

## The Trade Relations between the Sanjak of Scutari (Shkodra) and the Republic of Venice in the First Half of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> Century



### Economic History

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### Abstract

The article lays stress on trade relations between the Sanjak of Scutari (Shkodra) and the Republic of Venice in the first half of the XVIIIth Century (1700-1757). The Venetian Trade Authority of 'Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia' established the Lazaretto of Castelnovo (Herzeg Novi) of Montenegro in 1701 to quarantine the wares from the port of San Sergius of Scutari (Shën Shirqi i Shkodrës) and other ports of Albania. They instituted also the Venetian customs duty of the 'Cottimo of Durazzo, Boiana of Scutari (Buna e Shkodrës) and the other ports of Albania', and opened the Venetian vice-consulate of Scutari in 1706. During the first twenty years of XVIIIth Century the trade relations between Durazzo (Durrës) and Venice were at its peak. So did also the wool trade of Scutari (Shkodra) that rendered Albania the leading partner of wool trade with Venice, providing with the Albanian wool the textile industry of Venice and the Northern Italy. Scutari had eight hundred merchants, who brought from the Albanian and the Balkan marketplaces and fairs the main products such as wool, leather, wax, tobacco, oil etc. They had set up almost a hundred and thirty companies in Venice. In 1736, Scutari was known in Venice as the most important city of Albania with a bazar and one thousand shops. In 1745, its foreign trade spread also in Trieste, Ancona and Apulia on account also of the Dolcignote (Ulqin) vessels. Besides, the Scutarine trade reached high values during the period 1744-6 and 1746-51 and reduced substantially towards 1755-6, because of the half fare of the customs duty of the cottimo at the lazaretto of Castelnovo and Split and the lack of wares in the Balkan hinterland.

Scutarine trade with the Venetian Republic arises at the turn of the XVIIIth Century, when the Venetian Trade Authorities prepared the ground to trade with the Albanian main ports by opening the lazaretto of Castelnovo (Herzeg Novi, 1701)<sup>43</sup>.

How important was this area for the trade relations, brings proof also the setting up of the Venetian customs duty of 'Cottimo of Durazzo (Durrësi), Boiana di Scutari (Buna e Shkodrës) and the other ports of Albania' that was managed by a Venetian accounting officer<sup>44</sup>.

Anyway, the opening of the Venetian vice-consulate of Scutari in 1706 that was dependent on the Venetian consulate of Durazzo, was another step to promote trade between the two coasts and face the French concurrence<sup>45</sup>. Scutari had a good prelude to take on the role of Durazzo in XVIIth Century in order to draw the trade of the main Albanian and Balkan marketplaces by means of the inner-Balkan trading routes.

Zef Jubani the offspring of a Scutarine family of merchants, basing his assertions on the consular and customs documents made an attempt to evaluate the Scutarine trade with Venice to a 100 million Venetian lire<sup>46</sup>.

In a note of 23 October 1715, the value of the wares charged on a Genovese ship, rented out only by the merchants of Scutari in Durazzo, amounted to 10.939 ducats<sup>47</sup>. In this way, if we take into account the number of the ships that departed from the ports of St. Sergius and Bacchus (Shën Shirqi) and Durazzo (Durrës) with wares that belonged to the Scutarine merchants, we can establish approximately the trade revenue.

<sup>43</sup> Archivio della Stato di Venezia (State Archives of Venice), Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 1° serie, busta 167, n. 88; Nelli-Elena Vanzan Marchini, *Rotte Mediterranee e baluardi di Sanità: Venezia e i lazaretti*, Milano, Skira, 2004, p. 236.

<sup>44</sup> Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 48, n. 442, decree of 4 October 1704.

<sup>45</sup> Stavri Naçi, *Shqipëria e Veriut në shekullin e XVIII. Letrat e zv/Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1706- 1756)*, Tiranë, 1967; Asv, Csm, 1° S., b. 744.

<sup>46</sup> Zef Jubani (Giuseppe Tubany), *Progetto di navigazione a vapore italiana, tra le prozze dei litorali d'Italia ed Albania, avendo per punto d'appoggio le piazze di Venezia: il commercio di Venezia coll'Albania*, Venezia, Rizzi, 1878.

<sup>47</sup> Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 266, 15 September 1715.

Scutari was chosen by Venice as a seat of vice-consulate that had to be under the Venetian consulate of Durazzo, because at the beginning of the XVIIIth Century, its trade increased. Moreover, as for the wool trade during the first five years, Scutari exported even more than Durazzo to Venice<sup>48</sup>. That was an advantage as far as it concerns the port of St Sergius (Shën Shirqi) of Scutari (Shkodra) on the River Boiana (Buna) that differently from the port of Durazzo, didn't permit the big ships to enter port.

However, the lack of an organised trade towards Venice induced the Scutarine merchants to send wares abroad by means of the French consulate of Durazzo. But, in 18 April 1704, Venezia was able to ensure a continuous trade between them and the Scutarine merchants, because they signed up a petition where they promised to send wares in Venice<sup>49</sup>.

The short distance between the port of Scutari and the Venetian province of the Bay of Kotor and Dalmatia contributed for the transport of a flow of wares to Venice<sup>50</sup>.

On the other hand, Venice had to face the developed navigation of the port of Dolcigno (Ulqin), which being nearby Scutari could combine it with the Scutarine trade, helping in this way the widening of trade throughout the ports of the Adriatic Sea<sup>51</sup>.

In the same way, even the close trade relations between Scutari and Ragusa, another merchant republic nearby Scutari, could contribute to the change of direction of the flow of wares, diverting them from their way towards Venice<sup>52</sup>.

In fact, the Venetian Consulate of Durazzo that collected the custom revenues from the trade in the Albanian ports, by means of their consular agents, was not able to control the port of Scutari. For this reason, the consul had to procure a decree from the legal authorities in accordance with custom officers in order to prevent the unfair trade<sup>53</sup>.

Meanwhile, the Scutarine merchants were aware that the number of the ships in the port of San Sergius of Scutari was really small. Thus, on 1 June 1701, they asked to the Venetian trade authorities more ships to have a direct trade with Venice and facilitate trade exchange network<sup>54</sup>. Before they had to carry the wares on the way of the caravans towards Hezeg Novi and Split avoiding Ragusa<sup>55</sup>. A small number of the Scutarine merchants moved to the port of Durazzo, where there were a lot of Venetian ships and trade was well-organised<sup>56</sup>. Moreover, the Scutarine merchants of Durazzo could propose the candidate for the post of the Venetian consul of Durazzo<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>48</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 28, 24 September 1704; Cristian Luca, "L'importazioni delle merci levantine nella Venezia del Seicento e del primo Settecento: la cera e i pellami provenienti dai Principati Romeni", C. Luca, G. Masi, A. Piccardi, *L'Italia e l'Europa Centro-Orientale attraverso i secoli. Miscellanea di studi di storia politico-diplomatica, economica e dei rapporti culturali*, Venezia, Brăila, Museo di Brăila, 2004, pp. 331-344, 348.

<sup>49</sup>Asv, CSM, 2°S., b. 28, 4° Part, 18 April 1704.

<sup>50</sup>Antun Sbutega, "Il Montenegro tra Adriatico e Balcani", in Stefano Trinchese, Francesco Caccamo, *Rotte adriatiche. Tra Italia, Balcani e Mediterraneo*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2011, pp. 42-50, 45.

<sup>51</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 18, 11 May 1722.

<sup>52</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 18, 23 January 1709.

<sup>53</sup>Zija Shkodra, *Dokumente mbi Shqipërinë në shekullin XVIII: letrat e konsujve venedikas të Durrësit (1696-1707)*, Tiranë, Akademia e Shkencave, 1975, dok. 45, 6 September 1702, p. 98.

<sup>54</sup>Asv, CSM, 2°S., b. 28, 1 June 1701.

<sup>55</sup>Asv, CSM, 1° S., b.744, 20 November 1706.

<sup>56</sup>Z. Shkodra, *Dokumente...Lëtrat e konsujve venedikas të Durrësit...*, doc. 9, 3 November 1700, pp. 37, 41.

<sup>57</sup>Asv, CSM, 2°S., b. 28, 2. S, 21 August 1702.

In 1704, the merchants of Scutari asked again for four additional ships<sup>58</sup>. That was a sign that trade was growing. In the same year, the Venetian consul of Durazzo sent two assistants to collect the customs revenues from Scutari and in 1705, the former consul of Durazzo Giorgio Emmanuele Cumano was entrusted the task<sup>59</sup>. The role of the consul Pietro Orsini Rosa was decisive for the Venetian Trade Authority of 'Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia' to set up the viceconsulate of Scutari in 1706.

The trade of the French Consul of Durazzo by means of the port of St Sergius of Scutari, was influenced not only by the inclusion of the Scutarine merchants, but also in the displacement to Scutari of the goods belonging to the merchants of Voskopoja, Ioannina and Siatista<sup>60</sup>.

In 1706, when the Venetian vice-consulate of Scutari was opened, trade was growing, as on 12 October 1706, the vice-consul Pjetër Engjëlli wrote to the Venetian authority of "Cinque Savi" that if the lazaretto of Castelnovo (Herzeg Novi) will not welcome 2000 bales of wares, this will oblige the merchants to send the rest of their wares to Ragusa<sup>61</sup>. He held this post till 1709, when he fled to Castelnovo as he was announced that the Veneto-Turkish War was going to burst<sup>62</sup>.

In the same year the competition of the ships of Dolcigno was going to close the Venetian consulate of Durazzo, putting at risk trade between Venice and the Albanian ports.

In 1706-7, the land traffic from Scutari was interwoven with the traffic by sea of the lazaretto of Castelnovo and Split (that were set up first for the way of the caravans). In the first years of the XVIIIth Century, the lazaretto of Castelnovo, Split and Ragusa were at the disposal of the merchant ships from the ports of Durazzo and Scutari<sup>63</sup>. After the expurgation of the wares during the quarantine period, they were transported to Venice.

There were also some troubles with the land trade of Scutari, because the merchants didn't pay the customs revenue of Cottimo of 2%, which gave way to the dispute between the Scutarine merchants and the other merchants of the port of Durazzo who already paid it<sup>64</sup>.

The Venetian trade authorities intended to provide a stimulus contemporary even for the Venetian products that were exported to Albania. One of the measures they took in the beginning of XVIII Century, was to permit to the Scutarine merchants to accompany the wares to Venice<sup>65</sup>. That because on their way back, they could invest the revenues through the trade in Venetian manufactured goods, especially Venetian wool cloth of various qualities, taking on the role of the distributor of the manufactured goods destined mainly for the Albanian and the Balkan market. The importance of the Albanian trade in cereals and in particular of the Scutarine trade was great for Venice because Albania provided with cereals Dalmatia and Venice itself. Till 1709 the trade in cereals was carried by the Dalmatian (mainly from Perast) and Dolcignote vessels<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>58</sup>Asv, CSM, 2°S., b. 28, Part 4°, 18 April 1704.

<sup>59</sup>Stavri Naçi, "Rreth tregtisë së sanxhakut të Shkodrës me Republikën e Venedikut gjatë shek. XVIII", in *Buletini i Universitetit të Tiranës. Shkenca Shoqërore*, 1963, n.1, pp. 3-64, 15.

<sup>60</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 28, 11 September 1705.

<sup>61</sup>Z. Shkodra, *Dokumente... Letra të konsumje venedikas të Durrësit...*, doc. 130, 12 October 1706, pp. 235 – 6.

<sup>62</sup>Rosana D'Alborton Vitali, "La scala di Durazzo negli anni del console Rosa (1705-1733)", *Studi veneziani*, 34, 1997, pp. 225-245, 238; S. Naçi, "Rreth tregtisë së sanxhakut të Shkodrës...", p. 4.

<sup>63</sup>Nelli-Elena Vanzan Marchini, *Le leggi di Sanità della Repubblica di Venezia*, Venezia, N. Pozza editore, 1995, vol. 1, p. 406.

<sup>64</sup>Z. Shkodra, *Dokumente... Letra të konsumje venedikas të Durrësit...*, doc. 130, 12 tetor 1706, pp. 235 – 6.

<sup>65</sup>Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 167, 23 September 1728.

<sup>66</sup>Asv, CSM, 2°S., b. 18, 23 January 1709.

But because of the emerging rivalry between the two communities, Venice procured a decree from the Sublime Porte that prohibited the transport of the cereals on Dolcignote vessels. During the grain shortage the Ottoman Porte prevented also the Venetian merchants from trading in cereals.

In the three-year time of the XVIII Century (1701-1703) were traded from Scutari to Venice almost 4.788 bales of wares<sup>67</sup>. In the last year their number virtually doubled. In this period, only the wool trade between Scutari and Venice increased, whereas the leather trade of cordovane, montonine and wax almost halved decreasing progressively. In the biennium 1705-6, the wool trade doubled again, while the leather trade almost halved, though preserving higher values than the last year of the previous three-year period<sup>68</sup>. In the end, in the biennium 1707-8, though the wool trade decreased, it increased if compared with the previous biennium, while the leather trade decreased six times, whereas the wax trade remained at low levels and for two years there are no data. In the whole, the wool and leather trade dwindled a lot, as the wool trade went up and the leather trade went down.

Shkodra was a city of approximately 800 merchants<sup>69</sup>. During the seasons when the products of the foreign trade were gathered in the Balkan marketplaces and fairs, the Scutarine merchants spread everywhere in Albania and the Balkans to acquire the main wares and send them to Venice.

There were established close relations even between the commission merchants and agents who lived in Venice and commissioned the goods to the forwarders (suppliers) or the merchants who lived in Albania and obtained goods in the Balkan marketplaces<sup>70</sup>. The collaboration between the Venetian, Albanian and other foreign merchant companies was apparent. In other cases there were the sales representatives who took care of the transport of goods to Venice, solving every problem that might arise. This was carried out by means of the close relations with the viceconsul of Scutari, the prior of the lazaretto of Castelnovo, who after the expurgation of the goods, sent them to the commission merchants according to the rate table for the shipping<sup>71</sup>. They also helped to provide with the needed papers the rented ships.

During the twenty years of the XVIIth Century that encompassed the Peace Settlement of Passarowitz (1718) after the end of the Second Morean War (1714-18), Durazzo had still the primacy in Venetian trade, though Scutari soon distinguished for the wool trade<sup>72</sup>.

We don't have any statistics about the trade of Scutari during the period of the Morean War (1714-1718) and a decade following the Peace Treaty of Passarowitz (Požarevac) of 21 July 1718. Anyway, it influenced negatively the trade of Durazzo with Venice as most of the merchants moved to Vienna, Budapest or Leipzig, whereas the trade of Scutari increased and surpassed that of Durazzo<sup>73</sup>. Even during the war, the Scutarine merchants and the vice-consul Anton Doda, went on trading with Venice by means of a Genovese vessel<sup>74</sup>.

In that period, customs revenues reduced drastically to encourage foreign trade. Moreover, they could be collected also at the Customs House of Venice.

<sup>67</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 28, 24 September 1704; C. Luca, "L'importazioni delle merci levantine...", p. 348.

<sup>68</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 48, note from a register of 1714.

<sup>69</sup>P. Bartl, "L'Albania nei rapporti economici fra la penisola balcanica e l'Italia", *Le relazioni economiche e commerciali: atti del Congresso di Lanciano-Atri-Chieti/L'Aquila, 13-17 aprile 1780*, in *Rivista di Storia del Mezzogiorno*, 1980-1981, n. 15-16, ed. Centro di Studi sulla storia e la civiltà adriatica, 1983, pp. 187-198, 129.

<sup>70</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 18, 30 March 1707.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>72</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 18, 23 September 1728.

<sup>73</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 18, 23 September 1728.

<sup>74</sup>Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 266, 1 August 1715.

During the First Morean War (1685-1699) and the Second Morean War (1714-1718), Venice attempted to take possession of the Albanian cities of Scutari, Durazzo, Valona, Dolcigno and Antivari, but didn't succeed in doing it<sup>75</sup>.

The Peace Treaty of Passarowitz (Požarevac, 21 July 1718) supported the Austrian trade and brought to front the port of Trieste that reopened as a free port and reduced customs revenues to draw a great deal of goods<sup>76</sup>. On 27 May 1719, "The Imperial Levant Company" set up to enlarge trade with the Ottoman Empire<sup>77</sup>.

The Venetian trade was losing its role in the international trade, becoming more regional after that date<sup>78</sup>.

In 1728, Ragusa traded with Scutari by paying beforehand the wares<sup>79</sup>. But, Venice made an agreement with Ragusa to prevent this way of trading:

- a) By permitting to Ragusa to exchange the raw materials with the Venetian salt
- b) Holding the Ragusan port open for the Albanian wares.

The Venetian trade experienced the difficulties in 1730, because she had to turn the ports of Castelnovo and Split in free trade ports<sup>80</sup> as a response to face the enlargement of the lazaretto of Ancona and its conversion in a free port in 14 February 1731 and the growing competition of the free port of Trieste and the other ports that remained as such till 1731<sup>81</sup>. In reality, The Venetian tariff-reform of 1736 intended also to face the phenomenon of the free ports<sup>82</sup>..

After 1718, because of the merchants' displacement from Durazzo to Vienna and Budapest, the port of Durazzo fell in decay, highlighting Scutarine trade.

In 1736 Scutari became famous in Venice as the most important city of Albania<sup>83</sup>. The vice-consul of Scutari Anton Doda described the city as a big one with a bazar with a thousand shops<sup>84</sup>. Besides, in 1736, Scutari was led also by the council of the community of Scutari, whose members were also merchants belonging to important families that had close trade relations with Venice<sup>85</sup>.

The community of Scutari devoted itself even to the issues with regard to the merchants. Anyway, the rivalry between the two interest groups of Tanners and Tailors, that were composed of various guilds of merchants and craftsmen<sup>86</sup>. The rivalry revealed harmful for the trade relations. On the other hand, the

<sup>75</sup>Paolo del Negro, "La Milizia", in Gino Benzoni e Gaetano Cozzi, *La Venezia barocca. Storia di Venezia*, Venezia, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani, 1994, vol.VII, pp. 503-531, 528-9.

<sup>76</sup>Eva Faber, "Trieste and the Austrian Littoral 1700-1850", in Luc François, Ann Katherine Isaacs, *The Sea in the European History*, Pisa, 2001, p. 59.

<sup>77</sup>Domenico Gatteschi, *Manuale del diritto pubblico e privato ottomano: contenente le principali capitazioni e trattati di commercio della Porta colle potenze cristiane o relativi regolamenti*, Alessandria d'Egitto, Tipografia della posta europea di V. Minassi & Co., 1865, p. 51.

<sup>78</sup>Pierre Cabanes, Bernard Doumerc, Olivier Chaline, Alain Ducellier, Michel Sivignon, *Historia e Adriatikut*, Tiranë, Shtëpia e Librit dhe e Komunikimit, 2005, [*Histoire de l'Adriatique*, Paris, Seuil, 2001], pp. 361-3.

<sup>79</sup>Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 18, 4 May 1728.

<sup>80</sup>Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 17, 31 July 1732.

<sup>81</sup>Samuele Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, Venezia, Filippi, 1075, vol. VIII, p. 69.

<sup>82</sup>Gino Benzoni, Antonio Ippolito Menniti, *Storia di Venezia: L'ultima fase della serenissima*, *Enciclopedia di Storia di Venezia* Roma, G. Treccani, 1998, vol. 8, p. 576.

<sup>83</sup>G. R. Albrizzi, *Lo stato presente di tutto i paesi del mondo*, Venezia, 1739, p. 194.

<sup>84</sup>S. Naçi, *Shqipëria..., Letra të zëv. Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1706-1756)...*, vol. 1, doc. 11, 19 ottobre 1736, p. 60.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibidem*, vol. 1, doc. 8, 8 aprile 1736, pp. 52-3.

<sup>86</sup>Zija Shkodra, "Roli dhe pozita e veçantë e esnafit të tabakëve gjatë sundimit turk", in *Buletini i Shkencave Shoqërore*, Tirana, 1962, n. 1, p. 41.

guilds played also the role of the protector of the castles and of the bazar as it happened in 1745 during a chaotic situation<sup>87</sup>.

The Austrian - Turkish War of 1737-9 that followed the Russian-Turkish War of 1735-9, impeded trade as the Austrian Army came down to Kosovo and the Northern Albania<sup>88</sup>.

During the XVIIIth Century, the Scutarine merchants were engaged in the inter-Balkan trade with St. Marc's Republic for the supply of the raw materials and the distribution of the Venetian and European cloth and manufacturing.

From 1745 on, the Scutarine trade became even more international, involving also the Dolcignotte navigation in the transport of goods towards the ports of Trieste, Ancona and Apulia<sup>89</sup>. However, the Venetians succeeded in changing the course of the Scutarine Adriatic trade, by means of the Venetian consulates operating in these ports.

In the XVIIIth Century, there were a series of tariff reforms in the years 1736 and 1751 to revive the Venetian trade, which bore fruit<sup>90</sup>.

There were some of the high-quality Albanian products that had priority and provided the Venetian and the European industry, especially the main wares such as: wool, leather, wax, tabacco, grain, oil, etc. For some of them like wool, Albania was the leading export trading partner country of Venice and the lifeblood of the Venetian and the Northern Italy textile industry<sup>91</sup>.

As a result, trade exchange grew between the Peace Settlement of Carlowitz (1699) and that of Passarowitz (1718), reaching high values during the years 1744-6 and 1746-51 and reducing substantially in 1755-6 because of the half fare of the customs duty of Cottimo at the lazaretto of Castelnovo and the shortage of wares in the Balkan hinterland.

But, in 1749, though trade between Scutari and Venice was at its peak, faced the competition of Vienna and Thessaloniki<sup>92</sup>.

Even the tariff- reform of 1751, boosted trade between Scutari and Venice, that was in some way impeded by the customs duty of Cottimo that halved to 1% in the ports of Castelnovo and Split, by changing the direction of the cargoes that used to depart before from the port of Besok of Scutari, that as a bigger port and closer to the River Boiana's mouth at the Adriatic, had substituted the port of San Sergius<sup>93</sup>.

Although the favorable credit system that was offered to the merchants of Scutari by the Venetian Authorities, in order to promote trade, the most part of the products were at the hands of the French and the

<sup>87</sup> Stavri Naçi, *Shqipëria e Veriut në shekullin e XVIII. Letra të zëv. Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1757-1802)*, Tiranë, 1975, vol. 2, 25 September 1745; Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 744, 25 September 1745; Stavri Naçi, *Pashallëku i Shkodrës nën sundimin e Bushatllive në gjysmën e dytë të shekullit XVIII (1757 - 1796)*, vol. 1, Tiranë, 1964, vol. 1 p. 51.

<sup>88</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo. A short history*. London, 1998, (Italian translation), pp. 203-6.

<sup>89</sup> S. Naçi, *Shqipëria... Letra të zëv. Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1706-1756)...*, vol. 1, doc. 51, 23 August 1746, pp. 158-9.

<sup>90</sup> Massimo Costantini, *Porto, navi e traffici a Venezia: 1700-2000*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2004, pp. 42, 79.

<sup>91</sup> Asv, CSM, 2° S., b. 82, 1721-6.

<sup>92</sup> Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 744, 2 ottobre 1748; S. Naçi, *Shqipëria... Letra të zëv. Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1706-1756)...*, vol.1, doc. 95, 8 May 1749, pp. 277-8.

<sup>93</sup> Asv, CSM, 1° S., b. 399, n. 27, 14 Febrary 1790, Most of the wares had to pay the customs duty of cottimo of 1% and only wax paid the full tariff of cottimo of 2%.

Ragusan merchants<sup>94</sup>. The unification of the various parts of the country, seemed the only solution (especially for St. Marc's Republic) to put under control the inner trading towns of Albania and especially the Northern and the Central Albania that became part of the Pashalik of Scutari (1757-1831). This area was a source of primary products for the Venetian industry.

In this period, the role of the vice-consul Antonio Duoda (Anton Doda) was appreciable in carrying out and establishing the Venetian trade policy for the trade route of Scutari by means of a dense network of relations and correspondence with the Venetian and Albanian authorities, in order to meet the needs related to the commercial scale. This happened in such a delicate moment to maintain the balance, and protect a rather flourishing trade, facing the challenge of political instability during the years 1746-51<sup>95</sup>. The vice consul of Scutari disagreed with the Venetian consul's attitude, who had granted him as the only revenue the fee anchor of the merchant ships, depriving him from the consular fee of half per cent on goods of the trade route of Scutari, as the Venetian consul of Durazzo used to levy on his behalf by means of his consular agent<sup>96</sup>.

After the Bushati family came to power, the Sanjak of Scutari turned into a pascialik, embodying Zadrima Plain, the Port of St. John of Medua (Shëngjin), Ipek (Peja) in Kossovo, the capital of the Sanjak of Ducagini (Dukagjin), the Sanjaks of Ocrida (Ohër) and Elbasan that included the port of Durazzo, and the cities of Kavaja and Tirana<sup>97</sup>.

How trade blossomed in the XVIIIth Century, brings proof the setting up of a hundred thirty trading companies of Scutarine merchants in Venice.

<sup>94</sup>S. Naçi, *Shqipëria... Letra të zëv. Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1706-1756)*..., vol. 1, doc. 145, 24 June 1755, p. 411.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibidem*, Introduction., vol. 1, p. 23; S. Naçi, *Pashallëku i Shkodrës...*(1757 - 1796), vol. 1, p. 50.

<sup>96</sup>S. Naçi, *Shqipëria... Letra të zëv. Konsujve venedikas të Shkodrës (1706-1756)*..., vol. 1, doc. 51, doc. 52, 28 August 1746, pp. 157 - 163.

<sup>97</sup>S. Naçi, "Le facteur albanais dans le commerce balkanique au XVIIIe siècle", in *Studia Albanica*, 7, n. 2, 1970, pp. 37 - 42, 41.