
REVIEWS OF BOOKS

C. BRUHL and C. VIOLANTE, *Die "Honorantiae Civitatis Paviae". Transkription, Edition, Kommentar*, Cologne-Vienne, Böhlau Verlag, 1983 IX - 102 p.

It was not mere palaeographic enthusiasm that led these two distinguished scholars from Giessen and Milan, both highly qualified authorities on the *Regnum Italiae*, to undertake a critical edition of the *Honorantiae* from the library of the counts Dal Verme and dating from the XVth century. This is an extremely valuable source, and following in the footsteps of Solmi, Soriga and Vidari the editors have been able to establish the different stages in which it was compiled, and at the same time to provide an invaluable range of information on economic activities between the Po valley and the Alps, on trade between the Anglo-Saxons, Venetians, and the seaborne Republics of southern Italy and Byzantium around about the year 1000. In their scrupulously scholarly commentary on the text the editors describe the origins of the institutions that are celebrated in the *Honorantiae*, reconstruct the network of economic activities that centred round Pavia before the destruction of the Germanic imperial palace in 1024 and the reversion of political affairs to Milan. Finally they analyse the origin and nature of certain components of the C manuscript (Codex Dal Verme, XVth century) which is transcribed here, and which consists of three sections: the 10th century *Instituta*; the additions and commentaries made by the master of the Royal Chamber, Gisulf (995-1020) which make up the historical section of the manuscript; and the later additions and glosses added between 1050 and the XIVth century. The latter raise the question of the contemporary nature of the document, but one can simply say that in the early Middle Ages it still served as a guide to the origins of the Pavian guilds and illustrates the importance of the original imperial regalia as defined by the first Germanic rulers in Italy for the subsequent development of civil and public law.

It should be noted that the *Codex* of which this document is part is made up of a collection of chronicles, titularies and constitutions relating to estates in the Po valley and Ticino, and that the 18 paragraphs which make up the whole carry

the precise title: *Instituta regalia et ministeria camere regum Longobardorum et honorancie civitatis Papie*. In other words, its functional purpose was of greater importance than its celebrative intent, and while there is no shortage of celebration (everyone is probably familiar with the famous salutations to the Venetians and the leaders of the Pavian merchants: "divites", "magni et honorabiles et multum divites") this is a reflection of the awareness that these venerable and solid, political, social and economic institutions were the basis of the glory of the Empire in northern Italy.

The linear commentary which forms the centre-piece of this publication (pp. 28-76) is a model of scholarly erudition and clarity, and we shall note here only the sections which are particularly path-breaking or which appear to provide a definitive settlement of problems that have been the subject of disagreement in the past.

First of all, the political structure. Its centre was the *regale palatium* (inherited from Theodoric), surrounded by the courts (*curtes*) of the imperial dignitaries from the IXth century onwards, which C. Bruhl describes as a form of pied-à-terre. The whole constituted a legal forum originally at the service of the State (palatine judges, palatine schools) and which by the XIVth century was also doubling as a *Studium Generale*. But Pavia also functioned as a customs centre, raising what the later glosses described as *decima*, that is the mass of transit tolls which provided the salaries and recompense of the heads of the *Instituta*. In this sense, the Germanic Empire was direct heir of the Lombard kings and the Carolingian invaders, since one list of the different Alpine passes (*clusae*) goes back to 775. The organization of transport and communications over the mountain passes enabled the transit of cloths, horses, household slaves and valets (*mancipa*) from the North, in growing numbers from the IXth century and from the XIIth swollen by the pilgrims headed towards Rome and the Holy Land. This in turn enables us to identify the development of a first trade axis in the early middle ages, linking Frisia with Central Italy. In the later years of the IXth century a second came into being, running between Pavia and the Anglo-Saxon world.

The key figure in the fiscal administration of the Regnum was the Master of the Royal Chamber. All the guild masters and the representatives of the local mercantile groups gravitated around him paying their dues in rare goods (spices, medicinal herbs) or in hard currencies (Venetian or Oriental coin). There is a fascinating suggestion put forward that the Pavia *denier* was officially tied to the Venetian *denier* by the authorities for exchange purposes and to the detriment of the latter. But was not this, after 972, a means whereby the Republic which had recently obtained its freedom from Byzantium was able to obtain the safety of its citizens and their freedom to trade at will beyond the Alps, opening up to them opportunities without precedent in Christian Europe? We find these 'rich and noble merchants' buying slaves left in the monastery of St. Martin by their brothers from over the Alps, coming into competition with the well-organized *negotiatores* of Salerno, Gaeta and Amalfi.

But the great innovation of the Xth century, par excellence the German century, concerned the Pavian merchants themselves. As an appendix of the Empire, this part of the Regnum which in 1024 was to rise against its master (the error lay in the failure to understand the strength of the demands for citizenship and the concession of autonomies compatible with continuing integration in the Empire) saw the emergence of the *negotiores palatii*. They constituted a meritocratic elite, their demands were focussed in the political arena, and explain the revolutionary events of the XIth century.

Amongst the masters of the *ministeria* described in the *Honorantiae*, pride of place was accorded to the *magister monetae Papiensis* who was placed in authority over his colleagues in Milan and Lucca and whose prime function was essentially entrepreneurial since he was responsible for gold mining in the rivers of the Piedmontese alps. This monopoly over the collection of precious mineral ores also explains the premium accorded to the Pavian *denier*, which was 5% in relation to its main rivals. This was a world, in which words like value added were understood, recognized and pursued. Further proof of the same thing can be found in the practice of using a double pricing system in the Pavia territories, a 'current price' and a 'special price', and which permitted various forms of 'dumping' operations and were obviously innovations in the world of the early Middle Ages.

The historical sections of the text enable its compilation to be dated between 991 and 1004, while the additions made in 1020 were done by very accurate copyists. However, the later XIth to XIVth century additions are no less valuable, and refer constantly to the nature and status of the medieval guilds and the crafts of Pavia. Although they were feudal organisations at the service of the Royal Chamber, they were described by analogy in the same terms as the later Roman *collegia*. This was the purpose of the term *Honorantiae* which sought to sublimate the *Instituta* of imperial origin, but which in fact derived ultimately from the models established in the Oriental Empire. Then in 1158 the text provided a basis for the definition of the Swabian regalian rights, and provides extremely important evidence of the additions which help understand the underlying 'continuities' of the medieval period. As an essentially constitutional document, the *Honorantiae* provided the basis for establishing the components of the public domain which became the predominant feature of the administrative system created by Frederick Barbarossa (public highways, navigable rivers, access to shores and river banks, tolls, right to strike coin, mine ores, the duties payable for fishing etc).

In short, a remarkably comprehensive picture of northern Italy at the beginning of the XIth century, which continues over three hundred years. There is only one criticism, and that is the absence of maps — but in view of the great achievements of this work, this is a very minor sin.

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TH. HERSHBERG (ED.). *Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family and Group Experience in the 19th Century. Essays toward an Interdisciplinary History of the City*, New York — Oxford, Oxford University, Press, 1981, pp. XVI — 525.

The territory of mid-nineteenth century American urban history at the micro level is still largely uncharted. Theodore Hershberg's collection of fourteen essays is an ambitious and complex work. Eight historians, five sociologists, two economists, one political scientist and one economic historian give us a series of new prisms through which we can view the Philadelphia socio-economic experience between 1850 and 1880. Their illuminating source is the huge computerized data base of the Philadelphia Social History Project, constructed from original Census manuscripts and numerous local documents. Anyone unfamiliar with the PSHP should read Appendix II describing briefly the data base before examining the text. And the text requires careful examination.

The writing is dense and detailed and, as Hershberg indicates, the nature of the data base selected and the scholarly interests of the researchers determine the approach to the subject matter. This proves to be a major strength and weakness of the book. The abundance of evidence hovering in the background is always evident but the conceptual framework for analysis is not developed. The implication is that these prisms will present a coherent picture when viewed in the interdisciplinary mode. There are in many of the essays clear searchings for the coherent light of theory. Numerous specific hypotheses in the colours of the different disciplines do filter out highly particular conclusions about life in a mid-nineteenth century industrializing city.

The four main sections of the book follow the sub-title breakdown. The initial essay on work tries to disentangle the question of economies of scale from technological change and the use of power in selected manufacturing industries. The second focuses on the continuity of occupational distribution among Irish and German ethnics in 1850 and 1880. The section on space looks at journey-to-work, residential mobility and industrial location. These come to the common conclusion that highly localized industrial labour markets were the main determinants of residential living patterns in the walking city of this era.

The third section on family assigns an important role to children as secondary workers and in one essay compares the changing role of the family in the growing up process then and now (in 1970).

The final section contains an interesting essay on the urbanization of the Irish population from 1840 to 1860. The similarities and differences between the economic and demographic characteristics of the Irish in Philadelphia and London are compared. The last three essays centre on the Black group experience. Differences between mulattoes and Blacks, between ex-slaves and free-born and between female and male-headed Black families are detailed.

Are these twelve essays, as Hershberg hopes, "a sound intellectual introduction to life in a nineteenth century industrializing city?" Basic parameters such

as population components, the relation of manufacturing to non-manufacturing employment, the role played by organizational change, income, wealth, trade patterns — all are missing. The Civil War, the Depression of the seventies, and any long-range trends affecting Philadelphia are not explored in either the introductory or concluding framework essays. A key unanswered question which undoubtedly occurred to PSHP researchers is: How representative was Philadelphia of large, rapidly growing American cities in the nineteenth century? Inspection of population and labour force and other census variables suggest that Philadelphia was one of only a few large American cities that did not conform to the long-swing (Kuznets cycle) pattern which dominated American industrial-urban growth from 1840 to 1930. The relatively slow growth of services, producer-concentrated manufacturing, the composition of the demographics and the response of Philadelphia entrepreneurs to shifting comparative advantages may offer partial clues. The collection would have profited by an essay sketching out such linkages.

The specifics of these substantive essays are in general well-done. However, there are some lapses. On page 66 in Table 9, total average employment change between 1850 and 1880 is 66% while in the text on page 67 it is correctly identified as 21%. On page 67 clothing is identified as an industry in which the number of firms decreased while on page 65, Table 8 says the figures were 410 in 1850 and 702 in 1880.

The final essay is a foray into applying comparative historical research to current policy questions. It measures and analyzes ethnic segregation for a number of groups at different points in time. Unfortunately, its newly-defined measure of segregation, "the index of dominance" (which measures what percentage of a typical ethnic's census tract was inhabited by that ethnic group) has the flaw of not considering the impact of a specific group's proportion of the total population changing over time. It does not abstract from scale, and the index grows or declines over time! The index of dominance for Blacks given in the last essay is 1880, 4; 1930, 11; 1970, 74. Recalculation of the index taking into consideration the effect of the increasing proportions of ethnic stock yields the ratio: Blacks 1880, 4/12; 1930, 11/35; 1970, 34/74. These would compare with the earlier ethnic groups as follows: Irish and German 1880, 27/34, 16/25; Polish, 1930, 7/20; Italian, 1930, 9/38. It is not clear that using this index brings us to the conclusion that there was greater segregation of Blacks in 1970 than other historic ethnic groups or than Blacks themselves in prior decades!

The purposeful omission of methodology (which is available elsewhere) makes this an even more tantalizing and frustrating survey. From the huge potential of its data base, these essays yield a view of historical glades, glens and swamps begging for a theoretical map of the whole terrain. Yet, despite Sombart's dictum, "no theory, no history," this is a new kind of history. Hopefully, future volumes will define and broaden the comparative historical perspectives in both space and time as well as sharply focus the developmental themes

needed to realize the rainbow-like blend which an interdisciplinary approach to urban history promises.

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H. KOCH *Histoire de la Banque de France et de la monnaie sous la IVe République*, Paris, Dunod, 1983, pp. XVI - 438.

The first history of the French Central Bank, the famous Ramon study, was published in 1929. But now the archives of the rue de la Vrillière for the period between 1944 and 1958 are opened to us by a man who was adviser to the Governor of the Bank and as a result gained an intimate understanding of its different functions. He served at different times in the General Secretariat, the Central Study Bureau, and the Foreign Service Bureau. The result is a remarkable combination of broad over-views combined with unerring mastery of detail, a wide-ranging knowledge of macro-economics and an unusual facility for depicting the men who although little known to the wider public were responsible for the management of public credit and monetary affairs during the difficult years of France's first economic reconstruction in the period after the Second World War.

From the outset the author sets out to explore a problem which most will agree is fundamental. There can be little doubt that the first phase of the transformation of France into a genuinely industrialized economy had been completed by 1958, but at what precise date did the crisis which made that transformation — and made it a question of life or death for the nation — begin? Between 1930 and 1938 the archaic nature of the system of production, the distortions in the distribution of the fruits of labour and capital investment, the incapacity of the credit system to modernize itself had become evident (however Keynes's theory of the *Open Market* dates only from 1935). The two years between 1938-9 were little more than an about-turn (Paul Reynaud), and although promising in many respects the process was cut off by the war economy which could not be dismantled until 1944-5 and which had thereafter to be reintroduced (Indo-China), and also by the formidable hiatus caused by the German occupation. The anticipatory signs of recovery (a buoyant black market which revealed the capacity of a dualist economy — official and clandestine — to adapt, demographic expansion) were, however, stifled by the inability of gold to bring about economic reanimation due to the swelling of the floating debt and the ambiguous situation arising from the fact that while constant recourse to loans had left companies with considerable liquidities virtually nothing was being invested any more.

These unhealthy symptoms were a combination of inheritances from the past and the present, and became absorbed into the effects of the immediate

economic conjuncture and the reorganization of international financial structures agreed at Bretton-Woods. The agreements made in February 1944, and then completed by a subsequent series of conventions between individual states, had the advantage of integrating France immediately after its liberation in a series of credit organizations and facilities. The most important of these was the F.M.I., established on the basis of a differential exchange rate for the franc in relation to sterling and the dollar which was set at rates virtually the same as in 1939, and which as a result bore little relation to the present realities of the French economy: the result was the 60% devaluation at the end of 1945¹. But the most serious outcome lay in the inability to gear the expansion of national productivity, the importance of which was not generally appreciated, to a rational implementation of the Marshall Plan, which in many quarters was seen simply as a form of foreign interference. The combined instability of the legislative and the executive, which was evident even before the signing of the peace treaties, also served to discourage national and international investment at a time when the state had become a genuine 'State-Employer' (by virtue of the nationalisation programme). In fact the drama of the IV^e Republic was to lie in the fact that it was to take another ten years before pressure from outside the political world was to make itself felt, and the sagacity of the supporters of the future Vth Republic was evident from 1956 onwards in the realization that only a new regime could give them room to develop.

The history of the Bank of France which H. Koch has now reconstructed for us demonstrates that once the institution had been nationalized (but without becoming part of the State) along the lines desired by the C.N.R., although lacking an internal constitution until 1973 it quickly became an excellent instrument in the hands of the 'Shareholder-State' (indeed the only share-holder) for the more effective management of credit. The law of December 2nd 1945 brought into being the National Credit Council (C.N.C.), and established the following fundamental principle: the Council was to be under the chairmanship of a minister appointed by the government, who could — and given the instability of the IVth Republic he could do little else! — delegate his powers to the Governor of the Bank, who was *ex officio* vice-Chairman. Deprived of its role as France's first public and private bank, yet promoted to the position of

¹ Fixed parities — the only rational solution to the problem — have not yet been introduced except within the European monetary system (1979). They are still essentially based on the franc-Deutschmark parity. Clearly a fixed franc-dollar or, even better, franc-écu parity would go a long way towards resolving the oil account, purchases of non-European foodstuffs, and precious metals. H. Koch demonstrates (pp. 110-111) very clearly that from the beginning of 1948 the Bank of France had put this case to the government of Robert Schuman (René Mayer was Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs at the time) and described the conditions necessary for the financial redistribution that would follow: levies on consumer prices, immediate emancipation of industrial prices, and the expansion of foreign currency reserves (in short: austerity).

overseer of the 'fundamental functional regulations of banking institutions in the private sector' (and particularly with control over the liquidation of companies struck off the banks' list.) and equipped with the statistical resources that A. Sauvy had been demanding for years, the Bank of France was able to operate with complete autonomy and to centralize banking risks. The expertise which it acquired as a result to 'discriminate' in all fields of credit activities (whether concerning public or private institutions) gave it a focal role.

This being the general situation in the immediate post-war years and the particular position of the Bank of France which was now responsible to oversee (albeit in strictly liberal terms) public credit and to regulate (in a planning rôle) the national economy, what needed to be done?

The first task was to finance the Treasury. It was a question of adapting monetary reserves to the value of the available merchandise, of transforming the ratios between the different elements of which it was traditionally composed and which were marked by an excess of credits on the state, while at the same time continuing to honour these. The second imperative was closely related to the first, and lay in the need to renovate company financing, since savings were collapsing, which in turn revealed the eclipse of the middle classes. Finally, it was also essential to revive and increase production. The proportion between purchases and sales which had been 66% in 1938 had fallen to 21% in 1945, and the currency reserves (the Bank of France's gold stock) were derisory. The restoration of the currency and bank credits was based on the remarkable 'Schumann inventory' of 1946 and above all on a systematic policy of intervention aimed in the early years between 1944 and 1950 at benefiting economic credits and also the banking system itself.

The first of these operations was intended primarily to benefit small and medium-sized companies (in industry and agriculture), and there was already an awareness that these represented the key strike force in a broader process of reconstruction (2). This was a courageous policy, although one that was gener-

² This is in fact the role given to national credit in the present policies of the United States government, on the assumption that in present circumstances neither the State nor big business is the major creator of jobs (cf P. F. Drucker *Harvard Business Review* Jan. 1984). This is also the policy followed at present by M. Jacques Delors, although with a degree of discretion, in so far as he relies on the CODEVI and entrusts the management and placement of the funds collected not to the Bank of France but — and this transfer of power is something that needs to be studied — to the Caisse Centrale of the savings banks, that is to say to the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations. The comparison can also be widened to include several recent statements by Marcel Dassault (*Le Monde* 8.3.1984) recommending that priority assistance be given to the 'smaller lame ducks' (and less therefore to the 'great elephants') by setting up, with funds provided by the inheritance taxes, a 'Caisse du Petit Commerce et de l'Artisanat' which would offer loans at 3%. The market for this supply of credit is composed of some 800,000 small business managers.

ally misunderstood at the time since it involved keeping interest rates low at a time when inflation (between 1947-8) reached 5 and 6% per month! It was also a policy of force, since the Bank of France made use of its powers to set at its own wish and according to particular circumstances the ceilings on rediscount rates (an operation of fundamental importance in a policy designed to assist production). At the same time, utilising the flexibility conferred by its position as the accounting agent of the Finance Ministry, the Bank carried out simultaneously a devaluation of the currency while skilfully revaluing its own reserves when by a stroke of genius Governor Monick obtained the right to recast in gold bars the excessively numerous gold coins in circulation (a particular French vice!) for the payments required in international settlements. From 50 milliards of Francs in 1944 the volume of participation in the economy rose to 1250 milliards by 30th June 1950.

The second operation was based on the provisions that had been made as early as 1936 for discounting, intervention in the money markets (of Keynes) and the share markets: the Bank systematically discounted stocking bills (the example of the Grain Bureau bills is well known) and carried out a centralization of all Treasury stock. As a result the internal balance of its monetary reserves began to improve: at 30.9.1944 these consisted of bills and cash to 75%, against 27% in short-term deposits: by 30.6.1950 the ratio was 50/50. Fiduciary bills declined in proportion to script, which provided incentive for the investment effort even through it still fell short of the better proportions achieved in Britain and the USA.

Between mid-1950 and the end of 1956 the recovery was thrown into jeopardy partly by external factors (the return of instability caused by the Korean War) but primarily by internal factors, in particular the attitudes of French consumers. The alternating increases in prices and wages continued to spiral. Under the guidance of the Governor Wilfrid Baumgarten and with the approval of Antoine Pinay, the Bank tried to rescue the currency. Between 1944 and 1950 this had been sacrificed, but now it became possible to adopt a more 'monetarist' policy. The Bank relied on the European Settlements Union (Union européenne de paiements = UEP) which had resulted from the formation of the OECD, itself a product of the Marshall Plan and hence also of the Bretton-Woods agreements. The UEP assured settlements in a way that could not have been foreseen in 1944 (for which P. Mendes-France was responsible) through the intermediary of the B.I.R.D., using a system of credit quotas: those for France equalled 15% of its total foreign transactions in 1949 (by 1955 the percentage had doubled due to the international crisis).

If this crisis was international, it was experienced with particular severity in France. Between 1950 and 1955 there was no trade surplus, off-shore contracts proved increasingly onerous, the foreign currency reserves fluctuated violently and there was a general shortage of dollars. France was living from hand to mouth. The solution was found, and from 1953 onwards its architect was W. Baumgarten, by bringing the free and official currency markets in Paris into

direct competition, by issuing gold coins to soak up small savings and above all by giving a further incentive to industry by priority financing of national industries. After the partial recovery of 1944-50 we have now arrived at the period of the major transformation and we would fully agree with H. Koch who stresses that these decisions that in retrospect appear entirely logical created the need for remarkable processes of reorientation and adaptation. The plan was beginning to take shape.

A new phase was opened in 1956. The governments which succeeded one another in quick succession, much to the alarm of the Governors of the Bank, began despite the murky political situation finally to understand one thing: that the currency had to be subordinated systematically to broader economic objectives. It was above all Guy Mollet to whom credit should go for imposing on government an awareness of the particular sphere of activity that pertained to the Bank of France (an attitude that was retained with remarkable continuity and appropriateness by the Vth Republic between 1958 and 1968), but it should also be pointed out that it was W. Baumgarten in particular who understood that it was essential to provide the country with the instruments necessary for in-depth expansion, particularly through encouragement for investment goods (for example the snowball effect of building). On 31.12.1958 amongst the total volume of middle-term credits issued, *special* loans to the building industry amounted to 834 milliard francs, with 352 milliards granted to national industries, 566 milliards in other loans for equipment and building, and 73 milliards in export credits (the sector that received the smallest increase after 1955, although the Gaillard devaluation provided ample compensation for the level of direct public assistance). By providing incentives for investment saving, the Bank succeeded in giving healthier support to the currency than loans would have permitted.

What remained to be done after 1955 to bring about the full take-off of the recovery? The first priority was to end the political uncertainty, but this was a problem to which a solution was to be found elsewhere and was taken in hand by General de Gaulle. Secondly, it was necessary to reduce the Bank's direct subventions to the State which originated from the convention of 1938 and which were always open to abuse, and to transform these into selective injections of credit — always medium term — for production. This meant high interest rates to prevent savings stagnating and to avoid short term speculation. Two quotations from H. Koch's study seem to be of particular importance and relevance when it comes to contrast this situation with what had occurred between 1930 and 1958. '... the economic crisis of the 1930s and the ideas put forward by Lord Keynes had firmly anchored the conviction that interest rates should not be too high. In France in particular it needed some time after the end of the war before it became recognised that although the 'cheap money policy' was viable in relation to the circumstances which had given it birth, it now needed to be modified since the overall circumstances had become quite different'. '... it was only between 1957/8 that the view gained

ground that it was perhaps advisable to disassociate the costs paid by the users of credit — even if they were over-estimated — from the marginal price of refinancing by the banks. Limiting the latter's tendency to make loans by penalising their investment accounts became a new instrument of intervention'.³

Who were the directors of the Bank of France? Men like E. Monik and W. Baumgarten had learned their art in the rough school of the 1930s. Fearing the alternating and ill-prepared deflations and devaluations imposed by the politicians, deeply aware of the citizens' mistrust of the ways in which public funds were managed, they became at the same time authoritarian and non-conformist. It should also be said that they had always to act on their own, and were never attacked by the State when things went badly. It should also be remembered that alongside the Governors there were figures like the Assistant Governor P. Calvet, the very incarnation of the 'grand commis' who thanks to his close friendship with Dr von Mangold was able in 1958 to find support for the franc to avoid devaluation against the mark, 40% of which came from Germany! Mention must also be made of the assistance which the Bank received from senior administrators in other branches of public service such was the case of Jean Cottier, financial adviser to the French embassy in Washington who in 1958 showed how the national budget for what promised to be an extremely difficult year in 1959 could be protected by obtaining exclusive priority on the credit facilities of the Chase Manhattan Bank and the First National Bank of New York.

In conclusion one can say that historians can learn a great deal from this study about banking methods and developments which are too often seen solely in the light of political events. The appendices contain the most important and comprehensive data on public finances that has yet been compiled in an edited form.

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P. MAINONI, *Mercanti lombardi tra Barcellona e Valenza nel Basso Medioevo*. Bologna, Cappelli ed, 1982 pp. 200.

This study originates from a much larger research project on the Milanese ruling and commercial elites in the Visconti-Sforza period, and is concerned with the role played by Lombard merchants in the Catalan economy. It is essentially an analytical study and the sections dealing with the activities of the Lombards in Barcelona and Valencia are furnished with detailed list of names that provide an inventory of the individual companies and merchants operating in both cities. Unfortunately this detailed archival research suffers from severe

³ Pages 373-374.

limitations, since the absence of all the account books for the various companies in question has left the author with nothing to supplement the information gleaned from notarial archives, which by itself provides only a descriptive picture of the economy. Only in the case of the Borromeo company is there slightly wider documentation available, and it is to the author's credit that he has been able to use and present the partial correspondence that has survived from the Borromeo private archives. But set in the light of the extensive bibliography on the Italian and Catalan economies in the XIVth and XVth centuries — with which the author is well familiar — the study does not suffer unduly from the limited nature of the sources on which it is based, and serves in fact to widen our knowledge of an important aspect of the more general structure of Mediterranean commercial systems in the late Middle Ages.

Lombard merchants are first mentioned in the Catalan cities in the XIIIth century, but they were in fact not from Lombardy but from Asti, Alessandria, Monferrato and Piacenza. It was only towards the middle of the next century that merchants from Milan itself were to be found operating in Catalonia, but they then quickly replaced the former so-called 'Lombards', although the trade that they were involved in remained essentially that which had already been established — importing fustian cloth and Lombard metal goods in exchange for wool, furs, dried fruit, rice, saffron and salt. These were all commodities that formed part of a much wider system of commercial exchanges, since Barcelona and Valencia constituted two outlets for the products of Muslim Spain and Castile, while Milan on the other hand lay at the centre of a vast hinterland which included in particular Como and Monza.

Initially it was Genoese and Tuscan merchants who had played the key role in this trade, but 'the expansion of demand in Lombardy for Spanish wool in the late XIVth century necessitated more direct contact with the source of production' (p. 37), forcing Milan to establish closer ties with Genoa (and also with Nice, Finale and Savona) whose port and shipping was of vital importance for trade with Spain, even though the Lombards preferred to use Biscayan vessels whose tariffs were generally lower — but since Milan had no fleet of its own there was little choice. As a result Genoa quickly assumed for Milan an importance which had traditionally been held by Venice by means of which, as E. Ashtor's studies have demonstrated, Lombard cloths had been able in the XIVth and XVth centuries to invade the markets of the muslim Levant. But direct penetration of the Iberian markets meant that Milan 'had to shift its commercial axes towards the West' and at the same time had also 'to develop its own commercial class who, in order to acquire these new markets, needed to learn new techniques and new expertise' (p. 49).

The Lombard merchants were particularly prominent in Valencia (where they also took an interest in insurance operations) since Barcelona was already 'a major centre of commercial organization and financial activities, with its own well-developed merchant classes, and therefore only offered scope for manoeuvre to the great Italian banking houses, in other words the Tuscan banks,

whose capital and technical know-how were placed at the disposal of the Crown' (p. 90). However, after the alliance between Alfonso of Aragon and Filippo Maria Visconti a number of Lombard companies were also set up in Barcelona, the first being an agency of the Borromeo company which began operating in the first months of 1437 and which had a hand in the Balearics and in various banking activities as well.

Yet the Lombard companies 'generally operated with a rather restrictive internal structure and tended to make use of commissioned agents rather than their own factors. As a result the greater part of the companies that operated in Barcelona and Valencia functioned as commissioning agencies for correspondents at Genoa, Milan and other Iberian centres' (p. 126). It is no surprise, therefore, that one of the major problems for the Lombard commercial houses lay in establishing a permanent representation on the Spanish markets, and the majority were simply 'representatives of individual families: the father or elder brother would remain in Milan, while younger sons or brothers tried to operate on different foreign markets' (p. 128). Nonetheless, the Lombard presence in Spain in the first half of the XVth century was considerable, and there were many cases 'especially amongst merchants originating from present-day Piedmont' of whole families that transferred themselves permanently to Spain (p. 130). As the author suggests, it is highly probable that the same would be found to be true if similar studies were carried out on other Spanish commercial centres, such as the Balearics or the Castilian hinterland.

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A. MANIKOWSKI, *Il commercio italiano di tessuti di seta in Polonia nella seconda metà del XVII secolo (L'Azienda di Marco Antonio Federici a Cracow, 1680-1683)*. Warsaw, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Fasciculi Historici n. 10, 1983, pp. 201.

Manikowski's interesting study sets out to develop two sets of arguments. The first is that in the XVIIth century the trade in luxury goods, particularly silk textiles, continued to play a fundamental role in the economies of certain European states, and remained more important than the trade in cheaper and bulk textile products (an argument which is essentially that reached by myself in two recent articles: 'Per una storia dell'industria di lusso in Francia. La concorrenza italiana nei secoli XVI e XVII' in *Ricerche di Storia Sociale e Religiosa* 14.1978 pp. 181-202; 'Silk manufacturing in France and Italy in the XVIIth century: two models compared' in *Journal of European Economic History* 10, n. 1 Spring 1981 pp. 167-199). The second argument is that the overland trade to Poland was by no means irrelevant in comparison with the trade via the Baltic, at least in terms of value. The study has the additional interest of tackling a period

which has generally been neglected by other Polish historians, running roughly from the mid-XVIIth to the mid-XVIIIth century when, at the 'end of the reign of the Saxon rulers and in the era of Stanislaw Poniatowski' a new 'revival of the Polish economy' began to take shape.

The study is situated, therefore, in that crucial century during which both the Polish and the Italian economies found themselves forced to adapt to the rapidly shifting structures of international trade. It is hardly necessary to say that this process of adaptation was carried out in essentially defensive terms, revealing a clear inferiority and subordination in relation to the emergent stronger economies of the European continent. As far as Italy is concerned, Manikowski proceeds on the basis of the hypothesis formulated some years ago by Carlo Cipolla who defined the Italian case as that of a 'fully matured economy' which was typified by high levels of wages, yet proved resistant to the adoption of new technologies, new methods of production, new commodities and was locked into an essentially conservative social system. However, in reasserting this argument, Manikowski makes no reference to the development of rural industries in this period and their role in challenging the hegemony of the urban corporations, nor to recent debates on the subject of protoindustrialization. But the reason for this may well be the time that it has taken for this study to be published.

In Poland, declining terms of trade in the XVIIth century due to the fall in the price of Polish wheat and parallel increases in the price of imported goods, triggered off the familiar process of the expansion of the seigneurial economy and the reimposition of forced-labour obligations, together with the fall in the purchasing power of the rural masses. What is original in the author's description of this process is the emphasis he places on the inter-dependence between the two 'feudal' economies of Poland and Italy, (even though the adjective needs some modification when it comes to the Italian case in view of the enormous regional variations on the peninsula). The strengthening of the Polish nobility and the renewed emphasis on ostentatious clothing and life styles created new market opportunities for the Italian manufacturing cities (particularly Venice, Florence, Genoa and Lucca), making Poland a primary outlet for quality silk production. The oriental fashions favoured by the Polish magnates, and the long expertise of Venice and other Italian cities in these styles, created the basis for an intense commercial activity between the peninsula and Poland, and gave the Italian producers an edge over their increasingly threatening competitors.

Research in the private archives of the Italian merchant Marc Antonio Federici, who had come originally from Venice but became fully integrated into Cracow society, enables Manikowski to present an extremely interesting panorama, in which he has wisely set the activities and operations of this individual merchant against the context of the broader developments of this fundamental branch of the Italian economy in these centuries. It becomes clear that the silks which Federici ordered directly from manufacturers in Italy were generally inferior in quality to those which he bought at the Leipzig fairs. But this should

not mislead us since many of the fabrics on sale at the Leipzig fairs were Italian — these fairs constituted the most important pivot of trade in Central Europe, and as Kellenbenz has shown were dominated by German merchants. But there the Italian merchants who had taken up residence in Poland (there were about 20 of them) were also able to buy Dutch and above all French silk cloths. The latter were posing an increasingly threatening challenge to Italian silks (although the development of the rivalry between French and Italian silks on the German markets needs to be studied more closely), and the resistance of the Italians was due in considerable part to the particular favour which they continued to find amongst the Polish nobility.

The volume of the Italian silk exports has been estimated by Manikowski, who puts Federici's turn-over at about 10,000 thaller a year: taking this as an average, and multiplying by the number of Italian merchants in Poland (20), he suggests that the annual value of the silk imports must have been about 200,000 thaller a year, or about 10-20% of the entire Polish trade deficit — a far from derisory item. The figure is all the more striking if we remember that it represented a fairly small amount of cloth (some 1,400 pieces, in contrast to the 44,600 pieces of cheaper cloths imported annually via the Baltic). It was only in these luxury goods (which were not easily assessed for customs purposes) that quality and value became quite independent of volume and quantity.

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J. M. MERRIMAN (ed.), *French Cities in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Hutchinson, 1982, 304 p.

This is a book of pioneer essays to illustrate how, in what ways, and with what consequences, this peasant nation was dramatically urbanized in the nineteenth century. By the test of urbanism defined as communes having 2000 or more inhabitants, France remained predominantly agricultural until about the 1930s; by the more stringent test of urbanism defined as cities with at least 5000 inhabitants, France was not predominantly urban until 1950s. All the same, the variety and growth of French towns in the nineteenth century was marked, the impact on political and social life immense. Merriman and his eight authors discuss the multiple forms this physical, social and politico-administrative revolution took, seeking to account, a) for the relatively slow pace of France's urbanization by comparison with those of her British or German neighbours, b) for the peculiar tensions between the capital and the local governments, c) for the emergence of mass politics, and d) for the manner in which "the increasing social division" of "urban space" affected politics.

If there were cities that showed a pattern of industrial growth on the contemporary British model, there were more that showed artisanal and rural

components in their expansion. Cities had many functions; industry was only one of the activities that they grew in response to. Merriman himself shows us Limoges in transition from the Restoration to the July Monarch, altered from a commercial, virtually medieval backwater ("crowded, dark and very dirty") to a centre of the porcelain industry, with a challenging bourgeoisie, an interest in liberal politics, and, after an aroused working-class population opened the way to an era of bourgeois politics, a growing secularity, a confident municipal politics, a nascent republicanism, and the stirrings of industrial action. Charles Tilly advances an interpretation of changing nineteenth century "repertoires" of collective action, from *charivari* to *manifestation*, successive forms of "learned behaviour", as the consequence of urbanization and the mark of the diminution of local expressions of interest and the enhancement of the popular voice in national politics. Ted Margadant explores the interaction between the rural countryside and the city. He shows variations in the political mobilization of the peasantry, according to its concentration in or dispersion away from urban cities, concluding that well before the great transport and communication revolution of the last century small-town politicians were proselytizing rural society. David Gordon examines Reims and Saint-Etienne to reveal the new industrial elite controlling petit-bourgeois unrest and orchestrating opposition to the Second Empire, with republicanism as their vehicle, modifying their tactics concerning the workers according to their industry and their own *champ de bataille*. Louise Tilly sketches a broad panorama of women in the work force in Paris, Lyon, and Lille, showing variations in the pattern of employment, male-female differences in migratory situations, and the relative narrowness of female opportunity, not least because of the essentially proletarian nature of women's work, shaped as it was by the demands of the family. Don Reid traces the development of Decazeville, celebrated for its 1886 miners' strike, "from a noble's dream" to "a teeming industrial centre" in 1914. Michael Hanagan discusses the relative situations of artisan and industrial worker (rural and urban), both separately and as they 'were thrown together' to organize and take action at the end of the century. Joan Scott reconsiders the socialists' municipal experience, finding in it less an acceptance of the bourgeois republic than an enclave of resistance to the established order. Finally, Robert Herbert offers a clear lecture on industry and transport as reflected in painters "from Daubigny to Monet".

This last paper is placed just beyond the mid-point of the book. It affords a welcome respite amid all the densely packed information, the leaps large and small, in geography and in time, and, it must be said, the occasional descents here and there to currently fashionable phrases which beat down on the reader. It is characteristic of social history that it makes stern demands on the attention-span. One may not relax. In a single sentence, direction may be switched 180 degrees; in a line we are bundled off to quite another part of the historical woods and quite another geographical location; within a single paragraph, contrasting worlds are juxtaposed, juggled, judged, and tossed aside for some fresh line of

pursuit. The easy, lazy nostrums of narrative line are missing, replaced by bleak facts, assorted, bare as glaciers, statistically underpinned, cobbled into workaday sentences when not marshalled into graphs. All the more admirable, then, the triumph of those who have keen eyes for the illuminating illustration and sympathetic imaginations for informed recreation, and who contrive to render the whole into some literary form. All these authors are impressive in their documentation. Impressionists *malgré eux*, they combine to suggest a compelling urban landscape.

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R. RAGOSTA (ed.), *Navigazioni mediterranee e connessioni continentali (secoli XI-XVI)*, with Introductions by M. Mollat & C. Verlinden, Naples, Pironti Editore, 1982 ppix, 328.

This volume contains the long awaited proceedings of the XIth International Maritime History Congress which opened in Bari on 28 August 1969, began on the following day at Trani and then continued on board the cruiser *Ausonia* until the 9th of September with visits to a number of principal Mediterranean ports. The delay in publishing the papers delivered at the conference was largely due to the sudden and premature death of Federigo Melis in 1973. Melis had been the organizer of the conference and was in charge of the preparations for publication. It was only some years after his death that the task of completing the papers for publication was given to the Department of Commercial History at the Naval University Institute of Naples.

Unfortunately this lengthy delay has left its mark on the structure of the published volume. A number of papers given at the conference have in the meantime been published elsewhere and are therefore not included here, and the available papers have therefore been collected under new thematic groupings by the editor. But despite these omissions, the volume still conveys the impressive weight and scope of the conference and the contributions are sufficiently important to present a coherent and valuable collection which can be judged on its own merits. The reader interested in a detailed account of the original conference should turn either to the review published in the *Rivista Storica Italiana* (LXXXII 1970, pp. 266-9) by G. Reborà, or to the lucid 'Conclusion' by V. Rau which is reprinted in the present volume.

Despite its brevity, the paper by F. Melis (Da un bacino all'altro del Mediterraneo attraverso la penisola italiana pp. 3-14) provides an extremely penetrating interpretation of the overall theme of the conference. Drawing on the immense wealth of the accounts and correspondence of the Datini Archive in Prato, on which he was the unchallenged expert, Melis's paper was focussed on

the Italian case and analyses the nature of the 'freight revolution' effected by a handful of leading merchants at the close of the XIVth century, and which made possible the commercial transit of large and low value goods. By adjusting freight differentials, the volume of trade was increased. In Melis's view the consequences of the 'freight revolution' are beyond calculation: 'the opening up of the seaborne trade routes as all manner of commodities began to circulate with great freedom, acquiring a new emancipation from bulk and volume, and thereby acquiring a new commercial agility' meant that this created a chain reaction, working back along the capillary networks of overland trade routes as well, activating around the principal axes of Mediterranean trade new lateral developments which engaged in the new process of expansion regions that had hitherto been peripheral. It was this that contributed to the revival of many cities of the interior and gave a new base to the great commercial fairs of Geneva and Lyons. A bold, overarching interpretation, in other words, that covered the entire Mediterranean region for more than a century and which essentially challenged the Braudel thesis, in that it was an interpretation that was both unitary and yet stressed at the same time the important role in the evolution of the Mediterranean economy played by the cities of the hinterland (such as Prato for example).

J. Heers's paper ('The Ligurian Apennines and the Sea at the close of the Middle Ages' pp. 77-95) provided an excellent illustration of the wider theme of the conference and added further weight to the arguments outlined by Melis. Working from a detailed study of notarial archives Heers described the ways in which Genoese merchants penetrated a series of important inland markets along the two main Apennine highways (a subject developed in greater detail in his book *Genoa in the XVth Century*). The ambit in which the Genoese merchants operated reached as far as Milan and the great fairs of central Europe, but their activities remained in Heers's view 'very artificial and external, with little real contact with the economies of those countries through which the merchants travelled' (p. 91). As a result the region of the Ligurian Apennines which lay beyond the principal transit routes remained untouched. And this was one of the reasons why the powerful port city had always to give way to the seigneurs of the mountain hinterland, and was never able to create and dominate a wider hinterland of its own.

The relations between overland and maritime routes connecting different Italian cities, and in particular Venice, was the subject of the paper by H. Kellenbenz ('Trade between the Levant and the countries north of the Alps' pp. 301-314), which examined the ways in which goods from the east were distributed throughout the German states (in return for northern metal goods which made the return journey to the Levant). The trade was conducted by German merchants, especially the Nuremburghers, but was strictly controlled by Venice through the German Staple (*Fondaco dei Tedeschi*). The German scholar did not deal exclusively with the Venetian role in this trade, which has been closely studied by others, but also explored new dimensions of east-west trade and

described, in particular the development of the routes via Trieste, Fiume and Ragusa after the fall of Constantinople, via Genoa and Naples, and also — although there is much less evidence available for this — via Marseille, Barcelona and Valencia.

The paper by J. Tadic ('The western Balkan coast and its role in maritime and Continental trade from the XIth to XIVth centuries') described commercial activity along the Balkan, and particularly the Dalmatian coast, emphasizing the close ties between the coastal towns and the hinterland thanks to the survival of the efficient road system built by the Romans. He also emphasized the intense commercial activity linking Ragusa in particular after the XIIIth century with Italian Adriatic cities. S. Mijuskovicj ('Bari, Cattar and the Serbian rulers (XIIIth-XVth centuries)' pp. 111-114) gave a brief description of the trade between Bari and Cattar, the leading Serbian port and the gateway to the Serbian kingdom, after the XIIIth century.

The Rumanian historian S. Goldenberg described the 'Commercial contacts between various Danubian countries and the Mediterranean between the late XVth century and the early XVIIth century' (pp. 131-152). The expansion of this trade was relatively late, and occurred only after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople since 'previously the Rumanian countries had been forced to obtain the goods they needed either from the Genoese or from the Venetians on the spot in Italy, and generally in Venice', selling in return cattle and livestock which had to be brought along the difficult and long roads through Hungary. This structure only began to change with the development of Ragusa's maritime trade, which became the principal outlet for the Danubian countries towards the Mediterranean by virtue of the commercial privileges granted to Ragusa by the Ottoman sultans.

A further contribution to the understanding of the generally neglected issues of Slav commercial history was made by M. Lesnikov ('Maritime and continental trading systems of the cities of the northern shores of the Black Sea between the XIIIth and XVth centuries' pp. 115-130) who drew primarily on Russian sources. The essay, which although lacking footnotes does contain an excellent map, reveals the intensity of the trade between the Russian Black Sea towns, which were closely linked to the trade carried on the Dnieper and Volga rivers, to the vast landbound hinterland, as well as to Constantinople. The principal export commodities were hides and furs, which were sold throughout the West mainly by Italian merchants who bought them in the Bosphorous towns in exchange for spices and textiles.

The crucial role played by the Byzantine capital in Mediterranean trade was ably described by H. Ahrweiler ('Maritime and continental trade in the Byzantine world' pp. 247-263) in a paper which summarized the findings of her well known study on *Byzantium and the Sea*. With direct reference to the Pirenne thesis, the author emphasized the negative role played by the Arabs and Slavs in blocking Byzantium's international maritime trade with the consequent ruralization of urban life in the empire until after the XIth century, causing greater

utilization of the previously neglected roadways of the hinterland in preference to the highways which led to the now declining coastal cities of Asia Minor. But later on, when Byzantium revived as a maritime power, this network of internal roadways became of considerable value not only in military terms but also as an important complement to seaborne routes for the development of international trade.

Although with specific reference to Asia Minor, this theme was further developed by J. Richard ('The Mediterranean and its relations with the eastern hinterlands between the XIth and XVIth centuries' pp. 265-299) whose paper started at the point on which Ahrweiler had closed, the moment when the Ottoman invasions of the XIth century transformed the commercial structure of the Mediterranean which had previously been characterized by the peaceful co-existence of the Arab and Byzantine powers. The First Crusade was in reaction to the Turkish invasion, and it opened the way for western merchant fleets to penetrate the East. In this the lead was taken by the Italians, and the commercial situation in the Mediterranean thereby became more open and flexible. Operating from their coastal bases, the Western merchants, missionaries and adventurers set out to discover the vast Muslim hinterland, penetrating as far as India and China. The recover of Turkish expansion after the fall of St. John of Acre in 1291, the final Latin bulwark in the East, then marked the beginning of a new relationship between the Mediterranean countries and the Arab states of the hinterland. The difficult international situation, together with the revival of piracy, made direct contact between the West and Muslim Asia problematic, although commercial contacts never completely disappeared even in the century following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. Trade was however forced to adopt new and generally weaker patterns, following new routes such as that via the southern coasts of the Black Sea, in which the Genoese and Venetians played an important role, or else via Famagusta where the Genoese again were quick to establish a dominant position.

Despite the narrower title of his paper, J. Devisse ('Trade routes and trade in West Africa, and contacts with the Mediterranean: an essay on medieval African trade between the XIth and the XVIth centuries' pp. 169-244) provided a wide-ranging and impressive description of the African situation in general, drawing on wide documentary and archeological sources. The paper was not limited solely to the coastal regions but tried to reach out to speculate about the situation 'in that deeper Africa that lay to the South of the Atlas mountains and stretched southwards to the tropical forests'. For centuries Saharan trade was based on the exchange of salt from the north for gold (and in lesser degree, slaves, gum and ivory) from the south, carried back and forth on caravans of dromedaries. There is documentary evidence of this trade from about 950, and its development can be reconstructed in considerable detail throughout the Medieval period. The principal intermediary role was played by Ghana, and trade was concentrated along two principal routes, one of which ended on the coast of present-day Tunisia, the other in Morocco. Here European vessels

waited for the goods coming from the African hinterland, and carried them northwards in exchange for textiles and cloth. West Africa's virtual monopoly over north African trade began to decline in the second half of the XVth century as a result of the growing demand for Egyptian gold which caused an eastward shift in the principal trade axes. But it was also affected by the expansion of Portuguese commerce, since the Portuguese by-passed all intermediaries and traded directly with the African countries of the interior, while what they sought was no longer gold alone but slaves to work the sugar cane plantations first in Madeira and then in America. The new development 'that gradually began to take shape in the course of the XVth and XVIth centuries was the emergence of a series of horizontal axes which cut across and competed with the older north-south routes that had been used during the previous three and four centuries' (p. 237).

The paper by V. Cortes Alonso ('The transport of Moors from the port of Valencia to Africa in the XVth century' pp. 155-167) provided a good bridge between the experiences of the Iberian peninsula and Africa, and examined the contacts between the two through the 'licences' which were issued on payment to anyone who wished to leave the Kingdom of Aragon. These are documents of immense value for the historian, since they specify the traveller's status (freeman or slave), 'his origin (Moor, Negro, Turk), place of birth, place from which he was travelling, other personal information, name and nature of last employment, reason for making the journey and destination', (p. 156). The result of the research on these sources is summarized in the two tables included in the published edition as an Appendix, and reveals that the majority of those obtaining exit permits were former slaves (604) who had purchased their freedom and were returning to Africa, and that the greatest number of departures occurred during the reign of Alfonso the Magnanimous, but were greatly reduced under his successors and then almost completely stopped towards the end of the Reconquista.

Another Iberian port, Majorca, was the subject of the paper given by the late F. Sevillano Colom ('Mediterranean navigation from the XIth to the XVIth century and the importance of the port of Majorca' pp. 15-74). The author was formerly the director and organizer of the important Palma archive, and his paper provides an extremely valuable introduction to the development of trade in this area of the Mediterranean. He first described the nature of the sources available in the Majorca archives, and then rapidly but lucidly outlined the political and economic trends over six centuries in the history of the Balearic Islands. The pioneering nature of this essay, together with the numerous interventions made subsequently by A. Arandez Santamaria, gives it particular importance, and establishes three clear phases in the evolution of Majorca's economic history: the first is the period of Muslim domination (XIth-XIIIth centuries), for which documentation remains scarce; the second covers the years of the independent Kingdom of Majorca (1229-1349); the third follows the annexation of the Kingdom to the great confederation ruled by the Crown of

Aragon (XIVth-XVIth centuries). Using the records of the registers of *Ancoratge* (anchorages) and *Guiatges* (licences for departures and exports), the data from which have been drawn up in the form of quantitative tables and statistics, the author has reconstructed the prevalent Mediterranean commercial contacts that revolved around Majorca in each of these three periods. Majorcan trade was often dominated by Italian merchants, and was generally carried in small coastal vessels. The principal imports were grain, wines and metal goods, which were exchanged for salt from the Iberian peninsula in particular, but also fish and cross-bows. The exports were directed mainly towards the north African coast and other countries belonging to the Crown of Aragon, but there was also trade with southern France and Italy, and also, although on a lesser scale, with the *partes Romanie* (that is Rhodes, Constantinople and Cyprus). The structure of the island's commercial economy was not unduly affected by the forcible annexation to the Crown of Aragon, although this did lead to greater Italian influence particularly because of the privileges accorded to the Genoese. But in general the Aragonese attempted to develop the island's natural and historical assets, and thereby strengthened its established functions by integrating them into the wider economic system constituted by the Aragonese commercial empire, using Majorca 'as a spring-board towards north Africa and as a base for more effective penetration of the central western Mediterranean' (p. 51).

Majorca then brings us to the conclusion of this ideal journey around the principal cities and regions of the Mediterranean, and for the sake of clarity we have followed this essentially geographical itinerary rather than the more thematic structure around which the present volume has been organized. As can be seen, very few parts of the Mediterranean have been omitted, and even those that do not find direct reference in the published volume — such as the Red Sea ports, the ports of Apulia, Naples and Barcelona — were the subject of short papers during the conference. All in all, the published *Atti* are a worthy tribute to a monumental conference, and bear witness once again to the organizing genius and initiative of the late Federico Melis.

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