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ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ ΠΕΡΙΚΛΗ ΘΕΟΧΑΡΗ

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ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ.— **The Greek merchant of the Palaeologan period: A collective portrait**, by *Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis*\*. Ἀνεκρινώθη ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀκαδημαϊκοῦ κ. Διονυσίου Α. Ζακυθινοῦ.

The Byzantine merchant is an elusive figure. He is supposed to have played a dominant role in the Mediterranean until the twelfth century, and to have controlled the internal trade of the Byzantine Empire, secure behind the protective barriers erected by a strong government. While this may, indeed, have been so, it is very difficult to describe with any precision the Byzantine merchant in his days of greatness. The geographic and class origin of medieval merchants, the sources of their capital, the manner in which they exercised their trade are matters which are capable of being investigated — and have been investigated — when they apply to Venetian or Genoese traders. But the Byzantine merchant remains an unknown quantity, and his activities can be only nebulously seen in the uninterested sources, at least through the twelfth century<sup>1</sup>.

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\* ΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΗΣ Ε. ΛΑΪΟΥ - ΘΩΜΑΔΑΚΗ, "Ἕλληνες ἔμποροι στὴν ἐποχὴ τῶν Παλαيو-λόγων: συλλογικὴ προσωπογραφία.

1. For Genoa of the early period, see H. C. Krueger, *Genoese Merchants, their Partnerships and Investments, 1155-1164*, in «Studi in onore di Armando Saporì», I, Milan, 1957, 257-272; IDEM, *Genoese Merchants, Their Associations and Investments, 1155-1230*, in «Studi Amintore Fanfani», I, Milan, 1962, 415-426; G. Pistorino, *Mercanti nel Trecento*, «Clio», 10 (1974) 33-65; R. S. Lopez,

The period for which it is possible to form a precise — although still limited — idea of the Byzantine merchant is the period in which traditionally he is thought to have ceased to exist. In the time of the Palaeologi, the Venetian and Genoese merchants established a firm dominance in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea area, and historians have assumed, following the narrative sources, that the Byzantines virtually stopped engaging in trade. In the course of the last ten years, however, it has been recognized that there were, indeed, Byzantine merchants and sailors in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and that the realities of economic dependence were rather complex, allowing for the participation — albeit with specific restrictions — of the native populations in the increased economic activity of the area<sup>2</sup>.

Since the existence of the Byzantine merchant of the Palaeologan period is now firmly established, it is necessary to attempt some statements about the structure and the activities of this social group. The Palaeologan period is the only one for which sufficient information exists to make possible such an enterprise.

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Le marchand génois, un profil collectif, in IDEM, *Su e giù per la storia di Genova*, Genoa, 1975, 17-33. For Venice, see Y. Renouard, *Mercati e mercanti veneziani alla fine del Duecento*, in *La civiltà veneziana nel secolo di Marco Polo*, Florence, 1955, 92-100; G. Luzzatto, *Il mercante veneziano del tempo di Marco Polo*, in *Nel VII Centenario della nascita di Marco Polo*, Venice, 1955, 241-254; IDEM, *Storia economica di Venezia dal XI al XVI secolo*, Venice, 1961. I know of no study of the Byzantine merchant; for an interesting view of the Byzantine commercial economy, see R. S. Lopez, *Beati Monoculi: The Byzantine Economy in the Early Middle Ages*, in IDEM, *Byzantium and the World Around it: Economic and Institutional Relations*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1978.

2. K. P. Matschke, *Fortschritt und Reaktion in Byzanz im 14. Jahrhundert*; *Konstantinopel in der Bürgerkriegsperiode von 1341 bis 1354*, Berlin, 1971; N. Oikonomidès, *Hommes d'affaires grecs et latins en Constantinople (XIIIe-XVe siècles)*, Montreal, 1979; A. E. Laïou-Thomadakis, *The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries*, «Dumbarton Oaks Papers», 34 (1980), 177-222.



The most voluminous groups of sources concerning the activities of the Byzantine merchants are to be found in the archives of the Italian city states which were involved in trade in this area. The sources are primarily Venetian and Genoese, but also Ragusan. They supply the bulk of extant information; the evidence they provide helps us to look at the Byzantine sources in a new light, and perhaps re-interpret certain phenomena in new ways.

This paper has a double purpose. First to explore the characteristics and the activities of the known Byzantine merchants of the Palaeologan period, that is, of those who inhabited the lands subject either to the Byzantine Emperor or to the Empire of Trebizond. The second purpose is to outline the function and activities of Greek traders and sailors from areas which were not under Byzantine jurisdiction, and particularly from areas where there were large Italian colonies<sup>3</sup>. The second topic is vast, virtually untouched, and the documentation on it is enormous. The remarks which follow are based on all the published sources, and on unpublished materials which I have collected in the Genoese and Venetian archives. In the discussion of the Byzantine merchant I have used all the information available to me.

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3. The statistics for this part of the study include information about merchants originating from or resident in Constantinople, the rest of the Byzantine Empire, and the Empire of Trebizond. It does not include merchants from Chios (under Genoese occupation), Crete, Modon, Coron, Chilia, Pera, Caffa, or other Italian colonies, or from areas which, although they had a population which included Greeks, were under the rule of others (for example, Vicina or Maocastro in the fourteenth century) Greeks from these areas are discussed in the second part of the study. Since the Palaeologan state contracted geographically in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a problem arises concerning the inclusion of specific areas at specific times. I have not taken into account the political vicissitudes of Thessaloniki in the fifteenth century, considering that the existence or otherwise of Greek merchants was not affected by short-term changes of sovereignty. Cities like Serres or Adrianople have been included, even after they fell to the Turks; also included are the cities of the Despotate of Epirus. Some Greeks from the Byzantine Empire have been included, even though they had Venetian or Genoese citizenship. In any case, such citizenship was not necessarily exclusive, as may be seen by the fact that the Notarades were Genoese citizens.

## A. THE BYZANTINE MERCHANT

It is possible to recover in the sources the names of 239 Greeks from Byzantine lands or from the Empire of Trebizond, who engaged in trade during the Palaeologan period. This number, although very small when compared to the data available for Italian merchants, is nevertheless sufficient to allow some basic observations, and even some rudimentary statistical groupings. There is, however, a methodological problem which stems from the nature of the sources. These being, in the majority, western, they undoubtedly distort reality, for they include only those Greeks who happened to have commercial transactions with the Italians. Thus, a strong structural bias is inherent in the evidence. The almost complete absence of Byzantine notarial records (which existed, but have survived only in very small numbers) makes it virtually impossible to study the relations of Byzantine merchants and bankers among themselves. This difficulty is less acute for the years 1380-1401, because of the survival of the decisions of the patriarchal court of Constantinople which, in this period, judged some commercial cases as well<sup>4</sup>:

The historian has to deal with a double problem: the accidental nature of the survival of pertinent western sources, and the distorted picture which these sources necessarily project. One example may serve by way of illustration. I have divided the Palaeologan period into four chronological divisions, for historical reasons. The first extends from the recapture of Constantinople in 1261 to the conclusion of the Venetian-Byzantine treaty in 1310; the second, from 1311 to 1352 and the end of the Byzantine-Genoese war; the third, from 1353 to 1402 (battle of Ankara), and the last one to 1453. In the first period, only one of 24 known individuals appears in a Greek source, while all the others are found in Italian sources. In the subsequent periods, the percentages of individuals who appear in Greek sources range from 9% (1403-1453), to 29% (1353-1402), to 59% (1311-1352). There are significant differences between the Byzantine merchant of the first period, as he appears

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4. These decisions appear in MM I, II. The discovery, by P. Sehreiner, of the account books of some Byzantine traders, will, when published, provide valuable information: P. Schreiner, *Kuptsy i tovary Pričernomorja: fragment vizantijskoj kontorskoj knigi, «Byzantinobulgarica», 7 (1981), 215-219.*



in this documentation, and the merchant of subsequent periods. Are these due to real changes, or to the bias of the evidence? The methodological problem is clear. One first restriction that it imposes on the scholar is, that the statistics which can be calculated must be used in a particular way: statistics from the four sub-periods may not be directly compared, unless there is compelling external evidence that the differences they present are real, and not fictitious. Furthermore, it is impossible to make firm negative statements about the Byzantine merchant; one is forced to argue minimally, establishing the activities of merchants in at least some areas, with at least certain commodities.

In the first period under discussion, which extends from 1261 to 1310, the basic sources (that is, those which give precise information about the merchants) provide a rather interesting picture: of the 13 individuals whose geographic origins can be specified, 31% originated in the Black Sea area, 31% in Constantinople, and 38% in Monemvasia<sup>5</sup>. The distribution is about equal among these three areas. The visible commercial activities of these people, however, took place overwhelmingly in Caffa and the northern coasts of the Black Sea: a phenomenon directly linked to the nature of the sources, for most of the information comes from the acts of Genoese notaries stationed there. The merchandise the Greek traders dealt in was primarily that of the Black Sea — slaves, a little grain, some fish — and of the Aegean — cochenille, cloth. The capital involved in these operations was normally very small. The social position of the individuals was usually undistinguished: we can find one member of the lower aristocracy (Nikolaos Chatzykes, who

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5. The sources used for this period are: G. I. Bratianu, *Actes des notaires génois de Péra et de Caffa de la fin du 13e siècle, 1281-1290*, Bucharest, 1927, no. 143; M. Balard, *Gênes et l'Outre-Mer, I, Les actes de Caffa du notaire Lamberto di Sambucetto, 1289-90*, Paris, 1973, nos. 438, 535, 212, 208, 223, 412, 595, 875, 714, 505, 430, 459, 105, 409, 594, 410, 459, 529, 48; G. Bertolotto, *Nuova serie di documenti sulle relazioni di Genova coll'impero bizantino*, «Atti della società Ligure di storia patria», 28 (1898), 516, 526; Gregory of Cyprus, *Letters*, no. 128.

There is no reason to think that «Poli Erminio» (Bratianu, *Actes*, no. XXIX) was a Greek, as does L. Balletto, *Un carico d'argento in fondo al mare (Costantinopoli 1281)*, «Atti dell'Accademia Ligure di Scienze e Lettere», 33 (1976), 3-8; he was an Armenian.

appears in a Byzantine source)<sup>6</sup>, a man acting as agent of another aristocrat, one banker, and three men who are specifically designated as merchants.

To what extent is this picture a true reflection of reality? It should first be said that it probably reflects correctly the relations between Greeks and Genoese in the Black Sea area, where Genoa was struggling to establish an economic dominance. The activities of the Genoese rarely included Greeks. The Greeks who appear in the Genoese notarial documents did not engage in the *commenda*, the primary form of commercial contract. They lived, almost literally, on the gleanings of the Genoese trade; the fact is best illustrated by the three men, probably sailors, who purchased from a Genoese 154 modii of millet to transfer to Trebizond; this had been the fee (in kind) which the Genoese shipmaster had charged for transporting a certain quantity of millet<sup>7</sup>. The most active man was a certain Nichita de Tana, native of Sinope and inhabitant of Caffa. He owned one fourth of a house in Caffa, which he sold to a Genoese; he bought three Bulgarian slaves; he had lent money to a Genoese, and he rented a ship with which he was to carry grain and meat to Trebizond. Yet the cash total of two of these activities, was 2,410 aspres, that is 133 hyperpyra, a very small sum<sup>8</sup>. It is also indicative that of the 151 documents from late thirteenth-century Pera only two mention Greeks.

There are two possible interpretations of this evidence. One is that there were no active Greek merchants in this period; the other, that their activities did not take them into contact with the Genoese and that their presence was therefore only marginally recorded. A certain dissonance which exists between the sources mentioned here, and other, less precise, sources, makes me inclined to think that the second possibility was the one which obtained. There is a letter of the Patriarch Gregory of Cyprus, who addressed an imperial official and repeated the report given him by a Greek-speaking merchant from Palestine, then resident in Constantinople, who had recently returned from the Black

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6. Gregory of Cyprus, Letters, no. 128.

7. Balard, Gênes, no. 505.

8. Balard, Gênes, nos. 223, 412, 595, 875.



Sea. The man had reported that the Genoese were using force to hinder the activities of Byzantine merchants. He said also that there had been imperial ships sent out to protect the Greek merchants, but to no avail; and that the Genoese were trying to monopolise the Black Sea trade and should be stopped<sup>9</sup>.

There is also intriguing but limited evidence of Byzantines involved in long-distance trade. In 1281, the Emperor Michael VIII had signed with the Egyptian sultan Qala'un a peace treaty, several articles of which added up to a reciprocal trade agreement<sup>10</sup>. Among them, were articles guaranteeing to the Byzantine merchant free access to the Egyptian markets, and leaving the matter of duties and taxes to be decided later. This may be thought an anachronism; and, unfortunately, scholars have paid very little attention to such provisions introduced in Byzantine treaties with other states, *a priori* considering them to be *pro forma*. This treaty seems to be referring to a real situation. For around 1290, a certain Genoese, captain of a *navis*, was transporting to Alexandria some Greek merchants and their merchandise, for a fare of 500 *hyperpyra*. And the presence of Byzantine merchants in Alexandria is attested even later, in 1349<sup>11</sup>. These facts suggest that the evidence given by the bulk of our sources is heavily biased, and should be corrected to allow for more extensive and more variegated activities on the part of Byzantine merchants in this period.

One other element that must be retained is the significance of Monemvasia and of its inhabitants. The city was populated by large numbers of sailors, pirates and traders. We find her pirates in the late thirteenth century very active in the southern Aegean and in the area off the coasts of Thrace and northern Asia Minor. Their enterprises were undertaken in small boats, suitable to the local trade they were

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9. Gregory of Cyprus, Letters, no. 164 = V. Laurent, *Les registres des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I, fasc. IV, Paris, 1971, no. 1540.

10. M. Canard, *Le traité de 1281 entre Michel' Paléologue et le sultan Qala'un*, «Byzantion», 10 (1935), 669 - 680.

11. G. Bertolotto, *Nuova serie*, 521; cf. AASS Nov. IV, 676; Cantacuzenus III, 98.

attacking; and we must assume that they functioned as traders as well, since they shared among themselves the merchandise they had captured, presumably in order to sell it. There were, however, also true merchants, who bore names famous in the history of the city; and both sailors and pirates are to be sought among the inhabitants not only of the city itself, but also of its two colonies, in Pegai and along the Asiatic coast of the Propontis<sup>12</sup>. The activities of the Monemvasiot merchants continue into the second period, which extends from 1311 to 1352. In this period, 8% of the known Byzantine merchants originated from Monemvasia. The main area of their enterprise was the southern Aegean, between Nigroponte and Crete. The trade was usually small-scale, (the value of ships and merchandise together ranging from 300 to 2200 hyperpyra), and consisted primarily of alimentary products; sometimes it reached the coasts of Asia Minor or Macedonia. Monemvasiots were also very active in the area around Constantinople, Thrace and the Black Sea; these were probably from the colony at Pegai, although some of them were from Monemvasia proper. A great deal of the olive oil trade, from the Morea to Constantinople was in their hands, and they were able to exercise it even in very adverse political situations<sup>13</sup>.

In this second period, the sources present a more variegated picture of the Byzantine merchant, partly no doubt because they themselves are more varied: 59% of the information concerning 39 traders comes from Greek sources, and the rest from Venetian, Ragusan and Genoese documents. In this documentation, Constantinople looms large: 51% of the Greek merchants were natives or residents of that city, and 36% of recorded commercial activities took place there. Caffa, on the other hand, appears to play a very secondary role, involving only 11% of the Greek merchant's activities, while 32% of them took place in the central and southern Aegean. This is an example of misleading statistics, for the information is entirely dependent on the fortuitous survival of spe-

12. Laïou - Thomadakis, *Byzantine Economy*, 106 - 107.

13. A. Papadopoulos - Kerameus, *Žitiya dvuh vselenskih patriarhov XIV v.*, in «Zapiski istoriko-filologičeskago fakul'tet imperatorskago S. Peterburskago universiteta», 76 (1905), pars. 40 - 42.



cific kinds of sources<sup>14</sup>. Nevertheless, the same sources, if used to supply qualitative rather than quantitative information, confirm the fact that Constantinople was a very active and important port in this period, and that the Greek merchants played a significant role in its commerce.

The acts of a Cretan notary who was in Constantinople in 1350, a critical year, show just how teeming with commercial activity this port was, even at a time when political relations between Venice, Genoa and the Byzantine Empire were at their most tense: war broke out in the fall of that year, and at its conclusion everything had changed<sup>15</sup>. But if the documentary material is correct in emphasizing the importance of Constantinople, the apparently secondary role of Caffa is quite misleading. For this was probably the period in which the Byzantine presence in the Black Sea trade was most extensive. The Byzantine merchants imported grain into Constantinople from the Black Sea, breaking the Genoese monopoly — if such a thing had, in fact, existed. They were so active that the Genoese were frightened; and when their activities were facilitated by the lowering of customs duties in a decree of John VI, the Genoese were provoked into a war with the Byzantine Empire. A few years later, in 1352, the Byzantines and the Genoese

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14. Sources on which the statistics for this period are based: MM I, 66-68, 279; MM III, 107, 109, 102-103; B. Krekić, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1961, nos. 173, 114; G. M. Thomas, R. Predelli, *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levanticum*, I, Venice, 1880, no. 72; G. Balbi, S. Raiteri, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare: Atti rogati a Caffa e a Licostomo (sec. XIV)*, Bordighera, 1973, 30, 89, 112-114, 111; A. S. V., *Notai di Candia*, not. Antonio Bresciano, b. 11, fo. 2r, 2v, 4v, 3v, 5r, 5v, 3r; P. Nasturel, *Une prétendue oeuvre de Grégoire Tsamblak: Le martyre de Saint Jean le Nouveau*, «Actes du premier Congrès international des études balkaniques et sud-est européennes», 6, 1971, 345-351; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Žitiya*; S. Lindstam, *Ett i Mitylene förövat övergrepp på nagra resande till Thessalonike*, BZ 25 (1925), 47-50. A few more names appear in K. D. Mertzios, *Μνημεία Μακεδονικῆς Ἱστορίας*, 22. Unfortunately, Mertzios misunderstood the documents, and the names are not relevant here.

15. A. S. V., *Notai di Candia*, not. Antonio Bresciano, b. 11, fo. 1r-6v. I am preparing an edition of and commentary on the Constantinopolitan acts of this notary.

signed a peace treaty which, among other things, virtually prohibited Byzantine merchants to sail to Tana, thus indicating that their activities had previously extended as far north as that city<sup>16</sup>.

The sources permit also the discovery of the provincial Greek merchant. There is mention of a merchant from Arta, and of merchants from Ioannina, active on the western coast of Greece. The field of their activities extended to Avlona, Ragusa, Venice and various coastal cities of the Black Sea area<sup>17</sup>. This is where one must argue simply in minimal terms: one must note the existence of these merchants, but cannot tabulate their activities, for mention of them is incidental.

Partly because of the high incidence of Greek sources, it is possible to refine somewhat our portrait of the Byzantine merchant in this period. A relatively high proportion (18%) belongs to the aristocracy. That is a feature which has been dated to the second half of the fourteenth century and has been explained by the fact that the Byzantine aristocracy, having lost its lands to the Turks, by necessity turned to trade<sup>18</sup>. The phenomenon, however, seems to be datable to a significantly earlier period; and it might have been observable even earlier, had we had more Greek sources where this could appear. It is, I think, obvious that in the cities of the Palaeologan period — if not of earlier times — trade was not an activity shunned by the aristocracy; that, on the contrary, the Byzantine aristocracy, an urban one for the most part, exhibited some economic flexibility, as is indicated by its participation in trade. The source of the capital of these people is usually not stated; only in one case do we know about it, for the man used his daughter's dowry property, and the case therefore reached the court<sup>19</sup>.

The number of known Byzantine traders rises dramatically in the period extending from 1353 to 1402. There are 85 known merchants, more than double the number from the period immediately preceding

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16. Laïou - Thomadakis, *Byzantine Economy*, 194 - 195.

17. Krekić, *Dubrovnik*, no. 173; *MM* III, 109.

18. Oikonomidès, *Hommes d'affaires*, *passim*.

19. *MM* I, 279.



this<sup>20</sup>. The fact is due primarily to the survival of the acts of a Genoese notary in Chilia, the account books of the Genoese colonies of Pera and Caffa, and the fact that, in this second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the patriarchal court of Constantinople enlarged its activities to include all sorts of cases of civil and even commercial law, and its records have therefore preserved some information about Byzantines who were in some way involved with trade.

The importance of Constantinople is, once again, evident. The majority of these people whose origins or place of permanent residence are known were from Constantinople (70%), while 47% of recorded transactions involved Constantinople and Pera. Second in visible importance was the port of Chilia, with 27.5% of the recorded transactions of Greek merchants. But we also find Rumania, Russia, Chios, Tana, Ragusa, Candia, Venice and Genoa as areas in which the Byzantine merchant had some kind of presence, although its extent cannot be precisely determined.

The caution necessary in interpreting fragmentary sources is particularly evident in this period. It might, *a priori*, be thought

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20. The sources used for this period are: G. Airaldi, *Studi e documenti su Genova e l'Oltremare*, Genoa, 1974, 90-91; G. Pistarino, *Notai genovesi in Oltremare. Atti rogati a Chilia da Antonio di Ponzò (1360-1361)*, Bordighera, 1971, nos. 94, 32, 63, 72, 80, 93, 47, 48, 58, 59, 66, 67, 71, 83, 89, 90, 18, 21, 22, 45, 52, 60, 88, 73, 3, 6, 27, 97; M. Balard, *Gênes et l'Outremer*, II, *Actes de Kilia du notaire Antonio di Ponzò 1360*, Paris, 1980, 187, 67, 68, 138, 141, 128, 161, 163, 164, 181, 39, 183, 186; MM II, 372-375, 400, 546-551, 511-512, 549, 399-400, 377-379, 385, 560-561, 386-387, 461; G. Ferrari Delle Spade, *Registro Vaticano di atti bizantini di diritto privato*, SBN, 4 (1935), no. 3, p. 267; A. S. G., *Sindicamenta Peire*, 1402, reg. 1, fo. 107r, 106r, 45r-v, 51r-v, 60v-70r; A. S. G., *Notary Donato di Chiavari*, 1389, nos. 37-38; Krekić, *Dubrovnik*, 251; A. S. G., *Caffe Massaria*, 1386, fo. 360r-v, 362v, 414v; A. S. G., *San Giorgio*, «Introitus soldorum duorum pro mina grani», sala 37, sc. 26, 1384, fo. 8r, 41v, 58v, 83r; A. S. G., *Antico Comune, Magistrorum rationalium*, r. 100, fo. 61r-v; *Peire Massaria*, 1390, 218r; *Peire Massaria*, 1402, fo. 54r; 1391, fo. 169; N. Iorga, *Documents concernant les Grecs et les affaires d'Orient tirés des registres de notaires de Crète*, RHSEE, 14 (1937), 90; M. Balard, *La Romanie génoise (XII-début du XVe siècle)*, Rome, 1978, 337; A. Lombardo, *Nicola de Boateriis, notaio in Famagosta e Venezia (1355-1365)*, Venice, 1973, nos. 174, 310; G. G. Musso, *Navigazione e commercio genovese con il Levante nei documenti dell'Archivio di Stato di Genova (secc. XIV-XV)*, Rome, 1975, no. 10.

reasonable that Constantinople would retain its position as an important trade center even in adverse political conditions. But, *a priori* and on the basis of what is usually said about the period, it would not have seemed probable that cities such as Adrianople and Serres might have had a commercially active population<sup>21</sup>. And yet, an accidentally preserved source reveals the intriguing fact that the most active Greek merchants in Chilia in 1360-1361 were two partners from Adrianople, John Vasilico and John Frangopoulos, who had travelled hundreds of miles to come to Chilia to place their funds and to hedge their risks by splitting them among many enterprises. Together they invested capital of at least 1814 hyperpyra and 10 sommi and 20 saggi of silver<sup>22</sup>.

There is, in this documentation, a significant presence of Greeks from the ports of the Empire of Trebizond. They were mostly sailors or owners of relatively small boats; they acted as partners, several sailors putting up capital together, to invest in enterprises, particularly in the purchase of grain, which formed the single most important commodity of the Black Sea trade, and of the port of Chilia. They also engaged in contracts of exchange; sailors from Simisso (Samsun) are particularly active in this period, and are also mentioned in the previous years. Many of the Greeks who appear in this documentation are shipmasters or co-owners of boats, or sailors. They transport grain from Chilia to Constantinople or Pera in the 1360's, from Constantinople or the Bulgarian coast to Caffa in the 1380's, from Constantinople and Panidos to Genoa in the 1380's. To some degree that structure of the Byzantine merchant class (the single largest visible category consisted of *patroni* of boats or sailors) is connected with developments in the Black Sea area where, after the troubles between Venice, Genoa and the Mongols in the 1340's, trade patterns had changed significantly. The role of Caffa, the great wheat exporting port, had been to some degree assumed by the smaller ports of the western coast, where small quantities of grain were loaded in large numbers of small boats, which then transported the grain

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21. On some late Byzantine cities, see P. Nasturel, N. Beldiceanu, *Les églises byzantines et la situation économique de Drama, Serrès et Zichna aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, JÖB, 27 (1978), 269-285.

22. Pistarino, *Notai* nos. 47, 48, 58, 59, 66, 67, 71, 83, 89, 90.



to Pera, from where it was taken to Genoa, not by the Greeks but by the Genoese<sup>23</sup>. The role of the Greek merchant of the Black Sea area was supportive and auxiliary to the Genoese trade; his activities essentially stopped in Pera, and did not take him to Italy. But within the Black Sea, his presence was so strong as to be almost dominant.

Only very rarely did the Byzantine merchants break the barrier which kept them out of the ultimate Italian destination of trade, and thus kept them confined in the eastern Mediterranean. This was in 1384 and again in 1389, when Manuel Cabasilas transported considerable amounts of grain to Genoa. The Cabasilas were a famous family, and Manuel himself was acting as an imperial agent, carrying imperial grain on a ship that belonged to the Emperor<sup>24</sup>. Once again, we see the Byzantine aristocracy actively participating in trade. Of the Greeks who were engaged in commercial transactions in this period, 20% belonged to the aristocracy; one or two of them were Emperors. Agents of a Greek emperor transported grain to both Genoa and Caffa (then under Mongol siege) in the 1380's. The Caffa adventure was unknown until recently; in the case of the exports to Genoa, the exporter has been thought to have been John V Palaeologus. But it was not; it was his grandson John VII, son of Andronicus IV, who had, with Genoese aid, rebelled against John V in August, 1376, and held Constantinople until 1379. John himself had, we know, undertaken a trip to Genoa, probably in 1390, in search of help. Leading his own rebellion, he had taken Constantinople for a few months during that same year<sup>25</sup>. John did not act alone. On the contrary, he had a strong following among the inhabitants of the city, and among many members of the aristocracy, some of whom left Constantinople with him at the end of his rebellion. It is tempting to identify these people, as a

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23. M. Balard, *Les Génois à l'ouest de la Mer Noire au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, «Actes du XIV<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'études byzantines», II, Bucharest, 1975, 21-32.

24. On this, see Laïou-Thomadakis, *Byzantine Economy*, 220.

25. On John VII, see F. Doelger, *Johannes VII, Kaiser der Rhomäer*, 1390-1408, *BZ* 31 (1931), 21-36; P. Wirth, *Zum Geschichtsbild Kaiser Johannes VII. Palaiologos*, «Byzantion», 35 (1965), 592-600; E. Zachariadou, *John VII (Alias Andronicus) Palaeologus*, «Dumbarton Oaks Papers», 31 (1977), 339-342.

group if not necessarily individually, with persons like Cabasilas, who exported to Genoa badly-needed Byzantine wheat from the territories held as apanage by John VII. Other aristocratic families had close economic contacts with the Genoese. Among them were the Goudelis, particularly George Goudelis and his son John, rich and powerful men who had both political and economic ties with the Genoese. George Goudelis was a Genoese citizen, as was Nicholas Notaras, father of the last mesazon of the Byzantine Empire<sup>26</sup>. Nicholas Notaras had made a fortune in the Genoese public debt. Lucas had all his money in Italy, and both he and his son Demetrius—perhaps the very son who was executed before his father's eyes after having pleaded with him to liquidate their Italian assets to pay off the Ottomans—had active trade relations with the Venetian banker Badoer in the 1430's<sup>27</sup>.

There were, then, important members of the Byzantine aristocracy who had daily economic contacts with the Genoese: there was an Emperor, in whose service one at least of these people is known to have acted, and who himself was a firm ally of the Genoese. The Byzantine civil wars of the late 14<sup>th</sup> century have usually been taken as mere internal squabbles of the imperial family, supported and fomented by Venice and Genoa, who acted for their own purposes. But that interpretation must be revised, to take into account the strong economic interests which linked part of the Byzantine aristocracy—including the disaffected Emperors Andronicus IV and John VII—to the Italian city states.

For the last 50 years of the existence of the Byzantine state, the available information concerning the merchant is extremely biased. The bulk of it comes from the account books of the Venetian banker Giacomo Badoer, who was active in Constantinople from 1436 to about 1440; and because he gives details about transactions involving a number of Greeks, one may be misled into thinking that the information he provides gives an accurate picture of the structure, if not of the extent, of

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26. Oikonomidès, *Hommes d'affaires*, 68, 122; to the bibliography, add H. Hunger, *Johannes Chortasmenos* (ca. 1370 - ca. 1436/37); *Briefe, Gedichte und kleine Schriften*; *Einleitung, Regesten, Prosopographie, Text*, Vienna, 1969, 44 ff.

27. Ducas, *Istoria Turco-Bizantina* (1341-1462), ed. V. Grecu, Bucharest, 1958, 329; cf. Laïou-Thomadakis, *Byzantine Economy*, 205.



the activities of Greek merchants<sup>28</sup>. In fact, the picture is quite true, as the following example illustrates. In Badoer's voluminous account books, never once is Thessaloniki mentioned. One might legitimately think that the city, which had undergone political vicissitudes, being besieged by the Turks in 1411, falling under Venetian domination in 1423, and finally being conquered by the Ottomans in 1430, had a totally disrupted economic life that could support neither trade nor those activities that financed it. This, however, was not so, as is proved by a small account book of one of the church officials of the city. In this document we find three bankers, and the interesting information that two of them were related to each other by marriage; there is a possible fourth banker; there is also a middleman, and someone else, whose exact profession or trade is unknown, but who managed to die in Tana, a long way from home, where people went only for purposes of trade<sup>29</sup>. Once again, therefore, the fact that every statistic is dominated by Constantinople and by the people who appear in the account book of Badoer has only illustrative, and not apodictic, value.

The statistics for this period, which reflect the activities of 91 persons<sup>30</sup>, establish, first of all, the high participation (34% in this in-

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28. U. Dorini, T. Bertelè, edd., *Il Libro dei Conti di Giacomo Badoer (Costantinopoli 1436-1440)*, Venice, 1956, *passim*.

29. S. Kugéas, *Notizbuch eines Beamten der Metropolis in Thessaloniki aus dem Anfang des XV. Jahrhunderts*, BZ, 23 (1914-1919), 143-163. An arithmetic book, probably composed in Thessaloniki in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, includes a great many examples that refer to traders or to trading activities. That, however, may not be very valuable information, since many of the examples appear to be commonly used in such books: H. Hunger, K. Vogel, *Ein Byzantinisches Rechenbuch des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna, 1963.

30. These statistics are based on the following sources: Badoer, pp. 40, 540, 153, 371, 27, 32, 33, 54, 336, 362, 480, 584, 58, 6, 114, 236, 246, 237, 5, 36, 364, 444, 240, 199, 219, 480, 177, 522, 623, 84, 234, 74, 27, 58, 32, 416, 310, 499, 628, 650, 414, 121, 115, 160, 229, 792, 61, 82, 162, 197, 204, 29, 108, 135, 148, 153, 354, 105, 178, 27, 40, 32, 36, 784, 796, 200, 27, 75, 360, 646, 745, 555, 21, 404, 783, 610, 405, 122, 7, 680, 102, 410, 120; J. Fr. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca e codicibus regiis*, III, Paris, 1831, 46; Laonici Chalcocondylae *Historiarum demonstrationes*, ed. E. Darko, II, Budapest, 1923, 165-166; S. de' Colli, Moreto Bon, *Notaio in Venezia, Trebisonda e Tana, 1403-1408*, Venice, 1963,

stance) of the aristocracy in trade and finance. Secondly, they show that the Greeks of Constantinople were very active in commercial activities, since they form the second ethnic group—after the Venetians—in the accounts of Badoer. But it is clear that the capitals at their disposal were small, that their trade with the Venetians was a deficit one, and that they funnelled to the Constantinopolitan market imported goods, especially cloth and spices. The statistics also show that the Byzantines were very active in retail trade; that is one of the structural characteristics of the Palaeologan economy which did not change over time. Another phenomenon typical of the Byzantine economic situation is the existence of relatively large numbers of bankers. There are 9 visible bankers in Constantinople and Thessaloniki: Greek bankers have been present in the sources since the late 13th century<sup>31</sup>.

no. 5; Krekić, Dubrovnik, nos. 1350, 888, 667, 728, 1103, 762, 810, 923, 986, 929, 930, 870, 981, 533, 632, 686, 688, 729; Kugéas, Notizbuch, 150, 153; A. S. G., Notary B. de Ferrariis, 9 Jan. 1444; A. Roccatagliata, Con un notaio genovese tra Pera e Chio nel 1453-1454, RESEE, 17 (1979), 220. The number of known traders will increase after the publication of the sources discovered by P. Schreiner. I have not included in the statistics the persons who appear in the correspondence centering around the «judge» of Adrianople Nicholas Isidoros, and published by J. Darrouzès, Lettres de 1453, REB, 22 (1964), 72-127, primarily for the technical reason that they belong to a period slightly after the fall of Constantinople. These letters attest to the continuing economic activity of the Greeks under Ottoman rule. They refer, however, to very restricted activities: participation in the exploitation of a saline under Ottoman supervision (let. 3), the existence of a συντροφία, sailing in the Black Sea to load salt (let. 3) or fish (let. 4). It is, perhaps, significant that Isidoros, clearly a wealthy man who could afford to ransom captives, to maintain a small school in Adrianople, and to support the fair and feast of St. Demetrius in Thessalonica, should be seen here to have obtained his income mostly from the activities outlined above.

31. Badoer, 153, 32, 336, 6, 58; Kugéas, 150, 153. See the poem of Alexius Makremvolites against a mendacious money-changer: E. Miller, Manuelis Philae Carmina, Paris I (1855), 457-58:

«Πῶς τὸ ψεύδος κατεσθίεις ἀδεῶς, ἀργυροκόπε, / καὶ οὐ φρίττεις τὴν ἐκ τοῦτου κοσμο-  
λέτειραν κατάραν; / Ἄν γὰρ ὡς φαρμάκῳ τούτῳ κέχρησαι ὀνησιφόρῳ, / Ἄπαξ ἔδει  
τοῦτο δοῦναι τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ καὶ μόνον, / ἵνα μὴ τὴν σώζουσάν σε δύναμιν κατακενώσῃς. /  
Πῶς τὸ σὺ παρὰ Λατίνοις νῦν ποιεῖς, ἀργυροκόπε, / Καὶ οὐκ ἐνλαβῇ καὶ φρίττεις τῆς  
καινοτομίας ὅλως; / Τὸ γὰρ φάτε μυριάκις ἐὰν εἴπης τῆς ἡμέρας / Ἄφατον ἐναποφαί-  
νεις ὡς μὴ λαληθὲν μηδ' ἄπαξ.»



Finally, in the same period there are sporadic and tantalizing references to traders from other parts of the state which had been until recently the Byzantine Empire. There are merchants from Ainos, from Adrianople (long under Ottoman occupation), from Rodosto. Greek traders still went to Tana, a large number (15% of the recorded transactions) went to Dubrovnik, one even seems to have travelled on his ship to Sicily, to buy the grain he brought to Dubrovnik. Some went to Panidos, there to load the grain of Thrace, still an item of export<sup>32</sup>. Once again, we notice the relatively large presence of sailors and sea-captains. Many of them, however, were from Crete, and have not been included in these statistics.

The general characteristics of the Byzantine merchant in the Palaeologan period may be summarised as follows. It is, first of all, clear that there were several types of Byzantine merchant. There were the small retail traders whom we find in Constantinople and in the few other cities for which there is documentation. Then there are merchants and bankers with a somewhat larger capital, and a greater geographic radius of activity. In a different category are the sailors and shipmasters from Constantinople, from the cities of the Empire of Trebizond, from Monemvasia, and from the Italian-held Byzantine territories, who not only transported merchandise on account of others, but also engaged in trade. Their activities will be examined again, in the second section of this study.

A large, varied, but not exactly determinable proportion of the Byzantine merchants and bankers were members of the aristocracy. And an important trait, perhaps among the most important, is the reappearance over fifty, and sometimes over one hundred and fifty years of merchants and bankers who were members of the same family. There are families with a strong and continuous chronological representation: the Sofianoï, one of the major Monemvasiot families, appear in our incomplete sources from 1292 until the late 1430's. The Goudelis are an old established family; they appear as merchants from the late 14th century until the end of the documentation. The name Vassilikos recurs in the sources; the Demonoianni, originally also a Monemvasiot family,

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32. On this, see Laïou - Thomadakis, *Byzantine Economy*, 218 - 219.

but perhaps no longer so when they last appear, were traders and ship-masters from the late 13th c. until John de Monoiane died in Tana in 1390 or 1391<sup>33</sup>. Others can be shown to have participated in trade for at least one hundred years. If we cannot speak with certainty of great Byzantine merchant or banker families comparable to the Bardi, the Datini or the Medici, we can at least speak of families with a respectable diachronic continuity in trade.

The Byzantine merchant was able to survive during this period of Italian economic predominance in the eastern Mediterranean. His role, however, in the economic and commercial system of the area was purely secondary, and could never be primary, for the Italians controlled the main prerequisites for international trade: communications, banking, information mechanisms. Thus, the Byzantines rarely gained access to the Italian markets. Their activities seem rather to be pointing at the existence of a second level of activities, which underlay the large international commerce dominated by the Italians, and which consisted of local sea-borne trade, involving small quantities of capital and merchandise. This trade both catered to the local populations and fed international commerce. And in this trade, the Greek merchant and sailor assumed a very important position, both in the Black Sea area and in the Aegean, where he may have had a greater flexibility.

A word is necessary about the politics and the religious predilections of the Byzantine merchant and banker group. It might be thought that a relatively well-defined social group such as the one I have examined, would have made discernible political and religious choices in an era where political and theological disputes were far from lacking. Unfortunately, the political and social attitudes of members of the merchant and banker group are only rarely visible, and then they don't follow much of a pattern. The great civil war between John VI Cantacuzenus and the regency for John V (1341 - 1347) was certainly in many ways a social conflict. The merchants and bankers of Constantinople and the provinces presumably took sides. The little evidence we have points to a certain amount of hostility from the merchants and bankers (of Constantinople

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33. A. S. G., Notary Donato di Chiavari, 1389, nos. 37 - 38.



at least), toward John VI who was, at the time, the representative of the great landed aristocracy<sup>34</sup>. But when it comes to specific individuals, the information is ambivalent. We know of one man, Nicholas, a Monemvasiot merchant and a rich man, a wholesale importer of olive oil, who was a staunch supporter of John VI, and presumably a Palamist being a compatriot, friend and the beneficiary of a miracle by the future Patriarch Isidore (1347-48)<sup>35</sup>. He was so vehement in his ideas, that at some point he left Constantinople to join John VI in his rebellion; a riot then ensued and the people opened his warehouse, full of oil, and planned to set fire to his house, although their leaders eventually held them back. The other piece of information is less certain. When John VI was proclaimed Emperor in 1341, the opposition against him began first in the city of Adrianople. Three men led the rebellion which then spread into other cities and became civil war: one of them was a laborer, but the professions of the other two are not mentioned. One of these men was named Frangopoulos, and it is clear that he was not only an able man but one of substance also; for he stayed in power in Adrianople until the city fell in 1346, and he was subsequently very well treated by John VI, certainly not as if he had been part of the «rabble» as Cantacuzenus called the people<sup>36</sup>. In any case, we find about 15 years later, in Chilia, a rich Greek from Adrianople, named John Frangopoulos who was a merchant and investor of some wealth. I am tempted to identify him if not with the rebel Frangopoulos himself, at least with a member of his immediate family. Similarly, a member of the Goudelis family, whose commercial activities have been mentioned, was one of the strongest supporters of the regency for John V Palaeologus, and was the wine steward of the Empress Anne of Savoy<sup>37</sup>.

The political connections and commercial activities of members of the aristocracy during the last hundred years of the Byzantine state have already been mentioned. Further research may uncover more specific and more coherent links between the political and economic interests of the Byzantine merchants in that period.

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34. Cantacuzenus, III, 33-43.

35. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Žitiya*, par. 40-42.

36. Cantacuzenus, II, 556 ff.

37. Cantacuzenus, II, 277.

## B. THE GREEK MERCHANT OF THE ITALIAN COLONIES

The Greeks who inhabited the Italian-held territories of the Black Sea area, and the coasts and islands of the Aegean and Ionian seas, were also very active in trade of various kinds. Their commercial and nautical activities were very extensive in the period under consideration, but they remain virtually entirely unexplored. This aspect of the life of Medieval Hellenism must be closely studied, for not only is it interesting in itself, but is also sheds light on the subsequent fate of the inhabitants of the territories mentioned above. There is extensive source material, which is found in the Venetian and Genoese archives. It consists, for the most part, of notarial documents. The bulk and nature of these sources is such, that only after lengthy and sustained research can the information they provide be collected, tabulated, and interpreted by the historian. It is a labor which will require many years of patient work, and which I hope to complete in the future. The remarks offered below are based on a partial and unsystematic reading of the sources. They lay no claim to being complete or conclusive; they merely present some structural traits of the trading activities of the Greek population of these areas.

It may first be noted that the Greeks formed a large proportion of the artisans and small shopkeepers of the Genoese colonies of Pera, Caffa, and Chios. They were builders, bakers, millers, tavern-keepers, master craftsmen, food vendors and so on<sup>38</sup>. Although I have not made a statistical study of the evidence, it seems to me that the proportion of Greek artisans and shopkeepers was greatest in Pera, and less pronounced in Caffa and Chios. In Candia, the visible proportion of Greek

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38. Only a few selected references will be given to illustrate this point. See, on Caffa, A. S. G., *Caffe Massaria*, 1386, fo. 622r-630r; Airaldi, *Studi*, 80-82, 62-66; 85-86, 95-96, 47-49, 84-85. The presence of Greeks in Caffa is also attested by the existence of Greek notaries: Balbi-Raiteri, *Notai*, 111. On the Greeks of Pera, see, by way of example, A. S. G., *Peire Massaria*, 1390 bis, fo. 91ro, 41vo; 1390, 127vo, 6vo, 3ro, 172ro, 109vo, 37ro. On the Greeks of Chios, see Ph. P. Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and their Administration of the Island*, I, Cambridge, 1958, 639-648.



to Latin artisans was 1:5 in 1271-1281, and 1:6 in 1300-1304<sup>39</sup>. Whereas the real proportion was higher (since the Greek artisans must have used primarily Greek notaries, whose cartularies have not survived), it must still be noted that Candia had a large resident Venetian population, and that the Greek and Latin groups therefore shared these activities.

It is also clear that the Greek inhabitants of the Black Sea and Aegean coasts made up a large proportion of the sailors who sailed on those seas, either on their own boats, or on those whose shipmasters were Venetian or Genoese. They, like the artisans, often invested in trade as well. The Genoese records show Greek sailors from Caffa, Pera and Chios sailing in the Black Sea area, and investing their money in trade, wine and other products, as well as in slaves<sup>40</sup>. The Greek inhabitants of Chilia, Maocastro, Vicina and Cembalo, all cities with considerable Genoese colonies, also engaged in trade, and worked as sailors and shipmasters<sup>41</sup>. The cartularies of the notary Antonio di Ponzò are particularly useful, for they show clearly how intertwined were the activities of Genoese and local Greek sailors and traders<sup>42</sup>. The Greek sailor and petty merchant may be said to have been omnipresent in the Black Sea area, at least since the middle of the 14th century, when the bulk of the documentation begins. In Caffa, a list of fugitive sailors in the register of 1386 has a high proportion of Greek names<sup>43</sup>. Even in Genoa

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39. See Angeliki E. Laïou, *Quelques observations sur l'économie et la société de Crète vénitienne (ca. 1270 - ca. 1305)*, in «Bisanzio e l'Italia», *Raccolta di studi in memoria di Agostino Pertusi*, Milan, 1982, 190 - 192.

40. See, for example, Musso, *Navigazione*, no. 1; Peire Massaria, 1391, 69vo; Balard, *Gênes*, nos. 48, 763, 430.

41. Pistarino, *Notai*, nos. 50, 32, 378, 18, 25, 31, 50; A. S. G., Peire Massaria, 1390, 112vo; A. Agosto, *Due lettere inedite sugli eventi del Cembalo e di Sorcati in Crimea nel 1434*, «Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria», n. s., 17, fasc. 2, 1978, 509 - 517.

42. A. S. G., *Notai Ignoti*, b. 18, esp. fo. 35vo - 37vo, 42ro-vo; cf. M. Balard, *Notes sur les ports du Bas-Danube au XIVe siècle*, «Südost Forschungen», 38 (1979), 1 - 12.

43. See A. S. G., *Caffe Massaria*, 1386, fo. 623ro - 629ro, and *passim*; cf. A. S. G., notary Guirardo Parisola, 3, c. 212; cc. 20 - 21 (1383).

itself, in the late 14th and early 15th centuries, the highest number of non-Italian, Levantine sailors, consisted of Greeks<sup>44</sup>.

In the Aegean too, Greek sailors appear with increasing frequency, since the late thirteenth century. Evidence for this may be found in the treaties between Venice and the Byzantine Empire, which normally incorporated clauses that tried to regulate the hiring of Byzantine sailors by the Venetians<sup>45</sup>. It appears that in the Palaeologan period a significant proportion of the crews of Venetian ships in the eastern Mediterranean consisted of Greek sailors. Evidence of a different kind may be gleaned from the reparations demands presented by the Venetians to the Byzantine government, the first of these being the so-called *Decisiones piraticae* of 1278. This document shows the Greeks of Modon, Coron and Candia sailing on small boats in the Aegean, and carrying merchandise of relatively low value, mostly food products and wine. This merchandise was transported throughout the Venetian-held islands of the Aegean, although on occasion the boats reached Athens and Thessaly<sup>46</sup>. The Greeks were also quite active as traders in Candia; the phenomenon is observable from the very first period for which notarial records exist, that is, from the 1270's. They formed *commenda* and *colleganza* contracts, mostly for small sums of money, and they acted both as sleeping partners and as travelling merchants<sup>47</sup>. Only one had activities which extended as far as Venice in this period. There are, however, some examples of Greeks from Crete reaching Asia Minor, even Alexandria<sup>48</sup>.

From the late thirteenth century until the second half of the fourteenth, the activities of the Greeks from the Venetian colonies seems to have followed a particular pattern. They were very active in local trade,

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44. See, for example, the list in Musso, *Navigazione*, 188-193; cf. Balard, *Romanie génoise*, 881.

45. See, for example, Thomas-Predelli, *Diplomatarium*, 145, 166.

46. G. L. Tafel, G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, III, 1857, 159-281; cf. G. Morgan, *The Venetian Claims Commission of 1278*, BZ 69 (1976), 411-438.

47. S. Borsari, *Il dominio Veneziano a Creta nel XIII secolo*, Naples, 1963, 98 ff.

48. S. Carbone, Pietro Pizolo, *Notaio in Candia*, I, Venice, 1978, no. 403.



over short distances, both on land (in the case of Crete) and on the sea<sup>49</sup>. They were almost excluded from the long-distance trade, especially the trade to Italy, which was a virtual Venetian monopoly. The transactions in which the Greeks were involved were small-scale; typically, these people combined the occupation of sailor with that of trader. It should be noted, however, that there were exceptions to this pattern. Rich Greeks from Crete, including the privileged nobleman Alexius Callergis, either invested in trade (both local and relatively long-distance to Asia Minor and Venice, for example), or, as in the case of Callergis, commercialised their agricultural production<sup>50</sup>.

At some point during the second half of the 14th century, difficult to establish with precision, this situation changed. We now begin to find Greeks trading in places far from home, and sometimes disposing of considerable capital. Dimitri Siropulo of Candia, patronus of a *griparia*, went trading to Rhodes and Cyprus in 1361<sup>51</sup>. Another Cretan, Theodore of Candia, was a merchant in coral, whose activities in Dubrovnik can be followed during the years 1368-1382. He had his own ship, he formed a number of short-term companies, and he occasionally sold his coral to Venetians<sup>52</sup>. Later in the 14th century, we encounter a rich Greek from Coron, ser Johannes Crimolissi. He was an important merchant who had gone to Dubrovnik in 1385, had sold a ship to a Venetian, and engaged in the oil trade in Kotor. In 1390, he had a representative — with a Venetian name — in Dubrovnik. He and his activities were protected by Venice, which tried to get him reparations for damages of 2,500 ducats which he claimed to have suffered at the hands of officials of the county of Salona<sup>53</sup>. An important person in fifteenth century Constantinople was Theodore Vatazi, inhabitant of

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49. Laïou, *Quelques observations*, 187 - 198.

50. Carbone, Pizolo, no. 685; M. F. Tiepolo, *Domenico prete di S. Maurizio, notaio in Venezia (1309 - 1316)*, Venice, 1970, no. 22.

51. Lombardo, Nicola de Boateriis, no. 125.

52. Krekić, Dubrovnik, nos. 274, 278, 279, 282, 283, 288, 292, 295, 296, 298, 300, 302, 313, 325, 339, 359.

53. B. Krekić, *A Note on the Economic Activities of Some Greeks in the Latin Levant Towards the End of the Fourteenth Century*, «Studi Veneziani», 9 (1967), 187 - 191.

Candia and ship-master of a *navis* which made the journey from Crete to Constantinople, and to Italy. Vatazi carried wine, oil and honey from Messina, and he himself invested in some of this merchandise<sup>54</sup>. His activities cannot have been atypical; less usual may have been the case of another Greek from Candia who, in the late 14th century, sent Cretan wine to London, on one of the Flanders galleys<sup>55</sup>.

As the notarial documents make clear, there was a brisk trade in the Aegean in this period, linking Crete, Cyprus, Constantinople, Chios and Rhodes. Greeks from all of these areas participated in the various economic activities attendant upon this trade. Greeks from Candia appear in the Ragusan documents of this period, as do Greeks from other areas; those from Rhodes (under the domination of the Hospitalers) and from Corfu (a Venetian dependency) were particularly enterprising. They participated in the active trade between ports and islands of the Aegean and Ionian seas, and a number of them, especially the Corfiots, sold in Dubrovnik the food products which they had brought on their own boats<sup>56</sup>. Sailors from Rhodes and Karpathos travelled as far north as Constantinople; here we find, in 1438, a shipmaster from Karpathos who also appears to engage in the cloth trade<sup>57</sup>.

It would be easy to multiply such examples, but it would serve no purpose. The subject requires systematic investigation, although a few very general conclusions may already be drawn. It is clear that, whereas the Byzantine state constantly declined in the Palaeologan period, and

54. Badoer, 200, 263-264. Theodore Vatatzis' family, or possibly he himself, was of Constantinopolitan origin but emigrated to Crete in the early 15th century. A colleganza contract dated September 7, 1401, registered in Candia, shows a «Theodorus Vataci de Costantinopoli, presentialiter manens in Candida», accepting 16 gold ducats with which to trade: A. S. V., Notai di Candia, not. C. Maurica, b. 13, fo. 287vo.

55. Krekić, Note, 191.

56. Krekić, Dubrovnik, nos. 572, 574, 537, 547, 553, 556-558, 908, 946, 974-978, 1095, 1135, 880, 791, 819, 761, 412, 281. All the Candiot notaries testify to the active trade between Rhodes and Crete. See, for example, A. S. V., Notai di Candia, not. G. Emo, b. 1, fo. 7ro, 2ro (1369); Marcus de Placentia, b. 186, fo. 59ro (1344). C. A. Luttrell, *Crete and Rhodes, 1340-1360*, «Γ' Κρητολογικὸ Συνέδριον», vol. II, 1974, 167-175.

57. Badoer, 488, 630.



did so rapidly after 1341, part of Byzantine society flourished, perhaps more than ever before, and participated in the economic processes which were taking place in the eastern Mediterranean and in Italy. The Greek population of the Byzantine lands, and of the lands under Latin occupation, engaged in trade and in sea-faring in a specific way which, although it precluded them from significant access to the European markets, and limited their economic initiative, nevertheless allowed them a great field of activity in retail trade and in local navigation.

I have tried to present two related issues. First, I am suggesting that the Italian expansion into the eastern Mediterranean did not result in the destruction of Byzantine trade, but rather in a profound change. It is possible to argue that one of the results was an increase in economic activity in the entire area. However, in the new circumstances, the commercial activities of the Greek population were channeled in ways which fulfilled the needs of international trade, not those of their own society. This is why the Greek population was limited to a secondary role in international commerce.

The second argument presented here is that of historical continuity. It is well known that, during the post-Byzantine period, there was a vital and active Greek urban element in the Venetian-held territories of the old Byzantine Empire. This class of merchants, sailors and artisans created a culture which was characterised by the interaction of Italian and Greek elements, and which has left a significant artistic and literary heritage<sup>58</sup>. The developments I have discussed here show that the economic and social pre-conditions for the development of such a culture existed already in the Byzantine period, as a result of the forced symbiosis of Greeks and Italians in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Greek sources for the history of Venetian and Genoese-occupied territories during the Byzantine period are very few indeed. We know that Greek notaries existed in Chios and Candia, but none of their cartularies have survived. A very small number of isolated documents from

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58. D. A. Zakythinos, *Ἀναγέννησις καὶ Ἀναγεννήσεις*, Athens, 1979; M. Chatzidakis, *Essai sur l'Ecole dite «Italogrecque» précédé d'une note sur les rapports de l'art vénitien avec l'art crétois jusqu'à 1500*, in A. Pertusi, *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, II, Florence, 1974, 69-124.

the 14th and 15th centuries exists in the Venetian and Genoese archives. The documents have an intrinsic interest, despite their small number. First of all they were all (with one exception) autographs of simple people, precisely those sailors and traders whose role I have discussed, and this in itself is a rarity in this period. Secondly, they give us an interesting first-hand glimpse into the daily contacts of Greeks and Italians, and thirdly, they provide rare examples of the spoken Greek of the period, more or less influenced by Italian. In the early fifteenth century, Johd Chortasmenos urged a friend of his to return to Constantinople from Thessalonica by sea, and to visit the Italian-occupied islands in order to find out whether the Greek inhabitants had become barbarised and forgotten the Greek tongue<sup>59</sup>. The few documents at our disposal show that Greek had not been forgotten, although Chortasmenos would, perhaps, have found its form barbaric.

The first two documents are found in the cartularies of two Venetian notaries from Candia, Benedetto da Milano and Giovanni Similiante. Both were written on small pieces of paper, and were folded and inserted by the notary into the leaves of his parchment cartulary, which contained the Latin acts to which the Greek documents refer. The first document is dated August 24, 1327; it is a receipt for part of a payment due by Costas Mavromates to Michael Dono, and a promise for payment of the rest within one month. The form is very different from the formulas employed by Venetian notaries in similar acts. It cannot be said, however, that it reflects the practices of Greek notaries, since it seems to be an unofficial act. It was written by Ioannes Bono, who is described, in the Latin acts, as a *specialis*<sup>60</sup>. The script is very good, and the document contains several abbreviations. It was written by a person who knew well both the Greek language and the Greek script. Ioannes

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59. H. Hunger, Johannes Chortasmenos (ca. 1370 - ca. 1436/37); Briefe, Gedichte und kleine Schriften; Einleitung, Regesten, Prosopographie, Text. Wien, 1969, letter 54, to Demetrius Makrianos:

«διὰ τῶν νήσων ἰὼν τῶν τε ἄλλων καὶ ὅσας ἡ Λατινικὴ κατέσχε πλεονεξία, καταμάνθανε τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἥθη, εἰ μὴ παντάπασιν ἐξηγρωμένα τυγχάνει καὶ τῆς Ἑλλήνων οὐμιλίας ἐπιλέλγεται . . . »

60. A. S. V., Notai di Candia, notary Benedetto da Milano, b. 142, fo. 76ro (August 24, 1327, ind. 10).



Bono may have been a member of the family of Stefano Bon, who was one of the most important Candiot notaries of the early 14th century. Stefano Bon had both family and professional relations with many Greeks; he had learned Greek, and in his will he expressed the desire to be buried in a Greek monastery<sup>61</sup>.

The second text, written in 1330, as results from the Latin act to which it refers, is a note addressed to the notary G. Similiante by two brothers, George and Nicholas Chandakites, to remind him that he should complete and deliver the agreement concerning the leasing of some land by the two brothers to Nicholas Callergis. In the pertinent Latin act, dated October 10, 1330, Callergis promises to pay rent to the two brothers<sup>62</sup>. The Greek document is written in an awkward script, with many misspellings; it is clearly the autograph of people of little education. It would appear that the notary Similiante, to whom this document is addressed, could read Greek.

A document found among the acts of the Genoese notary Giovanni Balbi suggests that in Chios of the early 15th century people could write simple Greek, even though with difficulty. The document is a letter sent to Chios by Battista Giustiniano De Rocca in 1413. The letter was witnessed by three Greeks, presumably sailors, who appended their autograph testimonies to its authenticity<sup>63</sup>. All three testimonies are written very awkwardly, and contain many misspellings. Nevertheless, they provide an interesting indication of the survival of some sort of Greek letters in an area which had been under Latin rule for about a hundred years.

The fourth text is a translation of a decree issued in Italian, which forbade certain ships to sail into the ports of Chios, because they came from an area which had been struck by a contagious disease. One must assume that the text (dated February, 8, 1449) was written by a notary, but one with a rather rudimentary education, at least in Greek. The language is heavily influenced by Italian.

61. A. S. V., Notai di Candia, notary Albertino Maça, b. 295, fo. 13ro-vo.

62. A. S. V., Notai di Candia, notary Giovanni Similiante, b. 244, fo. 108vo (October 10, 1330).

63. A photograph of this document appears in G. G. M u s s o, *Fonti documentarie per la storia di Chio dei Genovesi*, «La Berio», 8 (1968), 5-30.

The last document is a copy made in Chios, of a will originally written in Famagusta. The original included the signature of a Greek witness, which is here reproduced by the hand of the notary Ioanes Coressi. The notary also reproduced the monogram of Philotheos, the witness.

1. A. S. V., Notai di Candia, b. 142, Benedetto de Milano. Folded piece of paper, found between fo. 72ro and 76ro.

August 24 (1327, tenth indiction).

Payment of part of a debt, and promise for the payment of the rest.

† Μηνὶ Αὐγούστῳ καὶ ἰνδικτιῶνος ι'-ης. Ἐπλήρωσα ἐγὼ ὁ Λιτζελῆς τὸν κυρ Μιχαὴλ Λόνῳ ὑπέρπυρα δ' διὰ τὸ χρεῖος τοῦ Κωστα Μανρομάτη κατοικοῦμενον εἰς τοὺς Ἀπάνῳ Πατζήδες, καὶ ἀκομὴ εἰστέκω νὰ δόσω ἕτερα ὑπέρπυρα δ', διόλου τοῦ ἐρχομένου Σεπτεβρίου τῆς ἰνδικτιῶνος ια'-ης πληρωθείσης, διὰ πάσα χρεῖος ὅπου τοῦ ἐχρηαιωστῇ ὁ ρηθεις Κωστας ὁ Μανρομάτης, ἔξω ἀπὸ τὰ ἰδ' μυσούρια τὸ κριθάριν τὰ ποῖα τοῦ θέλῃ ὁ Μανρομάτης. Μάρτυρας ὁ κυρ Στεφανῶ Καλεργης, καὶ κυρ Πιέτρῳ Ξανθόπουλος καὶ ἐμοῦ Ἰωάννου Μπόνῳ.

2. A. S. V., Notai di Candia, b. 244, Giovanni Similiante. Folded piece of paper, found between fo. 108vo and 109ro. No date (1330).

Note, addressed to the notary, to remind him to deliver a lease.

† Γεώργιος καὶ Νικόλας ἡ Χανδακτηαὶ παρακαλοῦμεν σε νὰ ἐνθήμεισε νὰ τεληόσης το χαρτὴν τῆς πακτοσης τοῦ Νικόλα του Καλέργη

3. A. S. G., Notaio Giovanni Balbi, 1413-1414, sala 40, sc. 46, 227.

September 22, 1413.

Autograph testimonies of three witnesses, found at the bottom of a letter which was received in Chios on September 23, 1413, according to a note on the outside of the letter.

† ἐγὼ παπακοστὲ ὁ θαλασσωμάχος ἦδα τὸν μισε Πατέστα Ἰουστουνια Τερόκα το ποσ ἐγραφε το χαρτὴν τουτο με το χερὴν του.

† ἐγὼ νικόλας ὁ βαρκαυφαλὸς καὶ ταβουλάρως ἶδα τὸν μισε Πατέστο Ἰούστον Τερόκα τόπος ἐγραφεν το χάρτῃν ἐτουτο [μ]ε το χερὴν του εἰς τὰς ἰκοσι δῶν του σεπτέριον μῖνος.

† ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης ὁ Βαρηκέφαλος εἶδα τὸν μισὲ Μπατέστα Ἰουστινιανὸν Τερόκα το πῶς ἐγραφεν ἐτουτον τὸ χαρτὴν με τὰς χεῖρας του † τοῦ ἔτους 5' κβ' οὐ ἰστάς κβ' τοῦ σεπτεβρίου μηνός.



4. A. S. G., Notaio Tommaso di Recco, sala 40, sc. 77a. The document consists of two leaves; one contains the Italian and Greek text in two columns, and the other contains the last part of the Greek text.

February 8, 1449.

Decree forbidding several persons to sail with their boats into the ports of Chios.

Αστο ηξευρῖ πασα ανθρωπος / το ποσ δια τον μεσε λοποεστε / κε της βουλης κε  
το φυτζιον / της ηγνας το ποσ εξορισαν / απε το νυσην κε απε την χοραν / της Χνου  
εονα εονος Μυχαλι / Λουκαν караβοκυρην μνας / γρυπαριας του Λαζαρι Πορδομε  
[ακ]ομυ κε την / γρυπαρεαν. ακομυ αστο / ηξευρι πασα ανθρωπος το ποσ εξορισαν δια  
χρονονς β / οπομελι ναεرتون Κριστοφαν / Ριτζον κε την γρυπαριαν του. / ακομυ εξορισαν  
Λεον Ψυμαριν \* / караβοκιριν μνας γρυπαριας του Περο Τε Περιον καὶ τὴν γρυπα|ριαν  
δια χρονονς β οπομελι / ναεرتون. κε δια τουτον οριζομεν / απε τον ορισμον του μεσε /  
λοποεστε να μυδεν τους δοσι / κανησ να φαν μυδε να πιουν / μυδε βουλην μυδε μονί /  
κε εκυνονς οπον ονοματισα / ανοθεν / μυδε τεσ ανοθεν γρι / παριεσ απανο ησπενα / την  
φορκαν. ακομυ / η ανοθεν γεγραμενι να μυ / δεν τορμυσουν ναεرتون / μυδε να πατυσον  
ηστο νυσην / μυδε η γρυπαριεσ ι αυτεσ / μεσα ηστουσ διο χρονονς / απανο ηστην πενα  
αποηπα / προτιτερα. ακομυ ο αυτος / Μυχαλης ο Λουκας μυδε / η γρυπαρεα του να  
μυδεν / πατυσι στο νυσην μυδε / ηστον λημνονα εονα εονος / απανο ησπενα την φορκαν. /  
κε ο αυτος [Κ]ριστοφορος / κε Λεο μυδε η γρι / παριεστον να μυδε τορμυσον / ναεرتون  
ηστονεσιν προτα / περι το γραμενο απανο / ησ πενα την φορκαν / κε η γρυπαριεστον να  
τεσ / καβουν. κε αυτον εκαμεν / ο μυσε ποδεστας κε ι βουλι / κε το φυτζιον διατι ηρταν /  
απο τοπον οπου ενε / θανατικον κε καμνον / δια το καλιον της χορασ.

5. A. S. G., Notaio Giovanni Balbi, 1413, no. 399. Copy of a will originally made in Famagusta. The Greek notary John Coressi copied the signature of a Greek who had witnessed the will.

October 12, 1408.

† ἐγὼ ὦ Φηλοθεοσ τα ανοθεν γεγραμενα μαρτηρῶ ὑπογράφο καὶ δια πληونا  
ασφαληαν πονω\*\* καὶ το σημάδιν μου.

\* κε την γρυπαριαν του erased.

\*\* Πόνω is a transliteration of the Latin pono.

## Π Ε Ρ Ι Λ Η Ψ Η

Ἡ μελέτη αὐτή, ἡ ὁποία στηρίζεται σὲ δημοσιευμένες καὶ ἀνέκδοτες πηγές (κυρίως, ὅσον ἀφορᾷ τὶς τελευταῖες, σὲ νοταριακὰ ἔγγραφα τῶν ἀρχείων τῆς Γένοβας καὶ τῆς Βενετίας), χωρίζεται σὲ δύο μέρη. Στὸ πρῶτο μέρος ἐπιχειρεῖται μιὰ συλλογικὴ προσωπογραφία τῶν γνωστῶν σ' ἐμᾶς ἐμπόρων τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Αὐτοκρατορίας τῆς Τραπεζοῦντος (239 τὸν ἀριθμὸ). Δεδομένου ὅτι οἱ περισσότερες σχετικὲς πηγές εἶναι Ἰταλικές, καὶ ὅχι Ἑλληνικές, τίθεται σοβαρὸ μεθοδολογικὸ πρόβλημα ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἀκρίβεια τῶν πληροφοριῶν ποὺ παρέχουν. Οἱ πληροφορίες αὐτές, ἐλλιπεῖς καὶ στρεβλωμένες, παρουσιάζουν μέρος μόνον τῆς πραγματικότητος, καὶ ὑπερτονίζουν ἐκείνες τὶς δραστηριότητες, οἱ ὁποῖες συνέδεαν τοὺς Ἑλληνες ἐμπόρους μὲ τοὺς Ἰταλοὺς. Οἱ Ἰταλικὲς νοταριακὲς πηγές εἶναι ἰδιαίτερα παραπλανητικὲς γιὰ τὴν ἐποχὴ 1261-1310, ὁπότε δείχνουν ἐλάχιστη συμμετοχὴ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ στοιχείου στὸ ἐμπόριο, πρᾶγμα ποὺ διαψεύδεται ἀπὸ ἄλλες πηγές, ὅπως ἡ συνθήκη τοῦ Μιχαὴλ Η' μὲ τὸ σουλτάνο Καλαοῦν, καὶ μιὰ ἐπιστολὴ τοῦ Πατριάρχου Γρηγορίου τοῦ Κυπρίου. Ἡ πιθανότερη ἐρμηνεία αὐτῆς τῆς ἀνισοροπίας εἶναι ὅτι οἱ Ἑλληνες ἔμποροι τῆς ἐποχῆς αὐτῆς εἶχαν σχετικὰ μικρὰ ἐπαφὴ μὲ τοὺς Ἰταλοὺς, καὶ γι' αὐτὸ δὲν ἀναφέρονται συχνὰ στὶς Ἰταλικὲς πηγές.

Γιὰ τὴν ἐποχὴ 1311-1453 (ἡ ὁποία ἐδῶ διαιρεῖται σὲ τρεῖς περιόδους, 1311-1352, 1353-1402, 1403-1453), ἡ πλουσιότερη πληροφόρηση ἐπιτρέπει μιὰ πληρέστερη εἰκόνα τῆς πραγματικότητος. Ἡ γεωγραφικὴ προέλευση τῶν ἐμπόρων ἐντοπίζεται σ' ὅλες τὶς παράκτιες περιοχὲς τῆς Αὐτοκρατορίας καὶ τὰ νησιὰ (Κωνσταντινούπολη, Θεσσαλονίκη, Μονεμβασία, Πηγές, Ραιδεστός, Αἶνος, ἀκτὲς τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου) καθὼς καὶ σὲ μερικὲς πόλεις τῆς ἐνδοχώρας (Ἀδριανούπολη, Σέρρες, Ἄρτα). Ἡ δραστηριότητά τους περιορίζεται γεωγραφικὰ στὸ Αἰγαῖο καὶ τὸ Ἰόνιο πέλαγος καὶ τὸν Εὐξείνου Πόντο, καὶ ἐμφανίζεται ἰδιαίτερα ἐντονη στὴν περιοχὴ τῶν Κελλιῶν μετὰ τὸ 1352, ἀλλὰ πολὺ σπάνια φτάνει ὡς τὴν Ἰταλίαν καὶ τὴ Δυτικὴ Εὐρώπη. Ἑλληνες ἔμποροι ἐμφανίζονται καὶ στὴν Τάνα, ἀν καὶ δὲν εἶναι σαφὲς πόσο μακρὰ ἦταν ἡ παρουσία τους ἐκεῖ. Ἡ κοινωνικὴ προέλευση τῶν ἐμπόρων ἐμφανίζεται ὡς ἐξῆς: οἱ πρὸ πολλοὶ ἦταν ναυτικοὶ καὶ καραβοκύρηδες οἱ ὁποῖοι, ὅπως καὶ στὴ Δυτικὴ Εὐρώπη τῆς ἴδιας ἐποχῆς, ἀσχολοῦνταν ἐπίσης μὲ τὸ ἐμπόριο. Ἐνα σημαντικὸ μέρος τοῦ στρώματος



τῶν ἐμπόρων ἀπετελεῖτο ἀπὸ μέλη τῆς ἀριστοκρατίας, σὲ ποσοστὸ πὺν κυμαίνεται ἀπὸ 18 - 20 % στὰ 1311 - 1352 καὶ στὰ 1353 - 1402 ὥς 34 % στὴν ἐποχὴ 1403 - 1453. Οἱ ἀριθμοὶ αὐτοὶ εἶναι σαφῶς ἐπηρεασμένοι ἀπὸ τὴ μονομέρεια τῶν πηγῶν, καὶ πιθανῶς θ' ἀλλάξουν μὲ τὴ δημοσίευση ὁρισμένων Βυζαντινῶν πηγῶν, τὴν ὁποία ἔχει ἀναγγεῖλει ὁ P. Schreiner. Εἶναι, πάντως, σαφές, ὅτι τὸ ἐμπορικὸ στρώμα στὸ ὕστερο Βυζάντιο περιλάμβανε μικρεμπόρους, ναυτικούς, τραπεζίτες, καὶ μέλη τῆς ἀριστοκρατίας, ἀκόμη καὶ τῆς αὐτοκρατορικῆς οἰκογένειας. Ὅρισμένες οἰκογένειες, ὅπως οἱ Βασιλικοί, οἱ Ἀργυρόπουλοι, οἱ Σαραντηνοί, οἱ Φραγγόπουλοι, ἀσχολοῦνταν μὲ τὸ ἐμπόριο ἐπὶ 100 τουλάχιστο χρόνια, ἐνῶ οἱ Σοφianoὶ καὶ οἱ Δαιμονογιάννηδες (ἡ οἰκογένεια Εὐδαιμονοϊωάννη) εἶχαν ἀκόμη πῖο μακροχρόνια δραστηριότητα.

Συγκεκριμένα γιὰ τὴν περιοχὴ τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου μποροῦμε νὰ ποῦμε ὅτι, ἐνῶ ἡ οἰκονομικὴ κυριαρχία ἀνῆκε στοὺς Γενοβέζους, καὶ κατὰ δεύτερο λόγο στοὺς Βενετούς, οἱ Ἕλληνες κυριαρχοῦσαν σὰν ναυτικοὶ καὶ μικρέμποροι.

Οἱ πολιτικὲς καὶ θρησκευτικὲς ἐπιλογές τοῦ κοινωνικοῦ αὐτοῦ στρώματος δὲν εἶναι προφανεῖς, καὶ χρειάζεται περαιτέρω ἔρευνα γιὰ νὰ ἀποκαλυφθοῦν.

Τὸ δεύτερο μέρος τῆς μελέτης ἀσχολεῖται μὲ τὸν ἐμπορικὸ καὶ ναυτικὸ βίον τῶν Ἑλλήνων, οἱ ὁποῖοι ζοῦσαν σὲ Λατινοκρατούμενες περιοχές, καὶ ἀποτελεῖ πρόδρομο ἀνακοίνωση, δεδομένου ὅτι στηρίζεται σὲ μικρὸ μόνο μέρος τοῦ πλουσιότατου ἀρχεῖκου ὕλικου. Ἡ μερικὴ ἐπεξεργασία τοῦ ὕλικου δείχνει ὅτι οἱ Ἕλληνες κάτοικοι τοῦ Καφφᾶ, τοῦ Γαλατᾶ καὶ τοῦ Χάνδακα συμμετεῖχαν σὲ σημαντικὸ ποσοστὸ στὴ βιοτεχνία καὶ τὸ μικρεμπόριο τῶν πόλεων αὐτῶν. Ναυτικοὶ καὶ ἔμποροι ἀπὸ τὸν Καφφᾶ, τὸ Γαλατᾶ, τὰ Κελλιά, ἄλλες Γενοβέζικες ἀποικίες τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου καὶ τὴ Χίο ἐμφανίζονται στὶς Γενοβέζικες πηγές, ἐνῶ στὴν ἴδια τὴ Γένοβα, στὰ τέλη τοῦ 14ου αἰ. καὶ τὶς ἀρχές τοῦ 15ου, οἱ περισσότεροι ξένοι ναῦτες ἦταν Ἕλληνες.

Καὶ ὁ Ἑλληνισμὸς τῶν Βενετοκρατούμενων περιοχῶν περιεῖχε πολὺ σημαντικό ναυτικὸ στοιχεῖο, ὅπως προκύπτει ἤδη ἀπὸ τὶς *Decisiones Piraticae*. Οἱ Βενετοὶ νοτάριοι τῆς Κρήτης, μετὰ τὴ δεκαετία τοῦ 1270, καταγράφουν μερικές, τουλάχιστο ἀπὸ τὶς δραστηριότητες τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ ναυτικοῦ καὶ ἐμπορικοῦ στοιχείου, ὅχι ὅμως ὅλες, δεδομένου ὅτι αὐτὲς καταγράφονταν κυρίως ἀπὸ Ἑλληνόφωνους νοτάριους τῶν ὁποίων τὰ κατάστιχα δὲν ἔχουν διασωθεῖ. Στὴ μεγάλη πλειοψηφία τους, οἱ Ἕλληνες ἔμποροι καὶ ναυτικοὶ ἀπὸ τὴ Χίο, τὴ Ρόδο, καὶ τὴν Κέρκυρα, ἔπλεαν τόσο στὸ Αἰγαῖο ὅσο καὶ τὸ Ἰόνιο πέλαγος. Ἡ ἀπαρχὴ τῆς διαδικασίας τοῦ συγκερασμοῦ τῶν Ἰταλικῶν καὶ Ἑλληνικῶν πολιτιστικῶν στοιχείων,

ἢ ὅποια συντελέσθηκε στὶς περιοχὲς αὐτές, ἔχει τὶς βάσεις τῆς στὴν οἰκονομικὴ καὶ κοινωνικὴ συμβίωση τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ καὶ Ἰταλικοῦ ἀστικοῦ πληθυσμοῦ στὴν ὕστερη Βυζαντινὴ ἐποχὴ. Ἡ μελλοντικὴ ἔρευνα θὰ πρέπει νὰ ἐξετάσει σὲ βάθος τόσο τὴν οἰκονομικὴ ὅσο καὶ τὴν κοινωνικὴ καὶ πολιτιστικὴ ζωὴ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ καὶ ἐμπορικοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ πληθυσμοῦ τῶν Λατινοκρατούμενων περιοχῶν στὴν ἐποχὴ αὐτή.

Στὰ ἀρχεῖα τῆς Γένοβας καὶ τῆς Βενετίας σώζονται ἐλάχιστα κείμενα, γραμμένα στὰ ἑλληνικά, ποὺ εἶναι αὐτόγραφα ἐμπόρων ἢ ναυτικῶν, ἢ ἀναφέρονται σ' αὐτούς, καὶ τὰ ὅποια δημοσιεύονται ἐδῶ.

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[illegible]



