

MECHANISMS OF GLOBAL EMPIRE BUILDING

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INTRODUCTION. MECHANISMS OF GLOBAL EMPIRE BUILDING

AMÉLIA POLÓNIA*

CÁTIA ANTUNES**

This book maps out the crucial mechanisms of global empire building during the Early Modern period and poses at center stage global exchanges between-, across and among individuals and empires¹. For the merit of this introduction, it is important to first address the definition of global empire, since this remains an elusive and challenging concept. Intuitively, global empire translates the hope and the will of a particular political system (usually regarded as metropolitan) to rule over an indefinite number of territories and govern a multitude of peoples, often in discontinued regions and in different parts of the world. However, few empires encompassed meaningful territorial domains or were able to absolutely govern over peoples across different continents. In truth, the illusion of trans-continental sovereignty is not enough to define an empire as global, although territorial expansion by individuals could be used by metropolitan authorities to claim and solidify the boundaries of empire, as Tamar Herzog has masterly shown in her latest work².

For the editors of this volume, an empire results from a nominal political claim over a territory over which a certain state, or its delegated institutions (governorships, companies, towns, settlements, etc.), arguably hold domain. The editors find, however, a distinction between *imperium* and *dominium*. The former introduces the element of controlling

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¹ ANTUNES & POLÓNIA, 2016.

² HERZOG, 2015.

territories and institutions, while the later refers to the control of people, frequently using the former institutions and powers in place. For many centuries, these concepts remained separate, but under the Roman imperial government of Julius Cesar and Augustus, they were united in what was to become the *Imperium Romanum*³. Since then, empires were considered a combination of territorial control and human jurisdiction and both concepts became interchangeable. However, when looking at the Early Modern period, it becomes clear a substantial difference between the territory that central states thought to control and what they actually did control, being most Early Modern imperial borders porous and difficult to enforce⁴. At the same time, the domain over the peoples that populated the aforementioned territory was as illusory. The state and its institutions faced serious challenges to the enforcement of its dominions, challenges that met with responses ranging from genuine negotiation to outright violence⁵.

This book claims that it is so not only because of its lack of territorial coverage or control that «national» global empires do not exist, but rather because of their (in)capacity to accommodate the challenges imposed by autochthonous, sedentary, migratory or mobile populations, made of subjects and foreigners. It further claims that sometimes the domain, rather than formal, is informal and self-organized, as it happens, for instance, in much of the fringes of the Portuguese State of India. In these circumstances, it is in the domain of the human agency that historians may zoom into the mechanisms that made empires global, as these mechanisms were directly dependent upon the action of individuals, groups and networks in their enactment of empire⁶. The result of this agency was twofold. On the one hand, local agency often resulted in the increase of nominally controlled territories by the central state, a welcome result in view of the general weakness and limitation presented by central and local state institutions. On the other hand, it fostered personal and collective relationships across borders imposed by territorial definitions, making cross-imperial connections a matter of fact, rather than a matter of contingency. As a result of these cross-imperial connections and concomitant exchanges, formal frontiers of empires became less important for daily life, but ever so important for framing the lives of individuals, either through institutions or socio-economic and cultural systems⁷.

How did people connect across empires and what happened to empires as a result? The chapters in this book focus on instances in which individuals or groups systematically looked for ways to connect beyond the territorial and institutional limitations imposed by their respective empires. In so doing, they showcase a set of clear mechanisms of individual and collective agency that challenged, cooperated or represented imperial interests, in what

³ LINTOTT, 1981: 28.

⁴ HERZOG, 2015.

⁵ Violence is meant here as the overall encompassing notion of forcing one's social system upon another. This includes, among others, acts of war, exploitation, acculturation, cultural orthodoxy expansion (including religious and social regimes).

⁶ WARD, 2008; HANCOCK, 2009; LAMIKIZ, 2013; POLÓNIA, 2013.

⁷ ANTUNES, 2012: 172-184.

should be perceived as a sliding scale of behaviors, rather than an absolute stance designed in time and space⁸.

There are well known ways for people to connect beyond the territorial and sociological border of empire: illegal exchanges, marriages or trade were just some of them⁹. People married across ethnic and religious boundaries as much as they used trade in products or in systems prohibited by the central state or its institutions. Curiously, these illegal activities were not necessarily more common among autochthonous or sedentary population in the colonies than among mobile groups and temporary employees of the state institutions. Researchers, led by these new approaches, face several challenges, which are to become very productive, and revert into new research questions. This book aims at answering some of these questions by presenting several case studies within the scope of diverse imperial domains.

How did individual and collective agency contribute to the constitution of global maritime empires during the Early Modern period? This book will answer this question by looking at the role individuals played in the construction of “informal empires”, resulting from the enactment of a multitude of self-organized networks operating world-wide, whose main goal was safeguarding their personal social and economic advantages, frequently regardless of (and in spite of) state intervention.

Individual agents, their families and networks operated in the Atlantic or Asia, across geographical borders between empires, went beyond the restrictions imposed by religious differences, ethnic diversity or the political interests of central states. The result is the constitution of «informal empires». These informal empires were, we hypothesize, a borderless, self-organized, often cross-cultural, multi-ethnic, pluri-national world that can only be characterized as global.

In order to address this complex problem, the actions of agents or networks will be analyzed by considering the three processes by which free agents either defy or cooperate with central states. In fact, either they could use illegality (contraband, smuggling, privateering); defiance (personal alliances with competitors of a given monopoly/central state); or litigation (suing the monopolies). They could adopt a cooperative approach by owning shares in the monopolies, working as subcontractors for the monopoly holders or by using lobby clusters to advocate for their interests at different levels of government, including, of course, lobbying the monopolies themselves. Lastly, agents could assume an appropriative/representative role by working within the monopolies and, thereby, serving the central state in the administration, the army or the evangelization process.

In this sense, we hypothesized that empires were brought to fruition also (if not foremost) by individual choices of individuals and the networks they created. This book con-

⁸ We are grateful for the concept of «sliding scale» introduced by Erik Odegard and Kaarle Wirta, while developing their dissertations at Leiden University.

⁹ NIERSTRASZ, 2015; NIERSTRASZ, 2012; NIERSTRASZ, 2016; POLÓNIA & CAPELÃO, forthcoming.

tributes to the discussion of this hypothesis by looking at the internal organization of individual agency within self-organized networks. By sustaining that between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries the world was increasingly characterized by widespread collaboration which went beyond the boundaries of countries and continents, this book seeks to look at the enactment of frequently multinational agents and networks during the Early Modern Period.

In the chapter *Sailors, Soldiers, Friars, Settlers: the Portuguese in North America in the 16th and 17th centuries*, Mariah Wade discusses how the Portuguese adventurers contributed and determined some of the outcomes of the Spanish presence in North America. In a different perspective so does Alejandro Garcia Monton. In his chapter *Protecting privileges, contesting exclusion: clashing transatlantic networks within and across 17th century empires*, he argues that the sustainability of the Spanish Empire depended on entrepreneurs, business groups and firms that were in fact foreigner and extraneous to the internal agency of Castile and the Spanish empire, in a curious combination of Italian, Portuguese, Dutch and British cooperation.

The internal mechanisms that enable cooperative networks to function at a global level are also under scrutiny here. Trust, reputation, kinship, self-regulation mechanisms, reward, coercion and punitive reciprocity are analyzed from a cross-border empire building perspective, with special emphasis for the merging of global networks of business and trade. The paper by Ana Sofia Ribeiro illustrates these relational factors when analyzing phenomena that sustained *Cooperative Rivalry: Iberian Merchants in Cross-Imperial Transactions in the Period of the Iberian Union (1580-1640)*.

Next to participative and cooperative, agency could also be reactive. Reaction was often of an economic nature. The creation of colonial monopolies and exclusive rights of access by the central states in the Early Modern period opened the way for Kate Ekama and Joris van den Tol's approaches on the mechanisms available to fight the system from within. Kate Ekama does so by analyzing *Conflict in Court: Suing the Dutch East and West India Companies*, while Joris van den Tol provides a chapter centered on *Public Discourse in the Dutch Republic on Free Trade to Brazil, ca. 1630-1638*, the later framed as means of lobbying pro- and against monopolies and free trade.

Interesting are the cases in which agents perform as members of the system, as representatives of the formal empire, defectors if you will, providing nevertheless alternatives for the sustainability of the system and a strong contribution to the globality of empire. As formal monopolistic colonial systems often resulted into unprofitable ventures, as was the case of the Dutch Atlantic in the eighteenth century, or unable to effectively guarantee, by control and punishment, the desired monopolies, as it occurred in the Portuguese Empire, institutional agents engendered solutions and legitimating schemes that could be considered illegal, or evolved from an illegal status into legality. The chapters by Karwan Fatah-Black, on *Deflected colonial monopoly formation in the Dutch Atlantic*, and Erik Oder-

gard's, *On Free Agents and the Carriers of Colonial Governors* offer significant evidence for the Dutch case, while Maria Inês Guarda obtained the same results when looking into *The Angolan Slave Trade in the Early 18th. Century*. These three essays provide clear evidence to how evading rules set out by the empire was not always illegal, as it often offered ways for added sustainability of empires.

Last, but certainly not least, this book tries to understand a world created by mechanisms that involved smuggling and other illegal ways of allocating products and services to a global market. Transaction costs became cheaper and thus viable in places and at times when central states were unable to compete. Exceptional circumstances were those when war or other diplomatic conflict threaten the stability of the European or overseas markets. Chris Nierstras' paper, *Have Your Tea and Drink it Too: How Rogue Companies, Private Traders and Smugglers Popularized the Consumption of Tea in Western Europe (1700-1760)*, enlists some of the most creative market solutions, thus assessing the complexity of these schemes. These creative solutions were initiated and optimized by individuals and networks, frequently sanctioned, on the shadow, by official institutions.

This book is mostly based on case studies, resulting from research driven by recent theoretical and methodological approaches to colonial studies and the analysis of overseas empires in the First Global Age. These are not, however, exceptional cases, and for that reason should not be seen as systemic curiosities, anomalies or irregularities. They are also phenomena that are common to multiple empires and in diverse chronologies. This collective work provides evidence for the Portuguese, the Spanish and the Dutch empires. All give multiplied evidence of stateless mechanisms, depending on the agency of individuals that, neglected until very recently by colonial history, have been considered as irrelevant. Other publications testify in favor and consolidated a shift in the way empires are analyzed, now focusing on individuals and networks, and the way they become central elements of the process of empire building¹⁰. This is not equivalent to fore close on the role of states, formal powers and institutions as agents of empire building, but it rather hopes to stress the dialectic relationship between state, institutions, networks and individuals in the construction of global empires.

¹⁰ ANTUNES & POLÓNIA, 2016; ANTUNES, 2012: 172-184; ANTUNES & FATAH-BLACK, 2016; PETTIGREW, 2015: 487-501; POLÓNIA, 2012: 349-372; POLÓNIA, 2015: 215-235.

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THE COST OF THE *ASIENTO*. PRIVATE MERCHANTS, ROYAL MONOPOLIES, AND THE MAKING OF TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE IN THE SPANISH EMPIRE*

ALEJANDRO GARCÍA-MONTÓN**

The resilience of the Spanish empire during the Early Modern period is currently largely ascribed to its capacity to foster and reproduce collaborative relationships between the political superstructure and a plethora of local and transnational actors across the globe. As a consequence, while the contribution of private actors – chiefly the social elites – to the viability of the empire has attracted new interest, the image of the Spanish monarchs as absolutist and omnipotent rulers has also been challenged. Cooperation and negotiation have effectively become major interpretative keys to interrogate an empire that is currently envisioned more like a constellation of multiple decisional centers, invested with certain degree of autonomy, than as a centralized and hierarchical polity led from Madrid¹.

Despite the fact that the Spanish empire is currently regarded more as a collective partnership than merely a dynastic project, the agency and contribution of private actors at shaping the empire's policies still remains in the background. Somehow, the central role traditionally attributed to the «state» in the framing imperial policies has not substantially changed. Indeed, the questions most assiduously broached in the historiography are focu-

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¹ IRIGOIN & GRAFE, 2008: 173-210; YUN CASALILLA, 2009; CARDIM, 2012.

sed on grasping and assessing the different strategies and mechanisms that the state developed and used in order to cooperate with private actors and thus achieve its own goals. This essay turns that viewpoint on its head. Instead of prioritizing how the state established cooperative strategies with non-state actors in order to satisfy its needs, as the contractor state perspective does for instance², the approach employed here focuses on how private agents collaborated with the state in pursuit of their own personal and private goals³. In so doing, this essay aims at casting some light on the role that private actors had, not only in the management and the reproduction of the Spanish empire, but at shaping it in an active rather than in a passive way.

The foundations on which the Crown's monopoly over the transatlantic slave trade was managed by the Genoese company of Domenico Grillo and Ambrosio Lomellino will be the case in point (1663-1674). Although rarely studied, this period served as a laboratory in which the operational details of the slave trade in Spanish America in the next century were redefined⁴. By scrutinizing the bargaining processes that underpinned the association between Grillo & Lomellino and the Crown, this article aims to show how a proposal coming from the private sector could turn into a decisive private-public partnership (PPP) with a long-lasting effects on the articulation of the transatlantic slave trade circuits and the political economy of the Spanish empire.

The first part of this essay contextualizes and highlights the innovations brought by the contract between Grillo & Lomellino and the Crown, with due reference to the historical and political context of the African slave trade in the Spanish empire. Among others, the most relevant novelty was the granting of a monopoly charter to the Genoese company. The second section examines how the partnership between Grillo & Lomellino and the Crown began, shedding light on the mechanisms used by merchants and financiers to gain access to the central political institutions of the state. As was often the case, the initial proposal was presented to the Council of the Indies. The proposal was considered interesting and negotiations started. What were Grillo & Lomellino bringing to the table? The third part approaches the proposal of the Genoese company from the Crown's standpoint and unveils how it was interpreted, according to the manifold interests and needs involved in empire management. The conditions under which the Genoese company was finally allowed to operate the slave trade was the result of different negotiations in which a wide array of tangible and intangible pay-offs was bargained among the parties involved. These terms included the exchange of shipbuilding services and the recognition of privative rights, among others. However, as the fourth section shows, the mutual obligations that ultimately bound

² The Spanish empire from that perspective in: TORRES SÁNCHEZ, 2013a: 23-32; —, 2013b: 159-99.

³ For the Portuguese case: ANTUNES, 2012: 173-85; POLÓNIA & OWENS, 2009: Unpublished Working Paper from DynCoopNet-Pt.org. Available at <http://www.dyncoopnet-Pt.org/working-papers/104-Cooperation-Based-Self-Organizing-Networks-in-Portuguese-Overseas-Expansion-in-the-First-Global-Age-1400-1800>. Accessed on 11-06-2016.

⁴ VEGA FRANCO, 1984; GARCÍA-MONTÓN, 2014.

the parties were not the result of convergent agendas. On the contrary, Grillo & Lomellino manipulated the privileges that they had been granted and also fulfilled their contractual obligations in a way that boosted their private investment in illicit markets. Therefore, it is argued that the legal order that Grillo & Lomellino contributed to create in order to hijack ultimately became the framework in which the official slave trade was practiced in the forthcoming decades. The final section presents the conclusions.

GRILLO & LOMELLINO'S *ASIENTO* (1663-1674) AND THE POLITICS OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE IN THE SPANISH EMPIRE

Despite the historical relevance of the African slave trade in the Spanish empire, this field remains to be explored in depth. This situation becomes even clearer when our knowledge of the Spanish experience is compared with other cases⁵. The bulk of the literature on the topic has focused on the merchant networks involved in the trade. Special attention has been paid to the 1595-1640 period when Portuguese merchants controlled the flows of human traffic and built an impressive and dramatic economic structure that linked both shores of the Atlantic⁶. Other studies have focused on specific regions and how they participated in the transatlantic slave trade⁷. In recent years, different attempts have been made to evaluate the size and the geography of the slave traffic⁸.

As Delgado Ribas pointed out some years ago, if we want to arrive at a reasonably complete picture, it is crucial to assess the role played by the transatlantic slave trade in the political economy of the empire which, until the late eighteenth century was far from central⁹. This inquiry into the foundations of the legal slave trade markets and their dynamics will illuminate some puzzling key questions: how was the demand for slaves from Africa framed, and how was this demand met through the interplay of official and un-official trade circuits. Although there are some important works on the politics of the African slave trade in the Spanish empire and its institutional implications, they are more effective at describing its chronological evolution than at providing an analytical perspective on its origins and evolving patterns¹⁰. Indeed, the relevance of Grillo & Lomellino's example becomes clear only in reference to its context in the complex history of the slave trade in the Spanish empire. Therefore, in order to be able to better assess the distinctive features of our case study and its significance, some general remarks about how the slave trade was organized in the Spanish empire will be made.

⁵ ELTIS & RICHARDSON, 2008; FRADERA & SCHMIDT-NOWARA, 2013.

⁶ Two examples in: VILA VILAR, 1977; NEWSON & MINCHIN, 2007.

⁷ BOWSER, 1974; PALMER, 1976.

⁸ MENDES, 2008: 63-94; BORUCKI, 2012: 29-54.

⁹ DELGADO RIBAS, 2013: 13-42.

¹⁰ SCELLE, 1906; PERALTA RIVERA, 1990; DELGADO RIBAS, 2013.

Generally, the transatlantic slave trade in the Spanish empire was a monopoly of the Crown operated by private actors. Every merchant who wished to participate in the official markets needed a royal privilege. The Crown only began retreating as an active player from 1780 onwards, from which moment transactions could be freely carried out between private actors, either vassals or foreigners¹¹. The charters that gave access to the official markets regulated in different ways and degrees the conditions under which the trade was going to be conducted. For example, they specified the quantity of slaves to be carried and their sex; established the source areas and the delivery ports in the Americas; the type of ships to be used, their tonnage and the composition of the crews. The fiscal regime applied to the trade and its jurisdictional framework was also expressed in the charters. The design and contents of these privileges was highly contingent and almost personalized. However, the charters were based on informal mercantile customs and legal precedents. Therefore, it is possible to identify major patterns and specific changes in the organization of the slave trade.

There were two ways to obtain a charter. The most basic charter was called a «licencia» – license – and granted permission to bring one slave into the Americas. Private players could benefit from gracious licenses given by the monarch. This was very common during the sixteenth century, when charters were used as a way to reward past services. The most common way to enter the market consisted in buying or negotiating a charter to trade. Different systems were used to allocate the licenses. During most of the early Modern Age, the Crown, through the Council of the Indies and/or the *Casa de la Contratación* – the house of transatlantic trade – was the only player with the prerogative to grant and sell licenses. During some periods, however, the marketing of licenses was outsourced to private actors (1595-1610, 1616-1640). Licenses were normally transferable, but not always, and became the center of flourishing secondary markets and the target of speculators¹².

Through the allocation of licenses, the Crown determined how many players could participate in slave trade markets. Generally, the Crown fostered the limited participation of multiple players by granting several charters (1513-1517, 1533-1640, 1651-1662, 1751-1764, and 1780 onwards). Some merchants managed to expel competitors by obtaining monopoly charters (1663-1750, 1765-1779) but the fact that only one player was entitled to enter the official markets does not mean that this was the case in effect, owing to the occasional possibility of selling and/or splitting the trading privileges (1518-1532)¹³. This is the case of the Flemish Lorenzo de Gauvenot, who sold to different Genoese traders the 4,000 licenses that he had been awarded in 1518¹⁴. Some terminological confusion has also con-

¹¹ DELGADO RIBAS, 2013: 32-36; RODRIGO, 2013.

¹² DONOSO ANES, 2001: 1093-1136; CORTÉS LÓPEZ, 2004: 45-62.

¹³ Data collected from: SCALLE, 1906; VILA VILAR, 1977; DONOSO ANES, 2010; CORTÉS LÓPEZ, 2004; TORRES RAMÍREZ, 1973. It should be noted that during the 1739-1748 interruption of the *asiento* with the South Sea Company, the Crown issued trading licenses to other merchants.

¹⁴ CORTÉS LÓPEZ, 2004: 27-39.

tributed to blur the picture around the number of actors involved in the trade at any given time. Whereas the term *asiento* is nowadays frequently understood as synonym of monopoly, contemporaries used it as «agreement between parties», normally referring to large contracts. The expression *estanco* was the normal word for «monopoly»¹⁵. This distinction is of the utmost importance, because while some *asientos* were certainly *estancos* others were not. Equally important is to determine exactly what was placed under these monopolistic administrations. For example, the *asientos* signed by Portuguese firms between 1595 and 1640 were a concession to market licenses. Even if the *asentistas*, instead of selling the licenses at their disposal, used them to take slaves to America themselves, the Crown did not lose the right to issue as many of them as it pleased, which prevented these *asentistas* from taking advantage of any monopolistic position¹⁶. For example, in 1629, during the *asiento* of Rodríguez Lamego (1623-1631), Philip IV granted his brother the *cardenal-infante* Ferdinand 1,500 licenses to import slaves to the River Plate. These permissions were resold to the Genoese Nicolò Salvago¹⁷.

Little is known about how the allocation of charters to trade and their different characteristics impacted on the interplay between official and private slavery circuits and also on the total volume of the slave trade. However, the porosity of the Spanish American borders, their length, and the limitations to fully enforce any kind of monopoly contributed to create two differentiated spheres of trade, the official and the unofficial one. As the available evidence suggest, illicit markets carried remarkable volumes of traffic, but we should not disregard the role played by other fraudulent practices, for example when legal circuits were manipulated to introduce slaves or other goods without paying taxes¹⁸. Furthermore, and more importantly, the question would be to assess the way merchant networks penetrated these areas of interaction and how they adapted to the changing conditions of trade. This aspect takes us to the question of supply. Both legal and illegal slave markets in the Spanish Americas shared at least one key feature: Spain lacked outposts in Western Africa. This framed the traffic as an inter-imperial operation which required large and overlapping networks of collaboration, often pluri-national and inter-religious¹⁹. Rivalry among potential suppliers was fierce and, in combination with other issues, was not a bad *casus belli*²⁰. We should assume, therefore, that changes in the supply side affected the flow of slaves to

¹⁵ *Diccionario de Autoridades*, Tomo I (1726). ASSIENTO. «Vale tambien contrato, ù obligación de alguna cosa: como el assiento de negros, el assiento del tabáco. Lat. Scripto contracta, seu concepta obligatio, conventio». *Diccionario de Autoridades*, Tomo III (1732). ESTANCO. «Se llama el assiento que se hace para acotar la venta de las mercancías y otros géneros vendibles, poniendo tasa y precio a que fixamente se hayan de vender, y embarazando que otros puedan tratar y contratar en los géneros que uno toma por su cuenta, y por cuyos derechos y rentas hace escritura y obligación: como sucede en el tabaco, náipes, nieve y otras especies y géneros: y así se dice del que hace semejante postúra y assiento, que estanca, o hace estanco de tal o tal cosa. Latín. Mercium detentio. Monopolium.» <http://web.frl.es/> [Accessed on 17-11-2014].

¹⁶ BOWSER, 1974: 31; VILA VILAR, 1977: 34-35, 59-60, 65.

¹⁷ SCELLE, 1906: 457-460; VILA VILAR, 1977: 52, 57-58.

¹⁸ VILA VILAR, 1977: 157-182; DONOSO ANES, 2010: 255-311; BORUCKI, 2010.

¹⁹ SILVA, 2011: 7-32.

²⁰ OLIVAS, 2013: 85-109.

the Americas but we should also ask ourselves if legal markets also shifted their position in response to these changes and how.

Despite the limitations of the data collected, as well as in the design of the database, the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* (TSTD2) is still the best tool at our disposal to infer possible long-term effects of the changing patterns in the articulation of the official slavery circuits in the Spanish empire²¹. For example, since the slave trade was progressively liberalized from 1780 onwards, it is estimated that until 1866, 821,512 slaves were transported to Spanish America. Demand played a crucial role during those years. The rise in the volume of slaves traded was to a large extent linked to the need to man the expansion of the Cuban sugar industries. During the period in which the slave trade remained legally a monopoly of the Crown (1501-1779) the number of slaves was significantly lower (458,625). During this period, the number of slaves increased whenever there was more than one actor in operation: specifically, 376,075 slaves brought by multiple actors, on an annual average of 2,186 slaves (1501-1640, 1651-1662, 1739-1748, 1751-1764, 1780-1866) compared to 82,550 brought by monopolistic actors, on an annual average of 917 (1663-1738, 1749-1750, 1765-1779). Although the database does not discriminate by default between legal and illegal cargoes, and that our approach to the numbers is therefore quite simplistic, it seems clear that the politics of African slave trade in the Spanish empire mattered²².

Grillo & Lomellino's *asiento* was the first in the history of the Spanish empire's slave trade to be associated to a charter of monopoly. In contrast to previous periods, the Crown agreed not to issue further privileges to trade; Grillo & Lomellino were entitled to split and alienate their trading rights. When the Genoese company asked for permission to sell part of their quota of 3,500 slaves per year to third parties, the Council of the Indies denied them such permission²³. Grillo & Lomellino's contemporaries were aware of the institutional setting. In January 1665, members of the *Casa de la Contratación* and the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville – the guild of transatlantic merchants – addressed Philip IV with a harsh complaint against the new monopolistic model of the trade or, to put it in their own words, the *estanco*. Among other things, they argued that new setting eroded the liberty previously enjoyed by merchants to engage in the transatlantic slave trade by «freely acquiring» charters to trade in the licenses' markets²⁴. From this moment onwards and until the mid-eighteenth century, monopolistic charters were in operation without interruption.

This *asiento* also inaugurated a taxation system that was consolidated in the following decades. Two major novelties were introduced. First, whereas the previous *asientos* dealt with slaves or licenses, Grillo & Lomellino's contract negotiated *piezas de Indias*.

²¹ Constructive criticism in: SILVA & SOMMERDYK, 2010: 77-105; BORUCKI, 2012.

²² <http://www.slavevoyages.org> [Accessed on 12-1-2015].

²³ Archivo General de Indias (Seville) (henceforth AGI), Indiferente General (henceforth IG), Leg. 2834, s.f., 23-10-1668. Report of the Council of the Indies to its attorney and his answer.

²⁴ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 13-1-1665. Report by the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville and the *Casa de la Contratación* to the Council of the Indies about Grillo & Lomellino's *asiento*.

Besides the common use of the term *pieza de esclavos* or just *pieza* among traders and buyers to refer to one slave, *pieza de Indias* was used since the early seventeenth century in ports like Veracruz for fiscal purposes to describe slave cargoes. A regulation of this practice was issued in 1621 although it does not seem to have had a major effect²⁵. Grillo & Lomellino's contract established one *pieza de Indias* as a healthy adult, seven *cuartas* tall and with no physical defect. Second, at request of Grillo & Lomellino, the contract merged different taxes into a single contribution of 100 *pesos* per *pieza de Indias* which was to go in its entirety to the royal treasury. Until that moment the slave trade had been taxed by different authorities on both sides of the Atlantic. For example, besides the fee due for the licenses, merchants were compelled to pay customs duties (*almojarifazgo de esclavos* in Seville), value added taxes (trans-Atlantic and inter-American trade *almojarifazgo*); sales taxes (*alcabala*); and local taxes (*sisas*, *agua de Turbaco* or *cimarronaje*)²⁶. Unsurprisingly, this change triggered the complaints of many American *alcabala* and *sisa*'s local tax farmers, who had their expectations to collect revenues from the slave trade in their jurisdictions thwarted.

Grillo & Lomellino's contract also introduced novelties regarding the political geography of purchase. The role assigned to the Genoese company was to act as an intermediary between the non-Spanish supplying networks and the Spanish American colonies. The contract identified as suitable suppliers for the *asiento* any provider whose country of origin was in peace with the Spanish empire at the time of purchase. Thus, the Portuguese were officially excluded until 1668 and the French between 1667 and 1668. Apart from the African coasts, Grillo & Lomellino could make the purchase anywhere, and inter-imperial trade was allowed although subject to controls. According to Vega Franco's data, which is based on the records of official entries, we have estimated that the 17,636 *piezas* de Indias disembarked by Grillo & Lomellino amount to 21,222 individual slaves²⁷. Among the ports entitled to receive the slaves Portobello absorbed 53.3% of the total, Cartagena de Indias 22.66% and Veracruz a 9.89%. La Habana, Santo Domingo, Cumaná and the Venezuelan coast received 13.7% of the total. Precise data about the place of purchase of the slaves is available for 16,345 slaves and it is quite revealing about the decisive role played by Dutch merchants in supplying Grillo & Lomellino's *asiento*. Almost 89.5% of the slaves came from Curaçao. The rest came from Barbados (5.5%) and Jamaica (5%) but always prior to the 1665-1667' Anglo-Dutch war. Concerning the Genoese's deep involvement in fraudulent activities, the Dutch also feature prominently. For instance, according to the Spanish ambassador in The Hague, Manuel de Lira, in 1669 Grillo & Lomellino illicitly imported

²⁵ VILA VILAR, 1977: 186-193.

²⁶ LORENZO SANZ, 1979: 512-520; NEWSON & MINCHIN, 2007: 71, 144, 216-218.

²⁷ VEGA FRANCO, 1984. While the data in *piezas de Indias* is available for all harbors, the number of individual slaves is only available in a few harbors. The coefficient used here is 1.20 and draws on the co-relation between 18,314 individuals/15,212 *piezas* disembarked in Cartagena de Indias, Portobello and Veracruz.

more than 4,000 slaves from Curaçao while the number of officially registered slaves for that year is about 2,044²⁸.

Grillo & Lomellino's *asiento* represents a decisive managerial turning-point within the juridical model of the Crown's monopoly over the slave trade. As the innovations brought by the contract framed the mercantile practice of the official slave trade during the next decades – monopolistic charters, fiscal regime, and political geographies of purchase among other aspects – we should also grasp this experience as a laboratory in which new modes of organization were put in practice for the first time. However, after highlighting the historical relevance of this *asiento* the wider question remains still open: what encouraged the Crown to redefine in such drastic and unprecedented ways the configuration of trade circuits after more than one century and one-half of the transatlantic slave trade in the Spanish empire?

A PROPOSAL THAT TURNED INTO A PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

The origin of Grillo & Lomellino's *asiento* dates back from early 1662 and takes the form of a pamphlet submitted by the Dominican friar Juan de Castro to Philip IV²⁹. Castro's initiative was far from being unusual in the political culture of the Spanish empire. Individual merchants, companies and corporations, either vassals or otherwise, constantly formulated petitions and proposals in which they presented new economic opportunities, offered to collaborate with the Crown, or suggested new ways to organize the economy³⁰. For example, during the period in which the legal slave trade to the Americas was suspended (1640-1651), proposals addressed to the Council of the Indies to import slaves were sent from Brussels by English entrepreneurs like Guillermo Buchel and Nicolás Felipe (1642)³¹, by Seville-based merchants as Joseph de Andrade (1647)³², and from Amsterdam by the Dutch West India Company (1648)³³. Moreover, as the case of the Portuguese Manuel Bravo de Acuña illustrates, merchants also used these submissions in order to access markets. In 1670, Bravo de Acuña made different offers to replace Grillo & Lomellino's administration³⁴. Conversely, the Crown also actively sought entrepreneurs ready to

²⁸ Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid), mss. 13,372, vol.1, ff. 16v-17v. 8-9-1671. Letter of Manuel de Lira, The Hague, to Queen Mariana de Austria, Madrid.

²⁹ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 10-6-1662. Report about Juan de Castro's pamphlet and Grillo & Lomellino's proposal by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV.

³⁰ VALLADARES, 1993: 131-154; ESTEBAN ESTRÍNGANA, 2006: 223-274.

³¹ AGI, IG, Leg. 435, Lib. 13, ff. 285r-286r, 24-10-1642. Letter by the secretaries of the Council of the Indies to its president and officers about Buchel & Felipe's proposal.

³² AGI, IG, Leg. 2767, Lib. 1, ff. 315r-316r, 12-11-1647. Report by the Council of the Indies on Joseph de Andrade's proposal.

³³ KLOOSTER, 1998: 106.

³⁴ AGI, IG, Leg. 2767, Lib. 2, ff. 66r-66v, 21-10-1670. Instruction of Queen Mariana de Austria to the Council of the Indies to evaluate Bravo de Acuña's proposal.

establish partnerships or to engage in the official markets. That was the case when, in 1644, Philip IV, via the Council of the Indies, instructed the *Casa de la Contratación* in Seville and the royal officers in Cartagena de Indias to seek new partners for the transatlantic slave trade³⁵. Two years before Grillo & Lomellino's contract expired, the Crown started investing time and resources in advertising the impending opportunity to acquire the administration of the slave trade monopoly. This was advertised in major trading hubs in both shores of the Spanish Atlantic, such as Lima, Panama or Seville³⁶.

Castro's pamphlet consisted of two sections³⁷. The first one referred to the shortage of slaves in the Spanish Caribbean, its causes and its impact on the local economy and public revenue. According to Castro, since the Portuguese War of Independence began (1640) American markets were critically undersupplied. Since 1560s Portuguese networks had dominated the slave imports into the Spanish Americas. The trend was reinforced in 1580 when both empires came to be ruled by Philip II. The ban of the Portuguese from the slave markets in 1640 and the lack of reliable suppliers that were also amenable to the international politics of the Spanish empire led to the closure of the markets for over a decade. According to Castro, this had in turn brought stagnation to the production of sugar, cacao, gold and coral, and also to farming and ranching activities.

Castro pointed out that Dutch merchants were meeting the local demand for slaves in the black market. As the TSTD2 shows, from 1648 the flow of slaves to the Spanish Caribbean recovered. While the annual average of slaves disembarked between 1641 and 1647 was of 753, in 1648 the volume rose to 1,745. And from 1648 to 1651 the average per year comprised was of 1,977 slaves³⁸. Different factors suggest that Dutch merchants were behind this development. The fierce Portuguese campaigns against the Dutch in Brazil between 1648 and 1649 forced the latter to focus on the Caribbean basin. Changes within the Dutch West India Company (WIC) also stimulated the presence of Dutch private merchants in different areas of the Atlantic; from 1638 onwards in Brazil and the Caribbean, from 1647 onwards in Angola, and from 1648 onwards in North America. The peace between Spain and the Netherlands (1648) underpinned the Dutch shift to the Caribbean. Dutch outposts were officially recognized by Madrid and Dutch ships in distress also obtained permission in 1650 to touch the Spanish American coasts³⁹. According to Castro's description, the Spanish American local authorities and the Dutch merchants used alleged conditions of distress to undertake the untaxed sale of goods and slaves. This was a generalized practice in all Spanish America⁴⁰.

³⁵ AGI, IG, Leg. 2767, Lib. 1, ff. 312r-312v, 23-8-1644; 313r-314r, 23-8-1644.

³⁶ AGI, IG, Leg. 2767, Lib. 2, ff. 114r-117v, 27-1-1672; ff. 119r-120r, 27-1-1672; ff. 120r-121r, 27-1-1672.

³⁷ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-3-1662. Copy of Juan de Castro's proposal.

³⁸ <http://www.slavevoyages.org> Accessed on 12-1-2015.

³⁹ KLOOSTER, 1998: 40-43; ANTUNES & SILVA, 2012: 22-23.

⁴⁰ MOUTOUKIAS, 1988: 771-801.

The pamphlet explained that despite their preeminence, the Dutch were not the only players involved in the illegal slave trade during the 1650s and the early 1660s. The description of the friar described how local merchants from Veracruz, Caracas, Maracaibo or Santo Domingo also sailed the Caribbean loaded with silver and local goods to acquire slaves in Curaçao. Likewise, merchants from Cartagena de Indias crossed the Atlantic towards the Cape Verde islands looking for enslaved workforce, which was duly supplied by Portuguese traders. Thus, despite their ban from official markets after 1640, the Portuguese continued to supply the Spanish American markets, even if indirectly.

Smuggling and contraband were the preferred way to trade for all actors, even after the legal slave trade was reopened in 1651. During the 1650s the *Casa de la Contratación* started issuing licenses again but demand was very low and irregular. According to Castro, the ships, which «rarely» were furnished with the official licenses, could transport as many as a thousand slaves at a time, of which no more than two hundred were being imported legally. This portrait fits well with the few data available about the period. According to Villa Vilar, from 1651 to 1654 the licenses issued by the *Casa de la Contratación* accounted for a total of 910 slaves while, according to the TSTD2, the number of slaves actually disembarking in Spanish America these years was 7,222⁴¹. If we accept 910 as the figure of slaves legally entering Spanish America, this means that illicit trade was responsible for smuggling seven times as many slaves. According to TSTD2 between the reopening of the slave trade in 1651 and 1663, when the Grillo & Lomellino's contract came into force, at least 26,948 slaves were brought into Spanish America⁴².

The second part of Castro's pamphlet suggested how to organize, increase, and tax the slave trade; how to eradicate illicit practices; and how to invest the resulting revenue. The main idea was to grant a monopolistic charter for nine years, authorizing the introduction of 4,000 slaves per year. Each *pieza de Indias* was to be taxed by 100 *pesos*. According to him, the market price of each slave should be fixed on 400 *pesos*, which is 100 *pesos* less than the American buyers were paying at the time; the availability of cheaper workforce would, according to Castro, boost the local economy. The advantages were, therefore, double: to increase public revenues and to lower the prices of American products to the advantage of peninsular merchants. The first 400,000 collected *pesos* were to be invested in two different enterprises. 100,000 *pesos* would be used to buy a galleon of 1,000 tons for the navy, which was under construction in Campeche. Later, that same galleon was to be employed in transporting the remaining 300,000 *pesos* to Spain to be used to build other six galleons in the Basque Country. Castro also proposed to ship 500 tax-free slaves in order to build a new shipyard every three years, in La Habana, Veracruz, and the island of Hispaniola.

Castro sent his project to Philip IV. It was read by the president of the Council of the Indies and forwarded to the *Junta de Negros*, an ad hoc committee specialized in the slave

⁴¹ VILA VILAR, 1976: 180; <http://www.slavevoyages.org> [Accessed on 12-1-2015].

⁴² <http://www.slavevoyages.org> Accessed on 12-1-2015.

trade that included members of the Council of the Indies and the Council of finances. The proposal was found attractive although it was not seriously pursued. Over time Juan de Castro became one of the most active *arbitristas* of the period, but in 1662 he was still unknown to the political authorities of the empire. This fact and the highly sensitive issues discussed on the pamphlet did not help the project move forward. Nonetheless, the critical situation forced the Council to send Castro's proposal to the *Casa de la Contratación* and the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville asking for feedback. Both considered the proposal to be worth exploring. Juan de Castro was therefore approached by the Council of the Indies and asked for the name of an actor who was ready to carry out the plan. The company of Grillo & Lomellino was mentioned⁴³.

Whether or not Castro was acting on behalf of Grillo & Lomellino is something that we cannot determine yet. However, the reputation and credit of the Genoese company was crucial in establishing a formal dialogue on the basis of Castro's paper⁴⁴. Grillo & Lomellino were already collaborating with the Crown in several important enterprises. At that time, they were among the most important financiers of the Spanish empire. More specifically, they were well-known because between 1654 and 1660 they had acted as general treasurers of the *Cruzada*, an ecclesiastical subsidy granted by the Pope to the Habsburgs to fund war against the infidel and which dated back to the first half of the sixteenth century. As was the case with many other fiscal resources, the Habsburgs leased out its collection and administration. In the 1620s the revenues generated by the *Cruzada* became crucially important for the finances of the Spanish armies in Flanders as well as for the galleys in the Mediterranean, in which several Genoese firms were involved as contractors too⁴⁵. Once Grillo & Lomellino came onto the scene, Juan de Castro disappeared from the formal negotiations.

A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP OF TRANSATLANTIC SCOPE

Although the final agreement between Grillo & Lomellino and the Crown differed in many ways from Castro's initial proposal, their internal logic was the same. The *asiento* of Grillo & Lomellino consisted on a large-scale operation of transatlantic scope in which the Genoese company was in charge of raising and securing funds from the African slave trade in the Americas in order to finance and implement a shipbuilding project in northern Spain. Arguably, the venture was conceived as what we currently call a PPP: both parties maintained different legal statuses, and Grillo & Lomellino put their skills and capital

⁴³ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-5-1662. Report about Juan de Castro's pamphlet and Grillo & Lomellino's proposal by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV.

⁴⁴ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-5-1662. Report about Juan de Castro's pamphlet and Grillo & Lomellino's proposal by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV.

⁴⁵ GARCÍA-MONTÓN, 2014: 128-133.

to work in order to provide public goods, infrastructure, slaves and ships. Indeed, Grillo & Lomellino's slave trade *asiento* differs from others precisely because it was not negotiated exclusively in the framework of the slave trade conceived as a way of solving financial needs. From 1595 onwards and after 1674 the Crown exchanged the *asientos* for lump sums of money. Instead, Grillo & Lomellino's new arrangement involved a more intricate exchange of services and compensations.

The slave trade and the naval dimensions of the proposal were intrinsically part of the same deal but their details were settled in two different negotiation packages leading to two different contracts. The first one had to do with the conditions under which the slave trade was going to be operated and taxed. Juan de Castro's pamphlet entered the clogs of the Spanish administration in March 1662, and the contract with Grillo & Lomellino was signed in 31 July 1662. The contract was negotiated by the *Junta de Negros*, with the assistance of the *Casa de la Contratación* and the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville, which evaluated its clauses. The Council of the Indies assessed its final shape. Meanwhile, Philip IV was kept up-to-date about the course of the negotiations by the head of the Council of the Indies⁴⁶.

The second negotiation package revolved around the shipbuilding project and it only began once the details on how to raise funds with the slave trade had been settled, that is after 31 July. The assiduous discussions held reflect the importance of the issue at stake; in contrast to the regular slave trade, the terms were negotiated hard. After Grillo & Lomellino received the measurements and specifications of the ten ships to be built on 20 December 1662, on 2 February 1663 they proposed a twenty six clause-contract⁴⁷. Negotiations were led by the fleet quartermaster of the *Carrera de Indias*, who was in charge of organizing and provisioning the fleets which escorted the annual merchant convoys to America, and by other members of the Council of the Indies. The Council of the Indies assisted with expertise and final decisions were taken by the Council of the Indies. Although Grillo & Lomellino initially proposed to build four of the ten galleons for the *Armada del Mar Oceano*, at some point during the negotiations it was decided that *Armada del Mar Océano* galleons should be replaced by cutters, which would be deployed with the *Armada de Barlovento*. While the *Armada del Mar Océano* was in charge of patrolling the Atlantic coast of the Peninsula and depended of the *Junta de Armadas* the Council of War, the *Armada de Barlovento* patrolled the Caribbean Sea and depended on the *Junta de Armadas* of the Council of the Indies. While the negotiations about the cutters were completed on 23 July 1663⁴⁸, the agreement on the six galleons for the *Carrera de Indias* fleet was not reached until 14 December⁴⁹. Overall, the whole operation including both rounds of negotiation took almost two years.

⁴⁶ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 11-6-1662; s.f., 12-6-1662. Reports of Joseph González Caballero to Philip IV.

⁴⁷ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 2-2-1663. Copy of Grillo & Lomellino's proposal annotated by the *Carrera de Indias* fleet quartermaster and the *Casa de la Contratación*.

⁴⁸ AGI, Contaduría, Leg. 562, n° 1, ff. 1r-8r, 23-7-1663. *Asiento* to buy four cutters for the Armada de Barlovento.

⁴⁹ AGI, IG, 2703, ff. 219r-222v, 14-12-1663.

In what follows, the report sent by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV in order to explain the agreement reached with Grillo & Lomellino will be examined⁵⁰. This report was sent on 31 May 1662, while the negotiations were about to conclude. Indeed, the contract concerning the slave trade was signed on 5 July 1662⁵¹. This contract was endorsed by the king on 31 July⁵². One of the conditions set out in this contract was the obligation to construct ten vessels. The report by the *Junta de Negros* explained the whole project, including both the operation of the slave trade and the project to build the ships. This document reveals what Grillo & Lomellino brought to the table in the eyes of members of the ruling circles of the empire. Its analysis transcends the interpretative limitations posed by formal contractual terms. The contracts represent the mutual obligations which bounded together both parties on the different aspects of the project, but they do not shed much light on what was exactly at stake overall or how the project was perceived by the parties. Furthermore, the two contracts scarcely make reference to each other; only two of the nineteen clauses of the contract concerning the slave trade vaguely refer to the shipbuilding project. This aspect obscures any appreciation of the full dimension of the project even when the contracts are read together, as they seem to be part of unrelated negotiation packages.

Three main points were put forward in the report sent by the *Junta de Negros*. They were organized in order of importance, and aimed to explain to the king the advantages that this project posed for the management of the empire. The chief advantage of entering into a partnership with Grillo & Lomellino had to do, in the eyes of the authors of the report, with the shipbuilding opportunities that they brought to the fore. Grillo & Lomellino offered to build ten vessels in Spanish shipyards. In order to ensure that enterprise was duly carried out, Grillo & Lomellino asked to manage the slave trade to the Americas through a monopolistic charter, as originally stated in Juan de Castro's proposal. For the *Junta de Negros*, the slave trade was instrumental to cover the expenses of what was the main goal of the project: the construction of the ships. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the main concern about the slave trade was the collection of tax. This same rationale was expressed, for example, in July 1666. Owing to some delay in the delivery of the vessels, Queen Mariana of Austria and the Council of the Indies reminded Grillo & Lomellino that «the long-term enjoyment of the *asiento* of slaves was in exchange for the delivery of the ten vessels, especially since this was the only reason which led us to enter the partnership»⁵³.

The Crown had important reasons to focus on Grillo & Lomellino's shipbuilding offer. In a discontinuous empire, scattered all over the globe, naval resources were of paramount importance. After the Battle of the Downs against the Dutch in 1639, in which the

⁵⁰ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-5-1662. Report about Juan de Castro's pamphlet and Grillo & Lomellino's proposal by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV.

⁵¹ Archivo Histórico de Protocolos Notariales de Madrid, 8545, ff. 159r-168v, 5-7-1662.

⁵² AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-7-1662. Official *asiento* contract between Grillo & Lomellino and Philip IV.

⁵³ AGI, IG, Leg. 2513, Lib. 1, s.f., 29-7-1666. Letter of Queen Mariana de Austria and the Council of the Indies to Grillo & Lomellino.

Armada del Mar Océano was seriously weakened, the Spaniards were relegated to a secondary position vis-à-vis other European naval forces. By mid-century, the Dutch, the English and the French were clearly ahead of the Spaniards in naval capacity both in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Moreover, the contracts signed from 1648 onwards for the construction of galleons for the *Carrera de Indias*' fleet in Spain and America turned out to be a complete disaster and only one of the eighteen galleons ordered was finally delivered. This led Spain to buy ships in the Netherlands. Besides being a hard blow for the pride of the political elites of the Spanish empire, the acquisition of foreign vessels posed several problems as they did not always follow the specifications set by the *Casa de la Contratación*⁵⁴. At the beginning of the 1660s, one of the priorities of the Crown was to invigorate its naval power. However, the acute fiscal and financial crisis which the Spanish empire was facing during the central years of the century made things more complicated. Inflation, at any rate, made things easier. According to some contemporaries, the reason behind the Crown's default on its bankers in 1662 was unequivocally linked to the desperate attempts that were being made to fund the construction of new ships⁵⁵. That same year the Crown agreed with two private agents the construction of twenty-six galleons and two cutters at the price of 37 and 39 silver ducats per ton plus interests. However, the project was displaced by Grillo & Lomellino's offer, which was more cost-competitive – 31 and 34 silver ducats per ton depending on the type of ship – and also included favorable payment terms⁵⁶.

Besides the main goal, the ships, the report sent to Philip IV underlined two important spin-off advantages. First, it was argued that issuing a monopolistic charter to import a fixed quota of slaves was a good way to mitigate the shortage of enslaved workers in America and thus to increase tax collection. This argument was mainly tax-related, rather than primarily concerned with guaranteeing the provision of workers. As previously noted, whereas during the 1650s and the early 1660s the volume of the official slave trade was meagre, black markets were flourishing. Although the Crown could not know the exact volume of the illegal trade it was aware of its magnitude. Therefore, the main aim of the *Junta de Negros* was to increase and stabilize the flow of taxes from the slave trade. Certainly, the supply of enslaved workers was also a concern of the Crown, but probably not as much as the diversion of precious metals from the empire or foreign penetration in Spanish America. Indeed, the closure of the official transatlantic slave trade markets for more than one decade between 1640 and 1651 and the lack of state-driven initiatives to foster the official markets during the 1650s seem to be in support of this.

The second spin-off benefit underlined in the report had to do with the expectation that Grillo & Lomellino would oversee smuggling and contraband in the Caribbean. This

⁵⁴ SERRANO MANGAS, 1985: 135.

⁵⁵ BARRIONUEVO, 1893: 452-453.

⁵⁶ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-5-1662. Report about Juan de Castro's pamphlet and Grillo & Lomellino's proposal by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV.

point also reinforces the idea expressed in the previous paragraph, as it tacitly assumes that slaves were being illegally imported in a volume that concerned the Councils of the Crown. The argument of the *Junta de Negros* was simple and not bereft of logic. It assumed that by entitling Grillo & Lomellino as monopolist their agency would share the interest of the Crown in fighting smuggling and contraband. From this perspective, the contract was seen as a way of externalizing the costs of (a) preventing foreign penetration in the Spanish American markets, which was increasingly draining precious metals from the empire, and (b) monitoring the misbehavior of the local authorities and royal officers in allowing fraudulent economic activities. As acknowledged by the *Junta de Negros* but also by the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville some years later, the lack of commitment of the latter was a crucial stimulating factor for smuggling and contraband⁵⁷.

The arguments of the *Junta de Negros* convinced Philip IV and on 31 July 1662 the contract with Grillo & Lomellino was signed. Starting from March 1663, Grillo & Lomellino accepted to annually import a minimum of 3,500 *piezas de Indias* for seven years. 3,000 were to be commercialized by the Genoese company in exchange for 100 *pesos* per *pieza*. The slaves were to be disembarked in the official ports of Cartagena de Indias, Portobello and Veracruz. Nonetheless, if the number of imported slaves was lower, the Genoese company was still compelled to pay the difference to the expected sum of 300,000 *pesos* per year. The first available funds were to be used for the construction, also by Grillo & Lomellino, of ten vessels in the Basque Country and Cantabria, at 31 and 34 *pesos* per ton, to be delivered by September 1664. The remaining 500 *piezas* were to be shipped tax-free by the company in order to fund a network of shipyards in the Spanish Caribbean, following the plan designed by Juan de Castro. The first 300,000 *pesos* paid by the Genoese company to the royal treasure were set aside for a galleon which Castro was also constructing in Campeche. Nonetheless, Grillo & Lomellino never committed to these last two points. Due to the private character of the lawsuits between Juan de Castro and the Genoese partners on this question, we can assume that Castro's projects were of a private nature and did not actively involve the Crown, and therefore did not interfere on the agreements between the Crown and Grillo & Lomellino⁵⁸. In sum, with this contract the Crown expected to collect 2,100,000 *pesos* in seven years and to assure that the money was used to run an ambitious shipbuilding program in Spain. However, in the end Grillo & Lomellino only paid 1,763,600 *pesos*.

The negotiations about the shipbuilding program took place in the following months. From the perspective of Grillo & Lomellino the core of the negotiation revolved around making sure that the funds for the construction were available and that construction was

⁵⁷ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-5-1662. Report about Juan de Castro's pamphlet and Grillo & Lomellino's proposal by the *Junta de Negros* to Philip IV.; AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 13-1-1665. Report of the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville addressed to the Council of the Indies.

⁵⁸ AGI, IG, Leg. 2835, s.f., 29-11-1670. Minute of the Council of the Indies about the petition of Manuel de Oyarbide (grantee of Juan de Castro) against Grillo & Lomellino.

as cheap as possible by obtaining different privileges; for instance, permission to ship cash from Castile to the Netherlands to buy naval equipment, or advantages to cutting and acquiring wood in the peninsula. From the Crown's perspective, the main issue was to ensure that the ships had the expected specifications and quality and, in general, to guarantee the delivery of the vessels. Although the goal was to build the ships in domestic shipyards, in the end it was decided to buy some of them abroad. On 23 July 1663 Grillo & Lomellino signed a contract with the Crown to acquire four fully-equipped frigates in Amsterdam, to be delivered in Cadiz for the *Armada de Barlovento*⁵⁹. The vessels were bought between May and July 1664 by the Florentine Francesco Feroni on behalf of Grillo & Lomellino under the supervision of the royal officer Juan Baptista Lezcano⁶⁰. Regarding the six galleons, as far as it is known, only four of them were delivered⁶¹.

THE COST OF THE *ASIENTO*, THE PRIVILEGES OF GRILLO & LOMELLINO

Not everyone in the political circles of the empire shared the enthusiasm showed by the *Junta de Negros* and the final decision taken by Philip IV. For example, once the slave trade *asiento* started to operate on March 1663, the duke of Alba was openly skeptical at the Council of State about the wisdom of using Grillo & Lomellino as monopolist players in the transatlantic slavery market⁶². He argued that it was a matter of time before Grillo & Lomellino took advantage of their position and ran massive smuggling operations in slaves and other goods. In addition, Alba had little doubt that the Genoese company and the Amsterdam merchants would be quick to start working together. Given the context in which Alba's words were proffered, it seems that they were more concerned about the increasing Dutch penetration of Spanish America than with the contents of Grillo & Lomellino's *asiento*. Nonetheless, his position poses a question which, although difficult to answer, needs to be addressed: what price did the Crown pay for Grillo & Lomellino's services? Indeed, as Alba's words suggest, we can hypothesize that the main advantage to the Genoese company were the previously noted privileges.

Indeed, it seems likely that these privileges were what Grillo & Lomellino had aimed to achieve from the start. The joint slave trade and shipbuilding project was an extremely expensive endeavor, and the expected returns meagre and uncertain. Even if the Crown shouldered many of the risks, a side of the negotiation in which Grillo & Lomellino were particularly careful⁶³, the investments to be made by the Genoese firm to run the slave trade

⁵⁹ AGI, Contaduría, Leg. 562, n° 1, ff. 1r-8r, 23-7-1663. *Asiento* with Grillo & Lomellino to buy four cutters for the *Armada de Barlovento*.

⁶⁰ AGI, Contaduría, Leg. 562, n° 4, s.f. 15-9-1666. Final payment to Grillo & Lomellino for the four cutters bought for the *Armada de Barlovento*.

⁶¹ SERRANO MANGAS, 1985: 98-105.

⁶² Archivo General de Simancas (henceforth AGS), Estado, Leg. 2202, s.f., 31-3-1663. Minute of the Council of State.

⁶³ For instance: Grillo & Lomellino made sure that any damage happened during the construction process of the ships or once they were launched would be assumed by the Crown. AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 2-2-1663. Copy of Grillo & Lomellino's proposal annotated by the

and to initiate the construction of the ships were not minor. For example, Grillo & Lomellino advanced the money to pay the frigates purchased in Amsterdam. They also started cutting wood for the galleons to be built in the Basque Country before the final agreement on the quality of the ships was even reached⁶⁴. The vessels to ship the slaves to Spanish America and the freight-related expenses were also completely assumed by them as well as taking care of the cargoes. As it is well known, the slave trade was a demanding investment, and returns were anything but guaranteed⁶⁵. Furthermore, as previously noted, bypassing official markets in the Spanish Caribbean during the 1650s and early 1660s was not that difficult. What sense did it make then for Grillo & Lomellino to pay such a big price in order to deal with slaves or to engage with the ruinous Spanish shipbuilding sector?

If meeting the formal goals expressed in the contracts in full was not among the priorities of Grillo & Lomellino, trying to maximize their privileges was. One of the main arguments posed by the Genoese company to justify the delays in the construction of the vessels had to do with the lack of funds⁶⁶. However, to a large extent, they were themselves responsible for that situation as they frequently eluded the payment of duties. Grillo & Lomellino's lack of commitment led to different lawsuits being filed against them by the Council of the Indies attorneys and their properties were seized in Spain and the Americas in 1666⁶⁷. In 1668 the contracts were renegotiated and the partnership extended until 1674. The delay in the delivery of the galleons and the arrears on the annual payment of 300,000 *pesos* were compensated with loans in Flanders; a much cheaper operation from the company's perspective but also useful for the Crown due to the War of Devolution with France (1667-1668)⁶⁸. Seemingly, the game for the Genoese company was to avoid obligations as much as possible and maintain costs low while keeping and strengthening its privileges as much as possible.

After the first contract was signed in July 1662 the Genoese company constantly badgered the Council of the Indies to have its privileges implemented and enlarged. These privileges included some that had already featured in previous *asientos*, but others were being now granted for the first time. For example, sailing outside the annual convoy system which linked the Americas to Spain, having privative judges to safeguard the privileges of the company vis-à-vis other jurisdictions and authorities, and settling a multinational network of agents in American soil, were rights already conferred by the so-called Portuguese

Carrera de Indias' quartermaster and the *Casa de la Contratación*. Clause 5. Also, if a ship caused the loss of a cargo of slaves, the taxes that selling those slaves would have yielded were to be discounted from Grillo & Lomellino's annual payment of 300,000 *pesos*. AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 31-7-1662. Official *asiento* contract between Grillo & Lomellino and Philip IV. Clause 5.

⁶⁴ AGI, IG, Leg. 2703, ff. 211r-214r, 16-9-1663. Argumentation by Grillo & Lomellino to the *Carrera de Indias*' quartermaster.

⁶⁵ FATAH-BLACK & VAN ROSSUM, 2015: 63-83.

⁶⁶ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 8-11-1664. Minute of the *Junta de Negros* about Grillo & Lomellino's argumentation justifying delays in the annual payment quota of 300,000 *pesos* as revenue from operating the slavery markets and its impact on the shipbuilding project.

⁶⁷ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 15-3-1666. Order to seize Grillo & Lomellino's properties by the Council of the Indies.

⁶⁸ A copy of the contract in: ABREU Y BERTODANO, 1751: 562-565.

asientos (1595-1640). New rights and conditions were the monopolistic charter, the application of a specific fiscal system, and the lack of geographical limitations for the transactions, among others. The arguments used by Grillo & Lomellino to request new privileges were always based on their need to fulfill the obligations of the contract, i.e. the goals of the Crown. The Council of the Indies prosecutors were opposed to most requests, especially those ones concerning the enlargement of privileges or the concession of new ones. For instance, the harbor of Buenos Aires was never open to the company⁶⁹. To maintain Buenos Aires isolated from the main Atlantic trade circuits was a cornerstone in the global geo-strategy of the Spanish empire, which aimed to avoid the drain of Peruvian silver through that route. Still, the Genoese partners achieved other goals vis-à-vis the Council of the Indies. Indeed, some of those achievements were explicitly invoked three decades later in 1696 in the contract between Charles II and Manuel Ferreira de Carvalho, agent of the Portuguese *Companhia do Cacheu e Cabo Verde*⁷⁰. Ferreira asked to enjoy, not only some of the conditions already contained in the July 1662 contract, but also in six charters issued in October 1662, January 1664, and November 1668. Five of these charters included the Crown's commitment to observe and enforce the privative jurisdiction which, according to the *asentistas*, was necessary for an appropriate development of the business.

The commercial and jurisdictional privileges given to Grillo & Lomellino were extremely useful for merchants operating in transatlantic markets and especially for those who, like Grillo & Lomellino, lacked the support of their own state in their overseas ventures⁷¹. These privileges not only opened markets in conditions and regions unreachable by illicit means but also gave security to the private investments undertaken by the firm under the cover of the *asiento*. First of all, the contract gave direct access to the American silver, dyestuffs, and local goods such as cacao and tobacco. For instance, in 1663 the WIC unsuccessfully made a proposal to the Crown to administrate the cochineal and dyewood trades from Spanish Americas⁷². In any case, having access to the transatlantic economy, either indirectly, by channeling merchandises through the Spanish *Carrera de Indias*⁷³, or directly, as Grillo & Lomellino did, was a priority for the Genoese merchants because of their decline in the European circuits of exchange. Indeed, during the second half of the seventeenth century the Genoese commercial communities in Cadiz and Lisbon expanded and became increasingly influential⁷⁴. Since the 1630s, the rise of crypto-Jewish competitors in the finances of the Spanish empire obliged the Genoese networks to share the silver

⁶⁹ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 12-3-1669. Minute of the Council of the Indies about Grillo & Lomellino's request to trade in Buenos Aires and resolution by the fiscal attorney.

⁷⁰ A copy of the contract in: CALVO, 1862: 5-42.

⁷¹ SUBRAHMANYAM, 1988: 559-582; COSTA, 2011: 915-932.

⁷² AGS, Estado, Leg. 4010, s.f., 8-4-1663. Minute of the Council of State drawing on information provided by Esteban de Gamarra, Spanish ambassador in The Hague.

⁷³ OLIVA MELGAR, 2004.

⁷⁴ CARRASCO GONZÁLEZ, 1997; ALESSANDRINI & VIOLA, 2013: 295-322.

pie which traditionally had under control⁷⁵. Furthermore, from 1654 onwards the Crown ceased to automatically back its loans with American precious metals⁷⁶. Although the flow of American silver to the peninsula rose during the second half of the seventeenth century, only a small share ended in the royal treasure⁷⁷.

The possible private interests that Grillo & Lomellino would have had on the ship-building side of their *asiento* are less obvious at first glance but they can be partially understood in relation to the slave trade business and the position of their firm in European markets. Spanish shipyards were dependent on northern European markets for the supply of certain goods such as timber, hemp, ship apparels, sails or lead⁷⁸. Although we do not know if the commercial privileges given to the Genoese company concerning the making of the galleons were used to conduct illegal activities, it is clear that Grillo & Lomellino depended on northern European markets for supplies. However, as Grillo & Lomellino were former importers of Castilian wool in the region, this was an opportunity to deepen their position there. For sure, they enhanced their own relational capital by making use of the same Amsterdam-based networks which were instrumental in the operation of the slave trade, either official or fraudulent, and the illegal importation of goods to America. The Florentine Francesco Feroni which we have encountered before, brokering the acquisition of the four frigates for the Crown, was also in charge of mediating in these transactions with slaves with the WIC⁷⁹. Additionally, it is not surprising to find a Genoese company firmly involved in the shipbuilding industry and probably Grillo & Lomellino had the necessary expertise, organizational skills, and contacts to do so. From the 1630s onwards naval policies became one of the priorities of the Republic of Genoa. The Republic's attempts to reinvigorate its naval power were limited in practice, but several private agents benefited as contractors of these rearmament policies. Genoese ship-builders also equipped the Genoese-commanded galleys at the service of the Spanish Empire and the Pope, as well as the Republic of Venice which was among their best clients⁸⁰.

However, the privileges granted to Grillo & Lomellino were only potentially useful. It was on the hands of the company and its ability to make a profitable use of them. Thanks to these privileges, the Genoese company not only controlled the official slavery markets but engaged in major smuggling and fraudulent operations which linked America, Atlantic Europe and the Mediterranean. If we believe the words of the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville, «the Grillos turned into the Lords of the Indies»⁸¹.

⁷⁵ BOYAJIAN, 1983.

⁷⁶ ÁLVAREZ NOGAL, 1997.

⁷⁷ OLIVA MELGAR, 2004.

⁷⁸ SERRANO MANGAS, 1985: 147-178; SANZ AYÁN, 2004, 79-103.

⁷⁹ COOLS, 2006: 39-50.

⁸⁰ KIRK, 2005; BASSO, 2012: 273-292.

⁸¹ AGI, IG, Leg. 2834, s.f., 1665. Report by the *Consulado de Mercaderes* of Seville on the smuggling activities of Grillo & Lomellino. GARCÍA-MONTÓN, 2014: 205-222.

CONCLUSIONS

This essay has demonstrated how private actors actively influenced the politics of the Spanish empire in pursuit of their own goals. More crucially, it has shown how the changes they promoted could have long-lasting effects on the organization of the empire's political and economic frameworks. The contract in which Philip V of Spain granted Queen Anne of England and her vassals permission to operate the slavery markets in the Spanish empire, signed in 1713, incorporated in its thirty-ninth clause «all the concessions» given to «Don Domingo Grillo». Certainly, the privileges enjoyed by the English South Sea Company included a monopolistic position. The first such position in the history of the African slave trade in the Spanish empire had been awarded forty years earlier with Grillo & Lomellino⁸².

Managing the official slavery circuits through a monopolistic charter was an initiative alien to the Council of the Indies and the Crown. It originated in the private sphere. Its implementation by the Crown was not the result of a decision-making process primarily concerned with regulating the slave trade markets. The goal that the Crown intended to achieve was very different, namely the construction of war ships. The Genoese company presented itself as capable of materializing an intangible asset scattered in the geographies of Spanish America – the right to tax the slave trade by securing the official trade through a monopolistic charter – into a tangible one in the form of a public good which would facilitate the management of the empire – the collective security that would be provided by the ships included in the agreement⁸³.

Collaboration between Grillo & Lomellino and the Crown was negotiated and framed as a PPP. In so doing, the Crown did not incur in any borrowing from private capital markets: the cost of the ships was, theoretically, zero. However, the services provided by Grillo & Lomellino had to be paid at a high price. For example, the suppression of the local duties on the slave trade at the request of the Genoese company meant breaking part of the social contract which bound the Crown to the Spanish American tax farmers in charge of the *alcabala* and the *sisá*. This was not a minor political cost in an empire that was based on multilateral pacts involving the local elites, corporations, and political authorities. These were, also, not the only costs. The exclusive commercial and jurisdictional rights granted to Grillo & Lomellino were manipulated by the Genoese firm in order to subvert the Crown's rights in the American trade. They did so by incurring in large fraudulent and illicit activities. Therefore, it may be said that Grillo & Lomellino promoted renovated legal structure of the slave trade so they could hijack it. It seems clear that it was not only Early Modern rulers who manipulated private networks as tools for empire management. Private networks collaborated with the empires in pursuit of their own interests. These joint ventures shaped the empires in ways initially unexpected by the rulers.

⁸² This contract in: *Coleccion de los tratados de paz, alianza, comercio &c. ajustados por la corona de España con las potencias extranjeras desde el reinado del Señor Don Felipe Quinto hasta el presente*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Imprenta real, 1796), 120.

⁸³ THOMPSON, 2012: 317-351.

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COOPERATIVE RIVALRY: IBERIAN MERCHANTS IN CROSS-IMPERIAL TRANSACTIONS DURING THE IBERIAN UNION (1580-1640)

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The Real Audiencia de Charcas, head of the Tucumán and Buenos Aires jurisdiction, received an order from the Spanish king in 1602 to expel all the Portuguese who had entered the Spanish Empire, via Brazil, without a royal license, i.e. clandestinely¹. This decision followed complaints by Spanish merchants in the Vice-Royalty of Peru who were unable to compete with the Portuguese merchants. The first charge brought against the Portuguese was of a religious nature, with the latter being accused of being New Christians. However, the fundamental reason for accusing them was rooted in economic rivalry as the Portuguese merchants had subverted trading rules and regulations by directly contracting commerce between Europe and the Spanish New World through illegal South American navigation routes. Smuggling was a way to provide the Spanish-American consumption markets with cheaper commodities since the combination of navigation rules, laws and taxation in the Spanish West Indies trade, along with increasing transportation and transaction costs, had contributed to higher prices for most goods imported from Europe. Another claim made by the Spanish plaintiffs was that the Portuguese traded directly with the Dutch, despite the formal prohibition on trading with enemy ships in Iberian territories.

As this 1602 episode illustrates, historiography has to date focused primarily on competition between Iberian businessmen, while trading cooperation between Portuguese and Spanish merchants during the Iberian Union (1580-1640) is an aspect that has consistently

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¹ ISRAEL, 2002:127.

been neglected. Historiography has generally seen the political union as being of most benefit to Portuguese merchants and seamen², almost all of whom were slave traders to America through the *asientos de negros*' regime³. The Portuguese were considered the biggest smugglers in the Rio de la Plata region, Peru and Nueva España (New Spain)⁴, as well as being bankers to the Habsburg monarchy⁵. However, even Spanish historiography has paid little or no attention to the role that Spanish merchants played in European and American trade after the 1580s, when these trading routes were in the hands of foreign, including Portuguese, merchants. The exceptions to this invisible presence were the Spanish merchants in New Spain and Peru who actively prospered in local and international smuggling dynamics, operating in guilds (*Consulados*)⁶.

Some studies have supported more recent historiographical contributions that claim that private agents unquestionably took advantage of the conditions created by the imperial authorities to potentiate their trading activities⁷. Works born out of the «cross-cultural trade» inspiration⁸ have defended this claim on the grounds that merchant communities needed to increase their network efficiency by trading with people from different social backgrounds, in transnational stages and integrated in overseas imperial realities⁹. Filipa Ribeiro da Silva describes the joint trading associations that were set up by Portuguese and Dutch merchants in the West African trade circuits during a period of formal rivalry between Portugal and the Netherlands¹⁰.

More detailed studies over the past decade have emphasized how collaborative and rival associations between Portuguese and Spanish merchants co-existed in the Far East, specifically along the Malacca-Macao-Nagasaki-Manila-Cebu-Acapulco axis¹¹, as well as in southern Brazil, where an informal Spanish colonization of Portuguese territories near Asuncion, in the São Paulo hinterland, benefited from trade between the Paraguay Province and the Portuguese settlements in the Piratininga upland¹². Although there is sporadic documental evidence to show that Spanish and Portuguese agents profited from the political union in terms of trade opportunities and complementarities, there has not yet been any systematic study of Iberian trade interactions, and their reaction to the presence of non-Iberian competitors in a global environment.

² LAGUARDA TRÍAS, 1988: 57-84.

³ VILA VILAR, 1977; STUDNICKI-GIZBERT, 2007.

⁴ LAFUENTE MACHAIN, 1931; CANABRAVA, 1984; ISRAEL, 2002: 97-150; VENTURA, 2005.

⁵ BOYAJIAN, 1983; SANZ AYAN, 2004; —, 2005: 157-158.

⁶ RUIZ RIVERA & GARCÍA BERNAL, 1992: 143-153; SHAW, & OLIVA MELGAR, 2005.

⁷ COSTA, 2002; POLÓNIA & OWENS, 2009; POLÓNIA, 2012: 349-371; ANTUNES, 2012: 173-185.

⁸ CURTIN, 1984.

⁹ BOYAJIAN, 2007; ROITMAN, 2008; TRIVELLATO, 2009; ANTUNES, 2009.

¹⁰ SILVA, 2011.

¹¹ BAENA ZAPATERO & LAMIKIZ, 2014: 693-722; OLLÉ, 2013: 253-275; PICAZO MUNTANER, 2010; POLÓNIA, 2013: 133-158; SOUSA: 331-351.

¹² FLORES, 1997: 26-29; VILARDAGA, 2010; NOVAIS, 2011.

Against the background of Iberian control of sea trade, Iberian merchants' informal cooperation in times of formal constraints sustains the pertinence of these recent studies. How and why did these Iberian merchants associate? By which means did they interact with foreign merchants? What level of adaptation was needed after 1580 and, again, after 1640? Did formal national rivalries and states' political or economic embargoes on foreign agents prevent or discourage these informal cooperative associations?

This chapter aims to understand the initial impact of the political union on Portuguese and Spanish trading partnerships during the first ten years of this union (1580-1590). In presenting the preliminary results of my post-doc research into trading and financial cooperation and competition between Portuguese and Castilian merchants during the Iberian Union (1580-1640) it follows two directions: firstly, it examines the legal implications for trade during the annexation of the Portuguese Crown to the Habsburg dominions, and secondly it analyzes the role played by Spanish merchants in Portuguese foreign trade at the time.

In 1581, the Portuguese representatives of the nobility, the clergy and the commoners met in Tomar to acknowledge Philip II as King of Portugal, after a complex combination of diplomatic and military pressure. One of the many conditions imposed on the new king was that the Kingdom of Portugal should remain formally separated from other Habsburg dominions and should be ruled in accordance with its own laws and mores¹³. Regarding trade, the commoners petitioned the new monarch to abolish the policies of monopoly and contracts for the overseas dominions and proposed free trade for all territories. In addition, they petitioned for exports of iron, wood, wheat, leather and horses by other Habsburg subjects to Portugal to be exempt from tax, as well as for the ending of the prohibition on importing such commodities from Castile. This final request implied the naturalization of Portuguese citizens as Habsburg subjects, a move that would automatically open the door of the Spanish West Indies to Portuguese merchants, who might then also profit from the availability of naval protection against foreign privateers¹⁴.

In 1582, and despite the above requests, Philip II signed the Patent Letter, in which he pledged to grant the Portuguese certain privileges, favors and mercies. With regard to trade, however, Philip II declared that all trade in Asia, Africa and Brazil should continue to be opened exclusively to Portuguese ships and subjects. At the same time, however, border tariffs between Portugal and Castile were ended in an attempt to enhance trade between the two kingdoms, while the king also allowed Castilian wheat to be exported to Portugal and ruled that naval measures should be taken to guarantee secure navigation of Portuguese fleets in Asia and Africa¹⁵.

¹³ SANTARÉM, 1924: 78. On the problem of Portuguese succession and the path that led to Philip II of Spain becoming King of Portugal, see POLÓNIA, 2009: 257-295; BOUZA, 2005: 39-203; SCHAUB, 2001: 21-23.

¹⁴ SANTARÉM, 1924: 78-81.

¹⁵ *Patente das Mercês, Graças e Privilégios que El Rey D. Philipe Nosso Senhor faz Mercê a estes Reinos*, 1582. BN, Rs 68 P.

Despite these changes, the principle of national exclusivity of trade in overseas territories was maintained. Although the Castilian Crown had allowed subjects of the empire to trade with the Spanish Indies since 1526, Charles V ruled in 1538 that such permission was restricted to Castilians only. No foreigners, and that included Flemish and Italians under the Habsburg jurisdiction, could participate in the American venture¹⁶. This legislation remained in place throughout Habsburg rule in Castilian, and the reality was not altered by the events of 1580. Portuguese subjects continued, therefore, to be considered foreigners in Spanish dominions for the sixty years of Habsburg rule and American trade consequently continued to be closed to them, unless they (or other foreigners) became naturalized Castilians.

The economic conjuncture in the late sixteenth and throughout the first half of the seventeenth century proved difficult, however, for Portuguese and Castilian entrepreneurs in Europe and overseas. The traditional state-controlled monopolies of Iberian overseas trade that had strengthened these countries' positions in European markets during the sixteenth century created more problems than possibilities in the 1580s. In the Portuguese case, this was against a background of decreasing pepper revenues. After the state had undertaken to protect navigation on the Cape Route and in the face of growing competition from Muslim traders in India, the Portuguese Crown introduced a system of contracting pepper trade out to private investors. However, the monopoly reverted to the state after 1597 since no private investors were willing to risk high-value investments in times of fierce competition in the Indian Ocean without convenient and regular protection¹⁷. Nevertheless, as literature points out, the period was also a period of prosperity for Portuguese private agents and merchants active in the Asian trade, both for those dedicated to trade in oriental imports to Lisbon and for the *casados* who had settled in the Eastern territories. These agents exploited privileged Portuguese trading posts in Malacca and Macao in order to intervene in the Eastern Asian internal trading circuits and to profit from imports of porcelain, silk and Japanese silver¹⁸. Portuguese merchants also began to devote attention to the Atlantic trade, where they exchanged slaves for the increasing production of Brazilian sugar¹⁹. The Iberian Union created the opportunity for Portuguese merchants to become the exclusive suppliers of slaves in the Spanish Americas from 1595 onwards. Despite the American trade formally being open only to Castilians, the need for a labor force in the American fields, as well as in the gold and silver mines, meant the Habsburg *asientos* effectively held a monopoly on the supply of black slaves in the Spanish Indies. The Portuguese were the exclusive suppliers since they dominated the African slave trade circuits, they had a privileged position when negotiating such contracts. Even before 1595, however, the Por-

¹⁶ RUIZ RIVERA & GARCÍA BERNAL, 1992: 57.

¹⁷ GODINHO, 1971: 68.

¹⁸ MAGALHÃES, 1998: 9-10.

¹⁹ GODINHO, 1971: 101-118; SCHWARTZ, 1998: 213-231; COSTA, 2000.

tuguese already dominated the regime of private concessions for supplying slaves to the Indies, either directly or indirectly (through the help of Spanish front men), and legally or otherwise, with slave smuggling already being a current practice, both in Central America and Rio de la Plata²⁰.

Despite the extraction of increasing amounts of silver, Spanish overseas trade in the early seventeenth century also saw increased production of foodstuffs in the Americas. This prompted a change in consumption habits and demand, with the traditional demand for agricultural products such as wheat and meat being replaced by demand for the manufactured goods, especially textiles, that the traditional Castilian industry was no longer able to produce. Castilian textile centers such as Zaragoza, Toledo and Segovia began declining during the second half of the sixteenth century, mostly owing to competition from foreign textile producers. The presence of northern Italian and Flemish merchants in Madrid and Seville, along with the financial services these foreigners provided to the Spanish Crown, resulted in their being granted important privileges for importing their textile manufactures. Castile's national industry, with its poorer quality and quantity of production, was unable to withstand the combination of this pressure and the higher taxes on consumption goods in Castile²¹. As a result, Castile became increasingly dependent on its foreign merchants, who benefited from the security of liquidity facilitated by the availability of American silver. The complexity and wide-ranging nature of taxes on trade imposed high transaction costs on products loaded in Seville, Sanlúcar and Cadiz. The structure of the Spanish monopoly, which imposed tight controls on ships and cargoes, as well as excessive taxes and regular confiscations of private silver by the state, fueled by a permanently bankrupt treasury and continual warfare, also encouraged a sharp increase in smuggling along both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of America. These constraints, along with the inefficiency of local Armadas, paved the way for free-rider commerce in slave ships, along with silver transports in the Manila galleon and small cabotage vessels, more often than not with the connivance of the Spanish-American authorities²². This trading system also compromised the solvency of merchants in Seville, who were unable to prepare annual cargoes because of the sharp fall in their revenues and whose trading was repeatedly delayed.

The Eighty Years' War made Portuguese merchants, ships, products and territories vulnerable to enemy action, with privateering, piracy and formal military conflict undermining the attractiveness of overseas trade in the Atlantic and Asia between 1580 and 1640. Spanish kings forbade Dutch trade in Iberian ports in 1585, 1595, 1598 and 1605, and these embargoes on Dutch goods, ships and merchants prompted the Dutch to attempt to establish direct trade links with the Spanish Indies. On the one hand, the Dutch accounted for a significant portion of manufactured exports to America, with goods being imported to

²⁰ VILA VILAR, 1977: 25-33; TORRÃO, 2007; STUDNICKI-GIZBERT, 2007: 9-13; NEWSON & MINCHIN, 2007.

²¹ FISCHER, 1992: 72-75.

²² RIVERA & BERNAL, 1992: 154-160.

the Iberian Peninsula and, from there, shipped to the Indies, mostly through Spanish front men, while, on the other hand, northern European markets were the preferred consuming centers for Spanish-American exports, especially dyes.

Jonathan Israel argues that Dutch trade with the Spanish colonies first began through the mediation of Portuguese New Christian merchants in Porto Rico, Cuba, Hispaniola and Venezuela²³. How did these Portuguese and Spanish merchants deal with each other in such an unstable and fiercely competitive environment? Did the Iberian Union foster cooperation between these two groups, or did it promote further internal competition between them?

Thanks to the analysis of the Castilian merchant Simon Ruiz's bills of exchange and business correspondence with Portugal, within the scope of DynCoopNet-pt research project²⁴, it has been possible to reconstitute one of the the Iberian trading networks before 1580 and to see them as the model guiding Iberian trading and financial collaboration leading up to that year. While the bills of exchange mainly reflect financial relationships between deliverers and beneficiaries, and issuers and payers, the commercial correspondence with Simon Ruiz's agents in Portugal provides evidence of clearly cooperative relationships between Portuguese and Castilian merchants in several trade circuits, as well as evidence of informal financial partnerships. Both these documentary sources provided a basis for rebuilding a network and identifying nodes and different types of relationships. This reconstituted network revealed cooperative ties between Portuguese and Castilian agents in times of formal imperial rivalry and monopolistic trading policies, as well as informal commercial partnerships that knew no formal boundaries and were able to circumvent the legal constraints²⁵. Indeed, from the 1570s onwards, Portuguese merchants were the second largest group operating in Ruiz's business network.

The complementarity of Iberian imperial spaces in terms of valuable trading products, routes and spaces favored the establishment of cooperative trading partnerships. These in turn allowed the participation of Portuguese agents in the silver revenues of the Spanish fleets and the integration of Castilian merchants, such as Simon Ruiz, in the trading of spices and other Asian luxuries, slaves and Brazilian sugar, all of which were booming activities in the 1570s. On the other hand, the wealthiest Portuguese agents' financial liquidity represented quite an asset since it allowed them to maintain strong ties with their representatives in the Low Countries; these ties were extremely valuable to the Spanish, who were themselves unwelcome in those provinces²⁶. It was before the formal Iberian Union that Portuguese merchants created the basis for their role as the main bankers of the Habsburg monarchs, especially under Philip III and Philip IV, by establishing informal partnerships with the Crown's *asentistas* as a means of entering the business. These

²³ ISRAEL, 2002: 19.

²⁴ www.dyncoopnet-pt.org.

²⁵ RIBEIRO, 2011: 153-173.

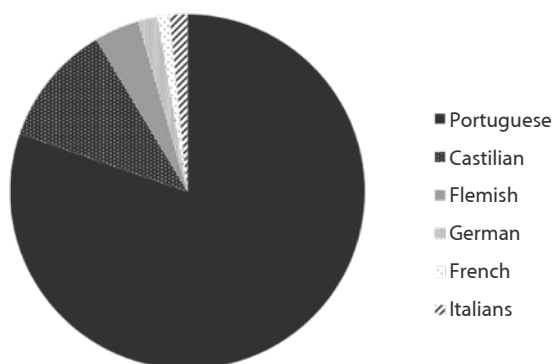
²⁶ RIBEIRO, 2011: 107-108, 121-124.

merchants were best-positioned to place the money where it was needed after the Spanish agents had to flee Antwerp when the Eighty Years War broke out. The conflict resulted in the Habsburg monarchs having to provide the Flemish city with money to pay the soldiers and supply the armies. The Portuguese agents were the best way to ensure that the *asentistas* (who lent the money to the monarch) had correspondents able to advance ducats to the Habsburg administration in Flanders²⁷.

The notarial records of Porto and Lisbon, the two main seaports in the Portuguese kingdom, were selected as the data sources for the years 1580-1590. Although notarial records for this period are scarce (there was only one office in Porto and three in Lisbon), I collected all the records relating to foreign trade between 1580 and 1590 that were issued in these two Portuguese seaports. These identified 443 agents in a total of 142 different types of notarial deeds, including deeds establishing liabilities and granting discharges, powers of attorney, freight contracts and deeds establishing companies). Although this sample provides only a small portrait of what Portuguese foreign trade must have been like at the time, it is at least possible to capture some sort of picture in this way.

The chosen methodological approach to the data provided in these notarial records was network analysis. This methodology, whereby systems of social relations are represented in nodes (the individuals) and links (relationships), allows us to observe that the world of Portuguese foreign trade was much more interrelated than the reading of individual notarial deeds suggests. On the one hand, it allows us to visualize social ties that would otherwise remain silent, while, on the other hand, social network statistics enable us to understand the frequency of relations, connectivity and centrality of different people, as well as the social organization of different groups, through the existence, or otherwise, of clusters and communities.

Figure 1: Geographical origins of merchants operating from Lisbon, 1580-1590 (%)



Source: ADL, 2nd, 3rd and 15th Notaries of Lisbon and ADP, 4th Notary of Porto, 1580-1590.

²⁷ BOYAJIAN, 1983; BROENS, 1989; RIBEIRO, 2011: 107.

As figure 1 shows, 11.1% of the merchants participating in these Portuguese affairs were Castilians, while 80.3% of the merchants were Portuguese²⁸. The relative numbers identified in the notarial records seem to support the hypothesis of Portuguese agents' great strength in global overseas trade dynamics over Spanish merchants' loss of influence, even in the Spanish Americas and at least from the 1570s onwards. Castilians were nevertheless the largest foreign group operating in Portugal and in Portuguese overseas trade.

Figure 2: Relative presence of foreign and Portuguese merchants in notarial contracts, by typology (1580-1590).

Typology of contracts	Portuguese presence (%)	Castilian presence (%)	Flemish presence (%)	German presence (%)	French presence (%)	Italian presence (%)
Powers of attorney	78.2	26.1	13.1	4.3	2.2	6.5
Contracts of liability	94.7	15.8	10.5			5.7
Discharges	88.0	24.0		4.0		8.0
Contracts	85.7	14.3				14.3
Company formations	100					
Freight contracts	77.7	22.2	11.1	22.2	22.2	
Sales contracts	100	33.3	33.3			
Guarantees	100	100				
Total	85.2	22.6	8.7	4.3	2.6	6.1

Source: ADL, 2nd, 3rd and 15th Notaries of Lisbon and ADP, 4th Notary of Porto, 1580-1590.

The Castilian presence ranged from transportation to banking, financing and money exchange services, and from representation and agency to equal partnerships; in other words, a whole diversity of positions and roles on the long-distance trade routes in the early modern era and, as figure 2 demonstrates, without any particular specialization in specific types of contracts.

In terms of organizational complexity, Portuguese overseas trade essentially comprised the provision of capital, shipping and expertise. As figure 2 shows, Portuguese agents participated in almost all the contracts analyzed.

²⁸ The remaining 8.6% of agents participating in Portuguese trade were Flemish (4.1%), German (1.8%), French (1.1%) and Italian (1.6%), and almost all from Genoa).

Even though they constituted only around 11% of the total number of individuals in this particular network, Castilian agents participated in over 22% of the contracts. The first obvious conclusion to draw from this is that some of those individuals must have participated in more than one type of contract. This was certainly the case for two of the best-connected agents in the network: Ventura de Frias and Lancerote de Serra, Castilians, were mentioned not only as representatives in powers of attorney and guarantees, but also in contracts involving financial transactions and contracts establishing and discharging liabilities, as well as being involved in freight contracts and as agents negotiating the transportation, buying and selling of goods, especially slaves. In all these contracts, their role implied a strong relationship of trust, mostly with Portuguese agents.

In terms of Portuguese merchants operating within a Castilian network, the case study of the Ruiz company showed that the political union resulted in growth of only six per cent in the numbers of Portuguese merchants responsible for the company's affairs. Portuguese merchants' capital investments in Antwerp meant they already held a key position in Simon Ruiz's network before the union, and they were able to maintain this position after 1580. The profits they earned from the Spanish business were then re-invested in the flourishing sugar and slaves trades, with new partners in Lisbon and Porto²⁹.

All the Portuguese merchants mentioned in the Ruiz archive also appear in the Lisbon notarial records between 1580 and 1590. These merchants were dealing with other – Spanish – agents who had also interacted at certain times with Ruiz's network. Who were these Spanish merchants? With whom did they interact in business affairs? What benefits were they seeking when doing business in or with Portugal? What benefits did they provide to their partners? And what was their role in the functioning of the Portuguese foreign trade network?

Network analysis statistics offer an interesting perspective on Castilian participation in Portuguese foreign trade. Both of the agents with the highest degree of connectivity in this trade were Portuguese: Diogo Faleiro, with thirty-two links, and Francisco Rodrigues de Elvas, who was directly linked to thirty-one people. Looking for the major hubs in the network (i.e. those individuals with over ten contacts, representing 7.9% of the total number of agents), we can observe that the only Castilian agent deeply connected to the network was Ventura de Frias.

Ventura de Frias was an agent for other Castilian merchants in Portugal, including Simon Ruiz and Francisco de Cuevas³⁰. He was already established in Portugal when he set up a commercial partnership with the Castilian merchant, Inigo de Salazar. Although the notarial deeds do not specify the businesses these merchants were involved in, they show

²⁹ Bill of exchange ASR-05.1590.481. Simão Vaz was a preferential partner in the slave trade and had his business base in Porto. RIBEIRO, 2011: 119-124.

³⁰ See <http://timelink.dyncoopnet-pt.org/mhk/dyncoopnet/id/rp-robot-125> for a biography of Ventura de Frias. ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 11, livro 52, 26v-28v.

bills of exchange frequently circulating between Lisbon and Madrid and linking the two Castilian merchants to important Castilian bankers such as Juan Ortega de la Torre³¹. In 1589, Ventura de Frias was one of the best known and indeed most solvent bankers operating in Lisbon, and he consequently represented an alternative way of obtaining payment of bills of exchange that had previously been refused³².

If we measure the betweenness centrality³³ as a means of examining certain individuals' relevance in tying together different contacts and acting as a bridge for fostering communications within different groups of agents in the network, we can clearly see that Castilian agents were not especially relevant in Portuguese foreign trade as none of them had a significant centrality for promoting alternative business contacts with their partners. On the contrary, their attachment to Portuguese agents promoted their integration into overseas Portuguese trading circuits. Although they were frequently involved in the trading process, Castilian agents seem to have been less relevant for investments and logistics in foreign trade conducted from or through Lisbon, even though this trade could be profitable for them individually. This means that even though Castilian agents sought to engage in the Portuguese trading circuits, the overall network that the Lisbon notarial deeds allow us to reconstruct shows that they did not play a key role in its functioning. In the case of Simon Ruiz's trading activity, the agents of most relevance as major connectors of hubs, measured in terms of the degree distribution and betweenness centrality, were Portuguese, while – by these measures – most of the Castilian partners had only a minor impact³⁴. The Portuguese were linked to numerous business contacts and able to offer new business opportunities to well-established Castilian merchants such as Ruiz in, for example, the spice and slave trade, as well as investments in Spanish public debt; indeed, with revenues in Spanish silver, the latter was one of the most attractive businesses for Ruiz³⁵.

³¹ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 19, 98v-100.

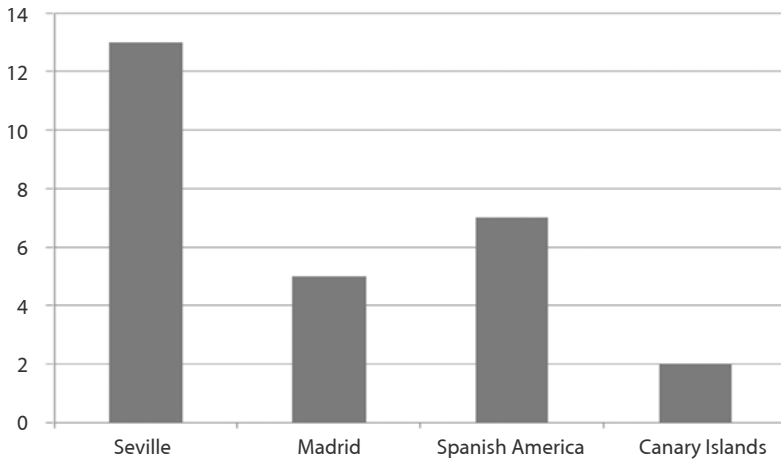
³² ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 5, livro 22, fl. 118v-119v.

³³ «Betweenness centrality» measures the extent to which a node lies between other nodes in the network. It takes into account the connectivity of the node's neighbors, giving a higher value for nodes that bridge clusters. The measure reflects the number of people to whom a person is indirectly connected through these people's direct links.

³⁴ In networks studies, the degree of a node is the number of connections it has to other nodes, while the degree distribution is the probability distribution of these degrees over the whole network. If one agent is linked to 30 individuals, his degree will be 30. In the case of Simon Ruiz's business network, about half of the top 25 most-connected agents were Portuguese, especially between 1574 and 1597. Since this network comprised a hierarchical structure, in which most of the nodes were linked to a much reduced number of individuals, there is a high probability that a Portuguese agent was one of Ruiz's most-connected partners.

³⁵ RIBEIRO, 2012: 33.

Figure 3: Portuguese merchants operating in Spanish territories, 1580-1590



Source: ADL, 2nd, 3rd and 15th Notaries of Lisbon and ADP, 4th Notary of Porto, 1580-1590.

Although the majority of Portuguese agents mentioned in the Lisbon notarial records relating to foreign trade between 1580 and 1590, and living in Spanish territories in the Peninsula or overseas, were established in Seville, they were also present in Madrid and Spanish overseas territories such as the Canaries archipelago and America. The numbers in the above figure are inexpressive, but confirm the tendency of the current historiographical discourse, whereby the Portuguese are seen as having managed to establish a position for themselves in Madrid and Seville. These towns played a crucial role in Spanish business as they were at the head of peninsular trade with America and comprised the political decision-making center for Portuguese and Spanish contracts overseas³⁶. The chart also confirms the Portuguese presence in the Spanish West Indies and on the Canary Islands³⁷.

Portuguese control of the African slave-supplying routes and the use of Seville as an entrepôt for East Indies products attracted Portuguese merchants to the town from the mid-sixteenth century onwards³⁸. One of the best known Portuguese merchants in Seville during the 1580s and 1590s was Simão de Tovar, who is listed in the records from 1580 onwards as representing Diogo Nunes Caldeira, Ramiro Álvares da Costa and Garcia Caldeira, all important Lisbon merchants, in the main trading gateway to Spanish America. These Lisbon merchants traded in carmine through a single representative in New Spain who sent commodities and silver to Seville, where Simão de Tovar negotiated with the

³⁶ EBBEN, 1996; FERNÁNDEZ CHAVES & GARCIA, 2012: 199-222; OTTE, 2008; PULIDO SERRANO, 2003: 543-554.

³⁷ SANTOS, 2014; SULLÓN BARRETO, 2014; VENTURA, 2005.

³⁸ RUIZ RIVERA & GARCÍA BERNAL, 1992: 169-170.

Castilian authorities and dealt with the related administrative procedures. The merchants' trade with America produced revenues in silver that had to be imported through Seville and, at least in theory, could not leave Castile. They consequently needed to reinvest these silver revenues, sometimes in acquiring new products from America³⁹. Simão de Tovar was a doctor and acted as an agent for Portuguese merchants at the Casa de Contratación, the institution that controlled American trade in Castile. Although he was accused in 1570 of illegally trading in America, the Contratación authorities ended their action against him in 1580, when the Iberian Union ushered in a period of greater tolerance of the Portuguese presence in the city and facilitated naturalization⁴⁰.

The records also show a significant Portuguese presence around the Spanish Court in the years before 1580⁴¹. What changed, after the establishment of the Union, was Lisbon's role in the functioning and the geographical enlargement of business networks in the Peninsula. While the *asientos* continued to flow through Lisbon, with rising imports of oriental spices and Brazilian sugar, the involvement of the Portuguese and Spanish in supplying slaves to the American colonies served to strengthen this union. Madrid, however, was the center of decision-making on these trading monopolies. This meant that traders needed powerful agents close to the Court so as to ensure their participation in the overseas contracts awarded by the Crown. A good example of this form of agency was Luis Mendes de Olivença, whose betweenness centrality in this context was the third highest. This means that his absence would have deeply compromised several agents' connections to the Court. Throughout the 1580s, Mendes de Olivença acted for Francisco Rodrigues de Elvas (one of the best connected individuals in this sample)⁴² and Manuel Rodrigues Caldeira⁴³, while also being the regular financial correspondent of Gonçalo Rodrigues de Elvas, Gonçalo Rodrigues Angel and António Fernandes de Vila Nova⁴⁴.

Agency representatives in the Spanish dominions were frequently Portuguese, even if they were prohibited by law from living there⁴⁵. Before establishing his own trading house in Lisbon, António Nunes Caldeira was a representative in 1580 of Garcia Caldeira, Ramiro Álvares da Costa and Diogo Nunes Caldeira in New Spain. These merchants' trading strategy in the Spanish colonial territories involved sending goods and silver to Seville, where their representative, Simão de Tovar, forwarded them to Lisbon, despite the prohibition on exporting silver from Spain to Portugal⁴⁶. The Portuguese presence in overseas Castilian territories did not involve exclusively agency relationships as Portu-

³⁹ ADL, 2.º cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 5, livro 23, fl. 124v-126.

⁴⁰ LÓPEZ PEREZ & REY BUENO, 2006: 69-91.

⁴¹ According to the Simon Ruiz archive, 18 Portuguese merchants were based in Madrid between 1574 and 1580. RIBEIRO, 2011: 105.

⁴² ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 3, livro 13, 142-143.

⁴³ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 5, livro 22, fl. 81v-83v.

⁴⁴ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 4, livro 20, 34-34v.

⁴⁵ Portuguese agents were found in New Spain, Santo Domingo, Cartagena and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

⁴⁶ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 5, livro 23, 124v-126.

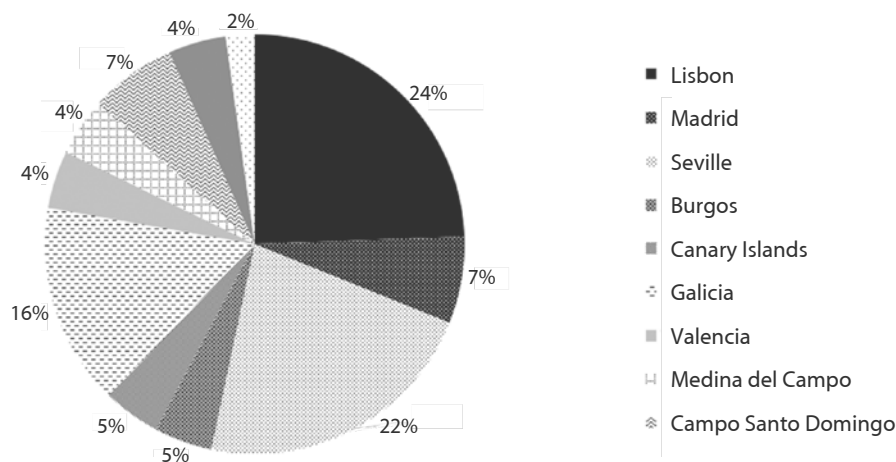
guese merchants based in different parts of the Atlantic territories sometimes also set up partnerships to maximize their profits from the transatlantic trade. In 1583, for example, Brás António, who lived in Las Palmas on Gran Canaria, had a partnership with two Lisbon merchants, Gabriel Mendes and Diogo Rodrigues Vila Lobos; these merchants had a factor in Pernambuco, Brazil, and received annual payments through Lisbon. This is just one individual story reiterating the importance of being able to control the Canaries' wine trade with Brazil, with investments in sugar being one of the most valuable products for the return journey⁴⁷.

The data obtained from the Lisbon notarial deeds point to a preference among Portuguese principals in Lisbon to choose other Portuguese as their correspondents or agents. At first glance, it appears that the Portuguese were able to conduct business in the Spanish Empire by themselves, while Spanish merchants wanting to become involved in Portuguese overseas trade were more dependent on their Portuguese agents. According to the traditional historiographical perspective, there were more Portuguese merchants with sufficient capital to invest simultaneously in different types of trade and business than there were Spanish merchants with similar characteristics. The same studies refer to the gradual decline in the fortunes of the most prominent Spanish merchants, with their ennoblement and indebtedness seen as possible explanations⁴⁸. However, Spanish sources similar to the Lisbon records and other types of documents have still to be cross-examined. Caution is therefore advised, and the possibility of Spanish agents accounting for some of the success of overseas private trading in the second half of the sixteenth century cannot be excluded.

Iberian partnerships existed and were convenient, both for the Portuguese and for the Spanish. While the Iberian Union legalized and informally promoted Portuguese traders' access to Spanish overseas dominions, these partnerships were a mechanism from the outset of the political union for easing Spanish traders' access to certain goods, including oriental linens and slaves, for which there was demand in America, as well as for facilitating their informal participation in these trading dynamics.

⁴⁷ ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 11, livro 53, 6v-8.

⁴⁸ Some authors use the label «cosmopolitans» or the religious «diaspora» term to underline the role of anti-Jewish persecutions in the success achieved by the Portuguese mercantile population in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. SWETSCHINSKI, 2000; STUDNICKI-GIZBERT, 2007; KAGAN & MORGAN, 2009: 7-17.

Figure 4: Geographical settlements of Castilian agents in the network, 1580-1590

Source: ADL, 2nd, 3rd and 15th Notaries of Lisbon and ADP, 4th Notary of Porto, 1580-1590.
Total number of individuals: 47. Unknown geographical references: 3.

There were two main hubs of Spanish agents directly linked to business in Portugal. These were in Lisbon and Seville, both of which were maritime centers for overseas expansion, logistics and trade. Which of these locations was chosen by an agent depended directly on the functions the agent performed. Most of these Spanish agents were based in Lisbon, which was the hub of Portuguese overseas trade and the head of the Portuguese Court, where monopoly contracts for spices and slaves were negotiated, as well as being the head of the Casa da Índia, where oriental luxuries were traded, and the main port of departure for ships sailing to the Atlantic, Africa, America and Asia. The famous brothers Pedro and Francisco de Maluenda, from Burgos, lived in Lisbon from at least 1581. It is not known exactly when they moved from Castile to Portugal, but even before 1580 they were two of the Habsburg Crown's most famous and wealthiest *asentistas*⁴⁹. In Lisbon, they were the preferred bankers of Castilian agents based in Medina del Campo or Madrid, including Lope de la Camara, Cosme Ruiz and Dom Alonso Martines de Lerma⁵⁰. In this sense, Lisbon was a preferential market for Castilian banking activity. However, despite all the activity in the port and the abundance of commercial investments and capital, Lisbon and Portugal never had an organized banking structure, with well-established markets offering advantageous exchange rates for trade with foreign places, whereas the significant volume of foreign trade in Portugal meant a need for effective financial markets to allow international transferences and credit. That was why,

⁴⁹ LAPEYRE, 1953.

⁵⁰ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 5, livro 22, 75v-77; ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 11, livro 52, 26v-28v.

even before 1580, Portuguese merchants used the Medina del Campo fairs for exchanging with Antwerp and Lyon⁵¹. By the late sixteenth century, however, these fairs became very delayed, while successive Spanish defaults led to the decline of some merchants and an inefficient exchange⁵². It is plausible, therefore, that some merchants, including the Maluenda brothers, chose to establish new exchange houses in Lisbon, where the solvency of individual agents was not a problem.

Seville, however, was the gateway for American trade since even foreign ships on these navigation routes were forced to depart from the port of Guadalquivir or its satellites (Cadiz and San Lucar de Barrameda), at least if they were licensed to do so. According to the Lisbon documents, banking was also a main activity of the Spanish merchants listed as being based in Seville and linked to Portuguese foreign trade. There is some empirical evidence to corroborate the importance of the financial links between Lisbon and Seville: in 1583, for example, Rodrigo Fernandez issued bills of exchange to Brás Rodrigues and Gabriel Mendes in Seville for payment in Lisbon by the Portuguese António Rodrigues de Moraes. Brás Rodrigues was based in the town of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands and handled wine cargoes destined for Pernambuco, while Gabriel Mendes was his representative in Lisbon⁵³. Another example was the private bank owned by the Castilian Miguel Lambias and the Portuguese Diogo de Albuquerque in Seville. In 1584, a Spanish agent in Santo Domingo, Juan Perez, wanted to invest in ginger imports to the Spanish Indies. To do so, he appointed a Portuguese merchant from Lisbon as his representative to buy the ginger in Lisbon (no further details of the contract are provided in the sources). In the same year, Perez sold 114.5 quintais of ginger (around 8.7 tons) to the Spanish merchant Diego de Medrano in Santo Domingo; the cargo was sent to Seville and then shipped to New Spain. In July 1586, payment for the first half of the cargo, totaling three thousand *reales*, was made by Medrano's Seville-based correspondent, Diego Ortiz, to Manuel Gomes' representative, Lancerote de Serra. The contract stated that the other half of the 160,500 maravedís should be paid at the end of the same year by means of a bank deposit in Seville held by Lambias and Albuquerque⁵⁴. Banks were essential for deposits of money resulting from trading with the Spanish Indies, either when traders were waiting for exchanges with Portugal or for further reinvestment of profits in other endeavors.

Other trading products, such as sugar and slaves, also resulted in Iberian partnerships being set up to handle imports to the Spanish Indies. In 1590, three Castilian merchants – Miguel Martinez de Jaurigui, Francisco Jaurigui and Lopo de Tapia – appointed João Galego Gil as their representative in Lisbon. He in turn acted as their front man in freight-

⁵¹ VILLANUEVA, 2001: 73-198.

⁵² AL-HUSSEIN, 1986: 221-266.

⁵³ ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 11, livro 53, 14v-15v.

⁵⁴ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 3, livro 16, 27-28v.

ing a ship to sail from Lisbon to Guinea to buy slaves and from there to Santo Domingo and the port of San Juan de Ulloa in New Spain⁵⁵.

Some Portuguese merchants, however, chose to place their Castilian representatives in Seville as these agents really understood the dynamics of this market and dominated the logistics and commercial structure of American shipments⁵⁶. Fernão d'Aires, for example, a Portuguese merchant in Lisbon, used Miguel Angel Landies as his representative in Seville from 1579 until at least 1583⁵⁷.

The connections between Madrid, Medina, Burgos and Lisbon also ensured a direct link with the commercial, financial and insurance markets. Madrid was particularly important for the Portuguese merchants since they needed to deposit their capital there at the service of the Crown and, once they had been paid, to transfer money back to Lisbon. That function was performed by Lope de la Camara (the director of Ruiz's branch in Madrid) and Juan Ortega de la Torre.

A different axis of Iberian trading activity ran through Galicia and various Portuguese ports. This was an ancestral connection and a regularly used route, especially for trade involving shipping as a central activity. The omnipresent product in this circuit was timber. In 1586, João de Pinhão negotiated a timber supply contract with the Portuguese merchant Vasco Fernandes do Porto⁵⁸. Although the records show that André Lopes and Baltazar Solhoso discussed their accounting of wood imports to Lisbon in 1588⁵⁹, these agents' presence in transactions was quite erratic, pointing to the wide range of timber importers and timber resellers in Portugal. It was a business in which various small Portuguese retailers sought to earn profits and indirectly obtain part of the revenues from the expansion process⁶⁰.

Spanish agents were also particularly important as agents of Portuguese merchants in the Canary Islands and Santo Domingo. Although the Portuguese commonly chose other Portuguese as their agents in the Spanish Indies (Figure 3), this was not always the best solution. Some Spanish agents acted as front men for Lisbon merchants in Spanish territories, such as on the island of Las Palmas, where in 1586 Tomás de Vendoval served as the commercial agent of Simão Lopes de Lima and Ciprião Rodrigues, with responsibility for arranging shipments of wine from Las Palmas to the Americas on their behalf⁶¹. In 1586, Francisco Lopez de Almansa was João Gomes' agent for dispatching merchandize in Santo

⁵⁵ ADL, 3.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 1, livro 2, 20v-21v.

⁵⁶ This was a common principle applied when choosing agents, as Trivellato has shown for the Hindu agents of Portuguese merchants in Goa (TRIVELLATO, 2009) or Leonor Freire Costa, *et al.* for Brazilian gold exploitation in the eighteenth century (COSTA *et al.*, 2010)

⁵⁷ ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 11, livro 53, 128-129.

⁵⁸ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 3, livro 17, 10-12.

⁵⁹ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 4, livro 19, 72-73v.

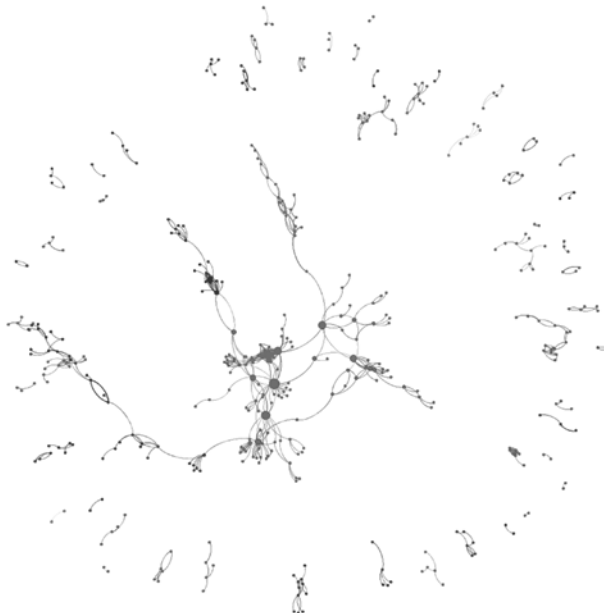
⁶⁰ PRIEGUE, 1988; COSTA, 2007.

⁶¹ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 3, livro 17, 91-93v.

Domingo⁶². Exceptionally, Castilians were sometimes also employed as agents for Portuguese traders in Pernambuco, Brazil, the hub of the sugar export trade, even though this was not officially allowed. Gaspar Rodriguez de Cartagena and Gaspar Fernandez de Cartagena, for example, acted as representatives of Lisbon merchants for shipments of boxes of sugar to Portugal⁶³. Although Portuguese and Castilian merchants often saw each other as rivals, particularly in this context of international trade, it was probably individual decision-making on the potential profitability of cooperating with Portuguese merchants that prompted various Castilian merchants to accept the agency of Portuguese trade, despite its being illegal. Resistance to the Portuguese presence in exclusively Spanish economic regions came largely from those who would not directly benefit from it, with self-interest and competition feeding this antagonism.

The Mediterranean routes do not seem to have been particularly interesting for merchants settled in Lisbon since Castilian agents from Cordoba or Valencia appear there only intermittently, directly interacting with other Spanish agents in Portugal and trading with a small cluster of textile producers and dyers in southern Spain in the late sixteenth century. In 1583, for example, Francisco Gomes Português bought twenty lengths of fabric that he had arranged to be dyed black for Diego Perez of Cordoba⁶⁴.

Figure 5: Community partition of Portuguese overseas trade, 1580-1590



⁶² ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 3, livro 14, 92v-93v.

⁶³ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 4, livro 19, 7v-8.

⁶⁴ ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 13, livro 63, 10v-12.

Spanish merchants interacted sparsely in the network, being represented in only nineteen of the sixty-five communities in the modularity partition of the network (i.e. the division of the network into subgroups in which the individuals are more connected with each other than with other members of the global network). None of these subgroups of individuals comprised exclusively Spanish agents; in other words, the subgroups did not operate as a guild, based on a definition of a merchant nation, but instead decided individually whom they wished to interact with in action that was self-organized rather than being driven by a central institution or political authority. Castilian agents comprised thirteen of the nineteen members of this less integrative community. However even in this group of merchants, where we can observe more endogamic behavior, contacts with merchants of other geographical origins were intense. The group comprised merchants, such as Ventura de Frias, Juan de Ibarra, Juan Ortega de la Torre, Inigo de Salazar, and Pedro and Francisco de Maluenda, whose primary activity was providing trade finance. Flemish agents such as Julian de la Corte, who was involved in the slave trade, and the Luso-Castilian Lancerote de Serra and the Portuguese Francisco Rodriguez de Serra were perfectly integrated in the trading communities, interacting (almost exclusively) with Portuguese agents, but also with Flemish merchants. In 1588, they bought slave licenses from Manuel Fernandes Correia and António Correia de Gusmão to supply the Spanish Indies. After being bought in Guinea, the slaves were taken to Cartagena de las Indias by these slave traders, who acted as front men for their Flemish and Spanish counterparts⁶⁵.

The Castilian agents with better connections, including Lancerote de Serra, who was part of a broader cluster, engaged directly with important members of the network in order to sustain their position as interlocutors and intermediates between the Spanish and Portuguese agents. This cluster tied together the main hubs of Portuguese foreign trade, represented by Manuel Gomes, Duarte Mendes and Francisco Rodrigues de Elvas. Only six of the clusters in which Spanish agents were involved resulted from unique notarial contracts; these can thus be seen as less representative of and disconnected from the reality of the Spanish agents, most of whom were connected to active communities of merchants and who had individualized motivations for their activities in Portugal. If they themselves were not the main characters in Portuguese foreign business affairs, they certainly tried to interact with such people. This conscious behavior clearly supports the theoretical insights of the «preferential attachment» mechanism in network formation, whereby the more connected a node is, the more likely it is to receive new links⁶⁶.

Portuguese merchants in Portugal described the process of Iberian Union in 1580 with a certain indifference and skepticism in their letters. They feared a quick downturn of trade at seaports and in Portuguese markets, Lisbon in particular. In June of that year,

⁶⁵ ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 4, livro 20, 135v-137v. ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 4, livro 20, 99-99v.

⁶⁶ BARABÁSI & ALBERT, 1999: 509-512.

Jerónimo Duarte stated that, with the present state of conflict between Portugal and Castile, there was no appetite for good business in Portugal as everything was subject to accidents⁶⁷. In November, the same agent, settled in Alenquer (north-east of Lisbon), was concerned about the possibility of his property being looted by the authorities in Lisbon. He claimed that there was nothing for him to write about because there were so few business affairs⁶⁸. In September, meanwhile, Rodrigo Lopes and Lopo Rodrigues de Évora described themselves as living in difficult and dangerous times. Everything in Portugal was closed. They believed, however, that the victory of the Duke of Alba (the commander of Philip II's army) would reduce the danger and were hoping that the conflict would end as soon as possible so that they could return to Lisbon and have the opportunity to re-establish business and proper communications⁶⁹.

In theory, the Kingdom of Portugal retained its economic independence in 1580 and maintained a separate administration of its overseas territories. In practice, however, complementary Iberian trading operations were already in place before 1580, while Spanish and Portuguese merchants soon tried to articulate the potential for profits from trade with both imperial spaces.

The preliminary results of the analysis of the Portuguese notarial records indicate, albeit with the limitations of the source representativity, that the Habsburgs' political annexation of the Portuguese Crown did not actually result in much change for Portuguese foreign trade associations, at least not in the significant case of Simon Ruiz, as Portuguese and Castilian merchants were already engaged in joint ventures in the spice trade, European wheat imports, Portuguese salt exports and financial investments before 1580.

Portuguese notarial records also provide evidence of similar cooperative behavior between Portuguese and Castilian merchants, who frequently set up partnerships to maximize the opportunities created by transatlantic trade, especially concerning the supply of various commodities to the Spanish Indies. Although the notarial records do not include information on informal financial partnerships set up to invest in Castilian public debt, we know that such partnerships existed throughout the period. The Simon Ruiz archive, for example, contains examples of Portuguese investments in *asientos* during the 1580s and 1590s, now held by the Ximenes family⁷⁰. However, these data also confirm Portuguese merchants' dependence on the Castilian financial circuit, which created business opportunities for Castilian merchants such as the Maluenda brothers. The main difference between the Simon Ruiz case study and the current research is that the Portuguese notarial records do not contain details of any Iberian partnerships in Portugal's trade with the East. There are two possible explanations for this: firstly, Simon Ruiz's partnership with Portuguese

⁶⁷ AHPV, ASR, Correspondence, box 62, letter 132.

⁶⁸ AHPV, ASR, Correspondence, box 62, letter 133.

⁶⁹ AHPV, ASR, Correspondence, box 62, letter 138.

⁷⁰ SILVA, 1956.

merchants investing in Eastern cargoes could have been an exception, while, secondly, such partnerships may have existed without appearing in these public records, given that the number of notarial contracts referring to Portuguese trade with India and Far East trade is remarkably low.

Although the Portuguese notarial records present Castilians as the most numerous foreign group operating in Portugal, Portuguese agents themselves had an extensive and well-articulated presence in their country's foreign trade affairs, with the most important Portuguese agents being active in the Atlantic trade. Although the records contain all the remaining deeds, these represent only a small part of Portugal's total overseas trade. Nevertheless they show that although Castilian merchants lacked the substantial amounts of capital needed for major investments in transoceanic trade, they had the financial expertise that was lacking in the Portuguese credit market. Spanish merchants operated independently of a national guild, in contrast to how they had operated in Flanders, and acted as «free-riders», where the extent to which they associated with other individuals depended on their own interests and motivations.

The political union seems not to have altered Iberian trading partnerships much, at least not initially. Portuguese and Spanish continued to work together, both aiming to profit from the imperial trading routes and from fighting their countries' monopolies by establishing informal partnerships – sometimes hidden from the authorities – in order to obtain trading licenses. This seems to indicate a certain continuous early-modern paradigm, as also demonstrated by Xabier Lamikiz for the eighteenth century, when Spaniards were crucial for the operations of foreign – especially English – merchants in trade with the Spanish Indies⁷¹. However, this sample also suggests that Castilian merchants may also have benefited from the Portuguese monopolies, albeit less frequently, by using Portuguese front men to collect revenues from slave and sugar trading. This aspect has been overlooked in most of the literature to date on Iberian partnerships.

This case study reflects 1) how a political event can alter global trade associations, 2) how business networks frequently by-passed segmented political hierarchies to become both transnational and transimperial, and 3) the relevance of the network structure model and network functioning mechanism as a form of flexibility and adaptability of early-modern business networks. However, more in-depth work has still to be done, including an analysis of the Spanish notarial data, to evaluate the degree of interactions and inter- or independence of Portuguese and Spanish trading activities. Secondly, the notarial records are not fully representative of all trading affairs since, as the scarce remaining business correspondence reveals, most of these relationships were informal.

⁷¹ LAMIKIZ, 2010.

SOURCES

Patente das Mercês, Graças e Privilégios que El Rey D. Philipe Nosso Senhor faz Mercê a estes Reinos, 1582. BN, Rs 68 P.

- ADL, 15.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, caixa 11, livro 52, 26v-28v.
ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 19, 98v-100.
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ADL, 2.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, ofício A, caixa 3, livro 16, 27-28v.
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ANGOLAN SLAVE TRADE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. THE ATLANTIC NETWORKS OF RODRIGO DA COSTA DE ALMEIDA

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Since the earliest days of the overseas Atlantic expansion the Portuguese Crown had sought to have exclusive control over the sources and goods of the new territories discovered, and that remained its aim during pre-colonial times. In the case of Africa in the early fifteenth century, the Crown (and his own family) granted Prince Henry the Navigator various commercial monopolies on certain products in Portugal itself, as well as on trade in West Africa and the Atlantic islands¹. After Henry's death, and under John II, the monopoly on West African trade was restructured and restored to the Crown, specifically for the most profitable products of gold and slaves². In West Central Africa, Paulo Dias de Novais was appointed the first captain and governor of Angola and given the task of exploring the coast and the hinterland. After his death, the Crown took direct control of this territory and appointed a series of temporary governors and captains to rule the region and its peoples, as well as to secure the Crown's monopoly³.

As Cátia Antunes has shown, royal monopolies were founded in personal bonds to the king in a system of reward for services and favors provided by individuals to the Crown. In granting these men positions overseas, the Crown simultaneously appointed the representatives of its intentions and rights in those territories. This was a way of sharing the costs

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¹ West Africa corresponds to the area covered by today's Senegal and Nigeria.

² BOXER, 1969: 309.

³ West Central Africa corresponds to the area covered by modern Gabon, Congo and Angola. BIRMINGHAM, 1965: 9-20.

so as to be able to focus on gaining revenues. In order to maximize the latter, the Crown pushed colonies of settlement to exercise fiercer territorial control, invested in colonial governments and granted monopolies on trade so as to secure administrative and economic leadership⁴. Supporting the Church and missionary work were also part of this monopoly endeavor, the aim of which was to ensure the submission and integration of Africans into the Portuguese colonial way of thought.

Although this, of course, was the purpose and principal idea of the Portuguese Crown, officials sent to Angola and supposed to be the personification of the king's interests were in reality far keener on satisfying their own ambitions than on complying with royal rules. Indeed, in order to better secure these ambitions, officials bonded together to create local networks, specifically relating to the slave trade and using the profits from this trade to cover the risk taken in accepting the overseas tasks⁵. The high mortality rate among officials was well-known and an important reason for seeking to avoid being sent to Angola since every letter from the authorities in S. Paulo de Luanda demanded more soldiers to replace those who had died.

These local networks were generally put in place by people who were social outsiders, such as Romani, New Christians or exiled criminals (*degredados*). However, they were also complemented with Crown agents. Whatever their background, all these agents could be or become what Alencastro called «colonial men», meaning people serving the Crown at various places overseas, but all investing in a specific place with the aim of gaining wealth and prestige and, ultimately, social promotion for themselves⁶. Although these networks were local and specific to places such as Angola, they were also connected to networks in various parts of Brazil (including Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco) and even within West Central Africa (Loango).

When considering these chains of economic interest, scholars have largely neglected the important role played by social outsiders as the organizers and agents of trade networks in places such as Angola and have instead focused on those appointed by the Crown to run these overseas territories. Scholars including Nuno Monteiro, Fernanda Bicalho and Fátima Gouvêa have emphasized the leadership by the nobles appointed as governors of Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and Angola, and the connections between these noblemen within networks apparently under their control, while other academics, such as João Fragoso and Selma Pantoja, have concentrated on the internal networks put in place in Angola and Brazil by local individuals, specifically those regarded as the local nobility (*nobreza da terra*), but without seeking to connect these networks beyond their coastal boundaries⁷.

⁴ ANTUNES, 2012: 173-185.

⁵ GUARDA, 2013.

⁶ ALENCASTRO, 2000: 103-104.

⁷ FRAGOSO *et al.*, 2010; MONTEIRO *et al.*, 2005; FRAGOSO & GOUVÊA, 2010; PANTOJA, 2010: 237-242.

What is missing is a study linking these two perspectives. Indeed, the «government networks», as referred to by Gouvêa, need to be contextualized as it is otherwise hard to understand how a governor recently arrived in Angola was able immediately to develop his links to Brazil «out of the blue». Moreover, it is hardly conceivable that the local nobility in a place such as Luanda would remain outside the Atlantic profits chain when even African kingdoms such as Matamba and Cassange were keen to participate⁸. We need, therefore, to follow David Hancock and to explore the marginal and opportunistic men who developed those webs at a regional level and then extended them across the Atlantic. This aspect has still to be researched for Portugal, Brazil and Angola, and it is this gap that is addressed in this article. The key focus here is on analyzing the regional networks put in place by men on the spot, such as Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida, and on understanding the importance of such middlemen in linking the Atlantic through a series of networks covering the African slave trade and eluding the Crown's monopoly. I will start by introducing the slave trading networks in the Angolan hinterland and the networks of power surrounding Governor Bernardino de Távora de Sousa Tavares in Luanda (namely his connection with Almeida), while also examining the conflict that emerged from the rivalry between the governor's network and that of his opponents (the royal purveyor, the captain of the Cavalry and the secretary of Angola). Lastly I will demonstrate how and why Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida built connections across the Atlantic, and the social and economic impact that this had on him and his family.

Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida was the valet of Governor Bernardino de Távora de Sousa Tavares and in charge of an Angolan group responsible for securing the governor's interests in acquiring slaves from the hinterland and keeping his rivals in Luanda out of this trade. He was also a useful middleman in the slave trade between Angola and Bahia, thus creating a link between the governor and the latter's son, Alexandre de Sousa Freire, who led a garrison of soldiers in Bahia. This chapter sees social outsiders, for the first time, as the main figures on the stage of the Atlantic slave trade, and thus as playing a key role in these activities. Historiography has traditionally attributed this role to characters of social importance, whereas the latter profited from these networks, but did not actually put them in place. This new scope is made possible by a deeper analysis of the organization of African slave trade and the linkages identified, also for the first time, between local commercial networks and the Atlantic.

Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida's roots remain obscure. His grandson, who inherited his name, inquired into his family background when applying for the habit of the Order of Christ, but sought in vain for confirmation of his grandfather's purity of blood. Despite efforts undertaken in Lisbon, Faro, Luanda and Bahia to find out when Rodrigo was born and who his parents were, his origins remain unclear. A baptism register held at the church

⁸ BIRMINGHAM, 1965: 41.

of Faro and found by the Holy Office solicitor in 1754 reported that «On the thirtieth of August of 1654, I baptized Rodrigo, son of Domingos de Almeida and of his wife Anna Maria, stepfather Francisco Fugaça de Mello, present the midwife Graça Luis». The baptism registration was signed by a priest and, one hundred years later, was accepted as genuine by the Holy Office, even though it was impossible to find anyone to properly corroborate this information⁹.

The fact that nobody knew who Rodrigo's parents were or could certify to the purity of his blood shows that his family could not have held a prominent position in society; this would have been the case if they had had noble blood or commercial wealth as this would have given them high social status and they would therefore have been well-known¹⁰. Consequently, we can assume that Rodrigo was not wealthy when he started his career in the Atlantic in July 1668, even though he had sufficient money to fund the costs of being a soldier in Bahia. He stayed there for fourteen months, where he loyally served Governor Alexandre de Souza Freire and, by the time he returned to Lisbon at the end of his posting, had been promoted to the rank of captain¹¹.

Here I open a parenthesis to emphasize that, despite some similarities to the cases presented in the *Optima Pars* project, Rodrigo's trajectory is a singular case. Contrary to what Flory and Smith, Schwartz, Kennedy and other authors state about the careers of local nobility for their case studies in that project¹², Rodrigo is unlikely to have been a merchant at the start of his career. He became part of Angola's militia and put a personal effort into fulfilling, and indeed going beyond, his obligations, as I will demonstrate. In doing so, he pleased and gained the trust of the governors. As a result, he was appointed to higher positions, thus integrating into the local nobility, and received the habit of the Order of Christ from the king in confirmation of his noble status. Nonetheless, I have not found any sources reporting his activities as a merchant before that time, even though his frequent voyages and the references to his ships, slaves, and horses going from Brazil to Angola mean this is certainly conceivable. In contrast to the above authors' case studies, Rodrigo did not develop any matrimonial alliances with people in the government of Angola or any port city in Brazil¹³. The same does not apply, however, to other institutions as the two daughters of his marriage to D. Ana Duque married a colonel and a Bachelor, thus confirming one of the patterns revealed by the authors of *Optima Pars*. With regard to

⁹ ANTT, TSO, Habilitações, Rodrigo, mç. 4, doc. 62.

¹⁰ Rodrigo was said to be the son of Domingos de Almeida, from Grandola, and of his wife D. Ana Maria de Lima, from S. Miguel de Alfama, in Lisbon. He was reported to be the grandson of Ruy Dias Santos and of Beatriz Vaz, both from Grandola, and of Amador Rodolfo and Isabel de Araújo, both from Lisbon. Although the names of his parents were corroborated by a note in the baptism register, meaning that they were his real parents, it is strange that nobody in any of the places Rodrigo lived in had ever met them. ANTT, TSO, Habilitações, Rodrigo, mç. 4, doc. 62.

¹¹ ANTT, RGM, D. Pedro II, Book 11, fl.383.

¹² BICALHO, 2005: 83-87.

¹³ BICALHO, 2005: 86.

this project, Maria de Fátima Gouvêa nevertheless stressed the importance of the «imperial connections» built by imperial elites (i.e. bonds between governors at different points of the South Atlantic), an argument shared by Maria Fernanda Bicalho and João Fragoso¹⁴. This is the key differentiating factor between the careers presented in the above project and the career of Rodrigo, with the latter seeming to have benefited from governors' protection in return for serving them to the best of his ability rather than benefiting from any links they may have had between Africa and South America. By then, there were ships, men, and horses, circulating around the Atlantic, and these are reported as being his. It was thus Rodrigo's wealth that enabled successive governors to establish their trading links, and not the other way around, as argued by the above authors. Over time, Rodrigo increased his revenues and became a wealthy merchant, by which time many governors had benefited from the trade networks that he had built up. The idea of trade networks put in place by governors and wealthy merchants bonded by marital alliances consequently does not fit with Rodrigo's trajectory.

In 1676 Rodrigo left Lisbon to join the new governor of Angola, Aires de Saldanha e Meneses, and to serve him in that colony as lieutenant of the Cavalry. This was still part of his first period in the Atlantic. He was active in the South Atlantic until 1687, with activities extending from the West Central African coast to the shores of Brazil. Rodrigo's endeavor was characterized by his pleasing, by all means, the governors on both sides of the Atlantic. However, his success started before he reached Angola, where the new governor appointed him captain of the cavalry, a position he took very much to heart. It is unclear when exactly Rodrigo started to have some money of his own, although the period he spent in Bahia may have proved profitable and enabled him to purchase his own lands and slaves in Angola. Whether those possessions were bought or received as payment for services performed is unknown, although they probably resulted from his involvement in the local slave trade, where after receiving some slaves from *sobas* he was able to accumulate a sum of money that was convertible into land that he could put to good use¹⁵. One of the things he was noted for during his time as a lieutenant and captain was the use of his personal wealth to take care of the horses, which were fed with grass from Rodrigo's lands¹⁶. He must also have had a certain degree of mobility since he was soon able to go to Maranhão, from where, with the governor's agreement, he was able to reach Pernambuco. It was during his stay in Pernambuco that war broke out in Angola and the governor of this captaincy dispatched him to Angola as a captain in charge of twelve soldiers. After this mission had been completed, Rodrigo undertook a further trip to Angola and, once again with the Bahia authorities' permission, took three exiled men with him.

¹⁴ BICALHO, 2005: 87-90.

¹⁵ As Mariana Candido shows, anyone could have slaves simply by using violence against the *sobas* to extract payment of tributes and presents in the form of captives. CANDIDO, 2013: 185-188.

¹⁶ ANTT, RGM, D. Pedro II, Book 11, fl.383.

Between 1681 and 1687, therefore, he regularly crossed the Atlantic, taking soldiers from Brazil to Angola to assist successive governors in times of war. During this period his activities were not funded by royal revenues and were conducted entirely at his own expense. As surprising as this situation might be for a poor young man who had only recently started his career overseas, the sources merely certify that this was the case without, however, specifying the actual costs involved. It is left entirely up to us to imagine how this could have been possible, and this leads us to suppose that he already had businesses in Pernambuco, probably involving the Governor of Bahia and related to the slave trade. This is because the sources reveal that he was involved in the Angolan slave trade a few years later and also during the governorship in Bahia of Alexandre de Souza Freire's brother, who seemed to be really pleased with Rodrigo. Furthermore, Rodrigo's will disclosed that he had businesses in Pernambuco and other parts of Brazil, and these could have been started at that time¹⁷. As a result of this heavy personal involvement in the South Atlantic crossings, along with his being appointed to represent the Senate of Luanda, a *pro bono* appointment made in Lisbon, the Crown decided to grant him the sum of 200 réis and membership of the Order of Santiago¹⁸. These rewards were the corollary for his dedication to the tasks for which he had been appointed and were awarded when Rodrigo was still establishing himself in the Portuguese Empire.

After these awards were bestowed upon him by the Crown, the first mentions of Rodrigo's personal wealth start appearing in the sources, thus reflecting the link between the two Atlantic shores. Instead, however, of relying on the grant of 200 réis, Rodrigo started working even harder by serving the governor as captain-major in the province of Libolo, lieutenant in the artillery, and director of the Holy House of Mercy of Luanda. In each of these positions, Rodrigo continued to employ his own ships to transport guns to the forts in Angola, as well as soldiers from Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro and Bahia¹⁹. At the same time, he offered three of the four horses he had bought in Pernambuco to the Angolan cavalry, possibly in order to be regarded as a benefactor not only for his own office, but also for the Kingdom of Angola itself and the interests of the King of Portugal. He also employed his own slaves to help Gonçalo de Menezes in the war against the African chief Mbwiła, and later on to assist Henrique Jacques de Magalhães. None of these activities produced income and all of them were conducted at his own expense, while he also donated 4000

¹⁷ AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, D. 2189.

¹⁸ A title linked to the Order of Santiago, one of the three created during the time of the Iberian *Reconquista*, the other two being the Order of Avis and the Order of Christ. The end of the *Reconquista* and the absorption of the orders by the Crown progressively made these orders and their knights symbols of prestige, granted by the Crown as payment for services performed. Traditionally connected to knights, and thus the nobility, being appointed a knight in one of these orders represented a rise in social status and also a sum of money. The most important of these three orders in terms of the status of nobility was the Order of Christ (OLIVAL, 1997: 97-108).

¹⁹ These ships appear to have been his, even if the sources do not reveal where or how he obtained them. Nonetheless, the witnesses interviewed by the Inquisition said he owned many ships, while another document indicates that the journeys between Angola and Brazil were made in Rodrigo's own vessels. ANTT, RGM, D. Pedro II, Book 11, fl.383; AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, D. 2189.

cruzados for the Holy House of Mercy of Luanda and up to 12000 cruzados to restore the institution's hospital. These were yet more examples of the great generosity and care for the colony that Rodrigo displayed in seeking to protect the institutions established there by the Crown, a noble gesture by someone who, as I will shortly demonstrate, dreamed of becoming a nobleman.

Rodrigo's donations may seem large, but by the late 1680s he had become a very wealthy and powerful man, owning ships, slaves and lands on both sides of the Atlantic. Indeed, the existence of his ships can only be explained if we consider them to have been needed for his personal businesses. Having said this, we can nevertheless regard Rodrigo as having been a poor young man who spent more than a decade traveling back and forth between Angola and Pernambuco, Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. On both sides of the Atlantic he served governors who did their utmost to grant him royal favors because they had benefited from the use of men, slaves, horses, ships and money from Rodrigo and were grateful for all this help. The governors had probably also benefited from his contacts in each of the above places and the connections between them with regard to the slave trade, given that they seemed to support his voyages to Brazil. This was a time when demand for slaves in the Americas was growing rapidly, while we have also already seen how easy it was to own slaves in Angola. Moreover, Rodrigo was ideally placed to engage in the slave trade, as his frequent voyages and his will indicate that he had contacts in each of the places he traveled to. The revenues from this trade would have created a cycle of increasing personal wealth, whereby the more money he made from the slave trade through the networks he had established, the more money he could spend on working for the king and in reaping the expected benefits. And indeed, the generosity revealed by Rodrigo, in every sense comparable to the behavior expected of a nobleman, was recognized in 1698 when the Crown awarded him membership of the Order of Christ, the only order conferring nobility on its members, along with the corresponding allowance (*tença*)²⁰.

The end of the seventeenth century brought with it evidence of Rodrigo's real aims and ambitions. After being appointed a knight of the Order of Christ, Rodrigo tried to acquire the concession on the property of the Purveyor's Office of the Royal Treasury (*Provedor da Fazenda Real*) from the Crown for seven thousand cruzados. In order to convince the king of his merits, Rodrigo explained how he had several times funded supplies to the governors in Angola and Brazil from his own income, both in times of war and peace. At the same time, he demonstrated his local influence by emphasizing that when Henrique Jacques de Magalhães tried to impose the copper coin in Angola, Rodrigo and his friends and relatives were the only people who had been able to put an end to the local rebellion triggered by the coins. Moreover, his prominence was such that Magalhães had proposed him for the requested office because he recognized him as the best person for the designated task. It

²⁰ ANTT, RGM, D. Pedro II, Book 11, fl. 383.

was only natural, therefore, that he sought to acquire the property of the Purveyor's Office so as to continue the good work done and with the hope of transferring its benefits to his heirs²¹. However, the Overseas Council was of the opinion that Rodrigo should not obtain that office as, despite his deserving it on the grounds of his previous work, there were no guarantees about the skills and honesty of his sons and grandsons²². Rodrigo nevertheless managed in December 1701 to purchase the office of clerk (*escrivão*) of the Royal Treasury of Angola, thus reflecting the entrepreneurship that he demonstrated during Bernardino de Távora's governorship in Angola and throughout the rest of his life.

Bernardino de Távora was already elderly when he arrived as governor in Angola in December 1701. Based on their existing friendship and despite ruling for just one year, Bernardino succeeded in increasing Rodrigo's local influence and power by making him his valet, while also improving Rodrigo's position in Brazil. Although it is impossible to know exactly when the friendship between Rodrigo and Bernardino began, their mutual enemy, Gaspar da Silva Reis, stated that by the time Távora's predecessor was coming to the end of his term in office, Rodrigo was announcing to anyone who wanted to hear that the new ruler was his friend²³. In addition, Rodrigo's first job in the Atlantic had been in Bahia at the service of Bernardino de Távora's brother, the governor Alexandre de Sousa Freire, and he returned to Bahia several times during 1702. By then, however, the person he was in contact with in Bahia was the other Alexandre de Sousa Freire, the nephew of the Bahia governor and son of Bernardino de Távora.

Given that Rodrigo was linked to that family from early on in his career until his death, the assumption made by Silva Reis must have been accurate. Indeed, the link between the two families continued over the generations since the sugar mills and the office of Purveyor of the Customs House of Bahia (*Provedor da Alfândega da Bahia*), both of which were acquired from Sousa Freire, were bequeathed to Rodrigo's eldest son Domingos.

The year 1702 was a remarkable year for Rodrigo. About a month after taking charge as Governor of Angola, Bernardino de Távora appointed Manuel Monteiro da Rocha, the godfather of one of Rodrigo's sons, as Prosecutor of the Royal Treasury²⁴, the institution at which Rodrigo was a clerk. This reflected Bernardino's concern to have Rodrigo's people within that body in order effectively to control it. I specifically refer to Bernardino's con-

²¹ AHU, Angola, Cx. 16, D. 1812.

²² AHU, Angola, Cx. 16, D. 1812.

²³ AHU, Angola, Cx. 19, D. 1978.

²⁴ The Council of Trent reinforced the importance of baptism within the spirit of the Counter-Reformation. In this context, an individual was incorporated into the Church through the spiritual tutors, with baptism representing the spiritual birth. As such, links of solidarity resulted from the relationship of godparents to godchildren. The godparents were integrated within the family and also considered to be relatives, with marriages between such parties being regarded as incestuous and forbidden by the Church. Such a relationship thus spread to the social life of these individuals, reinforcing social relations previously existent or creating others. It could also link people belonging to different social levels, establishing between them vertical relations of power. This privileged relationship, so typical in the Catholic estates, was also expressed through economic cooperation in the form of exchanges of goods and services and through political loyalty in the form of alliances or domination. NACIF, 2013.

cern and not Rodrigo's as although this governor has been portrayed as a weak administrator and a puppet in the hands of his friends, this depiction would seem to be far from accurate. It is simply not conceivable that a seventy-two-year-old man would have gone to Angola just to attend to the wishes of his friends, while risking his own life in the tropics²⁵. Only an ambitious and self-confident person would accept that responsibility and risk in return for the opportunity to increase his own wealth, while also maintaining his social position (the marriage of his eldest son meant he had become linked to the House of the Counts of Aveiras)²⁶. Although it was obviously important to have local contacts upon arrival, that need was safeguarded by the presence of Rodrigo and his social connections, as will now be explained.

By then, Rodrigo was an influential man in Angola, while having friends and relatives working with him meant he was better able to respond to the needs and wishes of the governors. By the time of Magalhães' policy on copper coins, Rodrigo had been able to restore social peace, while his position as head of the Holy House of Mercy of Luanda and membership of that institution's brotherhood enabled him to control elections for the Senate of Luanda, thus ensuring that the new judges were under his command. Meanwhile his son Domingos was captain of infantry, thus controlling the local militia. Therefore, almost every public institution that was part of daily life in Luanda was under Rodrigo's influence. This included religious life, where not only was he a brother of Luanda's Holy House of Mercy, but he also enjoyed good relations with the Jesuits through their connections with Bernardino de Távora²⁷.

Bernardino was able to take advantage of Rodrigo's importance in Luanda and the networks the latter established. In this way, he was able to benefit from his time as administrator of the colony by becoming actively involved in the local slave trade, with the result that he appeared to be responsible for disrupting the slave trade and for organizing the networks that enabled that trade. Among his many roles, the governor was expected to guarantee procedural order in relations with the populations of the hinterland, to mediate in relationships with various institutions in Luanda and to oversee the port activities regarding exports of slaves to America and Europe. Hence his power was founded on his network relationships with the hinterlands, the town's institutions and the port administration. And in all these relationships he was reliant on his friendship with Rodrigo da Costa de

²⁵ GUARDA, 2013: 65-66.

²⁶ There is a disparity between the sources regarding his age. According to the witnesses interviewed by the Inquisition when he applied for the habit of the Order of Christ, he was 72 years old. However, according to the Royal Purveyor, Gaspar da Silva Reis, he was 85, with that age being the reason for the measures taken and felt by Reis to be unreasonable. Even if his exact birth date is uncertain, one always has to consider the possibility that Bernardino's enemies wished to discredit him. It would also seem highly unlikely that a person aged 85 would be considered eligible to be nominated by the king and to travel to Angola and continue living there for three years. Given that the information produced by the inquiries it seems more reasonable, to consider that he was born c. 1629. AHU, Angola, Cx.17, D. 1930; A.N.T.T., TSO, CG, Habilitações, Bernardino, mc.1, doc.3.

²⁷ GUARDA, 2013: 51-52.

Almeida, the *de facto* manager of the local slave trade operations. It was Rodrigo's men who were responsible for disrupting slave markets (*pumbos*) in the hinterland²⁸. Most of these men were social outcasts (Romani, New Christians or *degradados*) who had enlisted in the local army and were ready to follow Rodrigo, and hence the governor, if the latter had the support of the former²⁹. Rodrigo ensured Bernardino obtained a share of the slaves available for trading by linking the hinterland chiefdoms with the coastal markets through his military supporters, who acted as middlemen in bringing the slaves from the *presídios* (the forts in Angola's hinterland) to Luanda. This share was the result of the labors of merchants who were sent into the hinterlands, where they used the title of captain-major bestowed upon them by the governor in order to endow them with the authority and right to deal with «vassal» African chiefdoms³⁰. After their official appointment, these merchants went inland with their merchandizes, using violent means to force African chiefs to secure transport for them without payment, while also demanding that the African chiefs supplied them with food «which they made them give against their will»³¹.

These forced «gifts» (*baculamentos*) had been abolished by the 1676 *Regimento* (body of law), according to which governors were not allowed to demand such contributions from the local chiefs. Despite this prohibition, however, the merchants who had been made captain-majors continued this long-standing tradition of «gifts». This illegal practice also continued to be accompanied by forcing chiefs to accept the commodities provided by the merchants in exchange for slaves. This «gift giving» and bartering were further aggravated by the captain-majors' power to act as intermediaries in resolving conflicts between chiefdoms, for which they demanded substantial payments (in the form of slaves) and where the captain-majors had an interest in ruling in favor of the party that would pay them the most (again, the highest number of slaves).

The actions of these captain-majors profoundly disrupted the trading principles and traditions of the hinterland, especially regarding the function of the African middlemen (*pumbeiros*) responsible for establishing the commercial links between African rulers, Europeans and Angolan settlers.³² This was because once these captain-majors arrived in the *presídios* to which they had been appointed, they distributed the cloth (*fazendas*) they had brought with them as *banzos* (bundles of goods used as a unit of purchase for slaves),

²⁸ *Pumbo*: The market of Pumbo (later Stanley Pool) was located in Loango. Sixteenth-century Africans called the Portuguese merchants who went to trade there *pumbeiros*. This name soon became applied to any Portuguese agents going to inland markets (*feira*) to trade, while the markets themselves began to be called *pumbos*. HENRIQUES, 1997:116-117, 766.

²⁹ *Degradados* were people who had been punished by being sent to Portuguese colonies, where they were expected to contribute to the colony's protection and prosperity. AHU, Angola, Cx. 18, D. 1930.

³⁰ Although some academics as Beatrix HEINTZE (1980) and Catarina M. SANTOS (2005) consider the African chiefdoms within Portuguese rule as vassals, as the documentation represented them, I defended in my dissertation that it was not the case (GUARDA, 2013) and the same is argued by CANDIDO, 2013: 93.

³¹ AHU, Angola, Cx. 18, D. 1923, 27 January 1703.

³² AHU, Angola, Cx. 18, D. 1923, 27 January 1703.

forcing the African chiefs to give them a slave (*peça de índias*) in return for each *banzo*. If the chiefs, or *sobas*, had insufficient numbers of slaves to pay for the *banzos*, their relatives could be taken away to supplement the payment³³. Although this situation was relatively common among African communities in Angola – obtaining credit by pawning a relative to the creditor until the debt was repaid – relatives were unlikely to regain their freedom once they had been given to Portuguese officers³⁴. The fact that these «exchanges» circumvented the markets and were conducted directly by the merchants themselves caused the *pumbos* to stagnate, while the *pumbeiros* were unable to use their commodities to buy many slaves since most of the best ones had already been taken by the captain-majors³⁵. The latter also acted as judges at the *mucanos*, the courts where the disputes of *sobas* were resolved, and in doing so commonly favored the party that would be most profitable for them. As a result, there was no place for the *pumbeiros* to trade since all the slaves available in the chiefdoms, or *sobados*, ended up being forcibly taken by these captain-majors in a true monopoly that led to frequent complaints by local residents (*moradores*). The captain-majors were controlled by Rodrigo's men, who were in charge of the Luanda militia (in which Rodrigo's son served) and who were also the bodyguards of Bernardino de Távora in Luanda. This militia was responsible for traveling to the various forts to extract the slaves owed to the governor, Rodrigo and themselves and to take them directly to the coast.

The journey to the hinterland was paid for by a percentage of the slaves acquired. In reality, these activities were based on a hierarchy of power and violence, starting with the asymmetric trading between traders and chiefdoms. The same asymmetry was also ingrained within the relationship between the merchants and the militia at the governor's service, while similar dynamics were at play in the relationships between the militia and its leader, Rodrigo, and the latter and the governor himself. In this system, profits from the slave trade were concomitant with the position held by each actor in the hierarchy. And this system worked, as shown by the case of José de São Miguel Pereira. The latter was appointed by Bernardino as captain-major for the lands of the *soba* Mbwila. This was after Pereira had received thirty *banzos* on credit from António de Mariz Sarmiento (one of Rodrigo's hand men at the service of Bernardino and who became a member of the ruling Senate of Luanda after Bernardino's death, owing to the influence that he enjoyed as a *protégé* of Rodrigo during Bernardino's governorship) to exchange for slaves. This was the best way to ensure that Pereira would be able to pay for the *banzos*. If anything happened in the meantime to the *banzos* credited to Pereira, the slaves of his wife and sons would be taken. After Pereira died on his way to Mbwila, the governor sent sixteen soldiers and a colonel to the Dande district to collect the slaves that Pereira had promised as collateral for the *banzos*

³³ AHU, Angola, Cx. 18, D. 1923, 27 January 1703.

³⁴ SHUMWAY, 2011: 59.

³⁵ AHU, Angola, Cx. 17, D. 1911.

granted on credit. The soldiers took the slaves and also the *banzos*³⁶. This case study clearly shows that if a trader appointed as a captain-major by the governor failed in his mission, a militia would be sent to retrieve the governor's investment. Other names, too, should be mentioned in order to complete the picture. According to Gaspar da Silva Reis, the purveyor and the governor's enemy, the governor appointed António Lobato Torres as judge of all the *mucanos*, while this task was supposed, in theory, to be done by the captain-major in each respective jurisdiction. This suggests that Bernardino did not trust the merchants he had appointed as captain-majors and was afraid that, when judging the *mucanos*, they would take all the profits for themselves. In order to avoid this, Torres was appointed to keep a close eye on each trial to ensure that the governor's share was secured. Bernardino also appointed another man, Manuel Fernandes Sardinha, as the agent of his ships and in charge of taking fifty to seventy armed men to calm down the uprisings of the *sobas* that were triggered by the captain-majors' oppression of the *presídios*. According to Silva Reis, however, Sardinha and his men went to the *presídios* and bullied the captain-majors by threatening to denounce their extortions from the *sobas* unless they gave them a share of the slaves in the form of *baculamentos* (gifts from the *sobas*) or through the *mucanos*³⁷. This just increased the pressure on the African chiefs, who not only had to take account of the ambitions of the captain-majors who supervised them, but also of these «police-men» (given that it was highly probable that some of the slaves taken as the governor's share would have been the armed men's own share). This affirms the hierarchy existing at a social, political and military level in Angola, with each stage of this interdependent network linked to one another through bonds corresponding to favors and obligations that made each social level subordinate to the governor and his valets, specifically Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida³⁸. These dynamics explain the extent to which standing law and rules of trade were violated, as well as the consequent disruption of commerce.

Once back in Luanda, Rodrigo's militia was crucial in ensuring the governor's primacy in the export of slaves to Brazil by loading ships with more captives than allowed by the Portuguese Crown and stealing manioc flour from locals to use as a means of exchange for buying more slaves in Benguela and for feeding existing captives during the transatlantic voyage³⁹. The primacy of the governor's exports was secured by blocking the intervention of administrative officials, such as Gaspar da Silva Reis, Pascoal da Silva Pontes and Amaro Barbosa Brandão, who could have threatened Bernardino de Távora's interests. These three men joined forces against the governor during much of his time in office in an attempt to promote their interests rather than his. In July 1702, all three men were jailed by men loyal to the governor and led by Rodrigo de Almeida, with the implicit sup-

³⁶ AHU, Angola, Cx.18, D. 1930.

³⁷ AHU, Angola, Cx. 18, D. 1930.

³⁸ AHU, Angola, Cx. 19, D. 1979, 7 July 1703.

³⁹ AHU, Angola, Cx.18, D. 1930.

port of Manuel Simões Colaço. The offices previously held by Silva Reis were then divided between Rodrigo, who was appointed *Provedor da Fazenda Real*, and Colaço, who was appointed *Ouvidor-Geral*. This meant that Rodrigo had finally achieved the office that he had coveted so much and that, from then on, he was able to run the Royal Treasury, both for the governor's and his own benefit. Finally, with Colaço as *Ouvidor-Geral* and their mutual enemies in jail, trade was now completely controlled by the network of Rodrigo and Governor Bernardino.

The death of Governor Bernardino in December 1702 brought an end to his benefits from the Angolan slave trade; the same did not apply, however, to his men. Although Colaço soon distanced himself from the governor, arguing that he had been forced by Bernardino to collaborate, the majority were able to retain their power by ensuring they remained within Rodrigo's sphere of influence⁴⁰. Colaço's fear shows his secondary role as a valet; this contrasts with Rodrigo, who continued signing documents as Purveyor of the Royal Treasury and retained his influence over Luanda's institutions, even to the extent of controlling the election of the Senate members who ruled until a new governor was appointed⁴¹.

Rodrigo's strong position was not limited, however, to Angola as his networks also extended to Bahia, where the youngest son of Bernardino de Távora was an army colonel. While Bernardino was still alive, he and his son were in regular contact in order to protect their interests on both sides of the Atlantic, relying in this respect on the ships, men and loyalty of Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida. The fact that the links between the son and Rodrigo continued after Bernardino's death made it possible for Rodrigo's networks in Bahia to be made available there. This argument is supported by the fact that Rodrigo had agents all over the Atlantic territories, while also maintaining ownership of at least one sugar mill in Brazil⁴². It is unclear how many sugar mills he owned, although his will mentions the Jacaracanga mill bought from Alexandre de Souza Freire in Bahia. This was supposed to be developed into an enormous property since its revenues were intended to be used, according to Rodrigo's will, for expansion through purchases of more adjoining land. This concern reflects the tradition among the nobility of seeking to keep all the family's possession together by passing them in their entirety from father to son as a single legacy. Rodrigo was keen to preserve his wealth in a trust set up for his son and grandson, with the aim of creating a property of significant size and with a high demand for slave labor. This was probably the reason for his involvement at the head of the Angolan slave trade networks and accounts for much of the money he invested in various Brazilian ports, as

⁴⁰ AHU, Angola, Cx. 18, D. 1954.

⁴¹ AHU, Angola, Cx. 19, D. 1978.

⁴² AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, D. 2189.

well as Lisbon and Angola. The Angolan slave trade enabled Rodrigo to amalgamate his influence and wealth, with businesses all over the South Atlantic⁴³.

Bernardino de Távora's governorship was characterized mainly by his involvement in commercial disruptions to the inland slave trade and conflicts with local authorities, whose interests in the local slave trade had been overruled by the governor and his men. This resulted in intense activity among traders and merchants connected with captain-majors and ship owners on a scale never previously seen, with the entirety of Bernardino's activities as governor being oriented towards generating profit from trade. As confirmation of the lure of money was the fact that Rodrigo traveled as supercargo to supervise the exchanges between Angola and Brazil and to secure his own interests along with those of Bernardino. The link between the two men was further reinforced by Rodrigo's above-mentioned purchase of the Jacaracanga sugar mill (which became the family property) and the office of Purveyor of the Treasury in Bahia from Sousa Freire. Indeed, these connections lasted throughout Rodrigo's professional life as he had started his career by serving the brother of Bernardino who was then Governor of Brazil, and then served Bernardino himself in Angola and lastly, after the latter's death, continued to trade with Bernardino's son, Alexandre de Sousa Freire. The fact that the two families were connected to one another by more than mere commercial ties is indicated by the marriage of one of Alexandre de Sousa Freire's sons, António José de Sousa Freire, to a daughter of Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida, D. Brites da Costa (widow of Manuel Pereira da Silva Caldas)⁴⁴.

Rodrigo and Bernardino's friendship was still perceived after the latter's death, when, in 1703, the Crown appointed the new *Ouvidor-Geral*, Rodrigo Rebelo da Silva, to serve in Angola. The latter was related to Rodrigo's wife and reported to be engaged to marry Rodrigo's daughter, with Silva Reis referring with great displeasure to the frequent visits of the new officer to Rodrigo's house⁴⁵. This displeasure was increased by Rebelo da Silva's failure to respond to the instructions from the Crown to confiscate Bernardino's possessions. Silva Reis expected to be compensated for the losses he had suffered as a result of his imprisonment, but instead of confiscating the governor's possessions and giving them to Silva Reis, Rebelo da Silva left them in the care of Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida, who immediately sent them to Bernardino de Távora's family in Brazil. Once in the hands of Alexandre de Sousa Freire and his elder brother, Manuel de Sousa Tavares, those goods were too far away to be used by the brothers' enemies as compensation for losses suffered. On the contrary, Bernardino's heirs used them to further improve their social status, which had already been enriched by matrimonial alliances with important families such as the Brito e Castro in Bahia and the Counts of Aveiras in Portugal⁴⁶.

⁴³ AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, D.2189; ANTT, TSO, Habilitações, Rodrigo, mc. 4, doc. 62.

⁴⁴ HENRIQUES & HENRIQUES, 2006: 509.

⁴⁵ AHU, Angola, Cx. 19, D. 1978.

⁴⁶ For more information on the sons of Bernardino de Távora, see GUARDA, 2013.

Meanwhile, Rodrigo continued increasing his power in Angola, where he maintained his influence, and also in Brazil, where he succeeded Alexandre de Sousa Freire as Purveyor of the Royal Treasury in Bahia and managed some of the latter's sugar mills and plantations. After Rodrigo's death in 1717, and as stated in his will, his son Domingos da Costa de Almeida took over that office and, as the new head of the family, received the sum of 34,179,596 *réis*. By the time of his death, Rodrigo was one of the most powerful, influential and wealthy men in Bahia, famous for his entrepreneurial skills, properties and ships, and treated with the respect and deference considered due to someone of his caliber⁴⁷. Other factors that contributed to the rise in his social status were the important connections he had established through the marriage of his son Domingos to D. Brites da Rocha Pitta, daughter of Sebastião da Rocha Pitta, a nobleman of the Royal House of Portugal. Pitta was renowned for his noble way of life, as well as for being a wealthy owner of sugar mills. This favorable marriage resulted in Domingos being favored by his father, who added a codicil to his will, leaving the above assets to Domingos⁴⁸.

Although he started his career as a soldier in Bahia, Rodrigo was a resilient and intelligent man who employed his skills to please his powerful superiors and, in so doing, improved his standing in society. He was bestowed with honors and offices, both by his superiors and by the Crown, with his power and influence increasing in direct proportion to his proximity to the nobles he served in Angola and Brazil. For their part, these noblemen benefited from Rodrigo's local knowledge and networks, finding in their connections across the Atlantic the key to making the South Atlantic slave trade a profitable and efficient enterprise.

In conclusion, even if the roots of Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida remain unclear, his wealth and noble way of life are well documented. Many people made mention of him as the master of many ships and owner of great amounts of money from his businesses in Bahia and Angola, as well as for holding honorable positions in the army and local institutions on both sides of the Atlantic. His will attests not only to his prosperity in the shape of the huge legacies left to his heirs, servants and various institutions, but also to his spread of businesses across the Atlantic through his representatives in Portugal, Luanda and Bahia⁴⁹. His wealth allowed Rodrigo and his family to enjoy the magnificence and ostentation of life as a noble family, receiving the respect and consideration afforded to such people and able to make profitable alliances. The marriage between Domingos da Costa de Almeida and

⁴⁷ ANTT, TSO, Habilitações, Rodrigo, mc. 4, doc. 62.

⁴⁸ «I declare that for the love I have for my son the Colonel Domingos da Costa de Almeida and for having married him to my pleasure and with succession I gave him the sums of money declared in a bill written with the letter of the mentioned son and signed by us both and the mill that I have in Jacaracanga, which I bought from Alexandre de Sousa Freire, which is also declared in the aforementioned bill which in everything mounts up to thirty four hundred and one hundred and seventy-nine thousand five hundred and ninety-six *réis* [...]» AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, D. 2189.

⁴⁹ AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, D. 2189.

D. Brites da Rocha Pitta, daughter of the noble Sebastião da Rocha Pitta and D. Ana Cavalcante de Albuquerque, both from Bahia and owners of large sugar mills, constituted the greatest confirmation that all the efforts of Rodrigo da Costa de Almeida had paid off. Not only had his Atlantic networks secured the trade, transport and employment of African workers for Brazilian sugar plantations and mills, but they had also made his family one of the most powerful and influential in early eighteenth-century Bahia.

SOURCES

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PORTUGUESE PRESENCE IN SPANISH COLONIAL NORTH AMERICA IN THE SIXTEENTH AND EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

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A vast literature documents the Portuguese colonial presence in the continents of Africa and Asia. To date little is known about the presence of the Portuguese in the North American Continent and their individual impact on some of the most important Spanish colonial enterprises during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The volunteer enrollment of the Portuguese in these expeditions to New Spain¹ highlights the free movement of people, skills and wealth across different nations and European Empires and the involvement of priests, knights, pilots, sailors, craftsmen and settlers in hazardous colonial enterprises. In some cases, these religious and commercial colonial ventures were undertaken while the Portuguese Crown was subsumed to that of Spain, while others did not. That raises questions as to the covert primacy of commercial and personal interests over political ones or, alternatively, to the enterprising influence of individuals. This chapter follows the archival traces of the Portuguese involved in these colonial endeavors and argues that nationality was not a consideration in joining these expeditions, and that economic conditions, religious fervor, expediency, self-interest and personal aggrandizement led these Portuguese to the New World.

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¹ The geographical definition of the Spanish colonial territory designated as New Spain changed through time. For the purposes of this chapter it included all the Spanish possessions in the Western Hemisphere, most of South America, Central America, the West Indies and, Florida and the modern United States territories west of the Mississippi River.

INTRODUCTION

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries people in Europe were on the move. The Hapsburg rulership blurred boundaries, hybridized governance structures and traditional ways of seeing the world, and it acted as a flux for multinational enterprises that offered economic and social opportunities to skilled and experienced individuals. One could refer to this phenomenon as transversality in which cultural worlds crisscrossed and intercepted with political and personal consequences. Alternatively, one could speak of «grassroots globalization»² whereby peoples on the move evaded national boundaries and structures often to be caught up by webs of colonial globalizing and singular events.

The Portuguese traced and discussed in this chapter were from different social classes and backgrounds. In different ways they procured wealth, prestige, adventure, economic opportunities or simply a place to settle that might provide some share of all that. They did not expect to perish, but most did. They chose to participate in enterprises, and in doing so initiated a sequence of events that resulted in their death though that was not the agent's wish or expectation. They fell prey to the «composition effect – an outcome of an aggregate of acts... each of which is intentionally carried out. But the eventual outcome is neither intended nor desired by anyone»³. As it happens, the foreground event connecting the lives of these Portuguese (and others) is the narrative of Cabeza de Vaca first published in Zamora in 1542 and again in 1555, but this time including Cabeza de Vaca's *Commentaries* that refer to his journey and experiences in South America (Río de la Plata). The Infanta Juana, who married João III of Portugal in 1552, authorized and set up the price of the book, as regent of her brother Prince Phillip, who became Phillip II of Spain in 1556⁴.

On June 17, 1527, Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca left the port of San Lúcar de Barrameda on a voyage to the New World. Emperor Charles V appointed him as crown treasurer to the expedition of Pánfilo de Narváez, a position of importance and trust as Cabeza de Vaca was responsible for the king's property and for collecting the tithes expected to result from the expedition's discoveries. This expedition and Cabeza de Vaca's decisions, actions and official narrative, *La Relación*⁵, were catalysts for a chain of singular events that spanned over a century and resulted in multiple webs of intended and unintended personal and historical consequences. To assume that «human agency can be defined only in terms of intentions»⁶, is misconceiving the reality, as Anthony Giddens has demonstrated. Further, «unintentional doings can be separated conceptually from unintended consequences of doings», but again Giddens' dissertation on the subject shows that to be a moot point since an actor's

² RAUNIG, 2002.

³ GIDDENS, 1984: 10.

⁴ CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 178, 178n3.

⁵ CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 1-41.

⁶ GIDDENS, 1984: 8.

intentionality does not affect the issuing consequences⁷. These conceptual notions concerning the nature of agency, actors and intentionality apply to Cabeza de Vaca's expedition, its outcomes, and to the Portuguese (and others) who became enmeshed in the events the expedition engendered.

The Narváez expedition was charged with Spanish royal authority to explore and conquer the lands between the modern Florida Peninsula and the Río Panúco (near Tampico, modern State of Tamaulipas, Mexico). Though at least one maritime expedition mapped the coastline between Florida and the northeastern coast of modern Mexico⁸, the hinterlands were unknown. Of the six hundred people who left Spain with the Narváez Expedition only four survived: Alonso del Castillo Maldonado, Andrés Dorantes de Carranza, Cabeza de Vaca and Estevan (Estevánico), a native of Azamor (Azemmour, Morocco)⁹. These four spent six years on the Texas coast living and traveling with Native American groups, before embarking on a long and very arduous land journey across Texas and Mexico to return to Mexico City. Of these four survivors only Cabeza de Vaca returned to Spain. Castillo and Dorantes remained in New Spain, while Estevánico, Dorantes' slave, was killed as he traveled to the Pueblo Country in preparation of Francisco de Coronado's Expedition to the mythical Golden Seven Cities of Cibola, which were thought to be towns (pueblos) in the Native American southwest, specifically in modern New Mexico.

Cabeza de Vaca arrived in Lisbon in August 1537, and sometime after that reported on his trip to the Audiencia Real and to Emperor Charles V (Charles I of Spain). When Hernando de Soto began preparing his expedition to Florida he knew the Narváez Expedition had run into trouble but he did not know, nor did anyone else, the extent of the debacle until later. In fact, the royal concession De Soto received for the conquest of Florida was given on April 1537¹⁰. De Soto tried to convince Cabeza de Vaca to join the new expedition to Florida without success, but De Soto benefited greatly from the recent and detailed information Cabeza de Vaca provided the Audiencia and the King on harbors, landscapes, resources and indigenous peoples. Equally relevant was the encounter with Juan Ortiz who was lost, or defected, during the Narváez Expedition. Ortiz's knowledge of the landscape,

⁷ As Giddens notes, the complexity of the relationships between actions and consequences separated in time and space is to be considered. He states, «In general, it is true that the further removed the consequences of an act are in time and space from the original context of the act, the less likely those consequences are to be intentional – but that is, of course, influenced both by the scope of the knowledgeability that actors have and the power they are able to mobilize.» These are highly relevant parameters relative to causality and consequences when considering the Hernán de Soto and Coronado's expeditions. GIDDENS, 1984: 11.

⁸ Alonso Álvarez de Pineda mapped the Gulf of Mexico coastline in 1519 but no original account of this voyage has been found. The chronicler, Bernal Díaz del Castillo mentions the voyage, as does Hernán Cortes, who conquered Mexico. Juan Vespucci also produced a map of that coastline.

⁹ There were two other survivors, Juan Ortiz, who was found by Hernando de Soto's Expedition, and Lope de Oviedo, who is known to have survived for some years. For information on Lope de Oviedo see KRIEGER, 2002: 189.

¹⁰ *Concession Made By The King Of Spain To Hernando De Soto Of The Government Of Cuba And Conquest Of Florida With The Title Of Adelantado*. In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 359-365.

as well as of Native Americans' behavior and languages became invaluable to the De Soto Expedition while traveling in the southeastern United States.

As Hernando de Soto readied in Spain for his voyage to Florida, in Mexico City Vice-roy Antonio de Mendoza planned an expedition to northwest New Spain and the Pueblo Country. This expedition, entrusted to Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, was spurred by the travels of Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions and the news of presumed riches the Pueblo Country could provide. Mendoza acquired Estevánico, Dorantes' slave, for his knowledge of the country and the indigenous people. In 1539, Estevánico accompanied the Franciscan Fr. Marcos de Niza in an exploratory mission as preparation for the expedition of 1540-1542. As mentioned, Estevánico was killed during that mission, likely because he broke some Native American taboo.

It is unlikely that Cabeza de Vaca intended his narrative and the information it contained to result in the expeditions that followed and in which he was not involved. In fact, it is quite clear that he expected the hardships he endured and the knowledge he acquired during his travels in New Spain to legitimize his royal appointment to the next expedition to Florida¹¹. Instead his experiences and narrative provided others with information they used to advance their own projects and agendas, and in the process those same experiences resulted in intended and unintended consequences.

The principal objective of this chapter is to document the Portuguese presence in the colonization of North America. To do so, it is necessary to locate their traces, often faint, in archival documentation. This chapter uses primarily the expedition narrative of Cabeza de Vaca¹², the various narratives of the expedition of Hernando de Soto, but particularly that of The Gentleman of Elvas¹³, the Castañeda narrative of the Coronado Expedition¹⁴ as well as various archival documents connected with these expeditions. For the Juan de Oñate colonization period several archival documents were used, though the most important was the Valverde Inquiry¹⁵. The Portuguese were actors entangled in other people's webs of action, and their transversality moves affected, or were affected, by the decisions of others. Intentionally or not, they were links in chains of events that produced consequences. In fact, it is only because the actions of the Portuguese were relevant to the colonization that we can locate their presence in the archival record.

The actions and narrative tension between Providential discourse and personal agency permeate all the expeditionary testimonies discussed in this chapter. For most of the cases discussed and for the presence of Portuguese individuals in the unfolding colonial discoveries of North America, the analytical focus is the accumulation «*of events deriving from an*

¹¹ CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 24.

¹² CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 24.

¹³ *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas.* In CLAYTON *et al.*, 1993: 359-365.

¹⁴ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002.

¹⁵ HAMMOND & REY, 1953.

initiating circumstance without which that cumulation would not have been found»¹⁶: Cabeza de Vaca's narrative is that initiating circumstance.

In the context of the colonial discoveries in which the crowns of Portugal and Spain were involved at this time, Cabeza de Vaca's narrative is the first text that tracks in time and space the movement of Europeans through the southeast of the United States. This had to be the primary and only text available to potential literate colonizers who had their sights on North America. It is also noteworthy that while exploratory trips from Cuba to the Florida coast had been undertaken since 1513, none went farther westward. Additionally, at the time Cabeza de Vaca reached «Florida» Hernán Cortes had barely managed to conquer the Aztecs and hold the Basin of Mexico (1519-1522). The territorial extent and characteristics of «La Florida» as well as those of northern Mexico were unknown. In fact, aside from Cuba and some areas of Florida nothing was known of the North American Continent.

A LAND OF CHRISTIANS

The multinational expeditions of the sixteenth century to the New World incorporated mostly people from Central and Western Europe: Portuguese, Spanish from all parts of modern Spain and regionally identified, Italians from several regions, a few French and some from the British Isles as well as from Spanish and Portuguese islands, «discovered» and colonized from the fifteenth century onward. In general, the specific «nationality» of the agents did not seem to be noticeable to the writers of the narratives. Within the multiplicity of languages, ethnicities and customs, the writers found an identity that made it possible to speak of the commonality of their experiences: they identified themselves as Christians. With Europe on the move and explorers facing the novelty, excitement and fear of new, «barbarous» worlds, the common denominator to provide stimulus, bolster their resolve and shield them from the inhumanity of their acts was their unified beliefs as Christians against an undefined barbarity.

Throughout the *Relación*, Cabeza de Vaca consistently refers to the members of the expedition collectively as Christians¹⁷, and so do The Gentleman of Elvas¹⁸ and Luys Hernández de Biedma¹⁹, both authors of narratives of the Hernando de Soto Expedition to Florida. On the other hand, Pedro de Castañeda, who authored the *Relación de la Jornada de Cibola* on the Coronado Expedition²⁰, seldom refers to Christians, opting generally to speak of the Spanish and identify people, Europeans and Native Americans, by the region from which they came.

¹⁶ GIDDENS, 1984: 12-13.

¹⁷ CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 24.

¹⁸ *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas.* In CLAYTON et al., 1993.

¹⁹ BIEDMA, 1993.

²⁰ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002.

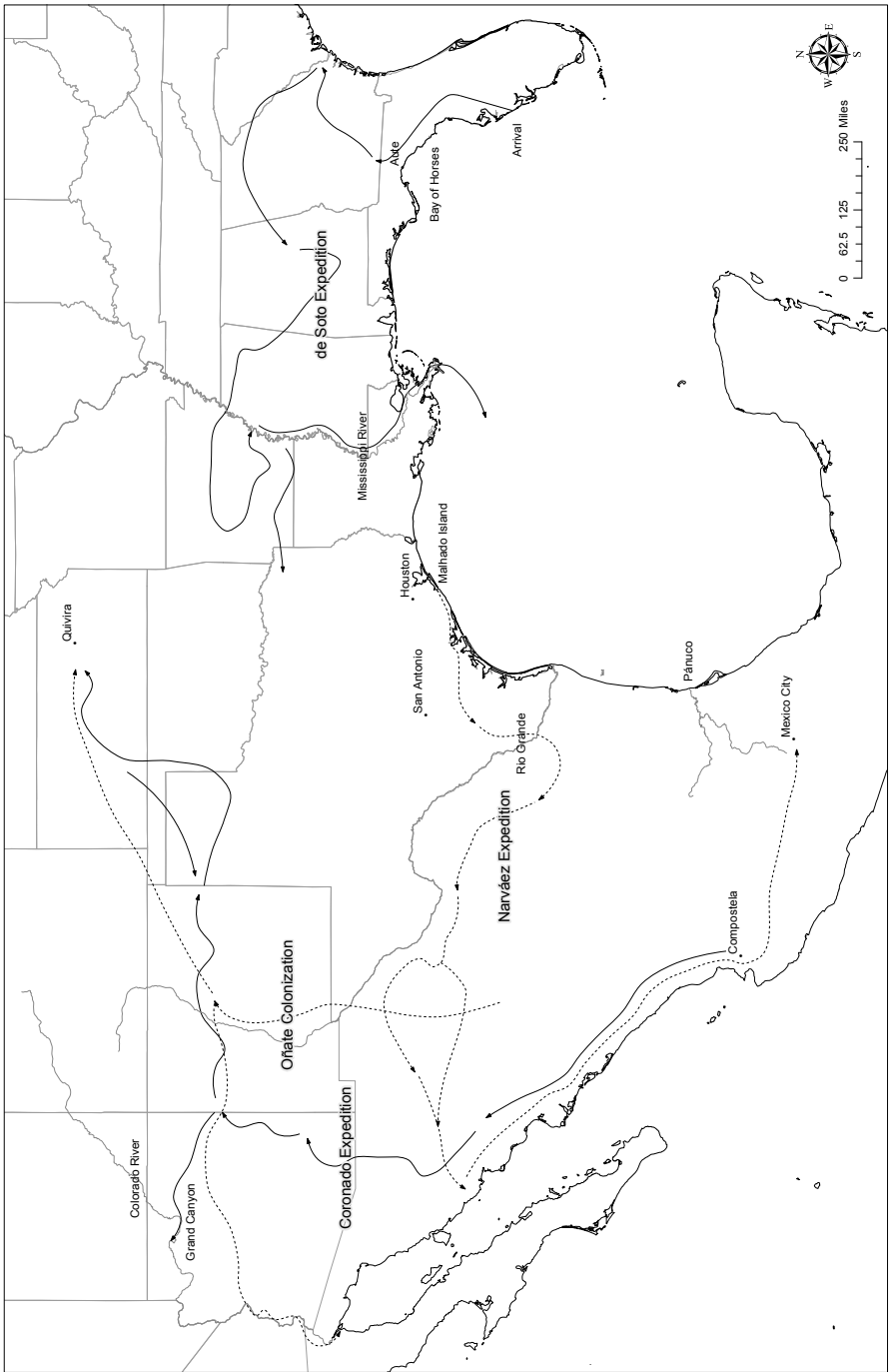


Figure 1: Map to show the routes travelled by the Narváez Expedition, Coronado Expedition, de Soto Expedition and the Oñate Colonization. Figure by Paul Holloway.

THE NARVÁEZ EXPEDITION TO FLORIDA, 1527-1536

The Narváez Expedition was the first European expedition to penetrate the southern portion of North America from Florida to Mexico and it provided Europeans with the first information on the landscape, climate and on the indigenous peoples of the southern United States. It brought to the indigenous populations that met the colonizers mostly transitory experiences with violence and long term deadly encounters with pathogens, though those were already present in some areas²¹. The expedition reaffirmed some of the stereotypes Europeans held about the New World and exposed Native Americans to different types of animals; weaponry and warfare, as well as to a whole range of material culture that unhinged native reluctance to engage with the «aliens», and through time caused social change. The experience also should have deeply affected would-be colonizers since the loss of human life emphasized the difficulties and gamble of conquest. Conversely, Cabeza de Vaca's *Relación* must have surprised its readers, because Native hospitality was likely unexpected as might have been the gruesome episode of cannibalism the «Christians» committed on each other to survive²².

The colonizers proceeded from the Florida Peninsula to the Mississippi River (fig. 1), some traveling by sea and others by land. The expedition members soon wore out any tolerance locals might have had, as they raided their crops and engaged Native populations in several skirmishes. When they reached the Bay of Horses, they were in desperate straits and forced to slaughter their horses for food. In tatters, starved, emaciated and sick the conquistadors were eager to reach the only known harbor in northeast New Spain, Pánuco (near modern Tampico, Mexico), but they no longer had ships for the voyage. Among the remaining two hundred and forty members who took to the sea was Álvaro Fernández, a Portuguese sailor and the only carpenter on the expedition. His skills and actions proved vital to the advance of the expedition and to its ultimate outcome²³. Indeed, without his intervention, it is possible that Cabeza de Vaca would not have survived, the story would not have been told, the web of events that his narrative engendered would not begin, mapping knowledge of the southeast United States would not be available to Hernando de Soto²⁴ and considerable information on the landscape and on the Native populations would not be available to modern Native Americans and researchers.

Álvaro was the only craftsman on the expedition capable of coordinating the building of barges and recycle the iron to nail the barges' planks together. Aside from gathering appropriate wood and shaping it into sea worthy vessels, melting iron and making molds to fashion nails in the wilderness required innovative and improvising skills.

²¹ HANN, 2003: 54-57

²² CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 87-90.

²³ CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 73.

²⁴ BISHOP, 1933: 53.

They built five barges thirty-three feet long and though some were lost at sea, eventually three barges and eighty survivors were caught by a hurricane and were shipwrecked on the Texas Gulf Coast in November 1528. As Cabeza de Vaca states, «so much can necessity do, which drove us to hazard our lives in this manner, running into a turbulent sea, not a single one who went having any knowledge of navigation»²⁵. The three barges came ashore at different points of the coast separating the conquistadors and placing them with different local Native groups. It seems Álvaro remained with Cabeza de Vaca's group at Malhado Island (Bad Luck Island, Galveston Island, modern Texas), and at least temporarily with the same Native hosts. After several weeks and some ghastly episodes, including the first recorded episode of cannibalism the conquistadors committed on their European shipmates, Cabeza de Vaca ordered Álvaro, three other Europeans and a Native, to travel southwestward to attempt to find the land route to Pánuco. Álvaro was chosen because he was a good swimmer and there were several large rivers to cross on the way to the south. Only two other members of the expedition were noted as «*chripstianos nadadores*»²⁶. Later Andrés Dorantes let it be known that Álvaro and two others sent to scout the route to Pánuco had perished from hunger and cold²⁷. Álvaro's carpenter expertise provided the knowledge to build barges allowing the «Christians» to sail westward, which eventually resulted in the survival of Cabeza de Vaca. Conversely, Álvaro's swimming capability did not return the travel knowledge expected and likely resulted in his demise.

It would take several years of captivity and a long trek through Texas and the northern regions of modern Mexico before Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions reached northern New Spain (Mexico). The report of their exceptional journey, travails and survival captured the imagination of prospective explorers and resonated with the political elites seeking further wealth, prestige and power. When the newly appointed (1535) Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza heard the report of the survivors he purchased Estevánico from his master, Andrés Dorantes. Viceroy Mendoza used Estevánico's knowledge of northern Mexico and his skill with Native Americans to explore the route to the mythic Seven Golden Cities of Cibola²⁸, the Pueblo Country of modern New Mexico.

THE FRANCISCO VÁSQUEZ DE CORONADO EXPEDITION, 1540-1542

Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza sponsored the expedition of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado to the Pueblo Country. The expedition was to follow the land route Estevánico

²⁵ BISHOP, 1933: 53.

²⁶ CABEZA DE VACA, 2003: 89n1.

²⁷ BISHOP, 1933: 89.

²⁸ The Seven Cities of Cibola are thought to have been another version of the Portuguese Seven Cities of the Antilles, or the legend of Antillia – A Ilha das Sete Cidades. For more information on the influence of this myth among the early explorers, see CHAVEZ, 1968: 16-6.

had taken earlier to New Mexico, and Fray Marcos de Niza, who accompanied Estevá-nico part of the trip, apparently never actually entered the Pueblo Country though it is said that he reported on riches and on seeing a pueblo glittering under the sunlight²⁹. The Europeans traveled from Northern Mexico to the northern reaches of modern New Mexico and between 1540 and 1542 they made long exploration trips westward to California and eastward to Kansas. They did not find the fabled Seven Cities of Cíbola nor did they uncover golden treasure, but they did record for the first time the magnificence of the Grand Canyon and provided invaluable and unique information on geography, on the landscape and on the many Native groups they encountered. Though the expedition was a great disappointment for those who undertook it and invested in it, as Pedro de Castañeda recorded at the time, some later wished to return. The enthusiasm to conquer that country did not wane; it was only temporarily postponed³⁰. Unfolding the web of unintended consequences, Coronado's Expedition laid a foundation of indigenous mistrust for those explorers who came after, but provided modern Native Americans and researchers with the first, the best, and sometimes the only, pristine geographic, environmental and cultural information on a vast territory.

Among the 250 or so expedition members were several Portuguese. Unlike other expeditions, we know that all those who applied to be included in the expedition had to provide considerable and specific material resources to gain admission. There are at least five people listed either as Portuguese or whose names indicate they were Portuguese, and one likely from Cape Verde. Andrés do Campo, said to have been a gardener³¹, joined the expedition early on and participated with three horses, local weapons and a buckskin breast plate as listed in the Muster Roll. Of the total participants contributing horses only 34 out of 222 cavalymen brought to the expedition more than three horses; most contributed one horse³².

In 1541, a large group of Spaniards including Coronado traveled from their headquarters in New Mexico to the Central and Southern Plains (fig. 1) to look for the mythical Kingdom of Quivira, presumably rich in gold, and to explore the area and hunt bison. Andrés do Campo might have been among those who made that journey. This trip did not lead to the discovery of precious metals but introduced the conquistadors to the immense bison herds roaming the plains and to the potential wealth to be had in meat, pelts, fat and glue, products that later would be central to the economy of New Spain. Pedro de Castañeda, who wrote a detailed narrative of the events of the overall expedition, was part of the journey to the plains and provided the first information on the landscape, on the fauna and flora of the Southern Plains of the United States and on two

²⁹ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002: 43.

³⁰ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002: 13.

³¹ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002: 325.

³² AITON, 1939: 556-570.

native groups they encountered, the Querechos and the Teyas³³. The contact the explorers made with these native groups was the first historically recorded view Europeans had of a unique hunting and gathering mode of living based mostly on the resources the bison provided. The subsistence and economic patterns Castañeda witnessed in 1541 were vital to the Plains Indians of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but his report showed the antiquity of the subsistence pattern and made it possible to link it to pre-Columbian times.

The Europeans left New Mexico disillusioned and with little to show for their efforts and expenditure of resources and time. They neither conquered nor settled the country and certainly did not acquire the mineral wealth desired. Instead they sowed the seeds of anger and distrust among the natives of the Pueblo Country. The Franciscan friars who accompanied the expedition did not fare better despite their efforts. In a misguided last conversion effort, Fray Juan Padilla vehemently requested to be allowed to remain on the plains against Coronado's wish. With the friar remained a black man who is said to have served as interpreter³⁴, a mestizo, some Native Americans who were part of the expedition and Andrés do Campo, mentioned as Portuguese in the Muster Roll³⁵ and as «español portugués» in Nájera's narrative³⁶. After traveling to the plains, Fray Padilla was soon decapitated, achieving martyrdom as he desired, but Andrés managed to escape reportedly riding a mare. Apparently he traveled, mostly on foot, from around Kansas City, Kansas, to Pánuco on the Gulf of Mexico and then to Mexico City where he reported Fray Padilla's death. How he managed to find his way and negotiate passage through countless native territories is unknown. His remarkable and unrecorded trek between Kansas City and Tampico (about 1300 miles or 2100 km) took several months and would have required unusual skills.

Andrés reached Mexico City in 1543 and Fray Angelico Chavez speculated that Andrés «*must have been sworn to secrecy by Viceroy Mendoza.*» If the Franciscans ever questioned the man, they said nothing, wrote nothing. However, his adventures surely must have made him a hero among his peers, and he could not help but boast about them in the taverns. The gist of it got to Hernán Cortes and he, in turn, could have passed it on to his chaplain in Spain, Francisco López de Gómara. In 1552, the latter published his story of the conquest of New Spain, in which Gómara mentioned that «*Andrés do Campo, a Portuguese and gardener of Francisco Solís*» escaped with «*twelve Indians of Michoacán () was soon captured but, after ten months of captivity, he escaped with a pair of dogs*»³⁷. Andrés possessed extremely important information on an alternative route from the plains to Mexico, as

³³ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002: 191-214.

³⁴ CHAVEZ, 1968: 59.

³⁵ AITON, 1939: 44.

³⁶ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002: 322.

³⁷ CHAVEZ, 1968: 24.

Castañeda recognized³⁸, and despite the fact that no record has been found of his travels, people in power would have tried to obtain that information and use it. Chavez notes that, «Gerónimo López, a man who bitterly hated the Franciscans () had personally talked with the Portuguese following his return from Quivira. Writing to the King in 1547 to obtain royal favors López related that Andrés do Campo told him how he and Father Padilla had traveled for three hundred leagues after Coronado returned to New Spain»³⁹.

Similarly to Cabeza de Vaca, Andrés' personal knowledge of the American wilderness resulted from surviving excruciating experiences. Unlike Cabeza de Vaca, who wrote about his journey and having lost the opportunity to return to La Florida parlayed that knowledge into the governorship of the Río de la Plata⁴⁰, the repercussions of Andrés' knowledge are hard to trace as only reported hearsay of his trip is presently available. Written and oral knowledge dissemination, exemplified respectively by Cabeza de Vaca and Andrés' experiences, produced different results, though social class likely played a role in accessing powerful officials, obtaining patronage and publishing a narrative. In the action webs individuals create and the unintended consequences of such actions, Andrés' extraordinary feat of survival appears to have profited no one except perhaps the Native American groups of the Central Plains whose lives were sheltered from contact a spell longer. Had the Vice-roy acted on Andrés' verbal account, a speedier route to the plains and to Quivira would have been found and European settlement would inevitably follow. As it was, that route was not developed until the late eighteenth century when Pedro Vial traveled from Texas to Santa Fé (New Mexico) and then to the plains. This route would eventually link Texas, New Mexico, the Plains and Louisiana⁴¹. Still, Coronado's lack of success to conquer and settle the Pueblo Country did not discourage others and soon another attempt was made to bring those lands into the fold of New Spain, subdue the native peoples who inhabit them and exploit their labor.

THE EXPEDITION OF HERNANDO DE SOTO TO LA FLORIDA, 1539-1542

When Cabeza de Vaca arrived in Lisbon on August 9, 1537, plans were already under way for another expedition to Florida⁴². Hernando de Soto returned a very rich man from conquering Peru and Emperor Charles V granted him «all the land known as Florida» in April of 1537⁴³. This agreement dashed Cabeza de Vaca's hopes to return to the lands he had

³⁸ CASTAÑEDA DE NAJERA, 2002: 399.

³⁹ CHAVEZ, 1968: 68.

⁴⁰ Cabeza de Vaca was appointed to the Río de la Plata in March 1540 as adelantado and governor and the expedition left Spain for South America in December of the same year. For more information see BISHOP, 1933: 89.

⁴¹ CHIPMAN, 2000: 208-9.

⁴² BISHOP, 1933: 163, 167.

⁴³ BISHOP, 1933: 167.

so laboriously trekked and to use the knowledge he acquired at such great price. He learned that some of his kinfolk had signed on with Hernando de Soto and the latter tried in vain to entice Cabeza de Vaca to join his forthcoming expedition⁴⁴. De Soto's expedition sailed from Spain on April 6, 1538. Among the six hundred conquistadors who set sail were two kinsmen of Cabeza de Vaca and eight Portuguese gentlemen from Elvas (Portugal)⁴⁵. The Portuguese visited Hernando de Soto in Seville in January of 1538 and were accepted to join the expedition, though others from different places appear to have been denied admission. The Portuguese, Andrés de Vasconcelos, Fernan Pegado, Antonio Martinez Segurado, Mem Royz Pereyra, Joam Cordeiro, Estevan Pegado, Bento Fernandez and Álvaro Fernandez, are portrayed as displaying excellent armor and embarrassing the Castilians who preferred to be seen in fine clothing. If the description of what others had to sell to amass enough revenue to be admitted to the expedition is an indication of what the Portuguese had to sell to join in, they undoubtedly paid a considerable price⁴⁶.

One of those Portuguese conquistadors wrote the anonymous *Narrative of the Gentleman of Elvas*⁴⁷, arguably the most reliable and important source of information on the expedition. It has been assumed that Álvaro Fernandez was the writer of the narrative, though the authorship remains unclear. Five of the eight Portuguese mentioned perished during the expedition, including Andrés de Vasconcelos and two brothers said to be his kin⁴⁸. Regardless of the authorship, the Gentleman of Elvas provides a second snapshot of the lands Cabeza de Vaca traversed, but often also first hand and unique information on the landscape, customs and on indigenous peoples inhabiting the southeast of the United States. Among these groups were some that suffered the colonial encounter with the Narváez expedition and were soon to fade from the archives. Hernando de Soto perished on the Mississippi River in 1541, and Luís Moscoso de Alvarado took the leadership. Had a Portuguese taken over the expedition's command at the time of Hernando de Soto's demise, which country would have claimed ownership of the lands traversed? And was participation of Portuguese *fidalgos*, minor nobility gentlemen, legally, politically and socially acceptable? It has been stated that the Portuguese gentlemen who joined the expedition were listed as residing in Badajoz, the quintessential frontier town, to avoid possible conflicts, and Elvas'

⁴⁴ BISHOP, 1933: 168-170.

⁴⁵ In 1933, James Alexander Robertson in his Preface for the translation of the *True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas* intimated that the Portuguese were admitted because the town of Elvas was close to the town of Badajoz. Depending on the historical circumstances, Badajoz was sometimes under Portuguese rule and others under Spanish. Robertson states that the Portuguese were admitted because of the geographic location of the two towns «undoubtedly to satisfy any official inquiry that might be made.» See *The De Soto Chronicles*, v. 1, 27.

⁴⁶ *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas*. In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 49.

⁴⁷ *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas*. In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 38-219.

⁴⁸ *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas*. In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 104, 150.

anonymous authorship seems to agree with that⁴⁹. Though shrouded in personal anonymity, the author chooses to be identified *precisely* by his birthplace, and reaffirms that information in the narrative about all who participated. To complicate matters further, the book was published in Évora in 1557, and most important the Inquisitor General approved the publication. Conversely, the other narratives of the expedition seldom identified anyone by their nationality or region, though they do so for the Portuguese and the Spanish⁵⁰. Though nationality seemed not to matter in the constitution of the expeditionary crews, self-identification with a region or national identification by others (at least the writers), appears to have been noteworthy.

After De Soto's death the expedition continued westward but finding no food supplies to raid or wealth, eventually decided to return to the Mississippi River, build barges and sail to Pánuco, re-playing Cabeza de Vaca's sequence of choices. Elvas mentions the information Cabeza de Vaca provided Charles V, indicating that the Emperor shared it with Hernando de Soto. On their return trip they again passed by the Native town of Naguatex⁵¹ and Elvas noted that they made pottery out of clay «*little differing from that of Estremoz or Montemor*», towns in the Portuguese Alentejo, another instance of unguarded association with a specific region of Portugal⁵². At the Mississippi River, a Portuguese from Ceuta sawed lumber and taught others to do so, a Genoese built the ships with the help of two Biscayan carpenters and a Genoese and a Sardinian caulked the ships, while the natives of the area provided ropes and garments to make sails⁵³; on the spot multinational labor and skill-components, exemplifying the objectives of those who contracted the crews and resulting in mutual knowledge exchange. Again, the Elvas narrative makes a point of identifying people by their regions, as if to stress the importance of regionalism within a trans-national empire. They landed in Pánuco on September 10, 1543; destitute, some sick, but all grateful they had survived. It is unlikely they would have survived had they not profited from Cabeza de Vaca's experiences and transmitted knowledge. Correctly or not, all those who wrote narratives mentioned they passed by places where Cabeza de Vaca had been, legitimizing and linking their routes to the master narrative.

⁴⁹ *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas.* In CLAYTON et al., 1993: n. 22.

⁵⁰ HERNÁNDEZ DE BIEDMA, 1993: 224-246; RANGEL, 1993 – *Account Of The Northern Conquest And Discovery of Hernando de Soto (drawn from Historia general y natural de las Indias by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés) Newly Translated and Edited by John E. Worth With Footnotes by John E. Worth and Charles Hudson*, p. 249-306. In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 270, 294.

⁵¹ Naguatex was likely located on the Red River in the modern state of Louisiana.

⁵² *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships*, 149. *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas.* In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 149.

⁵³ It is to be noted that there may have been several other Portuguese among the expedition. *The Gentleman of Elvas, True Relation of the Hardships Suffered by Governor Hernando de Soto & Certain Portuguese Gentlemen During the Discovery of the Province of Florida. Now Newly Set Forth by a Gentleman of Elvas.* In CLAYTON et al., 1993: 151, 199, n. 131.

These three expeditions covered a large geographic portion of the United States and were the first windows into a Native American world facing the multiplicity of challenges European colonization caused. Nevertheless, beginning in 1513 several expeditions from Cuba explored Florida and the regions immediately westward. In the 1560s and 70s, the Portuguese were certainly involved in these endeavors but only a few emerge from the archives. Two of them were captured by Native Americans, lived among them for several years, and served as interpreters for other expeditions. One of them, Antonio Perez, a sailor, provided unique cultural information on the Tequesta and Calusa, influential and intriguing chiefdoms located in southern Florida⁵⁴.

Despite the loss of life and wealth and the scant rewards most of these expeditions seem to have provided the explorers, conquest fever did not diminish, but it was re-directed from Europe to New Spain (Mexico). Like the Coronado expedition, later colonization efforts originated in Mexico and contracted people already in New Spain, many second generation explorers, and some who had participated in previous expeditions, knew the country to be traversed, had had extensive contact with local indigenous groups and were capable of serving as interpreters and guides. Thus, the process and practices of conquest changed considerably as they arose from cultural and ethnic hybrid communities. Nevertheless the brutality and greed associated with conquest and domination did not abate; in fact, conquest became more virulent.

JUAN DE OÑATE'S COLONIZATION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE NEW MEXICO, 1595-1607

After the Coronado expedition, the Pueblo Natives in New Mexico had been mostly left alone but not forgotten. They were very industrious, grew abundant crops, made beautiful cloth blankets and exquisite pottery. Despite the fact that their adornments used mostly turquoise stones they mined, the rumors of abundant silver and gold had never died. Puebloan crafts and labor ethic made them perfect for the *encomienda* system⁵⁵. Forays into that territory in 1580s and 90s, in which some Portuguese were involved, did not result in long-term settlement, but by 1592 Don Juan de Oñate⁵⁶ may have been preparing to request royal permission to settle New Mexico, and he obtained the viceroy's approval in 1595⁵⁷. To fulfill the terms of his contract, Oñate needed to amass considerable resources at per-

⁵⁴ Archivo General de Indias, Patronato 257, No. 1, G.3, Ramo 20 – PEREZ, Antonio (1573) – *Testimony on the Indians of South Florida*. In *Testimony on the Indians of South Florida*, February 28, 1573.

⁵⁵ The *encomienda* system was a system of forced or unfree labor according to which the land grants included the labor of Native peoples living in the area. See for instance, SIMPSON, 1966.

⁵⁶ Juan de Oñate was from a prominent family and his wife was the granddaughter of Hernán Cortes and great-granddaughter of Montezuma, the last Aztec ruler.

⁵⁷ HAMMOND & REY, 1953: 5.

sonal expense and through those who joined the expedition and would potentially obtain *encomiendas* and share in the wealth to be had. This was an elaborate political and financial negotiation process. Final royal approval of the contract was delayed until the summer of 1597, and in early January 1598, one hundred and twenty-nine males gathered in far northern Mexico (Río de Conchos, southern Chihuahua, Mexico) and were finally on the move to New Mexico. All the colonizers were recruited in New Spain and several brought along wives, children and slaves, as this was a settlement expedition and not one of discovery⁵⁸. The royal contract required large quantities of a wide range of merchandise, from iron implements and weapons to shoes, socks, medical supplies, rosaries, gifts, and certainly food, spices, farm animals and horses⁵⁹.

The muster roll⁶⁰ taken on February 17, 1597 shows that at least eleven participants were Portuguese. Gaspar López de Tavora from Lisbon was given the job of Alguacil Real, an important political and legislative appointment. Lieutenant Juan González was from Terceira Island and brought along two servants; Commander (caudillo) Manuel Francisco was from Vila do Conde while Commander Gonzalo Hernández was from Coimbra. Gonzalo took along his «wife, children and family»⁶¹. Sancho de Acosta, was a soldier from Tavora, while Domingo Alvarez Canela was a soldier from Vila Nova de Portimão. Other Portuguese soldiers were Rodrigo Correa from Tavira, Antonio Rodriguez from Canes, Antonio Hernández from Braga, and Manuel Travasos from San Gonçalo de Amarante. Most of these people contributed horses, weapons and armor and very likely had to pay their way in in other ways.

The Muster Roll taken in January 1598 also shows Juan Rodriguez from Crestuma, Porto, who was about 40 years of age⁶². Most, if not all, of these participants had to be already in Mexico and likely represent second or third generation immigrants. This indicates that in the previous century, throughout Portugal, many people had migrated to Central America; a clear dynamic process of grassroots globalization. People were on the move for political and religious reasons, but certainly for economic ones; some settled down and some moved on to other discoveries and other conquests. Like the other expeditions, some of the participants originated from areas in Central and Western Europe, but this time the number of those who were shown to be from New Spain is overwhelming⁶³. The conquest and settlement run afoul soon enough as the Europeans' ruthless methods faced the resistance of the native groups. Severe punishments such as amputation of hands and feet and instances in which pueblos were destroyed and people burned alive neither diminished the indigenous resistance nor aided «European» settlement.

⁵⁸ HAMMOND & REY, 1953: 14.

⁵⁹ HAMMOND & REY, 1953:130-149.

⁶⁰ HAMMOND & REY, 1953: 150-158.

⁶¹ HAMMOND & REY, 1953: 154.

⁶² HAMMOND & REY, 1953: 290, 862.

⁶³ At least 60 participants are identified as being from Mexico or from other towns in New Spain. That identification referred to place of birth.

In September 1578, Sergeant Major Vicente de Zaldívar, Oñate's nephew, traveled to the Southern Plains to explore and hunt bison just as Coronado had done before, and in June 1601 again they returned to the plains retracing Coronado's quest for Quivira. The reports of these excursions provide some environmental and cultural information, but the bulk of the important material actually comes from the legal inquiries made after 1602 when Oñate lost control of the military and settlers and when many fled New Mexico while he was on the trip to Quivira.

The Valverde Inquiry resulted from internal strife among the colonizers and the atrocities committed against the Native Puebloans. The inquiry began in July 1601 and continued through 1602. Many people were called as witnesses and their legal testimonies recorded. The testimony of Juan Rodríguez from Crestuma, provides some of the most relevant information on Native Americans. Rodríguez stated that he was a pilot and had gone to New Mexico as commander of Captain Francisco de Zúñiga's company and that he had taken part in all expeditions and discoveries Oñate made. It is beyond the aims and scope of this chapter to describe in detail the evidence Rodríguez provided, but a few things should be mentioned. Prior to Oñate and Rodríguez's reports next to nothing was known about most groups on the plains, with the exception of the Querechos⁶⁴, very likely those we now call Plains Apache, and the Teyas, likely those we now call Wichita⁶⁵. Rodríguez observed and recorded information on the Jumano, the Escanxague, and also on the Apache. The information on the Jumano and Escanxague – the type and size of their settlements, social arrangements, clothing, body decoration, weaponry, dwellings, foods hunted, collected and obtained through trade, as well as on storage facilities is unique and invaluable. This is the *only* time we learn cultural information about the Escanxague. The group did not disappear from the historical record and was encountered again in the 1650s and 1680s, though the information we obtained from the later encounters is negligible. Rodríguez was attentive to cultural characteristics, and he synthesized what he witnessed adding that information to his legal statements in the Valverde Inquiry. As for the Jumano, the information Rodríguez provided confounds further a complicated picture of one of the most intriguing native groups researchers have encountered. That information is invaluable to put together the historical puzzle of this group, which has been the subject of many books and ideas among scholars in Mexico, New Mexico and Texas. As a pilot, Rodríguez was a trained, keen observer and his report on landscape signposts, water and resources was invaluable to anyone who wanted to traverse the forbidding Southern Plains⁶⁶. Other witnesses in the Valverde Inquiry who had traveled to the Southern Plains also provided information on

⁶⁴ The Querechos' subsistence strategies and later evidence makes it almost certain that these were Plains Apache. The Apache, a designation that incorporates several Native American groups, are Athabaskan speakers.

⁶⁵ Who the Teyas were is still a matter of heated debate. Cultural characteristics described in historical documents seem to indicate the Teyas were a group of the Wichita, a modern designation for a historical group that incorporated other groups. The Wichita are part of the large Caddoan linguistic family.

⁶⁶ HAMMOND & REY, 1953: 862-871.

these native groups but the detail, clarity and organization of Rodríguez's testimony stands apart from the others.

While economic information was generally recorded and provided particularly during expeditions, cultural information about native groups was either very sketchy or absent. Conversely, in legal inquiries witnesses tended to provide a great deal more information, often cumulative, as different people witnessed (and perceived) different events. In conflict situations with Native Americans, as most of these were, the colonizers recorded the number of males as arms bearers and potential enemies, seldom including women and children. In New Mexico, where indigenous groups were essential to a functional and profitable *encomienda* system, knowledge and understanding of native peoples was important; that was true for the Jumano but not for the Escanxague who were not *encomendados*, which makes Rodríguez detailed information more significant.

Despite several political moves and petitions, it was clear the colonization project was doomed since Oñate had lost the support and control of most colonizers and many had rebelled and fled New Mexico. On August 24, 1607, Oñate resigned his post as governor of New Mexico. Some of the colonizers remained in the Pueblo Country until 1609 and others stayed beyond that year and among these must have been some Portuguese. The Valverde Inquiry and other official inquiries resulted in the punishment of Oñate and several other colonizers though no Portuguese is listed; they were too far down the leadership pyramid.

CONCLUSIONS

The documents discussed in this paper are the foundational texts of Spanish America and the historical scaffolding of Native American studies in North America. The disastrous fate of the Narváez expedition ultimately led to the survival of only four individuals. Had the expedition succeeded in its objectives, these four survivors would not have walked from Texas to Northern Mexico, nor would they have experienced long-term and close contact with many Native American groups. Likewise, without the carpenter skills of Álvaro Fernandez, a Portuguese, Cabeza de Vaca might not have survived to write *La Relación*. That narrative brims with vicissitudes and struggle for survival; there is no wealth mentioned. And yet, the narrative became the linchpin for the next two Spanish expeditions and all those who participated in them, including the Portuguese, expected riches and glory. Instead, many of them perished and those who did not returned poorer but grateful to be alive. Oviedo thought they were all duped «and Narváez caught plenty of them, and other captains find as many as they wish, or at least more than they need, because the poverty of some and the greed of others and the craziness of nearly all doesn't let them realize what they are doing nor whom they are following»⁶⁷. If they were duped in their venture,

⁶⁷ BISHOP, 1933: 27.

as Oviedo stated, the credulity that drove those who applied for admission was common to most regardless of class, background or profession.

Another way of looking at the risk the Portuguese, and others, took is to consider that in a multinational empire, held together with institutional velcro, national power structures held little sway over the lives of citizens and the concept of «nation» became operationally irrelevant within the scope of empire. That was not the case for the identification with «region»: thus, the Gentleman of Elvas' insistence on self-identifying with Extremadura. Region referred to a specific landscape and kin, and it mattered as it grounded people in *their* ancestral land and in *their* traditional social structures; their place of belonging. This grassroots globalization movement across empires and continents meant that people profited from loopholes to look for other ways and places to construct their lives. The personal disconnect with «patria» was such they were willing to self-expatriate.

But regardless of the perspective one takes on this phenomenon of transcontinental movement it remains a fact that the actions of these actors had consequences. Single, pedestrian, personal and communal acts, such as swimming a river or building a barge, produced intended and unintended outcomes that altered the course of many of lives, tweaked the course of history multiple times and involved several Portuguese who, intentionally or not, were instrumental in shaping history.

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CONFLICT IN COURT: SUING THE DUTCH EAST AND WEST INDIA COMPANIES

KATE EKAMA*

INTRODUCTION

To date, opposition to the United Dutch East India Company (VOC) and its Atlantic counterpart, the West India Company (WIC), has not been sufficiently analysed¹. In the thousands of words written on the histories of the two chartered companies the details of how they were established and the processes of negotiation and contestation that surrounded the drafting, implementation and maintenance of the chartered monopolies have not been adequately explored. Accounts which simply state that the VOC was founded in 1602 or the WIC in 1621, while factually correct, appear to flatten out turbulent histories. In particular, the role of free agents² in the construction of «Dutch empires» in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans has not been critically analysed. As will come to the fore, the two go hand in hand – the Companies faced sustained opposition from free agents right from the first conception of united, chartered trading companies in the Republic.

The founding of both the VOC and the WIC was contested. Because of this, the creation of the companies is the necessary starting point in analysing types of opposition to

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² At this point I define free agency in terms of interests. Free agents are those individuals whose interests fell outside of the myriad interests of the chartered companies. For the purposes of studying opposition, I can further say that these interests were divergent. Because of this, free agents appeared in court suing or being sued by the Dutch East and West India Companies.

them. There is a paucity of research on opposition to the VOC in the early years of the seventeenth century. However, one opponent – the Magellan Company – will be highlighted to indicate not only that opposition existed but the forms it could take. In the case of the WIC, there were two clear types of opposition to the formation of the company – that is, internal opposition between the men drafting charters, and external opposition from merchants who sought to limit the scope of the proposed charters.

Opposition, specifically in the form of litigation, continued after the creation of the companies. An analysis of court sentences demonstrates the persistent nature of the companies' engagement with opponents in the legal arena. Furthermore, analysing the sentences brings to the fore the different opponents the companies faced, being both individuals and other companies.

Flemish merchant Isaac Le Maire provides a case study for analysing the engagement between free agents and the companies. Le Maire was involved in protracted opposition to the VOC, including in the form of litigation. The final section details his dealings with the VOC, concluding that charters were central to the way he opposed the company.

EARLY OPPOSITION: HOW THE COMPANIES WERE CREATED

In the late 1500s the seven United Provinces of the Northern Netherlands were in turmoil. They were in the midst of revolt against the Spanish, fighting to establish their independence from the Habsburg Empire as a free Republic. During this period, the Dutch position in European trade was already well established³ and ventures overseas – to Africa, Asia and the Atlantic – had been undertaken. Furthermore, Dutch merchants had worked in the service of, most famously, the Spanish and Portuguese overseas expansion⁴. Long-distance trade in particular went through a period of great expansion in the late 1500s and early 1600s. It is in this political, mercantile and social context that the creation of the Dutch East and West India Companies took place.

In this context, war and trade went hand in hand and separating out commercial from political and military motives is nearly impossible. For the VOC there is debate whether war or commerce was the primary motive for creating the company⁵. Such debate is absent on the impetus for chartering the WIC: The prevailing consensus is that the WIC was established primarily for political and military reasons, that is, to take the war against the unified Spanish and Portuguese crowns to the Atlantic⁶.

³ On the Baltic trade, or *«moedernegotie»* see, for instance, ISRAEL, 1998: 16, 18.

⁴ GAASTRA, 2003: 15. Gaastra points out the importance of the information that such men brought to the Republic, but publishing and in some instances translating the works meant that they were available to other companies too.

⁵ Gaastra, 2003: 19-20; GELDERBLUM *et al.*, 2011: 31.

⁶ HEIJER, 2005: 37-38; EMMER, 1981: 75.

A central premise of this research is that the way in which the Dutch East and West India companies were established was paramount. My starting point is the hypothesis that the way in which the companies were established played a very important role in shaping patterns of opposition that would continue over the period of the companies' existence. That is, issues which were not resolved during the process of setting up the two companies continued to surface in forms of opposition. This section explores early opposition, that is, in the years leading up to the granting of the first charters. By examining the processes by which the two companies were chartered, and key actors in these processes, a picture begins to emerge of contestation and early opposition.

THE CHARTERS

It was during the 1590s that ideas first started circulating regarding the chartering of a united East India Company and a West Indian counterpart. A few years later, in 1602, the VOC received its first charter. Strikingly, it was close to three decades later that the West India Company was chartered. The huge corpus of literature on the Dutch East and West India Companies indicates that opposition existed, but gives little insight into the nature and influence of that opposition in the chartering of the companies.

THE VOC

During the 1590s, there were numerous small trading firms established in the cities of Holland and Zeeland which conducted trade in Asia. These have come to be known as the *voorcompagnieën* (Early Companies)⁷. Aware of the intense competition between the companies, the States General sought to foster cooperation between them in the closing years of the sixteenth century, but this came to nought. The idea to merge the companies resurfaced with more momentum after the founding of the English East India Company in 1600⁸. Two years later, the company was granted its first charter, on 20 March 1602.

Because opposition to the merging of the *voorcompagnieën* has hardly featured in literature on the VOC, it seems that the process was a smooth one. However, this impression demands scrutiny. Two authors, Gaastra and Gederblom, indicate that opposition did exist and both authors characterise charter negotiations as «difficult»⁹. Interprovincial tension between Holland and Zeeland, and the desire to limit the power that Amsterdam would wield within the organisational structure of the new company contributed to these difficulties¹⁰.

⁷ GAASTRA, 2003: 17, 19. See also BRAKEL, 1908: 1-12.

⁸ GELDERBLOM *et al.*, 2011: 38.

⁹ GAASTRA, 2003: 20.

¹⁰ GAASTRA, 2003: 20; GELDERBLOM *et al.*, 2011: 44.

It is likely that opposition from Olivier van Noort's Magellan Company was an additional factor in the difficulty of charter negotiations. The VOC was formed through an amalgamation of pre-existing trading partnerships, but it was not a merger of all the *voorcompagnieën*. Van Noort's Magellan Company was active in the 1590s, but was excluded from the VOC in 1602. The basis of van Noort's opposition to the VOC was the charter he had been granted by the States General in 1597. In it he was granted concessions for voyages via the Magellan Strait to the Spice Islands of Southeast Asia¹¹. Somewhat surprisingly, article 34 of the VOC's first charter states that his concessions would remain intact, thus leaving a gaping hole in the VOC's monopoly¹². From 1603 onwards the Magellan Company and the VOC were involved in a long-standing dispute over cloves from Ternate which was first mediated by the States General and later argued before the *Hoge Raad*¹³. The companies are named as opposing parties in court sentences dated 1620, 1623 and 1633¹⁴. The continued existence of the Magellan Company negates the argument that the VOC monopoly was watertight because all *voorcompagnieën* were involved. Furthermore, it raises questions regarding inclusion and exclusion in the creation of the VOC, specifically why the Magellan Company was not part of the merger¹⁵. And lastly, it brings to the fore the importance of charters, an issue that will resurface in the discussion of Isaac Le Maire's dealings with the VOC.

THE WIC

The process of chartering the WIC was a complex one, encompassing opposition and negotiation which spanned decades. At times the impetus to create the company came from merchants, at other times it was the States General itself. And at various times merchants, the provincial states and the States General blocked the progress of draft charters¹⁶. Two threads of opposition, which I treat as internal and external, run through the contested process. The ebb and flow of political support for war against Spain, or for efforts towards peace, was also a factor which alternatively hampered and fostered progress.

From the very first floating of the idea of a chartered West India company by Willem Usselincx in the 1590s, there were detractors. External opposition came from merchants

¹¹ JAPIKSE, 1926: 681-2 (24 December 1657).

¹² WITTEVEEN, 2002: 94.

¹³ BIJLSMA, 1917: 26-44.

¹⁴ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Hoge Raad van Holland en Zeeland, nummer toegang 3.03.02, inventarisnummers 866, 867.

¹⁵ Bijlsma suggested that the Magellan Company was not considered a threat to the VOC and therefore was allowed to maintain its concessions, granted by the States General in 1597. BIJLSMA, 1917: 35. If this was indeed the case, it was a gross miscalculation, as the three decade long dispute between the VOC and the Magellan Company attests.

¹⁶ Specifically, in 1610, when merchants sought the assistance of the States General against the Portuguese who continued to capture Dutch ships despite the truce, it was Amsterdam merchants who blocked progress. In 1614, when support from merchants and prominent men had increased, it was the States General that opposed the creation of the WIC. ENTHOVEN, 2003: 40, 44.

who opposed either the geographic scope of the proposed monopoly or the goods it encompassed on the basis of their own commercial interests. In 1606, the year formal discussions on creating a WIC began, there were protests from Hoorn and Enkhuizen; they wanted to keep salt shipping out of the planned company's monopoly¹⁷. Years later, in 1620, Amsterdam merchants trading with Guinea tried to limit the monopoly of the proposed company to the Americas in order to protect their own interests in Africa¹⁸.

Internal opposition took the form of competing draft charters in which different conceptions of overseas expansion, and perhaps one can even say different views of empire were worked out in the charter articles. Willem Usselinx and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt were key actors in this internal struggle. Based on his experience of the Iberian New World, early in the process Usselinx advocated trade and settlement as the twin pillars of successful expansion¹⁹. He also proposed a dual structure for the company directorship which would keep matters of trade and state separate. A board of directors consisting of chief shareholders would manage trade and shipping while a Council for the Indies, modelled on the Iberian *Real y Supremo Consejo de Indias*, would control war, colonization and justice. A competing charter drafted by Oldenbarnevelt at about the same time in the 1610s envisioned a different structure which, while giving the States General a seat on the board, essentially put company business in the hands of merchants²⁰.

In 1617 internal opposition once again came to the fore. The States General's commission favoured Usselinx's proposal and the powerful role that it suggested for the States General, Prince of Orange and noblemen in the management of the company. However, the States of Holland blocked the progress of this charter and supported instead van Oldenbarnevelt and his commitment to peace with Spain. When he was executed the following year, the opportunity arose to overhaul the Amsterdam city council and install men of a pro-war, pro-WIC outlook. At this stage the States of Holland created a commission to review both the 1606 charter and Usselinx's later version with the intention to combine them into one plan. By December 1619 this had been achieved by essentially ignoring Usselinx's ideas. The draft charter was submitted to the States General in the early months of 1620 but underwent significant alterations in the following months. The power of the States General was reviewed and revised and in the March 1620 version finally settled – not only would the States General be allowed to choose the final member of the board of directors, it would be allowed to send more than one delegate to the meetings²¹. Two other amendments were included in the March 1620 charter: Groningen and Friesland were given a chamber; and the States General's financial contribution to the company was

¹⁷ BICK, 2012: 98-9.

¹⁸ ENTHOVEN, 2003: 44.

¹⁹ BICK, 2012: 93, 95.

²⁰ BICK, 2012: 100-105.

²¹ BICK, 2012: 105-111.

changed to turn the States General into a shareholder. Despite opposition from the Amsterdam city council, the amendments were retained in the charter²².

Plans progressed and a final draft was produced in October 1620²³. It was approved by the States General on 3 June 1621, almost thirty years after Usselincx had first proposed the idea. In the meantime, Usselincx had departed for Sweden, disappointed that his colonial designs had been foiled²⁴.

Even after the long road to granting the charter, the greatest obstacle still had to be overcome: financing the company²⁵. According to Den Heijer, «problems between the shareholders and directors of the VOC had made many investors wary of participating in similar ventures»²⁶. The company needed two years to raise the capital required to undertake its chartered activities. By mid-1623 the company's share capital amounted to 7.108.161 *gulden* and had been increased to an amount of 17.090.000 *gulden* by 1629. And there it remained until bankruptcy in 1674²⁷.

CHARTER RENEWAL

The charters of the VOC and WIC were granted for limited periods of time. This gave all parties the chance to opt out at certain points – the States General could renegotiate its position, and merchants could choose whether or not to continue their participation. The years in which the charters came up for renewal brought various tensions to a head. A particular issue which arose was merging the VOC and WIC.

The VOC charter of 1602 was granted for 21 years, thus it was up for renewal in 1623. In response to agitation from discontent shareholders, alterations were made to directors' privileges before the charter was renewed²⁸.

During the 1640s, renewal of the second VOC charter (granted in 1623) coincided with the expiration of the first WIC charter (granted in 1621). The Dutch West India Company faced sustained challenges from merchants who sought to protect or promote their own interests with the result that «opponents of the company had gradually managed to curtail its monopoly» by the mid-seventeenth century²⁹. Concerned to halt the further erosion of the WIC's monopoly, WIC directors sent an early request to the States General in

²² This coincided with opposition from Amsterdam merchants trading with Guinea mentioned above. It is quite possible that these merchants were part of the Guinea Company, created in 1614 and later folded into the WIC. Furthermore, they may have chosen the Amsterdam city council as the channel through which to oppose the charter. ENTHOVEN, 2003: 44.

²³ This paragraph is based on BICK, 2012: 105-109, quote 107.

²⁴ HEIJER, 2002: 28.

²⁵ The WIC was by no means alone in its financial struggle. The Portuguese East India Company required four years before sufficient subscriptions had been collected in order for the company to be incorporated. ANTUNES & TORRES, 2005: 166-82.

²⁶ My translation of the Dutch original. HEIJER, 2002: 33.

²⁷ HEIJER, 2002: 33.

²⁸ GEPKEN-JAGER, 2005: 66-67.

²⁹ HEIJER, 2003: 97.

the hopes of completing a timeous renewal. However, the States General delegated the task to the States of Holland. This was the usual procedure, explained by the fact that the province of Holland was the economic heart of the Republic. Den Heijer goes so far as to say that «[w]ithout the consent of the States of Holland no charter could be ratified»³⁰. The States of Holland came up with the idea to merge the VOC and WIC³¹. The directors of the WIC certainly saw it as a way to rescue the West India Company from ruin. Their enthusiasm for a merger was countered by the VOC's dismissal of the idea. However, the States of Holland exercised its political strength and convinced the States General to renew the VOC's charter for periods of between three and six months only, in an effort to pressure the VOC into compliance. For their part, the WIC even tried to sew discord among the VOC directors by exploiting the ever-present tensions between Amsterdam and Zeeland. Their last-ditch attempt was to circulate a pamphlet outlining the great benefits of a merger between the two trading companies. These tactics were unsuccessful. Finally, in 1647 a satisfactory deal was brokered whereby it was agreed that the VOC would pay 1.5 million *gulden* to the WIC and the idea of fusing the two companies was put to rest. The States General approved the agreement and renewed both charters for a period of 25 years³².

While the idea of a merger between the East and West India Companies may have been put aside, the WIC continued to see the VOC as its salvation. In 1714 the WIC suggested it be taken over by the VOC – the VOC would gain the possessions and rights of the WIC without any of its debt. Furthermore, the VOC would receive 1.1 million *gulden* which had to be turned into VOC shares. The idea was dismissed by the VOC directors and was not mentioned again.

LITIGATION: A WAR OF WORDS

Conflicts between the Dutch East and West India Companies and merchants were fought out in the courts of the Dutch Republic. The focus here is on one specific court, the *Hoge Raad van Holland, Zeeland en West-Friesland*, which was established in 1582 to replace the *Grote Raad van Mechelen*. The *Hoge Raad* functioned until 1795³³. The *Hoge Raad* was not the only court in which litigants could make their cases but the fact that it

³⁰ Not only did Holland contribute more than 50% of the taxes collected by the States General, according to Israel the States of Holland «were the most important decision-making body in the United Provinces» from the departure of Leicester in the late sixteenth century. ISRAEL, 1998: 276-277. Cf. the power of the States of Holland to delay the VOC charter renewal.

³¹ What this says about the States of Holland's colonial vision is certainly something to consider. And who exactly within the States of Holland came up with such a proposal?

³² HEIJER, 97-102; GEPKEN-JAGER, 2005: 67.

³³ It is necessary to clarify that the Hoge Raad under discussion here is not the same court as the Hoge Raad which exists in the Netherlands today. As van Rhee states, they have only the name in common. The present Hoge Raad was established during the nineteenth century. C. H. van Rhee, foreword to *Hoge Raad van Holland, Zeeland en West-Friesland (1582-1795): De hoofdlijnen van het procederen in civiele zaken voor de Hoge Raad zowel in eerste instantie als in hoger beroep* by LE BAILLY & VERHAS, 2006: 9-12. See also VERHAS, 1997; VAN RHEE, 2006.

was the appellate court means that it provides a window onto various instances of the same case as it came up through the lower courts. Furthermore, because the jurisdiction of the *Hoge Raad* was not limited to one province, using the records of the *Hoge Raad* does not limit the geographic scope of this study as the choice of a different court would³⁴. This section comprises an analysis of sentences passed involving the two chartered companies and the opponents that they faced in this specific court throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

SENTENCES

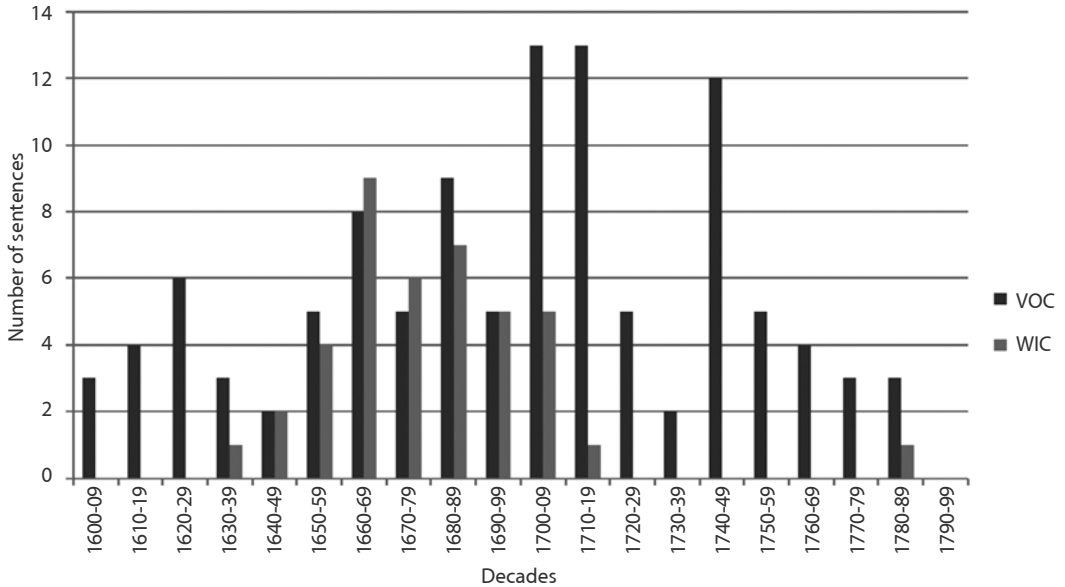
According to the records of the *Hoge Raad* the Dutch East and West India Companies were named as either initiators or targets of legal action in 151 sentences between 1602 when the VOC received its first charter, and 1795, the year in which the *Hoge Raad* ceased to function in its original form³⁵. Figure 1 shows the frequency by decade of sentences passed involving the two companies.

Two striking features of the distribution must be highlighted. The first is the difference in number of sentences involving the two companies. Of the 151 entries represented, 110 of those involve the VOC (73%) compared to 41 for the WIC (27%). The significant difference in number of sentences is surprising given the focus in scholarship on the whittling down of the WIC monopoly and the lack of attention to opposition faced by the VOC.

The second feature is the consistency over time of sentences involving the VOC compared to the grouping of cases against the WIC between 1630 and 1710, followed by a single sentence in the 1780s. Of the 41 WIC sentences 21 were passed between 1621 and 1674, the period of the first WIC, while 20 sentences were passed in the 120 years of the existence of the second WIC. According to the distribution, the first WIC appeared in sentences more consistently than the second WIC; sentences are condensed in the first few decades of its existence, with one outlier in the final years of the second WIC's existence.

³⁴ This is a significant point because of the tension between Holland and Zeeland, and diverging provincial interests. By focusing on the *Hoge Raad* I do not limit this study of opposition to one province or one set of interests.

³⁵ In some cases it is the company that is mentioned while in others it is the directors who are referred to; ie «De Oost Indische Compagnie tegen X» or «Y contra de Bewindhebbers van de West Indische Compagnie».

Figure 1: Distribution of sentences by decade

Source: This is based on the number of entries pertaining to the VOC and WIC in the *Alfabetische Klapper*. NL-HaNA, Hoge Raad Holland en Zeeland, 3.03.02, *Naamindex Hoge Raad* 1582-1795.

This analysis of sentences indicates the persistent nature of opposition against the companies. Opposition and contestation were not confined to the years around the granting of the first charters to each company but continued to surface over the period of their existence. For the VOC in particular, opposition in the form of litigation arose quite consistently over the two centuries during which the company was active.

OPPONENTS

The records of the *Hoge Raad* indicate that opponents of the companies were individuals – both men and women – as well as other charter companies. Specifically, Isaac Le Maire's Australia Company and Olivier van Noort's Magellan Company are listed as opponents of the VOC. The nature of the Australia Company's conflict with the VOC will be elaborated upon in the form of a case study in the following section. As has already been noted regarding the Magellan Company, it was an opponent of the VOC in sentences dated 1620, 1623 and again in 1633³⁶. While the VOC faced both individuals and companies as opponents in the *Hoge Raad*, no companies are listed as opponents of the WIC.

An explanation for this may be found in the nature of the relationship between the *voorcompagnieën* and the VOC on the one hand, and the relationship between the compa-

³⁶ NL-HaNA, Hoge Raad Holland en Zeeland, 3.03.02, inv.nrs. 866, 867.

nies trading in the Atlantic and the WIC. In the case of the VOC, there are clear lines of continuity that can be traced from the *voorcompagnieën*; this is seen in the location of the company's chambers, and the individuals who made up the board of directors. No such continuity can be traced between the companies in the Atlantic and the WIC³⁷. In creating the WIC it has been indicated that the Guinea Company and the New Netherland Company were incorporated into the WIC, but it remains to be seen which companies were left out, and why³⁸. How these different relationships between the companies relate to opposition and the kinds of opponents the companies faced requires further research, in particular into dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

According to Bick, the board of directors of the West India Company, the *Heeren XIX*, had a team of lawyers employed to deal with lawsuits brought against the company by foreign merchants and governments. Simon van Beaumont who was the secretary to the city of Middelburg and a WIC director himself, was one such lawyer, as was Amsterdam lawyer Gijsbert Rudolphij³⁹. Whether or not the VOC did something similar has not yet been confirmed. But an indication that they did is given by Gepken-Jager who states that from 1614 the VOC employed an advocate who «was more or less a secretary in permanent employ of the VOC»⁴⁰. What exactly this functionary's legal responsibilities were remains to be discovered, but it is not impossible that like the WIC, the VOC employed a team of legally trained men to deal with their lawsuits.

The details of sentences and opponents presented here are the preliminary results of a foray into the *Hoge Raad's* records. Directions for future research include eliciting patterns of settlement and sentencing by matching the *Hoge Raad's* records of cases brought to the court and those for which a sentence was passed. One of the functions of the counsellors of the *Hoge Raad* was to mediate in disputes and find common ground for settlement⁴¹. This indicates that arbitration and mediation were in fact institutionalised. Moreover, there were instances in which the States General reserved the right to adjudicate a case⁴². Sometimes, the impulse came from the *Hoge Raad* – there were cases in which the court declared itself unwilling/unable to pass judgment and deferred to the States General, in an acknowledgement of the fact that when the companies were involved there was more at work than the application of the law. Politics were at play⁴³.

³⁷ Van Winter raises this point and provides a two-part explanation. Both the looser structure of the Atlantic companies and the different nature of Atlantic trade (shorter sailing time, less preparation required) contributed to the lack of continuity. WINTER, 1978: 1-2.

³⁸ ENTHOVEN, 2003: 44

³⁹ BICK, 2012: 129.

⁴⁰ GEPKEN-JAGER, 2005: 52.

⁴¹ LE BAILLY & VERHAS, 2006: 15.

⁴² The States General had no formal jurisdiction in this area thus where exactly they got the authority and how they justified and legitimised this may be revealing not only of the power of the States General but surely of the relationship between the States General and the chartered Companies.

⁴³ In this context the companies appear more and more like semi-government institutions. Considering that the States General was subsidising the WIC, it is quite possible that the States General took a more pronounced role in the adjudication of cases involving the Company.

ISAAC LE MAIRE

Isaac Le Maire was not one to shrink from conflict. The once-director of the VOC was involved in a number of disputes with the Company during the early 1600s⁴⁴. In 1606 he was suspected of falsifying company accounts and forced to resign his position as director. In 1609 he publicly criticised company policy and was found to be speculating with VOC shares⁴⁵. In 1614 Le Maire established his own company, the Australia Company, under the aegis of which his son Jacob, accompanied by Willem Schouten, set sail in search of a new passage to Asia in 1615. And they found one, via Le Maire Strait. But a number of complications arose when their ship, *Eendracht*, was seized by the VOC in 1616⁴⁶.

The misadventure provided an opportunity for Le Maire to oppose the VOC. In the report submitted to the States General on the crew's return, Le Maire presented a series of requests. Essentially he asked for a monopoly on the newly discovered passage to Asia and the freedom to trade in India, Africa, China, Japan and any other places the Australia Company reached via the newly-discovered strait⁴⁷. In addition, he requested that the States General order the VOC to pay compensation for the seizure of the *Eendracht*⁴⁸. The States General decided that the two matters should be addressed individually. The compensation question was delegated to a tribunal consisting of four representatives from the *Hoge Raad* and three judges from the *Provinciale Raad van Holland*. In November 1619 the tribunal announced its decision in favour of Le Maire: the VOC would indeed have to pay compensation to the Australia Company. But it was another three years before the amount was set. By that time, 1622, the States General had still not reached a decision regarding the second, far more serious matter. For years the States General had been occupied with how to deal with the discovery of Le Maire Strait and its implications for the VOC monopoly in Asia as well as the possibility of a chartered West India company⁴⁹. Le Maire passed away before the dispute was settled and surely would not have been pleased with the outcome. Barreveld comments: «The [Australia] Company was defeated by the power of the strongest, but not by the law»⁵⁰.

⁴⁴ For an overview of Le Maire's dealings with the VOC including disputes, the first of which began in 1602, the year the Company was chartered, see BARREVELD, 2002: 13-32. Also, SCHOORL, 1969.

⁴⁵ WITTEVEEN, 2002: 64; GELDERBLUM *et al.*, 2011: 30.

⁴⁶ BARREVELD, 2002: 156-158.

⁴⁷ It was a condition of the Australia Company's charter that they had to report to the States General on return of the fleet. BARREVELD, 2002: 163.

⁴⁸ BARREVELD, 2002: 164-165.

⁴⁹ BARREVELD, 2002: 168, 174.

⁵⁰ BARREVELD, 2002: 181.

CONCLUSION

Isaac Le Maire and fellow free agents were the characters at the centre of opposition to the Dutch East and West India Companies. These individuals, and the companies of which they were a part, were key figures in the sustained opposition faced by the companies, which started as early as ideas to create the companies arose and continued over the period of their existence.

Early opposition to the VOC and WIC began when the first ideas to create the companies came up in the late 1500s. Disputes between Holland and Zeeland played a role in the difficulty of charter negotiations for the founding of the VOC. In addition, van Noort's Magellan Company, which was first granted concessions to trade in the Spice Islands of Southeast Asia in 1597, arose as an opponent of the united company. The continued existence of the Magellan Company after 1602 is evidence that the VOC was not a merger of all the *voorcompagnieën*. The fact that the Magellan Company did not become part of the VOC had serious consequences for the VOC's monopoly, as the protracted dispute between the two companies shows. During the process of creating the WIC, opposition took internal and external forms. Competing draft charters and attendant colonial visions were the manifestation of internal opposition while opposition to the scope of the planned monopoly from merchants trying to protect their trading interests can be categorised as external opposition.

Once the VOC and WIC had received their first charters, in 1602 and 1621 respectively, opposition continued and the companies found themselves in court where they were involved in sentences passed by the *Hoge Raad*. Numerically, the VOC was named in far more sentences than the WIC between the early 1600s and 1790s. Analysing the distribution of the sentences leads to the conclusion that the VOC faced persistent opposition in the form of litigation. Unlike the WIC, parties opposing the VOC were both individuals and companies. Explanations for the difference between the opponents faced by the companies could be sought in the structure of trade in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans before the creation of the VOC and WIC respectively.

Isaac Le Maire, initially a VOC director, soon became an opponent of the company for which he lost his position as director. After he had been excluded he did not give up on long-distance trade. When the way that Le Maire opposed the VOC is seen alongside the concurrent disputes between the Magellan Company and the VOC, the centrality of charters is unavoidable.

This research goes beyond merely filling the lacuna in existing scholarship on free agency and opposition to the companies, presenting the idea that the way in which the companies were created had consequences for the kinds of opposition they faced over the period of their existence. It is hypothesised that the companies actually faced different types of opposition. The continuation of this research on the twin themes of opposition

and free agency will contribute to understanding mechanisms of opposition to the Dutch companies, the role of free agency in these processes, and furthermore, challenge traditional views on the construction of empire.

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MONOPOLIZING ARGUMENTS: OUTSIDE LOBBYING IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC FOR FREE TRADE TO BRAZIL, 1630-1638

JORIS VAN DEN TOL*

«I pray», an anonymous pamphleteer wrote in 1636, «that other distinguished individuals, who could have written this ten times better than I did, will not be suspected of being the author, but that rather my reasons and arguments will be weight instead of carefully scrutinizing this author»¹. From experience, the author knew what was going to happen after he had started the public discourse on free trade to Brazil. Pamphlets contrasting his view would try to harm his name or discredit his authority. Instead, the author wanted a productive discussion stemming from his arguments; he wanted a public discourse on free trade to Brazil.

The object of this chapter is to investigate how individuals reacted to the creation of colonial monopolies. In order to do so I will focus on the public discourse on free trade to Brazil. The scope of the chapter will be limited to the way these individuals tried to influence the decisions of the States General by lobbying for their own interests. Lobbying can, according to political science theories based on modern day practice, be divided into direct (or inside) lobbying and outside lobbying. The main difference between the two is that direct lobbying aims to obtain a majority of the decision makers, whereas outside lobbying aims to show and increase support by the public for a particular cause. The latter

* Leiden University.

¹ «Bidde derhalven, datmen andere apparente personen, die het thienmaels beter als wel ick hadden kunnen doen, buyten verdacht wille houden, ende vele eer ende meer die redenen ende argumenta te ponderen als curieuschicken naer den autheur te vorschen». Knuttel 4425: Anonymous, *Reden van dat die West-Indische Compagnie oft handelinge niet alleen profijtelyck maer oock noodtsaeckelijck is tot behoudenis van onsen staet* (no printer, no place 1636) 8.

process is called «socializing the conflict»². The printing of pamphlets for public discourse was ideal for socializing a conflict in an attempt to outside lobby in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. In fact, it has been argued that certain public individuals were very susceptible to pressure from pamphlets expressing the «public opinion»³. The use of pamphlets became so widespread that, for example, during the Eighty Years' War (1568-1648) no less than 5.336 pamphlets were printed, ranging from one (1570) to 326 (1618) per year⁴. From the absolute peak year in pamphlet printing, 1672, nearly nine hundred pamphlets have survived⁵.

Historical research on these pamphlets is a relatively new and not very widespread practice. Traditionally, pamphlets have been used to illustrate a historical narrative, functioning solely as striking examples or as suitable quotes. The first to systematically study pamphlets in their own right was Pieter Geurts, who, in his dissertation, analyzed different themes in the «war of words» during the early years of the Dutch revolt⁶. Still, Geurts' book did not study the *function* of pamphlets in history. In 1987 Craig Harline wrote a monograph in which he viewed «pamphlets not as repositories of historical facts but as a historical phenomenon in their own right»⁷. He studied their function and made dissociations based on types of pamphlets, audiences and subjects. Furthermore, his definition of a pamphlet as «[printed] writings of immediate and direct or indirect political significance» that were «intended sometimes to inform but usually to persuade the reader about current events», has been widely used since⁸.

Still, it was only when pamphlets came available online through TEMPO that widespread studies on pamphlets and public discourse really took off⁹. There is an edited volume from 2011 that contains articles by a large number of historians working on pamphlets and public discourse¹⁰. Additionally, several dissertations have been written since 2008 that examine the function of pamphlets in the Early Modern Dutch Republic¹¹. Although these dissertations have only studied the relationship between pamphlets and public opinion

² KOLLMAN, 1998: 6-12; LOWERY, 2005: 6.

³ T HART, 1993: 833.

⁴ Based on search results from The Early Modern Pamphlets Online (TEMPO) which incorporates the pamphlet collection of the Royal Library (Knuttel collection) and the collection of the Groningen University library (Van Alphen collection) which together consist of nearly all the known Dutch pamphlets of the seventeenth century.

⁵ The peaks in 1618 and 1672 can of course be explained through the events in the Dutch Republic: The Synod of Dordrecht in 1618 together with the faction battle between Van Oldenbarnevelt and Stadtholder Maurits, and the *Rampjaar* (Disaster year) in 1672 together with the murder of Johan and Cornelis de Witt.

⁶ GEURTS, 1956.

⁷ HARLINE, 1987.

⁸ HARLINE, 1987: 3.

⁹ See: <http://tempo.idcpublishers.info/>

¹⁰ Not strictly focusing on pamphlets, but studying public identity/opinion/discourse partly using pamphlets is another edited volume: POLLMANN & SPICER, 2007; DEEN *et al.*, 2011.

¹¹ DEEN & MOORDDAM, 2012; REINDERS, 2008; HARMS, 2010; STENSLAND, 2011.

or the pamphlets as a part of the general public discourse, they have failed to take their conclusions a step further¹². How did this public discourse or public opinion influence the course of historical events? After all, the goal of printing *persuasive* pamphlets was not solely to contribute to a public discourse. Rather, pamphleteering was an instrument for outside lobbying. This chapter, therefore, aims to answer the question how did individuals react to- and/or lobbied for the creation of monopolies in Dutch Brazil by studying outside lobbying in pamphlets. After presenting a brief historical overview, the pamphlets will first be analyzed quantitatively and then qualitatively for their content, showcasing that outside lobbying was an essential part of the discourse of free trade in the 1630s.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first attempt by the West India Company (WIC) to acquire territories of the Portuguese in Brazil was in 1624, leading to a short-lived victory in the Bay of All Saints in the wealthy captaincy of Bahia. A second attempt on the Portuguese Atlantic colony resulted in the capture of Recife in the captaincy of Pernambuco in 1630, from where the territorial ambitions of the WIC in Brazil took form. Almost immediately, on October 16, 1630, the trade to Brazil was opened both to the inhabitants of the United Provinces and to the inhabitants of Pernambuco who were willing to submit to Dutch rule. The only conditions merchants had to uphold were that they would have to use the Company's ships and needed to pay various fees and taxes (*recognitie*). If one was a shareholder in the WIC, he would receive a five per cent discount on the freight rate. Furthermore, in order to stimulate migration to the colony, immigrants would not have to pay import taxes on anything they brought from Europe and also received a free trip to the colony¹³. This all was announced multiple times via pamphlets in the Republic.

¹² There is – to my knowledge – one exception to be made. There is an article by Michiel van Groesen in which he argues that news circulation about the successful capture of Bahia, and the way that image was kept alive by different authors, contributed to public support for a second invasion. See: VAN GROESEN, 2011: 167-193.

¹³ Knuttel 3998: Anonymous, *West-Indische Compagnie. Articulen, met approbatie van de Ho:Mog: Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, provisioneelijck beraemt by Bewinthebberen vande Generale geotroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie ter vergaderinghe vande Neghenthien, over het open ende vry stellen vanden Handel ende Negotie op de stadt Olinda de Parnambuco, ende Custen van Brasil* (Paulus Aertsz van Ravesteijn, Amsterdam 1630); Knuttel 3999: Anonymous, *West-Indische Compagnie. Articulen, met approbatie van de Ho:Mog: Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, provisioneelijck beraemt by Bewinthebberen vande Generale geotroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie ter vergaderinghe vande Neghenthien, over het open ende vry stellen vanden Handel ende Negotie op de stadt Olinda de Parnambuco, ende Custen van Brasil* (Weduwe en erfgenamen van Simon Moulett, ordinaris drukkers der Ed:Mog: Heeren Staten van Zeelandt, Middelburg 1630); Knuttel 4152: Anonymous, *West-Indische Compagnie. Articulen, met approbatie van de Ho:Mog: Heeren Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, provisioneelijck beraemt by Bewinthebberen vande Generale geotroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie ter vergaderinghe vande Neghenthien, over het open ende vry stellen vanden Handel ende Negotie op de stadt Olinda de Parnambuco, ende Custen van Brasil. Hier zijn achter by ghedruckt de vryheden van Nieu-Nederlant* (Marten Jansz. Brandt, boeck-verkooper by de Nieuwe Kerk in de gereformeerde catechismus, Amsterdam 1631).

Despite the privileges, these regulations attracted neither a significant amount of merchants, nor a recognizable number of immigrants, mainly because of the ongoing (guerrilla) warfare in the area surrounding Recife and Olinda. Gradually, however, things improved when the conquests of the Dutch extended into the rest of the province of Pernambuco. Especially the clearing of *Varzea*, the rural area west of Recife, made peaceful commerce and settlement more likely and more attractive. The fact that the Company successfully maintained the colony for nearly four years also increased the confidence of merchants and migrants. When things were faring better, the WIC changed its policy on January 9, 1634. The import of provisions and munitions into Brazil, and the export of Brazil-wood to the fatherland now became monopolised by the Company. The sugar was abundantly used by the inhabitants of Dutch Brazil to acquire European provisions and manufactured goods. Migrants were still given free passage, but had to pay for their own food and drinks on the ships. Because of the increased number of inhabitants, the prices for housing increased rapidly¹⁴.

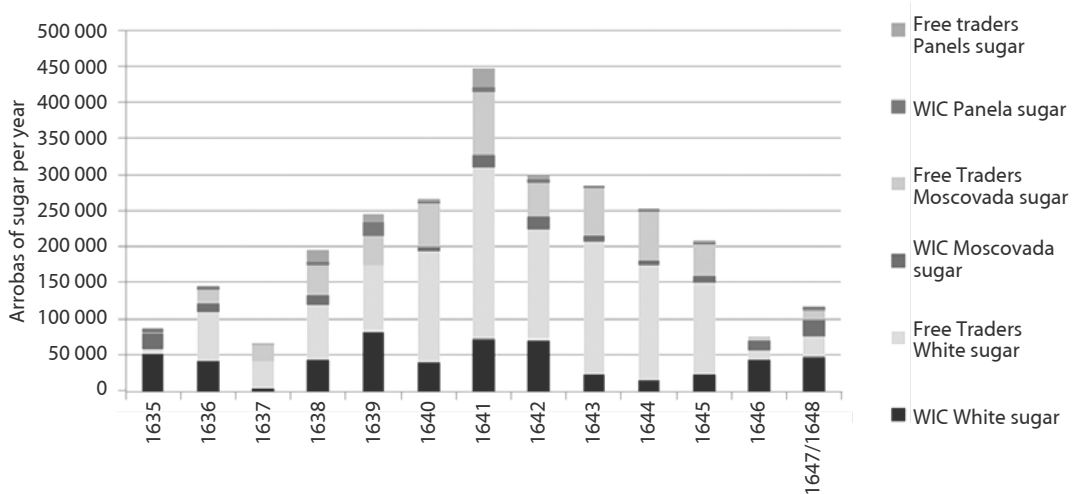
However, some of the investors of the WIC were troubled with the fact that the Company was losing a lot of revenue in the on-going war against the Portuguese, while private traders accumulated quite a lot of income. Why would the WIC have to bear all the costs, while others profited? Investors were especially upset with the Luso-Brazilian planters, who were now trading as free as when the Portuguese were still ruling. The opinion that the Catholics were getting rich at the expense of honest Calvinist investors, rang especially loud in Zeeland. Moreover, this bitterness stemmed from shareholders in the chambers of Maze and Stad en Lande. It was in Amsterdam where most of the support for free trade originated. Their reason for disliking the manner in which business was done was that the Company did not have sufficient means to buy all the sugar in Brazil, nor did it have the infrastructure and money to supply all the necessary imports to Brazil. Besides, the Company was profiting from the fees, taxes and tolls paid by the free traders¹⁵. As can be seen in Graph 1, the sugar imports in the Netherlands done by free traders (light colours) hugely exceeded the imports done by the company (dark colours). Unfortunately, no data on free trade before 1635 have survived¹⁶.

¹⁴ BOXER, 1957: 76.

¹⁵ BOXER, 1957: 76-77.

¹⁶ This does not mean of course that there were no sugar imports in the Republic before that period or before the existence of the WIC of course. See: STRUM, 2012: 169-175; EBERT, 2003: 49-75.

Graph 1: Sugar imports in the Dutch Republic from Brazil in *arrobas*, sorted by transporter and type of sugar, 1635-1648. (Based on Wätjen)¹⁷



On December 27, 1636 the States General passed a resolution authorizing the WIC to resume and enforce its monopoly as it was stated in the original charter. This decision aggrieved many merchants. Some of them already had goods in transit to Brazil at the time, so they argued that ships that had left the Dutch ports prior to December 27 should be allowed passage on the old terms. The States General rejected this request, but decided that the WIC should pay a fair price for the ships and goods offered by the free traders. Strikingly, the general board of the WIC (*Heeren XIX*) discovered they neither had enough cash to pay for all of the moving assets nor did they have the possibility to organize the supply of basic needs in the colony themselves. Therefore they decided to ask the States General to comply with the demands of the free traders. Again, the States General refused, but were eventually persuaded by the States of Holland to allow free trade¹⁸. The joy for the free traders was short-lived as in early 1637 the States General changed its mind again. The States General were formed by representatives of the different provinces in the Republic. This meant that different alliances aiming for majorities needed to be formed constantly. These far from straightforward decisions by the States General are a testimony of this bargaining and constant negotiating within the different interests within the highest political authority of the Dutch Republic. The going back and forth of the political decision-making fueled the public discourse by pamphleteers on the topic of free trade; especially in the years 1637-1638.

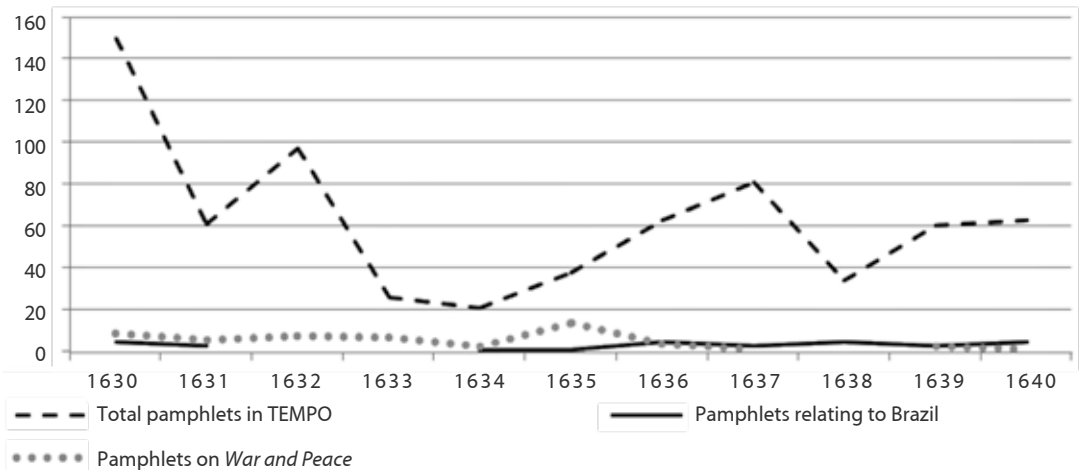
¹⁷ WÄTJEN, 1921.

¹⁸ BOXER, 1957: 77-78.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF PAMPHLETS

Pamphlets were printed and distributed regularly in the Dutch Republic during the Early Modern period. The impact of a pamphlet could be very large. Printruns of more than 1000 copies were not unusual, and the pamphlets were passed along from one person to the other¹⁹. For the period under scrutiny in this article, 1630-1638, five hundred seventy-one pamphlets have been preserved in the TEMPO database. Of these, twenty-three were related to Dutch Brazil. In comparison, in that same period, fifty-two pamphlets on the issue of war and peace were distributed, obviously one of the most hotly debated topics during the Eighty Years' War²⁰. So, even though twenty-three may not seem much, it is in fact a respectable amount. Especially if one takes into account that there was a lot of news published as pamphlets, pamphlets on «strange» occurrences such as shooting stars (*staertsterren*) and decrees by the States General. In 1638, out of the thirty-four pamphlets that were published in total, five (almost fifteen percent) were related to Dutch Brazil.

Graph 2: Number of Pamphlets in TEMPO database per year (1630-1640).



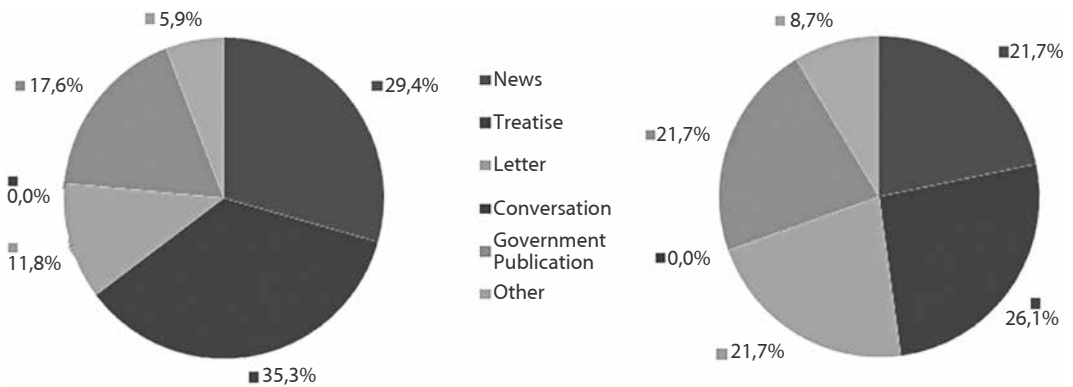
When examining the pamphlets on Brazil more closely, the first thing that stands out is that none of these pamphlets is a fictional conversation between two or more characters. This very popular genre called dialogue (*praetje*) is found in different discourses throughout the seventeenth century. However, it apparently was not in fashion for this type of discussion. In comparison, of the pamphlets arguing in favor of a lasting peace instead of a truce in the years 1607-1609, nearly one-third was of this genre. A second thing that becomes clear on first inspection is that a small minority of the pamphlets about Brazil

¹⁹ DUKE, 1999: 115-132, 123-124; HARLINE, 1987: 21.

²⁰ STENSLAND, 2011: 227-252; REINDERS, 1595: 141-162.

is not an argumentative narrative, but is in fact a government publication, news or news in the form of a letter. When comparing unique pamphlets to reprints, it is striking that treatises are not reprinted at all, while a (fictional?) letter about the way the Company, Admiralty and States General spend too much money was reprinted four times. The other reproductions are articles announcing free trade to Brazil printed by order from the States General. These were printed simultaneously in Middelburg and Amsterdam and were later reprinted and republished together with the privileges for New Netherland²¹. The only persuasive text about free trade and monopoly that was reprinted is a pamphlet that compared the situation in Brazil to seventeenth-century board game called *verkeerspel*²².

Graph 3: Pamphlets on Brazil, divided by type of pamphlet. Left is unique prints (n=17), right includes reproductions (n=23).



By studying the originals in comparison to the reprints, it becomes clear that there is a distinction between rhetorical and economic value of pamphlets. When a pamphlet is published its arguments are added to the public discourse, this is its rhetorical value. All the following editions of the same pamphlet are produced only for their economic value. For relatively little costs, these copies could be sold. Apparently they were high in demand and could be sold, even though they were not new or original. Of course, this is not true for government publications, but the letter criticizing the amount of money wrongfully spent by the institutions clearly sold the most.

Even though the majority of the pamphlets related to Brazil published between 1630 and 1638 were not argumentative, all but one in the years 1637-1638 were. These were the

²¹ New Netherland was a WIC colony on the North American East Coast from the Delmarva Peninsula to Cape Cod. The WIC received the rights of ownership of the Dutch settlement in New Netherland that had been granted by Amsterdam to a group of merchants in 1614; before the chartering of the company. However, because of an unwritten rule the colony came directly under the Amsterdam chamber (regional board) of the WIC. See further: HEIJER, 2002: 81-83; ROPER & JACOBS, 2014.

²² Knuttel 4582: Anonymous, *Het spel van Brasilien vergeheleken by een goetd verkeerspel* (no printer, no place 1638); Knuttel 4583: Anonymous, *Het spel van Brasilien, vergeleeken bij een goed verkeerspel* (no printer, no place 1638).

pamphlets that formed the public discourse on free trade, as this topic was not debated in the years before. In the following paragraphs, these pamphlets on free trade will be analyzed and differentiated by the different arguments they used.

«THE STRONGEST GOVERNMENT IS THAT WHICH IS HAPPILY OBEYED»²³

The one pamphlet about Brazil that was not argumentative came out in 1637. It was an announcement that money could be invested in the WIC again²⁴. Six other pamphlets answered the call for discourse by the author of the pamphlet mentioned in the introduction²⁵. All of the pamphlets listed economic arguments to support their statements, both defenders of free trade and defenders of the Companies' monopoly. Considering that the topic had to do with trade, this is not strange at all. Another thing that unites all the publications is that they were printed anonymously. There is one that gives a clue about the identity of the author, but «Ior. H. Gr. Gron.» is not exactly a giveaway, apart from that there seems to be a connection to the province of Groningen²⁶. The reason for all the anonymity remains unknown, but it seems likely that more than just the author mentioned in the introduction of this article feared criticism to their person.

Two of the six pamphlets defended the monopoly of the WIC. It is striking that both of these used moral arguments. By moral I mean that they used *pathos* to play their audience on the fairness of enforcing the monopoly²⁷. Another good example from moral argumentation comes from the previously mentioned pamphlet that compared the trade to Brazil to a board game²⁸. Here the author argues that the allowing free trade for the investors that are now trading personally is not even that bad, but «the worst is (...) that most of the players on the left [non-merchants] (which includes the lame [widows], the cripple [orphans] and the blind [individuals with no knowledge of trading that trusted the WIC directors]) are watching but are getting nothing»²⁹. In other words, it is unfair that the WIC investors that did not have the means to enjoy the privileges of free trade, got cheated out of their profits. The two pamphlets arguing in favor of a monopoly used none of the other

²³ MACHIAVELLI & LIVY, quoted in Kn. 4581, 12-13.

²⁴ Knuttel 4513: Anonymous, *Nieuwe inteyckeninge ende verhooginghe der capitalen vande geotroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie* (no printer, no place 1637).

²⁵ Kn. 4425: *Reden*, 8.

²⁶ Knuttel 4580: Ior. H. Gr. Gron., *Consideratien als dat de negotie op Brasil behoort open gestelt te worden onder articulen hier na beschreven* (no printer, no place 1638).

²⁷ Knuttel 4515: Anonymous, *Examen over het vertoogh teghen het onghefondeerde ende schadelijck sluyten der vryen handel in Brasil door een ondersoecker der waerheydt* (no printer, no place 1637) 7.

²⁸ Kn. 4582: *Het spel van Brasilien*; Kn. 4583: *Het spel van Brasilien*, passim.

²⁹ «Maer het swaerste is noch (...) so staen de meeste part van de Maets aen de linker zijde [niet negotianten] (daer onder Lamme [weduwen], Creupele [weesen] en Blinden [blindt in saken van Negotie, sich simpelijck op de Bewindthebbers vertrouwende] ende kijcken toe en krijghen niet.» Kn. 4582: *Het spel van Brasilien*, 5.

types of arguments. The four pamphlets challenging the monopoly and defending free trade, made use of other types of arguments, such as juridical.

The pamphlet that uses juridical argumentation, bases its argument on «the general law of peoples» (*gemeene recht der volckeren*) after which the author uses Latin quotes from Bartolus and Seneca, to underline the validity of his claim³⁰. According to this law, trade cannot be limited or rejected to anyone. It is true that the charter had been issued before, but since free trade had been allowed before by the WIC, they implicitly already recognized this universal right that was originally claimed by Grotius³¹. The author finishes with eight counterarguments made by others, which he refutes one by one. Not all of these counterarguments are made in the other preserved pamphlets, which means that either they were made in pamphlets we no longer possess, or that these arguments previously were not a part of the public discourse. The author is well educated, as becomes clear from the extensive use of Latin quotes and examples from Roman literature and contemporary legal theory to support his claims. However, the author is also well-informed of various details about the Company and free trade; as becomes clear from his narrative. This leaves open the possibility that the author is using internal WIC directors' arguments in the public discourse. Especially the fifth counterargument he refutes strengthens the likelihood of the latter circumstance. This argument is that in two years of free trade only 800.000 guilders of dues and taxes had been paid by the free traders to the company, which was deemed not to be nearly enough to repair the infrastructures and buildings and to maintain the soldiers in Brazil³². This argument is not likely to be used to convince a public audience as it does not appeal to the reader. This means the author must have heard it somewhere else in order to refute it, possibly from WIC directors. The extensive use of Latin indicates that the targeted audience was not the average Dutch burgher but rather members of the well-educated elite. As Arthur Weststeijn noted, this elitist idea of free trade tied in with ideological origins of Dutch colonialism that were deeply rooted in the late humanist culture. Which of course took ancient Rome as its timeless ideal type³³. Thus, the use of Latin examples made the argument of the author appeal to this audience. Targeting this well-educated audience made it more likely to achieve the explicit goal of the author: «revising the decision by the States General of April 14, and to return to limited free trade as decided by the *Heeren XIX* on July 18, 1636»³⁴.

³⁰ Knuttel 4581: Anonymous, *Deductie, waer by onpartijdelijck over-wogen ende bewesen wort, wat het beste voor de Compagnie van West-Indien zy: den handel te sluyten of open te laten* (Isaac Burghoorn, 's-Gravenhage 1638), 3.

³¹ Knuttel 4581: Anonymous, *Deductie, waer by onpartijdelijck over-wogen ende bewesen wort, wat het beste voor de Compagnie van West-Indien zy: den handel te sluyten of open te laten* (Isaac Burghoorn, 's-Gravenhage 1638), 3-4, 23.

³² Knuttel 4581: Anonymous, *Deductie, waer by onpartijdelijck over-wogen ende bewesen wort, wat het beste voor de Compagnie van West-Indien zy: den handel te sluyten of open te laten* (Isaac Burghoorn, 's-Gravenhage 1638), 27.

³³ WESTSTEIJN, 2014: 187-204, 192.

³⁴ «(...) soo wert vertrouwt dat hare Ho:Mo: alle «tselve near hare wijsheyt ondersoekende, hare latest Resolutie vanden 14. April latest-leden sullen modereren, ende dienvolgens den handel met sodanige Limitatien sullen open-stellen, als by de Regelemente[n] inde absolute

One of the pamphlets stands out from the others because of its style. This pamphlet is very schematic, numbers point by point all the different arguments, uses subtitles to indicate a new subject and uses meta-communication to help the reader perusing the argument. The style in which it is written is very modern, and even renowned authors such as Lipsius or Grotius could learn something from this style. The author of this pamphlet also uses Latin in his text, and French, but the examples he uses are proverbs, which were probably much more common knowledge than the Roman laws in the pamphlet mentioned earlier. These pieces of wisdom are used to support solely economic argumentation. Another thing worth mentioning is that the cover page of this pamphlet has the same decorative image as the pamphlet that compared the trade to Brazil to a board game, which indicates that it is likely that they were printed by the same printer. However, these two pamphlets have a contrary standpoint, which emphasizes the different values of a pamphlet: the economic value for the printer and the rhetorical value for the author (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The two pamphlets with the same decorative elements on the front page. Kn. 4580 on the left and Kn. 4582 on the right. Additionally, the last line with the year is printed in the exact same wording and font on both pamphlets. This also indicates they were probably printed by the same printer.

CONSIDERATIEN

ALS *1638*

Dat de Negotie op BRASIL
behoort open gestelt te worden,
onder Articulen hier na beschreven,

DOOR

Io^e. H. Gr. Gron.



Ghedrukt in 't Jaer ons Heeren 1638.

HET SPEL

VAN *1638*

BRASILIEN.

Vergheleken by een goet
Verkeer-Spel.



Ghedrukt in 't Jaer ons Heeren 1638.

The last two pamphlets constitute a dialogue. The first to be published criticized the plan to close the trade to Brazil, which in turn received criticism from the second pamphlet.

Resolutie vande XIX, den 18. Julii, 1636 door desen is gearresteert ende besloten gheweest». Kn. 4581: *Deductie*, 32.

The first author gives economic arguments for free trade, arguing that at least five sections of the community would profit from it, and that having a monopoly and a monopsony in Brazil was bad for the planters that partially needed to rely on the supplies provided by the WIC³⁵. The author is clearly very well informed about the situation in Brazil, which means that he either lives there or has someone else as an agent; it is clear that the author is a private trader. It even seems likely that the author was a Luso-Brazilian, though he never clearly states so. His emphasis on the difficulties the Portuguese are experiencing, like missing oil and wine, indicate that, at the very least, he sympathizes with them³⁶.

The author of the pamphlet that tried to refute him also noticed that the first author might have been Portuguese. The proof that he is Portuguese, the second author suggests, is that the first author got the reason for the Dutch Revolt wrong. According to the second author, it was not because of the «Tenth Penny» issued by the Duke of Alva, like the first author said. He who made such a silly mistake «must be a Portuguese stranger»³⁷. All the other counterarguments the author puts to the table are not as interesting, since he is just arguing that what the first author said is not true. No, Portuguese planters will not leave the colony. No, this decision was not only made by Zeeland and the other chambers in the periphery (meaning: not Amsterdam), and other similar ways of arguing. He does not argue to prove his right, he just states opposite of what the first author has stated.

There is however one aspect that is interesting about this last pamphlet. On the first page, when pointing out that the decision to reinstate the monopoly was made unanimous, the author writes that the decision was made «after long deliberation and with an unanimity of advice, not just by the people from Zeeland and the periphery-chambers, not just by the brightest politicians here in this country, but even the highest government in the United Netherlands»³⁸. The phrase «here in this country», which is not the same country as that of the highest government of the United Netherlands, which is mentioned separately, can only indicate Dutch Brazil. This remark can mean three things: 1. The author is writing this from Brazil, which is interesting because it means that there was either a discourse exchange between the Dutch Republic and Brazil or that individuals from Brazil were actively involved in the public discourse in the Dutch Republic; 2. The pamphlet was meant for an audience in Brazil, which would mean that there was either a press together with a public discourse in Pernambuco or the Dutch tried to influence a public discourse in Brazil. Since this pamphlet explicitly mentions it is referring to the first

³⁵ Knuttel 4514: Anonymous, *Vertoogh, bij een lief-hebber des vaderlants vertoont. Teghen het ongefondeerde en schadelijck sluyten der vryen handel in Brazil* (no printer, no place 1637) [A3ro].

³⁶ Knuttel 4514: Anonymous, *Vertoogh, bij een lief-hebber des vaderlants vertoont. Teghen het ongefondeerde en schadelijck sluyten der vryen handel in Brazil* (no printer, no place 1637) [A3ro].

³⁷ «dat hy in die nederlantsche saecken een Portugijs vreemdelingh is» Kn. 4515: *Examen over het vertoogh*, 11-12.

³⁸ «na soo rijpe deliberatie van rade, ende met sodanen eenparicheyt van advijs, niet van de Zeeuwen ende Buyten-cameren (ghelijck die daer worden genoemt) niet alleen van die ghesonste politiquen hier te Lande; maer selve van d'hoochste regeringhe der vereenichde Nederlanden». Idem, 3.

pamphlet, this means that the first pamphlet must have been read in Brazil too; or 3. The author is pretending there is a link between himself and Brazil in an attempt to boost his credibility. Which would still be remarkable since it is done so nonchalantly that it appears not to be a unique situation that someone from Brazil is involved in the public discourse in the Dutch Republic.

This trans-Atlantic sphere of public discourse that seems to have happened simultaneously in two different locations, looks like a promising new avenue for future research. The literature on pamphlets, public opinion, public debate, and the public sphere has been devoted to national contexts. If there was any attention for the colonies, they have been considered as a topic and not as a geographical place where this discourse happened. These connections formed by debates spanning oceans and continents. This sphere not only existed in the imagination of individuals engaged in the discourse, but is also represented in the pamphlets that functioned as a repository. The individuals that formed this trans-Atlantic phenomenon thus exerted supra-national influence on the outcome of the political decision-making process.

CONCLUSION

The far-from-straightforward decision-making process in the States General sparked a public discourse and concomitantly a public discourse on the issue of free trade to Brazil in the years 1637-1638. Especially in the last year challenging the monopoly was an important issue in the public discourse. Economic arguments, supported by moral and juridical reasoning were printed in large numbers. The individuals reacted to the monopoly in Dutch Brazil by outside lobbying for their own interest through the use of pamphlets. How did this public debate and discourse influence the outcome of the decision-making process? What was the outcome of this campaign?

The WIC chamber of the Noorderkwartier, which previously had opted for maintaining the monopoly, was convinced and now supported the Amsterdam chamber in its attempt to convince the States General to allow free trade. There is no proof that this is a direct result from the public discourse, but the pamphlets arguing for free trade obviously did not do any harm. The chamber of the Noorderkwartier felt that at the very least the opinion of Johan Maurits van Nassau, the newly appointed Governor General in Brazil, should be taken into account. The States of Holland sided with the chambers of Amsterdam and Noorderkwartier and used delaying tactics. When Johan Maurits finally gave his opinion in January 1638, he proclaimed to be in favor of free trade. He was heavily influenced by his trusted vice-governor commander of the army Krzysztof Arciszewski, and furthermore stressed the risk of losing the Portuguese plantation owners if free trade

would not be allowed³⁹. It must be noted here that Arciszewski had a personal connection with the author of one of the pamphlets arguing for free trade, since that author mentions he was only able to obtain a house in Recife through his personal connection with the Polish WIC army commander⁴⁰. Outside lobbying was certainly not the only mechanisms for individuals pursuing their own interests. Patronage and personal networks had been important as well.

On April 29, 1638 the States General, the *Heeren XIX* and the various chambers came to an agreement. The conclusion was that the trade in slaves, Brazilwood and munitions would be monopolized by the Company, while the other trade would be licensed and only allowed to all inhabitants of the Dutch Republic who were shareholders in the WIC. Since the plantation owners used all their money in their *engenhos*, they were not obligated to obtain a license or become a shareholder and could still trade in the same manner as they did before⁴¹. This outcome resulted in a lot of free trade in sugar (see graph 1) and a Company that kept the most profitable trade for itself. This way, none of the parties was left empty-handed. Or, as Henk den Heijer stated, this was a perfect example of the typical Dutch *poldermodel*⁴².

Thus, when confronted with a monopoly, the individuals who benefited from free trade used outside lobbying, here represented by pamphleteering, in an attempt to influence the decision-making process. There are signs that lead to believe that even individuals outside the Dutch Republic, in this case Brazil, attempted to (or even succeeded in) influencing the public discourse. At the very least, this form of outside lobbying contributed to a result that was more favorable than a monopoly held by the Dutch West India Company.

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³⁹ BOXER, 1957: 79-81.

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A COMPANY OF STATE. THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY AND THE DEBATES ON THE COMPANY-STATE IN ASIA, 1660s-1690s

ERIK ODEGARD*

This chapter seeks to highlight an episode within the history of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) from a new perspective. The Dutch company, often called «the first multinational company in the world», is most often studied from the perspective of business history, history of trade or maritime history. However, Philip Stern, in his recent *The Company State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India*, introduces a new perspective to study the Early Modern commercial companies. Instead of seeing the various chartered companies as filling «state-like» functions, he argues we should see them as states in their own right¹. Stern argues that the English East India Company, acted as a state in Asia and viewed itself as such even as early as the seventeenth century. Rather than seeing the company as a commercial entity that also fulfills some «state-like» roles, the company *was* a state. This state, moreover, was not constituted solely by the charter granted in England, but also by the privileges received from sovereigns in Asia, as well as the rights it had acquired in specific locations due to purchase, lease, or conquest. This has a number of important consequences for the study of the company. In the first place, we should approach the company as an organization with a political life of its own, independent from that of the mother country. In the second place, this means that we may study the companies from a political perspective, rather than from a purely commercial one. This will also allow scholars to study ideological conflicts within company

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¹ STERN, 2011: 6.

management and will privilege as political thinkers in their own right the ones that did the ruling: governors and directors.

Stern's argument is based upon an understanding of sovereignty and statehood that is perhaps typical for the British case and thus might seem difficult to apply to another case, such as the Dutch East India Company². However, Arthur Weststeijn has recently used the frame for a study of the discussions on the VOC in the Republic, focusing on the views of three men who at varying points in the 17th century were engaged in debates about the role and position of the VOC³. Of the three men studied by Weststeijn only one actually served the company in Asia. This was Pieter van Hoorn, a VOC council in the Indies in the 1660s and 1670s. The other men discussed the company from the Republic. Pieter van Dam was the secretary of the VOC's central board of management, the *Gentlemen XVII*, and advocated a focus on trade and shipping, while Pieter de la Court was an outspoken opponent of the company and a defender of the idea of the absolute freedom of the seas⁴.

Weststeijn's article is a valuable contribution to the field, but it still sees the company primarily from the perspective of men in Europe who had no experience in Asia and who viewed the company primarily in commercial terms. This is a marked contrast from the way the EIC officials which are at the heart of Stern's work saw the VOC. EIC officials enviously looked at the VOC's position in Asia, which they tried to emulate. The VOC's military power and local revenues allowed the VOC, in English eyes, «to secure by great expenses and Forts their sovereign state in India, Enlarge their Dominion as well as their Trade, and be always in a condition to revenge any affronts that are offered them»⁵. This English quote from the mid-1690s, clearly indicates that seen from the outside, the VOC clearly behaved like a state in Asia.

There are some strands, both old and new, in the scholarship of the Dutch company that tie in very well, with seeing the VOC as a company-state. Gerrit Knaap, in his recent inaugural lecture in Utrecht argued that the company, in its operations in Asia, actually more resembled a colonial state, than a shipping firm⁶. Many of the most important products that the company shipped back to the Republic in the Seventeenth through levies or taxation of territories which the company held by right of conquest⁷. The greatest expenditures in Asia were on its apparatus of state: soldiers, fortifications and civil servants. This ties in well with an older view of Dutch historian Terpstra, who viewed the company as a «state outside the state»⁸. The VOC, in other words, was distinct from the Dutch Republic

² For the idea of corporation and statehood in Early Modern England, see: STERN, 2011: 7.

³ WESTSTEIJN, 2014: 13-34.

⁴ WESTSTEIJN, 2014: 20-24.

⁵ STERN, 2011: 86.

⁶ KNAAP, 2014.

⁷ For example, fine spices, cinnamon and later on, coffee and tea. KNAAP, 2014. Terstra argued that the VOC's policies can be seen as the direct precursors of the tax-in-products policy of the 19th century colonial state in Indonesia – TERPSTRA, 1942: 1-34, 21.

⁸ TERPSTRA, 1942: 1.

and its governors in Asia had considerable leeway in setting the agenda. The expansion of the territorial control of the company could, however, lead to tensions between governors and directors, as territorial control required large investments.

This chapter will focus on a specific period in the history of the VOC and argue that this period witnessed a clear discussion on the nature of the company's state in Asia, this is the period 1660-1690. The finalization of the conquest of Ceylon in 1658, followed by the capture of Negapatnam a year later and the conquest of the Portuguese towns on the South Malabar Coast in 1662-1663 meant that the VOC had acquired a large new territory it controlled. The question was how to integrate these with the existing VOC settlements in Asia. This required a formulation of the proper role of the company in relation to the local kingdoms (primarily Kandy on Ceylon), local societies and the potentials for trade and other profits. This chapter will focus on the rivalry between two men Rijckloff Volckertsz van Goens (1619-1681) and Hendrik Adriaan van Reede tot Drakensteyn (1636-1691) who after 1670 took opposing sides in this debate. Van Goens, who had been responsible for the final offensives that pushed the Portuguese off Ceylon and who had commanded VOC forces in Malabar and who subsequently served as governor of Ceylon, was perhaps one of the most vocal advocates for territorial power, colonization and a form of statehood for the VOC in Asia in the Seventeenth Century. Van Reede, who had served under Van Goens at the siege of Cochin became his opponent in 1670, after being appointed commander of the Malabar Coast. Van Reede opposed Van Goens' plans, advocated a peace treaty with Kandy and would criticize the territorial and colonization projects of Van Goens. Their personal rivalry also highlights another interesting aspect. It shows how colonial administrators could both use the company's territorial gains for their own profit, even though the company was losing money in the areas under their command. These profits were not merely financial, Van Goens could use his position of power in the region to further the careers of men who were part of his personal network. A good example of this is the elevation of his son to governor of Ceylon to succeed him. On the other hand, Van Reede could cleverly use the mounting criticism of Van Goens's rule to position himself as a good alternative candidate. This was successful in the long run: though Van Reede was dismissed and sent to the Netherlands in 1678, he would use his criticism of Van Goens's costly projects to curry favor with the leading company directors in Amsterdam and would return to Asia in 1684-1691 as commissioner-general. This was a special position, outside the regular VOC hierarchy in Asia, and allowed Van Reede to push through many of his own ideas, but also to engage in some of the activities that he had criticized in Van Goens, chiefly the embarkation of new and costly fortress-construction. All this is to show that company governors could also behave as free agents, and that working for the company's best interests was in no way opposed to advancing one's own interests.

THE COMPANY-STATE IN ASIA

The acronym VOC is often translated in English as the Dutch East India Company. This is an unfortunate translation as it gives the reader a wrong image of the company, as one that is roughly comparable to its English counterpart in London. In fact the literal Dutch translation «United East India Company» is more revealing. We are not, in truth, dealing with *one* company, but with a joint-venture of five regional companies which participated in the united entity in fixed proportions. This federalized constitution of the company in Europe followed the model of the Dutch Republic itself and was designed to make a cooperative effort by the various Holland and Zeeland merchants palatable to all. Indeed, in the original 1602 charter, regulations dealing with the internal organizational structure in Europe take up the body of the text⁹. Apparently making Dutch merchants work together was deemed more difficult to organize than the intercontinental trade itself.

In Asia, this federalized setup had a reverse effect: it created the need for a strong central rendezvous. Since all chambers of the company in the Netherlands expected to receive their just proportion of *all goods* coming from Asia, a central node in the shipping network was needed to load all the ships with the right amount of goods so that every chamber received its due¹⁰. These ships sailed in convoys, but once in Dutch waters proceeded straight to the regional chambers where they would be unloaded and the products auctioned. The central rendezvous in Asia was established in Batavia and this port became the heart of the company state in Asia.

By 1662, after the conquest of Cochin from the Portuguese by Rijckloff van Goens (1619-1682), the company's state comprised a large number of scattered holdings throughout Asia and Southern Africa, from the Cape to Nagasaki and from Basra to Banda. In general we can classify the various territories, ports, forts, factories and islands where the company was present in three different categories: 1) territories, cities or islands held by the VOC in sovereign possession by right of conquest, donation or inheritance, 2) positions which the company leased from local polities and here it received extraterritorial rights of one sort or another, and 3) areas where the company had to operate like other merchants. It could receive privileges or «most-favored» trading partner status here, but not the right to build forts or maintain armies.

The first category was, by the early 1660s comprised of the spice islands in the Indonesian archipelago, the area around Batavia, the coastal lands of Ceylon, taken from the Portuguese in the previous three decades, the city of Malakka, Malabar, captured in three campaigns in the early 1660s, and finally the replenishment station at the Cape. The VOC's territory on Formosa belonged to this category, but had been lost to Chinese Ming loy-

⁹ GAASTRA, 2002: 20.

¹⁰ For the VOC logistical and shipping network, the position of Batavia as rendezvous and the threat of Ceylon fort his privileged position, see: BRUJIN *et al.*, 1987: 119-142. More recent work has studied the intra-Asian system, for the position of Batavia within *this* system, see: PARTHESIUS, 2010: 113-116.

alist Zheng Chenggong, better known as Coxing, in 1662. The second group of positions included Pulicat on the Coromandel coast, while the third group was larger, comprising trading posts in the Persian empire, in the Mughal empire in Surat and Bengal, in Japan, in Tonkin and in Siam, amongst others. The state of the company then was a composite one, sovereign government in one area, humble trader in another. Nevertheless, all these different positions were a part of the same enterprise and all its governors participated in its internal political life. Personnel, especially high personnel, was shifted regularly throughout these positions, strengthening internal cohesion. Nevertheless, it was this internal cohesion which came under pressure in the 1660s and 1670s by the actions of Rijckloff Volckertsz. Van Goens in the so called «western quarters» in this case Ceylon, Malabar and the southern Coromandel Coast.

RIJCKLOFF VAN GOENS AND THE COMPANY IN SOUTH ASIA: A THREAT TO BATAVIA'S DOMINANCE

The VOC had resumed its war with Portugal in 1652¹¹. In the following decade the company captured all the Portuguese forts on Ceylon, the southern Coromandel and the Malabar coast. The epic siege of Cochin in 1662-1663 served as the conclusion for this long period of conquests. By 1663 therefore, the VOC was in possession of a coherent set of possessions in South Asia. These possessions, the coastal lands of the island of Ceylon, the city of Negapatnam and the collection of forts on the Malabar coast – Cochin, Cannanore, Quilon and Cranganore – initially all resorted under the command of the governor of Ceylon in Colombo. Administratively there was thus a strong coherence in this region. This coherence was also mirrored in strategic and commercial relations between the various areas. Malabar and Negapatnam guarded the «flanks» of Ceylon in the Indian mainland and would prevent the Portuguese from using these positions as a platform for the reconquest of Ceylon¹². The position of governor was held from 1662 onwards by the man who had overseen the war against the Portuguese ever since his appointment to commander-in-chief for Ceylon and South India in 1656: Rijckloff Volckertsz. Van Goens¹³. In many respects, Van Goens was personally responsible for the extent of the company's domain in South Asia. He had personally overseen the sieges of Jaffna and Cochin and had overseen the assault on Negapatnam from afar¹⁴. He had been the one who had

¹¹ EMMER & GOMMANS, 2012: 321.

¹² This argument for the military utility of Coromandel and Malabar for Ceylon was still being made in the late eighteenth century, as the VOC improving its fortifications. NL-HaNa 1.04.17, Hoge Regering Batavia, inv.nr 583.

¹³ Van Goens would serve as governor of Ceylon from 1662-1663, again from 1659-1672. In the period 1672-1675 he held the position of «Superintendent and commander-in-chief» over the VOC possessions in South Asia. Since his son was at that time governor of Ceylon, Van Goens still exerted great power over the Ceylon command.

¹⁴ EMMER & GOMMANS, 2012: 321. For Van Goens' role in the war on Ceylon after the fall of Colombo, see: AALBERS, 1916: 135-170.

convinced the *Gentlemen XVII* to send more troops to Ceylon, back in 1655, when he presented a report to them in person¹⁵. He had envisioned and propagated the idea that the Portuguese could be removed from the island altogether. It was also Van Goens who had convinced the company leadership, both in Batavia and in the Republic that it was absolutely imperative to take the Portuguese possessions on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts as well. He had argued that these could serve as a base of operations against Ceylon and should be taken for strategic reasons. Especially the excellent harbor at Cochin could be used as a staging area. In addition, possession of the Malabar coast would give the company access to the Malabar pepper and Van Goens had convinced his superiors that a monopoly on this product was feasible. When Van Goens was promoted to governor of Ceylon in 1662, the cities on «the other side» – i.e. Negaptnam and Tuticorin – resorted directly under his command while the commander of the Malabar coast reported to him, rather than directly to the governor-general and council in Batavia. Only in 1669-1670 would Malabar become an independent command free from the tutelage of Colombo¹⁶. This was a clear break of VOC practice until this time. It had always been policy to make regional governors and commanders directly responsible to the High Government in Batavia, rather than letting them report to a regional head. This was done out of a realization that such strong regional heads could potentially challenge the domination of Batavia in the VOC-system in Asia.

This is in fact exactly what would happen. Given the strong position of Ceylon in the VOC-system, and his great personal power in Ceylon, Van Goens went about changing the position of the company in his command, and entrenching his own interests along with it. Van Goens used his position of great power to appoint friends and family to important positions. This was in itself not unheard of, but the great regional power and the great extent and the number of positions to be filled allowed Van Goens to build up a strong regional powerbase. Van Goens even succeeded in making Ceylon a second rendezvous for ships coming from, and departing to the Netherlands. This was an extremely important achievement. Up to this time, Batavia had been the central nodal point in the VOC's Asian domains. All ships coming from the Netherlands would call first at Batavia, and only from Batavia would ships depart for the Netherlands. This had the advantage of course that the High Government in Batavia was able to control the flow of information to the directors in the Netherlands. Products from South Asia would be collected at Galle on Ceylon and shipped directly to the Republic. This of course also enabled Van Goens to correspond freely with the directors, uninhibited by a prying eyes in Batavia¹⁷. In addition, he pro-

¹⁵ The *Gentlemen XVII* were the seventeen directors of the VOC in the Republic. Representing the six municipal chambers, Amsterdam, Zeeland, Rotterdam, Delft, Hoorn and Enkhuizen. The XVII were responsible for setting general policy which would then be implemented by the «High Government of the Indies» in Batavia. LEUPE, 1855: 141-180.

¹⁶ EMMER & GOMMANS, 2012: 336-337.

¹⁷ GAASTRA, 2002: 52.

posed plans which would radically change the nature of the company in Asia. In the first place, Van Goens proposed to move the seat of the company's capital and rendezvous to Colombo. There were in fact a number of sound motivations behind this idea. He noted the adverse disease environment of Batavia for instance and observed that with the central army reserves at Colombo, the VOC's army would suffer much less attrition due to disease, easing personnel problems. He hoped to promote colonization on Ceylon, which would create a far safer surrounding for the VOC's headquarters than Batavia, which was dependent on rice imports from large regional powers such as Mataram¹⁸. Other reasons given highlight his focus on South Asia, with the new possessions in India and Ceylon secure, Van Goens hoped that the company's trade here would soon be larger than that from the far East. Colombo would then be well suited as a central rendezvous. However, Van Goens ignored one crucial aspect of the rendezvous function: Colombo did not have a safe anchorage for half of the year and even the harbor of Galle, which he likely wanted to use for this role, was not entirely safe. During the summer monsoon, the south and west coasts of Ceylon were dangerous lee shores, prohibiting communications. Behind the attempt to move the VOC headquarters were also two unspoken motivations. In the first place, Van Goens was genuinely enamored by Ceylon and had high hopes of turning it into a «second fatherland»¹⁹. In the second place, moving the capital to Colombo would increase the personal power of Van Goens and afford further opportunities for his clients who served on Ceylon, in Malabar or on the south Coromandel Coast.

In addition to moving the capital, Van Goens proposed capturing the entire island and rendering it safe for large-scale European colonization. He hoped that a new class of European burghers would form the top layer of a reconstructed Ceylonese society. Besides cinnamon, the island would produce areca nuts and the new colonists would focus on agriculture, mainly cotton and tobacco²⁰. These colonization plans show that there was no quick bifurcation between Asia and the America's and that plans for colonization and agricultural settlement remained relevant for many years.

In one respect Van Goens' plans were opportunely timed. The company had lost its agricultural colony on Formosa in 1662 and hopes of regaining it receded after a number of years. This colony had been populated mainly with Chinese settlers, who had proven unreliable to the company, helping the Chinese who invaded in 1661-1662²¹. In other respects, however, Van Goens' plans were both badly timed and poorly received – to say the least. There was a group of VOC officials which supported colonization plans, but these focused their ideas on Java, and Van Goens' plans for Ceylon were quickly dismissed by these men as

¹⁸ Van Goens was well aware of this dependency, having been on five diplomatic missions to the Mataram court in the 1640s and 1650s. S'JACOB, 2002: 131-149, 134-140.

¹⁹ A phrase used by Van Goens in a report on the situation of Ceylon written for the High Government when he was promoted to the position of Director-General in Batavia in 1675. NL-HaNa, 1.04.17 Hoge Regering Batavia, inv.nr. 542.

²⁰ Production of these crops is mentioned in: ANTHONISZ, 1908.

²¹ For capitulation of Formosa, see: ANDRADE, 2011: 290-297.

hurtful for their own plans²². Response to the other plans was even more vitriolic. Moving the capital west was anathema for the VOC staff who had spent most of their careers in the archipelago and Far East. Their prospects for entering the highest layers of management would then be very slim indeed. It did not help either that Van Goens had already moved ahead with implementing the necessities for his policies in the field.

Starting in 1656 after the conquest of Colombo, and gaining pace after the fall of Cochin in 1662 a huge fortress-building program was implemented in the newly-taken Dutch possessions. The old Portuguese fortifications were dismissed as not suited for modern warfare and in need of replacement. Galle, Colombo and Cochin received new enceintes and new forts and citadels were constructed at Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Kalpitya, Mannaar, Jaffna, Negapatnam, Quilon and Cannanore. In addition these major fortifications were often accompanied by a protective screen of minor fortifications, for example Oostenburg at Trincomalee, Hammenhiel near Jaffna and the Sitawaka-Hanwella-Maltuane group of forts which shielded Colombo and its environs from possible attack from Kandy²³. This building program represents perhaps the single largest fortification-building program by Europeans in Asia in the early modern period²⁴. It was also an enormously contentious affair, as it entailed high costs, both in construction as in garrisoning and maintenance. Fortifications were always a preferred way of keeping an area under control. The Spice islands of the Indonesian archipelago were notably heavily fortified. However, the fortification program of Ceylon and South India was seen by many VOC officials as being way beyond the strategic necessity of the situation. In addition, Van Goens insisted in attempting to increase the area under the company's control on Ceylon by waging war on the Sinhalese king at Kandy. This necessitated fortifications inland and high costs for mobile armies. This generated even more criticism.

There are different documents from the second half of the 1670s that illustrate these critical views. There are three documents which are of particular interest, dated in the period 1676-1678. In the first place, there is Adriaan van Rheede's *Considerations on the state of the company on Ceylon* written on request of the High Government in 1677²⁵. This report was preceded by Joost Segenaar's *Short declaration on the state of Ceylon*, written in November 1676 and sent to the *Gentlemen XVII*²⁶. The third paper is an anonymous letter sent to the *Gentlemen XVII* from Ceylon by a self-styled «faithful servant of the honor-

²² Weststeijn mentions the disagreement between Pieter Van Hoorn and Van Goens in his recent article. Though both men were in principle in favor of colonization, they disagreed about the best location. Van Goens advocated Ceylon, Van Hoorn was in favor of Batavia. WESTSTEIJN, 2014: 25.

²³ For an analysis and description of the system of fortification on Ceylon, see: JAYASENA & FLOORE, 2010: 235-260.

²⁴ As the entire system was conceived in one instance and completed roughly in the period 1660-1700.

²⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.04.17, Hoge Regering Batavia, inv. nr 543 and 544.

²⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.04.02, VOC, inv. nr. 4895.

able company»²⁷. These three documents share a critical view on Van Goens' actions on Ceylon. One of the main points of criticism concerns the fortification-building program. Van Reede takes on the assertion, made by Van Goens, that the largest of the new fortifications would be able to withstand even full-blown European sieges. The ability to withstand European enemies was crucial according to Van Goens, who pointed to the Portuguese negligence in this regard as a reason for their expulsion from the island. Van Reede asserted that it was ridiculous to suggest that VOC fortifications could ever be up to European standards. Manning the different fortifications at European levels (Van Reede names 4 soldiers for every 3,77 meters of wall as standard) would require an army of 60.000 men for all the new forts and fortresses! It would be better, Van Reede contented, not to make the fortifications too strong, lest they prove impossible to recapture²⁸. It must be noted that Van Reede here exaggerates as well, in his calculations he takes every meter of wall as a front-line wall, even if they shield one another, greatly inflating his figures. In addition, the assumption that European manning standards should apply in Asia is also problematic. It appears more likely that this was a clever way to attack the plans proposed by Van Goens. Van Reede also included estimates of the cost of fortification construction in the area. For Malabar and Ceylon, Van Reede estimated the total costs of fortification construction at f 2.434.213,18 ¾ guilders²⁹. To him, these high costs were indefensible and a sign of corrupt and inefficient government.

The other two letter-writers agree with him in this respect and also heavily criticized the fortification-building project. Joost Segenaar noted that Van Goens' hostility against Kandy only made Kandy a more implacable foe which now cooperated with «foreign potentates» to overthrow the company on Ceylon, thus necessitating heavy defense expenditure by the company. By building the fortification in locations which the treaty between company and Raja had allocated to Kandy, Van Goens had hardened Kandy's opposition against the company. In short, Van Goens' fortification had become a self-fulfilling prophesy. The anonymous letter-writer agrees and notes that fortification at outlying positions were necessary to cut off Kandy from the sea, but that they did not need to be defensible against a European enemy, as they were only there to exercise a legal claim to the territory and prevent European incursions. Any European move against even a small VOC fortification would serve as a *casus belli*. In short, the fortification itself was of no importance, rather the threat to respond with force was what was crucial. For this, the anonymous writer noted, a strong navy, rather than fortifications was important, «it being obvious that the company's power rests on always remaining master of the seas»³⁰.

²⁷ NL-HaNa, 1.04.02, VOC, inv.nr. 4897, Particuliere consideration van een getrouwe dienaar van de Ed. Comp. Packende de directie ofte gouvernement van 't eijlandt Ceijlon in Oostindien en aen de Ed. Hen bewinthebebrs in Patria overgesonden.

²⁸ NL-HaNa, 1.04.17, inv. nr. 544.

²⁹ NL-HaNa, 1.04.17, inv. nr. 544.

³⁰ NL-HaNa, 1.04.02 inv. nr. 4897.

Van Goens also received strong criticism for his very strict monopolistic policies. Pieter van Hoorn wrote a fierce criticism of Van Goens, arguing that only by opening the trade of Ceylon could the island be brought to prosperity³¹. When all these critical remarks were being made, Van Goens was no longer governor of Ceylon. Upon the outbreak of war with France and Britain in 1672 he had been promoted to commander-in-chief of the western quarters and had defeated a French invasion attempt in Trincomalee bay. In 1673 Van Goens commanded the fleet blockading the French fleet and army in St. Thomé on the Coromandel coast. The surrender of the French fleet in September 1674 was crucial³². Peace with England had already been signed in February of that year and the French squadron had been the only potential threat left to the company. In addition, Van Goens could strengthen his reputation as an able commander and war hero. These successes enabled Van Goens to move to Batavia as a regular councilor of the Indies, later being promoted to director-general. This position was important. Governor-general Maetsuycker was already old and his likely successor was the director-general. When Maetsuycker died in January 1678, Van Goens succeeded him as governor-general. However, his choice of successor in Ceylon also proved a ground for criticism, Van Goens appointed his son as his successor. The outrage at this move is palpable in the letters as well. The anonymous letter writer, perhaps shielded by his anonymity, voiced it best:

«to conclude I want to add that it is, in my opinion, very detrimental to the honorable Company that this entire governorship has, for so many consecutive years, been directed or governed exclusively by the house of Van Goens, father or son, and those depending on them»³³.

Joost Segenaar, in his missive, constantly speaks of the «Rijckloffen van Goensen» in plural, to underline the fact that these two men were identical in their vision and strategy.

The arrival of Van Goens in Batavia sparked off a period of profound unrest within the Council of the Indies. This culminated in the removal from office of the most outspoken rivals of Van Goens from the Council. Adriaan van Reede, Pieter van Hoorn, Pieter Overtwater and Constantijn Ranst were all sent packing. With the council cleaned in this way, Van Goens felt empowered to proceed with his plans for Ceylon. After the death of Maetsuijcker in January 1678, Van Goens succeeded him as governor-general. To Van Goens' shock, however, the council still blocked implementation of his views for Ceylon. Van Goens found out he had few supporters in Batavia. His long service on Ceylon had allowed him to place his supporters in all positions of power there, but this network of support could not help him once he moved to Batavia. Moreover, Van Goens did not receive

³¹ ARASARATNAM, 1973.

³² AMES, 1990.

³³ NL-HaNa, VOC, 1.04:02, inv. nr. 4897. Original Dutch tekst: «Enlijck tot besluit hier bij voegende dat het mijns bedunckens seer schadelijk voor d' E. Comp. Is, dat dit gantsche gouvernement ende de directie van dien soomeenigh jaer naer den anderen geheel en al door het huijs van de Hen van Goens vader en soon off degeenen die daeraen dependeeren gedirigeert ende gegouverneert is geworden».

support from men he had thought would support him. Most importantly, Cornelis Speelman, his future successor as governor-general. Van Goens would seek and receive dismissal from his post in 1681, disappointed in his accomplishments as governor-general in Batavia. In the meantime, the critics which Van Goens had sent home were now voicing their concerns to the *Gentlemen XVII* themselves. These men would ultimately be able to strike back and enforce their vision for the company.

THE DUTCH RESPONSE: *THE GENTLEMEN XVII* AND CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES OF EMPIRE

How did the board of the company's directors respond to the upheavals within the corps of its colonial administration? The management board of the company had itself been shaken up by the events of 1672³⁴. Opponents of the stadtholder were removed from office or quickly had to change positions on the political issues presenting the Republic. In Amsterdam the powerful mayor and director Gillis Valckenier had taken the leadership in both the city as well as the Amsterdam board of directors. We are especially well informed of the machinations within the Amsterdam board of the company by Femme Gastra's *Bewind en Beleid*, which focusses exactly on this period. It is notable that within the Amsterdam board a number of former allies of the Witt survived in the new, post-1672, arrangements. These men come to oppose the policies of Van Goens. At the heart of this group were four men: the former diplomat and regent Coenraad van Beuningen, the 21-times mayor of Amsterdam Joannes Hudde, the mayor, regent and member of the admiralty board Joan Huydecoper, and the secretary of the company Pieter van Dam³⁵.

After the death of Gillis Valckenier this group of regents sought to bring the company back into what they saw as a better balance between the roles of merchant and ruler. Van Beuningen, always the most outspoken of the reform-minded group formulated it like this in 1685:

«It is in a certain degree true that the Dutch East India company is a Company of state as well as of commerce. It would be wrong and hurtful, however, if those who have been entrusted with its management in Asia were to conclude from this fact that it was proper to make efforts

³⁴ In 1672, the Dutch Republic was simultaneously invaded by France, England, Munster and Cologne. The disastrous first year of the war almost spelled the end of the Republic as an independent state in Europe. As a result the composition of the urban oligarchies changed markedly, with underlying factions seizing the day – and power. This also had considerable effects on the composition of the VOC's board of directors. For the political ramifications of '72 on the urban level, see: ROORDA, 1961.

³⁵ For the background of the individuals and the composition of both the boards in the Netherlands as well as the High Government of the Indies, see: GAASTRA, 1989.

to occupy, to conquer and to fortify for reasons of state alone, rather than for commercial advantages»³⁶.

Van Beuningen was thus clearly aware of the reality of the dual nature of the company in Asia as both merchant and sovereign. Though Van Beuningen did not propose the abolition of the company-state, he sought important changes nonetheless. In his mind, the balance between the commercial and the state functions of the company had been lost and it should be rebalanced in favor of the former. His proposals had important ideological overtones, as he sought to reduce the power of the company's servants in the East and increase the say of the directors in the Netherlands over policy, trade and, crucially, personnel. Throughout the early 1680s these men debated the possible ways in which to intervene in the problems in the east. Ultimately, it was decided to send a mission under exceptional authority to inspect the company's establishments and to implement changes. The goal of this was to improve the control of the Dutch managers of the company in Asia and to ensure that the goals of the company as the directors saw it, payment of dividends to shareholders, were foremost in everyone's mind. The inspector-general would receive exceptional, plenipotentiary, powers and was empowered to fire personnel, to enforce changes on establishments (i.e. build or reduce fortifications, increase or reduce garrisons etc.) and to root out corruption. In choosing the man to lead this mission, the directors clearly chose sides in intra-company fights: they chose Adriaan van Reede tot Drakensteyn, lord of Mijdrecht and now a member of the *ridderschap* (those noblemen with voting rights in the provincial states) of Utrecht.

THE MISSION OF VAN REEDE, SUCCESS AND FAILURE

While the initial plan was to send Van Reede directly to Batavia to take on the high government itself, this was modified even before he set sail. While Coenraad van Beuningen, who positioned himself as the most stringent supporter of reform had lobbied to send Van Reede to Batavia, this was overruled by the other directors from Amsterdam and Zeeland. Sending the special Commissioner to Batavia would only worsen the factional divides there and undermine the authority of the High Government³⁷. Despite complaining about the management of its assets in the east, the company directors realized that they needed the High Government intact. Otherwise disgruntled employees would always try to use to

³⁶ Dutch original, as quoted by GAASTRA, 2002: 57: «'t Is een gemeen ende in seeckeren sin waerachtig seggen dat de Nederlandsch Oost Indische Compagnie is niet alleen een Compagnie van commercie maer oock van staat. Edoch 't selve soude en seer verkeerd ende schadelijk impressie geven in de gedachten van degeende die het Bewidt van deselve Compagnie is touvertrouwt, indien bij haer daeruyt besloten wiert, dat men om insighten vn Staet, ende niet alleen om voordelen te doen door commercie moeyte ende kosten voor 't occupeeren, conqueren, fortificeren... moet aanwenden». Also referred to in GAASTRA, 1989:148-150.

³⁷ GAASTRA, 1989:162.

directors to settle personal scores overseas. Thus, while the directors insisted on a new focus on efficiency and profitability, they were forced to accept that the company's government overseas needed some leeway to set their own agenda. The restriction of the Van Reede mission to the «Western quarters» of the Cape, Persia, Surat, Malabar, Ceylon, Coromandel and Bengal was thus a compromise agreement. Receiving broad powers outside of the normal VOC hierarchy, Van Reede was supposed to reduce costs, fight corruption and graft and improve revenues. However, Van Reede could not fire or sue employees himself, but had to hand them over to Batavia for trial.

The results of the mission were rather different than expected by its advocates in the Netherlands. After visiting the Cape of Good Hope, Van Reede moved to Bengal, Coromandel, Ceylon and Malabar. The stay in Malabar was prolonged to enable the committee to participate in the war against the Zamorin of Calicut. Leaving Cochin sick in 1691, Van Reede died at sea on December 15th before reaching Surat. His ostentatious grave in Pulicat is easily the largest monument on the Dutch cemetery there. Interestingly, it was built in local fashion (a domed temple), despite a 1678 stricture prohibiting that³⁸.

Van Reede's mission was not perceived as a success. Personnel fired in Bengal was sent to Batavia, where they were promptly taken back into the company's service. In Coromandel, Van Reede sent the families of all personnel back to Batavia. This ended a period of the Dutch community in Golconda and Coromandel and prevented the evolution of a local Dutch society. Bringing over family members was seen as inviting corruption, as it was well known that family networks worked together within the company in illegal trades³⁹. For those involved, it was however a traumatic experience. Daniel Havart wrote his *Op- en ondergang van Coromandel* (Rise and Fall of Coromandel) largely as a defense of the old system against the arrival of Van Reede⁴⁰. There was however another reason for criticism of Van Reede: his fortification projects.

Already when at the Cape, Van Reede had devoted much attention to improving the fortification. A large part of his report from the Cape deals with the efforts to dig a moat around the castle. The large wall dividing the castle and which even today dominates the interior views was constructed on his instigation. In South Asia Van Reede was remarkably resistant to proposals to reduce the costly fortifications, which he had supported in the 1670s. At Cochin he rejected a plan made by engineer Taarant at the request of commander Van Dielen to reduce the fort⁴¹. As Van Reede had overseen the completion of the works

³⁸ VAN DER POL, 2011: 97-101.

³⁹ For an example of such a family network at work, see: GAASTRA, 1989: 120. The example given, as case from 1671, implicated governor-general Maetseuijcker himself.

⁴⁰ HAVART, 1693. Pages 14-15 give an interesting, though polite, criticism of Van Reede's decision to move the seat to Negapatnam. For an analysis of Havart, see: PETERS, 2002: 65-83.

⁴¹ See the map NL-HaNa, Collectie Leupe, 4. VEL, inv. nr. 0899, De waare Grondteijckening van de hooft stadt kochin, der Custe Mallabaer soo als door last van de E. A: Command: Isaak van Dielen door den sergeant H. J. Farant int jaar 1689 in den Maent April perfectelijk is naar gemeeten, [...] Hans Georg Taarant.

in the early 1670s, this might still be put down to an attachment to his former seat of residence. The plans proposed by Van Reede himself to extend the – only recently completed – walls of Galle northward do not fill this category however⁴². In fact, these plans, as well as the most well-known project of the new citadel at Negapatnam, form a consistent picture of *increased* rather than reduced activity on new fortification building programs. The original projects of the 1660s were now nearing completion or already finished. Instead of seeking cuts and reductions in fortifications and expenditure, Van Reede proposed new projects to improve the defense of different important locations. The cap-stone of all this was moving the capital of the Coromandel command south, to Negapatnam and construct there, *ex novo*, a new citadel of massive proportions. Interestingly, the new fortification partly followed new trends in fortification design in the Dutch Republic after 1672. In some respects, however, it remained of an older type, leading us to conclude that an amateur who had seen the new style, but not fully understood all its elements, was responsible for the design. Most likely, it was Van Reede himself, who, as part of the *ridderschap* of Utrecht and related to important army commanders may have seen the new works at Naarden under construction in the late 1670s and early 1680s.

The move to Negapatnam and the expensive fort more than anything else, proved the limits of the power of the directors back home. The inspector they had sent to the east in expectation of cost reductions, had undertaken an enormous project at staggering cost to the company. Apparently, building fortifications was something that all commanding officers did. This may have something to do with the social status one could derive from a reputation as a fortress-builder, or simply with a genuine fear of attack and losses to the company. However, the costs incurred in fortress-construction could be used as a way to try and discredit a governor – or in the case of Van Reede, inspector. Van Goens had been criticized by Van Reede for his fortress-construction on Ceylon. It was now Van Reede's turn to be criticized for his project at Negapatnam. There was another, more fundamental, problem with the Van Reede mission, however. By keeping Batavia out of the scope of the inspection, Van Reede could not get at the core of the problem. Personnel he had dismissed from Bengal were simply transferred to other positions by the governor-general and council⁴³. This would appear an oversight on the part of the directors. The fiercest advocates of the mission had indeed wanted to send Van Reede to Batavia as well. They were however stopped by a more moderate faction of the company directors who argued, wisely, that the directors could not manage their Asian empire from Europe. If the XVII got too involved in the Asian management, and the power-struggles between the company's servants there,

⁴² The proposal to extend the walls of Galle to the north are shown in map HaNa, 4. VEL1054, *Grondtekening van de stad Gale*, ca. 1695. Though the map is dated to ca. 1695, it has to have been made earlier, in the late 1680s when Van Reede visited Galle. The inscription accompanying the proposed extension of the walls reads, «bij de heer van Mijdrecht ontworpen», which clearly can refer only to Adriaan van Reede tot Drakenstein, heer van Mijdrecht.

⁴³ Nicolaas Shaghen for example, was dismissed from Bengal, sent to Batavia for trial, but sent to Ambon as governor. WIJNAENDTS, 1944: 33.

they risked undoing the management structure of the company. This already indicates the limitations of the Van Reede mission and shows why the experiment was not repeated. It was simply not possible to manage the VOC's Asian empire from Europe and bypass the Asian realities.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the rivalries within the VOC in the period 1660-1690 from the perspective that the company in Asia was in fact a company-state, as argued by Stern for the EIC. The perspective of the company-state allows for a rather different analysis of these events. We can use the perspective of the company-state to analyze the discussions of this period as ideological and political confrontations, rather than just a disagreement about the management of the company. At its heart, the debate was between those who wished to see the company as «mere merchants», against those who saw it as a state in Asia unto itself. This fundamental disagreement was not resolved in this period and debates about the propriety of spending money on soldiers, forts and territorial control continued to plague the company throughout its existence. Likewise, there would always remain a tension between the High Government in Batavia and the governor of Ceylon.

The period 1660-1690 was a period of changes for the company in Asia. The loss of Formosa, and the simultaneous conquests on Ceylon and South India early in the 1660s caused a rebalancing towards the west. However, the new conquests were also a threat to the existing state of the company. The coherent group of possessions on Ceylon, south Coromandel and Malabar, under unified command of Van Goens in Colombo proved a threat for the position of Batavia as the central node of the company's shipping system and as the capitol of the company's state in Asia. By establishing Ceylon as a separate rendezvous, Van Goens effectively placed himself beyond the control of Batavia, in effect turning it into a «state within a state», with himself at its head. Moving ahead with laying the groundwork of his vision for the Company, Van Goens, throughout the later 1660s seized lands on Ceylon from the king of Kandy and attempted to bring them in the company's domain. To protect these gains, he started a very large fortification-construction program. The results of this program can be considered as the unique material culture of a particular vision of empire. Needless to say, Van Goens was fiercely criticized and upon his assumption of the role of governor-general in 1678, relations between him and the council of the Indies broke down, leading ultimately to the intervention of the *Gentlemen* XVII.

In the early 1680s, after the dismissal and death of Van Goens sr. a group of powerful directors from the Amsterdam chamber decided that the best way to address the problems the company faced was by sending over a specially empowered inspector to root out corruption, waste and idleness and make the company more profitable and efficient. The purpose of this mission is best read in the words of Coenraad van Beuninghen who feared

that the company would all too readily start thinking in terms of reasons of state, rather than in terms of commerce. The mission of Van Reede, thus, was a push by a group of directors in the Netherlands to attempt to reclaim their control of the Eastern bureaucracy. In this respect, Van Reede failed miserably. While originally the idea was for him to go to Batavia as well, this plan was soon dropped. Actively hindered from Batavia, Van Reede could not fully exercise his broad range of powers effectively. The failure of the directors to assert their dominance reasserts the impossibility to rule the company-state from Europe. Perhaps more serious from the point of view of the reform-minded directors was the fact that Van Reede, who was after all supposed to be their agent, undertook and proposed large new fortification-building programs, which proved very costly. Rather than abandon or reduce fortifications, he decided to build new ones, at great cost to the company. This signaled that even specially selected, highly empowered inspectors operating outside the normal hierarchy could not be controlled effectively from the Republic. This should serve to reinforce our understanding of the company's men in Asia as «free agents» who could act in pursuit of their own interests and affairs and could be checked only with great difficulty by their principals from the Netherlands. In the tug-of-war over which part of the company actually governed the company-state in Asia and Africa, «Batavia» ultimately won out and the directors in the Republic would not send another inspection committee east until the very end of its existence, in the 1790s. To conclude, the study of the internal organization of the chartered companies and of the career paths of its servants can reveal not only the private networks which operated within the companies, but also reveals the fights, political and ideological, over control of the company-state.

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HaNa, 4.VEL0899, *De waare Grondteijckening van de hooft stadt kochin, der Custe Mallabaer soo als door last van de E. A: Command: Isaak van Dielen door den sergeant H. J. Farant int jaar 1689 in den Maent April perfectelijk is naar gemeeten, [...] Hans Georg Taarant.*

NL-HaNa, 4. VEL1054, *Grondtekening van de stadt Gale, ca. 1695.* Though the map is dated to ca. 1695, it has to have been made earlier, in the late 1680s when Van Reede visited Galle. The inscription accompanying the proposed extension of the walls reads, «bij de heer van Mijldrecht ontworpen», which clearly can refer only to Adriaan van Reede tot Drakensstein, heer van Mijldrecht.

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A «UNITED FORCE OF MERCHANTS AND DENIZENS»? THE DEFLECTION OF THE MONOPOLY GRANTED TO THE WIC, 1600-1800

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INTRODUCTION

Why were the attempts at monopoly formation in the Dutch Atlantic deflected and even discontinued at an early stage, despite being important for the military and economic strategy of the Dutch Revolt and subsequent foreign and trade policies of the Dutch Republic? This chapter suggests that this question should be approached by looking at some of the conflicts that arose as a result of the granting of monopoly rights to the Dutch West India Company. The institutional framework of the company itself was already the result of tensions between formal monopoly formation and the more informal expansion of trading networks by those operating outside scope of the monopoly holding company². With the expansion of the territory of the company, we should add, metropolitan authority was increasingly challenged by people in its empire overseas³. This last aspect is often glossed over in the Dutch literature due to a peculiar denial of the territorial aspects of the Dutch overseas expansion⁴.

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¹ See for example the introduction of POSTMA & ENTHOVEN, 2003; Although the authors are generally pessimistic about the long term contribution of the Atlantic expansion to the Dutch economy, the conquest of Atlantic domains was regarded as important. VRIES & VAN DER WOUDE, 1997: 396-402; VRIES, 2005: 1-29; OOSTINDIE & ROITMAN, 2012: 129-60.

² HEIJER, 2005: 45-50.

³ FATAH-BLACK, 2015.

⁴ EMMER, & KLOOSTER, 1999: 48-69.

The charter granted by the States General provided the WIC with exclusive rights to trade, settle and make treaties in its Atlantic charter area⁵. The WIC was granted several of these exclusive rights with their first charter, although in some areas pre-existing claims by Dutch merchants resulted in some infringements of the monopoly⁶. Although the company survived for 170 years, its exclusive rights over trade, settlement and treaties were reduced over time. The conflicts that created the early infringements were primarily based in the metropolis. Cities and provinces that were united in the States General claimed pre-existing rights. The spirit of the Union of Utrecht was to recognize and protect local privileges⁷. This fragmentation in the metropolis, however, was not the only force that was deflecting the initial course of complete monopoly that was envisioned in the initial formation of the WIC. In the colonies people were beginning to challenge the monopoly as well, albeit in a different way than in the metropolis⁸.

We can distinguish three forms (metropolitan, colonial and illicit) in which the process of colonial monopoly formation was deflected, all with their specific outcomes and effects on the monopoly of the WIC. The three forms of monopoly deflection resulted in different outcomes for different sections of the formal monopoly and the company that was holding the monopoly rights. While the formal monopoly was often questioned, evaded and broken; battles over its existence were rarely fundamentally questioning the existence of the exclusive charter as such. Challengers of the monopolies rather tried to reform import duties or restrictions on trading in certain areas or for certain products, than dismantling the institution itself. Therefore it seems fitting to speak of deflecting in the sense of bending, changing course, redirecting, or when ascribing malicious intention, the disorienting of the company, rather than breaking it. This conceptualization points toward an interactive relationship between state, the monopoly holding company and private entrepreneurs in the Dutch Atlantic.

DEFLECTING THE MONOPOLY

This chapter regards the life cycle of the Dutch West India Company, an early modern chartered company that was granted the formal monopoly over the Atlantic trades from Dutch ports in 1621. The granting of the monopoly and the formation of the company granted a shell of protection to the exploits of the entrepreneurs from Dutch towns, while simultaneously excluding others. The combining of different interests was done through the «chamber» system, which was created at the founding of the company. The central board of the company was formed by the *Heeren XIX*, which was formed based on lower

⁵ Anonymous, 1621.

⁶ HEIJER, 2013: 25-27.

⁷ FRUIN, 1901: 366.

⁸ KLOOSTER, 1995; RUPERT, 2012; FATAH-BLACK, 2015.

urban or provincial directorates known as chambers. The chamber of Amsterdam provided eight directors, the Zeeland chamber four, and the other chambers (Rotterdam, West Friesland as well as Friesland and Stad en Lande) all had two directors on the board. In addition, the States General had one representative, making the tally come down to nineteen members⁹. Both the granting of positions in these boards and the extent of the charter expressed the power to include or exclude people from profiting from Atlantic colonization and trading ventures.

The WIC's institutional framework was challenged from the outset and was therefore reformed several times. Due to great financial trouble the company was declared bankrupt, although it was immediately refounded in 1674 with a leaner structure and scope¹⁰. This second WIC faced major metropolitan and colonial attempts at further deflection of its monopoly, and in fact the dismantling of its competencies as a monopoly-holding company. It was finally dissolved in 1791 and the possessions of the company came under more direct control of the Dutch state¹¹.

The life cycle of this company can be split into three phases, all with their specific dynamics. First we see a process towards monopoly formation. In towns there are actors pushing for the formation of the company, conceptualizing it as one with monopoly rights. The formulation, ratification, instating and upholding of this formal monopoly was a negotiated process with clearly identifiable winners and losers. The outcome of the process was institutionalized with the granting of the charter. The second phase in the life cycle of the monopoly grant that is studied here is the deflection of the monopoly. Deflection does not simply mean the breaking down of the monopoly, but can conceptually be used to incorporate a measure of the effectiveness of the charter and what was threatening the upholding of the monopoly as it was chartered to the WIC. In its third and final phase the company was first dismantled and then disbanded.

Based on the trajectory and forces shaping the WIC formal charters and the whole of Dutch Atlantic activities we might draw up a table of three types of deflection and their impact. A typology of deflections in turn gives opportunity to conceptualize the reasons behind the trajectory a colonial monopoly has taken, deflecting a monopoly renders a formal monopoly on colonial activities less effective without necessarily abolishing it. The dynamics behind the deflection of the scope of the WIC monopoly can be situated geographically both in the Dutch Republic and in the overseas settlements. Added to this, the distance between the two created room for illicit activities. Together these created roughly three forms of deflection through which the company's reach and jurisdiction was altered by entrepreneurs operating both inside and outside the company. These three forms by which the monopoly was deflected are the result of the centers of (economic) power and

⁹ HEIJER, 2013: 28-30.

¹⁰ HEIJER, 2013: 107.

¹¹ HEIJER, 2013: 182-185.

control, which were able to deflect the course of the company. In the long run the outcome of the different forms of deflection was either the splintering, disbanding or formal perpetuation of the (now ineffective) colonial monopoly. Deflections as a result of illicit trade led to perpetuation of monopolies as empty shells, metropolitan deflections led to the disbanding of monopolies and deflection because of the development of economic and social forces in the colonies led to a dispersion of the monopoly in a variety of local arrangements.

Table 1: Types of deflection and their outcomes in the long run	
Metropolitan	Disbanding of the company
Colonial	Dispersion into smaller, more localized charters
Illicit	Perpetuation of the company as empty shell

Since the emphasis of this chapter is on the colonial deflection of the monopoly, I will be discussing three specific, geographically ordered cases of colonial monopoly formation and deflection in the Dutch Atlantic: the colonies in the Guianas (plantation colonies), the Caribbean islands (trade nodes) and the North American east coast (inland trade and agriculture). The inclusion of the other cases, primarily Dutch Brazil and the West African forts would not result in a different view. Especially Brazil could, despite its short time span, give a very similar result regarding the described dynamics. After having looked at how trade networks and monopoly formation interacted I will argue that there were two fundamental reasons why Dutch monopoly formation was deflected in the Atlantic. First there are the opposing interests between those overseas and metropolitan administrators, often coming down to a choice between the security (favored by those overseas) or the profitability of the enterprise. More concretely, the geography of competitive trans-Oceanic colonization resulted both in long distances between the colony and the metropolitan centers, while limiting the distance between colonies, this, in turn, eased transgressions. This colonial monopoly deflection resulted in the dispersing of the WIC monopoly into a set of fragmented privileges. Secondly there were the opposing interest between freighters, merchants, investors and producers that were forced to work within the same chartered monopoly. This was metropolitan monopoly deflection, and resulted in the disbanding of the deflected aspects of the monopoly.

THE WIC

In the decades after the initial steps in the Atlantic and Asia two major monopoly companies were chartered by the States General: The VOC (United East India Company) and the WIC (West India Company). In the two centuries after the initial Dutch expansion

into the Atlantic the WIC monopoly first had to be heavily supported by the States-General, then had to rely time and again on state sponsorship, all the while its formal monopoly was taken apart by the instating of patroonships in the seventeenth century as well as the opening up of its trading privileges. In 1621 the Dutch West India Company was founded as a company holding the monopoly over trade and rights to settlement for the Dutch in the Western hemisphere. It went bankrupt in 1674, was re-founded that same year and then lasted until 1791, when the lease of its charter was not renewed. Over the course of its existence its monopoly became ever smaller, hardly ever expanding its reach, although the Amsterdam Chamber, on occasion, was able to curtail Colonial Deflections, especially in the seventeenth century.

The charter of the Dutch West India Company was remorseless about those who acted in parallel to the company: The charter stated that none of the Dutch, or even Inhabitants of the Republic would be allowed to be engaged in trading and shipping in the WIC's chartered area. When breaching this, the punishment for «the shipping companies and participant therein» to be impounded for the value of the ship and cargo that had trespassed¹². This strict regulation is not hidden somewhere in the many articles of the charter, but features prominently in the preamble. For the case of the Dutch, Earl Hamilton has argued in his discussion of the role of monopolies in overseas expansion that «the flag not only followed the private trader, it was firmly planted by him»¹³. But the preamble of the charter is hardly a text that celebrates the free trader. It seems almost unthankful of the States General to chastise the free traders even before the full plans of the company had been laid out. Had it not been the intrepidity of free traders defying the Habsburgs who had paved the way for the WIC and the power of the Dutch in the Atlantic? On the other hand, one could argue, the members of the States General were well aware that even amongst themselves there were men who would leave no chance unabated to trade for their private interest to the detriment of the prospected company.

Some would argue that the Dutch granting of monopoly rights to the WIC was an example of what Adam Smith called the mercantile system. Historians have long argued that mercantilism or colonial monopoly formation was based in early modern economic philosophical notions that trade was central to wealth and that the quest for wealth was a «zero sum game». Economic historians increasingly insist, however, «that we cannot speak of a “mercantilist school” in a rigorous sense»¹⁴. Put more strongly, Steve Pincus insists that «There was no mercantilist consensus»¹⁵. The Dutch took a very pragmatic stance when it came to their own chartered companies for the East and the West. Grotius strategically removed his plea for an open Atlantic from the final draft of *Mare Liberum* in his *De Jure*

¹² Anonymous, 1621.

¹³ HAMILTON, 1948: 33-53.

¹⁴ RONCAGLIA, 2005: 41-44.

¹⁵ PINCUS, 2012: 3-34.

Paedae as not to upset the negotiations for the Twelve Years Truce with the Iberians¹⁶. Nevertheless, both for Asia where the Dutch had a monopoly company, and for the Atlantic where such a company was not yet established, Grotius argued the same right of plunder and free trade for the Dutch¹⁷. The limits to the ideological coherence behind mercantilism, and the subsequent informing of practices of maritime empires (such as the instating of monopolies), is widely noted. There has been a lively debate on the question to what extent there was a mercantilist consensus amongst the European ruling classes, but one of the conclusions appears to be that the «mercantilist» practice did not correspond to any neat set of ideological dogma's, but had a high level of rather practical self-interest at its core¹⁸.

This «practical self-interest» was far from monolithic and in the Dutch case the different factions fought over how to formulate, instate and uphold the WIC monopoly. An important colonial dynamic that undermined colonial monopolies was the closeness of the colonies to each other, compared to the distance between the colonies and their colonizer in Europe. Intercolonial as well as interimperial trade and smuggling were rampant, and perhaps even constitutive for the Atlantic world in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Empires (including the Dutch) had «messy interimperial economies». As Cathy Matson argued in the recent debate on mercantilism:

«though merchants and small producers in the colonies were keenly aware of imperial officials' ideological starting points as well as their mercantile policy objectives, they regularly found flexible ways to regulate port city commerce and internal economies on their own terms or to simply smuggle what they wanted when conditions seemed to warrant it»¹⁹.

While this was the case, and even high officials in the metropolis were aware of this, there was nevertheless a recurring drive to monopolize, formally charter and restrict trade along imperial lines. This trend is common across the maritime European empires. For the Dutch the WIC's Order of Government of 1629 functioned as a constitution for its western domains, but local governing councils were given the possibility of issuing bylaws. As Kunst has noted «[t]he necessities of everyday life led to the creation of special legislation for trade in the West Indies»²⁰. While this new legislation had to be approved by bodies in the Republic it did provide those in the colonies with tools to deflect unwanted elements in the monopoly.

In the metropolis there were several forces trying the change, amend and fight the colonial monopolies. Often merchants from Amsterdam played a central role both in the formation of the monopoly, as well as in attempts to deflect it. For the chambers of the

¹⁶ ITTERSUM, 2007: 59-94.

¹⁷ ITTERSUM, 2007: 59-94.

¹⁸ MATSON, 2012: 35-40.

¹⁹ MATSON, 2012: 35-40.

²⁰ KUNST, 1981: 61.

WIC outside of Amsterdam, the maintaining of the monopoly was generally a way to curb the freedom of Amsterdam traders. Here another issue played in the background, those who had invested in the VOC and WIC were eager to get a return on their investment rather than supporting the opening of the monopolies for their trading ventures. Amsterdam itself often supported free trade, counting on its superior staple market and shipping industry to defeat the competition²¹. In the Order of Government (1629) the rules and regulations for the governing of the WIC, its ships and its landed possessions were laid down²². Without going into the details of the Order, what is important here is that it was initially an attempt to create a centralized government in the colonies. This was part of a grand design of the Dutch in the Atlantic. After this failed, the Dutch have been said to have continued with an «expansion without empire»²³. The aspiration to form a centralized (and as a result more autonomous) government *in* the Atlantic was undermined by both the States of Holland and Zeeland²⁴.

The importance of intercolonial/cross imperial connections has given rise to new conceptions of European expansion in the Atlantic, understanding it as an integrated Atlantic world²⁵. Research into trading networks rather than formal governmental structures has shown that Dutch Atlantic colonies functioned as nodal points through which trade, migration, news circulated both within and across formal imperial boundaries²⁶. What took place in the overseas Atlantic as a result of that has been labeled as the creation of «interimperial microregions» by Jeppe Mulich. With this concept Mulich aims to transcend national perspectives on Caribbean colonies, and show how they were all necessarily integrated in their regional context with its own logic of rivalry, cooperation and exchange²⁷.

The Dutch were in no way unique in this. April Lee Hatfield has convincingly summarized how in all the different North European empires, interimperial connections that subverted monopolistic designs from the metropolis were the norm rather than the exception in the seventeenth century Atlantic World²⁸. She suggests that while there are clear differences between the North American mainland and the Caribbean, the New England colonies could in themselves be regarded as islands in the way they connected to the larger Atlantic world at the time²⁹. Hatfield discusses how the Dutch being especially capable in adapting to a British environment, and that many of those who we would now call «Dutch»

²¹ KUNST, 1981: 111.

²² SCHILTKAMP, 2003: 320-34.

²³ EMMER & KLOOSTER, 1999: 48-69.

²⁴ KUNST, 1981: 58.

²⁵ ARMITAGE, 2002: 11-30; BAILYN, 2005.

²⁶ OOSTINDIE & ROITMAN, 2012: 129-60.

²⁷ MULICH, 2013: 72-94.

²⁸ HATFIELD, 2003.

²⁹ HATFIELD, 2003.

actually came from a range of societies in Northern and Western Europe³⁰. In this way, the Dutch proved themselves as essential middlemen greasing the wheels of the seventeenth century Atlantic world³¹. In the eighteenth century this middlemen position was challenged when New England took over the middleman role in the Atlantic³². Regardless of who was playing the role of middlemen, it might be more important to consider between what these middlemen were mediating. The eighteenth century saw a massive boom in land exploitation, urbanization and labor migration in the Atlantic world. Rather than trade, the increasing productivity and the concentration of economic power in colonial urban centers reconfigured the relationships between motherlands and colonies. Colonial elites became more powerful, while metropolitan powers began to lose some of their control. In this context, colonial deflection of the formal monopoly took a new turn for the Dutch.

NEW NETHERLAND

Together with Brazil, New Netherland formed the mainstay of the Dutch Atlantic territory in the seventeenth century. New Netherland was in part governed as a patroonship, which meant that the colony's government was farmed out to a Dutch family. Before the WIC arrived there were small trading stations operated by Dutch merchants. Already at an early stage the colony saw clear examples of colony-based opposition to the monopoly, which forced the WIC to grant «freedoms and exceptions» and later the patroonship for Kilian van Renselaer, who had initially spearheaded the push for the before mentioned freedoms³³.

The challenge to the «company's monopoly on the fur trade» came already «by the early beginnings of the colony.» One of the colonists, *ondercommies* (Second Commissioner of the WIC) Gerrit Fongersz, offered to ship beaver pelts of other colonists on his own to the Republic³⁴. The WIC monopoly and the *commies* as its representative overseas were not the only officials to enforce the formal monopoly in New Netherland. Because the monopoly of the WIC was outsourced into patroonships, the patroonship holders, like Van Renselaer in New Netherland attempted to enforce the WIC restrictions. However, there seems to be no indication that this outsourcing of the monopoly resulted in effective restrictions³⁵. It was actually the shareholders themselves who started to organize a large share of the illicit transports. Already in 1640 the metropolitan deflection of the monopoly resulted in the company having to give up its fur trading monopoly as well as its shipping

³⁰ HATFIELD, 2005: 205-28.

³¹ KOOT, 2011.

³² VRIES, 2005; KIMBALL, 2009; OOSTINDIE, 2012: 28-55; POSTMA, 1998: 107-31; POSTMA & ENTHOVEN, 2003: 287-322.

³³ HEIJER, 2013: 80-81.

³⁴ JACOBS, 2005: 203-204.

³⁵ JACOBS, 2005: 204.

rights to the colony³⁶. This metropolitan attack on the monopoly resulted in a deflecting and even for a time disbanding the formal restrictions on trade. What did remain in place, however, was the exclusive Dutch access to the colony: «When the shipping was decontrolled in 1640, this requirement [that all imports and exports pass through the WIC warehouse in New Netherland] was maintained»³⁷. Legally, the foreign trade had been allowed at an early stage, but the main issue became the level of taxation in the trade connection. Morton Wagman has argued that it was «virtually impossible for the settlers to challenge the power of the West India Company' in the middle decades of the seventeenth century»³⁸.

A recurring issue of contention between the colonists and the WIC was the height of the trade tariffs imposed by the WIC. The WIC chamber of Amsterdam, interested in trading more than agriculture in the patroonships, began to retract the initial freedoms the WIC had granted the New Netherlands in 1640. An export tariff of an impressive 16 per cent was to discourage New Netherlanders from trading³⁹. By 1645 this policy was radically altered. New Amsterdam was granted increased independence. The trade in tobacco and slaves was freed from duties, and the remaining elements of the monopoly were steadily broken down⁴⁰. This all to great annoyance of the Amsterdam Chamber of the WIC.

The colonial deflection of the monopoly was primarily informed by attempts to evade the «ten percent export duty in Holland on all merchandise bound for America». The challenge to the monopoly was posed by regional imports «directly from neighboring Puritan colonies in New England.» When this was still on a small scale this was not much of a problem, but soon the local council «decided to plug this loophole by enacting an ordinance that levied a ten-percent tariff on all goods imported into the province from foreign colonies»⁴¹. The opposition to the placard by a wealthy merchant was quelled by the governor. Also in the case of a tax on beer to pay for the stationing of troops in the colony, the protest by the inhabitants was successfully subdued⁴².

The regional context of the colony provided however some alleys for inter-imperial exchange that breached the formal monopoly of the WIC. New Amsterdam became a place to where Dutch ships could legally sail, and then connect to English colonies without paying the recognition fees levied from 1640 onwards⁴³. New Amsterdam came to function as a transit port between the Dutch Republic and the English colonies on the North American east coast. New Amsterdam Merchants «distributed the imported goods in small yachts or other crafts throughout the rest of New Netherland, as well as New England, Maryland,

³⁶ JACOBS, 2005: 205.

³⁷ JACOBS, 2005: 256.

³⁸ WAGMAN, 1999: 495-500.

³⁹ A patroonship is feudal grant to a Dutch nobleman of part of the Atlantic charter area of the WIC.

⁴⁰ KUNST, 1981: 68.

⁴¹ WAGMAN, 1999: 495-500.

⁴² WAGMAN, 1999: 495-500.

⁴³ JACOBS, 2005: 256.

and Virginia»⁴⁴. «New Amsterdam became a point of brokerage, repair and provisioning for ships» and it also became quite common that New Englanders «engaged Dutch ships» to service local trading ventures⁴⁵. The governing council of New Amsterdam instituted a weekly marketplace that was open to «both foreigners and inhabitants»⁴⁶. And to encourage the importation of livestock English placards were «sent to towns in Connecticut, New Haven and Long Island to advertise the fairs». Todt argues that the commercial infrastructure was such that New Amsterdam quickly became a place with established connections to the English colonies. The New Netherlanders could provide «subsistence commodities» in the early stages of a colonization attempt. Food went out from New Netherland, often in exchange for livestock. Todt argues that «New Netherlands had a legal infrastructure that reinforced commercial transactions (...) and sought to accommodate foreign merchants». Court cases «convey a sense of porousness between the colonies regarding trade». While trade flourished, territorial conflicts could hamper the connections between the colonies. When war came between the Dutch Republic and England in 1653, this initially barred trade, but in the overseas context both the Dutch and New Englanders quickly sought ways to reconnect their colonies. However, the responses from the different New England colonies varied. While some closed off the connections and persecuted trespassing, in Providence, Rhode Island colonists argued to continue trade. Between New Haven and New Netherlands it was agreed that «payment for debts already incurred» would be secured⁴⁷. In the end the military challenge posed during the Second Anglo Dutch War (1665-1667) could not be withstood, and during the peace negotiations the States General decided not to demand the return of the colony to Dutch hand, if in exchange they could hold on to their conquest in the Guianas.

CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

The Dutch held several Caribbean Islands, but their activities extended beyond those. The islands that did not fall under the WIC did also have communities of Dutch merchants in both the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Since the activities of these merchants have only recently come to light, it is as of yet unsure what the relation of these communities to the WIC was⁴⁸. For Curacao and St. Eustatius the picture is much clearer. Curacao was captured from the Spanish in 1634 to serve as a replenishing station for WIC privateers and secondly as a trading station to the Spanish Main Land. This trade was not allowed by the Spanish monarchy, but provided a welcome service to the colonists in Tierra Firme. While

⁴⁴ JACOBS, 2005: 258.

⁴⁵ TODT, 2011: 348-78.

⁴⁶ TODT, 2011: 348-78.

⁴⁷ TODT, 2011: 348-78.

⁴⁸ KLARENBECK, 2014: 113-29.

still under the impression that the Dutch could realize an Empire in the Atlantic that would be ruled from Dutch Brazil, Curacao initially fell under the Dutch Brazilian government. But this structure changed when Governor Peter Stuyvesant was moved to New Netherland, and a vice-governor was made responsible for the island under the supervision of Stuyvesant. In 1664 New Netherlands fell from Dutch power, as Brazil had ten years earlier. From then on the Amsterdam chamber of the WIC became responsible for the colony and the appointing of governors. However, decisions of the local council could only be overturned by the States General⁴⁹.

As with most of the WIC personnel at the time the governors and commissioners were banned from private trade. This rule was imposed to prevent the local officials of the WIC from turning a blind eye to illicit trading. This trade did however take place, sometimes on a large scale⁵⁰. But besides the officials, there seems to have been fairly little need to evade the company's regulation, as these were limited to the obligation to obtain a patent from the colony. Organized attempts to infringe on the monopoly, either through court or through merchant associations seem to have come to nothing⁵¹. Once a captain had such a patent he could freely trade in Curacao's port. In 1784 two major merchants from Curacao sought revision with the States General of several court sentences that had condemned them to paying recognition fees to the WIC⁵². Curacao Governor Abraham de Veer wrote a long letter explaining the practice with trade, duties and restrictions on the island. The merchants contested the WIC recognition fee since, as they claimed, the States General had not bestowed the right to levy taxes on the WIC. Secondly, they stated that Kunst writes that indeed there is no clear reference in the Order of Government, nor the Charter of 1674 that grants the WIC that right⁵³. While the argument failed short to impress the States General, it should be noted that the system of recognition fees on Curacao was based on customary tradition, rather than official guideline. What the merchants actually protested was that they were excessively high⁵⁴. Two commissioners who visited the island reported that the calculation of fraud regarding the recognition and excise fees came to f94.000 for 1789 alone⁵⁵.

In the case of Curacao, we can clearly see that an extensive network of trade developed that was beyond the reach of the company. While this was encouraged by the WIC, for

⁴⁹ KLOOSTER, 1998.

⁵⁰ KLOOSTER, 1998 (proefschrift).

⁵¹ When a Company for trade and shipping by citizens of Curacao (Societeit van commercie en navigatie der burgerije uit Curacao) was founded, this was successfully blocked from Amsterdam. KUNST, 1981: 202, cites NL-HaNA, WIC 209, 67 and 474, 67.

⁵² See the case before the Appeals Court for the West Indies between the merchants Adriaan Webb and Gerard Stridels and the WIC. NL-HaNA, *Staten Generaal, processtukken van rechtbanken in West-Indië*, 1.01.02 inv.nr. 9591.

⁵³ KUNST, 1981.

⁵⁴ KUNST, 1981.

⁵⁵ It is noted that this seems an excessive amount. However, the official committee visiting the island stated that the levying of the fees cost f 114.500, while the income from levying them was only f 55.613. This left the company f 58.000 short. The report stated that it was estimated that f 94.000 was lost due to smuggling. FORTMAN, 1919: 452.

example by making Willemstad a Freeport, it also meant that they were barely able to keep control over what was going on in the colony and effectively tax the shipping that went on. As the trading communities on islands such as St. Christopher show, the WIC seems to have been unsure as how to deal with these infringements. The substantial illicit trading on Curacao resulted in a situation where on the surface the monopoly of the company seemed to stay intact. The government of the colony remained in the hands of the WIC and there were no really significant legal changes. However, the scale of the evasion of the monopoly hollowed out its reach and effectiveness tremendously. The illicit trade made the formal monopoly simply an empty shell.

THE GUIANAS

Berbice, Demerara, Essequibo, Pomeroon, Suriname are just a few of the many colonies that the Dutch possessed on the Guiana coast. In the seventeenth century about fifteen expeditions attempted to found some form of colonial settlement. Many of these received their own charter from the WIC. David Nassy negotiated his own charter for the colony of Cayenne, Van der Perre did the same for Essequibo, although these subcontracts should not be seen as challenges to the monopoly of the WIC. The count of Hanau, Frederik Casimir, received a charter from the WIC to start a «*Hoogduitsche*» (German) colony in the Guianas⁵⁶. The area was granted to him a «loan or Feudum» and was conditional on having to cultivate and build upon the seashore of the chartered area⁵⁷. This and the other patroonship charters show that the private «patrons» accepted the monopoly of the WIC in full, and could be mobilized to execute its charter, even though the company's funds and reach had started to diminish.

The granting of patroonships worked well as a way to delegate some of the responsibilities of upholding the monopoly of the company to third parties. However, this created problems in its own right, especially in the mid to long term. One of the most prominent charters that was granted in the WIC's charter area was that of the Suriname Company (*Sociëteit van Suriname*). The *Sociëteit* was founded after the States of Zeeland decided to relinquish their claim over the colony. The States of Zeeland had funded the operation to capture the colony from the English, after which they simply refused to hand over the colony to the WIC as charter holder. When the military challenge posed by the Amerindians began to outweigh the financial benefit of managing the colony the States of Zeeland sold the colony to the WIC. The WIC then found the city government of Amsterdam and the family Van Aerssen Van Sommelsdijck willing to found the *Sociëteit* as the charterholder for the colony of Suriname⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ HARTSINCK, 1770: 270.

⁵⁷ HARTSINCK, 1770: 217.

⁵⁸ HARTSINCK, 1770: 623-624; FATAH-BLACK, 2015.

During the Zeelandic period of Suriname interlopers were infringing on the WIC's slave trade monopoly. The entire period from 1667 to 1682 can be read as a gross metropolitan challenge to the formal monopoly. The interloping became less salient once the WIC took possession of the colony outsourced its management to a Chartered Company (*Sociëteit van Suriname*)⁵⁹. Suriname, now by far the largest of the Guiana colonies also took in most of the WIC's slaves in the eighteenth century. In this way, the WIC had managed to wrest control of the colony from the states of Zeeland, and by participating for one third in the *Sociëteit* they also had more ways to enforce their monopoly over the slave trade. However, their advantage did not last. Especially from Zeeland, and often conniving with colonists, smugglers began to infringe on the monopoly⁶⁰. Also plantation owners began to pressure the company since it appeared to be unable to satisfy their demand. In 1730, when the WIC charter was to be renewed, merchants from Zeeland managed to pry open the slave trade monopoly of the WIC by being allowed to trade on the African coast⁶¹. The exclusive access for the WIC was retained for the Guianas until 1738, when it had to give this up allegedly because of diminished returns, but in practice because of the opposition by the private slave traders in the metropolis.

CONCLUSION

The very act of colonizing sprang from the competition between European rivals, and colonies were often strategically placed: by the British to «enter into the Bowels of the Spaniard in Peru» or by the Dutch to realize «the dark eclipse of the [Spanish] King's treasures»⁶². To this end money and power was invested into a range of different operations. The initial incursion into the Spanish Atlantic was by hit-and-run operations, violently raiding Iberian settlements and fleets. Later, attempts at monopoly formation were made to support more structural backing to the Atlantic operations. Once settled overseas, the colonists often found themselves in precarious conditions, in which survival depended on the supply of provisions and colonists. Geographically, the European incursion into the Atlantic world was very diverse, from icy waters of New Foundland to the Gulf of Mexico, down the entire South American coast to Chile. This vast and diverse continent created many possibilities for exchange between colonists of different empires. The circuits of exchange were far more resilient than the European attempts to close them down. When going back to the early modern period we can see that monopolies were formed to benefit not just merchants or the mercantile sector, but that it integrated producers, bankers, landowners and then spilled over into colonization.

⁵⁹ FATAH-BLACK, 2015: 153-157.

⁶⁰ PAESIE, 2008.

⁶¹ HEIJER, 1997: 297 and onwards.

⁶² HARLOW, 1925; USSELIX, 1622: 12.

The formation of the WIC monopoly was challenged in an early stage due to metropolitan rivalries between the provinces and other interested parties. Free traders also illicitly tried to evade the limits placed on their operations. The emphasis in this chapter has been on the challenges to the monopoly by people who were based in the colonies. The colonists put up their own resistance to the regulations of the WIC. In New England the monopoly of the WIC was subcontracted to Patroons. The illicit trade with the Republic as well as the direct trade with neighboring colonies posed a very direct challenge to the execution of the monopoly. However, the city of Amsterdam managed to roll back some of the deflections of both the colonists and the interlopers. In the Guianas the monopoly over the slave trade was retained by the WIC for longer than in other areas in the Atlantic. This was in part the result of a successful delegation of responsibilities by the company to the *Sociëteit van Suriname*. In the end the combination of both illicit trade and pressure from parties in the metropolis resulted in the disbanding of the important monopoly on the slave trade in 1738. The case of the WIC is one where the formal monopolies were unpacked in quick succession, although some, like that over the slave trade remained in place for much longer, and the formal organization also continued to exist and levy some duties until the end of the eighteenth century.

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BEYOND MONOPOLY. THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY AND PRIVATE TRADE IN TEA TO EUROPE (1685-1796)*

CHRIS NIERSTRASZ**

East India companies are best known for the way they excluded the competition from trade through monopoly privileges. This reputation is mainly due to their trade in spices as this trade was undeniably largely dictated by monopoly. The other products East India companies traded in were less prone to monopoly. In this chapter, it will be argued that the ability to control the trade in one of those other products, tea, was often very limited in the face of competition. This competition went through a particular development as more and more competitors gained access to the source of tea in China. Before 1713, China was not accessible for European East India companies, so Chinese traders first had to bring tea to the East India companies. Only companies who were able to attract Chinese merchants could lay their hands on tea to bring to Europe. With direct trade, so from 1713 onwards, European companies were welcomed in Canton, the problems of the faulty supply of tea seemed solved. However, the fact remained that the EIC and the VOC were unable or unwilling to satisfy the still large demand of tea in Europe. Faced with monopolies in the Dutch Republic and England, Dutch and English merchants teamed up in the search for tea with merchants in other European cities, such as Ostend, Copenhagen and Gothenburg, while the French East India Company also saw new possibilities. These East India companies started bringing home substantial amounts of tea. Even more interestingly, when the Dutch East

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India Company (VOC, hereafter) was faced with this competitive market for tea, it displayed responses that might seem very odd for a company with a monopoly on trade. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) decided to share its monopoly right on trade to the Republic with private traders. As an essential part of the VOC's strategy, its East India Men returned to the Republic with private trade in tea onboard in order to enhance the amount of tea the VOC already imported to the Dutch Republic. The VOC was the only East India Company which allowed extensive private trade in tea beyond the permitted trade of its crews. This chapter will give an answer to the question why a monopoly company such as the VOC was willing to give such extensive room to private trade in tea.

PRIVATE TRADE AND THE «DISCOVERY OF TEA» (1685-1741)

Private trade in tea was not born out of the VOC trade of tea as tea was already structurally brought back to Europe by private traders on VOC ships before the VOC directors declared it an official commodity of trade. Even stronger, the VOC only decided to trade in tea when it realized the success of this private trade. Before 1685 the tea trade of the VOC proved problematic as it struggled to obtain supply of tea from China, while the little import of Japanese tea to Europe was considered a failure. The Chinese emperor had outlawed trade by his subjects, which meant exporting tea was difficult and only smaller amounts were brought to Batavia. In 1685, the situation changed as the Chinese emperor allowed its subjects to trade outside of China. As the VOC was not welcome in Canton until 1713, Chinese merchants brought tea and other Chinese goods to Batavia. As these Chinese merchants looked for spices and other goods from the Indonesian Archipelago, Batavia was in a particularly strong position to attract this new trade. This meant a steady inflow of tea to Batavia to which private traders quickly responded.

For some reason, the VOC soon became aware of the profitability of trade in tea to Europe and the directors ordered tea to be imported. The directors were quite clear where they got the idea from:

«The tea, which is now imported in so large quantities by private persons, and is presented to some people as also to gentlemen of merit and honor, and such in so large quantities of boxes, bottles, and canisters, that it passes all measure, we have resolved that henceforth it will be considered an article of commerce, specially reserved to the Company alone, and that therefore after this to nobody, whoever it may be, it may be forwarded or brought to even as lining (stuffing), on the penalty of confiscation and such other mullets (fines) as we will deem proper to impose; for this reason we have resolved to augment the demand, lately made by us, to twenty thousand pounds»¹.

¹ SCHLEGEL, 1900: 470.

For several reasons the room available in VOC ships for private trade in tea far exceeded the room allowed in other companies. First of all, the importance of Batavia for Chinese traders meant large quantities of tea was available, while the role of Batavia as rendezvous for returning VOC ships to Europe gave ample opportunity for private trade. Tea was still abundantly available in Batavia while the VOC was hesitant to step into this branch of trade, so tea was a logical choice for VOC servants who wanted to transfer their fortunes home with an extra profit. The VOC was already deeply involved in spices and textiles, while other companies mainly specialized in tea and textiles. As companies in general specialized in these products, they were more restrictive on private trade in these commodities, as they feared it would cut directly into their only profit. For the VOC the trade in tea was not essential, spice had higher profit rates, so it logically preferred to invest in these products. In turn, it used leniency in allowing private trade in tea as a tool to keep its servants from conducting illegal private trade in spices².

In true monopolistic fashion, the VOC at first wanted its servants to give up private trade when it stepped into the tea trade itself. Private trade infringed on the profits it wanted to grasp for itself. Unfortunately for the VOC, it proved impossible to root out private trade, due to its profitability and the small scale on which it was organized. This is further supported by pictorial evidence for the existence of private trade and the way it was spontaneously organized. A picture from 1695 shows a woman called Tryn carrying a tea pot and a container of tea³. The text below tells us that she had obtained the container from a VOC sailor called Piet in exchange for some kisses and sweet words. More important for us, is the fact that we can find more references to such containers, taken by VOC sailors, to Europe. Throughout the whole period, reference is made to this trade, which straddled the line between permitted and prohibited trade. De Haan refers to how sailors held on to their containers of tea like lions, defending them with their lives as they often had bought their tea on credit. Losing their container to VOC commissioners on their return home would mean their financial ruin⁴. In this period, the division between permitted trade and illegal trade was still quite fluid. Rather, they should be considered the same thing, as the VOC directors would only strictly define the dimensions of permitted trade in the eighteenth century.

As banning private trade proved impossible, the VOC directors took steps to better control private trade in tea. In 1695, the VOC had had enough of the anarchistic private trade in tea. New rules were implemented in order to give the VOC the tools to put a halt to the import of private trade tea. Plans existed to make private traders in tea pay a fee⁵. This fee needed to be paid on the loading of the tea in Batavia and if not paid the tea would be

² NIERSTRASZ, 2015: Chapter 1,

³ Unfortunately it was not possible to get the rights for this picture. To see the picture: JACOBS, 2006: 184.

⁴ HAAN, 1922: 203.

⁵ VAN DER CHIJS, 1880a.

confiscated on arrival in the Dutch Republic. Unfortunately, the VOC had totally miscalculated the tenacity of its own crews in their pursuit of profits. In actual fact, they simply continued their trade bringing to light the opportunistic nature of their behavior, as well as the ingenuity of their relatives in the Dutch Republic. As Van Dam puts it:

«In the year 1696, the commanders and others had arranged for an enormous crowd to gather, both outside of the port [in all kinds of small boats] and on the dock of Texel itself'. In the confusion thus created many undeclared goods were kept out of the reach of the inspectors, much to the disgruntlement of the Directors. From the goods that were seized in the chaos in the water and on the docks, the VOC came to the startling conclusion that: "amongst [the seized goods was] tea, in larger quantities, and of better kinds than the VOC had received herself"»⁶.

In Batavia, those involved in private trade decided on a more subtle strategy in order to convince the VOC Directors of the necessity of private trade in tea. The VOC servants and crews were mainly silent as the main protests were made by Chinese citizens living there under the protection of the VOC⁷. These citizens argued that the VOC had more to win by allowing private trade than it had with banning private trade. Private trade generated income in Batavia as the Chinese traders would stay away as they had no other ways to sell their tea. The VOC would not be able to replace the amount of tea imported by private traders itself, which would lead to a loss of market share. Apart from a loss in trade, the new measures meant an increase in the burden carried by the Chinese merchants bringing tea to Batavia of 25,000 rixdollars inevitably leading to their ruin. Without the profits from their dealings with private traders, Chinese merchants would see their profits evaporate. Without such profits, it would no longer be worthwhile to defy the dangers of their trade to Batavia. The VOC would not only lose out on the profits of the tea trade, but also Batavia would lose income from the taxation of the Chinese junk trade. In turn, the company would also lose out on profits on the sale of its own goods to the Chinese Junks. If the fee would be introduced immediately, the damages would even be greater, as the tea had been bought on credit and that would invalidate repayments.

All in all, the Governor-General decided that in view of the protest and the impact it had on Batavia, he saw no reason to enforce the fee. The Directors could not enforce the fee either, as they had no way to check if fees had really been paid⁸. The VOC directors soon had to give up on wanting to monopolize the trade in tea. Instead they focused on the problems private trade caused to VOC trade. The VOC directors complained that ships were overloaded with private trade tea, causing accidents and shipwrecks. During the whole period between the start of VOC trade in tea and the start of recogni-

⁶ DAM, 1927: 5.

⁷ BLUSSÉ, 1986: 125.

⁸ BLUSSÉ, 1986: 125-127.

tion trade, the VOC directors almost continuously complained about such practices. In this manner, the call for an absolute ban on private trade in tea slowly disappeared from the argument.

At several intervals during the early years of trade, the amount of private trade of tea conducted is often hinted at in the sources. In 1695, the Chinese inhabitants made an estimation of the amount of tea that was exported by private trade. They estimated the size of private trade to be 250 piculs, which amounted to 31,250 lb (Dutch) or 33,325 lb (English). This was roughly the same size as the official VOC imports, and far superior of the whole official imports of the EIC⁹. De Hullu, in his authoritative study on the early China trade in tea, indicates around 300,000 pounds of tea imported through what he considered illegal private trade in 1730¹⁰. Governor-General Van Imhoff hinted that before 1743 «2000 to 3000 kannassers» of tea were yearly brought to the Dutch Republic by private trade. In turn, he considered such imports not to be illegal, but legitimate¹¹. In 1733, the VOC had established that one *kannasser* should not exceed the amount of 90 lb¹². The combination of both sources gives us a conservative estimation of approximately 270,000 pounds of private trade tea in the years just before the start of the recognition trade in tea. A report from 1734 calculated that such illicit trade in tea, or better put «unstoppable trade in tea» brought 2 million pounds of tea yearly back to the Republic¹³. Glamann points to an even larger amount of illegal private trade in tea of 2,5 million pounds every year¹⁴. In fact, when the ship the *Ananas* shipwrecked in 1743, all that was saved from the ship were private correspondences proving the widespread private trade in tea. The extent of private trade went beyond the imagination of the VOC directors and they were infuriated¹⁵.

When Governor-General Van Imhoff (1743-1750) was hired to reform the VOC, his eye fell on the private trade in tea. He treated private trade as an established practice over which the High Government in Batavia was unable to wield control. He wanted to find a way in which the VOC better profited from the import of private trade tea. So he only thought it fair if the VOC would profit from the private trade too. After all, the VOC had been given the monopoly on all trade between Asia and Europe, so if the private traders exceeded what the VOC wanted to grant them as permitted trade, he only thought it fair if they would pay for it.

⁹ CHAUDHURI, 1978: 538.

¹⁰ HULLU, 1917: 105.

¹¹ HEERES, 1912: 441-621.

¹² VAN DER CHIJS, 1880b. Veginning tot het medeneme van 'kassen, in plaats van kannassers, mits niet meer wegende dan 90 lb.

¹³ HAAN, 1922.

¹⁴ GLAMANN, 1958: 239.

¹⁵ SCHOONEVELD-OOSTERLING, 1743.

RECOGNITION TRADE IN TEA

The official tea trade of the VOC is often very harshly judged as a complete failure, especially after direct trade to Canton (1713) was established by the other East India Companies. Kristoff Glamann has already shown that at the end of the Seventeenth century the VOC, just like its European competitors, moved into the market for Asian commodities such as textiles and tea¹⁶. In the period of indirect trade (1685-1713), the VOC was still the strongest competitor in the tea trade, as we have seen, due to its strong position in Batavia. The assumed weak performance of the VOC in the later tea trade is mainly attributed to its stubborn refusal to change from indirect trade in Batavia to direct trade with Canton¹⁷. It stuck to indirect trade in Batavia until 1729, whilst the competition had already moved forward by trading directly with Canton.

In general, the English East India Company (EIC) is seen as easily outdistancing its Dutch rival from the establishment of direct trade onwards. However, such conclusions have not been based on quantitative evidence, but more on the assumption that direct trade is per definition more efficient than indirect trade. At the same time, they are based on the presupposition that the VOC took no steps toward direct trade, which has already been proved to be a false assumption¹⁸. In any case, such assumptions have been made without taking into account that the VOC was much more lenient towards private trade and without realizing that the private trade in tea was quite substantial. Does a comparison of the official imports of tea by the EIC and the VOC, as well as the import by private traders on VOC ships, give new insights into this discussion?

The problem with private trade is that it often escapes the attention of historians as it is elusive and hard to quantify. Private trade in general always formed an intricate part of all Company trade both in the European trade and in the intra-Asian trade, but in the case of the VOC private trade in general is often wrongfully treated as fraud and corruption¹⁹. English private trade in the intra-Asian trade has received more positive reviews as it has been seen as a motor of competition and change. Its profits financed and pushed the returns of the EIC to new heights. However, such an analysis does not take in account that the EIC and VOC empires were differently organized. The English empires was strongly orientated towards taxation, while the Dutch empire was geared towards profit from trade. This difference makes the study of English private trade an easier task as the EIC kept taxation records. For the VOC, financial records on private trade are less available as the VOC was largely unsuccessful in imposing tax on private trade in Asia. However, as a recognition fee for private trade in tea had to be paid in the Republic, without escape, and was recorded there, it is possible to see the magnitude and development of this part of private trade.

¹⁶ GLAMANN, 1958: 212-243.

¹⁷ FURBER, 1976: 126.

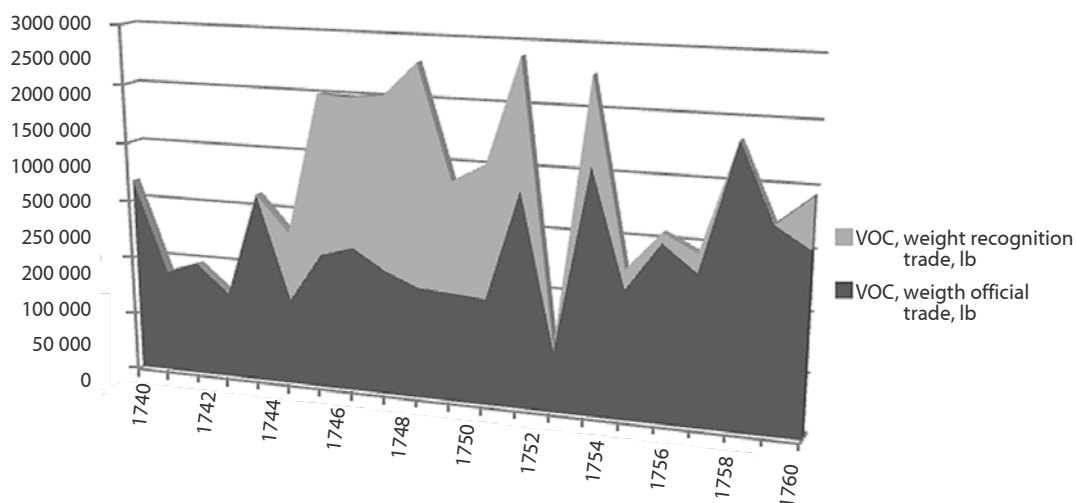
¹⁸ FURBER, 1976: 129-135 and 140-144; NEAL, 1990: 218-220; CHAUDHURI, 1978: 386-388; and discredited by: YONG, 2007: 145-152; GAASTRA, 2003: 137.

¹⁹ See for instance: GLAMANN, 1958: 105.

What made this private trade or recognition trade in tea so special was that it was structurally different from the permitted trade in tea conducted by the VOC crews. Crews of all the East India Companies enjoyed private trade privileges, called permitted trade, which in practice meant they were allowed to bring private trade goods on their voyages. The recognition trade was structurally different as this private trade privilege was not aimed at crews, but all those falling under the VOC authorities in Batavia. All VOC servants, Asian subjects and Chinese merchants in Batavia were encouraged to bring their tea to the VOC warehouses. The VOC promised to load all the tea offered on the ships returning to the Dutch Republic, even if it required employing extra ships especially for this purpose. It promised to sell the tea at the first possible occasion after the tea had been unloaded. In order to stimulate its Asian subjects to participate, it would allow the profits to be transmitted back to Batavia on bills of exchange without extra costs.

The directors of the VOC allowed private traders to bring tea to Europe on its East India Men, but now on their conditions. In return for the service of shipping the tea over and in recognition of its monopoly, the VOC charged a recognition fee ranging from 30% to 40% on the tea brought to the Dutch Republic. There were different ways of calculating the fee and over the century the VOC directors imposed ever higher charges, going up to 50%. These fees were paid after the sale of the tea in the Dutch Republic (the VOC guaranteed the tea would be auctioned at a VOC auction on the first opportunity) and accounted for in the general account books of the VOC²⁰. The uninterrupted data on the recognition trade, gives us the possibility to study the development of this type of exchange.

Graph A: Imports of tea, VOC official trade and VOC recognition trade, lbs (1740-1760)



Source: NA, VOC, Generale Staten, 4592-4592.

²⁰ See NeHA, VOC, Generale Staten, 4592-4597 and YONG, 2007: 232.

During the first 10 years of the recognition tea, the success of the scheme becomes evident when we compare the amount of recognition tea imported in relation to the import figures of the VOC (see Graph A). During this period, the VOC often more than doubled the amount of tea it brought to Europe by allowing private trade. As the VOC lacked the financial resources to expand its own tea trade²¹, opting for private trade made sense in an environment in which competitors had been able to expand their trade. After 1755, the recognition abruptly collapsed, even though the recognition trade continued to be allowed until the end of the VOC (1796). This collapse was not related to any change in the rules, but the recognition trade was inhibited to recover to earlier levels by fundamental changes in the competition for trade in Canton, especially in the way the EIC started dominating the purchase of tea in new ways. The recognition trade in tea would occasionally still flare up, but most of the time smothered on at much lower levels than in the years of its greatest success.

The VOC directors used the trade in recognition tea as strategic tool in the competition for the tea market. By allowing recognition trade in tea from Batavia, the VOC aimed to enlarge its tea trade and hamper the tea trade of the competition to the Dutch Republic. It also hoped to use private trade in tea to generate profit for the Company in Europe. Van Imhoff, the Governor-General who engineered the recognition trade in tea in 1743, only saw advantages for allowing recognition trade in tea. In an attempt to convince his superiors of the positive sides of his plan, he wrote:

«With a good and loyal treatment of business, this sending of tea for the account of private individuals will give the Company a substantial profit and will give our competitors in the trade with China much impediment, as none of them are capable of helping and sustaining themselves in this trade with so little profit as our traders will be happy to accept»²².

The recognition trade has been described in the literature, but its implications have not yet been fully understood²³. The strange development it went through of rapid success followed by swift decline triggers many different questions. In order to understand this development, the private trade in tea needs to be placed in a comparative perspective with the trade of the competition. A comparison of the tea imported to Europe by the VOC, the EIC and the recognition trade in tea, shows that at its height the quantity of tea imported on recognition rivaled the imports of the VOC and often even surpassed the imports of the EIC. At the low point of EIC imports of tea in 1747, the EIC brought 410,990 lb English

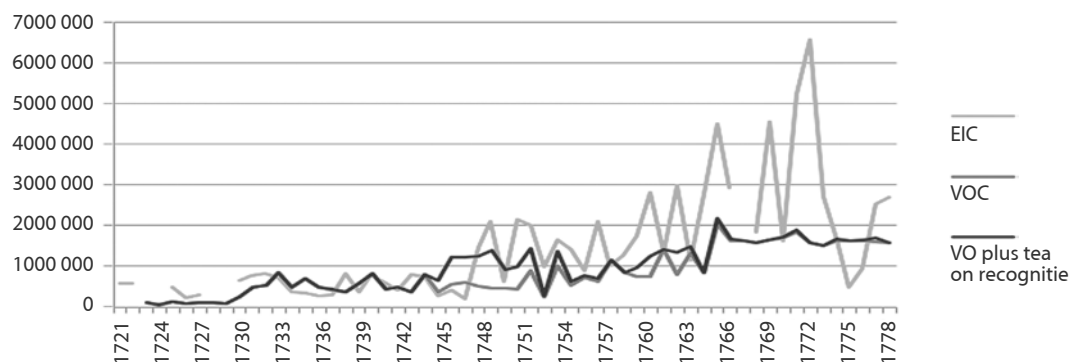
²¹ KORTE, 1984 ; GAASTRA, 2003.

²² HEERES, 1922: 46, (...) bij eene goede en getrouwe behandeling vna zaken dese versendinge van thee voor reeck. Van particulieren de Compagnie een naamwaardige winst en onse competeuren in den handel op China door de tijd veel impediment geven sal, nademaal niemand harer in staat is sig in die vaart te behelpen en het gaande te houde met soo weynig winst als waarmede dese onse negotianten sig sullen contenteeren (...).

²³ YONG, 2007: 124-125.

weight of tea from Canton to Europe, which the Dutch recognition trade alone brought home over 1,200,000 lb Dutch weight of tea on VOC ships. When the figures of private trade are combined with figures of the VOC trade in tea meant the import of 2,400,000 lb Dutch weight of tea to the Dutch Republic²⁴. Even more surprisingly, the rise in import of private trade tea coincided with a substantial drop in the imports of the EIC.

Graph B: Amount of tea imported by the EIC, VOC and the VOC plus recognition trade, in kg²⁵ (1720-1780)



Sources: NA, VOC, Generale staten, 4590-4596 and BL, IOR, Commercial legers, 8-17.

Recognition trade mirrored a dual strategy on the part of the VOC regarding the tea trade. The VOC focused on the more expensive tea in their direct trade with Canton, while private traders focused on the cheaper varieties brought to Batavia. Counter-intuitively, this division meant the price of the recognition tea through indirect trade was lower than the price paid in Canton by the VOC in its direct trade (see Table 1). The tea brought to Batavia was the tea that had not been sold during the previous sales in Canton. The East-India Companies first chose what they wanted to buy, which was what they considered the best value for money. The tea officially exported by the companies could not escape paying tax to the Chinese authorities.

Table 1: Purchase prices of VOC tea, in Batavia, Canton and on recognition (1751-1754)

	VOC, Batavia	VOC, Canton	VOC, tea on recognition
1751	0.080336	0.042233	0.027623
1752		0.042233	0.042027
1753		0.042875	0.037338
1754		0.042026	0.04333

Source: INGHygens, Bookkeeper-General Batavia; the circulation of commodities of the VOC in the eighteenth century (BGB), <http://bgb.huygens.knaw.nl/>

²⁴ Neha, VOC, Generale Staten, 4593.

²⁵ One lb Dutch equals 0,494 kg and one lb English equals 0,453 kg.

The lower price of recognition trade tea also meant the tea was of lower quality than the tea imported by the VOC itself and by the other companies. In other words, the tea was of lower quality than the tea bought in Canton in the direct trade until the moment the EIC started purchasing this tea in Canton after 1755. For this lower quality and the lower prices, several explanations exist. As we have argued above, the tea was of lesser quality because it was the left-over tea from the year before. The tea was also less fresh as it took a year longer to reach Europe. The tea was brought to Batavia on Chinese junks in baskets often exposed to the elements. This exposure meant a loss of flavor and quality. The transshipment at Batavia had a similar effect on the tea. Most importantly, the tea was cheaper as it was brought to Batavia without paying taxes in Canton as all those involved in the tea trade had an interest in letting the left-over tea go without taxation. The Chinese emperor farmed out taxation to his officials for a fixed lump sum so these tax-farmers had an interest in concealing there was more money to be made²⁶.

Private traders in recognition tea were only the last part of a chain, with Chinese merchants and Portuguese merchants from Macao supplying Batavia with tea. These merchants were after goods they could profitably sell in China, especially spices and tin. The VOC used this principle in its own trade in tea to Canton too, but apparently the possibilities for trade in these goods were not exhausted. The Portuguese traders were also attracted with these goods they could sell in China, but they also used these goods in their trade with Manila. In order to face the increasing competition for tea, the VOC directors had decided to import these goods from Batavia onto the market in Canton. The VOC China ships started making a stop-over in Batavia to exchange their silver for spices and tin. The journey continued to Canton, where these goods were sold at a profit. The profitable trade in these goods helped to augment the purchase power of the VOC for tea in the Canton market.

THE REASONS FOR DECLINE

New archival research presented here, shows that the VOC did not fall behind the EIC until 1748, rather the opposite (See graph B). The official trade did not fall behind EIC trade, while if we take in account the private trade in tea more than double the amount of tea was brought to the Dutch Republic. One of the reasons was a smart game between trading at both Batavia and Canton and using monopoly and private trade in tea to boost returns. However, the success did not last after 1755 as the EIC invented an answer that made the recognition trade through Batavia almost completely obsolete.

The fall in imports of the recognition trade was occasioned by the arrival of new competition for the market in Asian goods in Canton. The EIC was losing its home-market in tea to smugglers from the continent and felt it had to reorganize its trade²⁷. It made several

²⁶ DYKE, 2011: 10.

²⁷ MUI & MUI, 1968: 44-73.

changes to its China trade, which dealt a severe blow to the recognition trade of the VOC. First of all, it drastically increased its exports of silver to Asia in order to pursue a larger market share in tea. Before 1748, the EIC had brought its silver directly to Canton in order to buy tea. Imitating the VOC policy, it now exchanged a large part of its silver for Asian goods with a market in Canton. In order to do so, the China men first visited English settlements in Asia and Asian ports to procure pepper and other Asian goods. They sold these goods at profit in Canton and with these profits, the EIC enhanced its purchase power²⁸. As the VOC was also supplying these goods, their price must have dropped in Canton. Such an availability of spices at low prices in Canton meant Chinese Junks had less incentive to search for spices themselves. As a consequence, the Chinese Junk trade went into decline together with the supply of tea for the recognition trade.

The occurrence of recognition trade after 1755 was strongly influenced by the European competition for tea. In the years up to 1796, the EIC attempted to buy up as much tea in Canton as possible. It also continuously increased the amount of tea it brought to Europe, in order to apply pressure on the market for tea in Canton. It was only able to do so every two years, buying substantially lower amounts of tea in the other year. The VOC sales alternated accordingly: when the EIC bought a lot of tea, the VOC bought less. When the EIC bought less, the VOC bought more, while Chinese producers of tea were able to keep up with expanding trade without a notable raise in prices of the main varieties of tea. In the years that the EIC bought more, the recognition trade made up for what the VOC was not able or willing to buy. This tea had been brought to Batavia in the year after the EIC had bought less in Canton. The delay of one trading season needed to bring tea from Canton to Batavia and shipping it on to Europe, meant that the recognition trade nicely balanced out the official trade. After 1765, the recognition trade further dwindled into insignificance as EIC imports to Europe through Canton exploded as funds became available with the establishment of British Empire in Bengal. The VOC and its private traders could no longer keep up in the tea trade with the EIC and its Indian empire.

CONCLUSION

Until now the private trade in tea by VOC servants and subjects has been misunderstood and misrepresented. The VOC was never as strict as its competitors on limiting private trade in tea to the permitted trade of its crews. In fact, the VOC was less strict in general with its monopoly on tea. It realized a competitive market for tea existed and used private trade to gain market share. Extensive private trade existed alongside the official VOC trade. This private trade had been the origin of all tea trade to Europe and as private traders had already created a market for tea before the companies started trading in tea.

²⁸ NIERSTRASZ, 2015: Chapter 2.

When the VOC saw the potential of the private trade in tea, it decided to impose a recognition fee on it in 1745. In return, the tea trade which had until then been tolerated became a part of the official strategy of the VOC. The recognition tea together with the official imports of the VOC grew so formidable that the EIC was almost pushed out of the market for tea. The structural changes made by the EIC in answer to the recognition trade did their job, leaving the private trade in tea in ruin.

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AFTERWORD. BUILDING A GLOBAL WORLD BEYOND EMPIRES

CÁTIA ANTUNES*

AMÉLIA POLÓNIA**

This book elaborates on central issues related to mechanisms of global empire building, within- and on the borders of the institutions of empire. It also searches for understanding the configuration of the world that resulted from the creation of consortia of individuals, joined in networks of a great many political, ethnic, social and religious backgrounds. When one analyses empire building under these premises, it is difficult to encompass current views and conceptual definitions of empire that remain centered in a discourse of nation state building typical of the nineteenth century, but unheard of during the Early Modern period¹. These men (and women, even if they were not brought to the fore in this book) came together and helped to construe global empires not, in a large extent, corresponding to nationalistic ends or ideologies typical of the period post-Age of Revolutions. Individuals and networks were powered by their own talents, skills and knowledge and driven by their own self-interest. It is at this level that a new definition of empire ensues and the global frames conjunctural and structural developments.

The case studies tackled by Erik Odegard and by Maria Inês Guarda show case a common practice in the articulation between state and private networks. In their chapters it is clear that the influence of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Portuguese empire were far less important than the personal networks. The latter were far more profound and encompassing than what traditional narratives of the company and the empire have voiced thus far.

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¹ STOLER, 2006: 25-146; —, 2004: 577-593.

Erik Odegard explains how the career progression of VOC high-ranking employees were co-dependent upon their personal networks, rather than on regimes of meritocracy usually portrayed as paramount for the efficiency of the Northern European chartered companies. Odegard's contribution shows how networks in Europe and Asia were essential for individual progression within a specific empire and how the latter was heavily dependent upon the functioning of these networks for its daily functioning and long-term strategies.

Companies and states were equally played out by the way individuals and networks succeeded in participating in global movements and change, leaving the institutions responsible for empire at a loss. Kate Ekama shows that although the Dutch commercial companies seem to have been modern as organizations, they still faced serious competition from groups in the Dutch Republic that were less inclined to participate in a state-led colonial enterprise and were more vested in continuing trade at a global scale free from the constraints imposed by institutional rules. The Supreme Court of the United Provinces was a privileged ground where litigation against the VOC and the Dutch West India Company (WIC) took place. Even though the motivation for litigation was diverse, it remained a fact of daily life for companies, private merchants and their global networks during the seventeenth and the eighteenth century.

The same bottom-up approach is paramount in Joris van den Tol's analysis of the role petitions played in the support of Dutch Brazil in The Hague and the way this petitioning translated into lobbying practices that tried, and at times succeeded, in changing colonial policy and institutional set ups. The author analyzes the arguments (i.e. political, religious or economic) used to support the public discourse in the Dutch Republic in the debate that opposed sponsors of free trade versus monopolized access to Dutch Brazil in the seventeenth century. For Van den Tol, public pressure reflects the will of individuals and merchant groups to challenge the official policy promoted by the WIC.

Karwan Fatah-Black zooms into the case of the WIC's long history and supports Ekama's findings regarding opposition through litigation. His argument is, though, more specific and complex. For Fatah-Black, one of the strongest frameworks of nation-centric, institutional empire building were the systemic rules that governed economic exchange. The case of the colonial monopoly of the WIC is treated in his chapter as a case in which economic monopoly was the starting entrepreneurial point of the company in the 1620s, terminating in the 1780s as a deflected monopoly. This deflected monopoly was in many senses accommodating, adaptable and flexible and thus an agent in itself of practices across different geographies, but also within multiple social systems.

Still on the sphere of the Dutch empire, Chris Nierstrasz's paper investigates how monopolistic companies, private traders and smugglers pushed the boundaries of the traditional Companies (VOC and the British East India Company – EIC) regarding the import of tea into Europe. The process that Nierstrasz analyses is deeply contextualized by the globalization of the tea trade and consumption in Europe, a development that was responsible

for implementing multiple varieties of tea trade to Europe from Canton. The author shows how, by the creation of a market for popular tea, the trade of rogue companies, private traders and smugglers played a vital role. The two joint-stock companies were simply following in a catching-up tandem. Favorable market conditions arguably allowed that, whilst the Companies tried to organize their monopolies, private traders and smugglers simply worked around them. At times, those were the source of innovation that provided the edge that became the source of competitive advantage to overcome competition.

Opposition in the context of global empire building was contemporary and simultaneous with cooperative and representative mechanisms between the state and entrepreneurial networks and between different networks across empires. Ana Sofia Ribeiro provides an example where mechanisms of cooperation between merchant communities institutionally separated resulted in the decrease of geographical boundaries across the Portuguese and the Spanish empires. However, hypothesizing that the collaboration of Portuguese and Spanish merchants in cross-imperial trading ventures could have been increased by the political union of the two crowns, she concludes that, after all «the political annexation of the Portuguese Crown by the Habsburgs has not changed much Portuguese foreign trade associations. In theory, the kingdom's economic independence and a separate overseas territories administration were kept. In practice, an Iberian complementary trading exploitation was already practiced before 1580. Spanish and Portuguese merchants soon tried to articulate trading potential profits from both Imperial spaces», what means that political and institutional trends did not seem to be a determinant condition to promote cooperation between merchants of diverse «nationalities».

Alejandro Garcia Monton also follows the trail of this cooperative bottom-up approach by explaining the way a private Genoese firm approached the Spanish Monarchy in order to govern the slave trade through the *asiento* and all adjacent activities within the contract. The forging of this public-private partnership stands for the way people excluded from empire building (the Genoese) were still able to determine governance and exploitation of empire, while expanding the institutional borders of the same empire beyond what the state had initially conceived. The case study addressed by Garcia Monton also exemplifies, to a certain extent, the capacity of non-institutional elements to represent empire and in so doing furthering the interests of expansion and consolidation.

Spain being clearly an empire in which the agency and contribution of private actors in shaping empire remains still understudied, the central role traditionally conferred to the «state» at framing imperial policies has been prominent. It even resulted in the misinterpretation of different strategies and mechanisms the state developed and used to cooperate with private actors in order to achieve its own goals. Garcia Monton's essay reverses this standpoint by focusing on how private agents collaborated with the state in pursuing their own personal and private goals and doing so contributing to the sustainability of the empire.

It is however in the work of Mariah Wade where this phenomenon is clearer. Wade's account of the Portuguese participation in the Spanish expeditions in North America, perceived as an odd case as it can be, shows how mechanisms of cooperation and representation were already in place since the very beginning of the European expansion overseas. As stressed by the author, the volunteer enrollment of the Portuguese in expeditions to New Spain highlights the free movement of people, skills and wealth across different boundaries. Part of this involvement of priests, knights, pilots, sailors, craftsmen and settlers in hazardous colonial enterprises performing in religious, military and commercial colonial ventures were undertaken while the Portuguese Crown was part of Spain, but many others were not. This evidence raises questions as to the covert primacy of commercial and personal interests over political ones or, alternatively, to the enterprising power of individuals. In the end, the chapter argues that «national» provenance was not a consideration in joining these expeditions.

Even if mechanisms of opposition, cooperation and appropriation were common features and strong drivers of global empires, they were not mutually exclusive and should, once again, be seen within a sliding scale of analysis (as is the case with all the chapters in this book). What the analysis of these mechanisms provides is the possibility to understand the complexity of agency as translated into personal choices of different historical actors and the mapping out of the repercussion of their choices at the level of empire.

Mechanisms of global interaction in- and between empires were not often peacefully acknowledged or accepted by institutions and states. More often than not, the state and institutions of empire reacted to mechanisms of global integration by punishment, allowing for cooperation (or forcing cooperation) and by incorporation. Punitive actions were often translated into systems of punishment for illegality, subversion and political or religious unorthodoxy. However, punitive actions were costly and inefficient for states that were generally weak and institutions that could not enforce resolutions. Therefore, cooperation and appropriation seemed the best options to take. Cooperation in a nutshell combined the wishes of individuals, groups and networks with the goal setting and the rules of the state through complex systems of interpersonal and collective bargaining. Incorporation, on the other hand, was more pernicious and included the inclusion of mechanisms of global exchange in the functioning of empire. As Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo claims, colonial empires being «polities characterized by the generating and institutionalizing of uneven political, economic and socio-cultural relationships, both within and outside of their porous frontiers, they can and should also be analyzed as agents of globalization and as polities that globalized production, trade, communication and finance and that frequently favored territorial expansion and international integration»² – often by assimilating

² JERÓNIMO, 2016: 213.

ing mechanisms and solutions offered by individuals and networks working sometimes in favor, sometimes against imperial aims.

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MECHANISMS OF GLOBAL EMPIRE BUILDING

This book maps out the crucial mechanisms of global empire building during the Early Modern period and poses at center stage global exchanges between, across and among individuals and empires. The book focuses on instances in which individuals or groups systematically looked for ways to connect beyond the territorial and institutional limitations imposed by their respective empires. In doing so, it showcases a set of clear mechanisms of individual and collective agency. They challenged, cooperated with, or represented imperial interests, in what should be perceived as a sliding scale of individual behaviors and motivations, rather than an absolute stance run by central powers.

How did people connect empires and what happened to empires as a result? How did individual and collective agency contribute to the constitution of global maritime empires during the Early Modern period? This book will answer these questions by looking at the role individuals played in the construction of 'informal empires', resulting from the enactment of a multitude of self-organized networks operating world-wide, whose main goal was safeguarding their personal social and economic advantages, sometimes cooperating with formal powers, frequently regardless of (and in spite of) state intervention.

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