

Everyday Life and Material Culture in the Venetian and Genoese Trading Stations of Tana in the 1430s (Based on the Study of Notarial Documents)

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The thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries were a period of Venetian and Genoese expansion and continuous presence on the coasts of the Black and Azov seas. In these remote lands the Italians established a network of trading stations which soon became urban centres. While the Genoese possessions constituted a true colonial empire with the center in Caffa (modern Theodosia), the Venetians had only two outposts, namely, Trebizond and Tana (modern Azov). Located on the estuary of the Don River on the shore of the Azov Sea, Tana was one of the major trading stations in this region, a pivotal place for both the Venetians and Genoese. One of the main sources for research into life in these settlements, including material culture, everyday life, and the history of consumption, are the notarial documents drawn up by Venetian notaries temporarily residing in the trading station.

These notarial deeds are quite numerous, since the settlement's trade and social life required their production. Regrettably, most of them were destroyed by the Ottomans when they conquered the stations. However, Venetian legislation demanded that copies of many documents be passed on from one notary to his successor, and further sent to the metropolis, along with the officers' reports, which were stored in the Venetian archives. Therefore a number of medieval Venetian deeds originating from Tana have survived (34 notaries are known to have worked in Tana, from whom 1194 documents are extant¹).

In this study, I will discuss the unpublished notarial testaments drawn up by two fifteenth-century Venetian notaries in Tana (Nicolo de Varsis and Benedetto de Smeritis) as a source for reconstructing some aspects of the material culture of the trading station. These two notaries worked in Tana between 1430 and 1440. The documents are available in the State Archives of Venice in the *Notarili Testamenti* and *Cancelleria Inferior, Notai* sections.²

¹ Sergej Karpov, "Венецианская Тана по актам канцлера Бенедетто Бьянко (1359-1360 гг.);" [Venetian Tana in the acts of Chancellor Benedetto Bianco (1359-60)], *Prichernomorje v Srednie Veka* 5 (2001): 10.

² Archivio di Stato di Venezia, *Cancelleria Inferior, busta* 231: Nicolaus de Varsis (hereafter ASV, CI. 231); *ibidem*, *Notarili Testamenti, busta* 750: Nicolaus de Varsis (hereafter ASV,

Some testaments contain detailed reports on minor issues of the testator's property. After money, the objects bequeathed mentioned most often in the wills are clothes and textiles. Textiles produced industrially in Europe often served as currency³ and were widely used by the Tatars and other local populations.⁴ Sometimes textiles are mentioned without specifying their kind (e.g., *item Andrea Nigro ipse habere debet brachia quinque tella Nigroponti*⁵). Once, a master allowed Martin, a slave, to retain upon his liberation all cloth and flax fabric (*panno de lano et lino*) that he had.⁶ Probably the most popular type of cloth was *loesti*. A certain Baldassare, son of the late Marco, seems to have been the main dealer in *loesti* in the 1430s. He asked 10 *sommo* from one person for a piece of *loesti*, he obtained 10 pieces of *loesti* for another customer, and, together with another merchant, he sent 19 slaves to Venice in exchange for 32 pieces of *loesti*.⁷ *Loesti* is repeatedly mentioned.⁸ It is not yet known for sure whether this cloth was produced in or named after Aalst, a town in eastern Flanders,⁹ or the English town of Lowestoft;¹⁰ the provenance is surprising in neither case. As early as the thirteenth century Venetian galleys began to sail to Flanders regularly and these voyages were also connected with those to the Black Sea and Azov Sea region. The timing of the arrival and departure of galleys was scheduled in such a way that the galleys to Tana left only after the galleys carrying textiles from Flanders arrived in Venice.¹¹

Contrary to the import of other textiles, which seems to have blossomed, the silk trade through Tana was declining in the fifteenth century. The quality of

NT. 750); *ibidem*, *Notarili Testamenti*, busta 917: Benedictus de Smeritis (hereafter ASV, NT. 917).

³ Sergej Karпов, *Итальянские морские республики и Южное Причерноморье в XIII-XV вв.: проблемы торговли* [The Italian maritime republic and the southern Black Sea coast in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries: The problems of trade] (Moscow: Moscow State University Press, 1990), 156.

⁴ L. P. Kolley, "Хаджи-Гирей хан и его политика (по генуэзским источникам). Взгляд на политические сношения Каффы с татарами в XV веке" [Hajji Giray Khan and his policies according to the Genovese sources: A glance at the political relations with the Caffa Tatars in the fifteenth century], *Izvestija Tavricheskoj Uchenoj Arkhivnoj Komissii* 50 (1913): 108.

⁵ ASV, NT. 750, f. 21r.

⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 44r (not. n/n)-44v.

⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 23r.

⁸ ASV, NT. 750, (1) - (2) f. 18v, 23v-24r. Notably, in the last case the 19 slaves were equaled in price to the 32 *panni loesti* (*item de 1430 misimus in manibus viri nobilis ser Hermolai Pisani Venetiis testas decemnovem de quibus habuimus pannos loestos triginta duos*).

⁹ *Sec II Libro dei conti di Giacomo Badoer (Constantinopoli 1436-1440)*. Complementi e indici, ed. Umberto Dorini (Rome: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato-Libreria dello Stato, 1956), 204.

¹⁰ Eliahu Ashtor, "Aspetti della espansione italiana nel basso medioevo," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 90 (1978): 11.

¹¹ *Régestes des délibérations du Sénat de Venise concernant la Romanie*. vol. 3: (1431-1463), ed. Freddy Thiriet (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1961), doc. 2500: 1439 VI 30.

the silk sold through Trebizond was higher than that of the silk sold through Tana;¹² although testaments often mention silk as plain pieces,¹³ shirts and shawls, etc., made of silk,¹⁴ are also noted. In what sense the notary used the word *facistergium* is not always clear. Basically, this word can have the literal meaning "towel;" however, in certain cases it was probably used to designate a piece of silk (e.g., *facistergia 30 diploide de sericho... facistergia 14 et omnes denarii qui super habundaverint ex bonis meis*;¹⁵ in another place: *dimitto scolle sancte Marie facistergium unum de ... siricho laboratum ...; item dimitto ecclesie sancti Francisci ... unum laboratam de siricho*;¹⁶ et alia 15 *facistergia diplois et vestis mittantur patri et matri mee Scuriano aut eorum successoribus ...; item facistergium unum magnum pichorum trium tode sorgati quod est in manibus Vinturine filie Fagni ... ut ... portet et diploidem togam et facistergia pischiere affnibus meis*).¹⁷ Another textile of Eastern origin was *bocassino*. Although this word also meant the length of textile needed to make a shirt, it is more plausible that the testator and the notary used it in the direct meaning, that is, a printed cotton cloth of Persian origin. *Bocassino* is mentioned alongside *cordoban* (high quality leather, commonly exported through Tana to Trebizond¹⁸ in the testament of a certain Baldassare (*item recepi a ser Nicolao Taiapiera cordobanos et bochassiones de tractu duorum ballabanorum*).¹⁹

The testaments mention different types of clothes, often specifying the colour, materials, and whether there was a lining or not. The word *diplois*²⁰ seems to have been used for any type of clothing with a lining, some kind of an often-mentioned double robe or cloak, sometimes with the specification of colour or material (...*diploidem unam de chamocha blanco novo*;²¹ *diploidem unam albam tristem*;²² *diploidem unam de panno rubeo*;²³ *diploidem unam de charexea album*²⁴). Another type of dress was the *clamys*,²⁵ sometimes noted with a specification of the colour, e.g., scarlet (*de scarlatino*)²⁶ or black (*de*

¹² Карпов, *Итальянские морские республики*, 116.

¹³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 19r (3)-19v (4), 23r, 25r, 28v. Shirts are also mentioned without the specification of silk: ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v, 30v-31r; yet another example: *dimitto Chaterine filie Dominici viri mei chamisiam unam rechamatam de ciemisino et chabaga unam de sersti vergatam... item dimitto Marine uxori Hermachoza chamisiam unam de tella de sorgati* (ASV, NT 750, 8).

¹⁴ ASV, NT. 750, 8, 20r-20v, 30v-31r.

¹⁵ ASV, NT 750, f. 3r-3v.

¹⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 25r.

¹⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

¹⁸ *Il Libro dei conti di Giacomo Badoer*, 307, 334.

¹⁹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 23v-24r.

²⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v, 21r, 28v, 29r.

²¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

²² ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

²³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

²⁴ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

²⁵ ASV, NT. 750, f. 21r, 22r, 27r-27v, 28v, 30r-30v.

²⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 27r-27v.

morelo).²⁷ A number of togas are mentioned – made of silk,²⁸ black with a red lining (*una toga de morelo suffulta de rubeo*),²⁹ double and turquoise in colour (*toga una dupla de viride turchina*).³⁰ *Roba* can also be traced in the documents (*item dimitto Bolat filiozio meo robam unam de panno*;³¹ *item dimitto uxori dicti Gasparini robam unam de bochasino blanco ...; item dimitto filie Gasparini truzimani Ianuensium robam unam de bochassino virido*³²). Notably, robes from or named after Scotland (*robe echosse*³³) provide another example of the possible extent of the Venetian long-distance clothes trade. It is dubious whether the word *gonelfa* can be equated to the Italian *gonnella* (“skirt”) and how it served (e. g., *in primis dimitto Chorado commissario meo gonelfam meam de grixio et clamidem meam et diploidem unam novam*;³⁴ *gonela l de viride suffulta, panno albo*³⁵). Once, this item had a fur lining (*...gonam unam fulcitam pelibus*³⁶). The term *fulcitum* probably meant a garment with a lining (*unum fulcitum cum suis peroliis novum, du... ungula de argento*;³⁷ *unum fulcitum cum duobus chappizalibus, duobus cussinis, cultra et par unum lintheaminum*³⁸).

Vestis is a term with broad meaning; a number of *vestes* are mentioned in the testaments: *vestem unam sufultam de giris et faculetos XXXa contextos de siricho... vestem unam de fuxono*;³⁹ *vestis una de paonazio suffulta dosiis*;⁴⁰ *dimitto ... vestes a dorso lane*.⁴¹ In the last case it may mean something like a caftan made of sheepskin; in another case it must have been a coat made of fox fur.⁴² Another piece of clothing made of fox fur was a *fodra* (*dimitto uxori predicti Antonii fratris mei fodram unam de vulpe*⁴³). A green *vestis* is mentioned in another testament; according to the testator’s will it was to be given to a certain tailor, Lorenzo (*item dimitto Laurentio sartori vestem meam viridem...*).⁴⁴ The fact that an item of clothing was bequeathed to a cloth-working professional once again highlights the high value of cloth and dress.

The Black and the Azov Sea regions supplied the European markets with furs from the Russian lands. Tana was a pivotal intermediary, arguably more

²⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

²⁸ ASV, NT. 750, f. 3r-3v.

²⁹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

³⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 27r-27v.

³¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 24r-24v.

³² ASV, NT. 750, f. 30v-31r.

³³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 22r.

³⁴ ASV, NT. 750, f. 21r.

³⁵ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

³⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 45r.

³⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 27r-27v.

³⁸ ASV, NT. 750, f. 44r-44v.

³⁹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

⁴⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 23v-24r.

⁴¹ ASV, NT. 917, 7-8.

⁴² ASV, NT. 917, 7.

⁴³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 24r-24v.

⁴⁴ ASV, NT. 750, f. 3r-3v. Other two *vestes*: ASV, NT 750, f. 22r.

important than Caffa because of its position on the Don River. Russian merchants preferred this trade route to the Black Sea to others as it was safer and more reliable.⁴⁵ Besides large-scale export to Europe, furs were also used locally, with sable enjoying particular popularity.⁴⁶ As one might expect, the testaments repeatedly mention fur coats (using a Latin word for them borrowed from Russian: *subbum* or *subbim*, Russ. *ушба*), caftans (this word was also borrowed and is once mentioned as: *chofani*⁴⁷), and other clothing. Notably, such mentions are a feature more common in female testaments. For instance, a certain Antonina, wife of Dominico Balotto, bequeathed four fur coats to different people and institutions (*subum unum de chamocha iisdem naranzatum suis perolis scole sancte Marie et sancti Antonii de Tana... Aclize sarazene subbum unum de chamocha blancum sine aliquo pro anima mea ... subbum unam de dosiis sine subbo domine Luchine dicte Secher ... domine Magdalene uxori Iohannis Greci subbum unum de chamocha viridem sine fudra aliqua*).⁴⁸ Other testaments also mention fur coats (*subum unum de chamocha blancum ecclesie sancte Marie ... de Tana pro una chasula facienda seu planeta*;⁴⁹ *item dimitto done Iacome subbum unum ... sine panno aliquo*;⁵⁰ *item dimitto Marie meum subbum de pellizia*⁵¹).

Headgear, as most of the clothes, most likely originated mainly from Europe. Once, a black beret is bequeathed to a monk, Antonio (*dimitto biretum meum nigrum magnum domino fratri Antonio ut oret Deum pro anima mea*).⁵² Further, one comes across two new black caps from London (*due birete nigre nove de Londres*).⁵³ Other types of headgear included different variants,⁵⁴ although most of them can be described as berets and caps (e. g., *item dimitto meam gapam nigram et caputinum meum [...] roxate Iohanni famulo meo*;⁵⁵ *dimitto... biretum unum nigrum*;⁵⁶ *dimitto... capuzium unum blancum*;⁵⁷ *item in domo Iacobi Donato sunt alique res mee, videlicet vestes due, clamidas quatuor, duo chapucii, biretum unum*⁵⁸ *magnum de morelo*;⁵⁹ notably, in the last case the

⁴⁵ Mikhail Tikhomirov, *Древняя Москва XII-XV вв.; Средневековая Россия на международных путях. XIV-XV вв.* [Ancient Moscow 12th-15th c.; medieval Russia on international routes, 14th-15th c.] (Moscow: Moscow Worker, 1992), 77-79.

⁴⁶ Sergej Karpov, "От Таны в Ургенч – эти трудные дороги Средневековья" [From Tana to Urgench – these difficult routes of the Middle Ages], *Srednie Veka* 61 (2000): 219.

⁴⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 27r-27v.

⁴⁸ ASV, NT. 750, 8.

⁴⁹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 25r.

⁵⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 25r.

⁵¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 31r.

⁵² ASV, NT. 750, 2.

⁵³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

⁵⁴ ASV, NT. 917, 5-6, 7. ASV, NT. 750, 2.

⁵⁵ ASV, NT. 917, 7.

⁵⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 27r-27v.

⁵⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

⁵⁸ Crossed out: *nigrum*.

⁵⁹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 22r.

testator or the notary used two designations of the colour black). Sometimes particular features of the headgear are emphasized, such as the colour green and fox fur (*item dimitto Gasparino biretum unum de pano virido cum vulpe pro anima mea*⁶⁰). One piece of headgear was apparently made of sheepskin (*item dimitto biretum meum de pelibus agninis*⁶¹). Some of the testators also mention boots, in one case specifying the colour green colour, in other cases pink (*rosato*) or deep purple (*paonazio*).⁶²

The testaments abound with the mentions of objects destined for ecclesiastical use – liturgical vestments, textiles for ecclesiastical use, antependia (coverings hung over the front of an altar), etc. For instance, one testator wished that some of his money be spent on making a full set of liturgical vestments (*in primis dimitto quod de denariis quos habere debeo a comune Venetiarum pro meo salario in Tana fiat per commissarios meos unum paramentum ducatos quindecim presbytero falcitum plareta, camisso, stolla et manipulo scole sancte Marie, sancti Antonii et sancti Marci de Tana*⁶³). Another testator bequeathed a *tobalia* and a *facistergium* (*item dimitto sacristie dicte ecclesie sancti Gervasii unam de meis tobaliis et unum facistergium pro anima mea*⁶⁴). The latter might simply have meant a piece of cloth, e.g., silk, without any particular purpose; *tobalia* probably meant an antependium. However, it was bequeathed by a lay person. This may mean that this person stored an altar cloth, but another understanding seems more plausible: Items of everyday life, such as a tablecloth (probably decorated and embellished), could be re-used in the church. *Una velata nova*⁶⁵ that was given to the notary Nicolo de Varsis could also have meant an antependium, or it may have been a piece of decorated linen or silk easy to re-use as a humeral veil.

Another item bequeathed to a church that appears in the deeds is an icon, seemingly with three gilded figures (*item dimitto ser Iohani a Valle barbano meo et meo commissario anchonem meam circa tribus figures deaureta*⁶⁶). This item especially attracted my attention because a certain Michele de Matheo de Suazio, who stayed in Tana in the summer of 1436,⁶⁷ seems to have been the same person as Michele de Matheo (early fifteenth century-1469), a Venetian artist whose paintings can be seen today in the galleries of Venice. If this is correct, this specialist may have been hired for one season to make paintings in the trading station's church(es). If so, this would not come as a surprise, since

⁶⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 30v-31r.

⁶¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

⁶² ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v, 27r-27v, 28v, 30r-30v.

⁶³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 30r.

⁶⁴ ASV, NT. 917, l.

⁶⁵ ASV, NT. 750, f. 30v-31r.

⁶⁶ ASV, NT. 750, separate sheet (testament of Vittore a Valle, 9 September 1438).

⁶⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 22v, 23r.

even the well-known humanist and antiquarian Giulio Pomponio Leto (1425-1498) visited the trading station.⁶⁸

Gold rings are mentioned repeatedly in deeds; moreover, sometimes the colour of a precious stone is specified. As one might expect, these references occur only in female deeds with the single exception of a gentleman whose rings, however, were pledged (*dimitto... illos annulos qui sunt in pignore in manibus ser Thodori Drimali pro ducatis quinque*).⁶⁹ A woman mentioned above, Antonina, wife of Dominico Balotto, was particularly careful about the future of her precious objects – she mentioned gold rings, a silver belt, and other items in her will (*dimitto Marnechaton anulum unum de auri et unam bochza... dimitto Luzie filie Culmeliche filiozie mee anulum unum de auro... dimitto ser Bartholomeo Rosso commissario meo sifos tres de argento 4 cazias et zengulum unum de argento pro anima mea*⁷⁰). Another testator also mentioned three gold rings, specifying the type of precious stone (*anullum unum de auro... anulum unum d[e] auro] ... chorniola... annullum unum de auro cum lapide viridi*⁷¹). One testament mentions precious stones, namely, rubies, but not in the context of the bequeathing of rings; it seems that these rubies were rather destined for sale than for direct use (*rubini qui st... in manibus ser Philipi Contarini de quibus michi in debito prout apropiaret quondam scripto eius mano*⁷²). Another item of jewelry was silver belts.⁷³ Sometimes their weight is specified; thus, Michele de Mattheo de Suazio left his brother a silver belt weighing 13 ounces (*item dimitto fratri meo zingulum meum de argento ponderis onziarum tredecim*⁷⁴).

The weapons and utensils that the Italians used were likely brought from the metropolis for the most part. Weapons were often bequeathed, since the situation in the region required every newcomer to be ready for an attack. One had to own arms to be admitted to a galley, notwithstanding one's status. For instance, a certain Giovanni Liardo, an Italian testator, bequeathed a new bow and arrows (*item arcum unum novum cum aliquibus sagitis vollo quod detur ser Petro de Marsilio tintori*).⁷⁵ It is tempting to think that this was rather a crossbow than a longbow. Crossbows were indeed a favourite weapon of Venetian citizens and a necessary element of the equipment of a galley's *ballistarii* and the fortress' garrison. In a strictly terminological sense, however, a crossbow is mentioned only once (*item vollo quod vendatur ballistum unum a*

⁶⁸ See Vladimiro Zabughin, *Giulio Pomponio Leto*, vol. I-II (Rome: La vita letteraria, 1909-1910); Georg Voigt, *Возрождение классической древности* [The Renaissance of Classical Antiquity], vol. 2 (Moscow: Типография М. Р. Schepkina, 1885), 210-14; Jacob Burckhardt, *Культура Италии в эпоху Возрождения* [The culture of Italy in the époque of Renaissance] (Saint Petersburg: Gerold, 1904 – 1906), vol. 1, 339-41.

⁶⁹ ASV, NT. 750, 8, 24r-24v, 25r.

⁷⁰ ASV, NT. 750, 8.

⁷¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 24r-24v.

⁷² ASV, NT. 917, 7-8.

⁷³ ASV, NT. 750, 8, 23r.

⁷⁴ ASV, NT. 750, f. 23r.

⁷⁵ ASV, NT. 750, f. 3r-3v.

*pedi*⁷⁶). The same Giovanni also bequeathed another bow (or rather crossbow), this time an old one, with arrows and several swords (*item dimitto arcum meum veterem cum aliquibus sagitis Iohanni Nigro et aliquales spatas a scrinia*⁷⁷). Swords appear in other testaments as well (*item dimitto spatam meam magnam Angelo Ravagnano*, etc.⁷⁸). Another person mentions *ducenam unam scutelarum de Valentia*, that is, small shields from Valencia (presumably to be traded for equipping the garrison).⁷⁹ Once, arms are referred to generally (*vollo quod vendantur arme mee et alie res mee hic in Tana*⁸⁰).

The utensils mentioned in testaments included silver goblets or cups, specifying their weight (*item tractum duarum taciarym de argento ponderis onziarym decem et septem*⁸¹), and, notably, a tin vessel left to the monastery of St. Michael in Murano in Venice.⁸² Even a chest (*capsa*),⁸³ a table (*tabula rotunda*),⁸⁴ and a bag (*manticha*)⁸⁵ could be noted in a will. One slave-owner, liberating his slave, allowed him to keep his bed.⁸⁶ Once the bequeathed utensils are mentioned as such, without any specification along with the clothes (*omnes mee vestes et cetera suppellectilia mea*⁸⁷). As for the means of transportation, the horses that the Italians used must have been predominantly of local origin, taking into account the huge scale of the Tatars' animal trade, described by Barbaro,⁸⁸ and reaching Germany and Italy through Walachia and Transylvania.⁸⁹ However, the source evidence for this is not so rich in these deeds; there is only one mention of a mule (or perhaps a donkey) to be given to the consul.⁹⁰

The candles that Tana's inhabitants used for light were presumably made locally;⁹¹ the wax, however, was imported either from the Russian lands or from Asia Minor, both for local consumption and for re-export to Italy (mentioned in one of the deeds: *item dare teneo ser Thome Beniventi pro cantaria duodecim zere*⁹²).

⁷⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

⁷⁷ ASV, NT. 750, f. 3r-3v.

⁷⁸ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v, f. 21v-22r, 23r.

⁷⁹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 28v.

⁸⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 23r.

⁸¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 23r.

⁸² ASV, NT. 750, f. 19v (4)-20r.

⁸³ ASV, NT. 750, f. 30v-31r.

⁸⁴ ASV, NT. 750, f. 24r-24v.

⁸⁵ ASV, NT. 917, 7.

⁸⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 44v-45r.

⁸⁷ ASV, NT. 917, 7-8.

⁸⁸ *I viaggi in Persia degli ambasciatori veneti Barbaro e Contarini*, ed. Laurence. Lokhart, Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca, and Maria Francesca Tiepolo (Rome: Ist. Poligrafico dello Stato, 1973), 85.

⁸⁹ *I viaggi in Persia*, 84-86.

⁹⁰ ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

⁹¹ ASV, NT. 750, f. 19v (4)-20r.

⁹² ASV, NT. 750, (1)-(2) f. 18v.

Eastern goods like spices, herbs, dyes, and medicines do not seem to have been widely used by the inhabitants of Tana (at least according to the extant sources). Perhaps this situation occurred because of the decline of trade with China due to the crisis events of the fourteenth century. Although these goods constituted almost a quarter of the whole export of Giacomo Badoer from Constantinople to Venice,⁹³ it is unlikely that they arrived there through Tana. The time when Tana had been a major transit point of the spice trade⁹⁴ were already over.

One occasionally finds entries in the wills in which the testator asks to sell his belongings (clothes, weapons, etc.) on the spot in Tana to pay his debts (which normally required more or less quick selling). Given that the population of the trading station must not have been large, the logical conclusion is that these items were fairly liquid and easy to sell. One can take this as indirect evidence of my working hypothesis that items produced in Europe (including clothes) were often lacking in Tana.

As for food consumption, one can infer only a little on the diet of the inhabitants of the trading station. Although sometimes consumed on spot, fine products like sturgeon⁹⁵ and caviar⁹⁶ were mostly destined for export, as can be judged by the prices for sturgeon: 10 ducats, 125 bezants, and 142.8 bezants per *botta*, respectively.⁹⁷ The basis of the diet in Tana must have been grain, lower-

⁹³ Mikhail Shitikov, "Константинополь и венецианская торговля в первой половине XV в. по данным книги счетов Джаккомо Бадозра." [Constantinople and the Venetian trade in the first half of the fifteenth century according to the account book of Giacomo Badoer], *Vizantijskij Vremennik* 30 (1969): 50.

⁹⁴ Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, *La Pratica della mercatura*, ed. Allan Evans (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1936), 24; Michel Balard, *La Romanie Génoise (XIIe-début du XVe siècle)*, vol. 2 (Rome: École française de Rome, 1978), 720.

⁹⁵ ASV, NT. 750, fol. 3-3v, 20r-20v, 23r, 23v-24r, 26v. The fish trade constituted a considerable part of the economy of Tana (it was even claimed that it dominated other commodities; see Balard, *La Romanie Génoise*, vol. 2, 706. The fishing season lasted from July to August, and sturgeon were exported as far as Flanders. Although Balard claims that the destinations could be Constantinople and cities of Asia Minor (ibidem, 625), the sets of documents I have researched show only long-distance trade. However, less valued fish from the Azov Sea were taken to Constantinople and, according to Jacoby, constituted a large part of the poor population's diet; see David Jacoby, "Caviar Trading in Byzantium," in *Mare e litora*, ed. Rustam Shukurov (Moscow: Indrik, 2009), 355.

⁹⁶ ASV, NT. 750, fol. 29r (*item a magistro Francisco butario habere debeo charatellos 6 a chaviaro a quatuor chantariis pro una*). Tana was already a centre of the caviar trade in the earlier period (Balducci Pegolotti, *La Pratica della mercatura*, 380; Jacoby, "Caviar Trading," 352-353). So-called *koupatikon* caviar was thought to be from Lo Copa (ibidem, 355), but most likely this meant that the caviar was transported in barrels (Latin *cupa*). The price of caviar largely depended on its quality (ibidem, 361). Italian merchants were the intermediaries who made caviar fashionable in Europe (ibidem, 364).

⁹⁷ ASV, NT. 750, fol. 3-3v, 23v-24r. See, e. g.: *Item habere debeo a ser Blaxio Alberegno pro butis quatuor moronarum sibi datis bixancios quingentos et pro buta una vini bixancios octaginta et pro morovaxia sibi data bixancios sexaginta duos... Item habere debeo a*

quality fish, meat, oil, and wine. The Tatars around Tana, though nomadic, not only had fields to cultivate, but even huge harvests of millet, according to Barbaro.⁹⁸ There is no evidence, however, that they supplied the population of the trading station or that grain was imported from elsewhere.

Wine was certainly imported to Tana (mainly from Trebizond,⁹⁹ although possibly from Greece and the Crimea as well). Nevertheless, it was always in short supply¹⁰⁰ and therefore the Venetian Senate gave those involved in the wholesale wine trade the privilege of selling it duty-free.¹⁰¹ Baldassare, son of the deceased Marco, mentions twice that he sold wine,¹⁰² once for 74 bezants and once for 80 bezants per *botta*. Notwithstanding a shortage of wine, it was also sold to the Tatars; thus, Barbaro narrates how his guest, Edelmugh, drank his fill of it.¹⁰³ Another direction of wine re-export may have been the Russian lands. Tana had to import oil for local consumption, but it is mentioned only once (namely, one *botta* of oil).¹⁰⁴

The evidence for urban spatial organization is limited to the mention of parcels of land, houses, workshops, and storehouses (e.g., *item solvare debeo medietatem afflictum unius magazeni ubi saliti fuerunt*,¹⁰⁵ *item solvare debeo ad afflictum presentis domus in qua ad presens habito et pro uno magazeno quod est superius pro uno anno qui complebat die*¹⁰⁶). Another location mentioned several times is the *peschiera*,¹⁰⁷ a fishing spot that was often owned by Italians¹⁰⁸ and manned by Italian workers. These spots were as much as 40 miles from Tana (according to Barbaro) and were sometimes exposed to Tatar raids.¹⁰⁹

The items used in everyday life in Tana that appear in the testaments show that most of the manufactured objects (namely, weapons, clothes, and textiles) imported to Tana were manufactured in Europe. The diet of the Italian inhabitants of the trading station, however, was mostly based on locally produced supplies – grain, meat, and fish. The main (and important) sustenance need in Tana was wine, which was imported from the Aegean Sea, the Empire of Trebizond, and probably the Crimea.

commissariam quondam Georgii Pasqual bixencios mille qui sunt pro butis septem moronarum datis quinque.

⁹⁸ *I viaggi in Persia*, 86.

⁹⁹ See: Mihnea Berindei and Gilles Veinstein, "La Tana-Azaq de la presence italienne à l'emprise ottomane (fin XIIIe-milieu XVIe siècle)," *Turcica* 8 (1976): 110-201.

¹⁰⁰ Карпов, *Итальянские морские республики*, 127.

¹⁰¹ ASV, Senato, Misti, LX, f. 236r. (in *Régestes des délibérations*, vol. 3, doc. 2532).

¹⁰² ASV, NT. 750, fol. 23r.

¹⁰³ *I viaggi in Persia*, 78-79.

¹⁰⁴ ASV, NT. 750, f. 19v (4)-20r.

¹⁰⁵ ASV, NT. 750, f. 26v.

¹⁰⁶ ASV, NT. 750, f. 27r.

¹⁰⁷ E.g. ASV, NT. 750, f. 20r-20v.

¹⁰⁸ *I viaggi in Persia*, 77-78.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, 77-78.

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HERAUSGEGEBEN
VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG
DES AMTES DER NIEDERÖSTERREICHISCHEN LANDESREGIERUNG

**KULTUR
NIEDERÖSTERREICH**



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Vorwort

Die vorliegende Ausgabe von *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* soll neuerlich die Breite vermitteln, in welcher Bereiche des mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Alltags in der Quellenüberlieferung unterschiedlichster Inhalte, Autoren, Datierung, Provenienz und sozialer Gruppierungen auftreten können.

Während sich Francesca Battista mit „erotischen“ Musterbriefen des Heinrich von Iserna aus dem dreizehnten Jahrhundert beschäftigt, konzentriert sich Jan Odstrčilík auf anonyme Texte böhmischer Herkunft in einer Handschrift des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts aus der Corpus Christi Library in Cambridge, welche sich mit dem Eintritt Gottes in die menschliche Seele auseinandersetzen. Auch Kateřina Horníčková widmet sich Lebensäußerungen im böhmischen Raum und zwar den Reliquiensammlungen von Angehörigen der Prager Eliten bereits vor dem Zeitraum und den diesbezüglichen Bestrebungen Kaiser Karls IV.

Elisabeth Vavra untersucht Totentanz-Darstellungen des deutschsprachigen Raumes aus dem fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhundert und kann feststellen, dass die in diesen auftretenden Kleidungsdarstellungen der wiedergegebenen Protagonisten zur Kenntlichmachung der Standeszugehörigkeit derselben dienen sollten und nicht, um visuell auf deren standestypische Verfehlungen hinzuweisen. Ievgen A. Khalkov untersucht die letztwilligen Verfügungen der Bewohner der Venezianischen und Genueser Handelstationen von Tana am Schwarzen Meer aus den Dreißigerjahren des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts hinsichtlich ihrer Aussagen zur materiellen Kultur und weist auf die herausragende Stellung des Kleidungswesens hin. Irina Savinetskaya liefert Ergebnisse ihrer Forschungen zur Konstruktion des Fremdbildes von Franzosen in deutschen Quellen des fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhunderts und deren Verhältnis zur Selbstbeurteilung der Deutschen.

Damit liefern die sechs Beiträge wichtige Ergebnisse zu Alltag, spiritueller und materieller Kultur von Angehörigen unterschiedlicher sozialer Schichten profaner und klerikaler Provenienz. Sie können dadurch mithelfen, die komparative Erforschung mittelalterlicher und frühneuzeitlicher Lebensgestaltung erfolgreich voranzutreiben.

Gerhard Jaritz