Scuola Normale Superiore, Classe di Lettere e Filosofia

Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II

Corso di perfezionamento in
Global History and Governance

XXXIV ciclo

Global commodities, Monopolies, and Negotiation.

Tobacco trade and taxation in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire (17th-18th centuries)

Settore Scientifico Disciplinare M-STO/02

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Anno accademico 2024/2025

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Introduction

From the terrace of his cottage, Henry Fitzhugh (papers' range: 1746-1786), one of the wealthiest planters of northern Virginia in British North America, could control his African black slaves while they were loading on a chariot several hogsheads containing cured leaves of a plant that had made his fortune. The years of good harvest and high market prices assured him great profits, even though the imperial laws and the structures of the transatlantic trade involved restraints and backlashes. At the docks, the precious leaves fell into the hands of captains enrolled by British mercantile firms. Agents and correspondents of these firms were not only able to market the American planters' products in most parts of Europe, but they could also provide them a fundamental credit line for purchasing the crucial factors of production: land, seeds, farm tools, and workforce - notably slaves from Africa. Fitzhugh, was a big fish in the big Chesapeake pond, but the success was all but granted: numerous white middle planters, heavily indebted with merchants, had failed during low prices conjunctures[1].

Halfway across the world, in Beijing at the Forbidden City, the powerful Qing emperor Qianlong (r. 1736-1795) had to deal with reports made by his officials worried by the widespread diffusion of the same crop in many regions of the Chinese empire. They blamed the plant under consideration for wasting good land and they advocated that it should be torn out by its roots. Indeed, the crop had met for more than a century a spectacular dissemination: since the first arrival of its exotic leaves on the southern Chinese coast, large-scale migration of Han and Hakka people had spread its cultivation along the highland valleys of the Yangzi river and its tributaries. But, if Qianlong's

[1] On Henry Fitzhugh see Timothy H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985); Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia by the University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). For the relationship between planters from the Chesapeake Bay and British - most of all Scottish - merchants, see Jacob M. Price, "Merchants and Planters: The Market Structure of the Colonial Chesapeake Reconsidered," in *Tobacco in Atlantic Trade. The Chesapeake, London and Glasgow, 1675-1775* (Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain ; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Variorum, 1995), 1–32; Russell R. Menard, "Plantation Empire: How Sugar and Tobacco Planters Built Their Industries and Raised an Empire," *Agricultural History*, 2007, 309–32.

predecessor in the seventeenth century had issued rigid bans against its cultivation and consumption, the emperor was fully aware that its development was irreversible. Not only did the Imperial Household Department declare a particular variety originating in Yongding suitable for the emperor's consumption, but the trade that arose from it was tapped by custom duties that assured imperial coffers with magnificent revenues[2].

Meanwhile, at the center of the Mediterranean, different actors from the Italian peninsula faced various issues connected to the same plant. For instance, at the Governor's Palace in Livorno, the marquis Carlo Andrea Ginori (b. 1702 - d. 1757) kept on his desk, among numerous economic projects, different proposals concerning the Mediterranean re-distribution of the derived products of the same crop[3]. At the opposite end of the social ladder, the humble figure of Tomaso Giacovich, a small Croatian ship captain from the Venetian Dalmatia, established a substantially different relationship with the same plant. In the night between April 3 and 4, 1705, he tried to smuggle three bags containing this illegal 'drug' aboard a *gondola* in the canals near *Riva degli Schiavoni* in the core of Venice. Such volume of trade was not particularly impressive, but the event gave birth to a huge inquisitorial process: only the tax farmers which ran the sovereign monopoly could legally import and sell it to the public[4].

1. A research on tobacco: global commodities, monopolies, and negotiation processes in the early modern age

Why are these four distant eighteenth-century images across the world connected and what should we retain from them? All of them, in fact, revolve around a plant with which we are still very familiar today: the omnipresent tobacco. Today, tobacco counts for an impressive annual global consumption of 5.9 trillion cigarettes - tragically, the world's leading underlying cause of death, bringing in 2005 to the first international

[2] The paragraph is inspired by Carol Benedict, *Golden-Silk Smoke: A History of Tobacco in China, 1550-2010*, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 34–60.

[3] On Carlo Andrea Ginori see Antonella Alimento, "Tra Bristol Ed Amsterdam: Discussioni Livornesi Su Commercio, Marina Ed Impero Negli Anni Cinquanta Del Settecento," in *Dall'origine Dei Lumi Alla Rivoluzione. Scritti in Onore Di Luciano Guerci e Giuseppe Ricuperati* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008), 25–45; Id., "Tra 'Gelosie' Personali e 'gelosie' tra gli Stati: i progetti del governatore Carlo Ginori e la circolazione della cultura economica e politica a Livorno (1747-1757)," *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* XVI (2009): 63–96.

[4] Information on the episode of Tomaso Giacovich in Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASVe), *V Savi alla Mercanzia*, serie I, b. 905.

public health treaty which calls for coordinated actions aimed at reducing tobacco use[5] - and its plants are grown in 124 countries, with leading producers spread throughout the world, from China to Brazil, India, the United States, and Indonesia[6]. In turn, its historical path has not always been marked by global success. For thousands of years before 1492, tobacco remained within the Americas, the only continent where the plant had naturally spread.

However, since the beginning of the early modern age, its global diffusion became outstanding, eventually reaching the four corners of the world. According to the historian Didier Nourrisson, «*le tabac représente l'un des exemples les plus stupéfiants de l'adaptation d'un produit exotique à la civilisation occidentale*»[7], but its ascent, as a matter of fact, did not regard only Western civilization. Accurately, Charles C. Mann, putting in a global perspective the 'Columbian exchange', describes tobacco as «the first American species which spread throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa» and indicates it as one of the key protagonists of the cultural and ecological shock which occurred with the New World entering the stage[8]. Not by chance, Timothy Brook has suggestively dedicated many pages to tobacco and to its cross-cultural path in order to understand the making of the 'global world' in the 17th century[9]. At the same time, at different latitudes we can appreciate the constant effort to rule over the circulation of such a global good, whose addictive properties could raise many concerns about health, mass-consumption, and, as a consequence, taxation. Above all, the spectacular rise of tobacco's circulation and consumption provide sovereign powers with a mouth-watering opportunity to increase revenues, on condition of promoting its trade and establishing agreements with key players in its flows. These are the main coordinates for tobacco in the early modern

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[5] World Health Organization, "WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control," accessed October 11, 2021, https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/9241591013.

[6] Samira Asma et al., "CDC Grand Rounds: Global Tobacco Control," *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 63 (April 4, 2014): 277–80.

[7] Didier Nourisson, *Histoire sociale du tabac* (Paris: Editions Christians, 1999), 5.

[8] Charles C. Mann, *1493. Uncovering the New World Columbus Created* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), 12. For Mann, the other key protagonists of such a process were African slaves, American silver, and a wide range of food plants and bacteria. On the 'Columbian Exchange' in its classical proposal, see Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, Contributions in American Studies ; No. 2 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood PubCo;, 1972).

[9] Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*, 1st U.S. ed. (New York: Bloomsbury Press : Distributed to the trade by Macmillan, 2008), 126..

period, more specifically between the 17th and 18th centuries, so after its global turn and before the introduction of the modern factory system for its production.

The present research moves on from the intersection between the increase of long-distance circulation of commodities and the enhancement of state fiscal systems in the early modern age. Those two phenomena were undoubtedly among the most relevant trends between the 17th and 18th centuries. Tobacco's history provides a case in point for a better comprehension of their relationship and for addressing research questions which animate debates in the literature. Which factors allowed transimperial commodities to float across cultural, political and local fiscal borders? How local fiscal institutions reacted to the restructuring of global trade? Did the latter impact the tax burden's growth? What kind of confrontation economic actors with their networks and state bodies with their institutions ended up setting in order to claim their respective interests in the global circulation of commodities? And did that confrontation shape somehow the circulation itself of global goods?

In particular, this thesis aims at reviewing the pillars of early modern long-distance trade and fiscal enhancement. An established narrative on the rise of the Western world in the early modern age has stressed the role of administrative centralization to reach the final outcome of 'national' fiscal states (i.e., states with greater ability to collect revenues and manage the public debt on a national scale) and to foster economic development through the consolidation of the domestic market[10]. These considerations often comply with the identification as a successful model of the historical path of the Dutch Republic and, most of all, of the English/British state between the 17th and 18th centuries[11]. At the same time, scholars have long debated European predominance in early modern long-distance trade, highlighting the role played by chartered companies such as the Dutch and

[10] For a general overview and comparison on the European scale, see Richard Bonney, ed., *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c. 1200-1815* (Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[11] Many studies on the Dutch and the British cases have pointed out the importance of bureaucratic centralization both for fiscal and economic success. Two very influential ones are John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Jan De Vries and A. M. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

English East India companies in the Indian Ocean[12], but also by informal mercantile networks capable of crossing transimperial borders[13].

However, the case of tobacco offers an opportunity to adopt a different perspective and examine the interplay of early modern sovereign monopolies with the collection of increasing revenues and the circulation of global commodities that characterized the period under review. On the one hand, the establishment of tobacco monopolies in early modern Europe undoubtedly contributed to the greater mobilization of resources by early modern sovereign powers. On the other hand, the features of tobacco trade and taxation under the monopolistic regime problematize the picture emerging from the established narratives: the right for tax farming was granted to non-state actors which ran a privileged economic enterprise (the 'Tobacco Farm'), while highly regulated markets and pervasive fiscal measures disciplined the boundaries between legal and illegal circulation of such a global commodity. How did sovereign monopolies contribute to fiscal revenues and the strengthening of an economic sector tied to greater global interconnectedness? Moreover, given that it differs significantly from the models used to explain the English and Dutch cases, which other factors contributed to the success, and what obstacles marked the periods of difficulty?

These aspects have been often neglected in the literature as a signal of backwardness, but an investigation on the concrete strategies deployed by mercantile networks and state fiscal institutions around the tobacco sector sheds light on the economic, institutional, and cultural resources by which early modern societies participated in the restructuring of global trade. In particular, I am interested in exploring the conditions, limits, and dynamics of the negotiation processes between mercantile networks and state fiscal institutions around tobacco trade and taxation. They reveal the concrete paths adopted to deal with the economic and fiscal opportunities provided by the emergence of new global goods in the early modern age.

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[12] See, for example, Kirti N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Neils Steensgaard, "The Growth and Composition of the Long-Distance Trade of England and the Dutch before 1750," in *The Rise of Merchant Empires–Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 102–52.

[13] See, for example, Ana Crespo Solana, "A Network-Based Merchant Empire: Dutch Trade in the Hispanic Atlantic (1680–1740)," in *Dutch Atlantic Connections, 1680-1800. Linking Empires, Bridging Borders*, ed. Gert Oostindie and Jessica V. Roitman (Leiden ; Boston, MA: Brill, 2014), 139–58; Cátia Antunes and Amélia Polónia, eds., *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

I will engage with these questions in the development of the thesis, looking for the specific answers elaborated on such problems during the early modern period as an epoch of great transformations not only in long-distance trade and fiscal tightening, but more generally in the global hierarchy. Accordingly, I propose to investigate the actual functioning of the tobacco's trade and taxation in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire during the 17th and 18th centuries. At that time, our two polities had surely passed their golden age and operated in a world profoundly shocked by the emergence of the Oceanic routes for the Eurasian exchange and by the establishment of the Atlantic empires. However, they struggled to join the party without any sort of abandonment: their strategies for carving out a successful space in the new configuration of global trade reveal interesting aspects for a better comprehension of early modern interaction of global goods, fiscal institutions, and economic actors.

2. The 'puzzle' of long-distance trade and state-building

The growth of long-distance trade and taxation are two big themes, too big for catching all their implications in a single research. Their relevance for the early modern period is universally acknowledged. According to some interpretations, commercial ability and the 'invention of the state' represented the backbone of the long-lasting European superiority over the rest of the globe. Despite these statements undergoing intensive review, particularly concerning the extent of 'European hegemony' throughout the period[14], it is unsurprising that the long-distance circulation of commodities and fiscal enhancement are still key research topics for the early modern age, albeit approached from a polycentric perspective[15]. The following paragraphs provide a review of the

[14] For instance, the 'Californian school' has contested that a proper divergence in the economic performance and growth between north-western Europe and China was not in progress until the nineteenth century. See the fundamental Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton Economic History of the Western World (Princeton, N.J. ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000). John Darwin, in turn, outlines an 'age of equilibrium' in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries after an age of impressive commercial expansion fostered not only by European maritime powers, but also by the dynamism of empires in central and eastern Eurasia. See John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire* (London ; New York: Allen Lane, 2007), 1–156.

[15] See Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2016); Michael Bycroft and Sven Dupré, eds., *Gems in the Early Modern World: Materials, Knowledge and Global Trade, 1450-1800* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). On fiscal enhancement, see Bartolome Yun-Casalilla and Patrick

literature on such topics in order not only to highlight the main topics on which scholars have focused their attention and the issues that this thesis aims at renewing.

2.1 The state of the art

For a long time Western historiography has focused on the emergence of the 'modern state' as a fundamental turnaround which, in the last resort, was called to account the supremacy of the West over the rest of the world[16]. The narrative on state-building has been often driven by a 'teleological paradigm' from feudal anarchy to a greater degree of political centralization, coercive power, and bureaucratic administration[17], leaving room just for the conflict risen by various forms of resistance among society[18]. In this context, the birth of a wider taxation systems and the advent of public finance run by central governments have been usually mentioned as crucial items of the epochal state-building process[19]: sovereign finance successfully imposed its rule over the plurality of

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Obrien, *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Wenkai He, *Paths toward the Modern Fiscal State: England, Japan, and China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013).

[16] In the traditional canon, the state was not only one of the main expressions of modernity, but also an 'European invention', see Joseph H Shennan, *The Origins of the Modern European State 1450-1725* (London: Hutchinson, 1974). For a follow-up on this point, with particular reference to the Italian historiographical debate and to the research on the early modern Italian states, see Ettore Rotelli and Pierangelo Schiera, eds., *Lo Stato Moderno*, 3 vols (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1971); Giorgio Chittolini, Anthony Molho, and Pierangelo Schiera, eds., *Origini Dello Stato. Processi Di Formazione Statale in Italia Tra Medioevo Ed Età Moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994); Luigi Blanco, *Le origini dello Stato moderno: secoli XI-XV* (Roma: Carocci, 2020). Take note that the historiography on the 'modern state' finds some resonance in monumental works by economists and economic historians which have undertaken in the long run the theme of the economic growth of the West with respect to the rest of the world. In particular, the institutions provided by the western state, with particular reference to the institutional achievements in north-western Europe, were pointed out as a major factor for promoting scientific ideas and technological innovation or securing property rights. See Douglass C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World: A New Economic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); David S. Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor* (New York: W W Norton & Co Inc, 1999).

[17] In this respect, the influence of sociologists inspired by the essays of Max Weber on the rise of modern bureaucracy and state administration as the key to maximize efficiency and eliminate favoritism, though with threats to individual freedom to be carefully managed. See Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 1947).

[18] Ettore Rotelli and Pierangelo Schiera, eds., *Lo Stato moderno. Accentramento e rivolte*, vol. 3 (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1974).

[19] Jean-Philippe Genêt and Michel Le Mené, eds., *Genèse de l'état moderne: prélèvement et redistribution. Actes du Colloque de Fontevraud 1984* (Paris: CNRS, 1987); Katia Béguin and Jean-Philippe Genêt, "Fiscalité et genèse de l'État : remarques introductives," in *Ressources publiques et construction étatique en Europe. XIIIe-XVIIIe siècle*, Histoire économique et financière - Ancien Régime (Vincennes: IGPDE, 2015), 3–26.

feudal and traditional duties and *regalia*[20], giving birth to a 'modern' kind of coercion over society. According to different research trends, the escalation of warfare and military budget in the early modern age played a decisive role for such an outcome. As Charles Tilly vividly argued, «the state made war and the war made the state». According to this sociological theory of state-building, the early modern period saw a growing demand for revenue to cover rising military expenses and support larger administrations. This need provided a crucial impetus for a historical cycle of coercion-extraction, driven by the centralization of political power and a substantial increase in fiscal pressure on society[21].

From this premise, opposite interpretations emerged. On the one hand, the sociological model of the 'predatory state' has highlighted the negative economic impact of heavy taxation on markets, trade and productive activities[22]. On the other hand, the rise of successful 'fiscal states' - able to exercise an effective coercive power over society and mobilize a greater volume of resources - has been associated to the path toward economic development, suggesting that the rationalization of taxation promoted the consolidation of domestic markets[23]. However, both schools of thought share the same assumption: the strengthening of bureaucratic taxation provided an essential pillar for the successful state-building process that firstly took place in Europe at the turn of early modern and modern ages, with particular references to the Dutch and the English cases. While imperial finance would remain influenced by decentralization, local negotiation, and elements of

[20] *Regalia*, in medieval legal terms, were rights belonging exclusively to the king as outcomes of historical conflict and negotiation with local rulers and the temporal power of the church. Mostly, they dealt with the exploitation of some natural resources within the sovereign's jurisdiction or of trade on some particular good. At the same time, these rights were often granted by the emperor or by royal powers to prominent subjects, in order to reward their military or political services and their loyalty. As a consequence, the map of regalian rights, from the middle ages to the early modern period undoubtedly, figures out as an intricate tangle of levies and duties claimed by different and sometimes competing authorities. See Christopher Corèdon and Ann Williams, *A Dictionary of Medieval Terms and Phrases* (D.S. Brewer, 2004), 246–53.

[21] See Samuel E. Finer, "State-and Nation-Building in Europe: The Role of the Military," in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, vol. 84 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 84–165; Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990-1990* (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990).

[22] For an introduction to the concept of the 'predatory state', see Mehrdad Vahabi, "Introduction: A Symposium on the Predatory State," *Public Choice* 182, no. 3 (2020): 233–42. See also Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: A History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Stephan R. Epstein, 'The Rise of the West', in *An Anatomy of Power: The Social Theory of Michael Mann* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 233–62.

[23] On the idea of 'fiscal states' as the innovative shape of central powers which progressively took place in early modern Europe, see Richard Bonney, ed., *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c. 1200-1815* (Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999).

patrimonial taxation, the powers adhering to the fiscal state model would emerge victorious in the international competition between the long 18th century and the First World War[24]. Furthermore, the concept of the fiscal state has been projected by scholars on a global scale, using it as a benchmark for analyzing the historical development of fiscal systems in other regions of the world[25].

Nevertheless, the classical interpretation went through a proper crisis at the turn of the 1980s. Scholars have examined aspects that the 'modern state' paradigm had overlooked[26]. The revisionist arguments have influenced recent studies on early modern taxation and fiscal systems. More attention has been devoted to the need to obtain the cooperation of strategic economic actors for tax collection, even for the British case itself. Instead of a centralized and bureaucratic infrastructure along Weberian lines, the state that emerges out from recent research is less hegemonic: it was rather the product of negotiation and bargaining at local, regional, and national levels, especially in the construction of fiscal and financial systems[27]. If the *pars destruens* on the classical image

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[24] For a collection of studies investigating the eighteenth-century international competition among European powers through the lens of the success or failure of fiscal-military states, see Christopher Storrs, ed., *The Fiscal-Military State in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Essays in Honour of P.G.M.Dickson* (Farnham ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009). For an analysis on WWI, Joseph A. Schumpeter examined the failure of the Habsburg empire by comparing his backward financial system, described as a 'domain state', to the 'fiscal state' established by its rivals. See Joseph A. Schumpeter, "The Crisis of the Tax State," *International Economic Papers* 4 (1954): 99–140.

[25] See the approach in the essays collected in Bartolome Yun-Casalilla and Patrick O'Brien, *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[26] For a follow-up on this point, see Francesco Benigno, 'Lo Stato Moderno Come Topos Storiografico', in *Lo Stato Moderno Di Ancien Régime* (Repubblica di San Marino: Aiep, 2007), 17–38.

[27] For important recent studies that have challenged the model of the 'fiscal state' for 18th-century Great Britain and have highlighted the complex negotiations and reciprocal relations that characterized the relationship between the governed and their governors, see Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c.1550–1700*; Andrew Mackillop, "The Political Culture of the Scottish Highlands from Culloden to Waterloo," *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 3 (2003): 511–32; David A. Fleming, *Politics and Provincial People: Sligo and Limerick, 1691-1761* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010). Moreover, also the excise administration – so important in the considerations of O'Brien and Brewer on the British state – has been scrutinized by new studies that have contributed to reassess some exaggeration on its bureaucratic dimension: see Miles Ogborn, "The Capacities of the State: Charles Davenant and the Management of the Excise, 1683–1698," *Journal of Historical Geography* 24, no. 3 (1998): 289–312; William J. Ashworth, *Customs and Excise: Trade, Production, and Consumption in England, 1640-1845* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); D'Maris Coffman, *Excise Taxation and the Origins of Public Debt* (Basingstoke: Springer, 2013). As it has been recently summarized, «it is, therefore, increasingly clear that, to the extent that effective fiscal and financial systems existed in all three [British] kingdoms by 1783, they had been brought into existence through bargaining and negotiation as well as administrative reform», Aaron Graham and Patrick Walsh, "Introduction: The British Fiscal-Military States, 1660-1815," in *The British Fiscal-Military States, 1660-c.1783* (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 1–25.

of the 'modern' or 'fiscal' state has the merit to underline the partial inconsistency of traditional interpretations, we still have to deal with an indisputable historical fact: the outstanding enhancement of tax collection throughout the early modern age. If the 'canon' based on centralization is unsatisfactory, historical research must maintain the ambition to explain how the result was actually achieved and which factors eventually contributed to the epochal transformation in the magnitude of resources mobilized by sovereign powers.

Turning our attention to the literature on global trade in the early modern period, since the 1970 the 'new institutional economics' (NIE) has been very influential in stressing the role of institutions as the crucial catalysts of commercial trust. In this regard, institutions, politics, and regulations are no longer depicted as factors opposed to market development, as they were, for instance, in the 'predatory state' paradigm. They are rather presented as consubstantial elements with it[28]. For Douglass North and Robert Thomas, «the establishment of institutional arrangements and property rights [...] create an incentive to channel individual economic effort into activities that bring the private rate of return to the social rate of return»[29]. The economic historian Avner Greif proposed a broader definition of institutions as systems of social factors - like rules, beliefs, norms, groups organization - contributing to generate a regularity of economic behavior[30]. His distinction between the inefficient 'community responsibility system' and a more efficient 'individual legal responsibility system' is strongly based on social factors that contributed to the development of 'individualist cultural beliefs'. However, it primarily relied on the superiority of notarial deeds, a formal legal code, and effective tribunals over a socially enforced market based on reputation[31]. Accordingly, following his reasoning, the rise of the nuclear family and non-kin, interest-based organizations distinguish medieval Europe from previous and contemporary civilizations.

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[28] See in particular Douglass C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World: A New Economic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[29] North, Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World*, cit., p. 1.

[30] Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy: Lessons from Medieval Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 382–83.

[31] The most important work where Greif has developed this point is a comparative study on the business organization of the Maghribi traders - a specific group of North African Jews - with that of Genoese merchants in the middle age. See Avner Greif, "Reputation and Coalitions in Medieval Trade: Evidence on the Maghribi Traders," *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989): 857–82.

A quite opposite line of research has developed a perspective from below on commercial trust: since the publication of the seminal book *Cross-cultural trade in world history* by Philip D. Curtin[32], the studies on stateless diasporas have underlined the importance of connections based on familiar, linguistic and religious ties which enabled long-distance trade. This approach encouraged renewed research on mercantile networks[33] and many studies have pointed out their functioning as an alternative narrative to the emergence of impersonal markets and modern business companies[34]: commercial trust found its lifeblood primarily in the personal relationships of correspondents who mutually influenced the economic behavior of their partners.

However, recent developments in the literature have renewed the picture. While previous works had explained the success in early modern long-distance trade as the result of «personal trust based on a common religion and carefully fostered relations of scattered families»[35], the romantic image of merchant communities as units in total harmony,

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[32] Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*, Studies in Comparative World History (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[33] While scholars had always been interested in the ties maintained by merchants for business relations, the notion of mercantile networks appeared in commercial history only in the 1990s after the development of the 'social network analysis'. For a resume, see John Scott, *Social Network Analysis: A Handbook*, 2nd ed. (London ; Thousands Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 2000). Leos Muller was among the first who applied the approach of social network analysis to commercial history: he included a quantifying correspondence analysis in his examination of the mercantile networks of the merchant companies based in Stockholm. See Leos Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm, c. 1640-1800: A Comparative Study of Early-Modern Entrepreneurial Behaviour*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Historica Upsaliensia 188 (Uppsala: SAcademiae Ubsaliensis, 1998). However, many authors have emphasized the limited explanatory range of quantitative network analyses: quantitative analyses only make sense if the volume of data is large enough to provide some statistical relevance, but the concept of mercantile networks has been successfully adopted as a tool for qualitative analysis of commercial interaction. For a case study adopting network analysis for a qualitative investigation on the commercial interactions of early modern Armenian merchants, see Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean:The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa*, California World History Library 17 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010). An interesting methodological review of the network analysis applied to commercial history can be found in the introduction to the book edited by Andrea Caracausi and Christof Jeggle on commercial networks and European cities in the early modern age. See Andrea Caracausi and Christof Jeggle, eds., *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, Perspectives in Economic and Social History; No. 32 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014).

[34] Richard Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business in the English-Speaking World, 1580-1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y ; London: Cornell University Press, 2005); Hannah Barker, *Family and Business During the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[35] John F. Bosher used these words to describe the flourishing of Huguenot business ventures in the Atlantic after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, see John F. Bosher, "Huguenot Merchants and the Protestant International in the Seventeenth Century," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (1995): 77–102.

cohesive and proud of themselves has been challenged by many studies[36]. Kinship ties were not always helpful for operating in early modern transatlantic networks: on the contrary, they could represent proper constraints for extending trade relationships[37]. In the seminal book *The Familiarity of Strangers*, Francesca Trivellato has completely reframed the issue of cross-cultural trade. While rejecting North's focus on strong institutions as the only security for credit and contractual enforcement between strangers, at the same time she profoundly criticizes the tendency to 'groupism' - i.e. the assumption of internal homogeneous groups, delimited with the outside, which benefit of a mutual trust thanks to their common religious or ethical identity[38]. Trivellato also moves away from Greif's thesis, pointing out that, as late as the 18th century, individual legal responsibility coexisted with elements of the community responsibility system. Her analysis on the mercantile network of the Ergas & Silvera, a Sephardic Jews' merchant house based in Livorno between the 17th and 18th centuries, invites us to go beyond the alleged smooth model of trading diaspora and to take into account a wide range of aspects to comprehend what made cross-cultural transactions possible. In particular, she proposes the expression 'communitarian cosmopolitanism' to encapsulate the experience of «merchants who [...] synthesized multiple traditions and mingled with non-Jews but did so within the framework of a corporatist society of unequal and separate groups»[39].

At the same time, the findings from other case studies - like the works of David Hancock on the Atlantic networks for the distribution of Madeira wine in the 18th century - demonstrate that mercantile networks in the early modern age knew success only when they were able to secure economic information, commercial products, and trade services, while they failed when individuals proved unable to exploit relations to their own

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[36] Claude Markovits was among the first to question this point: his study on Indian mercantile networks shed light on rivalry and lack of trust between Sindi brothers involved in long-distance relations. See Claude Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947: Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Panama*, Cambridge Studies in Indian History and Society 6 (Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[37] For a case study from which this issue clearly emerges, see Shervllynne Haggerty, "I Could 'Do for the Dickmans': When Family Networks Don't Work," *Cosmopolitan Networks in Commerce and Society 1660-1914*, 2011.

[38] Here, Trivellato relies on the critique elaborated by the sociologist Rovers Brubaker. See Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[39] Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 18

advantage[40]. Even the good reputation of the family or cross-cultural network could be not sufficient for the success of merchant communities in long-distance trade without connections with the institutional framework in a commercial system which was highly dependent on the institutional rules imposed by the state[41]. For instance, Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, presenting the economic activities of the 'Portuguese nation' in the Atlantic world between the 16th and the 17th century, emphasizes the solid connection of this network with the institutions of the Spanish Habsburg Empire, participating to profitable *asientos* and royal monopolies on two key trades of the 17th-century Spanish Atlantic economy, like African slaves and tobacco[42]. If the research on trading diasporas, mercantile networks, and cross-cultural trade has indeed the merit to shed light on some crucial dynamics of long-distance exchange of the early modern world, this analysis often focuses on networks as informal and horizontal webs of connections. The risk is to downsize the vertical relations of power and the several problems which they had to face to concretely display the circulation of people and commodities. Above all, how trade networks dealt with the growing presence of fiscal institutions and how they managed to establish new forms of coexistence with the intrusive action of states remain unresolved questions.

2.2. A reassessment

This brief review of the literature suggests that long-distance trade and state-building were not only two main ongoing historical processes of the early modern age, but also two topics whose deep connections and mutual influences require further research. Although they have been traditionally investigated by separate branches of the discipline, it is true that, in the words of Michael Kwass, «the growth of early modern world trade was bound up inextricably with the raise of powerful European fiscal-military states that could tax and borrow on a scale large enough to engage in modern global

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[40] David Hancock, "The Trouble with Networks: Managing the Scots' Early-Modern Madeira Trade," *The Business History Review* 79, no. 3 (2005): 467–91.

[41] For a case study on the relevance of consular intermediation and assistance to Venetian mercantile networks in the late middle age, see Stefania Montemezzo, "Galley Routes and Merchant Networks between Venice and the North Sea in the Fifteenth Century," in *Commercial Networks and European Cities, 1400-1800*, ed. Andrea Caracausi and Christof Jeggle (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014), 153–70.

[42] Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 107–19.

warfare»[43]. This consideration suggests that a sharp opposition between long-distance trade and the enhancement of state coercion on society is totally inaccurate for the early modern times. In addition, narratives focusing exclusively on networks or institutions, often to highlight their divergence in terms of goals and actions, risk losing sight of a far more complex and interconnected historical landscape. As a matter of fact, the relationship between trade and politics, commercial expansion and state building, economic networks and fiscal institutions, circulation of global goods and taxation still fosters debates among historians calling for further research. In fact, though not always explicitly, these topics are at the center of the classical discussion on 'mercantilism', a concept that has been used widely to describe the economic policy adopted by European states between the 17th and 18th centuries: a proper alliance between the state and the oligarchy of businessmen led to aggressive custom duties and use of the military to promote exports, defend commercial interests, and ensure a positive balance of trade[44]. From this field of research, essential studies provide useful insights about the impact of 'mercantilism' - as a policy and a cultural tool - on state-building processes[45] and mercantile networks' opportunities[46].

To some extent, the 'puzzle' of long-distance trade and state-building and the themes of the debate on 'mercantilism' have been more recently addressed by the influential book *Power and Plenty* (2007) by Ronald Findlay and Kevin H. O'Rourke[47]. The two economists have examined over the long run the relationship between international trade, power and material standards of living, with the aim to contribute to the debate on the integration of global markets and the (failed) convergence of prices in the early modern age. Not surprisingly, they identified trade as the main driver of episodic growth throughout the last millennium. However, in their opinion, the European (British) success in the 18th-19th centuries was not related to the triumph of bourgeois values or

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[43] Michael Kwass, *Contraband: Louis Mandrin and the Making of a Global Underground* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), 8.

[44] For an overview, see Lars Magnusson, *Mercantilism: The Shaping of an Economic Language* (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 1994).

[45] Agustín González Enciso, *War, Power and the Economy: Mercantilism and State Formation in 18th-Century Europe*, Routledge Explorations in Economic History 8 (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2017).

[46] Jonathan I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550-1750* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

[47] Ronald Findlay and Kevin H O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty: Trade, War, and the World Economy in the Second Millennium* (Princeton, New Jersey; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009).

property rights, rather to factor endowments and geography: there was immense benefit to Europe to having access to the abundant land and resources of the Americas - specifically cheap cotton, sugar and other commodities which allowed for a competitive advantage - as well as to relying on African slaves. Monopoly, war, colonization and mercantilist policy were depicted as rational choices in front of imperfect markets, in order to conquer share of international trade in a world where voluntary and involuntary trades both occurred regularly.

In contrast with the neoclassical economy, this perspective points out the role state-building - in this case, of its systematic violence - in historical economic development[48]. Nevertheless, Findlay and O'Rourke approach bears some problematic aspects. Above all, the lack of a historic and 'plural' definition of the state, imagined as a static entity with a 'predatory aim'[49]. From such a premise, there remains little room to grasp the actual dynamics of negotiation which took place between the states and social groups. By contrast, it is useful to look at the recent developments of the historical research on 'mercantilism'[50]. This category is more and more investigated as an ongoing and localized process for the establishment of an ever-changing relationship between state power and merchants. It is particularly useful to recall here the lesson by Jean-Pierre Hirsch, according to whom it is not appropriate to consider 'mercantilism' as a coherent complex of economic doctrine of the period, but rather focus on the concrete articulation of trade and commercial policy. His work outlines the changing relationship between power and merchants as a social construct, where the negotiation on spaces, privileges and rules went well beyond property rights and transaction costs, including social, cultural, and political dimensions[51].

2.3 'Out of the market': tobacco's global journey between trade and monopolies

Looking at tobacco in the early modern age, it was not only a commodity deeply involved in the growth of long-distance trade and in the tightening of taxation, but its

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[48] See also Frederick C. Lane, *Profits from Power: Readings in Protection Rent and Violence-Controlling Enterprises* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1979).

[49] See the criticism on this point in Stephan R. Epstein, *Freedom and Growth: The Rise of States and Markets in Europe, 1300-1750* (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2000).

[50] See in particular Philip J. Stern and Carl Wennerlind, eds., *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and Its Empire* (Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[51] Jean-Pierre Hirsch, *Les Deux Rêves Du Commerce. Entreprise et Institution Dans La Région Lilloise, 1780-1860* (Paris: EHESS, 1991).

historical path sheds light on the relationship between them and on the bargaining dynamics which affected their actual realization. It also contrasts with the idea of market exchange as a function of enlightened reforms or the full articulation of free trade based on competition. On the contrary, the monopolistic regulations which affected its trade testify «the illiberal roots of capitalism»[52], but with a different meaning than how this concept has been used by Sven Beckert for cotton. In fact, we assist not only to coerced labor, but also to highly regulated markets, privileged companies that were granted legal monopoly by governments, and pervasive fiscal measures that ultimately shaped the boundaries between legal and illegal circulation. In particular, the monopoly on tobacco trade and taxation ended up in the majority of European states in the establishment of the 'Tobacco Farm'[53]. This peculiar early modern age institution was a middle ground between a tax administration, a bureaucratic office and a trading company. It was usually headed by a consortium composed of financiers concerned with importing leaf and processing the finished products through the management of privileged companies and manufacturers, and with the exclusive right to sell tobacco within the domestic market in return for an annual fee. Its action fell at the same time in the fields of territorial administration, taxation, economic production, and long-distance trade. The outstanding rise of tobacco circulation and consumption between the 17th and 18th centuries occurred under the monopoly regime.

In this respect, if the latter point would have been inconceivable for neoclassical explanations, scholars have reviewed the classical attribution to Adam Smith of the idea of the market regulated by an invisible hand: the rigid separation of economics from law and the conferral of normative pretentious to the analysis of competition are ascribed by many authors to later thinkers, like Jeremy Bentham[54]. However, debates about competition and monopoly in the early modern age pertained to controlling economic activity and associating market order with social order according to an approach strongly influenced by ethics[55]. While the mechanism is well studied and intuitive for foodstuff

[52] Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, cit., p. 39.
[53] See Stefano Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna: secoli 17.-19* (Roma: Viella, 2017).
[54] For a deeper analysis in this point, see Alessandro Stanziani, *Rules of Exchange: French Capitalism in Comparative Perspective, Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries* (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 17–37.
[55] Jean-Yves Grenier, *L'économie d'Ancien Régime: un monde de l'échange et de l'incertitude*, L'Évolution de l'Humanité Albin Michel (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996).

and staple commodities like bread or salt[56], the adoption of rigid regulations and monopolies for an item of pleasure consumption like tobacco raises further questions. Which were the thoughts and values that drove institutions to limit the market? What kind of relationship between economics and law contributed to establishing the tobacco monopoly? Did this latter originate from the legal authority or find legitimation before in competition?

From a general view, tobacco as a global commodity recalls the relentless dialectics that we can find in the works of Werner Sombart and Joseph A. Schumpeter between, on the one side, the 'creative destruction' derived by the competition among entrepreneurial spirits and, on the other side, the tendency to the consolidation of monopolies on behalf of the biggest players[57]. However, I propose to address these questions overcoming the tensions between liberals and interventionists about the creation of monopolies and their consequences. In order to avoid normative interpretations, some insights can be drawn by findings on another kind of early modern institution. Some years ago, Isabelle Grangaud and Simona Cerutti co-edited a special issue focused on the establishment of institutional mechanisms – such as fideicommissum and legacies to religious institutes in Christian societies, and *waqfs* goods in the Muslim world – designed for managing movable and immovable assets that were withdrawn from the market. The unrestricted circulation was not the primary condition for goods and assets in these societies. However, instead of interpreting these institutions through the lens of intrusive modernizing paradigms, the various contributions in the special issue demonstrate, from a cross-cultural perspective, that making certain goods inalienable - 'out of the market' - does not mean completely

[56] Abundant literature on the aim of market regulation policies on basic foodstuffs emphasizes the goal to ensure just prices, sufficient quantities of good quality. See Jean-Claude Hocquet, *Le sel et la fortune de Venise. Production et Monopole*, vol. 1 (Lille: Université de Lille, 1978); Steven L. Kaplan, *Bread, Politics and Political Economy in the Reign of Louis XV*, 2nd edition (London ; New York, NY: Anthem Press, 2015).

[57] For a first approach to the elaboration of these concepts in Marx, Sombart, Schumpeter and the broader consequences of their writing, see John E. Elliott, 'Marx and Schumpeter on Capitalism's Creative Destruction: A Comparative Restatement', *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 95, no. 1 (1980): 45–68; Hugo Reinert and Erik S. Reinert, 'Creative Destruction in Economics: Nietzsche, Sombart, Schumpeter', in *Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900). Economy and Society*, ed. Jürgen G. Backhaus and Wolfgang Drechsler, vol. 3, The European Heritage in Economics and the Social Sciences (Boston, MA: Springer US, 2006), 55–85.

removing them from exchange. Rather, it signifies an attempt to regulate their circulation and appropriation[58].

Undoubtedly, tobacco trade and taxation monopolies differed significantly in their mechanisms and goals: they were not designed to prevent assets or render the goods covered by monopoly licenses inalienable. Instead, they established frameworks to regulate rather than exclude the circulation and sale of specific goods. However, I argue it is worthwhile to draw parallels from these insights, beginning with the recognition that practices and institutions which withdrew goods from the free market and competition should not be viewed as inherently opposed to circulation and the formation of social connections[59]. On the contrary, putting tobacco 'out of the market' was the result of concretely negotiating between, on the one hand, the objective of political intervention and, on the other hand, the economic interests and social aspirations at stake. Investigating the process of negotiation that developed around Tobacco farms can reveal much about the dynamics of global trade in the early modern age, between circulation and monopoly.

The composition of Tobacco farms also shows that the global circulation of such a commodity was mediated by the strategies of social actors bearing economic interests and the active intervention of institutions. In this respect, if mercantile networks and trade institutions have been frequently presented as excluding alternatives for explaining the very foundation of long-distance circulation of goods across the globe, the history of tobacco suggests reconsidering such a sharp opposition. In this respect, I turn to Regina Grafe's remarks for a rethinking of the whole approach to the issue: according to her, we should regard the spatial nature of institutions, instead of conceiving them as monolithic structures, and the institutional nature of personal networks. While the 'political networks' were never meant to be forceful centralized structures, «family bounds, nations, diasporas, guilds, *consulados*, mercantile courts were all institutional responses to what is known as the 'fundamental problems of exchange'»[60]. We should learn from this lesson that early modern institutions and networks were not two separate worlds that cannot interact with each other. On the contrary, networks unfolded not only horizontally

[58] See Simona Cerutti and Isabelle Grangaud, "Premessa. Fuori Mercato: Appartenenze Locali e Beni Nel Mediterraneo," *Quaderni Storici* 154, no. 1 (2017): 1–12.

[59] See in particular Pascale Ghazeleh, "Closed Markets? Creating Communities, Personalizing Property in Late Ottoman Egypt," *Quaderni Storici* 154, no. 1 (2017): 107–26.

[60] R. Grafe, "On the spatial nature of institutions and the institutional nature of personal networks in the Spanish Atlantic", *Culture & History Digital Journal*, 3-1 (2014), pp. 1-11, p. 4.

but also vertically: they encompassed institutions and the political sphere, as well as market relations. At the same time, state institutions often swarmed with officials with their own business in the economic sphere, and this not necessarily led to the supremacy of private interests over public wellness but could be a relevant strongpoint. In fact, they were able to gather information, capital, and commodities from their networks that relied, at least in part, on merchants' channels of communication and ensured access to resources that were directly foreclosed to governments and their official bodies. Therefore, I argue that an in-depth analysis of the functioning of the early modern Tobacco farms and of the subsequent negotiation about the conditions of tobacco trade and the management of its monopoly provides new insights in the ways networks and institutions dealt with each other. This effort represents not only an attempt to fill a gap in our knowledge of tobacco history, but more importantly an opportunity to identify the concrete pillars of long-distance trade and the actual dynamics of state-building in the early modern age.

3. Comparisons and case studies in the 'early modern globalization'

Nowadays, we are familiar with the term 'globalization' when we want to underline the impact of long-distance relations on economic, social, cultural and political change. Coined by sociologists and economists, it describes a phase in the development of international capitalism, with particular reference to the integration of markets worldwide[61]. However, we should be aware of how tricky such a term could be for historians. Although many works backdate globalization's inception, questioning the idea that it constitutes an absolutely new phenomenon of the present-day world[62], there is a

[61] Paul Q. Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalization in Question: The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance*, 2nd ed (Cambridge, UK : Malden, MA: Polity Press ; Blackwell Publishers, 1999); Will Hutton and Anthony Giddens, eds., *Global Capitalism* (New York: The New Press, 2000). The canonical definition of globalization in sociology and economics indicates the quantum leap in the worldwide interdependencies and global exchanges occurred since the early 1970s, with the extensive internationalization of trade and finance that followed decolonisation and the upsurge of the power of transnational corporations. See Ankie Hoogvelt, *Globalization and the Postcolonial World: The New Political Economy of Development*, 2° edizione (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univ Pr, 2001).

[62] Some scholars have appointed the acceleration impressed in the post-1945 by the 'Cold War', see William R. Nester, *Globalization: A Short History of the Modern World*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Others have appointed the long nineteenth century (roughly, 1750-1880) as the true inception of the globalization process watershed: the take-off of the industrial revolution in Great Britain, the outburst of free trade, the restructuring of the Atlantic economy, and the long distance impact of the new factory system in international trade are the main pillars of this proposal. See Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic*

fundamental difference between attesting to an increase in global connections and concluding that such a process has a direct or even indirect impact on historical transformations. While 'globalization' has been considered an 'outcome' and the definition of an epoch in which worldwide interconnectedness represents a major factor affecting the broadest range of human activities[63], such dynamics can hardly be smoothly led back to the 17th and 18th centuries.

Nevertheless, a growing number of scholars described the early modern period - an 'age of discoveries' and new trading routes - as a crucial step in the quantitative and qualitative acceleration of worldwide connections for many historians[64]. Their arguments challenge the econometrician idea of globalization as the mere outcome of price convergence among distant markets[65]: the permanent existence of global trade in the early modern age would have unprecedentedly involved all the major zones of the world to

Economy (Cambridge, MA, USA: MIT Press, 1999). Actually, cross-checking arguments from specialists of different epochs results in a confusing cacophony of diverse claims about the beginning of globalization. So some medievalists recognize a critical turning point in global connections between the eleventh and the twelfth centuries, historians of central Asia often highlight the crucial importance of the *pax mongolica*, and specialists of ancient history might speak of an 'ancient globalization'. See John R. S. Phillips, *The Medieval Expansion of Europe*, Clarendon Paperbacks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System AD 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Eric H. Cline, *1177 B.C.: The Year Civilization Collapsed* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2014). As a matter of fact, if every huge transformation in history or any period of greater connections is ascribed to the globalization process, its interpretative potential results quite washed-out.

[63] For a first introduction to this huge topic, see Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions 86 (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Andrew Jones, *Globalization: Key Thinkers* (Cambridge ; Malden, MA: Polity, 2010); Peter N. Stearns, *Globalization in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2010). We can appreciate a convergence on this point by enthusiastic storytellers on the 'rise of the West' and by critical commentators about the role of coercion and economic exploitation for the formation of modern world-economy.

[64] We can appreciate a convergence on this point by both enthusiastic storytellers on the 'rise of the West' and by critical commentators about the role of coercion and economic exploitation for the formation of modern world-economy. See William Hardy McNeill, *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community : With a Retrospective Essay* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750*, (New York: Academic Press, 1980).

[65] This view can be found in the several articles of Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, according to whom in the early modern period an 'intercontinental trade boom' took place, but this trade growth led to no significant reduction in transport costs, nor to a appreciable decline in trade barriers, so, for instance, we find no evidence for commodity price convergence between Europe and Asia. For them, globalization began only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when a certain convergence can be traced. See in particular Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "When Did Globalization Begin?," *European Review of Economic History* 6, no. 1 (2002): 23–50. Some scholars have tried to challenge the supposed absence of price convergence in early modern commodity markets, for example see Klas Rönnbäck, "Integration of Global Commodity Markets in the Early Modern Era," *European Review of Economic History* 13, no. 1 (April 2009): 95–120.

«exchange products continuously [...] on a scale that generated deep and lasting impacts on all trading partners»[66].

According to this interpretation, the point about the 'deep and lasting impacts' marks the difference and the novelty of the early modern age, so much so that transcultural exchange would interact as never before with local and regional processes[67]. However, a certain ambiguity about the relationship between the increasing interconnectedness of the early modern age and modern globalization remains unsolved. We find in the literature definitions like 'proto globalization'[68], 'first globalization'[69], 'soft globalization'[70], 'primitive globalization'[71], 'archaic globalization'[72], highlighting specific features for the period compared to the 'birth of the modern world'[73] and elements of continuity with the previous centuries[74]. These latter were not the background of a motionless tradition, but vital forces interacting with new inputs emerging from the early modern age, like the greater interconnectedness of information and commodity circulation, the rise of the European state systems, with their imperial rivalry and military fiscalism, the growth of finance and consumption.

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[66] Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, "Path Dependence, Time Lags and the Birth of Globalisation: A Critique of O'Rourke and Williamson," *European Review of Economic History* 8, no. 1 (2004): 83. Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giráldez have written seminal contributions on the origins of globalization in the late 16th century: since that time, they argue, all heavily populated land masses began interacting directly and indirectly with long-lasting consequences. In their thesis, the foundation of Manila in 1571 by Spaniards represents a vital turning point. See Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, "Born with a" Silver Spoon": The Origin of World Trade in 1571," *Journal of World History* 6, no. 2 (1995): 201–21; Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, "Born Again: Globalization's Sixteenth Century Origins (Asian/Global Versus European Dynamics)," *Pacific Economic Review* 13, no. 3 (2008): 359–87.

[67] See, for example, the general approach in Geoffrey C Gunn, *First Globalization: The Eurasian Exchange, 1500 to 1800* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

[68] Hopkins, *Globalization in World History*.

[69] Gunn, *First Globalization*.

[70] Jan De Vries, "The Limits of Globalization in the Early Modern World," *The Economic History Review* 63, no. 3 (2010): 710–33.

[71] Cheney, *Revolutionary Commerce*.

[72] Christopher A. Bayly, "'Archaic' and 'Modern' Globalization in the Eurasian and African Arena, c. 1750–1850," *Globalization in World History*, 2002, 47–73.

[73] Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden (Mass); Oxford (UK); Victoria (Australia): Blackwell, 2005), 1–83.

[74] For example, Christopher Bayly argues that in the pre-industrial world the greater interconnectedness between distant regions followed different logics if compared to modern globalization. In particular, early modern globalization had multiple centers. Moreover, the global dissemination of people, goods and ideas knew new channels, but still occurred along traditional routes too, like tribal dynastic migrations, mercantile diasporas, land caravan trade. In addition, motives like prestige trade, cosmic religion, humoral or moral understandings of substances were a crucial engine to long-distance encounters. See again Bayly, "'Archaic' and 'Modern' Globalization in the Eurasian and African Arena, c. 1750–1850."

I define the 'early modern globalization'[75] not as an outcome, nor as a paradigmatic category to explain the historical change, but as a 'process' actually underway during the 17th and 18th centuries bearing specific features that require further investigation. Taken at large, we assist to an undeniable greater interconnectedness of various regions of the world interacting with local and regional scales in various domains of human society. But such a relationship was much more fluid than developmental studies[76], world-systems theory[77] and histories of globalization usually presume to be. Rather, it is the complexity of dynamic and multi-scale interactions that should attract historians' attention.

The topic of this research enables us to move from the global to the regional and local scale, with the ambition to clarify the modalities of interaction of such scales in the historical development of tobacco trade and taxation. From a methodological point of view, we shall problematize the discussion on the 'early modern globalization' in the light of the 'global turn' of the discipline[78]. The ongoing reconfiguration can be described, above all, as the result of a growing dissatisfaction with the conventional boundaries imposed by the canon of national history, particularly in light of the definitive crisis of the Eurocentric paradigm and the idea of a single line of historical evolution aligned with the trajectory of the West. The need of «provincializing Europe»[79] has gone hand in hand with the flourishing of subaltern studies that raised fundamental issues about the need for deeper investigation on non-Western dynamics and pushed to rethink the writing of 'world history'[80] in a way that equally values regions and continents beyond Europe. Going

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[75] The choice to qualify the globalization which I am referring to with the neutral 'early modern' answers to the need to avoid biased projections on the past and to pay greater attention to the specific features of global interconnectedness of the early modern age.

[76] The approach of development studies, so influential in Anglo-American literature since the 1950s, has been later dismissed by scholars. For this debate, see Sophus A. Reinert, "State Capitalism Past and Present: The European Origins of the Developmental State," in *The Oxford Handbook of State Capitalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

[77] See Immanuel M. Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Salvatore J. Babones and Christopher Chase-Dunn, eds., *Routledge Handbook of World-Systems Analysis* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2012). The point raised here is intended to combine the inquiry on power relations with the acknowledgement of the wide variety of inputs that contributed to the emergence of a new pattern of global trade and transnational relations in the early modern age.

[78] For an introduction, see Maxine Berg, ed., *Writing the History of the Global: Challenges for the Twenty-First Century*, British Academy Original Paperbacks (Oxford: British Academy, 2013).

[79] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[80] With 'world history', I intend an approach in historiography, from 'universal history' at the turn of 1900 to recent syntheses, that investigates the historical interactions of human civilisations at the world's level. See Arnold J. Toynbee, *The World After the Peace Conference. Survey of International Affairs, 1920-1923*

beyond these approaches, Sanjay Subrahmanyam was one of the main theorists of the 'connected histories'[81]: criticizing both traditional comparative history (too influenced by the paradigm of the nation-state) and subaltern studies (which tend to treat different cultures as monolithic entities), the renowned historian has called for emphasizing cross-pollination and mutual influence not only between different cultures but also among the various local or regional developments that operate with their own specificities in global processes[82].

More and more scholars suggest to write 'global history' not as a unit of analysis applied to the whole world, but as a lens and a point of view for taking into account the intersections between global, regional and local scales[83]. My approach is much more in tune with a multilevel and polyphonic perspective on the global dimension of historical processes, rather than using the 'global' as a synonym of world history or history of globalization. However, I am not at all satisfied with the recurrent opposition between connection (objective and source-based) and comparison (supposedly subjective) that we find in the literature[84]. On the contrary, I aim at integrating comparative history in the picture, though with a renewed approach than the traditional one based on national units of analysis[85].

In this respect, it is useful to recall the methodology used by Kenneth Pomeranz in his seminal work on the 'great divergence' between Europe and Asia: he substantially denies the need of world analysis for exploring global issues, promoting a comparative analysis of specific economic regions with crucial features in common in order to shed light on broader global dynamics[86]. In this respect, comparisons based on archival

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(New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1925); John R. McNeill and William H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of World History* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2003).

[81] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–62.

[82] See, for example, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Turning the Stones over: Sixteenth-Century Millenarianism from the Tagus to the Ganges," *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 40, no. 2 (2003): 129–61; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500–1640," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 5 (2007): 1359–85.

[83] On this point, see Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

[84] For the opposition between the two concepts, see Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45, no. 1 (2006): 30–50. For a critique of such an approach, see Alessandro Stanziani, *Eurocentrism and the Politics of Global History* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 11–12.

[85] See the approach in Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jurgen Kocka, *Comparative and Trans-National History* (New York, NY: Berghahn, 2009).

[86] Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

research still remains a peerless seed corn for grasping relevant information not only for deepening our knowledge of the case studies under investigation, but also on the connected histories which pass through and beyond them[87].

Accordingly, moving forward any sterile contrasts between multilevel scales of analysis, comparative approach, and global connections, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empires are intended as case studies that represented different organized spaces of their regional context and operated in the light of their global connections. As a matter of fact, state institutions, tax farmers, and merchants acted at local, regional, and imperial levels not just in opposition to global trends, but claiming their specificity and interest in broader global processes. Comparisons and archival research aims at understanding much deeper the motives of convergence and the role of variables for different outcomes in the two paths of participation in tobacco trade as a global commodity and a fiscal resource.

The terms used to identify the two case studies reveal a particular point of interest for the comparison among them: the possibility of exploring the intersection between global trends and differentiated levels of agency, from the local space to the imperial one, through the structuring of state power. In fact, in the Tuscan case, although contemporary sources typically use a plural expression – the '*felicissimi*' states of the Grand Duke – and rarely provide a unified definition before the second half of the 18th century, we can observe a growing influence from the central state power in shaping economic and financial strategies. The domains that made up the Grand Duchy, which had existed before and continued to exist as distinct regimes under the rule of Florence, were actually integrated into a true 'composite monarchy', as John Elliott has described the prevalent condition in early modern Europe, but were also subjected to the 'tutelary action' of the sovereign state, as suggested by Luca Mannori[88]. For the Venetian case, a recent turn in historiography has adopted imperial categories to interpret the relation of the *Dominante* with its dominions in the *Stato da Terra* or *Terraferma* (the overland territories in north-

[87] I rely on considerations that advocate for recomposing comparative history and connected history after a long season during which they have been usually counterposed. See Alessandro Stanziani, *Eurocentrism and the Politics of Global History* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 11–12; Erik Jan Zürcher, "The Young Turk Revolution: Comparisons and Connections," *Middle Eastern Studies* 55, no. 4 (July 4, 2019): 481–98.

[88] See John H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past & Present*, no. 137 (1992): 48–71; Luca Mannori, *Il Sovrano Tutore: pluralismo istituzionale e accentramento amministrativo nel principato dei Medici (secc. XVI-XVIII)* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1994).

eastern Italian peninsula) and the *Stato da Mar* (territories on the eastern coast of the Adriatic sea and Ionian islands)[89].

In this scenario, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire offers the opportunity to better understand the strategies adopted by their actors to join the new wave of global commodities' circulation and which factors affected the results of such efforts. The comparison makes it possible to question motives and causes of divergence and different outcomes, starting from the analysis of the variables which characterized the two case studies. In particular, the historiography has warned on the diverging concerns for our two polities governments in Venice and Florence about trade[90]. Venice remained throughout the early modern age the center of its own empire, whose commercial nature continued to be implemented with a rigid attention to promote its own manufacturing products, mercantile fleet, and the port of the capital even to the detriment of other cities, ports, and marketplaces under Venetian authority[91]. Conversely, long-distance trade in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was strongly affected by the rise of Livorno, a *portofranco* that deliberately attracted mostly foreign merchants and their business as a tool to participate in the new circuits of global trade[92].

Finally, the focus on two polities of the early modern Mediterranean provides a promising point of view to further elaborate on the circumstances under which increasing circulation and fiscal tightening took place, with particular reference to the new hierarchies that went hand in hand with the remodeling of global trade in the early modern age. Although the traditional interpretation of the Mediterranean decadence in the 17th and 18th centuries has been deeply reviewed by scholars[93], there is still little in the

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[89] For example, the different collective volume on Venice edited by Eric Dursteler in the 2010s deals with the term 'empire', whereas the collective volume edited by John Martin and Dennis Romano in the previous decade does not, talking of Venice as a 'city-state'. See John J. Martin and Dennis Romano, *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797 / Edited by John Martin and Dennis Romano* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Eric R. Dursteler, "Introduction: A Brief Survey of Histories of Venice," in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1–24; Benjamin Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire in the Early Modern Period," in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 125–253.

[90] On this point, see Fusaro, *Political Economies of Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, 89–109.

[91] On the evolution of this policy in the eighteenth century, between conflicts and accommodation with other centres, see Walter Panciera, *L'acqua giusta: il sistema portuale veneziano nel 18. secolo*, Fonti e studi di storia veneta. Nuova serie (Roma: Viella, 2021).

[92] This is one of the basic thesis of Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*.

[93] For the traditional interpretation of the seventeenth-century general crisis see Eric J. Hobsbawm, "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century," *Past & Present* 5 (1954): 33–53; Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century* (London ; Boston: Routledge

literature on how early modern polities and their actors without direct domains in the colonial Atlantic might have dealt with the circulation of new global goods like tobacco. Nowadays we can rely on some insightful contributions on the tobacco spread in the early modern Italian context[94], but these latter works are mainly concerned with the internal organization of the business sector and to the conflictual relationship with robbers and smugglers which originated from the establishment of the tobacco monopolies. Conversely, much remains to be understood on actors, social practices, and channels that allowed the Tobacco Farms to intrude into the networks of the global commodities' circulation and contribute to the fiscal upsurge of the age.

4. Sources and scheme of the chapters

In sum, the Grand Duchy Tuscany and the Venetian Empire constitute two political and economic organized articulations at the intersection of Mediterranean and continental Europe which took part in the so-called 'early modern globalization'. In this respect, tobacco business – a pillar of early modern global circulation of commodities and of early modern taxation as well – entered into the picture of a particular region, allowing us to investigate the concrete strategies of historical actors involved in it. The topic raises questions about commodities floating across cultural, political and fiscal borders. The thesis will focus on the strategies adopted by fiscal state institutions and mercantile

& Kegan Paul, 1978). The debate particularly influenced the economic history of the seventeenth-century Mediterranean and, more particularly, Italian peninsula. See, for example, Carlo M. Cipolla, "The Decline of Italy: The Case of a Fully Matured Economy," *The Economic History Review* 5, no. 2 (1952): 178–87; Edoardo Grendi, "I Nordici e Il Traffico Del Porto Di Genova: 1590-1666," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 83, no. 1 (1971): 23–71. For a general reassessment of the traditional thesis, see Molly Greene, "Beyond the Northern Invasion: The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century," *Past & Present*, no. 174 (2002): 42–71. For revisionist studies on Venice and Tuscany, see Jean Georgelin, *Venise au siècle des lumières* (Paris: Mouton éditeur, 1978); Maria Fusaro, *Political Economies of Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean: The Decline of Venice and the Rise of England (1450-1700)* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ Press, 2015); Robert Burr Litchfield, *Emergence of a Bureaucracy: The Florentine Patricians, 1530-1790* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1986); Corey Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, First edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[94] In this respect, the greatest research effort has been provided by Stefano Levati with a monograph on the tobacco farms in the early modern Italian peninsula. See Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*. Important studies have been published also on single states. See, for example, Cinzia Capalbo, *L'economia del vizio: il tabacco nello Stato pontificio in età moderna fra produzione e consumo* (Napoli: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1999); Rita Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia: il partito del tabacco e lo Stabilimento Manfrin nel Settecento* (Venezia: La Musa Talìa editrice, 2013); Paolo Calcagno, "L'«impresa Generale Del Tabacco». Come Genova Provò a Sfruttare a Fini Fiscali Uno Dei Massimi Processi Di Mondializzazione Degli Scambi Tra XVII e XVII Secolo," *Nuova Rivista Storica* 101, no. 2 (2017).

networks in the light of the restructuring of global trade. In particular, the topic provides a case in point to explore the practices of negotiation between them as a crucial key to better understand limits, conditions, and opportunities of commodities' circulation and fiscal enhancement in the early modern age.

The two case studies are presented jointly in the unfolding of the thesis. This is because their respective specific features allow us to maintain a comparative approach along all the chronology of the dissertation. This latter runs is comprised between the central decades of the 17th century – so, the age of crisis for the Mediterranean, but also for the take-off of the tobacco trade – up to the eve of the Napoleonic epoch that represented an epochal turning point for the region leaving space to an unprecedented dimension in mobilizing people and resources for collective purposes, even disrupting consolidated polities; the Venetian Empire collapsed in 1797, while the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was overwhelmed by the French revolutionary army in 1799[95].

The reconstruction of the connected and transnational dimension of the phenomena under investigation would have been impossible without an extensive review of the English, American, French, Spanish, and Portuguese literature on the tobacco business in the early modern period. I have used these secondary sources not merely as a supplement to describe the general context within which the two case studies operated, but as a genuine tool of investigation to understand historical trajectories at the local and regional levels in light of global events, connections, and mutual influences. However, the core of the research and the comparison between the two case studies lies in the examination of archival sources. The thesis is based on a wide variety of primary sources and manuscripts gathered in archives and libraries across Florence, Livorno, and Venice, with forays into French and English series.

Primary sources and coeval manuscripts or printed texts need a preliminary presentation, also to stress the points of view that they reflect and the actors that

[95] From a political point of view see Pierre Serna, *Fratelli di Francia. Storia e storiografia di una rivoluzione divenuta repubblicana* (Milano: Guerini e Associati, 2013). For the revolutionary impact on trade circuits, see Silvia Marzagalli, *Les boulevards de la fraude: le négoce maritime et le Blocus continental, 1806-1813 : Bordeaux, Hambourg, Livourne* (Villeneuve d'Ascq (Nord): Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 1999); Katerina Galani, "The Napoleonic Wars and the Disruption of Mediterranean Shipping and Trade: British, Greek and American Merchants in Livorno," *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique* 7 (2010): 179–98.

concretely organized the documents in the archives and libraries[96]. First, I have used medical and economic treatises, gazettes and journals of various approaches, and even satirical writings to encompass the different meanings ascribed to tobacco in early modern society. They typically provide the views of the educated and economically well-off segments of society, thus revealing a particular point of view on the spread of tobacco in the early modern period. However, by properly framing the historical actors who voiced opinions in these texts, their descriptive potential retains significant historiographical interest, as long as one avoids the mistake of confusing the projection of a certain perspective onto the rest of society with a neutral examination of the material and cultural conditions of the time.

Then, I have based my arguments on archival sources of different nature. Official documents produced by fiscal institutions and magistrates with competence on tobacco and trade show the amount of revenues obtained from the tobacco monopolies and the everyday problems to face for the implementation of the rigid regulations issued for that sector. The archives of the tobacco farms give a formidable account of the economic transnational enterprise to be undertaken to get those revenues. Archival sources on state revenues in the early modern age must be handled extremely carefully by historians, not so much because of a general lack of reliability, but first and foremost because of the modalities of tax collection and public expenditures mostly adopted by early modern polities. We can hardly speak for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire of something similar to what Christopher Storrs has described for the Savoy-Piedmont after the administrative and financial reforms issued by Victor Amadeus II: «henceforth, all income passed through a central treasury, the office of the treasurer-general, who submitted daily accounts to the *generale delle finanze*»[97]. On the contrary, our two case studies presents polycentric fiscal structures, where different coffers enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy[98]: instead of a convergence of income in a central treasury

[96] On the need to consider the archives themselves not only as sites of knowledge retrieval, but also as sites of knowledge production and cultural agents of fact definition, see Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1 (2002): 87–109.

[97] Christopher Storrs, "The Savoyard Fiscal-Military State in the Long Eighteenth Century," in *The Fiscal-Military State in Eighteenth-Century Europe. Essays in Honour of P.G.M. Dickson*, ed. Christopher Storrs (Farnham ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 210.

[98] See Elena Fasano Guarini, "Camerlenghi Ed Esazione Locale Delle Imposte Nel Granducato Di Toscana Del'500-'600," *Publications de l'École Française de Rome* 46, no. 1 (1980): 29–49; Luciano Pezzolo, *Il fisco dei veneziani : finanza pubblica ed economia tra 15. e 17. secolo*, Nordest. Nuova serie, 2003, 60–61.

responsible for public expenditure, the central power was used to charge a single financial commitment to a specific bureau, magistracy, or community, to which one or more revenues were assigned to fulfill the assignment[99]. So, single offices were responsible for tax collection and public expenditures, and only after the expenses charged to them had been incurred they sent the rest of the money to one or more central coffers. Nevertheless, the archives of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflect the growing need of state administration and sovereign power to have a reliable overview of available resources and necessary expenditures. I was thus able to gather information that provides a general framework from sources produced during targeted inquiries commissioned by the sovereign on the state of public finances, or within the broader context of refining the principles of compatibility applied to state budgets.

The private archives of merchants and tax farmers provide an unmatched source of information on the structure of commercial relations concerning tobacco. While these sources have been widely used by historians to investigate the actual functioning of mercantile networks, I have also found explanatory potentials in the correspondence of state officials with consuls and informal economic agents abroad offers an interesting perspective on the attempts of the governments to exploit such networks and relations. Finally, evidence of routes and protagonists of tobacco trade is taken from papers of the health boards, trade statistics from custom houses, and inventories of warehouses. An exhaustive quantitative history of commodity movements is hindered by the loss of valuable documentation produced by the customs offices of our two case studies. Nevertheless, research has demonstrated the possibility of utilizing other archives, such as those of the *Magistrato della Sanità* (Health Board) in Livorno[100] and the registers of

[99] For the charge of public expenditures by the central government on local communalities in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, where the sovereign usually met public finance's purposes exerting a sort of 'guardianship authority' over the pre-existing local powers and obliging them to cover specific expenditures, see Luca Mannori, *Il Sovrano Tutore: pluralismo istituzionale e accentramento amministrativo nel principato dei Medici (secc. XVI-XVIII)*, Per la storia del pensiero giuridico moderno 45 (Milano: Giuffrè, 1994).

[100] The Health Board was a permanent office dedicated to preventing the spread of epidemic diseases, beginning with the devastating plague that, in the mid-17th century, caused significant surges in mortality rates throughout Tuscany. Based on declarations made by ship captains upon their entry into the port, Livorno's health officials enforced quarantine measures not only for incoming individuals but also for the goods they transported. These commodities were classified as either '*soggette*' or '*non soggette*' to contagion, as it was believed that the disease could cling to items likely to retain dust and residues (textile products, in fact, were among the main suspects). For this reason, captains were required to submit not only a report on the ship's origin and ports of call but also a '*portata*' detailing the merchandise that comprised

the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* in Venice[101], to gather information on maritime traffic and the goods arriving at these ports.

The following chapters are not organized chronologically: each addresses a thematic issue raised by tobacco business. Chapter 1 reflects on the interpretative potentials of a 'situated commodity history' and focuses on the historical trajectories of tobacco's commodification in the early modern age. The analysis allows to single out factors, conditions, and limitations of long-distance commodities' circulation in the 'early modern globalization'. In particular, I investigate the supply-side and institutional changes in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire deployed by key actors for an effective participation in tobacco's global commodification. Moreover, the examination of trade statistics helps in reconstructing a reliable picture of the composition and the evolution of tobacco commercial routes that linked our two case studies with other crucial hubs for tobacco's intercontinental trade.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the rise of tobacco as a 'contested' consumer good. I explore the obstacles and resistance that it had to face to penetrate new cultures, as well as the cultural appropriations and 'translations' that enabled different social uses. Then, I examine the evolving cultural attitudes towards tobacco, as the dominant culture as well as the subaltern social groups attributed to the new stimulant social meanings related to its consumption as a recreational good.

Chapter 3 deals with the evolution of tobacco taxation in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. The long-term success of the tobacco monopolies contrasts with the model of the 'fiscal state' and of the bureaucratic centralization of tax

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their cargo. See Cesare Ciano, *La Sanità Marittima Nell'età Medicea*, vol. 15 (Pisa: Pacini, 1976); Carlo M. Cipolla, *Il burocrate e il marinaio: La «Sanità» toscana e le tribolazioni degli inglesi a Livorno nel 17. secolo* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1992).

[101] In the archive of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, Venetian magistrate responsible for external trade and some domestic economic sectors, it has been kept this interesting series of 100 registers that provide data on annual imports and exports of commodities saddled with custom duties. Moreover, the registers also track entries and exits of '*non soggetti a dazio*' goods: in this category, we can find foodstuffs (wine, oil, meat, fish) and vegetable raw materials (hemp, firewood, pitch, building materials) that were subject only to a consumption tax; in addition, goods that were subject to a state monopoly, including tobacco, fell under these registers. Unfortunately, the registers of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* cover only a few decades in the last quarter of the 18th century. Accordingly, they are not sufficient for comparison on the *longue durée*. However, the comprehensiveness of the series and its in-depth details make it an essential tool for delving into the Venetian trade of the period. See Giordano Campos, "Il Commercio Esterno Veneziano Della Seconda Metà Del'700 Secondo La Statistica Ufficiale," *Archivio Veneto* 19 (1936): 145–83; Alessandra Sambo, "La Balance de Commerce de La République de Venise: Sources et Méthodes," *Cahiers de La Méditerranée*, no. 84 (2012): 381–410.

collection. On the contrary, the primary form of tobacco taxation in early modern Europe allows for a deeper exploration of the relationship between property taxation, monopolies, and elements of ‘early modern globalization’. Moreover, the topic invites reflection on the elements of continuity, beneath formal ruptures, in the transition from tax farming to direct administration by state apparatuses. In general, starting with the case studies of the Tuscan and Venetian tobacco monopolies, the chapter provides an analysis of the logic behind taxation and fiscal systems in the early modern period.

Chapter 4 explores how fiscal institutions, merchants, and tax farmers established practices of negotiation between their different interests around tobacco trade and taxation. A proper ‘negotiating arena’ emerged from the establishment of the tobacco monopolies, with extra-judicial petitions as a fundamental tool both for the monopolistic merchants and for the excluded one to promote their interests and engage with the state. The factors that allowed mercantile networks to penetrate fiscal institutions, obtain the tobacco monopoly, and maintain the privilege over time are also investigated in this section.

Then, chapter 5 focuses on the recurrent problems raised by tobacco fraud and contraband. Places and actors of early modern tobacco contraband are investigated in the first chapter of the chapter. Moreover, alongside the intensification of the crackdown on ‘economic crimes’, the case of tobacco allows us to highlight the strategies of compromise that were implemented for the coexistence of the monopoly with extra-legal practices. At the same time, the boundaries between 'legal' and 'illegal' practices tend to blur in light of the various levels of complicity that the monopolistic merchants themselves demonstrate toward smuggling, including active and direct participation in tobacco trafficking that violated the monopoly itself.

Finally, chapter 6 investigates the economic activity of the Tobacco Farm and its interplay with the innovation and import-substitution processes. The Tobacco Farm represented a crossroad for fiscal institutions and mercantile networks: an economic actor that elaborates policies and partnership for supplying its protected market. While mercantile and institutional networks show modalities and patterns to facilitate tobacco’s circulation, the monopolistic enterprise resorted to commercial correspondents, scientific knowledge, experienced skilled laborers, and reliable agents not only to assure quality

products for consumers, but also to develop domestic tobacco plantations and manufactories.

Chapter 1

Tobacco's commodification: from the global turn to the Mediterranean participation

«*Il patrio suolo à tramutar constretta,*
sott'altro ciel mi coltivò già l'arte;
hor diffusa mi sono in ogni parte,
Ed ogni clima i miei rampolli alletta.

Di me pianta più bella e virtuosa
il Brasile non ha, né 'l Peruano:
varcan per haver me vasto Oceano
la Bretagna, la Francia e Olanda ondosa.

In polve attratta e masticata in foglia,
soffiata in fumo ed in liquor lambita,
oltre il piacer ch'arreco, io porgo aita
con torre à chi mi prende ogni sua doglia»[102]

«*Rappresentano li signori partitanti che il negotio del tabacco soffre pregiudicio in tutte le tre isole del Levante e anco nella Provincia della Dalmatia laddove lo smercio dei tabacchi forestieri non incontra la soddisfatione di quei popoli e non corre che a 2 soldi per libbra*»[103]

In 1669, the Cistercian monk Benedetto Stella, a well-educated religious figure from Rome in the mid-17th century, presented tobacco as the central actor in a compelling global diffusion that transcended political and cultural boundaries. In just a few lines, his sonnet illustrates how quickly the American plant had spread across the world, driving long-distance oceanic trade. Its leaves were embraced by various societies, where people began to smoke, chew, and snort tobacco. This worldwide diffusion of tobacco was a crucial precursor to its deep involvement in the expansion of long-distance trade and the intensification of taxation that characterized the early modern period. However, the commercialization of tobacco was far from a smooth process in regional and local contexts. In 1672, the representatives of the Tobacco Farm in Venice lobbied the magistracies of the *Serenissima* to reduce the rent due for the privileges of the monopoly. Their arguments primarily focused on the challenges of marketing tobacco in the imperial

[102] Benedetto Stella, *Il tabacco* (Roma: per Filippo Maria Mancini, 1669), n. nn.
[103] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, 'Tabacco', reg. 169, Venice 15/12/1672.

space of the Venetian *Stato da Mar*, where just small quantities were sold at rock-bottom prices due to a still limited demand.

This chapter examines the process of tobacco's commodification in the early modern period, looking in particular to the participation of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire in this global trade. I will explore not only the reasons for its success but also the challenges that highlight the limitations of commodity transfer in early modern societies. This approach offers insights into both the general trends and the local divergences in tobacco's commodification. In particular, the commodification of tobacco in the two case studies was closely linked to the tentative and fragmented development of demand for the new product. In fact, the initial commercialization of this American novelty could not rely on established domestic tobacco markets, suggesting the need to examine the supply-side strategies employed by local historical actors to create new economic and fiscal opportunities. I aim to investigate the role of businessmen and state authorities in promoting tobacco as a commercial product, which led to various levels of negotiation surrounding its circulation. In this respect, exploring the interactions between mercantile networks engaged in long-distance trade and fiscal institutions is particularly fruitful. What interests drove these negotiations? And what implications can we draw to better understand the early modern circulation of global commodities?

The perspective provided by the two case studies not only deepens our understanding of the relationship between the Atlantic world and the Mediterranean during the 17th and 18th centuries, but also allows for a comparison of the strategies employed by institutional and social actors within interconnected spaces to seize new resources from the expanding long-distance trade. The global spread of tobacco was part of the broader trends of early modern globalization, but its 'transculturation'[104] was far from monolithic. The hierarchies of global trade determined access to, or exclusion from, the American colonial markets, the primary source of tobacco leaves worldwide in the early modern period. However, unlike other tropical crops characteristic of global trade at the time, the tobacco plant quickly proved adaptable to temperate climates: alongside

[104] On the concept of 'transculturation', the process by which a cultural item belonging to a given society is transferred to a new space and becomes part of the welcoming culture heritage, see Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar (advertencia de sus contrastes agrarios, económicos, históricos y sociales, su etnografía y su transculturación)*, Biblioteca de historia, filosofía y sociología ; v. 8 (La Habana: JMontero, 1940).

its leaves and finished products ready for consumption, the seeds necessary for transplantation also began to circulate. As a result, domestic cultivation and importation emerged as two viable alternatives for developing the tobacco trade and its associated fiscal revenues. What factors drove the clear predominance of importation in the first tobacco's commodification in our case studies? To what extent did the goals and inventive strategies of local actors shape the flow and circulation of tobacco across distant regions?

It would be misleading to view the process as solely driven by market forces: as some scholars of global commodities have argued, «human thought and culture are intimately embedded in their bodies and the material environment (...) has creative powers and independent nature»[105]. The trajectories of tobacco's global commodification, like those of other global goods, are shaped by its physical properties and material nature, which play a key role in negotiating its social value and use.

Consequently, the chapter begins with a thorough examination of the potential of a 'situated commodity history' that places tobacco at its center. This methodological and historiographical framework facilitates the following reconstruction of the key coordinates of tobacco's global diffusion, providing valuable insight into the specifics of early modern globalization. I provide an overview of the main characteristics of tobacco's global diffusion in the early modern period. In addition to offering insights to more precisely define the chronology of tobacco's emergence as a global commodity, the analysis of its dissemination pathways and intermediaries allows for a deeper exploration of the factors, conditions, and limitations of long-distance commodity circulation in the 'early modern globalization'. The participation of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire in tobacco's global commodification represents the next step: the intersection of key actors in the circulation of economic information with the sovereign's need for growing fiscal revenues forms the essential backdrop for tobacco's commodification in both case studies. Finally, I will examine the flows and routes of tobacco in Livorno and Venice, aiming to shed light on the global and regional interconnections that characterized its circulation between the 17th and 18th centuries.

[105] Timothy J. LeCain, *The Matter of History: How Things Create the Past* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 16.

1. A 'situated commodity history'

Representative commodities have long been protagonists in historical studies, especially in the fields of economic and social history. Research on global trade has always devoted space to the commodities that circulated along old and new commercial routes[106]. Just think about the relevance of salt since the ancient times, pepper and other spices in the late middle age, or sugar in the early modern world to understand the remodeling of global trade and hierarchies[107]. Nevertheless, in the last decades a new approach has made its way with studies focused on commodities and their global trajectories as the main actors of the research. This approach is usually known as 'global commodity history'. Nowadays, it represents a vibrant field of research that draws from several disciplines, including anthropology, sociology and political economy[108]. The main difference with other works that refer to market goods in the title or content is the ambition to answer the big questions of global history through the lens of production, trade, and consumption of commodities[109]. Following this approach, fruitful attention has been dedicated to various products, including chocolate, sugar, cod, cotton, silk, and even guano[110]. Its theoretical and methodological framework, and the resulting historical studies on single commodities provide a renovated glance to grasp the intertwined dynamics of global trade and fiscal tightening.

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[106] See, for example, the approach in Sushil Chaudhury and Michel Morineau, eds., *Merchants, Companies and Trade: Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[107] Samuel A. M. Adshead, *Salt and Civilization* (Basingstoke ; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992); Filipe Vieira de Castro, *The Pepper Wreck: A Portuguese Indiaman at the Mouth of the Tagus River* (Austin, TX: Texas University Press, 2005); Russell R. Menard, *Sweet Negotiations: Sugar, Slavery, And Plantation Agriculture in Early Barbados* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2006).

[108] For a recent update on the state of the art in the field of commodity history, see Jonathan Curry-Machado et al., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Commodity History*, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2024).

[109] Such a goal is particularly explicit in the renovated approach to imperial history and in the works of research groups on the nexus between commodity frontiers, global countryside and the rise of capitalism. See Jonathan Curry-Machado, ed., *Global Histories, Imperial Commodities, Local Interactions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Sven Beckert et al., "Commodity Frontiers and the Transformation of the Global Countryside: A Research Agenda," *Journal of Global History* 16, no. 3 (2021): 1–16.

[110] See, among others, William G. Clarence-Smith, *Cocoa and Chocolate, 1765-1914* (Routledge, 2003); Regina Grafe, *Distant tyranny: markets, power and backwardness in Spain, 1650-1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); Ulbe Bosma, *The Sugar Plantation in India and Indonesia: Industrial Production, 1770–2010*, Studies in Comparative World History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Gregory T Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World A Global Ecological History* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014); Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2016).

First of all, economic anthropology has defined a 'commodity' not just as the product of human labor or a consumer good: it requires the combination of 'use' and 'exchange' value that arise when it is no longer produced for immediate consumption[111]. But, following the lesson of Karl Polanyi, the economic action contained in the exchange of commodities is substantially 'embedded' in social structures more than dependent on 'rational behavior for maximizing profit[112]. Anthropologists like Arjun Appadurai have stressed 'the social life of things', as well as the mutual influence of socio-cultural relations and economic transactions, putting forward criticism on the narrow idea of commodities as objects of mere economic value[113]. In this respect, it is noteworthy that one of the first works which resounds the methodological approach of 'commodity history' comes from an anthropologist: Sidney Mintz, a prominent scholar best known for his studies on the Caribbean. In his *Sweetness and Power* (1985), the author offers a study on sugar, for centuries the major tropical product from the Caribbean in global trade[114]. Its impressive upward production for the world market is not associated only to the historical exercise of power by Europe since the beginning of the early modern age, but also to broader cultural and social transformations. Putting production together with consumption, Mintz shows how the European 'invention' of the Caribbean plantations with African black slaves met the changing habits of 'taste' and sociability, as well as the demand for readymade calories to alleviate the new industrial workers' fatigue. In this puzzle, a rigid division of the process in causes and consequences is not so worthy. Only focusing on the overall historical trajectory of commodities, on their global journey, we can properly understand the levers of «the mystery of people unknown to one another

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[111] Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3–63.

[112] In this respect, the contribution of Karl Polanyi and of his disciples is strongly counterposed to the 'calculativeness' proposed by Oliver Williamson. For a synthesis, Jens Beckert, "The Great Transformation of Embeddedness: Karl Polanyi and the New Economic Sociology," in *Market and Society: The Great Transformation Today* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 38–55.

[113] Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). From his point of view, «the concrete, historical circulation of things» is hard to grasp without looking at the cultural meaning and at the social context where «any 'thing' (...) [rises to] its exchangeability for some other thing», Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," 13.

[114] Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1986).

being linked through space and time - and not just by politics and economics, but along a particular chain of connections maintained by their production»[115].

Moreover, 'commodity history' draws assumptions from sociology and political economy[116]: the world-systems theory coined the term 'commodity chain', defined as a «network of labor and production process whose end result is a finished commodity»[117]. In particular, Wallerstein and Hopkins used the concept to grasp the development over time of the hierarchical division of labor and its integration at a global level prior to the 19th century. Finally, Gary Gereffi and his collaborators inaugurated the Global Commodity Chain (GCC) analysis, focusing on the contemporary industrial commodity chains and, notably, on the inter-firm networks which connect developing countries exporters with global markets[118]. While in this form the concept loses almost any interest in the historical development of the chain, the GCC analysis has introduced relevant points: giving great weight to the role of firms as capitalism's organizing agents, it tries to «understand how *'key' or lead' agents build, co-ordinate, and control the linkages and flows of produce* between raw materials suppliers, processors, primary-traders, wholesalers, and retailers»[119]. In other words, this line of research does not assume participants and transactions in global trade as separate and independent between them. It underscores, on the contrary, the relevance of relations of power within the economic transactions, going beyond the core-periphery opposition of the world-system theory[120].

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[115] Mintz*, Sweetness and Power*, cit. p. xxiv.

[116] For a very effective overview on the intellectual preconditions of commodity analysis, see Jennifer Bair, *Frontiers of Commodity Chain Research* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009).

[117] Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Commodity Chains in the World-Economy Prior to 1800," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 10, no. 1 (1986): 159.

[118] G. Gereffi, M. Korzeniewicz, R. Korzeniewicz, "Introduction: global commodity chains", in *Commodity chains and global capitalism*, cit., pp. 1-14. Gereffi also offers a key and very influential distinction between producer- and buyer-driven commodity chain, see G. Gereffi, "The organization of buyer-driven global commodity chains: how US retailers shape overseas production networks", in *Commodity chains and global capitalism* cit., pp. 95-122.

[119] Philip Raikes, Michael Friis Jensen, and Stefano Ponte, "Global Commodity Chain Analysis and the French Filière Approach: Comparison and Critique," *Economy and Society* 29, no. 3 (2000): 394. Italics is mine.

[120] Today, GCC analysis is much more integrated with other academic tradition devoted to investigate commodity-specific dynamics of change, as the case of the francophone *filière* approach born in the background of the needs of the post-colonial French state to implement state agricultural development policy in former French colonies, see *Ibidem*, pp. 403-409. Moreover, some authors argue for reframing such conceptualization, in order to elaborate a more inclusive analytic tool considering that 'commodity' risks restricting the analysis to agricultural or low-value goods, for example see T. Sturgeon, "From Commodity Chains to Value Chains. Interdisciplinary Theory Building in an Age of Globalization", in *Frontiers of Commodity Chain Research*, cit., pp. 110-135.

Looking at historiography, commodity-focused research provides scholars with an «empirical focus for their effort to understand aspects of global or world history»[121]. Some authors have adopted such a perspective to overcome the bottlenecks of national history, area studies and core-periphery paradigm[122], as 'commodity history' has developed in strict connection with the 'global turn' in historiography[123]. It has also contributed to renovate imperial history between the 17th and 19th centuries, especially thanks to global goods' ability of going beyond political, cultural and social frontiers[124]. Consequently, today there is a growing genre of popular historical scholarship in which the story of human civilization is told through the history of individual commodities. Several books have been published from empirical studies on a broad spectrum of global commodities, like rice, cod, potato, tea and coffee[125]. And the ambition of this historiographical approach is far-reaching. In the highly influential work of Sven Beckert on cotton and the emergence of the modern industrial complex, the 'white gold' is at the core of an empire integrated at the global level, providing new insights into the origins of the 'modern world'[126]. Beckert's work exemplifies the potential of using a commodity-focused history with a global perspective as a key interpretative tool for understanding some of the largest questions of world history.

Of course, there is no unanimous consensus among historians working on commodity trade. On the one hand, for the advocates of the 'commodity frontiers

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[121] Sven Beckert, "Cotton and the Global Origins of Capitalism," *Journal of World History* 28, no. 1 (2017): 107.

[122] It is the case of Latin America historians who have reconstructed the last 500 years of the continent from the perspective of the commodities produced there and exported to global markets. See Steven Topik, Carlos Marichal, and Zephyr L. Frank, *From Silver to Cocaine. Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000*, E-Duke Books Scholarly Collection (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006).

[123] Not by chance, it has been described as a «particular apt mode of exploring global history» providing a promising point of view on transformations bound to social change in technology, economics, labor regime, pattern of migration and consumption over wide geographical zones. Sandip Hazareesingh and Jonathan Curry-Machado, "Editorial–Commodities, Empires, and Global History," *Journal of Global History* 4, no. 1 (2009): 4.

[124] Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla and Bethany Aram, eds., *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824: Circulation, Resistance and Diversity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[125] Limiting to some examples of the commodities mentioned here, see Judith A. Carney, *Black Rice. The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA ; London: Harvard University Press, 2001); Mark Kurlansky, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish that Changed the World* (New York, NY: Penguin Publishing Group, 1997); Larry Zuckerman, *The Potato: How the Humble Spud Rescued the Western World* (Boston, MA: Faber & Faber, 1998); Helen Saberi, *Tea: A Global History*, Edible (London: Reaktion Books, 2010); Jan Breman, *Mobilizing Labour for the Global Coffee Market: Profits from an Unfree Work Regime in Colonial Java* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015).

[126] Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*.

initiative (CFI)[127], the focus should be on the progressive shift of the geographical sites where resources had been incorporated into a dominant economic system, providing a powerful lens through which analyzing capitalism's history[128]. In particular, for this perspective, the early modern capitalist commodity regime (1450s-1850s) is characterized by «direct and violent dispossession of people from land and nature and by unfree labor systems that included chattel, slavery, peonage and indentured contract labor»[129]. These authors point out the spatial contribution of the 'global countryside' to the western economic growth between the early modern and the modern times[130]. On the other hand, CFI met criticism from authors who blamed it for an Euro-American centric approach. According to critics, CFI does not account for the manufacturing development in China under the Song dynasty or for the interweaving of extensive use of land, richness of natural resources, poverty, and inequalities in African history[131]. Others have underlined the bias inside a general and wholly comprehensive model for commodity circulation through spatial frontiers: for instance, in the case of sugar, many authors single out the substantial diversities of its trans-imperial circulation and local interactions from the 'paradigm of cotton'[132]. Following again the debate on the global history of cotton, Beckert insists on the Atlantic 'war capitalism' and emphasizes American slavery as a crucial world institution that arose out of, and underpinned, capitalist development.

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[127] On the concept of 'commodity frontiers', conceived as the spatial dimension where the capitalist expansion interact and strives to incorporate local ecosystems, see Jason W. Moore, 'Sugar and the Expansion of the Early Modern World-Economy: Commodity Frontiers, Ecological Transformation, and Industrialization', *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, no. 3 (2000): 409–33.

[128] On this point, see the considerations by Eric Vanhaute on the already mentioned seminal book of Sven Beckert on the empire of cotton. See Eric Vanhaute, 'Commodity Frontiers and the Global History of Capitalism: A Discussion about Sven Beckert's "Empire of Cotton"', *Journal of World History* 28, no. 1 (2017): 101–5.

[129] Sven Beckert et al., 'Commodity Frontiers and the Transformation of the Global Countryside: A Research Agenda', *Journal of Global History*, 2021, 8. On the relevance of coercion and slavery for the early modern expansion of commodities' circulation, Beckert uses the expression 'war capitalism' for describing the early modern confluence of armed trade, fiscal military states, land exploitation, black slave trade, and alliance between European capitalists and political and economic élites in other regions of the world, see Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 30–85. See also Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development*, Early American Studies (Philadelphia: PENN, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

[130] Ulbe Bosma, 'Empire of Cotton and the Global Countryside', *Journal of World History* 28, no. 1 (2017): 121–30.

[131] Maxine Berg, 'Commodity Frontiers: Concepts and History', *Journal of Global History*, 2021, 1–5.

[132] For the debate, see Ulbe Bosma, *The Sugar Plantation in India and Indonesia: Industrial Production, 1770–2010*, Studies in Comparative World History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Beckert's approach gave rise to a new wave of studies under the framework of the 'new history of capitalism' (NHC)[133]. However, his argument is counterbalanced by other works which highlight both the resistance of a part of the traditional Indian cotton manufacturing system in the age of British industrialisation[134], as well as the active role of Chinese empire, Mughal India, and Ottoman empire to the early modern circulation of that commodity along alternative routes[135]. Moreover, Giorgio Riello and Trevor Burnard has recently criticized the NHC for being overly concentrated on production, underplaying the 'power of consumption', and for linking American slavery to industrialization because of a misleading chronology: cotton produced in large quantities in the United States came in the 19th century, so too late to cause the Industrial Revolution[136]. In addition, the American plantation system itself is downsized by scholars who explain the reversal towards Western Europe in global cotton balance more in the light of the openness of the south Asian system of cotton production and distribution, which allowed European to thrive cultural and technological transfer[137].

Looking at tobacco's commodification in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, I borrow from 'commodity history' the importance of investigating the global production regime to understand the penetration of a worldwide commodity in regional and local spaces. Furthermore, I believe it is important to reassess the opposition between production and consumption, which is typical of the traditional historical debate on the Industrial Revolution and is renewed today in the various strands of 'commodity history'. Upon closer examination, production and consumption, supply and demand, represent two crucial stages of the 'commodity chain' that allow for a deeper exploration of different aspects and, in some ways, distinct moments. If we consider the absolute novelty of tobacco in the Mediterranean during the early modern period, the primary issue

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[133] Sven Beckert and Christine Desan, *American Capitalism: New Histories* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2018).

[134] Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy, 'Introduction: The World of The South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850', in *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1–30.

[135] Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[136] Trevor Burnard and Giorgio Riello, "Slavery and the New History of Capitalism," *Journal of Global History* 15, no. 2 (2020): 225–44.

[137] Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

for its commodification lay in the need to establish an entirely new production and distribution chain for this new global commodity. The establishment of widespread demand and diverse tastes came later. For this reason, the thesis first addresses the tobacco production regimes and its global diffusion, before turning to consumption in the following chapter.

Moreover, several concepts put forward by 'commodity history' appear particularly promising for understanding the ways in which fiscal institutions and economic networks shaped long-distance trade, extracting profits and new revenues from it. First and foremost, the emphasis on 'key' or 'lead' agents, as defined by Gereffi, suggests that the most lucrative trades attracted businessmen and financiers which could act as 'interest groups'[138] in negotiations with institutions and other actors in the commodity chain. Their strategies for advancing their interests, along with their networks for navigating markets and gathering information, can help us identify the interplay of corporatism, competition, and negotiation that characterized the circulation of commodities in the early modern period. Secondly, since «tax policies were essential to the management of commodities»[139], 'commodity history' diverges from much of world trade history by «bringing the state back in»[140] as a key player, deeply intertwined with broader networks. From this perspective, commodities become a valuable and appropriate subject of study for exploring the relationship between fiscal institutions and economic networks. Thirdly, 'commodity history' teaches us that the balance between social groups, markets, and state policies is shaped by historical variables, which can evolve over time. We should not assume that later configurations of the global market have linear roots in the past; rather, we must recognize the historical shifts and substantial transformations that defined the evolution of a particular sector.

Finally, 'commodity history' has often adopted the perspective of a single global

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[138] In sociology, the label 'interest groups' is not merely a generic term, but it marks a precise research field focused on formal or informal associations that, accordingly to one or more features shared by their members, carry on certain claims towards other social groups for the introduction, the preservation or the extension of favorable conditions in relation to the shared features. See J. Beyers, R. Eising, W. Maloney, "Researching Interest Group Politics in Europe and Elsewhere: Much we study, little we know?", *West European Politics*, 31 (2008), pp. 211-240; D. Lowery*, "*Images of an Unbiased Interest System*", Journal of European Public Policy*, 22 (2015), pp. 1212-1231.

[139] C. Marichal, S. Topik and Z. Frank, "Conclusion. Commodity Chains and Globalization in Historical Perspective", in *From silver to cocaine*, cit., pp. 352-360, p. 358.

[140] This was the title of a very influential collective volume devoted to states as powerful agents in shaping social and political processes, see T. Skocpol, D. Rueschemeyer, P.B. Evans (eds.), *Bringing the State Back in*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, 1985.

good in its circulation on a world scale, focusing on its entire 'chain' from the cultivation or extraction of raw materials to the consumption of finished goods. This approach contrasts with my proposal to investigate specific issues related to the tobacco trade and taxation within a defined geographical context. However, this divergence does not stem from a mistrust of works that, due to their broad geographical scope, rely heavily on secondary literature. Excellent books on global history do this, and they remain a valuable contribution to revitalizing the debate within the field. What should be avoided is a degeneration into tautological narratives aimed solely at filling gaps or illustrating global connections without further exploration of the issues and problems discussed in the literature. As underlined by Giorgio Riello, we need «history of cotton textiles [and I would add, histories of sugar, tobacco, coffee, oil, salt, and any other trade which involved a great magnitude of people in the early modern age and beyond] but also (...) a story narrated through [them]»[141]. Accordingly, I propose a 'situated commodity history', strongly 'embedded' in the historical context analyzed by the research: along with the awareness of the global routes that a commodity follows in terms of production, trade, and consumption, such an approach allows to renovate the perspective with which scholars have explored relevant themes for single units of analysis, whether they are big areas, state entities, or local regions. Moreover, it provides the opportunity to investigate how global trends and local actors interacted and shaped circulation itself along relations of multiple scales.

2. A plant that 'circumnavigated the globe': routes, actors, and limitations of tobacco's commodification

How did a plant first cultivated between 2500 and 1800 BC in the Peruvian-Ecuadorian Andes[142] became a global commodity after centuries of confinement to the Americas? The worldwide spread of tobacco in just over a century after European contact with the New World is truly remarkable. By the turn of the 1600s, both its leaves and

[141] Riello, *Cotton*, 1.

[142] See Deborah M. Pearsall, "The Origins of Plant Cultivation in South America," in *Origins of Agriculture. An International Perspective*, ed. C. Wesley Cowan and Patty J. Watson (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 173–205.

seeds had «circumnavigated the globe»[143], despite the fact that, until the very end of the 15th century, no one outside the Americas was aware of the cultivated varieties of this plant[144]. As Timothy Brook vividly pointed out, «whenever tobacco showed up, a culture that did not smoke became a culture that did»[145], sparkling new lines of long-distance trade. Eventually, in 1753, the renowned doctor, physician, and naturalist Carl Nilsson Linnaeus defined the taxonomy of the plant 'Nicotiana', listing two species: *Nicotiana tabacum*, an annual and tall plant with large leaves, from which almost all tobacco consumed today is derived; and *Nicotiana rustica*, a similar, but smaller plant with thicker, sturdier leaves[146]. However, for more than a century, the identification of this new American plant remained highly inconsistent among both naturalists[147] and the general public[148]. But along which routes, through which actors, and with what limitations did the global 'commodification' of tobacco take place?

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[143] This expression is found in Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence*, 1° edizione (London: Routledge, 1994), 84.

[144] There is a wide literature on the early modern diffusion of tobacco. See at least: Orazio Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*, Typographie coopérative (Napoli, 1900); Berthold Laufer, "Introduction of Tobacco into Europe," *Field Museum of Natural History* 19 (1924): 97–162; Berthold Laufer, "Tobacco and Its Use in Asia," *Anthropology Leaflet*, no. 18 (1924): 1–39; Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 36–54; Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*, 1st U.S. ed. (New York: Bloomsbury Press : Distributed to the trade by Macmillan, 2008), 117–51; Charles C. Mann, *1493. Uncovering the New World Columbus Created* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), 63–107.

[145] Brook, *Vermeer's Hat*, 126.

[146] See Victor G Kiernan, *Tobacco: A History* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1991), 12–13; Iain Gately, *Tobacco: A Cultural History of How an Exotic Plant Seduced Civilization* (New York: Grove Atlantic, 2001), 1–19.

[147] Joseph Pitton de Tournefort proposed the classification of the different species of the tobacco plant – taken as case in point for the second class of herbs in his system based on flowers' features –differentiating between *Nicotiana* and *Nicotiana Minor*, but Linnaeus's terminology has eventually prevailed. See Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, *Elements de botanique, ou Méthode pour connoître les plantes.* (Paris: de l'Imprimerie Royale, 1694), 97. Generally speaking, the process of cataloging and classifying New World flora was particularly hard for early botanists of the Old World: in the Americas, Europeans encountered a world that was utterly puzzling and by no means learned men, relying basically on accounts offered to them by explorers, administrators, ships' captains and sailors, could hope to match the received descriptions with the classical literature. On this issue, see John H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New, 1492-1650* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Jonathan D. Sauer, "Changing Perception and Exploitation of New World Plants in Europe, 1492-1800," in *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World in the Old* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976), 813–45; Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 36–38. Regarding tobacco, we note similar problems of classification in eastern Asia as well as in Europe, see Laufer, "Tobacco and Its Use in Asia," 2–7.

[148] Names used by Amerindians – like *piecitl*, *petun*, *uppowoc*, *perebecenuc* – usually circulated in the treatises published in Europe, but they were soon joined by vulgar appellatives: for instance, since the

When Europeans landed on the American continent, tobacco was not a natural resource but a cultivated, cured, and processed 'artifact' with outstanding ubiquity among Native populations[149]. As it is well known, its consumption – sucking on its dried leaves mixed with crushed seashells, inhaling snuff, applying it topically as an ointment, or smoking its leaves with 'smoking tubes' or wrapped in larger palm leaves[150] – played a pivotal role in religious rites, being attributed with divination and healing properties[151]. In contrast, the colonists had no familiarity with tobacco, and the practise of smoking was apparently quite marginal in their own cultures[152]. Thus, the first phase of the European encounter with tobacco was primarily a process of 'recognition'[153], followed by the phase

1550s, it was called *herba legati*, *herba regina* or *herba prioris* according to different figures related to its introduction, and only at a later stage the term 'tobacco' prevailed. On the various names adopted for tobacco, see Stella, *Il tabacco*, 12–27. For what concerns the term 'tobacco', the sixteenth-century medical and botanical literature often explains it with the reference to the American isle of Tobago, but actually no tobacco seemed to have been cultivated there. There is much more agreement on the hypothetical origin from the instrument used by Haitian peoples for inhaling via nose the smoke produced by burning powdered leaves of the plant. See Stefano Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna: secoli 17.-19* (Roma: Viella, 2017), 18–20.

[149] See Alexander von Gernet, "Nicotian Dreams: The Prehistory and Early History of Tobacco in Eastern North America," in *Consuming Habits: Drugs in History and Anthropology*, ed. Jordan Goodman, Paul E. Lovejoy, and Andrew Sherratt (London: Routledge, 1995), 66–87; Johannes Wilbert, *Tobacco and Shamanism in South America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 149–50; Sean M. Rafferty, "Archaelogy," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia* (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005); Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 1–7.

[150] For a follow-up on the various ways for consuming tobacco among the Amerindian societies, see Compton Mackenzie, *Sublime Tobacco* (London: Chatto, and Windus, 1957), 84–85.

[151] Joseph C. Winter, ed., *Tobacco Use by Native North Americans: Sacred Smoke and Silent Killer* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000); Joseph C. Winter, "Native Americans," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jordan Goodman (New York, NY: Thomson Gale, 2005).

[152] According to Iain Gately, the possibility of using lungs for stimulation, not only for respiration, was «one of the American continent's most significant contributions to civilization», while Europeans used to burn things to produce sweet smells and to sniff, but not to inhale. See Gately, *Tobacco*, 4, 23–25. This could explain why many European descriptions of native Americans taking tobacco refer to 'drinking' a kind of smog. However, Gately's argument falls short if we look at the recovered ancient pipes adopted for smoking a wide variety of herbs and natural resources, like willow bark, roots, mushrooms, wood shavings, rosemary, hempen, and some flowers, see Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*, 1–4; Kiernan, *Tobacco*, 15–16.

[153] In his travel diary, Columbus simply annotated that the indigenous living in the islands of Bahamas and Cuba made large use of some *hojas secas* to whom he seemingly attached no importance, though he added that they «must be something highly esteemed among them», according to their repeated appearance and status as a gift. See Christopher Columbus, *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America, 1492-1493*, ed. Oliver Dunn and James E. Kelly (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 118–19, 137–39.

of the 'experience' of tobacco, which mainly took place in the 'frontier zones' between Spaniards and Amerindians[154]. There, tobacco quickly became associated with diplomacy and hospitality, and Europeans strongly relied on Native Americans' expertise, learning from them how to consume it[155].

Unsurprisingly, for many decades there was a significant contrast between the widespread adoption of tobacco habits among those Europeans who had arrived in the Americas and the disturbing perception of observers who had remained in the Old World, where they viewed this novelty with mistrust and distress[156]. Nevertheless, from the second half of the 16th century onward, the European colonizers inaugurated a third phase related to tobacco: its global 'dissemination'. Leaves and seeds of the American plant reached almost every corner of the world within 50-60 years[157]. The volume of imports and the rate of consumption rose dramatically during the 17th century, making tobacco a stable presence in the societies of the Old World[158]. This spectacular rise of tobacco has

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[154] See Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures*, 44–62. In the 16th century, Spanish adventurers, *conquistadores*, missionaries, and settlers writing on the new conquered lands in the Americas, but also travelers and observers from Portugal, England, and France devoted many pages of their works to tobacco, highlighting how its consumption was basically learned from the natives and it had already spread among Christians settled in the New World. An in-depth reconstruction of this coeval literature can be found in Eric Burns, *The Smoke of the Gods: A Social History of Tobacco.* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2006).

[155] Norton and other scholars have promoted an interpretation of the new taste for exotic American commodity, like tobacco and chocolate, which aspire to go beyond biological determinism, but also cultural constructivism which ends up to describe the transfer of values from a culture to another as a process of 'rationalization', made in this case by the European culture over the pagan rites of the pre-Columbian civilizations. On the contrary, the cross-cultural encounter gave rise to the social matrix of a *mondialisation métisse*, in which Amerindians provided a critical contribution. On this point the works of Serge Gruzinski have exerted a critical influence on later discussion on the hybridization associated with the 'Iberian globalization' of the first early modern age, see Serge Gruzinski, *La pensée métisse* (Paris: Fayard, 1999); Serge Gruzinski, *Les quatre parties du monde. Histoire d'une mondialisation* (Paris: La Martinière, 2004). See also Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, *Iberian World Empires and the Globalization of Europe 1415–1668*, Palgrave Studies in Comparative Global History (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

[156] On the Spanish case, see Silvia Monti, *Il tabacco fa male? Medicina, ideologia, letteratura nella polemica sulla diffusione di un prodotto del Nuovo mondo* (Milano: F. Angeli, 1987), 33–45.

[157] For an exhaustive account of this process, it is still very useful Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*.

[158] According to data provided by Spanish scholars, the tobacco landed in Seville moved from 15.328 pounds in 1609 to 404.564 pounds in 1613, while tobacco exported through other markets in Europe increased from 133.000 to 500.000 pounds. See Javier López Linage and Juan Hernández Andreu, *Una historia del tabaco en España* (Madrid: Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, 1990); Santiago Luxán Meléndez and Óscar Bergasa Perdomo, "La Institucionalización Del Modelo Tabaquero Español 1580-1636: La Creación Del Estanco Del Tabaco En España. Nota y Discusión," *Vegueta: Anuario de La Facultad de Geografía e Historia* 7 (2003): 135–53.

been described as a path with «few parallels in economic history»[159] and has been traditionally attributed by Western historiography to European maritime and commercial expansion in the Atlantic world and the Indian ocean. However, we should consider some elements that complicate the picture, particularly some features that seem to characterize tobacco's early modern globalization: the multinational and trans-cultural dimension of the process; the divergence of local 'translations'; the extent of transplantation and domestication of the plant.

To begin with, it is indisputable that American tobacco reached Western Europe, Africa, the Levant, and the Far East up to China and Japan through the navigation of European merchants, who were key contributors in connecting these distant regions with the New World[160]. However, a closer examination reveals that tobacco's commodification was far more multinational and trans-cultural than traditionally described. While Europeans held a strong position in the oceanic navigation that facilitated the outburst of tobacco, their initial interest in it lay primarily in the ornamental and medical value attributed to the fascinating novelty of American flora[161]. For tobacco to gain a significant foothold in European markets, it first required supply-side changes in the Americas that would transform it from a household and local commodity in the New World into a cash crop for export to distant markets. According to Marcy Norton, Amerindian groups in the Caribbean were the first to actively promote tobacco cultivation for export, exchanging it with European goods[162]. Moreover, they played a crucial role as brokers within a complex environment of Iberian settlers, Dutch, English, and French

[159] P. Schmidt, "Tobacco-Its Trade, and Consumption in Early Modern Europe," in *Prodotti e Tecniche d'oltremare Nelle Economie Europee. Secc. XIII-XVIII* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1988), 591.

[160] On the central importance of the advanced organization of European merchant houses for the emergence of a north-Atlantic economy for American tobacco, see Lewis C. Gray, "The Market Surplus Problem of Colonial Tobacco," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1928): 1–16; Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993). On the role of Portuguese Goa in India as a gateway for Brazilian tobacco in the Sub-continent, see M. N. Pearson, "Markets and Merchant Communities in the Indian Ocean: Locating the Portuguese," in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 88–108.

[161] For a recent research on this problem in the early modern Italian states, see the contributions in Lia Markey and Elizabeth Horodowich, eds., *The New World in Early Modern Italy, 1492-1750* (Cambridge: university press, 2017).

[162] Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures*, 149–51.

privateers, runaway black slaves and their descendants (*cimarrones*)[163]. Similarly, Portuguese settlers in Brazil became regular consumers and stimulated local Amerindian groups to supply them with tobacco along with basic foodstuffs[164]. It was only at the beginning of the 17th century that European colonizers recognized tobacco as a useful and profitable cash crop and began to organize their own plantations[165].

Crucial inputs from non-Western societies were evident at the other endpoints of the early modern tobacco's dissemination too. For example, tobacco's arrival in China can be traced not only to the southern coast, increasingly visited by European ships since the late 16th century, but also (and apparently even earlier) in the northeastern frontier regions where Korean merchants, especially during the political instability caused by the Qing-Ming conflict, began trading some tobacco varieties acquired from Japanese businessmen in Manchuria[166]. Similarly, African actors played a fundamental role in the diffusion of tobacco in the interior regions of Sub-Saharan Africa[167]. Islamic trading networks also spread a wide array of Atlantic stimulants, including tobacco, from the Maghreb to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean and the Middle East[168].

Secondly, the widespread diffusion of tobacco and the multinational vectors of its circulation resulted in diverse processes of 'translation', with particular regard to tobacco's social uses. In Europe, some authors made tobacco smoke intelligible by referring to it as 'perfume', evoking the incense burned in religious ceremonies[169]. Later, taking tobacco as snuff defined a peculiar form of sociability for upper classes in

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[163] See also Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (Yale University Press, 1978).

[164] Jean-Baptiste Nardi, *O fumo brasileiro no período colonial lavoura, comércio e administração* (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1996), 33–35.

[165] On the diffusion of tobacco plantations among white settlers in the Caribbean area, Brazil, and British North America between 1590s and 1640s, see Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 140.

[166] Carol Benedict, *Golden-Silk Smoke: A History of Tobacco in China, 1550-2010*, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 17–33.

[167] Berthold Laufer, "The Introduction of Tobacco into Africa," *Anthropology Leaflet* 29 (1930); J.E. Philips, "African Smoking and Pipes," *Journal of African History* 24 (1983): 303–19.

[168] Rudolph P. Matthee, *The Pursuit of Pleasure: Drugs and Stimulants in Iranian History, 1500-1900* (Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[169] For instance, the French Franciscan friar, cosmographer, and writer André Thevet, in his report on the journey made in South America, described a scene of tobacco consumption by American natives in these terms. See André Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique, autrement nommée Amérique, et de plusieurs terres et isles découvertes de nostre temps* (Paris: Chez les heritiers de Maurice de la Porte, 1558). Significantly, fumes were integral both to Catholic and Judaic sacred liturgy.

eighteenth-century Europe[170]. Elsewhere, tobacco integrated into consumer practices where smoking was already a customary experience, such as smoking cannabis sativa in Africa and South Asia[171], the use of the hookah (or water pipe) in India, and the consumption of betel in Southeast Asia. In these regions, existing practices influenced the particular patterns of consumption[172]. Tobacco habits in the Russian empire provide an astonishing example of local variations: after the removal of the 17th-century ban, European Russia imported snuff and pipe-smoking tobacco from the West, whereas in Eastern Russia a mixture of tobacco and henbane for water pipe prevailed and Western Siberia preferred sweetened chewing-balls of tobacco imported from China[173]. Accordingly, tobacco's diffusion in the Old World did not act as an eradicating factor of local differences; on the contrary, its global circulation appears to have reinforced distinctions, showcasing both divergence and 'localization' alongside connections.

Moreover, while tobacco became a proper new global good during the 17th century, its conquest of new societies usually occurred in parallel with the circulation of its seeds, its transplantation, and the domestication of the plant. In other words, many regions of the early modern world became not only consumer markets, but also sites of cultivation and production for tobacco. Indeed, alongside the exceptional production input from the New World, alternative production sites in Europe, Africa, and Asia soon began to emerge[174]. In this respect, the most important factor is the easy domestication of the

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[170] For French upper society, see Chiara Rita Pozzati, *Tabacco: vizio o virtù?: Diffusione e consumo del tabacco nell'Europa dell'Ancien regime: il caso francese* (Soldiershop Publishing, 2017), 84–85.

[171] For instance, on precocious smoking of cannabis sativa, see Nikolaas J. Van Der Merwe, "Cannabis Smoking in 13th-14th Century Ethiopia: Chemical Evidence," in *Cannabis and Culture*, ed. Vera Rubin (London: De Gruyter Mouton, 1975), 77–80; Mohammed Kuddus, Ibrahim A. Ginawi, and Awdah Al-Hazimi, "Cannabis Sativa: An Ancient Wild Edible Plant of India," *Emirates Journal of Food and Agriculture*, 2013, 736–45.

[172] Anthony Reid, "From Betel-Chewing to Tobacco-Smoking in Indonesia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 44, no. 3 (1985): 529–47; Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c.1500-1820*, New Approaches to Economic and Social History (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 214–15.

[173] Matthew P. Romaniello, "Customs and Consumption. Russia's Global Tobacco Habits in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Global Lives of Things. The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 183–96.

[174] For a general treatise on the global spread of tobacco's cultivation, see Orazio Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*, Typographie coopérative (Napoli, 1900).

tobacco plant under differing climatic and soil conditions[175]. As the Tuscan abbot Marco Lastri noted in 1774, tobacco can be cultivated even in the harshest climates and guarantees yields even on the most marginal lands: «*il tabacco industriosamente coltivato vegeta in qualunque parte, nientedimeno ama in modo speciale una terra mediocremente grassa e sottile, profonda, né troppo frigida. [...] È già provato per l'esperienza che questa pianta si coltiva, più o meno, in quasi tutte le parti del globo, e fin nei climi più freddi dell'Olanda e della Svezia*»[176]. So, whereas it had become first known in the Old World as an American and tropical good, tobacco cultivation proved adaptable in temperate climate zones: this feature allowed tobacco plantations - unlike sugar or cocoa - to expand well beyond the tropical climate regions[177]. Moreover, tobacco culture requires soils relatively rich in nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Without continual crop rotation or the heavy application of fertilizer, tobacco quickly exhausts the nutrients of even the richest soil, resulting not only in environmental degradation but inferior tobacco. However, extensive inputs of labor, sophistication of agricultural techniques, and the integration with cattle-raising might guarantee tobacco harvest even in the most marginal territories where other crops tend to fail[178].

A closer look at tobacco's global transplantation in the early modern age provides important insights on the features of its commodification, beginning with the European colonial context. For a long time, Western historiography has ideally contrasted the impact of colonial tobacco cultivation with that attributed to sugar. In particular, Fernando Ortiz, in his *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y azúcar* (1940), argued that «sugar and tobacco are all contrast»[179]: in Cuba, sugar cultivation was organized as a monoculture with the use of slave labor in the latifundia owned by big landlords; conversely, the 'good' tobacco production, he claimed, relied on the free labor of independent rural peasants and had represented for a long time the alternative crop for small-scale holdings, integrated

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[175] See Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence* (London: Routledge, 1994), 6–9.
[176] Marco Lastri, *Della Coltivazione e Manifattura Libera Del Tabacco in Toscana. Discorso Economico Letto in Un'adunanza de' Georgofili Il Dì VI Luglio MDCCLXXIV* (Firenze: Stamperia Bonducciana, 1789), 17–18.
[177] See Victor G. Kiernan, *Tobacco: A History* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1991), 20–32.
[178] On this point, see Carol Benedict, *Golden-Silk Smoke:A History of Tobacco in China, 1550-2010*, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 44–45.
[179] Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar (advertencia de sus contrastes agrarios, económicos, históricos y sociales, su etnografía y su transculturación)*, Biblioteca de historia, filosofía y sociología ; v. 8 (La Habana: JMontero, 1940), 5.

with the cultivation of cereals and vegetables for domestic consumption or local markets. However, such an image collapsed in front of the findings on the tobacco plantations in the early modern British empire in North America. Anglo-Saxon scholars have pointed out the rise of a tobacco's North-Atlantic economy between the 17th and 18th centuries: based on the close integration of colonial plantations in British America and the manufacturing centers in European metropoles, it was considered a dominating factor for tobacco distribution throughout the world[180]. In particular, the Chesapeake bay – between the Virginia and Maryland colonies – emerged as the greatest growing-region in the Atlantic world, especially after that the so-called 'sugar revolution' largely had driven tobacco cultivation out of the Caribbean islands in the mid-17th century[181]. Tobacco plantations played a pivotal role, in addition to sugar, in the building process of the first English empire[182]. Outstanding gains in productivity were achieved thanks to the massive availability of land – particularly important given that tobacco is a plant which quickly depletes nutrients[183] –, the labor switch towards a greater use of black slaves[184], and to

[180] See, for example, Stanley Gray and V. J. Wyckoff, "The International Tobacco Trade in the Seventeenth Century," *The Southern Economic Journal* 7, no. 11 (1940): 1–26.

[181] White settlers in English Barbados, St. Kitts, and Bermuda, as well as in French Saint-Christophe, Saint-Domingue, and Martinique had early adopted tobacco as a favorite cash crop for their parcels of limited size on these islands, combining it with the cultivation of basic foodstuff for self-consumption. They used to harvest them first-hand, often with the assistance of a couple of indentured servants, or *engagés* as they were called in the French colonies, eventually selling tobacco leaves for the European markets. However, in 1640s-1650s, fostered by Dutch huge investments, non-Spanish Caribbean rapidly turned to sugar plantations, which marked dramatic demographic and economic transformations towards the monoculture based on slavery. See Henry A. Gemery, "Emigration from the British Isles to the New World, 1630–1700: Inferences from Colonial Populations," *Research in Economic History* 5, no. 1980 (1980): 179–231; Marc Vigié and Muriel Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot: amateurs de tabac, fermiers généraux et contrebandiers sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 96–124. This historical dynamic has contributed to forge a reductive opposition between the poor and free farmers cultivating tobacco on their own and the plantocracy of the sugar mills employing a large number of black slaves, see Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar (advertencia de sus contrastes agrarios, económicos, históricos y sociales, su etnografía y su transculturación)*; Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944); Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550–1835*, Cambridge Latin American Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[182] See Russell R. Menard, "Plantation Empire: How Sugar and Tobacco Planters Built Their Industries and Raised an Empire," *Agricultural History*, 2007, 309–32.

[183] Lorena S. Walsh, "Plantation Management in the Chesapeake, 1620–1820," *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 2 (1989): 393–406.

[184] Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia by the University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of

the adoption of a learned-by-doing husbandry, which blended European, Native American, and African farming techniques with new, specific methods[185]. Colonial law, especially in Virginia, established a precise and distinctive method for cultivating and producing tobacco - the 'Chesapeake system of tobacco cultivation' - aiming at ensuring the quality of the harvest[186]. Additionally, the development of Atlantic shipping, the enhancement of credit channels for tobacco planters, and the improvement of commercialization techniques by large companies involved in the Atlantic trade were critical role to the sensational success of the Virginian leaf during the 18th century[187].

Research on other case studies has broadened our understanding of tobacco's production in the early modern European empires. Spanish and Portuguese scholars have reevaluated the importance of the Iberian world in the formation and consolidation of the «*Sistema Atlántico del Tabaco*»[188], as well as the extensive resort to slavery in tobacco production in the Iberian empires[189]. In particular, social elites throughout Europe sought after high-quality 'luxury' tobacco from Spanish Cuba, which in the 18th century

North Carolina Press, 2010), 524–38; John C. Coombs, "The Phases of Conversion: A New Chronology for the Rise of Slavery in Early Virginia," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (2011): 332–60.

185 In this regard, scholars of colonial north America has called this complex the 'Chesapeake system of tobacco cultivation' as the product of locally developed agricultural techniques and normative interventions by the colonial regulation, see Barbara Hahn, "Tobacco's Commodity Route," in *Plantation Kingdom: The American South and Its Global Commodities*, ed. Richard J. Follett (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 91–118.

186 Barbara M. Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright: Creating an American Commodity, 1617-1937* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2011), 17–44.

187 See Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1962); Jacob M. Price and Paul GE Clemens, "A Revolution of Scale in Overseas Trade: British Firms in the Chesapeake Trade, 1675–1775," *The Journal of Economic History* 47, no. 1 (1987): 1–43; Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*. For the role of big Scottish trading companies in the commercialization of tobacco, see T. M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords: A Study of the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and Their Trading Activities c. 1740-90* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); Philipp Robinson Rössner, *Scottish Trade in the Wake of Union (1700-1760): The Rise of a Warehouse Economy* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008).

188 Defined as «*la formación y la consolidación de una estructura compleja de producción de la primera materia prima, transporte, manufacturación y distribución del producto entre ambas orillas del Atlántico, tal y como tuvo lugar entre finales del siglo XVI, se desarolla durante el XVII y cambia sustancialmente en el siglo XVIII*», see Santiago de Luxán Meléndez and Gárate Montserrat, "La Creación de Un Sistema Atlántico Del Tabaco (Siglos XVII-XVIII). El Papel de Los Monopolios Tabaqueros. Una Lectura Dese La Perspectiva Española," *Anais de Historia de Além Mar* 11 (2010): 147.

189 On the relationship between tobacco production and slavery in the Iberian empires, see Joao de Figueirôa-Rêgo, Vicente Sanz Rozalén, and Santiago de Luxán Meléndez, eds., *Tabaco e escravos nos Impérios Ibéricos* (Lisboa: Cham, 2015).

monopolized tobacco imports in Cadiz[190] and was regularly traded in return for slaves with British merchants who were intermediaries for consumption in Britain and for its redistribution in Europe[191]. In addition, Bahia in the Northeast region of Brazil became a major export center for tobaccos harvested in the Portuguese South American colony[192]. There, tobacco culture was embedded within a system of mixed farming, especially cattle-raising: fallowing was normally combined with a routine application of animal manure, which reduced problems with soil fertility and allowed the same plot of land to be used for tobacco cultivation for a much longer period of time than in the Chesapeake[193]. The best qualities of 'tobacco Brazil' went mainly to Lisbon, where they both served the domestic market and were re-exported towards the Mediterranean and Northern Europe[194]. At the same time, the third-quality leaves - at least, according to the European consumers' taste - were mixed with molasses exported to West Africa, where they found many admirers among local people and were exchanged in return for slaves[195]. Iberian colonial tobaccos maintained unique characteristics without imitating the sweet-scented strain from Virginia[196] and successfully established their place in the global markets[197].

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[190] Cuba's rise to dominance in the Spanish tobacco market was at the expense, primarily, of Venezuela, whose export economy in the 18th century turned increasingly to cocoa, indigo and hides. See Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 142.

[191] See Santiago de Luxán Meléndez, "Las Compañías Reales de Esclavos y La Integración de Cuba En El Sistema Atlántico Del Tabaco Español 1696-1739," *Anuario de Estudios Atlánticos* 62, no. 14 (2016): 1–22. It has been largely demonstrated that tobacco represented the cash crop for slaves in Cuba, but the latter were mainly employed in sugar plantations on the island. However, Charlotte Cosner's findings suggest a more complex picture of those involved in the cultivation of tobacco in colonial Cuba: despite Ortiz's argument, not all the Cuban tobacco farmers (the '*vegueros*') were poor, white, and Canary Islanders. See Charlotte Cosner, *The Golden Leaf: How Tobacco Shaped Cuba and the Atlantic World* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2014).

[192] The most extensive study on colonial tobacco production in Brazil is Jean-Baptiste Nardi, *O fumo brasileiro no período colonial lavoura, comércio e administração* (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1996).

[193] See Catherine Lugar, "The Portuguese Tobacco Trade and Tobacco Growers of Bahia in the Late Colonial Period," in *Essays Concerning the Socioeconomic History of Brazil and Portuguese India* (Gainsville, FL: The University Presses of Florida, 1977), 26–69.

[194] Brazilian tobacco's exports amounted to 20 million pounds per year in the 18th century. It represented the second colonial tobacco's output in the 18th century, behind the unattainable production from the British Chesapeake which reached peaks over 100 million pounds. See Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 142–43.

[195] See Roberto Zaugg, "Le Crachoir Chinois Du Roi: Marchandises Globales, Culture de Cour et Vodun Dans Les Royaumes de Hueda et Du Dahomey (Xviie-Xixe Siècle)," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 73, no. 1 (March 2018): 132–33.

[196] On the human agency to forge the two colonial strains of tobacco in British North America – orinoco and sweet scented – see Lorena S. Walsh, "Summing the Parts: Implications for Estimating Chesapeake Output and Income Subregionally," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (1999): 53–94; Barbara M. Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright: Creating an American Commodity, 1617-1937* (JHU Press, 2011).

[197] On the one side, tobacco grown in the region of Bahia in Portuguese Brazil was firstly treated and made into 'rope' and then marketed in 'rolls' as a darker tobacco with an intense flavor and highly appreciated to

Furthermore, we must dispel the notion (so embedded in the image of the 'Atlantic tobacco system') that European metropoles and non-Western societies engaged in tobacco cultivation solely for household and self-consumption purposes. In certain regions of North-Western Europe, notably in the Dutch United Provinces, tobacco cultivation became a significant, labor-intensive, and market-oriented sector, particularly valued by merchants and entrepreneurs for blending American leaves with cheaper locally grown ones[198]. In the Ottoman empire, where English and Dutch merchants introduced goods from the Americas before 1600[199], tobacco quickly became a widely consumed commodity from the Middle East to the western Balkans[200] and was also adopted as a

be chewed and smoked, see Gustavo Acioli, "A Ascensão Do Primo Pobre: O Tabaco Na Economia Colonial Da América Portuguesa-Um Balanço Historiográfico," *Sæculum–Revista de História* 12 (2005): 22–37. On the other side, the Spanish powdered tobacco was regarded everywhere in Europe as a proper luxury item, benefitting from the unique features of the Cuban tobacco and the manufacturing excellence achieved by the royal tobacco factory in Seville, see José Manuel Rodríguez Gordillo, *Historia de la Real Fabrica de Tabacos de Sevilla: sede actual de la Universidad de Sevilla* (Sevilla: Fundacion Focus-Abengoa : Universidad de Sevilla, 2005); Laura Nater, "'Colonial Tobacco: Key Commodity of the Spanish Empire, 1500–1800," in *From Silver to Cocaine. Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2006), 93–117. On the contrary, French attempts to promote massive colonial tobacco production did not produce the desired results: after the triumph of sugar plantations in the Antilles, various projects to develop tobacco cultivation affected French Louisiana in the first decades of the 18th century. However, inadequate manpower, high freight costs, and mediocre product quality led to substantial failure: France remained a de facto tributary of Great Britain for the supply of tobacco. See Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 115–23.

[198] Amsterdam merchants had introduced tobacco cultivation to the eastern Utrecht's province since 1610, where Amersfoort became a renewed center for tobacco farming. The activity became particularly attractive to small farmers after the 1650s, as grain prices fell relative to those for tobacco. At its peak, at the beginning of the 18th century, tobacco production on some 5.000 hectares of land reached an annual sum of 15-17 million pounds. See Jan De Vries and A. M. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 221–25.

[199] Bruce William McGowan, *Economic life in Ottoman Europe: taxation, trade and the struggle for land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1–41. According to the relation of the Venetian consul Girolamo Morisini, French merchants soon fit in the supply of tobacco for Levantine markets: in the second decade of the 17th century, they brought to Syria the greatest volume of Western tobacco, see *Relazione di Soria del console Girolamo Morosini, presentata il 8 febbraio 1614 m.v.*, printed in Guglielmo Berchet, *Relazioni dei consoli veneti nella Siria* (Torino: G.B. Paravia, 1866), 157–60.

[200] Uzi Baram, "Clay Tobacco Pipes and Coffee Cup Sherds in the Archaeology of the Middle East: Artifacts of Social Tensions from the Ottoman Past," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 3, no. 3 (1999): 137–51; Cheryl Ward and Uzi Baram, "Global Markets, Local Practice: Ottoman-Period Clay Pipes and Smoking Paraphernalia from the Red Sea Shipwreck at Sadana Island, Egypt," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 10, no. 2 (2006): 135–58; Evangelina Balta, "History and Historiography of Greek Tobaco," in *Tütün Kitabı* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), 86–97; Aleksandar Fotić, "The Introduction of Coffee and Tobacco to the Mid-West Balkans," *Acta Orientalia* 64, no. 1 (2011): 89–100.

cash crop. It was primarily cultivated in Macedonia, Albania, and the inner regions of Syria and Anatolia, up to the borders with Persia[201]. Here, local farmers and tenants grew tobacco on arable lands, benefiting primarily the Turkish landlord élite – *agas* or *beys* – who participated in the expansion of commercial agriculture which interested the Ottoman empire in the 18th century[202]. Levantine tobaccos fueled relevant domestic consumption, sparking intense debates among religious and legal authorities[203], and facilitated export flows to North Africa, Black Sea, and and the Western Mediterranean, driven by Muslim, Jewish, Armenian, and Greek networks[204]. In Safavid Iran, by the mid-17th century, tobacco cultivation had been domesticated. Homegrown varieties – fine *Tanbaku* for water pipes and coarser *Tutun* for common pipes – were exported to the Indian Subcontinent, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia[205]. Further north, around 1700, tobacco cultivated in the Ukrainian plains began to provide a profitable, cheap leaf. Despite Tsar Peter the Great's prohibition, it successfully competed in Moscow with the Virginian leaf imported by the English Tobacco Company, which had signed a supply contract for the Muscovy's central provinces in 1699[206].

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[201] Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire. 1300-1914* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), vol. II, 843–887.

[202] Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 130–34.

[203] James Grehan, "Smoking and 'Early Modern' Sociability: The Great Tobacco Debate in the Ottoman Middle East (Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries)," *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (2006): 1352–77.

[204] In particular, the relevance of Macedonian tobacco in the Mediterranean trade was huge: even though the intra-imperial trade – with North Africa, the Black Sea and the Middle East – overshadowed for a long time the markets of Europe, a growing demand nourished traffics with the Italian peninsula and central Europe. See Nicolas G Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), 239–80; Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430-1950*, 1st American ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 114–32; Eyal Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica: The Ottoman Perspective," *Jewish History* 28, no. 3–4 (2014): 289–312. Also tobacco exported from Alep, but harvested across the Persian border and known by the name of *Tombak*, was exported to Egypt and Christian Europe, especially for pipe smoking thanks to its intense taste. Here a statement of the late 18th century by the Venetian consul Morana: «*noto, ed assai stimato è il Tabacco d'Aleppo, specialmente in Europa, per l'uso della Pippa: serve questa Foglia ad un esterno Commercio, dopo averne supplito al grandioso consumo delli Monsulmani in quelle, ed altre Provincie*», in Giovanni Antonio M. Morana, *Relazione del commercio d'Aleppo ed altre scale della Siria, e Palestina di Gio. Antonio Maria Morana era per la serenissima repubblica di Venezia console generale in Aleppo, costa di Siria, Palestina ec* (presso Francesco Andreola, 1799), 11.

[205] Matthee, *The Pursuit of Pleasure*, 128.

[206] Matthew P. Romaniello, "Through the Filter of Tobacco: The Limits of Global Trade in the Early Modern World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 4 (2007): 914–37.

In the Indian Ocean and Eastern Asia, tobacco emerged as an agricultural commodity intensively exchanged in local and inter-regional markets. In India, tobacco cultivation spread significantly, especially in the Surat region (north-west of the Subcontinent) and along the Coromandel Coast (south-east). Western Indian tobacco was exported to many centers of the Persian Gulf-Red Sea area, while the South Indian tobacco was primarily sent to Burma, Sumatra, and Java[207]. In the Chinese empire, tobacco became a favored cash crop for Hakka and Han smallholders in the highlands above the Yangzi river and its tributaries. Despite the decentralized organization of such production, these migrant communities acted as «entrepreneurial farmers on the move»[208], providing abundant raw and processed leaves for Chinese merchant groups. These latter aggressively marketed tobacco to supply the enormous domestic market, perhaps the world's largest by the mid-18th century[209], and to export it to Mongolia, Russian Siberia, and Southeast Asia[210].

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[207] Balkrishna G. Gokhale, "Tobacco in Seventeenth-Century India," *Agricultural History* 48, no. 4 (1974): 485–91. The agencies of this distribution were twofold: the English and the Dutch used Indian tobacco as a local-currency earner in their inter-area trade between points in the Persian Gulf, the Indian coastal town, and Southeast Asia; at the same time, the Mughal ruling circles traded on their own account with the Middle Eastern region, with royal junks loaded with tobacco among other commodities, and prominent Brahman families dominated the tobacco-related trade and taxation activity even in the European outposts on the Subcontinent's coasts. See Gokhale, 489; B. Krishnamurthy, "Indian Commercial Intermediaries and the French East India Company in Coromandel during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Indian Trade at the Asian Frontier*, ed. S. Jeyaseela Stephen (New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2008), 173–92; Philomena Sequeira Antony, "Hindu Dominance in the Goa-Based Long-Distance Trade during the Eighteenth Century," in *The Indian Trade at the Asian Frontier* (New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2008), 213–30.

[208] Benedict, *Golden-Silk Smoke*, 36.

[209] According to Carol Benedict, at the apogee of the Qing period tobacco's annual consumption per capita can be estimated in 3-4 pounds: these data are even higher than it has been reported for eighteenth-century England and Wales and they suggest again a substantial comparability of consumption levels between the two distant societies. See Benedict, 49. For England and Wales, see Carole Shammas, "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800," in *Consumption and the World of Goods* (Routledge, 1993), 199–227. On the problem of comparability between England and Chinese regions, see Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton Economic History of the Western World (Princeton, N.J. ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[210] Chinese merchant élite, particularly from Huizhou, Shanxi, and the tobacco-growing regions of Fujian and Jiangxi, strongly held tobacco exports and domestic distribution from the highland sites of production to the urban centers of consumption. See Benedict, *Golden-Silk Smoke*, 53–54. As the relevance of the Russian trade for Chinese tobacco increased, the Chinese government also allowed the establishment of large tobacco plantations along the northern border, see Romaniello, "Customs and Consumption. Russia's Global Tobacco Habits in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 193–94.

In sum, tobacco's global dissemination gave birth to multiple centers of production and various patterns of circulation in the early modern age. These included plantations harvested by slaves, smaller plots cultivated through a labor-intensive approach by entire peasant households, and large estates where servants worked. A closer look reveals the emergence of *tobaccos* in plural rather than in singular terms, as the varieties of the plant underwent divergent paths of local hybridization and transformation. This process led to different leaves with specific organoleptic features and distinctive flavor[211]. All of these varieties were strongly market-oriented and fueled commercial flows at both regional and inter-areas levels.

The three features of tobacco's globalization discussed here - the trans-cultural dimension of the process, the divergence of local translations, and the extent of transplantation - illustrate the uneven, differentiated, and polycentric nature of long-distance circulation in the early modern age. More specifically, whereas tobacco soon became a global good appreciated in most parts of the world, evidence suggests the image of a 'segmented trade' influenced by local regulation, production conditions, consumer preference, and social habits, rather than a singular early modern international tobacco market[212]. And the plurality of interests shaping local receptions singles out that tobacco's circulation met opportunity and limitation according to strengths and constraints of the

[211] For a summary and commentary on the various types of tobacco grown around the world in the 17th and 18th centuries and the different stimuli they brought to the taste by virtue of their specific characteristics, see Niccolò Gavelli, *Storia Distinta, e Curiosa Del Tabacco, Concernente La Sua Scoperta, La Introduzione in Europa, e La Maniera Di Coltivarlo, Conservarlo, e Prepararlo, e per Servirsene Con Altre Ottime Ed Utili Osservazioni Sopra Il Medesimo* (Pesaro: Altieri, 1758), 11–13; Francesco Griselini and Marco Fossadoni, eds., *Dizionario Delle Arti e de' Mestieri*, vol. XVII (Venezia: appresso Modesto Fenzo, 1774), 194–95. Also curing practices served as crucial variables in the process of flavor-building for the finished products. As early as 1615, an anonymous English writer, the author of a ready manual for planting tobacco, pointed clearly out the issue by comparing curing methods among the Amerindians and the Spaniards: «the natural color of Tobacco is a deep yellow or a light tawnie: and when the Indians themselves sold it us for knoves, hatchelts, beads, belles, and like merchandise, it had no other complexion (...). Spaniards' tobacco is noynted and slubbered over with a kind of juice, or syrope made of Saltwater, of the dregges or filth of sugar, called malasses, of black honey, Guiana pepper, and leeze of wine: this they do to give it colour and glosse, to make it more merchantable», see *An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England: And How to Bring It to Colour and Perfection, to Whom It May Be Profitable, and to Whom Harmfull : The Vertues of the Hearbe in Generall, as Well in the Outward Application as Taken in Fvme : With the Danger of the Spanish Tobacco* (London: Nicholas Okes, and are to bee sold by Walter Burre, 1615).

[212] The term 'segmented trade' has been proposed by Daniele Andreozzi for describing the commercial strategies and networks of merchants based in 18th-century Trieste, see Daniele Andreozzi, "'Segmented Trade'. Merchants, Mercantile Practices, and Mercantilism between Trieste, the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean in the XVIII Century," *Mediterranea-Ricerche Storiche* 15, no. 44 (2018): 567–86.

early modern transport system and commercialization tools, but also to the negotiation processes that economic actors and institutions established around tobacco circulation. Focusing on case studies of a particular sub-region of the Mediterranean Sea, as it is the case of this thesis, it is important to bear in mind the wide range of local strategies, negotiation processes, and production systems that characterized tobacco's globalization. This approach not only prevents misleading generalizations, but also facilitates a concrete investigation into why historical actors made their choices and the extent to which their actions influenced the circulation of global goods.

3. Tobacco's commodification between economic information, privileged profits, and sovereign revenues

Whereas there is substantial agreement in the literature that tobacco became a staple commodity in the metropolitan centers of Atlantic Europe as early as the late 16th century, significant references to the American plant in the Italian peninsula remained extremely rare for decades. Tobacco's entrance into the commodity markets of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and of the Venetian Empire necessitated crucial supply-side changes that should not be underestimated. Wholesale merchants and political powers began to perceive tobacco as a valuable resource and established on this matter a dialogue between fiscal institutions and mercantile networks involved in long-distance trade. The evolution of tobacco's trade was profoundly influenced by the strategies and choices of businessmen and state officials who began to develop projects to exploit tobacco both for commercial profits and public revenues. Despite their distinct and possibly conflicting viewpoints, the confrontation between these groups gave birth to a peculiar system that strictly regulated the legal channels for tobacco circulation as a commodity, ensuring control over its flows and capturing a portion of the wealth it generated.

Initially, commercial opportunities for tobacco in the Italian peninsula were far from guaranteed. By the 1630s, the Atlantic tobacco trade was firmly established. Portuguese merchant networks, predominantly composed of 'New Christians', had consolidated their supremacy in marketing tobacco from the Spanish and Portuguese

colonies in the Americas[213]. In English North America, the colony of Virginia, after importing seeds from the Caribbean, had chosen tobacco cultivation as its main production: this had become basically the only export commodity to the metropolitan area and an important source of income for the English merchants engaged in the Atlantic trade[214]. In contrast, Livorno and Venice did not yet have sufficiently developed for tobacco.

Despite non-ideal conditions for tobacco's commercial success, attempts to market this new commodity were made. Notably, since 1609, the truce between the United Provinces and the Habsburg monarchy allowed the Dutch merchant fleet to supply the Mediterranean with colonial goods from the Iberian Atlantic, alongside their established trade in bulk commodities from northern Europe[215]. English merchants were their most

[213] We should remember that at this time, until 1640, the Habsburg monarchy gathered both the Spanish and Portuguese crowns, as well as their respective overseas empires. On the role of the substantial alliance between the Habsburg crown and the transatlantic mercantile networks of the 'Portuguese nation' for the establishment of regular maritime routes, market integration, commodities circulation across the Atlantic, see Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). On the prominence of 'New Christians' in the Atlantic trade of tobacco from the Iberian colonies in the Americas, see Joao de Figueirôa-Rêgo, "Os Homens Da Naçao e o Trato Tabaqueiro. Notas Sobre Redes e Mobilidade Geografica No Contexto Europeu e Colonial Moderno," *Anais de Historia de Além-Mar* 14 (2013): 177–200; Joao de Figueirôa-Rêgo, "Os Agentes Do Tabaco e a Mobilidade Ibérica. Brasil. Indias de Castela e Conexões Italianas (Séculos XVII e XVIII)," *Ammentu. Bollettino Storico e Archivistico Del Mediterraneo e Delle Americhe* 5 (2014): 41–55. In particular, it was in the 1620s that the Spanish crown decided to collude with Portuguese traders, instead of struggle against them: a royal decree made importation a government-administered trading monopsony, commissioning the Portuguese Diego Pinelo, as an agent on behalf of the central imperial power, to buy all of the tobacco grown in the Spanish Caribbean and to ship it to mainland. See Marcy Norton and Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, "The Multinational Commodification of Tobacco, 1492-1650: An Iberian Perspective," in *The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1550-1624*, ed. Peter C. Mancall (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 257–58.

[214] Spanish Caribbean tobacco was the basis for the English tobacco boom, first as a trade and contraband item, then as an export cash crop firstly in Bermuda, and only later in Virginia, see Philip D. Morgan, "Virginia's Other Prototype: The Caribbean," in *The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1550-1624*, ed. Peter C. Mancall (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 342–81. On English and later British mercantile networks engaged in transatlantic economy in the 17th and 18th centuries and on their strategies to secure credit and commercial organization, see Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*; Jacob M Price, *Overseas Trade and Traders: Essays on Some Commercial, Financial and Political Challenges Facing British Atlantic Merchants, 1660-1775* (Aldershot; Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1996); Peter Mathias, "Risk, Credit and Kinship in Early Modern Enterprise," in *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy*, ed. John McCusker and Kenneth Morgan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 15–35.

[215] See Engels, *Merchants Interlopers Seamen and Corsairs*, 76–79; Renato Ghezzi, *Livorno e l' Atlantico: i commerci olandesi nel Mediterraneo del Seicento* (Bari: Cacucci, 2011), 71–75. Dutch trade with the Italian peninsula was particularly important in the 17th century because it was there that Flemish merchants could obtain currency for their commercial exchange in the Ottoman Levant. In this perspective, Fernand

important competitor, having entered the Mediterranean well before the 1590s. As early as 1592, they conducted trade with Ottoman territories under the monopoly and protection of the Levant Company[216]. In the first decades of the 17th century, the ports of the Italian peninsula became a fundamental market for their woolen cloth textiles (particularly the lighter 'new draperies' especially designed for the Spanish and Italian markets, which were more suitable for the warmer Mediterranean climate) and mining products (especially lead and tin). Additionally, they were crucial for the re-export of spices and colonial products[217]. Tobacco was among the extra-European commodities traded by northern fleets in the Mediterranean, sourced both from their colonies and from the Iberian peninsula. However, if its trade did not become substantial until the 1640s[218], local

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Braudel had largely demonstrated the role of bulk commodities imported by the Dutch fleet, especially after the 1590s when Baltic grains began to be carried by northern vessels to a Mediterranean sea hit by crop failures and famine. However, Jonathan Israel has re-evaluated the importance of luxury and colonial goods for a global assessment of Dutch trade in the 17th century, though his analysis has touched only incidentally the Mediterranean area with regards to this point. See Fernand Braudel and Ruggiero Romano, *Navires et Marchandises à l'entrée Du Port de Livourne: 1547-1611* (Paris: Colin, 1951); Jonathan I Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[216] See Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935); C. G. A. Clay, *Economic Expansion and Social Change: England 1500-1700* (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[217] See Gigliola Pagano DeDivitiis, *English Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). According to Pagano De Divitiis, between 1620 and 1630 the Tuscan port of Livorno emerged over the other ports of the Italian peninsula as the most important scale for English navigation in the Mediterranean. Besides, following Engels, in the same years English competition succeeded in questioning Dutch supremacy in the western Mediterranean trade, but the latter managed to recover ground especially between 1642 and 1670, by taking advantage of English domestic troubles. See Engels, *Merchants Interlopers Seamen and Corsairs*, 55. For the role of English and Dutch fleets in the relevant trade (with regard both to volume and value) between the Iberian peninsula and the Italian ports of Genoa, Livorno, Naples, and Venice, see also Gigliola Pagano De Divitiis, *Mercanti inglesi nell'Italia del Seicento: navi, traffici, egemonie* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1990); Paolo Malanima, "I Commerci Del Mondo Del 1674 Visti Da Amsterdam e Da Livorno," in *Ricerche Di Storia Moderna IV: In Onore Di Mario Mirri* (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1995). Furthermore, as pointed out by several authors, in those years Livorno proved able to attract much of the transit trade towards the Ottoman Levant, thanks to geographical reasons, but also for the Medici's fiscal policy of the 'free port' and the investment in port and commercial services, as the construction of large warehouses which facilitated the storage of large volumes of commodities. See Paolo Scrosoppi, "Il Porto Di Livorno e Gli Inizi Dell'attività Inglese Nel Mediterraneo," *Bollettino Storico Livornese* 1 (1937); Corey Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, First edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 28–44.

[218] According to Ghezzi, tobacco from Lisbon arrived in Livorno only sporadically until the 1640s, when it met a substantial increase, see Renato Ghezzi, "Il Porto Di Livorno e Il Commercio Mediterraneo Nel Seicento," in *Livorno: 1606-1806. Luogo Di Incontro Tra Popoli e Culture* (Torino: Allemandi, 2009), 328–30. Also the Dutch fleet carried tobacco only incidentally in Livorno on behalf of Flemish merchants in the 1620s and 1630s, see Engels, *Merchants Interlopers Seamen and Corsairs*, 95. Her argument was

actors in Livorno and Venice also began to participate in the early stages of tobacco. They relied on economic information provided by their correspondents from the Atlantic world, contributing to a more detailed understanding of the commodity's commercial potential.

In the early 1630s, in Livorno, the merchant Giulio del Beccuto, an agent of a house of '*negozi, cambi e mercatura*'[219] based in the port city and engaged in buying and selling a wide range of goods from long-distance trade[220], faced significant difficulties in marketing Spanish tobacco. From his Genoese correspondents residing in Alicante, Mr. Dardaglia and Paravagna, he received a case of tobacco via Barcelona and Genoa on a boat captained by Antonio Bruno of Marseille[221]. The merchants from Alicante had sent the tobacco to del Beccuto with the commission to sell it on the Livorno market and use the proceeds to purchase gold-embroidered drapes[222]. Expectations from the Iberian peninsula were high, but the merchandise struggled to find buyers. Consequently, the

based on the archive of the health board held by the State Archive of Livorno, though that kind of source appears more useful for an investigation on the vessels entering the port of Livorno than for understanding imports, because the '*portate mercantili*' which described the ship's cargo were sent to central office of the health board in the granducal capital, so today some of them are available in certain series of the State Archive of Florence. For an use of the sources from Livorno, see also Gino Guarnieri, *Livorno Marinara: Gli Sviluppi Portuali, La Funzione Economica, La Tecnica Commerciale, Marittima* (Livorno: Benvenuti & Cavaciocchi, 1962).

[219] See the registration of the society in ASFi, *Mercanzia*, f. 10840, 15/01/1631. Giulio del Beccuto's commercial *banco* was a *società in accomandita*, a limited partnership which allowed to share and reduce the business risk. For Tuscan subjects, it was compulsory to register these commercial organizations in Florence before the court of *Mercanzia*. See Maurice Carmona, "Aspects Du Capitalisme Toscan Aux XVIe et XVIIe Siècles: Les Sociétés En Commandite à Florence et à Lucques," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine (1954-)* 11, no. 2 (1964): 81–108; R. Burr Litchfield, "Les Investissements Commerciaux Des Patriciens Florentins Au XVIII e Siècle," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 24, no. 3 (1969): 685–721.

[220] On the activities of Giulio del Beccuto see also Marcello Berti, "Aspetti Dell'attività Commerciale Di Livorno All'inizio Del Regime Di Porto Franco Colti Da Un Osservatorio Significativo: La Società Di Giulio Del Beccuto," in *Atti Del Convegno Livorno e Il Mediterraneo Nell'età Medicea* (Bastogi, 1978), 289–305; Elena Bertelli, "Un'azienda Commerciale a Livorno Nel XVII Secolo. Gli Affari Del Banco Di Giulio Del Beccuto (1629-1639)" (Università di Pisa, 1994).

[221] On the journey made by the tobacco case, see Salviati Archive, *Libri di commercio*, reg. 173, "Copialettere", letter of Giulio del Beccuto to Giovanni Martini in Barcelona, Livorno 10/09/1631. The expedition immediately presented serious problems: the tobacco case was «*malissimo condizionata, aperta, et tutta rovinata, e di peso solo in tutto libbre 230, e voi dite nelle polizze di carico libbre 258*», see *Ibidem*, letter of Giulio del Beccuto to Bartolomeo di Boiero in Genoa, Livorno 10/09/1631.

[222] «*Si è ricevuto la cassetta di tabacco (...) e poco dopo ci è pervenuta la vostra graditissima del 14 di luglio con ordine di venderla a contanti e convertire in tela d'oro di opera minuta, che così faremo*», see *Ibidem*, letter of Giulio del Beccuto to Dardaglia and Paravagna in Alicante, Livorno 10/09/1631.

Livorno's merchant began to doubt the possibility of achieving the selling prices desired by his correspondents:

> «*Si va procurando della cassa di tabacco et si stenta a trovare riscontro, pure si farà il possibile et ne resta venduta circa libbre 20 a 2 pezze da 8 la libbra et sarà difficile mantenere il detto prezzo, però l'ammontare sarà poco, che non ci pare metta in conto trattare di baratti in drappi d'oro che avanti si venda quello che ci resta. (...) Et se risolvesse di mandare qua uno vassello carico, et per ancora non sono comparsi li salumi, vedete se mettervi conto fare qualche ordine, quali zibibi, mandorle et mele che havevate inclinatione di fare*»[223]

Del Beccuto suggested sending cargos of salted fish from the Atlantic ('*salumi*') to Livorno instead, as this commodity had a reliable and steady market. In exchange, he proposed acquiring Levantine products like raisins, almonds, and apples, which set the foundation for their ongoing trade between Livorno and Alicante in the subsequent years[224]. By contrast, most of the Spanish tobacco remained unsold by the end of 1632, over a year after its arrival in Livorno, «*per essercene abbondante e senza domanda, e quello che altri vendono segue a prezzi vilissimi*»[225]. Obviously, tobacco was 'abundant' only in relative terms, as it was still a commodity with little demand in Livorno's trade.

Despite being considered a high-quality product suitable for affluent consumers in Spain, where tob-quality tobacco was already regarded as a distinctive social tract[226], Spanish tobacco did not garner widespread popularity in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany at that time. It was still viewed as a luxury item for the wealthy, and its high prices were not

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[223] See *Ibidem*, letter of Giulio del Beccuto to Dardaglia and Paravagna in Alicante, Livorno 17/12/1631.

[224] See *Ibidem*, letters of Giulio del Beccuto to Dardaglia and Paravagna in Alicante, Livorno 04/03/1632, 26/12/1632, 11/06/1633.

[225] To be noted, after the initial failure, the correspondents from Alicante gave up hope of getting gold drapes in exchange for their tobacco, falling back on Tuscan maiolica plates: «*in vendita del vostro Tabacco, non ci è per anco sortito fare cosa alcuna per essercene abbondante e senza domanda, e qeullo che altri vendono segue a prezzi vilissimi, ne faremo di nuovo diligenza, et resterà il ritratto convertito in tanti piatti di terra di Pisa, con mandarli come havete ordinato*», see *Ibidem*, letter of Giulio del Beccuto to Dardagna and Paravagna in Alicante, Livorno 26/12/1632.

[226] On this point and on the eventual success for Spain in dictating tobacco fashion for élites throughout Europe by the end of the 17th century, see José Manuel Rodríguez Gordillo, *Diccionario Histórico Del Tabaco* (Madrid: Edita Tabapress para Cetarsa, 1993), 206–49; Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 67–69; Wim Klooster, *Illicit Riches: Dutch Trade in the Caribbean, 1648-1795* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 189–90; Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures*, 171–72.

sustainable for beyond the elite circles At the same time, smoking or sniffing tobacco had not yet become a trend, nor was it a status symbol among the Florentine elite. Del Beccuto's records show the he only sent tobacco to Florence once in the 1630s, specifically 3 kegs on October 30, 1634, on behalf of the patrician Girolamo Albizzi[227].

Following the lesson of the first fiasco, Mr. Dardaglia and Paravagna ceased sending Spanish tobacco to del Beccuto in the subsequent years. Nonetheless, other types of tobacco 'sold at very low prices'[228] by different merchants found more success. In adapting his trading strategies, the same Del Beccuto offered his services to Abram de Vita, a Jewish merchant in Ferrara, to facilitate the sale of his *organzine* in exchange for Flemish and English commodities readily available in Livorno, including cheaper varieties of tobacco[229].

Economic information gathered from correspondents proved crucial in determining which varieties of tobacco gained traction over others. In Venice, where the commodification of tobacco became significant a few decades later, the overland trade routes with Northern Europe facilitated substantial imports from Flanders[230], as noted by state officials who consulted the Venetian merchants' representatives in 1654[231]. By then time, these merchants had also initiated new trade routes, collaborating with English captains, shipowners, and merchants to establish direct links between Venice and the

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[227] See Salviati Archive, *Libri di Commercio*, reg. 189, "Quadernuccio delle Mercanzie", ff. n. nn.

[228] See the quotation above.

[229] «*Mag.co Sig.re ci è stata gratissima la vostra lettera del 3 corrente, vedendo la volontà che avete di avviare qualche negozio con noi (...) e sentiamo come volentieri fareste baratto di cotesti orsoi con queste mercanzie di Fiandra di ogni sorte dal che presentemente ci sarà commodità buonissima per essere ripieni tutti i magazzini per le continue tratte che sono venute (...); ci bisognerebbe una mostra delli orsoi che si vuole barattare (...) e che mercanzie più vi aggradano, o parte di una sorte e parte di un'altra delle contenute nella allegata nota che come li orsoi daranno satisfazione avremo commodità da questi fiamminghi et inglesi di averne che mercanzia vi piaverà*». See Salviati Archive, *Libri di Commercio*, reg. 173, "Copialettere", letter of Giulio del Beccuto to Abram de Vita in Ferrara, Livorno 14/11/1631. In the 'note' attached to the letter we find a wide range of commodities marketed by English and Flemish merchants, with particular stress on foodstuffs (grain and broad beans), raw materials (tin, lead and iron), textile manufactures, and colonial products (pepper, sugar and, of course, tobacco).

[230] However, in these decades, the 'Flemish merchants' were also particularly active in maritime trade with the *Serenissima*, having also obtained important facilities for duty-free extraction on the '*Navi di Ponente*' of goods purchased in Venice. See ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 5v-7r, 03/08/1652; and ff. 163v-164r, 08/05/1660.

[231] «*L'anno passato, a forza di spese gagliarde, se n'è fatto venire da Fiandra per via di terra una gran quantità, e ne capita in questa città più di 200.000 libbre all'anno*», see ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 609, writing of Bartolo Boneri to the Senate, Venice 14/03/1654.

tobacco-growing regions in the American colonies. One notable figure in this development was Paulo del Sera, who pioneered direct direct trade on English vessels between Venice and the English Barbados in the Caribbean sea which soon attracted the interest of the Venetian authorities[232].

Reporting to the board of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, del Sera emphasized the pivotal role of tobacco in consolidating such affairs. Drawing on information from Mr. Obson, an English merchant in Venice with whom he collaborated[233], del Sera explained that «*producendo l'isola di Barbados, che è situata dirimpetto al Brasil, quantità grande di tabacco, vogliono quegli abitanti esitarlo, non dando il carico alle navi di altre mercanzie, se non levano a proprozione dal medesimo tabacco come ha convenuto fare così quella nave capitata, come quelle che s'attendono, in summa considerabile*»[234]. In essence, the demands of colonial planters necessitated a nearly compulsory exchange: to export their goods to the burgeoning markets of colonial societies, the Venetian authorities had to facilitate the domestic tobacco market, enabling merchants to efficiently handle the increasing shipments arriving from the West Indies.

The success of particular trade routes during this period is compelling because it illustrated how significant shifts in global production impacted Mediterranean markets as centers of consumption. On the one hand, the prices of Virginian tobacco plummeted dramatically between the 1620s and the 1640s, diverging significantly from the 'luxury price' identified by Russel Menard for the 1618 harvest[235]. On the other hand, Amsterdam merchants effectively promoted tobacco commercial cultivation among the farmers in the Utrecht province, particularly around Amersfoort, establishing it as a major source of cheaper tobacco leaves for the global market[236]. These innovations in tobacco supply side

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[232] In 1655, the magistrate in charge of trade in Venice, the *Cinque Savi*, delt several times with the «*introdutione et continuatione delle Navi che dalle Indie occidentali possono capitare in questa città, come è seguito dalla suddetta nave Giovanni Maria, ultimamente venuta a dirittura con ricche mercanzie*», as an interesting opportunity to establish a profitable trade with the English colonies in the Caribbean. See ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 67r-69v, 08/12/1655; and ff. 75r-77v, 20/08/1656.

[233] The writing of the *Cinque Savi* on this affair ended as it follows: «*a quanto abbiamo sopra espresso, dobbiamo aggiungere esser di già capitata in questo porto non solo la Nave che attendeva il mercante Obson, come abbiamo detto, ma anco un'altra per il medesimo del Sera*», see ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, f. 69v, 08/12/1655.

[234] *Ibidem*, f. 67v.

[235] Russell R. Menard, "A Note on Chesapeake Tobacco Prices, 1618-1660," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 84, no. 4 (1976): 401–3.

[236] See De Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 221–25.

were disseminated and integrated into the economic information exchanged between correspondents across the Atlantic and the Italian peninsula. They were evaluated alongside information flowing in the opposite direction, which detailed the actual sales prospects in markets like in the Livorno and Venice[237]. Consequently, economic information not only influenced the circulation possibilities of a global commodity such as tobacco, but also shaped the commercial policies adopted by institutions in response to these dynamics[238].

However, a significant turning point occurred when merchants engaged in the long-distance trade of tobacco began petitioning sovereign powers for privileges to introduce local production phases related to this new commodity. From the 1630s onwards, both in Tuscany and Venice, numerous requests for licenses and exclusive rights on tobacco appear in historical records. These petitions reveal a growing interest in the sector and identify the early promoters of its commercial and fiscal exploitation. These initiatives were part of a consolidated system of interaction between economic actors and state powers, characterized by merchants and entrepreneurs elaborating and submitting 'projects' to establish new trade lines or introduce innovative production activities[239]. Crucially, the system promoted a convergence of interests driven by the potential for increased tax revenues, in exchange for granting the proposer a commercial or industrial monopoly license (*privativa*). It was widely accepted that private entities investing in new

[237] The considerations of Del Beccuto on the different tobaccos suitable for commercial exchange demonstrates the influence of the conversation between commercial correspondents on the characteristics of the exchanged commodities in order to bring to the success of particular varieties of products over others or to the proper creation of new ones. Take the example of David Hancock's proposal to look at the eighteenth-century commercialisation of the Madeira wine as a proper 'invention' by the mercantile networks across the Atlantic. See David Hancock, "Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: The Invention of Madeira Wine," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29, no. 2 (1998): 197–219; David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[238] Indeed, the case of Paolo del Sera shows a quite common example of the attempts of the merchant class to influence the policy-making in the realm of trade, relying on their expertise about global traffics. Not without reason, Corey Tazzara has argued that in the early modern age «merchants were the supreme economic experts of their days», see Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, 261.

[239] Quite often, the authors of these 'projects' were foreign subjects and they could circulate internationally to propose their innovations to different sovereign powers, until they were accepted. For the Venetian case, see Roberto Berveglieri, *Inventori stranieri a Venezia (1474-1788): importazione di tecnologia e circolazione di tecnici artigiani inventori. Repertorio*, Memorie. Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti. Classe di Scienze Morali, Lettere ed Arti 58 (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1995).

commodities or production methods, when beneficial to the sovereign interest, should enjoy exclusive rights to the profits under a monopoly regime. Consequently, other actors were legally barred from participating in the specific trade sector or production process under license for a defined period[240]. This approach ensured that certain commodities or specific productive processes were monopolized by those with the knowledge and capital to develop such projects. In return, these activities were expected to yield beneficial effects for public welfare, including the promotion of trade, employment of the population, and increased fiscal revenues. Archival sources from the early modern period

[240] The Tuscan secretary to the *Riformagioni* eloquently remembered to his sovereign that «*S.A.S. è solita a introdurre nuove arti et inventioni, et a sua dipendenti concedere privilegio, per qualche tempo per 8 o più anni, con la proibizione di usare agli altri l'industria di nuova inventione*», see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 36, f. 248, 17/10/1633. Some further examples from the Tuscan case clearly shows the entanglement between private interests and public purposes in the licenses granted by the grand-ducal secretaries. The petitions dealt with the processing of commodities increasingly coming from the New World, like sugar refining granted to the Flemish Antonio Gonthier in Livorno and to the Jews David Franco Albuquerque and Samuel Goes in Pisa, see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, ff. 54-54; ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 44, ff. 275-288, 10/08/1653; but also to the fabrication of Mediterranean products, like in the case of coral manufacture introduced by the Genoese Camillo Boccadoro in Pisa under the condition that nobody could bring manufactured coral in Livorno and Pisa, see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 40, n. 441, 01/02/1642; and reg. 44, n. 384, 22/10/1654. Another relevant sector which involved the issues of monopoly licenses was about the attempts to imitate foreign manufactures: the Frenchman Giovanni Audiret proposed in 1642 the establishment in Pisa and Livorno of the «*negotio e lavoreria di bancheggiar cere all'uso di Venezia*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 40, n. 679, 17/07/1642; 20 years later, the Frenchman Giovanni by the Frenchman Piero Giordano from Marseille and the Jew Caleb Ferro proposed the establishment in Florence and Livorno of the «*fabbrica dei berrettini di lana tanto di Spagna, che di qualsivoglia altra sorte lavorati all'usanza di Barberia e nominati di Fez*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 46, ff. 114-115, 23/08/1662. However, this last episode reveals also the negotiation involved in the process, as the granducal magistracies carefully scrutinized how much to grant and how much to require in return: the requests were actually downsized by authorities, who eventually granted a monopoly license of 5 years, instead of 10 years as asked by the petitioners, and exempted them only from the payment of internal duties, while custom duties on exports were fully maintained, see *Ibidem*, ff. 116-117, letter of the *auditore* Giovanni Federighi to the grand duke, Florence, 26/08/1662. Licenses could also cover specific trade routes, but this sphere discloses to the utmost degree the great difficulty in making them effective. In 1634, Iosef and Salomon Crespini, Jews who had lived for 30 years in Livorno, stated to have strongly benefitted to the grand duke's revenues with their trade in Ponent, Levant and north Africa: in the light of this progress, they appealed to the interest of the public authorities with the perspective of promoting trade between Livorno and the cities of Morocco (Tetuan and Salè): however, they added, such trade would have been their «*inventione*», so in order to be able to continue it in the best possible way and to reward their efforts, they begged the grace that «*tre capi di mercanzia, che tra l'altre servino di qua per quelli paesi, che sono allume, drapperia, e merce di ogni sorte, non possa nessun altro per tempo di 20 anni, o quello che a V.A. parrà, caricarle a Livorno per detti luoghi*», see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 36, n. 431. The privilege was actually granted for 10 years, but at the end of this period the director of the Livorno's custom house argued against the renovation of the privilege, because, «*sebbene altra volta ottenne simil privilegio, hora non è più quel tempo, perché qui sono molti mercanti che negoziano per Tituano e Salè*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, n. 434, letter of Pandolfo Attavanti to Alessandro Vettori in Florence, Livorno 15/02/1646.

indicate that this process was not sporadic or temporary, but rather systematic and sustained over time.

As I argued in the introduction, practices and institutions which withdrew goods from the competition of the free market should not be viewed as inherently opposed to circulation and the establishment of social connections[241]. Effectively, a new colonial commodity like tobacco, which faced numerous cultural and social obstacles to its adoption and widespread consumption, gave birth to a productive sector and became popular under the protective umbrella of sovereign powers. Once authorities recognized the fiscal and commercial potentials of tobacco, state officials began negotiating with economic actors equipped with market information to fully exploit these opportunities and realize substantial profits. State authorities relied on the connections and expertise of skilled businessmen to access distant markets and organize production. In turn, these entrepreneurs proposing such ventures demanded exclusive privileges and monopoly rights in order to undertake these initiatives. Since tobacco trade was not firmly established in the Italian peninsula, significant investments were required without any guarantee of immediate profitability[242]. Thus, placing tobacco 'out of the market', leading eventually to the establishment of the monopoly (*privativa*) over the entire sector, appears more an experimental effort to introduce a new business rather than a bid to take possession of an existing successful trade. As a result, a pattern of dialogue developed between businessmen and fiscal institutions, characterized by a mixture of shared interests and practices of negotiation. This dynamic profoundly influenced the circulation and critical phase of tobacco's commodification in our case studies.

Table 1.1 – Petitions for licenses linked to tobacco in Tuscany and Venice (1630s-1650s)

Date	Place	'Nation' of the petitioner(s)	Object

[241] See Simona Cerutti and Isabelle Grangaud, "Premessa. Fuori Mercato: Appartenenze Locali e Beni Nel Mediterraneo," *Quaderni Storici* 154, no. 1 (2017): 1–12.

[242] In a memory on the tobacco farm of the early 19th century, a Tuscan officials informed the new sovereign that «*l'uso del tabacco in polvere non fu in principio molto comune,* [therefore] *bisognò per assuefarsi le persone facilitarne la compera e quasi donarlo*», so much so that some of the first entrepreneurs in this sector went bankrupt, as in the case of the Jew «*Emanuel Levi, il patrimonio del quale fu incorporato dal Magistrato del Sale*», see ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Notizie istoriche sulla Regalia del Tabacco", 31/08/1803.

1632	Tuscany	Jewish	Reducing powdered tobacco
1633	Tuscany	Jewish	Tobacco plantation
1635	Tuscany	Jewish	Reducing powdered tobacco
1640	Tuscany	French	Tobacco plantation
1645	Tuscany	Jewish	*Privativa* on the entire sector
1653	Venice	Venetian	Reducing powdered tobacco
1655	Venice	Venetian	Tobacco wholesale purchase for the domestic market
1658	Venice	Venetian	*Privativa* on the entire sector

Sources: ASLi, *Governatore*, f. 2603; ASFi, *Riformagioni*, f. 36, 37, 40; ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I, bb. 153, 155.

From Table 1.1, we observe the monopoly licenses issued in Tuscany and in Venice during the 1630s to 1650s for activities related to tobacco production and commercialization. The prominence of the Jewish community in Livorno is notably highlighted in the early efforts to establish tobacco business. Similarly, in Venice, despite prohibitions on direct ownership of productive activities, local Jews played a pivotal role in the commercialization of tobacco[243]. Leveraging their extensive mercantile networks and Iberian heritage, they significantly entered this new sector, mirroring their involvement in other colonial commodities[244]. In this respect, the gap of over a decade

[243] See Gaetano Cozzi, ed., *Gli Ebrei e Venezia: secoli XIV-XVIII. Atti del Convegno internazionale organizzato dall'Istituto di storia della società e dello Stato veneziano della Fondazione Giorgio Cini. Venezia, Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore, 5-10 giugno 1983* (Milano: Comunità, 1987). Broadly speaking, the the *Savi alla mercanzia* informed the Senate that, regarding the wholesale tobacco trade in mid-1650s, «*nella direzione di questo affare si ha relazione che ebrei et altri ne abbiano trasmessi a questa parte*», see ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, f. 75v, 20/08/1656. Furthermore, Christian subjects who were granted privileges on tobacco business usually relied on Jewish networks: the conduct of the tobacco monopoly held by the merchants and financiers Sebastian Magno and Giuliano Van der Mann relied on the Jew Joseph Aboaf in Venice as the company's principal agent, see ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, II series, reg. 169, ff. n. nn., 29/04/1665.

[244] There is plenty of literature on the role of Sephardic Jews for long-distance trade connections in the early modern age. For some insights into the Livorno's and Venice's context, see Federica Ruspio, *La nazione portoghese: ebrei ponentini e nuovi cristiani a Venezia* (Torino: Zamorani, 2007); Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, *Vivere fuori dal ghetto: ebrei a Pisa e Livorno, secoli 16-18* (Torino: Zamorani, 2008). Moreover, the Mediterranean has been a central stage in Jonathan Israel's studies on the European Jewry's networks between Amsterdam and the Italian peninsula until the 1660s, but it becomes marginal in the following period. See Jonathan I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550-1750* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Jonathan I. Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World of Maritime Empires* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002). However, the research of Francesca Trivellato on the Livorno's mercantile house Ergas & Silvera, animated by two families of Sephardic Jews, explicitly suggests to re-evaluate their role after 1670, see Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The*

between initial developments in Tuscany and similar initiatives in Venice suggests that tobacco's commodification occurred later in the latter region compared to the areas along the Tyrrhenian sea. The Western part of the Mediterranean relied more on imports from the Iberian peninsula and the Atlantic world, which constituted a substantial portion of its overall trade by the time. By contrast, Venice retained the leadership in commercial exchange between the Italian peninsula and the Ottoman Levant for the whole period[245]. Additionally, the diverse privileges granted by authorities indicate that these mercantile networks facilitated not only the influx of extra-European goods into the Mediterranean but also the adoption of avant-garde techniques and production processes aimed at capturing new markets.

For instance, in 1632 the Jews David and Manuel Valensin introduced in Livorno «*l'arte di macinare il tabacco con odore o senza, di maniera che riesce della medesima bontà e perfezione come si macina nella città di Siviglia in Spagna*»[246]. Powdered tobacco produced in Seville was esteemed as a high-quality product, and the petitioners argued that mastery of this technique could make Livorno the primary outlet for premium tobacco throughout the Italian peninsula. Therefore, they sought exclusive rights for such production in Livorno and Pisa[247]. In 1653, the Venetian merchant Anzolo Monelli requested the privilege to process powdered tobacco, claiming to have «*inventato il modo di macinare il tabacco che riesce più grato e di maggior esito e consumo*»[248]. He enticed the authorities by offering to pay 500 ducats to the public treasury for this privilege.

The exclusive right granted to the Jews Moise Israel Peres, David Valensino, and Raffaello Politi for tobacco cultivation in the countryside of Pisa vividly illustrates the transcontinental circulation of goods and production techniques between the New World

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Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2009), 5–6.

[245] Renato Ghezzi, "North Italian Ports and the Levant in the 16th and 17th Centuries.," in *Reti Marittime Come Fattori Dell'integrazione Europea - Maritime Networks as a Factor in European Integration* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2019), 485–505.

[246] ASLi, *Governatore*, reg. 2603, f. 112, 29/08/1632.

[247] «*(...) risulta a grande beneficio di questo felicissimo stato, poiché concorreranno da tutte le parti d'Italia a comprarlo in detta città e non sarà necessario farlo venire di Spagna. E perché detti supplicanti possano con maggior utile continuare a fare detta arte, poiché sono stati li primi inventori a farla in detto luogo, supplicano a V.A.S. gli faccia grazia di concederli privilegio che nessuna persona di qualsivoglia qualità, che sia ancora et abbia privilegio generale per lì poter fare tutte le arte e li esercizi, non possa fare detta arte in detto luogo o nella città di Pisa*», *Ibidem*.

[248] ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 29v-30r, 26/09/1653.

and the Mediterranean during the first half of the 17th century. In 1633, they sought the privilege to cultivate tobacco for the following 30 years, emphasizing to «*haver con buona esperienza nel Brasile et altrove fuori delli stati di V.A.S. preso maestranza di tabacco*»[249]. Negotiations with grand-ducal secretaries led to a reduction in the privilege's duration to 20 years and discussions about potential bans on imported foreign tobaccos, as the Jewish associates found it hard to start the new business without such additional protection[250]. While foreign tobaccos were not prohibited, the Jewish entrepreneurs received exclusive rights to cultivate tobacco and additional personal privileges, including permission to bear firearms for defense. These concessions were crucial given the significant investments required, as «*la coltivazione vuole da ogni pianta cassarsi solo quattro foglie fino a che venghino giallicce, secondo l'uso del Brasile e che bisognerà ire in Algieri per comprare dua schiavi pratichi di simil coltura, con prezzo della libertà dopo che saranno ammaestrati genti paesane*»[251]. In return, they expected to find a lucrative market for their locally cultivated tobacco on the Barbary coast, ensuring substantial revenues for the grand-ducal customs houses. Livorno's Jewish 'nation' had strong connections with Algiers and Tunis through local Jewish correspondents and family members involved as agents for their commercial houses, facilitating trade[252]. However, the strategic emphasis on North Africa also highlights that, at that time, the domestic market for tobacco had limited appeal compared to other regions of the Mediterranean.

The initiative encountered significant challenges. In 1635, the same groups sought exclusive rights for the production of powdered tobacco to secure their profits[253]. Around the early 1640s, French merchant Giovanni Battaglieri also obtained a similar exclusive privilege to cultivate tobacco in the Grand Duchy's territories, prompting immediate

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[249] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 36, ff. 248r-v, 17/10/1633.

[250] According to the petitioners, the main threat came from tobacco arrivals in Livorno as corsair prey, as it could be sold «*a prezzo vilissimo in pregiudizio grave del negotio che supplicano*», whereas the main channel of supply from the American continent, pointed out in Portuguese Brazil, was significantly compromised by the Dutch occupation of Pernambuco. See *Ibidem*.

[251] *Ibidem*.

[252] See Vittorio Salvadorini, "Traffici Con i Paesi Islamici e Schiavi a Livorno Nel XVII Secolo: Problemi e Suggestioni," in *Atti Del Convegno Livorno e Il Mediterraneo Nell'età Medicea* (Livorno: Bastogi, 1978), 206–55.

[253] See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 37, ff. 89-90, 06/12/1635.

protests from the Jewish group[254]. The dispute persisted for years, with thorough investigations by the grand-ducal authorities[255]. According to the *Commissario* of Pisa, Tommaso Canigiani, Moise Peres and partners had indeed begun selling tobacco grown in the countryside of Pisa, as evinced by buyers. However, they had not planted tobacco in the last two years due to difficulties in finding suitable land[256]. Despite these setbacks, the case underscores the transcontinental mobility of Jews who brought economic knowledge and technical expertise from Brazil to Tuscany to experiment with the production of an emerging global good[257]. Moreover, colonial goods reached the Italian peninsula via the intermediation of Barbary coast cities[258]. The Jewish group highlighted Algiers as a pivotal market for tobacco consumption and the redistribution of coerced laborers trained in tobacco cultivation in the Atlantic world. While these channels did not resolve all difficulties[259], they were essential in promoting the circulation of tobacco and

[254] See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 40, f. 20, 11/01/1641.

[255] Eventually, the grand ducal secretaries established that the dispute could not be resolved via rescript, but needed the sentence of the mercantile court of the *Consoli del Mare*: this latter ruled that the Jewish group's privilege had lapsed due to non-compliance with the conditions under which it was granted, see ASPi, *Consoli del Mare*, reg. 206, 24/02/1643. In fact, as early highlighted by the secretary to the *Riformagioni* Alessandro Vettori, the Jewish groups had failed to accomplish the condition to «*mostrare tra 18 mesi l'invenzione esser praticabile et riuscibile*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 40, f. 72, 27/04/1641.

[256] See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 40, f. 22, 15/04/1641.

[257] The timing of this episode supports the thesis of a particular wave of the Jewish diaspora between Brazil and Livorno during the war between Portugal and the United Provinces, see Victor Tiribas, "Mobility, Clandestine Literature, and Censorship: A Case Study in the Transatlantic Diaspora of a Migrant Circle," *Rivista Storica Italiana* CXXXI, no. 3 (2019): 1050–84.

[258] English privateers frequently resorted to those scales, but in the 1630s the Dutch corsairs were the most active in supplying them with colonial goods after preying on Spanish and Portuguese fleets engaged in trade with the Indies. See Engels, *Merchants Interlopers Seamen and Corsairs*, 78; Klooster, *Illicit Riches*.

[259] Economic information and technical expertise were not everything: other production factors had a decisive impact on the success of tobacco cultivation as a cash crop. In particular, Moise Peres's failure in finding suitable land would suggest that the rapid soil depletion caused by tobacco farming posed a serious problem in the Tuscan countryside after the exploitation of the first fields identified as appropriate for that cultivation. Without continual crop rotation or the heavy application of fertilizer, tobacco quickly exhausts the nutrients of even the richest soil, resulting not only in environmental degradation but also in inferior tobacco. On tobacco's impact on soil's exhaustion, see Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 203. For the impact of European colonial plantation on environment and on the settlement pattern in the English tobacco colonies of north America, see Avery O. Craven, *Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606-1860*, vol. 13, 1–4 (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1926), 68–70. For a general survey on this point from the perspective of the global 'commodity frontier' of sugar in the early modern age, see Jason W. Moore, "Sugar and the Expansion of the Early Modern World-Economy: Commodity Frontiers, Ecological Transformation, and Industrialization," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, no. 3 (2000): 409–33.

securing protection from authorities in exchange for anticipated economic and fiscal benefits[260].

Economic information and trade channels played a crucial role in increasing the offer of American tobacco and local production in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. They were also instrumental in the establishment of full-fledged monopolies on tobacco trade and taxation. In 1645, another group of Sephardic jews submitted to the Tuscan government a draft of a contract for the establishment of the tobacco monopoly, for which they begged the sovereign «*di concederci l'appalto con i precedenti partiti e capitoli per l'osservanza de' quali ci obblighiamo ciascuno di noi in solitum*»[261]. The petition was signed by Jacob and David Israel de Tunis, Abram Vais Pegna, Lazzaro Vigevano and David Falcone. Who were they? Not really the latest arrivals: members of the 'aristocracy of the Jewish nation'[262], they belonged to the élite of great merchants and bankers who fostered long-distance trade, credit, and insurance market in Livorno[263]. In particular, they were among the protagonists of the 'Portuguese era' of the local Jewish nation, which until 1715 would have remained in the hands of an oligarchy of Iberian origins[264]. The ongoing relationship between 'new Christians' in the Iberian empires – from the metropoles to the farthest corners in America and Asia – and the Jewish communities originated from the Sephardic diaspora in crucial centers like Amsterdam, Livorno, Venice, and the major scales of the Ottoman empire is a theme abundantly investigated in the literature, especially concerning the role of that network in

[260] Moreover, the relevance of Jewish channels of expertise is confirmed by the case of the Savoyard states, where the *Lettere Patenti* issued on 2nd December 1753 by the regent Cristina, in order to introduce tobacco cultivation and manufacture in the sub-Alpine domains, provided «*speciali privilegi ad un ebreo di Nizza*», see Felice Amato and Camillo Duboin, *Raccolta per Ordine Di Materie Delle Leggi, Cioè Editti, Patenti, Manifesti Ecc. Emanate Negli Stati Di Terraferma Sino All'8 Dicembre 1798 Dai Sovrani Della Real Casa Di Savoia*, vol. T. XXII, Vol. XXIV, L. XI (Torino: Tipografia Cerutti, Derossi e Busso, 1858), 3.

[261] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 845, 22/03/1645.

[262] The definition of '*aristocrazia della Nazione*' is in Renzo Toaff, *La nazione ebrea a Livorno e a Pisa (1591-1700)* (Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 1990), 393.

[263] Abram Vais Pegna and Abram Israel de Tunis (father of David and Jacob) are recorded in various legal disputes brought against them around 1640 for obtaining compensation under insurance contracts on cargo shipped by sea. See ASPi, *Consoli del Mare*, "Atti civili", regg. 211-212.

[264] The same language of the official documents of the nation was the Judeo-Portuguese, see Giuseppe Tavani, "Appunti Sul Giudeo-Portoghese Di Livorno," *Annali Dell'Istituto Orientale Di Napoli. Sezione Romanza* I, no. 2 (1959): 61–99.

mercantile traffics and in the circulation of global goods[265]. The importance of such mobility and connections is fully confirmed in the path toward the tobacco monopoly in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany: a member of the house Pegna has been mentioned as the main point of reference for the Marrano diaspora from Malaga to Livorno[266]; Jacob Israel de Tunis, the main investor in the tobacco monopoly's affair, had reached Livorno from Tunis during the 1630s, but its affairs stretched from North Africa, especially Algeri where one of his brothers lived, to the Iberian peninsula, where he regularly sent ships from Livorno[267]. Moreover, they both were members of the handful of houses that in 1642 had eventually overwhelmed the hegemony of the older establishment of the Jewish nation, for decades gathered under the authority of the doctor and banker Mosè Cordovero[268], and virtually monopolized the government posts of the nation[269]. Not by chance, the petitioners proved to well know the relevant place of tobacco as an economic and fiscal resources in the Iberian monarchies: according to the granducal secretary Giovan Battista Gondi, they supported their proposal with the positive example of the recently established monopolies on tobacco by the Spanish and the Portuguese crowns, which significantly were in the hands of Portuguese 'new Christians'[270]. In addition, the

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[265] See Jean-Pierre Filippini, "Il Posto Dei Negozianti Ebrei Nel Commercio Di Livorno Nel Settecento," *La Rassegna Mensile Di Israel* 50, no. 9/12 (1984): 634–49; Richard Ayoun, "Les Juifs Livournais En Afrique Du Nord," *La Rassegna Mensile Di Israel* 50, no. 9/12 (1984): 650–706; Jonathan I Israel, "The Jews of Venice and Their Links with Holland and with Dutch Jewry (1600-1710)," in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia: Secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milano: Comunità, 1987), 95–116; Jonathan I. Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World of Maritime Empires* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002); Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, "Reti Toscane e Reti Internazionali Degli Ebrei Di Livorno Nel Seicento," *Zakhor. Rivista Di Storia Degli Ebrei d'Italia*, 2003, 93–116; Federica Ruspio, *La nazione portoghese: ebrei ponentini e nuovi cristiani a Venezia* (Torino: Zamorani, 2007); Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2009).

[266] See Giuseppe Marcocci, "Itinerari Marrani. I Portoghesi a Livorno Nei Secoli Dell'età Moderna," *Livorno, 1606-1806*, 2009, 412.

[267] See ASPi, *Consoli del Mare*, "Suppliche", reg. 977, f. 7.

[268] On Mosè Cordovero, see Michele Cassandro, "Gli Ebrei Di Livorno Nel Seicento. Aspetti Economici e Sociali," *La Rassegna Mensile Di Israel* 50, no. 9/12 (1984): 573.

[269] On the conflict between the two 'parties' in 1642, see Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, *Vivere fuori dal ghetto: ebrei a Pisa e Livorno, secoli 16-18* (Torino: Zamorani, 2008), 151–52.

[270] Unfortunately, the documentation does not include the original of the first petition written by the Jewish venture to the grand-ducal institutions, but in a register kept in the state archive of Florence that collects the notes taken by the secretary Giovan Battista Gondi during the sessions of the state council I have found a revealing paper that states as it follows: «*Letti i capitoli maneggiati con supplicanti ebrei di Livorno per*

participation of David Falcone and Lazzaro Vigevano in the enterprise also shows the consolidation of an alliance between affluent Sephardic houses in Livorno and Italian Jews, which would have exploited the privileges of the tobacco monopolies and other *appalti* or *privative* to extend their network in the Tuscan hinterland[271].

As for Venice, the Senate and the magistracies responsible for trade and taxation had begun collecting information on the introduction of the tobacco monopoly in other Italian and European states as early as the early 1650s[272]. However, it was only possible to implement the new system once a solid supply was presented by members of the mercantile community in the capital. Since December 1653, the Venetian authorities began a negotiation with Bartolo Boneri, a servant of the *Collegio*, who had proposed to establish a particular form of tobacco monopoly as a «*modo sicuro di accrescere le pubbliche rendite per la somma di ducati 40.000 o 50.000*»[273]. Behind Boneri, there was a 'secret person'[274] whose identity has been impossible to find during the research, but

l'appalto del Tabacco, che asseriscono essere di utile per la cassa di SAS come esperimentato in Castiglia e ora anche in Portogallo. L'auditore alle riformagioni dica quanto gli occorre», see ASFI, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1491, 22/03/1645. This channel of emulation appears completely in line with the expertise in tobacco economic activities that, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Livorno's Sephardic Jews claimed to have acquired in the Iberian empires to support in the previous years their petitions to obtain monopoly licenses for the cultivation or the manufacturing of that commodity.

[271] While the 'Livornine' allowed Jews living in Livorno and Pisa to move and to freely exercise commercial and manufacturing activities, the situation was very different in the other centres of the grand-duchy, where, as in the major parts of Europe, the Jewish communities were obliged to reside in the ghetto, with rigid economic limitations. See Lucia Frattarelli Fischer and Paolo Castignoli, eds., *Le "Livornine" del 1591 e del 1593* (Livorno: Cooperativa edile "Risorgimento," 1987). In this respect, the award of the tobacco monopoly granted to the Jewish group important privileges for their mobility throughout the grand-ducal territory. As the contract states, «*per la vendita del Tabacco potranno gli Appaltatori mandar persone loro dipendenti, e di lor Nazione, per tutto lo Stato, et ancho aprir botteghe per la detta vendita, purché in quelle che di nuovo aprissero ne' luoghi dove non son soliti tenerle non possino vender se non tabacco. Et in tutti i luoghi dove saranno per venderlo devino goder tutti i privilegi che godono gli ebrei in Pisa et Livorno*», see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, c. 845. On this point, see also the fundamental works of Lucia Frattarelli Fisher, in particular Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, "Gli Ebrei Toscani Dalla Città Alla Campagna," in *Città e Campagna: Tradizioni Storiografiche e Prospettive Di Ricerca*, ed. Ann Katherine Isaacs (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1997), 143–52.

[272] ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni, Terra filze*, reg. 564, Pregadi 18/02/1651.

[273] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, Pregadi 14/03/1654.

[274] See the letter of Bartolo Boneri to the Senate signed on 24 December 1653, reproduced in Stella, "Il monopolio dei tabacchi nella Repubblica Veneta," 5. The distinction between the proposer and the material financer(s) of the enterprise was extremely recurrent in the process of awarding tax contracts and fiscal *partiti* related to Venetian public finance. Doing so, the names of the financers remained concealed during the first negotiations and they could leave the concrete management of the enterprise to field agents, gaining paybacks from the financial rent of the affair. See Luigi Luzzatti, "I Dazi, Le Gravezze, i Prestiti e Le Spese

several hints suggest his strong familiarity with the commercial life of Venice. In fact, at the end of 1654, the *raccordante* explained that during the year 193.000 pounds of tobacco had been imported in Venice from Flanders, Atlantic ports, and the Ottoman scales, of which only 68.000 had been re-exported, so the domestic market was described as consistent and already structured for providing relevant fiscal revenues to the sovereign power. Such information came from merchants who were presented as business partners by Boneri and were evidently used to invest in long-distance tobacco trade[275]. The same Boneri family listed members who directly invest in the *mercatura* as their principal economic activity, as the case of the «*negozio di Costantinopoli*» carried out in those years by Ciprian Boneri with Lorenzo Lorenzi[276]. Thus, he advised to issue a monopoly *per conto pubblico* on the purchase of all the tobaccos imported, which had to be restricted to the only city of Venice and to be stored in the public warehouses in order to reserve all the sales to the Republic[277].

Nevertheless, state institutions and monopolist merchants also had to confront the challenges posed by a commodity that initially faced indifference and resistance in the market, despite its immense potential. Privileges and commercial licenses provided protection and allowed time for investors to consolidate the new sector. But what strategies did they employ to promote tobacco consumption? And what role did institutions play in stimulating demand among the general public? Sources on this topic are scarce, particularly regarding the initial attempts at tobacco commercialization. However, a certain pattern emerges from the archives of the tobacco monopolies in the 1640s and 1650s, revealing significant collaboration between monopolist merchants and

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Principali Dal Secolo X Alla Fine Della Repubblica," in *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia* (Venice: Visentini, 1912), xl.

[275] ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni*, *Terra filze*, reg. 609, writing of the *Deputati sopra la provvisione del denaro* to the Senate, Venice 15/12/1654.

[276] Information on the firm Boneri & Lorenzi has been found in the answer of the *Savi alla Mercanzia* to the petition of Ciprian Boneri who he had experienced troubles and seizures of belongings in Costantinople after the death of his partner Lorenzi during his stay in the Levant. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 190 r-v, Venice 20/09/1661.

[277] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 171, n. 3, "Partito del Tabacco, o sia Progetti et Arricordi". The collection of *dazi* and *partiti* was organised *per conto pubblico* (the operations were carried on by deputies and officials salaried by the Republic) or *per affitto* (via the alienation of certain revenues to private individuals or companies in turn of a fix annual rent). See again Luzzatti, "I Dazi, Le Gravezze, i Prestiti e Le Spese Principali Dal Secolo X Alla Fine Della Repubblica," xl–xliii.

institutions in successfully integrating tobacco into daily life and local culture, sometimes at the expense of other economic interests[278].

The first measures taken after the issuing of the first licenses demonstrated the state's commitment to securing tobacco's commercial viability. In key urban centers such as Livorno and Venice, the authorities employed a targeted approach, selling cheaper varieties of tobacco in taverns and inns frequented by workers and the lower-income populace. A 1647 petition by tavern owners in Livorno to the director of the Custom House complained about the influx of lower-quality tobacco, stating that in their inns «*si ritrova tabacco trinciato misto di qualità inferiore [...] che vende a prezzo vile*»[279], originating from the new retail shops that the tobacco contractors had opened around the port where they mixed Brazilian tobacco from Portugal with local tobacco leaves from the countryside of Pisa[280]. Similarly, in Venice the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia approved a proposal in 1656 by Bartolo Boneri to establish retail points near the port to «*espandere il consumo di tabacchi tra le genti di minor fortuna*»[281]. These measures were aimed at embedding tobacco consumption across diverse social strata, ensuring its wide acceptance and adoption.

In addition, we have evidence that tobacco entrepreneurs in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany adopted a more direct approach by distributing free samples of tobacco. According to Marco Lastri, a well-educated botanic experts of the 18th century and prominent member of the Accademia dei Georgofili, «*in quei primi tempi il tabacco era una merce ultronea, che si offeriva e si regalava dagli Appaltatori col sol fine di assuefarvi la gente*»[282]. Whereas Lastri referred to such a dynamic to underline the challenges faced by the first commercialization of tobacco, arguing that those experiments were too little based on the promotion of local cultivation, at a closer look the free distribution of tobacco appears fully integrated in coherent strategy of commercialization to generate interest and encourage regular consumption. In 1646, a

[278] Something similar has been described for the introduction in Europe of Indian cotton textiles, generating resistance on the part of linen, woolen and silk producers, though in aligning with the interests of chartered companies involved in the Indian Ocean. See Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 117.
[279] ASLi, ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, n. 4, 26/11/1647.
[280] *Ibidem*.
[281] ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 83v-85v, 18/09/1656.
[282] Lastri, *Della Coltivazione e Manifattura Libera Del Tabacco in Toscana. Discorso Economico Letto in Un'adunanza de' Georgofili Il Dì VI Luglio MDCCLXXIV*, 15.

report from the Auditore Cristoforo Marzi to the government in Florence informed that he had agreed with the local agents of Jewish families in Livorno the distribution of tobacco samples in urban markets and rural fairs, with the aim to facilitate the implementation of the granducal tobacco monopoly in the territory of Siena[283]. This tactic aimed to bolster steady demand and embed tobacco as a regular commodity within the economic structure of the Grand Duchy. To some extent, we could even trace a parallel with the widespread practice in the 20th-century cigarette industry, where the cost of 'advertising' included also giving away samples for free[284].

In conclusion, tobacco faced significant challenges during its initial introduction to the Italian peninsula. However, economic information exchanged among the participants in long-distance trade enabled local actors to selectively access varieties that were more marketable. Moreover, they developed the necessary connections with supply markets and acquired the expertise needed to propose tobacco production projects, which appealed to the authorities seeking for fiscal benefits. These actors secured exclusive rights to profits 'out of the market' in this emerging sector. The tobacco case offers a counterpoint to narratives of 'early modern globalization' which emphasize the free movement of goods overcoming protectionist measures. The alignment of interests between economic actors and fiscal institutions led to monopolistic regimes that did not obstruct the circulation of this new global commodity. Instead, they facilitated the experimentation with economic governance structures, supply-side adaptations, and aggressive commercialization strategies. As a consequence, they shaped conditions that fosters the expansion of the tobacco sector rather than limiting its diffusion[285].

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[283] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, c. 858v, 30/08/1645.

[284] For the case of the advertising policy implemented by Camel in the first decades of the 20th century, see Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 101.

[285] Early modern trade regulation is often described as an obstacle to the expansion of a sector or the whole economy. Take, for instance, the following argument by William Clarence-Smith about chocolate: «the mercantilist policies adopted by all the European colonial powers overseas slowed the consumption and diffusion of chocolate for two centuries or more», Clarence-Smith, *Cocoa and Chocolate, 1765-1914*, 21. However, the author does not consider a crucial difference between cocoa and tobacco, one that the same Spanish colonizers had to face in their American territories at the beginning of the 17th century. In fact, a relevant point was the delicate nature of the cocoa plant, which fastly exhausted the soil and whose plantation could not satisfy a wide demand as tobacco did. As a consequence, Spain deliberately promoted tobacco plantation and commercialization for the wider domestic market. See Irene Fattacciu, *Socialità, esotismo e 'ispanizzazione' dei consumi nella Spagna del Settecento* (Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2018), 37–38.

4. Was tobacco a colonial commodity? Evidence from tobacco trade in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire

The institutionalization of economic privileges and monopolies for tobacco trade and production in the Italian peninsula during the central decades of the 17th century represented a significant shift towards an expanding economic sector. The negotiation between mercantile networks and state institutions set the conditions for the increase of the offer of foreign tobacco leaves, the consolidation of local production, and the integration of the exotic commodity into the daily life of common people. In order to better understand the features of tobacco trade in the early modern Mediterranean, such a shift raises a question: was tobacco a colonial commodity at that time? The question might sound rhetorical, as the plant was unknown in Europe before the discovery and colonization of large parts of the American continent. We also know that its production took part in the formation of an Atlantic plantation complex, harvested in the New World mainly by African black slaves and oriented to satisfy new patterns of European consumption[286].

However, we have seen that, thanks to its climate flexibility and soil adaptability, the tobacco plant was adopted as a cash-crop in many places across Eurasia. To some extent, the early modern globalization of tobacco produced an acceleration in the diversification of tobacco products: relevant growing regions flourished outside the European Atlantic empires, providing the market with leaves characterized by specific organoleptic characteristics. At the core of the Mediterranean, the Italian peninsula was well connected both with the Atlantic and Levantine routes along which different tobaccos circulated. How did this heterogeneity shape the image and conception of tobacco?

For 18th-century English society, tobacco has been proposed as a case in point to investigate the formation of a racialized colonial consciousness. Unlike other extra-European products, such as sugar and tea, it has been demonstrated that tobacco's advertisement consistently showcased Native Americans and African slaves, as a sort of

[286] For tobacco plantations and coerced labor in the Atlantic world, see Paul G. Clemens, "The Operation of an Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake Tobacco Plantation," *Agricultural History*, 1975, 517–31; Lorena S. Walsh, "Plantation Management in the Chesapeake, 1620–1820," *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 2 (1989): 393–406; Joao de Figueirôa-Rêgo, Vicente Sanz Rozalén, and Santiago de Luxán Meléndez, eds., *Tabaco e escravos nos Impérios Ibéricos* (Lisboa: Cham, 2015).

metonym for imperial conquest during the Georgian era[287]. Ultimately, these references were based on the reality of colonial production, which was responsible for almost all tobacco imports to Britain[288]. However, the colonial imagery returns recurrently, even at latitudes less connected with American plantations, in representations of tobacco in the early modern era.

This imagery intended to emphasize the 'otherness' of the New World and gave way during the 17th century to a depiction more in tune with the colonial and slave perspective of European imperial projection in the Americas. The project 'Slavery Images' provides many examples of representations of Virginia's tobacco plantations where the hard work of African slaves appears in the foreground, while in the background stands out the master's mansion and the white planter himself who controls the smooth running of the operations[289]. The same can be said about one of the most important Portuguese works of the early 18th century on the natural resources of colonial Brazil: black slaves are represented during the operations for the realization of tobacco 'rolls', while the prose of Giovanni Antonio Andreoni, a Jesuit of Italian origin living in Bahia and known as André João Antonil in the Portuguese territories, reiterated that it was necessary to employ «*negros mais destros*» to obtain the desired result[290].

The same imagery spread rapidly, beyond the Atlantic empires and colonial societies that mostly employed African slaves in tobacco plantations, so much so that works edited in the Italian peninsula of the 18th century reproduced them. The depiction of tobacco published in the issue of April 1752 of the Livorno's periodical *Magazzino italiano di istruzione e piacere*[291] is an interesting example. This magazine was the outcome of an editorial initiative of the Florentine abbot Giovan Battista Zanobetti, one

[287] Dark-skinned colonized men appear in half of the 400 trade cards of tobacconists held in the British museum, see Catherine Molineux, "Pleasures of the Smoke: 'Black Virginians' in the Georgian London's Tobacco Shops," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (2007): 327–76.

[288] See data on English and British imports between 1660 and 1770 in Ralph Davis, "English Foreign Trade, 1660-1700," *The Economic History Review* 7, no. 2 (1954): 150–66; Ralph Davis, "English Foreign Trade, 1700-1774," *The Economic History Review* 15, no. 2 (1962): 285–303.

[289] See "Slavery Images - 'Tobacco,'" accessed March 4, 2022, http://www.slaveryimages.org/s/slaveryimages/item?fulltext_search=tobacco.

[290] André João Antonil, *Cultura e opulência do Brasil por suas drogas e minas* (Lisbon: Officina real Deslandesiana, 1711), 114–15. On this book and on the decision of the author to use the alias of Antonil, see Timothy J. Coates, "Introduction," in *Brazil at the Dawn of the Eighteenth Century* (Dartmouth, MA: Tagus Press, 2012), xv–xxi.

[291] See *Magazzino italiano di istruzione e piacere*, Livorno, Antonio Santini e compagni, 3 vol., 1752.

of the protagonists of the diffusion of economic knowledge in Livorno[292], and it aimed at stimulating the interests of the multi-national merchant community of the port city with the disclosure of the European cultural debates[293]. Accordingly, particular attention was devoted to the works of political economy and scientific culture, especially from the realm of applied science for their pragmatic implications. Commercial news – like the lists of exchange rates and the notes of the ships that arrived in the port of Livorno – were an indispensable complement to each issue[294].

In this context, it is remarkable that Zanobetti decided to publish for the issue of April 1752 a *Dissertazione sul tabacco*[295]. This latter was basically a translation, though with some additions, of a 'Dissertation on tobacco' firstly appeared in the English *Universal magazine of knowledge and pleasure* in 1750[296], a magazine that, as we can immediately understand from the title, was one of the most important sources for Livorno's periodical. The text was accompanied by a depiction of the various stages in the manufacture of tobacco following the harvesting of its leaves (see Figure 1.1). In the background we see again African slaves spinning tobacco and making 'rolls, while in the foreground a European man and woman are engaged in the cleaning and pressing of tobacco and the making of so-called 'buns' for pipe smoking.

Figure 1.1 – 'La manifattura del Tabacco', 1752

[292] Zanobetti was the author in 1751 of the preface to the Livorno's edition of *Sul commercio*, a book published the year before in Rome by the banker Girolamo Belloni. On the instrumental use of this preface as an opportunity to open a public debate on the existing relation between political freedom and free trade, see Antonella Alimento, "Carlo Ginori and the Modernization of the Tuscan Economy," in *Florence after the Medici: Tuscan Enlightenment, 1737-1790*, ed. Corey Tazzara, Paula Findlen, and Jacob Soll (New York, NY ; London: Routledge, 2020), 157–75.

[293] For example, as another indicator of the crucial importance of the reflection on trade and its social implications in that years, see the publication of the some translated extraits of the 21st book of Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois*, in *Magazzino italiano*, v. I, May 1752, pp. 95-99; June 1752, pp. 125-129; v. II, July 1752, pp. 8-10; August 1752, pp. 41-42.

[294] More on the *Magazzino italiano* can be found in Elena Gremigni, "La stampa periodica a Livorno nel secolo dei Lumi," in *Giornali del Settecento fra Granducato e legazioni. Atti del convegno di studi, FIrenze, 17-19 maggio 2006* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008), 1000–1034.

[295] *Magazzino italiano*, April issue, pp. 62-66.

[296] See *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, London, published by John Hinton, vol. VI, issue November 1750, pp. 225-228.

Source: 'Magazzino italiano', vol. I, April issue, p. 62.

This image has a proper transnational history and almost one hundred years of circulation along scientific and technical dissertation about tobacco. The pervasive presence of black people can be found also in books devoted to colonies where the employment of African slaves for tobacco growing and processing was much less central, if not absent, as in the case of the French West Indies. Not by chance, I found the oldest version of the same image in the second version of the *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par le François* (1667), by Jean Baptiste Du Tertre[297]. The series of plates by the famous engraver Sébastien Leclerc[298] provided the readers with images from the Caribbean colonial universe, surely spoilt by an exoticist view of the Antilles. In this case, tobacco manufacture appears in a plate that represented different processes, both carried out by slaves of African origin: on the left, we find the operations related to the processing of manioc; on the right, the stages of separating the ribs from the leaf, curing, and making

[297] Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, *Histoire Générale Des Antilles Habitées Par Les François*, 2 vols. (Paris: chez Thomas Iolly, 1667).
[298] On the role of Sebastien Leclerc and the *Académie des sciences et arts* in the making of the second edition of the *Histoire*, see Christina Kullberg, *Lire l'Histoire Générale Des Antilles de J.-B. Du Tertre. Exotisme et Établissement Français Aux Iles (1625-1671)* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2021).

the tobacco 'rolls' are represented in the identical way we appreciated from the *Magazzino toscano*[299].

Figure 1.2 – Image in a chapter dedicated to tobacco in Pomet's 'Histoire'

Source: Pierre Pomet, *Histoire Générale Des Drogues Traitant Des Plantes, Des Animaux et Des Mineraux* (Paris: chez Jean-Baptiste Loyson et Augustin Pillon, 1694), 159.

Later on, the same image was published in different works in France and England for describing tobacco from various point of view: I could find it in the late-17th century treatise on drugs by the French grocer Pierre Pomet (see Figure 1.2)[300]; in the monumental history of the French Antilles by the Dominican father Labat, published in 1722[301]; and in the great description of American colonial societies published in 1762 London, the *American gazeteer*[302]. In these cases, tobacco's images were separated from other processing activities, so the representation overlaps perfectly with the background of the one from Livorno. In fact, one of the primary sources for the 'Dissertation on tobacco'

[299] Du Tertre, *Histoire Générale Des Antilles Habitées Par Les François*, vol. II, 419.
[300] Pierre Pomet, *Histoire Générale Des Drogues Traitant Des Plantes, Des Animaux et Des Mineraux* (Paris: chez Jean-Baptiste Loyson et Augustin Pillon, 1694), 159.
[301] Jean-Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau voyage aux isles de l'Amérique, contenant l'histoire naturelle de ces pays, l'origine, les moeurs, la religion et le gouvernement des habitans anciens et modernes, les guerres et les événemens singuliers qui y sont arrivez* (Paris: chez Guillaume Cavelier, 1722), vol. IV, 496.
[302] *The American Gazetteer: Containing a Distinct Account of All the Parts of the New World* (London: printed for A. Millar and J. & R. Tonson, 1762), vol. III, 302.

published by the *Universal magazine* was the book of Pomet, explicitly quoted[303], which also had an English translation published in 1748 in London[304].

The mediation of such literature, much more involved with colonial societies, for the texts on tobacco that circulated in the mid-18th-century Italian peninsula explains the strong association with the colonial imagery. Furthermore, the colonial nature of tobacco and its American dimension can be experienced also in the definition of the plant and of the related activities provided by important dictionaries and compilation of technical knowledge of the mid-18th-century Italian peninsula. The *Dizionario universale delle arti e delle scienze* appeared in Venice in 10 volumes between 1748 and 1749: it was basically a translation, promoted by the Venetian printer Giambattista Pasquali of the fifth edition of the *Cyclopaedia* edited by Ephraim Chambers and firstly published in London in 1727[305]. It represented the most important encyclopedic collection of technical and scientific knowledge until the diffusion of the cornerstone of the European Enlightenment, the French *Encyclopédie*, and it provided significant insights on the productive activities and economic applications of natural resources. In this respect, tobacco cultivation was essentially described as a business of colonial America[306]: the article dwelled in detail on the method of cultivation used in British Virginia, while merely noting that there was also significant Levantine production, about which, however, no details were added.

The absence of information on Levantine tobacco in an 18th-century encyclopedic text of English origin is hardly surprising, given that the North American colonies were almost the only supply region for domestic consumption. The quality of this production was an important issue that merited study and dissemination, since the viability of a redistribution trade in Western and Northern Europe dominated by large British merchants depended on it. However, it is more striking to note the substantial reproduction of the colonial imagery and the almost exclusive focus on the American

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303 *Universal magazine*, issue November 1750, p. 226.

304 Pierre Pomet, *A Complete History of Drugs* (London: printed for J. and J. Bonwicke, S. Birt, W. Parker, C. Hitch, and E. Wicksteed, 1748).

305 On the major role of the *Cyclopaedia* in the eighteenth-century encyclopedism and on the interconnections between the Venetian editorial adventure (in competition with the other contemporary translation carried out in Naples) with the subsequent French translation, see Gianfranco Dioguardi, "Enciclopedismo Nel XVIII Secolo," *Belfagor* 53, no. 2 (1998): 208–15.

306 «*Si coltiva il Tabacco in varie parti dell'America, particolarmente nell'Isola Caribbe e nella Virginia*», *Dizionario universale delle arti e delle scienze*, Venice, presso Giambattista Pasquali, 1749, v. VIII, p. 247.

dimension in the Italian texts. Niccolò Gavelli's treatise on tobacco, published a few years later, in fact, followed the article in the Venetian Dictionary, but he added some precious information, especially in what we can learn between the lines: after having exalted American leaves, he argued that «*ne viene ancora una quantità dal Levante e dalle coste della Grecia, e dell'Arcipelago in foglie unite insieme. Anche dall'isola di Malta e nell'Italia si fanno molte sorte di tabacchi*»[307].

Despite the lack of codified knowledge on tobacco cultivation in the Ottoman Levant and the Christian Mediterranean, Gavelli's account attests to the multiplicity of tobaccos circulating in the region. What evidence can we draw from Tuscan and Venetian sources in order to get a more precise picture of tobacco trade at the core of the early modern Mediterranean? Was the tobacco imported in the two early modern Italian states a colonial commodity from the Americas? To begin with, it is important to stress that the importation of tobacco into the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire took place primarily via maritime routes. Specifically, the main points of entry were the ports of Livorno and Venice. Regarding Livorno, numerous studies have systematically gathered data from the archive of the Health Board. From these works, we can retain that tobacco imports to Livorno experienced a substantial increase in the 1640s. Until 1611, tobacco was virtually absent from the Livorno market[308] and, according to Marie Engels, Dutch ships arriving in Livorno in 1625 and 1630 only occasionally carried tobacco[309]. Moreover, Renato Ghezzi has shown that, unlike sugar, tobacco remained a rare cargo on ships arriving from Lisbon throughout the 1630s. It was only in the early 1640s that tobacco saw a true boom, with average annual imports rising from nearly zero in 1637-1641 to approximately 180 quintals between 1642-1646, and then exceeding 450 quintals in the 1650s and 1660s[310].

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[307] Niccolò Gavelli, *Storia Distinta, e Curiosa Del Tabacco, Concernente La Sua Scoperta, La Introduzione in Europa, e La Maniera Di Coltivarlo, Conservarlo, e Prepararlo, e per Servirsene Con Altre Ottime Ed Utili Osservazioni Sopra Il Medesimo* (Pesaro: Altieri, 1758), 13.

[308] For the period 1547-1611, see Fernand Braudel and Ruggiero Romano, *Navires et Marchandises à l'entrée Du Port de Livourne: 1547-1611* (Paris: Colin, 1951).

[309] Marie Christine Engels, *Merchants Interlopers Seamen and Corsairs: The Flemish Community in Livorno and Genoa* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), 95–112.

[310] Renato Ghezzi, "Il Porto Di Livorno e Il Commercio Mediterraneo Nel Seicento," in *Livorno: 1606-1806. Luogo Di Incontro Tra Popoli e Culture* (Torino: Allemandi, 2009), 329.

These considerations can be complemented with an in-depth analysis of the '*portate mercantili*' of ships arriving between January 1654 and August 1657[311]. These were years of favorable conditions: the resurgence of Mediterranean-Atlantic trade, which had inevitably been disrupted by the Anglo-Dutch conflict (1652-1654), coincided with the growing significance of the tobacco trade in Livorno. By this time, approximately 20 years after the first licenses and privileges for tobacco trade and production in the Grand Duchy, a substantial wholesale market had taken root. This documentation is therefore valuable for understanding the routes and intermediaries through which Livorno was able to intercept the blooming tobacco's global trade.

During the period under consideration, 48 vessels unloaded tobacco in Livorno, totaling 3.864 quintals. Although we can recognize the Levant (especially from Smyrna) and the Barbary coast as two alternative supply routes[312], the vast majority of tobacco (3.104 quintals) came from the West (see Graph 1.1): 29 of the recorded vessels had begun their journey beyond the Strait of Gibraltar. Among them, three notable cases involved ships arriving directly from the Atlantic islands (Barbados and the Azores) that unloaded tobacco in Livorno without stopping at the metropolitan capitals[313]. However,

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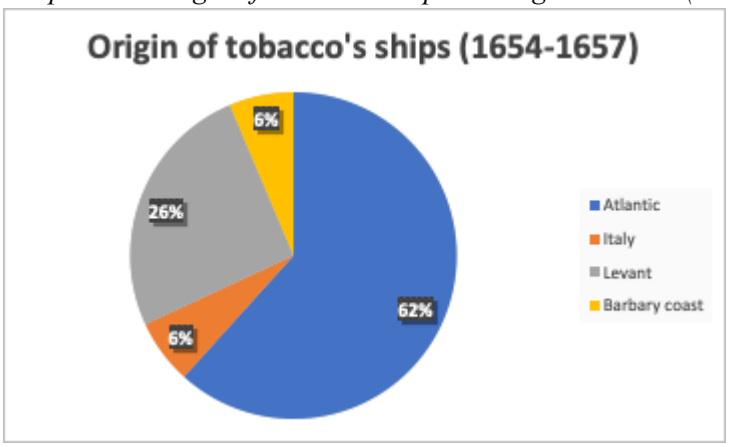
[311] The following statements, unless otherwise specified, are taken from ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, inss. 4-5; and *Ibidem*, reg. 1819, inss. 3-6. Some observations on these documents can be found in Cesare Ciano, "Uno Sguardo al Traffico Tra Livorno e l'Europa Del Nord Verso La Metà Del Seicento," in *Atti Del Convegno Livorno e Il Mediterraneo Nell'età Medicea* (Bastogi, 1978), 149–68.

[312] Out of the 48 recorded vessels, 12 came from Levantine ports, primarily from Smyrna, where tobacco cultivated in both Anatolia and the Middle East converged. However, tobacco was a relatively minor commodity along this route from the Levant: only 118 quintals entered Livorno through it, included within shipments where other goods were of greater significance. For example, the *polacca San Carlo*, with a capacity of 400 *salme* (approximately 90 tons) and captained by Giacche Gilbert, a Frenchman residing in Livorno, arrived in Livorno on September 10, 1654, after departing from Smyrna 20 days earlier. Its cargo included: 79 bales of silk, 87 bales of spun cotton, 43 bales of wool, 350 buffalo hides, 9 sacks of wax, 3 bales of carpets, and 2 sacks of tobacco. See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, ins. 4, letter of 09/10/1654. On the other hand, only three vessels came from the Barbary Coast, but they carried significantly larger quantities of tobacco. The Maghreb coast played a crucial role in the redistribution of tobacco across the 17th-century Mediterranean, largely due to the privateering trade. Our records mention two captains residing in Livorno, Antonio Napoleone and Francesco Levanto, who arrived in the port from Algiers on June 17, 1655, each with substantial tobacco shipments, both exceeding 200 quintals. The ship *San Francesco e Sant'Antonio*, captained by Antonio Napoleone, carried 305 rolls of tobacco (approximately 201 quintals), while *La Madonna del Loreto*, captained by Francesco Levanto, had 400 rolls in its hold (around 264 quintals). See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1819, ins. 4, letter of 17/06/1655. Notably, our records indicate that the route between Livorno and North Africa was primarily navigated by Livornese captains, likely involved in privateering and piracy, which had made them quite familiar with the Barbary cities.

[313] These included the ship *Riccardo e Maria*, captained by the Englishman Francesco Restfoni, arriving from the island of Barbados with 330 quintals of tobacco, and docking in Livorno on June 10, 1655 (see ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, ins. 5, letter of 06/10/1655); as well as the ships *Caccia* and *Tommaso e Lucia*, arriving from the '*Isole Terziere*' (i.e., the Azores), which docked in Livorno on October 3 and October 29, 1656, respectively (see *Ibidem*, reg. 1819, ins. 6, letters of 10/03/1656 and 10/29/1656).

more than half of the ships that unloaded tobacco in Livorno between 1654 and 1657, came from the European capitals of Lisbon, London, and Amsterdam[314]. These three cities were central to imperial economies that tobacco had helped to integrate on a transcontinental scale: vast plantations in American colonial territories (particularly in Portuguese Brazil and English Virginia[315]); mercantile networks that supplied planters with credit and African slaves, later selling the harvest on the other side of the Atlantic (including in West Africa in exchange for more slaves to fuel American production[316]); and manufacturing centers in major European cities to process products destined for consumption.

Graph 1.1 – Origin of tobacco's ships landing in Livorno (1654-1657)



Source: ASFi, Mediceo del Principato, regg. 1818-1819.

In particular, Brazilian tobacco arriving in Livorno from Lisbon experienced a significant growth trend, although almost exclusively on English-flagged ships[317]. However, it was Northern-sourced tobacco that took the lion's share. England and the

Presumably, these ships were returning from the American mainland, where they were more likely to have loaded tobacco.

[314] Of the 48 recorded vessels, 25 came from these three ports.

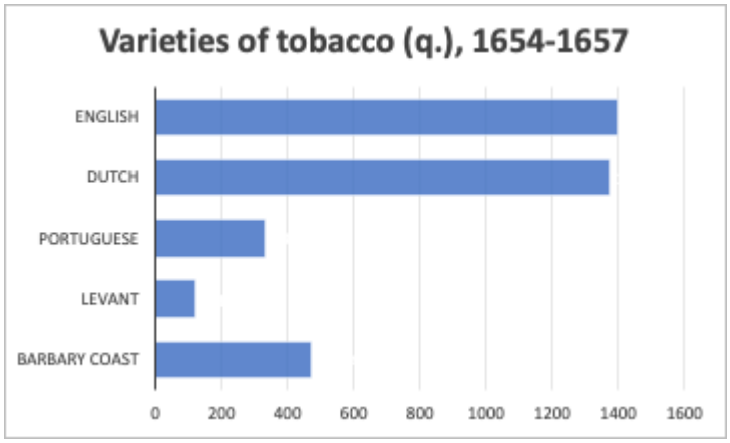
[315] For the cultivation of tobacco in the Chesapeake Bay area between the English colonies of Virginia and Maryland, see Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia by the University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright*. For tobacco production in Portuguese Brazil, see Nardi, *O fumo brasileiro no período colonial lavoura, comércio e administração*.

[316] See Pierre Verger, "Rôle Joué Par Le Tabac de Bahia Dans La Traite Des Esclaves Au Golfe Du Bénin," *Cahiers d'études Africaines*, 1964, 349–69.

[317] Of the nine ships arriving from Lisbon with tobacco on board, five were captained by Englishmen, three by Italians from Livorno, and one by a Dutchman.

Dutch Republic had by then achieved a dominant position in the global tobacco market[318]. Of the 3.104 quintals arriving from the West, 1.396,35 quintals can be attributed to English production, 1.375,32 quintals to Dutch production, and 332,38 quintals to Portuguese-Brazilian production (see Graph 1.2). These data are consistent with the findings of Renato Ghezzi who has argued that, in the early 1640s, English-traded tobacco became the most prominent on the Livorno market, eventually being surpassed by Dutch-redistributed tobacco in the 1660s[319]. Nevertheless, shipments of tobacco from London to Livorno were small compared to Dutch loads and those arriving directly from the Americas; for the wealthy London trade companies specializing in tobacco, Mediterranean markets were not as easily conquered as those in Northwestern Europe, the Baltic, and Northern Germany[320].

Graph 1.2 – Varieties of tobacco landing in Livorno (1654-1657)



Source: ASFi, Mediceo del Principato, regg. 1818-1819.

In sum, during the 1650s, tobacco in Livorno was mostly a colonial commodity harvested in the American plantations and commercialized by the North Atlantic maritime powers. Though the Western Mediterranean trade showed relevant differences with the

[318] Planters in the American colonies were shipping an average of 15 million pounds (approximately 68,000 quintals) per year to England. Due to the sharp decline in the price of tobacco grown in Virginia and Maryland, this colonial product quickly established itself in many European markets. See Russell R. Menard, "A Note on Chesapeake Tobacco Prices, 1618-1660," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 84, no. 4 (1976): 401–10; Russell R. Menard, "Plantation Empire: How Sugar and Tobacco Planters Built Their Industries and Raised an Empire," *Agricultural History*, 2007, 309–32.

[319] Renato Ghezzi, *Livorno e l'Atlantico: i commerci olandesi nel Mediterraneo del Seicento* (Bari: Cacucci, 2011), 162–65.

[320] For a comparison, see Jacob M. Price, *France and the Chesapeake; a History of the French Tobacco Monopoly, 1674-1791, and of Its Relationship to the British and American Tobacco Trades* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973), 509–30.

coeval tobacco trade in Northern Europe, colonial re-exports, which kept tobacco prices low, and Dutch low-cost cultivation were better positioned than the first attempts to domesticate tobacco cultivation in the Eastern half of the Mediterranean[321].

The documentation kept in the Tuscan Health Board archive allows a comparison of tobacco imports in Livorno between different times of the early modern age. In particular, I have chosen to compare the years from 1654 to 1657 with the period 1731-1733. Also for these years we can rely on a notable continuity in the Health Board documentation and they represent a significant period. Scholars have demonstrated that Livorno trade experienced a considerable expansion from the custom house reform of 1676 to the end of the Medici dynasty in 1737[322], with a particularly intense growth during the wartime years from 1689 and 1713[323]. Moreover, though the whole period was still marked by conjunctural hard times, the years 1731-1733 were of trade expansion in Livorno after the end credit crisis that hit in 1729[324].

Data from the *portate mercantili* from 1731 to 1733 show a reversed scenario compared to the picture of tobacco trade in the 1650s[325]. First of all, among the captains of the ships carrying tobacco, the number of Mediterranean actors is significantly higher. Out of 97 ships, 47 were captained by men from the Mediterranean maritime cities of France, whereas the numbers of English and Dutch captains stopped respectively at 22

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[321] Tobacco had already been cultivated in certain regions of the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. However, by the time these were small-scale productions with limited output. See Bruce William McGowan, *Economic life in Ottoman Europe: taxation, trade and the struggle for land, 1600 - 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1–44.

[322] Jean Pierre Filippini, "Grandeur et Difficultés d'un Port Franc: Livourne (1676–1737)," *Bulletin de l'Association Française Des Historiens Economistes* 12 (1979): 36–46.

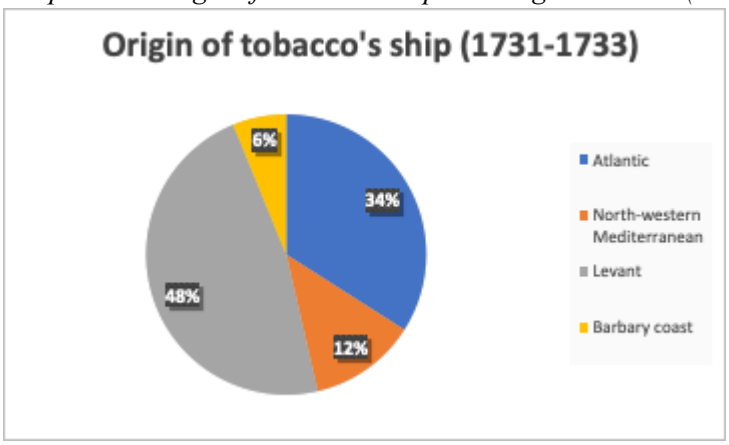
[323] Andrea Addobbati, *Commercio, rischio, guerra: il mercato delle assicurazioni marittime di Livorno, 1694-1795* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2007), 89–95. Addobbati has analyzed the series of the *stallaggi*, a tax on Livorno trade, that are kept in the '*Soprassindaci e Sindaci*' archive in Florence. This was a granducal magistracy responsible for oversight of the accounts of the institutions that collected taxes. From the evidence collected from this source, Addobbati has argued that the period immediately after the custom house reform (traditionally considered as the pillar for the free port success) was a tough one for Livorno, due to the international unfavorable economic conjuncture and to the slow consolidation of the new administrative practice. By contrast, wartime periods were exploited at the highest level: thanks to the policy of neutrality, Livorno trade experienced the greatest growth during the wars of the 18th century, stabilizing after peace at higher rates than in the prewar period.

[324] On the credit crisis hitting Livorno in the first decades of the 18th century, see Daniele Baggiani, "Tra Crisi Commerciale e Interventi Istituzionali: Le Vicende Del Porto Di Livorno in Età Tardo Medicea (1714-1730)," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 104, no. 3 (1992): 678. On the benefits from neutrality for Livorno trade, see also Corey Tazzara, "Port of Trade or Commodity Market? Livorno and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Mediterranean," *Business History Review* 94, no. 1 (2020): 201–28.

[325] The following statements, unless otherwise specified, are taken from ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, regg. 2306-2307.

and 15. Also Italian captains, especially from Livorno, Genoa, Naples and Venice, were involved in tobacco imports in the Tuscan ports. Such a different picture is a spy of the changing balance in Mediterranean trade in the 18th century when compared to the previous one, with particular reference to the relevance of French merchants in the *caravane maritime* connecting the western half of the basin with the Ottoman scales[326]. Moreover, it was related to the crucial turnaround in the places of origin for tobacco varieties commercialized in Livorno. As we can see from Graph 1.3, almost half of the tobacco ships in this period came from the Levant, while ships from the Atlantic had dropped from 61% in the 1650s to 34% in this second period.

Graph 1.3 – Origin of tobacco's ships landing in Livorno (1731-1733)



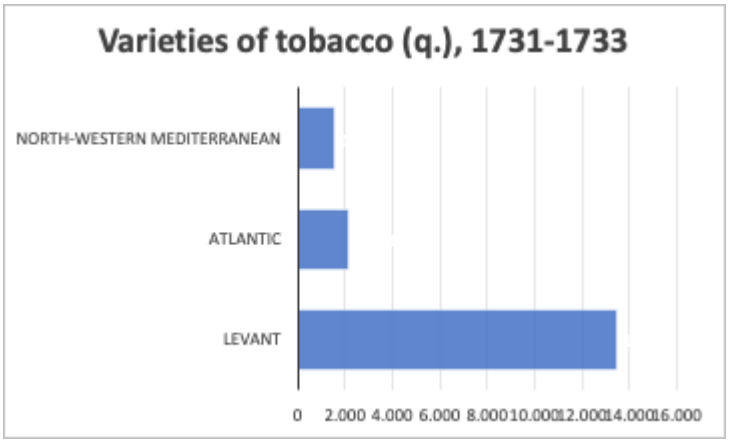
Source: ASFi, Mediceo del Principato, regg. 2306-2307.

However, the magnitude of the changement can be more appreciated from the quantities of the different varieties of tobacco which were imported in Livorno. In fact, the amount of tobacco cultivated in the Ottoman Empire far outperformed the other varieties. During the years 1731-1733, more than 13.471 quintals of Levantine tobacco reached Livorno, against just 2.120 quintals from the Atlantic and 1.591 quintals from the North-Western Mediterranean, especially Marseille and Genoa (see Graph 1.4). It represented more than 78% of all the tobacco imported in Livorno in these years. Moreover, cargoes from the Levant were usually large consignments of tobacco leaves

[326] See Daniel Panzac, *La caravane maritime: Marins européens et marchands ottomans en Méditerranée, 1680-1830* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2004).

from ships of various nationalities that specialized in this trade[327]. The opposite of the dynamic prevailing in the previous century, when in cargoes from the Levant tobacco was a secondary commodity and quantitatively inferior to other products on board.

Graph 1.4 – Varieties of tobacco landing in Livorno (1731-1733)



Source: ASFi, Mediceo del Principato, regg. 2306-2307.

The image of a specialized trade is confirmed by the absolute prominence of Salonika as the port of origin for Levantine tobacco[328]. Nicolas Svoronos' immense research on the Greek city in the early modern age has demonstrated the importance of tobacco to the port economy. Salonika, in fact, represented the collection center for tobacco leaves grown in the region of Macedonia. The region's annual harvest was estimated at 100,000 bales of 71 *okkas* each[329]. The largest portion of this product was destined for the internal trade of the Ottoman Empire, to Anatolia and Egypt[330]. However, a relevant share was exported to the Western Mediterranean, especially to Italian port

[327] Also English ships were involved in the shipment of Levantine tobacco to Livorno. Out of 45 ships carrying tobacco from the Levant, 7 were flying the British flag for a total amount of 1.592,21 quintals of tobacco.

[328] More than 13,423 quintals out of 13,471 quintals of Levantine tobacco came from Salonika in the years 1731-1733.

[329] The *okka* was an Ottoman unit of weight corresponding to 1.275 grams or 3.76 Florentine pounds. Accordingly, one bale of Thessaloniki tobacco corresponded to about 267 Florentine pounds or 90.5kg. Thus, the total production of tobacco grown in Macedonia in the 18th century reached 26.7 million Florentine pounds.

[330] Eyal Ginio has highlighted that the tobacco trade between Salonika and Alexandria was largely in the hands of Muslim ottoman subjects, while Jews dominated the export trade of tobacco towards the Western half of the Mediterranean. See Eyal Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica: The Ottoman Perspective," *Jewish History* 28, no. 3–4 (2014): 289–312.

cities: among these latter, Livorno imported the largest amount of tobacco from Salonika[331].

Looking at data on the Venetian Empire, we should recall that tobacco trade in the Venetian Empire results less developed when compared with Livorno in the 1650s. Though we can only rely on less systematic information for this period, there is no doubt that at that time tobacco imported in Venice was mostly a colonial commodity from the Americas through the intermediation of Atlantic commercial powers. English merchants played a pivotal role for the development of new trade routes between Venice and the Caribbean, especially Barbados from where a relevant tobacco trade originated involving some Venetian mercantile houses[332]. Moreover, overland trade routes with Northern Europe facilitated substantial imports from Flanders: as reported by the first tobacco contractor, Bartolo Boneri, to the Senate in 1654, «*l'anno passato, a forza di spese gagliarde, se n'è fatto venire da Fiandra per via di terra una gran quantità, e ne capita in questa città più di 200.000 libbre all'anno*»[333]. In addition, the 'Flemish merchants' were also particularly active in maritime trade with the *Serenissima*, having obtained important facilities for duty-free extraction on the '*Navi di Ponente*' of goods purchased in Venice. Tobacco was among the most common commodities that these northern merchants exchanged for Venetian products in the central decades of the 17th century[334].

For a comparison with the 18th century, I have examined the registers of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*. This source provided data on annual imports and exports of commodities saddled with custom duties from 1771 to 1797. Moreover, from 1772 to 1782, the registers also track entries and exits of '*non soggetti a dazio*' goods: in this category, we can find foodstuffs (wine, oil, meat, fish) and vegetable raw materials (hemp, firewood, pitch, building materials) that were subject only to a consumption tax; Goods that were subject to a state monopoly, including tobacco, fell under these

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[331] Nicolas G. Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), 239–80.

[332] As we have seen, in 1655, the magistrate in charge of trade in Venice, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, dealt several times with the «*introdutione et continuatione delle Navi che dalle Indie occidentali possono capitare in questa città, come è seguito dalla suddetta nave Giovanni Maria, ultimamente venuta a dirittura con ricche mercanzie*», as an interesting opportunity to establish a profitable trade with the English colonies in the Caribbean. See ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 67r-69v, 08/12/1655; and ff. 75r-77v, 20/08/1656.

[333] ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 609, writing of Bartolo Boneri to the Senate, Venice 14/03/1654.

[334] See ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 5v-7r, 03/08/1652; and ff. 163v-164r, 08/05/1660.

registers[335]. Accordingly, this source is particularly useful to understand the routes of tobacco trade in the 18th-century Venetian Empire[336].

Also for the Venetian case, the comparison between the tobacco trade in the 17th and in the 18th centuries shows a remarkable turnaround. Between 1772 and 1782, the city of Venice imported 20,9 million pound of tobacco, almost exclusively from abroad (see Table 1.2.): the Venetian *Terraferma* contributed with only 595.355 pounds, while tobaccos from the Ottoman Empire ascended to 15.526.955 pounds, notably from Ottoman Albania[337]. Conversely, Atlantic tobacco was a completely marginal commodity in the Venetian Empire of the late 18th century. Statistics shows also a relevant flow from Habsburg Hungary, which significantly grew in the 1780s[338]. Counting also the capital for tobaccos from the west, 2.580.727 ducats outflowed abroad during the period, more than 258.000 ducats per year, so apparently even more than declared in some memorials by the tobacco general farmer and Venetian officials[339]. In any case, the bulk of imports were constituted by cargoes of tobacco leaves harvested in the Albanian province of the Ottoman Empire. This commodity animated a vibrant direct trade between Durazzo and Venice[340].

Table 1.2. - Imports of tobacco trade in Venice (1772-1782)

Regions of origins	Tobacco pounds
Levante estero (Ottoman Greece)	3.896.330
Golfo estero (Ottoman Albania)	11.630.625
Germania (Hungary)	4.533.480

[335] On the registers of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, see again Giordano Campos, "Il Commercio Esterno Veneziano Della Seconda Metà Del'700 Secondo La Statistica Ufficiale," *Archivio Veneto* 19 (1936): 145–83; Alessandra Sambo, "La Balance de Commerce de La République de Venise: Sources et Méthodes," *Cahiers de La Méditerranée*, no. 84 (2012): 381–410.

[336] What follows is based on my elaboration on the registers: ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, "Registri", regg. 12, 16, 18, 22, 23, 28, 29, 33, 35, 40, 41, 46, 47, 52, 56, 57, 61, 63.

[337] From the 'foreign Levant' (Ottoman Greece), 3.896.330 pounds arrived during the period, while 11.630.625 arrived from the "foreign Gulf" (Ottoman Albania).

[338] In ten years, 4.533.480 pounds came from Hungary, but almost half between 1780 and 1782 (1.829.494 pounds).

[339] The indication of 160.000 ducats is in a memorial signed by Girolamo Manfrin, general tobacco farmer between 1779 and 1797, see QSFL, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, "Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma", p. 214r. More than 200.000 ducats is the amount suggested in a letter written by the *Provveditore generale di Dalmazia e Albania*, Piero Michiel, in 1763, see ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Zara 04/04/1763.

[340] The correspondence between the Venetian consuls in Durazzo to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* demonstrates that Levantine tobacco was the most important commodity that the Venetian Empire imported from Ottoman Albania. See in particular ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, regg. 661-666.

Ponente (Thyrrenian and Atlantic)	237.141
Terraferma	595.355
Other	15.078
Total	20.908.009

Sources: ASVe, Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 'Registri', regg. 12, 16, 18, 22, 23, 28, 29, 33, 35, 40, 41, 46, 47, 52, 56, 57, 61, 63.

From these data, despite the prevailing coeval representations, it is evident that in the 18th century tobacco Atlantic was no more a colonial commodity from the Americas. On the contrary, it was mostly an imported commodity from the Ottoman Empire in the form of tobacco leaves. I argue that the reasons for this development are the dynamism of market agriculture in the 18th-century Ottoman Empire; the nature of the demand of the main purchaser of tobacco in our two case studies, the monopolistic Tobacco Farm; and the ability of the prominent mercantile networks to influence the offer.

First of all, Levantine exports progressively reached higher levels, steadily feeding Western markets with commodity which, generally speaking, required extensive use of land[341]. According to some scholars, whereas fallow became more and more scarce in Western Europe, the relatively more abundant land of the Eastern Mediterranean was drawn into the Europe-centered international system and production[342]. However, Ottoman tobacco cultivation shows a certain dynamism that cannot be reduced into the scheme of the unequal exchange with Western Europe. It was a labor-intensive crop integrated with manufactures. Moreover, the bulk of the harvest was destined for the Ottoman markets, where it was processed and traded for domestic consumption[343]. Most importantly, Ottoman tobacco plantations belonged to market-oriented agriculture that emerged in the 18th century with the transition from the *timar* to the *chiftlik* system that took place primarily in the hinterlands of ports like Durazzo and Salonika as the elected sites for more capital-intensive and labor intensive uses[344].

Moreover, the monopolistic organization of the tobacco trade in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire massively influenced the flows of tobacco's circulation. The intrusive presence of the Tobacco Farms as the greatest purchasers in the

[341] See Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire. 1300-1914* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 947–70.
[342] See Donald Quataert, *Workers, Peasants and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730-1914*, 2010, 32–75.
[343] This pattern is described in Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica."
[344] See McGowan, *Economic life in Ottoman Europe*, 56–77.

western tobacco markets profoundly shaped the nature of the demand. In order to safeguard its profit, the monopolistic enterprise was mainly interested in buying cheap cargos of *foglia soda*, i.e. tobacco leaves which were just seasoned after the harvest and represented the fundamental raw material for the privileged manufactures. The tobacco farmers were used to highlight the importance of a regular low-cost supply of tobacco leaves in order to raise privileged profits and state revenues. This dynamic emerges with particular clarity from the correspondence between the Lefroy & Charron company in Livorno with the general contractors in Florence: the trading company, led by the two Nordic merchants (English Lefroy, Dutch Charron) and based in Livorno, had been identified by the Tobacco Farm as the main supplier of the *foglia soda* from Salonika. After years of collaboration, according to all the parties involved, «*la convenienza e la fiducia è, fra le S. loro e noi, così reciproca che non temiamo, anzi siamo sicurissimi d'un felice esito di questra intrapresa nell'interesse di SMI*»[345]. From this perspective, in the 18th century, tobacco leaves from the Ottoman Empire provided more assurances than the colonial varieties from the Americas: the latter were not only subjected to the recurrent wars that concerned the Western Mediterranean and Atlantic Europe at the time[346], but ultimately more expensive than the ones from the Levant (see Table 1.3 for a comparison between the wholesale prices of the Virginia and Salonika tobacco leaves on the Livorno's market).

Table 1.3. - Wholesale prices of tobacco from Virginia and from Salonika in the Livorno's market (1735-1758)

Year	Virginia leaf	Salonika leaf
1735	5,8	5,1
1746	5,2	4,5
1750	5,9	5,6
1754	5,6	4,5
1758	9,7	5,8

Sources : ASFi, Appalti generali, ff. 273, 276, 501, 855, 859, 865.

[345] ASFi, *Appalti generali delle regie rendite*, reg. 499, Livorno 29/11/1751.

[346] For the impact of warfare and revolutions in the Atlantic world for the development of local tobacco cultivation in central Europe as an alternative to Atlantic tobacco, see Alexander Van Wickeren, *Wissensräume im Wandel. Eine Geschichte der deutsch-französischen Tabakforschung (1780-1870)* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2020).

Finally, the divergence between Durazzo and Salonika as the main place of origin for the Levantine tobacco purchased respectively in Venice and Livorno reveals that, while the demand was affected by the features of the monopolistic enterprise, the offer was shaped by the mercantile networks that had assumed a prominent position in tobacco trade. In fact, on the one hand, the Livornese Jews had long established branches and commercial extensions in Salonika, operating under the protection of the French flag until 1748[347]. They quickly became the primary exporters of tobacco to Italian markets, largely due to partnerships with local Ottoman Jewish subjects who sourced leaves directly from inland cultivation regions, while Western merchants were generally confined to coastal trading hubs. The predominance of Livornese Jews in tobacco re-exports from Salonika was testified also by French consuls, who often complained, as it was the case for De Boismond in 1714, that «*les juifs en élevant avant la récolte de tous les tabacs, obligeaient les marchands français à les leur acheter à un prix plus élevé*»[348].

Venice, on the other hand, found its own «*picciole Indie*»[349] in Ottoman Albania, where it developed a trade dominated by imperial subjects - especially from Venetian Albania - who exchanged Venetian manufactured goods for raw materials, exotic luxury items, and popular consumer goods. Specifically, Venetian consuls in Durazzo, Montenegrin shipowners, and merchants from Venice's Greek community cooperated to control Albanian tobacco exports. They often reached agreements with Ottoman customs officials to leverage their mediation in setting the selling prices established by local owners[350].

Overall, we observe a mutual influence between the institutionalization of the tobacco monopoly as an effective sovereign tool for resource extraction and the specialization of economic agents. Their agendas and strategies were primarily shaped by directives of the monopolistic company, yet they, in turn, materially influenced not only the dynamics and mechanisms of fiscal extraction but also the restructuring of trade flows for one of the most important global commodities in the Mediterranean of the 18th century.

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[347] See ASFi, *Segreteria di Finanze affari prime del 1788*, reg. 35, ins. 2, Salonika 04/07/1747.
[348] Archives Nationales de Paris (ANP), *Affaires Étrangères*, B[1], reg. 990. Salonika 30/06/1714.
[349] Giovanni Antonio M. Morana, *Relazione del commercio d'Aleppo ed altre scale della Siria, e Palestina di Gio. Antonio Maria Morana era per la serenissima repubblica di Venezia console generale in Aleppo, costa di Siria, Palestina ec* (presso Francesco Andreola, 1799), 54.
[350] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 889, Durazzo 26/11/1780.

5. Conclusion

The Atlantic world has traditionally been viewed by Western historiography as the primary arena for the early modern dissemination of American tobacco beyond its original soil. However, adopting a global perspective, it is more clear that divergent and localized processes shaped its diffusion. In particular, tobacco's global commodification in the early modern age proved to be a multinational and trans-cultural process, with diverse local 'translations' and different regions that became sites of production thanks to the transplantation and the domestication of its cultivation. At a closer look, the early modern global tobacco trade reveals a 'segmented' landscape characterized by competing products and production systems, all oriented towards market demands. These systems interconnected cultivation sites with consumption hubs at regional and inter-regional levels.

Despite lagging behind Atlantic Europe and the Ottoman Empire, tobacco entered the commodity markets of the Italian peninsula by the mid-17th century. In this context, I argue that economic networks and institutions, particularly those overseeing fiscal and commercial affairs, played a pivotal role in the diffusion of tobacco in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire. The solutions adopted by these entities inevitably shaped the flow of this new American commodity and significantly influenced the crucial steps of its 'commodification' in our case studies. From this premise, the Italian peninsula mirrored a transnational trend where tobacco evolved from a colonial 'otherness' to becoming a key economic resource. Moreover, the tobacco trade provided an opportunity for institutions and economic networks of the region to actively engage in the dynamics of early modern globalization.

Privileged licenses and monopolies had the lion's share in the attempts of sovereign powers and mercantile networks at providing markets with a new commodity that still could not count on a steady and reliable demand from consumers. Businessmen with Atlantic connections and engaged in long-distance trade guaranteed access to colonial markets and economic information. However, the protection of sovereign power and the benefit of exclusive rights over the sector turned out to be basic prerequisites for investing in the new sector. Several licenses were issued on tobacco trade and production, seeking a balance between privileged profits and increased fiscal revenues, until full-fledged

monopolies were established in the entire sector. Progressively, the success of the tobacco monopoly contributed to the abandonment of early plans for local production, as monopolistic merchants, able to control imports, lobbied to avert the spread of domestic cultivation of tobacco in order to protect their own business.

Finally, evidence from the tobacco trade in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire testifies a notable shift. Whereas in the mid-17th century tobacco was essentially a colonial commodity from the Americas, in the following century it gradually became an import from the Eastern Mediterranean. This change was largely due to the economic dynamism of rural Ottoman areas, where tobacco plantations were increasingly market-oriented, especially in the hinterlands of ports like Durazzo and Salonika. The increased tobacco production in the Ottoman Western provinces catalyzed privileged relationships based on mercantile connections between various Mediterranean ports and transimperial spaces. Jewish mercantile networks, prominent in the tobacco trade at Livorno, leveraged their established presence in the port of Salonika and collaboration with local Ottoman Jews to forge a privileged conduit between Livorno and Macedonian city, which emerged as the primary tobacco supplier for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany's tobacco monopoly. In Venice, meanwhile, the combined efforts of imperial subjects, particularly Greeks and Montenegrins, who mediated trade across the Ottoman border, were crucial for bolstering tobacco imports from Durazzo. Here, the Venetian consul regularly negotiated with Ottoman authorities to ensure a steady supply of tobacco for the internal markets of the empire. This nuanced control over supply channels highlighted the strategic role of diplomatic and mercantile interventions in sustaining Venice's tobacco influx.

The monopolistic tobacco market deeply influenced trade routes. The Tobacco Farms emerged as principal buyers in major wholesale trading hubs like Livorno and Venice, actively seeking large batches of tobacco leaves. These were sought at competitive prices for processing within their own manufacturing setups. In the 18th-century Mediterranean, Levantine productions were able to ensure more consistent and economically priced supplies compared to American alternatives, demonstrating the Mediterranean's capacity to offer a sustainable and competitive source for tobacco amidst global trade currents.

Overall, the commodification of tobacco from the 17th to the 18th century illustrates

not only the ability of Mediterranean economic and state actors to integrate into the circulation of new global goods but also the gradual emergence of a specific segment of the global tobacco trade that was distinctively independent from the Atlantic economy and the importation of colonial goods from American plantations. This independence underscores a significant shift in global trade dynamics, where the Mediterranean world actively participated in tobacco's global turn with its own specific features. Its interactions sculpted a unique pathway in the broader narrative of tobacco's commodification, reflecting regional strengths and the strategic utilization of endemic mercantile networks.

Chapter 2

The contested birth of a consumer good

«*A me è accaduto spesse volte andando per la provincia di Guattemala et Nicaragua, entrare in casa di qualche Indiano, che presa haveva quest'erba, che in lingua Messicana è chiamata tabacco, et subito sentito il fetore acuto di questo veramente diabolico e puzzolente fumo, era forzato a partirmi con gran prestezza, et andare in altro loco*»[351]

«*Io penso che nel mio secolo l'uso del tabacco, l'invenzione del giuoco di Genova, la scoperta dell'elettricità, la soppressione dei Gesuiti, con quello che dopo è avvenuto nella Chiesa cattolica, abbia alterato molto, rinnuovato, mutato l'aspetto dell'Europa nel fisico e nel morale*»[352]

The inclusion within a society of new exotic commodities is an historical process far from being granted. Different obstacles hampered a peaceful acceptance of an unknown good coming from a distant and alien culture. At the end of the 16th century, the Italian adventurer Girolamo Benzoni, after many years spent in the Spanish American territories, described tobacco as a disgusting, stinking, and diabolical product. His peremptory statement exemplifies various levels of doubts, moral condemnations, and cultural shocks that firstly undermined tobacco consumption. After two centuries, the picture was significantly overturned. For instance, the Florentine scholar and erudite Giuseppe Pelli Bencievnni included tobacco among the most significant elements of his era[353]. In 1784, his pen lingered on the great changes of the 18th century, arguing that tobacco contributed to a proper moral and physical alteration of European people.

The dialectic between motives of rejection and triggers for 'domesticating' tobacco within the receiving culture is a challenging issue. As we have seen, tobacco spread globally between the 17th and 18th centuries, prompting amusement and interest, but even the most successful exotic novelties met indifference and negative reactions. They

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[351] Girolamo Benzoni, *La historia del mondo nuovo di M. Girolamo Benzoni,... : la qual tratta delle isole et mari nuovamente ritrovati, et delle nuove città da lui proprio vedute, per acqua, et per terra in quattordeci anni* (Venezia: Pietro e Francesco Tini, 1572), 55.

[352] Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni, *Efemeridi*, II series, vol. XII, p. 2126v, 24/01/1784.

[353] Pelli Bencivenni's personal diary (Efemeridi) constitutes a fantastic source for historians, as he had been writing down for 49 years (1759-1808) thoughts and comments about released books, political events throughout Europe, and episodes of urban life from Florence.

sparked debates and bitter confrontation between proponents and critics, and they were subjected to an open negotiation process. In this chapter, I focus on the bumpy paths towards tobacco consumption in my two case studies, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. As stated by Arjun Appadurai, commodities are not just mechanical items of defined production regimes, but their flow is a shifting compromise between socially regulated paths and manifold forces of diversion which contribute to the reconfiguration of values assigned to them[354]. As a matter of fact, tobacco did not appear out of the New World as a consumer good for everyone and everywhere, nor as an appreciated stimulant for recreational consumption. At first, the interests on the American plant were rather ornamental and medical. Nevertheless, it progressively became a consumer good with a large audience. Here, I aim at illustrating which cultural, social and economic operations contributed to the contested birth of a consumer good.

Exotic stimulants have been widely investigated by scholars who have pointed out the new and more inclusive forms of consumerism that appeared in the early modern world. This field of studies had its founding moment during the 1980s in the research on the birth of a consumer society in the 18th-century England: a 'consumer revolution' - based on the commercialization of society and the process of emulation of the highest ranks of the society - would have realized a clear caesura in trends between Stuart and Georgian England, a statement which also aimed at stressing the relevance of demand over production factors for the outbreak of the Industrial Revolution[355]. The 'new luxuries' - opposed to the aristocratic, ostentatious 'old luxury' of the previous times - were marked not by their intrinsic values, but by the unnecessary nature of their use and the emergence of taste and social fashion as pushing factors[356]. In addition, De Vries has demonstrated that the upsurge of unnecessary consumption among the lowest and middle ranks of society was not necessarily caused by increasing wage rates: the corrosive power of fashion and the social connotation of consumption stimulated changes in the organization of peasant households in North-Western Europe, leading to more work, also

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[354] See Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 17–28.

[355] Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982).

[356] Jan De Vries, "Luxury in the Dutch Golden Age in Theory and Practice," in *Luxury in the Eighteenth-Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, ed. Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (Madison: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 41–56.

by women and children, in order to get access to market economy[357]. In the literature, it became soon clear that an important share of the 18th-century new consumerism in North-Western Europe and British North America was attracted by global goods and exotic groceries[358]. Moreover, the research has later moved to a proper global approach to the phenomenon, highlighting the impact of long-distance circulation of commodities in consumer patterns and investigating the process in non-western regions of the world[359].

However, the greater attention devoted to market demand risks overlooking the role played by other factors. In *Consumption and the making of respectability*[360], Woodruff Smith has proposed to interpret the European consumption of a range of exotic goods during the long 18th century in the light of the 'cultural contexts' elaborated by societies consuming them. In particular, he has highlighted the association of tobacco (and coffee) with the concept of 'rational masculinity' which both framed and promoted the growing demand by consumers. Smith's findings are fascinating and full of implications, but he makes a sharp separation between cultural and economic factors and, as a consequence, it results weakly in catching the connections between them. Moreover, the influence of cultural connotations originating from different fields should not be overlooked. For the present research, I propose to pay more attention to the 'translations' of the 'American devil'[361] provided by coeval moral debates: while there are numerous studies on the fascinating medical debate that developed alongside tobacco's penetration in Europe, less attention has been given to moral concerns regarding its diffusion and the social 'translations' that made tobacco consumption acceptable. In addition, I aim at examining the intermediaries that allowed the transfer of the habit of tobacco consumption to new societies, especially among the lower ranks of society.

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[357] Jan De Vries, *The Industrious Revolution Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present*, 2009.

[358] Carole Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1993).

[359] Maxine Berg, "In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 182, no. 1 (2004): 85–142; Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c.1500-1820*, New Approaches to Economic and Social History (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[360] Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600-1800* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[361] As early as in the first half of the 16th century, this expression was conveyed by Gonzalez Fernández de Oviedo who wrote about tobacco in the fifth book of his *La Historia de las Indias*: the rituals surrounding tobacco in the Native American cultures were the material embodiment of their sympathy for the devil. See Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *La Historia General de Las Indias* (Seville, 1535).

I start from an analysis of the role of stimulants in the early modern global trade, exploring the common aspects that we can recognize in the broader set of '*excitantia*' and the specific features emerging from tobacco. Then, I will delve into the first steps of tobacco in the Italian peninsula, from the obstacles to its diffusion to the roots of its recreational consumption. The progressive rise in tobacco consumption across the Italian states is the subject of the third and fourth sections of this chapter. In the first instance, I will examine the evolving cultural attitudes towards tobacco: while tobacco increased its economic significance, as well as its cultural and social impact, the dominant culture elaborated new positive values related to its use and circulation. At the same time, the social meaning of tobacco's consumption and appropriation as a resource still underwent contestation and negotiation, especially regarding social and gender boundaries. Finally, I provide a quantitative picture of tobacco consumption in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire.

1. Stimulants and 'excitantia' in the early modern global trade

Scholars have abundantly demonstrated that the New World's potentials – both in terms of land appropriation and of completely new crops for Africa and Eurasia – ended up deeply revisiting commodity circulation in the early modern age. In particular, most of the new global commodities were 'food of a curious kind'. A vast array of tropical goods, not only from the Americas, left a decisive mark in the circuits of early modern global trade[362]: coffee, sugar, tobacco, chocolate – all of them ubiquitous goods in the present-day world – began to circulate and influence material cultures in the early modern period[363].

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[362] «The tropical substances whose production I observed in Puerto Rico were foods of a curious kind. Most are stimulants; some are intoxicating; tobacco tends to suppress hunger, whereas sugar provides calories in unusually digestible form but not much else», Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), xxiv.

[363] Marcello Carmagnani, *Le isole del lusso: prodotti esotici, nuovi consumi e cultura economica europea, 1650-1800* (Torino: UTET libreria, 2010); Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c.1500-1820*, New Approaches to Economic and Social History (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018). On the contrary, historians today tend to downsize the immediate impact of the discovery of America – i.e in the sixteenth century – on European economy and global circuits of trade, see Marcello Carmagnani, *Le connessioni mondiali e l'Atlantico: 1450-1850*, Piccola biblioteca Einaudi. Mappe 67 (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 2018).

At a closer look, we can identify a multifaceted set of exotic 'drugs' which began to spread worldwide at the turn of the 16th century and merged as omnipresent factors in global trade and taxation. Their diffusion was so impressive that David Courtwright has spoken of a global 'psycho-active revolution' in human history erupted about 500 years ago[364]. In this respect, I prefer to adopt the term '*stimulants*' to define this category of early modern commodities. Whereas the terms 'intoxicants' or 'drugs' flatten the social meaning of these goods to one only dimension, we need categories that can grasp a much more multifaceted picture. First of all, 'stimulant' best evokes the main term we find in the coeval sources, namely that of *excitantia* as substances producing alterations in human body and mind[365]. Scholars have convincingly argued that the new set of exotic 'soft drugs' which became available in Europe in the early modern age were conceived as members of the same category of *excitantia*[366]. However differently they are categorized today, many treatises of the 17th and 18th centuries simultaneously addressed cocoa, tobacco, coffee, and tea and their effects on the human body and mind[367]. Moreover, as proposed by Mindi Schneider and Ulbe Bosma, 'stimulant' bears a double significance: on the one hand, it is an agent producing a temporary increase of the functional activity or efficiency of an organism or any parts of it; on the other hand, it represents a *stimulus*, something that rouses or incites to social, economic and political activity[368]. Accordingly

Early modern stimulants provide the case of global goods that - with different rhythms and paths - met popular consumption along with the taste of the wealthy, fostering social transformations with relevant consequences. In other words, their spread questions the consolidated interpretation of pre-industrial long-distance trade as dominated by luxury goods particularly expensive on export markets, since these would have been the only ones able to sustain the transportation costs. During the late middle

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[364] David T. Courtwright, *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 2.

[365] On this point, see Jordan Goodman, "Excitantia: Or, How Enlightenment Europe Took to Soft Drugs," in *Consuming Habits. Drugs in History and Anthropology*, ed. Jordan Goodman, Paul E. Lovejoy, and Andrew Sherratt (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 1995), 126–48.

[366] Fattacciu, *Socialità, esotismo e 'ispanizzazione' dei consumi nella Spagna del Settecento*, 19–23.

[367] See, for example, Jacob Spon, *De l'usage du caphé, du thé et du Chocolate* (Lyon: Chez Jean Girin et Barthelemy Rivière, 1671); Simon Pauli, *A Treatise on Tobacco, Tea, Coffee, and Chocolate* (London, 1746); Gómez de Arias, *Tratado physico medico, de las virtudes, qualidades, provechos, uso, y abuso, del cafè, del the, del chocolate, y del tabaco* (Madrid: en la Imprenta de los Herederos de Francisco del Hierro, 1752).

[368] Mindi Schneider and Ulbe Bosma, "Stimulant Frontiers: Editorial Introduction," *Commodity Frontiers* 2 (2021): i–iv.

age, pepper and other oriental spices, such as cinnamon and nutmeg, entered the global trade at exorbitant prices, which reflected their status symbol for the ruling class[369]. Early modern stimulants deeply changed the paradigm: the diffusion of sugar, tobacco, coffee, chocolate, and tea helped challenge the idea that extra-European goods were reserved for aristocrats and brought about a profound revision of the intellectual debate on 'luxury'[370].

Coffee, cocoa, tobacco, tea and other global tropical goods stimulated moral debates, enthusiasm and condemnation, new social practices and cultural appropriations in many parts of the world. While they were struggling to impose themselves as consumer goods, they have been part of different spheres of interest, such as botanic and ornamental, medical, and ritual domains. Scholars have identified different steps characterizing the circulation of tropical stimulant crops during the 'Age of Encounters', from the 'observation', marked by curiosity and information gathering with the central role of botanic gardens, up to 'naturalization' which enables transplantation and local cultivation[371]. During such a process, the step of medical interest has been usually regarded as a central stage for the wider acceptance of exotic novelties[372]. Not by chance, one of the first and most famous treatise on tobacco in Europe declared explicitly the aim to describe «*todas las cosas que traen de nuestras Indias Occidentales que sirven al uso de medicina*»[373].

However, we should be careful not to oversimplify the process. Viewing the different spheres of interest on stimulant commodities as successive and non-dialogue moments risks losing sight of the interactions and influences with which the various debates contributed to the rise of new consumption habits. Moreover, we should not take the final outcome as granted when we look at the historical past. Historical studies on

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[369] Jack Turner, *Spice: The History of a Temptation* (New York, NY: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2004); Paul Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

[370] See Marcello Carmagnani, *Le isole del lusso: prodotti esotici, nuovi consumi e cultura economica europea, 1650-1800* (Torino: UTET libreria, 2010).

[371] David Gentilcore, "The Impact of New World Plants, 1500-1800: The Americas in Italy," in *The New World in Early Modern Italy, 1492-1750*, ed. Lia Markey and Elizabeth Horodowich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 190–205.

[372] For the case of tobacco, see Sarah Augusta Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane: Tobacco in Sixteenth Century Literature* (New York: New York Public Library, 1954). But similar assumptions can be found - as a sort of premise - in many studies on global commodity chains: ritualistic and pharmaceutical status are considered important for the emergence of a new exotic good, but the development into a mass commodity would bring to the loss of that dimension. See Schneider and Bosma, "Stimulant Frontiers," ii.

[373] Nicolas Bautista Monardes, *Primera y Segunda y Tercera Parted de La Historia Medicinal de Las Cosas Que Se Traen de Neutras Indias Occidentales* (Seville, 1574), II, 40.

'drugs' have convincingly demonstrated that borders between licit and illicit are traced not much from their intrinsic properties, but basically as the result of social activities and cultural aspirations[374]. Also early modern stimulants should be analyzed as proper commodities - so, as we have seen, taking into account both their exchange value and their social embeddedness - in order to understand why only some of them knew a globalizing process before industrialization[375]. The failed reception in Europe of other exotic goods from the New World – like peyote, coca or yerba mate[376] – suggest to further problematise the 'puzzle of distribution'[377] of global commodities in the early modern age: they were not free-floating commodities, but their eventual reception as recreational consumption goods was affected by cultural practices, processes of identity-building, social codes, economic interests, and political intervention[378].

Indeed, the features of the global emergence of a specific commodity deeply influenced its patterns of circulation, consumption, and subsequent taxation. A comparative approach reveals the factors that determined similarity and divergence between tobacco and other successful global stimulants of the early modern age. To begin with, the first distribution of chocolate in Europe was essentially limited to the Atlantic trade promoted by the richest Spanish merchants (in particular, from Seville and later Cadiz) with their colonies in the Americas. The main consumers belonged to noble networks for whom it represented a proper luxury good and a prestigious mark of

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[374] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise a Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); Piero Camporesi, *Exotic Brew. The Art of Living in the Age of Enlighenment* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1994).

[375] Benjamin Breen, "The Failed Globalization of Psychedelic Drugs in the Early Modern World," *The Historical Journal* Pre-print (2021): 1–18.

[376] See Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, "The Spanish Empire, Globalization, and Cross-Cultural Consumption in a World Context, c. 1400-c.1750," in *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824: Circulation, Resistance and Diversity*, ed. Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla and Bethany Aram (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 277–306.

[377] This concept has been proposed by David Courtwright in his seminal study on the emergence of drugs as a major component of early modern global trade and on their contribution to the birth of the 'modern world', see David T. Courtwright, *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 53–68. For a reassessment, see Benjamin Breen, "The Failed Globalization of Psychedelic Drugs in the Early Modern World," *The Historical Journal* Pre-print (2021): 1–18.

[378] Interesting insights on this point can be found in a recent interview to the historian Paul Gootenberg for the journal 'Commodity Frontiers', see Elisabet Dueholm Rasch, "Teaching the History of Drugs as Commodities: A Talk with Historian Paul Gootenberg," *Commodity Frontiers* 2 (2021): 5–9.

distinction[379]. The Spanish Crown established in 1629 and 1632 high taxes on the imports of chocolate to be paid at the customs house of Seville: the affluent consumers would not have been frightened by the consequent price increase[380], whereas the cocoa plant fastly exhausted the soil and discouraged projects and investments to expand plantations in the colonies to satisfy wider markets[381].

On the contrary, in the late middle age sugar was already appreciated in Europe - especially in Portugal, thanks to direct contacts with India, and in the South of Spain because of the coexistence with the Arab culture[382]. It was one of the first tropical crops that Europeans aimed at transplanting in their new colonies at the beginning of the early modern age, initially in West Africa and then in the Americas[383]. Planters and merchants discovered better and more efficient ways of producing and marketing Atlantic sugar, allowing a sharp reduction of prices, especially for sugar produced in the English Caribbean in the mid-17th centuries[384]. A proper 'sugar revolution' sustained an outstanding increase in customs revenues, worthing 3 hundred thousands pounds sterling for the crown as early as the mid-1670s[385]. In the 1630s-1650s, the new rising group of English merchants, also as part of the ruling class that emerged during the English Civil War, successfully lobbied for the Atlantic sugar trade not to be rigidly organized by the state, unlike what had been implemented in the previous experience of the Virginia Company between 1609 and 1624[386]. In addition, in England as elsewhere in Europe,

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379 See Clarence-Smith, *Cocoa and Chocolate, 1765-1914*, 9–13; Fattacciu, *Socialità, esotismo e 'ispanizzazione' dei consumi nella Spagna del Settecento*, 40–45.

380 Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 206.

381 On the divergence between cocoa and tobacco cultivation in the 17th-century Spanish Americas, see Laura Nater, "'Colonial Tobacco: Key Commodity of the Spanish Empire, 1500–1800," in *From Silver to Cocaine. Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2006), 95–105.

382 Eddy Stols, "The Expansion of the Sugar Market in Western Europe," in *Tropical Babylons: Sugar and the Making of the Atlantic World, 1450-1680*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 237–88.

383 For the westward movement of the sugar's commodity frontier in the early modern age, see Jason W. Moore, "Sugar and the Expansion of the Early Modern World-Economy: Commodity Frontiers, Ecological Transformation, and Industrialization," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, no. 3 (2000): 409–33.

384 Sugar prices in Barbados fell from around 20 shillings (Barbados currency) for hundredweight in the early 1650s to 9 to 10 shillings by the 1690s, see Menard, "Plantation Empire," 316.

385 Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery. An Economic History of the British West Indies 1623-1775* (Barbados: Caribbean Universities Press, 1974). For the concept of 'sugar revolution', see Barry W. Higman, "The Sugar Revolution," *Economic History Review* 53, no. 2 (2000): 213–36.

386 Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 92–198.

sugar distribution could benefit from earlier diffusion and an already established production system, with sugar refineries operating in the main marketplaces on the continent. This framework undoubtedly reduced the recourse to privilege license for sugar production and distribution in the metropoles, as well as to a system of taxation essentially based upon duties on raw sugar imports[387].

For its part, coffee became an export commodity before 1500 in Yemen, where the trade was dominated by Arabs and Indians and came to Europre in the first decades of the 17h century along muslim commercial routes via the Levant[388]. However, its diffusion grew significantly in the mid-18th century, as the growing European demand outstripped Mokha's output and Europeans began planting coffee in their colonies, both in the Americas and, even more importantly, in the Indian Ocean[389]. The new scale of coffee plantations and the direct control of production pushed prices down and, at least for the biggest players in the coffee inter-oceanic trade, primarily the Dutch, allowed a policy of low custom duties to raise the volume of imports and promote re-exports[390]. However, coffee from Yemen did not disappear from European markets, especially Mediterranean

[387] For the English and the Dutch cases, surely the most successful examples of the European sugar industry between the 17th and the 18th centuries, see Jan De Vries and A. M. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 326–29; John Styles, "Product Innovation in Early Modern London," *Past & Present*, no. 168 (2000): 124–69. However, the Mediterranean sugar industry should not be overlooked, see J. H. Galloway, "The Mediterranean Sugar Industry," *Geographical Review* 67, no. 2 (1977): 177–94.

[388] Coffee made its European entrance in Venice and by the mid-century it had taken root in the main cities of the continent, like Paris, London and Vienna. See Filippo Maria Paladini, "Sociabilità Ed Economia Del Loisir. Fonti Sui Caffè Veneziani Del XVIII Secolo," *Storia Di Venezia - Rivista* I (2003): 153–281; Woodruff D. Smith, "From Coffeehouse to Parlour: The Consumption of Coffee, Tea and Sugar in North-Western Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Consuming Habits: Global and Historical Perspectives on How Cultures Define Drugs* (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), 142–57.

[389] «By 1750 Amsterdam's imports of American production almost matched its purchases of Javanese coffee», Steven C. Topik and Mario Samper, "The Latin American Coffee Commodity Chain: Brazil and Costa Rica," in *From Silver to Cocaine. Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000*, ed. Steven C. Topik, Carlos Marichal, and Zephyr L. Frank (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), 118–46. Marseille, which had represented one of the main Mediterranean entrepot for Moka's coffee in the 17th century, after 1730 became a great warehouse for the French Atlantic coffee from the Antilles, see Gilbert Buti, "Marseille, Port Du Moka et Du Café Des Îles d'Amérique Aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles," *RiMe. Rivista Dell'Istituto Di Storia Dell'Europa Mediterranea (ISSN 2035-794X)* VIII, no. 1 (2021): 45–74. On the general trends of coffee production and trade at the global level between the 18th and the 20th centuries, see Mario Samper and Radin Fernando, "Appendix: Historical Statistics of Coffee Production and Trade from 1700 to 1960," in *The Global Coffee Economy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, 1500–1989*, ed. William Gervase Clarence-Smith and Steven C. Topik (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 411–62.

[390] See Steven C. Topik, "The Integration of the World Coffee Market," in *The Global Coffee Economy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, 1500–1989*, by William G. Clarence-Smith and Steven C. Topik (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 21–49.

ones, throughout the 18th century: in Venice, in the last decades of the Republic, it was still considered a product preferable in quality to coffee from the Atlantic[391].

Accordingly, though a true trademark of the early modern age, tobacco was not at all the only stimulant to have a global circulation at that time. However, scholars have stressed the precocity of tobacco's diffusion among the less affluent people, from the mariners of the Iberian Atlantic to the Japanese military[392]. Other tropical goods remained for a long time unaffordable for lower social strata, underwriting social status. In this respect, the contrast between chocolate and tobacco is remarkable: while the plebeian actors involved in the Atlantic circuits were fundamental to the early diffusion of tobacco, the trickle-down progress for chocolate was still under way in 18th-century Europe[393]. In this context, Marcy Norton has highlighted the contrasting commercialization paths of tobacco and chocolate. Cocoa, perceived immediately as a lucrative colonial commodity in Spain, benefited from pre-existing trade infrastructures established by Amerindian networks. Its import quickly fell into the hands of the wealthiest figures involved in trans-oceanic trade, such as the merchant oligarchy in Seville, epitomized by the Mendoza family. In contrast, tobacco followed a different trajectory. One of the first names to emerge as a tobacco shipper was Ambrosio de Sofia, who operated on the fringes of the established mercantile community. At the turn of the 17th century, his Atlantic networks connected Seville to the Caribbean rather than the wealthier Mesoamerican regions, relying on strong ties with Portuguese new Christians in the Habsburg colonial Americas[394]The outstanding global tour of tea only began in the 19th century, when colonial Java, Ceylon and India emerged as major tea exporters and China lost its primacy[395]. Coffee's spread resembles that of tobacco for timing and characteristics, though along opposite routes. Tobacco, as cocoa beloved among Indigenous peoples of the Americas, were brought to Europe in the 16th century and spread from there to Asia

[391] Sambo, "La Balance de Commerce de La République de Venise."

[392] See Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, 190–247. For an overview on trade statistics and fiscal revenues from sugar, caffeine drinks, and tobacco in eighteenth-century Britain, see Carole Shammas, "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800," in *Consumption and the World of Goods* (Routledge, 1993), 199–227.

[393] See Fattacciu, *Socialità, esotismo e 'ispanizzazione' dei consumi nella Spagna del Settecento*, 40–45.

[394] Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures*, 142–45.

[395] Markman Ellis, Richard Coulton, and Matthew Mauger, *Empire of Tea: The Asian Leaf That Conquered the World* (London: Reaktion Books, 2015); Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire. How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017).

and Africa; coffee originally moved from Africa to Arabia, where since the 16th century the city of Mokha became the greatest world center for the export of such a commodity towards Asia and, later, Europe[396]. Scholars have stressed the connections between coffee's and tobacco's commodifications, also because of the recurrent practices of simultaneous consumption of the two goods[397]. However, evidence suggests that Europe was still a small luxury market for coffee prior to 1750[398].

Explanations for the early 'democratization' of tobacco consumption can be found both on the demand and the supply side. As it is well known, tobacco contains high levels of nicotine, an alkaloid that produces physiological changes in the human body and that is highly addictive, so that a regular consumption implied a certain dependence and that a greater amount of the substance is required for producing the same effect[399]. In this respect, the chemical composition of tobacco has been associated with the relief that it could bring to a growing number of the working poor who began to regard tobacco as a necessity[400]. But, above all, as for sugar, the explosion of tobacco's long-distance trade went hand in hand with the astonishing fall of its prices[401]. This outcome was strongly related to the early adoption of tobacco cultivation for global markets. Though Wallerstein has considered tobacco «the poor relative of sugar» in the early modern age, as it could count on a smaller world market and a smaller profit margin than sugar[402],

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[396] Steven Topik and William G. Clarence-Smith, "Introduction: Coffee and Global Development," in *The Global Coffee Economy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, 1500–1989*, ed. Steven Topik and William G. Clarence-Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1–18.

[397] On this point, see Brian William Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 28–29.

[398] See Topik and Samper, "The Latin American Coffee Commodity Chain: Brazil and Costa Rica," 121–23.

[399] Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence*, 1° edizione (London: Routledge, 1994), 3–6.

[400] As vividly argued by Fernand Braudel, «with the increase - or at least the continuation - of very serious dietary difficulties, humanity had need of compensation, according to a constant rule of its life. Tobacco was one of these compensations», Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century: The Structures of Everyday Life by Braudel, Fernand*, vol. 1 (London: William Collins Sons & Co, 1985), 261.

[401] In England, tobacco was sold up to the cost of 20 shillings per pound before 1619, but the same amount was sold for less than 1 shilling in 1670. See the data collected from English customs, published by Ralph Davis in Davis, "English Foreign Trade, 1660-1700," 163–66.

[402] Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *The Modern World System II. Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750*, Wallerstein, Immanuel Maurice, 1930- Modern World-System 2 (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 164–65. Wallerstein's consideration on the margin profits for sugar and tobacco is indisputable and confirmed by research on the 'sugar revolution'. However, his argument about soil depletion is not reflected in the literature: most authors indicate that sugar plantations exhaust soil fertility much faster than tobacco ones. See Moore, "Sugar and the Expansion of the Early Modern World-Economy."

recent studies have emphasized the relevance of tobacco plantations in the early modern European empires in the Americas[403]. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the output from European empires in the New World progressively increased, as falling prices expanded the markets for colonial tobacco[404]. Gain in agricultural productivity, the shift from indentured servants to African slaves, innovation in commerce, and improvement in shipments were essential factors for increasing the offer and driving prices even lower[405].

In any case, exotic stimulant crops' did not take the only path towards consumer goods for pleasure: this aspect has long been coexisting with other kinds of purpose. Accordingly, we should not think as if coeval people looked at stimulants as we do today, or just as intoxicants. By contrast, we rather acknowledge the richness of the debates and negotiations around them, which encompassed botany, medicine, social behavior and economy, in order to grasp more insights on early modern global trade and fiscal enhancement. I will delve into these debates to reconstruct the cultural reflections that accompanied the spread of tobacco in the Italian peninsula in the early modern age.

2. Tobacco's first steps in the Italian peninsula: doubts, translations, and the roots of recreational consumption

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the first steps of tobacco consumption in the Italian peninsula were far from exceptional. To provide a general picture of the phenomenon we must rely on scattered information. From contemporary printed books, we can discern a kind of canonical narrative on tobacco's introduction to the region that frequently appears in erudite literature. Consider the following lines by Massimiliano Zavona, printed in Bologna in 1650:

> «*d'herba Santa Croce acquistò il nome, da che Prospero Santa Croce, legato per la Sede Apostolica appresso i Portughesi, la portò a Roma, sì come i suoi antenati arricchirono*

[403] Figueirôa-Rêgo, Sanz Rozalén, and Luxán Meléndez, *Tabaco e escravos nos Impérios Ibéricos*; Melissa N. Morris, "Cultivating Colonies: Tobacco and the Upstart Empires, 1580-1640" (Columbia University, 2017).

[404] According to Jacob Price, Chesapeake Bay's output of tobacco grew steadily between 1610s to 1680s. After that, wartime between 1689 and 1720 brought a certain stagnation due to higher freight rates and insurance costs. However, in the 1730s, sustained growth came back, bringing the Chesapeake output to triple in the 1770s. See Price, *France and the Chesapeake; a History of the French Tobacco Monopoly, 1674-1791, and of Its Relationship to the British and American Tobacco Trades*, 509–10.

[405] Menard, "Plantation Empire."

> *questa città medesima del legno della Santissima Croce di NS Gesù Cristo, ansiosi di giovare à gl'interessi dello spirito, così questi si mostrò non meno bramoso dell'utile del corpo. E perché per diligienza e studio di Nicolò Tornabuoni, legato in Francia, fu tramandata quest'herba in Italia, da quel cognome alcuni la nominarono Tornabona*»[406]

Alongside the various names of tobacco during its initial diffusion, the quotation refers to two significant episodes involving diplomats residing at the courts of Portugal and France. In 1561, Cardinal Prospero di Santa Croce, returning from a diplomatic mission to Portugal, presented Pope Pius IV with a gift of tobacco seeds. Consequently, the plant was initially called *'erba di Santa Croce*'. Its cultivation was mainly promoted among the Cistercian Monks around Rome for medicinal purposes[407]. In 1574, Bishop Nicolò Tornabuoni, grand-ducal ambassador in Paris, brought the first tobacco seeds to Tuscany for his uncle Alfonso Tornabuoni, Bishop of Sansepolcro. From tere, cultivation spread to various territories in the central peninsula[408]. In the Venetian *Terraferma*, it was the Benedictine Fathers of Campese who introduced tobacco cultivation. This began in the so-called '*Sette comuni*' of the Vicenza plateau (Asiago, Rotzo, Roana, Gallio, Foza, Lusiana and Enego) and extended to the communities of the Brenta river valley (Valstagna, Oliero, Campolongo, Campese and Valrovina)[409].

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[406] Massimiano Zavona, *Abuso del tabacco de' nostri tempi, trattato di Massimiano Zauona medico Rauennate. Nel quale si dimostra, che con quello si possono curare vn'infinito numero di mali, che molestano l'huomo* (Bologna: presso Gio. Battista Ferroni, 1650), 2–3.

[407] We know nowadays that the sort of tobacco introduced in Rome was a variety of *Nicotiana rustica*. To the best of my knowledge, the first Italian *Herbario* which referred to tobacco was the work of Castore Durante, who placed it within the varieties of henbane, calling it *hiosciamo peruviano* or *hiosciamo novo* and stressing that it was known as *herba Santa Croce*. See Castore Durante, *Herbario nuovo di Castore Durante, medico e cittadino romano. Con figure che rappresentano le vive Piante che nascono in tutta Europa, e nell'Indie Orientali e Occidentali* (presso Bartholomeo Bonfadino e Tito Diani, 1585), 230–31.

[408] In particular, Cosimo I of Tuscany introduced the cultivation of tobacco in Chitignano, in the Arezzo *contado*. From there, tobacco cultivation reached the near free city of Cospaia, in nowadays Umbria, and also the Papal territories of Marche, especially Chiaravalle, where again the Cistercian monks began to produce powdered tobacco with their stone mills.

[409] For all the paragraph, see Giampietro Diana, "La Storia Del Tabacco in Italia. I: Introduzione e Diffusione Del Tabacco Dal XVI Secolo al 1860," *Il Tabacco* 7, no. 2 (1999): 56–62; Antonio Ceci, "Il Monopolio Del Tabacco in Italia. Ascesa e Declino Di Un'industria Di Stato," *Historia et Ius* 8 (2015): 1–46.

Moreover, the extract presents a top-down model with notable parallels to the narrative of tobacco's arrival in Atlantic Europe[410]. The fascination with the impressive American flora quickly spread among the centers of sovereign power in the Italian peninsula[411]. This process highlights the early significance of the royal botanic gardens in the circulation of American novelties, serving as a stage for celebrating the aesthetics associated with power. It is no coincidence that Italian erudite literature frequently emphasized the importance of the tobacco seeds and plants sent in the 1560s by the French ambassador at the Lisbon court, Jean Nicot, to the French queen Catherine de' Medici. This act underscored tobacco's 'translation' into a custom perfectly suited to court life[412], which was a major force in disseminating new habits and patterns that were then imitated by the social elites and subsequently by the lower classes[413]. Additionally, the same narrative accords considerable importance to the medical debate on the curative properties of tobacco. Drawing from texts and treatises elaborated in Atlantic Europe[414], Italian

[410] Damião de Góis, an intellectual at the service of the Portuguese crown as court historian, in his *Crónica do Felícissimo Rei D. Manuel*, published in 1566 in Lisbon, argued that his kinsman Luís de Góis had had the merit of importing the plant of tobacco to Portugal after his exploration of Brazil in 1540s and to offer it to the king for his botanical garden. See Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 15–18. In France, beyond the *querelle* between André Thevet and Jean Nicot to whom recognised the merit of first importing tobacco (see Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 15–18.), the point of landing was commonly acknowledged in the sovereign court, thanks for the exotic interests of the queen Caterina Medici and the proposal by Nicot to use powdered tobacco to treat headaches. Not by chance, the Italian erudite literature recurrently begins its writing on the early history of tobacco connecting these episodes from the Iberian world and the northern European courts to the following developments in the Italian peninsula. See, for example, Gavelli, *Storia Distinta, e Curiosa Del Tabacco, Concernente La Sua Scoperta, La Introduzione in Europa, e La Maniera Di Coltivarlo, Conservarlo, e Prepararlo, e per Servirsene Con Altre Ottime Ed Utili Osservazioni Sopra Il Medesimo*, 7–8.

[411] For the case of the Medici court in Florence, see Francisco Javier Zamora Rodríguez, "Interest and Curiosity. American Products, Information, and Exotica in Tuscany," in *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824* (Springer, 2014), 174–93; Lia Markey, *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University press, 2016).

[412] See Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, 47. Jacques Gohory, in his treatise on the new American plant published in 1572, explicitly acknowledged the queen's role in promoting tobacco cultivation in France, suggesting to name it '*Medicée*' in her honor, see Sarah Augusta Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane: Tobacco in Sixteenth Century Literature* (New York: New York Public Library, 1954), 72–75.

[413] For the role of social emulation in the emergence of a consumer society in eighteenth century England – an argument which had a long-lasting influence for the historiographical paradigm of the 'consumer revolution' – see again McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*.

[414] In this respect, for a long time the most important treatise on medical expertise about tobacco remained the work of Nicolas Monardes, a doctor from Seville_ he described tobacco as a '*panacea*' against an incredible variety of disease. Following the basic and dominant principles of the humoral theory of the Galenic medicine, he celebrated the virtues of tobacco as a «*calienta y seca*» plant which could provide a fundamental aid to counter an excess of phlegm, the cold and wet humor deemed responsible for several

naturalists and physicians began to popularize the acceptance of tobacco as a medical remedy[415]. These two processes of appropriation from above – by European power and medical culture – were pivotal in 'translating' the social meaning of the American plant and integrating it into the host cultural universe.

However, despite the extensive connections of Italian courts with the Atlantic world and the transnational circulation of the medical debate, the lack of direct domains in the Americas could explain a certain delay in the spread of the new good[416]. More importantly, despite early activism in the cloisters of monasteries- both for tobacco cultivation and for snuff adoption as a healthy habit - commercial plantations and the consumption of for pleasure and leisure did not initially penetrate significantly in the

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ailments. I consulted the second version of Monardes's book, printed in 1574. The original version was of 1571. See Nicolas Bautista Monardes, *Primera y Segunda y Tercera Parted de La Historia Medicinal de Las Cosas Que Se Traen de Neutras Indias Occidentales* (Seville, 1574), 41r–50v. However, it should be noted that the first volume of Monardes's work on New World 'materia medica', published first in 1565, never mentions tobacco. In 1567, before the publication of the second volume, which included the famous treatise on tobacco, a French publication appeared entitled *L'agriculture et maison rustique* by the botanist Jean Liébault which should have exerted a certain influence in the way Monardes and others looked at tobacco. Here, we can find detailed information on methods for tobacco cultivation and a presentation of its medical properties, so that «*Nicotiane, encor que depuis peu de temps soit connue en France, tient ce neanmoins le premier rang entre les herbes medicinales, à raison de ses vertus singulieres et quasi admirables*», see Jean Liébault, *L'agriculture et maison rustique* (Paris, 1567), 79v. On the work of Liébault, see also Marc Vigié and Muriel Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot: amateurs de tabac, fermiers généraux et contrebandiers sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 31–32. According to Dickson, also the following works of Jacques Gohory (1572) and Gilles Everaerts (1587) on the medical virtues of tobacco were deeply based on Liébault's publication, see Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, 93–94.

[415] The Venetian publishing industry demonstrated an immediate interest in the medical debate on tobacco, translating Monardes's text for a Venetian edition in 1575. The American herb was praised for its virtues for healing «*i dolori della testa, specialmente procedendo da cagion fredda*»; «*passioni del petto*»; «*dolore dello stomaco*»; «*dolore del fianco*»; «*vermi del corpo di tutte le generationi*»; «*dolori delle giunture*»; «*dolore de' denti*»; and we could continue. See Nicolás Monardes, *Delle Cose Che Vengono portate dall'Indie Occidentali pertinenti all'uso della Medicina. Raccolte e trattate dal Dottor Nicolò Monardes, medico di Siviglia* (Venezia: presso Giordano Ziletti, 1575), v. II, 6-11. Most importantly, in the 1610s-1650s, Italian physicians and doctors began to publish their own treatises on tobacco, utilizing Monardes and updated works on tobacco from northern Europe as their most important sources. Today, we can make reference to the recent in-depth analysis by Stefano Levati of this literature on tobacco which flourished in the Italian states in the first half of the 17th century, see Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 40–55.

[416] On this point, Brian Brege has invited to analyze the channels of mediation that allowed sixteenth-century Florence to turn to the Atlantic world without overlooking the inescapable political obstacles experienced in the quest for carving out a substantial space in the American continent, especially in Brazil, see Brian Brege, "Renaissance Florentines in the Tropics: Brazil, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and the Limits of Empire," in *The New World in Early Modern Italy, 1492-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 206–22.

Italian peninsula. Indeed, these potential outcomes were not part of the objectives of the two 'translations from above' (ornamental and medical) which characterized the early introduction in the Italian states and in Europe as a whole.

As a matter of fact, several testimonies confirm the late diffusion of tobacco in the Italian context compared with Atlantic Europe, as well as the oscillation between mere curiosity and suspicion on the part of diplomats residing abroad. For instance, in 1618 the chaplain and privy secretary of the Venetian embassy in London, Orazio Busino[417], was strongly impressed by «one of the most notable things I see in this kingdom and which strikes me as really marvelous». He referred to the dried leaves of the «queen's weed, properly called tobacco», which arrived in London from the (West) Indies and placed «in a hollow instrument a span long, called a pipe» to be smoked with great enjoyment by many consumers. The secretary expressed all his skepticism about the introduction of tobacco in other European countries, «for it enters cities with vaporing ostentation and then, after being well pounded, departs loaded with gold, leaving the purses of its purchasers empty»[418]. Some years earlier, Simone Contarini informed the Venetian Senate from Constantinople about the ban on tobacco consumption by the Ottoman authorities. The *Bassa* had ordered the burning of an hogshead of «*tabaco, cert'herba che viene d'Inghilterra per medicina solita altre volte usarsi qui ancora, ma prohibita al presente*», as well as many «*cannicce d'argento che servivano all'uso di bere il vapore di quell'herba*»[419].

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[417] The following considerations by Orazio Busino can be found in his letters sent from London to Pietro Contarini, newly appointed as extraordinary ambassador at the court of James I Stuart. Busino gives Contarini political news on the kingdom, but also information of various nature on the city of London and the habits of English people. The texts of various letters written between January and September 1618 have been lately collected in a single work, called the *Anglipotrida*, which still represents a useful instrument for investigating the events of the early seventeenth-century London and, most of all, the perception of the English society by the Venetian élite. On this source, see Luigi Monga, "La Londra Secentesca Nella 'Anglipotrida' Di Orazio Busino," *Annali d'Italianistica* 14 (1996): 553–74.

[418] I quote from the English translation of Busino's letters proposed in the "Calendar of State Papers relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice", while the original manuscript is kept at the Marciana Library in Venice. See in particular Allen B. Hinds, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, 1617-1619*, vol. 15 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1909), 169, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol15.

[419] Dispatch from Pera of Constantinople, 13/06/1610, see Goration F. Brown, *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice*, vol. 11 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1904), 240, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol11. It is quoted also in Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 29. Another testimony of the burning of illegal English tobacco in Constantinople by the *Aga* of the Janissaries is in Allen B. Hinds, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Relating*

The amazement and estrangement felt by Venetian ambassadors and their employees in 1610s-1620s illustrate that English enthusiasm for smoking had no parallel in the Italian peninsula, even roughly 50 years after its introduction in England[420]. In contrast, the knowledge of tobacco, smoking practices (described as 'drinking'), and even pipes as instruments for inhaling burnt herbs seemed really poorly acquired, even among the learned circles which held political power. Moreover, the spread of tobacco habits often produced negative reactions among Venetian observers. Many doubts and concerns were raised about the wide diffusion of a consumption behavior deemed so expensive it could lead to the waste of patrimonies and a bloody outflow of currency. While similar doubts existed in Atlantic Europe, tobacco had already become a constant presence in their societies. As a result, most solutions to these problems were aimed at taking concrete action for eradicating or achieving a profitable co-existence with it[421]. Conversely, in the first decades of the 17th century, Italian officials and diplomats' reasoning about tobacco resonated more as theoretical speculation on distant matters. During this time, a greater degree of tobacco knowledge and adoption seemed to have spread in other Mediterranean societies, particularly along the Muslim shores of Syria, Anatolia, and North Africa[422].

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to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, vol. 17 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911), 309, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol17.

[420] The manufacture of pipes in London, for example, is believed to have begun around 1570, see Eric G. Ayto, *Clay Tobacco Pipes* (Aylesbury: Shire, 1984), 4.

[421] As regards England, the high custom duties issued in 1614 on foreign tobaccos by James I Stuart have been associated with the religious and moral arguments against it that had been developed in his *Counterblast*, see Mariangela Mosca Bonsignore, *Invettiva contro il tabacco* (Torino: Tirrenia Stampatori, 2003). However, Laura Nater has underlined the importance of the economic issue related to the expensive imports of tobacco from the Spanish colonies in the Americas. From this perspective, the will of stopping the outflow of currency and of promoting English production should be strongly re-evaluated to understand the inner nature of those measures. Nater, "'Colonial Tobacco," 99. We should also remind that at that time the inception of tobacco cultivation in the newly founded English colonies in north America was combined with the transplantation of the American weeds in metropolitan England: as printed instructions for the cultivation of tobacco demonstrate, the need to substitute expensive imports from the Spanish empire with domestic products represented a main concern of the time, see *An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England*.

[422] As we have seen also from the reports of the Venetian ambassadors, the early adoption of tobacco in the Mediterranean Muslim societies was harshly contrasted by religious and political authorities, as smoking appears to have been taken up by all layers of society with eagerness and enthusiasm. In Safavid Iran, in 1609, Shah Abbass, blaming the fact that his soldiers spent a great part of their pay in tobacco, forbade its consumption, threatening transgressors with the cut of noses and lips, see Matthee, *The Pursuit of Pleasure*, 119. In the Ottoman empire, again in 1621, the sultan Osman forbade the cultivation and use of tobacco «on the grounds that it wasted money, induced laziness and, above all, imitated a habit introduced by infidels», see Geoffrey Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 191. Indeed, laws introducing bans on

However, things were already in motion. A closer reading of the Italian medical debate on tobacco suggests a dual problematization: first, the relationship between the primary 'cultural translation' of the American plant and the preconditions for its adoption as a pleasure product; and, second, the timing and location of this latter process took place. Many authors who praised the health benefits of a judicious use of tobacco were firmly against its unrestricted circulation. For instance, Giovanni Ludovico Bertaudo, an esteemed doctor at the court of the House of Savoy in Turin, listed numerous instances where tobacco's healing properties could be utilized in his *Trattato nuovo della ebbrietà e dell'abuso del Tabaco* (1618). Yet, his efforts were primarily aimed at discouraging the abuse of the «*suffimigio del tabaco*».

By the first decades of the 17th century several, the late-16th-century image of tobacco as a *panacea* had been questioned by authors who raised doubts about some of its purported healing properties. Some treatise began to promote the opposite view, highlighting tobacco's negative consequences on human health[423]: Bertualdo was well acquainted with this updated literature, positioning himself within a more cautious strand of medical reflection. In this view, tobacco was appreciated for various virtues, especially as a sneezing aid to expel excess phlegm, but readers were carefully warned of the negative consequences of abusing its products.[424]. Furthermore, concerns about tobacco

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tobacco consumption were issued in various regions of Eurasia, from the Ottoman to the Russian empire, from Denmark to Persia, Moghul India, and Qing Manchuria, see largely Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*.

[423] According to Silvia Monti, Bartolomé Marradon and Pedro Lopez de Leon were, at the beginning of the 17th century, the first Spanish critics of Monardes, denouncing the detrimental effects of tobacco on the base of autopsies which exhibited blackened internal organs from people used to smoke, see Monti, *Il tabacco fa male?*, 22. In France, similar arguments can be found in the treatises of the second half of the century, as in Simon Paul's *Commentarius de abusu tabaci et herbae thée* (1665) and in the virulent attack against tobacco by Guy-Crescent Fagon, doctor at the court of Louis XIV, who explicitly begs the question if *L'abus du tabac abrèget-il la vie?* (1699) and in the same year presided over the dissertation defense by Claude Berger of a thesis on the damage on mucosa and respiratory tract due to tobacco. See Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 42–45; Pozzati, *Tabacco*, 80–83.

[424] In addition to Monardes, the treatise quotes medical and botanical works appeared between the 1570s and the 1610s, especially in the kingdom of France, Dutch republic, and Italian states: the *Adversaria nova* published in 1576 by the botanists Mathias de l'Obel (Flemish) and Pierre Pena (French), see on this book Ludovic Legré, *La Botanique En Provence Au XVIe Siècle: Pierre Pena et Mathias de Lobel* (Marseille: Aubertin et Rolle, 1899); Castor Durante's *Herbario novo* (1585), an Italian doctor that published a collection of medicinal herbs and plants from America and Asia, on him see Tiziana Pesenti, "Durante, Castore," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1993); the *Specimen Historiae Plantarum* (1611) by the French botanist Paul Reneaulme, see Paul Reneaulme, *Specimen historiae plantarum. Plantae typis aeneis expressae* (Paris: apud Hadrianum Beys, 1611); the

appeared much more related to moral and political issues than to medicine. In particular, Bertaudo firmly condemns the inebriation caused by tobacco:

> «*(...) si è sparsa la fama di questo ammagliato e puzzolente fumo, quansi in tutta l'isola della Gran Bretagna, per amagliar l'animi e per corrompere i buoni costumi; (...) e tanto han fatto che molti lasciano il culto d'iddio e la buona cura della Repubblica e magistrati, e l'economia di casa, et altri beni pubblici, che come tanti epicurei non attendono ad altro in tutto, quel poco tempo, che dovriano spendere nell'utilità loro e del prossimo, ch'a sorbire quel puzzolente fumo (...). Insomma questo fumo guasta tutte le operationi animali, riempendo il cervello d'un rapido vapore, qual rende l'huomo mezzo ubriaco, e fuori di sé, (...) quello fumo inventato da Demoni per inganar i Popoli.*»[425]

It is noteworthy that the association of tobacco with the devil was a common theme in medical literature and in the chronicles of missionaries focused on converting Amerindian people[426]. More importantly, the text reveals concerns about the social disorder that might result from tobacco intoxication. The emphasis on a kind of drunkenness which distracted individuals from household economy and community duties echoes many of the concerns expressed in James I Stuart's invective in the first years of the 17th century[427]. In this famous text attributed to the English sovereign, tobacco was accused of an inextricably association with pagan and 'diabolical' rites[428] and to

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annotations to Monardes's *Historia* and to Garcia de Orta's *Colóquios dos simples e drogas da India*, realized by the French and naturalized Dutch Carolus Clusius and translated in Italian in 1616 by the physician Annibale Briganti, see *Dell'historia de i Semplici Aromati, et Altre Cose Che Vengono Portate Dall'Indie Orientali Pertinenti All'uso Della Medicina [...] Con Alcune Brevi Annotazioni Di Carlo Clusio [...] et Due Altri Libri Parimenti Con Quelle Cose Che Si Portano Dall'Indie Occidentali* (Venezia: nella stamperia di Giovanni Salis, 1616). In the following decades, the treatise of the Flemish Jean Neander, published in 1626, and the Burgundian Jean Magnen, published in 1648, became among the most authoritative reference texts on the subject, and still in the 18th century they were widely quoted. Significantly, these authors recovered certain therapeutic virtues of tobacco already extolled by Monardes, but at the same time advised against its use as a universal remedy, condemning in particular early consumption by children and pregnant women. See Jean Neander, *Traicté Du Tabac Ou Nicotiane, Panacee, Petun, Autrement Herbe à La Reine* (Lyon: chez Barthelemy Vincent, 1626), 281–82; Jean Chrysostome Magnen, *Exercitationes de Tabaco* (The Hague: Adriani Vlacq, 1648), 47.

[425] Bertaudo, *Regole della sanita et della natura de' cibi di Ugo Benzo medico et filosogo sanese. Opera utile, ornata di varie storie, et arricchita d'un trattato nuovo della ebbrietà e dell'abuse del Tabaco*, 814–15.

[426] On the association of tobacco with the devil, see Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures*, 58–62.

[427] James I Stuart, *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (London: By Robert Barker, 1604).

[428] Significantly, describing tobacco among Amerindians, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo Y Valdes (a Spanish noble who took part in the conquest of the Caribbean) associated its consumption as a material

provoke social disorder[429]. And the acceptance of the medical use of tobacco appears to be a way to limit its spread to a controlled and benign context area, countering the rise of recreational consumption. In fact, the treatise concludes with a wish of «*prohibire l'uso d'esso e per uso di medicina a noi converrebbe usar solo quello ch'abiamo ne' nostri giardini*»[430].

These doubts formed the basis for condemnations and even outright prohibitions by institutions, including the catholic Church[431], against tobacco consumption in the first half of the 17th century. As late as 1650, a doctor from Ravenna, Massimiano Zavona, revisited the medical use of tobacco. While he did not deny the plant's healing properties[432], he argued that the abuse of tobacco had made it harmful to human health. Classified as an *errino* in the Galenic medical system - a medication used to purge and evacuate excess humors - he also added that:

> «*se come di tale si vogliamo servire, bisogna adoprarlo con quelle regole che si ricercano nel metter in uso gl'errini, date da quelli che n'hanno scritto, cioè che non si adoprino, se prima il corpo non sia ben purgato, o con medicamenti, o con l'essersi cavato il sangue a*

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embodiment of bad Indian culture, stigmatizing the use for leaving their senses during religious rituals and associating it with henbane, a plant that evoked sorcery and witchcraft at that time in European common sense. Oviedo indeed made the devil a centerpiece of Indian rituals surrounding tobacco, as shamans smoked «*cosas que se llaman tabacos*» when they wanted to «*consultar con el diablo*». See Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *La Historia General de Las Indias* (Seville, 1535), 441.

[429] The king of England released a *Counterblast* against the new habit which made him the most relevant resonator for moral and social concern about tobacco diffusion at that time. He presented smoking as a savage and pernicious luxury, which could bring to dissipation and weakening of the vital forces upon which was based the kingdom itself. In fact, he warned his subjects, «*mollicies* and delicacie were the wracked and overthrown, first of the Persian, and next of the Roman empire. And this very custom of taking *Tobacco* (whereof our present purpose is) is even at this day accounted to effeminate among the Indians themselves as in the market they will offer no price for a slave to be sold, whom they find to be a great *Tobacco* taker», see James I Stuart, *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (London: By Robert Barker, 1604), n. nn.

[430] Bertaudo, 827.

[431] Ecclesiastical hierarchies were indeed among those most concerned about the spread of tobacco habits. After the request from the Seville's church, in 1642, the pope Urbano VIII ordered the excommunication of any person who smoked or sniffed tobacco in the churches of the city and archdiocese of Seville. A few years later, in the Jubilee year of 1650, with the *Breve 'Cum sicut'* issued on 8 January, the pope Innocenzo X ordered the excommunication of anyone who consumed tobacco by mouth or through the nose in churches, particularly inside Saint Peter's Basilica. See Ceci, "Il Monopolio Del Tabacco in Italia. Ascesa e Declino Di Un'industria Di Stato," 6–7.

[432] Actually, Zavona extended the range of disease treatable with tobacco to uterine pain, scrofula, itch, and loss of hearing, see Zavona, *Abuso del tabacco de' nostri tempi, trattato di Massimiano Zauona medico Rauennate. Nel quale si dimostra, che con quello si possono curare un infinito numero di mali, che molestano l'huomo*, 14–27.

digiuno. Ma è così vero che tutti che a nostri giorni pigliano questa polvere non habbiano prima purgato il corpo, né siano digiuni come si ricerca nell'uso degl'Errini, che più tosto sono satolli, ripieni, e quasi fuori di sé per lo soverchio bere»[433]

Tobacco was directly associated with the inebriant effects of drinking and eating, as puffing on pipes and sniffing powdered tobacco became part of recreational rituals during convivial meals or at the tavern[434]. Along with remarks on the improper and counterproductive use for medical purpose, there was a certain disturbance due to the intoxicant nature of tobacco and its social consequences[435]. Accordingly, a linear explanation of tobacco cross-cultural circulation, framed as a conversion and translation of its values via the medical debate to later encourage its adoption for recreational consumption, appears unsatisfactory[436].

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[433] Zavona, 43–44.

[434] See Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise a Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 96–111; Massimo Martelli and Vincenzo Zagà, "Il Fumo Di Tabacco Nell'arte Pittorica. Periodo Moderno (XV-XIX Sec.)," *Tabaccologia* 2 (2011): 19–27.

[435] Also in Girolamo Baruffaldi's ode to snuff, we can find several parallels between tobacco and wine: «*quanto vuol mi guardi bieco / l'occhio torbido di Bacco / io dall'Indie porto meco / merce solo di Tabacco, / che consola, e che vivifica / e fortifica / quanto e più faccia un bicchiero / di buon vino, o bianco o nero*», Girolamo Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo* (Ferrara: per gli Eredi di Bernardino Pomatelli, 1714), 9–10.

[436] To some extent, such interpretation follows the evolution of the intellectual debate fostered by the growing diffusion of new exotic goods. Marcello Carmagnani has proposed a model in three steps: at the beginning, these 'drugs' raised concerns of essentially medical nature; then, the controversy shifted towards the *querelle* on luxury; finally, in the mid-eighteenth century, they were incorporated in the reflection of the emerging political economy. See Marcello Carmagnani, *Le isole del lusso: prodotti esotici, nuovi consumi e cultura economica europea, 1650-1800* (Torino: UTET libreria, 2010), 101 and fw. Levati has substantially adopted such a scheme for the literature on tobacco in the early modern Italian peninsula: starting as a medical issue, treatises on tobacco shifted to the sphere of agronomy and economic production in the second half of the 18th century. However, things went on much more unevenly. In the 18th century, the medical use of tobacco remained somewhat in force, albeit quite residual if compared with recreational consumption. Even with the establishment of the monopolies on tobacco, apothecaries usually retained the right to sell tobacco and similar powders for pharmacological use. In particular, in Florence the sale of a powder known as '*purgacapo*', which «*serve per tabacco et forse ne contiene qualche mescolanza*», needed the license issued by the consuls of the apothecaries art, see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, ff. 870 r-v, letter of Alessandro Vettori to the director of the apothecaries art, 30/08/1645. But also at the beginning of the 19th century tobacco medical use was a diffused reality and interventions in this field could led to a number of problems: a notification issued in 1803 by Jean-Gabriel Eynard, the Tuscan tobacco general farmer, that required much more detailed medical receipts for medical tobacco, inspired a vibrant protest by the grand-ducal fiscal doctors, because it risked to cause painful waste of time for the treating of pressing disease. Tobacco's importance as a pharmaceutical should not be overlooked, they claimed, because «*oltre alle ordinazioni, che se ne fanno dai medici come rimedio per gl'uomini, serve nella veterinaia ed in maggior copia che per la medicina umana*», see BNCF, *Fondo Targioni Tozzetti*, reg. 270, ff. 116r-118v.

In fact, the authors analyzed here reacted to phenomena that were already occurring in society, albeit in small quantities. Our investigation should avoid biased perspectives by focusing only on the 'canon' emerging from erudite treatises written by the ruling classes. Evidence suggests a parallel diffusion of recreational and voluptuary tobacco consumption among all classes, even at the base of the social pyramid. Not by chance, the diffusion of tobacco as a pleasurable consumer good emerges more strongly from contemporary poems or plays[437]. These genres did not focus on erudite scrutiny of the plant's medical virtues or the collective health implications related to moral, social, and political concerns. Instead, they provided insights into the customs of the time, which are remarkably attractive for us today. In this respect, the social borders and connotations for different ways of consuming tobacco appear much more shaded: tobacco was indeed regarded as an instrument for lessening the distance between social ranks, recommending «*chi diventar volesse huomo gentile, ancor ché nato sia d'oscuro sangue, / usi il tabacco e non sarà più vile*»[438].

Because of the nature of primary sources and printed texts at our disposal, basing arguments about the initial tobacco consumption of the less affluent classes on solid evidence is anything but straightforward. However, some insights from the literature and sources suggest a nuance to the prevalent top-down model for the spread of extra-European goods for consumption. Apparently, tobacco easily found its way among soldiers in the Italian peninsula[439], who were familiar with the consumption of other powdered herbs and proved to be a fundamental vector in the spread of tobacco habits[440],

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[437] The merit of having indicated these works as a useful tool to look at how the social phenomenon of tobacco diffusion was relevant for contemporary observers is once again due to Stefano Levati, see Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 42–43.

[438] Francesco Zucchi, *La Tabaccheide, Scherzo Estivo Sopra Il Tabacco* (Ascoli: Maffio Salvioni, 1636), 79.

[439] Pier Luigi Origoni, a doctor and physician from Milan, argued that at the end of the 1610s, during the first siege of Vercelli, among the Milanese troops «*non era officiale o soldato che in sacca non avesse una presa di scialappa*», but «*cominciarono poco doppo a metter in uso il tabacco artificiato col muschio, anesi e rosmarino, sì che il tabacco cacciò la scialappa*», see Pier Luigi Origoni, *Discorso Contro l'abuso Del Tabacco* (Milano: per Filippo Ghisolfi, 1643), 119.

[440] This episode corroborates for the Italian peninsula the general role of soldiers (defined as «*les plus grands fumeurs de l'ancien régime*», Didier Nourisson, *Histoire sociale du tabac* (Paris: Editions Christians, 1999), 42) and sailors for the penetration of tobacco habits in European societies. There is a wide acceptance among specialists that in central Europe, another region of second-hand and late arrival of tobacco, the armies deployed during the thirty years war (1618-1648) massively contributed to the diffusion of this new global good in the core of the continent. See Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 53. Rosemary

similar to the role of sailors in the transoceanic dissemination from the eastern seaboard of the Americas to the shores of Western Europe[441]. Additionally, other kinds of cross-border travelers, like northern European beggar pilgrims, could effectively contribute to the process[442].

Archival sources confirm also that powdered tobacco was indeed a product widely consumed across the social ladder in the mid-17th century. In 1635, Tuscan officials scrutinized the increasingly widespread practices among less affluent consumers of buying tobacco leaves and then crushing them into powder to reduce costs or profit from reselling due to the price gap[443]. Such activity required only basic technology: instruments for crushing and grinding tobacco leaves were available in ordinary households, enabling peasants and urban workers to make their own cheap snuff for personal use or small-scale retail[444]. Similarly, in Venice, authorities viewed private houses, convents, and

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Elliot has explained such a general process as an outcome of the physiological properties of tobacco, which helped in hard and painful wartime, but also of soldiers' mobility: they were required to travel across borders and to station in different countries, accordingly they often catch their movements as an opportunity to trade goods. See Rosemary Elliot, "Soldiers," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jordan Goodman (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005), 568–70. As it has been argued for sailors, tobacco proved able to conquer «the lower rungs of the very stratified societies of early modern Europe, in terms of both pay and status», see Marcy Norton, "Sailors," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jordan Goodman (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005), 510.

[441] Matthias de l'Obel, in his celebrated herbal of 1570, gave a clear account of how European sailors returning from the New World were a crucial vector in tobacco spread: «for you may see many sailors, all of whom have returned from there carrying small tubes (...) [which] they light with fire, and, opening their mouts wide and breathing in, they suck n as much smoke as they can», quoted in Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, 44.

[442] For instance, the doctor and physician Giovanni Piccino, from the town of Orte in the Papal states, describing some beggar pilgrims on their route to Rome for the Jubilee in 1650, argued that: «*si vedevano de' Guitti, de' Guidoni, tanto mendichi, che scalzi e nudi nelle riggidità maggiori di quei tempi, e per empirsi la bocca di fumo di tabacco, non curavano votarsela di pane, e non poteva procacciarsi per limosina quel quaatrino per altro che potersi provedere di Tabacco*», see Giovanni Piccino, *Il Petopiccino, overo eccellenza e doti del tabacco di Giovan Piccino medico fisico nell'illustriss. città d'Orte. Diviso in doi libri, nel primo si tratta delle lodi del tabacco, nel secondo delle sue virtù* (Viterbo: per il Diotiallevi, 1650), 103.

[443] See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, f. 37, nn. 89-90.

[444] When the grand duke of Tuscany eventually opted for the establishment of a monopoly on tobacco business, the possession of such instruments was immediately banned, as a threat to the profit of the tax farmer. The ban of 1645 stated: «*nessuno fuorché i detti Appaltatori, o chi harà da loro licenza, potrà doppo detto tempo tener in casa ordigni da pestare, o macinar tabacco*», Lorenzo Cantini, *Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini socio di varie accademie* (Firenze: nella Stamp. Albizziniana da S. Maria in Campo, 1800), vol. XVII, 203.

monasteries with suspicion, as these places frequently ground tobacco leaves for sale to the less affluent consumers of the Lagoon[445].

Moreover, even prior to the establishment of sovereign monopolies, tobacco underwent early commodification in Livorno and Venice through the efforts of shopkeepers and peddlers who began selling cheap varieties at kiosks, trade fairs, and on the streets. in the 1620s, English and Dutch retailers residing in Livorno received small quantities of tobacco from Dutch vessels for sale[446]. A similar scenario unfolded with Calvinist Frenchmen, representing the lower strata of the French 'nation' in early-17th century Livorno[447]. Tobacco trafficking was vigorous at the docks, where sailors, dockers, porters, and other harbor workers incessantly traded small bags of tobacco intended for popular consumption[448]. Likewise, sailors and soldiers aboard Venetian galleys, many from the *Stato da Mar*, particularly from the eastern shores of the Adriatic, spearheaded the distribution of tobacco among popular consumers in mid-17th century[449]. In the early 1650s, small shops operated by spirit sellers freely sold cheap tobacco leaves for smoking and chewing[450].

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[445] For instance, in 1696, the rumours said the convent of the friars devoted to San Francesco della Vigna had become a proper illegal trading post for cheap snuff: inside its cloisters, tobacco was grown, harvested, and eventually reduced in snuff to be sold. The Inquisitor over tobacco gathered evidence that «*in un camerino situato vicino alla Camera, che corrisponde col Canale di Murano, l'Infermeria, e la Spiciaria, da due Laici e un secolar servente si venda tabacco a chiunque va per comprarne, tenendolo in un armaro, e che in peso di libbre e mezze libbre preparato negl'involti di carta, ne segua di questo la vendita continua*», ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I, 165, ff. 230-231.

[446] Information in Marie Christine Engels, *Merchants Interlopers Seamen and Corsairs: The Flemish Community in Livorno and Genoa* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), 95.

[447] Collecting information on the activities of the passed Calvinist Frenchman Samuel Selvaggio, the Holy Inquisition of Pisa took possession of the inventory of the merchandise held by Jean Canguijean, the young servant of Selvaggio. From this document, it turns out that Canguijean had brought to his store at the fair of Pisa 1 bale and 6 rolls of tobacco, which resulted in a cheap product in a quantity good for small retailing. See AAPi, *Sant'Uffizio*, reg. 11, ff. 237r-265v.

[448] The docks became a space of crucial concern for Tuscan authorities after the establishment of the tobacco monopoly, as a meeting place for illegal sales which were eventually smuggled in the hinterland. However, even before the *privativa*'s inception, little retail of tobacco was commonly carried out there: in a petition of 1644 to the governor of Livorno, Giovanni Antonio Veneziano stated he had bought from two French sailors landed from Messina few pounds of tobacco at the docks, defined as the «*posto solito per il negozio del tabacco*», see ASLi, *Governatore*, "Atti civili – Suppliche", reg. 2603bis, ff. 397-398.

[449] Complaint about tobacco smuggled «*nelle fuste e galere quotidianamente*» at few steps from Palazzo Ducale, home of the highest political power in Venice, describes the onrushing folk on the Riva degli Schiavoni as the main consignees of such disposal. See in particular ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I, reg. 161, cc. 97-98.

[450] See ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 564, 18/02/1650 mv.

Even coerced laborers, like other manual workers, found solace and comfort in tobacco[451], which became a staple for slaves and convicts detained in the Bagno of Livorno for service of the granducal galleys[452]. For instance, the correspondence between Saverio Azzoni from Malta and the director of the Livorno's custom house provides details not only on prices and routes of the Mediterranean slave market, but also on the essential commodities required for the subsistence of these slaves during their transport to Livorno[453]. Alongside basic foodstuffs like biscuit (the crucial ailment for the maritime life), cheese, oil, and onions, there was a regular supply of tobacco leaves that slaves could smoke for their pleasure and relief[454]. Furthermore, slaves asserted a kind of right

[451] It has been largely demonstrated for the Iberian colonies in the Americas that black slaves soon adopted tobacco, learning from the native populations. Francisco de Oviedo, observing these communities on the isle of Hispaniola, wrote in 1546: «*muchos negros de los que estan en esta ciudad y en la isla toda, han tomado la misma costrumbre, e crian en las haciendas y heredamientos de sus amos, esta hierba para lo que es dicho, y toman las misma ahumadas o tabacos; porque dicen que, cuando dexan de trabajar e toman el tabaco, se les quita el cansancio*», quoted in Monti, *Il tabacco fa male?*, 11.

[452] Livorno, defined by Braudel as the Christian Algeri, hosted a significant slave population, especially in the 17th century, mainly as a by-product of the corsair activities carried out primarily by the grand-ducal order of knights of Santo Stefano against the Muslim subjects of the so-called Barbary regencies of north Africa. Their attacks, in addition to the booty of merchandise and ships captured, brought back to Livorno Muslims forced into bondage and who became despite them engine to new raids and incursions as coerced oarsmen on the grand-ducal galleys. See Michel Fontenay, *La Méditerranée entre la croix et le croissant: navigation, commerce, course et piraterie (16.-19. siècle)* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2010). On the presence of Muslim slaves in seventeenth-century Livorno, see Cesare Santus, *Il «turco» a Livorno: incontri con l'Islam nella Toscana del Seicento* (Milano: Officina Libraria, 2019). Of course, similar corsair activities were deployed on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, where many people from the Italian peninsula were deported deprived of freedom after a raid. As in other cities, this process gave birth to guilds and institutions for the ransom of enslaved Christians and to insurance systems against the capture. For the case of Livorno, see Andrea Addobbati, "Il Prezzo Della Libertà. Appunti Di Ricerca Sulle Assicurazioni Contro La Cattura," *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* 8 (2000): 95–123. More broadly, on the ransom economy which derived, see Wolfgang Kaiser, ed., *Le commerce des captifs : Les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerranée, XVe-XVIIIe siècle* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2008).

[453] Saverio Azzoni's commitment for the grand duke was twofold in Malta. On the one hand, he collected the rights of admiralty on the vessels under the Tuscan flag that sold their booty in Valletta, another crucial center of Mediterranean privateering. On the other hand, he bought on behalf of the sovereign slaves for the Tuscan galleys. For some accounts on these operations sent to Livorno, see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 7, nn. 1 and 177.

[454] For example, the 'Turkish' slave named Iachiach, son of Sesa from Tripoli on the Barbary coast, charged on the French ship of the captain François Fabre, was equipped with 30 rolls of biscuit, 3 rolls of Levantine cheese, 1 *tomolo* of broad beans, 2 *quartucci* of oil, 4 *quartucci* of vinegar, onions and garlics, 1 roll of tobacco leaves. In another case, Hassan di Ghailas from Rodi and Ahmet di Chalil from Caramania, charged on the French *pincotta* of the captain Andrea de Fei, were equipped with 90 rolls of biscuit, 3 *tomoli* of broad beans, 4 rolls of rice, 9 rolls of cheese, 4 *quartucci* of oil, 6 *quartucci* of vinegar, 2 *tari* of fresh herbs, and again 3 rolls of tobacco leaves for smoking. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 8, nn. 13 and and 191.

to engage in small-scale trading within the Bagno, which eventually included the distribution of tobacco, overseen by the head of Turkish slaves in Livorno[455].

To understand the nature of tobacco's early adoption by the less affluent classes, it is useful to recall a famous statement by Fernand Braudel: «with the increase – or at least the continuation – of very serious dietary difficulties, humanity had a need for compensation, according to a constant rule of its life. Tobacco was one of these compensations»[456]. The urban and rural poor lived in a world where what we would now call hallucinatory or ecstatic experiences were common[457], and the early modern age multiplied the available possibilities in many respects[458]. Tobacco's nature as a narcotic and intoxicant allowed common people, burdened with exhausting manual labor, to find some relief in everyday life. Despite the limitations imposed by the medical debates and the frequent condemnations based on moral concerns, unprivileged groups brought on the stage their needs, contesting the attempts to exclude them from the circulation of this new global commodity.

In sum, the circulation of tobacco as a recreational commodity involved navigating through various doubts and condemnations, making its early adoption contested and negotiated. This new exotic stimulant provided effects on the human body and mind which were appreciated by numerous physicians, but within a contested debate. Moreover, moral concerns looked at tobacco as an intoxicant, not much because of its negative consequences for health, but for its purported social consequences. In particular, tobacco had to face the stigma of paganism and frequent associations with socially unacceptable behaviors such as drunkenness, idleness, and dissipation. Coeval medical

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[455] The head of Turkish slaves in Livorno was a sort of representative of the slaves, called upon to confront local authorities about the allowed boundaries of the small trade carried out by the slaves, first and foremost among themselves. In 1704, the slave Ahmet from Tripoli, new head of Turkish slaves, sent to the director of the custom house a petition that states the conductor of the contract on coffee and tobacco in Livorno had controlled for decades «*una bottega ad uso di caffè e appaltino del tabacco sopra la cantonata di via San Giovanni, la quale da trent'anni indietro è stata tenuta ad uso di caffè dal capo mercante della nazione turchesca, di mano in mano*», see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 126.

[456] Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century. The Structures of Everyday Life: the limits of the possible*, vol. 1 (London: William Collins Sons & Co, 1985), 261.

[457] See also the expertise on mind-altering substances described by Carlo Ginzburg in what he called the 'female medicine' or by Piero Camporesi when he referred to the 'medicine of the poor', see Piero Camporesi, *The Fear of Hell: Images of Damnation and Salvation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 108–14; Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 304.

[458] Courtwright, *Forces of Habit*, 9–68.

treatises were often used to limit tobacco's diffusion to the narrow sphere of pharmacology. The effort to tame tobacco was primarily driven by consumption policies modeled on the ruling classes' vision of the world and intended to mark the obligation of the common folk and their distance with them[459]. Despite this, plebeian groups like sailors, soldiers, pilgrims, shopkeepers, peasant, urban workers, and slaves negotiated and carved out spaces for their trade and consumption of tobacco[460]. Unlike other exotic substances of the period - especially in contrast with the coeval chocolate's entrance into European market, but also with the following ones by as sugar, coffee, and tea - tobacco permeated all social classes simultaneously[461]. Beyond the canon of the top-down process from elites' botanical gardens and courts, tobacco habits found their way towards voluptuary consumption from below, as they met fertile ground in the Italian states away from the central places for fashion-leading and the largest wholesale trade. The active participation of the poor in early tobacco consumption in the Italian states echoes observations made by Marcy Norton about the Iberian peninsula and the divergence between the commercialization paths of tobacco and chocolate. Similarly, as we have seen, the initial figures associated with tobacco circulation in Livorno and Venice did not hold leading positions within the mercantile communities. Most interestingly, tobacco's

[459] It is interesting that, according to Giovanni Giacomo Cuffari, the viceroy of Sicily, don Francisco de Mellos, had prohibited the use of tobacco with «*pene arduissime sotto pretesto, come io credo, per atterrire i semplici, che sia stato avvelenato da que' Turchi di Levante, nostri communi nemici*», see Giovanni Giacomo Cuffari, *I Biasmi Del Tabacco* (Palermo, 1645), 36. Scaring simple people was evidently necessary in front of tobacco's adoption among the less well-off.

[460] To some extent, early political doubts and proper bans on tobacco took part in the broader history of the tension between established consumer cultures and the corrosive power of global trade, see Maxine Berg, "In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 182, no. 1 (2004): 85–142; Peter McNeil and Giorgio Riello, eds., *Luxury: A Rich History* (Oxford University Press, 2016). The spread of new habits, especially among lower strata of the societies, was often perceived as a threat to stable hierarchies and had been fought by governments, as the widely studied case of sumptuary laws on dressing shows. In this respect, Appadurai has observed that «sumptuary laws constitute an intermediate consumption-regulation device, suited to societies devoted to stable status displays in exploding commodity context, such as India, China and Europe in the pre-modern period», Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," 25. For a case study on eighteenth-century France, see Michael Kwass, "Consumption and the World of Ideas: Consumer Revolution and the Moral Economy of the Marquis de Mirabeau," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37, no. 2 (2004): 187–213. For a great comparison at a global scale, see Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, 87–136.

[461] Sidney W. (Sidney Wilfred) Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 74–150; Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988).

case provides one of the main planks against the story that is so often told about the integration of exotic commodities into Europe: that the inhabitants of Old World societies first accepted such goods as medicines and later learned to appreciate them as recreational substances. As a matter of fact, the latter went in parallel and beneath the cultural debates on tobacco's virtues and faults, with different pace and meaning depending on social level and context.

3. Conversions and multifaceted translations: negotiation and appropriation of the social meanings of tobacco

The institutionalization of tobacco trade in the Italian peninsula during the central decades of the 17th century represented a significant shift towards recreational use, driven by the convergence of commercial profits and fiscal revenues. This development allowed tobacco to overcome early prohibitions and criticisms, embedding itself within the broader consumer culture of the time. From the mid-17th century, the function of tobacco evolved significantly, both in treatises and among societies. Initially confined to apothecary's shelves for medicinal purposes, it increasingly found its way into retail shops as a commodity for pleasure and routine consumption driven by taste and delight[462].

Such evolution laid the foundation for a substantial and progressive rise in tobacco consumption across the Italian states. In 1720, a Venetian official, the *Inquisitore sopra i Dazi*, informed the Senate on a substantial increase in tobacco revenues over the previous 60 years, attributing this rise to the outstanding growth in consumption of «*cosa tanto superflua, essendosi fatto comune l'uso anco alle femmine ed eziandio alle miserabili persone*»[463]. This phenomenon was part of a broader transformation in consumption patterns in the 17th- and 18th-century Europe, which witnessed the rise of the so-called commercial society and spurred critical reflections on 'luxury', aimed primarily at rethinking the analytical frameworks used to understand new consumption habits[464].

[462] For a parallel with Dutch society, according to Kristof Glamann, colonial groceries were basically sold as pharmacological drugs at Amsterdam in the first decades of the 17th century. Only in 1630s sugar, tobacco, tea, and coffee began to add up to relevant share of VOC and WIC sales in the Dutch capital, see Kristof Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade 1620 – 1740* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958), 13–14.

[463] ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 1561, 16/10/1720.

[464] For a summary, see Antonella Alimento, "Ricchezza e Lusso," in *Illuminismo. Un Vademecum*, ed. Tortarolo Edoardo and Gianni Paganini (Torino: Bollati-Boringhieri, 2008), 221–37.

Within this *querelle*, the most attentive observers underlined the transformative impact of non-European goods: the economist Jean-François Melon, a proponent of the '*doux commerce*' theory[465], noted in 1734 that «*il y a peu de temps que des Isles d'un luxe nouveau sont découvertes, c'est-à-dire, que la soye, le tabac, le sucre, etc. sont devenus de nouveaux besoins*»[466]. Although discussions on luxury in the Italian states during this period only marginally addressed tobacco[467], it became evident through documentation that it had transformed into a 'new need'. Tuscan officials remarked that tobacco had become «*uno dei più estesi articoli di commercio, ed autorizzato dalla moda è diventato un nuovo bisogno della vita degl'uomini*»[468].

Evolving cultural attitudes towards tobacco went hand in hand with the institutionalization of tobacco trade and the establishment of recreational consumption. While tobacco increased its economic significance, as well as its cultural and social impact, the dominant culture elaborated new positive meanings and values related to its use and circulation. At the same time, tobacco's consumption and appropriation as a resource still underwent contestation and negotiation, especially regarding social and gender boundaries.

To begin with, since the mid-17th century, Italian scholarly treatises on tobacco underwent significant changes. Although the medical application remained relevant[469],

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[465] On this crucial category for the rise of eighteenth-century political economy, see Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism Before Its Triumph* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1977); John Shovlin, *The Political Economy of Virtue: Luxury, Patriotism, and the Origins of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, N.Y; London: Cornell University Press, 2007); Paul Burton Cheney, *Revolutionary Commerce: Globalization and the French Monarchy* (Cambridge (Mass.); London: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[466] Jean-François Melon, *Essai politique sur le commerce* (Paris, 1734), 110.

[467] See Andrea Addobbati, "Il Dibattito Sul Lusso Nella Toscana Leopoldina," in *Modelli d'oltre Confine. Prospettive Economiche e Sociali Negli Antichi Stati Italiani*, ed. Antonella Alimento (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2009), 45–63; Alida Clemente, *Il lusso "cattivo": dinamiche del consumo nella Napoli del Settecento* (Roma: Carocci, 2011); Cecilia Carnino, *Lusso e benessere nell'Italia del Settecento* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2014).

[468] ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Notizie istoriche intorno alla regalia del tabacco", 31/08/1803. Even across the Alps, in revolutionary France, advocates of free tobacco cultivation supported their arguments with a critique of the idea of tobacco as a luxury: for some groups – especially for workers, soldiers, and sailors – it was rather a true necessity. See *De La Vente Libre Du Tabac et de l'avantage d'en Établir La Culture En France, Par M. Mittié, Ancien Controleur Ambulant Des Domaines Du Roi, de La Généralité de Paris* (Paris, 1789), 5.

[469] Take the case of the debate on powdered tobacco and leaves as a wound healing remedy: in 1671, the naturalist and physician Francesco Redi stressed the «*bizzarra stravaganza*» of the contrast between the high level of poisonousness in tobacco oil, which several experiments on small and medium-sized animals

these treatises began to emphasize recreational consumption as a central theme. Consider the case of the aforementioned Bernardo Stella, whose work was published in 1669. In his preface to the 'curious reader', the Cistercian monk notes that his work was inspired by the great texts of the European medical debate, starting with Neander and Magnen, and that he aims to moderate tobacco abuse in the Italian peninsula. Nevertheless, he acknowledges the widespread use of tobacco across all social classes, justifying his decision to abandon the Latin language in favor of the «*lingua naturale italiana, (benché con maniera, e stile rozzo) acciò dotti, ed indotti, nobili, e plebei potessero leggerlo, intenderlo ed approfittarsi di lui*»[470]. More importantly for our discussion, Stella distinguishes clearly between the pharmacological use of tobacco, which should be administered as «*sciloppi, lambitivi, e tavolette (...), in acqua stillato, o in olio o in balsamo*» with great care and medical advice, and its use for pleasure, «*come si fa in fumo, in polvere ed in foglia*». He further observes that, in society at large, «*non si usa il Tabacco più per medicamento, ma per delitia*»[471].

Outside the strict medical context, other social virtues began to be associated with tobacco. Notably, tobacco was particularly valued for its aid in enhancing the concentration of learned men, scholars, and academics[472]. For instance, Girolamo Baruffaldi emphasized the benefits for memory from the consumption of tobacco («*Ma qui per tutti basterà ch'io rechi / il mirabil Magliabechi, / che sa ben quanto serva, e quanto aiuti / la memoria il Tabacco a chi lo fiuti*»[473]), as well as the inspiration it could

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had shown to be lethal, and «*cert'uomini, che medicano e guariscono con la sola polvere di tabacco i tagli e tutte quelle ferite che ferite semplici da' maestri di Chirurgia sono chiamate*», see Francesco Redi, *Esperienze Intorno a Diverse Cose Naturali e Particolarmente Quelle Che Ci Son Portate Dall'Indie* (Firenze: per Piero Matini, 1686), 35. I consulted the 1686 edition, but the original one was published in 1671. On this point, Redi referred not only to the classical text of Monardes, but also to the direct and coeval testimony of Father Antonio Vieira, Portuguese missionary and Jesuit who lived for several decades in colonial Brazil, making a strong opposition with the false belief in the miraculous medical powers of certain stones found in the heads of poisonous snakes in the East Indies. On the general aim of Redi's publication on this topic, see Gabriele Bucchi and Lorella Mangani, "Redi, Francesco," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 2016). On Francesco Redi's importance for the experimental method promotion at the grand-ducal court in the second half of the 17th century, see Paula Findlen, "Controlling the Experiment: Rhetoric, Court Patronage and the Experimental Method of Francesco Redi," *History of Science* 31, no. 1 (1993): 35–64.

[470] Stella, *Il tabacco*, n. nn.

[471] See Stella, 102, 103, 478.

[472] See Sebastiano Laghi, *Neve, Tabacco e Acqua Vita. Otiosi Discorsi Di Sebastiano Laghi Di Lugano* (Milano: per Filippo Ghisolfi, 1647), 74.

[473] Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo*, 47.

provide for poets and men of letters («*Non so come possan fare / a compor versi, e poemi / certi astemi / del Tabacco nimicissimi: / io non credo, che in moltissimi / petissimi, / che del Zeno faran sull'ampa Istoria, / troverassi la memoria / d'un moderno rimatore / di buon sapore, / dispregiatore / di questo balsamo / prelibatissimo / ch'è la droga de' Poeti, / l'elisir de' Letterati, / svegliarono de' Segreti, / e ristoro ai cervelli affaticati*»[474]). Additionally, the relationship between tobacco consumption and inappropriate excess was intensely reframed and reconfigured. The suspicion of diabolical intoxication and drunkenness caused by tobacco, a common theme in the early treatises, was progressively counterbalanced by opposing views highlighting its ability to calm lust and temper the effects of alcohol overuse[475].

In other words, the poems and treatises of the time resonate with the aforementioned observations of Woodruff Smith, who has argued that in early modern England smoking and sniffing tobacco gradually changed their 'cultural context', shifting from a pagan and orgiastic dimension to one of 'respectability'[476]. According to Smith, tobacco was progressively relocated from the intoxicants of popular recreational consumption, often associated with alehouses[477], to the realm of rational masculinity. It became a substance favored by well-established people who gathered in coffeehouses[478].

Similar trends were at work also in the Italian peninsula, as suggested by manuals aimed at a male audience on how to smoke stylishly and without being unpleasant to women. I defer to the vivid words of Émile Marco de Saint-Hilare, author of a popular nineteenth-century best-seller on smoking tobacco, which are particularly useful for

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474 Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo*, 55–56.

475 See Zucchi, *La Tabaccheide Scherzo Estivo Sopra Il Tabacco*, 79; Piccino, *Il Petopiccino, overo eccellenza e doti del tabacco di Giovan Piccino medico fisico nell'illustriss. città d'Orte. Diviso in doi libri, nel primo si tratta delle lodi del tabacco, nel secondo delle sue virtù*, 18.

476 See Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600-1800* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

477 On the strong association between alehouses and pipe-smoking in early modern England, see "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800," 199.

478 See Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600-1800*, 139–70. Smith sharply contrasts the 'rational masculinity' with the cultural context of 'domestic femininity', associated with tea, sugar, and the greater importance of breakfast. See Smith, 171–88. The emergence of smoking as a distinct respectable habit for the ever economically stronger bourgeoisie was also in relation with the transformation of a large number of coffeehouses into private clubs, not open to ordinary visitors, see Steve Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create': Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture," *The Journal of Modern History* 67, no. 4 (1995): 807–34.

exploring both the association with masculinity and the distancing from the realm of excess:

> «*pressoché tutte le abitudini degli uomini, in sulle prime innocenti, finiscono per degenerare in gravi difetti, talvolta anzi in vizi: il prender tabacco ed il fumare non ebbero mai né possono avere siffatto inconveniente; un uomo che ama il vino, col tempo divien ubbriacone, altri che ama le donne, col tempo divien dissoluto, ecc.; uno che prende tabacco, uno che fuma restano stazionari*»[479]

Can the process of converting a diabolical intoxicant into an 'honest luxury'[480] be summarized with these words? Not entirely. In fact, Smith's thesis has been convincingly criticized for considering cultural constructs as coercive framework for social practises[481]. Other scholars have analyzed consumption patterns of early modern Europe pointing out the emergence of new, semi-luxury, and fashionable goods in the household budgets, both in urban areas and the countryside. These studies pay greater attention to the interconnections between the economic and the cultural spheres, emphasizing new categories like 'utility', 'leisure', 'comfort', 'delight'. These categories began not only to complement the traditional concern with 'status' but also to complicate the picture of social practises, challenging the rigid typifications imposed by cultural constructs[482].

Learning from this, the investigation into primary sources shows that symbolism and values of our cross-cultural commodity changed over time and space. In particular, tobacco's gender and social boundaries were constantly questioned and negotiated. Women's access to tobacco consumption in the early modern age serves as an interesting case of creative appropriation outside the cultural dimension traditionally attributed to

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[479] Emile Marco de Saint-Hilaire, *L'arte di fumare e prender tabacco senza recar dispiacere alle belle* (Pesaro: Tipografia Nobili, 1828), 44.

[480] «*Ma quel tanto, tanto, tanto / a bizzeffe impolverarsi / e impiastrarsi / a fusone il viso e il manto / con tanta intemperanza e tanta furia / è una spezie di lussuria, / ma lussuria onesta e pura, / che conforta la mente e l'assicura*», see Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo*, 48.

[481] For a good synthesis, see Jon Stobart, Andrew Hann, and Victoria Morgan, "Leisure, Consumption and Shopping," in *Spaces of Consumption. Leisure and Shopping in the English Town, c. 1680-1830* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 1–25.

[482] See Angus McInnes, "The Emergence of a Leisure Town: Shrewsbury 1660-1760," *Past & Present*, no. 120 (1988): 53–87; Peter Borsay, "The Emergence of a Leisure Town: Or an Urban Renaissance?," *Past & Present*, no. 126 (1990): 189–96; Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Jon Stobart and Cristina Prytz, "Comfort in English and Swedish Country Houses, c. 1760–1820," *Social History* 43, no. 2 (2018): 234–58.

certain goods. This case also illustrates how the differentiation of forms of consumption multiplied access possibilities to new global and contested goods, such as stimulants. For instance, smoking tobacco did not become widespread among women until the advent of the cigarette made with bright tobacco in the mid-19th century[483], whereas chewing tobacco remained predominantly a male habit. Women's exclusion had several reasons: the taste was considered particularly strong, especially in the case of Brazilian tobacco, one of the most appreciated 'rope' tobaccos[484] for chewing, which was «*nero e della grossezza di un dito*»[485]. Additionally, since chewing tobacco strongly stimulated salivation and the resulting expectoration[486], it was perceived as entirely inappropriate for the female gender[487]. This perception was largely perpetuated by men whose arguments aimed at excluding women from those habits. In their reasoning and representations,

[483] See Gately, *Tobacco*, 176–84.

[484] The term 'rope' for several tobaccos derived from the first phases of processing the dried leaves of the plant after the harvest. In particular, «when the leaves are sufficiently dried, they are pulled from off the stalks, and made up in little bundles; which being steeped in sea-water, or for want thereof, in common water, are twisted in manner of ropes, and the twists formed into rolls, by winding them with a kind of mill around a stick», Ephraïm Chambers, *Cyclopaedia, Or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences by Ephraïm Chambers*, vol. II (London: printed for W. Innys, 1743). The 'rolls' of tobacco were then further processed in Europe to make snuff and chewing tobacco: «*c'est du tabac en rouleau dont on se sert soit pour raper soit pour macher*», Jacques Savary des Brûlons and Louis-Philémon Savary des Brûlons, *Dictionnaire universel de commerce: contenant tout ce qui concerne le commerce qui se fait dans les quatre parties du monde ...* (Amsterdam: chez les Jansons à Waesberge, 1726), v. II, 1444.

[485] Gavelli, *Storia Distinta, e Curiosa Del Tabacco, Concernente La Sua Scoperta, La Introduzione in Europa, e La Maniera Di Coltivarlo, Conservarlo, e Prepararlo, e per Servirsene Con Altre Ottime Ed Utili Osservazioni Sopra Il Medesimo*, 11.

[486] This outcome became also the target of medical criticism, because, depriving the human body of spittle, «the common method of smoking and chewing (...) rob the stomach of its best assistance, pall the appetite, spoil digestion, and weaken the whole body», see *A Dissertation on the Use and Abuse of Tobacco in Relation to Smoaking, Chewing, and Taking of Snuff* (London: printed for F. Roberts, 1720), 12.

[487] Francesco Arisi's ode to chewing tobacco harshly criticised the most unpleasant consequences of this activity: «*Come spiaccionmi costoro / Masticanti, / Tabaccanti, / ch'hanno il Labbro / sporcaticcio, / bruciaticcio, / come un fabbro / Steropeo di Mongibello, / senza lume / pien di nero arso bitume, / incallito, / fra l'incudine, e il martello. / Altri ancora / quasi ognora / nelle sale van gettando, / e spruzzando in qua e in là, / con villana libertà / della foglia, e squarzi, e zacchere, / deponendo in ogni lato, / il polmone lambicato, / e fan laghi, e fan pozzacchere, / onde avviene, che il Padrone / più d'un servo tenga, ch'abbia /scopa e sabbia, / e più volte al giorno sudi*», see Francesco Arisi, *Il tabacco masticato, ed il tabacco fumato: trattenimenti autunnali ditirambici* (Firenze: Piero Matini, 1707), 12–13.

tobacco use by women was strongly associated with immoral behavior and sexual unattractiveness[488].

However, by the early 19th century, Sevillian women working in tobacco factories smoked their *papelotes*[489]. This outcome did not come from nowhere. In the early modern age, women became more accustomed to tobacco consumption in the regions where the plant had been introduced as a cash crop. They were directly involved in the productive process, with the entire peasant household actively engaged in tobacco cultivation. Specifically, «*la récolte des feuilles était l'ouvrage des femmes et des enfants*»[490] in the Amersfoort's district of the Dutch United Provinces and in French Flanders, where delicate fingers were essential to prevent the leaves from crumpling. Moreover, women often handled the sale to the public or served tobacco in taverns. According to Stephen Snelders, involvement in the production and distribution of tobacco significantly contributed to female tobacco consumption in the Netherlands, despite persistent stigma[491]. In this respect, the percentage of women among the '*appaltini*' for the public sale of tobacco in the district of Florence under the authority of the general tobacco farm is quite remarkable: out of 54 retail outlets, almost one quarter (12) were run by women[492].

Snuff was generally more accepted for women, although criticism and censorship were not absent in this area either. In 1760s Venice, the conservative author Abbot Angelo Maria Labia, in his rhyming dialectal satires, frequently criticized Andrea Tron's jurisdictionalism and what he perceived as the contemporary corruption of customs[493]. In

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[488] See Ivan Gaskell, "Tobacco, Social Deviance, and Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century," in *Holländische Genremalerei Im 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Bock and Gaehtgens (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1987), 117–37.

[489] Just think of Carmen, employed in the Sevillian tobacco manufacture, in the novel of Prosper Mérimée, on which Georges Bizet based his famous opera.

[490] François Rozier, *Cours complet d'agriculture, théorique, pratique, économique, et de médecine rurale et vétérinaire*, vol. IX (Paris: Rue et Maison Serpente, 1796), 336.

[491] See Stephen Snelders, "Normalisation and Ambivalence: Tobacco in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic," *Cultural and Social History* 18, no. 5 (2021): 1–16. For a study on the northern Netherlands, with particular reference to women as street vendors and tavern keepers who served customers with smoking tobacco along with alcoholic drinking, see Danielle van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship: Female Traders in the Northern Netherlands, C. 1580-1815* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2007), 87–176.

[492] See ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 501, "Bilancio cassa generale Ufficio del Tabacco".

[493] For a general survey on the political issue and debate in the second half of the 18th century in Venice, it is still very useful the classic book by Giovanni Tabacco on the patrician Andrea Tron, see Giovanni

line with moralistic writings of the time, Labia targeted what he perceived as women's licentious behavior. Significantly, in response to a complaint from the general tobacco farmer, he stated that «*le Donne xe la causa sol, e vera*»[494] of declining revenues due to their growing craze for foreign tobaccos, particularly *rapé*, a French snuff that gained a large share of the market in the 18th century, This was attributed to the easy method by which consumers could independently powdering it and its lower price compared to Spanish and Dutch *polvigli*[495].

Despite such criticism, snuff was considered a form of tobacco consumption particularly suitable for women. Moreover, it increasingly became associated with refinement, gentility, good manners, and the style of the upper classes. This message was conveyed through essential accessories for tobacco sniffing, such as fine handkerchiefs

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Tabacco, *Andrea Tron (1712-1785) e la crisi dell'aristocrazia senatoria a Venezia* (Trieste: Istituto di Storia Medioevale e moderna, 1957).

[494] Here the satirical sonnet by Labia dedicated to this story (a copy is available at Correr Museum Library, *Codice Cicogna*, cod. 705, n. 7):
« *No me stupisco più da poco in qua*
Se el partito del Tabacco in dejezion
Sempre più el va per le contrafazion
Che in tanti luoghi tutto di se fa
Da dove vegna el mal alfin se sa
Et che le xe più la Religion
No i xe i Sette Communi la rason
No i Privilegi, no la Nobiltà
Dei danni che risente el Partitante
Le Donne xe la causa sol, e vera,
perché oltre al Tabacco de Levante
De Spagna, de Germania, e di Inghilterra
Le vende quel de Franza tante e tante
E questo è quel che guasta la cerniera
Anzi la Tabacchiera
Tanto che alfin ognun s'ha persuaso
Che questo è quel che va gustando il naso
Senti mo' in sto caso
Anca elle s'ha pensa' de far consumo
E assae più a bon mercà, de quel da fumo»

[495] Sold in 'carrots', which are rolled pieces of tobacco about a foot long and closed at one end, reminiscent of the root of the plant, it was then easily powdered by consumers using simple domestic graters. See Savary des Brûlons and Savary des Brûlons, *Dictionnaire universel de commerce*, v. I, 554. At that time, the Tuscan tobacco farm could buy from Livorno's merchants the French *Rapé* at the price of 1 *lira* and 3 *soldi* per pound, whereas 12 times more money was needed to obtain the same amount of Sevillian *polviglio* (14 *lire* and 5 *denari*). See ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 276, ff. n. nn., "Aggravi e spese della prima annata a tutto ottobre 1746. Compre di Tabacchi".

for the ensuing sneeze and, above all, elegant snuff boxes. Both items held significant cultural value in the imaginary of eighteenth-century European aristocracy, serving as fundamental accessories for both women and men that facilitated high society sociability, and were later imitated by emerging classes[496]. The snuffbox, in particular, played a pivotal role in public life by giving rise to specific social rituals[497]. Its aesthetic craftsmanship and intrinsic value served as a status symbol, establishing the owner's prestige and social standing.

The European trend described is indeed substantiated by our case studies. Notably, the production of snuff boxes attracted significant attention in the realm of crafting precious objects for collectors and esteemed individuals keen on emphasizing their status. This trend is exemplified by the renowned porcelain manufacturers opened in Tuscany by Marquis Carlo Ginori[498] and in Venice by Geminiano Cozzi[499], both celebrated for

[496] Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise a Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants*, 131–46.

[497] A proper ritual for the correct social use of the snuff box was translated in Italian on the *Gazzetta veneta* edited by Gasparo Gozzi from the English *Spectator*, see *Gazzetta veneta, che contiene tutto quello ch'è da vedere, da comperare, da darsi a fitto, le cose ricercate, le perdute, le trovate, in Venezia o fuori di Venezia, il prezzo delle merci, il valore de' cambi ed altre notizie, parte dilettevoli e parte utili al pubblico*, n. I, 06/02/1760. What follows is the integral reproduction of the social ritual:
«*Esercizio militare della Tabacchiera:*
1. Prendi la tabacchiera colla dritta
2. Passa la tabacchiera nella sinistra
3. Batti sulla tabacchiera
4. Apri la tabacchiera
5. Presenta la tabacchiera alla compagnia
6. Ritira a te la tabacchiera
7. Raduna il tabacco e batti sul cerchio della tabacchiera
8. Prendi una presa di tabacco con la dritta
9. Tienlo un poco fra le dita prima di presentarlo al naso
10. Presenta il tabacco al naso
11. Annusa giusto con tuttaddue le narici
12. Non far brutto viso
13. Serra la tabacchiera: starnuta, sputa, soffiati il naso»

[498] On the figure of Carlo Ginori, see Luigi Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Ginori* (Firenze: Coi tipi di M. Cellini, 1876), 81–92. In 1737 he had established a porcelain factory in Doccia, near Florence, and in in 1745 he created a workshop for the manufacture of precious stone, which he had entrusted to the stonecutter and porcelain fitter Francesco Poggetti, who supervised the production of various products: tobacco boxes, seals, trays, boxes, table tops, and statuettes. See Rita Balleri et al., *Album Carlo Ginori. Documenti e itinerari di un gentiluomo del secolo dei lumi* (Firenze: Polistampa, 2006), 21–22; Antonella Alimento, "Tra 'Gelosie' Personali e "gelosie" Tra Gli Stati: I Progetti Del Governatore Carlo Ginori e La Circolazione Della Cultura Economica e Politica a Livorno (1747-1757)," *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* XVI (2009): 65.

[499] On Geminiano Cozzi, see Chiara Garyza Romano, "Cozzi, Geminiano Francesco Antonio," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1984). The porcelain factory had been introduced in Venice at the beginning of the 18th century by the patrician family of Vezzi,

producing a wide array of exquisite products. Moreover, collections from eighteenth-century patrician residences, such as those showcased at the Ca' Rezzonico museum, further validate the prevalence of refined snuff boxes. These items were not only intended for common recreational use but represented proper preciouses: the Ca' Rezzonico museum also hosts some samples of enamel on copper, produced in England in Battersea and Bilston manufactures.

The social significance of certain forms of tobacco consumption can be further appreciated through accounts found in the gazettes published in Florence and Venice during the second half of the 18th century. For instance, the *Gazzetta toscana*, active between 1766 and 1811[500], frequently reported on the exchange of precious snuff boxes as lavish gifts within Florentine high society. These finely crafted objects were often treated more as works of art than mere consumer items or tools for consuming tobacco. Exambples included snuff boxes made of enameled gold, agate adorned with diamonds, and Saxon porcelain encased in gold[501]. An accident involving theft at the Church of San Felice in Piazza, where Giovanni Gaspero Menabuoni, the Grand Duke's librarian, had his gold snuff box stolen, prompted a detailed description of its exquisite craftsmanship and various decorative motifs: «*era del peso di once 6 e mezzo circa, fatta in Parigi col bollo della Zecca di detta città e nuova ascendeva al valore di mille lire tornesi*»[502].

In summary, these snuff boxes were not only objects of the highest value and refined workmanship, but also products of Europe's finest luxury manufacturers. The

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recording important successes; later, Geminiano Cozzi perfected production to such an extent that he generated a large traffic of «*tazze da caffè, e da cioccolata, e per altre bevande, siccome zuccherariere, figure, pagode, tabacchiere, pomoli da canna, ed utensili vari fatti sul tornio, modellati o formati collo stampo, e questi diversamente e gentilmente dipinti con oro (...), eseguiti in tutte quelle maniere che sono le più atte a soddisfar il genio dei compratori*», see *Giornale d'Italia*, Venezia, Bendetto Milocco, 1765, t. I, f. 322.

[500] The periodic was an initiative of the librarian and printer Anton Giuseppe Pagani, who in 1766 began the publication of the *Gazzetta patria* with the permission of the sovereign. The title was already converted in *Gazzetta toscana* in 1767. The journal aimed at overcoming the traditional experience of the literary journal and reaching a wide audience, covering both the mundane events that took place around the court and the low key news. Particular attention was paid to the urban dimension of Florence. See Arnaldo Bruni, "Gazzette Fiorentine Del Secondo Settecento," in *Giornali Del Settecento Fra Granducato e Legazioni: Atti Del Convegno Di Studi, Firenze, 17-19 Maggio 2006* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2008), 21–42.

[501] Confining ourselves to the numbers of 1767, see *Gazzetta toscana*, Firenze, Anton-Giuseppe Pagani, 1767, n. 4 26/01/1767, n. 10 07/03/1767, n. 12 21/03/1767, n. 21 23/05/1767, n. 23 06/06/1767, n. 51 19/12/1767.

[502] *Ibidem*, n. 47, 21/11/1767.

'*cose da vendere*' section of the *Gazzetta veneta*, published by Gasparo Gozzi between 1760 and 1761[503], catered to a broader audience beyond courtly circles, appealing to an affluent public interested in commercial news. This periodical featured reports on books, artworks, and various valuable artifacts for sale in Venice's shops, including silverware, jewelry, and numerous snuff boxes. Examples ranged from Saxon porcelain, silver, crystal, and mother-of-pearl, often adorned with gold and silver finishes[504]. The popularity of snuff boxes encompassed society at large, accommodating different purchasing powers. For instance, while a second-hand porcelain snuff box with metal fittings could cost as little as 4 *zecchini*, luxurious pieces like a crystal snuff box encircled in gold were offered for sale at 40 *zecchini*[505].

Accordingly, tobacco, especially snuff, and its accessories played a crucial role in defining the social status of early modern Italian elites. These elites asserted their position through style and refinement, influencing fashion trends and social interactions. Tobacco had become a significant element in the portrayal of power, not just in political terms but as a reflection of economic and social supremacy. Nevertheless, opportunities provided by second-hand markets allowed less affluent individuals to negotiate their social standing and partake in the rituals and habits prevalent in the salons of the wealthy[506]. Even within smoking culture, the widespread demand for tobacco helped blur social

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[503] On the publishing enterprise of Gasparo Gozzi in the 1760s Venice, see Marino Berengo, "Introduzione," in *Giornali Veneziani Del Settecento*, ed. Marino Berengo (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1962), 1–75, especially 24-39. The *Gazzetta veneta* experimented new ambitions for journalism, moving apart from the main periodicals of the first 18th century in Venice, basically aimed at a narrow and literate public: the raw model lied in the English newspapers, in particular the *Spectator* edited by Joseph Addison, much more inclined to the analysis of social questions, and the publication was funded by tradesmen who promoted sections of economic utility, like commercial news and advertisements. See Noris Raffaelli, "Nota Introduttiva," in *Osservatore Veneto*, ed. Gasparo Gozzi (Bologna: Rizzoli, 1965), 5–21; Rosa Maria Colombo, *Lo Spectator E i Giornali Veneziani Del Settecento* (Adriatica Editrice, 1966).

[504] See *Gazzetta veneta*, nn. I, 06/02/1760; II, 09/02/1760; IV, 16/02/1760; VI, 23/02/1760; IX, 05/03/1760; XI, 12/03/1760; XIII, 18/03/1760; XIV, 22/03/1760; XX, 12/04/1760; LIX, 27/08/1760; LXIV, 13/09/1760.

[505] See *Ibidem*, nn. I, 06/02/1660; LIX, 27/08/1760.

[506] The evidence of second-hand and cheaper snuff boxes emerged from the perusal of the commercial news in the *Gazzette* is quite in line with recent studies that have looked at second-hand markets as important places for the extension of new consumerism in the early modern age. See Beverly Lemire, "Peddling Fashion: Salesmen, Pawnbrokers, Taylors, Thieves and the Second-Hand Clothes Trade in England, c. 1700–1800," *Textile History* 22, no. 1 (1991): 67–82; Ilja Van Damme and Reinoud Vermoesen, "Second-Hand Consumption as a Way of Life: Public Auctions in the Surroundings of Alost in the Late Eighteenth Century," *Continuity and Change* 24, no. 2 (2009): 275–305.

boundaries. Venetian coffeehouses, where the aforementioned gazettes were read over coffee and tobacco[507], served as meeting places for the nobility and affluent residents of the city[508]. At the same time, efforts to differentiate forms of tobacco consumption were not merely tools of exclusion from above but also avenues for those of lower means to negotiate their access to tobacco use. Despite snuff's association with social prestige, Girolamo Baruffaldi's ode to snuff revealed that ordinary people substituted expensive bergamot-scented mixtures with more affordable alternatives like common lemon or orange[509]. Furthermore, insights from a French memoir on pipe manufacturing, translated and published in Venice[510] due to local entrepreneurs interests[511], highlighted how pipe

[507] See Filippo Maria Paladini, "Sociabilità Ed Economia Del Loisir. Fonti Sui Caffè Veneziani Del XVIII Secolo," *Storia Di Venezia - Rivista* I (2003): 153–281.

[508] See Annerose Menninger, "New Beverages in Early Modern Europe: The Rise of Coffee, Tea and Chocolate (16th-18th Century)," in *Il Cioccolato. Industria, Mercato e Società in Italia e Svizzera (XVIII-XX Sec.)* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2006), 209–37. A similar convergence of different social, economic and cultural groups in one place has been described for Ottoman coffeehouses, from the near East to the western Balkans, see Ralph S. Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle, WA; London: University of Washington Press, 1988); Fotić, "The Introduction of Coffee and Tobacco to the Mid-West Balkans."

[509] «*Per di fuor ben si sente il piccante, / e frizzante / vivo odor di Bergamotta; / ma, ahimé, 'l prezzo alquanto scotta, / e non fa per la gente spiantata, / malabbiata, / che si vive a la gioranta, / cui lascio, come cosa peregrina, / la degna Bergamotta di cucina*», Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo*, 59. In the notes at the end of the poem, the author explained that the *degna Bergamotta di cucina* was the ordinary lemon or orange, «*la scorza de' quali agrumi ha bensì odore, ma non già della fragranza che la Bergamotta. Però a certi Nasi di gusto ordinario serve*», Baruffaldi, 167.

[510] The original author of the memoir on pipe was the French Duhamel du Monceau, author of the *Descriptions des Arts et Métiers* firstly published in Paris in 1761. The text, integrated with further consideration by the Swiss economist and agronomist Jean Bertrand, was translated and published in Venice in the *Nuovo Giornale d'Italia* edited by Francesco Griselini, see *Nuovo Giornale d'Italia spettante alla Scienza naturale e principalmente all'agricoltura, alle arti, ed al commercio, in seguito alli Dodici Tomi che formano la Prima Collezione con titolo di Giornale d'Italia*, t. III, 1779, Venice, presso Benedetto Milocco in Merceria, pp. 60 and fw.

[511] Pipes' production in the Italian peninsula never met the expansion achieved in England, France, and, above all, in the Dutch United provinces. Here, it dated back to the early 17th century, when English pipe makers entered the republic as religious refugees. The city of Gouda quickly emerged as the dominant center of this production: pipe-makers guild's members rose from 80 in 1665 to 223 in 1686. See De Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 309–11. According to the memoir written by M. Duhamel du Manceau and edited by Jean Bertrand, «*la fabbricazione delle pippe in Olanda, come pure in Francia e in Inghilterra, dà impiego a un gran numero d'operai*», up to 60-70 workers in the biggest ones, see *Nuovo Giornale d'Italia spettante alla Scienza naturale e principalmente all'agricoltura, alle arti, ed al commercio, in seguito alli Dodici Tomi che formano la Prima Collezione con titolo di Giornale d'Italia*, t. III, 1779, Venice, presso Benedetto Milocco in Merceria, f. 60. However, in Venice Bernardin Tonetti was granted in 1742 the exclusive right on the production of fireplaces and clay pipes. Such articles were «*due capi che riceviamo dalli Stranieri, il primo dal Levante et il secondo dal Ponente*» (ASVe, *Cinque Savi*, I

shapes and sizes varied according to users' social status. Wealthy individuals preferred long pipes to avoid the heat from combustion, whereas common people favored shorter pipes for a more intense smoke experience[512].

However, members of the less wealthy classes often pursued their right to access tobacco consumption in more adversarial and violent ways. An example can be found in the following extract from the *Gazzetta toscana* of 1767, reporting news from the town of San Miniato:

> «*Essendosi portata la squadra di questo Tribunale verso i contorni di San Romano, ed incontrati alcuni contadini che avevano seco del tabacco forestiero, nel voler fare arresto di essi, accorse un fratello con un pezzo di grosso legno, e malmenò la squadra, che neppure con le armi si poterono disimpegnare. Due rimasero orribilmente feriti nel capo, uno de' quali però nel giorno dipoi avendo lasciata in miserie la moglie con due piccoli figli, e l'altro giace ancora infermo. Riuscì nonostante alla squadra di condurre i trasgressori in queste carceri, ove si trovano e vengono processati*»[513]

This brutal account from rural Tuscany stands in stark contrast to the refined sophistication of the snuff boxes described in the same gazette. In their instance, peasants of low status resorted to smuggled tobacco from abroad, which was more affordable than the highly taxed tobacco of the grand-ducal monopoly. Such frequent stories[514] underscore a grassroots movement through extra-legal channels for access to the new consumerism brought about by the globalization of tobacco. The transition from

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series, reg. 216, f. 58r), and Tonetti had convincingly suggested the possibility of replacing expensive imports with the introduction of a new local manufacture.

[512] A similar conclusion can be drawn from Francesco Arisi's ode to smoking and chewing tobacco. With regard to pipes, he underlined the extreme varieties of prices, so that even «*in man d'un religioso / virtuoso / e sì divoto, / che di povero ha il voto, / può senza meraviglia, / e senza verun scrupolo aver loco, / se non ha gran fattura, e costa poco*». Moreover, dealing with popular consumption of tobacco, he ironically spoke of «*que' blesoni, e que' margutti, / che tengon sempre la mestizia addosso, / e si stan di mala voglia, / quando in un giorno non ingoian tutti / cento, e più fusti dell'Indiana foglia*». Arisi, *Il tabacco masticato, ed il tabacco fumato*, 11; 39–40. On the contrary, cigars were not a common product for smoking in the Italian peninsula before the turn of 1800: Arisi does not even mention them, which in contrast were more familiar in the Iberian Atlantic.

[513] *Gazzetta toscana*, n. 9, 28/02/1767.

[514] See for example Furio Bianco, *Contadini, Sbirri e Contrabbandieri Nel Friuli Del Settecento. Valcellina e Valcovera* (Pordenone: Edizioni Biblioteca dell'immagine, 1990); Stefano Levati, "Gli Spazi Dell'illecito: Il Contrabbando Del Tabacco Nell'Italia Moderna Tra Privilegi e Confini," in *Movimenti e Confini. Spazi Mobili Nell'Italia Preunitaria*, ed. Laura Di Fiore and Marco Meriggi (Roma: Viella, 2013), 75–94.

traditional luxury to more democratic forms of commodity circulation was a notable aspect of the early modern era. The momentum of consumption accelerated and the volume of consumers expanded, especially for global goods connected with the intensification of long distance trade. Yet, it is important to recognize that global commodities assumed different values across social strata, and access to these goods was continually renegotiated and reframed, particularly by those with less economic and social power[515]. The case of tobacco illustrates the diverse paths and channels through which a global commodity circulated as social actors negotiated their status and ability to consume. While precious snuff boxes symbolized social power, the broader demand for accessible consumption encouraged the availability of cheap, untaxed tobacco. People were willing to negotiate access, even through extra-legal channels, to a product that had evolved from exotic novelty or limited to the narrow medical-pharmacological sphere into a staple of popular consumption.

It is no coincidence that Jacopo Novelli, a poor farmer from the communality of Buti in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, when caught by customs guards with contraband tobacco purchased in the Republic of Lucca, defended himself by describing it as an «*abitudine per servirsene per proprio uso*»[516]. He emphasized a substantial distinction between consuming tobacco for personal enjoyment and illegally selling it against the grand-ducal monopoly. Furthermore, certain communities frequently negotiated with authorities for permission to economically exploit local tobacco cultivation. The plant's resistance to more temperate climates facilitated its spread eastwards, impacting Western Europe as well. In many regions, this cultivation was swiftly outlawed to protect monopoly revenues[517]. However, communities deeply connected to tobacco cultivation

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[515] For further consideration on the importance of extra-legal systems to explain the penetration of commodities to the farthest corners of early modern societies, see Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, 138–47.

[516] ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, f. 2, n. 80, Petition of Gaetano Boldrini on behalf of Jacopo Novelli to the grand duke, 20/10/1784

[517] This happened in England, after the early diffusion of tobacco-growing, see Joan Thirsk, "New Crops and Their Diffusion: Tobacco-Growing in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Rural Change and Urban Growth, 1500-1800. Essays in English Regional History in Honour of W. G. Hoskins*, ed. C. W. Chalklin and Michael A. Havinden (New York, NY: Longman, 1974), 76–103. In France, privileged provinces in the south west (mainly the Guyenne) were allowed to cultivate tobacco until 1719, but after that tobacco cultivation was further restricted to the eastern and northern border provinces of Alsace and Flanders, see Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 137–40.. For a parallel with the Spanish case, here contraband issues were much more related to illegal imports from overseas than to local cultivation, see Miguel A. Melon

resisted fiercely. Illicit planting was particularly prevalent in mountainous or marginalized areas lacking in grain or other basic resources. Tobacco could thrive in challenging terrain, ensuring a minimum yield and enabling these communities to bring their produce to market, where it could be sold for immediate money[518]. A coeval examination of the geographical and economic conditions of some rural territories helps understanding the adoption of tobacco as a cash crop by their population:

> «*sono per la massima parte a declivi, molti lo sono assai pendenti, e pochi quasi pianeggianti. E di fatti, trattandosi di tenimenti di terra posti in poggio, non si incontrano vallate o ripiani, meno che pochissime e ristrettissime vicine al corso dei torrenti da cui son trameggiate e divise quelle zone montuose che costituiscono tutto il territorio privilegiato per la coltivazione del tabacco*»[519]

In the Venetian *Terraferma*, this dynamic was a recurring concern for authorities in relation to the *Sette comuni* of the Vicenza plateau and of the upper Brenta river valley[520]. Despite constant government bans on free cultivation issued since the beginning of the century[521], these communities consistently argued for their right to grow tobacco cultivation, highlighting its importance for their livelihoods. For instance, in 1785,

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Jiménez, *Hacienda, Comercio y Contrabando En La Frontera de Portugal: Siglos XV-XVIII* (Caceres: Cicon Ediciones, 1999); Oscar Bergasa Perdomo, "Monopolio de Tabaco y Real Hacienda: El Impacto Del Contrabando Sobre Los 'dineros Del Rey' Durante El Siglo XVIII," in *Politica Economica y Gestion de La Renta Del Tabaco En El Siglo XVIII*, ed. Agustín González Enciso (Madrid: Fundacion Altadis, 2008).

[518] Tobacco is easy to adapt to a wide range of climatic conditions and is particularly resilient, leaving something to harvest even in the event of low rainfall or prolonged drought. However, without continuous soil rotation and heavy use of fertilizers, it can quickly deplete soil nutrients. Growing it in densely populated and highly cultivated areas therefore requires a large input of labor and energy. See Lewis C. Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860* (Washington, DC, 1933), v. I, 34-67. However, as Benedict demonstrated for the case of China, farmers in the mountains were able to keep the cost of labor and inputs lower, being able to resort to slash-and-burn agriculture to claim new land, see Benedict, *Golden-Silk Smoke*, 48–50. In any case, the cultivation and initial processing of tobacco could engage the whole peasant household, so that the activity, apart from obtaining tobacco leaves for self-consumption, was essentially market-oriented as a key cash-crop for entering the money economy. For the Dutch case, see De Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 221–23.

[519] BNCF, *Fondo Targioni Tozzetti*, reg. 340, ff. 249r-284r.

[520] See also Bruno Caizzi, *Industria e Commercio Della Repubblica Veneta Nel XVIII Secolo* (Milano: Banca commerciale italiana, 1965), 161. The *Sette comuni* of the Vicenza's plateau were: Asiago, Enego, Foza, Gallio, Luisiana-Conco, Roana and Rotzo.

[521] The first decree of prohibition explicitly addressed to the *Sette comuni* dated back to 1702. The frequent repetition of similar legislation during the century says a lot about the ineffectiveness of such measures. See ASVe, *Cinque savi*, I Series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, ff. n. nn.

representatives from Valstagna, Oliero and Campolongo asserted that their territories, «*estesi in linea verso il confine austriaco, in sito angusto tra' Monti e la Brenta, nel sterile terreno di circa 180 campi zappativi, affatto insufficienti con altro genere di prodotti alla sussistenza di povera numerosa popolazione, trovano con industria e fatica il necessario sostentamento nella coltivazione del tabacco sin dalla sua prima introduzione*»[522]. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, subjects were often supplied with tobacco transferred from privileged provinces to areas under the monopoly ruling: «*il leur est facile au moyen des plantations considerables qui sont en quelqu'uns des fiefs, et sourtout dans la Comté de Chitignano*»[523], complained the new tobacco general farmer in 1745. Moreover, beyond these fiefs, several communities in the north-eastern outskirt of the state were granted privileges for cultivating tobacco[524].

In conclusion, the rise in recreational consumption facilitated significant cultural conversions of tobacco, particularly the shift from viewing it as a diabolic intoxicant associated with drunkenness to a honest[525], respectable, and socially accepted habit. Tobacco became increasingly integrated into the sociability of the elite, reaching the apogee during the 'Rococo period'[526], with snuff playing a crucial role in symbolizing status. However, even as tobacco gained social acceptance, its meanings were diverse and subject to contestation. Despite moralistic efforts to restrict tobacco to men, women often transcended these gender boundaries. Moreover, individuals across different social strata found ways to participate in and shape the circulation of this global commodity. Different forms of consumption and associated accessories became means to assert or negotiate one's social status in the emerging consumer culture of early modern globalization. Beyond cultural constructs for consumption habits, the extra-legal channels for tobacco circulation and the cultivation of tobacco as a vital resource for rural communities

[522] ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 943, s.l.n.d., but 1785.

[523] ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 13, n. 4, ff. 4r-5r, 14/12/1745

[524] In particular, the territories of Turicchi, La Trappola, Londa, and Lorino, see ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 149.

[525] As Molière makes Sganarelle say at the opening of Dom Juan, «*quoi que puisse dire Aristotele et toute la Philosophie, il n'est rien d'égal au tabac: c'est la passion des honnets gens, et qui vit sans tabac n'est pas digne de vivre*», quoted in Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 54.

[526] As defined by Schivelbush for the chronological space of snuff as a major cultural phenomenon, see Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise a Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants*, 131.

expanded the range of social practices and cultural translations affecting the different meanings associated with tobacco throughout early modern societies.

4. A glaze on per capita tobacco consumption in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire

According to Carole Shammas, England and Wales experienced mass consumption of tobacco by the mid-17th century[527]. The historian based her arguments on the analysis of the imports of tobacco and other extra-European groceries resulting from the archives of the English Customs House. Unfortunately, we have no reliable data on the long run for tracing the development of the per capita consumption of tobacco in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. However, we can make some assessments for the late 18th century by cross-referencing data on the amount of finished goods sold by the Tobacco Farms and the first censuses conducted by central governments (see Table 2.1[528]).

Table 2.1 – Tobacco annual consumption in Tuscany and Venice in the 1780s (habitants and pounds)

	Tuscany	Venetian Empire*	Florence	Venice and *Dogado*
Population	1.058.930	2.033.417	79.607	236.054
Tobacco consumption	931.421	2.263.143	160.550	562.700
Tobacco consumption per capita	0,88	1,11	2.02	2.38

* Without Venetian Dalmatia, Albania and Ionian islands.
Sources: ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 389; BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX*.

These figures represent the peak of tobacco consumption in our case studies during the period covered by this study. They show a tiny, but significant difference between tobacco consumption per capita in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian empire. According to the data provided by Jordan Goodman, Europeans at the end of the 18th century consumed about 120 million pounds, that in per capita terms means about 1-

[527] Carole Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America* (Clarendon Press, 1990), 79.
[528] For the demographic data, see the note above. Unfortunately, sources did not allow to determine tobacco consumption in Venetian Dalmatia, Albania, and Ionian islands in the 1780s, accordingly I had to limit the comparison to the amount of tobacco consumption in Venice and *Dogado*, Venetian *Terraferma* and Istria

1,1 pounds annually[529]. So, Tuscan consumption seems to have been under the European average, but at a closer look the levels reached in the two case studies are relevant for the early modern age. Following the pioneering works of Carole Shammas on pre-modern consumption, scholars consider early modern groceries as mass-consumed commodities if they were bought by people of varied income levels and if their availability was such that it allowed 25% of adult population to use it at least once daily[530]. Regarding tobacco, Shammas has suggested that «2 pounds of tobacco a year would probably allow enough for every person to have a pipeful a day»[531], accordingly she calculated that the total imports of 1672 in England, which account per capita consumption for 1,1 pounds, could furnish 50% of the total population with that ration. At a closer look, the figures for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in the 1780s are not so distant to that level. Moreover, if we focus on the per capita consumption in the capital cities of Florence and Venice, data show extremely high levels for the 1780s (respectively, 2,02 and 2,38 pounds), even higher than the 18th-century English average of 2 pounds, considered the highest one in early modern Europe[532].

Surely, all these considerations need to not be taken as rigid statements, but rather as suggestions that indicate a possible path of research that I could not explore thoroughly in this thesis. Moreover, we should manage these data very carefully and avoid peremptory statements thereunder. First of all, estimations on tobacco consumption in 18th-century Europe which are available in the literature derive almost entirely from the imports of American tobacco in the major Atlantic ports. While such data are more reliable for Western Europe, they do not perform well for other regions of the continent, where eastern and Ottoman tobacco held a larger market share. Furthermore, the volume

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529 Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence*, 1° edizione (London: Routledge, 1994), 71. See also Price, *France and the Chesapeake; a History of the French Tobacco Monopoly, 1674-1791, and of Its Relationship to the British and American Tobacco Trades*, 732; Catherine Lugar, "The Portuguese Tobacco Trade and Tobacco Growers of Bahia in the Late Colonial Period," in *Essays Concerning the Socioeconomic History of Brazil and Portuguese India* (Gainsville, FL: The University Presses of Florida, 1977), 48; Hendrik Karel Roessingh, "Tobacco Growing in Holland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Case Study of the Innovative Spirit of Dutch Peasants," *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae* 11 (1978): 42–47.

530 See Carole Shammas, "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800," in *Consumption and the World of Goods* (Routledge, 1993), 199–227.

531 Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America*, 78.

532 Shammas, 79–80. According to Michael Kwass, French tobacco consumption reached a similar degree of tobacco consumption only at the very end of the *ancient regime*, see Kwass, *Contraband*, 47–52.

of smuggled tobacco cannot be inferred from here, though it undoubtedly had an important role in the expansion of tobacco consumption among Europeans from all walks of life[533]. However, even relativising the explanatory scope of a comparison with the alleged European average, we can safely assert that tobacco's consumption during the 17th and the 18th in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire suggests the vitality of their consumer markets that attracted global goods with their demand.

In this respect, tobacco's demand from consumers remained relatively inelastic in relation to the economic conjuncture and the price dynamics of basic foodstuffs. In the case of wine – not just part of early modern stimulants, but a fundamental component of the early modern diet due to its calorie intake[534] – it has been demonstrated that the increase in price of wheat corresponded to a decrease in wine consumption, as a greater share of household resources had to be invested in the crucial foodstuff for survival. As a consequence, the income from the duty on wine, farmed out to private contractors in Venice, was all but stable[535]. To verify the possible correlation between wheat price and tobacco consumption, I have considered the revenues from the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in the light of the series on wheat prices in Tuscany between the middle age and the early modern period provided by Paolo Malanima[536]. For facilitating comparison, I have converted the absolute values (tobacco revenues in annual silver grams collected and wheat prices in the cost in *soldi* of *lira Fiorentina* of a *staio*) in indexes, utilizing as reference point the average between 1690 and 1750 (=100). This chronological arch works quite well for our subject, because it covers a period when the tobacco trade had already been consolidated, showing a relative stability in revenues

[533] For an estimation of the effects of smuggling and other frauds on per capita consumption figures in Great Britain between 1698 and 1752, see Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries."

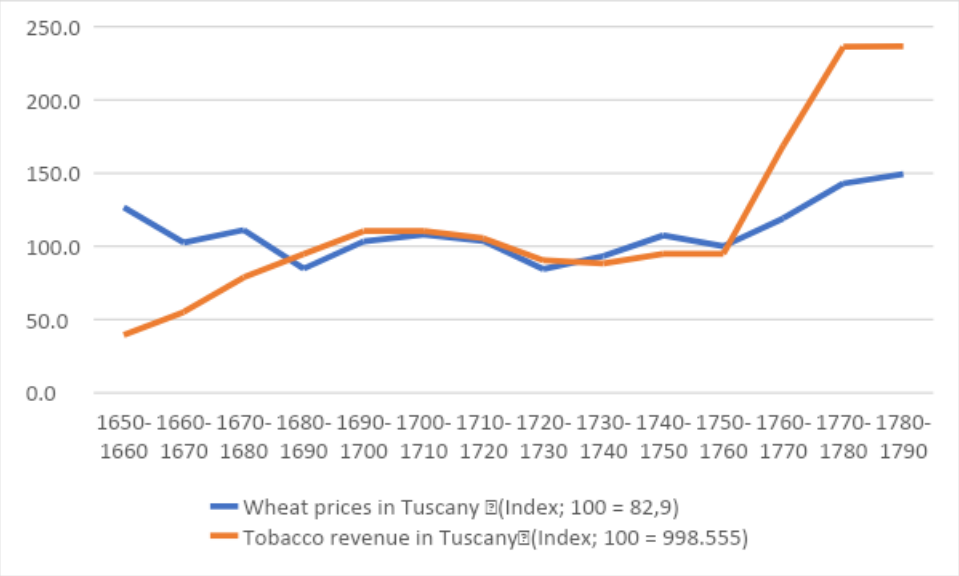
[534] For 17th-century Venice, Ugo Tucci has suggested the consumption of 1,34 l of wine per day for each adult male and of about 1 l for the other components of society, that is an annual total requirement of 481.800 hl. See Ugo Tucci, "Commercio e Consumo Del Vino a Venezia in Età Moderna," in *Il Vino Nell'economia e Nella Società Italiana Medioevale e Moderna* (Firenze: Accademia dei Georgofili, 1989), 185–202.

[535] Pezzolo, *Il fisco dei veneziani*, 158–66.

[536] See Malanima, "Wheat Prices in Tuscany, 1260-1660"; Paolo Malanima, "Aspetti Di Mercato e Prezzi Del Grano e Della Segale a Pisa Dal 1548 al 1818," in *Ricerche Di Storia Moderna I* (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1976), 288–327. This printed collection represents one of the most continuative and complete series on wheat prices for the early modern age in Europe. Surely, distant grain markets knew significant differences in prices during the same years, but I have preferred to provide a comparison with the Tuscan data, as nothing similar can be found in the literature for Venice.

before the remarkable upsurge which occurred in the second half of the 18th century (see Graph 2.2[537]). From such comparison, it turns out that the tobacco case was quite different from the wine's one: fluctuation in wheat prices affected considerably everyday life, especially in the years of proper famine due to harvest failures and the ineffectiveness of the provisioning circuits from abroad[538], but the trend in the tobacco revenues knew no significant correlation. If the Tuscan tobacco monopoly could profit from a conjuncture of declining wheat prices during the first decades after its introduction, the most significant upsurge in revenues occurred in the second half of the 18th century, a period which was marked by a significant return of high wheat prices.

Graph 2.2 – Indexes of wheat prices and tobacco revenue in Tuscany, 1650-1790 (100 = average between 1690 and 1750)



[537] For wheat prices, see the note above. Revenues from the Tuscan tobacco monopolies are organized as ten-year averages.

[538] Take the example of the «*catastrofe agraria*» in 1766, a classical example of early modern famine which hit particularly strongly in the Italian peninsula: the heavy cold hit the first months of the year and then the fierce summer heat arrived too early, creating a perfect storm which brought to a severe failure in grain harvest in many regions. In the grand-duchy of Tuscany, people were starving and only in 1767 the situation got better after a new provisioning contract had been signed by the government with Genoese merchants for foreign grain and financing public works which could provide some relief. However, if we look at the financial resources provided by the tobacco monopoly to the Tuscan sovereign, those years marked a significant rise, despite everything. See Franco Venturi, *Settecento Riformatore. L'italia Dei Lumi (1764-1790). Tomo I: La Rivoluzione Di Corsica. Le Grandi Carestie Degli Anni Sessanta. La Lombardia Delle Riforme*, vol. 5 (Torino: Einaudi, 1987), 360–78; Luigi Mascilli Migliorni, "L'età Delle Riforme," in *Il Granducato Di Toscana. I Lorena Dalla Reggenza Agli Anni Rivoluzionari*, ed. Furio Diaz, Luigi Mascilli Migliorni, and Carlo Mangio (Torino: UTET, 1997), 276–81.

Does this mean that the addictiveness of tobacco led to a much less elastic demand from consumers in comparison to wine? Were maybe tobacco consumers sufficiently affluent so that they did not have to revise their habits due to increase in the price of grain? Could governments externalize the negative consequences of the economic conjuncture on the private contractors thanks to the tax farming system? It is difficult to answer these questions in the light of the current state of research, but these findings suggest that consumers' demand for tobacco experienced a spectacular surge between the 17th and 18th centuries. It shared some fundamental characteristics with the new forms of consumerisms that began to erode traditional patterns of stable and hierarchical access to goods. First of all, the availability by an increasing number of people of a share of their income for pleasure goods[539]. Then, the emergence of public spaces for sociability which promoted specific consumables: for example, the intense upsurge in tobacco consumption that we can note in the 18th-century Venetian Empire was met also because of the coeval triumph of coffeehouses in Venice and in other cities under its domains, a place where sociability was lubricated by drinking hot beverages and smoking and sniffing tobacco[540]. Finally, change in consumer behaviour was significantly fostered by early forms of diversification of tobacco products, in order to facilitate broader gender and social access to them. As an 18th-century relation on the growth of fiscal revenues from the Venetian tobacco monopoly significantly reports, the main merit of such trend could be traced in the increased consumption of «*cosa tanto superflua, essendosi fatto commune l'uso per anco alle femmine ed eziandio alle miserabili persone, (…) effetto derivato dalla divina provvidenza, che avendo dato alli uomini una natura molto inclinata alla viziosità ed alla*

[539] On this point, see Jan De Vries, "Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: Understanding the Household Economy in the Early Modern Europe," in *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London: Routledge, 1993), 85–132.

[540] See Filippo Maria Paladini, "Sociabilità Ed Economia Del Loisir. Fonti Sui Caffè Veneziani Del XVIII Secolo," *Storia Di Venezia - Rivista* I (2003): 153–281. Conversely, taking tobacco in early modern England was closely associated with the alehouse, and when this latter fell into decline in the second half of the 18th century also smoking habits were affected, explaining at least partially why tobacco usage peaked at the beginning of the century and then fluctuated around that amount with no more growth for more than a century. We might also consider the growing importance of tea and gin consumption in the second half of the 18th century in England as possible alternatives and obstacles to the further expansion of tobacco consumption. See Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America*, 81; Stobart, *Sugar and Spice*.

imitazione, studia qualunque arte d'imitare e di viziosamente sapere il gusto di una novità ricevuta e posta in credito dall'uso delle persone più riguardevoli»[541].

5. Conclusion

Stimulants represented an interesting subject of research as they shed light on the new forms of consumption that interested a larger share of society in the early modern age. Tobacco, unlike other early modern stimulants like chocolate and coffee, rapidly transitioned from a luxury good to a broadly accessible commodity due to significant price declines. This democratization of tobacco set the stage for its widespread adoption across various social strata at a time when other stimulants remained largely confined to the wealthier segments of society.

Initially, the consumption of tobacco was met with considerable resistance, primarily reflected through the medical debates of the time, which often doubled as platforms for airing moral and social concerns. Tobacco was frequently linked to social disorder, purportedly distracting individuals from domestic responsibilities and community duties. These criticisms echoed the anxieties of the ruling classes, particularly as recreational tobacco use began to permeate all levels of society alongside its medicinal applications. Research indicates that in cities like Livorno and Venice, the early spread of tobacco consumption was facilitated by modest social figures like mariners, port workers, small shopkeepers, and even slaves and convicts.

With the establishment of a regulated regime that balanced privileged profits with fiscal revenues, the severe condemnations of tobacco gradually faded, paving the way for a massive increase in its consumption during the 18th century. New positive social meanings were associated with tobacco use, which also became integrated into displays of power and social prestige, holding a prominent position in the sociability of high society. However, specific groups in early modern societies carried creative appropriations of tobacco, even overturning the social values attributed to it by the dominant culture. These developments sparked diverse responses, leading not only to varying approaches to tobacco among different social classes and interests but also to an ongoing negotiation regarding the extent and avenues of participation in the new

[541] ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 1561, Venice 16/09/1720.

consumerism of the early modern age.

A review of per capita tobacco consumption in the 18th century reveals that the markets in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire were significant outlets for global products, with Venetian consumption notably exceeding the average for Europe at the time. Interestingly, the demand for tobacco appeared inelastic to economic fluctuations, remaining robust even during periods of significant bread price increases. This contrasts sharply with consumption patterns for other commodities like wine, suggesting a dynamic shift in consumer habits where tobacco use began to challenge the traditional hierarchical access to recreational goods.

Chapter 3

The 'most convenient of the sovereign revenues': the tobacco monopoly and the early modern fiscal system

«*La Renta del Tabaco, es la mas util y segura que tiene su Magestad y cada dia seà mas opulenta, si en su administracion se pusiere el cuidado, y atencion que se merece*»[542]

«*La vente du tabac ne fut rendue exclusive qu'en 1674, et cette branche de revenus, affermée 500mille livres dans le premier bail, rapporte dans ce moment au Roi, près de 30 millions. (...) L'impôt sur le tabac, est de toutes les contributions la plus douce et la plus imperceptible, et on le range avec raison dans la classe des habiles inventions fiscales*»[543]

«*Gli appaltatori generali riverentemente espongono a VMI come nel Tribunale del Vicario di Vicopisano sono state compilate due gravissime procedure per trasgressioni di Tabacco commesse da moltissime persone, (...) di grave rilevanza agl'interessi dell'Appalto generale per il gran numero di delinquenti e per la copiosa e frequente introduzione di detto contrabbando*»[544]

Today, tobacco and taxation are closely intertwined, primarily to support public policies aimed at reducing consumption and discouraging smoking as an unhealthy habit[545]. This connection has deeper historical roots, evolving over time with changes in both meaning and structure. In 18th-century European debates on economic and financial reforms, the importance of tobacco revenue was widely acknowledged. Both Spanish economist and royal secretary Jerónimo de Uztáriz in 1724 and French royal finance director Jacques Necker in 1784, despite their differing views and proposals, praised tobacco taxation. Its net revenue had risen sharply since its inception, and its unique features made it a valuable asset for sovereign powers. Uztáriz, in particular, described the tax as the «most convenient and secure», highlighting its balance between the state's

[542] Jerónimo de Uztáriz, *Theorica y practica de comercio y de marina*, 3° (Madrid: En la imprenta de Antonio Sanz, 1757), 367.

[543] Jacques Necker, *De l'administration des finances de la France*, vol. 2 (Paris: Jean-Pierre Heubach et Comp., 1785), 75.

[544] ASFi, *Segreteria di Finanze*, f. 568, M. De la Brochetière a SMI Francesco Stefano, Firenze 28/12/1747.

[545] Pearl Bader, David Boisclair, and Roberta Ferrence, "Effects of Tobacco Taxation and Pricing on Smoking Behavior in High Risk Populations: A Knowledge Synthesis," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 8, no. 11 (2011): 4118–39.

need for resources and the affordability of the tax burden on subjects, while also ensuring a relatively stable income.

However, this seemingly mild tax burden faced significant challenges. Frequent instances of resistance, tax fraud, and even rebellion were recorded. As the third quotation illustrates, many people resorted to smuggled tobacco, severely impacting sovereign revenues, as taxed official tobacco was undercut. Tobacco taxes raised the price of a commodity that had become popular across social classes, making smuggled alternatives especially attractive to consumers with limited means for such indulgences. This tension stemmed from the clash between competing forces in the early modern period: central governments, on one side, sought to increase the tax burden on their subjects, while social groups, on the other, demanded access to the global flow of commodities. Taxation became a central battleground for negotiations, as the growing influence of state taxes significantly altered the redistribution of goods, producing both winners and losers.

Yet, the negotiating aspect of early modern fiscal structures is often overlooked. Our understanding of these practices has largely been shaped by two traditional interpretations. On the one hand, the 'fiscal state' paradigm has long encouraged interpretations that view the rise of central government taxation as part of a top-down process of administrative and bureaucratic centralization, replacing feudal powers, local estates, and ancient jurisdictions with modern, standardized tax systems.[546]. On the other hand, drawing from the 20th-century dominant sociological theory of state-building[547], historians have highlighted the role played by the growing demand for revenue to cover rising military expenses and support expanding administrations in the early modern age. The escalation of warfare provided a crucial impetus for a historical cycle of coercion-extraction, driven by the centralization of political power and a substantial increase in fiscal pressure on society. Accordingly, as John Brewer argued, the concrete

[546] On the idea of 'fiscal states' as the innovative shape of central powers which progressively took place in early modern Europe, see Bonney, *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c. 1200-1815*.

[547] See Samuel E. Finer, "State-and Nation-Building in Europe: The Role of the Military," in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, vol. 84 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 84–165; Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990-1990* (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990).

manifestation of the 'fiscal state' in 17th-18th-century Europe was that of a 'fiscal-military state' raising more money to finance warfare[548].

While the causal relationship between war and state-formation (especially, in terms of bureaucratization) has been questioned[549], it is still less clear how the undisputable increase of the military budget was managed by sovereign powers of the time, which were obliged to raise more money in order to meet the growing financial needs for war. Also the 'fiscal state' theory has undergone critical review in the last decade. The recent revisionism in fiscal history has indeed the merit to question the excessive emphasis on administrative centralization and top-down coercion as primary drivers of fiscal change[550]. However, the factors that allowed the outstanding enhancement of power centralization and tax collection throughout the early modern age still need to be properly investigated.

In this chapter, I examine the role played by some of these factors for fiscal change in the early modern period, especially the rise of long-distance trade and the creative adaptation of patrimonial fiscal instruments. The quantitative and geographical success of tobacco taxation suggests delving into the historical reasons that brought almost all early modern European polities to identify tobacco trade as a fundamental resource to increase fiscal revenues in such a critical season for the growth of tax burden on society[551]. Which were the experiences and models that influenced tobacco taxation? Did this latter represent an historical continuity or a rupture with the historical process of tax collection? Moreover, belonging to the new set of global goods which nourished in the early modern

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[548] See John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

[549] Historical research on case studies has shown that military operations were usually carried on by process of 'devolution' towards proper entrepreneurs of war instead of giving birth to bureaucratic administration for the new centralized state. See, for example, David Parrott, *The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Rafael Torres Sánchez, *Military Entrepreneurs and the Spanish Contractor State in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[550] On this point, see the introduction of the thesis. Here, I just recall the importance of recent works that have stressed the crucial role of contractors and financiers in early modern tax collection and for the growth of state revenues in the 17th and the 18th centuries. See Aaron Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government in Britain, 1702-1713*, First edition., Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015); Agustín González Enciso, "Between Private and Public Interests: The Moral Economy of Collaboration in Eighteenth-Century Spain," in *The War Within: Private Interests and the Fiscal State in the Early Modern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 171–93.

[551] For a comparative study at the European level, see P. Schmidt, "Tobacco-Its Trade, and Consumption in Early Modern Europe," in *Prodotti e Tecniche d'oltremare Nelle Economie Europee. Secc. XIII-XVIII* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1988), 591–616.

age[552], it is important to explore the relations involved in tobacco trade in connection with the growth of taxation. To what extent did the characteristics of long-distance tobacco's circulation shape the preconditions that enabled early modern sovereign powers to significantly increase their revenues.? And what kind of similarities and discrepancies can we recognize by comparing tobacco taxation with that on other early modern global commodities?

Another crucial issue is the negotiation processes between the state, merchants, privileged companies, and consumers around tobacco taxation. In the literature, at least when the influence of the 'predatory state' paradigm prevails[553], interactions between the state and the 'civil society' around taxation is usually described as the manifestation of an unfixable tension which ends up in resistance and contraband. However, we should investigate this kind of relationship looking beyond the scheme of mere opposition and confrontation. To what extent did the negotiation between institutions and economic actors contribute to the implementation of tobacco's taxation? And what dynamics and logic influenced the whole process?

These questions are inexorably related to the debate on the alternative between tax farming and direct administration in the early modern fiscal system. As I explained in the introduction, following the tradition of studies on the British state, a sort of evolutionary scheme of progressive stages has exerted a deep influence on our understanding of fiscal change in history. The *fil rouge* towards a successful path was recognised in the bureaucratic centralization of fiscal administration, as the desirable and inevitable way to abandon 'archaic' forms of levy and to extract more revenues[554]. Indeed, the emergence in the 18th century of an efficient, centralized and direct administration of tax collection and public expenditures has represented a watershed theme for different national historiographies. For instance, France's substantial defeat in the long-lasting military confrontation with Great Britain between 1688 and 1815 has been often explained in the

[552] For an overview, see Carmagnani, *Le isole del lusso*.

[553] On the 'predatory state' paradigm, see Mehrdad Vahabi, "Introduction: A Symposium on the Predatory State," *Public Choice* 182, no. 3 (2020): 233–42.

[554] By contrast, see the approach maintained in the chapter devoted to the Confederation of Poland-Lithuania published in the volume edited by Bonney in 1999: the final outcome of the 'partition' is basically explained in the light of the substantial failure in fiscal centralisation by the royal power in front of the estates and the privileged orders who were able to retain their powers in the area of tax allocation and collection. See Anna Filipczak-Kocur, "Poland-Lithuania before Partition," in *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c.1200-1815*, ed. Richard Bonney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 443–80.

light of its failure in fiscal and financial effectiveness[555]. In particular, the intrusion of financiers and private groups in tax collection, following the classical studies on the French *Ferme générale*[556], is still predominantly blamed in the literature as a symptom of bad handling of royal public resources. In this respect, it is no coincidence that Spanish scholars have frequently insisted on a sort of juxtaposition between the French experience and the early modern fiscal system of Bourbon Spain: this latter, establishing a direct state intervention in tax collection and administration in the 1730s-1740s, was eventually able to break the spiral of interdependence between financiers and the royal treasury, whereas France dramatically failed[557].

As a consequence, divergent historical cases have been mainly described as backward or declining depending on such an alternative. Take the case of the Ottoman Empire, for whom the end of the 'classical age' (1300-1600) of military expansion and powerful statehood has been counterposed in the literature to the following centuries of decentralization. The alleged internal institutional decay have represented a major theme in Ottoman history of the 17th and 18th centuries, following which the spread of tax farming in the various provinces of the empire has been interpreted as a symbolic freight of weakness, arbitrary taxation, and diversion of government revenues into private pockets[558]. Also the prevalent narrative on the Habsburg Empire has highlighted the limits imposed on sovereign legitimacy to raise taxes: generations of scholars have focused their attention on the conflict between the constraints exerted by the powerful estates and the centralizing reforms attempted by the central government to obtain more revenues[559]. The

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[555] For a resume, see Richard Bonney, "Towards the Comparative Fiscal History of Britain and France during the 'long' Eighteenth Century," in *Exceptionalism and Industrialisation: Britain and Its European Rivals, 1688-1815*, ed. Leandro Prados de la Escosura (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 191–215. See also Joël Félix and Frank Tallett, "The French Experience, 1661-1815," in *The Fiscal-Military State in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Christopher Storrs (Farnham ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 147–66.

[556] John. F. Bosher, *French Finances 1770-1795: From Business to Bureaucracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Yves Durand, *Les fermiers généraux au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971).

[557] See Rafael Torres Sánchez, *Constructing a Fiscal Military State in Eighteenth Century Spain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

[558] See Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973); Alan Palmer, *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (New York, NY: Barnes & Nobles Books, 1994).

[559] See Peter G. M. Dickson, *Finance and Government under Maria Theresia, 1740-1780* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), II, 6–35. At the same time, William Godsey has noted that the Estates of Lower

historiography on the early modern Italian states has been deeply affected by similar views. There, fiscal administration knew a certain institutional pluralism and a multiplicity of coffers for tax collection. These features have been described as the main reasons for the financial limits of those polities, whereas administrative centralisation carried out by Savoy-Piedmont and enlightened rulers and officials tied to the Habsburg monarchy in the second half of the 18th century are taken as positive models[560].

Although the association of tax farming and decentralization with ineffectiveness is still an influential topic in fiscal history, some works have convincingly deepened the relationship between economic actors and fiscal institutions in early modern taxation with a European scale of comparison: on the one hand, some studies have highlighted that profit in the management of public resources was not forbidden, but rather distinguished between fair benefits and outlaw ones[561]; on the other side, if limits in state administration paved the way for financiers' opportunities, it was through various private groups – merchants, contractors, tax farmers, financiers – that rulers could have access to larger pools of resources, without embarking on difficult negotiation with estates or local powers which were required for imposing direct taxes beyond traditional privileges[562]. Even the

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Austria survived to the Habsburg centralizing reforms because they proved to be necessary, not only thanks to their increasing financial potency, but also because they offered a politically viable way of exacting ever-larger quantities of money, men, and other resources from local society. See William D. Godsey, *The Sinews of Habsburg Power: Lower Austria in a Fiscal-Military State 1650-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 37–66.

[560] From this point of view, the main references are to the reforms implemented in the Austrian Lombardy and in the grand-duchy of Tuscany under Peter Leopold from the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty: for this approach, see Carlo Capra, "The Eighteenth Century. I. The Finances of the Austrian Monarchy and the Italian States," in *Economic Systems and State Finance*, ed. Richard Bonney (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 295–314. For the Savoy-Piedmont case, to some extent more in line with the model of the 'fiscal-military state', see the classical studies of Enrico Stumpo, as Enrico Stumpo, *Finanza e Stato moderno nel Piemonte del Seicento* (Roma: Istituto storico per l'età moderna e contemporanea, 1979), and the explicit considerations by Storrs in Christopher Storrs, *War, Diplomacy and the Rise of Savoy, 1690–1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). By contrast, on the institutional pluralism and the multiplicity of coffers for financial administration in the early modern Italian states there is plenty of interesting literature, far less concerned with the issue of fiscal change along theoretical models and basically more useful for grasping the inner logic of such organization. For instance, see Elena Fasano Guarini, "Centro e Periferia, Accentramento e Particolarismi: Dicotomia o Sostanza Degli Stati in Età Moderna?," in *Origini Dello Stato. Processi Di Formazione Statale in Italia Tra Medioevo Ed Età Moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994), 147–76.

[561] Anne Dubet and Marie-Laure Legay, eds., *La Comptabilité publique en Europe, 1500-1850* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011).

[562] See the essays collected in Joël Félix and Anne Dubet, *The War Within: Private Interests and the Fiscal State in Early-Modern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2018).

classical negative description of the French *Ferme générale* has been revised, stressing the fundamental credit line and the steady streams of income that it guaranteed to the king without the financial risks and bureaucratic hassles of direct administration[563]. As a matter of fact, in-depth studies on French state budgets and accounting have pointed out the growing contribution of indirect taxes to royal revenues, the ability of French fiscal institutions to cooperate with the social élites for establishing channels of credit, their relative success in eroding fiscal privileges, and the partial adoption of an advanced administrative science of accounting[564]. Also the research on the Ottoman financial system has nuanced the harshest opinions on the actual contribution of tax-farming to the imperial budget: the *mukataat* and *iltizam* systems not only guaranteed regular flows of money to the local and central governments, but they also provided for control instruments and procedures that allowed central bodies to gather good information on imperial finance and channels for petitions and protests from subjects seeking an acceptable form of 'fiscal justice'[565].

From these premises, some scholars have acknowledged a sort of 'moral economy of collaboration' between the state and economic interests as the heart of early modern

[563] For instance, a traditional approach highlighted the tension between financiers' blackmail and the reformist attempts to establish direct administration of public revenues, see Aline Logette, "La Régie Générale Au Temps de Necker et de Ses Successeurs (1777-1786)," *Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger* 60, no. 3 (1982): 415–45; Eugene N. White, "From Privatized to Government-Administered Tax Collection: Tax Farming in Eighteenth-Century France 1," *The Economic History Review* 57, no. 4 (2004): 636–63; François Monnier, "La Réforme Impossible: Turgot et Necker," *La Revnue Administrative* 59, no. 353 (2006): 456–63. But other scholars have criticized such considerations, acknowledging in the evolution of French *Ferme générale* a peculiar private-public partnership which allowed to lower costs faced by the crown, see Noel D. Johnson, "Banking on the King: The Evolution of the Royal Revenue Farms in Old Regime France," *The Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 4 (2006): 963–91.

[564] For these points, see respectively Michel Morineau, "Budgets de l'Etat et Gestion Des Finances Royales En France Au Dix-Huitième Siècle," *Revue Historique* 264, no. 2 (1980): 289–336; Daniel Dessert, *Argent, pouvoir et societé au Grand Siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1984); Michael Kwass, *Privilege and the Politics of Taxation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Marie-Laure Legay, *La banqueroute de l'État royal: la gestion des finances publiques de Colbert à la Révolution*, Collection En temps & lieux 26 (Paris: Editions EHESS, 2011).

[565] See Ariel Salzmann, "An Ancien Regime Revisited:'Privatization' and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *Politics & Society* 21, no. 4 (1993): 393–423; Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden ; New York, NY: Brill, 1996).

taxation, rather than an open conflict along the path toward modern statehood[566]. This entanglement was particularly evident in the realm of the privileged form of taxation of the early modern age, the indirect taxation, and bore relevant consequences. According to Guido Alfani and Marco di Tullio, the advancement of the 'fiscal state' is to be considered one of the main causes of growing inequalities during the early modern age. Placing the case of the Venetian mainland in a pan-European scenario, they argue that «post-tax inequality was higher than pre-tax inequality, essentially because the poor were taxed proportionally more than the rich»[567]. While the two authors focus mainly on the fiscal exemptions for large assets, for our perspective we must consider that consumption taxes are intrinsically regressive. To this point, it is worth adding Waquet's considerations on the concept of 'tax repercussion' as applied to the fiscal systems of the early modern age: various mechanisms can shift the burden of taxation from the apparent taxpayer to the real one. Thus, a merchant, after paying customs duties, would recover the amount of those levies by proportionally increasing the prices of his products[568].

However, it is to note that such revisionism, especially in the studies on the British state, does not usually aim at getting rid of the premises of the 'fiscal state', but rather at flanking it with other categories which might be helpful in underscoring different functions of the state itself. For example, Bowen has described the 'contractor state' as «a state which is not seen as offering an alternative model to the fiscal-military state, but instead co-existed alongside it in the manner of a Siamese twin»[569]. Aaron Graham has used the same category to argue that «some of the greatest improvements in revenue collection also occurred when English, Scottish, and Irish customs and excise were placed in farm in the late 17th century, which leased the right of collection to private consortia for a fixed sum or percentage»[570].

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[566] Agustín González Enciso, "Between Private and Public Interests: The Moral Economy of Collaboration in Eighteenth-Century Spain," in *The War Within: Private Interests and the Fiscal State in the Early Modern Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 171–93.

[567] Guido Alfani and Matteo Di Tullio, *The Lion's Share Inequality and the Rise of the Fiscal State in Preindustrial Europe* (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 147.

[568] See Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 377.

[569] Bowen, "The Contractor State, c. 1650–1815," 241. See also Simon Devereaux, "The Historiography of the English State during 'the Long Eighteenth Century': Part I – Decentralized Perspectives," *History Compass* 7, no. 3 (2009): 742–64.

[570] Aaron Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government in Britain, 1702-1713*, First edition., Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015), 12.

For our perspective, I suggest taking a further step and to dismiss the evaluation of historical fiscal practices as alignments or detours from the process of administrative centralization and market flourishing. The adoption of a model based on bureaucratic centralization and market developmentalism results ultimately misleading for the interpretation of relations and actors that enabled fiscal strengthening. In particular, rather than focusing exclusively on the state as the true subject who regulates public finance through coercion from above opposed to the 'private society', the multiplicity of actors and concurring strategies who affected early modern taxation suggest to seriously investigate the 'negotiated transactions' between social groups and state institutions as one of the crucial spaces to understand the epochal fiscal intensification of the period[571].

In this respect, tobacco taxation in the early modern age sharply contrasts with the axioms of the 'fiscal state'. In particular, tax farming and monopolies, as well as the connections between fiscal institutions and economic actors, have been too often interpreted only through the lens of corruption and ineffectiveness or as signals of failure in the transition towards state enhancement and capitalism. Conversely, we should focus on their complex dimension as concrete spaces where historical actors negotiated around fundamental issues of the time: the regulation of global goods' circulation; the distribution of the tax burden in an epoch of intense fiscal strengthening; and, more broadly, the actual implementation and reception of public authority on estates, corps, communities and local powers. A research on tobacco taxation in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire aims not only at shedding light on a specific sector, but also at grasping further insights on the inner logic of early modern fiscal systems, especially on the dynamics of a crucial relationship: the one between fiscal institutions and economic networks who – with their relations, competences, and capitals – represented a viable solution for increasing revenues and negotiated with the sovereign powers the limits and privileges of their service.

In the first section of the chapter, the tobacco monopoly is placed in the broader context of global commodities's taxation in the early modern age. There are perceptible divergences with, for example, the fiscal history of coffee, while it is interesting to explore

[571] From this point of view, I agree with the conclusions proposed by Jean-Claude Waquet at the end of a neglected collection of works of fiscal history, see Jean-Claude Waquet, "Conclusione. Qualche Proposta per Un'altra Storia Delle Finanze Pubbliche," ed. Jean-Claude Waquet and Denis Menjot, vol. 24, Cheiron. Materiali e Strumenti Di Aggiornamento Storiografico (Roma: Bulzoni, 1996), 137–40.

the counterintuitive similarities with the taxation of basic staples such as salt. Accordingly, the fiscal systems of the two case studies and the role that monopolies played in them are put under investigation. Then, I provide a deeper examination of the reasons that led to the introduction of the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire, as they reveal crucial aspects of the early modern inner logic of taxation. Finally, after providing a quantitative picture of fiscal revenues from tobacco between the 17th and 18th centuries, the last section of the chapter examines the early modern dilemma between tax farming and direct administration, highlighting the elements of continuity that have been usually neglected in historiography.

1. Tobacco between global commodities, monopolies, and patrimonial taxation

The combination of colonialism and mercantilism at the base of the dominant economic ideology in the European states throughout the 17th and 18th centuries pushed sovereign powers to shape consumption habits and control the production and distribution of global commodities goods. These efforts had a deep connection with the widespread desire to take advantage of new opportunities to increase tax revenues. In this respect, important studies have problematized the historical path towards growing taxation, showing the critical relevance of exotic groceries' imports for early modern tax revenues in Europe[572]. We can trace a pattern for early modern taxation of global commodities. The first introduction of exotic crops in Europe usually met high customs duties: they belonged to the sphere of luxury, not of necessary commodities; moreover, their first reception was among the richest strata of the population that would not suffer from the price increase due to heavy taxation. Development in the fields of production and distribution determined the ability for some commodities to reduce prices and increase the volume of trade, with substantial benefits for re-exports and customs duties. At the same time, the hardness of competition at a global stage determined, for some commodities, the adoption of mercantilist and monopolistic practices in order to gain a foothold in long-distance trade and exploit new opportunities to raise revenues. The

[572] In the 1970s, Joan Thirsk collected impressive amount of data from the 17th- and 18th-century English Custom House, showing that sugar products, caffeine drinks and tobacco constituted less than 10% of the value of all imports in 1559, but in the latter 1660s the percentage increased to 16,6% and by the 1770s it came to more than 35%. See Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

drainage of global resources by European states was by no means a foregone conclusion during the early modern age, but for many commodity chains it gradually imposed itself in parallel with the establishment of global systems for production and distribution centered on the Atlantic Ocean that guaranteed outstanding revenues collection.

Tobacco presents a different path: privileges and licenses granting exclusive rights on tobacco trade and production in return for annual fees accompanied the decisive steps of tobacco's commodification. Competition and uncertainty drove the negotiation between merchants and institutions to the removal of tobacco from the free market, as a strategy to promote the development of the sector. And, from this premise, also taxation policy on tobacco took on a particular form with the establishment of the state monopoly on its trade. Accordingly, the fiscalization of tobacco does not appear to have been very much like those of other extra-European commodities, whose trade usually was charged with import duties and remained open to free economic initiative, like in the case of sugar or coffee, or suffered sometimes proper prohibition to circulate in order to protect local industry, like in the case of cotton calicoes from India[573].

In any case, sovereign monopolies on tobacco became a common and widespread fiscal tool in early modern Europe. After the first and unsatisfactory experiments issued during the Thirty Years War, such a solution found room within polities with very different constitutional regimes, dimensions, knowing a proper transnational spread[574]. In fact, in the central decades of the 17th century, a sort of European model for tobacco taxation and trade emerged. It was based on two fundamental pillars: on the one hand, the establishment of the tobacco monopoly by the authority of the sovereign power, which claimed the exclusive right to exploit tobacco trade; on the other hand, the establishment of the Tobacco Farm, the administrative and economic enterprise running the monopoly,

[573] For coffee and sugar, see Steven C. Topik, "Culture, Economy, and Coffee," *Latin American Research Review* 32, no. 1 (1997): 124–38; Mimi Goodall, "The Rise of the Sugar Trade and Sugar Consumption in Early British America, 1650–1720," *Historical Research* 93, no. 262 (2020): 678–91. For prohibitions to Indian cotton calicoes' circulation, see Olivier Nantois, "Le Commerce Des Toiles Peintes et Imprimées" Indiennes" En France Au Temps de La Prohibition (Octobre 1686-Septembre 1759)" (PhD Thesis, Paris 4, 2006); Jonathan P. Eacott, "Making an Imperial Compromise: The Calico Acts, the Atlantic Colonies, and the Structure of the British Empire," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (2012): 731–62.

[574] For broader considerations on the impact of the Thirty Years War on European taxation and public finance, see Larry Neal, "The Variety of Financial Innovations in European War Finance during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648)," in *Financial Innovation and Resilience: A Comparative Perspective on the Public Banks of Naples (1462-1808)*, ed. Lilia Costabile and Larry Neal, Palgrave Studies in the History of Finance (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 127–45.

responsible for collecting the fee to be paid into the sovereign's coffers and organizing the production and distribution of tobacco.

The first tobacco monopolies in Europe saw the light in the 1630s. To begin with, in 1636, the Cortes de Castilla issued the monopoly on tobacco trade within the borders of the Castilla and Leon kingdom: tobacco production and trade were claimed as an exclusive right of the Crown and farmed out for 10 years to a private entrepreneurs, the Portuguese 'new Christian' Antonio de Soria[575]. Many states followed this initial example afterwards: once obtained the independence from the Spanish crown, in 1644 the new dynasty of Braganza eventually revived the tobacco monopoly in Portugal, which had been already in force in the 1630s under the Habsburg Crown[576]; between 1639 and 1659 the tobacco monopoly found his way in almost all the Italian states, starting precisely from the polities under the authority of the Spanish crown[577]. After this first group, in the second half of the century, it was the time for Habsburg hereditary domains[578], followed

[575] The *Real cedula* of the 28th December 1636 ordered the exclusive right on both wholesale and retail tobacco trade. The tax farmer was granted total control over the entire chain, from import of raw tobacco leaves to the manufacturing process and distribution, while local cultivation within the borders of the Castilla and Leon kingdom was strictly prohibited. See José Manuel Rodríguez Gordillo, *La creación del estanco del tabaco en España* (Madrid: Fundación Altadis, 2002).

[576] Two Portuguese entrepreneurs, Alvaro Fernandes and Diego Fernandes de Sequeira, signed a first contract for the tobacco monopoly in 1641, for the annual rent of 32.000 cruzados, but then the Crown immediately came back on the road of liberalization, pushed by the assurances of anti-monopolists. However, revenues obtained after such a decision were much smaller than anticipated: on the 6th October 1644, Fernandes and Sequeira signed another sex-year contract, agreeing to pay to the crown 64.000 cruzados annually for their monopoly. See Carl A. Hanson, "Monopoly and Contraband in the Portuguese Tobacco Trade, 1624-1702," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 19, no. 2 (1982): 152–53.

[577] For general surveys, see Roberto Mantelli, "Il Consumo e La Tassazione Del Tabacco Nell'Italia Dei Secoli XVI-XVIII," in *Fra Spazio e Tempo. Studi in Onore Di Luigi de Rosa*, vol. 1 (Napoli: Esi, 1995), 545–67; Stefano Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna: secoli 17.-19* (Roma: Viella, 2017), 66–74. Also studies on single case studies and some edited archival sources are available: for the state of Milan, see Stefano Levati, "Risorse Finanziarie e Ordine Pubblico Nello Stato Di Milano: Il Dacio Del Tabacco Dalla Istituzione Alla" Statalizzazione"(1639-1770)," in *Con La Ragione e Col Cuore. Studi Dedicati a Carlo Capra* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2008), 183–208; for the viceroyalty of Naples, see Renato Urga, "La Privativa Del Tabacco Nel Napoletano Durante Il Viceregno," in *Scritti in Onore Di Riccardo Filangieri*, vol. II (Napoli: L'Arte tipografica, 1959), 551–72; for Genoa, see Paolo Calcagno, "L'«impresa Generale Del Tabacco». Come Genova Provò a Sfruttare a Fini Fiscali Uno Dei Massimi Processi Di Mondializzazione Degli Scambi Tra XVII e XVII Secolo," *Nuova Rivista Storica* 101, no. 2 (2017); for Venice, see Antonio Stella, "Il monopolio dei tabacchi nella Repubblica Veneta : studio di Antonio Stella," *Annuali del R. Istituto Tecnico e Nautico di Napoli*, 1893, 1–39; Rita Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia: il partito del tabacco e lo Stabilimento Manfrin nel Settecento* (Venezia: La Musa Talìa editrice, 2013), 17–21.

[578] Here, the process started from Lower Austria (1664) and Tyrol (1670), see Godsey, *The Sinews of Habsburg Power*, 209–34.

by many German states, France, and then even further towards the Scandinavian kingdoms and Russia[579]. The geographical diffusion of the tobacco monopolies did not stop there: their reliability for European powers was so appreciated that they adopted the same solution in different regions of their empires to raise revenues for colonial administrations[580].

How should we interpret the divergence of tobacco taxation with the pattern

[579] For Bavaria and Wurttemberg, see Gray and Wyckoff, "The International Tobacco Trade in the Seventeenth Century," 5–6. Prussia established a tobacco monopoly in 1719, then relaunched by Frederick II the Great within a general plan of financial reform, see Peter H. Wilson, "Prussia as a Fiscal-Military State, 1640-1806," in *The Fiscal-Military State in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Essays in Honour of P.G.M.Dickson*, ed. Christopher Storrs (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 95–124. For France, see Marc Vigié and Muriel Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot: amateurs de tabac, fermiers généraux et contrebandiers sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris]: Fayard, 1989), 183–202. In the central decades of the seventeenth century, the French Crown had issued on several occasions custom duties on tobacco imported from foreign countries, but the fiscal yield remained largely unsatisfactory. Under the impulse of Colbert, the monopolistic model was adopted also in France, looking at the examples provided by the Habsburg rivals: the first contract for farming out the tobacco monopoly was signed in 1674 with M. Jean Breton Bourgeois and then, in 1680-1681, the tobacco farm entered in the first contract for the *Ferme générale*, a huge consortium of financiers who began to administrate royal indirect taxes in exchange of a substantial annual rent to be paid to the king. For Russia and the Scandinavian kingdoms, see Orazio Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*, Typographie coopérative (Napoli, 1900), 114–17. In Russia, after the 'longest ban on tobacco imports ever attempted', Peter the Great eventually established a monopoly on tobacco trade in 1696, firstly signing a contract with the Russian merchant Martin Bogdanov and then, in 1698, a multi-year contract with the English King William III to allow a company of English merchants to import into European Russia a high volume of Virginia tobacco, namely 3.000 hogsheads for the first year, which means nearly 3 million pounds. See Matthew P. Romaniello, "Customs and Consumption. Russia's Global Tobacco Habits in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Global Lives of Things. The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 183–96.

[580] Spanish-speaking historiography has emphasized the role of the establishment of the tobacco monopoly in the American colonies by the Bourbon dynasty in the second half of the 18th century: that process represented a crucial pillar of imperial and financial reform for achieving a more sustainable colonial administration. See Allan J. Kuethe and Kenneth J. Andrien, *The Spanish Atlantic World in the Eighteenth Century: War and the Bourbon Reforms, 1713–1796*, New Approaches to the Americas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 229–304. However, we can date back the first sort of monopoly on tobacco in the Portuguese empire downright in 1624 in the *Estado da India*: the sale of tobacco in Goa was farmed out as an exclusive right, in order to raise revenues needed for defense of the endangered Indian viceroyalty, see Vitorino Magalhaes Godinho, *Les finances de l'état portugais des Indes Orientales (1517-1635): Materiaux pour une étude structurelle et conjoncturelle* (Paris: Fundaçaô Calouste Gulbenkian, 1982), 65–66. The episode is particularly telling for the relevance of tobacco trade in Portuguese imperial circuits, from Bahia to Goa, and imperial fiscal system: taxes from tobacco in Goa supplied up to 20% of the total revenue collected in the *Estado da India* in 1687, see Jorge Pedreira, "Costs and Financial Trends in the Portuguese Empire, 1415–1822," in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 64.

recognized for the other unnecessary global goods of the early modern age? In this regard, it is interesting to note that in our case studies on several occasions state officials and sovereign powers discussed the opportunity to establish stricter regulation for a commodity like coffee, borrowing exactly from the established monopolies on tobacco. In 1745, the *Deputati alla Provvision del denaro pubblico* presented a project to introduce in Venice «*un generale Partito sopra il Caffè a somiglianza di quello sopra il Tabacco*»[581]. The affair aroused the protests of the *Deputati al Commercio*, who feared disastrous consequences for Venetian trade, especially with Egypt[582], and accused the proposer of serving the interests of France: coffee from French West Indies had been penalized in 1740 by the Senate with additional duties in order to favor the *Serenissima*'s position in the redistribution of the Levantine coffee to the Italian peninsula and central Europe[583]: the *deputati* suspected that the proposal of a monopoly on coffee represented an expedient functional to French interests[584]. Regardless of objections, the project was approved and put into practice[585], but the new *partito* knew a particularly troubled life, with recurring disputes and constant infringements, until it was eventually abolished as

[581] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte Deputati al Commercio", reg. 217, f. 59v, Venice 26/09/1745. *Partito* in Venice was widely used as a synonymous of a contract farmed out to financiers.

[582] The deputies underlined that the trade with Egypt for Venice was no longer the channel to get the luxury products from the East Indies, but it remained a very relevant traffic thanks to the exchange between coffee from the Arabian peninsula and Venetian manufactured goods, see *Ibidem*, ff. 46v- 52v, Venice 15/09/1745.

[583] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte Deputati al Commercio", reg. 216, ff. 12v-18r, Venice 27/03/1741. The decision of the Venetian Senate provoked the remonstrances of the French consul M. Le Blond and of the French ambassador M. de Froullay, who complained about a measure that had been «*extorqué à force d'argent que les juifs interessés ont donné sous main à qualques Sages dans l'ésperance de se render les arbitres absolus du prix du café*», despite «*la grande consummation qui se fait actuellement de celui de France dans le pays, parce qu'il coute moins de moitié que celui qui provient des échelles du Levant*», see ANP, *Affaires étrangers*, B^3 409, M. Le Blond to M. de Froullay, Venice 23/07/1740.

[584] «*In questo capitolo il Partiante si è bruttamente scoperto il fianco, e si è fatto conoscere se non in faccia, tanto però che basta perché noi possiamo qualificarlo per un emissario di Francia*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte Deputati al Commercio", reg. 217, f. 64r, Venice 26/09/1745.

[585] On the decree of the Senate that established the new method, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte Deputati al Commercio", reg. 217, ff. 75v-76r, Venice 25/02/1746. However, the definite implementation of the sovereign will happened only in 1751. The monopoly on coffee represented a *partito* on consumption like in the case of tobacco: the tax farmer obtained the exclusive right to introduce coffee from Alexandria, thus becoming the only legal supplier for the *caffettieri* who operated in Venice and other cities of the Venetian mainland. Interestingly, in 1752, when D. Silvestro Bartolozzi was awarded of the coffee monopoly for the Venetian mainland, he asked that «*per ovviari alli contrabbandi nella Terraferma, siano prescritte tutte quelle cautele che corrono per l'Appalto del Tabacco*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 218, f. 83v, Venice 20/04/1752.

early as 1753[586]. The coffee monopoly found bitter opposition in the powerful merchant consortium that managed Venetian trade with Egypt and, conversely to what had happened with tobacco, the owners of retail coffee shops were already well organized to defend their interests at the time of the experiment[587]. Moreover, in the face of the resounding problems caused by the new *partito*, fiscal institutions had little reason to defend the instrument, given the «*picciolezza dell'Appalto, che rileva poco più di 12.000 ducati*»[588]. However, some arguments raised by the *Deputati al Commercio* pointed out also a «*grande differenza tra il tabacco ed il caffè*» that made convenient the monopoly for tobacco, whereas the same solution did not satisfy public expectation in the case of coffee. In particular, the deputies remarked that, if tobacco was an herb of low value and slight alterations in price, coffee, though «*merce superflua*» like tobacco, was a «*genere di valor grande, che costa ora di più ora meno*»[589]. In other words, coffee did not yet fulfill an important condition for the fiscal success of the tobacco monopoly, namely the regularity of a broad demand in society, well established even in the lower and middle strata of the population, which contributed to maintain prices at relatively stable and low levels.

A particular compromise between open trade and fiscal regulation for coffee took place in Livorno. The granducal authorities never experienced a monopoly on the coffee trade, but the retail system in the port city came to be subject to licenses to be paid to the coffee tax collector[590]. At the beginning of the 18th century, the retailers were required to

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[586] In particular, the *caffettieri* of the Venetian mainland, who used to get smuggled coffee, refused to submit to the new discipline and to be supplied with coffee from Alexandria by the contractor in Venice. Their resistance led to a worrying situation for the Venetian authorities, who noted with concern that «*uno spirito di rivolta agita in una insolita insurrezione la maggior parte della Terraferma contro il nuovo Dazio del consume del caffè*», *Ibidem*, f. 120r, Venice 29/07/1752. The same Bartolozzi, exasperated after numerous unsuccessful attempts to come to an agreement with the *caffettieri*, pleaded to terminate the tobacco monopoly contract, for «*l'esser questo riuscito infelicissimo*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 219, f. 8v, Venice 07/09/1753.

[587] Merchants engaged in the Egyptian trade had immediately made their voices heard, demanding that «*l'uscita del caffè dichiarata fosse esente di tale dazio*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 217, f. 83v, Venice 25/02/1746.

[588] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 218, f. 199v, Venice 05/02/1753.

[589] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 217, ff. 65 r-v, Venice 26/09/1745.

[590] As for the case of tobacco monopoly, the state farmed out to the best bidder the '*appalto del caffè*', but this latter basically consisted in the collection of a fee on coffee shop owners, who in turn obtained a license which allowed them to retail coffee. By contrast, coffee wholesale trade and imports to the rest of the grand

pay 7 pieces of eight monthly to the tax farmer and the system remained in force throughout the century, earning around 10.000 *lire* for the state coffers[591]. A figure that, compared to those of the tobacco monopoly, is of secondary importance. Moreover, despite the fiscal stranglehold on the number of coffee shops remained particularly tight even after the switch from private contractors to the direct administration of the Livorno's custom house in 1749[592], general coffee trade and its distribution outside the port city were never reduced to a privileged and exclusive affair.

At a deeper examination, tobacco's fiscalization results closer to that, mainly because of their strategic importance for public concern, were allowed to circulate only under a monopolistic regime and, in turn, guaranteed revenues thanks to the sovereign authority established on their trade. It is all but obvious that, in order to exploit the consumption of a global good with a leading role in the long-distance circulation of commodities, early modern fiscal institutions recovered and the reshaped of an ancient legal tool for extracting revenues, i.e. the *ius prohibendi*: as for salt, iron and saltpeter, the monopoly on tobacco was issued as a regalian right claimed by the sovereign and granted to private subjects as a privileged business. In particular, the pattern of tobacco taxation presents a peculiar consonance with that of salt. This latter was all but an unnecessary product in the early modern period, as it was largely employed by people for seasoning and preserving food, especially meat and fish[593].

The literature has often hastened to dismiss privileged trade and fiscal monopolies as an archaic survival from the past, however, if we broaden our gaze, we note that these instruments were certainly not exclusive to our two case studies. Let us take the case of the two Bourbon monarchies. Michel Morineau's fundamental study on the '*états de prévoyance*' of the French crown highlighted not only the exponential 18th-century rise in ordinary revenues (from 181 to 471,6 million *livres tournois* between 1726 and 1788),

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duchy always remained open to all, once entry duties were paid. For the establishment of the tax in 1703, see Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini* ..., vol. XXI, 251–252.

[591] See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 126, Francesco Terriesi to the grand duke, Livorno 19/05/1704; *Ibidem*, reg. 21, n. 53, 11/09/1786.

[592] In 1749, when the contract with Francesco Morelli for the income paid by Livorno's coffee shops expired, the administration of the licence system passed to the custom house of the city, which granted each shop separately by public auction and set their total number at 13 (12 for Christians and 1 for Jews). See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, Florence 18/07/1769.

[593] For a 'global commodity history' on salt trade and consumption, see Mark Kurlansky, *Salt: A World History*, 2002.

but also the growth in the weight of indirect taxation and patrimonial revenues (rising to 57,4% in 1788 from 49,8% in 1726)[594]. The latter were not managed directly by the fiscal administration, but were farmed out to the *Ferme Générale*, a consortium of financiers who not only paid significant sums each year, a large part of which went to support the public debt, but also represented the main financier of the crown with staggering loans, then drawing on future indirect tax revenues[595]. In this scheme, the *Ferme du Tabac* and the *Gabelle du Sel* constituted two indispensable cornerstones, contributing 21,2% of the total revenue of the French crown[596].

With regard to the Spanish monarchy, research on the *Real Hacienda* has shown how public finance was one of the main areas of intervention and reform during the 18th century[597]. In particular, the crown succeeded in the effort of revitalizing a sector that seemed hopelessly doomed to collapse at the end of the 17th century, above all by regaining a certain creditworthiness, a fundamental precondition for being able to finance itself with loans without incurring prohibitive costs[598]. However, the achievement of this new equilibrium owed much to the revival of traditional levy instruments, starting with fiscal monopolies: according to data reported by Torres Sanchez, state monopolies covered an average of 18% of the *Real Hacienda*'s revenue in the period 1701-1804, ranking as the first revenue category for the Spanish budget[599]. This evidence suggests

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[594] Morineau, "Budgets de l'Etat et Gestion Des Finances Royales En France Au Dix-Huitième Siècle," 314.

[595] *Ibidem*, 293. The incidence of revenues from tax farming on the French budget passed from 24,2% in 1643 to the peak of 54,7% in 1685, then stabilizing between the 45 and the 50% in the following century, see Durand, *Les fermiers généraux au XVIIIe siècle*, 57. On the loans granted by the *Ferme générale* to the French crown, see Bosher, *French Finances 1770-1795*, 75–76.

[596] At the end of the *ancient régime*, the salt tax and the tobacco tax combined for about 100 million of *livres tournois*, accounting for more than 69% of the annual rent of the *Ferme générale* under the Mager contract (signed in 1787) and for 21,2 % of the 471,6 million of *livres tournois* overall collected by the French crown in 1788. See *Lettre Addressée à M. de Blaçons, Député à l'Assemblée Nationale, Par M. Duvaucel, Fermier Général. Servant de Suite Aux Réflexions Importantes Sur Le Tabac, Par Le Meme, et Contenant Qulques Idées Nouvelles Sur Cette Branche Importante Des Revenus de l'état* (Paris, 1790); Jean-Claude Hocquet, "Qui La Gabelle Du Sel Du Roi de France A-t-Elle Enrichi?," in *Genèse de l'Etat Moderne: Prélèveemnt et Ridistribution*, ed. Jean-Philippe Genêt and Michel Le Mené (Paris: CNRS, 1987), 209–19.

[597] See José Miguel Delgado Barrado, *Aquiles y Teseos: bosquejos del reformismo borbónico (1701-1759)* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2007).

[598] See Anne Dubet, *Un estadista francés en la España de los borbones. Juan Orry y las primeras reformas de Felipe V (1701-1706)* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2008).

[599] Torres Sánchez, *Constructing a Fiscal Military State in Eighteenth Century Spain*, 215.

that traditional forms of taxation should not be pitted against the epochal push toward the extraction of greater fiscal revenues which states undertook in the course of the early modern age. Instead, the contribution that private financiers, monopolies, and privileged trade made to this process should be acknowledged as a substantial one.

Looking at our case studies, the salt tax represented one of the most ancient customs in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, , as its origins date back to the republican era of Florence. Similar duties were in force also in other cities later subjected to the *Dominante*[600]. The free trade of salt was strictly forbidden and, in the granducal period, a central bureau (*Uffizio del Sale*) administered a rigid monopoly on its production and distribution to the subjected communities[601]. As in the case of tobacco, taxation was incorporated in the price of salt, whose original level was the result of the negotiation between the central power and local communities: accordingly, different prices coexisted on the basis of the bargaining power of the single community at the time of the subjugation[602]; however, the actual price was affected by arbitrary and unilateral increases issued by the central power as fiscal leverage. And, though some communalities enjoyed the regime of the free sale for the salt of the monopoly, in the majority of them eventually prevailed the system of coerced distribution, so that the sale was converted in a proper tax on the whole communality[603]. The operations related to the salt tax oscillated between the supervision of central magistracies and the implementation by private economic actors. In fact, at the central level, the tight relation with the sovereign power was implemented by the requirement for the director of the salt bureau to inform each week the crucial magistracy

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[600] According to an eighteenth-century memoir, a tax on salt was established in Florence as early as 1349, see ASFi, *Segreteria di gabinetto*, reg. 83, ins. 12/2. On the sixteenth-century organisation of the tax, see also Arnaldo d'Addario, "Burocrazia, Economia e Finanze Dello Stato Fiorentino Alla Metà Del Cinquecento," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 121, no. 3 (1963): 362–456.

[601] The most important salt production in the grand-duchy of Tuscany was that from the *moie* (salt sources) of Volterra, whose salt could be red or white. The *Uffizio del Sale* distributed also other four typologies: the salt from the salt pans of Grosseto (white and gray), the marine salt from Portoferraio on the Elba island, the marine salt from Trapani, and finally a 'mixture' of various salts. See Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 398–99.

[602] On the contractual nature of the 'pacts of subjugation' between the capitals of 'regional' Italian states and other pre-existing local powers, see Fasano Guarini, "Centro e Periferia, Accentramento e Particolarismi: Dicotomia o Sostanza Degli Stati in Età Moderna?"

[603] The amount to be paid to the salt bureau was calculated on the basis of a fix quantity of salt for each person and cheese beast. The charge, established at the central level, was then partitioned by the communality among its inhabitants, who had to pick up – and pay – the stipulated amount of salt from the *canova* serving their territory. See ASFi, *Miscellanea di Finanza*, A, reg. 270.

of the *Pratica Segreta* about the purchase and consumption of salt in all the communalities of the Grand Duchy. At the territorial level, the enforcement of the tax was delegated to retailers appointed by the central bureau, though they were not official employees, as they carried on this particular commercial activity with their capitals[604].

As regard Venice, the various *partiti* on salt had many features in common with the Tuscan case[605]. However, the studies of Jean-Claude Hocquet have made clear how much important the control of salt distribution was for the *Serenissima* in order to exert in the late middle age and in the first early modern age its imperial power between the *Terraferma* and its overseas domains, as well as its hegemonic influence in the neighboring states[606]. In fact, from the 13th century onward, Venice succeeded in imposing its monopoly on the salt trade, especially in the Adriatic 'gulf', forcing the coastal production centers to come under its strict control. The salt was imported to Venice and distributed – through tax farmers – to both subjects and neighboring states, with high profits for the state finance[607]. In the 17th and the 18th centuries, Venice remained an important actor of the international salt trade, exploiting the production centers in its overseas domains[608]. Moreover, the *partiti* on salt attracted more and more the interest of the greatest financiers, who facilitated the eventual unification of the

[604] This was the case both of the holders of *botteghe*, in the territories subjected to the free sale of the salt of the monopoly, and of the *canovieri*, in the territories where the coerced distribution of salt was in force. In particular, they received the salt from the *Uffizio del Sale* at lower prices, so that they can profit from the resale. See ASFi, *Carte Gianni*, reg. 7, ins. 85.

[605] In particular, it was the ancient monopoly in Venice, established in the 13th century. After its conquest in the *Terraferma*, the *Serenissima* in many cases maintained the salt price which was in vigour before the annexation, a typical case of negotiated fiscality with the subjected communalities. At the same time, we can count numerous increases in the salt price decreed unilaterally by the Venetian power, who, in 1714, decided to convert the annual salt consumption in a poll tax or capitation. See Luzzatti, "I Dazi, Le Gravezze, i Prestiti e Le Spese Principali Dal Secolo X Alla Fine Della Repubblica," lxx–lxxiii.

[606] See all the publications on this point by Hocquet, but in particular Jean-Claude Hocquet, *Le sel et la fortune de Venise*, 2 vols. (Lille: Université de Lille, 1978).

[607] See, in particular, Jean-Claude Hocquet, "Fiscalité et Pouvoir Colonial: Venise et Le Sel Dalmate Aux XVe et XVIe Siècles," in *Etat et Colonisation Au Moyen Age et à La Renaissance*, ed. M. Balard (Lyon: La Manufacture, 1989), 277–316.

[608] In particular, the salt pans in the Ionian island of Santa Maura (Leukas) became extremely important in the 18th century.

various contracts in a single one, very profitable in terms of revenues for the state and in terms of profits for the tax farmers, though only the most affluent could concur for it[609].

The same existence of fiscal monopolies on salt and tobacco has been usually considered as a signal of backwardness or as the residual of pre-existing forms of patrimonial taxation, coherently with the model of the 'domain state'[610]. Interestingly, such criticism results particularly strong in the historiographical tradition on the 'ancient Italian states'[611], where the fiscal monopolies and, more generally, the *appalti* (tax farming and alienation of revenues) have been described as double ineffective and detrimental: on the one side, farming out the administration of those monopolies meant less revenues for the public finance, as the government gave up a part of them by guaranteeing a commercial profit for the tax farmer; on the other side, the obstacles to the free economic initiatives of individuals would have hampered the economic development[612].

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[609] See Andrea Zannini, "La Finanza Pubblica: Bilanci, Fisco, Moneta e Debito Pubblico," in *L'ultima Fase Della Serenissima*, ed. Piero Del Negro and Preto (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1998), 455.

[610] Since the late 18th century, the widespread system of fiscal monopolies suffered harsh controversy throughout Europe: critics blamed it for private alienation of public revenues and for thwarting the economic initiative of subjects. Such polemic has notably dominated in nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiography, regarding early modern *ius prohibendi* and monopolies as remains of fiscal ineffectiveness and injustice: heavy tax burden for subjects, but limited revenues for public finance. But it has found a remarkable resonance in the modern research on the emergence of the fiscal state, as fiscal monopolies blended sovereign *regalia* and private intrusion in fiscal administration, in contrast to the path towards ordinary taxes collected by state bureaucracy. See again Ormrod and Bonney, "Introduction. Crises, Revolutions, and Self-Sustained Growth: Towards a Conceptual Model of Change in Fiscal History"; Dincecco, "Fiscal Centralization, Limited Government and Public Revenues in Europe, 1650-1913."

[611] For a long time, 'ancient Italian states' has been the prevalent definition in historiography for the early modern polities of the Italian peninsula. See Mario Mirri, "Dalla Storia Dei" Lumi" e Delle" Riforme" Alla Storia Degli" Antichi Stati Italiani"," in *Pompeo Neri. Atti Del Colloquio Di Studi Di Castelfiorentino, 6-7 Maggio 1988* (Castelfiorentino: Società Storica della Valdelsa, 1992), 401–540; Gaetano Greco and Mario Rosa, eds., *Storia Degli Antichi Stati Italiani* (Roma; Bari: Laterza, 1996). To some extent, their connotation as 'ancient' was much inclined to underscore the partial and insufficient achievements in terms of statehood and 'modern' institutions by pre-unitarian states destined to disappear in the 19th century. Some implications can be discovered also in the field of taxation, as the fiscal structures of the early modern Italian states have been analyzed along the sharp opposition of particularism vs. centralisation, or privilege vs. fiscal justice. On the risk of anachronism hidden in such categories, see Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 40–41.

[612] Similar considerations on the monopolies on salt and tobacco in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire can be found in Luigi Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato* (Milano: Banca commerciale italiana, 1965), 29–31; Giorgio Borelli, "Introduzione," in *Il Sistema Fiscale Veneto: Problemi e Aspetti, XV-XVIII Secolo*, ed. Giorgio Borelli, Paola Lanaro, and Francesco Vecchiato (Verona: Libreria Universitaria Editrice, 1982), 7–13.

However, their relevance for state budgets was all but residual. In fact, the 'fiscal constitution' that we can outline from our two case studies allows further considerations about the place that these monopolies held in their respective fiscal systems. These latter were basically oriented to privilege indirect over direct taxation, as it was the case of Great Britain, but in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire patrimonial *gabelle* and fiscal monopolies contributed to a much greater extent to the general amount of revenues from indirect taxation. Take the case of the annual *ristretti* of the revenues paid to the *Depositeria generale*, the most important coffer for the Tuscan sovereign's liquidity, which are seamless available between 1675 and 1688 and then for some sporadic years (1698, 1726, 1731)[613]: the income from fiscal monopolies (salt, tobacco, and iron) ranged between 8,5 and 10% of the total amount of revenues for the *Depositeria*, while also the dynastic domains (administered by the *Scrittoio delle Possessioni*) contributed with around 5% to the total amount of revenues for the *Depositeria*[614].

We can draw more comprehensive information from other sources. To begin with, the '*Stato generale delle finanze del Granducato di Toscana*' made in 1738 by the *depositario generale* Neri da Verrazzano is a very useful document, as it distinguishes the budget of the *Depositeria generale* from an accounting attempt to illustrate all revenues and expenditure of the state[615]. From this general budget, it appears that the *gabella del sale* was the single most important income for the Grand Duchy in a fiscal system dominated by indirect taxation and regalian rights[616], while the sum of revenues

[613] On the *Depositeria generale* and its role in the Tuscan fiscal system, see Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 35–36. The annual elaboration of the *ristretti della Depositeria generale* was an initiative of Francesco Feroni, a Florentine who had made large profits with mercantile traffics in Amsterdam and in 1672, thanks to the trust put in him by the grand duke Cosimo III Medici, was appointed to the delicate role of *Depositario generale*. See Paola Benigni, "Francesco Feroni: Da Mercante Di Schiavi a Burocrate Nella Toscana Di Cosimo III. Alcune Anticipazioni," in *La Toscana Nell'età Di Cosimo III* (Firenze: Edifir, 1993), 165–83.

[614] Data are elaborated from ASFi, *Depositeria generale*, "Parte antica", regg. 1662-1676; *Ibidem,* "Appendice", reg. 2.

[615] The major aim of Neri da Verrazzano redacting this document was to provide the new sovereign, Francis Stephan from the dynasty of Lorraine who obtained the grand ducal title in Tuscany following the extinction of the Medici lineage and the subsequent international agreements, with a clear picture of the financial situation of his new domain. On such document see Luca Mannori, *Lo Stato Del Granduca, 1530-1859: Le Istituzioni Della Toscana Moderna in Un Percorso Di Testi Commentati* (Pisa: Pacini, 2015), 141, where the author defines it as «*il primo bilancio dello stato*».

[616] According to da Verrazzano, the salt tax earned 214.914 *scudi* to the grand ducal coffers in 1738. Only the sum of the revenue from all custom houses and city gates had yielded more. In general, the sum of

from the salt and tobacco monopolies accounted for the 19,5% of the total receipts[617]. The tax farmers who managed in the following decades Tuscan revenues certainly realized the importance of these fiscal sources: salt and tobacco revenues combined for the 36,2% of total income of the Tuscan General Tax Farm between 1746 and 1749, the 39,1% in 1750-1752, the 36,8% in 1753-1758, and the 39,2% in 1763-1768[618].

For the Venetian Empire, we can look at the series of the *Bilanci generali* which starts from 1736 and is considered a reliable source for the *Serenissima*'s budgets in the 18th century[619]. They are organized into four geographical and administrative subdivisions: Venice, *Terraferma*, Dalmatia and Levant, to which the 'Gulf' is added, in the sense of the budget for the naval patrol of the Adriatic Sea. For each subdivision of the Venetian Empire revenues and expenditures are reported. From this source, it appears that, like in the Tuscan case, the ordinary revenues from the *Dominante* were predominantly formed by indirect taxation and that the *partiti* (i.e. fiscal monopolies issued as regalian rights by the sovereign power and farmed out to private financiers)

custom duties, fiscal monopolies and other consumption taxes accounted for 68,5% of state revenues. See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 218, f. 35.

[617] Da Verrazzano aggregates the revenue from various *appalti* under one heading, which amounts to 109.880 *scudi*, but adds in his introduction to the budget that «*eccettuando quello del tabacco, che rende qualche cosa di rilievo, tutti sono di piccolo importanza*», see *Ibidem*, "Introduzione generale del senator Neri da Verrazzano", ff. n. nn. Moreover, we know from other sources that the annual fee for the tobacco monopoly paid by the company Gabrielli, Zanchi & Poletti (1736-1745) amounted to 37.000 *scudi*, see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 568, Florence 06/04/1735. Accordingly, in the face of 1.288.449 *scudi* which entered in the grand ducal coffers in 1738, the two monopolies combined for 19,5% of total Tuscan revenues.

[618] My elaboration on data from the accounting books of the Tuscan general tax farm which are available in ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 383, 565, 704, 705, 1213.

[619] The elaboration of the *bilanci generali* had been a recurrent desire expressed by the Venetian Senate, but only thanks to the work of Girolamo Costantini, bookkeeper of the *Deputati e aggiunti alla Provvision del denaro*, who in 1736 carried out a massive gathering of information from the coffers of the various magistracies of the *Dominante* and from all the provinces of the *Terraferma* and of the *Stato da Mar* in order to draw up a reliable state budget for the Venetian empire as a whole. Doing so, he inaugurated an annual praxis that would continue until the fall of the oligarchic republic. On Costantini, see Fabio Besta, "Appunti Sulla Compilazione Dei Bilanci Generali Di Fatto," in *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia*, vol. 3 (Venice: Premiato Stabilimento Grafico Visentini, 1903), vii–xcv. These sources are conserved in the archive of the *Deputati* until the year 1782, while those of the following years have been lost. It is also possible to consult their edited version in *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia. Bilanci Dal 1736 al 1755*, vol. III (Venice: Premiato Stabilimento Grafico Visentini, 1903); Angelo Ventura, *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia. Bilanci Dal 1756 al 1783*, vol. IV (Padova: Tipografia antoniana, 1972).

constituted a proper pillar of public finance[620]. In this regard, salt and tobacco monopolies took the lion's share: accounting from more than four-fifths of the income from the *partiti*, they secured between the 21,9% and the 29,5% of the ordinary revenues from Venice for the state coffers, even though the percentage drops to an average of 15,2% if we consider the revenues from all administrative subdivisions of the Venetian Empire. However, the *Bilanci* also stress the structural distortions of imperial finance in the *Stato da Mar*: expenditures in the provinces of *Levante* and Dalmatia were always higher than revenues, but at a closer look, though in the *Bilanci generali* the annuities from the tobacco monopolies on salt and tobacco are represented among the revenues of the *Dominante*, they earned revenues for state coffers from both the *Stato da Terra* and the *Stato da Mar*, as their consumption was taxed throughout the Venetian Empire. The center of the empire drained resources from its subject territories on the other side of the Adriatic Sea and the Ionian Islands, although it then reinvested in those lands in military defense expenses and maritime armament[621].

In addition to the relevance of the revenues from fiscal monopolies, we must consider that they ensured a certain dynamism and functionality in relation to new financial needs. We must emphasize the connection between the soaring military expenditure in the central decades of the 17th century and the growing urge to increase tax revenues to support the unprecedented heights reached by the public debt. Despite its policy of neutrality, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was forced to shell out huge sums to help finance the Spanish armies during the Thirty Years' War[622]. The Tuscan coffers came under similar pressure between the outbreak of the Nine Years' War (1688-1697) and the end of the War of the Quadruple Alliance (1718-1720), this time in favor of the Habsburg Empire's army of Italy[623], and, following the Lorraine succession in Florence, the

[620] Between 1736 and 1783 indirect taxation always covered more than 65% of the total revenues from Venice, with peaks in excess of 70%. In turn, in the same period, the *partiti* alone accounted between the 27,2% and the 34,8%. But also the composition of revenues from the Venetian mainland, Dalmatia and Levant follows a similar pattern.

[621] On this dynamic, see also Luciano Pezzolo, *Una finanza d'ancien régime: la Repubblica veneta tra 15. e 18. secolo* (Napoli [etc.]: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 2006), 31–36.

[622] See again Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 120.

[623] Under the grand duke Cosimo III, Tuscan coffers had to miss out 1.656.019 *scudi* which fled to Vienna as war contributions, see Giuseppe Pansini, "Per Una Storia Del Debito Pubblico e Della Fiscalità al Tempo Di Cosimo III Dei Medici," in *La Toscana Nell'età Di Cosimo III. Atti Del Convegno Pisa - San Domenico Di Fiesole, 4-5 Giugno 1990*, ed. Franco Angiolini, Vieri Becagli, and Marcello Verga (Firenze: Edifir, 1993), 295–317.

financial contribution to Vienna increased further during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763)[624]. The required liquidity was largely obtained through public credit managed by the various *Monti* – i.e. institutions for the collection of loans from private subjects and the payment of the interests[625]. Similarly, in the Venetian case, the percentage of revenue allocated to debt servicing exploded in the mid-17th century with the outbreak of the Cretan War (1645-1669), subsequently experiencing a progressive increase in the ratio of debt to annual ordinary income[626].

From our angle, it is interesting to observe the contribution of the salt and tobacco monopolies to war finance and the growing indebtedness of the Tuscan and Venetian governments. In the midst of the wars at the turn of the 18th century against the Ottoman empire, the Venetian authorities repeatedly identified the increase in prices of the tobacco sold by the *partitanti generali* as a fundamental lever to increase the monopoly yield[627]. On the Tuscan front, during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), twice in the space of few years, in 1711 and 1715, the government resorted to increases in the price of salt of one *quattrino* per pound to finance the erection of two *Monti redimibili*, whose

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[624] The outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession posed an existential threat to the potential Habsburg heritage to the imperial title, so the new grand duke Francis Stephan of Lorraine and his wife, Maria Theresa of Austria, daughter of Charles VI, summoned all possible resources to finance the war. On the consequences for Tuscan finance and on the direct involvement of the grand duchy of Tuscany in the Seven Years' War, see Alessandra Contini, *La reggenza lorenese tra Firenze e Vienna: logiche dinastiche, uomini e governo, 1737-1766* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2002), 250–55.

[625] See Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 9–11.

[626] According to Luciano Pezzolo, during the Cretan War, Venetian public debt experienced an intense upsurge, increasing sixfold between 1641 and 1679. And while the ratio of debt to ordinary revenues was as low as 2,8 in 1641, it rose up to 8,8 in 1670 and to 11 in the late 1710s during the Second Morean War against the Ottoman empire for the control of the Peloponnesian peninsula. See Pezzolo, *Il fisco dei veneziani*, 213–14. It is also to note that the following Venetian policy of the 'armed neutrality' did not stop the impact of major continental wars on the budget of the *Serenissima*, see Giovanni Scarabello, "Il Settecento," in *La Repubblica Di Venezia Nell'età Moderna: Dal 1517 Alla Fine Della Repubblica*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi, Michael Knapton, and Giovanni Scarabello (Torino: Utet, 1992), 597 et seq.

[627] The *Inquisitore sopra i dazi* informed in 1720 the Senate about the freedom of the *partitanti generali* to increase tobacco prices: since they were not subject to any limitation on selling prices, they increased them over time in the second half of the 17th century and in the first decades of the 18th century, thus allowing an appreciated increase in revenue for the state coffers, «*a segno che se nell'anno 1676 il tabacco in foglia si vendeva a soldi 4 alla libbra peso sottile, in polvere 6, Brasil in corda 20; ora, nel corrente partito, l'infimo Prezzo della foglia al partito è soldi 24, polvere 30, corda 50, ed i prezzi di tabacchi odorosi e sopraffini sono, come è a tutti noto, assai maggiori*», ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 1561, Venice 16/09/1720.

amount was respectively of 500.000 and 302.000 *scudi*[628]. A few decades later, the aggregation of the monopolies on salt and tobacco to the Tuscan General Tax Farm proved decisive in producing a breakthrough in the flow of revenue from the contractors into the state coffers to finance the new public debt accumulated in the War of Austrian Succession[629].

But the nexus between fiscal monopolies and public debt was structural: on the one hand, the size and regularity of these revenues allowed them to be allocated for a given period to short-term lenders[630]; on the other hand, they were also particularly useful in long-term debt servicing and restructuring. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the revenues of the *Uffizio del Sale* were progressively assigned to the *Monte del Sale*, the institution that managed the largest share of the Tuscan public debt, and, according to Waquet's calculations, out of 440.000 *scudi* dislocated for debt servicing in 1738, salt and tobacco taxes represented the first and the third largest items respectively[631]. Likewise, the earnings from the Venetian salt and tobacco monopolies were meant to finance various

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[628] See ASFi, *Miscellanea di Finanze*, A, reg. 318. According to Luigi Luzzatti, recourse to raising the price of monopoly salt was a customary practice in cases of financial need in Venice as well, see Luzzatti, "I Dazi, Le Gravezze, i Prestiti e Le Spese Principali Dal Secolo X Alla Fine Della Repubblica," LXXII–LXIII.

[629] Before the monopolies on salt and tobacco were aggregated to the general tax farm in 1745, Emmanuel Richecourt, the head of the Lorraine regency in Tuscany, did not conceal from the sovereign in his dispatches sent to Vienna «*l'incertitude où nous sommes de la somme fixée sur le canon de la ferme*», ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 19, f. 79, Emmanuel Richecourt to the grand duke, Florence 29/02/1744. For the recovery of the financial fortunes of the Lombart company (which had leased the Tuscan general tax farm since 1740) after 1745, see Jean-Claude Waquet, "La Ferme de Lombart (1741-1749). Pertes et Profits d'une Compagnie Française En Toscane," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 25, no. 4 (1978): 513–29.

[630] For example, in 1731 the Venetian Senate authorized negotiations for obtaining loans to meet the expected extraordinary expenditure of the following year, since in the event of a breach of peace with the Ottoman empire, which seemed imminent, a massive mobilization of the military navy would have been necessary. According to the French consul in Venice, M. Le Blond, a mission to Genoa was entrusted to «*un Juif connu et accredité dans ce pays là, pour y trouver un million de Ducati*». The conditions set by the Genoese financial market were deemed too onerous by the Senate, which eventually decided to borrow «*cette somme de la Confrérie de S. Rocco, qui est fort riche, à la quelle le Public assigne 40.000 Ducati par ans sur la Ferme du Tabac, ce qui est precisement l'intérêt du dit million à raison de 4 pour cent, qui lui seront contribués de 6 en 6 mois Juif connu et accredité dans ce pays là, pour y trouver un million de Ducati*», see ANP, *A.E.*, B^1, 1168, letter of Le Blond to the Secretary of the Navy, Venice 21/071731.

[631] In the 18th century, the *Monte del Sale* was the youngest institution for debt servicing in Florence, since it managed debts accumulated no earlier than 1625, but it had become the largest with 5.083.600 (39%) out of 12.956.817 *scudi* of the total nominal debt issued by the grand duchy of Tuscany. In regard to the sources of revenue to pay debt interests, it is remarkable that 140.441 (32%) out of about 440.000 *scudi* came from the salt and tobacco monopolies in 1738. See Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 376.

Depositi which paid interests (the *pro'*) to the state's creditors[632]: in particular, tobacco revenues were paid to the cashier of the magistracy of the *Savi alla Mercanzia*, but, among the extraordinary provisions of the period 1735-1755 reported in the Venetian *Bilanci generali*, we note that the *Conservator del Deposito*, who at the time managed the *pro'* payment for the important *Deposito novissimo al 3,5%* frequently received advances and loans over the tobacco monopoly[633]; in addition from 1775 onwards, the proceeds of the latter were paid directly to the *Provveditore agli ori e argenti*, a magistracy «*destinata al pagamento dei pro' sopra capitali tutti a pubblico debito e per affrancare col sopravanzo annualmente una porzione dei capitali stessi*»[634].

In the final analysis, we can say that the *ius prohibendi* on salt and tobacco played an important role in the process of fiscal tightening of our case study during the early modern age. Not only did they allow for a net increase in revenue, but their characteristics well suited them to intervene in the event of a surge in expenditure, as regularly occurred with war, and to finance the public debt, one of the most dynamic and expanding sectors of public finance between the 17th and the 18th century[635]

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[632] On the Venetian public debt and the various *Depositi* issued by the authorities in order to collect loans and pay interests, see Luzzatti, "I Dazi, Le Gravezze, i Prestiti e Le Spese Principali Dal Secolo X Alla Fine Della Repubblica," CXCII–CC.

[633] See *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia. Bilanci Dal 1736 al 1755*, III:261 et seq.

[634] BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV*, *Cod. CCCC LXXVIII (=851)*, "Rendite e spese pubbliche, vol. I", f. 42, 22/04/1775.

[635] The crucial importance for early modern states of achieving better performance in public debt management has been progressively acknowledged in historiography, following the seminal study on the English case of Peter Dickson, see Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England*. Conversely, in the Italian historiography the explosion of public debt in the early modern states has been considered a serious ballast preventing economic and fiscal reforms, see for example Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 9–17. However, more recent studies have relativised the phenomenon: Luciano Pezzolo, describing the ratio between ordinary revenues and public debt in the Venetian case, has argued that a ratio of 10-12 : 1 was quire common among the major European powers of the time, like France, Great Britain and the United provinces of the Netherland, see Pezzolo, *Il fisco dei veneziani*, 214.

2. 'Monopolizing the vice': the introduction of the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire

How can we explain such a significant importance for the tobacco monopolies in the early modern fiscal systems? And what can we retain from a comparison with the significant exceptions from the prevalent model of the monopoly? In fact, the United Provinces of Netherlands and England stand out from the path of the monopoly farmed out to entrepreneurs by maintaining customs duties on imports and excise on domestic consumption as the primary sources of taxation on the sector[636]. The Anglo-Dutch divergence is usually explained in the light of their commercial supremacy in the Atlantic tobacco trade: English and then Scottish merchants made huge profits by marketing American tobacco in north-western and central Europe, benefitting also from the drawback policy for tobacco re-export, while Amsterdam became the most important marketplace for tobacco trade at the international level[637]. So, was the tobacco monopoly just a second-best solution for the minor players in the global tobacco trade? Or did it represent a concrete resource according to the circumstances?

To begin with, for a better comprehension of the situation on the ground,it is useful to clarify how tobacco monopolies were farmed out in our two case studies. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the tobacco monopoly took the form of a contract between the sovereign himself and the representatives of the company which were granted the privilege. Merchants and financiers petitioned the government claiming better conditions for their business, but the definition of the final agreement found its home primarily in the secret deals that were signed in parallel with the official monopoly chapters[638]. In Venice, by contrast, the '*esazione per affitto*'[639] was carried out following a '*pubblico*

[636] See Jacob M. Price, "The Economic Growth of the Chesapeake and the European Market, 1697-1775," *Journal of Economic History* 24, no. 4 (1964): 496–511; De Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, 324–26.

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[638] See, for example, the contract and the secret deals signed in 1645 by the Grand Duke Ferdinando II and the Jewish company which was granted the privilege of the first Tuscan tobacco monopoly, in ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, n. 843, ff. n. nn.

[639] The alternative to the '*esazione per affitto*' (tax farming) was tax collection '*per conto pubblico*' by officials paid by the state. Almost always *dazi* (custom duties and taxes on consumption) and the *partiti* (fiscal monopolies) deemed more profitable were leased, while the *gravezze* (taxes on income) were collected '*per conto pubblico*'. See Angelo Ventura, *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia. Bilanci Dal 1756 al 1783*, vol. IV (Padova: Tipografia antoniana, 1972), xv–xvii.

incanto', an auction with the intervention of a guard holding a mace or scepter, a symbol of imperial authority similar to the staff once carried by the Roman lictors. The term '*piego della mazza*' referred to the individual who acted as a guarantor for the commitments made by the person entering the auction. Eventually the *partito* was awarded to the private individual or group of private individuals who offered the best terms, generally by bidding a higher sum for the full amount of the tax. The adjudication of the tobacco monopoly in Venice was regulated by this public auction, as the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* were used to «*portarsi al pubblico incanto*» and receive offers by intermediaries of financiers and merchants competing for the monopolistic rights[640].

Moreover, we can take some insights from the *bandi* on the tobacco monopoly issued in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire in order to make all the subjects aware of the privileges granted to the contractors and the prohibitions that ensued. First and foremost, the establishment of the monopoly prohibited the free trade of tobacco, both retail and wholesale, in the domestic market[641]. Only the *appaltatore* or *partitante* (the tax farmer) could legally import, produce and sell tobacco products[642]: proper consortia of financiers and economic actors, who had obtained the *ius prohibendi* offering to the sovereign coffers more money than their competitors, took over the management of the 'tobacco farm', both an economic enterprise and a fiscal resource, for the time of their contract[643]. They enjoyed a full-fledged monopolistic regime in which the entire tobacco sector, from imports to retailing, passing through the manufacturing process to convert raw leaves into finished products, was in the hands of a privileged company and taxation was basically incorporated in the price paid by consumers. On the

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[640] See, for example, the process that eventually led to the adjudication of the tobacco monopoly to Giacomo del Pino in 1682, when the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* were obliged to resort to the public auction several times until a lucrative offer could be accepted. See ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, 'Riposte', reg. 161, ff. 135-137, Venice 03/09/1682.

[641] As we can read from the first article of the *capitoli* approved by the Venetian senate on the 5th March 1667, immediately after the award of the tobacco farm, «*ogn'uno, indifferentemente su chi esser si voglia, che si ritrova in questa Città e Dogado haver Tabacco intiero e pesto d'ogni sorte fuori di Fontico debba in termine de' giorni 15 dopo la pubblicazione haverlo portato in esso fontico a San Gregorio sotto pena della perdita del Tabacco, di ducati 5 per libbra, e altre pene ad arbitrio dell'Ecc.mi Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, a cui per legge resta raccomandato l'affare*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, 05/03/1667.

[642] These names derived from the ways the tobacco farm was called in Florence (*appalto*) and Venice (*partito*). The Venetian general tobacco farmers were sometimes also called *dacieri*.

[643] In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the tobacco farm was usually leased for 9 years, whereas in Venice contracts lasted 5 years until 1762.

contrary, other economic actors owning imported tobaccos were obliged to store their cargoes in public warehouses explicitly identified for the purpose: merchants were free to negotiate them, but just for being re-exported abroad, otherwise only the tax farmer was entitled to buy them[644].

So, net of the administrative and productive costs and of the annual rent to be paid to the sovereign coffers, private subjects were legitimated to earn profits from the administration of fiscal revenues. At the same time, the tax farmers had precise obligations to be fulfilled: in particular, they were required to «*mantener sempre tutti gli Stati abbondanti di Tabacco buono e mercantile, dar pesi, e misure giuste*»[645], and to observe the maximum prices set by decree, on penalty of forfeiture of the contract. Moreover, their activities were put under the authority of state magistracies – in Venice the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* soon succeeded the *Deputati alla Provvision del denaro pubblico* in that competence[646]; in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany it was appointed to the *Magistrato del Sale*[647] – responsible for supervising the correct functioning of the

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[644] The *capitoli* for the first tobacco monopoly in the grand-duchy of Tuscany state: «*il tabacco che venga di fuori delli Stati di S.A. per mare o per terra, non si potrà per uso de' medesimi stati vendere ad altri che a' detti appaltatori, con quali mentre chi lo conduce per mare non potesse non convenire del Prezzo potrà liberamente venderlo ad altri per fuori dalli Stati solamente, o estrarlo per suo conto, et nella città di Livorno non si potrà tenerlo se non nella Dogana, et non altrove, et chi ne conducesse per terra, anco per passeggio, in altri stati dovrà alle solite dogane pigliar le bullette et altri riscontri, perché si resti in sicuro che non si venda per lo stato e dopo l'averlo estratto dovrà portarne e mandarne le giustificazioni ai medesimi appaltatori in buona forma*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, "Capitoli per l'appalto del tabacco per tutti i felicissimi stati del Serenissimo gran duca tanto di Firenze che Siena", f. 845r. In Venice, all the imported tobacco was supposed to be stored in the «*magazzino nuovo sopra il Canale Grande al traghetto di S. Tomà*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 171, Pregadi 13/02/1655.

[645] I quote from the Tuscan *bando* of 11th May 1645, published in Lorenzo Cantini, *Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini socio di varie accademie* (Firenze: nella Stamp. Albizziniana da S. Maria in Campo, 1800), vol. XVII, 205.

[646] The decree of the Venetian Senate, dissolving the *Deputati alla Provvisione del denaro pubblico*, states: «*e perché l'affare del Tabacco con tutto quello potesse dal medesimo dipendere fu con particolare decreto appoggiato ad esso Magistrato, conoscendosi necessario raccomandarlo ad altro (...), sia il medesimo negotio nella forma e con l'autorità che tenevano essi Deputati demandato a quello de' V Savi alla Mercanzia*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, Pregadi 15/04/1662.

[647] The granducal *bando* of 11th May 1645 states that «*protettori e conservatori dell'appalto, e cognitori, e giudici di tutte le trasgressioni e cause e diferenze da quello dipendenti sarà nella città e dominio fiorentino il Magistrato del Sale, et inoltre in ciascuna città, terra, castello e luogo degli stati di S.A.S. l'officiale e giudice supremo che in quello risieda*», see *Ibidem*. In the Venetian case, the Senate established that «*sia assegnato per Giudice del presente negozio del Tabacco il Magistrato de' V Savi, qual abbia autorità et incombenza particolare di far eseguire in tutte le sue parti li predetti presenti capitoli*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, 05/04/1667.

monopoly and with full judicial jurisdiction on the matter regardless of the social status or the community of belonging of the plaintiff and the defendant[648]. However, the supervision of these magistracies were certainly not comparable to the tight control exercised over the salt monopoly and its distribution: the privileged companies that imported, processed, and distributed tobacco had much more leeway than the salt *canovieri*[649].

A relevant difference between the Tuscan and Venetian tobacco monopolies was about space. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the tobacco monopoly was established over «*tutti i felicissimi stati di S.A.S.*» since its introduction in 1645[650]. The imposition had to be universal, above any territorial privilege or exemption, including both the '*Stato nuovo*' of Siena and the '*Stato vecchio*' of Florence even though at the time the two territories maintained distinct magistracies[651]. By contrast, the Venetian authorities had to deal with the complexity of their imperial domains, especially with the varieties of people and local institutions in the *Stato da Mar*. Accordingly, the tobacco monopoly firstly referred to «*la vendita del medesimo tabacco in questa città e dogado*»[652] to which Istria and the *Terraferma* were soon added[653]. With regard to the Venetian Dalmatia and the Ionian islands, the imperial finance implemented an opposite strategy: the goal to increase the opportunities for collecting revenues from tobacco brought to the subscription of different contracts with imperial subjects in the different provinces of the *Stato da Mar*[654].

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[648] Significantly, the Tuscan *bando* of 1st August 1690 states that the litigation related to the tobacco farm had to be issued «*davanti al Magistrato del Sale della Città di Firenze privativamente a tutti gli altri Fori e Tribunali di tutti gli Stati felicissimi di S.A.S. ancorché fossero tra Ebrei ed Ebrei, nonostante l'autorità, privilegio, balìa o preeminenza di qualunque altro Magistrato*», see Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini ...*, vol XX, 126.

[649] On the rigid control of the salt bureau on the *canovieri* in the early modern Grand Duchy of Tuscany, see also Elena Fasano Guarini, "Camerlenghi Ed Esazione Locale Delle Imposte Nel Granducato Di Toscana Del'500-'600," *Publications de l'École Française de Rome* 46, no. 1 (1980): 29–49.

[650] See the *bando* in Lorenzo Cantini, *Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini socio di varie accademie* (Firenze: nella Stamp. Albizziniana da S. Maria in Campo, 1800), XVII, 203.

[651] See Jean-Claude Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis: essai sur le système des finances et la stabilité des institutions dans les anciens états italiens* (Rome: École Française de Rome. Palais Farnèse, 1990), 235–36.

[652] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, 'Tabacco', reg. 169, Venice 07/05/1666.

[653] *Ibidem*, Venice 01/12/1666.

[654] See the different contracts signed in the 1660s in *Ibidem*, 24/04/1664, 20/04/1666, 21/07/1666, 25/06/1667, 27/04/1669.

A deeper examination of the processes that brought to the establishment of the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian empire results useful to understand why mercantile networks and fiscal institutions ended up to elaborate this system. Actually, the tobacco monopolies did not come out of nowhere. As I said in the first chapter, the first steps of tobacco's commodification in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire were marked by commercial and industrial monopoly licenses (*privative*) granted by the governments to subjects involved in long-distance trade. To some extent, the establishment of a fiscal monopoly on the entire sector – from tobacco importation to the processing of finished goods for consumers – emerged from that pattern based on the convergence of interests and negotiation between sovereign powers and economic actors.

Moreover, we have seen that mercantile expertise and long-distance connections were extremely relevant for the elaboration of a concrete proposal for the tobacco monopoly, but this latter did not come out of the blue for the granducal officials. In fact, sources suggest that the elaboration of the *capitoli* for the first contract of the tobacco monopoly had been the outcome of a longer discussion between the Livorno's mercantile group and the senator Niccolò Albizzi, commissioned by the Grand Duke to follow the affair and to continuously report on it[655]. Then, the draft of the monopoly was scrutinized by a commission of various agents and officials involved in fiscal, commercial and legal aspects of the granducal administration[656]. And the proposal found unanimous consent:

> «*Tutti hanno concorso che il Negozio sia buono et i capitali da passarsi et da procurarne l'esecuzioni, perché si fa per V.A. una grossa entrata di ducati 10.000 sopra il consumo di cosa la quale non è di aggravio considerabile a' sudditi che con l'appalto venga a rincararsi, perché non è punto necessaria al vivere umano, ma*

[655] The secretary of the *Riformagioni*, Alessandro Vettori, began his information to the grand duke on the proposal signed by the Jewish venture for the tobacco monopoly as it follows: «*Già noto a V.A. questo trattamento dell'Appalto del Tabacco stato maneggiato dal Senatore Niccolò degli Albizzi, con il quale si sono digeriti questi capitoli, dando giornalmente ragguaglio di tutto all'A.V.*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, Alessandro Vettori to the grand duke, Livorno 26/03/1645.

[656] In addition to the secretary of the *Riformagioni*, Alessandro Vettori, the process involved the *depositario generale* Cosimo del Sera, the director of the *Uffizio del Sale* Ottavio Capponi, the senator Niccolò Albizzi, the marquis and court butler Vincenzo Salviati, the *auditore* Stefano Marzi for the *Stato nuovo* of Siena, and Ludovico da Verrazzano and Pandolfo Attavanti, respectively governor of Livorno and director of the custom house of the port city.

solamenta di certa satisfatione e gusto, et ci sono esempi di altri stati dove è parimenti appaltata»[657].

Similar considerations can be found in the Venetian case. Here, the first incentive came from the correspondence of the Venetian diplomatic representative in Naples, the nobleman Paolo Vendramin, who at the beginning of 1651 sent to the Senate a copy of the printed edict that had recently established the tobacco monopoly in the vice-royalty[658]. The government was immediately interested in exploring the opportunity to adopt that kind of solution for the relief of public finance, but the studies and investigations conducted by the magistracy of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* did not at first yield the desired results: they attempted to constitute a '*partito*'– as state-owned fiscal monopolies were called in Venice – on tobacco and to farm it out with the system of the '*incanto*' (public auction to the best bidder), but only a 'secret person' offered «*ducati 2.000 all'anno alla S.tà V. per questa città e Stato tutto da Terra e da Mar, somma veramente insensibile*»[659], so the project was for the moment set aside. However, the circulation of the information on fiscal solutions for tobacco continued along the Venetian diplomatic channels in the following years. In particular, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* and the *Deputati alla Provvision del denaro pubblico* collected other reports from the legations

[657] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 846, Alessandro Vettori to Giovanni Battista Gondi, Livorno 26/03/1645.

[658] ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni, Terra filze*, reg. 564, Pregadi 18/02/1651. Tobacco in Naples had been subject to payment of an import duty since 1627 and a *gabella* since 1637, this latter issued to finance the Lombardy war, see Ludovico Bianchini, *Della storia delle finanze del Regno di Napoli libri sette del cavaliere Lodovico Bianchini*, vol. 2 (Napoli: tipografia Flautina, 1834), 364–65. Production and public sales of tobacco had remained free, but the fiscal yield of the tax remained very low, so in the middle of the 1640s the tax farmer Giovanni Battista Buzzacarino proposed to the government the establishment of the tobacco monopoly for 6.000 *ducati* per year. Consequently, on the 1st May 1647 a first order for the *ius prohibendi* on tobacco was issued, but the outburst of the Naples revolution related to the uprisings led by the figure of Masianello brought to set aside the project. In the following year, the debate on the tobacco monopoly resumed with conflicting opinions, up to the *Prammatica* approved on the 10th December 1650 that eventually introduced the tobacco monopoly in the vice-royalty of Naples. See Urga, "La Privativa Del Tabacco Nel Napoletano Durante Il Viceregno," 552–58.

[659] This is the comment on the previous attempts to establish a tobacco monopoly in Venice provided to the Senate by the *Deputati sopra la Provvisione del denaro pubblico* in 1654, see ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni*, *Terra filze*, reg. 609, 15/09/1654. The amount of 2.000 *ducati* per year was quite the same to the estimate made by the *Savi alla Mercanzia* in 1651 on the yield of the import and export duties on tobacco (2.032 *ducati* for the import duty and 650 for the export one), thus the low offers collected for the tobacco monopoly did not make such a change convenient. See ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni*, *Terra filze*, reg. 654, Savi alla Mercanzia to the Senate, 19/04/1651.

in Florence, Naples, Milan, and Genoa[660]. From the former two, the officials apprehended that the annual rent could be much higher than it had been offered in Venice[661]. The Venetian resident in Milan informed that the tobacco monopoly was implemented there not only in the capital city, but in all the territory of the state[662]. Besides, from Genoa news came that in 1654 the authorities approved the proposal for a monopoly presented by a shopkeeper of the city, where great cargoes of tobacco were used to land from Spain and being freely processed and publicly sold, but the strong opposition of the great merchants who traded with the Iberian peninsula managed to prevent its implementation[663].

The examples from other Italian states revealed to the Venetian government the importance of commercial expertise for a good start of the tobacco monopoly, though also how this latter could be a source of open conflict with merchants accustomed to the free trade of tobacco[664]. Once again, the final tipping point was the result of a negotiation between the fiscal institutions, represented by the magistracies of the Venetian Empire, and the economic actors that proposed the monopoly. The clauses of the contract were approved by the Senate on the basis of a draft elaborated by the *Deputati della Provvisione del denaro pubblico* after they had summoned the proponent, Bartolo Boneri, and had discussed together of the privileges and limits of the new system[665]. In the end,

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[660] Whereas the Tuscan case suggests a direct emulation of the Spanish and Portuguese monopolies, the Venetian officials collected information from the narrower space of the other Italian states. This divergence seems to attest more Iberian connection for the grand-duchy of Tuscany, via Livorno, than it was the case of coeval Venice. However, we should also consider that at the time of the Venetian discussion on the possible introduction of the tobacco monopoly the Senate could count on many examples in the Italian peninsula, whereas in 1645 the Tuscan officials had no Italian comparisons, except for the state of Milan, not by chance a Spanish domain. See Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 66–75.

[661] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, Pregadi 14/08/1654.

[662] ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni, Terra filze*, reg. 609, Milan 26/08/1654. In the state of Milan a tobacco monopoly was established as early as in 1640: the Spanish authorities decided to emulate the solution adopted some years before in the kingdom of Castilla, replacing an older *gabella* which all the apothecaries, grocers, shopkeepers, and wholesale traders who sold tobacco were supposed to pay. Significantly, the new tax was established with the same argument we met in the Tuscan case, the unnecessary nature of tobacco consumption. See Levati, "Risorse Finanziarie e Ordine Pubblico Nello Stato Di Milano," 185–87; Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 66–68.

[663] ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni, Terra filze*, reg. 609, Genoa 29/08/1654. In Genoa, the monopoly was eventually established on processed tobacco in 1656, then extended to raw tobacco leaves in 1659. See Calcagno, "L'«impresa Generale Del Tabacco»," 465.

[664] For the protests against the tobacco monopoly project that came from this environment, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 155, ff. 67r-69v, 08/12/1655.

[665] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 170, Pregadi 05/01/1654 and 13/02/1654.

the proponent could benefit for himself and for his heirs up to 20 years after his death of an income of the 3% calculated over all the revenues which would have entered in public coffers for the tobacco affair[666], but he was also supposed to provide the state with the capitals for purchasing tobacco from importers, so that «*la Signoria Nostra non habbi a capitar ad alcun esborso*»[667]. Though this particular form of fiscal enterprise with private capitals and public administration was not too successful and it was soon replaced by the more common pattern of the public '*incanto*' to award fiscal monopolies '*per affitto*', i.e. to the private administration of the best bidder[668], the Venetian officials eventually endorsed the establishment of the '*partito*' with very similar considerations to those noted in the Tuscan case:

> «*Per gli eccitamenti più volte portateci da Bartolo Boneri, nel proposito del tabacco, risolvemmo avere qualche informazione d'avvantaggio di quello rappresentammo con alter nostre alla S.tà V. Facemmo però scrivere al Residente in Milano ed al Console in Genova, dale risposte dei queli resterà al certo informato dell'utile che ne riceve il Re in quello Stato e quello che hanno potuto avere in Genova. (...) Ora con l'allegata scrittura, pur eccitati dal medesimo Boneri, abbiamo stimato proprio di promuovere affare dal quale si può sperare utile di somme considerabili, quando prenda la piega che il raccordante desidera, (...) perché [il tabacco] è passato in uso così dilettevole che si è reso quasi connaturale a chi ne prende*»[669].

We should also consider the particular political conjuncture in which the tobacco monopolies were issued in our two case studies. Their finances were suffering substantial pressure due to active or indirect involvement in military conflicts. In regard to Venice, the *Serenissima* was in the throes of one of the costliest wars against the Ottoman Empire, which would end with the painful surrender of the island of Crete (1645-1669)[670]. In those years, the Senate was forced to take numerous measures to make money and to face a huge financial commitment: alienation of offices and positions, sale of public buildings,

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666 ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, Pregadi 14/03/1654.

667 ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 170, Pregadi 13/02/1654.

668 On this evolution, see also the memoir on the *partito del tabacco* in ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 165, ff. 467-472, Venice 29/01/1698.

669 ASVe, *Senato*, *Deliberazioni*, *Terra filze*, reg. 609, Venice 15/12/1654.

670 For the military events and the «*grande sforzo finanziario*» for Venice, see Gaetano Cozzi, Michael Knapton, and Giovanni Scarabello, eds., *La Repubblica Di Venezia Nell'età Moderna: Dal 1517 Alla Fine Della Repubblica*, Storia d'Italia (Torino: Utet, 1992), 117–27.

new admissions of families into the patriciate against the payment of conspicuous sums, further charges on the tithe and conversion of the *campatico* (another levy on land) in an ordinary tax[671].

Also the Grand Duchy of Tuscany experienced a period of dramatic financial pressure throughout the Thirty Years War. The Habsburg extorted as much as 1.867.815 *scudi* from Tuscan coffers between 1625 and 1642 to bankroll the Spanish armies under the Medici's alliance with Madrid[672]. Moreover, the direct entry into the War of Castro (1641-1644) – fought in alliance with Venice and the Duke of Modena against the pope Urbano VIII and the expansionist ambitions of his nephews Barberini over Castro, a feudal possession of the Parma's Farnese – worsened the picture[673]. The Tuscan government resorted to relevant loans from patrician financiers and bankers, with strong relations in other Italian marketplaces like Genoa, Milan, and Venice, but also to new taxes to finance the service of the public debt: the establishment of an extraordinary *gravezza universale* in 1642, the imposition of a new tax on the stamped paper in 1646, the weighing of the tax burden in Livorno with new levies on the *sensali* (trade brokers) and some restrictions on the traditional fiscal privileges[674]. We might also note that the effects of the plague of 1629-30 had exacerbated the situation and called for further per capita increase of the fiscal pressure[675]. Not by chance, the adoption of the tobacco monopolies found fertile ground in such a scenario: these events confirm that wars and military expenditures often created crisis and pain in state finance, but they provided also

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671 See Giuseppe Gullino, "Considerazioni Sull'evoluzione Del Sistema Fiscale Veneto Tra Il XVI Ed Il XVIII Secolo," in *Il Sistema Fiscale Veneto: Problemi e Aspetti, XV-XVIII Secolo*, ed. Giorgio Borelli, Paola Lanaro, and Francesco Vecchiato (Verona: Libreria Universitaria Editrice, 1982), 66–68.

672 See Jean-Claude Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis: essai sur le système des finances et la stabilité des institutions dans les anciens états italiens* (Rome: École Française de Rome. Palais Farnèse, 1990), 120.

673 On the War of Castro and its impact on the grand duchy of Tuscany, see Eric Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries, 1527-1800: A History of Florence and the Florentines in the Age of the Grand Dukes* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 191–92; Furio Diaz, *Il Granducato di Toscana: I Medici*, Storia d'Italia (Torino: Utet, 1976), 379–83.

674 See Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 117–22. On the fiscal squeeze on Livorno's *sensali*, which led to the distribution over the members of such profession of no less than 2.000 *scudi* since 1643, see Andrea Addobbati, "Le molte teste dell'Idra : i sensali livornesi nell'età delle riforme," *MEFRIM* 127, no. 1 (2015): 65–90.

675 See Luciano Pezzolo, "Sistema Di Potere e Politica Finanziaria Nella Repubblica Di Venezia (Secoli XV-XVII)," in *Origini Dello Stato. Processi Di Formazione Statale in Italia Tra Medioevo Ed Età Moderna*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini, Anthony Molho, and Pierangelo Schiera (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994), 322–23.

an opportunity to open a creative moment for fiscal innovations, as the time of emergency provided an extra-legitimation to the sovereign powers to establish new taxes or to extend the duration of extraordinary ones.

Another reason for tobacco fiscalization stands out from other kinds of sources: the staggering fall in tobacco prices during the central decades of the 17th century made it a commodity easy to tax, as it could bear the cost of fiscal duties without reaching too high final prices. A few figures might help us understand the magnitude of such a process, both at farm and wholesale level. The downfall began in the mid-17th century in the Atlantic world, particularly in the English plantations on the North American continent. Whereas previous imports of tobacco from Spanish colonies were extremely expensive for England[676], the recorded trend of the farm prices (paid to planters in the colonies) for Chesapeake's tobacco outlines a resounding drop: 1 pound of tobacco passed from 48 pence sterling in 1618 (a sort of «luxury price» that marked the initial boom of tobacco's cultivation in the Chesapeake and lasted until 1624) to an average of 2,3 pence in the 1650s[677]. Despite planters' complaints about low prices, scholars of North America's colonial economy agree that several factors allowed them to make substantial gain in agricultural productivity, so that the costs of production fell almost as rapidly as tobacco

[676] Prices for Spanish tobacco were so expensive for English trade that the Commons petitioned against their imports in 1624, see *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1623-1625* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1859), 249, 19/05/1624.

[677] Russell R. Menard, "A Note on Chesapeake Tobacco Prices, 1618-1660," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 84, no. 4 (1976): 404–8, especially 408. According to the exchange rate that we can find in one of the most important commercial manual published in eighteenth-century Livorno, 1 piece-of-eight was exchanged for 57 pence sterling, see Ricci and Guidotti, *Introduzione alla pratica del commercio: ovvero, Notizie necessarie per l'esercizio della mercatura contenenti un trattato di aritmetica, valutazioni di qualunque sorte di monete, pesi, misure e cambj che sono in uso nelle principali piazze d'Europe coll' aggiunta di un metodo facile per ragguagliare i cambj forastieri con quei di Livorno. Opera utilissima ad ogni negoziante ...* (Livorno: Stamperia di Gio. Paolo Fantechi, e compagni, 1751), 96. This means that 1 pence sterling was worth 2,01 *soldi* of *lira fiorentina*, so we can consider about 4 *soldi* the average price paid to American planters in the 1650s. The following wholesale tobacco prices found in archival sources are converted in *soldi* of *lira fiorentina* in the notes in order to attempt a comparison between them.

prices[678]. Production and exports rose steadily in the 18th century[679], as farm prices continued their decrease in the last part of the 17th century, though stabilizing in the new century at least until 1760s[680]. An even greater cheapness emerges from tobacco harvest prices paid to Ottoman farmers according to consular correspondence: in 1740, the French consul Thomas fixed first tobacco price to 15 *akçe* per *okka*[681], while the Venetian consul

[678] In this respect, the traditional interpretation of tobacco prices' drop in mid-seventeenth century as an outcome of overproduction is considered 'backward', see Russell R. Menard, "Plantation Empire: How Sugar and Tobacco Planters Built Their Industries and Raised an Empire," *Agricultural History*, 2007, 317. Among the factors which explain gains in agricultural productivity, we should consider the system of husbandry developed by Virginian planters, as they learned-by-doing to establish a method of farming by blending European, Native American and African techniques with new methods implemented on the ground, but also the massive import of African slaves, a transition that permitted planters to ignore the conventions that protected English servants from overwork and other forms of abuse. See Lorena S. Walsh, "Summing the Parts: Implications for Estimating Chesapeake Output and Income Subregionally," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (1999): 53–94; John C. Coombs, "The Phases of Conversion: A New Chronology for the Rise of Slavery in Early Virginia," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (2011): 332–60. Also failing costs of transport and commercialisation aided tobacco to become cheaper and found new outlets as a commodity of mass consumption, see Russell R Menard, "The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies, 1617-1730. An Interpretation," *Research in Economic History* 5 (1980): 152.

[679] English tobacco imports from the Chesapeake rose from an annual average 27,6 million pounds in 1701-10 to 43,6 million pounds in 1731-40 and 67,1 million pounds in 1751-60, see Price, *France and the Chesapeake; a History of the French Tobacco Monopoly, 1674-1791, and of Its Relationship to the British and American Tobacco Trades*, v. II, 843-844; Neils Steensgaard, "The Growth and Composition of the Long-Distance Trade of England and the Dutch before 1750," in *The Rise of Merchant Empires–Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 141.

[680] The statistics from the US Bureau of the Census allow to follow the farm price of Chesapeake tobacco for all the colonial period. In particular, prices went down to 1 pence sterling per pound already in the 1670s-1680s, but in the following times we can argue for a remarkable stability of prices when compared with the seventeenth-century trend. However, wartime in the second half of the 18th century (especially during the Seven Years war and the war of American independence) marked conjunctural surges: 1,6 and 2,43 pence sterling per pound respectively in 1760 and 1775. See U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1975), 1198. In order to facilitate further comparison, we can convert colonial farm prices in *soldi* of *lira fiorentina*: the result is 2,11 *soldi* per English pound (450gm), which goes down to 1,59 *soldi* per Tuscan pound (340gm).

[681] See ANP, *A.E.*, B^1, 996, M. Thomas to the Secretary of the navy, Salonika 30/11/1740. Some clarification on Ottoman monetary units and weight measures are here required. *Okka* was the common weight measure for commodities exported from the Ottoman empire towards the states of western Europe: it was worth 1.275gm, so 3,76 Tuscan lb. The *akçe* (*aspro* in Italian) was the smallest silver coin in the Ottoman empire: it was worth 1/120 of *kurus* (known as piaster in the western states), see Sevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). In order to propose a comparison among farm prices in the American British colonies and in the Ottoman empire, I draw again from the exchange rate proposed in the Ricci's and Guidotti's commercial manual: according to the authors, 1 *kurus* was worth 4 *lire fiorentine* in the first half of the 18th century on the Livorno market, see Ricci and Guidotti, *Introduzione alla pratica del commercio*, 185. As a consequence, 1 *akçe* was worth 0,67 *soldi*, so farm prices in Thessaloniki in 1740 can be converted in 4,7 *soldi* of *lira fiorentina* per *okka*

Capriata accounted tobacco prices in the producing places of Ottoman Albania at 20 *akçe* per *okka* in the last part of the century[682].

As the 17th-century steep fall in prices set the conditions for tobacco's adoption as a mass-consumed goods in Atlantic Europe[683], a similar pattern is suggested for the Venetian case. Looking into the details of the proposal submitted by Bartolo Boneri to the government, in the mid-1650s he described the opportunity to buy raw tobacco at the wholesale price of 6 *grossi* per Venetian pound and to sell them to the public at twice the price[684]. Thanks to low farm prices at source, Venetian merchants could acquire tobacco in mid-17th century for still contained wholesale prices, so much so that the authorities – here as elsewhere – could easily charge its consumption with fiscal duties that came to be 100% of the market price[685]. Moreover, looking at the calculations made by Venetian authorities for the *dazio di uscita* on tobacco leaves, in 1682 their value was estimated in

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and in 1,22 *soldi* per Tuscan pound. So, Ottoman farm price, when compared with the American British colonies' one in the first half of the 18th century (estimated in 1,59 *soldi* per Tuscan pound, see above), results even cheaper.

682 «*Devo umiliar a venerata cognizione di VV EE che ai 31 del prossimo scorso agosto gionse in questa via di mare il Pascià di Scuttari, et il giorno susseguente passò in Cavaglia, dove fissò il prezzo de' Tabacchi del presente raccolto a aspri 20 di sua determinata volontà, senza che li venditori ardissero opporvisi, quantunque sperassero venderli a più alterate misure ai soliti acquirenti Bocchesi*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 886, letter of Giuseppe Capriata to the magistrate of *Savi alla Mercanzia*, Durres 20/09/1784. We should also consider as a decisive factor the erosive devaluation of Ottoman *kurus* in the last 40 years of the 18th century, after the stability of the first half of the century. See Nicolas G Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), 83–84.

683 Scholars have stressed the impact of new extra-European groceries on consumer behaviour between the 17th and the 18th century: while in the 1550s the imports of groceries amounted to 8.9% of the total value of imports into England and Wales, that ratio rose to 16.6% in the 1660s and 27.6/ in the1750s, see Carole Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America* (Clarendon Press, 1990), 77. Most interestingly, also the composition of groceries imports changed with time, from the predominance of luxury spices like pepper in the 16th century to the triumph of mass-consumed goods like tobacco, sugar products, and caffeine drinks. See also Jon Stobart, *Sugar and Spice: Grocers and Groceries in Provincial England, 1650-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

684 See ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 609, writing of Bartolo Boneri to the Senate, Venice 14/03/1654. For the value of *grossi*, we should consider that in Venice the more common *lira* (composed by 240 dinars *piccoli*) was flanked by another account currency, the *lira di grossi* (composed by 240 dinars *grossi*). The ratio between *piccoli* and *grossi* was 26:1, so 1 *grosso* was worth 2 *soldi* and 2 dinars, see Edoardo Martinori, *La moneta: vocabolario generale* (Roma: Multigrafica editrice, 1977), 251. Accordingly, wholesale tobacco price in mid-seventeenth century Venice results in 13 *soldi*.

685 For a comparison about fiscal potential derived from tobacco low prices, we know that custom duty on tobacco imported in England in the late 17th century was four times higher than farm prices in the colonial Chesapeake bay, see Robert C. Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Legal and Illegal Trade," *Economic History Review*, 1982, 369.

2 *grossi* per pound[686]. In sum, tobacco wholesale price in Venice had been falling to one third in roughly 25 years and it appeared even lower on Livorno's market in 1665, according to coeval magistrates' calculations for the custom duty of *stallaggio*[687].

Beyond political and economic issues, the intensive resort to tobacco monopolies should be measured in the light of the social premises and consequences of early modern taxation. From this point of view, the tobacco case sheds light on particularly telling dynamics. To begin with, the actual authority of sovereign powers to impose taxation on society was all but granted by the time. Several organizational deficits and local counterpowers determined proper limits that narrowed the space of possibilities, even within the state entities associated with the rise of 'absolutism'[688]. In this regard, monopolies did not imply complicated and uncertain political struggles with estates and local authorities, as it usually came out from the attempts of establishing new taxes on land. By contrast, the dynamics of the tobacco monopoly shifted bargaining to negotiation with economic actors, where concessions and rewards could be more easily weighed in the light of the balance of interests instead of the distribution of fiscal sovereignty between the central power and other social bodies.

Moreover, authorities endorsed in a recurring way a tax on tobacco because it affected a superfluous commodity, the «*consumo di cosa non punto necessaria al vivere umano, ma di mero diletto per non dir vizio*»[689]. Tobacco habits were already called 'vice' by coeval witnesses, so the officials could describe the monopoly as a voluntary tax, since

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[686] The magistrate of *Savi alla mercanzia savi* had been already commissioned in 1677 to review the tariffs paid by the general tax farmer for the extraction of tobacco from the warehouse, as prices were no more in accordance with those of the 1650s. Only in 1682, they informed the Senate that «*avute le più mature informazioni in questa materia, col mezzo anco di giustificazioni ricevute da testimoni circa la qualità e valore de' tabacchi, devenendo alla regolazione delle stime suddette hanno terminato che il Tabacco in foglia, e rodolo debba esser stimato in ragione di grossi due la libbra (...) e quello in polvere in ragione di grossi quattro la libbra*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 161, Venice 08/05/1682. Accordingly, the price is convertible in 4 *soldi* and 2 *denari* of *lira fiorentina*.

[687] Between August 1664 and July 1665, the Tuscan tobacco tax farmed had imported from Livorno 132.258 pounds of raw tobacco, worth 3.565 *scudi* (24.955 *lire*). See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e Tabacco*, reg. 148, letter of Bartolomeo Cavalli to the grand duke, 17/08/1665. We can presume an average wholesale price of 3,77 *soldi* per pound.

[688] See James B Collins, *Fiscal Limits of Absolutism: Direct Taxation in Early Seventeenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

[689] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, f. 847, letter from Alessandro Vettori to Cosimo del Sera, 22/03/1645.

anyone could at any time escape from the levy by renouncing to tobacco consumption[690]. The new consumerism of vice was a crucial point for the legitimation of the new tax, but it also remained a solid argument throughout the entire period under review. Again in 1777, Tuscan officials proposed this fundamental difference between salt and tobacco taxation:

> «*la sola importante differenza che tutti devono necessariamente far uso del sale, e che ognuno è in piena libertà di usare o non usare il tabacco, talmente che nessun suddito ha motivo di dolersi o di credersi aggravato se, volendo per gusto o piacere, o abitudine, far uso del tabacco, gli viene soltanto imposto di provvedere quello che forma un capo delle regalie del suo sovrano, laonde non può reputarsi odiosa questa privativa*»[691]

Taxation on unnecessary consumption had the merit to not increase the price of essential goods, reducing the risk of popular protest and uprising. Whereas the central decades of the 17th century record throughout Europe proper anti-tax revolts, especially against new levies on essential goods for popular everyday life[692], it does not appear that

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[690] The voluntary nature of taxation on tobacco became a proper common place also in the Italian financial literature. Take the case of the following quotation from an influent nineteenth-century treatise on fiscal duties and monopolies: «*tale balzello* [*tassazione sul tabacco*] *è uno dei meno odiosi e dei più giustificati che la scienza fiscal abbia Saputo trovare. Viene infatti dal contribuente pagato volontariamente, non colpisce un genere necessario alla vita, tende anzi a limitare il consumo che, al di là di certe proporzioni varie secondo i temperamenti, diventa indubbiamente nocivo*», Giovanni Cappellari della Colomba, *Le imposte di confine, i monopoli governativi e i dazi di consumo in Italia* (Firenze: Stamperia Reale, 1866), 222.

[691] The point on unnecessary consumption for tobacco taxation remained recurrent in the arguments of fiscal institutions throughout the period under review. ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Giusepe Gavard to the grand duke, Florence 03/06/1777.

[692] Significantly, in some cases these revolts against new taxes on essential commodities like flour, salt, or fruit brought governments to move backwards or to withdraw the measures, but at a certain interval the sovereign power returned to the fray exactly by resorting to the imposition of the tobacco monopoly in the furtherance of the objective of obtaining more revenues. Take the case of the Vizcaya revolt, on the Bay of Biscay, in 1631-1634: the rebellion sparked by the levying of a new salt tax and broadened into a widespread movement; it ended only in 1634, when the duke of Ciudad Real led an armed force into Bilbao in April 1634 and arrested and executed six of the rebel leaders, but at the same time the salt tax was abolished. Only a few months after this major regional rebellion, the Olivares ministry and the crown negotiated with the *Cortes* the safer monopoly on tobacco. See Burg, *A World History of Tax Rebellions*, 198–99. Also the events which predated the establishment of the tobacco monopoly in Naples are very telling. The first discussion on this fiscal solution, on the basis of the Spanish model already implemented in the State of Milan, occurred in 1646-1647, but the project was set aside because of the outburst of the

the creation itself of the tobacco monopolies provoked open and harsh rebellions in any context[693].

Notwithstanding, despite this smooth and safe dimension, the burden of tobacco monopolies complied with a consolidated pattern of early modern age[694], falling disproportionately on the population, enriching a small part of it and hitting harder on its vast majority. To some extent, the tobacco farmers fits in the concept of 'tax repercussion' proposed by Waquet[695]: they were the ones who poured money into the state coffers, but in return they obtained the exclusive right to economically exploit certain resources and productive sectors, potentially drawing on the buyers of their products[696]. From this point

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revolutionary strife related to the popular riots and uprisings headed by the figure of the fisherman Masianello. These latter had been provoked by the exacerbation of the *gabella* on salt and by the establishment of a new consumption tax on fruit, but the political conflict ended up to embrace broader questions, from the powers of noble landowners to the forms of government, passing through the international positioning of Naples in the Franco-Spanish conflict. However, after Madrid had succeeded in reasserting its full authority, the recent experience of the *gabelle* as the main target of such a frightening uprising brought the local governing bodies to turn toward the tobacco monopoly to increase revenues as a smoother solution. See Urga, "La Privativa Del Tabacco Nel Napoletano Durante Il Viceregno"; Rosario Villari, *La rivolta antispagnola a Napoli: le origini (1585-1647)* (Bari: Laterza, 1976); Aurelio Musi, *La rivolta di Masaniello nella scena politica barocca* (Napoli: Guida Editori, 1989).

693 However, at a closer look, the tobacco monopoly's reception was all but peaceful in early modern societies. Undoubtedly, the hostility of taxpayers did not take the form of great political upheavals that seriously frightened the same foundations of central authority, as it had been the case in anti-tax revolts that in the mid-seventeenth century ended up in proper military confrontations. The Croquants (1636-1637) and the Va-nu-pieds (1639-1643) revolts are prominent examples of this kind: they both occurred in France during the Thirty Years war, after the Crown had attempted to intervene in the fiscal field with new taxes and measures of centralisation, and they both erupted in armed clashes between the insurgents and royal forces. See Yves-Marie Bercé, *Croquants et nu-pieds: les soulèvements paysans en France du XVIe au XIXe siècle*, Collection Archives (Paris: Gallimard, 1974); Anthony Levi, *Cardinal Richelieu and the Making of France* (London: Carroll & Graf, 2000). Still, also in the long-eighteenth century resistance and rebellion result very widespread if we only consider the large deployment of fraud, contraband, and illegal transactions as proper social practices to context taxes and evade the monopoly itself. See Jean Nicolas, *La rébellion française: mouvements populaires et conscience sociale (1661-1789)*, L'univers historique (Paris: Seuil, Éditions du Seuil, 2002), 57–176; Domenico Cecere, *Le Armi Del Popolo: Conflitti Politici e Strategie Di Resistenza Nella Calabria Del Settecento* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2013), 58–93.

694 See again Guido Alfani and Matteo Di Tullio, *The Lion's Share Inequality and the Rise of the Fiscal State in Preindustrial Europe* (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

695 Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 377.

696 For a comparison with the English taxation of tobacco, Robert Nash has demonstrated that the 1685 strong increase in customs duties for importing tobacco in England was entirely passed on to consumers by the merchant importers: while the duty more than doubled from 1. 6d to 1. 15d per pound, the wholesale price of tobacco, which had averaged 5. ½d per pound in 1683 and 1684, increased to 8. ¼d in the next two years. See Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 369.

of view, the taxation of tobacco contributed to a redistribution of resources from the bottom up, from consumers (but more strongly from the weaker sections of the population) towards tax farmers, but also, as we have seen, towards creditors and contractors of the state (largely belonging to the privileged and economically stronger classes)[697].

3. Money up in smoke: a glaze on the growing fiscal revenues from tobacco

To what extent did tobacco taxation contribute to satisfying the revenue-hungry states? It is worth examining the fiscal performance of the state-owned tobacco monopolies during the chronological arch covered by this research, in order to also understand their place in the social life of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. The convenience of tobacco taxation had been deeply scrutinized by both economic operators and institutional officials, but their calculations and hopes had to be put to the proof of facts. Did the new tax compromise the tobacco market and, consequently, fiscal revenues? Such a consequence was not unusual and it appears to have been the case for oil in Venice: according to Ivo Mattozzi[698], after several increases of the duty, olive oil consumption decreased from 4.836 *miara* in 1649 to 3.956 *miara* in 1689-1691. And, more generally, such an argument has long been hegemonic in studies on the

[697] Talking about the Tuscan public debt, Waquet has suggested that the interests of the public debt were paid first and foremost to creditors who belonged to the most affluent families of the Florentine patriciate and that the fiscal burden hit stronger over «*les moins pauvre des pauvres*», so sharecroppers, artisans and shopkeepers, rather than day-laborers, assistants and servants. The argument is based on the consideration that «*les droits sur le pain fin, le tabac et le fer, touts produits qui n'étaient pas, en principe, susceptibles d'etra consommés en grande quantité par la 'feccia del popolo'*», *Ibidem*, 388. However, the spread of tobacco in all social classes makes me more cautious about the actual contribution of the weakest part of the population to the fiscal tightening of the early modern times.

[698] See Ivo Mattozzi, "Crisi, stagnazione e mutamento nello stato veneziano sei-settecentesco: il caso del commercio e della produzione olearia," *Studi veneziani*, 199-276, 4 (1980): 250. However, Salvatore Ciriacono and Luciano Pezzolo have suggested to look at this trend also in the light of the loss of ground in manufacturing and redistribution compared to the English rise in the seventeenth-century Mediterranean sea, as oil consumption was also an indicator of important Venetian manufactures, like those for the production of soap and woollen cloths. In compensation, the internal redistribution of olive oil in the Venetian empire managed to progressively fall back on new production sites in the *Stato da Mar*. See Salvatore Ciriacono, *Olio ed ebrei nella Repubblica veneta del Settecento*, Miscellanea di studi e memorie (Venezia: Deputazione di Storia Patria, 1975), 16–21; Luciano Pezzolo, *Il fisco dei veneziani : finanza pubblica ed economia tra 15. e 17. secolo*, Nordest. Nuova serie, 2003, 165–66.

forms of taxation in the early modern age[699]. On the contrary, the case of tobacco took quite the opposite path, as there is evidence that the fiscal yield went up significantly between the second half of the 17th and the 18th centuries.

Until the monopoly remained farmed out to privileged contractors, the income for public finance basically lied in the canon paid by the tax farmer to the state in turn of the exclusive right to import, process, and sell tobacco products in the domestic market. Accordingly, the annual amount of money paid to the sovereign treasury by the private companies who enjoyed the tobacco monopoly is a good tool to appreciate the fiscal performance. The data show the alternation of positive and negative conjunctures, with consequent setbacks and accelerations for the magnitude of returns, but also the long-term trend towards significantly increased monopoly rents (see Table 3.1 and 3.2[700]).

Table 3.1 – Tobacco contractors and rent (*lire toscane*) in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany (1645-1799)

Years	Contractors	Rent
1645-1654	David and Jacob d'Israel de Tunis, Abram Vais Pegna, Lazzaro Vigevano and David Falcone	70.000
1654-1663	Leonardo Signorini, Bernardo Guasconi and Francesco Dati	105.000
1663-1672	Emanuel and Salomone brothers Levi	140.000
1672-1681	Emanuel and Salvatore Levi	210.000
1681-1690	Emanuel and Salomone Levi	No information
1690-1699	Salomone di Vita Levi	245.000
1699-1708	Abramo, Alessandro and Angelo sons of Emanuel di Salomon Vita Galligo	245.000
1708-1717	Samuel di Emanuel Levi	245.000

[699] For a classic and very influential example, see the opposition between, on the one side, the negative view of the traditional fiscal and industrial monopolies that have spread in the 17th century (as a result, for the author, of a fragmented and ineffectual fiscal policy carried out by the last members of the Medici's dynasty) and, on the other side, the laudatory comments on the opposite policy adopted by in the following century by Peter Leopold of Habsburg-Lorraine in Luigi Dal Pane, "Le Riforme Economiche e Finanziarie Di Pietro Leopoldo," *Rassegna Storica Toscana* 2 (1956): 229–46.

[700] Similar lists have been published by Stefano Levati in Stefano Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna: secoli 17.-19* (Roma: Viella, 2017), 97–99. For the Venetian tobacco monopoly, see also Rita Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia: il partito del tabacco e lo Stabilimento Manfrin nel Settecento* (Venezia: La Musa Talìa editrice, 2013), 24–25.However, the data tracked during my research turn out to be slightly different on several occasions: this result depends on the sources consulted, in fact the two scholars have reproduced information mainly from memoirs and retrospective account tables, while I also used information from the balance sheets of tobacco farms, which do not always coincide with the data reported by the fiscal institutions and which are irreplaceable for understanding the development of the annuity during periods of direct administration.

1717-1726	Samuel Levi and nephews Salomone, Dattilo and Isacco di Vita Levi	262.500
1726-1727	Filippo and Antonio Suardi (rescinded)	280.000
1727-1736	Emanuel Cased and Vitale Vitali (then Domenico Andrea Gavi)	245.000
1736-1745	Pier Antonio Gabrielli, Alberto and Giuseppe Zanchi, Girolamo Poletti	259.000
1745-1749	General Tax Farm – Lombart company	243.034
1750-1753	General Tax Farm – Masson company	243.034
1754-1762	General Tax Farm – Diodati company	271.642
1763-1768	General Tax Farm – Almano company	325.814
1770	Direct administration	432.733
1781	Direct administration	604.869
1789	Direct administration	686.374
1793	Direct administration	583.401
1799	Direct administration	536.798

Source: ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg, 42, n. 843; reg. 51, n. 146; ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 328, n. 22; reg. 375, n. 49; ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 568, Florence 06/04/1735; ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 383, 565, 704, 705, 1213; ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 113; ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, f. 389; ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Notizie istoriche intorno alla regalia del Tabacco"; reg. 149, "Dimostrazioni delle entrate e uscite generali a contanti, a tabacchi e droghe, ovvero bilancio e stato della suddetta regia azienda del Tabacco"; See also *Bando et ordine da osservarsi per il Nuovo Appalto del Tabacco*, Firenze, 1672; *Bando e ordine da osservarsi per l'Appalto del Tabacco*, Firenze, 1717; *Bando e ordine da osservarsi per l'appalto del Tabacco*, Firenze, 1727 which have been scanned and are available on Google Books.

Table 3.2 – Tobacco contractors and annual rent (*ducati*) in the Venetian Empire (1657-1799)

Years	Contractors	Rent*
1658-1663	Francesco Rinaldi	9.200
1663-1668	Sebastian Magno and Giuliano Van der Mann	17.100
1668-1673	Pietro Pagliaruzza	19.200
1673-1678	Francesco Molinari	25.990
1678-1683	Castelli and Pocobello	38.000
1683-1688	Giacomo del Pino	30.000
1688-1693	Giacomo del Pino	32.402
1693-1698	Merco Stevanati	35.036
1698-1703	Giacomo d'Ambrosi	50.548
1703-1708	Paolo Grassi	80.061
1708-1713	Giuseppe Gaudio	107.545
1713-1718	Paolo Morari	105.000
1718-1723	Domenico Pedretti for Bernardo Zanchi	120.160
1723-1728	Compagnia del Nuovo Commercio	120.440
1728-1733	Zorzi Crissafida for Cottoni, Maruzzi and Zanchi	144.640

1733-1738	Cottoni, Maruzzi and Zanchi	149.613
1738-1743	Cottoni, Maruzzi and Zanchi	152.145
1743-1748	Salvi and Giro	164.527
1748-1753	Salvi, Perulli and Coletti	187.500
1753-1758	Salvi, Perulli and Coletti	232.000
1758-1763	Salvi and Perulli	274.860
1763-1771	Iseppo Mangilli	215.762
1769	Girolamo Manfrin (rescinded)	356.541
1771-1779	Giammaria Volpi and company	294.089
1779-1787	Girolamo Manfrin	378.875
1787-1799	Girolamo Manfrin	599.999

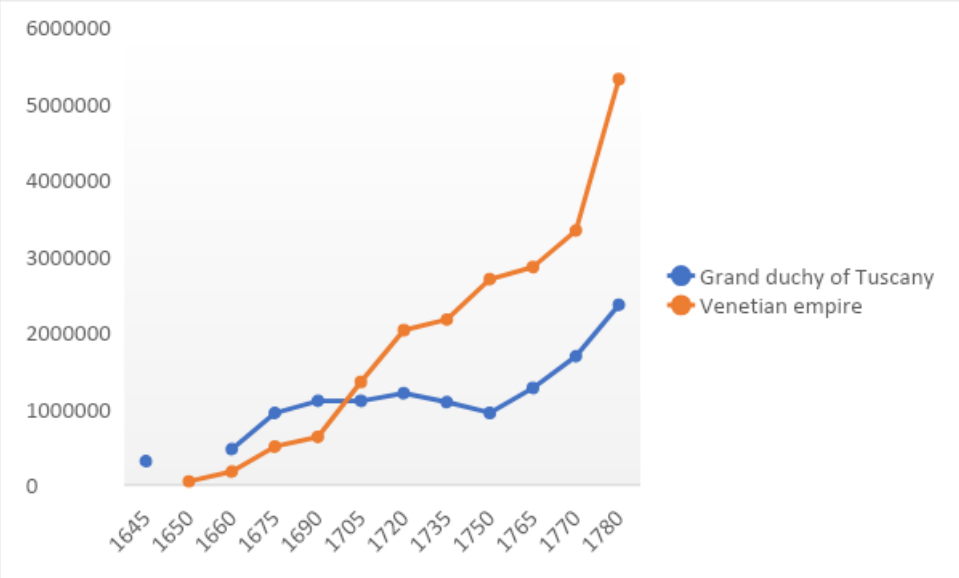
* Since 1718-1723 the rent includes also the collection of the export duty on tobacco
Source: ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 374, n. 13, and reg. 399, n. 3; ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", regg. 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 890; ASVe, *Miscellanea Soranzo*, reg. 14; BMCVe, *Morosini-Grimani*, reg. 446bis, ff. 78 and ff.

However, a simple table of the nominal values of the annual yield from the tobacco monopolies is not satisfactory because of the depreciation of the money of accounts in the long run. So, I have analyzed the curves of revenues from the two case studies by converting them in silver grams[701]: this operation not only allows to prevent the bias of nominal values, but it also represents the best indicator for a comparison at the international level of state finances' performance, as it shows the degree of resources actually available to support public expenditure[702].

Graph 3.1 – Tobacco annual revenues in Tuscany and Venice, 1645-1780 (silver grams)

[701] For doing so, I have used the series on the amount of silver embodied in the *lira Toscana* and in the *ducato veneziano* published in Paolo Malanima, "Wheat Prices in Tuscany, 1260-1660," accessed March 2, 2022, http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/malanima.php; Luciano Pezzolo, *Una finanza d'ancien régime: la Repubblica veneta tra 15. e 18. secolo* (Napoli [etc.]: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 2006), 12.

[702] Of course, the amount of silver in the money of accounts is the best indicator only regarding our purpose here. For example, if the research interest had been in fiscal pressure, it would have been better to adopt a conversion in grain price or salaries to achieve that goal. On this point, see Pezzolo, *Una finanza d'ancien régime*, 11–14.



I have used such data to make Graph 3.1[703], in order to appreciate a visual image of the development of fiscal revenues from tobacco in the medium-long run. The graph shows that the fiscalization of tobacco does not appear to have compromised or sterilized the inner source of that kind of revenues, i.e. tobacco trade and consumption. As a matter of fact, the income for public finance experienced a strong upwards trend from the decades of the monopolies' inception to the late 18th century. By the end of the 17th century the tobacco tax yielded three and a half times the silver that was paid into the state coffers in the early years of the monopoly in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The figure would have reached a ratio of 8 to 1 in the late 18th century. The surge was even more powerful in the Venetian Empire, where revenues from tobacco reached in the 1780s an amount 30 times higher if compared with the first contracts in the 1650s-1660s. In other terms, a relevant flow of money literally went up in smoke for subjects

[703] Data for the annual canon in money of account are taken from ASVe, *Miscellanea Soranzo*, reg. 14; BMCVe, *Morosini-Grimani*, reg. 466bis, ff. 78 and fw; ASFi, *Riformagioni*, regg. 42, 51; ASFi, *Segreteria di finanze*, reg. 568; ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 278, 501, 855, 859, 865; ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 389; ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 113, 114; ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148; ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 7; BNCFi, "Bando e ordine da osservarsi per l'appalto del tabacco, rinnovato ed ampliato per dover cominciare il dì primo Agosto 1699", published in Florence in the *stamperia di S.A.R.*, and similar printed decrees for the years 1672, 1708, 1717, 1727, and 1736 all conserved in BNCFi. See also Antonio Targioni Tozzetti, *Cenni storici sulla introduzione di varie piante nell'agricoltura ed orticoltura toscana del dottore Antonio Targioni-Tozzetti* (Firenze: Tipografia Galileiana di M. Cellini e C., 1853), 124; Marco Lastri, *Della Coltivazione e Manifattura Libera Del Tabacco in Toscana. Discorso Economico Letto in Un'adunanaza de' Georgofili Il Dì VI Luglio MDCCLXXIV* (Firenze: Stamperia Bonducciana, 1789), 33.

increasingly addicted to tobacco, but that amount was in a significant part converted in resources for state finance.

4. Continuities and turnaround between tax farming and direct administration

Data from Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 show that a substantial jump ahead for tobacco fiscal revenues in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany happened with the abolition of the General Tax Farm and the establishment in 1769 of a new bureau for the direct administration of indirect taxation. Already in 1770 the annual yield from the tobacco monopoly had reached 432.733 *lire*, against 325.814 *lire* obtained during the Almano contract (1762-1768), and later on it achieved the peak of 686.374 *lire* in 1789. This significant increase in revenue raises the issue of the alternative between tax farming and direct administration of taxation in early modern fiscal systems.

It should be recalled that the dominant interpretation has always considered tax farming an inefficient and second-best alternative. When rulers can adequately monitor and sanction the actions of their agents, they would opt for state administration with fixed salaries and increase their revenues. Similar conclusions have been outlined by scholars who have studied the 18th-century Bourbon monarchy's finance and, in particular, the development of the tobacco *estanco*. The Spanish crown ruled the direct administration of the tobacco monopoly in 1731, interpreted as the key for the outstanding growth of the contribution from tobacco taxation to overall Crown receipts[704]. The prevailing conclusion that we can find in this literature highlights the relevance of the transition to direct administration and of the expulsion of private financiers from tobacco revenue management: with the words of Torres Sanchez, the transition represented an «important advance in the construction of the Spanish fiscal-military state»[705].

However, the picture should be approached with greater complexity. Following Edgar Kiser, the case of tobacco taxation should be interpreted under the light of the principal-agent theory: according to Kiser, «the type of agency relation that rulers will

[704] Rafael Escobedo Romero, *El tabaco del rey: la organización de un monopolio fiscal durante el Antiguo Régimen* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2007), 144–60.
[705] Rafael Torres Sánchez, *Constructing a Fiscal Military State in Eighteenth Century Spain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 76.

use for tax collection is a function of the control capacities of rulers»[706]. In particular, with direct administration, the principal (i.e. the ruler) is the actor that bears the risks and gets the net profits or takes the loss from the activity and, thus, must directly monitor and sanction the agent to insure compliance. With tax farming, the agent (i.e. the private contractor) is the residual claimant, and thus has a direct interest in adequate performance. Accordingly, when rulers can adequately monitor and sanction the actions of their agents, they will prefer state administration with fixed salaries. When direct control of agents is not possible or too costly, rulers will use tax farming to give agents higher incentives to collect taxes. From this premise, the analysis of the concrete case of tobacco monopolies needs to consider some structural factors affecting the control capacities of the state and power relations between rulers and agents. In particular, the combination of state finance, global trade and consumption that characterized the particular nature of tobacco taxation singles out the absence of state self-sufficiency for two fundamental assets: the access to distant markets from where such a global good was provided and the economic knowledge related to the production process.

These pre-conditions contributed to the common preference of the sovereign powers for contracting out the tobacco monopolies for decades, since these latter required to rely on «*negozianti che proseguano di buon animo affare così utile per V.A.*»[707]. Not only this global commodity required advanced mercantile skills and connections, but the income obtainable from an economic activity that was all but consolidated was highly uncertain: according to Tuscan officials, «*sono ben molto vari i giudizi del progresso che potrà avere questo negozio qua insolito et totalmente nuovo*»[708]. So, this lack of

[706] Edgar Kiser, "Markets and Hierarchies in Early Modern Tax Systems: A Principal-Agent Analysis," *Politics & Society* 22, no. 3 (1994): 290.

[707] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, n. 843, Florence 10/05/1645. The phrase was written by the *auditore* Vettori to the Grand Duke after the establishment of the tobacco monopoly in relation to some further exemptions requested by the Jewish merchants who had obtained the *appalto*: Vettori urged to meet the demands of the contractors, as their mercantile skills were deemed indispensable for the good functioning of the new tax.

[708] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, letter from Alessandro Vettori to the grand duke, Livorno 26/03/1645. As we have seen, sources suggested that 10 years later, when Venetian officials got into the thick of the discussion for the introduction of the monopoly, tobacco trade had become more developed, confirming a certain quantitative jump in the circulation of tobacco in the Italian peninsula in the middle decades of the 17th century. Notwithstanding, similar considerations can be made for Venice, since the yield of the tobacco monopoly was all but granted: the existing duty on imports and exports of tobacco leaves and powders provided totally only about 2.700 *ducati* a year in 1651, see ASVe, *Senato*, *Terra*, reg. 654, Venice 19/04/1651. The following measures that established the doubling of the import duty and the increase of

confidence strongly suggested contract out the collection of the revenues of the new state-owned monopoly, so that the risk and effort of such perilous enterprise were in the end transferred from the government to the tax farmers. In addition, the entrepreneurial and commercial expertise provided by tax farmers could guarantee greater efficiency compared to state administrations that often had only partial knowledge of their fiscal structures. The uncertainty of the net income from an indirect tax, with the additional disadvantage of the complicated territorial control to avoid contraband, was sold with a fixed amount paid by the contractors, so much so that the tobacco monopoly could be defined as the «*una tra le più riguardevoli e sicure rendite del Principato*»[709].

If the reasons to prefer farming out the tobacco monopolies sound clear, should we interpret the shift towards direct administration as a 'progress' for the fiscal system? Looking at our case studies, does the increase in Tuscan tobacco revenues with the abolition of the General Tax Farm confirm the traditional interpretation on the dichotomy between tax farming and direct administration? In this respect, it is appropriate to investigate more about the levels of continuity and rupture that occurred as a result of this change. This approach allows us to analyze the concrete dynamics that characterized tax farming and direct administration in the early modern age, without bias dictated by general theories developed in later times.

Not surprisingly, looking at the historiographical tradition on the 18th-century Grand Duchy of Tuscany, scholars have usually inscribed the shift to state administration into the broader reformist push fuelled by the spread of enlightened ideas among Tuscan intellectuals and officials during the Lorraine regency (1737-1765) and then promoted by the new sovereign himself, the Grand Duke Peter Leopold (1765-1790)[710]. Indeed, during

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the export duty to 4 *grossi* per pound for tobacco leaves and to 8 *grossi* per pound for powder tobacco failed to significantly increase revenues, see Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia*, 18.

[709] BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV*, *Cod. CCCC LXX (=532)*, f. 42, Pregadi 10/05/1786. The insistence on tobacco taxation as a 'safe' one is particularly recurrent in the considerations of fiscal officials and magistracies, who stressed the convenience of a certain amount of revenues instead of relying on the unpredictability of market conjuncture which was unavoidable in case of direct administration of the tobacco monopoly. From this point of view, see again the revisionist theories that have interpreted the choice of tax farming in the light of transaction costs, revisiting the argument that such choice would derive from an inefficient lack of a dependable administrative machine, see Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue*.

[710] There is abundant literature on the high permeability of the granducal ruler class to the Enlightenment's culture and on the political, social, and economic reforms which were undertaken in the Tuscan state in the second half of the 18th century. On the particular theme of the abolition of the General Tax Farm as a fundamental precondition for regaining free hand in economic and social reform, especially in the issue of

the debate which erupted as the end of the Almano contract approached, both Angelo Maria Tavanti and Francesco Maria Gianni, despite their different opinions about the desirable balance between direct and indirect taxes[711], endorsed a swift suppression of the General Tax Farm in order to facilitate reforms for the welfare of the economy and the extension of commerce. In particular, their main goal lay in the abolition of the internal custom duties and the review of the levies with the greatest impact on production activities. The basic idea was that without the hindrance of the contractual terms with private financiers it would have been simpler for the sovereign to «*procedere a quelle variazioni che gli sembrassero vantaggiose al commercio ed allo stato*»[712].

However, I argue that other factors decisively contributed to such an outcome. First and foremost, the same advocates of the *laissez-faire* policy backed the reform because it represented an opportunity to increase public finance's profits: for instance, in his plan for the abolition of the General Tax Farm, Tavanti explicitly suggested to the sovereign the perspective to benefit from the «*utili dei quali partecipa l'appaltatore in conseguenza del suo contratto*»[713]. Looking at the tobacco monopoly, this argument finds a substantial

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abolishing the internal customs, see Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 87–93; Vieri Becagli, *Un Unico Territorio Gabellabile. La Riforma Doganale Leopoldina: Il Dibattito Politico 1767-1781* (Firenze: Università degli studi-Istituto di storia-Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, 1983).

[711] On the political struggle between officials and ministers who had enthusiastically joined the physiocratic 'sect', like Angelo Maria Tavanti, and more cautious personalities who made criticism on the perspective of the 'unique' land tax and of the total removal of custom duties, like Francesco Maria Gianni, see Furio Diaz, *Francesco Maria Gianni: Dalla Burocrazia Alla Politica Sotto Pietro Leopoldo Di Toscana* (Milano; Napoli: Riccardi, 1966); Mario Mirri, *La Lotta Politica in Toscana Intorno Alle Riforme Annonarie (1764-1775)* (Pisa, 1972); Mario Mirri, "La Fisiocrazia in Toscana: Un Tema Da Riprendere," in *Studi Di Storia Medievale e Moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, vol. 2 (Firenze: Olschki, 1980), 703–60; Sandro Landi, *Il governo delle opinioni: censura e formazione del consenso nella Toscana del Settecento* (Bologna: Il mulino, 2000), 241–62. On the turn-of-the-century clashes between promoters (like Giovanni Fabbroni and Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni) and sceptics (Francesco Maria Gianni and Matteo Biffi Tolomei) about a *laissez-faire* policy, see Renato Pasta, *Scienza, Politica e Rivoluzione. L'opera Di Giovanni Fabbroni (1752-1822) Intellettuale e Funzionario a Servizio Dei Lorena* (Firenze: Olschki, 1989); Bernardo Sordi, *L'amministrazione Illuminata. Riforma Dele Comunità e Progetti Di Costituzione Nella Toscana Leopoldina* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1991).

[712] ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 75, ins. 2, "Piano per il passaggio dal sistema dell'appalto a quello della gestione in amministrazione diretta", f. 7r. The author of the plan has been already identified in Angelo Maria Tavanti by Dal Pane, see Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 88. For the contribution to this debate by Francesco Maria Gianni, particularly close to the positions of Tavanti in this case, see ASFi, *Carte Gianni*, reg. 13, ins. 250, ff. 5r-v.

[713] ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 75, ins. 2, "Piano per il passaggio dal sistema dell'appalto a quello della gestione in amministrazione diretta", f. 11v,

evidence in the notable growth of the profits earned by the general contractors between 1745 and 1768[714]: the financiers had not only contributed to the immediate rise of fiscal revenues for state coffers, but also improved the sector securing higher returns for themselves. From this point of view, around the extra-profits of the tobacco contractors, a political struggle for the distribution of the resources deriving from the expanding market of such a commodity was undergoing.

In this respect, the successful results of the *Azienda del Tabacco* under the direct administration of the state seem to suggest that the granducal public finance could extract much more revenues by internalizing the administration of the tobacco monopoly, exactly as it had occurred about 40 years before in the Spanish fiscal system[715]. Notwithstanding, despite the prevailing approach of sharply contrasting tax farming and state fiscal administration, several features of continuity between the two systems stand out at a closer look. For example, thanks to the improved financial management and to more information on the sector provided by the General Tax Farm, the Grand Duke could renegotiate the profits' share between the financiers and himself well before the setting up of direct administration. In fact, if the project for a formal mixed *régie* was forcibly shelved in 1749, in practice the Grand Duke always shared the profits of the privileged companies, first through informal front men, then through official representatives of the sovereign agreed upon in the contracts[716]. And the Grand Duke reserved for himself an ever-larger slice of the company shares, reaching at 17 *carati* out of 20 under the Almano contract[717]. Something very close to a *régie*, regardless of the nomenclature, as the same

[714] According to the accounting books of the companies that ran the Tuscan General Farm, the income from the tobacco monopoly passed from 839.796 *lire* in 1746 (the first year after its aggregation to the General Tax Farm) to the annual average of 1.129.360 under the Almano contract (1763-1768). See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 383, 1213.

[715] For the financial impact of the passage of the Spanish *estanco del tabaco* from tax farming to direct administration, with the establishment of the *Universal Administracion de la Renta del Tabaco* in 1730, see also Regina Grafe, *Distant tyranny: markets, power and backwardness in Spain, 1650-1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 154–59.

[716] The Grand Duke Francis Stephan was directly involved in the Lombart company through his front man Dominique Poirot de la Brochetière. Later on, he resorted to Abram Vaxoncourt, François Grobert and Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets as formal representative of the sovereign power who held shares of the Masson, Diodati and Almano companies. See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 1, nn. 24-25, 06/06/1740; ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 955, Florence 29/04/1762.

[717] See Waquet, "Les Fermes Générales Dans l'Europe Des Lumières: Le Cas Toscan," 1012–16.

head of the Tuscan government, the marquis Antoniotto Botta Adorno, wrote to Francis Stephan after the signature of the contract[718].

Moreover, the new *Amministrazione generale delle regie rendite* was entrusted in 1769 to the direction of Antonio Serristori, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets and Niccolò Siminetti: coherently with the old tradition to involve the patriciate among the ranks of granducal administration, they all belonged to the Florentine aristocracy[719], but it is particularly revealing that two out of three were already involved in the Tuscan General Farm. Serristori had been among the main private investors in the *appalto generale* since the Masson contract, so much so that we can state that the administration of public finance remained in the hands of the very same group who had controlled the previous system. Indeed, since 1749, together with the senators Niccolò Martelli and Filippo Maria Guadagni and the knight and Cosimo degli Alessandri, he had joined French financiers in a new company for the management of the Tuscan General Farm. Then, the Tuscan group replaced them altogether between 1753 and 1768[720]. In the long run, around the figure of Serristori – a nobleman involved in many commercial affairs, including the

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[718] «*Il presente contratto, con gli articoli separate, ritenendo tutti i vantaggi d'un formale appalto, si approssima a un Sistema di ben regolata amministrazione delle sue regie entrate, e la partecipazione degli utili per la rata di tre carati servirà sempre di maggior stimolo ai deputati che vi avranno interesse di impiegare tutto il loro zelo e industria*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 78, f. 270, Botta Adorno to the Grand Duke, Florence 05/05/1761.

[719] Niccolò Siminetti and Antonio Serristori belonged to two of the greatest families of the Florentine patriciate, while Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets, native of the Savoyard states, had been admitted to the local aristocracy in 1765. See Orsola Gori Pasta, "Serristori, Antonio Maria," in *DBI - Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Treccani, 2018).

[720] With the death of Schmidveiller in 1749 and the consequent wreck of the project for the establishment of a *régie*, Richecourt and Pierre Foacier (a French financier already engaged in the Lombart company) seized the opportunity to relaunch their proposal to keep alive the General Tax Farm through the formation of «*une compagnie pour ainsi dire mixte*» (see ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 22, f. 423v, Richecourt to the Grand Duke, Florence 24/08/1748), composed by financiers who had already participated in the Lombart company and members of the Tuscan consortium which had petitioned the sovereign for large commercial privileges, including the Tuscan General Farm. In fact, the private shares in the Masson company (1750-1752) were eventually held by four Frenchmen (Pierre Foacier and Dominique Poirot de la Brochetière, already engaged in the Lombart contract; the son of Pierre Foacier, Foacier de Betteville, and the former director of the company's correspondence, Florenceau de Boisbedeuil) and four Tuscan subjects (Niccolò Martelli, Antonio Serristori, Filippo Maria Guadagni and Cosimo degli Alessandri). See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 565, ff. n. nn., "Onorario accordato da SMI agl'appaltatori generali da prendersi sopra i prodotti dell'Appalto generale prima di ripartire gli utili". Then, after the signing of the new contract under the name of the Diodati company, Martelli, Serristori and Guadagni remained the only financiers involved in the Tuscan general farm, while Alessandri assumed the role of cashier of the company. See ASFi, *Miscellanea di Finanze*, *A*, reg. 195, ff. n. nn., Florence 13/02/1753; ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 955, ff. n. nn., Florence 29/04/1762.

traffic of jewelry[721] – a powerful financial group was formed and prevailed for decades over competitors through strategic partnerships within the old Florentine patriciate and the new class of officials and entrepreneurs who had permanently settled in the grand duchy, starting from the interesting case of the family Cambray-Digny[722]. For his part, Gavard had served as one of the formal representatives of the sovereign in the Diodati and Almano companies. Their inextricable overlap between personal financial interest and state service emerges clearly from their direct participation in the debates for customs reform and for overcoming the General Tax Farm itself[723], despite the fact that their relationship with the sovereign power was in practice regulated by a commercial contract and not by any employment in the ranks of bureaucracy. Indeed, any sharp opposition between greedy financiers and disinterested administrators loses its poignancy here.

Also the specific sector of tobacco reveals other remarkable continuities between the two systems. To begin with, the new administration strongly relied on the network of

[721] This activity is testified by some folders in the archive of the Serristori family, nowadays stored in the state archive of Florence. See ASFi, *Serristori*, regg. 666-670.

[722] Such financial group clearly emerged from the correspondence of Luigi Guglielmo de Cambray-Digny, native of Picardie, who had arrived in Tuscany in 1745 thanks to his connections with the French financiers of the Lombart company, for which he served as *directeur general des comptes de la ferme*. On the «*saga familiare*» of the Cambray-Digny between the 18th and the 19th centuries, see Remo P. Coppini, "I Cambray-Digny: Una Famiglia Dal Servizio Dei Lorena Alla Realtà Italiana," in *Il Granducato Di Toscana e i Lorena Nel Secolo XVIII: Incontro Internazionale Di Studio, Firenze, 22-24 Settembre 1994*, ed. Alessandra Contini and Maria Grazia Parri (Firenze: Olschki, 1999), 633–40. In particular, the letters received from Antonio Serristori and Niccolò Martelli (both general tax farmers) reveal the wide extent of affairs that engaged the group, from grain to tobacco trade. See BMFi, *Cambray-Digny*, reg. 2, f. 186, Richard, Serristori and Martelli to Cambray-Digny, Florence 21/04/1761; reg. 3, ff. 144-145, Serristori to Cambray-Digny, Florence 17/04/1764. Concerning the general tax farm game, the strategies of the group testify to a propensity for financial investment as a crucial form of assets management and the importance of familiarity with government and court environments: at the moment of the renovation of the contract in 1761, the group managed to obtain the sovereign's concession again also because Serristori personally went to Vienna to directly negotiate the affair with the privy councilors of the sovereign and to anticipate other Florentine financiers who aspired to get their hands on the business. As Martelli wrote to Cambray-Digny, the most formidable competitors were companies equally specialized in the management of financial contracts, such as those animated by Gavi and Arnaldi (whom we have already met in the previous tobacco contracts) and by Cataldi (whose company had obtained in 1739 the new contract for the lottery), see BMFi, *Cambray-Digny*, reg. 2, f. 107, Martelli to Cambray-Digny, Florence 16/05/1761. On the establishment of the state lottery on the basis of the Genoese example and the contract signed with the Cataldi company, see Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 56.

[723] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 49, ff. 144-147; reg. 50, f. 279. Interestingly, the appointment of Serristori and Gavard as «*amministratori generali*» of the new system was legitimated in the *Motuproprio* of the 16th of August 1768 «*volendo confidare questo importante oggetto a persone di capacità e d'esperienza*», skills and experience which had matured in their affairs during the *appalto generale*, see Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini ...*, vol. XXIX, 146.

commercial partners and suppliers of raw leaves and finished tobacco products which had been consolidated under the General Tax Farm: the cross-analysis of the correspondence of the Diodati company (1754-1762) and that of the available years under direct administration (1768-1786) for purchasing tobaccos shows an impressive match of manufacturers and merchant houses in regular business with the Tuscan monopoly[724]. As it was explicitly admitted by the officials, the new system necessarily had to draw on past experience, especially in the case of the tobacco monopoly, which was inextricably bound up with market practices and relations that could hardly be reconstructed from scratch in a short period of time: not by chance, the administrators decided to «*prendere le opportune informazioni dai cadenti appaltatori per sapere quali fossero i corrispondenti che si prevalevano per i migliori tabacchi*»[725], in order to continue to benefit immediately from their services.

Furthermore, the state *Azienda del Tabacco* employed the large part of the accounting and administrative staff of the old General Tax Farm's company. Ignazio Sarot began his career under the Lombart company as director of the tobacco shop in the square of Florence and in 1750 had already assumed the top-post of chief minister of the central bureau of the monopoly, maintaining it well beyond the abolishment of the *appalto generale* until his death in the early 1780s. Similar careers within the core management of the tobacco monopoly between tax farming and direct administration can be traced for the bookkeepers Ferdinando Dami and Carlo de Bruck, the treasurer Cosimo Minucci, the scrivener Giovanni Domenico Ceccherini, but also for Giuseppe Genay and

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[724] I used the books of correspondence of the tobacco bureau stored in ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 663, "Lettere della Compagnia per fuori di Stato in materia di provviste e di commercio"; ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, regg. 8-21, "Tabacco. Copialettere". In particular, the tobacco manufacturers Carli from Amsterdam, Costa from Strasbourg, Damart from Saint Omer, the merchant houses *Aubert & Lombart* in Genoa and *Eredi di Aron Veneziano* in Livorno quietly continued to supply the Tuscan tobacco monopoly despite the 'breakthrough' of 1768. I will delve more into the relations between supplier merchants and the tobacco farms in another chapter of the thesis.

[725] ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 8, f. 26, Serristori and Gavard to Lestienne Damart, Florence 08/10/1768. This extract comes from a letter to Lestienne Damart, owner of a tobacco manufacture in Saint Omer, northern France, in which Serristori and Gavard informed the former supplier that «*essendoci stata nominate la di lei fabbrica, aviamo dunque creduto opporturno prevalerci della medesima, quando da lei si vogliano accettare l'istesse condizioni e patti che fra di loro sono seguiti nelle provviste da essi fatte in passato*». But, in the first months after the grand ducal *motuproprio* of 26th August 1768 which abolished the general tax farm, similar letters were sent from Florence to the vast majority of the consolidated suppliers of the tobacco monopoly.

Suardo Maria Suardi as directors of the territorial administrations in Livorno and Siena[726]. Such tendency to bring in former revenue-farming factors as public officials of the state fiscal administration also occurred at the highest level of the financial administration in the Tuscan case: take the example of Luigi Guglielmo Cambray-Digny, who was director of accounts under the General Tax Farm and remained in the same position with the passage to direct administration, starting a 'dynasty' of financial officials who served in various fiscal bureaus of the Grand Duchy between the late 18th and early 19th centuries[727]. In this respect, with regard to the Spanish case, Rafael Escobedo Romero has highlighted a similar process for the establishment of the direct administration of the tobacco monopoly in 1730[728]: whereas scholars have usually described this type of recruitment as a viable path to 'bureaucratization', I argue that more emphasis should be placed on the fact that the intervention of tax farmers' companies in the fiscal offices often provided an important asset of internal organization, administrative and accounting skills, economic information and consolidated market relations. At a closer look, this heritage represented a proper and fundamental prerequisite to introduce and implement (also through the direct involvement of these actors) forms of direct administration of fiscal resources, rather than a structural obstacle against which the state would have to launch a granitic and fierce battle to get rid of private finance in tax collection.

To conclude this section with a comparison with the Venetian scenario, it should be noted that the *Serenissima* never integrated the tobacco monopoly in a general tax farm

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[726] It is possible to follow the careers of these employees thanks to the tobacco farm's accounting books, as the payment of their wages and emoluments was detailed in the budget under expenditure. Here, I have used the accounting books of the tobacco monopoly under the General Tax Farm for the years 1746, 1750, 1762 and under direct administration for the years 1772, 1778, 1781. See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 278, 501, 865; ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 380, 389; ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 74.

[727] At the moment of the establishment of the Tuscan *Amministrazione Generale*, Luigi Gugliemo de Cambray-Digny shared the destiny of his business partner (Antonio Serristori) and maintained the very same role he had played for more than two decades under the General Tax Farm. In 1775, the post of director of accounts was abolished and Cambray-Digny was promoted to first accountant of the *Depositeria generale*. See ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 3, n. 78, Florence 12/09/1775. Two of his sons, Francesco and Giuseppe served in the financial and fiscal administration of the late-eighteenth century Grand Duchy of Tuscany, in particular Giuseppe as director of the Tobacco Farm between 1793 and 1799 and Francesco as director of the accounts of the *Depositeria generale* since 1801. See BMFi, *Cambray-Digny*, reg. 9, f. 10, Camillo Rossi to Giuseppe de Cambray-Digny, Siena 17/06/1793; *Ibidem*, reg. 10, f. 4, "Ruolo degli impiegati nella Regia Depositeria", 14/01/1802.

[728] See Rafael Escobedo Romero, "De Subarrendatarios a Administradores Provinciales: Una Aproximación a La Burocratización de La Renta Del Tabaco Durante La Primera Mitad Del Siglo XVIII," *Cuadernos Dieciohistas* 10 (2009): 149–65.

and neither decided to bring it under state administration. Scholars have underlined the tension that grew during the 18th century between, on the one hand, the ever-stronger consolidation of tax farming, which represented not only an effective financial tool, but also a system of business and patronage that flourished in the shadow of power blocs and political 'parties'[729]; and, on the other hand, the increasing resentment against the financiers who managed tax collection, whose 'greed' was often blamed as the main cause of heavy fiscal burden on population, so much so the ruling class was induced to intervene for limiting the abuses and too much arbitrariness granted to them[730]. This situation led to a heated debate that became particularly harsh in the mid-1770s. Even a moderate figure like the Count Giovanni Bujovich[731] launched a radical criticism without appeal against tax farming: in his writing, he denounced the unbearable Venetian paradox of low per capita income for public coffers and, at the same time, the excessive burden of finance on the population's basic consumption, among which he listed tobacco itself[732]. And, he blamed as its main cause the 'greed' of the insatiable financiers, whose «*ministri crudeli e sanguinari aumentano ai contribuenti gli esborsi a tal segno, e portano tali vessazioni sulle classi de' sudditi più miserabili, che rendono il tributo odioso*»[733].

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[729] See on this point Alfredo Viggiano, "Politics and Constitution," in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797*, ed. Eric R. Dursteler (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 81.

[730] Using the words of Luciano Pezzolo about the eighteenth-century Venetian debate on fiscal reforms, «*il crescente odio verso le imprese d'appalto lungo il Settecento costrinse i governi a trovare nuove soluzioni che limitassero da una parte gli spazi goduti dai dazieri privati e che calmasero dall'altra gli animi irrequieti dei sudditi*», Luciano Pezzolo, *Una finanza d'ancien régime: la Repubblica veneta tra 15. e 18. secolo* (Napoli [etc.]: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 2006), 31.

[731] The count Giovanni Bujovich will be a protagonist of the Venetian political life between the terminal phase of the oligarchic republic and the Napoleonic era. Critical of the French revolutionary outcomes and of the democratic thrusts in the government of the Venetian 'Municipality', he was among the five members of the Deputation that, following the stipulation of the Treaty of Campoformio, assumed powers to prepare the ground for the forthcoming arrival of the Austrian authorities in the lagoon. See Giovanni Scarabello, "La Municipalità Democratica," in *Storia Di Venezia. L'ultima Fase Della Serenissima*, ed. Piero Del Negro and Paolo Preto, Storia Di Venezia. Dalle Origini Alla Caduta Della Serenissima (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1998), 344–45; Valentina Dal Cin, *Il mondo nuovo : l'élite veneta fra rivoluzione e restaurazione (1797-1815)*, Studi di storia (Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2019), 39.

[732] «*La nazione paga dazi sui consumi de' ogni spezie di vittuaria più necessaria e vile, come pane, vino, carni, olio, frutti, cuoi, generi di vestiario, tabacco*», see Giovanni Bujovich, *Scritti Pubblici Concernenti Lo Stato Interno Di Venezia Nei Passati Mesi d'interregno, Più Due Memorie Sopra Le Finanze e l'agricoltura Del Vecchio Governo* (Venezia, 1797), 68.

[733] Bujovich, 68. The quotation was part of the memoir «*Sopra la riforma delle Finanze*», written in 1778, and it went on shortly afterwards to state that, coherently with the maxims of the emerging political economy, «*tra il genere de' tributi sarà da preferirsi quello nel quale fra la somma da pagarsi dal popolo e la somma totale da entrare nell'erario vi sia la minor differenza possibile*».

Bujovich spoke at a very significant moment, as the Venetian magistracies and the Senate were discussing an ambitious fiscal reform plan aimed at simplifying the plethora of duties levied by the *Serenissima*. A special 'conference' of Venetian officials, similarly to the concerns we have met in the Tuscan case, submitted to the Senate a merciless analysis of the more than 150 duties in force, underlining how the whole system «*pesa infinitamente più al Popolo per ciò che opprime l'industria e il commercio, di quello che per la rendita che scanza ne deriva all'erario*» and, in addiction, describing «*il Popolo in intiera balia dei dazieri*»[734]. Not surprisingly, one of the biggest issues at stake was whether the envisaged new system with a reduced number of duties on consumption and external trade should be farmed out to private parties or managed in-house by the state. The 'conference' considered «*incompatibile l'affittanza di questi dazi con l'esazione dei medesimi a rigor di tariffa*» and suggested to establish a sort of general tax farm[735]; another project, presented by Pietro Rossini, focused much more sharply on the direct administration of taxation[736]. Despite large volume of documents produced, the plans remained on paper and the duties on consumption, including the *partito del tabacco*, suffered no change: according to Paolo Ulvioni's studies, the Venetian top echelons of power, especially Andrea Tron and Francesco Donà, were unwilling to question the fiscal contracts awarded to private financiers with whom they had intense patronage and political relations[737].

Should we interpret the different outcomes in our two case studies in relation to the degree of organicity between reforms and Enlightenment in the Italian states of the second half of the 18th century? Actually, as denounced by Anna Maria Rao, such an approach, long in vogue in the literature, runs the risk of drawing up a hierarchy of the various historical experiences based on the sole parameter of the circulation of ideas and the appropriation of new cultural movements[738]. As a consequence, the 'reforms without Enlightenment' in Venice have been sometimes downgraded to a second-rate process with insufficient results due to the limited permeation of enlightened ideas into the ruling

[734] BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. DXI (=175)*, Pregadi 01/06/1775, ff. 195r-v.
[735] *Ibidem*, Pregadi 14/03/1778, f. 208r.
[736] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Dogane", reg. 870bis.
[737] See Ulvioni, "Politica e Riforme a Venezia Nel Secondo Settecento. Il 'Piano Daziale.'".
[738] See Anna Maria Rao, "Enlightenment and Reform: An Overview of Culture and Politics in Enlightenment Italy," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 10, no. 2 (2005): 142–67.

class[739]. However, such a point of view appears oversimplified, especially if taken as mono-causal: the concrete outcomes of this political season were never a foregone conclusion, but rather the product of conflicts and clashes between opposing factions and 'parties', which in turn were more or less organically linked to simmering social balances[740].

Moreover, with regard to the events related to the tobacco monopoly, we can identify far more contingent motives. On the one side, the Venetian *partito del tabacco* did not suffer major difficulties as in the Tuscan case, where the aggregation of the tobacco monopoly to the General Tax Farm represented a way out of the problems that had accumulated during the contract with the Gabrielli, Zanchi and Poletti company. On the other side, effective alternatives to 'general farm' and direct administration persisted: in particular, the traditional method of stimulating competition between pretender financiers by granting the monopoly via the '*pubblico incanto*' ensured further leaps forward for tobacco revenues in the second half of the 18th century. Take the case of the above-described successful management of the Venetian tobacco monopoly by Girolamo Manfrin between 1779 and 1797: his ability to increase the annual rent for the state coffers from 294.089 to 599.999 *ducati* in less than 20 years was strongly stimulated by the need to defend himself against attacks from other financial groups[741] and to win their competition at the time of contract renewal[742].

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[739] For some criticism on this biased perspective, see also Antonella Alimento, "Introduzione," in *Modelli d'oltre Confine. Prospettive Economiche e Sociali Negli Antichi Stati Italiani*, ed. Antonella Alimento (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2009), ix–xli.

[740] For an interpretation of the reformist drive throughout the long-18th century in the light of important changes in the social relations within the Italian states, see Marcello Verga, "Tra Sei e Settecento: Un'età Delle Pre-Riforme?," *Storica* I, no. 1 (1995): 89–121. In this respect, a huge difference between our two case studies lies in the reconfiguration of the social base of power that took place in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany following the dynastic change in 1737, whereas the political conflicts of the Venetian 18th century never went so far as to question the foundations of the oligarchic power. See Diaz, *I Lorena in Toscana*; Del Negro, "Introduzione.".

[741] Manfrin accused the financiers who had invested in the previous contract with the count Iseppo Mangilli of plotting against him and having him unjustly imprisoned in 1769, at the time of his first bid for the *partito del tabacco*: according to him, «*li stessi finanzieri, fatti vieppiù avidi dopo il vantaggio dal loro complotto fortunatamente derivato al Mangilli in quella Condotta, (...) cospirando tutti insieme ai miei danni, dissero e fecero tanto con insidiose calunnie e con fraudolenti modi occulti e palesi, che giunsero a raffreddare il primo fervore, e ad intimorire e sovvertir l'animo dei V Savi alla Mercanzia, ed alla Pubblica cassa*», BMCVe, *Mss. Cicogna*, reg. 2505, n. 3, with no place and date.

[742] For example, in December 1783, Manfrin proposed to the Senate to increase the fee paid into the state coffers by 25.000 *ducati* per years, but another financial consortium, gathered under the name of Avvanzetti

In other words, Venice lacked the preconditions that led the Tuscan ruling class to adopt the solutions analyzed in this section, while the traditional system continued to prove profitable for fiscal revenues and profits of the privileged companies. In addition, the Tuscan shift to the direct administration of the tobacco monopoly was by no means all-encompassing and irreversible: indeed, its management, even after the abolition of the Tuscan General Farm, remained farmed out to private entrepreneurs in border territories or local communities that were difficult for the central administration to control, such as the granducal enclave of Pietrasanta, the district of Lunigiana, the town of Barga and Portoferraio on the Island of Elba[743]. At a closer look, tax farming and direct administration were two options to which fiscal institutions looked without too many prejudices, orienting themselves with the compass of the research for the most effective solution according to circumstances to maximize fiscal revenues.

5. Conclusion

Tobacco monopolies emerge as a relevant and widespread component of early modern fiscal systems. «The most pervasive colonial commodity in Europe»[744] carved out a substantial place in public finance and in the process of fiscal tightening which characterized early modern polities, diverging considerably from the model usually proposed in the literature by the advocates of the 'fiscal state'.

The debates that animated the first steps of the tobacco monopolies reveal the motives and objectives that contributed to adopting such solutions. The collection of economic and administrative information was a crucial issue and mercantile expertise became essential to provide fiscal institutions with a more precise picture of tobacco circulation. Merchants were involved not only in the imports of raw tobacco, but also in

company, raised the bid to an additional 40.000 *ducati* per year. In the end, Manfrin managed to prevail, but he was forced to bring the annual increment to 45.000 *ducati*. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889, Venice 20/12/1783, 09/01/1784 and 29/03/1794; BMCVe, *Mss. Cicogna*, reg. 3650, Pregadi 07/08/1784; BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, "Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma", f. 25, Venice 05/04/1784.

[743] See ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 83, ins. 17, "Dimostrazione incassato e speso dalla Regia Zienda del Tabacco nell'anno 1778 – Posti Appaltati".

[744] This definition has been provided by Kwass with reference to eighteenth-century Euopre, see Kwass, *Contraband*, 30.

the same management of the monopoly and in the collection of revenues. Tax farming guaranteed a new source of profit to them, but it was also extremely appreciated by governments, because it ensured a significant, certain, and fixed income instead of variable and unpredictable revenues. In particular, for the implementation of tobacco taxation, rulers drew from the patrimonial model of the *ius prohibendi* and regalian rights, looking in particular at the governance in force for salt, rather than to the custom duties which usually hit other global commodities.

If we turn to the traditional interpretation of early modern Italian states' taxation between the 17th and 18th centuries, their progressive emphasis on taxes on consumption has been usually related to the commercial decline of the Mediterranean: between the imposition of new forms of direct taxation in the 15th century and the attempts to reform the cadastre in the 18th century, taxation would have been characterized by a shift towards indirect taxation, but through a decrease in revenue from custom duties offset by the explosion of *gabelle*, taxes and monopolies that burdened the population's consumption[745]. However, this interpretation falls short in light of recent reflections on the motives for the rise of revenues from indirect taxation – especially excise and customs – in Great Britain during the long 18th century: as Kwass has argued, «this rise (…) was not merely a reflection of British commercial growth, as vigorous as that growth was. It was the result of a deliberate policy to generate higher revenues by creating new kinds of indirect taxes and raising rates on those that already existed»[746]. Accordingly, greater attention should be devoted to the political choices and external circumstances that led to the adoption of certain fiscal instruments as they were deemed best suited to respond to contingent needs.

In addition, the case of tobacco suggests to go beyond the simplistic explanations of that fiscal change as a reaction to the flight of the richest flows from the Mediterranean. As a matter of fact, societies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire constituted important markets attracting global commodities and proving the growing relevance of voluptuary consumption in their context[747]. This social dynamism

[745] See Luciano Pezzolo, "La Storiografia Più Recente Sulla Finanza Italiana Della Prima Età Moderna: Gli Studi Sulla Fiscalità," *Rivista Di Storia Finanziaria* 10 (2003): 56–57.

[746] Kwass, *Contraband*, 43.

[747] For the participation of the early modern Italian peninsula to the broader trends of the consumer revolution of the time, see again Alida Clemente, *Il lusso "cattivo": dinamiche del consumo nella Napoli*

represented a precious resource in the eyes of governments and the measures taken by fiscal institutions should be analyzed in the light of such purpose. In particular, local economic actors had resources and long-distance connections to participate in tobacco's redistribution throughout the local spaces, the Mediterranean areas and beyond. In this respect, the creation of the tobacco monopoly allowed Tuscan and Venetian governments, among many others in Europe, to exploit for tax purposes the global trade of a commodity that they could not directly dispose of. Borrowing from the model of patrimonial taxation and resorting to economic actors and their networks, fiscal institutions expanded their jurisdictional domain and strengthened their pressure on society in order to mobilize a greater amount of resources.

The considerations of fiscal officials and economic actors who proposed to the sovereign powers the establishment of the tobacco monopolies did not betray expectations. The analyses of the annual yield from tobacco throughout the early modern age show the progressive growth of public revenues for the states and of private profits for the contractors who ran the monopolies. In addition, the tobacco monopolies were particularly consistent with the inner logic of early modern taxation. As we have seen, the 'fiscal constitutions' of our case studies reflected a considerable preponderance of indirect taxation, a general trend in early modern taxation that we have seen also in the English excise-based system. From this point of view, officials and secretaries proved to be familiar with the importance of taxing domestic consumption for the sake of public finance and with the same lesson of the English model[748]. However, such a composition of taxes did not bring necessarily to follow a bureaucratic and centralized administration: privileged business and patrimonial forms of taxation carved out an important role for themselves in the early modern Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, in particular through the success of tax farming and fiscal monopolies according to

del Settecento (Roma: Carocci, 2011); Cecilia Carnino, *Lusso e benessere nell'Italia del Settecento* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2014).

[748] For example, in the 1730s, the *Savi alla Mercanzia* presented to the Senate several considerations for the debate on the reform of custom duties, prompted by the fierce competition that Venice suffered from the free ports of Livorno and Ancona. Their writings distinguished goods entering Venice into three categories: those which supplied Venetian manufacturers, those which were meant for domestic consumption, those which were later re-exported to foreign countries and to the subjected territories, Only the second category had to be interpreted as «*merci di consumo e la loro rendita deve essere preservata (…) secondo lo stile della nazione inglese*», a clear reference to the British excise. See BNMVe, *Mss. Cod. It. VII*, reg. 2091, ff. 15r-25v, Venice 14/04/1736. Quotation at f. 22r.

percentages of the total revenue similar to what happened in the 18th-century Bourbon monarchies. From this point of view, with particular reference to tobacco taxation, the leading perspective of increasing revenues brought to favor privileged business in tax collection, rather than aiming at developing state bureaucratic administration and free domestic markets.

The investigation on the two case studies also suggests a reassessment to the sharp opposition between tax farming and direct administration. According to theorists of the 'fiscal state', the emergence in the 18th century of historical examples of centralized tax collection run by the state through direct administration represents a watershed towards fiscal modernity. Whereas such a model has been adopted for comparison at the global level[749], the shift towards direct administration by the Grand Duchy of Tuscany reveals relevant continuity with the previous General Tax Farm. On the one hand, the Grand Duke was directly involved in the economic business and in the resulting profits of the General Tax Farm; on the other hand, the administrators of the new fiscal administration and the personnel of the new *Azienda del Tabacco* were recruited among the financiers and skilled laborers of the General Tax Farm. Conversely, in the Venetian Empire the tobacco monopoly continued to be farmed out throughout the early modern age. In this case, the traditional method of stimulating competition between pretender financiers by granting the monopoly via the '*pubblico incanto*' ensured effective alternatives to the models of the general tax farm and the direct administration that characterized the Tuscan path. Tax farming in early modern fiscal systems should be interpreted in the light of the analysis of concrete historical contexts. Such a solution was not necessarily an inefficient and second-best alternative to state administration, but it could represent the most efficient one according to the circumstances.

Finally, in this way the fiscal burden was distributed in compliance with the existing social order: the 'tax repercussion' hit stronger on the less well off without exacerbating the risk of threatening uprisings. If state coffers, great merchants, privileged companies who ran the monopoly, and financiers of the public debt were the winners of this story, the poorest consumers were the most penalized due to the regressive impact of tobacco

[749] See again Bartolome Yun-Casalilla and Patrick O'Brien, *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

taxation: in this respect, the tobacco monopolies perfectly participated in worsening social inequalities during the fiscalization process of the early modern age.

In a nutshell, the positive fiscal performance was achieved thanks to the interplay of several forces: the insertion in the new circuits of long-distance trade; the recovery of patrimonial forms of taxation; the pursuit of profits by businessmen who asked for monopoly licenses; the gathering of information on models and foreign experiments to emulate and adapt them to the local circumstances; the rise of early modern consumerism; the search for forms of taxation that could limit social uprisings and, at the same time, comply with the existing social order. Instead of conflicting between them, they all fell within the strategies of economic groups and fiscal institutions in order to serve the same purpose of mobilizing a greater amount of resources and reproducing a process of redistribution of wealth in accordance with the structural inequalities of early modern societies. Ultimately, tobacco taxation offers the case in point of an alternative path toward a greater tax burden for early modern polities, a path that was implemented in a very different way than usually described by the model of the bureaucratic administrative centralization in tax collection: its ‘heroes’ were not salaried clerks or the coercion exerted from the political center, as Brewer had suggested, but conversely economic networks and fiscal institutions who negotiated around the conditions of tax collection and global commodities’ circulation.

Chapter 4

A 'negotiating arena': the competing networks and the supplication system around the tobacco monopoly

«*Li signori Castelli e Pocobello, partitanti generali del tabacco, hanno rappresentato l'apparente necessità di deliberare questo Datio molto prima del spirare della sua condotta, acciò chi lo levasse abbia anco il commodo di far venir da luoghi lontani le necessarie provvisioni del tabacco medesimo, non potendo che con grave sconcerto trascorrere senza stabilimento di nuovo Partito la vicina stagione dei fiori, che è quella appunto deve facilitar al mercante il modo d'acconciar per il resto dell'anno il tabacco*»[750]

«*Diversi di questi mercanti mi hanno trovato per rappresentarmi che per discorsi fatti tra loro (…) l'opinione universal della mercatura sarebbe che si potesse di presente valersi di qualche mezzo per incoraggiare li napoletani, siciliani e sardi di venire qua con più frequenza ed in maggior numero per il crescere il negozio. Metodo migliore mai ci puol essere che quello della libertà del commercio del Tabacco*»[751]

«*Napoli, al sig. Francesco Cassani: ho dato conto della mia carica et arrivo in Livorno, et esibitoli il mio servizio, le ho dato avviso che i miei di Lisbona havevano caricato sopra la Nave Loreto li zuccheri e tabacchi commessili*»[752]

In this chapter, I aim at shedding light on the modalities by which mercantile networks penetrated fiscal institutions. In particular, I will address this point by delving into the effective dynamics of the negotiation processes that developed around the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. In the previous chapter we have appreciated data on fiscal income from tobacco in the two case studies. Increasing revenues throughout the period clearly show the responsiveness of fiscal institutions to the greater circulation of extra-European commodities in the early modern age. But the features of tobacco taxation suggests to review the main coordinates on the rise of the 'fiscal state': monopolies, privileged companies, mercantile networks were the essential preconditions for the fiscal success in this field, rather than state coercion, bureaucratic centralization, and 'rational' civil administration[753]. Tobacco

[750] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 161, f. 7, Venice 16/01/1682.

[751] ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 2274, f. 187, Giacinto del Vigna to Carlo Rinuccini, Livorno 28/05/1721.

[752] Ginori-Lisci Archive in Florence (GAFi), reg. 31, II, 7, "Copialettere di Lorenzo di Carlo Ginori (1689-1691), Livorno 04/04/1689.

[753] For the pillars of the 'fiscal state', firstly as an interpretative tool for the British state, than as a paradigm for early modern Europe, and lastly as a category for comparison on a global scale, see Brewer, *The Sinews*

taxation provides a case in point in line with authors who, describing early modern fiscal administration and public finance, have spoken of a 'contractor state', relying on suppliers and contractors to reach its targets, and of a 'moral economy of collaboration' between state and business interests[754].

Nevertheless, while a general reassessment of the logic of early modern taxation can be assumed from the findings of the previous chapter, it still remains to understand how some mercantile networks were able to become fundamental interlocutors for fiscal institutions and crucial actors for tax collection. Moreover, as the tobacco monopoly naturally created winners and losers, it is important to understand why some networks prevailed over others which were excluded from the *ius prohibendi*. Indeed, as it shines from the first quotation above, the whole system of the tobacco monopoly was based on the effective penetration of reliable mercantile networks in the domain of taxation. The tobacco general farmers in Venice reminded the institutions of the *Serenissima* of the importance of agreeing on the timeline for establishing the new contract for the monopoly. The initiation of the enterprise had to be compatible with the seasonality of the tobacco trade and the necessary mercantile operations, from the supply of the raw leaves to the processing of finished products. While contractors benefitted from the exploitation of tobacco in a monopolistic regime, other businessmen and merchants could only negotiate their share in the tobacco re-export trade. Mercantile 'nations' in Livorno several times lobbied granducal institutions for the 'free trade of tobacco', in order to, as it results from the second quotation above, enhance the freeport business opportunities. It is evident the variety of interests: different mercantile networks competed for clinching the monopoly, but they also lobbied fiscal institutions from opposite points of view after the *ius prohibendi* was granted. At the same time, the picture presents very nuanced boundaries between mercantile networks and institutions responsible for trade and taxation: in the same letter, Lorenzo Ginori informed his correspondents in Naples that he had just taken up his post in Livorno as *Provveditore della Dogana* and that the transport of sugar and tobacco, coming from Portuguese Brazil and purchased by his

of Power; Bonney, *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c. 1200-1815*; Yun-Casalilla and O'Brien, *The Rise of Fiscal States*.

754 Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government in Britain, 1702-1713*; González Enciso, "Between Private and Public Interests."

agents in Lisbon, would take place on the ship named Loreto, which had already sailed for Naples[755].

As a matter of fact, the tobacco monopolies were run by privileged companies with long-distance trade relations. Their consolidation gave birth to an ongoing 'negotiation' between different actors who stretched from fiscal institutions, tax farmers, and mercantile networks. In this respect, as admitted even by some advocates of the 'fiscal state', «there was (…) no centralisation without negotiation»[756]: a process that, like a sort of two-faced Janus[757], would have pursued its goals by resting «on the interplay between coercion, or use of the legitimate monopoly of violence by the ruler, and collaboration, or the relation between public and private interests, to protect society and promote the common good»[758]. These words from Joël Felix and Anne Dubet suggest that the rise of the fiscal state in the early modern age was marked by the crucial role played by various social groups in helping rulers access larger pools of resources. Most importantly, they highlight the bargaining dimension of commodities' circulation and their taxation, determined by negotiation between, on the one hand representatives of the sovereign power and, on the other hand, local communities, social estates and, above all, financiers and private economic actors[759].

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[755] Lorenzo Ginori's correspondents in Naples were Francesco Cassani and Giuseppe del Beccuti who ran the tobacco monopoly in the viceroyalty in the years 1682-1692. See Renato Urga, "La Privativa Del Tabacco Nel Napoletano Durante Il Viceregno," in *Scritti in Onore Di Riccardo Filangieri*, vol. II (Napoli: L'Arte tipografica, 1959), 551–72.

[756] Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, "Introduction," in *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 15.

[757] The reference is to the work of Ruiz Ibáñez on the relationship between the subjects and the early modern Spanish monarchy, where the author describes the coexistence of a form of social domination from above and of multiple horizontal articulations deriving from the «*juego de poderes coexistentes en la sociedad*», see José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, *Las dos caras de Jano: monarquía, ciudad e individuo. Murcia, 1588-1648* (EDITUM, 1995).

[758] Anne Dubet and Joël Félix, "Introduction: Corruption and the Rise of the Fiscal State," in *The War Within. Private Interests and the Fiscal State in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Joël Félix and Anne Dubet (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 3.

[759] Recent studies highlighting the bargaining dimension of early modern taxation have demonstrated that not only parliamentary regimes - like the Netherlands and Great Britain - had experienced financial and fiscal progress thanks to agreements between the king and the 'nation': on the contrary, other ways to create trust between central powers and elites, including merchant elites, worked out on many occasions. See Francisco Comin Comin and Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, "Spain: From Composite Monarchy to Nation-State, 1492-1914. An Exceptional Case?," in *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500-1914*, ed. Bartolomé Yun Casalilla and Patrick K. O'Brien (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 233–66; Renate Pieper, "Financing an Empire: The Austrian Composite Monarchy, 1650-1848," in *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500-1914*, ed. Bartolomé Yun Casalilla and Patrick K. O'Brien (Cambridge: Cambridge University Pressù, 2012), 164–90; Juan Francisco Pardo Molero, "Comprehend,

However, the idea of early modern negotiation around trade and taxation should be reviewed in the light of the findings from authors who have questioned the relationship between the two spheres of 'public' and 'private': their rigid separation was a relatively recent development, both in practice and in the collective imaginary[760]. As highlighted by David Parrott, the same warfare handling included contributions and the exercise of violence from private subjects who were also involved in the government of the territory[761]. In addition, research on the techniques, objectives and impact of officers and contractors who collected and spent tax revenues suggest that the procedures did not seek to prohibit profit in the management of public monies, but to distinguish between lawful and unlawful benefits[762].

From these premises, there are still crucial questions requiring answers. How did mercantile networks penetrate fiscal institutions? Did merchants penetrate the state or did this latter opt to delegate to them tax collection since the very onset? Was their relationship a collaboration between different and separate entities? As I have clarified in the introduction, I will delve into the relationship between networks and institutions going beyond the idea of mercantile networks as horizontal webs of correspondence between

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Discuss and Negotiate: Doing Politics in the Kingdom of Valencia in the Sixteenth Century," in *Polycentric Monarchies: How Did Early Modern Spain and Portugal Achieve and Maintain a Global Hegemony?*, ed. Pedro Cardim et al. (Brighton ; Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 162–80; Anne Dubet, "The Spanish Monarchy and Financier Fraud during the Early Eighteenth Century: A Morality of Favours and Negotiation," in *The War Within. Private Interests and the Fiscal State in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Joël Félix and Anne Dubet (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 71–98; Joël Félix, "Why Did Chambres de Justice Disappear in Eighteenth-Century France? Fiscal Profit and Institutional Change, 1688-1788," in *The War within: Private Interests and the Fiscal State in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Joël Félix and Anne Dubet (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 195–228. Research has also looked beyond the borders of 'Western civilisation': for example, it is important to compare works on the French and Spanish monarchies with the chapters on the Ottoman and the Chinese empire in the book on the global rise of fiscal states, edited by Yun-Casalilla and O'Brien, see Şevket Pamuk, "The Evolution of Fiscal Institutions in the Ottoman Empire, 1500-1914," in *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500-1914*, ed. Bartolomé Yun Casalilla and Patrick K. O'Brien (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 304–33; R. Bin Wong, "Taxation and Good Governance in China, 1500-1914," in *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500-1914*, ed. Bartolomé Yun Casalilla and Patrick K. O'Brien (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 353–77.

760 See, for example, the considerations provided on the concepts of 'corruption' and 'anti-corruption' in Ronald Kroeze, André Vitória, and Guy Geltner, eds., *Anti-Corruption in History: From Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

761 David Parrott, *The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

762 On this point, see the seminal work of Marie-Laure Legay on the French Crown's finance between the 17th and the 18th centuries: Marie-Laure Legay, *La banqueroute de l'État royal: la gestion des finances publiques de Colbert à la Révolution*, Collection En temps & lieux 26 (Paris: Editions EHESS, 2011).

coherent actors united by kinship, ethnicity, or religion[763]. The comprehension of the concrete functioning of networks requires to deepen their cross-cultural connections and vertical developments, as they encompass institutions and the political sphere as well as market relations[764]. An investigation on the social *milieu* of the fiscal institutions and mercantile networks involved in the negotiation processes around the tobacco business, as well as on the procedures and mechanisms through which it took place, might help in grasping further insights on the concrete dynamics of network's penetration of fiscal institutions.

The chapter begins with an analysis of the social background of merchants and trade officials. Specifically, I aim to explore whether merchants operated as distinct entities from fiscal and trade institutions or actively participated in their functioning. Then, I will focus on the strengths that enabled mercantile networks to infiltrate fiscal institutions and secure the tobacco monopoly. Long-distance connections, economic information, and active participation in the tobacco trade were crucial resources for the adjudication of the privileged business. However, dominant positions could be undermined by changing circumstances, leading to the replacement of established merchants or the emergence of alternative networks in the management of the monopoly. Finally, I examine the 'negotiating arena' that emerged with the establishment of tobacco monopolies: in particular, petitions became a vital tool for both monopolistic businessmen merchants and the excluded ones, allowing them to channel their interests toward state officials who acted as intermediaries between the mercantile world and the sovereign power.

1. Merchants and trade officials: a shared milieu?

To begin with, it is important to provide some findings on the relationship between mercantile networks and state officials in charge of fiscal and commercial issues. Conflict and collaboration took place between them, but the same subjects very often carried out

[763] For the limits of an approach focused on family networks, see Shervllynne Haggerty, "I Could 'Do for the Dickmans': When Family Networks Don't Work," *Cosmopolitan Networks in Commerce and Society 1660-1914*, 2011.

[764] See Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Regina Grafe, "On the Spatial Nature of Institutions and the Institutional Nature of Personal Networks in the Spanish Atlantic," *Culture & History Digital Journal* 3, no. 1 (2014): 1–11.

different activities at once, moving themselves with ease between state institutions and commodity markets. A glance at these relations sheds light on how early modern taxation and trade were subjected to negotiating practices challenging the boundaries between institutions and the market.

Such a perspective is particularly promising for grasping further insights about the interweaving of political and economic drives in the early modern state administration. Many specialists of Livorno have stressed that the same notion and every-day life of the free port «developed through practical negotiations between merchants and local officials»[765], rather than from Grand Dukes' legislation. The local population, with a relevant percentage of foreigners, «*si considerava obbligata al granduca solo in ragione d'un accordo negoziato*»[766]. In this context, some institutions and magistracies played a crucial role as mediators between merchant circles and sovereign power and as regulators of commercial life, namely, the *Provveditore* (Director) of the Livorno's Customs House and, progressively, the Governor of the city[767]. With regard to Venice, a similar duty was entrusted to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, a magistracy that, as we have seen, had competence on trade and on a large set of fiscal and production sectors, including the tobacco monopoly. One of the most important task they carried out was to collect information and petitions from the mercantile world, to «thoroughly research the topic under examination and then provide the *Collegio* with an appropriate reply, which would become part of the Republic's legislative record»[768]. These magistrates were part of a

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765 Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, 81.

766 Andrea Addobbati, "Le molte teste dell'Idra : i sensali livornesi nell'età delle riforme," *MEFRIM* 127, no. 1 (2015): 67.

767 On the role of the *Provveditore*, see Corey Tazzara, "La Gestione Della Dogana Nel Pirmo Seicento," in *La Città Delle Nazioni. Livorno e i Limiti Del Cosmopolitismo (1566-1834)*, ed. Andrea Addobbati and Marcella Aglietti (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2016), 219–35. The Governor of the city became much more important as a landmark for the mercantile 'nations' of the free port when the Livorno's customs house became part of the Tuscan General Farm under the Lorraine regency. On these dynamics, see Marcella Aglietti, "Giuliano Capponi Governatore Di Livorno Fra Medici e Lorena," *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* XVI (2009): 33–63. And, more broadly, Marcella Aglietti, *I Governatori Di Livorno Dai Medici All'Unità d'Italia. Gli Uomini, Le Istituzioni, La Città* (Pisa: ETS, 2009), 88–206.

768 Maria Fusaro, *Political Economies of Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean: The Decline of Venice and the Rise of England (1450-1700)* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ Press, 2015), 52. For a sketch of the magistrate organization and functioning, see Maria Borgherini-Scarabellin, *Il magistrato dei cinque savi alla mercanzia dalla istituzione alla caduta della repubblica: studio storico su documenti d'archivio* (Venezia: Deputazione di Storia Patria, 1925); Giordano Campos, "Il Commercio Esterno Veneziano Della Seconda Metà Del'700 Secondo La Statistica Ufficiale," *Archivio Veneto* 19 (1936): 145–83.

transnational push towards the institutionalization of commercial protection and advice which took momentum since the mid-17th century[769].

In addition to the competences attributed by the sovereign power to these institutions, it is interesting to note the social background of the actors that animated them or represented their first interlocutors. In fact, as it was the rule for the Tuscan administration, the Directors of the Livorno's Customs House usually belonged to families of the Florentine patriciate[770]. Following the lesson of Furio Diaz, some scholars have described the progressive consolidation of patricians in the main institutions of the Tuscan state as a degeneration of the 'meritocratic principle' that had brought a new class of non-noble jurists in the first Grand Dukes' bureaucracy during the 16th century[771]. However, a closer look at these crucial magistrates for the economic life of Livorno and of the whole Grand Duchy reveals that they were appointed first and foremost because of their direct experience in long-distance trade. Moreover, their institutional service did not preclude them at all from participating in economic ventures.

Some examples from the 17th and the 18th centuries make it clearer. Probably, the most significant case is Lorenzo Ginori, Director between 1688 and 1694. Previously, he had been in Lisbon as the head of a *banco* engaged in several transcontinental trade lines, from Portuguese Brazil to the Far East. In fact, the redistribution of colonial and exotic goods in the Mediterranean basin was one of his main business[772]. His successful

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[769] The establishment of the Council of Trade by the Commonwealth in 1650 and the installment of the *Chambres de Commerce* throughout the French kingdom in 1701 can be considered two famous examples of the same process. See Thomas Schaeper, *The French Council of Commerce, 1700-1715: A Study of Mercantilism after Colbert* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1983), 73–98; Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 602–8; Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, 160–62.

[770] See Litchfield, *Emergence of a Bureaucracy*.

[771] See Furio Diaz, *Il Granducato di Toscana: I Medici*, Storia d'Italia (Torino: Utet, 1976), 365–68, 469–71. To support his argument, Diaz cites precisely the *provveditori* in Livorno in the second half of the 17th century, all belonging to important families of the Florentine patriciate: Pandolfo Attavanti, the senator Andrea Alamanni, Iacopo Peruzzi, Giovanni Cerretani, Alamanno Arrighi, Ferdinando Nerli and Lorenzo Ginori.

[772] On the commercial activities of the Ginori network in the late 17th century, see Francisco Javier Zamora Rodríguez, "War, Trade, Products and Consumption Patterns: The Ginori and Their Information Networks," in *War, Trade and Neutrality: Europe and the Mediterranean in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Antonella Alimento (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2011), 55–67; Zamora Rodríguez, "Florentinos Em Lisboa e a Sua Intermediação Nos Cargos Eclesiásticos Portugueses Nos Finais Do Século XVII," in

activities earned him an appointment as consul of the Florentine 'nation' in Lisbon in 1674 and several diplomatic and informal missions as agent of the Grand Duke Cosimo III[773]. And his trade interests still constituted a great share of his concerns during his institutional post in Livorno: once established in the free port, he made sure that the trading house in Lisbon, now run by his brother Niccolò, could continue to count on the assistance of the expert collaborator Tommaso Baldi. The latter kept him constantly updated by sending him «*il bilancio generale della ragione passata e quello della ragion nuova*»[774]. In his letters, we can clearly see the network of correspondents and commercial exchanges that Lorenzo orchestrated from Livorno, relying on the mercantile affiliated houses run by his younger brothers in Lisbon, Seville and Cadiz and trading in extra-European goods, above all sugar and tobacco from Brazil and oranges and porcelain from China[775]. This well-documented case was all but exceptional: his successor, Francesco Terriesi, had been for years in London, from where he shipped tin to the Mediterranean, and he continued his business activities after his appointment as Director of the Livorno's Customs House in 1694[776]; a few decades later it was the turn of Giacinto del Vigna, Director between 1715 and 1724, also coming from mercantile experience abroad, in this case in Amsterdam, just like Francesco Feroni, appointed as *Depositario generale* in 1669 after a brilliant career in the Atlantic trade of grain and slaves[777] and, still in the 1670s-1680s, «he himself opened operations in Livorno, Cadiz and Messina (…) with other

Con Gran Mare e Fortuna: Circulaçao de Mercadorias, Pessoas e Ideias Entre Portugal e Itália Na Época Moderna (Lisboa: Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras, 2015), 135–48.

[773] See Antonella Viola, "Lorenzo Ginori: console della nazione fiorentina e agente di Cosimo III dei Medici nella Lisbona seicentista," *Di buon affetto e commerzio: relações luso-italianas nos séculos XV-XVIII*, 2012, 163–76.

[774] Ginori-Lisci Archive in Florence (GAFi), reg. 31, II, 7, "Copialettere di Lorenzo di Carlo Ginori, 1689-1691", Lorenzo Ginori to Tommaso Baldi, Livorno 04/04/1689.

[775] See extensively GAFi, regg. 31-34, II, 7, "Copialettere di Lorenzo di Carlo Ginori".

[776] We can appreciate Terriesi's involvement in Tuscan commercial circuits throughout Europe during his years in London and his appointment as *Provveditore* of the Livorno's customs house as well thanks to the same correspondence of Lorenzo Ginori. See in particular GAFi, reg. 31, II, 7, "Copialettere di Lorenzo di Carlo Ginori, 1689-1691", Lorenzo Ginori to Francesco Terriesi, Livorno 04/04/1689; *Ibidem*, reg. 34, II, 7, "Copialettere di Lorenzo di Carlo Ginori, 1695-1708", Lorenzo Ginori to Francesco Terriesi, Florence 17/08/1697.

[777] For more biographical information on Feroni, see Paola Benigni, "Francesco Feroni, Empolese, Negoziante in Amsterdam," *Rassegna Degli Archivi Di Stato* 47 (1988): 488–517; Paola Benigni, "Francesco Feroni: Da Mercante Di Schiavi a Burocrate Nella Toscana Di Cosimo III. Alcune Anticipazioni," in *La Toscana Nell'età Di Cosimo III* (Firenze: Edifir, 1993), 165–83.

members of the Florentine merchant elite»[778]. Also his colleague in the Tuscan government and political rival, the nobleman lawyer Ferrante Capponi, invested in several *accomandite*, including the Florentine silk manufacture run by Balestri and the same company created in 1727 for the management of the Tobacco Farm under the names of Emanuel Cases and Vitale Vitali[779].

The Venetian case shows another suggestive dynamic. Also the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* were often familiar with mercantile business thanks to direct experience[780]. In addition, the deliberative process of the magistrate in matters of trade and navigation always included representatives indicated by Venetian merchants and shipowners, the '*capi di piazza*' and '*capi dei parcenevoli*'[781]. These figures collected from other merchants proposals and petitions to be submitted to the government[782], informed the institutions on the economic situation of individual markets and international trade in general[783], gave their opinion on economic projects elaborated by Venetian magistracies and economic actors[784], contributed to the evaluation of candidates for the posts of

[778] Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, 144.

[779] See the registration of the society before the court of the *Mercanzia* in Florence in ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10854, ff. 104v-105v, Florence 15/10/1727.

[780] For some cases between the 16th and the 18th centuries, see Ugo Tucci, "Il Patriziato Veneziano, Mercante e Umanista," in *Mercanti, Navi, Monete Nel Cinquecento Veneziano* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1981); Isabella Cecchini and Luciano Pezzolo, "Merchants and Institutions in Early-Modern Venice," *The Journal of European Economic History* 41, no. 2 (2012): 89–114.

[781] When the Venetian Senate decided to establish a new specific magistrate on trade, the *Deputati al commercio* (1708-1756), which was required to collaborate with the Five Sages of Trade, the very first act was to collect information and define regular correspondence with these representatives of the Venetian marketplace: «*con le norme che ci vengono prescritte dal decreto medesimo, chiamati già li capi di piazza e quelli de' parcenevoli, fu loro spiegata in chiara forma la Pubblica riverita intenzione, incaricandoli a suggerire sopra ogni punto quei lumi e raccordi che con la propria esperienza reputassero opportuni*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 210, cc. 1r-2r, Venice 03/12/1708.

[782] For example, in 1713, during the War of the Spanish succession, 38 Venetian shipowners conveyed to the government through the '*capi di piazza*' and the '*capi dei parcenevoli*' their grievances about their ships being arrested by the French fleet and corsairs over the past two years, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 172, ff. 11-12, Venice 22/03/1713.

[783] For example, in 1792, the *savio* Nicolò Venier, appointed as deputy for the Black sea trade, benefited from a detailed report written by the '*capi di piazza*' and '*capi dei parcenevoli*' on the ports of the Black sea and on the commodities that could boost trade between Venice and that region: their suggestion was to establish a privileged «*società da cui dovrà essere intrapreso un esperimento di diretto commercio coi stati russi per quell mare e per quello di Azov*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 207, ff. 22v-23r, Venice 19/12/1792.

[784] For example, in 1720, the *Deputati al commercio* received a project for the relaunch of the Venetian trade in the eastern Mediterranean, which suggested some measures to take advantage of the difficulties of

Venetian consul in foreign scales[785]. Obviously, their representativeness as Venetian merchants and shipowners depended on their activity and success in business: take the case of the Demetrio Perulli, great merchant, shipowner and tobacco contractor of Greek origin, who had already become '*capo di piazza*' in the early 1720s and still held this position in the 1750s together with Bonhomo Algarotti, while both continued to remain at the forefront of the Venetian '*mercatura*'[786].

In Livorno too, we observe a similar process for the involvement of the most important merchants of the free port in the collection of economic information, in the evaluation of projects and proposals presented to institutions, and in the elaboration of suggestions and opinions on the Grand Duchy's economic policies. These were the explicit aims which brought Giacinto del Vigna to promote in 1717 the establishment of a Deputation of Trade composed by foreign and Tuscan merchants who received the task to discuss in the presence of the customs house's Director the guidelines for preserving and increasing Livorno's traffic[787]. The first members of the board were merchants

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the rival port of Marseille, struggling with the painful consequences of the plague. The magistrate solicited a writing on the matter from the '*capi di piazza*', who commented positively on the project and took the floor expanding on the fiscal policies and diplomatic relations of the *Serenissima*. In particular, they advised to pursue the «*pace cogl'accennati Barbareschi con quell'intiera osservanza con cui resta eseguita in vantaggio delle nazioni di Francia, Inghilterra e di Olanda, onde potesse nella decadenza di quelle intieramente risorgere questo commercio*» and to focus on the soap trade, for which they considered necessary to «*esentarli dal dazio del consumo dell'olio (…) implorando la rinovazione del Decreto 1715 che durò due anni in via d'esperimento in cui non ha sofferto il pubblico erario alcun detrimento, ma la crescita degli ogli e delle ceneri ha impedito il buon effetto che doveva sperarsi*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al commercio", reg. 213, ff. 70v-75r, Venice 05/10/1720.

[785] For example, in 1754, the '*capi di piazza*' presented to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* a detailed report on the five candidates to the post of Venetian consul in Durres: their opinion would have strongly contributed to the appointment of the outgoing consul, Giovanni Battista Rossi, for another term, with whom «*ha motivo la piazza di chiamarsene paga e contenta per il contegno da lui tenuto nel periodo di due quinquenni in circa nel consolato appunto di Durazzo da lui sostentuto*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 358, n. 85, with no place and date, but 1754.

[786] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, n. 37, Nicolò Tron, Giovanni Battista Mecatti and Demetrio Perulli, capi di piazza, to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, Venice 10/12/1721; *Ibidem*, reg. 359, n. 1, Demetrio Perulli and Bonhomo Algarotti, capi di piazza, to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, Venice 23/03/1754.

[787] For an in-depth study on this Deputation, see Daniele Baggiani, "Tra Crisi Commerciale e Interventi Istituzionali: Le Vicende Del Porto Di Livorno in Età Tardo Medicea (1714-1730)," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 104, no. 3 (1992): 678. Here, the author points out how the Tuscan magistrates looked to the model offered by the contemporary French *Chambres de Commerce*, but also how the government of Cosimo III decided to reduce the state presence in the board to a minimum, due to the port's special characteristics and the objective of promoting full cooperation between and with the merchants of Livorno. However, we should also note that the experiment promoted by Del Vigna was not the first one in grand ducal Livorno: a

particularly expert in trade and representative of the major mercantile 'nations' in the free port: the English Daniel Gould, the French Onorato Berti, the Dutch Federigo Broegh, the Flemish Filippo Guglielmo Huygens, and the Italian merchants Antonio Federighi, Francesco Giavarini, Jacopo Finocchietti and Franco Damiani[788]. Moreover, the Jewish nation, excluded from the deputation, immediately protested and by the end of the year obtained, though «*separatamente dagli altri*», an official channel for confrontation with local institutions, through two nominees from the community, Abram Franco and Rafael Medina[789]. The experiment was not long-lived, however, under the Lorraine regency, in 1746, a new Council of Trade was established with similar powers and, above all, the central government continued to include the leading merchants of Livorno in the deliberative process through the periodic collection of memoranda, information and proposals to strengthen the health of commerce[790].

Deputazione composed of the Governor, the consuls and four businessmen saw the light in 1642. And other short-lived examples can be found in sources. See Gino Guarnieri, *Livorno Medicea Nel Quadro Delle Sue Attrezzature Portuali e Delle Funzione Economico-Marittima: Dalla Fondazione Civica Alla Fine Della Dinastia Medicea (1577-1737)* (Livorno: Giardini, 1970), 176. However, the common thread to all these trade institutions was the merchants' expertise as fundamental source for their authority.

[788] See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1810, ff. 379-381, Carlo Rinuccini to Giacinto del Vigna, Florence 16/11/1717.

[789] *Ibidem*, reg. 2272, Giacinto del Vigna to Carlo Rinuccini, Livorno 27/11/1717.

[790] Some specialists in the history of early modern Livorno's trade have preferred to emphasize the differences, rather than the continuities, between the Deputation of Trade of the late Medicean period and the Council of Trade established under the Lorraine regency. In particular, the latter has been interpreted in the light of the centralizing wave unleashed by the new dynasty under the auspices of Cameralism: not by chance, the Council of Trade created in 1746 eventually excluded merchants, being composed by the Governor of the city, the port captain and two counselors belonging to the state administration. Moreover, two years later, its authority was extended to the Tuscan merchant navy, as part of the territorial organization of trade and production orchestrated by the government within a broader imperial context that referred to the Habsburg in Vienna. See Carlo Mangio, "Commercio Marittimo e Reggenza Lorenese in Toscana (Provvedimenti Legislativi e Dibattiti)," *Rivista Storica Italiana* XC (1978): 898–937; Daniele Baggiani, "Livorno e La Polizia Del Commercio: Formula Politica, Prassi Istituzionale (1737-1748)," in *Il Granducato Di Toscana e i Lorena Nel Secolo XVIII: Incontro Internazionale Di Studio, Firenze, 22-24 Settembre 1994*, ed. Alessandra Contini and Maria Grazia Parri (Firenze: Olschki, 1999), 589–620; Daniele Edigati, "The Tuscan Edict of 1748 and Ancien Régime Maritime Legislation," in *War, Trade and Neutrality. Europe and the Mediterranean in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Antonella Alimento (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2011), 68–81. However, other works have highlighted how the grand ducal policy on the free port and Livorno's trade abundantly drew, even under the Lorraine regency and the reign of Peter Leopold, on mercantile expertise via memoranda, projects and detailed opinion on various topics, from the building of infrastructure like warehouses and roads to the promotion of 'active trade' and the creation of insurance companies. See Carlo Mangio, "La Memoria Presentata Dalla «nazione Inglese» Di Livorno in Occasione Dell'inchiesta Del 1758," in *Gli Inglesi a Livorno e All'Isola d'Elba: Sec. XVII-XIX* (Livorno: Bastogi, 1980), 58–65; Francesco Mineccia, "Economia e Società a Livorno Durante La

The picture that emerges from sources tells us that the institutionalization of commercial advice and protection went hand in hand with official and informal channels of confrontation and negotiation with the merchant élite of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. Similar dynamics have been well illustrated for many cases in early modern Europe[791]. Moreover, throughout the early modern era, the common desire of states to implement more institutionalized intervention in economic and commercial matters coexisted with the opening of magistracies and collegiate bodies to mercantile expertise, as early modern «merchants were the supreme economic experts of their days»[792]. To some extent, merchants and trade officials indeed shared the same milieu. This common background strongly facilitated the realization of a proper 'negotiating arena' between officials, ministers, and businessmen interested in commercial and manufacturing activities. The infrastructural and social dimension of early modern institutions sheds light on spaces influenced by both reformist cultures and economic logics[793]. The in-between actors very often combined the roles of civil servant and businessman, blurring again the distinction between the verticality of institutional structures and the horizontality of mercantile and social networks.

Guerra Dei Sette Anni Attraverso Alcune Annotazioni Inedite Di Stefano Bertolini," *Ricerche Storiche* XIII, no. 1 (1983): 205–32; Allen D. Thompson, "'Progetti in Vantaggio Del Principe, Del Pubblico e Del Commercio Della Toscana'. I Mercanti Di Livorno e l'economia Toscana al Momento Della Successione Lorenese," *Critica Storica* 28 (1991): 427–88; Andrea Addobbati, *Commercio, rischio, guerra: il mercato delle assicurazioni marittime di Livorno, 1694-1795* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2007), 103–7, 236–39.

[791] See in depth Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*; Carrasco Gonzalez Maria G., *Los Instrumentos Del Comercio Colonial En El Cádiz Del Siglo XVII (1650-1700)* (Madrid: Banco de España, 1996); George K. McGilvary, *East India Patronage and the British State: The Scottish Elite and Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008); Paul Burton Cheney, *Revolutionary Commerce: Globalization and the French Monarchy* (Cambridge (Mass.); London: Harvard University Press, 2010); Cátia Antunes, "Free Agents and Formal Institutions in the Portuguese Empire: Towards a Framework of Analysis," *Portuguese Studies* 28, no. 2 (2012): 173–85.

[792] Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, 261. Furthermore, Tazzara has also convincingly argue against any anachronistic pulse to see chambers of commerce as pressure groups while treating trade boards as disinterested bodies of governance: rather than institutions of the 'public sphere', they were both 'creatures of the state' that at the same time represented corporate interests and provided crucial expertise for the concrete issues of political economy.

[793] It is important to recall the analysis of early modern institutions provided by Denis Richet for the French case. Richet refused to consider institutions as separated bodies from society, focusing his attention on concrete figures and social groups who animated institutions, representing the proper 'spirit' of them. See Denis Richet, *La France moderne: l'esprit des institutions*, Science Flammarion (Paris: Flammarion, 1973).

2. Success and failure of mercantile networks with the tobacco monopoly

The shared environment between merchants and officials responsible for trade and fiscal institutions provided a communion of language and mentality, legitimizing individual profiteering in the management of affairs tied to state interests. But how did mercantile networks penetrate fiscal institutions and obtain monopolies? Why did some of them prevail over others? Which kind of skills and expertise were necessary to maintain the monopolistic privilege? I will address these questions investigating which resources enabled mercantile networks to prevail for the adjudication of the tobacco monopolies and for what reasons they could lose the privilege in favor of other merchants.

2.1 Prevailing mercantile networks in a transnational business

Since the first political debate aroused by the proposal of establishing a monopoly on tobacco, fiscal institutions demonstrated to be aware of the importance of mercantile expertise for the success of the envisaged innovation. While tobacco global trade remained a transnational business marked by the collaboration and competition of different commercial networks, it is interesting to understand how specific networks began to combine their long-distance mercantile activity with the adjudication of the monopoly and the assumption of a dominant position in tax farming. Could they exploit their vantage point in the tobacco market? Did institutions play a role in favoring some interlocutors to the detriment of others? The examination of the prevailing networks in tobacco trade and taxation in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire provides useful insights to answer these questions.

As we have seen, the role of the Sephardic diaspora and of the Jewish community of Livorno clearly emerged as a crucial one from the sources on the first privileged licenses related to the tobacco sector in the 1630s, as well as from those on the establishment of the full monopoly in 1645[794]. Later, in 1655, a dispute before the court of the Governor of Livorno informs us about the extent of Jewish networks' control over

[794] For a general survey on the Marrana diaspora in Livorno, see Giuseppe Marcocci, "Itinerari Marrani. I Portoghesi a Livorno Nei Secoli Dell'età Moderna," *Livorno, 1606-1806*, 2009, 405–17. For the contribution of the Jewish 'nation' to long-distance trade and processing of global goods in Livorno, see Michele Cassandro, "Gli Ebrei Di Livorno Nel Seicento. Aspetti Economici e Sociali," *La Rassegna Mensile Di Israel* 50, no. 9/12 (1984): 567–82.

tobacco redistribution in the region: Giuda Almandel, tobacco farmer in the Duchy of Modena, had purchased in Livorno 900 pounds of Brazilian tobacco from the Jews Rafael and Mosè Fano and another 4.000 pounds of tobacco leaves from Abram and Jacob Levi Luisada, which were then sent to Massa, as evidenced by the bills of the local tobacco farmer, the Jew Zemal di Giuda Levi[795]. This is another confirmation for the competitive advantage which the Jewish communities enjoyed in the tobacco business, backed by their inclusion in deep-rooted commercial networks connecting the Mediterranean with the Atlantic and by the dominance of 'new Christians' in the management of the Iberian monopolies[796]. Not surprisingly, the channels of tobacco distribution were fuelled by the maintenance of relations between the local Jewish community, dominated by the Sephardic component in this period, and Lisbon, a proper 'port of two seas' which in the 17th century still played a crucial role in the continental redistribution of colonial commodities from the Indian ocean and Brazil[797]. And the Livorno's Jewry demonstrated to have consolidated a solid connection with the Portuguese society, considering both *conversos* and 'old Christians'[798]: take the case of the Jews Abram Villareal, Abram

[795] See ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, "Atti criminali", reg. 3082, n. 142. Rafael Fano was one of the merchants at the top of the Jewish 'nation' of Livorno around 1650. He represented the community before the Tuscan authorities in several occasions, in particular he was among the signatories of the petition to the Livorno's Customs House to renew the important franchise of the 'liberal gift' (*benefitio libero*) to the Jewish 'nation' between 1648 and 1652, see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, nn. 24, 77, 119, 163. On the 'liberal gift', which exempted from taxation merchandise stored in Livorno for two years, see Corey Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, First edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 82–83.

[796] According to Stefano Levati, also the first tobacco farmers in the Savoyard states and in the duchy of Parma were Jews, respectively Iacob Israel Moreno from Nice and Simone Donati, see Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 76–77. For the reasons which led families of 'new Christians' – i.e. Jews converted to Christianity in order to continue operating within the Iberian empires – to control the tobacco monopoly in Spain and Portugal throughout the 17th century, see Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane, Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 213–23.

[797] See Paolo Calcagno, "Attraverso La Porta Di Lisbona : I Generi Coloniali Volano Del Commercio Luso-Genovese Tra XVII e XVIII Secolo," in *Reti Marittime Come Fattori Dell'integrazione Europea - Maritime Networks as a Factor in European Integration* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2019), 519–32. For the image of Lisbon as a port serving two seas (the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean sea) and connecting them, see Joana Sequeira and Flávio Miranda, "A Port of Two Seas: Lisbon and European Maritime Networks in the Fifteenth Century," in *Reti Marittime Come Fattori Dell'integrazione Europea - Maritime Networks as a Factor in European Integration* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2019), 339–53.

[798] As opposed to 'new Christians', former Jews who were forced to conversion in order to remain within the Portuguese kingdom, by 'old Christians' we refer to Portuguese families who professed the Christian faith for generations. This kind of cross-religious relations has clearly emerged for the case of Livorno in

Martin and Rafael Gabay who in 1661 controlled the imports of Brazilian tobacco in Livorno via Lisbon, connecting the Portuguese monopoly managed by the company Fernandes & Duarte with the agents of the Tuscan tobacco farmers in Livorno, Abram and Mosè Pais de Leon[799]. Moreover, from the in-depth study of James Boyajian on the seventeenth-century Portuguese bankers, we know that Alvaro Fernandes and Joao Duarte, the main investors in the Portuguese tobacco monopoly, belonged to families which had been engaged for decades in the traffics between Lisbon and the overseas outposts of Bahia in Brazil and Goa in the Indian subcontinent[800].

In this respect, the activity in Livorno of Pedro de Silva Enriques, consul of the 'Portuguese nation' and «*commettente delli Signori deputati della Compagnia generale degli Stati del Brasil in Regno di Portogallo*»[801], is particularly telling for understanding the actual cross-religious nature of the Jewish network involved in long-distance tobacco trade and the importance of Iberian agents for the establishment of communication channels between the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and South America[802]. In particular, according to Zamora Rodríguez, he was likely a 'new Christian' and descended from Duarte da Silva, one of the richest merchants in Lisbon since the 1630s precisely because

several studies of Lucia Frattarelli Fischer and in the work of Francesca Trivellato, who has particularly highlighted the commercial collaboration between Jews in Livorno and 'old Christians' in Lisbon, see Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, "Reti Toscane e Reti Internazionali Degli Ebrei Di Livorno Nel Seicento," *Zakhor. Rivista Di Storia Degli Ebrei d'Italia*, 2003, 93–116; Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2009), 215–16. For similar conclusion on the case of the Jewish community in Amsterdam, see Cátia Antunes, *Globalisation in the Early Modern Period: The Economic Relationship between Amsterdam and Lisbon, 1640-1705* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2004).

[799] See ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, reg. 2607, f. 334.

[800] See James C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Bankers at the Court of Spain, 1626-1650* (Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 27–29.

[801] The title of representative of the *Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil* in Livorno is attested in ASFi, *Notarile moderno*, "Protocolli", reg. 13279, ff. 158v-159r. See also Mario Baruchello, *Livorno e il suo porto: origini, caratteristiche e vicende dei traffici livornesi* (Livorno: Editrice Riviste tecniche, 1932), 387. On the Portuguese general company for the Brazilian trade, established in 1649 as a joint-stock company, see Leonor Freire Costa, *O transporte 2no Atlântico e a Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil, 1580-1663* (Lisboa: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 2002).

[802] For a general framework, see the works of Zamora Rodríguez, in particular Francisco Javier Zamora Rodríguez, "Livorno Nel Crocevia Degli Imperi Iberici," in *La Città Delle Nazioni. Livorno Ei Limiti Del Cosmopolitismo (1566-1834)* (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2016), 277–92.

of his trade with Brazil[803]. So, he could have returned to the faith of his ancestors in Livorno, but the decision to remain, at least publicly, in Catholicism is very interesting: in fact, it suggests that 'new Christians' were fundamental to enable this network to enjoy direct relations with Portuguese Brazil[804].

In fact, his business between the late 1640s and the 1650s mainly involved importing colonial commodities from Brazil via Lisbon: the new Christian identity allowed him to take on a role in the Tuscan port in the name of the chartered company for Brazilian trade promoted by the Portuguese crown[805] and, at the same time, to collaborate with the Jewish consortium which held the first tobacco monopoly in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany[806]. However, as the maintenance of solid relations between *conversos* and Jewish belonging to the Sephardic diaspora was a common and widespread reality, it often ended up under the lens of the Inquisition[807]. For example, according to a complaint

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[803] See Francisco Javier Zamora Rodríguez, "Privato versus Pubblico. L'attività Dei Primi Consoli Spagnoli Nella Livorno Granducale," *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* 17 (2010): 43–64. The scholar was mainly interested in the family Silva, which controlled the Spanish consulate in Livorno since 1677 and was related with the Silva Enriques through double marriages, following an established pattern in the patrimonial strategies of new Christian families. On Duarte da Silva, see Boyajian, *Portuguese Bankers at the Court of Spain, 1626-1650*, 126.

[804] It has been shown that the Iberian harassment of Jews had a deep impact on the composition of commercial societies involved in spice, sugar, and slave trade in Portugal: from the partnership between Jews and Italian merchants of the 15th century, they moved to an organization based on kin for 'new Christians', as this resulted the best protection against accusations of heresy or Judaizing practices. See Mario José Ferro Tavares, "Das Sociedades Comerciais de Judeus e Italianos as Sociedades Familiares de Cristaos Novos. Exemplos," in *Di Buon Affetto e Commerzio: Relações Luso-Italianas Na Idade Moderna*, ed. Nunziatella Alessandrini et al. (Lisbon: Centro de História de Além-Mar, 2012), 21–39. The use of double identity was another common practice to preserve their own trade: take the case, studied by Francesca Trivellato, of the Silvera, a Jewish family based in Livorno and engaged in long-distance trade in the second half of the 17th century, which was known under the name De Paz in Lisbon, so that they could benefit from a Christian identity for their trade with the Indian ocean, see Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*, 29–30.

[805] By the way, the establishment itself of the company in Lisbon was deeply affected by the policy of tolerance towards the 'new Christians' suggested by the Jesuit father Antonio Vieira in order to facilitate the collection of their money to finance the new venture. However, David Grant Smith has demonstrated that the shareholders of the company were largely old Christians, including Portuguese, English and Italian financiers, see David Grant Smith, "Old Christian Merchants and the Foundation of the Brazil Company, 1649," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54, no. 2 (1974): 233–59.

[806] For example, in 1649, he faced a mercantile dispute with the Flemish captain Giovanni Lunequire, regarding the delivery of merchandise shipped to Livorno, among which we find tobacco for the *appaltatori*. See ASPi, *Consoli del Mare*, "Atti civili", reg. 227, n. 13, 27/06/1649; ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, reg. 2605, ff. 114-120, 07/08/1649.

[807] The archives of the Portuguese Inquisition have been brilliantly exploited by Figueirôa-Rêgo as a revealing source on mercantile networks for tobacco trade, as the meticulous investigations on the 'new

presented to the Roman Holy Office in 1659, the Brazilian ship captain Emanuele de Sà, publicly Christian but suspected of Judaism, allegedly helped two Jewish women, also publicly Christian, to escape from the Inquisition in Lisbon and to take refuge in Livorno. During the journey, the captain would have been engaged in Genoa in «*discorsi familiari e segreti (...) con Ebrei, col dire che gli aveva portato del tabacco*»[808]. Tobacco trade may have been a pretext in this case, but it was presented as a highly plausible habit of this milieu, confirming the contribution of *conversos*, crypto-Jews, and the Livorno's Jewish nation to tobacco circulation between the Atlantic space and the Mediterranean one.

The Sephardic prominence in the redistribution of tobacco as a colonial commodity in the Mediterranean of the mid-17th century, especially along the Bahia-Lisbon-Genoa-Livorno route, encouraged Livorno's Jews to invest in the privileged business of the tobacco monopoly. But also in the Venetian case, despite the formal ban on them from participating in tax farming, local Jews and their Sephardic connections played a relevant role in the first contracts of the *partito del tabacco*. The offer for the third Venetian tobacco contract (1663-1668) signed under the names of Sebastian Magno and Giuliano Van der Mann was initially presented to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* by Joseph Aboaf, a Jewish businessmen living in Venice who was engaged in long-distance trade and, thanks to these connections, proved able to beat the concurrence for the adjudication of the monopoly[809]. The Sephardic (*Ponentina*) Jewish community in Venice enjoyed a role of cultural leadership in the broader diaspora between the late-16th century and the first half of the 17th century and, following the reversal of the policy against them in the years 1573-1574, its members gained an increasing share in the maritime trade via Corfu and in the overland traffics throughout the Balkans which connected Venice with Salonika

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Christians' suspected of Judaizing practices often provide detailed information on their business, see Joao de Figueirôa-Rêgo, "Os Homens Da Naçao e o Trato Tabaqueiro. Notas Sobre Redes e Mobilidade Geografica No Contexto Europeu e Colonial Moderno," *Anais de Historia de Além-Mar* 14 (2013): 177–200.

808 AAPi, *Sant'Uffizio*, reg. 17, ff. 143r-146r, Rome 12/10/1659; and ff. 254r-256v, Livorno 06/11/1659.

809 Joseph Aboaf presented an offer «*per quel nome che da lui sarà nominato consistente d'affitto annuo di ducati 17.100, il che rilevano per tutti essi anni 5 ducati 85.500*», which exceeded the other two offers received by the Five Sages of Trade of 15.000 and 16.040 *ducati* per year. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Pregadi 26/03/1662. For the involvement of Aboaf in long-distance trade between the Levant and northern Europe, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 155, f. 24v, Venice 26/05/1654, and ff. 163v-164r.

and Constantinople[810]. Similarly to the case of Livorno, scholars have underlined the intensity of the commercial partnership of the Venetian Jews with Portuguese 'new Christians' and with the expanding Sephardic community in Amsterdam[811]: this connection was truly important in ensuring that Venice maintained a significant share of the exchange between the Levant and northern Europe[812], carving out a role in the redistribution of Levantine goods in central Europe and of colonial commodities like tobacco in the Adriatic sea, central Europe and the western Mediterranean.

Following Jonathan Israel, a critical turning point occurred with the outbreak of the exhausting Cretan War (1645-1669), which «finally broke, or at least heavily disrupted, the crucial Venice-Salonika link, destroying the commercial vitality of the Venetian Jewry» and, consequently, leading to the economic and numerical decline of the Venetian Sephardic community[813]. However, the traces available to us on Joseph Aboaf show him engaged in the 1650s not only in trade with northern Europe, but also, together with brothers Pensi, in that with the lands of the Ottoman Empire, despite the war between the *Serenissima* and the Sublime Porte[814]. Not by chance, as remarked by the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, the new tobacco farmers, clearly thanks to the inclusion of Aboaf in the company, could supply, even in the current difficult circumstances, the state-owned monopoly with the required tobacco leaves from the Atlantic and the Ottoman Levant[815].

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[810] See David Jacoby, "Venice and the Venetian Jews in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia: Secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milano: Comunità, 1987), 29–58; Federica Ruspio, *La nazione portoghese: ebrei ponentini e nuovi cristiani a Venezia* (Torino: Zamorani, 2007).

[811] See José Gentil Da Silva, "Les Juifs Portugais Entre Lisbonne et Venise. Une Autre Vision de La Méditeerranée et de l'économie, XVI-XVIII Siècles," in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia: Secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milano: Comunità, 1987), 117–36.

[812] For the Venetian intermediation in such exchange in the previous centuries and the critical changes which affected it during the early modern age, see Herman Van der Wee, "Structural Changes in European Long-Distance Trade, and Particularly in the Reexport Trade from South to North, 1350-1750," in *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 14–33.

[813] See Jonathan I Israel, "The Jews of Venice and Their Links with Holland and with Dutch Jewry (1600-1710)," in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia: Secoli XIV-XVIII*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi (Milano: Comunità, 1987), 105.

[814] In February 1653, the brothers Pensi and Joseph Aboaf protested against the seizure by the Venetian authorities in Corfu of a boat coming from Valona in Ottoman Albania, under the pretext it transported enemy goods. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 155, f. 24v, Venice 26/05/1653. Some years later, in 1660, the petition of the Flemish merchants for the renew of commercial privileges originally granted in 1626 presents Aboaf as one of their local partners in the redistribution of the «*merci che vengono di Ponente*», see *Ibidem*, f. 163v, Venice 08/05/1660.

[815] «*I partitanti generali di questo partito del tabacco riverentemente espongono (...) che nel primo anno della corrente condotta hanno ricevuto abbondante provvisione di tabacchi di Ponente e di Levante a prezzi*

Maintaining a regular supply of such commodity from the Levant, even in the face of wartime hostilities, was after all a fundamental condition for sustaining the revenues of the *partito*, which were by no means taken for granted in the first uncertain decades after its introduction[816]. In addition, Jewish expertise allowed them to penetrate the tobacco monopoly administration, particularly as subcontractors and local retailers in some provincial territories[817]. Later on, in the 1710s, when the Venetian legislation became more discriminatory towards Jews in subcontracts and local procurement, the monopolistic merchants obtained that for the functioning of the Tobacco Farm they could «*lasciar correre il consueto*», i.e. to let the Jewish subcontractors remain in service[818].

The Sephardic, 'new Christian' and Jewish relevance in the first contracts of the *ius prohibendi* in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire does not mean that tobacco trade was fully in their hands. In fact, other economic actors took part in it. In Venice, Flemish merchants regularly imported tobacco from Amsterdam and, in general, from the *Ponente*[819], joining English merchants and ship captains who, as we have seen, had collaborated with Venetian businessmen in the early marketing of tobacco and were favored with fiscal exemptions on Atlantic merchandise calling at the Venetian

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favorevoli da' loro negozi per la scala di Ragusa», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 170, Venice 23/02/1663. During the wars between the Venetian and the Ottoman empires, the intermediation provided by the city of Ragusa for the commercial exchanges between the two areas became of the upmost importance. At the time of the outbreak of the first Morean War (1684-1699), the Five Sages of Trade discussed at length with the Venetian '*capi di piazza*' about the possibility of promoting the Venetian city of Kotor as a commercial entrepot to compete against Ragusa, but the project never found an adequate interest nor convenience in the merchants of the capital, who largely preferred to resort to the antagonistic city in the Adriatic, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mecanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 35-40, Venice 26/08/1684; f. 43, Venice 13/09/1684; ff. 55-58, Venice 28/09/1684.

816 As we can see from Table 4.2, the income raised by Venetian coffers from the tobacco monopoly experienced only slow and weak growth in the first decades after its introduction. Moreover, such small increase was due much more to the extension of the monopoly to the Venetian Dalmatia and the islands of the Levant than to any significant general improvement in the tobacco business, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Pregadi 25/04/1665 and 25/06/1667.

817 Joseph Aboaf, as procurator of the general tobacco farmers, sub-rented in a first moment to Abram de Elisso Perera and Josef Cordovero the sale of tobacco in the city of Venice and *Dogado*, then the sub-contract was carried out by another Jew, Jacob Navarro, in 1666. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Venice 07/05/1666.

818 See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 172, ff. 169-170, Venice 04/12/1713.

819 In their petitions to the Five Sages of Trade for the renewal of their fiscal benefits originally granted in 1626, the Flemish merchants indicated the commodities from the Atlantic ocean and the Western Mediterranean which were traditionally covered by the exemption: the list included tobacco among a wide set of goods, like lead, tin, beans, hides, pepper, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, carnations, madder, and sugar. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 155, ff. 5v-7r, Venice 03/08/1652.

islands of the Levant on their way to the capital[820]. Looking at Livorno, the activities of Pedro da Silva Enriques on its account and on behalf of the *Companhia geral* included partnerships with businessmen belonging to various 'nations': for instance, he had recurrent contacts with the Genoese consul in Livorno for the rent of vessels to be employed in the shipment of sugar, tobacco and Pernambuco timber along the route Bahia-Lisbon-Genoa-Livorno[821]; moreover, an English firm based in Livorno, Giovanni Farfas & company, made use of Silva Enriques to collect commodities from Brazil and re-exporting them in other marketplace of the Italian peninsula[822]. Also David Falcone, one of the members of the Jewish venture which took the first tobacco contract, had regular business relations with the English Giovanni Hall, from who he bought «*grosse partite di tabacco*»[823]. In those years, English ships not only distributed tobacco from the North American colonies in Livorno, but were the main carriers of the import of Brazilian tobacco into the Tuscan port via Lisbon[824]. In addition, the French flag began to gain importance in the imports of Levantine tobacco[825]. Among the receivers of such cargoes,

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820 «*Le mercanzie tutte così de Inglesi, come de' Fiammenghi godono il privilegio rilasciato dalla generosa grandezza di V.S. di esser esenti di dazio quando capitano nelle isole del Levante, per cui attendere l'incontro del passaggio per Venezia*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, f. 305, Venice 23/09/1687. These Atlantic players obtained significant exemptions in Livorno as well, since the Tuscan authorities were aware of the richness of their extra-European trade and competed with rival Italian ports, starting with Genoa, for attracting them by dint of facilitations. For example, in 1654, the Grand Duke granted the English and the Dutch 'nations' to be exempted from the quarantine planned for ships coming from the Iberian Peninsula if they had called in Genoa with a *patente netta*, following the petition of the English and Dutch merchants who complained of receiving worse treatment in Livorno than in Genoa. See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, ins. 1, 07/09/1654, 13/10/1654.

821 On this Luso-Genoese collaboration, see Francisco Javier Zamora Rodríguez, *La Pupilla Dell'occhio Della Toscana y La Posición Hispánica En El Mediterráneo Occidental* (Madrid: Fundación Española de Historia Moderna, 2013), 44.

822 In 1649, Giovanni Farfas begged to be exempted from the custom duties for sugar and tobacco purchased by Pedro de Silva Enriques for re-exporting them, as well as for the cargo of caviar arrived from Russia and partly destined to Venice, because he had to transfer all the merchandise to a new ship, the arrival ones being damaged. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, n. 57, Livorno 04/02/1649.

823 See ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, reg. 2604, f. 18, 05/06/1640, and f. 154, 20/11/1641.

824 See the sources of the *Uffiziali della Sanità* for the description of the ships entering the port of Livorno and of their flag, captain, crew, ports of origin and call, journey made and cargo carried. For example, for the years 1654-1657, see ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, inss. 4-5, and reg. 1819, inss. 3-6. In this respect, also Pedro de Silva Enriques received tobacco from Lisbon on English vessels, as in the case of the 10 rolls of Brazilian tobacco on the half frigate captained by Tommaso Hill arrived in Livorno on the 22nd of April 1657, see ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1819, ins. 6, 22/04/1657.

825 For example, the polacca named San Carlo, captained by the French Jacques Gilbert, arrived in the port on the 10th of September 1654, after sailing from Smirne 20 days earlier, with a cargo of silk, cotton, wool, wax, rugs, hides and tobacco, see ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, ins. 4, 10/09/1654.

we can find not only members of the Jewish community[826], but also affluent merchants of the English 'nation' and of the French one – such as Samuel Bonnell and Origen Marchant[827] –, as well as Italian businessmen based in Livorno from where they re-exported tobacco towards the other states of the peninsula[828].

From this survey, it emerges the transnational nature of tobacco business, as well as the importance of effective trading networks for its proper functioning. Officials and magistrates of the Tuscan administration, basically in the hands of the Florentine

[826] As early as 1645, the Jew Giovanni Antonio d'Antonello Veneziano received tobacco from the Ottoman Levant on French vessels and negotiated the purchases with French merchants living in Livorno, like Giovanni Napoleon and Stefano Durant, see ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, "Atti civili", reg. 2603bis, ff. 397-398, 21/03/1645.

[827] See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1819, ins. 4, 06/09/1655 and 09/11/1655. Samuel Bonnell was an English merchant of royalist sympathies residing in Livorno in the 1640s-1650s. In 1644, we find him in business with Abram Israel de Tunis, father of the two brothers who took the tobacco monopoly the following year, as insurers of the merchandise loaded on the boat called San Francesco Buonaventura of the *patron* Berni da Portoscuro, see ASPi, *Consoli del Mare*, "Atti civili", reg. 212, n. 25, 05/12/1644. In the same year, a ruling by the Court of the Livorno's Governor ordered the seizure of a cargo arriving in Livorno for Bonnell, which included tobacco shipped from London by Guglielmo Courtin, Tommaso Copiet and Madame Butler, see *Ibidem*, n. 27, 10/12/1644. In 1648, he was among those who begged for the renewal of the 'liberal gift' on behalf of the English 'nation' of Livorno: the petitioners included the English consul Morgan Read, the agent of the English government Carlo Longland, the rich merchant Nicholas Abdy, so Bonnel belonged to the social elite of the 'nation', those members who were entitled to represent the community thanks to their wealth and offices, see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, n. 19, 04/06/1648. Origen Marchant was a French merchant native of La Rochelle who had moved to Livorno in the 1620s and later became part of the nobility of the city. He was engaged in long-distance trade between Livorno and the Atlantic ports: for example, he appears among the receivers of the load of pepper, hides, sugar, tobacco, and woolen clothes shipped from Amsterdam on board of the ship called Adam et Eva, captained by the Flemish Giovanni di Salvestro, see ASPi, *Consoli del Mare*, "Atti civili", reg. 212, n. 2, 14/10/1644. On Bonell and Marchant, see also Stefano Villani, "Una Piccola Epitome Di Inghilterra, La Comunità Inglese Di Livorno Negli Anni Di Ferdinando II: Questioni Religiose e Politiche," *Cromohs-Cyber Review of Modern Historiography* 8 (2003): 1–23.

[828] This was the case of tobacco arrived in Livorno for Cesare Santini and Giuseppe Armano, see ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1818, ins. 4, 23/11/1654; *Ibidem*, reg. 1819, ins. 5, 07/08/1656. Santini was a merchant from Lucca, while Giuseppe Armano claimed the title of Venetian consul in Livorno: they both purchased tobacco in Livorno for re-exporting the global commodity to their home countries, see ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore,* "Atti civili – Suppliche", reg. 2604, n. 287, 18/04/1643. From the books of *accomandite* registered in the Florentine court of the *Mercanzia*, we learn that Armano opened a *banco di cambio e mercatura* in Livorno in 1653 for three years, with the capitals of Giovanni and Andrea Tenzini from Amsterdam and Giovanni Piatti from Venice, see ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10844, f. 156, 09/09/1653. The relation between Armano and the Venetian government shows, by the way, the blurring of boundaries between official representatives and informal agents at that time: when Armano died in 1661, the Five Sages of Trade were instructed to appoint a new consul in Livorno, but they replied to the government that «*non troviamo che il suddetto Armano si trattenesse in quella piazza in qualità di console, ma che solo per li servigi prestati in Firenze di pubblico vantaggio fosse egli stato decorato dalla S.V. del titolo e grado di Consigliere*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 155, f. 183v, Venice 02/05/1661.

patriciate at that time[829], were particularly aware of this point, since at least a part of them was all but alien to long-distance trade. Niccolò Albizzi himself, the senator who was commissioned to negotiate with the Jewish group who had proposed the tobacco monopoly to the Tuscan administration, was among the funders of the commercial house managed by Giulio del Beccuto in Livorno[830]: as we have seen, this *banco* was engaged in tobacco transactions as early as in the first years of the 1630s. Moreover, his relative Girolamo Albizzi was a wholesale traders in Livorno and he stands out as *accomandatario* for several commercial houses of *cambio e mercatura* in the 1640s-1650s[831]. Such familiarity of a part of the Florentine patriciate with global trade, via Livorno's commercial houses mainly managed by Italian merchants, translated into new opportunities as soon as some difficulties affected the Jewish company which had obtained the first tobacco monopoly in 1645. In fact, disputes erupted between the Italian and the Sephardic components of the Jewish company and the business had a hard time undermining revenues for the state and profits for the tax farmers[832]. When the contract expired in 1654, a syndicate of Florentine patricians obtained the tobacco monopoly: the new contract was signed under the names of Leonardo Signorini, Francesco Dati and Bernardo Guasconi[833]. The presence in this group of a figure like Guasconi is a further confirmation that the familiarity, now widespread in Florence, with the profits to be made

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[829] On the evolution of the grand ducal administration, see Robert Burr Litchfield, *Emergence of a Bureaucracy: The Florentine Patricians, 1530-1790* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[830] See ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10840, f. 47, 15/01/1631.

[831] For the *società in accomandita* in which Niccolò and Girolamo Albizzi were interested between the 1640s and the 1650s, see ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10843, ff. 7-8, 72, 96, 11, 118; *Ibidem*, reg. 10844, f. 152.

[832] During the first year of the tobacco monopoly, great concern spread among grand ducal officials in Florence for the controversies between the new tobacco farmers. The *Auditore alle Riformagioni* wrote to the Livorno's Governor on behalf of the Grand Duke to order him a solicit extra-legal intervention for solving the litigation: «*è noto a V.S.Ill.ma il negozio dell'Appalto del Tabacco, per il quale è grave interesse di S.A. che sia ben governato per mantener un'entrata così sicura, come vi si è, fatta di scudi 10.000 l'anno, et perché le discordie che passano tra gli ebrei appaltatori si vede soprastare qualche pericolo di disturbarlo, vuole S.A. che V.S. Ill.ma vi interponga extragiudicialmente la sua autorità, et se per l'imminente partenza ella non potesse applicarvisi, vuole la medesima allora che ella ne dia la cura a chi giudichi meglio*», see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, "Nota per scrivere al Governatore di Livorno", 22/07/1645. The affair was then entrusted to the *Auditore* of the Court of Livorno's Governor, who was requested from Florence to «*operare di maniera che si quietino, se è possible, gli interessati tra di loro o almeno camminimo di maniera che non si ritardi per questo il buon progresso dell'Appalto, del quale tiene S.A. molta premura per il grande interesse pubblico di conservare questa entrata*», see *Ibidem*, 29/07/1645.

[833] See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 2429; ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Notizie istoriche intorno alla Regalia del Tabacco".

from the tobacco trade was combined with the international ties guaranteed by the mobility of people circulating between the Mediterranean and Atlantic Europe[834].

Accordingly, though important protagonists of long-distance tobacco trade, at that time Jewish networks held by no means a market monopoly as many other networks were taking part in that business. Notwithstanding, Jewish operators continued to control the management of the tobacco monopoly also under the Florentine tax farmers, in continuity with the first company, especially in Livorno where the main warehouse and manufactures of the Tobacco Farm found place[835]. Moreover, a crucial leap forward of the annual rent in the second half of the 17th century occurred with the ongoing control over the tobacco monopoly by the Levi family, a Jewish commercial house based in Livorno[836]. In the Tuscan archives, information on this family began in the 1630s: by then, Isach Levi was head of the family, still living in Pisa and trading in bills of exchange in collaboration with other Levantine and Sephardic Jews[837]. In 1645, he was involved in maritime insurances with Abram Vais Pegna, one of the investors in the first company which took the tobacco monopoly[838]. His sons, Emanuele and Salomone Levi, participated to the great effort, described by Lucia Frattarelli Fisher, of the Livorno's

[834] A military officer from an ancient noble family, Bernardo Guasconi had strong ties with England, where he fought in the civil wars from 1642 onwards, before returning in Tuscany in 1649 and taking part in various commercial enterprises, facilitated by the vast mercantile network that a branch of his family could boast from the Levant to Russia, via Amsterdam and Venice. More biographical information on Guasconi, naturalized as English subject in 1661 under the name of Bernard Gascoigne, in Stefano Villani, "Bernardo Guasconi," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Treccani, 2003). During the 1650s, when Guasconi was living in Tuscany, we found him engaged with Odoardo Beal, an English living in Livorno, also in a Venetian-style paper manufacture located in Pisa, see ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10844, f. 186v.

[835] In 1655, when the tobacco monopoly was already in the hands of the group of Florentine patricians, the general farmers begged the grand duke to exempt their agents in Livorno, the Jews Abram and Moise Pais di Lion, from the position of *massari*, the heads of the Jewish 'nation' who were drawn by ballot among the most influential members of the community. The Tuscan government approved the request after the Livorno's Governor had informed that the two Jews «*si trovano molto occupati per questo negozio dell'Appalto*», see ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, "Atti civili", reg. 2605, f. 876r, 17/02/1655. For the warehouses and manufactures of the tobacco farm in Livorno in the 1650s, see ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 1814, ins. 2, f. 1591.

[836] Under the Levi family, the rent for the tobacco monopoly passed from 140.000 *lire* in 1663 to 262.500 *lire* in the 1720s. See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg, 42, n. 843; reg. 51, n. 146; ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 328, n. 22; reg. 375, n. 49.

[837] Among the petitions sent to the Livorno's Governor in 1634, we find the request of Isach Levi to submit to the *Massari* of Pisa the judgement over a dispute between him, Rafael Israel Gomez (defined as '*ebreo levantino*') and David Bueno concerning the payment of a bill of exchange taken from Venice, see ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, "Atti civili", reg. 2603, f. 259, 10/07/1634.

[838] See *Ibidem*, reg. 2603bis, f. 383, 15/03/1645.

Jewish nation in the central decades of the 17th century to shift part of their investments from the great deposit trade to public debt, licensed manufacturing activities and fiscal monopolies[839]. In 1650 they took over the brandy contract after the first unsuccessful management by the French Gasparo Rosignolo and in the 1660s they were involved together with Daniel Farro in the privileged sale of paper, exploiting the manufactures established in Colle Val d'Elsa[840].

But the most profitable privileged sector to invest in turned out to be that of tobacco. The Levi family kept the monopoly between 1663 and 1726 almost without interruption, inheriting it from the company Signorini, Dati and Guasconi, which had negotiated an annual fee of 105.000 *lire*, and ending up to pay 262.500 *lire* per year during the contract 1717-1726[841]. In particular, Emanuel Levi stands out for three decades as general contractor, in association with both his brother Salomone (1663-1672 and 1681-1690) and his nephew Salvatore (1672-1681). Then, another generation took over the business, with the emergence of the first son of Emanuel – Samuel Levi – and of Salomone Levi (for his part, nephew of Samuel) as the most recurrent tobacco farmers[842]. Unfortunately, the failure to keep private or institutional archives related to the activities of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in this long period precludes a detailed and in-depth study of a family that long identified its fortunes with the tobacco business and contributed to a significant upsurge of fiscal revenues. However, they were not among the most important Jewish

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[839] In addition to the tobacco monopoly, between the 1650s and the 1670s, groups of Jews obtained privileged licenses for the production of paper, spirit, coffee and alum, see Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, "Gli Ebrei Toscani Dalla Città Alla Campagna," in *Città e Campagna: Tradizioni Storiografiche e Prospettive Di Ricerca*, ed. Ann Katherine Isaacs (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1997), 146–49. For the «*concessione fatta da S.A.S. alla Nazione Ebrea di poter mettere denari nella detta Dogana di Livorno per tirarne gl'interessi a ragione del 6% annuo*», see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, n. 123.

[840] For the establishment of the brandy monopoly in 1645, see ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, n. 896, 07/08/1645. Information about the takeover of the monopoly by Emanuel Levi in ASLi, *Governatore e Auditore*, "Atti civili – Suppliche", reg. 2608, f. 177. For the involvement of Jewish groups in the privileged sale of paper in the grand duchy of Tuscany, which earned the state coffers an annual fee, see Renzo Sabbatini, *Di Bianco Lin Candida Prole. La Manifatture Della Carta in Età Modern e Il Caso Toscano* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1990), 161–66.

[841] See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg, 42, n. 843; reg. 51, n. 146; ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 328, n. 22; reg. 375, n. 49.

[842] The degree of kinship between the Levi who acted as tobacco *appaltatori generali* in these decades can be easily deduced from the patronymics listed in the *bandi* published by the grand ducal authorities. See *Bando et Ordine Da Osservarsi per Il Nuovo Appalto Del Tabacco* (Firenze: Nella stamperia di S.A.S., 1672); *Bando e Ordine Da Osservarsi per l'Appalto Del Tabacco* (Firenze: Nella stamperia di S.A.S., 1717).

families running the great deposit trade in Livorno on the eve of their first tobacco contract[843]: it was indeed the ability to get access to the management of such a fiscal tool and to maintain such a position that enabled this middle-sort Jewish family to significantly improve its condition.

For their part, granducal institutions involved in trade and taxation strongly appreciated the experience that the Levi family could provide. The uncertainty that emerges during the first contract – when the new tobacco farmers did not hide that «*tale appalto gli possa essere molto dannoso*»[844], confirming a still rather uncertain business almost 20 years after the creation of the *ius prohibendi* – even passed through a bankruptcy of the company[845], but the efforts provided in the improvement of the administration and functioning of the Tobacco Farm in the following decades led the *Auditore* Emilio Luci to state in 1683 that «*sono 20 anni in circa che [Emanuel Levi] tiene gli appalti del Tabacco e Acquavite per tutti i felicissimi stati di V.A.S., e nell'uno e nell'altro appalto ha non solamente aumentata l'entrata per l'A.V.S., ma ha dato ancora e dà tuttavia piena ed universal soddisfazione ai popoli, e corrisponde ai pagamenti con quelle puntualità, come è noto a V.A.S. et ai suoi ministri*»[846].

So, an important upsurge in revenues and profits related to the tobacco business was achieved via the specialization of a small number of commercial houses in the monopoly management. Confirmation comes from the books of mercantile correspondence of the Florentine company Cases & Vitali between 1717 and 1727[847]:

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[843] According to Cassandro, the main Jewish commercial houses of the time that received commodities from the Levant and the Atlantic ports were managed by Arbam and Isac Ergas and Salomone Nessin, followed by the families Sulema, Valenzino, Supino and Soria. For its part, the family Luz enjoyed a privileged license for the sturgeon trade with the Russian ports of Moscovia and Arcangelo. See Cassandro, "Gli Ebrei Di Livorno Nel Seicento. Aspetti Economici e Sociali," 576–77.

[844] ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Copia di suppliche e rescritti antichi relative alla transazione sulla Gabella dei Tabacchi conceduta agli Appaltatori della Regalia", Florence 09/08/1662.

[845] See *Ibidem*, "Notizie istoriche intorno alla Regalia del Tabacco", Florence 31/03/1808.

[846] *Ibidem*, "Copia di suppliche e rescritti antichi relative alla transazione sulla Gabella dei Tabacchi conceduta agli Appaltatori della Regalia", letter of Emilio Luci to the grand duke, Florence 24/01/1683.

[847] The accounting and commercial books of this Jewish company based in Florence arrived in the state archive of in the light of the court case opened in the late 1720s with another Jewish house, that of Moisè and Malachì Sacerdote. The dispute had negative consequences on the business of Cases and Vitali, who were also obliged to integrate Domenico Andrea Gavi in the management of the monopoly in 1729 and were gradually replaced by him in the following years, see ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10854, f. 138v, 09/03/1729. The documentation, kept in the archival series of the *Libri di commercio*, is indeed huge and could represent a promising base for further research on the Florentine environment of merchants and manufacturers and their connections with the members of the Jewish 'nation' in Livorno, as the company

before their direct investment in the monopoly in 1727, Cases and Vitali were involved in tobacco trade in Livorno with the Jewish Levi and Galligo families as their principal correspondents in the Tuscan port[848]. This connection suggests that also the tobacco contracts for the years 1699-1708 (under the name of Abram, Alessandro and Angelo Galligo) and 1727-1736 (under the name of Emanuel Cases and Vitale Vitali) remained in the hands of the same group of interest, which could benefit also from the financial support of some of the greatest Jewish merchants and bankers in Livorno, like the family Franco, Coen, and Saccuto[849]. Moreover, their business partnerships went beyond the boundaries of kinship and religion, as the transactions of tobacco for the monopoly led them to regular dealings with Christian commercial houses, like the Corboli in Genoa, the Huygens, Federighi and Seriman in Livorno[850]. And, as in the case of the tobacco

was involved in many sectors, but found its core business in the negotiation of textiles and fabrics. See ASFi, *Libri di Commercio*, regg. 1214-1235.

[848] In particular, from Florence, Cases and Vitali usually informed the Levi in Livorno about possible tobacco purchases through their correspondents and referred to Samuel Galligo as their partner in brokering the transactions in Livorno. See, in particular, ASFi, *Libri di Commercio*, reg. 1218, letter to Levi in Livorno, 08/07/1719. See also *Ibidem*, letters of 22/07/1719, 23/12/1719, 03/12/1721, 21/03/1722, 25/07/1722

[849] In 1705, Samuel Levi and nephews proposed themselves for the tobacco monopoly with an offer of 245.000 *lire* per year «*supplicando ancora l'A.V. a fargli grazia di dispensarli dal far deposito o investiture per la cautela, e che invece sia permesso agli oratori di dare la fideiussione di Lazzaro Coen e Fratelli di Giuseppe, obbligati con essi insieme et in solidum*», ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Copia di suppliche e rescritti antichi relative alla transazione sulla Gabella dei Tabacchi conceduta agli Appaltatori della Regalia", 07/10/1705. In 1719, the company Cases & Vitali informed the Levi in Livorno that «*il negozio dei tabacchi l'andiamo tirando avanti come sentirete dal sig. Franco di costà, al quale abbiamo consegnato il provento ottenuto*», ASFi, *Libri di Commercio*, reg. 1218, letter to Levi in Livorno, 11/07/1719. The Jewish merchant Saccuto appears, together with his Christian colleague Giovanni Battista Lari, among the financiers of the 1726 tobacco contract signed under the name of Filippo and Antonio Suardi. Moreover, when this latter was rescinded just in 1727, Saccuto and Lari presented the Tuscan fiscal institutions with their offer for the management of the tobacco monopoly amounting to 259.000 *lire* per year. See ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10854, ff. 72r-73v, 18/10/1725; ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 375, ins. 49, Pier Francesco Mormorai to Giuseppe Ginori, Florence 10/07/1727.

[850] In 1719, Cases & Vitali and Levi set with the commercial house of the Federighi a «*negotio di tabacco contro oli, cuoia e altro*», while two years later they resorted to the Corboli commercial house in Genoa and to the connections of Flemish and English merchants in Livorno (Filippo Guglielmo Huygens and David Seriman) to receive tobacco from Brazil and British north America: «*il sig. Corboli ci dice che per anco non si son completate le polizze di carico delli rolli 20 Brasil, ma che ha notizia però d'Inghilterra che devono venirne altri e di scrivere ai sig.ri Huygens e Seriman procurino ricavarsi dal Capitano, il quale deve avere le polizze di carico; e circa la vendita de' medesimi sovrascritti scriverò oggi all'istessi sig.ri Huygens che le dica de' prezzi potranno sostenere e secondo la relazione de' medesimi così potrà sortirne la compra; onde deviate ingegnarci con detto Huygens acciò suddetti prezzi conveneienti e darcene a noi l'avviso per regolarsi con detti signori a farveli ottener*». See ASFi, *Libri di Commercio*, reg. 1218, letters to Levi in Livorno, 22/07/1719 and 03/12/1721.

monopoly managed by the company Signorini, Dati and Guasconi, a collaboration between Jewish expertise in the tobacco business and Florentine patrician capitals eager to find profitable investments emerges from companies established under the names Antonio and Filippo Suardi and Emanuele Cases and Vitale Vitale for the running of tobacco contracts signed in 1725 and 1727: the main funders were Luigi Duarte and Andrea de Silva, Daniello Mastre, Giovanni Domenico Arnaldi, the Senator Ferrante Capponi and the Marquis Giovanni Galeazzo Gerini[851].

Something similar can be recognised in the Venetian Empire. As we have seen, the *partito del tabacco* debuted with very limited fiscal performance, so much so that it yielded less revenue than the Tuscan one despite counting on a larger population[852]. In addition to the above described network of Jewish personnel, fiscal institutions relied on businessmen who had gained experience in other markets to try to give momentum to the monopoly rent. In particular, in 1682, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* registered the absence of adequate offers for the new contract: no businessman meant to commit to figures close to the current annual fee, as the expiring company had to deal with many problems which hampered its profits[853]. In the end, the monopoly was awarded to the Genoese Giacomo del Pino for less than the previous contract, but his connections with the Tyrrhenian ports of Genoa and Livorno facilitated the provisions of Atlantic tobaccos, for which Venice faced particular difficulty in the event of war in Western Europe[854].

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[851] See ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10854, ff. 72r-73v, 18/10/1725, and ff. 104v-105v, 15/10/1727. For the Iberian, and probably converted from Judaism, family of Silva, who maintained the Spanish consulate in Livorno for generation, see Zamora Rodríguez, *La Pupilla Dell'occhio Della Toscana y La Posición Hispánica En El Mediterráneo Occidental*.

[852] See also the data presented in the previous chapter on the annual rent from the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire converted in silver.

[853] The Five Sages of Trade argued that the main problem was the blatant impunity of contraband: «*grandemente combattuto questo pubblico patrimonio de' molteplici contrabandi sì in questa città, come nella Terraferma, onde per mantenerlo in aumento ricercasi la rigorosa applicazione et autorità che può figurarsi la pubblica sapienza*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 161, f. 136, Venice 03/09/1682.

[854] Del Pino also inaugurated the practice to request authorisation from the Venetian government to supply the provinces of the *Terraferma* with Atlantic tobaccos coming overland from Genoa and Livorno without passing from Venice: the first decree issued by the Senate granting such permission to the tobacco farmers was released on the 13th of August 1692 to Giacomo Del Pino, following the effects of the maritime battles during the Nine Years' War; then, the Senate replicated similar measures on 17th January 1694, 3rd August 1697, 18th November 1702 and 20th September 1709. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 170, Pregadi 20/09/1709. Such measure was in derogation of the *capitoli* of the tobacco monopoly that provided importation of all tobaccos from *Levante* and *Ponente* into Venice, to pay the custom duties there

Maintaining the monopoly for 10 years, del Pino could improve the overall yield of the *partito* of 12.000 *ducati*[855].

At a closer look, these were very small improvements: at the turn of 1700, the annual nominal rent of the Venetian tobacco monopoly in silver grams was still lower than in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Conversely, the first half of the new century registered a much stronger growth rate, increasing monopoly revenues by almost 5 times in 45 years. I argue that one of the most important factors in such an upsurge was represented by the greater involvement of Greek mercantile networks in the tobacco business. Scholars have often underlined the importance of Greek merchants for the Venetian trade in the eastern Mediterranean and the commercial intermediation with Atlantic maritime powers in the Venetian Ionian islands[856]. The apogee of their weight in the Venetian economic sphere, marked also by the rise of big Greek shipowners, lies exactly between the 17th and 18th centuries: in particular, their contribution proved crucial in connecting the capital city of Venice with the *Stato da Mar* and in reconfiguring the imperial spaces of trade with the Ottoman Levant[857].

Regarding tobacco trade, we note that from the first decades of the 18th century, some Greek trading houses established in Venice increased their imports of tobacco from the Ottoman Empire. From a document of 1712, we learn that the biggest players in

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and then be redistributed for the provinces of the *Terraferma* and of the *Stato da Mar*. However, as reported in a writing of the Five Sages of Trade, «*col motivo poi delli frequanti pericoli prodotti dale guerre che ardevano tra le Nazioni del Ponente, non venivano condotti in questa città i Tabacchi di quelle parti, fu dalla Pubblica clemenza concessa l'abilità ai Partitanti passati e precedenti di poterli condurre in Terraferma per via di Genova e Livorno*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 172, f. 162, Venice 22/11/1713.

[855] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 324-327, Venice 05/12/1687.

[856] Venice assumed a very important role for the Greek world following the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453: a strong Greek community gradually developed in the city, benefitting from the protection of high culture and from the tolerance for the Greek Orthodox rite guaranteed by the *Serenissima*. For a more in-depth look, see Eurigio Tonetti and Maria Francesca Tiepolo, eds., *I Greci a Venezia: atti del convegno internazionale di studio, Venezia 5 -7 novembre 1998* (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2002); Despina Vlami, Chrysa A. Maltezou, and Angeliki Tzavara, eds., *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: uomini, spazio, idee (13.-18. sec.): atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 3-7 dicembre 2007* (Venezia: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 2009). Progressively, the Greek community gained economic weight, becoming an important component of the long-distance trade that affected several regions of the Venetian empire. For an updated research on these connections, see Maria Fusaro, "Cooperating Mercantile Networks in the Early Modern Mediterranean," *The Economic History Review* 65, no. 2 (2012): 701–18.

[857] See Ugo Tucci, "I Greci Nella Vita Marittima Veneziana," in *I Greci a Venezia*, ed. Maria Francesca Tiepolo and Eurigio Tonetti (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2002), 243–56.

tobacco trade in the marketplace were the *banchi* of Eredi Andrea Cottoni, Fratelli Sarro and Lambro Maruzzi, Greek mercantile houses long-established in Venice, and that they traded mainly tobacco leaves grown in Macedonia and Epirus[858]. These tobaccos came in large part from the marketplace of Salonika, but also the port of Durazzo in Ottoman Albania began to acquire a relevant role as a redistribution center for the commodities of the Greek peninsula during the ongoing military conflicts with the Sublime Porte[859]. Such flows provided a safe supply of the fundamental commodity for the Venetian tobacco monopoly in such a conjuncture: in particular, from the *libretti* of commodities transported on Venetian ships from Durazzo to Venice realized by the Venetian consul in Durazzo, we can see that the *partitante generale* Paolo Grassi (1703-1708) was largely supplied with tobacco leaves by Greek mercantile houses established in Venice, in particular those of *Fratelli Sarro*, *Demetrio Coletti e Compagni* and *Eredi Andrea Cottoni*[860].

In addition, after the experimentation, following the scheme adopted by John Law in France, of awarding the tobacco monopoly to the *Compagnia della Nuova Istituzione*[861], some of these Greek families began to invest directly in the *partito del*

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[858] Of a total amount of 617.100 pounds of tobacco stored in the public warehouses, 555.000 belonged to the Greek mercantile houses of Lambro Maruzzi and *Fratelli Sarro*. Moreover, the recent arrival of 400.000 pounds of tobacco leaves, still under quarantine in the lazarets, was entirely composed by tobaccos from Arta in the Epirus and Salonika in Macedonia. See the notes in ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 354, n. 3174, Venice 19/11/1712.

[859] As highlighted by Nicolas Svoronos, until the peace of Passarowitz with the Ottoman empire (1718), Venetian trade with Salonika was in serious difficulty, though Greek intermediation ensured the preservation of not insignificant traffic flows. In particular, wars and reprisals carved out a new role for Adriatic ports like Split and, above all, Durazzo as marketplaces where local merchants, especially Jews and Greeks, conveyed commodities from Macedonia, Albania, and eastern Balkans to be re-exported towards Venice in turn of salt and manufactured goods. See Nicolas G Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), 169–71. For the importance of such traffic flows for Venetian trade, in particular for the export of salt and manufactured goods, see the relations of the *Deputati al Commercio* in ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 211, ff. 127v-131r, Venice 03/04/1715; reg. 212, ff. 278-286, Venice 20/03/1717.

[860] On the side of Durazzo, there were members of the same families or other Greek correspondents who sent tobaccos both from Ottoman Albania and Macedonia to their correspondents in Venice: this was the case of Rado Coletti, Constantin Paico, Adamo Papà, Adamo Gira, Andrea Dana and Giorgio Varetto. See at length ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli – Durazzo", reg. 661.

[861] In 1716, the *système* promoted by the Scottish financier John Law in France awarded the tobacco monopoly to the new Western company under the name of Jean Ladmiral in turn of 4.020.000 *lire tornesi*. The company (called *Compagnie des Indes* since 1719) was a privileged chartered company which benefitted from the new system for the collection of public credit designed by Law and, even after the resounding bankruptcy of the project, it maintained until 1730 the tobacco monopoly as another source for

tabacco. In 1727, the tobacco monopoly was obtained by Zorzi Crissafida, who resulted as *partitante generale* and was funded by the company *Eredi di Andrea Cottoni*[862]. From a report of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* written on 15th September 1729, we learn that the company of the tobacco monopoly had been extended to other commercial houses: Zorzi Cottoni, director of the company *Eredi di Andrea Cottoni*, had reported that acts for the *partito del tabacco* «*siano firmate non più da D. Nadal Berti, ma bensì di carattere di D. Simon Maruzzi per le ditte ora appaltatrici, cioè Eredi di Andrea Cottoni, Maruzzi e Zanchi*»[863]. In fact, the company formed for the management of the tobacco monopoly was divided into 20 *carati*, i.e. shares representing the invested capital: 8 owned by the company *Eredi di Andrea Cottoni*, 8 owned by the company *Lambro e Simon Fratelli Maruzzi* and other 4 owned by Giuseppe and Zuanne Zanchi from Bergamo. The company Cottoni, Maruzzi & Zanchi held the tobacco monopoly for three consecutive contracts (1728-1743), providing the state coffers with an important surge in the annual

its funding. See Marc Vigié and Muriel Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot: amateurs de tabac, fermiers généraux et contrebandiers sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris]: Fayard, 1989), 265–67. With regard to Venice, in 1719 the *Deputati al Commercio* informed the Senate about the proposal, made by a secret person, for the creation of a privileged joint-stock company explicitly modeled on the chartered companies established in Great Britain, France and the United provinces of the Netherlands. Its core business had to be the revival of Venetian manufacturing production useful for export trade, looking in particular at the sectors of woollen cloths, silk, glass and hides. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 213, ff. 28r-29v, Venice 30/03/1719; ff. 30v-32v, Venice 27/06/1719; ff. 146v-147r, Venice 02/08/1720. The Venetian magistracy endorsed enthusiastically the project, in particular with Polo Renier, described by Walter Panciera as the «*più convinto animatore dell'iniziativa*», and the *Compagnia di Nuova Istituzione* began actually to operate in summer 1720 with several economic privileges granted by the government, to which the tobacco monopoly was added in 1722. See also Walter Panciera, *Fiducia e affari nella società veneziana del Settecento*, CLEUP (Padova, 2001), 121–35. For a framing of the Venetian affair of the *Compagnia di Nuova Istituzione* within the proper European fever of the time for joint-stock companies designed for privileged trade, see Stefano Condorelli and Daniel Menning, eds., *Boom, Bust, and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720 Stock Market Bubble* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019).

[862] The new contract for the tobacco monopoly was signed in 1727 by D. Zorzi Crissafida, while on 23rd February 1728 the company *Eredi di Andrea Cottoni* obtained the management of the duty on the tobacco exports: this latter consisted in the immediate payment of 23.000 *ducati* to state coffers in turn of the interest rate of 4%, «*quali pro' devono essergli corrisposti dalla vendita del Tabacco per esser formato creditor Zorzi Crissafida partitante generale dello stesso*». See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 890, Venice 16/05/1727, 23/02/1728, 03/01/1729.

[863] *Ibidem* Venice, 15/09/1729.

fiscal yield up to 152.145 *ducati*, a sum extremely more relevant of the 35.036 *ducati* collected per year in the last decade of the 17th century[864].

For the following twenty years (1743-1763), the Venetian Tobacco Farm was dominated by two of the wealthiest members of Venice's Greek community: Florian Coletti, head of Demetrio Coletti & Co., a leading tobacco import firm in Venice since the early 1700s, and Demetrio Perulli, a prominent merchant and shipowner of Greek origin, whose ships were immediately made available for the supply of the Tobacco Farm[865]. In Venice, as elsewhere, these families collaborated not only with members of the Venetian mainland nobility, such as the skilled financier Giovanni Battista Salvi from Bergamo[866], but also formed structural alliances with key figures of the Venetian patriciate. One notable example is the group of merchants and financiers who, under the leadership of Count Iseppo Mangilli, controlled the Venetian tobacco tax farming during the 1760s and 1770s. Their influence was bolstered by their close ties to Andrea Tron and Francesco Donà, prominent figures in Venetian politics and members of the faction that emerged from the internal conflicts within the patriciate at the time[867].

So, while the wars in western Europe created substantial headaches for Venice regarding the supply of Atlantic tobaccos, the Greek mercantile networks proved capable of overcoming the difficulties posed by the conflicts with the Ottoman Empire. At first, they intensified their involvement in the tobacco trade, finding an important source of profit and securing a safer supply channel for the monopoly. Then, some families combined their mercantile activity with investments in the monopolistic business, thanks

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[864] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 374, n. 13, and reg. 399, n. 3; ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", regg. 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 890; ASVe, *Miscellanea Soranzo*, reg. 14.

[865] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 880; ASVe, *Fraterna Grande di S. Antonino per i poveri infermi e bisognosi*, "Archivio privato Perulli", regg. 3, 6-7, 11, 39-43, 46.

[866] On the collaboration between Demetrio Perulli and Giovanni Battista Salvi for the salt and tobacco monopolies and their re-export trade, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 216, ff. 72r-73v, Venice 31/08/1743.

[867] On the relationship between the group of financiers who sustained the tobacco contract under the name of Iseppo Mangilli and the political faction headed by Andrea Tron, see Biblioteca del Museo Civico Correr, *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 2505, nr. 3. See also Paolo Ulvioni, "Politica e Riforme a Venezia Nel Secondo Settecento. Il 'Piano Daziale,'" in *Profili Di Storia Veneta*, ed. Umberto Corsini (Venezia: Università degli Studi Ca' Foscari, 1985), 65–94; Piero Del Negro, "Introduzione," in *L'ultima Fase Della Serenissima*, ed. Piero Del Negro and Paolo Preto, vol. 8, Storia Di Venezia (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1998), 1–80.

to the experience they had accumulated in the tobacco sector[868]. And, similarly to what happened in Tuscany with a handful of Jewish mercantile houses, they specialized in such a business and contributed to a steady growth in public revenues.

2.2 The turnover of networks and the monopoly administration

The specialization of some families as tobacco farmers, thanks to their belonging to some of the mercantile networks mostly involved in the long-distance trade of such a commodity, progressively lost its own momentum. With different timeframes, the income from the tobacco monopolies apparently reached a sort of peak between the 1720s and the 1740s. Actually, this trend can be observed not only for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, but also in the other states of the Italian peninsula, with generalized stagnation and even, especially in the case of Genoa and Naples, a remarkable decrease in public revenues[869]. Should we interpret this development as a signal of the economic depression and of the negative commercial conjuncture which hit on the Italian peninsula in the 1730s[870]? Or should we listen to officials and tax farmers of that time who regularly point the finger of blame at contraband[871]? Undoubtedly, a concurrence of causes was at stake, but one of the main consequences was the substitution of old dominant networks with others on the rise. Scholars have debated on the limits of mercantile networks: kinship ties could represent proper constraints for extending trade

[868] Also the families Coletti and Perulli, who invested in the tobacco monopoly between the 1740s and 1750s, were of Greek origin. See Table 4.2. More on Coletti and Perulli in the following section.

[869] See Roberto Mantelli, "Il Consumo e La Tassazione Del Tabacco Nell'Italia Dei Secoli XVI-XVIII," in *Fra Spazio e Tempo. Studi in Onore Di Luigi de Rosa*, vol. 1 (Napoli: Esi, 1995), 74–74; Cinzia Capalbo, *L'economia del vizio: il tabacco nello Stato pontificio in età moderna fra produzione e consumo* (Napoli: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1999), 73; Paolo Calcagno, "L'«impresa Generale Del Tabacco». Come Genova Provò a Sfruttare a Fini Fiscali Uno Dei Massimi Processi Di Mondializzazione Degli Scambi Tra XVII e XVII Secolo," *Nuova Rivista Storica* 101, no. 2 (2017); Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 97–104.

[870] On this theme, the considerations provided by Franco Venturi still exert a great influence in the interpretation of such decade for the Italian states as the «*punto più basso dello sgretolamento politico, della depressione economica, della delusione intellettuale*», see Franco Venturi, *Settecento Riformatore. Da Muratori a Beccaria*, vol. 1 (Torino: Einaudi, 1969), 3. By the way, the economic crisis of the time was demonstrated by the scholar with a document stored in the archive of Turin describing the export of wine from the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, passed from 81.059 barrels in 1731 to 35.275 in 1739. See *Ibidem*, 15.

[871] See, among many examples, the complaint raised by tobacco farmers and the following analyses by state officials in ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, n. 17, Venice 05/06/1721; ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 6, n. 261, Carlo Rinuccini to Giacinto dal Vigna, Florence 19/09/1720; and n. 270, Giacinto dal Vigna to the grand duke, Livorno 07/09/1720.

relationships and mercantile networks risked to become a trap when new information and economic opportunities developed outside of them[872]. Was this turnover the outcome of the biases that mercantile networks could face in the market? Or did the intervention of the fiscal institutions play a more central role in the transition?

First, we must note that the turnover of the groups at the top of the tobacco monopolies came during periods of poor financial performance. In Venice, the company *Cottoni, Maruzzi and Zanchi*, after the notable increase in public revenues guaranteed with the first contract, faced much more challenges in the following decade. An investigation conducted by the *Prior del Collegio* in 1730 on the best method of accounting «*che ponga in più chiarezza la scrittura e possa vedersi facilmente col ricapito la disposizione e consumo di ogni genere e sorte di tabacco*» revealed, inter alia, the negative conjunction for the provision of tobaccos for the state-owned monopoly and the bad consequences on the quality of products for sale[873]. In addition, the annual fee knew only very little increase in the second (1733-1738) and third (1738-1743) contracts[874]. The uncertainties surrounding the tobacco monopoly were so relevant that potential investors were turned away when the contract came up for renewal: the Senate decreed the traditional public auction, including the possibility of submitting a bid for a single province, and for 7 times in December 1740 the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* went to Rialto to receive offers, but on all such occasions «*ne fu offerto cosa alcuna e fu rimesso*

[872] See Claude Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947: Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Panama*, Cambridge Studies in Indian History and Society 6 (Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Haggerty, "I Could 'Do for the Dickmans'"; David Hancock, "The Trouble with Networks: Managing the Scots' Early-Modern Madeira Trade," *The Business History Review* 79, no. 3 (2005): 467–91.

[873] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 890, Venice 27/04/1730. Strammeno Lotti, *Prior del Collegio*, informed the Five Sages of Trade of the decision made by the minister of the tobacco farm, Mr. Angelini, to return to the accounting method in force before 1722, whereby the purchases were transcribed without distinguishing «*ogni condizion di tabacco, sia d'Albania, di Salonicco, Giannina, Arta, Missolongi e Serraglio, et altri vari luoghi, da dove era et è solito capitarne*». However, during 1729, the main problem for the business had been an insufficient supply of tobacco for the domestic consumption and the resulting practice of mixing different types of leaves: «*ridotti li tabacchi a misura che giungono in quantità di pochi, vengono riposti in magazzini e mischiati tra loro per ordinario da gente poco adusa a discernere, cogliendo qual condizion di tabacco le passa per le mani, tanto che non può calcolarsi salutare una tal pratica*».

[874] From 144.640 *ducati* during the first contract, the annual fee grew to only 149.613 and 152.145 *ducati* per year respectively for the second and the third contracts. See Table 4.2.

l'incanto»[875]. Eventually, when hope began to falter, «*fu esibita polizza secreta da D. Francesco Peretti per li nomi che dichiarerà*»[876].

The submission of a 'secret bill' by a lawyer or agent of investors who remained initially unknown was a way to open a parallel negotiation between fiscal institutions and interest groups that signaled willingness, but also certain conditions, to run the monopoly. In this case, behind Francesco Peretti, there was a consortium of financiers which had acquired expertise and relevant profits in the management of several Venetian *partiti*, also thanks to affinity and contiguity with power blocs and factions of the Venetian patriciate[877]. This group kept his hands on the tobacco monopoly for 4 consecutive contracts (1743-1763) and, in continuity with what we found for the company Cottoni, Maruzzi & Zanchi, it was animated by businessmen of Greek origin who had been involved in tobacco trade between the Venetian and the Ottoman empires: in fact, among them, we note the company *Demetrio Coletti & compagni*, represented by Florian Coletti, which was among the major receivers of tobacco in Venice since the first decades of the 18th century[878]; but also the presence of a great merchant and shipowner of Greek origin, like Demetrio Perulli, whose ships began immediately to supply the *partito del tabacco* with cargoes of leaves exported from Salonika[879].

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[875] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 880, Venice 29/12/1740.

[876] *Ibidem*, Venice 27/02/1741.

[877] Scholars of the 18th-century political conflicts in Venice have abundantly underlined the formation of factions and competing interest groups within the patriciate and its clientele, which were usually united by consistent priorities in foreign policy and relevant domestic political issues, such as the control of public debt or jurisdictional and ecclesiastical policy. Along the conflicts between '*vecchi*' and '*giovani*', '*grandi*' and '*poveri*', the control of public services, such as the postal service, and of the farming out of important fiscal contracts, starting with the most profitable ones on salt and tobacco, became crucial topics of the clash, driving the actions of these interest groups. See Giovanni Tabacco, *Andrea Tron (1712-1785) e la crisi dell'aristocrazia senatoria a Venezia* (Trieste: Istituto di Storia Medioevale e moderna, 1957), 166–73; Paolo Ulvioni, "Politica e Riforme a Venezia Nel Secondo Settecento. Il 'Piano Daziale,'" in *Profili Di Storia Veneta*, ed. Umberto Corsini (Venezia: Università degli Studi Ca' Foscari, 1985), 65–94; Giovanni Scarabello, "Il Settecento," in *La Repubblica Di Venezia Nell'età Moderna: Dal 1517 Alla Fine Della Repubblica*, ed. Gaetano Cozzi, Michael Knapton, and Giovanni Scarabello (Torino: Utet, 1992), 568–646; Piero Del Negro, "Introduzione," in *L'ultima Fase Della Serenissima*, ed. Piero Del Negro and Paolo Preto, vol. 8, Storia Di Venezia (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1998), 1–80.

[878] On the composition of the company for the new contract on the tobacco monopoly, see ASVe, *Fraterna S. Antonin*, "Carte Perulli", reg. 23, "Partito dei Tabacchi Salvi, Perulli, Coletti". For the participation of the mercantile house *Demetrio Coletti & Compagni* in tobacco trade in the first decades of the 18th century, see again at length ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli – Durazzo", reg. 661.

[879] On tobacco transported on Perulli's ships during the tobacco contract 1743-1748, see ASVe, *Fraterna S. Antonin*", "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 6, Demetrio Perulli to Giovanni Battista Salvi, Venice

However, the additional element that characterized this group was the full integration with the Venetian society, up to the access to the title of Count for the Perulli family[880], and, more interestingly for our perspective, the consolidated familiarity with the world of privileged monopolies. The first tobacco contract signed by this group under the name Salvi & Giro was animated by Giovanni Battista Salvi, a nobleman from the Venetian *Terraferma* who had already put his hands in the lucrative salt monopoly for the territories *al di qua del Mincio* in the 1730s, a state contract in which also the families Coletti and Perulli were involved with continuity as shareholders[881]. These latter were particularly important as they controlled the production in the rich salt pans of Santa Maura, a fief of the Perulli, extending also such activity to other Ionian islands and directly organizing the shipping of such commodity to Venice[882]. The outcome in the

29/08/1746. On the commissions for tobacco purchases in Salonika by the company Salvi, Perulli and Coletti, see also ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli – Salonicco", reg. 743, Pietro Coch to Five Sages of Trade, Salonika 13/08/1754. On Demetrio Perulli as one of the greatest interprets of the revival of Venetian shipbuilding and long-distance trade after the new legislation on reduced fares and privileges for the '*navi atte*', see also Sergio Noto, "Ultime Vele Veneziane Verso Ponente. Prime Ricerche Sugli Uomini d'affari al Tramonto Della Serenissima: I Peruli," in *Venezia e l'Europa. Soldati, Mercanti e Riformatori*, ed. Francesco Vecchiato (Verona: Libreria universitaria editrice, 1994), 221–71.

[880] Michiel Perulli, native of Athens, and since the 1680s among the most influential members of the Greek-Orthodox community in Venice, obtained in 1703 from the *Pien Collegio* the acknowledgement of the noble status for himself and his two nephews, Spiridione and Michiel. Then, in 1715, Demetrio Perulli, son of Spiridione, thanks to his marriage with Eugenia Macula, daughter of the Count Bernardo Macula, a family of rich and noble exiled from Athens, inherited also the fief of Santa Maura (which included the island of Santa Maura – i.e. Lefkada in the Ionian sea – and the territories of Prevesa and Vonizza, all conquered by the Venetian fleet during the first Morean War and formally recognised as territories of the *Serenissima* with the peace of Carlowitz in 1699), where the Perulli had already established a commercial base and land estate. While Demetrio remained active in large-scale trade and member of the Greek-Orthodox community in Venice, his son Spiridione converted definitively to Catholicism and mitigated his cultural and linguistic ties with his ancestral lands. See Vincenzo Ruzza, *La famiglia Perulli da Atene a Venezia: con notizie biografiche di molti suoi membri* (Vittorio Veneto: Grafiche De Bastiani, 2000).

[881] On Giovanni Battista Salvi as main investor in the salt monopoly, see ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 45, Venice 12/07/1739. On the company Salvi & Coletti which ran the salt monopoly *al di qua del Mincio* in the 1740s and 1750s, see *Ibidem*, reg. 51. These families remained for decades as the main investors in such a privileged trade: in 1764, the shareholders of the monopoly were Antonio Salvi, Florian Coletti, Alessandro Gardin, Demetrio and Spiridione Perulli, while still in 1788 Spiridione Perulli had a legal dispute with Niccolò Coletti related to their shares in the same monopoly. See ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Carte Perulli", regg. 22 and 49.

[882] In 1731, Demetrio Perulli subscribed the first private agreement with the Count Sordina for the exploitation of the salt pans on the island of Corfu, see ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 45, Venice 10/05/1731. In 1743, he submitted a petition to Venetian authorities in which he enumerated the success of his various activities (the production of salts '*all'uso di Trapani*' in Santa Maura, the construction of four '*navi atte*' and the plantation of a certain herb to be converted in ash) and he asked for the exclusive right to introduce the production of '*Sali grossi*' in the island of Zante, because it was high

administration of the salt monopoly had been very advantageous for the Venetian Empire's budget[883] and the low price achieved for the salt from Santa Maura made a decisive contribution to regaining for Venice the supply of salts for Piedmont and for the state of Milan, which had been successfully challenged in previous decades by Trieste[884]. The skills acquired in the salt sector by this consortium were considered essential for the revival of the ailing *partito del tabacco* by fiscal institutions[885] and such choice brought considerable success: as highlighted by Venetian officials,

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likelihood that the Western vessels which landed there for the supply of currants could be interested in the provision of this kind of salt, which they normally bought in Trapani. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 216, ff. 72r-73v, Venice 31/08/1743. Of course, his activity of shipbuilder was strictly interconnected with the production of salt, as his owned vessels regularly transporting such commodity from the Ionian islands to Venice, see ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", regg. 3-4, "Inventari di navi diverse possedute dal conte Perulli". Finally, Coletti appears among a group of Greek businessmen (Coletti, Petropoli and Papadopoli) involved with Perulli in the trade of the salt from Santa Maura. See the correspondence of Demetrio Perulli on this point in ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Carte Perulli", reg. 3.

[883] The revenues for the Venetian budget from the salt monopolies reached 702.199 *ducati* in 1757, while they were stationary around 590.000 *ducati* in 1736, see BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. CCC LXXV (=81)*, "Rendite e pro' della Dominante, 1757"; *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia. Bilanci Dal 1736 al 1755*, vol. III (Venice: Premiato Stabilimento Grafico Visentini, 1903), 2–47.

[884] The re-export of salt to Milan via Venice was a traditional and lucrative trade for merchants and for state coffers, but since the beginning of the 18th century the competition from the marketplace of Trieste, favoured by the common belonging to Habsburg domains, became very effective. A first opportunity to make that salt transit «*si conservi nella Dominante e non vada a finire in mano della Compagnia di Trieste*» took place in 1726, when the new tax farmer in Milan, Giuseppe Tansi, behind whom there was the influent and powerful Baron von Tinti, claimed the freedom to sign contracts for salt provisions with other parties, because the Trieste's company lacked some requirements, in particular a sufficient number of ships, to carry on successfully that business. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 214, ff. 197r-198v, Venice 10/12/1726; reg. 215, ff. 1r-2v, Venice 29/01/1727, and ff. 2v-3r, Venice 04/02/1727. However, the company Renghenfeld & Illebran based in Trieste managed to took control of the supply of the salt farm in Milan, undermining the position of the Venetian merchants despite the dispatch of an agent to Vienna to try to close the deal. Only in the 1740s, at the initiative of the company Salvi & Perulli, the project of «*rimettere sull'antica via di quesat piazza l'Impresa de' Sali per lo Stato di Milano*» regained momentum, by exploiting the cheap production of salt in the island of Santa Maura. See *Ibidem*, reg. 216, ff. 19r-24r. Venice 29/04/1741. Moreover, with regard to the Savoyard state, Demetrio Perulli was involved in the distribution of salt in Piedmont, especially in the province of Novara: on 20th November 1744, he subscribed a contract with Giuseppe Antonio Coppo, official for the department of Novara of the royal revenues of the Savoyard state, for such provision. See ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 47, ins. 15, Venice 20/11/1744. Also other contracts signed directly with the *Azienda delle Gabelle* of the Savoyard state are stored in this folder.

[885] See in particular the considerations provided by the Five Sages of Trade on the financial strength and experience of the «*partitanti generali della futura condotta del Partito del tabacco, già conduttori del partito dei Sali al di qua del Mincio*», in ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 178, ff. 153r-155r, Venice 30/03/1741.

«*se nella classe de' contratti si volesse porre anche le tre condotte del Partito del Tabacco sostenute da Perulli non si potrà negargli il merito di aver avvantaggiato la cassa pubblica di 600.000 ducati, coll'aumento delle offerte quando il Principe nelle condotte antecedenti sostenute dai sig.ri Maruzzi non ebbe altro aumento che di 20 a 30.0000 ducati per condotta, sicché egli impiegò le proprie applicazioni non solamente a beneficio proprio, come fecero i suoi antecessori, ma anche a vantaggio sensibile del Pubblico Erario, dal che ridondar ne dovrebbe merito et il Pubblico aggradimento*»[886].

Thus, a new positive season for the Venetian tobacco monopoly occurred in the mid-18th century thanks to the rise of interest groups of financiers who identified in the greatest fiscal contracts a remarkable opportunity for their profits. Such groups included merchants wishing to diversify their investments, like Giovanni Pommer who in 1749 entered with 4 *carati* in the company of the *partito del tabacco* and within a few years had a claim of 120.870 *ducati* against Demetrio Perulli[887]. They resorted to agents and skilled entrepreneurs, who usually put their names down as owners of the company, while the big financiers stayed in the shadows enjoying their rents. Iseppo Mangilli, owner of the tobacco contract between the 1763 and 1771, stands out as agent of Spridione Perulli in the private agreements for the provisions of salts from Santa Maura to the state-owned monopoly in 1773[888] and, in his turn, as shareholders in the salt monopoly *al di qua del Mincio* in 1780[889]. Girolamo Manfrin, mocked in satires hostile to him for his humble

[886] ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 51, "Informazione sopra I contratti oltre l'investiture delle Saline di Santa Maura". The annual fee from the tobacco monopoly for the state coffers passed from 152.145 *ducati* under the last contract with the company Cottoni, Maruzzi & Zanchi (1738-1743) to 274.860 *ducati* under the last contract for the company Salvi & Perulli (1758-1763). See Table 4.2.

[887] See the private agreement for the shares of the tobacco monopoly in ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 943, Venice 23/06/1749. For the claim of the huge credit by Giovanni Giacomo and Cristoforo Pommer, sons of Giovanni, and the following adjustment through the granting by Demetrio and Spiridione Perulli to the Pommer brothers of sums on the future sale of the salts of Santa Maura, see *Ibidem*, Venice 29/01/1759.

[888] See ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 50, Iseppo Mangilli to the Savio Cassier, Venice 06/03/1773. From the same letter, we find information also on the company *Mangilli & Compagni* which had run the tobacco monopoly in the previous years: among the investors, we find again Spiridione Perulli, who accordingly continued to finance the *partito del tabacco* also under the contract signed by Iseppo Mangilli.

[889] «*Ho ricevuto io sottoscritto dal sig. conte Spiridione Perulli ducati 1.000 valuta corrente e questi sono per il primo comparto di utili nell'attuale partito generale de' Sali di qua del Mincio a me spettanti per la*

origins[890], ensured to the Venetian budget another important upsurge in tobacco revenues between 1779 and the fall of the oligarchic republic in 1797[891] but his first efforts to obtain the monopoly even took him to prison because: as a person still subjected to parental authority, he had submitted in 1769 a bid that was not adequately supported by solid investors[892]. His later success relied most of all on his ability to raise funding from various '*capitalisti*', as defined in sources, with large amounts of money to invest[893]. Generally speaking, the growing experience in tax farming and the considerable availability of capital of these financial groups made it possible to manage a business of ever-increasing size and with ever-increasing resources needed, while at the same time securing a further increase in fiscal revenues.

Looking at the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, we observe similarities and some divergences. The families who had monopolized for decades the sector faced growing problems in the late 1720s. In 1727, the company run by Filippo and Antonio Suardi, which had obtained the granducal tobacco monopoly the year before, declared bankruptcy: the high fee negotiated with Tuscan fiscal institutions, set at 280.000 *lire* per year, resulted no longer sustainable and, consequently, the contract was rescinded[894]. After this outcome, Emanuel Cases and Vitale Vitali presented an offer for the monopoly under the condition of «*valersi per l'amministrazione e governo dell'appalto di 6 o*

porzione di 1 carato dal sig. Conte suddetto donatomi per scrittura primo marzo 1772, Io Iseppo Mangilli affermo», ASVe, *Fraterna di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 44, Venice 11/02/1780.

[890] In a particularly offensive manner, a satirical sonnet appeared in the 1790s depicted Manfrin «*in mezzo al fango e dalla merda nato*», see BMCVe, *Mss. Cicogna*, reg. 2947, ins. 18, "Sonetti, ossiano Satire contro il Manfrin impresario de' Tabacchi", n. 1.

[891] Usually, the merit of such increase has been entirely recognised to the entrepreneurial skills of Manfrin, see Vincenzo Fontana, "Girolamo Manfrin e La Manifattura Tabacchi a Venezia Di Bernardino Maccaruzzi," *Bollettino Dei Musei Civici Veneziani* 22 (1977): 51–63; Martina Frank, "Manfrin, Girolamo," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 2007).

[892] On the first offer by Manfrin for the tobacco monopoy in 1769 and his subsequent imprisonment, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 193, ff. 11r-12r, Venice 22/04/1769; BMCVe, *Mss. Cicogna*, reg. 2505, ins. 3.

[893] Among the financiers who invested «*capitali a pubblica cauzione*» for the tobacco contract signed by Manfrin for the years 1779-1787, there were the Count Girolamo Ranuzzi from Bologna, the Marquis Panno, two descendants of the Maruzzi family, the brothers Costantin and Lambro, and the merchant Pietro Vanautgarden, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 885, Venice 19/02/1779.

[894] The information can be drawn from a letter of the *Auditore* Pier Francesco Mormorai, who stated to have been involved by the grand duke in the drafting of the new tobacco contract, by virtue of his legal knowledge, which was particularly sought after by the sovereign after the bankruptcy of the company Suardi, see ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 375, n. 49, Pier Francesco Mormorai to Giuseppe Ginori, Florence 09/07/1727.

almeno 5 della famiglia Levi, che però volevano coperte con salvacondotto personale dalle molestie che potessero inferirgli i di loro creditori»[895]. Although they eventually managed to sign the contract, in spite of having to waive the safe-conduct for the Levi family, they soon followed the latter on the painful path to debt and failure as a result of the adverse judgment in the dispute with Moisè and Malachì Sacerdote[896]. Indeed, members of both the families Cases and Levi, which, as we have seen, had worked closely together in the tobacco business, suffered a sharp decline in their social status between the late Medici's era and the establishment of the new Lorraine dynasty (which took place in 1737), i.e. when the tobacco contract was won by other competing parties. In 1738, Emanuel Cases submitted a petition to the Tuscan authorities, asking for the permission to exercise the profession of *pubblico mezzano*: from his writing, we learn that he had already turned to the profession of trade broker in Florence, after his failure in the tobacco monopoly, and that he aimed at taking the place in Livorno of his brother, Jacob Cases, who had enjoyed that position until his recent dead[897]. After a couple of months, also Samuel di Sabato Levi and brothers begged for the same purpose because, due to the wasteful repayment of debts accumulated in their trade, they were now «*incapaci di preseguire alla mercatura*»[898].

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[895] *Ibidem*.

[896] For the court litigation, see ASFi, *Libri di Commercio*, reg. 4450. Cases & Vitali had signed an *accomandita* for commodity trade with Moisè and Malachì Sacerdote for the total amount of 18.000 pieces-of-eight which was intended to enrich the liquidity of the company set up for the tobacco monopoly, so much so that it was stipulated «*che se venisse confermato per maggior tempo l'appalto del Tabacco e Acquavite conferitoli da S.A.R., in detto caso non deva aver luogo la disdetta, ma continuasse per tanto tempo quanto dureranno i suddetti appalti*», ASFi, *Mercanzia*, reg. 10854, ff. 102r-103r, 26/09/1727. However, the financial difficulties of Cases & Vitali led to the termination of this limited partnership, see *Ibidem*, f. 139r, 02/06/1730.

[897] See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 9, n. 163, Emanuel Cases to the Grand Duke, Florence 13/06/1738.

[898] See, *Ibidem*, n. 202, Samuel Levi to the Grand Duke, Livorno 29/11/1738. The Jewish brokers, as well as the Christian ones, had to comply with a limited number imposed by the authorities, accordingly the authorisation obtained from the *Massari* of the Jewish 'nation' was not sufficient for the petitioners, but they presented also a declaration signed by great merchants and bankers of the Livorno's Jewry – Samuel Coen, Graziadio Leone, Samuel Oliveira, Isach Moreno and Isach de Segni – which highlighted the recent transfer of Leone, Mattia and Abram Ventura, former Jewish brokers in Livorno, to North Africa, thus freeing up some posts. In addition to this solidarity between coreligionists, the Levi brothers found words of praise also by the director of the Livorno's customs house, who defined them «*molto cogniti ai negozianti di questa Piazza e, per l'esercizio che hanno avuto di Mercatura, molto pratici*», see *Ibidem*, Giovanni Pitti to the Grand Duke, Livorno 10/12/1738. In the end, the decision taken in Florence allowed only Samuel Levi, and not his brothers, to exercise as broker in Livorno.

By comparison, the fortune of the tobacco monopoly was no better in the immediate future: the following tobacco farmer, Domenico Andrea Gavi (1727-1736), could benefit from the lower fee of 245.000 *lire* per year, in comparison with the contract signed by the Suardi in 1726, but this did not prevent him from pleading a further decrease in the annual fee for the following contract, because the tobacco monopoly had become «*un negozio troppo arrischiato e sottoposto ad infinite perdite, sì per le gravi continue spese che da esso risultano, sì per i deboli guadagni che dall'istesso provengono*»[899]. In the end, Gavi ended his career of tobacco farmer with the charge of fraud and deception against his funders, starting with Gian Galeazzo Gerini and the Marquis Capponi, while «*il negozio dell'Appalto avrebbe risentito sopra di sé il totale esterminio*» without the intervention of the Florentine Pier Antonio Gabrielli (1736-1745), who offered an annual fee of 14.000 *lire* per year higher than in the previous contract[900]. Significantly, the new company also included Giuseppe Zanchi, a financier from Bergamo who, as we have seen, was already involved in the Venetian tobacco monopoly[901]: once again, the first answer to uncertainties was sought in the experience of businessmen who had gained expertise in the administration of monopolies.

A significant watershed for mercantile networks involved in the Tuscan tobacco monopoly was marked by the General Tax Farm introduced in the Grand Duchy of

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[899] Archivio Ginori, "Affari di Governo di Carlo Ginori", reg. 13, III, 0, "Difesa dell'Appalto generale del Tabacco e Acquavite contro l'amministrazione che ne aveva Domenico Andrea Gavi nel governo dell'ultimo Gran Duca di Casa Medici", ff. n. nn.

[900] *Ibidem*, ff. n. nn. This source goes on to explain that Gavi had designed a fraudulent scheme to conceal the actual performance of the business from his funders, as «*la porzione di detto danaro che pro rata fu pagato dal Gavi a detti Sig.ri non fu estratto dal Corpo del loro Negozio, bensì preso, tumultuariamente e alla sordina, da diversi cambisti che non avevano corrispondenza veruna co' loro capitali*». By contrast, as soon as Gavi set the condition of a decreased fee to present his offer for a second contract, Gabrielli raised the bid to win the deal: «*non si fu appena sparso per la città il rumore di questa sopraffina richiesta che il sig. Pier Antonio Gabrielli, uomo d'incomparabile integrità e celeberrimo nell'osservanza della fede data, assicurato da mercanti di somma illibatezza e candore, offerse di più ducati 2.000 sopra la tassa da' vecchi conduttori pagata*». It should be remember that 1 Florentine *ducato* or *scudo* was worth 7.000 *lire toscane*.

[901] The company for the tobacco monopoly was composed by Pier Antonio Gabrielli, Giuseppe and Alberto Zanchi from Bergamo and Girolamo Poletti. In addition to the annual fee offer of 259.000 *lire*, the financiers offered to deposit a further 30.000 *ducati*, 20.000 of which in *luoghi* of the *Monte del Sale*, as security in the *Uffizio del Sale*'s treasury, and obliged themselves to «*fare un'accomandita di altri ducati 20.000 per il meno per fondo del negozio di detti appalti generali*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 568, Florence 06/04/1735. Gavi's last-ditch attempt to further increase the bid to 266.000 *lire* per year was eventually overwhelmed by the accusations of fraud leveled at him.

Tuscany by the new sovereign Francis Stephan (Grand Duke in 1737-1765) of the Lorraine dynasty from Vienna and the regency which governed in Florence[902]. The first reports on the Tuscan fiscal system made by the Lorraine officials sent to Florence to govern the new domain, in particular those of Emanuel de Nay, Count of Richecourt, were very negative, emphasizing bad administration, disorder and corruption[903]: the main solution adopted, borrowed from the previous experience of government in the Duchy of Lorraine[904], consisted in farming out custom duties and other forms of indirect taxation all together to a single big consortium of financiers. After a first contract signed with the count Carlo Bernasconi in 1739, then rescinded for irregularities and abuse of the tax farmer[905], the lucrative *appalto generale* was awarded to the Lombart company (1741-

[902] With the death of Gian Gastone Medici (Grand Duke in 1723-1737), the reigning branch of the dynasty was definitely extinguished. The scenario had long been evident to European chancelleries and had resulted in negotiation for the assignation of the grand ducal title between various reigning families: since the Congress of Cambrai in 1722, an international agreement indicated don Carlos Bourbon, son of the king of Spain Filipe V, as recognised candidate for the Tuscan succession. While the Florentine patriciate attempted to play a game for the re-establishment of ancient republican freedom, the events in the Italian peninsula of the War of Polish succession (1733-1735) turned the tables with the conquest of the continental *Mezzogiorno* and Sicily by the Bourbons and the royal title assumed by don Carlos for an independent Kingdom of Naples. Principles of international equilibrium between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs contributed to the succession of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany to the son-in-law of Charles VI Habsburg and husband of Maria Theresa, Francis Stephen of Lorraine, whose Rhenish duchy was destined to enter in the French orbit. Despite the grand ducal title, Francis Stephen never ruled from Florence, residing in Vienna where with his close counselors he could deal with the imperial government and, above all, represent the center to which the various domains of his lineage had to refer. Accordingly, in Florence the actual government was taken over by a regency, which included prominent figures of the Florentine patriciate, as the Marquis Carlo Ginori, but whose leadership was assumed by trusted Lorraine men, like Marc de Beauvau, Prince of Craon, and, above all, Emanuel de Nay, Count of Richecourt, this latter the proper head of the Tuscan government until his serious health condition forced him to return to Lorrain in 1757. See at least Jean-Claude Waquet, "La Toscane Après La Paix de Vienne (1737-1765): Prépondérance Autrichienne Ou Absolutisme Lorrain?," *Revue d'histoire Diplomatique* 93 (1979): 202–22; Furio Diaz, *I Lorena in Toscana: la Reggenza*, Storia (Torino: Utet, 1988); Marcello Verga, *Da "cittadini" a "nobili": lotta politica e riforma delle istituzioni nella Toscana di Francesco Stefano* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1990); Alessandra Contini, *La reggenza lorenese tra Firenze e Vienna: logiche dinastiche, uomini e governo, 1737-1766* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2002).

[903] «*Chaque sorte de revenue est régie par trois ou quatre tribunaux qui y participent, les dépenses se payent de la meme façon, il n'y en a aucune qui ait une assignation simple ni égale à la dépense*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 12, f. 21v, Richecourt to the Grand Duke, Florence 29/10/1737.

[904] On the General Tax Farm introduced in 1697 in the Duchy of Lorraine, see Jonathan Spangler, "Court Faction Overwhelmed by Circumstance: The Duchy of Lorraine Torn between Bourbon and Habsburg, 1624–1737," in *A Europe of Courts, a Europe of Factions. Political Groups at Early Modern Centres of Power (1550-1799)*, ed. Ruben Gonzalez Cuerva and Alexander Koller (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 197–2018.

[905] See Luigi Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato* (Milano: Banca commerciale italiana, 1965), 58–59. According to Lorenzo Cantini, the main financial advisor of

1749), which was composed by a consortium of French and Lorraine financiers[906]. The new system guaranteed a more effective fiscal exploitation of the new domain for the interests of the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty[907], but it also answered to some pushes to reform the Tuscan administration looking at the lesson of Cameralism and at transnational trends which privileged the General Tax Farm as an instrument for greater effectiveness and greater control on public finance[908].

Francis Stephan in Vienna, François Joseph Toussaint, negotiated with the Jewish community in Livorno an anticipation of the sum needed by Bernasconi to recognise a loan to the Grand Duke of 5 million florins. See Lorenzo Cantini, *Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini socio di varie accademie* (Firenze: nella Stamp. Albizziniana da S. Maria in Campo, 1800), vol. XXIV, 155.

[906] See Jean-Claude Waquet, "La Ferme de Lombart (1741-1749). Pertes et Profits d'une Compagnie Française En Toscane," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 25, no. 4 (1978): 513–29.

[907] According to Waquet, between 1750 and 1765, Francis Stephen received from Florence a total amount of 6.766.000 *scudi*, see Jean-Claude Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis: essai sur le système des finances et la stabilité des institutions dans les anciens états italiens* (Rome: École Française de Rome. Palais Farnèse, 1990), 563. This substantial caesura has been traditionally interpreted in the light of the financial needs of the Habsburg court in Vienna, particularly under pressure with the outbreak of the Austrian succession threatening the maintenance of the imperial title, which would have been recognised to Francis Stephan only in 1745. Classical studies have emphasised how such external interests produced a regressive impact on Tuscan economy, public finance, and tradition balance in administration, see in particular Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato*, 61–66; Diaz, *I Lorena in Toscana*, 59–109. However, Waquet and Dickson have proposed different interpretations: on the one hand, the government on behalf of Francis Stephan by the Lorraine regency has been presented in the light of the traditional Lorraine absolutism, inspired by Cameralism, rather than a symptom of Habsburg intrusiveness in Tuscan affairs; on the other hand, a significant part of Tuscan resources which took the path to Vienna remained in large part at the disposal of the house Lorraine, representing around 20% of total personal revenues for Francis Stephan and financing also his own private investments. See Waquet, "La Toscane Après La Paix de Vienne (1737-1765): Prépondérance Autrichienne Ou Absolutisme Lorrain?"; Peter G. M. Dickson, *Finance and Government under Maria Theresia, 1740-1780* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), vol. II, 358–359.

[908] In particular, in accordance with the principles of Cameralism advocated by Richecourt, the regency aimed at exerting a greater control in the name of the sovereign power over a fiscal system which was conceived in the light of another logic. In fact, the numerous existing magistracies answered to the recognition of the political role of the Florentine patriciate, whose control of posts and offices, with both fiscal and administrative powers, ensured the reproduction of traditional social relations. The push for a greater control over public finance indeed raised constant institutional debates and a heated political struggle, starting with the rivalry between the Count of Richecourt and the Marquis Carlo Ginori, but also with the confrontation between the General Tax Farm and the Council of Commerce established in Livorno in 1746, but we should note also the collaboration between the Lorraine ministers and Tuscan member of a legal class which came mainly from provinces and was interested in intervening in the matter. Finally, it has been highlighted that the Tuscan Tax Farm participated to a transnational trend in Europe that for almost the entire 18th century privileged the concentration of public revenues in big contracts with private entrepreneurs, instead of resorting to direct administration. See Jean-Claude Waquet, "Les Fermes Générales Dans l'Europe Des Lumières: Le Cas Toscan," *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome. Moyen-Age, Temps Modernes* 89, no. 2 (1977): 983–84; Waquet, *Le Grand-Duché de Toscane sous les derniers Médicis*, 487–530, 558–69; Antonella Alimento, "Tra Bristol Ed Amsterdam: Discussioni Livornesi Su

For our perspective, it is interesting to note that also the tobacco monopoly became part of the General Tax Farm in 1745, together with the salt tax, only after the expiry of the old contract signed in 1736[909]. While in Venice the *partito del tabacco* always remained a separate contract, the good financial performance, though the first years of incertitude, of the General Tax Farm[910] and specific problems in the administration of the salt and tobacco monopolies facilitated the unification. With consternation, the sovereign complained that «*non abbiamo alcuna conoscenza di queste rendite*»[911], while a group of Florentine financiers invoked the limits of the current direct administration of the salt tax to put themselves forward as concessionaires for a possible contract[912]. Looking at the tobacco monopoly, in spite of good expectations, the company Gabrielli & Zanchi had suffered a relevant decrease in sales in the last years of its contract[913].

Commercio, Marina Ed Impero Negli Anni Cinquanta Del Settecento," in *Dall'origine Dei Lumi Alla Rivoluzione. Scritti in Onore Di Luciano Guerci e Giuseppe Ricuperati* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008), 35–37; Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, 203–14.

[909] See ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 72, "Nota delle diverse partite d'entrate comprese nell'appalto generale", ff. 61-62.

[910] In 1748, the tax farmers begged the payment of their additional honorarium negotiated with the sovereign power for the three months of October, November and December 1740, because, despite their service began in 1741, in that period the company had been engaged in the complex operations to establish the contract fee through the calculation of an '*anno* comune' on the yields of the previous decades. In order to reinforce their claim, they stressed their «*bonne regie, laquelle se trouve parfaitement justifiée par les augumentations de produit qui se sont trouvées chaque année*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 34, n. 9, Vienna 01/07/1748. On the difficulties during the first years of the contract with the company Lombart, see Waquet, "La Ferme de Lombart (1741-1749). Pertes et Profits d'une Compagnie Française En Toscane," 519–24.

[911] The Grand Duke wrote this comment for the council of regency in Florence, after the request of the general tax farmers to include taxes administered by the *Uffizio del Sale* into their contract, see ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 3, f. 41r, Francis Stephan to Carlo Ginori, Vienna 10/07/1742.

[912] The proposal came from Domenico Nardi & Compagni, who offered their willingness to contract out the salt tax, pointing out the disorder caused by the law which «*dispone che alcune comunità dello Stato posano eleggere li salaioli deputati o amministratori del sale, ed altri di essere eletti dal medesimo Magistrato o Congregazione del sale, come la stessa cosa viene parimenti praticata dal Magistrato de' Conservatori di Siena, e da altri Magistrati di questo stato, perché mai questa rendita è stata appaltata*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 35, n. 33, "Proposizioni fatte da Domenico Nardi e compagni di prendere in appalto lo smaltimento del sale di Toscana", Florence 26/09/1744.

[913] In 1737, the tobacco farm had sold 398.073 pounds for the domestic market and export and in the following years, especially thanks to the presence of militias in the territory to safeguard a smooth succession in favour of the Lorraine dynasty and to defend the Grand Duchy in the event of an invasion by the Bourbon armies, this figure increased to 482.102 pounds in 1740. However, since 1742, tobacco sales to the militia were halted and the size of the business declined to the state of 369.373 pounds in 1744. See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 273, "Ristretto dei tabacchi venduti in anni 8 secondo la dimostrazione data dai sig.ri Gabrielli".

Notwithstanding, there were no immediate benefits for state coffers, as the fee for the two monopolies was fixed to a provisional sum even lower than the previous contract[914]. The Lombart company faced immediately many problems with the tobacco business in the Tuscan state: the exemptions of privileged territories were not clearly defined and contraband seemed to be the general rule, especially in the freeport of Livorno[915]. In addition, «*la fabrication du tabac n'est pas aussi en regle qu'il serait à desirer*»[916]. However, things got better soon: at the end of the contract with the Lombart company, the new general tax farmers, under the name of the Masson company (1750-1753), were able to increase the annual fee, which for the *Uffizio del Sale* passed from 1.689.219 to 1.704.946 *lire*[917]. In particular, the tobacco monopoly began to yield appealing returns, so much so that those interested in the Lombart company claimed their right to exploit the *ius prohibendi* beyond the expiry of their general contract in 1749, reaching a total of 9 years for this annuity as well[918]. It was indeed under the general tax farm that the fiscal revenues from the tobacco monopoly grew significantly again, especially with the contract Diodati (1754-1762) and Almano (1763-1768), as the profits for the contractors themselves[919].

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[914] The annual fee for the *Uffizio del Sale* was of 1.689.219 *lire*, «*fissato provvisionalmente con rescritto del dì 2 gennaio 1745. Si lavora con tutta diligenza per terminare i ristretti da cui ne risulterà il canone previo da pagarsi*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 72, f. 63, "Dimostrazione delle diverse partite di entrate comprese nell'appalto generale". It represented, by far, the biggest item in the general tax farm's contract. With regard to the tobacco monopoly, which was part of such sum, the annual fee resulted in 243.034 *lire*, about 15.000 *lire* less than the company Gabrielli & Zanchi was paying. See Table 4.1.

[915] See the remonstrances sent on these points by the Franco-Lorraine financiers to Vienna in ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 13, nn. 4, 14, 24.

[916] These words accompanied an alarming memoir written by Astier de la Blanche a few months after the Lombart company had obtained the tobacco monopoly, see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 77, Astier to French shareholders, Florence 06/08/1745. In response, the French financiers immediately realized the urgency of intervening «*a fine de prendre des arrangements certaines pour abroger tout ce qui nous paraîtra abusive sur cette partie*», *Ibidem*, Pierre La Bruyère de Clorcy et al. to Astier, Paris 23/08/1745.

[917] See ASFi, *Appalti*, f. 565, "Conti generali appalto Masson".

[918] The financiers begged for the grace to be allowed to continue to benefit from the salt and tobacco farms until 1754 «*pour n'avoir commencé à en jouir que le 1 janvier 1745 (…) ou qu'il lui sera paié la somme de 400.000 livres pour son dedommagement de n'en avoir joui que 5 années relativement et conformement à la conclusion de l'avis du conseil di V.M.I.*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 34, n. 9, Vienna 03/07/1748.

[919] The accounting books of the Tuscan General Farm show indeed a constant surplus between receipts and expenditure (including the fee to be paid to the state coffers), which allowed to pay the annual honorarium of the tax farmers and, net of the latter, to redistribute profits and dividend among the company's shareholders. Such surplus registered an annual average of almost 724.000 *lire* between 1741 and 1768, see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 383, 565, 704, 705, 1213.

How can we interpret this peak? Many studies in literature have stressed the proper change of regime which the General Tax Farm involved: it not only introduced a boost to centralization and control over a multipolar and centrifugal fiscal system, but it also pushed forward more rigorously the legislative provisions against a tradition oriented towards reliance on locally negotiated concessions and practices[920]. Undoubtedly, this issue was not of secondary importance, given Richecourt's insistence on the benefits against fraud and contraband[921] and the heated political struggle around the General Tax Farm, the opposition to which, was led above all by Carlo Ginori, first in Florence in the Council of Finance and then in Livorno as Governor of the city[922]. However, the case of the tobacco monopoly suggests looking at other dimensions. In fact, the new company began immediately to operate to improve supply chains and the quality of products placed

[920] It is to be noted that the employees of the private company served in some relevant institutions of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany that represented the traditional interfaces to which subjects and economic actors turned to plead their interests. As a result, established balances were altered. This development was of particular impact in Livorno, where the director of the customs house – an office firmly in the hands of the Florentine patriciate who invested in the commercial traffic of the free port (from 1680 to 1740: Paolo Poltri (1680-1687), Lorenzo Ginori (1688-1696), Francesco Terriesi (1696-1715), Giacinto del Vigna (1716-1725) and Giovanni Pitti (1725-1740), all of them owners of or interested in commercial houses in the main marketplace of western Europe, like London, Amsterdam, Lisbon and Cadiz – used to have a certain degree of autonomy and discretion in the concessions to be granted to the merchants of the 'nations', in the light of promoting the general health of trade. See, for some examples, ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 106, Livorno 28/02/1704, n. 254, Livorno 06/05/1707; *Ibidem*, reg. 5, n. 279, 22/08/1716; *Ibidem*, reg. 7, n. 88, Livorno 16/01/1727; *Ibidem*, reg. 8, n. 30, Livorno 15/09/1734. As denounced by the Governor of the city in 1757, «*sebbene la Dogana fosse in amministrazione per il sovrano, prue sopra i ministri della medesima vi era un Provveditore, ministro che era una persona consumata negli affari del commercio, bene intenzionata, e che riguardandosi come l'anima del commercio di Livorno era dell'intera e piena confidenza del sovrano, e ne aveva tutta la maggiore autorità*», ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 77, Carlo Ginori to Giovan Antonio Tornaquinci, Livorno 11/02/1757. By contrast, the petition sent to the Livorno's customs house after the establishment of the general tax farm were transmitted to the representatives of the private company residing in Florence: the final decision about concessions and graces was moved from Livorno to the capital, evaluating them with priorities quite different from the past. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 11, n. 11, Florence 11/08/1755, n. 129, Florence 12/05/1759.

[921] «*J'estimerai une ferme à canon fixe et dans laquelle tous le bénéfices appartiendraient au fermier preferable à une administracion (…). D'un fermier l'on espère peu de graces ainsi le public est plus exacte à payer et plus en garde pour les contrabandes*», ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 22, cc. 172v-173r, Richecort to the Grand Duke, Florence 12/03/1748.

[922] «*La più certa, la più reale e la principal causa operatrice del male, non ad altro deve attribuirsi che al rigore con cui, invece di protezione e facilità, si sono trattati i mercanti, e si sono rigettati tutti i progetti tendenti a mettere in pratica le predette facilità*», ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 77, Carlo Ginori to Giovan Antonio Tornaquinci, Livorno 11/02/1757. On the political conflict between Ginori and Richecourt, see Diaz, *I Lorena in Toscana*, 14–30; Alimento, "Tra Bristol Ed Amsterdam: Discussioni Livornesi Su Commercio, Marina Ed Impero Negli Anni Cinquanta Del Settecento," 35–37.

on the market. To begin with, the financiers had easier access to the tobaccos of the French Atlantic – mainly cultivated in the Caribbean colonies, like Saint Domingue, and processed in the manufactures dislocated in metropolitan France – thanks to agents and correspondents who could select those of best quality and «*le faire avoir à un prix raisonnable*»[923]. In addition, the company's top management recommended the *fermiers* settled in Florence to devote efforts to the promotion of *rapé* – snuff tobaccos commercialized in 'carrots' which consumers could reduced in powder by their own means and whose prices were much lower than Spanish *polvigli* – as they constituted the product from which the contractors could gain the most profit[924]. It consisted of a tobacco variety that had revolutionized snuff consumption in Atlantic Europe, starting from Amsterdam and Paris, providing a refined and fashionable product that was affordable for the middle classes[925]. But the conquest of the Tuscan market with the new product required specific skills and proper marketing strategies: on the one hand, the correspondents from Paris assured the sending of specialized workers to teach the productive process in local manufactures[926]; on the other hand, the price of *rapé* tobacco was artificially kept particularly low «*pour que les florentins s'y accoutument plus facilment*»[927].

Accordingly, also in the Tuscan case we note the importance of combining the ability to raise large amounts of capital with the access to effective mercantile networks which could provide new products, production expertise, and commercial opportunities that the previous dominant networks could not guarantee. Moreover, the dynasty change favored the recruitment of foreign financiers linked to the Lorraine house, who had already distinguished themselves in the Rhenish Duchy, but also with strong connections

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[923] On the services provided by M. Tanton for the purchase of 140 'carrots' of *tabacco di Santo Domingo* sent to Livorno, see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 77, M. Vaneau to M. Demontils, Pise 16/03/1745.

[924] As highlighted by Astier in Florence, «*la consummation de cette espece de tabacs est (…) la plus avantageuse pour la ferme et nous ne devons rien oublier pour en introduire l'usage*», *Ibidem*, Astier to the French shareholders, Florence 22/10/1745.

[925] For a coeval description of the *rapé* production in the Netherland and in France, see Jacques Savary des Brûlons and Louis-Philémon Savary des Brûlons, *Dictionnaire universel de commerce: contenant tout ce qui concerne le commerce qui se fait dans les quatre parties du monde …* (Amsterdam: chez les Jansons à Waesberge, 1726), vol II, 1444.

[926] See *Ibidem*, Jérome Parat de Montgeron et al. to Astier, Paris 21/03/1745.

[927] *Ibidem*, Charles Michaut et al. to Astier, Paris 08/11/1745.

with one of the largest financial companies of the time, the French *Ferme Générale*[928]. These relations helped also to improve the production sector of the tobacco business, drawing directly on the resources and knowledge of the members of the French *Ferme du Tabac*[929]: such competitive advantages for the French-Lorraine financial group also explains why the attempts to obtain the profitable affair of the General Tax Farm for a new Tuscan company were frustrated both in 1740 and 1748[930]. This transalpine

[928] In particular, some officials and servants who followed the Lorraine house in its Tuscan destiny, like the Irish military official Jérome O'Kelly, invested in the new Tuscan General Farm as well as in other Florentine economic activities, by becoming part of the consolidated Florentine system for the financing of limited partnership, see Fabio Bertini, "Investimento e Affari Durante La Reggenza," in *Il Granducato Di Toscana e i Lorena Nel Secolo XVIII. Incontro Internazionale Di Studio, Firenze, 22-24 Settembre 1994* (Firenze: Olschki, 1999), 579–89. Then, the Lorraine Charles Michaut had been director of the privileged trade company established by the duke Leopold in 1718 and later general tax farmers in Lorraine, but since 1728 he was domiciled in Paris participating to various financial enterprises, such as the financing of the army of France in Italy in 1735. He was among the most active exponents in Paris of the company for the Tuscan General Farm with the Lorraine Frédéric Dithmar de Schmidveiller (whose relative Jean Frédéric had been general tax farmer in Lorraine in 1730) and the French financiers Pierre Foacier, Perre La Bruyère de Courgis, Jérome Parat de Montgeron, Jean-Pierre Descourts, Jean-Baptiste Héron de Courgis, Jean-Raymond de Cléry, Charles Mazières. See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 78, "Registre particuliere de la Compagnie – Ancienne Société". All of them were employed in the French *Ferme Générale* before, after or during the Tuscan experience as *receveurs*, *directeurs* or *inspecteurs*, while Mazières would die many years later as *fermier général*. See Yves Durand, *Les fermiers généraux au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), acts 173, 366; Waquet, "La Ferme de Lombart (1741-1749). Pertes et Profits d'une Compagnie Française En Toscane."

[929] For example, in addition to what I have already presented, in 1745 M. Demontils informed the general tax farmer in Florence that M. de Montgeron had undertaken «*de traiter l'affaire du tabac d'Arles avec MM. les fermiers généraux*», also in order to facilitate the shipment of tobacco from the manufactures located in the French Atlantic ports to Livorno via Seville, notwithstanding vicissitudes of the War of the Austrian succession. See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 77, Demontils to Astier, Paris, 29/08/1745.

[930] The bids and negotiations that took place in the first years and at the end of the Lombart contract show that, beyond the motives of the political clash, there was also a strong conflict between economic entrepreneurs and distinct interest groups around the General Tax Farm. We can identify a French-Lorraine front, which initially prevailed, and a Tuscan one, which did not give up its cause: in fact, around personalities well placed in the regency government such as Carlo Ginori and Pompeo Neri, Tuscan capitals gathered with the aim of putting pressure on the sovereign to promote their own commercial enterprises. Firstly, in 1740-1741, after the failure of the Bernasconi contract, Ginori tried with insistence, but unsuccessfully, to convince the Grand Duke to prefer local subjects, rather than French-Lorraine financiers, for the award of the general tax farm. See ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 187, Ginori to the Grand Duke, Florence 11/04/1741, 11/07/1741, 25/07/1741, 09/09/1741, 17/10/1741. Then, in 1748, Tuscan financial interests returned to the charge presenting to the sovereign an ambitious project for the establishment of a privileged company which would have also managed the general contract for public revenues. See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 12, n. 41, "Sommario del Piano generale di commercio formato dalla Compagnia Toscana". According to Richecourt, among the promoters of the Tuscan company, there were the abbot Pompeo Neri, described as «*le chef visible et le directeur*», and prominent members of relevant patrician families, like the Senator Francesco Quaratesi, the Marquis Scipione Capponi, the abbot Lorenzo Casimiro degli Albizzi, the Count Francesco Pecori and many others. See ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 22, Richecourt to the grand duke, Florence

circulation of commodities and economic expertise undoubtedly played a pivotal role in bringing crucial innovation in the productive sector and in reviving the performance of the monopoly in a particularly delicate conjuncture[931].

3. The supplication system: an instrument for mercantile negotiation

The resources available for prevailing mercantile networks in the long-distance trade of tobacco played a crucial role for the adjudication of the tobacco monopoly. While in the long run the overcoming of periods of difficulties in the tobacco monopoly was more and more related to the search for financial groups able to raise large amounts of capital for the monopolistic business, the quality of mercantile connections and the access to economic information remained indispensable factors. In this respect, the shared environment between merchants and officials discussed above provided a fundamental prerequisite to establish an effective negotiating arena around the tobacco monopoly. With the adjudication of the tobacco contract, many interests from different actors were at stake and were taking action to advance their demands and protect their own benefit. Monopolistic merchants and fiscal institutions continued to negotiate around the conditions and fees of the tobacco contract, but also the merchants and other businessmen

13/03/1748. The Livorno's Governor Carlo Ginori does not explicitly appear among the promoters, but Verga and Waquet have convincingly argued about his involvement in the affair. However, the Tuscan consortium suffered a second crushing defeat, as the sovereign rejected the project (Francis Stephan stated that «*par plusieurs réflexions nous ne croyons pas qu'il convienne qu'un compagnie de commerce ait en meme temps la ferme générale*», *Ibidem*, n. 40, Francis Stephan to Richecourt, Vienna 31/01/1748) and moved, in the light of the good profits made by the company Lombart, towards the establishment of a *régie* for the management of royal revenues (a system in which finances were entrusted to one or more deputies who received a fixed honorarium and participated in a limited share of the proceeds, paying the rest into the state coffers). The project was entrusted to Frédéric Dithmar de Schmidveiller, but his sudden death in March 1749 scuppered the plan brought the contracting solution back into vogue. On these events, see also Waquet, "Les Fermes Générales Dans l'Europe Des Lumières: Le Cas Toscan," 1008–12; Verga, *Da cittadini a nobili*, 204–6.

[931] It should be noted that not only the French *Ferme générale* represented an inspiring model for many sovereign powers in eighteenth-century Europe, but France also exported skilled financiers in various context for the administration of the newly-established general tax farms: in addition to the grand duchy of Tuscany, that was also the case of the Savoyard states in 1698, the Duchy of Lorraine in 1719, the Duchy of Parma in 1756 and of the Kingdom of Prussia in 1766. These tax collection instruments only later passed into the hands of local capitals and businessmen. See Waquet, "Les Fermes Générales Dans l'Europe Des Lumières: Le Cas Toscan," 983–84.

excluded from the monopoly spoke up for carving out their space in tobacco trade. But through which instruments was this negotiation carried out?

The supplication system, which regulated advocacy to institutions and power in the early modern period, played a pivotal role. Scholars have highlighted the pivotal role of petitions in both judicial and extrajudicial procedures of the time: various legal institutions received demands for justice through petitions and supplications, which helped regulate relations between individuals and groups, as well as between individuals and institutions[932]. In societies marked by the pluralism of judicial systems[933], parallel mercantile tribunals coexisted, mediating between conflicting instances according to the principles of 'summary justice'. This form of justice, distinct from 'ordinary justice', relied on on natural law, the presentation of actions and relevant facts, and expedited procedure[934]. Regarding the mercantile world, I argue that similar principles were applied in the extrajudicial deliberative processes that followed the formal submission of fiscal and commercial requests through the supplication system.

Petitions submitted by businessmen were formally addressed to the sovereign power, as the ultimate authority in matters of justice. Officials with extensive knowledge of trade carefully filtered and strategically presented the key points of these demands to the government, often with the direct assistance of prominent merchants involved in daily commerce. The presentation of actions and facts, along with requests for privileges or exemptions, initiated a negotiation process between the petitioners and state institutions. The outcome was not just a specific response to each individual petition, but the accumulation of practices and orientations to which the involved actors referred as precedents, guiding them in the initiation of new negotiations. From this process, Corey Tazzara identifies in Livorno a kind of «making policy by supplication»: precedents and customs by which petitions were dispensed, rather than current legislation, forged the

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[932] Mario Ascheri, "Giustizia Ordinaria, Giustizia Dei Mercanti e La Mercanzia Di Siena Nel Tre-Quattrocento," in *Tribunali, Giuristi e Istituzioni Dal Medioevo All'età Moderna,* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1989), 23–54; Andrea Caracausi, "Procedure Di Giustizia in Età Moderna: I Tribunali Corporativi," *Studi Storici* 49, no. 2 (2008): 323–60.

[933] Sally Engle Merry, "Legal Pluralism," *Law & Society Review* 22, no. 5 (1988): 869–96; Paul S. Berman, "The New Legal Pluralism," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 5 (2009): 225–42.

[934] See Simona Cerutti, *Giustizia sommaria: pratiche e ideali di giustizia in una società di ancien régime (Torino XVIII secolo)* (Roma: Feltrinelli Editore, 2003).

institutional framework and the same definition of the free port[935]. I adopt this definition to describe the set of practices and relationships that, in the early modern period, placed the reconciliation of conflicting interests and negotiation at the core of the deliberative process in commercial and fiscal policies.

Some concrete examples from our case studies can clearly show how supplications and negotiation shaped not only policies, but also the very daily practices around trade and taxation. Venetian merchants operating within and beyond the borders of the empire were organized in representative corporations which bargained conditions and fiscal regimes under which trade could be conducted with state protection and supervision. The 'consortium of Cairo' was one of the most important corporations of this type in the 18th century[936], so much so it even gradually acquired the prerogative of approving the admission of new Venetian merchant firms to trade in Cairo[937]. Its importance was mostly related to the coffee trade, as Venice struggled to maintain a key role in the redistribution of the Yemeni beans, purchased in Alexandria, against the competition of French coffee from the Caribbean[938]. As we have seen, mercantile interests lobbied on the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* and the *Deputati al Commercio* for favorable customs tariffs[939] and the

[935] See Corey Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*, First edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 85–98.

[936] Although the Venetian merchants involved in the Egyptian trade had always been heard to regulate economic policy in this area, it was not until 1762 that the consortium was formally established, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 189, ff. 148v-150r, Venice 23/05/1762.

[937] In 1773, the Senate analysed a very negative report showing a serious disruption in trade with Egypt and consequent setbacks in merchant profits and fiscal revenues. The '*terminazione*' proposed by cav. Zustinian from the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* pointed the way to make the establishment of other Venetian merchant firms in Cairo conditional on the granting of a «*certificato di questo magistrate che autorizzi le persone suddite a tradursi in Egitto e previe le informazioni di questo consorzio di commercianti in Egitto che dovrà riconoscere la qualità delle nuove ditte e le circostanze del commercio*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 380, n. 30, Venice 28/09/1773.

[938] For a reconstruction of the controversy at the height of its intensity in the 1740s, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia¸* I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 216, ff. 12v-18r, Venice 27/03/1741 and 14/04/1741.

[939] With a resolution of 16th July 1740, the Senate accepted the requests of Venetian merchants engaged in the Egyptian trade and established that each parcel of coffee coming from Alexandria and transported on Venetian vessels would be counted at 300 pounds, as opposed to the ordinary count of 10 pounds for all other cases. Given the customs tariffs that taxed each package with the duty of 1 *ducato*, «*restò avvantaggiato il caffè d'Alessandria tradotto sopra legno di veneta bandiera proveniente da quella scala con la proporzione dell'uno al trenta*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia¸* I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 217, ff. 59v-69r, Venice 26/09/1745.

exemption for re-exports from the duty linked to the short-lived coffee monopoly[940]. But the supplication system orchestrated by the Venetian trade magistracies and the representatives of merchants proved permeable to other actors, starting with foreign operators. Take the case of the petition written in 1714 by two of the main English firms based in Venice, those of Germineau & Rousseau and of Robert Brown, against the burdensome exit duty on salted fish. The English merchants not only alluded to the risk «*di perdere con il pesce salato anche i piombi, li stagni et altri carichi soliti di esser portati dalle navi inglesi*», with dreadful consequences for the Venetian control over the redistribution in the region of such Western commodities, but also made the concrete proposal to convert the exit duty into a consumption one. Such a proposal was very favorably evaluated by the *Deputati al Commercio* because it would encourage long-distance trade by increasing the commodities that «*saranno qui introdotti, il che renderà profitto ai pubblici dazi*»[941]. These petitions sought both to capture the government's support by showing the convergence of interests between merchants' profits and state wealth, and to influence fiscal policy with specific proposals that fed the decision-making process. Moreover, the system channeled various instances for a flexible application of tax measures and also for a kind of mercantile self-government for the collection of duties. For example, at the outbreak of the First Morean War (1684-1699), the '*capi di piazza*' presented various ideas with the aim at safeguarding the Levant trade, among which there was the proposal to take the collection of the '*Tansa di Levante*' (the set of charges on Venetian ships from the Levant) away from the government-appointed ministers and to entrust it once again to «*particolari mercanti*», as had been successfully done between 1662 and 1674 with greater sustainability for the square[942]. Indeed, the various forms of '*Tansa*', i.e. taxes imposed on subjects who exerted mercantile or industrial activities[943], suited particularly well to a negotiated implementation: merchants, manufacturers and

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[940] After the establishment of the '*partito del caffè*', «*avevano (...) prodotto i mercanti loro memoriali nell'Ecc.mo Collegio al 5 febbraio, in cui ricercavano dichiarazioni e regole per il commercio degli esteri*», claiming strongly that «*l'uscita del caffè dichiarata fosse esente di tale dazio*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 217, f. 83v, Venice 08/06/1746.

[941] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Scritture dei Deputati al Commercio", reg. 211, ff. 59r and 60r, Venice 20/08/1714.

[942] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 46-53, Venice 20/09/1684.

[943] For more information on these particular '*gravezze*', see Luigi Luzzatti, "I Dazi, Le Gravezze, i Prestiti e Le Spese Principali Dal Secolo X Alla Fine Della Repubblica," in *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia* (Venice: Visentini, 1912), clvi–clxvii.

money changers did not hesitate to bargain partial exemptions or complete absolutions based on particular circumstances and documented shifts in the dynamics of the marketplace[944].

Looking at Livorno, in the second half of the 1730s, competition from other free ports of the Italian peninsula, such as the Papal city of Civitavecchia on the Tyrrhenian sea, was becoming particularly worrying[945]. Giovanni Pietro Ricci sent a supplication to the government in which he manifested all his concern about the risk of losing all the re-export trade of colonial commodities in which he was involved. In particular, the Ricci family had received a commission from the mercantile house François Chassaigne & co., their correspondents in Marseilles, for the cargo of 100 barrels of Caribbean sugar on the ship Santa Rosalia, with the order to receive the goods «*o in Livorno o in qualunque altro luogo verso il Ponente fino a Civitavecchia*» and then load them again «*sopra altro bastimento che le conduca a Venezia*»[946]. The problem arose from the due payment, according to the 1676 tariff, of the 'stallage receipt' - a duty established in Livorno on the transhipment of the cargo from one vessel to another - for 450 *lire*, whereas the new custom duties granted by the Pope recognised important exemptions on goods that were not unloaded ashore[947]. The arguments adopted by Ricci to obtain from the Grand Duke the same conditions granted in Civitavecchia and those presented in support of the plea by the Customs House Director Pitti outline well the themes and possible alliances in the negotiation process. In the first instance, the merchant emphasized the importance of the

[944] For example, in 1755, Michiel Molinari had been subjected to the mercantile '*Tansa*' with the title of money changer for his activity of trading in mint capitals. After a few years, when Molinari was also charged with the payment of another tax, the '*Taglion di piazza*', he requested and obtained full exoneration for the payment of the '*tansa*' because the trading for which he had been listed had by then fallen into disuse «*dopo l'inutilità in cui è divenuta la privata interposizione nel giro dei capitali dacché si sono facilitate nel Deposito novissimo le investiture e le affrancazioni*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 189, ff. 9v-10r, Venice 31/03/1761. For other cases, see *Ibidem*, reg. 189, ff. 38r-v, Venice 13/08/1761; reg. 193, ff. 19r-20v, Venice 17/05/1769; reg. 207, ff. 95r-v, Venice 06/06/1794; reg. 208, ff. 32r-35v, Venice 28/03/1796.

[945] For the free port policy in the Papal states, especially in Civitavecchia and Ancona, and its inclusion in a broader transnational movement in which trade exemptions became an essential instrument of the economic and commercial strategy of states, see Alberto Caracciolo, "Il Dibattito Sui 'porti Franchi' Nel Settecento: Genesi Della Franchigia Di Ancona," *Rivista Storica Italiana* LXXV (1963): 538–58. For the impact on Livorno, see Jean Pierre Filippini, *Il porto di Livorno e la Toscana, 1676-1814* (Napoli \etc.! Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1998), vol. II, 149–150.

[946] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 9, n. 15, Giovanni Pietro Ricci to the Grand Duke, Livorno 16/11/1736.

[947] See *Ibidem*, Giovanni Pitti to the Grand Duke, Livorno 21/11/1736.

deal not only for his profits from the commission trade, but also for the incomes of local subjects who would have worked on the transhipment and, above all, «*per il fine di rimuovere le nazioni forestiere ad abbandonare il porto e piazza di Livorno per preferire nel commercio e spedizioni loro le piazza estere, specialmente quelle che procurano d'ingrossar il traffico con levarlo a Livorno*»[948]. So, the petition cleverly raised recurring issues of public relevance, such as the employment of the subject population and the contribution of the 'foreign nations' to Livorno's long-distance trade. Foreign merchants themselves often insisted on this last point. It was the case of the petition wrote by the Livorno's English nation complaining about the higher tax burden compared to Genoa and Civitavecchia for the transhipment of salted fish, which would have become particularly hurtful at the end of Lent, when the '*salumi*' had to be necessarily shipped to Naples due to the lack in Livorno of caves or places suitable for storing them[949]. In another case, the English Antonio Lefroy and the Dutch Pietro Charron, in order to obtain fiscal exemptions for the shipments of cod they used to bring in from the Atlantic ports, strongly underlined their 'loyalty' to Livorno despite the better conditions proclaimed by the Papal edicts[950].

In all these affairs, we note an interesting dialectic between the central government and the institutions in Livorno: while the Florentine secretary, Carlo Rinuccini, repeatedly expressed skepticism about the appropriateness of derogating official tariffs, the Director of the Livorno's Customs House, Giovanni Pitti, usually shared the lexicon and assessments of the mercantile world. He stressed how the merchants' interest «*ridonderà anco in vantaggio del commercio di Livorno*»[951] and promoted compromise solutions that would facilitate the achievement of an effective balance between the various interests at stake, often suggesting to proceed «*per grazia singulare a motivo d'incoraggiarli in detto commercio*»[952]. Such programmatic consensus was rooted in Pitti's familiarity with long-

[948] *Ibidem*, Giovanni Pietro Ricci to the Grand Duke, Livorno 16/11/1736.

[949] See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 10, n. 98, Livorno 13/06/1740. The petition was subscribed by some of the most prominent English merchants living in Livorno and also by some Dutch and French merchants who had opened mercantile houses together with English partners: Roberto Bateman, Guglielmo Brook, Aikman & Marshall, Blackwell & Wheake, Ragueneau, Marchant & Prescott, Langlois and sons, Sapte and Desmaret, brothers Unwin, Pietro Gravier & co., Lefroy & Charron, Godfrey Chamberlain.

[950] See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 9, n. 21.

[951] *Ibidem*, reg. 9, n. 15, Giovanni Pitti to the Grand Duke, with no place and date.

[952] There words were used by Pitti in the information for the central government about the petition written by the Livorno's English nation described above. The Director also suggested meeting the merchant's

distance trade and its local protagonists. The reliance on 'singular favors' undoubtedly alluded to the centrality of the sovereign power, from whose authority specific concessions descended, but also to a flexible and discretionary application of customs legislation and levies on global goods' trade[953], in order to adapt to particular circumstances and according to a well-tested negotiation process[954].

3.1 Negotiated privileges for the tobacco monopoly

In this general context, what can we infer about the bargaining practices surrounding tobacco trade and taxation? Sources indicate that this sector was not merely a specific aspect of the broader dynamics described around supplications. The imposition of the monopoly led to the creation of a unique system involving a multitude of

demands by «*ordinare la diminuzione di detto stallaggio della metà o di un terzo per il puro travaso terminata la quaresima*», see ASLi *Dogana*, reg. 10, Giovanni Pitti to the Grand Duke, Livorno 23/06/1740.

[953] State institutions appeared much more inclined to grant special exemptions for routes that enhanced Livorno's role as a relevant entrepot for long-distance trade, i.e. above all for extra-European goods that, coming from the Atlantic ports, called in at the Tuscan free port and were then redistributed in the region or towards the Levant. From this point of view, the facilitations granted for salted fish or sugar trade are of particular significance, while the greater rigidity in transactions related to grain, oil and wool or in rents to be paid to the customs house is not too surprising. See the rejected petitions in ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 9, n. 40, Livorno 27/02/1737; reg. 10, n. 99, Livorno 09/06/1740; reg. 11, n. 11, Livorno 11/08/1755; reg. 11, n. 129, Livorno 12/05/1759.

[954] During the Lorraine regency, the Florentine government paid more attention to codifying exemptions and privileges granted to merchants in Livorno: in 1758, the head of the Tuscan regency, the marquis Antoniotto Botta Adorno wrote to the governor of the free port, Filippo Bourbon del Monte, that «*non apparisce che sieno state usate ai mercanti quelle agevolezze che hanno decantato (...), onde indipendentemente da ogni altra cosa travaglierò a far regolare un piano delle facilità che potranno concedersi per il bene del traffico*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 11, n. 97, Botta Adorno to Bourbon del Monte, Florence 04/07/1758. Moreover, the establishment of the General Tax Farm implied a profound change in the *raison d'être* of the *Provveditore* in Livorno: from expert in commercial matters and interlocutor with the local merchant circles to an official of a financial company with physical headquarters and interests in the capital city. Scholars have spoken at length of this shift as a very notable caesura, but we should also consider that the officials of the General Tax Farm themselves could never escape the system of supplications and constant negotiation with mercantile interests. In the archive of the Livorno's customs, we note that petitions quite similar to the Medici period continued to be written throughout the 18th century, bot now the government requested information and a reasoned opinion to the financiers of the General Tax Farm and, later on, to the general administrators residing in Florence. The system remained quite the same, but the protagonists and the points of view substantially changed. See, for example, the debate around the petition written by the Jewish merchants Joseph and Rafael Franco who asked the license for exporting 80 mules to their correspondents in America: from Florence, Serristori and Gavard praised the initiative and agreed with the opportunity of granting the desired license, but their arguments were all focused on the increased tax revenues that this new traffic could provide to the Grand Duchy. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 12, n. 64, Florence 16/03/1768.

stakeholders, making negotiation among them an inevitable reality to manage. A sort of flexible 'social infrastructure' underpinned the monopoly, linking the various actors involved in the circulation of the commodity to define taxation and trade conditions.

To begin with, the monopolistic merchants who ran the Tobacco Farm had significant leverage due to their central role in the creation of the monopoly itself. Moreover, they could emphasize that the actual flow of revenue into the state coffers was highly dependent on the smooth operation of the monopolistic enterprise. Not surprisingly, their petitions to fiscal institutions frequently began with statements highlighting their own contributions to increasing state revenues or the heavy burdens they had assumed in order to secure further favorable conditions. For example, in the 1660s, the brothers Salomon and Emanuel Levi, requesting a reconsideration of the duties on tobacco imported into the Grand Duchy, pointed out that the annual bid of 140.000 *lire* for the monopoly not only doubled the previous fee but also represented a considerable effort for their company, so much so that «*tale appalto gli possa essere molto dannoso*» without the necessary adjustments. The monopolistic merchants presented their fate as inextricably linked to the stability of fiscal institutions, as the state risked to lose the significant revenue increase they had secured[955]. In Venice, Giacomo dal Pino emphasized that he had significantly raised the monopoly fee «*in tempo che l'appalto era in notoria deiezione*» and thus expected that «*non gli fossero introdotte novità pregiudiziali al suo interesse*»[956].

Along these lines, tobacco contractors often encountered a certain condescension from authorities who were willing to grant concessions «*perché proseguissino di buon animo negoziazione così utile a V.A.*»[957]. For example, the groups that secured the first tobacco monopoly contracts in the mid-17th century immediately moved to strengthen their position. In Venice, despite complaints from the Arts of Verona, the tobacco contractors were exempted from the «*contribuzione de' Galeotti et alter gravezze, non essendo conveniente che restino in alcuna parte alterati li capitoli già stabiliti per la*

[955] See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, Marco Martelli to the Grand Duke, Florence 09/08/1662.
[956] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 161-163, Venice 17/05/1685.
[957] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 870v, Alessandro Vettori to Giovanni Battista Gondi, Florence 10/05/1645.

vendita di detto tabacco»[958]. The Jewish venture led by the brothers Israel de Tunis and Abram Vais Pegna quickly achieved significant amendments to the contract signed with the Grand Duke, securing further restrictions against contraband and greater control over the business of exporting merchants[959].

The actual terms of the tobacco monopoly continued to be negotiated, with varying outcomes, throughout the early modern age, highlighting the inherently mixed nature – beyond the 'private' and the 'public' – of the fundamental instrument of regulation in this matter: the tobacco contract between the sovereign power and the monopolistic merchants. Once the monopoly was granted to a privileged company, it secured the exclusive right to import foreign tobacco for the domestic market and to distribute it throughout the internal provinces. However, customs duties and other fees remained applicable to the monopolistic business and the tobacco contractors had to sustain them. These taxes became a subject for further negotiation and petitions. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the tobacco farmers were granted since 1654 that «*li loro tabacchi di qual si voglia specie possino con le debite giustificazioni e riscontri andare innanzi e indietro dappertutto liberamente e senza pagamento di dazio*»[960] and, in the following decades, that the import duties could be waived or the annual fee consequently deducted by 1.100 *scudi* per year[961]. In the Venetian Empire, they firstly claimed a «*minorazione del dazio d'uscita*», according to which the tobacco leaves had to be charged with 2 *grossi* per pound and the powdered tobaccos with 4[962], and then struggled against the new 'stallage receipt' imposed since 1684 on commodities which entered from the sea in the harbor of the capital[963]. In some cases, an intensification of fiscal privileges resulted from

[958] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Pregadi 13/04/1658.

[959] The Jewish group, just after a couple of months since the signature of the tobacco contract, obtained the reduction of the maximum quantity of tobacco for personal use from 2 pounds to 4 ounces; the extension of the punishments provided for smugglers to accomplices and transporters of illegal tobacco; the obligation to always inform contractors about the extraction of tobacco from the Customs Houses of Florence, Pisa, Livorno and Siena. See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 870r, Florence 09/05/1645.

[960] ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 362, ins. 3, Giovanni Battista Gondi to the Grand Duke, Florence 14/07/1654.

[961] ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, Bartolomeo Cavalli to the Grand Duke, Florence 17/08/1665.

[962] See BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. CCCC LXX (=532)*, ff. 1r-v, Venice 08/05/1682, and ff. 2r-v, Pregadi 13/05/1682.

[963] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 265-270, Venice 27/02/1787, and ff. 316-317, Venice 01/09/1687.

negotiations initiated by petitions signed by the monopolistic merchants, which highlighted the potential impact on the public coffers of any obstacles to their pursuit of profit. For example, the exemption from the 'stallage receipt' was included in the new contract for the period 1688-1693 because the Venetian fiscal institutions received no other financially viable offers. Ultimately, they had to reach an agreement with the *partitanti* of the ending monopoly contract, conceding to their request for a reduction in taxes[964].

At the same time, state power weighed demands against multiple concerns that might suggest rejecting the instances from tobacco contractors[965] and, above all, tended to jealously guard its exclusive prerogative to grant exemptions and privileges. So, despite the recurrent supplications of the tobacco farmers, the Grand Duke always decided to renew the exemption on custom duties on tobacco as special concession from year to year, instead of recognising them as a right of the contractors[966]. Moreover, the normative character of the tobacco monopoly contract emerges in all its public relevance from the '*bandi*', prohibitions, and legal arrangements that ensued. Take the case of the regulations against fraud and smuggling of tobacco[967], but also that of the procedures to which

[964] Against offers that were much lower than the existing contract, the new tax farmer had made an offer that was close to the current fee on the condition that «*resti esentato dall'imposizione nuova del stallaggio il tabacco che dal partitante e suoi agenti fosse introdotto in questa città*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, f. 255, Venice 12/04/1686.

[965] For example, remaining on the same case, a few years earlier, the Senate rejected the request of the contractor Giacomo Dal Pino to abolish the duty of entry by the sea on monopoly tobaccos, despite «*le ragioni del partitante che consistono nel dimostrare con l'esperienza derivare da tal aggravio la scarsissima introduzione de' tabacchi nella città, che prendono con pregiudizio sensibilissimo del Partito e pubblici interessi altra strada*». In fact, the Five Sages of Trade had raised considerations of fiscal and commercial fairness that heavily influenced the final decision: on the one hand, that «*anco il tabacco che s'introduce per la via di terra resta soggetto al dacio d'entrata, et anco col riflesso che il partito abbraccia il solo dacio del consumo nella Dominante e Stato tutto, non altrimenti li daci d'entrata e uscita, che restano per conto pubblico*»; on the other hand, that such regulation was valid «*tanto per il conduttore quanto per qualsiasi altro che vorrà introdur tabacco per esitarlo verso qualunque luogo estero*». See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 156-159, Venice 12/05/1685, and ff. 161-163, Venice 17/05/1685.

[966] On several occasions, the tax farmers begged to be given the grace at least «*fino alla fine dell'appalto*», but Tuscan authorities always answered: «*concedes per un altro anno in conformità dell'ultima concessione*», ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, Bartolomeo Cavalli to the grand duke, Florence 27/11/1667. See also *Ibidem*, Bartolomeo Cavalli to the grand duke, Florence 21/09/1670, Emilio Luci to the grand duke, Florence 13/11/1672, and Francesco Panciatichi to the grand duke, Florence 07/10/1705.

[967] The first Tuscan *bando* after the establishment of the tobacco monopoly stated that anyone caught in possession of smuggled tobacco would not only lose all the merchandise, as well as the animals and vehicles

tobacco merchants were obliged to submit[968]. These obligations became a recurrent source of dispute between merchants and tobacco farmers: from the very beginning of the monopoly, the tobacco contractors obtained considerable commercial privileges, such as the exclusion of the 'maximum sales price' clause for tobacco sold by them directly to exporting merchants[969], and were able to get rid of the cost of the maintenance and expansion of the warehouses where the tobaccos belonging to private individuals were stored[970]. By contrast, merchants attempted on several occasions to escape the tobacco contractors' tight control over their goods, but usually in vain: when the Tuscan General Farm got its hands on the tobacco monopoly in 1745, the proposal to replace the obligation to store their tobaccos in the customs warehouse with the handing over of a key of their own warehouses to the tax farm's employees was seen as smokescreen in Livorno. Prominent tobacco merchants, such as Lefroy & Charron, Langlois, Ricci and Finocchietti, categorically refused to hand over the keys and requested the '*Auditore*' of Livorno's government and the Council of Finance in Florence to intervene on their behalf. They also strengthened their arguments by warning that, «*sull'esempio dei pregiudizi che da simili pretensioni ha sofferto il traffico di altri generi, non discendano anche a quello dei tabacchi*»[971]. However, the Council of Finance ruled in favor of the General Tax Farm,

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used to transport it, but would also incur a heavy fine, up to 25 *scudi* per pound of tobacco plus 100 *scudi* in the case of possession of devices for crushing and grinding tobacco. See Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini* ..., vol. XVII, 204. Moreover, as we can appreciate from the Venetian one, fines were accompanied, in the most serious cases, also by corporal punishment, like the painful «*tratti di corda*», and by imprisonment, up to «*5 anni di galera*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Pregadi 13/02/1655.

[968] As we have seen, economic actors owning imported tobaccos were obliged to store their cargoes in public warehouses explicitly identified for the purpose: merchants were free to negotiate them, but just for being re-exported abroad, otherwise only the tax farmer was entitled to buy them. See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, "Capitoli per l'appalto del tabacco per tutti i felicissimi stati del Serenissimo gran duca tanto di Firenze che Siena", f. 845r; ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 171, Pregadi 13/02/1655.

[969] «*(...) per rivenderlo alli quali non sia prohibito il venderlo di vantaggio purché non eccedino un prezzo covenniente*», ASFi, *Auditore delle Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 870v, Alessandro Vettori to Giovanni Battista Gondi, 10/05/1645.

[970] In 1648, the tobacco contractors signaled to the sovereign that «*nel principio del loro appalto fu accomodato un magazzino in Livorno per servizio di mercanti particolari che conducono tabacco*», for which now the building office in Livorno was demanding 101 *ducati* from them for the expenditure incurred in the purchase of planks and other material for this warehouse. The tax farmers complained that such expenditure could not be charged to them, since «*detto magazzino serve per il Commune et altri mercanti particulari*», and obtained that it would be borne by the Livorno's Customs House. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 3, n. 26, Alessandro Nobili to the Grand Duke, Livorno 10/07/1648.

[971] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 36, n. 3, f. 21v, Florence 02/07/1745.

as the new disposition had been already bargained with fiscal institutions and included in the tobacco contract. The government ordered the merchants to strictly comply with it[972].

3.2 The excluded take the floor: collaboration and conflict in the tobacco market

As we have seen, various actors took part in the negotiating arena surrounding the tobacco monopolies. Although the contractors certainly held a privileged position within the system, they were by no means the only interlocutors of the fiscal institutions. Among these actors, we also find individuals from more modest backgrounds. For example, the 'Turkish merchants' from the Ottoman Albania[973] were neither among the wealthiest businessmen in Venice nor the most prominent Ottoman figures temporarily residing there, but they represented a particularly active community, especially after the Peace of Passarowitz (1718), engaged in the retail and trade of low-value goods, such as tobacco leaves from Albania[974]. For an extended period, they were not allowed to freely transport tobacco for personal use, in accordance with the regulations protecting the monopoly.

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[972] The council «*si trova in obbligo di costringerli alla rigorosa esecuzione di ciò che a suo favore vien prescritto dall'articolo 2 del bando vegliante sopra l'appalto del tabacco*», *Ibidem*.

[973] Scholars have emphasized the relative vagueness of the concept of 'Turk' in early modern public opinion, but generally speaking we should always remember that Ottoman subjects were by no means mere exotic projections in the minds of the Venetians or, depending on the situation, distant military rivals or trading partners. They were, indeed, a constant reality among the Venetian '*calli*', where they went to sell their commodities and resided in the prestigious building of the '*Fondaco dei Turchi*'. Even during the periods of war between the *Serenissima* and the Sublime Porte, Ottoman merchants reached Venice with special passports which guaranteed their safety. Take the case of the petition presented to the Five Sages of Trade, through the intermediation of Raimondo Mondini, by the Turk from Constantinople Aggi Sulima d'Aggi Abib who, after the outbreak of the First Morean War, requested «*una ducale di passaporto tanto in terra quanto in mare per la persona di detto Turco con altri due o tre compagni per poter sicuramente portarsi a Venezia con molte sue mercanzie*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 72-73, Venice 15/12/1684. However, their overnight stay within the walls of the '*Fontico*' was strictly controlled by the Venetian authorities and diligent police activities were initiated as soon as informants reported that a 'Turk' had not spent the night inside. See, for example, *Ibidem*, f. 70, Venice 14/12/1684. For more information on the Ottoman presence in the capital and in the subjected territories of the Venetian Empire, as well as on the commercial partnerships between Venetian subjects and 'Turkish' people in the early modern eastern Mediterranean, see Benjamin Arbel, *Trading Nations: Jews and Venetians in the Early-Modern Eastern Mediterranean*, Brill's Series in Jewish Studies ; Vol. 14 (Leiden ; New York: Brill, 1995); Paolo Preto, *Venezia e i turchi*, Interadria 18 (Roma: Viella, 2013).

[974] On the 29th of November 1729, a knave of the Five Sages of Trade attested that he had placed all consignments of tobacco (for a total amount of 4.930 pounds) arrived from Bojana, Ottoman Albania, on board of the tartanes Madonna della Concession and Santissimo Crocefisso, and owned by 19 Turkish merchants, in the public warehouse. Some of these Turkish merchants, like Osman Ali, were in business with the Venetian tobacco farmers and sold loads of leaf tobacco to them. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 890, Venice 29/11/1729 and 29/07/1729.

However, these actors initiated a prolonged negotiation with Venetian authorities, which was marked by negative responses and several seizures of their tobaccos, deemed contraband[975]. Ultimately, following the intervention of the 'Consul of the Turks', a figure appointed to represent the interests of the Ottoman subjects living in Venice, the government decided to grant the Turkish merchants permission to possess a certain quantity of tobacco for personal use[976]. In Livorno, even the porters at the public warehouses, where merchants were required to store their tobacco, resorted to the petition process to improve their conditions[977]. In 1767, they complained that Girolamo Conti, a clerk of the General Tax Farm, had instructed them to perform much more costly and time-consuming tasks than usual in connection with the routine inspection of tobacco leaves provided by the supplier merchants[978]. As a result, they demanded a significant increase in their pay, arguing that their regular compensation was nearly entirely consumed by the cost of new twine, an expense they were forced to bear, which had serious consequences for their own livelihood and that of their families[979].

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[975] Since 1719, Adi Mucco and fellows, Turkish merchants from Scutari, Ottoman Albania, asked the permission to extract from the lazaret their commodities, including «*un poco di oglio, tabacco e un poco di sale per valersene nel tempo che ci fermiamo in questa città Dominante*», *Ibidem*, Venice 07/10/1719. However, this request as similar others which followed were turned down by the Five Sages of Trade, given the strongly negative opinion of the tobacco contractors, who were concerned about fuelling illegal trade with such a permission. On the contrary, many consignments of tobacco, even very small ones, were seized from merchants coming from Bojana and Scutari in those years. See *Ibidem*, Venice 23/11/1729 and 12/08/1730.

[976] «*Supplichiamo umilmente la benigna clemenza di VV. EE., noi mercanti turchi e cristiani albanesi, di voler annuire alle nostre divote supplicazioni, già che le sue benignità si sono compiaciute a tenore d'altra nostra divota supplicazione di concederci per nostro uso quale parte d'implorato tabacco, che di ciò gliene rendiamo infinite grazie*», *Ibidem*, Venice 24/02/1731.

[977] For a study on this crucial manpower for the ordinary activities of the free port, composed mainly by migrant workers and organized in a privileged company that held the exclusive right to carry out this service for the customs house in Livorno, see Andrea Addobbati, *Facchinerie: Immigrati Bergamaschi, Valtellinesi e Svizzeri Nel Porto Di Livorno (1602-1847)* (Pisa: ETS, 2018).

[978] In particular, the inspection concerned a consignments of about 800 bales of tobacco from Habsburg Hungary supplied by Nicola Calat to the Tuscan General Farm: the porters were required to untie each bale, re-tie it at the end of the inspection and then put it back in the public warehouses, so «*dovettero i supplicanti sopportare non solo la spesa di spago, quanto ancora la fatica laboriosa di sciogliere e rilegare ciascuna di dette balle, onde non mancarono di adempire gl'ordini suddetti, persuasi d'aver uno stipendio corrispettivo a detta spesa e fatica, ma nell'atto di domandare al provvisioniere Calat la loro mercede, gl'offrì in pagamento i soliti soldi 2 per libbra*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 12, n. 130, Antonio Serighetti, Alessandro Gritti, Francesco Leoni and Giovanni Fagioli to the Grand Duke, with no date and place, but Livorno 1767.

[979] «*Ma tutto ciò è stato vano, giacché non hanno i detti Deputati risoluto cosa alcuna, in grave pregiudizio dei supplicanti, che campano e s'alimentano con tali emolumenti, (…) venendoli in questa forma tolti quei*

Thus, the supplication system was used as a tool to support claims and defend rights not only by tobacco contractors but also by other large and small economic actors who actively or passively interacted with the monopoly[980]. It is interesting to note how this diverse group of players came to rely on this route, which, as an alternative or alongside litigation in ordinary or special courts[981], provided access to both a negotiating arena overseen by magistracies with specific jurisdiction in the matter and to the sovereign power of last resort justice and grace. In any case, these procedures were always shaped by the opinion, information gathered, and rulings issued by those same magistracies. These magistracies zealously defended their jurisdiction against other bodies[982], and the

diritti e quei guadagni ad essi dovuti in forza del di loro impiego e che servono unicamente al sostentamento della loro vita e famiglia», *Ibidem*.

[980] A large proportion of petitions sent to the tobacco magistracies was written by secondary actors, such as coachmen, dock workers and pedlars demanding clemency for small quantities of smuggled tobacco, often making excuses such as «*non credendo che questo fusse soggetto a frodo, riguardo alla poca quantità e perché doveva servirsene in uso proprio*», ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 2, n. 7, Francesco Romanini to the Grand Duke, Florence 29/05/1782.

[981] In this respect, we should always bear in mind the typical institutional pluralism of the *ancient régime*, based not only on a frequent overlap between the exercise of jurisdiction and the holding of fiscal, judicial, and commercial privileges, but also on the overlap between administration and jurisdiction, whereby institutional prerogatives were devolved to a plurality of local and feudal powers, but also, as we have seen, purely economic ones. See Luca Mannori, *Il Sovrano Tutore: pluralismo istituzionale e accentramento amministrativo nel principato dei Medici (secc. XVI-XVIII)*, Per la storia del pensiero giuridico moderno 45 (Milano: Giuffrè, 1994); Maria Anna Noto, "Ai Confini Del Regno Di Napoli, Tra Immunità e Privilegi Giurisdizionali: Cittadinanza, Aggregazioni e Definizione Dello Spazio Urbano Nella Limitrofa Provincia Pontificia," in *Le Dimore Signorili Nel Regno Di Napoli: L'età Spagnola*, ed. Aurelio Musi (Salerno: Università degli studi di Salerno, 2014), 135–53. Looking at the field of taxation, the guiding principle was that every single levy required a special magistracy, endowed with civil and criminal jurisdiction, to take charge of its collection. The tobacco monopoly was no exception, although the Lorraine government in Tuscany in the 18th century introduced a notable innovation in the field of justice linked to the sovereign treasury and regalian rights: together with the institution of the General Tax Farm, the Grand Ducal Chamber saw the light in 1740, a court with full jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases connected to the taxes included in the contract with the privileged company which ran their collection. See Sordi, *L'amministrazione Illuminata. Riforma Dele Comunità e Progetti Di Costituzione Nella Toscana Leopoldina*, 28–29. However, not only the jurisdiction over the salt and tobacco monopolies remained with the Salt Bureau until 1759, but the cases analyzed above show that, even after the institution of the Grand Ducal Chamber, tobacco disputes continued to be largely handled out of court through supplications and direct negotiation.

[982] Taking one example among many possible, in 1688, the magistracy of the Five Sages of Trade protested animatedly against the trial instituted by the '*Podestà*' of Malamocco, following the arrest of 11 hogsheads of tobacco smuggled in the city by the English Roberto Sanders, captain of the ship Can Levriero: the magistrates stated that the whole affair had to remain «*sotto l'ombra del Magistrato suddetto, a cui resta demandata interamente questa materia*», ordering the Podestà to «*tener sospeso ogni cosa senza progredire più oltre, et informare dei motivi, non solo di tal formazione di processo, ma con qual fondamento s'intenda in questa materia l'autorità del Reggimento mentre resta ad esso Magistrato come sopra demandata*»,

claimants themselves were often the first to request their judgment. Tobacco subcontractors in the Venetian Empire frequently appealed to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* to challenge the overreach of local elites and judges. Take, for example, the case of Antonio Silvestri, a tobacco subcontractor on the Ionian island of Cephalonia, who in 1694 appealed to have the sentence issued against him by the General Inquisitor of the islands annulled and the case reconsidered by the competent magistracy in Venice[983]. Similar criticisms of local courts and chancelleries were common on the Venetian mainland, where subcontractors typically appealed to the Venetian special magistracy in their disputes against the general tobacco farmer[984].

The diverse background of appellants and supplicants involved in the tobacco monopoly's negotiating arena reveal how even those excluded from the privilege could find a voice in the process. However, we must not lose sight of the overwhelming centrality of the major players, who were able to carve out considerable space for themselves. This outcome was also a result of the social proximity we have identified between, on the one side, tax farmers and merchants involved in the long-distance tobacco trade, and on the other side, members of the magistracies with jurisdiction over fiscal and

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ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 170, Venice 11/12/1688. The claim made by the Governor of Livorno in 1769 against the «*cognizione privativa alla Camera granducale non solo delle cause criminali relative alla legge, ma anche delle cause civili nelle quali abbiano interesse, come attori o come rei, l'Amministrazione generale o i ministri ed appaltatori del tabacco, nonostante qualunque privilegio o preminenza di questo Tribunale*» was indeed more problematic, but eventually successful: the Florentine government recognised that the civil disputes in Livorno between the General Administration for tax collection and private parties had to be brought in the first instance before the Auditor of the Governor's Court. See ASLi, *Governo*, IX series, reg. 965, ff. 59-60, Bourbon del Monte to Rosenberg, Livorno 15/05/1769; *Ibidem*, I series, reg. 7, ff. 290r-293v, Rosenberg to Bourbon del Monte, Florence 19/05/1769.

983 The sentence issued by the General Inquisitor of the Islands upheld Pietro Tenado's arguments and ordered Silvestri to pay the former heavy damages. However, jealousy of their own jurisdiction moved the Five Sages of Trade to rule that «*nel termine di mesi sei comparer debbano avanti a Noi e Magistrato nostro per l'uso delle loro ragioni et a vedere tagliato et annullato il suddetto atto e sentenza*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 170, Five Sages of Trade to the General Inquisitor of the Islands, Venice 29/11/1694.

984 For a claim by the tobacco subcontractor Giacomo Giro against the abuse of competence by the Podestà of Padova, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 890, Nicolò Venier to the Five Sages of Trade, Padova 20/02/1733. For the disputes between the general tobacco farmer Girolamo Manfrin and the subcontractors of Brescia (Faustino Lucchi), Udine (Niccolò Vianello), and Treviso (Francesco Canco) for failure to deliver the agreed quantity of leaf tobacco from Albania, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 886, Venice 29/03/1786, 31/03/1796, 17/08/1786.

commercial matters[985]. Therefore, it is not surprising to find numerous examples of collaboration between fiscal institutions and tax farmers, as described above, and the same can be said of major merchants. For instance, at the request of Monsiuers Le Peintre, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* supported the French merchant based in Salonika in seeking extrajudicial arbitration over a dispute with the tobacco general farmer Manfrin regarding the supply of 1.200 bales of Caradà tobacco[986].

However, the balance among all the different interests could only be precarious, and collaboration often shifted, giving way to open conflict. The Venetian government had to contend with the hostility of the mercantile world toward the rigidity of the tobacco monopoly from its very inception. Once the Senate decided to accelerate in its initial implementation, both 'national' and English merchants repeatedly protested against the «*servitù del partito del tabacco*», arguing that it severely hindered Venice's appeal as a marketplace for tobacco redistribution, with the risk of merchants and ship captains redirecting traffic to other ports[987]. The recurring conflict between exporting merchants and monopoly contractors[988] often pitted different groups that had competed for the '*partito del tabacco*' against one another, confirming the permeable boundaries between

[985] In this respect, it seems to me that the petitions written by secondary actors were much less effective when they risked to damage the interests of prominent economic actors. The above-mentioned case of the public tobacco warehouses' porters in Livorno, claiming an increase in their pay, found fierce opposition in the opinion of the Customs House's Director, Alessandro Adami, who accused the porters of the impudence «*di sempre accrescere i loro emolumenti, e la loro avidità di non contentarsi di un discreto guadagno, è stata la vera sorgente d'onde son derivati tutti i tumulti e sconcerti de' magazzini*». According to him, such behaviour was particularly harmful for the free port's trade and the interests of the mercantile houses residing in Livorno, as it «*ha disgustato i mercanti e li ha obbligati a non servirsi dell'opera di detti facchini in quei lavori ne' quali possono farne di meno*». ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 12, n. 50, "Osservazioni di Alessandro Adami Direttore al Secondo Memoriale".

[986] The dispute between Le Peintre and Manfrin revolved around two bills of exchange drawn in favor of the French merchant by the Careggiani company above Demetrio Stano from Salonika. The *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* were demanded by Le Peintre to push for «*un amicabile riconoscimento col mezzo di soggetti mercantile eleggibili dalle parti*», to which Manfrin agreed, declaring himself «*alieno io dal cultivar brighe forensi*». See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 886, Venice 16/09/1786.

[987] In 1654-1655 the greatest concern related to the proposal of the tobacco monopoly for merchants living in Venice lied in the possible implications for the trade with West Indies: as I described in the previous chapters, a part of tobacco's commodification in Venice was driven by the connections of the English mercantile community of the city – and of their local partners – with the planters of the English Barbados, whose tobacco was a crucial item for establishing a commercial exchange with those lands. For the protests against the tobacco monopoly project that came from this environment, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 155, ff. 67r-69v.

[988] Much material from the controversy surrounding the tobacco exit duty can be found in ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, I series, reg. 360.

the trading world and financiers that managed the collection of certain taxes and monopolies. For example, in 1697 the former holder of the tobacco monopoly, Marco Stevanati, mobilized all his relations with the magistrates of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* to contest the claim of the new contractor, Giacomo Ambrosi, to limit his rights «*di estraher dal Fontico Tabacchi per stati esteri anco confinanti, quando siano città murate*», demanding that «*l'uscita de' tabacchi per stati esteri resti a detto Stevanati concessa senza alcun altro peso o molestia*»[989]. Ambrosi was not satisfied with the conciliation proposed by the magistracy and appealed again to the Court of the *Quarantia*. From this and other episodes, we can infer that the primary concern of tax farmers and fiscal institutions regarding tobacco re-exports was the possibility of this commodity being easily smuggled back into the territory of the *Serenissima*. This is why, for a long time, merchants were faced with a prohibition on exporting tobacco to a list of neighboring and suspect states[990].

Also the mercantile 'nations' in Livorno recurrently targeted the tobacco monopoly and its consequent rules as a source of disrepair for their business. In 1681, they raged against the new '*bando*' especially because of the restrictions on the forms in which tobacco could be traded in the free port and the tightening of inspections of the vessels by the guards[991]. Interestingly, the merchants, also through the consuls of the 'nations', had let it be known that they had «*scritto fora a' lor corrispondenti che non gli mandino più di simil genere*»[992]. The Customs House's Director in Livorno, Paolo Poltri, also urged

[989] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 165, ff. 416-420, Venice 13/09/1697.

[990] Usually, walled cities beyond the frontiers were considered safer and it was allowed to export tobacco to those destinations, but also these lines of traffic could be placed under tighter control. For example, see the opinion of the '*capi de' parcenevoli*' about the dreadful consequences of the tax farmers' practice in the early 1740s of completely excluding the possibility for merchants to export tobacco to neighboring states and cities, «*concedendo i luoghi lontani et escludendo i vicini*», ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, I series, reg. 360, ff. 167-168, Giovanni Battista Persico and Giovanni Benedetti, Capi de' Parcenevoli, to the Five Sages of Trade, Venice 23/04/1743.

[991] They complained that «*si vedono obbligate le barche e legni che non hanno qui occasione di scaricare a far la denuncia del tabacco, e sottoposte ad esser visitate ad ogni arbitrio della guardia per ritrovare se il tabacco sia della qualità e quantità denunziata, e se non confrontasse, vi è la perdita anco del legno, con che si può risultare un intiero carico di un naviglio, et anco venire all'aprimento delle balle*»; moreover, the new *bando* ordered the «*obbligo di non poter vendere né estrarre i tabacchi se non nella medesima forma, modo qualità e quantità nelle quali saranno stati introdotti*», ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 2264, Paolo Poltri to Francesco Panciatichi, Livorno 01/08/1681.

[992] ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 2264, Paolo Poltri to Francesco Panciatichi, Livorno 23/07/1681. As the Customs Director immediately stressed, the problem was much bigger than for tobacco business alone, because «*resterà questo porto privo delle navi che per portare il tabacco venivano in questa piazza*

by this particular means of pressure, supported their requests to the Florentine government, even though he was aware of the already onerous conditions that had been imposed on the Jewish tax farmers to renew the tobacco contract[993]. The granducal secretaries eventually accepted the principle to seek a balance between, on the one side, the profits of the tax farmers and state coffers, and on the other side, the health of trade and its protagonists, so they intervened to change many of the innovations opposed by the mercantile world. Nevertheless, the latter repeatedly returned to challenge the Tobacco Farm's privileges that hindered their business. In 1721, they advocated the abolition of the obligation to present the tobacco farmer with the '*responsali*', i.e. delivery receipts for tobacco exported abroad: in their opinion, this was a proper vexation that drove many potential traders from other Italian states away from the port of Livorno[994]. The English 'nation', due to its strong position in the global tobacco redistribution and its lack of direct interest in the Tuscan monopoly, was among the most active in criticizing the harmful consequences of the *ius prohibendi* on trade: the climate of contentiousness of the 1720s surrounding the free port exemptions even landed at the Palace of

e degli utili che danno». The subsequent development of events proved him right: «*seguita ad andare via il poco resto del tabacco che era in questo magazzino et i sig.ri consoli delle Nazioni hanno scritto alli loro Paesi che non sia caricato Tabacco alle navi che vengono a Livorno, perché non restino sottoposti all'arbitrio dell'appaltatori e di Portogallo si vuol sentire poche navi in questa città, perché con occasione del tabacco portavano altre mercanzie, che tutte andranno a Genova*», *Ibidem*, Paolo Poltri to Francesco Panciatichi, Livorno 28/07/1681.

[993] Poltri recognised the efforts that the tax farmers had made to keep the tobacco monopoly in their own hands, but stressed that also the welfare of merchants should be safeguarded: «*segue forse l'istesso adesso con questi Ebrei, che hanno avuto tante condizioni per mantener l'appalto, che è considerabile e deve essere sostenuto per l'utile che porta, mentre però non rechi tanto pregiudizio per altri versi che in cambio di utile sia dannoso*», *Ibidem*, Paolo Poltri to Francesco Panciatichi, Livorno 23/07/1681. Moreover, the Director supported the merchants' demands because, within a few days, their instructions to foreign correspondents had caused not a single pound of tobacco belonging to private individuals was left in the public warehouses, see *Ibidem*, Paolo Poltri to Francesco Panciatichi, Livorno 01/08/1681.

[994] As reported to the Florentine government, in a tone of veiled assent, by the Customs Director Giacinto del Vigna, the merchants of Livorno suggested «*qualche mezzo per incoraggiare li napoletani, siciliani e sardi di venire qua con più frequenza ed in maggior numero per crescere il negozio. Metodo migliore mai ci puol essere che quello della libertà del commercio del Tabacco (…) cioè che chi spedisce fuori non debba essere obbligato di promettere a questo appaltatore di consegnarli dentro un certo tempo gl'attestati, chiamati responsali, d'averlo scaricato nel luogo che avessero asserito di volerlo concludere*», ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 2274, Giacinto del Vigna to Carlo Rinuccini, Livorno 28/05/1721. In his article on the Deputation of Trade established in Livorno in the late-Medici's period, Daniele Baggiani referred to this proposal as an initiative to abolish the monopoly: as a matter of fact, in this case the merchants did not contest the logic and the institution of the domestic monopoly on tobacco trade and distribution, but they were demanding greater facilitation for the re-export trade.

Westminster in London, where merchants engaged in the Mediterranean trade argued before Parliament that «*if Leghorn* [Livorno] *was once a free port, it is not so at present*», especially because of tax farms on articles such as tobacco and writing paper[995]. Moreover, the English merchant William Gott was among the authors of 17 detailed proposals concerning the port of Livorno and sent to the new Lorraine government in 1737[996], among which there was the request to completely abolish the tobacco monopoly in Livorno, with the aim of removing the influx of tobacco from rival Genoa, which had been elected by merchants as the main emporium in the Western Mediterranean for such a commodity[997]. Finally, complaints grew again with the advent of the General Tax Farm in 1740: during a new listening campaign of Livorno's merchant circles in 1758, all the 'deputies of the nations' returned to strongly demand «*che si sopprima l'appalto dell'acquavite (…) e che l'istesso segua dell'appalto del tabacco, con libertà a' ognuno di fabbricarne*»[998]. Again the abolition of this valuable instrument for public finance was not considered feasible, but the general tax farmers themselves proposed to meet merchants' demands by lowering the duty due to them on powdered and crushed tobacco brought into Livorno by sea and differentiating it by type of tobacco[999].

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[995] British Library, *Lansdowne MS*, reg. 1037, n. 3, "Reasons shewing that Leghorn cannot be deemed a Free Port". According to the authors of the paper, tax farms constituted conspicuous breaches in Livorno's free trade regime: thanks to them, contractors were authorized to male rigorous inspections on merchants' activities and properties. I would like to thank Andrea Addobbati and Corey Tazzara for having brought this document to my attention.

[996] The affair is thoroughly explored in Thompson, "'Progetti in Vantaggio Del Principe, Del Pubblico e Del Commercio Della Toscana'. I Mercanti Di Livorno e l'economia Toscana al Momento Della Successione Lorenese."

[997] The merchants' proposal argued that «*per benefizio del commercio di Livorno non vi dovrebb'essere l'appalto del Tabacco e acquavite, seguitando con ciò l'esempio dell'Inghilterra, dell'Olanda, del Levante e del Portofranco di Genova, nei quali si possono liberamente trafficare e manipolare tutte le sorti di Tabacco*». They further added that not too long before several Neapolitan and Sicilian vessels used to sail to Livorno with their cargoes of silk, oil and wheat, «*essendo certi di potersi ivi provvedere del loro bisognevole, in specie di detti Tabacchi del Brasile, dei quali mai ne mancava essa piazza, (…) ma essendo mancato il comodo a detti padroni di proveddersi del loro bisogno in Livorno, per essere colato quasi tutto a Genova il traffico di detti Tabacchi del Brasile*». Finally, the benefits from the abolishment of the tobacco monopoly in Livorno were not limited to the traffic of the Brazilian tobacco, but also to those of other varieties: «*si vedrebbero ricorrere con assai Maggiore affluenza a Livorno dall'Inghilterra li Tabacchi Virginia, dall'Olanda i Polvigli, dal Levante i Tabacchi in foglia*». See ASFi, *Miscellanea Finanze*, *A*, reg. 290, ins. C.

[998] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 11, n. 142, "Sunto de' lamenti e delle domande de' mercanti di Livorno contro l'Appalto generale"

[999] The proposals for the abolition of the monopolies on tobacco and spirits were strongly rejected, especially the first one as «*converrebbe molto meno di privar il Regio Erario della sicura e rispettabile*

What can we say about the effects of such a negotiation? Undoubtedly, the general trend over the long term was towards a greater liberalization in the tobacco trade, intersecting with the broader discussion on trade-friendly revision of customs tariffs[1000]. Once again, the stances taken by institutions with competence over taxation and trade helped to promote a deregulation of the obligations on re-exports and transit of this commodity introduced with the creation itself of the monopoly[1001]. In the Venetian Empire, whereas the *Deputati alla Provvision del denaro pubblico* had decreed in 1659 that re-exports of tobaccos for neighboring lands were forbidden, as we have seen several proclamations restricted the ban to a specific list of suspect territories and cities since the 1680s[1002]. Later on, the export duty on tobacco was further reduced «*al solo peso di sei piccoli per libbra*»[1003] and, when, in 1743, the company Cottoni, Maruzzi and Zanchi lost

entrata della Zienda dei Tabacchi, ogni volta che (…) non si potrebbero introdurre tante fabbriche di Tabacco da formare un ramo di commercio capace d'indennizzare S.M.I. del forte canone che l'Appaltatore gli paga di questa partita», *Ibidem*, "Risposte succinte dell'Appaltatore generale alle rappresentanze e doglianze dei mercanti". On the contrary, the reduction of the duty on the imports of processed tobaccos, which amounted to 2 *crazie* per pound (3 *soldi* and 4 *denari*) for all of them according the law published on 1st October 1745, was considered a useful solution to meet the demands of merchants without going through negotiated concessions. The new tariff maintained a duty of 3 *soldi* and 4 *denari* per pound on Spanish powdered tobacco from Seville, but lowered it on Dutch *Avana* (1 *soldo* and 8 *denari*), grinded and crushed tobaccos (1 *soldo*) and tobacco flour from the Netherlands (6 *lire* for 1.000 pounds). See also *Ibidem*, Giovanni Becher, Lazzero Damiani, Filippo Guglielmo Huygens, Pietro Charron, Santi Dutemul, Cornelio Beremberg, Antonio Lefroy, Giuseppe Porter, Giovanni Dufour, Isach Recanati, Ioseph Franco to Botta Adorno, Livorno 30/01/1759.

[1000] For these debates in our two case studies in the 'long 18th century', see Ugo Tucci, "La Marina Mercantile Veneziana Nel Settecento," *Bollettino Dell'Istituto Di Storia Della Società e Dello Stato Veneziano* II (1960): 155–200; Becagli, *Un Unico Territorio Gabellabile. La Riforma Doganale Leopoldina: Il Dibattito Politico 1767-1781*; Ulvioni, "Politica e Riforme a Venezia Nel Secondo Settecento. Il 'Piano Daziale'"; Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, "Livorno 1676: La Città e Il Porto Franco," in *La Toscana Nell'età Di Cosimo III. Atti Del Convegno Pisa - San Domenico Di Fiesole, 4-5 Giugno 1990*, ed. Franco Angiolini, Vieri Becagli, and Marcello Verga (Firenze: Edifir, 1993), 45–66.

[1001] For the efforts of the Venetian resident in Milan, Giuseppe Imbersi, to have the established surcharges on timber and tobacco removed by the Senate, as they had become the object of complaints and threatened tariff reprisals by the Habsburg plenipotentiary in the State of Milan, the Count Cristiani, see BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. DXI (=175)*, "Vol. V, Scritture, Decreti, Sommarie ed alter memorie riguardanti il Commercio Veneto interno, 1755-1790", ff. 41r-44r, Giuseppe Imbersi to the Five Sages of Trade, Milan 22/03/1758. For the support of the Livorno's Governor, Filippo Bourbon del Monte, for the overland traffic of tobacco through the grand duchy, see ASLi, *Governo*, IX series, reg. 965, ff. 59-60, Bourbon del Monte to Rosenberg, Livorno 15/05/1769.

[1002] The list included Cervignano, Castiglione, Corbola, Trieste, Trento and its territories, Mantova and Mirandola, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 165, ff. 416-420, Venice 13/09/1697.

[1003] Remember that in 1682 the export duty on tobacco had been halved at the request of the tobacco contractor Giuseppe Dal Pino, amounting to 2 and 4 grossi per pound for powder and leaf tobacco respectively. See BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. CCCC LXX (=532)*, ff. 1r-v, Venice 08/05/1682, and ff. 2r-v,

the renovation of the tobacco monopoly but maintained its hands on the contract for the collection of the export duty, it immediately advocated for the abolition of every restrictions, as «*togliendosi li divieti e le soggezioni riguardo ad alcuni luoghi confinanti si farebbe una maggior estrazione e per conseguenza un maggior dazio di uscita*»[1004]. This demand was eventually approved also because it was strongly supported by exporting merchants, who were particularly interested in Trento, whose territory was listed as a suspicious place but represented at the time the main foreign market for tobacco re-exports from Venice[1005].

Looking at the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the trend followed a similar pattern. Whereas the first '*bandi*' on the tobacco monopoly were particularly rigid, allowing re-exports only by sea from the port of Livorno[1006], the merchants of the free port soon obtained the right to «*estrarre da detta città tabacchi sodi, purché sieno sodi e non in polvere, e quelli far transitare a Firenze, per di qui farli passare a Bologna, per servizio di quella o altre città*»[1007]. The mercantile world's objections to the monopoly brought the contractors themselves to agree further facilitation: for example, in 1714, Samuel Levi and nephews were led to renounce the right to visit any ship flying foreign flags, as this

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Pregadi 13/05/1682. Accordingly, the new tariff was much more advantageous for exporters, as 1 *grosso* was equal to 26 *denari piccoli*. See Edoardo Martinori, *La moneta: vocabolario generale* (Roma: Multigrafica editrice, 1977), 251. It is to be stressed that not only exporting merchants, but also tobacco contractors were required to pay the export duty when tobacco for other subjected provinces came out from Venice. As explained by the extended text of the quotation above, «*questo dazio, ridotto da molti anni al solo peso di sei piccoli per libbra, che ragguagliato all'intriseco valore è di tre incirca per cento, pagasi egualmente dall'Appaltator generale che lo estrae da Venezia per le occorrenze dello Stato, dalli particolari che in tenue summa ne spediscono per loro uso, e pagasi dai mercanti (senza però riconoscere il dazio del consumo) che lo estraggono per terre aliene*», ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, I series, reg. 360, f. 109, Venice 31/03/1743.

[1004] *Ibidem*, f. 110.

[1005] In 1741, tobacco exported to Trento amounted to 1.522.841 pounds, or 86,1% of total re-exports to foreign markets, see ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, I series, reg. 360, f. 13, Venice 19/08/1741, "Foglio che dimostra la summa intiera de' Tabacchi usciti per il Stato Veneto e Stati esteri".

[1006] For example, see the article 6 of the "Bando e ordine da osservarsi per l'appalto del tabacco" published on the 1st August 1690, according to which «*l'estrazione in qualunque caso debba sempre seguire per mare, perché il tabacco che non sia del predetto appaltator generale mai ha da poter transitare per alcuna parte o luogo degli Stati suddetti di S.A.S.*», Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini* ..., vol. XX, 121.

[1007] The quotation is from "Bando et ordine da osservarsi per l'appalto del tabacco" published on the 14th March 1699, see Cantini, vol. XXI, 71. Also the right of 2 pieces-of-eights for each parcel of tobacco arrived in Livorno from ports within the distance of 250 miles and intended for other destinations was abolished in 1703. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 53, Anton Francesco Montauti to Francesco Terriesi, Florence 19/04/1703.

practice risked further irritating the merchants in the marketplace[1008]. Furthermore, under the reign of Peter Leopold in the second half of the 18th century, the government approved a complete reform of the relevant legislation with the aim of preserving the tobacco trade: in 1769, it was stipulated that everyone could import by sea every kind of «*Tabacchi sodi, cioè in Corda del Brasil, in foglia di qualunque specie, il rapé in bastoni e per qualunque altro genere che possa intendersi sotto la denominazione di detti tabacchi sodi*»[1009] and also to freely negotiate them in Livorno or to export them towards foreign countries overland by transiting granducal territory, provided that the batches of tobacco in question were over 100 pounds in weight[1010]. Also for powdered tobaccos the new legislation allowed every merchant to import and re-export them by sea and overland, though with the payment of an extra-duty for the transit[1011]. Even this latter fiscal obstacle to re-export

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[1008] «*Noi Samuel e nipoti Levi, appaltatori generali del Tabacco delli Stati del Ser.mo Granduca di Toscana, dichiariamo e promettiamo (…) che, nonostante la permissione accordataci in virtù del nuovo Bando spedito questo medesimo giorno di poter visitare o far visitare di nostro ordine o de' nostri subappaltatori pro tempore in Livorno li bastimenti di qualsivoglia bandiera di nazion forestiera, per interesse dell'appalto del tabacco, che fossero nel porto o nel molo di Livorno, ci obblighiamo di non valerci, né vogliamo poterci valere della suddetta permissione, né poter mandare a fare tali visite senza licenza del governatore di Livorno pro tempore*», ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 328, ins. 22, Samuel and Salomon Levi to the Grand Duke, Florence 23/10/1714.

[1009] See § 2 of the universal law on tobacco published on the 11th of May 1769. A copy of the law can be consulted in ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 36.

[1010] See § 3, 4 and 5 of the universal law on tobacco published on the 11th of May 1769. While re-exporting tobaccos from Livorno by sea did not foresee any further aggravation, transit by land was still subjected to more complicated conditions: firstly, merchants had to obtain a written license from the customs ministers indicating the number, mark and weight of each parcel shipped; secondly, transit was burdened with the payment of a duty of 1 *lira* for each 250-pound parcel; finally, it was compulsory to «*far venire dall'ultima Dogana di frontiera del Granducato responsali e giustificazioni che provino detti colli corrispondenti in numero, marca e peso, e tali e quali sono scritti da Livorno, essere stati estratti dalla Toscana e realmente passata negli stati alieni*». See § 5 of the universal law on tobacco published on the 11th of May 1769 in ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 36.

[1011] «*Si permette parimenti in favore del commercio che tutti gli altri Tabacchi, Polvigli di ogni specie, pesti macinati, in grana, o altrimenti lavorati e ridotti in polvere, che verranno per via di mare nel Porto di Livorno, possino itnrodursi in quella città e rispettivamente di lì spedirsi per passo attravarso la Toscana per gl'altri Stati esteri, osservate però le cose che seguono e non altrimenti, cioè (…) restino ancora sottoposti immediatamente al pagamento del seguente Dazio particolare spettante alla Zienda de' Tabacchi, che per nuova facilità vien ridotto*», see § 9 of the universal law on tobacco published on the 11th of May 1769 in ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 36. The same free introduction and negotiation of powdered tobaccos in Livorno was a not-obvious achievement for the merchants of the marketplace: as we can learn from the '*bando*' on processed tobaccos in 1714, it was not allowed «*per maggior benefizio dell'Appalto (…) portare, né introdurre sopra bastimenti di alcuna sorta Tabacchi in Polviglio, o granati, o in qualsivoglia altra forma pesti o macinati, che siano stati caricati o manipolati in qualunque luogo posto dentro alla distanza di miglia 100 da detto Porto di Livorno*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 5, n. 59.

of tobacco was eventually removed when the Grand Duke «*per sempre facilitare il commercio*» decided to exempt from the duty powdered tobaccos re-exported from Livorno by sea[1012]. Finally, in spite of the contrary opinion of the second department of the General Administration of Royal Revenue, the Grand Duke Peter Leopold in 1781 abolished the obligation of licenses for foreign tobacco passing through Tuscany for destinations abroad. He also ordered a revision of the customs tariffs to eventually exempt the overland transit of tobacco through the Grand Duchy's territory by all duties[1013].

In sum, the tobacco monopoly survived conflicts and protests that went so far as to challenge the very legitimacy of its existence, but the answers to the claims of those excluded from the *ius prohibendi* were able to give more legitimacy to their profits without sacrificing the monopoly itself. The progressive rethinking of tobacco legislation - which brought results like the amendments to the contracts for the management of the tobacco monopoly or the greater opportunity for the re-export trade - were achieved through constant day-to-day negotiation rather than once and for all by the authority of new legislative acts. So, although Venice's criminal legislation on contraband stipulated that the vessel on which the tobacco had been illegally introduced could not be taken out of the port before the sentence was passed, the captain of the English ship called Accordo, which had been stopped by the guards of the Malamocco's *Reggimento* for suspected smuggling tobacco, obtained a license to «*poter proseguire il viaggio, esibendo di dare un'idonea pieggiaria, stante gli interessi di questi negozianti nelle spedizioni*»[1014]. In Livorno, despite the 1769 universal law prohibiting the land transit of any kind of raw, crushed, and powdered tobacco in quantities less than 100 pounds, two years later Giorgio Ranieri Coco petitioned the Grand Duke to allow the land passage to Bologna of a 6-pound box of powdered tobacco received from Sardinia. The petition was granted as

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[1012] «*Per sempre facilitare il commercio, si è degnata S.A.R. di esentare tanto le farine di tabacco, che gli altri tabacchi detti Siviglia e Avana di Spagna e d'Olanda che compariranno per via di mare nel porto di Livorno dal rispettivo dazio (...) nel solo caso che detti Tabacchi scaricati, o depositati, o contrattati in detta piazza di Livorno si riestraggano successivametne per l'istessa via di mare*», ASLi, Dogana, reg. 14, n. 41, "Notificazione sopra i Tabacchi Siviglia e Avana di Spagna e Olanda", 04/12/1770.

[1013] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 571, Protocol n. 20 of the 27/03/1781. For the contrary opinion of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets as general administrator of the second department, see *Ibidem*, Gavard to the Grand Duke, Florence 21/03/1781. For the exemption from transit duty for tobacco in the 1781 tariff, see *Tariffa Delle Gabelle Toscane* (Firenze: Gaetano Cambiagi stampatore granducale, 1781), 257–60.

[1014] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 75-76, Venice 02/01/1685.

«*grazia speciale in vantaggio del loro commercio*»[1015]. Indeed, the bargaining dimension remained a central feature of the tobacco monopoly's governance, extending far beyond the specific activities of the tobacco farmers to encompass all the stakeholders involved.

4. Conclusion

The establishment of the tobacco monopolies gave birth to a particular social infrastructure aiming at a balance between several interests and different needs. First and foremost, the objectives of public finance were obliged to be checked and harmonized as far as possible with the pursuit of profits by the monopolistic merchants investing in the sector. But many other actors also participated or claimed their right to have access in the tobacco 'commodity chain', starting with merchants engaged in long-distance circulation who struggled to get favorable conditions in tobacco re-export trade. By investigating how these different interests interacted with each other, it has been possible to highlight the absolute centrality of negotiation to mediate conflicts that could have hindered the existence of the monopoly.

In this regard, merchants and trade officials shared a common environment that facilitated the process of negotiation. Officials in strategic institutional magistracies with competence on taxation and trade played a pivotal role. The *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* in Venice or the Director of the Livorno's Customs House were not simply experts in the field: they actually engaged in mercantile business investing in long-distance trade, manufacturing and public debt. This substantial overlap has not been adequately emphasized even in seminal studies on the commercial life and the political economy of the time[1016]. Thanks to their multiple affiliations, these actors served as a crucial hinge between institutions and market forces, a crucial aspect for a business sector where the contribution of mercantile networks was particularly important.

[1015] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 14, n. 200, Serristori, Gavard and Siminetti to the Grand Duke, Florence 07/12/1771.

[1016] Taking the case of Livorno, the actors of the free port have been investigated by Andrea Addobbati mainly as economic operators, while Corey Tazzara has mostly looked at them as institutional actors and policy-makers. There is a lack of reflection that restores the greater complexity emerging from these figures. See Addobbati, *Commercio, rischio, guerra*; Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World*.

Indeed, mercantile networks with a predominant position in the long-distance tobacco trade had a vantage point for the adjudication of the monopoly. Resources from the mercantile networks proved essential points to emerge in a proper transnational business and to accredit themselves as privileged interlocutors with fiscal institutions for the monopoly. Moreover, their commercial expertise, access to new products, ability to raise larger amounts of capital and to forge alliances with officials and political factions were among the main drivers to overcome stagnation and 'bottlenecks' through the turnover of the merchants at the top of the tobacco monopoly. Progressively, financial skills and expertise in the monopoly administration became more decisive factors for the adjudication of the Tobacco Farm and the success of the business.

From this point of view, there is no doubt that the networks of the tobacco contractors were decisive in promoting an acceptable balance between the different interests at stake. Undoubtedly, the pursuit of balance underlying the success of the tobacco monopolies concerned some and not all. The monopoly inevitably created produced winners and losers[1017]. However, the social infrastructure that surrounded the tobacco monopoly did not look at taxpayers and at the merchants excluded from the monopolistic privileges only in terms of coercion and repression. On the contrary, the monopoly itself was configured as a sort of 'negotiating arena' in which, through various extrajudicial means as the supplication and petitions sent to the sovereign power, different subjects could present their demands in search of a compromise. Namely, merchants involved in tobacco trade frequently resorted to their contacts with institutions and magistrates to present their claims and wrest favorable fiscal and commercial conditions to run their business.

The balance between the various interests remained, in any case, a precarious equilibrium: cooperation could suddenly turn into open conflict, even to the point of questioning the legitimacy of the monopoly itself. However, it was precisely the bargaining process between the biggest players – especially tax farmers, major merchants, and fiscal institutions – that allowed the necessary adjustments to be made. In particular, pressure from merchant groups led to the approval of innovations that guaranteed a

[1017] On this point, see again Guido Alfani and Matteo Di Tullio, *The Lion's Share Inequality and the Rise of the Fiscal State in Preindustrial Europe* (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 147.

greater account of the profits that the marketplace could make from the re-exports of a global commodity like tobacco, without renouncing the income that the monopoly ensured for tax farmers and state coffers. Thus, the redefinition of the sector was usually achieved through constant day-to-day negotiation rather than once and for all in the light of new legislative acts.

Chapter 5

The dark side of the monopoly: tobacco contraband between repression, compromise, and complicity

> «*Tra li più pesanti aggravi fu dal nostro ossequio esposto a VV. EE. vi è il gravissimo delle vendite che al minuto e all'ingrosso si fanno da' sudditi di questo Ser.mo dominio nelle loro case e botteghe vicine alle abitazioni degli eccellentissimi Ambasciatori (…). Una pubblica vendita di tabacco di contrabbando nel cuore della città senza avere da temere, (…) senza avere altro disturbo che di portarsi con breve incomodo a questi luoghi di pubblica e creduta franca fiera di tabacco, con avvantaggio rimarcabile di prezzo, che si fa con esultanza di cuore da que' venditori*»[1018]

> «*Jacopo Peruzzi, agente nella Fattoria della Contea di Cesa, umilissimo servo e suddito della RAV, con tutto l'ossequio le rappresenta come la mattina del 12 dicembre prossimo passato 1772 si portà alla detta fattoria Antonio Casoni Di Monte, unitamente con nove suoi compagni armati con sette bocche da fuoco per ciascheduno, e un cane corso, carichi di tabacco e polvere in quantità di some dieci, i quali arbitrariamente pretesero estorcere dei denari del supplicante, avendoli domandato ottanta Zecchini che avrebbero lasciato tanto Tabacco in deposito*»[1019]

The 'negotiating arena' around the tobacco monopoly did not clear the ground from all the threats and conflicts. The establishment of the *ius prohibendi* was followed, literally the very next day as Stefano Levati shrewdly pointed out[1020], by the most precise definition possible of all cases that violated the monopoly and were therefore to be considered illegal. Legislation frequently clashed with the widespread resort to fraud and contraband, practices which involved different levels of the social pyramid. As we can see from the first quotation above, Venetian subjects dared to sell and buy illegal tobacco in the heart of the capital to get a better price 'with heartfelt exultation'. They were also protected by the ill-concealed complicity of foreign diplomats living in the city.

[1018] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 352, n. 2034, Venice 10/11/1703.

[1019] ASFi, *Amministrazione generale delle regie rendite*, reg. 951, ins. 71, Jacopo Peruzzi to the Grand Duke, Florence 22/04/1773.

[1020] See in particular Stefano Levati, "'Che Non Seguano Fraudi in Pregiudizio Del Nuovo Datio Imposto Sopra Il Tabacco': Norme e Corpi a Difesa Dei Diritti Di Privativa Nell'Italia Centro-Settentrionale (XVII-XVIII Secolo)," in *Contrabbando e Legalità: Polizie a Difesa Di Privative, Diritti Sovrani e Pubblico Erario: Seminario Di Studi, Messina, 1-3 Dicembre 2011*, ed. Livio Antonielli and Stefano Levati (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2016), 111–40. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the rescript that formalised the tobacco monopoly was signed on the 10th of May 1645 and the *bando* against fraud and contraband was published the very next day, on the 11th of May 1645, see Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini …*, vol. XVII, 203.

Repression and even military force were common responses that the state and tobacco contractors adopted to preserve their interests. But, the protagonists of the monopoly had also to come to terms with smugglers, even accepting to buy tobacco from them in situations somewhere between extortion and aggressive negotiation. The supplication from Jacopo Peruzzi to the Grand Duke reported in the second quotation above was not a unique case: commenting on it, the general administrator Giuseppe Gavard noted that he deserved «*di essere trattato come alcuni altri particolari dello stato senese, i quali si sono ritrovati nella medesima circostanza*»[1021].

In this chapter, I will delve into the problems and challenges that tobacco smuggling posed to the monopoly. To begin with, I will present the general picture in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire in the 17th and 18th centuries. Who were the protagonists of early modern tobacco smuggling? And why did they resort to contraband? Then, I will focus on the strategies and practices that were put in place to reduce as much as possible the damage to fiscal revenues and commercial profits that these interests expected to make from the sector. To what extent did the confrontation between the early modern institutions and smugglers fit into the negotiation processes described above?

Tobacco smuggling in the early modern age was really a critical issue of fully transnational relevance, a proper 'dark side' of the monopoly which prospered wherever the latter was established[1022]. As Michael Kwass has noted, «tobacco was one of a number of exotic consumer goods to inundate Europe in the eighteenth century, as transoceanic trade with the New World, Africa and Asia surged. What is less well known is that much of that trade was illicit»[1023]. Indeed, it seems particularly pretentious to determine 'how much' of such trade was illicit, since, by definition, smuggling eluded any collection,

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[1021] ASFi, *Amministrazione generale delle regie rendite*, reg. 951, ins. 71, Giuseppe Gavard de Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 07/05/1773.

[1022] Tobacco contraband expanded even well beyond the boundaries of monopolies, as states that never adopted this fiscal solution had to face the same intense phenomenon. Take the case of the British customs system, which provided drawbacks on re-exports of tobacco, making legal trade to other states profitable, but also leading to an explosion of illegal trade, whereby merchants obtained tax breaks by declaring their tobacco loads for re-export, but then smuggled them back into the kingdom. On these dynamics, see Philipp Robinson Rössner, *Scottish Trade in the Wake of Union (1700-1760): The Rise of a Warehouse Economy* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008), 63–65. Moreover, until 1713, when a legislative act enforced the destruction of damaged tobacco, merchants bribed customs officers to declare good tobacco as damaged, in order to not pay the duty on it, for then importing considerable quantities duty-free, see Paul G. Clemens, "The Rise of Liverpool, 1665-1750," *Economic History Review* 29 (1976): 211–25.

[1023] Michael Kwass, "The First War on Drugs. Tobacco Trafficking, Criminality, and the Fiscal State in Eighteenth-Century France," in *The Hidden History of Crime, Corruption and States*, ed. Renate Bridenthal (New York, NY ; Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), 77.

however pre-statistical, of data by early modern states. Nevertheless, some attempts have been made to provide accurate percentages of tobacco smuggling out of the total volume of tobacco trade[1024]. In any case, leaving aside quantification, the significance of the phenomenon remains undisputed virtually everywhere in the early modern age, as abundant studies from different national historiographies have demonstrated[1025]. Actually, illegal cross-border flows of this global commodity consistently helped its spread, providing its products at lower prices for the less affluent members of early modern societies[1026].

To investigate such a relevant phenomenon, it is important to pay attention to the literature on contraband in the early modern age. First of all, in these works we usually find a distinction between 'fraud' and 'contraband'. According to some scholars, the

[1024] According to French scholars, tobacco illegally imported in metropolitan France was in the range of 33% to 66% between the Colbert time and the age of Enlightenment, while Spanish and British consumption was 50% supplied by smuggled tobacco. See Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 315–16; Jordan Kellman, "French Empire," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia* (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005); William Alan Cole, "Trends in Eighteenth-Century Smuggling," *The Economic History Review* 10, no. 3 (1958): 395–410; Oscar Bergasa Perdomo, "Monopolio de Tabaco y Real Hacienda: El Impacto Del Contrabando Sobre Los 'dineros Del Rey' Durante El Siglo XVIII," in *Politica Economica y Gestion de La Renta Del Tabaco En El Siglo XVIII*, ed. Agustín González Enciso (Madrid: Fundacion Altadis, 2008).

[1025] In addition to the studies already mentioned, see also for Great Britain: Alfred Rive, "A Short History of Tobacco Smuggling," *The Economic Journal* 39, no. 1 (1929): 554–69; T. C. Barker, "Smuggling in the Eighteenth Century: The Evidence of the Scottish Tobacco Trade," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 62, no. 4 (1954): 387–99; Robert C. Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Legal and Illegal Trade," *Economic History Review*, 1982, 354–72; for the Iberian peninsula: Carl A. Hanson, "Monopoly and Contraband in the Portuguese Tobacco Trade, 1624-1702," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 19, no. 2 (1982): 149–68; Agustín González Enciso, "Entorno al Contrabando de Tabaco En El Siglo XVIII," in *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporanea. Homenaje a Federico Suarez Verdager* (Madrid: Rialp, 1991), 199–209; José Manuel Rodríguez Gordillo, "El Fraude En El Estanco Del Tabaco (Siglos XVII-XVIII)," *Hacienda Publica Espanola - Reviews of Public Economics* 1 (1994): 61–77; for the French kingdom: Emmanuel Hepp, "La Contrebande Du Tabac Au XVIIIe Siècle," in *Aspects de La Contrabande Au XVIIIe Siècle*, ed. Marie-Hélène Bourquin (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), 39–93; André Ferrer, *Tabac, sel, indiennes: douane et contrebande en Franche-Comté au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires franc-comtoises, 2002); for the early modern Italian states: Furio Bianco, "La Frontiera Come Risorsa. Il Contrabbando Del Tabacco Nella Repubblica Di Venezia in Età Moderna," *Histoire Des Alpes - Storia Delle Alpi - Geschichte Der Alpen* 3 (1998): 213–25; Cinzia Capalbo, "Contrabbando, Commercio e Fiscalità Nel Napoletano in Età Moderna. Il Mercato Illegale Del Tabacco," ed. Donatella Strangio (Padova: Cedam, 2000), 97–121; Rita Tolomeo, "Il Commercio e Il Contrabbando Di Tabacco Tra La Serenissima e Il Levante," in *Mercanti e Viaggiatori per Le Vie Del Mondo*, ed. Giovanna Motta (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2000), 275–88; Stefano Levati, "Gli Spazi Dell'illecito: Il Contrabbando Del Tabacco Nell'Italia Moderna Tra Privilegi e Confini," in *Movimenti e Confini. Spazi Mobili Nell'Italia Preunitaria* (Roma: Viella, 2013), 75–92; Paolo Calcagno, "Fraudes Maritimes Au XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles: Un Voyage Dans Les Sources Génoises," *Cahiers de La Méditerranée* 90 (2015): 215–36.

[1026] See in particular Beverly Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures: The Material World Remade, c.1500-1820*, New Approaches to Economic and Social History (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 138–87 and 201–5.

former is the non-payment of tax duties on lawfully marketable goods, such as evasion of customs duties or cheating in the declaration of a cargo of commodities. The latter is the clandestine trade in prohibited goods or commodities subjected to specific regulations, like our case of tobacco[1027]. Although Melón Jiménez had highlighted that sometimes early modern sources use the two words interchangeably, Biagio Salvemini and Roberto Zaugg have recently highlighted the moral dimension of the definition of 'fraud' in the French *Encyclopédie*: the pen of Denis Diderot referred to a 'vice opposed to justice and truthfulness'[1028]. As noted by Guillame Calafat, «the legal definition of 'fraud' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries covered a broader range of practices»[1029] than simply contraband, fraudulent imitation, counterfeit goods, contravention, or false labels.

If we take a broader definition like 'economic crimes'[1030], studies on the early modern period can be divided into two lines of studies. On the one side, research has been oriented by the attention to the perspective of the state and its desire to operate a more effective control over the fiscal system and the entire territory under its jurisdiction[1031]. This approach is often concerned with the investigation on the normative power of

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[1027] See Silvia Marzagalli, "Formes et Enjeux de La Contrebande et de La Fraude à L'époque Napoléonienne," in *Territoires de l'illicite: Ports et Îles: De La Fraude Au Contrôle (XVIe-XXe s.)*, ed. Marguerite Figeac-Monthus and Christophe Lastécouères (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012), 189; Paolo Calcagno, *Fraudum. Contrabbandi e Illeciti Doganali Nel Mediterraneo (Sec. XVIII)* (Roma: Carocci, 2019), 9–10.

[1028] See Biagio Salvemini and Roberto Zaugg, "Frodi Marittime Tra Norme e Istituzioni - Premessa," *Quaderni Storici* 48, no. 143–2 (2013): 311.

[1029] Guillaume Calafat, "Ramadan Fatet vs. John Jucker: Trials and Forgery in Egypt, Syria, and Tuscany (1739-1740)," *Quaderni Storici* 48, no. 143–2 (2013): 420.

[1030] For this broader definition, able to encompass various forms of illicit practices in the economic sphere, see Renate Bridenthal, "Introduction," in *The Hidden History of Crime, Corruption, and States*, ed. Renate Bridenthal (New York, NY ; Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), 2–3.

[1031] Along this line, research groups in Spain and Italy have recently proposed new works that enable the analysis of circumstantial case studies within a renewed theoretical perspective. See Miguel A. Melón Jiménez, *Los Tentaculos de La Hidra. Contrabando y Militarización Del Orden Publico En España (1784-1800)* (Madrid: Silex, 2009); Francisco Gil Martínez and Amorina Villarreal Brasca, eds., *Estudios Sobre La Corrupción En España y América (Siglos XVI-XVIII)*, Historia (Universidad de Almería) 25 (Almería: Editorial Universidad de Almería, 2017); Marco Battistoni, *Franchigie: Dazi, Transiti e Territori Negli Stati Sabaudi Del Secolo XVIII* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2009); Donatella Balani, *Per Terra e per Mare: Traffici Leciti e Illeciti Ai Confini Occidentali Dei Domini Sabaudi (XVIII Secolo)* (Torino: Deputazione subalpina di storia patria, 2012); Livio Antonielli and Stefano Levati, eds., *Contrabbando e legalità: polizie a difesa di privative, diritti sovrani e pubblico erario. Seminario di studi, Messina, 1-3 dicembre 2011* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2016). The Italian line of research was also influenced by the work carried out by the university centre for the history of police and territorial control, animated by Livio Antonielli. See Livio Antonielli, ed., *Polizia, Ordine Pubblico e Crimine Tra Città e Campagna: Un Confronto Comparativo* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2011).

institutions and it has been often inclined to depict contraband as a feature of developing countries: it only occurs where control mechanisms are too weak to be imposed. Following this line, studies have privileged the point of view of growing repression by the state authority. However, it is interesting to recall the perspective proposed by Paolo Prodi who described the progressive 'desacralization' of contraband: no longer conceived as a sin opposed to virtue, though this dimension still shines through from the *Encyclopédie*'s definition, but an economic crime sanctioned by desacralized institutions, whose normative power was in some ways more disputable[1032].

On the other side, scholars have turned their interest toward the economic and social implications of the phenomenon. Within this second research trend, we can recognize another divergence. Seminal studies on the British case have focused their attention on the impact on the overall economy produced by contraband, a sort of 'stone guest' without which it is not possible to understand early modern economic history[1033]. In contrast, French historiography has developed an approach to the subject more concerned with the social dynamics behind smuggling, starting with the trigger of deteriorating living conditions, without disdaining a look at the issues related to the fiscal consolidation of the state and to the increased tax pressure on the weaker social sectors[1034]. In this perspective, communities and institutions tend to create weak norms, recognizing the fact that the uncontainable creativity of social practices cannot be disciplined.

Looking at tobacco smuggling in the early modern period, the opposition of conflicting viewpoints clearly emerges. On the one hand, the fight against fraud and illegal traffics forged a formidable convergence of interests between the state and the

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[1032] See Paolo Prodi, *Il sovrano pontefice. Un corpo e due anime: la monarchia papale nella prima età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982).

[1033] On the vast literature and the heated debate that has addressed the issue of the impact of smuggling on the English, and then, British economy, see George Daniel Ramsay, "The Smugglers' Trade: A Neglected Aspect of English Commercial Development," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 2 (1952): 131–57; Cole, "Trends in Eighteenth-Century Smuggling"; Hon-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, "'Trends in Eighteenth-Century Smuggling' Reconsidered," *The Economic History Review* 28, no. 1 (1975): 28–43.

[1034] See Edmond Esmonin, "Contrebande et Contrebandiers En Dauphiné Au XVIII Siècle," *Cahiers d'histoire*, no. 9 (1964): 199–207; Marcel Lachiver, "La Fraude et Les Fraudeurs: A Propos Du Commerce Du Vin Dans La Partie Occidentale de l'Île-de-France Au XVIIIe Siècle," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 21, no. 3 (1974): 419–44; Yves Durand, "Le Contrebande de Sel Au XVIIIe Siècle Aux Frontières de Bretagne, Du Maine et de l'Anjou," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 7, no. 14 (1974): 227–69; Bernard Briais, *Contrebandiers Du Sel. La Vie Des Faux Sauniers Au Temps de La Gabelle* (Paris: Aubier, 1984); Gérard Béaur, Hubert Bonin, and Claire Lemercier, eds., *Fraude, Contrefaçon et Contrebande de l'antiquité à Nos Jours* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2006).

monopolistic merchants. Both of them suffered from the uncontrolled development of smuggling encouraging the legal and police sanction of the 'economic crimes'[1035]. On the other hand, merchants, local producers, and consumers did not perceive contraband practices as proper offense and claimed them as a legitim way to get access to the early modern circulation of global commodities. Indeed, if the regulatory acts created such economic crimes, the social practices and behavior that were at their origin suddenly became outlawed[1036] and the judgment on them was primarily a matter of culture and perception. This means that, on the one hand, due to deep-rooted habits, such 'extra-legality' was not considered as such by a large part of the population. In his research on the French 18th-century tobacco smuggler, the legendary Louis Manfrin, Michael Kwass has endorsed the thesis according to which contraband was made by 'poor men' exacerbated by state fiscalism and denied access to the circulation of global commodities. He has drawn a parallel between the popular support for smuggled tobacco sales by Manfrin's armed gang and the 'moral economy of the crowd' described by Edward P. Thompson in the early modern revolts for the price of bread[1037]. Consider, also, Cesare Beccaria's famous reflections on the 'non-infamous' nature of contraband crimes, for which he called for a substantial softening of penalties in tune with the widespread popular sentiment[1038]:

[1035] For a case study that has highlighted this strong convergence in the fight against contraband, see Miguel A. Melón Jiménez, "Servir y Servirse Del Estado. Pedro López de Lerena y La Persecución Del Contrabando En La España Del Siglo XVIII," *Tiempos Modernos* 30, no. 1 (2015): 1–22.

[1036] As Briais has stressed for the case of salt in France, the origin of contraband did not lie in the trafficking itself, which often took place along routes thousands of years old, but in the establishment by the Crown of the '*gabelle*', «*cet impôt détesté va être à l'origine d'une contrebande gigantesque*», Briais, *Contrebandiers Du Sel. La Vie Des Faux Sauniers Au Temps de La Gabelle*, 10.

[1037] See Michael Kwass, *Contraband: Louis Mandrin and the Making of a Global Underground* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), 119–33. For Thompson's argument on the logic behind 18th-century English food rioters, see Edward P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 50, no. 1 (1971): 76–136.

[1038] The literature of the Enlightenment, among other themes, promoted a completely different viewpoint on smuggling compared to the dominant political culture of government in the 17th and 18th centuries and it transformed popular resentment against draconian criminal measures into a systematic critique and a plan of reform for European criminal law. One of the main points was the offensive disproportionality between crime and punishment in the case of contraband, as stressed by Cesare Beccaria in his famous best-seller, but also by various other writers and intellectuals around Europe. For the French case, with particular attention to the revaluation in high literature of 'tobacco criminals', see Kwass, *Contraband*, 285–317.

> «*Il contrabbando è un vero delitto (…) ma la di lui pena non deve essere infamante perché commesso non produce infamia nella pubblica opinione. (…) Gli uomini, sui quali le conseguenze remote fanno debolissime impressioni, non vedono il danno che può loro accadere per il contrabbando; anzi, sovente ne godono i vantaggi presenti. Essi non vedono che il danno fatto al Principe, non sono dunque interessati a privare dei loro suffragi chi fa un contrabbando, quanto lo sono contro chi commette un furto privato, contro chi falsifica il carattere, ed altri mali, che possono loro accadere*»[1039].

On the other hand, other scholars suggest interpreting the alleged intensification of contraband registered by sources and literature for the 18th century in the light of fthe development of the political culture. Jean-Claude Waquet has noted that the rise of a greater focus on compliance with norms and tariffs left less room for negotiations and informal agreements. In his case study on the transition between the Medici dynasty and the Lorraine government in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, he concludes that the greater intensity of the fight against fraud and contraband was not due to an increased number of infractions, but to a more rigid view of territorial spaces and legislative dictates by the authorities: «*la vigueur de la lutte contre les frauds n'est pas uniquement fonction de l'extension des infractions: la répression repose sur un choix politique qui motive, autant que les faits eux-mêmes, la représentation que s'en font les gouvernants*»[1040]

Both of these approaches are ultimately unsatisfactory. The first tends to exaggerate the conflict between the predatory nature of the state and the resistance from below. Moreover, it is misleading to view contraband solely as a 'weapon of the weak', a social behavior carried out by the less affluent people to counter the deficiencies of their material life. In contrast, the second approach focuses entirely on the regulatory power of the state, presenting contraband as merely a consequence of the legal framework. This perspective, however, overlooks the competing interests and social relations that drive smuggling.

Nevertheless, recent contributions have renewed research perspectives in multiple directions. To begin with, conflicts, upheavals, up to proper open rebellions stemming from the practice of smuggling have been explored more in depth by going beyond the

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[1039] Cesare Beccaria, *Dei Delitti e Delle Pene* (Livorno: Coltellini, 1764), 93–94.

[1040] Jean-Claude Waquet, "Aux Marges de l'impôt: Fraudeurs et Contrebandiers Dans La Toscane Du XVIIIe Siècle," in *La Fiscalité et Ses Implications Sociales En Italie et En France Aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1980), 94.

automatism of unease and consequent social protest: stimulating studies have placed them within a broader framework of tools that groups outside the governing elites used to agitate political conflict, also through interclass coalitions or 'factions'[1041]. In addition, contraband has been described as an evolving social practice in the age of early modern globalization and state formation, of the rise of capitalism and of the fiscal state: extra-legal practices in various imperial and local spaces contributed in a decisive way to the expansion of the consumption of global goods in the early modern age[1042]. Moreover, regarding adulteration, a different point of view contests the link with an increasing demand for food by low-income classes in highly imperfect markets: first and foremost, it was a juridical category that was mobilized on occasions by economic lobbies in order to benefit from rents in the market[1043]. Finally, criticizing a perspective too influenced by the 'state narrative' on contraband, some studies have emphasized the blurring of the boundaries between the legal and the illegal in the commercial sphere, as very often «crime is the continuation of business by other means»[1044].

From the analysis of this literature, I suggest to overcome the binary opposition between social practices and regulative institutions, in order to recognize an intense and mutually dependent interplay between norms, institutions, and economic practices classified as contraband. These latter have been usually investigated much more under the light of clash and repression, rather than highlighting the efforts of agreement and compromise. Interestingly, this tendency can be easily traced both in the studies devoted to the social background and implications of contraband[1045], and in the research concerned

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[1041] Looking at the Italian historiography, see how Domenico Cecere has reconsidered the issue of upheavals and revolts connected to contraband within a larger framework of political conflicts, in comparison with previous works on the social resistance of marginal territories and subjects against the fiscal rapacity of the state and the economic one of landowners and other social elites. See Alessandro Pastore and Paolo Sorcinelli, eds., *Emarginazione, Criminalità e Devianza in Italia Fra '600 e '900: Problemi e Indicazioni Di Ricerca* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1990); Domenico Cecere, *Le Armi Del Popolo: Conflitti Politici e Strategie Di Resistenza Nella Calabria Del Settecento* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2013).

[1042] See in particular Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, 137–89.

[1043] Alessandro Stanziani, "Negotiating Innovation in a Market Economy: Foodstuffs and Beverages Adulteration in Nineteenth-Century France," *Enterprise & Society* 8, no. 2 (2007): 375–412.

[1044] Phil Williams, "Transnational Organized Crime and the State," in *The Emergence of Private Authority in Global Governance*, ed. Rodney Bruce Hall and Thomas J. Biersteker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 164.

[1045] Furio Bianco have counted more than 40 villages affected by popular uprisings between 1773 and 1795 in the *Reggimento* of Friuli (Venetian mainland bordering the Habsburg empire), identifying an 'anti-fiscal ideology' deeply rooted in the popular tradition of the *ancient régime* and running between conservation

with the state's increasing efforts to regulate, standardized and consolidate behaviors and spaces under jurisdiction[1046]. Notwithstanding, as suggested by Alida Clemente, we must make the effort to relativize the scope of formal norms, because their excess and ineffectiveness naturally ended up «*con il glorificare il carattere negoziale e contingente, procedurale delle norme di fatto*»[1047]. Accordingly, I considered here both formal norms and factual practices concerning tobacco contraband, in order to emphasize the context and procedures that encouraged compliance and appeasement over clash and repression. At a closer look, the sources show how they all coexisted as concomitant strategies to face extra-legal traffic.

The chapters first focuses on the main places, actors, and circumstances under which tobacco contraband took place in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. Then, I will examine how the ongoing process of state-building dealt with the persistence and intensification of tobacco smuggling: territorial control represented a crucial instrument to limit the damage inflicted by tobacco contraband, but the attempts to make progress in that field were not necessarily oriented to a greater degree of centralization. Finally, I investigate the answers to tobacco smuggling by the state and the monopolist merchants: alongside repressive measures, we can identify diverse practices of agreement and compromise that constantly renegotiated the boundaries between legal and illegal trade, but also episodes of connivence that further complicate the picture.

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and revolt, since it was based, on the one hand, on the preservation of and respect for the old rules and, on the other hand, on clear opposition to all novelties that seemed to upset customs established for centuries in fiscal matters. See Furio Bianco, *Contadini, Sbirri e Contrabbandieri Nel Friuli Del Settecento. Valcellina e Valcovera* (Pordenone: Edizioni Biblioteca dell'immagine, 1990).

[1046] This sentence by Stefano Levati seems particularly revealing to me: «*La lotta al contrabbando del tabacco nel corso dell'età moderna, quindi, ben si presta come cartina di tornasole per indagare il conflitto crescente tra uno Stato che cercava di regolamentare, normare e consolidare spazi e comportamenti […] e una società che tentava invece di ribadire e far valere le proprie prerogative e al contempo, nella progressiva consapevolezza che gli spazi d'autonomia goduti in passato si stavano riducendo, di sfruttare le nuove opportunità che le soluzioni, a volte goffe e incomplete, delle autorità offrivano*», Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 107.

[1047] Alida Clemente, "Quando Il Reato Non è 'Peccato'. Il Contrabbando Nel Regno Di Napoli Tra Conflitti Diplomatici, Pluralismo Istituzionale e Quotidianità Degli Scambi (XVIII Secolo)," *Quaderni Storici* 48, no. 143–2 (2013): 361.

1. Places and actors of tobacco smuggling

Tobacco's commodification and the fiscal regime to which it was subjected made it a major player in the illegal flows. As emphasized by T.C. Barker, «the existence of a customs duty several times the prime cost of a commodity makes smuggling a temptation difficult to resist, particularly when there is very little chance of the fraud's detection and a steady demand for the commodity in question, despite the high duty»[1048]. This was exactly the situation that tobacco merchants faced in Livorno and Venice, as virtually everywhere throughout the world between the 17th and the 18th centuries. They were indeed eager to seize the opportunity of illegally supplying the respective domestic markets (a forbidden activity because of the monopoly) by meeting consumers' willingness to buy cheap smuggled tobacco. On the contrary, the contractors were forced to maintain higher prices on monopoly products in order to secure their profit margin[1049].

[1048] Barker, "Smuggling in the Eighteenth Century," 387. Consider that, in 1685, following the sharpest increase in duties for the early modern English trade, the tobacco customs reached the rate of 100% of the pre-customs price on tobacco. See Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 369.

[1049] We learn from various sources that consumers could found cheaper tobacco from the illegal market: the French-Lorraine company who took over the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in 1745 complained of continuous contraband sales «*du tabac à prix au dessous de l'ordinaire*», thus significantly lower than those set in the tariffs they were required to comply with; in the Venetian Empire, the tobacco contractors denounced that it had become common practice to exploit '*trasmessi*' – i.e. special permissions granted by the authorities to individuals requesting to import limited quantities of tobacco for personal consumption – to cover up smuggling activities and resell cheap tobacco to the detriment of the monopoly. See ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 77, Astier to French shareholders, Florence 29/10/1743; ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, Venice 30/01/1703. However, there is no universal agreement on the impact of smuggling on the price of smuggled goods. For illegal tobacco prices in the British Isles, a dispute pitted Barker and Cullen against each other: the former has argued that duty-evasion did not lower prices and that smuggled tobacco was sold at the same price as if legally imported, for the extra-profits of the fraudsters; the latter put forward a diametrically opposed conclusion, suggesting that smuggling did reduce prices and in this way increased the demand for contraband commodities. See Barker, "Smuggling in the Eighteenth Century"; Louis M. Cullen, "The Smuggling Trade in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature* 67 (1968): 149–75. How to settle the issue? Surely, we can find both the situations. For instance, according to Pietro Canal, Venetian Lieutenant of Udine in Friuli in the 1790s, smugglers bought tobacco in Austrian territories for about 12 *soldi* per *funt* (a unit of weight slightly above the Venetian pound) and then managed to resell it in the *Terraferma* at prices ranging between 35 and 60 *soldi* per pound, figures in line with the prices of monopoly tobacco, see ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 354, Pietro Canal to Five Sages of Trade, Udine 02/08/1795. But the vast majority of sources insists on the low prices at which tobacco was found on the black market, confirming that «extra-legal systems are crucially important in explaining the penetration of commodities to the farthest corners and least auspicious consumers, challenging restraints on consumptions», Lemire, *Global Trade and the Transformation of Consumer Cultures*, 138. In addition, I find it interesting to recover Nash's argument on legal and illegal tobacco trade: the evidence he collected supported Cullen's conclusion

Surely, tobacco not only became part of a thriving smuggling tradition that animated the territories of the Italian peninsula, but represented also one of the major threats to public finance, as it was an illegal traffic particularly hard to break. It was hard even to simply uncover it due to the small volume of the commodity and the ease of declaring a less valuable type of tobacco at customs[1050]. In fact, according to Venetian fiscal officials, «*questo partito [del tabacco] risente più detrimenti degli altri per la molteplicità de' contrabbandi e per la reprensibile inosservanza dei divieti serenissimi*»[1051]. The consequences weighed heavily on tax farmers who in some cases sold less tobacco than the smugglers: in 1703, the general tobacco farmer in Venice blamed that «*i posti pubblici del Partito stanno oziosi, quando copioso è il numero delle persone che consumano tabacco*»[1052]. The '*canovieri*', who were entrusted with the resale of monopoly tobacco in the complicated province of Tuscan Romagna, went so far as not to sell «*neppure un'oncia di tabacco, nonostante che i Romagnoli siano assuefatti ad usarlo come gli altri popoli*»[1053]. But, of course, the damage was severe for the state coffers too, as the loss of profits suffered by contractors «*ridonda anco in danno notabile della Dogana e altri proventi dell'A.V.R.*»[1054].

It is not too surprising that limitations in early modern state's controls of the territory were at the root of many cases of tobacco contraband, with particular reference to land borders and coastlines[1055]. So, the recurrent problems with the province of

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that illegal imports depressed prices in the market, but, due to the inelastic demand for tobacco, domestic consumption appears not to have globally expanded because of the fluctuations of the illegal trade: «its effect was rather to reinforce changes that were occurring in the distribution of trade [between the legal and the illegal one]», Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 370.

[1050] Reports and memoirs insisted on these kinds of problem: «*essendo il tabacco di due sorte, cioè in erba in certi rotoli e in polvere, questo valendo molto di più, non viene ad ogni modo nella balla fatta distinzione. (…) Difficile potrà riuscire la diversione dei contrabbandi, in una scatola molte libbre potendosene estrarre senza essere scoperti*», ASVe, *Senato Terra*, reg. 564, Venice 19/04/1651

[1051] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, f. 349, Venice 03/02/1688.

[1052] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, ff. n. nn., Venice 30/01/1703.

[1053] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 03/06/1777.

[1054] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 6, n. 270, Samuel Levi and nephews to the Grand Duke, Livorno 30/10/1720. Venetian fiscal institutions, gathering information on the contraband of tobacco for the Senate, acknowledged that «*sempre a grave Pubblico discapito si assegna la decadenza dei Privati*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 352, n. 3034, Venice 05/05/1704.

[1055] Enrique Martinez Ruiz has described tobacco smuggling in eighteenth-century Spain stressing the crown's difficulties in enforcing the monopoly and preventing illegal imports at the border with Portugal and along the entire Mediterranean coast of the kingdom. See Enrique Martinez Ruiz, "La Lucha Contra El

Romagna for the granducal government were connected to the vast border with the Papal states, crossed at various points by smugglers who supplied consumers in this remote province. Moreover, the Tuscan Romagna was separated from Florence by the Apennine mountains, posing further challenge to the central power. As depicted by a report from 1759, the situation worsened further following the abolition of the tobacco monopoly by Pope Benedict XIV in 1757[1056], but also other frontiers, like those between Bologna, Lucca and Pistoia, became the scene for gangs of smugglers who skilfully violated borders and customs[1057]. With regard to the Venetian Empire, difficulties appeared even in the Lagoon itself, where the coldest winters led to the formation of a layer of trampling ice that facilitated the illegal entry of commodities into the capital[1058]. However, the

Contrabando En La España de La Ilustración (1700-1808)," in *Contrabbando e Legalità: Polizie a Difesa Di Privative, Diritti Sovrani e Pubblico Erario*, ed. Livio Antonielli and Stefano Levati (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2016), 141–62.

[1056] I leave room to the report written by Jacopo Mazzei for the Secretary of Finance in 1759, which are particularly revealing about the issues raised by geographical obstacles and free cultivation and manufacturing of tobacco beyond the frontiers: «*la Romagna Toscana divisa da Firenze per l'estensione del Mugello e del Casentino, situata tra gli Appennini, tutta montuosa ed alpestre, è terminate alla fine dei monti della Romagna Pontificia, paese piano, vasto e per natura più che per arte florido. Ella dunque, per la sua situazione è naturalmente provincia della Romagna ecclesiastica, piuttosto che della Toscana, ha conseguentemente tutto il suo commercio con quella dei prodotti e generi della quale essa ha quasi una inevitabile necessità. Dal che facilmente si comprende la somma facilità dell'introduzione in essa del Tabacco di quello Stato, specialmente ora che si vende colà a vilissimo prezzo, ond'è che i subappaltatori del Tabacco di quei luoghi veracemente dicono che non ne vendono quasi più punto, perché tutti lo prendono forestiero, e che non potranno perciò soddisfare alla tassa convenuta coll'appalto*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, "Relazione delle notizie, osservazioni e riflessioni fatte da me Jacopo Antonio Mazzei nel viaggio da me fatto di commissione degl'Ill.mi Sig.ri Appaltatori Generali per la Romagna, e per altri luoghi confinanti allo Stato ecclesiastico a motivo della soppressione dell'appalto del tabacco seguita ultimamente in detto Stato", with no place or date, but 1759.

[1057] In 1752, the general tax farmer denounced that «*una comitiva di cinque e più contrabbandieri armati si lasciava frequentemente vedere da qualche tempo in qua nel Pistoiese e nella Valdinievole, conducendo ogni volta più somme di vari generi di contrabbando, che andava spargendo e vendendo agl'abitanti de' luoghi per cui transitava*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 568, Grobert, Foacier de Betteville and Martelli to the Grand Duke, Florence 09/03/1752. The information gathered thanks to the undercover mission of a guard of the General Farm made it possible to ascertain the identity of the smugglers, all of whom came from the territory of Bologna and the county of Vernio. They usually left with smuggled salt from across the border, entered the Grand Duchy of Tuscany through the Sambuca pass in the Pistoia area, and, once they had disposed of the contraband in the Valdinievole, went to the territory of the Republic of Lucca to stock up on tobacco and then sell it illegally both in the Valdinievole and in the Bologna's territory. Two frontiers and three different states were repeatedly violated by the group's activities.

[1058] See the considerations about the fact that «*la rigidissima corrente stagione coll'agghiacciamento di queste Lagune anima li contrabbandieri, valendosi del libero transito sopra il ghiaccio medesimo ad introdurre nella Dominante qualunque genere di contrabbando*» in ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 945, Venice 02/01/1789. The threats to the tobacco monopoly in the internal territory were no less intense in the

biggest problems were once again related to border roughness and to cumbersome control of the extensive maritime coastline[1059]. In particular, the mountains in the northern part of the provinces of Udine and Vicenza offered shelter to contraband tobacco from the Habsburg territories, as well as to illegally-cultivated varieties from some communities in the Venetian mainland[1060]. The border with the Papal states became increasingly problematic after the Pope liberalized tobacco cultivation, so that the neighbouring province of Polesine became «*il luogo più esposto all'invasione de' contrabbandi per la vicinanza dell'estero confine e che è la porta delle introduzioni e spargimenti di Tabacchi, quali poi si dilatano e diffondono facilmente nel Padovano medesimo*»[1061].

Table 5.1 shows the ratio of population to legal tobacco consumption in the various provinces of the Venetian mainland[1062]. Due to the high levels of contraband, real tobacco consumption exceeded official data on imports. For example, in 1721, the tobacco subcontractors for the territories of Vicenza, Bassano, and Cologna deplored that «*il numero di quelli che seminano di contrabbando, fabbricano e vendono all'ingrosso ed al minuto liberamente nelle città e nei territori sopra mercati e nelle solennità eccede di molto quelli che se ne facciano esito per conto del partitante*»[1063]. Interestingly, provinces with lower results in per capita consumption, like Vicenza, Treviso, and Udine, were also the territories that experienced more problems with tobacco contraband, according to the

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Grand Duchy of Tuscany: in 1746, the sub-contractor of Monterotondo, small town near Grosseto, informed the director of the tobacco farm in Siena that he had been to a village under his jurisdiction on a feast day to sell tobacco, but he found there an astonishing and unwelcome surprise: «*trovò diversi genovesi che vendevano pubblicamente il tabacco forestiero di più qualità, del quale ne fecero un buon esito, a segno che convene all'appaltino suddetto fare ritorno a Monterotondo senza alcuna vendita*», ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 77, Suardo Maria Suardi to the general tax farmers, Siena 14/06/1746.

[1059] Of course, the overseas domains of the Venetian Empire represented an additional challenge for the central power: in this respect, the *partitanti* of the tobacco monopoly for several times asked the government to adopt for Venetian Dalmatia and Albania the same health procedures in force in Venice, «*affine di divertire il suo sbarco furtivo e nociva facilità de' contrabbandi istessi*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, Venice 30/01/1703. However, the frequency of petitions returning on the very same point demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the remedies adopted.

[1060] See ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Dispacci agli Inquisitori di Stato", regg. 350-354 and 378-387. Many episodes are described in Bianco, *Contadini, Sbirri e Contrabbandieri Nel Friuli Del Settecento. Valcellina e Valcovera*.

[1061] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 362, n. 30, Venice 10/05/1760.

[1062] For data on the population of each districts, I have used Pietro Castiglioni, *Relazione Generale Sopra i Censimenti Delle Popolazioni Italiane Dai Tempi Antichi Sino All'anno 1860* (Torino: Stamperia Reale, 1862), 302.

[1063] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, n. 17, Venice 05/06/1721.

correspondence of their Rectors with the Venetian magistracy of the *Inquisitori di Stato*[1064]. Table 5.1, thus, should not be interpreted as the picture of the diverse propensity to tobacco consumption, but as a representation of the geography of infringements.

Table 5.1 – Per capita legal consumption of tobacco in the Venetian mainland's districts (1780)

District	Tobacco pounds	Population	Per capita consumption
Venice and Dogado	562.700	236.054	2,38
Bergamo	332.198	252.371	1,32
Padova	343.198	346.632	0,99
Brescia	278.485	329.356	0,85
Udine	281.897	358.814	0,79
Treviso	224.477	364.121	0,62
Verona	124.533	231.952	0,54
Vicenza	115.766	222.739	0,52

Source: BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, f. 73.

Sources outline a genuine cross-social underground economy: members of the social elites and privileged classes took part in it, as well as the truly outcasts. All of them appear inscribed in a system that reproduced the hierarchy of formal economy and assigned to everyone his specific task[1065]. But who were the main actors of contraband operations regarding tobacco? To begin with, the same figures related in a way or another to the Tobacco Farm itself[1066]. The monopolistic merchants could find profitable to carry out their own contraband business from their privileged position, securing profits that did not affect the official statistics, so without contributing to increase the fee to be paid to state coffers[1067]. Also former tax farmers could be a threat to the monopoly: take the case

[1064] See, for example, the dispatches sent to the Inquisitors by the Rector of Vicenza in ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, 'Dispacci diretti agli Inquisitori', regg. 378-387.

[1065] On this point for the southern part of the Italian peninsula, where also the powerful barons of the provinces were often involved in smuggling business, see Gaetano Sabatini, "Fiscalità e Banditismo in Abruzzo Alla Fine Del Seicento," *Nuova Rivista Storica* 79, no. 1 (1995): 77–114; Capalbo, "Contrabbando, Commercio e Fiscalità Nel Napoletano in Età Moderna. Il Mercato Illegale Del Tabacco," 110–11.

[1066] In this respect, with particular reference to frauds performed by the retailers of the French *Ferme Générale* who adulterated tobacco cutting it with contraband or mixing it with a host of cheap additives, from tulipwood, shavings and sifted ash to pulverized brick and plain old dirt, see Kwass, *Contraband*, 57–69.

[1067] See, for example, the case of the trial of the Tuscan tax farmer Salomon Galligo on the charge of tobacco contraband in ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 56, Mantauti to Terriesi, Pisa 26/04/1703 and Florence 28/04/1703.

of the harsh accusation by the Galligo company of the «*fraudolenta macchina ordita da Salam* [Salomone] *Levi sotto l'ombra e spalla del Belloni (che altro non tende che a mandar in un total esterminio l'appalto del Tabacco e i presenti appaltatori)*»[1068]. Salomone Levi was the former holder of the Tuscan tobacco monopoly and, from his privileged position, he had set up a transit trade between Livorno and the Papal Romagna, regardless of the ban in force limiting the concessions of tobacco transit by land only to Bologna via Florence. For his part, Galligo, when he took over the monopoly, offered Giovanni Angelo Belloni – member of a prominent mercantile and financial family in the Papal states and tobacco contractor in the province of Romagna[1069] – a new commercial partnership for the supply of tobacco. Yet, the understanding between Levi and Belloni survived the new scenario, preventing Galligo from getting his hands on the profits from this trade. Worse still, Levi and Belloni returned some of the tobacco exported into the Papal lands back to the granducal territory, fuelling contraband in the Tuscan Romagna[1070].

Likewise, personnel responsible for enforcing the 'boundaries' of the *ius prohibendi* could be vulnerable to the allure of corruption and illegal profit. For example, in 1720 the Tuscan tobacco farmers denounced both the contraband performed in Livorno by the guards of the Health Board, who monitored the lazarettes where the merchandise 'purged'[1071], and the complicity of customs guards for the «*pregiudizio che ricevono nel*

[1068] ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 328, ins. 22, Galligo and companions to the Grand Duke, with no date and place, but 1699.

[1069] On the Belloni family, see Alberto Caracciolo, *L'albero Dei Belloni: Una Dinastia Di Mercanti Del Settecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982). For their investment in the papal tobacco monopoly, see Capalbo, *L'economia del vizio*, 74, 138. Giovanni Angelo Belloni, major banker and entrepreneur, was the uncle of the famous Girolamo Belloni, author of the influential commercial treatise *Del Commercio*, published in 1750 and advocating an economic policy able to promote the 'active trade' of subjects. See also Alberto Caracciolo, "Belloni, Girolamo," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1970).

[1070] See ASFi, *Miscellanea Medicea*, reg. 328, ins. 22, Salomone Levi to the Grand Duke, with no date nor place, but 1699; Galligo to Giovanni Angelo Belloni, Florence 08/10/1699, 15/08/1699 and 22/08/1699; Giovanni Angelo Belloni to Galligo, Bologna 11/08/1699 and 18/08/1699.

[1071] The tobacco farmers had repeatedly pleaded with the government that all tobaccos, once their quarantine was over, should not remain in the lazarettes, but should be removed as soon as possible, by order of the owners and authorization of the tobacco contractor, by the porters of the Customs House and transported to the appropriate warehouse. The main reason for this urgency was the connivance of the guards of the Health Board with illegal trade, in fact «*suppongono gli appaltatori che alle volte queste guardie abbiano tenuto mano a commetter frodi*». See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 6, n. 261, Carlo Rinuccini to Giacinto del Vigna, Florence 19/09/1720.

loro provento dai Tabacchi che di contrabbando sono introdotti in questa città dalla Porta dei Cappuccini»[1072]. Further on, soldiers and sailors were not only great consumers of tobacco, but also expert smugglers of that commodity[1073]. Venetian authorities had to deal almost on a daily basis with frauds carried out aboard vessels and galleys, even literally under the eyes of the political power of the *Serenissima* on the *Riva degli Schiavoni*[1074]. And the issue became, if possible, more problematic in the overseas subjected provinces, where the General Superintendent in Venetian Dalmatia and Albania and the General Superintendent to the Sea proclaimed frequently bans and prohibitions without producing significant effects, «*a tal che in ogni galera, caicchio e fusta li carabinieri, soldati et officiali, sino li stessi galeotti assistiti da scrivani et altre persone che facilmente potranno rilevarsi dalle perquisizioni della giustizia, ne fanno un pubblico traffico*»[1075].

Seamen and sailors are a very interesting case of smugglers because they introduce us to the remarkable involvement of the poor and marginal people in tobacco smuggling. As I pointed out elsewhere, one of the main reasons for this dynamic was the cheap prices on the black market: as González Enciso has demonstrated for the Spanish case, a correlation existed between the rising of prices of tobacco sold by the *estanco* and the higher volumes of smuggling[1076]. The trend was fuelled by subjects with limited purchasing power and working conditions marked by tedium, physical fatigue and

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[1072] *Ibidem*, n. 270, Giacinto del Vigna to the Grand Duke, Livorno 30/10/1720.

[1073] See also the general picture portrayed in Rosemary Elliot, "Soldiers," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jordan Goodman (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005); Marcy Norton, "Sailors," in *Tobacco in History and Culture. An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jordan Goodman (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005).

[1074] «*Gli appaltatori del Dacio del Tabacco capitano al Magistrato Nostro (…) con gravissima indolenza delli licenziosi contrabbandi che giornalmente si praticano sopra la Riva de' Schiavoni a pregiudizio considerabile degli interessati medesimi, sopra di che prendiamo noi Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia (…) sia applicato con ogni diligenza al divieto e castigo de' simili inconvenienti che nelle fuste e galere quotidianamente si praticano, essendo l'affare dell'importanza ben nota*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 161, ff. 97-98, Venice 20/06/1682.

[1075] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 180, ff. 27v-28v, Venice 28/09/1746. The writing of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* commented on a petition by Lorenzo Addobbati, sub-contractor for the tobacco monopoly in the overseas provinces of Dalmatia, Albania and Kvarners islands.

[1076] Agustín González Enciso, "Tabaco y Hacienda, 1680-1720," in *Tabaco e Historia Económica. Estudios Sobre Fiscalidad, Consumo y Empresa (Siglos XVII-XX)*, ed. Luis Alonso Álvarez, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, and Santiago de Luxán Meléndez (Madrid: Fundacion Altadis, 2006), 199–209.

exposure to the elements[1077], who were both buyers and dealers of illegal tobacco. Along this line, among the main actors of tobacco contraband in early modern Genoa, Paolo Calcagno has named «*coloro che si dedicano ad attività marittime o lavorano e frequentano il porto: ma anche (…) schiavi delle galee*»[1078]. Such a list results confirmed in our two case studies, with the addition of the coachmen and other popular figures who daily flocked to trading cities. For example, Niccolo Zanobi, caught with 5 ounces of smuggled tobacco at the gates of Livorno, justified himself by exploiting the idea of a necessary consumption for his job, «*essendo ben noto che i vetturini per necessità devono fumare tabacchi per liberarsi dall'umidità*»[1079]. Also prisons and concentration sites formed shelters for tobacco contraband: the Venetian institutions were particularly concerned «*che nelle prigioni si vendesse tabacco*»[1080] and frequently faced threats to the monopoly from the Ottoman community who were forced to stay in the '*Fontico dei Turchi*'. This latter became a proper paradise for smuggled goods and a source of unrest and even armed clash that risked opening up real diplomatic cases[1081].

[1077] For the rapid spread of tobacco habits among those who worked outdoors, see Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 65–66.

[1078] Calcagno, "L'«impresa Generale Del Tabacco»," 472–73.

[1079] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 21, n. 5, Niccolò Zanobi to the Grand Duke, Livorno 24/01/1786. A similar justification was adopted by Agostino Tarabotto from Lerici, a sailor in service on the Genoese vessel owned by Giovanni Battista Biagino: the illegal tobacco in his hands was presented to the authorities as a mere misunderstanding due to the necessary consumption among them, as the sailor had accidentally taken a wrapper containing tobacco with a package he was supposed to deliver ashore, «*siccome per servizio de' marinai della soprariferita Feluca, che sono soliti fumare, avevamo nella medesima una libbra di tabacco involta in un foglio*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 17, n. 68, Agostino Tarabotto to the Grand Duke, Livorno 15/04/1780.

[1080] In 1685, after having received such an information, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* gave immediately order «*che fosse troncato l'abuso e castigati li delinquenti*» to reassure the tobacco contractors about the sustainability of their enterprise, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 162, ff. 93-94, Venice 01/02/1685.

[1081] A diplomatic crisis with the Sublime Porte was about to blow up in 1746, when Venetian guards brutally fired at a group of Ottoman merchants who were smuggling tobacco from the *Fontico*. The issue resulted particularly complicated because of «*l'atrocità con la quale era stato dagl'officiali proceduto, la qualità e numero delle ferite e le circostanze*». Indeed, two Ottoman subjects, Zeniel Mizo from Scutari and Sueliman Gera had suffered severe wounds and permanent mutilation. The brother of Suleiman, living in Senigaglia, claimed for justice and threatened to appeal to Constantinople if the culprits were not adequately punished, while the Venetian consul in Durazzo, Francesco Cumano, informed of the reprisal that, had hit Venetian sailors and subjects from Perasto and their houses in the Albanian port, on hearing the news of what had happened in Venice. In the end, the Ottomans, wronged by the Venetian guards, accepted the compensation offer made through the intermediation of the merchant Zilio and the dispute was closed without further consequences. Whereas the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* proved to be very determined to reach an accommodation of the affair, at the same time they would not allow any relaxation

At the opposite end of the social scale, privileged subjects and the richest merchants played a decisive role in tobacco contraband. On the one hand, as Waquet has pointed out for the Tuscan case, «*c'est donc avant tout sur les frontières intérieures, réelles ou juridiques, que les fraudeurs fondent leur activité*»[1082]: much of the contention during the early modern age was played out around the personal and territorial privileges, the 'discontinuous space' of extensive administrative autonomies and fiscal immunities of local communalities, cities and fiefdoms[1083]. As we have seen in the opening of this chapter, diplomatic immunities of consuls, residents and ambassadors of foreign powers provided a flourishing ground for tobacco smuggling[1084]. Also ecclesiastics raised constant headaches for tax farmers and fiscal institutions[1085]: armed with their personal

on the side of the fight against tobacco contraband originating from the Ottomans, whose recurrence was sufficient to «*riconoscere l'abituazione di questo, ed altri scandali, che si sono ridotti in un aperto libertinaggio, e tendendo le nostre applicazioni a ripararli e rimettere il Fontico de' Turchi in quella disciplina che dipende dalle pubbliche leggi*». On the whole matter, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 180, ff. 15r-17v, Venice 11/08/1746. Indeed, Ottoman merchants arriving in Venice with their cargoes of Levantine goods found it quite convenient to hide a part of them and then sell them on the black market, especially those charged by high duties or monopolistic regimes such as tobacco and oil. See *Ibidem*, ff. 183r-185r, Venice 07/03/1748. Although it was a very different place from the *Fontico dei Turchi* in Venice, the *Bagno* of the slaves in Livorno also stood out as a concentration site particularly committed to tobacco contraband, see for example ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 126, Francesco Terriesi to the Grand Duke, Livorno 19/05/1704; *Ibidem*, reg. 7, n. 49, Giovanni Pitti to the Grand Duke, Livorno 31/05/1726.

[1082] Waquet, "Aux Marges de l'impôt," 81.

[1083] On this point, see Levati, "Gli Spazi Dell'illecito," 76–77. For the concept of 'discontinuous space' for the early modern period, see Angelo Torre, *Luoghi: la produzione di località in età moderna e contemporanea* (Roma: Donzelli Editore, 2011), 74. To understand the magnitude of the issue, consider that in the territory of Siena as much as 14% of the population was under the jurisdiction of feudal lords in the 18th century, see Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 138.

[1084] An interesting case about the illegal introduction of salt, paper and tobacco exploiting diplomatic immunities, as well as the fraud for other more valuable goods whose customs duties were circumvented, happened in 1769 in Livorno. The zealous Customs Director, Alessandro Adami, had countered the claims of the English resident Mann, who sought total exemption from inspection for his personal effects, with the general rules of the Customs House, «*le quali vogliono che tutto ciò che si trasporta debba esser visitato dai Ministri della Dogana o delle Porte qualunque sia l'esenzione e il privilegio delle robe e delle persone a cui queste appartengono*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 3, ins. 3, Alessandro Adami to the Grand Duke, Livorno 10/01/1769. However, after further disputes had arisen with other foreign ministers residing at the court of Florence, the central government and the general administrators of royal revenues, ordered Adami to «*lasciarli liberamente passare ancorché essi abbiano con la propria persona bauli o colli di equipaggi non muniti della dovuta permissione o delle solite formalità di dogana*», *Ibidem*, ins. 17, Serristori, Gavard des Pivets and Siminetti to Alessandro Adami, Florence 17/01/1769.

[1085] Once again, the dimension of the phenomenon was striking and nothing better than this letter from the archbishop Gaetano Stampa offers us a broad outline of it: writing to his parishes, he declared that he had been informed «*dai sig.ri ministri del governo secolare che tanto in questa città quanto in tutti gli stati del*

privileges and immunities, as well as with the special jurisdiction of ecclesiastical sites[1086], they used to sow tobacco in the cloisters of convents for their own consumption, but also to profitably resell the illegal commodity to their devotees[1087]. Smuggling out of privileged fiefdoms and communities that had been granted immunity from the tobacco monopoly was massive too: the County of Chitignano, a feudal enclave in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany between Florence and Arezzo and near to the border with the Papal states, according to fiscal institutions, «*serve da asilo e di deposito ai suddetti*

Serenissimo Granduca vi siano molte persone ecclesiastiche, tanto secolari che regolari, che giornalmente ricettino nelle chiese, monasteri e altri luoghi immune robe di contrabbando, come sale, tabacco, chiodi, pannine a altro proibito dalle leggi di questo dominio, in grave pregiudizio del pubblico interesse degli arrendatori», ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 1105, Florence 07/07/1718.

[1086] Fiscal institutions faced proper impassable barriers at the gates of churches and convents: for example, in 1698, the Inquisitor over Tobacco had discovered that Father Fra' Zuanne, sacristan at the convent of the Madonna dell'Orto in the *sestiere* of Cannaregio, was selling powdered tobacco to anyone who asked for it, however «*trattandosi di persona religiosa, di luogo sacro e di sito osservabile, abbiamo creduto non potersi maggiormente inoltrare, ma ben di rassegnarli a' pubblici voleri, che sapranno ben scegliere e comandare li più opportuni ripieghi*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 165, ff. 588-589, Venice 08/08/1698. Even at a time of great efforts to reduce ecclesiastical and noble immunities and exemptions by the Tuscan government, the Secretary of Royal Law, Giulio Rucellai, was obliged to remind to the general tax farmers that inspections by company officials and guards were not permitted in «*chiese, case parrocchiali, canoniche o altri luoghi compresi nell'immunità locale*», ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 72, ff. 87-88, Florence 29/04/1746.

[1087] The huge report of Venetian tobacco contractors to the Senate written in 1703 also addressed this issue, complaining that clergymen cultivated tobacco not only for their own consumption, but also «*per ritrarre utile dai loro devoti con titolo di benefattori*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, Venice 30/01/1703. For a comparison with the Spanish case, see Ricardo Franch Benavent, "Regalismo e Inmunidad Eclesiástica En La España Del Siglo XVIII: La Resistencia Del Clero Valenciano a La Imposición Del Estanco Del Tabaco," *Hispania. Revista Española de Historia* 57 (2007): 295–316.

contrabbandieri»[1088] and, in many cases, the illegal trafficking materially conducted by the poor were protected or even commissioned «*da soggetti autorevoli*»[1089].

Another case of tobacco smuggling, involving individuals across various social strata, concerns illegal plantations. Although the plant was highly adaptable to temperate climates and diverse soil conditions[1090], from the establishment of the monopoly until the mid-18th century, Tuscan and the Venetian monopolistic merchants strongly opposed the promotion of local plantations. On one hand, given their social environment, which was predominantly mercantile, it was easier for them to purchase tobacco leaves from abroad through intermediaries and supplier merchants, rather than organizing domestic plantations managed by themselves or other agents of the monopolistic company[1091]. On

[1088] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Serristori, Gavard and Siminetti to the Grand Duke, Florence 04/08/1769. An imperial fiefdom controlled by the Counts Ubertini since 1434, the community of Chitignano resorted to smuggling tobacco and gunpowder as one of its main resources: the granducal privilege of tobacco cultivation was added to its proximity to the minuscule and independent Republic of Cospaia, also a place of free tobacco cultivation from which large streams of contraband flowed to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Papal states as well. See Luigi Fognani, *Chitignano: contrabbando, storia, socialità in una cultura di crocevia appenninico* (Firenze: Il Candelaio, 1982); Giampietro Diana, "Il Tabacco e La Repubblica Di Cospaia," *La Voce Del Tabaccaio* 71 (1988): 68–73; Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 137–40. Problems with tobacco smuggling emerged from most of the 42 infeudated sites that the Lorrain regency found in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany at the end of the 1730s and, in some of them, «*non vi è stato mai fatto visite né perquisizione alcuna*» and the armed employees of the tobacco farm «*non vi hanno mai posto piede*», as an inquiry reported by that time, see ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 1105, "Nota di diversi luoghi infeudati che si trovano nel Granducato di Toscana", with no place nor date, but around 1738. For further information on imperial and grand ducal fiefdoms within the boundaries of the Tuscan state, see Giuseppe Pansini, "Per Una Storia Del Feudalesimo Nel Granducato Di Toscana Durante Il Periodo Mediceo," *Quaderni Storici* XIX (1972): 131–86; Giuseppe Caciagli, *I Feudi Medicei* (Pisa: Pacini, 1980); Carlo Vivoli, "Una Fonte per La Storia Del Territorio Della Toscana Nel Settecento: Le Piante Dei Feudi," in *Istituzioni e Società in Toscana Nell'età Moderna*, vol. 2 (Roma: Ministero per i Beni culturali e ambientali, 1994), 337–64.

[1089] This was the conclusion of an inquiry of the recurrent case of tobacco contraband in the province of Friuli in the first years of the 18th century, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 352, n. 2034, Venice 28/07/1704. It was often not a case of unvarnished evasion, but rather a skilful exploitation of territorial immunities and tax exemptions to give rise to negotiation between local potentates and central magistrates in order not to repress smuggling activities by the inhabitants of their own territory. Take the example of the Duke Sforza-Cesarini and his connivance with the inhabitants of his own fiefdom of Santa Fiora in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany who had introduced tobacco cultivation: the protection of the abuses committed by the population went so far that the Duke bargained with the government and the General Tax Farm not to introduce monopoly tobacco into his territory. See Waquet, "Aux Marges de l'impôt," 84.

[1090] For a general survey on tobacco cultivation expansion in the early modern world, see Orazio Comes, *Histoire, géographie, statistique du tabac*, Typographie coopérative (Napoli, 1900).

[1091] A significant exception in the Italian peninsula can be found in the Savoyard states: there, the government struggled to boost indigenous cultivation on behalf of the tobacco farm in the territories south and south-west of Turin, particularly in the Mirafiori and Gonzole estates. In 1722, a Venetian friar was also granted a license to start growing tobacco on behalf of the state in the lands of Migliabruno near

the other hand, defending the monopoly by controlling imports at the borders was far easier than managing widespread cultivation within the domestic territories. The latter was particularly difficult to enforce in peripheral or overseas domains, where 'police forces', both numerically and organizationally inadequate, struggled to maintain effective supervision[1092]. This issue was also particularly sensitive for fiscal institutions, as illegal cultivation directly competed with tobacco sold under the state-owned monopoly. In response, the sovereign power issued recurring decrees and bans against tobacco cultivation within domestic territories in order to «*rimuovere i nocivi disordini, et i pretesti a dannificare questa riguardevole pubblica rendita*»[1093].

Accordingly, fiscal institutions and monopolistic merchants generally agreed that tobacco cultivation should be banned[1094]. However, the enforcement of the ban on plantations was far from consistent. In particular, recurring issues arose from privileged communities and fiefdoms that had been granted the right to cultivate tobacco for personal use and the local market. This exception to the general principle of the *ius prohibendi* was often exploited to introduce contraband tobacco into territories subject to the state-owned monopoly, where tariffs were regularly evaded, and whose products faced fierce competition from cheaper goods supplied by smugglers. Throughout the 18th century,

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Racconigi and at Banna near Turin. See Felice Amato and Camillo Duboin, *Raccolta per Ordine Di Materie Delle Leggi, Cioè Editti, Patenti, Manifesti Ecc. Emanate Negli Stati Di Terraferma Sino All'8 Dicembre 1798 Dai Sovrani Della Real Casa Di Savoia*, vol. T. XXII, Vol. XXIV, L. XI (Torino: Tipografia Cerutti, Derossi e Busso, 1858), 2–3. Conversely, a mature reflection on the promotion of domestic tobacco cultivation did not take place in the other Italian states until the second half of the 18th century. See Stefano Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna: secoli 17.-19* (Roma: Viella, 2017), 56–62, 199.

[1092] I refer here to both the private and state guards and troops mobilized for the defense of the monopoly described in the previous chapter. As a matter of fact, the very existence of the regalian rights contributed to their enhancement, but their numbers remained pretty inadequate for a capillary control of the territory throughout the early modern age. See Stefano Levati, "'Che Non Seguano Fraudi in Pregiudizio Del Nuovo Datio Imposto Sopra Il Tabacco': Norme e Corpi a Difesa Dei Diritti Di Privativa Nell'Italia Centro-Settentrionale (XVII-XVIII Secolo)," in *Contrabbando e Legalità: Polizie a Difesa Di Privative, Diritti Sovrani e Pubblico Erario: Seminario Di Studi, Messina, 1-3 Dicembre 2011*, ed. Livio Antonielli and Stefano Levati (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2016), 138–40.

[1093] This was the comment for the Senate by the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* on a memorial written in 1702 by the monopolistic merchants denouncing that the number of illegal tobacco plantations in the Venetian mainland was completely out of control. See ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, 'Diversorum', reg. 348, ff. n. nn., Venice 30/01/1702.

[1094] It is to be noted that northern European powers usually agreed on the same conclusion, with bans to tobacco cultivation in metropolitan Europe. The United provinces of Netherlands represented an important exception in the European scenario, see Jan De Vries and A. M. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 221 and fw.

reports and memoirs about tobacco fraud and contraband in the Venetian mainland often focused on the territory of the '*Sette comuni*' in the Vicenza plateau (Asiago, Rotzo, Roana, Gallio, Foza, Lusiana, and Enego) as well as the communities in the Brenta river valley (Valstagna, Oliero, Campolongo, Campese, and Valrovina). These regions, located on the edge of the Alps and bordering Habsburg territories, enjoyed a degree of autonomy and economic privileges stemming from statutes predating their incorporation into the dominion of San Marco. For the local population, tobacco cultivation became an important means of subsistence and economic exchange, particularly given the poor grain and cereal harvests possible on the mountainous soils.[1095]. Accordingly, as Venetian magistrates often denounced, the inhabitants of the '*Sette comuni*' constantly violated the ban on tobacco cultivation «*coll'abusivo pretesto delle esenzioni che per speziale pubblico privilegio essi godono sopra ogn'altro de' loro prodotti, della qualità però di questi non dovendo in maniera alcuna comprendersi li suddetti Tabacchi, dichiarati sempre, ed in ogni luogo, di irremissibile contrabbando*»[1096].

Looking at the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, a significant portion of the difficulties arose from inland enclaves, particularly privileged communities and fiefdoms, from which large quantities of smuggled tobacco escaped into the rest of the grand ducal territory. In this regard, Tuscan authorities had to confront outright illegal plantations, such as in the fief of Santa Fiora in the state of Siena, where the feudal lord, Duke Sforza-Cesarini, was accused of collusion with smugglers of tobacco, spirits, salt, and textiles from his domain[1097]. However, one of the main threats came from the territories where the sovereign power had granted the privilege of tobacco cultivation for local

[1095] In 1725, the representatives of Valstagna, Campolongo, Oliero and Valrovina claimed the right to tobacco cultivation for their people as a crucial issue for their livelihood: they described «*in umile supplica ai piedi del Ser.mo Principe le loro miserie procedenti dalla presente povertà della loro situazione*», as the reason because of which they argued «*d'aversi in mancanza d'altro rilasciato prodotto applicati alla coltura del Tabacco*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 13/09/1725.

[1096] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, Venice 28/08/1721. While the establishment itself of the tobacco monopoly in Venice and then in all the dominions of the empire explicitly banned the cultivation of the American plant on the domestic soil, the authorities had to issue specific and recurring interdiction for sowing tobacco in the '*Sette comuni*' and communities of the upper valley of the river Brenta from 1703 onwards. See *Ibidem*, Venice 30/01/1703.

[1097] In particular, according to the report written by the officials of the general tax farm, the Duke «*defend son fief de Santa-Fiora contre le tabac de la ferme générale*», by hindering the penetration of monopoly tobacco into his jurisdiction. See ASFi, *Miscellanea di Finanze A*, reg. 477, ins. "Sforza di S. Fiora", Florence 12/03/1754.

consumption. Despite this restriction, privileged tobacco, such as that harvested in the County of Chitignano (a paradise for contraband as we have seen above), often crossed borders and competed with monopoly tobacco in Tuscan markets, much to the frustration of the fiscal institutions[1098].

The role of feudal lords in the transgression linked to illegal tobacco cultivation raises a final interesting point: miserable people were frequently only the material perpetrators of tobacco smuggling, while the direction was in the hands of much more financially solid individuals. If the former found in the illegal trade an opportunity of employment, it was also a strategy, from the point of view of the principals, to limit the damage and the risk of confiscation in the event that the contraband was discovered by the customs guards. The magistrates were aware of the «*accortezza dei contravventori di spingere i loro contrabbandi nel territorio Toscano in sacchi, e a schiena per mezzo di persone miserabili che non han nulla da perdere e che pagano le pene con la carcere*»[1099]. Similar dynamics and relations can be observed among the maritime frauds: captains of small vessels, like the Neapolitan Pietro di Leva, put themselves under the protection of powerful flags and, on commission of wealthy merchants, they dared to sell at the Livorno's docks «*toutes sortes de contrebandes de tabacs, liqueurs, et eaux-de-vie, et cartes à jouer, même du vin, le tout sans avoir acquitté les droits ni obtenu la permission du fermier général*»[1100].

[1098] In 1745, when the tobacco monopoly became part of the General Tax Farm, the deputies of the French-Lorraine company protested to the sovereign that the subjects «*continuent à se procurer d'autre tabac que de celui de la ferme, et qu'il leur reste facile au moyen des plantations considérable qui sont en quelqu'uns des dits fiefs, et sourtout dans la Comté de Chitignano*», ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 13, "Mémoires à Vienne", n. 4, ff. 4r-5r, Florence 14/12/1745.

[1099] See ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 88, ins. 3, "Prospetto: definizioni e riflessioni riguardanti la rendita e regalia dei Tabacchi in Toscana", Giuseppe de Cambray-Digny to Luigi Dithmar di Schimdweiller, Florence 06/02/1795.

[1100] ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 13, n. 24, f. 27, with no place nor date, but 1746. Pietro di Leva's vessel flew the flag of the Queen of Hungary and was in the employ of his patron and self-proclaimed consul of the Queen, the affluent merchant from Livorno, Mr. Granelli.

2. State-building and the fight to contraband: central authority and decentralization in the territorial control

With the establishment of the tobacco monopolies, the sovereign powers attempted to collect a universal levy with - at least in theory - no exemption. This agenda implied that the governance of the Tobacco Farm had to deal with privileges based on social status, local franchises and special jurisdictions (both at territorial level and related to social estates). Undoubtedly, they represented a serious threat to the profits of the monopolistic merchants, especially because, as we have seen, they often represented the anti-chamber of contraband. How did the implementation of the tobacco monopolies shape the state-building process? In this respect, the territorial fight to preserve the tobacco monopoly oscillated between decentralization entrusted to different local stakeholders and the exercise of higher authority over them with little precedent, at least in fiscal matters.

The strategies for the implementation of the state-owned monopoly usually did not impose it from the beginning to the entire subject territory, but rather proceeded step by step according to power relations emerged over time. In the Venetian Empire, the '*partito del tabacco*' was initially established on the capital city and the mainland provinces[1101]. Its further expansion towards the overseas provinces was by no means granted. Firstly, as we have seen, the new regulation debuted more as an experiment than as a sure means to increase fiscal revenues. It was certainly preferable to verify its actual availability in the center of the imperial territory, where the competent magistracies – for the provinces of the mainland, the respective Rectors; for Venice, the *Deputati della Provvisione del denaro pubblico*, who were succeeded in 1662 by the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*[1102] – were more dependent on, and therefore controllable by, the sovereign power. Moreover, taxation in the subjected communities was generally negotiated locally and its collection

[1101] As stated by the 20 articles signed by the Senate with Bartolo Boneri in 1655, the establishment of the tobacco monopoly ordered «*che resti per conto di Serenissima Signoria non solo il tabacco tutto di ogni sorta che al presente si attrova in questa città e nelle altre tutte città dello Stato di Terraferma, ma anco tutto il tabacco grezzo tanto in foglia, quanto in rotolo, che per l'avvenire capiterà così per mare, che per terra in questa Serenissima Dominante*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 171, Pregadi 13/02/1655.

[1102] For the entrusting of the tobacco monopoly to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* in 1662, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Pregadi 15/04/1662. For the role of the mainland Rectors in the implementation of the tobacco monopoly's provisions about the delivery of tobacco owned by private merchants to public customs, see *Ibidem*, reg. 171, Pregadi 13/02/1665.

was often entrusted to local elites[1103]. These dynamics were particularly pronounced in the Venetian maritime colonies. Here, the principle of colonial auto-sufficiency called for new taxes to be imposed on those provinces, but also to proceed in accordance with «the mechanism of negotiation with local communities through the 'capitoli'»[1104]. So, various reasons advised against starting with an effective proclamation of the tobacco monopoly throughout the subjected territory, especially discouraging proceeding in overseas territories where the authorities already had to struggle against colonial subjects founding ways to evade the law, to circumvent judicial decisions, and most of all to avoid their fiscal obligations[1105].

Notwithstanding, the good performance of the new system in the capital city and in the Venetian mainland soon suggested adopting it also as a tool for imperial taxation and to help cover the huge expenditures related to the defense of the maritime empire. The point was particularly pressing. One of the first acts of the Venetian Senate following the annexation of a territory to its overseas empire was to assure control over the local resources and revenues: customs, excises, and other taxes, monopolies and landed estates, as well as various obligations of groups and individuals[1106]. However, since the 16th century the progressive upsurge of military expenditures made these resources insufficient, nor could the chronic deficits of some overseas provinces be compensated by the surplus of other ones. Moreover, the establishment of new taxes on the overseas territories represented a harsh process because of the complex negotiation to be opened with the local ruling class. The situation brought unavoidable and regular subventions from Venice[1107]. In this regard, the introduction of a new fiscal duty on consumption via the extension of the sovereign monopoly on tobacco represented a viable compromise that guaranteed extra-revenues and did not question the political balance between the center and the periphery of the empire. Accordingly, through partial and successive expansion, the '*partito del tabacco*' was progressively extended to all the overseas

[1103] On this point, see Luciano Pezzolo, *Una finanza d'ancien régime: la Repubblica veneta tra 15. e 18. secolo* (Napoli [etc.]: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 2006), 27.
[1104] Benjamin Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire in the Early Modern Period," in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 239.
[1105] For a review on the Venetian Ionian islands, see Alfredo Viggiano, *Lo specchio della Repubblica: Venezia e il governo delle isole Ionie nel '700* (Caselle di Sommacampagna: Cierre, 1998), 113–95.
[1106] See Arbel, "Venice's Maritime Empire in the Early Modern Period," 217–18.
[1107] See Pezzolo, *Una finanza d'ancien régime*, 48–55.

domains in the second half of the 17th century: in 1665, the tobacco monopoly was introduced in the three Ionian islands of Corfu, Cephalonia, and Zante; two years later, the Senate defined the same for the Venetian Dalmatia and Albania[1108].

However, the Senate did not include the Ionian islands, the Venetian Dalmatia and Albania to the same '*partito del tabacco*' of Venice, but granted the tobacco monopolies in the *Stato da Mar* to local merchants and financiers with separated contracts. In fact, in 1666 the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* suggested to improve the yield of tobacco taxation in the three Levantine islands by adopting there, as it was used in Venice, the method of «*portarsi sopra l'incanto per deliberare lo stesso dacio o partito a isola per isola o unitamente di tutte 3 le isole del Levante*»[1109]. With regard to Dalmatia and Albania, the establishment of the tobacco monopolies was achieved thanks to the offers presented by two local entrepreneurs, Iseppo Faustini in 1667 (400 *ducati* per year) and Camillo Mazzoleni in 1669 (1.335 *ducati* per year)[1110]. As it had happened some years before in Venice with the mercantile group represented by Bartolo Boneri, these actors operating in the Venetian maritime empire whetted the fiscal appetite of the sovereign power by presenting their expertise in the long-distance trade of this commodity and the easy profits that a farmed out monopoly on its consumption would have guaranteed to the public coffers. Although, after the first separated contracts for the overseas provinces, since 1674, the colonial monopolies were united to the general monopoly, thus all the subjected territories were aggregated in a single greater contract to be negotiated and signed in Venice, the organization of tobacco imports and distribution was usually subleased by the general tobacco farmers to local entrepreneurs[1111]. In fact, despite the Venetian balance sheets indicate all the revenues from the tobacco monopoly as an income realized in the capital city[1112], they actually came from the various parts of the Venetian Empire as fees paid by the subcontractors to the general tobacco farmers, who eventually paid the agreed

[1108] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco" reg. 169, Pregadi 24/04/1665 and 25/06/1667. On this point, see the report written in 1786 by Niccolò Erizzo, Extraordinary Superintendent to the Islands, on revenues and duties from the Levant in BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. D (=543)*, ff. 8r-22r.

[1109] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, "Tabacco", reg. 169, Pregadi 20/04/1666. It then resulted awarded to Francesco Belloni for 500 *ducati* per year, see *Ibidem*, Pregadi 05/07/1666.

[1110] See *Ibidem*, Pregadi 25/06/1667 and 27/04/1669.

[1111] See *Ibidem*, Pregadi 09/09/1674.

[1112] See *Bilanci Generali Della Repubblica Di Venezia. Bilanci Dal 1736 al 1755*, vol. III (Venice: Premiato Stabilimento Grafico Visentini, 1903), 2–47 and 284–355.

annual fee for the '*partito del tabacco*' in the state coffers. However, local tobacco farmers and replicated the logic of the monopolistic trade for tobacco, whose leaves in the first half of the 18th century were directly imported from the Ottoman Empire without the commercial intermediation of Venice[1113].

The general tobacco farmers proved quite reactive in petitioning the sovereign power for the privilege of extending the monopoly when the Venetian Empire conquered new territories in Dalmatia and Albania during the 18th-century wars with the Sublime Porte. They represented not only an opportunity for more profits, but most of all a way to better defend the monopoly against smuggling between eventual privileged provinces and the territories under the monopolistic regime. This concern results particularly recurrent in the writings of the tobacco general farmers. For example, in 1693, the newly conquered territories in Dalmatia and Albania found themselves at the center of a debate on how to realize a tobacco monopoly within them. The *Provveditore generale* argued in favor of the «*possibilità di aumentare, attraverso una disunion degli appalti, di 240 ducati in circa la vendita dei tabacchi nei paesi di nuova Conquista in quelle province*»[1114]. However, the general tobacco farmer in Vernice, Marco Stevenato, was able to persuade the political power to «*unire al mio partito anche i detti paesi di nuova Conquista nelle dette province di Dalmazia e Albania per scansare quei disordini, sconcerti e danni che dalla disunion potrebbero succedere, esibendo ducati 300 all'anno per il restante tempo della mia presente condotta*»[1115].

The integration of the imperial monopolies had its political and financial center in Venice: tobacco exported from the Ionian islands must be brought only in the capital city, thus limiting the opportunity of foreign trade for local peoples[1116]. However, the central power was sometimes obliged to amend the principle. When Morea, a former Ottoman province, became a recognised Venetian possession after the peace of Carlowitz (1699),

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[1113] This point was all but granted in the commercial and maritime dimension of the Venetian Empire, according to which the capital city represented the heart of the integrated system. See the report written in 1786 by Niccolò Erizzo, Extraordinary Superintendent to the Islands, on revenues and duties from the Levant in BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. D (=543)*, ff. 8r-22r.

[1114] ASVe, *Savia alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 350, n. 276, 11/02/1694.

[1115] *Ibidem*, 13/02/1694.

[1116] As it was ordered by the Senate to the officials in Zante, Corfu and Cephalonia, «*non siano fatte bollette ad alcuno d'estrazione di tabacco, se prima non daranno sufficiente pieggiaria di condurlo alla pubbliche Dogane di Venezia et poi al Fontico in conformità dei capitoli del Partito approvati da questo consiglio*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 169, Pregadi 22/08/1673.

the *Serenissima* had to deal with the pre-existing habit of freely processing and exchanging tobacco with other regions in the Levant, in the western Balkans and in eastern coast of the Italian peninsula[1117]. In the light of repeated illegal trafficking and the great difficulties in preventing it, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* eventually considered the convenience of granting the inhabitants of the Morea the possibility of trading tobacco directly to foreign regions[1118].

Conversely, in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany the tobacco monopoly was issued on «*tutti i felicissimi Stati di S.A.S.*»[1119] since the first contracts signed in the central decades of the 17th century. Reading the *bandi*, the fiscal monopoly also affected feudal jurisdictions and the *Stato nuovo* of Siena, which were not foregone outcomes since the fiefdoms within the granducal territory enjoyed numerous fiscal privileges and Siena still maintained a separate administration from that of the *Stato Vecchio* of Florence[1120]. Such framework was the legacy of the historical formation of polities like the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire: a path between conquest and compromise, where the

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[1117] Such information was provided to the Venetian Senate by the *Provveditore generale dell'armi in Morea* Angelo Emo, who endorsed the concession to the Morea's inhabitants of the free trade of their local products with foreign regions also in order to revive the economy of the new domain, since, because of the fiscal tightening that followed the war and the subsequent expenditure on fortification, «*di fatto venne nel Regno a più angustiarsi il commercio*», ASVe, *Collegio*, "Relazioni finali di ambasciatori, rettori e altri pubblici rappresentanti", reg. 86, "Provveditore generale in Morea", Report by Angelo Emo, 17/01/1709. Moreover, the list of the concession made by the *Provveditore generale* Francesco Grimani includes the identification of the cultivated and fallow lands, the extension of gardens, olive groves, and vineyards, as well as the names of the resident families and of those who had recently established themselves in Morea. We note numerous inhabitants from Ottoman lands in the Balkans and in the Greek world: Athens, Crete, Rumelia, Ioannina, Thebes (the most numerous provenance). But also «*turchi fatti cristiani*» who already lived in Morea before the war and, according to such a list, were among the main tobacco growers in the region. See *Ibidem*, Report of Francesco Grimani, 08/10/1701.

[1118] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, reg. 170, Pregadi 16/01/1710. The following military confrontation with the Ottoman empire (1714-1718) brought to the early loss of the Morea, which returned again under the authority of the Sublime Porte in 1715.

[1119] Lorenzo Cantini, *Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini socio di varie accademie* (Firenze: nella Stamp. Albizziniana da S. Maria in Campo, 1800), vol. XVII, 203.

[1120] As we can read from the Tuscan *bando* of 27th May 1672, «*non si potrà per li Stati suddetti di Firenze e di Siena, comprendendo ancora la Città, Contado, Distretto e Montagna di Pistoia, e qualunque altro luogo, ancorché privilegiato, o esente più di questi, e del quale ancora bisognasse farne espressa et individua menzione, et ancora tutti i luoghi infeudati, o in qualunque modo sottoposti al dominio alto e supremo di S.A.S., vender tabacco, tanto a minuto quanto all'ingrosso da nessun altro, che dall'Appaltatore suddetto, o chi averà causa da lui, né si potrà anco da altri che da lui farlo pestare, acconciare, et accomodare per il consumo*». See *Bando et Ordine da osservarsi per il nuovo Appalto del Tabacco, rinnovato et ampliato, per dover cominciare il dì primo agosto prossimo futuro 1672*, Firenze, Nella Stamperia di S.A.S., 1672.

Dominante (Florence and Venice) made proper deals of subjection with the communalities that defined privileges and powers which remained in the hands of local institutions[1121]. Developments in research on the exercise of power in early modern Europe teach us not to consider this situation an Italian anomaly[1122]. At the same time it is interesting to note how the establishment of the tobacco monopoly tried to overcome the limits of the central power's right to tax. In any case, various levels of compromise were indeed inescapable. For instance, despite the assertive pronunciations against local derogations that we can read in the signed contract, in 1745 the Tuscan general tax farmers informed the sovereign with ill-concealed irritation that, especially in the feudal jurisdiction of Chitignano, his subjects were used to be exempted from the tobacco monopoly[1123]. Similarly, in the Venetian Dalmatia the Tobacco Farm had long been in «*uno stato di totale deperimento*» because in some places the same legitimacy of the tobacco monopoly had been never recognised by local populations[1124].

Indeed, the claim of a state-owned monopoly on tobacco required a considerable effort for widespread territorial control, as the flourishing of illegal competitors in providing tobacco to consumers represented a direct threat to the fiscal revenues extracted from the sector. In this respect, sovereign power resorted to various instruments. First of all, tobacco contraband was progressively subjected to special legal rites and magistracies with broad powers of inspection and prosecution. The most serious cases were judged by tribunals empowered with the inquisitorial rite, like the *Magistrato del Sale* in

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[1121] See Angelo Ventura, *Nobiltà E Popolo Nella Società Veneta Del '400 E '500* (Bari: Laterza, 1964); Elena Fasano Guarini, "Potere Centrale e Comunità Soggette Nel Granducato Di Cosimo I," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 89 (1977): 490–538.

[1122] At a closer look, is there really that much qualitative difference between the Spanish 'composite monarchy' and the coexistence of different 'states' under the sovereign authority of the Medici dynasty in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany? See John H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past & Present*, no. 137 (1992): 48–71.

[1123] See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 13, ff. 4r-5v, 14/12/1745, and ff. 27v-28r, 17/05/1746.

[1124] This is what emerges from a memorandum brought to the attention of the *Inquisitori di Stato* in order to take urgent measures for halting the disastrous trend. The source reveals that in Macarsca (city on the Dalmatian coast) «*non fu mai riconosciuta dipendenza dalla Ferma*» and in Imoski (in the hinterland of Split) «*si fanno lecita la piantagione del tabacco, massime nella villa di Ranovich*», see ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 944, "Promemorie", s.l.n.d.

Florence[1125] and the *Consiglio dei Dieci* in Venice[1126], that offered fewer guarantees to defendants. Moreover, the defense of the monopoly was entrusted also to the support of local representatives of the central governments[1127] who were granted wide powers to break into places suspected of fraud by the tobacco farmers[1128]. They could also rely on the intervention of armed figures employed by governments to safeguard public order: guards of the custom houses[1129], armed ships[1130], and soldiers on horseback[1131] had the task to supervise the observance of the monopoly and to defend the monopolistic

[1125] For the competences in contraband trials of the *Magistrato del Sale*, see ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 83, ins. 12, "Memorie e Riflessioni sopra la difficoltà di ridurre nel Granducato gli attuali diversi prezzi del Sale ad uno e medesimo Prezzo", ff. 149-161.

[1126] Such legal procedure was conceived as an effective disincentive to contraband by the tax farmers, so much so that on several occasions they asked for the extension of the inquisitorial rite of the *Consiglio dei Dieci* for all the *Rettori* of the Venetian *terraferma*. See, for instance, ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 161, ff. 135-137, 03/09/1682.

[1127] The Venetian Senate was used to respond to tax farmers complaints about fraud and contraband by soliciting the cooperation of the *Rettori*. However, as it transpires by the following extract of a *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*'s advice written in 1682, stimulated by the grievances of the tobacco contractors Castelli and Pocobello for the «*contrabbandi che giornalmente si fanno senza riguardo ai rigorosi divieti indicati nei capitoli del partito*», such solution seems more tired and routine than effective: «*Abbiamo stimato necessario accompagnar la scrittura suddetta sotto I prudentissimi riflessi dell'EE.VV., perché sia dall'Ecc.mo Senato scritta lettera ai Rettori di Terraferma per una vigorosa assistenza ad essi partitanti in affare di così grave rimarco*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 161, f. 13, 19/02/1682.

[1128] The proclamation of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* issued on 12th January 1741, against contraband in *Terraferma* stated «*che tutti li Ministri delli Ill.mi Rappresentanti di dette Città e Territori, e così pure quelli di qualsiasi giurisdizione, abbiano libertà di portarsi in qualunque luogo sospetto di contraffazione o contrabbando di Tabacchi, tanto nelle dette città che nelli Territori e Giurisdizioni, e ciò con ordine del Partitante o suoi Agenti*», see BMCVe, *Provenienze diverse C*, reg. 348, ins. 40. Some years later, the Tuscan finance council informed Vincenzo Antinori, vice-director of the *Uffizio del Sale*, about the suspected tobacco contraband in the house of the family Gattai: the contiguity of these buildings with the gendarmerie quarters theoretically prevented searches, but the obstacle was overcome by allowing the *Uffizio del Sale* to intervene with the Bargello without license, «*purché faccia il suo uffizio quietamente e per tor via tutte le occasioni di strepito potrà eseguire ciò dopo le 24*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 54, n. 53, Richecourt to Vincenzo Antinori, Florence 19/12/1743

[1129] In 1720, the Tuscan government ordered to the Director of the Livorno's custom house that «*tutti li tabacchi sieno dai proprietari levati dai Lazzeretti per mezzo de' facchini di codesta dogana con la licenza dell'appaltatore, e con l'assistenza delle guardie di dogana siano trasportati in Livorno nei magazzini sotto l'occhio dell'appaltatore medesimo*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 6, f. 261, letter from Carlo Rinuccini to Giacinto del Vigna, Florence 19/09/1720.

[1130] See, for example, the petition sent to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* by the tobacco tax farmers for obtaining the armed escort of a public frigate to protect from the corsairs their two ships employed in the transport of Levantine tobacco in ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 218, ff. 19v-21r, 14/12/1751.

[1131] In order to unravel the illegal cultivations of tobacco in the *Terraferma*, the Venetian authorities were used to send «*in giro li ministri con scorta di soldati a cavallo per far seguire li spianti de' Tabacchi nostrani, e divertire qualunque altra contraffazione in tale proposito*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 890, letter of Flaminio Cassetti to the Savi alla Mercanzia, Treviso 20/09/1733.

company's interest. Ultimately, the mobilization of state resources, including the use of armed forces across the provinces and peripheral territories, primarily served to protect the interests of the monopolistic company. Contraband was primarily a threat to the profits of the privileged merchants, while the state coffers received a fixed annual payment from the contractors. However, fiscal institutions were well aware that defending the state-owned monopoly was a crucial foundation for encouraging competitive offers and higher bids to award the Tobacco Farm.

Moreover, the situation on the ground relied basically on the organization of the privileged company to which the monopoly was granted. In the mid-18th century, the Tuscan Tobacco Farm presented a capillary administrative structure, with territorial directors and officials who resided in the main cities and towns of the Grand Duchy and corresponded between each others for the circulation of the information on the enterprise's performance, as well as on the threats posed by contraband[1132]. Moreover, the actual monopoly enforcement was in the hands of an hierarchical army of local tobacco sellers who asked licenses to the general tax farmer so that they could legally carry out their retail activities on behalf of the state-owned monopoly. At the higher level, for the Florentine *Stato Vecchio* alone, the accounting books of the Tobacco Farm in 1751 show 55 *appaltini* who not only had distributed over the year the agreed amount of 78.631 pounds of tobacco, but also an extra sum of about 56.762 pounds[1133]. But considering all the places for the whole Grand Duchy where tobacco was sold to the public – including the *botteghe* of the Tobacco Farm, the *rivenditori* in the cities and in the rural areas, the principal subcontractors and the tobacco shops dependent from the latter – the total number ascended to 1.320 'tobacconists' directly interested in the implementation of the monopoly even in the most peripheral localities[1134].

In other cases, the territorial control was totally entrusted to local subcontractors. These latter made agreements with the general tobacco farmers to take over the running

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[1132] Tobacco farm's territorial administrations in the 1754 were: Arezzo, Castellina, Contee delle Maremme, Cortona, Florence, Fivizzano, Livorno, Monsummano, Monte Pulciano, Pescia, Pieve S. Stefano, Pisa, Pistoia, Pogio a Caiano, Porto Ferraio, Prato, Siena. See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 855.

[1133] See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 501, "Firenze – Cassa generale".

[1134] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, "Nota distinta di tutti i posti dello stato nei quali si vende il Tabacco al pubblico", 1777. The source indicate a total number of 1.320 outlets for retail tobacco, subdivided as it follows: 14 *botteghe dell'amministazione generale*, 281 *rivenditori di città*, 198 *rivenditori di campagna*, 205 *conduzioni principali*, 622 *rivendite ad esse sottoposte*.

of the monopoly in certain provinces or localities in exchange for an annual fee. Doing so, they enjoyed the same authority and prerogatives of the Venetian contractors in their area of competence and ensured widespread coverage of the territory subjected to the monopoly. Significantly, in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany local contracts for the tobacco monopoly were issued especially in territories complicated to control, as it was the case of the granducal *enclave* of Pietrasanta, separated from the rest of the state by the sea mouth of the Republic of Lucca[1135]. The fragmentation of the tobacco contract into several subleases not only represented a simplification from a management point of view, but also made it possible to integrate members of the local élites into the implementation of the monopoly itself. In January 1733, the company Cottoni, Maruzzi and Zanchi petitioned the Senate for including in the contract the newly conquered Ionian and Aegean islands of Santa Maura and Cerigo, as well as the Vonizza, Butrinto, Prevesa and other cities and territories recently acquired by the lion of San Marco in Dalmatia and Albania[1136]. Their requests were fulfilled, but the general tobacco farmers immediately decided to sublease the Greek lands to the company Teotochi and Franzin, whose main funder was the influent Earl Giorgio Teotochi, a ennobled Greek with strong relations in Venice[1137]. So, the sovereign power looked at the tobacco monopoly as a concrete opportunity to give impetus to its claim for universal taxation over all its domains, but its

[1135] On the first contract for the tobacco monopoly in Pietrasanta, farmed out to local Jews, and the protests of the population, see Lucia Frattarelli Fischer, "Gli Ebrei Toscani Dalla Città Alla Campagna," in *Città e Campagna: Tradizioni Storiografiche e Prospettive Di Ricerca*, ed. Ann Katherine Isaacs (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1997), 150. Once the Grand Duke Peter Leopold in 1768 eventually decided to dismiss the Tuscan general tax farm and to convert it in the direct administration of granducal revenues, the tobacco monopoly remained farmed out in Pietrasanta to the former contractor, the Jewish Jacob Errera. See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Florence 14/09/1768. With regard to the Venetian Empire, the adjudication of sub-contracts for the tobacco monopoly in the Venetian *Terraferma* and the overseas domains were apparently even more common. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, regg. 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 890.

[1136] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 890, Venice 03/01/1733.

[1137] In March 1733, the general tobacco farmers informed «*esser stata sublocata la vendita de' Tabacchi di cotesta isola di Santa Maura, Amaxichi, isola di Leucada, Vonizza, Prevesa e territory al Co: Giorgio Teotochi et D. Marin Franzin compagni, con la facoltà permessa nei Capitoli del Partito; si compiacerà V.S. Ill.ma far che siano li stessi da chi s'aspetta riconosciuti e mantenuti in sublocatari di dette isole e territori, con tutte quelle prerogative che sono prescritte da' capitoli e proclami*», ASVe, *SAvi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 890, Venice 14/03/1733. For Giorgio Teotochi's relations with the Greek community of rich shipowners established in Venice, see Ugo Tucci, "I Greci Nella Vita Marittima Veneziana," in *I Greci a Venezia*, ed. Maria Francesca Tiepolo and Eurigio Tonetti (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2002), 243–56.

implementation was ultimately deferred to privileged agents and multiple forms of decentralization.

Furthermore, also the operations of armed control of the territory were to all intents and purposes exercised by persons paid by the monopolistic company[1138]. At the end of the 18th century, the Venetian *partitante generale* spent more than 212.000 *lire* for the armed protection of the tobacco monopoly[1139]. His payroll counted no less of 140 *spadaccini*, 23 *caporali* and 21 *capitani* employed for the defense of the monopoly. They were organized in 19 land squads that almost reflected the administrative subdivisions of the *reggimenti* in the Venetian *Terraferma.* Also 5 naval squadrons had been equipped for tighter control of the lagoon in Venice and Chioggia[1140]. Their cumbersome presence often created troubles, especially because the Tobacco Farm's squads who took up quarters within the walled cities frequently ended up in turbulent attitudes[1141]. Nevertheless, it proved to be essential in providing a pliant and mobile intervention force in a territory jagged by geographical barriers, but also by official privileges and tax exemptions, and even more widespread customary social practices that went against the dictates of the law and that the state administration often failed to map and eradicate[1142].

[1138] This was not an unusual practise: also the groups of Jewish entrepreneurs that in 1633 asked for the license and exclusive right of cultivating tobacco in the countryside of Pisa were granted with the «*facultà di poter portar armi offensive e difensive per conto loro*», ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 37, n. 89.

[1139] According to a relation on the expenditures of the tobacco farm for the armed guard of the various provinces of the Venetian empire, the financier Girolamo Manfrin incurred an annual cost of 212.066 *lire* and 8 *soldi*. See ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 945, Venice 01/12/1788.

[1140] In addition to the 5 naval squadrons in Venice and in Chioggia, the ground forces in service of the tobacco farm were dislocated in the following locations: Padova, Polesine, Vicenza, Vicenza's hinterland, Verona, Verona – Mira, Verona – Mascenigo, Verona – Arcè, Brescia, Brescia – Lonato, Bergamo, Treviso – Feltre, Treviso – Serravalle, Treviso – Crespan, Treviso – Agorel, Pieve di Cadore, Udine – Gemona, Udine – Sarone, Capodistria. See ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 944, "Ruolo dei Spadaccini, 1788-1795".

[1141] For example, in 1788, the *Provveditore* of Padova informed the *Inquisitori di Stato* that a squad of *spadaccini* recently created by the tobacco general farmer was going armed around the city, disturbing the public peace in streets and taverns, so much so that «*fu prossimo più di una volta il pericolo di gravi disordini fra la milizia e questa gente disordinata per il vino*», see ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 945, letter of Alvise Contarini, Padova 27/10/1788.

[1142] In 1781, the Tuscan administration of granducal revenues received with high astonishment the request by the inhabitants of the fiefdom of Cesa the grace to cultivate tobacco «*allegando di aver goduto di un tal privilegio ne' tempi andati*». In fact, the general administrator Giuseppe Gavard de Pivets commented that «*non già per privilegio come suppongono i supplicanti, ma per mero abuso si coltivava e manipolava in passato il tabacco nel suddetto Territorio di Cesa*», ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 571, letter of Giuseppe Gavard de Pivets to the grand duke Peter Leopold I, Florence 31/10/1781.

Scholars have sometimes looked at these systems of territorial control as a stage toward the creation of police forces by states[1143]. In this respect, the organization of territorial administrations and armed guards by a monopolistic company has been conceived as a backward solution to be overcome or as a crucial antecedent that to some extent inspired public innovations. However, the relationship between economic activity and the state-building process in the early modern age appears much more complex and with no well-defined borders, especially when we look at fiscal monopolies where various interests co-existed. We are rather dealing with a multi-polar governance, carried out by different agents, over an enterprise that used business profits to implement the fiscal policy. Actually, the features of the Tobacco Farm present striking assonances with what Michael Braddick has defined the 'loose agents of the state'[1144]: early modern society was populated by subjects of various kinds engaged at local level who with their activities allowed policies to be effectively implemented[1145]. It follows that the granting of exclusive rights through monopolies and fiscal privileges could also contribute to the consolidation of the central authority's right to tax and fight contraband, but through actors and according to dynamics very different from those we are used to think about.

3. Facing the black market: from repression to compromise and complicity

Frequently, after describing routes and players of contraband, as well as the tools for territorial control, scholars focus on the increasingly intense repressive action by public authorities and the entrepreneurs who ran the monopolies. Certainly, this aspect is not absent from our case studies. From the establishment of tobacco monopolies in mid-17th century until the mid-18th century, punishments for tobacco smuggling were progressively stiffened with a greater role assigned to corporal punishment and detention

[1143] For a collection of essays that have investigated the measures and instruments for preventing early modern fiscal monopolies from fraud in the light of an historical process towards the creation of police forces, see Livio Antonielli and Stefano Levati, eds., *Contrabbando e legalità: polizie a difesa di privative, diritti sovrani e pubblico erario. Seminario di studi, Messina, 1-3 dicembre 2011* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2016).

[1144] See Michael J. Braddick, *The Nerves of State: Taxation and the Financing of the English State, 1558-1714* (Manchester ; New York : New York: Manchester University Press, 1996).

[1145] Similar considerations have been recently provided also for the system of licenses for tobacco retailers issued in Charles I's England. See Alexander G. Taylor, "Tobacco Retail Licences and State Formation in Early Modern England and Wales," *The Economic History Review* 72, no. 2 (2019): 433–58.

in prisons or on galleys[1146]. So, in 1745, the new Tuscan universal law on tobacco introduced afflictive penalties of the body in the most serious cases of contraband[1147], whereas trials on the matter could end with sentences that condemned offenders to coerced public works for life or even to the gallows[1148]. In the Venetian Empire, the State Inquisitors, in the trial of five armed smugglers accused of an 'insurrection' against the tobacco monopoly in the Venetian Albania in 1780, sentenced three of them to public galley service and the others to death[1149].

At a closer look, the harshest repression mainly affected the weakest offenders and hardly the 'instigators' or the influential individuals who were often behind their actions[1150]. Moreover, repressive instruments were adopted with the greatest urgency in cases that challenged established authority and public order. Michael Kwass has identified three different types of 'rebellion' related to tobacco smuggling in the early modern age. At the least serious level in the eyes of the authorities, we find the acts of individual resistance, when a single fraudster attempted to evade arrest or confiscation of

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[1146] As Levati has summed it up, «*se per tutto il XVII secolo le punizioni sono ancora in larga parte consistenti in ammende pecuniarie e nella perdita dei prodotti fraudolenti, a partire dal secolo successivo, pur con differenti gradi da Stato a Stato, si assistette a un crescente ricorso alle pene corporali, al carcere e alla galera, misure all'inizio riservate esclusivamente a coloro che non fossero in grado di sostenere le multe previste dalle ammende, ma che col passare degli anni vennero estese e aggravate*», Levati, "'Che Non Seguano Fraudi in Pregiudizio Del Nuovo Datio Imposto Sopra Il Tabacco': Norme e Corpi a Difesa Dei Diritti Di Privativa Nell'Italia Centro-Settentrionale (XVII-XVIII Secolo)," 115–16.

[1147] The general tax farmers applauded the measure as «*una tal salubre e provvida disposizione*» and promptly asked for its extension in the cases of salt crime, see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 568, Florence 01/09/1746.

[1148] See the case of Grand Ducal Chamber's judgment against Giuseppe Carnesecchi, Angiolo Bernardi and Gaetano Dettini, guilty of carrying out a large-scale theft at the tobacco farm's factory in Florence, ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Florence 20/01/1768. While penalties for their accomplices were minor and proportional to their collaboration, for the three perpetrators of the major crime «*vi fu scissura tra i giudici della Camera, opinando due per la pena ordinaria di forca, e due per la pena de' pubblici lavori a vita*», but in the end the tribunal opted for the milder punishment.

[1149] The two sentenced to death were also guilty of inflicting severe gunshot wounds on local tobacco farm's employees. See ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Processi criminali", reg. 1125, n. 775.

[1150] On the one hand, penalties were differentiated according to the social and legal status of convicted fraudsters, so much so that corporal punishments, service on the galleys or the gallows were not expected in the sentences against the nobles. On the other hand, a kind of class prejudice could easily shape the action of institutions: as the Director of the Livorno Custom House, Alessandro Adami, explicitly admitted, his diligence in the matter of inspecting the personal luggage of ambassadors, which we have analyzed above, was not so much due to the suspicion that the diplomats themselves might be engaged in smuggling, but to «*l'abuso che possono fare i domestici delle immunità accordata a' padroni*», ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 3, ins. 22, Alessandro Adami to Angelo Tavanti, Livorno 20/01/1769.

the merchandise. Secondly, there are the interventions of entire communities or significant parts of them, with crowds of local residents reacting by opposing the claims of the monopoly guards or taking the side of smugglers. Finally, at the most relevant level, we find the premeditate assaults of armed gangs of smugglers, with ambushes of officers or actual armed confrontations for the control of the territory[1151]. Of course, it was the second and third types that most worried the authorities. Take the cases of the determination with which the Venetian magistrates worked to dismantle the «*ammasso di persone armate che in numero di 18-20 ogni settimana, provenendo dalle piazze dello Stato pontificio e passando per il Polesine (…) con quantità de' Tabacchi del Ferrarese, del quale fanno vendita con avanzato libertinaggio a fronte dei pubblici sovrani divieti*»[1152] and of the embarrassment caused by the «*tumultuaria insurrezione praticata dalle femmine di Valle nel Cadore il giorno 6 cadente con maltrattamenti in Filippo Corte* [an employee of the tobacco monopoly] *che aveva colà piantato casello in quel giorno per la vendita dei tabacchi*»[1153]. In the latter episode, as in other ones, the act of tolling the church bell, traditionally used to summon the community against external threats and, in the intentions of contractors and fiscal institutions, to be exploited to mobilize locals against gangs of smugglers, was completely overturned: it became an instrument in the hands of the part of the local community that participated in tobacco contraband, or

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[1151] See Kwass, "The First War on Drugs. Tobacco Trafficking, Criminality, and the Fiscal State in Eighteenth-Century France."

[1152] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 880, Zuanne da Riva to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, Este 26/03/1757.

[1153] ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 350, "Dispacci agli Inquisitori di Stato", reg. 350, Giovanni Battista Redessi to the State Inquisitors, Udine 30/05/1789. The community of Valle in the province of Friuli had been in the previous months the scene of violence and abuse by the 'swordsmen' of the tobacco farm, which had caused resentment among the local population and formal protests by representatives to the central government. Then, some cases of contraband by local inhabitants nurtured small turmoil that turned into 'insurrection' when the tobacco farm decided to set up a new sales outlet in the community: it was primarily the women of the village who called for the forced closure of the new privileged shop, even tolling the church bell to organize a riotous mob that went in search of the unfortunate Filippo Corte, and «*munite di bastoni, zappe, […] e sassi lo accompagnarono sino al casello del tabacco con qualche maltrattamento*» to have the banner of San marco handed over and the tobacco outlet closed without further mediation. See also *Ibidem*, 22/04/1789, 12/05/1789, 20/05/1790, 03/06/1789, 21/06/1789, 19/07/1789, 22/07/1789, 09/08/1789. According to the letters written by the State Inquisitors to the Lieutenant of Udine, the women who had stirred up the population were linked to «*lo spirito d'inobbedienza e di partito coltivato dalla seducente opera di Gasparo Valmassoni, Gasparo Costantini ed Antonio Bernabò, i quali si rileva in figura di capi fautori tengano colle loro osservabili direzioni ed occulti sediziosi consigli nel concitamento di quell'indocile popolazione*», ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Lettere ai Luogotenenti di Udine", reg. 101, Venice 25/07/1789. See also *Ibidem*, 16/05/1789, 12/06/1789, 19/08/1789, 19/09/1789,

sympathized with the smugglers that provided cheap supply of illegal tobacco, which resorted to it in order to compact the population against the abuses of armed guards and tax farmers. Moreover, just as made famous by the deeds of the renowned Louis Mandrin[1154], armed traffickers became accustomed to militarily occupying, in the truest sense of the word, the market squared in broad daylight to sell their contraband tobacco and also to forcibly impose its purchase at increased prices on the monopoly employees[1155]. It was these threatening events that stimulated the authorities to consider the option of occasional recourse to army intervention[1156] or the more structural reorganization of the police force to make the fight against smuggling more effective[1157].

However, sources clearly demonstrate the coexistence of repressive tools against contraband alongside practices of compromise with the perpetrators of illegal trafficking. Most interestingly for our argument, some structural initiatives designed to reach a compromise and address the underlying causes of tobacco contraband gained increasing

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[1154] See in particular Kwass, *Contraband*, 126–38.

[1155] Take the case of the misadventure of Jacopo Peruzzi, agent of the Arezzo's bishopric in the County of Cesa, who denounced to the Tuscan government that «*la mattina del dì 12 dicembre 1772 comparvero in quella tenuta dieci malviventi armati con dieci some di tabacco e polvere di contrabbando, i quali avendoli domandato 80 zecchini per lasciarli tanto tabacco in deposito, si contentorono di riceverne lire 90 mentre egli disse di non avere altri denari, e gli diedero forzatamente, e come in deposito, libbre 110 tabacco*». The granducal magistrates analysed the case and eventually decided that he deserved «*di essere trattato come alcuni altri particolari dello Stato senese, i quali si sono ritrovati nella medesima circostanza e che (…) possa V.A.R. degnarsi di comandare che il tabacco venga rimesso all'Amministrazione generale e da questa sieno pagate al Peruzzi le lire 114 da esso effettivamente sborsate*» See ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 951, n. 79, Florence 07/05/1773. In other terms, as in the episodes related to Louis Mandrin described by Kwass, if the forced sales system burdened local actors and minor tobacco farm's employees in the first instance, in the end it was the general contractors of the entire monopoly that lost money to reimburse the offended.

[1156] The recourse to the army represented a resource of last resort for the Venetian government to quell the most serious tobacco smuggling disorders. We have evidence of this for another unfortunate installation of a monopoly outlet in Pieve di Cadore that required the accompaniment of cavalry soldiers, see Levati, "'Che Non Seguano Fraudi in Pregiudizio Del Nuovo Datio Imposto Sopra Il Tabacco': Norme e Corpi a Difesa Dei Diritti Di Privativa Nell'Italia Centro-Settentrionale (XVII-XVIII Secolo)," 128–29. .

[1157] This was the path taken by the Grand Duke Peter Leopold, especially after the decision to switch to the direct administration of royal revenues which, inter alia, led to «*riunire coll'imminente terminazione dell'appalto generale tutte le squadre (…). Dovranno a quest'effetto gli individui di dette squadre, e principalmente i bargelli ed altri capi singolarmente invigilare per adempiere alle diligenze che loro incombono; e dovranno altresì (…) eseguire quelli ordini che verranno dati dai magistrati*», see the *Motuproprio* of the 26th of October 1768, reproduced in Carlo Mangio, *La polizia toscana: organizzazione e criteri d'intervento, 1765-1808* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1988), 222–23. However, according to Levati, the granducal 'police' failed to ensure adequate control of the territory, so much so that the systematic deployment of the military against contraband was necessary once the tobacco monopoly was reintroduced in the 1790s. See Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 174–75.

traction during the 18th century. While Levati has suggested that the limited success of repressive measures against contraband led, in the second half of the century, to the search for alternative solutions — particularly reforms aimed at abolishing the *ius prohibendi* on tobacco[1158] — I argue, on the contrary, that the immediate response to this situation was the development of initiatives that came to terms with the reality of smuggling in order to safeguard and strengthen the monopoly itself.

Fiscal institutions often approached the financial issues raised by tobacco contraband with a pragmatic mindset, especially when major public order concerns were not at stake, seeking an acceptable and honorable coexistence with extra-legal practices rather than aiming for their systematic eradication. This approach is evident in the clemency granted by the sovereign power to those involved in tobacco fraud or contraband. While the authorities were more rigid when confronted with blatant deception and repeat offenders[1159], and typically upheld the practice of 'whistleblowing'[1160], they

[1158] See Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 187–97. I have the impression that such a conclusion is primarily an inevitable consequence of one of the premises of this important study, namely that of looking at the tobacco sector in order to provide a fresco of the conflict between collective rights represented by the state and pockets of personal and territorial privilege.

[1159] Ridolfo Baretti had purchased 2 pounds of smuggled tobacco at the Livorno's docks in 1778. When granducal guards contested the contraband, he begged the sovereign power for grace, but the petition was dismissed because, consistently with the information gathered by Alessandro Adami and Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets, the supplicant was considered «*per le sue fraudi commesse in diversi tempi (...) un contravventore recidivo*» and, consequently, he did not deserve any grace. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 16, n. 76, Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 22/04/1778.

[1160] Sovereign graces for small episodes of tobacco contraband usually exempted offenders from paying the fines owed to the sovereign and the public purse, but tended to make it clear that the reward (to be paid by the offenders themselves) owed to those who had denounced or arrested the contraband that was the subject of the sentence must still be recognized. For example, see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 106, Anton Francesco Montauti to Francesco Terriesi, Pisa 14/04/1703; n. 254, Francesco Terriesi to the Grand Duke, Livorno 06/05/1707; *Ibidem*, reg. 13, n. 15, Serristori, Gavard and Siminetti to the Grand Duke, Florence 17/02/1769; n. 34, Serristori, Gavard and Siminetti to the Grand Duke, Florence 26/04/1769. The principle behind this differentiation is to be found in the low impact of the single fine on the state coffers resulting from minor incidents of smuggling, but also in the importance of a widespread system of incentives to denounce and arrest offenders as a deterrent to the further propagation of illegal practices. From this point of view, in addition to the quarter fine set by legislation in favor of whistleblowers, the Tuscan officials, facing an upsurge in tobacco contraband in the 1790s, discussed about the necessity «*che la vigilanza degli esecutori venga svegliata con premi più positivi, giacché le multe istituite dalla Legge in pochissime occasioni han dato luogo ed effetto*», so they suggested remedy «*non solo con assegnare agli esecutori l'intiera valuta e stima, ma anche il doppio di essa sopra le materie al netto che verranno rimesse al Magazzino generale di Firenze*» in order to achieve greater and more effective vigilance against the stealthy introduction of tobacco. See ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 88, ins. 3, "Prospetto: definizioni e riflessioni riguardanti la rendita e regalia dei Tabacchi in Toscana", Giuseppe de Cambray-Digny to Luigi Dithmar di Schimdweiller, Florence 06/02/1795.

were inclined to offer near-total pardons to those in poor financial conditions, at least with respect to the portion of the fine owed to the public coffers. For example, Paolo Narelli and Stefano Buratti, belonging to the Corsican 'nation' in Livorno, were arrested for the illegal detention of smuggled tobacco in 1770 but they received the grace from the sovereign due to «*l'estrema miseria degli oratori*», despite the blatant falsity of their excuse about their ignorance of the existence of the tobacco monopoly, «*essendo commune in quasi tutti i paesi la privativa dell'appalto del tabacco*»[1161]. These initiatives were accompanied by measures aimed at reducing the penalties for smuggling, in line with the new cultural understanding of the phenomenon outlined above[1162].

However, it is quite evident that the pardon agreement was subject to the sensibilities of the decision-makers and possible biases of the magistrates themselves: thus, the pleas of the Jews Gabriello Boccara and Salomone Cammeo for two different incidents of tobacco contraband were only partially granted because, as Giuseppe Gavard stated in his information, «*siccome sono frequenti e di difficile scoperta le contravvenzioni che si commettono in Livorno, specialmente fra gli ebrei, sono di sentimento che convenga di usare qualche rigore verso quelli che restano sorpresi e convinti del loro male operato per servire d'esempio agli altri*»[1163]. Indeed, the judgment on the same episode could be very different according to the ideas and roles of the various granducal magistrates: a certain clash between Gavard, general administrator of royal revenues and more inclined to protect the fines due to the public treasury, and Giuseppe Francesco Pierallini, Auditor of the Livorno's government and often advocate of compromise with a view to promoting a pacification of local social tensions, took place several times in the second half of the 18th century around pleas from the free port requesting a pardon of penalties for tobacco smuggling[1164].

The need for compromise was felt particularly by local representatives of the sovereign power with regard to the issue of illegal cultivation of tobacco. While the central magistracies of the Venetian Empire usually recommended to the *Potestà* and

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[1161] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 14, n. 25, Giuseppe Francesco Pierallini to the Grand Duke, Livorno 29/08/1770.

[1162] For example, the Grand Duke Peter Leopold ordered in 1777 that, in the case of the illegal introduction of foreign tobacco up to 4 ounces, offenders ought not be caught and arrested, but only the confiscation of the contraband. See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Notification of 21/08/1777.

[1163] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 16, n. 43, Gavard to the Grand Duke 13/03/1778.

[1164] See respectively ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 14, n. 80, Serristori, Gavard and Siminetti to the Grand Duke, Florence 26/03/1771, and Pierallini to the Grand Duke, Livorno 03/04/1771.

Capitani to adopt «*le maniere più forti e mezzi tutti possibili ad impedire l'introduzioni, in qualunque parte del territorio venissero praticati, dei tabacchi medesimi*»[1165], at the peripheral level the ineffectiveness of the mere repetition of prohibitions and of the albeit frequent campaigns to eradicate illegal plants was increasingly evident. For example, in 1723, the Podestà of Vicenza expressed «*qualche dubbio di difficoltà che nell'esecuzione degli ordini d'esso Inquisitore possa incontrarsi, o in alcuno dei veri Sette Comuni o in altri abusivamente per l'addietro intrusi in tale rango*», indeed criticising the costly repressive policy against illegal sowing of tobacco promoted by the Inquisitor over Duties in the Venetian mainland[1166]. Local authorities were also aware of the violent aftermath in which they risked to be involved take the case of the petition sent to the Venetian government by the Podestà of Vicenza on behalf of Pellegrin Soster, one of the '*sindaci*' of Lusiana within the '*Sette comuni*', in which the unfortunate man required protection because, as a result of the Podesta's order to arrest some tobacco smugglers, «*questi mi insidiano di presente la vita, et sono mesi sei che non sono stato in Lusiana mia patria, per non sacrificare la vita alla loro barbarie*»[1167]. Nevertheless, this perspective was not immediately welcomed either by the tobacco monopoly companies, who saw such demands as mere expedients to be able to more easily commit all sorts of abuse, nor by the government authorities. Until the mid-18th century, decrees of the Senate and the orders by the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* and the activities of the Inquisitors over Duties opposed any relaxation of the ban on tobacco cultivation[1168].

[1165] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, "Circolare del Consiglio dei X al Podestà e Capitano di Treviso e simile a quello di Vicenza et al Capitano vice Podestà di Paodva ed al Capitano e Podestà di Bassano", Venice 28/08/1721.

[1166] See *Ibidem*, Venice 30/07/1723.

[1167] ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Finanza – Tabacco", reg. 943, Vicenza 11/05/1738.

[1168] For example, in 1749, the Senate rejected the petition of the community of Campese which professed to be privileged in matters of tobacco cultivation, while the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* had deemed this practice completely abusive in the absence of explicit concessions in the *Serenissima*'s archives. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, Pregadi 21/08/1749. The following year it was the turn of the '*Sette comuni*' of the plateau of Vicenza: the Senate decreed that these communities «*si devono rassegnare all'obbedienza*» and renewed the task to the Inquisitor Duodo of enforcing the maxim that these inhabitants «*devono astenersi dalle semine e impianti delle erbe regine*», while at the same time giving the Podestà of Vicenza the responsibility of «*praticare la visita ai Sette comuni, ed anche a quello di Campese, di estendere le inquisizioni sopra le loro direzioni nella materia de' Tabacchi, ed informare ogni volta il Senato per le deliberazioni si convenissero*», *Ibidem*, Pregadi 10/09/1750.

From another point of view, relaxations of the maximum permitted quantities for personal use or retailing[1169], along with the free distribution of tobacco to individuals and groups considered particularly at risk of engaging contraband – such as clergymen and soldiers[1170] – became common practices of compromise aimed at curbing smuggling. State policies and the monopolistic merchants encouraged the adoption of lower prices for monopoly tobacco in the most challenging circumstances[1171]. As the employees of the Lombart company noted when they began managing the Tuscan tobacco monopoly, «*dans ce pays ici il faut autant de tariffs qu'il y a des villes, parce que les prix sont proportionnés aux facilités ou aux difficultés qu'il y a d'introduire le tabac de contrebande dans chaque ville, en égard au voisinage de la mer ou des états voisins*»[1172]. Indeed, the complex interplay of specific jurisdictions and pre-existing communities with their own privileges, susceptibility to smuggling, and proximity to territorial borders and seaports were the main reasons that guided the differentiation of prices. In the granducal enclave of Pietrasanta, separated from the rest of the Tuscan state by the outlet to the sea of the Republic of Lucca, the tobacco contract set lower tariffs compared other, more

[1169] For example, despite the contrite reactions of the general tax farmers, the Tuscan government decided not to harass the introducers of foreign tobacco when it was less than one ounce. See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Richard, Martelli, Serristori and Grobert to the Grand Duke, Florence 16/11/1759. Moreover, when the central government ordered an inquiry on the so-called '*barche tinaccere*' anchored at the Livorno's docks, from which many smugglers and fraudsters used to supply themselves with foreign tobacco to be brought into the free port and Tuscan territory, the initial proposal to remove all the boats in question from the quay was modified following the opinion of the Governor of Livorno, who on the contrary promoted greater regulation of their activities, also because, he added, «*non si hanno prove e quando si avessero per alcuna non è giusto di rimuoverle tutte. E che le medesime fanno inoltre molto comodo al pubblico, e specialmente agli equipaggi dei piccolo bastimenti*», ASLI, *Dogana*, reg. 23, memoir attached to the letter of Giuseppe Gavard to Vincenzo Mugnai, Florence 16/0//1791.

[1170] As reported by the Venetian tobacco contactor in 1780, «*m'assoggettai volontario io Girolamo Manfrin generale impresario servo ossequiosissimo di V.E. alla perdita di ducati 4.000 circa nell'ottenimento della mia impresa col somministrare gratuitamente a cadaun individuo delle religioni tutte due libbre di tabacco al mese nelle qualità ricercate a piacere e colla minorazione di soldi 10 per libbra del prezzo che rispettivamente lo vendono alla piazza li tabacchi medesimi*», ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Finanza – Tabacchi", reg. 941, Venice 22/08/1780. For the free distribution of half a pound of tobacco to Tuscan *bargello* and foremen, and the inclusion of Strasbourg *rapé* tobacco in the provided types, «*e ciò per animarli sempre più allo scoprimento delle contravvenzioni*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Protocol n. 16 of 19/01/1778.

[1171] It has to be kept in mind that the tariffs of tobacco prices were not freely determined by the contractors, but were set at the time the monopoly was awarded as a result of the negotiation between the wishes of the fiscal institutions and the bids of the interested entrepreneurs.

[1172] ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 77, Astier to French shareholders, Florence 29/10/1745.

easily controlled territories[1173]. As for the exemplary case of the free port of Livorno, here, «*attesa la facilità con cui il contrabbando puole introdursi in Livorno, i Tabacchi dell'Amministrazione generale si vendono ivi a minor prezzo che negli altri dipartimenti dello stato*»[1174].

In the Venetian Empire we notice a similar dynamic. Table 5.2 presents the wholesale prices of four types of tobacco in Venice, Padova, Vicenza, Brescia, Udine and Dalmatia: I have chosen these locations (the tariffs always refer not only to the city, but also to the territory of their district) because they allow us to look, in addition to the capital's exceptional market[1175], at two situations not particularly affected by contraband (Padova and Brescia) and three others that recurred in most of the dispatches and memoirs on tobacco smuggling.

Table 5.2 – Tariffs of various types of monopoly tobacco (prices per pound in *lire* and *soldi*) in Venice, Padova, Vicenza, Brescia, Udine and Dalmatia (1796)

Varieties of tobacco	Venice	Padova	Vicenza	Brescia	Udine	Dalmatia
Padovano	5	5	4	5. 2	4. 2	4. 10
Genisé	5. 8	6	4. 16	5.6	6	5
Rapé	7. 4	7. 10	6	7	6	6
Albanian leaves	2. 8	3	3	3. 14	4	3

Source: ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 942.

Data seem to confirm the tendency to keep prices lower in the districts most affected by smuggling: in fact, frequent maritime frauds introduced foreign tobacco into the overseas province of Dalmatia and border smuggling with the Austrian territories flooded the districts of Vicenza and Udine. However, we also note how this possibility was easier for snuff produced in Venetian manufactories such as the 'Padovano' and on tobacco *rapé*, on which contractors were known to obtain higher profit margins. On the contrary, it was much more difficult to avoid price increases due to distance and geographical obstacles for products that came from the maritime trade and usually converged primarily

[1173] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Florence 14/09/1768.

[1174] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, with no place nor date, but 1777, memoir attached to the letter of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 02/04/1777.

[1175] Just consider that the luxury powdered tobacco from Seville was sold in Venice at the astonishing sum of 42 *lire* per pound, while it could be found on the Venetian mainland's markets at about half the price, confirming the different price dynamics in the capital, especially for foreign luxury goods that were in high demand there. For this and other tariffs in 1796, see ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Finanza – Tabacchi", reg. 942.

in Venice. So, Albanian leaves and Genisé tobacco prices could not be kept so low in the district of Udine due to the costs for their overland transportation, but they were sold at lower prices in Dalmatia, where they were directly imported in some cases on behalf of the contractors[1176]. State policies and the management of the monopoly had to conform with the limitations imposed by geographical and market dynamics.

Finally, other forms of contraband and the subsequent management by the actors involved open up a different scenario, where, rather than compromise, a true complicity with smuggling emerges. Firstly, in some cases, the multiplicity of fiscal institutions led to a clash of perspectives on the prevailing fiscal interest and even the definition of smuggling itself: in the case of the tobacco monopoly, the complications primarily stemmed from the relationship with officials and tax collectors of custom duties. The Livorno Customs House was necessarily involved in the tobacco trade, as, as we have seen, it not only collected the stallage fee on the re-export trade of tobacco in the free port, but also had the right to a small levy on the importation of tobacco into the grand ducal territory by the monopolistic company[1177]. While the latter had every interest in imposing documentary burdens and restrictions on merchants wishing to sell or purchase tobacco for re-export, on many occasions the customs officer presented opposing arguments. For example, in 1721, the request by the merchant 'nations' of Livorno to abolish the requirement to present the '*responsali*' (proof of actual foreign sales) for tobacco re-export was enthusiastically supported by the Director of Customs, Giacinto del Vigna. The argument put forward by the granducal official emphasized the benefits that would result both in terms of increased trade in the free port and a predictable rise in customs revenue[1178]. From his perspective, the speed and ease with which merchants shifted from legal transactions to tobacco smuggling were customary practices in trade that the state had no interest in completely eradicating. The point was even explicitly discussed between merchants and fiscal institutions themselves: when a group of

[1176] On the high costs and perils from tobacco transportation between Venice and the district of Friuli, see ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, "Lettere ai Luogotenenti di Udine", reg. 101, Venice 21/04/1789. On the imports of tobacco leaves in Venetian Dalmatia on behalf of the general contractors, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Lettere da Zara, Provveditori generali", reg. 572, Antonio Renier to the Five Sages of Trade, Zara 13/10/1766.

[1177] The Customs House had a specific book for tobacco that formed its whole budget. See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 15, n. 19, 31/01/1776.

[1178] ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, reg. 2274, Giacinto del Vigna to Carlo Rinuccini, Livorno 28/05/1721.

representatives of the merchant 'nations' in Livorno stressed again, in 1746, the problems caused to them by the '*responsali*', they candidly argued that such a document «*non poteva in conto alcuno accordarsi dai detti compratori, mentre venendo da questi mandati in Paesi forestieri, ed in contrabbando, gli era impossibile di poter ricavare il detto responsale, e soddisfare a quell'obbligo a cui pretendevano di sottoporli gli appaltatori*»[1179].

These considerations shed light on a second aspect of complicity surrounding tobacco contraband: due to their affiliation with the mercantile world, both tax farmers and officials of fiscal institutions were not only responsive to the demands of merchants engaging in illegal trade, but they themselves tended to become actors in smuggling. As reported in a memorial to the Senate written by the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia in 1757, there were recurring abuses by tax contractors in the maritime importation of tobacco, especially from Genoa[1180]. However, as we have seen above, even the monopolistic merchants themselves actively engaged in smuggling practices or returned to illegal trade once their monopoly contracts had expired. In fact, smuggling became a resource even in anticipation of the expiration of the privilege. Towards the end of the contract, monopolistic merchants faced the problem of disposing of the tobacco stored in their warehouses, knowing that it would be difficult to secure favorable terms in selling to the company that would win the new contract. As a result, expiring contractors were inclined to sell off their remaining stock at rock-bottom prices, a dynamic that Venetian authorities repeatedly prohibited through specific proclamations because «*tal arbitrio di vendita ad ogni prezzo sarebbe il disfacimento della futura condotta, et in conseguenza d'intollerabile pubblico disavantaggio*»[1181]. However, the responses of monopolistic merchants directly involved smuggling. This was the case with Salomon Galligo, a contractor who, in the early 18th century, faced the accusation of smuggling tobacco into

[1179] Extract from the project written in 1737 by Livorno's merchants with 17 proposals to the Florentine government, entirely reproduced in Thompson, "'Progetti in Vantaggio Del Principe, Del Pubblico e Del Commercio Della Toscana'. I Mercanti Di Livorno e l'economia Toscana al Momento Della Successione Lorenese," 479. For a comparison with other European contexts on the role of big tobacco merchants in the contraband of such a global commodity, see Nash, "The English and Scottish Tobacco Trades in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries"; Joao de Figueirôa-Rêgo, "Redes e Interesses Do Tabaco No Oceano Global. Notas de Investigacao (Séculos XVII e XVIII)," in *El Tabaco y La Esclavitud En La Rearticulacion Imperial Iberica (s. XV-XX)* (Évora: Publicações do Cidehus, 2018), 40–72.

[1180] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, II series, 'Tabacco', reg. 171, Venice 18/05/1757.

[1181] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, 'Risposte', reg. 161, f. 175, Venice 06/02/1683.

the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, which he sold alongside the tobacco he managed for the monopoly[1182]. Demetrio Perulli, a Greek merchant and shipowner who joined the company holding the Venetian Tobacco Farm in the mid-18th century, in the fall of 1762 relied on his connections with small merchants and smugglers in the Stato da Mar to sell at low prices tobacco that could not be sold through the official monopoly channels before the end of the contract[1183]. Count Iseppo Mangilli, representative of the consortium that had won the tobacco monopoly starting in 1763, vehemently denounced to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia the damage caused to the future enterprise by this explicit complicity with smuggling, but the Greek merchant's position was not compromised. Perulli's sale of tobacco to smugglers significantly increased the risk of smuggling in Venetian Dalmatia and the Ionian Islands, while it did not affect the heart of the empire, where the tobacco monopoly guaranteed the majority of revenue. Consequently, the magistrates decided to overlook the matter[1184].

As a matter of fact, as has been suggested for the Kingdom of Naples[1185], the tobacco monopoly was a powerful device for regulating competition between different mercantile groups. While monopolists were often closely tied to financial speculators and public authorities, for others, commercial ventures were off-limits. State authorities looked for a balance and often remembered that the monopolistic privileges must not «*sotto qualsivoglia pretesto apportare il menomo impedimento all'universale libertà di esercitare la consueta negoziazone cogli esteri stati*»[1186]. However, the consequences of this particular distribution system were felt on multiple levels. First, monopolistic merchants were granted a competitive advantage in the market through the right of first negotiation on incoming tobacco. For example, in 1713, the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* allowed the monopolist merchant Niccolò Morari to «*introdurre per via di stati esteri li*

[1182] See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 4, n. 56, Montauti to Terriesi, Pisa 26/04/1703 and Florence 28/04/1703.
[1183] Perulli signed a proper contract with the shipowner Ivanovich at lower prices compared to those agreed in the previous years with other correspondents in the Venetian Dalmatia and in the Ionian islands. See ASVe, *Fraterna grande di S.Antonin*, 'Archivio Perulli', reg. 46, Santa Maura 17/10/1762. For the Kingdom of Naples, it is interesting to note that, according to Cinzia Capalbo, a similar practice was not only tolerated, but explicitly authorized by fiscal institutions. See Cinzia Capalbo, "Contrabbando, Commercio e Fiscalità Nel Napoletano in Età Moderna. Il Mercato Illegale Del Tabacco," in *Studi in Onore Di Ciro Manca*, ed. Donatella Strangio (Padova: Cedam, 2000), 119–20.
[1184] See BMCVe, *Provenienze Diverse C*, reg. 78, ff. 242-247; ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, 'Risposte', reg. 189, ff. 196v-199r, Venice 23/12/1762.
[1185] See again Capalbo, "Contrabbando, Commercio e Fiscalità Nel Napoletano in Età Moderna. Il Mercato Illegale Del Tabacco."
[1186] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, reg. 189, f. 89 r, Venice 12/02/1762.

Tabacchi di Ponente in foglia e corda, per il bisogno e consumo delle città suddite della Terraferma», sidelining the principle that all tobacco, both from the Levant and the West, had to be landed in Venice, sparking protests from other merchants[1187]. In the same years, according to the granducal decree of 1714 on processed tobacco,

> «*quando poi li Tabacchi della suddetta qualità, che arriveranno nel Porto di Livorno, e saranno con le suddette denunzie e licenze scaricati e portati nella suddetta Dogana, se i Padroni di essi vorranno venderli, o contrattarli in Livorno, debbano, prima di trattarne con altri, domandare e ricercare se vogliono comprarli gli Appaltatori Generali, o loro Subappaltatori, e non volendoli comprare, o non convenendo sul prezzo, saranno i medesimi Appaltatori generali, e loro Subappaltatori, tenuti e obbligati dare liberamente licenze in scritto senza spesa, che tali Tabacchi si possino estrarre o vendere ad altri, e ciò si intende solamente per estrarsi fuori delli Stati di SAR*»[1188].

The monopolistic merchants were also responsible for the establishment of regulatory rules that excluded other products, potentially competitors of the state-owned tobacco monopoly and eventually marked as 'adulterated' forms of tobacco. Among these was the '*polvere purgacapo*' a local remedy for headaches and colds[1189], seen as an alternative to snuff since the first introduction of the tobacco monopoly. In 1645, the Auditor Vettori wrote to the art of the apothecaries' Director that «*dalli appaltatori del tabacco viene motivato che si venda certa polvere nominata purgacapo o con simile nome [...] che serve per tabacco et forse ne contiene qualche mescolanza la cui vendita è in grave pregiudizio dell'appalto*»[1190]. Here Vettori, as a granducal representative, took the side of tobacco monopolistic entrepreneurs, to the disadvantage of apothecary shops that lost the opportunity to legally sell the product. The decision was part of a broader strategy to eliminate alternative remedies, thereby consolidating tobacco's position in the market. A following official Ban from 1690 declares:

[1187] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, reg. 172, ff. 161-173, Venice 22/11/1713.
[1188] ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 5, n. 59, with no place nor date but 1714.
[1189] «*Il Purga-capo è un medicamernto ceffalico per lo più starnutatorio, che purga la testa da gli escrementi viziosi*», Girolamo Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo* (Ferrara: per gli Eredi di Bernardino Pomatelli, 1714), 159.
[1190] ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 852r, 15/04/164.

> «*è fatto divieto di vendere la polvere nominata purgacapo, né altra che facesse l'istesso effetto del tabacco senza licenza in questa città di Firenze de' Consoli dell'Arte de' Medici e Speziali, e nella città di Siena senza licenza della medesima arte, e fuori di dette città in qualunque luogo de' compresi nel presente appalto senza licenza del Rettore, o uffiziale supremo del luogo, la qual licenza non possa concedersi senza prima sentire detto Appaltatore generale.*»[1191]

Similarly, the Tuscan tobacco farmers, with the assistance of experts and technicians, lobbied against the free cultivation of the so-called '*erba corsa*', as they argued that the latter was just «*tabacco bello e buono*»[1192]. Although at the beginning of the 19th century the opinion of a renown agronomist like Targioni Tozzetti advised against considering the '*erba corsa*' as a variant of tobacco (*Nicotiana rustica*)[1193], the decrees against tobacco smuggling and the campaigns to uproot illegal plantations continued to target the sowing of '*erba corsa*' or similar alternatives. In 1789, the Venetian Inquisitors of State wrote to the Rectors of Vicenza that the following uproot campaign against the illegal sowing of tobacco was required to target also the plantations of '*erba regina*' because, on many occasions, offenders had defended themselves by claiming to cultivate a plant entirely different from tobacco and for medicinal purposes. However, the leaves of '*erba regina*' were used to produce goods similar to those sold by the state monopoly, which were then smuggled. The campaign in question reached a record number of 200,000 illegal plants uprooted in the territory of the '*Sette comuni*' alone[1194].

4. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the complex layers of tobacco smuggling within the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire during the 17th and 18th centuries, highlighting its economic, social, and political implications. Tobacco smuggling was not

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[1191] Cantini, **Legislazione toscana raccolta e illustrata dal dottore Lorenzo Cantini …*, XX, 123.
[1192] See ASFi, *Appalto generale*, reg. 420, Francesco Masson to the Grand Duke, Florence 12/09/1752.
[1193] BNCFi, *Targioni Tozzetti*, mss. 275, ff. 95r-96r, Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti to Tommaso Coppi, Florence 26/05/1817.
[1194] See ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, 'Lettere degli Inquisitori', reg. 126, Venice 07/11/1789 and 23/11/1789. It is interesting to note that '*erba regina*' was one of the many names by which, according to scholarly literature, tobacco was initially known among Europeans. The name was inspired by Queen Catherine de' Medici of France, who first introduced the use of tobacco at the French court.. See Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna*, 13–20.

merely an economic activity; it was a multifaceted social phenomenon that involved a wide cross-section of society. Both economically marginalized individuals and privileged elites were heavily engaged in these illicit operations. Their participation underscores the widespread appeal and profitability of the tobacco trade, which transcended social boundaries. Smugglers operated across diverse locations, from remote rural areas that served as safe havens for cultivating and initially distributing contraband tobacco, to bustling urban centers where high demand and lucrative opportunities flourished. This geographical diversity not only facilitated the spread of smuggling but also created significant challenges for state enforcement, which was often hindered by the vast and varied landscapes of these regions.

The struggle against tobacco smuggling had significant implications for state-building processes, underscoring the broader challenges that emerging modern states faced in asserting control over their territories. The monopolization of the tobacco trade became a crucial state tool, not only economically but also as a means of extending influence across regions. Scholars have interpreted this as instrumental in enhancing state capacity and reinforcing central authority, as states consolidated power and established more structured administrative mechanisms. However, a closer examination reveals a more nuanced picture. The expansion of the tobacco monopoly occurred progressively and often through negotiation rather than direct imposition by sovereign power. While the legal procedures and taxation rights linked to the tobacco monopoly strengthened central authority over local magistracies and elites, the limits of direct territorial control required fiscal institutions and tax farmers to employ various strategies, including decentralization. In particular, the implementation of the tobacco monopoly and the fight against smuggling largely depended on the organization and armed forces of the private company holding exclusive tobacco trade rights. Local elites continued to play a fundamental role, particularly in remote provinces such as Venice's overseas imperial domains, where they often served as sub-contractors for tobacco farming.

In this context, I argue that smuggling should not be seen as merely a by-product of weakly patrolled state boundaries, nor simply as a response from disadvantaged social classes to early modern fiscal tightening. Although the normative power of institutions set new limitations and, consequently, created punishable offenses, it also generated economic opportunities that frequently blurred the line between the ‘legal’ and the

‘illegal’. This framework reveals a multiplicity of practices and actors involved in tobacco smuggling, even fostering interclass collaboration between poorer individuals and wealthier economic actors who usually were the ones that orchestrated these operations.

As the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire struggled with tobacco smuggling, their approaches oscillated from harsh punitive measures to more nuanced strategies, including negotiated compromises with smugglers. Initially, authorities imposed severe penalties as a deterrent, yet over time they acknowledged the impracticality of completely eradicating smuggling. This realization led to a pragmatic approach that sought to manage the coexistence of illegal activities within the legal framework of the tobacco monopoly. Such a model, often characterized by granting amnesty to smugglers when public order was not directly threatened, and incentivizing informants with rewards, aimed to foster a form of socially enforced resistance to smuggling.

Moreover, the monopolistic merchants directly participated in tobacco contraband on many occasions, but they also adopted more sophisticated strategies as the. Simply put, illegal sales guaranteed extra profits compared to the management of the monopoly, such as the direct sale of tobacco to smugglers in anticipation of the end of the privileged contract. However, the tobacco farmers also exerted pressure on fiscal institutions to obtain regulatory rules that would define the boundaries of smuggling, in order to gain competitive advantages in the re-export market and eliminate threatening alternatives.

Thus, the intersection of mercantile networks, fiscal institutions, and the illicit tobacco trade reveals a complex web of mutual dependency and interaction. Smugglers and traders sought to maximize profits within the shadow of legal constraints, while the state navigated these challenges by adapting regulatory and enforcement strategies pragmatically. State institutions and their normative power developed in close interaction with social actors, legitimizing certain practices while rendering others illegal, often in pursuit of compromise. The boundaries between ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ were continually negotiated and redefined, frequently through ex-post regularizations and contractual agreements for social practices that had previously resisted repression. This dynamic not only shaped the economic contours of the tobacco trade but also influenced the broader political and administrative evolution of territorial control in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire during the early modern period.

Chapter 6

The Tobacco Farm between innovation and import-substitution

«Quest'appaltatore è tutto paragonabile ad un mercante, il quale cerca di fare i suoi negozi, non avendo in vista che il lucro presentaneo»[1195]

«Imposto da tali troppo convincenti cagioni, passai ad estendere delle prudenti indagini, con sodi ed aggiustati principi agronomi, sulle terre dell'Istria, e vidi che non era ottenibile il rinvenire colà un'estensione unita del suolo necessario (…). Magri inoltre, ed in complesso sassosi, que' fondi non eran atti a produrre il ricercato genere di qualità»[1196]

From his privileged position in Livorno, Governor Carlo Ginori reflected on the tensions between taxation and commercial activities. In particular, in 1757, he renewed his criticism of the Tuscan General Tax Farm, continuing a vigorous opposition he had maintained for over 15 years. Aligned with the views of the mercantile 'nations' of the free port[1197], he reported to the Florentine government the detrimental effects on trade caused by the excessive rigor of the general tax farmers. The comparison used by the Governor is particularly significant: he likened them to 'merchants focused solely on their own interests, concerned only with short-term profit', rather than considering the long-term consequences of an issue of undeniable public importance.

Albeit given in the context of a heated political controversy[1198], this definition sounds particularly stimulating for a deeper investigation of the economic dimension of

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[1195] ASFi, *Reggenza*, reg. 77, Carlo Ginori to Giovanni Antonio Tornaquinci, Livorno 11/02/1757.

[1196] BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, ff. 215r, with no place nor date, but 1793.

[1197] See the memoranda sent in 1758 to the Tuscan government by the Dutch, Jewish and French nations in ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 799, ins. 1; for the memoir written by the Tuscan merchant Giuliano Ricci, see *Ibidem*, f. 107, Livorno 07/01/1758.

[1198] Ginori's words should be understood in the light of his eclectic entrepreneurial background, as a proponent of ideas that favored economic freedom in the mid-18th century Tuscany. On the economic reform targets pursued by Ginori in Livorno and on the influence of the 'freedom and protection' concept, elaborated by the so called 'Gournay circle', see Antonella Alimento, "Carlo Ginori and the Modernization of the Tuscan Economy," in *Florence after the Medici: Tuscan Enlightenment, 1737-1790*, ed. Corey Tazzara, Paula Findlen, and Jacob Soll (New York, NY ; London: Routledge, 2020), 157–75. At the same time, it is important to recall that Ginori belonged to an interest group that in the post-Medici Grand Duchy of Tuscany opposed the French-Lorrain bloc, which had controlled the Tuscan General Tax Farm since its introduction in 1740. In the 1740s, the Marquis was, in fact, one of the leading figures of a Tuscan economic group that did not aim to prevent the outsourcing of granducal tax collection to a private company, but rather to secure the General Tax Farm contract for a 'Tuscan company'. As Marcello Verga's studies have shown, this proposal sought to implement a broad political-economic initiative in which state finance, investments from the grand duchy's social elite, long-distance trade, and the protection of sovereign power were key pillars of a strategy to revive the Tuscan economy. See Marcello Verga, *Da "cittadini" a "nobili":*

the early modern privileged company which ran the fiscal monopoly: the Tobacco Farm. In the previous chapters, we have shown that the monopolistic merchants were entrusted with the privileges for the collection of a significant tax and the organization of a relevant economic sector, especially because of their familiarity in long-distance trade and their participation in merchant networks stretching from the Atlantic to the Eastern Mediterranean. Now, I will examine how the Tobacco Farm dealt with the issues raised by the economic activities connected with the monopoly. In particular, I aim at shedding light on the relationship of the tobacco monopolies and their main actors with two crucial themes that play an important role in economic history: the path towards product and production innovation and the import-substitution processes.

These topics have often met peremptory statements in economic literature and historiography. For a long time, scholars have identified technological innovation as one of the crucial factors for the key stages of European economic development, including the Industrial Revolution driven by Britain[1199]. According to the more traditional interpretation of this phenomenon, an institutional framework capable of providing resources and protecting property rights would have ensured Europe's global leadership in innovation during the early modern period[1200]. The theories on the 18th and 19th-century Industrial Revolution have been profoundly revisited: greater emphasis has been placed on the significance of resources from the American colonies and the natural resources available, primarily coal as a revolutionary energy source, while the gap in the 18th century between Britain and other regions of the world, including the more economically advanced provinces of the Chinese Empire, has been drastically reduced[1201]. Nevertheless, innovation remains a central theme in the analysis of international economic competition. Reflecting on the rise of the Anglo-American 19th-century global cotton industry, scholars have highlighted the complex interplay of innovation and import substitution, between plantations in the Americas and new industries in Britain, which

lotta politica e riforma delle istituzioni nella Toscana di Francesco Stefano (Milano: Giuffrè, 1990), 187–206.

[1199] See Thomas S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution, 1760-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[1200] See David S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[1201] See Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton Economic History of the Western World (Princeton, N.J. ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000).

characterized its ascent at the expense of the previous global production centers in the Indian Subcontinent[1202].

By contrast, commercial privileges related to taxation and productive activities have usually been viewed with suspicion, as factors that hinder innovation and market development. From this perspective, fiscal history has emphasized the 'uncontrolled spiral' that provided, on the one hand, a peerless source of upward mobility for those involved in those privileges and, on the other hand, increasing costs for public finance with the risk of recurrently bankruptcy[1203]. Economic history has usually overlooked them as entirely subjected to the fiscal dimension, thus a factor that brought to sacrifice empire-building projects, economic innovation, trade and production development. Paradoxically, we can recognize a sharp opposition with the almost universally acknowledged findings on the monopolistic overseas trade of chartered companies, that, despite their monopoly and privileges, «have been generally considered concurrent and instrumental to the growth of long-distance trade in the early modern world»[1204]. In particular, the features of early modern joint-stock companies have been used, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, to investigate the basis of modern business, as the coherent predecessors of contemporary multinational companies[1205].

Historiography on the early modern Italian states seems to confirm this picture: the proliferation of exclusive privileges to sell, import, or manufacture certain commodities has been almost entirely investigated in the light of fiscal revenues collected by the state from the award of licensees and monopolies, often driven by external interests[1206].

[1202] See Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014).

[1203] For the 18th-century Bourbon monarchies in France and Spain, see Francisco Andújar Castillo, *El poder del dinero: ventas de cargos y honores en el Antiguo Régimen* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2011); Marie-Laure Legay, *La banqueroute de l'État royal: la gestion des finances publiques de Colbert à la Révolution*, Collection En temps & lieux 26 (Paris: Editions EHESS, 2011), 81–82; Rafael Torres Sánchez, *Constructing a Fiscal Military State in Eighteenth Century Spain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 46–47.

[1204] Despina Vlami, *Trading with the Ottomans: The Levant Company in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 1.

[1205] See, for example, Ann M. Carlos, "Agent Opportunism and the Role of Company Culture: The Hudson's Bay and Royal African Companies Compared," *Business and Economic History* 20 (1991): 142–51. For a recent overview of French, English, Dutch and other chartered ventures in the Atlantic in the early modern period, see also Louis H. Roper and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke, eds., *Constructing Early Modern Empires: Proprietary Ventures in the Atlantic World, 1500-1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

[1206] Consider the harsh statement by Luigi de Rosa in his seminal book on the '*arrendamenti*' in Naples: «*è fuori di dubbio, comunque, che fu durante il Viceregno [spagnolo] che il Paese ebbe a lamentare un*

Furthermore, this process has frequently been criticized for leading to a tightening of taxes that burdened the productive classes and stifled free economic initiative, resulting in widespread damage to the economy[1207]. Indeed, the discussion on economic innovation and development in the 18th-century Italian peninsula is largely dominated by intellectual history, particularly the circulation of political economy and Enlightenment ideas[1208]. Accordingly, the focus is primarily on economic reform projects aimed at liberalizing the domestic market and increasing agricultural productivity, while early modern monopolies are portrayed as outdated instruments that hindered development and needed to be eliminated[1209]. Without directly opposing these perspectives, some studies on the Venetian context seem to suggest a less explored and particularly interesting path for the focus of this thesis. In particular, as early as the 1990s, Roberto Berveglieri's studies highlighted the Venetian patents aimed at granting industrial privileges. A practice that was far from discontinuous or exceptional, their issuance by the sovereign power aimed at supporting innovation and technological transfer, also demonstrating the quantitative and qualitative contributions of foreign emigrants[1210]. Walter Panciera also emphasized

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inasprimento fiscale e vide sorgere la maggior parte degli arrendamenti», Luigi De Rosa, *Studi sugli arrendamenti del Regno di Napoli: aspetti della distribuzione della ricchezza mobiliare nel Mezzogiorno continentale (1649-1806)* (Napoli: L'arte tipografica, 1958), 8.

[1207] According to Luigi dal Pane, the Medici's fiscal policy in the first decades of the 18th century was marked by the «*cristallizzazione progressiva degli istituti esistenti*» and by the «*diffondersi (...) delle privative di fabbricazione e di vendita, degli appalti di rendite pubbliche, privative e appalti che contribuivano a immobilizzare il sistema vigente*», Luigi Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato* (Milano: Banca commerciale italiana, 1965), 11.

[1208] For a general picture, see Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge (Mass.); London: Harvard University Press, 2005); John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples, 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Manuela Albertone, ed., *Governare il mondo. l'economia come linguaggio della politica nell'Europa del Settecento* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 2009).

[1209] Consider, in particular, the significant body of scholarship on the Leopoldine period of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, focusing on the political struggles and intellectual debates that arose around the economic and social reform projects, particularly during the 1760s to 1780s. See Luigi Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del secolo 18. alla caduta del Granducato* (Milano: Banca commerciale italiana, 1965); Furio Diaz, *Francesco Maria Gianni: Dalla Burocrazia Alla Politica Sotto Pietro Leopoldo Di Toscana* (Milano; Napoli: Riccardi, 1966); Adam Wandruszka, *Pietro Leopoldo: un grande riformatore*, Collana storica 82 (Firenze: Vallecchi, 1968); Mario Mirri, *La Lotta Politica in Toscana Intorno Alle Riforme Annonarie (1764-1775)* (Pisa, 1972); Vieri Becagli, *Un Unico Territorio Gabellabile. La Riforma Doganale Leopoldina: Il Dibattito Politico 1767-1781* (Firenze: Università degli studi-Istituto di storia-Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, 1983).

[1210] See Roberto Berveglieri, *Inventori stranieri a Venezia (1474-1788): importazione di tecnologia e circolazione di tecnici artigiani inventori. Repertorio*, Memorie. Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti. Classe di Scienze Morali, Lettere ed Arti 58 (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1995); Roberto Berveglieri, *"Ingegnosi artificij": trecento anni di storia della scienza, della tecnica e dell'innovazione: (1474-1788)* (Verona: Cierre, 2020).

how, during the last century of the Serenissima, all manufacturing sectors, primarily leveraging a significant circulation of people and technicians on a transnational scale, worked towards the production of import substitutes. Therefore, the 18th century was a century of innovations at a relatively fast pace, albeit with a focus primarily on the product rather than the production process[1211].

At a closer look, the tobacco monopolies fit well in the scenario described by Berveglieri and Panciera, as they survived and prospered thanks to the development of a proper economic enterprise dealing with product innovation and import-substitution: the 'Tobacco Farm'. This latter not only sold to consumers finished tobacco products charged with taxes. It also negotiated with merchant houses the supply of foreign tobacco and other commodities which were necessary for the production process. Moreover, it owned its own manufactures in the domestic territory for processing the raw materials - tobacco leaves and different kinds of drugs - to produce the finished goods for the market. The alternative between outsourcing and internalization was not a peremptory choice, but rather a contingent strategy inspired by a pragmatic vision of the monopolistic business at the crossroad between early modern fiscal institutions and mercantile networks. In addition, the complex economic activity of the Tobacco Farm was not reduced to a mere ratio of costs to revenues, nor to the production and market dimension alone. The second quotation above shows the familiarity of the tobacco farmers with agronomic knowledge and agricultural practices for the good yield of tobacco cultivation: in that case, the monopolistic company, in search of the best site in the Venetian Empire to develop its own plantations, conducted studies on the soils of Istria 'with wise and appropriate agronomic principles'. In other fields, such as manufacturing, we see a similar focus on transnationally produced knowledge and on the preconditions for a quality product.

The study of how Tobacco Farms used economic and scientific information as a resource allows us to investigate their actual contribution for the production process's innovation in the sector, but also to what extent the day-to-day management was informed by a constant update of expertise and know-how. Looking at the specific solutions adopted, it should be avoided any adhesion to either pre-constituted schemes or prejudices on the activities of these peculiar and privileged enterprises. Conversely, the choices

[1211] See in particular Walter Panciera, "Imprenditori, Tecnici e Macchine: L'attegiamento Verso l'innovazione Nel Settecento Veneto," in *L'area Alto-Adriatica Dal Riformismo Veneziano All'età Napoleonica*, ed. Filiberto Agostini (Venezia: Marsilio, 1998), 133–52.

between opposite extremes, like the alternative between the recourse to the market or the partial internalization of the commodity chain, should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis according to the particular characteristics of the business.

In this respect, an analysis of the crucial aspects of the economic life of this peculiar early modern institution - a middle ground between a tax administration, a bureaucratic office and a trading company - allows us to grasp more insights on how the monopoly regime contributed not only to the outstanding rise of tobacco trade and taxation consumption between the 17th and the 18th, but also to projects for economic innovation and import-substitution. This approach has found a certain success for research on the imperial spaces, whose recent developments highlight the active interdependence between informal networks and state-sponsored monopolies[1212], or in the studies inspired by global or connected history[1213]. I argue that a further step should be made by overcoming the opposition between, on the one hand, the progressive enhancement of the state and the rise of liberalism in Western Europe and, on the other hand, the relationship between coercion, monopoly and informal imperial agents in the overseas domains. A greater attention to the relationship between the plural dimension of institutional contexts and the modalities by which communities and mercantile actors related to them should be devoted also by research on the early modern Mediterranean states, their networks and institutions[1214].

In particular, the chapter begins with a picture on how the Tobacco Farms in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire dealt with the import of foreign tobacco. Mercantile and institutional networks overlapped with the same aim to provide the market with the tobacco products with the higher demand. Then, I will focus on the innovation that the monopolistic merchants promoted for manufacturing and cultivation. Increasing domestic production (including the emergence of innovative projects for the establishment of tobacco plantations) became a primary goal in the light of serious economic and fiscal concerns that escalated in the second half of the 18th century. Acting

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[1212] See the approach in Cátia Antunes and Amélia Polónia, eds., *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[1213] See, for example, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, ed., *Merchant Networks in the Early Modern World, 1450–1800*, An Expanding World: The European Impact on World History, 1450 to 1800 (Aldershot, Great Britain ; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Variorum, 1996).

[1214] On this point, see also the analysis of the existing literature and the considerations provided by Alida Clemente in Alida Clemente, "Stati e Commercio Nell'Europa Moderna Tra Reti e Gerarchie," *Storia Economica* XX, no. 2 (2017): 469–88.

not only as fiscal instruments for increasing state revenues but also as major privileged economic actors, the Tobacco Farms interacted with other market forces and affected the entire production and distribution chain, raising further questions: how did tax collection and commercial business harmonize with each other? Which factors led contractors to opt for buying on the market or to internalize part of the commodity chain? What was the relationship between, on the one hand, the monopolistic enterprise and, on the other hand, the scientific knowledge and transnational economic information to take care of product quality and innovate the production process?

1. Turning to the market: tobacco imports in the monopolistic regime

The accounting books of the tobacco farmers show to what extent the economic dimension of the monopoly was perceived as a crucial point for the success of the enterprise and, consequently, for the hope of increasing fiscal revenues[1215]. Like all economic firms, the first alternative facing the directors was the classic 'make' or 'buy' decision: organize the extraction of raw materials and produce the finished or semi-finished goods in-house; or turn to the market. The 'dilemma' has been usually interpreted in economics as the result of rational choices to realize potential production cost efficiencies[1216], but substantial revisiting of such view is helpful for our focus on the early modern world[1217]. In fact, scholars have introduced contextual factors and strategic

[1215] These voluminous documents represent a precious source to understand the necessary operations and the figures involved in the tobacco farms. Unfortunately, we can hardly find them in the state archives, since under tax farming the management of the enterprise was charged to a private company. However, from 1745 onwards, the granducal archives store copies of this kind of documents, as the sovereign had introduced a general tax farm of its indirect revenues and had taken an interest in it. Accordingly, we can use these folders to grasp some insights on the organization of the early modern tobacco farms. In particular, I have consulted the following folders (at least one for each different company who ran the general tax farm between 1740 and 1768): ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 278, 501, 855, 859, 865, 1136. When it is not differently specified, what follows is based on such sources.

[1216] See David Ford and David Farmer, "Make or Buy—a Key Strategic Issue," *Long Range Planning* 19, no. 5 (1986): 54–62.

[1217] This is an important point for our perspective, because outsourcing has been pointed out by historians as a crucial component for early modern age: the political decisions adopted by governments and state departments found fundamental channels of implementation in their relationship with contractors and economic actors who not only provided services and goods to the sovereign power, but, from military affairs to tax collection, also participated in the process of definition of public strategies and contributed to their realization. See Richard J. B. Knight and Martin Howard Wilcox, *Sustaining the Fleet, 1793-1815: War, the British Navy and the Contractor State* (Woodbridge ; Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell Press, 2010); Aaron

implications as fundamental components, in addition to the traditional cost aspect, for a better comprehension of the decision to outsource a part of an organization's activities[1218]. In this respect, the Tobacco Farms preferred to turn in large part to the market for the provisioning of the monopoly, by relying on their mercantile networks and supplier merchants engaged in long-distance trade.

In the first place, the tobacco market was extremely differentiated and varied. Each specific product had its own characteristics due to the use of tobacco leaves from different growing regions and to the variety of seasoning, fragrance and processing processes[1219]. The tobacco farmers were supposed to provide consumers with a wide array of finished goods, which might satisfy different habits (smoking, chewing, sniffing) and suit personal taste. If «*il tabacco del Brasil è il migliore di tutti i tabacchi in corda, almeno è stimato così*»[1220], the sales points of the state-owned monopoly could certainly not lack it on their shelves. Accordingly, the Tobacco Farm had to deal with the contextual factor of consumers' preferences and, consequently, to commercialize a wide range of finished products.

Graham, *Corruption, Party, and Government in Britain, 1702-1713*, First edition., Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015); Rafael Torres Sánchez, *Military Entrepreneurs and the Spanish Contractor State in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[1218] See Chris Fill and Elke Visser, "The Outsourcing Dilemma: A Composite Approach to the Make or Buy Decision," *Management Decision* 38, no. 1 (2000): 43–50.

[1219] The global dissemination of the American commodity brought to the emergence of tobaccos in plural rather than in singular terms. This occurred not only because of the hybridization and transformation experienced locally by the varieties of the plant, but also because of the diversification of finished tobacco products during the manufacturing process and the distribution chain. For example, the rise of Cuban tobacco as a luxury commodity came out of the appreciated combination of the organoleptic features of tobacco leaves harvested on the Caribbean island and the development of the highly-specialized production of cigar for the wealthiest consumers worldwide. See Jean Stubbs, "El Habano: The Global Luxury Smoke," in *Global Histories, Imperial Commodities, Local Interactions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 248–76; Charlotte Cosner, *The Golden Leaf: How Tobacco Shaped Cuba and the Atlantic World* (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 2014).

[1220] Niccolò Gavelli, *Storia Distinta, e Curiosa Del Tabacco, Concernente La Sua Scoperta, La Introduzione in Europa, e La Maniera Di Coltivarlo, Conservarlo, e Prepararlo, e per Servirsene Con Altre Ottime Ed Utili Osservazioni Sopra Il Medesimo* (Pesaro: Altieri, 1758), 11. Here, as elsewhere in his treatise, the fundamental source for Gavelli was the dictionary of trade written by the brothers Savary, which for more than a century represented a fundamental fountain of knowledge for the tobacco sector. See Jacques Savary des Brûlons and Louis-Philémon Savary des Brûlons, *Dictionnaire universel de commerce: contenant tout ce qui concerne le commerce qui se fait dans les quatre parties du monde ...* (Amsterdam: chez les Jansons à Waesberge, 1726), II, 1663–65.

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 present the lists of tobaccos sold by the Tuscan and Venetian monopolies, along with their prices. From these, we can clearly observe the coexistence of tobacco leaves sourced from American plantations and the eastern Mediterranean, as well as processed tobaccos produced in the main factories of Western and Central Europe. However, what is perhaps most striking is the significant price differential between the most expensive and the cheapest products (with a ratio of up to 1:24), which raises the question of whether it is accurate to speak of a single market, or even of 'tobacco' in singular terms. When introduced to consumers, the products derived from our global plant from the New World were presented in highly differentiated forms: some aimed to appeal to the social elite, while others were accessible to a broader, more popular audience. From the perspective of the tobacco farmers, it was crucial to cover as much of the social spectrum as possible, purchasing the most popular foreign tobaccos in each price range, products that had captured the attention and favor of consumers across national borders.[1221].

Table 6.1 – Wholesale and retail prices of tobaccos in Livorno, 1769

Types of tobacco	Price per pound	Price per ounce
Cruscone, o comune	16 soldi e 8 denari	1 soldo e 8 denari
Puro fine	16 soldi e 8 denari	1 soldo e 8 denari
Grana chiara	16 soldi e 8 denari	1 soldo e 8 denari
Foglietta pura	1 lira	2 soldi
Olandina	1 lira	2 soldi
Resino alla Lucchese	1 lira	2 soldi
Grana scura	1 lira	2 soldi
Grana nera	1 lira	2 soldi
Foglia soda di Salonicco	1 lira	2 soldi
Foglia soda di Caradà	1 lira	2 soldi

[1221] In the price lists of the tobacco farms we can clearly recognize significant variations, according to the finished products which came out from the local privileged manufactures where foreign raw tobacco leaves were processed to be later placed on the domestic market. However, some products are surprising in their spread across European markets: this was the case of Spanish powder from Seville, rope tobacco from Brazil, many varieties of French and Dutch *rapé* were truly international products, known and appreciated at various latitudes in Europe. To some extent, they represent an early case of branding, since it was the guarantee of origin, beyond the intrinsic characteristics of the product, that determined its value.

Foglia soda di Virginia	1 lira	2 soldi
Foglietta alla nobile	1 lira 3 soldi e 4 denari	2 soldi e 4 denari
Foglietta alla cappuccina	1 lira 3 soldi e 4 denari	2 soldi e 4 denari
Foglietta alla veneziana	1 lira 3 soldi e 4 denari	2 soldi e 4 denari
Odoroso	1 lira 6 soldi e 8 denari	2 soldi e 8 denari
Trinciato di Salonicco	1 lira 3 soldi e 4 denari	2 soldi e 4 denari
Trinciato di Virginia	1 lira 6 soldi e 8 denari	2 soldi e 8 denari
Trinciato d'Inghilterra	1 lira e 10 soldi	3 soldi e 4 denari
Trinciato di Tacchia	1 lira 13 soldi e 4 denari	3 soldi e 8 denari
Foglietta di Caradà	1 lira 13 soldi e 4 denari	3 soldi e 8 denari
Mezzo forzato di Salonicco	1 lira 13 soldi e 4 denari	3 soldi e 8 denari
Mezzo forzato di Caradà	1 lira 13 soldi e 4 denari	3 soldi e 8 denari
Bresil in corda	1 lira 13 soldi e 4 denari	3 soldi e 8 denari
Rapé di Parigi sodo	4 lire 13 soldi e 4 denari	-
Rapé di Parigi grattato	5 lire 6 soldi e 8 denari	10 soldi
Rapé di Strasburgo sodo	2 lire	-
Rapé di Strasburgo grattato	2 lire e 10 soldi	5 soldi
Rapé di San Vincenzo sodo	3 lire	-

Rapé di San Vincenzo grattato	3 lire 13 soldi e 4 denari	6 soldi e 8 denari
Siviglia di Spanga prima sorte	26 lire 13 soldi e 4 denari	2 lire
Siviglia di Spagna seconda sorte	24 lire	1 lire 16 soldi e 8 denari
Avana d'Olanda	6 lire	12 soldi
Farina di Caradà	3 lire	6 soldi e 8 denari
Siviglia d'Olanda	8 lire	13 soldi e 4 denari

Source: ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 1/b

Table 6.2 – Wholesale and retail prices of tobaccos in Venice, 1796

Types of tobacco	Price per pound*	Price per ounce
Granetta umida ed orto	1 lira e 10 soldi	5 soldi
Padovano ad uso Mestre	2 lire	8 soldi
Padovano fino	2 lire e 5 soldi	9 soldi
Padovano sopraffino	2 lire e 10 soldi	10 soldi
Padovano alla vecchia	2 lire e 5 soldi	9 soldi
Padovano ad uso Santa Giustina	2 lire e 18 soldi	11 soldi
Nostran Campese umido	2 lire e 5 soldi	8 soldi
Nostran Campese asciutto	2 lire e 15 soldi	10 soldi
Radica nostrana umida	2 lire	7 soldi
Radica asciutta	2 lire e 5 soldi	9 soldi
Albania melata	3 lire	10 soldi
Albania non melata	2 lire e 8 soldi	8 soldi
Caradà pesto	2 lire e 8 soldi	8 soldi
Genisè pesto fino e scagliato	2 lire e 14 soldi	9 soldi
Bergamasco	2 lire e 8 soldi	8 soldi
Santi Padri	2 lire e 2 soldi	7 soldi
Rapé fini d'ogni genere	7 lire e 4 soldi	12 soldi
Rapé violetto ordinario	4 lire e 16 soldi	8 soldi

Bolognino	2 lire e 2 soldi	7 soldi
Spagna	21 lire	70 soldi
Trinciato foglia d'Albania	1 lira e 4 soldi	4 soldi
Trinciato foglia di Salonicco	1 lire e 4 soldi	4 soldi
Inghilterra Quadro in carte	2 lire e 8 soldi	7 soldi
Inghilterra Tre Re in carte	2 lire e 10 soldi	7 soldi
Marca a cavallo	3 lire	-
Amburgo	3 lire	-
Brasil in corda	2 lire e 8 soldi	8 soldi
Olanda, Arta e Aleppo in carte	1 lira e 5 soldi	5 soldi
Fogli d'ogni sorta in libretto	1 lira e 16 soldi	6 soldi

* Data converted in Tuscan pounds

Source: ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 942, ff. 23-24.

Furthermore, as discussed in previous chapters, the institutional footprint of the tobacco monopolies played a key role in fostering the interdependence between Tobacco Farms and market supply. Monopolistic merchants successfully lobbied against the promotion of local tobacco cultivation and shaped the Tobacco Farm into a major purchaser of raw tobacco leaves from abroad. However, another important business consideration also influenced the landscape: the critical need to ensure a regular supply of various tobacco types to satisfy personal tastes and established consumption habits across different regions. For instance, the wealthiest consumers in Venice grew increasingly fond of Spanish powdered tobacco[1222], while the majority of domestic consumption was driven by less affluent individuals, with preferences varying by location. In the capital city, for example, residents favored Albanian tobacco leaves[1223], while in Venetian Lombardy «*il principale consumo è quello appunto delli Tabacchi di*

[1222] The expensive Spanish powder was the favorite one among the high ranked officials and diplomatic representatives of foreign powers residing in Venice. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 180, f. 88r, Venice 12/05/1747.

[1223] The Venetian tobacco farmer Girolamo Manfrin wrote to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* in the 1790s that only tobaccos similar to those from Ottoman Albania would have been «*analoghi al gusto ed al genio della Nazione*», see BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, f. 215r, s.l.n.d. but 1793.

Salonicchio»[1224]. Moreover, when considering the domestic market as a whole, tobacco farmers and fiscal administrators were often dissatisfied with the poor quality of local tobaccos, primarily because they were highly variable and did not meet the standards of the imported products they handled.[1225]. In this regard, merchants engaged in long-distance trade had direct access to markets in multiple growing regions as well as the main emporiums of the global tobacco trade. This provided them with a crucial advantage, enabling them to secure the desired qualities of the commodity, as well as vital information and forecasts on the annual harvest and prices. For instance, in the autumn of 1752, the Venetian consul in Salonika, Pietro Coch, relayed information on the tobacco market to the capital from the Venetian merchant Giuseppe Bronza. In particular, the consul advised the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* to encourage Venetian tobacco farmers to take advantage of the «*copiosa raccolta de' tabacchi in quest'anno, che ha causato un ribasso tale ne' prezzi che pare impossibile*», as well as several foreign merchant houses (notably Jewish and French) based in Salonika, who were eager to send their tobacco to profitable markets like Venice.[1226].

In short, supplier merchants were seen as the best guarantee in the eyes of the tobacco farmers. The need to rely on their expertise was so great that they were sometimes entrusted with broad mandates regarding the types of tobacco that would best serve the monopolistic enterprise. For instance, in the spring of 1753, the new Tuscan tobacco farmers commissioned the Florentine businessman living in Cadiz, Alessandro Quaratesi, to provide, in addition to the usual 600 pounds of *Polviglio di Spagna*, another 100 pounds of the tobacco known as *Negriglio*, which had been present in the Tuscan markets in the

[1224] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 397, n. 119, s.l.n.d. but 1785.

[1225] The monopolistic enterprise often complained about the unreliability of local tobacco cultivation between one harvest and another. In 1765, a note on the tobacco leaves from three communalities of the Brenta river valley (Valstagna, Oliero and Campolongo) stressed the worse quality of the product if compared with the supply of the previous year, so much so that «*tutti ricusano di volerli e il Partito ne tiene grandiose quantità ne' suoi magazzini senza speranza di poterli esitare*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 888, 13/09/1765. In the 1790s, the Tuscan general administrator of public revenues, Alessandro Pontenani, highlighted that the survey by the expert Procopio Costantini had denounced that tobacco leaves cultivated in the Tuscan privileged territories of Turicchi, Trappola, San Lorino del Conte and Chitignano had been «*sempre riscontrate per foglie di poca sostanza, mal curate, alcune con poco ed altre con cattivo odore, nonostante la qualità dei tabacchi nostrani con applicate diligenze sarebbe somigliante alle meglio curate foglie infilate di Levante, di Olanda ed altre consimili*», ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 150, letter of Alessandro Pontenani to the Grand Duke, Florence 20/12/1794.

[1226] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli", reg. 743, letter of Pietro Coch to Savi alla Mercanzia, Salonika 16/11/1752.

past. They added, however, that «*quando tal genere non fosse possibile aversi, provvederà in quella vece altra qualità che riconosca essere più accreditata*»[1227].

Not by chance, particular attention was paid by the state magistracies with competence in the sector to facilitate the relationship between the tobacco farmers and supplier merchants. For instance, the timing of monopoly's adjudication was definitely influent to organize the procurement of tobaccos from distant markets and it dictated the «*necessità di deliberare questo Dazio molto prima del spirar della sua condotta, acciò chi lo levasse abbia anco il comodo di far venir da luoghi lontani le necessarie provvisioni del Tabacco medesimo*»[1228]. The fortunes of the enterprise were related to the timeframe of the tobacco market, which flourished from late summer to December-January[1229], so it was very important that the tobacco farmers had already been awarded the contract in spring so that they could invest in the purchase of the leaves on the market in good time[1230]. But it was also recommended to define the monopoly's adjudication before of the «*stagione de' fiori per dar l'odore a' tabacchi*»[1231], as also drugs for tobacco production were ingredients for the monopolistic manufacturing which the farmers bought on the market[1232].

To facilitate the collaboration between the Tobacco Farm and supplier merchants, contractors and state institutions elaborated various strategies. In some cases, business relations were bolstered by setting up commercial agreements whereby tobaccos were

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[1227] ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 663, n. 2, f. 2r, Florence 30/03/1754.

[1228] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 161, 16/01/1682, f. 7.

[1229] The timeframe for the new harvest of leaves was consequent with the annual calendar of tobacco's cultivation: the agricultural activities started in December with sowing in dedicated seedbeds, then the plants were transplanted in April and the first leaves were harvested in July. At that time, tobacco growers had to deal with the crucial operations of fermentation, curing, and pressing before putting these leaves on the market, while, thanks to special precautions, the plants provided a second supply of leaves, which were usually harvested in September and resulted in «*tabacco buono, ma più leggero*», see ASFI, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 149, "Memoria sopra la Piantazione del Tabacco e sua Cultura".

[1230] As the Tuscan officials stated, it was important that the tobacco farm could «*compiere l'approvvigionamento necessario per l'esito a tutto giugno, tempo in cui si potranno intraprendere le regolari lavorazioni per il tempo successivo*», ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 8, f. 3v, letter of Ferdinando Dami to general administrators, Florence 02/09/1768

[1231] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 161, f. 135, Venice 03/09/1682.

[1232] In 1746-1747, the Tuscan tobacco farm bought several exotic drugs (cinnamon, cochineal, saffron, coriander, carnations and *campeccio* wood) for tobacco processing from merchants living in Livorno, especially from the Italian *negozianti* Carlo Baldanzi and David Lampronti and from the English mercantile house Franck & Luytens, see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 278.

purchased not for cash, but in exchange for manufactured goods to be exported on foreign markets. Consider the case of the Florentine production of woolen clothes, whose traditional Levantine markets had become much more challenged during the 17th and 18th centuries, especially because of the fierce competition of French cloths[1233]. The Tuscan government was particularly interested in exporting these domestic manufactures with a view to improving its balance of trade and promoting the employment of its subject workers: in 1760, a sovereign decree decided to finance a new privileged manufacture in Florence with 6.000 *scudi* «*per premiare l'industria di Leonardo Biadi lanaiolo nell'aver introdotta in questa città la manifattura delle Londrine solite smerciarsi in Levante*»[1234], but their marketing still experienced obstacles and difficulties[1235]. In this regard, an interesting solution attempted by Tuscan authorities was to link the export of woolen clothes to the supply of foreign leaves for the Tobacco Farm: fiscal officials negotiated with the monopolistic merchants the conditions to take an interest in the Biadi factory in Florence, in order to use these *londrine* as a bargaining chip to purchase foreign tobacco leaves. Then, the Tobacco Farm signed an exclusive contract with Nicola Calat, a merchant from Livorno who had already been engaged in Levantine trade, who undertook to export at least 300 *Londrine* from the Biadi privileged factory and, in turn, was appointed as «*provvisioniere dei Tabacchi dell'Appalto generale*»[1236]. However, with the passage to the general administration of public revenues in 1768, Calat's contract was

[1233] Woolen clothes produced in Languedoc had a crucial importance in the functioning of the French maritime *caravane* along the scales of the Ottoman Levant and North Africa, as their features were preferred by Muslim consumers, see Gilbert Buti, "Aller En Caravane: Le Cabotage Lointain En Méditerranée, XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles," *Revue D'histoire Moderne Contemporaine*, no. 1 (2005): 7–38.

[1234] Information about the whole project and its development can be found in ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, writing of the Chamber of Commerce to the Grand Duke, Florence 08/04/1772.

[1235] On the preoccupations of the Tuscan government about the difficulties of Florentine *Londrine* in the Levantine markets, see ASLi, *Governo*, I series, reg. 3, ff. 437r-438r, letter of Francesco Orsini Rosenberg to Filippo Bourbon del Monte, Florence 11/07/1767.

[1236] See the granducal decree in ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Florence 16/07/1766. The familiarity with the Levantine markets held a certain importance for the commitment in the export of the Florentine *Londrine* of the factory Biadi, as the granducal grace suggests: «*essendosi impegnato il sig. Nicola Calat di levare ogni anno 300 pezze londrine seconde dalla fabbrica di Leonardo Biadi e compagni, è stato per grazia di S.A.R. nominato provvisioniere dei Tabacchi in foglia che potranno occorrere in servizio dell'Appalto generale*», see ASLi, *Governo*, I series, reg. 2, f. 679 r-v, letter of Antoniotto Botta Adorno to Filippo Bourbon del Monte, Florence 23/08/1766. In fact, the registers of the Health board confirm that in 1755 ships from Tunis, Alexandria, Bona, Izmir arrived in Livorno with commodities intended for or recommended to Nicola Calat, see ASFi, *Sanità*, reg. 393, ff. 112r, 306r-v, 587r, 595r.

terminated because the merchant was accused of artificially raising tobacco prices[1237]. The tobacco farmers continued to use the *londrine* in their business but this latter began to be negotiated «*liberamente e con chi facesse miglior condizioni nel prezzo dei Tabacchi, e nel ricevere maggior quantità di Londrine da computarsi nel prezzo dei Tabacchi medesimi*»[1238]. The change of strategy was intended to stimulate competition between different supplier merchants for obtaining cheaper prices in tobacco purchases, but the barter struggled to take off in Livorno mainly due to the inferior quality of Florentine production compared to the French goods available on the market[1239]. Only the following exclusive contract signed with the merchant Stefano Saraf eventually ensured the profitability of the deal[1240], although other figures soon knocked on the government's door: it was the case of the Tuscan consul in Alexandria Giovanni Francesco Agostini, who flattered the general administrators with «*il vantaggio che verrà a risentire l'amministrazione generale vendendo una porzione delle sue Londrine in denari effettivi piuttosto che in baratto nelle contrattazioni dei Tabacchi, sopra il quale la Regia Zienda viene a risentire un sicuro scapito*»[1241].

[1237] The general administrators Giuseppe Gavard and Antonio Serristori had denounced that «*questo fisso provvisioniere (…) arrecasse aggravi troppo considerabili nella valuta dei Tabacchi che egli consegnava*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets and Antonio Serristori to the Grand Duke, Florence 24/08/1768. The secretary of finance immediately reassured the administrators that they were free to «*fare in avvenire le provviste dei tabacchi che loro stimano per abbisognare l'Amministrazione da chi, dove, e in quel modo che stimeranno più opportune per il miglior servizio*», see *Ibidem*, Angelo Tavanti to the general administrators of public revenues, Florence 05/09/1768.

[1238] *Ibidem*, writing of the Chamber of Commerce to the Grand Duke, Florence 08/04/1772. The accounting books of the tobacco farm show that the central bureau indeed paid its supplier merchants with *londrine* from the Biadi factory: in 1771, 300 woolen clothes were delivered to the mercantile house Otto Franck & co. as partial payment of 173 hogsheads of tobacco leaves from Virginia; other 200 woolen clothes were delivered to Salomon Aghib and Giovanni Cambiaso who had supplied the tobacco farm with a total amount of 1.060 bales of tobacco leaves from Habsburg Hungary. See ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 82, f. 19r.

[1239] This was the opinion of the general administrators of public revenues, who supported their arguments by sending samples of clothes from the Biadi factory and similar French products to the government's attention. Called upon to give his opinion, Livorno's governor Bourbon del Monte promptly provided an articulated report thanks to the information collected «*da questi negozianti*», where he highlighted the excessively high price and poor colour gloss in the products of Florentine manufacturers: «*le londrine toscane sono fabbricate intrinsecamente e sostanzialmente di lane più perfette de' panni francesi, ma non incontrano tanto il piacimento de' Turchi e de' Levantini, perché non hanno nell'estrinseco né que' vivi colori né quella lucentezza che mostrano i panni francesi. E inoltre il prezzo delle Londrine toscane è più alto del prezzo de' panni francesi*», ASLi, *Governo*, IX series, reg. 963, f. 239r, letter of Filippo Bourbon del Monte to Francesco Orsini Rosenberg, Livorno 03/08/1767.

[1240] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 569, Florence 20/04/1772.

[1241] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 21/07/1777.

This project highlights the challenges in finding a balance between various privileged trades that political authorities sought to support and promote, while also illustrating the fundamental importance of relying on individuals with experience in mercantile relations and proven trustworthiness. Similar conclusions can be drawn from a long-term analysis of the supplier merchants of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm. Naturally, the transfer of the monopoly from one group of financiers to another had consequences. For example, the French-Lorraine company, which took control of granducal revenues in the 1740s, capitalized on its strong connections with financiers from the French General Farm to engage their supplier merchants. Specifically, they signed a contract in Paris with Jacob Wenix & Company, merchants from Amsterdam, for the delivery of powdered and rope tobacco to Tuscany, replacing the usual suppliers[1242]. Conversely, some entrepreneurs succeeded in keeping their place among the list of suppliers for a long time: manufacturers like Carli from Amsterdam and Costa from Strasbourg began to serve the Tuscan Tobacco Farm under the French-Lorraine governance, but they remained within the network also with the following tax farmers and after the passage to the direct administration, as they ensured continuity and adequate knowledge of the Tuscan market[1243]. Like other entrepreneurs, they took advantage of the freedom to manufacture and trade that characterized the tobacco sector in the Dutch United Provinces and Alsace,

[1242] The deputies of the General Farm in Florence had informed their superiors in Paris that, among various economic actors, M. Scolten from Amsterdam had offered the best tobacco *rapé* to the tobacco farm in Livorno, see ASFI, *Appalti generali*, reg. 77, M. Astier to French shareholders of the company, Florence 30/07/1745. From another letter from Paris, we know that also the first contact with M. Scolten was guaranteed by the French financial group, thanks to the past collaboration with M. de Montgeron, see *Ibidem*, Charles Michault et al. to M. Astier, Paris 26/04/1745. However, the French financiers answered that they had already signed a contract with another mercantile house from Amsterdam, the Wenix & company, who had regularly served the French tobacco farm with important guarantees about the quality of the product: «*il doit vous faire passer incessamment six mille livres de tabac en corde, nous l'avons gouté, il est excellent et d'une qualité qui plaira à davantage que celui de M. Scolten*», *Ibidem*, Pierre La Bruyère de Clorcy et al. to M. Astier, Paris 16/08/1745.

[1243] After taking office in 1768, the general administrators wrote to Andrea Costa that «*molti fabbricatori di tabacchi rape all'uso di Strasburgo ci hanno fatto dei progetti molto vantaggiosi per intavolare con noi dei negoziati di suddetti tabacchi; ma come che abbiamo il piacere di prevalerci degl'istessi corrispondenti che hanno ben trattato l'appaltatore cadente, ci siamo con esso informati quale fosse quella fabbrica da cui potessimo ricavare a condizioni discrete detto genere di rapé, ed essendoci stata nominate la di lei casa, con l'informazione dei prezzi che da lei gli veniva rilasciato, cioè di lire 36 e mezzo il cento peso di costì (…), ci siamo determinati alle suddette condizioni e prezzo commettergliene case 40 all'italiana in bastonetti*», ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 8, ff. 29-30, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets and Niccolò Siminetti to Andrea Costa, Florence 08/10/1768.

allowing them to specialize and become key suppliers of processed products that met strong demand among the middle and upper classes of consumers[1244].

From Table 6.3 and Table 6.4[1245] we can see that the Jewish mercantile élite in Livorno maintained for a long time a role of primary importance as tobacco merchants: the families Leone, Aghib, Veneziano, Sacchi, Miranda consistently appear among the most relevant suppliers of the Tobacco Farm for much of the 18th century, even if their relative weight varied over time. Other wealthy Livorno's merchants, like Ricci and Finocchietti in the 1740s-50s or Pietro Dupouy in the 1780s-90s, are included in the lists of suppliers, dealing in small batches of more expensive products such as the Spanish powdered tobacco from Seville[1246]. But the data show how the needs of the monopolistic enterprise led to the concentration in the hands of a few great 'tobacco lords'[1247] of the bulk of the wholesale trade in this global commodity: while the lists of suppliers used to include up to 30 players in a year, it was usually 4 or 5 mercantile houses that covered more than 85% of the annual supply.

[1244] Alsace enjoyed the privilege of being exempted from the royal tobacco monopoly as part of the negotiated subjugation of the province to the kingdom of France in the 1670s-1680s: this agreement allowed the development of a local cultivation and manufacturing sector capable of bringing its products, especially a particular variant of tobacco *rape*, to the attention of the Mediterranean and northern European markets, see

[1245] I have realized two tables instead of just one, because the two kinds of source offer different data: as a consequence, we can elaborate the total amount of tobacco pounds provided to the tobacco farm by each supplier for the years 1746, 1750, 1754 and 1758; and the sum paid by the farm to the merchants for the years 1774, 1785 and 1794. Despite this difference, the two tables are useful to follow the development of the composition of the greatest merchant suppliers of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in the second half of the 18th century.

[1246] Giovanni Pietro Ricci and Giovanni Pietro Finocchietti were among the Livorno's great merchants that in the late 1730s interacted with the new government of the Lorraine regency about trade issues, putting forward proposals to safeguard the traditional exemptions, to address the issue of merchant class representation and to revive the port's trade. See Allen D. Thompson, "'Progetti in Vantaggio Del Principe, Del Pubblico e Del Commercio Della Toscana'. I Mercanti Di Livorno e l'economia Toscana al Momento Della Successione Lorenese," *Critica Storica* 28 (1991): 427–88. The brothers Dupouy had an important mercantile house in Livorno, but their fortunes matched above all the desperate need for money that Tuscan governments suffered during the revolutionary and Napoleonic conjuncture between the 1790s and 1810s, see S. J. Woolf, "Economy and Finances in Tuscany in the Revolutionary-Napoleonic Period," in *La Toscana Nell'età Rivoluzionaria e Napoleonica*, ed. Ivan Tognarini (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1985), 27–37.

[1247] I borrow from the great study of Thomas Devine on eighteenth-century Scottish tobacco merchants, see Thomas M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords: A Study of the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and Their Trading Activities c. 1740-90* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990).

Table 6.3 – Main supplier merchants of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm 1746, 1750, 1754, 1758

Year	5 most important suppliers and weight (pounds) of their provisions (total number of supplier merchants)	% on the total tobacco purchases of the year
1746	Fratelli Leone: 394.203 Ioseph Sacchi: 142.500 Aron Veneziano: 79.070 Bower & Beremberg: 40.400 Giuliano Ricci: 20.825 (27)	90,27
1750	Lefroy & Charron: 169.760 Ioseph Sacchi: 159.860 Moisè Graziadio e Fratelli Leone: 144.300 Aron Veneziano: 85.148 Carli & compagni di Amsterdam: 60.633 (30)	70,21
1754	Lefroy & Charron: 620.172 Carli & compagni di Amsterdam: 130.286 Fratelli Aghib: 96.210 Aron Veneziano: 93.420 Moisè Graziadio e Fratelli Leone: 87.000 (24)	90,38
1758	Aron Veneziano: 322.290 Lefroy & Charron: 142.788 Carli & compagni di Amsterdam: 75.507 Fratelli Aghib: 28.008 Sig.ri Cugnoni di Londra: 19.972 (10)	97,54

Source: ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 276, 501, 855, 859.

Table 6.4 – Main supplier merchants of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm 1774, 1785, 1794

Year	5 most important suppliers and sum (*lire*) paid to them (total number of supplier merchants)	% on the total tobacco purchases of the year
1774	Salomone Aghib: 132.776 Otto Franck & compagni: 100.695 Carli & compagni di Amsterdam:71.746 Eredi Aron Veneziano: 42.533 Tommaso Seraf: 27.838 (17)	85,85
1785	Salomone Aghib: 125.276 Tommaso Seraf: 80.859 Anton Francesco Salucci & Figlio: 68.770 Carli & compagni di Amsterdam: 35.703 David & Moisè Miranda: 22.561 (13)	85,36
1794	Nais & compagni di Fiume: 279.233 Walser, Kriemler & compagni: 252.181 Carli & compagni di Amsterdam: 23.962 Matteo Bertarelli di Amsterdam: 22.985 Fratelli Aghib: 10.306 (12)	97,19

Source: ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 86, 98; ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 149.

How can we interpret this trend? Research on the Atlantic tobacco trade has demonstrated that the biggest mercantile firms from Glasgow monopolized the distribution of the Virginian leaf in Northern Europe thanks to advantages in shipping from the American colonies, successful business techniques, and the rise of a spectacular warehousing business for an economy which did not have much to offer in terms of local

products[1248]. In our case, I argue that a similar pattern emerged from the establishment and consolidation of the Tobacco Farms: as it has been demonstrated for other European examples, the monopolistic buyer for the domestic trade was interested in securing its business with the vertical integration of the regular supply of tobaccos through the definition of more or less formal procurement contracts[1249].

Sometimes, this objective was pursued by relying on both official and informal agents who negotiated on behalf of the Tobacco Farm to purchase tobacco from suppliers. These agents could be direct employees of the monopolistic enterprise, as was the case with Antonio Sartori, a wage earner at the central bureau of the Tobacco Farm for the Livorno department. His duties included paying suppliers, receiving the maritime cargoes of the commodity, and organizing their delivery to Florence[1250]. Conversely, the activities of the *pubblico mezzano* Giovanni Santi Pasquinelli were much more behind the scenes. Since 1769, he worked for the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in Livorno, gathering economic information, negotiating tobacco consignments with merchants, and advising the farmers

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[1248] See Jacob M. Price, "The Rise of Glasgow in the Chesapeake Tobacco Trade, 1707-1775," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (1954): 179–99; Thomas M. Devine, "Sources of Capital for the Glasgow Tobacco Trade, c. 1740-80," *Business History* XIV (1974): 113–29; Philipp Robinson Rössner, *Scottish Trade in the Wake of Union (1700-1760): The Rise of a Warehouse Economy* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008).

[1249] I refer, in particular, to the studies on the relationship between the Iberian tobacco farms and their supplier merchants. The Spanish Tobacco Farm used to source leaves from the American colonies, especially from the island of Cuba, but also tobacco from Portuguese Brazil and British Virginia. In 1707, the *Real Hacienda* addressed the issue of provisioning by appointing a permanent official in La Havana for negotiating batches of tobacco with local planters. By contrast, the supply of Brazilian and Virginian tobaccos was entrusted to merchant *asientistas* who signed specific contracts with the Tobacco Farm for an annual amount of the desired commodity. See Rafael Escobedo Romero, *El tabaco del rey: la organización de un monopolio fiscal durante el Antiguo Régimen* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2007), 79–90. Research on the Portuguese case has shown that the company run by Willem de Brujin, Paulo Cloots and Arnaldo van Zeller (Dutch merchants living in Lisbon who held the monopoly between 1722 and 1727) introduced a key innovation by promoting the vertical integration of raw material's provision: they signed a contract with the Portuguese merchant Antonio Gomes Figueirò, who ended up to provide the 70% of the tobacco leaves for the Lisbon tobacco farm. Also during the following contracts, despite the huge number of suppliers, only 4 merchants provided almost 59% of tobacco supplies. See Susana Münch Miranda, "Risco et Expectativas No Monopólio Português Do Tabaco, 1722-1727," in *El Tabaco y La Esclavitud En La Rearticulación Imperial Ibérica - O Tabaco e a Escravatua Na Rearticulação Imperial Ibérica (s. XV-XX)*, ed. João Figueirôa-Rêgo and Santiago de Luxán Meléndez (Evora: Cidehus, 2018), 120–40; João Paulo Salvado, "Uma Revolução de Escala? O Impacte Do Estanco No Comércio de Tabaco Brasileiro (Lisboa, Primeira Metade Do Século XVIII)," in *El Tabaco y La Esclavitud En La Rearticulación Imperial Ibérica - O Tabaco e a Escravatua Na Rearticulação Imperial Ibérica (s. XV-XX)*, ed. João Figueirôa-Rêgo and Santiago de Luxán Meléndez (Évora: Cidehus, 2018), 141–61.

[1250] See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 501, 855.

on the commercial decisions to be made[1251]. More commonly, this role was effectively outsourced, with contracts signed with mercantile entrepreneurs who became *provvigionieri*, the official suppliers of the Tobacco Farm for specific types of foreign tobacco leaves. Consider the case of the company Lefroy and Charron, formed by an English merchant and a Dutch merchant residing in Livorno. In 1751, they signed a contract with the Tobacco Farm that lasted over 15 years. This agreement not only covered the supply of leaves for the monopoly's factories (which alone accounted for 55% of the annual purchases), but also facilitated an interesting collaboration in the resale of tobacco on the free market in Livorno[1252]. In this regard, such positions were undoubtedly coveted, as merchants could rely on a secure buyer like the Tobacco Farm itself. As a result, this led to intense rivalry among merchants, who were eager to discredit their competitors by any means. For example, the contract signed by Nicola Calat in 1766 was immediately challenged by Jacob Errera, who had strong connections with the tobacco warehouse workers and found it easy to discredit Calat in the eyes of the city governor[1253].

[1251] Pasquinelli had been practicing in Livorno as a *mezzano*, the regulated job for trade brokers who facilitated supply and demand matching between Livorno's merchants, and, since 1769, after the Tobacco Farm came under the authority of the general administration of royal revenues, began to correspond with the director of the Livorno's custom house, Alessandro Adami, about lots of tobacco negotiated with the main protagonists of the tobacco market in the port city, like the Jewish Jacob Errera, Salomon Aghib, Aron Veneziano, but also about the harvest information from Salonika or the best way to use the tobaccos purchased according to their features. See ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 4, Giovanni Santi Pasquinelli to Alessandro Adami, Livorno 18/11/1769, 13/12/1769, 22/12/1769, 27/12/1769, 03/01/1770, 08/01/1770, 15/01/1770.

[1252] The Lefroy & Charron company collaborated with the Tuscan Tobacco Farm between 1751 and 1768, under the general tax farmers' contracts signed under the names of Francesco Masson, Francesco Diodati and Giuseppe Almano. For the inventory of the commercial books of such society conserved in the Livorno's custom house in 1768, see ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 13, n. 109, 31/12/1768.

[1253] Calat denounced to the Tuscan government the collusion of the ministers and clerks of the public tobacco warehouses in Livorno with the Jewish merchant Jacob Errera, who «*oltre l'aver procurato di screditare dappertutto la di lui persona, ha praticato e va praticando diversi maneggi e raggiri per impedirgli la negoziazione dei Tabacchi con l'Appalto generale, ed in conseguenza lo smercio delle londrine, a cui si è impegnato*», see ASLi, *Governo*, I series, reg. 3, f. 167r, Francesco Orsini Rosenberg to Filippo Bourbon del Monte, Florence 24/03/1767. But the governor himself had been sensitive to the discredit campaign against Calat: soon after his appointment as supplier of the tobacco farm, Bourbon del Monte did not conceal «*il mio timore relativamente al suo poco talento nella mercatura ed alla mancanza de' capitali*», see ASLi, *Governo*, IX series, reg. 963, f. 96v, Filippo Bourbon del Monte to Antoniotto Botta Adorno, Livorno 12/09/1766.

Sources on the Venetian case, for their part, provide less structural information about the relationship between the general tobacco farmers and their supplier merchants, but some clues from institutional correspondence allows us to sketch a general picture. As we have seen, the *Partito del Tabacco* in Venice was deeply intertwined with Greek mercantile networks operating between Venice and Ottoman Rumelia. The Tobacco Farm had long been supplied by these economic actors, who played a pivotal role in Venetian maritime activities in the Mediterranean and in foreign trade with the Ottoman Levant and Northern European traders[1254]. The families Paiko/Paico, Cottoni, Maruzzi, Dana, Papa, Grassi, Sarro and Coletti are the most prominent in the consular records of tobacco cargoes shipped on Venetian ships from the ports of Durazzo and Salonika[1255]. They played a dual role as both shippers and receivers, as their mercantile houses were established in Venice but also maintained branches and correspondents in key ports of call across the Balkans and the Greek peninsula. The collaboration between financiers from the Venetian *Terraferma* and Greek merchants involved in the tobacco trade deepened with the integration of the latter as partners in the monopolistic enterprise. In this context, Greek trading houses invested in the Tobacco Farm, while often continuing to play a significant role as supplier merchants. Between 1734 and 1742, when the monopoly was managed by the company Cottoni, Maruzzi & Zanchi, 39.2% of the tobacco bales stored in the public *fontico* belonged to the Lambro & Simon brothers Maruzzi[1256]

However, in the second half of the century, the relations of the Venetian Tobacco Farm testify to the growing importance of seafaring and merchant networks from the Venetian Albania, especially from the Bay of Kotor[1257]. In fact, the *Partito del Tabacco*

[1254] On the economic activities of Greek merchants and shipowners in Venice, see Tucci, "I Greci Nella Vita Marittima Veneziana.". On their role in Venetian economy, looking both to mercantile connections in the eastern Mediterranean and to trade with the major western European states, see Maria Fusaro, "Cooperating Mercantile Networks in the Early Modern Mediterranean," *The Economic History Review* 65, no. 2 (2012): 701–18.

[1255] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli", regg. 661-666, 743.

[1256] 25.842 on 65.788 bales, see ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, I series, reg. 360, ff. 173-199, "Nota del Tabacco entrato nel Pubblico Fontico nelli qui sottoscritti tempi e quantità da marzo 1734 sino li 20 luglio 1742, di ragione di chi, da dove e con qual bastimento venuto".

[1257] The growing importance during the 18th century of maritime and commercial activities by subject populations in the Venetian Dalmatia and Albania has been for a long time overlooked by specialists of Venetian history. A great and very useful collection of sources on these actors can be found in Nikola

became used to sign contracts with a handful of *cattarini* subjects who owned ships, maritime expertise in the Adriatic sea, and a deep-rooted familiarity with the scale of Durazzo in Ottoman Albania. In 1757, the Tobacco Farm run by the company Salvi & Perulli signed a contract with the merchant Luca Ivanovich for the annual supply of 3.000 bales of tobacco leaves from Albania[1258]. Few years later, the same shipowners Luca Ivanovich appeared with other two *mercanti bocchesi* from Dobrata (Camenarovich and Tripovich) as the Venetian subjects who trade Albanian tobacco from Durazzo to Venice[1259]. The same families kept a firm grip on the tobacco supply business throughout the century: in 1793, the report on the Venetian trade in Durazzo written for the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* by the consul Giovanni Antonio Morana asserted that «*alla scala di Durazzo l'importante articolo de' Tabacchi è in potere soltanto degli acquirenti sudditi, non solo per le annuali provviste della Ferma generale di Venezia, ma ancora per le altre della Lombardia. Grandiose somme vengono tutti gli anni impiegate in questo prodotto, e significant vantaggi ne riportano i sudditi provvigionieri che sogliono per lo più essere le ditte Co: Ivanovich e Tripovich*»[1260]. Indeed, for generations families from Perasto, Dobrota, and other Venetian cities in the Bay of Kotor virtually monopolized the purchase of tobacco in Durazzo and its export to Venice as well as to other markets of the region[1261].

In summary, local – but not necessarily 'national' – economic actors with extensive mercantile networks could join the tobacco farmers and access such lucrative and privileged business opportunities, but there was limited room for everyone[1262]. Firstly,

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Čolak, *Regesti Marittimi Croati. Navigazione Nell'Adriatico*, vol. I (Padova: Centro di studi storici croati-Venezia, 1985).

[1258] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 371, 30/04/1757.

[1259] The three tobacco buyers informed the *Cinque Savi alla Mecanzia* of the harassment they had suffered in Durazzo because of the abuses perpetrated by Ottoman officials, see *Ibidem*, reg. 365, Durazzo reg. 365, Durazzo 23/03/1762; *Ibidem*, reg. 366 Durazzo 29/11/1762, Venice 06/12/1762

[1260] *Ibidem*, reg. 400, n. 100, Durazzo 31/05/1793.

[1261] The Venetian consul in Durazzo struggled to impose on *cattarini* subjects the obligation to export all tobacco out of the Ottoman scale to Venice, but they often found it convenient to transport their cargoes to the Imperial lands and Papal states bordering the Adriatic sea, also with the assistance of foreign consuls. For example, in 1743 the consul denounced to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* «*le solite collusioni tra li Dobrotiani e lo stesso vice-console Raguseo per il futuro carico di Tabacco da spedirsi in Ancona e Stato austriaco*», see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli", reg. 663, Giovanni Battista Rossi to Savi alla Mercanzia, Durazzo 03/09/1743.

[1262] For example, the new Tuscan tax farmers of the Diodati company (1753-1761) rejected the proposal of the Livorno's merchant Jacob Finzi for the provision of tobacco leaves from Salonika because they had already received the necessary batches from their usual suppliers: «*ci troviamo favoriti di cortesissima sua de' 27 del mese scorso, dalla quale sentiamo le proposizioni ci fa toccanti il particolare dei prezzi che si*

the suppliers were required to properly cultivate their relations and trust with the monopolistic merchants and financiers that ran the monopoly in order to not lose the commission[1263]. As discussed in the previous chapters, over time, the monopolistic merchants at the helm of the Tobacco Farms developed additional skills beyond those strictly related to trade, particularly in financial management and the ability to raise large sums of capital from various types of financiers. However, this evolution did not diminish the importance of having access to effective and extensive mercantile networks, nor the opportunity to leverage the commercial monopoly as an advantageous position to conduct business beyond the management of the monopoly itself. As demonstrated by the case of the Lefroy & Charron company in Livorno, this aspect could be shared with other mercantile entities with strong connections to the monopolistic merchants. Moreover, the large volumes of tobacco demanded by the Tobacco Farm favored the wealthiest merchants, capable of investing substantial capital. Small traders, ship captains, and occasional sellers made up the majority of the suppliers to the Tobacco Farm, but the scale of their business was limited to a marginal level. On the one hand, those who were included in the networks of the monopolist merchants enjoyed a significant vantage point, securing orders and protection. On the other hand, the ban on free trade in tobacco for the domestic market likely discouraged investment in large tobacco consignments without the certainty of being able to resell them to the tax farmers[1264]. In other words, the structures of the fiscal monopoly and the magnitude of the Tobacco Farms' demand were

potrebbero ottenere i Salonicchi e Caradà. Ma siccome presentemente abbiamo fatta sufficiente provvista di simili generi di Tabacchi non siamo in grado di dare orecchie alle sue preposizioni», ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 663, ff. 5v-6r, company Diodati to Jacob Finzi, Florence 04/08/1753.

[1263] That was the destiny of the mercantile house of Amsterdam, Jacob Wenix & company, in relation to the Tuscan Tobacco Farm: as we have seen, the French general farmers provided the contact to their Tuscan partners in 1745 and the latter used their services until 1751, when relations came to an abrupt end due to «*insoddisfazione ne' prezzi e qualità che hanno stimolato i sig. Appaltatori della vegliante Condotta a lasciare la loro farbbica per provvedersi altrove*», ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 663, f. 6v, company Diodati to Jacob Wenix, Florence 22/08/1753. The new company Diodati tried to re-establish the business relationship, but with unsatisfactory results, see *Ibidem*, f. 24r, company Diodati to M. Lejolle, Florence 01/06/1759.

[1264] Not by chance, this consequence of the establishment of the tobacco monopoly was immediately blamed by the mercantile communities in Venice because the arbitrariness of the tax farmer had damaged the «*affare del Tabacco, dal quale sino ad ora non hanno li mercatanti potuto cavar profitto et veder il ritratto di tanto capitale condotto; (...) non viene dato sicuro modo ai mercanti che lo conducono di havere prontamente il danaro del medesimo tabacco*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 155, f. 67v, Venice 08/12/1655.

crucial factors that influenced the global tobacco markets and the fortunes of their players in our case studies.

2. Tobacco manufacturing and the internalization of skills

The social stratification and differentiation of tobacco consumption, as well as the strategic implications of the monopoly, brought the tobacco farmers to usually favor purchasing from the market most of the tobacco leaves and finished products they would later commercialize, instead of organizing cultivation on the domestic soil. At the same time, more or less structured supply contracts tried to ensure regular provision through vertical integration. However, other parts of the commodity chain were mainly internalized and organized in-house: this was the case of tobacco manufacturing. Again, the decision between outsourcing and internalization was linked to the coexistence of fiscal and commercial concerns in the sector.

Table 6.5 and 6.6 allow us to observe the composition of foreign tobaccos bought by the Tuscan and the Venetian Farms from supplier merchants in 1794. It immediately stands out that, from a quantitative point of view, the bulk of purchases on the market was represented by the *foglia soda*, tobacco leaves which had only undergone preliminary curing and seasoning after the harvest and which required further manufacturing process to be sold to the public[1265].

Table 6.5 – Foreign tobaccos delivered in Tuscan warehouses in 1794

Tobacco products	Sum (pounds)
Siviglia di Spagna	639
Siviglia d'Olanda	362
Avana d'Olanda	87
Rapé S. Vincenzo	6.428
Rapé di Parigi	290
Rapé di Strasburgo	13.954

[1265] The reasoning would be different if we look at the flows of money to buy these foreign tobacco products: for example, the average price for the *Siviglia di Spagna* purchased by the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in 1750 was of 11 *lire* and 12 *soldi* per pound, while it dropped to 5 *soldi* and 1 *denaro* for the leaves from Salonika, that is to say 46 times less (1 *lira* = 20 *soldi*), see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 501.

Foglia diversa* (Salonicco, Caradà, Virginia, Ungheria)	629.892
Brasile in corda	908
Total amount of foreign tobaccos	652.560

* Composition of tobacco leaves between Salonicco, Caradà, Virginia and Ungheria is not specified in the original document.

Source: ASFi, *Azienda del sale e del tabacco*, reg. 149, "Dimostrazione delle entrate e delle uscite a denari contanti, a tabacco e droghe"

Table 6.6 – Foreign tobaccos delivered in Venetian warehouses in 1794

Tobacco products	Sum (pounds)
Foglia di Albania	762.389
Foglia di Caradà	479.977
Foglia comun di Salonicco	35.625
Foglia di Gingè	38.641
Foglia d'Arta	24.302
Foglia d'Ungheria	556.184
Foglia d'Olanda	15.236
Rapé di Francia in vasi e bastoni	540
Rapé d'Augusta	4.533
Brasil in corda	1.352
Tabacco Levante	15.752
Tabacco d'Inghilterra e Tre Re in carte	4.640
Virginia in carte	14.467
Foglia del Maryland	29.345
Siviglia di Spagna	2.180
Total amount of foreign tobaccos	1.986.163

Source: BMCVe, *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 3650, "Foglio che dimostra la quantità di cadauna specie Tabacchi provvisti negli anni 8 infrascritti della corrente condotta"

Such composition was mainly due to the development of a remarkable system of privileged manufactures that formed the beating heart of the Tobacco Farms. For its part,

Table 6.7 shows the amount of tobaccos which entered in the Florence's factory owned by the monopoly in 1746: the *foglia soda* from Salonika and Virginia was flanked by superior-quality varieties[1266] and by minced second-rate leaves and less nobles parts, such as the Dutch ribs, which were mixed in the manufacturing process with more valuable leaves to make snuff powders[1267]. The total amount of these varieties accounted for almost the 97% of the tobacco pounds purchased in that year, confirming the importance of the manufacturing and production dimension of the monopolistic enterprise[1268].

Table 6.7 – Tobaccos entering the Tuscan Farm's factory in Florence during 1746

Varieties of tobacco	Sum (pounds)
Foglia di Salonicco	690.534
Farina d'Olanda in botte	38.359
Cruscone	20.699
Tabacchi da rilavorarsi	3.792
Foglia di Virginia	38.777
Foglia di Caradà	30.628
Foglia Genisè	483
Costole sode d'Olanda	32.842
Total	856.014

Source: ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 276.

The centrality of manufacturing should not be conceived as peculiar to the Tuscan and Venetian cases, as a comparative scale shows deep similarity in many European

[1266] The *Tabacchi all'uso di Salonicco* were usually classified in three species in relation to their qualities: the cheapest variety was the *Comune*, also simply called *tabacco Salonicco*; the variety *Caradà* was more appreciated and consequently fetched a higher price on the market; but the most valuable tobacco leaves were classified as *Genisé*. For an account on this classification, see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 28/02/1763.

[1267] The blending of different varieties of tobacco leaves and less noble parts of the plant was all but an exclusive practise of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm: tobacco manufacturers in Amsterdam exploited the plantations which had flourished in the rural areas east of Utrecht blending their leaves with small quantities of more expensive American tobacco to obtain a cheap product that was appreciated by the middle and popular segments of the population. See Jonathan I Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 266.

[1268] The Tuscan Tobacco Farm bought 884.473 pounds of tobacco in 1746, see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 276.

examples[1269]. At the same time, it was not a foregone conclusion: the first steps of the Tobacco Farms were much more oriented towards monopolizing the commercial intermediation between tobacco imports and public sale to consumers rather than investing on a monopolistic production within the domestic territory[1270]. However, our case studies underwent a turbulent yet inexorable process of import substitution: starting from the '*foglia soda*' purchased from the merchant suppliers, thanks to innovations in techniques and products, the privileged manufactures of the Tobacco Farms began to produce their own variants of finished products, with a wide range of rope tobaccos and snuffs. A closer examination of the general trend toward the internalization of manufacturing is easily understandable. In fact, if we consider the economic dimension of the monopolistic enterprise and the financial interests of the states, the profit margins for the contractors increased by producing their own finished goods for the majority of domestic consumption, rather than purchasing them at higher prices.

Moreover, it seems that a significant divergence took place in the provision of different provinces: for example, in the Venetian *Terraferma*, the territory of Bassano was supplied much more with *tabacco nostrano* than with foreign tobaccos, whereas it

[1269] In particular, the fortune of the Spanish *estanco* on tobacco were always linked to the processing of raw materials from American colonies in the metropolitan manufactures, especially the tobacco factory of Seville which already in the mid-17th century became one of the most important productive site in early modern Europe, with more than 300 employees. See José Manuel Rodríguez Rodríguez Gordillo, "Sobre La Industria Sevillana Del Tabaco a Fines Del Siglo XVII," *Cuaderno de Historia. Instituto Jerónimo Zurita* VII (1977): 553–552. Later on, the tobacco monopoly administration invested also in other metropolitan factories in order to diversify production, see Agustín González Enciso, "La Factoria de Tabacos de Santander, 1768-1794," in *Historia y Humanismo. Homenaje al Profesor Rojas Ferrer* (Murcia: Ediciones Universidad de Murcia, 2000), 507–18. For the manufacturing process of Brazilian tobacco in the Lisbon's factory, whose production found important markets also in the Spanish and French kingdoms, see Raul Esteves dos Santos, *Os tabacos: sua influência na vida da Nação*, Colecção Seara Nova 15 (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1974); Carl A. Hanson, "Monopoly and Contraband in the Portuguese Tobacco Trade, 1624-1702," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 19, no. 2 (1982): 149–68. For its part, the French Tobacco Farm controlled a production system that was more geographically dispersed, with factories located in Paris, Sète, Dieppe, Le Havre, Toulouse, Charleville, Morlaix, Tonneins, Nancy and Marseille. See Vigié and Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot*, 205–10.

[1270] As we have seen, the first proposal advanced by Bartolo Boneri to the Venetian Senate in 1653 envisaged the claim of a state-owned monopoly on all the wholesale purchases of raw tobaccos in Venice, with the perspective of raising money by reselling them to the public. On this proposal, see also Antonio Stella, "Il monopolio dei tabacchi nella Repubblica Veneta : studio di Antonio Stella," *Annuali del R. Istituto Tecnico e Nautico di Napoli*, 1893, 4–5.

was true the opposite for other cities like Verona and Padova[1271]. In secondary cities and rural zones it was much easier for tobacco farmers to commercialize only cheaper tobaccos produced in their own manufactures instead of the most expensive ones from abroad, with substantial gains in terms of net revenues[1272]. Most likely, demand for luxury foreign tobaccos was not as intense there as it was in the main cities, but at the current state of research it is not possible to give a clear and definite explanation. Anyway, more data from the Tuscan Tobacco Farm confirm such divergence, regarding the diffusion of foreign tobaccos in the innermost markets: as it appears from Table 6.8, in 1750, the most expensive finished products from abroad were sold almost entirely in the territory of the 5 biggest cities of the Grand Duchy (Florence, Livorno, Pisa, Siena and Pistoia)[1273]. Obviously, this framework was essentially due to the demographic distribution of the population[1274], but it is interesting to observe that Spanish and Dutch *polvigli*, the most expensive powdered tobaccos on the market, were almost absent out of the main cities (literally absent in the territorial administrations of Fivizzano, Pieve S. Stefano,

[1271] See the *note* on the tobacco inventories from the various cities of the Venetian *Terraferma* in 1779 (these documents were written at the end of the tobacco contract by the old warehouse workers to be handed over to the agents of the new *partitante* or to the provincial sub-locators): the inventory from Bassano was mainly composed by *tabacco nostran tre comuni* and *radica nostrana*, while in other cities like Verona and Padova the lion's share was taken up by Ottoman leaves like tobacco *Albania*, *Salonicco*, *Caradà* and *Gingè*. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 885, s.l.n.d. but 1779.

[1272] This is exactly how the Venetian tax farmers set the question of tobacco monopoly's revenues from the *Patria del Friuli* in 1752 in their correspondence with the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, suggesting that the success in growing income from that territory had been achieved thanks to the promotion of finished products coming out of the monopolistic manufactures, see ASVe, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, I series, reg. 360, ff. 217-219, Venice 04/03/1752.

[1273] Florence stands out as by far the most important part of the state for foreign tobacco's consumption. The rope tobaccos represent a peculiar case, with Siena's department which registered the 42% tobacco *Brasil* sales.

[1274] Historical demography on the Grand Duchy of Tuscany has demonstrated that in the second half of the 17th century almost 60% of the population lived in the flatlands of the *Stato Vecchio* of Florence and of the north-eastern part of the *Stato Nuovo* of Siena with an average population density of 44 inhabitants for km2 (the mountain zones of the Tuscan-Emilian Appennino and the *Maremme* accounted respectively for 24,9 and 13,8 inhabitants for km2). During the 18th century, Florence and its *contado* maintained a dominant demographic prominence, but three new factors significantly emerged: 1) the population of secondary cities and rural areas of the *Stato fiorentino* began to grow faster than that of the 6 major cities; 2) since the beginning of the century, the north-western part of the *Stato fiorentino* (Pisa, Livorno, Pescia, and Pistoia) knew a substantial upsurge of its growth rate, passing from 29,5% of the total population of the *Stato Vecchio* in 1642 to the 35,5% in 1737; 3) the *Stato Nuovo* of Siena eventually halted the negative demographic balance known under the Medici dynasty and came back to grow vigorously in the last decades of the century. See Lorenzo Del Panta, *Una traccia di storia demografica della Toscana nei secoli 16.-18* (Firenze: Università degli studi, Dipartimento statistico-matematico, 1974).

Castellina, and Maremme). By contrast, cheaper French *rapé* and rope tobaccos were more common also in secondary cities and rural areas. But some territories, like Castellina, received no foreign products, being provided only with locally-produced *foglietta*[1275].

Table 6.8 – Percentages of foreign tobaccos sold in the different territorial administrations of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in 1750

Territory	Spanish and Dutch *polvigli*	French *rapé*	Rope tobacco (*Brasil in corda*)
Florence	63,1	62,4	12,2
Livorno	21,3	14	12,3
Pisa	6,6	4,6	12,3
Siena	3,5	8,0	42,1
Pistoia	1,9	2,7	6,6
Prato	0,4	2,4	1,9
Arezzo	0,9	2,7	3,1
Cortona	0,3	0,8	1,3
Pescia	0,1	0,5	3,8
Montepulciano	0,1	1,0	1,5
Fivizzano	0	0,2	1,4
Portoferraio	1,7	0,6	0
Pieve S. Stefano	0	0	0,4
Castellina	0	0	0
Contee delle Maremme	0	0,1	1,1

Source: my elaboration from ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 501, "Uscita a Tabacchi – Art. 1: Vendita di Tabacchi"

Table 6.9 – Types of tobaccos sold by the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in 1750 (pounds)

Tobacco type	Sales

[1275] The *foglietta* was the name of a powdered tobacco produced in the Tuscan tobacco manufactories with second-rate leaves reduced in 'flour', kneaded with black dye and perfumed with essences of tribble, orange flower water, and rose water. See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Ricette per la manipolazione del Tabacco".

Spanish and Dutch *polvigli*	2.922
French *rapé*	20.711
Rope tobacco (*Brasile in corda*)	4.422
Foglia soda	53.453
Processed in Tuscan manufactories	302.029

Source: my elaboration from ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 501, "Uscita a Tabacchi – Art. 1: Vendita di Tabacchi"

For its part, Table 6.9 confirms, from the point of view of sales to the public, that, if the *foglia soda* was the kind of product most sought after on the market by the Tobacco Farms, it was mainly conceived as a variegated and diversified raw material for the privileged manufactures rather than something directly disposable for final consumption. In fact, tobaccos processed in the manufactories of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm formed more than three quarters of the total amount of pounds sold in one year[1276].

But how did the tobacco farmers achieve the development of an effective manufacturing system? Again, state protection played its part. If productive issues were deemed as important elements by the monopolistic merchants for the success of the enterprise, fiscal institutions and governments were also particular sensitive to the argument of privileged profit margins, as the latter were intrinsically linked to the growth of tax revenues from the tobacco sector[1277]. And they consequently legislated. In order to protect the monopoly's manufactures, the possession of devices to crush and grind tobacco was, at least in theory, precluded to subjects of any social status[1278]. Subjects

[1276] Data also confirm the progressive affirmation of French *rapé* as a stylish good, powdered tobaccos particularly suited to the noble and upper classes sociability, but cheaper than the Spanish *polviglio*, and for this reason they became a much more popular product during the 18th century.

[1277] Not by chance. the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* promptly highlighted this point to the Senate whenever the *pubblico incanto* for the Tobacco Farm struggled to find appropriate offers. See, for example, ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte e Scritture", reg. 161, ff. 86-97, Venice 19/06/1682; reg. 162, ff. 254-270, Venice 27/02/1687; reg. 165, f, 251, Venice 25/09/1696.

[1278] See ASFi, *Riformagioni*, reg. 42, f. 852, 28/03/1645. However, the domestic processing of raw leaves of tobacco was all but a residual habit: Venetian tax farmers frequently complained about the licentiousness of soldiers in the *Stato da Mar*, who were used to smoke, sniff and also resell smuggled tobacco refined by themselves using artisanal tools. In 1747, they predicted in alarming tones the «*totale eccidio al subappalto dell'isola di Corfù, stante la licenziosa libertà che dalle Pubbliche milizie et altri servienti ne' pubblici legni viene usata nella fabbrica e vendita de' tabacci*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 180, 26/11/1747.

were also prohibited from investing capitals in tobacco productive sites located too close to state borders[1279]. Such measures were designed to limit the illegal introduction of smuggled tobacco into the state, and they were progressively extended. Venetian legislation even went as far as to identify a list of 'suspicious places' abroad and forbid its subjects from having any «*intelligenza in materia di tabacco con gli abitanti de' luoghi confinanti e sospetti*»[1280]. At the same time, the state interest in the sector was protected by imposing strict oversight on the workers employed in the tobacco manufactures[1281]. These workers formed a highly hierarchical structure, which included seasonal and day laborers for less specialized tasks[1282], and during peak production periods, the largest sites employed over 70 people[1283]. While part of this workforce was replaced each season

[1279] For instance, the granducal *Motuproprio* issued on 22nd June 1778 forbade subjects to take an interests in «*negozi e fabbriche stabiliti negli Stati esteri in distanza almeno di tre miglia dal confine, nelle quali si facia smercio o traffic di sale e di tabacco*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, 22/06/1778.

[1280] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 165, 13/09/1697, f. 417. At the end of the 17th century, the list of suspicious places included Cervignano, Castiglione, Corbola, Trieste, Trento, Riva di Trento, Mantova and Mirandola.

[1281] Besides, among the *provvigionati* (i.e. people who received a regular payment) of the central bureau of the Tobacco Farm, in the section of the Florentine tobacco factory we can regularly find the employment of armed guards who oversaw the activities.

[1282] The tobacco factory in Florence employed permanent workers, each of which earned an annual salary of 447 *lire* and 8 *soldi*. See ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 951, letter of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 25/09/1773. There was also at least one chief of the tobacco workers with a higher salary: in the case of Antonio Ghelardini, sources speak of 52 *lire* per month, so an annual sum of about 624 *lire*, see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, regg. 501, 855 and 859. Moreover, during peak production season, which occurred in the warm season between May and October, the tobacco factory employed '*lavoranti soprannumerari*', seasonal workers who were paid 1 *lira* and 5 *soldi* per day: following a hierarchical scheme, when a permanent worker retired from the service, there was the «*consuetudine di avanzare gradatametne quelo de' lavoranti soprannumerari che n'è il più anziano*», see ASFi, *Amminstrazione generale*, reg. 951, letter of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 12/10/1773. Below them, the factory had some '*fa servizi*', that is to say workers employed in disparate tasks that did not require in-depth expertise and who were paid 6 *soldi* and 8 *denari* per day, a sum that was considered «*troppo miserabil guadagno*», see *Ibidem*, n. 113, petition of Antonio Ghelardini, Florence 04/10/1773. Finally, the productive process could resort also to a number of '*ragazzi abbandonati*' under the jurisdiction of the Bigallo Hospital, for whom the central bureau of the tTobacco Farm paid the hospital with 4 *crazie* per day, see *Ibidem*, n. 112, Giuseppe degli Albizzi and Giuliano Spinetti to Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets, Florence 17/09/1773.

[1283] According to the testimony of Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni, at the end of the 18th century, in the tobacco factory of Santa Caterina in Florence «*vi sono nell'estate più di settanta lavoranti*», see Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni, *Efemeridi*, II series, vol. XXVIII, p. 8024r, 26/05/1799. Unfortunately, the accounting books of the Tuscan tobacco farm do not indicate the number of workers employed in the tobacco factory, but we know that in 1771 the permanent workers were 37, so seasonal employees could be as numerous as the ordinary ones, see ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 951, letter of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 25/09/1773. We also know that the salaries of the workers of the factory accounted

without major issues, specialized workers possessed essential knowledge of tobacco production, to the point that authorities often restricted their movement, viewing them as strategic assets whose potential relocation to rival powers had to be prevented at all costs[1284].

The importance of productive expertise is indeed manifest from the Tobacco Farm's organization. The first budget of the Tuscan General Tax Farm regarding the tobacco monopoly (1746) registered the flows of tobaccos between three fundamental buildings in Florence[1285]: the general warehouse, administered by Monsieur de Champreux, where the commodities were received from the suppliers in Livorno and foreign marketplaces; the tobacco factory, under the direction of the General Inspector Giovanni Maria Suardi, where raw tobaccos came from the general warehouse to be processed; the '*Mulina del Barco*', run by the miller Giuseppe Favi, where some types of tobacco passed «*per macinarsi*». The three buildings were tightly integrated in the productive process, so much so that the tobacco farmers proved to be particularly responsive in bearing the cost of interventions for an improvement of the logistic chain[1286]. Moreover, these manufacturing buildings were not tied to the single contractor, but remained at the disposal of the Tobacco Farm when the handover took place: for example, the houses owned by Niccolò Xaverio Cambi in Borgo Ognissanti in Florence hosted the tobacco factory for the Tuscan General Farm between 1745 and 1778, but, as pointed out by the

for the 26,7% of the total amount of annual *provvigioni* paid by the Tobacco Farm for all its departments (19.357 against 73.377 *lire*), see ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 381, "Conto generale delle Regie entrate comprese nell'Amministrazione generale".

[1284] In 1743, Raffaello Lenzi was promoted to the post of «*capo de' lavoranti nella Fabbrica del Tabacco*» with the obligation of not leaving the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 53, n. 412, letter of François Vauthier to Niccolò Ginori, Florence 08/04/1743. Instead, the Venetian tobacco farm suffered the loss of the «*fabricator Michieletti, benché precettato a non dover mai partire dallo Stato*», who found more remunerative employment in the tobacco factory opened in Lugano by Francesco Saverio Volpi, see ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 942, s.l.n.d., but post-1786.

[1285] For what follows see ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 276, "Bilancio generale del Tabacco ed Acquavite d'un anno per tutto il dì 31 ottobre 1746".

[1286] In 1753, the Tuscan general tax farmers proposed to the sovereign their participation to the expenditure for the construction next to the *Mulina del Barco* of a «*magazzino da riporre i Tabacchi sottoposti alla macina*» issued by the decree of 7th September, in order to «*accelerare la costruzione di detto Magazzino molto necessario alla Zienda de' Tabacchi*», see ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 568, Francesco Diodati to the grand duke, Florence 10/10/1753.

general administrator Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets during a dispute with Cambi, they had been used for the same purpose also before by the tobacco contractors Gavi and Levi[1287].

Most importantly, the most experienced personnel represented an important resource that normally remained in service after the arrival of the new contractor. Take the case of the long career of Giovanni Maria Suardi: in 1745, he became the inspector of the factory in Florence for the new French-Lorraine company that took the tobacco monopoly[1288], a very important and delicate role in the light of «*l'importanza de' generi e capitoli esistenti nella Fabbrica del Tabacco, e la indispensabile necessità di mettere al lavoro nelle ore prescritte tutto l'anno gli uomini che vi sono impiegati e di dirigere assiduamente le loro operazioni*»[1289]. He could obtain the post thanks to his previous experience in the tobacco factory of Lucca, but also to the recommendation of the Suardo Maria Suardi, one of his relative who had found employment among the cadres of the Tobacco Farm's administration as chief ministry in Siena[1290]. Giovanni held the position of inspector of the factory for 35 years until his death in 1780[1291], also earning a substantial increase in annual salary from 1.375 to 2.100 *lire* in recognition of his long service[1292]. Like Suardo, he was descended from the brothers Antonio and Filippo Suardi,

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[1287] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 08/06/1778. Niccolò Cambi, at the moment of the exit of the tobacco factory from its building in 1778, had requested compensation because of the smell of tobacco which, in his opinion, would not allow the building to be rented immediately. Gavard des Pivets contested the claim by pointing out that the building was already being used as a tobacco factory well before the establishment of the general farm: the reference to the Jewish brothers Levi as contractors dated such use to the last quarter of the 17th century.

[1288] See ASFi, *Appalti generali*, reg. 77, Fermiers généraux to M. Astier, Paris 06/09/1745.

[1289] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 571, letter of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets and Francesco Piombanti to the Grand Duke, Florence 20/04/1781. The officials also wrote that the manipulation of tobacco required «*l'immediata assistenza e la continua vigilanza dell'ispettore*» and that it was not recommended that workers operated without the «*conveniente soggezione*».

[1290] Suardo introduced his relative to the general director of the French-Lorraine company in Florence M. Astier as «*un homme qui a été cy devant fermier du tabac en Toscane, et qui est actuellement à Lucques, par le quell il offert de diriger la manipulation, et de faire fabriquer différents tabacs dans le goût du pays*», *Ibidem*, M. Astier to Fermiers généraux, Florence 20/08/1745. Suardo was also employed as agent of the Tuscan Tobacco Farm in important operations abroad, like the mercantile relationship with the company holding the tobacco monopoly in Parma to which the Tuscan enterprise provided various types of tobacco, see ASFi, *Appalto generale*, reg. 663, n. 38, letter of Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the tobacco tax farmers of the Duchy of Parma, Florence, 28/09/1756.

[1291] ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 571, Memoir of Carlo Bissi, Florence 04/10/1780.

[1292] See ASFi, *Finanze*, reg. 570, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 20/05/1777. Moreover, Giovanni Maria Suardi made profits thanks to resale of boxes and packages in which batches of tobacco and drugs for the manipulation arrived at the factory. They included the «*invoglie dei Tabacchi in foglia, delle botti nelle quali vengono pure talvolta le suddette foglie; et anche i rapé; dei cassoni e case*

who had run the tobacco factory in Livorno in the 1720s and had been interested in the company that held the monopoly in those years[1293], representing an example of a family that found in tobacco manufacturing an area of specialized employment for which they passed on the necessary skills over generations[1294].

The manufacturing process took a central role in the tobacco commodity chain, as well as in the fiscalization of its consumption. Access to raw materials, especially different tobacco leaves from distant markets was of paramount importance, but it was equally crucial to exploit manufacturing knowledge based on human labor and codified recipes in order to produce the farm's own finished goods. First of all, an effective manufacturing system for the privileged business of tobacco represented a crucial key for increasing profit margins and fiscal revenues. Moreover, such productive creativity assisted the Tobacco Farms of the whole Italian peninsula in distinguishing their goods, as, through the resort of various drugs and techniques, skilful manufacturers could enrich raw tobacco leaves and give each finished product its own particular flavor[1295]. So, the processing of raw materials had to follow precise rules, elaborated and transmitted by the

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nei quali vengono gli zuccheri; dei vetri rotti dello stillo; e finalmente di tutti gli attrezzi, chiodi, ferrami e di altre cose simili inutile al servizio della Zienda», *Ibidem*. Such profits were criticized and denounced by the ordinary workers of the tobacco factory as illicit personal gains, estimated in 1.400 *lire* per year, at the expense of the farm's own budget: eventually, the general administrators claimed the business for the tobacco monopoly, compensating Suardi with another increase in salary. See ASFi, *Amministrazione generale*, reg. 953, n. 92.

[1293] See ASLi, *Dogana*, reg 7, n. 48, letter of Pier Filippo Adami to Giovanni Pitti, Florence 09/08/1727.

[1294] Sources are less continuative for the Venetian case, so much so that we cannot hazard similar conclusions. However, we know that Antonio Gritti held the position of tobacco factory's director in Venice at least from the contract with the *Nuova compagnia di Commercio* (1723-1728) to the first contract of the company Salvi and Perulli (1748-1753), during which he was replaced by his son Pietro after years of service as his '*aiuto*', see ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, reg. 890, Venice 27/02/1728; ASVe, *Fraterna grande di Sant'Antonin*, "Archivio Perulli", regg. 50-51.

[1295] In this respect, an interesting testimony comes from the ode to powdered tobacco written by Girolamo Baruffaldi at the beginning of the 18th century: the author was an enthusiastic consumer and did not hesitate to glorify the productive creativity of the various centers of the Italian peninsula. Thus, the city of Bologna had introduced the «*fabbrica del tabacco di S. Cristoforo, d'una gentilissima concia non ancora trovata da altri*», while in Ferrara 'imperial tobacco' was produced, «*di foglia semplice, con la concia di vari odori de' più preziosi, e d'un gratissimo gusto*» and much appreciated in Florence. Venetian production was particularly valued for the '*soave zansemina*', its jasmine-scented tobacco: in fact, Baruffaldi explained that in Venice «*il più usato e prezioso tabacco suol essere quello coll'odore di Gelsomino*». Instead, in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the powder from Poggibonsi had already become established during the Medicean period: «*ivi si fabbrica una specie di tabacco, ch'è poi lo stesso che di radica, di color gialletto e di grana simile a quello detto di S. Cristoforo, ma d'un odore ed una volatilità penetrantissimo*». See Girolamo Baruffaldi, *La Tabaccheide, ditirambo* (Ferrara: per gli Eredi di Bernardino Pomatelli, 1714), 107,146, 159, 184.

experience of the manufacturers in the sector, so much so that the Tobacco Farms inevitably became the place where such knowledge was nourished, protected, and codified.

It is no coincidence that the tobacco factory in Florence followed a proper manual of '*ricette per la manipolazione del tabacco*': inside, we find the recipes for the various types of finished products that the granducal tobacco monopolistic company put on the market, indicating in detail the ingredients, doses and procedures of the various phases, as well as some general comments on the various kinds of tobacco[1296]. Products like the *puro fine*, the *foglietta comune*, *alla Veneziana* or *alla Cappuccina*, the *grana chiara*, the *mezzo forzato* and many more were indeed the meeting between global connections and local expertise: the manufacturers employed tobacco leaves from various regions of the American continent and from the Ottoman Levant, mixing them with herbs and drugs originating in distant countries, but the secrets for a perfect outcome laid most of all in the accuracy with which processing operations were carried out. Not by chance, the emphasis on human labor and knowledge of production processes was particularly marked, as we can realize reading the following quotation taken from the manual:

> «*il tabacco è una di quelle produzioni della natura che non diventano utili, se non in grazia dell'industria umana, che la perfeziona, e della moda, che ne introduce e ne sostiene la consumazione. La foglia di tabacco si conduce sopra la pianta ad un certo grado di maturità il quale viene indicato, come dicesi, dall'imbullettatura gialla sopra le foglie istesse. (...) La cognizione e la pratica ne distingue le qualità diverse, e l'industria compone le diverse specie dei tabacchi, che si conoscono con vario credito di commercio*»[1297]

3. Agronomic knowledge and monopolistic business for tobacco cultivation

The early modern tobacco business was mainly characterized by the purchase on the market of foreign tobacco leaves to supply the privileged manufactures of the Tobacco Farm. However, in the last quarter of the 18th century fiscal institutions, mercantile

[1296] See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Ricette per la manipolazione del tabacco".
[1297] *Ibidem*.

networks, and state administrators delved into new solutions that could ensure the growth of tobacco consumption and related tax revenues, as well as provide new opportunities for trade[1298]. In particular, also thanks to the growing importance of agronomy among the numerous agricultural academies that played a relevant role in the Italian Enlightenment[1299], the possibility to promote tobacco cultivation in the domestic territory became an issue of public concern, with debates that involved state institutions and intellectuals, as well as businessmen who ran the Tobacco Farm.

We have a considerable body of research about how the uncertainties over the supply channels of American tobacco caused by the Atlantic imperial wars and revolutions around 1800 forced countries such as France and Great Britain to introduce and promote tobacco plantations in new regions of their empires, from West Africa to India. The Seven Years' War (1756-1763), the revolutionary period including the American War of Independence (1776-1783), and the Napoleonic era have been particularly well researched in this regard[1300]. During the period, academies and learned societies began to sponsor the adoption of tobacco as a crop for agricultural development and commerce. They were part of the 'Agricultural Enlightenment', which envisioned harnessing the environment for economic gain through practical knowledge and scientific theories from fields such as botany and, as of the 1770s, agricultural chemistry[1301]. Reform circles specialized in the need for specific crops or commodities such as tobacco, its trade requirements and consumer tastes[1302]. The commercialization of older subsistence-farming regions and the planting of previously non-tobacco regions in this

[1298] For a comparison with the solutions adopted by the other Italian states, see Stefano Levati, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna: secoli 17.-19* (Roma: Viella, 2017), 187–212.
[1299] See Mario Mirri, "La Fisiocrazia in Toscana: Un Tema Da Riprendere," in *Studi Di Storia Medievale e Moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, vol. 2 (Firenze: Olschki, 1980), 703–60; Michele Simonetto, *I Lumi Nelle Campagne: Accademie e Agricoltura Nella Repubblica Di Venezia, 1768-1797* (Treviso: Canova, 2001); Albertone, *Governare il mondo. l'economia come linguaggio della politica nell'Europa del Settecento*.
[1300] See Kathinka Sinha-Kerkhoff, *Colonising Plants in Bihar (1760-1950): Tobacco Betwixt Indigo and Sugarcane* (Gurgaon: Patridge Publishing, 2014); Matthew P. Dziennik, "'Till These Experiments Be Made': Senegambia and British Imperial Policy in the Eighteenth Century," *The English Historical Review* 130, no. 546 (2015): 1132–61; Pernille Røge, *Economistes and the Reinvention of Empire: France in the Americas and Africa, c.1750-1802* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[1301] Peter M. Jones, *Agricultural Enlightenment: Knowledge, Technology, and Nature, 1750-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
[1302] Alexander Van Wickeren, *Wissensräume im Wandel. Eine Geschichte der deutsch-französischen Tabakforschung (1780-1870)* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2020).

era of 'tobacco's second globalization' were marked by a massive spread of tobacco knowledge[1303].

Far less is known about how the imperial conflicts and wars of the era contributed to the spread of a tobacco-specific, knowledge-based culture of improvement in the Mediterranean area. In the late 18th century, the Eastern Mediterranean was a region of commercial and imperial rivalries, as the increasing Russian presence in the area culminated in the outbreak of the Russo-Ottoman War (1768-1774). As stressed by Giuseppe Gavard, the general administrator of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany's Tobacco Farm, «*in tutti gli stati d'Europa sono considerabilmente aumentati i prezzi delle foglie, o materie prime, che servono alla fabbricazione dei Tabacchi dopo la guerra portata in Levante dai Moscoviti, e dopo che sono incominciate le turbolenza nelle colonie Angl'Americane*»[1304].

In this respect, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was animated by a vibrant debate on the possibility to liberalize tobacco cultivation in the domestic territory as an answer to the difficulties in the global tobacco market. The Papal states represented a role model: Pope Benedetto XIV, a propagandist of liberal economic reform[1305], had abolished the tobacco monopoly as early as in 1757[1306], granting free economic initiative in the tobacco sector. This came in direct response to the 1756 rule implemented by the British royal navy during the Seven Years' War, which put Civitavecchia, the papal port of call for maritime trade, in serious difficulty for the supply of western tobacco[1307].

The war in the Eastern Mediterranean and the turmoil of the American colonies disrupted once again the traditional supply routes for tobacco and pushed for a

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[1303] For the 'tobacco's second globalization', see Alexander Van Wickeren, William G. Clarence-Smith, and Jean Stubbs, eds., *Tobacco in Global Perspective, 1780–1960* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024).

[1304] ASFi, *Segreteria di Finanze*, reg. 570, Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 02/04/1777.

[1305] See Luigi Dal Pane, *Lo Stato Pontificio e Il Movimento Riformatore Del Settecento* (Milano: Giuffrè, 1959).

[1306] See Cinzia Capalbo, "Contrabbando, Commercio e Fiscalità Nel Napoletano in Età Moderna. Il Mercato Illegale Del Tabacco," in *Studi in Onore Di Ciro Manca*, ed. Donatella Strangio (Padova: Cedam, 2000), 159–62.

[1307] According to the 'rule of 1756', the British royal navy stated that neutral vessels could not navigate in wartime along the route that the French mercantilist policy did not permit in peacetime. Moreover, it claimed the right to visit each mercantile vessel chasing enemy's goods and to seize each ship directed to the French colonies, accusing them of violating the blockade. Similar measures were taken by the French navy, further damaging the trade of neutral powers. See Ernest Nys, *La Guerre Maritime Étude de Droit International* (Farmington Hills, MI: Gale, 2013), 50–72.

liberalization of the domestic sector, as well as the threats of contraband from the free circulation of tobacco in the Papal states. Moreover, the promotion of tobacco plantations was advocated by thinkers who saw in the liberalization of Tuscan productive sectors a means to provide new economic opportunities for granducal subjects. The Florentine Academy of the Georgofili became the beating heart of such debates and a forge of reports and projects for agricultural development that represented the interests of Tuscan landlords and formed an important component of the Grand Duke Peter Leopold's government ideology[1308].

In particular, the proposal for the liberalization of tobacco cultivation was entrusted to the pen of the Abbot Marco Lastri[1309]. In his *Della coltivazione e manifattura libera del tabacco in Toscana*, an economic dissertation read in the gathering of the Academy of the Georgofili on the 6th July 1777, Lastri complained that, despite the large consumption of tobacco, «*pochissimo si coltiva in Italia e si potrebbe quasi dire in Europa [...]. Le Terre d'America e di Levante sono quelle che hanno generalmente il pregio di somministrarcelo*»[1310]. However, he argued that tobacco can be cultivated in the most hostile climates[1311] and that its introduction in the granducal territory would have been very beneficial to the whole economy: «*può arricchirsi il nostro suolo di una nuova pianta, relegata, starei per dire, in pochi angoli dell'America, e che potrebbe diventar per noi un nuovo capo d'industria ed importante ramo di economia pubblica e di commercio*»[1312].

Lastri's dissertation, as many others projects and proposals from the Academy of the Georgofili, was sent to the attention of the Grand Duke and of the reformer minister Angelo Tavanti: in the 1770s, the hypothesis of the abolition of the tobacco monopoly already circulated on the desks of the Tuscan ruling class[1313] and Lastri's dissertation

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[1308] On the shift of the Tuscan political economy from the mercantile world to agrarian policy, see also Corey Tazzara, "Port of Trade or Commodity Market? Livorno and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Mediterranean," *Business History Review* 94, no. 1 (2020): 223–29.

[1309] On this figure, see Paoli Maria Pia, "Lastri, Marco," in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Roma: Treccani, 2004).

[1310] Marco Lastri, *Della Coltivazione e Manifattura Libera Del Tabacco in Toscana. Discorso Economico Letto in Un'adunanza de' Georgofili Il Dì VI Luglio MDCCLXXIV* (Firenze: Stamperia Bonducciana, 1789), 7–8.

[1311] «*È già provato per l'esperienza che questa pianta si coltiva, più o meno, in quasi tutte le parti del globo, e fin nei climi più freddi dell'Olanda e della Svezia*», Lastri, 17.

[1312] Lastri, 36.

[1313] The first debates for the abolition of the tobacco monopoly took place in 17724, along with the project to reform the traditional retail system. See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Osservazioni

represented an important vehicle of agronomic and economic information to deliberate on the matter. However, the Grand Duke adopted a gradual approach to the promotion of domestic tobacco cultivation. Firstly, the liberalization of tobacco cultivation and trade was decreed for territories at the borders of the state where the implementation of the *ius prohibendi* was more and more under the threat of contraband. In 1778, within a general plan to revive the economy, the tobacco monopoly was abolished in the lower province of Siena, «*e perciò sarà in piena libertà di chiunque senza veruna restrizione di [...] seminare, piantare, coltivare qualsisia qualità di tabacco*»[1314]. Then, in 1780, it came the turn for the *vicariati di Fivizzano e Bagnone* where, as it had been already granted to Pontremoli, Barga and Portoferraio, «*sarà in libertà di chiunque la piantazione e la manipolazione e vendita del genere di cui si tratta*»[1315]. Finally, in 1789, «*fu rilasciata interamente all'industria della nazione toscana la fabbricazione e commercio dei tabacchi e soppressa la privativa che eravi precedentemente*»[1316].

In this context, Lastri's dissertation knew a second life and began to circulate as a printed text. It was deemed particularly useful not only for the ideological coherence with the sovereign decision, but mostly because of the agronomic principles and technical expertise that animated the text[1317]. The Tuscan population lacked the know-how for the management of tobacco plantations and the circulation of scientific and practical information on the newly-liberalized sector could play a key role for the blooming of the economic sector. Nevertheless, after just two years, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany retraced his steps: «*attesa la qualità del suolo toscano, e le più preziose culture a cui sono applicati i suoi abitanti, non ha potuto prosperare questo ramo di coltivazione. Per queste*

[anonime] sopra l'idea di abolire la privativa del tabacco e di dare ad ognuno la libertà di seminare, coltivare, fabbricare e commerciare il suddetto genere", with no place and date, but 1772. However, the opposition of the general administrator Giuseppe Gavard des Pivets and the uncertainties on the financial impact for sovereign coffers drowned the intent. See ASFi, *Amministrazione generale delle regie rendite*, reg. 952, ins. 8, Gavard De Pivets to the Grand Duke, Florence 28/10/1774. In the 1780s, after the death of Angelo Tavanti, the political climate changed and the abolition of the whole *ius prohinendi* over tobacco became less credible. Francesco Maria Gianni proposed the liberalization of tobacco manufacturing, but maintaining the ban on cultivation. See ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 64, ins. 3, "Relazioni e Memorie diverse del Senator Gianni sopra tutte le imposizioni di Toscana", 1786.

[1314] See the Edict of 11th April 1778 in ASLi, *Dogana*, reg. 16, n. 64.

[1315] ASFi, *Segreteria di Finanze affari prima del 1788*, reg. 570, granducal *Motuproprio* issued on 07/11/1780.

[1316] ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 148, "Notizie istoriche intorno alla regalia del tabacco", Florence 31/08/1803.

[1317] See Lastri, *Della Coltivazione e Manifattura Libera Del Tabacco in Toscana. Discorso Economico Letto in Un'adunanza de' Georgofili Il Dì VI Luglio MDCCLXXIV*, 11–13, 19–32.

per altre cause [...] s'intenderà ristabilita dal dì 1° dicembre 1791 in poi la Privativa del Tabacco a favore dell'Amministrazione generale delle Regie Rendite»[1318]. The liberalization of the tobacco cultivation had not aroused sufficient interest in Tuscan landlords and was struggling to get off the ground. Francesco Maria Gianni complained for this sudden decision: he argued that the education of Tuscan population to tobacco cultivation would have required much more time, as «*se ne conoscevano appena le proprietà e non si avevano esperienze che ne insegnassero la coltura*»[1319]. However, the abolition of the tobacco monopoly was first and foremost a financial failure: the revenues from the custom duties on the imports of foreign tobaccos, that were supposed to compensate for the lesser entries, yield only 115.206 *lire* in 1790 against 683.764 *lire* earned with the sales of the Tobacco Farm in the 1788[1320]. Indeed, the financial unsustainability of free tobacco cultivation was the main reason for the reintroduction of the monopoly.

The Venetian case is particularly interesting because it demonstrates that agricultural innovation was not necessarily related to the push for the liberalization of economic activities and the abolition of the monopoly. Conversely, a great step forward in the domestic tobacco plantations was achieved within the boundaries of the tobacco monopoly and with the agents of the Tobacco Farm as the main protagonists of such an innovation. First of all, the illegal cultivation of tobacco raised more and more concerns about contraband and suggested coming to terms with the communities responsible for sowing tobacco for smuggling. A possible compromise solution had been indicated several times by the inhabitants of the communities concerned themselves: to formally grant the privilege for tobacco cultivation in those circumscribed areas with the obligation to sell the harvest to the company holding the monopoly. As early as in 1723, the petitioners from Valstagna, Campolongo, Campese and Valrovina showed that they were able to resort to a set of arguments that tickled the ambitions of their state counterparts. After the usual reference to the poverty of the local populations as justification for their recourse to tobacco cultivation, they claimed (not very plausibly) that they resold the harvest only beyond the border with the Habsburg states, so without negative repercussion

[1318] ASFi, *Carte Gianni*, reg. 12, ins. 247, Edict issued on 18/10/1791.
[1319] *Ibidem*, "Ricordi sulla Legge de' 18 ottobre 1791 per la Privativa del Tabacco".
[1320] See the data in ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 88, ins. 1, "Dimostrazione del consumo del tabacco", 1789-1790.

on the Venetian public finance; and that Inquisitor Memmo's decision to order the uprooting of the plantations was highly objectionable not also because it further deteriorated their already precarious condition, but also because it condemned Venice to depend on the Ottoman Empire for the purchase of tobacco leaves for annual consumption, with negative consequences on the balance of trade[1321]. In this respect, «*si prostrano con le loro famiglie in numero di sotto 4.000 per la concessione di poter con le maniere più caute per li Partitanti veneti seminare, e raccoglier l'unico prodotto (dicono essi) che loro resta della lor terra per contrattarlo coi Partitanti medesimi*»[1322].

Nevertheless, this perspective was not immediately welcomed either by the tobacco monopoly companies, who saw such demands as mere expedients to be able to more easily commit all sorts of abuse, nor by the government authorities: until the mid-18th century, the decrees of the Senate, the pronouncements of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, and the activities of the Inquisitors over Duties opposed any extension of privileges and any relaxation of the ban on tobacco cultivation[1323]. Sometimes prohibitions were justified to prevent the bad consequences of an unrestrained tobacco cultivation on the agricultural output of essential commodities such as grains and cereals: in 1783, with ill-concealed interest, the Venetian tobacco farmer Girolamo Manfrin even went so far as to suggest to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* that the allocation of the

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[1321] «*Ill.mi et Ecc.mi sig.ri Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, le valli di Valstagna, Campolongo, Campese e Valrovina contigue alli Sette comuni espongono in umile supplica ai piedi del Ser.mo Principe le loro miserie, procedenti dalla presente povertà della loro situazione; dicono d'aversi, in mancanza d'altro rilasciato prodotto, applicati alla coltura del tabacco esitato sin'ora ne' Stati imperiali, co' quali confinano; (...) discendono poscia a dolersi del praticato commando dell'Ecc.mo Inquisitor Cav. Memmo, che nell'anno passato ha fatto seguir lo spianto di quasi 24 miara di erbe, per il quale successo si sono recati miara di ducati al Paese Turco, et essi sudditi restate nella deplorabile condizione di cercare sino con la vendita delle caldare e letti l'alimento delle loro famiglie*», ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 13/09/1725.

[1322] *Ibidem*.

[1323] For example, in 1749, the Senate rejected the petition of the community of Campese which professed to be privileged in matters of tobacco cultivation, while the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* had deemed this practice completely abusive in the absence of explicit concessions in the *Serenissima*'s archives. See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 348, Pregadi 21/08/1749. The following year it was the turn of the '*Sette comuni*' of the plateau of Vicenza: the Senate decreed that these communities «*si devono rassegnare all'obbedienza*» and renewed the task to the Inquisitor Duodo of enforcing the maxim that these inhabitants «*devono astenersi dalle semine e impianti delle erbe regine*», while at the same time giving the Podestà of Vicenza the responsibility of «*praticare la visita ai Sette comuni, ed anche a quello di Campese, di estendere le inquisizioni sopra le loro direzioni nella materia de' Tabacchi, ed informare ogni volta il Senato per le deliberazioni si convenissero*», *Ibidem*, Pregadi 10/09/1750.

greatest part of the *Sette comuni*'s land to tobacco cultivation was responsible for the famine in the Vicenza's territory, as «*sono rimasti privi quei Popoli di terreno da produr grani e biade e sarebbero quasi privi di sussistenza se non fossero stati soccorsi dalla pubblica carità*»[1324]

However, the general tide changed over time the 1760s onwards: in response to a full-blown crisis in the supply of Ottoman tobacco leaves[1325], the Senate added to the traditional terms of the monopoly the possibility for the contractor to sow tobacco within the borders of the Venetian Empire[1326]. I will discuss later on the plan to grant the «*libertà delle impiantagioni nella Dalmazia e nell'Isole dell'oltremare*», which for the moment remained on paper. In fact, the new tobacco contractor, the count Iseppo Mangilli, eventually turned to the Venetian mainland, negotiating annual provisions of '*tabacco nostrano*' with the growers of the '*Sette comuni*' and of the upper valley of the river Brenta. As reported by the contracts later subscribed, the inhabitants of such communities were at last allowed to dedicate their efforts to tobacco plantations provided that the crops had to be «*tutti venduti al Partitante*». Mangilli pledged to pay the planters a high price for their tobacco, whose representatives, in return, were required to «*invigilare perché non sia in verun tempo e luogo, niuno eccettuato, dal, o nel loro Paese introdotto, transitato, o comprato alcun genere di tabacco di contrabbando, né di stato estero, né di qualuqnue altro luogo di qual si sia luogo, che non fosse nato e raccolto nei detti comuni*»[1327].

The goal of the agreement was twofold: on the one side, the monopoly looked to domestic production, which often had developed outside the law, to ensure a secure flow of tobacco for its own supply; on the other side, the 'regularization' of illegal plantations

[1324] ASVe, *Inquisitori di Stato*, reg. 943, Girolamo Manfrin to the Savi alla Mercanzia, Venice 08/11/1783. This was not an isolated case. In Lorraine tobacco cultivation was accused in its early days of being the cause of bad harvests, such as those recorded in 1628, see Marc Vigié and Muriel Vigié, *L'herbe à Nicot: amateurs de tabac, fermiers généraux et contrebandiers sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris]: Fayard, 1989), 135.

[1325] In sum, the system of the Venetian tobacco farm was painfully undermined at the turn of 1760 by the imperial fiscality of the Sublime Porte who decided to increase the custom duties on exported tobacco, so much so that the new tariff «*ammonta a due terzi di maggior dispendio di quanto precedentemente correva*», ASVe, *Fraterna S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 46, Venice 28/11/1761.

[1326] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Risposte", reg. 189, ff. 88v-89v, Venice 12/02/1762.

[1327] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 26/08/1763. The high price agreed for the best quality of locally cultivated tobacco reached the tariff of 52 *soldi* per pound, so more than 2 *lire* and a half.

attempted to provide a lucrative alternative to contraband and, to some extent, made the main perpetrators of such practices accountable for fighting smuggling. The initiative received praise from writers and commentators who had taken a clear stand against the criminal legislation protecting the tobacco monopoly, whereby «*o l'esecuzione della legge aveva a distruggere i Sette comuni o la necessità di preservare questa popolazione, custode di un confine geloso, situata sopra monti alpestri, priva di arti, di industria e di commercio, aveva ad abrogare la legge*»[1328]. And it undoubtedly opened a favorable season for the planters of the privileged communities of the *Terraferma*, who also obtained, in the following contracts, the right to retain some tobacco for their own use and for limited retail sale[1329]. Notwithstanding, it was not easy to maintain an effective balance between the different demands: from the outset, the *partitanti* denounced to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* that the inhabitants of the *Sette comuni* had retained an excessive amount of the crop in order to sell it as contraband; they had supplied the monopoly with poor quality tobacco, so much so that «*tutti ricusano di volerli e il Partito ne tiene grandiose quantità ne' suoi magazzini senza speranza di poterli esitare*»; and they were even in the habit of threatening potential informers and witnesses with «*violenza e naturale ferocia*»[1330].

[1328] These words came from the pen of the Count Giovanni Bujovich who took part in 1778 in the heated debate on the reform of the Venetian fiscal system and devoted ample space to an indictment against the repressive policies of smuggling: he went on to praise the contracts between the people of the '*Sette comuni*' and the tobacco contractors because, «*provvedendo quei sudditi di un patrimonio, abbiamo risparmiata la loro vita preziosa, abbiamo cavato dal seno del nostro stato un prodotto nuovo ed abbiamo preservato altrettanto contante nazionale che passava ne' paesi turcheschi in provvista dei tabacchi*». See the writing "Sopra la riforma delle finanze, memoria scritta l'anno 1778" published in Bujovich, *Scritti Pubblici Concernenti Lo Stato Interno Di Venezia Nei Passati Mesi d'interregno, Più Due Memorie Sopra Le Finanze e l'agricoltura Del Vecchio Governo*, 75.

[1329] The contract signed in 1770 by Giuseppe Giupponi, elected procurator of the *Sette comuni*, and the new tobacco contractor, Giammaria Volpi, recognized the right of the local population to «*trattenere tabacco per proprio uso*» and limited local trade to retailing, «*cioè soldo a soldo per uso della povera gente abitante in essi comuni*». See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 24/08/1770.

[1330] For their part, the inhabitants of the privileged communities retorted to the accusations by claiming their dedication to the cause of fighting contraband, to the extent that they had led a smuggler with the illegal merchandise from Valstagna to the prisons in Vicenza, and that they had «*coltivato coi metodi del paese senza alcuna maliziosa novità*». See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 13/09/1765.

The unsatisfactory quality of tobacco and the indulging in smuggling by the local populations remained topics of contention in the last decades of the 18th century[1331], but an even deeper and ill-concealed motivation for the contractors' complaints was indeed the high prices granted to the privileged communities. Once the crisis of the early 1760s had passed, these entrepreneurs worked repeatedly to lower the cost of the essential raw material for their manufactures. So, around 1778, the new contractor Girolamo Manfrin first imposed a downward revision of the prices paid to the growers for the various qualities of '*tabacco nostrano*'; later, because of the «*sensibile discapito derivato ad esso sig. Manfrin dalla convenzione del 14 maggio 1778, ch'ebbe luogo nel corso della cadente condotta*», he declared in 1786 «*di non voler convenire a verun contratto per le semine o piantaggioni con cotesti communi*»[1332]. .

However, the government did not accept step backs that would have called into question the basic principle: the importance to guarantee the economic livelihood to rural communities in marginal territories, with an incentive solution that could keep local farmers away from smuggling, was reaffirmed by the sovereign power, arousing in Manfrin «*il pubblico zelo di possibilmente adattare allo spirito delle clementi sovrane intenzioni*» and convincing him to «*posporre il proprio interesse all'oggetto della pubblica quiete*»[1333]. So, reasons of public order and economic concerns forced the reluctant entrepreneur to sign a new contract, although his grievances were not without consequences: the people of the '*Sette comuni*' soon made their voices heard again by the government because of the «*discapito sofferto per la diminuzione de' prezzi de' Tabacchi*»[1334].

[1331] For example, describing the various stages that led him to establish his tobacco plantation in the overseas province of Dalmatia, Girolamo Manfrin emphasised how «*nella Veneta Terraferma (...) non era neppur sperabile di avere da que' terreni, sebben fertili e deliziosi, una qualità di tabacchi simili a quelli dell'Albania, analoghi al costume ed al genio della Nazione*»; in addition, he argued that «*sarebbe stato imprudente e pericolosissima l'intrapresa di concentrar nel cuore delle province che ponno valutarsi il principal vital sostegno della Finanza, uno stabilimento che avrebbe potuto dar fomento ai furti, alle contraffazioni, e ferire notabilmente la pubblica regalia, somministrandone bastevol prova l'esito della picciola allora, ed attualmetne permessa, rovinosa piantaggione nei Sette comuni*». See BQSVe, *Mss. Cl. IV, Cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, ff. 215r-v, with no place nor date, but 1793.

[1332] See ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 02/02/1786 and 21/05/1786.

[1333] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Venice 21/05/1786.

[1334] *Ibidem*, Venice 12/12/1796. The representatives of the '*Sette comuni*' presented to the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* a detailed comparison of what was collected during the Manfrin management and during the previous contract with Mangilli. According to their calculations, the total loss due to the downward revision of tariffs amounted to no less than 1.093.327 *lire*.

It is possible to compare this issue with the Tuscan case: in the 1750s, also granducal tobacco farmers and fiscal institutions attempted to contractualize illegal domestic cultivation to convert those farmers into suppliers of leaves for the Tobacco Farm. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the main problems did not stem from local autonomy of cities and communities, but from privileged jurisdiction of feudal origin. The County of Chitignano primarily stood out among them: both the Counts Ubertini, owners of the fief[1335], and all the inhabitants enjoyed various privileges, including «*celui de semer le tabac et de le vendre dans la Comtée à qui bon leur semble*»[1336]. Also Tobacco manufactures had flourished in the County around plantations: powdered tobacco produced there could be freely sold within the borders of the fiefdom[1337], but easily invaded the rest of the granducal territory.

In this case, a contractual 'regularization' was not proposed by the government or state officials, but by the French-Lorraine financiers who held the Tuscan Tax Farm. While the Lombart company (which ran the tobacco farm between 1745 and 1749) had to coexist unhappily with such traditional privileges[1338], the representatives of the Masson company (1750-1753) immediately realized the importance of reaching an agreement with the Counts Ubertini. A decisive push in this direction came from the financier Pierre Foacier, who had known the Lorraine model whereby tobacco cultivation was permitted under explicit license but with the *Fermier Général* as the only allowed buyer[1339]. This experience had indeed met many pitfalls, such as the proliferation of unauthorized

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[1335] On the County of Chitignano and the Counts Ubertini, see Luigi Fognani, *Chitignano: contrabbando, storia, socialità in una cultura di crocevia appenninico* (Firenze: Il Candelaio, 1982).

[1336] ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 499, Astier to Foacier, Arezzo 23/10/1749.

[1337] On the initiative of the Counts Ubertini themselves, there were manufactures in Chitignano that processed the leaf harvested in the fief and produced first and second grade '*polviglio*'. See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 149, "Recapitolazione de' Prezzi ai quali si sono pagati i tabacchi lavorati della Contea di Chitignano", with no place nor date, but 1751.

[1338] See the complaints by the new tobacco contractors to the Grand Duke in 1745 in ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 13, n. 4, ff. 4r-5r, Florence 14/12/1745.

[1339] See *Recueil des édits, déclarations, arrets et réglements concernant la Ferme Générale du Tabac de Lorraine et Barrois*, Nancy, 1752, n. 1, edict issued on the 7th of December 1703. Most likely, the new Tuscan stakeholders in the company (Serristori, Guadagni, Alessandri and Martelli) also played an important role, having more direct experience with tobacco production in the Tuscan privileged territories. For the composition of the companies of the Tuscan General Farm, see Waquet, "La Ferme de Lombart (1741-1749). Pertes et Profits d'une Compagnie Française En Toscane"; Waquet, "Les Fermes Générales Dans l'Europe Des Lumières: Le Cas Toscan.".

tobacco plantations[1340], yet it was considered the best possible way to limit the damage of smuggling to the economy of the monopoly. It is no coincidence that the capitulations eventually signed by the parties indicated two fundamental motivations, combining the safeguarding of public finance and the economic protection of the subjects: «*ovviare ai diversi pregiudizi che risultavano dall'introduzione che veniva fatta in diversi luoghi dello Stato di Toscana dei Tabacchi che si raccolgono nella Contea di Chitignano*» and «*assicurare agli abitanti della medesima l'esito di detti Tabacchi*»[1341].

Foacier entrusted the deal and the negotiation to an experienced man in the field such as Astier de la Blanche, former tobacco director in Florence for the Lombart company[1342]. He settled in Arezzo with the mandate to obtain from the Ubertini the faculty to establish a Tobacco Farm's bureau in Chitignano and the exclusive right to buy the leaves grown by the inhabitants of the County[1343]. Having evaluated the proposal, the counts – Ranieri Niccolò, Francesco, Ubertino and Luigi Ubertini – agreed to open negotiations, mainly thanks to a direct and secret conversation between Astier and «*le vieux comte*», who was the most eager to reach an agreement with the Tobacco Farm,

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[1340] In a fantastic example of subaltern creativity and of the wide range of 'weapons of the weak' at their disposal, Lorraine subjects justified their plantation arguing that they did not cultivate tobacco, «*mais bien des herbes à la Reine et Sainte-Catherine; ce qui aurait arreté les juges de prononcer sur la demande des suppliants, quoique les dits herbes soient tabacs*», *Recueil des édits, déclarations, arrets et réglements concernant la Ferme Générale du Tabac de Lorraine et Barrois*, Nancy, 1752, n. 2, decree issued on the 13th of December 1704. The terms 'herb of the queen' or 'herb Saint-Catherine' referred to the queen Catherine Medici, who had played a central role in the spread of tobacco at the French court in the second half of the 16th century. Like others, they were employed indiscriminately to describe tobacco, as can be seen in the vast contemporary erudite literature on the subject. See, for example, Niccolò Gavelli, *Storia Distinta, e Curiosa Del Tabacco, Concernente La Sua Scoperta, La Introduzione in Europa, e La Maniera Di Coltivarlo, Conservarlo, e Prepararlo, e per Servirsene Con Altre Ottime Ed Utili Osservazioni Sopra Il Medesimo* (Pesaro: Altieri, 1758), 7–8. However, the different species of tobacco and the hybridization that the plant of American origin underwent over time and space, as well as the only partial codification by scientific agronomy, left room for ambiguity and controversy over the nature of some of them. Similarly to the Lorraine case, in the first years of the 19th century, botanical experts in the service of the Florentine government were frequently called upon to verify whether the suspicious plants discovered in the Tuscan territory were tobacco or whether they belonged to other species. The results could be varied: in one case, what the tax farmer described as «*piante che mi si dice esser tabacco selvatico*» turned out to be another plant of the Solanaceae family, the nightshade; in another case, the plants called '*erba corsa*' by the growers were none other than tobacco of the species '*Nicotiana Rustica*', variety '*Brasile Manacos*'. See BNCFi, *Targioni Tozzetti*, reg. 275, f. 86r, Florence 19/05/1807 and 24/05/1807, ff. 92r-v, Florence 05/08/1807.

[1341] ASFi, *Appalti*, f. 499, "Capitolazioni firmate tra i sig.ri Conti di Chitignano e l'Appaltatore generale di Toscana sopra i Tabacchi che si raccolgono in quella contra", with no place nor date, but 06/12/1749.

[1342] See his correspondence with the French stakeholders of the company in ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 77.

[1343] See ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 499, Astier to Foacier, Arezzo 02/10/1749

even suggesting to the French clerk how to carry out the process more effectively, both by good and bad means[1344]. The two-way agreement and the differences of opinion between the Counts[1345] facilitated the signing of a contract that provided for: delivery of all the tobacco grown annually in the fief to the monopoly company; prohibition to increase tobacco plantations without a further agreement with the tobacco farmers; ban on manufacturing tobacco in Chitignano, apart from the Counts themselves for personal use; obligation for all growers to present the Tobacco Farm with «*le Portate più esatte di tutte le piante di Tabacco e dei Tabacchi in foglia che si troveranno nella Contea*»; the right of the tobacco contractor to have his own clerk in the County and «*di mandarvi gli esecutori a fare le visite e perquisizioni*»; dual jurisdiction – of the Counts themselves and of the Court of Arezzo – in matters of tobacco smuggling committed by the inhabitants of the fief[1346].

Despite the traditionally high prices paid to the planters of Chitignano for their harvest, the Tuscan General Farm's agent managed to impose a considerably lower tariff, set in the contract at 5 *soldi* per pound[1347]. This outcome is to be interpreted in the light of the particular conjuncture of the tobacco market in the early 1750s: though the War of the Austrian succession had not led to any massive surge in tobacco prices in the region, after the Peace of Aix-la-chapelle (1748) wholesale prices for tobacco leaves traded in

[1344] The Ubertini entrusted the negotiations to the Auditor of the fief, the Senator Quaratesi. Before discussing with the latter, Astier had already agreed on a text with the most senior Count, Ranieri Ubertini, in which it was stipulated that the Counts could no longer absolve the inhabitants of Chitignano from punishment for tobacco smuggling without the vote of the general tobacco contractor. However, they agreed not to send Quaratesi the proposal through Count Ranieri, since he «*ne veut point paraître avor part dans cette affaire auprès des autres, qui le regarderaient comme un innovateur dangereux*». In addition to maintaining the secrecy of this arrangement, Ranieri also advised Astier to report to the Auditor that the granducal ordinances obliged the Counts to enforce provisions against contraband, but that these were not observed at all, and therefore «*de lui faire des menaces, que c'est un moyen sûr pour (…) les autres comtes*». See ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 499, Astier to Foacier, Arezzo 14/10/1749 and 23/10/1749.

[1345] See, for example, *Ibidem*, De la Morlette to Foacier, Arezzo 27/04/1752, and Foacier to De la Morlette, Florence 14/10/1752.

[1346] See *Ibidem*, 06/12/1749.

[1347] The tariff is particularly low in comparison with the retail price that growers used to charge in Chitignano. According to the information collected by Astier, «*la feuille la plus exquise de cette Comtée se vend en détail tant au plus 20 ou 22 sols la livre*», ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 499, Astier to Foacier, Arezzo 23/10/1749.

Livorno fell to between 4 and a half and 5 *soldi* per pound[1348]. It is not astonishing that, precisely in this situation of falling prices, a part of the Counts Ubertini – tobacco producers who risked to lose profit margins – pushed for an agreement with the Tuscan General Farm, even accepting a fixed price significantly lower than usual in order to obtain an assured outlet for their crops. However, the low price offered to growers was at the root of the initial failure of the new course: as Tommaso Minucci, the Commissioner of Arezzo, pointed out describing the poor collection of tobacco leaves from Chitignano in 1752, «*la maggior parte di questi abitanti, considerando il basso prezzo che dovevano venderla all'Appaltatore generale, ed in conseguenza che non gli tornava il conto d'occupare il terreno con questo genere, non ne facero nell'anno scorso la piantazione*»[1349]. In order to reverse the trend, sudden action was taken by revising the tariffs upwards: good results were not long in coming, so much so that already the following harvest guaranteed the tobacco monopoly a generous supply of Chitignano leaf[1350].

In fact, once the initial error had been revised, we notice a certain similarity with the Venetian case, whereby the 'contractualization' of privileged domestic cultivation was characterized by high prices based on the desire to provide incentives to planters not to resort to smuggling, rather than on strict production needs of the contractors. Still in the 1780s, prices paid by the Tobacco Farm for the Chitignano leaf were well above average: 16 *soldi* per pound for the first grade leaf, 10 for the second grade and 6 for the third grade[1351]. Inevitably, the retail prices of tobaccos made from Chitignano leaf were higher than the cheaper qualities made in the manufactures of the Tuscan tobacco farm. Clerks and government men, however, noted on several occasions how, in the medium term, the regime of the «*prezzo profittevole*» had greatly contributed to the expansion of tobacco cultivation in the privileged territories[1352]. Moreover, in the last quarter of the

[1348] For wholesale prices of leaf tobaccos in Livorno during the War of the Austrian succession and in the following years of peace, see ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 276, "Bilancio generale tabacco 1746", and reg. 501, "Bilancio generale tabacco 1750".

[1349] ASFi, *Appalti*, reg. 499, Minucci to Foacier, Arezzo 27/04/1752.

[1350] At the end of 1752, the number of planters from Chitignano who sold their tobaccos to the Tuscan General Farm had grown to 68 for a total of 6.401 plants. See *Ibidem*, Bartoli to De la Morlette, Chitignano 16/10/1752.

[1351] See ASFi, *Azienda del Sale e del Tabacco*, reg. 149, Motuproprio issued on the 15th January 1780.

[1352] As the Senator Francesco Maria Gianni suggested in 1789, «*si osservi peraltro che la Contea di Turicchi, Chitignano, S. Lorino del Conte, ecc., e si veda se a misura che è stata permessa e favorita la*

18th century, the Chitignano leaf became quantitative important in the regular supply of the Tuscan monopoly, reaching the third position, behind the very popular varieties from Hungary and Salonika, among the tobaccos purchased by the monopolistic merchants[1353]. We should consider that, despite Manfrin's reluctance, also in the Venetian Empire the domestic cultivation of tobacco in the *Terraferma* – once illegal and then brought under contract – increased its contribution for the monopoly manufactures: during the second contract of Girolamo Manfrin for the Venetian tobacco monopoly (1787-1794), the tobacco leaves bought by the monopoly from the planters of the '*Sette comuni*' amounted to 2.602.405 pounds, behind only Albanian (5.290.197 pounds), Hungarian (3.362.231 pounds) and Caradà (3.362.231) tobacco[1354].

However, the contractualization of illegal tobacco cultivation did not address the issue at its core. The judgment of the quality of the tobacco leaves from Chitignano and the other privileged territories was never too flattering: there was no shortage of harsh assessments describing them as «*foglie di poca sostanza, malcurate, alcune con poco, ed altre con cattivo odore*». With regard to the Venetian Empire, the harvest in the *Terraferma* never covered more than a quarter of the annual demand needed to satisfy the domestic consumption of tobacco[1355]. Therefore, alternative solutions were sought that could lead to a more effective promotion of tobacco plantations. In the case of Venice, a crucial impetus for innovation and import substitution came directly from the top of the monopolistic enterprise

As I said, Ottoman fiscal policies and the war in the Eastern Mediterranean caused severe supply chain disruption between the 1760s and 1780s: Venice began to search for alternatives in the overseas domains of the Ionian Islands and Dalmatia of the *Stato da Mar* for the supply of raw materials for local manufactures and exotic goods for its dynamic consumer market. In this context, tobacco was a topic very much on the radar of

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coltivazione del Tabacco, con assicurarne lo smercio mediante un prezzo profittevole, ne sia pure manifestamente aumentato il prodotto», ASFi, *Segreteria di Gabinetto*, reg. 88, ins. 2, n. 5, Gianni to Pontenani, Pisa 25/01/1789.

[1353] See ASFi, *Azienda del Tabacco*, reg. 68, "Riscontro generale di magazzino, anno 1782".

[1354] See BMCVe, *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 3650, "Foglio che dimostra la quantità di cadauna specie Tabacchi provvisti per consumo annuo per anno e complessivamente negli anni 8 della prossima spirata condotta", with no place nor date, but 1795.

[1355] According to Venetian officials, «*l'intero consumo di Tabacco nello Stato ascende a 2 milioni e mezzo di libbre*» per year. See BQSVe, *Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX (=532),* 'Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma', f. 140, Venice 08/06/1792.

Venetian officials, entrepreneurs, and experts. While the Venetian-Ottoman wars in the previous decades had not compromised trade between Venetian and Balkan merchants, the new intrusion of the Russian military fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean added to tensions along the 'triple frontier' of the Venetian, Habsburg, and Ottoman Empires[1356], and diverted Ottoman tobacco to other markets[1357]. Therefore, traditional tobacco re-exports from Venice to northern Italy and central Europe dropped sharply in the 1770s: from 1.977.138 pounds in the years 1758-1762, a figure that already represented a loss from the tightening of Ottoman export duties, to a mere 514.967 pounds in the years 1771-1778[1358].

While the western blockade of the Seven Years' War did not affect the tobacco sector in Venice as significantly as in other places, the War of American Independence seriously exacerbated the disruption of tobacco supply from the Atlantic. The Venetian consul in London, Giovanni Valle, had collaborated since 1768 with the tobacco farmers in Venice for the provision of Virginia leaf, praising the periods in which «*si sente il benefizio della quiete delle colonie americane*», but in 1776 he reported that «*stante le turbolenze americane, essendo interrotto il traffico delle colonie, vanno da qui ora all'America i soli bastimenti pagati da questo governo per i trasporti di gente, munizioni ed altro inserviente alla guerra*» with no opportunity for the ships sailing from London to Venice to load tobacco from the Americas[1359].

During the war Venetian authorities began to demonize the dependence on the Ottoman Empire, not only in terms of the negative consequences this had for fiscal revenue, but also for the great annual monetary outflow. This was estimated as some 160,000 ducats in a report signed by Manfrin and more than 200,000 ducats in a letter

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[1356] Filippo Maria Paladini, *Un caos che spaventa : poteri, territori e religioni di frontiera nella Dalmazia della tarda età veneta*, Saggi Marsilio. Presente storico (Venezia: Marsilio, 2002); Brian L. Davies, *The Russo-Turkish War, 1768-1774: Catherine II and the Ottoman Empire* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2016); Stefan Hanss et al., *The Habsburg Mediterranean 1500-1800*, Archiv Für Österreichische Geschichte Bd. 145 (Wien = Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2021).

[1357] Rita Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia: il partito del tabacco e lo Stabilimento Manfrin nel Settecento* (Venezia: La Musa Talìa editrice, 2013).

[1358] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889

[1359] ASVe, *Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli - Londra", reg. 710bis, London 22/03/1771 and 16/01/1776.

written by General Superintendent for Venetian Dalmatia and Albania, Piero Michiel[1360]. Government and high officials discussed with alarm the implications for the Venetian economy. In June 1771, the Venetian consul in Salonika informed the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* of the difficulties Venetian ships faced in loading tobacco, cotton and wool due to the military conflict, underscoring this would result in a lack of essential goods for trade with Venice[1361].

The fiscal and economic policies of the Ottoman Empire also reduced Venetian access to Levantine tobacco. A serious crisis occurred in 1761, when the Sublime Porte increased export duties from 6 to 24 akce (120 = 1 kurus in the Ottoman monetary system) for each okka (about 1.3 kg) of prime quality tobacco, while taxing second quality ('Caradà') at 15 akce and third quality at 12 akce[1362]. Supplies of tobacco from Durazzo and Salonika were hit by an unprecedented price hike, of which the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* were painfully aware, causing concern about the lack of supply for the Venetian tobacco farm[1363].

As a consequence of these difficulties, the Venetians began to perceive their own imperial territory more as an area for tobacco cultivation and an alternative to overseas trade. The experimental projects and agricultural reform practices in the newly conquered Venetian territories in Dalmatia and Albania were closely linked to the discussions on tobacco improvement in Northern Europe but were adapted to Venetian conditions. Tobacco cultivation became an object of increased agro-scientific concern and entrepreneurial investment, as it provided a tool for consolidating what remained of Venetian overseas colonies by integrating them into a coherent economic system. Some Greek Ionian Islands beyond the Adriatic Sea – in particular Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante,

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[1360] Querini Stampalia Library of Venice (QSLVe), *Mss. Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, "Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma", f. 214r. ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Zara 04/04/1763.

[1361] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli – Salonicco", reg. 743, Salonika 18/06/1771.

[1362] ASVe, *Fraterna grande di S. Antonin*, "Archivio privato Perulli", reg. 46, Paradise, Bergoin and Haveson to Perulli and Salvi, Salonika 01/06/1759. Behind the decision to increase duties lay the financial difficulties of the Ottoman Empire around 1760, and the spread of the western habit to snuff led to the Sublime Porte promoting a protectionist policy. For the Ottomans, locally grown tobacco appeared increasingly attractive for meeting the growing domestic market, thereby also becoming a valued source of public revenues. See Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire. 1300-1914* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 947–70; Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden ; New York, NY: Brill, 1996), 119–90.

[1363] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Consoli - Durazzo", reg. 665, Durazzo 02/05/1762.

Santa Maura, and Cerigo – were also important in the imperial economy dominated by the capital city of Venice, providing key commodities such as salt, olive oil and raisins for the *Serenissima*'s manufacture[1364]. The agricultural development of the overseas colonies was undoubtedly designed to subordinate them to the commercial intermediation of Venice. This was the case in a 1769 proposal from Dalmatia for agricultural improvement in the *Stato da Mar*, and also one from Cephalonia, from Count Marin Carburi, to introduce in his own landholdings the cultivation of some exotic crops[1365]. With the Ottoman fiscal retaliation of the early 1760s, tobacco came to be seen as a commodity worthy of being transplanted to the Venetian overseas colonies, and the first attempt to do so was in 1762. After an initial fiasco over leasing the Tobacco Farm, due to the absence of offers, the Senate added to the traditional terms of the contract the possibility of planting tobacco in the overseas territories, and signed a contract with Count Iseppo Mangilli granting him permission to cultivate tobacco in Venetian Dalmatia and on the Levantine islands belonging to Venice[1366].

The yield from Mangilli's first experiment fell short of expectations. Besides, tobacco cultivation required the adoption of specialized techniques, investment and a significant labor input, as tobacco was a labor-intensive crop: the prices set to supply the monopoly did not guarantee an immediate economic return. Indeed, in the face of experiments carried out around Zadar, the *Provveditore* Piero Michiel stated that the owner «*soggiacerebbe al sicuro discapito di soldi 4 pur crescenti della stessa buona moneta per cadauna libbra, senza ricavare neppure la conveniente compensazione per la terra impiegata*»[1367]. However, the desire for autarky charted a new path and gained in intensity in the 1780s. The Senate sought those willing to take on the general Tobacco Farm and cultivate tobacco in the overseas colonies. In 1784, the Avvanzetti Company publicly described its import-substitution project as an opportunity to mitigate «*il danno*

[1364] See Jean-Claude Hocquet, *Le sel et la fortune de Venise*, 2 vols. (Lille: Université de Lille, 1978); Salvatore Ciriacono, *Olio ed ebrei nella Repubblica veneta del Settecento*, Miscellanea di studi e memorie (Venezia: Deputazione di Storia Patria, 1975); Maria Fusaro, *Uva passa: una guerra commerciale tra Venezia e l'Inghilterra (1540-1640)* (Venise: Il Cardo, 1997). In particular, olive oil was both a source of energy for many manufactures, just think to the furnaces for producing glasses and '*contarie*' from the island of Murano, and a raw material, especially for the relevant sector of soap makers in Venice. See Ciriacono, *Olio ed ebrei nella Repubblica veneta del Settecento*, 1–18.

[1365] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Diversorum", reg. 374, ins. 32, Venice 14/08/1769; *Ibidem*, reg. 338, ins. 64, Venice 05/01/1778.

[1366] QSLVe, *Mss. Cl. IV*, *cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, "Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma", ff. 214v-215r.

[1367] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 888, Zara 04/04/1763.

di un passivo commercio col raccolto delle Albanie, che sono attualmente il fondo grandioso del consumo ed il troppo sensibile soggetto del passivo commercio»[1368]. The use of the language on active and passive trade is revealing of the need for tobacco contractors and privileged companies to engage with the economic knowledge and the 'science of commerce' to credit themselves as credible interlocutors to institutions that intended to revitalize the tobacco sector through agricultural innovation.

In the end, the collection of agricultural projects led to the establishment of the large-scale tobacco plantation in the territory of Nona, near Zara in Venetian Dalmatia, run by the privileged company of Girolamo Manfrin. The activities of Manfrin have been widely researched[1369]. Under him the Nona plantation expanded to encompass 1.240 Padoan fields[1370] with leaf storage and processing facilities, employing around 2,000 workers after the extension of the contract to 12 years. It was not by chance that the Senate praised the results of the Nona plantation, because it helped bolster the redistribution of tobacco via Venice towards the traditional markets for re-export[1371].

It is remarkable that the experiments of tobacco plantations in the Venetian imperial peripheries were proposed and implemented by the monopolistic enterprise of the Tobacco Farm, but at the same time they were closely linked to the scientific discussions on agriculture at the time. Manfrin claimed to have chosen the territory of Nona on the basis of «*sodi ed aggiustati principi agronomi*»[1372]. For different reasons related to soil and climate, he discarded other territories of the Venetian Empire: the Venetian mainland, Istria, Venetian Albania and the Greek Ionian islands of Zakynthos, Cephalonia and Corfu. By contrast, Dalmatian soil and in particular «*il solo Territorio di Nona poteva darmi tutto il suolo occorrente vicino al mare, in ottima plaga, ed adattato*

[1368] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889, "Prima carta del Progetto Avvanzetti", Venice 09/01/1784.

[1369] See at least Vincenzo Fontana, "Girolamo Manfrin e La Manifattura Tabacchi a Venezia Di Bernardino Maccaruzzi," *Bollettino Dei Musei Civici Veneziani* 22 (1977): 51–63; Daniela Mazzotta, "La Manifattura Sul Rio Delle Burchielle a Venezia: Due Secoli Di Storia," in *Le Fabbriche Del Tabacco in Italia: Dalle Manifatture al Patrimonio* (Torino: Celid, 2012), 101–12; Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia*, 67–91.

[1370] The 'Padoan field' was about 3.800 mq. See Vittorio Lazzarini, "Antiche Leggi Venete Intorno Ai Proprietari Nella Terraferma," in *Proprietà e Feudi. Offizi, Garzoni, Carcerati in Antiche Leggi Veneziane* (Roma, 1960), 9.

[1371] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889, "Trapunti della quantità dell'introito, transito e consumo per lo stato de' Tabacchi", Venice 06/02/1792.

[1372] QSLVe, *Cl. IV, cod. CCCCLXX (532)*, "Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma", f. 215r, with no date nor place, but 1793.

alla produzione di un Tabacco eguale alla più perfetta Albania»[1373]. Moreover, he used the report on Nona by the General Superintendent for agriculture in Dalmatia, Rados Antonio Michieli Vitturi, to claim the concession of a larger number of fields for planting. According to Vitturi, «*calcolando poter un campo produrre un anno per l'altro quantità di libbre 1.101 di foglia asciutta*»[1374]: on the basis of this report, Manfrin presented to the Senate his request for 1.539 fields more than the number that had been agreed to produce an annual 2.400.000 lbs of tobacco in order to supply all the domestic consumption of tobacco.

In 1790, Nona's success was applauded in a report by Ottavio Cristofoli, one of the agronomists who inspected the plantation that year[1375], and Venetian interest in tobacco extended to other Italian states. Between 1790 and 1795, Manfrin directly promoted several surveys by professors of agronomy and members of agricultural academies[1376]. He was fully involved in the networks of agricultural academies[1377], and his team included experienced and renowned agronomists from various parts of the Venetian Empire and other Italian states: Canon Andrea Zucchini, member of the academy of Georgofili and director of the botanical garden in Florence; Francesco Velluti from Cortona in Tuscany and Count Ottavio Cristofoli from Conegliano in the Venetian mainland, two other members of agricultural academies; Captain Zavoreo, official engineer of the *Serenissima*; landowners Angleo Muzio from Nona, Lorenzo Lacin from Traù, Andrea Bossi from Milan, and Filippo Cecchi from Florence; and Giovanni Belloni a farmer from the Polesine[1378]. All those competing with Manfrin for appointments as privileged company also had to comply with cultivation practices and techniques highlighted by the «*rinomati agronomi inviati sul posto per ordine pubblico*»[1379], which became a basic prerequisite for entering the sector.

[1373] *Ibidem*, ff. 215v-216r.
[1374] *Ibidem*, f. 140r
[1375] See Ottavio Cristofoli, *Memoria Agraria Scritta in Zara Dal Sig. Ottavio Cristofoli Di Conegliano* (Venezia: 1790, n.d.).
[1376] More information can be found in Tolomeo, *Imprenditoria e società in Dalmazia*, 71–92.
[1377] Thanks to the brilliant results of the tobacco plantation of Nona, Manfrin became a correspondent member of the Florentine academy of Georgofili in 1791, see Museum Correr Library of Venice (MCLVe), *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 2380, ins. 71.
[1378] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889, "Relazione dei tre agrari forestieri canonico Andrea Zucchini, Ottavio Cristofoli e Francesco Velluti", Zara 22/08/1790.
[1379] MCLVe, *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 3650, "Affare Tabacchi - Progetto Manfrin", with no place and date, but 1795.

The inclusion of agricultural experts seemed key to enable a production of tobacco guided by «*buone regole*»[1380]. The specialist treatises on tobacco cultivation and processing that Venice and other Italian states produced in the period evidence how Enlightenment discussions were adapted to the Mediterranean context in a complex and creative process of appropriation. The Venetian publishing industry was interested in foreign books and treatises on tobacco cultivation written by individual experts and agronomic groups looking for alternatives to the traditional provision of American leaf and translated into Italian as crucial sources for local debate and field trials. Indeed, the institutional efforts were accompanied by several publishing initiatives aimed at disseminating know-how on tobacco cultivation. In 1781, the government promoted Abbot Marco Fossadoni's translation of a French manual on the cultivation and manufacture of tobacco - a rarity in pre-revolutionary France, where, since the 1720s, tobacco cultivation had been officially banned in favor of purchases from North America, but it was still allowed in some privileged provinces such as Alsace and Flanders. That same year the *Nuovo Giornale d'Italia* informed readers about the publication in Darmstadt by Johann Gottlieb Backhauss of a book on tobacco cultivation, explicitly aimed at promoting the substitution of American leaf with varieties grown in Europe[1381]. And among Manfrin's papers are notes referring to the entry 'tobacco' written by Louis de Jaucourt in the *Encyclopédie*[1382].

As the Nona example shows, entrepreneurs such as Manfrin not only immersed themselves in agronomy, but also drew on technical expertise from different regions, encompassing both agricultural and animal husbandry, given the importance of integrating tobacco cultivation and cattle farming for the fertility of the soil[1383]. Expertise was acquired through the mobility of individuals with know-how. For Nona, 119 growers were recruited from among farmers of inland Italian states, whose expertise came from tobacco cultivation in the privileged territories and in the interstices where the monopoly was not implemented[1384]. Manfrin also employed growers from the Ottoman Empire and

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[1380] *Ibidem*, "Affare Tabacchi - Progetto Rigamonti", with no place and date, but 1795.
[1381] See "*Nuovo giornale d'Italia*, vol. V, 1781, 407.
[1382] MCLVe, *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 3650, Venice 05/11/1796.
[1383] QSLVe, *Mss. Cl. IV*, *cod. CCCCLXX (=532)*, "Tabacchi di Dalmazia e Terraferma", Venice 08/06/1792, ff. 137-142
[1384] ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889, "Foglio dimostrante uomini, animali e strumenti trasportati da Venezia a Nona, 1790-1791".

the '*Sette comuni*' to supervise workers at Nona contracted from surrounding villages[1385]. The knowledge of farmers was considered of importance for regionalizing agronomic research on tobacco cultivation, and a skilled workforce was particularly crucial for the domestic production of quality leaf on a par with that of Ottoman Albania.

We should remain skeptical about the agronomic projects, especially with regard to quality[1386], since the Tobacco Farm still needed to purchase tobacco from abroad in the 1790s. Over the years, however, the harvest in the new colonial plantations did become more substantial and an increasing supply of leaf was guaranteed for manufacture on the Venetian mainland. The first experimental harvest in Nona was in 1786, and between 1787 and 1794 the annual average yield was 606,376 pounds, concentrated largely in the latter years due to various initial physiological obstacles[1387]. The project protected by the government and financed by Manfrin had moreover enabled Nona to achieve a much more significant output than tobacco cultivation across the Venetian mainland over a century of local privileges. This outcome was achieved thanks to the innovation in tobacco plantations, as a result of the combination of the adhesion to agronomic principles, the reliance on skilled planters from the Ottoman territories and the Venetian *Terraferma*, and the financial expertise in the management of the Tobacco Farm.

4. Conclusion

The Tobacco Farms were integral components of fiscal machinery aimed at maximizing tax revenues through monopolistic controls over tobacco distribution, but they proved to act as active market participants. In this respect, the features of the monopolistic enterprise and of the tobacco market highly affected the alternative between buying on the market or internalizing part of the commodity chain. With regard to foreign tobacco leaves, the Tobacco Farms continued to rely on effective and extended mercantile networks of supplier merchants who could assure a long-term and stable provision of a

[1385] ASVe, *Miscellanea Soranzo*, reg. 14, "Relazione della Conferenza circa il sopralluogo effettuato sullo stabilimento di Nona dal Conte Rados Michieli Vitturi", Venice 08/06/1792.
[1386] On the scarce effectiveness of the 18th-century Venetian agrarian policy in Dalmatia, see Paladini, *Un caos che spaventa*, 95–100.
[1387] MCLVe, *Codice Cicogna*, reg. 3650, "Foglio che dimostra la quantità di cadauna specie tabacchi provvisti per consume anno per anno", with no place and date, but 1795. For the organization of tobacco shipping from Nona to Venice, see ASVe, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, I series, "Tabacco", reg. 889, Venice 11/05/1795.

varied range of tobaccos. These relationships were crucial, as they allowed the Tobacco Farm to maintain quality and supply consistency, which were vital for their operations and profitability. Suppliers who managed to secure long-term contracts often did so because of their proven reliability and strategic position within the tobacco trade network, underscoring the mutual dependence between the Tobacco Farm and these commercial networks. The pattern emerging from sources suggests that the monopolistic enterprise, as the biggest buyer in the market, shaped the equilibrium in the long-distance tobacco trade: while the number of suppliers for the tobacco monopoly was relatively high, the bulk of the provisions (up to 80-90%) was usually in the hand of a short list of 4-5 merchant houses with strong ties and relations with the tobacco farmers.

The development of a system of privileged manufactures under the supervision of the Tobacco Farm highlights another crucial footprint on the whole economic sector. On the one hand, state protection played again a role, issuing regulatory rules that defended the economic interests of the privileged manufacturers, as well as the revenues' sake. For example, the possession of devices to crush or grind tobacco was strictly prohibited. On the other hand, the diversity of tobacco products available in the market was a direct result of the sophisticated knowledge and professional experience within the Tobacco Farm itself. Expertise at the local level elaborated global products and transnational economic information to produce specific tobacco goods that distinguished themselves from those of other states due to the particular recipes codified within the privileged manufactures.

Innovation in tobacco cultivation was markedly different between the two regions. In a first moment, we can register a certain similitude in the efforts to contractualize illegal tobacco cultivation in privileged jurisdictions or remote communities, like the fiefdom of Chitignano or the '*Sette comuni*' in the Vicenza province. These experiments were significant and contributed a significant share to the supply of raw tobacco for the Tobacco Farm manufactures. However, the quantities provided were never enough to significantly reduce imports from abroad, and, above all, the quality was always considered unsatisfactory. Therefore, alternative solutions were sought, marking a notable divergence between the two case studies at this point. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, attempts to liberalize the tobacco sector led to financial failure, suggesting that without adequate control and expertise, tobacco cultivation could not be effectively managed. Contrastingly, in the Venetian Empire, especially in territories like the Ionian

Islands and Dalmatia, the protagonists of the Tobacco Farm embraced principles of agronomy and economic knowledge to enhance productivity and profitability. These efforts were part of a broader strategy to innovate within the constraints of a monopolistic framework, demonstrating the role of the monopolistic enterprise in promoting agricultural innovation to bolster economic and fiscal outcomes. The Tobacco Farm's plantation in Nona represents a case in point: the aim to integrate the overseas domain in the imperial economy, the combination of scientific and economic knowledge, skills laborers and farmers from a transnational and transimperial environment, and the financial expertise in the management of the monopoly eventually contributed to the innovation and import-substitution processes.

In sum, this comprehensive approach to managing the tobacco trade underscores the overlapping interests and complex interactions between state institutions and mercantile networks that surrounded the Tobacco Farms. Institutions could leverage economic activities to facilitate state-building processes, enhancing their administrative reach and fiscal capabilities. The case studies of the Tobacco Farm in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire provide a vivid illustration of the pivotal role played by state-monitored and monopolistic enterprises in shaping the early modern economy, particularly in the context of global commodities like tobacco, to an extent that encompassed both economic innovation and import-substitution processes.

Conclusion

Tobacco's commodification in the early modern Mediterranean

In the intricate world of early modern global trade and fiscal growth, tobacco became a key commodity. Its spread across continents in the 17th and 18th centuries was outstanding, but shaped by local, regional, and imperial forces. While historical accounts of tobacco's global commodification often focus on the Atlantic world, where the Americas were the main producers for European markets, this thesis contends that a broader perspective reveals a more fragmented system. This system was influenced by a variety of global and regional factors, reflecting the broader dynamics of early modern globalization. Rather than a uniform process, the circulation of global commodities in this era was shaped by diverse and localized forces. Unlike other extra-European tropical goods that circulated on global markets in the early modern age, tobacco's adaptability to temperate climates and diverse soil conditions fostered a multifold process of transplantation. The American output increased significantly with fundamental supply-side changes: its cultivation had been mainly oriented to domestic and local consumption, but Amerindian communities began to conceive tobacco as a crop for export markets and, then, European colonizers promoted big scale production with plantations and slaves. At the same time, the circulation of its seeds contributed to the domestication of the plant at the four corners of the world, from West Africa to the Chinese Empire. Various regions became not only consumers, but also key producers of tobacco that reached export markets through a transnational mercantile intermediation. Accordingly, tobacco's rise as a global commodity was marked by a complex, multi-national, and trans-cultural transformation, with different regions adapting cultivation techniques to suit local conditions. A closer inspection reveals a segmented global tobacco trade, where different production systems competed to meet market demands, both at the regional and inter-regional level.

In this scenario, while in the Atlantic world tobacco's journey was linked to colonial exploitation, with American plantations worked by enslaved Africans, the Mediterranean followed a different path. The first steps of tobacco's commodification in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire reveal the main factors that allowed transimperial commodities to float across cultural, political, and local fiscal borders. In particular, the interplay of economic information, privileged profits, and sovereign revenues was central to the spread of tobacco in the region. Far from being passive tools for the reception of new global goods, the economic projects negotiated at that time by mercantile networks and institutions, particularly those overseeing fiscal and commercial activities, actively shaped characteristics and conditions for its circulation. These actors influenced the flow of this new commodity and played a significant role in its transformation into a global product. The Italian peninsula, in this sense, mirrored broader trends, with tobacco evolving from a colonial novelty into a valuable economic resource. Moreover, the tobacco trade offered regional institutions and economic networks a chance to participate in the larger process of early modern globalization. Privileged licenses and monopolies were central to the efforts of sovereign powers and mercantile networks to exploit tobacco for profits and revenues, especially in the early period when consumer demand was still uncertain. To some extent, the negotiation between mercantile networks and fiscal institutions determined solutions that implied the protection 'out of the market' of the tobacco sector and, most of all, of the privileged merchants themselves, who were granted the exclusive right to import or produce tobacco. Merchants with ties to Atlantic trade ensured access to colonial markets and vital economic intelligence. For example, in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany the most relevant projects for tobacco trade came from the community of Sephardic Jews based in the free port of Livorno. Their Iberian connections and extended mercantile networks gave them a fundamental vantage point, also thanks to the direct experience in tobacco production acquired by some members of their community thanks to the mobility in transimperial spaces in the Americas. By contrast, the first commercialization of the new global commodity in the Venetian Empire was in the hands of local merchants with solid relations with English and Flemish correspondents who provided them with colonial tobacco. However, securing sovereign protection and exclusive rights was crucial for successful investment in the new industry. A variety of licenses were issued for tobacco production and trade, striking a balance between

privileged profits and increased tax revenues, ultimately leading to monopolies dominating the sector. As these monopolies grew stronger, early plans for local tobacco cultivation were abandoned, as monopolistic merchants, controlling imports, lobbied to prevent the spread of domestic production in order to safeguard their business interests.

Moreover, the circulation of our commodity in the early modern Mediterranean was influenced by the rise of alternative growing-regions and the emergence of dominant mercantile networks for tobacco redistribution in the region. The Eastern Mediterranean, particularly within the Ottoman Empire, gradually became a key area for tobacco cultivation, where market-driven plantations thrived in places like Macedonia and Albania. This shift marked a wider transformation: once an exotic colonial product, tobacco became integrated into the global marketplace through local modifications and regional trade networks. Historical records from the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire show a significant change between the 17th and 18th centuries. Tobacco was mainly a colonial product from the Americas in the mid-1600s: it reached the main ports of the Western Mediterranean mainly on board of English and Dutch vessels that redistributed colonial commodities from the metropolitan commercial hub of Atlantic Europe in return for Mediterranean and Levantine goods. In the central decades of the 17th century, tobacco was a relevant item of this set of colonial commodities and its spread was deeply associated with the Atlantic-Mediterranean connections. However, by the next century it had increasingly become an import from the Levant with a striking contrast with the imaginary built around tobacco, deeply intertwined with the New World and black slaves' workforce. This change was driven by a certain economic dynamism of rural Ottoman areas, where in the 18th century tobacco cultivation became more market-oriented, particularly in the regions surrounding ports like Durazzo and Salonika. Increased production in these Ottoman sites fostered connections between Mediterranean ports and trans-imperial spaces. Jewish mercantile networks in Livorno used their established presence in Salonika and collaboration with Ottoman Jews to get direct access to local tobacco growers and facilitate a key trade route, making Salonika the primary tobacco supplier for the Tuscan tobacco monopoly. In Venice, Greek and Montenegrin subjects played a vital role, mediating trade across Ottoman borders to secure tobacco supplies, especially from Durazzo. In addition, the institutional framework of the commercial empire played an active role. For example, among the duties of the Venetian

consul in Durazzo, there was the task to negotiate directly with Ottoman authorities prices and conditions to secure a steady flow of tobacco for export to Venice. This issue was of public interest not only due to the desire to protect the trans-imperial mercantile interests of its subjects active in the *Stato da Mar*, but also for two key strategic objectives: the financial stability of the tobacco monopoly and maintaining the primacy over the redistribution of goods from the Levant to the markets of the Po Valley and Central Europe, including the tobacco leaves that supplied the local monopolies. Imperial interests and trading networks were both crucial in controlling tobacco imports.

Intermediaries and patterns for consumption

The establishment of institutional and commercial solutions for tobacco's circulation went in parallel with significant change in consumption patterns. '*Excitantia*' have long been an intriguing area of study, offering insight into new consumption habits that reached a broader portion of society in the early modern period. Tobacco, in particular, stood out among early modern stimulants such as chocolate and coffee, rapidly shifting from a luxury product to a widely accessible commodity due to significant price reductions. This shift towards greater affordability allowed tobacco to penetrate various social classes at a time when other stimulants remained primarily the domain of the elite.

However, tobacco faced strong opposition and resistance to its use, mainly due to its association with moral decay and social disorder. Its spread as a recreational commodity involved navigating significant doubts and criticisms, making its initial acceptance a contested process. This new and exotic stimulant offered effects on both the body and mind that were valued by many physicians, though amidst a heated debate. Additionally, moral concerns focused on tobacco as an intoxicant, not necessarily due to its health effects, but because of its alleged social consequences. It was often associated with paganism and linked to behaviors deemed socially unacceptable, such as drunkenness, laziness, and wastefulness. Its increasing circulation sparked a transnational debate across European societies regarding the medical benefits of the new American plant, with some supporting its use and others opposing it. However, even medical

treatises written by authors who endorsed tobacco as a remedy for numerous ailments often included moral and social critiques. Medical writings of the time often sought to restrict tobacco's use to a narrow medicinal context.

These efforts were largely shaped by consumption policies that reflected the worldview of the ruling classes, aimed at reinforcing the social distance between the elite and the common people. Indeed, tobacco was commonly associated with social disorder, distracting people from their family and community responsibilities. These concerns clearly reflected the anxieties of the upper classes. Despite this, lower-class groups found ways to trade and consume tobacco as a recreational commodity, alongside its medicinal use. Unlike other exotic stimulants of the period, particularly in contrast to the introduction of chocolate into the European market, tobacco quickly spread across all social classes. Its consumption pattern did not follow the top-down model seen with elite-driven products like sugar, coffee, and tea. Instead, it took root from below, particularly in the Italian states, outside the main centers of fashion and wholesale trade. The active participation of the poor in early tobacco consumption in the Italian peninsula parallels observations made on the Iberian Empires, highlighting the differing commercialization paths of tobacco and chocolate. According to the analysis of sources on the first diffusion of tobacco in cities like Livorno and Venice, early consumption was largely driven by lower social groups, such as port workers, small traders, and shopkeepers. Sailors and soldiers aboard Venetian galleys, many from from the eastern shores of the Adriatic, played a pivotal role in spreading tobacco among common consumers of the *Stato da Mar* in the mid-17th century. Their movements between different regions of imperial spaces allowed them to act as conduits for the exchange of goods, including tobacco, facilitating its diffusion across social classes. Even coerced laborers were part of tobacco's first spread in the Mediterranean. For example, it became a common necessity for slaves and convicts held in the Bagno of Livorno: during their transport to Livorno, in addition to basic provisions, there was a regular supply of tobacco leaves, which slaves used for personal enjoyment and relief. As a matter of fact, tobacco was among compensations to the increase of serious dietary difficulties that affected the urban and rural poor of the early modern societies. As a narcotic and intoxicant, it provided a form of relief for working-class individuals, burdened by arduous labor. Despite medical and moral

criticisms, disadvantaged groups pushed back, asserting their right to participate in the circulation of this new global commodity

In a broader context, individuals such as sailors, soldiers, and slaves, who moved (voluntarily or not) across imperial territories for military and commercial purposes, were crucial to the dissemination of tobacco consumption. Their mobility enabled them to bridge regions with distinct economic and cultural characteristics, promoting the flow of goods and practices between different parts of the Mediterranean and beyond. This circulation was not just the result of top-down policies or the imitation , but also of the actions of these transitory figures, whose roles in the military and mercantile systems positioned them at the forefront of the global spread of tobacco, making them key agents in the birth of such a contested consumer good. Moreover, those initially involved in the tobacco trade were not prominent figures within the mercantile community. Tobacco's story challenges the conventional narrative of how exotic commodities were embraced in Europe: the idea that Old World societies first used these goods as medicines and later adopted them as recreational substances. In reality, tobacco's transition occurred alongside and sometimes beneath the cultural debates about its benefits and risks, with varying significance depending on social status and context.

As a regulated tobacco trade was eventually established, balancing privileged profits with fiscal revenues, the intense criticism of tobacco began to fade, allowing for its broader acceptance in the 18th century. Tobacco acquired new, positive social associations, particularly among intellectuals, scholars, and academics, who valued it for its ability to improve concentration. At the same time, the notion of tobacco as a source of excessive indulgence was increasingly redefined. Early writings often linked tobacco to fears of diabolical intoxication and drunkenness, but these concerns gradually gave way to perspectives that emphasized its calming effects, such as its ability to curb desire and mitigate the consequences of excessive alcohol consumption. Moreover, tobacco became a symbol of power and prestige, especially within the higher echelons of society. The association of tobacco with 'honest luxury' and status made it an important part of elite social rituals and gatherings. However, the diverse social practices surrounding tobacco consumption complicate the picture, challenging the rigid typifications imposed by cultural constructs as the traditional concern with 'status'. In particular, specific groups

within early modern societies adapted tobacco for their own purposes, challenging and subverting the dominant social values attached to it. For example, lower-class individuals and marginalized communities used tobacco in ways that contrasted with its elite associations, turning it into a means of asserting their own social identities. Women's access to tobacco consumption in the early modern age serves as an interesting case of creative appropriation. Smoking and chewing remained predominantly a male habit in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire of the 17th and 18th centuries. While tobacco use by women was often associated with immoral behavior, they corroded and converted the social meaning of snuff that increasingly became associated with refinement, gentility, and good manners. These shifts in tobacco's use created varied responses across different social classes, contributing to the formation of diverse attitudes toward its consumption. The evolving perceptions of tobacco, ranging from a luxury good to a commodity for the masses, led to an ongoing negotiation about how and to what extent different groups could engage in the emerging consumer culture.

This dynamic interaction reveals the complexity of early modern consumerism, where tobacco's widespread adoption was not a straightforward process but rather a contested space, shaped by both elite desires for distinction and the ways in which subaltern groups found meaning in consumption. The diffusion of tobacco consumption, therefore, underscores the role of consumption as a social and cultural battlefield where economic, political, and social forces intersected, allowing diverse groups to carve out their place in the changing landscape of early modern global trade. An analysis of tobacco consumption per capita in the 18th century reveals that markets in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire were significant centers for global goods, with Venetian consumption notably surpassing that of Tuscany. One of the key reasons for this higher consumption in Venice can be traced to the changes in the tobacco trade across the Mediterranean. Unlike the previous century, when tobacco was primarily a colonial product from the Americas, the large-scale production of tobacco in the Ottoman Empire led to an increased flow of tobacco into Venice. As a result, Venice, which maintained a prominent role in the trade between the eastern Mediterranean and the Italian peninsula throughout the early modern period, saw a higher circulation of the product. Remarkably, the demand for tobacco proved resistant to economic fluctuations, maintaining a steady level even during times of sharp increases in bread prices. This was in stark contrast to

other goods, such as wine, whose consumption patterns in our case studies were more closely tied to economic stability. The resilience of tobacco consumption during these periods of economic stress further underscores the transformation in consumer behavior, where tobacco began to break down traditional class-based distinctions in the consumption of leisure goods.

The tobacco monopolies between state-building and long-distance trade

Tobacco monopolies became a significant and widespread feature of early modern fiscal systems. As one of the most pervasive colonial commodities in Europe, tobacco secured an important place in public finance and in the fiscal tightening processes that defined early modern states, deviating from the typical model suggested by advocates of the 'fiscal state' that regards bureaucratic centralization in tax administration as indispensable . The debates surrounding the establishment of tobacco monopolies reveal the motivations and objectives that led to their adoption. The collection of economic and administrative information was critical, and mercantile expertise was indispensable in providing fiscal institutions with a clearer understanding of tobacco circulation. Merchants were involved not only in the importation of raw tobacco but also in managing the monopolies and collecting the revenue. Tax farming offered merchants a new source of profit and was highly valued by governments as it ensured a stable, predictable income, unlike the volatile revenue from other forms of taxation. In particular, rulers drew on the patrimonial model of *ius prohibendi* and regalian rights for the implementation of tobacco taxation, taking inspiration from the governance systems used for salt, rather than relying on customs duties that typically applied to other global commodities.

The presence of fiscal monopolies on salt and tobacco has often been viewed as indicative of backwardness or as a remnant of earlier patrimonial taxation systems, in line with the 'domain state' model. This criticism is particularly pronounced in the historiography of the 'ancient Italian states,' where fiscal monopolies, and more broadly, *appalti* (tax farming and revenue concessions), are seen as both ineffective and harmful.

On one hand, outsourcing the management of these monopolies is thought to have resulted in reduced public revenues, as the government relinquished part of the income in favor of ensuring profits for tax farmers. On the other hand, the restrictions placed on individual economic activity were believed to stifle economic development. However, the fiscal monopolies on salt and tobacco were essential to the state budgets of both the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, playing a vital role in their public finance systems, accounting from 19.5% to 29.5% of state's income. They not only provided a consistent flow of income but also helped the state manage the escalating costs of military campaigns and mounting public debt. Both the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire underwent significant financial pressures during the mid-17th century, particularly during wars such as the Thirty Years' War and the War of the Austrian Succession. The funds generated from the tobacco and salt monopolies were vital in supporting these military expenditures, often through price hikes that boosted revenues during times of conflict. In particular, salto and tobacco monopolies also played a crucial role in managing the growing public debt of both regions. The predictable and substantial nature of these revenues made them key instruments for securing both short-term loans and long-term financial restructuring.

When examining the traditional interpretations of early modern Italian states' taxation in the 17th and 18th centuries, the shift toward taxes on consumption is often attributed to the commercial decline of the Mediterranean. Historically, the imposition of new forms of direct taxation and efforts to reform land registries in the 15th and 18th centuries led to an increased reliance on indirect taxes, such as gabelle, taxes, and monopolies, which burdened the consumption of the population. However, this view falls short in light of more recent analyses of indirect taxation in 18th-century Britain: their findings shed light on the favor to indirect taxes over direct ones in the British fiscal system, but also on the importance of the private consortia which leased customs and excise to generate an outstanding increase in fiscal revenues. This highlights the need to consider the political decisions and external factors that shaped the adoption of specific fiscal instruments, deemed best suited to respond to immediate needs. The case of tobacco suggests that the fiscal changes were not merely a reaction to the outflow of wealth from the Mediterranean. Societies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire were important markets for global commodities. Local economic actors had the resources

and long-distance connections to facilitate tobacco's redistribution across local, Mediterranean, and global markets. This social dynamism was a valuable resource for governments, and the measures taken by fiscal institutions must be understood in light of this. The creation of tobacco monopolies in the two case studies allowed their governments to capitalize on the global trade of a commodity that they could not directly control as other European powers with new colonial empires in the Americas. By borrowing from the patrimonial model of taxation and collaborating with mercantile networks, fiscal institutions expanded their jurisdiction and exerted greater pressure on society to mobilize more resources.

The evaluations made by officials and economic actors involved in the establishment of tobacco monopolies confirmed their expectations. Moreover, the negotiation between fiscal institutions and mercantile networks around the definition of regulatory rules confirms the importance of commercial expertise for a good start of the tobacco monopoly, but it also reveals other interesting reasons that made this specific solution suitable for early modern sovereign powers. In particular, the fiscalization of tobacco emerged largely due to the significant drop in its prices during the 17th century. Prices for tobacco fell dramatically, both for American and Ottoman varieties. This notable decrease in production costs made tobacco an attractive commodity for taxation, as it was affordable at both the wholesale and farm levels. The low farm prices in the mid-17th century allowed merchants from the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire to acquire tobacco cheaply, making it feasible for the government to impose taxes that could account for up to 100% of the market price. Moreover, authorities could easily implement taxes without significant resistance since tobacco was seen as a non-essential luxury or 'vice'. Unlike taxes on essential goods, the tax on tobacco did not lead to public unrest, as it was voluntary—people could choose to stop consuming it if they wished. Unlike direct taxes on land, which often faced opposition from local authorities, tobacco monopolies were negotiated with economic actors, with rewards and concessions made to balance interests. So, the tobacco monopoly not only provided a stable revenue stream but also allowed states to avoid unrest typically associated with taxes on essential goods. By taxing a luxury commodity and framing it as a voluntary choice, authorities could justify the tax while maintaining social stability, offering a clear example of how early modern taxation systems were adapted to both economic conditions and social contexts.

Finally, the fiscal burden imposed by tobacco monopolies was distributed in a way that preserved the existing social order. The 'tax repercussion' affected the lower classes the most, without posing a significant risk of uprisings. While state coffers, wealthy merchants, privileged companies running the monopolies, and financiers of public debt benefited, the poorest consumers were most adversely affected due to the regressive nature of tobacco taxation. In this way, tobacco monopolies contributed to the worsening of social inequalities during the fiscalization process of the early modern period.

An analysis of tobacco revenues throughout the early modern period shows a steady increase in public income for the states and privileged profits for the contractors managing the monopolies. The structure of these monopolies was aligned with the broader logic of early modern taxation. As seen in the case studies, the 'fiscal constitutions' of these states were characterized by a heavy reliance on indirect taxation, reflecting a general trend in early modern fiscal policy that was also evident in England's excise-based system. From this perspective, officials recognized the importance of taxing domestic consumption to support public finances, following the same lessons learned from the English model. However, this approach did not necessarily lead to a centralized, bureaucratic administration. Instead, privileged business interests and patrimonial taxation played a prominent role in the fiscal systems of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, particularly through the success of tax farming and fiscal monopolies, with revenue shares similar to those in 18th-century Bourbon monarchies. In the case of tobacco, the priority was to increase revenues through collaboration with privileged businesses rather than focusing on developing a centralized state apparatus and free domestic markets.

The investigation of the two case studies challenges the traditional distinction between tax farming and direct administration. Theorists of the 'fiscal state' often argue that the emergence of centralized tax collection in the 18th century marked a shift toward modern fiscal systems. While this model has been widely used for global comparisons, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany's move to direct administration reveals continuity with its earlier tax farming system. The Grand Duke remained directly involved in the economic activities and profits of the General Tax Farm, while the administrators of the new fiscal system and the personnel of the *Azienda del Tabacco* were recruited from the skilled labor

force of the General Tax Farm. In contrast, in the Venetian Empire the tobacco monopoly continued to be farmed out throughout the early modern period. The traditional method of stimulating competition among financiers by granting monopolies through the auction of the *pubblico incanto* provided an effective alternative to both the general tax farm model and the direct administration used in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Thus, tax farming should be understood in the context of concrete historical realities, where it was not necessarily an inefficient solution, but rather the most effective given the circumstances.

The successful implementation of tobacco monopolies can be attributed to a combination of factors: the integration into global trade networks, the revival of patrimonial taxation, the pursuit of profit through monopoly licenses, the adaptation of foreign models to local conditions, and the emergence of consumerism. These elements worked in concert, allowing states to generate significant revenue while minimizing social unrest, as the taxation of a non-essential commodity like tobacco did not provoke widespread opposition. Instead of conflicting, these factors reinforced the existing social order by mobilizing resources and perpetuating economic disparities. Tobacco taxation provided an alternative pathway for increasing state revenues that differed from the bureaucratic centralization models often associated with fiscal modernity. The key drivers of this process were not bureaucratic structures, but rather the involvement of mercantile networks and fiscal institutions negotiating tax collection and trade policies, especially regarding global commodities. This hybrid approach, which blended patrimonial taxation with merchant involvement in global trade, proved to be an effective method for early modern states to generate revenue. The success of the tobacco monopolies in the Venetian Empire and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany underscores how these fiscal policies were adapted to meet the demands of the time, demonstrating that tax farming could be a practical and efficient means of managing state finances, particularly in the context of expanding global trade. These monopolies exemplify how states could leverage global markets to their advantage, while also navigating the complexities of local economic and social structures.

Ultimately, tobacco monopolies highlight the intersection of fiscal policy and global trade, revealing the crucial role played by mercantile networks and patrimonial

taxation in shaping long-distance circulation of commodities in the early modern age. Rather than centralizing power in a traditional bureaucratic sense, these monopolies show how states could manage resources through negotiation with economic actors, reinforcing existing social hierarchies while securing essential revenue. The success of these monopolies not only demonstrates the 'puzzle' between state-building and long-distance trade, but also highlights the role of patrimonial taxation and its combination with mercantile networks involved in the long-distance trade of new global commodities. The regulatory framework established by sovereign powers through the legal monopoly on tobacco was precisely the kind of arrangement sought by merchants, who benefitted from operating within a protected and privileged trade environment.

Negotiation processes and the social infrastructure of early modern institutions

The creation of tobacco monopolies led to a unique social and economic framework designed to balance competing interests and diverse needs. The core objective of public finance (i.e., ensuring stable revenue for the state) had to align with the profit motives of the monopolistic merchants investing in the sector. However, numerous other stakeholders also sought access to the tobacco supply chain, including long-distance merchants aiming to secure favorable terms for the re-export trade. By examining the interactions between these various interests, it becomes clear that negotiation was at the heart of maintaining the monopoly's existence, helping to mediate conflicts that could otherwise disrupt the system.

Merchants and trade officials operated within a shared environment that facilitated this negotiation process. Key figures within strategic institutional bodies, such as the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia* in Venice or the Director of the Livorno Customs House, played a crucial role. These officials were not merely experts in taxation or trade; they were also deeply involved in mercantile activities, including long-distance trade, manufacturing, and public debt. This overlap of roles has often been underappreciated in earlier studies of the commercial and political economy of the time. Their multiple

affiliations allowed these figures to act as intermediaries between institutions and market forces, a pivotal function in a business sector where the involvement of mercantile networks was essential.

In fact, these mercantile networks, which operated in the long-distance tobacco trade, were in an advantageous position to secure the monopoly. Jewish mercantile networks in Livorno became key players in managing the tobacco monopoly, a role they maintained for several decades.While they did not hold a full monopoly on the tobacco trade itself, Jewish merchants were indispensable to the successful operation of the tobacco monopoly. This situation led to a proper specialization in the sector of some specific families, often part of smaller commercial houses, that were able to leverage their expertise to secure crucial positions in state-owned monopolies. For instance, the Levi family played a central role in the monopolistic company, steadily increasing their stake in the business, particularly from 1663 until the 1720s. Their involvement in the tobacco monopoly resulted in a substantial rise in annual rents paid to the Tuscan state, from 105,000 lire to 262,500 lire by the early 18th century. The Levi family's expertise was not just in tobacco trade but extended to managing various public contracts, including brandy and paper sales. This broad commercial experience made them highly valuable to the Tuscan fiscal institutions. Although initially the tobacco monopoly was a risky venture, the Levi family's management improved over time, contributing significantly to state revenues. However, this specialization went hand in hand with partnerships with Christian merchant houses, reflecting the intertwined nature of Jewish and Christian mercantile activities in Livorno. The Levi family collaborated with major Christian commercial houses like the Corboli in Genoa and Huygens in Livorno, while the *accomandite* created for the tobacco monopoly were funded by members of the Florentine patriciate, like the the Senator Ferrante Capponi and the Marquis Giovanni Galeazzo Gerini.

With regard to the Venetian Empire, a key factor in the growth of the revenues from the tobacco monopoly was the increasing involvement of Greek mercantile networks in the tobacco trade. Greek merchants, particularly those established in Venice, played a crucial role in sourcing tobacco from the Ottoman Empire, notably from Salonika and Durazzo, and ensuring a stable supply for the Venetian monopoly. By the early 18th

century, Greek trading houses like the *Eredi Andrea Cottoni*, *Fratelli Sarro*, and *Lambro Maruzzi* became major players in the tobacco market. These networks were able to circumvent the challenges posed by conflicts with the Ottoman Empire and establish reliable trade routes. Greek families also began investing directly in the tobacco monopoly, knowing a similar process of specialization as in the Tuscan case. The company *Cottoni, Maruzzi & Zanchi* formed a consortium that controlled the monopoly from 1728 to 1743. This partnership significantly boosted the tobacco monopoly's revenue, which increased from 35.036 ducati to 152.145 ducati annually. The involvement of these Greek merchants and their alliances with Venetian nobility and financiers, such as Giovanni Battista Salvi and Count Iseppo Mangilli, further solidified their influence in the tobacco business.

The resources and capital available to these networks were crucial for operating transnational businesses and establishing themselves as key partners with fiscal institutions. However, in both the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, the dominance of mercantile networks in managing tobacco monopolies began to shift in the early 18th century. By the 1730s, both regions began to experience stagnation in tobacco revenues, signaling a turning point in the management of these monopolies. A significant factor in this decline was the growing difficulty in maintaining profitable contracts amidst issues like contraband and market challenges. This period marked a critical shift, where new financial groups began to emerge. The transition was further influenced by the role of fiscal institutions. In both the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire, the shift in control of the tobacco monopolies was largely driven by the intervention of powerful financiers and new partnerships that integrated both local and transnational financial capital. For instance, in Venice, a new consortium of Greek financiers headed by the Perulli family, alongside Venetian elites, took control of the tobacco monopoly after 1743, significantly improving its fiscal performance. In the Tuscan state, the tobacco monopoly was integrated into the General Tax Farm system under the Lorraine dynasty, marking a shift from earlier, more localized management to a more centralized system. This change reflects broader economic and administrative shifts in early modern Europe, where the increasing complexity of global trade, coupled with the need for greater state control, led to the consolidation of tobacco monopolies into the hands of larger financial groups. The collaboration between mercantile expertise and state institutions, such as the

French-Lorraine financial networks in Tuscany, proved instrumental in reviving the tobacco sector, particularly through innovations in product quality and marketing strategies. So, the transition in the tobacco monopolies in Tuscany and Venice illustrates the shift from smaller, specialized mercantile networks to larger, more integrated financial consortia. This shift was driven by a combination of market challenges, fiscal institutional interventions, and the evolving needs of state governance. The role of emerging financial elites, who were able to combine capital, expertise in financial administration, and connections with both local and global markets, played a pivotal role in revitalizing the tobacco monopolies and reshaping the economic landscape of early modern Europe.

Undoubtedly, the definition of negotiation channels around the tobacco monopoly played a decisive role in establishing a balance between competing interests. However, this balance was not without its challenges. The monopoly created winners and losers, and the social structure surrounding it did not merely rely on coercion or repression against taxpayers or excluded merchants. Instead, the monopoly functioned as a kind of 'negotiating arena', where various stakeholders - through petitions, supplications, and informal means - could present their demands and seek compromises. Merchants often used their connections with institutions and magistrates to advocate for more favorable fiscal and commercial conditions to support their business operations.

Businessmen and state magistracies developed a well-established model of dialogue that fluctuated between the clash and convergence of interests, acknowledging the overlap between taxation and commercial activity, as well as the legitimate negotiation between state authorities and economic actors in the everyday life of the monopoly. This process was notably facilitated by the structure of the tobacco monopoly and the related magistracies, which functioned as an arena primarily based on negotiations among the various stakeholders involved in the tobacco trade and the search for a reconciliation of their interests. Around these magistracies, a system of petitions and supplications flourished, indicating that the institutionalization of trade councils and the protection of commercial interests - well-documented phenomena in the literature - proceeded alongside the opening of both official and informal channels for negotiation and engagement with the mercantile elite and tax contractors. Notably, there was a significant overlap in language and perspectives: Venetian tobacco contractors frequently

emphasized, in their petitions seeking more favorable conditions, how they had contributed to increasing the revenue collected by the state. This pattern often aligned with the calls of the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, who would urge the Venetian government to grant new benefits to contractors as their business was useful to state interests.

Despite these ongoing negotiations, the balance of interests remained fragile. What started as cooperation could quickly escalate into open conflict, occasionally challenging the legitimacy of the monopoly itself. It was precisely the bargaining process among the major players - tax farmers, influential merchants, and fiscal institutions - that allowed for adjustments to be made when needed. Merchant pressure led to more freedom for the re-export trade of tobacco, which ensured greater profits for the merchants excluded from the monopoly. However, these changes did not come at the expense of the income generated for tax farmers and the state. The reorganization of the tobacco sector, therefore, was typically the result of continuous, day-to-day negotiations rather than a final decision made through new legislation.

The historical forms of taxation applied to tobacco were also shaped by the limitations of early modern state administration and negotiations with economic actors embedded in global trade networks. These features were central to the practical exercise of sovereignty in early modern Europe. However, state entities maintained significant bargaining power due to the protection and privileges granted to actors engaged in the trade of new commodities or innovative production processes. Through the creation of institutions such as the tobacco monopoly, which involved individuals playing multiple roles - officials, tax contractors, merchants, and entrepreneurs - there emerged a marked departure from the model of increasing state coercive power in tax collection. Indeed, the contingent, fragmented, and negotiated nature of the state's coercive power is particularly evident in the significant increase in state revenues from a sector where the effectiveness of the coercive 'predatory' state was limited by the necessity to engage in bargaining with a multifaceted social reality, one that pursued its interests through various strategies. This process was not solely characterized by opposition and resistance but, in many cases, especially by advocacy, collaboration, and integration into institutions.

Rather than centralizing state control, the tobacco case reveals an important aspect of early modern fiscal logic: the establishment of a 'social infrastructure' around tax definitions. This infrastructure created the arena and tools for negotiation among all parties involved, making the boundaries between the 'public' and 'private' more blurred than we could expect with the lens of contemporary observers. This concept reveals a complex and dynamic relationship between state powers, mercantile networks, and fiscal institutions. This relationship was not merely one of coercion or bureaucratic centralization but rather an intricate negotiation process that often blurred the lines between public and private interests. Ultimately, the social infrastructure surrounding the tobacco monopolies in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire highlights the hybrid nature of early modern statecraft, where formal state institutions coexisted with informal, often transnational, mercantile networks. These networks were indispensable for the effective functioning of monopolies and fiscal systems, demonstrating how the state's power was both negotiated and shared with privileged economic actors. This interdependence not only underscores the flexibility and adaptability of early modern fiscal systems but also challenges traditional narratives of centralized state power, suggesting instead a more collaborative model of governance.

The monopoly and the extra-legal trade: compromise and complicity

Tobacco smuggling represents a complex phenomenon that shows the intersection of economic, social, and political factors. During the 17th and 18th centuries these illicit activities went beyond mere violations of trade laws; they were deeply embedded within the fabric of early modern society. Both disadvantaged individuals and affluent elites were deeply involved in these illegal activities. Their involvement highlights the broad attractiveness and profitability of the tobacco trade, which crossed social divides. Smugglers operated in a wide range of settings, from isolated rural regions where they grew and initially distributed illicit tobacco, to busy urban areas where demand and profitable prospects thrived. This geographic variety not only promoted the spread of

smuggling but also posed substantial difficulties for state authorities, whose efforts were often impeded by the expansive and diverse nature of these territories.

Monopolistic merchants themselves were often involved in smuggling, capitalizing on the extra profits generated by bypassing the official monopoly channels. These merchants employed sophisticated strategies to exploit the gaps in enforcement, especially as their contracts neared expiration, leading them to engage in illegal sales in anticipation of losing their exclusive rights. These practices revealed the intimate connection between the legal and illegal spheres of commerce, as even those in positions of authority and those benefiting from the monopoly found themselves complicit in contraband activities.Moreover, the social dynamics behind tobacco smuggling also involved interclass collaboration. Wealthier merchants often orchestrated smuggling operations, which were executed by economically disadvantaged individuals, creating a complex system where social and economic boundaries were blurred. This collaboration was not merely a result of fiscal pressures on poorer classes, but also stemmed from the profit-driven motivations of wealthier elites who benefitted from the illicit trade.

Tobacco contraband exemplified the challenges faced by early modern states in asserting control over territories and regulating commerce. The analysis of the case studies sheds light on a complex system of governance characterized by negotiation, decentralization, and collaboration between the state, monopolistic merchants, and local elites. While sovereign powers aimed to impose a universal tax through the tobacco monopoly, this process was not immediate and never absolute. Instead, the expansion of the monopoly was gradual and strategically negotiated, particularly in the overseas territories of the Venetian Empire, where local authorities and elites played key roles in the enforcement and management of the system. For instance, the tobacco monopoly was initially confined to the capital and mainland provinces, with its extension to overseas territories, such as the Ionian Islands, Dalmatia, and Albania, being carried out gradually. Local merchants and entrepreneurs, often with strong ties to the ruling elite, were granted separate contracts to manage the monopoly in these regions. This decentralization allowed the state to expand its fiscal reach while maintaining a balance of power with local stakeholders. In fact, local entrepreneurs, such as those operating in the newly acquired territories in Dalmatia, were involved in the monopolistic enterprise. Similarly,

in Tuscany, the tobacco monopoly was applied across the entire Grand Duchy but faced challenges in regions with entrenched local privileges, such as the feudal territories. The state's efforts to extend its fiscal control were often compromised by the social and political structures already in place, as demonstrated by the ongoing local exemptions in places like Chitignano. This highlights a central central to the functioning of early modern fiscal systems, but the concrete operations on the ground did not comply with the model of the increasing struggle of the state to impose its authority over local privileges. In both the Venetian Empire and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, privileged merchants and local subcontractors were entrusted with enforcing the monopoly. While state armed intervention was an option, especially in broader cases of social disorder associated with tobacco contraband, the tobacco monopoly was supported by an extensive network of armed guards hired by the monopolistic merchants themselves tasked with suppressing illegal trade, which posed a significant threat to the monopoly's revenue. This reliance on the guards of the monopolistic company and local intermediaries demonstrates how the fight to tobacco contraband functioned within a 'multi-polar governance' system, where various actors - both local and central institutions, state officials and privileged merchants - contributed to the implementation of state policies through the tobacco monopolies.

Indeed, the state's response to tobacco contraband was multifaceted. Initially, harsh punitive measures, with severe penalties for offenders, had the lion's share and were implemented as a deterrent. However, as it became increasingly clear that completely eliminating smuggling was impractical, a more pragmatic approach emerged. Authorities began to adopt strategies that allowed for the coexistence of illegal activities within the formal structure of the tobacco monopoly. For example, amnesty was sometimes granted to smugglers when public order was not directly threatened, and informants were incentivized to cooperate with the authorities. This strategy of negotiated compromise and occasional indulgence reflected the recognition that smuggling was deeply woven into the social fabric and could not simply be eradicated through repression. In Venice, for example, the authorities clamped down on smuggling with forceful measures, including the use of the military to suppress armed gangs of smugglers. Yet, the authorities also understood the limitations of pure repression. Instead of eradicating smuggling completely, fiscal institutions often sought pragmatic solutions, including offering clemency to those in difficult financial situations or imposing lighter penalties

for first-time offenders. This dual approach allowed for a delicate balance between state power and the realities of illegal trade. Smuggling, in some cases, was even tolerated to ensure the smooth functioning of the tobacco market. The approach to controlling tobacco cultivation also exemplified the state's strategy of compromise. Both in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Venetian Empire, local officials faced difficulties enforcing strict prohibitions against illegal tobacco planting, especially in remote or hard-to-police regions. In these areas, the state often resorted to a more flexible policy, sometimes allowing controlled cultivation to meet local demands or reduce the risk of violent conflict. This pragmatism was also evident in the adjustments made to tobacco pricing, where lower tariffs were applied in areas more prone to smuggling, like Livorno in Tuscany, to curb illegal trade while maintaining the monopoly's profitability.

Interestingly, in both regions, the tobacco monopoly was also seen as a tool for regulating competition between different mercantile groups. The monopolistic merchants, often backed by powerful local elites, were granted the exclusive right to control the tobacco trade, sidelining competitors. This gave them a competitive edge in the market but also ensured that state authorities could maintain a level of control over tobacco sales, smuggling, and cultivation. For instance, in Tuscany, local elites were integrated into the monopolistic structure, which helped reduce resistance to the monopoly, but also ensured that the state could extend its influence across the territory. Similarly, in Venice, the monopoly was expanded to new territories through negotiations with local merchants, who were granted exclusive rights to manage the tobacco trade in exchange for paying the state a fee. Ultimately, the tobacco monopolies were not just mechanisms for raising revenue but also played a significant role in shaping the economic and social order. While they relied on forceful measures to curb smuggling, they also demonstrated a remarkable level of adaptability, incorporating local economic practices and negotiating with various interest groups to maintain the monopoly’s legitimacy and profitability.

Innovation and import-substitution within the monopolistic business

The development of tobacco monopolies in both the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire offers insightful examples of how patrimonial taxation, commercial networks, and economic innovation intersected in the early modern period. These monopolies were not merely fiscal tools but evolved into complex economic enterprises that incorporated both state control and the input of entrepreneurial mercantile networks. The fundamental goal of the Tobacco Farms was to regulate and collect taxes on tobacco consumption, yet these monopolies were deeply involved in the wider economic landscape. Not only did they manage the trade and importation of tobacco, but they also influenced local markets, shaped consumer demand, and drove agricultural and manufacturing innovations. This dual role as both tax collectors and market actors meant that the Tobacco Farms were at the crossroads of fiscal policy and economic strategy.

The structure of the monopolistic enterprise significantly influenced the decision of whether to purchase tobacco on the open market or to internalize parts of the supply chain. For foreign tobacco leaves, the Tobacco Farms depended heavily on well-established mercantile networks of suppliers, which ensured a consistent and long-term provision of a diverse range of tobaccos. These connections were vital for maintaining the quality and reliability of supplies, essential to the Farm's operations and profitability. Merchants who succeeded in securing long-term contracts did so because of their demonstrated reliability and strategic positioning within the tobacco trade, revealing the interdependence between the Tobacco Farm and these mercantile networks. Sources indicate that the Tobacco Farm, as the largest purchaser in the market, played a key role in shaping the tobacco trade's dynamics. While the number of suppliers for the monopoly was considerable, the majority of the supply (up to 80-90%) was dominated by a small group of 4-5 merchant houses, with strong, established relationships with the tobacco farmers.

The introduction of privileged tobacco manufacturing under the oversight of the Tobacco Farm also left a significant impact on the whole economic sector. On one side, state protection played a crucial role, issuing regulations to safeguard the economic interests of the privileged manufacturers and to ensure revenue collection. For example,

the ownership of tobacco-crushing or grinding equipment was strictly forbidden. On the other side, the variety of tobacco products available on the market resulted from the expertise and professional experience within the Tobacco Farm itself. Local knowledge was used to adapt global products and economic information, creating specific tobacco goods with unique recipes that set them apart from other regions' offerings.

Tobacco cultivation varied greatly between the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire. Initially, both regions made efforts to contract illegal tobacco cultivation in remote areas or privileged territories, such as the fiefdom of Chitignano in Tuscany and the '*Sette comuni*' in Vicenza. While these attempts contributed a noteworthy amount to the supply of raw tobacco, the quantities produced were never enough to reduce reliance on imported tobacco, and the quality was consistently unsatisfactory. This led to different strategies in the two regions. In the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, attempts to liberalize tobacco cultivation ended in financial failure, demonstrating that effective management of tobacco production required substantial control and expertise. In contrast, in the Venetian Empire, especially in the overseas provinces of the Ionian Islands and Dalmatia, the Tobacco Farm embraced agronomic principles and economic strategies to improve productivity and profitability. These efforts aligned with broader projects to innovate the entire sector within the monopolistic framework, showing how monopolistic enterprises could stimulate agricultural innovation to support fiscal and economic growth. A prime example of this was the plantation at Nona (Venetian Dalmatia), where the integration of scientific knowledge, skilled laborers, and transnational expertise led to innovations that contributed to a promising start of import-substitution.

The examples from the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Venetian Empire illustrate the critical role monopolistic enterprises, such as the Tobacco Farms, played in shaping the early modern economy. Despite the formal state control over the monopoly, the concrete management of this broad spectrum of economic activities - from the participation in the global trade of raw leaves and finished tobacco products to the organization of manufactures and local cultivation - remained in the hands of the monopolistic merchants and of their extended economic networks. However, monopolistic trade did not appear in contrast with innovation and economic development:

especially in the last part of the 18th century, the debates from political economy and agronomy were heard by monopolistic merchants and financiers at the top of the Tobacco Farms, in order to carry out product innovations and import-substitution processes.

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