Naples, a Capital

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1. The first distinctive feature of Naples' long history as a capital - from the end of the thirteenth century to 1860 - is that it ruled over a kingdom which was fundamentally poor.

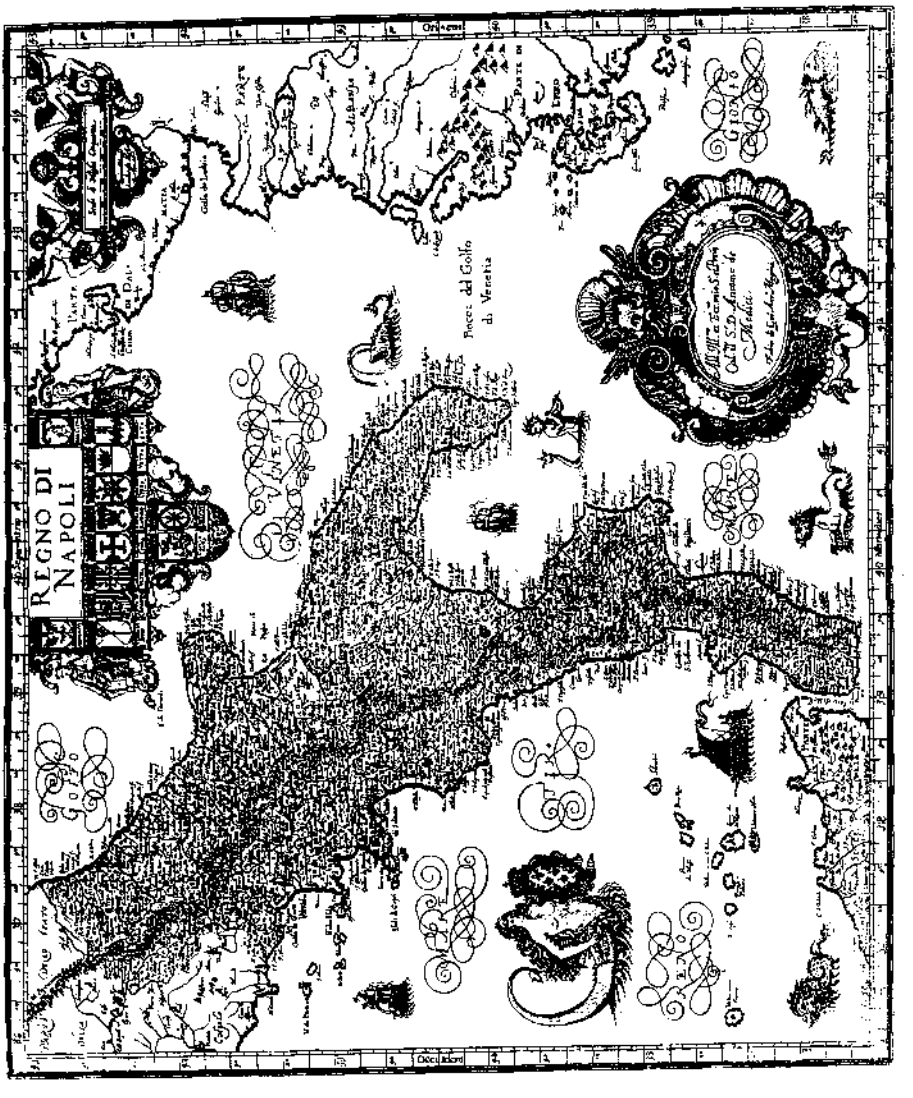
The Appennines, which split the Italian peninsula lengthwise from the southernmost tip of the Po Valley to the Messina Straits, slope down towards the sea on both sides in the South, reducing the amount of flat land. The further south they reach, the less suitable the soil becomes for agricultural purposes: wooded areas alternate with clayey soils which are unsuitable for sustaining tree cultivation and any other crop.

Leaving aside the area around Naples, the so-called *Terra di Lavoro*, which is relatively flat and fertile despite it having been covered for centuries by malaria-infested marshland, the only large plain in the Kingdom of Naples is the Apulian Table-land, the *Tavoliere di Puglia,* which was used for agriculture and livestock raising, especially sheep farming, up to the political unification of the country.[1]

Although it was later reorganised in the fifteenth century by the Aragonese kings, the *Tavoliere* had been part of the transhumance system since Roman times: flocks wintered there after having been brought down from the Abruzzi and Basilicata mountains. Hundreds of thousand, and at times over a million, sheep found food in the areas that were set aside for grazing, while the town of Foggia situated in the heart of the vast plain served as a market for the sale of wool and meat and for the payment of taxes.

Land lying on the edges of the vast area set aside for transhumance was often farmed. Similarly, in spring and summer the land used by flocks for grazing during the autumn and winter months was also farmed. However, the *Tavoliere* was characterised by the presence of large feudal estates where extensive farming was practised and in some areas water scarcity which meant that only certain crops such as olive-trees were suitable.

[1] There is extensive literature on the Apulian Tableland. Among the many studies available which are listed in the works of P. Di Cicco who has published five volumes on the documents of the Foggia Customs (P. Di Cicco, *L'Archivio del Tavoliere di Puglia*, (Rome, Ministero dei Beni Culturali) (1970-1991), 5 volumes, see D. Musto, *La Regia Dogana della Mena delle pecore di Puglia*, (Rome, Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato, 1964); G. Coniglio, *La Dogana di Foggia nel secolo XVII*, (Naples-Foggia-Bari, C.E.S.P. 1964); J.A. Marino, *Pastoral Economics in the Kingdom of Naples*, (Baltimore-London, The Johns Hopkins University Press 1988).


REGNO DI
NAPOLI
Golfo di Venetia
Occidente

2. To have an idea of the prodigious growth of Naples, which accounted for up to a tenth or more of the Kingdom's entire population, we should remember that, before becoming capital of the Kingdom, during the Swabian period (1253-1266), a reliable estimate set the population at about 35 thousand inhabitants. [2]

During Angevin rule the population continued to grow, despite periodic checks due to epidemics (1348, 1362, 1382, 1399, 1411, 1422), ranging between 40,000 and, in 1435, 6000 inhabitants.[3] Although the figures might be lacking in precision, the following table offers a revealing picture of the city's demographic growth [4] during its long history as a capital:

1266	35,000	1657	140,000	1804	443,000
1435	60,000	1688	187,000	1806	450,000
1458	75,000	1701	214,000	1812-1813	326,000
1494	118,000	1734	270,000	1815-1816	326,000
1501	125,000	1742	294,000	1819-1820	336,000
1528	155,000	1766	337,000	1835-1836	357,000
1547	212,000	1776	366,000	1836-1837	336,000
1606	226,000	1786	399,000	1861	447,000
1630	300,000	1797	438,000		
1656 (beginning)	365,000	1802	437,000		

The table shows that despite epidemics, earthquakes and wars, the Neapolitan population roughly doubled under the Aragonese (1441-1501) and again under Spanish rule (1503-1701), nothwithstanding the severe outbreak of plague in 1656, which decimated the population with more than 200 thousands deaths.[6] The population continued to grow significantly during Austrian occupation (1707-1734) and in the early Bourbon period (1734-1798). There was a slight fall in the growth rate during the period of the Parthenopean Republic (1799) and its aftermath, but with the return of the Bourbons in 1801 the population started to rise again and on the eve of Joseph Bonaparte's arrival (1806) it reached a peak of 450 thousand inhabitants.

The period of French rule was detrimental to population growth. In the ten years of French government the city lost over 100 thousand inhabitants, just under a third of its population. During the Second Restoration it began to

[2] G. Pardi, *Napoli attraverso i secoli. Disegno di storia economica e demografica*, (Milan- Rome-Naples, Albrighi, Segati e C. 1924), p. 34.
[3] *Ibid*, pp. 49-54.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 59-105.
[6] S. De Renzi, *Napoli nell'anno 1656*, (Naples, Celli editore 1968 edition).

increase again slowly but progress was severely checked by the 1836 cholera outbreak.[7] On the eve of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Naples (1860), its population had reached almost the level of 1806.

3. At the turn of the eighteenth century Naples towered over the other towns in the Kingdom in terms of population density. Only two towns - the industrial centres of Cava dei Tirreni and Nocera Inferiore, both situated in the Salerno province - had a population of 25,000 and 23,000 respectively; 35 centres had a population of between 10,000 and 20,000 but in most of these the inhabitants numbered between 10 and 15,000. Many towns had only a thousand or just over 10,000 inhabitants.[8]

It is significant that most of these centres were situated in Campania and in Apulia, which, as we have mentioned, were the two flattest areas in the country. In the rest of the Kingdom very small centres with around 1-2 thousand inhabitants prevailed, and in some places the population scarcely reached 500.[9] Considering that there were about 3,000 municipalities (*comuni*) in the Kingdom, those with a population of between 10 and 25,000 represented only a fraction of the total population.

Neither was Naples' outstanding demographic density matched in other Italian states: the population of the main cities (Rome, Venice, Milan etc.) did not reach even a third of the population of Naples.

On an international scale, Naples was one of the most densely populated cities in Europe. At the beginning of the sixteeenth century it was second only to Paris; a century later it was overtaken by London and in the course of the eighteenth century it became the fourth largest city, after Constantinople.[10]

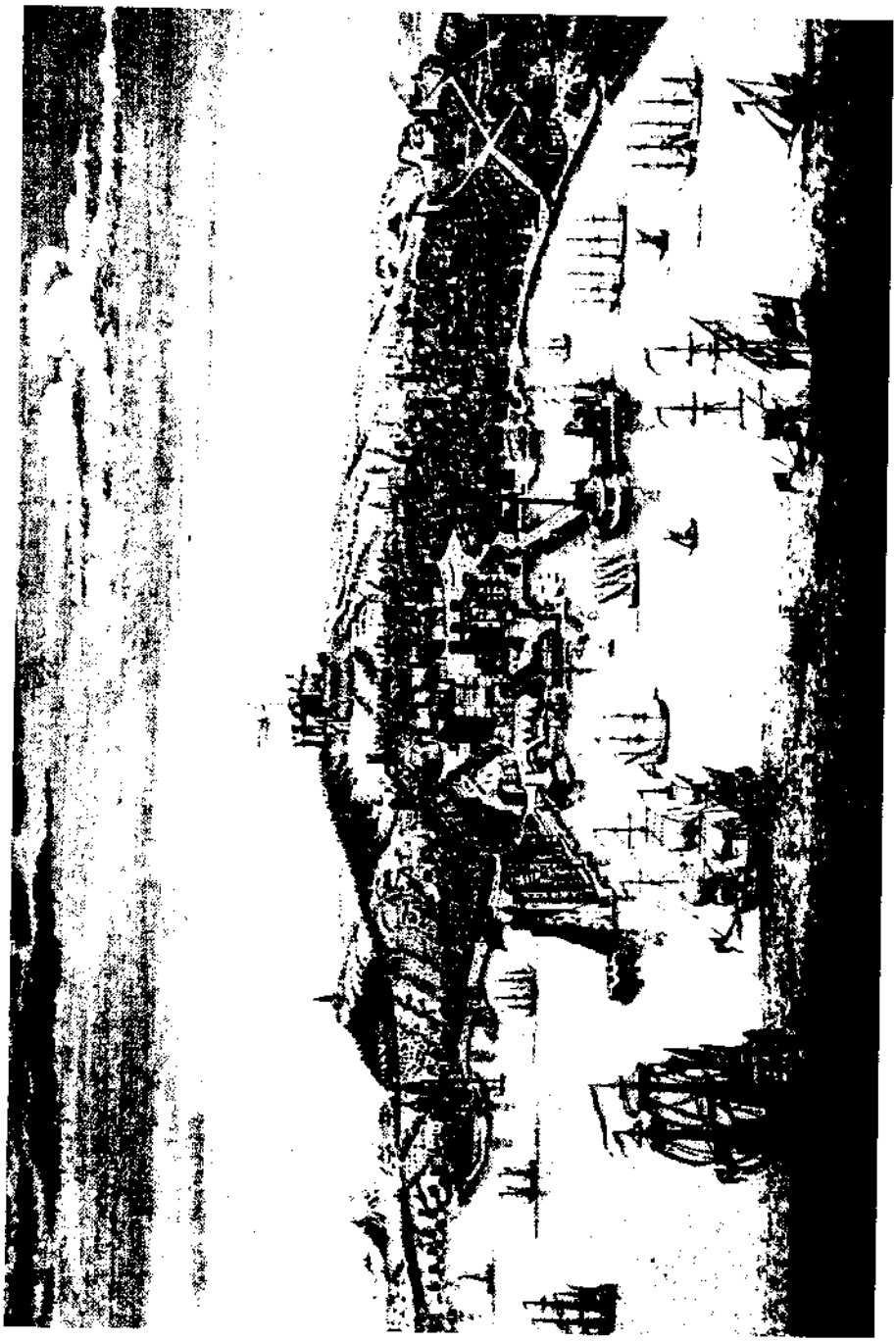
The population was spread over a large number of very small settlements, most of which were, to all intents and purposes, dormitories: peasants left at dawn to go and work in the fields which were often many kilometres away only to return home at dusk, worn out by their labours. This fact only served to aggravate the peasants' already wretched conditions and consequently the larger centres, especially the capital, became a magnet of attraction for

[7] A. Forti Messina, *Società ed epidemia. Il colera a Napoli nel 1836*, (Milano, Franco Angeli) 1979.

[8] These were: Afragola, Altamura, Andria, Arienzo, Avellino, Aversa, Bari, Barletta, Benevento, Bisceglie, Bitonto, Boscotrecase, Castellammare, Catanzaro, Chieti, Foggia, Francavilla Fontana, Gaeta, Gallipoli, Lanciano, Maddaloni, Martina, Martirano, Massafra, Ostuni, Ottaviano, Procida, Reggio, Rionero, Sansevero, Sarno, Scigliano, Taranto, Terlizzi, Torre del Greco.

[9] P. Villani, *Documenti e orientamenti per la storia demografica del Regno di Napoli nel Settecento*, (Rome, Istituto Storico Italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea, 1968), pp. 82 et seq.

[10] P.M. Hohemberg-L.M. Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe 1000-1950*, (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1985) p. 11.



Naples, about 1700

peasants seeking work and a better standard of living. Naples thus attracted a constant influx of people from the countryside. Moreover, since Naples had the only university in the Kingdom, students from well-to-do families in the provinces came to Naples to study. At the same time, as well as being the largest port in the Kingdom, it concentrated all the important export trade. Naples was also the seat of government and, ever since the beginning of the sixteenth century, people had migrated to the city in the hope of occupying important positions in the country's government, public administration, business and finance. Lastly, Naples' capacity to attract was increased by the fact that Neapolitans enjoyed special privileges, a very important one being the exemption from any kind of direct taxation.

4. The rapid increase in Naples' population in the first five years of Spanish rule laid bare the inadequacy of housing in the city.

In the first half of the sixteenth century the Viceroy Don Pedro de Toledo redesigned the lay-out of the city, extending the city walls in order to meet the growing demand for land to be used for housing. Work on the city walls was carried out in two phases. In the first, to the north, the walls situated between the gate of the so-called *Spirito Santo* (named after the nearby church) and the Alcala gate, later called *Reale* after the Royal Palace which was built there, were demolished.[11] In the second phase, in 1533, to the west of the city, the walls along present-day *Via Foria* were extended with the construction of the *Porta di S. Gennaro,* which still exists today.[12]

In this way the city gained a few more miles but as time went on and as the population grew, the area enclosed within the walls became too small. Owing to the law forbidding construction outside the walls, housing in the city became very crowded; gardens were used for building and, probably on account of the high cost of land, alley-ways and narrow lanes - many of which were only a few metres wide - replaced the streets and squares between the rows of houses.

Naples possessed no large *piazza* on which the main streets converged, although there were a number of large open spaces. The most famous was that of the *piazza maggiore* in the area of the main market (*Mercato grande*). This was originally uncultivated land. It was brought within the city walls in 1270 after King Corradino had been decapitated in 1268. The setting of many tragic public events, including a large number of executions, this was the place where Masaniello's rebellion began and also the square where the republicans were executed in 1799.

[11] C. Celano, *Notizie del bello, dell'antico e del curioso della città di Napoli divise dall'autore in dieci giornate per guida e comodo de' viaggiatori,* con aggiunzioni di G.B. Chiarini. Introductions by G. Doria and L. De Rosa and a note by B. Croce. Edited by A. Mozzillo, A. Profeta and F.P. Macchia,(Naples, E.S.I., 1970), vol II, pp. 1436 *et seq.*
[12] *Ibid.*, vol 1, pp. 50, 242.

Another large open space was *Largo del Castello* in front of *Castello angioino*, which was itself the scene of numerous historical events. It underwent no significant modification until the Restoration when *Palazzo S. Giacomo*, the seat of the Bourbon government, was designed and built, overlooking the square and the sea.

The third and last large open space was the area created after alterations were made to the city walls in the north. With the demolition of the walls around the Alcala gate an area where three convents - *Santa Croce, S. Luigi e Santo Spirito* were situated - was brought within the city. These convents were reduced to two (*S. Luigi* and *Santo Spirito*) alongside the square when the Royal Place was built at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Over the centuries parades and festivities were held in the square. No changes were made to it until the Second Restoration when King Ferdinand had the *basilica* of S. Francesco di Paola built on it in thanksgiving for the recovery of his Kingdom. Meanwhile one of the two convents was knocked down towards the end of the eighteenth century and was replaced by a building to serve as government offices. The other convent was demolished almost at the same time as the erection of the *basilica*, and was replaced by another building to be used as a royal guest house.[13]

5. Under Don Pedro de Toledo the physical aspect of Naples changed markedly from that which had characterised the city since Aragonese times. Don Pedro's policy for dealing with the nobles was partly responsible for bringing about such a transformation. In order to bring the nobility under the influence of the Court and to oblige it to reside in Naples, Don Pedro got nobles to build or rebuild their homes in the capital. As a result numerous buildings were erected which either occupied unbuilt areas or were built onto existing houses which did not have the same architectural value.

Already in the fifteenth century the construction of these buildings had damaged the pre-existing urban fabric of the city and had occasioned conflict between proprietors. However in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the building trend intensified and in the city there were "continual demolitions, alterations, with the elimination of weaker parties, conflict between churches and *palazzi*, fierce disputes between two buildings too near each other"[14]

Such uncontrolled individualism brought about, or made worse, Naples' urban disorder. It was only in the eighteenth century, through the work of artists like Vanvitelli, Vaccaro, Sanfelice, Fuga, Medrano, and Canevari, that the city began to transform the chaotic nature of its streets with the

[13] G. Doria, *I palazzi di Napoli*, edited by G. Alisio, with an essay by G. Labrot, (Naples, Edizione del Banco di Napoli 1986), p. 211.

[14] G. Labrot, *La committenza nobiliare e le sue fabbriche*, in G. Doria, *I palazzi di Napoli, op. cit.*, p. 27.

construction of buildings,which for the most part harmonised with the surroundings, including buildings of great value and architectural interest. However, since most of these buildings were constructed in the heart of the city and were scattered about various districts they did not create any kind of "West End". Naples was, perhaps, the only city in the world not to have an area that was exclusively residential. Behind, and sometimes next to buildings belonging to the well-to-do and the nobility, bad housing inhabited by poor people appeared which was often used for humble, if not precarious occupations.

The prohibition against building outside the city walls meant that the size and the population of different boroughs outside the city grew, as did their number. Writing in the period 1685-1692, Carlo Celano observed that seventy years earlier, that is in 1615-1622, the only boroughs were those of *S. Maria di Loreto, S. Antonio, Vergini* and *Chiaia*. Seventy years later, these boroughs had become densely populated and others had grown up: those of *Montagnola, S. Maria della Stella, Cappuccini, Materdei, Santo Spirito, Cesarea* and *Porta Medina*. [15]

These boroughs were situated outside some of the city gates and owe their origins and growth to the trade and business which developed around the gates. For example *S. Maria di Loreto* grew as a result of its proximity to *porta del Carmine*, near the main market or "piazza maggiore" where a large volume of transactions took place[16],especially in the food sector. It also benefited from the abundance of water, which had enabled the inhabitants to set up small industries like tanning and dyeing. The borough of *S. Antonio* developed as a result of its proximity to *porta Capuana*, crossed by busy traffic from the fertile Nola and Capuan countryside while the borough of the *Vergini*, which was spread over the *Valle dei Vergini*, centred on *porta di S. Gennaro*.

For business, work and other reasons, the inhabitants spent most of their time in the city and in order to have easier access they opened passages through the city walls, despite the law forbidding them from doing so. The most famous of these were what were later to become *porta d'Alba* (1625) and *porta Medina* (1640).

A large number of hamlets surrounded Naples and these boroughs, some of which were small towns in their own right, like Torre del Greco and Marano[17]. They had very close ties with Naples, supplying the city with agricultural products or raw materials in exchange for industrial goods which they

[15] C. Celano, *op. cit*, vol. I, pp. 6, 50, 52, 59-60.

[16] L. De Rosa, *Studi sugli arrendamenti del Regno di Napoli. Aspetti della distribuzione della ricchezza mobiliare nel Mezzogiorno continentale (1649-1806)*, (Naples, l'Arte Tipografica 1958), pp. 145, et seq.

[17] Cf.D. Chianese, *I casali antichi di Napoli*, (Naples 1938); C. De Seta, *I casali di Napoli*, (Rome-Bari, Laterza 1984), pp. 18 *et seq*.

were unable to manufacture for themselves. They benefited greatly from their proximity to the capital (10-20 kms) and received special concessions in the form of tax exemptions[18] from the Spanish Viceroys who wanted to avoid overcrowding within the city and wanted to stop the city from expanding beyond its walls and forbid the construction of new houses within them.

6. Apart from the addition of a few gates, from the time of the Viceroy Don Pedro until the end of the eighteenth century the city walls remained unaltered. Then the surge in population growth broke down every impediment to expansion beyond the walls. In some places the walls were demolished to make room for dwellings and work-shops and sometimes they were incorporated into new buildings. The gates and towers alongside the walls had a similar fate, although some of them were preserved.

Apart from the city walls, Naples was the only city in Europe to be defended by five castles. Their positions cast light on the reasons dictating the city's urban layout and structure and reveal the criteria dictating its fortification. Naples was surrounded by hills on two sides, by the sea on one side while on the fourth side, to the east, it opened onto the vast and highly accessible plains of Capua and Nola. Therefore its rulers sought to strengthen the city walls around the areas which were most exposed by building castles[19].

At the end of the ninth century, when Naples was the capital of a Duchy, *Castel dell'Ovo* was built. In the twelfth century the Normans decided to increase the fortifications, even though it was not the capital city, and a second castle was built to defend it from attacks from the Capuan and Nola plains. This was *Castelcapuano*, named after *Porta Capuana*, which was situated nearby. Yet once the Angevins had raised the city to the status of capital, they set out to bolster its sea defences and erected *Castello del Carmine* - after the nearby church - alongside the sea in the southern part of the city and *Castelnuovo* or *Castel angioino*, in the western part of the city. The last castle - *Castel Sant'Elmo* - was built in the sixteenth century by the Spaniards, replacing a fort which had been built by the Angevins on the hill overlooking Naples, both to strengthen the city's defences and to remind the Neapolitan population of the perils of insurrection.[20]

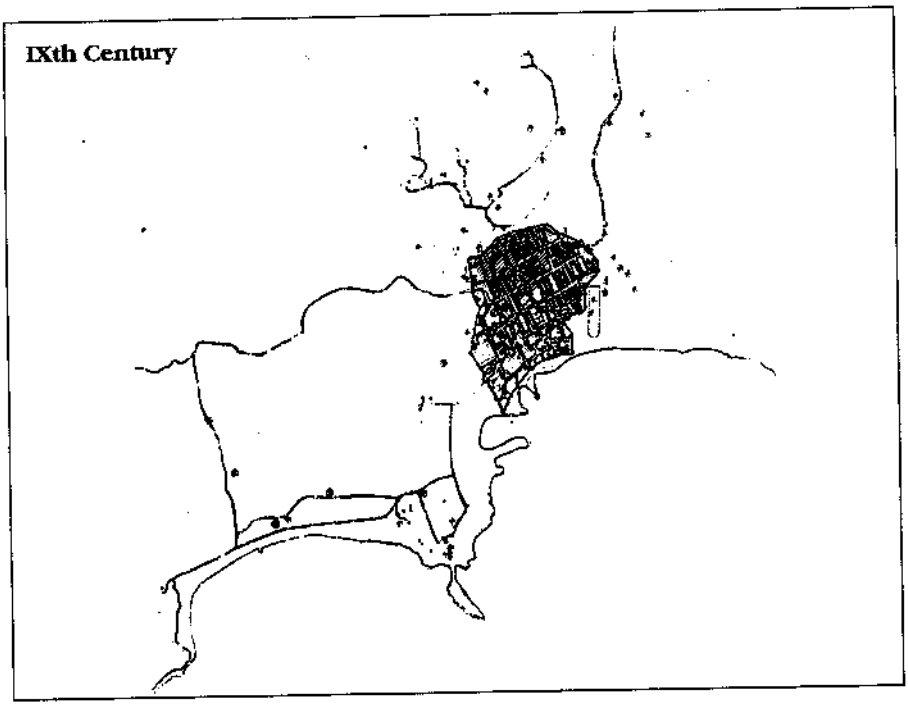
At different times the castles were lived in by the King or Viceroy. For example a branch of the Angevin family inhabited *Castelnuovo*, as did the Aragonese; another branch of the Angevins resided at *Castelcapuano* while the Spanish Viceroy Cardinal Zapata resided at *Castel S. Elmo*.

Unlike the walls which were demolished as the city expanded, the five

[18] C. De Seta, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[19] A. Cirillo, *Castelcapuano. I luoghi, le storie, i personaggi di spada e di toga*, (Naples, Fausto Fiorentino 1994), p. 18.

[20] C. Celano, *op. cit*, vol III, pp. 1608 et seq.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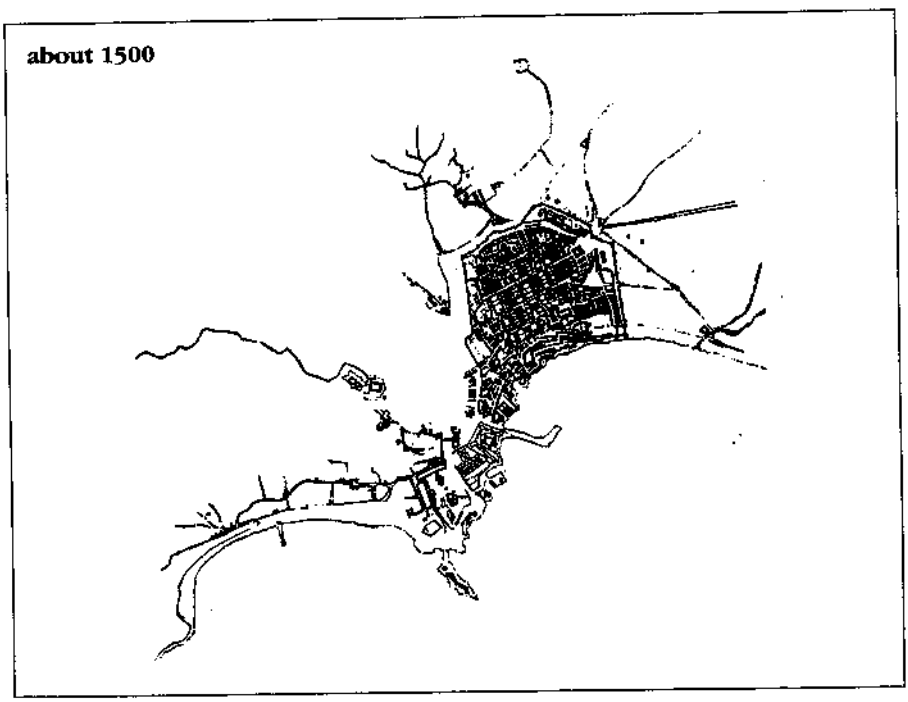
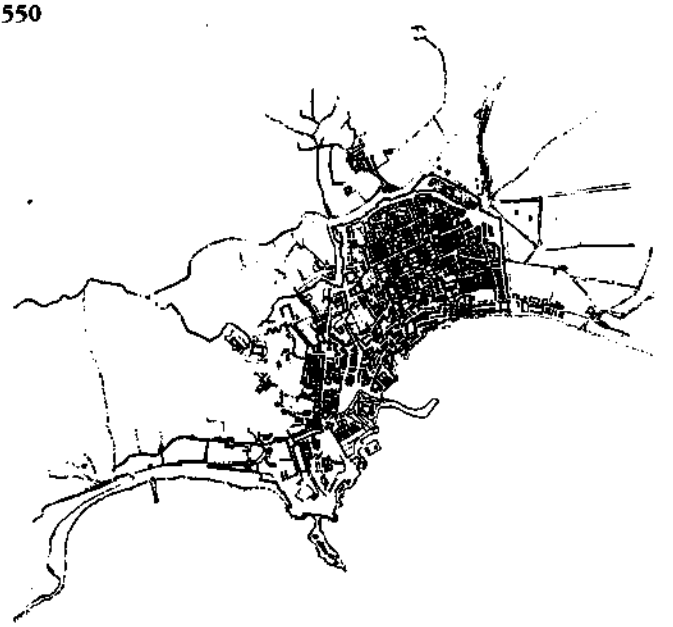

about 1500

about 1550



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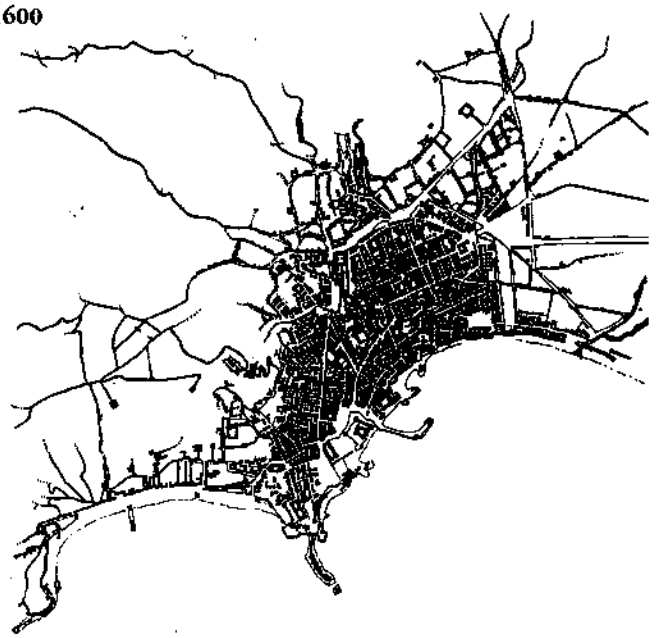

about 1750

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castles survived, although not all of them kept their original function. *Castelcapuano*, for example, was turned into *Palazzo dei Regi Tribunali* by Don Pedro de Toledo which housed the central financial and administrative authorities, the civil and criminal courts as well as one of the city prisons. *Castel del Carmine* was dismantled, leaving two towers and a fourteenth-century wall.

7. These five castles were always guarded by soldiers. While only a few soldiers were garrisoned inside *Castel dell'Ovo* (often used as a prison, as during the Risorgimento revolutions), there was a much large body of soldiers garrisoned inside *Castello Angioino* which guarded the area alongside the port up to *Castello del Carmine*. Hundreds of soldiers guarded *Castel S. Elmo*, the fortress on the hill which was at that time covered by vegetation and was almost uninhabited. The castle was armed by a large number of cannons and various kinds of artillery and contained the soldiers' barracks, stables, its own water tank, millstones for flour grinding, ovens for bread-making and rooms for ammunition and bullet-making.

Until 1651, the barracks that housed the regiments of Spanish soldiers despatched to Naples were situated outside the city in the area between the city walls and the hill slopes, although many soldiers found lodgings "scattered in various houses... belonging to women who had gathered there in large numbers." After 1651, and especially after 1668, the soldiers were transferred to the other hill overlooking the sea and *Castello dell'Ovo* at Pizzofalcone to put an end to the soldiers' cohabitation with prostitutes. Thus, up to the mid-eighteenth century the "Spanish district", that is to say, the military district, with its own hospital, occupied the area known as Pizzofalcone and its surroundings. These included a large area stretching from the lower slopes of the hill on which *Castel S. Elmo* was situated to the area in front of *Castel dell'Ovo*. Nonetheless, the soldiers continued to linger in the city in their free time, frequenting wine bars and taverns and people of low station.

According to Benedetto Croce, towards the end of the seventeenth century, almost at the end of Spanish rule, there were about 5-6,000 Spanish soldiers in Naples, stationed in the city's prisons, quarters and fortresses. But in periods of tension and above all in the period before the kingdom of Naples entered the Thirty Years War, the number of Spanish soldiers in Naples increased to over 10,000, and was to increase to around 16-17,000 during the Austrian occupation of the Kingdom (1707-1733)[21]. We also have to take account of about 3,000 officers and crews who arrived in Naples on the Spanish galleys (from 1707 on board Austrian ships and from 1734 on board Bourbon vessels) which

[21] Ch. L. de Montesquieu, in *Mia cara Napoli. Due secoli di testimonianze d'eccezione sulla città*, edited by A. Filippetti, preface by C. De Seta, (Naples, Infrasud 1986), p. 31.

stopped at the port and stayed in the city for about four months every year during the winter[22]. Lastly there were the sailors employed on tartans, *marticane,* feluccas and other merchant vessels, who stayed in the city for short periods in between voyages and often fraternised with each other in taverns and wine bars.

The presence of so many soldiers and sailors in the city often led to tension with the Neapolitans and, since many were armed with swords and guns, despite the law forbidding people to carry weapons, fights broke out leading to bloodshed.

8. Before becoming capital of the Kingdom, Naples occupied an area which in topographical terms resembled very closely that of the Greek-Roman period with the urban lay-out based on the two major *decumani.*

The city walls which defended Naples from the sea were built a few metres away from the shore, although maritime occupations and ship-building were more common among the inhabitants of the nearby islands of Procida and Ischia and among the population of the small coastal settlements outside the city limits, like Gaeta, Pozzuoli, Torre del Greco and Castellammare, as well as the Amalfi coast.

When Naples became capital of the Aragonese Kingdom, and especially after the Spanish occupation, it expanded towards the sea. This was not only because the sea was the main means of communication and because both foreign and domestic trade was conducted by sea, given the conditions of the Kingdom's roads and rivers, but also because Naples was surrounded by hills which did not allow it to expand towards the interior. Although there were some episodes of development near the hills, especially during the eighteenth century, even under the Bourbons city expansion was markedly on the seaward side. Thus it was inevitable that the coastal strip lying between *borgo Loreto* and *Castello del Carmine,* on one side, and at *Largo del Castello,* on the other one, should become densely populated and bustling with activity which was mostly connected to the trade carried on along the quays and wharves in the port.

9. Since Angevin times, the port of Naples had continued to expand. Under the Aragonese its foundations were deepened and towers and lanterns were added. Later it was divided into two moles: the *molo piccolo* and *molo grande.* The former was used for local trade and for unloading the city's provisions while the latter was used for international trade and by warships.

Under Spanish occupation the importance of the port of Naples grew and the movement of shipping continually increased. In the middle of the

[22] L. De Rosa, "Tra i fulgori e le ombre del Viceregno" in *La fabbrica delle navi,* edited by A. Fratta, Electa, (Naples 1990).

sixteenth century there were as many as ten large galleons and thirty galleys riding at anchor, fourteen of which were Neapolitan[23].

The exportation and importation of most of the foodstuffs and goods consumed or produced in the city and the provinces alike were carried on through the port of Naples, which was therefore the arrival and departure point of all fleets operating in the Mediterranean. According to the commercial weight exercised by each country, in the course of time, ships from Calalonia, Provence, Genoa, Venice, Rome, Leghorn, Ragusa, Spain, France, the Greek-Ottoman Empire, Britain, Denmark and Russia frequented the port[24]. Some of these countries built their own warehouses and premises there and when they had become sufficiently established, the streets and squares in which they had been built were named after them such as *rua Catalana, loggia dei Genovesi* and *via dei Fiorentini*. Moreover, the largest foreign mercantile communities also built churches, including the Italian or Pisan Church[25], the Florentine Church[26], the Genoese Church[27], the Spanish Church[28], the Lombard Church[29], the Greek Church[30], the German Church[31].

The growth in the importance of the port of Naples was closely linked to its ties with Spain. Not surprisingly, therefore, when Spain and Italy began to decline, it too was affected, even though in times of war - such as the Thirty Years War and the Messina War (1674-1678) - the port continued to be busy. When Charles the Bourbon ascended to the Neapolitan throne (1734), the port revived considerably. Apart from encouraging the growth of a merchant navy, Charles ordered the construction of a large number of warships, restoring the Neapolitan arsenal and docks to a high level of activity. At the same time, the port was restructured and enlarged, its quays were connected to one another by new roads and a new building was erected to house the Maritime Health Authority[32].

[23] L. De Rosa, *La fabbrica delle navi*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[24] L. De Rosa, "Navi, merci, nazionalità, itinerari in un porto dell'età preindustriale. Il porto di Napoli nel 1760", in AA.VV., *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento*, (Napoli, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici 1968), pp. 332 et seq.

[25] The Church of S. Giacomo degli Italiani was built as a votive offering by the Republic of Pisa in 1238. Cf. C. Celano, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 1385.

[26] The Church of S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini was built in 1557. *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 1461.

[27] The Church of S. Giorgio dei Genovesi was built towards the end of the sixteenth century. *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 1406.

[28]The Church of S. Giacomo degli Spagnoli was built in the sixteenth century. *Ibid.* vol. III, pp. 14.

[29] The Church of S. Anna dei Lombardi was built towards the end of the sixteenth century. *Ibid.*., vol. II, p. 866

[30] The Church of SS. Pietro e Paolo dei Greci was built in 1518. *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 1445, 1460.

[31] The Church of S. Maria delle Anime della Nazione tedesca was built in 1586. *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 1297.

[32] A. Formicola-C. Romano. "Il periodo borbonico" in *La fabbrica delle navi*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

The military fleet continued to expand after the departure of Charles for Spain. By the end of the eighteenth century its presence in the Mediterranean had grown so much as to attract the attention of the British[33]. Although trade declined during the Continental System, the arsenal and docks continued to develop under French rule. Indeed since France was a technologically advanced nation, French "ideas, technology and work methods" led to a "qualitative leap forward in all areas of Neapolitan ship-building"[34].

In the period following the second Bourbon Restoration(1815), while the merchant navy grew and the military marine was somewhat reduced in size, steamships began to appear more frequently in the port of Naples, none of which, however, had been built in Neapolitan shipyards.

10. Apart from the port, the other focal point along the coast was the main market. Not only was it the centre of most of the city's trade but a wide range of artisanal and commercial activities was performed there.

The most important crafts of the city were carried on in the streets and alleyways which were either near to the market or connected to it. These were the woollen and silk industries which, after having declined in the fourteenth century, were encouraged by the Aragonese Kings and revived with the help of artisans from Florence, Catalonia, Spain, Genoa and Milan. Woollen manufacture, however, suffered a decline in the sixteenth century while the silk industry entered its golden period.

Unlike the woollen industry, the silk industry was not named after any particular street since silk manufacture was spread over a large area, especially in the district near to the main market called *rione dell'Orto del Conte*. Here there were numerous workshops where spinning and weaving machines were operated by men, women and children of all ages[35].

Although raw silk was produced in various provinces, especially in Calabria, silk manufacture soon became concentrated in Naples for reasons of domestic consumption and to facilitate its exportation[36], since the port of Naples was more suited to handling international trade. During the sixteenth century it has been estimated that in some years more than a million *libre* of silk arrived in Naples from the provinces and "at least 400 thousand were woven by manufacturers in the city who employed many people. "However, silk was manufactured not only in workshops but also at home[37]. Towards the

[33] The Neapolitan Navy had become "una realtà tangibile tanto da attirare l'attenzione dell'Inghilterra". *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[35] L. De Rosa, "The De-industrialisation of the Kingdom of Naples in the XVIth and XVIIth Centuries" in H. Van Der Wee, *The Rise and Decline of Urban Industries in Italy in the Low Countries (Late Middle Ages-Early Modern Times)*, (Leuven, Leuven University Press 1988), p. 133.

[36] M. Bussagli, *La seta in Italia*, (Rome Editalia), 1986, pp. 147-148, 165.

[37] Cf. L. De Rosa, ("*The Deindustrialisation etc.*", *op. cit.*, p. 128).

end of the sixteenth century and at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in order to save on labour costs, the tasks of spinning and weaving were given to people to perform in their own homes. Such people lived either in the city itself or in areas outside the city.

Even though it was not best-quality silk, because the much-lamented lack of effective twisting-machines prevented the manufacture of excellent thread, the silk was sold at a fairly good price[38]. In fact, some of it, especially the silk which was dyed black, was in great demand abroad. In the early decades of the seventeenth century, the market for black silk stretched from Spain to Poland[39], including Central European markets. Then, just like the woollen industry in the previous century, the silk industry slowly declined in the seventeenth century. It came under pressure due to the competition from foreign products that were cheaper and more in keeping with new fashions, and by the end of the seventeenth century one of the markets which had been one of the most important centres of the silk trade, *Piazza degli Armieri*, was "reduced to a corner with a few merchants who sold more foreign cloth than local cloth[40]". There is no need to add that the *Arte della Seta* (silk manufacturers' guild), like the *Arte della Lana* (woollen manufacturers' guild), had its own law court, legal authorities and prisons. In addition, the *Arte della Seta* boasted its own majestic church, a sign of its wealth, and had founded an important *conservatorio* for orphans of *maestri* (masters) of the guild[41].

Subsequently, neither of these two guilds managed successfully to undergo processes of renewal and return to their former glory, although some attempts were made in this direction, especially in the Bourbon period. King Ferdinand IV, for example, in the second half of the eighteenth century, founded a royal silk-factory at San Leucio, near Caserta, while Murat's government tried hard to revive the woollen industry, but without success. It was only after the second Restoration of the Bourbons that the government promoted a recovery of the woollen industry by making soldiers, sailors, courtiers and bureaucrats use woollen cloth manufactured in the Kingdom, using even prisoners as an additional work-force[42].

[38] M. Bussagli, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-166.

[39] R. Mazzei, *Traffici e uomini di affari in Polonia nel Seicento*, (Milan, Franco Angeli 1983), p. 26.

[40] BNN, Mss XI-D-18, pp. 43-45.

[41] Almost all the *Arti* (guilds), including the smallest ones, had their own church. For further information on these churches, their foundation and whereabouts cf. Celano, *op. cit.*, vol. III, *Sub Nomine*. In Naples there were more than 300 churches, and many chapels and monasteries. Moreover, a considerable part of the city's real estate belonged to churches, monasteries, confraternities and chapels.

[42] L. De Matteo, *Governo, credito e industria laniera nel Mezzogiorno. Da Murat alla crisi post-unitaria*, (Naples, Istituto Italiano per gli studi Filosofici 1984), pp. 110 et. seq.

As well as woollen manufacturers and silk manufacturers, other categories of craftsmen were present in the market: *parrettari* (who made bullets for cross-bows), *campagnari* (who made bells), *zappari* (who made hoes, shovels and spades), *casciari* (who made crates, chests and trunks), *giubbonari* (who made jackets), *zabatteria* (where a number of leather-working crafts and shoe-making were concentrated), and *catari* (who made wooden bowls).

11. Another craft was located between the main market and the small mole: that of the goldsmiths. Their district consisted of a church, squares, streets and alleys all called after them. Their art had already reached a high standard in the fourteenth century, but the greatest work was produced in the centuries that followed. Gold was generally worked in the home, but products were sold in small shops that lined the district[43]. In the sixteenth century, there were more than 300 registered *maestri* (masters), not counting the workers, apprentices, boys and members of the family associated with their work-shops or involved in their work. There were more than twice as many *maestri* in the seventeenth century, when the Viceroys decided to concentrate silver-working in Naples[44].

The fashion for artistically embossed or chased silver and gold plate caught on gradually in rich countries, especially in Spain, France and England, and demand increased as the Baroque style spread. It has been recognised that, together with Sicily, Naples was one of the most important manufacturing centres in Europe in this sector, and gold and silver worked in Naples, often in a vivid figurative style which was constantly changing, were exported all over Europe, but especially to Spain and throughout the Spanish Empire. The Roman Catholic Church, prone to "the showy pomp decreed by the Counter Reformation" helped to establish the predominance of silver "in altar hangings, statues, picture frames and liturgical furnishings etc."[45].

Not far from the goldsmiths' district was to be found the district around the small mole and the inner harbour - or *mandracchio* - which was reclaimed between the first and second world wars. Here trade predominated, goods were loaded and unloaded, especially fat or dirty goods, as well as animals for slaughter.

In the maze of alleys round the port, ship-owners, sailors, stevedores, carriers, insurers and porters were to be found, together with a number of craftsmen who had their workshops there. These included *chiavettieri* (who made keys and locks), *lanzieri* (who made spears and swords), *canestrari* (who made wicker baskets), and *scoppettieri* (who made arquebuses and

[43] G. Doria, *Le strade di Napoli*, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

[44] B. Molajoli, in E. and C. Catello, *Argenti napoletani dal XVI al XIX secolo*, (Naples, Giannini 1973), p. 16.

[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 60 *et seq.*

pistols). There were also taverns, inns, and *friggitorie* (fried-food shops), and government buildings like the royal tobacco factory. In the eighteenth century the Bourbons erected a special building on the quay, later called the *immacolatella*, which housed a law court, the *Deputazione della Salute* (health authority) and the *Comando del Porto* (port authority)[46].

12. The open space on the other side of the port, *Largo del Castello*, beyond which were the docks and the arsenal, was one of the most characteristic and interesting places in the city.

Both because of its proximity to the arsenal and the docks and because of the various categories of people that were connected with port activities (shipowners, insurers, bankers, money-changers and sailors), *Largo del Castello* was thronged with such a colourful and lively crowd that it had become "one of the most characteristic places in Europe, described, sung about, sketched and painted thousands of times", so much so that - according to one text - to recall its history and describe the *piazza* over the centuries would require "too many pages"[47].

The human fauna found there was very varied: amongst the craftsmen, jugglers, pedlars and adventurers, there were a great many seafarers, drawn by the numerous hotels, taverns, inns and brothels of various levels, the latter being hidden in the alleys that led off the *Largo*. The *Largo* was bordered on one side by the sea, on another by one end of the Angevin Castle and many huts that had sprung up round it like mushrooms, on a third side by Church of *San Giacomo* and the bank of the same name which became *Banco delle Due Sicilie* after 1808, and on the fourth side by a theatre, *Teatro del Fondo*. The *Largo* boasted other theatres including the San Carlo opera house which the Bourbon King, Charles III, opened in 1737[48].

13. The coastal strip from *Castello del Carmine* to *Largo del Castello* was one of the busiest and liveliest areas in the city, and was made up of a network of extremely narrow roads and alleys with very few wider roads or squares. It is therefore easy to understand why housing was of a low standard.

Most apartments were small, almost always with dark rooms, no ventilation and no sanitation; other apartments were divided amongst families that were nearly always large, with shared or almost non-existent sanitary arrangements, and water that had to be drawn at the one little fountain in the courtyard etc.

The *bassi* were even worse, especially those downtown: they were

[46] G. Doria, *Le strade di Napoli*, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

[47] Ibid., pp. 315-316.

[48] Cf. *Il Teatro di San Carlo*, (Naples, Electa 1987), 3 volumes: 1. F. Mancini, *La storia, la struttura*, pp. 180; 2. edited by B. Cagli and A. Ziino, *L'opera, il ballo*, pp. 344; 3. F. Mancini, *Le scene, i costumi*, pp. 214.

rooms that opened onto the street and contained a bed, a stove, a well, a lavatory when there was one, and sometimes even a spinning-wheel or a hand-loom.

The general living conditions of this part of the city were made even worse by storehouses (*fondaci*) which, for the most part, consisted of an entrance with no door that led into a courtyard with small windowless rooms. When the Kingdom fell into decline and the centres of trade moved away, the storehouses had lost their original purpose as storehouses for goods. Left empty, these rooms had become homes for the very poor and for social outcasts, and had gradually sunk into indescribable sanitary conditions.

To ease the situation, Charles III built a paved road along the coast. This road went through the whole of the port area and continued through the coastal towns to Portici, where the King had had *Villa La Favorita* built beside the sea. The road was called *La Marinella*: its building began in 1740 and it did not take many years to complete. It became famous because the workshops along it housed artisans who produced ceramics, majolica ware and terracotta used in the eighteenth century and later for flooring in apartments, as well as for decorating walls: these work-shops produced the famous majolica-tiled cloister attached to the great Angevin-Gothic church of Santa Chiara, which is today one of Naples' finest monuments.

As building went ahead, many storehouses were demolished. However, just before the Unification of Italy, there were still about one hundred left. Only after the heavy toll of the 1884 cholera epidemic, when about 10,000 people died, did slum clearance begin; houses with adequate sanitation were built, existing roads were widened and new roads were built, connected to a main road.

14. The part of the city in and around the *Tribunali* (law courts), i.e. around the ancient *Castelcapuano*, was another characteristic and, for various reasons, an important district. Judges, clerks of the court, guards, scribes, *razionali* (accountants), relatives of prisoners, secretaries, butlers, menservants, grooms and coachmen all thronged the district. One factor that contributed to making other people flock to the area was that judges could take decisions at their own home on law-suits to the value of two *once*, with interlocutory decrees, as the sentences were written in the law-courts, and it was possible to appeal against them[49]. And in fact many lawyers and magistrates, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but also later, at least until the Unification of Italy, had had houses built in the so-called *Via dei Tribunali*. There were also offices belonging to notaries, procurators and actuaries[50].

[49] C. Capaccio, *Il forestiero*, (Naples, Luca Torre Editore 1989), (1st edition 1634), vol. II, p. 423.

[50] L. De Rosa, *Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo tra crescita e decadenza*, (Milan, Mondadori - Il Saggiatore 1987), pp. 89 *et seq.*

The *Monte e Banco dei Poveri* was opposite the law-courts. It opened in the early seventeenth century and continued until 1808, when it became a branch of *Banco delle Due Sicilie*. And so a lot of merchants, craftsmen and entrepreneurs had reason to come to the district, as well as clerks who worked in or had dealings with the bank. There was always a great bustle of priests, friars and ecclesiastics connected with the churches, monasteries and confraternities in the district, and the faithful came and went for religious ceremonies. In 1587, a hospital, *Ospedale della Pace*, had been opened in *Via dei Tribunali*, and so there were patients, doctors, nuns and nurses thronging the area. Not far away, in an almost parallel street, was *Casa dell'Annunziata*, which took in babies that were abandoned outside its doors; it was also a hospital and, until 1701, a bank.

The continuation of one of the great Graeco-Roman *decumans* and an obligatory thoroughfare for the boroughs beyond *Porta Capuana* or *Porta Nolana*, as well as for the villages on the Nola and Capua plain, *Via dei Tribunali* was lined on both sides by work-shops. The alleys and lanes leading off it were just as crowded with shops and houses.

Both the *decumans* (lower and upper) were thoroughfares that linked the north and the south of the city, and so streets with people and animals milling along them continuously. Various crafts were practised on the *decumans*, and work-shops were to be found among the baronial *palazzi* that had been built over the years. The lower *decuman*, *via San Biagio dei Librai*[51], was so called because, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it used to be teeming with bookshops, and hence with printers, paper-makers, bookbinders and gilders. The first pawnshop, *Monte di Pietà*, and the bank of the same name, founded in 1539, was on the lower *decuman* and crowds of people would go there to pawn or redeem their possessions. Further along the same street, in the *piazza* with the great church and convent of the Dominican friars and several noteworthy buildings belonging to the aristocracy, there was another bank, *Banco del Salvatore*, which also accounted for considerable hustle and bustle until it closed down in the early nineteenth century. In the same street was the new, majestic Jesuit church (*Palazzo Sanseverino* had been confiscated and transformed into this church for the Jesuits) which was very well-attended, *Palazzo Filomarino*, belonging to cardinal Filomarino, where G.B. Vico had been a tutor, and the residence of the Venetian ambassador to the Court of Naples.

At the end of the lower *decuman* were the Church, the Conservatorio and *Banco dello Spirito Santo* which led into Via Toledo. This latter road connected *Palazzo dei Regi Studi*, built at the beginning of the eighteenth century for the faculties of the University of Naples, and the Royal Palace.

[51] V. Gleijeses, *Spaccanapoli e il centro storico*, (Cava dei Tirreni, Di Mauro editore 1983).

Via Toledo, with its other churches, convents and important buildings, was always crowded with people, who were sometimes there to take part in the processions and ceremonies that took place in that street. The presence of the Roman Catholic Church was marked throughout the city with its principal religious orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, Theatines, Jesuits, Carmelites and so on). There was a large number of churches and monasteries, as well as a huge number of confraternities and chapels, some of which were private chapels. Some philanthropic organisations which were very widespread in the city from the sixteenth century, such as *Monti di Pietà, Monti di Misericordia*, hospitals and Conservatori, sprang from the Church's action and preaching.

15. As the capital, at times an independent kingdom (with the Angevins, the Aragonese and the Bourbons) and at other times a province governed by a viceroy (of the Spanish and then the Austrian Empire), Naples was home to many diplomats, members of the administrative, political and ecclesiastical hierarchy, financiers and bankers, experts and professionals in various sectors and masters of various crafts, i.e. representatives of all those sectors which every capital requires to sustain fittingly its complex role. These experts, politicians and artists were not always Neapolitan by birth. Indeed, it may be said that the most important jurists, magistrates, administrators, artists and musicians came from the other provinces of the Kingdom, and even from abroad, as in the case of Bernardo Tanucci during the reign of Charles III.

As in every capital, in Naples too there were opposing parties, factions and opinion groups. When it was a capital, Naples was always divided into two fronts: those who supported the government and those who opposed it. Often there were bloody clashes; these led at times to varying degrees of repression, e.g. the conspiracy of the barons in the late fifteenth century, the Macchia conspiracy in the early eighteenth century, the 1799 Republic and the revolts of 1848.

16. As has been said, the University of Naples was the only university in Southern Italy from 1224, the year of its foundation by Frederick II, until after Unification. For many centuries there were few faculties: Medicine, heir to the ancient School of Medicine in Salerno, Law and so on. In the early nineteenth century, an Engineering Faculty was founded, followed by a Faculty of Veterinary Science, and then the University went on increasing in size and in the number of subjects taught. The presence of the University in the city meant that, as well as students, the greatest minds and the most learned scholars of the Kingdom came to Naples. Although the level of cultural tradition was not always uniform, and glorious periods were followed by less glorious ones, it ought to be emphasised that not only Thomas Aquinas taught in Naples, but also philosophers of the calibre of Giordano Bruno, Bernardino Telesio, Tommaso Campanella and G. B. Vico spent part of or all their lives in the city.

Men such as Antonio Serra and Carl'Antonio Broggia, who between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries contributed to the progress of economic theory in several aspects, were products of Naples. The first chair of political economy in the whole of Europe was created in Naples in 1754 and the first person to hold it was Antonio Genovesi. Naples has the merit of having given Europe, and not only Europe, the sharp intellect of Abbot Galiani, and the highly competent legal scholar, Gaetano Filangieri, men round whom a profusion of other great minds flourished which, as has been recognised, [52]made the eighteenth century in Naples one of the Enlightenment's most prestigious periods in the whole of Europe.

17. The government, the Church, the aristocracy and the various middle-classes which, according to the period, were made up of lawyers, bankers, merchants and, very rarely, industrialists, continued to foster the arts in their various branches. And so there was a constant procession of painters - Giotto, Caravaggio, Ribera, Solimena, Hackert and the Posillipo School, etc. who found patrons in Naples working for the Court, the Church, private citizens and city authorities, as circumstances dictated. Architects and sculptors too, such as Fanzago, Fuga, Sanfelice and Vanvitelli, found constant opportunities for work and gratification. Writers came to Naples, starting with Boccaccio, who spent an important period of his life in the city. Renaissance poets such as Pontano and Sannazzaro lived in Naples. Torquato Tasso came to Naples and stayed to write some of his works; Cervantes was fascinated by the city's colour; Goethe spent memorable days in Naples. But it was above all in the field of music that Naples was really important. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Naples, with its *conservatori* created a school of music at a European level, a school which was a "must" for young musicians who wanted to specialise. Through the school musical composition flourished. Eighteenth-century Neapolitan *opera buffa* is still performed with success in theatres all over the world. The names of Pergolesi, Cimarosa, Joppolo, Paisiello and Scarlatti are world-famous. The greatest composers of opera in the first half of the nineteenth century, Rossini, Donizetti and Verdi, worked in Naples, lured by the eighteenth-century San Carlo opera house, where many of their masterpieces were performed.

However, at the same time, alongside so many academics, men of culture and politicians, hordes of humble folk flocked to Naples from the immediate hinterland and from the countryside and mountains of the Abruzzi, Lucania and Calabria. These people were almost always totally illiterate, driven by the mirage that the capital could offer them better living conditions. And, of course, just like the aforementioned famous people, the country-folk had to tramp the streets of the city and hang about in the harassing search for work. It was this horde of immigrants, this mixed and

[52] J. A. Schumpeter, *Storia dell'analisi economica*, Turin, Einaudi, 1959, vol. I, p. 214.

wretched rabble that, more than any other social class, made a deep impression on foreign visitors to Naples.

18. Famous for its natural and monumental beauty and its artistic and cultural traditions, especially from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, and most of all after excavating began at Pompeii and Herculaneum, Naples was visited by many illustrious tourists. Colbert and Cervantes came in the seventeenth century and were followed by many intellectuals, statesmen, aristocrats and artists who could not resist the thrill of seeing Naples. Visitors left no corner unexplored once Naples became part of the *Grand Tour*, an essential stage in the education of the offspring of the European ruling classes. The city was the object of critical research, and as well as studying its archaeological remains, its streets, its *palazzi*, its monuments, the riches of its churches and its scenery and colours, visitors did not refrain from passing judgement on its inhabitants.

An eighteenth-century English writer and traveller, John Addison, for example, had no hesitation in writing that Neapolitans "had always been famous for lives given over to laziness and pleasure", because "for them work was not necessary"[53]. Addison was generalising; more importantly, he did not realise that it was not a matter so much of "laziness" as of lack of work, and in many cases a lack of a permanent roof over one's head, which is why so many poor wretches spent all day in the streets, always looking for an opportunity to appease their hunger. During the Austrian occupation (1707-1734), one of the viceroys, Count von Harrach, had noted that between 50,000 and 60,000 men that he called *lazzi* (*lazzaroni*) roamed the city; they had no possessions whatsoever, and, as well as being out of work and penniless, they "lived on vegetables and wore a pair of breeches".

Although Charles Louis de Montesquieu recognised that the throng of poor idlers trailing around the city consisted mainly of people who had come in from the country, he observed: "one of the things that contributes most to peopling Naples is the poverty and the laziness of the Neapolitans: they live on charity and on a little soup, bread and meat which the city's immensely wealthy convents distribute"[54].

Stendhal's opinion was much the same. After delighting in the music at the San Carlo opera house and enthusing about the beautiful scenery and *Via Toledo* and other streets in Naples, he could not resist grumbling about "the uncouthness of those half-naked people which one could not get rid of, not even in the coffee-houses". "A thousand and one things", he added, "remind you that you are living amongst barbarians. And yet these

[53] Cf. J. Addison, *La baia più bella del mondo*, in *Mia cara Napoli*, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[54] Cf. L. de Montesquieu, *I miracoli e i lazzaroni di Napoli*, in *Mia cara Napoli*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

barbarians, pilferers only because they are poor, are not wicked. The really evil wicked are the Piedmontese"[55].

Stendhal was in Naples in 1817, Alexandre Dumas in 1835. Although, like other visitors, Dumas noted that the lower classes used to "lie almost naked at the entrances to buildings and in the corners of *piazze*, where they ate, slept and awoke", he could not resist adding that "it broke" his "heart to see such abvious wretchedness". And, unlike other visitors, he immediately added: "No, the lower classes in Naples are not unhappy, because their needs are in keeping with their desires". The really unhappy were: 1) the aristocracy, "who bear a great name and do not know how to gild it, who own *palazzi* and allow their furniture to be sold"; 2) the middle classes, "who have neither trade nor industry, who have a pen but cannot write, who have a voice but cannot speak"[56].

Dumas had fully understood the tragedy of a city and a Kingdom where the decline of one social class which had ruled for centuries - the aristocracy - had not, as elsewhere, coincided with the rise of another class - the middle class founded on trade and industry - which was capable of taking its place and shouldering its responsibilities. Hence the tragedy of an intellectual class which under the last Bourbon rule realised the futility of trying to bring about changes, and whose criticisms and proposals laid them open to the risk of exile or imprisonment. The ancient capital mirrored the profound crisis throughout the Kingdom which a few years later was to bring about its rapid disintegration before Garibaldi's army.

[55] Stendhal, *Non è possibile dimenticare Napoli*, in *Mia cara Napoli*, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
[56] A. Dumas père, *Napoli, la città del coraggio*, in *Mia cara Napoli*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.