Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Master's Degree Programme

in

Comparative International Relations

(ex D.M. 270/2004)

Final Thesis

Global goods and international trade: two eras of globalization compared

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Academic Year
2020 / 2021

Ai miei genitori Marta e Massimo, che hanno sempre creduto in me

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ABSTRACT

Questa tesi di laurea magistrale dal titolo inglese «Global goods and international trade: two eras of globalization compared», tradotto in italiano come «Merci globali e commercio internazionale: due epoche di globalizzazione a confronto», intende analizzare l'impatto che determinate merci, considerate «globali» perché diffuse in tutto il mondo, hanno avuto e hanno tuttora sulla società. Le epoche prese in considerazione sono l'Età Moderna, che copre un arco temporale della durata di circa tre secoli, compreso tra la seconda metà del quindicesimo secolo e l'inizio del diciannovesimo secolo, e l'Età Contemporanea, che copre un arco temporale che ha avuto inizio nel diciannovesimo secolo ed è tutt'ora in corso. Le merci prese in considerazione sono cacao, caffè, tè, tabacco e cotone per quanto riguarda la Prima Età Moderna e cibo in senso più ampio, tecnologia con relativi canali e servizi di utilizzo e ricerca scientifica per quanto riguarda l'Età Contemporanea.

Il testo della tesi è suddiviso in tre capitoli. Il primo capitolo, intitolato in inglese «Geographical discoveries and international trade» e tradotto in italiano come «Scoperte geografiche e commercio internazionale», è dedicato alle scoperte geografiche che si sono susseguite dal quindicesimo secolo in poi e che hanno permesso la creazione di reti di commercio globale. Il capitolo inizia con un'introduzione storica che spiega le cause che hanno indotto navigatori europei ad esplorare terre sconosciute nella cosiddetta «Età delle scoperte». Queste cause possono essere divise in tre tipologie: cause culturali, cause economiche e cause tecniche. Le cause culturali si possono ritrovare nella cultura del Rinascimento che, con il suo desiderio di conoscenza, spinse gli esploratori europei ad estendere i confini del mondo allora conosciuto; gli importanti progressi compiuti dagli europei nella cartografia permisero la stesura di mappe accurate che consentirono il compimento dei viaggi oceanici. Le cause economiche furono provocate dal costo sempre più oneroso dell'intermediazione dei mercanti turchi e arabi, a cui gli europei si affidavano per l'importazione di sete, pietre preziose e spezie. Di conseguenza, gli europei sentirono il bisogno di trovare un nuovo modo per raggiungere le Indie senza dover dipendere da terzi per l'importazione dei prodotti. Le cause tecniche sono legate all'invenzione e al perfezionamento di una serie di tecnologie che permisero agli europei di controllare la navigazione e orientarsi in mare; tra queste si possono citare la caravella, il portolano, la bussola, il quadrante, l'astrolabio e le carte nautiche. Il capitolo continua poi con la descrizione delle prime spedizioni portoghesi e spagnole che portarono alla scoperta del Nuovo Mondo: il processo di esplorazione iniziò alla fine del quindicesimo secolo per poi protrarsi nei secoli successivi. I primi ad attraversare l'Oceano Atlantico furono i portoghesi, che gradualmente percorsero l'intera costa ovest del continente africano e arrivarono successivamente in Asia grazie al viaggio di Vasco Da Gama, compiuto alla fine del quindicesimo secolo. Il successo dell'espansione

spagnola si deve invece all'impresa di Cristoforo Colombo, il quale, nel 1492, sbarcò nel continente americano. Questo primo viaggio, seguito da altri, comportò il cosiddetto «Columbian exchange», ossia uno scambio di animali, piante, minerali, cultura e idee tra il nuovo e il vecchio continente. Questo processo ebbe conseguenze in tutto il mondo, che fu trasformato dallo scambio di piante ed animali provenienti da un continente diverso, che provocò un impatto biologico e la comparsa di nuove malattie fino a quel momento sconosciute. In aggiunta, le migrazioni umane verso il Nuovo Mondo generarono guerre per il possesso dei territori e favorirono l'insorgenza di nuove malattie. Visto il successo portoghese e spagnolo conseguente alle spedizioni di Vasco Da Gama e di Cristoforo Colombo, anche le altre potenze europee come Inghilterra e Francia cominciarono ad intraprendere imprese per la conquista future colonie oltre oceano. Nell'arco di tre secoli, gli europei finirono così per dominare il mondo intero. Uno degli aspetti più drammatici dell'epoca delle scoperte geografiche fu lo sfruttamento delle colonie e la presa in possesso dei territori sudamericani da parte dall'impero spagnolo attraverso l'azione dei cosiddetti «conquistadores», con conseguente sterminio delle popolazioni autoctone: i Maya, gli Aztechi e gli Inca. Il capitolo si concentra poi sulla riorganizzazione dei traffici globali e sulla nascita dell'economia mondiale. Grazie alla conquista europea del Nuovo Mondo, le rotte atlantiche divennero più importanti delle già conosciute rotte mediterranee, con conseguente riposizionamento del «centro del mondo» nell'Oceano Atlantico. In questo modo, il commercio passò da una dimensione di tipo mediterraneo a una dimensione di tipo globale e gli scambi economici coinvolsero tutti i continenti. Nonostante l'imporsi dei viaggi commerciali nell'Oceano Atlantico, Indiano e Pacifico, le città portuali del Mar Mediterraneo rimasero comunque punti strategici per l'importazione e l'esportazione dei prodotti. Il commercio marittimo fu comunque sempre affiancato dal commercio via terra, soprattutto dove non c'erano alternative possibili, come in Asia, attraverso le vie carovaniere che avevano come punto focale le città di Costantinopoli e di Aleppo, in Russia, e in Africa, con la città del Cairo come punto di riferimento. Il capitolo descrive anche i vari possedimenti delle potenze europee nel Nuovo Mondo, assieme alle merci che venivano importate nel vecchio continente. Viene sottolineato il ruolo essenziale che i porti franchi di Livorno, Marsiglia e Trieste hanno avuto nel commercio internazionale. Essi erano un'attrazione per i mercanti di tutto il mondo, grazie alla caratteristica di essere privi di tasse e di essere un luogo dove era possibile praticare la propria religione senza alcuna restrizione.

Il secondo capitolo, dal titolo inglese «Global goods of the Early Modern Age» e tradotto in italiano come «Merci globali della Prima Età Moderna», descrive come l'Età delle scoperte comportò una conseguente espansione del commercio internazionale. Gli europei cominciarono ad importare merci e alimenti usati comunemente dai nativi americani, che divennero presto di uso comune anche in Europa. Un ruolo fondamentale nell'importazione e nell'esportazione di questi prodotti venne compiuto dalle compagnie commerciali, tra le quali è opportuno nominare l'olandese VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie – Compagnia Olandese delle Indie Orientali), l'inglese BEIC (British East India Company – Compagnia Britannica delle Indie Orientali) e la francese CIO (Compagnie des Indes Orientales – Compagnia francese delle Indie Orientali). Tra le merci più importanti importate in Europa, si è scelto di prediligere cacao, caffè, tè, tabacco e cotone. Di tutti questi prodotti, nella tesi vengono descritte le aree di provenienza, il primo contatto avvenuto con gli europei e la conseguente importazione nel vecchio continente, e i successivi traffici commerciali e i punti strategici per l'esportazione e l'importazione delle merci in questione. Il capitolo prosegue poi con la descrizione di come queste sostanze diventarono di uso comune per la popolazione e per la società europea, spiegando che paesi le accolsero per primi e come si diffusero poi nel resto del continente. Le bevande coloniali contribuirono a ridefinire la vita quotidiana dei loro consumatori europei, le cui giornate vennero scandite in funzione del loro consumo e della possibilità di ritrovarsi in luoghi dedicati alla loro fruizione dove era anche possibile stare in compagnia e discutere di affari più o meno importanti. La pianta di tabacco, dopo aver ricevuto ospitalità nelle serre e nei giardini europei, cominciò ad essere utilizzata a scopo terapeutico e il suo uso creò successivamente dipendenza tra la popolazione. Attorno al cotone si formò una vera e propria industria, ed esso diventò il protagonista della rivoluzione industriale che caratterizzò l'Inghilterra del diciottesimo secolo, con tutte le conseguenze che essa ebbe sulla società europea.

Il contenuto del terzo e ultimo capitolo, dal titolo inglese «Global goods of the Contemporary Age» e tradotto in italiano come «Merci globali dell'Età Contemporanea», si concentra sulle merci che oggigiorno aiutano a far comprendere che il mondo è in costante connessione: il cibo, la tecnologia, le multinazionali e la ricerca scientifica. Dopo una breve indagine sul consumo attuale delle bevande coloniali, il terzo capitolo si dedica alla spiegazione di come il commercio globale del cibo e la convergenza delle varie tradizioni culinarie mondiali abbiano subito un rapido cambiamento grazie all'introduzione della catena del caldo e del freddo, che consente di preparare i cibi in luoghi e tempi diversi da quelli dove sono poi effettivamente consumati. La rivoluzione tecnologica e il trasporto costante e illimitato di informazioni hanno rivoluzionato il mondo, che è divenuto grazie a questi fattori perennemente interconnesso. Il commercio internazionale e la creazione di compagnie multinazionali sono senza dubbio protagonisti dell'attuale globalizzazione, la quale non conosce limiti di spazio. La diffusione delle malattie ha comportato un continuo rinnovamento della ricerca scientifica per cercare di contrastarle. Il terzo capitolo si conclude con la descrizione di come queste merci globali contemporanee influiscano sulla società odierna, creando nuove abitudini di consumo, nuovi modi di interagire e nuove forme di cooperazione.

INTRODUCTION

This master's degree thesis, entitled «Global goods and international trade: two eras of globalization compared», intends to analyze the impact that certain goods, considered «global» because spread throughout the world, have had and still have on society. The epochs took into consideration are the First Modern Age, which covers a period of about three centuries, between the second half of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the Contemporary Age, which is about a timeframe that began in the nineteenth century and is still ongoing. The goods taken into consideration are cocoa, coffee, tea, tobacco and cotton regarding the Early Modern Age and food in the wider sense, technology with its channels and services of use and scientific research regarding the Contemporary Age.

The text of the thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter, entitled «Geographical discoveries and international trade», is dedicated to the geographical discoveries that have followed one another since the fifteenth century and that have allowed the creation of global trade networks. The chapter begins with a historical introduction that explains the causes that led European navigators to explore unknown lands in the so-called «Age of Discovery». These causes can be divided into three types: cultural, economic, and technical. The cultural causes can be found in the Renaissance culture which, with its desire of knowledge, pushed European explorers to extend the boundaries of the then known world; the important progress made by Europeans in cartography allowed the drawing up of accurate maps that allowed the completion of ocean travel. The economic causes were provoked by the increasingly costly intermediation of Turkish and Arab merchants, to whom Europeans relied for the import of silks, precious stones, and spices. As a result, Europeans felt the need to find a new way to reach the Indies without having to rely on third parties to import the products. The technical causes are linked to the invention and improvement of a series of technologies that allowed Europeans to control navigation and orient themselves at sea; these include the caravel, the pilot book, the compass, the quadrant, the astrolabe, and the nautical charts. The chapter then continues with the description of the first Portuguese and Spanish expeditions that led to the discovery of the New World: the exploration process began at the end of the fifteenth century and then lasted through the following centuries. The first to cross the Atlantic Ocean were the Portuguese, who gradually traveled the entire west coast of the African continent and arrived later in Asia thanks to the journey of Vasco Da Gama, completed at the end of the fifteenth century. The success of the Spanish expansion is due to the enterprise of Cristoforo Colombo, who, in 1492, landed in the American continent. This first trip, followed by others, involved the so-called «Columbian exchange», that is, an exchange of animals, plants, minerals, culture, and ideas between the new and the Old Continent. This process had consequences throughout the world, which was transformed by the exchange of plants and animals from a different continent, that caused a biological impact and the appearance of new diseases until then unknown. In addition, human migration to the New World generated wars for the possession of territories and favored the onset of new diseases. Given the success of Portugal and Spain following the expeditions of Vasco Da Gama and Cristoforo Colombo, other European powers such as England and France also began to undertake ventures for the conquest of future overseas colonies. Within three centuries, Europeans came to dominate the world. One of the most dramatic aspects of the era of geographical discoveries was the exploitation of the colonies and the taking in possession of the South American territories by the Spanish Empire through the action of the so-called «conquistadores», resulting in the extermination of indigenous peoples: the Maya, the Aztecs, and the Incas. The chapter then focuses on the reorganization of global traffic and the birth of the world economy. Thanks to the European conquest of the New World, the Atlantic routes became more important than the already known Mediterranean routes, resulting in the repositioning of the «center of the world» in the Atlantic Ocean. In this way, trade shifted from a Mediterranean dimension to a global dimension, and economic exchanges started to involve all continents. Despite the imposition of commercial travel in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Ocean, the port cities of the Mediterranean Sea remained strategic points for the import and export of products. Maritime trade, however, was always flanked by land trade, especially where there were no possible alternatives, as in Asia, through the caravan routes that had as a focal point the cities of Constantinople and Aleppo, Russia, and Africa, with the city of Cairo as a landmark. The chapter also describes the various possessions of European powers in the New World, along with the goods that were imported into the Old Continent. The essential role of the free ports of Livorno, Marseilles and Trieste is emphasized as they, without taxes, were an attraction for merchants all over the world, who in the free port were also free to practice their religion and to bring their families with them.

The second chapter, entitled «Global goods of the Early Modern Age», describes how the Age of Discovery led to a consequent expansion of international trade. Europeans began to import goods and food commonly used by Native Americans, which soon became commonplace in Europe. A fundamental role in the import and export of these products was played by the commercial companies, among which it is appropriate to name the Dutch VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie – Dutch East India Company), the English BEIC (British East India Company) and the French CIO (Compagnie des Indes Orientales – French East India Company). Among the most important goods imported in Europe, in this thesis it has been chosen to prefer cocoa, coffee, tea, tobacco and cotton. Of all these products, the thesis describes the areas of origin, the first contact with Europeans and the consequent import into the Old Continent, and subsequent trade and strategic points for the export and import of the goods in question. The chapter then continues with the description of how these substances became common use for the population and for European society, explaining which countries welcomed them first and how they then spread to the rest of the continent. Colonial drinks helped redefine the daily lives of their European consumers, whose days were marked according to their consumption and the possibility of meeting in places dedicated to their use where it was also possible to stay in the company and discuss more or less important business. The tobacco plant, after receiving hospitality in European greenhouses and gardens, began to be used for therapeutic purposes and its use subsequently created dependence among the population. Around cotton a real industry was formed, and it became the protagonist of the industrial revolution that characterized England in the eighteenth century, with all the consequences that it had on European society.

The content of the third and final chapter, entitled «Global goods of the Contemporary Age», focuses on the goods that nowadays help us to understand that the world is constantly connected: food, technology, multinationals, and scientific research. After a brief survey of the current consumption of colonial beverages, the third chapter is devoted to explaining how the global food trade and the convergence of the various world culinary traditions have undergone a rapid change thanks to the introduction of the chain of heat and cold, which allows to prepare food in places and times other than those where they are actually consumed. The technological revolution and the constant and unlimited transport of information have revolutionized the world, which has become thanks to these factors perpetually interconnected. International trade and the creation of multinational companies are undoubtedly protagonists of the current globalization, which knows no limits of space. The spread of diseases has led to a continuous renewal of scientific research to try to combat them. The third chapter concludes with a description of how these contemporary global commodities affect today's society, creating new consumer habits, new ways of interacting and new forms of cooperation.

This investigation tries to answer the following questions: when did the process of globalization actually begin? Is the process of globalization an historical phenomenon? What role have global goods played in defining the newly globalized world? Can it be said that the circulation of global goods has united society in both historical periods? What benefits do global goods bring with them? What negative effects do they have? What do global goods of the Early Modern Age and global goods of the Contemporary Age have in common? What are instead the differences between them?

An introduction to the concept of globalization should be made. The term «globalization» designates the process of the world becoming global. The word globalization became common in the roaring nineties because it grasped the increasingly interdependent nature of our planet's social life.[1] The word has been in use to indicate a very wide range of phenomena connected with the growth of economic, social, and cultural integration between the different areas of the world. Globalization is a seemingly unstoppable force that influences everyday life as well as macropolitical, economic and sociocultural processes worldwide.[2] Globalization affects the economic, political, cultural, and ecological spheres of the world.

The economic dimension of globalization creates links between national and regional economies through international trade and financial markets. The economic dimension of globalization refers to processes of increased international trade, the lifting of restrictions on commodity and capital movements with free trade agreements and the rise of transnational corporations whose impact supersedes that of most national markets.[3] By the middle of the twentieth century, a period of European domination has come to an end and the world has entered the era of global civilization. The development took place in the economic field, with the formation of the European Economic Community, the current EU - European Union, the rise of Japan as an industrial power and a growing comparison between rich and poor nations.[4] Corporations, especially global active ones, can play a key role in shaping not only the economy but society as whole, because they have it in their power to withdraw the material resources (capital, taxes, jobs) from society.[5]

The political dimension of globalization increases and expands political interrelationships around the world. The current word «globalization» points not to an end in politics but to its escape from the categories of the national state, as it denotes the processes through which sovereign national states are crisscrossed and undermined by transnational actors with varying prospects of power, orientations, identities and networks.[6] There is a broad consensus that a wide variety of social changes – increasingly porous borders, the growing power of super territorial entities like the EU, UN (United Nations), and World Bank and even sub territorial entities (direct relations between regions in

[1] Steger Manfred B., *La globalizzazione*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino (2016), p. 11
[2] Chiu Chi Yue, Torelli Carlos J., Gries Peter, Cheng Shirley Y. Y., *Toward a social psychology of globalization*, in *Journal of social issues n. 67*, Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell (2011)
[3] Reese Gerhard, Rosenmann Amir, McGarty Craig, *Globalisation and global concern: developing a social psychology of human responses to global challenges*, in *European Journal of social psychology n. 45*, Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell (2016)
[4] Waters Malcolm, *Globalization*, London: Taylor & Francis (2000)
[5] Ulrich Beck, *What is globalization?*, Cambridge: Polity Press (2009), p. 2
[6] Ibidem, p. 1 - 11

different countries) are eroding the power of the nation-state.[7] Political globalization is strongly connected to its economic counterpart, as it ensures the operation of a transnational economy.[8]

The cultural dimension of globalization intensifies and enlarges cultural flows around the world. The globalization process creates transnational social links and spaces, revalues local cultures, and promotes third cultures.[9] More than ever, individuals are exposed to many different sociocultural influences by travelling to other countries as tourists, sojourners, immigrants or refugees, and by consuming products, information and media from around the globe.[10] Jonathan Friedman (2000: 25) argues:

> Historical courses and recourses have shown a continuous contact between cultures that not only has generated an exchange, but more often a phenomenon of acculturation: more civilizations «strong», supported by advanced economic and technological tools, have imposed themselves on the «weak», providing them with their own techniques and ideologies, permeating them and decreeing, in the most extreme cases, their disappearance.

Globalization brings with it widespread ecological effects throughout the world, such as climate change and transnational pollution. The current climate change is the first sign of the effects of a development model, which began with the industrial revolution a few centuries ago, and that today leads to global changes of the planet. The globalization of activities with the increase of greenhouse gas emissions predicts a further increase in the average temperature of the planet. In the future, global warming could have catastrophic effects such as rising sea levels, rising heat waves and periods of intense drought, floods, and the increase in the number and intensity of storms and hurricanes. These phenomena in the future could have an impact on population, with even greater effects on who will live in the most vulnerable and poor areas of the world, they will damage food production agriculture and they will threaten vital species, habitats, and ecosystems.

Globalization can be defined as the worldwide diffusion of practices, expansion of relations across continents, organization of social life on a global scale, and growth of a shared global consciousness.[11] The continents and the world, seen as a whole, were divided according to distances that were once

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[7] Ritzer George, *The globalization of nothing*, Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press (2007), p. 5

[8] Kasser Tim, Cohn Steve, Kanner Allen D., Ryan Richard M, *Some costs of American corporate capitalism: a psychological exploration of value and goal conflicts*, in *Psychological Inquiry*, London: Taylor & Francis (2007)

[9] Ulrich Beck, *What is globalization?*, p. 12

[10] Reese Gerhard, Rosenmann Amir, McGarty Craig, *Globalisation and global concern: developing a social psychology of human responses to global challenges*

[11] Ritzer George, *The globalization of nothing*, p. 4

extremely real, by virtue of the primitive nature of transport and the difficulty of travelling.[12] Geoffrey Barraclough (1978) defines the key feature of the world economy:

> The first was the development of transportation and communication networks that physically linked together different parts of the planet, especially by railways, shipping and the telegraph. The second was the rapid growth of trade with its accompanying pattern of dependency, especially between the relatively industrialized countries of Western Europe and the rest. The third was a huge flow of capital mainly in the form of direct investment by European firms in non-industrialized areas.

During the eighteenth century, the world assisted to an intensification of the commercial networks and global connections, as more and more data and information started to circulate. In recent decades the process of globalization has gained enormous momentum thanks to the use of the world wide web, which determines an unprecedented human interconnection. Globalization therefore includes today the myriad forms of connectivity and flows that link the local and national dimension to the global dimension, as well as the West to the East and the North to the South.[13]

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[12] Bauman Zygmunt, *Dentro la globalizzazione – Le conseguenze sulle persone*, Roma – Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli (2003), p. 15

[13] Steger Manfred B., *La globalizzazione*, p. 12

CHAPTER 1

GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERIES AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

> The two worlds, which God separated and made so different, were therefore gathered together, and from that day they began to become more alike.
>
> Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian exchange* (1972)

1.1 The causes of geographical discoveries

The historical period from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century is called the «age of geographical discoveries», during which Europeans sailed to unknown islands. The causes of geographical discoveries can be divided in three typologies: cultural, economic, and geographical causes.

Figure 1 *Cognoscenti in a room hung with pictures*, Flemish painting, about 1620, London: The National Gallery

First of all, it is important to describe the cultural causes of geographical discoveries. Between the fifteenth and the sixteenth century, Europeans undertook long and dangerous voyages by sea that led to the discovery of new worlds. The causes of these geographical discoveries should be sought primarily in the culture of the Renaissance. The Renaissance was a historical period between the end of the fourteenth century and the middle of the sixteenth century, which marked the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age. The cultural phenomenon of the Renaissance was characterized on one hand by the polemic against the institutions and the ideas that dominated Europe since ancient times, and on the other hand by the wealth of new insights and actions. The latter laid the foundations for the new face of Europe first and then of the whole world, which, starting from this period, became more and more involved in European history. Human being was again at the centre of the world and there was an increasing interest in natural and material things. For this reason, during the Renaissance, adventurous explorers hugely extended the boundaries of the known world, driven by the desire for new discoveries. The interest in new discoveries, typical of the Renaissance, can be seen in the Flemish painting above (Figure 1), which depicts maps, travel books, a globe, a compass, and an astrolabe.

A field that made progress during this time period was cartography. This period of exploration and empire building necessitated accurate maps; consequently, cartography attracted attention from scholars and ruling dynasties across the world.[14] The main exponent of the renewal in the field of cartography was the Florentine Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli. He was a famous astronomer, astrologist, mathematician, philosopher, and geographer at the Medici court of the fifteenth century who was committed in perfecting the astronomical and mathematical foundations of geography and cartography.[15] Until the fifteenth century, Europeans believed that the Earth had a flat surface, at the centre of which were the sacred sites of Jerusalem. Toscanelli was among those who supported the Earth's sphericity: in particular, he had the merit of being the first one to assume that the shortest way to reach the Indies, that is, the territory of East Asia, was not the terrestrial one of Marco Polo. According to Toscanelli, there was the possibility of reaching the Indies by sea sailing West, and he demonstrated it with his famous planisphere, which has unfortunately been lost as his other works. Finding a way to reach the Indies by sea was necessary because, from the second half of the fifteenth century, Ottomans had progressively closed the spice routes, and the fall of Constantinople in 1453 sent in ruin Venetian, Genoese, and Florentine spice merchants. Obviously, Toscanelli did not imagine the existence of the American continent, however his theories had a decisive influence on the discovery of America. In fact, his studies were the cultural and scientific basis of Cristoforo Colombo's voyage, with whom Toscanelli had important relations and to whom he provided the maps used by the great navigator for his expeditions. Therefore, if the «idea» and the realization of «buscar

[14] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2010), p. 213

[15] Ammannati Francesco, Calzolari Silvio, Cardini Franco, Castagna Carlo Alberto, Chiarelli Brunetto, Rombai Leonardo, *La carta perduta – Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli e la cartografia delle grandi scoperte*, Firenze: Fratelli Alinari (1992)

al levante por el poniente» must be attributed to Colombo, certainly great scientific and political support was given to him by the Florentine Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli.[16]

Secondly, it is important to talk about the economic causes of geographical discoveries. Throughout the Middle Ages, Europe purchased from the East silks, precious stones, and especially spices like pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, and clove. Trade with the East took place by land, and it was very risky because the goods had to cross the territories controlled by the Ottomans. Rather than face these risks personally, generally Europeans preferred to turn to Turk and Arab merchants. Turk and Arab merchants transported the highly sought-after spices from the East to the ports of the Mediterranean, like Alexandria and Tripoli. Here the European merchants, especially Venetians and Genoese, bought them and then sold them all over Europe. Due to the increased danger in military clashes because of economic interests, the need for merchants to be able to defend themselves led to an increase in expenses to protect fleets and trade routes.[17] The high prices charged by Venetian, Genoese, Turk and Arab merchants on the trade of products determined the need to find a new way to the Indies: an entirely maritime route allowing goods to be bought at the place of production, avoiding travel in the Eastern territories and the cost of transition in the trade organization with the Far East.

Finally, it is important to describe the technical causes of geographical discoveries. For centuries routes had been prevailingly coastal: the Medieval fear of the open sea could be overcome only in the Mediterranean, an enclosed sea on which it was impossible to get lost, a sea generally calm, without fogs and tides.[18] The invention and perfection of a series of technologies that became globally spread and used permitted Europeans to control the oceans and New World: among them we can find the print, that was instrumental for the development of commerce, and the powder, that was at the bases of the European superiority and military strategy. During the fifteenth century, Europeans made important advances in nautical techniques, which enabled the great ocean voyages and oceans ceased to be seen as barriers but became instead an important connection.

For centuries, the prevailing North winds and a steady counter clockwise sea-current had forced European ships to sail almost exclusively along the northern shores of the Mediterranean, as well as the strong current coming in had made it very difficult to get out from Gibraltar.[19] First of all, the old

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[16] Ibidem, p. 13

[17] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, Roma – Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli (2008)

[18] Astengo Corradino, *The state of European science and technology in the late Middle Ages*, in *GeoJournal n. 26*, Amsterdam: Kluwer Academic Publishers (1992), p. 439

[19] Pryor John H., *Geography, technology and war: studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean: 649 - 1571*, Cambridge: Cambridge university Press (1988)

boats were replaced by a new type of ship, the caravel, a very fast and handy sailing ship that with its big sails could take advantage of the wind. Also, since there were no oars, the caravel did not require a large crew and could therefore be loaded for even very long trips. According to the Italian explorer, sailor and slave trader Alvise Ca' Da Mosto, who discovered Cape Verde islands in 1456 together with Antoniotto Usodimare, Portuguese caravels were «i migliori navilij che vadano sopra il mare».[20]

In the same period the pilot book was introduced. It was a collection of written information for sailing, with directions on the distance and bearings between ports, capes, gulfs, river mouths, and with any necessary information of dangers, such as shoals and reefs, and was essentially based on sailors' experience.[21] This knowledge of earth, wind, and sea proved indispensable in charting navigable routes and returning home safely.[22]

To orient sailing vessels beyond sight of land, mariners required navigational equipment, such as the compass, astrolabe, sextant, back staff, and cross staff that Europeans adopted from Arab, Persian, and Chinese technology.[23] Significant progress was made in nautical instruments like the quadrant and the astrolabe, that allowed sailors to detect the position by observing the stars. These instruments were used to observe the height of the sun in its daily culmination as well.[24] Also the naval magnetic compass for the identification of the cardinal points started to be used.

Also, nautical charts became more precise. Nautical charts were built on the basis of sailors' experience and utilized in the daily practice of sailing.[25] Nautical charts retained unchanged their essential characteristics through the ages, however in the fifteenth century they underwent some modifications, a sign of the changed interests of the users. In fact, the attention was shifted from the Eastern Mediterranean to the West and particularly to the Atlantic.[26] Thanks to these tools, sailors could orient themselves safely, even when they were a long way off the coast. The developments in naval technology during late Middle Ages and the advances made in the same period by astronomy in Europe were the fundamental premises that made geographical explorations possible.[27]

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[20] Caddeo Rinaldo, *Le navigazioni atlantiche di Alvise da Cà da Mosto, Antoniotto Usodimare e Niccoloso da Recco*, Milano: Edizioni Alpes (1928)
[21] Astengo Corradino, *The state of European science and technology in the late Middle Ages*, p. 439
[22] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 21
[23] Ibidem, p. 21
[24] Germaine Rimington Taylor Eva, Richey Michael William, *The geometrical seaman: a book of early nautical instruments*, London: Hollis & Carter (1962)
[25] Crone Gerald Roe, *Maps and their makers: an introduction to the history of cartography*, London: Hutchinson & Co (1968)
[26] Astengo Corradino, *The state of European science and technology in the late Middle Ages*, p. 440
[27] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*

1.2 First Portuguese and Spanish expeditions: the discovery of the New World

Even if the movement of explorations started before, the era of great geographical discoveries began at the end of the fifteenth century, with navigators looking for a route to the Indies. The first Europeans to find a way to America were the Normans in the tenth century, but their colonies in the areas of the North Atlantic, including the north-eastern coasts of North America, perished soon without leaving traces of themselves. In the thirteenth century, the journey conducted by the Italian Marco Polo aroused great interest, and he spurred his contemporaries to seek a maritime route to the Far East. Spanish and Portuguese, because of their direct contact with the Atlantic Ocean, were best suitable to conduct these searches. The process of exploration accelerated at the end of the fifteenth century, when Cristoforo Colombo crossed the Atlantic in 1492 and Vasco da Gama arrived in India in 1498.[28]

1.2.1 The Portuguese explorers

The Portuguese were the first ones to sail the Atlantic Ocean. The conquest of the city of Ceuta in the northern coast of Africa on 21 August 1415, under the reign of the Portuguese king João I, is traditionally considered the date of beginning of European expansion.

The Infante Dom Henrique of Portugal, called «o Navegador», launched the initial Portuguese expeditions that took explorers to islands in the north Atlantic and down the coast of Africa.[29] Son of João I, he strengthened the navigation of his country by promoting all the geographical discoveries made by Portugal in the fifteenth century and he invested large sums to encourage the study of geography, cartography, and nautical subjects. He founded a large centre of nautical studies in the Portuguese city of Sagres. From there, in an effort to circumnavigate Africa, he organized systematic voyages of exploration: in 1434 the Portuguese ships reached Cape Bojador and then Cape Blanc in Northern Africa, Cape Verde islands and finally the Gambia in Western Africa. During the same century, Portuguese navigators conquered the archipelago of the Azores in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and explored the Gulf of Guinea in Western Africa.

The Portuguese expeditions were numerous throughout the century, and they gradually recognized the entire west coast of Africa. Finally, in 1487 the Portuguese navigator Bartolomeu Dias managed

[28] Ibidem, p. 14
[29] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 27

to round, that is passing, the continent. On the return, he baptized the extreme southern point of the African continent «Cape of Torments», which the King of Portugal wanted instead to be called «Cape of Good Hope». In the following years, Dias participated in Vasco da Gama and Pedro Álvares Cabral expeditions. His great enterprise paved the way to Asia for the Portuguese.

The concept followed by the Portuguese was to reach the Indies sailing to the East, rounding Africa. Before the end of the century, this enterprise was happily accomplished by the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama. After having participated in some expeditions along the western coasts of Africa in 1497 under the command of three ships, he crossed the east coast of Africa up to Melindi, and then crossed the Indian ocean landing in 1498 in Calicut, in the region of Malabar in India. He was the first European but not the first foreigner to arrive there, as merchants coming from the Ottoman empire, North Africa and the Middle East had already started their trade with Chinese and Indian merchants. Europeans were not the only ones venturing into strange lands, since Arab, Indian, Chinese, Persian, and Turkish peoples joined travellers like the Moroccan Ibn Battuta on the Silk Roads, on the Muslim Hajj and on ships in the Indian ocean. As a result, Indians and Africans in Calicut had already discovered European peoples before Vasco Da Gama arrived at the end of the fifteenth century.[30] Da Gama's journey was full of adventures, as he also had to face the hostility of the Arabs who held the monopoly of Indian trade. Finally, the brave navigator managed to return to Lisbon with Portuguese ships loaded with spices and precious stones, taking in this way away from Venice the hegemony of trade with the East. In 1502 and 1524 he made two more journeys on the same route. Vasco da Gama was appointed Viceroy of the Indies, and he laid the foundations of the Portuguese colonial prosperity.

In 1500, an expedition of thirteen ships led by the Portuguese navigator and explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral to India was driven on the coast of Brazil by a storm. He denominated the land «Terra de Vera Cruz» and occupied it on behalf of the Portugal kingdom. Since the discovery of the unknown territory of Brazil was entirely causal, its importance was not understood.

1.2.2 Discovery of the American continent: the Columbian exchange

Spain did not want to be excluded from the race to the Indies. The Spanish chose a different route from that chosen by the Portuguese: they relied on the project of Cristoforo Colombo, a Genoese

[30] Ibidem, p. 2

explorer and navigator in the service of the Spanish monarchy, who had the plan of reaching the Indies sailing West.

Colombo based his convictions on the theories of the Florentine cosmographer Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli. Toscanelli believed that the Earth was spherical, and that therefore the East could have been reached also passing from the West, that is crossing the Atlantic Ocean. Toscanelli's papers and studies represent the testimony of his relations with the great navigator before the discovery of America and the whole history of its cartography. Colombo inherited maps and reports on some trips made by Toscanelli. The two of them had an epistolary correspondence, documented by at least three letters: the first one sent by Toscanelli to Colombo, the second one by Toscanelli to Colombo's relative Canon Fernando Martins and the third one by Toscanelli to Colombo, and they all came into Colombo's hands between 1480 and 1482, when the navigator lived in Lisbon as salesman of a Genoese merchant.[31]

But Colombo made a mistake: he had miscalculated the size of the Earth by imagining it much smaller than it really was. Consequently, he thought the journey would be much shorter than it was. But above all what he had not counted on was a continental landmass lying between Europe and Asia and a globe eight thousand nautical miles larger than he estimated.[32]

Convinced that he could reach China by following the western route crossing the Atlantic, he visited the European courts in search of financial aid, but all rulers refused him, including the king Henry VII of England. After many efforts, Colombo managed to persuade the Spanish monarchs to finance an expedition that could realize this attempt. In 1492 Isabel I de Castilla and Fernando de Aragón reluctantly agreed to finance the enterprise of Colombo: at that time, transoceanic travels were fearfully expensive and risky, comparable to space flight today[33]. They provided the money, men and ships needed for the voyage: two caravels, the Niña and the Pinta, and a heavier ship, the Santa María. The crew, consisting of fifty-two men, many of whom taken from the prisons, was superstitious, violent, and continually threatened to mutiny. Nevertheless, Colombo and his men departed from the port of Palos on 3 August 1492, and they touched land only on 12 October 1492, after great difficulties.

Even if, at first, he believed to have reached the Japanese archipelago, Colombo soon realized that the territory on which he had landed did not have the characteristics of China and Japan described by

[31] Ammannati Francesco, et alii, *La carta perduta – Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli e la cartografia delle grandi scoperte*
[32] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 28
[33] Mann Charles C., *1943 – Pomodori, tabacco e batteri. Come Colombo ha creato il mondo in cui viviamo*, Milano: Mondadori Libri (2018), p. 20

Marco Polo, but he was instead convinced of being arrived in Asia, in the Indies. But not knowing the name of that island, he called it «San Salvador». Then he began his explorations and discovered the islands of Bahamas, Cuba, and Haiti, that he baptized «Hispaniola». When he returned to Spain, he was honoured.

The success of this first voyage, augmented by the American Indian slaves that Colombo brought to Spain and by the crew's stories, secured financial aid for other voyages. In the following years, he made three more trips, discovering the northern Antilles, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica between 1493 and 1496, the islands of Trinidad and Margarita and their corresponding stretch of land coast between 1498 and 1500, and finally the island of Martinique and the coasts of Central America between 1502 and 1504, but he never realized he had discovered a new continent.

Having defended the indigenous people of Haiti, Colombo came into conflict with the Spanish authorities and was dismissed from his office. Colombo died at Valladolid in 1506, poor and forgotten by all, convinced of having reached the Indies and unaware of having discovered a new continent. Thus, ended the story of a man who had changed the history of our planet: the few months of his first journey had erased two thousand years of theories and legends concerning the impossibility of crossing the Atlantic and redesigned the map of the Earth. For this reason, the discovery of Colombo is used to indicate the beginning of Modern History.

Colombo was the first one that, during his travels to the Americas, transported goods and animals between the two sides of the ocean. With the first voyage made by Colombo to the Americas in 1492, the era of continuous communication between the Old and the New World began. The Old World corresponds to the continents Europe, Asia, and Africa, while the New World corresponds to North and South America. The term «Columbian Exchange» refers to a wide-ranging exchange of animals, plants, culture, and ideas between the Old and the New World after the discovery of America, so it refers to the impact of European overseas expansion, dominated by Spain and Portugal from the mid-fifteenth century until the mid-seventeenth century.

The first expedition made by Colombo to America between 1492 and 1493 had a limited impact, as he just wanted to prove that his idea of reaching eastern Asia by sailing westward across the Atlantic Ocean was right, so a new route was established. Colombo and his men collected a variety of plants, animals, and minerals and brought them to Europe to prove the potential that existed in the newly discovered land.[34] These included animals like parrots and feathers of other birds, the cotton

[34] Cook Noble David, *The Columbian Exchange*, in Bentley, J., Subrahmanyam, S., Wiesner-Hanks, M., *The Cambridge World History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2015)

textile, fruits like pineapple, the plants of tobacco and rubber and a dozen of slaves from Bahamas and Hispaniola, who were respectively part of Lucayo and Taino tribes. After the Colombo expedition reached the port of Palos on 15 March 1493, news of the discovery and the promise of gold and wealth spread quickly, inflaming the hopes of many restless men. Suddenly a new possibility of becoming rich in lands to the west, only a few weeks away, seemed a reality. Colombo had no difficulty in finding adventurers for his second expedition.[35] From the second voyage to America, Europeans brought to the Old Continent various types of trees and fruits, agricultural products like wheat and oats, and animals like horses, mules, pigs, goats, and sheep.

The Columbian Exchange had worldwide consequences, as the world was transformed by the exchange of plants and animals from one continent to the other, which had a biological impact and provoked new diseases in both the Old and the New World.

In the century following the contact with Europeans, Native Americans have suffered a drastic decline in population. Alfred W. Crosby (1992: 24) claims:

> When Columbus broke their isolation and reunited the two halves of the planet, for the first time the American Indians found themselves facing their most ruthless enemy: not the white man nor his black slave, but the invisible exterminators hidden in the blood or propagated by the breath of the newcomers.

Epidemics were caused by the migrations of men and their diseases like measles, smallpox and scarlet fever, that reached the New World through explorers and conquistadores. The American Indians, because of their isolation, which was the longest from the rest of humanity and did not genetically protect them from the killers, were more exposed to epidemics. European diseases caused not only a collapse of the population throughout the hemisphere, but also caused an extraordinary ecological backlash[36]. Before the arrival of the Europeans the natives, using fire, cleared large areas for farming and hunting. With the decline of the indigenous population, the forests took over again the dissolved lands and settlements.

As soon as they arrived, the Europeans began to transform as much as possible the New World into a copy of the Old one.[37] The American Indians refused to grow European products, as they found European edible plants little more appealing than wild herbs. On the contrary, they enthusiastically welcomed the arrival of domestic animals from the Old World because they did not know how to

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[35] Ibidem, p. 107

[36] Mann Charles C., *1943 – Pomodori, tabacco e batteri. Come Colombo ha creato il mondo in cui viviamo*, p. 55

[37] Crosby Alfred W., *Lo scambio colombiano – Conseguenze biologiche e culturali del 1492*, Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore (1992), p. 54 – Crosby Alfred W., *The Columbian exchange – Biological and cultural consequences of 1492*, Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group (1972)

tame animals and they ate only meat procured through hunting. The animals introduced in America in 1493 with the second journey of Colombo easily reproduced thanks to the food at their disposal, which consisted of herbs, roots, and wild fruits, and thanks to the absence of predators and diseases. At the same time, these animals are considered responsible for the extinction of some plants, animals and even of the American Indians to whom they raided the crops. The introduction of Old World's domesticated animals did serious damage to native crops and contributed to a crisis of traditional Taino agricultural practice.[38] This traditional agricultural practice consisted in «conucos», a way of planting manioc, maize, beans, sweet potatoes, and other plants as that looked irresistible for animals like pigs which damaged them.

Except for the turkey, none of the animals of the Americas sent to Europe for display and study became popular food items. The New World has provided the old with many animals of no practical use, like for example the grey squirrel, that has supplanted the English red squirrel.

It is in the field of vegetables that America made a really positive contribution to the Old World.[39] American Indians devoted themselves to valuable food crops as America had few domesticated animals suitable for food. These crops included corn, beans, and potato, and only from these three elements it is possible to see the immense contribution that American Indians have made to the world's diet. Imported American crops proved to be complementary to those of the Old World, as they were allowed to cultivate in lands previously considered unproductive due to excess of sand, of altitude and aridity and allowed to eliminate the dead season because they had different needs of rain and sun factors compared to old European crops.

After the discovery of the New World, the population of the Americas, as well as that of Europe, increased. In America the Indian population did not increase, but the African and European immigration did. Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, American Indians died from wars with settlers and imported diseases. The European exploitation of America was slow for lack of servants and slaves, and this is the reason why conquistadores, landowners and merchants approached Africa, determining the great African immigration in America. During the nineteenth century, there was a rumour in Europe that land in America was very good and cheap, and this is why European immigration to the New Continent began. Consequently, America became a gigantic market for the exports of European industries, with a great return of profits in the Old Continent. In addition to having increased the population of the New Continent, the passage of over 50 million inhabitants

[38] Cook Noble David, *The Columbian Exchange*, p. 125
[39] Crosby Alfred W., *Lo scambio colombiano – Conseguenze biologiche e culturali del 1492*, p. 176 - 177

across the Atlantic Ocean lightened the demographic pressure on the continent of origin, encouraging the increase of the population at home.[40]

Unfortunately, despite its positive implications, the Columbian exchange also had negative implications caused by human activity, perfectly explained by Alfred W. Crosby (1992: 182 - 183):

> Usually, every time continents come together the total genetic heritage increases. When numerous animal and plant species invade a virgin territory, the adaptation to the new environment of individuals who survive to the increased biological competition produces new varieties and even new species. […] The Columbian exchange includes man, and man has changed the two worlds sometimes unconsciously, sometimes intentionally and often brutally. It is possible that man and plants or animals migrated in his wake have caused the extinction of more biological species in the last four hundred years than what would have been extinct due to normal production processes. […] After the Columbian exchange, the total genetic patrimony became impoverished. Thanks to Colombo the earthly life, of which we are an integral part, has been depleted, and impoverishment is bound to increase.

1.2.3 Other colonial powers, desire of new geographical knowledge and of appropriation

After the success of Spain with the expedition of Colombo, even the other European powers facing the Atlantic did not want to stay out of the race for exploration. The Spanish directed many of the first voyages of exploration, but also men from other nations participated in the great discoveries.

The Venetian navigator Giovanni Caboto, in the service of England, was the first one to touch the American continent, as Colombo had first discovered only American islands. In 1497, he was appointed by the English king Henry VII to repeat the journey made by Colombo. With English ships, he discovered Newfoundland and the island of Cape Breton and, one year later, the wide peninsula of North America called Labrador. His son Sebastiano, who also was in the service of the English crown, continued the explorations of the North Atlantic Ocean begun by his father Giovanni. He travelled a stretch of coast of the New England, went up for the South American rivers Amazon and Orinoco, making the first attempts of colonization of those regions.

In 1524, the Florentine Giovanni de Verazzano, in the service of the king Francis I of France, unsuccessfully sought passage to the East from the North-East. During 1523 and 1524, he commanded an expedition that visited the American coast: from South Carolina he descended to Georgia and then sailed up the Atlantic coast. He then went to explore Nova Scotia and touched

[40] Ibidem, p. 181

Newfoundland. After returning to France, in 1528 he made a second voyage to Central America, but nothing was heard of him and of the five ships that were part of the expedition.

The Florentine navigator Amerigo Vespucci was the first one who understood that the land touched by Colombo, considered by all part of Asia, was instead a new and great continent. While during his fourth and final journey Colombo had gone as far as Panama, in two expeditions made during the years 1499 in the service of Spain, 1501 and 1502 in the service of Portugal, Vespucci sailed the new land from Guiana to Rio de Janeiro, demonstrating that the new land had nothing to do with Asia. In fact, the coast that stretched uninterrupted for such a vast extent revealed to Vespucci the existence of a new continent, that was called «America» in his honour since the year 1507.

During the sixteenth century the travels multiplied, and new geographical knowledge was acquired. In 1519 an expedition led by the Portuguese navigator Fernão de Magalhães, with five ships and about two hundred men, departed. The expedition was ordered by the Spanish monarchy and had the same objective as Colombo's one: reach the East through the West. After about a year of navigation, Magalhães crossed the strait that now bears his name and leaned over the Pacific: he had finally found the passage to the East. Magalhães continued navigation in the Pacific and reached the archipelago of the Philippines, where he died in a clash with the natives. Only one of Magalhães's ships continued the voyage, conducted by the Spanish explorer Juan Sebastián Elcano. He crossed the Indian ocean, passed the Cape of Good Hope and returned to Lisbon in 1522, three years after the departure: with this enterprise the world was circumnavigated for the first time, that is, the complete tour of the terrestrial globe was made. Magalhães's journey was of great scientific importance, as it showed that the Earth was spherical, and that the Pacific was a very large ocean.

With the geographical discoveries began the process of expansion of the West: within three centuries, Europeans managed to dominate the whole world. Initially the protagonists of the colonial conquests were Spain and Portugal. Soon, however, they came into conflict, because they wanted to ensure exclusive control of the new territories. Moreover, the other European states had no intention of granting to Spain and Portugal the exclusive right to conquer colonies. In all the Modern Age the only thing that was worth was the strength: the State that reached a new territory appropriated it.

The desire for new knowledge animated the men of the eighteenth century and gave start to a new phase of geographical exploration. In this way the season of discoveries that started at the end of the fifteenth century was completed.

The most important expeditions of this period were made by the English officer, navigator and astronomer Captain James Cook. Between the years 1768 and 1780 Cook made three major voyages in the Pacific Ocean, during which he discovered and explored the Australian and New Zealand coasts. Cook assigned the redistribution of lands and waters of the Oceanic continent, discovering a large number of islands and even going into the North Pacific up to the Bering Strait. Then he wrote an interesting report on what he had seen: it was of great scientific interest because he accurately described landscapes, animals like the koala and the kangaroo, vegetation like the eucalyptus and the hibiscus plants and especially the indigenous, the Australian Aborigines and the New Zealand Maori, who were still living in the Stone Age.

Thanks to these expeditions it was possible to draw a complete and exact map of the globe for the first time. By the end of the eighteenth century there were few areas of the world yet to be discovered: the interior of Africa and Australia, the Poles, and the highest mountains of the great mountain chains.

1.3 The exploitation of South American colonies by the Spanish empire

When Europeans arrived in the New World, Central and South America were inhabited by about eighty million people. Some local civilizations had rather advanced political and economic culture and organization, but none of them knew the use of iron and wheel.

One of the largest and oldest civilizations was the one of the Mayas, which developed in the second millennium BC in the Mexican Yucatán peninsula and in the current Guatemala in Central America. The ancient Maya formed an empire divided into several city-states, but at the same time this empire was united by linguistic and cultural constraints. Their society was dominated by the nobles, to whom the possession of the land was reserved. Maya's religion was a form of polytheism, and also the priests had great importance, whose class was organized hierarchically. The main activity of the Maya was very primitive agriculture. The Maya excelled in the construction of majestic cities, at the same time centres of commerce and worship: among them, there are Tikal, the largest and oldest city with its great temples, Copan and Piedras Negras.

The Aztecs were originally a nomadic population from northern Mexico. In the fourteenth century, after numerous wanderings, they settled along the valley of Mexico. Around the year 1300, they founded their capital Tenochtitlán, which reached three hundred thousand inhabitants and corresponds to the present-day Mexico City. From there, they began to expand into neighbouring regions and ended up dominating the entire Mexican region. The Aztecs built an empire characterized by a strong central power exercised by the king and a council of nobles from warrior origin. Their religion was polytheistic and dominated the private and collective life of people. The God Sun, Lord of the Earth, was celebrated also with human sacrifices. The economy was based on agriculture and especially on the cultivation of corn, and the capital Tenochtitlán was characterized by a flourishing trade. The Aztecs had an evolved architecture, with large buildings, streets perfectly paved, and funeral monuments.

The Incas established a vast empire in the central Andes region. It reached its peak between the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, a hundred years before the Spanish conquest. The Inca's empire included, in addition to the current Peru, the bordering areas of today's Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia and Chile. Their capital was Cuzco, located three thousand five hundred meters high. The Inca society was characterized by a rigid hierarchy: the sovereigns held not only the political and military supreme authority, but also religious supreme authority, being considered descendants of the Sun. The memory of the Inca civilization survives today thanks to the great ruins of their fortress cities such as Cuzco, Machu Picchu and Písac, that are placed on steep mountains and terraces cut into the rock.

Spain made the biggest profits from overseas travels. The Spanish explored the coasts of both North and South America, and organized expeditions into the interior. After the first voyages of exploration, the real conquest of the territories of the Amerindians began. To accomplish it, there were largely adventurers and unscrupulous men ready to do anything to get their hands on the immense riches of the New World: the «conquistadores».

The first one of these adventurers was Hernán Cortés, who landed in Mexico in 1519, carrying with him about six or seven hundred men among soldiers and sailors to conquer the Aztec empire. Despite the enormous disparity in the number of forces, as the great and organized Aztec empire could count on one hundred thousand warriors, the Spanish prevailed because of their advanced weapons. In 1522, the Spanish expedition under Cortés set Tenochtitlán on fire, destroyed the Aztec Empire, massacred and exterminated its inhabitants and killed the last of its rulers, the Emperor Cuauhtémoc. After the capture of the Aztecs, tons of gold began to flow into the coffers of the Spanish government, which rewarded Cortés by granting him the governorship of Mexico.

After rewarding his men by sharing the possessions of the Aztec aristocracy, Cortés decided to continue his journey to subdue the Maya. As opposed to the Aztec, the Maya were not subject to a central power, so it was not enough to conquer a capital to destroy their empire: for this reason, it took the Spanish about one hundred and seventy years to succeed in subduing all the city-states of the Maya.

Another famous conquistador was Francisco Pizarro, who devoted his life to the conquest of the New World. He explored especially the coasts of South America and made immense wealth available to Spain. In 1531, the Incas suffered a Spanish invasion led by Pizarro, who took advantage of a moment of weakness of the empire due to the struggle between two brothers pretenders to the imperial throne: Huáscar and Atahualpa. To knock down the empire of the Incas, Pizarro headed to the capital Cuzco, which he occupied in 1533, and in this way, he conquered Peru in the same year. After overthrowing the Inca empire, Pizarro also conquered Chile.

Once the Aztec and Inca Empires succumbed to the Spanish, the relatively smaller indigenous societies of Central and South America became subject to extensive colonization in the 1500s and 1600s.[41]

1.4 The reorganization of global traffic and birth of the world economy

Following the conquest of the New World, the new Atlantic routes connecting the New World America with the East became more important than the Mediterranean ones. The process that threatened the Mediterranean was the displacement of the centre of the world from the inland sea to the Atlantic Ocean.[42] In the sixteenth century trade and commerce passed from a Mediterranean dimension to a global one.

In this way, the economy became intercontinental, because for the first time in the history of mankind trade covered all continents. Out of the longstanding commercial circuits that crisscrossed regions of the world, the growth of trading networks in three theatres during the early modern period produced an integrated global economy.[43] The protagonist of this extraordinary historical phase was Europe. In a certain sense, we could say that Europeans «invented» the world, because it was on their initiative that, for the first time in history, all areas of the planet came into contact.

1.4.1 Sea routes

Before Europeans made direct contact with the Indies, long distance traders moved along regularly travelled routes. The longest and the most renowned was the Silk Roads, a complex of routes that

[41] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 104
[42] Braduel Fernand, *Il Mediterraneo – Lo spazio e la storia. Gli uomini e la tradizione*, Roma: Newton & Compton editori (2002), p. 122
[43] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 85

facilitated overland and maritime trade from the Mediterranean to the South China Sea.[44] Most important points of the Silk Road were port cities on the Indian ocean's coasts such as Makassar, Bantam, Malacca, Surat and Aden, that were under the control of the Europeans, and merchant cities in central Asia such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Kabul, Herat, Baghdad, Tabriz, that underwent a process of decadence. The Silk Road became important during the fourteenth and the fifteenth century because the area underwent a period of relative peace under the control of the vast Mongol empire. During the fifteenth century, Mongols created the so-called "Pax Mongolica", that facilitated cultural exchanges and trade between the West, the Middle East and the Far East between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Mongols conquered and established in Central Asia, putting it under their direct control and creating an empire in the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia. At the same time, European and Christian merchants did not travel safely along the Silk Road anymore, because of Mongol control. Venice had been particularly interested in commerce along the Silk Road because, until the discoveries and the oceanic travels, it was the entry port of all the goods coming from East Asia and India. This geopolitical and commercial change caused by geographical discoveries meant a dislocation of interest and trade from an area in which Venice was the most important free-entrance port to the countries of the Atlantic coast. When the Silk Road was dismissed by the oceanic travels, a huge exchange began, but not only goods were included in it, and the Columbian exchange is a clear example of this.

Until the fifteenth century, the Mediterranean Sea was controlled by two major powers: Spain and the Ottoman empire. Venice was the intermediary and most important port of exchange in the Mediterranean area. The Mediterranean economies took advantage of their strategic position in the inland sea. They operated as redistributors of the products arriving on the Mediterranean coasts from the three continents bordering on them: Europe, Asia, and Africa.[45] Although Venice lost its importance because of the discoveries of the fifteenth century, the Mediterranean remained a key area where many Italian port-cities were renewed. For example, in 1591 Livorno became a free port and the main exchange point where goods from the colonies arrived and from which raw textiles and salt travelled from the Mediterranean to North Europe to be then manufactured in England and in the Netherlands. So, other political powers in Europe decided to create their free ports: in 1669 Marseilles and in 1719 Trieste became free ports. In the nineteenth century, after the Anglo-French war that took place between 1778 and 1783, the Mediterranean Sea was finally controlled by Britain and became part of the huge British empire. Thanks to cunning, strength, violence, and the use of economic

[44] Ibidem, p. 68
[45] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 30

differences there was a conquest of the inland sea by the Nordic, especially the British.[46] Malta and Gibraltar were important points of exchange. Mediterranean trade comprised three continents, and therefore the constant peculiarity of Mediterranean trade has always been the extreme variety of goods that were exchanged there.[47] The main commodities of the Mediterranean trade were agricultural products such as cereals, citrus fruits and sugar, olive oil for processing in the textile industry and for the production of soap, textile fibres and raw materials such as silk, flax, cotton, which from the East were processed in the West to be distributed throughout Europe, wool and metals such as lead and tin from Atlantic and Northern Europe, and salt, which was essential for human consumption, used as ballast for ships and for the conservation of fish, therefore important for the Scandinavian industry.

After the geographical discoveries of the fifteenth century, the voyages in the Atlantic Ocean rose significantly. The incorporation of the Atlantic area into international trade routes was facilitated by its physical characteristics. The clockwise movement of wind and sea currents allowed the creation of semi-fixed trade routes, while the presence of navigable rivers on the coast overlooking the ocean allowed the creation of an integrated network of maritime communications. The Atlantic Ocean involved a series of actors: Spanish, Portuguese, British and Dutch powers.

Spain controlled the majority of Latin America. Spain took precious metal and raw materials from Latin America and then used them as a market for its own products. Direct trade between the various Spanish possessions was prohibited, and Sevilla was the pivot around which all trade had to revolve. Nevertheless, behind the Spanish monopoly there were hidden economic operators of many nations and smuggling, with the result that all traded with all. Another problem facing the Spanish was piracy, as Spanish ships were highly prized prey for their cargo of precious metals. Moreover, there was a high demand for manufactured goods and the Spanish industry was not developed enough to satisfy colonies' demand. Indeed, at the end of the seventeenth century the majority of the goods imported in Latin America were not made in Spain, as the European country depended on other markets for the manufactured goods necessary for the markets of its overseas possessions. In conclusion, the Spanish simply focused on the export of precious metal produced in American mines.[48]

Portugal controlled commerce with western Africa, where they supplied themselves with slaves and precious metals and where they exported European goods for the consumption of local

[46] Rapp Richard T., *The unmaking of the Mediterranean trade hegemony: international trade rivalry and the commercial revolution*, in *The Journal of Economic History n. 35*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1975)
[47] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 49
[48] Ibidem, p. 58

populations. The Portuguese colony of Brazil was dedicated to the production of sugar, then exported to Europe. At the end of the seventeenth century, the discovery of gold in Brazil provoked the «gold rush», that is, the mass emigration towards the interior of the country, where the gold deposits were present. Portugal extracted gold from Brazil and imported sugar from plantations using Africans as slaves.

Britain controlled North America and the Caribbean. It was the most successful colonizing power because it was able to export raw materials for the colonies and to create a thriving industry of its own. British colonies were obliged to buy British products and Britain was able to meet the demand, while Portugal and Spain were not. Britain's ability to exploit colonies was one of the reasons that made the industrial revolution and economic growth possible, because it owned the capital and the materials for them. The Atlantic commerce of Britain in the Atlantic can be synthetized in a «triangle» of goods and slaves. The triangle was established between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century between Europe, Africa, and America: British traders transported goods to western Africa and exchanged them for African slaves, that were kidnapped or captured by sort of African slave hunters during some inter-tribal wars. Traders transported Africans to Caribbean plantations and there exchanged them for sugar or rum, and this is the reason why it is called the «Rum triangle». Traders brought these products to England to sell them. Colonialism and imperialism were effects of weapon competition. This triangle was problematic because colonies could not do trade directly, but they tried to do it, and this is one of the reasons why the colonies aimed at being independent.

The Netherlands controlled the Caribbean and the Baltic Sea. They were a small nation but devoted to trade, for this reason they set many colonies to facilitate commerce. During the Early Modern Age, the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands imported raw materials such as wheat, salted fish, timber, and leather from the Baltic countries, which were then exported to southern Europe, where the Dutch imported luxury products such as wine and salt.

In the Indian and Pacific oceans, commerce was already developed also before the arrival of the Europeans. In particular, there were three routes that did not involve Europeans: the first one went from Cambay and Calicut to Hormuz and by land, through the Silk Road, to Damascus, Aleppo and Aden; the second one went from Canton and Macao to Malacca, Japan and the Indonesian Islands, which were rich in spices; the third one went from Malacca to Calicut, Bengal and Ceylon. Until the nineteenth century, the control of much of the local businesses remained in the hands of local operators. Europeans arrived in Asia to avoid intermediaries in the spice trade, and they used their military superiority to impose themself in the area. Differently from the other colonies around the world, at the beginning the Europeans did not have political control over the Asian nations. They only inserted themselves in commerce and thanks to the technological and military superiority of their vessels and ships, they were able to control commercial routes.

Portuguese were the first ones to arrive in the Indian ocean and established in Malacca, that was a central point, and this is the reason why, when Europeans inserted themselves in the Asian commerce, they decided to conquer the city, making it their operational base. In particular, Portugal established its control over the city for the commerce of spices. The most traded goods in the Indian ocean were spices, including pepper in greater volume, and the precious «thin spices», including cloves, cinnamon, and nutmeg, very expensive because grown in a few areas. At the end of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese abandoned direct involvement in the organization of trade due to the rapid growth of intra-Asian trade.

The arrival of the Dutch in the Indian ocean marked the beginning of the decline of Iberian dominance in intercontinental maritime trade.[49] The Dutch employed pretty much the same strategy of the Portuguese: they conquered single cities and important ports, and then gained control over spices and textiles, especially cotton, from Indonesia. The main centre of Dutch trade was Jakarta; Jan Pieterszoon Coen, an unyielding governor of the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie – Dutch East India Company) realized that if the company could control spices at the point of production, then it could monopolize the trade.[50] Furthermore, the Dutch were able to develop coffee plantations in the parts of the world where they imposed their control. They also tried to control the trade with China and Japan, but at that time both nations were extremely powerful and closed their ports to the Europeans until the nineteenth century.

The main centre of the British operations was the Atlantic Ocean. However, after the proclamation of independence of the thirteen American colonies in 1776, Britain moved its political and commercial interest to the Indian ocean and, in particular, it established its administrative control over India and its three major ports, that were Surat, Mumbai and Calicut. Britain began a flourishing commerce of luxury goods from India, that included especially tea and textiles, and brought them to Europe. The luck of the British was in the success of Indian fabrics, which provoked a radical change in taste and fashion of the time.[51] The arrival of these goods in the Old Continent threatened the European industries, because Indian textiles were better quality and cheaper than the European ones. At the same time, it allowed European industries, especially the French and British ones, to become more competitive and produce even better-quality textiles to overcome Indian ones. Due to the

[49] Ibidem, p. 80
[50] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 91
[51] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 84

increasing demand for textiles in Europe, since the second half of the seventeenth century trade in the Indian ocean was characterised by a prominent position of silk and cotton. British victory over Nawab troops in Bengal during the Battle of Plassey in 1757 marked the beginning of British political rule over India.

Spain was the main agent in the Pacific Ocean, where it established its control over the Philippines and their capital Manila. An annual shipment, known as the Manila galleon, sailed the length of the Pacific Ocean from Mexico to Manila, carrying silver from the New World to the Old.[52] Spain was the most important commercial partner of China because it provided it with silver. While the Europeans were very interested in Chinese luxury goods and manufacture, Chinese and Japanese were not interested at all in other European products.

1.4.2 Land routes

Despite the expansion of maritime trade, land transport also played an important role in long-distance trade, especially where there was no alternative.[53]

Regarding intra-European traffic, the ancient Roman roads were still used as the main network for the entire Middle Ages. Another important network was inland navigation, favoured by the great abundance of navigable rivers throughout the continent. During the eighteenth century, it was expanded by a network of artificial channels, especially in France, in the Netherlands and in England.

In Asia, in order to ensure a constant and regular supply of essential goods within the empire, the Ottoman authorities developed a network of markets and fairs controlled and sanctioned by the state. In Asia also the caravan routes were important, the structure of which was for centuries the backbone of the trade of Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia. The main hubs of the caravan trade were the cities of Constantinople, Edirne, Aleppo, Cairo, and Smyrna. The cities along the caravan routes offered logistical and commercial services, including brokers, bankers, guides, and suppliers for pack animals. Among the latter, the most important were camels: a single caravan consisted of about a thousand camels, animals capable of carrying heavy loads for long stretches in lands without water.

The city of Constantinople played a key role in land trade in Asia, due to its centrality to the main trade routes of the Ottoman Empire. Caravans of pack animals, usually camels or horses, transported

[52] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 90
[53] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 92

merchandise typically consisting of lighter luxury items, such as silks, precious stones and metals, musk, dyes, woollen and cotton cloth, candles, and other small finished goods.[54]

Caravan routes allowed trade between the Ottoman Empire and Russia. They departed from Caffa, on the shores of the Black Sea, and arrived in Kiev. While goods such as fur and ivory came from Russia, the Ottomans exported silk and spices.

The city of Cairo served as hub of maritime trade for the Mediterranean, North Africa and the Red Sea, whose goods were then redistributed to Morocco and Damascus. During the sixteenth century, Cairo was the main market for the redistribution of coffee produced in Yemen.

During the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the city of Aleppo was the main hub of Central Asian trade with Western Europe. The goods traded were Southeast Asian spices and Iranian silk, which were purchased by Venetian, British and French merchants. The British imported their wool and bought silk and cotton. When Syrian silk replaced the finest Iranian silk, the presence of the British in Aleppo decreased, because they were not interested in the new product and because they no longer needed to import cotton, which was instead produced in the British colonies. French imported light wool and cash for purchases and exported cotton. In this way, the city of Marseilles grew for cotton imports from Aleppo and for growing trade with North Africa.

The routes of land trade on the African continent varied continuously to follow the changing positions of the oases, which were places of rest and supply of caravans. The most present commodity was gold, which from Sudan was exported to the Mediterranean coasts of Europe and Egypt. At the time of the greatest expansion of this traffic, about a ton of gold departed annually from Sudan and reached the shores of the Mediterranean.[55]

1.5 Commercial and financial networks

At the end of the seventeenth century, Europe was a global market where goods from all over the world flowed into. The commercial networks were composed by free ports, and by ways and places of commercial connections. This particular type of networks were formed by nets and points; nets were constituted by goods, streets, travels, and discoveries, while the points were where nets met, so at core cities, free-ports and capitals.

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[54] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 72
[55] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 103

In order to talk about commercial networks, it is interesting to analyse a painting entitled «Still life with an Ebony Chest» (Figure 2), painted by the Spanish Antonio de Pereda during the second half of the seventeenth century.

Figure 2 Pereda Antonio, *Still life with an ebony chest*, Spanish painting, 1652, St. Petersburg: The State Hermitage Museum

This still life represents a collection of objects from all over the world, that assume the meaning of global trajectories: the silver tray was obtained from Spanish silver; the ebony chest was made from the precious wood imported from East Africa and Southeast Asia; the ivory used for the marquetry decorations on the small chest was transported across vast distances; the series of ceramic and porcelain vessels came from different traditions, made by Chinese, Korean and Japanese potters or even manufactured in the Islamic world and Mediterranean regions; chocolate arrived in Spain from America; finally, important elements are the three types of textiles, because while velvet and linen were from Europe, the small cloth was probably of American origin, made from a pre-Columbian design tradition, and with this small cloth De Pereda captured the famous «Columbian exchange» defined by Alfred W. Crosby. The objects De Pereda depicted form only the tip of a vast iceberg of objects that were exchanged and commodities that were traded throughout the early modern world.[56]

Another interesting painting is represented by «Interior of a Chinese shop» (Figure 3).

[56] Gerritsen Anne, Riello Giorgio, *The global lives of things – The material culture of connections in the Early Modern world*, Milton: Routledge (2016), p. 3

Figure 3 *Interior of a Chinese shop*, Dutch painting, about 1680 - 1700, London: Victoria and Albert Museum

The interior of this imaginary shop, painted in Europe, only gives a small inkling of the vast diversity of goods that became available to consumers with the growth of global trade connections.[57] The goods for sale within it consisted of luxury items like lacquered chests, cabinet, and boxes, screens, picture frames, tall wooden stands, Chinese porcelains of all shapes and format, red earthenware, Indian textiles, Persian paintings, small ivory devotional sculptures and an array of folded fans. The painting presents a world of global goods, but suspends these objects in an undefined space, as styles of clothing, headdress, flora, and fauna that grace the paintings, textiles, porcelains and pieces of furniture suggest an extra-European world without determining a specific cultural or geographical context.[58]

During the Middle Ages, fairs were the focus of European financial life. They took place at precise dates at regular intervals at the hubs of the main European shipping routes. During the sixteenth century, fairs were dominated by the Genoese financials. Port cities were considered «permanent fairs» thanks to the continuous flow of merchants and merchandise that characterized them. The main port cities' permanent fairs were held in the region of the Champagne, replaced then by the fairs of Lyon and Medina del Campo. Falling within municipal jurisdiction, fairs, markets, and bazaars marked the designated spaces, carefully regulated by law and custom, for economic exchange. In the

[57] Ibidem, p. 6
[58] Ibidem, p. 7

initial stages of development, towns held markets on specific days, then gradually over a long period of time, the periodic markets evolved into permanent ones.[59]

As already mentioned before, ports and free ports have played a pivotal role for the development of commerce and for the exchanges of information. The needs of trade and traders, right within the free port, favoured, especially since the eighteenth century, forms of communication aimed at creation and the rapid, efficient, and widespread circulation of news.[60] Together with the nets, free ports represent the points that constitute the commercial networks. During the Early Modern Age, especially after the geographical discoveries that took place during the fifteenth century, Atlantic ports and Mediterranean cities along the coasts and ports acquired a significant role. Free ports started to be considered essential to develop international trade. Free ports were first an Italian, then a western European, later an Atlantic, and ultimately a global phenomenon.[61] Free ports were particularly interesting for two reasons. The first one is that they were free for everyone from everywhere, and the freedom to trade, to practice their religion and to bring their families is the reason why merchants and people were attracted there. The second one is that free ports were tax free, because they were meant to enhance international commerce and exchange of goods and not to protect the domestic industry; in fact, it was a place of suspension of sovereignty, where control of political power was constantly questioned in name of the needs of trade.[62] Free ports represented «focal points» where global nets met and the status of free port meant a lot for international trade, for the circulation of global goods and for the activity of both local and foreign merchants. The most important free ports to be declared were Livorno, Marseilles, and Trieste.

The city of Livorno was created by the Grand Dukes of Tuscany with the main purpose of making it a centre of sorting of international trade.[63] The city was famous for its regime of toleration, its flourishing foreign communities, the simplicity of its custom procedures, and its pervasive atmosphere of liberty.[64] During the seventeenth century, it became a fortified port facility. Livorno replaced Venice as a hub of trade between the Mediterranean and the rest of Europe, advantaged by its geographical location and its tax regime of free port. Livorno was a perfect place for northerners

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[59] Parker Charles H., *Global interactions in the Early Modern Age*, p. 81

[60] Kaiser Wolfgang, Salvemini Biagio, *Informazioni e scelte economiche*, in *Quaderni storici n. 124*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino (2017)

[61] Tazzara Corey, *Managing free trade in the Early Modern Europe: institutions, information, and the free port of Livorno*, in *The Journal of Modern History n. 86*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2014), p. 496

[62] Delogu Giulia, *Informazione e comunicazione in Età Moderna: immaginare, definire, comunicare il porto franco*, in *Rivista Storica Italiana*, Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane (2019), p. 469

[63] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 42

[64] Tazzara Corey, *Managing free trade in the Early Modern Europe: institutions, information, and the free port of Livorno*, p. 495

to distribute their products as their markets in the Mediterranean expanded.[65] When the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando I de' Medici promulgated the «Costituzioni livornine» in the years 1591 and 1593, the city became a free port where merchants from all nations can do their trade tax free. The «livornine» were laws granting exceptional commercial privileges to all foreign merchants who had transferred their operations to Livorno, which in this way attracted Sephardic, Greek, Armenian, English, and Dutch merchants, who brought with them their knowledge and networks, especially with the East and facilitated the creation of global enterprises. The case of Livorno and its free port, that was the first one to be established, highlighted how the political power and the institutional changes of the time could work together for economic interests and civic development in creating new networks and exchanges.

Marseilles was declared a free port by an edict of Louis XV on 5 March 1669. This expansion was intended to visually impart the message that Marseilles was a French city equipped to lead international commerce.[66] Located on the east coast of a wide bay open to the Mediterranean Sea, it became one of the main centres of European maritime trade. In order to attract international business and boost domestic sales, the minister of State of France Jean-Baptiste Colbert abolished the taxes previously required of foreign merchants entering the city.[67] From there, the French exported cotton, leather and coffee to Ottoman territories. Thus, in the eighteenth century the French established themselves as the first trading partner of the Ottoman Empire.[68] Marseilles was the most important free port even if Livorno was the first one to be established.

With the expansion of the Austrian Empire to the southeast and the subsequent conquest of Hungary, Slavonia, and Croatia in 1645, Austria's entry into Mediterranean trade was determined. The Austrians used the port facilities of Trieste and Tunis. In 1719, concurrently with the Habsburg reforms, Trieste became a free port with broad trade and customs immunities, and an important commercial and financial centre. It was given this role thanks to the reached quantitative and qualitative dimensions, the functions of the port, the traffics, the urban development and the total increase of the social economic system.[69] By the end of the eighteenth century, the population of the city increased from five thousand to thirty thousand inhabitants coming from all over Europe and the Mediterranean, making Trieste one of the cultural capitals of Europe. The development of the city

[65] Ibidem, p. 502
[66] Takeda Junko Thérèse, *Between crown and commerce – Marseille and the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Baltimora: Johns Hopkins University Press (2011), p. 24
[67] Ibidem, p. 24
[68] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 46
[69] Andreozzi Daniele, *La segretezza degli affari suoi – Commerci, regole e reati a Trieste nella seconda metà del Settecento*, in *Quaderni storici n. 143*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino (2013), p. 468

and the sharp increase in the number of its inhabitants was possible thanks to the creation of a free port.

The more the travels became distant range, the more Europeans merchants needed financial instruments. So, at the end of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there were many changes for these goods and financial innovations. The «foenus nauticum» was the first form of travel insurance for goods transported by sea. The «lettera di cambio» was a way to pay without liquid money and the principal instrument of medieval European credit, particularly in Italy. The «hansa» was formed in central Europe, especially in Germany. The «national debt» was introduced in the Netherlands during the sixteenth century to sustain travels and explorations, as people gave money to the nation to finance naval expeditions. The «stock exchange» was introduced at Antwerp in 1531 to exchange goods and decide their price.

CHAPTER 2

GLOBAL GOODS OF THE EARLY MODERN AGE

> Let us imagine the seventeenth century as a network of Indra that, like every web, grew and became more and more inflective; in which new threads continuously converged at each node, establishing links to the left and to the right, or from top to bottom and vice versa, in an endless knot and knot again.
>
> Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's hat. The seventeenth century and the dawn of the global world* (2015)

2.1 The rise of global goods

Europeans, when compared with other people of the world, have historically shown a strong curiosity for the secrets of distant nations: they have been, to put it briefly, «natural tourists».[70] As discussed in chapter one of this thesis, from the end of the fifteenth century onwards Europeans started to discover and colonize the unknown lands of the New World. Geographical discoveries paved the way for the study of newly discovered cultures and new trade routes. As the sociologist and tea expert Linda Reali claims (2019: 104):

> The trade routes in the East and West Indies pushed merchants to go to remote places in search of new goods to import, and at the same time they stimulated the domestic production of their country to export its products. This import and export trade involved a new commercial and cultural dialectic, with exchange of lifestyles and knowledge.

The age of discoveries led to a subsequent trade expansion. Europeans started to import goods of common use of the New World's native population in the Old World, which soon became commonly used also in the European continent. At the same time, they exported in the New World European goods unknown to local populations to exchange them with the new goods required in Europe. This trade in goods led to the launch of the global market and therefore to the beginning of globalization.

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[70] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, Roma: Donzelli Editore (2009), p. 28

This phenomenon had slowly begun in the sixteenth century, with geographical discoveries, and showed much more concretely its effects during the next century, as a result of the birth of privileged trading companies.[71] As we will see, from the sixteenth century European merchants organized into associations protected by their own states, which were constantly in competition with each other, to develop and secure trade in the new lands discovered in America, Asia and Africa. Among the most considerable European privileged commercial companies we can mention the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie - Dutch East India Company), of which we already had the opportunity to discuss in chapter one of this thesis, the BEIC (British East India Company), and the CIO (Compagnie des Indes Orientales - French East India Company). Among the most important goods present in the New World that then immediately found use and became fundamental in the life of Europeans we can name chocolate, coffee, tea, tobacco, and cotton.

2.1.1 Colonial beverages: chocolate, coffee and tea

The term «colonial beverages» refers to chocolate, coffee, and tea. The plants from which the fruits used to obtain these drinks derive were commonly used in their places of origin. When Europeans knew these substances, they immediately thought about the success they would have at home. In fact, chocolate, coffee and tea were immediately appreciated by Europeans and they played an important role in international trade and in the history of world food habits.

Cocoa is a small evergreen tree called «Theobroma cacao». The cocoa tree came from South America, especially from the Mexican area, where it was grown when the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived. The first ones who cultivated the cocoa tree were the Olmecs, one of the oldest American civilizations who lived in the fertile coastal plains of Mexico centuries before the arrival of the Maya, from 1500 to 400 BC. They collected the cocoa pods from the tree to get chocolate, the beverage obtained by dissolving the cocoa powder in water or warm milk. The Maya civilization was the second to cultivate the cocoa tree in the Mexican Yucatán peninsula from 1000 BC to 250 AD. After the passing of the Mayan age, in the ninth century AD, chocolate was drunk by the Toltecs, who flourished from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, and by the Aztecs, whose ascent began in the twelfth century.[72] The cocoa plant was called «Cacahuatl», or «food of the gods», because from its seeds, also used as a currency of exchange, you get a sacred drink, reserved only to the upper strata

[71] Brook Timothy, *Il cappello di Vermeer – Il Seicento e la nascita del mondo globalizzato*, Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore (2015)
[72] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, Milton: Taylor & Francis (2005), p. 24

of the population.[73] The Aztecs were the first to serve chocolate to the Spanish conquistadores, who were fascinated by the drink never tasted before. The Spanish conquistador Cortés was warmly welcomed by the Aztecs in 1519: they believed he was the god Quetzalcoatl, the bearded and light-skinned deity protector of daily life, who promised to return from his kingdom beyond the known world; in this way Cortés, the ruthless conquistador, and Quetzalcoatl, the good and kind god, became one single person.[74] During the imperial banquet in Cortés honour, the Aztec ruler served as a last course chocolate, that the medical and science researchers and writers Alan Bennett Weinberg and Bonnie Bealer (2009: 57) define as «a bitter, cold, dense and bubbling beverage, made from roasted cocoa beans and flavoured with vanilla or spices, served in golden cups».

It is almost certain that cocoa seeds were the first caffeinated vegetables to reach Europe in historical age, brought by Colombo who, returning from his fourth trip from the New World in 1502, offered the cocoa pods to the Spanish king Fernando de Aragón, but Cortés was the first to report the use of cocoa beans.[75] After destroying the Aztec Empire in 1522, Cortés founded cocoa plantations in the New World on behalf of Carlo V d'Asburgo, specifically in the island of Trinidad and Haiti. The first commercial bulk of cocoa beans arrived in Spain, at the port of Sevilla, in 1585. After the arrive of cocoa in Spain, Spanish introduced the use of cocoa to the European continent. Italian merchant Antonio Carletti brought chocolate to Italy in 1606, returning from a visit to Spain, while after it was spread in France. Dutch merchants imported a large number of seeds, and in the seventeenth century the Dutch began to compete with the Spanish for control of sea routes. In this way, Amsterdam became the most important cocoa port outside Spain.[76] From Amsterdam, cocoa was transported to Germany and Scandinavian countries, while Austria imported chocolate directly from Spain. Soon France made itself more independent from Spanish supplies by cultivating cocoa beans in its own West Indian colonies.[77] In 1606, England took away Jamaica and its cocoa plantations from Spanish control, which became the main source of cocoa seeds for the British empire. In North America cocoa arrived only in 1712, in a pharmacy in Boston, imported from England. Almost 150 years passed since the arrival of cocoa in Europe before returning to the northern part of the hemisphere from which it was born.[78]

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[73] Perullo Nicola, *Cioccolata, caffè e tè in Europa tra storia e cultura*, in Torriti Paolo, *Le bevande coloniali - Argenti e salotti del Settecento italiano - Tè, Caffè e Cioccolato*, Roma: Palombi Editori (2015)
[74] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 57
[75] Ibidem, p. 58 - 59
[76] Ibidem, p. 69
[77] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, in Porter Roy, Teich Mikuláš, *Drugs and narcotics in history*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1995), p. 42
[78] Ibidem, p. 73

Coffee is a small evergreen tree called «Coffea arabica» originating from Abyssinia, in the Kingdom of Kaffa, present-day Ethiopia. Ethiopia and Yemen contend for the title of place of origin of coffee.[79] The Ethiopians, in a very distant and not datable past, were the first to recognize the energetic effects of the wild coffee plant, and used its fruits, rich in caffeine, sugar and fat, to support the soldiers in combat. The first to use the fruits of the coffee tree and as an infusion were the Sufi monks of Yemen, in southern Arabia, during the fifteenth century. From the monasteries of Yemen, in 1510 coffee expanded into Islamic capitals such as Cairo and Makkah, where it was also used as currency. Coffee was then introduced into Europe by Turks merchants through the port of Venice.

Before the coffee international trade began, some private individuals had brought small quantities of coffee seeds to Europe.[80] In 1596, a Franco-Dutch physician and botanist received coffee seeds from an Italian correspondent; in 1600, the first seeds were transported to the Netherlands, which began to be sold in 1640 by a German traveler and merchant. The Dutch, whose trade records from Mokha mention coffee beans in 1616, were the first Europeans to include coffee in their commercial activity.[81] In 1663 the first regular exports of coffee from Yemen to the Netherlands began. With regard to the import of this new exotic commodity we can notice the centrality of the free ports mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, as Venice and Marseilles, from vantages convenient to the Mediterranean, were the first ports to receive commercially imported coffee from Arabia.[82] In 1624 the first shipment of coffee landed in Venice, while in 1650 many merchants of Marseilles began to bring home coffee from the East. In France, a cartel of pharmacists and merchants was formed to agree to regular imports of coffee from Egypt. But the first to realize the commercial potential of coffee were the Dutch, who then transplanted the coffee tree to their colonies of Ceylon, Sumatra, and Java to start their own cultivation. When the Dutch introduced the coffee plant to Java in 1688, the island soon became one of the world's leading producers of fine coffee. Despite its commercial successes, the Dutch society, based mainly on the work of craftsmen, failed to develop an industrial economy capable of competing in the long run with what was being structured in England.[83] In fact, with the same rapidity of coffee becoming popular in Europe, the plantations in the European colonies, whose climate was suitable for its cultivation, multiplied.

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[79] Fusaro Maria, *Reti commerciali e traffici globali in età moderna*, p. 28
[80] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 77
[81] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 27
[82] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, p. 38
[83] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 80

Tea is a beverage obtained from the infusion of the leaves of the tea tree, called «Camelia sinensis», which is a shrub of Asian origin from the Theaceae family. Tea tree is native to the Indian region of Assam, and it is today grown in India, Ceylon, China, especially in the southwestern province of Yunnan, Japan, Java, and Kenya. Its leaves, rich of caffeine, tannin, and aromatic substances, once dried, are used for refreshing and medicinal infusions. Tea came from China, where it was already grown in the sixth century. In the early centuries, tea was grown and consumed in central and southern China. From the fourth century after Christ, the demand for tea grew exponentially that it was no longer possible to cope with it by only trimming the branches of wild plants, then began the first tea crops.[84] The Chinese monks were the leading tea artisans, who passed on their culture to later generations and cultivated the plant outside the monasteries, in tea gardens, that attracted pilgrims and beverage lovers. In 610 AD, the Jing-Hang Grand Canal was completed. It is a long and wide waterway that connects the Blue River with the Yellow River, which are the two main commercial arteries of north and south China. Along the great waterways and the new canal, a new trade flourished, and it put into communication the goods of the north and those of the south for the first time: in this way, tea spread also in the north of China.[85] During the Song dynasty, which reigned from the tenth to the thirteenth century, with the treaty on tea «Ta Kuan Ch'a Lun», edited by the emperor Huīzōng, the cultivation of tea spread throughout China.

Canals, rivers, and caravan routes connected China to the rest of the known world. The Asian continent exported spices, herbs, tea, textiles, ceramics, and porcelain to the European continent thanks to a dense network of businesses. The Ming dynasty, which reigned from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, ordered the closure of maritime trade, suspending Chinese maritime activities and closing ports. In this way goods circulated only within the empire, thanks to new channels that connected the major inland cities.[86] This decision caused some consequences: on one hand, the former Chinese and Japanese merchants organized themselves into piracy; on the other hand, there was interference from the western maritime powers. In an attempt at religious conversion, the Portuguese landed Christian missionaries in China, who were perceived as a threat to the integrity of Chinese traditions and the authority of the emperor.

Christian missionaries made accounts of the Asian country for Europeans, which attracted botanists, fascinated by Eastern flora, and merchants, eager to get their hands on this new kingdom: in 1516, Portuguese started trading silver, fabrics and leather for Chinese silk, spices, and tea. In the

[84] Schapira Joel, *The book of coffee & tea*, New York: St. Martin's Press (1982), p. 149
[85] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, Roma: Donzelli Editore (2019), p. 13
[86] Ibidem, p. 31

seventeenth century, at the same time as coffee was introduced to Europe from Turkey, Dutch merchants brought tea back from China.[87] The Dutch exercised their commercial interests with the VOC, which in 1610 transported the first shipment of tea to Europe and held the primacy over the tea trade in Europe throughout the eighteenth century. For example, tea was introduced in Germany in 1650 by the Dutch. As Dutch tea imports grew, far exceeding the value of the coffee imports of their French predecessors, Holland became Europe's first major caffeine connection.[88] In addition, the Dutch contributed to the rise of the Qing dynasty by supporting the conquest of China by the Manchu military forces, and in this way the Dutch made way for the interference by European countries in Asia. In the seventeenth century, French king Louis XIV sent a delegation to Persia and the East to establish trade relations for the import of the precious oriental goods without the intermediation of the VOC, thus creating in the year 1664 the CIO, the French privileged commercial company. At the end of the seventeenth century, even the United Kingdom, with the BEIC, directed its interests towards Chinese tea. After the First and Second Opium War that took place between 1839 and 1860, the United Kingdom took over the monopoly of the canton's commercial hub, where it built storage warehouses, tea processing factories, and dedicated buildings for the selection of finished tea.[89] (Figure 4). In addition, because of the high demand of tea in England, the British encouraged its cultivation in their colonies in India. In the nineteenth century, England began importing all the tea from its Indian colonies, to take advantage of the enormous commercial advantages over traffic with China: in 1836 a first expedition of Assam Indian tea was made to London and, within four years, Indian tea was a huge national success.[90] The exponential growth in demand for tea at home at the end of the eighteenth century led to the import of poor-quality tea, mixed with leaves of various types, which meant that tea was adulterated, therefore the addition of low-quality substances for profit only. Even Swedish and Danish and merchants were attracted to the «new gold of the East», as tea was nicknamed: the Danish and the Swedish East India Companies contributed to the import of over a third of all tea introduced into Europe from China during the eighteenth century.[91]

[87] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. XVII
[88] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, p. 38
[89] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 168
[90] Perullo Nicola, *Cioccolata, caffè e tè in Europa tra storia e cultura*
[91] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 112

Figure 4 *Thirteen factories*, Chinese painting, about 1805, Salem: Peabody Essex Museum

Tea was introduced in the nearby archipelago of Japan in 816 by the Japanese monk Kōbō-Daishi, who brought the first plant of tree from China and created the first tea garden, reserved to the Japanese imperial court. The cultivation of tea spread in the country only three centuries later, in the twelfth century, when the monk Eisai Myōan, back from China, planted tea in the Hirado island. Eisai spent his life spreading the cultivation of the tea plant in Japan and proposing the beverage as a medicine.[92] Vasco da Gama and his Portuguese crew were the first European to arrive in Japan in 1497. Subsequently, the Portuguese Jesuits arrived, to which the Japanese proved tolerant by granting them the freedom to found churches for the conversion of the population to Christianity. The Portuguese gained a monopoly on the Japanese route, importing silks, silver, and porcelain to Europe. In 1657 Portuguese were driven out from the country because of a Dutch conspiracy to conquer commercial exchange with Japanese. In fact, during the seventeenth century Japan closed the ports with the West except with the Dutch, and for at least two centuries the VOC enjoyed a monopoly in the trade of Japanese goods.[93] They imported from Japan into Europe tea, sets of fabrics, silk and ceramics. Thanks to a diplomatic mission to reopen the islands' ports to trade with the West, in 1854 the Americans obtained free trade agreements with the possibility of importing tea directly from Japan. Because of the Chinese Empire's policy of closing down maritime trade, during the sixteenth century the isle of Taiwan became a landing port for Chinese and Japanese pirates, who began to exchange goods with Portuguese and Dutch. The VOC created ports with storage warehouses and government

[92] Ibidem, p. 40
[93] Ibidem, p. 49

buildings. After the First and Second Opium War that took place between 1839 and 1860, the United Kingdom took possession of Taiwan, giving a new impetus to small tea productions. The caravan routes, used as tea routes, followed the ancient Silk Road, connecting the center of China with its peripheral streets and other countries. The caravan routes of tea departed from the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Sichuan to Mongolia and Siberia in the north, Persia in the east, Tibet, and India in the south. To carry the tea along these streets were the coolies, who carried on their shoulders a load of about 10 bags of pressed tea, for a total weight of 150 kg.[94] Tibet was the main destination of caravan routes and the crossroads for trade with the Indian subcontinent. Another destination was Mongolia, which during the seventeenth century proposed a trade alliance with Russia, which was established with journeys lasting six months, departing from the mountains of the Mongolic steppes to Moscow. Tea drink established itself in Russia in the eighteenth century, and the Russians traded furs and horses for the new beverage. In the same century Russia opened tea factories directly in Fujian, in order to work the product on the spot, and at the same time the tea began to be cultivated in tea gardens Russian territory, in new tea gardens.

2.1.2 New addictions: tobacco

Tobacco is the product obtained by drying the leaves of the plant of the same name, properly treated and processed. The tobacco plant originates in Central and Temperate America and was later diffused as a smoke plant in industrial cultivation in temperate regions. Before the arrival of the first European settlers, it was used by indigenous peoples.

Whether or not the tobacco plant and its use were unknown to any civilization outside the western hemisphere prior to 1492, the fact is that the first Europeans to witness tobacco smoking were members of Cristoforo Colombo's crew when it landed in the Caribbean islands.[95] In his «Travel journal», Cristoforo Colombo remembered having met the natives with a «ember in their hands», which evidently was a sort of cigarette. The first tobacco seeds arrived in Europe from Brazil in 1557, transported by the French Franciscan friar, cosmographer, and writer André Thevet. Tobacco arrived in England in 1575, brought by the English privateer, navigator, politician, and merchant John Hawkings, who was returning from Florida. Simultaneously with its spread in Europe, tobacco also invaded Asia, as the historian Stefano Levati (2017: 19-20) explains:

[94] Ibidem, p. 71
[95] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 25

> With an almost synchronous movement the Spanish began the spread of tobacco from the east, penetrating from Mexico to the Philippines (already before 1575), and then continuing to Formosa and China (first quarter of the seventeenth century) and from there to Siberia, Mongolia, Turkestan, and Tibet, while from the west the Portuguese took it by sea to Java (1601), India (1605), Ceylon (1610) and probably also to Japan (about 1590) and Macau.

The sending of tobacco seeds to Italy by Cosimo de Medici's ambassador in Paris led to the cultivation of the plant in Tuscany. The papal nuncio in Lisbon simultaneously introduced the seeds to the Vatican, where they were planted in gardens.[96] Tobacco arrived in West Africa through French intermediaries, in East Africa through the Portuguese and Arabs, and in Maghreb Africa through the British. During the era 1650 to 1850, tobacco moved far beyond its initial aficionados in the Americas, Europe, the Muslim Mediterranean, and the western coasts of Africa. It spread globally through the new European maritime commercial networks, and in short order tobacco dug footholds outside the Americas.[97]

2.1.3 New textiles: cotton

The cotton plant designates annual herbs or shrubs of ancient cultivation in Egypt. Over the centuries cotton cultivation has spread to America, Russia, India, China and various other countries. The seeds of the cotton plant constitute the textile material. The final product, obtained through the drying of seeds and subsequent spinning, is used for the manufacture of fabrics. Cotton plants were grown in South Asia, Central America and East Africa, and the populations of these areas were aware of the importance of this crop. The fabrics obtained from the weaving of the seeds of the plant were worn by craftsmen. The people of Mexico sent a portion of the yarn to their Aztec rulers at Tenochtitlán, as part of their annual tribute. Although domestication, spinning and weaving of cotton evolved independently in South Asia, Central America and East Africa, soon knowledge of cotton weaving spread. Knowledge quickly spread along the trade and migratory routes existing at the time: from Mesoamerica to the north, from East Africa to the east, from India to the west, east and south.[98]

When the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrived in Calicut, India, in 1498, Europeans first had access to Indian weavers' products. The Portuguese were the first to transport large quantities of

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[96] Ibidem, p. 39
[97] Webb James L. A., *Globalization of disease, 1300 to 1900*, in *The Cambridge world history Volume 6: The Construction of a Global World, 1400–1800 CE, Part 1: Foundations*, p. 54 – 75, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2015), p. 70
[98] Beckert Sven, *L'impero del cotone – Una storia globale*, Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore (2016), p. 11

cotton to the Old World. Portuguese glory lasted for about a century, as in the seventeenth century the Portuguese were replaced by the Dutch and the British in control of the cloth trade, the first via the VOC and the second via the BEIC. Even the French, thanks to the founding of the CIO in 1664, began to import Indian fabrics, which took the name of «Indiennes». They bought cotton fabrics in India to trade for spices in Southeast Asia or to import them to Europe or to tarnish them in Africa, becoming commodities for slaves who would work in the New World plantations.[99] Thus began the slave market for the cultivation of cotton. As they became a regular presence in India, European merchants also penetrated East African markets, with the result that European supremacy grew on both sides of the Indian Ocean.[100] A world empire of cotton was then created, mastered by the European centrality that dominated the worlds of cotton. In historically cotton-producing countries, Europeans put in place a «war capitalism» that allowed them to dominate the worlds of cotton, through slavery in the production of raw materials and the violence of the increasingly widespread exploitation of indigenous manufacturing in the countryside. In this way, Europeans became part of the Indian production process. Subsequently, Europeans, through the practice of violence, eliminated local mediators who managed Indian production, so that they could directly control prices. The European privileged commercial companies created an extensive trade between Asia, the Americas, Africa and Europe. In the nineteenth century, cotton made up a global network of agriculture, trade and industrial production never seen before.[101] In America, millions of African slaves cultivated and worked plants to obtain raw cotton. Industrialization and slavery go hand in hand.[102] The raw cotton was bought by the British, who transported it in steamboats from America to British factories, where it was woven into fabrics thanks to mechanical spinning machines. The fabrics thus obtained were sold in the markets all around the world. One of the most important trade hubs for the cotton trade was Liverpool, where the ships, loaded with cotton, unloaded the bales in the warehouses that would then be distributed. In the second half of the eighteenth century, cotton manufacture was introduced in England, which exported its products in France, Spain, Netherlands and Germany. The original centers of the cotton industry in England were Manchester, Mulhouse, Barmen and Lowell. The beginning of European textile production began to replace Indian production, but Europeans continued to import the raw material of the land in which they developed control.

[99] Ibidem, p. 34
[100] Ibidem, p. 36
[101] Ibidem, p. XV
[102] Orsenna Erik, *Viaggio nei paesi del cotone*, Milano: Ponte alle Grazie (2007), p. 10

2.2 Effects of exotic substances on Early Modern Age society and culture: first form of globalization

From the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth-century substances with addictive qualities such as tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor were introduced, found acceptance, and spread with remarkable speed around the globe.[103]

2.2.1 Colonial beverages and new places of aggregation

Colonial beverages were some of the so-called «global goods» whose increasingly intense circulation during the Modern Age contributed to a profound restructuring of daily life habits and commercial circuits towards the creation of an increasingly wide audience of consumers.[104] Colonial beverages were introduced into European nutrition due to a decline in the use of spices as a status of refinement and wealth, that instead became, over the years, of common use. The new drinks then acquired a new fascination, thanks to their exotic origin. Chocolate, coffee, and tea were immediately considered medicinal products in the Old World. The initial classification and description of the new substances occurred not under the heading of food, beverages, or entertainment, but that of medicinal agents. In the resulting quest for experimental material and curative agents the new stimulants played a prominent role.[105] The physicians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries suspected in these drinks a common agent, although unidentified, and many of what we now call the pharmacological and psychoactive properties of caffeine were recognized well before its detection.[106]

Chocolate is a popular drink thanks to two substances contained in it: caffeine, present in modest quantities compared to tea and coffee, and theobromine, a stimulating chemical that enhances the effects of caffeine. As the Muslims had found in coffee a substitute for wine, the Aztecs appreciated chocolate because, with its stimulating effects, it offered them a substitute for the traditional indigenous drink, «octli», the fermented fruit of agave, which involved drunkenness, strongly disapproved by the Aztec civilization.[107] Aztec aristocrats prohibited the use of chocolate to ordinary

[103] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 24
[104] Delogu Giulia, *Venezia atlantica: per un'analisi economica e culturale dell'impatto dei generi coloniali nel secondo Settecento*, in *RiMe. Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea n. 8/1* (2021)
[105] Ibidem, p. 29
[106] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 105
[107] Ibidem, p. 56

people, including priests; only soldiers were excluded from this restriction, as caffeine was useful in military expeditions.

Cocoa beans were among the specimens Colombo brought back from his exploration voyage, but the first assortment shipped to Spain was seen as useless and discarded.[108] Cortés was initially impressed by the stimulating effects of chocolate and recommended the cultivation of cocoa to King Carlo V d'Asburgo in order to fortify the action of his soldiers in battle. Hernan Cortés reintroduced in Spain the bean as well as the knowledge of its application to the Iberian Peninsula, where it was kept a secret during the entire sixteenth century.[109] Carlo V used to mix cocoa with brown sugar, imported from the East: this new incredibly expensive drink, due to the high cost of its ingredients, became a real craze at the Spanish court and became popular at its very beginning. At the court of Madrid, chocolate became a status symbol. It was part of the Spanish court style which, in the seventeenth century, even before Versailles, held the primacy among the European courts.[110] With the arrival of the secrets of chocolate, the Spanish aristocracy immediately adopted the fashion of the Aztec nobility and so began the spread of caffeine and theobromine in European culture.[111] At the beginning the Spanish monks, who regularly drank chocolate, enjoyed a monopoly on cocoa. They themselves also acted as promoters, as they offered the drink to the visiting brethren from abroad, who spread it in their monasteries. In addition, in the seventeenth century, Spain served as the center of fashion and European society, where travelers from all over the world gathered to learn about the new trends. In this way, between the monks and the laity chocolate was widespread and welcomed as a pleasant drink with many health benefits.[112] In the Old Continent, cocoa and chocolate aroused a great deal of curiosity: they opened new discussions and books were even written on the subject. On one side chocolate was seen as energy and digestive food, and on the other hand, because of its warmth, it was looked at with a certain suspicion. Nevertheless, chocolate was appreciated in Europe for being a powerful stimulant and a nutritious and satiating drink. The Catholics of the time appreciated chocolate because it sustained them during their ritual fasts. According to the principle that a liquid does not interrupt fasting, chocolate served as a food substitute during periods of fasting. This function immediately made it an essential beverage in both Catholic countries, Spain and Italy.[113] Aristocrats used to start their day with a cup of hot chocolate. Chocolate became popular in Italy,

[108] Wagner Gillian, *The chocolate conscience*, London: Chatto & Windus (1987)
[109] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 27
[110] Schivelbusch Wolfgang, *Storia dei generi voluttuari – Spezie, caffè, cioccolato, tabacco, alcol e altre droghe,* Milano: Edizioni Bruno Mondadori (1999), p. 99
[111] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 59
[112] Ibidem, p. 68
[113] Schivelbusch Wolfgang, *Storia dei generi voluttuari – Spezie, caffè, cioccolato, tabacco, alcol e altre droghe,* p. 95

France, the Netherlands, Austria, and England. In Italy, chocolate spread during the seventeenth century, first in the courts of the Savoia in Piedmont and of the Medici in Tuscany, then in the big cities like Venice and Naples, and anyway not for a mass consumption but for an exclusive and refined consumption.[114] However, by 1662 its popularity was so great that its use had become a religious issue, but it was highly regarded for sustaining the devoted with nourishment and energy during their fasts.[115] Chocolate, together with coffee, was sold by Italian street vendors. After a first wave of interest, the passion for tea gradually faded in Paris and in the years that followed was replaced by a preference for coffee and chocolate, while tea remained available only in pharmacies.[116] When the Spanish princess Anna of Austria was given in marriage to King Louis XIII of France, she brought in a cocoa dowry. In this way, the French court was initiated into the new luxury, and after, with the reign of Louis XIV, chocolate became hugely popular among the upper classes. Given its high cost, chocolate was an aristocratic drink in Spain and in France, and it was only in the seventeenth century, when its price fell, that it also spread among the bourgeoisie. In a different way, Holland was modern Europe's first republic, and, accordingly, in that country there emerged a pattern of chocolate usage different from that which prevailed in the monarchies.[117] Since the Dutch imported large quantities of cocoa beans, in the Netherlands chocolate became accessible to the middle classes. From Amsterdam, chocolate went to Germany and Scandinavia and crossed the Alps to enter northern Italy, where the Italian chocolate masters created recipes that became popular all over the continent.[118] Chocolate, directly imported from Spain, became popular in Austria because Carlo V kept the tariffs on the product low: only in Austria did chocolate become what could be called a national drink.[119] In Germany, where chocolate arrived in the eighteenth century, it was a beverage associated with luxury and elegance, and therefore consumed by the aristocracy. In the Swiss painting below (Figure 7), it is possible to see a waitress serving the drink to the artist for breakfast. This pastel is the first example of chocolate represented in the European figurative arts outside of Spain.

[114] Perullo Nicola, *Cioccolata, caffè e tè in Europa tra storia e cultura*

[115] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, p. 33

[116] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 80

[117] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, p. 33

[118] Ibidem, p. 34

[119] Ibidem, p. 34

Figure 5 Jean-Étienne Liotard, *The chocolate girl*, Swiss pastel, about 1744 – 1745, Dresden: Dresden State Art Museums

In contrast with Spain and France, where both coffee and cocoa were initially trappings of the aristocracy, in England, as in Holland, both were sold to the public in shops almost from the start, to consume there or take out, although at ten to fifteen shillings a pound, these earliest "reasonable rates" were so high that only the prosperous could afford to partake frequently.[120] From 1690 chocolate houses opened at White's in St James Street and Cocoa Tree in Pall Mall, in London, which welcomed both aristocrats and bohemians. In the American continent, cocoa was used for its medicinal properties, sold by pharmacists. In America, the use of cocoa was borrowed from the European use as a tasty and stimulating beverage, but as soon as it became known also this use became extremely popular.[121]

[120] Ibidem, p. 34
[121] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 73

In the Arab medical literature, there are references that in the tenth century coffee was used as a medicine.[122] The Yemeni Sufi Order, where coffee history began in the fifteenth century, used this drink as a stimulant. Its energetic effect helped them reduce the need to sleep to sustain their rituals during Sufi assemblies, which were held at night, without making use of wine, which was forbidden. When morning came, they returned to their homes and their work, bringing the memory of caffeine's energizing effects with them, and sharing the knowledge of coffee drinking with their fellows.[123] The use of coffee extended beyond the scope of the rites with the birth of the first coffee houses, meeting places where the drink was served and whose frequenters were excited by caffeine, which sometimes caused riots, clashes and brawls. With the spread of the energetic effects of caffeine, which permeated every layer of secular society, Orthodox Muslim jurists condemned the new drink: in the Qur'an there was a clear warning to prohibit coffee for its stimulating action, considered similar to that of wine and hashish, coffee houses therefore posed a threat to social and political stability.[124] Despite this warning, from the sixteenth century coffee houses spread to all major cities of Islam. They were elegant structures, located in the luxurious neighborhoods of the larger cities, in which access was denied to women, who could, however, consume coffee at home. Weinberg and Bealer (2009) explain how coffee brought some shocking innovations into Islamic society. Some of them were perceived as dangers: they encouraged secular public assemblies, previously considered unthinkable in a respectable society; people, who used to eat at home, had the freedom to meet in a public place for refreshment, fun and conversation, but also for rumors; there were frivolous activities, games such as chess and checkers; secular music and musical entertainments that were heard in the premises encouraged the dissipation; coffee-goers consumed hard drugs such as hashish and opium. Other innovations were perceived as opportunities: coffee houses were a first place of informal, public, literary and intellectual aggregation, where poets and writers read their works and animated comparisons of science and the arts, and where they learned and discussed the latest social and political events.

In the sixteenth century, European travelers to Islamic domains reported vivid accounts of the first coffee houses. During the seventeenth century, the first English coffee houses opened: in 1650 the first coffee room in Oxford, and in 1652 in London, at Cornhill & St. Michael's Alley. They were followed by numerous openings in the Dutch cities of Aja, Amsterdam, and Haarlem. The history of English coffee houses and many others, opened in the following fifty years, where not only coffee

[122] Schivelbusch Wolfgang, *Storia dei generi voluttuari – Spezie, caffè, cioccolato, tabacco, alcol e altre droghe,* p. 17 – 18 – 19
[123] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, p. 7
[124] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 21

but also tea and chocolate were commonly served, is an interesting chapter in social, economic, political and literary history.[125] It is interesting to notice that the only objection to coffee houses in Europe was in England. The king, because of wives' discontent in seeing their husband wasting money outside home, issued a proclamation in 1675, ordering the closing of these establishments. Within ten days the measure had to be repealed over a storm of popular protest.[126] The coffee houses, intellectual exchange places frequented by writers and philosophers, flourished in the main European centers and coffee, which was an energy and not intoxicating drink, well represented the new society and the intellectual debate, which then took place much in literary coffee houses.[127] The coffee houses acted as a social place, a place of communication and discussion, while the coffee that is served there no longer seemed to have any function.[128] In 1671 the first French café opened in Marseilles, and its success aroused emulators all over the country, while private consumption of coffee continued to grow. The Parisians procured coffee from Marseilles, but only the richest could order a stock. Because of this need, in 1689 he opened the first café in Paris, the Café Procope, which welcomed a select clientele, composed of actors, musicians, literary and political, among which we can name Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, and where Maximilien de Robespierre, Jean-Paul Marat and Georges Jacques Danton traced the path that led to the French Revolution of 1789. With the opening of the Café Procope, the coffee drink established itself in Paris. By distinguishing itself from the popular alcohol-purveying cabarets through a sumptuous décor and an air of sophistication, the Café Procope managed to attract a high-class clientele that took advantage of the opportunity to gather separately from the common man. Soon others followed this example and coffee houses proliferated.[129] From the beginning of the eighteenth century, cafés spread to Paris as quickly as they spread to London in the second half of the seventeenth century.[130] Among the most famous Parisian cafés we can mention: the Café Parnasse and the Café Bourette, where writers and poets gathered, the Café Anglais, where actors and spectators gathered after having attended a theatrical show, and the Café Alexandre, where musicians and composers drew inspiration for their works. The history of caffeine in Europe did not progress until the explosion of maritime trade between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries corresponded to an intense international cultivation that made coffee, tea and cocoa accessible at a popular price.[131] In England and the Netherlands,

[125] Ibidem, p. XVIII
[126] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 36
[127] Perullo Nicola, *Cioccolata, caffè e tè in Europa tra storia e cultura*
[128] Schivelbusch Wolfgang, *Storia dei generi voluttuari – Spezie, caffè, cioccolato, tabacco, alcol e altre droghe,* p. 67
[129] Brennan Thomas Edward, *Public drinking and popular culture in eighteenth-century Paris*, Princeton: Princeton Legacy Library (2016)
[130] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 87
[131] Ibidem, p. 78

coffee and cocoa were sold in shops right away, but high prices allowed only the wealthiest to access it frequently.[132] Coffee, like tea, was promoted and banned by Dutch doctors, but its popularity grew as unstoppable in all Dutch social classes.[133] In 1685 the first coffee house opened in Wien, and coffee became commonly used. The Viennese coffee houses brought together the whole of society: professionals, employees, newcomers, the unemployed and immigrants. When in 1714 some coffee entrepreneurs joined a trade association, the Viennese coffee trade accordingly grew larger. In Germany, the first spread of coffee was due more to the influence of foreigners than to the example of the upper classes.[134] In fact, it was a Dutchman who founded the first German coffee room, to please the taste of English merchants and sailors who were passing through for their business in Hamburg. Other coffee houses opened in Resensburg, Leipzig and Berlin, and in 1725 German coffee houses helped spread caffeine among the middle classes of society. The king of Prussia Frederick II of Hohenzollern, called «Fredrick the Great», lived a lifetime of aversion to coffee: he issued edicts and taxes and set up a special police team to defend his subjects from the threat of coffee, which worked against their health and their savings.[135] In this way, the use of coffee was allowed aristocracy, but it was forbidden to common people. Fredrick the Great's fears were that by buying coffee abroad, money would leave Prussia, and that coffee would be harmful to health as doctors claimed. All these prohibitions led to a coffee smuggling market. Frederick the Great's campaign against coffee also had consequences in Germany, where its use disappeared in Hamburg, the first city in which it appeared. Nevertheless, Leipzig became renowned for its gardens and coffee houses, and Berlin also became an important center for its diffusion. In Germany, special coffee sessions began to be organized by and for women. These gatherings were occasions for the exchange of news and gossip and may be seen as the female response to the coffee houses which by then had clearly become a male domain.[136] In Italy, coffee arrived in the seventeenth century and its use was limited to an elite of students, teachers, and visitors to the University of Padua. Conservative Catholic priests opposed the consumption of coffee, considering it a violence of the divine law: it, with its evil effects, had been introduced by the devil, who thus aggravated the corruption of souls.[137] But when Pope Clement VIII tasted the beverage, struck by its flavor, he baptized it as usable by Christians. In 1683 the first coffee houses opened in Italy, in Venice, and in the following centuries the coffee houses, where intellectuals and artists gathered, invaded the whole peninsula (Figure 6).

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[132] Ibidem, p. 71
[133] Ibidem, p. 81
[134] Ibidem, p. 98
[135] Ibidem, p. 98
[136] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 41
[137] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 81

Figure 6 Ludwig Johann Passini, *Artist in Caffè Greco in Rome*, Austrian painting, 1856

Coffee was sold in Italy by Italian street vendors. Pietro and Alessandro Verri and Cesare Beccaria, who were members of the cultural institution «Accademia dei pugni», published in 1764 the Italian gazette «Il caffè», which allowed Italy to enter the European philosophical and literary debate and where members took on political and civic battles; for instance, they championed in favor of the smallpox inoculation.

Wolfgang Schivelbusch (1999: 21) compares the use of coffee by aristocrats and bourgeois:

> As an additional refinement, the court aristocracy added coffee to its luxury culture. [...] What mattered to the courtiers was not coffee as a drink, but the forms with which they could taste it, the opportunities it offered to show off elegance, grace and preciousness. The porcelain services, created specifically for the tasting of coffee at the courts, turned out to be the most important thing, just as in absolutism everything was determined by the ceremonial forms of the court. Form prevailed over content. Quite different, on the other hand, is the way to consider coffee proper to the bourgeois society of the time. At the center of the interest was not the form but the substance, the actual drink. And the substance itself meant concrete physiological properties and effects that were attributed to coffee.

With coffee and coffee houses, caffeine transformed society and culture, from the Middle East to Europe, America and beyond.[138] Nicola Perullo (2015) makes a comparison between the entry into society of chocolate and that of coffee:

> If chocolate was the symbol of Catholicism, of the aristocracy and of the old regime, coffee thus initially became the symbol of the Protestant ethics of Northern countries, of the industrial revolution and of the new capitalist society. This happened thanks to its properties: considered as a hangover remedy - to prevent the hangover, drinking coffee instead of alcohol, and to possibly cure its effects later – it was hailed as adjuvant for the best energy efficiency, allowing both body and mind to work more and better.

In the Asian countries, tea had a social and spiritual dimension. The Chinese learned the use of tea from the natives of North India and the Aboriginal tribes of Southeast Asia. From its discovery, tea became the beverage of body and spirit in China, where Confucian spirituality was integrated by the tea ceremony. The guides of these traditional values were the monks and the masters of tea, who were in charge of preparing the drink, with the related teachings of technique, tradition and spirituality, and to spread and pass on the art and culture of tea throughout China and Asia. In fact, in addition to being perceived as a natural drink because it was obtained from simple leaves, with invigorating and medical properties, tea was also considered a cultural drink, because around his gardens stood monasteries within which intellectuals and religious confronted and wrote texts with a cup of tea in their hands.[139] Until the Tang era, that took control in the seventh century, tea was an exclusive prerogative of the monks, but later tea was spread to large sections of the population. Tea rooms, dating back in China to the thirteenth century, became important centers of social life. Like coffee houses in the Arab world and in Europe, they played a significant role in the political life of the nation.[140] In Japan tea imposes itself as a search for beauty through harmony and balance. Buddhism and tea culture were among the socio-cultural components that more than others contributed to shape the identity of Japan from the seventh century after Christ.[141] In Japan, the tea ceremony was the most important tool for approaching Buddhism.[142] From the fourteenth century the consumption of tea, first only the prerogative of the monks, extended to all the Japanese population, who lived the tradition of tea as a spiritual but also worldly moment. In Vietnam, where the plant was already present in the wild state, tea spread from the beginning in all social strata and was served to guests, thus offering an opportunity for conviviality. In Tibet there was a wide use of tea in Buddhist temples and monasteries,

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[138] Ibidem, p. 367
[139] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 8
[140] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 51
[141] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 39
[142] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 51

but among society two different teas were used: the aristocratic tea was made from precious leaves of plants grown in the monasteries of Sichuan and Fijian, while the people drank tea of poor quality. In Mongolia, nomads used to have tea morning and night, convinced of its beneficial properties for the stomach and against headaches. They associated tea with the spiritual dimension: in fact, the precious leaves were given as a gift to Tibetan lamas as a sign of respect and in request of spiritual protection.[143] Tea arrived in Russia through a Mongolian delegation, and since its introduction it was consumed by the whole society, which stood out in the consumption of expensive green tea of exceptional quality and common pressed black tea. In 1600 in Persia, as will happen in Europe in the eighteenth century, the consumption of drinks reflected the social status[144]: in the taverns where coffee and tea were drunk gathered the most important personalities, artists, and writers, while the wine taverns were frequented by people of dubious reputation. In Turkey, until the opening of Suez Canal in 1869, which allowed people to obtain tea for lower costs than that sold by European merchants, tea was exclusively a beverage reserved for the rich.

European missionaries, sent to Asia to bring the population to Christianity, were enchanted by the refinement and culture of tea, attracting the attention of fellow countrymen at home. The use of tea as a beverage was introduced in Europe in the seventeenth century, where it became a common beverage especially in the United Kingdom, Netherlands, and Germany. In Europe, despite the high costs, tea consumption quickly spread to all strata of society, and in some contexts, it replaced coffee as the preferred beverage.[145] Europeans desired something new, and this desire was accompanied by a change in drinking tastes, and in the Old Continent a new taste for the exotic and for the oriental aesthetics prevailed. Doctors of the seventeenth century were divided into two opinions about the healing properties of tea. On one hand, some doctors welcomed the new drink with enthusiasm, extolling the healthy and beneficial virtues of exotic drinks to be introduced into the European drinking culture, seeing them also as an alternative to the abuse of alcoholic beverages that constituted a social scourge. On the other hand, other doctors were skeptical, because they saw tea as a dangerous exciting drink with a health risk because of the caffeine it contained, which may have had harmful consequences for the nervous system. Nevertheless, tea conquered the aristocratic and bourgeois salons, where the splendor of an extremely expensive drink linked to the exotic charm was displayed. Widespread throughout Europe, tea adapted to different cultures, and after a restricted use to high society, especially because of its cost, tea adapted also to social classes, showing its power of social cohesion: a tea of poor quality was reserved to the working class, but in spite of that, it was not willing

143 Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 75
144 Ibidem, p. 80
145 Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. XVIII

to give it up.[146] In Europe, as in Asia, intellectuals and artists gathered around tea. They consumed tea in European tea houses and tea gardens, where they exchanged information and ideas. Tea was imported in France at the end of the seventeenth century, and it suddenly became an important beverage. From 1692 and for the next ten years, tea was a luxury commodity because French king Louis XIV granted exclusive rights to a single merchant in the entire country, whose name was François Dammann.[147] In France, tea was used as a remedy for a series of ailments, and it was consumed in aristocratic salons, in the private lounges called «boudoirs», in the dining room only by ladies, because at the beginning men were served coffee, and women tea. With the fall of the French monarchy in 1792, the middle class emerged, and tea began to be consumed in the city. It became a convivial beverage appreciated by both women and men, and the sense of relaxation that its assumption involved stimulated intellectual conversations and activities.[148] When tea imports increased, far exceeding those of their French predecessors, the Netherlands became the most important European crossroads of caffeine. In the Aja the Dutch consumed high-end, sought-after and expensive tea for the aristocracy alone, and tea became the most precious commodity in the Netherlands. In the seventeenth century tea arrived in Germany, where it was sold only in the pharmacies. Only the German upper classes were allowed to use it in salons. In Italy, oriental goods disembarked from the free port of Livorno and to be then sent to Florence, a city in which the use of tea spread, sold at a high price, limiting its use only to a privileged few. In the eighteenth century, tea took the place of coffee in the consumption of the English population. In England tea was a marker of the social life of the English people, and therefore a tool for identifying their culture, unlike other Mediterranean countries such as France or Italy, where preferences were directed towards coffee and chocolate.[149] As the English wine and food writer Philip Morton Shand affirmed, tea has long been a female prerogative. In fact, were noblewomen such as Catarina Henriqueta de Bragança, wife of King Charles II of England, and the Duchess of York Maria Beatrice d'Este, wife of James II Stuart, to introduce the use of tea in English society. In a certain sense, the Portuguese contributed to the English enthusiasm for tea, through the Portuguese Princess Catarina Henriqueta de Bragança who introduced many exotic luxuries into her adopted land.[150] Following the example of the two queens mentioned before, who regularly drank tea in the company of their ladies-in-waiting, also the British aristocracy expressed a strong appreciation for tea. The ladies took tea in the living rooms, where they loved to chat, taking the opportunity to show off sophisticated clothes and adorn themselves with precious stones. Men consumed tea in public in the coffee houses, where only men and artists drank coffee,

[146] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 6
[147] Ibidem, p. 97
[148] Ibidem, p. 226
[149] Ibidem, p. X
[150] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 76

tea and other beverages and ate cakes and small meals, and a place where news items, information and ideas were exchanged. Men and women then lived the moments of leisure separately. They gathered only later, in the middle of the eighteenth century, in the tea gardens, which were gardens adorned with gazebos, where to have tea and small meals in company. In the same century, coffee houses were opened to all social classes.[151] The English interest in tea caused the disappearance of English coffee houses, around the year 1750. The gardens and tea rooms welcomed a new and expanded clientele from that time on, as England was the only western country to deny access to coffee houses to women.[152]

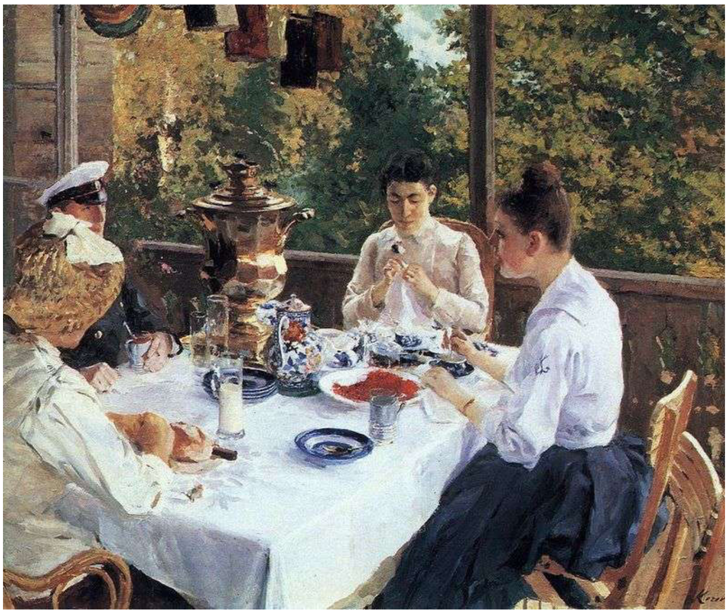

Figure 7 Konstantin Alekseevič Korovin, *At the tea table*, Russian painting, 1888, Strakhovo: Vassily Polenov Fine Art Museum

During the Victorian Age and afterwards, tea marked the days of the English: it was consumed obligatory at breakfast and in the afternoon, during the afternoon tea, when in the aristocratic and bourgeois salons of the city and of the countryside guests were received. The afternoon tea became not only an opportunity for a refreshing break, but also a moment of socialization, to exchange information and to make new friends.[153]

In conclusion, as Linda Reali states (2019: 56), «tea has been a sensory and cultural bridge able to approach the East and the West», it fascinated European aristocrats but also other European social

[151] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 133
[152] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 193
[153] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 213

classes, acting as a common good that created new habits in the lives of all Europeans. Weinberg and Bealer (2009: 42) discussed the similarities between coffee and tea:

> At the beginning they both were harvested in the wild and used only as stimulants or medicines; both were grown for the first time and ingested as a beverage only in relatively recent times; they were both introduced into the territories now associated with their origin by religious, returning from a neighboring nation, who used it to stay awake during meditations; from its first appearance in China, tea leaves were used as a bargaining chip, like coffee beans in Arabia.

Rudi Matthee (1995: 38) explains how chocolate, coffee and tea spread in the European society:

> The substances examined exhibit similarities not only in the patterns of their introduction and initial application but also in the manner in which they became disseminated and gained popularity among various segments of society. […] Coffee, tea, and chocolate at first were exceedingly expensive drinks and therefore outside the reach of all but the well-to-do. As a regular supply system came into being, however, prices fell, and the substances became more affordable. […] Stimulants played a role of tokens marking shifting class and gender lines. Except in the case of tobacco, popularization of what initially were expensive novelties occurred as a "downward" movement, with ordinary people gradually adopting consumer habits that once were the exclusive domain of the wealthy who, in turn, often emulated the fashion of royal circles.

2.2.2 The addictiveness of tobacco

Since the first century after Christ, North American Indians used tobacco for religious or magical rituals, smoking it in large red stone pipes cut, or wrapping the leaves in the shell of corn cobs. Later, while retaining part of its original sacral character, it became common among the natives. Together with other plants coming from the New World, such as potato, chili and tomato, also tobacco began a slow and silent diffusion in the Old World, finding hospitality in the botanical gardens as ornamental plants.[154] After Colombo's encounter with the plant and its use by Caribbean indigenous, soon the use of tobacco became subject of discussion among scholars, and it spread in Europe as a fashion. The French ambassador Jean Nicot, who stayed in Lisbon between 1558 and 1560, received the tobacco plant as a gift from the Portuguese, and sent some seeds to France. He was fascinated by the therapeutic use of it by the indigenous Americans, and thought it might help queen Catherine de' Medici, wife of the French king Henry II of Valois, to alleviate the pain caused by the migraine she

[154] Levati Stefano, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna – Secoli XVII - XIX*, Roma: Viella Libreria Editrice (2017), p. 14

suffered. Tobacco worked as an antidote to the queen's pain, who engaged in tobacco propaganda in France and the Republic of Venice, and its use spread among French population, first at the royal court, then between the Parisian bourgeoisie and finally in the province. Paris became the driving force behind new consumption, which quickly spread to the courts throughout continental Europe.[155] Stefano Levati (2017: 9) writes:

> At the end of the sixteenth century the tobacco plant was little, or nothing known, and only for therapeutic purposes; during the first three decades of the following century, it imposed itself so rapidly among all social classes to become an important subject in medical treatises-scientific, and subject of poetic entertainments and performances to delight the courts of the sovereigns.

The use of tobacco penetrated in all walks of life of the European population, among which snuff became an uncontrollable fashion for the elites while tobacco in the form of pipe dust was consumed among the less well-off, that makes us notice a social distinction in different ways in consuming tobacco. In the following centuries, the use of cigars, widespread in the nineteenth century, caused a further extraordinary increase in the per capita use of tobacco.[156] Having overcome the interest only in botany, several doctors decided to dedicate specific studies to tobacco. Tobacco quickly became known as a panacea: it was held to be effective against a long series of ailments; its seeds and leaves were accredited to have healing powers for afflictions as varied as running wounds, whitlow, rashes of the face, against syphilis, it was a disinfectant, useful during the 1635 and 1636 pandemic in Holland, during the plague in London in 1665, during the epidemic in Vienna in 1679.[157] In addition to a medical use of tobacco leaves, the presence of nicotine, with stimulating and euphoric but also relaxing and anxiolytic action, led to a voluptuous use of tobacco. The first group to use tobacco in Europe were the soldiers and sailors who set out on military expeditions and commercial ventures from the ports of Lisbon, Genova, and Naples.[158] The military played a key role in the penetration of tobacco into Central Europe. During the Thirty Years' War, fought between 1618 and 1648, the soldiers propagated tobacco consumption first in the territories devastated by the conflict, then in Austria, Hungary and Russia.[159] The largest tobacco consumers in Europe were soldiers and sailors, which led to hostility to the practice of smoking in the Mediterranean world: smoking was considered an inappropriate practice of slaves and plebeians.[160] England was characterized by an early

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155 Ibidem, p. 17
156 Ibidem, p. 9
157 Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 29
158 Ibidem, p. 26
159 Levati Stefano, *Storia del tabacco nell'Italia moderna – Secoli XVII - XIX*, p. 28
160 Ibidem, p. 21

consumption of tobacco that began in the late sixteenth century, and the British government imposed taxes on its consumption, concerned about the possible social and public order implications of excessive consumption. In the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands, the main tobacco users were university students, but then the use spread among all social classes and among women. Here pipe smoking was common among all classes. With growing French influence in the eighteenth century, however, snuff became common among the upper ranks of Dutch society as well.[161] Even Spain was characterized by an early consumption of tobacco, and its use was a common habit to the whole population. The initial medical-pharmacological use of tobacco influenced the onset of its voluptuous consumption. Because of this uncontrollable situation, European countries implemented fiscal and regulatory measures to combat this new phenomenon. For example, England implemented a tax on tobacco imports, Spain exploited the growing trade for tax purposes, Norway forbade tobacco imports and the various Italian sovereigns decided to subject it to privatization, which determined a weight of the turnover linked to the commercialization of the product. These taxes on the legal consumption of tobacco also involved a smuggling market, which took place in Italy especially in the Papal States, the Kingdom of Naples and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Moralists and preachers continued to inveigh against the satanic origin or the debilitating effect of tobacco, but lost ground to bureaucrats who realized that the addictive substance, far from just draining bullion, might actually be turned into a source of profit expanding tax base.

2.2.3 Cotton and the industrial revolution

In America, Africa and Asia, small plots of land were used to grow cotton, which was spun and turned into fabric by peasant families who then used it for themselves or gave it to their owners. Since Europeans established direct contact with cotton plantations in the sixteenth century, the cotton industry flourished. By appropriating the biological wealth of a plant of ancient origins, and the expertise of the enormous markets of the old Asian, African and American industry, European entrepreneurs and politicians built a cotton empire of extraordinary vastness and vitality.[162] In Europe, with the arrival of cotton, new markets and new fashions were born: the new fabrics were worn by the European aristocracy to flaunt their social status. African kings and merchants also contributed to the increase in demand for cotton, which required African slaves to be transported to the American colonies to work on the cotton, sugar, rice, tobacco, and indigo plantations. In 1780, cotton became the protagonist of the British Industrial Revolution. After the «war capitalism» we talked about in the

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[161] Matthee Rudi, *Exotic substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, p. 40
[162] Beckert Sven, *L'impero del cotone – Una storia globale*, Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore (2016), p. XVIII

paragraph 2.1.3, the Europeans put «industrial capitalism» in place. Industrial capitalism is a consequence of war capitalism, as it was only possible thanks to the profits made by the latter. They financed the installation of mechanization industries before spinning and then weaving cotton, which led to the concentration of labor in large industrial buildings.

Figure 8 Paul Sandby Munn, *Bedlam Furnace, Madeley Dale, Shropshire*, English painting, 1803, London: Tate Modern Museum

The new industry increased the quality but above all the quantitative productivity of the production of cotton. With the construction and commissioning of the factories there was an increasing concentration of the population in the cities, which gave rise to a market competition and an enterprising economy, in which the entrepreneurs sought workers. However, the industrialists also engaged in a brutal exploitation of work by a number of workers with high percentages of children and women at reduced wages. It is interesting to note that, with mechanization, the male workforce was replaced by the female one. In fact, mechanization no longer required a strong workforce like that of the men, who before had to manually throw the cotton fuse, but could also be carried out by a force considered weaker, that of the women.

Since the beginning, the cotton empire has been the scene of a global battle between slaves and planters, traders and politicians, farmers and merchants, workers, and industrialists. In this and other ways, the cotton empire has started the modern world.[163] The industrial revolution, of which cotton is the protagonist, brought with it consequences. One of the results of the industrial revolution was

[163] Ibidem, p. XIX

the realization of the modern production system, as already mentioned. There was also a revolution in transport both by water and by rail and rail which favoured what appeared to be an insatiable demand for coal, iron and, later, steel. Goods, people and ideas had a way of travelling faster. The industrial revolution did not manifest itself uniformly, as Europe, at the end of the eighteenth century, was still essentially agricultural. In France, serfdom was abolished only at the time of the French Revolution, and in Prussia it lasted until 1807. In Italy there was still a large class of employed agricultural workers. In Russia, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were still tens of millions of slaves. But soon the cities of Germany and the Netherlands became textile, metallurgical, coal and steel centres. The effects of the recent inventions were more striking in Germany, where the construction of a complex railway network allowed the exploitation of enormous deposits of coal and iron, and where the factories, with the use of steam engines, had a prodigious development. The triumphs of industrialization had changed the economic aspect of the European continent. In less than a century, a new Europe had risen on the ashes of the old.

CHAPTER 3

GLOBAL GOODS OF THE CONTEMPORARY AGE

> It is more reasonable to suppose a thing to have been invented by those to whom it would be of service, than by those whom it must have harmed.
>
> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the origin of inequality* (1754)

3.1 Contemporary global goods

Many goods that were once traded in the markets were not commodities in the sense in which we now understand them: land, music, work, care, people, and food once had a much more indefinite status. These goods have become commodities through complex and stratified processes, to be traded in markets with very specific characteristics.[164]

There are several elements that permit us to understand that the world today is globally connected, like food, technology, brands, and culture. As seen in chapter two of this thesis, food has always been a good of global exchange. Over the centuries, trade has allowed the spread of food. Technological development is related to globalization in two different ways. On one hand, technology is composed of a series of products globally diffused that contribute creating shared living areas. On the other hand, technology is related to global history because it does not only create products that are globally spread, but it also develops the very instruments for which global connections are made possible, by travel and communications. In the contemporary era, companies intend to create global brands that could be recognized throughout the world. The brand concept designates a company's brand, its ideals, and objectives. The goal of brands is to assert themselves worldwide in the market globalization, therefore in the markets positioned in the various countries of the world, characterized by increasing competition. With the increasing use of the internet, popular culture media and international travel culture became a good of common consumption. Social relations are constantly intensified by the transmission of ideas, meanings and values around the world that constitute cultural globalization, which is then characterized by the convergence of traditions of different countries. The

[164] Patel Raj, *Il valore delle cose e le illusioni del capitalismo*, Milano: Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Editore (2010), p. 22

scientific research and international organizations are constantly developing to control global diseases.

3.1.1 A global cuisine: the industrialization of food

The so-called colonial beverages are still characters of today's world trade in food species. The use of caffeine has emerged in historical times as a locally circumscribed practice, in Yemen in the form of coffee, in China and in Japan in the form of tea as described in chapter two of this thesis, before suddenly exploding, in recent centuries, on the entire surface of the globe.[165]

Cocoa crops have spread enormously in the planetary area enclosed within twenty degrees from the equator and the market has multiplied the variety of chocolate packages. The Ivory Coast and Ghana are the two countries that together produce more than half of the world's cocoa, followed by Indonesia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Brazil, and Ecuador. The cocoa beans reach the collection center where they are stored in bags to industrialized countries. In the latter, the beans are semi-processed and then sent to the industries that will transform them into the finished product, to be sold to the consumers. Still, today, about 20 percent of the world's cacao beans pass through Amsterdam, and Holland is the world's largest exporter of cacao powder, cacao butter, and chocolate.[166] Switzerland, Austria and Germany are the countries with the highest consumption of chocolate in Europe. 80 percent of the cocoa market is controlled by multinationals.

Since the name of caffeinated drinks has been known in Europe, only coffee seed has established itself as the most traded agricultural product on the world markets and these drinks are now accessible everywhere.[167] Coffee remains among the most important products of world trade. The countries currently producing coffee, which is then marketed throughout the world, are Ethiopia, the country from which the plant itself originates, Brazil, Guatemala, Colombia, Peru, as regards the Arabica variety, India and Vietnam, where the Robusta variety is produced, and Honduras. Coffee is collected from the plantations and then prepared in the collection centers, where it is taken over by the exporter, sometimes formed by a cooperative. This is where the commercial phase begins. The administrative management of daily coffee transactions takes place in New York for the Arabica variety of coffee and in London for Robusta variety of coffee. From the main production countries, coffee is exported by water to the whole world. In Europe, the largest coffee importing countries are Germany, Italy and

[165] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 370
[166] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *The world of caffeine – The science and culture of the world's most popular drug*, p. 33
[167] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 370

Belgium. The importers roast the coffee beans, which are then sold to consumers. Europe is the continent where coffee is mostly consumed, followed by Asia and Oceania and North America. In Europe, the countries where coffee is most consumed are those of northern Europe: Finland, Norway and Denmark. Regarding tea, the main producing countries remain China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka. The economic scope of the coffee trade is enormous, both for producer countries and for consumer countries.[168]

Tea still represents an economic source for the Asian producing countries. China has been and remains the cultural cradle of tea, depositary of a centuries-old tradition and custodian of varieties of cultivars that remain unique for their relationship with the terroir. It produces 40 percent of tea on a global scale, but esports only 16 percent of this quantity because of Chinese jealousy for their tea.[169] Some of them are recognized as a real heritage and therefore protected in their crops. In China today tea is still cultivated in the gardens outside the Buddhist monasteries, but also in their surrounding hills. Tea is collected from the plantations and immediately transported and processed in the plants, so as not to disperse the aromas. The product is then packaged and sold at auction prices in the countries of origin. The subsequent processing of mixtures and distribution to consumers take place in Western countries. The largest tea-consuming country in the world is China, followed by India and Russia. Today Russian tea consumption is unmatched in Europe. The Russians eat a single hearty meal in the afternoon, and sip numerous cups of tea during the day.[170] As happened at the beginning of its imports, the United Kingdom remains the largest tea country consumer in Europe and defines itself as the «home of tea». Concerning Europe, the Dutch, who were the first ones to introduce tea in the Old Continent, continue to play an important role in the trade of tea as regards the import and storage of tea. Over the centuries, Germany has increased its role in importing and reselling loose tea. Returning to the primary phase of the creation of tea, its cultivation is now threatened by global phenomena such as climate change. Torrential rains and floods cause the stagnation of water in the soil, the formation of mould and bacteria that affect the plant up to its buds. The drought causes a desiccation of the soil that dries the roots and then the plant itself. Climate change is paving the way for the cultivation of tea in other places, previously colder and now suitable for temperate and tropical southern crops, like Scotland, New Zealand, and Hawaii.[171] A new global phenomenon is the online

[168] Fumey Gilles, Etcheverria Oliver, *Atlante mondiale della gastronomia*, Milano: Antonio Vallardi Editore (2010), p. 66
[169] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 237
[170] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 103
[171] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 250

buying and selling of food products to avoid commercial intermediaries and widen the range of consumers worldwide.

The kitchens of the world have often met and merged. As Fumey and Etcheverria (2010: 22) describe:

> Products and kitchens have spread as the commercial scope of the merchants expanded thanks to colonial conquests. By accumulating wealth and capital, merchants have especially valued the handicraft and territorial products, making them known all over the world. During the colonial era, many countries knew and judged foreign cuisines.

Maintaining a contemporary perspective, it is well known that there are some types of food that can now be tasted in a country even if they come from abroad. Over the centuries, ingredients and foods have always travelled, mixing with each other and originating the different gastronomic heritage, which are basic elements of a cultural heritage. There is no dish in the world that does not show some form of contamination for the ingredients used or the cooking techniques used.[172] For example, the Döner kebab was spread in Germany in the 60s; the hamburger, born in Germany, spread in America thanks to German emigrants in the nineteenth century; pizza, which is now found all over the world, was spread in New York at the end of the twentieth century thanks to Italian immigrants in the United States. This phenomenon is still evolving due to the globalization of markets and migratory flows to cities.

By the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution also contaminated the food sphere, with the industrialization of food. The dishes of the world cuisine are available to consumers all over the world thanks to technological progress, to the prolongation of the cold chain that allows the food industry to distribute products worldwide. Industrialization leads to the loss of awareness about the origin of the food eaten, which is distorted by the packaging, causing a loss of identity of the product.[173] Industrial food consumption has also been stimulated by the entry of microwaves into domestic kitchens, which drastically reduces the domestic cold chain.

Ever since the twentieth century, the world has witnessed the birth of fast food in America. The first, called «White Castle», opened in 1921 in Wichita, Kansas; in ten years, it expanded into eleven different American states through a franchise. Later, other fast-food restaurants in California and

[172] Fumey Gilles, Etcheverria Oliver, *Atlante mondiale della gastronomia*, p. 4
[173] Ibidem, p. 10

London will open and expand. This phenomenon gets a counterbalance in France, where the «Michelin Guide» was born, which in 1926 is responsible for reporting the best restaurants.

From the end of the Second World War to the end of the twelfth century, the world was characterized by an abundance of food, which touched only a part of the world population.[174] This abundance was composed by the more or less constant decline in the prices of the main food raw materials, the surplus agricultural production, research, the development and transfer of innovation and the doubled agricultural yields per hectare. From 2002, the prices of agricultural raw materials have doubled, the volatility of agricultural activity has increased, as agriculture has to deal with seasonal cycles and good and bad years, the yields of the main crops have slowed down dramatically and there has been a decline in public investment in agricultural research. Since 2002 there has been a «new shortage» linked to food, due to the ecological, economic, and political limits of agricultural production, in the face of growing world demand.[175] In the face of this new shortage, the resources invested in agriculture by the emerging economies of China, India and Brazil have gradually increased. Paolo De Castro (2015: 9) describes this fact:

> China, India and Brazil are new agricultural powers that contend for the primacy that for decades belonged to the United States and Europe. These countries not only make agri-food production a mission to finally free their citizens from the nightmare of hunger, but also a way to participate with a leading role in globalization and gain positions of prominence in the world economic scene.

3.1.2 Global technology: the digital revolution

Technology is one of the main factors through which it is possible to understand that we are living in a globalized world. Transport, which is one of the main technological innovations, is a key player in globalization. As the evolution of transport and communication systems progresses, the speed with which news, goods, information, capital, and technology move from one side of the globe to the other increases, with a consequent acceleration of cross-border interactions and processes.[176] Franco Cardini (2005: 17) describes the globalization process in this respect:

> The process of globalization progressively but not uniformly accelerated: it has produced discontinuity and crisis; it has proceeded in a fatally heterogeneous and disharmonious way. Slow until the seventeenth century because mainly linked to the rhythms of caravans and sailing ships, it went gradually acquiring speed with steam traction and telegraph,

[174] De Castro Paolo, *Cibo – La sfida globale*, Roma: Donzelli editore (2015), p. 7
[175] Ibidem, p. 3
[176] Held David, McGrew Anthony, *Globalismo e antiglobalismo*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino 2010), p. 15

> then with radio and telephone; but the twentieth century - that of television, computer science, telematics, virtual reality - gave it a paroxysmal rhythm.

Among the technical factors that have determined mobility, the transport of information has played a particularly important role, a kind of communication that does not involve at all, or involves only in a secondary and marginal way, a movement of bodies and things.[177] Digital revolution is the process of transition from mechanical, electronic and analog technology to digital technology. This process began in the late 1950s in the industrialized countries of the world through the adoption of computers and digital memories. The digital revolution has created new information and communication technologies. Internet use boomed in the 1990s. Since then, the information society has been based on information technology. The accelerated diffusion of radio, television, internet and satellite and digital technologies has made possible immediate communications in a large part of the world.[178] As their importance has grown, an acronym has been created which includes information technologies and telecommunications: ICT – Information and Communications Technologies. The new forms of digital communication are at the basis of the profound changes of our time. As in the past, the changes are linked to the great communicative transformations that have taken place in history, from orality to writing, from printing to remote communications, from video links to digital relations.[179] The unequalled development of horizontal interactive communication networks that connect the local global has been made possible by the ubiquitous presence of the Internet, wireless communication, digital media, and social networks.[180]

Telephones and the Internet completely changed the way people communicate from place to place and made communications easier, regardless of distance, instantly available all over the globe. The World Wide Web connects billions of people. The Internet, as a communication tool, has become the main platform on which interpersonal relationships, work, the provision of services, and in which the contents are disseminated: it has become the environment in which culture is born and a way of inhabiting the world is formed.[181] Several technological products, development and services are nowadays sold all over the world. The spread of smartphones caused a growing use of social networks. Social networks were born in 1997 as a development of blogs, which were and still are sites in which the contents are inserted by one or more authors, with the possibility of the readers

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[177] Bauman Zygmunt, *Dentro la globalizzazione – Le conseguenze sulle persone*, p. 18
[178] Held David, McGrew Anthony, *Globalismo e antiglobalismo*, p. 15
[179] Dal Ferro Giuseppe, *La democrazia nell'era informatica*, Vicenza: Edizioni Rezzara (2015), p. 5
[180] Steger Manfred B., *La globalizzazione*, p. 41
[181] Soro Antonello, *Persone in rete – I dati tra poteri e diritti*, Roma: Fazi Editore (2018), p. 26

themselves to comment on them.[182] Social networks are a virtual space available to the user, where he can exhibit his own profile, create a network of «friends» and analyse the characteristics of his contacts.

Above the territorial, urban and architectural space transformed by engineering, with the advent of the global information network was imposed a third dimension of the human world, the cyberspace.[183] The latter is the set of computer resources and sites on the web, which are spread instantaneously and simultaneously through computer networks. The virtual world and the real world are connected, as the first is an empowerment of the second.

3.1.3 New services: Information Technology corporations

International trade, that is, trade between different populations, has always existed. International trade concerns the exchange of goods and services between the various countries of the world, and today this activity is of primary importance on the world stage. A country may decide to import goods and services produced in another country because it is unable to produce them internally because of its geographical location, the natural resources at its disposal, and also because of its technical evolution and evolution. A key element of the current situation is the multilateral system from an economic point of view, which was developed between 1944 and 1948. It is based on the most-favoured-nation clause, and this new architecture allowed for the internationalization and globalization of economies. As a result of internationalisation, there has been an increase in international trade. Since the 1990s there has been a globalization of economies, with a circle of goods but also of capital. The gigantic flows of capital mediated by technology create an exchange of goods and services never seen before. Economic globalization means the intensification and extension of global economic connections.[184] This process is being carried out by companies, which are the protagonists of globalisation and international trade. They make productive investments abroad, enter into contractual relationships with companies in other foreign countries, mainly using the Internet, and encourage technology transfers in the world. Today the vector of the internationalization of economies can be identified in the multinationals. Merchants have always existed in all civilizations, but modern market society has given birth to the corporation, or capital company, which is an original human creation moved in search of profit, which ended up dominating our planet.[185] In this globalized

[182] Ruggeri Giacomo, *Cambiati dalla rete – Vivere le relazioni al tempo dei social network*, Padova: Edizioni Messaggero (2012), p. 36
[183] Bauman Zygmunt, *Dentro la globalizzazione – Le conseguenze sulle persone*, p. 21
[184] Steger Manfred B., *La globalizzazione*, p. 43
[185] Patel Raj, *Il valore delle cose e le illusioni del capitalismo*, p. 45

world, the multinationals have taken on more and more power. They control a large part of investment capital, technology, and access to the world's financial markets.

The IT – Information Technology is now widespread in social, commercial, and economic contexts around the world. They shall consist of methods and technologies enabling the storage, transmission and processing of data and information. This happens through the goods produced thanks to the digital revolution, then the television, computers, phones, and internet. The present era is dominated by the presence of technological enterprises. The western IT are composed of five major multinationals grouped under the acronym «GAFAM»: Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft. These multinationals are all born with the internet, and they are competing with each other. In its daily reality, the Western population uses GAFAM tools and products to manage their professional duties and to maintain social interaction. They are producers of hardware and software for computer use, e-mail services and social networks for professional and personal use. Google is considered the centre of online platforms and is the most popular search engine in the world. This company offers services that meet the increasingly innovative needs of users, such as mailbox services, navigation, video platform, and the latest payment and advertising options. Amazon is not really a store, it is not a retail operator, but a platform that gives access to everything that is on the market.[186] In addition to e-commerce with the complete catalogue of a wide variety of categories of goods, Amazon offers services such as provision of spare parts for motor vehicles, direct contact with qualified professionals for all kinds of household work, start up financing, provision of content and teaching materials for teachers, online book publishing, donation to charities and home food services. Facebook is the social network with the largest number of connected users worldwide, through which users share information, news and audio-visual content. This first social network has over time incorporated new social networks such as Messenger and WhatsApp, which are instant messaging services, and Instagram, which is a photo and video exchange and sharing platform. Apple develops and manufactures electronic equipment and software. Microsoft is in charge of software development and has created a so-called «office suite» chosen by most users for professional and school use.

New operators linked to forms of online distribution are becoming increasingly important: they are Amazon and Netflix, two giants of video distribution. Netflix and Amazon are online distribution platforms for movies, TV series and other entertainment content. These two companies have changed the way people watch TV and they are facing on a global scale to conquer the hegemony of the market of production and distribution of audio-visual content. They have had a strong impact in the audio-

[186] Angioni Martin, *Amazon dietro le quinte*, Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore (2020), p. 171

visual industry and, first Netflix and then Amazon, have put in crisis the cable industry and pay TV operators, offering more advantageous prices to consumers.

3.1.4 Globalization of diseases and the development of scientific research

Diseases have always characterized the history of humanity. Since the world began to be interconnected by the geographical discoveries made during the fifteenth century and ahead, diseases have begun to have global reach. Disease has followed trade, exploration, and conflict, and has magnified their consequences.[187] In chapter one of this thesis, it has already been mentioned how the Columbian exchange, that began with the arrival of Cristoforo Colombo in the Americas and that took place throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, influenced in spreading the diseases of the Old World in the newly discovered lands and vice versa. Syphilis moved East, from the Americas to Europe, Africa and then Asia, while smallpox, measles and scarlet fever moved West, from Europe to the Americas. The global integration of infectious diseases is composed of infections that from the Old World crossed the Atlantic and vice versa. Some historians even write of the «unification» of the globe by disease, as if its distribution provides an index of human connectivity.[188] During the long era from the fourteenth century through the nineteenth century, the global webs of human commercial and social interactions extended and thickened. Some disease pathogens reached new populations, and the disease environments of humankind were more fully integrated than ever before.[189] James Webb (2015: 74) summarizes how the globalization of diseases began with the Columbian exchange described in chapter one of this thesis:

> Since 1492, there have been complex and ongoing global ecological exchanges that have affected human health around the globe. These exchanges have involved the transfer of plants, animals, drugs and cultural practices, as well as infectious pathogens. The extent of this globalization was limited by the time, risk and cost of transport, and by ecological factors, such as the disease barrier that prevented Europeans and other non-natives from entering the interior of Africa. In the late nineteenth century, some of these ecological impediments were surmounted, through the use of quinine to reduce the malaria burden and sanitation measures. These advances, in conjunction with new military technologies that reduced the costs of conquest to industrialized nations, underwrote the epidemiological changes of the second half of the nineteenth century.

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[187] McNeill William H, *Plagues and peoples*, New York: Anchor Press (1976)
[188] Le Roy Ladurie, *The mind and the method of the historian*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (1981)
[189] Webb James L. A., *Globalization of disease, 1300 to 1900*, p. 54

From the seventeenth century into the middle of the nineteenth century, the networks of international exchange continued to thicken and reach into previously unaffected regions. The epidemiological consequences were to accelerate the global mixing of genetic inheritances and more rapidly to globalize disease than ever before.[190] Smallpox disease does not exist anymore, and it is almost unknown in our contemporary world. However, back to the eighteenth century it was epidemic and extremely deadly in Europe and in Asia. Then Europeans brought it to the Americas, where it was even more devastating because indigenous people did not have the necessary antibodies to resist this deadly disease. In the Early Modern Age, smallpox, that became a global disease within the Columbian exchange traveling from East to West, so from Asia and Europe to the Americas, was highly infective; its case fatality rate was of 30 percent in Europe and Asia, with peaks of 90 percent in the native populations of the Americas. This very high mortality rate made historians say that it played a significant role in the collapse of the Aztec power. In the middle of the eighteenth century, because of the Seven Years War conflict between the European powers, regions were affected by mortality because of typhus disease, malaria and yellow fever, dysentery and fevers, together with other diseases that spread in the New World because of European explorers and settlers coming from the New World. In the nineteenth century, pandemics swept the globe. Most of them had their origin in Asia and soon spread from there to almost every part of the world: cholera, spread by long-distance migration, especially from India, like the one made by the coolies already named in chapter two of this thesis, by the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, after when people came back to their place of residence, by the exchanges in the Suez Canal; plague, because of migrants. With the end of the First World War, one of the greatest pandemics of all time took place. In 1918 three waves of influenza began and caused 25 million people deaths. The influenza of 1918 – 1919 marked the end of a century of pandemic disease.[191] Since the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020 the global scenario has changed radically due to a new virus highly contagious and completely unknown by the human immune system: the virus Covid-19, coming from Corona Virus Disease 2019, more commonly called «coronavirus». By November 2019, the coronavirus had begun to circulate in China, specifically in the city of Wuhan, the most populated of the eastern part, the hub of Chinese trade and trade. This area began to record a high number of abnormal pneumonias, the cause of which was unknown. By early January of the following year, the city had already seen dozens of cases and hundreds of people were under observation. On January 9, the Chinese authorities declared, through local media, the cause of this new disease, namely a strain of coronavirus responsible for diseases

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[190] Ibidem, p. 70

[191] Harrison Mark, *Disease and world history from 1750*, in *Cambridge world history Volume 7: Production, Destruction and Connection, 1750 – Present, Part 1: Structures, Spaces, and Boundary Making*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2015), p. 248

such as SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome). In January, infections outside China were still limited, with outbreaks of a few people coming into contact with people returning from China. Between the end of February and the beginning of March in Italy, Iran, and South Korea, and then in other European and non-European states, an increasing number of cases were detected. On 11 March 2020, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the WHO, declared the pandemic situation.

Talking about past diseases, before the advent of the vaccine, many thought that plague had been contained by the practice of quarantine.[192] Faced with damaging trade embargoes and the stigma of infection with a dreaded disease, most governments took drastic measures, forcibly isolating and hospitalizing plague victims and their contacts, destroying their property, and subjecting people to humiliating searches.[193] Smallpox was the only disease for which a specific and potentially highly effective method of prevention had been developed.[194] Today smallpox has almost disappeared thanks to the introduction of an effective vaccine called inoculation. Inoculation was a method to immunize people that had long been used in Asia and North Africa but arrived in Europe only at the beginning of the eighteenth century, especially thanks to great doctors, physicians, and British merchants. Techniques to introduce immunity to smallpox by introducing the pathogen into the body is an attenuated form date to ancient times and had been practiced across Asia and Africa for centuries before arriving in Europe.[195] Smallpox was eradicated thanks to a discovery made by the English physician Edward Jenner.[196] In 1796, he developed inoculation and created a new vaccine that proved to be even more effective, without any side effects. The scientific community distrusted this new technique, however, Jenner's method soon spread widely with hundreds of thousands of people vaccinated throughout Europe. In the ensuing decades the practice of vaccination spread across the world, moving across Europe and then the globe, following the pathways of commerce and empire and tracing global networks of knowledge and power.[197] If in the case of inoculation Europeans were laggards, adopting only very late a practice that had been common in Asia and Africa for centuries, vaccination reversed the direction of flow, moving from its European – indeed, English – origins, to spread around the globe.[198]

[192] Ibidem, p. 238
[193] Ibidem, p. 244
[194] Ibidem, p. 251
[195] Manela Erez, *The politics of smallpox eradication*, in *The Cambridge world history Volume 7: Production, Destruction and Connection, 1750 – Present, Part 1: Structures, Spaces, and Boundary Making*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2015), p. 259
[196] Ibidem, p. 261
[197] Ibidem, p. 261
[198] Ibidem, p. 262

Despite the widespread of vaccination in the nineteenth century, at the turn of the twentieth century smallpox was still endemic in much of the world.[199] Even in the mid-century, when more systematic vaccination had largely eradicated the disease in Europe and North America, it remained endemic in many parts of the global south including South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Indonesia and Brazil.[200] From Europe, vaccine spread in Russia and the Ottoman empires. Spanish court sent a mission to carry vaccine material to its American possessions and from them across the Pacific to Manila. British physicians carried it to India, China, and the west Indies, where it was introduced to Java.[201] Erez Manela (2015: 262) explains how vaccine was preserved on long sea voyages before refrigeration and freeze-drying through a human chain of infection:

> Twenty persons – sometimes volunteers, but at other times young boys, often orphans – would be taken on board for the journey. One was vaccinated before the ship left and, as he developed an infection, within a week or so infective material was taken from his pustules and used to vaccinate the next person. Thus, the virus was then transferred from one body to another and as a result at least one person with an active infection, and therefore with pustules containing the precious material, would be present on board when the ship arrived at its destination.

Together with yellow fever, old style quarantine – in which ships, their cargoes, and their crews were impounded – disrupted commerce and was increasingly regarded as inhumane. Alternatives had to be found, and from the early 1870s, following a severe epidemic in Buenos Aires, more emphasis was placed on sanitary reform.[202] The tendency was the desire to have better intelligence about epidemics in order to permit less intrusive and damaging interruptions to the business of the modern world.[203]

As time evolves, vaccine manufacture on a vast scale to eradicate global diseases requires innovation in techniques.[204] In the past, eradication had to await the advent of freeze-dried vaccines, which could be preserved and transported without need for refrigeration.[205] By the turn of the twentieth century, the growing acceptance of the germ theory of disease introduced a range of new methods of disease control. These new discoveries – most famously by Louis Pasteur with the rabies vaccine in France and Robert Koch in Germany – were quickly implemented around the world, not

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[199] Ibidem, p. 264
[200] Fenner Frank, Henderson Donald A., Arita Isao, Jezek Zdenek, Ladnyi Ivan Danilovich, *Smallpox and its eradication*, Geneve: World Health Organization (1988)
[201] Manela Erez, *The politics of smallpox eradication*, p. 262
[202] Harrison Mark, *Disease and world history from 1750*, p. 240
[203] Ibidem, p. 245
[204] Manela Erez, *The politics of smallpox eradication*, p. 258
[205] Ibidem, p. 258

least by colonial powers eager to make newly acquired tropical territories safe for their personnel and to highlight the «civilizing» effect of their rule.[206]

Although infectious diseases are a problem globally, we ought not to assume that epidemics are a thing of the past. The emergence of HIV and AIDS in the 1980s has served as a reminder of the potential of nature to generate new infections and of the man-made world to disseminate them.[207] This observation is supported by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. China immediately carried out an intensive monitoring of the new virus that infected the population. On 7 January 2020, the virus was isolated in China and sequenced a few days later. China shared this genetic sequence, offering an important step in terms of research as this allowed the spread of diagnostic tests that subsequently served in other countries. Not knowing the contagiousness of this new virus, no restrictions were imposed on travel to and from the Chinese country, as the few cases were concentrated in the city of Wuhan. Later, when the virus proved highly contagious from man to man, WHO (World Health Organization) recommended not to go to China. Meanwhile, the Chinese city of Wuhan was isolated. At the end of January 2020, the risk of the epidemic spreading globally went from moderate to high, so that on the evening of January 30 the WHO declared this «health emergency of international interest». The CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovations), an international organization which aims to promote the development and storage of vaccines against microorganisms capable of causing new and appalling epidemics, is coordinating the numerous projects for the preparation of vaccines against SARS-Cov-2 virus. Innovations in scientific research have allowed the creation of vaccines against the new virus.

3.2 Effects of global goods on Contemporary Age society and culture

As Zygmunt Bauman (2003: 3) claims:

> For some, globalization means everything we are forced to do to achieve happiness; for others, globalization is the very cause of our unhappiness. For all, however, globalization means the inevitable destiny of the world, an irreversible process and which, moreover, involves us all to the same extent and in the same way.

3.2.1 The globalization of taste

[206] Ibidem, p. 263

[207] Harrison Mark, *Disease and world history from 1750*, p. 255

Weinberg and Bealer call caffeine «the most popular drug in the world», taken by the population through coffee, tea and chocolate. At the time of their discovery and of their first use, the colonial beverages were considered only as medicines. After this first positive reception, colonial drinks were condemned and banned, but today they remain daily consumed by society. With caffeinated drinks, caffeine has completed the conquest of humanity, extending the consumer community to children.[208] So the entire population, from children to the elderly, is today using caffeine. Weinberg and Bealer (2009: XIII) argue that:

> Caffeine is without a doubt the most popular drug in the world and far exceeds nicotine and alcohol. It is the only psychoactive substance that has won resistance and disapproval to the point of being freely accessible almost everywhere, unregulated, marketed without a licence, sold as a counter product in tablets or capsules and even added to drinks designed for children.

France, Italy, and the United Kingdom have cyclically witnessed attempts by some to ensure a regulatory counterpart to their disapproval of caffeine.[209] In the twentieth century, America has seen vigorous campaigns against the use of caffeine in soft drinks. With the beginning of the twentieth century, chocolate consumption has grown more than ten times. Unlike coffee and tea, which after reaching Europe were also welcomed by the people of all continents, the passion for chocolate has yet to spread to Africa and has never touched the Far East.[210] Initially a beverage reserved for elites, in the nineteenth century chocolate became a democratic product thanks to the inventiveness of European craftsmen and industrialists. In the twentieth century there was a surge in chocolate consumption.

Coffee has become almost obligatory food for breakfast, thanks to its charge effect to start the day. Coffee regulates the daily life of its consumers in industrialized societies.[211] Nowadays it is possible to attribute to the term «coffee society» a wider meaning than it used to be. It used to designate a clique of wastrels who frequented the coffee halls. Today it could define our society as a whole, in which we meet and mingle.[212] The meeting in the coffee houses, transported from the Middle East to Europe, then spread also in the United States of America. It is interesting to make known that in Yemen, the place of origin of coffee, the government tries to discourage its use because of the negative effects of caffeine.

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[208] Weinberg Bennett Alan, Bealer Bonnie K., *Tè, caffè e cioccolata – I mondi della caffeina tra storie e culture*, p. 367
[209] Ibidem, p. 28
[210] Ibidem, p. 73
[211] Fumey Gilles, Etcheverria Oliver, *Atlante mondiale della gastronomia*, p. 66
[212] Reali Linda, *Storie del tè – Monaci e mercanti, regine e avventurieri*, p. 221

In the Asian countries, tea retains a social importance as a beverage of hospitality and conviviality. Tea has always demonstrated to be a beverage kept up with the times. In the early twentieth century, in order to spread the consumption and the commercialization of tea, the New Yorker trader Thomas Sullivan patented the tea bag, packing loose tea leaves in hand-sewn silk bags. These bags had the advantage of being lighter, less bulky and cheaper than the steel boxes used to contain tea leaves before; not least, indeed more revolutionary, the fact that tea bags allowed to prepare and enjoy in a short time the hot drink, since it was enough to immerse the sachet in the water to obtain the infusion. This revolution demonstrated that in the USA tea was, and still is, centred on a logic of mass consumption. Because of standardization and trivialization of consumption caused by globalization, all over the world there is a tendency to drink tea without formality and without special occasions. An answer to this phenomenon is the interest in quality and diversity, which is the luck currently enjoyed by local producers.[213] Alongside the tea produced by multinationals and independent historical brands, there is a niche market that prefers high quality leaf tea. Tea grown in new territories such as Scotland, New Zealand and Hawaii is more expensive, and in this way, it becomes a luxurious and exclusive drink for a few. To survive in the globalized world, Chinese family-run businesses that produce tea are opening to the online market. In Japan, in addition to exporting the product itself, efforts have been made to bring foreigners and tourists closer to the tradition linked to tea culture. After the mid-nineteenth century, Japan developed an opening policy in the practice of the art of tea. In the country itself, for the first time, tea involved also the female gender: with the refined elegance of geisha, which were girls engaged in entertaining tea-house guests, tea became an even more fascinating art in the eyes of Westerners. From the twentieth century, numerous Zen schools opened in Japan and in the USA to spread the culture of tea according to Zen elegance and simplicity[214], which was welcomed in the American continent as an elegant expression of minimalism. At the mass consumption European and American quality tea companies contrast a well-kept packaging with information about the product.[215] Linda Reali (2019: 260) stresses that «a tea is good and good if the whole chain that produced it is correct».

The globalization of dishes of various cultural heritage has made them accessible to all the kitchens of the world, both in restaurants and at home. Food globalization has led to a worldwide standardization of food, a reduction in the cost of food and a progressive reduction in the use of typical and territorial dishes. Despite this, in recent years men seek to protect their culinary heritage and the products of the territory, an act that is synonymous with a knowledge of globalization.[216] It is

[213] Ibidem, p. XII
[214] Ibidem, p. 51
[215] Ibidem, p. 252
[216] Fumey Gilles, Etcheverria Oliver, *Atlante mondiale della gastronomia*, p. 5

important to say that only rich countries have ethnic restaurants opened by immigrants. In large European cities, however, it is the native inhabitants who open ethnic establishments, such as in Amsterdam, where there is a proliferation of Indonesian restaurants. Fumey and Etcheverria (2010: 68) claim that:

> Since the eighth century there have been dishes that can be considered universal reference points in taste. The culture of «world food», typical of large cities and international tourist destinations, is based on exoticism and mestizo, responding to the need to know the «other». Food transport facilities allow for the arrival of products from all over the world. Despite this, many cooks prefer to enhance the products and excellence of the territory, respecting the seasonality of the vegetables and to access those elements judged positive. This world cuisine changes our food practices, just as it happened in modern times when, starting from the seventh century, Europe became aware and consumed plants imported from the New World.

Industrial and domestic freezing has made many products, such as fish, more available. The industrial production of certain foods causes a standardization of taste, which can be tasted everywhere, and a subsequent impoverishment of food heritage. It is likely that this «globalization of taste» will lead to a rediscovery of home cooking, seasonal vegetables and certified and quality food. With regard to the introduction of industrial foods into the daily diet of the population of developed countries, Jacques Attali (2020: 110) considers that:

> From the twentieth century onwards, the need is being imposed to reduce the cost of food and to industrialize it in order to push the middle and popular classes to devote most of their wages to consumer goods other than food, thus profoundly changing the nature of the meal, but also the conversation that accompanies it, as well as the society that structures itself on it.

The introduction of industrial food into the daily consumption of the population has led to a decrease in the number of meals consumed in the family, resulting in an increase in the number of times in which food is taken. The convenience of buying precooked and frozen foods is accompanied by a standardized production, with health risks for excess calories and fat, for preservatives and sauces aimed at various flavors.[217] This forces society to face some challenges, such as obesity. Eating disorders also increase due to the excessive presence of sugar in foods and beverages. After the exceptional hardships of World War II, the industrial and post-industrial sub-proletariat of the West has gone from under-nutrition to overnutrition. In the United States and some parts of northwestern

[217] Ritzer George, *Il mondo alla McDonald's*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino (1997), p. 214 - 217

Europe, obesity is now a greater social problem than malnutrition.[218] In addition, because of the tendency to eat at any time, the table has lost its significance as a symbol of power and conversation. The disappearance of lunches and dinners as occasions for debate makes it much more difficult to create common understandings and being alone pushes society to consume more and eat more and more snacks: music for the ears of the consumer society.[219]

The birth and continued advancement of fast-food chains has a business name. The fat, very salty and very sweet food you are served is produced with poor quality food. The food thus obtained makes it possible to satisfy the appetite of the consumer at a low price, but also to induce dependence.[220] Because it is possible to go to the fast-food restaurant at any time, society also loses the idea of eating at fixed times. To attend fast-food are mainly the poor classes, who can afford this meal considered «complete» at a low price.

Food, including its production, consumption and political use is a great challenge, connected to the others of the global community such as climate change.[221] The new challenges related to food are also food security and food waste. The need for more food security is dictated by the unequal distribution of the planet's resources, the need and the ability to achieve more environmentally sustainable food production and sufficient to meet rapidly growing demand. The advantage of the online business is the communication of correct and detailed information about the food that someone will go to buy. The consumer of the twenty-first century wants to be more aware. He wants the product he buys to be traced throughout his supply chain, so as to understand how it was cultivated and worked and how the people who work it are treated. This process is accompanied by fair trade production. The coexistence of food boom and famine continues in the world, due to unequal distribution, hyperproduction and hyper nutrition in developed areas, in the face of vulnerability to the deprivations of the rest of the world.[222] The fight against food waste is a reflection of a society that feels it has closed with the era of abundance that characterized the developed countries of the world from the end of the Second World War to the end of the twentieth century.[223] Jacques Attali (2020: 11) claims that:

> Since the dawn of time, food has been much more than a vital need. It has always been a source of pleasure, the foundation of language, one of the main economic activities, a measure of trade, a key element of social organization. It determines our relationship with others, with nature and with animals, it is the most perfect measure of the uniqueness of

[218] Fernández-Armesto Felipe, *Storia del cibo*, Milano - Torino: Pearson Italia (2010), p. 253
[219] Attali Jacques, *Cibo – Una storia globale dalle origini al futuro*, Milano: Adriano Salani Editore (2020), p. 158
[220] Ibidem, p. 141
[221] De Castro Paolo, *Cibo – La sfida globale*, p. 4
[222] Fernández-Armesto Felipe, *Storia del cibo*, p. 255
[223] De Castro Paolo, *Cibo – La sfida globale*, p. 13

> the human condition and the nature of gender relations. […] Food is essential for the development of a culture and its evolution: no society has ever survived without the social cement represented by the organization of agriculture, cuisine, and gastronomy.

3.2.2 Worldwide connections

Technological development changed people's lives and societies since the beginning of the Early Modern Age, during the fifteenth and the sixteenth century. In that age, one of the major advancements that happened was the invention of metal movable type printing press that was introduced in Europe by Johannes Gutenberg, who started printing the Bible in 1454. Other printing presses had already been created and used in China and Korea since the eleventh century, but they were used in a very limited way and only to produce very luxury items, so books were restricted to the royal and noble families. Furthermore, the difficulties of their languages made it very hard to represent every single word. On the other hand, Gutenberg had to create just a limited number of letters. Thanks to the introduction of the metal movable type printing press, he was able to create a large-scale editorial campaign and for the first time, books were also available to the lower classes. In the same way, European discoveries at the beginning of the Early Modern Age could happen because of the advancements in ship building and the creation in Portugal of a new type of vessel, the Caravel, that was able to navigate Oceans more rapidly and safely. Another example of a useful technological product was the telegraph, which was a system of remote communication, used for the transmission of data through the use of certain codes. It was subsequently replaced by the telephone and telephony, which were designed for the transfer of voice data.

Since the 1990s, the landline has evolved into a portable mobile phone. The mobile phone has become an integral part of the life of the modern population, which chooses orality as a means of rapid and effective communication and needs to speak regularly with someone and hear the voice of the interlocutor to understand his mood. Today the mobile phone has evolved into smartphones, able to connect to the internet and then make use of a laptop. The smartphone is used less and less to call and more to enclose precious fragments of our existence, becoming a technological extension of ourselves.[224] People can be reached, through smartphones, at any time of day and night and wherever they are.

Zygmunt Bauman (2003: 22) claims that:

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[224] Soro Antonello, *Persone in rete – I dati tra poteri e diritti*, p. 13

> Rather than making the human condition homogeneous, the technological cancellation of space-time distances tends to polarize it. It emancipates some from territorial constraints and causes certain factors to generate extraterritorial communities, while depriving the territory, in which others continue to be relegated, its meaning and its ability to attribute an identity. For some, again, that zeroing of the distances of space and time promises unprecedented freedom from physical obstacles and an unheard-of ability to move and act at a distance. For others, on the other hand, it presages the impossibility of approaching the locality - from which they also have little possibility to move elsewhere - and to make it welcoming and liveable. When «distances no longer mean anything», locations separated by distances also lose their meaning.

People, in addition to making professional use of the internet, also use the network to inform themselves, predestining it to traditional media such as newspapers, and for recreational use. In recent years, the Internet has responded to more and more needs demanded by users. Massimiliano Valerii and Settimio Marcelli claim that:

> In 2015 and 2016 the use of the Internet far exceeded the simple dimensions of information and entertainment, rather constituting the main vehicle through which, directly or indirectly, the population meets most of the needs of daily life. The fundamental element of this process is the fact that through the network people can avoid getting in touch with all those people who once played a role of intermediation between the user and the satisfaction of his or her needs. There is no need to leave the house to go to the shop, to the travel agency, to the bank counter, to the public office: it is possible to do everything with a series of clicks. And the more time passes, the newer thresholds are exceeded in the fruition of services through digital disintermediation. The network has thus become the emblem of a world in which everyone is personally responsible for the satisfaction of their needs.

The Internet has become the largest and most frequented public space humanity has ever known, the new dimension in which an important part of our life takes place.[225] People are becoming more and more familiar with the virtual world, sometimes more than the real world, made up of direct relationships. Technology has repercussions on man, it has gone from an element produced by man to a dynamic partner that contributes to change the motivations of man himself. All those natural or intrinsic limitations have been subverted with the penetration of technology, which will then be supported by the interaction between science and economics.[226]

The mass media have evolved over time: from the fifteenth century books, pamphlets, newspapers, comics and magazines, from the end of the nineteenth century vinyl records, magnetic tapes and

[225] Ibidem, p. 11
[226] Sertorio Luigi, *Storia dell'abbondanza*, Torino: Bollati Boringhieri (2002), p. 23 - 26

cassette tapes, from 1900 the cinema, from 1920 the radio, since 1950 television and since 1990 internet. Technology has imposed a general acceleration of both physical and, consequently, cultural movements. The facts become planetary events because they are covered and exalted by the media.[227] This kind of communication has repercussions on society. As early as 1935 Johan Huizinga stated that the spread of mass communication had produced a kind of schizophrenia in the citizens that was not compensated either by the quantitative growth of available information or by the increasing literacy of society.[228] Talking about mass media, it is important to bring out what Marco Aime (2004: 4) defines «news syndrome»:

> The newspapers ignore those towns and cities where life is quiet. A locality jumps on the pages of newspapers and news if the custom is compromised, and most of the time with worsening effects. The same happens for cultures and identities: when too much is said about it, something bad has happened or is about to happen. Cultures, like communities, should stay away from the news to live better. The increasing emphasis on cultures and their supposed roots leads to increasing attention to the local and localisms. Then it happens that some localisms, seized by elites endowed with sufficient power, are inflated with global aspirations: the regions turn to become states, the dialects languages.

In this way, through the news syndrome put in place by mass media, cultural conflicts arise. Cultural differences exist and must be taken into account. In the mass media, the emphasis is always on diversity, almost never on common elements, which are taken for granted, tacit, not considered or ignored. Diversity is an exception, so it makes news.[229] Similarly, readers and contacts of a certain site or media grow if the platform attracts their attention. The person in charge of the media is therefore led to worry about the ability to attract attention and is therefore tempted to indulge in spectacularism, violence and vulgarity. The competition for ratings makes the task of the media in democratic society lose sight of and hinders the formation of an informed public.[230]

Massimiliano Valerii and Settimio Marcelli (2017: 13) explain what happens with the evolution of mass media:

> People find themselves interacting with a system in which they have the impression of accessing an almost infinite number of possibilities, they are not communicative, without any spatial and temporal limits, in a context rich in relational potential and perceptual stimuli. The problem is that the contents that circulate more easily within this system are mainly those that trigger a high emotional involvement and require a poor activation of cognitive faculties. Not only the audiovisual contents, but also the written texts follow

[227] Aime Marco, *Eccessi di culture*, Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore (2004), p. 52
[228] Huizinga Johan, *La crisi della civiltà*, Milano: Edizioni PGreco (2012)
[229] Aime Marco, *Eccessi di culture*, p. 10
[230] Soro Antonello, *Persone in rete – I dati tra poteri e diritti*, p. XII

> this model, presenting themselves not only in synthetic form, but also syntactically elementary, thus recalling, with their paratactic structure, the pace of oral communication. In this system, therefore, it is difficult to position those media that require a higher activation of cognitive faculties, such as books, newspapers and periodicals. Today there is a phenomenon that linguists define «regression towards secondary orality» even of those who have received a training that would enable them to easily approach complex texts.

Thanks to immediate communications in a large part of the world through radio, television, internet and satellite and digital technologies, many national controls on information have become ineffective. For example, Chinese control of the internet can be tricked by technology experts. The mass media market is controlled by transnational corporations. In this way they can control the things the listeners' attention is focused on. Manfred B. Steger (2016: 84 – 85) declares that:

> The global cultural flows of our age are largely generated and directed by global media empires that rely on ultra-advanced communication technologies to spread their messages. [...] The commercial values distributed by the international media giants lead to the de-politicization of social reality and to the weakening of social ties.

It is important to note that the new types of mass media are also present in underdeveloped countries. Franco Cardini (2005: 21) analyses this fact:

> In the less developed countries, food, medicines, toys, books, of course, even newspapers may be missing, but there must be televisions, satellite dishes, mobile phones, laptops, which break old habits and customs and old world's parameters, which create new needs and new desires, which push emulation and envy.

Today, social networks have become part of the daily lives of users, who post their daily actions and thoughts on the internet. The combination of the increasingly widespread tendency to share every aspect of life and the centrality of the big data for the economic system, is the foundation of the new digital economy, based on the commercial exploitation of personal information and on the construction of identity and homologating models.[231]

Giuseppe Dal Ferro (2015: 11) outlines the risks associated with using the Internet:

> The greatest social risks are represented by what Evgeny Morozov calls «the dark side of the net», when it is used by fundamentalist groups, trained to proselytize and «martyrs» all over the world. Even in mature democracies, the Internet, in addition to having become a voice of freedom, can lend itself to becoming «the hidden ear», which listens to secret

[231] Ibidem, p. 16

> messages and makes them public at the expense of national security at times. To all this is added the process of disintermediation, which cancels the role of social bodies, establishing a direct relationship between leader and people, resulting in the loss of democracy. There are also the risks at an individual level that we could collect in four groups: the loss of privacy, the difficulty of the formation of individual identity, the consequent personal immaturity, the weakness of relationships.

Social networks initially spread among young people, while today virtual aggregation places tend to involve increasingly cross-cutting population groups. This is possible thanks to the fixed points on which they leverage social networks: to weave relationships, to share and to put together, to actively participate in networks of friendships, professional or of specific interests going beyond the physical distances and optimizing the times to own disposition in daily life.[232] As for the relationships created through the network, we must remember that social networks generate a false concept of friendship, the result of weak relationships, multiplied by the contacts in the network. If new digital media offers endless possibilities of relationships, they reduce friendship to being connected or not.[233] Friendship comes to coincide with the inclusion or cancellation of contacts, while every relationship between people, in order to be true and lasting, needs to grow and mature in patience, suffering and humility.[234]

A consequence of the excessive use of social media can be loneliness. Aurelio Musi (2021: 157 - 158) explains how this phenomenon is global and analyzes this behavior describing the various figures of contemporary solitude, particularly among young people:

> The phenomenon is worldwide. In England, where over three and a half million men and women have television as their only company, Theresa May has established the ministry of solitude. In Sweden, about 60 percent suffer from loneliness. France, Spain, Germany, Australia, Canada experienced similar problems. A health minister in the United States spoke of an «epidemic of loneliness». In Japan there are eighteen million people alone, twice as many as thirty years ago. [...] The transition from loneliness to suicide is short: in Switzerland half a million think to take their own lives. Among young Italians, the phenomenon of isolation is on the increase. There are many young people who do not leave their homes. [...] The «hikikomori» is one of the recurring figures among young people of contemporary solitude. Originally born in Japan, it then spread to other countries. The young man locks himself in the house and there consumes his life in solitude, renouncing all human relationships except those mediated - and appropriately distorted – by technology. Protective factors are marriage, high schooling, good economic conditions, but they are often not enough. Other figures of solitude are the «neet», the «ni-ni» and the «incel». The «neet», acronym of «not in education, employment or

[232] Censis Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali, a cura di Valerii Massimo, Marcelli Settimio, Conti Nibali Monja, Lapenna Laura, Donati Claudia, Coletta Vittoria, *I media e il nuovo immaginario collettivo*, Milano: Franco Angeli (2017), p. 102
[233] Dal Ferro Giuseppe, *Cambiati dalla rete*, Vicenza: Edizioni Rezzara (2015)
[234] Ruggeri Giacomo, *Cambiati dalla rete – Vivere le relazioni al tempo dei social network*, p. 59

> training», are young people who do not study, do not work, or are not learning a job. In England, a survey carried out among young people aged 16 to 24 has revealed a percentage of one-fifth. In South America the «ni-ni», «ni estudia ni trabaja», «neither studies nor works», are the recruitment reservoir for criminal organizations and drug cartels. The «incel», short for «involuntary celibate», are mostly young heterosexual males who cannot find a partner and pour out their anger at the female gender and the sexually active men, accomplices in their eyes of the injustice that condemns them to the state of isolation and inferiority. They associate with other frustrated singles and can even participate in criminal and terrorist activities. The movement is formed in chat where members discuss their hatred for women and men who succeed with them. A mixture of misogyny and sexual frustration that is channeled on the web and that has led several members of the «incel» community to acts that have all the characteristics of terrorism and that are now considered as such by the authorities. Shootings and stabbings of victims, mostly women chosen at random by a «incel» who before acting launches a manifesto of claim that then circulates with admiration in the chats of the movement. Today, therefore, the pathological deformations of solitude prevail in contemporary mass society.

Social networks can also spread a pain worse than loneliness. In recent years there has been an increase in suicides caused by cyberbullying and online violence. In these cases, the network has been used as a megaphone and theater of harassment, humiliation and brutal violence, before which the user becomes a further victim of the spectacularism of evil.[235] The web has opened up, especially to children, infinite possibilities of growth, knowledge and emancipation, however, it risks, if used in the absence of the necessary awareness, to expose it to dangers that adults underestimate.[236] Antonello Soro explains the emergency of cyberbullying:

> Isolation and digital immaturity are the main reasons why cyberbullying has become a real emergency: because it affects kids completely helpless and little aware of the dynamics of the web, and therefore deprived of the resources and instruments necessary to protect themselves. But also, because it is practiced by boys less and less followed and, conversely, more abandoned in front of a screen, unable to control their own reactions and unaware of the real and concrete implications of their virtual behavior.

[235] Soro Antonello, *Persone in rete – I dati tra poteri e diritti*, p. 33
[236] Ibidem, p. 74

Figure 9 iHeart, *Nobody likes me*, Canadian mural, 2014, Vancouver

In the end, it can be said that, due to migration, international tensions, images and ideas that are not lived personally but that are visible through the use of the Internet and mass media, while some barriers seem to collapse, we are witnessing the birth of new borders and divisions. Marco Aime (2004: 16) writes:

> By placing too much emphasis on cultural diversity, there is a risk of reconstructing barriers by projecting on «other» differences which, perhaps, could be overcome, attenuated or ignored. Putting diversity in the foreground means accentuating an alleged impermeability of the cultures of which individuals are carriers.

Moreover, technology has created a social divide. Access to technology enables the acquisition of information which is essential for participation in society. People who do not have digital technologies and skills are therefore at risk of being disadvantaged in the acquisition, processing and use of information, and therefore to be excluded from social life. Similarly, technologically developed countries differ from technologically underdeveloped countries. According to John Kavanagh, cited by Graham Balls and Milly Jenkins (1996):

> Globalization has given the ultra-rich more opportunities to make money faster. These people have used the most modern technologies to move large sums of money across the globe very quickly and to speculate with increasing efficiency. Unfortunately, technology has no impact on the lives of the poor. In reality, globalization is a paradox: while it has very positive effects for very few, it cuts off or marginalizes two thirds of the world's population.

3.2.3 The consumerism

Multinationals are the product of globalization. That is why it is possible to say that globalization divides how much and while it unites; the causes of division are the same ones that, on the other hand, promote the uniformity of the globe.[237] Multinationals produce in underdeveloped countries and then sell in Western countries, characterized by a consumer society. Raj Patel outlines damages related to the actions of the corporations, saying that they act as coldly rational, profit-driven beings in a world where inputs can be bought and sold in markets. To maximize profits, corporations organize workers, raw materials, machinery, and real estate to keep costs to a minimum.[238] Giuseppe Dal Ferro (2015: 31) claims that:

> The economy of scale has made possible low prices and universal dissemination of products. Everyone now owns essential appliances and some computer tools. This is due to the mass production of millions of specimens at low cost. Industries, however, to continue to live, are forced to invent new models and to induce people to abandon the products previously purchased to access the novelties. After all, it is the fashion mechanism that is always fed with new models. The result is waste, the increase in waste, the social anxiety of the latest model.

We live in «advanced societies» that no longer produce to consume but tend to indefinitely solicit consumption and consume to produce more and more.[239] Consumerism is a reality in developed countries. It is an economic and social phenomenon that consists in the increase of consumption to meet the needs induced by the pressure of advertising and by phenomena of social imitation widespread in the population. These needs are encouraged by the mass media, which are working in favor of multinationals as already said in paragraph 3.3.2. Zygmunt Bauman (2003: 90) makes an important observation:

> The consumerist in a consumer society is a creature totally different from the consumerist in any other previous company. If among our ancestor philosophers, poets and preachers the question arose of whether one worked to live or lived to work, the dilemma that is most often felt brooding today is whether you have the need to consume to live or if you live to consume. If you are still able to separate living and consuming, and you feel the need.

[237] Bauman Zygmunt, *Dentro la globalizzazione – Le conseguenze sulle persone*, p. 4
[238] Patel Raj, *Il valore delle cose e le illusioni del capitalismo*, p. 47
[239] Cardini Franco, *La globalizzazione – Tra nuovo ordine e caos*, Rimini: Il cerchio iniziative editoriali (2005), p. 18

Figure 10 Banksy, *Shop till you drop*, English mural, 2011, London

Amazon is based on a very sophisticated collection and processing of customer data, helped by the fact that on the internet there is a trace of any movement, as Martin Angioni (2020: 151) explains:

> They know what we buy, what we do not buy, what we look, and at what point of the «journey» we abandon, how long we look, if we leave a comment, if we read the comments of other customers, from which site we arrive, to which sites we move...as if someone were following our every move as we move to the shops or sidewalks of the city, and continually solicited feedback.

Consumers are slaves to advertising. They tend to buy what television advertising offers, now also supported by online advertising and on the same social networks through the so-called «influencers». Antonello Soro (2018: 29 - 30) affirms that:

> Advertising aimed at the specific profile of a consumer, attributed to each according to their online activities, not only does it create induced needs, but it risks encouraging a process of mass homologation and exclusion of those who do not want to recognize themselves in the dominant model. The sharing of our experiences, the traces of our web paths, feed an «economy of data», based on the exploitation of personal information and the construction of homologating identity models, on easy «labelling» which affect the ability to make independent choices. […] Personal identity thus tends to be reduced to the specific type of consumer, voter or user that Amazon, Apple or Google attribute to each, in a game of profiles and algorithms that cancels the uniqueness of the person, its value, its exceptional nature.

Netflix and Amazon, the two most important video distribution companies, base their success on the consumption, by users, of the services they propose, then movies and TV series. The battlefield on which the giants of digital communication collide is represented by the conquest of our time.[240] Reed Hastings, CEO of Netflix, has openly stated that the company is «in competition with sleep». Massimiliano Valerii and Settimio Marcelli explain how this conquest of time is implemented:

> The goal can be the conquest of time by extension, or it can happen by intensity, so we try to work in such a way as to reach the maximum possible overlap in the use of media, so that we do many things at the same time, that is to be multitasking, becomes a positive value. It does not matter if it is all done in an affectionate and superficial way: the essential thing is to remain as much as possible in contact with the screens on which the messages spread by the web are constantly superimposed.

New operators linked to forms of online distribution like Amazon and Netflix have contributed to redefining the genre of television series, making it crucial and relevant, the subject of continuous shared discourse and continuously taken over by the media and transforming some titles into real brands, able to retain the public and multiply in sequels and spin-offs.[241] In a sense, today it seems that consumers of these services base their day, and perhaps even night, on the programs offered. Aldo Grasso and Cecilia Penati (2016: 25) compare the consumption of TV with that of new digital technologies:

> For years, our home habits have been regulated by television programming. Even the dinner came to coincide with the news, just to share the news of the day at the table. For years our relationship with TV has been regulated by a kind of train schedule: sometimes inaccurate, sometimes dancer, but still time. If you missed the appointment the program was lost, difficult to resume. Now things have changed, radically. With digital technologies, everyone builds the schedule they want. A lot of TV is shown in streaming mode and consumption habits are customized: every member of a family decides to see the program that suits them best, maybe sitting in bed with a tablet in his hand. The «synchronized» schedule of the general TV had great strength. It had a unitary impact on the audience and, together, offered itself as a creative act. He made every show an event on which even the press and other media could draw criticism or debate. This is how in all these years the tv generalist has dictated the agenda to other media. The situation is now more complicated but much richer, especially since digitalization has created the phenomenon of convergence and networks, such as platforms and offerings, have multiplied. We live in a period of transition, where generalist TV and thematic TV still

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240 Censis Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali, a cura di Valerii Massimo, et alii, *I media e il nuovo immaginario collettivo*, p. 31

241 Grasso Aldo, Penati Cecilia, *La nuova fabbrica dei sogni – Miti e riti delle serie tv americane*, Milano: Il Saggiatore (2016), p. 10

> represent two antithetical and opposed universes: one aimed at the satisfaction of mass consumption, the other of individual needs.

In addition, the fascination of the series proposed by online service distributors convince the public to buy objects present in them and to cultivate new habits. TV series can therefore influence consumption and influence the market, implementing real marketing actions. The strategy is to create models that are able to impose themselves on consumers, then defining their consumption habits and attracting them more and more to the fruition of the products offered by them.

3.2.4 International response to global diseases

During the Early Modern Age, port cities were the entry points of goods and people, therefore also of infectious diseases. For this reason, it is no surprise that the first public health services were developed in port cities such as Venice, Marseilles, Livorno and Trieste. But their main goal was to prevent the spreading of epidemics and to protect commerce, not to cure people. They were more interested in avoiding contact and segregating ill people. They were the best places to start working on prevention, so governments felt they needed to strictly control the ships arriving in their cities. Indeed, each ship was inspected and received health licenses. Those suspected of carrying infectious diseases were held in quarantine, so they stayed forty days in isolation to make sure there was any danger. During the eighteenth century it became very important to have reliable information about health and epidemics to avoid them being spread. There was a very efficient network of information on public health among the cities in the Mediterranean; most of the documents came from Florence, originally from Livorno's port, and Venice, and allowed the circulation of information between port cities. The advent of wireless radio speeded up communications further, allowing ships to notify ports of disease before their arrival.[242]

Global scientific knowledge had been developed since the beginning of the Early Modern Age. Despite this, smallpox was totally eradicated only in 1973, two hundred years after the discovery of the vaccine against it: it was about convincing and persuading people about the new discoveries. Mark Harrison (2015: 251) exposes how the vaccine was perceived by society:

> Despite the backing of Western medical elites, vaccination encountered opposition wherever it was introduced. Many people regarded it as unnatural that humans should be inoculated with matter from an animal and remained skeptical about its efficacy. In fact, for many years, vaccination was not as efficacious as its proponents claimed. It later

[242] Ibidem, p. 246

became apparent that a second vaccination was required to confer complete protection. In hot climates, too, the lymph was prone to corruption and quickly lost its potency. For well over a hundred years, the operation also entailed cuts to the body with a lancet and this brought with it the risk of infection and scarification. Attempts to make the practice compulsory thus produced vocal and often violent demonstrations.

By the eighteenth century, scientific knowledge was efficiently shared at a global level. Infective diseases travelled fast, but so did medical discoveries. However, people needed convincing: many had moral and religious doubts on new medical methods such as inoculation and vaccines. During the eighteenth century, in a globally connected world, there was an intense circulation of infectious diseases and epidemics, medical developments, new and fake news. The circulation of news and fake news was able to influence people's choices concerning their health. Both for the supporters and detractors of the inoculation and vaccines, it was important to gather and to circulate information. There was a real «viral» debate: vaccine and, before that, inoculation ignited a truly global debate. On one hand, inoculation and vaccine were considered not medical or scientific matters but moral, religious and political ones. On the other hand, there are also many publications in favor of vaccines, which tried to convince people of the effectiveness and importance of vaccinating, especially children. The influenza pandemic that took place with the end of the First World War had an impact on societies it affected, but at that time relatively little was known about it. One of the reasons for this silence was that governments and the medical profession had been powerless to prevent it. They attacked the disease much as they had cholera and plague, assuming it to be a bacterial infection, but were imponent in the face of an agent which was easily transmitted from person to person.[243] The story of inoculation demonstrates on one side the importance of global networks, and on the other side the European contribution to global development. It also shows how the huge scientific and cultural European advancement led Europe to have a predominant position at the end of the eighteenth century. Even though inoculation was an African-Asiatic invention, the development of this method to cure smallpox was perfected and practiced on a large scale firstly in Europe.

The first structured forms of disease prevention and care were created during the Early Modern Age. Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting human health through organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private, communities and individuals. Disease, it was argued, had the capacity to destabilize regimes and to threaten the newly globalized economy. The language and practices of public health began to change, with more emphasis being placed on surveillance and containment.[244] Global eradication required,

[243] Ibidem, p. 247
[244] Ibidem, p. 255

first, the broad acceptance of the notion that disease control was properly a global, rather than local or national task. As the practice of vaccination spread globally over the nineteenth century, the political valence of disease control was also changing, first from a local into a national issue and then into a global concern, thus making national politics, and later international politics, a central aspect of the process.[245] James Webb (2015: 72 - 73) explains how international efforts against diseases developed:

> The nineteenth century saw the development of international efforts to block the expansion in epidemiological processes. One major trust was in the extension of quarantine, long practiced in preventing the spread of contagious disease from shipboard to land and across national boundaries. Beginning with the first International Sanitary Conference in Paris in 1851, new international regimes of quarantine linked signatory nations in joint efforts to coordinate their policies. The regimes were difficult to enforce, however, and did not enjoy broad success. A substantial advance in military health was accomplished with the establishment of routine medical practices. In the 1850s, the use of cinchona bark to treat malaria became standardized on British ships sailing in malarial regions. [...] Also in the 1850s, new understandings on the efficacy of sanitation to reduce or eliminate water supplies with fecal matter eventually helped to drive down the number of deaths and illnesses from this source in the developing nations that made these investments. These were the most successful investments in public health that have ever been made.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, sanitary measures enabled the most developed nations to control many common infectious diseases. In poor countries, however, the burden of disease changed little or actually increased. This was true not only of diseases considered pestilential, like rinderpest or plague, but also of those which were indigenous and endemic.[246] Global health required the development and operation of international organizations. The destructiveness of cholera was the principal impetus to the establishment of the first international agreements to impose quarantine to limit the spread of disease. The ideas of disease control as a global problem began with the foundation of disease control programs by the Rockefeller Foundation, that implemented activities in the removal of sanitary threats. These first efforts at the control of infectious disease were the precursors to the League of Nations and United Nations in the twentieth century.[247] The establishment of the LNHO (League of Nations Health Organization) after the First World War marked yet another stage in the rise of disease control as a field amenable to global action.[248] In the wake of the Second World War, the WHO (World Health Organization) emerged from the ashes of the LNHO in 1948. Its designation

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[245] Manela Erez, *The politics of smallpox eradication*, p. 262
[246] Harrison Mark, *Disease and world history from 1750*, p. 250
[247] Webb James L. A., *Globalization of disease, 1300 to 1900*, p. 69
[248] Manela Erez, *The politics of smallpox eradication*, p. 264

as a «world» organization reflected the global ambitions of its founders: it would serve not nations, but humanity itself.[249] When diplomats met to form the United Nations in 1945, one of the things they discussed was setting up a global health organization: WHO's constitution came into force on 7 April 1948, now there are 194 Member States, across six regions, and more than 150 offices. WHO strives to combat diseases: communicable diseases like influenza and HIV, and noncommunicable diseases like cancer and heart diseases. In 1959, WHO developed the SEP (Smallpox Eradication Programme) with the intent of eradicating smallpox through global vaccination. Erez Manela (2015: 275) outlines the criticalities of the SEP:

> The SEP faced strong opposition for many reasons and from many quarters within the organization throughout its life. For one, top WHO officials were notably unenthusiastic about the program early on. [...] The Brazilian epidemiologist Marcolino Candau, WHO longtime director general, saw the MEP's failure to achieve eradication as a serious blow to the WHO's credibility, and worried that a failed attempt to eradicate smallpox might deal the organization's reputation a further blow. After all, leading figures in the scientific community at the time held that programs aiming at the complete eradication of any infectious disease were impractical for a host of biological, political, economic, and social reasons. Such programs, one prominent expert argued in a widely book at the time, reflected the hubris of modern man. They were little more than another type of social utopia and were destined for an end even more ignominious than the dustbin of history, namely as a «curiosity item on library shelves».

The control of disease also came to be viewed as an important governmental responsibility in the emerging nation states of Europe, both reflecting and shaping the wider state-building projects that sought to delineate and control national boundaries, and to render populations more legible and productive.[250] The institutional framework of international governance and co-operation that the WHO provided gave health officials in the United States and elsewhere a space within which they could conceive and articulate smallpox eradication as a global problem that required a coordinated global solution, and then to pursue it as such.[251] It started emerging a growing optimism that diseases could be conquered. Only after the WHO made smallpox the subject of a worldwide campaign, would developing countries possess the resources to be able to eradicate the disease: an objective which was achieved in 1979.[252]

Mark Harrisons (2015: 237) outlines nowadays differences in the spreading of diseases:

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[249] Ibidem, p. 264
[250] Baldwin Peter, *Contagion and the State in Europe, 1830 – 1930*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1999)
[251] Manela Erez, *The politics of smallpox eradication*, p. 277
[252] Bhattacharya Sanjoy, *Expunging variola: the control and eradication of smallpox in India, 1947 – 1977*, Hyderabad: Orient Longman Publishers (2006)

The period from the eighteenth century started quietly enough but the coming century experienced an exchange of pathogens unequaled in variety and scope. Wave after wave of pandemic disease and livestock diseases circulated the globe, leaving enormous misery in their wake. And yet, the same period saw tremendous improvements in human health. Many common infectious diseases were banished from the developed world, widening the gap that already existed between the mortality profiles of rich and poor countries. These inequalities are still glaringly apparent but the affluent classes in Africa and Asia now experience disease in much the same way as those in the West, with rising rates of cardio-vascular and degenerative conditions.

CONCLUSION

Globalization is not intended as an historical phenomenon because it is a process constantly happening and evolving. Considering the origins of the word «globalization», this term firstly appeared in the 1990s. Given that modern technologies have been around for a few decades, globalization may seem a relatively new phenomenon. However, this does not mean that globalization did not exist before that period. As described in the previous chapters, global networks, that include global commercial, economic and social networks, existed and were very effective even before the introduction of the specific word «globalization» to describe this process. Globalization has roots in the Early Modern Age, when a series of networks was established as a result of the geographical discoveries that took place from the fifteenth century: commercial networks, cultural networks, networks of communication and information, state-nations, international law, democracy and human rights, and public health. These networks contributed to globally connecting the world for the first time in human history.

The «first form» of globalization is similar to the «current» and «modern» globalization, but at the same time there are differences between them. Many historians share the idea that globalization is a long-lasting process that began in the Early Modern Age, that became very pervasive in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that is now still in place. What has changed in these centuries is not how global integration works nor its quality, but its quantity, frequency and intensity, mainly because of the impact of technology developments. Globalization is accelerated due to the compression of time and space. This is the reason why globalization is a process that can only be truly understood by starting from the Early Modern Age, even though it seems to be a stronger and more evident process nowadays thanks to technological progress.

Global goods that started circulating in the Old Continent after the geographical discoveries have not been immediately welcomed by the new consumers. The presence of chocolate, coffee and tea in Europe was preceded and accompanied by a wide debate involving all social forces in a religious and scientific debate. Coffee was condemned by the Catholic Church to be a symbol of the devil, able to make vigilant, too talkative and uninhibited. At first there were different positions from doctors on the beverage of tea, as some considered it harmful to health, while others promoted its consumption as a remedy for all ills. They started to be consumed because of matters of fashion, but over the years they became protagonists of the daily life of people who could afford to buy them. Cocoa, coffee and tea were therefore the privilege of a few. Today, however, the global good of greater circulation, technology, is available to all, having reached even the poorest countries of the world. Global goods of Early Modern Age and global goods of Contemporary Age have in common the fact that, soon in the moment they entered society, they immediately became commonplace, creating at the same time a kind of dependence. Of all the colonial drinks at the beginning the use was promoted, until today that is not recommended. Tobacco is considered a real light drug. If before its use was allowed even in enclosed spaces, today tobacco is prohibited to be consumed in some specific places: for example, some municipalities began to forbid the use of tobacco in open areas. Hardly people who make excessive use of coffee and tobacco can then stop, and the same goes for those who make excessive use of social networks, viewing online content and are slaves to consumerism.

If the global goods that circulated in the Early Modern Age such as cocoa, coffee and tea created moments of conviviality at that time, the same cannot be said of the global goods analyzed in this investigation in circulation now. The public consumption of cocoa, coffee and tea created moments of sociality, thanks to the coffee houses and tea rooms, which offered the opportunity to participate in frivolous discussions or even a certain tenor and which were a meeting point for the aristocratic people of the time. Today social networks can be defined as meeting points: unfortunately, however, in this way the moments of discussion have seen a shift from offline to online, so we tend to prefer this mode of comparison. Consequently, it is possible to talk about the risks that social networks carry with them, namely the creation of hate groups and that of loneliness. For this reason, it is possible to say that globalization unites but at the same time divides.

As stated in the content of these thesis, globalization is inevitable. During Early Modern Age, European civilization has identified international trade as the cornerstone of the wealth of states. Globalization was thus established in the eighteenth century by the exponential increase in international trade. Today, people constantly use the products of globalization: they actually consume the colonial beverages that continue to characterize nowadays quotidian, eat dishes from different countries, if they are not particularly attentive to consumption they buy from multinationals and above all they constantly use technological products. Some people are opposed to the concept of globalization as they perceive that they no longer have their own local identity, as markets, productions, consumption and ways of living and thinking are connected on a world scale through a flow of trade that makes them interdependent and tends to unify them. On one hand, globalization allows people to connect with other individuals and groups around the world. On the other hand, people feel threatened by the fact that they hardly feel they belong to a local identity, but more to a global one. The result of this feeling is a decrease in cooperation and harmony. Due to the fact that globalization is a process that can no longer be avoided, the global society should have a clear knowledge of the phenomenon of globalization, and in this way could give it an adequate response so as not to simply remain trapped within it.

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