

Gennaro Varriale (ed.),

¿Si fuera cierto? Espías y agentes en la frontera (siglos XVI-XVIII),

Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2018, 243 pp.,

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In recent decades, the concept of the frontier has become an important theoretical framework through which one can readdress certain questions and issues relating to the historical past. For example, many scholars in Mediterranean Studies, particularly those starting from the Braudel viewpoint, no longer conceptualize boundaries by conflict, but instead as spaces characterized by social, cultural, religious and political exchanges.

Following on from this, researchers have highlighted not only the importance of the main actors that lived in the borderlands, but also the cultural interchange that those actors shaped during their travels between two or more civilizations. Trying to go beyond an Early Modern Mediterranean divided by faith, Emilio Sola (Universidad Alcalá de Henares-CEDCS) and Gennaro Varriale (Università Federico II di Napoli-CEDCS), both directors of the CEDCS (Centro Europeo para la Difusión de las Ciencias Sociales), presented in their *Detrás de las apariencias. Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)* a perception of a new Mediterranean world that was hidden under the old one and crushed under the rhetorical themes of crusade and jihad.¹ A key point for analysis was the study of the Spanish intelligence system throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, showing the extent to which the space between the Ottoman Empire and Spanish Monarchy was interlinked by several different go-betweens.

The positive results of the above-mentioned work have encouraged all the members of CEDCS to expand their focus beyond the Mediterranean frontier. *¿Si fuera cierto? Espías y agentes en la frontera (siglos XVI-XVIII)* seeks to open-up new space in which study two things: how the human component moulded news, and how this information was understood and recognised by public opinion.

But did public opinion exist in the Early Modern Mediterranean? This is the issue that Gennaro Varriale deals with in the introduction. He starts by reflecting on the several shades of information in the *ancien régime*, stating how the increase

¹ Gennaro Varriale, Emilio Sola (editor), *Detrás de las apariencias: información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)*, Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2015.

of political communication —oral and written— within Mediterranean societies was triggered by different historical developments such as the invention of the Printing Press, the spread of Renaissance thoughts or the occidental clash with the Ottomans. Although a frontier context such as the Mediterranean Sea produced a wide variety of news, Varriale emphasises how this flux of information was less influential in changing states' policies, and thus unable to shape a public opinion.

In this work then, we can grasp three conceptual frameworks. In the first, spies and agents provided a kind of information about the “others” —usually political enemies or little-known civilizations— in order to satisfy several administrative and military interests.

Miguel Ángel de Bunes Ibarra (Instituto de Historia-CSIC) presents us the case of Nuño Díaz, a spy at the service of Philip III in Istanbul. Díaz used and managed the advice from the frontier in order to steer the Mediterranean policy of Spain towards the Mediterranean. He managed the process of gathering information from the Ottoman territories, even if he converted the classical genre of *avisos de levante* into a biographical memoir in which he told of his experience as a slave in Istanbul. By studying the process of identity renovation to which these intermediaries were subjected in the Mediterranean area, Bunes Ibarra is able to demonstrate how it could be possible to remap the kind of information produced by those go-betweens.

In the same vein, but this time from an Ottoman view, Emrah Safa Gürkan (University of Istanbul 29 Mayıs) shows how Turks were able to conceal crucial information from the Venetian *bailo* during the Cyprus War's eve (1569-70). Rumours, silence, lies and diplomatic obstruction characterise the Istanbul experience of Marcantonio Barbaro between the end of 1569 and the beginning of 1570. Therefore, Gürkan reaffirms how the actors could manipulate the information and keep top-secret decisions from the bailo's prying eyes. Istanbul was represented as a great market of misinformation managed by the elite of the Sublime Porte in order to take advantage of its enemies in the maritime wars of the 16th century.

Séverine Valiente (Université Paul Valéry) concludes the section dedicated to the Mediterranean frontier focusing on the case studies of two islands: Chios and Lesbos. She analyses those cases as zones where information was moulded by several non-state actors. One of these was the Giustiniani family: merchants

able to maintain an intensive contact between Chios and Sicily, sending Philip II some news about the Ottoman defensive and offensive system. Nevertheless, Valiente stresses how the process of information-gathering for a political entity also represented a way to satisfy personal interests. Indeed, the Giustiniani managed the information from the Aegean islands in order to insert themselves into the Spanish commercial network.

The case of the Giustiniani family brings us to a second conceptual frame where managing determined information from the frontier corresponds to personal profits. Brendan Dooley (University College Cork) leads us towards a new geographical context: Northern Europe during the end of the 16th century. Dooley illustrates the relationship between Flanders and Florence through the case of Giovanni de Medici, a Florentine ambassador at the court of Alessandro Farnesio, governor of the Spanish Netherlands. By studying the practices of communication between Giovanni de Medici and Florence, the author tries to develop a cross-cultural analysis, rethinking the centre-periphery dichotomy, and examining the metamorphosis of late 16th century's European policy. Furthermore, Dooley highlights how the Florentine ambassador chose to send to Italy a multiplicity of news to shed light on his wide capabilities as a diplomatic agent. In fact, rather than a picture of the political events, the ambassador wrote a sort of cultural history of the Netherlands' court.

From West Europe to the Indian Ocean, Dejanirah Couto (École pratique des Hautes Etudes-Paris) analyses how the *pareceres* –documents about the political and economic communications between Lisbon and its Indian Empire– reveal the profit and the autonomy of the Portuguese elite in the levant. Managing and manipulating the information in the Indian trade-area, some Portuguese families became crucial powerful groups able to reach their economic and commercial goals within the Portuguese empire.

However, information during the Early Modern period was also a useful tool for shaping the knowledge of exotic lands and societies, rather than just a political instrument. Following this trajectory, Adriana Álvarez Sánchez (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) examines knowledge of the South American frontiers through the Amerindian languages as it was described by the friars that lived in those areas. Starting from the relationship between friars and their language-knowledge, Sánchez proposes to analyse the South American boundaries through the missionary's studies about local idioms. She identifies how language

shaped the socio-cultural aspects of a frontier, as well as the impossibility of going beyond cultural borders without the knowledge of the indigenous traditional customs, a problem that comes up even in Birgit Tremml-Werner's (University of Zurich) essay about information throughout the Japanese frontier. In her contribution, analysing the role of merchants and friars within the Spanish spy-system in the Far East, Tremml-Werner notes how the transfer of information on Japan in Europe influenced not only the foreign policy of the Spanish Monarchy in the Orient, but also remapped knowledge of the "other".

Hence, *¿Si fuera cierto? Espías y agentes en la frontera (siglos XVI-XVIII)* represents a profoundly analytical work in which Gennaro Varriale tries to assemble an expert team of historians able to reappraise the traditional frontier's studies, opening-up some suggestions, problems and original perspectives on new geo-political boundaries. Furthermore, the work also represents the openness of the CEDCS to young and promising researchers. Indeed, before the conclusion, Álvaro Casillas Pérez (Universidad de Alcalá de Henares) presents the first results of his PhD project in which he has been able to investigate the information shaped by the Habsburg spy system, using the potential of Digital Humanities (DH) methodologies. After a brief reassessment of the DH's evolution over the last few decades, Casillas Pérez shows the methodology through which he is studying the contents of documents produced by spies, organizing them with rigorous patterns, and finally publishing the historical outcomes as a form of public history.

Although the book presents different case studies coming from several contexts rather than just the Mediterranean space, Daniel Montalvo Mena (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) reviews the entire historiography of the intelligence system adopted by the Spanish Monarchy during the Habsburg-Ottoman Mediterranean conflict. Montalvo Mena reconfigures the Habsburg spying organization in the 16th and 17th centuries, focusing on three aspects. Firstly, he stresses the importance of the social origins held by the informal agents of the Catholic Crown. Then, he focuses on the relationships between that wide group of go-betweens (slaves, Jews, renegades, merchants, noblemen, soldiers and friars) and the societies in which they lived. Finally, Montalvo reconstructs the political and institutional contexts in which those spies worked.

To conclude the book, we find a brilliant paper written by Emilio Sola (Universidad de Alcalá de Henares) where he explains the centrality of the Christian renegades in comprehending the Early Modern Mediterranean. As Sola points

out, the stories of these actors reveal the high flexibility of that maritime frontier. Performing as double-agents with two or more identities between Christian and Muslim contexts, renegades were an important vehicle of information. In fact, through private networks shaped by these converts to Islam, news and rumours circulated rapidly among the cities of Istanbul, Venice, Rome, Paris and Madrid. Such informal communication channels, which offered some news about conflicts, alliances, and political purposes, represent an important framework to help us reassess our knowledge of the Mediterranean world in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Francesco Caprioli

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
Università degli Studi di Milano

Cem Behar,

**Kan Dolaşımı, Ameliyat ve Musîkî Makamları: Kantemiroğlu (1673-1723)
ve Edvârı'nın Sıra Dışı Müzikal Serüveni,**

İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2017, 337+vi s., ISBN 978-975-0840-28-9.

Literatürde Kantemiroğlu olarak bilinen ve hayatının 1688 ile 1710 yılları arasındaki yirmi iki yılını İstanbul'da geçirmiş olan Boğdan Prensi Demetrius Cantemir, kendisinden altmış üç yıl önce 1610 yılında dünyaya gelen Ali Ufkî Bey, Lehçe adıyla Wojciech Bobowski'den sonra yaptığı nota çalışmalarıyla 17. yüzyıl ve 18. yüzyıl başı Osmanlı musikisi için istisnai bir yer ve öneme sahip bir diğer isimdir. Farklı uzmanlık alanlarının yanı sıra Osmanlı/Türk musikisi alanında verdiği özgün ve titiz çalışmalarıyla da öne çıkan Cem Behar *Kan Dolaşımı, Ameliyat ve Musîkî Makamları: Kantemiroğlu (1673-1723) ve Edvârı'nın Sıra Dışı Müzikal Serüveni* isimli eserinde, *Kantemiroğlu Edvârı* olarak bilinen Kantemiroğlu'nun *Kitabu ilmi'l-mûsiki 'alâ vechi'l-hurûfât* isimli Osmanlı/Türk musikisi hakkında yazdığı eserini derinlemesine inceliyor.

Behar'ın kitap başlığının ilk kısmı olan "Kan Dolaşımı, Ameliyat ve Musîkî Makamları" okuyucuya ilk bakışta kitabın musiki makamları ve tıp ilmi ile ilgili