
FRENCH RESIDENTS IN OTTOMAN CRETE: TRADE, DIPLOMACY AND DAILY LIFE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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The paper tackles the diverse, and sometimes contradictory, facets of French presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. It takes eighteenth-century Ottoman Candia – nowadays Iraklion – as a case study. This choice has been driven by the opportunity of analysing – on a small scale – different aspects of living and trading in a “secondary” Levantine *échelle* during the eighteenth century. It also provides an opportunity to unveil interactions, contacts and transfers between the different communities living in the island. “Low status” of Crete within the overall French trade network notwithstanding, the *échelle* nonetheless produced six sizeable files (AN B I 341-347) preserved at the Archives Nationales de France and devoted entirely to the lives of French residents on Crete.

The paper’s main thesis is that Western presence in the Levant went well beyond merely commercial activities to encompass – even secondary trade centres like Crete – broader personal interactions at all social levels. Trade was inextricably linked with diplomatic activity and daily life of the merchants took them well beyond commercial affairs, into the realm of everyday encounters, engaging them in personal, and sometimes even intimate, relationships. Long-term residence, in some instances spanning throughout the whole life, fuelled tendencies towards assimilation that formed the basis of the emerging “Levantine” society. This aspects engaged European residents and local Christians, mostly Greeks and Armenians. More sporadically, however, it concerned also Jews and Muslims.¹

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¹ *Cfr.* David Celetti, “French Residents and Ottoman Women in 18th Century Levant: Personal Relations, Social Control, and Cultural Interchange,” in Constanta Vintila-Ghițulescu, *Women, Consumption and Circulation of Ideas in South-Eastern Europe : XVII-XIX Centuries* (Leiden-Boston, 2017), 47-64 ; Stefan Knost, “Les Francs à Alep, Syrie, leur statut juridique et leur

The paper is divided into three parts. The first one focuses on Cretan economy and emphasizes the importance of the island's commerce with France. The following section with diplomatic actions and practices, stressing the role of consuls in facilitating trade and in helping its fellow countrymen in their everyday life in the *échelle*. The final part highlights certain aspects of French residents' daily life, examining the existence, and the extent of, social contacts among communities otherwise divided by national, religious, and cultural fault lines.

A MINOR ECHELLE

From the perspective of French commerce, Crete constituted a minor *échelle* within vast network of French merchant settlements in the Levant. Its trade relied almost entirely on the exports of low-value raw material – as wax or olive oil used in the booming Marseilles' soap manufactures – and the import of a vast, but modest in terms of volume, array of French products.² This picture was only partially mitigated by the role played by the island in French cabotage trade³ – the so-called *caravane*⁴.

The marginal role of the Cretan trade was a consequence of the island's overall poor economic condition that limited both the supply and demand. Its potentially rich agriculture⁵ tilted heavily towards specific products⁶ – as wine, wheat and olive –, unevenly distributed on a vast, partially uncultivated territory, largely cut off from the coasts by poor land connections⁷. This state of affairs in itself resulted from Crete's long-term adaptation to its changing position within Levantine trade. During the first centuries of Venetian rule, the island had been a

interaction avec les institutions locales (XVIIe - XIXe siècle),” in *Gens de passage en Méditerranée de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne. Procédures de contrôle et d'identification*, eds. Claudia Moatti, Wolfgang Kaiser, (Paris, 2007), 205-218; Ian Coller, “Cosmopolitanism and Extraterritoriality: Regulating Europeans in Eighteenth Century Turkey,” in *Europa und die Türkei im 18. Jahrhundert/Europe and Turkey in the 18th Century*, eds. Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp, (Göttingen, 2011), 205-218.

² Archives Nationales (from now on AN), AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 février 1716.

³ Maria Fusaro, “After Braudel: a Reassessment of Mediterranean History between the Northern Invasion and the Caravane Maritime,” in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean. Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, eds. Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood, Mohamed-Salah Omri, (London, New York, 2010), 1-23; Daniel Panzac, *La caravane maritime. Marins européens et marchands ottomans en Méditerranée 1680-1830* (Paris, 2004), 230; Gilbert Buti, “Un aspect original de l'armement provençal au XVIII^e siècle: la caravane maritime,” *Bulletin de la Société des Amis du Vieux Toulon et de sa Région*, 114 (1992): 65-86.

⁴ Louis Bergasse, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, IV, 1599-1660, (Paris, 1954), 91-100.

⁵ “L'île, dont le climat est fort beau, est très abondante de toute sorte de comestibles. Cette année particulièrement la récolte des grains a été fort belle et celle de l'huile et du vin donnent de grands espoirs” (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 Juin 1723).

⁶ AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la marine*, 15 Février 1716.

⁷ This aspect was often related to poor demographic conditions, as in the consul Baume 1723 report. “Pour nous transporter à cet endroit, nous avons marché une journée et deux nuits, traversé plusieurs montagnes sur toute l'étendue de l'île, et de vastes vallées les unes très bien cultivées, les autres en friche faute de peuple pour les travailler” (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 Juin 1723).

major wheat producer. From the sixteenth century onwards, it developed olive and vineyards, and the island became an important exporter of Malvasia – or Malmsey wine⁸. Wine and olive rapidly acquired commercial importance, the former taking advantage over the latter in regard to market demand and harvests' yields.⁹ This trend came to a partial halt in the first half of the seventeenth century, when political instability and fears of war led Venetians to pressure peasants to increase their wheat output, considered a strategic crop in case of the outbreak of hostilities and disruption of commercial ties with Ottoman lands.¹⁰ This approach led to the situation, whereby the production of cereals increased in the last period of Venetian dominion, whereas that of olives and wine stagnated. The Ottoman conquest once again reversed the situation, as olives quickly became the island's most important produce.¹¹

The eighteenth-century expansion of olive groves on the island reflected the options of domestic producers, as landowners sought to diversify land use. At the same time, it reflected the island's increasing integration into European, and particularly French, trading networks. Crete lured merchants by the prospects of acquiring cheap olive oil, perfectly matching the demands of Marseilles' booming soap industry.¹²

“Depuis que la mortalité des oliviers de Provence [a réduit notre production] le commerce [des huiles d'olives] s'y est rendu très considérable et je compte que on porte de France depuis six à sept ans plus de quatre millions de piastres sévillanes ou de sequins Vénitiens qu'on a été prendre en Italie chemin faisant”¹³

A few data will help identify the problem and its magnitude. Between 1700 and 1721 French exported an average of 92,000 *mistat* of olive oil from Crete, double the amount of wine exports. Four year later, in 1725, they sent to Marseille

⁸ The wine was first produced in the Greek village of Monemvasia, occupied in 1248 by the Venetians. Having tasted the local wine, Venetians began to produce in their possessions on Crete, where it became one of the most widely exported, high-quality Levantine wines (Michela Dal Borgo, “Malvasia. The Story of a Levantine Wine in Venice”, *Ligabue*, 59 (2011): 110-128; *Venezia e le Malvasia del Mediterraneo*, Atti del Convegno “Venezia e le Malvasie del Mediterraneo”, Venezia 28 maggio 2015, (Venezia, 2015), 12-16)

⁹ Wines, in particular, were sent to Venice, to be then re-exported almost in all European countries, up to the British Islands, Germany, Poland, and Russia. But wines followed even other, less obvious, ways, as, for example, that to Chios and to the Flanders; to the Turkish areas through the emirates of Mentesh and Aydin, to Rhodes or to Northern Africa (Cfr: David Jacoby, “Creta e Venezia nel contesto economico del Mediterraneo orientale sino alla metà del Quattrocento”, in *Venezia e Creta. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi Iraklion-Chanià 30 settembre - 5 ottobre 1997*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli, (Venezia, 1998), 73-106; Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade. Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Mentesh and Aydin (1300-1415)*, (Venice, 1983), 3-20)

¹⁰ Cfr: Allaire Brumfield, “Agriculture and Rural Settlement in Ottoman Crete, 1669–1898: A Modern Site Survey,” in Uzi Baram and Lynda Carroll eds., *A Historical Archeology of the Ottoman Empire: Breaking New Ground*, (New York, 2000), 37-78.

¹¹ Cfr: M. Abrate, *Creta colonia veneziana nei secoli XIII-XV*, “Economia e Storia”, 3, 1956, p. 251-277; Gherardo Ortalli, “Venezia e Creta. Fortune e contraccolpi di una conquista”, in *Venezia e Creta*, 9-32.

¹² Cfr: Jean Vidalenc, *La vie économique des départements méditerranéens pendant l'Empire*, “Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine”, 1-3 (1954): 165-198.

¹³ AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 Février 1716.

200,000 *mistat* of the commodity. From the beginning of 1717, twenty to forty ships regularly loaded olive oil shipments. Between 1720 and 1741, French imports of this product increased by 50 per cent. This trend reached such a scale that, already by the early eighteenth century, went so far that already in the early eighteenth century Ottoman authorities stepped in to limit the exports as they feared shortages for domestic consumption. This concern was further exacerbated by the fact that local soap industry began to develop on the island, with manufactures being established in Chania and Candia. In 1723, six soap factories were active on the island; by mid-century, their number increased to twelve, to fifteen in 1783, and to eighteen in 1787. Their demand took up to fifty per cent of the olive crop in a good year, and almost all in case of bad harvests, not to count the demand of Istanbul's and of other provinces. It is therefore not surprising that authorities in Istanbul sought to limit exports. Sometimes this led to official ban, as it happened, for example, in 1716 and, again, in 1776.¹⁴

The actual effectiveness of these measures remains, however, an open question. Such attempts had to face the pressures of local producers and merchants, already tightly linked to the international market. They also sparked protests from the French traders' side, participating almost exclusively in olive oil business and able to fall back on a particularly active and influential diplomatic network. As consul Delane clearly stated, any interruption in the export of Cretan olive oil would have almost certainly put an end to French presence in the *echelle*, as merchants would not be able to find alternative export commodity.¹⁵ Black market and official corruption provided another check on governmental efforts. All those reasons limited the effectiveness of export bans, and pushed the Ottoman leaders towards adopting more realistic, free-trade solutions, accompanied by moderate taxation.

“L’huile était ici une marchandise de contrebande [au temps de l’interdiction du commerce, mais] on en chargeait presque autant [que on fait aujourd’hui dans un cadre de libre échange] au moyen des présents que l’on faisait aux puissants du pays. La Porte ayant reconnu l’utilité qu’elle pouvait retirer en laissant ce négoce libre et l’impossibilité qu’il y avait d’empêcher les cours, et pressée par ailleurs par les instances des gens du pays a accordé la libre sortie de cette marchandise au moyen d’une imposition qu’elle fit en 1725 d’un droit qui s’appelle « beddat » et qui a été pendant quatre années consécutives de deux paras l’ocque.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Molly Greene, *Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, (Princeton, 2000), 134-139.

¹⁵ “Il faudra que la plus part de nos négociants fassent retraite si la permission de sortir les huiles ne nous est pas confirmée n’y ayant dans tout ce Royaume que très peu de soie, cives et laines qui n’occupent pas un seul petit marchand” (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 Fevrier 1716).

¹⁶ AN, B I 341, , *M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 Mars 1725.

On the other hand, such trends mirrored the island's deepening dependence on international markets, which brought both opportunities, but also dangers associated with their volatile demand, as shown, for example, by the sudden decline of sales following the 1720 Marseilles' plague.¹⁷

Oil exports greatly contributed to French trade deficit. Even counting in the wares brought by *caravane*, the balance was structurally negative, and had to be covered with bullion and coins, usually piasters, sequins, or vouchers signed in others trade centers (Table 1.). Piasters were a coinage of Spanish origin, widely diffused in the Levant, and the most – if not exclusively – widely accepted in Northern Africa¹⁸, whereas sequins were a gold Venetian coin weighing 3.5 grams of .986 gold introduced in 1284, and rapidly ascended to the second most popular currency in the Levant.¹⁹ Vouchers were common promises of payments, subscribed by merchants operating in *échelles* with trade surpluses.²⁰ Along with coins and financial assets, French traders brought to Crete a wide range of products.

Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, Venetian luxury textiles, including brocades, gold-thread textiles, satins, watered silks, velvets, and silk velvets held an important share on the Cretan market. Subsequently, Dutch and English fabrics were marketed on the island, primarily by Armenian merchants from Smyrna. By the 1720s, *draps du Languedoc* of the *londrines secondes* type had by far overtaken any other type of cloth among Cretan imports.²¹ However, Venetians managed to retain competitive advantage in regard to silks, as they were apparently cheaper than the French ones.²²

French merchants also sold paper, glass and iron, traditionally re-exported to Crete from Venice, fish and caviar from Istanbul, and coffee. The imports of the latter originated since the sixteenth century from Yemen and reached Eastern Mediterranean by way of Cairo; however, during the eighteenth century, this route was gradually substituted by Central American imports, which came to take the central place in trade.²³ These major items were

¹⁷ “On assure que les levées d’huiles ne seront pas si fortes cette année à cause de la grande quantité qui on [avait] transporté à Marseilles n’a pu être consommée pendant la contagion et il faudra donc du temps pour leur débouchement” (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 Juin 1723).

¹⁸ Cfr. Ferréol Rebuffat, *Les piastres de la Compagnie Royale d’Afrique*, “Cahier de la Méditerranée”, hors série, 1, 1976, 21-34.

¹⁹ “Je compte que on a porté de France depuis, de six à sept ans plus de quatre millions de libre en piastre ou en sequins Vénitiens qu’on a été prendre en Italie” (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 février 1716.)

²⁰ Charles Carrière, “Reflexions sur le problème des monnaies et des métaux précieux en Méditerranée Orientale au XVIIIe siècle”, *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 1, (1976), 1-20; Id., “Réflexions sur les crises commerciales au XVIIIe siècle”, *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 2, (1977), 5-15.

²¹ AN, B I 341, *M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le Commerce du Levant*. 8 Mars 1725. Cfr. also Adhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, (Leiden-Boston), 1999, 37-39.

²² “Il vient, outres les balles de draps de France, des soies de Venise, de Florence et de Messine, à cause du fait qu’elles sont moins chères que celles de France” (AN, B I 341, *M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 mars 1725).

²³ Greene, *Christians and Muslims*, 127-28.

complemented by secondary products, such as dyestuffs and, namely, Caribbean coffee occupied an increasingly relevant place (tab. 02).

If France was without doubt Crete's main commercial partner, the island was also well integrated in other Mediterranean trading networks, with ports of Egypt, as well as Istanbul and Smyrna, accounting for a sizeable share of its traffic.²⁴ Moreover, due to its geographical location at the crossroads of South-Eastern Mediterranean, the island was an almost unavoidable stopover for caravans sailing between Northern Africa and the Levant to Greece and Europe. This, in turn, encouraged flourishing transit trade. On their journey north, captains sold in Crete goods brought from Barbary Coast and the Levant and bought olive oil and wheat. On their journey back, they exchanged the products of French manufactures, such as Languedoc, Yorkshire, Venetian or Leyden cloths, for oil. The island's ports became hubs where virtually all items of maritime trade in Eastern Mediterranean could be found and traded, from cinders to goat's hairs, from gall nuts to cotton and wool, from spices to coffee, sugar, and colonials.²⁵ Along with merchandise, French ships also benefitted from the existing demand for passenger transport as they could offer relatively comfortable and safe travel conditions.²⁶

La plus part des bateaux caravaniers viennent des ports du Grands Seigneur chargés de riz, café, lin, toileries, poissons, sels, cuirs, planches, tabac à fumer pour compte des marchands Turcs, Arabes, Juifs, Grecs, Arméniens lesquels pour la plupart les chargent en sortie de vins, huiles, raisins secs, fromage, miles, olives, bois à brule savon et autre denrées du Royaume pour le transport à Constantinople, Smyrna, Chio, Salonique, Alexandrie, Tunis et autres ports. Sans compter la quantité de puissants et autres passagers qui vont et viennent de cette île à la terre fermes et aux îles de l'Archipel [sur nos bateaux]²⁷.

The Ottomans' increasing demand for French sea shipping also increased the French community's political clout on the island. The growing number of ships hoisting French flag meant that captains and sailors added further numbers to merchants, priests and artisans traditionally resident on the island.

From the point of view of the *Nation Française*, and particularly for the consular service, *caravane* constituted an essential element in the system of Cretan trade. Custom duties paid to the local diplomatic mission by French captains stopping in Crete constituted one of the most important sources of

²⁴ AN, AE, B I 344, *Rapport sur l'Economie Crétoise*, 11 Janvier 1779.

²⁵ Michel Morineau, "Naissance d'une domination. Marchands Eruopéens. Marchands et marchés du Levant aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles", *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, hors série, 1, 1976, p. 145-84.

²⁶ Daniel Penzac, "Les échanges maritimes dans l'Empire ottomana u XVIIIe siècle", *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 39 (1985): 177-188

²⁷ AN, AE, B I 341, *Liste des bâtiments caravaniers qui ont abordé au port de Candie depuis le premier juillet 1720 jusqu'au premier Août 1724*.

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revenue, second only to money received from the Chamber of Commerce of Marseilles (Tab. 01).²⁸

| Table 1 - Outcome and Income of the Consulate in Chania in the first quarter of 1723 | | | | | |
|--|---------|---|--------|--|----|
| Date | Outcome | Piastres | Income | Piastres | |
| January | 1 | Pour solde du dernier quartier de l'année passée suivant le compte rendu donné par le Sr François Portal | 747.14 | Du Capitaine Saper pour le droit d'avarie sur sa tartane chargé d'huile pour France | 30 |
| | 16 | Payé au capitaine Laugier pour la nourriture de 10 matelots disgraciés pendant trois jours les ayant amené de Château Rouge en cette ville d'après le mandat n. 1 | 560 | Du capitaine François Pauquet pour le droit de demie avarie sur sa tartane partie vide | 15 |
| | 16 | Payements divers aux capitaines pour 28 coups de perrier ²⁹ et 2 coups de canon que on tira de l'ordre de Monsieur le consul pour la confirmation du Pacha de cette ville d'après le mandat n. 2 | 3 | Du capitaine Georges Moulet pour le droit de demi avarie sur sa tartine partie vide | 15 |
| | 16 | Paye au sieur Fonton second Drogman pour le louage de 5 montures pour le service de la Nation suivant le mandat de M. le consul n. 3 | 1.1 | Du capitaine Laugier pour l'avarie sur sa pinque arrivée chargée de bled à la Soude et destinée à Retimo | 35 |
| | 31 | Pour perte faite sur 107 sequins ayant été obligé de les recevoir de Ismail Cheleby | 1.14 | Du capitaine Jean Roux pour le droit d'avarie de sa barque nolisé en caravane | 35 |
| | 31 | Paye au chapelain Père Montans pour les cierges donnes la fête de la purification suivant les usages sur le mandat n 4 | 15.3 | Du capitaine Bruny pour le droit d'avarie de sa pinque chargé d'huile pour la France | 35 |
| | 31 | Valeur d'une lettre de change que les députés de Constantinople nous ont tiré provenant de la répartition que son Excellence a faite sur chaque échelle celle-ci ayant été fixée à 300 piastres suivant l'ordonnance de Monsieur l'Ambassadeur et les lettres des S. Députés. | 300 | Du capitaine Pierre Fabre pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane nolisée en caravane | 30 |

²⁸ Duties consisted in the "*Droit d'avarie*" and the "*Droit de Consulat*", that were paid as a percentage of the value of the items loaded or unloaded in the *échelles* (Joseph Nicolas Guyot, *Répertoire universel et raisonné de jurisprudence civile, criminelle, canonique et bénéficiale*, (Paris, 1777), t. 4, 581).

²⁹ Little bronze gun firing one pounds balls (Moritz Meyer, *Manuel Historique de la Technologie des Armes à Feu*, (Paris, 1837), t. II, 75).

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| Table 1 - Outcome and Income of the Consulate in Chania in the first quarter of 1723 | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----------|--|----------|
| Date | | Outcome | Piastres | Income | Piastres |
| Février | 9 | Pour une lettre envoyée au Pacha de Rettimo au sujet d'un miroir présenté au Janissaire Aga sur le mandat 5 | 16 | Du capitaine Couture pour le droit de demie avarie de sa barque partie pour Candie | 17.2 |
| | 15 | Pou les deux pics de draps d'Angleterre présentés au Pacha en cadeau suivant le mandat de M le consul 6 | 9 | Du capitaine Ricord pour le droit d'avarie de sa pinque chargé d'huile pour la France | 35 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine d'Estienne pour le droit de avarie de sa pinque chargée d'huile pour la France | 20 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Mousiston pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane partie vide | 15 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Tourrand pour pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane | 18 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Louis Icard pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque chargé d'huiles pour la France | 35 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Pauquet pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane | 15 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Guizard pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane chargée d'huiles pour la France | 30 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Lampré pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque réglée à pro rata de son nolis | 19 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Reybard pou le droit de demie avarie de son bateau parti vide | 20 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine robin pour la demi avarie de son bateau à la Soude | 20 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Jullier pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane charge d'huile pour la France | 25 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Reynaud pour le droit d'avarie de sa barque partie vide | 17 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Eymin pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque de relâche a la Soude | 17 |
| | sd | | | Reçu du capitaine Manuel pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque parti vide | 17 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Georges Moules pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane nolisée en caravane | 30 |
| | sd | | | Du capitaine Barthélémy pour reste de l'avarie de sa barque chargée d'huile | 26 |

| Table 1 - Outcome and Income of the Consulate in Chania in the first quarter of 1723 | | | | |
|--|--|-------------|--|----------------|
| Date | Outcome | Piastres | Income | Piastres |
| Mars | Payé au S. Fonton second drogman pour diverses montures d'après mandat 7 | 2 | Du capitaine Bertrand pour le droit d'avarie de son vaisseau a pro rata des marchandises qu'il a chargées dans cette ville | 25 |
| | Pour diverses effets eu de la Raine d'Hongrie, entre autres prunes et confitures par la suite données au puissants du pays suivant le mandat numéro huit | 140 | Du capitaine Jacques Beaumont pour le droit d'avarie de son vaisseau | 22.2 |
| | Payé au S. Fonton pour ce premier quartier pour ses appointements suivant le mandat 10 relatif au louage de sa maison | 56 | Du capitaine Jean Rous pour le droit d'avarie de sa barque | 35 |
| | Compté à Aly Pacha Janissaire de la nation pour le premier quartier de ses appointements sur le mandat 11 | 15 | Du capitaine Jean Langles pour le reste du droit d'avarie l'avarie de son vaisseau l'Ironnelle | 34 |
| | Pour trois boustes [enveloppes] d'étoffe de soie pour y mettre les lettres que le Pacha a écrit à Constantinople | 1.1 | Du capitaine Ronne pour le droit de demi avarie de son vaisseau à la Soude | 22.2 |
| | Pour change de ce premier quartier sur les piastres 747.12 que la Nation devais pour son dernier quartier de l'année passée à raison de 1 pour cent l'année. | 28 | | |
| | Pour change de trois mois sur les piastres 560 que j'ai passées au crédit du consulat ainsi que je l'ai explique ci-dessus a raison de 1 pour cent l'année | 21 | | |
| | Pour mes attributions de ce premier quartier | 8 | | |
| | | | Au total | 752 |
| Au total | | 1859 | Piastre dont la Nation reste débitrice pour dans ce premier quartier | 1107.39 |

Source : AN, B I 341, 8 Avril 1723, *Compte rendu par le sieur Honoré Germain de la Nation de cette ville de La Canée des sommes que il a exigées et payées pour le consulat pendant le premier quartier 1723.*

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| Table 2 - French Trade in Crete (1720-25) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|-------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-------------|--------|----------|
| Imports from Marseilles | | | | | Exports to Marseilles | | | | |
| French products | | | | | | | | | |
| Provenance | Quantity | Merchandize | Value | Unit | Provenance | Quantity | Merchandize | Value | Unit |
| Marseille | 12 balles et demie | Londrines Secondes | 15300 | Piastres | La Canée | 537298 | huile | 130433 | Piastres |
| Marseille | 1 ballot | serges impériales | 175 | Piastres | La Canée | 6279 | cire | 5808 | Piastres |
| Marseille | 2 caisses | bonnet | 320 | Piastres | La Canée | 345 | soie | 1897 | Piastres |
| Marseille | 1 balle | peigne | 480 | Piastres | | | | | |
| Marseille | 1 balle | ciseaux | 50 | Piastres | | | | | |
| Marseille | 2 caisses | indigo | 700 | Piastres | | | | | |
| French re – exports | | | | | | | | | |
| Marseille | | piastres Sévillanes, sequins zinzeris, pistolles d'Espagne | 34378 | Piastres | | | | | |
| Alexandrie | | Sequins | 55880 | Piastres | | | | | |
| Livourne | | piastres sévillanes | 50400 | | | | | | |
| Constantinople | | sequins Vénitiens | 50000 | | | | | | |
| Smirne | | sequins Vénitiens | 80000 | | | | | | |
| Malte | | sequins Vénitiens | 5277 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | | lettres de change sur Constantinople | 54377 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | | lettres de change sur Smyrne | 37690 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | | lettres de change sur Alep | 4000 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | 4 balles | Poivre | 500 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | une churle | Cannelle | 200 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | 2 barils | Girofle | 300 | | | | | | |
| Marseille | 2 barils | Muscade | 300 | | | | | | |

Source: AN, B I 341, *Lettre de M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 mars 1725,

DIPLOMACY, CONSULS, AND PASHAS

In Crete, even more than in other *échelles*, diplomacy emerged as an essential tool in securing French economic success. Olive oil, the core of the island's trade with France, was, in fact, a commodity particularly vulnerable to export embargos coming from both central and local governments.³⁰ This, in turn, exposed French merchants to all sorts of *avanies*, as the island's Pashas skilfully exploited their authority to extort gifts and money. In this context, establishing friendly personal relations with local authorities was of utmost importance for the individual consuls' task of protecting commerce and, at the same time, constituted an important step in the diplomats' careers. For this reason, Consul de Cresmery, in his first letter to the *Conseil de la Marine*, stressed the lavishness of the reception he was granted upon his arrival in Crete by the local *Pacha*. The diplomat presented the festivities that took place on 15 November 1717 as a proof of good relationships he was able to establish with the local government:

Je suis enfin à La Caneée depuis le quinze du mois dernier [...]. L'entrée que l'on m'a faite à mon arrivée a été l'une des plus magnifiques que l'on ait encore vue dans ce pays en pareille occasion. Toute la Nation vint me recevoir à la Soude où je mis pied à terre et je trouva [...] le premier écuyer du Pacha avec quatre beaux chevaux dont il y en avait deux très richement harnaché, l'un était destiné à me porter et l'autre au cas où je voulusse changer pendant la route. Les deux autres étaient pour le deux drogmans de cette échelle³¹.

In fact, consuls tried hard to establish friendly contacts with the *Pachas*. The most common way was to provide them with particularly valuable gifts.³² Sometimes, more subtle means were resorted to, such as using the tensions between Ottomans and Venetians to secure their favourable attitude towards French tradesmen. Such was the case described by the consul in Candia in 1716, at the time of the Ottoman-Venetian war of 1714-1718, as he stated that "*La crainte que nous donnions du secours aux Vénitiens et Maltais les obligera de nous ménager [...] ainsi nous pourrions demander bien de choses à la Porte que on ne osera pas nous refuser.*"³³

The attempts to gain the *Pacha's* favors, in this case his permission exports of olive oil without major restrictions, were not always as successful as

³⁰ Venetians, for instance, considered French diplomatic and consular service one of the main factors behind French remarkable commercial success (ASV, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, b. 556, f. 89-90, 20 October 1760). Cf. Karen Barkey, "The Ottoman Empire (1299-1923): The Bureaucratization of Patrimonial Authority," in *Empires and Bureaucracy in World History. From Late Antiquity to the Twentieth Century*, eds. Peter Crooks, Timothy H. Parsons (Cambridge, 2016), 102-126.

³¹ AN, AD, B I 341, *Lettre de M. de Cresmery au Conseil de la Marine*, 12 décembre 1717.

³² AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 février 1716.

³³ AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 février 1716.

expected. In June 1716, for example, Delane asked the ambassador in Constantinople to intervene with the Grand Vizier to obtain either the liberty of trade in Cretan oil, or, at the very least, an authorization to export what had been bought prior to the ban, as the local *Pasha* had allowed to bring to France only a part of the purchased goods, corresponding to 2,000 quintals.³⁴

Turning to ambassadors for help was an annoyance and a clear sign of the limits of consuls' ability to effectively deal with the local powers. Precisely for this reason Nicolas Morel de Cresmery stressed his very good connection with the *Pacha*, established through their frequent encounters and open discussions. In a letter to the *Conseil de la Marine*, he juxtaposed his friendship with the Ottoman official to numerous misunderstandings and tensions that characterized the tenure of his predecessor at the post and drew an explicit connection between his achievements and the steady flow of oil trade that benefitted Marseilles since he had been appointed consul in Chania.³⁵

Stressing good relations with the Ottoman *élite* did not imply any appreciation for the local official. On the contrary, the provincial authorities were frequently depicted as tyrannical, corrupt and inefficient:

Les puissants qui commandent cette île sont des gens ignorants, féroces, [ce sont des] tyrans, comme Ibrahim Pacha, lequel exerce notre patience et la pousse même à bout depuis deux ans et demi qu'il est en Candie, car [...] il prétend des contributions infondées des Français et de leurs bâtiments [...]³⁶.

Apart from undue taxes, sudden levies, and other vexations, French diplomats depicted the local governors as negligent in managing even the most vital trade facilities, such as roads and ports. Such laxness was explained by "oriental character," careless and lenient, as well as by widespread corruption, and, least by not last, deeply rooted antipathy towards Westerners.

Si le chef du Gouvernement qui réside à Candie était moins opposé et antipathique à tout ce qui s'appelle Franc il voudrait bien faire travailler à nettoyer le port [de Candie] dans lequel nos moindre bâtiments ne peuvent entrer sans risque de se perdre, surtout en hiver lors-ce-que ils entrer avec un vent fort. Je ne peux manquer de souligner la nécessité indispensable qu'il y a de creuser ce port [...]. Il est certains que tous les Turcs et autres connaissent cette vérité, mais elle ne saurait en gagner

³⁴ "[Le Pacha] après bien de sollicitation a accordé [l'exportation] de 2.000 quintaux de huile, encore est-il accompagné par un commissaire rigide dépêché de près pour que on ne en charge pas une plus grosse quantité" (AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 13 Juin 1716).

³⁵ "Je prendrai la liberté de l'informer aujourd'hui que la récolte des huiles a été très abondante cette année, ce qui attire journellement une quantité considérable de bâtiments de Marseille. Le Pacha, avec lequel je vis parfaitement, j'ai de nombreuses rencontres et je tiens un dialogue fort ouvert et franc, en accorde la sortie toutes les fois que je lui en fait demander la permission" (AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. de Cresmery au Conseil de la Marine*, 26 décembre 1717).

³⁶ AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 7 Décembre 1723.

les puissants qui gouvernent à employer à cette sorte de travaux et autres de réparation de la place les vingt milles piastres annuelles que le Grand Vizir y destine, lesquelles ils mettent dans leur bourse impunément. Personne n'ose parler, le dire ni agir contre elles sous risque de être envoyé à leur examen et à leur rigoureuse justice, ainsi qu'il arrive souvent.³⁷

Once again offering money to the Ottomans was perceived by the French diplomats as the only way to break the deadlock.³⁸

However difficult the relations with the island's officials might have been, French diplomats were interested that their *échelle* was run smoothly by high-ranking individuals with clear authority. In such cases, in fact, they could better solve eventual conflicts including those with local merchants and population. This aspect emerges quite clearly from the protest filed against French residents of Chania, accused of monopolizing the trade of imported goods, squeezing out Turkish merchants. Reporting on the events, consul Le Maire stressed that the local authorities, represented only by a *vizir à deux queues*, was too weak to respond adequately and put an end to the tumults. Thus, he asked therefore the ambassador in Constantinople to intercede and have the Porte appoint a *vizir à trois queues*, who would garner more respect among the local populace. Ottoman ruling class was therefore at once a hindering presence, in so far that they levied *avaries*, disrupted trade to receive gifts and money, or delayed needed infrastructural intervention; on the other hand, they represented an unavoidable partner for managing sometimes violent reactions of the local population. This, in turn, might suggest all the complexity of the emerging dominant position of French tradesmen even in local markets.³⁹

La population de cette ville a entrepris pendant le courant mois en trois différentes occasions [des actes contre] la Nation. La nation ayant este menacée par une sédition populaire comme elle verra par les pièces ci incluses je dois représenter a Son Excellence que le Pacha qui commende en cette ville n'étant que un vizir a deux queues n'a aucun pouvoir ni autorité et que nous devons attendre qu'un faible et médiocre appuy ce qui m'a contraint de recevoir l'Aga des janissaire pour lui demander sa protection contre les insultes dont nous étions menacées. [...] La Nation se trouve plus nombreuse qu'elle ne l'était autrefois et il y aborde des [grandes] quantités de nos bâtiments charges de denrées et autres marchandises dont plusieurs séditieux et mutins voudrait avoir l'achat et la vente au préjudice des français a qui elles sont adressées ou à qui elles appartiennent ce qui les a porte à demander qu'aucun de nos négociants ne puissent cendre en détail des marchandises qui viennent ici.⁴⁰

³⁷ AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 Juin 1722.

³⁸ AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 7 Décembre 1723.

³⁹ AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Le Maire au Marquis de Bonnal*, 25 novembre 1722.

⁴⁰ AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Le Maire au Marquis de Bonnal*, 25 novembre 1722.

Consuls expressed the admiration of Turkish pomp, as in de Cresmery's, the necessity of building friendly relationships, as shown by Baume, and contempt for an apparently unresponsive, deeply corrupt society stressed by La Maire. They also felt an attraction for Crete, mainly directed, however, towards its ancient Greek past. The same consul Baume, in fact, related with touching remarks the long trip he had undertaken to reach the village of Gortyna, and the visit to local ancient ruins. He saw in them the remnants of the labyrinth, itself part of a marvelous city, perfectly matching and reflecting his vision of the glorious past of Minoan Crete.⁴¹

Along with diplomacy, consuls organized and controlled French residents' daily lives. This task went well beyond economic matters, encompassing social and political arrangements as well. On the one hand, they aimed to cement unity among merchants, and, on the other, to present the "French Nation" as a small-scale replica of an idealized vision of France.⁴² According to their plans, the Turks were to witness an edifying of the country as a well-ordered, dignified, and successful monarchy. Enhanced respect would not only encourage trade, but also ease the tensions between the Frenchmen and local population, as well as the local authorities. It would have helped, in other words, to avoid such troubles as those stirring Chania in 1722, as well as the widespread negative actions of ill-disposed Pachas.

FRENCH RESIDENTS IN OTTOMAN CRETE

A document of 1712 provides us with a relatively comprehensive picture of the French Nation in early-eighteenth-century Crete, giving us information on such aspects as residence, regular or irregular sojourns on the island, function within the community, duration of stay in Crete and, in general, family status in the Levant (Table 3).

By this time, the *Nation Française* had evolved into a small community of around fifty-two residents, encompassing merchants, surgeons, artisans, people without clear profession, and a few women. Most of them (forty-seven out of fifty-two) resided in Chania. This strong concentration broadly reflected the economic and social structure of Ottoman Crete. Starting from the sixteenth century, the hinterland of Chania developed as a region of intensive olive cultivation. This trend increased even further under Ottoman rule, when olive oil became the principal export commodity, and the city as its main trading center. Moreover, Chania, which unlike other towns, was not cut off from by steep mountain ranges, provided relatively easy access to the south. Gentle slopes linked the city to the rich plain of Messara, with its extensive olive-tree cultivation. Thus, it provided clear commercial advantages, proven by the fact that it was in that city that the French established their consulate.

⁴¹ Cfr: Luigi Bossi, *Quadro geografico-fisico storico-politico di tutti i paesi e popoli del mondo con carte geografiche e tavole in rame*, (Milano, 1829), t. XV, 142-143; Federico Halbherr, Domenico Comparetti, *Relazione sui nuovi scavi eseguiti a Gortyna presso il Letheo*, (Firenze, 1887).

⁴² Ian, Collier, "East of Enlightenment. Regulating Cosmopolitanism between Istanbul and Paris in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of World History* 21 (3), (2010): 447-470.

Only five Frenchmen resided in Rethymno. The town's favourable geographical position and rich agricultural hinterland notwithstanding, the town played no economic role to speak of. This was largely to its extremely poor port facilities, which hindered trade, since merchants active in the region had to ship their wares to the port of Souda in the vicinity of Chania, in order to load them on seafaring ships.⁴³

Finally, no French resident was registered in Chania. This might seem surprising given the town's role as the administrative capital of the island, as well as its political and religious centre. The presence of provincial authorities attracted, apart from bureaucrats and soldiers, numerous merchants, including Greek Orthodox, Jews and Muslims.⁴⁴ The absence of French traders possibly stemmed from its political and military character, but also illustrated a tendency, quite strong among foreigners, to concentrate in the same town to establish a compact and cohesive community.

Obviously, most French residents in Crete were merchants by trade. However, they by no means represented the community's full social and professional spectrum. In fact, in Chania, sixteen residents were listed as merchants and six as *commis*, clerks working for affluent traders. If we add up both categories, it becomes clear that less than a half of all residents (47 per cent, to be precise) were actually active in commercial activities. The rest comprised clergymen, consul's secretary, four *drogmans* (two "ordinary," coming respectively from Smyrna and Constantinople, and two locals of Jewish origin holding a *berat*), a surgeon, a baker, an innkeeper, and as much as nine coopers (three listed as masters, two as apprentices, and four as simple workers). Three residents, Jean Baptiste Careffe, Louis Allinary, and Michel Babu are listed without indicating their profession. The first one is described as living *sans certificate* – without documents formally allowing him to reside in Crete with his brother Pierre, a merchant and legal resident in the *échelle*. Louis Allinary, born in Marseilles, arrived in Crete with Consul de Cresmery, and subsequently accompanied him in Sidon and Cairo before returning to Crete. Finally, Michel Babu, holder of a certificate of residence, was a former cook of Consul de Cresmery. After the latter's departure in 1722, he worked for a time as innkeeper, and settled permanently on the island.

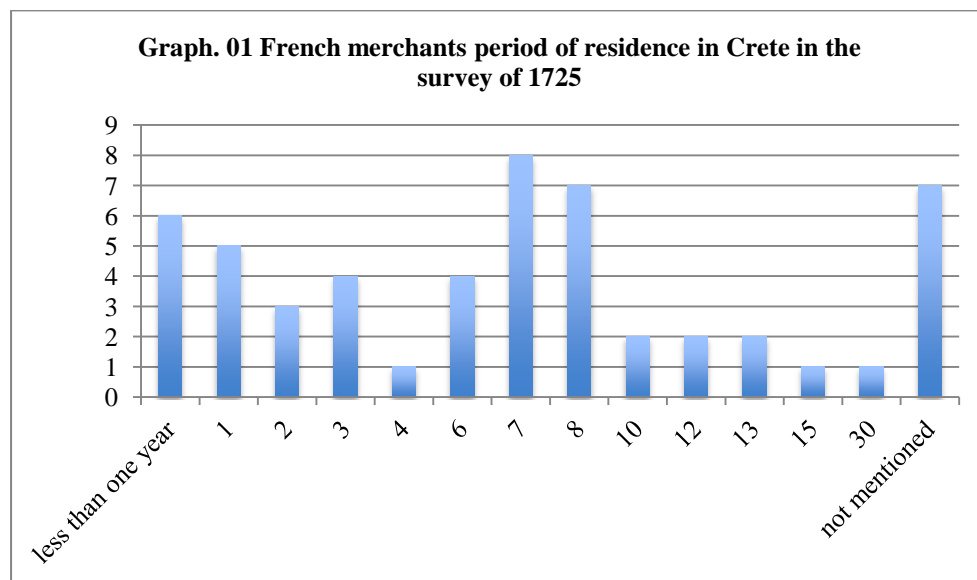
A much smaller number of residents in Rethymno included three merchants, Honoré Lyon, born in La Ciotat, without certificate; Jean François Toulon from Fréjus and Ambroise Carfeuil from Marseilles; a surgeon, Jean Baptiste Fabre, without certificate, and Jean Homas from Aix en Provence, baker and innkeeper without certificate.

⁴³ "A Rettimo [Rethymno] nos négociants font acheter des parties considérables [d'huiles] qu'ils font transporter par les bateaux du pays au port de La Soude où nos bâtiments vont les charger, ne pouvant aborder surtout en hiver à Rettimo, dont le port est entièrement comblé" (AN, AE, B I 341, *Commerce du Levant. Relation de M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine*, 8 mars 1725).

⁴⁴ Greene, *Christians and Muslims*, 102.

Among residents we find also three women, all without certificate of residence. Marguerite Couture, born in Marseille was the wife of Pierre Rainaud, who had started out as a merchant before becoming a ship captain; Benotte Faxé, also from Marseilles, lived on the island as mother-in-law of merchant Joseph Brondé; Marguerite Brouchière, in turn, was servant in the family of merchant François Bouquier.

The French Nation in Crete consisted essentially of medium-term residents, 43% of whom lived on the island for less than five years by the time of the survey; 21% had spent between six and eight years in Crete, while mere 18% - over than nine years (graph. 01). Such a timeframe was consistent with the directives of the Chamber of Trade of Marseille and the French central authorities, which limited period of residence in the Levant as a means to keep control of traders abroad.⁴⁵ There were, however, exceptions. Jean Chiousse, merchant from Marseilles, had been living in Crete for fifteen years; he arrived there in 1710 from Constantinople, where he had been a clerk to merchant Ramuzat. Chiousse also set up his own business in the Ottoman capital and subsequently moved to Acre. Another interesting case is that of the master cooper Antoine Floquin who, by the age of eighty, had spend thirty years in Chania. Moreover, many traders resided in other *échelles* before coming to Crete. Joseph Brondé, for example, had worked in Smyrna and Salonica. Jean François Delialbiéy had lived thirteen years in Acre, helping his father in running the business. Antoine Besson, merchant from Marseilles, had lived six years in Constantinople and Smyrna; Julien Ambroise had been in Athens and Corone.

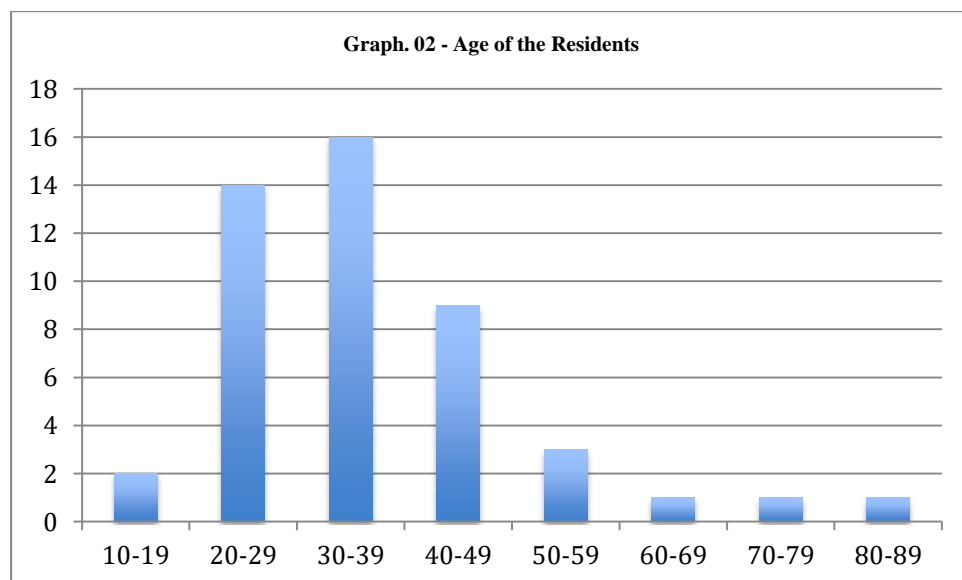


Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *Etat de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimmo*, 8 mars 1725.

⁴⁵ Even if the legal limitation to ten years of residence was actually set by law only in 1731, the Chamber of Trade tended however to keep the Frenchmen permanence abroad to short periods coherent with the needs of average trade practices (Celetti letti, “French Residents and Ottoman Women”, 47-64).

Surprisingly enough, consuls were well aware that a significant part of French residents (forty-two per cent) lived in *échelle* illegally, that is without a proper certificate, whereas *only* fifty-two per cent held the documents allowing them to reside and trade there. A tiny group of six per cent secured a certificate, but only following their arrival in Crete, proving that they had come illegally to the island. This picture contrasts with strict rules that French authorities tried to impose on residents in the Levant, which required both a passport and formal permission to sail to the *échelles*. This casts doubt on the effectiveness of control consuls were expected to exercise and their ability to put the rules into practice. As we examine our sources more closely, we see a more complex picture that, to an extent qualifies, this conclusion. Four cases of illegal residence concerned women, who, theoretically, could reside in the Levant only as merchants' wives. Fourteen illegal residents were artisans, servants or surgeons, while one was a person without any stated profession. Thus, only three merchants resided in the *échelle* without a passport. French administrative machine in Crete, therefore, appears to have been able to keep an eye on the traders themselves, but not so much on the "marginal" members of the French Nation, artisans and women. It is also interesting to note that, even upon having discovered undocumented residents, consuls took no immediate action, which stands in stark contrast with the formal demands of the ambassadors who insisted on strict application of the rules.⁴⁶

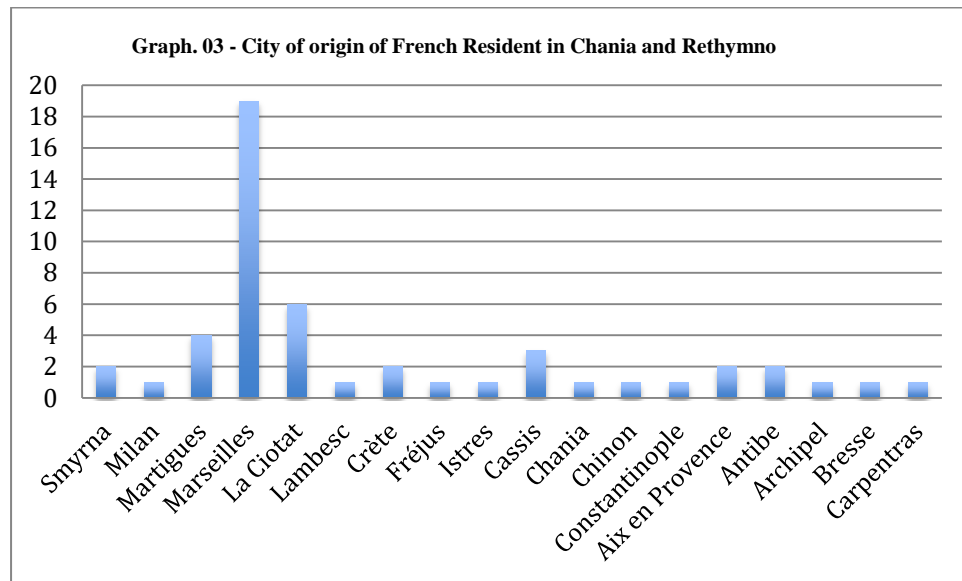
As is usual for a population composed predominantly merchants, and for early modern demographic and social models, most residents aged between 20 and 49 years, younger and older representing marginal exception (graphic 02). Two young men were nineteen, but only one, Antoine Béaumont from Cassis in Southern France, was a merchant and had been evidently sent to the Levant to learn the trade, whereas Antoine Dailot, born in the *Archipel*, was a cutter.



⁴⁶ *Cfr.*: Celetti, "French Residents and Ottoman Women," 47-64.

Elderly residents were also an exception. One merchant, Antoine Besson from Marseilles, was 53 years old, and another, Honoré Lyon from La Ciotat, was at the age of 70, but resided in Rethymno without permission. The other cases concern a woman, a surgeon and a baker (graphic 02).

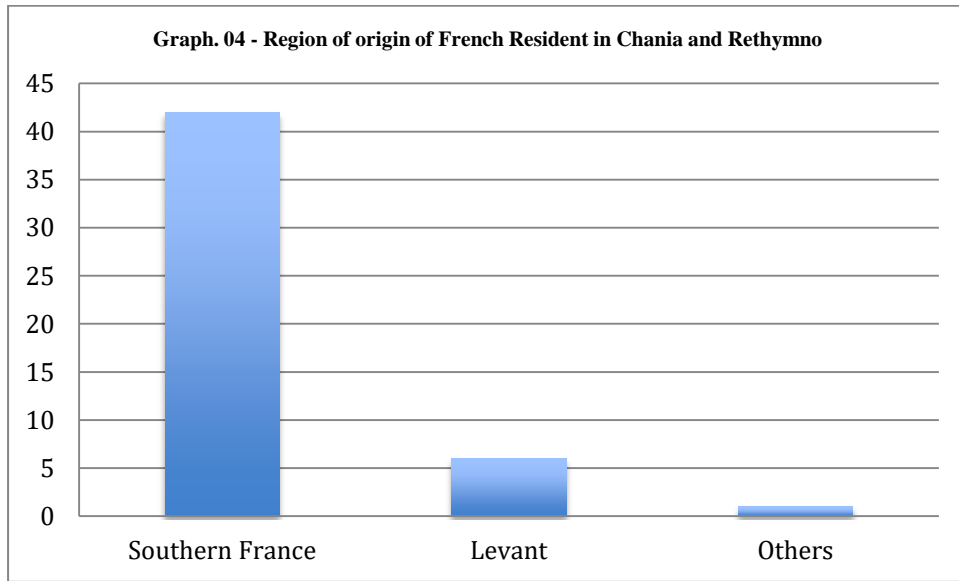
Most residents were born in Marseilles, or, more generally, in Southern France. A remarkable number of seven people – four *drogmans*, a merchant and two coopers - were actually from the Levant (Graphs 03 and 04).



Finally, the list provides us with a range of personal information. We know that the first *drogman* was partly paid by the consulate and partly from a tariff imposed on each French ship dropping anchor in Chania, whereas the second one was entirely at the payroll of the French Nation (*cf.* tab. 01). This divergence with regard to the sources of revenue might reflect the interpreters' different positions in terms of their importance and responsibilities, given that ship tariff could yield higher return than salaries did.

The oldest merchant of the French Nation, Honoré Lyon from La Ciotat, who resided in Rethymno without authorization, served for many years as vice-consul under de Cresmery and Lemaire, levying consular tariffs on ships anchoring in that port, after having "navigated most of his life and commanded numerous ships." Trading, shipping and vice-consular functions emerge here as interconnected professions or, at least, as options available in different periods of one's career and life.

Surgeon Jean Baptiste Fabre was the son of a Frenchmen and a Greek woman, which shows that long-term residents were keen to form personal and intimate bonds with local population; in fact, inter-communal marriages were quite common in this period. All the other residents, with the exception of the first *drogman*, Jacques Gerbaud, the innkeeper, and Bathélemy Floquin, cutter born on the island, were, on the contrary, married with French women, who had joined their husbands in the *échelles* with their children.



FRENCH RESIDENTS IN THE OTTOMAN CRETE

| Tab. 03 – French Residents in Chania (1725) | | | | | | |
|---|-----|---|--|---------------------------|--|---|
| Name | Age | Fonction | Certificate / Appointment | Date Arrival | Spouse | Others |
| Révèrent Charles d'Henvin | | Supérieur de la mission des Capucins de cette ville et Chapelain, cure de la nation française | | 1712 | | |
| Frère Felix de l'Etat de Milan | | religieux | | | | |
| Joseph Ennemard d'Aix en Provence | 36 | Chancelier par brevet du 13 mai et 1er Aout 1720 | | 1713 | | |
| Jean Antoine Suzibée de Smirne | 31 | Premier Drogman | Lettre de Monseigneur le Marqui de Bonnal 1 octobre 1716 | 12 avril 1717 | Marinette Pocary de la Sude depuis 1721 | 130 piastres de appointement payées par le Consulat et 3 piastres d'ancrage pour chaque bâtiment qui mouille en ce port |
| Charles Fonton de Constantinople | 22 | Second Drogman de cette échelle | Patente de Monsieur le Marquis de Bonnal 8 juillet 1722 | 1722 | | 200 piastres d'appointement qui lui sont payee par la Nation avec la nourriture et le logement n'étant pas marié |
| Moyse et Raphael Bonfils, frères juifs | | Drogman à <i>barats</i> | Patente de M. le Marquis de Bonnal du 25 octobre 1719 | | | |
| Honoré Colom Chaux de Marseille | 36 | | Sans certificat. M. de Cresmery dont il était domestique l'a établi dans l'échelle | | Marié à Magdalaine Merille fille du feu François de Fallon, sans enfants | |
| Joseph Brondé de Marseille | 36 | Marchand actuellement député | Certificat du 11 avril 1715 pour résider en cette échelle | 31 mars 1721 | Marié depuis deux ans à la Demoiselle Anne Fase de Marseille, sans enfants | Il a résidé en qualité de marchand A Smirne et Salonique |
| Maximin Brondé frère jumeau et associé de Joseph de Marseille | 36 | Marchand | Certificat du 16 juin 1717 | 1 ^{er} aout 1717 | Marié à la Demoiselle Jeanne Rozé Vachier de Marseille venue en cette ville avec son fils Jean Jacques le 4 novembre 1721 munie de un certificat du 25 septembre 1721 ayant encore un autre enfant agé de 8 mois | |
| François Portal de Martigues | 33 | Marchand | Certificat du 8 juillet 1717 | 17 aout 1717 | | |
| Pierre Careffe de Marseille | 42 | Marchand | Certificat du 21 octobre 1717 | 18 février 1718 | | Il a résidé dans l'échelle en 1709 et 1710 |
| François Bouquier de Martigues | 35 | Marchand | Certificat du 22 juin 1719 | septembre 1719 | Marié à la Demoiselle Catherine di Broglia de la ville d'Aix munie de un certificat du 14 novembre 1721 résident dans cette échelle depuis le 13 fevrier 1722 sans enfants | |
| Balthazar Rostan D'Antibe | 32 | Marchand | Certificat du 12 avril 1717 | septembre 1717 | | |
| Jean Rostan frère du S Balthazar | 37 | Marchand | Certificat 14 juillet 1724 | octobre 1724 | | |
| Gaspar Masson | 45 | Marchand | Certificat du 10 novembre 1719 | juillet 1722 | | |

DAVID CELETTI

| Tab. 03 – French Residents Chania (1725) | | | | | | |
|--|-----|----------|--|---|--------|---|
| Name | Age | Fonction | Certificate / Appointment | Date Arrival | Spouse | Others |
| Benoit Arnaud de La Ciotat | 40 | Marchand | Certificat 29 janvier 1711 | Mars 1711-mai 1718 à La Canée puis à Candie jusqu'en 1719, puis en France et revenu le 6 février 1722 | | |
| Noel Justinien Remuzat de Marseille | 27 | Marchand | Certificat du 17 juillet 1717 | May 1717, avec des intervalles pour des voyages en France à Marseille, auparavant résident à Constantinople environ 7 ans | | |
| Joseph Hiacinte Remuzat, frère de Noel | 26 | Marchand | Certificat du 26 juillet 1724 | | | Il doit passer à Seyde |
| Jena Chiousse de Marseille | 42 | Marchand | Certificat 14 février 1710 | mai 1710 | | Avant 1710 résident à Constantinople 11 ans en qualité de commis du S. Remuzat puis de marchand associé avec le S. Lamer et ensuite deux ans à Acre en la meme qualité de marchand |
| Jean François Delialbiey | 40 | Marchand | Certificat du 11 février 1700 pour se rendre à l'échelle de Acre | | | Le certificat fut délivrer pour aller à l'échelle de Acre où le feu père se trouvait. Il passa ensuite à Rome où il resta 3 ans marchnd. Il revint à Acre prendre la place de son père il y demeura 13 ans après quoi il passe à l'échelle où il se trouve depuis 13 mois |
| Antoine Besson de Marseille | 53 | Marchand | Certificat du 6 novembre 1710 pour résider à l'échelle de Constantinople | | | Il est resté six ans à Constantinople puis à Smire jusque au mois du Aout dernier quand il est passé en cette échelle |
| François Utre | 22 | Marchand | Certificat du 4 novembre 1723 | 30 octobre 1723 | | |

FRENCH RESIDENTS IN THE OTTOMAN CRETE

| Tab. 03 – French Residents in Chania (1725) | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| Name | Age | Fonction | Certificate / Appointment | Date Arrival | Spouse | Others |
| Pierre Guerin de Smirne, | 22 | Marchand | | | | Fils de Antoine Guerin, marchand résident à Smirne, il réside dans cette échelle depuis environ trois ans n'ayant aucun certificat à la Chambre de Commerce |
| Ambroise Jullien de Marseille | 39 | Commis du S. Careffe | Certificat du 17 Juin 1713 | | Catherine Rose Goujon de Marseille, marié depuis le mois de Juillet 1722 | Avant 1713 il est à Athènes en qualité de marchand et ensuite il a fait fonction de vice consul à Corron pendant deux ans |
| François Marin de La Ciotat | 29 | Commis du S. Guerin | Certificat du 11 février | Depuis environs 3 ans | | |
| Jean Abeile de Martigues | 23 | Commis du S. Bouquier | Certificat du 23 février 1722 | 30 mars 1722 | | |
| Antoine Beaumont de Cassis | 19 | Commis du S. Brondé | Certificat du 24 Aout 1724 | 21 juillet dernier | | Il a résidé dans cette échelle encore deux ans auparavant |
| François Vian de La Ciotat | 26 | Commis du S Balthazar Rostan | Sans aucun certificat de la Chambre | Depuis deux ans | | |
| François Chiousse de Marseille | 29 | Commis | Certificat du 9 Aout 1719 pour aller résider à Constantinople | | | Frère de Jean Chiousse il est venu dans cette échelle le mois de Juillet dernier pour être commis du frère |
| Jean Baptiste Careffe | 37 | | Il réside sans aucun certificat de la Chambre | Mai 1718 | | Frère de Pierre, il réside avec son frère |
| Louis Allinary de Marseille | 66 | | Certificat du 18 novembre 1717 | 1717 | | Il est arrivé en 1717, il est allé ensuite à Seyde et au Caire avec M. de Cresmery, il est revenu au mois d'Aout dernier |
| Marguerite Couture de Marseille | 41 | | | | Epouse de Pierre Rainaud qui résida à Candie en qualité de Marchand muni du certificat du 21 mai 1711 et commandant à présent un bâtiment | Elle est venue s'établir depuis quatre mois dans cette ville sans aucun certificat |
| Benotte Faxé de Marseille | 60 | | Sans certificat | 14 octobre 1718 | | Elle vit auprès de la famille Brondé, sa fille étant la femme du S. Joseph Brondé |
| Marguerite Brouchière | 30 | | Sans certificat | Mai 1725 | | Servante du S. Bouquier |
| Pierre Daumier de La Ciotat | 50 | Chirurgien de la Nation | Sans certificat | | Anne Arnaud de La Ciotat, son épouse depuis le 30 novembre 1710, qui réside à l'échelle, avec leur trois garçons | |
| Joseph Vert de Lambex | 50 | Boulangier de la Nation | Sans certificat | 30 novembre 1718 | Marié à Demoiselle Floquin, un garçon | Auparavant y est resté 24 ans en tant que boulangier |
| Jacques Gerbaud de Carpentras | 39 | Aubergiste de la Nation, boulangier | Sans certificat | Depuis 4 mois | Marié depuis environs deux ans avec la nommée Ranoussa, grecque de Rettimo n'ayant pas d'enfants | Auparavant il a résidé à Rettino dix ans |
| Michel Babu de Chinon en Touraine | 36 | | Certificat du 28 mai 1720 | 1718 | | Il est venu avec M de Cresmery dont il était cuisinier il a ensuite tenu l'auberge de la nation qu'il a quitté depuis 4 mois. Il a un garçon avec lui de environ 6 ans |

DAVID CELETTI

Tab. 03 – French Residents in Chania (1725)

| Name | Age | Fonction | Certificate / Appointment | Date Arrival | Spouse | Others |
|---|-----|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| Louis et Joseph Boyer frères de Marseille | | Maitres tonneliers | Sans certificat | Depuis 10 ans | | |
| Antoine Floquin de Bresse | 80 | Maitre tonnelier | Certificat du 9 novembre 1706 | Depuis 30 ans | | |
| Charles Fauron de La Ciotat | 40 | Maitre tonnelier | Certificat 11 mars 1717 | 8 mai 1717 | | Un garçon de quatre ans, son père et un de ses frères se trouvent avec lui sans certificat |
| Joseph Fauchier | 25 | Garçon tonnelier du S Fauron | Sans certificat | Depuis 7 ans | | |
| Barthélemy Floquin natif de cette ville, fils du S. Antoine | 23 | Tonnelier | Sans certificat | | Marié depuis un an et demi avec Catherine Exlauchy, grecque de la Soude ayant un enfant de neuf mois | |
| Antoine Daillot de Parchipel, fils du feu Antoine de Cassis | 19 | Tonnelier | Sans certificat | Depuis 5 ans | | Associé avec le S. Barthélémy Floquin |
| François Jaume de Martigues | 28 | Tonnelier | Certificat du 28 juin dernier | | | |
| Gaspard Colla d'Istres | 23 | Garçon tonnelier | Sans certificat | Depuis 7 ans | | |
| Jean Durand de Marseille | 33 | Tonnelier | Sans certificat | Depuis six mois | | Il a résidé auparavant à Candie onze ans |

FRENCH RESIDENTS IN THE OTTOMAN CRETE

| Tab. 03 – French Residents in Rethymno (1725) | | | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Name | Age | Fonction | Certificate / Appointment | Date Arrival | Spouse | Others |
| Honoré Lyon de La Ciotat | 70 | Marchand | Sans certificat de la Chambre | 1712 | | Fait la première fonction de vice consul résident depuis plusieurs années à Rettimo. M Delaunay, de Cresmery et Lemaire l'ont établi successivement vice Consul et l'on chargé du soin d'exiger les droits de l'échelle sur les bâtiments français qui chargent pour la marchandise ou pour la caravane. Il est considéré sur le pays. Il a navigué la plus grande partie de sa vie ayant commandé plusieurs bâtiments. |
| Jean François Toulon de la diocèse du Fréjus | 45 | Marchand | Certificat du 7 mai 1722 | Mois d'Octobre dernier | Rosolée Faure de La Ciotat munie de un certificat du mois de mars 1723 | |
| Ambroise Carfeuil de Marseille | 34 | | Certificat de l'année 1717 | Depuis deux mois | Marié depuis 8 ou 10 mois avec Thérèse Faxé de Marseille soeur de la femme du S Joseph Brondé. M. Lemaire mon prédécesseur la fit embarquer pour la France lors de son départ pour Seide, d'ordre de M le compte de Maurepas à la réquisition des M. de la Chambre de Commerce sur ce que elle était venue en ce pays sans leurs aveu, avec une permission de M Le Bailly due Langeron et la mère, qui était grièvement malade est restée à La Caneé | Avant de résider à Rettimo il a résidé pendant huit ans à Candie avec son père que y était boulanger et qui y est mort. |
| Jean Baptiste Fabre de Crète | 42 | chirurgien | Sans certificat | | Marié avec une grecque | Fils du nomme Antoine Fabre aussi chirurgien et d'une femme du pays |
| Jean Homas, d'un village proche d'Aix en Provence | 22 | Boulangier et aubergiste | Sans certificat | | | |

Source : AN, AE, B I 341, *Etat de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimno*, 8 mars 1725.

CONCLUSIONS

Crete, which has generally been considered a “secondary *echelle*,” due to its marginal position in the French trade system in the Levant and the humble status of its main export – olive oil – emerges as a relevant trade center. First of all, the island’s olive oil, acquired in the early eighteenth century a vital importance, as it fed Marseilles’ booming soap manufacture and offered the perfect substitute for falling domestic production. Olive oil trade expanded and exports to Marseilles reached such a level that they molded commercial relationship between France and Crete, putting its stamp on the transformations of the island’s economy. Low level of the Cretan demand did not allow French merchants to balance exports and imports, and deficits became a structural feature of this sector of Levantine trade. Piasters and Venetian sequins flowed into the island, and bills were issued in other *échelles* that had French exports surpluses. Cabotage, the so-called *caravane*, played a role in mitigating otherwise ever-growing deficit, mirroring at the same time the vitality, and complexity, of French economic presence in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The island hosted a small French community. Consular activity was, however, intense and showed all the aspects of the French diplomatic strategies in the Levant. It also shed light into the multifaceted relations that linked into one complex net consuls, merchants, and local powers. Without diplomatic supports olive oil trade was in constant danger of interruptions and merchants were exposed to the whims of the *Pachas*. Consuls’ ability to build good relations and effective networks with local leading classes was a prerequisite of stable and profitable trade. This was achieved by merging different and somewhat contrasting strategies, as gift-giving, threats, developing friendly relations, which, in any case, never blurred an overall negative image of Ottoman officials as corrupt, lax, and inefficient.

Though small, the French community in Crete presents a complete picture of the questions, problems, and contradictions touching foreigners’ presence in the early modern Levant. Closed in itself by rigid rules, controlled by the attentive eye of the consul, they should have offered the image of unity, order, discipline. Concentrated in work and business, French merchants were supposed to avoid any personal contact with local residents, official *drogman* serving as language and cultural intermediaries. Reality offered a much more complex, and varied picture where mixed marriages, long-term and irregular residence were so diffused to enclose almost half of the French people living in Crete. This, in turn, suggests that immaterial circulations were as relevant as the material ones.

APPENDIX

1. *Consuls in Chania*

The consular post was created in 1676 and remained in function until 1791. In 1764 it was transformed into Vice-Consulate, absorbing the Vice Consulate of Candia, which was re-established in 1772. Consul was supported by a Vice Consul and a clerk from 1776.

Léon Delane (appointed in 1708)
Nicolas Morel de Cresmery (appointed in 1717)
Benoit Le Maire (appointed in 1722)
Jean Jacques de Monthenault (appointed in 1724)
Joseph Martin (appointed in 1730)
Léon Delane (appointed in 1732)
Nicolas Dez (appointed in 1735)
Pierre – Etienne Robeau de Valnay (appointed in 1737)
Gaspard David Magy (appointed in 1746)
Claude Charles de Peyssonnel (appointed in 1757)
Joseph Amoureux (appointed in 1765)
Pierre – Jean Reybaud (*depute de la Nation* 1772)
Théodore Cavelier (appointed in 1773)
François-Alexandre d'André (appointed in 1775)
Jean Baptiste Michel Guyot de Kerky (appointed in 1779)
Joseph-Claude de Pellegrin (appointed in 1781)
Natal-Henri Mure d'Azir (appointed in 1787)

2. *Vice Consuls of Candia* (Heraklion)

Jean Baptiste Dubois (1711-16)
Antoine – Gabriel Durant (appointed in 1718)
Jean Baptiste Baume (appointed in 1720)
Antoine Maltor (appointed in 1735)
Henri de Costa (appointed in 1740)
Gaspard-David Magy (appointed in 1741)
Jean-Louis de Clairambault (appointed in 1746)
Jean – François du Teil (appointed in 1750)
Melchior de Vaugrigneuse (appointed in 1767)
Charles – Hyppolyte de Laidet (appointed in 1779)

From 1787 there is a vacancy until 1790, when Dutrouy is appointed, but does not reach his post.

3. *Vice Consuls of Rettimo* (Rethymno)

The Vice Consulate of Rettimo had been created at the end of the 17th century and suppressed in 1734. It has been managed by merchants who had no diplomatic licence (*brevet diplomatique*). There were Honoré Lyon (1725-1728), Gaspard Masson (1726-28) and Roch Bellon (1728-34).