

GENOA, SIXTEENTH CENTURY-1797

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1. Coverage

This questionnaire covers the period from the sixteenth- to the end of the eighteenth-century (1797) for the Republic of Genoa. In 1797 the Republic of Genoa was replaced by the Repubblica Ligure (under the influence and the control of Napoleon) and in 1805 it became part of the Napoleonic Empire. Customs rules and the taxation system changed. It is possible to collect data concerning trade in this period (until 1814) in the Departmental statistics (most of them can be found in the Archives Nationales de Paris-ANP).

2. Documents

These documents are fiscal records (registers, ledgers). Balances of trade are available only for the last decades of the eighteenth-century.³

3. Institutional setting

The institutions involved in the collection, transformation and publication of the data are the Casa di San Giorgio (for taxation purposes), Padri del Comune (the Port authority), Magistrato di Sanità (Health authority).

4. Motivations

They were made for a fiscal purpose.

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3. See Bulferetti L., Costantini C., *Industria e commercio in Liguria nell'età del Risorgimento. 1700-1861*, Milano, Banca Commerciale Italiana, 1966, p. 161, and Grendi E., *La Repubblica aristocratica dei Genovesi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, p. 342.

5. Methods

Data were collected for taxation purposes or for sanitary reasons. Usually, the custom officials based the taxation on declarations, but it is probable that they inspected documents on board and checked the goods directly from time to time. The data is supposed to be fairly accurate. However, since the volume of information available in the archive is so great, it has been difficult to cross check them systematically or to add them together in order to obtain a trend of the balance of trade in the long period. Up to now, scholars have calculated a balance of trade only for short periods of time.⁴

6. Information

The data recorded were: number and tons of ships entering and going out of the port of Genoa, taxation revenue on sea trade and on specific categories of goods. For a detailed inventory of fiscal documents available in the Archivio di Stato di Genova and produced by the Casa di San Giorgio see www.lacasadisangiorgio.it. The trade flows were usually recorded both in value and in quantity.

Prices are indicated in Lire genovesi (£1 = 20 soldi, 1 soldo = 12 denari) and generally they are based on fixed price lists. These price lists seem to have been computed by making an average between the price of the good at the port of departure and at the port of Genoa. As for quantities, a wide range of measures were used.

The custom authorities created the categories into which the flows of goods were recorded. Right now there is no evaluation of the total number of categories used. Goods were classified in several categories (i.e. grain, oat, silk, leather, wax, etc.) and usually without a specific indication of their origin or quality.⁵

The origin of specific goods was not indicated. Sometime it was included in the name of the goods (i.e., silk from Sicily, cheese from Piacenza). However, the documents indicate the port of origin (first port of call) of the vessel arrived in the port of Genoa. We don't know exactly how many localities are mentioned in the archive. It has been calculated only for specific periods.⁶

4. See Felloni G., *Organizzazione portuale, navigazione e traffici a Genova: un sondaggio tra le fonti per l'età moderna*, in "Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria", XLIII/1 (2003), pp. 337-364, and Bulferetti L., Costantini C., *Industria e commercio in Liguria nell'età del Risorgimento. 1700-1861*, Milano, Banca Commerciale Italiana, 1966, p. 161; Grendi E., *La Repubblica aristocratica dei Genovesi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, p. 342.

5. See Grendi E., *La Repubblica aristocratica dei Genovesi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, p. 323.

7. Publication of the data

It has been made only for limited periods of time, because the series of registers available are too wide.

8. Research questions

The data on trade has been used by to explore the Republic of Genoa's trading relationship with the Mediterranean as well as Northern European ports in the early modern period.

9. Bibliography

9.1. Primary sources

Archivio della Casa di San Giorgio (in Archivio di Stato di Genova) - <http://www.lacasadisangiorgio.it>

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Portofranco (Dutyfree, 424 units, 1601-1794).

Carati (Import: 491 units, 1445-1797, Export, 23 units 1532-1698).

Other taxes: (more than 1000 units over the whole period).

Archivio Storico del Comune di Genova, Fondo Padri del Comune

9.2. Secondary works publishing and commenting the data

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6. See Grendi E., *La Repubblica aristocratica dei Genovesi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987; Felloni G., *Organizzazione portuale, navigazione e traffici a Genova: un sondaggio tra le fonti per l'età moderna*, in "Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria", XLIII/1 (2003), pp. 337-364.

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9.3. Complementary sources

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