

AA. VV., *Actos del Congreso Internacional de Historia "El Tratado de Tordesillas y su época"*, Madrid, Sociedad V Centenario del Tratado de Tordesillas, 1995, 3 vols., pp. 1927.

The history convention held to celebrate the fifth centenary of the ratification of the Treaty of Tordesillas at Setubal in Portugal and at Salamanca and Tordesillas in Spain in June 1994, was an important occasion for historians to discuss the impact of the treaty on the political situation at the time, as well as its more long-term effects and its effects on the process of Spanish colonisation of the American continent. In terms of the huge organisational effort involved and the breadth of the topics addressed, the convention is perhaps comparable only to the conference cycle on the history of the Aragon Monarchy that lasted over several decades.

The central importance of the treaty in early modern and modern history is universally acknowledged. As is well known, the treaty, formulated in 1494 between the Catholic Monarchs Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon and the Portuguese King and embodying the spirit of the bulls previously issued by Pope Adrian VI, established that all land lying west of an imaginary line drawn from north to south, 370 leagues off Cape Verde, belonged to the Spanish Crown while all land lying east of the line - including the already discovered territories in Africa and those yet to be discovered in Brazil - belonged to the Portuguese Kingdom. Yet it is the very importance of the treaty and its far-reaching ramifications in different areas which make it difficult to provide a single explanation of its significance.

Thus, the aim of the convention celebrating the fifth centenary of the Treaty of Tordesillas was not that of reaching an impossible agreement about all the issues related to the Treaty nor of providing a single historical interpretation of events but rather to provide an opportunity for exchanging ideas. Consequently, the conference proceedings comprising over a hundred papers - divided into six broad sections ("States and Peninsular Societies", "Culture", "Religion", "The Spanish Monarchies' Atlantic and Mediterranean Policies", "The Treaty of Tordesillas", "The enforcement of the Treaty and its Effects", "Miscellaneous") - and reviewed in the light of the lively debate that characterised all conference sessions, have been produced not on the basis of a preconceived reading of events but rather with the aim to present the widest possible range of ideas and views regarding the subject. This aim is clearly reflected in the decision of the conference organisers - Luis Miguel Enciso Recio of the Complutense University of Madrid and Luis Antonio Ribot Garcia of the University of Valladolid - to publish the acts without an editor or an introductory essay.

Considering the wealth of material and the impossibility of discussing all the conference papers and the themes they address, our intention here is to examine some general questions emerging from the convention before going on to consider more specifically economic problems and the papers on the

origins of capitalism in the Iberian peninsula in the fifteenth and sixteenth century and the rise of the middle classes as well as the subjects of exploration, navigation and Atlantic trade.

Our first observation concerns methodology and the way that the traditional approaches of Spanish and Portuguese historians to colonial conquest and the growth of trade in the two states have been set aside. An ideal way of concluding the phase of rethinking about colonisation which began on the occasion of the Celebrations for the Fifth Centenary of the Discovery of America, the conference constitutes a major turning point as regards the nationalistic approach which divided the two historical traditions, at least up until the 1950s. This approach produced a heavily ideologised interpretation of the growth of colonial empires and saw the history of the two states in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries exclusively in terms of the complicated and drawn-out process involving the union of the two crowns from the reign of Philip II to Philip IV. This does not mean that the two historiographical approaches to the subject are overlapping. Profound differences exist and this fact was clearly evinced in the papers submitted at the conference and during debate (see, for example, the excellent historiographical appraisal in the paper given by Adolfo Carrasco Martinez). Indeed, although it was not always made explicit, one of the recurring themes of the conference was the identification of a Portuguese and Spanish - or as we would say more correctly nowadays, Castilian- model regarding the institutional, socio-economic and demographic aspects of explorations, the organisation of discovered lands into colonies and the relation between political ideology and religion.

We have spoken of a Castilian rather than Spanish model of colonial development and indeed another common denominator of the conference proceedings is the way they bring out the different motivations underlying the Catholic Monarchy's policy of colonisation. While the social and territorial organisation and administration of the Indies - which were directly governed from Castile - was structured along Castilian lines, colonisation affected all areas of the Iberian peninsula, in different ways, and produced significant changes in the structure of the trading and manufacturing classes. More generally - and this is the third theme that runs through the papers under review - the opening up of Atlantic routes triggered a process of transformation which profoundly affected the balance of power among European states and economies.

However, we ought to point out that in relation to these specific points and to the general organisation of the conference, the emphasis was on political and institutional history; this is of course only to be expected considering that the convention was held to celebrate the signing of an international agreement. Nonetheless, economic aspects were far from being neglected and the section on "The Treaty of Tordesillas" opens with contributions by Aurelio de Oliveria and Luigi De Rosa who provide a

general historiographical overview on the subjects of exploration, the development of oceanic navigation and Atlantic trade.

In particular Aurelio de Oliveria focuses on what may be defined as the grand era of Portuguese exploration beginning around the 1460s and ending in 1500 with the discovery of Brazil. He shows that the very success of Portuguese exploration and the active role played by the Crown forced the Catholic Monarchs to pursue a policy of negotiation of the Treaty of Tordesillas. Spanish and Portuguese rivalry and the stipulation of the Treaty provide the starting point for the paper by Luigi De Rosa who dwells on the revolution in ship-building technology, navigation and cartography as the preconditions for the major development in transoceanic communications in the first half of the sixteenth century with the opening of Spanish and Portuguese trade routes. De Rosa examines these routes within a general context of European Atlantic trade focusing on the discovery of Mexico and Peru on the one hand and Brazil on the other, with reference to settlement processes and territorial organisation in these countries. He goes on to make an excellent synthesis of the movement of goods from the mother country to the colonies and of the importation of raw materials and metals from the New World into the Iberian Peninsula.

Within this general framework, two contributions look more closely at the nature of trade and financial relations in Spain. The first is an essay by Luis Miguel Bernal who examines Spanish and Portuguese maritime trade at the time of the Treaty of Tordesillas, from 1485 to 1515. Bernal, who produced a prodigious study on the financial aspects of Spanish colonial trade in the early modern period¹, shows that in the 1470s there was a significant volume of trade between the ports of Lisbon and Seville, mainly based on imports of corn, fruit and slaves from Portugal despite the latent friction between the two Kingdoms, the ease with which smuggling was carried out along the land borders and the large number of pirates and privateers who operated on the trade routes against which each country sought reciprocal protection.

With regard to this trade, however, Bernal observes that there was a scarce presence of Portuguese merchants in Seville and little recourse to the most advanced methods for insuring goods and ships in transactions. The explanation he provides does not take into account so much the kind of trade as the different procedures in hiring ships adopted by the two countries. Although there was a very old tradition of maritime insurance throughout the Iberian Peninsula, unlike Castile and Catalonia, Portugal did not develop a set of specific laws regulating insurance practices. When Portuguese Atlantic trade began to expand rapidly, in order to compensate for the lack of regulation Portuguese monarchs set out to protect shipping by introducing laws which differed from usual Mediterranean practice and which envisaged the creation of a system of mutual insurance as opposed to the system based on the stipulation of policies. In 1436 two companies

were set up with their head offices in Lisbon and Oporto. These were financed with 2% of the proceeds from voyages undertaken by all vessels. In this way the companies were able to cover any damage sustained by ships and goods.

Portuguese insurance practices were later adopted by the *Casa de la Contratación* in Seville, a fact which bears witness to the continual osmosis between models of development as regards transoceanic trade. On this very subject a contribution by Carmen Sanz Ayan illustrates the cosmopolitan nature of capitalism in Spain under the Catholic Monarchs. The paper traces the history of two families of Genoese merchants, the Centurione and the Italiani, who asked to become naturalized Castilian citizens in order to enjoy certain privileges which would enable them to increase their trade and expand their financial activities. The question about the role played by merchant-bankers from various European countries in the financial and trading activities of the *Carrera de Indias* leads on naturally to the second of the main economic themes addressed during the conference on the Treaty of Tordesillas: the origins of capitalism in the Iberian Peninsula. This subject is dealt with by Felipe Ruiz Martín who looks at Castile and by Joaquim Romero Magalhães who examines the case of Portugal.

Ruiz Martín takes up his old thesis which rejects the notion that the presence of the capitalists and the birth of capitalism are one and the same thing, while insisting on the need to separate big capitalists, whom he identifies as Florentine, Genoese and German bankers, from small capitalists whom he identifies as Castilians². Above all in a rapid and concise account he shows that the diversity of manufacturing and trade activities in Castilian towns led to the formation of different groups of capitalists. Thus the golden era of Burgos was the period from 1430-40 to 1560 in connection with the positive trend in wool exports. This trend was upset by the crisis in the Low Countries which was the main market for this product, leading to the decline of local merchant-bankers; a similar situation occurred in Toledo whose fortunes had been tied to textiles and metal manufactures.

The situation in other towns was different. For example, Segovia produced the best manufactures in Castile both in terms of the quantity and the quality of its products but it was caught up in the 1519-21 revolts. Seville, which in the period from 1430 to 1530 had developed mainly due to internal trade, afterwards flourished in the wake of the expansion of transatlantic trade. Medina da Campo, on the other hand, was the centre where payment and trade fairs were held after 1407-8. Valladolid, elevated to the status of capital at the beginning of the reign of Philip II and the accession of Philip III,

¹ A. M. Bernal, *La financiación de la Carrera de Indias. Dinero y crédito en el comercio colonial español, 1492-1824*, Madrid, 1993.

sought to appropriate the privilege of holding payment fairs. But in the case of Valladolid, as in the case of Madrid, which was the capital from 1561 to the end of the century, the formation of a class of capitalists was linked to the search of sources of royal financing and consequently to the *juries'* market which grew up around the Court.

Although there was a marked differentiation in the formation of capital, Ruiz Martin observes that capitalist groups in each town interacted with those of other towns as well as with capitalists operating on an international scale. This was the case, for example, when payments were stopped in 1575; such interaction is also evident in the way capitalists not just from Seville but from towns all over Castile took part in transoceanic trade.

Reference to the characteristics of Castilian capitalists enables us to understand better the differences which are brought out in Joaquim Romero Magalhaes' paper on Portugal. In the first place, the general approach to the subject differs, with an emphasis on political and military aspects. Above all, the time framework differs: Romero Magalhaes brings forward the *post quem* date regarding the growth of Portuguese capitalism to 1415, the year of the conquest of Ceuta. This event opened the way to trade with the African Coast, consisting mainly of gold, spices and slaves and marked the arrival in Portugal of foreign merchant-bankers alongside Portuguese capitalists. At the same time, new contacts were formed with other Mediterranean ports and with ports in Northern Europe.

The conquest of Ceuta was followed by the conquest of Madeira and the Azores, major producers of corn and later sugar, and by the conquest of Morocco. This process owed much to the active role of the King and the Court and to the presence of a large number of small and medium capitalists. Above all the author notes that, contrary to what happened in Castile, foreign and native bankers built up common interests on the basis of a division of roles, with the former mainly taking control of foreign trade. Once again, the main difference with Castile lay in the role of the Sovereign who was in practice the Kingdom's chief merchant as a result of the royal monopoly over Asian trade; in the case of Brazil, on the other hand, free trade was permitted, once customs duties had been paid.

An aspect which is dwelt on in the essays by Ruiz Martin and Romero Magalhaes concerns the economic role of urban groups and the burgeoning middle classes in the towns of the Iberian Peninsula. In this connection Adeline Rucquoi notes that at the end of the Middle Ages Spain considered itself an urbanised country and that towns in Castile had a political as well as economic weight which was much greater than their demographic influence. This importance derived from the *Cortes* which bestowed on the towns the

² See on this subject, Felipe Ruiz Martin, "Las finanzas españolas durante el reinado de Felipe II", *Cuadernos de Historia de la Revista Hispanica*, II, Madrid, 1968, pp. 109-173.

special role of royal interlocutors thereby counterbalancing the influence of the great noble families. Towns were governed by merchant groups operating on a system of patronage and urban patrician families remained essentially mercantile even when they adhered to knightly codes of conduct. Within this general context and taking into consideration numerous specific cases, the writer raises an old but still topical question as to whether urban patrician families can be defined as bourgeois. Basing her arguments on the fact that such groups derived their fortunes not just from mercantile and financial operations but also from land rents, feudal possessions and military commissions which continued to form a significant part of their wealth, Rucquoi's answer is negative. What is more, such groups aspired to aristocratic lifestyles and blood-ties and birthrights continued to dictate the division into clans rather than occupations.

In the case of Portugal, which is studied by Humberto Baquero Moreno, an alliance between merchants, functionaries and patricians emerges more clearly. On one hand they were united in the intent to prevent artisans from having access to municipal bodies; on the other hand in their opposition to rural seigniors. For this reason it is easier to identify the first group as a bourgeois group although it is pointed out that Portuguese urban patricians united to defend their own privileges against foreigners before the King. This would imply a propensity for small-scale domestic and local coastal trade rather than for the large-scale operations involved in foreign trade which was in fact, controlled by powerful foreign merchant-bankers.

It can be seen, therefore, that economic aspects are given ample treatment in the discussion of issues more strictly related to the political and institutional implications of the Treaty of Tordesillas, only some of which have been referred to here. In fact one aspect which we should draw attention to before concluding this review concerns the importance of large international meetings in bringing together a wide range of contributions and approaches thereby providing an invaluable forum for the exchange of ideas, at a time when subject specialisation is predominant.

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F. BRAUDEL, *Out of Italy*, Paris, Flammarion, 1991, 236 pages + index.

This book was first published in an Italian translation by Einaudi in 1974 as the conclusion to the second volume of the *Storia d'Italia*; then as separate volume in 1986, under the title *Il secondo Rinascimento. Due secoli e tre Italie*. The original French version first appeared in 1989 (after Braudel's death in 1985) as *Le Modèle italien* (Paris: Arthaud), then collected in pocket

series, Champs No. 612 (1994), 220 pages. The English version is translated from the 1989 French version by the translator of Braudel's other books, Siân Reynolds.

If you wish to buy a handsome history book with colourful illustrations as a Christmas present for someone interested in European history (Italian history in particular), then I will recommend this English version positively for the following reasons: 1) It is elegantly produced, half the pages are carefully selected art works and photos by the editors to strengthen the visual effect of the text. For instance, *The Trial of Galileo*, by a XVIIth century anonymous Italian artist, presented on pp. 186-7, vividly shows the tension between new scientific concepts and conservative religious power. If one reads the next French version, the degree of tension would be largely weakened. Appropriate pictures are essential to historical works, and this book fully develops this point; 2) Beautiful picture books are often shallow in contents, but this is not the case here. The numerous pictures in this volume comfort readers significantly in view of Braudel's serious text, and the readers relax when absorbing Braudel's sometimes heavy messages; 3) The two centuries covered in this book (1450-1650) are a sparkling époque in Italian history: the splendid Renaissance era and the age of glorious capitalistic activities. Braudel covered not only politics, economy, society, but also opera, ballet, poetry, science and technology, among other topics. In the other words, one reads in a few pages a brief history of an interesting topic, with Braudel's explanations, judgements and insights. In short, it will make a welcome heading for Christmas and New Year holidays.

Was Braudel a writer for Christmas present picture books? Yes, after his retirement in early 1970s, he produced some audio-visual works: *La Méditerranée*, in 12 television films (1977), then transformed it into two picture books with texts from six other authors; *L'Europe*, 1982 (transformed from eight television films); *Venise*, with photographs of Folco Quilici, 1984; *Le monde de Jacques Cartier* (a history on the French navigator Cartier, 1491-1557), 1984. I am inclined to put *Out of Italy* in this category because it was initially written for general readers. He did not plan to publish it in a separate volume, and would be surprised to see it being transformed into the current picture-book form.

Another point is that *Out of Italy* largely overlaps with his *The Mediterranean* (1966) and *Civilization & Capitalism, XVth-XVIIIth Centuries* (1979). Pages covering literature, arts, architecture, opera, Baroque etc. astound Braudel readers, and I am impressed by his tremendous knowledge in these fields. But pages covering politics, economy and society can also find their twin-sisters in *The Mediterranean*. This is understandable because Braudel revised this *Lebenswerk* in 1966 in which Italy dominated the scene. In preparing this *Italy* in the early 1970s for general readers, he borrowed from *The Mediterranean* freely. He was aware of this, and was therefore reluctant to publish it as a separate volume during his lifetime. Similarly, the

important economic role played by Venice, Genoa and Florence in both *The Mediterranean* and *Italy* are further developed systematically later in *Capitalism*. A Braudel reader who is familiar with *The Mediterranean* and *Capitalism* will find this 1991 *Italy* strange: given that the central messages had been well conveyed in other works, why bother to print this 1974 text in a volume? I can defend this for Braudel: he might not allow this republication if were he alive, but transforming it into attractive picture book to create another reader group is a smart strategy by the publisher.

In addition to introduction (pp. 9-18), the book contains three chapters: 1) "A series of overall perspective" (pp. 19-192), which contain two sections "What the world looked like to an Italian in 1450" (pp. 20-51) and "1450-1650: two centuries, three Italies" (pp. 52-192); 2) "Looking back from 1633 or 1650" (pp. 193- 212), and 3) "Is Italian decadence a discernible process?" (pp.213-26).

Braudel broadly explains in the introduction why the two centuries covered in this book is a sparkling but also an unstable period, the inner difficulties that Italy envisaged and the hidden factors that created her decadence after 1650. He made himself clear. The long first chapter (174 pages) covers such divergent topics that I think his desire for "histoire totale" must have been satisfied. Although I am not skilled in the history of European performing arts, his explanation about the usage and functions of masks in *Commedia dell'arte* in pp. 136-49 impressed me. Although he was knowledgeable, I think the experts in each specialized topic may have critical comments to make on his explanation.

Chapters two and three are his evaluations of these two centuries, and this should be a major part of the book; but we find that only 34 pages are allocated to them, a strange order of priority. Chapter 2 contains two main themes, one is to explain the rise of the Northern countries (pp. 194-202): These explanations may not be convincing, but fortunately we can find elegant and powerful arguments on this issue in *Capitalism* (volume II, pp. 566-70), which I consider one of or Braudel's most brilliant passages). Another theme is on the decadence of Italy after the mid-XVIIth century; here Braudel repeat his commentary in the second part of *The Mediterranean*, hence this section is uninteresting.

Chapter 3 is most disappointing. I was surprised when Braudel announced in the first sentence that "The section that follows is probably the most contentious in the book. It seeks to propose a framework for tackling the major questions already considered in such a way as to integrate them into a valid model of Italian grandeur and decadence between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries" (p. 213). I expected to read some controversial propositions, hypotheses and arguments, but was discouraged after reading his descriptions of the historical background of Italy's rise and fall, the struggles for sea power in the Mediterranean and Atlantic by Spain, England, United Provinces etc.; then on "Capitalism and sectors of the economy", on "Greatness and culture". Almost all these themes have appeared in the

introduction and chapter 1, his style is so descriptive that it can hardly evoke debates, and it certainly did not “integrate them into a valid model of Italian grandeur and decadence”.

Although the contents are disappointing, the title of chapter 3 suggests an interesting issue: is the decadence of a (great) nation discernible? Braudel seems affirmative about this point in chapter 3, but one derives a very different message in chapter 1 (p. 181): “Just as surprised as I would have been in 1935, when I was teaching at the University of São Paulo, alongside my colleagues... and the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss: if someone had asked us a question about the decline of Europe or of France, we should no doubt have smiled disbelievingly.” He was too close to see things clearly.

Out of Italy is certainly not an original deep investigation, Braudel proposed no new concept, new notion or new hypothesis, nor did he dig out new evidence from archives (among 196 notes he mentioned nine archival sources, but I have reason to suspect that they were already used in *The Mediterranean*). Braudel showed his great talent of synthesis from his old notes and from other scholars' publications; he is knowledgeable, elegant, reader-friendly and an excellent story teller. But when we think one step deeper about Braudel's contribution to the whole issue, we are surprised to find that he is quite conscious of this question: “The outcome of this decline and fall has often been studied. We could do with more detail, but the result is already apparent” (p. 223). I fancy that to experts in Italian history the central message of this volume did not make an impact effect.

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L. DE ROSA (ed.), *Il Mezzogiorno agli inizi del Seicento*, Editori Laterza, Bari - Roma, 1994, pp.LX + 326.

The radical regime of censorship over theology and political theories and philosophy that followed the Council of Trent led to a gradual alignment of lay writers' opinions with those of the Church, even on economic questions. Compared to its liveliness at the end of the sixteenth century, Italian economic debate in the seventeenth century was largely dominated by post-Tridentine theologians, although many unpublished works are evidence that this was not because of a decline in interest in the subject, but because of the shrewd practice of “honest dissimulation” that the Neapolitan Torquato Accetto suggested as a rule of behaviour at the time.

The only important exception were the writings on money circulation. This was because by its very nature money was unrelated to the dogmas of faith; it was minted by secular authorities, used as a mediator in trade and

since it was not the subject of doctrinal disputes it could be openly discussed in the writings of merchants, royal officials and philosophers. To mention only the most important names, Scaruffi, Montanari and Davanzati in North Italy, and Serra, Turbolo and De Sanctis in the South, kept alive a debate that aimed not just to provide theoretical contributions, but also to help the sovereign choose the most suitable policies in money management to ensure his kingdom's prosperity¹.

It should be remembered that most of the works written in this period about money and exchange were concerned with providing answers to concrete problems, sometimes of great topical interest, which, at a time of rapid economic change in Italy, involved the equilibrium of both the state's finances and a country's commercial and financial budget. Regardless of whether one accepts that there was a process of refeudalisation, understood as a gradual increase in interest for investment in land on the part of urban patricians and the merchant élite, there is no doubt that the changes brought about in the Italian economy between 1590 and 1630 posed new problems for the politician, the merchant and the scholar².

This is true for all the Italian states, but even more so for mainland Southern Italy, which was the largest Spanish possession in Italy and was most affected by the changing international role of the Hapsburg monarchy in the thirty years covering the last ten years of Philip II's reign and the reign of Philip III (1588-1623). It was in this period that the oppressive tax system which continued in the Kingdom of Naples until the end of the Spanish rule took shape more fully, although its principles had been gradually laid down since the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Kingdom of Naples had a dual role as a bulwark in the Mediterranean and as a source of financial backing for military defence, primarily for Italy through financial aid to the Duchy of Milan, gateway to the Italian peninsula, but more generally to all the regions under the rule of the Spanish monarchy.

Southern Italian economists reached a high standard in political theory in the seventeenth century, as a result of a particular historical and political situation, and in the eighteenth century, because of the freer debate on economic renewal at a national level. Their writings have been the constant subject of Luigi De Rosa's research in this field³. De Rosa has taken up

¹ See the first systematic collection of these authors' writings in *Scrittori classici italiani di economia politica. Parte antica*, Milan, De Stefanis, 1804.

² On the XVIIth century crisis as a phase of a more general process of economic and social change, see C. M. Cipolla, "The Decline of Italy: the case of a Fully Matured Economy", *The Economic History Review*, II series, V (1952), pp. 178-187; L. Bulferetti, *L'oro, la terra, e la società. Un'interpretazione del nostro Seicento*, in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, LXXX (1954), pp. 5-66.

³ On this, see the papers published over a period of forty years, and now collected together, expanded and updated in L. De Rosa, *Economisti meridionali*, Napoli, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, 1995.

Schumpeter's reference to the value and the specificity of Southern Italian economists ⁴, making a more detailed study and has thereby aroused interest in these topics amongst scholars ⁵.

With *Il Mezzogiorno agli inizi del Seicento*, Luigi De Rosa enriches the field of studies on the history of Southern economic theory in the early modern period; the publishing of the works of four of the most interesting writers belonging to this school - the *Discorsi intorno a gli effetti che fa il cambio in Regno* by Marc'Antonio de Santis (1605), the *Breve trattato delle cause che possono far abbandonare li Regni d'oro e d'argento* by Antonio Serra (1613), the *Discorso sopra l'aggiustamento delle monete e cambi del Regno di Napoli* by Fabrizio Biblia (1621) and the *Discorso sopra le monete del Regno di Napoli* by Giovanni Donato Turbolo (1629) - not only offers the possibility of easier access to texts which are difficult to find and consult, but, thanks to De Rosa's long Introduction before the texts, presents these works for the first time within the context of the debate on money and exchange that took place in Naples between 1600 and 1630. It should be pointed out that this book belongs to a series of *Classici meridionali*, edited by the same Luigi De Rosa, which aims to present both published and unpublished works of Southern Italian philosophers in the early modern period, relating these works to the complex political and economic events in the Kingdom of Naples from the period of Spanish rule to the Restoration, and then identifying each one's specific theoretical contribution ⁶.

The subject of exchange and money circulation examined in this book enables us to grasp the core of the economic problems with which mainland Southern Italy grappled at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The rate of exchange of the kingdom of Naples currency fell in relation to foreign currencies; hence there was an export of capital and a shortage of money in the kingdom ⁷.

The problem facing the authors of the texts in this book was to explain why the rate of exchange had fallen and to help the authorities governing the Kingdom's economy to find ways of remedying the situation. It should be

⁴ J. Schumpeter, *Storia dell'analisi economica*, Italian translation by L. Occhionero and P. Sylos Labini, Turin, Boringhieri, 1954, p. 214.

⁵ See, for example, amongst the most recent works, *Alle origini del pensiero economico in Italia*, vol. I, *Moneta e sviluppo negli economisti napoletani dei secoli XVII-XVIII*, edited by A. Roncaglia, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1995.

⁶ *Il Mezzogiorno alla fine del Settecento*, edited by F. Di Battista and with an introduction by A. M. Fusco, Editori Laterza, Bari - Roma, 1992; *Il Mezzogiorno agli inizi dell'Ottocento*, edited by C. D'Elia, Editori Laterza, Bari - Roma, 1992; *Il Mezzogiorno agli inizi della Restaurazione*, edited by W. Palmieri, Editori Laterza, Bari - Roma, 1993.

⁷ For a general picture of the socio-economic and financial situation of the Kingdom of Naples under Spanish rule, cf. L. De Rosa, *Mezzogiorno spagnolo tra crescita e decadenza*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 1987.

borne in mind that the connection between the devaluation of the exchange rate and the export of capital, which is apparent to the scholar trained in economics today, was not immediately seen by these early seventeenth-century authors. We can see in their writings how difficult it was to achieve a fundamental picture of the economic system⁸. And yet the overall situation in the Kingdom of Naples at that time, which Luigi De Rosa presents clearly in his Introduction to the book, does not seem to leave room for other interpretations.

The foreign exchange market, whose principal centre within the Kingdom of Naples was Naples itself, had at its core bankers or merchant bankers, i.e. merchants who, to encourage trading activity abroad, had contacts with correspondents in one or more countries to whom they could send or from whom they could receive payment orders⁹. This network of contacts was used to pay for imports which, considering the general depression in domestic production, was the main reason why money went out of the Kingdom of Naples. Alongside this, the oppressive Spanish tax system, goaded by the necessity to pay the Spanish monarchy's ever-increasing military expenses, drained wealth from the country's more productive sectors, thereby contributing to their downfall and further increasing both the country's dependence on imports of foreign products and the scarcity of money in the domestic market.

In the sixteenth century, to ensure that trade had the means to function, the vice-regal authorities on several occasions had resorted to forbidding the exportation of money, and had guaranteed the circulation of *fedi di credito* issued by the Neapolitan banks. In the end, when he saw that these measures had failed, that monetary crises were more acute and that the money which came into the Kingdom of Naples soon went out again, the Viceroy, Count di Olivares, attempted to remedy the situation with a decree that fixed the maximum exchange rate. These measures had disastrous results: at first, there was a total slump in the exchange market, and then, when the decree was no longer strictly observed, the market immediately revived.

Notwithstanding the unsuccessful outcome of Olivares' measure, the first of the authors to address this problem in the seventeenth century, Marc'Antonio De Santis, recommended the same remedy in his *Discorso intorno alli effetti che fa il cambio in Regno* and immediately afterwards in *Secondo Discorso*, a reply to the polemic with an anonymous author after the publication of the first work. According to De Santis, a rich exchange agent in Naples, the Kingdom of Naples had a very strong export trade, consisting mainly of primary goods, in which the country was exceptionally rich, and

⁸ See on this the considerations that accompany the birth of modern economic thought in A. Roncaglia, *Petty e la nascita dell'economia politica*, Milan, Etas Libri, 1977.

⁹ On this, see L. De Rosa, *I cambi esteri del Regno di Napoli dal 1591 al 1707*, Naples, Banco di Napoli, 1955.

which other countries could not supply, whereas imports consisted of luxury goods, which, as such, were subject to changing tastes. In other words, De Santis believed that the balance of trade in the Kingdom of Naples was flourishing and should have encouraged the influx of gold and silver; if this did not happen, it was not because of the movement of goods, but because of the movement in exchange, which worked in the opposite direction and was the "real cause" of the lack of money.

More specifically, De Santis observed that exports were regulated by bills of exchange, whereas imports caused an outflow of capital. He went so far as to theorise about the existence of agents who took money out of the country only to bring it back through exchange, thereby making money on the difference between the commercial exchange rate of the bills and the official exchange rate. The remedy proposed was to bring in a law to revalue the exchange rate, so that, if the agents' preference stemmed from a free negotiation of currencies, foreign agents would find it more advantageous to make payments with a gold-standard currency than with bills of exchange. Antonio Serra, a doctor of law from Cosenza, based his *Breve trattato* of 1613 on the validity of these observations.

Serra pointed out that bills of exchange were promises of payment and, as such, could replace cash payment only temporarily and not permanently, as De Santis implied. Moreover, De Santis established the connection between the rate of exchange and the amount of currency in circulation arbitrarily. In more general terms, Serra challenged the theory, which was widely upheld at that time, that there was no connection between monetary policy and an analysis of production and trade. This earned him Galiani's praise, and in fact Galiani considered Serra the founder of modern economics.

Serra believed that the Kingdom of Naples was rich in animals and commodities, as De Santis had argued, but that it was in an infinitely less favourable position than other countries with regard to its geographical position, the quantity and quality of its products, its economic and commercial agents, and the presence of foreigners who received income from the Kingdom and sent this income abroad. Considering all these factors, and therefore the overall balance of payments, Serra estimated that the Kingdom's total expenditure, both commercial and financial, were certainly higher than its total income, and this was why the Kingdom of Naples was continuously losing gold and silver coins, and why the monetary circulation was essentially based on the paper issued by public banks.

However, Serra did not make clear which measures he intended to propose, stating that he would do so later if his book was favourably received by the Viceroy. But the fact that the treatise had no sequel suggests that it did not meet with the Viceroy's favour and that Serra's imprisonment, for reasons unknown to us, may have had something to do with this. Serra's imprisonment may explain why Fabrizio Biblia of Catanzaro, a royal official, first as *maestro* of the Mint in Naples and then as lessor of the provincial

treasury of Principato Citra, made no reference to Serra in his *Discorso sopra l'aggiustamento della moneta e cambii*.

Biblia's work dates from 1621 and appeared at a time when the Kingdom of Naples was undergoing a very bad financial crisis. The endemic difficulties of the Kingdom's economy, higher taxation because of the Spanish monarchy's involvement in the Thirty Years' war, and the very poor harvests of that year came after a decade of continuous monetary changes and devaluations, which were brought about in an attempt to improve money circulation in the Kingdom of Naples, but led to a continuous, and at times very sharp, fall in exchange rates. Biblia was ordered to study the country's financial problems and to propose remedies, so that the authorities could take action: the report he prepared for the Viceroy was his *Discorso*.

Compared to Serra's work, Biblia's report was a step backwards, in that he was concerned only with the technical aspects of the problem and did not consider the country's economic situation in a broader sense; in particular, his analysis of the evils that afflicted money circulation and a survey of opinions from various groups of operators, led Biblia to conclude that the main solution was to renew the Kingdom's currency circulation. Poor currency had, in fact, driven good currency out of circulation, "part prised out of the Kingdom, part melted down by the goldsmiths", and new coinage had to be made the same as old coinage as far as quality and weight were concerned, which in fact meant a revaluation of 30%, given the level which the currency had reached.

Deflation led to lower prices and at first brought back into the market those goods that had been kept away for fear of poor currency, but very soon, and over future years, the effects on foreign and domestic trade proved disastrous. Giovanni Donato Turbolo had been of a different opinion to Biblia. In 1629, he reprinted a series of his writings from previous years, and recalled that in 1618 he had argued that any attempt to regulate the rate of exchange was useless and that the export of currency was inevitable when the country had such a large foreign debt. However, at the same time he noted that the years preceding 1621 had been prosperous ones in the Kingdom of Naples and, despite an increase in exchange rates, silk, saffron, cereals, wines and other commodities commanded good prices and were exported on a large scale, thereby ensuring customs revenue. On the contrary with currency revaluation, prices in domestic markets had fallen and exports had dropped too, with serious effects on the country's prosperity.

In other words, Turbolo, like Biblia *maestro* of the Mint in Naples, but unlike him a descendant of a family of merchants and bankers and founder of a trading company, favoured a weak exchange rate which was left free to fluctuate. He was convinced that the Neapolitan currency was overvalued in that it had not adapted to the new silver values, whereas the currencies of other states had. Turbolo thus revealed his mercantilist views and showed how close he was to Serra in having grasped the connection between monetary policy and the economic reality in which this policy was formulated.

This is De Rosa's interpretation of the analyses contained in these works.

Luigi De Rosa brings out the similarities and differences between the authors of the texts, as well as their relation to the historical context in which they wrote. De Rosa seizes upon an important development in the history of economic thought, and not only Southern European economic thought: the emergence of a greater awareness of the complexity and the interdependence of a country's economy. It took a further century and a half before this awareness became complete, and here again, in Galiani, Southern Italy provided one of the most lucid philosophers of the time. However, it must be pointed out, as in fact De Rosa does, that the way had already been marked out at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

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CH. P. KINDLEBERGER, *Mariners and Markets*, New York, New York University Press, 1992, pp. ix-109.

This small book raises some very big issues. The book is ostensibly about the labour markets for sailors. However, the issues surrounding the book are much bigger: Are labour markets competitive and what constitutes valid evidence in economic history?

The genesis of *Mariners and Markets* was its author's distrust of findings by four Cliometricians on a subject near to his heart, labour markets in the past and more specifically labour markets for sailors. In a volume edited by David Galenson, *Markets in History* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989) two chapters aroused Kindleberger's ire. The first was a chapter written by Galenson himself. In it, Galenson describes his view, also that of many others, of the highly competitive nature of American colonial labour markets. Kindleberger is clearly sceptical of the notion that labour markets in this early period were even remotely close to being competitive. The second chapter, written by Lance Davis, Robert Gallman, and Teresa Hutchins, describes the competitive nature of the market for sailors on whaling ships sailing out of New Bedford, Massachusetts. It is in response to this view of early labour markets in general and to the market for seamen in particular that Kindleberger felt compelled to respond. This slim, but pointed monograph is his rebuttal.

Kindleberger is undoubtedly one of the most respected and cited economic historians in North America. Having retired from teaching at MIT in 1981, Kindleberger taught at several other universities in the United States before writing his autobiography (*The Life an Economist*, Cambridge, MA, Basil Blackwell, 1991) published just one year before *Mariners and Markets*.

On the first page of his autobiography he informs the reader that, "insofar as I am classified as an economic historian — I prefer to think of myself as an historical economist — I am not, repeat *not*, a Cliometrician, that is, an economic historian who used a great deal of econometrics. People of my stripe are sometimes referred to derisively as "literary economists" (original emphasis, p.1). Thus it seems he would have two basic problems with the body of work to which he is responding in his book, *Mariners and Markets*. First, he is highly suspicious of cliometrics and the heavy reliance on neoclassical theory (p.xii). However, second and seemingly what really drove Kindleberger to write an entire book to respond to a couple of chapters in an edited volume was Kindleberger's very specific personal knowledge, perhaps even passion, of both the sea and the sailors about whom he writes. Kindleberger was a sailor in his youth. Thus, much of the evidence that Kindleberger brings to bear comes from personal experience and obviously from having read a great deal of fiction relating to sailors.

The book is laid out in three chapters. The first is on the recruitment and pay of sailors. The second deals with the sailor's life at sea and in port. The final chapter covers the government, non-competing groups and the efficiency of markets for seafarers.

From the book's outset, Kindleberger attempts to convince the reader that the market for seamen could in no way be considered competitive, which is what Davis, Gallman and Hutchins argue in their earlier piece. While several of the issues he raises in the book clearly violate what would make this labour market work as a smoothly functioning competitive market, the evidence he brings to bear is often unconvincing. A good example of this deals with the practice of "crimping". Crimping (according to Kindleberger) was when unsuspecting sailors, who were often drunk or drugged when the practice occurred, were "sold" to ship captains by a merchant, such as boardinghouse keepers or operators of brothels, in return for debts owed to them by the sailors (pp. 20-1). The sailors were taken aboard ships, at which point the ships set sail and the sailors were forced to work as crewmen. When the sailors realized where they were it was too late — they were already out to sea on a ship with no chance of escape. Their wages were docked by the amount the captain paid to the merchant to "buy" the sailor, enough for the merchant to redeem the sailor's debt. Thus, the sailor is now working unwillingly on a ship that he did not board of his own freewill.

It is absolutely true that practices such as this would have disrupted the extent to which the market worked efficiently. The big question, however, is: How pervasive were such "non-competitive" practices as crimping? It is here where the book begins to fall short. There is very little, virtually no, quantitative evidence to reveal the extent to which these sorts of practices occurred. If they were rare, but were just widely recounted and reported, one would not expect them to have mattered much to the overall competitiveness of the labour market. However, if they did occur regularly and not in just

isolated areas of the world, then it could very well be that the market was not competitive and thus not efficient. The reader is often left wanting to know how pervasive such events truly were.

Overall, Kindleberger is very parsimonious in his use of citations. One would assume this is because Kindleberger has a deep, personal (even first-hand) knowledge of many institutions which he describes. Often, the evidence he uses to make his case is drawn heavily from fictional works such as Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (pp. 4, 8, 48, 49, 60, 61, and 88). One would like to have seen greater use of archival and original data sources rather than the heavy reliance on works of fiction.

While this book is very interesting and enjoyable to read, it lacks what most would consider as credible evidence. Even those who would be sympathetic to the argument that labour markets were not competitive during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may find the weight of the evidence less than overwhelming. In the original article that Kindleberger is trying to counter, however, the authors (Davis, Gallman, and Hutchins) analyze thousands of wage contracts and make extensive use of ship records to arrive at their conclusions that the markets for seafarers were, for the most part, competitive markets.

Kindleberger, in the introduction to *Mariners and Markets*, scolds Davis, Gallman, and Hutchins and others of "from time to time...com[ing] close to using the belief [that the labour market is competitive] instead of evidence [to prove it]" (p.xi). It would seem that in his deep desire to convince his readers that the market for seamen was *not* competitive, Kindleberger may have violated his own admonishment.

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G. SABATINI, *Proprietà e proprietari a L'Aquila e nel contado. Le rilevazioni catastali in età spagnola*, Naples, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1995, pp. 340.

Post-World War II historiography in Italy has continually paid attention to land-register sources in the early modern period. In 1955 Luigi Del Pane produced a study on the *catasto onciario* in the Kingdom of Naples¹.

¹ Cf. L. Dal Pane, *Scheda per la rilevazione dei dati dei catasti onciari del Regno di Napoli* in *Movimento operaio*, vol. VII (1955), pp. 761-66; on studies that before Dal Pane's work contributed to this current of research cf. L. Einaudi, *L'unità del potere e la storia catastale delle famiglie*, in *Rivista di Storia Economica*, vol. III (1938), pp. 93, 97, 153-54, 166-67, 174-75.

Thereafter progressively more-advanced instruments of analysis have been developed to extract the most information possible from land registers, taking into account the specificity of the socio-economic structure and the political and administrative conditions of each area in Italy². As research went on and became more concentrated on specific cases, the function of the land register as an instrument for analysing both the development of land use and disputes about property (between the laity and the Church, between local authorities and central authorities etc.) has become more and more apparent.

These aspects have been revealed by research on the eighteenth century, when the land register, taken firstly as a means of establishing bourgeois ownership, was used by the sovereign in an attempt to limit the property exemptions enjoyed by ecclesiastics and nobles, thereby starting a century-long debate and, in practice, opening the way to the abolition of feudal rights³. Another question closely connected with the problems posed by the development of land use and property disputes was that of geographical description: even before the land register changed from being merely descriptive to geometrical in its format, it was used by the central magistrature to gain better knowledge of the state's territory.

After a period of particularly intense research, Italian historiographical interest in this field seems to have fallen off in the last fifteen years. However, although fewer research projects are concerned with land registers, new trends in studying and interpreting sources have evolved, partly due to the possibility of classifying and processing data with computers⁴ and partly due to new ideas about urban and rural territory, about towns and the countryside, and their relationship to one another.

The reconstruction of a town's economy in the Old Régime is conditioned to a great extent by knowledge about its surrounding territory, from which it drew a fair percentage of its population, its provisions and its income. This area, taken as the whole area surrounding the town which was directly or indirectly subject to the town, was connected to the town by a closely-woven network of economic relations based on the division of labour, the organisation of markets and capital flows. Italy differed from the rest of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in that there was a strong link between the town and its *contado*. This had developed in medieval times, and in the transition to the early modern period it took different forms in different parts of Italy, with the political, administrative and economic

² Cf. R. Zangheri, *Catasti e storia della proprietà terriera*, Turin, 1980.

³ *Ibid.*, *La lotta per il catasto nel Settecento*, pp. 71-131.

⁴ Cf. R. Derosas, "A trentacinque anni dalla "scheda" di Dal Pane: un'applicazione dell'informatica alle fonti catastali," in *Quaderni storici*, n. 78, vol. XXVI (1991), f. 3, pp. 721-759.

reorganisation of urban centres and the transformation of their relationship with the surrounding territory.⁵

Historiographical research has shown how different the relations between town and *contado* were in the areas under Spanish rule and in the other states in Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; in these latter, the relationship between urban centres and their surrounding countryside tended mainly to reinforce the local lord's power, both politically and economically, or to redefine the productivity structure of the town's nobility. In the areas under Spanish rule, the relationship between town and country was similarly concerned with social and economic development, but was also conditioned by the presence of a more distant central authority. As well as the town and the local lord controlled the surrounding country, but there was yet another power: a distant authority and its local representatives. On the one hand the central authority transferred to the towns its administrative powers over the countryside. On the other hand, being removed from local rivalries, it set itself up as the custodian of ancient privileges and guardian of the law.

The study of the application of taxes is essential to understanding the dual relationship between the centre and the outlying areas and between the town and the *contado*⁶. The central power's levying tax on a region, the region's subdivision into *contado* and town, and tax distribution between the *contado* and the town, the methods by which monies were collected, were all occasions showing the interplay of institutional, social and economic relationships and power. This has been noted particularly in the State of Milan, at the time of Charles V's survey which rekindled the dispute about town property in the *contadi*, whereas research on the same type of problems in the Kingdom of Naples seems much more sketchy.

This lack of research may partly be due to the preponderant interest in the creation of *contadi*, in northern and central Italy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in that they were an important aspect of the process by which the Commune system was formed. However, it can be explained mainly by the greater attention paid to the study of feudalism and by research on refeudalisation processes in the Kingdom of Naples in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries⁷. The role of feudalism in the

⁵ Cf. M. Berengo, "Città italiana e città europea. Spunti comparativi", in Società Italiana di Demografia Storica, *La demografia storica delle città italiane*, Bologna, 1992, pp. 3-20.

⁶ On the need for research on the territorial and fiscal organisation of Italian communities during Spanish rule cf. G. Luzzato, "Per un programma di lavoro", *Rivista di Storia Economica*, vol. I (1936), p. 181, then in *idem. Per una storia economica d'Italia*, Bari, 1967; C.M. Cipolla, "Finanze di borghi e castelli sotto il dominio spagnolo", *Bollettino Storico Pavese*, vol. VIII (1945), ff 1-2, pp. 5-19.

⁷ Cf. the summary by P. Malanima, "L'economia italiana tra feudalesimo e capitalismo", *Società e Storia*, n. 7, 1980, pp. 141-156.

relationship between the centre and the outlying areas, the consolidation of the feudal economy in the provinces and the clash between the *università* and the barons have been studied while the relationship between town and *contado* and the central authority on the one hand and the formation or transformation of town property in the country on the other, has nearly always stayed in the background⁸.

As the case of the Milanese survey shows, the compilation of a land register for the purposes of tax distribution within a community, shows both the state of relationships within the territory and relations between the community and the central authority. Hence the process of compilation of the land register became a mirror of the interests of that society, made up of the representatives of the central power, the magistrates of the *università*, the baron's emissaries, the representatives of the various social classes and of the various territories that made up the urban area and the rural area (the districts, parishes, villages and hamlets etc.).

Gaetano Sabatini's book on taxation, the organisation of property and the economy of the town of L'Aquila and its *contado* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries belongs to this field of research. L'Aquila, a *città demaniale* situated on the northern frontier of the Kingdom of Naples, had, until the beginning of the sixteenth century, a municipal structure and a relationship with its *contado* that resembled more the urban centres of central and northern Italy than those of the other communities of southern Italy. This relationship broke down after 1528 when, after an uprising against the Spanish, the town lost both its privileged position in the Kingdom, although still remaining *demaniale*, and its *contado*, which was divided into fiefs. The separation of town and *contado* gave rise to quarrels between L'Aquila, the communities of the surrounding area and the central authority about the effectiveness of the punitive measures taken after the uprising, the distribution of the special taxation levied for the building of defence structures, and the methods of payment of ordinary taxation.

As part of the administrative and fiscal measures by which the Viceroy of Naples Pedro de Toledo tried to resolve these disputes, between 1550 and 1624 six land registers were ordered for the property that the citizens of L'Aquila or foreigners who were resident there owned in the town and its surrounding *contado*. This documentation, which has been preserved substantially intact, enables us to see how L'Aquila's relationship with both the central authority and the *contado* changed in the

⁸ An exception are the references on this subject in A Lepre, *Feudi e masserie, Problemi della società meridionale del '600 e '700*, Naples, 1973; M.A. Visceglia, *Territorio, feudo e potere locale. Terra d'Otranto tra Medioevo ed età moderna*, Naples, 1988, especially pp. 202-219; G. Galasso, *Economia e società nella Calabria del Cinquecento*, Naples, 1992; cf. also A. Musi, *Mezzogiorno spagnolo, La via napoletana allo Stato moderno*, Naples, 1991, especially pp. 59-73.

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In particular, the results of the land register surveys of 1550, 1580 and 1593 have been examined systematically, using a computer, in order to see from changes in property organisation in this period the transformation of L'Aquila's economic, social and productive structure from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century.

However, in the early modern period the land register was not only an administrative instrument: it also served political purposes. So the land registers of L'Aquila, which were of use in settling quarrels over taxation between town and *contado* and in ensuring a more equal distribution of the costs of defences, are one aspect of the quest for both a new social structure within the town and for a difficult political balance between the viceregal authority, the town aristocracy and the baronial class of the *contado*. In order to examine this aspect and the connection between the events in L'Aquila and changes in the relationship between the central authorities and the peripheral authorities in the Spanish dominions in Italy in the sixteenth century, Sabatini has consulted the Spanish dominions archives for documentation on the peripheral management of taxation in the Kingdom of Naples and to do research on the petitions L'Aquila presented to the Court between 1528 and the early seventeenth century, petitions concerning the many contentious jurisdictions which set the town against the Viceroy and other communities in the area.

In order to interpret this documentation correctly, Sabatini reminds the reader that in the period under study the compilation of land registers responded to the need of each community, to fix a precise criterion for taxing citizens within the community which was taxed by the royal authorities roughly in proportion to the size of its population. Observing the general principles laid down by the central authority, each community then drew up its own land register, deciding which type of property to include, how to value it and which tax basis and which rate of tax to apply. They could even decide to abandon the land registers either partially or totally and to use monies from excise duties to pay the community's tax quota. The compilation of land registers in the period under study was not based on a system of direct taxation, because tax was not *fixed* but *shared* out proportionately according to the land registers, and because land registers did not reflect a neutral distribution of taxes but allowed as many forms of tax distribution as the different criteria used in compiling the registers. In the specific case of L'Aquila, Sabatini shows that land registers were first drawn up in 1550 after twenty years of major administrative and political reform following the anti-Spanish rebellion of 1528, and that they reflected the central authority's desire to provide the town with an efficient instrument for tax distribution so as to guarantee the punctual collection of taxes.

The 1550 land register was a turning point in the taxation of the town, because, with its compilation, forms of indirect local taxation were reduced to a minimum. However, an emergency situation in 1552 brought back excise

duty, *as well as* taxes proportionate to the citizens' wealth and not *as an alternative* to them. Both forms of taxation continued to exist side by side for the whole of the period of Spanish rule. However, during the seventeenth century, with the emergence of a property-owning class which opposed wealth-linked taxation, and with the *università's* loss of efficiency in performing its administrative functions as its economic possibilities diminished, the role of land registers in the town's taxation became increasingly marginal, until by 1630 it was non-existent.

Once Sabatini has seen the kind of fiscal instrument the land register is, which has to be born in mind when interpreting the data it contains in so far as it is a partial image of reality, he then goes on to stress another aspect: the portrayal of the economy through its relationship with types of property. The land register shows the existence of a hierarchy amongst the community's economic occupations since it indicated which combinations had productive capacity. Furthermore, since it sought the sector with the best profits, the land register reveals growth trends. Hence for a community that practised mainly subsistence agriculture, the land register can show only by what kind of crop differentiation self-sufficiency was achieved, whereas in a community which had already diversified production - for example agriculture, animal-rearing and crafts complementary to these activities - the land register reveals both facets.

At the beginning of the period studied, L'Aquila's economy was based for the most part on the export of local agricultural products, mainly saffron, wool production and manufacture, the financial business related to these activities and the need to supply food for an area which was not self-sufficient in this sector. The gradual change in conditions after 1528 as a consequence of the rebellion (the end of tax privileges; the separation of the *contado* from the city for administrative purposes, L'Aquila's loss of importance as a trading centre, the oppressive taxation levied on the town to cover military expenses and, more generally, heavy taxation on goods which were to be exported) brought a shift in the investment of urban capital from investments in products for export to investments in the *contado* area between 1740 and 1780.

This type of investment led to an increase in cultivated land (sometimes through tillage and deforestation on a large scale), the appearance of small-holdings belonging to lower-class townspeople who aimed at self-sufficiency and supplementing their income, the appearance of large estates, producing corn and wine, belonging to families of the former merchant class, and the gradual acquisition by these families of feudal property in the area, with an eminently speculative aim (fiefs were bought and sold to carry out loan operations, to make money from feudal revenues, and to obtain capital gains from every transaction, etc.).

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the investment boom in the *contado* began to die off, the expansion of cultivated land came to a

halt, urban property began to decline as a consequence of a fall in L'Aquila's population and a fall in the local market's demand, transactions involving feudal possessions became fewer, exports, which had risen constantly in the previous period, fell dramatically and in some sectors ceased completely, and capital seemed to be invested mainly in government stock. It is at this turning point in the town's productive forces that a third aspect of the land register as a source of social history can be found, as Sabatini points out.

The land register provides the data necessary to identify an individual, his family unit and his overall liability to pay tax. However, property registration indicates which groups, classes or categories ruled in the community at the time the land register was compiled, and how this was manipulated so that the taxes could be distributed in a certain way. Comparing information from the land register at different times enables the researcher to see how a community's social structure developed. In the case of L'Aquila, it can be seen that, parallel with the process of economic change, the patricians, who were originally members of the merchant class, had become a land-owning class by the end of the period, by purchasing land in the *contado* and by gaining access to feudal estates. However, this change did not come about all at once, and it is important to emphasise that there was an intermediate phase when lands and fiefs were bought not for feudal revenue (and status), but as a different form of productive investment.

From the point of view of land use, the increase in land owned by townspeople brought with it an increase in the area cultivated, a concentration of allotments, and the cultivation of new lands obtained by the deforestation and the tillage of vast areas. Although the use of less productive land brought an increase in the area under cultivation, it led to a reduction in the average yield per hectare, especially in agriculture involving a hefty contribution of capital and labour, such as vines and vegetables. Furthermore, the recording of movable wealth, carried out only for the 1580 land register, where it accounts for 35 percent of the total wealth recorded, shows how important stock-farming and the financial business involved in the purchase of forage and the renting of pastures was, but it also shows how poor trade had become in L'Aquila during the sixteenth century and how central a role land-ownership played in wealth creation. An analysis of the distribution or the composition of wealth, on a community, family or individual basis wealth, especially for medium-sized and large properties, casts light on both social and economic trends. Thus we can see how the patricians of L'Aquila gained ownership of feudal estates and also how the rise of particular families came about.

On the basis of a distinction between *urban* and rural territory in relation to an area's political and geographical characteristics, Sabatini's research on L'Aquila, with the land registers as his source, shows there is a close connection between the development of types of property and changes in social relationships. In this process, we find elements of continuity with the

past, together with elements of modernity, such as the town's attempt in the *contado* to regain in the economic sphere the positions lost in the political and administrative spheres. At the same time, it is interesting to note that on the basis of Sabatini's research, the land register as an instrument of fiscal control on the local authorities by the central authorities appears secondary; this is probably because Sabatini's study has a different starting-point from other studies on this subject. Taxation mechanisms in the early modern period, particularly with reference to the Kingdom of Naples during Spanish rule, have often been analysed on the basis of the relations between the central authority and the local authority, i.e. stopping at the city walls, without considering the problem of the distribution of taxes within the territory controlled by the community. The study of land registers in sixteenth and seventeenth-century L'Aquila shows, on the contrary, that such registers were an area of contention for the various social groups in the town and its surrounding area. Overall, the picture that emerges is that of the break-up of a society and its recomposition on many new and different levels, within its own territory.

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L. TEISSEYRE-SALLMANN, *L'industrie de la soie en Bas Languedoc, XVII-XVIII siècles*, Ecole des chartes, Paris, 1995, pp. 3-417.

In recent years there has been an increasing number of studies on the history of textile manufacturing in Europe. In an attempt to avoid the usual stereotyped accounts and descriptions of the industry, the field of enquiry has been narrowed with the focus on the characteristics and typologies of particular sectors in particular areas. These themes were fully examined and discussed during a study week organised at the *Istituto Datini* in Prato in May 1992¹. During this important international meeting numerous researches on the subject were presented and discussed - many of which were the fruits of group work - and a very rich general picture emerged which was far more complex and disparate than the picture which is usually painted.

The present study under review here is thus part of a wider and very complex historical debate. On the one hand it examines the general role of the silk industry in European economic and technological development and on the other it reconstructs the specifically French path to industrialisation in the early modern period.

The study is based on thorough research using primary sources and the

¹ *La seta in Europa (secoli XIII-XVIII)*, edited by Simonetta Cavacciocchi, Atti della XXIV settimana di studi, Prato, 4-9 maggio 1992, Prato 1993.

author has carried out a very precise and detailed reconstruction of the origins and development of the silk industry in lower Languedoc. The importance of the first manufacturing centres in the region's economic development emerges right at the start of the book which is dense and well documented. At the beginning of the period, Nîmes, a medium-sized provincial town, was a small juridical centre, capital of the Beaucaire *sénéchassée*. Its economy had no real outlets and its ruling class was ill-prepared and unqualified for undertaking any kind of entrepreneurial activity. Thus, the first manufacturing centres set up by Louis XII which developed towards the end of the fifteenth century boosted the town's already precarious economy at a time when it was in a particularly depressed state after a succession of famines and epidemics.

The author relates the subsequent development of the Nîmes silk industry to general developments in silk manufacturing both in Europe and more specifically in France. This approach enables him to place his specific and fundamentally monographical study in a wider context, and to carry out a more balanced analysis regarding the role and importance of his case study. It is, in fact, well known that at the beginning of the early modern period Italian manufactures dominated production in Europe and were continually expanding. Nonetheless, although in this early phase market conditions afforded few immediate and positive outlets, the birth of the first manufacturing centres showed signs that new alternative and innovatory processes were emerging and were going to make a definite break with the traditional economy of the past.

In the seventeenth century, the conditions of the international market changed. As is well known, production in the Italian peninsula was overcome by a series of very grave crises which brought the manufacturing sector to its knees. The time was now ripe for the market for French silk, with its centre in Lyons, which could now expand under growing international demand.

This, therefore, was the international context in which the French silk industry began to grow but to understand more fully its development we should also consider events within France. Although in the seventeenth century, Lyons strengthened its monopolistic hold on the industry, this was by no means unchallenged. On the contrary the monopoly led to legal violations and fraudulent actions to evade the Lyons customs toll which by now had become inevitable but at the same time unacceptable. Moreover there was the specifically local context to consider: the majority of silk manufacturers and workers at Nîmes were Catholic while most of the merchants were Protestant. Religious conflict and the subsequent Edict of Nantes upset the economic equilibrium and gave rise to violent struggles within the community. These tensions had already been latent and were now accentuated by differences in charters and in levels of wealth which fomented division and internal conflict.

Despite the succession of unfavourable events, the silk industry of Nîmes resisted and when the crisis was over it made a vigorous recovery.

This capacity for recovery was directly related to the favourable conditions existing in the region, in particular an abundant supply of labour and the existence of a large number of small centres, where, alongside occupations in the tertiary sector, a secondary sector had developed mainly based on leather and textile manufacture. Thus, once the crisis had passed, in the course of the seventeenth century production and market structures grew and new industries arose, spread throughout nineteen localities, the majority of which were involved in tanning, hat and above all cloth manufacture.

In the eighteenth century Nîmes established itself as the principal industrial centre in the Lower Languedoc region, specialising in wool and silk manufacture. The development of knitwear industries was based on three factors: the abundance of the two raw materials, wool and silk, the division in roles between Nîmes and the region, and the creation of a single market centred on South America. Yet the most visible signs of the incipient process of industrialisation came from the rise in the production of silk cloth; through silk manufacture silk was to become a widely consumed raw material at prices which were accessible to a vast and heterogeneous clientele.

In this period the town's industrial and distributional sector underwent a complete restructuring and production and trade came to form two distinct and separate spheres. In these circumstances the merchant became increasingly important, first by acting as the manufacturer's interlocutor and intermediary and later through his role as supplier of raw materials and his control over the quantity and quality of goods, as a result of which he came to dominate the whole productive process. Moreover, the merchant's role was to widen geographical horizons, channelling exports increasingly towards foreign markets.

Although, therefore, there was something undoubtedly novel about this professional figure compared to the activities merchants had traditionally performed, the impact of the Industrial Revolution showed the inherent weakness and incapacity of the merchant to keep up with technological change. The causes of decline lay in the inability to speed up production processes at a time when market conditions made it indispensable to cut down manufacturing time. Moreover, customers' needs changed significantly, with a growing demand for other types of cloth which were cheaper and more hardwearing and adaptable for different purposes.

We then arrive at the basic question which underlies the whole study: how did the changes from proto-industrial production to mechanised production come about and, as regards France - and more specifically the lower Languedoc region - how did the transition from the domestic system to the factory system take place? For the author - and here we find ourselves in agreement - it is reductive to continue to examine the industry of the Old Regime exclusively in terms of the Industrial Revolution. Such an approach leads us inevitably to negate the importance of the technological changes that took place in France in the early modern period.

The history of the textile industry in lower Languedoc and Cevennes in the seventeenth and eighteenth century is the history of a highly dynamic industry spread over the whole region stretching from Rodano to Cevennes, excluding only a small coastal area, and engaging urban and rural communities both in the towns and in remoter regions of the interior. The development of this industrial pole completely belies the traditional and standard image we have of French industry under the Old Regime, especially when speaking of factories situated in the South. In the seventeenth and eighteenth century the fortunes of the silk merchants depended on five factors: raw materials, the geographical diaspora of production areas, abundance of labour, predefined manufacturing sectors and the opening of domestic and overseas markets. Each industrial sphere had its own professional autonomy and the various sectors operated parallel to one another throughout the century, each developing at its own pace. On account of the number, diversity and kind of manufactures produced there, Nîmes became a working-class city, employing a large quantity of labour as the industrial metropolis of Lower Languedoc. If it did not attain the same levels of industrialisation as Lyons and Montpellier, this was because of the lack of entrepreneurial spirit among the town's commercial élites, the choice of manufacturing strategies, the rigidity and cumbersome nature of production structures, all factors that demonstrated the inability to adapt to the rise of new technologies and changes in the international market.

This study is undoubtedly useful for improving our understanding of the role of French industrialisation. For too many decades, the process has been scaled down by European economic historians who have based their studies on comparisons with the British industrial model, often when such comparisons are quite inappropriate. There was, indeed, a French way to industrialisation, whose time-scale, modality and characteristics varied from region to region, as the present study shows, even though after reading such a study we are left with the impression that there is still much work to be done before we have a complete picture.

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L. WIEDMER, *Pain quotidien et pain de disette. Meuniers, boulangers et état nourricier à Genève (XVIII-XVIII siècles)*, Geneva, Editions Passé Present, 1993, pp. 1-511.

A study of the material history of Europeans, that is to say, on the evolution of the daily life of Europeans in the early modern period, cannot avoid addressing a question of fundamental importance, such as that of the

production and sale of bread. Bread has always been an essential foodstuff and has long exercised a huge influence over the capacity for survival and the demographic growth of entire populations. We have only to think of the numerous uprisings caused by corn shortages which have brought about economic and social upheaval and led to the periodic and systematic decimation of the population. Nonetheless, although such crises have been recurrent, their characteristics and their short-term and long-term effects on the population have varied from crisis to crisis.

The study under-review is an orderly and detailed analysis of the bread industry in the city of Geneva, and takes the reader through a study of the different stages of the industry, starting with the procurement of cereals, a staple and fundamental foodstuff, right up to the sale and consumption of bread. Geneva had a dual structure of bread supply: a free market involving the peasants who inhabited the surrounding countryside and local merchants and the market controlled by the city food authorities. The latter, however, had most influence on the search for and procurement of corn since it was essential to find regular and sufficient amounts in distant regions given that production in the Geneva countryside covered only a quarter of the amount consumed in the city. Therefore, in order to guarantee a constant and adequate supply of corn for bread production within the city, there was a large number of external suppliers in different areas whose strategic importance varied throughout the period under study.

Once the corn had reached the city, there was the problem of finding suitable areas in which to store it. This was not an easy task. In the seventeenth century corn was stored in different parts of the city, which often led to dispersion and the inability to produce sufficient quantities of bread. In the eighteenth century a solution to the problem was sought and the *Chambre des Blés* took more effective steps to collect and control supplies for the city food authorities by storing corn in the city's main granaries.

An analysis is then made of the types of mill which existed in Geneva and the author shows that they yielded lower levels of productivity compared to the mills used in France and East Europe. It is not accidental that the most serious famines in this period were caused not only by the lack of corn but also by the fact that mills could not be moved and by natural causes that adversely affected production, such as inadequate water levels and lack of wind power. In overcoming these difficulties millers performed a crucial role and were responsible for all operations involving cleaning, sifting and selecting corn. The business was run along family lines, a practice which continued over a long period. The miller was responsible for maintenance and repairs to the mill and for any other kind of problem relating to the running of the mill.

The last stage of production naturally concerned the bakeries. In Geneva there were two kinds of bakery: the public bakery and individual bakers. The art of bread-making was not particularly advanced compared to other places

in Europe, especially France. In this respect the local bodies set up to control and watch over bread production acted as a brake on progress in the sector, being too tied to archaic and costly methods of production. According to rules set out in the bakers' charter of 1629, apprenticeship did not facilitate innovation; it lasted for two years and the craft was mostly handed down from generation to generation.

After having illustrated the different stages of bread-making, the author goes on to examine the bread crises which occurred in the period and their effects on the city. The first crisis examined was that of 1649-1652 which was triggered by the bad distribution network and which brought about a situation of generalised distress. The city rulers ordered the expulsion of all poor foreigners, considering them useless mouths to feed. The subsequent crisis of 1690-1694 was caused by the military occupation of Savoy, Geneva's main granary in the period, as a result of the war declared by the Habsburg League. The 1709 crisis had different causes related to climatic factors which brought about a bread shortage. However, in all these crises and in those which followed in the eighteenth century, the Corn Chamber's role in coordinating proved to be very important in limiting the number of victims and in overcoming the most dangerous moments of the crises. In this respect, the body responded to a precise plan: guaranteeing regular supplies of bread was seen as a fundamental duty of the state. This led to the need for a carefully studied and far-sighted food policy. The debate carried on in France about free trade in corn and non-intervention by the state had little influence on those in charge of food provisioning in Geneva. The latter's vision of the state was based on an idea that the state had definite social responsibilities and was sensitive to the basic needs of the population although such a concept did not embody the notion of pure welfarism.

Corn Chambers existed elsewhere in Europe but the *Chambre des Blés* in Geneva was a special case owing to its being almost two centuries old and to its overall efficiency. In cases of urgent necessity, in order to satisfy the food requirements of the Geneva population, the geographical area over which corn could be produced was considerably widened so that large quantities of corn could be imported. Not surprisingly, throughout the eighteenth century the *Chambre des Blés* turned increasingly to Sicily, North Africa and Britain for its supplies of corn. The activity of the *Chambre des Blés* shows that the city food authorities had little faith in the possibility of improving provisioning merely by intensifying trade with the surrounding areas. Such an attitude must be seen within the context of the agrarian structure of the Geneva countryside, populated by small holders and peasants who produced essentially for self-consumption. Consequently, the town's agricultural problems could not be resolved by improvement in local production but only through trade and by forming links with areas which might be far from Geneva. According to the author, in the long term, this strategy caused local landowners to become lazy, taking away from them any incentive to

restructure and to modernise their methods of production.

In conclusion we can say that the book is well structured and the result of patient and thorough research using primary sources, a part of which appears in the appendices at the end of the book. Perhaps the study might have benefited from a less monographic approach and from greater comparison with other large urban centres in the old continent, although here the author may have been constrained by the fact that there is still a substantial lack of studies on the subject.

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