
NOTES

Trade between Cracow and Italy from the Customs-House Registers of 1604

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INTRODUCTION

Polish-Italian trade began almost immediately after the Polish state came into existence. Active trade between the countries existed from the XIVth century, while Italian emigration increased after the arrival of Queen Bona in Poland. Eminent artists and architects were the first to come, followed by merchants and craftsmen.¹ The lack of more detailed studies of trade between the two countries² provided the incentive for writing a more detailed essay on this subject. Two customs-house registers of 1604 (a customs register from the border³ and a customs-house register for the city of Cracow) form the basis

¹ H. BARYCZ, *Spojrzenie w przyszłość polsko-włoską*, Ossolineum 1965, p. 49; L. HAJDUKIEWICZ, *Times of Renaissance glamour*. "Kraków nowy i stary, Dzieje kultury." Collective work, edited by J. BINNIARZÓWNA, Cracow, 1968, p. 141.

² Jan Ptasnik discussed the question of trade between Poland and Italy, "Z dziejów kultury włoskiego Krakowa", "Rocznik Krakowski", Vol. IX, Cracow 1907, pp. 26-32, The same "kupcy", "Rocznik Krakowski", Vol. XIV, 1910, pp. 96-97; STANISŁAW KUTRZĘBA, *Handel i jego organizacja*, "Rocznik Krakowski", Vol. XIV, 1910, pp. 100-107. There is also an insufficient number of Italian works on international problems, especially those connected with the XVIth and XVIIth centuries. LUIGI DE ROSA, *Aspekty i problemy włoskiej historiografii gospodarczej*. "Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych". Vol. XXXIII 1972, pp. 166-168; GINO LUZZATTO, *Studi di storia economica veneziana*, Padova, 1954, Istituto Universitario di Economia e Commercio, Venezia, describes conditions of trade in Venice during the period under investigation, p. 14, pp. 16-17.

³ AGAD.ASK-III-5 k. 518-k. 536 "Credita kupców i Żydów krakowskich od towarów do Corony przywiezionych a die juli A 1604".

of our study.⁴ Each includes records of duties collected on behalf of different institutions: the customs register in Auschwitz and Bedzin fiscal lists duties which were received by the Treasury, whereas the customs-house register of the City of Cracow records duties collected for the state. In both cases individual institutions were responsible for collecting duties on specific items of merchandise. These sources are rich in content and very reliable as the records were made for the purpose of collecting duty.

The customs registers require the use of a statistical method that takes fully into consideration the contents of each source and provide an accurate and easily verifiable collation. Obviously table analysis removes the need for source reference.

1. LAND TRANSPORT: THE MOST IMPORTANT TRADE ROUTES

Overland transport was of fundamental importance for trade between Cracow and Italy, because river transport could only be used on a short stretch of the Danube. Any study of road transport needs to take account of the condition of the roads, methods of transportation, availability of draught animals and organization of transport. The geography of the area between Cracow, the Czech-Moravian lands and Austria was favourable for the building of roads for the transport of foods. Silesia, a mainly flat region, was joined with Cracow by a network of easily passable roads; the roads were difficult only in mountainous regions, especially in winter. During the period of heavy rainfall marshy roads were a problem, quite apart from the danger arising from the possibility of robbery, social unrest and the movements of armies. The means of transport were adapted to the existing roads, four-horse carts and sleighs in winter being the basic means of transport, which was based on horse power. A great demand for horses brought about the establishment of many horse breeding centres situated along the trade routes of international importance. The progressive increase in the volume of traffic brought into being a large group of carters, so that large companies, as well as individual carters, became engaged in trade between Cracow and Italy.

Hans Kulstorph, in Nurnberg, was the company specializing in Polish-Italian trade. The trade routes from Cracow to Italy were determined by the situation of the customs-houses on the border. Auschwitz customs-house linked the Carpathian highway with four main roads, one of which crossed Silesia, and the remaining three the Czech-Moravian districts and Austria. One trade route, Cracow-Vienna-Venice, led from Auschwitz to Bielsko - Teschen - Jablonowska Pass - Olomuniec - Zylina on the Vag river - Tafnava - Preszow - Vienna to Venice, or partly by river via Olomuniec, the Morava river through

⁴ WAP Kr. *Regestra thelonei civitatis cracoviensis A 1604* syg. 2126.

Preszburg to the West by the Danube via Vienna - Krems to Venice; and when the rivers were frozen - via Olomuniec - Nurnberg to Venice. They also used the road from Vienna via the Danube - Krems - the river In - Hall Innsbruck - Brenner Pass - Venice, or the shorter route - Vienna - the Danube - Linz - Venice.⁵

The trade road from Cracow - Prague - Nurnberg ran through Auschwitz - Racibosz - Głubczyce - Neisse - Klodzko - Lewin - Nachod - Prague to Nurnberg, and from there to Italy. Well organised transport to Venice made possible rapid communications between this town and Cracow, which was important for regular trade.⁶

2. MERCHANTS

The development of trade between Poland and Italy in the XVIIth century followed lively commercial contacts between them in the period preceding our study. The Italian merchants' great experience of trading and their deep knowledge of the needs and potential of European markets about which they continually exchanged information, and, finally, their ability in the fields of credit and finance, enabled them to hold monopolies in trade in many kinds of goods.⁷

The participation of Italian merchants in international trade was also facilitated by a highly developed network of agencies and branch offices. There were many such institutions which entered into the trade from the Netherlands and Portugal with such Italian towns as Naples, Bari, Genoa and Venice, as much as Gdańsk/Danzig/district.⁸ Both the Italian merchants and their Polish partners often used transit through Poland for trade with Russia, with which they maintained trade relations by land through Lublin, and by sea — through Archangel.⁹

⁵ M. TASZYCKA, *Włoskie jedwabne tkaniny odzieżowe w Polsce w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku*. Ossolineum 1971, pp. 19-20.

⁶ H. BARYCZ, *o. c.*, p. 205. During diplomatic journeys they took longer breaks eg. the journey from Venice to Nurnberg lasted 15 days. Ambroży Contarini, *Podróż przez Polskę*. "Cudzoziemcy o Polsce. Relacje i opinie". Edited by J. Gintel, Vol. I, 1971.

⁷ A. MANIKOWSKI, *Zmiany czy strategia?* On problem of Polish trade in the second half of the XVIIth century. "Przegląd Historyczny" z. 4, pp. 771-791, Warsaw 1973, pp. 787-788.

⁸ M. BOGUĆKA, *Handel zagraniczny Gdańska w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku*. Warsaw, Ossolineum 1970, pp. 62, 64.

⁹ H. KELLENBENZ, *Le déclin de Venise et les relations économiques de Venise avec les marchés au nord des Alpes (fin du XVIème - commencement du XVIIIème siècle)*, pp. 100-183. "Civiltà Veneziana" Studi 9. Aspetti e cause della decadenza economica veneziana nel secolo XVII. Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, Venezia, Roma 1957, p. 158.

A. *The national distribution of the merchants.*

Polish merchants and merchants from the towns situated along trade routes were all involved in the exchange of goods between both countries. The merchants formed a society that varied in affluence as well as in trading interest, and made an interesting mosaic of nationalities. In the group of merchants under investigation we can distinguish four nationality groups: 1) Polish; 2) Italian merchants resident in Cracow; 3) Italians 4) merchants from towns situated along the routes between Poland and Italy. The nationality of the merchants involved in Polish-Italian trade is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 1

NATIONALITY OF MERCHANTS INVOLVED IN TRADE BETWEEN
CRACOW AND ITALY

	Poles	Italian Merchants from Cracow	Italians	Germans and Czech	Total
Number	14	9	2	32	57
%	24,5	15,8	3,5	56,2	100

1. The Polish group consisted of seven merchants, who traded with Italy through Nurnberg and Austrian towns, and the same number of merchants who among other transactions imported articles of Italian origin to Cracow.

TABLE 2

POLISH MERCHANTS IN CRACOW

Number	Name	Intermediary towns	Import	Export
1.	Magdalena Wizemberg	Nurnberg	luxury fabrics	"res domesticae" nonmarked goods
2.	Kasper Bank	Nurnberg	fabrics, fruit and spices, fancy goods	leather, wax
3.	Stanislaw Stefanowicz	Nurnberg	silk fabrics	"res domesticae" nonmarked goods
4.	Ewa Bartłowa	Nurnberg	different goods	—
5.	Jerzy Pipan	Nurnberg	southern fruit	—
6.	Andrzej Fladrowicz	Nurnberg Krems	various goods	leather, wax
7.	Marek Gaja Jew from Cracow	Nurnberg Krems	southern fruit spices	leather
	seven merchants	miscellaneous	miscellaneous	miscellaneous

It is evident from the table that Polish merchants were not in constant touch with the Italian towns. The experienced Italian merchants used ruthless trading methods and took over the trade. They tried to make entry into their country difficult for foreign merchants.¹⁰

This monopolistic policy of the Italian merchants meant that the Polish merchants in Cracow only reached intermediary towns, mainly Nurnberg and Austrian towns, where they obtained the necessary Italian goods at fairs, which they paid for with goods of their own which they had brought from the East.

Immigrants from Italy settled willingly in Cracow, which at the beginning of the XVIIIth century was still the seat of the royal court.

At the beginning of the XVIIth century the Italians formed the nucleus of the wealthy commercial group of Cracow and occupied important posts in City administration.¹¹ Records in the Cracow customs-house show that this group consisted of nine merchants trading with Italy, two of them also being active in other areas. They were Lenart Gienobro, an importer of wine from Moravia and Edenburg, and Jan Avino, a smaller spice-merchant. The commercial activity of the merchants from Italy resident in Cracow, is described in the following table:

TABLE 3

TRADING ACTIVITY OF MERCHANTS OF ITALIAN ORIGIN

Number	Name of merchant	Type of goods		border customs-house
		Import	Export	
1.	Valery Montelupi	luxury fabrics	"res domesticæ" non-marked	Auschwitz
2.	Marian del Chiaro	luxury fabrics	leather "res domesticæ" non marked	Będzin
3.	Lukasz del Pace	luxury fabrics	"res domesticæ" wax	Auschwitz
4.	Juliusz del Pace	spices and fruit	Russia leather wax	Auschwitz
5.	Fabi del Benino	luxury fabrics	wax non-marked	Auschwitz
6.	Andrzej Cellari	luxury fabrics	Russia leather wax non-marked	Auschwitz
7.	Michał Leri	luxury fabrics	wax	Auschwitz
8.	Carlo Segni	luxury fabrics	furs, leather wax "res domesticæ" non-marked	Auschwitz
9.	Franciszek Tellani	luxury fabrics	wax "res domesticæ"	Auschwitz

¹⁰ H. BARYCZ, *o. c.*, p. 70, pp. 104-108.

¹¹ H. BARYCZ, *o. c.*, p. 50 mentions 13 representatives of Italian families in Cracow. A. MANIKOWSKI, *o. c.*, p. 787, states that Italians accounted for almost 1/3 of councillors of Cracow.

Of the Italian merchants resident in Cracow, the Montelupi family gained high economic and social status in the state.¹² Besides them, an important position in the trade of Cracow was occupied by the del Pace, del Chiaro, and Cellari families, who were already known in the preceding century for their copper and wine trade with Hungary.¹³

3. The Italian group was represented by two Venetian merchants. Unnamed merchants were only involved in sending small quantities of goods in one or the other direction. Their imports to Poland included "spalliere",¹⁴ other fancy goods and articles of clothing; they exported Russian leather and furs. The small number of Italian merchants and their modest trade does not indicate that the Italians held a share of the trade with Cracow. On the contrary, the mercantile talents, the initiative and activity of the Italian merchants, meant that they occupied the foremost position in Polish-Italian trade.

Because of various privileges held by Italian merchants they were exempt from registration in customs-houses, and this meant that few traces remained of their stay in Cracow.

The fourth group, the middlemen in the trade between Italy and Poland, consisted of merchants from towns situated along the main international trade routes.¹⁵ Nurnberg was on the trade route from Cracow westwards, and Prague, Vienna and Krems were on the southern trade route.

¹² AGAD. Rach. Król. Nr. 305, k 48 k. 89, the Montelupis (in Polish Wilczogórcy) were descendants of old Florentine nobility. As rich merchants and bankers of Cracow they rendered great services to Poland, among others as organizers of the post office. S. TOMKOWICZ, *Z dziejów obyczajów mieszczaństwa krakowskiego na początku XVII wieku*. "Biblioteka Warszawska, 1898", p. 248. W. LOŹIŃSKI, *Patrycjat i mieszczaństwo lwowskie w XVI i XVII wieku*. Lvov 1902, p. 190; S. KUTRZEBA, *o. c.*, pp. 104-105; GIOVANNI PTAŚNIK, *Gli Italiani a Cracovia dal XVI secolo al XVIII*. Roma 1909, p. 106.

¹³ KR. PIERADZKA, *Handel Krakowa z Wegrami w XVI w.*, pp. 85, 116, 123, 136, 180. J. M. MAŁECKI, *Związki handlowe miast polskich z Gdańskiem w XVI w i pierwszej połowie XVII w.*, Wrocław 1968, p. 134; S. KUTRZEBA, *o. c.*, pp. 105-106; J. PTAŚNIK, *Z dziejów kultury*, pp. 28, 30, 32, 33, 35; J. PTAŚNIK, *Gli Italiani*, p. 103.

¹⁴ Spalliere — szpaler — tapestry — fabric used for decorating the walls: Italian — spalliera, p. 1151 *Słownik Języka Polskiego* PAN (Polska Akademia Nauk), Vol. VIII, Warsaw 1966.

¹⁵ Among merchants of those towns, e.g. Nurnberg and Vienna, there were also Italians bringing goods to Cracow from more distant Italian areas, especially Milan. E.g. through Villach and Vienna to Auschwitz.

The table below illustrates the number of merchants from intermediary towns:

TABLE 4
MERCHANTS FROM INTERMEDIARY TOWNS IN POLISH-ITALIAN TRADE

Town	Nurnberg	Prague	Vienna	Krems	Total
Number of merchants	23	4	4	1	32
%	71,9	12,5	12,5	3,1	100

The numerical predominance of Nurnberg merchants as middlemen in trade between Italy and Cracow is obviously because of the situation of the town, and its excellent commercial tradition. On the route from Venice to Cracow via Austria and the Czech towns, the merchants from Vienna and Prague brought quantities of Italian goods. Merchants from Nurnberg occupied the leading place in trade between Cracow and Italy. The general trading activities of the more important merchants of those towns is illustrated in the following table:

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES OF MERCHANTS IN THE INTERMEDIARY TOWNS TABLE 5

Number	Full Name	Locality	Goods	value zloty (florins)
1.	Hannus Kerner	Nurnberg	chamois-leather	7281
2.	Hannus Baltner	Nurnberg	chamois-leather	2202
3.	Hannus Paul Miler	Nurnberg	miscellaneous, leather	1901
4.	Helias Pringert	Nurnberg	chamois-leather and others, wine	674
5.	Abraham Zyd	Prague	leather, fancy goods	928,5
27	other merchants	other localities	miscellaneous	6373,2

The table shows that Nurnberg merchants occupied first place economically as well as numerically.

B. *The commercial interests of the merchants under investigation.*

All the merchants trading between Cracow and Italy dealt in similar types of goods, according to the law of supply and demand.

However, some merchants changed the geographical direction of their trade while others changed their commodities. We can take as an example the history of the previously mentioned del Pace, del Chiaro and Cellari families, who changed from dealing in copper and Hungarian wine in the XVIth century to fabrics and southern fruit in the XVIIth century. Some of the merchants showed a distinct trade specialisation, although most traded in a variety of goods. The essential difficulty in determining the commercial differences of the merchants lies in the fact that each exported and imported goods of different kinds.

TABLE 6

DIFFERENT TRADE SPECIALIZATION AMONG THE MERCHANTS
ON THE BASIS OF THEIR EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

No. Merchants	Import				Export			
	Number of merchants trading in:							
	fabrics	food	miscellaneous	total	leather	wax	miscellaneous	total
1. of Cracow	4	5	5	14	4	2	4	10
2. Italians from Cracow	8	1	—	9	4	5	—	9
3. Italians	—	—	2	2	2	—	—	2
4. from intermediary towns	—	2	8	10	6	3	9	18
Total	12	8	15	35	16	10	13	39

The table shows that of 57 merchants acting as middlemen in Polish-Italian trade, only 35 imported goods to Cracow, while 22 foreign merchants did not import goods. The exports looked better, as of 57 merchants only 18 (including

4 of Polish origin) did not export abroad from Cracow.¹⁶ The composition of the merchants was differentiated, because they were engaged in the import of different goods — 15 merchants formed the most numerous group, followed by 12 merchants, engaged in the import of fabrics, and 8 merchants of foodstuffs. Merchants, 16 in number, in leather and fur took the lead among the exporters, and 13 traded in various goods. Ten merchants were in the wax trade, half being Italians from Cracow. The fabric trade was dominated by merchants of Italian origin. Valery Montelupi and Michal Leri, Fabi del Benino, Łukasz del Pace, Andrzej Cellari, Marian del Chiaro and Carlo Segni were the most important importers of Italian luxury fabrics. Franciszek Tellani was less involved in trade.¹⁷

The Italian monopoly in the trade in various goods, especially fabrics, caused discontent among Polish merchants,¹⁸ among whom only Magdalena Wizernberg and Stanisław Stefanowicz occupied prominent positions in supplying textiles.

Julius del Pace, an Italian settled in Cracow, and Marek Gaja from the Cracow merchants dealt in fruit imports. A small purchase of raisins (10 stone) and almonds (10 stone) by Jerzy Pipan, a well-known doctor and apothecary of Cracow, was connected with his professional activity and his frequent journeys to Italy.¹⁹ Spice merchants only imported, whereas fabric importers exported leather, wax, household goods and various other unspecified goods. Among the Italian merchants of Cracow Marian del Chiaro and Carlo Segni took the lead in leather exports and Carlo Segni in wax (55 stone). Valery Montelupi exported all kind of household goods, and unspecified industrial articles as well. Nurnberg merchants, especially Hannus Kerner, Hannus Baltner, Hannus Paul Miler and Helias Pringert were prominent in leather and fur exports. A considerable proportion of their exports probably met some large specific order for chamois-leather from a wealthy customer, or an institution, like the army.

C. *Structure of income.*

The merchants incomes varied considerably between the zł. 17.580. (the highest sum earned in trade by Valery Montelupi) and the zł. 50. — earned by goods transported by other merchants of Cracow. The income of merchants

¹⁶ A. MANIKOWSKI, *o. c.*, p. 788 — maintains that there is nowhere any mention of the export of Polish goods by foreign merchants.

¹⁷ On Fabi del Benino and Franciszek Tellani — J. PTAŚNIK, *Gli Italiani*, pp. 95, 96, 102, 108; on Carlo Segni — the same author, *Z dziejów kultury*, p. 13.

¹⁸ H. BARYCZ, *o. c.*, p. 69; J. PTAŚNIK, *Z dziejów kultury*, pp. 35-39.

¹⁹ B. BILIŃSKI, *Galilei e il mondo polacco*, Ossolineum 1969, pp. 29, 31.

acting as middlemen in trade between Cracow and Italy is shown in the following table:

TABLE 7
INCOME OF MERCHANTS TRADING BETWEEN CRACOW AND ITALY

No. Merchants	Number of merchants who earned money						Total merchants
	more than		zloty (florins)			less than	
	15000	10000	5000	1000	500	500	
1. of Cracow	—	—	2	4	6	2	14
2. Merchants of Cracow of Italian origin	1	2	4	2	—	—	9
3. Italians	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
4. from intermediary towns	—	—	1	2	3	26	32
Total	1	2	7	8	9	30	57
%	1,8	3,5	12,3	14	15,8	52,6	100

This shows that the most numerous group were the merchants who traded with the smallest amounts of money — less than zł. 500. — They were 52,6% of all the merchants, and came mainly from intermediary towns. This is clear, as those merchants on a large international scale, were middlemen only between the two countries. The most affluent were merchants of Italian origin, resident in Cracow. Being in touch with their old country and having a thorough knowledge of the needs and possibilities of both markets they produced in their circle a group of trading specialists.

Valery Montelupi made a fortune in trading in Polish goods and in the transit of expensive Italian fabrics which were fashionable in Poland at that time. The goods exported by Montelupi were generally defined as "*res domesticae*", or registered at the custom-house briefly as "goods", without more specific definition of the kind and quality. We were not able to examine the contents of the loads. They were probably some craftsman-made articles, perhaps silver dishes, or other valuable luxury objects.²⁰ The imports comprised mainly expen-

²⁰ *Słownik łaciny średniowiecznej w Polsce*, edited by Marian Płózi, t. 3. z. 6 (24) Wrocław, 1972, on page 827. II. transl. I, c - explains the word "domesticus" used together with "de rebus" as native, home, inland. They defined in this way domestically produced goods.

TABLE 8

TRADE ACTIVITIES OF MERCHANTS OF CRACOW OF ITALIAN ORIGIN

No.	Full Name	Import	Export	Turnover	Number of transports	Average value of goods transported only once zloty (florins)
1.	Valery Montelupi	12.980	4.600	17.580	89	197,5
2.	Marian del Chiaro	5.288	5.502,5	10.790,5	30	359,7
3.	Lukasz del Pace	6.954	3.400	10.354	25	414
4.	Juliusz del Pace	5.507	4.256,3	9.763,3	28	348,7
5.	Fabi del Benino	6.845	1.289,3	8.134,3	14	581
6.	Andrzej Cellari	3.120	3.824	6.944	25	278
7.	Michał Leri	6.845	89,3	6.934,3	8	864,3
8.	Carlo Segni	2.280	2.613,7	4.893,7	19	257,5
9.	Franciszek Tellani	1.906	2.573,5	4.479,5	11	407,2
	Zloty-florins	51.725	28.148,6	79.873,6	249	320,8
	%	64,7	35,3	100		

sive fabrics which were made in Italy, for which there was an outlet in Cracow, especially at the royal court. Montelupi imported his goods through Nurnberg with which he traded regularly in the year under investigation (39 occasions), and through Austrian towns: Krems and Vienna (27 occasions), without considering his trade with Italy through other foreign towns. Montelupi acted largely as middleman between Cracow and its eastern regions, transporting his goods through Lublin (10 times) and Lvov (4 times) to eastern territories of the Polish republic, and beyond her eastern borders.

TABLE 9

VALERY MONTELUPI'S TRADE ACTIVITIES

Import of goods	various silks	various fabrics	total	%
Zloty	11.900	1.080	12.980	73,8
%	91,7	8,3	100	—
Export of goods	"res domesticae"	non-marked goods	total	—
Zloty (florins)	1.400	3.200	4.600	26,2
%	30	70	17,580	100

Imports 12.980
Exports 4.600
Balance 8.380 florins

The above table shows that Valery Montelupi's trade balance (zł. 8,380. — import surplus) was negative. His balance of payments should have been squared for goods overdrawn in import. Evidently Montelupi, an important representative of circulating capital, was buying part of the goods with cash, with an assured high profit on imported Italian fabrics. Doubtless Montelupi, like many other important wholesalers, also greatly benefited from international credit which was very popular in Italy at that time.²¹

We have indicated in some detail the commercial activity of the most eminent merchants from Italian circles in Cracow. Besides Montelupi there were also other merchants, mentioned in the table, who paid in leather and wax for fabrics imported from Italy. Financial connections and transport needs led the merchants to form trading companies. The representatives of such a company were Michał Leri and Fabi del Benino, who jointly made a reciprocal exchange of Italian silk fabrics for wares brought from Poland. As regards income Magdalena Wizemberg took the lead in the group of Polish merchants; through Nurnberg and other intermediary towns she exported different manufactured goods in exchange for Italian luxury fabrics. Besides Wizemberg, Andrzej Fladrowicz, second to Carlo Segni as a wax exporter (46 stoves), traded in various kinds of industrial articles. The trade turnover of this group is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 10
THE POLISH MERCHANTS' COMMERCIAL ACCOUNT

No.	Full name	Import	Export	Turnover
1.	Magdalena Wizemberg	520	7.800	8.320
2.	Andrzej Fladrowicz	800	5.455,5	6.255,5
3.	Stanisław Stefanowicz	1.698,5	2.800	4.498,5
4.	Kasper Bank	904	3.667,5	4.471,5
5.	Marek Gaja (Jew)	1.005,5	—	1.005,5
6.	Mrs Ewa Bartel	1.000	—	1.000
7.	Jerzy Pipan	182,5	—	182,5
8.	Seven different merchants	1.010	3.320	4.330
Total zloty (florins)		7.020,5	23.043	30.063,5
%		23,4	76,6	100

The above calculation shows that the trade balance of Polish merchants was favourable (zł. 16.022,5 export surplus) and at the same time the surpluses

²¹ More broadly: J. G. DA SILVA, *Banque et credit en Italie au XVIIe siecle*, Vol. I-II Paris 1969.

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for exported goods were very high. This was probably due to a poorer knowledge of Italian markets on the part of Polish merchants, who bought Italian goods from the middlemen of Nurnberg or of Austrian towns.

An eminent personality among merchants from intermediary towns was Hannus Kerner of Nurnberg, whose cash payments (zl. 7.281. —) equalled the cash payments of more prosperous Cracow merchants.

TABLE 11

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN THE INTERMEDIARY TOWNS

No.	Locality	Cash payment- zloty (florins)			Number of merchants	Number of conveyances	Average value of goods transported only once zloty (florin)
		Import	Export	Turnover			
1.	Nurnberg	2.034	12.758,7	14.792,7	23	40	369,8
2.	Krems	2.600	—	2.600	1	3	866,6
3.	Prague	411	583	994	4	9	111
4.	Vienna	653	320	773	4	4	242,2
Total		5.678	13.661,7	19.359,7	32	56	345,7
$\frac{1}{2}$		29,5	70,5	100			

Nurnberg was in the lead with regard to the scale of cash payments (76,4% of the amount of all intermediary towns) and also the great number of merchants and their business activities as well. The average yearly cash payment of the Nurnberg merchant (zl. 643. —) as well as the average value of goods transported only once (zl. 169,8) were not high; we cannot, however, consider these values as definitive, as the transactions of Nurnberg in trade between Cracow and Italy was only a part of her international activity. The merchants' financial situation, according to customs house registers, greatly varied. The affluence of the whole trading group, divided into national groups, is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 12

WEALTH OF ALL MERCHANTS PARTICIPATING IN THE TRADE BETWEEN CRACOW AND ITALY

Merchants	of Cracow	of Cracow of Italian origin	Italian merchants	of intermediary towns	Total
Number	14	9	2	52	57
Zloty turnover	30.063,5	79.873,6	170	19.359,7	129.466,8
Zloty per capita	2.147,4	8.874,8	85	605	2.271,3

The table shows that the wealth of an average merchant, amounted to zł. 2.271,3 and came closer to the affluence of the merchants of Cracow. Italian merchants from Cracow became wealthiest. A low income, considering the average wealth of foreign merchants, is the result produced only by their trade with Cracow, which is only a fragment of their total international turnover.

III. GOODS

The development of Polish-Italian trade was the result of the differences in their economic needs, and of Poland's position at the crossroads of important trade routes. Different market needs created opportunities for the exchange of surpluses. Active Polish-Italian cultural relations created a demand for Italian luxury goods among the higher classes of Polish society, and these goods satisfied the sophisticated tastes of the Polish customers, who included the royal court.²²

In these conditions an important development took place in Polish-Italian trade. Trade with Italy enriched the Polish market with new kinds of goods, especially luxury fabrics, fancy goods and art objects. After the arrival of Queen Bona in Poland in 1518 the interest in Italian goods in Cracow, and soon all over Poland, greatly increased. The relations of the court with Italian towns brought knowledge of the needs and potential of the Italian market. Anna Jagellonian was as active a patroness as her mother, Queen Bona, and often acted as mediator between the Polish and Italian markets, and contributed in this way to a more complete exchange of goods between the countries.²³ Other kings granted the Cracovian merchants of Italian origin the right to sell Italian fabrics and other goods all over the country.²⁴ The royal court was supplied with goods partly through the merchants of Cracow and partly from Italy through servants of the Court. The latter paid no duty and so their commercial activity is difficult to assess. The major imports were fabrics, then spices and southern fruits, and the main exports leather, wax, and articles classified as "res domesticae".

²² D. SELLA, *Commercio e industria a Venezia nel secolo XVII*. Venezia, 1961, pp. 66-67 and others.

²³ Queen Anna among others wrote from Nowe Miasto on December 7th, 1591 to the Council of Gdańsk (Danzig) informing them, that she had received news of bad crops in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily for two years, which had caused a great demand for rye and wheat. The queen advised the Council to send ships with rye and wheat. Archiwum Państwowe - Gdańsk, former Stadts-Archiv, Gdańsk, 300. Abt. 50. Nr. 100. This document was destroyed during the war.

²⁴ J. MAŁECKI, *op. cit.*, p. 46. Among others King Stefan Batory granted to one of the Cracovian merchants the right of selling cloth from Italy, Venice and Milan all over the country.

A. Imported Goods.

Valuable luxury fabrics were the main items imported from Italy. At the beginning of the XVIIth century the production of fine cloth and refined silk fabrics in Venice was highly developed.²⁵ In 1604 the customs-house registered in Cracow such fabrics as: damask (7 pieces through Vienna), Venetian silk (3 large bundles also through Vienna), other silk fabrics, including such rare kinds as "half blue" (with a white warp and blue weft) (72,5 pieces) = ("postaw") "half scarlet", with a white warp and scarlet weft (10 pieces) = ("postaw") and half silk fabric specially made in Italy for Poland.²⁶ They also imported fine Italian cloths (15 pieces) = ("postaw") and cloth of Milan (3 pieces) = ("postaw").²⁷ This trade was mainly in the hands of local merchants, mainly of Italian origin. The structure of trade in these goods is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 13

FABRICS IMPORTED TO CRACOW

Merchants	Goods measure		
	Silks		Other fabrics
	piece	"postaw" = piece	piece
of Cracow	5	—	442
Italian merchants of Cracow	100	28	91,5
Total	105	28	533,5

The above table shows that cloths in the category of "other fabrics" were the most numerous. They were, however, cheaper than silks, so their value was lower than that of luxury fabrics. The second kind of goods imported to Cracow were foodstuffs. Poland was an agricultural and stock-rearing country with a large export surplus; so her imports only comprised delicacies such as southern fruit, spices and seasonings.

The following table shows the structure of fruit and spice imports.

²⁵ D. SELLA, *o. c.*, p. 127, Table II.

²⁶ Half-silk was imported to Poland in the XVIth century. J. RUTKOWSKI, *Historia gospodarcza Polski*, Warsaw 1953, p. 122.

²⁷ Prices of fabrics. Various kinds of silk: piece: average zł. 324. - half-silk: "karta" = roll zł. 1,1; Venetian silk: bundle - zł. 5,3; various kinds of fabrics: piece - average zł. 25. - Italian cloth: "postaw" = piece (stamen, patia) zł. 90.

TABLE 14

FRUITS AND SPICES IMPORTED TO CRACOW

Merchants	Goods					
	Orange cases ²⁸	Pepper stones	Raisin stones	Almonds stones	Saffron pounds	Tatar herb stones
of Cracow	40	85	150	30	69	15
Italian from Cracow	149	95	240	150	95	129
of Vienna	22	—	—	—	—	—
Total	211	180	390	180	164	144

Both fresh and dried fruits were imported; among fresh fruits oranges were the major items and were brought from central Italy by way of Venice, Krems and Vienna and in smaller quantities through Olomuniec. Oranges gained great popularity among the wealthier sections of Polish society. The curative properties of citrus fruits was well known in Poland and they were imported as early as the XVth century. The import of oranges reached its height during the reign of Sigismund III. As the Jesuits took an active part in it, this caused discontent among many of the anticlerical opposition.²⁹ Among other fresh fruits included in the category "different" we should mention lemons (— 3 cases), and 4 pack of walnuts. The considerable import of dried fruits arose from a great demand for them, and they were also relatively easy to transport. Raisins and almonds took first place in this group. The spices they delivered were mainly pepper, saffron and Tatar herb.³⁰ Pepper was widely used as a seasoning in Polish cooking and also for meat packing and for curing illnesses.³¹ Other spices were used in the same ways. They also imported to Cracow such sophisticated foodstuffs as, for example, Parmesan cheese, brought through Vienna, or olives.³² They also imported olive oil and Italian sweet wine, which was especially liked by women.³³ "Other goods" included clothing and fancy goods, such as, for instance, one bundle of leather sleeved vests (*kabaty*)³⁴ and

²⁸ zł. 10 per case.

²⁹ J. TAZBIR, *Konsumpcja cytrusów w Polsce XV-XVIII w.* "Pożywienie w dawnej Polsce", Warsaw 1967, pp. 105, 115, *Studia i materiały z historii kultury materialnej*.

³⁰ The price of one stone of raisins was zł. 2 - of almonds zł. 3 - of pepper - zł. 6 - of Tatar herb - zł. 2 - of one pound of saffron - zł. 5,5.

³¹ J. MICHAŁEWICZ, *Z badań nad konsumpcją w Polsce. Kuchnia królewska Zygmunta III* "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej", Nr. 4 Warsaw 1965, p. 707.

³² They imported two bales of Parmesan cheese at zł. 40 - olives, a vat at zł. 18 - (bale = balla, compacta, measure for cloth, walnuts, Parmesan cheese).

³³ HAUTEVILLE, *Relacja historyczna o Polsce*. J. GINTEL, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

³⁴ *kabaty*- leather sleeved vests, usually short, for both men and women. *Słownik Języka Polskiego*, p. 450, Vol. III.

five bundles of belts. The XVIIth century saw the rise of glass production in Murano,³⁵ and so glassware was imported to meet the needs of the wealthy: through Prague came mirrors, Venetian glasses (1 case) and decorated caskets (*puzderko*)³⁶ (brought 4 times). Through Vienna they brought two boxes of Venetian glasses, and through Opava two cases of glass; as well as a four cases of Venetian glass through unspecified towns.³⁷ Italian goods sold well in the country, and some were also delivered further, especially to Hungary which was at that time cut off, by advancing Turkish troops, from areas supplying many of these goods.

B. Export goods.

Goods exported to Italy included raw materials and hand made articles. Leather and wax were the most important raw materials. Leather and furs exported to Italy were partly of home production, from areas near Jarosław, Przemysl, Rzeszów and Cracow, partly from the East, reaching Cracow through Lublin. The qualities and quantities of leather exported from Cracow to Italy are illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 15
LEATHER AND FURS EXPORTED TO ITALY

Merchants	Leather - piece		Furs - piece			
	oxhide	calf leather	Russian leather	Chamois leather	Grey squirrels	fox
of Cracow	1.955	2.512	400	—	—	—
Italian from Cracow	2.217	—	1.832	677	5.950	—
from intermediary towns	—	—	—	52.380	—	121
Venetian	—	—	240	—	—	—
Total	4.172	2.512	2.472	53.057	5.950	121

It is evident from the table that first in quantity comes chamois-leather (suede), exported through Nurnberg, and second the pelts of grey squirrels. The unit of calculation for grey-squirrels was one thousand skins. White foxes were imported from Russia (120 skins), while the only specimen of red fox was imported from

³⁵ D. SELLA, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 66.

³⁶ Casket = *puzderko* = a case, box, *Słownik Języka Polskiego*, p. 755, Vol. VII.

³⁷ Prices: Italian leather-sleeved vests: bundle - zł. 20 - mirrors: a case - zł. 25 - Venetian glasses: a box - zł. 7,5; a case - zł. 12,5; casket: a case - zł. 5; glass: a case - zł. 12,5.

Germany.³⁸ Besides leather and all kind of pelts they exported various leather and fur articles as the produce of domestic handicraft. It is worth mentioning the export of a large vat (fasa) of zł. 200. worth of beaver-skin garments, through Nurnberg. There was a great demand in the West for wax from Poland, for the lighting of the large number of churches and court residences.³⁹ Crude wax brought to Cracow was clarified and melted in the local purification plant. Some wax and tallow was used for the production of candles also exported in large quantities to the Italian market. The "res domesticae" and unidentified goods included a large variety of commodities produced by local manufactures. A ready market for industrial articles and a relatively high price for them⁴⁰ indicate their high quality and workmanship.

TABLE 16

VARIOUS GOODS EXPORTED TO ITALY

Merchants	Goods		
	wax quintal	"Res domesticae" piece	non-marked piece
of Cracow	71	5	83
Italian from Cracow	287,5	22	88
Total	358,5	27	171

Analysis of the above table shows that Polish merchants were engaged exclusively in the export of wax and articles of local craft. The lack of foreign merchants interested in the export of these goods betrays their insufficient knowledge of Cracow's market as compared with merchants from Cracow, who organized the purchase of the necessary goods on the spot.

IV. CONCLUSION

Bilateral trade figures can show, on aggregating the volume of goods in monetary terms, a balance between import and export, or an imbalance of the value of goods in one direction. If the imbalance occurs on the import

³⁸ Price of oxhide (raw) was 15 grosz; dressed - zł. 1.; calf leather - 5,5 grosz; Russia leather - 15 grosz; Chamois leather - 7,5 grosz; grey squirrels - 3 grosz; white fox - 7,5 grosz; red fox - zł. 1.

³⁹ W. TOMKIEWICZ, *Kultura artystyczna*, "Polska XVII wieku, Państwo społeczeństwo - kultura," edited by J. Tazbir, Warsaw 1969, p. 268.

⁴⁰ The price of one piece of "Res domesticae" and other non-marked goods was zł. 200. The price of one quintal of wax - zł. 10,5.

side the balance will show a debit, which will be cleared by the trading partner in the monetary value paid in cash or in credit.

After calculating the turnover between Cracow and Italy in the year under investigation we obtained the following results

TABLE 17

IMPORT GOODS

Goods	Silk various and non-marked	Other fabrics fabrics	Fruits and spices	Various and non-marked	Total
Zloty (florins)	35.093	13.580	8.473,5	7.447	64.493,5
%	54,4	21	13,1	11,5	100

TABLE 18

EXPORT GOODS

goods	leather	furs	wax	"Res domesticae"	non-marked ⁴¹	total
Zloty (florins)	20.614	595	3.964,3	5.600	34.200	64.973,3
%	31,7	1	6,1	8,6	52,6	100

Balance	Import	64.493,5
	+ export	64.973,3
	turnover	129.466,8
	Export	64.973,3
	- Import	64.493,5
	Balance +	479,8

The balance sheet shows that the turnover between Cracow and Italy closed with a credit balance. To have obtained a credit balance in the trade turnover with a country with a highly developed goods and money economy is a sufficient proof of the economic power of Cracovian market and of the trading abilities of its merchants.

⁴¹ The contents of the load of non-marked goods is known only from records of foreign merchants. They were in general valuable articles often of foreign origin. Similar goods were exported by merchants of Cracow who did not show the specification of their goods as exempt from duty.

This examination of trade between Cracow and Italy, in 1604, allows us to draw some conclusions of a general character:

First: One should note the high preponderance of Cracovian merchants of Italian origin in the trade between Cracow and Italy, their high financial involvement and their resourcefulness.

Second: Analysis of the volume of goods shows that on the import side the traded goods were mostly industrial articles such as fabrics (75,4%), fruits and spices (13,1%) and different industrial and craft goods, such as glass, clothing and fancy goods. In exports craft goods and industrial articles occupied first place (61,2%), followed by raw materials such as leather and furs (32,7%), and wax (6,1%).

Third: The value of the turnover in trade between Cracow and Italy amounted to zł. 129.466,8. According to our calculations the net profit from this turnover amounted to about half the value of the amount of turnover.⁴² Thus the profit of the majority of merchants would amount to zł. 64.733,4. The amount of net profit obtained is evidence of the possibilities of accumulating working capital during the period under investigation both in Cracow and Italy.

Fourth: The amount of turnover realized by the majority of middlemen in trade between Cracow and Italy amounted, as shown above, to zł. 129.466,8. The sum included money invested in goods exported to Italy through Nurnberg, Prague and Austrian towns, as well as in goods imported from Italy to Cracow. In all probability the Italian merchants and the Cracovian merchants of Italian origin supplied all the goods, brought from Cracow, to the Italian market, and brought the imports to Cracow; as far as merchants of intermediary towns are concerned we are not, however, so certain. One should, therefore, suppose that these merchants left in their towns a considerable quantity of goods exported from Cracow, and sent on the remaining goods to Italy, or to other markets. This may lead one to expect that the amount of turnover realized by foreign merchants was a little lower than the turnover we calculated, which could have some effect on the balance, by lowering value and at the same time balancing the turnover between both partners.

⁴² The data for the calculation of the margin of profit of the majority of merchants were taken from the custom-house registers, and from the sources: AGAD.ASK-Rach. Król. III-SK 434. K. 453. K. 499.

Important abbreviations

- AGAD -- Archiwum Akt Dawnych (Main Archives of Ancient Records)
ASK -- Archiwum Skarbu Koronnego (Archives of the Treasury of the Crown)
WAP. Kr. -- Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe, Kraków, (District Crown State Archives, Cracow)
Rach. Król. -- Rachunki Królewskie (Royal reckoning)

Vocabulary

- Bale = balla, compacta -- measure of cloth, as well as of nuts and Parmesan cheese.
One bale of cloth contained 20 "postaw" = pieces.
Russia leather -- sheepskin, or calfskin, red dyed, (jucht)
stone (kamień) = measure = 32 pounds (one quintal = 5 stones)
grey squirrels (popielice) -- scisni
yat (fasa) -- a deep vessel for holding liquids, in this particular case a protection for holding valuable goods
postaw = piece -- stamen, petia, a measure of length for fabrics 12-32 ells of cloth
saffron = crocus (szafran)
bundle = mandica (węzeł)
wax purification plant (woskobójnia) -- cerepressorium, expressura cerae, liquatura
casket = puzderko = scatula, scrinialium
grosz -- a coin of low value, equal 1-30 zloty (florin) 1 zloty = 1 florin = 30 grosz.

