

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

**A European Commercial Trinomial:
Italy – Champagne –
The Netherlands
(12th – 14th centuries)**

Rome (Italy), 13-15 October 2011

Convened by:

Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

Executive summary

The workshop *A European Commercial Trinomial : Italy – Champagne – the Netherlands (12th – 14th centuries)*, organised by Professor Jean-Marie Yante (Université catholique de Louvain, at Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium) in collaboration with Professor Pierre Racine (Université de Strasbourg, France), took place in Rome from Thursday, October 13th – Saturday the 15th, 2011. The work of the first two days took place at the *Palazzo Borromini* in the premises of the *Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo*. For the last day, the *École française de Rome* placed an auditorium at our disposal at its site on the *Piazza Navona*.

Besides the scientific and financial support of the *European Science Foundation*, this meeting benefited from its partnership with the *Institut historique belge de Rome*, the *Academia Belgica*, the *École française de Rome*, the *Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo* and the *Centro studi 'Renato Bordone' sui Lombardi, sul credito e sulla banca*, of Asti (Italy).

Following a general pronouncement by Professor Pierre Racine on the meeting's theme and the goals to be pursued, the papers delivered at the workshop were divided into five sections :

- Section 1 : *Placing the theme in an historiographical perspective*
[3 talks]
- Section 2: *Trade and Italian credit*
[4 talks]
- Section 3: *Industry and commercial exchanges*
[4 talks]
- Section 4: *The Champagne meeting places : genesis, gains and destiny*
[2 talks]
- Section 5: *Gains and legacies. Research perspectives*
[2 talks, including the presentation of a data base project for historical sources on the Champagne fairs]

Besides the president of the *Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo*, who greeted the participants to the workshop, and the director of Medieval studies of the *École française de Rome*, who presided over one of the sessions held in that institution, the workshop brought together fifteen teachers or researchers from seven countries (a sixteenth participant was unable to attend for health reasons):

- Belgium (Université catholique de Louvain, at Louvain-la-Neuve ; Archives de l'État) – 3 participants;
- France (Université de Paris I; Université de Reims-Champagne-Ardennes; Université de Strasbourg) – 4 participants;
- Germany (Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte, Göttingen) – 1 participant;

- Italy (Centro studi 'Renato Bordone' sui Lombardi, sul credito e sulla banca, Asti ; Libera università internazionale degli studi sociali, Rome; Università degli studi, Milan) – 3 participants (a 4th participant was unable to attend for health reasons);
- San Marino (Università degli studi, San Marino) – 1 participant;
- Switzerland (Université de Genève ; Université de Neuchâtel) – 2 participants ;
- United States (University of Missouri, Kansas City) – 1 participant.

The papers read were 45 minutes long. The works of the various sections were followed by a discussion period 45 - 60 minutes in length. On the last day, an hour and a half was reserved for a general discussion centred on following up the workshop's activities, both as concerns publishing the acts and organising future meetings, the development of partnerships and the implementation of a data base on historical sources of the Champagne fairs.

General conclusions were drawn by Professor Michel Balard (Université de Paris I).

The acts of the workshop will be published in Brussels by the *Institut historique belge de Rome*.

Scientific content of the event

The workshop *A European Commercial Trinomial: Italy – Champagne – the Netherlands (12th-14th centuries)* brought together fifteen specialists on the commercial exchanges between these three regions and, at the same time, sought to measure the current state of knowledge on this theme, including the contributions of more or less older works and ongoing projects, to define a perimeter for new investigations utilizing contemporary research tools and to lay the foundations of an international and multi-disciplinary partnership.

Following a general report by Professor Pierre Racine (Université de Strasbourg) on the meeting's general theme and the goals to be pursued, the workshop's tasks were divided into five sections.

Within the first section (*Placing the theme in an historiographical perspective*), three talks (devoted respectively to Italy, to Champagne and France, and to the Netherlands) provided a detailed and critical outline of the historiography in these regions, listed the sources available, the editions of texts at the disposal of researchers as well as the general or more selective works dealing with the commercial exchanges that went on within the "trinomial". Following these lectures, as, moreover, for the following sections, a substantial discussion period allowed the participants to exchange their experiences and information, underline historiographical lacunae, and evaluate the possibilities of alleviating situations and the means for doing so.

The second section (*Trade and Italian credit*) approached the composition, structure and operation of the Italian commercial companies operating at the Champagne fairs and, more particularly, the Tuscan companies, as well as those specialized in banking transactions. Particular attention was paid to the Lombard *casane* present in Champagne regions and to the network established by these financiers in Switzerland and Comté territory. The range of sources to be utilized and their specific contributions allowed us to delimit the research to be carried out in other regions.

Entitled *Industry and commercial exchanges*, the third section provided an inevitably provisory determination of articles concerned by the traffic between Italy, Champagne and the Netherlands during the 12th-14th centuries. Deforming prisms in the traditional historiography, whose almost exclusive attention was accorded to the study of drapery and the commerce in related productions, were denounced and a vast range of articles involved in this long term trade was clearly shown. The success of the major mercantile meetings relying not only on the articles' variety but also on the insertion of the fairs into the medieval road network, one paper concentrated on it from a general perspective, while a second one dwelt

on the role of Switzerland as a zone of passage between Italy and Champagne. The success of the fairs being similarly linked to the publicity they benefited from, a codicological approach to the *La devisions des foires de Champagne* revealed the contribution of generally neglected sources and, from a methodological viewpoint, opened unprecedented fields of inquiry.

The fourth section's works, directly centered on the Champagne bases of medieval trade (*The Champagne meeting places : genesis, gains and destiny*), approached these meetings in their chronology, their space-time distribution (organization within a cycle) and their positioning in the politics of the territorial princes. They similarly examined the destiny of these fairs, the period involved (always discussed) and the reasons for their inexorable decline in the last centuries of the Middle Ages. Basing itself at once on normative and practical sources, one paper specified the nature of the *conduit* of the fairs, its methods and, as far as possible given the present state of knowledge and the sources available, their effectiveness. Another essential institution, the *garde* of the fairs was similarly the object of an approach combining juridical and economic elements with normative sources and practice.

The fifth and last section (*Gains and legacie: Research perspectives*) allowed us to attempt a first typological approach to literary sources likely to contribute a largely unprecedented and particularly suggestive enlightenment on the fairs' lived reality and the merchants' world. At present, the range of sources appears particularly broad. These materials, whose systematic situating is an imperative, convey more or less durable clichés and represent an essential contribution to the history of mentalities. A data base project on sources of the history of the Champagne fairs was presented within this same section. After a typological outline of the sources to be used (for the moment limited to written sources but apt for being extended to numismatical, iconographical, archaeological and monumental sources ...), the operation's technical and intellectual aspects were approached beginning with concrete cases already present in "a mini" database of experimental character designed at the history department of the Université catholique de Louvain, at Louvain-la-Neuve. This was the occasion for gathering the *desiderata* and suggestions of confirmed experts in a great variety of sources. The workshop's participants recognized the interest in pursuing this enterprise with the aid of data processing specialists with backgrounds in this type of endeavour.

Enriching the results with personal reflections and synthesizing the exchanges taking place within the various sections, Professor Michel Balard (Université de Paris I) drew the conclusions the workshop had arrived at in his particularly dense commentary.

Assessment of the results; contribution to the future direction of the field; outcome

Despite the major importance of the economic relations between Italy, Champagne and the Netherlands from the 12th through the 14th century, especially within the framework of the Champagne fairs, no scientific meeting to date had brought together specialists on the subject coming from the regions directly concerned and other horizons. The Roman workshop made possible the comparison of various historiographies, methodologies and documentary resources, and laid the foundations for future partnerships, inevitably international and multi-disciplinary.

Thanks to the reception extended by the publications of the *Institut historique belge de Rome*, an organization associated with the enterprise, the meeting's acts will be published quite soon. An international bibliography on the subject will be included in them. A definitive version of the manuscript is programmed for mid 2012.

The data base project on sources of the history of the Champagne fairs, a first version of which was presented at the workshop, will be the subject of ample exchanges between its creators (from the Université catholique de Louvain, at Louvain-la-Neuve), specialists in the various types of sources and various geographical regions concerned, as well as with data processing specialists with experience in similar endeavours. From this point of view, files and applications will be drawn up to obtain the required financial and human means, as well the conclusion of (regional, national and international) institutional partnerships which, as of 2012, will mobilize university representatives from various horizons. Steps will be taken in order to integrate researchers into the project coming from countries not represented at the Roman workshop, in particular the United Kingdom and Spain. The organization of a shorter meeting, exclusively devoted to the problems of setting up a data base and associating it with confirmed experts, is envisaged for 2012 or 2013.

In addition, the discussions drew our attention to sources that have been little used to date in the context of the theme studied, among which are literary sources, numismatical sources and archaeological sources (particular in connection with the topography of towns hosting fairs). The methods for inserting them, in the short or medium term, into the data base project should be the subject of a specific examination. With this in mind, as of 2012, with a periodicity to be defined and in places to be specified (notably in Champagne), study days will be organized around certain types of sources. Partnerships with universities and academic institutions will be sought.

In conclusion, for the first time, the Roman workshop brought about the meeting of researchers directly involved in the problematics of the commercial exchanges between Italy,

Champagne and the Netherlands from the 12th through the 14th century, a comparison of experiences, methodologies and familiarities with various types of sources, as well as the critical and eminently constructive examination of a draft version data base on the historical sources of the Champagne fairs. The integration of other partners with the enterprise (to be concretized) and the project for regular meetings similarly formed part of the workshop's activities. In order to bring these projects to fruition, a restricted group of persons, representatives of the various disciplines and various regions concerned, will be set up in the first half of 2012.

Final programme

Thursday 13th October 2011

(Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo, Palazzo Borromini, Piazza dell'Orologio, 4)

- 15.00-15.10 **Opening**
Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE (Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium)
- 15.10-15.20 **Welcome**
Prof. Massimo MIGLIO (Presidente dell'Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo, Rome, Italy)
- 15.20-15.40 **Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF), *Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH)***
- 15.40-16.25 **Introduction of the workshop**
Prof. Giovanna PETTI BALBI (Centro studi 'Renato Bordone' sui Lombardi, sul credito e sulla banca, Asti, Italy) and Prof. Pierre RACINE (Université de Strasbourg, Strasbourg, France)

Section 1: Placing the theme in an historiographical perspective

Chairman: Prof. Massimo MIGLIO

- 16.25-17.10 **Presentation 1: "Italy"**
Prof. Luciano PALERMO (Libera università internazionale degli studi sociali, Rome, Italy)
- 17.10-17.25 *Break*
- 17.25-18.10 **Presentation 2: "Champagne and France"**
Prof. Patrick DEMOUY (Université de Reims-Champagne-Ardennes, Reims, France)
- 18.10—18.55 **Presentation 3: "The Netherlands"**
Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE
- 18.55-19.40 **Discussion**
- 20.30 *Dinner*

Friday 14th October 2011

(Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo, Palazzo Borromini, Piazza dell'Orologio, 4)

Section 2: Trade and Italian credit

Chairman: Prof. Giovanna PETTI BALBI

- 09.00-09.45 **Presentation 1: "The Tuscan companies' relations with the Champagne fairs"**
Dr. Ignazio DEL PUNTA (Università degli studi, San Marino, San Marino)

- 09.45-10.30 **Presentation 2: “The structure of Italian banking companies”**
Prof. Beatrice DEL BO (Università degli studi, Milano, Italy)
- 10.30-10.45 *Break*
- 10.45-11.30 **Presentation 3: “From the Champagne fairs to the Lombard casane”**
Dr. Ezio Claudio PIA (Centro studi ‘Renato Bordone’ sui Lombardi, sul credito e sulla banca, Asti, Italy)
- 11.30-12.15 **Presentation 4: “The network of Lombard casane in Swiss and Comté territory”**
Prof. Franco MORENZONI (Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland)
- 12.15-13.00 **Discussion**
- 13.00-14.00 *Lunch*

Section 3 : Industry and commercial exchanges

Chairman: Prof. Danielle QUÉRUEL (Université de Reims-Champagne-Ardenne, Reims, France)

- 15.00-15.45 **Presentation 1: “Articles commercialized at the Champagne fairs”**
Prof. Pierre RACINE
- 15.45-16.30 **Presentation 2: ”Switzerland, a land of passage towards the Champagne fairs”**
Prof. Jean-Daniel MOREROD (Université de Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel, Switzerland)
- 16.30-16.45 *Break*
- 16.45-17.30 **Presentation 3: “The European road network serving the Champagne fairs”**
Prof. Thomas SZABO (Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte, Göttingen, Germany)
- 17.30-18.15 **Presentation 4 : “Transmission of La devisions des foires de Champaigne“**
Prof. Kathy KRAUSE (University of Missouri, Kansas City, United States)
- 18.15-19.15 **Discussion**
- 20.30 *Dinner*

Saturday 15th October 2011

(École française de Rome, Piazza Navona, 62)

Section 4: The Champagne meeting places: genesis, gains and destiny

Chairman: Dr. Stéphane GIOANNI (École française de Rome, Rome, Italy)

09.00-09.45 **Presentation 1 : “The cycle of Champagne fairs”**

Prof. Patrick DEMOUY

09.45-10.30 **Presentation 2: “*Conduit and Garde* of the Champagne fairs”**

Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE

10.30-11.10 **Discussion**

11.10-11.30 *Break*

Section 5: Gains and legacies. Research perspectives

Chairman: Prof. Pierre RACINE

11.30-12.15 **Presentation 1: “Unprecedented contributions from the literary sources”**

Prof. Danielle QUÉRUEL

12.15-12.45 **Discussion**

13.00-14.00 *Lunch*

14.30-15.15 **Presentation 2: “For a data base on sources of the history of the Champagne fairs”**

Marjorie GOBIN (Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium) and Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE

15.15-15.45 **Conclusions**

Prof Michel BALARD (Université de Paris I, Paris, France)

15.45-17.15 **Discussion on follow-up activities / networking / collaboration**

17.15-17.25 **End of workshop**

Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE

Secretary of the sections: Marie VAN EECKENRODE (Archives de l'État, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium)

Participants

- Prof. Michel BALARD, Université de Paris I, Paris (France)
- Prof. Beatrice DEL BO, Università degli studi, Milano (Italy)
- Dr. Ignazio DEL PUNTA, Università degli studi, San Marino (San Marino)
- Prof. Patrick DEMOUY, Université de Reims-Champagne-Ardennes, Reims (France)
- Drs Marjorie GOBIN, Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium)
- Prof. Kathy KRAUSE, University of Missouri, Kansas City, United States
- Prof. Jean-Daniel MOREROD, Université de Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel (Switzerland)
- Prof. Franco MORENZONI, Université de Genève, Geneva (Switzerland)
- Prof. Luciano PALERMO, Libera università internazionale degli studi sociali, Rome (Italy)
- Dr. Ezio Claudio PIA, Centro studi ‘Renato Bordone’ sui Lombardi, sul credito e sulla banca, Asti (Italy)
- Prof. Danielle QUÉRUEL, Université de Reims-Champagne-Ardennes, Reims (France)
- Prof. Pierre RACINE, Université de Strasbourg, Strasbourg (France)
- Prof. Thomas SZABO, Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte, Göttingen (Germany)
- Drs Marie VAN EECKENRODE, Archives de l’État, Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium)
- Prof. Jean-Marie YANTE, Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgique)

[a sixteenth participant was unable to attend for health reasons : Prof. Giovanna PETTI BALBI, Centro studi ‘Renato Bordone’ sui Lombardi, sul credito e sulla banca, Asti (Italy)]

Statistical information on participants

country	participants	men	women
Belgium	3	1	2
France	4	3	1
Germany	1	1	-
Italy	3 ^a	2	1 ^a
San Marino	1	1	-
Switzerland	2	2	-
United States	1	-	1
Total	15	10	5

^a a sixteenth participant (woman) was unable to attend for health reasons