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Mercantilism from below? Swedish consuls and merchant networks between Naples and Stockholm in the mid eighteenth century

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the relationship between state policy and commercial initiatives within the institutions of the *ancien régime*, namely consuls. By exploring the case of the Swedish consulate in Naples in the mid eighteenth century, it addresses the role of private actors in the establishment of consulates, the Swedish authorities' problems controlling the consular network from a distance, not least because of the specificity of the local operational contexts. The article challenges the standard interpretation of the Swedish consular service being subject to an effective government-led policy of controlling and promoting the expansion of the Swedish merchant marine in the Mediterranean. Further, it suggests considering consuls as *ancien régime* entrepreneurs of a particular type, who used their political resources to achieve both economic and symbolic outcomes, by taking a pragmatic, micro-analytical approach to the relationship between institutions and the economy.

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1. Introduction

In a challenging article, Coleman (1980, p. 790) proposed a profound revision of the traditional reading of mercantilism. He said it was time to abandon the notion that states were powerful economic policymakers, and instead view the manifestations of mercantilism empirically as a concrete process of negotiation between political and economic actors. Since Coleman's seminal article, studies of mercantilism have significantly changed the traditional state-centric view. In the words of Stern and Wennerlind, 'the common vision of a mercantile system premised upon a coherent, strong, and expansive nation-state is simply unsustainable ... The authority and legitimacy of that state ... to regulate and manage commerce and economic life was often both aspirational and restricted' (2014, p. 5). An extensive literature on trade networks shows that, with or without the background support

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of a strong political apparatus, such networks played a key role in structuring trade in the early modern era because of their dynamics of kinship, ethnicity and trust, and through formal or informal institutions that reinforced contracts and property rights (Curtin, 1997; Greif, 2006; Subrahmanyam, 1996; Tracy, 1990; Trivellato, 2009).

In the literature, the figure of the consul occupies an uncertain position. Originating in the ancient Mediterranean, by the Middle Ages they were corporate judges of commercial colonies, or typical private-order institutions (Ogilvie & Carus, 2014), said to have helped reduce transaction costs and to promote trade through their triple functions of adjudication, information, and protection of the merchant colony's interests (Bartolomei, 2017, pp. 4–6). In the age of mercantilism, they underwent a slow, discontinuous process of 'nationalization', transformed from representatives of corporate communities to public bureaucrats appointed by their states (Aglietti, 2012). However, the state's increasing control over consular functions did not reduce the overlap between the consuls' public and private profiles. The growing literature on the Mediterranean—in the eighteenth century, one of the regions with the greatest consular density (Marzagalli, 2016)—reveals the consuls to have been something other than mere state servants. They often acted according to an economic, entrepreneurial rationale, whether representing their own interests or those of certain commercial groups against others (Bartolomei, 2017). The appointment of consuls and the establishment of consular offices were often the result of self-promotion by people looking for material and symbolic advancement (Grenet, 2021; Herrero Sánchez, 2015; Janin, 2019; Kaps, 2016; Signori, 2019), to the point that for some states—the Austrian Habsburg Empire, Prussia, the US—it was the applicants themselves who drove the process (Agstner et al., 2006; Marzagalli, 2019; Ulbert, 2006). Meanwhile, consular functions varied from place to place, mirroring Europe's legal and institutional pluralism, and made even more complex in the eighteenth century by the attempts of sovereigns to territorialise maritime and transnational space (Salvemini, 2009; Zaugg, 2011).

The eighteenth-century Swedish consular service in the Mediterranean is an interesting case. The literature presents the consuls primarily as effective institutional instruments of Swedish mercantilism,¹ an efficient institution put at the service of the Swedish merchant marine by the state (Müller, 2006). The consuls were part of an institutional package designed to promote Swedish trade with southern Europe; they and Sweden's answer to the Navigation Act, peace treaties with Maghreb rulers, the establishment of trading companies, and a government agency charged with convoying Swedish shipping to protect it from Mediterranean corsairs. Intent on boosting exports and cutting out the middleman (especially the Dutch), Sweden chose to appoint consuls to provide information, to protect Swedish shipping from corsairs and privateers, and to provide a mix of commercial, social, and legal services for Swedish subjects abroad. Even 'the policy of appointments', Müller writes (2004, p. 41), 'should be seen mainly as an articulation of mercantilist ambitions', being 'the result of conscious policy'. The notion that the expansion of the Swedish consular state in the eighteenth century was a process controlled from above by the Swedish authorities—Kungl. Maj:t (the king or the King-in-Council), Kommerskollegium (the Board of Trade), and Kanslikollegium (the Chancellery Board)—suggests a more planned, bureaucratic process than elsewhere (Almbjör, 2021, p. 79; Beaupaire & Marzagalli, 2013, p. 82; Makko & Müller, 2015, 28–31; Müller, 2004, pp. 37–74, 85–93; Müller, 2006, 2018, p. 65). This is in line with the ideas of Douglass North (1991, pp. 22–40), who has emphasised the role of state institutions in the growth of international trade.

On closer inspection, the literature nuances the picture of the Swedish consular service as a highly controlled, bureaucratic, mercantile machine. It notes the multiple agencies and rationales, emphasising, for example, the consuls' private interests and use of consular status to enhance their 'market value' and 'relational capital' (Beaurepaire & Marzagalli, 2013, pp. 93–95; Müller & Ojala, 2002, p. 41; Ojala, 1997, p. 336, 341). Many consuls monopolised the trade with Sweden, or tried to, some families held certain consulates for generations, and the boundaries between consuls' private business and their consular work were less than clear (Almquist, 1912, p. 135; Gustafsson, 2015, pp. 97, 102–104; Kaukiainen, 2000, pp. 357–361; Makko & Müller, 2015, pp. 30–31; Müller & Ojala, 2002, pp. 35–39). The commercial advantages of a consular job attracted applicants who once appointed then neglected their formal duties (Almquist, 1912, pp. 138–139; Müller & Ojala, 2002, p. 25). In the eighteenth century, the government always consulted the main beneficiaries of Sweden's trade policy, Stockholm's merchants and shipowners engaged in foreign trade, about potential consuls (Almquist, 1912; Müller, 2004, pp. 44, 65, 80–82). Swedish consuls, in their official capacity as international middlemen connecting different markets with one another, could, unlike French consuls and others, engage in commercial ventures in their own right, and had opportunity to win large state contracts and profit from industrial ventures (Garau, 2013, pp. 237–246; Östlund, 2014, pp. 198–200; Torrejón Chaves, 2000, pp. 163–220). Consuls should not only be seen as facilitators of commerce, but also as an unusual type of merchant or entrepreneur, vested with both political authority and social capital.

Although the literature has not modified the picture of the Swedish consular service's early history, some have emphasised the agency of private actors in establishing consulates, not just in operating them. Bartolomei (2013, p. 257) has hypothesised that the Swedish consular service, like the French and Dutch, was primarily run by and for private interest groups rather than the government bureaucracy, and serving the national interest was incidental to its consuls. Fryksén (2017) singles out the part played by commercial mediators and private networks in establishing consulates, concentrating on the case of Georg Logie, who negotiated the Swedish–Algerian peace treaty with the ruler in Algiers and became the first Swedish consul there. Supported by political and merchant interests in Stockholm, Logie carved out a strong foothold for himself, his relatives, and his connections. At one point, people from his network ran the consulates in Tunis and in Sardinia, and Logie himself was succeeded by his son-in-law.

Fryksén's example seems to undermine the idea of Sweden's consular service being a purely government construct. Like the other European consular services, various non-state actors and agendas lay behind the founding and running of the Swedish consulates. The consulates in the Maghreb were exceptional because they had little commercial purpose, only their diplomatic mission (Almquist, 1912, pp. 139–140; Östlund, 2014, ch. 5; and for other European consuls in Maghreb Harding, 2000; Heinsen-Roach, 2019). However, his findings challenge the idea of a monolithic Swedish state, suggesting a more nuanced vision of economic governance that can be traced back to a nexus of networks and individuals with ambition and connections to the Stockholm elite. This is in line with recent Swedish research concerned with non-state actors in economic governance, administrative and diplomatic practices, and the dissemination of knowledge (Ågren, 2017; Forss, 2022; Lindström & Norrhem, 2013; Orrje, 2020; Pihl, 2022). Fryksén's findings call for further research to see if the same political, social and commercial overlaps were behind the founding of more typical consulates, which were primarily commercial.

To get to the heart of the matter we have acted on Coleman's suggestion and investigated the processes of consular appointments, not only in terms of the Swedish administration, but also of the relationship between diplomacy, entrepreneurial activity, individual ambition, and administration, in order to look at Swedish mercantilism 'from below'.

2. Purpose, sources and relevance

Our aim here is to analyse what drove the expansion of the Swedish consular service in the eighteenth century. The focus is a consulate in the non-Ottoman Mediterranean that has not been the subject of historical study before, Naples, which was considered important by the Swedish authorities for both economic and diplomatic reasons. Set up in 1751, the consulate was part of a strong policy to promote mutual trade under a treaty between the two crowns of Sweden and Naples. Naples was an important trading centre, a huge consumer market, and a hub for the transshipment and redistribution of imported goods through a system of fairs, and for trade in commodities such as wheat, silk and oil produced in its provinces,² to the point that its potential importance for Swedish commerce was even singled out by the Riksdag, the Swedish Diet. Also, because of the lack of a diplomatic presence, the Swedish consulate in Naples had to carry out diplomatic assignments, which was rare outside the Maghreb.

The primary sources are a combination of Swedish government records, central and local government records in Naples, and the private letter book of one of the first Swedish consuls, Abraham Sandol. The variety of documents from both Sweden and Italy allows us to look at the institutional process from both above and below—from the perspective not only of the Swedish authorities, but also of the businessmen operating in Naples who applied to and eventually ran the consulate.

The article concerns those who seek to understand the consuls' commercial functions and interests; whether consulates resulted from the top-down creation of trade networks where there were none; and whether the claim that consuls were formal institutions in the service of trade applied to the Swedish consular service in the Mediterranean. By relying on both administrative and private sources, we also fill a gap identified by earlier research on consuls (Bartolomei, 2017, p. 28; Ulbert, 2006). On a more general level, the findings in this article better our understanding of the rapid growth in consulates in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and, ultimately, the evolution of the early modern state (Braddick, 2000; Glete, 2002; Parrott, 2012; Tilly, 1992).

The article consists of three empirical sections. It traces the origins of Swedish shipping in Neapolitan waters in the eighteenth century and the trade treaty between the two crowns; it investigates who was behind the establishment of the Neapolitan consulate, which, although provided for in the treaty, was not actively promoted by the Swedish government, but was the subject of negotiations between the Swedish authorities and local aspirants, all of whom came from the transnational commercial circles of the Bourbon capital; and finally it focuses on two successful candidates and examines their entrepreneurial profile and relationships as consuls.

3. Swedish–Neapolitan commercial and diplomatic relations

In the early eighteenth century, Sweden (which included present-day Finland) relied on products such as lumber, copper, iron, flax, tar and pitch for its exports, and sought to

increase its exports in metal products and lumber. Swedish iron production doubled over the century, driven primarily by British demand (Evans & Rydén, 2007). There were official attempts to improve self-sufficiency and end the dependence on foreign producers for certain goods by promoting new agricultural projects (such as sugar and tobacco plantations) and manufacturing. The merchant marine expanded, particularly in the second half of the century, aided by changes in policy such as the Swedish answer to the Navigation Act and by expansion into the Mediterranean, looking for cheap salt and new freight markets. High labour productivity at home played a role, but neutrality abroad even more so, because the major powers were frequently at war and their corsairs and privateers harassed the sea lanes, making the Swedish flag much sought after. In the 1730s and 1740s, increasing numbers of ships flying the Swedish flag called at Mediterranean ports, and both Swedish and Danish ships (Andersen & Voth, 2000) made inroads into the intermediary trade between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, which until then had been controlled by the Dutch and English merchant marines (Ekegård, 1924; Högberg, 1969; Magnusson, 2000, ch. 2–4; Müller, 2004, ch. 5).

In the Kingdom of Naples, the evidence of Swedish shipping dates from the mid-1730s. In 1736, a Swedish ship under ‘Captain Enrico Giovanni Bosenlew’ arrived at Palermo and asked to be allowed to dock. The President of the Kingdom of Sicily asked officials what the practice had been until then, noting that ‘in the course of many years no other ship of that flag had ever been seen in that port.’³ A similar episode occurred in 1738 when another Swedish ship landed at Palermo, where it underwent a forced search because there were no trade agreements between the two Crowns.⁴ Indeed, in the Kingdom of Naples, the privilege of not being searched, or roughly speaking, the ‘right to smuggle’, had given the Dutch, English, then British, and French flags a competitive advantage since the seventeenth century (Clemente, 2013). Despite this, Swedish-flagged ships played a role in the trade between Northern and Southern Europe. Two rare registers of voyages departing from the port of Naples, relating to 1745, show the traffic between Naples and Northern ports comprised 4 Swedish ships, 16 Dutch, and 3 British.⁵ Of the Swedish ships, 3 of the 4 were destined for Hamburg carrying wine, a commodity whose export the Neapolitan government encouraged with tax exemptions (Clemente, 2022, pp. 80–83). Further evidence of the increasing presence of the Swedish merchant marine is the curious request in 1740 by the mayor of Gallipoli, the main port for oil exports, to appoint a Swedish consul to promote trade with the Swedish nation, whose ships increasingly called at the port.⁶ However, the Swedish presence in the Kingdom was limited to these visiting ships, as no Swedish merchant community existed in Naples, nor would it for the rest of the eighteenth century (Desideri, 2019, p. 91).

3.1. Strengthening relations: the trade treaty

The eighteenth-century expansion of the Swedish fleet, evident in the ports of the Sicilies, went hand in hand with a new political interest from both parties in expanding trade. For Sweden, the perceived need to strengthen trade relations with the South increased when its rulers allied again with France in the late 1730s to rally help with an imminent attack on Russia. As part of this realignment, some Swedish politicians thought it wise to isolate Britain by improving relations with Spain, Portugal, Venice and the Sicilies through trade treaties—the Swedish Board of Trade was instructed to draft a Swedish–Sicilian trade treaty. The Sicilies were also important geopolitically, because the Kingdom of Naples was ruled by the Spanish

King's brother, and supporters of the Swedish–French alliance were keen to see closer relations with Spain (Holst, 1931, pp. 186–187, 339–341). The enlargement and consolidation of the Swedish merchant fleet in the ports of the Sicilies required that they share in the privileges granted to other nations, and that required diplomatic agreements.

Under the Secretary of State Montealegre, who was instrumental in the 'heroic' first period of Neapolitan reform, Naples pursued a policy of commercial development (Clemente & Zaugg, 2017) based on legal reforms (Ajello, 1976; Caridi, 2012) and the conclusion of commercial and shipping treaties (Mafrici, 2004; Pingaro, 2017) with partners in the Mediterranean and in Northern Europe. Their policy aims differed from Sweden, because the Neapolitan merchant marine had neither the facilities nor the qualities suitable for shipping outside the Mediterranean. Naples wanted to attract foreign merchants and ships to increase its exports of commodities, and especially wine, silk, oil, salt and wheat.

The Neapolitan and Swedish ambassadors to Paris started negotiating a trade treaty at the former's suggestion in the summer of 1740. The 'Trattato perpetuo di commercio, e Navigazione' (*Nuova collezione*, 1804, pp. 347–385) between the crowns of Naples and Sweden was ratified between March 24 and 9 April 1743, after three years of diplomatic work in Stockholm, Paris and Naples. Joaquín Ignacio de Barrenechea y Erquiñigo, Marquis del Puerto (*DB-e*, 2018), whom Philip V appointed Spanish Minister Plenipotentiary to the Swedish Court on 12 April 1741, helped with negotiations because of the lack of a Neapolitan ambassador to Sweden and the dynastic connection between Spain and Naples. He corresponded frequently with Montealegre from June 1741, first from Paris and then, from December of the same year, from Stockholm, sending news and receiving instructions about the commercial treaty.⁷ The way the treaty was negotiated and concluded can help us understand what its aims were as far as the two parties to the treaty were concerned.

Apart from a shared interest in developing direct commercial relations, positions differed about the respective nations' privileges, and the question of their consuls' function delayed ratification. The Neapolitan state, pursuing territorialisation—assuming control of trade and streamlining it, to the detriment of the old corporate order—refused to recognise the consuls' legal powers (Desideri, 2019; Zaugg, 2011), which were 'in conflict with local justice'.⁸ Carl Gustaf Tessin, the Swedish negotiator, relented on this point to secure the deal (Holst, 1931, p. 342). Articles 4 and 5 of the treaty explicitly limited the function of the consuls to the agreeable settlement of disputes, and denied them extra-territorial jurisdiction, while Article 12 merely allowed them to attend contraband searches of Swedish ships (Article 12). Sweden's yielding on the consular question indicated that its priority was to ensure the security of its flag, and it attached no particular importance to the privileges of the resident merchants because there was no Swedish diaspora in Naples. Article 42 of the treaty granted Swedish subjects all the privileges enjoyed by the most favoured nations (the Dutch, the British and the French, a legacy of the treaties signed by Spain in the seventeenth century), but it did not, to the disappointment of the Swedes, grant the Swedish king the right to update his nation's privileges when another nation improved theirs (Holst, 1931, pp. 341–342).

The trade treaty did not lead to an immediate boom between the two nations, much to the chagrin of the ruling elite in Stockholm and Naples. In 1744, the Spanish ambassador to Stockholm urged Montealegre to step in to promote a trade project and finally make the treaty 'fruitful'. That same year, the Secretary of the Azienda was asked to consider a proposal discussed with an unnamed Swedish 'caballero' who was experienced in making and trading

in iron, to form a company of merchants to carry out an exchange in which Sweden would export iron to the Naples, and Naples would supply Sweden with salt.⁹

In 1746, the lack of trade became a matter for the Diet when the relevant government department, the Board of Trade, presented a report on the state of trade and the measures it had taken to promote it. The report detailed Sweden's trade with various foreign ports. Regarding Naples, the Board reported that no consul had yet been appointed and that trade was still in its infancy. The Diet committee responsible went on to issue an order in 1747 for the Board to take measures to increase trade with Naples, as this would help the Swedish economy. The hard-won trade treaty had been costly to conclude, and it could not have been in vain.¹⁰ Naples had to be a priority.

The impression of this response is one of top-down management, where, as Müller (2004) concludes, the Swedish government willingly took action to help trade. In this case, that help took the form of a bilateral trade agreement and in 1749 the appointment of a consul, who was formally received at the Neapolitan court in 1751.¹¹ However, despite Naples being a port that was prioritised both for commercial and diplomatic reasons, it took eight years to set up a consulate, and the process was not directed from above: it was the work of the two men who applied for the post, Carl Fredman and Abraham Sandol.

4. A New Swedish consulate: self-promotion, trust and Expertise

The Diet had said the trade agreement with Naples should be put into effect as a matter of urgency, but progress was slow. The Swedish government did not go out of its way to encourage nominations to the new consulship, and instead limited itself to receiving and evaluating applications from merchants operating in Naples. The lack of growth in trade and the possible advantages of appointing a consul were treated differently by the Boards concerned—the Board of Trade and the Chancellery Board—and the Stockholm merchants, depending on who applied.

There were no Swedish merchants in Naples who had close ties to the Stockholm merchants and would have been a shoe-in as consul, so the candidates were mainly leading merchants of other nations, for whom the consulship held the promise of symbolic and material capital. This was the case with Toussaint Combe, a French merchant from Marseilles, who applied to be consul in 1743 by contacting the Swedish envoy in Paris. Combe was one of the most important merchants in Naples, where he was to serve the French nation in 1744–1746 and a contractor for the Neapolitan navy (Zaugg, 2011, pp. 101–105, 108–111, 113–115, 180 n, 183–185). The Boards involved duly sought the opinion of the Stockholm merchants, their recommendation was that Combe be turned down, arguing that because Swedish maritime traffic with the Sicilies was limited and still relatively new, it would be better to wait until the number of ships passing through increased.¹² This was remarkable. Who Combe was and what position he held were not even discussed, though it was standard to use consular appointments to form bonds with important foreign trading houses (Almbjör, 2022, p. 323). Similarly, lack of trade was generally used to argue for the appointment of consuls, because they traded themselves and so could help increase trade volumes (Almbjör, 2021, pp. 82–83; Almbjör, 2022, p. 326)—this was indeed the case made when a candidate supported by the Stockholm merchants presented himself.

Two years later, a Swede named Carl Fredman from a Stockholm watchmaking family applied for the job. He lived in Naples—perhaps the only Swede who was a permanent

resident there—and he was already a point of reference for the captains of Swedish ships. In his petition of application, he referred to a dispute he had tried to settle between a Swedish captain and a British crewman, and asked for advice on how to proceed.¹³ However, since the Stockholm merchants knew little about Fredman, they did not recommend his appointment.¹⁴

Three years later, a year after the Diet had said trade with Naples should be prioritised, a Naples-based Swiss merchant called Abraham Sandol applied to be consul. He came from Le Locle in the canton of Neuchatel, and after a career that had taken him to various Northern ports including Amsterdam he had moved to Naples in 1734, where he would remain until his death (Clemente, 2022). The Stockholm merchants had changed their tune since Combe's and Fredman's applications. A low volume of trade was now a reason to appoint a consul. Sandol was a foreigner, but, on the plus side, he was not from Naples, so he would not be partial in disputes with the authorities there. He was a merchant in Naples with good credentials, and he had promised to hire a Swedish clerk who could eventually take over the consulate. It helped that he had lived and worked in Stralsund in Swedish Pomerania for four years in the 1720s, and that he corresponded with the rich and politically influential Stockholm merchant Gustaf Kierman, among other things the director of the Swedish Levant Company (Jägerskiöld, 1975–1977).¹⁵

The Boards agreed with the Stockholm merchants that a consulate in Naples was necessary to realise the potential of the trade treaty.¹⁶ Nothing came of Sandol's application, however, as Fredman turned up in Stockholm and petitioned the King before Sandol's appointment could be finalised.¹⁷ Fredman's petition of application and in-person campaign convinced the Stockholm merchants that he cared about Swedish trade interests, that he had helped Swedish ships in Naples on several occasions, and that his 'decent manner' towards the Neapolitan authorities would benefit Swedes passing through.

4.1. Swedishness and expertise together: a joint appointment

Fredman was Swedish so the merchants chose him, but on one condition: as he did not come from a merchant family and had no commercial training, it should be provisional on him having a Swedish trading partner or hiring a Swedish assistant to help him with commercial business and correspondence.¹⁸ It is not clear why the merchants and the Boards took this risk.

Exactly who Fredman's backers were is unclear, although there are clues from an episode shortly after his appointment, when Fredman was accused of abetting thieves and having a mistress in Stockholm. In his response to the accusations, he produced a letter of recommendation from an unnamed minister of the Neapolitan royal court to prove his good relations with Neapolitan ruling circles, a claim he backed up by referring to Swedish Chancery President Carl Gustaf Tessin (he of the Swedish–Neapolitan trade agreement). Finally, he had also reached agreements with Sweden's Manufakturkontoret (Office of Manufactures), the Stockholm silk producers, and Ziegler the royal confectioner for the supply of raw silk and leather from Naples.¹⁹ Fredman, with no direct ties to the Stockholm merchants, used other political and business contacts to make his case. Considering his background as a watchmaker, and the son and brother of watchmakers (Wikipedia, 2021), it is perhaps not surprising that his connections lay with Stockholm's manufacturing circles rather than its merchants.

The timing of Sandol's and Fredman's petitions of application suggests they were aware of goings-on at the Diet in 1746–1747. Both men will have been told what to write in their petitions of application. Sandol, for example, set out his vision for Naples as a Swedish trading hub, in which Sweden would be a direct supplier of goods from the Sicilies to Russia and Germany while exporting fish, brass, copper, iron and other Swedish products to Naples. He played up his knowledge of Swedish trade to compensate for being a foreigner, the preference otherwise being to appoint Swedes (Almquist, 1912, pp. 138–140; Müller, 2004, pp. 80–81). He also volunteered to hire a Swedish assistant as his successor, which was an important gesture since this was a common requirement for Swedish consuls, designed to make sure there was a pool of potential Swedish consuls and merchants knowledgeable about foreign trade (Almbjör et al., 2022, p. 328; Almquist, 1912, pp. 132–133, 140–141). Finally, Sandol listed the many difficulties faced by sea captains in the Two Sicilies and the shortcomings of the trade treaty—unruly sailors who not only caused trouble but then ran away, exorbitant customs searches and trade disputes while in port—and how the lack of a consul in Naples exacerbated the problems.²⁰ Sandol spelled out that he was familiar with the intricacies of international trade, local laws and institutions and knew how to get around them, and that he had expertise, combining commercial practice with a vision for Sweden's trade, that would make him useful to the Swedish government.²¹

Sandol may have lost out in 1749 but he would eventually be consul. The erstwhile rivals joined forces when in 1751 Fredman asked permission to make Sandol his trading partner with the title of Swedish agent. According to Fredman, they had become friends. By combining Fredman's patriotic zeal with Sandol's business acumen and creditworthiness, they would secure an export market for Swedish metal products and a contract to supply iron to the Neapolitan Crown, and establish a trading house 'for the good of Sweden' that would be known throughout Europe. For his part, Sandol presented no fewer than three petitions on the subject.²² The Stockholm merchants supported the partnership and the Boards were in favour of granting Sandol the title of Swedish agent, as it meant he could better serve Swedish shipping interests and exert influence on the local authorities in the port of Naples.²³ In 1752, Fredman left office, and Sandol assumed the post until his death at the end of 1755. The French consul Taitbout then succeeded Sandol, having been recommended for the position by the French ambassador in Stockholm (Almquist, 1912, p. 621).²⁴

The Swedish authorities' slowness in establishing a consulate in Naples can be explained by their inaction about finding suitable candidates. That the consulship did not come with a salary and there were no active Swedish merchants in Naples were complicating factors, and the Stockholm merchants had next to no actors there with whom they maintained stable relations. The consulate in Naples required competence and trust, especially since it also had diplomatic significance. As the Chancellery Board noted in 1756, Sweden had no diplomatic representative stationed at the royal court in Naples, nor was it likely that one would ever be sent, and the consul was thus something of a diplomatic representative as well.²⁵ Sweden's consuls in Naples were in a different position to most others except for the consuls in the Maghreb and Lisbon, who had diplomatic functions (Forssell, 1935, p. 304; Östlund, 2014, pp. 202–207). Yet, in the absence of an active recruitment process and a resident Swedish merchant community in Naples, the Swedish government had to make do with spontaneous applicants, even if none of them met the authorities' needs. The joint appointment of Fredman and Sandol, which they thought would guarantee both loyalty and expertise, was a clear sign of this.

This raises the question of why the former rivals combined efforts so soon after vying for the same post and why Fredman left his post not long after. The answers lie in their business profiles, intentions and interests.

5. The entrepreneurial use of the consular function

5.1. *The consulate in the hands of a swindler: Carl Fredman*

Fredman and Sandol were very different entrepreneurial personalities. The first trace of Fredman in Naples was in 1742, when he proposed setting up a clock factory with an English watchmaker, Oliver Robinson, and two local partners.²⁶ The Neapolitan court, unimpressed by his request for privileges and concessions on export duties, turned him down.²⁷ The clock factory was never built, and Fredman seems to have made a living by improvised commercial transactions, including the import of watches, mainly from Britain. Neapolitan sources indicate his reputation in Naples was not the best, and that the local authorities did not consider his manners 'decent', as he claimed in his petition of application to the Swedish authorities. The Neapolitan authorities were angered by his behaviour towards the well-known, influential British consul Edward Allen over a dispute between Captain Mellberg and a 'rebellious' English sailor called David Kane. Fredman had mocked Allen publicly and privately and accused him of insulting the Swedish nation, to the point where the Neapolitan authorities forced Fredman to make public amends for the 'inappropriate words he had uttered against the British Consul ... and which were detrimental to the consul's honesty and quality'.²⁸

Fredman's appointment as Swedish consul must have improved his standing with the Neapolitan authorities somewhat, however, as he felt able to leverage it in a number of imprudent commercial ventures—and to extricate himself afterwards. In Sweden, in addition to his promises to deliver leather and raw silk, he announced he was going to start a vermicelli pasta factory on the grounds that it was healthy and cheap. Even the poor could be fed well. He asked the Swedish king for an older boy from a Stockholm orphanage to spend a year in Naples learning the ropes, and 1,500 thalers to pay for his round trip and living expenses.²⁹ Rather than an orphaned boy, in the end it was one Jean Witte, the brother of a royal secretary, who travelled to Naples to learn how to make pasta and to work as a clerk for Fredman and later for Sandol.³⁰

In Naples, Fredman often defaulted on payments, but used his position as consul to obtain help from the authorities in his commercial disputes. Although they felt he performed his consular duties with too little decorum and openly mixed his consular work with private business, he was still the representative of a privileged nation in lieu of a diplomatic minister. In 1752, for example, the king himself ordered the courts to suspend the issuing of debt collection letters for unpaid goods, suggesting an attempt to obtain payment in an informal, polite manner, given the consular status of the debtor.³¹

Drawing on the resources and connections his status as consul offered him, Fredman eventually entered the lucrative wine trade. He petitioned the Swedish King about lowering the import customs on Neapolitan wine.³² On 1 March 1751, he entered into a contract of sale with a Neapolitan supplier, Giuseppe Panza, for 100 barrels of wine from Pozzuoli, *Lacryma Christi*, to be loaded onto a Swedish ship, for the considerable sum of 1,200 ducats. Fredman was to pay in silver coin with a six-month deferment of payment, and gave his creditor a substantial number of gold and silver watches and velvet coats as security.³³ After

the transaction was completed he sued the sellers in the Neapolitan courts, accusing them of usury. He claimed they had demanded a much higher interest rate than originally agreed, backed by the corporate court to which they belonged.³⁴ Clearly, Fredman fell victim to Naples's complex jurisdictional pluralism, but he was also not skilled and experienced enough to navigate it successfully.

Unlike Fredman, Abraham Sandol had a solid commercial background. After Amsterdam, he had worked in Naples as a commission agent for Dutch merchants and shipmasters. His main business was finding return cargoes for Dutch ships, mainly Vesuvian wines for Amsterdam and Hamburg, but also silk, oil and cereals. His letter book shows he wrote 1,544 letters to 110 correspondents between 12 November 1748 and 17 March 1753.³⁵ His main correspondents lived in Leghorn, Venice and Genoa, the leading cities for financial and foreign exchange transactions and central to the networks that connected Naples to the rest of Europe and the Atlantic economy. Sandol maintained good relations with the Dutch–German community in Leghorn, which dominated the traffic between Naples and Amsterdam, Hamburg and London. He enjoyed the Dutch nation's special privileges in Naples and worked closely with the Dutch consul Theodore Davel. In all essentials Sandol was a commission agent, a central figure in the commercial organisation of the modern Mediterranean (Trivellato, 2009, pp. 153–176).

Fredman and Sandol's partnership originated in yet another of Fredman's business failures. In January 1751, Fredman had ordered velvet from the Genoese trading house of Bender & Pisani, a correspondent of Sandol's, but never paid for it. Bender & Pisani asked Sandol to obtain payment from Fredman and Sandol reluctantly agreed, as he had no confidence in him.³⁶ The affair dragged on as Fredman refused to pay and asked for a postponement, claiming he was expecting a large sum from the Neapolitan Court.³⁷

Significantly, however, it was at this point Sandol began to write about Fredman in different terms. He asked Bender & Pisani to be patient and wrote that he did not doubt in the least that Fredman would pay his debts.³⁸ A few weeks later he assured them he had indeed changed his opinion of Fredman and vouched for his honesty.³⁹ We cannot say how sincere Sandol's change of heart was, but we can note that this was when Fredman applied to the Swedish authorities for Sandol's appointment as agent.⁴⁰ Sandol also warned his friends that he had been looking after some interests of Fredman's, who relied on him for his greater experience, presumably in the wine business.⁴¹

Fredman's situation did not improve, though, despite Sandol's help. He tried his hand at increasingly reckless ventures, relying on his good relations with the authorities and his consular status. Eventually, it all caught up with him. Heavily indebted, he turned to the King of Naples on 11 May 1752, offering him 'as a gift' an ingenious English-made clock entitled the Mechanical Triumph. Ever self-confident, Fredman had brought it from Britain at great expense and claimed it was a collector's item and so valuable that the only possible buyer was a 'crowned head'. In return, Fredman wanted the king to help him pay off his many debts from trading wine. The king politely refused.⁴²

Instead, Fredman transported the clock to Rome, where the ship carrying it sank in the Tiber. Fredman quickly made an insurance claim for 5,000 ducats, again trying to use his consular status to throw weight behind his application: he needed the money for a trip to Sweden to further important trade projects between the two nations.⁴³ His actions, however, aroused the suspicions of the Neapolitan commercial court that Fredman and the sailors had faked the shipwreck in order to collect the insurance.⁴⁴ Under torture, the crew confessed

that the ship had never actually sunk, and they were convicted, despite Fredman's protests from Rome.⁴⁵ Fredman himself was not convicted, but he never returned to Naples.⁴⁶

Fredman's story shows how little control the Swedish authorities had over their consuls and how serious the principal–agent problem could be in the government apparatus. They seem to have been unaware of his indiscreet behaviour, nor did they learn of his insurance fraud until March 1754, when Sandol informed them. In August the same year they acknowledged the 'honteuse accusation' against Fredman and suspended him, forbidding him to interfere in Swedish affairs: 'en cas que le d. Fredman retournerai dans votre ville ... ne doive plus s'intriguer dans les affaires de Suède'. In his place, they appointed Sandol.⁴⁷

5.2. Reconciling the institutional role with commercial affairs: Abraham Sandol

Unlike Fredman, a schemer who clumsily exploited his consular status to make money, Sandol's private reasons for seeking the office were more honest. First, the title of commercial agent of His Majesty the King of Sweden was welcome recognition of his commercial credit, which he proudly communicated to all his correspondents between May and June 1752:

It is occasioned by a change of my business name to Sandol & Co. because of engagements with some friends from Stockholm, where His Majesty of Sweden has graciously bestowed upon me the title of his agent in this Dominion.⁴⁸

Second, the office of consul gave him a privileged position as an intermediary in the freight market. Trade between southern Italy and Northern Europe was highly competitive and volatile. One thing was certain, however, and that was the constant movement of bulk freighters and large British, Dutch, and now Swedish ships bringing cargoes of stockfish, colonial goods, and British manufactures into the port of Naples.⁴⁹ For someone like Sandol, who devoted much of his correspondence to cargo handling, being Swedish consul gave him access to Swedish ships and information about business opportunities. He could get them freight contracts and make money through commissions, or even use them himself for lucrative cargoes of wheat and oil (for a similar argument, see Peskin, 2019, p. 87).

Third, it gave him the chance to trade directly with Sweden, an ambition that coincided with the mercantile aspirations of the Swedish and Neapolitan states. However, it is doubtful it was ever more than an opportunity. In 1752, Sandol and Fredman tried to negotiate with a Sicilian nobleman who controlled the Trapani saltworks to buy salt in Sicily, offering anchors and cannons in return, but the deal did not materialise because it was not favourable for Swedish ships compared to the existing combined sea route with Sardinia.⁵⁰ The project of exchanging salt for iron also clashed with established trade flows and networks that saw the Habsburg Empire, and especially Trieste, as the supplier of iron to Naples. Sandol's position let him expand his existing trade exporting silk, wine and salt to Sweden and Baltic markets such as Lübeck. This was a commission trade on behalf of leading trading and banking houses such as Dutch De Smeth, which had branches and connections throughout Europe and Latin America (Beerbühl, 2017, p. 178; Beerbühl, 2015, p. 110), and for whom Sandol bought salt for Swedish use, or British Jackson Hart & Rutherford, based in Leghorn.⁵¹ He negotiated with Senator Vult von Steyern for the purchase of Swedish pitch and cannons for the Royal Neapolitan Navy.⁵² There were also potential deals for the import of copper, but they fell through, and in general Sandol was wary of negotiating large contracts, which he said had to be approved by the Swedish Board of Trade.⁵³

Fourth, while we have talked about the consul as merchant, there was also the possibility that consuls improved conditions for Swedish trade through their formal functions, spreading information and providing legal protection and assistance for merchants in need. In Fredman's case the opposite seems to have been true. Besides lacking decorum and defaulting on his debts, Fredman also seems to have seen his consulship as a source of income, selling vice-consulates to the highest bidder.⁵⁴ Some of his vice-consuls were accused of charging Swedish captains exorbitant consular fees at ports of loading.⁵⁵

Sandol claimed to have fulfilled his duties, including acting as a private arbitrator in commercial disputes so they did not end up in Naples's glacial court system.⁵⁶ From his private correspondence we know he used his contacts with the city authorities to speed up the procedures needed for a ship to dock and start loading and unloading cargo.⁵⁷ Still, even under Sandol there were problems. In 1756, the Stockholm merchants complained about long waits for Swedish ships in Naples, deteriorating trade, and other nations' better trade agreements, which favoured them in the competition for freight contracts.⁵⁸ Despite the privileges granted by the treaty, the Swedish flag still did not enjoy the same treatment as the British, Dutch and French, and above all exemption from the right of visitation. The Neapolitan government was involved in diplomatic disputes with all these governments because it wanted to limit the privilege, first granted by the Spanish monarchy, for political reasons—the political autonomy of the new Bourbon Kingdom was at stake—and for fiscal reasons—the worrying level of smuggling. Naples failed to renegotiate these privileges with the powerful trading nations, but it avoided granting them to its new Swedish trading partner (Clemente, 2022, p. 143).

Whether the appointment of consuls in Naples generated any increase in Sweden's participation in Neapolitan trade is difficult to determine, nor is it the primary aim of this article. The literature indicates that direct trade increased with the Italian states, and indeed with the Mediterranean as a whole, but it is silent about individual ports (Ekegård, 1924, pp. 381–382; Heckscher, 1949, p. 28, 30, 46, 50; Hildebrand, 1958, p. 39; Högberg, 1969), nor does it capture the extent of the Swedish transit trade or tramp trade through Naples (Gasslander, 1954; Müller, 2004, pp. 226–228). Further, the growth of trade with the Sicilies had started in the 1730s, before Fredman and Sandol represented Sweden. Sandol and Fredman had most likely spotted the growth in trade and applied to become consul as a consequence.

However, Fredman's and Sandol's stories, like their relations with Swedish and Neapolitan institutions, show that access to an institutional role in the economy of the *ancien régime*, was an important symbolic and informational advantage that could give a businessman an edge in a market with high transaction costs. A consulate was a source of information, a tool for relationships, and an exclusive access point to local institutions in a context characterised by a high degree of pluralism and uncertainty about the rules.

6. Conclusions

We have used the example of the Swedish consulate in Naples in the 1740s and 1750s to illustrate the reasons for the expansion of Swedish consulates in southern Europe during the eighteenth century, and to explain the government's role in this expansion by looking for explanations both within and beyond the Swedish administration. In addition, we have examined how best to understand the role of consuls in international trade.

While the literature assumes that the government's stated ambitions drove the growth of the Swedish consular service and the consulates were straightforwardly the instruments

of the Swedish state to create trade relations where none existed, our analysis of the Swedish consulate in Naples shows this was not always the case. Despite a recent trade treaty, the diplomatic importance ascribed to Swedish–Neapolitan relations, and the express desire by leading politicians in both kingdoms to expand trade, the ability of the administrative apparatus to select consuls and control their work was limited, and so too their interest in doing so. This left government vulnerable to manipulation by fraudsters and amateurs like Fredman, who, once appointed to a distant location with minimal oversight, risked doing great damage to relations between the two kingdoms.

If the theory of an articulated, state-directed expansion of the Swedish consular service were true, we should have found traces of it in the establishment of the consulate in Naples. Rather, like Fryksén, we found evidence that the expansion of the Swedish consular service was driven by a variety of actors and networks connected to both the commercial and political spheres, and, in the case of Naples, their private aims and the public aims of Swedish mercantilism did not always coincide.

It is important to note, however, that our findings do not exclude the state playing its part. The networks involved in the expansion of the Swedish consular service were at least partially connected to leading Swedish politicians, and the trade treaty between Sweden and Naples potentially aided Swedish ships calling at ports in the Sicilies. The consuls, as complex intermediaries with local institutions, norms, and actors, had a role in protecting ships and providing them with commercial and financial services. As our analysis shows, however, even a formal state institution such as a consulate was no greater than the sum of its various actors, and could be subverted, whether in ways contradictory to its formal goals (Fredman) or in ways that furthered them (Sandol). The state is revealed as an articulated complex of relationships and contingencies, which shaped linkages between the administration and entrepreneurial actors whose perspectives and actions were individual, but also reflected the wider context. To expand the consular service in Naples was to expand the Swedish state, but mediated through networks from outside the formal state channels. Our case study shows the Swedish state was not a strong actor in the political economy. It failed to discipline private interests, it could not set up new, functioning public institutions, and it relied on spontaneous applications and simply took over private institutions without changing their corporate character.

Our study demonstrates that the Swedish authorities' actions were not guided by a articulated mercantile policy. Instead, the Chancellery Board and the Board of Trade acted arbitrarily and sluggishly, guided by incomplete information, unclear motivations, and contradictory arguments. The consuls remained a combination of public function and converging private interests, revealing the contradictions of the *ancien régime* and government efforts to transform private interests into public goods. Like Fryksén, our study points to a re-evaluation of the driving forces behind the expansion of the Swedish consular service. For that to happen, there is a need for further micro-historical studies of other Swedish consulates more important than Naples, such as Cadiz. Not to say that Naples should be underestimated, for it was one of the major ports in the central Mediterranean and diplomatically important to Swedish politicians, and like all ports in the region its significance lay in the potential trade it offered Swedish ships and the Swedish export industry.

Finally, the consular institution was not so much an instrument of impersonal trade regulation, but a resource available to those entrepreneurs capable of using it strategically. The appointment of consuls and commercial agents did not conjure up good trade relations out

of thin air. Rather, pre-existing trade seems to have provided certain merchants with the opportunity to use a consular appointment as a resource to profit from a nascent but growing trade. A consul was a particular type of *ancien régime* businessman with privileged access to political resources and should be analysed as such.

Notes

1. On mercantilism, see Magnusson (1994, 1995); for Swedish scholarship that critically discusses the implementation and even existence of mercantilistic ideas in Sweden, see Runefelt (2005) and Rydén (2018).
2. On main products, exports and commercial relations, see Chorley (1965), Macry (1974), Romano (1976), Lo Sardo (1991), Salvemini (2000) and Clemente (2011).
3. Document published in Ciccolella et al. (2021, no. 87). The ship had, however, picked up a cargo of salt from the Sicilian port of Trapani the year before.
4. Cited by Desideri (2019, p. 74).
5. Archivio di Stato di Napoli (State Archive of Naples) (ASN), Tribunali Antichi, Pandetta Nuovissima, fascio 2822, first semester 1745; ASN, Arrendamenti, b. 661, second semester 1745.
6. ASN, Segreteria di Stato degli Affari Esteri, fascio 2054.
7. ASN, Segreteria di Stato degli Affari Esteri, fascio 2047, 5 June 1741, 4 July 1741, 28 Aug. 1741, 3 Sept. 1741, 18 Sept. 1741, 10 Oct. 1741, 13 Oct. 1741, 3 Nov. 1741, 10 Dec. 1741, 28 Dec. 1741, 6 Feb. 1742, 14 Aug. 1742, 25 Sept. 1742.
8. ASN, Segreteria di Stato degli Affari Esteri, fascio 2047, Montealegre to Marquis del Puerto, 28 Aug. 1742, and Marquis del Puerto to Montealegre, 27 Nov. 1742.
9. ASN, Segreteria di Stato degli Affari Esteri, fascio 2047, Marquis del Puerto to Montealegre, 16 June 1744.
10. Riksarkivet (Swedish National Archives), Stockholm (RA), Kanslikollegium, E11:4, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 9 June 1749.
11. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, fascio 67/17, 20 Feb. 1751: 'A Francesco Ventura. Para que el Mag. de Com. expida en la forma q. propone, el r. exeq. r a las Patentes de Consules de Svezia, y Prussia en esta Capital.'
12. RA, Kanslikollegium, E11:4, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 3 Oct. 1743.
13. RA, Biographica, vol. F17b, Fredman to Kungl. Maj:t, 15 Mar. 1746.
14. RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 16B, Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 1 Sept. 1746.
15. See Sandol's petition attached to RA, Kanslikollegium, E11:4, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 9 June 1749.
16. RA, Kanslikollegium, E11:4, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 9 June 1749.
17. RA, Biographica, vol. F17b, Fredman to Kungl. Maj:t, 17 Aug. 1749.
18. RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17a, Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 24 Oct. 1749; RA, Kanslikollegium, E11:4, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 18 Oct. 1749.
19. RA, Biographica, F17b, Fredman to Kungl. Maj:t, n.d., read out to the Council on 19 Feb. 1750.
20. RA, Kanslikollegium, E11:4, Sandol's petition attached to Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 9 June 1749.
21. On 'expertise' as a combination of 'practical ability and a more general understanding', as the basis of political legitimacy, and its historiographical use, see Ash (2019).
22. RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17a, Fredman to Kanslipresidenten, 24 Sept./6 Oct. 1751 & 1/12 Oct. 1751, and Sandol's three petitions attached to Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 27 Feb. 1752.
23. RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17a, Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 27 Feb. 1752.
24. RA, Kanslikollegium, E11, vol. 5, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 4 May 1756 about the French General Consul Taitbout; the Italian Mattia Felice replaced Taitbout in 1757, and not as one bibliography has it in 1754 (Archivio di Stato di Napoli, 1985, p. 47).
25. RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17b, Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 6 July 1756.

26. ASN, Segreteria di Stato degli Affari Esteri, fascio 675, Pietro Contegna to Montealegre, 11 July 1742.
27. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 3/52. About projecting and distrust, see Yamamoto (2018).
28. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 27/19, Naples, 6 July 1746: 'A Francesco Ventura. Che chiami Carlo Fredman e gli ordini di scusarsi col console britannico delle parole improprie, proferte contro allo stesso'; ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 27/19, Odoardo Allen, 14 May 1746.
29. RA, Biographica, vol. F17b, Fredman to Kungl. Maj:t, n.d., read out to the Council on 18 Jan. 1750.
30. RA, Kanslikollegium, E11, vol. 6, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 2 Mar. 1759.
31. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 78/113, 16 Mar. 1752.
32. RA, Skrivelser till Kung. Maj:t, vol. 17b, Fredman to Kungl. Maj:t, n.d., read out to the Council, 18 Jan. 1750.
33. ASN, Notai 1700, Notaio Coppola, vol. 814/7.
34. ASN, Real Camera di S. Chiara, Diversi, fascio 7.
35. ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, fascio 4/9, Commercial letter book; detailed analysis of his credit and commercial networks in Clemente (2022, pp. 34–40, 46–57).
36. ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, fascio 4/9, Commercial letter book, Bender & Pisani, fol. 151v, 19 Jan. 1751.
37. *Ibid.*, fol. 154, 2 Feb. 1751; and fol. 192v, 14 Sept. 1751.
38. *Ibid.*, fol. 193v, 21 Sept. 1751.
39. *Ibid.*, fol. 197.
40. RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17a, Fredman to Kanslipresidenten, 24 Sept./6 Oct. 1751 & 1/12 Oct. 1751; RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17a, Sandol's three petitions attached to Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 27 Feb. 1752.
41. ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, fascio 4/9, Commercial letter book, Bender & Pisani, fol. 197v, 19 Oct. 1751.
42. ASN, Segreteria di Stato degli Affari Esteri, fascio 2054.
43. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 11, Carl Fredman to S.R.M., Rome, 27 Feb. 1753.
44. ASN, Reale Compagnia di Assicurazioni marittime, fascio 74, fols 19–21.
45. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 93/164, 6 July 1753 and fascio 118.
46. ASN, Segreteria d'Azienda, in ordinamento, fascio 111/94, Caserta. To Francesco Ventura, 5 Feb. 1755.
47. *Ibid.*, 'Traduction de la lettre du Royal Conseil de Commerce de Stockholm du 21 aout 1754 a l'agent de Suède à Naples'.
48. ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, fascio 4/9, Commercial letter book, Sgazzi, fol. 240v, 11 July 1752, a circular to all correspondents, *passim* (our translation from Italian).
49. We found in Sandol's letters evidence of the following Swedish ships, recommended to him as commercial agent, in the ports of the two Sicilies: ship 'Federico', captain unnamed, ship 'Emmanuel', captain unnamed, ship unnamed, captain Nicholas Luidz (Sic!), ship 'Speculazione', captain Malmberg, ship 'Pace', captain Federico Berg, ship 'Christeni', captain Hans Brauden. *Ibid.*, *passim*.
50. *Ibid.*, Marini Orsini, fol. 234, 6 June 1752, and fol. 261, 23 Sept. 1752.
51. *Ibid.*, De Smeth, *passim*; Jackson Hart & Rutherford, *passim*.
52. *Ibid.*, Fredman, 30 January 1753, fol. 288v; 20 February 1752, fol. 292v.
53. *Ibid.*, Fredman, 20 Feb. 1753; also see Fredman's petition to Kanslipresidenten 1/12 Oct. 1751, as an attachment to RA, Skrivelser till Kungl. Maj:t, vol. 17, Kansli-och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 27 Feb. 1752.
54. For Fredman granting the title of Swedish vice-consul to Domenico Palumbo in the port of Trani and to the D'Aprile brothers in Gallipoli, see ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, fascio 4/9, Commercial letter book, Palumbo, 13 Jan. 1753, fol. 286; Gavini, 12 Jun. 1751.
55. For Palumbo denounced by a Swedish captain for feigning 15 ducats of consular rights instead of 6, see *Ibid.*, Palumbo, 13 Jan. 1753, fol. 286; Gavini, 12 Jun. 1751.

56. RA, Biographica, F17b, Sandol's petition attached to Kansli- och Kommerskollegium to Kungl. Maj:t, 6 Jul. 1756.
57. See, for example, ASN, Supremo Magistrato di Commercio, fascio 4/9, Commercial letter book, Valente, fol. 294, 24 Feb. 1753.
58. RA, Kanslikollegium, E11:5, Kommerskollegium to Kanslikollegium, 4 May 1756.

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