BARCELONA, THE SEA, AND THE WORLD: THE «PROTESTS AGAINST THE SEA» IN 1868¹

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Between 1766 and 1868, close to 25,000 protests against the sea were filed at the Consulate of Commerce in Barcelona. By focusing on the 325 depositions extant at the ACA for the year 1868, this article contextualizes these documents within the city's history. They become a lens through which to examine the nature of Barcelona trade, changes in the provisioning of the city, its march towards modernity, new seafaring technologies, Barcelona's global trade, and the city's enduring ties to the sea.

KEYWORDS: *protests against the sea, Consulado de Comercio, trade with Scandinavia, the Americas, the Black Sea, wheat, wood, cod fish.*

BARCELONA, EL MAR Y EL MUNDO: LAS «PROTESTAS DE MAR» EN 1868

Entre los años 1766 y 1868, alrededor de 25.000 protestas contra el mar fueron archivadas en el Consulado de Comercio en Barcelona. Centrándonos en las 325 protestas correspondientes al año 1868, este artículo, contextualizando estos documentos en la historia de Barcelona en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX, utiliza estas protestas como un lente a través del cual podemos examinar la estructura del comercio barcelonés, cambios en la forma en que la ciudad fue aprovisionada, su marcha hacia la modernidad, nuevas tecnologías marí-

1. This article owes its genesis to Virginia Morero's helpful advice at the Archivo de la Corona de Aragon, who kindly guided me to the «protests against the sea» documents. I have never been able to thank her properly for her help. This is as much her work as it is mine. In Barcelona, I have always received the most cordial and warm hospitality from Javier Gil Pujol, as well as his careful and meticulous comments on this paper. He has truly been «*il miglior fabbro*». The article has also greatly benefitted from the comments, suggestions and critiques at the Southwest Spanish Seminar, held at the University of California, San Diego in January 2020. In particular Pamela Radcliff, David Ringrose, Kathryn Renton, Kate Woolard, William and Carla Phillips, Tom Barton, Antonio Zaldivar, and all the other seminar participants.

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timas, el rol de Barcelona en un comercio global, y los lazos que unían a Barcelona con el mar.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Protestas de Mar, Consulado de Comercio, comercio con Escandinavia, las Americas, el Mar negro, trigo, madera, bacalao.

Arriving in Barcelona on 22 December of 1868, C. Samfognaro, captain of the Catalonia-registered 276 tons brigantine *Eugenia*, rushed to the offices of the Consulate of Commerce to formally protest about the damage that bad weather and a tempestuous sea had inflicted on his cargo. Sailing from Trieste to Barcelona with wheat and flour for Barcelona merchants, the *Eugenia* ran into a storm that «may have damaged some of his cargo». Therefore, he «protested against the sea and against bad weather». Five days before, Jose Capelo, captain of the 149 tons Barcelona-registered *polacra*, the *Emilia* (a polacre was a three-mast ship, combining square sails with lateen ones, somewhat similar to those of a schooner or brigantine) also came to protest against the sea at Barcelona's Consulate of Commerce. Sailing from Puerto Rico to Barcelona with coffee and other goods for some of the city's merchants, he ran into foul weather that damaged his cargo. Thus, he wished «to protest against the sea and against bad weather», asserting that damage to the cargo was not due to his negligence.²

These two entries, clearly statements aimed at establishing the ground for formal insurance claims, are quite unremarkable. They followed closely, in their formulaic language and their narrative employment of difficulties at sea, on most of the close to 25,000 protests against the sea submitted to the Consulate of Commerce in Barcelona between 1766 and 1868. Even in the context of the 325 complaints lodged in 1868 —the central evidence for this article— the two entries mentioned above are quite pedestrian and far

2. On Barcelona's Consulate of Commerce the most important contribution to the topic is Espuny Tomás, María Jesús, *El Real Consulado de Comercio del Principado de Cataluña (1758-1829)*, doctoral thesis, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, 1992. Available online at <<http://www.tdx.cat/TDX-0630109-121322>>. The Consulates of Commerce were the heirs to the medieval Consulates of the Sea on which there is an extensive bibliography. See Piña Homs, Román, *El Consolat de Mar, Mallorca, 1326-1800*, Palma de Mallorca, Institut d'Estudis Balearics, 1985; *Consulado del mar de Barcelona: nuevamente traducido de catalán en castellano*, trans. de Pallejá, Cayetano, Barcelona, J. Piferrer, 1732, available online. Jados, Stanley S., *Consolat de Mar, and related documents*, University, Ala., University of Alabama Press, 1975. In the Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó (ACA), there are diverse holdings that deal with maritime trade in and out of Barcelona, organized as follows: An inventory of registers and volumes for the Consulate of the Sea (1715-1761), a body that predated the Consulate of Commerce. Another register for the Royal Consulate of Commerce (1762-1829), with an additional register for the tribunal of Commerce (1830-1868), plus additional inventories and index of litigation carried out under the jurisdiction of these bodies. I focus on the register of protests against the sea. There is an index that allows for the gathering of information and data speedily: *Arxiu de la Corona de Aragó* (ACA), Barcelona, *Índice de los Registros de Protestas de Mar* (1766-1868), which I have also used in the preparation of this article and *Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó* (ACA), Barcelona, *Registros de Protestas de Mar* (1766-1868) in 33 vols. (All of them now gathered in one enormous volume and including over 25,000 of such protests). For these two entries mentioned above see ACA, Barcelona, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, f200v and 203v. See also below.

less interesting than others involving dramatic accounts of peril at sea, mentioning steamships, or trade with locations not often associated with Barcelona's commerce. The significance lies in that they were the last protests filed at the Consulate of Commerce. With them, over one century of recording maritime incidents (all written in Castilian) came to an abrupt end. From 1868 onwards, the Consulate's jurisdiction was delegated to the Audiencia (royal appeals court), reflecting Barcelona's new political and economic realities.

The Royal Consulate of Commerce and the Protests against the Sea

In the simplest way to describe them, the «protests against the sea» were depositions by ship captains reporting difficulties at sea. They were filed at the *Real Consulado de Comercio del Principado de Cataluña* (hereafter Consulate of Commerce) immediately upon arrival in Barcelona. Following without exception a formulaic pattern, these depositions reported actual or possible damage to a ship's cargo and sought to exonerate the captain from charges of negligence or incompetence. By blaming tempestuous seas and adverse weather, captains attempted to explain their misfortunes as resulting from «natural» phenomena or acts of God. The protests also served to set into motion insurance claims and to obtain from the Consulate of Commerce a legal statement as to how and how much of the cargo was lost. In that sense, these depositions were intimately linked to the purpose and history of the Consulate of Commerce in Barcelona and to similar institutions in Valencia, Alicante, and elsewhere.

From the thirteenth century onwards consulates of the sea (*Consulados/Consolat del mar*) spread throughout the Western Mediterranean to regulate and structure trade and commercial relations. After Philip V's victory in the war of Spanish Succession in 1714, centralized administrative practices (the Decree of the New Plant in 1707 for Valencia and Aragon, and in 1716 for Catalonia) came into place to replace local customs. The city and the Principality lost their ancient local laws and privileges (Navarre and the Basque Country preserved their *fueros*).³ Nonetheless, the important role of the *Consulados del mar* in Mediterranean ports' economic life, as well as the need for commercial tribunals and trade regulations led, in spite of the survival of the *Consulado del Mar* as an institution, to the foundation between 1758 and 1766 of additional regulatory institutions such as: the *Junta de Comercio de Barcelona*, the *Consulado de Comercio y Matrícula de Comerciantes*, and the Royal Consulate of Commerce. The latter was just one of three different bodies dealing with Barcelona's maritime and land trade. The year 1766 marked the moment in which the protests against the sea began to be collected in the Consulate's Archives. As María Jesús Espuny Tomás has already described in detail, the Consulate came

3. On the Decree of the New Plant see Gil Pujol, Xavier, «Catalunya I Espanya, 1469-1716: Dinàmiques polítiques en una monarquia composta», *Catalunya i Espanya*, n.º 1, Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona, 2019, pp. 124-126.

into existence as a «tribunal in which contentious matters related to maritime and land commerce were to be settled». These matters included, as they did in Bilbao, Valencia, and elsewhere, the loss of ships at sea, as well as damage to the cargo or to the vessel. The decrees that led to foundation of the Consulate also ordered the use of Latin or Castilian (the latter almost exclusively) for the records to be archived in the Consulate's offices.⁴

What purpose did the protests serve? How did they translate into insurance claims? Following on Hilario Casado Alonso's work, maritime insurance was usually purchased on the exporting port from an agent representing one of several large insurance companies then in existence. For the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, London, New York, Antwerp, and other locations had replaced early modern insurance centers, such as Burgos, Genoa, and others.⁵ Insurance would have been purchased for the round trip or between the exporting site and Barcelona. After the protest had been filed formally, the ship company would then solicit insurance payment from their respective agents or from the principal insurer, a practice and protocol familiar to most of us who have had the misfortune to file an insurance claim.

Barcelona and the Protests Against the Sea as Historical Sources

This is not a history of Barcelona or of its economy. Such an enterprise would require a great deal more than what I am able to do here. Instead, this is a micro-historical glance at the city's trade links to other parts of the world as seen through a discreet collection of documents. For over a century, 1766-1868, they provide a window into different aspects of Barcelona's economy, weather conditions in the Mediterranean, the nature of seafaring, and ship technology. This is, above all, about Barcelona's maritime byways, linking the city, first and foremost to the Mediterranean, following patterns of trade that harked back to Antiquity. As such, the protests against the sea reflect Barcelona's enduring relationship with the Mediterranean, providing confirmation of recent findings in Mediterranean history. These documents confirm the continuity of Mediterranean coastal tra-

4. Espuny Tomás, María Jesús, *El real consulado...*, cit., pp. 84-85, 103, 133, *et passim*. Espuny Tomás' s excellent account shows the administrative structure of the Consulate (with a substantial commercial representation), though she does not address the protests against the sea. The Royal Consulate of Commerce was distinct from other administrative and supervisory «consulates» founded between 1758 and 1766 as part of Bourbon reforms, such as the *Junta de Comercio de Barcelona*, the *Consulado de Comercio y Matrícula de Comerciantes*. See Molas Ribalta, Pere, *Comerç i estructura social a Catalunya i València al segle XVII i XVIII*, Barcelona, Curial, 1977, cap. 7. Throughout this article «the Consulate of Commerce» refers to the «*Real Consulado de Comercio*» as described by Espuny Tomás.

5. Casado Alonso, Hilario, *El triunfo de Mercurio*, Burgos, Cajacírculo, 2003; Casado Alonso, Hilario, «El mercado internacional de seguros de Burgos en el siglo XVI», *Boletín de la Institución Fernán González*, n.º 219, 1999, pp. 277-306, and Casado Alonso, Hilario, «Los seguros marítimos de Burgos» *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. Historia*, vol. 4, n.º 1, 2003, pp. 213-242; Kingston, Christopher, «Marine Insurance in Britain and America, 1720-1844: A Comparative Institutional Analysis», *The Journal of Economic History*, 67, n.º 2, June 2007, pp. 379-409.

vel routes (as Braudel notes in his study of the Mediterranean in the sixteenth century), and the existence of Mediterranean micro-economies and connectivity, as described by Harden and Purcell in their influential book, *The Corrupting Sea*.⁶ These same sea routes, extending beyond the Straits of Gibraltar and the Dardanelles, connected the city to other parts of Europe and, finally, to most of the world beyond the shores of Europe.

The protests against the sea illustrate the period between 1766 and 1868; yet the Consulate of Commerce's extant documentation (now at the ACA) shows us the slow but inexorable changes in the city's commercial partners, in what was traded, and how. Although the protests against the sea provide only a partial and somewhat distorted view of all these issues (reports of ships that met with maritime difficulties or of goods imported into Barcelona), they are nonetheless significant sources of information, not just for Barcelona's but for the Mediterranean and global trade. If for one year alone, 1868, we have 325 depositions (close to 25,000 for the entire period), what then would have been the entire volume of trade in this period? What percentage of the whole did these protests against the sea represent? The actual number of ships coming into Barcelona's harbor must have been in the thousands every year, confirming the city's need for foodstuffs, raw material, and machinery, as it became a modern metropolis.

In approaching this topic, certain choices had to be made at the beginning of the research and writing. In several visits to the ACA, I dealt with the massive documentation in two distinct ways. One was to sample one year out of every decade. The other was to examine in detail specific years, 1766, 1866, 1868.⁷ What I learned from this approach was that there were patterns of trade (such as the import of certain items, though not always from the same localities) that remained constant for over a century. Throughout the period 1766-1868, there were obvious trends such as: the months in which the larger number of maritime incidents occurred (winter months); the enduring need to supply the city with grain from a diversity of locations, the inexhaustible appetite for wood from Scandinavia (for the building boom from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century); and the relative absence of mentions of trade with North Africa. Yet, in extrapolating from one year or a set number of years, one should emphasize that no single year or decade was *sui generis*. For example, in 1866, a year that I have examined as a whole for the purpose of comparison with 1868, the Black Sea or Romanian grain imports that dominate the 1868 protests, are not mentioned even once. Of course, Barcelona received

6. Since Fernando Braudel's work on the Mediterranean more than seventy years ago, the last two decades has seen a reigniting of the study of the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world as central to the study of late medieval and early modern Europe. The number of books published recently are remarkable in their number and capacious reach. See, for example, Fernand Braudel's foundational work, Braudel, Fernand, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, vol. 1, New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1975, pp. 231-354; Horden, Peregrine; Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2000, pp. 51-172 for «micro-ecologies»; Abulafia, David, *The Great Sea*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 545-640 for the modern Mediterranean. Harris, W. H. ed., *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

7. Some of my early findings are published in Ruiz, Teófilo F., *The Western Mediterranean and the World. 400 CE to the Present*, Malden, MA, Wiley/Blackwell, 2018.

wood from Scandinavia, machinery from England, sugar and coffee from the Caribbean and South America, cotton from the United States; but the volume of these commodities coming into the city changed from decade to decade and from year to year, reflecting the transformation of the city, its economy, and the possibility of new trade partners.⁸

Although I have already deployed these documents in previous works, by focusing on 1868 the depositions allow us to see what these historical sources tell us about Barcelona, about the city's relation to the sea, about its leading mercantile families, international trade, maritime routes and incidents at sea, as well as the impact of changing seafaring technology (steamships) on the city's trade. But before turning to a close look at the evidence, it may be appropriate to emphasize that 1868, the last year in which depositions against the sea were archived, coincided with momentous events sweeping Spain's politics and economy. This was also the case with Barcelona.

1868: Spain, Barcelona, and the Protests Against the Sea

1868 marked an inflection point in Spain's political history. Throughout the previous century, the Bourbon's enlightened reforms of the Spanish administration and the re-structuring of the economy, above all under Charles III (r. 1759-1788), allowed Spain to regain some of its former importance in European affairs. While Enlightenment ideas, some of them autochthonous, left a profound mark on Spain's culture, this was not, however, without opposition from traditional and religious circles. In the wake of the turmoil created by the Peninsular War (1807-1814), popular uprisings against the French, the restoration of Ferdinand VII (1784-1833), and a brief liberal interlude highlighted by the Constitution of Cádiz (1812), Spain faced great challenges. Ferdinand VII's despotic and ultra-conservative policies led to enduring conflicts between ultra-Catholic and conservative groups and Spain's growing liberal and republican elements. In addition, the loss of most of the Spanish colonies in the New World by 1821 dealt a severe political and economic blow to the metropole. After Ferdinand VII's death, Isabelle II's (1833-1868) indecisive rule did not help. Sasha Pack has aptly summarized the period as one of Spain's intermittent reach for liberal solutions in the context of failed and/or successful revolutions and military coups.⁹ The Carlist wars, a series of religious and political armed conflicts, lasted on and off from 1833 to the early 1870s, adding to the instability of the kingdom. The First Carlist War (1833-1840) —there would be two additional conflicts—

8. On the early nineteenth century economic transformations: Calosci, Laura, *Nacionalismo económico y comercio mediterráneo. Pensamiento y acción de la Junta de Comercio de Barcelona, 1763-1847*, Lleida, Editorial Milenio, 2006, pp. 19-97.

9. Astigarraga, Jesús (ed.), *The Spanish Enlightenment Revisited*, Oxford, The Voltaire Foundation, University of Oxford, 2015. On resistance to French ideas: Torrecillas, Jesús, *Guerras literarias del XVIII español: la modernidad como invasión*, Salamanca, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2008. Also Pack, Sasha D., *The Deepest Border: The Straits of Gibraltar and the Making of the Modern Hispano-African Borderland*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2019, p. 22.

pitted the Queen regent, María Cristina, and her daughter Isabella II, the rightful heir to the throne, against the dubious claims of the Infante Don Carlos and his descendants. In 1868, a military coup by General Prim, a Catalan by birth and upholder of strong liberal principles, brought about what has been described as the «Glorious Revolution» and the fall of the Bourbon dynasty. In many respects, the hope was that the 1868 Glorious Revolution would address the ills besetting a country divided between liberals and absolutists, dominated by a conservative church, and prone to successive (mostly liberal-inspired) military coups (*pronunciamientos*) or revolutions.¹⁰

The events of 1868 were also an attempt to constitutionally define Spain. Was it to be a republic or to remain a monarchy? And, if the latter, what kind of monarchy and who was to be elected king? The 1868 *gloriosa* was also a confrontation between progressive and left leaning political groups against conservatives and/or the Catholic Church. Prim, himself with strong republican sympathies, firmly believed that Spain needed a monarch and that republicans constituted a minority. The 1868 *gloriosa* articulated the Spanish liberals' desire, as was the case elsewhere in Western Europe, to achieve legal equality for all Spanish citizens. As such, liberals and progressives opposed the existence of local privileges, a remnant of the Ancient Regime. Barcelona, contrary to recent political formulations, was one of the centers of peninsular liberalism. As such, Catalan liberals sought to homogenize Spain's political landscape, and this trend was present throughout the country. In many ways, this helps explain the success of the diverse consulates and institutions aimed at creating peninsular-wide standards. Furthermore, when placing the 1868 glorious revolution's aftermath within the context of Cuba's (one of Spain's most significant economic assets) failed war for independence (1868-78) and the Carlist wars, one could see the dangers that political instability presented to the nation as a whole. The conflict in Cuba began, not coincidentally, in October 1868.¹¹

Political issues and ideological antagonisms were not the only causes that led to the *gloriosa*. As Raymond Carr pointed long ago, the 1868 Revolution has to be placed in the context of a European-wide economic crisis, a downturn in the railroad boom and a cotton crisis as the result of the American Civil War. Not every historian of modern Spain agrees with Carr's view of nineteenth century Spanish politics as a «narrative of failure».

10. Radcliff, Pamela B., *Modern Spain: 1808 to the Present*, Malden, MA, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017.

11. I owe these reflections to Professor Javier Gil Pujol's wise advice on the minefield of Spanish politics and ideology and the minefield of center vs periphery, Madrid vs Barcelona. See the old but formidable book by Carr, Raymond, *Spain, 1808-1939*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966, pp. 79-346; Heer, Richard, *An Historical Essay on Modern Spain*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971, pp. 99-112. On Prim as the main protagonist of the pre-revolutionary period until his assassination in 1870 Donézar y Díez de Ulzurrun, Javier María, *Prim: un destino manifesto*, Madrid, Sílex, 2016. For the Cuban war Ferrer, Ada, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898*, Chapel Hill, N.C., University of North Carolina Press, 1999. For the economic aspects of the 1868 *gloriosa* see also the pioneer article by Sánchez Alborno, Nicolás, «El trasfondo económico de la revolución [of 1868]» in Lida, Clara E.; Iris Zavala (eds.), *La revolución de 1868. Historia, pensamiento, literatura*, New York, American Publishing Co., 1970; Carrera Pujal, Jaume, *La Barcelona del segle XVIII*, Barcelona, Bosch, 1951; Carrera Pujal, Jaume, *La economía de Cataluña en el siglo XIX*, vol. 4, Barcelona, Bosch, 1961; Carrera Pujal, Jaume, *La lonja del mar y los cuerpos de comercio de Barcelona*, Barcelona, Bosch, 1953.

There were challenges but also successes. The constitution of 1837 defined the Spanish state according to those liberal principles that had animated the Cortes of Cádiz in 1812. Spain's government also embraced modernization, certainly in Madrid but also in other urban and industrial locations, while also instituting significant kingdom-wide administrative and educational reforms. The nineteenth century also witnessed Spanish's attempt to carve colonies in North Africa. Barcelona benefited greatly from these political developments and reforms.¹²

Barcelona and Catalonia in 1868

Economic changes, well-illustrated by the Consulate of Commerce's documentation, had a dramatic impact on Catalonia in general and on Barcelona in particular. After a period of decline that dated back to the late Middle Ages, the result of factional social and economic strife throughout the early modern period, the decline of Mediterranean trade, and the rise of the Atlantic and global economies, Barcelona began its long-term and vigorous recovery by the end of the seventeenth century. The city's renaissance was obvious in its demographic growth. From 37,000 inhabitants in 1714, the population rose to 115,000 in 1802. By 1850, the city had already a population of 187,000 inhabitants, with probably 500,000 by 1900. The roots for the city's demographic growth and economic expansion were grounded in the past. The steady rise in the number of inhabitants confirms, as Ringrose has argued, the global long-term expansion from the late Middle Ages onwards. The growing number of protests against the sea that mentioned foodstuffs and building materials necessary for the demographic and spatial expansion of the city also attest that Barcelona and Valencia, the two leading mercantile centers in the Crown of Aragon, while becoming part of the global economy, retained their vital connections with the Mediterranean world.¹³ Embracing commercial links with diverse parts of the world

12. Carr, Raymond, *Spain, 1808-1939...*, cit., pp. 299-300; Radcliff, Pamela B., *Modern Spain...*, cit.; Shubert, Adrian, *A Social History of Modern Spain*, London and Boston, Unwinn Hyman, 1990; Vincent, Mary, *Spain 1833-2002: People and State*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007; Phillips Jr., William D.; Carla Rahn Phillips, *A Concise History of Spain*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, chapter 6 and bibliography therein. In addition, the influential work of Prados de Escosura, Leandro, *De imperio a nación. Crecimiento y atraso económico en España (1780-1930)*, Barcelona, Alianza, 1988, re-edited in 1991, and Ringrose, David, *Spain, Europe and the «Spanish miracle», 1700-1900*, Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press, 1996; Grafe, Regina, *Distant Tyranny. Markets, Power, and Backwardness in Spain, 1650-1800*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2012; Fradera, Josep Maria, *Cultura nacional en una sociedad dividida: Cataluña, 1838-1868*, Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2003; and Fradera, Josep Maria, *The Imperial Nation. Citizens and Subjects in the British, French, Spanish and American Empires*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2018.

13. Carr, Raymond, *Spain, 1808-1939...*, cit., p. 300; Nadal Oller, Jordi, *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717: l'immigration française et les autres facteurs de son développement*, Paris, S. E. V. P. E. N., 1960. A brief mention of Barcelona's population in Rudé, George F. E., *Europe in the Eighteenth Century: The Aristocracy and the Bourgeoisie*, New York, Praeger, 1973, p. 55. Ringrose, David R., *Expansion and Global Interaction, 1200-1700*, New York, Longman, 2001, pp. 35-37, 191-198. See Grafe's excellent study (Grafe, *Distant tyrann-*

fueled Barcelona's early steps into becoming an industrial center. Based on cotton manufacturing, the city and the region became, together with the Basque country, early Spanish examples of the great shift from country to city, from farm to factory that would transform the western world.¹⁴ Barcelona's insertion into the world's economy and growth as an industrial center is clearly suggested by the protests against the sea. From construction materials to build the city's new urban expansion, grain and fish to feed its growing population, and machinery, locomotives, and other industrial goods to feed its factory, the protests against the sea provide a clear road map to the city's transformation.

The 1868 revolution, the monarchical interlude under Amadeo of Savoy (1870-73), and the brief Republican rule in 1873 assured the liberal Barcelona mercantile elites of their membership within a wider national project. In Barcelona, signs of growing industrial development were obvious by the middle of the century. The opening of a railroad link between Mataró and Barcelona in 1848, the inauguration of the Gran Teatro del Liceu, work on the city's expanded City Hall the previous year, and the foundation of the Institut Industrial de Catalunya the same year reflected the city's new economic prowess and confidence. Important among these building projects was the demolition of Barcelona's walls and Cerda's plan for the expansion of the city (the Eixample) undertaken between 1854-1860. This is not to say that all was a rush to prosperity and revival. Successive cholera epidemics until the 1860s and other ills impacted but did not derail Barcelona's trajectory towards its embrace of modernity at the turn of the century.¹⁵

Protests Against the Sea, 1766-1868

From the first deposition —filed by a captain from Gibraltar at the Consulate of Commerce on 7 January 1766— and for the next century, thousands of captains of merchant

ny..., *cit.*) which re-examines the issue of economic development within the framework of the center-periphery debate. Additionally, Permanyer, Lluís, *Història de l'Eixample*, Barcelona, Plaza y Janes, 1990.

14. Thompson, J.K.J., *A Distinctive Industrialization: Cotton in Barcelona, 1728-1832*, Cambridge & New York, Cambridge University Press, 1992; Molas Ribalta, Pedro, *Los gremios barceloneses del siglo XVIII: la estructura corporativa ante el comienzo de la revolución industrial*, Madrid, Confederación Española de Cajas de Ahorros, 1970; and Molas Ribalta, Pedro, *Comerç i estructura social...*, *cit.*; Romero Marín, Juanjo, *La construcción de la cultura del oficio durante la industrialización. Barcelona, 1814-1860*, Barcelona, Icaria Editorial, Publicacions i Edicions Universitat de Barcelona, 2005. Also Fradera, Josep Maria, *Indústria i mercat: les bases comercials de la indústria catalana moderna (1814-1845)*, Barcelona, Ed. Crítica, 1987.

15. On Barcelona, Fernández Armesto, Felipe, *Barcelona: A Thousand Years of the City's Past*, London, Sinclair-Stevenson, 1991, pp. 117-69; McDonogh, Gary; Sergi Martínez-Rigol, *Barcelona*, Cambridge & Medford, MA, Polity, 2018. On the city's urban renewal Busquets, Joan, *Barcelona: The Urban Evolution of a Compact City*, San Francisco, CA, Applied Research & Design Publishing, 2014. On cholera epidemics in nineteenth century Europe in general and in Spain in particular: Baldwin, Peter, *Contagion and the State in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1997; Carmona, Juan Ignacio, *Enfermedad y sociedad en los primeros tiempos modernos*, Sevilla, Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 2005. On memorialization and building a new identity Michonneau, Stéphane, *Barcelona: mémoire et identité*, Rennes, Presses Universitaire de Rennes, 2007, pp. 58-63.

ships flocked to the Consulate of Commerce's offices to protest against the sea and inclement weather. That same January 1766, French, English, Dutch, Spanish, and captains from other nationalities complained of tempestuous weather, voicing their fears, duly recorded by the Consulate's clerks, that their merchandise may have been damaged or lost. For the next century, all these depositions closed with the formulaic sentence: «I wish to protest, and I protest against the sea, bad weather, high seas...».¹⁶ Although the highly formulaic nature of these depositions, fairly unchanged for a century, alert us that these were the equivalent of insurance claims (some of them obviously filled preemptively before a real assessment of the damage could be made), there were noticeable changes in the information found in these protests over the century for which we have depositions. These sources provide us with a window on the different goods that were traded during this period and how they changed over time. From types of ships, tonnage, products exchanged, weather conditions, provenance of the ships, the different nationalities of sea captains and registration, and the work of translators and vice consuls in Barcelona who served as interlocutors for some of these foreign captains, we can also see the slow but significant changes in Barcelona's trade from one that was centered on the Mediterranean to becoming part of a world-wide system of mercantile exchanges.

My approach to the Consulate of Commerce's registers, as noted earlier, has been dictated by the sheer volume of the extant records and by the limitations imposed by intermittent research trips to the ACA. None of the great events of the age are explicitly evident in the documentation—the industrial revolution, the economic importance of the slave trade in which Barcelona merchants played an important role, the American and French revolutions, and the Napoleonic wars. One exception is the tangential evidence of trade in certain products, as for example the export of cotton from the Confederacy States to Europe during the American Civil war. Similarly, the growing number of references to Cuban and Brazilian sugar, cotton, and other raw materials after 1821 may indicate the shift in Spain's mercantile patterns—after the loss of most of its American colonies in the early 1820s—to trade with its remaining colonial holdings and with areas

16. ACA, Barcelona, 1-3, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868. Some examples will suffice. In January 1766, besides Carreras, the following protests were recorded at the *Consulado de Comercio*: M. Hange, captain of the ship *Our Lady of Mercy*, a citizen of Carnet with his ship registered in Spain carried diverse merchandise from Cádiz (probably coming from Atlantic markets and transferred to his ship outside the Straits of Gibraltar) to Alicante and Barcelona. The Dutch captain, Sepher de Wilder (the scribes in the consulate of commerce tried to render foreign names as accurate as they could but often failed to do so.) of the ship *Liberty*, registered in the Netherlands, stated through an interpreter (Juan Bautista Cabanyes and vice consul of the Netherlands in Barcelona) that on his voyage from Amsterdam from where he was bringing grain, he met bad weather that may have damaged his cargo. He wished to protest against the sea. Robert Hogg, the English captain of the ship *King George* sailed from New York to Barcelona carrying wheat. He also met bad weather and rough seas that damaged his cargo and, therefore, protested against the sea and against the intemperate weather. Two other protests were registered that day through two different interpreters. One from another Dutch captain, and the other from an English one. Both ships carried wheat from the Netherlands and England. Both claimed to have had their cargo damaged by tempests at sea. Both used translators who served as consuls or vice consuls for their respective countries.

of the Portuguese empire in the Americas. Nonetheless, the extant protests against the sea also reflect the continuity of commercial patterns in the Western Mediterranean. With the notable exceptions of sugar, cotton, machinery, oil, and other signs of modern economies of scale, there is little in most of the entries that an ancient or medieval historian of Mediterranean trade would not find familiar. There were, of course, significant differences as well.

Barcelona in 1868: Trading Partners and Commodities

Elsewhere, I have examined these documents for what they tell us about Mediterranean weather patterns, maritime routes, the ships' provenance and tonnage, and the diversity of vessels connecting Barcelona to the world between 1766 and 1868.¹⁷ While focusing on 1868, I am fully conscious of the perils of extrapolating from a discreet number (325) of depositions reporting maritime incidents. The documents recording these «protests against the sea» stand for a much larger number of ships that came to Barcelona that year. Did the nature of sea routes influence the evidence? And, if so, how? Nonetheless, it does not require a suspension of belief to posit that the protests against the sea closely reflected the patterns of trade for the entire year.

In 1868 Barcelona traded with nearby ports in the Western Mediterranean, other Iberian locations, Northern Europe (including the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, and the Baltic region), the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea area, as well as the Americas, though mentions of South American ports were limited to Brazilian locations and El Callao (on the Pacific rim). There are two references to North Africa, one to a ship sailing from Oran to Barcelona, and another from Egypt to that city: the only two mentions of North Africa I have found in the samples I have examined for every decade. References to several ports in the United States, one in Terranova, and a large number of entries identifying ships sailing from Caribbean ports (mostly Cuba and Puerto Rico) have also made their way to the holdings of the Consulate of Commerce. No protests against the sea appear from ships sailing directly from Asia, though references to Manila can be found in earlier years. One must emphasize the sources' seasonal inflection. In spite of the improvement in seafaring, the end of corsair activity, and the growing number of steamships carrying Barcelona's trade, the number of protests in 1868 was quite high in comparison to other years. In 1868 sea captains filed 325 protests against the sea, as compared to only 170 in 1866 or 214 one hundred years earlier. Only 16 complaints were registered in July 1868, while September experienced the highest number of protests against rough seas and bad weather (51). Of the 325 protests, 118 came from captains beginning and ending their trip in the Mediterranean.¹⁸ Other vessels, such as those car-

17. See Ruiz, Teófilo F., *The Western Mediterranean...*, *cit.*, pp. 26-29 and 216-223 for a study of 1866. The differences with the evidence just two years afterwards is quite remarkable.

18. The numbers for the year were as follows: January (28), February (22), March (17), April (20), May

rying goods from Scandinavia, the Caribbean, or the Black Sea, had long journeys and often greater chance of meeting rough weather as they made their way to Barcelona, though, as noted, Mediterranean ports were also vulnerable. Perhaps the large number of depositions by those sailing from nearby ports (Marseille, Genoa, *et al.*) reflected a greater volume of trade.

Scandinavian and Finnish Ports: Commodities

Ships sailing from Scandinavian and Finnish ports to Barcelona represented the largest actual number and percentages of all vessels mentioned in the protests against the sea in 1868. One may perhaps assume that seafaring from the North Sea to Barcelona, with the perennially difficult sea conditions found in the English Channel, the Straits of Gibraltar, and the Gulf of Valencia (places well known for maritime disasters) may have been the main reason for the large number of protests, that is, the number was so high not because trade between Barcelona and the far Northern parts of Europe dominated the patterns of commercial exchange but because of adverse weather conditions along the way. Sailing across the Atlantic Ocean from the Americas or the long route from the Black Sea to the Western Mediterranean (which included sailing through the treacherous Gulf of Lion), however, also presented numerous perils; yet the number of protests against the sea from these destinations did not match those from Scandinavia and the Baltic areas. With these caveats in mind, one may conclude that trade between Barcelona and Scandinavian and/or Finnish ports may have represented almost 24 % of all the trade coming into Barcelona in 1868. Depositions from these specific routes (either from the Norwegian coast or from the Baltic) amounted to around 74 out of 325 depositions.¹⁹

Although a diverse number of Scandinavian and Finnish ports are mentioned as the origin for ships sailing into Barcelona in 1868, four ports appeared prominently in the depositions: Bergen and Kristiansund (noted in the documents as Christiansund and not to be confused with Kristiansand) in Norway (part of the Danish Crown until 1905), Västervik in Sweden, and Björneborg in Finland. As to the latter, this was the Swedish name for Pori, a port city on the west coast of Finland in the Gulf of Bothnia and part of the Russian Empire in 1868. Although located in Finland, Björneborg or Pori had a strong Swedish presence, and long-standing historical and commercial ties to Scandinavia. Most of the ships carrying wood from Björneborg (Pori) and from other locations in Scandinavia to Barcelona were with, just a few exceptions, registered either in Norway

(20), June (22), July (16), August (31), September (51), October (41), November (28), and December (23). See ACA, Barcelona, *Índice de los Registros de Protestas de Mar* (1766-1868).

19. The actual number of depositions involving trade from Scandinavia and Finland may fluctuate by two or three or between 71 and 75. Some of the ports listed in the documentation are not easily identifiable. Nonetheless, because of their cargo (a cargo usually exclusively associated with the Scandinavian trade) and the ships' port or country of registration, I have assigned them to Scandinavia.

(mostly in Stavanger, Gävle, or Nystad) or in Björneborg itself. Some ships were also registered in Rostock (an old Hansa city in northern Germany with access to the Baltic through Warnemünde), reflecting the enduring nature of Hanseatic trade patterns. Wood came occasionally to Barcelona from other locations (from Kristiansund, even from Livorno) but mostly from Björneborg.²⁰ Although Barcelona and other peninsular ports had traditional trade ties to Scandinavia (medieval imports of cod and herring, as well as in the first depositions against the sea in 1766), by 1868 Barcelona carried an extensive trade with the four aforementioned ports. Kristiansund and Bergen faced the North Sea and the Atlantic with a direct route into the English Channel, around the Iberia Peninsula and into the Mediterranean. Kristiansund is mentioned 18 times in the depositions and Bergen five. Västervik (mentioned 6 times) and Björneborg (mentioned 14 times) were on the Baltic, the former on the eastern coast of Sweden (across the water from the important old Hanseatic island trading center at Gotland) and the second on the west coast of Finland. Both had easy access to the North Sea and to other Scandinavian ports.

Commodities

Scandinavian and Finnish ports sent, almost exclusively, two types of commodities to Barcelona: cod (*bacalao*) and wood. The latter is described as either wood (fairly unprocessed raw material) and/or as *tablones* or wood planks. Since there are fifty-four mentions of both processed and unprocessed wood (most of it from Björneborg), this commodity represented the bulk of the goods imported by Barcelona from Scandinavian and Finnish ports in 1868. Samples from other decades and extrapolating (always a precarious enterprise in dealing with the protests against the sea for a full view of Barcelona's entire trade) also show that wood was the main product coming from Scandinavia and Finland into the city from 1766 onwards. The progressive increase in the number of mentions of wood from the second half of the eighteenth century to 1868 paralleled the accelerated growth of the city and its rapid urban expansion, especially after 1860 and the removal of the city walls. Wood was essential for construction in Barcelona's *Eixample* and elsewhere throughout the metropolitan area, and Scandinavia had long been the most important and almost sole provenance for it. The other commodity often mentioned in the extant documentation is cod, that together with herring had been imported into Iberia since the Middle Ages, with Kristiansund as the main supplier (26 entries). Numerous mentions in 1868 also indicated the need to provision a growing population after the mid-nineteenth century. One must conclude that the citizens of Barcelona, as they do today, consumed large amounts of cod. But cod, which is almost always salted and had a long shelf life without refrigeration, was not the only type of fish imported. Although in much lesser numbers, *pez palo* (a kind of thresher shark) was also mentioned. Tar and

20. ACA, Barcelona, 1, 2v, 6, 7, 110v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 3-January-1868, 7-January-1816, 13-January-1868, 13-January-1868, and for later in the year, 3-August-1868; *et al.*

pitch, rarely mentioned in the extant depositions, completed the limited list of commodities carried to Barcelona from Scandinavian and Finnish ports.

Scandinavian and Baltic Trade: Ships and Sailing Patterns

The 1868 protests against the sea show an uneven distribution of maritime difficulties throughout the year. Depositions followed chronological patterns present in almost every year between 1766 and 1868. Winter months, as was to be expected, showed far more maritime incidents than summer months. For ships sailing from Scandinavia and Finland in 1868, most of the depositions against the sea appear in much larger numbers for January (15), October (13), August and November (11 each), and September (10). Unexpectedly, there are only 2 for December, and, typically, fewer between February and July. Of course, these protests against the sea also reflected specific weather conditions, storms, and the like that changed from year to year, as well as the rhythm of commercial exchanges that affected when products were shipped or not. Nonetheless, throughout the 102 years of depositions, the relation between the seasons or months and the frequency of the protests remains fairly the same, but trade between Scandinavia and Barcelona was carried out throughout the year regardless of possible adverse weather conditions. The need for profit and for a sustained supply of goods, even in difficult months, made these perilous voyages still attractive. If the seasons for sailings varied, so did the kind of ships carrying that trade, though maritime difficulties affected equally big ships as they did small ones. In the case of Scandinavian ports exporting goods to Barcelona, the types of vessels listed in the protests against the sea was limited. The depositions included eight *goletas* (schooners), 19 *corbetas* (corvettes), and 23 *bergantines* (brigantines or brigs). One 185 tons *fragata* (frigate) also appears in the documentation, the only exception to the strong dominance of the other three types of ships. Moreover, unlike other depositions reflecting trade with the Eastern Mediterranean or the Americas, no steamships (see below) are listed for trade from Scandinavian and Baltic ports to Barcelona.

Ships' tonnage also varied widely. Smaller schooners and brigs tended to be registered in Spain and piloted by Spanish captains; larger ones were often registered in Scandinavia and had Scandinavian captains. Vessels carrying fish (mostly cod) tended to be smaller than those carrying wood, though not always. Seldom, do we find ships, or at least as shown in the depositions, carrying a variety of products. The protests against the sea from Scandinavian and Baltic ports listed either cod or wood but seldom the two together. Brigs and schooners tended to have smaller tonnage, while corvettes often displaced large tonnages. Most of the ships making the voyage between Scandinavia and Barcelona averaged 200 tons or more. In September 1868, the depositions included the smallest ship recorded for the year, the 48-ton Spanish-registered brigantine *Gaspar*, with J.A. Castro at the helm, transporting cod. We also find the largest ship filing a protest for maritime disasters, the 600-ton Scandinavian-registered corvette *Rechnar* (or *Ragnar*), with J.O. Fontell as captain, and sailing from Björneborg to Barcelona with wood

planks.²¹ This large discrepancy in tonnage, one a very small ship for the rough waters of the North Sea and the Channel, and the other a very large ship, show, once again, that size was not a deterrent against the fury of the sea.

Between Scandinavia and Barcelona: The Struggles of Sea Crossings

The number of protests against the sea, the listing of Scandinavian ports engaged in trade with Barcelona, or the commodities that animated that trade do not convey the issues sea captains encountered on their voyages or the time and cost that would be spent along the sea routes connecting the Baltic and the North Sea with the Mediterranean. Many of these accounts had narrative strategies that enhanced and embellished (if that word could be used) the perils encountered along the route and the damages suffered to their cargo. Natalie Z. Davis' brilliant account of «pardon tales» or «fiction in the archive» may be the lens through which to see these distinctive narratives. Some examples will suffice. On 31 January 1868, accompanied by a translator, O. Lissand, captain of the Norwegian 150-ton brigantine *Cecilia*, registered in the Norwegian port of Bergen, came to the Consulate of Commerce in Barcelona to protest against the sea. His deposition described how he left Bergen on 28 December of 1867, carrying a cargo of cod fish for several prominent Barcelona merchants —the Morea, Granullers, and, most prominently, the Prat (sometimes spelled with two ts) company—. A day after leaving port, the ship met a fierce storm on the North Sea as it made its way to Dover where it sought refuge. From Dover, the brigantine *Cecilia* left for Gibraltar and the Mediterranean on 4 January, but, as it sailed eastward near Málaga and Cape San Antonio, it met heavy winds and high seas. Water entered the hull and damaged the cargo and the ship. The *Cecilia* sought refuge and a port to repair the ship in Mallorca, arriving there on 25 January (that is three weeks to travel between Dover and Mallorca). Leaving the Balearic island on 28 January, the ship finally made it to Barcelona on 30 January 1868 with its captain immediately entering a protest the following day.²²

Similarly, on 29 February 1868, accompanied by an interpreter, D. G. Hille, captain of the 143 tons Stavanger-registered Norwegian schooner, *Adret*, left Bergen on 8 January 1868 with a cargo of cod and *pez espada* for the same Barcelona merchants listed in the *Cecilia*'s protest against the sea. Right away the *Adret* met stiff bad weather (*fuerte temporal*), high winds, and the like, laboring against the storm until 20 January. The following day it entered the English Channel, where, to its misfortune, it again ran into inclement weather. Water came into the hull, and the crew was forced to work tirelessly, bailing the water with pumps. The *Adret* did not reach the Mediterranean until 10 February but even there it encountered large waves and wind (upon reaching Cape San Antonio

21. ACA, Barcelona, 138, 147v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 12-November-1868, 23-November-1868.

22. ACA, Barcelona, 23v-24r, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 31-January-1868.

around 23 February), making port at Barcelona on 29 February 1868 at 10 AM, the last day in a leap-year February. In another example, the Bilbao-registered Spanish brigantine, *Simón* (176 tons), with captain Don Norberto Portanachea at the helm, left Kristiansund with a cargo of cod for Barcelona merchants (Puig & Co.) on 19 December 1867. After stops in Málaga and Cartagena, it ran into severe bad weather (5 inches of waters in its hull), making it to Barcelona only on 8 March. The voyage took more than two and a half months.

TABLE 1. Trade Partners and Commodities: Barcelona 1868.

ORIGIN OF COMMODITIES	NUMBER OF MENTIONS IN PROTESTS AGAINST THE SEA	TYPES OF COMMODITIES
Northern Europe (Scandinavia not included)	26	Locomotives, oil, coal, diverse unspecified products, drugs, wheat, etc.
Western Mediterranean	66	Wheat, flour, barley, marble, green beans, potassium, hides, oil, and, in lesser quantities diverse unspecified goods.
Eastern Mediterranean	59	Wheat, cotton
North America (US)	21	Oil, coal, cotton (from southern US).
South America and Caribbean	40	<i>Guano</i> (from Callao), cacao, cotton, hides.
The Caribbean (Cuba and Puerto Rico)	Cuba represented 21 of the previous 40 (see below)	Sugar, cacao, cotton, cooper, hides, wax, tobacco, coffee, rum, rice
Iberia (only one deposition from Portugal)	21	Flour, cochineal (from Tenerife), barley, beans, sulfur, glass, marble, esparto, and diverse unspecified commodities

SOURCE: ACA, Barcelona, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, Register for 1868.

Clearly, the time for crossing between Scandinavian ports and Barcelona could be quite punitive. And one should not imagine that these incidents were exceptional or rare among the protests against the sea, or that they were confined to smaller ships or certain times of the year, or to vessels carrying cod or thrasher shark. Dramatic and damning maritime incidents occurred throughout the year and affected large and small vessels alike. On 23 November, for example, A.S. Aliarea, captain of the 487-ton corvette *Guba* rushed to the Consulate of Commerce in Barcelona, testifying that he was transporting wood from the port of Sundsvall to Barcelona when rough weather damaged his cargo, prompting him to «protest against the sea and inclement weather».²³ While I have high-

23. ACA, Barcelona, 42v-43, 46v-47v, 185v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 29-February-1868, 9-March-1868, 23-November-1868.

lighted Barcelona's trade with Scandinavian and Baltic ports above and the large amount of wood and cod that came into the city in 1868, the protests against the sea also allow us to see the wide range of commercial ties that linked Barcelona with most of the world. This was almost a global reach. With some notable exemptions, Barcelona's merchants drew from the rest of the world for the growing needs of the city, its industry, and population. This information may be best rendered in the Table 1, that details from where and what type of commodities came into the city in 1868.

The Patterns of Barcelona Trade: Supplying the Modern City

In spite of the high number of depositions filed in 1868, the range of goods listed in the protests against the sea was quite limited, reflecting the regional specialization of the locations with which Barcelona traded. Barcelona imported: a) food stuffs (cod, wheat and other grains, sugar, tobacco, coffee, etc.) to feed its growing population; b) raw material and manufactured goods (cotton, machinery, locomotives, and an endless supply of wood) to feed its burgeoning industries and urban growth; c) a lesser number of commodities aimed at the consumer market, such as marble, drugs, and so forth. Some of the trade followed patterns that were already in place in 1766, when protests began to be recorded. Cod and wood, coming from Scandinavia and the Baltic fall in this category. So did wheat, imported from other parts of the Western Mediterranean in the eighteenth century, but shifting dramatically to the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea in 1868. Spain's last colonial outposts in the Caribbean, Cuba and Puerto Rico also sent large quantities of foodstuff, sugar above all.

What was remarkable about the 1868 depositions, when compared, for example, with those of two years earlier in 1866, is the sharp contrast in how Barcelona was supplied that year, the provenance of wheat (the Black Sea), and the type of ships that traveled from some of these new markets (steamships). Unpacking a sample of the information found in the Table 1, below I focus on three distinct topics: 1) the trade with Cuba and Puerto Rico; 2) the trade with grain producing areas along the Danube, the Black Sea, and the Eastern Mediterranean; 3) the growing presence of steamships (obviously not immune to maritime difficulties) in 1868.

Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Barcelona

In 1868 Cuba was, with the beginning of the Ten-Year War, about to become a thorn on the side of Spanish authorities. Cuba, and to a lesser extent Puerto Rico, turned into quagmires for the fading Spanish overseas empire. In the mid-nineteenth century, these Caribbean colonies had become an untold source of wealth for the metropole. Cuban and Puerto Rican sugar, tobacco, cacao, and coffee became, together with Barcelona and the Basque area's industrial development, a lifeline for the Spanish economy. Cuba's

wealth became a trope in some nineteenth century Spanish novels. Ruined aristocrat or members of prominent families, most of them in Castile, could always regain their fortunes by a convenient marriage to a Cuban heiress, depicted in Orientalizing and racist fashion.²⁴ Barcelona was one the epicenters for the Caribbean trade. Long before 1868, the Catalans had made significant investments in Cuba's sugar industry, profiting as well from the slave trade. Companies, such as the *hijos de Mayol*, individuals such as Joan Güell (who commissioned Gaudí to build him a mansion on the *Paseo de Gracia*), and the well-known slave trader and prominent patron of the arts, Antonio López (whose daughter married Güell's son and whose statue in Barcelona was recently removed by the city) also rose to prominence in Catalan society on the strength of the sugar and slave trade. The 1868 *protestas contra el mar* do not mention the slave trade (abolished in Spain in 1837 and in Cuba in 1886), but they illustrate how Cuba and Puerto Rico contributed to Barcelona's rising need for certain foodstuffs and raw materials.²⁵

Cuba

The island colony sent to Barcelona sugar, coffee, cacao, cotton, wax (*cera*), and cooper (mentioned only once). In the depositions, Cuban goods came from three ports, and one must conclude that these were the ports that traded the most with Barcelona. La Habana accounted for more than a third of the exports, mostly sugar and tobacco, but also one mention of coffee and cooper. La Habana, linked to an important sugar mill in Bejucal by the first train in the Ibirean world (1837), was not, however, the main area for sugar production in the island, with most of the sugar mills (still mostly small enterprises in 1868) located in Cuba's easternmost region. *Matanzas*, a great natural bay east of La Habana, sent more or less the same products, while Santiago de Cuba, also blessed with a great bay on the southeast coast of Cuba, exported sugar, cotton, coffee, cacao, wax, rum and other alcohol products (*aguardiente*). Puerto Rico exported most of its goods, though in far less quantity than Cuba, from its main port in Mayaguez, replicating the Cuban export pattern: sugar, hides, cotton, and coffee. Unlike other routes described in the depositions against the sea for 1868, most of the ships sailing between the Caribbean and Barcelona were registered in Barcelona or even in La Habana. The trade between the Caribbean and Barcelona (the protests against the sea do not reflect what Barcelona exported back to its trading partners) was carried onboard diverse types of ships: corvettes, brigantines, and polacres. The protests against the sea show a large range of tonnage: from a 320-ton corvette, the *Teresa Cubana*, to a smaller polacre, the 137 tons *Magdalena*.

24. Pérez Galdós, Benito, *La familia de León Roch*, Sánchez Llama, Iñigo (ed.), Madrid, Cátedra, 2003.

25. Cervantes Rodríguez, Margarita, *International Migration in Cuba. Accumulation, Imperial Designs, and Transnational Social Fields*, University Park, PA, The Pennsylvania University Press, 2010, pp. 60-66, 91-95. Cervantes Rodríguez notes the profit made by Catalan merchants in carrying sugar to the United States before crossing the Atlantic on the way back to Barcelona.

The size of the ships was no guarantee against maritime disasters, and a brief case study will illustrate the nature and difficulties of this transatlantic route.

The *Teresa Cuban*'s two protests against the sea illustrate the difficulties that could occur in the Atlantic. The vessel, registered in Barcelona and under captain Jaime Manuel Bolwart, departed from La Habana ready to navigate under the «style of a good sailor» («*en disposición de navegar a estilo de buen mariner*») on 2 November 1867. It carried sugar and other commodities for Valencian and Barcelonan merchants, among them the «hijos de Mayol, Lamparea and Cia». The corvette met bad weather, high seas, rain, and wind from the south on its Atlantic crossing, taking as much as 25 inches of water in its hull and requiring the use of water pumps. Reaching Mahón on 12 December 1867, the ship and its crew were placed in quarantine at the city's «lazaretto» until 25 December, arriving in Valencia on 30 December. Leaving Valencia on 4 January, the ship finally arrived in Barcelona a week later. On the following day, Captain Bolwart registered his protest against the sea and bad weather. On a second crossing, the *Teresa Cubana* left La Habana under the same captain and with the same cargo (but now also destined for Marseilles) on 30 April. On 13 May, the *Teresa Cubana* was battered by high seas. Arriving in Barcelona (on its way to Marseilles), the captain went to the Consulate of Commerce to enter his complaint on 22 June 1868.²⁶

These two entries offer significant information. Two voyages from Cuba to Barcelona took from 2 November 1867 to 22 June 1868. Assuming that the ship on the second voyage continued to its original destination, Marseille, took on cargo there and in Barcelona for its return trip, and met with no further disasters, the *Teresa Cubana* could have made the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean three times at best. The time consumed by storms, quarantines, and misadventures made these crossings a bit longer than the usual west to east Atlantic crossing, averaging about six weeks in the nineteenth century: 2 months and 12 days for the first and a month and 22 days for the second. In the second voyage, the ship also carried passengers, combining its role as a merchant ship with the profit of transporting travelers. Quarantines, especially after the epidemic of cholera that swept Spain in the 1860s, remained an impediment to sea travel and commerce. Nonetheless, the margin of profit should have been high enough to make these long voyages acceptable. In its second voyage, the *Teresa Cubana* loaded merchandise in Barcelona to deliver it in Marseille. We must assume that these vessels not only connected Spain in general and Barcelona in particular with the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean, but as did other ships in different routes, connected Barcelona to other ports in the Americas and the Mediterranean.

The Black Sea, the Danube, and the Western Mediterranean

Throughout the one hundred and two years of depositions archived at the Consulate of Commerce (1766-1868), one constant was always present: Barcelona's insatiable need for

26. ACA, Barcelona, 8r-8v, 98r-99r, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 14 January 1868, 22 June 1868.

wheat, rye, barley, and other cereal grains. If, as I have argued elsewhere, the limited availability of peninsular land connections denied to Barcelona access to the cereal producing areas in Central Castile; then, throughout the more than a century of the protests against the sea, grain and flour came to the city in the hold of ships. Whether from other Western Mediterranean or Iberian ports, the import of these commodities was a constant. In 1868, the depositions reflected a radical change in the areas from which grain was imported and how it was transported to Barcelona.

Brâila and Barcelona

This is the story of Brâila, one of the two ports (the other one was Galati nearby and eventually the largest Romanian port on the Danube) on the Danube River with direct fluvial access to the Black Sea. Originally under the Sublime Porte and later part of the duchy of Wallachia, Brâila became the most important outlet for Romanian grain exports to Barcelona by 1868. Identified in the Consulate of Commerce documentation as Ibrail or Ibraila (its early modern Ottoman name) and carried by a small variety of vessels, the ships carrying Ibrail's exports (exclusively wheat) floated down the Danube to the Black Sea, sailed across the Bosphorus to Constantinople (Istanbul), into the Eastern Mediterranean, often to Malta, and, finally, to Barcelona.

There were 53 protests against the sea entered by sea captains whose voyages had originated in either the Danube, the Black Sea, or the Eastern Mediterranean. Two of them identified their cargo as wheat and cotton. Two more carried cotton, and one wheat and barley. Every other ship, 48 altogether, carried wheat exclusively. Of these, 27 ships originated in Ibrail and three from Galati. Remarkably just two years before, in 1866, the protests against the sea did not mention Ibrail or Galati at all. Political developments—the emergence of Romania as a country in 1862, the new port facilities on the Danube, a less restricted transit through the Dardanelles—may help explain this dramatic shift in where Barcelona purchased wheat. In addition, the need to feed a rapidly growing population must have prompted Barcelona merchants to seek a reliable and less expensive supplier of grain. And following patterns of consumption dating back to the Middle Ages, wheat, that is, white bread, was the preferred grain for the well-to-do.

Equally puzzling is that no complaints from ships sailing from Ibrail or Galati (Galeetz in the Consulate's documentation) were filed at the Consulate of Commerce until June 1868. The first deposition dates from 12 June 1868 and the last one from 19 December of the same year.²⁷ Did ships coming from Ibrail avoid the early winter months of the year or did the route not open until then? Besides Ibrail, Smyrna (6 mentions) and Salonica (8 mentions), both of them Ottoman ports on the eastern Mediterranean, were

27. ACA, Barcelona, 79v and 203 v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 12 May 1868, 19 December 1868. References to Barcelona's trade with the Middle East and the Black Sea area begin with a reference to Smyrna on 26 January and ends with the entry for Ibrail in December.

the other two locations with frequent ties to Barcelona. Cotton from Egypt and wheat and cotton from these ports completed the limited variety of commodities coming to Barcelona from the Middle East. The protests against the sea also show that a large number of ships carrying wheat, flour, and other grains came from Western Mediterranean ports: Genoa, Catania, Marseilles, Livorno, and Trieste. Since some of these locations were not particularly known as grain producing regions, did some of the merchants and ship owners in Italy serve as intermediaries between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Barcelona market? Although the depositions do not include that information, my suspicion, based on the fact that some of the Barcelona merchants trading with Western Mediterranean locations were also importing grain from Ibrail, is that such was often the case.

Steamships/Steamers (*Vapor*)

Sea captains' testimony of damage to their cargo on the route between Ibrail, other ports in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and Barcelona also differed significantly from depositions in previous years. They did so by the increased number of steamships found in the depositions. Steamships were, of course, not new to Barcelona's trade. By 1834 steamships connected Barcelona and Mallorca on a regular basis. The building and manufacturing company, *La Maquinista Terrestre y Marítima*, was founded in 1855, a powerful symbol of the new industrial city. The company was, among other building projects, producing engines and propellers for steamships by the late 1850s and 1860s. Although the number of steamships or steamers mentioned in the depositions had been on the rise in the 1860s, 1868, the last year in which protests against the sea were recorded, included a remarkable number of them. While for the entire year 41 out of 325 depositions involved reports of maritime difficulties by steamships (some more than once, or as much as three times), the Eastern Mediterranean and Danube's protests included 20 steamships altogether or almost half of all steamships mentioned that year. Ibrail alone accounted for 13 such ships. Conversely, we have no single protest for steamships traveling across the Atlantic from America to Barcelona or from Scandinavia into the Mediterranean. As the late David Ringrose commented on this paper, in the mid-nineteenth century steamships consumed 15 to 20 tons of coal a day. Thus, the absence of steamships from the Atlantic may have been dictated by their owners' unwillingness to carry large quantities of coal, as well as the inability to refuel along the route. Ship sizes did not allow for long journeys or left sufficient hold space for the cargo, rendering steamships not very profitable for Atlantic crossings or long journeys from Scandinavia.²⁸

Unlike other long voyages from other locations, trade from Ibrail and other Danube ports was carried almost exclusively by steamships and polacras (13 and 14 respectively)

28. Cabana, Francesc, *Fabricants i empresaris. Els protagonistes de la revolució industrial a Catalunya*, 2 vols., Barcelona, Enciclopèdia Catalana, 1992. As to the space needed for coal, I refer here to David Ringrose's comments on this paper at a seminar, held at the University of California San Diego on 18 January 2020.

in 1868. In the case of the Danube, steamships and reliable polacres (with three masts, square rigging, and lateen sails) made sailing upriver to Ibrail and Galati far easier than depending only on sail. Moreover, most of the steamships mentioned here did not have large tonnage. Ibrail had limitations as to the size of ships docking in its harbor. Steamships in the 1860s usually had one to two steam engines with either propellers or paddle-wheel and often combined sails (usually three masts as in a polacre) with steam power. They did not seem to have had great advantages (in terms of avoiding damage to their cargo) over corvettes, brigs, schooner, and other sailing ships. Of the 41 depositions against the sea registered in 1868, two steamships, the *Campeador* and the *Loreley* reported damage to their ships and cargo three times each. Five others entered protests twice. In examining some of these protests, we learn what were the preferred sea routes, the difficulties crossing diverse maritime frontiers, or of supplying the ship with enough coal.

The *Loreley*: From Ibrail to Barcelona

On 2 July 1868, Captain Charles Stewart sailed down the Danube to the Black Sea on the English owned 284-ton steamer the *Loreley* (probably the Lorely). The ship, carrying wheat for the Barcelona mercantile house of Sociedad Guardiola y Albissana, reached the port of Sulina on the Danube delta (identified in the extant protests as Lubina) on 3 July, requiring only one day from Ibrail to the Black Sea. The voyage continued without difficulties to Constantinople. It left the latter port on 7 July for Malta, taking five days to reach that island, loading coal and leaving on the same day. When the *Loreley* entered the Western Mediterranean, one assumes around the always troublesome Gulf of Lion, it met heavy easterly winds and high seas. Reaching Barcelona on Friday 17 July, Captain Stewart, accompanied by a translator, entered his protest against the sea and probable damage to his cargo four days later.

Carrying wheat for the Barcelona company of Srs J.M. Lissa and sons, our clueless captain Charles Stewart sailed out of Ibrail, once again, on 25 August. The *Loreley* reached Constantinople on 27 August, leaving the same day for Malta. Four days out of Constantinople and still in the Eastern Mediterranean, the ship met heavy winds and was battered by the sea, struggling its way into Malta on 2 September and arriving in Barcelona 3 days later. To add to their troubles, ship and crew were quarantined for three days, so it was not until 10 September when, accompanied by a translator, Captain Stewart entered his protest at the Consulate of Commerce. And once again, Captain Charles Stewart sailed this time from Salonica on 3 December. The *Loreley*, carrying wheat for the mercantile company of Srs. Paz, met a storm off Salonica, struggling into Malta to take on coal on 8 December, and leaving the same day. Unfortunate that he was, Captain Stewart met bad weather and high northeastern winds five days after leaving Malta, arriving in Barcelona on 14 December and registering his protest the following day with the help of an interpreter. Knowing the hospitality of the good people of Barcelona, I could imagine that the Consulate of Commerce's clerks immediately recognized Captain

Stewart and, taking pity on his misery, invited him out for tapas and drinks to console him.²⁹

Was this sheer incompetence, criminal intent, or simply extremely bad luck? It was probably a combination of all three that brought Captain Charles Stewart to the Consulate's office three times in six months. His misfortunes, however, provides us with a glimpse into the nature of Ibrail-Barcelona trade, the maritime route that joined these two locations, and other significant details that help to construct a portrait of Barcelona's life in 1868. First, the *Loreley* followed the same route in two of its three voyages from the Eastern Mediterranean. It departed from Ibrail on the Danube River, quickly reached the river's delta into the Black Sea, and touched briefly in Constantinople (probably to clear passage into the Eastern Mediterranean). The *Loreley* needed around 5 days to reach Malta, taking on coal for the rest of the trip. It then sailed westward (most probably, though the extant protests do not specify this), along the southern coast of Sicily, onwards to the always treacherous Gulf of Lion, and then to Barcelona. Further, one must assume that these steamships, as they made their way from the Western Mediterranean to Ibrail, just reversed the route, picking up coal in Malta on its way to the Black Sea and the Danube delta.

The protests against the sea from the Eastern Mediterranean give us a glimpse as to the city's insatiable need for grain. While we do not know what percentage of the depositions against the sea are representative of the overall trade between Ibrail and Barcelona, one must assume that it was not a very high percentage. Otherwise, the trade would not have been profitable. Since the only commodity traded was wheat (trigo), with a few mentions of cotton from the eastern Mediterranean, the amount of grain imported into Barcelona must have been quite significant. In addition, and as already noted, Genoa (mostly flour and wheat), Catania (barley), Marseille, Livorno, even Oran (see below), as well as other locations in the Iberian Peninsula, or in England sent large quantities of grain to Barcelona. If one adds all the wheat, barley, and flour reported as coming from the Western Mediterranean (57 mentions out of 68 depositions) to that from the Danube region and the Middle East, Barcelona's consumption of grain (mostly wheat) was substantial, closely paralleling the city's appetite for wood and fish. One must assume that not all the grain imported was solely aimed at the Barcelona market, but that the city was the most important node for the distribution of wheat and other commodities throughout Catalonia and beyond.

The depositions, those from Ibrail and elsewhere, often included elaborate lists of the mercantile houses hiring ships to bring their cargoes to Barcelona's mercantile ware-

29. ACA, Barcelona, 105r-105v, 134v-135r, 199v-200r, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 21-July-1868, 10-September-1868, 15-December-1868. This was exactly the route followed by other ships doing the Ibrail-Barcelona route, and, specifically, two steamships, the *Brunette* and the *Clyde*, both English registered and carrying wheat for Barcelona's merchants (Sociedad de Padrón y Folch). They departed from Ibrail, one on 18 June and the *Clyde* twelve days later. See ACA, Barcelona, 103r-103v, 104r-104v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 13-July-1868 20-July-1868.

houses. The long list of merchants and commercial enterprises also reflected the city's robust economic life in the second half of the nineteenth century. Fortunes made from international trade often translated into social and political prominence. Comparing the merchants named in the depositions as a sample of the whole, a good number of them overlapped with Barcelona's «good families». This is even clearer when one examines the list of merchants who had assigned their cargo to steamships. While real economic and political power rested with the industrialists and those on the boards of railroad companies, some merchants, such as the Ametlla, Pujol, Grau, Pla, Nadal, and others, rose to prominence in Barcelona on the strength of their trade connections with the outside world.³⁰ Finally, in each of his visits to the Consulate of Commerce, Captain Stewart was accompanied by an interpreter. The informality of the protests against the sea in the second half of the eighteenth century, when captains from diverse linguistic backgrounds came to the Consulate of Commerce without interpreters and most probably registered their protests in the lingua franca of Mediterranean commerce, gave way to formal statements, rendered into Castilian by interpreters, usually the Barcelona consul of each captain's nation.

The other steamboat to enter three protests against the sea in 1868 was the 293-ton *Campeador*, a Spanish ship registered in Gijón with Don Pedro Fernández as its helm. In all three protests, the captain emphasized that the ship was «en disposición de navegar a estilo de buen mariner». All three also concluded with the usual protests against the sea and the captain's insistent denial of any responsibility («desea salir de toda responsabilidad»). Sailing from London on 21 December 1867 with a large assortment of commodities for more than twenty Barcelona mercantile houses —some described as the business of the «widow of» (*viuda de* Sampere, *viuda* Coll y Mondallo, etc.), the ship collected two hundred and fifty-six oil barrels at Le Havre on 23 December—. The *Campeador* ran into high winds and rough seas that swept some of the oil barrels overboard, threatening the ship. In the face of the peril, the crew and the officers on board agreed to bail out all 256 oil barrels. After other misadventures and delays, the ship reached Barcelona on 21 January with Captain Pedro Fernández filing a protest the following day. Twice again in 1868, the *Campeador*, under Captain Fernández's unlucky or inept seafaring skills, met difficulties at sea.³¹

30. McDonogh, Gary W., *Good families of Barcelona: A Social History of Power in the Industrial Era*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 57, 119, 123-24, 133, 159 *et passim*.

31. ACA, Barcelona, 13v, 53r-54r, 144v-145v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 22-January-1868, 24-March-1868, 18-September-1868. Two additional maritime disasters should be mentioned briefly. The 59-ton schooner *Martijos* left Oran with wheat and barley for Barcelona. This is the only explicit mention of trade with North Africa (there is a mention of Egypt as well) that I have seen in the sampling of 102 years of documentation. Second, on 17 October 1868, the 129-ton brigantine, the *Bablethorpe* (sic), left Bristol, carrying among its cargo, a locomotive and coal for the Sociedad de Ferrocarril de Granollers. Rough sea conditions filled the ship's hold with more than four feet of water. To save their lives, the locomotive's boilers (*calderas*) were thrown out into the sea together with other commodities. See ACA, Barcelona, 141v-142v, 160v-161v, *Registros de Protestas de mar*, 1766-1868, 16-September-1868, 17-October-1868. For Spaniards in Oran see Pack, Sasha D., *The Deepest Border...*, *cit.*, p. 77.

Conclusion

Several themes, already raised above, deserve to be reiterated and summarized. First, considering the close to 25,000 depositions between 1766 and 1868, Barcelona's maritime trade must have been enormous. Its port teemed with ships coming from almost every part of the world. If we multiply these with protests registered in other locations, as we know was the case in Alicante and Valencia, then the volume of ships plying the waters of the Mediterranean or coming through the Strait of Gibraltar must have been into the hundreds of thousands for the 1766-1868 period and very large for 1868, before the opening of the Suez Canal and access to even more distant markets.

Second, in spite of the perils at sea, seaborne traffic was still the most efficient way to move commodities from one place to another, even within the Western Mediterranean area. The numerous references to trade with Marseille, Genoa, Livorno, and Spanish ports on Peninsular's southeastern locations, testify to the difficulties of land routes and to the enduring of coastal sailing in the overall Barcelona trade. Nonetheless, 1868 was perhaps also an inflection point. Railroads began to play a significant role in the Spanish economy, as did road networks. Third, although mentions of Asian and African trade connections (probably controlled by English and French interests) are rare or non-existent in 1868 or before, Barcelona maintained a healthy commerce with Northern Europe, the Americas, the Eastern and Western Mediterranean. Over the one hundred and two years of protests against the sea, the Western Mediterranean, while still a vital locus for Barcelona's commerce, was replaced by Scandinavia and the Eastern Mediterranean as the most important markets for supplying the city. Fourth, there was also a shift in the kinds of commodities imported from the eighteenth century to the second half of the nineteenth. While cod fish, wood, and wheat (and other cereal grains) retained their importance, machinery, oil, cotton, and sugar signaled Barcelona's new industrial importance and shifting tastes. While many historians have described and explained the city's developments and its leap to modernity from the late eighteenth century onwards and, most crucially, in the second half of the nineteenth century, were we to lack any of these valuable works, the protests against the sea would still attest to Barcelona's development as a city, its growing population, and building boom.

Five, the depositions were redacted exclusively in Castilian. This confirms the Catalan entrepreneurial and liberal classes' desire for national homogeneity. Castilian had long been part of public discourse with Catalan as the private and familial language. Diglossia was the reality in late nineteenth century Barcelona probably until the end of the century when Catalan became also the language of culture. The remarkable shift occurred when foreign sea captains began to employ translators to make their formal depositions at the Consulate of Commerce.³² Sixth, the 1868 protests against the sea provide

32. Fradera, Josep Maria, *Cultura nacional...*, cit., and Marfany, Joan Lluís, *Nacionalisme espanyol i català-nitat. Cap a una revisió de la Renaixença*, Barcelona, Edicions 62, 2017. As Marfany argues, until the nineteenth century the Catalan elites embraced Castilian, and the turn to Catalan did not occur until around 1898.

evidence for an accelerated transition in seafaring practices and technology, types of ships, and the growing reliance on steam-propelled vessels. Yet, as seen from the depositions, within the range of changes in types of ships there were striking differences. Not a single steamship is reported among the Scandinavian and Baltic Sea's depositions. While the Atlantic crossing, whether from the Caribbean or North America, had very few steamers mentioned in the documentation, England, the leading industrial power in 1868, did rely on steamships to carry its goods to Barcelona. The Danube (Ibrail and Galati) and Middle East (Salonica, Smyrna, and others) wheat trade also depended heavily on steamships. Malta, seldom mentioned in the protests before 1868, came now to play an important strategic role in the supplying of coal for steamships around the middle point of their journey from the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean to Barcelona. In 1868, maritime incidents also tell us a tale of a city (and a region) in the midst of its long-term rebirth into a vibrant and cosmopolitan city, marked by the city's full embracing of modernity and of its wide-ranging links to the sea and to the world.*

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Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, ACA, *Registros de Protestas de Mar* (1766-1868)

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