The Dutch and the Portuguese in West Africa : empire building and Atlantic system (1580-1674)

Ribeiro da Silva, F.I.

CHAPTER SIX: ENTREPRENEURS, BUSINESSMEN AND AGENTS: PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS NETWORKS

The European entrepreneurs and businessmen in the Republic and Portugal as well as their agents overseas were the basis of the complex system of interactions described earlier in this study. In Chapter 6 we will pay special attention to the economic activities of these private investors in the West African trade.

Here, we will examine the European entrepreneurs and businessmen based in the Republic and Portugal financing the insurance of ships and cargoes for the West African trade and operating in the long-distance circuits connecting West Africa with Europe and the Americas.

Our analysis will be based on the economic activities of certain merchants that we will use as case studies.[1] The selection of these merchants is based on the number of relevant primary sources available.[2] A wide set of data including the insurance and the commercial partnerships established between entrepreneurs and businessmen of different cultural backgrounds as well as commercial agreements, labour contracts and powers of attorney will allow us to discuss the level of cross-cultural interactions for the West African trade. Thus, the research findings presented in this Chapter will contribute to the debates on Early Modern business history especially those linked to trade Diasporas, mercantile networks, cross-cultural trade and private entrepreneurship and will show the economic advantages of Diaspora on the building of the Atlantic economy.

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[1] As a consequence of this methodological approach not all notarial contracts concerning the West African trade between *c.*1590 and 1674 will be referred in the text or the footnotes.

[2] The analysis of the entrepreneurs, businessmen and the agents of the Republic will be based on a sample of 494 notarial contracts from the GAA. The sample comprises all notarial acts regarding the business activities of the merchants of this Dutch port with the West Coast of Africa during the period of 1590-1674. This sample includes all contracts for the following places in West Africa: Senegambia, Guinea-Bissau region, Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, Grain, Gold, Ivory and Slave Coasts, São Tomé and Principe, Loango, Congo and Angola. The study of the insurers, merchants and agents operating from Portugal will be based on monopoly contracts and correspondence collected from the AHU, the notarial contracts from the IAN/TT and the ADP.

In Chapter 6, we will also identify the several categories of commercial agents controlling the trade in the Dutch and Portuguese posts and settlements in West Africa and the networks set in place by these insurers, merchants and commercial agents. Based on original data, we will demonstrate that many of these business and financial networks were not based exclusively on family ties, 'national' solidarities or imperial political and geographical unities. We will also argue that many of these networks had a cross-cultural, supra-national and trans-imperial character.

Finally, the research findings presented here will indicate that the commercial organization of the private entrepreneurship was far more efficient than the commercial organization of the State-sponsored trading companies or the commercial monopolies under royal management.

The analysis of the Dutch case will be divided in three periods: i) *c.*1590-1623; ii) 1624-1638; and iii) 1639-1674. This chronological division is necessary since, after the establishment of the WIC in 1621-1624, private merchants were prohibited from trading with West Africa and other areas in the Atlantic, and were forced to remove their assets and personnel from the commercial entrepôts within a period of two years (1623).[3] However, the Company did not respect this period. This provoked many complaints from the private merchants.[4]

These commercial restrictions were in use until 1638 for Brazil and 1648 for North America and West Africa. However, from the early 1640s onwards, the signs of economic decline started to emerge and the WIC's incapacity to conduct trade and guarantee the shipping of slaves and goods in the inter-continental routes led to a gradual opening of its monopoly to private businessmen. Therefore, after the 1640s, and especially during the 1650s and 1660s, there was a revival of private investment from the Republic into West Africa. Thus, in the first and third periods we will focus on the economic activities of the private entrepreneurs, businessmen and agents operating in West Africa, while in the second period we will examine the activities of the WIC, its insurers and its commercial employees. In this period, we will also look at the activities of the interlopers whenever the primary

[3] J. A. Schiltkamp, 'Legislation, jurisprudence, and law in the Dutch West Indian colonies: The order of government of 1629', *Pro Memorie*, 5/2 (2003), pp. 320-321; H. den Heijer, 'Directores, Stadhouderes e Conselhos de administração' in M. Wiesebron (ed.), *O Brasil em arquivos neerlandeses (1624-1654)*, pp. 17-43.
[4] See, for example: GAA, NA 201/137: 1622-07.

sources make this possible.[5] The third period will focus on the activities of the Company and the private insurers, merchants and agents authorized to operate in the areas controlled by the WIC and within certain branches of the monopoly.

The study of the Portuguese case will consider two periods: i) 1580-1640; and ii) 1641-1674. The first period covers the years of the Habsburg rule over Portugal and the second period the phase after the Portuguese Restoration of 1640. This chronological division is essential given the difference between the opportunities merchants enjoyed during the Union of the Iberian Crowns and the limitations imposed on these businessmen and their agents after the Restoration of 1640 and the subsequent War of Independence (1640-1668) against Spain. In the first period, we will examine the businessmen and agents operating from Iberia (both Portugal and Spain) and trading with West Africa trade and other parts of the Iberian Atlantic, whilst in the second period we will analyse the merchant groups operating exclusively in the Atlantic areas controlled by the Portuguese.

1. European entrepreneurs

The risks involved in the West African trade were covered by insurance. The ships operating in the coastal and the long-distance circuits and the commodities traded by the Europeans were insured. However, only a few European entrepreneurs had enough capital to be insurers.

Among those who could afford to be insurers in the Dutch Republic were several important merchants from Amsterdam, namely: Jan Jansz Smits, Claes Andriesz, Albert Schuijt, Barent Sweets and Jan de Clerck. Less prominent in the insurance business with West Africa, but still fairly active were: Pelgrom van Dronckelaer, Anthoni van Diemen, Hans van Soldt, Hans van Geel, Hendrick Voet, Willem Pauw, Van den Bogaert, Wijbrant

[5] Between 1623 and 1648 the number of notarial contracts concerning the commercial activities of private merchants is lower. Nevertheless, there are multiple examples of notarial acts signed by the WIC and private businessmen as well as between private entrepreneurs in deliberated attempts to overrun the Company monopoly. After the mid-1650s, the number of notarial contracts increased again, making again possible to follow in detail the economic activities of the several mercantile groups of the Dutch Republic investing in West Africa.

Warwijck and Salomon Voerknecht.[6] As an example of the insurance activities developed by these businessmen with regard to West Africa, we will look into the activities of Jan Jansz Smits and his associates.

Jan Jansz Smits, businessman in Amsterdam, started his insurance activities in 1612 with ships destined to West Africa and other areas in the Atlantic, namely Brazil, the West Indies, Portugal and Spain. In general, Jan Jansz Smits worked in partnership with Claes Adriaesz, Barent Sweets and Albert Schuijt.[7] Claes Andriesz and Barent Sweets were two powerful merchants from Amsterdam, especially active in the trade between Portugal, the Republic and the Baltic. However, they also operated as insurers of vessels sailing from the Republic and Portugal to the Southern Atlantic waters, both to West Africa (Cape Verde, Guinea and Angola), and Brazil.[8] As for Albert Schuijt, he was a trader in Amsterdam, specializing in the insurance business, mainly with West Africa and Brazil. Schuijt started his insurance activities in 1614 and remained active until 1623. In the early years of his business, he mainly insured ships operating in the routes connecting Europe, West Africa and the Americas. However, later Schuijt almost exclusively safeguarded vessels involved in the Brazilian trade. His highest volume of insurance business was in the routes linking Brazil to Portugal, namely Lisbon, Viana do Castelo and Porto.[9]

Like Schuijt, Jan Jansz Smit expanded his insurance business to the commercial routes linking Brazil and Europe.[10] However, as with West Africa, in the insurance activities concerning Brazil Jansz Smit operated mainly in partnership with other merchants to lower the risks. Among his partners should be mentioned one Hans van Soldt de Jonge, who also participated in the insurance business for West Africa, as well as men such as Bartholomeus and Abraham Bisschop or Wijbrant Warwijck.[11]

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[6] GAA, NA 196/199-200V: 1609-03-21; NA 258/83: 1614-01-28; NA 254/188-189: 1614-05-22; NA 253/476V: 1612-04-13; NA 138/210V-211V: 1615-03-25.
[7] GAA, NA 129/163-164: 1612-12-04; NA 130/13-14v: 1612-12-14; NA 130/13v-14: 1612-12-14; NA 130/18-19: 1612-12-17; NA 138/210v-211v.
[8] GAA, NA 210/93v-94: 1611-06-09; NA 130/13-14v: 1612-12-14; NA 130/13v-14: 1612-12-14; NA 130/18-19: 1612-12-17.
[9] GAA, NA 258/83: 1614-01-28; NA 254/188-189: 1614-05-22; NA 317/339: 1615-05-29; NA 378A/339: 1615-05-29; NA 379/606: 1616-11-17; NA 379/614: 1616-11-25; NA 379/618: 1616-12-02; 379/633-633V: 1616-12-09; NA 379/633: 1616-12-09; NA 385/202: 1622-08-20.
[10] In 1613, for example, Jansz Smit insured a cargo of sugar and other goods from Pernambuco to Porto, transported on board the ship *Nossa Senhora dos Remédios*, skippered by Francisco Pires Gorra, on behalf of Jeronimo Rodrigues de Sousa. GAA, NA 376/229: 1613-04-26.
[11] GAA, NA 377/74: 1614-03-01; NA 377A/74: 1614-03-01.

Many of the ships, cargoes and return goods insured by these merchants were property of Portuguese Sephardic merchants living either in Portugal or in the Republic. For instance, in 1612, Jan Jansz Smit, in association with Claes Adriaesz, Jan de Clerk and Jasper Grevenraet, insured several goods for Diogo da Silva, such as hides, elephant tusks, gold and other merchandise loaded on board the *St. Jacob*, skippered by Harpert Martens from Rotterdam, for a trip from Cape Verde to the Republic.[12]

In numerical terms, the Dutch entrepreneurs provided 79% of the insurance for the West African trade, while the Jewish businessmen living in the Netherlands only accounted for 21%. Besides, 65% of the insurance issued by the Dutch entrepreneurs was to ensure Jewish business, while only 35% was to safeguard Dutch commercial activities.

In addition to these insurers, there were also merchants engaged in the insurance business. A good example is Gerrit van Schoonhoven. Van Schoonhoven, a merchant in Middleburg, was probably one of the most active traders in West Africa until the establishment of the WIC. We can trace his economic activities from 1604 until 1621. The main areas of his investments were Guinea and Cape Verde. Van Schoonhoven, apparently, started trading in the Upper Guinea and the Cape Verde region as a private merchant around 1604.[13] However, by 1613, Van Schoonhoven declared that he had been doing business in the coast of Guinea in partnership with Cornelis Munincx, also merchant in Middleburg with commercial interests in Brazil.[14] Finally, in 1621, Van Schoonhoven appeared as one of the main directors of the *Compagnie van Guinea*, together with Jan Gerritsen Meerman and Elias Trip.[15] Sporadically, Van Schoonhoven also appeared together with other merchants from Amsterdam as an insurer of ships and cargoes of Portuguese Jewish merchants established in the Republic, and of Portuguese merchants based in Portugal dealing in slaves and sugar.[16]

During the strict monopoly of the WIC over the Atlantic (1621-1637) information on the insurance activities of the aforementioned entrepreneurs is more scarce. The limited number and the nature of the primary sources concerning the WIC do not allow an identification of the insurers of the Company. Nevertheless, after the WIC started to open

[12] GAA, NA 129/163-164: 1612-12-04; NA 130/13-14V: 1612-12-14; NA 130/13V-14: 1612-12-14; NA 130/18-19: 1612-12-17.
[13] GAA, NA 97/120v: 1604-08-30.
[14] At the end of the partnership, he received from Munincx more than 2,500 Flemish pounds (p. vl.). GAA, NA 134/41-44: 1613-11-29.
[15] GAA, NA 747/160-165: 1621-06-25.
[16] GAA, NA 254/188-188v: 1614-05-22; NA 164/162: 1620-11-07.

up its monopoly to private investment, the insurance activities of the entrepreneurs of the Republic reappeared in the notarial contracts. Men such as Lucas Van de Venne, a businessman involved in the trade with West Africa in the early period (*c.* 1590-1623), appear in several contracts as responsible for bottomries[17] given to the directors of the WIC, Chamber of Groningen. He insured the ship *Het Vosgen*, skippered by Michiel Jeuriaens, from Groningen to the coast of Guinea and gave commercial credit for the goods sent from the Republic and purchased in West Africa. The bottomry amounted to 3040 guilders and had a premium of 20%.[18] In fact, Van de Venne changed from merchant to insurer as a strategy to survive economically during the strict enforcement of the monopoly of the WIC.

Another important insurer during the 1650s and 1660s was Jan de Velde and associates. He was, for instance, the insurer of the ships freighted by Henrico Matias, an important German merchant based in Amsterdam since the 1650s, with commercial interests and investments in different areas of the Atlantic, across the Portuguese, the Spanish and the Dutch Atlantic Empires.[19]

Thus, the participation of the Dutch entrepreneurs in the inter-continental trade routes linking Europe to West Africa and the Americas was only indirect, mainly through the insurance for Portuguese Sephardic Jews operating in these trading circuits.

The Dutch entrepreneurs did not only insure the ships and the cargoes of the Dutch merchants and the Portuguese Sephardic Jews established in Amsterdam, but also most of the vessels sailing in the long-distance and coastal circuits of the Portuguese Atlantic.

The Portuguese historian Freire Costa has emphasized that the majority of the businessmen operating in the Portuguese Atlantic had their ships and commodities insured in Amsterdam.[20] This option could have been a solution for a possible lack of capital in

[17] A bottomry was a contract that combined credit and insurance. See, for instance: Frank C. Spooner, *Risks at sea: Amsterdam insurance and maritime Europe, 1766-1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
[18] The commercial activities of this merchant will be analysed later in this chapter. GAA, NA 1695/1113: 1651-05-15; NA 1595/1113: 1651-05-15.
[19] In 1657, for example, for the goods transported on board the *St. Pieter* travelling from the Coast of Guinea to the Rio de la Plata and back to Amsterdam, Henrico Matias and partners paid to Jan de Velde an insurance premium of 6% for the first part of the circuit and 14 to 15% for the second and third parts. On the other hand, for the merchandise shipped directly from Cadiz to Buenos Aires or Rio de la Plata, Matias would have to pay 25% of the insurance premium to De Velde and associates; while for the goods transported on the route Cadiz–Havana–Vera Cruz he would have had to pay only 10%. The shipping of merchandise from the Mediterranean to the Republic and from France to the Mediterranean (Civitavecchia) via Newfoundland would pay 25%. The cargoes transported from Portugal to Amsterdam paid 24%. GAA, NA 1115/17v: 1655-10-05
[20] Leonor Freire Costa, *Impérios e grupos mercantis*, p. 79.

Portugal. However, it is more likely that it was a well-thought-out strategy to spread risk and avoid major losses within the same mercantile group. In fact, the members of the Portuguese Jewish Nation of Amsterdam, some of them known as very wealthy businessmen, used a similar commercial strategy, as we saw earlier.

Usually, the Portuguese Sephardim in Amsterdam acted as contacts for the mercantile groups in Portugal to obtain their insurance in the Republic. Often, they were the commercial partners of businessmen operating from Portugal and the Portuguese Empire. For instance, João Soeiro, *contratador* of the Cape Verde and the Guinea royal monopoly between 1608 and 1614, made use of his factors' connections with the Sephardic Jews to freight and insure vessels in Amsterdam. In addition, by conducting direct trade between the Republic, the Petite Côte of Senegal (also included in the aforementioned monopoly), and the Republic, the ships could avoid calling at the ports of Ribeira Grande (Santiago, Cape Verde) and Lisbon, where several taxes had to be paid to the royal fiscal agents. Soeiro's main contacts in Amsterdam were Gaspar Fernandes, Gaspar Nunes, Duarte Fernandes, Pedro Rodrigues da Veiga and others.[21] Two other important associates of João Soeiro were Diogo da Silva and Diogo Dias Querido, both merchants in Amsterdam and connected to Soeiro via their common agents in Guinea: Simão Rodrigues Pinel and Estêvão Rodrigues, factors of the *contratador* on the coast. For example, on 19 January 1611, Diogo da Silva and Diogo Dias Querido sent some goods in the ship *Santiago*, skippered by Herbert Marselssen from Rotterdam, travelling from Rotterdam to Portudal and Joal. The value of the cargo amounted to 3,120 Flemish pounds. Simão Rodrigues Pinel and Estevão Rodrigues were responsible for the trade on the coast of Guinea. Hides, ivory and other African goods were to be bartered for the European cargo. They planned to stay six months in West Africa.[22]

Merchants from the Portuguese Northern Atlantic towns of Porto, Viana do Castelo and Vila do Conde also had partners among the Portuguese Sephardim of Amsterdam who

[21] For example, on 5 August 1611, Gaspar Fernandes transported goods for Duarte Fernandes, probably a holder of a commercial licence issued by João Soeiro to do trade within the area of the monopoly, on board *Het Vliegende Hert* travelling from Rotterdam to Portudal under the command of skipper Alewijn Jansen, from Rotterdam. The value of the merchandise transported to Portudal and the insurance premium was '2888 pond, 10 schellingen, 10 groten vl.', while the value of the return goods and the insurance premium of the return voyages amounted to 2552 Flemish pounds (p. vl.). GAA, NA 125/27v-28v: 1611-04-27; 124/131-131v: 1611-08-05.

[22] Barent Adriaen Andriesz, Wijbrant Warwijck and Anthoni van Diemen insured ship and cargo. The ship travelled from Portugal to several places on the coast of Guinea and return to the Republic. Claes Andriesz, Jaspar Grevenraet, Barent Sweerts and Jan Jansz Smits, all merchants in Amsterdam, insured the return cargo. GAA, NA 62/218v: 1611-01-19; NA 253/476v: 1612-04-13; NA 129/163-164: 1612-12-04; NA 130/13V-14: 1612-12-14; NA 130/13-14v: 1612-12-14; NA 130/18-19: 1612-12-17.

could help obtaining insurance for vessels and cargoes. For instance, Francisco Gomes Pinto, merchant in Viana do Castelo, was the partner of Diogo Nunes Belmonte, Portuguese Sephardic Jew and merchant in Amsterdam shipping slaves on the route Angola–West Indies–Seville, and sugar on the circuit Republic–Viana–Brazil–Viana–Republic. [23] Van Schoonhoven, a Dutch merchant and entrepreneur in Amsterdam, and several associates were the insurers.[24]

The foreign merchants established in Lisbon, either of Italian, Flemish, Dutch or English origin, also obtained their insurance in Amsterdam from the same group of Dutch entrepreneurs. Their connections were usually within the Dutch mercantile groups. For example, on 25 March 1615 Claes Adriensz agreed with Hendrick Voet, both traders in Amsterdam to insure money, gold, silver, goods and merchandise transported for Jan Snell de Jonge, trader in Lisbon from Eastern, Western, Southern, and Northern Europe as well as from the East and West Indies, Brazil, Angola, Guinea, Islands of the Mediterranean, France, England, the Baltic, Holland, etc. The maximum insurance per ship was 1,000 guilders. Claes Andriesz would cover 2/3 and Hendrick Voet 1/3; the Jan Snel's commission would be 1%.[25]

After 1640, the businessmen operating in Portugal continued to freight and insure their ships and cargoes in Amsterdam, especially those used in the European trade.[26] The data available for the West African trade does not give detailed information regarding the insurance in this chronology. However, the Company of Brazil freighted English and other foreign ships to convoy the fleets of the merchants operating in the routes connecting Lisbon to West Africa and Brazil. Therefore, it is likely that the insurance of these ships was also obtained at the first port of departure (somewhere in Northern Europe or the United Kingdom).[27]

In brief, during the period under review, the Dutch entrepreneurs were not only insurers of ships and cargoes transported in the Dutch Atlantic, but also in the Iberian

[23] For further information on these routes linking the Portuguese Northern Atlantic ports to the Republic, see Cátia Antunes, 'Micro-urban transactions in the Early Modern Period: The North Western Portuguese ports, 1580-1640', unpublished paper presented at the *European Sea Port-system in Early Modern Age: A comparative Approach. International Workshop*, Porto, 21-22 October 2005.
[24] GAA, NA 254/188-188v: 1614-05-22; NA 164/162: 1620-11-07.
[25] GAA, NA 129/163-164: 1612-12-04; NA 130/13-14v: 1612-12-14; NA 130/13v-14: 1612-12-14; NA 130/18-19: 1612-12-17; NA 138/210v-211v.
[26] Cátia Antunes, *Globalisation in the Early Modern Period*, pp. 91-122 & 123-140.
[27] For further information on the freightage of foreign ships by the Company of Brazil, see Leonor Freire Costa, *O transporte no Atlântico e a Companhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil*, p. 537-559.

Atlantic World. Most of these men retained an indirect connection with the West African trade by insuring ships and commodities for other traders operating in the commercial circuits linking Europe to Africa and the Americas. The entrepreneurs held the capital required to cover the risks, while the businessmen had the commercial knowledge and connections to ship and trade. This situation produced a cross-cultural insurance business, as we have seen earlier. We will return to this topic later in this chapter.

2. European businessmen

In practical terms, the merchants of the Republic and Portugal were the ones controlling the West African trade.

Between *c.*1590 and 1623, there were two different groups of merchants in the Republic with economic interests in West Africa: the Dutch merchants and the Portuguese Sephardic Jews established in Amsterdam and other Dutch cities. The latter group had taken refuge in the Republic after the establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal (1536) and the blockage of Antwerp by the Dutch insurgents.

During this early period, the majority of the notarial contracts in our sample concerning the West African trade were signed between Dutch private traders. On 25 June 1621, the recently chartered WIC signed an agreement with several Dutch private commercial firms operating in Lower Guinea for the sale of ships in Mori, Kormantin and Accra. This contract was signed by the WIC and five companies, namely[28]:

- the *Compagnie van Guinea,* represented by Gerrit van Schoonhoven, Jan Gerritsen Meerman and Elias Trip;
- the company of Nicolaes Balestel**;**
- the company of Philips Thijssen;
- the company of Adriaen, Marten and Guilliaume Papenbroeck;
- and the company of Hans Willemsen Elbinck.

In July 1622, another group of merchants from Amsterdam presented a petition to the Mayors and City Council of Amsterdam to confirm that they had been trading in Angola,

[28] GAA, NA 747/160-165: 1621-06-25.

Loango, the Congo River and other places along the West Coast of Africa for more than 17 years.[29] The city's statement was to be used against the WIC in the conflicts at the time over the removal of their merchandise and personnel from West Africa to the Republic. Frans Jacobsen Hinloopen, Samuel Bloemert, Lucas van de Venne, Frans Steenhuijsen, Hans Franx, Hans Rombouts, and Pieter Sijmonsz Snellinck, all merchants in Amsterdam, signed the petition.

Abraham de Velaer, Michiel Pauw, Melchior van de Kerckhoven, Guilliaume van de Perre, Pieter van der Hagen, Pieter de Vlamingh, Jan Verlou, Steven Groulaert, Jan du Bois, Philip van der Beeck, and Willem Brasser were also among the merchants investing in the West African trade.[30] However, they were clearly less active than those mentioned earlier.[31] As a representative case study, we have selected the economic activities of the family Papenbroeck.

Marten Papenbroeck was the most active member of the family and his activities are traceable between 1600 and 1623. His main business was with the Upper Guinea, Cape Verde and Bahia. Papenbroeck's first contracts covered commercial activities in the Republic, the Spanish Low Countries, Brazil and Portugal. At the time (1600), Papenbroeck started his participation in the Brazilian sugar and dyewood trades in association with Cornelis Snellincx and Hieronijmus de Vader, both merchants in Lisbon, as well as with Vincent van Hove, a merchant in Antwerp, Hendrick Uijlkens, a merchant in Rotterdam, Willem Willemsz,

[29] GAA, NA 201/137: 1622-07-00.

[30] For further information on the commercial activities of these merchants in other branches of Dutch commerce see, for example: E. H. Wijnroks, *Handel tussen Rusland en de Nederlanden, 1560-1640: een netwerkanalyse van de Antwerpse en Amsterdamse kooplieden, handelend op Rusland* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2003); M. Bulut, *Ottoman-Dutch economic relations in the early modern period 1571-1699* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001); Oscar C. Gelderblom, 'From Antwerp to Amsterdam. The contribution of Merchants from the Southern Netherlands to the Growth of the Amsterdam Market (*c.*1540-1609), *Review. A Journal of the Fernand Braudel center*, 26/3 (2003), pp. 247-282; *idem*, 'De deelname van Zuid-Nederlandse kooplieden aan het openbare leven van Amsterdam (1578-1650)' in C. M. Lesger & L. Noordegraaf (eds.), *Ondernemers en bestuurders. Economie en politiek in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de late Middeleeuwen en vroegmoderne tijd*, 237-258; *idem*, *Zuid-Nederlandse kooplieden en de opkomst van de Amsterdamse stapelmarkt (1578-1630)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000); J. W. Veluwenkamp, *Archangel: Nederlandse ondernemers in Rusland, 1550-1785* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2000). Biographies of the aforementioned merchants may be found in K. Zandvliet, C. Lesger *et al*, *De 250 rijksten van de Gouden Eeuw: kapitaal, macht, familie en levensstijl* (Amsterdam: Rjjksmuseum, 2006).

[31] GAA, NA 700/…: 1622-11-01; NA 658B/909: 1623-01-26; NA 658II/909: 1623-01-26; NA 658-2/909: 1623-01-26; NA 53/505: 1599-10-02; NA 264/182: 1608-05-02; NA 197/479V-480V: 1613-01-21; NA 253/130: 1608-08-28; 196/725V: 1611-03-31; 200/307: 1619-08-24; NA 200/306V-307: 1619-08-24; NA 164/176V: 1620-11-14; NA 165/99: 1620-11-23; NA 747/220-225: 1622-07-05; NA 108/84-85: 1607-06-26; NA 108/83: 1607-06-26; NA 197/70-71: 1607-07-07; NA 51/88: 1597-05-08; NA 79/8V: 1598-01-10; NA 79/8V-12: 1598-01-10; NA 108/84-85: 1607-06-26; NA 108/83: 1607-06-26; NA 197/70-71: 1607-07-07.

Willem Aertsz Organist, Hillebrant den Otter and Jacques de Meijere, all merchants in Amsterdam.[32]

Papenbroeck's business with West Africa seems to have started around 1603 in partnership with Jacques Bernart, Barthoult Jansen Steenhuijsen, Pelgrom van Dronckelaer and Hans van Baerle, all merchants in Amsterdam and main investors in a commercial company trading in Guinea.[33] However, by 1607 other Amsterdam merchants appear as commercial partners of Marten Papenbroeck. Three of these were Dirck van Os, Joost van Beeck and Abraham van Ceulen. Together they planned a trip to Guinea. Dirck van Os and Marten Papenbroeck paid for the freightage of the ships and the cargoes, and the latter two merchants financed the victualling of the vessel, all for 3,700 Flemish pounds.[34] Marten Papenbroeck's participation in the business must have expanded, since by 1618 he was participating in the Guinea trade single-handedly. On 10 April 1618, he freighted the *St. Paulus Bekeeringe*, a ship of 90 *last*[35], to travel from Amsterdam to Guinea and back under the command of skipper Boele Pieterss, from Stavoren. The skipper was allowed to stay for 45 days in Guinea and the cargo would cost a total of 6,000 guilders.[36] In 1623, Marten Papenbroeck was still active in the Guinea trade – he freighted the *St. Adriaen* under the skipper Claes Corneliss for a commercial trip between the Republic and Cape Verde.[37]

The Portuguese Sephardic Jews established in Amsterdam and other Dutch ports formed the second group of merchants in the Republic investing in West Africa between *c.*1590 and 1623. Among them were Gaspar Sanches, Gaspar Nunes, Pedro Rodrigues da Veiga, Duarte Fernandes, Diogo da Silva, the Belmonte family, Diogo Vaz de Sousa and Estevão Rodrigues Penso.[38] Based on the notarial contracts, we have selected the economic activities of Gaspar Sanches and his associates and Diogo da Silva as representative case studies.

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[32] GAA, NA 33/omslag 14/390v-392: 1600-04-30; 33/390v: 1600-04-30; 33/390v-392: 1600-04-30.
[33] GAA, NA 96/108-110v: 1603-11-11.
[34] GAA, NA 108/54-55: 1607-05-30.
[35] 1 *last* = 2 tons = 2,000 kilograms.
[36] GAA, NA 153/7: 1618-04-10.
[37] GAA, NA 659A/19: 1623-10-31.
[38] Diogo Vaz de Sousa and Estêvão Rodrigues Penso were Portuguese Sephardic merchants established in Amsterdam who also had investments in the Petite Côte of Senegal: more precisely in the ports of Portudal and Joala. Both returned from this region to the Republic on board the *St. Jacob* or *Santiago,* skippered by Govert Jansen from Rotterdam. GAA, NA 62/206: 1610-11-22; NA 62/209: 1610-12-08; GAA, NA 160/28-29v: 1619-10-04.

Gaspar Sanches, a Portuguese merchant resident in Rotterdam and Gaspar Nunes, a merchant in Amsterdam, were probably the most active Sephardic businessmen in West Africa during the first two decades of the 17th century. Sanches and Nunes together organized several commercial trips to West Africa. Their main areas of business were the ports of Portudal, Joala and Rufisque in the Petite Côte of Senegal, and the islands of Cape Verde.[39] Gaspar Sanches and Gaspar Nunes also participated in the trade in hides with Cape Verde.[40]

Sanches and Nunes were also associates of other Portuguese Sephardic businessmen from Amsterdam doing business in the same areas of West Africa. Gaspar Sanches had occasional partnerships in his commercial enterprises to Portudal and Cape Verde with Pedro Rodrigues da Veiga and Duarte Fernandes.[41] Gaspar Nunes joined in business with João Lopes da Costa and Antonio Nobre, as well as with Pierre Thonen and Pierre Bacquelarot, merchants in Amsterdam.[42] The trade with Guinea conducted by Gaspar Nunes in partnership with the abovementioned merchants connected the Republic to the Petite Côte of Senegal and the port of Dieppe (Normandy, France), where Luis Fernandes, the son-in-law of Gaspar Nunes, was the main contact person.[43] These commercial partnerships tell us much about the wide network of the Sephardic merchants throughout Europe and the European Atlantic possessions.

Diogo da Silva was another important Portuguese Sephardic Jew established in Amsterdam with regular commercial activities on the West Coast of Africa during the first three decades of the 17th century. However, he also conducted businesses in other Atlantic

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[39] For example, on 19 September 1609, the two Portuguese merchants freighted together the *St. Jacob*, of 80 *last*, to sail from Rotterdam to Portudal, under the command of skipper Govert Jansen from Rotterdam. Rotterdam was the port of departure and the final destination. The cargo cost was 7,000 guilders. In 1610, Gaspar Sanches and Gaspar Nunes freighted the same vessel and skipper to travel to the same destination. This may be a sign of specialization. However, the contracts do not give further details on the price of the cargoes. GAA, NA 115/22-23: 1609-09-19; NA 117/22: 1609-09-19; NA 117/22-23: 1609-09-19; NA 62/195v: 1610-09-30.

[40] On 14 January 1611, Paulus Claesz declared that a load of hides from the Cape Verde producers had arrived in Rotterdam on board the vessel of Govert Jansen with Gaspar Fernandes, probably the supercargo sent on board the vessel to conduct the business in Cape Verde. Paul Claesz bought, in fact, part of the cargo – 500 pieces at a price of 50 *stuivers* per piece. On 31 January of the following year, the same duo of traders hired the skipper Govert Jansen to travel once again to Cape Verde. GAA, NA 62/217v: 1611-01-14; NA 62/219: 1611-01-19; NA 62/421: 1612-01-02; NA 62/589: 1612-01-31.

[41] For instance, on 24 December 1610, Gaspar Sanches and Pedro Rodrigues da Veiga freighted the ship *Het Vliegende Hert*, skippered by Heyns Claessen, to travel from Amsterdam to Portudal. GAA, NA 62/210v: 1610-12-24; NA 125/27v-28v: 1611-04-27; 124/131-131v: 1611-08-05.

[42] GAA, NA 124/25v-26: 1611-03-16.

[43] On 20 September 1612, Gaspar Nunes had a total debt of 2,622 guilders and 33 stuivers in three bills of exchange issued by Pierre Thonen and Pierre Bacquelarot. GAA, NA 375/516: 1612-09-20.

areas. In the trade with West Africa, Diogo da Silva was associated with both Dutch and Portuguese Sephardic Jews from Amsterdam, as we have seen earlier.[44] Diogo da Silva also invested in the routes linking Europe with Brazil and Portugal with the Baltic. Silva's interests were mainly in dyewood and sugar from Pernambuco and Bahia. In the dyewood business, he was associated with Cornelis Snellinck, Nicolaes du Gardijn and Pieter Hustaert, merchants in Amsterdam and *contratadores* of the Brazilian dyewood; while in the sugar trade he was associated with Francisco Dias, a merchant from Viana do Castelo.[45] Diogo Dias Querido, the main associate of Diogo da Silva in the West African business, also had commercial interests in Bahia together with the Belmonte family, and connections with the Portuguese *contratadores* of the monopolies for the West African trade and the Spanish *asiento* for the supply of slave labour force.[46] In addition, Diogo da Silva also traded in grain between the Republic, the Baltic (Danzig) and Portugal (Lisbon).[47]

After the establishment of the WIC (1621-1624), the private traders in the Netherlands officially had to suspend their commercial activities in West Africa. However, many continued to sail to these areas, either at the service of the Company or for their on interest.

In the immediate years after the creation of the WIC, some of the aforementioned private companies and businessmen signed freight contracts with the Company to transport soldiers, ammunitions, victuals and commodities to the various Atlantic trading posts and forts incorporated under its jurisdiction. By guaranteeing the shipment of personnel, weaponry and merchandise, the private businessmen found a way to profit indirectly from the monopoly of the WIC. For instance, on 10 November 1623, Jors Andriaenssen, Hendrick Broen and Samuel Bloemert, on behalf of the WIC – Chamber of Amsterdam, freighted the *De Haen*, 250 *last*, property of Elias Trip, Hans Franx, and Jacob Jansen, the *Concordia*, 250 *last*, property of Elias Trip and Aernout van Lybergen and the *Nassau*, 190 *last*, property of Abraham van Beeck to ship soldiers and goods from Amsterdam to the places

[44] GAA, NA 62/218v: 1611-01-19; NA 253/476v: 1612-04-13; GAA, NA 129/163-164: 1612-12-04; NA 130/13V-14: 1612-12-14; NA 130/13-14v: 1612-12-14; NA 130/18-19: 1612-12-17.
[45] GAA, NA 116/228-228v: 1609-10-01; NA 378/618-620: 1615-09-26; NA 378/610: 1615-09-28; 378/620V: 1615-09-28; NA 645/653: 1619-04-10.
[46] GAA, NA 1089/18-19: 1649-05-07.
[47] See for example: GAA, NA 628/41: 1620-07-30; NA 628/79: 1620-08-27.

under the rule of the WIC.[48] On 21 November 1623, Dirck Pieterss van de Veen, on behalf of the WIC – Chamber of the Northern Quarter, freighted the *St. Marten*, 170 *last*, also property of Elias Trip. The vessel skippered by Jan Cornelisz Knaep van Medemblik shipped military personnel from Amsterdam to the ports and places administrated by the WIC.[49]

Despite the Company monopoly, many merchants from the Republic kept trading in West Africa on their own behalf. Their main strategy was to use passports from non-Dutch cities, forcing the skippers to depart from ports outside the Republic and to avoid areas under direct administration of the WIC. Both the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardic Jews made use of these strategies. For instance, on 26 March 1638, Dirck van de Perre, a merchant in Amsterdam, entrusted to Cornelis Pieters Coregh, skipper of the *Alckmaer*, 2,000 guilders worth of commodities for a journey from the Republic to West Africa. The ships were supposed to stop at different points including São Tomé. From the West Coast of Africa the vessel was to sail to the West Indies, Brazil and Florida, and, from there back to Amsterdam. Given the war between the Republic and Portugal and the monopoly of the WIC over the Dutch Atlantic trade, Van de Perre arranged for Dunkirk passports for the ship and the crew hoping that these documents would save the ship, the crew and the cargoes from being arrested in the areas controlled by the Portuguese and the Dutch. On 10 July 1638, the vessel arrived in São Tomé and the documents were suspected of being false, but the skipper was allowed to continue the voyage. However, the WIC confiscated both the ship and the cargo once it arrived at Recife, which was at the time controlled by the Company.[50]

The presence of private traders from the Republic in the area under the jurisdiction of the WIC increased even more after the Company decided to open up the commercial monopolies regarding the trade to Brazil and the New Netherland, in 1638 and 1648, respectively. In 1647 the Company also approved the participation of private merchants in the slave trade in Luanda. However, the Company forbade private merchants to trade in slaves and other African goods included in the monopoly in all other areas of West Africa. Therefore, private businessmen kept devising strategies to purchase forbidden commodities and evade taxation by avoiding paying commercial licences to the company. For instance, on

[48] GAA, NA 170/28v-30v: 1623-11-10; 170/30v: 1623-11-10; 170/30v: 1623-11-10.
[49] GAA, NA 170/10: 1623-11-21.
[50] GAA, NA 420/536: 1639-12-20. A similar strategy was followed by Isaac Carvalho, the Amsterdam-based proxy of Anthonio Mendes and Pedro Dias, merchants in Rouen (France). GAA, NA 1690/599: 1648-04-16.

9 April 1661, Jan Broers, Hendrick Duysterloo, Louis Wickenburgh and Antonio Maire, all merchants in Amsterdam, hired Gerrit Hartman, David Lemque and Wouter Abrahamsen de Vries to travel on board the *St. Jan Baptista*, under the command of skipper Jan Symonsen de Voockt, from Zierikzee, as supercargoes. The route was Amsterdam–Lower Guinea and Angola–Spanish West Indies–Amsterdam. Gerrit Hartman and David Lemque received clear instructions from the merchants not to trade in slaves, ivory and copper on the coast of Africa. They undoubtedly meant the area under the jurisdiction of the WIC due to the danger of confiscation of the vessel and cargo by the Company.[51]

However, once the WIC opened the monopolies to Brazil and to New Netherland, many private traders of the Republic, both Dutch and Sephardim, decided to established partnerships and cooperative relations with the WIC. For example, in the 1660s, Johan van Wickevoort, Pieter van Uffelen, Adriaan Brugman and Joost Glimmer, merchants in Amsterdam, appeared to be associated with the WIC, more precisely with the Chamber of Groningen, for the Gambia River trade. In fact, the directors of the WIC, Chamber of Groningen, granted them permission to equip ships and supply the cargoes to the Gambia River, after 12 August 1657.[52]

However, Johan van Wickevoort and Joost Glimmer claimed that persons of the Chamber of Amsterdam, who considered them to be lacking in experience, had treated them as enemies and inexperienced merchants.[53] This accusation was probably true for Joost Glimmer, but not for the other businessmen. Pieter van Uffelen, a member of the Van Uffelen family. He had started his economic activities in West Africa, more precisely Cape

[51] GAA, NA 2757A/165: 1661-04-09.

[52] In order to freight all the required ships they gave power of attorney to Pieter van Wickevoort, to freight the ship *De Vrede*, skippered by Frans Jansz Backer, from Burgerdam, and load the required cargo in Zealand on 3 March 1660. The following month, these merchants freighted the ship *De Gouden Burgh*, under the command of skipper Jacob Cley, from Middleburg, to travel with goods and provisions for eight to nine months from Amsterdam to the Gambia River and back to Amsterdam or somewhere else in the Republic. The freight would amount to 1,400 guilders per month. GAA, NA 1132/21-22: 1660-01-30; NA 1132/229: 1660-03-03; NA 1540/138: 1660-04-07.

[53] Another good example of the cooperation between Dutch private merchants and the WIC, as well as of conflicts between the two parties, can be found in the 1660s. Isaac Hoechepied Senior, and Gillis Hoonrbeck, the merchants in Amsterdam, had an established trading network with the island of Goere in Cape Verde. In order to keep a register of the goods traded there they hired Lammert Claesz as their junior clerk. He was supposed to work under the authority of Pieter van Asperen, the highest representative of the WIC in Cape Verde in 1666. Lammert Claesz served these merchants in this post from 28 March 1666 until September 1667. During his stay, he traded the commodities of these private businessmen at the fort. However, the co-existence of this agent and the WIC high officers seems to have been quite difficult. Lammert Claesz, Isaac Hochepied and Gillis van Hoornbeeck were accused of smuggling goods at the fort. GAA, NA 2296 I/63-65: 1668-02-16; NA 2297/13-14: 1669-03-06; NA 2297 IV/13-14: 1669-03-06. For further information on the economic activities of these merchants see: GAA, NA 2226/994-997; NA 2229/855: 1669-03-29.

Verde, Gambia, Sierra Leone, the 'Guinea Coast', and the West Indies as early as 1614 with Michiel Block.[54] Johan van Wickevoort had business connections with the Spanish American colonies, the West Indies and the Caribbean Islands, especially Jamaica. His main partner in this business was Henrico Matias, an influent German merchant based in Amsterdam since the 1650s, with wide commercial interests in West Africa, the Spanish American colonies, Brazil, Spain and Portugal. These disputes may also have been due to the commercial jurisdictions of the Chambers over the different regions of West Africa.[55]

Like the Dutch merchants, from the 1640s onwards, some of the Portuguese Sephardic Jews were also associated with the WIC. However, and in contrast to the Dutch merchants, they were not directly engaged in the commercial transactions of the WIC in West Africa and other areas of the Atlantic. Since the late 1640s, the Sephardim appear in the Notarial contracts of the GAA mainly has buyers and holders of WIC shares usually from the Chamber of Amsterdam. Luis Gomes de Avila, Manuel Dias de Pas, Luís Mendes de Pas. Duarte Dias de Pas, Andrea de los Rios, Miguel de los Rios, Luís de Azevedo, Joseph Mendes da Costa, Jacob Vila Real and Diogo Rodrigues de Spinosa were some of the most proeminent businessmen involved in these financial activities. [56] However, usually they bought the WIC shares from Dutch merchants and not directly in the stock exchange. Albertus Ruijtier, Samuel Cassart, Dirck and Adriaen Snooy, Egbert Schut, Adriaen Blocq Martensz and Philippo Sannios were some of the businessmen with whom they often did business. Albert Ruijtier, for instance, sold to Miguel de los Rios 40.000 Flemish pounds of WIC shares – Chamber of Amsterdam, to Luis de Azevedo 5.000 Flemish pounds, to Joseph Mendes da Costa 5.000 and to Manuel Dias de Pas 65.000 Flemish pounds.[57] Hence, over time, the participation of the Sephardim of Amsterdam in the West African trade became indirect and under the form of financial instruments.

[54] The Van Uffelen family under Matheus and Hans van Uffelen had commercial activities in Madeira, Bahia and Guinea from 1600. GAA, NA 1133-133v-134v: 1660-04-29; NA 1131/67-68: 1659-10-21; NA 97/76: 1604-08-05; NA 102/212: 1606-03-09; NA 138/7: 1614-09-04.
[55] For further information, see Chapter 1.
[56] See for example: GAA, NA 2188A/134: 1649-02-23; 876/24v-25: 1650-02-11; 2189A/364: 1650-05-11; 2189B/662: 1650-08-26; 2189B/688: 1650-08-27; 2189B/706: 1650-08-31; 2189B/709: 1650-08-31; 2189B/940: 1650-10-21; 2189B/954: 1650-10-27.
[57] GAA, NA 2189B/662: 1650-08-26; 2189B/688: 1650-08-27: 2189B/706: 1650-08-31; 2189B/709: 1650-08-31.

Like in the Republic, the mercantile group based in Portugal and operating in the West African trade comprised not only Portuguese, but also foreign merchants. The latter businessmen were mainly from the Italian cities and Flanders. The former group included wealthy and mid-scale merchants. These two sub-groups were divided into two categories: the Old Christians and the New Christians. New Christians were Sephardic Jews forced to convert to Christianity by King Manuel I (1495-1521) in 1497.

The *contratadores* of the royal monopolies were among the wealthiest merchants based in Portugal and operating in the Portuguese Atlantic.[58] According to Freire Costa, the Dias Henriques, the Vaz de Évora, the Rodrigues de Elvas and the Fernandes de Elvas were some of the most prominent families holding royal contracts.[59] The Lamego, the Ximenes, the Coutinho and the Gomes da Costa families were also among them. These families appeared regularly as farmers of the monopoly contracts of the Portuguese Crown, not only for West Africa, but also for other commercial areas until the mid-1620s. Nevertheless, between 1580 and 1640, there was also foreign investment in the contracts of the West African trade. For instance, Giovanni Batista Rovelasca (João Baptista Rovelasca in Portuguese), a Milanese merchant based in Lisbon, and his associates Pedro de Sevilha and António Mendes Lamego, rented the royal monopoly of São Tomé between *c.*1583 and *c.*1600. During the same periods, Rovelasca's partners also farmed out the monopoly rights of the contract of Angola (see Tables 24 and 25).

[58] For further information on the Portuguese royal monopolies over the slave trade in the West African Coast, see Chapter 1.

[59] Leonor Freire Costa, *Impérios e grupos mercantis.*; *idem*, 'A Rota do Cabo e as rotas do Brasil: Para um estudo comparado do transporte marítimo nos século XVI e XVII', paper presented at the Seminar *O Mundo que o Português criou*. Fundação Joaquim Nabuco – 500 anos do Descobrimento do Brazil.

Table 1: *Contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea (1580-1649)

Years	*Contratadores*
1580-1583	Royal administration
1583-1588	Álvaro Mendes de Castro
	Diogo Fernandes Lamego
	Bernaldo Ramires
	Rui Gomes Bravo
1588-1589	Royal administration
1590-1595	Simão Ferreira Malaca
	Pedro Freire
	Diogo Henriques
	Ambrósio Ataíde
1595-1599	Diogo Nunes Caldeira
*c.*1601-1607	Jácome Fixer
	João Gonçalves Gusmão
1606-1608	Royal administration
1608-1614	João Soeiro
1614-1615	Royal administration
1615-1619	António Fernandes de Elvas
1619-1620	António Fernandes de Elvas
1621-1623	António Fernandes de Elvas
1623-1627	Royal Administration
1627-1632	André da Fonseca
1632-1637	Royal administration
1637-1642	Gaspar da Costa
1642-1649	Royal administration

Sources[60]

Table 2: *Contratadores* of Angola (1578-1676)

Years	*Contratadores*
1578-1587	Royal administration
1587-1593	Pedro de Sevilha
	António Mendes de Lamego
1593-1603	João Rodrigues Coutinho (governor of Angola)
	Pêro Gomes Reinel
1603-1606	Gonçalo Vaz Coutinho (brother of João Rodrigues Coutinho)
1607-1614	Duarte Dias Henriques
1615-1623	António Fernandes de Elvas
1623-1624	Manuel Rodrigues de Lamego
1624-1628	Henrique Gomes da Costa
1628-1636	André Rodrigues de Estremoz
	Gaspar Ximenes Sanches & António Correia Sanches (1/3 only)
1636-1644	Pero Ruiz de Abreu
	Francisco Dias Portalegre
1645-1648	Lopo da Fonseca Henriques
1649-1651	Lopo da Fonseca Henriques
1652-1654	Tomás Figueira Bultão
	Diogo Sanches Caraça
1654-1660	António da Gama Nunes
	Jorge Lopes da Gama (brothers)
1661-1662	Royal administration
1663-1664	Jerónimo Teixeira da Fonseca, Captain of Massangano (Angola)
1667-1668	Royal administration
1669-1676	Jerónimo Teixeira da Fonseca
	Lopo da Fonseca Henriques

Sources[61]

[60] Based on information from Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 29; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Capitães de Cacheu: 1615-1647' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 514; Frédéric Mauro, *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico: 1570-1670* I (Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1997), pp. 217-218; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*; IAN/TT, *Registo geral de mercês*, database.

[61] Based on information from Frédéric Mauro, *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico* I, pp. 215-217; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*.

Table 3: The *contratadores* of São Tomé (1583-1661)

Years	*Contratadores*
[1583]	João Baptista Rovelasca
	Pero de Sevilha
	António Mendes Lamego
[1600]	Baltazar Rodrigues de Chaves
1602-1605	Royal administration
1606-1617	Jorge Roiz [Rodrigues] da Costa
1617-1621	Royal administration
1621-1626	António Ramires
	[António Pedroso]
1626-1657	Royal administration
1657-1661	Sebastião Lambert or Lamberto
	Belchior Borrais
	Pêro Stalpart

Sources[62]

During the Union of the Crowns (1580-1640), the Court was in Madrid and, therefore, the contracts of the royal monopolies over the Portuguese colonial trade were negotiated and signed there.[63] The transfer of the Portuguese commercial and financial elite to the Habsburg Court gave them access to the Spanish *asientos*.[64] Consequently, the Portuguese merchants were no longer interested in exclusively farming out the royal monopolies over the trading areas in West Africa, but also leasing out the *asiento*, as explained previously.[65] Two representative case studies of this phenomenon are the economic activities of the Coutinho brothers and their associates, and António Fernandes de Elvas.

João Rodrigues Coutinho, governor of Angola, son of Lopo de Sousa Coutinho, the ex-governor of São Jorge da Mina, held the monopoly rights over the trade with Angola between 1593 and 1606 (see Table 24). Between 1595 and 1600, his partner, Pedro Gomes Reinel, was the main holder of the Spanish *asiento* (see Table 26). In the following period, (1601-1609) João together with his brother, Gonçalo Vaz Coutinho, managed to obtain the Spanish *asiento* via their connections in the Court of Philip II (see Table 26). Gonçaclo Vaz

[62] Based on information from Cristina Maria Seuanes Serafim, *As ilhas de São Tomé*, table 15, pp. 140-141; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*.
[63] For further information on this matter, see Chapter 5.
[64] For further information on the role of the Portuguese bankers in the Court of the Habsburgs, see: M. Ebben, *Zilver, brood en kogels voor de koning. Kredietverlening door Portugese bankiers aan de Spaanse kroon, 1621-1665* (Centrum voor Moderne Geschiedenis, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1996).
[65] For further information on this topic, see Chapter 5.

Coutinho was also associated with Diogo da Veiga, his father-in-law, a merchant engaged in the slave trade with Brazil and the La Plata River.[66]

António Fernandes de Elvas followed a similar strategy. Elvas started his activities as a *contratador* in 1615. Simultaneously, he farmed out the contract of Cape Verde and Guinea and the contract of Angola. The management of these two contracts was in the hands of the Elvas Family until 1623 (see Tables 23 and 24). In the meantime, he was also able to rent the Spanish *asiento* between 1615 and 1622 (see Table 26).

Table 4: A list of the merchants that accumulated several contracts over the Iberian slave trade

Merchants' Names (Portuguese spelling)	Cape Verde & Guinea Contract	Angola Contract	Spanish *asiento*
Pedro Gomes Reinel		1593-1603*	1595-1600
João and Gonçalo Rodrigues Coutinho		1593-1606	1601-1609
António Rodrigues d' Elvas	1615** / 1616-1623	1615-1624	1615-1622
Manuel Rodrigues Lamego		1623-1624	1623-1631

Sources and Observations[67]

The West African, the Brazilian and the Spanish American trades were not the only businesses of these merchants. Most of them had commercial interests in other geographical areas. All the aforementioned merchants invested in the *Carreira da Índia* either directly or via their associates. For instance, in 1586, João Baptista Rovelasca, Pedro de Sevilha and António Mendes Lamego also rented the monopoly rights over the *Carreira da Índia*. Rovelasca was even involved in an attempt to create a State-sponsored commercial company for the Portuguese trade in Asia – the *Companhia Portuguesa da Índia Oriental* – chartered by the Crown in 1628.[68] The Coutinho Brothers were also associated with Jorge Rodrigues de Solis, a major investor in the royal fleets sailing to India.

[66] Leonor Freire Costa, *Impérios e grupos mercantis*, pp. 74-76; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*, p. 45.

[67] For the Portuguese contracts: Frédéric Mauro, *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico* I, pp. 215-218; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os Magnatas do tráfico negreiro*, pp. 15, 19-29; 32-5 & 39-48; for the Spanish *asientos*: L. B. Rout, Jr., *The African Experience in Spanish America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 37-61; Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispanoamerica y el comercio de esclavos* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1977), pp. 23-59. Observations: * in partnership with João Rodrigues Coutinho; ** in this period the monopoly contract over the Cape Verde & Guinea slave trade was held by another member of the family: Duarte Pinto d' Elvas.

[68] K. Chaudhuri, 'O comércio asiático' in Francisco Bethencourt and K. N. Chaudhuri (dir.), *História da Expansão Portuguesa* 2 (Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 1998), pp. 194-212.

The same was also true of António Fernandes de Elvas. In fact, he was the son-in-law of Jorge Rodrigues de Solis and the brother-in-law of Jerónimo Rodrigues de Solis, two major investors in the Indian trade. Jerónimo Rodrigues de Solis was, in fact, Elvas' attorney and factor, who had been to Cape Verde and Angola several times to defend the *contratador*'s interests.

After the Portuguese Restoration of 1640, the Portuguese merchants in possession of the *asiento* at the time abandoned Seville and moved to Portugal.[69] However, not all these businessmen were made welcome by the new King João IV (1640-1656). Between 1640 and the 1670s, the Portuguese mercantile elite included merchants of New Christian descent that had controlled the monopoly contracts during the Union of the Crowns. Álvaro Fernandes de Elvas, Luís Rodrigues de Elvas, Fernão Rodrigues Penso, and the Gama Brothers were among these men. However, from the 1630s onwards, other New Christian businessmen became important, namely Baltasar Rodrigues de Matos, Francisco Carlos, Duarte da Silva, Pedro Baeça da Silva and Diogo Rodrigues de Lisboa.

Fernão Rodrigues Penso, Francisco Carlos and Manuel Rodrigues da Costa were the most powerful merchants of Lisbon and the bankers of the Portuguese King João IV. Duarte da Silva and his associates were the main investors in the fleets that promoted the takeover of Brazil and Angola from the WIC.[70] In addition, most of these men were shareholders of the Company of Brazil chartered by the Crown in 1649. André Correia Bravo, António Gomes de Elvas, Jorge Gomes Alemo (son of Diogo Rodrigues de Lisboa), Tomé Botelho da Silva, Pedro de Baeça and Manuel Rodrigues de Matos (son of Baltasar Rodrigues de Matos) were among the shareholders, directors, and advisers.[71]

The Portuguese mercantile elite of the time also included Old Christian businessmen such as Gaspar Pacheco, Gaspar Malheiro, Francisco Fernandes Furna, Matias Lopes, João

[69] Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Aspectos sociales en América colonial. De extranjeros, contrabando y esclavos* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, Universidad de Bogotá, Jorge Tadeo Lozano, 2001), pp. 119-130.
[70] J. Caiola, 'A reconquista de Angola por Salvador Correia de Sá' in *Congresso do Mundo Português* IX (Lisboa: Comissão Executiva dos Centenários, 1940), p. 423; R. Cavalheiro, 'A colaboração da metrópole na reconquista do Brasil' in *Congresso do Mundo Português* IX, pp. 289-335; C. R. Boxer, 'Salvador Correia de Sá e Benevides and the Reconquest of Angola in 1648', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 28/4 (Nov., 1948), pp. 497-498; *idem*, 'Padre António Vieira, S.J., and the Institutions of the Brazil Company in 1649', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 29/4 (Nov., 1949), p. 485.
[71] David Grant Smith, 'Old Christian Merchants and the Foundation of the Brazil Company, 1649', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 54/2 (May, 1974), p. 257.

Guterres, Manuel Martins Medina, Gaspar Gonçalves do Souto, etc.[72] The Mendes de Brito, the Malheiro and the Gonçalves de Souto families were also included in this group of merchants. Most of these merchants were major investors in the Company of Brazil.[73]

However, only a few of these businessmen were directly associated with the West African monopoly contracts. For example, between the 1640s and 1670s, only once did two Portuguese merchants of Lisbon farm the contract of Angola. The Brothers António da Gama Nunes and Jorge Lopes Gomes held the contract in the period of 1654-1660. Their economic activities included not only Angola, but also Brazil, the Atlantic Islands and Asia. The main commodities traded by them were slaves, sugar, iron, coral and silk. They were also major investors in bonds of the Portuguese public debt (*padrões de juro*) and shares of the Company of Brazil.[74]

All the other merchants that farmed out the contract of Angola were citizens and merchants of Luanda. This was the case for Lopo da Fonseca Henriques, Tomás Figueira Bultão, Diogo Sanches Caraça and Jerónimo da Teixeira Henriques. In addition, these businessmen were mainly New Christians, linked with families that in the past decades had already been major investors in the West African trade. For instance, Lopo da Fonseca Henriques rented the contract of Angola between 1645 and 1651. Together with his brother Jerónimo Teixeira da Fonseca, Captain of Massangano (Angola), he farmed out the same contract for two other terms between 1663 and 1664, and 1669 and 1676, respectively. The Fonseca Henriques had family ties with Duarte Dias Henriques, holder of the contract of Angola in the period 1607-1614 and the Spanish *asiento* in 1627-1647, with wide connections in Brazil and the Spanish American colonies. Aside from the slave trade, the Fonseca Brothers were also holders of bonds of the Portuguese Public Debt and investors in the Company of Brazil, chartered by the Crown in 1649.[75]

From 1648, the date of the Portuguese takeover of Luanda, the auctions of the contracts of the Angolan monopoly took place in Angola and not in Lisbon. This was to be an exceptional measure, due to the financial difficulties of the Portuguese Crown in the late

[72] Leonor Freire Costa, 'Elite mercantil na Restauração: Para uma releitura' in Nuno Gonçalo F. Monteiro, Pedro Cardim, Mafalda Soares da Cunha (orgs.), *Óptima Pars*, pp. 99-132.
[73] David Grant Smith, 'Old Christian Merchants and the Foundation of the Brazil Company, 1649', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 54/2 (May, 1974), p. 240.
[74] AHU, Angola, box. 4, several documents, 1654 and 1656; Angola, box 5, several documents, 1660, 1663, and 1667. José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*, pp. 52-54.
[75] AHU, Angola, Papeis Avulsos, 1645; Angola, box 3, several documents, 1650, Angola, box 5, several documents, 1660 and 1663; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*, pp. 52-53.

1640s. However, this practice continued until the mid-1650s, and when the Crown tried to re-centralize the auction process in Lisbon, the merchants of Luanda, via the City Council, presented a petition asking the King to suspend this transfer. In this document, dated 29 April 1659, the City Council argued that the farming of the Angola monopoly by the wealthiest businessmen of Lisbon did great damage to the businessmen of Luanda and the merchants operating in the South Atlantic slave trade. Whenever a wealthy merchant from Portugal won the contract, he and his associates would operate the business with their own ships and supply the required exchange goods in great quantities via their agents in Luanda. Therefore, the merchants of the city and other traders visiting the port with vessels loaded with exchange products for the slave trade, mainly Portuguese-Brazilian traders, could not do much business. These complaints continued throughout the 17th century.[76]

These primary sources show a clear conflict of interests between these two groups of merchants, disputing the control of the most profitable monopoly of the Portuguese Crown in the Atlantic during the second half of the 17th century.[77] In renting the contract of Angola, the merchants of Luanda were not only defending their own commercial interests but also the economic goals of the Portuguese-Brazilian traders operating in the slave trade in the Portuguese Southern Atlantic. The strong ties between the Angolan and Portuguese-Brazilian merchants and their distance from the mercantile wealthiest groups based in Lisbon also tell us much about the changes in the commercial dynamics of the Portuguese Southern Atlantic during the second half of the 17th century and the formation of the so-called 'Brazil-Angola complex'.[78]

In practical terms, the Portuguese Crown allowed the *contratadores* to transfer to a third party a part or a branch of the contract. In fact, the *contratadores* could give away part of the monopoly rights to other private merchants via *avenças* – sort of trading licences.[79] These

[76] 'Carta da Câmara de Luanda a El-Rei D. Afonso VI': 1659-04-29 in António Brásio (ed.), *Monumenta Missionária Africana* 1st series, XII, (Lisboa,: Agência geral do Ultramar, 1952)pp. 231-233; AHU, códice 16, folio 135v: 'Consulta do Conselho Ultramarino sobe queixas dos moradores de Luanda: 1664-11-19. Eunice R. J. P. L. Jorge da Silva, *A administração de Angola*, pp. 233-237.

[77] Similar disputes between the businessmen in Portugal, Angola and Brazil also occurred regarding the trade of alcoholic beverages (wine versus *cachaça*). José C. Curto, *Enslaving spirits*; *idem*, *Álcool e Escravos*.; *idem*, 'Vinho versus cachaça em Angola' in Selma Pantoja and José Flávio S. Saraiva (eds.), *Angola e Brasil nas rotas do Atlântico Sul*, pp. 69-97.

[78] Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, 'The economic network of Portugal's Atlantic World' in Francisco Bethencourt & Diogo Ramada Curto (eds.), *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion*, pp. 118-119.

[79] For further information see Chapter 1, section four.

practices were common during the whole period under study. For instance, the *contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea between 1595 and 1599 and between 1601 and 1607, Diogo Nunes Caldeira and Jácome Fixer respectively, sold multiple *avenças* to several private merchants.[80] The *contratadores* Álvaro Mendes de Castro, Diogo Fernandes Lamego, Bernardo Ramires and Rui Gomes Bravo, holders of the Cape Verde and Guinea contract between 1583 and 1588, followed a similar practice.[81] These two practices gave many traders direct or indirect access to the coast.

These *avençadores* or sub-renters of the contracts could be either Portuguese or foreigners. In many cases, they were in fact Spanish merchants, holders of commercial licences granted by the Spanish king to introduce slaves into the Spanish American colonies who needed to set up contracts with the Portuguese *contratadores* in control of the commercial monopoly areas. For instance, António Nunes do Algarve and Francisco Nunes de Beja, *contratadores* of the Cape Verde and Guinea royal monopoly between 1574 and 1580 signed a contract with João de Gusmão, on behalf of several *vizinhos* of Mexico, granting them permission to purchase 500 slaves in the Guinea-Bissau region and transport them to Mexico. João de Gusmão was holder of a royal commercial licence from the Spanish king to introduce slaves into the Spanish American colonies. The loading of the slaves in the Guinea-Bissau region would be supervised by the factors of the *contratadores* serving in this region; while the payment of the rights over the slaves had to be made at the port of San Juan de Úlva (Mexico) to the proxies of the Portuguese *contratadores* on the spot, within a period of two months. The value of the payments had to be shipped to Seville via the Spanish royal fleet in either cash or merchandise (silver, gold or pearls).[82]

On the other hand, the access to the royal monopoly areas in West Africa was only possible for the inhabitants of the Archipelagoes and the merchants holding trading licences issued by the Crown or the *contratadores* to trade temporarily in the area. Many merchants from Portugal and other areas established commercial partnerships with the merchant-citizens of both Archipelagoes, at least until the 1590s. In 1602 and 1605, João and Afonso Antunes, both merchants and *vizinhos* of Ribeira Grande (Santiago, Cape Verde) established

[80] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 79.
[81] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 24.
[82] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 24.

two commercial companies with two inhabitants of Lisbon: the merchant Gonçalo de Araújo and the surgeon Marcos do Quintal.[83] However, from the 1560s onwards the number of representatives of the Portuguese and Spanish merchants in the Archipelagoes, as well as the number of commercial partnerships established between the European traders and the locally settled merchants started to decrease. This change came about mainly because the king granted the *contratadores* of these colonial areas permission to access the coastal areas directly, without the participation of the merchant-citizens. Therefore, people settled in the Guinea-Bissau region, Kongo and Angola – the so-called *lançados* and *tangomaos* – became their economic agents. We must stress, however, that many merchants continued to use economic agents in the Archipelagoes. Nevertheless, the practice of sub-renting the contracts of West Africa by selling trading licences to other private merchants continued until the 1670s.

In addition, we should emphasize that the groups of traders and settlers of Cape Verde, São Tomé and Angola, comprised of wealthy, mid- and small-scale merchants, were also important businessmen in the Portuguese and the Spanish Atlantic. The former traders operated simultaneously in the coastal and the long-distance circuits, while the latter exclusively in the coastal circuits between the islands and the African coastal areas.[84] The wealthiest merchant-citizens of Cape Verde were involved in wider commercial circuits, encompassing several coastal and long-distance routes connecting the Archipelago to Europe and the Americas, especially to the Spanish American colonies.[85]

[83] The executors of the contracts could either accompany the capital/merchandise throughout the complete commercial circuit or just execute it locally. In other cases, traders from Lisbon established commercial companies with the merchant-*vizinhos* of Cape Verde that lasted for several years. Maria Manuel Ferraz Torrão, 'As ilhas de Cabo Verde e o espaço comercial atlântico: participações e ligações das pequenas e médias associações comercial', in *IV Colóquio Internacional de História das Ilhas Atlânticas* (Canárias: Gran Canaria, Tenerife, 9-14 October 1995). See Tables 1, 2 and 3. http://www.ceha_madeira.et/canarias/hia.html

[84] Due to the nature of the sources available it is extremely difficult to determine or identify who the *vizinhos* of the Archipelagoes were that only operated in the coastal circuits connecting the island with the African coastal areas.

[85] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 51 & 92.

3. Agents

To conduct trade in West Africa, the Dutch and the Portuguese businessmen needed either to live in the posts and settlements, take part in the commercial journeys or place their economic agents at key points in the commercial circuits. These men needed to establish cooperative relations with other economic agents already settled on the West African Coast, namely the Portuguese, other Europeans, Eurafricans and Africans.

Between *c.*1590 and 1623, the private merchants from the Republic made use of the two different types of economic agents in order to operate their West African trade: the supercargoes on board the ships and the factors sent ashore.

The supercargoes sent to West Africa on board the ships to conduct trade on the coast could either be one of the businessmen investing in the commercial venture or commercial staff hired by the merchant freighting the ship and investing in the trip. Both the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardic merchants did this. For instance, in 1607, Elias Trip, a merchant in Dordrecht, Jan Kuysten, a trader in Amsterdam and Manuel Tellis Barit [Port.: Manuel Telles Barreto], a Portuguese man from Madeira, freighted together *De Maecht*, skippered by Hendrick Reijerss, to travel from the Maas River to the Congo River and the coast of Angola. The Portuguese merchant travelled on board the vessel to carry out the trades on the African Coast.[86]

In most cases, the main investors in these commercial journeys stayed at home and hired other supercargoes to go on board the vessels and trade the commodities on the coast. Both the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardim hired supercargoes to do business on their behalf in West Africa. For instance, on 19 September 1609, Gaspar Nunes and Gaspar Sanches hired Luís Fernandes and Gaspar Fernandes, respectively. These two supercargoes

[86] GAA, NA 107/66-66v: 1607-06-27. The Portuguese Sephardic Jews established in Amsterdam had similar practices. For example, on 24 December 1610, Gaspar Sanches and Pedro Rodrigues da Veiga freighted the ship *Het Vliegende Hert*, skippered by Heyns Claessen, to travel from Amsterdam to Portudal. Pedro da Veiga and his brother Gaspar Fernandes travelled on board the ship to trade the merchandise on the coast. GAA, NA 62/210v: 1610-12-24; GAA, NA 160/28-29v: 1619-10-04.

went on board the *St. Jacob*, with all costs and voyage paid for. In the Petite Côte of Senegal, they conducted trade at Portudal, Joal and Rufisque, etc.[87].

The different commercial firms operating in the West African trade also contracted factors to be their permanent agents on the coast. For instance, Gerrit van Schoonhoven, partner in the *Compagnie van Guinea*, together with Elias Trips and Jan Gerritsen Meermaan, hired several men. In 1613, Van Schoonhoven and his partner Cornelis Munincx already had factors on the 'Guinea Coast'. Later, Van Schoonhoven hired other men, namely Rombout Pils, Hendrick van Domselaer, Carel Tresel and Gerrit Laurens Rijser. The former two were in his service in Guinea in 1617. Carel Tresel was hired a second time in 1618 to be the senior factor - *oudere commis* – to conduct trade in Guinea for a period of two years, receiving a monthly wage of 36 guilders. The latter, Gerrit Laurens Rijser, was hired in the same year to travel on board the ship *Jupiter,* also trading in Guinea for a similar period of time, with a mensal salary of 30 guilders.[88]

The Sephardic merchants also signed labour contracts with several traders to be their factors in West Africa. For instance, Diogo da Silva and partners kept factors permanently on the Petite Côte of Senegal to do business. Simão Rodrigues de Noe and Diogo Vaz (de Sousa) were two of those men.[89]

The businessmen operating in the Petite Côte of Senegal as factors of the Sephardim businessmen in Amsterdam, as well as those on board their vessels, were classified by the Portuguese Crown as *lançados*.[90] In fact, some of these men even had institutional ties with the *contratadores* of the royal monopolies of the economic areas of West Africa under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Crown. For example, Luís Fernandes, supercargo of Gaspar

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[87] GAA, NA 115/22-23: 1609-09-19; NA 117/22: 1609-09-19; NA 117/22-23: 1609-09-19; NA 62/206: 1610-11-22; NA 62/209: 1610-12-08. Another good example was the team of supercargoes of Diogo da Silva. Simão Rodrigues Pinel and Estevão Rodrigues were among them. They had to travel several times on board vessels freighted by Diogo da Silva and his partners in these commercial ventures to conduct trade on the Petite Côte of Senegal on their behalf in 1611. GAA, NA 62/218v: 1611-01-19. The Dutch merchants also hired the services of supercargoes. For example, on 6 October 1600, Jaspar Casmebroot travelled to São Tomé Island on board the ship *Don Luijpaert,* under the command of skipper Claes Claess Heck, to conduct trade on the island. GAA, NA 54/43v: 1600-10-06.

[88] GAA, NA 645/29-30v: 1617-07-28; NA 151/207v: 1618-04-04; NA 151/208: 1618-04-04.

[89] GAA, NA 62/218v: 1611-01-19. Another good example is Diogo Dias Querido, also a Portuguese Sephardic Jew in Amsterdam. In 1612, he freighted the ship *Jonas* under the command of skipper Douwe Annes of Enkhuizen, for a trip from Amsterdam to Guinea stopping at Cape Verde (on the continent), Portudal, Joala and Rufisque. The skipper and crew were supposed to receive an open letter from his factor on the Guinea Coast, almost certainly Jacob Peregrino or Pelegrino, stating that he had fullfilled his obligations. GAA, NA 128/182-183: 1612-09-19; GAA, NA, 645/887: 1620-01-22.

[90] For further information, see Chapter 3; and for the Portuguese terminology, see Glossary.

Nunes, and Simão Rodrigues Pinel and Estêvão Rodrigues (Penso), supercargoes of Diogo da Silva, as well as Jacob Peregrino, factor of Diogo Dias Querido, were also factors of the Portuguese *contratador* of the monopoly of Cape Verde and Guinea between 1608 and 1614, João Soeiro. Pedro Rodrigues da Veiga, partner and supercargo of Gaspar Sanches, was also among Soeiro's factors.[91] Jacob Peregrino, factor of Diogo Dias Querido, had business connections with Duarte Fernandes, a Jewish merchant in Amsterdam and Duarte Dias Henriques, the *contratador* of Angola in the period of 1607-1614.[92] Moreover, other Portuguese Jewish merchants in Amsterdam operating in the commercial circuits linking the Republic to West Africa were also included in the list, namely Diogo Vaz (de Sousa) and Gaspar Nunes.[93]

In short, both the Dutch and the Sephardim merchants made use of similar agents on the West Coast of Africa and recruited them in the same ways. The agents hired to be the supercargoes and factors of the Portuguese Jews had connections with Portuguese merchants conducting trade in the Portuguese settlements of West Africa on their behalf or on behalf of the *contratadores* of the royal monopolies.

After the establishment of the WIC (1621-1624), the private merchants had to remove their economic agents from these areas within a period of two years. The WIC commercial agents replaced them.[94] However, in order to overcome the lack of foodstuffs in Angola and to maintain the trade organization in Luanda, the Company authorized the presence of freemen – *vrijmannen* – and free traders – *vrije kooplieden* – in this city. The circumstances of the establishment of freemen and free traders in Angola are not well known. However, from 1642, the Gentlemen Nineteen had been discussing the possibility of opening up the monopoly of the slave trade in Luanda to private merchants from the Republic. The Company employees had proved to be incapable of stopping the decline of the trade and the various Chambers of the Company were unable to send regular cargoes of exchange commodities without the cooperation of the private merchants. This discussion

[91] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 44.
[92] GAA, NA 624/155v: 1617-11-03; NA 611A/421: 1618-06-20; NA 34/115-116: 1601-12-08.
[93] *Ibidem.* For Diogo Vaz (de Sousa) see: GAA, NA 62/206: 1610-11-22; NA 160/28-29v: 1619-10-04; For Gaspar Nunes see: GAA, NA 117/22-23: 1609-09-19; NA 62/201v: 1610-11-01; NA 62/206: 1610-11-22; NA 62/589: 1612-01-31; NA 375/516-516v: 1612-09-20.
[94] For further information on the commercial staff of the Company see Chapter 1.

resulted in a regulation that granted the private merchants from the Republic permission to send vessels to Luanda to buy slaves and to transport them preferably to New Holland (Brazil) and the West Indies.[95] Therefore, these private merchants needed to place their agents in Luanda. These traders became known as *vrije kooplieden* – free merchants. For instance, Jan Pietersz Harder was a *vrijman* in Angola in 1649 and did business with Henrick Cuman and Jacob van der Mart in the Republic.[96] Due to the limited information available, the commercial activities of these businessmen in the different settlements unfortunately cannot be described and analysed in detail.[97]

As we have demonstrated earlier, the private merchants from the Republic used different strategies to keep trading in West Africa. The presence of agents of private businessmen from the Republic in the area under the jurisdiction of the WIC increased even more after the Company had decided to open up the commercial monopolies to Brazil and New Netherland, in 1638 and 1648 respectively. The practice of sending supercargoes on board the vessels to conduct trade at the various ports of call continued to be in use. For example, on board the *St. Jan Baptista* were several supercargoes, namely David Lemque, Gerrite Hartmand and Wouter Abrahamsz de Vries. The ship sailed under the command of skipper Jan Symonsen de Voockt of Zierikzee on the route Amsterdam–Lower Guinea and Angola–Spanish West Indies. These supercargoes were hired by Albert Lubbertsen Coningh, Jacob Jansen Pelgrom, Abraham Clocker, Jan Broers, Hendrick Duysterloo, Louis Wickenburgh and Antonio Maire, all of whom were merchants in Amsterdam. These merchants entrusted to them a cargo worth more than 6,000 guilders and gave them wide

[95] This regulation was only printed in pamphlet form and approved by the States General in 1648. However, given the multiple references to independent colonists and independent merchants in Luanda from the mid 1640s, it is likely that this regulation was put into practice before it had been approved by the States General. In fact, at the end of the 1640s, the WIC was not able to keep business afloat and the Directors of the Company were stimulating private merchants to invest in the West African trade. To conduct trade in Angola, the private merchants and their agents had to pay taxes to the Company – 30 guilders per slave to Brazil and 50 guilders per slave to the island or other place chosen by the private merchants and their agents. All ships freighted by private merchants had to carry on board a supercargo, paid by the Company to supervise the trade. The presence of this overseer of the company was essential to make sure that the private traders only loaded slaves in Luanda, the only authorized port, and did not load any other commodities, which remained within the monopoly of the company. GAA, 54: 'Reglement […] over the openstellen van de handel op S. Paulo de Loanda' (The Hague, 1648). Klaas Ratelband, *Os Holandeses no Brasil e na Costa Africana. Angola, Kongo e São Tomé (1600-1650)* (Lisboa: Vega, 2003), pp. 310-315.

[96] Klaas Ratelband, *Os Holandeses no Brasil e na Costa Africana*, p. 286; GAA, NA 1092/90: 1649-12-31; NA 1097/20v: 1651-05-04.

[97] For example, Hendrick Ouwman, director of the Company in Angola, informs us that the *vrije kooplieden* as well as the Portuguese and the Portuguese governor used as exchange rate 1,000 *reis* for 7 ½ guilders (*Hollands geld*).GAA, NA 1100/12v: 1652-05-03.

jurisdiction to conduct trade on their behalf in Angola, the Oronoco River and other places in the West Indies. [98] These supercargoes were not only in charge of selling the products sent from the Republic, and of purchasing new cargoes and putting it up for sale elsewhere, but they also had the autonomy to buy ships and engage in the coastal trade in the various areas they were supposed to visit on behalf of their European employers.[99]

In the Portuguese settlements of West Africa there were also several groups of economic agents operating in different trading circuits: the commercial officials of the Portuguese Crown, the agents of the *contratadores* of the royal monopolies and the agents of the *avençadores* of the royal monopolies.

Despite leasing out the monopoly areas of West Africa to private traders, the Crown kept its own commercial agents in several areas. These agents were usually associated with three main royal institutions: the *almoxarifados*, the *alfândegas* and the factories – *feitorias.*[100] They worked together to do business on behalf of the king when the commercial monopolies were under the direct administration of the Crown. Whenever the monopolies were leased out, the agents of the Crown would only have an inspecting and supervising role in the activities of the private merchants. In 1608, for example, Domingos Lobo Reimão was factor and *recebedor* – receiver – of the royal factory at Santiago (Cape Verde), while Nuno Melo Cabral was factor of the floating-factory on the São Domingos River (Cacheu).[101]

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[98] GAA, NA 2757/133: 1661-04-08; NA 2757A/153: 1661-04-09; NA 2757A/149: 1661-04-09; NA 2757A/165: 1661-04-09; NA 3586/235: 1670-03-21.

[99] For example, the supercargo Wouter Abrahamsz de Vries, mentioned earlier, upon arrival in the Spanish West Indies bought a vessel from Don Francisco Daymonte and sailed to Rio de Hache. Here, he purchased slaves and other goods, which he sold on the local consumption markets, and bought other merchandise in demand in Europe before he returned to the Republic. GAA, NA 2757/133: 1661-04-08; NA 2757A/153: 1661-04-09; NA 2757A/149: 1661-04-09; NA 2757A/165: 1661-04-09; NA 3586/235: 1670-03-21. For other examples see: GAA, NA 1555B/1453: 1641-10-08; NA 1611/52-53: 1639-07-23; NA 420/536: 1639-12-20.

[100] For further information on the commercial and fiscal institutions of the Portuguese Crown, see Chapter 1, sections three, four and five.

[101] For instance, in the Guinea-Bissau region, the king had a floating factory anchored temporarily on the São Domingos River (founded *c.*1533) (Cacheu, Guinea-Bissau region) with a factor, clerk and *recebedor* on board, in addition to other crew members. This factory was not permanently anchored on the São Domingos River, but also sailed to other coastal areas, as well as to the Cape Verde islands and to the Portuguese Kingdom. The main function of this royal agent was to barter cotton for slaves. His activities were directly connected with the royal factors at the factories on the Cape Verde Islands of Santiago and Fogo. The cotton bartered on the Guinea-Bissau region was produced on Fogo Island (Cape Verde) and shipped to the Guinea-Bissau region by the royal factor at the royal factory of the cotton (founded *c.*1529) on Fogo. The slaves purchased on the Guinea-Bissau region were to be sent to the royal factory in Santiago (founded *c.*1520) to be later shipped either to Europe or to the Americas. Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Actividade externa de Cabo Verde: organização, funcionamento, evolução' in Luís de Albuquerque and Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* I, pp. 249-255; *idem*, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília

The *contratadores* of the royal monopolies were granted permission to place their economic agents at the key points in each monopoly area. In order to conduct their business in the monopoly area they could send factors from Lisbon to the various places or hire inhabitants of the posts and settlements.

In Cape Verde, São Tomé and Angola, the *contratadores* often hired local inhabitants. Usually, they chose holders of posts in the local royal administration to be their representatives. In fact, from the 1610s onwards, it became common practice to engage royal officers appointed by the king as representatives of the *contratadores* in the different monopoly areas.[102] In the posts on the West African Coast, such as Cacheu, the captains of the fortresses appointed by the King accumulated the functions of factors to conduct trade either on behalf of the King or on behalf of the *contratador* (see Table 27). In Cacheu, for instance, this became common practice after Baltazar Pereira Castelo Branco. In 1615, the king and the *contratador* appointed him for both functions. Luís Peixoto de Magalhães was another good example. He was also *almoxarife* of Ribeira Grande (Santiago, Cape Verde) in 1619 and later became factor of the *contratador* of Cape Verde: André da Fonseca (1627-1630).[103]

The *contratadores* also appointed as their representatives in the monopoly areas inhabitants of the settlements: mainly traders engaged in the coastal circuits, and sometimes even in the inter-continental circuits. In fact, most of the commercial agents in the service of the *contratadores* in West Africa were settlers and traders of Cape Verde and São Tomé. The cooperation between the *contratadores* and these local traders could assume two distinct forms: a simple labour contract as a commercial agent or the form of a commercial partnership. Both practices were very common in Cape Verde, São Tomé and Angola. For example, between 1580 and 1632 almost all the *contratadores* of the Cape Verde and Guinea monopoly

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Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 17-123; Zelinda Cohen, 'Administração das ilhas de Cabo Verde e o seu distrito no segundo século de colonização (1560-1640)' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 189-224.

[102] Francisco de Távora, for instance, *almoxarife* of Ribeira Grande (Santiago, Cape Verde) between 1611 and 1619, was also administrator of the Cape Verde contract on behalf of the *contratador* during the renting contract of 1615-1620. In the following years (1621-1623), he was also appointed captain of Cacheu by the king and was, at the same time, factor of the *contratadores* António Fernandes de Elvas for the Guinea-Bissau region. Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Capitães de Cacheu: 1615-1647' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 514.

[103] Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Capitães de Cacheu: 1615-1647' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, p. 514.

hired citizens of Ribeira Grande (Santiago Island, Cape Verde) as their representatives (see Table 28).

Table 5: Royal officials as factors of the *contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea (some examples) (1621-1649)

Years	*Contratadores*	Factors	Post in Royal Administration
1615-1619	António Fernandes de Elvas	Baltasar Pereira Castelo Branco	Captain of Cacheu
		Francisco de Távora (1615-1620)	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago
1619-1620	António Fernandes de Elvas	António Proença	Captain and factor of Cacheu
		Francisco de Távora (1615-1620)	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago
1621-1623	António Fernandes de Elvas	Francisco de Távora (1621/1623)	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago Captain and factor of Cacheu
1623-1627	Royal Administration	Francisco de Távora (1620-23)	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago Captain and factor of Cacheu
		Francisco Sodré Pereira (1626-7)	Captain and factor of Cacheu
1637-1642	Gaspar da Costa	Luís de Magalhães (1640-45)	Captain and factor of Cacheu
		Manuel da Costa	-
1642-1649	Royal administration	Luís de Magalhães (1640-45)	Captain and factor of Cacheu
		Gonçalo Gamboa de Aiala (1645-49)	Captain and factor of Cacheu

Sources[104]

Table 6: Inhabitants of Ribeira Grande as agents of the *contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea (1574-1632)

Years	*Contratadores*	Factors/collaborators	Place
1574-1580	António Nunes do Algarve	Manuel Lopes Cardoso (1575)	Santiago (Cape Verde)
	Francisco Nunes de Beja	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago	
1583-1588	Álvaro Mendes de Castro	Manuel Lopes Cardoso	São Domingos River (Cacheu)
	Diogo Fernandes Lamego	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago	
	Bernaldo Ramires	Fernão Sanches	Santiago (Cape Verde)
	Rui Gomes Bravo	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago	
1590-1595	Simão Ferreira Malaca	Fernão Sanches (1593/1594)	Santiago (Cape Verde)
	Pedro Freire	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago	São Domingos River (Cacheu)
	Diogo Henriques		
	Ambrósio Ataíde	Manuel Lopes Cardoso (1593)	
		Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago	
*c.*1601-1607	Jácome Fixer	Francisco da Cunha (1604)	Santiago (Cape Verde)
	João Gonçalves Gusmão	Citizen of Ribeira Grande, Santiago	

Sources[105]

[104] Based on information from Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 17-123; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Capitães de Cacheu: 1615-1647' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde*, II, p. 514; Frédéric Mauro, *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico* I , pp. 217-218; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*; IAN/TT, *Registo geral de mercês*, database.

The *contratadores* were also granted permission to sub-let the monopoly rights to the *avençadores*. These businessmen also needed to have their economic agents in the various posts and settlements in West Africa. For example, Luís Rodrigues de Paiva, Francisco de Paiva and other merchants in Lisbon had their business agents in Cape Verde, namely Simão Rodrigues Mântua (see Table 29). Like the *contratadores* and the *avençadores*, most businessmen based in Portugal and other European states with commercial interests in West Africa also selected merchants and settlers of Cape Verde and São Tomé as factors, attorneys, solicitors, etc. (see Table 29).[106] In order to solve judicial matters related to the execution of commercial contracts and bills of exchange, the merchants in Portugal also hired judicial officers of the Crown in Cape Verde, São Tomé and Angola as their representatives (see Table 29).

For example, Francisco da Cunha Sequeira, holder of several judicial posts, such as municipal judge of the Ribeira Grande's City Council and auditor-general (head officer of the royal judicial system) of the Cape Verde Archipelago during the 1610s and 1620s, was also attorney/solicitor of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom.[107]

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[105] Based on information from Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 17-123; Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Capitães de Cacheu: 1615-1647' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História geral de Cabo Verde*, II, p. 514; Frédéric Mauro, *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico*, pp. 217-218; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiro*; IAN/TT, *Registo geral de mercês*, database.

[106] Manuel Dias António Godines and Nuno Gonçalves, both merchants and citizens/inhabitants of Ribeira Grande, are two good examples among the many others. The former was a representative of his brother João Godines, a trader in Lisbon between 1603 and 1627, and the latter was the factor of Gomes Rodrigues de Milão, a merchant from Lisbon, between 1604 and 1615.

[107] For example, António da Cunha, clerk of the orphans and tutorships at Santiago Island between 1572 and 1579 and Francisco Toscano, sheriff of the judicial district in 1583, were both attorneys/solicitors of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom. Álvaro Pedreira, for instance, clerk of the judicial district, chancellor and public attorney at Santiago, was attorney of Diogo Fernandes Cid, a merchant from the Portuguese Kingdom, in 1584. Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547.

Table 7: Citizens of Ribeira Grande, holders of judicial offices and merchants of Cape Verde as economic agents of Portuguese merchants (including the *contratadores*)

Years	Name	Observations
1572-1595	António da Cunha	Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom (1579) Clerk of the orphans and their inheritances at Santiago (Cape Verde) (1572-1579)
1575-1594	Manuel Lopes Cardoso	Factor of the *contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea on Santiago (1575) Factor of the *contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea on the São Domingos River (Cacheu) (1593)
1576-1579	Gonçalo de Araújo	Merchant of Ribeira Grande, Santiago (Cape Verde) Commercial partner of Belchior Martins, merchant from Lisbon
1580	Gonçalo Mendes	Merchant Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom
1580-1582	Baltazar Álvares	Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom No other job known
1583-1584	Álvaro Pedreira	Attorney of Diogo Fernandes Cid, merchant from the Portuguese Kingdom (1584) Clerk of the judicial district, chancellor and public attorney on Santiago (Cape Verde) (1583)
1583-1584	Francisco Toscano	Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom (1584) Sheriff of the judicial district of Cape Verde (1583)
1587-1602	Fernão Sanchez	Merchant Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom (1587, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1597, 1601, 1602) Factor of the Cape Verde contract (1593, 1594)
1588-1616	Simão Rodrigues de Mântua	Merchant Factor of the *contratador* of Santiago Island (1608-1614) in Ribeira Grande Factor of Luís Rodrigues Paiva, merchant in Lisbon
1590-1598	Afonso Antunes	Merchant of Ribeira Grande, Santiago Island (Cape Verde) (1596, 1598) Attorney of merchants from the Kingdom (1590, 1593)
1597-1610	Francisco da Cunha	Factor of the contract of Santiago Island (1604) Factor of Luís Fernandes Gramaxo, merchant in Lisbon
1603-1627	António Godines	Merchant Brother of João Godines, merchant from Lisbon
1604-1615	Nuno Gonçalves	Merchant Factor of Gomes Rodrigues de Milão, merchant from Lisbon
1605-1632	Francico da Cunha Sequeira	Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom (1605) Municipal judge at Ribeira Grande city council (1612, 1614) Auditor-general of Cape Verde (head officer of the royal judicial system) (1621, 1627-1631) etc.
1608-1626	António Mendes	Merchant Attorney of merchants from the Portuguese Kingdom (1609-1615)

Sources[108]

[108] Based on information from Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547, and Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 90-91.

Over time, *contratadores* and *avençadores* tended to hire an increasing number of merchants and colonists of the Portuguese possessions and royal officials already serving in the posts and settlements. Since the colonists of Cape Verde and São Tomé had privileged access to the coastal areas, it was to the advantage of the *contratadores* and the *avençadores* to have local merchants and settlers at their service.[109] The employment of royal officers with posts in the most important commercial and fiscal agencies of the Crown also made the *contratadores*' lives easier since these men already knew the area and the trading practices. These connections could also be used to smuggle goods and avoid the payment of taxes. As for the military officers, the businessmen probably used their employment as factors as a way to guarantee the security of ships and cargoes, at least during their stay in the ports for loading and unloading. In other words, the businessmen hoped to reduce risks.

All the economic agents under analysis so far made the connection between the African ports and the international trading circuits linking these ports with the Americas and Europe. Behind these commercial agents was another layer of economic actors: those establishing the connection between the African coastal areas and the supply markets of African goods located deeper in the continent. Free Africans, Eurafricans and more rarely Europeans, the latter usually named *tangomaos* by the Portuguese authorities, were the connections between these two worlds.[110] These *tangomaos* lived not only in the ports, but also in the jungle under the authority of the local African rulers, and in some cases, they even had family ties with these authorities, as explained earlier. For instance, João Ferreira, known as 'the Ganagoga', a new Christian from the Alentejo, lived on the Senegal River in the 1590s under the protection of the Gran-Fulo or Tekrur and the 'duke' or *alcaide* of Kassan on the Gambia River, to whose daughter he was married.[111]

Given the circumstances of their settlement and the shortage of primary sources, it is extremely difficult to identify who these men were.[112] Nevertheless, in most cases, they were

[109] For further information on the commercial restrictions imposed on *contratadores* and the benefits granted to the settlers of Cape Verde and São Tomé, see Chapter 1.
[110] For further information on these social groups and their economic activities, see Chapters 3 and 4.
[111] André Álvares de Almada (1594), *Tratado breve dos rios de Guiné do Cabo Verde* (Lisboa: Editorial L. I. A. M., 1964), pp. 24-25; Isabel Castro Henriques, *Os pilares da diferença: Relações Portugal-África: Séculos XV-XX* (Lisboa: Calendoscópio, 2004), pp. 352-353; Philip Havik, 'Missionários e moradores na Costa da Guiné: Os padres da Companhia de Jesus e os tangomãos no princípio do século XVII', *Stvdia*, 56-57 (2000), pp. 225, 228, 230-232 & 249.
[112] Among the merchants and citizens of Ribeira Grande (Santiago, Cape Verde) between 1560 and 1648, we could only identify two men who had lived for many years in the Guinea-Bissau region: Vicente Ribeiro and Luís Lopes Rabelo. The latter was also merchant-*vizinho* of Ribeira Grande, engaged on the coastal trading

traders and their main concern was to do business and make as much profit as possible in order to guarantee their survival. Therefore, they would trade with all European merchants settled on the coastal areas, be they Portuguese, Dutch, French or English.

The private traders from the Republic did business with Portuguese and Eurafricans in several regions along the West African Coast, namely at the ports of Rufisque, Portudal and Joala on the Petite Côte of Senegambia, as well as in the regions of Loango and Kongo. For instance, Pieter van den Broecke during his second voyage to West Africa established contacts with several Portuguese and Eurafricans at different points on the coast. For instance, on 1 November 1609, at Mayoumba, Pieter van den Broecke bought from an Eurafrican of Portuguese descent named Lowies Mendes [Port.: Luis Mendes] redwood, elephant tusks and *taccola* (Takula, dye-yielding plant), on 26 May 1610. During the same journey, on 17 May 1610, van den Broecke reports the master of the ship *Mauritius* trading under his supervision also went up the Cacongo River to do business with a Portuguese merchant named Manuel da Costa. Finally, on his third voyage to Angola, van den Broecke met at Mayoumba another Portuguese: '[his] great friend Francisco Delmende Navero'. [113]

These commercial transactions continued under the rule of the WIC in West Africa. In fact, in none of the possessions taken over by the WIC did the Company employees dare to penetrate much into the interior. On the Gold Coast and in São Tomé and Angola, the employees responsible for the trade relied on middlemen that would bring the African merchandise, as well as foodstuffs, from the remote areas in the interior to the coast. For instance, during the WIC government over Angola, the factors of the Company benefited from the economic cooperation of some Portuguese and Eurafricans who had access to the hinterland and supplied the Company employees with Africans goods and slaves to be exported to the American and European consumption markets. They also provided the WIC officers and soldiers with foodstuffs and other goods necessary for daily life.

The European businessmen and their agents operating in the Portuguese possessions in West Africa also relied on the services of these middlemen to obtain African goods from the hinterland markets.[114]

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circuits between the islands and the Nuno and Gâmbia Rivers, together with two other merchant-skipper-*vizinhos* of Ribeira Grande: Francisco Ricalde/Recalde and Diogo Ximenes Vargas. Iva Cabral, 'Vizinhos da cidade da Ribeira Grande de 1560 a 1648' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 515-547.

[113] J. D. La Fleur (trans. & ed.), *Pieter van den Broecke's Journal*, pp. 71, 73, 76 & 87.

[114] For detailed information, see chapters 3 and 4.

4. Trans-imperial networks

Both the Dutch and the Portuguese merchants doing business in the long-distance circuits via West Africa placed their agents in strategic ports that made the operation of the business possible. The analysis of these commercial webs will show the differences and similarities in the way the European merchants and their agents conducted their African trade and their Atlantic business in general.

To illustrate the Dutch case, we have selected as representative case studies the commercial networks of Lucas van de Venne and Henrico Matias. On the other hand, to highlight the business webs of the Portuguese Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam we analyse the connections of Diogo Nunes Belmonte.

Lucas van de Venne, a trader in Amsterdam, developed his economic activities in the Atlantic between 1609 and 1651. Before 1623, Lucas van de Venne's main areas of investment were Angola, Kongo and Loango in West Africa, and Bahia in Brazil. In the business with Brazil and Angola, Lucas van de Venne was often associated with Leonard de Beer, a Flemish trader in Amsterdam.[115] In order to trade with West Africa and Brazil, Van de Venne and associates set up a commercial network linking several Atlantic areas. [116]

In the Republic, Van de Venne and partners were associated with several Portuguese Sephardic Jews, such as Bartolomeu Rodrigues de Molina and Jorge Peres Veiga. The former was Van de Venne's connection for the transport of the barter goods from the Republic to West Africa, while the latter was an important link in the Brazilian sugar and dyewood

[115] Oscar Gelderbloom, *Zuid-Nederlandse kooplieden*, pp. 180-181.224, 231 & 238.

[116] De Beer started his Atlantic activities in 1601 trading with Brazil, Portugal and the Republic, more precisely with the areas of Pernambuco and Bahia. In his multiple activities with Brazil, Leonard de Beer was also associated with Laurens Joost Baeck, to whom he granted power of attorney as his representative as well as commercial credit to conduct trade on his behalf. As well as the businesses with West Africa and Brazil, de Beer had also commercial interests in the routes connecting Portugal to the Spanish Low Countries and the Dutch Republic, mainly for the transport of wood. It was more than 10 years after he had initiated his commercial activities that de Beer appeared for the first time as an investor in the West Coast of Africa, in particularly in Angola and Congo. Moreover, de Beer also appears associated to Jorge Peres Veiga, and Sebastião Ribeiro, Portuguese Sephardic merchants established in Amsterdam with investments in both West Africa and Brazil. GAA, NA 88/205V: 1601-01-22; NA 62/210V-211: 1610-12-27; NA 126/15V: 1611-11-19; NA 376/114/115: 1613-03-06; NA 645B/1520: 1621-05-06; 394/278-279: 1627-04-20; NA 126/15V: 1611-11-19; NA 200/538V-584V: 1620-05-09; NA 164/162: 1620-11-07; NA 164/162: 1620-11-07; NA 142/225: 1616-03-23; NA 376/114-115: 1613-03-06; NA 381/110: 1616-03-10; 381/114: 1618-03-10; NA 376/114-115: 1613-03-06; NA 645B/1520: 1621-05-06

business. For the trade in Angola, Kongo and Loango, Van de Venne's main connection was the Portuguese trader Gonçalo da Costa, a resident of Luanda.[117]

To do business on his behalf in Bahia, Lucas van de Venne had given power of attorney and commercial credit to Francisco Pereira, a silversmith and citizen of Bahia.[118]

For the capitalization of the business, Van de Venne and associates had given power of attorney to Lambert Hustaert, a merchant in Lisbon and *contratador* of the Brazilian dyewood trade, in partnership with other merchants, to pay the bills of exchange issued by the agents in Luanda and Bahia.[119]

After the establishment of the WIC (1621-1624), the nature of Lucas van de Venne's businesses changed, as referred previously. In fact, whilst he remained partly a merchant, he became partly an insurer, as mentioned earlier. The trade conducted by Van de Venne was mainly in Brazilian and São Tomé sugar, bought at the settlements controlled by the Company.[120] Therefore, Van de Venne and his associates continued to operate in a colonial network encompassing areas controlled by a single European sea power.

The case study presented earlier shows that the commercial webs of the businessmen of the Republic in the early 17th century encompassed mainly the Portuguese Southern Atlantic. Their networks seem to have connected Europe to West Africa and Brazil to Europe, but not West Africa to the Americas.

However, in the course of the 17th century this scenario would change. The commercial web of Henrico Matias, a merchant of German descent based in Amsterdam, and especially active in the 1650s and 1660s, covered both the Portuguese and the Spanish Empires and included the inter-continental routes connecting Europe, West Africa and the Americas simultaneously.[121]

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[117] GAA, NA 376/114-115: 1613-03-06; NA 376/114-115: 1613-03-06.

[118] GAA, NA 376/114-115: 1613-03-06; NA 381/110: 1616-03-10; NA 381/114: 1618-03-10; NA 126/222: 1612-04-25.

[119] For example, in 1613, Gonçalo da Costa, agent of Van de Venne and de Beer in Luanda, received a cargo of products from Van de Venne and associates via Bartolomeu Rodrigues de Molina, a Portuguese Sephardic Jew from Amsterdam. The commodities were in exchange for African goods in Congo, Angola and Loango up to the value of 73,680 Portuguese *réis*. Gonçalo da Costa signed a bill of exchange for this amount on behalf of Van de Venne and sent it to Lisbon. The bill was to be paid by Lambert Hustaert, merchant in Lisbon, and attorney of Van de Venne. GAA, NA 376/114-115: 1613-03-06; NA 645B/1520: 1621-05-06.

[120] GAA, NA 1052/64: 1638-11-25; NA 1609/419-422: 1640-01-21.

[121] For instance, Diogo and Daniel Nunes Belmonte organized several commercial voyages in partnership with other Portuguese Sephardic Jews from Amsterdam during the 1610s and 1620s. They invested mainly in the slave trade and the commercial web controlled by them encompassed Spain, Portugal, Guinea, Angola and the Spanish West Indies. Belmonte's main associates were Sebastião Ribeiro, Miguel de Espinosa and Pedro Gomes de Lisboa, all merchants in Amsterdam. In this business, the Dutch merchants acted as insurers of the

His connections crossed the borders of several empires. Matias started his economic activities in the Atlantic in the 1650s and remained active until the 1670s. He had interests in West Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean Islands, the New Netherland, and the Spanish American colonies in both South and Central America and the West Indies. In West Africa, Matias' main activity was the slave trade, though he also participated in other trades. His representatives were present at Angola and on the Gold Coast, more precisely in Mina, Mori, Cape Coast, Accra and Kormantin.[122]

Matias had regular investments in other areas of the Atlantic. In the trade between Brazil, the Southern Spanish American colonies and the Republic, Henrico Matias traded in hides, tropical woods, cacao, indigo and other goods.[123] In the trade with the Spanish Central American colonies, Henrico Matias was associated with Johan van Wickevoort and Jacomo Ruland.[124] In the trade with Curaçao, Henrico Matias was associated with Guillelmo Belin le Garde and Philip van Hulten.[125] Henrico Matias also participated in the coastal trade between the New Netherland and Curaçao. On 28 April 1668, he owned 2/16 parts in the ship *Juffrouw Leonora*, skippered by Cornelis Jacobss from Amsterdam, to be used in the trade between the New Netherland and Curaçao.[126] Finally, we should mention that Henrico Matias was also an investor in the fisheries in Newfoundland and the Mediterranean.[127]

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cargoes on board the ships owned or freighted by Belmonte. Among these insurers were Anthoine van Dimen, Albert Schuijt, Wijbrant Warwijck, Hans van Soldt, de Jonge, Pelgrom van Dronckelaer and Samuel Voerknecht, among many others. GAA, NA 258/81v: 1613-03-19; NA 258/83: 1614-01-28; NA 254/188-189: 1614-05-22; NA 646a/394: 1623-03-28.

122 On 10 September 1669, Gerardo Knijff, a merchant in Amsterdam declared on behalf of Henrico Matias that on the Gold Coast (more precisely in Mina, Moere, Cape Coast, Accra, Kormantin, Bimba and Anamabó, less than three slaves had been traded. GAA, NA 2231/100: 1669-09-10.

123 For example, the ship *De Morgenstar*, taken by English privateers while sailing between the Canary island of Santa Cruz and Amsterdam, under the skipper Claes Willemsz, carried on board 2,429 hides, 90 pieces of campeche-wood, 456 pieces of Brazil wood, 28 bags of cacao and 12 boxes of indigo. GAA, NA 2120/167-169: 1657-05-25.

124 In 1658 they had sent on board the ship *Campen* under skipper Caspar van den Broeck and under the commercial responsibility of supercargo (*commies op het schip*) Daniel Kelder, a cargo of lace, serge, bay, camlet, damask linen, medicines and mirrors with an estimated value of 16,107 guilders. GAA, NA 1131/67-68: 1659-10-21.

125 On 9 August 1660, Ghijsberto de Rosa, factor of these three merchants, sold various merchandise to Pieter de Leeuw, an inhabitant and merchant of the island of Curaçao, up to the value of '268,505 ½ silver *reales*'. GAA, NA 2211/140-142: 1661-07-26.

126 The other owners of the vessel were the merchants: Jacob Venturin owned 4/16 parts; Gillis van Hoornbeeck, on behalf of Cornelis Steenwijck, a merchant in New York, 2/16 parts; Gerrit Hamel on behalf of Jan Doncker, a merchant in St. Christophel, 2/16 parts; Pieter van Becx 1/16 parts and Jonathan Levi 1/16 parts. GAA, NA 2226/994-997: 1668-04-28.

127 GAA, NA 1113/288: 1655-06-21; for other examples see also: NA 1115/17v: 1655-10-05; NA 1136/355: 1661-03-17.

Thus, Henrico Matias invested in different commercial regions and trading circuits crossing the borders of several empires. In fact, Matias did business in the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and English settlements in West Africa and colonies in the Americas. In Europe, the situation was not very different, since Matias had connections in several important Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and English cities such as Naples, Genoa, Livorno, Civitavecchia, Seville, Cadiz, Lisbon and London.

In order to conduct his inter-continental businesses, Henrico Matias had representatives in various key ports. In London, Jacob Luce (possibly Jacob de Luz?) had power of attorney and commercial credit from Matias to recover goods seized by English privateers.[128] In Curaçao, However, in the early 1660s, Henrico Matias and his partners (Guiljelmo Belin le Garde and Philip van Hulten, merchants in Amsterdam) decided to establish their own factor on the island – Ghijsberto de Rosa, who conducted trade on their behalf with some inhabitants of the island and the Company.[129] Edward Man and Isaac van Beeck, directors of the WIC - Chamber Amsterdam, were slso important contacts for Matias' business with Curaçao.[130]

In addition, to defend his interests on board the ships, Matias usually hired a supercargo, both for the ships sailing in the inter-continental circuits linking Europe to the Americas directly or via West Africa or for the ships operating in the fishing routes of Newfoundland and the Mediterranean. For example, in 1658 Daniel Kelder was sent as supercargo – *commies* – on board the ship *Campen*, travelling to Cartagena under the command of skipper Caspar van den Broeck.[131]

In order to organize the slave trade, Matias had connections in Europe, West Africa and the American colonies. In this business, Europe supplied the capital to back the risks of the voyage and pay the freight of the ships, the crew and the cargo. West Africa supplied the African slaves in exchange for the European products and other African and American goods. The American markets paid for the slaves with bullion (silver and gold), colonial goods (sugar, tobacco, cotton, dyewood, cacao, etc.) and sometimes precious stones or bills

[128] GAA, NA 2120/167-169: 1657-05-25.
[129] GAA, NA 2211/140-142: 1661-07-26.
[130] GAA, NA 2118/137: 1657-08-01.
[131] GAA, NA 1131/67-68: 1659-10-21.

of exchange.[132] It was only in Europe that these commodities and the bills of exchange were turned into capital. Hence, the capitalization of the business was done in Europe.

In Europe, Henrico Matias appeared associated with Jacinto Vasques, a merchant in Seville with investments in the slave trade, as well as with Marcelo van der Goes and Philip van Hulten, merchants in Amsterdam.[133] On both the 'Coast of Guinea', i.e. Gold Coast, and Curaçao, Henrico Matias kept up regular contacts with the representatives of the WIC during the 1650s and 1660s.[134] The WIC high officials on Curaçao also received regular loads of slaves from West Africa. A small proportion of the slaves met the labour needs of the island, whilst the majority were exported to the Spanish American markets nearby. The slaves could be paid for either in bullion (usually silver or gold from the Spanish American colonies) or in goods. Hides, tobacco, *cochenille, compeche-cochenille, silver-cochenille* and wood (*compeche-hout*) were some of the goods used as payment.

The director of Curaçao was supposed to send the payment-goods directly to Amsterdam or via the New Netherland. In the latter case, Petrus Stuijvesant, governor of the colony, was always supposed to be informed. Once in Amsterdam, this merchandise was sold and transformed into capital.[135] For example, on 1 August 1657, Eduart Man and Isaac van Beeck, on behalf of the WIC, together with Henrico Matias received, under the orders of the abovementioned governor, an load of slaves from West Africa on board the ship *Den Coninck Salomon*. An estimated value of 100 silver *reales* had to be paid for the cargo. The payment could be made either in currency or through the selling of goods shipped directly to Amsterdam or via the New Netherland.[136]

However, the relations between Eduard Man and Isaack van Beeck (directors of the WIC, Chamber of Amsterdam) and Henrico Matias go beyond the slave trade. On 4 March 1655, they authorized Henrico Matias to obtain permission to release the ship *Madama van Brazil*, under the command of Captain Hendrick Vroom. The ship and crew were, at the

[132] Joseph C. Miller, 'Capitalism and slaving: The financial and commercial organization of the Angolan slave trade, according to the accounts of Antonio Coelho Guerreira (1684-1692)', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 17/1 (1984), pp. 1-56.
[133] GAA, NA 2117/161: 1656-11-23; NA 2715/207: 1660-04-10.
[134] For example, in 1657, Johan Valckenburg, general in the service of the WIC on the 'coast of Guinea', declared, on behalf of Henrico Matias, that a healthy slave in Arda, Calabar and the Gold Coast could cost the equivalent to 25-50 guilders GAA, NA 2717/65: 1661-01-19.
[135] GAA, NA 2117/161: 1656-11-23.
[136] GAA, NA 2118/137: 1657-08-01.

time, retained in Puerto Rico.[137] In brief, in the second half of the 17th century the commercial interests of the Dutch-Flemish-German merchants based at Amsterdam and their agents comprised several Atlantic Empires.

The Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam, on their part, already in the early 17th century held connections across various Atlantic Empires and had business in different commercial regions, such West Africa, the Spanish American colonies, the Moroccan coast (at the time known as the 'Barbary Coast') and the Mediterranean. Diogo Nunes Belmonte 'alias' Jacob Belmonte, Portuguese Sephardic Jew of Amsterdam, is a good example of this type of web.

His commercial activities can be traced between 1613 and 1629. Belmonte appears engaged in the sugar trade between Brazil, Portugal and the Republic.[138] He was also involved in the re-distribution of Brazilian sugar throughout the Mediterranean. Various vessels were freighted by Belmonte to transport sugar from Porto, Viana and Lisbon to ports such as Livorno, Pisa and Venice and return to the original port of departure with other commodities loaded in the Mediterranean.[139] Here, he also invested in the commercial routes linking Venice and Constantinopla for the shipment of precious stones and hides.[140]

Belmonte also appeared associated with the trade between the Republic and Salé (North of Africa), sometimes via Portugal. For instance, on 22 March 1626, Diogo Nunes Belmonte and Francisco Vaz de Leão, Portuguese merchants in Amsterdam, freighted *De Gulden Sterre*, 50 *last*, property of Lambert Cronelisz Cruyff, citizen of Enkhuizen. The ship was skippered by Harck Gerritsz , of Venhuizen, on the route Amsterdam-Salé (Morocco)-Amsterdam. The freightage price was 2700 guilders. [141]

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[137] GAA, NA 2116/45: 1655-03-04.

[138] For instance, on 21 March 1613, Diogo Nunes Belmonte, declared that the cargo of sugar loaded on the ship *Nossa Senhora dos Remédios* traveling from Pernambuco to Porto, with and insurance of François Boudewijns, was taken by pirates. GAA, NA 253/reg. 12/37: 1613-03-21.
For example, on 1 September 1623, Diogo Nunes Belmonte in partnership with Miguel Esteves de Pina, João Pires da Cunha, Dinis Jenes, Manuel Alvares de Campos and Nuno Dias freighted the *Jonas*, 65 *last*, to transport goods form Amsterdam to Viana do Castelo (Portugal) and return with a cargo of brazilian sugar and other merchandise to the same Dutch port. The skipper was Hendricl Broeckman, of Hamburg. GAA, NA 646SA/672: 1623-09-01. For other examples see: GAA, NA 645/231: 1618-07-26; 383/23: 1620-02-03; 645/997: 1620-06-01; 628/334-336; 646A/394: 1623-03-28.

[139] GAA, NA 151/1v: 1617-10-28; 645/449: 1618-10-03; 645/509: 1619-02-14; 645/778: 1619-07-31

[140] For example, on 4 August 1615, Diego Nunes Belmonte insurered the ship *Breton* Corrier and its cargo of precious stone and hides with Daniel and Jan van Geel, merchants of Amsterdam, to travel from Constantinople to Venice under the command of skipper Pedro de Juani de Cagola. GAA, NA 254/301-303v.

[141] GAA, NA 632/57-59: 1626-03-22. For other examples, see: GAA, NA 201/142v-144; 391/149: 1625-08-21; 391/149-149v: 1625-08-21; 632/337-229: 1626-11-09; 632/183-184: 1628-03-15.

In what concerns the West Africa trade, Belmonte operated in two main regions: the Upper Guinea and Angola. In the former region, he was mainly engaged in the trade of hides, ivory and gold, while in the latter, his main business was the slave trade. Naturally, the commercial circuits of the vessels freighted by Belmonte to travel between the Republic, Portugal and Spain, and the two regions mentioned earlier had two different destinations. The ships sailing to the Upper Guinea returned to the Republic or the Mediterranean.[142] For instance, in 1612, Belmonte in partnership with Diogo Dias Querido, his brother-in-law, as well as with Eliau Benvenista e Francisco Lopes Pinto, Portuguese merchants in Venice, entrusted a cargo of exchange goods to Jacob Pelegrino/Peregrino, merchant in Amsterdam, to be traded at the Upper Guinea. The cargo was transported on board the *Jonas* skippered by Douwe Annes, of Enkhuizen. The return cargo was to be delivered at Livorno.[143]

The ships travelling to Angola, on the other hand, transported slaves to the Spanish American colonies and returned with cargoes of precious metals and other goods to Seville.[144] For example, on 22 May 1613, *De Engel Michiel*, was freighted by Diogo Nunes Belmonte and insured by several powerful Amsterdam entrepreneurs to transport African slaves from the port of Luanda (Angola) to the Spanish West Indies and returned to Seville loaded with Spanish bullion, gold, silver and other goods.[145]

In order to conduct business in these various regions and commercial branches, Belmonte had representatives and associates at different places. His contact person in the Spanish West Indies was Francisco Ribeiro. Aron Querido, alias Diogo Dias Querido, was Belmonte's brother-in-law and his factor at Salé (Morocco), as well as partner in the business with the Upper Guinea, as we have shown earlier.

In the Mediterranean, Belmonte had several contact persons at Livorno, Venice and Pisa: Jorge da Veiga Pinto in the former city, Eliau Benevista, Rafael da Cunha and Abraham Cousin in the second port, and Francisco Gomes de Morais, in the latter city. In Antwerp, his contacts were Manuel Nunes d'Évora, Manuel and Diogo Francês; while in Bayonne and London he had Jacome Luís and Johan Luce, to whom he had given power of attorney.

142 GAA, NA 258/83: 1614-01-28; 645/887: 1620-01-22.
143 GAA, NA 258/83: 1614-01-28; 645/887: 1620-01-22.
144 GAA, NA 146/199v-200v: 1617-02-23.
145 GAA, NA 258/81v: 1613-03-19; 254/188-188v: 1614-05-22.

Similarly to the business of the Sephardim of Amsterdam in West Africa, the administration of the Portuguese royal monopolies required a wide commercial web covering not only West Africa, but also the Portuguese and Spanish American colonies and Europe. Therefore, the *contratadores* and *avençadores* needed to place their agents at the various key points of the trading circuits. To illustrate the Portuguese case, we have selected as a representative case study the commercial networks of Simão Ferreira Malaca and his associates, *contratadores* of the Cape Verde and Guinea monopoly in 1590-1595, and the web of Duarte Dias Henriques, *contratador* of Angola for the period 1607-1614. To complement the analysis we will also look briefly at the net of the *avençador* of the Cape Verde-Guinea monopoly, Luís Fernandes Gramaxo (1590s-1610s).

Simão Ferreira Malaca and partners, *contratadores* of Cape Verde and Guinea between 1590 and 1595, had factors in multiple places across the Atlantic. Jorge Fernandes Gramaxo and Fernão Sanches were their representatives on Santiago (Cape Verde), Manuel Lopes Cardoso was their factor on the São Domingos River (Cacheu, Guinea-Bissau region), Jorge Fernandes Gramaxo and Brás Ferreira protected their commercial interests in Cartagena (Spanish America) and Leonel de Quadros was their representative in Seville (Spain).[146]

Duarte Dias Henriques, *contratador* of Angola for the period 1607-1614, had a similar trans-imperial web. His factor was Manuel Drago, who was also factor to Miguel Dias Santiago. Dias Santiago was cousin of Dias Henriques and his factor in Lisbon and Bahia. He travelled regularly between these two ports because of his interests in the slave and sugar trades. In fact, Dias Santiago was also a powerful sugar planter in the captaincy of Bahia.[147]

Like the *contratadores*, the private merchants in possession of commercial licences to trade within the monopoly areas also needed to establish their commercial networks connecting West Africa to other areas. For example, Luís Fernandes Gramaxo, a merchant in Lisbon and *avençador* of the Cape Verde and Guinea monopoly between the 1590s and 1610s, had two representatives at Ribeira Grande, another factor at the Rio Grande (Guinea-

[146] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos e meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 82-83 & 91; Maria da Graça A. M. Ventura, 'Os Gramaxo. Um caso paradigmático de redes de influências em Cartagena das Índias', unpublished paper presented at the *Instituto de Cultura Ibero-Americana*; *idem*, 'Los Judeoconversos Portugueses en el Peru del Siglo XVII: Redes de complicidad' in Jaíme Contreras, Bernardo J. Garcia Garcia and Ignacio Pulido (eds.), *Família, religión y negocio: el sefardismo en las relaciones entre el mundo ibércio y los Países Bajos en la Edade Moderna*, (Madrid: Villaverde, 2002), pp. 391-406; *idem*, 'Cristãos-novos portugueses nas Índias de Castela: dos negócios aos cárceres da Inquisição (1590-1639)', *Oceanos*, 29 (March, 1997), pp. 93-105.

[147] Eunice R. J. P. L. Jorge da Silva, *A administração de Angola*, pp. 224-225; Frédéric Mauro, *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico* I, pp. 215-217; José Gonçalves Salvador, *Os magnatas do tráfico negreiros*.

Bissau region) and two other agents in Cartagena and Lisbon. His agents in Ribeira Grande were Jorge Gramaxo and Francisco da Cunha; the latter was factor of the *contratador* of Cape Verde and Guinea. António Nunes Gramaxo was the *avençcador*'s connection in the Guinea-Bissau Region, while Jorge Fernandes Gramaxo was the *avençador*'s contact person in Cartagena. The latter was also the factor of Simão Ferreira Malaca and partners, *contratadores* of Cape Verde 1590-1595, in Cartagena. Luís Fernandes, cousin of Fernandes Gramaxo, was his representative in Lisbon. Fernandes Gramaxo's commercial activities took place mainly in the trading circuit Lisbon–Guinea-Bissau region/Cape Verde–Spanish America–Seville–Lisbon.[148]

After the Portuguese Restoration of 1640, the businessmen operating in the West African trade lost their Spanish American connections, due to the economic embargoes, the war against Spain and the religious persecutions of the Portuguese New Christians in the Spanish American colonies and Iberia.[149] In the 1650s and 1660s, the *contratadores* and *avençadores* of the Portuguese royal monopolies in West Africa mostly kept in regular contact with Portugal, Angola and Brazil. Only the Portuguese Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam involved in the slave trade, such as Henrico Matias, were able to keep contracts in several Atlantic colonial areas, as we have seen earlier.

To sum up, the case studies presented here show that the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardic merchants of the Republic invested in areas of West Africa that were situated on the margins of the Portuguese presence in Africa, such as the Petite Côte of Senegal, the less-populated islands of Cape Verde and the coastal areas between Loango and Kongo. For the Sephardim, this was a strategy to avoid the payment of taxes to the fiscal officers of the Portuguese Crown in Ribeira Grande, São Tomé and Luanda. In this way, they were able to operate the business without the control of the commercial agents of the Portuguese Crown, who supervised the transactions and made sure that the Crown did not lose money.

To complement their business in West Africa, the Dutch private merchants also engaged in the Brazil sugar and dyewood trade. The Portuguese Sephardic Jews, however, were not only engaged in the Brazilian but also in the Spanish American trade, guaranteeing the supply of slaves to these colonies and the transportation of the export commodities such as sugar, dyewood, tobacco, silver, gold and precious stones to Europe.

[148] Maria Manuel Torrão, 'Rotas comerciais, agentes económicos, meios de pagamento' in Maria Emília Madeira Santos (coord.), *História Geral de Cabo Verde* II, pp. 90-91.
[149] Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation Upon the Ocean Sea*, pp. 151-174.

In addition, there were also differences between the African and Brazilian products traded by the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardic Jewish merchants, as well as between the routes used by these two groups. In West Africa, the former group traded mainly in gold and ivory, whilst sugar and dyewood were their main acquisitions in Brazil. The consumption markets for these goods were located in Europe and the circuits were operated separately. The Portuguese Sephardic Jews, in contrast, traded mostly in slaves, sugar, dyewood, gold, ivory, hides and silver. They operated in complex circuits linking cities in the Republic and Iberia to ports in West Africa and in the Portuguese and the Spanish American colonies.

These facts may help us to understand the reasons why the private merchants of Amsterdam were so reluctant to invest in the WIC and to support the attacks against the Portuguese Atlantic possessions. For them the West African and the Brazilian trades were profitable enough without a commercial monopoly, territorial possessions and a formal military apparatus. In fact, during the WIC monopoly over the West African trade, the two groups used similar strategies to overcome the commercial restrictions imposed on the Atlantic trade.

The businessmen operating from Portugal during the Union of the Crowns had simultaneous investments in Iberia, West Africa, Brazil and the Spanish American colonies. The Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam had similar business patterns. This community had direct commercial links and family ties with the aforementioned merchants. After the Portuguese Restoration of 1640, the mercantile group in control of the Portuguese Southern Atlantic circuits concentrated their economic activities almost exclusively in the Angola-Brazil Complex, although it had links with some New Christian families that had held the monopoly contracts and the Spanish *asiento* in the previous period and with some Portuguese Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam.

5. Cross-cultural interactions

The detailed analysis of the entrepreneurs, businessmen in the Republic and Portugal, as well as their agents in the various Atlantic posts and settlements, has demonstrated that multiple cross-cultural interactions were established between the different groups and wide commercial webs covering different Atlantic empires were created. The members of these

groups had different types of cross-cultural relations, such as insurance, commercial partnerships, labour contracts, etc. Most of the ships, cargoes and return goods insured by the Dutch entrepreneurs were the property of Portuguese Sephardic merchants settled either in Portugal or in the Dutch Republic, as demonstrated earlier.[150] Two good examples are the following. In 1614, Jan Jansz Smits, in association with Anthoni van Diemen, Pelgrom van Dronckelaer, Hans van Soldt de Jonge, Hendrick Voet, Albert Schuijt, William Pauw, Van der Bogaert and many others insured Diogo Nunes Belmonte, a Portuguese Sephardic merchant established in Amsterdam, for a cargo of slaves on board *De Engel Michiel*, skippered by Sebastião Ribeiro, as well as the return cargo, which was to be gold, silver and other commodities. The ship was to sail on the route Luanda–West Indies–Seville. The following year, Jan Jansz Smits, together with Jan Jansen van Helmont and Albert Schuijt, insured the ship *St. Pieter*, property of the Portuguese merchants Francisco da Costa Brandão and Simão Rodrigues Lobo, both traders from Lisbon. The ship was to follow the circuit Lisbon–Angola, under the command of skipper Rodrigo Alvares, from Lisbon. Gaspar Rodrigues Nunes, a Portuguese Sephardic merchant in Amsterdam, was responsible for the insurance on behalf of the Portuguese merchants mentioned earlier.

On the other hand, the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardim businessmen operating from the Republic in the West African trade also established cross-cultural commercial partnerships, as shown previously.[151] For instance**,** Diogo Vaz de Sousa, a Portuguese Sephardic merchant established in Amsterdam operated in the trade with Cape Verde in partnership with several Dutch merchants, such as Adriaen Ryser, Gerrit de Beer, Pieter and Jacques de Barys, all merchants in Amsterdam. On 4 October 1619, the abovementioned traders celebrated an agreement with Diogo Vaz de Sousa to travel to Cape Verde on board their vessel named *De Swarte Beer*, under the command of skipper Adriaen Claessen from Amsterdam. The cargo of merchandise had an estimated value of 150 Flemish pounds, half of which belonged to Vaz de Sousa and the other half to the other traders. Diogo Vaz de Sousa was supposed to travel on board the vessel and conduct the trade in Cape Verde. Part of the returning-cargo was to be hides from Cape Verde. Bento Osorio, also a merchant in Amsterdam, gave surety on behalf of Diogo Vaz de Sousa.

[150] GAA, NA 254/188-189: 1614-05-22; NA 378A/339: 1615-05-29.
[151] GAA, NA 62/206: 1610-11-22; NA 62/209: 1610-12-08; NA 160/28-29v: 1619-10-04.

In addition, the Dutch and Portuguese Sephardic Jews in the Republic also gave powers of attorney and signed labour contracts among themselves, which may also be classified as cross-cultural interactions. A good example was Duarte Fernandes, a Portuguese merchant resident in Amsterdam and an investor in the commercial routes linking the Republic to West Africa. On 5 August 1611, he gave power of attorney to Jaspas Moerman, a merchant from Rotterdam, to control the arrival of the goods in the port of Rotterdam or other ports in the Maas River. He had also permission to control the merchandise transported by Gaspar Fernandes on his behalf on the ship *Het Vliegende Hert,* travelling from Rotterdam to Portudal under the command of skipper Alewijn Jansen from Rotterdam.[152]

All these aspects tell us much about cross-cultural financial and commercial partnerships as well as about labour interactions and trans-colonial networks. Both, the Dutch private merchants and the Portuguese Sephardic Jews established financial and commercial partnerships with businessmen outside their own groups for the West African trade. However, only 20% of the notarial contracts analysed refer to cross-cultural partnerships between members of the various groups, while 80% represent contracts between members of the same merchant group. These figures challenge the main argument of Roitman' s recent study on the inter-cultural trade of the Sephardim of Amsterdam. The author argues that cross-cultural trade was a dominant feature of the commercial activities of the Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam.[153] However, in the case of West Africa, the research findings show demonstrate that inter-cultural trade was a common practise only among the wealthiest members of this community and especially for the most risky investments, such as the insurance of ships and cargos operating in commercial circuits regularly affected by naval the military conflicts between the various European sea powers.

The level of cross-cultural partnerships was especially low during the time of the Spanish embargo imposed by Philip II on all Dutch vessels and merchandise in all Iberian ports both in Europe and overseas. A similar trend occurred between 1621 and 1654, when the hostilities between Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese in the context of the Thirty Years'

[152] GAA, NA 125/27v-28v: 1611-04-27; 124/131-131v: 1611-08-05.
[153] Jessica Roitman, *Us and Them: Inter-Cultural Trade and the Sephardim, 1595-1640* (PhD. Diss., Leiden University, 2009) (forthcoming Brill, Series: Jewish Studies); Cátia Antunes, 'Atlantic entrepreneurship: Cross-cultural business networks, 1580-1776', unpublished paper presented at the workshop *Transitions to Modernity*, Yale University, Nov. 2007.

War (1618-1648) reached their zenith and the power of the WIC had reached its highest point. Conversely, during the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) and from the mid-1650s onwards, the level of cross-cultural contracts increased (see Table 30).

Therefore, during periods of military hostilities and politico-economic embargoes, traders from different groups (especially those involved in the conflicts) did not find it advantageous to establish cross-cultural partnerships, while during periods of peace, the merchants from different mercantile groups frequently cooperated with each other. Nevertheless, the level of cross-cultural partnerships is clearly lower for the notarial contracts concerning West Africa than for any other areas of the Atlantic during the same period.[154] To understand the reasoning behind these numbers we will look at several aspects that may have inhibited the cross-cultural partnerships for the West African trade.

Table 8: Dutch and Sephardim cross-cultural contracts for the West African trade (*c.*1590-1674)

Periods	No. of contracts	No. of cross-cultural contracts	% Cross-cultural contracts
1580-1608	28	3	11
1609-1621/3	100	26	26
1624-1654	93	13	14
1655-1674	120	24	20
Total/Average	341	66	19

Sources[155]

The majority of the cross-cultural interactions between Dutch and Portuguese Sephardic Jews operating from the Republic, Portugal and other Atlantic areas were essentially financial, assuming the form of insurance. The Portuguese Sephardic Jews opted to insure their vessels and cargoes with Dutch entrepreneurs to spread the risks of the business outside the group. This strategy seems to be related to the process of capitalization of the West African trade. As we have explained earlier, this business involved a complex system of direct exchange of goods, not only in Africa but also in the American consumption markets, and the circulation of bills of exchange that could only be

[154] The first general figures on the topic have been presented by Cátia Antunes in an unpublished paper entitled: 'Atlantic entrepreneurship: Cross-cultural business networks, 1580-1776', presented at the workshop, *Transitions to Modernity*, Yale University, Nov. 2007.
[155] GAA, NA.

transformed into capital in Europe. The high risks involved in this kind of business and the delay of the return profits may explain why the Portuguese Sephardim operating in West Africa had financial partnerships with members outside their own mercantile group. It was a strategy developed to spread the risks.

Furthermore, the commercial partnerships only had a short duration, sometimes just one or two voyages, and could be easily dissolved if problems arose between the partners or capital was lost. Due to the short-term and flexible character of these partnerships, these merchants could easily change their commercial associates and re-direct capital from one business to another quite quickly. This flexibility was essential for the expansion the business, not only in terms of capital invested, but also by diversifying the branches of business and the areas of focus. However, it precluded the survival of long-term commercial and financial partnerships.

However, cross-cultural commercial partnerships were rare. In general, associations were established with members of the same mercantile group. In fact, by establishing commercial partnerships within the same mercantile group the Dutch and the Portuguese Sephardim (in either the Republic, Portugal or other areas of the Atlantic) were able to exploit the commercial expertise of the members of their own group in the Southern Atlantic trade. This phenomenon may be connected with the characteristics of the trade and supply and consumption markets of the African and the European goods in Europe and West Africa and the Americas respectively.

The African goods in demand in Europe were mainly gold, ivory, hides, wax and ambergris. However, their supply was limited and, therefore, these commodities were easily consumed by the markets, regardless of the high prices, and with high profits for the merchants. Consequently, the different groups of merchants operating in the specialized trade of these goods did not need to establish commercial partnerships to control the volume and therefore the prices of goods supplied to the consumption markets.

The volume and type of European goods supplied to the West African consumption markets demonstrate that this was true for these markets also. The Europeans did not ship bulk products to West Africa. They supplied the African markets with a very specific range of products for the consumption of the African elites, as explained in Chapter 4. Hence, the European products did not play a key role in the African economies. In this sense, the establishment of cross-cultural commercial partnerships between European merchants to

defend the position of their commodities in these markets by controlling the prices or the demand was of no importance.

However, for cross-cultural labour contracts the case is quite different. In fact, the European businessmen (Dutch, Sephardim, Portuguese, etc.) with commercial interests in West Africa hired inhabitants of the Atlantic posts and settlements as their agents, often holders of posts in the local administrations, by merit of their commercial privileges to trade with the coast, their commercial expertise, their judicial knowledge and their military power. Therefore, the commercial agents of the colonial areas (either under Dutch or Portuguese control) worked not only on behalf of the Portuguese Crown and the WIC, but also on behalf of private merchants holding royal monopolies and trading licences.

These commercial agents were primarily traders with knowledge of the local markets. They were sent overseas to trade and obtain the highest profit, not only on behalf of the European merchants, who hired their commercial expertise, but also for themselves. For these commercial agents, the political and geographical borders of the colonial areas in the Atlantic and more precisely in West Africa, as defined by the several European sea powers, were not an obstacle to doing business. Furthermore, nor were the different cultures and religious beliefs of the various economic agents an obstacle to conducting trade. Ultimately, all the European businessmen from the Republic and Portugal and their agents operating in West Africa depended on the services of the African and middlemen of mixed-descent to successfully operate their business.

Taking these aspects into account makes it easier to understand and explain how these commercial agents served the interests of the Portuguese Crown, the WIC and the private merchants of the Republic and Portugal simultaneously, while still pursuing their own ambitions. It also becomes easier to clarify how these economic agents trading within the commercial areas under Portuguese rule, could and did have commercial partnerships with merchants from an 'enemy State' of the Portuguese and the Spanish Kingdoms – such as the Dutch Republic. Finally, it becomes possible to explain how Portuguese or people of mixed-descent could supply African products to merchants from an 'enemy state', especially in the coastal areas. This complex scheme of inter-connections between the various economic agents demonstrates clearly that the commercial interests of the businessmen living in the various Atlantic colonial areas, whether under Portuguese, Spanish or Dutch

rule, transcended the political and geographical borders of the Atlantic Empires of these Early Modern European States.

This leads us to another relevant issue: the role of trans-imperial networks in the Dutch and the Portuguese Atlantic empires. Both, the Dutch merchants and the Sephardic Jews operating from the Republic, Portugal, and other Atlantic areas usually established commercial webs encompassing the several Atlantic Empires (Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish and even English). Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the trans-imperial webs of the Sephardim preceded in time the ones organized by the Dutch businessmen. Thus, the detailed analysis of merchant groups and their commercial webs in the Early Modern Period demonstrates, once again, the economic advantages of Diaspora on the building of the Atlantic economic system.[156]

Furthermore, the evidence here presented disproves the idea that the Sephardim only operated within their own group, based on family networks, and were therefore 'not capable of organising their activities in effective organizational structures such as the overseas trading companies of Northwest Europe'. [157] We have demonstrated that the commercial organization of the private businessmen operating the long-distance circuits from either the Republic or Portugal did not have exclusively a family character and was far more efficient than the Dutch State-sponsored Company for the Atlantic trade. These entrepreneurs were, in fact, the ones that were able to adapt to the new context post-1640-1650, while the WIC never truly recovered from the loss of Brazil, and the Portuguese Crown only started to profit from Atlantic trade in the 1680s, with the mining activities in Brazil. Hence, throughout the 17th century, while the private initiative showed a extreme capacity of adaptation to new economic situations, the State-sponsored companies and the States have showed reduced economic flexibility.

These research findings contrast with the success of the trading companies engaged in the slave trade from the late 17th century onwards, especially the Royal African Company, the Middleburgh and the Braandenburg companies, among others.

In our point of view, the success of these companies in a later period was due to various factors. Firstly, the formation of new consumption markets in the Americas,

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[156] Jonathan I. Israel, *Diasporas within the Diaspora*, especially Introduction and Conclusion; Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea*, especially Chapter 5.

[157] P. C. Emmer and F. Gaastra (eds.), *The organization of Interoceanic Trade in European Expansion* (Aldershot: Variorum; Ashgate Pub. Co., 1996), pp. xvi-xxii.

especially in the Caribbean Islands and North America with highly specialized demand for African slaves stimulated the specialization of this trade. This opening allowed these companies to specialize in a certain commercial branch. This reality contrasted highly with the 17th century, then the businessmen involved in the slave trade also appeared engaged in a wide range of other economic activities, which included not only trade in different products and regions, but also investments in insurance and eventually in industries associated to the import of colonial goods, such as sugar and tobacco.

Secondly, from the 18th century onwards, most of these trading companies did not have settlement and government responsibilities towards the trading posts in West Africa and the plantation colonies in the Americas. Therefore, their investments were reduced to the freightage of the ships and crew members and the purchase of the cargoes. Again, this situation was completely different from the reality the WIC or the private entrepreneurs in hold of the monopolies of the Portuguese Crown encountered in West Africa and the Atlantic, in general.

The conclusions presented in this chapter also question the effective power of the different European States over their Atlantic Empires and the real importance of imperial borders. The borderlines of the Atlantic 'national clusters' such as the so-called Dutch and Portuguese Atlantic 'systems' established by the European States and State-sponsored companies according to their monopoly interests were loose and often overlapped by the private entrepreneurs and businessmen to meet their goals for the Atlantic trade.

In addition, these businessmen invested simultaneously in various areas of the Atlantic, which have been traditionally classified as separate sub-systems, such as Brazil, the Caribbean Islands, North America, the Spanish American colonies and West Africa. These pieces of evidence dispute the existence of separate Atlantic sub-systems controlled by specific mercantile groups, for the period and the regions under analysis in this study.