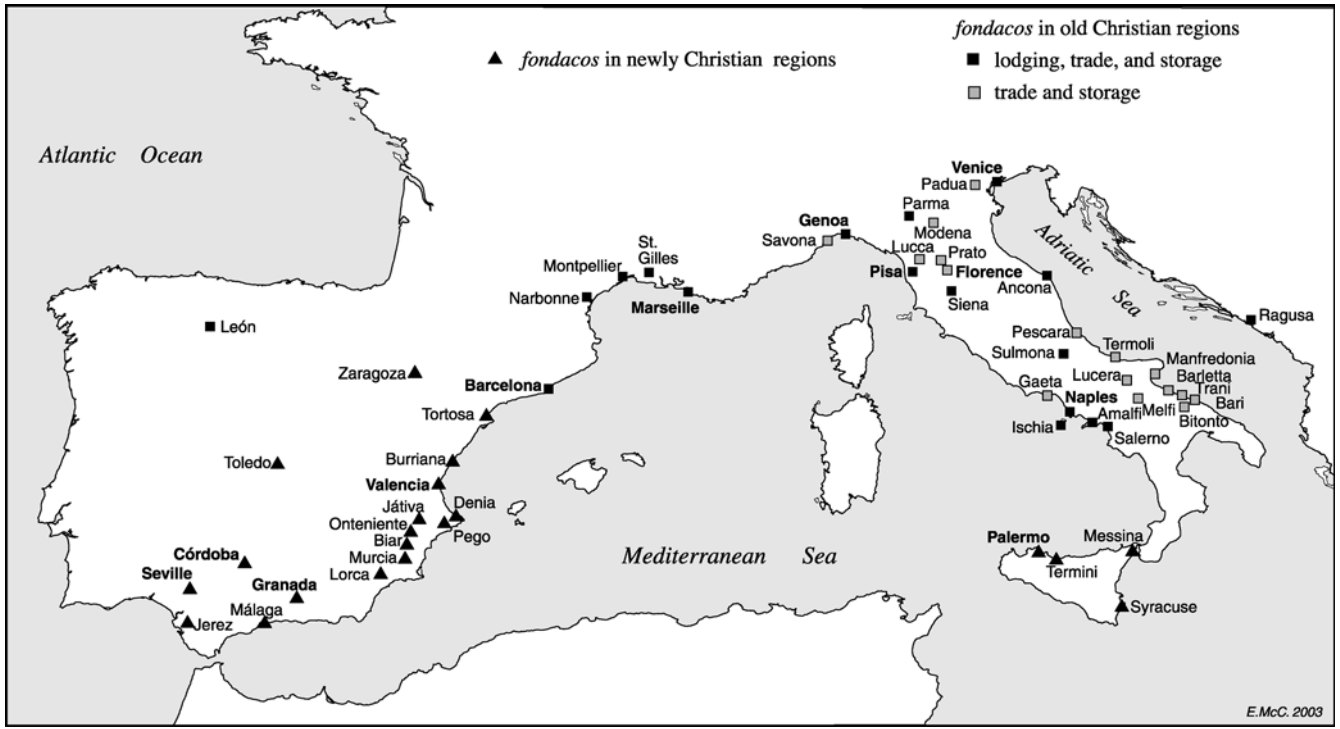
CHAPTER 9

The fondaco *in Mediterranean Europe*

Felix Fabri, like many other German pilgrims, passed through Venice on his way both to and from the Holy Land. This city served as a natural gateway to the Adriatic and Mediterranean for travelers and traders coming south from cities of the German empire. Felix stayed in an inn (*hospitium*) during his time in the island city in the 1480s, but he remarked that "the German merchants have a house in Venice that is called a *fonticum*. It has many rooms and bedrooms in which merchants stay and store their goods. It is unbelievable how much merchandise is sent from this *fonticum* to Germany, and each year Venice levies more than twenty thousand ducats in taxes (*pro telonio*) on these exports."[1] It should not be surprising that Felix's description of the Venetian Fondaco dei Tedeschi (*fonticum Almanorum*) is reminiscent of his notes on the European *fondacos* that he observed in Alexandria. Certainly, the existence of this commercial and residential *fondaco* for German traders in Venice was no coincidence. Instead, as this chapter will demonstrate, it was just one example of the multiple ways in which the Islamic institution of the *funduq*/*fondaco* was integrated into medieval Christian urban life in Mediterranean Europe.

By the thirteenth century, cognate words such as *fonticum* and *fondacho* had found their way not only into Latin, but also into other southern European vernacular languages. The multiplicity of these words, and their variety of meanings, bespeaks not only the piecemeal adoption of the idea of the *fondaco* in Europe, but also the many different ways in which these facilities could be understood. For example, in medieval Italian, the word *fondaco* (or *fondacho)* could apply, among other things, to a store or private warehouse, a public warehouse, a merchant firm, a warehousing tax, a residential facility, or a board of officers who regulated, measured, and stored provisions. Related terms proliferated, including *fondacaio*, *fondacare*, *fondacato*,

[1] Fabri, *Evagatorium in terrae sanctae*, I, 83 [32a], III, 432 [220a].



Map 4. Distribution of Christian *fondacos* in Mediterranean Europe (eleventh to fifteenth centuries)

fondachetto, and so forth.[2] All evidence points to the derivation of these and other cognate terms from the Arabic *funduq*, not directly from the Greek *pandocheion*, since the latter term was very rare, though not entirely unknown, in medieval Europe.[3]

Nevertheless, although European *fondacos* shared characteristics with contemporary *funduqs* and *fondacos* in Muslim cities, many took on new functions. In fact, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice was a very unusual example of cross-cultural replication. In most southern European cities, including Venice, the uses of *fondacos* reflected the particular interests of local merchants and administrators. These men had the power and resources to adapt or create institutions to suit their specific needs, including networks of warehouses, lodging-houses, and offices in the cities where they did business.[4]

When western European merchants encountered *funduqs* and *fondacos* in Islamic cities, they must have observed their multiple functions as residences for merchants and spaces for the storage, sale, and taxation of commercial goods. Not all of these functions were either necessary or appropriate in a western European Christian setting, as has already been shown for those parts of Spain, Sicily, and the Crusader states that came under Christian political rule. The regulated residential aspect, especially, tended to disappear in areas where cross-cultural trade was absent, indigenous hostelries were common, and where non-local merchants could mingle freely with the local population. In these regions, there was more emphasis on the control of goods, and the extraction of revenue through monopolies and

[2] A number of these are cited in Edler, *Glossary*, 126–128. For a wide range of other usages in medieval Italian, consult the Opera del Vocabolario Italiano Database, compiled by the Centro di Studi Opera del Vocabolario Italiano (http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/ARTFL/projects/OVI/).

[3] Greek authors had noted *pandocheions* in Italy during the early Roman period, but the word very rarely appeared in classical or medieval Latin. Du Cange cited only a handful of examples in his *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis* (Paris: Librairie des Sciences et des Artes, 1938) VI, 127. The occasional use of cognates in late medieval Latin by writers from northern Europe was probably a revival. In the 1480s, Felix Fabri used the word *pandocheum* to describe a wretched inn in Jaffa and an eating-house in Corfu (*Evagatorium in terrae sanctae*, I, 195 [75b]; III, 348 [193a]). He does not seem to have associated this word with *fundicum*. The link with drinking survived the centuries, and *pandoxando* and *pandocatrix* appeared in seventeenth-century England as terms applied respectively to the liberty of brewing ale and to an alewife (Thomas Blount, *Nomo-lexicon* [London: Herringman, Newcomb, Chiswel, and Bentley, 1691], "pandocatrix," no page number). Blount traced the term *pandocatrix* to the twelfth century. In contrast to the rarity of the *pandocheion, xenodocheions* were common in early medieval Europe, especially in the context of charitable religious and monastic hospitality, just as they were in the Greek east. The word *xenodocheion* had easily crossed the bridge from Greek into Latin, probably eased by the strong Christian associations of the term. See Szabó "Xenodochiza"; Kislinger, "Kaiser Julian."

[4] Edwin Hunt, *The Medieval Super-companies. A Study of the Peruzzi Company of Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 99.

taxes on these items. There were only a few areas, notably the mainland territories of the realms of Aragón and the Venetian Adriatic, where politics and geography encouraged the continued control of certain merchant groups as well as their goods.

The new European *fondacos* all shared a purely commercial and fiscal utility. In contrast to the Arabic *funduq*, there was no charitable or religious significance to the European understanding of the *fondaco*, and its various meanings pertained instead to storage, money, merchants, taxes, or commercial business. Francesco Pegolotti outlined some of these in his fourteenth-century handbook of mercantile practice and regional terminology, cataloging those places where commercial goods were sold in cities ("luogora dove le mercatantie si vendono nelle cittadi"). These were variously called "*mercato* in the Tuscan dialect; *piazza* in many [other] languages; *bazar* or *raba* in Genoese; *fondaco* in many languages; *fonda* in Cyprus . . . and *sugo* (*sūq*) in Arabic." He went on to note that "all manner of foodstuffs and things necessary for human life, and grain and livestock" could be had in such places.[5] At the same time, he also listed *fondaco* among terms for places (together with *bottega*, *volta*, *stazione*, and *magazzino*) "where one places merchandise for safekeeping, and where merchants and other people go to stay in security, and to safeguard their merchandise and goods, and [where they keep] their account books and other such things."[6]

Analysis of references to *fondacos* in cities in late medieval Spain, southern France, Italy, and the Dalmatian coast confirms Pegolotti's observations on commercial usage. This chapter will thus examine three main roles established for *fondacos* in southern Europe, looking first at their continuing capacity as merchant hostelries and official enclaves for established mercantile communities (the notable example being the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice); second, at their function as public or state-run commercial spaces; third, at their development into sites for storage and merchant business.

Throughout this discussion, it will be apparent that the medieval term was essentially limited to southern Europe, especially Italy and Spain. Except in rare instances, *fondacos* do not appear in medieval documents from northern Europe, or indeed from anywhere at a distance from the Mediterranean. Perhaps this was because there were already indigenous northern parallels and counterparts, such as the Hanseatic lodges in Germany, the Baltic region, and London, which served very similar functions. Or perhaps it was because some degree of familiarity or proximity

[5] Pegolotti, *La Pratica della mercatura*, 17. [6] *Ibid.*

with the Muslim institution was necessary to ease its implantation in a Christian setting. Consideration of the geographical distribution of the *fondaco*, together with the functional relations between different variations of the institution, sheds light on the process and purpose of its adoption from an Islamic to a Christian context.

MERCHANT LODGING, COMMUNITY, AND *FONDACOS*

From their earliest appearance, *funduqs* in the Islamic world lodged travelers, particularly traders, and their offshoot, the *fondacos*, continued this tradition by housing foreign European merchant communities in Islamic cities. This aspect of the *fondaco* was imported to medieval Europe by the same merchant groups who encountered the institution in Muslim ports, but its function as a hostel, and especially as a site for communal lodging, was often short-lived in the new European context.

There were several reasons for this. First, there were already plenty of other inns, private houses, monastic hostels, and similar facilities to meet the lodging needs of merchants and other travelers. These went by many different names, including *diversorium*, *hospitium*, *albergo*, *hostelerie*, *ostalaggio*, *meson*, and *posada*.[7] It was a well-known aphorism, repeated by a merchant writing to his partner in Prato, in about 1400, that "the early riser makes a good profit and can spend the night in an inn" ("può riposare all'albergo").[8] Thus, it was difficult for the *fondaco* to find a niche in this well-established industry. Second, except in Venice and a few other regions, the impulse for preserving the segregation and solidarity of foreign merchant communities was not very strong in situations when both visitors and hosts were Christian.

Although most Italian city-states had citizens and property in other towns, and it was common for special buildings to be set aside for the use of foreign merchant communities, these were not generally called *fondacos*.[9] Instead, they were usually referred to as houses (*domus*) or hostels (*hospitia*), or – increasingly by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries – as

[7] Much has been written on inns and hospitality in medieval Europe. See Noël Coulet, "Inns and Taverns," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. J. R. Strayer (New York: Scribner, 1982–1989), VI, 468–477; Francis Garrison, "Les Hôtes et l'hébergement des étrangers au moyen âge. Quelques solutions de droit comparé," *Etudes d'histoire du droit privé offerts à Pierre Petot* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1959) 199–222; N. Coulet, "Les Hôtelleries en France et en Italie au bas moyen âge," in *L'Homme et la route en Europe occidentale au moyen âge et aux temps modernes* (Auch: Centre Culturel de l'Abbaye de Flaran, 1982) 181–205.

[8] Iris Origo, *The Merchant of Prato* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957) xiii.

[9] David Nicholas, *The Growth of the Medieval City* (London: Longman, 1997) 172–173.

loggias.[10] Even in Venice, where there were a number of other foreign merchant groups besides the Germans, including traders from elsewhere in Italy (Lombardy, Milan, Genoa) and from the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean (Ragusa, Albania, Greece), these residents had their own city quarters or neighborhoods, in which they owned houses and other real estate.[11]

Residential merchant *fondacos* did appear briefly in some areas of southern Europe during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, at the same time that similar facilities were evolving in Islamic and crusader cities. These early communal *fondacos* were distinguished by their association with particular merchant groups (for example, the *fondaco* of the Pisans, or the *fondaco* of the Sienese), but there is no indication that they were regulated like their counterparts in Islamic cities. Instead, they more resembled the *fondacos* for Italian traders in Sicily, Seville, and the Latin east, providing housing, a locus for business activity, and – almost certainly – a convenient site for taxation by local governments. It seems likely that this European variant represented an intermediate stage between the *fondaco* as a regulated residence for a particular group (as in Islamic cities) and the *fondaco* as a state or private warehouse (as in late medieval Italy). It is noteworthy that *fondacos* associated with particular merchant groups had disappeared in most Italian and southern French towns by the fourteenth century.

In Provence, the idea of the residential *fondaco* probably arrived through the mediation of Italian traders. In 1133, a treaty between Genoa and Narbonne granted a *fondaco* for the use of Genoese merchants on the banks of the Aude. A decade later, both Genoa and Pisa were promised *fondacos* in Montpellier in recompense for their assistance in quelling revolts and their support of William VI against the count of Toulouse.[12] Later, Raymond V of Narbonne and Toulouse gave the Genoese a house to use as a *fondaco* ("domum id est fondicum") in St. Gilles in 1174, where they could "live and store their goods and do business," in return for naval support from

[10] The development of the *loggia* has been discussed in chapters 4, 5, and 6. On Italian *loggias*, see Sexton, "Renaissance Civic Loggias"; Charles Burroughs, "Spaces of Arbitration and the Organization of Space in Late Medieval Italian Cities," in *Medieval Practices of Space*, ed. B. Hanawalt and M. Kobialka (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000) 64–100.

[11] Susan M. Stuard, *A State of Deference: Ragusa/Dubrovnik in the Medieval Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992) 173–174; Deno Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West: Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966) 113; Giorgio Fedalto, "Le minoranze straniere a Venezia tra politica e legislazione," *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV–XVI): aspetti e problemi* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1977) 1, 152, 159; Brünehilde Imhaus, *Le minoranze orientali a Venezia, 1300–1510* (Rome: Il Veltro, 1997) 37–83.

[12] Alexandre Germain, *Histoire du commerce de Montpellier* (Montpellier: Imprimerie de Jean Martel Ainé, 1861) 1, 92–94; Schaube, *Handelsgeschichte*, 553, 559; Kathryn Reyerson, "Patterns of Population Attraction and Mobility: The Case of Montpellier, 1293–1348," *Viator* 10 (1979) 259–260.

Genoese ships.[13] These grants were very similar to contemporary pledges made to Genoa by both Muslim and Christian rulers in Spain.[14]

In the thirteenth century, James I of Aragón was as eager to control *fondacos* in his Catalan and southern French territories as in Valencia and Tunis. A pledge to Genoese ambassadors in 1263 included a royal *fondaco* in Montpellier, given to Genoese merchants for their lodging, business, and commercial storage, but which they were not permitted to mortgage or sublet.[15] Genoese merchants were not the only players in this period. Two decades earlier, merchants from Narbonne had been granted a *fondaco* in Tortosa, while in the 1270s, Catalan merchants had a *fondaco* in Narbonne, and Pisan merchants sought a similar privilege.[16]

Despite these early references, the concept of residential *fondacos* for foreign traders did not take root in southern France over the long term. By the early fourteenth century, as Kathryn Reyerson has observed, "the twelfth-century *fondachi* . . . had long disappeared" in Montpellier, and this seems to have been the case elsewhere as well.[17] The buildings still remained and kept their names, as indicated when the widow of a silversmith in Montpellier rented out a house and the "*fondaco* of Pisa" to a visitor from Novara in 1333, but this private transaction shows that the building no longer had any official status.[18] The post of *fondiguier* also still appeared in French urban statutes, but now as the keeper of a private or public warehouse for the storage of goods.[19] Instead of lodging in *fondacos*, late medieval travelers in southern France had a variety of other options. By the middle of the fourteenth century, Montpellier and Marseille had at least twenty inns each, and Avignon nearly sixty. In the next century, Toulouse had about thirty hostels, and Arles had eighteen.[20] *Loggia*s also began appearing in Provence by the fourteenth century, paralleling appearances in other Christian ports.

[13] *Liber iurium Reipublicae Genuensis*, I, cols. 296–300 (no. 310). In 1108 the Genoese had received privileges and houses in St. Gilles (Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 48).

[14] See discussion in chapter 4 of promises issued to Genoa in 1146 by Alfonso VI of Castile and Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona; also treaties with Andalusi rulers in period 1149–1188 (in chap. 3).

[15] (James I of Aragón), *Documentos de Jaime I de Aragón*, V, 49 (doc. 1342).

[16] Germain Mouynès (ed.), *Inventaire des archives communales antérieures à 1790* (Narbonne: E. Caillard, 1877) II, 36–37 (doc. 21), 154–156 (doc. 93).

[17] Reyerson, "Patterns of Population," 278.

[18] Kathryn Reyerson, "Land, Houses, and Real Estate Investment in Montpellier: A Study of the Notarial Property Transactions, 1293–1348," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 6 (1983) 80.

[19] Noël Coulet, "Propriétaires et exploitants d'auberges dans la France du Midi au bas moyen êge," in *Gastfreundschaft, Taverne und Gasthaus im Mittelalter*, ed. H. C. Peyer (Munich and Vienna: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1983) 121.

[20] Coulet, "Les hôtelleries," 189; Philippe Wolff, "L'Hôtellerie, auxiliaire de la route. Notes sur les hôtelleries toulousaines au moyen âge," *Bulletin Philologique et Historique (jusqu'à 1610) du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques* (Paris) I (1960) 189–205. In Avignon, 169 individuals were

11 Merchants unloading cargo at a *loggia*, perhaps in Perpignan, *c.*1489. Maestro de Canapost, Retable de la Trinité, Musée Hyacinthe Rigaud, Perpignan. My thanks to Larry Mott for drawing my attention to this painting.

A similar pattern is found in western Italian cities, though at a later date. *Fondacos* became common in Genoa, Pisa, Florence, and other cities from the thirteenth century, but quickly devolved from residences to warehouses. It is striking that *fondacos* did not appear in western Italy until nearly half a century a century after those in Provence, Spain, and Sicily, suggesting that Genoese and Pisan traders long thought of them only as facilities for their convenience and lodging abroad. The fact that the Fondaco dei Tedeschi was flourishing in Venice by the 1220s (see below) further confirms the impression that most Italians saw the *fondaco* as a residence for traders doing business far from home – their own situation in Alexandria, Tunis, Seville, or Montpellier – not in neighboring cities.

Nevertheless, when business travelers from Italy and further afield needed lodging in Italian cities, there were hostels to accommodate particular communal groups. For example, in 1203 there was a hostelry in Arezzo devoted to guests from Florence (*hospes Florentiae*). Another in Verona was described as a *domus mercatorum* in 1216. A Milanese law of 1340 required that foreign

listed as innkeepers in 1371 (Joëlle Rollo-Koster, "Mercator Florentinensis and Others: Immigration in Papal Avignon," in *Urban and Rural Communities in Medieval France*, ed. K. Reyerson and J. Drendel [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998] 96–97).

merchants stay in a specified hostelry (*hospitio*), while they did business in that city, and this was quite a common requirement in other cities.[21]

Pisa, in the early thirteenth century, was one of the first western Italian cities to adopt the terminology of a residential communal *fondaco* and the word would continue to be common there in later periods – though with different meanings. Florentine merchants had a residential *fondaco* in Pisa in 1214, as did merchants from San Gimignano by 1238.[22] At about the same period, the chronicler Salimbene de Adam described a lodging-house in Pisa for merchants from Parma, adding that this facility was "called a *fondaco* by the Pisans."[23] The term must have been quite common by 1278, when traders from Narbonne requested a *fondaco* in Pisa on the grounds that merchants from Provence, Genoa, and Catalonia already enjoyed these privileges.[24] By 1305, a whole section of the Pisan merchant statutes concerned the *fondaco* for merchants from Siena, though it is not clear whether this was a residential or purely commercial facility.[25] Other Pisan rulings from the same year established a Pisan *fondaco* in Genoa, to serve as a hub for both Pisan lodging and business.[26] Evidently, the paradigm of the communal *fondaco* survived in Pisa and Genoa into the early fourteenth century, by which point it had long disappeared in southern France. However, these western Italian *fondacos* were never subject to the strict regulations imposed on their counterparts in Venice or Islamic ports.

The fact was that most Christian merchants had little need for regulated communal *fondacos* in Christian cities, and few governments could maintain them. Thus, these facilities usually fell from residential use in southern Europe after a century or so of experimentation. Notable exceptions were the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice, and the *fondacos* for visiting Muslim merchants in the realms of Aragón.

[21] Antonio Noto (ed.), *Liber datii mercantie communis mediolani. Registro del secolo* XV (Milan: Universitá Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, 1950) 62–63.

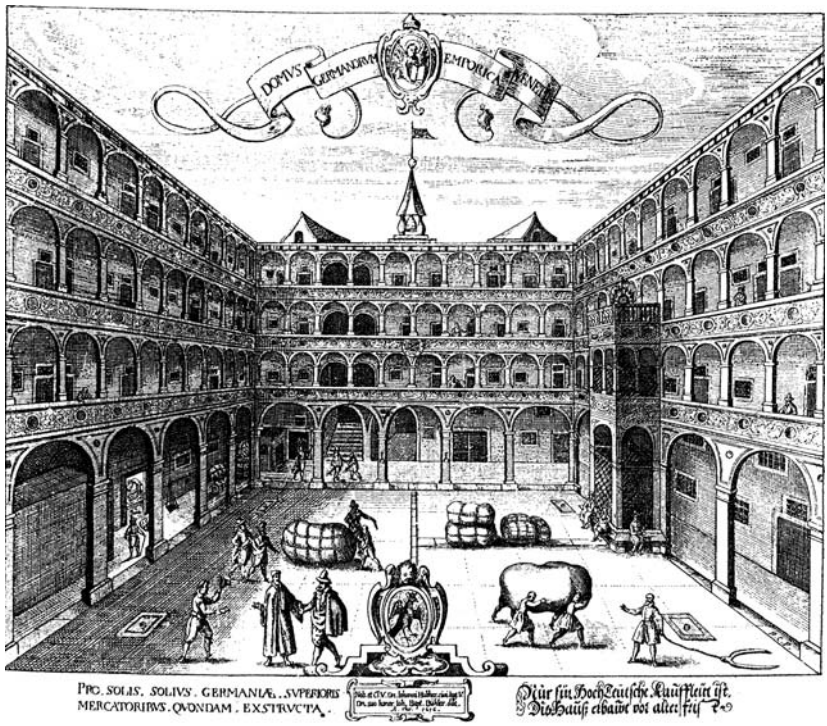
[22] Amintore Fanfani, "Note sull'industria alberghiera italiana nel medio evo," *Saggi di storia economica italiana* (Milan: Società Editrice "Vita e pensiero," 1936) 116; Schaube, *Handelsgeschichte*, 655, 759; Szabó, "Xenodochia," 83.

[23] "Mercatores Parmenses domum habebant ad hospitandum, quam Pisani fundicum appellant": Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, ed. F. Bernini (Bari: G. Laterza & Figli, 1942) I, 61. Salimbene's impulse for clarification may suggest that the term *fondaco* was still somewhat unusual at the time he was writing. Nevertheless, the merchants from Parma apparently knew the term. In 1247, when Frederick II held the city of Parma, "nobody dared enter the city," since those who did so (apparently merchants) were captured approaching with their wagons of goods, or were later taken "in the *fondacos*" (*Chronicon Parmense*, in Muratori [ed.], *Rerum Italicarum scriptores*, IX, 772).

[24] Port, *Essai*, 87, 90, 110. As noted above, Narbonese merchants would also have been familiar with *fondacos* in their home city.

[25] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 79–80.

[26] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 390.



12 Merchants and goods in the courtyard of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice. Note the traditional form of the building. Engraving by Raphael Custos, first half of the seventeenth century. From the collection of the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

VENICE AND THE FONDACO DEI TEDESCHI

Whereas most *fondacos* in southern Europe were functionally different from their prototypes in the Islamic world, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice stands out as an example of almost direct institutional adoption from a Muslim into a Christian context. This hostelry and commercial entrepôt for German merchants doing business in Venice was one among a number of "oriental" imports that influenced Venetian aesthetics and culture in the later middle ages.[27] The Venetian Fondaco resembled its counterparts

[27] Deborah Howard, "Venice and Islam in the Middle Ages. Some Observations on the Question of Architectural Influence," *Architectural History* 34 (1991) 68–69. Howard points out that many scholars have noted the "distinctly oriental atmosphere" of Venice, and the city has been compared to a "colossal sūq." Western Italian cities such as Genoa, Pisa, and Florence exhibited few of the eastern architectural influences (both Byzantine and Islamic) that were so evident in Venice (*ibid.*, 59).

in Alexandria not only in architectural form, but also in its administration, regulations, and purpose. As in Egypt, both merchants and their goods were compelled to lodge in the Fondaco, and this residence requirement depended on regional origin. German traders not only brought northern commodities to Venice, but they also obtained local and other goods through the Fondaco to carry back to Germany. Venetian authorities oversaw all business in the Fondaco, appointed its officials, and charged hefty fees for lodging and taxes.[28]

Today, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi is probably the best-known example of a *fondaco* in the Mediterranean world. First established in the early thirteenth century, it flourished into the early modern period, and remained a possession of the Venetian government until the fall of the Republic in 1797. Recently, the building (which now houses the main post office in Venice) has been thoroughly studied by modern historians of art and architecture, in part because new murals by Titian and Giorgione had been added when the Fondaco was rebuilt after a fire in the early sixteenth century.[29]

References to a *fondaco* for German merchants – a "fonticum comunis Veneziarum ubi Teutonici hospitantur" – first appeared in the 1220s, although it is possible that a facility existed before this date. An early thirteenth-century origin makes sense not only because of the increase in Mediterranean traffic and German mercantile activity in the later twelfth century, but also because of contemporary German and Venetian political and economic ambitions. Peace treaties signed in 1177 between Venice and Frederick Barbarossa encouraged commercial exchange and set the scene for establishing a trading-house.[30] Venice was also eager to gain further control over traffic in the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean in the wake

[28] The resemblance between the Fondaco dei Tedeschi and western *fondacos* in Egypt, together with the abundant sources for the German trading-house, make it tempting to borrow data from Venice to illuminate the poorly documented daily life of the *fondacos* in Alexandria. Such borrowing would be risky, especially in light of obvious differences between the two forms (for instance, there was no religious distinction between German traders and their Venetian hosts – at least until the Reformation). Nevertheless, it is worth keeping in mind the possibility that the well-documented arrangements for staff, finances, maintenance, and other routine operations in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi could shed light on our understanding of overseas *fondacos*.

[29] The fundamental study of this facility is Henry Simonsfeld's *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venedig und die Deutsch-Venetianischen Handelbeziehungen* (Stuttgart: Neudruck der Ausgabe, 1887). Also important is G. M. Thomas's edition of the *Capitolare dei visdomini del Fontego dei Todeschi in Venezia (Capitular des deutschen Hauses in Venedig)* (Berlin: A. Asher & Co., 1874), containing statutes relating to administration of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. Because this building, its history, and its documentation have been comparatively well studied, it is unnecessary to provide more than a brief overview here. See also Karl-Ernst Lupprian, *Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi e la sua funzione di controllo del commercio tedesco a Venezia* (Venice: Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, 1978); Concina, *Fondaci*, 125–217; Manlio Dazzi and Mario Brunetti, *Il Fondaco Nostro dei Tedeschi* (Venice: Ministro delle comunicazioni, 1941). On Titian and Giorgione, see Juergen Schulz, "Titian at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi," *Burlington Magazine* 143 (2001) 567–569.

[30] (Frederick I), *Diplomata*, Diplomata, x, iii, 218–222 (doc. 695), 242–243 (doc. 708).

of the Fourth Crusade. With Constantinople and the Aegean firmly within the Venetian commercial sphere after 1204, and a strong Venetian merchant presence in the *fondaco* communities in both Ayyūbid Alexandria and crusader Acre, Venice was unwilling to allow other merchants (beyond their current competitors from Genoa, Pisa, and Barcelona) to enter the maritime trading sphere in the eastern Mediterranean. Regulations motivated by these thirteenth-century conditions continued to be enforced in later periods, even after the Paleologan restoration and, later still, following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople.

German merchants also benefited from the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. By the time Felix Fabri arrived in Venice, German traders and pilgrims had been coming to Venice for centuries.[31] The geographical contours of mountain passes and trade routes made the city an obvious destination for northerners seeking access to the Mediterranean and Mediterranean goods. A decree passed in 1475, shortly before Felix arrived in Venice, reconfirmed earlier rules to the effect that "no German merchant may on any pretext take lodgings in any place outside the exchange house, upon a penalty of fifty ducats, and the same penalty shall fall upon anyone who has lodged or received into lodgings such a person."[32] The Italian term "Tedeschi" (usually *teutonicus* or *alemanus* in Latin) broadly applied to merchants from many northern cities, both imperial and independent, in Germany and beyond. The 1475 regulations cited merchants from Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, and "other subjects of the emperor" who "shall be liable with all their merchandise to pay the duties at our exchange house."[33] Merchants from Regensburg, Cologne, Ulm, Nuremberg, Lubeck, and elsewhere all lodged together in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, although their regional rivalries occasionally created dissension. A controversy between merchants from Nuremberg and Cologne came to a head in 1429, and its description reveals that the two groups had traditionally maintained separate kitchens and dining spaces in the Fondaco. After this point, Venetian administrators ruled that there should be only one kitchen, though there would continue to be two ovens and two cooks, one for each group.[34]

[31] German traders had trafficked with Venice since the early middle ages, as shown by Michael McCormick (*Origins of the European Economy*, 678–687), but the volume of trade increased by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. By the later middle ages, many northern merchants would have been familiar with the Hanseatic *kontors* and the Steelyard in London, facilities that had certain functional similarities to the Fondaco dei Tedeschi.

[32] Thomas, *Capitolare*, 228–229; English translation in David Chambers and Brian Pullan (eds.), Venice: *Documentary History 1450–1650* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) 328.

[33] Thomas, *Capitolare*, 227; Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Documentary History*, 328.

[34] Dazzi and Brunetti, *Il Fondaco Nostro dei Tedeschi*, 57–58. The segregation of ovens for the two German communities recalls stipulations regarding special ovens annexed to *fondacos* in Islamic cities.

Not all Germans coming through Venice were long-distance traders, nor were all of them required to stay in the Fondaco. A number of Germans in more long-term residence (bakers, tradesmen, and artisans) were considered exempt, probably because the income and tax potential of these small-scale businessmen was of little interest to the city. Pilgrims, also, were allowed to reside elsewhere in the city, so that when Felix Fabri inquired at the Fondaco about a place to stay, his party "was conducted by a certain German to the Inn of St. George, which is large and respectable."[35] Later, returning through Venice at the end of his travels, Felix stayed at the St. George again. However, when he stopped by the Fondaco dei Tedeschi to get news from a party of merchants recently arrived from his hometown of Ulm, a young trader in the party insisted that Felix have the key to his room, and that he leave his inn and come to eat and sleep with them in the Fondaco.[36]

The Fondaco dei Tedeschi was located by the Rialto Bridge, one of the most important commercial areas in medieval Venice, a site where traders came together from many different regions with all kinds of goods. The land for the facility seems to have been acquired by the commune in 1222, apparently with the assistance of a German merchant, Bernardus Teotonicus, a confidant of the doge Pietro Ziani.[37] The first explicit reference to the building dates to December 1228, when the administration of a "*fondaco* belonging to the Venetian commune for housing German merchants" was farmed by the city for a sum of 1,100 ducats, payable in three installments.[38] Shortly thereafter, a document from January 1229 recorded the lease of the Fondaco to a certain Abilinus Teotonicus, apparently a German.[39] This venture in farming the Fondaco may not have been successful, at least from the point of view of urban administrators, since the city had assumed direct administration of the facility by the second half of the thirteenth century.[40] Both fiscal models had precedents elsewhere, in Muslim and Christian cities, and Venice was following an established tradition of urban and royal authorities deriving profit from *fondacos* under their control.

Later, the city of Venice mainly profited from the Fondaco dei Tedeschi through fees and taxes on commercial transactions in the building. By the

[35] Fabri, *Evagatorium in terrae sanctae*, I, 31 [11b].

[36] Fabri, *Evagatorium in terrae sanctae*, III, 388 [207b].

[37] Wolfgang von Stromer, *Bernardus Teotonicus e i rapporti commerciali tra la Germania Meridionale e Venezia prima della instituzione del Fondaco dei Tedeschi* (Venice: Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, 1978) 9, 32.

[38] *Liber communis detto anche plegiorum del R. Archivio generale di Venezia*, ed. R. Predelli (Venice: Tipografia del Commercio di Marco Visentini, 1872) 68 (no. 249) and 161 (no. 685). The 1228 text is also edited in Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, I, 1–2 (doc. 2).

[39] Lupprian, *Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, 7.

[40] *Ibid.* It remains a matter of debate whether the Fondaco dei Tedeschi was originally a state-controlled facility, either leased or directly administered, or if it was at some point a private enterprise.

later fifteenth century, these amounts were variously reported as totaling 20,000 ducats a year (according to Felix Fabri in the early 1480s), 1,000,000 as claimed in a source from 1470, or 100 ducats per day as recorded in 1493 and 1499.[41] The Venetian chronicler Marino Sanudo, who noted the latter figure, added that this was because of "the prominent position and the size and convenience of the place, being in the middle of the Rialto," the commercial heart of the city.[42] There was also other income associated with the Fondaco, since its rooms were rented out for a set price, and guests owed additional small sums to the keeper of the house for maintaining the building.[43] Despite these fees paid to Venice, German merchants also profited from the Fondaco, as attested by the fact that – though under some duress – they were willing and able to pay for access to the facility's location and amenities.

Venetian authorities did not permit German merchants to traffic beyond Venice, or to rent ships for transport down the Adriatic into the Mediterranean (although this was possible for German pilgrims such as Felix Fabri). Instead, traders were required to stay in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi and to conduct their business there under the watchful eye of Venetian authorities and tax-collectors, before returning northward with cargoes of Venetian and other Mediterranean commodities. Venetians were likewise prohibited from trading with German merchants outside the city, whether in Padua, Treviso, or other non-Venetian regions, nor were Venetians permitted to travel northward to do business in German cities (this restriction did not include Flanders, England, or other northern European markets, where Venetians traded regularly).[44]

German traders imported a variety of northern commercial goods to Venice, with many items originating in Russia, Scandinavia, and the Baltic region, including wool and fustian cloth, metals (silver, copper, tin, zinc, lead, gold, and iron), furs, hides, objects of horn, and leather. Felix Fabri marveled at the quantities of goods traded through the Fondaco dei

[41] Lupprian, *Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, 9. A century later, Ferdinand Braudel's analysis of monthly tax receipts indicated seasonal variations in traffic passing through the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. This would seem to confirm the fifteenth-century estimates. In 1561–1562, volume ranged from about 2,000 ducats received by the city each month in March, April, May, and December, to roughly 4,000 ducats in June, July, August, October, and January, to a peak of about 5,000 ducats levied in taxes in February (*Mediterranean World*, I, 266).

[42] Marino Sanudo, *Laus urbis Venetae*, in Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Documentary History*, 9–10.

[43] Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 12.

[44] Prohibitions on Venetian trade are found as early as 1272 (von Stromer, *Bernardus Teotonicus*, 4–5; Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 31–32). As stated in the ruling from 1475, "No Venetian citizen or subject may go to Germany, or to any part of Germany . . . to buy or sell merchandise from any German, on pain of losing all goods bought or sold, and paying as much again by way of penalty" (Chambers and Pullan [eds.], *Documentary History*, 328).

Tedeschi, and a decade later, in 1494, the pilgrim Pietro Casola claimed that its contents "would suffice alone to supply all Italy with the goods that come and go."[45] German merchants returned home bearing the traditional commodities of Mediterranean trade: spices, pepper, drugs, cotton, sugar, and silk.

Strict controls on German trade were desired not only by the Venetian administration and maritime merchants, but also by local guilds that felt their businesses were threatened by German imports. Complaints from the Venetian mercers' guild, a round 1446, insisted that German traders be under their authority, since their business was being destroyed by foreign traders who "stock and sell mercery on the Rialto Bridge . . . [and] if no measures are taken, the said mercers . . . will shortly be ruined." This text goes on to provide a glimpse at the spectrum of German commodities passing through the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in the mid-fifteenth century, including "basins and other brassware, iron and tin, locks, mirrors, mirror glass, caps, gloves of wool or hide, cups, bales of cloth, shears, scissors, jugs, paternoster beads, hats, spectacles . . . razors, axes, belts, combs of horn or wood, cushions, serges, coarse cloth, and every other kind of mercery." The Germans also "make girdles, big bags, woollen and straw hats, wallets, playing cards, caps, and dyed skins for girdles and bags."[46]

There were also other concerns about German merchants and their business. Some Italians saw them as an easy mark, believing that German quality controls were not up to Italian standards. In 1434, the Venetian trader Andrea Barbarigo managed to sell a cargo of sub-standard cotton in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, even though "it was held by all there to be bad and abominable wares."[47] Others voiced different complaints regarding German merchants, and in the fifteenth century the Medici family (who had their own more direct connections to northern markets) refused to do business with Germans in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi since it was too difficult to track down bad debts if delinquent traders left for home.[48]

By the later fifteenth century, when Felix Fabri passed through Venice, the German presence in the Fondaco was long established. Over time, the number of traders had grown, forcing renovations and enlargements to

[45] Pietro Casola, *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Year 1494*, ed. and trans. Margaret Newett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1907) 129.

[46] From the Mariegola or rule book of the mercers (ASV Arti, b. 312, ff. 101–141), translated in Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Documentary History*, 281–284.

[47] F. C. Lane, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice 1418–1449* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1944) 106.

[48] Raymond de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397–1494* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963) 245.

the building in 1319 (following a fire the year before), 1372, and 1401.[49] During the 1340s, the street leading to the Fondaco and the Rialto Bridge had to be widened, another indication of efforts to meet the needs of growing commercial traffic in this area of the city. Another devastating fire broke out in January 1505, burned for an entire night and throughout the following day, and necessitated complete rebuilding of the Fondaco. Construction – this time in stone – took three years, and the Council of Ten authorized its funding with revenues from the Venetian salt monopoly.[50] In the interim, German traders were housed in other lodgings until the new Fondaco, elegant and enlarged, was ready for their occupation. A list of leases on rooms and storage chambers drawn up in 1508, when the new building opened its doors, noted three floors with sixty-eight occupied rooms, eight more still vacant, and twenty-five storage vaults. Merchants could lease rooms for an annual rent, paid to the city, along with various other customary fees for services and tips. In addition, six more rooms, on the third floor, "shall not be assigned to particular merchants, but shall be reserved for the accommodation of travelers and vendors of cheap cloth, to prevent them from lodging at the inns outside the exchange house, for [by doing so] they cause great loss to our most illustrious government."[51]

By the 1480s, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi may have housed up to 120 merchants, usually for fairly short-term stays, though numbers were reduced when some traders tried to keep their room keys even when they were not in residence.[52] A century later, when a papal nuncio visited Venice around 1580, he estimated that there were nearly 900 Germans (mostly Protestants) in

[49] Benjamin Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis: Genoese and Venetian Men of Affairs and the Fourteenth-century Depression* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976) 14; Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, I, 21, 98, 135.

[50] Dazzi and Brunetti, *Il Fondaco nostro dei Tedeschi*, 59–60. Unlike in Sicily and Apulia, the Venetian salt trade did not pass through a *fondaco*.

[51] Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, I, 363–364; Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Documentary History*, 329–330. These house rules for the Fondaco in 1508 also stated that "the rooms on the first and second floors shall be rented at twelve ducats a year each, and those on the third floor at eight ducats, to be paid in full to St. Mark, on the understanding that merchants shall pay in addition to this rent all the other royalties and expenses which they have been accustomed to pay, and shall similarly make the customary payments to the steward of the exchange house." The basic outline of these regulations is found as early as the middle of the fourteenth century, though rents seem to have increased sharply in the first half of the fifteenth century (Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 12–13, 15).

[52] P. Braunstein, "Appunti per la storia di una minoranza: la popolazione tedesca di Venezia nel medioevo," *Strutture familiari, epidemie, migrazioni nell'Italia medievale*, ed. R. Comba, G. Piccinni, and G. Pinto (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1984) 516; P. Braunstein, "Remarques sur le population allemande de Venise à la fin du moyen âge," *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV–XVI): aspetti e problemi* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1977) I, 233–236. Simonsfeld discussed the problem of absent keys to unoccupied rooms, and the degree to which this cut down on space available in the Fondaco to newcomers (*Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 13).

the city. Although some of these were servants in private houses, tradesmen, or artisans, others were "merchants, the richer or more prosperous folk, or their agents or correspondents" who lived in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. "If you count officials and servants as well," he continued, "there are nearly two hundred living in that great building. They live as in a college, having everything in common, and they eat in the same place at a set hour, which proves very convenient for their business."[53] The nuncio went on to report rumors of heresy and dissolute living in the Fondaco, unwittingly drawing on the age-old theme of religious and moral iniquities rampant within the walls of such an establishment.

By the second half of the sixteenth century, after the Reformation, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi took on a new role, and in fact came to resemble its Islamic counterparts even more closely than had been the case previously. Many of the German merchants in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi were now religiously distinct from the local Venetian population, just as had long been the case with Christian merchants in the *fondacos* in Alexandria, Tunis, Damascus, and other Muslim cities. Even before the Reformation, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi had provided for the religious needs of its resident community, just as did *fondacos* across the Mediterranean. In the middle of the fourteenth century, an altar had been established in the Fondaco in order that German merchants could worship together in the convenience of their lodging without having to venture forth to attend mass in a local church.[54] These provisions would later become not only convenient but necessary for German Protestant traders in Venice.

The Fondaco dei Tedeschi is the only medieval *fondaco* for which detailed records survive to document its administration and staff. Venetian city officials established regulations for the Fondaco as early as 1242, with more comprehensive additions in 1268, and these statutes were reiterated in later legislation throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[55] Many of the rules for the Fondaco addressed the desires for order and revenue on the part of the Venetian government, responded to complaints by German merchants, or reacted to the pleas of local merchants and guilds concerned at losing business to foreigners.

As well as emphasizing the city's control of the building itself, through oversight by the Venetian Council of Ten, Fondaco regulations instituted

[53] Aldo Stella, *Chiesa e stato nelle relazioni ei nunzi pontifici a Venezia* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1964) 279. English translation in Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Documentary History*, 330.

[54] Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 11.

[55] These are published in Thomas, *Capitolare*. They include Latin statutes dated 1242 to 1281, and Italian legislation on the Fondaco drawn up from 1268 to 1499.

officials for the building, including three elected *vicidomini* (overseers), two *scrivani* (notaries), up to thirty *sensali* and *messeti* (agents and brokers), a *fundicarius* (responsible for financial and daily administration of the building), a *ponderator* (weigher), and various other lower-ranking service posts. These men were appointed each year by the city, received a salary from the commune, and were prohibited from personally taking part in any monetary transactions – purchases, sales, gifts, or bribes – occurring in the Fondaco (though tipping was permitted).[56]

The fact that administrators in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi were all local people employed by the Venetian commune, rather than appointed by the German residents, marks a departure from the model of *fondacos* abroad. In Alexandria and Tunis, although the *fondaco* buildings were owned by the Muslim administration, the consul, notaries, and *fundicarius* were always Europeans, and usually chosen either by their home government or by western merchants doing business in the relevant *fondaco*. This innovation in Venice is further indication of the power of the Serenissima vis-à-vis German traders, who were eager to continue traffic even in the face of apparently disadvantageous terms.

The regulations placed great emphasis on standard practice, honest dealing, and meticulous record keeping. All goods had to be weighed on official scales when they entered the building, and again before they left, and nothing could be bought or sold without being properly assessed. All transactions and goods passing through the Fondaco were to be recorded in the official ledgers by the *fundicarius* or one of the notaries, and for this purpose, the two notaries took it in turns each month to sleep in the Fondaco in order to be available as needed. Every month, an accounting (*ratione*) had to be submitted to the overseers (*vicidomini*).[57] Whenever a merchant arrived at the Fondaco, the *fundicarius* assigned him to one of the thirty agents (*sensali*), who would accompany him and advise him during his stay, apparently in much the same way that dragomen operated in the eastern *fondacos*.[58] Every month, also, the *fundicarius* and one of the notaries went together (never alone) to purchase wine for the Fondaco, and the subsequent sale of this wine and its price were strictly controlled. Like other officers in the Fondaco, the keeper of the tavern received a salary from the state, and could only sell wine to registered residents during certain legal hours. The German merchants frequently agitated for increased

[56] Thomas, *Capitolare*, xii. This arrangement seems generally to have been satisfactory, except in certain situations. In 1386, for example, the city's financial difficulties forced a 50 percent cut in the salary of brokers (*sensali*) working in the Fondaco (Lupprian, *Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, 19).

[57] Thomas, *Capitolare*, xiii.

[58] Lupprian, *Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, 13–14.

hours of operation, but the rules were strict, and any tavern-keeper found to be bending them was liable for dismissal. The numerous rules and ordinances relating to the sale of wine in the Fondaco indicate the enduring importance of the topic, in terms of both profit to the city and customer demand.[59]

Other regulations recall further constraints placed on merchants in Islamic *fondacos*, including the fact that the Fondaco dei Tedeschi was locked every night and opened in the morning by Venetians. In 1330, a merchant from Augsburg had to justify the fact that he had lodged elsewhere than the Fondaco, and he explained that this was because he had arrived in Venice after the Fondaco's doors had been shut. This excuse was not accepted by Venetian authorities, however, on the grounds that he was a long-time trader in Venice and ought to have known better.[60] As has been noted elsewhere, *fondacos* were not unique in imposing a nocturnal curfew, since medieval cities, warehouses, and private houses routinely locked up their gates and doors at night. But there were differences between keeping thieves out of the *fondaco* and locking residents within. As in Muslim cities, the fact that access to the Fondaco dei Tedeschi was controlled by local authorities, not the German merchants, indicates an interest in securing people as well as simply guarding goods.

The evidence for parallels between the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice and the European national *fondacos* in Alexandria and other Muslim cities is both compelling and unique. No other town in south Europe successfully maintained such a facility to regulate the trade and personal movement of a particular group of foreign traders, or to profit so openly from their business. Why was the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice such a faithful copy of prototypes in the Islamic world, while contemporary *fondacos* in Genoa, Florence, Pisa, Montpellier, Marseille, and elsewhere in the western Mediterranean were so different? The reason rests on a combination of factors, including the geography of trade routes, the rise of German trade, consumer demand for particular goods, and – above all – the fact that the city of Venice had both the model to follow and the ability to follow it. Venice was one of the few European ports with the power and topography to exert economic control in its territories in the way that Ayyūbid and Mamlūk rulers could enforce their dominance over trade and traders in Egypt.

[59] Thomas, *Capitolare*, xiii; Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 17 (also I, 77 [doc. 185a]); Dazzi and Brunetti, *Il Fondaco Nostro dei Tedeschi*, 59. Once again, these regulations on wine recall the concerns and restrictions relating to the European *fondacos* in Islamic cities.

[60] Thomas, *Capitolare*, xvi; Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, II, 16.

Situated at the northern tip of the Adriatic, with land routes through mountain passes (especially the Brenner) and the Po Valley leading down from the north and west towards its excellent harbor, Venice was positioned to control commercial traffic through its port to a degree impossible for cities along the western Italian and French coast. Its island location, likewise, discouraged suburban settlements and economic competition, and permitted greater control of visitors to the city and access to its markets than was the case for mainland cities, despite their walls and gates. The Adriatic also served as a channel for Mediterranean traffic to and from Venice. The importance of this sea in the development of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi is suggested in the fact that several other Adriatic ports besides Venice, including Ancona and Ragusa, adopted the model of the regulated communal *fondaco*, though none with the same enduring success.[61]

For German and other northern merchants seeking access to the eastern Mediterranean trading sphere, the route through Venice was almost inevitable. In contrast, merchants and pilgrims coming south by a more westerly route could choose their destination – whether Marseille, Genoa, Pisa, or elsewhere – according to the variable contingency of routes, commerce, or politics. Travelers could come either through France along the Rhone Valley to the Mediterranean, or through several passes leading to Lake Como, Milan, and from there to a choice of Ligurian or Tuscan ports. But none of these western routes had the expediency of Venice.

Venice's creation of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi came from its recognition of the commercial and fiscal advantages of its unique location. Unlike other southern European ports, it had both the model and the geographical situation to implement a facility of this type. Although there is no evidence that the Fondaco dei Tedeschi was directly modeled on the *fondacos* of Alexandria, the administrative parallels are too clear to dismiss this possibility. As has been outlined above, German merchants were required to traffic through the Fondaco, and to stay and store their goods within its walls. The building was owned by the city, which hired and payed the staff, arranged for security, and imposed a nocturnal curfew. Just as Europeans

[61] Ancona: F. Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981) III, 480; Ragusa had a large regulated *fondaco* in its port district in the fifteenth century (Stuard, *A State of Deference*, 47–48). There had been *fondacos* in Ragusa at least since the thirteenth century (*Liber statutorum civitatis Ragusii compositus anno 1272*, ed. V. Bogisic and C. Jirecek [Zagreb: Societas Typographica, 1904); new ed., *Statut Grada Dubrovnik, 1272* [Dubrovnik: Historijski Arhiv Dubrovnik, 1990] 199). When Felix Fabri arrived there in the 1480s, however, he specifically noted the lack of inns, and did not mention a *fondaco* (*Evagatorium in terrae sanctae*, I, 35 [13a].

were prohibited from trafficking inland from Alexandria, so German merchants in Venice were not permitted to venture beyond this market into the commercial sphere of the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean.

In both cities, *fondacos* were located at the end point of a trade diaspora, where one group of merchants was forced – by both geography and legislation – to hand off their business to another group. The *fondacos* in Venice and Alexandria linked three trading networks: German merchants controlled traffic along inland routes across the empire and eastern Europe; Venetians sought to dominate maritime trade routes in the eastern Mediterranean; while overland commerce in Egypt and Syria was mainly in the hands of indigenous Muslim and Jewish traders. Both Venice and Alexandria were geographically positioned to encourage their development as terminal emporia, where merchants met, traded their goods, paid taxes, and returned home. Thus, Venetians and Germans converged in Venice, Venetians and Egyptians in Alexandria. The commercial potential of both cities was exploited by their rulers. Egyptian sultans and Venetian doges clearly understood the fiscal opportunities presented by the control of *fondacos*, and they paid due attention to these facilities.

The unique situation of Venice was demonstrated in the early fifteenth century, when both Genoa and Milan tried to establish *fondacos* along Venetian and Muslim lines, but failed because they were unable – or unwilling – to adopt the controls imposed in Venice and Alexandria. In 1417, German–Venetian relations had been strained by the latter's incursions in Dalmatia, and in consequence, Emperor Sigismund of Hungary forbade German traders to traffic through Venice. German activity in Venice declined accordingly (though it did not disappear entirely), and German merchants immediately sought other points of access to the Mediterranean.[62] Merchants from Constance arrived in Genoa to petition for commercial privileges, and Genoa was more than happy to comply. In late 1419, Genoese ambassadors visited a number of German towns, including Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Munich, with promises of honest dealing, freedom of prices, and the offer of Genoese ships that Germans could hire to carry their goods to other ports in the eastern and western Mediterranean. These liberal concessions regarding prices and transport were intended to contrast with the stricter Venetian controls over sales and shipping, but the Genoese went even further, denouncing the practice of locking up merchants and their animals in the *fondaco* at night, as was done in Venice ("sicut fit in

[62] Genoese–German negotiations in the 1420s are outlined by P. Dollinger, "Projets d'un Fondaco dei Tedeschi à Gênes et à Milan au XVe siècle," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 12 (1987) 675–688.

Veneciis") and vowing that this would not happen in Genoa.[63] It appears that Genoa proceeded with these plans, since there is mention of expenditure for a *fondicus* in 1424, and later data from the same year confirm the establishment of a *habitaculum* to lodge German merchants in the city. The *fondicus* was rented to the German community for 80 *livres* a year, a sum collected by the Genoese *douane*.[64]

In 1422, German merchants also requested privileges in Milan, perhaps building on marriage ties between the Visconti family and the dukes of Bavaria. They were granted rights to a house ("una domo aut habitatione") in which they could stay, tax-free, with their families and servants. At the same time, they also received the right to exercise legal jurisdiction over their own community in all but capital crimes.[65] This concession of legal jurisdiction mirrored rights granted to *fondaco* communities in the Islamic world, but not accorded to German merchants in Venice.

Despite these generous concessions offered to German merchants in Genoa and Milan, the reopening of Venice to German traffic in 1431 hindered the further development of *fondacos* for Germans in northwest Italy. Some traffic continued, especially for traders seeking access to western Mediterranean markets, and German merchants again requested privileges in Genoa in 1466 and in Milan in 1472. Yet this was precisely the period in which traffic through the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice was growing by leaps and bounds, requiring the expansion of its facilities and staff. Although the documentation testifies to the strict regulations surrounding the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, and frequent German complaints about its inconveniences, fees, and rules, the system evidently worked. For all its restrictions, the geographical and commercial advantages of Venice outweighed the more liberal policies offered by Genoa and Milan. Further rebuilding and expansion of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi after the fire of 1505 indicates the continued growth of German traffic in Venice despite broader economic and political changes on the world stage: the growth of Ottoman power, the Hapsburg union of the German and Spanish empires, and the discovery of sea routes to India and the New World.

As the example of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi makes clear, the success and function of a *fondaco* as a regulated point of mediation for international

[63] Aloys Schulte, *Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Handels und Verkehrs zwischen Westdeutschland und Italien mit Ausschlufs von Venedig* (Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, 1900) 1, 256–259.
[64] Dollinger, "Projets," 684.
[65] Noto (ed.), *Liber datii mercantie*, 1; Dollinger, "Projets," 682–683. The Milanese facility was not specifically called a *fondaco*, despite administrative parallels, nor is it clear whether the Germans actually ever obtained this *domus* in Milan.

trade and traders depended on particular geographic, economic, and political circumstances. Given the right conditions, *fondacos* could play a critical role as commercial meeting places for different merchant communities and as portals for cross-cultural exchange. Not only for German merchants doing business in Venice, but also for non-Christian traders who sought access to ports and markets in southern Europe, the advantages of the *fondaco*'s role as a nexus outweighed the very real restrictions that it imposed.

FONDACOS FOR NON-CHRISTIAN MERCHANTS

Few Muslim traders visited Christian markets outside the Iberian Peninsula during the later middle ages, and there were no *fondacos* to house them in Marseille, Genoa, Florence, or other European ports in the western Mediterranean. As we will see, Arago-Catalan and Adriatic ports were once again an exception. The reasons for this absence of Muslim merchants in most southern European ports are complex, and they shifted over time. Economic factors were certainly important, compounding a longstanding imbalance in the desirability of European and Islamic goods with the fact that Christian merchants – and Christian ships – came to dominate routes across the Mediterranean by the thirteenth century, bringing goods and trade through Islamic ports. Logistical, cultural, and religious factors must also have played a role, since the lack of appropriate lodging and other facilities for Muslim traders in most Christian ports discouraged their travel and trade in these markets. Yet these considerations were neither universal nor insurmountable.

Why were there no *fondacos* for Muslim merchants in most European ports? After all, *fondacos* were recognized in southern Europe as facilitators of cross-cultural trade, and were even established in certain regions (the realms of Aragón and Venice) where they proved useful and lucrative. The answer involves chronology, competition, and topography. The pattern was already established in the early middle ages, since Muslim traders rarely visited French or Italian ports even before the hegemony of Christian shipping in the Mediterranean. There was apparently little to draw Muslim traders to Europe, and several factors – including disinclination and inconvenience – to keep them away. With the exception of conquered territories, there were no *fondacos* in Latin Europe until the twelfth century, and Muslim merchants would not have found facilities to meet their needs for communal lodging, religious accommodation, legal traditions, and food-ways. Later, the rapid development of Christian mercantile power introduced the concept of the *fondaco* to European consciousness, but this commercial

revolution also established competition. Muslim merchants were unwelcome in Christian ports unless their business and movement could be strictly controlled. In the few areas where this was possible, when political circumstances combined either with longstanding custom, as in the realms of Aragón, or geographical advantage, as in Venice, regulated *fondacos* did emerge to handle Muslim traffic. These facilities orchestrated a balance between the needs of local governments and merchants, and the requirements of foreign traders. In other areas, notably southern France and northwestern Italy, where there was neither a tradition of Muslim presence nor the topographical ability to channel and protect trade, *fondacos* never evolved as facilities for cross-cultural trade.

In the realms of Aragón, *fondechs* (*fonduks*) for housing Muslim merchants and travelers had existed since the thirteenth-century conquests of James I, and their existence underscores the degree to which *fondacos* were perceived as mediation points for cross-cultural interaction and trade. *Fondechs* flourished in the *morerías* of Valencia and elsewhere during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the fact that they rendered substantial revenues in royal rents ensured their continued official protection and oversight. These royal *fondech*s were leased out, usually for terms of two to four years, and their rents (and thus value) increased steadily over time.[66] The regalian monopoly over the Muslim quarters of Valencia, Játiva, Zaragoza, and other cities allowed the king to require that any foreign Muslims visiting these markets must lodge in the *fondechs* and pay their fees. Seigneurial Muslims were exempt from this requirement, as were those who had family in a particular town.[67] After the conquest of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella, a similar system was put in place there as well, with an *alhóndiga* established for visiting Muslims in 1498.[68] This model was presumably adopted from the *fondechs* in Arago-Catalan realms, through the influence of King Ferdinand, since it had not previously been common practice in Castilian cities.

By the fifteenth century, the *fondech*s in the *morerías* of the realms of Aragón were well known as sites for drinking, gambling, and prostitution, all of which were subject to royal oversight and licensing fees. The attraction of these activities meant that the *fondechs* became places where Christians

[66] F. Vendrell Gallostra (ed.), *Rentas reales de Aragón de la época de Fernando I (1412–1416)* (Barcelona: Instituto Universitario de Estudios Medievales, 1977) 20, 34, 41–42, 50, 57, 60; Meyerson, *Muslims of Valencia*, 154–155, 286.

[67] Barceló Torres, *Minorías islámicas*, 97; Meyerson, *Muslims of Valencia*, 155.

[68] Manuel Espinar Moreno, "Del urbanismo musulmán al urbanismo Cristiano. II: Andalucía oriental," in *Ponencias y comunicaciones* (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1991) 229–230. The rest of the city's Islamic community was banished to the suburb of Albaicín.

and Muslims came together not merely for commerce but also for alcohol, dice, and sex.[69] In 1495, the Muslim community of Játiva complained that after recent renovations to the *fondech*, "Christian youths were sneaking into the *fondech* through a window and spending the night in the *morería*."[70] As a result of such activities, the *fondechs* often had a bad reputation, frequently appearing in contemporary Valencian court documents as the sites of brawls and other misconduct.

This was not universally the case, however, since many *fondechs* continued to be viewed as respectable hostelries. In Zaragoza, for example, Muslims coming with their families to do business in the city would lodge their daughters in the city's *fondech*, in order that the girls remain secluded and not be "maltreated or spoiled for marriage" as noted in a legal case from 1496.[71] Perhaps this was the same *fondech* in Zaragoza that had had its rents given to the nuns of the convent of Peramán by King Ferdinand I of Aragón in the early fifteenth century.[72] Surely such a grant would have been inappropriate if this *fondech* were renowned for illicit activities.

Adriatic ports would also establish *fondacos* to host visiting Muslims, but not until the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 and the advent of Ottoman diplomatic and commercial activity in the eastern Mediterranean. In 1514, Ancona established a "fondaco dei mercanti turchi et altri musulmani," and a century later, in 1612, a Fondaco dei Turchi was established in Venice for lodging merchants from the Ottoman Empire. There may also have been an earlier *fondaco* for Muslim merchants in Venice, but no trace of this facility remains.[73] Although outside the chronological scope of this study, the foundation of the Fondaco dei Turchi, in the wake of Venetian victories at the battle of Lepanto in 1571, indicates the continued economic and political ability of early modern Venice to take advantage of the segregated

[69] Meyerson, *Muslims of Valencia*, 49, 155, 227. Also M. Meyerson, "Prostitution of Muslim Women in the Kingdom of Valencia: Religious and Sexual Discrimination in a Medieval Plural Society," in *The Medieval Mediterranean: Cross-Cultural Contacts*, ed. K. Reyerson and M. Chiat (St. Cloud, MN: North Star Press, 1988) 87, 89, 91. Although these activities are reminiscent of prostitution in late antique *pandocheions*, this seems a new development in the realms of Aragón since the thirteenth century.

[70] Meyerson, *Muslims of Valencia*, 156.

[71] Meyerson, *Muslims of Valencia*, 250.

[72] Vendrell Gallostra (ed.), *Rentas reales*, 72. Peramán, a convent in Pinseque, had been combined with the convent of Santa Inés in Zaragoza in 1406. My thanks to Brian Catlos for this information.

[73] Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, III, 480; Agostino Sagredo, *Fondaco dei Turchi in Venezia* (Milan: Stabilmento di Giuseppe Civelli, 1860) 25. On the architecture of the Venetian facility, see J. Schulz, "The Original Appearance of the Fondaco dei Turchi at Venice," *Abstracts of Papers delivered in Art History Sessions* (Los Angeles: College Art Association of America Annual Meeting, 1977) 27. Over time, there may have been several facilities for housing Muslim merchants in Venice. See Concina, *Fondaci*, 219–246; Alethea Wiel, "The Demolition of the Warehouse of the Persians in Venice," *Burlington Magazine* (1908) 221–222; Auld, "Commercial Interchange," 93.

fondaco model. Like the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, and like *fondacos* in the contemporary Muslim world, the Fondaco dei Turchi enforced a noctural curfew and insisted that all Turkish merchants must stay and store their goods within its walls. There was also special emphasis on privacy and segregation, with care taken that the courtyard should not be overlooked by other buildings. No weapons were allowed in the building, nor any "women or beardless persons who may be Christians."[74]

Muslim traders were not the only potential "foreign" presence in southern European cities. Attitudes towards local Jewish communities, and Jewish visitors, also emphasized segregation through separate city quarters and lodging-houses, though these were not called *fondacos*. When Benjamin of Tudela traveled along the Mediterranean coast in the late twelfth century, he generally stayed as a guest with members of the Jewish communities in towns along his route. But there were also more formal Jewish guest-houses available in the later middle ages and early modern period. A text from 1328 noted a *hospicium* located in the Jewish quarter of Tortosa, and a "hospitium venture hebrei" existed in Bologna early in the next century. There was likewise a Jewish hostel in Milan, in 1575, where Jewish visitors to the city were permitted to lodge ("allogiare a l'hostaria") for up to three days.[75]

In Venice, the city administration's characteristic vigilance was evident in provisions for its Jewish residents. Few Jews were permitted to live in Venice before the fourteenth century, although they could enter the city briefly on commercial business. By the fifteenth century, however, there seem to have been a number of Jewish inhabitants in the city, and the population increased dramatically following the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. To handle this influx, Venice adopted a policy of residential segregation already prevalent in Venetian overseas colonies such as Candia, where Jews lived in their own quarter (called *judaica* or *judaiche*). The creation of the Ghetto Nuovo in Venice in 1516 provided a separate residential area for the city's growing Jewish population.[76] Like the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, which had recently been rebuilt and enlarged after the fire of 1505, the Ghetto

[74] Regulations drawn up by the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, May 1621, translated in Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Documentary History*, 350–352.

[75] Antoni Rubio y Lluch, *Documents per l'historia de la cultura catalana mig-eval* (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1908) 88 (doc. 71); Salo W. Baron, *The Jewish Community, its History and Structure to the American Revolution* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945) II, 11 (Baron translates the Hebrew *maḥanot* as *fondachi*); Hirschberg, *History of the Jews in North Africa*, 474; Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Jews in the Duchy of Milan* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1982) III, 1609–1610 (doc. 3658).

[76] Jacoby, "Venice and the Venetian Jews," 30, 37–38.

Nuovo provided regulated communal lodging under the eye of the Venetian administration, which tolerated its activities and held the keys to its gates. Unlike the Fondaco, the Ghetto housed permanent rather than temporary residents in the city, but both institutions addressed the Venetian concern to control and regulate the presence of "others" within its island domain.

THE *FONDACO* AS COMMERCIAL ENTREPÔT AND WAREHOUSE

Throughout Mediterranean Europe, all regional versions of the *fondaco* drew on models originally encountered by European rulers and merchants in Islamic ports, or in conquered Muslim cities, and they evolved to meet a variety of fiscal and commercial needs. In contrast to the communal facilities discussed above, the majority of European commercial *fondacos* were facilities for storing and controlling goods rather than people. Most references associate commercial *fondacos* with money, commodities, and commercial operations, not with merchant communities or their lodging.

Two basic versions of the commercial *fondaco* had emerged in Europe by the second half of the thirteenth century: first, warehouses administered by a ruler or city, and often deployed to enforce taxation or monopolies on certain goods; second, *fondacos* held by private merchants or merchant firms. In both cases, the word for the physical facility also came to apply, by extension, to more abstract related concepts, such as the office that levied taxes on particular goods, a branch of a merchant firm, or an account register. This variety and flexibility of usage suggests that ongoing experimentation fostered a rapid evolution of the *fondaco* in its new European context.

OFFICIAL *FONDACOS* AND ROYAL MONOPOLIES

As in the Islamic world, European *fondacos* were convenient points through which to monitor prices and distribution, and many were connected with specific commodities, most notably grain, salt, oil, iron, and textiles, while others provided space for more generalized wholesale transactions. *Fondacos* associated with royal monopolies were commonly found in those regions of Spain and Sicily that had once been under Muslim rule, as well as in southern Italy. In 1317, for example, Robert, king of Naples (1309–1343) addressed a short memo to the *fundicariis* of "the *fondacos* of our court" ("fundicorum curie nostre").[77] In Castile, shortly after their conquest of

[77] A. Zambler and F. Carabellese, *Le Relazioni commerciali fra la Puglia e la Repubblica di Venezia dal secolo x al xv* [1898]; new ed. Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1991) 135–136 (no. 49).

Málaga in 1487, Ferdinand and Isabella observed the example of their predecessors Ferdinand III and James I, and placed the main *alhóndiga* (probably already the city's grain entrepôt) and customs house under royal control ("el alhondiga e aduana quedan para nos").[78] City-states could likewise administer public commercial *fondacos*. They appeared in Pisa, Genoa, Venice, Ragusa, and other ports whose merchants and urban officials were familiar with practices in Islamic ports. The best-documented example of this type was the facility in Porto Pisano, which handled a variety of commodities arriving in Pisa and appeared frequently in the city's statutes from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.[79]

Regulations concerning these European facilities, both specialized and general, show that many fundamental characteristics of the Muslim commercial *funduq* were adopted into Christian usage. *Fondacos* in southern Europe served as depots for the reception of imported goods, whether brought from the hinterland or from more distant locales, and provided space for their storage before sale. In many instances, *fondacos* were sites where unrefined goods were transferred before processing: grain for milling into flour for bread, iron for working, raw wool for dyeing and spinning. Most transactions in this setting were wholesale exchanges between merchants, or between merchants and government officials, not retail sales. Indeed, retail sales were often explicitly prohibited. In Pisa, in 1305, the keepers of *fondacos* for textiles were not to "permit any goods to be sold at retail or by the piece" in their facilities.[80]

The workings of these official *fondacos* were nicely described by Boccaccio, who was familiar with the system after serving an apprenticeship in his youth with a commercial firm in Naples in the 1330s:

> In the seaports of all maritime countries, it used to be the practice, and possibly still is, that any merchant arriving there with merchandise, having discharged his cargo, takes it to a *fondaco*, which in many places is called the *dogana*, and is maintained by the commune or by the ruler of the state. After presenting a written description of the cargo and its value to the officers in charge, he is given a storeroom (*magazzino*) where his merchandise is placed under lock and key; the officers then record all the

[78] Francisco Bejarano Robles (ed.), *Los Repartimientos de Málaga* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 1985) 101.

[79] Paolino Pieri records in his chronicle that in 1291 Genoese and Florentine armies attacked Pisa and Porto Pisano, and laid waste to the port region, including this *fondaco* (Paolino Pieri, *Cronica di Paolino Pieri Fiorentino delle cose d'Italia dall'anno 1080 fino all'anno 1305*, ed. A. F. Adami [Rome: Stamperia di Giovanni Zempel, 1755] 54).

[80] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 102. In the kingdom of Naples, in 1450, there was a similar distinction between retail sales of iron and sales in the royal *fondacos* (J. Ametller y Viñas, *Alfonso V de Aragón en Italia y la crisis religiosa del siglo XV* [Gerona: P. Torres, 1903] 690 [art. 17]).

details in their register under the merchant's name, and whenever the merchant removes his goods from bond, either wholly or in part, they make him pay the appropriate dues. It is by consulting this register that brokers, more often than not, obtain their information about the amount and value of the goods stored at the *dogana*, together with the names of the merchants to whom they belong. And when a suitable opportunity presents itself, they approach the merchants and arrange to barter, exchange, sell, or otherwise dispose of their merchandise.[81]

Despite its fictional guise, Boccaccio's account is confirmed in contemporary urban statutes and other documents, all of which detail a similar protocol. In the early fourteenth century, for example, any merchant ship arriving in Porto Pisano was entitled to a key to a shop or storeroom ("apothecam sive magazenum") in the city's *fondaco*, and the ship's scribe or another of its officers was later responsible for returning this key before the ship departed so that the space could be reassigned to another vessel.[82]

Royal and urban governments were interested in the movement of commercial goods not only from a fiscal viewpoint, given their potential revenues from taxation, but also from a concern to ensure public supply, mediate prices in the event of famine or other shortage, and control movement of potential war materials. It should be no surprise, therefore, to find that critical foodstuffs (grain, salt, oil, etc.), metals (iron, steel, copper), and textiles important to local economies (wool and silk) were the items most commonly channeled through the controls of the *fondaco* system, just as was the case in the Islamic world. This pattern persisted in European *fondacos* throughout the later middle ages. A wide variety of other goods also arrived in *fondacos*, but it was rare to find imported luxury items such as spices, drugs, or precious metals mentioned in connection with these official facilities.

Iron and salt

In Sicily and southern Italy, iron, salt, pitch, dyestuffs, and certain other goods could be sold only through official royal *fondacos* or, in some cities,

[81] Boccaccio, *Decameron*, Eighth day, tenth story, 4–6, II, 348, trans., 666–667. On Boccaccio's apprenticeship in Naples, see V. Branca, *Boccaccio. The Man and his Works* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 16–27. While in Naples, Boccaccio may have lived in the Florentine *fondaco* (*ibid.*, 16–17). *Dogana*, like *fondaco*, was a term (from *dīwān*) imported from Arabic. The Arabic office of the *dīwān*, for monitoring goods and collecting taxes and other fees, overlapped with the structure of the *funduq*/*fondaco* in Muslim ports, and it is not surprising that the terms continued to mingle in Christian contexts.

[82] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 427. As in the Venetian Fondaco dei Tedeschi, Pisan officials assigned keys and space in the *fondaco*, and absent merchants were not allowed to retain their rights to a particular room or shop.

through *fondacos* belonging to particular merchant groups.[83] Salt was particularly important, since it was a preservative for fish and meat, and there were salt *fondacos* in Pescara, Barletta, Lucera, Manfredonia, Termoli, Bari, and other towns. There were likewise warehouses for iron in Naples, Gaeta, Trani, Manfredonia, Barletta, and Melfi, as well as less specialized facilities for general merchandise.[84] *Fondacos* and their monopolies (*secrezie*) were under the oversight of royal officials known as *secreti*, and administered on a day-to-day basis by a *dohanerius* or *fundicarius*. Frequent references to keys demonstrate concerns about access and security. In all *fondacos*, tariffs in the form of a mark-up (*terzaria*) or tax (*ius fundici* or *cabella*/*gabella*) had to be paid to the crown at the time of sale. The *terzaria* (i.e. a third of the value of the goods) was the difference between what the crown paid for iron (often 4 ducats per quintal) and its price (thus 6 ducats per quintal) in the royal *fondacos*. This 50 percent mark-up was also applied to other goods subject to royal monopolies, including steel, though some items yielded a lower profit.[85] The *cabella* (*gabella*) or *ius fundici*, in contrast, was a straight tax of 3 percent on value at the time of sale, levied on a wide variety of goods. Early in the reign of Joanna I (1343–1382), for example, Venetian merchants paid the *ius fundici* on oil, salted meat, cheese, lard, and other items sold within their *fondacos*, or weighed with *fondaco* scales.[86] Pegolotti (writing 1310–1340) also stated that if a merchant in Apulia intended to export oil or other commodities, he negotiated "in the *fondaco* or *piazza* where he has left the merchandise in storage ('di fondacarsi')" and paid a certain rate of tax upon its retrieval.[87] The term *cabella* was also used for the right to collect this tax. Since the taxes on particular products often yielded only

[83] The Venetian *fondacos* in Apulia, like their counterparts elsewhere in Sicily and southern Italy, were used for residence, storage, and sales. Regulations made in 1347 for the Venetian *fondaco* in Trani ruled that "no citizen of Trani nor any non-Venetian foreigner may live in the said *fondaco*, nor may they have a house or storeroom in that *fondaco* unless they are Venetian, except for the custodian of the said *fondaco*, and likewise excepting the house of the commune customarily for foreigners and of course also excepting the houses and warehouses of the royal *gabella* for iron, salt, and dyestuffs" (Zambler and Carabellese, *Relazioni commerciali*, 136–152 [no. 50]). Venetians continued to have access to *fondacos* in Naples and Trani in the 1450s. See (Alfonso I of Naples), *Diplomatico aragonese Re Alfonso I (1435–1458)*, ed. Eustacio Rogadeo, Codice diplomatico barese 11 (Bari: Vecchi, 1931) 238–239, 258–259; (Alfonso I of Naples), *Il "Codice Chigi." Un registro della Cancelleria di Alfonso I d'Aragona, re di Napoli, per gli anni 1451–1453*, ed. J. Mazzdeni (Naples: L'Arte tipografica, 1965) 100–102, 163–164.

[84] (Alfonso I of Naples), *Diplomatico aragonese*, 171–174, 176–182, 236–238, 371–372; (Alfonso I of Naples), *Il "Codice Chigi"*, 54–55, 81–82, 262–263. The salt trade had also been regulated under earlier rulers, including Frederick II and Charles of Anjou.

[85] Alan Ryder, *The Kingdom of Naples under Alfonso the Magnanimous. The Making of a Modern State* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) 357.

[86] Zambler and Carabellese, *Relazioni commerciali*, 136–152 (no. 50).

[87] Pegolotti, *La Pratica della mercatura*, 163. This sum is not stated as being *cabella*.

small sums, it was common for the crown to farm the *cabelle* on an annual basis, either individually or in bundles. However, if no reasonable bids were tendered for the right to collect the *cabella*, then royal *secreti* had to sally forth and gather the various *cabelle* from local *fondacos* and other venues.[88]

Royal administration of *fondacos* for the sale and distribution of iron and salt was little different in the fifteenth century, during the reign of Alfonso the Magnanimous, than it had been in the thirteenth century under Frederick II. To some extent, however, this was owing to revival more than continuity. In the interim, starting during the Angevin regime, many of the "ancient monopolies" (or *secrezie*) belonging to the crown had been gradually usurped by other powers, especially the nobility. Alfonso the Magnanimous sought to reverse these encroachments, and demanded in 1446 that all nobles produce proof of their right to collect tolls on iron, pitch, and steel sold within their domains.[89] Among other things, Alfonso wanted control of these revenues to use for other purposes, such as granting a fourth part of local *fondaco* taxes to the church in Barletta in 1442.[90]

Fifteenth-century petitions and legal records indicate many imperfections in the *fondaco* system, especially in matters of distribution. Evidently, there were often shortfalls in supplies of iron and salt available to the *fondacos* in outlying regions, creating local unrest and improper pricing. Shortages and transport costs meant that prices for salt and iron could be higher in rural *fondacos* than in the larger cities, but revenues were sometimes insufficient to pay the staff. However, when the treasurer of Calabria wanted to shut down the *fondaco* for salt in Monteleoni, the town objected, arguing that the *fondaco* had been in place "from time immemorial."[91] In other circumstances, rural people sought to bypass the system of local *fondacos*, since iron was often unobtainable or too expensive there. In 1450, Alfonso heard a petition from his subjects in the kingdom of Naples asking that he permit them to purchase iron in any royal *fondaco*, pay the *cabella*, then resell it at retail in their own districts, since "there was a great scarcity of iron and the local *fondacos* did not have sufficient quantities to sell." This process would save most residents the need to travel long distances to obtain iron.[92] Similar problems were apparent in the *fondacos* for salt, since a year earlier, in 1449, a royal inspector had found that the salt *fondaco* in

[88] Ryder, *The Kingdom of Naples*, 358.
[89] Ryder, *The Kingdom of Naples*, 356; P. Gentile, "Lo Stato napoletano sotto Alfonso I d'Aragona," *Archivio Storico per la Province Napoletane* n.s. 24 (1938) 10–19.
[90] (Alfonso I of Naples), *Diplomatico aragonese*, 92–94.
[91] Ryder, *The Kingdom of Naples*, 355.
[92] Ametller y Viñas, *Alfonso V de Aragón*, 690 (art. 17).

Bitonto was empty. The record makes clear that this was a locked building, or storeroom, since he had to obtain the key ("clavem dicti fundici") before making his discovery. The local administrator, the *dohanerius*, protested that he had repeatedly tried to obtain fresh supplies from the *fondaco* in Bari, but without success.[93]

Grain, oil, and foodstuffs

In Castile, royal *alhóndigas* also functioned as warehouses for monopoly goods, especially grain and salt. As in Sicily and southern Italy, data from shortly after the Christian conquest of this region indicate that these functions were directly adopted from Muslim practice, and became incorporated within a broader royal fiscal agenda. These royal policies were still in place during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and within the next century, *alhóndigas* for storing grain began to appear across the Atlantic in New Spain.

By the fifteenth century, the *alhóndiga* system in Castile had narrowed to a few centralized facilities in major cities. There is little evidence, as is so clear for southern Italy, of a graduated network of royal warehouses for regional distribution and taxation. Instead, the Alhóndiga del Pan in Seville became the hub for grain traffic in Andalusia, and while there were also grain *alhóndigas* Málaga, Granada, Toledo, and other Castilian cities, these never reached the preeminence of the facility in Seville.[94] This pattern made sense, geographically, given the fact that until the 1490s, Seville was the only major southern port in Castile, and located in one of the most important agricultural regions of the country. Any grain or other produce coming to or from the southern coast would necessarily have traveled via Seville, until the conquests of coastal cities in Granada during the later fifteenth century opened up other channels for maritime access.

By law, all imported grain coming through Seville was supposed to pass through the Alhóndiga del Pan, though data suggest that this could never

[93] Francesco Carabellese, *La Puglia nel secolo xv da fonte inedite* (Bari: Commissione Provinciale di Archeologia e Storia Patria, 1901) 110–111.

[94] An *alhóndiga del trigo* existed in Málaga at the time of the city's conquest (Calero Secall and Martínez Enamorado, *Málaga*, 125). This was probably the same *alhóndiga* that Ferdinand and Isabella claimed as royal property in their *repartimiento* of the city (Bejarano Robles [ed.], *Repartimientos de Málaga*, 101). In Granada, L. Torres Balbás cited *alhóndigas* for grain, honey, wood, cheese, figs, oil, and other goods in the early sixteenth century ("Las Alhóndigas hispanomusulmanas," 452). In Toledo, local statutes in 1562 noted that the mayor (*alcayde*) of the city was to hold the key to the *alhóndiga* where wheat (*trigo*) and bread (*pan*) were brought to be stored. This building was to be kept very clean (E. Saez, "Aranceles de Toledo," *Anuario de la Historia del Derecho Español* 14 [1942–1943] 549).

be fully enforced.[95] As with *fondacos* elsewhere, merchants tried to avoid regulations and consequent taxation, especially in cases where they no longer obtained any substantial privileges (particularly rights of residence) through conforming to the system. Before 1248, Genoese merchants trafficking in Muslim Seville had ardently desired access to a *fondaco*, since this was their only opportunity to do business in the city. After the conquests of Ferdinand III, in the middle of the thirteenth century, this earlier necessity motivated their immediate request for an *alhóndiga* in newly Christian Seville. Soon, however, it became evident that access to a residential *alhóndiga* was no longer needed in a Christian city, and increasingly, *alhóndigas* became largely tools of royal and civic authority rather than mercantile convenience. By the fourteenth century, Genoese traders in Seville were actively seeking ways to avoid bringing their grain to the Alhóndiga del Pan, and data from 1467 show Genoese merchants carrying grain to the *lonja de los genoveses* rather than the Alhóndiga.[96] In 1469, grain merchants from Burgos also sought (and gained) exemption from Alhóndiga rules, asking in particular that its administrators ("los de la Alhóndiga") be prohibited from claiming extra taxes and impositions.[97]

In the late fifteenth century, Ferdinand and Isabella promoted legislation to reform and renovate the *alhóndigas* of Castile, and most particularly the Alhóndiga del Pan. In an ordinance of 1478, which may have expressed the needs of royal propaganda as much as the necessity to improve grain supplies, they stated their intention to reform laws governing the Alhóndiga in order that the people of Seville not be "gravely injured" by paying more for bread than was reasonable.[98] The Catholic monarchs' attention to this matter followed a food shortage in Seville 1467–1469, and they were probably attempting to establish a more reliable bulwark against famine.[99] The reformed Alhóndiga was intended as a storehouse for grain, from which stocks could be distributed in times of need at set prices, and both flour and unmilled grain were to be sold through it. The administrators of the

[95] In 1467–1469, for example, it appears that only a quarter of grain imports actually came through the Alhóndiga (Rosario Marchena Hidalgo, "Economía sevillana en la baja edad media: una crisis de subsistencia," *Archivo Hispalense* 54 [1971] 197).

[96] Rowena Hernández-Múzquiz, "The Alhóndiga of Seville and the Challenge of Recurring Food Crises in the late Medieval Period" (unpublished paper delivered at the Thirty-third International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 10, 1998) 4–5. The Alhóndiga del Pan is also the subject of her dissertation, "Economy and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Seville (1391–1506): A Study of the *Abastecimiento* (Provisioning) of an Iberian Urban Center," Ph.D. dissertation (New York: Columbia University, 2003). My thanks for her comments on this section.

[97] Marchena Hidalgo, "Economía sevillana," 194.

[98] Hernández-Múzquiz, "The Alhóndiga of Seville," 5–6; also Guichot *Ayuntamiento*, 354.

[99] Hernández-Múzquiz, "The Alhóndiga of Seville," 2–3.

Alhóndiga del Pan kept detailed accounts of grain prices, purchases, supplies, suppliers, dealers, and distribution. The meticulous records of the Alhóndiga del Pan in Seville, like those of its contemporary, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice, provide information on these two late medieval *fondacos* that is unparalleled elsewhere in Europe or the Islamic world.

Despite the rhetoric of innovation in the 1478 ordinance, the clear parallels between the late fifteenth-century Alhóndiga del Pan and earlier versions, both Muslim and Christian, speak of renovation and reform rather than invention. There had been grain *alhóndigas* in Seville since the city's conquest in the thirteenth century, and these almost certainly succeeded earlier Muslim *funduqs*. Conscious continuity was indicated by the injunctions of Alfonso X, in a diploma of 1253, that Muslim muleteers should continue to bring their grain to the king's *alhóndiga* in Seville "just as they had done" under Almoḥad rule.[100] Evidence for grain *funduqs* in contemporary Ceuta and other Moroccan cities supports this connection.[101] An official *alhóndiga* for flour or grain also existed in Seville in the fourteenth century, when city ordinances from 1344 legislated the proper royal weights and measures ("el peso del rey") to be used in the *alfondiga de la farina*.[102] As with earlier versions, royal *alhóndigas* were commonly leased in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, with the tenant paying a fee to the crown in return for the right to collect a percentage of revenues.[103] The holders of these leases (*arrendadores*) were an important component of royal fiscal policy, and this system was convenient, though open to abuse.

In 1478, therefore, Ferdinand and Isabella sought to reestablish royal control of an institution that merchants and suppliers had become adept at avoiding. In many ways, their actions resembled those of Ferdinand's uncle, Alfonso the Magnanimous, in his efforts several decades previously to regain royal monopolies that had fallen into private hands in the kingdom of Naples. It is significant that these actions were taken in Castile, where grain *alhóndigas* were already well established, not in Ferdinand's own Aragonese realm, where the *fondech* took a different form.

Like the royal *fondacos* for iron and salt in southern Italy, and those for grain in North Africa and elsewhere, the Alhóndiga del Pan in Seville worked to supply both public need and the royal fisc. Its control of the grain

[100] Fernández Gómez et al. (eds.), *Privilegios de Sevilla*, 148.
[101] Al-Anṣārī, "Description de Ceuta," 160. See the discussion in chapter 7.
[102] Carande, *Sevilla*, 114.
[103] This rent (the *partido de la alhóndiga*) was set at 22 percent from 1441 to 1454, then at 11 percent from 1455 to 1458 (Miguel Angel Ladero Quesada, "Almojarifazgo sevillano y comercio exterior de Andalucia en el siglo XV," *Anuario de Historia Economica y Social* 2 [1969] 82–86).

trade prevented steep increases in price during times of scarcity, though it may have kept prices artificially high during periods of surplus. Prices in the Alhóndiga, as in *funduqs* and *fondacos*, were generally higher than those in an imagined "open market" owing to control of supply and the imposition of taxes and mark-ups on the products in question.

Royal *alhóndigas* for grain were also established in Málaga and Granada shortly after the conquest of these cities. This shows both continuity from the Naṣrid administration and the clear understanding by the Catholic monarchs that the *alhóndiga* was a useful tool of royal bureaucracy and largess. The *alhóndiga* in Málaga came under direct royal control, but in Granada, where the "New Funduq" (*funduq al-jadīd*, later the Corral del Carbón) had been the entrepôt for sales of grain, this facility was sold (or perhaps merely leased) to the count of Urueña in 1493.[104] Granada, perhaps, was less critical as a center for distribution than the port city of Málaga.[105]

By the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, *fondacos* for grain and other foodstuffs were also common in Italy, as well as in towns along the eastern Adriatic coast, and in Hungary.[106] The critical importance of wheat and other staples, such as oil and vegetables, necessitated their regulation throughout these regions, and city administrators kept a close eye on the movement of agricultural products between the countryside and urban markets.[107] Sources mention a grain *fondaco* in Ragusa in 1272, a *fundicum bladi* in Padua in 1301, and a *fondacho del grano* in Naples in 1323.[108] Pisan statutes from 1324 and 1330 mentioned a *fundaci olei*, and Lucca, while under Pisan rulership in 1348, also had an official *fondaco* to monitor and tax transactions in grain, food, oil, wine, and vegetables.[109] In Venice, there may have been a warehouse for grain from as early as the twelfth century. According to the sixteenth-century Venetian chronicler Marino Sanudo, there had been a grain *fondaco* on the Rialto in 1172, during the dogeship of

[104] Torres Balbás, "Las Alhóndigas hispanomusulmanas," 460–461. A document from 1494 also suggests that the Corral del Carbón served as a facility for lodging (*ibid.*, 448–449).

[105] Curiously, there is no evidence of a grain *alhóndiga* in Almería, the other main Naṣrid port now under Christian control.

[106] Concina, *Fondaci*, 115, 117, 120.

[107] Nicholas, *The Growth of the Medieval City*, 177.

[108] *Liber statutorum civitatis ragusii*, 135, 195; *Regimina Paduae*, in Muratori (ed.), *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, VIII, 427; Arrigo E. Castellani, "Una lettera pisana del 1323," in *Saggi di linguistica e filologia italiana e romanza (1946–1976)* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1980) II, 310.

[109] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, II, 531, 1167. Pisan regulations from 1305 also required that a *fundicarius* not accept or permit any fake saffron ("zaffaranum falsum") to be sold in the *fondaco*, nor any that was adulterated or bad in other ways. If such saffron came into the *fondaco*, he was to detain it and denounce it to the consuls of the merchants (*ibid.*, III, 101–102). Lucca: Salvatore Bongi (ed.), *Bandi lucchesi del secolo decimoquarto, tratti dai registri del R. Archivio di Stato in Lucca* (Bologna: Tipografia del Progresso, 1863) 196–199.

Sebastiano Ziani.[110] This is the earliest citation of a grain *fondaco* anywhere in Latin Europe, but its twelfth-century date is not implausible given the close Venetian connections with both the Islamic world and Byzantium (where a grain *foundax* in Rodosto had been established in the eleventh century), and the foundation of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi only a few decades later. Certainly, there were several *fondacos* for foodstuffs in Venice by 1278, when the city's guild statutes listed a chapter devoted to the *fontegariis* who oversaw the buying and selling of wheat (*blavam*) and vegetables "in fontico et in cava fontici."[111]

Textiles

Textiles were another commodity sold and stored in commercial *fondacos* in southern European cities. As early as 1203, a contract for a purchase of cotton in Genoa was written out "in the *fondaco* [where the goods] were stored," and *fondacos* for cloth had become ubiquitous in Italian towns by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[112] In contrast to the official facilities for salt and grain, however, the ownership and administration of *fondacos* for wool, linen, and other cloth was very variable. There are examples of official *fondacos* – administered by officers of the town – intended to control imports and exports of textiles to particular urban markets, but other *fondacos* belonged to guilds, merchant firms, or private individuals. Presumably, the importance, diversity and lucrative nature of the textile industry itself fostered this heterogeneous development.

In some Italian cities, textile *fondacos* functioned as points where undyed cloth was brought from regions outside the city, and transferred under controlled circumstances to local dye-shops. Non-local merchants may have stayed in these facilities, as indicated by the terminology of "hosts" (*hospes*) and "guests" (*hospites*) found in some urban statutes.[113] Meanwhile, other

[110] M. Sanuto, *Vite de'Duchi* (*Life of the Doges*), in Muratori (ed.), *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, XXII, 508. Ennio Concina has observed that Sanudo's statement about the grain *fondaco* and its link to the city's interest in overseeing the grain trade may be the product of hindsight, especially in light of the building of a new grain *fondaco* in Venice in 1492 (Concina, *Fondaci*, 145–146).

[111] Giovanni Monticolo (ed.), *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposto alla giustizia e poi alla guiustizia vecchia dalle origini al* MCCCXXX (Rome: Tipografi del Senato, 1896) I, 4, 181–182. The chapter itself was titled "Capitularis de starios," indicating the office's importance for the measuring and regulation of commodities. See also Alberti Tenenti and Ugo Tucci, "Magazzini, fondaci, dogane," in *Storia di Venezia temi. Il mare*, ed. Alberto Tenenti and Ugo Tucci (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1991) 789–817.

[112] Giovanni di Guiberto, *Giovanni di Guiberto (1200–1211)*, ed. M. W. Hall-Cole, H. G. Kreuger, R. G. Reinert and R. L. Reynolds (Genoa: Deputazione di Storia Patria per la Liguria, 1939) 342 (no. 717).

[113] As in Pisa in 1305 (Bonaini [ed.], *Statuti*, III, 26, 101).

cities used *fondacos* exclusively for selling and storing textiles of local production, excluding imported textiles from their premises, or for separating items produced in different regions. In fourteenth-century Siena, for example, any broker (*sensaio*) in charge of a *fondaco* in the city for the guild handling wool from Radicondoli (in the Sienese *contado*) was not allowed "to receive or have in the said *fondaco* any cloth or remnant (*panno o scampolo*) except for those which were made in the *castello* of Radicondoli."[114] In this case, traffic through *fondacos* was closely supervised, but many other references were less specific. French cloth passing through Genoa on the way to Messina in 1346 was stored in a *fondaco* (perhaps a privately owned warehouse), as was French cloth sold in Savona in 1324–1325, but there is no evidence that this was according to mandate rather than simple convenience.[115]

City administrators in Pisa sought to ensure that textiles woven locally should not be confused with imported materials, and that the latter should not be sold freely in local markets. With this in mind, officers in charge of *fondacos* were required to keep careful records of the cloth brought to their establishments for storage, noting where these pieces came from, to whom they were sold, and what colors they were to be dyed. When woolen cloths were brought into Pisan *fondacos* by foreigner traders, the *fundicarius* had to be notified within eight days as to which dyer would be used.[116] All textiles were to be meticulously measured and weighed when they entered the *fondaco*, using the official rods and weights approved by the city, nor was any *fundicarius* to "permit any textiles to leave the *fondaco* . . . until they have all been measured."[117] In 1305, a *fundicarius* in Pisa was required to swear that "if anybody else measures or weighs any things or goods in the said *fondaco* . . . being things or goods belonging to my guests, or anything else for which I receive and take [money], then I will not accept or permit this measuring and weighing until it has been done [again] by the broker using correct Pisan weights and public measures."[118] The rates

[114] Luciano Banchi (ed.), *Statuti senesi scritti in volgare ne'secoli XIIIe XIVe pubblicati secondo i testi del R. Archivio di Stato in Siena* (Bologna: Gaetano Romagnoli, 1871) II, 187.

[115] Léone Liagre-De Sturler, *Les Relations commerciales entre Gênes, la Belgique et l'Outremont d'après les archives notariales génoises (1320–1400)* (Brussels and Rome: Institut historique belge de Rome, 1969) 14 (no. 9), 21 (no. 15), 244 (no. 195). A later contract, drawn up in 1386, was made in the same *fondaco* and dealt with the hire of a ship from Genoa to Flanders. There is no mention of cloth, though the route suggests that this may have been the intended return cargo (*ibid.*, 645 [no. 490]).

[116] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 101, also 35, 231–232.

[117] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 99–100. The statutes routinely insist on the exclusive use of official weights and measures, and reiterate these requirements at many points (*ibid.*, 39, 107).

[118] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 99.

of these impositions were regulated by the city, often with input from the guilds for warehouse-keepers and dyers, and no *fundicarius* was permitted to collect more than the statutory amount.[119]

Taxes were due on the storage and sale of textiles in Pisan *fondacos*, except in the case of exempt items, and merchants could also expect to pay other fees. When a Florentine cloth merchant arrived in Pisa in about 1320, he had to cover the costs of storing his goods (and possibly also of lodging) in a *fondaco*, and also make an additional payment to the custodian. Pisan regulations appear to have been particularly concerned with the regulation of *fondacos* and the receipt of their revenues, since there is less evidence of *fondacos* and their fees in other cities. On the same trip, for example, this Florentine merchant was charged *ostellaggio* (a fee for lodging, but probably also storage fees) in Caen and Paris, while he paid another parallel charge, this time under the title *casatico*, in Nice.[120]

Unlike the *fondacos* for grain, salt, or iron, which functioned as single centralized depots, with no more than one for each product in a city, there could be many facilities for textiles in any given city. The Pisan statutes of 1305 referred to "the *fondaco or fondacos* in which textiles are sold in the city of Pisa."[121] In this case, there may have been a hierarchy of facilities, since contemporary Pisan legislation differentiated between the official *fondaco* in Porto Pisano, which was administered by the city, and other *fondacos* in the city proper, which may have been controlled by guilds and individual merchants.[122] Chronicles also indicate multiple facilities. For example, the *Chronicon Parmense* described a battle in Florence in 1304 during which "all of the *fondacos* with merchandise, draperies, and other goods" were burned.[123] Giovanni Villani was more specific in his numbers, reporting that in the 1330s there were roughly twenty *fondacos* in Florence handling French and other transalpine textiles. He claimed that 10,000 pieces of cloth passed through these each year, with a value of 300,000 florins when they were sold in Florentine markets.[124] A century-and-a-half later, in 1472, the Florentine chronicler Benedetto Dei counted thirty-two *fondaco* shops ("botteghe di fondachi") in the city "in which they clip and cut cloth of

[119] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 231–232. The *Breve consulem curie mercatorum Pisanae civitatis* (1305) included a long list of rates for *rieva* and *casaticum* on goods, including textiles, foodstuffs, metals, and spices (*ibid.*, 103–106). Pegolotti also included a lengthy section on rates for *fondacaggio* and other tariffs levied in Pisa (*La pratica della mercatura*, 203–214).

[120] Armando Sapori, *Una compagnia di calimala ai primi del trecento* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1932) 95–96.

[121] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 26.

[122] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 412.

[123] *Chronicon Parmense*, in Muratori (ed.), *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, IX, 850.

[124] Villani, *Cronica*, VI, 185.

many different colors."[125] Some of these *fondacos* would have been owned by textile guilds, such as the Arte di Calimala, while others were the property of merchant firms, including the Bardi and Peruzzi companies whose account books are filled with references to their *fondacos* for cloth and clothing.[126]

The geographical distribution and administration of these *fondacos* for cloth, as well as their multiplicity, distinguishes them from their more regulated counterparts for grain, salt, and iron. They were found mainly in cities in northwestern Italy, particularly Tuscany, not in regions where the *fondaco* had been directly adopted from Muslim models, nor in Adriatic ports. They preserve distinct aspects of the regulatory function of commercial *fondacos* elsewhere, and they could be under the oversight of urban authorities, as can be seen in the promises of city administrators to reform the *fondacos* and investigate the actions of their *fundicarii*. On the other hand, there was often little to distinguish official facilities from the private *fondacos* and warehouses that also flourished in Florence, Pisa, Genoa, and other cities. Possibly these *fondacos* for cloth were a transitional form, bridging the gap between the early state-controlled *fondacos* that appeared in some European cities and the unregulated private warehouses, also called *fondacos*, that were becoming increasingly common.

Equally likely, however, is the possibility that textile *fondacos* represented another adoption from Muslim prototypes encountered by Tuscan traders in Tunis, Alexandria, and Spain. Unlike the large residential *fondacos* for foreign merchant communities, many of the Italian textile *fondacos* resemble the smaller (and usually unregulated) commercial and residential *funduqs* in Muslim cities. In the middle of the twelfth century, after all, the geographer al-Idrīsī had claimed the existence of nearly one thousand *funduqs* in Almería, a major center for textiles and other goods. Genoese and Pisan traders would have been perfectly familiar with the business life of Almería and other Muslim ports, where they had their own residential *fondacos* in this period, and may have imported the concept to their home cities.

THE OFFICE OF *FUNDICARIUS*

Urban statutes relating to *fondacos* in southern European cities make clear that the officials in charge of these buildings were subject to the scrutiny of

[125] Benedetto Dei, *La Cronica dall'anno 1400 all'anno 1500*, ed. Roberto Barducci (Florence: Francesco Papafava Editore, 1984) 83.

[126] Armando Sapori (ed.), *Libro giallo della compagnia dei Covoni* (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Cisalpino, 1970) 171, 174; A. Sapori, *La Crisi delle compagnie mercantili dei Bardi e dei Peruzzi* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1926) 281; A. Sapori (ed.), *Libri di commercio dei Peruzzi* (Milan: Treves, 1934) 85–87, 260, 269.

administrators working for the city, for merchant guilds, or for the crown. Although the keepers of state-run facilities were more closely regulated than their private counterparts, as is shown in the Pisan statutes relating to the *fundicarius* for the *fondaco* in Porto Pisano, any *fondaco*-keeper was subject to a fine – or ejection from his post – if he failed to abide by the laws relating to *fondacos*. Other data also testify to the presence of individual *fundicarii* in Christian Mediterranean cities. A Wilielmus Fundigarius turns up as a witness to a will in Genoa as early as 1191, and the title became more common in following centuries.[127] In 1301, Guido Fondegario appeared in several contracts from Famagusta, and a Michus de Lucha was noted as a *fundicarius* in Ragusa in 1358.[128] Like dyers, brokers, and other commercial workers, the keepers of *fondacos* had their own guilds, and were included among the *arte* in Venice (1278) and Pisa (1321).[129] A list of consuls of guilds in Montpellier noted one or two each year to represent the *fondeguiers de mercadiers* of the city between 1353 and 1393.[130]

The reiteration of urban legislation concerning the office of *fundicarius* highlights the possibility of its abuse in the hands of greedy or unscrupulous office-holders, leading to tax losses for the city and exploitation of merchants. In order to avoid these evils, laws concerning the *fondacos* emphasized the protocol for the handling and weighing of goods, equity of fees, the meticulous keeping of records and accounts, and the necessary probity of the *fundicarius*. In 1286, for example, the keepers of *fondacos* in Pisa were required to be mature men, between forty and sixty years old, all of whom had prior experience in overseas trade. They were expected to reside in the *fondaco* buildings with their families (though a single man would also be allowed to serve), and the office was renewable annually at the will of the people and the *consul maris*.[131] By 1305, this was still true for the *fundicarius* of the *fondaco* in Porto Pisano, but other candidates need only have attained the age of twenty-five, though they must have been resident in the city for at least ten years, could not be royal servants, and

[127] Guglielmo Cassinese, *Guglielmo Cassinese (1190–1192)*, ed. M. W. Hall-Cole, H. G. Kreuger and R. L. Reynolds (Genoa: Deputazione di Storia Patria per la Liguria, 1938) 185–186 (no. 467).

[128] Polonio (ed.), *Notai genovesi in Oltremare*, 554; *Monumenta Ragusina*, comp. Ivan Krstitelj Tkakic, Petar Budmani, and Josip Gelcic, *Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium* 13 (Zagreb: Academie Scientiarum et Artum, 1882) 222.

[129] Monticolo (ed.), *Capitolari delle arti veneziane*, 1, 4; Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 225–226.

[130] Jean Combes, "Hôteliers et hôtelleries de Montpellier à le fin du XIVe siècle et au XVe," *Hommage à André Dupont (1897–1972). Etudes médiévales languedociennes* (Montpellier: Fédération historique du Languedoc Méditerranéen et du Roussillon, 1974) 57. In some years, the *fondiguiers* and *alberguiers* were listed together, perhaps indicating an ongoing residential character of the *fondacos*.

[131] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, 1, 188–189.

should know how to read and write.[132] Urban statutes in Ragusa, dating from 1272, were equally clear that a *fundicarius* must remain resident in his *fondaco*: any office-holder who was absent from the city for more than fifteen days would lose his position.[133]

Literacy, and more especially numeracy, were important skills required of *fondaco* officials. Urban legislation mandated literacy for the keeping of accounts, yet allowed that this task could be done by a notary rather than the *fundicarius* himself. Thus, in Pisa in 1305, the latter was required to promise that following

> all sales which take place under my authority (*in mea custodia*), or other things under my oversight, I will write down (or cause a scribe who may be better trained to write down) in the ledger (*quaterno*) that I have and hold, or which somebody else has and holds for me, for the communal *fondacos* of the merchants (*pro communi mercatorum fundaci*), namely the [specific] quantities, measurements, weights, and prices; the day on which the contracting parties came to terms; the day of purchase and sale; and that the buyer and seller were present. If I do not know how to write, then I will have in the *fondaco*, for writing and having the above data written, somebody [who knows how to write] who is more than twenty years old and has been approved by the consuls of the merchants.[134]

The importance of literacy is likewise evident in the frequent mention, in merchant documents, of account ledgers connected with *fondacos*, *fondaco* rents, and sums deposited with *fundicarii*.

A notary received a salary for his work in the *fondaco* (30 pounds a year in Pisa in 1286), and like the notaries in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, he was required to live in the *fondaco* during his period of tenure in order to be available as needed.[135]

After 1324, the *fundicarius* in Pisa paid a fee to the city in exchange for the right to collect the *cabella*, a shift suggesting ongoing readjustment in the financial arrangements for the *fondaco*.[136] Other than receiving a salary and collecting specific taxes, a *fundicarius* was not allowed to derive profit from the *fondaco* and its affairs. The officer in charge of the state-run *fondaco* in Porto Pisano drew a salary of 40 pounds a year in 1286.[137] In Pisa, the *fundicarius* was to facilitate commercial transactions in the *fondaco*, but could not himself participate in buying or selling goods, nor could he rent out areas of the building for personal income. Perhaps with

[132] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 412, 25–26, 75–76. Most of these regulations were repeated in 1321 (*ibid.*, 275).
[133] *Liber statutorum civitatis ragusii*, 208.
[134] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 98–99.
[135] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, I, 188–189.
[136] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, II, 1162.
[137] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, I, 188–189.

an eye to the potential mess and destruction caused by animals, or to avoid competition with local livestock dealers, he was prohibited from keeping chickens, doves, ducks, or pigs in the *fondaco*.[138]

Evidently, *fondacos* provided an important tool for the official regulation of commerce, and particularly transactions in certain key items, in a number of southern European cities. In some cities, most notably Venice, Seville, Pisa, and Ragusa, they continued to play an important role in administering urban trade through the later middle ages. Officially sponsored *fondacos* continued – and augmented – regulatory functions established in the Islamic world. But this was by no means a uniform model, since there is no evidence of these official facilities in many other Mediterranean Christian cities. Instead, *fondacos* in most Italian and southern French cities evolved along quite different lines, becoming privately held warehouses and commercial firms. It was not uncommon for both varieties to exist in the same town, suggesting fluidity between the two forms and again reflecting Islamic precedents.

FONDACOS AS COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR GUILDS AND MERCHANTS

Urban statutes were not only concerned with the affairs of official *fondacos*, but also with a wide variety of other facilities that went by the same name. For example, regulations for the merchant consuls of Pisa in 1321 included a list of the many different *fondacos* in the city besides the one in Porto Pisano – those belonging to merchants from San Miniato and Siena, *fondacos* for the sale of cloth (*panni*), and many others listed in association with private individuals.[139] Both officially sponsored and private facilities could be subject to taxation and oversight, but they can be distinguished by their different administration, function, and beneficiaries. Official *fondacos* for grain, salt, or textiles delivered revenues to the city or ruler, and these were run by urban or crown appointees. In contrast, proprietary *fondacos* belonged to private people and groups, who used these commercial spaces for their own business activities and profit.

Many *fondacos* in Italian cities were in private or corporate hands. Important merchant families and business firms in Genoa, Siena, Florence, and

[138] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, III, 100, 553. This contrasts with the pigs and other beasts observed in the *fondacos* of Alexandria.

[139] "Fundaco di casa Gaytani, et di Guido Marignani et dei consorti; et dei filioli Conchi, et dei filioli Ardecase; et quello dei Senesi, et dei filioli Turchi di Mercato, et Garfagnini" (Bonaini [ed.], *Statuti*, III, 226–228).

elsewhere often had their own *fondacos* during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. References to these buildings appear in their letters, account books, contracts, and in descriptions of urban topography and administration. Merchant guilds, such as the Arte di Calimala (cloth importers and finishers), the oldest guild in Florence, likewise owned or rented *fondacos* for their business activities.[140] These could be actual buildings or rooms, devoted to business and storage, but the word was also used less tangibly to apply to a mercantile firm or to an entity of account (as in "the money has been posted to his account in the *fondaco*").[141] Often the physical and conceptual meanings went in tandem, indicating both the partnership itself and its place of business.

Purchase or rental of commercial space and related expenses were standard costs for doing business both locally and abroad. A *fondaco* could be expensive, and in Pisa, any potential purchaser had to be willing to put up securities against its cost, or produce suitable people willing to secure the sale.[142] Merchant account books very frequently include notation of rents paid for *fondaco* buildings, usually calculated in periods of six months or a year.[143] Payment was generally noted in coin, though rent on one *fondachetto* in Florence included a fat goose on All Saints Day as well as an annual sum in gold florins.[144] These commercial facilities might also be sublet, or leased to another tenant.[145] In Genoa, a building was rented in 1310 for use as a *fondaco* and residence ("pro fondico et domibus"), and rented again – at a considerably higher rate in the wake of renovations to the structure – in 1347.[146] A lessee often bore the cost of renovations and other corporate business expenses (including wining and dining the members or partners) on top of rent for commercial buildings. In 1319, the Arte di Calimala in

[140] Guilds in Pisa owned *fondacos* as early as the late twelfth century (G. Volpe, *Studi sulle istituzioni comunali a Pisa* [Florence: Sansoni, 1970] 264). On merchant company *fondacos*, see L. Grossi Bianchi and E. Poleggi, *Una citta portuale del medioevo: Genova nei secoli x–xvi* (Genoa: Sagep, 1979) 128, 236, 332; *Costituto del comune di Siena, volgarizzato nel mcccix–mcccx* (Siena: Tip. e Lt. Sordmuti di L. Lazzeri, 1903) 43, 297; E. Poleggi and P. Cevini, *Genova* (Rome and Bari: Editore Laterza, 1981) 59; Donato Velluti, *La Cronica domestica: scritta fra il 1367 e il 1370* (Florence: Sasoni, 1914) 141, 143.

[141] This is a common usage in Italian commercial sources. See, for example, A. E. Castellani (ed.), *Nuovi testi fiorentini del dugento* (Florence: Sansoni, 1952) 604–617.

[142] Bonaini (ed.), *Statuti*, iii, 358.

[143] Documents recording the rental of *fondacos* are very common. As well as citations below, see Sapori (ed.), *Libro giallo*, 179, 185; *Libro del dare e dell'avere di Gentile de'Sassetti e suoi figli* in Castellani (ed.), *Nuovi testi fiorentini del dugento*, 294, 303.

[144] Bartolomeo Masi, *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi, calderaio fiorentino dal 1478 al 1526* ed. G. O. Corazzini (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1906) ii. This record is from 1485.

[145] Sapori, *Compagnia di calimala*, 46.

[146] Grossi Bianchi and Poleggi, *Una citta portuale del medioevo*, 222.

Florence rented a rather run-down *fondaco* in the city, and celebrated the event with a festive dinner for members of the guild. Subsequently, as well as paying an annual rent of 45 florins for the property, they had to fund its restoration.[147] When partners in the Datini firm needed to do business outside Florence or Prato, arrangements were made for the firm (*compagnia*) to cover

> the expenses incurred by the partners or factors for eating, drinking, and the rental of houses or *fondachi* (*pigioni di case o di fondachi*) . . . but the expenses that any of the partners or factors may incur for himself are to be paid out of his own money. Further, the said partners agree that if they need to maintain a *fondaco* in Florence to conduct the business of the *compagnia*, the rent is to be paid out of the money of the *compagnia*.[148]

In many cases, a *fondaco* ceased to be a separate building, becoming instead part of a larger structure or complex, often a locked storage room or warehouse attached to a business establishment, inn, or private house. This was probably the case with the Genoese property noted above, rented as "fondico et domibus" in 1310, which apparently served both residential and storage functions.[149] Later, an inventory of an inn (*albergo*) in Padua, made in about 1400, included a list of furnishings (chests, benches, and shelves) in its *fondichetto*. This equipment for storage contrasts with the items such as beds, bedding, tables, and chairs listed in other rooms (*camera*) for living and sleeping, and indicates a functional separation between the two spaces.[150] The fourteenth-century Tuscan author Franco Sacchetti recounted a comic story set in Venice, in which a group of Florentine merchants played a trick on friends by stealing a choice piece of meat while it was cooking "in the house of Giovanni Ducci"(one of the Florentines), and putting an old leather hat in the pot instead. In order to distract the cook and get her out of the kitchen while making the swap, they asked her for the key to the *fondaco* in order to check on some of their merchandise. She came to open the *fondaco* door and waited while they puttered about, turning over bales

[147] Sapori, *Compagnia di calimala*, 41–43.

[148] This example is from a 1367 contract; the differentiation of *case* and *fondachi* suggests distinct functions and a separation of living and business space: Enrico Bensa, *Francesco di Marco da Prato: notizie e documenti sulla mercatura italiana del secolo XIV* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1928) 289.

[149] Grossi Bianchi and Poleggi, *Una citta portuale del medioevo*, 222. *Fondacos* were generally locked. Thus, there is a reference to a key to the *fondaco* for textiles ("chiave del fondacho de la drapperia") owned by a merchant firm in Florence in the fourteenth century (Sapori, *Crisi*, 281).

[150] Vittorio Lazzarini, "L'albergo del 'Bo' nel 1399," *Archivio Veneto-tridentino* (Venice) 1 (1922) 300. Another inn in Modena also had a *fondigum* (Coulet, "Inns and Taverns," 471–472). See also Coulet, "Les hôtelleries," 194.

and pretending to examine them. Meanwhile, their colleague was making mischief in the kitchen.[151]

Sometimes, storage chambers might double as bedrooms, particularly when a factor was responsible for protecting the merchandise in his care. This overlap points out the dangers of trying to overly categorize the usage of space. Nevertheless, the occasional presence of a snoozing servant was very different from the regular and regulated housing of whole groups of merchants. The statutes of the Calimala, in Florence, suggested that a trusted factor should sleep in the *fondaco*, and with this in mind, this space should be furnished with a second-hand bed, two mattresses, three pillows, two blankets, and three sets of sheets.[152] Paolo da Certaldo's fourteenth-century *Libro di buoni costumi* also noted the possibility that a traveling factor might stay overnight in a *fondaco* – in which case he must strive to conduct himself with the greatest propriety during his sojourn.[153] In general, however, lodging in *fondacos* was increasingly rare.

A *fondaco* could be the same as a shop (*bottega*), especially in Tuscany, though a *fondaco* might also be a building containing shops, as was common in Genoa, or a shop could have a *fondaco* for storage, as in Siena in 1343.[154] Pegolotti noted the two words as synonyms, and elsewhere they were frequently listed in parallel ("la bottega o'l fondaco") or as alternatives ("fuori du buttiga, cioè nel fondaco").[155] The provision of retail space is evident in renovations to a *fondaco* in Florence, in 1319, including new wooden floors, furniture, scales, measures, and an area outside for displaying goods.[156] Later, in 1357, regulations for the Florentine guild of linen merchants routinely linked *botegha*s and *fondachos* together as locations for the sale of cloth.[157] When a church in Florence needed repairs in 1331, the city sought various ways to raise the necessary funds, including placing a small collection box (*cassettina*) in every "fondaco e bottega," "in order to collect offerings for God."[158] Evidently, these were places where people

[151] Franco Sacchetti, *Il Trecentonovelle*, ed. E. Faccioli and G. Einaidi (Turin: Giulio Einaidi, 1970) 254–260 (no. 98).
[152] Sapori, *Compagnia di calimala*, 44.
[153] Paolo da Certaldo, *Libro di buoni costumi*, ed. Alfredo Schiaffini (Florence: Le Monnier, 1945) 141–142.
[154] Grossi Bianchi and Poleggi, *Una citta portuale del medioevo*, 100, 136, 222; Q. Senigaglia (ed.), "Statuto dell'arte della mercanzia senese," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria* 15 (1908) 137.
[155] Pegolotti, *La Pratica della mercatura*, 17; Certaldo, *Libro di buoni costumi*, 96; Banchi (ed.), *Statuti senesi*, 323.
[156] Sapori, *Compagnia di calimala*, 41–43.
[157] Giuseppe Mastursi (ed.), "Statuto dell'Æarte dei rigattieri e venditori di panni lini e lino de Firenze del 1357," *Bollettino dell'Opera del vocabolario italiano* 3 (1998) 358, 366, 374–376.
[158] Villani, *Cronica*, v, 244.

would be likely to pass by, including those who might have a bit of cash to spare for pious causes.

Fondacos also served as sites for recording mercantile business and keeping registers; they contained offices for writing accounts, and meeting-rooms for sales and other transactions. The closing clauses of a number of contracts indicate that notaries did business in *fondacos*. This first appeared in the early thirteenth century, when the *fondaco* was still a relatively new institution in southern Europe. In one early example, a contract engaging a baker for the Genoese *fondaco* in Alexandria was drawn up in a *fondaco* in Genoa ("actum Ianue, in fundico") in 1200. A few years later, when two members of the Genoese Pedicula family made a partnership with another investor for a voyage to the Levant in 1203, the contract was written out the firm's Genoese *fondaco* ("in Ianue in fundico Pedicularum").[159] Notation of this sort was typical in overseas *fondacos*, both in Muslim cities and Genoese colonies in the Black Sea, but it was less frequent in Europe, where there were presumably many more locations suitable for notarial work. Nevertheless, the form continued sporadically into the later middle ages, indicating the continued presence of private commercial *fondacos* as work sites. In 1346, account records of the Florentine Peruzzi company included the cost of food, drink, and candles for the notaries in the company's *fondaco*.[160]

By the fourteenth century, *fondacos* in Florence and other Italian towns were frequently connected with banking, loans, and accounting. They became increasingly associated with the holding of money as well as the storage of actual commercial goods.[161] There are innumerable references in late medieval merchant account books to sums "held in the *fondaco*," "paid to the *fondaco*," or "posted to the *fondaco*." In some instances, it seems clear that the *fondacos* in question were still actual buildings in which money or goods could be deposited, transferred, and withdrawn. Thus, another tale told by Sacchetti concerned a trickster who tried to swindle money from one *fondaco* on the Porta Rosa in Florence by telling the cashier to look

[159] Origone, "Genova," 312; Giovanni di Guiberto, *Giovanni di Guiberto*, 310–331 (no. 653). The same (or possibly another) *fondaco* belonging to a member of the Pedicula family appeared in 1186, when the *Codice diplomatico della Repubblica de Genova* noted the "fundici Oberti Pedicule" located near the market of St. George (Imperiale di Sant'Angelo (ed.), *Codice diplomatico*, I, 293–295 (no. 151). Contracts from Marseille, dated 1219, 1227, and 1230 were also drawn up in private *fondacos*, one of which was held by a Genoese merchant (Louis Blancard [ed.], *Documents inédits*, I, 15 (no. 11), 20 (no. 15), 31 (no. 23).

[160] Sapori (ed.), *Libri di commercio dei Peruzzi*, 181; Liagre-De Sturler, *Les Relations commerciales*, includes contracts made out in Genoese *fondacos* in 1346 and 1386 (244 [no. 195], 645 [no. 490]) and in Savona in 1324 and 1325 (14 [no. 9], 21 [no. 15]).

[161] This was not a new development. In Muslim cities the security of *funduqs* led to their use for the storage of cash.

in his account (*region*) and take out 200 florins that were owed to him. When the cashier could find no record of this sum, the trickster kicked up such a fuss that an employee of a neighboring *fondaco* came over to see what was going on. Between them, the two *fondaco* employees managed to foil and punish the would-be thief.[162] Evidently, there were a number of *fondacos* located in this area of Florence, in both fiction and fact, since Donato Velluti also mentioned a *fondaco* in this street, and accounts of the Bardi company show a partner depositing goods in a rented *fondaco* on the Porta Rosa in the early fourteenth century.[163]

In other cases, the application of the term was less tangible, as when it indicated a banking account (such as a sum listed as "iscritte al nostro fondacho in dovere"),[164] or when it referred to a merchant partnership or branch of a commercial company outside the home city. The latter application often appeared in the context of a junior partner or factor being assigned to a particular *fondaco*, and was most common in late medieval Tuscan usage. Boccaccio, for instance, recounted the tale of a widow who sent her son to Paris in the service of a firm ("servigi del fondaco"), while, in another story, a Florentine merchant in Paris decided not to launch his son on a business career ("mettere ad alcun fondaco").[165] In a further example, a Florentine treatise on arithmetic, written in about 1374, set a problem in which a factor was employed by a firm (*fondacho*) for three years at a different salary each year.[166] In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, the Datini company established a number of *fondacos* in cities in Italy, southern France, and the realms of Aragón, each dealing in particular merchandise and staffed with Datini factors.[167] In the same period, the Medici apparently used a similar system, employing representatives in a number of branch offices, including facilities in Bruges, Venice, and Rome that were either known as *fondacos* themselves or incorporated *fondacos* as part of their establishment.[168]

[162] Sacchetti, *Il Trecentonovelle*, 501–506 (no. 174).
[163] Velluti, *Cronica domestica*, 141; Sapori, *Compagnia di calimala*, 31.
[164] Armando Sapori (ed.), *Libri degli Alberti del Giudice* (Milan: Garzanti, 1952) 168.
[165] Boccaccio, *Decameron*, I, 457–458; II, 206.
[166] Paolo Dagomari, *Trattato d'aritmetica*, ed. Gino Arrighi (Pisa: Domus Galilaeana, 1964) 149 (no. 187).
[167] Corsani, *I fondaci e i banchi* 35, 91–92, 102.
[168] Armand Grunzweig (ed.), *Correspondance de la filiale de Bruges des Medici, 1re. partie* (Brussels: M. Lamertin, 1931) 56; Raymond de Roover, *Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 218, 240. Even de Roover was puzzled by the exact meaning of *fondaco* in this context. When he mentioned a merchant who "was active in the *fondaco*" in Rome, he added that this "means probably the merchandising department" (218).

Fondacos owned or rented by merchant companies and individuals also existed outside Italy, in both southern France and Spain, but there is less evidence for these facilities, perhaps owing to fewer merchant records or, in some areas, a less entrenched indigenous commercial culture. *Repartimiento* documents from Málaga, Almería, and other southern Spanish cities conquered by Ferdinand and Isabella show that *alhóndigas* were still granted out to individuals in the late fifteenth century, much as had been the case in the thirteenth century, though in smaller numbers. In contrast to the abundance of *fondechs* and *alhóndigas* mentioned in Valencia and Jerez after the conquests of James I and Alfonso X, a mere handful appear in the partitions of Málaga and Almería, and we know of only a few others from Granada. It appears that some of these were converted into non-commercial residences, as with two *alhóndigas* given as houses to canons of the cathedral of Málaga in 1495. Often, *alhóndigas* only appear in these texts as buildings defining the boundaries of property given in royal grants.[169] Perhaps because state-owned commercial *alhóndigas* were so important in Castile and the realms of Aragón by the late fifteenth century there was less attention given to smaller privately held facilities. It is likely, also, that aside from the *fondacos* housing Italian merchants in Naṣrid ports, the strained economy of Granada in the late middle ages could not sustain the proliferation of *funduqs* that had been common in earlier centuries. Thus, there were fewer of these facilities to distribute after the conquest of Naṣrid cities.

Although they bore some resemblance to their counterparts in the Islamic world, *fondacos* in southern European cities generally assumed new identities after their implantation within a Christian context. In most French and Italian cities, *fondacos* evolved to occupy new fiscal and commercial niches, serving as state warehouses, storage facilities, and spaces for private business affairs. Only in a few regions, where geography and politics supported the arrangement, did *fondacos* continue to house foreign traders during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

More than in other regions of the medieval Mediterranean world, the development of the *fondaco* in southern Europe owed a debt to contingency, commercial expediency, and human initiative. *Fondacos* did not grow up in European cities of their own accord, as though the seeds of this institution had been carried across the Mediterranean by the wind. In contrast to the

[169] Bejarano Robles (ed.), *Repartimientos de Málaga*, 138, 275; M. D. Aguilar García, "Dotación de casas de la mesa capitular: su proyección urbana," *Jábega: Revista de la Diputación Provincial de Málaga* 56 (1987) 12; Cristina Segura Graiño (ed.), *Libro del repartimiento de Almería* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense, 1982) 256, 317.

earlier evolution of the *pandocheion* and *funduq* in the eastern and southern Mediterranean, French and Italian *fondacos* were not discovered *in situ*, after a military conquest or other political shift; they did not simply continue to develop in the same region under a new cultural, religious, and linguistic regime. Instead, the concept of the *fondaco* was deliberately imported to Europe by merchants and other travelers. After the transplant, the institution subsequently developed according to the interests and ambitions of these men and their contemporaries.

By and large, the idea of the *fondaco* was brought to Europe by merchants, for the use of merchants. However, given the pervasive mercantile culture of Italian city-states in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (the period when *fondacos* began to appear in southern Europe), the interests of merchants were usually closely allied with those of their urban governments. In many cases, city administrators were merchants themselves, or were already familiar, through diplomatic channels, with the *fondaco* system in Alexandria, Tunis, and other Muslim ports. Aspects of the *fondaco* were therefore adopted in both the private and public sphere, wherever they could serve the fiscal, commercial, or regulatory goals of European and their governments. In conclusion, although the European understanding of *fondacos* originated in the roles that these facilities played in Muslim ports, only those aspects that were useful to Christian merchants and administrators, in a European context, survived their cross-Mediterranean transfer.