**The Decline of Venetian Shipping**

**威尼斯航运的衰落**

In the late thirteenth century, northern Italian cities such as Genoa, Florence, and Venice began an economic resurgence that made them into the most important economic centers of Europe. By the seventeenth century, however, other European powers had taken over, as the Italian cities lost much of their economic might.

在13世纪后期，意大利北部城市，如热那亚、佛罗伦萨和威尼斯逐渐出现了经济复苏，这使得它们成为欧洲最重要的经济中心。然而，到了17世纪，其他欧洲势力崛起，同时这些意大利城市失去了它们曾经的经济影响力。

This decline can be seen clearly in the changes that affected Venetian shipping and trade. First, Venice’s intermediary functions in the Adriatic Sea, where it had dominated the business of shipping for other parties, were lost to direct trading. In the fifteenth century there was little problem recruiting sailors to row the galleys (large ships propelled by oars): guilds (business associations) were required to provide rowers, and through a draft system free citizens served compulsorily when called for. In the early sixteenth century the shortage of rowers was not serious because the demand for galleys was limited by a move to round ships (round-hulled ships with more cargo space), with required fewer rowers. But the shortage of crews proved to be a greater and greater problem, despite continuous appeal to Venice’s tradition of maritime greatness. Even though sailors’ wages doubled among the northern Italian cities from 1550 to 1590, this did not elicit an increased supply.

这一衰退很明显地体现在影响威尼斯的航运以及贸易的变化上。首先，威尼斯在亚得里亚海上的中介功能——它曾控制着亚得里亚海上其他团体的航运产业——败给了直接贸易。在15世纪时期，为单层甲板大帆船(一种靠划桨驱动的大船)征募水手不算一个问题：行会(商业协会)负责提供桨手，当有需要的时候，会通过征用系统强制征召一些没有工作的公民。在16世纪早期，桨手的短缺问题还不算严重，由于圆船(一种使用圆形船体以提供更多货舱空间的船只)的出现，限制了单层甲板大帆船的需求，而圆船只需要很少的桨手。然而，尽管一再强调威尼斯那海事之伟大的传统，但是船员的短缺被证明是一个日益严重的问题。甚至当意大利北部城市水手的工资在1550年到1590年间翻倍时，水手的数量依然没有增长。

The problem in shipping extended to the Arsenale, Venice’s huge and powerful shipyard. Timber ran short, and it was necessary to procure it from further and further away. In ancient Roman times, the Italian peninsula had great forest of fir preferred for warships, but scarcity was apparent as early as the early fourteenth century. Arsenale officers first brought timber from the foothills of the Alps, then from north toward Trieste, and finally from across the Adriatic. Private shipbuilders were required to buy their oak abroad. As the costs of shipbuilding rose, Venice clung to its outdated standard while the Dutch were innovation in the lighter and more easily handled ships.

航运的问题延伸到了威尼斯军械库，威尼斯那庞大且颇具实力的造船厂。木材短缺，必须从很远的地方运来。在古罗马时期，意大利半岛上有茂密的冷杉林，冷杉是建造军舰的好材料，但是不足的现象早在14世纪早期就出现了。军械库的长官最早从阿尔卑斯山脚下购买木材，而后则从北部到的里雅斯特地区(购买木材)，最后则需跨过亚得里亚海(才能购得木材)。私人造船厂则不得不从国外购置橡木。当造船的成本增加时，威尼斯依旧固守着它那过时了的标准，而与此同时，荷兰则转向更轻更易操作的新型船只方面的创新。

The step from buying foreign timber to buying foreign ships was regarded as a short one, especially when complaints were heard in the latter sixteenth century that the standards and traditions of the Arsenale were running down. Work was stretched out and done poorly. Older workers had been allowed to stop work a half hour before the regular time, and in 1601 younger workers left with them. Merchants complained that the privileges reserved for Venetian-built and owned ships were first extended to those Venetians who bought ships from abroad and then to foreign-built and owned vessels. Historian Frederic Lane observers that after the loss of ships in battle in the late sixteenth century, the shipbuilding industry no longer had the capacity to recover that it had displayed at the start of the century.

　　从国外购买木材进而购买船只这一步很快就完成了，特别是在16世纪后期传出对威尼斯军械库不良的标准和传统的抱怨时。工人消极怠工，成品质量低下。老员工被允许在正常工时结束前半个小时就收工，到了1601年，年轻的员工也如此效仿。商人们抱怨那些建造和拥有船只的威尼斯人所拥有的特权先是扩展到那些从国外购得船只的威尼斯人身上，而后又进一步扩展到建造并拥有船只的外国人身上。历史学家弗雷德里克•莱恩观察到，自从16世纪后期在战场上损失了船只之后，造船业再也没有能力恢复到16世纪初那样了。

The conventional explanation for the loss of Venetian dominance in trade is establishment of the Portuguese direct sea route to the East, replacing the overland Silk Road from the Black sea and the highly profitable Indian Ocean-caravan-eastern Mediterranean route to Venice. The Portuguese Vasco da Gama’s Voyage around southern Africa to India took place at the end of the fifteenth century, and by 1502 the trans-Arabian caravan route had been cut off by political unrest.

对威尼斯人失去贸易主导权的传统解释是，葡萄牙人建立的直接通往东方的海上航线替代了起自黑海的陆上丝绸之路以及通往威尼斯的高利润的印度洋—东地中海陆上商路。在15世纪末期，葡萄牙的瓦斯科•达•伽马实现了环绕南非到达印度的航行;而在1502年，通往阿拉伯国家的商路因政治动荡被切断。

The Venetian Council finally allowed round ships to enter the trade that was previously reserved for merchant galleys, thus reducing transport cost by one third. Prices of spices delivered by ship from the eastern Mediterranean came to equal those of spices transported by Portuguese vessels, but the increase in quantity with both routes in operation drove the price far down. Gradually, Venice’s role as a storage and distribution center for spices and silk, dyes cotton, and gold decayed, and by the early seventeenth century Venice had lost its monopoly in markets such as France and southern Germany.

威尼斯委员会最终允许在贸易中使用圆船，之前只允许使用单层甲板大帆船，因此运输的成本下降了1/3。从地中海东部船运过来的香料价格与葡萄牙航线船运的香料价格相当，但是两条运营的商线使得香料的总供应量增加，从而导致香料的价格大幅度下降。逐渐地，威尼斯作为香料、丝绸、染料棉和黄金的储存与配销中心的作用衰退了，到17世纪早期，威尼斯彻底失去了它在诸如法国和德国南部市场上的垄断地位。

Venetian shipping had started to decline from about 1530—before the entry into the Mediterranean of large volumes of Dutch and British shipping—and was clearly outclassed by the end of the century. A contemporary of Shakespeare (1564-1616) observed that the productivity of Italian shipping had declined, compared with that of the British, because of conservatism and loss of expertise. Moreover, Italian sailors were deserting and emigrating, and captains, no longer recruited from the ranks of nobles, were weak on navigations.

威尼斯航运业的衰退是从大约1530年开始的——在大量荷兰和英国船只进入地中海之前——并且在16世纪末期明显被超越了。在莎士比亚时代(1564～1616)，相比较英国，意大利航运业生产力已经在下降了，这是因为意大利的航运业过于守旧并且缺乏专业技术所致。此外，意大利船员逐渐逃离并移居到他乡，而船长不再是从贵族阶级中征召而来，在航海方面也暴露出各种不足。