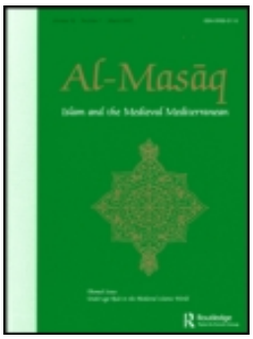

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Other Markets: Complementary Commercial Zones in the Naṣrid World of the Western Mediterranean (Seventh/Thirteenth to Ninth/Fifteenth Centuries)[1]

ÁDELA FÁBREGAS GARCÍA

ABSTRACT *The Naṣrid kingdom of Granada was integrated into the dynamic space of contacts and exchanges that constituted the southern Mediterranean at this period. The Granadans benefitted from the important presence and commercial activity of the major Italian merchants, and from the systems of navigation by cabotage and micro-exchange that these merchants practised in the region. This facilitated the creation of an active platform of complementary markets that integrated the southern coasts of the Iberian Peninsula, the south of Italy, and the Maghribi coasts. In these markets, key roles were played by groups of local traders who were absent from the usual circuits of overseas commerce, dominated as it was by the great merchant communities. This article presents concrete cases of the relations that connected the Naṣrid world to these others through trade.*

Keywords: Economics – trade; Granada (kingdom) – trade; Sicily (kingdom) – trade; Merchants – in Iberia; Naṣrids, Arab dynasty; Genoa (republic) – trade; Cereals – trade; Ceramics - lustreware

The process by which integrated economic spaces in the Mediterranean area were formed through the binding principle of commerce is a discussion that has been on-going for decades. However, in recent years, the subject has undergone a radical evolution of the principles on which its study is based. A convincing new system for analysing early medieval economic development has emerged, which promotes a convergent model of emerging economic spaces, as opposed to the classical binaries of centre–periphery or developed–less developed, which is how early medieval economic development has been characterised in the past.[2] Indeed, the new approach emerged largely in response to the hazards, pointed out by Paulino

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[1]Translated by Mariam Rosser-Owen.

[2] Initiatives such as those proposed in the following studies have contributed significantly to the formation of these new interpretive approaches. See *Desigualdad y Dependencia: La periferización del Mediterráneo Occidental (s. XII–XIX)*, ed. María Teresa Pérez Picazo, Guy Lemeunier and Pedro Segura (Murcia: Editorial Regional de Murcia, 1986); *La Mediterrània i la idea d'Europa: Espais, cultures, intercanvis i èlits en el trànsit de l'edat mitjana a la moderna*, supplement to *Revista d'Historia Medieval* 6 (1995); and the Seminar "Commercio a lunga distanza e sviluppo delle economie regionali nel Mediterraneo medievale" organised by the Università di Pisa and Scuola Normale di Pisa in 1994.

Iradiel, of interpreting economic relations in the late medieval period on the basis of the dominance of large commercial powers over the rest of the Mediterranean region. Presenting the commercial development of different regional economies as a direct consequence of external agency offered a one-dimensional picture of small economies "subjected" to the imperatives of the metropolis, in the sense of being exclusively devoted to feeding the interests of that metropolis. This approach did not take into account the internal development and dynamism of these regions, which led them to open up to new international markets and become a magnet for the great businessmen of the age.[3]

The old approach neglected the nuances offered by a complex, global vision, of a developing and dynamic economy beginning to show signs of interconnectivity and complementarity between its components, increasingly open to external agency, but which had its own capacity for development as well as its own limitations, which were generally not imposed from outside. Recent studies of the economy of Sicily,[4] and Valencia,[5] have been approached from this new perspective, and it is now being applied to other areas, such as the region occupied in the last centuries of the Middle Ages by the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada.

The Naṣrid kingdom of Granada: a Mediterranean market

During the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries, the far southeast of the Iberian Peninsula constituted the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada, the last Islamic state to remain in the territory of al-Andalus. This state was formed by the initiative of a small local dynasty taking advantage of the break-up of the Almohad empire, the last great polity of the Islamic west. Among other features that differentiate the social, political and economic organisation of Naṣrid society from others of classical Islam is the development of a notably speculative approach to their productive economy.[6] This commercial facet of a sector of the Naṣrid economy should probably be directly linked with the economic integration of this small state into its natural region of operation, that is, the western Mediterranean. It shows Granada's incorporation into the dynamics of mercantile growth in the West, thanks to its strategic position on one of the principal commercial arteries of the time, the channel between the Straits of Gibraltar. As we will see, this was driven by a specific type of production, developed from Islamic technological traditions, which enabled the Naṣrids to offer western markets a whole range of commodities – silk and sugar in

[3] Paulino Iradiel, "Introducción", in *La Mediterrània*, 9–18, esp. 13.

[4] Stephan R. Epstein, *An Island for Itself: Economic Development and Social Change in Late Medieval Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[5] In an attempt at a global interpretation of the economic development of Valencia, co-ordinated by Paulino Iradiel, and manifested in the publications of several authors. See, for example, Germán Navarro Espinach, *Industria y artesanado en Valencia, 1450–1525: Las manufacturas de seda, lino, cáñamo y algodón* (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1995); David Igual Luis, *Valencia e Italia en el siglo XV: Rutas, mercados y hombres de negocios en el espacio económico del Mediterráneo occidental* (Valencia: Bancaixa, 1998); Enrique Cruselles Gómez, *Los mercaderes de Valencia en la edad media* (Lleida: Milenio, 2001).

[6] Antonio Malpica Cuello, "Il traffico commerciale nel mondo mediterraneo occidentale alla fine del Medioevo: Il Regno di Granada", in *Aspetti ed attualità del potere marittimo in Mediterraneo nei secoli XII-XVI*, ed. Paolo Alberini (Roma: Ufficio Storico della Marina Militare, 1999), pp. 351–381; Adela Fábregas, "La vida económica del Sultanato nazarí en su vertiente comercial", in *Historia de Andalucía, VII. Coloquio*, ed. Antonio Malpica Cuello, Rafael G. Peinado Santaella and Adela Fábregas García (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2010), pp. 81–101.

particular, though other items as well – which were greatly valued in European markets of the day, and which until that point had been difficult to obtain outside the more traditional eastern markets, which were expensive, far away and dangerous to reach.

Even before the political constitution of the Naṣrid state in 629/1232, al-Andalus had been part of the commercial network that was forming in the West.[7] The difference is that, from the time of its constitution, it was the Naṣrid state itself – in the person of its rulers – that acted as the main driver and protector of this wider commercial activity. The rulers' main objective was certainly to ensure the economic prosperity of this embryonic state, which would help to guarantee its survival at a time of extreme political and territorial pressure. It is clear that almost from the start, the Naṣrid authorities maintained an attitude of economic openness, promoting conditions favourable to the economic activity of the principal mercantile powers of the medieval Mediterranean.

Among Granada's main economic partners, the republic of Genoa stands out for the number and constant activity of its merchants in these lands.[8] Protected by the authorities in both Genoa and Granada, the Ligurians enjoyed statutary recognition contracted through successive peace and trade agreements between the two powers. These states protected the activity of their compatriots on Naṣrid soil through highly co-ordinated mechanisms, which in turn guaranteed that they traded profitably.[9]

In my view, this activity should not be considered colonialist,[10] though it is clear that the demand for certain articles – such as sugar and silk – necessitated a strong drive towards production levels targeted at commercial exchange. The extent to

[7] From the sixth/twelfth century, the coastlines of al-Andalus had been subjected to an unprecedented level of aggression, which can be interpreted in the context of the crusading spirit spreading across the whole of the West. Genoa participated in the attacks launched against the Andalusi cities of Almería and Tortosa (541–543/1147–1149), after which she began to penetrate those markets commercially. This, and the lack of interest the Ligurian state later showed in consolidating effective territorial control in the region, have led to the suggestion that Genoa's true intention in posing the threat of military annexation was simply to force the Andalusi authorities to open to the development of Genoese commercial interests in the region under the best possible conditions. See Antonio Malpica, "Dal Mediterraneo islamico al Mediterraneo cristiano: Il dominio del bacino occidentale nel Mediterraneo centrale", in *Una città nel Mediterraneo: L'Opulenta Salernum*, ed. Valdo D'Arienzo (Salerno: Edizioni del Paguro, 2001), pp. 31–66; Caffaro, *Storia della presa di Almeria e Tortosa (1147-1149)*, ed. Marina Montesano (Genova: Frilli, 2002).

[8] Antonio Malpica Cuello and Adela Fábregas, "Los genoveses en el reino de Granada y su papel en la estructura económica nazarí", in *Genova: Una "porta" del Mediterráneo,* ed. Luciano Gallinari (Genoa: Brigati, 2005), 2 vols, I: 227–258.

[9] Jacques Heers, "Origines et structures des compagnies coloniales génoises (XIIIe-XVe siècle)", in *État et colonisation au moyen âge*, ed. Michel Balard (Lyon: La Manufacture, 1989), pp. 17–33. Members of these trading communities operated under the supervision of an official consul, who provided legal guarantees, agreed with the local authorities, during their stay on Naṣrid soil. They also maintained a constant link with their place of origin and with other members of the Genoese community trading in other places.

[10] If by "colonialist" we understand a situation characterised by unequal relations and by the dependence of one region, in this case Granada, on another. A good definition of colonialism at the end of the Middle Ages is offered, for example, by Michel Balard: "Colonisation, c'est à nôtre sens une triple forme de domination: domination économique, se traduissant par une appropiation de la terre par les conquérants étrangers qui orientent la production locale vers la satisfaction des besoins de leur métropole ou des échanges internationaux; domination politique, s'exprimant par l'instauration d'un systeme de sujétion sous des formes diverses d'un territoire à l'autre; domination culturelle, par laquelle un pays ou une cité-Etat impose sa langue, sa religion, voire sa civilisation". See Michel Balard, "Avant-propos", in *Etat*, p. 12.

which Genoese business interests were involved in restructuring local economies could even have led to the development of new areas of production. This can be detected in Granada in the establishment of a luxury ceramics industry, producing lustre pottery intended exclusively for overseas export. Genoese commercial interests may even be detected in the transmission to Granada of the practical knowledge for this production, probably from Ifrīqiya,[11] where the closest typological antecedents for this kind of pottery have been found.[12] In fact, Naṣrid projection into the international western market was largely possible thanks to the initial activity of the Genoese, who became the strongest link between the Naṣrid economy and external markets.

But the Genoese were not the only ones who took the opportunity to trade in Naṣrid lands; nor does it seem that Naṣrid society limited its creative impulses and economic development to collaborations of this kind. Though some basic understanding of this question was outlined long ago,[13] over the last few years an effort has been made to offer a more complete and better articulated vision of the reality of Naṣrid commerce, following the analytical trends outlined at the start of this article. Important strands have been to identify just how developed the Naṣrid exchange economy actually was; the extent of internal economic activity in which an indigenous cohort of merchants could participate; and the role that this cohort played in the commercial projection of the kingdom in the outside world. Without minimising the significance of Genoese involvement in developing the region's commercial potential, other issues to be addressed include the activity of perhaps less visible merchant communities, including the Florentines,[14] Venetians[15] and Catalan-Aragonese.[16] Their commercial activity was important in its own right, as well as for the way it complicates a vision defined perhaps too much by Genoese domination. By considering the activity of these other merchants in the Naṣrid realm, one can begin to detect a greater flexibility in the Naṣrid commercial structure than had previously been recognised. At the same time, one can start to appreciate

[11] Alberto García Porras, "Transmisiones tecnológicas entre el área islámica y cristiana en la Península Ibérica. El caso de la producción de cerámica esmaltada de lujo bajomedieval (ss. XIII-XV)", in *Relazioni economiche tra Europa e mondo islámico secc. XIII-XVIII: Atti della Trentottesima Settimana di Studi, 1-5 maggio 2006,* ed. Simoneta Cavaciocchi (Firenze: Istituto di Storia Economica Datini, 2007), pp. 827–843; Alberto García Porras and Adela Fábregas García, "Genoese Trade Networks in the Southern Iberian Peninsula: Trade, Transmission of Technical Knowledge and Economic Interactions", *Mediterranean Historical Review* 25 (2010): 35–51.

[12] Several ornamental typologies of Tunisian ceramics decorated with cobalt blue and manganese, made between the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries, relate directly to the earliest production of Naṣrid lustreware: specifically, the type of decoration which follows a radial scheme emanating from a central geometric motif, with a succession of cartouches or undulating borders; or decoration of naturalistic vegetation filling almost the whole surface of the dish; and decoration with figurative motifs. See Alberto García Porras, "Los orígenes de la cerámica nazarí decorada en azúl y dorado", in *Atti XXXV Convegno Internazionale della Ceramica* (Firenze: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2002), pp. 53–62.

[13] See the references in the following footnotes.

[14] Federigo Melis, "Malaga nel sistema economico del XIV e XV secolo", in *Mercaderes italianos en España (siglos XIV-XV)* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1976), pp. 3–65; Raúl González Arévalo, "Apuntes para una relación comercial velada: La República de Florencia y el reino de Granada en la Baja Edad Media", *Investigaciones de Historia Económica* 8 (2012): 83–93.

[15] José Enrique López de Coca, "Sobre las galeras venecianas de Poniente y sus escalas ibéricas (siglo XV)", in *Homenaje a Tomás Quesada* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1998), pp. 401–416.

[16] Roser Salicrú, "La Corona de Aragón y Génova en la Granada del siglo XV", in *L'expansió catalana a la Mediterrània a la Baixa Edat Mitjana,* ed. María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol and Damien Coulon (Barcelona: CSIC, 1999), pp. 121–144.

the true extent of the Naṣrid kingdom's own commercial initiative through the activity of its indigenous cohort of merchants.

We should also take into account the signs that an integrated system of economic areas was forming, creating a platform for multiple exchanges that make the western Mediterranean an early, even embryonic, example of a complementary economic system.[17] These relationships have a different character from those Granada established with the great European markets, where the presence of Granadan merchants is only recognisable in exceptional cases. This secondary area of mercantile activity has a more marked regional character, and the direct involvement of a cohort of Naṣrid merchants is clearly detectable in some cases. This activity has a place for a Granadan merchant fleet, although not operated exclusively, for Muslim merchants, and for patterns of business transactions beyond the mere export of a few, highly valued products, or the purchase of other items, especially textiles, so successful for the Naṣrid market.

In these new areas of merchant activity, the pattern changes considerably, following a clear diversification in some cases, or responding to other kinds of necessities, which complement other sectors of the Naṣrid economy. This facet is very little known at the moment, and we shall now consider what we can say about these questions.

The first step is to outline the nature of this secondary commerce on which the Naṣrid market seems to have depended. It is in this commercial sector that there appear more clearly certain trends towards integration and complementarity, involving broad sectors of the Naṣrid productive economy as well as Naṣrid society as a whole. The few clues on which we currently depend to elaborate this picture direct our attention first towards the southern markets of the western Mediterranean. The Naṣrid kingdom may – and this is a question that still requires clarification – have had a close and direct mercantile projection in regions such as southern Italy, the Maghrib, Mallorca and southern Valencia. I would like to emphasise that, for the moment, this is a working hypothesis, built on minimal evidence, and it is difficult to know how to take it forward, since we cannot always depend on the same parameters when identifying levels of interaction, or for distinguishing trade from other types of activity.

Southern Italy

The south of Italy, especially Naples and Sicily, is one region that can be considered as integrated within the orbit of Genoese influence, whose relations with Granada assume features of complementarity while at the same time retaining an element of competition. Sicily and Granada both appear in international markets as providers of certain merchandise, which then compete with each other to dominate the marketplace. The clearest example is that of sugar: this was produced in both Granada and Sicily at similar levels of quality, and they competed fiercely with each other to lead the market in the medium-to-low quality range.[18] There is no evidence for

[17] Later developed with much greater sophistication in the Atlantic world. See Manuel Lobo Cabrera, "La navegación entre las islas Canarias en la edad moderna", in *Islas y sistemas de navegación durante las edades Media y Moderna,* ed. Adela Fábregas García (Granada: Alhulia, 2010), pp. 91–115.

[18] See David Abulafia, "Italia e lo spostamento economico del XV secolo", in *El Mediterráneo medieval y renacentista, espacio de mercados y culturas,* ed. Jaume Aurell (Pamplona: Eunsa, 2002), pp. 179–212.

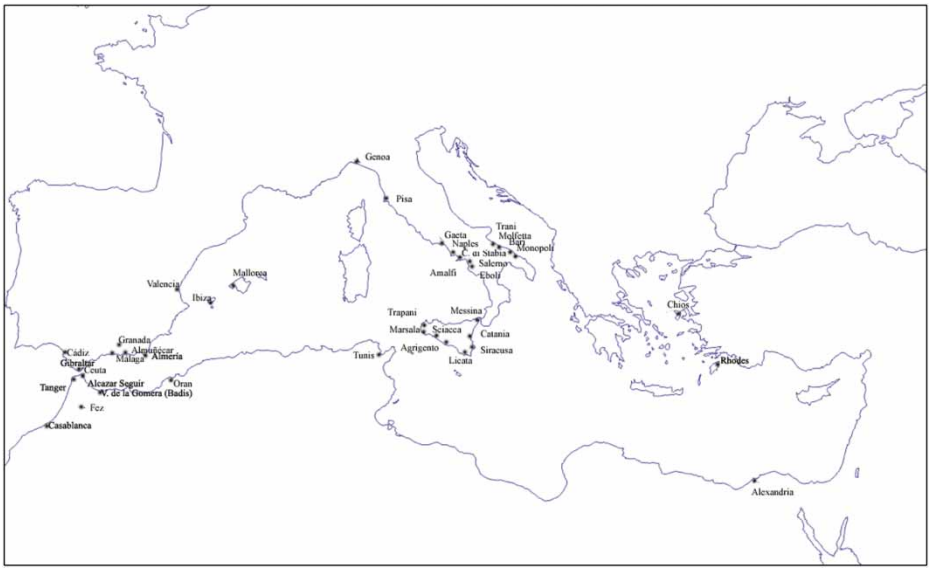

Figure 1. Map of mediterranean markets in contact with Granada

direct relations between the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada and the southern cities of the Italian Peninsula, and I have not been able to find significant traces of a southern Italian mercantile presence in Naṣrid markets. If such merchants are ever identified on Granadan soil, it is likely that their presence was merely occasional. However, we can begin to consider the possibility of a system of relations between the two regions that is better articulated than had previously been thought. Its organisation perhaps benefitted from the involvement of the Genoese, although there are differences from the pattern of activity that they often developed, as I shall explain.

A considerable number of studies have focused on the position of Sicily within the structure of international commerce in the late medieval period, agreeing that, from a particular point, Sicily's external projection became integrated, even embedded, within a Genoese system that had woven its mercantile network by connecting threads in different Mediterranean spaces.[19] The Genoese maintained a strong economic base in Naples and Sicily throughout the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries. Political circumstances, not always favourable to their interests, contributed to repositioning the role of the Genoese, though as Petti Balbi points out, this did not dismantle their strong web of business dealings and investments, reflected in the network of consulates maintained throughout the region, from Naples to Gaeta, Castellamare di Stabia, Amalfi, Salerno, Eboli and Policastro, and elsewhere (see Figure 1).[20] A significant number of Genoese merchants are documented in Sicily during the second half of the fourteenth century, though of course they are likely not to have been the only merchants there. Specifically, a

[19] David Abulafia, *Le due Italie: Relazioni economiche fra il regno normando di Sicilia e i comuni settentrionali* (Napoli: Guida Editori, 1991[2]); Giovanna Petti Balbi, *Negoziare fuori patria. Nazioni e genovesi in età medievale* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2005).
[20] Petti Balbi, *Negoziare*, 111.

community of fifty to sixty Genoese businessmen is mentioned,[21] despite the rivalry between the Crown of Aragón and the Ligurian republic. They dominated the export of grain in the ninth/fifteenth century, though this was not their only business on the island that contributed to their constantly growing wealth. The trade in sugar and the land tenancy market were also objectives of Ligurian interest.[22]

What is certain is that, at the start of the ninth/fifteenth century, Genoese merchants paid taxes to the Sicilian treasury that were almost five times higher than those paid by the Catalans, their closest competitors. Despite restrictions, pressures or threats, increasingly frequent after 1420 when Alfonso V of Aragón (r. 1416–1458) adopted measures damaging to their commercial activities on the island, the Genoese presence in Sicily maintained its strength. This is clear from the continued existence of the consular network until the end of century.[23] While relations between Genoa and Sicily remained good, and the island continued to be one of the pillars of Genoese commerce in the Mediterranean, tensions and rivalries were introduced to the commercial equilibrium by the policies of the Crown of Aragón, which promoted the interests of Catalan-Aragonese merchants in direct competition with the Genoese.

With the firm introduction of the world of Genoese business into these three Mediterranean spaces – Granada, Sicily and Naples – regardless of their economic readiness, Genoese commercial interests activated a process of integration between them. It is likely that this process began with Sicily, if we take into account the earlier date of the sources. A single mention in the anonymous Pisan manual of merchandise, dated 1278,[24] relates to the exchange rate between the *tarí* and the *dobla* of Almería, and offers us the first glimpse of contact between southern Italy and the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada. Further contacts are alluded to by the notary Adamo da Citella a short time later, in 1286–1299.[25]

However, the most significant evidence for the existence of this common space of exchange comes from the Neapolitan area. The first indications relate to the establishment of a network of navigation and trade at a regional level, controlled by Genoa. On 9 May 1414, the departure of a cog (*coca*) from Genoa was approved, which would make its first stop in the Naples region, at the port of Castellamare di Stabia.[26] For three days it would load merchandise there before following its course along the coasts and ports of Puglia, where another port of call of three days was envisaged at the port of Trani, and one or two more optional stops between Giovinazzo, Bari, Molfetta and Monopoli. Two more days were allocated for supplementing the cargo with wine or olive oil, products for which this region was a notable supplier.[27] After that, on

[21] Pietro Corrao, "Uomini d'affari stranieri nelle città siciliane del tardo medioevo", *Revista d'Historia Medieval* 11 (2000): 139–162, p. 142.
[22] *Ibid*., 149.
[23] Petti Balbi, *Negoziare*.
[24] "Il più antico manuale italiano di prattica della mercatura", ed. Roberto S. López and Gabriella Airaldi, *Miscellanea di Studi Storici* 2 (1983): 99–133.
[25] Pinuccia F. Simbula, "Apertura de las rutas comerciales de las flotas italianas hacia el Atlántico", in *Navegación Marítima del Mediterráneo al Atlántico*, ed. Antonio Malpica (Granada: THARG, 2001), pp. 209–258, esp. 251.
[26] Archivio di Stato di Genova (hereafter A.S.G.), Notai Antichi (hereafter N.A.), 480, Giuliano Canella, fols 144v–146v.
[27] José Enrique López de Coca Castañer, "Comercio exterior del reino de Granada", in *El Reino de Granada en la época de los reyes Católicos. Repoblación, comercio, frontera (I)* (Granada: Diputación Provincial de Granada, 1989): 129–180, esp. 145.

the decision of the ship's captain, the ship would set a course for east or west, where in either case it would follow a clearly defined route.

If the cog went west it would reach the port of Málaga, where it would remain for 24 hours, unloading part or all of the merchandise on board. If the Málagan market did not absorb the whole cargo, the ship would sail next for Cádiz, where it would repeat the operation. As the document clearly states, the voyage should not end there but should continue, with new merchandise acquired in both markets, sailing and trading up towards Flanders, or alternatively sailing to one or two Maghribi markets, which are not specified.[28]

This document has an illustrative value more than anything else, showing that this was a practice followed with some regularity, while not offering concrete facts much beyond the simple proof that these routes existed. Nevertheless, we can corroborate the existence of these regular and officially recognised contacts with the evidence of customs regulations established in Genoa on the business of its citizens with the kingdom of Granada. These clearly point to four possible directions for trade: the northern markets of England and Flanders; Castile and Portugal; the Crown of Aragón, including Valencia, Ibiza and Mallorca; and southern Italy, specifying the markets of Sicily, Naples and Gaeta, with a tax of 10 *lira* for each 100 gained.[29] Thus, a regulatory text of the early ninth/fifteenth century clearly shows that Granadan projection in those markets, by means of Genoese mediation, was regulated and provided for, and indicates the existence of these regular connections with greater clarity than any other source.

Moreover, the few customs registers that survive for the port of Genoa at this period allude on other occasions to the existence of routes connecting Naples with the Naṣrid ports. One example is provided by two ships registered with Genoese customs in 1445, which sailed on long voyages practically circumnavigating the Mediterranean, always counting on the Naṣrid ports and Naples as ports of call. In the same year, Conrado Gentile took on cargo in Chios to make sales or deliveries in Naples, Gaeta, Tunis, Mallorca, Málaga or Cádiz;[30] while Cosme Dentuti's ship declared a voyage by cabotage (*per costeriam*) from Rhodes to Flanders, with stops at Alexandria, Chios, Tunis, Gaeta, Naples, Pisa, Mallorca, Málaga, Cádiz and England.[31] The best-known case is that of Filippo di Negro, whose ship was also registered in the customs census of 1445.[32] In this case, he completed a voyage that started in Southampton and reached its final destination in Chios, making stops en route at Cádiz, Málaga, Oran, Tunis and Sicily.

Even in the exceptional instances that imply the existence of Neapolitan mercantile interests directly on Granadan soil, the participation of the Genoese is evident through the use of their fleet. The king of Naples himself led missions to sell cereal to western Islamic markets. In November 1414, Enrico Lechavelio, owner of a ship, made a claim against Blasium Cosiani of Ischia and Lodisio Campucii of Naples, both representatives of the king of Naples (then Ladislao I Angiò-Durazzo, r. 1386–1414), for the cost of the charter of his ship loaded with grain

[28] A.S.G., N.A., 480, Giuliano Canella, fols 144v–146v.
[29] *Liber Institutionum Cabellarum Vetterum (comunis Janue)*, ed. Domenico Gioffré (Milano, 1967), doc. I, pp. 3–22, 7.
[30] A.S.G, Banco di S. Giorgio (hereafter B.S.G.), Sala 14, Carattorum Veterum (hereafter C.V.), reg. 1552, fol. CXXVIv.
[31] A.S.G, B S.G., C.V., reg. 1552, fol. CXXVIIr–CXXXv.
[32] A.S.G, B S.G., C.V., reg. 1552, fols XXXXVIIIr–LIv.

from Naples, which went to Valencia, "Alcudia de Berbería" (*al-Kudya al-Bayḍā'*), Málaga and Genoa. The sentence obliged them to pay in full the amount raised from the sale of the grain. Its interest for our purpose is that the record relates to a voyage that conducted an important part of its journey through Naṣrid lands, touching the ports of Málaga and Almuñécar, where Neapolitan grain reached a value of 800 Genoese pounds (*libre genovesi*).[33]

It is precisely in the purchase of Neapolitan or Sicilian cereals by the Naṣrid market that one of the principal points of contact between the two spaces resides. This grain, which travelled to various places in the Mediterranean, was an object of priority for Genoese interests in Sicily and one that united the fortunes of these two lands.

Messina was the commercial heart of Sicily and the place of greatest Genoese representation, although the Genoese also maintained consular seats in Palermo, where they had their headquarters, and in the main centres of grain supply, i.e. Trapani, Marsala, Sciacca, Agrigento, Siracusa, Licata and Catania.[34] Some of these centres are also referred to in the notarial documents about chartering ships, which constitute our main primary source. From at least the last quarter of the eighth/fourteenth century, evidence exists of imports of Sicilian grain to Granada, such as a document of 1378 written by the Genoese notary Theramo di Magiolo.[35] In this year, the contract of charter was stipulated for a ship loaded with Sicilian grain that would sail at the behest of the Genoese merchant Luchino Scarampo to Cataluña and Valencia to unload grain. Later the ship would travel to Almería, staying for two days to unload grain, either there or at another port in the kingdom of Granada. Afterwards, it would sail to Málaga, opening the possibility that it could also sail to Oran to load skins or silk and bring these to Seville or North African ports.[36] This document presents us with another example of the practice of navigation by "grand cabotage", by which the Genoese constructed a rich network of contacts at a private, social level, as well as consular establishments throughout the Mediterranean.[37] This instance reveals a prime commercial interest in Sicilian grain in the markets of the Genoese trade orbit, which could absorb the entirety of the grain import from Sicily.

Regarding Sicilian imports, the documents signed by the Genoese Giuliano Canella between 1413 and 1414 offer a sense of the ordinary encounters that resulted from including the Granadan markets as spaces of demand and business for cereals.[38] From the earliest cases until those from the first decades of the ninth/fifteenth century, a very similar scheme was followed. The chosen ship was chartered in Genoa to sail to the island of Sicily, normally to the port of Messina, from where it began a voyage towards the port of Agrigento. During the voyage along the Sicilian coast it would stop in one or two ports in order to load the requisite quantity of wheat, destined for sale in Genoa itself or in western ports, such as Barcelona, Valencia or Mallorca, the kingdom of Granada represented by Almería, Almuñécar, Málaga, Cádiz, Seville, or

[33] A.S.G., N.A., 481, Giuliano Canella 1414, 7 November, fols 76v–77r.
[34] Petti Balbi, *Negoziare*, 124.
[35] A.S.G., N.A., Theramo di Magiolo 322/II, fols 29r–v.
[36] A.S.G., N.A., Theramo di Magiolo, 322 /II, fols 28v–29v.
[37] Adela Fábregas, "Redes de comercio y articulación portuaria en el reino nazarí de Granada", *Chronica Nova* 30 (2003–4): 69–102.
[38] A.S.G., N.A., 480, Giuliano Canella, fols 318v–319r.

Maghribi ports including Alcudia, Mazagón and a "Seta Barbaria" (perhaps Ceuta?).

From this date on, which coincides with the Naṣrid kingdom's period of greatest economic splendour, we have other similar testimonies – not many, but constant. Even without them, we can deduce Granada's close dependence on the external supply of grain, but this is not constant nor serious for the internal equilibrium of the Naṣrid economy – in fact, quite the contrary.

There is no doubt that Granada imported grain, not just as occasion required, but continuously throughout this period. It is not clear whether this related to periods of shortage or not. On the other hand, Granada produced cereal. Studies of charters detailing the appropriation of land from the Granadan population at the time of the Castilian conquest (*libros de apeos y repartimientos*) present a glimpse of the model of agricultural production at the end of the Naṣrid period, and they always indicate an important agricultural space reserved for the cultivation of cereals. However, it seems clear that there is more evidence for their existence in the kingdom's interior, or at least in areas not so directly connected to a model of speculative agriculture linked to commercial export for international trade. We know that the cultivation of cereals was widespread in the fertile plain of Granada (the Vega), even to the point of constituting the base of the four-yearly rotation that was practised there (wheat-vegetables-wheat-flax).[39] In the frontier zones, we know that agriculture was directed at sustaining the rural community, with a predominance of cereals, vines and orchards.[40] Another significant case is that of the Serranía de Ronda, which has been presented as the grain-basket of the western zone of the kingdom of Granada, accounting for more than 50% of the production of the Málagan diocese in 1489.[41]

In the coastal zones, the familiar agricultural binary of subsistence-trade seems to have inclined in favour of the latter. In this case, it is possible to speak of an element of influence and manipulation in Granadan agriculture from external commercial factors. Thus the incomes of, for example, the share (*partido*) of Salobreña for the years 1495 and 1496 show a very insignificant presence of cereal on the coast. Cereal grows equally well in irrigated and unirrigated land, and it seems from the *Libros de Repartimiento* that, in the coastal zones, farmers would restrict the cultivation of cereal to unirrigated land, thereby reserving the better land of the irrigated zones for crops intended for export, such as sugar-cane. It is precisely these regions that can be presented as the principal destinations and consumers of imported cereals, though it should not be inferred from this that Granada was wholly dependent on outside imports. One should perhaps rather think in terms of a complement to the speculative economy of the region, which to some extent allowed that speculative economy to be sustained and developed. There is little more that can be said on this matter in the current state of our knowledge.

[39] Pedro Hernández Benito, *La Vega de Granada a fines de la Edad Media, según las rentas de los habices* (Granada: Diputación Provincial de Granada, 1996).

[40] Concepción Alfaro Baena, *La formación de un señorío en el reino de Granada: El Repartimiento de Castril de la Peña* (Granada: Asukaría Mediterranea, 1993).

[41] Manuel Acién Almansa, *Ronda y su serranía en tiempos de los Reyes Católicos* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 1979).

The Maghrib

Granadan demand also reached other grain-baskets of the Mediterranean, and thus we come to the second space of Granadan connectivity in the Mediterranean about which it is currently possible to say something: that of the Maghribi markets. In this case, Genoese mediation was not constant, though it did exist. Indeed, if anything stands out from the contacts between Granada and the Maghrib, it is precisely that they were conducted with a greater degree of autonomy on the part of the Naṣrid mercantile community, which was able to act here without intervention from foreign intermediaries. I will first outline the parameters of this exchange, and will then consider certain specific traits of the mercantile activity that developed in the region, focusing on its protagonists.

In order to determine the extent of Naṣrid trade activity in these Islamic markets, there are two lines of research on which we can rely, despite the very little that has been written about this subject to date. First, we know of Granada's position as a market open to the purchase of cereal from the markets of North Africa.[42] As we have already pointed out, Genoese intervention is not always evident, or at least it was not exclusive.[43] Many Maghribi ports were exporters of this basic foodstuff, at least until 1342, the date of extant Catalan–Aragonese documentation for the transport in Granadan ships of loads of wheat and barley from Vélez de la Gomera (Bādis) to Málaga.[44] Some places, such as Gibraltar, seem to have been regular markets,[45] though cereal shortage in the Naṣrid kingdom seems to have extended along the coastal zones, from Gibraltar to Almería,[46] via Almuñécar,[47] and of course Málaga,[48] where ships of all nationalities docked: Genoese, Casti-

[42] Robert Vernet, "Les relations céréalières entre le Maghreb et la Péninsule Ibérique du XIIe-XVe siècle", *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 10 (1980): 321–335.

[43] For the involvement of the Naṣrid sultans in the world of international business, and specifically their trade with Italian merchants, see Adela Fábregas, "Actividad comercial de los reyes nazaríes y su implicación con los representantes del gran comercio occidental a finales de la Edad Media", *Studia Historica* 25 (2007): 171–190.

[44] María Dolores López Pérez, *La Corona de Aragón y el Magreb en el siglo XIV (1331-1410)* (Barcelona: CSIC,1995), p. 393.

[45] "*…caa passava dalli per Nafee a carregar de trigo, de que os de Gibraltar eram mingoados…*": Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica do Conde Don Pedro de Menezes,* ed. facs. Jose Adriano de Freitas Carvalho (Porto: Programa Nacional de Ediçoes Comemorativas dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 1988), Liv. I Cap. XXXIII. The same mayor (*alcaide*) of Gibraltar was responsible for ensuring supplies of grain for his villa, acting as merchant himself: "*…esta Barca vinha carregada de trigo, e de farinha, a qual era do Alcayde de Gibraltar…*"; see *ibid.*, Liv. I Cap. LIX. There is also no shortage of occasional detours of grain from other regions of Naṣrid territory: "…E quando os christãaos assy de cauallo como de pee uyram como nom sahyam da villa [*de Gibraltar*] nehuuns de cauallo. preguntarom aaquelle mouro que caso era aquelle o qual lhes respondeo como o alcaide era com todollos de cauallo fallar a el Rey de graada. e outros eram em nauyos a marlella a buscar pam de que eram muy mynguados…"; see Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica do Conde Dom Duarte de Meneses,* ed. Larry King (Lisboa: Universidade Nova, 1978), Ch. CXXI, pp. 291–296.

[46] Manuel Sánchez Martínez, "Comercio nazarí y piratería catalano-aragonesa (1344–1345)", in *Relaciones de la Península Ibérica con el Magreb. Siglos XIII–XVI: Actas del coloquio celebrado en Madrid en diciembre de 1987,* ed. Mercedes García Arenal and María Jesús Viguera (Madrid: CSIC, 1988), pp. 41–86, docs 3 and 7 of the appendix.

[47] A.S.G., N.A., 481, Giuliano Canella.

[48] *Ibid. Los documentos árabes diplomáticos del Archivo de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. and trans. Maximiliano Alarcón y Santón and Ramón García de Linares (Madrid: Escuela de Estudios Árabes, 1940), doc. 59.

lian,[49] Valencian, Mallorcan,[50] even ships from Cagliari,[51] fully or partially loaded with cereals and vegetables. These imports could have been at Naṣrid behest, without the need of intermediaries,[52] as seems to have been the tendency even in the first quarter of the ninth/fifteenth century. From these dates we know various sources for the import of wheat and barley from Alcázar Seguir (Qaṣr al-Ṣaghīr/ Qaṣr al-Maṣmūda),[53] Casablanca (called Anfa in medieval sources),[54] and Tangier.[55]

In order to delimit this second space of commercial interaction – that of Muslim merchants in the Maghrib – and to better define its characteristics, we can look to another important line of research, which again has scarcely begun. The durable nature of ceramic and its identification as an item of commerce, both for itself and as a container for other merchandise, makes it one of the principal indicators of interregional commercial contact, while at the same time indicating its routes and being one of the most significant Naṣrid products in overseas trade.[56] As mentioned briefly at the start of this article, the production of Naṣrid lustre pottery was orientated almost exclusively, it seems, towards export. The origins of the lustre technique can be linked with earlier production in the Islamic East, which also had an important commercial role and great success in international markets; but there were also precedents much closer to home, including precisely from the Maghrib, such as Tunisian ceramics decorated with cobalt and manganese.[57] It is increasingly clear that commercial interests were involved in the initiative to produce Naṣrid lustreware, and other ceramics of the same stylistic family, such as the blue and lustre ceramics made in the potteries of the Valencian region from the start of the ninth/fifteenth century.[58]

[49] Such as the Sevillan, Gines González. See Roser Salicrú i Lluch, *Documents per a la història de Granada del regnat d'Alfons el Magnanim (1416-1458)* (Barcelona: CSIC, 1999), doc. 103, pp. 175–177.

[50] It has been said that the main commercial activity linking Mallorca and the Naṣrids was the transport of Maghribi grain to Spanish shores in Mallorcan ships by Mallorcan merchants. See Pablo Cateura Benasser, "Notas sobre las relaciones entre Mallorca y el reino de Granada en la década de 1339-1349", *Bulletí de la Societat Arqueologica Luliana* 37 (1979): 151–165, p. 154.

[51] In 1431 in Oran, Tristany Fortuny of Cagliari loaded, at the request of merchants from Granada and Tlemcen, grain and other merchandise destined for Málaga. See Salicrú, *Documents*, doc. 252, pp. 300–301.

[52] The same *qā'id* of Gibraltar was responsible for chartering a barge from Alcázar Seguir, loaded with wheat and flour. See Zurara, *Crónica do Conde Don Pedro*, Liv. I, Cap. LXI.

[53] *Ibid.*, Liv. I, Cap. XXXI, LXI, Liv. II Cap. XXII.

[54] *Ibid.*, Liv. I, Cap. XXXIII, LIV. II Cap. XXI.

[55] *Ibid.*, Liv. I, Caps XLIX, LII.

[56] A strategy already adopted by other authors who have focused on reconstructing the routes of Naṣrid trade, specifically with Italy. See, for example, Alberto García Porras, "La cerámica española importada en Italia durante el siglo XIV: El efecto de la demanda sobre una producción cerámica en los inicios de su despegue comercial", *Archeologia Medievale* 27 (2000): 131–144.

[57] A. Daoulatli, "Le bleu et le brun Hafsides: XIIIe–XVIe siècle", in *Couleurs de Tunisie: 25 siècles de céramique* (Tunis: Institut du Monde Arabe, 1995), pp. 110–182; García Porras, "Los orígenes".

[58] On this subject, see for example the proposals made about Naṣrid ceramics by García Porras, "Transmisiones"; *idem*, "La cerámica". To these studies we may now add new contributions that are strongly compelling, such as that offered recently by Mariam Rosser-Owen on the possible involvement of Italian trade in the creation of certain Naṣrid and Valencian ceramics and their introduction into Maghribi and Egyptian markets. We thank the author for allowing us to consult her unpublished work. See Mariam Rosser-Owen, "'From the Mounds of Old Cairo': Spanish Ceramics from Fustat in the Collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum", in *I Congreso Internacional Red Europea de Museos de Arte Islámico* (in press).

The success of Naṣrid lustreware in the circuit of international trade is beyond doubt. Its main market has been localised in medieval Europe. Finds of Granadan luxury ceramics in Italy, France, England and the North Sea and Baltic regions, have confirmed this direction of traffic, which constituted the principal mainstay of commercial success, as has been well-studied.[59] But Naṣrid ceramics did not travel in one single direction. They also encountered a space of secondary projection in the markets of the Islamic world. Very few examples of Naṣrid lustre found in the Maghrib have been published so far, especially if we restrict our attention to finds that are properly contextualised and identified. But even the little evidence we are able to adduce provides important information. When viewed from this new perspective, such studies as might be carried out in the future promise very interesting developments.

By tracing the trajectory of Granadan luxury ceramics and, along with that, of Naṣrid commerce in Islamic markets, we can clearly perceive an expanding radius that covers, at a minimum, the whole of the Maghrib. The identification of Naṣrid lustre in Egypt, when distinguished from later Valencian ceramics, further widens its eastern extent to a remarkable degree, and reveals its ability to reach distant markets in the Islamic world. Naṣrid ceramics, including jars, dishes and pitchers, have been identified in Fusṭāṭ especially, but also in Alexandria, in significant numbers, though restricted to a brief chronological span.[60] The publication of the collection of fragments of Naṣrid lustre in the Victoria and Albert Museum scrupulously charts the lifespan of this trade, preceded by both *cuerda seca* and lustre ceramics of the Almohad period, made in the potteries of southern Iberia in the second half of the sixth/twelfth century, and supplanted by ceramics from the Valencian potteries in the second half of the eighth/fourteenth century.[61]

The doubts that normally accompany the definitive attribution of this type of ceramic to Naṣrid production or to the Valencian potteries of Paterna and Manises – which, from the eighth/fourteenth century, initiated a production imitating the most successful Naṣrid models[62] – can be assuaged by the existence, even

[59] Among the many publications by John G. Hurst, we may single out, "Spanish Pottery Imported into Medieval Britain", *Medieval Archaeology* 21 (1977): 271–276; *idem*, "Spanish Pottery Imported into North-West Europe", *Boletín de Arqueología Medieval* 6 (1992): 45–49. See also *Spanish Medieval Ceramics in Spain and the British Isles*, ed. Christopher Gerrard, Alejandra Gutiérrez and Alan G. Vince [BAR International Series, volume DCX] (Oxford: Archaeopress, 1995); Alejandra Gutiérrez, *Mediterranean Pottery in Wessex Households (13th to 17th Centuries)* (BAR, volume CCCVI] (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2000); Jaume Coll Conesa, "El comercio de la cerámica valenciana en Flandes y el Atlántico Norte", in *A la búsqueda del Toisón de Oro: la Europa de los príncipes, la Europa de las ciudades*, ed. Eduard Mira and An Delva (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 2007), pp. 315–325. These publications contain references to many other studies in this area.

[60] Ernst Kühnel, "Loza hispanoárabe excavada en Oriente", *Al-Andalus* 7 (1942): 253–268; Gamal Mehrez, "Recientes hallazgos de cerámica andaluza en Alejandría", *Al-Andalus* 24 (1959): 399–401; Manuel Casamar, "Fragmentos de jarrones malagueños en los museos del Cairo", *Al-Andalus* 26 (1961): 185–191; Rosser-Owen, "'From the Mounds'".

[61] Rosser-Owen, "'From the Mounds'".

[62] The problem of the identification of Naṣrid or Valencian lustre within the broad group of ceramics often called "Hispano-Moresque" has been a constant issue in the few studies published until very recently. For example, Ernst Kühnel, "Loza hispanoárabe", presents a much more widespread presence of Naṣrid lustre in Islamic markets, extending its limits towards Syria, Palestine and Asia Minor, but he leaves open the distinction between Naṣrid lustre, and lustre and blue ceramics from Manises, from where it would seem the majority of the examples he considers originated. In this regard, the effort to scrupulously differentiate these two ceramic productions – as is observed in the recent publication of the V&A material

though sparse, of written sources. The account of an ambassador – perhaps Muḥammad al-Bunyulī, according to Seco de Lucena – from the Naṣrid sultan Muḥammad IX (r. 821–857/1419–1453 with interruptions) to the court of the Mamluk Sultan al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (r. 842–857/1438–1453) in 844/1440, is extremely revealing. In describing the gifts that the Naṣrid party brought to the Mamluk sultan, the best goods from Granada and those that were most appreciated in the outside world, Naṣrid lustre is mentioned: "We presented [the Mamluk sultan] with various examples of Andalusi merchandise which we had brought [in order to sell][63] such as examples of Málagan ceramics, Granadan *al-inchibar*, clothing made from silk cloth and wool and various other trifles…".[64] It is interesting to note that the ambassadors offered as a speciality the clay from which the ceramics were made – *al-inchibar*, famous for being particularly fine – to which were dedicated some verses, as was also done with the other gifts.

Nevertheless, the central and western Maghrib seem to have been more important as spaces of reception for Naṣrid blue and lustre pottery. Despite the scarcity of references, it is still possible to identify a reception space for these ceramics in the Ḥafṣid capital, Tunis, the seat, as we shall see, of a significant Naṣrid mercantile community. Various series of lustre pottery, including ceramics of great size and sumptuous decoration – which have been designated the "Alhambra series" because of their close stylistic relationship to the famous "Alhambra vases" – have been found in several places in the Qaṣba.[65] However, Tunis – where, as we may observe here for the first time, there may have been a Naṣrid stylistic influence in the use of decorative ceramics applied in architectural spaces[66] – was not the only reception space for Naṣrid ceramics, nor is it the best documented to date. Evidently the markets of the Marīnid kingdom were also filled with this type of ceramic, with a rich and diversified range of dishes, small bowls, and pitchers found at Ceuta,[67] where the finds contextualised

(*footnote continued*)
(Rosser-Owen, "'From the Mounds'") – now becomes a priority for any study of this question, and it is only from this premise that we can seek answers in any significant way to the questions asked here.

[63] The clarification comes from the version offered by the translator of the passage which, we imagine, was based on the account of the Naṣrid ambassador. The fragments of this source that have been preserved do not expressly mention commercial activities being conducted by the Naṣrid delegation. However, a close reading of the text offers other details that lead us to concur with the opinion of the translator, which is that the author's voyage to Cairo could have had a commercial objective.

[64] Luis Seco de Lucena, "Viaje a Oriente: Embajadores granadinos en El Cairo", *Miscelanea de Estudios Árabes y Hebráicos* 4 (1955): 5–30.

[65] Abdelaziz Daoulatli, "Céramiques andalouses à reflets métalliques découvertes à la Kasbah de Tunis", in *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée occidentale, Xe-XVe siècles. Valbonne, 1978*, ed. G. Demians d'Archimbaud et M. Picon (Paris: CNRS, 1980), pp. 343–357.

[66] Brunschvig has already proposed a possible Granadan influence on the production of Tunisian tiles applied in palatial buildings and other spaces associated with the rulers of Ifrīqiya, based on the description left by Anselmo Adorno. The latter wrote an account of his voyage to the Holy Land in 1470–1471, in which he included complete descriptions of his travels through various cities along his route, including Tunis. He wrote of the royal gardens of Tunis: "Le Savage qui recouvre le sol est formé de carreaux très blancs, jaune-citron, bleu ciel, Noris, avec des motifs et dessins en toute sorte de couleurs. Au milieu du pavage de chaque pièce, un bassin rond en marbre habituellement blanc se creuse un peu au-dessous du niveau du sol". See Robert Brunschvig, *Deux récits de voyage inédits en Afrique du Nord au XVe siècle: Abdalbasit b. Halil et Adorne* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2001[2]), pp. 114–116.

[67] Where the finds have been most studied. See Carlos Posac Mon, "Loza dorada nazarí hallada en Ceuta", in *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Estudios Árabes e Islámicos, Lisboa-Coimbra 1968* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), pp. 565-571; *Comer en Ceuta en el siglo XIV. La alimentación durante la época mariní*, ed.,

archaeologically, particularly in the area of Huerta Rufino, have allowed scholars to confirm the destination of these ceramics in spaces linked to groups of high social status, although outside of strictly palatial contexts;[68] in Fez, where the Málagan provenance of the blue and lustre ceramics found at the Madrasat Bū ʿInāniyya (built 751–756/1350–1355) has been confirmed;[69] and even, probably, in Alcázar Seguir, where the fabric analysis conducted on a group of lustre dishes revealed an external provenance that could be ascribed, in the absence of definitive confirmation, to Málagan potteries.[70]

Though this is not our focus on this occasion, we are not yet able to clarify how far the presence of these ceramics in Maghribi sites should be considered accidental, though the extent of the finds leads one to think that it cannot have been. Neither is it yet possible to know to what extent appreciation for these ceramics, the demand for them, and the places in which they have been found, constitute a determining influence on new types of production in North African ceramics. Nevertheless, these finds roundly confirm the existence of direct contacts and exchanges between the Granadan and Maghribi markets. We may speak of a well-defined system of collaborations, and a commercial zone that was much better connected than has been recognised hitherto, and whose profile is gradually becoming clearer.[71]

Despite the fact that much remains to be done in this field, we can also note that this is one of the few spaces – perhaps together with the markets of the Valencian region, which we are not discussing on this occasion – in which the international activity of an indigenous group of Naṣrid merchants is clearly detectable alongside the familiar mediation of Italian businessmen. We can therefore accept the existence of a market dynamic which, while favoured by the activity of external agents, could also develop alongside those same agents.

As we have seen, Naṣrid lustreware was exported as a commercial item to Maghribi markets. The same Naṣrid envoy who travelled to the Mamluk court in 844/1440 was also a merchant, and after completing his diplomatic mission he devoted himself to selling in the Egyptian market place the goods he had brought from al-Andalus. He had presented a small sample of these goods to the sultan, and we can therefore assume that, among other things, he was also selling this type of ceramic, which must have been transported in considerable quantity. Our merchant could have sailed to

(*footnote continued*)
José Manuel Hita Ruiz, José Suarez Padilla and Fernando Villada Paredes (Ceuta: Consejería de Educación, 2010), pp. 192, 203, 204, 205.

[68] José Manuel Hita Ruiz and Fernando Villada Paredes, "Cerámica con cubierta estannífera de Huerta Rufino, Ceuta", in *Homenaje al Profesor Carlos Posac Mon* (Ceuta: Instituto de Estudios Ceutíes, 1998), pp. 443-470.

[69] Abdalla Fili, "La céramique de la madrasa mérinide al-Bu'inaniyya de Fès", *Cerámica nazarí y mariní. Transfretana Monografías* 4 (2000): 259-290.

[70] The authors of the study propose an origin external to Alcázar Seguir and an attribution to the region of the Straits without opting for Málaga, Tanger or Ceuta. See J. E Myers and M. J. Blackman, "Conical plates of the Hispano-Moresque tradition from Islamic Qsar es-Seghir: Petrographic and Chemical Analyses", in *Atti del III Congresso La ceramica medievale nel Mediterraneo occidentale*, *Siena-Faenza 1984* (Firenze: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2009[2]): 55-68, esp. p. 64.

[71] Until now, only the connections between the Naṣrid and Maghribi intellectual elites have been explored, revealing a whole area of cultural exchange. See Rachel Arié, "Les relations diplomatiques et culturelles entre Musulmans d'Espagne et Musulmans d'Orient au temps des Nasrides", *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* 1 (1965): 87–107; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, *Las riberas nazarí y del Magreb (siglos XIII-XV)* (Granada: Grupo de Investigación Ciudades Andaluzas bajo el Islam, 2000).

Cairo along the usual routes of Mediterranean navigation, which employed Christian – preferably though not exclusively Genoese – ships to support the commercial operations of Granadan merchants. Following the lustreware leads us to observe the same behaviour that we detected in the case of the cereal trade. Andalusi merchants continually resorted to the large ships and navigation routes by cabotage practised by Genoese, Venetian and Catalan–Aragonese merchants.[72] The references we have already given to European ships – which for the moment form one of our principal sources of information – while infrequent, mention Naṣrid and Maghribi merchants as well as those from Valencia, sometimes in partnership with each other, transporting merchandise to and fro across the Straits of Gibraltar.

The sources feature operations that imply contacts and exchanges between Valencia, Granada and the Maghrib, conducted by businessmen of a distinct social level, which must have been high. Even the Naṣrid sultans participated in these activities,[73] as well as figures of high social and political standing, such as the *qā'id* of Almería, who was clearly not a novice.[74] This is a question of great interest, which for the moment cannot be more than posed, and in response to which the information offered by Roser Salicrú, among others, offers suggestive leads.[75] This is something that does not happen at all in other markets, or only in very exceptional circumstances, especially in the markets of Christian Europe, where, as we know, Naṣrid commodities were in great demand.

But on the other hand, the system of direct contacts and exchanges that developed between the kingdom of Granada and the Islamic states of the Maghrib assigns an important role to an Islamic – Granadan and Maghribi – fleet, and to Muslim merchants. The presence and activity of Granadan merchants, not yet identified in other markets where Naṣrid commerce had notable interests, becomes more clearly defined. We know that, on many occasions, Granadan merchants traded directly, without resorting to the mediation of the Italian merchants, who were well established in those markets. In the account transmitted by the chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara about the early years of the Portuguese presence in Ceuta, following its conquest in 1415, we find the best-known testimony so far, with unquestionable proof of the existence of direct contacts, conducted by Naṣrid merchants, using Naṣrid ships, which bought and sold Granadan commodities in the Maghribi

[72] Examples of this Granada-Maghrib traffic conducted by European merchants, or by Naṣrid merchants transported in European ships, pop up constantly in the studies that have treated this type of contact to date, though no one has yet opened a specific line of enquiry into this question. For example, see Sánchez Martínez, "Comercio nazarí", 82; López Pérez, *La Corona de Aragón*; Salicrú i Lluch, *Documents*, doc. 252, pp. 300–301; Rodríguez Gómez, *Las riberas nazarí y del Magreb*; Fábregas, "Redes de comercio"; *idem*, "Actividad marítima y mercantil nazarí en el Magreb occidental: relatos de un observador portugués en el Estrecho", *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su reino* 20 (2008):151–173.

[73] For example, in 1453 Muḥammad IX and other merchants from Málaga chartered the ship belonging to the Genoese Domenico Denturo to transport diverse merchandise from Oran to Málaga. See Salicrú i Lluch, *Documents*, doc. 391, pp. 471–472.

[74] In 1457, Mahomat Bencidam, *qā'id* of the castle of Almería, retaliated against Martín de Vàguena, captain of the ship in which one of his representatives had sailed, loaded with merchandise from North Africa and destined for Almería, for not having completed his contractual agreement. See Salicrú i Lluch, *Documents*, doc. 422, pp. 511–513. See also Fábregas, "Actividad comercial de los reyes".

[75] Salicrú transmits references to many cases of this kind of activity and to the role Naṣrid merchants assumed as opposed to the traditional involvement of European commercial interests in this market. See Salicrú i Lluch, *Documents*, docs. 33, 61, 90, 103, 252, 303, 304, 381, 391, 422.

markets, our ceramics among them.[76] In this case, the destination for Naṣrid lustre was nearby, though this was not necessarily always so.

In Zurara's account, the intense commercial traffic that these waters supported is obvious. Movement was constant between one shore of the Straits and the other. In scarcely a weekend, for example, three "Moorish" ships loaded with merchandise are mentioned, although their destination is not specified. While it is not clear where they were heading, it is certain that in a great number of ports and coves there appeared boats loaded with merchandise or ready to depart.[77] Usually they are small ships, such as caravels, able to fulfil mercantile initiatives sometimes restricted to a single merchant, as indicated occasionally in references to cargo that seems to have belonged to a single owner,[78] or to just a few businessmen.

These autonomous actions find their explanation in another circumstance that is extremely interesting but whose study is again still embryonic: that is, the existence of groups or communities of Naṣrid businessmen, sometimes with a well-defined presence, trading on Maghribi soil. We know, for example, of an Andalusi community residing in Tunis at this period. The presence of Andalusis in Ifrīqiya, constant and notable since the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century, coincides with emigrations forced by the changing frontier with Castile. Brunschvig, for example, confirmed the existence of officially constituted communities in Bougie, and the probable existence of a small Andalusi neighbourhood in Qayrawān, as well as in the capital Tunis. They could integrate without difficulty into the social and economic fabric of the Ḥafṣid state, and they conducted every type of activity, including trade and craft production, while maintaining their own characteristics and a sense of solidarity with their compatriots.[79]

ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ, an Egyptian traveller in Maghribi lands and later in the Naṣrid kingdom, narrates his encounter with Abū l-Qāsim al-Bunjulī al-Gharnaṭī al-Andalusī, resident in Tunis and head of the merchant community in the region.[80] The importance of this figure is such that he was able to gather his friends and colleagues, all prominent merchants from al-Andalus and other regions, in the gardens of the Raʾs al-Ṭābiyya, the royal recreational park, to entertain them.[81] So there were contacts between the two spaces – Maghribi and Andalusi – maintaining a tradition that by then had already lasted for centuries, and sufficiently strong to sustain the presence of a prominent community of Granadan merchants with a good social position in the Ḥafṣid capital. Everything indicates that Ifrīqiya was an axis of connection between the markets of the eastern and western

[76]"E os das Fustas do Conde ouveraõ a coixa do monte (de Gibraltar), e as outras correrom contra Mallaga: e jazendo estas duas largas ao mar, viraõ vir contra Mallega hum Caravo, que vinha carregado de louça, e tanto que o virao, forom tras elle até a coixa do monte, onde o fezerom encalhar em terra…": Zurara, *Crónica do Conde Don Pedro*, Liv. I, Cap. XLII, pp. 347–350, especially p. 349. "…E nom passou grande espaço quando virom sahir de Larache huma vella, e Alvaro Fernandes vogou a ella, e filhou-a, e era hum Carevo em que tomarom tres Mouros, e muita louça de Malaga, e pano, e outra mercadoria": Zurara, *Crónica do Conde Don Pedro*, Liv. II, Ch. XVI, pp. 534–539.

[77]*Ibid.*, Liv. II, Ch. XVI, pp. 534–539.

[78] As is the case, for example, with the cargo of wheat and flour confiscated from the *qāʾid* of Gibraltar after the assault on a boat carrying fifteen passengers in which he travelled from Alcázar Seguir to Gibraltar. See Zurara, *Crónica do Conde Don Pedro*, Liv. I, Ch. LIX.

[79] See Robert Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsides. Des origines à la fin du XVe siècle* (París: Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient, 1947), 2 vols, II: 155–156.

[80] Brunschvig, *Deux récits*, 21.

[81]*Ibid.*, 22–23.

Mediterranean from at least the tenth century; with respect to al-Andalus, Ifrīqiya maintained regular and considerable contacts in the fifth/eleventh century, according to the documentation in the Cairo Geniza.[82] Despite the grave political difficulties in the region in the sixth/twelfth century – due to conflict with the Fāṭimids, attacks by the Normans and above all the Almohad conquest – Andalusi merchants travelled to Ifrīqiya to sell their products, which were consumed by the Tunisian market and later re-exported; here, Andalusi merchants stocked up on eastern products, such as spices and linen from Syria and Egypt.[83]

Before concluding this discussion, I would like to make a brief observation about the rich impressions offered by the studies of the export of Naṣrid ceramics. They call powerful attention to the fact that, even in the Islamic markets – where we might assume a ready acceptance of Naṣrid stylistic models as the result of a related decorative culture – we find the same phenomenon that is common in the European markets: that is, the substitution from the middle of the eighth/fourteenth century of Granadan lustreware by the new blue and lustre products of Valencia. These Valencian products not only show signs of a considerable increase in the volume of consumption, but also of a typological and, above all, stylistic development, introducing decorative motifs from the Latin and Western European tradition, which are – perhaps curiously – also accepted into the Islamic markets.[84] Finally, the fact that these new ceramics also found a successful niche in the Italian marketplace, as had the ceramics from Tunisia and Granada before them, and the specific commissioning of these ceramics in large batches by Italian patrons, leads one to increasingly suspect that, with these very particular new ceramic types, so clearly intended for sale in the international marketplace, we may again detect the initiative of Italian businessmen.

The apparently easy adoption by the Maghribi markets of these new Valencian products, which eliminated without great difficulty the wares that had until then been highly appreciated and were much closer to traditional Maghribi patterns of consumption, could indicate a level of control by Italian merchants greater than has previously been imagined. These merchants relied on powerful methods when "modelling" the necessities and the very nature of these markets in western Islam, by means of a control of the offer.

Conclusion

Naṣrid overseas trade did not limit its sphere of activity to the necessities and interests that defined the great actors of the Latin West, who nevertheless largely determined the opening of Naṣrid markets. Despite the little study that these questions have received to date, the existence can gradually be increasingly discerned of a highly dynamic space of exchange at a regional level, between Granada and other areas of the western Mediterranean not traditionally included among the great markets or motors of economic development in the west. Within these spaces, there is capacity for mercantile activity of less significance, although possibly

[82] Shelomo D. Goitein, "Medieval Tunisia: The Hub of the Mediterranean", in *idem*, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden: Brill, 1968[2]), pp. 308–328.
[83] Shelomo D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999[2]), 6 vols, I: 303.
[84] An issue to which Rosser-Owen calls attention in "'From the Mounds'".

much more interwoven into the economic reality of the regions involved, and directly related to the economic interests of its own mercantile class. This latter clearly existed and was active, although with a greatly reduced capacity, almost evanescent, when compared with the front line of the business world.

The commercial ties that Granada maintained with the markets of southern Italy were clearly mediated by Genoese intervention. But the nature of these ties is different from those found in other spaces of Granadan commercial projection. It is possible to detect a clear intention to introduce equilibrium into the system; this seems to have been important for several Naṣrid regions, possibly those most closely linked with the sectors of speculative production. This is also indicated by the fact that the majority of the imports were cereals, probably to supply the coastal regions.

The other sphere of commerce, that of the Maghribi markets, was – according to the little we know at the moment – much more open, dynamic and diversified. For now, it is possible to note the clear involvement of an indigenous body of merchants in this facet of Naṣrid overseas trade. Of course, this trade was not plied exclusively by Muslim merchants, but it is certain that here they had a space that seems to have been denied to them, or at least was extremely restricted, in other spheres of international commerce, especially the European markets.

Much more remains to be clarified about these questions. We must move forward by identifying, for example, the patterns and markets of consumption that were capable of projecting Naṣrid trade into the Islamic world, and by outlining more clearly the nature and extent of the system of exchanges that was developed. It is also necessary to better define the contours of a mercantile activity that seems to have relied on the participation of Granadan businessmen, without negating the important role foreign interests played. It is important to recognise the degree of autonomy with which these two groups were able to develop their activities, and to understand the spaces of co-operation and interaction they developed.

A careful analysis of the testimonies of Arab and Latin authors active in Maghribi markets would shed further light on the question. We also think the archaeological evidence has the potential to inform us further about the distribution patterns of articles such as Naṣrid lustre ceramics, which enjoyed their own successful market in the Islamic sphere. By means of systematically identifying and localising these Naṣrid luxury ceramics, a task that is still in its infancy, we should be able to understand better the extent of the geographical expansion of the Naṣrid market within the Islamic world, and to clarify further the nature and dimension of the participation of the Naṣrid mercantile cohort in the development of these secondary markets.