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## Sedentary Merchant Triumphant: The Transformation of Venetian Trading Patterns in the Long Twelfth Century

This paper examines the transformation of Venetian commerce across the twelfth century, arguing that the strategies of Venetian merchants are best described using two distinct models. One was locally integrated and geographically decentralized, typical of merchants who settled abroad and became part of local societies, sometimes retaining few clear links to Venice. The other was far more centralized, characterized by short-term, profit-focused ventures originating in Venice that precluded deep entanglements in foreign economies. Both models were facilitated by the unstructured nature of Venetian overseas administration, which accommodated a degree of autonomy for expatriates while providing the infrastructure necessary for transient commerce. The decline of the integrated model began with the imperial sanctions of 1171 and culminated with the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204), after which the centralized model came to dominate. The subsequent importance of the “sedentary merchant” in Venetian trade was shaped as much by political as by economic factors.

**Keywords:** Medieval commercial revolution, Venetian commerce, Medieval Mediterranean, Byzantine economy, trade diaspora, merchant colonies

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While the medieval explosion in the scale of Venetian commerce has formed the subject of numerous works of economic history, many of these have framed the period up to 1204 as a sort of prelude. In his magisterial study of Venetian economic history, Gino Luzzatto summarized the history of Venetian trade of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries by saying that “the shape of early commerce was largely identical to that of the later period,” as Venetians traded in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Levant, and especially within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire, and then brought their profits back to their city, making it ever richer.<sup>1</sup> The main difference between this period and later commerce, in his view and that of others, lies in the dramatically smaller scale of the early trade, which manifested in lower levels of monetization and smaller sums being involved throughout. The present paper seeks to re-examine the dynamics of this early trade by identifying an early system of commercial practices that was fundamentally distinct from that of the later Middle Ages, and then tracing the process of its eventual decline.

I argue that the logic of twelfth-century Venetian maritime trade is best understood by distinguishing within it two distinct types, or business models. One was characterized by the dominance of wealthy Venetians who financed perfunctory, opportunistic commercial ventures overseas, and sought to maximize profits and reinvest them quickly. This highly centralized model, dependent on stationary investors, was in fact quite similar to the later medieval practices. Yet a close look at the early sources reveals that another, markedly different model of trade existed in parallel with the centralized one: characterized by a high degree of local integration, it was decentralized both financially and geographically. Venetians who settled in Byzantium and who, according to Greek chronicles, became indistinguishable from the locals, constituted a distinct social group with economic and political strategies of its own. Venetian settlements overseas, which lacked formal administrative structures and relied instead on ecclesiastical institutions, accommodated the coexistence of these two models of trade, as they allowed for a high degree of autonomy among Venetians living abroad while also providing the infrastructure necessary to support the more transient approach of commerce.

The decline of the integrated model of trade occurred in two phases: imperial sanctions against Venetians in 1171 dealt it the first major blow, and the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204) brought about its final demise.

<sup>1</sup>Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia dall'XI al XVI secolo* (1960; reis. Venice, 1995).

From the thirteenth century on, the centralized model of trade came to dominate: the majority of business deals were thereafter struck in Venice and traveling merchants had relatively little scope for independent action. This eventual triumph of the “sedentary merchant” was an outcome of the broader sociopolitical restructuring of Venetian society, and stemmed from a series of violent conflicts whose logic was at least as political as it was economic.

### Capitalism, Venice, and their Historians

Venetian business history has long been integral to the study of the origins of capitalism, the development of credit and finance, and the historiography of the medieval “commercial revolution,” the rapid development of the European economy in the Central Middle Ages that is often seen as the first step in the European rise to global economic prominence.<sup>2</sup> In 1905, Reinhard Heynen completed a study of the business activities of Romano Mairano, a twelfth-century Venetian merchant whose surviving private archive is unusually complete.<sup>3</sup> The resulting book mounted a forceful argument against the theories of Werner Sombart: Heynen concluded that in Venice, capitalism began with merchants making their fortunes solely through trade, without needing the landed backing or pre-existing capital that had seemed essential to Sombart.<sup>4</sup> Heynen’s view was accepted by N. S. B. Gras, who saw in Venetian history a clear example of early capitalist business practices—although he studied a slightly later period.<sup>5</sup> The assessment of medieval Venice as precociously capitalistic prevailed in the twentieth century, thanks in large part to the work of Frederic Lane, who saw in the Venetian state a unique union of government and commerce, and argued that the state’s readiness to deploy violence for the benefit of the merchants was one of the primary causes of its commercial and political success.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Roberto Sabatino Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350* (Cambridge, UK, 1971); Raymond de Roover, “The Commercial Revolution of the 13th Century,” in *Social and Economic Foundations of the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Anthony Molho (Hoboken, 1969), 23–26. For a recent overview of the historiography on the commercial revolution, see Robert Fredona and Sophus A. Reinert, “Italy and the Origins of Capitalism,” *Business History Review* 94, no. 1 (Spring 2020): 5–38.

<sup>3</sup> Reinhard Heynen, *Zur Entstehung Des Kapitalismus in Venedig* (Stuttgart, 1905), 1–6, 121–124.

<sup>4</sup> Werner Sombart, *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1902).

<sup>5</sup> N. S. B. Gras, “What Is Capitalism in the Light of History?,” *Business History Review* 21, no. 4 (Winter 1947): 79–120.

<sup>6</sup> Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore, 1987); Lane, *Profits from Power: Readings in Protection Rent and Violence-Controlling Enterprises* (Albany, 1979). For a more recent appraisal of Lane’s work, see Melissa Meriam Bullard, S. R. Epstein, Benjamin G. Kohl, and Susan Mosher Stuard, “Where History and Theory Interact: Frederic C. Lane on the Emergence of Capitalism,” *Speculum* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2004): 88–119.

Lane's insight into the significance of state-sponsored violence to economic advancement remains highly influential: Jessica Goldberg's important book on the medieval Jewish merchants attested in the Cairo Geniza draws on it to explain the displacement of Jewish and Arab merchants by Italians in later medieval Mediterranean trade.<sup>7</sup> More recently, Chris Wickham has proposed a different assessment of the rise of Italian merchants in the Mediterranean: he has emphasized the geographic reach and flexibility of Italian traders within a context of regional and local growth, and questioned the importance of violence and political shifts.<sup>8</sup> In his recent study of Venetian trade, he bypassed the Heynen-Sombart debate by arguing that in medieval Venice, careers in trade were made both by members of wealthy, property-rich Venetian families and by new merchants who started out with nothing.<sup>9</sup> They all participated in a trade that followed the "Venetian business model," characterized by speedy, superficial dealings in major ports and lacking serious integration into local economies.<sup>10</sup>

In this article, I argue that alongside this centralized "Venetian business model," there existed a different approach to trade that was at least as significant in the early period of Venetian expansion. It involved merchants trading overseas largely independently of central authority, relying on their own local connections and on the protection of host states or communities rather than on the backing of their distant metropole. This decentralized model required local integration and fit within a broader pattern of early and central medieval trade in which some merchants left their homeland and became essentially deracinated, as in the case of Amalfi and its diaspora.<sup>11</sup> The decline in political stability in the Mediterranean, precipitated by the military losses suffered by the Byzantine and Fatimid Empires and then furthered by the Crusades, slowly rendered this model of trade unviable, as individual merchants could no longer hope to rely on the safety of external market infrastructures.<sup>12</sup> Instead, they found themselves in need of securing

<sup>7</sup>Jessica Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and Their Business World* (Cambridge, UK, 2016), 358–359.

<sup>8</sup>Chris Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat: Reinterpreting the Mediterranean Economy, 950–1180* (Oxford, 2023), 621–662.

<sup>9</sup>Wickham, 511–512.

<sup>10</sup>He further points out that this centralized model was by no means novel; the credit mechanisms that allowed for the existence of stationary investors date to at least the ninth century: Wickham, 337–339, 517–518.

<sup>11</sup>See Patricia Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and Its Diaspora: 800–1250* (Oxford, 2013).

<sup>12</sup>For macroscopic perspectives on the eleventh-century rise in violence, see Romney David Smith, "Calamity and Transition: Re-Imagining Italian Trade in the Eleventh-Century Mediterranean," *Past & Present* 228, no. 1 (Aug. 2015): 15–56; Ronnie Ellenblum, *The Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean: Climate Change and the Decline of the East, 950–1072* (Cambridge, UK, 2012); Elena Xoplaki, Dominik Fleitmann, Juerg Luterbacher,

their own military backing, which fostered more centralized patterns of trade. This fusing of commerce and violence shaped the rise of Pisa and Genoa, and helped displace older emporia like Comacchio and Amalfi that had relied on the more integrated model of trade.<sup>13</sup> In the case of Venice, the two models coexisted until 1204, and centralized trade came to dominate only gradually, pushed along by a series of political crises.

### Venetian Trade before 1171

Venetians were already trading and traveling extensively throughout the Mediterranean in the Early Middle Ages, but their activities intensified dramatically in the new millennium.<sup>14</sup> Throughout this period, their trade focused primarily on the Byzantine areas of the Eastern Mediterranean, where they benefited from their legal status as imperial subjects, augmented over time by unique imperial privileges and tax exemptions that, from the tenth century on, offered them a major competitive advantage.<sup>15</sup> Venetians could trade tax-free in a number of places in Byzantium after Emperor Alexios I Komnenos issued a chrysobull (imperial decree) that granted them their own quarter in Constantinople and the right to tax the Amalfitans within Byzantium in addition to the commercial tax exemption.<sup>16</sup> Notably, many of the

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Sebastian Wagner, John F. Haldon, Eduardo Zorita, Ioannis Telelis, Andrea Toreti, and Adam Izdebski, "The Medieval Climate Anomaly and Byzantium: A Review of the Evidence on Climatic Fluctuations, Economic Performance and Societal Change," *Mediterranean Holocene Climate, Environment and Human Societies* 136 (15 Mar. 2016): 229–252.

<sup>13</sup> On Genoa and Pisa, see Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 534–590; Steven A Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* (Chapel Hill, 1996); Quentin van Doosselaere, *Commercial Agreements and Social Dynamics in Medieval Genoa* (Cambridge, UK, 2009); Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Handel Und Politik Zwischen Dem Byzantinischen Reich Und Den Italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa Und Genua in Der Epoche Der Komnenen Und Der Angeleri (1081–1204)* (Amsterdam, 1984), 50–85; Karen Rose Mathews, Silvia Orvietani Busch, and Stefano Bruni, *A Companion to Medieval Pisa*, vol. 28 (Brill, 2022).

<sup>14</sup> For early medieval Venetian trade, see for example Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300–900* (Cambridge, UK, 2001), 731–777; David Jacoby, "Venetian Commercial Expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean, 8th–11th Centuries," in *Medieval Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond* (New York, 2018), 1–22; *The Age of Affirmation: Venice, the Adriatic and the Hinterland between the 9th and 10th Centuries*, ed. Stefano Gasparri and Sauro Gelichi (Belgium, 2017); Gerhard Rösch, *Das Pactum Lotharii von 840 und die Beziehungen Venedigs zum Fränkischen Reich im 9. Jahrhundert* (Marburg, 1984).

<sup>15</sup> For privileges predating the eleventh century, see Annamaria Paziienza, "Venice beyond Venice: Commercial Agreements and Pacta from the Origins to Pietro II Orseolo," in *The Age of Affirmation*, ed. Gasparri and Gelichi, 147–176.

<sup>16</sup> *I trattati con Bisanzio, 992–1198*, ed. Marco Pozza and Giorgio Ravegnani, vol. 4, *Pacta veneta* (Venezia, 1993), n. 2. For more on the Amalfitan presence in Byzantium, see Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and Its Diaspora: 800–1250*; Vera von Falkenhausen, "La Chiesa amalfitana nei suoi rapporti con l'Impero bizantino (X–XI secolo)," in *La Chiesa di Amalfi nel medioevo* (Ann Arbor, 1996), 383–424, 391; Giuseppe Galasso, "Il commercio amalfitano nel periodo normanno," in *Studi Riccardo Filangieri* (Napoli, 1959), 81–103.

locations listed in the chrysobull were major grain markets; Venetians within Byzantium dealt extensively in agricultural goods like grain, cheese, and olive oil, facilitating the supply routes that served to feed Constantinople, as well as sourcing victuals for Venice, which due to its geography always relied on food imports.<sup>17</sup> In addition to food staples, Venetians frequently traded in wine, cotton, and textiles from the Peloponnese, including silk that was manufactured in Thebes and Corinth from the mid-eleventh century.<sup>18</sup> The precise date when Alexios Komnenos issued this chrysobull has been controversial, and scholars have disagreed on whether it was symptomatic of Byzantine military or economic weakness.<sup>19</sup> Whether Venetian rise, aided by subsequent imperial privileges and concessions, was more broadly linked to Byzantine decline has similarly provoked much debate.<sup>20</sup> This question is, however, not the subject of the present study: rather than interrogating the impact of Venetian trade on Byzantium, I seek to understand its role in the social and economic history of Venice.

The eleventh and twelfth centuries in Venice were a time of major sociopolitical transition: ducal power was increasingly defined and limited in a process that led to the development of the Venetian commune.<sup>21</sup> This period was marked by the rise of numerous “new”

<sup>17</sup> See figure 2 for a map of the locations included in this chrysobull. Note that this list was likely not exclusive. See David Jacoby, “Italian Privileges and Trade in Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade: A Reconsideration,” in Jacoby, *Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean* (New York, 1997), 349–369; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 335–336.

<sup>18</sup> On the commodities traded by the Venetians in Byzantium, see Lilie, *Handel und Politik*, 264–285; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 321–328, 517–520; Angeliki Laiou, “Regional Networks in the Balkans in the Middle and Late Byzantine Periods,” in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cécile Morrison (Dumbarton Oaks, 2012), 125–146, 130–137; Angeliki Laiou, “Monopoly and Privileged Free Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (8th–14th Century),” in *Byzantium and the Other: Relations and Exchanges*, ed. Cécile Morrison (New York, 2012), 511–526; David Jacoby, “Silk Crosses the Mediterranean,” in *Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean* (New York, 2001), 55–79; Jacoby, “Silk in Western Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade,” in *Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean*, 452–500.

<sup>19</sup> David Jacoby, “The Chrysobull of Alexius I Comnenus to the Venetians: The Date and the Debate,” *Journal of Medieval History* 28, no. 2 (June 2002): 199–204. Thomas F. Madden, “The Chrysobull of Alexius I Comnenus to the Venetians: The Date and the Debate,” *Journal of Medieval History* 28 (2002): 23–42; Peter Frankopan, “Byzantine Trade Privileges to Venice in the Eleventh Century: The Chrysobull of 1092,” *Journal of Medieval History* 30, no. 2 (June 2004): 135–160; Frankopan, “The Rise of the Adriatic in the Age of the Crusades,” in *Byzantium, Venice and the Medieval Adriatic: Spheres of Maritime Power and Influence, c. 700–1453*, ed. Magdalena Skoblar (Cambridge, UK, 2021), 276–95.

<sup>20</sup> See Jonathan Harris, “The Debate on the Fourth Crusade,” *History Compass* 2, no. 1 (Jan. 2004): 1–10.

<sup>21</sup> Andrea Castagnetti, “L’età precomunale e la prima età comunale (1024-1213),” in *Il Veneto nel medioevo. Dai comuni cittadini* (Verona, 1991), 1–162; Giorgio Cracco, *Tra Venezia e Terraferma: Per la storia del Veneto regione del mondo* (Viella, 2009), 5–41;

families, some of which, like the Ziani, Polani, or the Dandolo, would continue to form the core of the Venetian aristocracy for centuries to come.<sup>22</sup> The exact manner of their rise cannot be reconstructed from the surviving sources, yet there are few doubts that it was in large part the outcome of commercial success which they were able to convert into political power.<sup>23</sup> Eleventh-century Venetian evidence, although relatively sparse, points to a society in which politics, power, and wealth were already wholly tied to long-distance commerce.<sup>24</sup>

The wealth of prominent Venetian families, both new and old, typically rested on a combination of three types of assets: vineyards in the Saccisica and Padovano, salt pans in the Venetian lagoon, and ongoing investments in overseas trade.<sup>25</sup> Venetian merchants and institutions included property ownership among their investment strategies, and newly wealthy Venetians like the Ziani routinely loaned money against property, allowing them gradually to acquire significant holdings both in the Venetian lagoon and in trading outposts in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>26</sup> This combination of commercial and non-commercial investments provided a time-tested way to balance risk and profit, creating stability while offering ample opportunity to put surplus to good use. The only problem with this approach was that it could not be scaled up indefinitely: property in Venice quickly became scarce, and

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Andrea Castagnetti, *La società veneziana nel medioevo 1: Dai tribuni ai giudici* (Verona, 1992).

<sup>22</sup>The highest proportion of new families in surviving documentation dates to the late eleventh century: see Giorgio Cracco, *Un "altro mondo." Venezia nel medioevo dal secolo XI al secolo XIV* (Torino, 1986), 14–15; Andrea Castagnetti, "Famiglie e affermazione politica," in *Storia di Venezia, 1, Origini-Età ducale*, ed. Lellia Cracco Ruggini, Massimiliano Pavan, Giorgio Cracco, and Gherardo Ortalli (Rome, 1992), 613–644.

<sup>23</sup>See Irmgard Fees, *Reichtum und Macht im mittelalterlichen Venedig. Die Familie Ziani*, (Tübingen, 1988); Silvano Borsari, "Una famiglia veneziana del medioevo. gli Ziani," *Archivio Veneto* (1978): 27–72; Thomas F. Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice* (Baltimore, 2006).

<sup>24</sup>Gherardo Ortalli, "Il mercante e lo stato: strutture della Venezia altomedievale," in *Mercati e mercanti nell'alto medioevo: l'area euroasiatica e l'area mediterranea* (Spoleto, 1993), 85–135; Gerhard Rösch, "Mercatura e moneta," in *Storia di Venezia. Dalle origini alla caduta I* (Rome 1992), 549–573, 556–573.

<sup>25</sup>André-É. Sayous, "Le rôle du capital dans la vie locale et le commerce extérieur de Venise entre 1050 et 1150," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 13, no. 3 (1934): 657–696; Margarete Merores, "Der venezianische Adel. (Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte.) I. Teil: Die Geschlechter," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 19, no. 1/3 (1926): 193–237; "Die venezianischen Salinen der älteren Zeit in ihrer wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Bedeutung," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (1916): 71–107; Michelle Mollat, *La Venezia dei mille* (Sansoni, 1965), 183–202; Gerhard Rösch, *Der venezianische Adel bis zur Schließung des Großen Rats. Zur Geschichte einer Führungsschicht*, 33 (Sigmaringen, 1989), 75–76; Luzzatto, *Storia Economica*, 20–25.

<sup>26</sup>Fees, *Reichtum und macht*, 47–102; Borsari, "Gli Ziani"; Giorgio Cracco, *Società e stato nel medioevo Veneziano. Secoli XII–XIV*, *Civiltà veneziana*. Studi (Venice, 1967), 76–80.

in the twelfth century the city's population was rapidly growing.<sup>27</sup> The more successful twelfth-century newcomers like Romano Mairano could exploit this by buying up houses on the Rialto, but the most profitable assets within the Venetian lagoon—the salt pans—were for the most part already tightly controlled by the wealthiest families and by large, powerful monastic foundations.<sup>28</sup> This scarcity was further compounded by the complex and evolving legal mechanics of property rights: whether or not one chooses to use the word “feudal” to describe it, the ownership of land and salt pans in Venice was bound up in ties of personal loyalty and ancient custom which did not easily follow the logics of the market.<sup>29</sup> Newly rich families could make inroads into this traditional world, but this was a process that required extensive investment of both capital and time, usually spanning generations. Reliable avenues for investment that did not rely on maritime trade were in increasingly short supply in Venice, and merchants looking for ways to diversify their holdings and diminish risks were compelled to look beyond the Venetian lagoon.<sup>30</sup>

The prevailing assumption in the historiography of the Venetian economy has long been that Venetians brought the bulk of the profits made from trade in the Eastern Mediterranean back home to Venice.<sup>31</sup> There is certainly some truth to that: the large inflow of capital from overseas trade is clearly evidenced by the physical transformation of the city between the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>32</sup> A focus on impressive

<sup>27</sup> Estimates of the population of Venice in the twelfth century vary: Dorigo, *Venezia Romanica*, 33 puts it at 30,000 people ca. 1150, whereas Lane, *Venice*, 18–19, 73 proposes a number closer to 80,000 in 1200. The accuracy of these figures is highly debatable. See Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 532. Nevertheless, the rapid growth of the city in this period is clearly evident from the archaeological as well as the written record. See n. 33 below.

<sup>28</sup> Merores, “Die venezianischen Salinen”; Mollat, “L’exploitation du sel”; Jean-Claude Hocquet, *Les monastères vénitiens et l’argent* (Rome, 2020).

<sup>29</sup> See Luzzatto, *Storia Economica*, 20–25; Gérard Rippé, “Feudum sine fidelitate. Formes féodales et structures sociales dans la région de Padoue à l’époque de la première Commune (1131–1237),” *Mélanges de l’Ecole française de Rome. Moyen Âge, temps modernes* 87 (1975): 187–239; Н. П. Соколов, *Образование Венецианской колониальной империи* [Formation of the Venetian colonial empire] (Saratov, 1963), 255–258. On the complicated circumstances behind the creation of Sokolov’s brilliant work, see А.А. Кузнецов, “Человек Империи и Будущий Историк Империи в Сталинской Тюрьме: Следственное Дело Н.П. Соколова,” [Man of empire and future historian of empire in Stalin’s prison: the case file of N.P. Sokolov], *Вестник Нижегородского Университета Им. НИ Лобачевского*, no. 1 (2021): 26–38.

<sup>30</sup> See Fees, *Reichtum Und Macht*, 83–884 and Cracco, *Società e stato*, 17, 37, and 79 for discussions of the limited investment options in the Venetian lagoon.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. Silvano Borsari, *Studi sulle colonie veneziane in Romania nel XIII secolo*, P (Napoli, 1966), 107; Fees, *Reichtum und Macht*; Michael Angold, “Venice in the Twelfth Century: Between the Adriatic and the Aegean,” in *Byzantium, Venice and the Medieval Adriatic*, 298.

<sup>32</sup> Guido Rosada, “Aggregazioni insediative e strutture urbane,” in *Storia di Venezia*, 209–268; Guido Perocco and Antonio Salvadori, *Civiltà Di Venezia I: Le Origini e Il Medio Evo* (Venezia, 1973), 232–236; Wladimiro Dorigo, *Venezia Romanica: La Formazione Della Città*



building projects and luxurious *objets d'art* has, however, obscured the fact that the new commercial wealth was much more widely distributed than such conspicuous, high-level spending may suggest. Middling merchants and upwardly mobile Venetians, who were not among the richest citizens but who carried out much of the long-distance trade, did not construct new islands in Venice, commission masterpieces of mosaic, or finance military campaigns. Instead, many of them chose to settle in familiar overseas ports and to do business there. Venice held an important place in their world, but it was not their main place of business, and not all their capital ultimately flowed back to it.

The extent of integration of Venetians into Byzantine society is the subject of some debate; narrative sources generally treat Byzantinized Venetian merchants as unexceptional, while Venetian documents can give the opposite impression.<sup>33</sup> Several Byzantine chroniclers relay that assimilated Venetians in the empire were numerous and significant enough to warrant imperial concern. In the mid-twelfth century, Manuel Komnenos proposed that Venetians who had settled permanently in Constantinople, married Greek women, and were resident outside the boundaries of the Venetian quarter should be given special status as permanent residents (*bourgesioi*) and pledge direct obedience to the Byzantine empire.<sup>34</sup> Niketas Choniates explains further that these

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*Medioevale Fino All'età Gotica*, Monumenta Veneta (Verona, 2003); Michela Agazzi, *Platea Sancti Marci. I luoghi marciani dall'XI al XIII secolo e la formazione della piazza* (Venice, 1991); Margherita Ferri, Sauro Gelichi, Silvia Garavello, and Martina Ghezzi, "Isole fortunate?: La storia della laguna nord di Venezia attraverso lo scavo di San Lorenzo di Ammiana," *Archeologia Medievale* 39 (Jan. 2012): 9–56; Sauro Gelichi, "Unconventional Places and Unconventional Biographies? Colonizing the Lagoon in the Middle Ages: The Case of Venice," *Journal of Urban Archaeology* 1, no. 1 (2020): 103–112; Gelichi, "L'Archeologia nella laguna veneziana e la nascita di una nuova città," *Reti Medievali Rivista* 11 (2010/12): 137–167.

<sup>33</sup>Peter Schreiner, "Untersuchungen zu den niederlassungen westlicher Kaufleute im byzantinischen Reich des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts," *Byzantinische Forschungen* (1979): 175–191; Chryssa A. Maltéizou, "Venetian Habitatores, Burgenses, and Merchants in Constantinople and Its Hinterland (Twelfth–Thirteenth Centuries)," in *Constantinople and Its Hinterland*, ed. Gilbert Dagron and Cyril Mango (New York, 1995), 233–241; Chryssa A. Maltéizou, "Les italiens propriétaires terrarum et casarum à Byzance," *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 22 (1996): 177–191; Angeliki Laiou, "Institutional Mechanisms of Integration," in *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire* (Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), 161–181; David Jacoby, "The Byzantine Outsider in Trade (c. 900–c. 1350)," in *Latins, Greeks and Muslims: Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean, 10<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (New York, 2009), 129–147, 85–132; Jacoby, "Migrations familiales et stratégies commerciales véniennes aux XII et XIII siècles," *Migrations et diasporas méditerranéennes: Xe au XVe siècles*, ed. Michel Balard and Alain Ducellier (Paris, 1999), 355–374; Freddy E Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au Moyen Âge: le développement et l'exploitation du domaine colonial vénitien (XII–XVe siècles)* (Paris, 1975), 29–62.

<sup>34</sup>Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Joannes A. van Dieten (Berlin, 1975), 171; John Kinnamos, *Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke, (Bonn, 1836), 281–283.

foreigners had become indistinguishable from Byzantines, all the while benefiting from imperial tax breaks and the legal flexibility that came from being subject to an external jurisdiction.<sup>35</sup> It is interesting that the concern they expressed was not just that these Venetians were acting too much like the Byzantines: it was that they were benefiting from their formal status as foreigners while simultaneously living essentially as locals.<sup>36</sup> The push to designate Venetians as *bourgesioi* can be understood as an attempt to resolve this contradiction.

Certainly, Byzantines were often resentful of the Venetians as a group, seeing them as a privileged minority who enriched themselves at the expense of Byzantium thanks to the imperial tax exemptions. Anti-Latin sentiment comes through especially clearly in literary sources, and it is complemented by documented instances of conflicts between the Venetians in the empire and their Byzantine neighbors.<sup>37</sup> All this did not, however, preclude a significant degree of quotidian integration between individual Venetians and Byzantines, evidenced best, perhaps, by the intermarriages between Venetians and Byzantines, as well as the commonness of the surname *Grecus* in Venetian records.<sup>38</sup> In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, we see very few signs of linguistic barriers between Venetians and Greeks: some Venetian documents refer to extended negotiations with local Greek merchants and make

<sup>35</sup>Choniates, *Historia*, 171.

<sup>36</sup>On the status of the *bourgesioi* as a means of integrating outsiders into the Byzantine justice system, see Angeliki Laiou, “L'étranger de passage et l'étranger privilégié à Byzance, XIe-XIIe Siècles (1994),” in *Byzantium and the Other*, 69–88 and “Institutional Mechanisms of Integration,” in *Byzantium and the Other*, 161–81, 173–174.

<sup>37</sup>See Jonathan Shepard, “Knowledge of the West in Byzantine Sources, c.900–c.1200,” in *A Companion to Byzantium and the West, 900–1204*, ed. Nicolas Drocourt and Sebastian Kolditz (Leiden, 2021), 31–84 for a recent overview of the place of Venetians and Westerners in Byzantine sources.

<sup>38</sup>In some cases, *Grecus* operated merely as a surname. Surnames were, however, still developing in this period and were not too far removed from their origin as ethnicity markers; see for example the use of *Grecus* in n. 3, b.12, San Zaccaria, Corporazioni religiose, Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV). See the discussion in Thomas F Madden, “Venice and Constantinople in 1171 and 1172: Enrico Dandolo's attitudes towards Byzantium,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 8, no. 2 (1993): 166–185, 175, n. 27; Donald Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge, UK, 1988), 98–99. For more on surnames in this period, see Gianfranco Folena, “Gli antichi nomi di persona e la storia civile di Venezia,” *Atti. istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti* 129 (1971), 445–484 and Luigi Andrea Berto, “Note e proposte per uno studio prosopografico della Venezia alto-medievale,” *Studi Veneziani* 59 (2010): 73–88. For more on Byzantine-Venetian intermarriages, see Angeliki Laiou, “The Foreigner and the Stranger in 12th Century Byzantium: Means of Propitiation and Acculturation” in *Fremde der Gesellschaft. Historische und sozialwissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zur Differenzierung von Normalität und Fremdheit*, ed. Von Marie Theres Fögen (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), 71–97; Silvano Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio nel XII secolo: i rapporti economici* (Venezia, 1988); Angeliki Laiou, *Byzantium and the Other*; Sauro Gelichi, “La principessa, la rugiada e la bizantinità di Venezia,” in *Lezioni Marciane 2017–2018: Venezia prima di Venezia: Torcello e dintorni* (Rome, 2020), 23–37; Schreiner, “Untersuchungen zu den niederlassungen westlicher Kaufleute im byzantinischen Reich.”

references to contracts drawn up in Greek.<sup>39</sup> These Greek contracts do not survive, but the evidence that they existed makes it clear that Venetians entered into agreements with people outside of their community, and that they were able to do so in Greek.<sup>40</sup> Ironically, the twelfth-century Constantinopolitan patriarch Dositheos, the author of some of the most virulent diatribes against the Venetians in the late twelfth century, who once declared that convicted murderers could attain absolution by killing one hundred Westerners, was himself likely of Venetian stock.<sup>41</sup>

The impact of medieval Venetian legal and documentary practices on the extant historical record has been somewhat underappreciated in the historiography of Venetian presence in Byzantium in this period. The vast majority of surviving Venetian trade documents were produced to evidence legal actions and agreements conducted between Venetians; these agreements rarely mention Greeks or other outsiders.<sup>42</sup> This absence is seemingly in conflict with the narrative sources, which as we have seen present a complex picture of extensive cross-cultural interactions, one that includes both ethnic and religious resentment but also intermarriage and cultural mixing. Historians arguing against Venetian integration have seen the documentary record as a more systematic, reliable, and numerically grounded source than contemporary narratives, which are often contradictory and possibly full of exaggerations.<sup>43</sup> In interpreting the silence of the documentary record, it is, however, important to consider that the preservation and survival patterns of medieval legal documents are not entirely random: there

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and Antonino Lombardo, *Documenti del commercio veneziano, I* (Torino, 1940), 103, n. 101.

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of linguistic integration, see Laiou, "Institutional Mechanisms of Integration," 173–174. Twelfth-century Venetian documents that evidence deals between Venetians and Greeks include Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and Antonino Lombardo, *Documenti del commercio veneziano nei secoli XI–XIII* (Torino, 1940), 56–57, 201–202 (nn. 54, 203); Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and Antonino Lombardo, *Nuovi Documenti Del Commercio Veneto Dei Secoli XI–XIII* (Treviso, 1953), 11, 14 (nn. 9, 11); n. 3, b. 12, San Zaccaria, Corporazioni religiose, ASV; *Famiglia Zusto (1083–1184)*, ed. Luigi Lanfranchi (Venice, 1955), n. 6; Lanfranchi, ed., *S. Giorgio Maggiore* (Venice, 1968), vol. II, 380–383, 463–465, 526–527, vol. III, 294–296, 399–401 (nn. 181, 231, 271, 500, 581). Some are discussed in Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 322–323; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 47–48, 105–106; and Maltézou, "Les Italiens Propriétaires Terrarum et Casarum à Byzance."

<sup>41</sup> Shepard, "Knowledge of the West," 31–32.

<sup>42</sup> Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and Antonino Lombardo, *Documenti del commercio veneziano nei secoli XI–XIII* (Torino, 1940) and *Nuovi documenti del commercio veneto dei secoli XI–XIII* (Treviso, 1953) are standard editions that contain nearly all commercial documents from medieval Venice. I have supplemented these with the few documents they missed (only some of which are published) and cited them in editions when possible. (Hereafter cited as *DCV*; *Nuovi documenti*.)

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Peter Schreiner, "Untersuchungen zu den niederlassungen westlicher Kaufleute im byzantinischen Reich."

existed a complex and specific contemporary logic of archival preservation. Most surviving commercial documents from Venice are quittances drawn up to conclude agreements between Venetians.<sup>44</sup> These were systematically kept because they had an ongoing, indefinite legal function in Venetian courts, i.e. preventing future litigation. Notably, the lively trade between Venice and the cities of Northern Italy and the Holy Roman Empire, well known from mentions in external documentary and narrative sources and further evidenced by archaeological findings, is mostly invisible in the corpus of Venetian commercial documentation until the end of the twelfth century, pointing at the existence of structural lacunae in the Venetian documentary evidence.<sup>45</sup>

The absence of representative random data makes it impossible to determine precisely the proportional significance of the different models of Venetian trade. Despite these limitations, however, archival documents can offer some clues on the general extent of centralization of Venetian trade in this period. Tracing the locations where agreements on commercial matters were made in the mid-twelfth century (the earliest period for which the rates of documentary survival are high enough to draw any numerical inferences) clearly shows significant geographic dispersal.<sup>46</sup> Of all the discrete commercial agreements attested in surviving Venetian documents between 1150 and 1172, only about a third were made in Venice (see figure 1).

The Venetian Quarter in Constantinople emerges as a major center not just of trade but also of business negotiations among Venetians, followed by other cities within Byzantium and to a lesser extent the Levant and Egypt. Yet this study of the surviving documents likely fails to capture the true extent of Venetian involvement in Byzantium.

<sup>44</sup>For more on quittances, see Dino Puncuh, *All'ombra della Lanterna. Cinquant'anni tra archivi e biblioteche: 1956-2006* (Genoa, 2006), 794–795; for Venetian documentary practices, see Attilio Bartoli Langeli, “Il notariato,” in *Genova, Venezia, il Levante nei secoli XII–XIV*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli and Dino Puncuh (Genoa, 2000), 73–101.

<sup>45</sup>For more on trade between Venice and the Holy Roman Empire, see Rösch, *Der venezianische Adel*; see also Andrea Castagnetti, *Mercanti, società e politica nella marca veronese-trevigiana: secoli XI–XIV* (Verona, 1990).

<sup>46</sup>The early documents survive in clusters shaped by the archives in which they were initially kept as well as by their subsequent use as evidence in later property transactions (especially in cases where property had figured as security in a loan) and legal disputes (especially regarding inheritance). This clustering, coupled with low overall numbers, makes it impossible to use the early documents to draw any meaningful statistical conclusions: for example, between 1130 and 1140, twenty-nine discrete agreements on commercial matters are attested in total; six of these were made in Corinth and none at all in Constantinople, a distribution that quite clearly reflects nothing except accidents of survival. The number of documents increases dramatically from the 1150s on, likely in part due to the confusion and tensions surrounding outstanding obligations following the imperial sanctions of 1171 (on which more below), and in part because some of these records were later used to estimate and substantiate eventual compensation payments. See *DCV*, 58–78, 140–141, 298–299 (nn. 56–75, 141, 303). \

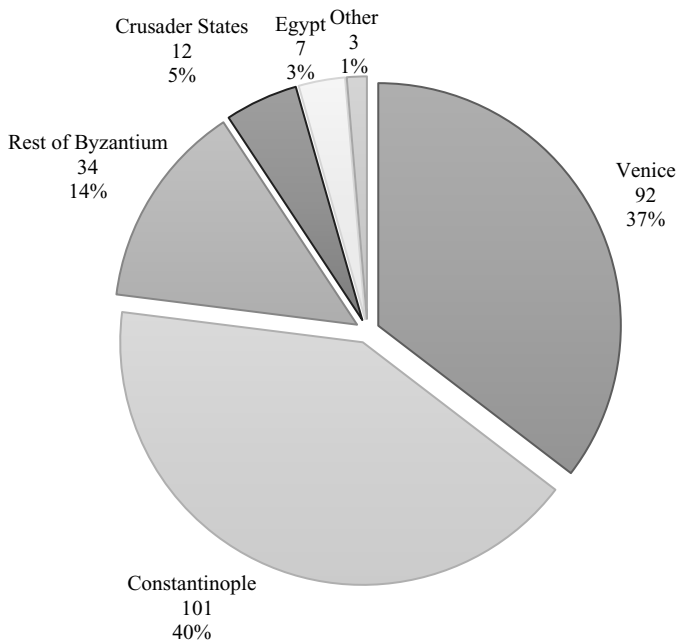


Figure 1. Locations of the making of business agreements, 1050–1071. Notes: The Byzantine locations outside Constantinople include Halmyros, Thebes, Sparta, Corinth, and Crete; “other” consists of three single agreements made in Caorle, Zadar, and Lesfornies (Palestine). In this calculation, I have included both the locations where extant commercial agreements were signed as well as the locations of any lost agreements the locations and dates of which are clearly mentioned in the texts of surviving documents (as is common in quittances). Note that I did not include some documents that Morozzo and Lombardo considered commercial but that do not specifically attest the date and location of the making of agreements concerning maritime trade: for example, I did not include agreements concerning property transfers within the Venetian lagoon unless they explicitly mention long-distance trade. The types of agreements tallied here include sales, the formation and dissolution of partnerships, the issue, repayment, and transfer of obligations, debts, and the rights to make or collect them, and the settlement or resolution of trade-related conflicts. (Sources: the documents used here can be found in DCV, *Nuovi documenti*; *Lanfranchi, Famiglia Zusto*; and *Codice diplomatico veneziano dalle origini al 1200 a cura di Luigi Lanfranchi*, Archivio di Stato di Venezia.)

Passing references to no longer extant Greek contracts in Venetian documents indicate that trade deals between Greeks and Venetians involving significant sums could be drawn up by Byzantine rather than Venetian notaries—and unfortunately, almost no Byzantine commercial documents survive today.<sup>47</sup> Jurisdiction in cases involving Greeks and

<sup>47</sup>See Maria G Parani, “Intercultural Exchange in the Field of Material Culture in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Evidence of Byzantine Legal Documents (11th to 15th Centuries),” in *Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000–1500* (Brill, 2008), 349–72, 351–352.

Venetians was not formally defined until the very end of the twelfth century, but in the earliest Byzantine concessions to Venice in 992, the emperors Basil and Constantine granted Venetians a special right to be judged by the Logothete of the Course in an expedited procedure.<sup>48</sup> After Alexios I Komnenos granted the Venetians a quarter in Constantinople, Venetians had their own judges in Byzantium, yet while seeking out Venetian judges may have sometimes been possible in Constantinople (where such high-status Venetians regularly traveled), it could not have been very practical in, say, Rodosto or Sparta.<sup>49</sup> The ad hoc, unstructured nature of Venetian overseas administration will be discussed at more length below; here I want to stress that the Byzantine legal system, which accommodated an impressive range of regional diversity beyond the letter of the law, was likely often more accessible to Venetians living abroad than the Venetian one.<sup>50</sup> Any Greek documents involving Venetians but intended for the Byzantine courts likely were not brought to or retained in Venice where they held no legal force: the first collection of Venetian statutes includes a rule that no one except a Venetian could testify against a Venetian.<sup>51</sup> The absence of such documents from the Venetian documentary corpus cannot be taken as conclusive proof that they did not exist. It is also worth mentioning that transactions for smaller sums were likely to go entirely unrecorded so as

<sup>48</sup> Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati con Bisanzio*, 21-34 (doc.1). Note that the Logothete of the Course (of the Dromon) was generally in charge of foreign affairs, pointing at the Venetians' ambiguous status as both imperial subjects and outsiders. For more on this, see Angeliki E. Laiou, "L'étranger de passage et l'étranger privilégié à Byzance, XIe-XIIe siècles (1994)," in *Byzantium and the Other*, 69-88, 84; and Laiou, "The Foreigner and the Stranger in 12th Century Byzantium: Means of Propitiation and Acculturation," in *Byzantium and the Other*, 71-97.

<sup>49</sup> The chrysobull of 1198 mentions a long-established unwritten custom among Byzantine citizens to seek justice from Venetian judges in cases where a Venetian was the defendant, and if the defendant was a Greek, the opposite rule applied. See Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati con Bisanzio*, 119-138 (doc.11); Daphne Penna, "Venetian Judges and Their Jurisdiction in Constantinople in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century: Some Observations Based on Information Drawn from the Chrysobull of Alexios III Angelos to Venice in 1198," *Subseciva Groningana* 8 (2009): 135-146.

<sup>50</sup> On the flexibility of Byzantine legal practice see Laiou, "Institutional Mechanisms of Integration," 165-168; 9; Helen Saradi, "The Byzantine Tribunals: Problems in the Application of Justice and State Policy (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c.)," *Revue Des Études Byzantines* 53 (1995): 165-204, 170-204; and Caroline Humfress, "Thinking Through Legal Pluralism: 'Forum Shopping' in the Later Roman Empire," in *Law and Empire: Ideas, Practices, Actors*, ed. Jeroen Duindam, Jill Diana Harries, Caroline Humfress, and Hurvitz Nimrod (Brill, 2013), 223-250. On Byzantine notarial practices, see Helen Saradi, *Notai e documenti greci dall'età di Giustiniano al XIX secolo. 1. Il tute notarile bizantino: (VI-XV secolo)*, Per una storia del tutee nella civiltà europea (Milano, 1999).

<sup>51</sup> *Gli tute civili di Venezia anteriori al 1242*, ed. Enrico Besta and Riccardo Predelli (Venezia, 1901), 67.

to avoid paying notarial fees.<sup>52</sup> Although Venetian commercial documents offer the historian a nearly unparalleled glimpse into the trading practices of medieval merchants, they cannot be treated as a representative random sample.

That many Venetian merchants had an active interest in local integration—despite the relative dearth of clear evidence for this in Venetian documents—can perhaps be seen most clearly from repeated instances of their resistance to central Venetian authority. In 1147, two legates of the doge were sent to the town of Rodosto on the Sea of Marmara to compel its Venetian residents to respect the privileges granted by the doge to the local Venetian church of San Giorgio.<sup>53</sup> These included the mandatory use of the church's weights and measures for all transactions over a specified value and, crucially, the proper payment of all accompanying tariffs, two times higher for transactions with Greeks. The document calling on them to comply concludes with a warning that those who contravene it are not only diminishing and scoffing at the honor of their native land but are also liable to be fined by the ducal court.<sup>54</sup> The authentication formula then contains an atypical clause insisting that there should arise no doubts that the document is genuine, as it was personally signed by hand by all the present legates and witnesses, numbering six—more than was typical at the time. The drafters of the document clearly expected the people of Rodosto to push back against this decree by any means, potentially even stalling its implementation by calling the authenticity of the document into question. The Venetian residents were surely driven in part by a rather unsurprising resentment of tariffs, but the special emphasis in the text of the document on deals with Greeks hints at the existence of another dynamic: the locals seemingly had no strong desire to conduct business under the aegis of their distant Adriatic homeland and were quite happy to strike deals without oversight, using their own measures instead. The reverse rationale is also telling: the ducal court doubled tariffs on transactions with Greeks as a matter of course, testifying to the presence of a protectionist policy of discouraging Venetian traders from integrating themselves too much into the local economy. All this may prompt us to consider how common such shadow transactions, deliberately carried out outside of the purview of Venetian institutions

<sup>52</sup>G. C. Maniatis, "The Personal Services Market in Byzantium," *Byzantion* 74, no. 1 (2004): 25–50.

<sup>53</sup>*Nuovi documenti*, 9–11 (n.8).

<sup>54</sup>*Nuovi documenti*, 9–11 (n. 8). "Quicquid autem huic actioni contrayre presumpserit, non solum ut honoris patrie diminutor contemptorque erit reprobandus, sed et bandum curie domini nostri ducis sciet se emendatarum" ("Whoever should nevertheless presume to go against these acts shall not only be shamed as a diminisher and despoiler of the honour of the homeland, but shall also know that he owes a fine to the curia of our lord the duke.")

to evade payments or restrictions, may have been, and what this may tell us about possible gaps in the Venetian documentary evidence.

Another indication that some Venetians came to be rather attached to their Byzantine lives lies in how difficult it appeared for the ducal government to persuade its citizens to return home in times of political crises: in 1121, 1170, and 1196, significant numbers of Venetians preferred to forfeit their Venetian possessions and to pay fines rather than leaving the empire at an inopportune moment.<sup>55</sup> Apparently, some Venetian merchants enmeshed themselves so deeply within the Byzantine world that they grew reluctant to heed direct orders from Venice. Although it is impossible to know their exact number, they constituted a large enough presence to raise the concerns of both the Byzantine emperors and the Venetian dukes.<sup>56</sup> Note that this does not necessarily imply that they were taking over Byzantine trade or becoming essential to the imperial economy—but Byzantium had certainly become crucial to them.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Byzantium was experiencing a period of economic prosperity characterized by urbanization, development of industries, and increasingly lively trade.<sup>57</sup> Some of this intensifying commercial activity was carried out by Venetians who settled permanently in Greek towns, formed long-term business relationships with local potentates and producers, and found a place for themselves in this economic boom. This was made easier by the simultaneous fragmentation of political power in Byzantium: the local

<sup>55</sup> See discussions in Angold, “Venice in the Twelfth Century,” 296–315; Jadran Ferluga, “Veneziani fuori Venezia,” in *Storia di Venezia*, 693–722; Giorgio Cracco, *Un “altro mondo”*; Maltézou, “Venetian Habitatores, Burgenses, and Merchants,” 233–241; Maltézou, “Les Italiens propriétaires terrarum et casarum”; and Federica Masè, “Modèles de Colonisation Vénitienne: acquisition et gestion du territoire urbain en Méditerranée orientale (XIe–XIIIe siècles),” in *Actes des congrès de la société des historiens médiévistes*, 33<sup>e</sup> congrès (Madrid, 2002); and Schreiner, “Untersuchungen zu den niederlassungen westlicher Kaufleute im byzantinischen Reich.”

<sup>56</sup> A Venetian chronicle from the early thirteenth century estimates the number of Venetians who sailed to the Empire in 1171 at some 20,000 people: see *Testi storici veneziani: XI–XIII secolo; Historia ducum venetorum, Annales venetici breves, Domenico Tino, Relatio de electione Dominici Silvi ventorum ducis*, ed. Luigi Andrea Berto (Padova, 2000), chaps. 18, 28–29. Many modern historians find this figure unlikely; the roundness of the number certainly indicates that it is not a precise count, but that this number seemed plausible within living memory of the events suggests to me that it may not be a complete exaggeration: see Gerhard Rösch, “Lo Sviluppo Mercantile,” *Storia di Venezia* 2 (1995): 131–151; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 523, n. 124. Also see Giorgio Cracco, who suggests that Venetians abroad may have been more numerous than those at Rialto. Cracco, *Un “altro mondo,”* 14. See also n. 28 above.

<sup>57</sup> See Alan Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900–1200* (Cambridge, UK, 1989); Michael Frank Hendy, “Byzantium, 1081–1204: The Economy Revisited, Twenty Years On,” in Hendy, *The Economy, Fiscal Administration and Coinage of Byzantium* (Northampton, 1989), 1–48; Angeliki Laiou and Cécile Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy* (Cambridge, UK, 2007); Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, chap. 4.



magnates, *archontes*, were growing increasingly powerful and independent in this period, which enabled them to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Venetian merchants and their privileged position in long-distance trade.<sup>58</sup> Imperial concerns over the encroaching assimilation of the Venetians and the diatribes of the Constantinopolitan chroniclers may relate to deeper worries over the loss of centralized control across the disparate communities of the empire. The merchants who were deeply embedded in local networks of power and trade, like the Venetians in Sparta with its market for oil and other agricultural products, or in Corinth and Thebes with their growing silk industry, benefited from their role as tax-free mediators between the local *archontes* and those traders who trafficked along the main long-distance routes.<sup>59</sup> The primary beneficiaries of this dynamic were the merchants and the *archontes* who were able to avoid some of the usual sales taxes and to increase their hold over local industries. Merchants who stayed in Byzantium were not truly reliant on their more itinerant compatriots: familiarity and trust certainly facilitated trade, but ultimately their tax privileges constituted a structural advantage, and their liminal cultural position could work to their benefit.<sup>60</sup>

Trading within the Byzantine Empire, especially in the economically thriving regions between the Peloponnese and the Balkans, offered a far broader range of investment opportunities than existed in Venice and its hinterland. In addition to participating in a much wider range of local commercial ventures, Venetians in Byzantium purchased and leased real estate—a form of investment that could grant prestige as well as financial stability. Deriving a stable income from the extraction of rents on immovable property was a hallmark of elite status throughout the medieval period, and in addition to this symbolic significance, property was a relatively safe investment, which held an obvious appeal to

<sup>58</sup> See Leonora Alice Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950–1100* (Cambridge, UK, 2004); Maria Gérolymatou, “L’aristocratie et le commerce (IXe–XIIe Siècles),” *Symmeikta* 15 (2002): 77–89; David Jacoby, “The Byzantine Social Elite and the Market Economy, Eleventh to Mid-Fifteenth Century,” in *Essays in Renaissance Thought and Letters: In Honor of John Monfasani*, ed. Alison Frazier and Patrick Nold (Leiden, 2015), 67–86; Michael Angold, “Archons and Dynasts: Local Aristocracies and the Cities of the Later Byzantine Empire,” in *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. Michael Angold (Oxford, 1984), 236–253; Nicolas A. Oikonomidès, “La décomposition de l’empire byzantin à la veille de 1204 et les origines de l’empire de Nicée: à propos de la “Partitio Romaniae,” in *Byzantium from the Ninth Century to the Fourth Crusade* (Northamptonshire, 1992), 3–28.

<sup>59</sup> Pamela Armstrong, “Merchants of Venice at Sparta in the 12th Century,” *Sparta and Laconia. From Prehistory to Pre-Modern* 16 (2009): 313–322; Jacoby, “Silk in Western Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade,” 452–500; Jacoby, “Silk Crosses the Mediterranean,” 55–79; and Jacoby, “Foreigners and the Urban Economy in Thessalonike.”

<sup>60</sup> Laiou, “Monopoly and Privileged Free Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean,” 511–526; Laiou, “L’étranger de passage et l’étranger privilégié”; and Jacoby, “Migrations familiales et stratégies commerciales.”

merchants embroiled in maritime trade, renowned for high profits and high risks. This approach was not, of course, without its own risk: legally, Venetians were forbidden from purchasing property outside of their *embolo* (quarter)—but as we read in Choniates and Kinnamos, these regulations were not entirely effective, even in Constantinople; they were even laxer in the provinces. This dynamic was hardly new: for example, Venetians had a colony in Dyrrachium well before being officially permitted to trade there by the chrysobull of Alexios I Komnenos.<sup>61</sup> Venetian documentary evidence for external property purchasing is unsurprisingly lacking; property transactions between Byzantines and Venetians would have certainly fallen under Byzantine jurisdiction.<sup>62</sup> Some sporadic mentions nevertheless appear in the Venetian documents: in 1150 and 1156, Venetians in Halmyros purchased adjacent plots of land from two Greek brothers.<sup>63</sup> Properties belonging to Venetian laymen are also attested in late twelfth-century Cyprus.<sup>64</sup> Beyond this, the very presence of a settled Venetian community in a city like Thessaloniki testifies to the possibility of property transfers outside of imperially sanctioned boundaries, as it did not officially have a Venetian quarter.<sup>65</sup>

The tendency of some Venetians to settle abroad and acquire local properties was not limited to Byzantium. In 1144, King Roger II permitted the Venetians in Norman Palermo to rebuild the ruined Greek church in the Seralkadi quarter for their own use.<sup>66</sup> A handful of documents preserved in Palermo reveal some glimpses of the community that lived around this church. The Palermitan Venetians were apparently quite settled: they were buried in the cemetery of their church and made donations to it for the salvation of their souls. With Palermo as their base, they traded in North Africa and Dalmatia.<sup>67</sup> They seem to have retained few real links to Venice, and no trace of their

<sup>61</sup> Alain Ducellier, *La façade maritime de l'Albanie au moyen âge: Durazzo et Valona du XIe au XVe siècle* (Thessaloniki, 1981), 70–73; Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, vol. 1, ed. Diether Roderich Reinsch (Berlin, 2001).

<sup>62</sup> On Byzantine jurisdiction and the ambiguous legal status of the settled Venetians, see Laiou, “The Foreigner and the Stranger,” 85–88; and Ruth J. Macrides, “The Competent Court,” in *Law and Society in Byzantium, Ninth-Twelfth Centuries*, ed. Angelii E. Laiou and Dieter Simon (Cambridge, MA, 1994), 117–130.

<sup>63</sup> Jacoby, “The Byzantine Outsider in Trade”; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 35.

<sup>64</sup> Tassos C. Papacostas, “Secular Landholdings and Venetians in 12th-Century Cyprus,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 92, no. 2 (1999): 479–501.

<sup>65</sup> Jacoby, “Foreigners and the Urban Economy in Thessalonike”; Ferluga, “Veneziani fuori Venezia.”

<sup>66</sup> Carlo Alberto Garufi, *I documenti inediti dell'epoca normanna in Sicilia*, vol. 18 (Palermo, 1899), 44–45 (n. XVIII). See David S. H. Abulafia, “Pisan Commercial Colonies and Consulates in Twelfth-Century Sicily,” *English Historical Review* 93, no. 366 (Jan. 1978): 68–81, 71.

<sup>67</sup> Garufi, *I documenti inedita*, 91–92 (n. XXXIX), 149–150 (n. LX), 209–210 (n. LXXXVI).

community survives in the Venetian archive—further evidence of structural gaps in the Venetian documentation.

Venetian evidence for the overseas property market is far more useful when it comes to areas within the legal boundaries of Venetian quarters, as they set a clear limit on Venetian jurisdiction. Investment options there were slightly more accessible than in Venice, though still very limited and competitive: property ownership was made difficult by the fact that most land given to Venice by the emperor was then routinely gifted to Venetian monasteries and churches, largely restricting the property market in the *embolo* to negotiations of leases and subleases. These quarters were valuable mainly because they hosted docks and harbors, known as the *skalai*, as well as workshops and warehouses, termed ambiguously *ergasteria*.<sup>68</sup> Notably, purchasing workshops in the increasingly bustling Byzantine cities was an investment strategy employed by the Byzantines as well as the Venetians.<sup>69</sup> Some Venetians saw property in Byzantium principally as a financial asset; sometimes they temporarily settled in the empire for business reasons and became *habitatores*—they did not try to grow roots; others came to treat Byzantium as their primary home and became *bourgesioi* or *burgenses*.<sup>70</sup> It is tempting to assume that the first group held more capital and assets in Venice, and the second had less, but this is surely an oversimplification. Several women number among the *habitatores*, indicating that this demographic extended beyond professional male merchants traveling for business.<sup>71</sup> Conversely, the famous Mairano made significant investments in Constantinople, but his financial strategy was ultimately quite balanced and included substantial real estate in Venice as well.<sup>72</sup> Some merchants who started with very little, like the freedman Dobramiro Staniario, were more inclined to prioritize putting profits back into maritime trade; with luck, they could gradually scale up their enterprises.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Gino Luzzatto, “Capitale e lavoro nel commercio veneziano dei sec. XI e XII,” *Studi di storia economica Veneziana* (Venice, 1954), 89–116; Masè, “Modèles de colonisation.”

<sup>69</sup> Federica Masè, “Le quartier des vénitiens à Constantinople du XIe Au XIIIe siècle: la fin d’un réseau?” in *Réseaux marchands et réseaux de commerce. Concepts Récents*, ed. Federica Masè (Strasbourg, 2010), 117–128; *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Angeliki Laiou and Hélène E. Ahrweiler (Washington DC, 1998); Paul Magdalino, “The Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople: Commercial and Residential Functions, Sixth to Twelfth Centuries,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 209–226.

<sup>70</sup> Categorization from Maltézou, “Venetian Habitatores, Burgenses, and Merchants.”

<sup>71</sup> S. Giorgio Maggiore, 271–273, 311–314 (nn 483, 514); Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 66.

<sup>72</sup> For Mairano, see Irmgard Fees, “Ein venezianscher Kaufmann des 12. Jahrhunderts: Romano Mairano,” in *Mito di Venezia: una città tra realtà e rappresentazione* (Venice, 2006); Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, chaps. 4, 6.

<sup>73</sup> For Staniario, see Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 109–110; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 513–514.

Wealthy Venetians invested in real estate overseas too, especially in the Crusader states—but on the whole, they integrated less. Some may have become *habitatores* overseas for a few years, but they remained essentially distinct from those Venetians who married local women, set up businesses, and counted among the *borgesioi*. Maintaining strong links with Venice and anticipating substantial inheritance there likely made the prospect of more permanent migration less attractive, especially as anti-Western sentiment was becoming more pronounced in Byzantium over the course of the twelfth century.<sup>74</sup> It is curious that the well-off families are disproportionately documented investing in real estate in the crusader states, where Venetian jurisdiction was clearer than in Byzantium, as Venetians made up an integral part of the broader settler society. Pietro Zani already owned a house in Acre in the early twelfth century; Pietro Morosini, another member of the new eleventh-century elite, was a *habitor Acrici* (resident of Acre) in 1166.<sup>75</sup> Members of wealthy families bought and leased overseas property alongside their commercial activities, but they generally prioritized maintaining their possessions in Venice over investing abroad. The one exception comes from the Morosini: two of the brothers, Nicolino and Filippo, sold their shares in Venetian property to the Falier (who were their neighbors on the Rialto)—and at this point they disappear from the records, even though it is reasonable to assume that they used the money to settle and continued trading in the Levant, offering yet another reminder of the limits of the Venetian documentary corpus.<sup>76</sup> Settling in the new crusader states could, however, offer quite different opportunities from those present in Byzantium. In return for military support, Venetians negotiated ownership of a third of the city of Tyre, as well as several fiefs in its vicinity, which then apparently came to belong to several important Venetian families, of whom we only know the Pantaleo and the Contarini.<sup>77</sup> Holding fiefs with several villages transformed them into feudal lords, granting them a great deal of political importance and social prestige, in addition to financial revenue. One of these new lords is

<sup>74</sup>Dion C. Smythe, “Insiders and Outsiders,” in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (Hoboken, 2010), 67–80; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*; Thomas F. Madden, “Venice’s Hostage Crisis: Diplomatic Efforts to Secure Peace with Byzantium between 1171 and 1184,” in *Medieval and Renaissance Venice*, ed. Ellen E. Kittell and Thomas F. Madden (Urbana, 1999), 96–108.

<sup>75</sup>*Nuovi documenti*, 20 (n.17); *DCV*, 169 (n.171). On the Ziani, see Fees, *Reichtum und Macht*; Borsari, “Gli Ziani”; on the Morosini, see Rösch, *Der venezianische Adel*, 21–22, 28–29, 64–65.

<sup>76</sup>Venier Dalmari in b. 1, *Miscellanea Perg. Privati, Raccolte e miscellanee*, ASV; Domenico Soave in b. 178, *Cancellaria inferiore, Notai*, Repubblica di Venezia, ASV.

<sup>77</sup>Jacoby, “Migrations familiales et stratégies commerciales,” 355–74, 362–3.

referred to in a document from 1157 as *miles* [sic], indicating his transition into the ranks of feudal, military aristocracy.<sup>78</sup>

Business strategies were shaped in part by personal taste and in part by financial circumstances, with some people preferring to settle abroad rather than continue casting their earnings into “*periculo maris et gentis*” (peril of the sea and people) and others being more open to risk. The “Venetian business model” in which the merchants traveled along well-trafficked sea routes, stopped at only the most active ports, and made quick sales seeking only sufficient profits to quickly make good on their loans precluded integration and closed opportunities for local investment—but to those who could afford to invest profitably in Venice, it offered clear advantages.<sup>79</sup> A key feature of this model was an openness to violent means of seeking commercial advantage. The *muda*, militarily defended state convoys of Venetian trading ships which sailed together at set points every year along predetermined routes, became increasingly common over the twelfth century, rendering quick, transitory trade ever more efficient and secure and allowing Venetian ships to maximize the opportunities of cabotage, buying, and selling at the major ports and to take full advantage of their tax-exempt status.<sup>80</sup> This form of trade was especially sensitive to political fluctuation, such as the tensions over the reissue of privileges that arose frequently between the Venetian elites and the Byzantine emperors, but the fact that capital was not wholly tied up within the empire rendered the

<sup>78</sup> *DCV*, 126–127 (n.126). For more on the Venetian settlements in the Crusader States, see discussions in Marwan Nader, *Burgesses and Burgess Law in the Latin Kingdoms of Jerusalem and Cyprus (1099–1325)* (New York, 2016); Marie-Luise Favreau-Lilie, *Die Italiener Im Heiligen Land Vom Ersten Kreuzzug Bis Zum Tode Heinrichs von Champagne (1098–1197)* (Amsterdam, 1989); David Jacoby, “The Venetian Presence in the Crusader Lordship of Tyre: A Tale of Decline,” in *The Crusader World*, ed. Adrian J. Boas (Routledge, 2015), 181–195.

<sup>79</sup> Note that in this period, different approaches to trade and investment did not map onto the *stans/procertans* divide: trade and property ownership were intertwined components of aristocratic wealth in Venice, and the sitting and traveling business partners were often relatives. For more on patrician participation in Venetian trade, see Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 511–512; Rösch, *Der Venezianische Adel Bis Zur Schließung Des Großen Rats. Zur Geschichte Einer Führungsschicht*, 75–76; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 68–68, as well as n. 26 above. Familial investment in trade precipitated the personal involvement of (usually younger) family members; a common type of Venetian commercial partnership, the *fraterna compagnia*, allowed brothers to maintain shared ownership of their inheritance including any outstanding obligations; notably, heirs often held real estate in common even after dividing their commercial affairs. See Giorgio Zordan, “I vari aspetti della comunione familiare di beni nella Venezia dei secoli XI–XII,” *Studi veneziani* (1966): 127–194, 161–163; Jacoby, “Migrations familiales et stratégies commerciales.”

<sup>80</sup> For more of the *muda*, see Frederic Lane, “Venetian Shipping during the Commercial Revolution,” *American Historical Review* 38, no. 2 (1933): 219–239; Jean-Claude Hocquet, *Denaro, navi e mercanti a Venezia 2* (Treviso, 1999); Giovanni Italo Cassandro, “La formazione del diritto marittimo veneziano,” in *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, ed. A. Pertusi (Florence, 1973), 185–218.

merchants flexible, making it possible to refocus trade elsewhere.<sup>81</sup> The flexibility of this model was already noted by Gras, who pointed out how relatively easily sedentary merchants adjusted their affairs “either to war or peace, storm or calm, prosperity or depression.”<sup>82</sup> As mentioned above, this type of trade existed since the early medieval period; it was likely how many long-distance ventures, such as the trade in slaves, were structured.<sup>83</sup> As we have seen, however, in this period the centralized model existed alongside a different, more integrated one. While some merchants could afford to put the bulk of their profits to good use in Venice, many others saw a wider array of opportunities in the thriving economy of Byzantium and became deeply entangled in the local economies of the places where they traded, which incidentally made them far more vulnerable to political upheavals.

The coexistence of these distinct approaches to trade in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was supported by the decentralized, ad hoc character of Venetian overseas administration, which was marked by a heavy reliance on ecclesiastical institutions.<sup>84</sup> Venice formally owned land within Byzantium since the late eleventh century, and yet no formal Venetian government structure existed overseas for over a hundred years after the initial grant. Venetian merchants who traveled and lived overseas operated under a patchwork approach to administration and authority which relied heavily on the role of clerics, churches, and monasteries, as well as a shared understanding of assembly politics. Ownership of most land and buildings in overseas quarters was ceded to Venetian monasteries and churches through ducal donations, and in addition to property rights, churches also held monopolies on the use of scales, weights, and measures; as in Rodosto, the fee they collected for their use functioned effectively as a transaction tax.<sup>85</sup> The church that

<sup>81</sup>For some accounts of the conflicts over imperial privileges, see David Jacoby, “Italian Privileges and Trade in Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade: A Reconsideration,” in Jacoby, *Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean*, 349–369; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 20–124; Angeliki Laiou, “Byzantium and the Crusades in the Twelfth Century: Why Was the Fourth Crusade Late in Coming?” in *Byzantium and the Other*, 17–40.

<sup>82</sup>Gras, “What is Capitalism in the Light of History?” 98.

<sup>83</sup>For more on the slave trade, see Michael McCormick, “New Light on the ‘Dark Ages’: How the Slave Trade fuelled the Carolingian Economy,” *Past & Present* 177 (2002): 17–54; McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 344, 356–367, 523–531, 731–777; Alice Rio, *Slavery after Rome, 500–1100* (Oxford, 2017), 19–41.

<sup>84</sup>For more on the role of merchants’ churches in medieval trade, see Vsevolod Slessarev, “*Ecclesiae Mercatorum* and the Rise of Merchant Colonies,” *Business History Review* 41, no. 2 (Summer 1967): 177–197.

<sup>85</sup>David Jacoby, “The Expansion of Venetian Government in the Eastern Mediterranean until the Late Thirteenth Century,” in *Il commonwealth veneziano tra 1204 e la fine della repubblica*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt, and Ermanno Orlando (Venice, 2015), 73–107; John Mark Nicovich, “The Poverty of the Patriarchate of Grado and the Byzantine–

stood at the center of every Venetian settlement performed many administrative and social functions in addition to being a place of worship. Churches were important places: Venetians routinely assembled there to witness public oaths and participate in public gatherings.<sup>86</sup> They were equally central to the administration of private trade: Venetian notaries were always clerics (most often priests) and could be found in Venetian churches, which were also seen as *loci credibili* (trustworthy places), where documents could be deposited for safekeeping; as sturdy stone buildings, they also offered warehouse space for the storage of goods.<sup>87</sup> The notary-priests regularly traveled on merchant ships and recorded transactions along trade routes; they were active in commercial outposts throughout the Mediterranean and sometimes resided in these outposts as the priests of the local churches; as such, they represented the most consistent structural link between the more settled Venetians, such as those at Halmyros and Rodosto, and the more transient merchants.<sup>88</sup> At the same time, they benefited from a culturally ambiguous status: the ongoing vituperations of Byzantine Orthodox clergy reveal that, especially in the early part of this period, Byzantine locals in the provinces were often not yet sensitive to the rupture between Western and Eastern churches.<sup>89</sup>

The judiciary function of government was the only one that Venetians did not formally delegate to ecclesiastical institutions. In the twelfth century, the highest legal authority among Venetians in Byzantium belonged to the Venetian legate; the first mention of this office dates to 1150, when Sebastiano Ziani, the future doge, identified himself in a document as the legate of the Venetians, claiming the authority to adjudicate disputes.<sup>90</sup> The legate was not a constant presence in Constantinople however, being sent only when needed for negotiations with the emperor. In the absence of the legate, cases were decided by Venetian judges, and in the absence of judges, it sufficed to

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Venetian Treaty of 1082," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, no. 1 (1 June 2009): 1–16; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 54–57; Maltéizou, "Les italiens propriétaires terrarum et casarum," 180–183.

<sup>86</sup> In the imperial chrysobull of 1198, Alexios III required the Venetian legate to swear an oath to Byzantines and Venetians in St. Akyndinos, "as is customary." See Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati con Bisanzio*, 119–138 (doc.11); Penna, "Venetian Judges and their Jurisdiction."

<sup>87</sup> The clerical status of the notaries was unique to Venice: although clerical notaries existed in other cities, they were becoming increasingly less common in the Central Middle Ages, and clerical status was not a prerequisite for being a notary anywhere outside Venice: see Bartoli Langeli, "Il otariate."

<sup>88</sup> For a list of some of the more notable traveling priest-notaries, see Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 55 (n. 116).

<sup>89</sup> Shepard, "Knowledge of the West," 39–41.

<sup>90</sup> *DCV*, 96–98 (n.95).

bring together a group of *boni homines*, effectively referring to all nearby Venetians.<sup>91</sup> The conventional places for such gatherings were, once again, Venetian churches. None of these officials drew a salary nor were they forbidden from engaging in business of their own; in fact, the presence of judges overseas was largely incidental, as they traveled primarily to conduct their own affairs. Even in cases where the Venetian legate was present, *boni homines* were still listed alongside him, granting legitimacy through communal approbation. Without a centralized governing structure, final authority to adjudicate disputes among Venetians abroad lay with their communities—not just theoretically, as in the later communes and republics of Italy, but in a very real sense, referring to all Venetians present in a given place at the time. This approach to justice relied on a shared understanding of assembly politics derived from early medieval and Carolingian models, and its application in trading colonies meant that Venetians overseas enjoyed a significant degree of effective autonomy—in practice, they did not have to act in accordance with their notional metropole.<sup>92</sup>

This dispersed pattern of administration, as well as the centrality of overseas churches, may well predate the imperial privileges of the late eleventh century.<sup>93</sup> In Byzantium, foreign and even provincial merchants had been officially prohibited from trading freely and were limited to special commercial quarters where they could only remain for

<sup>91</sup> *Boni homines* is an early medieval legal term that usually denoted property-owning men of good reputation and reasonably high social standing: see Karin Nehlsen-von Stryk, *Die Boni Homines Des Frühen Mittelalters Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung Der Fränkischen Quellen* (Berlin, 1981); Thomas Szabó, “Zur Geschichte Der Boni Homines,” in *Studi Giovanni Cherubini*, ed. Duccio Balestracci (Siena, 2011), 301–322; Wendy Davies, *Christian Spain and Portugal in the Early Middle Ages: Texts and Societies* (New York, 2019), 274–287.

<sup>92</sup> For more on the development of assembly politics, see Timothy Reuter, “Assembly Politics in Western Europe from the Eighth Century to the Twelfth,” in *The Medieval World*, ed. Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (New York, 2003), 432–450; Chris Wickham, “Consensus and Assemblies in the Romano-Germanic Kingdoms: A Comparative Approach,” in *Recht und Konsens im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. Verena Epp and Christoph H. F. Meyer (Ostfildern, 2017), 389–424; for Venice, see Stefano Gasparri, “Venezia fra l’Italia bizantina e il regno italico: la civitas e l’assemblea,” in *Venezia. Itinerari per la storia della città*, ed. Stefano Gasparri, Giovanni Levi, and Pierandrea Moro (Milan, 1997), 61–82; Andrea Castagnetti, “Dall’assemblea popolare ai consigli del comune nel ducato di Venezia (secoli IX–XII),” in *Studi sulle società e le culture del Medioevo per Girolamo Arnaldi*, ed. Ludovico Gatto and Paola Supino Martini (Florence, 2002), 105–114; П. В. Лукин, “Средневековая “демократия”: народные собрания в Новгороде и Венеции.” *Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики*, [Medieval “democracy”: popular assemblies in Novgorod and Venice, *Ancient Rus. Questions of Medieval Studies*] 4 (2018): 23–41.

<sup>93</sup> The early medieval *sinochagia* (merchants’ lodgings) were often attached to churches: see Michael E. Martin, “The Venetians in the Byzantine Empire before 1204,” in *Byzantinische Forschungen*, ed. J. D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam, 1988), 201–214, 203; Robert Sabatino Lopez, “Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire,” *Speculum* 20, no. 1 (1945): 1–42, 37.



short periods at a time.<sup>94</sup> Special privileges seem to have been routinely granted to ecclesiastical institutions however, which perhaps partly accounts for the early presence of Amalfitan and Venetian churches in Constantinople, Dyrrachium, and elsewhere.<sup>95</sup> In addition to the colony in Dyrrachium, St. Akyndinos in Constantinople is named as an already-established Venetian church in Alexios' *chrysobull*, and likely it served some practical and administrative functions for Venetians in Constantinople even before they were officially granted the surrounding quarter.<sup>96</sup> Whatever the origins of the ecclesiastically-based administrative pattern may be, in the twelfth century it was marked by a flexibility that was well suited to accommodating the divergent models of Venetian trade.

This logistical significance of ecclesiastical foundations offers a unique (albeit highly partial) window into the actual geography of Venetian presence overseas. While individual Venetian merchants are recorded appearing in a wide range of locations in this period, many of these mentions likely evidence only fairly transient interactions. The presence of an extraterritorial church or monastery, on the other hand, signals the existence of a more permanent Venetian settlement (see figure 2). Venetian churches are attested throughout the Eastern Mediterranean in the twelfth century, though evidence for them is densest in the Peloponnese, Thessaly, and around the Sea of Marmara—the most economically active areas of the Byzantine Empire in this period.<sup>97</sup> This geographic distribution fits well with our knowledge of Byzantine trade routes, but tracing mentions of churches also highlights some more surprising Venetian settlements, including those poorly attested in the documentary evidence such as those on Cyprus and Rhodes.<sup>98</sup> In addition, because ecclesiastical institutions

<sup>94</sup>Lopez, "Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire," 25–35; David Jacoby, "The Byzantine Outsider in Trade;" Jacoby, "Italian Traders in Byzantium, c.800–1204," in *A Companion to Byzantium and the West, 900–1204*, ed. Nicolas Drocourt and Sebastian Kolditz (Leiden, 2021), 471–495.

<sup>95</sup>In the tenth century, trading privileges were also granted to the Georgian monastery of Iveron on Mount Athos: see Laiou, "Institutional Mechanisms of Integration," 164–165, 172; and on Amalfitan foundations, see von Falkenhausen, "La Chiesa amalfitana nei suoi rapporti con l'Impero bizantino (X–XI secolo); Jacoby, "Commercio e navigazione degli amalfitani nel mediterraneo orientale: sviluppo e declino," in *Medieval Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond* (New York, 2018), 65–104; Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire*, 25–35, 69–70, 238–241.

<sup>96</sup>Borsari. *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 31, n.5; Lilie, *Handel und Politik*, 11–12; on Dyrrachium see DCV, 66–67 (n.63).

<sup>97</sup>Lilie, *Handel und Politik*, 204–205, compiles evidence on the existence of numerous permanent markets in Catodica; the lively economy of mainland Greece attracted enough Venetian interest to leave some traces of overland trade in the Venetian documents, e.g. DCV 110–111, 129, 134–135, 136–137, 148–149, 206–208, 229–230, 264, 304–305, 347–349, 418–419, 441–442 (nn.110, 129, 135, 137, 150, 209, 235, 239, 270, 308, 353, 426, 451).

<sup>98</sup>On trade routes, see Lilie, *Handel und Politik*, 243–263; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 334–336; 517–519



Figure 2. Geography of Venetian settlements overseas (XI-XII centuries). Note: see the Appendix for a description of the sources and methods used to identify and select the locations presented here. Map by Isabelle Lewis.

formed the core of Venetian outposts both within and outside Byzantium, they equally reveal areas with continuous Venetian presence in the Levant, Southern Italy, and Sicily.

A notable exception to the importance of decentralized, integrated model of trade is found in the case of Egypt. Venetians traded in Egyptian ports throughout this period and came to have a large *funduq* in Alexandria—but because it was difficult for foreign Christian merchants to enmesh themselves effectively within the local economy, all Venetian trade there fell along the lines of the more centralized model.<sup>99</sup> The Venetian settlements in the Crusader states present an intermediate example. Although, as we have seen, some Venetians acquired landed property and settled there, ultimately the exceptionally heavily militarized context fostered the development of more centrally controlled and financed forms of trade and administration: the office of the Venetian *bailo* was first created in the context of impending military conflict.<sup>100</sup> The more permanent settlements associated most clearly with the integrated model of trade were thus primarily found within Byzantium, no doubt due to a combination of favorable cultural and

<sup>99</sup> David Jacoby, “Les italiens en Egypte aux XIIe et XIIIe siècle: du comptoir à la colonie?” in *Coloniser au Moyen Âge*, ed. Alain Ducellier and Michel Balard (Paris, 1995), 76–89, 102–107.

<sup>100</sup> Jacoby, “The Expansion of Venetian Government,” 93–103.

political factors—although notably, the Venetian enclave in Norman Palermo presents a clear example of similar local integration outside Byzantine territories (see figure 2).

The integrated, decentralized model of Venetian trade finds its parallel in the history of Amalfi, another Italian trading town that thrived in the central medieval period under the aegis of Byzantium. The merchants of Amalfi operated by setting up diasporic trading communities around the Mediterranean that wound up having only very tenuous connections to their city of origin, and only maintained some cultural and personal ties through ecclesiastical and monastic foundations.<sup>101</sup> By contrast, the outposts of Pisa and Genoa were governed by lay administrative structures from the start; both cities initially attained commercial success through a mixture of commerce and violence, by blending piracy, cabotage, and trade, and their economic expansion was then greatly boosted by the crusades.<sup>102</sup> Genoese trade in particular was highly centralized, with the earliest documents from Genoa showing a lively investment market in the city that seemed to shape overseas trade directly from the Ligurian coast.<sup>103</sup>

### The Decline of Integrated Trade

The relative administrative and economic autonomy of Constantinopolitan Venetians did not prevent outbursts of violence: fight broke out regularly between the Italian diasporas, and the proximity of the Italian quarters in Constantinople to one another made violent clashes especially likely.<sup>104</sup> In March 1171, inflamed by news of a lost battle between Genoese and Venetian ships, in a fight that recalled many similar prior skirmishes Venetians sacked the Genoese quarter in Constantinople and burned it down. The emperor Manuel Komnenos responded by issuing an order to arrest all Venetians found

<sup>101</sup> See Skinner, *Amalfi*; Jacoby, “Italian Traders,” 471–495.

<sup>102</sup> For a recent overview, see Michel Balard, “The Genoese Expansion in the Middle Ages,” in *Communicating the Middle Ages* (New York, 2018).

<sup>103</sup> Quentin van Doosselaere, *Commercial Agreements and Social Dynamics in Medieval Genoa* (Cambridge, UK, 2009); Agostino P. M. Inghuscio, *Reassessing Civil Conflicts in Genoa, 1160–1220* (Oxford, 2012); for contrast with Venice, see Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 77–78.

<sup>104</sup> See figure 3; Magdalino, “The Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople”; Krijnie N. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople: The West and Byzantium, 962–1204: Cultural and Political Relations* (Leiden, 1996); Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, UK, 2003); David Jacoby, “The Urban Evolution of Latin Constantinople (1204–1261),” in *Byzantine Constantinople. Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life* (Leiden, 2001), 277–297.

within the Byzantine Empire and to seize their goods and properties.<sup>105</sup> The shock of this event prompted fury in Venice, and the people's assembly demanded the formation of a military fleet to attack Byzantium. This fleet was duly produced, and doge Vitale Michiel set out at the head of this armada for Byzantine waters. The Venetians then overwintered on the island of Chios, where illness spread through the camp and supplies ran low; the fleet had to return to Venice in defeat, where the enraged Venetian public reacted by murdering the doge, whom they blamed for the disaster. Venetian chroniclers of later centuries tell us that, having realized with horror what they had done, members of the murderous crowd repented and proceeded to relinquish their ancient power to elect the doge through direct voting in the assembly of all citizens—the *arengo*, or *concio*—and instead to choose a council of wise men who would be charged with selecting the new doge in their stead.<sup>106</sup>

The events of 1171–1172 have long been recognized for their crucial role in Venetian state formation, cast as the moment when the republic was born in Venice and government by public assembly definitively ended. The disastrous campaign and the murder of the doge precipitated the establishment of the Great and Minor Councils of Venice that would form the core of its governance in the later centuries. The social realities behind these dramatic events have been interpreted in a variety of conflicting ways: traditionally, historians highlighted the tensions between the old aristocratic families like that of the murdered doge Vitale Michiel, whose power and prestige derived from centuries of participation in government and extensive property holdings, and the newcomers like the Dandolo or Ziani who had risen up through successes in trade within living memory—framing this as a clash between the aristocracy and the merchants.<sup>107</sup> More recently, Thomas

<sup>105</sup>The emperor's retaliation may have been a response to a conflict with the doge in the previous year: see Madden, "Venice and Constantinople in 1171 and 1172." For more on the events of 1171, see Giorgio Cracco, *Società e stato nel medioevo veneziano (secoli XII–XIV)* (Florence, 1967), 92 (n. 3); Frederic Lane, "At the Roots of Republicanism," *American Historical Review* 71 (1966): 403–420, 407–409; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 20–27; David Jacoby, "Italian Privileges and Trade in Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade: A Reconsideration," in *Trade, Commodities and Shipping in the Medieval Mediterranean*, 349–369.

<sup>106</sup>Berto, *Testi storici veneziani: XI–XIII secolo; historia ducum Venetorum, Annales Venetici breves, Domenico Tino, Relatio de electione Dominici Silvi Ventorum ducis*, 28–41; Cessi, "Venice to the Eve of the Fourth Crusade," 272–3; Lane, *Venice*, 90, 92; G. Maranini, *La costituzione di Venezia*, 2 vols (Florence, 1974), 1: 148–9; Madden, *Dandolo*, 57.

<sup>107</sup>See A. Castagnetti, "Il primo commune" in *Storia di Venezia 1*, vol. II, ed. LC Ruggini, M. Pavan, Giorgio Cracco, and G. Ortall (Venice, 1995); Cracco, *Società e stato nel medioevo veneziano*, 28–66; *Un "altro mondo." Venezia nel medioevo dal secolo XI al secolo XIV*, 49–54; Castagnetti, *Il primo commune; Dai tribuni ai giudici*; Luzzatto, *Storia economica*, 3–28; Lane, *Venice*, 34–46, 92–95.

Madden has reacted against such structural analysis by pointing out that the men elected to the new Council of Ten in 1172 had never opposed the previously existing ducal administration but instead were party to it, nor were all of them involved in trade.<sup>108</sup>

The new men who came to power in the 1170s were certainly not revolutionaries; for the most part, they were members of prominent families that had risen up through commercial success in the eleventh century. They belonged precisely to the type of rich merchants who were most clearly associated with the centralized model of Venetian trade: by 1172 their families had already been in possession of great wealth for several generations, long enough to have successfully mobilized it to acquire extensive property and to raise the status of their families in the city.<sup>109</sup> The new doge they elected, Sebastiano Ziani—mentioned above as the first known legate to Constantinople – came from one such family and was widely known as the richest man in Venice. The strategies the Ziani family employed to further its political rise ranged from lending conspicuously vast sums to the commune for military campaigns to massive property purchases in Venice and in the crusader states.<sup>110</sup> The aftermath of the arrest of Venetians in Byzantium was the culmination of these families' rise to prominence, and it cemented their place in the highest echelons of the Venetian elite.

Whether one sees in the formation of new councils the outcome of a broader conflict between old families and the new, between aristocrats and capitalists, or simply the culmination of a long process of restricting ducal power through conciliar regulation, the new Venetian “commune” of the twelfth century is generally recognized as being at its core a nascent oligarchy.<sup>111</sup> In the decade following 1171, disparities within Venetian society were thrown into sharp relief: although the arrest, dispossession, and expulsion of the Venetians harmed all Venetians to some degree, wealthier merchants were immeasurably better positioned to outlast this crisis than those who were less prosperous. The settled, well-established communities of merchants in Constantinople and other

<sup>108</sup>Madden, *Dandolo*, 56–57.

<sup>109</sup>Many of these families later claimed more ancient origins, reflected in them being listed among the “case vecchie” in the *Chronicon Iustiniani*—but this is unlikely: see Andrea Castagnetti, *La società veneziana nel medioevo. 2: Le famiglie ducali dei Candiano, Orseolo e Menio e la famiglia comitale vicentino-padovana di Vitale Ugo Candiano (secoli X–XI)* (Verona, 1993); Luigi Andrea Bertò, *In Search of the First Venetians: Prosopography of Early Medieval Venice* (Antwerp, 2014).

<sup>110</sup>Sebastiano Ziani was one of the two biggest contributors to a massive emergency loan issued to the commune of Venice by a group of citizens in return for a share in an eleven-year lease of the Rialto market: see Fees, *Reichtum und Macht*; and Borsari, “Gli Ziani.”

<sup>111</sup>Giorgio Cracco, *Un “altro mondo”*; Andrea Castagnetti, “L’età precomunale e la prima età comunale,” 1–162; Castagnetti, “Famiglie e affermazione politica;” Lane, “At the Roots of Republicanism.”

cities of the empire ceased to exist, and for about a decade Venetians were largely shut out of trade in Byzantium. Merchants who had not invested major sums into productive assets within the Venetian domain were left penniless, while those who had succeeded in acquiring substantial Venetian-controlled assets remained solvent and could look for new ways to maintain and increase their remaining wealth.<sup>112</sup> Tellingly, Ziani and the newly formed conciliar government quickly embarked on an ambitious series of legal and social reforms in Venice, many of which appear as efforts to balance a volatile socioeconomic situation, such as the 1173 statute setting maximum prices for food and wine.<sup>113</sup> Yet he and other newly powerful members of the commercial elite were less eager to pass legislation that could negatively impact their own finances: although the usual punitive doubling of interest rates on late repayments was initially suspended, outstanding loans for ventures in the Byzantine empire were certainly not forgiven. The Ziani benefited from this directly: they collected unpaid debts in property deemed to be of equivalent value, including, for example, a mansion worth 1,000 denarii that had belonged to the aristocratic Michiel family.<sup>114</sup>

The Venetian documentary record from the 1170s is littered with records of defaulted loans, many of them dealing with the heirs of the debtors, affecting the entire families of those who were deceased or missing because they did not manage to flee the empire. The famous Romano Mairano, who was rather better off than most of the newer merchants, fled the empire on his own large ship, with some 140 other Venetian refugees.<sup>115</sup> In the wake of the imperial sanction, he lost all his Constantinopolitan assets and had to sell his houses on the Rialto to pay his creditors; the documents from the 1170s show him engaging in increasingly desperate ventures, embarking on atypical journeys to Béjaïa and Ceuta off the coast of Morocco, which nevertheless did not help him fully recover his former status.<sup>116</sup> The way he weathered the crisis is perhaps telling: many of Mairano's business agreements from

<sup>112</sup> Fees, "Ein venezianscher Kaufmann des 12. Jahrhunderts: Romano Mairano," 34–36; *Reichtum und Macht*, 47–102; Cracco, *Società e stato*, 43–47; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 117, 129.

<sup>113</sup> For legal reforms, see M. Roberti, "Dei giudici veneziani prima del 1200," *Nuovo Archivio Veneto* 8, no. 2 (1904): 230–245, 244; Lane, "At the Roots of Republicanism."

<sup>114</sup> Fees, *Reichtum und Macht*, 47–102, 59; Borsari, "Gli Ziani."

<sup>115</sup> *Gli atti originali della cancelleria veneziana*, ed. Marco Pozza (Venice, 1995), 81–84 (doc. 18).

<sup>116</sup> *DCV*, 279–283, 288–293 (nn. 284, 285, 287, 293, 294, 296, 297). On Mairano's difficulties in this period, see Fees, "Ein venezianscher Kaufmann des 12. Jahrhunderts: Romano Mairano," 34–36; Cracco, *Società e stato*, 43–47; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 117, 129.

this period, curiously termed *convenienciae*, absolve him of all previous debts upon the successful completion of ventures carried out in the service of some of the richest Venetians; he seems to have made relatively little personal profit from these missions.<sup>117</sup> In fact, many of the documents that survive from 1170s record private agreements that dissolve previous obligations while establishing new, more hierarchical forms of partnership between creditors and debtors in which the latter become agents whose primary contribution is labor, and who sometimes are not required to leave the Rialto in pursuit of profit.<sup>118</sup>

In subsequent years, most of the documented Venetian trade focused on the Southern Mediterranean, especially Egypt.<sup>119</sup> The newly formed councils along with the doge engaged in complicated diplomatic maneuvering throughout this period: they negotiated for a new *funduq* in Alexandria, signed peace treaties with the Normans (their old enemies) and brokered the famous Peace of Venice of 1177—a pivotal moment in the conflict between the papacy and the Holy Roman emperors.<sup>120</sup> The main thrust of their diplomatic efforts was, however, aimed at recovering the losses of 1171 and regaining a strong position in trade within Byzantium.<sup>121</sup> In this matter, the interests of the richer and the poorer Venetian merchants aligned: both groups wanted a restoration of the highly profitable Byzantine trade and compensation for the losses of 1171. Yet, these negotiations were difficult, and Venetians and Byzantines were still formally at war in 1180.<sup>122</sup> After years of complex politicking, Venetians were at last allowed to return to

<sup>117</sup>On *conveniencia* agreements, see Adam J. Kosto, “The Convenientia in the Early Middle Ages,” *Mediaeval Studies* 60 (1 Jan. 1998): 1–54.

<sup>118</sup>See Mueller, *The Procuratori Di San Marco and the Venetian Credit Market: A Study of the Development of Credit and Banking in the Trecento*, 73–9, 177–8 on the development of what he calls the “stationary commenda,” and which was central to later medieval Venetian trade.

<sup>119</sup>A. Pertusi, “Venezia e Bisanzio: 1000–1204,” *DOP* 33 (1979): 1–22, 5, 11–12; Lilie, *Handel Und Politik Zwischen Dem Byzantinischen Reich Und Den Italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa Und Genua in Der Epoche Der Komnenen Und Der Angeleri (1081–1204)*, 360–372; L. Fr. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, 3 vols (Cambridge, UK, 2012, rep.), 1: 171–175; Jacoby, “Les Italiens en Egypte aux XIIe et XIIIe siècle.”

<sup>120</sup>See Thomas F Madden, “Alexander III and Venice,” in *Pope Alexander III (1159–81)* (New York, 2016), 315–340.

<sup>121</sup>Angold, 2021 claims that Venetian elites wanted to reconnect with Byzantium for primarily sentimental reasons—but to me, it appears significant that both the richer and the poorer merchants in Venice stood to benefit materially from Byzantine trade.

<sup>122</sup>A Venetian-Pisan treaty of 1180 refers to an ongoing conflict between Venice and the Empire; Venetians were likely only allowed to return to Byzantium around 1183: see Martin, 213–214; Madden, “Venice’s Hostage Crisis.”

Byzantium and to their quarter in Constantinople in 1184, and a number of new imperial concessions were granted by the emperors through the 1190s, some much more generous than what had existed previously, and compensation was issued for the damage inflicted in 1171.<sup>123</sup>

The fragmentary evidence of the documentary record can add some surprising nuances to the broader narrative of the 1171 crisis: testimony from 1179, for example, recounts that in March 1171 in Constantinople, a certain Domenico Barbaromano was apprehended and apparently lost almost all proceeds from the sale of a ship and its cargo—except for a sum that was held for him by “one of the Constantinopolitan *caadelatis*”: apparently, the seizure of Venetian property, although swift and effective, was not entirely comprehensive.<sup>124</sup> Interestingly, a handful of surviving Venetian notarial documents were signed in Constantinople in the 1170s, including a contract that was drawn up by a Venetian notary-priest in May 1171, mere months after the arrest of the Venetians.<sup>125</sup> Others include a donation made in 1177 by a Venetian *habitor* of Constantinople to the monastery of San Giovanni di Torcello and two contracts concerning the manumission of a slave from 1176, which interestingly designate the freedman as a new Roman citizen.<sup>126</sup> These survivals indicate that at least some Venetians in the capital were not detained and were even able to retain some ties to the lagoon. Perhaps they, as the 1175 Norman-Venetian treaty puts it, were “in the employ of the Constantinopolitan emperor”—but unfortunately their professional occupations and positions in Constantinople remain unknown.<sup>127</sup> A notable set of documents from Thebes, on the other hand, shows traces of continued commerce carried out by a group of Venetian merchants who apparently operated between Byzantium and Venice in the 1170s.<sup>128</sup> It is not wholly clear how exceptional such activity was:

<sup>123</sup> For a detailed description of these privileges, see Donald M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge, UK, 1992), 123.

<sup>124</sup> DCV, 309 (n. 313). *Cadelatis* is probably a transliteration of the Greek καταλύτης (lodger); this usage is unique and the identity of these lodgers remains unclear.

<sup>125</sup> DCV, 235–236 (n. 241).

<sup>126</sup> Luigi Lanfranchi, ed., *S. Giorgio Maggiore, vol. III*, 131–133 (nn.374, 375); Luigi Lanfranchi, ed., *S. Giovanni Evangelista Di Torcello (1024–1199)* (Venezia, 1948), 96–98 (n.64); Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 22–23. Note that these Constantinopolitan documents do not record commercial agreements and so are not included in the calculations for figure 4 below.

<sup>127</sup> In 1175, William II of Sicily granted protections to all Venetians except pirates and those who were serving in the Byzantine emperor’s navy: “illis qui fuerint in auxilio imperatoris Constantinopolitani ad defendendum ejus Imperium in galeis illis:” see Tafel, *Urkunden Zur Älteren Handels- Und Staatsgeschichte Der Republik Venedig I*, 172–174 (doc. 65); Cracco, *Un “altro mondo,”* 52.

<sup>128</sup> DCV, 267–27 (nn.273, 274, 275). Briefly discussed in Jacoby, “Migrations familiales et strategies commerciales,” 367–368; Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 23; Lilie, *Handel und Politik*, 211, 505; Angold, “Venice in the Twelfth Century,” 304; Madden, “Venice’s Hostage Crisis,” 101–102.



Venetians who managed to stay in the Empire despite imperial orders likely lacked the opportunity, and perhaps the desire, to draw up their legal contracts in Venetian form—tellingly, the few documents that survive from the Constantinopolitan *habitatores* directly affect the property rights of institutions or families within Venice. Nevertheless, most of the Venetians within the Byzantine borders in 1171 undoubtedly found themselves designated firmly as undesirable foreigners and were attacked, arrested, or managed to flee.<sup>129</sup>

After the Venetians were officially allowed to return to the empire, their re-established settlements there were not identical to those that had existed prior to 1171. Although land in the Venetian quarter in Constantinople was returned to its previous (mostly ecclesiastical) owners, the most capital-rich Venetian families were able to immediately buy out or lease some of the most enviable properties.<sup>130</sup> As the increasingly entrenched members of the Venetian oligarchy negotiated their way back into Byzantine trade, they introduced more centralized and hierarchical structures of administration that facilitated long-distance control of commerce at the expense of opportunities for local integration and autonomy. The jurisdictional rules governing the legal standing of Venetians in Byzantium were carefully clarified through negotiations with the emperor, and the Venetian community in Constantinople came to lie largely outside of the emperor's purview.<sup>131</sup> The ducal government established a new office, that of the *iudex Venetorum*, the judge of the Venetians, and the Venetian quarter attained a formal extraterritorial quality that clearly distinguished Venetians from the locals, structurally impeding assimilation at a time when anti-Latin sentiment was especially high among the Greek populace.<sup>132</sup> Living in Byzantium as a Venetian came to be seen as

<sup>129</sup>The impressive magnitude of their financial losses has been estimated by Michael Hendy: *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy: C. 300–1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 590–602; “Byzantium, 1081–1204: The Economy Revisited, Twenty Years On,” 25–27; see also Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 338–339.

<sup>130</sup>See, for example, Giovanni Dandolo leasing a workshop on the Golden Horn in 1184: DCV, n. 344.

<sup>131</sup>Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati con Bisanzio*, 119–138 (doc.11); Penna, “Venetian Judges and Their Jurisdiction;” Laiou, “The Foreigner and the Stranger in 12th Century Byzantium: Means of Propitiation and Acculturation,” 85–87; Laiou, “Institutional Mechanisms of Integration,” 171–178; Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 47–48, 105.

<sup>132</sup>This resentment of the Latins fuelled the notorious massacre of the Latins in 1182 when Constantinopolitans attacked the Latin quarters and went on a murderous rampage. Soon after this incident, the emperor offered Venetians compensation as well as new privileges, perhaps hoping to replace the mercantile fleet that was lost with the departure of the Pisans, Genoese, and other Latins: see Ralph-Joannes Lillie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloï (1081–1204)* (Las Palmas, 1984), 532–537; Nicole, *Byzantium and Venice*, 106–119.

perilous; when renting properties in Constantinople, Venetians now added a new clause to their contracts: they would pay rents only “barring fire and the violence of the emperor.”<sup>133</sup> The geographic distribution of commercial agreements derived from Venetian documents of this period shows a notable decline in agreement-making overseas compared to the middle of the century, though initially Constantinople retained some of its significance (see figure 4 below).

The old, locally integrated approach to trade was fundamentally undercut by the loss of accumulated social and economic capital in 1171 and by the changes in Venetian society that followed it—but it was not yet entirely extinct in the closing decades of the twelfth century. Upon their return to the empire, some Venetians seemingly became deeply enmeshed within Byzantine society once again. Once Venetian jurisdiction in Constantinople was sanctioned by the emperor, Venetian documents attained more broadly recognized legal force, at last allowing us to see some mixed deals first-hand. One such case shows Italians going to a provincial Greek priest for notarial services as a matter of course: a quittance drawn up in Constantinople in 1201 between the Venetian Leonardo Simetecolo and a group of Pisans regarding an advance sale of 34 miliaria of oil in Modone references a previous document drawn up by the Greek priest there, which the Pisans handed over to Leonardo upon completion of their deal.<sup>134</sup> When in 1196, during yet another expedition against Byzantium, the doge called for all citizens to return to Venice, many chose instead to remain in Abydos, claiming with remarkable frankness that they had the right to think of their own wellbeing and not just of their *patria*—and so continued the long history of failed ducal appeals to the patriotism of Venetians abroad.<sup>135</sup> Niketas Choniates, in his account of the events of the Fourth Crusade, mentions that in the days after the conquest, he was staying at the house of his local Venetian friends with their families.<sup>136</sup> The house had to be evacuated because it happened to be located within the quarter now allotted to the Frankish knights—indicating that it must have been situated quite far from the pre-conquest Venetian quarter (ref. figure 3); Venetians manifestly lived in different parts of the city, mixing with the locals rather than being spatially confined to a separate enclave.

<sup>133</sup> “...excepto periculo incendii et violentia imperatoris...:” see, for example, *DCV* n. 344; *Nuovi documenti*, n. 40; n.263, b.5, *Corporazioni religiose*, Mensa Patriarcale, ASV.

<sup>134</sup> The Greek document is called “simioma Greca” (σημείωμα). *DCV*, 444–446 (n. 456); see Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 56, n.118.

<sup>135</sup> Tafel and Thomas, *Urkunden*, 216–25; cf. Cracco, *Un “altro mondo,”* 58; Maltézou, “Venetian Habitatores, Burgenses, and Merchants,” 238.

<sup>136</sup> Choniates, *Historia*, 588.

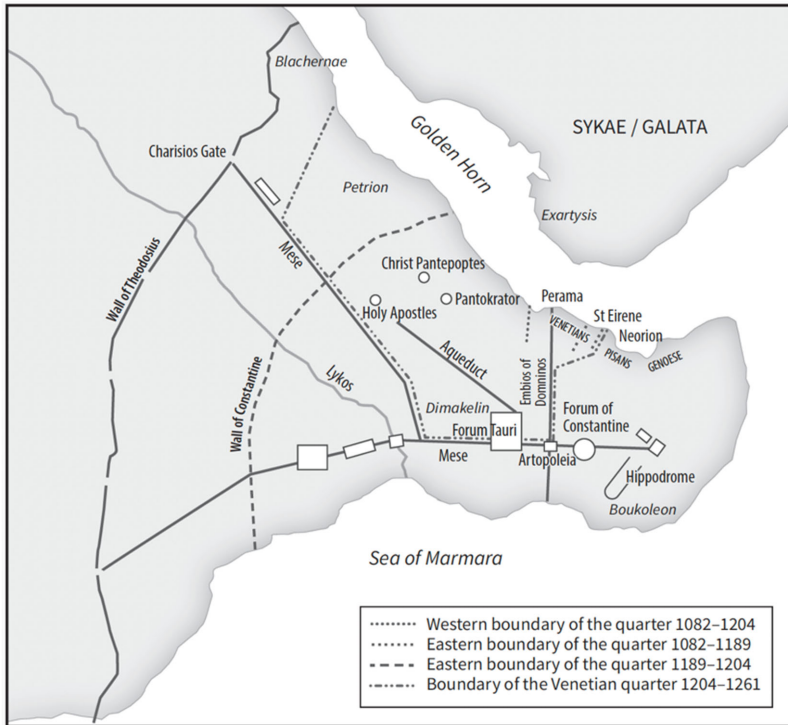


Figure 3. Western quarters in Constantinople. Map by Isabelle Lewis. (Source: David Jacoby, “The Venetian Government and Administration in Latin Constantinople, 1204–1261: A State within a State [2006],” in Jacoby, *Travellers, Merchants and Settlers in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York, 2014), 19–79, 39.)

### A New World: Venetian Trade after 1204

The conquest of Constantinople by the Latin armies, among whom Venetians were the most numerous and militarily significant, was a watershed moment in the history of Venice and the Mediterranean—and certainly in the history of Venetian trade. Somewhat paradoxically, despite the extensive geopolitical gains made by Venice in the Eastern Mediterranean in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade, in some ways Venetian commerce in the thirteenth century became less geographically distributed. Direct political control subordinated overseas territories to an increasingly rigid Venetian political hierarchy, and at the same time, an increased need for military protection discouraged merchants from embarking on independent ventures. In the new political reality, the integrated model of commerce, which had relied on the protection

and support of local communities and institutions, became impractical, and merchant investors resident in Venice came to direct all long-distance trade.

In the aftermath of 1204, Venice was allotted three-eighths of Constantinople and of all territories of the Byzantine Empire during the division of the new Latin Empire of Constantinople.<sup>137</sup> Following several years of conflict, it was ultimately left in direct control of several coastal areas in the Adriatic and Aegean, the islands of Crete and Euboea (Negroponte), and a large part of Constantinople. After the death of Enrico Dandolo, the Constantinopolitan Venetians initially tried to assert their independence and elected a podestà, Marino Zeno, without waiting on orders from Venice; ultimately however, the need to gain effective military control over new Venetian territories quashed any nascent separatist tendencies and overseas administration was restructured to maintain centralized control.<sup>138</sup> As Venice gained undisputed control over parts of the Byzantine Empire, most administrative functions previously handled by ecclesiastical institutions and private individuals fell to new government officials, appointed from Venice for a limited term and paid a salary.<sup>139</sup> Churches and monasteries generally maintained their possessions, and in fact new grants continued to be made to them, but they were functionally subordinated to the authority of the lay government. Some elements of older practices persisted: for example, court cases in Constantinople were heard in the Pantokrator monastic complex, continuing the traditional use of sacred space for this purpose—yet in practical terms, the flexible, devolved approach to overseas administration that centered the church and the assembly was well and truly gone.<sup>140</sup> Taxation became direct, the judiciary was tightened, and ultimate local authority was granted to the podestà and his local council, in an extension of the system that developed in Venice a few decades prior. The Constantinopolitan podestà was expressly forbidden from engaging in trade or bringing his family along with him, revealing a deliberate effort to ensure he would remain an

<sup>137</sup> Oikonomidès, “La décomposition de l’empire byzantin à la veille de 1204 et les origines de l’empire de Nicée: à propos de la “Partitio Romaniae.”

<sup>138</sup> Chryssa A. Maltézou, “Venetian Habitatores, Burgenses, and Merchants”; David Jacoby, “The Venetian Presence in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (1204–1261): The Challenge of Feudalism and the Byzantine Inheritance,” in *Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean*, 141–201.

<sup>139</sup> Jacoby, “The Venetian Government and Administration in Latin Constantinople, 1204–1261: A State within a State (2006),” in *Travellers, Merchants and Settlers in the Eastern Mediterranean*, 19–79.

<sup>140</sup> David Jacoby, “The Venetian Quarter of Constantinople from 1082 to 1261: Topographical Considerations,” in *Novum Millenium: Studies on Byzantine History and Culture Dedicated to Paul Speck*, ed. Claudia Saude and Sarolta Takács (New York, 2001), 153–170.

outsider.<sup>141</sup> Some of the more dispersed areas under Venetian control, such as many Aegean islands, were privately taken over by Venetian aristocrats who held them in fief from the Latin Emperor at Constantinople—but the most important territories, including Crete and Ragusa (Dubrovnik), were ruled by governors appointed from Venice for biannual terms, and Venice emerged as the metropole in direct control of extensive overseas territories.<sup>142</sup>

For Venetian trade, the period following the Fourth Crusade was unsurprisingly marked by dramatic growth; the scale of commerce seen in thirteenth-century Venetian records is markedly greater than that of the twelfth.<sup>143</sup> Venetian merchants gained access to the Black Sea with its rich grain markets and direct links to Eurasian trade routes (although their involvement there remained largely superficial, and was initially hampered by the Mongol invasions), and at the same time started to trade more actively in the Western Mediterranean, placing themselves in the midst of a vast trading network.<sup>144</sup> Yet this impressive geographic range belies an underlying spatial consolidation and restriction. Despite gaining political control and direct jurisdiction in many areas of the Eastern Mediterranean, Venetians did not form major trading hubs there: instead, the economy of the new Venetian domains came to be defined by intensive, export-oriented patterns of resource extraction, linked to a network of long-distance commerce directed from Venice.<sup>145</sup> The triumph of the centralized model of trade in the early thirteenth century was likely even more dramatic than the documentary record can show, as the expansion of Venetian political control meant that there were now few advantages to using non-Venetian document forms for

<sup>141</sup>For an overview of the office of the podestà, see Robert Lee Wolff, *A New Document from the Period of the Latin Empire of Constantinople: The Oath of the Venetian Podestà* (Brussels, 1953).

<sup>142</sup>Sally McKee, *Uncommon dominion: Venetian Crete and the myth of ethnic purity* (Philadelphia, 2000); Rena Lauer, *Colonial justice and the Jews of Venetian Crete* (Philadelphia, 2019); Silvano Borsari, *Il Dominio Veneziano a Creta Nel XIII Secolo* (Napoli, 1963).

<sup>143</sup>For thirteenth-century Venetian trade, see Luzzatto, *Storia Economica*, 29–132; Reinhold C. Mueller and Frederic C. Lane, *The Venetian Money Market: Banks, Panics, and the Public Debt, 1200–1500, 1* (Baltimore, 1997).

<sup>144</sup>Annabel Hancock, “Tracing Connections: Using Network Analysis to Study Trade and Movement in the Mediterranean in the 11th to 14th Centuries,” *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 38, no. 4 (2023): 1536–1563; Angeliki E. Laiou, “Venice as a Centre of Trade and of Artistic Production in the Thirteenth Century (1982),” in *Byzantium and the Other*, 11–26.

<sup>145</sup>Angeliki Laiou, “The Many Faces of Medieval Colonization (1998),” in *Byzantium and the Other*, 13–30; Mario Gallina, *Una società coloniale del trecento, Creta fra Venezia e Bisanzio* (Venice, 1989); “Progetti Veneziani Di Economia Coloniale a Creta,” in Gallina, *Conflitti e Coesistenza Nel Mediterraneo Medievale* (Umbria, 2003), 301–320; David Jacoby, “The Economy of Latin Greece,” in *A Companion to Latin Greece* (Leiden, 2014), 185–216.

recording overseas transactions.<sup>146</sup> The Venetian statutes promulgated by doge Jacopo Tiepolo in 1242 regulated the creation of notarial documents, decreeing that contracts could only be drawn up in Venice and Constantinople, and paid off only there or in a city specified in the text of the document; yet, amazingly few surviving records show trade agreements made in Constantinople after the 1220s.<sup>147</sup> The conquest of Constantinople heralded a fundamental shift in the character of Venetian commerce: decisions that shaped trade from Constantinople to Alexandria were now almost exclusively made in the vicinity of the Rialto (see figure 4).

The causes of this transition are likely manifold. Constantinople, devastated by fires and looting in 1204, suffered significant population loss and was no longer the capital of a prosperous and powerful state; although several new wharves were built in the newly enlarged Venetian quarter there, revenues from the rents of Venetian-owned properties in the city may have declined, and the formerly prosperous areas of Thessaly, Boeotia, and the Peloponnese, devastated by ongoing warfare, lost much of their economic vitality.<sup>148</sup> In addition, the decreasing security of travel in the Mediterranean encouraged more centralized forms of trade, leading to the entrenchment of the *muda* convoy system in Venice. In the twelfth century, significant numbers of merchant ships regularly traveled independently of the *muda*, whereas in the thirteenth century this practice largely disappeared.<sup>149</sup> The *muda* effectively

<sup>146</sup> Antonella Rovere, "L'organizzazione burocratica: uffici e documentazione," in *Genova, Venezia, il Levante nei secoli XII-XIV*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli and Dino Puncuh (Venice, 2001), 103–128; David Jacoby, "Multilingualism and Institutional Patterns of Communication in Latin Romania (Thirteenth–Fourteenth Centuries)," in *Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000–1500*, 25–48; Maria Francesca Tiepolo, "Public Documents and Notarial Praxis: Some Examples from Venetian Greece of the Early Fourteenth Century," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10, no. 1–2 (1995): 302–21.

<sup>147</sup> *Gli statuti veneziani di Jacopo Tiepolo del 1242*, I, ed. Roberto Cessi, (Venice, 1938), xxvii, 62; *idem*, V, viii, 22. Another clear change in Venetian record-keeping is evident from the survival from the thirteenth century of contracts for trade in Western Europe, which, as mentioned above, are conspicuously absent from the twelfth-century documentary record.

<sup>148</sup> Louise Buenger Robbert, "Rialto Businessmen and Constantinople, 1204–1261," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 1995, 43–58; David Jacoby, "Venetian Settlers in Latin Constantinople (1204–1261): Rich or Poor?" in *Byzantium, Latin Romania and the Mediterranean*, 181–204; Jacoby, "The Economy of Latin Constantinople, 1204–1261 (2005)," in *Travellers, Merchants and Settlers in the Eastern Mediterranean*, 195–214; Jacoby, "The Encounter of Two Societies: Western Conquerors and Byzantines in the Peloponnese after the Fourth Crusade," in Jacoby, *Recherches Sur La Méditerranée Orientale Du XIIe Au XVe Siècle* (London, 1979), II:873–906; Angeliki E. Laiou, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," in Laiou, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* (New York, 1992), 177–233.

<sup>149</sup> For the *muda*, see F. M. Hocker and J. M. McManamon, "Mediaeval Shipbuilding in the Mediterranean and Written Culture at Venice," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 21, no. 1 (2006): 1–37; Jean-Claude Hocquet, "La politica del sale," in *Storia di Venezia. Dalle origini alla caduta* 2, ed. Giorgio Cracco (Rome, 1995), 713–736; Frederic Lane, "Venetian Merchant

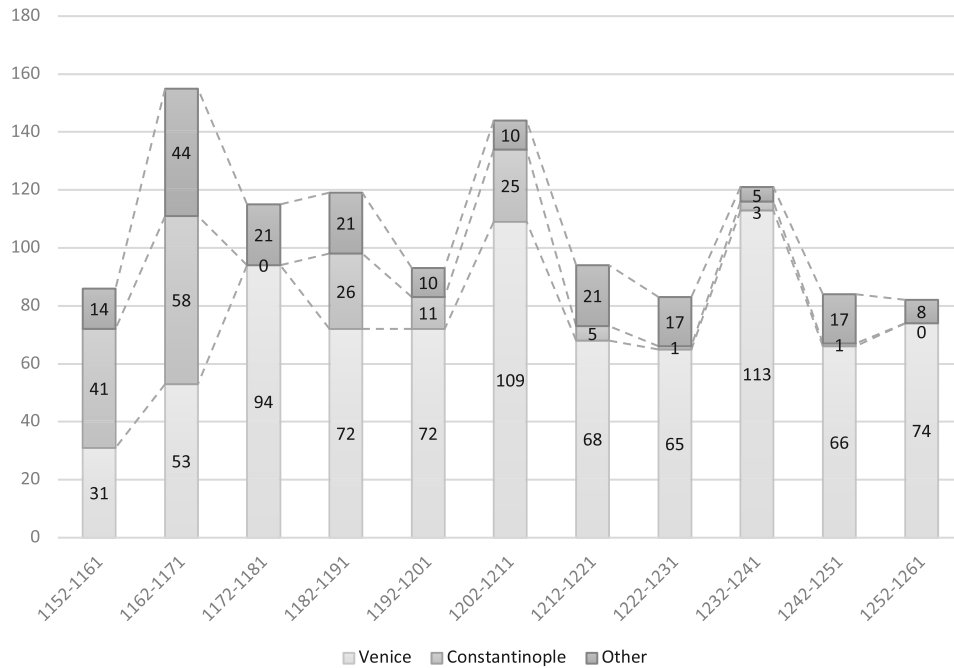


Figure 4. Locations of the making of business agreements, 1082–1261. Note: this diagram visualizes the proportion of business agreements made between Venetians in Venice, in Constantinople, and at other locations between 1152 and 1261, calculated using the same method as that used for figure 1. Note the sharp increase in the relative proportion of agreements made in Venice after c.1210. (Sources: the documents used for this study can be found in DCV, *Nuovi documenti*; Lanfranchi, *Famiglia Zusto*; and *Codice diplomatico veneziano dalle origini al 1200 a cura di Luigi Lanfranchi*.)

protected Venetian commercial interests, but they also placed nearly all long-distance trade within strict, relatively low-risk parameters, determined by the republic's newly formalized government. These convoys allowed investors near-complete control over the locations and duration of trading ventures at the outset: whereas twelfth-century contracts often instructed traveling merchants to "trade wherever may seem good," thirteenth-century contracts tended to name both the *muda* convoy that they expected the outgoing ship to join and the one with which they had to return, as well as the locations along the way where they were expected to trade.<sup>150</sup> Venetian ventures in the thirteenth century came to be largely limited to biannual journeys to and from Venice, allowing for limited local entanglements. The geography of Venetian trade changed as well: Byzantine territories were no longer central to it, and Egypt grew in importance; Venetians may have been the most numerous group of Europeans in Alexandria.<sup>151</sup> The powerful merchants of Venice orchestrated this commercial activity from the Rialto, and immense capital now flowed to the lagoon, where that gave rise to local industries and financial innovations.<sup>152</sup>

The Fourth Crusade precipitated the decline of the geographically distributed, decentralized, and locally integrated system of long-distance trade among the Venetians towards one that was far more centered on Venice as the active metropole, directly administering its affairs from afar. In business history terms, this is the moment when we can see the triumph of the canonical "sedentary merchant" who never has to leave Venice while managing his far-flung commercial empire. Yet a closer look at early Venetian trade shows us that, although investing in long-distance trade from Venice was practised as early as the ninth

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Galleys, 1300–1334: Private and Communal Operation" *Speculum* 38, no. 2 (Apr. 1963): 179–205.

<sup>150</sup> On the relationship between the use of the *colleganza* and the prevalence of the *muda*, see Dean Williamson, "The Financial Structure of Commercial Revolution: Financing Long-distance Trade in Venice 1190–1220 and Venetian Crete 1278–1400," in *The Economics of Adaptation and Long-term Relationships*, ed. Williamson (Cheltenham, 2019). The *muda* system was characterized by low risks, but also predictable and limited returns; newer merchants seeking to distinguish themselves and hoping to attain higher than average profits still ventured out independently, sometimes to increasingly distant and improbable places.

<sup>151</sup> Jacoby, "Les Italiens en Égypte aux XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles," 86; Balard, "Le commerce génois à Alexandrie," 271–275; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 516–517.

<sup>152</sup> See Reinhold Mueller, *The Procuratori Di San Marco and the Venetian Credit Market: A Study of the Development of Credit and Banking in the Trecento* (Baltimore, 1969) and Mueller, *The Venetian Money Market: Banks, Panics, and the Public Debt, 1200–1500*, 2 (Baltimore, 2019) for the role of this centralization in the development of banking; the thirteenth century also saw the rapid growth of local industry, especially luxury manufacture, see Laiou, "Venice as a Centre of Trade and of Artistic Production in the Thirteenth Century (1982)." On glass production, see Veronica Occari, Ian C. Freestone, and Corisande Fenwick, "Raw Materials and Technology of Medieval Glass from Venice: The Basilica of SS. Maria e Donato in Murano," *Journal of Archaeological Science Reports* 37, no. 3 (June 2021).



century, the role of the stationary investor was not always central to Venetian business—and that a different way of structuring trade saw Venice through the first centuries of its dramatic expansion.

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#### Appendix: Notes on the Geography of Venetian Outposts

The map in figure 2 includes two types of locations which help detect the presence of Venetians in the Eastern Mediterranean and within the Byzantine Empire. The first is derived from the Chrysobull of Alexios I Komnenos, which was the first imperial privilege to list specific places where Venetians could trade without paying the *kommerkion* tax.<sup>153</sup> The significance of this list has been debated: although the text of the chrysobull may imply that Venetians could trade only in these locations and not in the rest of the empire, more likely it merely identified significant markets where Venetians were already active as well as places where the emperor wanted to encourage trade for strategic reasons.<sup>154</sup> Earlier evidence shows that Venetian activity in Byzantium had never been limited to these markets, and conversely, some of the most important centres of twelfth-century Venetian trade in Byzantium are absent from this list.<sup>155</sup> The successive chrysobulls issued to Venetians during the twelfth century dispensed with naming precise locations and instead named entire provinces where Venetians traded—a geographically expansive list which continued to expand; this does not give a clear indication of the locations of commercial centres. Imperial decrees thus

<sup>153</sup> Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati con Bisanzio*, 27–35 (doc.2).

<sup>154</sup> David Jacoby, “Italian Privileges and Trade in Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade”; Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 335–336.

<sup>155</sup> See, for example, the port city of Halmyros where extensive Venetian activity is attested throughout the period: Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 335; and Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 135–136 on Demetrias and Halmyros.

provide relatively little concrete information on the actual geography of Venetian presence in Byzantium (and none on their presence outside the empire), and to contextualize them I have pursued another approach: tracing extraterritorial Venetian ecclesiastical foundations.<sup>156</sup>

Those I have been able to identify to date were located in Dyrrachium, Corinth, Sparta, Thebes, Halmyros, Thessaloniki, Abydos, Rodosto, Adrianople, Kotzinos, Limassol, Rhodes, Acre, Tyre, Beirut, Palermo, Bari, and, of course, Constantinople.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>156</sup>Venetian churches within Byzantium are listed in Borsari, *Venezia e Bisanzio*, 40–41; and Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 117–222, who includes them in his survey of Italian presence in Byzantium. To their findings, here I add Rhodes, where there is some evidence for Venetian churches dating to the period of Byzantine control, Limassol on Cyprus, and Thessaloniki. Moreover, in this map I identify all overseas Venetian churches, including those located outside Byzantium.

<sup>157</sup>[1. Dyrrachium]: The (likely Amalfitan) church of St. Andrew was granted to the Venetians in the 992 *chrysobull*; a significant community of Venetian colonists in Dyrrachium is also mentioned by Anna Komnena in the *Alexiad*, V.1, and by Guillaume de Pouille in *La geste de Robert Guiscard*, ed. M. Mathieu (Palermo, 1961), lines 465–466; Skinner, *Amalfi*, 219–220; von Falkenhäusen, “La chiesa amalfitana,” 402; Alain Ducellier, *La façade maritime de l’Albanie*. [2. Corinth]: Lillie, 195–7, Borsari, 41; *DCV*, 90–91, 95–96 (n. 88, 94). [3. Sparta]: Lillie, 198–200; Borsari, 41; *DCV*, 203–204 (n. 205). [4. Thebes]: Lillie, 210–213, 287; Borsari, 41; *DCV*, 136–137 (n. 137). [5. Halmyros]: Lillie, 187–190; Borsari, 41; *Nuovi documenti*, 15–16 (n. 13); *S. Giorgio Maggiore* 463–470, 526–527 (nn. 231, 232, 233, 271). [6. Thessaloniki]: A dependency of San Nicolò di Lido: David Jacoby, “Foreigners and the Urban Economy in Thessalonike, c. 1150–c. 1450,” in Jacoby, *Latins, Greeks and Muslims*, 2009, 85–132, 92; B. Lanfranchi Strina, ed., *Codex Publicorum (Codice del Piovego)*, I (1282–1298), Fonti per la Storia di Venezia, sez. I, Archivi pubblici (Venice, 1985), 207 (n. 28) [7. Abydos]: Borsari, 41; *DCV*, 375–376 (n. 382). [8. Rodosto]: San Giorgio: *Nuovi documenti*, 14–15 (n. 12); *S. Giorgio Maggiore*, 533–534 (n. 276), and Santa Maria: Borsari, 40; *S. Giorgio Maggiore*, n. 216; *Nuovi documenti*, 9–10, 14–15, 25–26 (nn. 8, 12, 23). [9. Adrianople]: The Latin monastery attested at Adrianople is not clearly described as being Venetian but there is strong circumstantial evidence to support its links to Venice; it certainly signals significant Venetian presence: see Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 171 (n. 2); Jacoby, “Italian Traders in Byzantium, c.800–1204,” 484. [10. Kotzinos]: The oratory of St. Blasius near the town of Kotzinos on Lemnos was given to the Venetians by the orthodox bishop of the island and became the property of San Giorgio Maggiore: *S. Giorgio Maggiore*, 380–383 (n. 181); Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 63, 122. [11. Limassol]: see Tassos C. Papacostas, “Secular Landholdings and Venetians in 12th-Century Cyprus,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 92, no. 2 (1999): 479–501 for extensive evidence on a large, settled Venetian community in Limassol around a church of San Marco, esp. 485–490; Nicholas Coureas, *The Latin Church in Cyprus, 1195–1312* (Aldershot, 1997). [12. Rhodes]: Jacoby, “Italian Traders in Byzantium, c.800–1204,” 483 mentions a Venetian church on Rhodes as being first attested in 1187, but a Latin, most likely Venetian church, was already present there around 1100 when it is mentioned in a treatise related to the Great Schism: see Sicienski, “The Azyme Debate: The Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries,” 137; and Shepard, “Knowledge of the West in Byzantine Sources, c.900–c.1200,” 40. [13. Acre]: Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus. Bd. 4: The Cities of Acre and Tyre: With Addenda and Corrigenda to Volumes I–III* (Cambridge, UK, 2009), 125–126; *DCV*, 266–267 (n. 272); Jacoby, “The Expansion of Venetian Government in the Eastern Mediterranean until the Late Thirteenth Century,” 91; David Jacoby, “The Venetian Privileges in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: Twelfth and Thirteenth-Century Interpretations and Implementation,” in Jacoby, *Commercial Exchange across the Mediterranean* (New York, 2005), 155–175. [14. Tyre]: First attested in 1137: *DCV*, 126–127 (n. 126). See Jacoby, “The Venetian Presence in the Crusader Lordship of Tyre: A Tale of Decline,”

This approach reveals several Venetian communities that are not well evidenced in the Venetian documentary corpus; nevertheless, it does not constitute an exhaustive record of Venetian presence overseas, and there are undoubtedly omissions arising from the partial survival of the sources. It seems probable that many locations where Venetian merchants left documents on hold for others had some continuous Venetian presence at that time—but it is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of this presence.<sup>158</sup> It is also clear that some Venetians lived amongst local populations in Byzantine territories and did not form their own enclaves—but their traces in the historical record are vanishingly faint (not unlike those of their Byzantine neighbours). Secondly, despite the importance of churches to Venetian trade, some known outposts lack attested churches: in crusader-held Tripoli, there were a few houses held by the *Opera Sancti Marci* but seemingly no church; Venetians also likely owned some properties in Chrysopoulos, but little is known about them.<sup>159</sup> Finally, the Venetian *funduq* in Alexandria did not have a church—and perhaps it should not be considered a permanent settlement because of the limits placed on the of merchants' visits there.<sup>160</sup>

Importantly, the geographic distribution in figure 2 does not reflect the intensity nor the reach of Venetian commerce: for example, trade

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*Gli atti originali della cancelleria Veneziana*, 70–74, 81–84 (docs. 15, 18). [15. Beirut]: Jacoby, “The Expansion of Venetian Government in the Eastern Mediterranean until the Late Thirteenth Century,” 94; Favreau-Lilie, *Die Italiener Im Heiligen Land Vom Ersten Kreuzzug Bis Zum Tode Heinrichs von Champagne (1098–1197)*, 46–48, 86–87; Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus, Bd. 1 A–K (Excluding Acre and Jerusalem)* (Cambridge, UK, 1992), 116. [16. Palermo]: Garufi, *I documenti inediti dell'epoca normanna in Sicilia*, 44–45, 92–93, 149–150, 209 (nn. 18, 39, 60, 86). See David S. H. Abulafia, “Pisan Commercial Colonies and Consulates in Twelfth-Century Sicily.” [17. Bari]: Bari has the most tenuous claim to having a Venetian church on this list, yet ultimately its existence seems probably in the late twelfth century: see David Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes* (Cambridge, UK, 1977), 80; Francesco Carabellese, *Bari*, Collezione Di Monografie Illustrate (Bergamo, 1909), 85–86. Note that this list does not include Venetian monasteries and churches in the Northern and Eastern Adriatic because, as Venetians vied for political control over that area, churches there were not extraterritorial in the same way as those that existed further away.

<sup>158</sup>Venetian documents show merchants leaving documents on Crete (e.g. *DCV*, 164–165 (n.167)), but it is impossible to know where exactly on the islands this was; sources post-dating 1204 claim that some Venetians had already owned property on the island in the twelfth century, but they are dubious and unspecific: see David Jacoby, “Byzantine Crete in the Navigation and Trade Networks of Venice and Genoa,” in *The Eastern Mediterranean Frontier of Latin Christendom*, ed. Jace Stuckey (New York, 2008), 39–62. Another location where Venetians may have had a presence is the port of Kytros: see Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 193.

<sup>159</sup>See Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 515; Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 135; Jacoby, “The Expansion of Venetian Government in the Eastern Mediterranean until the Late Thirteenth Century,” 94.

<sup>160</sup>Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 515–516; David Jacoby, “Les italiens en Egypte aux XIIIe et XIIIe siècle: du comptoir à la colonie?”

between Venice and the nearby cities on the Western shore of the Adriatic was routine and extensive, yet too proximate to give rise to defined diasporic communities like those associated with long-distance trade.<sup>161</sup> Moreover, some locations that were important for long-distance trade, such as the port of Modone, which had a fortress and served as an important stopover point on routes between the Aegean and Adriatic—show no signs of permanent Venetian settlement prior to 1204.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>161</sup> *Byzantium, Venice and the Medieval Adriatic*, ed. Magdalena and Herrin; Rowan Dorin, “Adriatic Trade Networks in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cécile Morrisson (Cambridge, MA, 2012); Wickham, *The Donkey and the Boat*, 514. Some Venetians were certainly resident in the Adriatic ports: e.g. “Iohannes Serçi de Boda de Kataro” (from the Bay of Kotor): *DCV*, 218-219 (n.221).

<sup>162</sup> Lillie, *Handel und Politik*, 200-202; Borsari, 56 n.118.