

Connecting Mediterranean and Atlantic History

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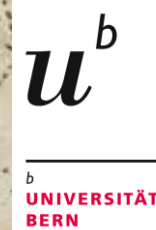
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VILLE DE NICE

Nicholas Scott Baker (Macquarie University, Sydney)

The Botti Family. From the Mediterranean to the Atlantic World

The Botti family, originally from Cremona, settled in Florence in the early fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century, five brothers Matteo, Simone, Iacopo, Giovanbattista, and Francesco developed a wide-ranging commercial network that bridge the Atlantic and Mediterranean worlds, stretching from the Canary Islands to the Levant. Several volumes of *copialettere* and *ricordi*, now housed in the Archivio di Stato in Florence, permit insight into the lives and commercial operations of an otherwise largely anonymous family through the turbulent central decades of the sixteenth century. Through these archival remnants, this paper will examine the mercantile and economic culture of one small family company in the emergent early modern global economy, tracing the attitudes, sentiments, and values that shaped the dynamics of Botti network. It will focus, in particular, on the figure of Iacopo Botti, who took up residence in Seville, married into the Catalan merchant Font family, and became active in Spanish colonial and commercial activities in the Atlantic. In doing so, it will consider how this small, family archive provides an intimate, micro-level perspective on larger histories and narratives of the shifting nature of commerce in the Mediterranean and Atlantic.

Francesco Guidi Bruscoli (Università di Firenze)

Breaking boundaries. Florentine merchants and the Atlantic (late 15th - early 16th centuries)

Traditionally we tend to represent the European ‘expansion’ as the sum of great ‘national’ enterprises. Newer or older national states – albeit also attempting to undermine their rivals’ monopolies – chose a destination of preference, where they were trying to hold control. The Italian peninsula (and the territorial entities that formed it) were seemingly left out of this game. However Italian merchants – and in particular Genoese and Florentines – did participate, with financial, technical and human capital. Therefore, despite it would be misleading to talk of a Genoese or a Florentine ‘expansion’ (let alone an Italian ‘expansion’), there is no doubt that these businessmen played a relevant role and their money was involved in both financing exploration voyages and in helping to develop the commercial opportunities that flowed from these ventures. This papers will focus on the activity of Florentine merchants, who were able to collect capitals from all corners of Europe (not only their place of residence or their place of origin), and managed to involve different categories of people, even beyond the mercantile world and even residing in ‘competing’ countries.

James Nelson Novoa (University of Ottawa)

*Portuguese merchants as mediators between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean in Pisa
(1580-1640)*

My paper will shed light on a relatively neglected subject: the role of Portuguese merchants as intermediaries between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic during the Iberian Union, a period in which they had an exceptional access to American and Asian markets as subjects of the Habsburg crown. While Ferdinando I de' Medici's livornine of 1591 and 1593 are generally construed as conceived of to bring Levantine merchants to Pisa and Livorno the Consoli del mare at the State Archive of Pisa present countless examples of a well-entrenched community of Portuguese merchants there at the end of the sixteenth century, largely constituted by New Christians who settled in Pisa as a result of Cosimo's 1549 invitation to have them settle there. Drawing upon the documents held in those archival sources I will identify some of the key members of this community over the space of several generation, the commodities that they traded in and their correspondents in the Iberian Peninsula. Many telling examples show us that they served as veritable go-betweens that linked American (especially Peru and Brazil) markets to European ones, acting as purveyors of American goods to Tuscany by means of Portuguese and Spanish ports. Their role as privileged intermediators between both worlds will be considered by drawing upon their networks and activities.

Giorgio Tosco (European University Institute, Florence)

From interloping to companies? Genoese and Tuscan responses to a shifting Atlantic economy (mid-17th century)

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the Republic of Genoa and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany made plans to expand the activity of their merchant marine in the Atlantic Ocean, and in the extra-European world more generally. The Genoese established two joint-stock companies of trade (the Genoese East India Company, 1647-1653, and the San Giorgio Maritime Company, 1653-1668), which, however, were not economically successful. During the 1670s the Grand Duchy of Tuscany led negotiations with Portugal, in order to establish a common joint-stock company; however, this project remained only on paper.

Some of the merchants who promoted these projects had no previous experience of extra-European trade; some others, however, especially in the Genoese case, had already plied this line of business, as interlopers or as partners of foreign merchants. For them, these projects were not just a way to enter, out of the blue, an entirely new line of trade, but rather a way to give a new institutional framework to an activity they were already involved in. My paper looks at how Genoese and Tuscans considered interloping and companies as alternatives, in order to enter the Atlantic market. The merchants and the state structures of these two countries switched from the former to the latter and vice versa, on the basis of the comparative advantages and drawbacks that each solution seemed to offer. The relative appeal of interloping and companies depended on many different factors, located both in Italy and elsewhere; in particular, the choice was connected to the changes which were taking place in the Atlantic economy in the second half of the century. This period, as Niels Steensgaard noted, witnessed a European expansion of the model of the joint-stock company of trade, and many other European countries used this institution as a way to enter the Atlantic market. The attempts made by Tuscany and Genoa are part of this shared European history, and should be located within this Atlantic framework. The sources I use come mainly from Italy, Portugal and Netherlands, and are composed of both private and public documents. In my paper, I will first describe the activities of the Genoese and the Tuscan merchants who were already involved, as interlopers, in the Atlantic trade. I will show how they organized their business,

how they got around Spanish and Portuguese regulations, and which products they traded. Then, I will describe how and why this situation changed, and what prompted merchants and state institutions to consider the joint-stock model as a viable alternative. My main argument is that the Portuguese Restoration War created a new demand for neutral shipping and foreign capital, in order to keep open the communication lanes between Portugal and Brazil. Joint-stock companies were a way to gather more capital, among the Italian investors. Moreover, a company chartered by a neutral state could better protect the neutral status of the Italian ships, whereas vessels managed by many different private merchants, who used flags of convenience and foreign dummies, were more vulnerable. These motivations were reinforced by other factors, such as the desire to promote naval and military development, or the allure of the model of the joint-stock association which was created by the spectacular success of the Dutch India companies. When hostilities ended, however, the comparative advantages of companies diminished, and their drawbacks, such as their higher monitoring costs, became more visible. The Genoese merchants, then, returned to their old strategy of interloping in the Atlantic market, and some years later the Tuscans only toyed with the idea, but they never put it into practice. As I will summarize in the final part of my paper, a change of the economic and political circumstances stimulated a change in the institutions that Italian traders in the Atlantic world used or wished to use. However, this change was not a teleological process, bound to end in a certain way, and the failure in establishing a company should not necessarily be regarded as a sign of backwardness.

Antonella Alimento (Università di Pisa)

Atlantic trade as an instrument of national economic renewal. The Caribbean in the vision of the governor of Livorno, Carlo Ginori (1746-1757), and of his informal network

In this paper I will examine the strategies put in place by the civil governor of Livorno, Carlo Ginori (1702-1757), in order to establish connections with the Atlantic and the thriving oceanic trade routes. The case of governor Ginori is particularly interesting because it facilitates the exploration of several issues central to the Nice conference. Firstly, it provides an opportunity to retrace how the governor of a small state, that of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in the period of the Lorraine regency (1737-1765), developed strategies to enable participation in Atlantic trade without risking conflict with the great European trading powers. Secondly, it allows us to examine which goods found their way into Atlantic markets and the means in which they did so. Finally, it makes it possible to reconstruct the informal methods that the governor used to brought to fruition his plan to establish a Caribbean colony where Tuscan goods could be marketed and sold. Ginori's correspondence with Baron Pfütschener, an influential advisor to Francis Stephen, demonstrates how the civil governor of Livorno had very clear ideas on the role that Tuscany, thanks to the Free Port of Livorno, could carve out a space for itself within the composite economics of the Habsburg-Lorraine empire. On the basis of his knowledge of the "new science of commerce", in particular of the works of Véron de Forbonnais and of Plumard de Dangeul, Ginori conceived a grand plan to revitalise the free port centered on the export of Tuscan raw materials and manufactured goods. Thanks to the correspondence that he exchanged with Captain Biagini, it is also possible to reconstruct the network that Ginori used to pinpoint the Caribbean island where a neutral Tuscan colony could be established. This was to be built on the model of the Dutch colony of Sint Eustatius and would receive Tuscan goods in exchange for Atlantic commodities, thus cutting out foreign intermediaries. Finally, thanks to the ship manifests of the two vessels that Ginori ultimately manage to arm and launch from Livorno towards the Caribbean (1756), which are also preserved in Florence in the private archive of the Marquis Lorenzo Ginori, it is also possible to document the economic interconnections established between the ancient Italian states and the Atlantic sphere during the 1750s, thus placing an early modern Italian territory, that of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, within its global context.

Benedetta Crivelli (Università Bocconi, Milano)

*Venice in a global world. Shipping and commodities in the reconfiguration of the
Mediterranean space (16th - 17th centuries)*

During the 16th century, the maritime expansion triggered connections among distant territories facilitated by the development of the international trade. Even though this process shifted the centre of economic exchanges toward the Atlantic world, it entailed that people, products and events originated in one part of the world generated permanent and systematic effects in societies around the whole globe. Starting from this consideration, my research focuses on products exchanged on the routes that crossed the Atlantic Oceans to reach the marketplace of Venice. Following the approach of the recent studies in trade history, I try to consider both the traders and the products to allow a deeper investigation into the impact of exchange and distribution of goods on the building of economic space. In the second half of the 16th century, Venice, coping with the multiterritorial empires that surrounded it, was involved in a zone of interconnections between Mediterranean and the territories on the Atlantic Ocean. Focusing on the enterprises established by Florentine merchants (the merchant company of Alessandro, Francesco and Vincenzo Guadagni and their agents), this paper aims to analyse the circuits of trade between Lisbon and Venice in order to assess to what extent the trade of sugar and other colonial goods affected the economic and political networks in the Mediterranean sea. Imperial conflicts were also considered in order to figure out the strategies adopted by merchants to protect profitable commodities. Moreover, as merchants controlled the economic resources through the access to credit, financial tools are as well considered in order to analyse the links between commerce of goods and the supply of credit. These connections can define competitions among merchants groups but also allowed to experiment new alliances and synergies. Using empirical evidence, this paper casts new light on socio-economic relations by which agents build new bounded spaces that integrated local, regional and global markets. I explain how, breaking up cultural and geo-political frontiers, merchants organized trade circuits and to what extent their economic connections were articulated within new spaces in order to create stable markets.

Robert Wells (Indiana University)

From Old World Slavery to New. The Order of Malta in the Americas

The Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem is perhaps best known as one of the major military orders of the Middle Ages or for its control of the Maltese archipelago from 1530 to 1798. But members of the Order also played an important and little-studied role in early French efforts to colonize the Americas. Knights of Malta were present in North and South America and the Caribbean for over two centuries, with the most intense period of involvement lasting from 1632 to 1665. During this time, the Order provided five different governors for the scattered French colonies of Acadie, New France, the Antilles, and Tortuga; more importantly, it purchased four Caribbean islands from the failing *Compagnie des Îles de l'Amérique* in 1653. In 1665, however, it was forced to sell these rights back to a different French company, meaning that it was an active landholder in the Americas for only twelve years. In this presentation, I will first introduce the basic elements of the Order's involvement in the Americas, which are unfamiliar to most. Then I will argue that the its purchase and sale of the four Caribbean islands resulted from the Order's unique institutional situation in the seventeenth century: a Catholic religious organization subject to the Papacy; a landowner with claims all over the European continent; and also a sovereign state embedded most immediately in the Mediterranean. I will show how one knight in particular, Philippe Longvilliers de Poincy, drew on his religious responsibilities to the Order and its system of land titles to interest Grandmaster Giovanni Paolo Lascaris in four islands on the other side of the world. Both local concerns and transnational conflicts then led not only to their purchase, but their resale twelve years later under Grandmaster Nicolau Cotoner. This story reveals forgotten connections between the Mediterranean and Atlantic Worlds and attests to the importance of places as disparate as Rome, Hainaut, Malta, and Haarlem to the colonization of the Americas.

Klemens Kaps (Universität Linz)

Gateway economies in the North of Italy. The mercantile links of Lombardy and Trieste with Spanish Atlantic markets in the 18th century

The concept of “Atlantic Italies” intersects neatly with another perspective, whose aim was to explore the impact of Atlantic markets on Central European economies, mainly located in nowadays Germany and Poland during the early modern age. This approach, embodied by researchers such as Klaus Weber or Margrit Schulte-Beerbühl still focuses on the Baltic and Northern Sea, and thus on a transport and trade route that is well established on the horizon of both Atlantic and maritime history alike. In turn, “Atlantic Italies” clearly and rightfully points to the fact that lots of these exchange processes also concerned Mediterranean economies located on the Italian Peninsula. The crucial point, however, is that both perspectives have a common spatial point of reference, or even overlap, as a substantial part of Central European commodities was channeled through the Mediterranean. Port cities such as Livorno, Venice, Genoa, Marseille and, as a newcomer in the 18th century, Trieste, acted as intermediary nodes for the commercialization of Central European products at Atlantic markets (and vice versa for the import of Atlantic commodities). While spaces and places such as Genoa and, although to a lesser extent, Tuscany, are either very prominent or at least present when exploring and explaining transatlantic trade in the early-modern age, other places on the Italian Peninsula are rather neglected or even blinded out completely in commodity exchange and mercantile networks, both between the Mediterranean and the European Atlantic on the one hand, and even more so concerning transatlantic trade. Building on these considerations, this paper explores the links of two Northern Italian spaces to Spanish Atlantic markets during the 18th century, which usually receive little attention when researching transatlantic trade. This is the Duchy of Milan, merged in 1713 together with the Duchy of Mantua into Austrian Lombardy, on the one hand, and the Adriatic port city of Trieste on the other hand. While both spaces were under the authority of the Vienna-based Habsburg dynasty and thus a largely land-locked empire, both Trieste and Lombardy played an important role not only in linking their immediate spatial surrounding, but also other regions of Habsburg Central Europe to Spanish Atlantic markets. The paper briefly describes the entirely different role and trajectory of both spatial entities in transatlantic trade: the

Milanese disposed of a long-lasting tradition of both commercial and financial transactions and networks with the Iberian Peninsula stretching back until the Later Middle Ages, while Trieste started to be transformed into a hub of long-distance trade over the course of the 18th century at least in partial substitution of Venice. In a second step, the paper analyses the evolvement of both commodity flows and merchant networks between both Lombardy and Trieste on the one hand, and the Spanish Atlantic, embodied mainly by the harbour of Cádiz, after the “free trade” decree of the Spanish Crown of 1778, in part also by Barcelona and Alicante, on the other hand. Here, it will be focused on exports that were either departing originally from or channeled through Lombardy and Trieste, focusing on the aspect if finished products arriving from both spaces in Cádiz were part of the much-discussed re-export of European consumer commodities overseas and directed to Spanish Atlantic markets in Central and Southern America. Imports of colonial goods to Lombardy and Trieste will be analyzed as well, here pointing to both their use as new consumer goods and important materials for the rising proto-industrial production (such as dyestuffs like cochineal or indigo). The role of Genoa as an intermediary harbour for both Trieste’s and Lombardy’s trade with Spanish Atlantic markets channeled through Cádiz will be analyzed. Here, it will be carefully distinguished between those products that were produced in Genoa and others, such as linen, woolen and cotton textiles, brassware, copper, steel, iron, glass, grain and even silk to a certain degree, that were produced in the Habsburg dominions. In a last step, merchant networks channeling and intermediating these commodity flows will be studied, focusing on the small, but powerful Milanese merchant community in Cádiz and their overseas networks linking them to Spanish American markets and harbors on the one hand, but also on the attempts of Triestinian traders to bypass their Genoese intermediaries by constructing direct intermediary channels with Spanish markets, which they achieved after many failed attempts in the last two decades of the 18th century. Here, it will be shown that the networks of the Milanese traders acted as a helpful ally, as they could rely largely on an own ethnic network, even in the port of Genoa. In sum, the paper concludes with a reflection on the complex and intertwined characteristic of Mediterranean-Atlantic trade locating Lombardy and Trieste as two important gateway economies in the North of “Atlantic Italies” in the 18th century that embodied, alongside with Genoa, an important role in connecting Central Europe to Spanish Atlantic markets.

David do Paço (SciencesPo, Paris)

Trans-Atlantic Trieste. The informal connections of the Grahl family from the Adriatic to the Delaware and the Hudson Bays, 1770s-1820s

This case study explores the complex configuration of the commercial framework in which the American trade fitted in with, and emphasizes the structural stability of this framework over the first decades of the Republican period. According to recent contributions dealing with German trans-Atlantic immigration in the eighteenth-century Anglo-Saxon world, my paper invites reconsidering and paying more attention to role played by agents of the Holy Roman Empire in the Atlantic Italies Networks. To do so, it focuses on the Grahl family, a family established in Trieste in the 1770s and operating in the Mediterranean, the UK and North America during the American War of Independence and the first decades of the American Republic. It especially analyses the overlapping and crisscrossing networks from which the Grahls' commercial activities proceeded. Based on the public records of the American and British consuls in Trieste and of the one of the Austrian administration of the city port of Trieste, as well as on merchants' private papers, my presentation analyses the global and trans-imperial activity developed by Johann Grahl. A Jewish merchant from Dresden converted to the English Church; Johann obtained the British citizenship, like many other German merchants. His marriage with Antoinette, a woman from a Huguenot family, which owned estates in Pennsylvania, allowed him to embed, through the British Empire, his trade between Europe and North America. In the 1770s, Johann based his activity in Trieste and contributed to the extraordinary fast globalization of the free port under the protection of the British Consul, Nath Green. Besides, in 1785, four American citizens from Philadelphia, all partners of Johann Grahl, submitted to Thomas Jefferson their project to develop a private trade company between Philadelphia and Trieste. This project sought to take advantage of the fast extraversion of the Trieste Trade in the world from the late 1770s and to connect, through the Mediterranean Sea, the young independent state of Pennsylvania with both the central European and the Asian trade. The early attention paid by American merchants on Trieste led in 1801 to the appointment of the first American consul in the Habsburg Adriatic free port, John Lamson. It also echoes the private initiatives of merchants operating in the second half of the eighteenth century between the Holy Roman Empire (where Trieste was located)

and the British Dominions, initiatives that have already connected, if not integrated, the former British colonies in North American with the European and the Mediterranean commercial networks, and to which rested the early Republican trade of the US. Indeed, in 1790, Grahl married his daughter to an imperial subject who progressively got involved in the family commercial activity and moved in in the US in the early 1800s. Based in Philadelphia and New York in the 1810-1820s, and thanks to the networks his has established in Trieste, Johann's son-in-law, a certain Lorenzo Da Ponte, contributed the development of the commercial and cultural trade between the Habsburg free port and the United States. From New York, Da Ponte sustained thanks the economic activity of his family-in-law and significantly contributed to the circulation of the Italian people, theatre and goods thanks to Johann Grahl's network and for his own benefice, the one of his partners in Trieste, and the one his wealthy patrons in New York and Trieste.

Valentina Favaro (Università di Palermo)

From the Neapolitan court to the Viceroyalty of Peru. Carmine Nicola Caracciolo between interests, networks and governmental practices (1700-1720)

In recent decades, numerous studies have shown how much the circulation of men - ministers, merchants, ecclesiastics etc. - constituted a key element in the construction of the Spanish monarchy during the modern age. These men contributed to the consolidation of networks that linked the various kingdoms of the Crown, acting as vehicles of experiences and knowledge between the Mediterranean and Atlantic areas as well as guarantors of the transfer of material objects. In this perspective, the reconstruction of transnational careers does not merely provide biographical data: it allows to show the degree of interaction between family and factional interests and the importance of personal networks for the construction of equilibrium at the local level. These are elements that offer a more complex reading of the relations between ministers and sovereign, conditioned not only by bonds of loyalty, but also by interests - especially economic ones - that the ministers defended during their mandate.

The aim of this communication is to highlight some particularly significant passages of the political career of Carmine Nicola Caracciolo, a Neapolitan nobleman who, in the first decades of the eighteenth century and at the height of the Spanish Succession War, was ambassador to the Holy See, ambassador to Venice and Viceroy of Peru. Following the topics of the meeting, particular attention will be paid to the years of the viceroy charge in the American territory. The aim is above all to highlight some aspects related to the practices of government - in compliance with the political lines advocated by the Madrid court - and to the relationship that Caracciolo established with the local political and economic elites. In defining these two aspects, we will try to understand how much they had been influenced by the experiences gained in previous years and by the networks of relationships that Caracciolo had built on the Italian peninsula. The research, which is still at an early stage and which therefore still presents many open questions, has been conducted above all on the family archive documents kept at the State Archive of Naples and on the documents of the Archivo de Estado of Madrid and Archivo de las Indias of Seville. The different nature of the sources makes it possible to interweave a "public" and private dimension, and therefore to propose a reading that takes into account the family ties and the influence that these had in the choices adopted in the years of the Peruvian viceroyalty.

Luca Codignola (University of Notre Dame & Saint Mary's University, Halifax)

Alabaster Traders and their kin. Travelling between North America and the Italian Peninsula, 1763-1846

In the early nineteenth century the Viti family of Volterra was most successfully producing alabaster articles for the Tuscan and international markets. Three brothers, Vito Viti (1772-1866), Niccolò Viti, and Antonio Viti were employed in the workshop of their father. In 1815 Vito Viti, by then forty-three years old, travelled to the United States for the first time. He was in Baltimore, then moved to Philadelphia, where he resided for the rest of his life, acquiring American citizenship in 1828. The rest of his family -- two brothers and one sister -- remained in Volterra, though one of the brothers, Niccolò Viti, and his son, Giuseppe Viti, spent long periods in the United States themselves. Aside from adding to our knowledge of the earliest migrations from the Italian peninsula, there are four main reasons why the story of Vito Viti and his network of family members, friends, and business partners is significant. The first is the list of exotic products from the Italian peninsula that he tried to sell in North America and the odd American products that he tried to market in the Italian peninsula. The second reason is Vito Viti himself, an adventurous entrepreneur who crossed the Atlantic Ocean several times and travelled extensively in the United States and British North America. The third reason is the network of people that gathered around Vito Viti's business activity helping him to transport and sell, apparently with great success, all that he had to offer to his new American compatriots. The fourth reason is the fact that Vito Viti's experience provides further evidence of the idea that these were people of blurred nationalities and multiple identities. Vito Viti himself was able and willing to wear different hats in accordance with the context in which he found himself. This paper is entirely based on new archival research, whose findings are described in Luca Codignola, *Blurred Nationalities Across the North Atlantic: Traders, Priests, and Their Kin Travelling Between North America and the Italian Peninsula, 1763-1846* (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming January 2019).