



LAS SOCIEDADES PORTUARIAS DE LA EUROPA ATLÁNTICA EN LA EDAD MEDIA

JESÚS ÁNGEL SOLÓRZANO TELECHEA
BEATRIZ ARÍZAGA BOLUMBURU
MICHEL BOCHACA
(EDITORES)

35 CIENCIAS HISTÓRICAS

ier

JESÚS ÁNGEL SOLÓRZANO TELECHEA
BEATRIZ ARÍZAGA BOLUMBURU
MICHEL BOCHACA
Editores

LAS SOCIEDADES PORTUARIAS DE LA EUROPA ATLÁNTICA EN LA EDAD MEDIA

Gobierno de La Rioja
www.larioja.org



**Instituto
de Estudios
Riojanos**

Logroño, 2016

Las sociedades portuarias de la Europa Atlántica en la Edad Media/ Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Beatriz Arízaga Bolumburu, Michel Bochaca (editores).-- Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2016.- 400 p.: il.col; 24 cm. - (Ciencias Históricas; 35). D.L. LR 1325-2016. - ISBN 978-84-9960-100-7

1. Sociedad urbana. I. Arízaga Bolumburu, Beatriz. II. Solórzano Telechea, Jesús Ángel. III. Bochaca, Michel. IV. Instituto de Estudios Riojanos. III. Título. IV. Serie.

341.7/.8 (460)

339.5 (460)

Reservados todos los derechos. Ni la totalidad ni parte de esta publicación pueden reproducirse, registrarse o transmitirse, por un sistema de recuperación de información, en ninguna forma ni por ningún medio, sea electrónico, mecánico, fotoquímico, magnético o electroóptico, por fotocopia, grabación o cualquier otro, sin permiso previo por escrito de los titulares del copyright.

Los trabajos de la presente publicación fueron presentados en los XII Encuentros Internacionales del Medioevo en Nájera y han sido sometidos a una doble revisión anónima por pares y por el siguiente Comité Científico Internacional: Amélia Aguiar Andrade (*Universidade Nova de Lisboa*). Raphaela Averkorn (*Universität Siegen*). Iñaki Bazán Díaz (*Universidad del País Vasco*). Ariel Guance (*CONICET-Universidad de Córdoba de Argentina*). Jelle Haemers (*Universiteit Leuven*). Juan Francisco Jiménez Alcázar (*Universidad de Murcia*). Ricardo Izquierdo Benito (*Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha*). Christian Liddy (*University of Durham*). Denis Menjot (*Université de Lyon II*). Esther Peña Bocos (*Universidad de Cantabria*). Giuliano Pinto (*Università degli studi di Firenze*). Sarah Rees Jones (*University of York*). Teófilo F. Ruiz (*University of California. Los Ángeles*). Vicente Salvatierra Cuenca (*Universidad de Jaén*). Urszula Sowina (*Instituto Arqueológico de Varsovia*). Isabel del Val Valdivieso (*Universidad de Valladolid*).

Primera edición: diciembre, 2016

© Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, Beatriz Arízaga Bolumburu y Michel Bochaca (editores)

© Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2016

C/ Portales, 2 - 26001, Logroño, La Rioja

www.larioja.org/ier

© Imagen de cubierta: Embarcación pintada al fresco en la ermita del Lazareto de Abaño, en San Vicente de la Barquera (Cantabria).

Depósito Legal: LR 1325-2016

ISBN 978-84-9960-100-7

Diseño gráfico de la colección: Ice comunicación

Producción gráfica: La Mirada comunicación (Logroño)

Impreso en España. Printed in Spain.

Índice

PRESENTACIÓN

- 9 Leonor González Menorca, Consejera de Desarrollo Económico e Innovación de La Rioja
- 13 Jonás Olarte Fernández, Alcalde de Nájera

INTRODUCCIÓN

- 17 Las sociedades portuarias: campo de estudio de la Historia Social
Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea

PRIMERA PARTE: LA COMUNIDAD MARÍTIMA: MARINOS, PESCADORES Y MERCADERES

- 27 Rôles d'Oléron et usages maritimes dans l'Europe atlantique à travers l'exemple de Bordeaux, Libourne et Bayonne aux XIVE et XVe siècles
Michel Bochaca y Pierre Prétou
- 49 Salmon, Salt and the Internationalization of Aberdeen's Economy in the Later Middle Ages
David Ditchburn
- 67 Foreign merchants and skippers in Gdansk (Danzig) in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries
Roman Czaja y Anna Marynowska
- 83 Actividad económica y sectores productivos en la ciudad de La Coruña a fines del siglo XV. Una aproximación a partir del padrón fiscal de 1497
Amparo Rubio Martínez

- 115** Un poder que viene del Mar Océano: Las Cofradías de los Hombres del Mar en el Algarve a fines de la Edad Media
Gonçalo Melo Silva
- 137** Pesca y comercio entre Castilla e Irlanda a finales de la Baja Edad Media. El caso de los marineros de San Vicente de la Barquera en Irlanda (1489-1517)
Javier Añíbarro Rodríguez

SEGUNDA PARTE: LA COMUNIDAD PORTUARIA: EMPRESARIOS, VENDEDORES Y EXTRANJEROS

- 165** Navegación, comercio y negocio: los intereses vascos en los puertos flamencos en los siglos XV y XVI
Ana María Rivera Medina
- 197** Monnikerede, a small town within the portuary system of the commercial metropolis of Bruges
Jan Dumolyn y Ward Leloup
- 213** Door to the Mediterranean: port activity in late Islamic Lisbon
Ana Luísa Sérvulo Miranda
- 249** La integración de los italianos en las sociedades portuarias andaluzas (siglos XIII-XV)
Raúl González Arévalo
- 285** Los “no vecinos” en las ciudades de la Andalucía atlántica a finales de la Edad Media
Juan Manuel Bello León
- 319** Sociedades portuárias e técnicas mercantis. A metrologia do transporte marítimo (séculos XIV-XV)
Mário Paulo Martins Viana
- 337** La sociedad jerezana y su implicación en las actividades comerciales. La producción y comercializaron del vino (finales s. XV-inicios s. XVI)
Enrique José Ruiz Pilares
- 365** Violencia y conflicto en las sociedades portuarias de la baja Andalucía a fines de la Edad Media
Roberto J. González Zalacaín

The Zwin estuary: a medieval portuary network

Jan Dumolyn
Ghent University

Ward Leloup
Ghent University

“Brujas es una grant çibdat muy rica é de la mayor mercadería que ay en el mundo [...]; allí vi las naranjas é las limas de Castilla ; allí las frutas é vinos de la Greçia, tan abondosamente como allá; allí vi las confaçiones é espeçerías de Alexandría é de toto el Levante, como si allá estoviera; allí vi las pelleterías del mar Mayor, como si allí nasçieran; allí estava toda Italia con sus brocados é sedas é arneses é todas las otras cosas que en ella se fazen; así que non ay de parte del mondo cosa donde allí no se fallase lo mejor que en ella ay”¹

In September 1438, the Castilian nobleman Pero Tafur visited the city of Bruges in Flanders during his journey throughout the then-known world. He considered Bruges the most important commercial port in the whole world, as merchants from all nations came together there buying and selling commodities

1. Tafur, P. *Andanças é Viajes de Pero Tafur por diversas partes del mundo avidos (1435-1439)*. Marcos Jiménez de la Espada, D. (Ed.) Imprenta de Miguel Ginesta, Madrid, 1874: 251, 254.

from all over the world². As is generally known, from the end of the thirteenth century onwards, Bruges functioned as a hub for international trade, hosting merchants from, among other places, the Hanseatic towns, England, Scotland, France, the great Italian city states and the Iberian Peninsula. Goods from both the North Sea Area and the Mediterranean zone could be found there and the town was also the primary export market for the most valuable finished product the Low Countries themselves had to offer, cloth. The commercial elites of the town itself, the hostellers and brokers, mostly profited from their position as middlemen in international transactions and the city offered a wide range of excellent commercial and financial infrastructure to its visitors as well as a climate of legal security³.

However, despite its central position for overseas trade in Europe, Bruges was in fact not a seaport. Lying some fifteen kilometres inland, the city depended primarily on the canals and waterways that connected it to the sea for the international merchants and their commodities to reach its market halls and squares. In his journal Pero Tafur also dwelt on how merchants accessed the city by water, helped by the tides, and concluded that “*si lo oviesen de fazer con las bestias sería grandíssima costa é grande empacho*”⁴. The most important waterway connecting Bruges during its commercial heydays to the sea was the Zwin channel. Nowadays only a small nature reserve along the border of Belgium and the Netherlands, the Zwin used to be a vast inlet of the sea forming one of the major harbours of Northern Europe.

Throughout the medieval period, the Flemish coastal plain formed a dynamic landscape, shaped and reshaped by the interaction between men and sea. By the end of the Roman era, coastal Flanders was a vast marshy landscape, intersected by large and small tidal gullies bringing the influence of the sea deep inland.

2. Devliegheer, L. “Pero Tafur te Brugge, Sluis en Antwerpen (1438)”, *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge*, 140, 2003: 269-287.

3. Stabel, P. *Dwarfs among Giants. The Flemish Urban Network in the Late Middle Ages*. Garant, Leuven, 1997; Murray, J. M. *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism, 1280-1390*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005; Gelderblom, O. *Cities of Commerce: the Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250-1650*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2013.

4. Tafur, *Andanças é Viajes de Pero Tafur*: 253.

During the following centuries the domination of the sea in the area diminished as a result of natural processes of dune formation, sedimentation and silting-up of the tidal gullies, and since the tenth century even more so as a consequence of active embankment and drainage by the coast-dwellers. Dry lands were protected by dikes and smaller, silted-up tidal channels were dammed up to create new arable land⁵. However, this also involved risks. During storm surges, the tidal waves were impounded much more violently in a reduced flow-plain, deeply scouring the remaining gullies and flooding the cultivated lands when dikes collapsed⁶.

The first half of the twelfth century witnessed a series of such storm surges that struck especially hard in the region to the north-east of Bruges, where an old system of gullies called the Sincfal had remained open⁷. The flooding of large plots of embanked land, which were only slowly recovered by new embankments during the next century and a half, certainly was a disaster for the local farmers and coast-dwellers, but for the growing city of Bruges these storm surges proved a blessing. Due to the sedimentation of the tidal gullies, the city's maritime trade link had encountered serious difficulties in the decades prior to 1100. In this period the *Oude Zwin* or Old Zwin, a partly canalized waterway linking the city to the Sincfal-system, remained Bruges only serious connection to the sea, though it was a far from ideal one. As a result of the twelfth-century storm surges, however, an older creek in the Sincfal-system known as the *Budanvliet* was reshaped into a broad tidal channel navigable by seagoing vessels that reached up to five kilometres of Bruges: the Zwin

5. Tys D. "The medieval embankment of coastal Flanders in context", E. Thoen e.a. (Eds.) *Landscapes or seascapes? The history of the coastal environment in the North Sea area reconsidered*. Brepols, Turnhout, 2013: 199-239.

6. Baeteman, C. "De Holocene geologie van de Belgische kustvlakte", *Geological Survey of Belgium Professional Paper*, 304, 2008: 12-20; Hillewaert B. "Dynamiek en opnieuw evenwicht in de kusterosie", Hillewaert, B., Hollevoet Y. en Ryckaert M. (Eds.) *Op het raakvlak van twee landschappen. De vroegste geschiedenis van Brugge*. Vandewiele, Bruges, 2011: 79; Baeteman, C. "History of Research and State of the Art of the Holocene Depositional History of the Belgian Coastal Plane", Thoen e. a. (Eds.) *Landscapes or seascapes*: 17-24.

7. Gottschalk, M. K. E. *Stormvloeden en rivieroverstromingen in Nederland. I. De periode vóór 1400*. Van Gorcum, Assen, 1971: 59-67.

channel⁸. For Bruges, the creation of the Zwin announced a period of renewed accessibility by sea and secured its development into the main commercial hub of northern Europe, but the newly formed Zwin channel also gave rise to several new port-towns along its banks and would become the artery of a genuinely portuary network.

A first port town along the Zwin attested in the historical records was a place called *Letterswerve*. Somewhere between 1159 and 1163 the Flemish count Thierry of Alsace established a toll tariff for this harbour after complaints of unfair taxation by merchants from Cologne⁹. Apart from the record of a chapel at *Littersuerua*, mentioned in an episcopal charter from 1163, this toll tariff is the only historical source documenting the existence of this port, which seems to have disappeared in the following years in favour of the later town *Damme*. As a consequence, little is known about the origins or character of this first port town along the banks of the Zwin and even its exact location is debated by historians, though it is generally situated in or in the immediate vicinity of Damme¹⁰. However, the toll tariff does show that already by the middle of the twelfth century commercial activities took place along the Zwin and merchants, not only local or Flemish merchants but also traders from Cologne, used this waterway to import a wide range of products¹¹.

The commodities and materials on which dues had to be paid in Letterswerve included salted herring, salmon, mackerel, fish in tons, flatfish and haddock, wine, beer and mead, wool and yarn, grain, beans, salt, turnips, nuts, cheese,

8. Verhulst A. *Landschap en landbouw in middeleeuws Vlaanderen*. Crédit communal de Belgique, Brussels, 1995: 29-42; Verhulst, A. "Kort overzicht van de geschiedenis van de Zwinstreek in de Middeleeuwen", *Handelingen van bet Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge*, 137, 2000: 191-198; Wintein, W. "Historische geografie van de Zwinstreek. Een stand van zaken", Bauwens A. R. (Ed.) *Aaneengeregen tijdankers*. Heemkundige Kring West-Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, Oostburg, 2002: 39-50.

9. Verhulst A., de Hemptinne, Th. and De Mey, L. "Un tarif de tonlieu inconnu, institué par le comte de Flandre Thierry d'Alsace (1128-1168) pour le port de Littersuerua, précurseur du port de Damme", *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, 164, 1998: 143-172.

10. Verhulst, de Hemptinne and De Mey "Un tarif de tonlieu inconnu": 145-154; De Groote, J. "Het toltarief van Letterswerve", *Rond de Poldertorens*, 42, 2000: 25-27.

11. Verhulst, A. "Keulse handelaars in het Zwin tijdens de twaalfde eeuw en de vroegste ontwikkeling van de Vlaamse zeehaven", *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis*, 81, 1998: 351-358.

soot and grease, lead and copper, but also swords, shields, buckets, drinking cups, plates and brassware, wax, honey, mattresses, horses, cows, pigs, sheep, wood, manure, fruits, whetstones, millstones, hides, leek, garlic, olives, peat, apples and pears¹². The majority of these goods brought by ship to the harbour of Letterswerve, were probably further transported by land to the market of Bruges. By establishing a fixed toll tariff for the goods passing through the port of Letterswerve, the Flemish count actively encouraged this trade and of course secured a profitable source of income for the comital treasury.

Some fifteen years later further measures were taken by the count and the city of Bruges to improve the trade along the Zwin channel for their mutual benefit. In the 1170s Count Philip of Alsace expropriated lands around the channel and had a barrage built to close of the estuary at its farthest navigable point¹³. At the same time the commune of Bruges had a canal dug from the city to this dam to secure its maritime commercial supply route. Around the dam quays were constructed where commodities could be loaded from the seagoing vessels onto smaller barges that, through a sluice in the dam and via the newly dug canal, could navigate up to the centre of Bruges. As a consequence, the focal point of commercial activities shifted from the earlier tidal harbour of Letterswerve to the new transshipment port that grew around the dam. This new settlement was aptly named *Damme*, meaning ‘dam’ or ‘barrage’. In 1180 Count Philip granted the inhabitants of this town an urban privilege and an exemption of tolls in the whole county, but Bruges would maintain a tight leash on its outpost. The lock and the quays, the construction of which had been financed by Bruges, remained property of this city. Moreover the aldermen of Damme formally owed Bruges *hoofdvaart* (or *chef de sens*) meaning that their verdicts in any type of cases could be reformed by those of their capital city.

12. Verhulst, De Hemptinne and De Mey “Un tarif de tonlieu inconnu”: 164-166.

13. These infrastructural works in the Zwin region, and the later promotion of the development of Damme by grant of privileges, was part of a broader economic policy conducted by Thierry and mainly Philip of Alsace to stimulate the commercial development of maritime Flanders. See Verhulst, A. “Initiative comtale et développement économique en Flandre au XIIe siècle: le rôle de Thierry et de Philippe d’Alsace (1128-1191)”, *Miscellanea Mediaevalia in memoriam Jan Frederik Niermeyer*. Wolters, Groningen, 1967: 227-240.

Also in other judicial, military and economic matters Damme would remain subordinated to Bruges¹⁴.

By the first half of the thirteenth century more ports along the Zwin estuary start to appear in the sources. *Mude*, the present-day hamlet of Sint-Anna-ter-Muiden, was first mentioned in 1213 and in 1242 was also granted an urban privilege and exemption of tolls, both in the Zwin estuary and at Dunkirk. Situated close to the North Sea, this settlement of merchants and fishermen dominated the entrance to the Zwin estuary. It was there that the ‘water bailiff’, the comital officer policing all traffic on the Zwin, initially took the seat of his office¹⁵. Merchants from Mude are mentioned for the first time in a charter dated 1226 by which the English king ordered the release of some Flemish ships, detained on their way back from Gascony to Flanders¹⁶.

The same charter provides the first attestation of *Monnikerede*, yet another port along the Zwin, and one of its merchants. This settlement must have received urban privileges around the middle of the thirteenth century, as by 1266 its aldermen are mentioned for the first time. The 1226 English royal charter shows that merchants from these towns conducted trade abroad with their own vessels on account of merchants from Bruges, Ghent or Lille¹⁷. Yet Bruges, and Damme as its second, kept a close eye on these towns as well, ever trying to protect their own commercial interests. Mude and Monnikerede also owed *hoofdvaart* to the Bruges aldermen and they were seriously restricted in their own economic development. When for instance the inhabitants of Monnikerede built a sluice in a side channel of the Zwin, allowing them to conduct trade without passing

14. De Smet, A. “L’origine des ports du Zwin. Damme, Mude, Monnikerede, Hoeke et Sluis”, *Etudes d’histoire dédiées à la mémoire d’Henri Pirenne par ses anciens élèves*. Nouvelle Société d’Éditions, Brussels, 1937: 127-132; Ryckaert, M. “Damme. Van bruisende havenstad tot schone slaapster”, Blockmans, W. and Pleij, H. (Eds.) *Plaatsen van Herinnering. Nederland van prehistorie tot Beeldenstorm*. Bakker, Amsterdam, 2007: 136-139; Leloup, W. and Vannieuwenhuyze, B. “Damme en Sluis: de oorsprong en vroegste ontwikkeling van twee middeleeuwse Zwinstadjes”, *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge*, 150, 2013: 21-41.

15. De Smet “Les origines des ports du Zwin”: 132-134; Nowé, H. *Les baillis comtaux de Flandre, des origines à la fin du XIV^e siècle*. Lamertin, Brussels, 1929: 409-413.

16. Höhlbaum, K. *Hansisches Urkundenbuch* I. Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, Halle, 1876, 201: 63.

17. De Smet “Les origines des ports du Zwin”: 132-136.



Figure 1: map of the Zwin portuary network (Source: Murray, J. *Bruges. Cradle of Capitalism* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005: 30)

Damme, they were soon blown the whistle on by countess Margaret and had to promise the aldermen of Damme to obstruct this waterway with poles¹⁸.

As we have already mentioned, throughout the thirteenth century foreign traders increasingly came to Flanders themselves. By the middle of the thirteenth century the merchants of the Germanic Hansa, some of whom had already been present in the Zwin estuary a century earlier, tried to obtain an autonomous enclave with a jurisdiction of their own along the Zwin, as they had obtained one in London, Bergen and Novgorod. The Hanseatic merchants negotiated with Countess Margaret of Flanders in 1252-1253 and initially obtained the permission to found a new settlement along the shores of the Zwin, to be named

18. Warnkönig, L. A. *Flandrische Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte bis zum Jahr 1305*, II, 2. Fues, Tübingen, 1837: 16.

Nieuwdamme. However, for reasons unknown, this plan did not materialise.¹⁹ Perhaps it was opposed by Bruges who wanted to keep a check upon the Hansa merchants' autonomy.

Even though they never obtained an autonomous enclave for themselves, a remarkable presence of German merchants is attested in the port town of *Hoeke*. This small town on the left bank of the Zwin, between Monnikerede and Mude, was mentioned for the first time in 1250, but initially it was clearly not a place of great importance. An account of the bailiff of Bruges from 1255 lists all small towns in the region, but no mention was made of *Hoeke*. Only between 1255 and 1274 the place must have received an urban privilege, as in the latter year two aldermen of *Hoeke* are mentioned. The maritime laws of Hamburg, Lübeck and Bremen, all drawn up around 1300, mention *Hoeke* as the seat of the Hanseatic merchants in Flanders while in the town itself a hospital and a church were erected by German merchants and an *oosterlingenbuis*, a building where the Hansa resided, is mentioned in 1401 but we know very little about its importance or status²⁰.

Thus by 1275 a cluster of outports had appeared along the borders of the Zwin, undoubtedly originating from the increasing commercial activity along the channel and the consequent need to diversify the existing portuary infrastructure. Between Bruges and the port towns along the Zwin there was a relation of mutual dependency. On the one hand, the Zwin towns owed their existence and prosperity to the increasing attraction of Bruges on foreign merchants and the consequent shipping traffic along the Zwin channel. On the other hand, Bruges also depended on the Zwin towns for the transshipment of commodities destined for its market, as only smaller barges could navigate up to the city centre. Bruges was only a seaport by means of these port towns along the Zwin²¹.

19. Stein, W. "Über den ältesten privilegien der Deutschen Hanse in Flandern und die ältere Handelspolitik Lübecks", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 30, 1902: 67-92.

20. De Smet "Les origines des ports du Zwin": 137-139; Stein "Über den ältesten privilegien": 92-94; Koppmann, K. "Das haus der Oesterlings zu Hoek", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 5, 1875: 130.

21. Murray *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism*: 29-33.

Even though the Zwin towns enjoyed a degree of communal autonomy with governmental institutions and privileges of their own, Bruges invariably kept a close eye on its outports to prevent them from steering a too autonomous course. Throughout the Middle Ages the city would possess and maintain the port infrastructure in Damme, while the other towns only had tidal harbours without any appreciable infrastructure. Control was also exercised judicially and economically, as the legal decisions of the Zwin towns could be reformed by the aldermen of Bruges and the craft guilds of the smaller towns had to follow the rules of their counterparts in the capital city. Thus, already from the start Bruges' concerns with its maritime accessibility went hand in hand with a close supervision of its outports Damme, Mude, Monnikerede and Hoeke, but in the end both the metropolis and the Zwin towns enjoyed a reciprocal prosperity. However, from the end of the thirteenth century onwards far-reaching changes would start to affect the systemic and functional logic of this urban portuary network.

The scourging power of the storm surges during the first half of the twelfth century may have created a deep channel, but as soon as the storms subsided, sedimentation again gained the upper hand over erosion. Soon after its creation the Zwin was liable to the natural process of silting-up and the waterway was increasingly beset by accumulations of sand. Bit by bit alluvial lands along the borders of the Zwin were re-embanked, reducing it to an ever smaller stream and speeding up the sedimentation processes even more.²² As a consequence, by the end of the thirteenth century the ever larger seagoing ships increasingly had trouble navigating up to Damme, raising the need for a new transshipment port further downstream. Furthermore, where Philip of Alsace and the commune of Bruges had harmoniously worked together on the development of commercial infrastructure along the Zwin in the second half of the twelfth century, the relations between the city and the count were seriously flagged by the end of the thirteenth century. In 1278-1280 conflicts had arisen between members of the Bruges commercial elites on the one hand and foreign merchants on the other about unfair taxation and abuses concerning the city scales. Count Guy of Dampierre had to discipline the aldermen of Bruges to appease the foreign traders. However, the abuses persisted and the count allowed the German and

22. Verhulst A. *Landschap en landbouw*: 54-63; Wintein "Historische geografie": 47.

Castilian merchants to move their commercial activities to nearby *Aardenburg*, a town in the vicinity of Bruges where they would stay for the next two years²³.

By October 1280, a combination of tensions between the city and the count, social struggles between artisans and commercial elites and factional conflicts within the Bruges magistrate, resulted in an outright rebellion. Order was only restored in the city one year later and a severe repression followed²⁴. In the light of these circumstances, count Guy of Dampierre founded a new port town along the shores of the Zwin in the 1280s, through which he could control the maritime traffic to Bruges, as a warning to the city. At a time when the other Zwin towns had to cope with increasing sedimentation, this new port town, named *Lamminsuliet* but soon known as *Sluis* (literally meaning 'lock') was situated close to the sea and provided an easily accessible deep-water harbour and an extensive portuary infrastructure. Soon Sluis outgrew the other Zwin ports and became the prime transshipment port in the Zwin estuary. Even though in 1290 Sluis received a similar urban charter as the other ports and its aldermen likewise owed *hoofdvaart* to Bruges, the city tried to steer an autonomous course, supported by the Flemish counts, and thus posed a serious potential threat to Bruges' commercial interests²⁵.

When on 13 July 1323 John of Namur, son of Guy of Dampierre and lord of Sluis since his father's death in 1305, obtained the office of water bailiff and with it the right to police all traffic on the Zwin channel, Bruges fiercely reacted to this threat to its domination of the Zwin trade. Despite attempts at reconciliation by the young count Louis de Nevers, the conflict further escalated and on 31 July the Bruges militia marched on Sluis, sacked the city and burned it to the ground.

23. Wyffels, C. "Nieuwe gegevens betreffende een XIIIde eeuwse 'democratische' stedelijke opstand: de Brugse Moerlemaye' (1280-1281)", *Bulletin de la Commission Royale*, 132, 1966: 51-58; Poeck, D. W. "Kontorverlegung als Mittel Hansischer Diplomatie", Nils, J., Paravicini, W. and Wernicke, H. (Eds.) *Hansekaufleute in Brügge. Bd.4: Beiträge der Internationalen Tagung in Brügge April 1996*. Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 2000: 33-53.

24. Wyffels "Nieuwe gegevens": 58-96; Boogaert, T. A. "Reflections on the Moerlemaye: Revolt and Reform in Late Medieval Bruges", *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 79, 2001: 1133-1158.

25. Leloup and Vannieuwenhuyze "Damme en Sluis": 41-52; Backerra, J. A. *Ontstaan en ontwikkeling van Sluis tot de komst van de Bourgondiërs*. Ghent University, Ghent, 1959; Murray, *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism*: 33-36; Fossion, B. "Bruges et les petites villes du Zwin. A propos des "réseaux" urbains", *Le réseau urbain en Belgique dans un perspective historique (1350-1850). Un approche statistique et dynamique*. Crédit communal de Belgique, Brussels, 1992: 328, note 11.

As a result of his political weakness, count Louis, barely a year in power and not uncontested in his position, did not impose any sanctions on Bruges for this raid, probably superseded by the following events²⁶. In the autumn of 1323 and the spring of 1324 the count was in fact confronted with several insurrections against his officials on the countryside of coastal Flanders and in Bruges. In an attempt to pacify the revolt, Louis of Nevers pardoned Bruges on 9 April 1324 for its expedition against Sluis and granted the commercial metropolis several new privileges²⁷. Of paramount importance for the history of the Zwin portuary network is the staple privilege Bruges received on that day, formally establishing its economic dominance over the Zwin ports.

With this charter of 9 April 1324 Bruges obtained formal staple rights for all goods entering the county of Flanders through the Zwin, implying that all imported commodities should be brought to the Bruges market before being sold elsewhere. For Damme, Hoeke and Monnikerede specific exemptions were made to this obligation. In Damme horses and cattle, furs, butter, nuts and all kinds of heavy goods packed in tons such as herring, wine or ashes could be marketed while in Hoeke and Monnikerede, merchants were allowed to trade grain, salt, dried fish, and everything needed for rigging boats such as pitch, tar, anchors and wood. Fresh fish, grain and salt could also be traded on board of the ships. The three ports also obtained the right to measure the commodities in the Zwin harbour²⁸.

For Sluis on the contrary, the privilege contained nothing but excessive economic restrictions. No cloth was to be traded or manufactured there nor was the city allowed to have a money-changing office or scales with measures over sixty pounds. No new guilds could be established and the existing guilds of Sluis had to follow the regulations of and were subordinated to their Bruges

26. Sabbe, J. *Vlaanderen in opstand 1323-1328: Nicolaas Zannekin, Zeger Janszone en Willem de Deken*. Van de Wiel, Bruges, 1992: 18-20; Bovesse, J. "Notes sur l'Écluse et la maison comtale namuroise à la fin de XIIIe et au début du XIVe siècle", *Hommages au professeur Paul Bonenfant (1899-1965). Études d'histoire médiévale dédiées à sa mémoire par les élèves de son séminaire à l'université libre de Bruxelles*. Universa, Brussels, 1965: 242-245.

27. Sabbe *Vlaanderen in opstand*: 21-29.

28. Gilliodts-Van Severen, L. *Coutumes des pays et comté de Flandre. Quartier de Bruges. Coutumes des petites villes et seigneuries enclavées* IV. Gobbaerts, Brussels, 1892: 502-504.

counterparts. Furthermore it was forbidden to erect any fortifications in the city and no burgher of Sluis could become water bailiff²⁹. Remarkably, in the 1324 privilege no mention is made of Mude, which had gradually lost its portuary functions by successive embankments that alienated the settlement from the banks of the Zwin³⁰. Thus the staple privilege of 1324 made Bruges the legally enforced central place in the Zwin portuary network and provided a division of labour between the ports in this network. Bruges' judicial control over its outports was also strengthened, as in 1352 the city gained the count's ruling to the effect that no city doing *hoofdvaart* to Bruges could obtain privileges contrary to those of the appellate city. In effect this was an insistence that the laws and privileges of the Zwin ports be fully subservient to those of Bruges³¹.

A detailed survey of the organisation and functioning of the Zwin portuary network is possible for the fifteenth century, as surviving source material becomes more abundant³². Despite the far-going restrictions imposed by the Bruges staple privilege, Sluis nevertheless managed to become the most prosperous among the Zwin towns. More than sixty ships could simultaneously moor in its harbour and by the middle of the fifteenth century its population would reach nearly 10.000 inhabitants. The numerous conflicts and staple infringements which throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries opposed Sluis to Bruges illustrate how the outport kept trying to steer an autonomous course³³. After 1382 Sluis was provided with fortifications, brutally contradicting the stipulation of the Bruges staple privilege, and in 1385, after the Burgundian

29. Backerra *Ontstaan en ontwikkeling van Sluis*: 52-54.

30. Verhulst *Landschap en landbouw*: 60. By the middle of the fourteenth century the water bailiff would transfer the seat of his office from Mude to Sluis (Nowé *Les baillifs comtaux*: 409-413).

31. Murray *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism*: 34-35; Sosson, J.-P. "Les « petites villes » du Zwin (XIVe-XVe siècles): des « espaces urbains » inviables?", Conatmine, Ph., Dutour, Th. and Schnerb, B. (Eds.) *Commerce, finances et société (XIVe-XVe siècles). Recueil des travaux d'histoire offert à m. le professeur Henri Dubois*. Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, Paris, 1993: 173-174; Fossion "Bruges et les petites villes du Zwin": 328-329.

32. The city accounts of the Zwin towns are conserved from the end of the fourteenth century on, with the pitiful exemption of those of Sluis.

33. Fossion "Bruges et les petites villes du Zwin": 328-330; Murray, J. *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism*: 35-37; Lambert, B. "Offences in the Outport: Illicit Trade in Fifteenth-Century Sluis and Southampton", *Il commercio al minuto. Domanda e offerta tra economia formale e informale. Secc. XIII-XVIII*. Firenze University Press, Firenze, 2015: 167-184.

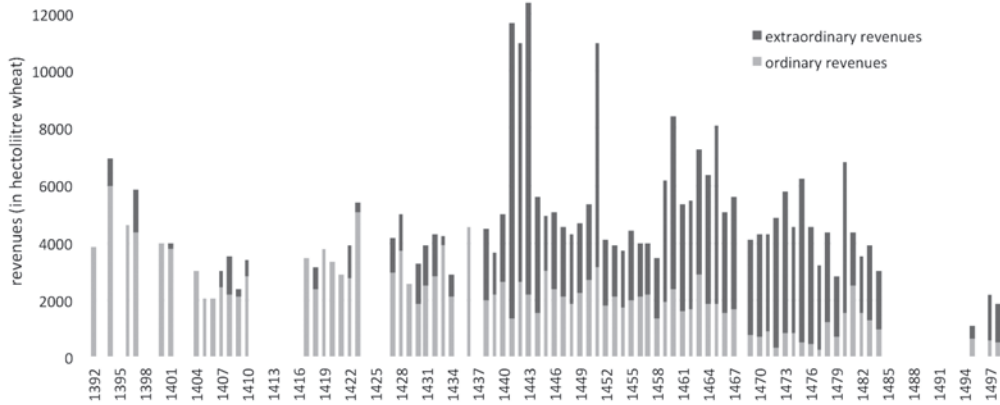


Figure 2: development of the yearly revenues of the Zwin town of Monnikerede based on the towns' accounts from 1392 till 1500 (source: Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, *Comptes en rouleaux*, nr. 2000 and *Chambre des comptes*, nrs. 36391-36467).

duke Philips the Bold had become count of Flanders, a comital castle as well was constructed at Sluis, militarily controlling the entrance of the Zwin channel³⁴. Damme too was protected by a city wall since the end of the thirteenth century and by the middle of the fifteenth century it counted some 2000 inhabitants. The two major Bruges outports now had a more or less diversified economic structure, counting several guilds and trades³⁵.

Monnikerede and Hoeke on the contrary never had more than a couple of hundreds of inhabitants. Throughout the later medieval period these towns remained tidal harbours without any considerable portuary infrastructure, nor did they have any fortifications. Monnikerede did not even have a church of its own and its burghers had to go to nearby Oostkerke to receive the sacraments. Economic life in these small towns was also markedly less diversified than in

34. Van Dale J. H., *Een blik op de vorming der stad Sluis en op den aanleg harer vestingwerken van 1382 tot 1587*. Altorffer, Middelburg, 1871.

35. Fossion "Bruges et les petites villes du Zwin": 330.

the larger Sluis or even in Damme, merely focussing on the local needs of the inhabitants and the few privileged functions they were assigned, primarily the trade in dried fish and the measurement of commodities on the Zwin channel. While Damme and Sluis both had a magistrate consisting of two burgomasters and twelve aldermen, Monnikerede and Hoeke only had two burgomasters and respectively six and five aldermen who frequently had to assist each other in their duties³⁶.

The financial situation of the smaller Bruges outports is indicative of their downfall during the fifteenth century. With limited and gradually decreasing financial resources of their own, primarily consumption taxes on grain, beer and wine, the small port towns increasingly had to rely on extraordinary revenues such as direct taxation of their burghers and loans to pay their expenses³⁷. Already by 1395 the comital officers overseeing the finances of Monnikerede had to proclaim measures to curtail the expenses and debts of the small town³⁸. Especially in the second half of the fifteenth century the city, confronted with the rising tax burden of the Burgundian state, had to rely on extraordinary revenues to meet its expenses (figure 2). A turning point in this evolution seems to have been the Bruges uprising of 1436-1438 during which the Bruges rebels, mainly from the craft guilds, were supported by the outports, with the obvious exception of Sluis which remained loyal to the count. In 1437 the Bruges militia once again laid siege to the city, although failed to destroy it as it had done in 1323. When the Bruges uprising was struck down the rebellious Zwin ports were deprived of their privileges and had to come up with large sums of money to regain them, causing a snowball effect of debts by the second half of the fifteenth century. The increasing taxation caused the burghers to leave the towns,

36. Fossion "Bruges et les petites villes du Zwin": 331-332.

37. Sosson, J.-P. "Consommation et finances communales. Deux exemples d'asphyxie financière et économique: Hoeke et Mude, petites villes de l'estuaire du Zwin (1394-1500)", *"Proeve 't al, 't is prysselyck" Verbruik in Europese steden (13^{de}-18^{de} eeuw). Liber Amicorum Raymond van Uytven*. UFSIA, Antwerp, 1998: 309-328; Sosson "Les « petites villes » du Zwin": 175-184; Fossion "Bruges et les petites villes": 332-338.

38. Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, *Chambre des comptes*, nr. 36391: f. 9r-v.

further undermining their financial basis³⁹. Sluis on the contrary was rewarded for its loyalty and managed to finally cast off Bruges judicial domination.

Between 1477 and 1492, when the county of Flanders rebelled against the government of Maximilian of Austria, the Zwin region again was the scene of battle and commerce along the channel was dealt a fatal blow, causing the further decay of the Zwin towns. This was also a turning point in the decay of Bruges itself. By the middle of the sixteenth century, as a result of political factors and its diminished accessibility from the sea, but ultimately caused by more structural reasons such as changing trade routes in Europe and the rise of the Atlantic economy, the position of Bruges as the main market of northern Europe would be taken up by Antwerp⁴⁰.

Indeed, not only the political disturbances and the limited economic and financial base of the small towns caused the decay of the Zwin portuary network. During the late middle ages the silting-up of the Zwin mercilessly progressed, increasingly hindering the naval traffic on the channel. From about 1400 a pilotage service was organised to lead larger vessels around the sandbanks and in 1456 a signalization system was installed. During the fifteenth century Bruges also deployed two dredge boats, one of which was aptly named the ‘mole’. In the latter fifteenth century Bruges even invested in major hydraulic works to scourge the Zwin but to no advance; by 1500 the sandbanks in the Zwin estuary had become so large that only small ships could enter and navigate the stream⁴¹. In 1486 only 73 ships called in at the port of Sluis while fifteen years

39. Dumolyn, J. *De Brugse opstand van 1436-1438*. UGA, Heule, 1997; Sosson “Consommation et finances communales”: 318.

40. Haemers, J. *For the Common Good? State Power and Urban Revolts in the Reign of Mary of Burgundy, 1477-1482*. Brepols, Turnhout, 2009; Haemers, J. *De strijd om het regentschap over Filips de Schone: opstand, facties en geweld in Brugge, Gent en Ieper (1482-1488)*. Academia Press, Ghent, 2014; for the decay of Bruges as a port and the shift to Antwerp see Van Uytven, R. “Stages of Economic Decline: Late Medieval Bruges”, Duvosquel, J. M. and Thoen, E. (Eds.) *Peasants and Townsmen in Medieval Europe: Studia in Honorem Adriaan Verbulst*. Snoeck-Ducaju, Ghent, 1995: 259-269; Bolton, J. L. and Guidi Bruscoli, F. “Why Did Antwerp Replace Bruges as the Commercial and Financial Centre of North-Western Europe? The Evidence of the Boromei Ledger for 1438”, *The Economic History Review*, 61, 2008: 360-379.

41. Degryse, R. “Brugge en de organisatie van het loodswezen van het Zwin op het einde van de 15^{de} eeuw”, *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge*, 112, 1975: 61-130; Ryckaert, M. and Vandewalle, A., “De strijd voor het behoud van het Zwin”, Vermeersch, V. (Ed.) *Brugge en de zee. Van Bryggia tot Zeebrugge*.

later this number had dropped to merely 36⁴². A final attempt to improve the accessibility of the metropolis was the digging of a new canal, the *Verse Vaart*, directly linking Bruges with Sluis. With this, the portuary role of Damme, Mude, Monnikerede and Hoeke had definitely finished. In 1566 Bruges even bought the city of Sluis from king Philips II to gain full control over its connection with the sea, but with the outbreak of the Eighty Years' War the Zwin estuary once again became a battle-scene. The frontline ran right through the Zwin and the region was devastated by strategic inundations. While Damme and Sluis kept some importance as fortified border cities, Monnikerede, Hoeke and Mude were practically deserted by the end of the sixteenth century⁴³. The once florescent portuary network along the Zwin had definitely ceased to exist.

Mercatorfonds, Antwerp, 1982: 53-61; Blockmans, W., *Metropolen aan de Noordzee. De geschiedenis van Nederland 1100-1560*. Bert Bakker, Amsterdam, 2012: 254.

42. Gottschalk, M. K. E. *Historische geografie van Westelijk Zeeuws-Vlaanderen II*. Van Gorcum, Assen, 1958: 121.

43. Ryckaert and Vandewalle "De strijd voor het behoud van het Zwin": 61-70.

Si quiere comprar este libro, puede hacerlo directamente a través de la Librería del Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, a través de su librero habitual, o cumplimentando el formulario de pedidos que encontrará en la página web del IER y que le facilitamos en el siguiente enlace:

[http://www.larioja.org/
npRioja/default/defaultpage.jsp?idtab=488335](http://www.larioja.org/npRioja/default/defaultpage.jsp?idtab=488335)

Esta obra tiene por objeto el análisis de las sociedades portuarias de la Europa Atlántica en la Edad Media, que constituyen un tipo de sociedades urbanas en las que el puerto creó unas comunidades bien definidas por las funciones portuarias y marítimas, aunque su peso dependió de las relaciones de la ciudad con el puerto y fueron muy raras las sociedades portuarias puras. Esta monografía se divide en dos partes: la comunidad marítima y la comunidad portuaria. La primera encuadra una categoría de profesionales, conformada por su relación directa y estrecha con el mar, como marinos, transportistas, mercaderes, piratas, maestros, pilotos, tripulaciones, propietarios de naves y pescadores. La segunda parte está dedicada al estudio de los profesionales, incluidos en ámbitos laborales, situados en los alrededores de las actividades marítimas y portuarias, como la construcción naval, la maniobra de los barcos en el mar, los toneleros y cesteros, los sogueros y cordeleros, los regateros y mulateros, los encargados de los servicios del puerto, y los escribanos y notarios que anotaban los fletes. La interacción de la evolución económica, social y cultural de las sociedades portuarias nos permite abordar este tipo de sociedades como una categoría específica de la historia social y relacionarla con la historia de las sociedades urbanas europeas. Este monografía se ha realizado en el marco del proyecto de investigación Las sociedades urbanas de las ciudades y villas portuarias de la Europa Atlántica en la Baja Edad Media (HAR2012-31801)

Gobierno de La Rioja
www.larioja.org



Ayuntamiento
de Nájera

