*Land and Sea Transport and Economic Depression in the Kingdom of Naples from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Century**

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1. It is difficult to say which factor was more influential in determining, and indeed perpetuating, South Italy's backward system of communications. Was it the harshness and hostility of nature, the lack of commitment on the part of the authorities or the region's economic depression, which hampered and slowed down improvement in the sector?

It is likely that each of these causes interacted and are so inextricably linked and interwoven that it is difficult to come to a precise conclusion.

As is well known, the road network created by the Romans in the South was disrupted and destroyed by the Barbarian invasions[1]. Regions were cut off from one another and both inter - and intra-provincial trade declined considerably.

This state of isolation continued into the thirteenth century when half of the Kingdom was virtually uncultivated, partly in consequence of the lack of roads. While the province of Terra di Lavoro, a part of Principato and the area around Naples were better cultivated, the most important crops — wheat and fodder

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[1] Cf. *Rapporto generale sulla situazione delle strade, sulle bonificazioni e sugli indirizzi pubblici dei Reali Domini al di qua del Faro* diretto a S.E. il Ministro delle Finanze, (Naples 1827), pp. 3-4.

crops on the plain, olives, vines, flax and legumes in the hilly and mountain areas — were either sold at very low prices or increased so much in price as to cause a dramatic fall in consumption.

It was observed that such wide fluctuations in price were largely the result of the fact "that there were no roads nor other means of communications between towns". Therefore, either it was impossible to conduct any kind of trade, or trade was carried on with very high transport costs. We should add that not many modes of transport were employed "so that donkeys, a few carts and men's shoulders were the most convenient means." For example, in the twelfth century, measures for regulating the transport of several statues on shoulders — that is, using only human force — were issued from Naples to Lucera[2]. Given this situation, it is hardly surprising that sheep-farming was the most common activity; although methods were still fairly backward, it was practised not only in Basilicata, Calabria and Abruzzo-Molise but also over a large area of the Apulian plain and especially on the vast Tavoliere around Foggia.

In the Swabian period, in the eleventh century, and even more so in the period from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, internal communications were made even more precarious by the issue of a very large number of tolls (*diritto di passo*) in the Kingdom. These were rented out to private collectors and proved to be extremely vexatious for merchants and other wayfarers[3]. Added to this were the dangers to personal safety encountered by those who travelled about unescorted.

2. Certainly, Naples' rise to become the capital of continental South Italy, which occurred in the second half of the thirteenth century, led to some improvement. The presence of a government

[2] L. Bianchini, *Storia delle finanze del Regno delle Due Sicilie*, edited by L. De Rosa, (Naples 1971, p. 93.

[3] V. Jacovetti, *Saggio storico-critico-legale sovra gli aboliti passi del Regno di Napoli.* (Naples 1792), p.5 *et seq.*

in Naples, and along with it a series of tertiary and quaternary services, helped to improve connections, at least between Naples and the other provinces in the Kingdom. The roads around Naples were improved and after Benevento — one of the main towns on the Naples-Apulia route — had been given over to the Papacy, a new road was built from Naples to Apulia by way of Terra di Lavoro and Avellino. The roads from Naples to Nocera and from Nocera to Cava dei Terreni and Salerno were also improved. There was also a notable improvement in the "Via degli Abruzzi" which connected Naples to Florence by way of Aquila[4]. In order to facilitate travelling on some stretches of these roads, which passed through marshland, major land reclamation projects were undertaken in Campania[5].

Despite these improvements, large stretches of road could be covered only on horseback or on the back of donkeys or mules. This meant that the quantity of goods transported was very limited. With the exception of the area around Naples and other large centres, especially Terra di Lavoro, wheels — that is, carts — had all but disappeared from the main southern ways.

It is hardly necessary to point out the consequences of this situation. According to a calculation made in the eighteenth century, for long and uphill journeys "the load of a cart pulled by two mules or horses correspond[ed] to eight carried on the animal's back" and a *canestra* or carriage pulled by two animals convey[ed] eight passengers comfortably" while the same load would have required eight saddled horses. This meant that transport costs were reduced by three quarters. If trade was carried on in flat rather than in hilly areas, wheels brought even greater economic benefits. In areas such as those around the capital and Terra di Lavoro, a cart pulled by two animals could transport 40 *tomoli* of corn or flour, while the same amount, if

[4] L. Gasparinetti, 'La "Via degli Abruzzi" e l'attività commerciale di Aquila e Sulmona nei secoli XIII-XV', in *Bollettino della Deputazione Abruzzese di Storia Patria*, vols. LXXXV-LXXXVII (1964-1967), pp. 13-14.

[5] L. Bianchini, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

carried on the animal's back, would have required at least 10 mules[6].

The slowness of the journey, the limited quantity of goods transported, the greater number of animals required and, therefore, the greater number of escorts needed, and the numerous problems caused by having to feed and rest animals, were all factors which increased transport costs. But an additional burden continued to be the problem related to travellers' personal safety. Several writers, like De Blasio and Gasparinetti, have cited instances in both the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and also in later centuries, of assaults and thefts committed against travelling merchants, who were themselves authorised to carry arms for personal defence[7]. Yver writes that "Apulia, Terra d'Otranto, the two Principati and Abruzzo stood out from all the other provinces on account of the number of crimes committed on their territory"[8].

Although since the eleventh century there had been specific laws to deal with these problems and although royal officers, who had the task of guarding roads and mountain passes, had received precise instructions for driving out brigandage, the number of crimes committed against travellers went on increasing; moreover, royal officials were often directly responsible for encouraging such crimes since they allowed the soldiers in their charge to abuse the powers conferred upon them and to extort tributes from merchants[9], sometimes taking a share themselves. Although they continued to receive payment for the toll — known as *servaggio, guidaggio* and *salvinaio* — which had been established since the eleventh century and in return for which they were obliged to accompany wayfarers through places that

[6] F.S. Camilli, *L'utilità della costruzione delle pubbliche strade per tutto il Regno di Napoli dimostrata col calcolo della spesa*. Memoria umiliata al Supremo Consiglio delle Reali Finanze, (Napoli 1793), p.3. The *tomolo* was equivalent to hl. 0.555451

[7] L. Gasparinetti, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[8] G. Yver, *Le commerce et les marchands dans l'Italie meridionale au XIIIe et au XIVe siècles*, (Paris, 1903), p.64 *et seq.*

[9] G. Yver, *op. cit.*, p. 65; *L. Gasparinetti, op.cit.*, p. 17.

were considered dangerous, the collectors of this tax not only refrained from accompanying travellers but they also desisted from reimbursing those who had been assaulted or robbed, as they should have done[10].

Moreover, sometimes due to snow the Appenine passes could not be traversed from December to March[11]. Trade was therefore halted and each town lived either on its own resources or on the resources that it was able to procure from nearby towns with great difficulty and inconvenience, when the weather improved.

3. Journeys were therefore difficult and restricted. The Roman road connecting Naples to Rome by way of Minturno, Traetto (Formia), Fondi and Terracina, became deserted and fell into disuse after falling into the hands of brigands. The inland route generally used for connecting Naples to Central Italy was the road through Abruzzo. Taking the inland route in the fourteenth and subsequent centuries, Florence could be reached from Naples via Capua, Isernia, Sulmona, Aquila, Rieti and Perugia. In some places this road passed through mountains which were more than a thousand metres above sea level; during the winter they were covered by snow and could therefore only be crossed at certain times of the year. Even during the summer season this road presented several difficulties and involved a long itinerary: it took merchants at least five to six days to reach Florence from Aquila. The journey from Aquila to Sulmona required a whole day's travelling even when weather conditions were good, while a further five to six days' travelling were needed to arrive in Naples. In the best of conditions, therefore, the journey from Florence to Naples lasted eleven to twelve days[12].

The journey was undertaken on the back of animals and

[10] V. Jacovetti, *op. cit.*, p. 17 *et seq.*

[11] L. Gasparinetti, *La "Via degli Abruzzi" ...op. cit.*, p. 18.

[12] L. Peruzzi, *Storia del commercio e dei banchieri di Firenze in tutto il mondo conosciuto*, (Florence 1868), p. 218.

various kinds of obstacles had to be overcome. Apart from brigands who controlled the Campania borders and the area around Capua[13], one of the main difficulties was crossing rivers. Despite all this, the way through Abruzzo appeared to be the safest in the Kingdom and this was partly due to the fact that the Neapolitan kings made every effort to keep the road as fit for travelling as possible, seeking to repress all crimes committed against wayfarers; they were interested in trade and financial dealings with Florence, with whom they had entered into alliance and whose commercial and banking companies had been given access to the Kingdom.

Much less safe — if we exclude the roads which had been virtually abandoned, like the Naples-Terracina-Rome road and the Capua-Cassino-Anagni-Frosinone-Rome road and the Calabrian road that did not go beyond Salerno — was the way through Apulia. This passed through the outskirts of Avellino and Mercogliano and traversed badly guarded forests and gorges, passing close to Benevento, and then reached Foggia by way of Montecalvo, Ariano, and Bovino, almost as if it had been forged out of nature. In the thirteenth century, when in a good state of repair and when its many bridges were working, it appeared to be the only road wide enough in the Kingdom to be traversed by carriages[14].

Yet it was not only with a view to stimulating trade that governments sought to develop roads. There were also political reasons for doing so, as in the case of the decision to revive the Adriatic way. After strengthening their alliance with the Sforza[15], the ruling family of the Duchy of Milan who had acquired the Duchy of Bari and had therefore a vested interest in the Mezzogiorno, the Aragonese undertook to reopen the route along the Adriatic which, from Pescara, in one direction connected with the "Via degli Abruzzi" and in another direction

[13] G. Yver, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
[14] G. Yver, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
[15] G. Petroni, *Della storia di Bari*, (Napoli 1857), I, p. 506 *et seq.*

reached Bari connecting with the Antoniana way which joined Bologna to Rimini.

The Adriatic way certainly absorbed some of the traffic which had previously been carried on the "Via degli Abruzzi". Moreover, with the return of the Papacy to Rome following its long exile at Avignon in France in the the fourteenth century, the volume of traffic on the Abruzzi way decreased further; part of this traffic now shifted to the Tyrrenian coastal routes which by way of the Tiber reached Rome directly[16].

Apart from these long-distance routes the only connections between individual communities were foot paths and mule tracks which were unusable in the winter due to the snow and rain and were arid and very tiring in the sun-scorched summer months.

4. Such arduous and costly journeys would never have been undertaken for low-value commodities. Generally speaking, goods conveyed over such long-distance routes included manufactured wares (textiles, metallurgical products, etc.), rare products such as spices and also precious wares like silverware, etc.[17]. Merchants from the large industrial and commercial towns of Central and Northern Italy brought to the South the products of their advanced handicraft industries and spices imported from the Far East. There is no record of land transport being used to convey agricultural produce. In the opposite direction, from the South to Central-Northern Italy, there are likewise no records of agricultural products being transported overland, with the exception of raw materials like raw wool, cattle, saffron, etc..

The fact that overland routes were not used in the trade of foodstuffs and did not therefore stimulate the agricultural production of the areas could explain not only the very limited development of the interior, in particular, and the predominance of sheep-farming, but also the scarce economic progress

[16] L. Gasparinetti, *op. cit.*, p.21.
[17] G. Yver, *op. cit.*, p.69.

undergone by towns, which were not located on major routes, on a roadstead or close to an accessible port in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. It also explains why the prosperity of certain towns - for example Aquila - declined when there was a change in traffic flows[18]. Yet it was precisely in the period between the fourteenth and fifteenth century, and especially in the second half of the fifteenth century, while the Kingdom of Naples was growing and becoming more responsible, that an effort was made to create a domestic market in order to stimulate local initiative and to expand production. This was an attempt, as Del Treppo is right in pointing out[19], to carry out a mercantilist policy in South Italy, a policy which failed due to an unfavourable combination of political and military circumstances and to the opposition of the feudal barons, unwilling to relinquish any of their privileges; but also as a result of the inadequacies of the internal road network and the backwardness of communications.

The authorised trade fairs from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries did not produce the hoped-for effects. As has been observed, even when they were situated along busy roads and near to ports handling a large volume of international trade or in areas where there was a wider range of production, the situation did not change greatly. What the fairs did was to induce people to concentrate their sales and purchases in a few days rather than over weeks or months so that they could take advantage of the customs exemptions granted on the occasion of the fairs by royal decree.

Of course, attempts to promote an exchange between local raw materials and the products of other regions were even less successful in the fairs situated in inland areas, where central or local authorities had often made decisions for largely fiscal

[18] A. Grohmann, *Le fiere del Regno di Napoli in età aragonese*, (Naples 1969), p. 84 *et seq.*

[19] M. del Treppo, "L'espansione catalano-aragonese nel Mediterraneo" in *Nuove questioni di storia medioevale*, (Milano 1964), pp. 259-301.

purposes. "Far away - it has been observed - from the big trade circuits....[in these fairs] there was hardly ever a substantial influx of either people or goods."

It is no accident that the large majority of merchants who attended inland fairs were not foreigners but natives, usually living in the larger towns nearby[20]. What is certain is that while fairs took advantage of the existing road networks, there is little evidence to show that fairs actually caused new roads to be built. At the most, when fairs took on the dimension of a system, in which, given the continuous succession of fairs in spring and summer, merchants were able to go from one fair to another without remaining inactive for a long period, we may consider them as an attempt to rationalise trade as far as exploiting more effectively existing roads is concerned. Such roads were more usable, of course, in spring and summer, the harvest seasons, when local products were in supply. Yet, as Grohmann points out[21], the numerous fairs set up in Calabria and Basilicata, in the areas around both the Ionian and Tyrennian coasts, had little impact on the level of the region's economic development. Even in more commercial regions, like Apulia, fairs do not appear to have been a development factor, either in ways and means of communication or in the economy as a whole. In fact, it was the lack of roads which limited considerably the hinterlands of ports like Gaeta, Pozzuoli, Castellammare di Stabia, Amalfi, Salerno, Agropoli, etc., that is, the region around the capital (Naples was then one of the most densely populated cities in Europe). Beyond Naples and the surrounding towns, even at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the roads were "in the majority of cases merely mule tracks on which travellers slowly wound their way on foot, on horseback or on the back of a mule"[22].

5. This backwardness needs to be seen in the context of the

[20] Cf. for example, A. Grohmann, *op.cit.*, p. 229.
[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.
[22] *Ibid.*, p.209.

more general conditions of the Kingdom, a country which was, as we would say today, a producer of primary goods, that is to say, a producer of agricultural goods, livestock and raw materials. Only a small quantity of such materials was manufactured locally while most of it was exported.

Compared to the big industrial and commercial towns in Central and Northern Italy, the Kingdom appeared to be quite backward. This backwardness was evident in a) the type of distribution of wealth, concentrated in the hands of the King and a small number of people[23]; b) the almost total lack of local entrepreneurs, since most of the major commercial and financial business was controlled by foreigners; c) the poor quality of local industry and handicrafts, which were underdeveloped despite the great efforts made by various monarchs, particularly the Aragonese, to attract artisans and technical experts from other more advanced regions in Italy. In summary, at the start of the sixteenth century, although it covered a wide commercial area, the Mezzogiorno was none other than "a market to be exploited".

All the minerals and agricultural goods for exporting from the Kingdom had to pay the high costs of foreign intermediaries: Catalans, Venetians, Genoans, Pisans, Florentines, Lombards and Dalmations all made large profits. At the same time equally large profits were earned supplying the Kingdom with capital and manufactured products. Many of these foreigners took their profits back to their native countries, thereby causing a continual exportation of precious metals. The balance of payments was therefore frequently in deficit and to try to balance it the government was forced to import large amounts of precious metals which were often paid for by alienating government revenue, thus aggravating the Kingdom's finances. This, in turn, led to more taxation and more indebtedness.

[23] B. Croce, *Storia del regno di Napoli*, (Bari 1915), p.87; L. Genuardi, "Commercio e diritto marittimo" in *Studi in onore di M. Schipa*, (Napoli 1926), pp. 118-119.

6. The abuses and heavy-handedness of local authorities, barons and the administrations of free towns (the *università*), also helped to stifle internal communications. Despite the abolition of *guidaggi, servaggi, salvinari*, etc[24]; which had been decreed in 1321, such abuses continued to grow and a large number of non-authorised tolls were imposed locally[25] which proved to be extremely vexatious for those wishing to pass through these territories.

The abuse was so widespread that in 1455 King Alfonso the Magnaminous ordered his officials to check the legal grounds on which these claims were based and, above all, to check "whether or not the places in which the toll duty was collected were really dangerous or suspect, whether the collectors [had] an adequate number of armed persons to guard these places and finally whether it [were] necessary to guard such places and what costs this would entail"[26]. Yet despite royal intervention and the heavy penalties imposed upon those who collected unauthorised tolls, the abuses continued. This was partly because the King, who was pressed by financial needs and succession problems, was obliged to call a new general Parliament the following year and could not, therefore, be too insistent about the subject[27]; he went no further than to urge his successor, his son Ferrante, "to make trade free and expeditious by removing all tax and customs impediments"[28].

After a few years, in 1466, in consideration of "the grave disorders deriving from the widespread levying of this duty (the *diritto di passo*) and the negative repercussions it had on domestic trade", Ferrante ordered all the barons who felt entitled to levy the toll to justify themselves before government officials within three months, under the penalty of forfeiting the toll and

[24] V. Jacovetti, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
[25] *Ibid.*, p.92.
[26] *Ibid.*, p.95.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 99, 102.
[28] *Ibid.*, p.103.

of being obliged to pay back the sums levied unjustly[29]. But the order had little effect. Government officials, however, were able to establish "the period when each toll had been imposed, either by royal concession or by private authority; the amounts collected when the tolls were first introduced and the amounts then being collected; the great number of places where the toll had been levied and was being levied within the same territory and the exaggerated claims advanced by collectors about the expenses they incurred in collecting tolls." In particular the officials found that many tolls had been introduced during the first half of the fifteenth century. Initially the sum levied on a given amount of merchandise was quite small (two *denari* or one *tornese* or 5/6ths of a *grano*) but this increased very quickly to the huge sum of 15 *carlini*. Moreover, instead of being levied in just one place within the same territory, the toll was collected in as many as four different places, even though the collectors had absolutely no obligation to watch over the places assigned to them, to improve the roads or to accompany wayfarers through suspect areas[30].

In this situation, while the government abolished as many as 182 tolls[31], declaring them to be illegal, it was forced to acknowledge the validity of another twenty six tolls. However, it did take steps to reduce toll rates and to ensure that tolls were levied only on goods being transported for trade or business purposes.

7. While the toll issue dragged on in the period from 1469 to 1494, the year of the King's death, provoking royal impositions on the one hand, and on the other reactions by those unwilling to

[29] *Ibid.*, p.104.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[31] These tolls belonged to the Gran Siniscalco, the Prince of Salerno, the Prince of Bisignano, the Duke of Atri, the Duke of Amalfi, the Duke of Gravina, the Duke of Venosa, the Duke of Sora, the Duke of Ascoli, the Duke of Melfi, the Duke of Termoli, the Duke of Bojano, the Marquis of Pescara, the Count of Altavilla, the Count of Caserta, the Count of Aversa, the Count of Simmari. etc.. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

comply and lawsuits against the offenders, in 1494 all attempts to restrict tolls with the view to stimulating road traffic and intensifying local production ended. The threat of French occupation threw public finances into disarray and to try and bolster them the government had no better solution than to sell off estates and public offices at very low prices and grant privileges. Yet, despite such action the government failed to restore public finances and when Ferdinand the Catholic King succeeded to the throne he found them utterly depleted[32]. In the meanwhile, the social and economic developments which had occurred between 1494 and 1501 not only caused tolls to be legitimised but increased their number considerably.

In order to get round the obstacle posed by declarations of illegality, skillful jurists in the service of barons argued that the tolls were part of the *baglive*, that is, the responsibility of the local lawcourt, which was authorised to go round the area and to make sure that no damage was caused to landowners on whose property roads were built and demanding penalties for any damage caused "in whatever part of the territory the damage had occurred and by whosoever had caused it." Thus, according to this interpretation, the *Bajuli* had the right "to make the carters pay the toll duty anywhere within their own territory, since by passing through the territory they either spoiled the public way with their carts or, with their animals, caused damage to properties situated close to the road on which they travelled"[33]. Thus, with a privilege granted by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1505, the barons were authorised to collect dues from the "*baglive*, *gabelle*, tolls, measures, weights, *tomoli*, *statere* etc., alongside all the Towns, Land and Castles they already possessed"[34].

After the legitimacy of the 182 abolished tolls had been recognised, there was a mushrooming of new tolls. Their numbers increased so much that in the General Parliament of

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 115 *et seq.*
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 121.
[34] *Ibid.*, p.126.

1569, the Viceroy, the Duke of Alcala, was petitioned from all over the Kingdom "to put a stop to the excesses committed by the toll collectors[35]. Following a request for judgement regarding one of the Kingdom's courts, tolls were abolished since, at the time of Ferrante I, there was no record of them[36]. Unfortunately, at the same time, 75 tolls were recognised, since during Ferrante's reign they had not been prohibited[37]. In practice, both unabolished and abolished tolls continued to be levied. Indeed, after 1570, through acceptance of the principle that tolls were part of *baglives*, their number continued to rise. Moreover, side tolls were added to the main ones since, if a wayfarer avoided going through an area subject to a toll and chose an alternative route which was further away from the toll road and was therefore less accessible, the traveller might still be obliged to pay the toll if the alternative route passed through the territory in which the toll road was situated. In this way tolls were no longer restricted to just one road or path but became unlimited and were extended

[35] *Ibid.*, p.131.

[36] The 72 abolished tolls were those of Acerenza, Acerno, Airola, Aliano, Altilia, Altomonete, Amoruso, Andretta, Anoja, Anzi, Apice, Auletta, Bagnuolo, Bojano, Burgenza, Busso, Caccuri, Campognano, Campomarino, Canistro, Cariati, Carovigno, Casacalenda, Casa d'Albero, Castrominardo, Castrovillari, Callino, Chiavice, Cerignola, Civita d'Antina, Colletorto, Colonella, Conversano, Cornuto, Favale, Fondi, Fontanorosa, Garigliano, Ischitella, Itri, Lanciano, Lacedonia, Latiano, Loreto, Marsicovetere, Montecalvo, Monticchio, Montuoro, Oppido, Paglieta, Pietra Pertosa, Pietra Stornina, San Giorgio, Sant'Angelo, Sant'Elia, San Mauro, Scisciano, Squillace, Supino, Sujo, Terranova di Bisignano, Torella, Torre del Tronto, Trivigno, Tullo, Vastoaimone, Venafro, Villamaina: cf. V. Jacovetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-134.

[37] That is those of Acquaviva, Accumoli, Albi, Amatrice, Andria, Arpaia, Atripaldi, Barrea, Brognatore, Buonalbergo, Barrello, Caivano, Caltabottaccio, Cancello, Candela, Candelora, Canne, Canosa, Carinola, Casapazzana, Castelsecato, Castelmorrone, Cimitino, Civita di Capitanata, Civita Ducale, Colli, Contrada, Cosenza, Fricento, Gesualdo, Giffoni, Giulianova, Introdoco, Lauro, Lionessa, Leoni, Luceto, Macchia d'Isernia, Maddaloni, Martorano, Matera, Matina, Matina feudo di Bitonto, Mignano, Monteforte, Morcone, Motta Soreti, Oliveto, Oria, Orta, Polignano, Pomigliano d'Arco, Ponteannecchino, Ponte di Torre di Mare, Ponte a Carbonara, Rapolla, Ripacandida, Rocca Mondragone, Salerno, San Germano, Sant'Angelo a Scala, Sant'Omero, Santo Jorio, Santo Stefano di Serpico, Serra, Sesto, Solano, Soriano, Terranova di Calabria Ultra, Tolve, Torrella , Torre di Policore, Tutero, Vallelonga, Valle Cappelli. *Ibid.*, p.133n.

throughout the territory with the creation of *contropassi, passi traversi, membri di passo, grancie di passo, passitelli*, etc.[38].

Instead of improving, therefore, the conditions of trade actually worsened. The situation was brought to the notice of the Spanish Crown which, in 1616, ordered its Vice-Roy Don Pietro de Giron, Duke of Ossuna, to get the courts to intervene and to remove the impediments deriving from the abuses practised by the barons in collecting toll dues[39]. But, as is well known, instead of intervening, Ossuna sought to gain favour with the barons and left things to carry on as before. Consequently, each year the number of tolls and abuses went on increasing: from 29 in 1469, to 75 in 1570 and 800 in 1690[40]. But, worst of all, Government officials noted that duties were levied not "according to tariffs but according to the whims and greed of the collectors, and that exemptions were not granted and so there was no tax immunity"[41].

Despite the intervention of one of the leading Neapolitan lawyers of the time, Francesco d'Andrea, who defended the rights of the Royal Parliament in 1691, there was only a slight improvement in the situation. Although some previously allowed tolls were abolished and although the toll rate was lowered in some cases so as to standardise tariffs, after a short period the situation reverted to what it had been before and even worsened.

When the Bourbon King, Charles, came to the Neapolitan throne in 1734 one of his first acts was to acknowledge that "the owners and collectors of tolls and scafe in the Kingdom commit[ted] many extortions and abuses which caused great harm to wayfarers"[42]. It was only on 16 April 1792 that all tolls were abolished, but up till then the situation was extremely damaging for domestic trade. Wayfarers "were obliged to give publicans

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 144 et seq.
[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 155.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 157.
[42] D. Gatta, *Regali Dispacci*, (Naples 1786), dispaccio del 21 ottobre 1734

what they asked for if, in the middle of open country, they did not want to have to reckon with sticks, daggers or shot-guns." Moreover, tariffs and tables were not shown to the public and "more often than not [they were] crossed out in the place where the duty was specified, which should have been levied according to the quality of the goods." Little attention was paid as to whether the goods carried by the wayfarer were of small or great value, whether they were for personal use or for trade purposes. In the course of the eighteenth century, the collectors' boldness increased "to the point of forcibly levying duty even on the luggage and trunks which were carried on *calessi* and coaches." Crushed by so many restrictions, held up by the delays it was subjected to in many places "given the great number of inns and stations where tolls were collected"[43], trade faltered together with local farming, while prices rose.

8. Despite all this, after the efforts made by the Aragonese, the Spanish government, which had established its rule in South Italy, also sought to stimulate domestic trade. After it had seen the disastrous state not only of local communications but also of major interprovincial and national roads, as well as the impossibility of getting public and private owners of properties crossed by roads to build the roads and the necessary infrastructures themselves (brigdes, drains etc.) and to provide for their maintenance, on 27 June 1559 the Spanish government imposed a tax of 3 *grana* on each household in seven of the twelve provinces which formed the Kingdom, the proceeds of which were to be used for re-eopening bridges and roads. In August 1559, this tax was then increased to 9 *grana* per household and extended to the other three provinces[44].

The duty was regularly collected by local treasuries and officials but, in the current state of research, it is difficult to say

[43] V. Jacovetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-194.

[44] Archivio di Stato di Napoli (ASN), *Camera della Sommaria*, Consulte, fascio 42, f. 144.

whether it was actually used for the purposes for which it had been introduced. Moreover, while it is true that some measures had been taken, the initial enthusiasm began to fade and after the start of the Thirty Years War in 1618, construction slowed down and eventually came to a halt. The events into which the Kingdom, alongside Spain, had been drawn, diverted most of the funds collected from the road and bridge tax for seemingly more urgent and important purposes. In 1638 it was not difficult to see "that there was no improvement in state of the Kingdom's roads, bridges and lakes" [45].

With the increased financial burden caused by the war, records of road building, both before and after Masaniello's revolt, became increasingly rare. The plague of 1656 only made matters worse. It was only in 1660-69 that we hear of the levelling of the Pozzuoli-Baia road, which was rendered necessary by the use of waters from local spas [46]. After this date, especially after the Messina war in 1674-78, the situation became even more critical. The country was by then economically and financially prostrate and the few industries which had been carried on up till then had all but died. The silk industry, one of the four main pillars of the Kingdom's economy, had gone into a slow but irreversible decline and the vine-growing and wine industry had also died out [47].

As time progressed, the impoverished Kingdom found that it was unable to complete the building of its road network and to provide for the maintenance of existing roads. As a result, the inner regions fell into a state of neglect which only aggravated the depression already existing.

After the plague in 1656, the number of highway bandits rose. Not only did they extort money from travellers who ventured on a

[45] ASN, *Camera della Sommaria*, Consulte, I, f. 178.

[46] D. A. Parrino, *Teatro eroico e politico de' Governi de' Viceré del Regno di Napoli dal tempo di Ferdinando il Cattolico fino al presente Napoli*, (Gravier, 1770), vol. II, p. 305 *et seq.*

[47] L. De Rosa, *I cambi esteri del Regno di Napoli dal 1591 al 1707*, (Napoli 1955), p. 61.

journey without a proper escort, but they also imposed on farm workers, and not just in the more inland areas but also nearer to Naples, in the areas around Somma, Nola and Sora etc.[48]. A document dated 1659 refers to bandits who "kept the towns and countryside in constant awe and took away their communications and traffic," and who even "emptied the bags of government mail carriers." Robberies, assaults and the murder of even illustrious travellers, occurred in nearly all the provinces of the Kingdom, despite the death penalty being in force and despite its frequent imposition[49]. Indeed, it became a widespread opinion that banditry flourished because it received local support, that is to say, because it received "the protection of powerful barons"[50]. A special law[51], which promised a wide pardon for anyone who turned bandit leaders over to justice, did not succeed in stamping out the phenomenon. After 1670 brigandage became even more widespread, paralysing road traffic which had already dwindled[52].

9. The situation did not improve during the period of the Austrian Occupation (1701-1734). The conditions of the South's road network continued to be precarious and the bad practice of drawing on funds, which, instead, should have been spent on building and repairing roads, bridges and lakes, continued[53]. As Di Vittorio writes, "you had only to move away from inhabited areas to find the roads either in utter disrepair or non-existent, since, as there was no common interest to keep them open to traffic, there was nobody to provide for their expenses. The major roads, those through Apulia, Calabria and Capua, continued to monopolise the government's attention, but this did not prevent

48 D. A. Parrino, *op. cit.*, II, p. 203
49 *Ibid.*, II, pp. 237-238.
50 *Ibid.*, II, p. 263.
51 *Ibid.*, p. 393.
52 *Ibid.*, II, p. 407.
53 A. Di Vittorio, *Gli Austriaci e il Regno di Napoli (1707-1734). Ideologia e sviluppo economico*, (Napoli 1973).

the lack of maintenance - especially after heavy rainfalls which caused bridges to collapse and roads to flood - from rendering even the major roads often partially unusable". Even the country's most important road - through Apulia - which passed through the region's corn-growing areas and was therefore particularly important for the capital's food supplies, was in a deplorable state. In the most favourable conditions, when the weather was fine and the riverflow was regular and calm, "a short distance of 16 miles, between Ponte di Bovino and Foggia, took no less than two days to cross"[54]. By the end of the period of the Austrian Viceroyalty, the conditions of the Kingdom's roads were such "that the transport of goods, both those of lower value from the more distant provinces and the more high - value products of the nearby provinces in the Apulian region, was for the most part carried on by sea"[55].

10. Much more in the way of road construction was carried out by the Bourbons who began to reign in 1734. It was not just the quantity of road projects planned under the Bourbons, which was undoubtedly superior to the previous period; there was also a general change of attitude in the Kingdom which was certainly related to a new spirit that had made itself felt throughout Europe. More than one economic commentator spoke in favour of road construction and considered - as Palmieri did[56], for example - the expenditure on road, bridge and canal building as "productive".

Despite the limited resources available, the number of road projects drawn up was far from negligible compared to the past. An illustrious traveller, Galanti, provides us with a clear picture of road conditions at the end of the century around 1788. According to Galanti's description, at that time the road to Rome was not the old Roman road which went through Pozzuoli and followed the

[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 256-258.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 258.
[56] G. Palmieri, *Riflessioni sulla felicità relativamente al Regno di Napoli*, (Napoli 1788), p. 321.

coast, since this had been made unusable by the prevalence of marshland, but rather the road through Capodichino, Sparanise etc.. Once you arrived at Garigliano, the river was crossed by a ferry and not over planks[57].

The conditions of the Abruzzo road were not so good. Although the section from Naples to Venafro via Calvi had been partly rebuilt and improved, the section from Venafro was still being built in 1788 and the route from Popoli, Aquila and Civitaducale to the Kingdom's borders had still to be worked out. There was lively debate about this problem, which lasted for several years. To carry on the journey from Venafro there was the old existing Angevin and Aragonese road that went through Isernia, Castel di Sangro, Sulmona, Popoli, thence to Chieti via Tocco, S. Valentino, Torre, Alba close to Manoppelli and on to Pescara, Giulianova and Teramo, which was in bad repair along some of its sections. At some points (such as over the Volturno, the Cavaliere and the Pescara) it was necessary to carry on the journey by boat and the *Piano delle Cinquemiglia* was desolate and deserted and especially dangerous in winter[58]. The Abruzzo road was extremely run down and "owing to the small volume of traffic and goods it [was] [in 1788] solitary and scarcely used"[59].

There was no commercial traffic at all on the road to Sora, the continuance of which had still not been decided in 1788, as in the case of the Popoli-Aquila road. Indeed, it was still undecided whether to make it usable by carriages. The only traffic carried on the Sora route was by post horses which served the road from Capua to Caianello, Pagliarone, S. Germano, Roccasecca, Arpino, Sora, and thence to Tagliacozzo by way of Balzarano, Morino, Civitella, Capestriello, Avezzano, Cappella and Scurcula[60].

The Naples-Campobasso road was widened between Naples

[57] G. M. Galanti, *Nuova descrizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie*, (Napoli 1789), tomo III, p. 103.
[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 107.
[60] *Ibid.*,

and Caserta but this was done to cater for the needs of the Royal Palace which had been built at Caserta. In 1789 the road did not go beyond Ducenta, six miles from Caserta. After Ducenta the old route through Solopaca was broken up by the River Calore which had to be crossed by boat. After the crossing, the way carried on through S. Lorenzo Maggiore, Pontelandolfo, Morcone, Sepino and finally Campobasso[61]. Although it was decided to widen and level this section of the road, in 1788 it was still little more than a dirt track. The same could be said for the section of road which connected Campobasso to Vasto[62].

The Naples-Benevento road was relegated from being a first class road to a provincial road and its layout still needed to be replanned[63].

Little progress had been made on the Calabrian road from the time of the Viceroyalty to the end of the eighteenth century. It had been more or less restored up to the bridge over the River Sele, probably to facilitate access by the Court to the royal hunting ground around at Persano. The only efficient section of the road was that from Naples to Torre del Greco, which was for the most part paved, unlike the other roads in the Kingdom. This was, perhaps, due to the fact that the King used this section of the road to reach his villa at Portici, *la Favorita.*

As we have seen, the only really important road was the Apulian road, yet, in 1788, even this had only been restored as far as Bisceglie, a distance covering about 129 miles. It was served by bridges, which passed through a number of small towns before reaching Avellino and other towns on the way to Ariano. Between Ariano and Barletta the traveller could stop at Camporeale, Savignano, Bovino, Castelluccio, Ordona, Stornara, Cerignola, S. Carsano and Barletta. From here the route continued to Trani and Bisceglie. In government plans the road was to have continued as far as Lecce. Meanwhile, in 1788 work

61 *Ibid.*, p. 108.
62 *Ibid.*, p. 109.
63 *Ibid.*, p. 109.

began on enlarging and levelling the road from the Bovino bridge to Foggia and thence to Manfredonia. We should also mention that from Avellino there was a way through Atripalda, Gesualdo, Guardia Lombarda, Bisaccia and Carbonara which reached Melfi and Venosa[64]. To sum up, there was a fair amount of road construction activity going on in this period and Galanti himself was led to remark: "in ten years' time bad roads will no longer be among the causes responsible for the poor level of domestic trade"[65]. Ten years later, however, the war with revolutionary France drew heavily on financial resources and completely upset the road programme, thereby dissolving the hopes expressed by Galanti.

We ought to point out that only two roads - the Roman and Apulian roads - were served by post horses and thus able to sustain a reasonable volume of traffic. All the other roads did not operate a postal service and did not, therefore, offer resting and refreshment facilities nor facilities for changing animals. Only the Calabrian road operated a post for couriers[66]. Moreover, the new roads were not as resistant as Roman roads. They were built by levelling "the ground in the shape of a camber with a small side ditch" so as to form a slope on both sides for water drainage. To reinforce the road, the ground was covered by a stratum of round, limestone bricks placed one behind another, with the larger stones being placed over the less stable ground. This stratum was then covered over by crushed stone, that is to say, by pebbles, leaving the wagons and vehicles with the task of crushing and levelling them. Exposed to all weathers, roads built in this way did not last very long and often disintegrated under the weight of wagons. They therefore required huge sums to be repaired, as in the case of the Apulian road which had absorbed enormous sums of money in the course of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

[64] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-112.
[65] *Ibid.*, p. 319.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

11. Although commercial traffic had never abounded on the southern roads, there was, nonetheless, a considerable traffic of mail carriers and couriers. In the second half of the sixteenth century, an administration was set up to run the postal service under the direction of His Majesty's Post Master. The service provided postal links not only with other Italian states and, through these, with other European countries, but also between different regions within the Kingdom and between the regions and Naples. Apart from letters, the couriers or mail carriers, sometimes carried parcels and boxes which were loaded onto mules, thereby forming a kind of travel convoy which utilised horses or mules[67]. Although the government had its own special couriers for delivering official messages and mail, it relied on the normal postal service for its administration. For example the fiscal attorney for criminal cases used mail carriers to communicate with the provincial courts in Calabria, Bari, Principato Citra and Ultra and Terra di Otranto, and with the other local courts in the Kingdom[68].

While the postal service was useful to trade, since couriers could carry bills of exchange, from the point of view of goods traffic it was of very little help. Usually, at the most, trunks and bags could be carried and these were loaded onto animals. Mailcarriers conveyed "boxes, baskets, bundles, packages" daily from Naples to Salerno and the Cilento, as well as "goats, lambs and hares, both dead or alive" and other game and edible products, all on the back of mules[69].

Yet, although under the Bourbons the organisation of the postal service was improved (in 1742 a postal link with Constantinople was set up via Brindisi-Durazzo, and the service for other Italian cities and abroad - France, Germany, Spain and the Low Countries - was also improved)[70], the commercial traffic

[67] Cf. Prammatica II (1572) "De officio Praefecti cursorum", in Giustiniani, *Prammatiche del Regno di Napoli*, (Naples, 1808), p. 214.

[68] Cf. Prammatica III (1599), in Giustiniani, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

[69] Cf. Prammatica VIII (1777), in Giustiniani, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-225.

[70] *Ibid.*, pp. 219-223.

carried by mail carriers necessarily depended on the conditions of the roads and on the possibility of using wheels rather than animal transport. It was only when the roads improved that mail carriers stimulated trade, and helped to valorise certain products thereby stimulating production.

For example, the opening of the road to Rome for carriageable traffic enabled mail carriers to "carry post in gigs, *timonelle* and carriages" and moreover obliged them to "keep at least one hooded gig and one gig without a hood, for those who had to travel for the Post Office". The same regulations applied to those who travelled on the Apulian road. As far as the Calabrian road was concerned, "since - according to a law - gigs could not be used beyond Eboli", most of the journey had to be undertaken "on horseback", but - as ordered by law - "as far as Evoli [Eboli] [the Post Masters had to] keep a gig"[71].

Thus, the post service only helped trade in places where there were roads, that is, places where precisely on account of roads merchants and wayfarers were able to organise journeys by themselves. Yet, even for postal traffic, these roads were not easy. Post Masters who had to use gigs and not just horses, given the conditions of the road, with two passengers aboard, "were obliged to accept behind the gig or cab [luggage] weighing up to two hundred pounds, in addition to the servant, nor [were] they obliged to carry anything else". For heavier objects, and only if the gig had the carrying capacity, there were large fees to pay[72]. Post Masters could, of course, use four wheel carriages or *timonelle*, and so four horses were needed; with large vehicles able to carry four passengers inside and servants and trunks behind, eight horses could be attached, but in both these cases, the tariff "could be raised accordingly" [73].

In practice, as we may deduce from the large number of laws regulating the service, travelling by post was no less expensive

[71] Cf. Prammatica IX (1777), in Giustiniani, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
[72] *Ibid.*, p. 226.
[73] *Ibid.*,

than travelling independently. Coachmen, stable-boys, Post Masters, etc., all had pecuniary claims on the unfortunate traveller, and such claims could give rise to wranglings and arguments, so that sometimes passengers could be roughly handled, while at other times coachmen were seen to be "maltreated"[74].

More often than not, however, one or more animals were added to the vehicle, on the justification that a heavier load was being carried or that the hills along the route were especially steep, and so an increase in tariff was charged. In 1777, in order to avoid abuses the government had to specify the sections of road on which extra animals were allowed, the number of animals that could be added and the amount that could be charged.

Steep climbs, for which additional horses were allowed, were also to be found on the Apulian road. For these uphill sections of road, all of them situated between Naples and Ariano, the same rules applied as those which applied to the uphill stretch from Fondi to Itri. Another hill for which additional horses were allowed was the road from Mola di Gaeta to Epitaffio on the way to Rome, but customers could not be charged more than one *carlino* for every extra horse.

Apart from these cases, no other additional animals were allowed. Indeed, it was specified that "no Post Master on the Rome-Terracine route could add an extra horse nor on the Itri-Naples post". It was further stated that "no intermediary Post Master [could] disturb travellers by seeking to add on extra horses"[75].

However, other expenses were sometimes incurred by travellers and their loads when using the postal service. In places where rivers were still crossed using boats - or *scafi* - sometimes, when the river overflowed, it might be impossible to reach the other bank. An example is given in a law dated 1777 which, having established that "owing to the rise in the water level of the

[74] *Ibid.*, p. 228.
[75] *Ibid.*, p.227.

River Garigliano" the passengers - both those travelling from S. Agata to Mola di Gaeta and those travelling from Mola di Gaeta to Sessa - were unable to cross the river, and considering that there was no "place to accommodate travellers at the Garigliano Post", complained that passengers were obliged to return to their respective posts. In cases such as these, which were fairly frequent in winter, the Government stipulated that Post Masters could charge only "half the price of the journey for returning to the said posts"; once the level of the water had gone down, passengers could then set off again and would have to "pay for the whole journey again just as they did when they first set off for Garigliano"[76].

12. The postal service in the Kingdom of Naples was not, therefore, particularly cheap, but private transport was even more expensive. This explains why, in the pre-industrial period, sea transport was preferred for trade purposes.

Between the thirteenth and eighteenth century the more bulky products, especially cereals and fodder crops and other agricultural products including timber, fresh and dry fruit, wine, etc., were transported by sea. Yver observes that in the thirteenth and fourteenth century these agricultural products "took the less costly and less difficult sea route"[77] and not only when they were exported to Rome, Tuscany, Genoa, Venice, France or Spain etc., but also when they were transported from one part of the Kingdom to another. Alongside this direct traffic which was very quick, although it stayed close to the land, coastal traffic operated: this consisted of ships which went from port to port selling or buying products. Some 'ports' were, of course, merely beaches. In these cases goods were loaded on to ships, or unloaded, using boats. But other shores had the natural features of ports and developed accordingly; around these ports important trade centres grew up. This is the reason why coastal towns

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 228

[77] G. Yver, *op. cit.*, pp. 68, 130 *et seq.*

developed more than inland towns. In Apulia from the thirteenth to fifteenth century a large number of coastal towns sprang up, the most important of which was Barletta, "the trade capital of Apulia"[78]. Similarly, in Calabria the towns which developed most were the coastal towns like Policastro, Tropea, Reggio etc..

The predominance of sea trade over inland trade explains the interest shown by southern Italian governments in developing ports. Already in the thirteenth century, Frederick II had eleven new ports built. Succeeding the Swabians, the Angevins pursued the same policy in the thirteenth and fourteenth century and to obtain the finances needed for building ports and running them efficiently they levied a special tax, the "good money tax" (*la tassa del buon denaro*)[79]. Among the new ports built and old ports restored in this period we should mention those of Naples, Lanciano, Salerno and Manfredonia[80]. Considerable expenses were also incurred for building coastal watchtowers. Fifteenth-century monarchs acted in the same way, encouraging private investors to construct merchant vessels[81] and stimulating sea trade with their own ships[82].

However, in the first half of the sixteenth century, despite Spanish conquests in North Africa, the growing Turkish threat made sea trade more risky and it decreased considerably. While the more bulky goods and granuals (like cereals etc.) continued to be transported by sea[83], "the more sought, after Calabrian products, especially silk, were conveyed to Naples and Salerno overland"[84].

The role of sea trade in the local economy was further weakened in the Spanish period, that is, in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, owing to reductions in the Neapolitan

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 167.
[79] *Ibid.*, p. 163.
[80] L. Bianchini, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
[81] I. Schiappoli, *Napoli aragonese: traffici e attività marinare*, (Napoli 1972), p. 64.
[82] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[83] G. Galasso, *Economia e società nella Calabria del Cinquecento*, (Napoli 1967), p. 154.
[84] *Ibid.*, p. 151.

merchant navy which in any case had never been particularly large. Coniglio is right to point out that during the sixteenth century "the Neapolitan merchant fleet had not kept pace with the growth of sea trade". A lot of traffic was carried by Ragusan and Genoese ships[85] and, naturally, foreigners sought to buy at the best prices and consequently producers' profit margins were cut considerably and farmers were not encouraged to expand their activity.

The situation did not improve in the seventeenth century[86]. As we have already shown in another study, the process of decline continued[87], especially in the second half of the century. This was particularly evident in the case of the silk industry which was in great distress and also in the case of the Kingdom's corn and wine exports which shrank considerably[88]. This process of trade decline continued into the Austrian period (1707-1734), despite attempts to establish trade relations with the Ottoman Empire and despite the fact that the Kingdom's trade was now included in the vast trade zone of the central empires. During this period trade was predominantly carried on by sea, yet despite the attempts to develop ports the number of Neapolitan vessels participating in trade decreased while the number of foreign vessels increased.

The participation of foreign vessels in Neapolitan sea trade was still evident in the eighteenth century, even though the great reduction in such trade and Italy's general decline reduced the presence of foreign shipping. In 1760, despite the large number of measures adopted by the Bourbons to improve both ports and the conditions of the merchant navy[89], about a quarter of Neapolitan trade was carried by foreign vessels, of which a third was carried

[85] G. Coniglio, *Il Regno di Napoli al tempo di Carlo V*, (Napoli 1951), p. 117.

[86] G. Coniglio, *Il viceregno di Napoli nel secolo XVII*, (Roma 1955), p. 48 *et seq.*, p. 45 *et seq.*, p. 111 *et seq.*

[87] L. De Rosa, *I cambi esteri etc.*, pp. 62-63.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[89] L. De Rosa, 'Navi, merci, nazionalità, itinerari in un porto dell'età preindustriale: il porto di Napoli nel 1760', in *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento italiano*, (Napoli, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici, 1968), p. 334 *et seq.*

by Genoese ships, followed, at some distance, by Dutch, Danish and Leghorn vessels [90].

Twenty years later, the situation hardly seemed to have improved, even though the government had continued to expend energy and capital. In 1788, writing about the Kingdom of Naples, Galanti observed that "although it was] favourably situated and possessed in abundance nearly all the materials required by industry and all the products needed for human existence, not only [was] trade not flourishing, as it was in other countries which [lacked] such advantages, but sometimes [the Kingdom] [had to] procure goods from foreigners". Galanti added that "cereals, oil, silk and timber are our principal exports: when these are lacking or are scarce, we are always losers in the trade balance" [91].

13. Thus, at the end of the eighteenth century, overland trade in the Kingdom of Naples was scarce and sea trade was fairly limited. Undoubtedly, both these factors reflected insufficient economic development, which was itself the result of poor road and sea communications. At the end of the century, more discerning observers began to debate this very issue. One of these - Francesco Saverio Camilli - published a long memorandum to show " the usefulness of public road construction for the Kingdom of Naples, illustrated on the basis of costs". His argument ran thus: "eminent political thinkers of our century, analysing the nature of trade, [have] found that a country's wealth is produced at home where all trades and industries are practised, especially agriculture which is the source of all wealth since it is not only carried on each year but indeed each day, and by an infinite number of persons, while extensive and foreign trade is carried on by a few families whose business is commerce and in a few cities which enjoy the privilege of capital, and finally in the years of plenty, of which there are only three in each decade [note how the writer consciously foreshadows the concept of the

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] G. M. Galanti, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 326-327.

economic cycle]" [92]. To achieve this goal of domestic and general development Camilli believed that it was "imperative to make all the Kingdom's roads carriageable, since they are the channels through which wealth is communicated from one region to another." "If this happened - he urged - we could say in all certainty that this country would reach the level of prosperity achieved by other European countries and to which it has every right to aspire" [93].

[92] F. S. Camilli, *op. cit.*, p. iv.
[93] *Ibid.*