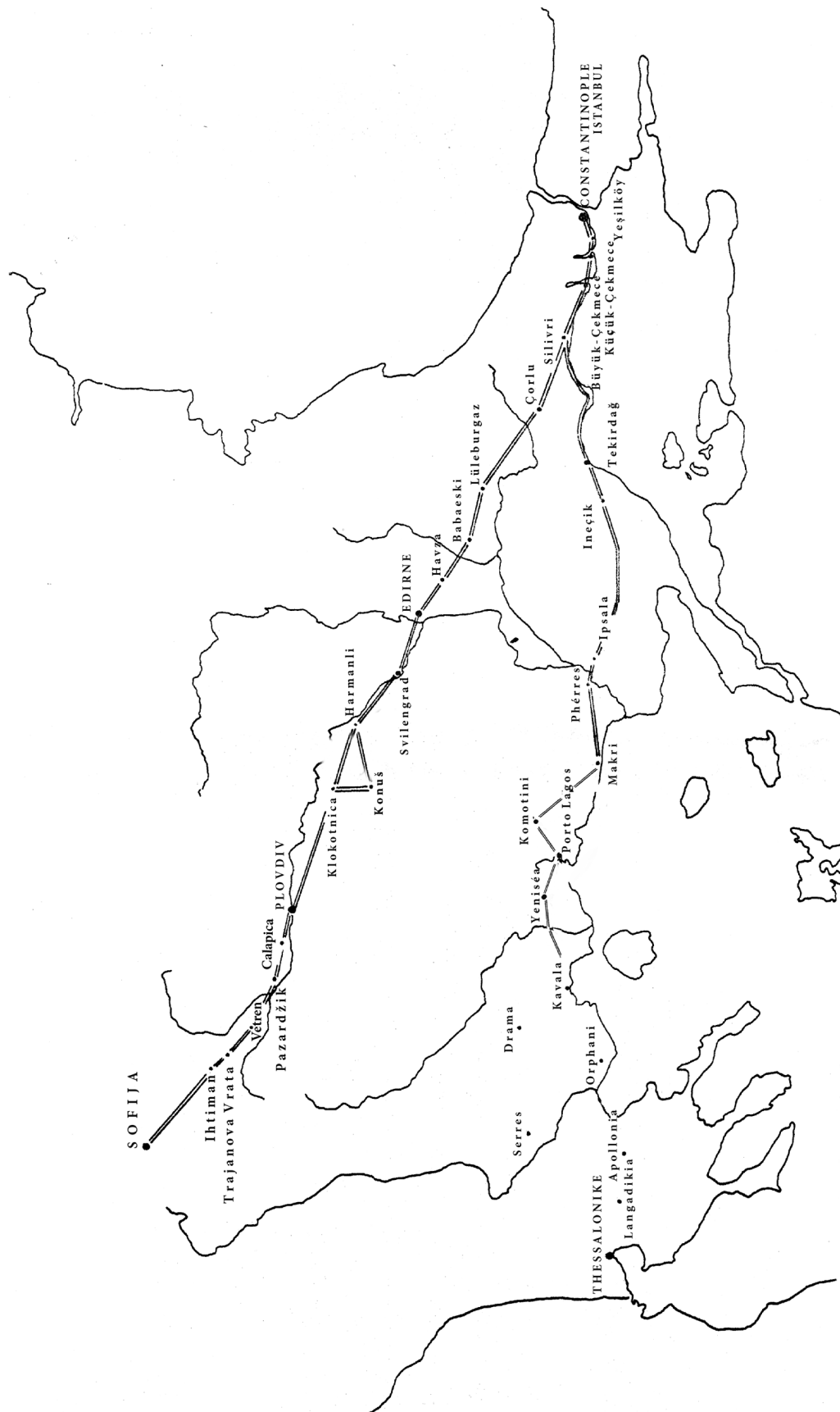
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<sup>85</sup> Pernot, *Robert de Dreux*, p. 84: "si grand et si spacieux que tous nos chariers et chevaux y étaient sans nous incommoder"; F. C. Baltimore, *A Tour to the East in the Years 1763 and 1764 with Remarks on the City of Constantinople...*, Londres: W. Richardson and J. Clark, 1767, p. 46.

<sup>86</sup> Clarke, *Travels*, pp. 117-120.

locaux d'hébergement philanthropiques impressionnent les voyageurs, ou bien ils les mentionnent ou ils les décrivent, mais ne donnent que rarement leur nom; au XIXe siècle, en revanche, ce sont les relais de poste et les *khāns* qui abritent les voyageurs, qui changent de chevaux dans les *kervansarays* et dans les relais, mais campent en dehors des villes et ne s'arrêtent que pour se reposer dans les lieux d'hébergement ou dans les cafés. Dans les textes du XIXe siècle, en fait de récits portant sur les conditions du voyage, nous trouvons plutôt des considérations sur les conditions climatiques et environnementales, des descriptions du paysage naturel et même des détails pittoresques sur les logements. Assez souvent, les voyageurs sont hébergés chez l'habitant, en ville ou dans les villages, soit recommandés, soit par nécessité. Enfin, du XVIe siècle au milieu du XIXe siècle, la *Via Militaris* et la *Via Egnatia* demeurèrent, malgré l'abandon des *kervansarays*, les voies les plus sûres et les plus fréquentées en direction ou en provenance de la capitale ottomane.

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Étapes principales de logements des voyageurs sur la *Via Militaris* et la *Via Egnatia* du XVIe au XIXe siècles.



Annexe. Références bibliographiques des relations de voyages du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle  
données en ordre chronologique du voyage

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(1533) Corn. Dupl. de Schepper, "Mission diplomatique de Corneille Duplicius de Schepper, dit Scepperus, ambassadeur de Christien II...", *Memoire de l'Academie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres, et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique XXX* (1857), pp. 111-112, 187-194.

(1534) Benedetto Ramberti, *Libri tre delle cose de Turchi. Nel primo si descriue il uiaggio da Venetia à Costantinopoli, con gli nomi de luoghi antichi & moderni...*, Vinegia: In casa de' figliuoli di Aldo, 1539, pp. 7-10.

(1535-1537, 1549-1550) Guillaume Postel, *De la Republique des Turcs, et là où l'occasion s'offrera des meurs et loy de tous Muhamedistes, par Guillaume Postel cosmopolite*, Poitiers: Enguilbert de Mamet, 1560, p. 60.

(1537-1540) Luigi Bassano, *I costumi particolari de la vita de Turchi, descritti da M. L. Bassano de Zara*, Rome: Antonio Blado Asolano, 1545, p. 45.

(1547) Pierre Belon, *Les observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Indée, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays estranges...*, Paris: Guillaume Cauellat, 1553, pp. 56v-68v.

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(1547) Jean Chesneau, *Le voyage de Monsieur d'Aramon, ambassadeur pour le Roy en Levant. Escript par noble homme Jean Chesneau*, publié et annoté par Ch. Scheffer, Paris: E. Leroux, 1887, pp. 12-19.

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(1553-1555) Hans Dernschwam, *Hans Dernschwam's Tagebuch einer Reise nach Konstantinopel und Kleinasien (1553/55). Nach der Urschrift im Fugger-Archiv / hrsg. und erläutert von Franz Babinger. Mit 55 Abbildungen im Text*, Munich et Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1923, pp. 14-28.

(1554) Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Lettres du garon de Busbec... / traduites en Francois... par M. l'Abbe De Foy*, Paris 1748, pp. 49-54, 61-84.

(1555) "Viaje de Turquia", *Türkiye'nin dört yılı, 1552-1556*, Istanbul s.d., pp. 55-57.

(1556) Wolfgang Müntzer, *Reyssbeschreibung dess Gestrengen und Vesten herrn W. Müntzer von Babenberg...*, Nach Jerusalem, Damascum und Constantinopel..., Nürnberg 1624, pp. 119-121.

(1558) Gaspare Erizzo, *Viaggio da Venezia a Constantinopoli e relazione dell' Impero Ottomano attribuito a G. Erizzo che accomagna il bailo M. Cavalli*, ms., Venise, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, It. VI.105, pp. 12r-16r.

(1567) Marcantonio Pigafetta, "Itinerario di M. A. Pigafetta genti'huomo vicentino...", *Starine* XXII (1890), pp. 97-98, 159-176.

(1572) Lambert Wytz, *Iter factum e Belgio-Gallice, Voyages de L. Wytz en Turquie*, ms., Vienne, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vindobonensis Palatinus 3325.

(1573) Philippe du Fresne Canaye, *Le voyage du Levant de Philippe du Fresne-Canaye (1573) / publié et annoté par M. H. Hauser*, Paris: E. Leroux, 1897, pp. 41-51.

(1573, 1578) Stephan Gerlach, *Stephan Gerlach dess Aeltern Tage-Buch der von zween gharwürdigsten römischen Käysern Maximiliano...*, Francfort 1674, pp. 19-22, 507-521.

(1574) Pierre Lescalopier, B. Cvetkova, "Edni Frensk pitepis ot XVIv. za Bilgarskite zeml (P. Lescalopier-1574)", *Bulletin de la Societé historique bulgare* XXVI (1968), pp. 253-258.

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(1579) Paolo Contarini, "Relazione...", dans Eugenio Aberi, *Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato...*, Serie III, Vol. III, Florence 1856, pp. 209-250.

(1582) Jean Palerne, *Peregrinations du S. Iean Palerne foresien où est traicté de plusieurs singularités, & antiquités remarquées és prouinces d'Egypte, Arabie deserte, & pierreuse, Terre Saincte, Surie, Natolie, Grece, & plusieurs iles tant de la mer mediterranee, que archipelaque*, Lyon: Iean Pillehotte, 1606, pp. 489-501.

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(1591) Wenceslas Wratislaw, Baron von Mitrowitz, *Η Κωνσταντινούπολις κατά τον 16ον αιώνα (1591-1596)...* [Constantinople durant le XVIe siècle (1591-1596)...], trad. I. Ep. Dryscou, s. l: Papapavlos & Cie, 1920, pp. 43-61.

(1597) Georges Dousa, *De Itinere suo Constantinopolitano Epistola*: Leipzig, Ex Officina Plantiniana, 1599, pp. 75-79.

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