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### The prize of neutrality

Welling, George Maria

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*Document Version*

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Publication date:*

1998

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Welling, G. M. (1998). *The prize of neutrality: trade relations between Amsterdam and North America 1771-1817*. [Thesis fully internal (DIV), University of Groningen]. s.n.

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## 5 The European trade of Amsterdam at the end of the eighteenth century

### 5.1 Periodisation

Before I turn to the central theme of this study--Amsterdam's trade with North America--it is necessary to have a closer look at Amsterdam's trade in this period in general, in order to fully understand the growing importance of the trans-Atlantic trade. Recent studies of Klooster, Enthoven and Postma<sup>1</sup> have given new emphasis to the importance of the trans-Atlantic trade. But it would be an oversimplification to view the North-American trade only in reference to the trans-Atlantic trade: the spectacular growth of the importance of the North-American trade can only be put in the right perspective by comparing it to other regions and earlier periods.

In order to compare the trans-Atlantic trade with the rest of Amsterdam's commercial activities, one would like to have detailed information on all branches of business. This could be derived from a complete machine-readable version of the portbooks of the levy of the *Paalgeld* for the whole period for which they are available. This was the ambitious target of the project when it started, but lack of funds and lack of time suggested a more realistic approach. After processing the complete portbooks for the years 1742, and 1771-1787, I realized that I was involved in an almost life-long project if I continued in the same fashion, in spite of all measures to increase the speed of the input process. Data-capture is not the only phase of research. Data also must be checked and if necessary corrected, standardized and analyzed. So, after investigating which information was available from earlier publications, I decided that there was enough material to provide the needed perspective if I restricted the rest of the data-input to the parts of the portbooks that concern the trans-Atlantic trade. The structure of these books has been discussed in Chapter Three. These data on the "West Indian" trade are much simpler and could be processed much faster: they were processed for the period 1742, and 1771-1817.

The decision to limit this study to this period is based on two grounds. First, there is a

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<sup>1</sup> W. W. Klooster (1995), J. M. Postma (1990), V. Enthoven (1996)

good historical reason to draw the line here. In 1817 the recovery after the Napoleonic period takes off. In 1815, 1816, and 1817 there is a remarkable revival of the trade, which has been noted before by Heeres.<sup>2</sup> He also indicates that the following period should be viewed in the perspective of the later developments in the nineteenth century. If one focuses on commercial relations and the history of trade, the period before 1817 can be regarded as a prolonged coda to the eighteenth century. Jonathan Israel, who concentrates on political history, sees a natural caesura between the eighteenth and nineteenth century in 1806, the end of the Dutch Republic<sup>3</sup>. De Vries and Van der Woude<sup>4</sup> include the Kingdom of Holland and the annexation by France in the earlier period, because they focus more on economic developments. They also see a real change after 1815. This change is reflected in the data of the *Paalgeld* portbooks, but there is good reason to put the caesura in 1817 for this study.

In the last chapter of this book the trans-Atlantic trade and especially the trade with the United States will be the central theme. The War of 1812, which brought England and the United States once again as enemies to the battlefields, can be regarded as a second war of independence. The treaty of Ghent may be seen as the beginning of the emergence of the former colony as a serious factor in world affairs. There was a real change in US economic policy: the tariff of 1816 offered American manufacturers a stronger position on the home market, which would prepare the ground for later economic expansion. When James Monroe succeeded James Madison as president of the United States in 1817 the political outlook changed considerably, leading eventually to the enunciation of what came to be known as the *Monroe Doctrine* in 1822. The United States claimed the whole American continent as its sphere of interest, on the other hand advocating the right of self-determination of all people. The period in which the European powers were too busy settling their continental conflicts was over and the Americans would meet severe competition again in the western hemisphere in their trade with South America and the West-Indies, which had become so essential. The support for the independence movements on the South American continent was not only based on popular support for the ideological aspects, but also on solid economic interest.

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<sup>2</sup> W.G. Heeres (1982), 7

<sup>3</sup> J. Israel (1995)

<sup>4</sup> J. de Vries and A. van der Woude (1995)

A more practical reason to chose 1817 as the end of a period is a structural change in the *Paalgeld* portbooks, the main source of this research, which has been discussed in Chapter 3: from then on the portbooks also include the East-Indian trade and the cargoes of the ships in the West Indian trade. After the opening of the Groot Noordhollandsch Kanaal the portbooks have once again a different structure.

## **5.2 The trade of Amsterdam in the eighteenth century**

Before presenting an attempted reconstruction of most of the trade of Amsterdam for the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the sources on which this reconstruction is based must be reviewed. In chapter three some of these sources have been discussed and compared with the *Paalgeld* portbooks. Since my reconstruction is based on a synthesis of data gathered from a number of these sources, it is now necessary to analyze the problems of using a combination of results of earlier studies with those gathered from the analysis of the *Paalgeld* portbooks.

### **5.2.1 The interpretation of the sources**

There are a number of recurring themes in the discussion of trade history, revolving around a central issue: how can we make an acceptable reconstruction of flows of trade in the past. There is a number of sources that can provide us with parts of the necessary information, but the interpretation of most of these sources is not as straightforward as one would like. I have discussed a number of these sources to establish the quality of the data of the *Paalgeld* portbooks. In general we can divide the sources into two groups: those that were generated by some sort of public authority and those that were created for other reasons. In the latter category one finds private communications between merchants and correspondents, but also the ship tidings in newspapers. In the first category are the registers of all sorts of levies and taxes, and lists commissioned by public authorities for other purposes. The use of both types of sources is problematic because it is very difficult to assess their accuracy.

The reliability of all sorts of tax-registers is questionable and has been discussed in many studies. Tax evasion is eternal and since most of the data we have on the trade of Amsterdam in this period are tax-related, all will have some sort of bias caused by evasion. Some authors

have concluded that it would be better to restrict research to the numbers of ships that have actually arrived in port. Based on the assumption that complete tax-dodging is unlikely, they suppose that all ships paid some tax. Hence, the number of ships must be correct. They claim that the flow of goods from one harbor to another would be too difficult to trace since the proportion of tax evasion cannot be estimated and may have varied over periods. This irregularity could be caused by changing levels of taxation: high taxes lead to more evasion, lower taxes to less. But also the enforcement of the tax laws differed over periods: a strong central government will be in a better position to collect the taxes than a weak one. It is even harder to establish if this would cause a bias in research of all goods or only of some goods. How can we discern which goods would be more affected than others by tax evasion? Most writers assume that it was common practice to declare only a part of the total cargo, excluding small and precious goods. However the evidence presented is so flimsy, that it does not allow a systematic assumption about tax evasion.<sup>5</sup>

Sources that originate from the private sector present even more difficulties. It is almost always impossible to assess their completeness. To estimate the number of ships that came to Amsterdam in the years for which the *Paalgeld* portbooks were not processed other data was needed: the data that Oldewelt and Van Nierop gathered from the ship tidings in newspapers- Oldewelt from the *Nieuwe Amsterdamsche Courant* and Van Nierop from *De Koophandel en Zeevaarttijdingen*, and those which Snapper gathered from the *Generale Lijsten* (General Lists), partly published in the *Nieuwe Nederlandse Jaarboeken*.<sup>6</sup> All these lists have a common shortcoming: they provide numbers of ships that put in at Texel or in Het Vlie. Van Nierop corrected these figures using the number of big ships that had arrived in Amsterdam, which were published by d'Alphonse.<sup>7</sup> From this she concluded that although most ships that arrived at Texel and in Het Vlie actually arrived in Amsterdam, quite a number of them did not.<sup>8</sup> Comparing his earlier findings from the *Generale Lijsten* with results from a cursory investigation of the *Paalgeld* portbooks, Snapper had to accept what Van Nierop published

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<sup>5</sup> J. de Vries (1958)

<sup>6</sup> W.F.H. Oldewelt (1953), L. van Nierop (1924), F. Snapper (1985)

<sup>7</sup> F.J. d'Alphonse (1900), 384-385

<sup>8</sup> L. van Nierop (1924), 121

sixty years earlier: quite a number of ships that arrived in Amsterdam cannot be found in the lists of ships arriving at Texel or in Het Vlie.<sup>9</sup> He claims that the differences are caused by the great number of rather small ships that came from the North German coast, the *Kleine Oost*, via the Wadden Zee into the Zuider Zee and hence were never registered in the *Generale Lijsten*. In an earlier publication<sup>10</sup> based on the analysis of the *Paalgeld* portbooks for the year 1778, I assumed that Snapper's idea was correct, although the table I included indicated that there were also other deviations that needed another explanation. There were significant

Year	Average size in Lasts	N=	St.Dev.
1742	19.7	326	9.3
1771	17.2	402	9.6
1772	18.8	353	10.8
1773	21.0	370	11.8
1774	23.1	356	59.3
1775	19.4	344	9.4
1776	20.6	502	7.4
1777	23.4	571	25.9
1778	23.7	713	31.7
1779	21.9	438	7.1
1780	23.3	379	8.0
1781	18.3	340	6.3
1782	17.9	183	5.9
1783	37.9	101	111.8
1784	20.3	173	8.1
1785	17.7	157	6.0
1786	17.7	122	5.1
1787	22.6	209	9.1
AVR	21.2	6039	25.7

**Table 1** Average size in lasts of ships coming from the *Kleine Oost*, 1742, 1771-1787. N is the number of ships. Source: *Paalgeld* Portbooks

differences also for ships coming from Iceland and Greenland -a 100% difference! From Norway a 50% difference, but there were also different numbers from Great Britain, and from the Baltic ports. But as table I shows, ships coming from the *Kleine Oost* were small, but not tiny. To get an impression of the size of the ships coming from the *Kleine Oost* I selected from the data set all ships coming from that region, of which only one cargo was specified, and for which that cargo was expressed in lasts. Since in the *Paalgeld* portbooks the size of the ship is not specified, this is the best indication of the ship's size. To explain some very high averages I have also given the Standard Deviation. For four of the five years in which the average size is higher than 23 lasts, the standard deviation is so high that one must expect the influence of a number of extreme values. In all these cases it is true: a small number of heavily laden wood-ships came from the *Kleine Oost* in these years. For the whole period

<sup>9</sup> F. Snapper (1985), 120

<sup>10</sup> G.M. Welling (1988), 463-464

excluding the extreme values an average of between eighteen and twenty lasts can be computed. Ships from the *Kleine Oost* were small, most of them as Van Nierop claimed between 16 and 30 lasts, but not exclusively.<sup>11</sup> But the number of ships coming from the *Kleine Oost* cannot fully explain for the differences between the totals of ships actually arriving in Amsterdam and those arriving at Texel on in Het Vlie. Below I will suggest an alternative approach, based on both a computer analysis of the *Paalgeld* portbooks and all the older data sets that have been entered into the computer for this purpose. First I will attempt a reconstruction of the number of ships that arrived in Amsterdam and establish what was the port of origin of these ships. Then I will present a reconstruction of the imports of Amsterdam in this period.

### 5.2.2 The number of incoming ships in Amsterdam

There have been a number of attempts to reconstruct the maritime traffic statistics of Amsterdam in the eighteenth century and I could have saved myself lots of time if I had just used the figures as they have been published.

In 1984 Faber published an article in which he used all available data for an attempted reconstruction of the flow of Dutch trade in the period 1784-1810.<sup>12</sup> However impressive and probably correct his conclusions may be, his analysis is based on a mix of data on numbers of ships putting in at Texel and in Het Vlie and tax income from ships arriving in Amsterdam. Although he repeats Van Nierop's warning, that not all ships arriving at Texel actually came to Amsterdam, he nevertheless uses these figures as if they were.

In 1985 Snapper tried to synthesize all the time-series that he knew of and combined them with data he had gathered from a cursory glance at the *Paalgeld* portbooks.<sup>13</sup> In that same article he hoped that one day a team could be formed to study the *Paalgeld* portbooks more thoroughly, which implies that his work may have been a bit impressionistic. All his counting and calculating was done manually. On the one hand this has resulted in a lack of

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<sup>11</sup> L. van Nierop (1924), 123

<sup>12</sup> J.A. Faber (1984)

<sup>13</sup> F. Snapper (1985)

accuracy, on the other hand it enticed him to chose simple solutions for the complex problems he faced. Still, he showed that a combination of data from various publications could be used together. Following in his footsteps I have stored all the comparable time-series in the computer. This allowed me to experiment until I found a more sophisticated way to solve the same problems. Maybe this reconstruction could be fine-tuned even more, but since it is not the main subject of this study the results I will present here are sufficient.

In order to construct a time-series of the number of incoming ships to Amsterdam covering the period from 1662 until 1810, I have combined data of seven sources, which cover all the trade of Amsterdam. First of all, the data I gathered from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, which I consider to be the most reliable, since this tax was collected in the port of Amsterdam and the whole data-collection has been

done using computers. The numbers calculated from the portbooks should reflect the actual number of ships that came into the harbor of Amsterdam. However, the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks do not cover the East-Indian trade, which is included in the other data. To solve this problem I used the NHDA-data set on Dutch-Asiatic shipping between 1595 and 1795.<sup>14</sup> For those years for which I had to rely only on the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, I added to the totals the numbers from this data set concerning the incoming shipping for the chamber of Amsterdam of the VOC, the United East India Company.

For the years 1788-1794 Snapper counted the total number of ships from the *Paalgeld* portbooks.

Although table II shows that Snapper's counting is not completely accurate, it is close enough that his figures can be used for the years for which the portbooks have

not been entered into the computer. Manually counting this source is a very tedious job and

year	Snapper	Com.	Dif.
1742	2748	2760	-12
1771	2942	2917	25
1772	3149	3141	8
1773	2914	2875	39
1774	3081	3058	23
1775	2988	2969	19
1776	3155	3169	-14
1777	3305	3301	4
1778	3552	3545	7
1779	3268	3221	47
1780	3320	3319	1
1781	3150	3148	2
1782	3611	3578	33
1783	3018	3054	-36
1784	2760	2754	6
1785	2752	2784	-26
1786	2357	2385	-28
1787	2512	2546	-34

**Table 2** Differences between the total number of ships counted from the *Paalgeld* portbooks by Snapper and computer generated.1742, 1771-1787 .

<sup>14</sup>This data set can be down loaded via the World Wide Web, with a complete documentation of the data set: the URL is: <http://oasis.leidenuniv.nl/nhda/nhda-datasets/nhda-datasets-vrij/data set-d0001/d0001f02/>



humans are bound to make mistakes in such processes. An average error below 1% is actually quite good. So I will use Snapper's *Paalgeld* totals to reconstruct the total number of ships that came to Amsterdam. However, since he gave no regional breakdown of the total figures, I cannot use them in the attempt to correct the data from the other series.

Leonie van Nierop published a series of very good articles about the trade statistics of Amsterdam at the end of the eighteenth century, which have all been a rich source of information for this study.<sup>15</sup> In two articles she described the import and export of Amsterdam in the late eighteenth century and these will be used for the next section. In this section I will use the figures from her article on Dutch shipping under the French. She gives a regional breakdown of all ships entering Amsterdam and of those arriving at Texel and in Het Vlie. She realized that there is a difference between these figures and corrected the data she gathered from ship tidings using the total numbers of large ships that had been published by d'Alphonse. Since she did the correction herself and I have a very high opinion of her work, I have decided not to correct her results as far as the European trade is concerned. Concerning the trade on the western hemisphere I corrected her figures by using those computed from the *Paalgeld* portbooks concerning the West Indian trade. This deviates from my treatment of the other data-sets, but there is no possibility of correcting her figures in the same way as I have corrected the other data sets, since there is no real overlap between her data and the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks. A correction based on the average correction for Oldewelt's data and Snapper's data produced results that have no real plausibility.

Before his attempt at a general reconstruction of the trade of Amsterdam in the eighteenth century Snapper published the *Generale Lijsten* for the years 1758-1761 and 1783-1786, which provide information on the number of ships that arrived at Texel or in Het Vlie in that period.<sup>16</sup> These are alphabetical lists of ports with the number of ships that arrived from that port at Texel and in Het Vlie, and for some years also in The Meuse and at Goeree.

The data that Oldewelt gathered, accounts of the levy of the *Lastgeld* and from ship tidings in the newspapers, were also used.<sup>17</sup> Snapper has indicated that some of the data

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<sup>15</sup> L. van Nierop (1924), 124

<sup>16</sup> F. Snapper.(1983)

<sup>17</sup> W.F.H. Oldewelt (1953)

gathered from the *Lastgeld* were not accurate, but for this study I mainly relied on the data gathered from the ship tidings, since they cover some years of the eighteenth century. The *Lastgeld*-data were only used to construct a long time-series of the total number of ships coming to Amsterdam, and as a correction to the totals that were obtained from a correction on other data-sets. Oldewelt produced a long list in which the rows were formed by harbors from which ships came to Amsterdam and the columns were formed by the years, based on the ship tidings. In each cell he noted how many ships came to Amsterdam that year. He made no attempt to come to larger regional categories and the interpretation of these data without such a categorization is pointless.

Finally I used the figures that Lindblad published on ships coming from the Baltic to Amsterdam between 1738 and 1795.<sup>18</sup> This time-series is based on the accounts of the *Galjootsgeld*, a levy on shipping from the Baltic. The revenues paid the costs of convoying the ships from the Baltic to Amsterdam. Although both the *Galjootsgeld* and the *Paalgeld* were levied on ships arriving in Amsterdam, there are differences between the number of ships arriving from the Baltic in both sources. Only for the years for which the *Paalgeld* portbooks were processed for the European trade (1742, 1771-1787) could the difference be established. For the year

year	<i>Paalgeld</i>	<i>Galjootsgeld</i>	difference
1742	693	739	21
1771	771	739	42
1772	940	886	54
1773	762	742	20
1774	839	801	38
1775	844	-	844
1776	671	607	64
1777	784	718	66
1778	825	786	39
1779	715	676	39
1780	802	744	58
1781	458	375	83
1782	728	604	124
1783	769	660	139
1784	739	640	99
1785	720	650	70
1786	532	482	50
1787	537	471	66

**Table 3** Number of ships arriving from the Baltic in Amsterdam according to the *Paalgeld* portbooks and the accounts of the levy of the *Galjootsgeld*, 1742, 1771-1787

1775 Lindblad published no data, but for all the other years it is striking that the *Paalgeld* figures are always higher than those of the *Galjootsgeld*, and especially during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War 1780-1784 the differences are considerable. This maybe explained by the fact that ships coming from the Swedish west-coast were not found in the *Galjootsgeld*-

<sup>18</sup> J.Th. Lindblad (1982), 143-144

accounts.<sup>19</sup> Especially during the war years the Swedish and Danish west-coast harbors were used as neutral ports, from which the goods that could no longer be shipped directly from non-neutral ports were carried to Amsterdam. Normally the differences between the two series of data are not so great that they disqualify Lindblad's data from being used as they have been in this study to correct "constructed" data. Since Lindblad's data concern actual arrivals in Amsterdam, I have preferred to use his data instead of those that Johansen published.

To combine the data-sets mentioned above into one series, two problems had to be solved. First of all, one level of aggregation had to be achieved. Secondly, the data from the ship tidings and of the General Lists do not contain the number of ships arriving in the port of Amsterdam, but at Texel or in Het Vlie. A comparison of these data with the *Paalgeld* data is possible only after some correction is made, which takes into account the number of ships that entered the port of Amsterdam via other routes. But it will also have to take into account that quite a number of ships that arrived at Texel and in Het Vlie did not go to Amsterdam from there, but to other ports. Snapper<sup>20</sup> has wrestled with this problem, but since he did not have data on a lower level of aggregation, he was not able to come up with a solution based on the analysis of real data. His solution is based on sophisticated speculations. He correctly assumed that the great differences between the totals computed from the *Paalgeld* portbooks and from the other sources were mainly caused by the many small ships coming from the North German coast--the *Kleine Oost*--via the Wadden Zee to Amsterdam. To correct this, he assumes that the entire *Kleine Oost* trade would be double the documented Hamburg trade. I will show that this linear form of correction is not suitable. Secondly, Snapper's view is a simplification of the problem. The problem is not only that we cannot trace a large number of ships that actually anchored in Amsterdam--as we know from the portbooks--in the ship tidings. There is also a fairly substantial group of ships that can be found in the ship tidings, that must have gone to other ports, since they never paid *Paalgeld* in Amsterdam. The analysis of the complete data-set of eighteen years of *Paalgeld* portbooks allowed me to develop a method to correct the data from the General Lists and the Ship tidings, based on a

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<sup>19</sup> J.Th. Lindblad (1982), 9

<sup>20</sup> F. Snapper (1985)

comparison of the data for the overlapping years. The data that Van Nierop published are also based on ship tidings of arrivals at Texel or in Het Vlie, but she provides a correction for actual arrivals in Amsterdam, based on the data of Alphonse.<sup>21</sup> Since the only data which overlaps with her data set concern the trans-Atlantic trade, I found no solid foundation to correct her data. This will have to wait until the complete *Paalgeld* portbooks have been processed for the whole period. However, I shall show however that the figures she gives for the West Indian trade are incorrect for a number of years and for this trade I will use the data I computed from the *Paalgeld* portbooks.

The *Paalgeld* data are completely disaggregated, while Van Nierop's data are aggregated into regional categories which cannot be split up anymore. Both Snapper and Oldewelt have aggregated data on *port per year* level. The *Lastgeld* data only allow a look at the total number of ships that came into Amsterdam in a year, which made it impossible to use them for a regional analysis of the trade of Amsterdam. To make a sensible comparison all the other data had to be brought to the highest level of aggregation of one of the series, in casu the level of aggregation that Van Nierop used. So, all data have been entered into the computer and all port names have been categorized according to the same scheme as used by Knoppers and Johansen for the *Galjootsgeld* registers and the Soundtolregisters<sup>22</sup>. Using the correction-method it was then possible to construct a time-series, that I will present as the best approximation of what actually might have happened. I am aware that this series is not as reliable as one would like. Using the correction method did not produce exactly the correct figures for the overlapping years. But since the new time-series matches the figures of the revenue of the *Paalgeld* much closer, I consider them the best for the time being.

### 5.2.2.1 Coding the data

Since a major part of the analysis is dependent on the quality of the coding, a description of the process of identifying all port names is appropriate. The coding scheme of the port

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<sup>21</sup> F.J. d'Alphonse (1900)

<sup>22</sup> J. Knoppers (1976)

names is based on a three digit three letter combination, in which the numbers indicate a geographical location and the letters a mnemonic indication of the name of the place.<sup>23</sup> For example places in the Netherlands have codes between 500 and 599, followed by three letters for their names: 501AMS for Amsterdam.

To be able to use the same coding-list for all the sources I used, it had to be adapted to accommodate a much larger number of port names. Especially, the categories for port names from the West-Indies, South America, and North America missed most of the names that were encountered in the *Paalgeld* portbooks. Identifying all port names used in the sources is not possible. Some of the names refer to places that have lost importance as ports, and are very difficult to find on modern maps, as well as on old maps. Some names do not refer to harbors, but to roads, or river mouths, or fjords, where goods were taken on board to avoid duties. There is also the problem of various names for one port. For some ports in the Baltic area, especially in the region which now is part of Finland, the sources have Swedish, Finnish, Russian and Dutch versions of the names. And all these versions have their own subforms, which were subject to distortion through interpretation of the clerks who wrote them down as they heard them. Identifying names as a subform of another name and retracing it to its original form requires a basic knowledge of all the languages involved, a good historical-geographic background, and a lot of creativity. Some identifications could be qualified as *sophisticated guesses*, but to bring the analysis on a higher level it is necessary to lose a little detail in order to get a better overview. As an example of the problems encountered I will cite the case of the place-name *Drange*. Until I recently found out that there actually is a place in Norway that is called *Drange*, which is situated on one of the fjords near Bergen, I have always interpreted the name *Drange* in the sources as a subform of *Drammen*, a much better known port in Norway. In this case the problem is not so serious, since both are in Norway and I have not used categorization on a lower level of aggregation. However, if interpretations like this would move a number of place-names from one category to another, it would have an influence on the outcome of the analysis.

Some of the subforms can be traced to their original form using computer programs based on "sound alike"-algorithms like *Soundex*, or string comparison-algorithms like

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<sup>23</sup> J. Knoppers (1976), 60-61

*proximity*.<sup>24</sup> The first group of algorithms produces a simplification of the original name, using a coding scheme in which vowels are neglected and consonants are coded according to phonetic groups they belong to. The result is a code, usually of four characters, which keeps the first letter of the name and fills up the rest of the characters with numbers indicating the phonetic group of the consonants. There are a number of variations of this algorithm, because the rules for certain sound-changes are not the same in all languages. Using Soundex, only a very small number of problematic cases were solved. Another small number was solved using the proximity algorithm, which searches for best matches for one candidate in an existing list, comparing the name letter by letter with other names and keeping a score for each correct letter, and then repeating the same process backwards. The scores of the forward and backward comparison are then processed with a formula which produces a figure between 0 and 1: a higher score meaning a closer match. Setting an under limit of .8 will then produce a list of possible matches that score higher than .8. It is possible to fine-tune the algorithm, adding weights to finding certain letters in certain places.

Using these algorithms some subforms were traced to their original forms, but still quite a number of port names could not be identified. Some of these were identified using the list of name-transformations that are given in the register of B.C. Damsteeg's *Nieuwe Spiegel der Zeevaart*.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes it was necessary to use the algorithms mentioned above on the names from this register to come to solutions. However, after all this still quite a number of port names could not be identified. Most of these cases were solved by suggestions I received from historians from all over the world, who responded to a message I had put on a number of specialized list servers on the Internet.<sup>26</sup>

All the coding was done using a small program especially written for this purpose, after I found out time after time that manual coding leads to inconsistencies and errors. If mistakes have been made in the coding of port names, all results on a higher level of aggregation are affected. Luckily most enigmatic port names appear only very seldom and coding errors will have an insignificant influence on the results. However, if there are mistakes--and there

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<sup>24</sup> E.A. Wrigley (1973), C. Harvey and E. Green (1994), M. Olson (1988)

<sup>25</sup> B.C. Damsteeg, (1942)

<sup>26</sup> I would like to thank all participants of the HISTORY, EM-HIST, AND C18 listservers, who made suggestions for solutions: especially for the port names in the West-Indies, a number of enigmata were solved.

probably are-- these mistakes have been made systematically and can also be corrected systematically. To improve the verifiability of this research all data-sets used, all code-lists, and the coding program are added to the appendices, to provide the means to check my findings. After correction of possible mistakes in the code-books, the whole data set can be recoded using the coding program. Then the analysis can be repeated.

### 5.2.2.2 Correcting Snapper and Oldewelt

Snapper's data from the General Lists and Oldewelt's data from the Ship tidings do not refer to ships arriving in Amsterdam, but to ships arriving at the main sea gates, at Texel or in Het Vlie. It has been suggested before that these numbers cannot be interpreted as being identical with the number of ships arriving in Amsterdam. The figures need to be corrected in two ways: first, ships coming to Amsterdam via other ways should be added to the numbers, and secondly ships going from Texel and Het Vlie to other ports should be subtracted. Since Snapper claims to have corrected some of the errors that Oldewelt made, I shall treat the two publications separately, although the method of correction has been the same for both.

Oldewelt's data overlap for six years with the data gathered from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, being the years 1742, 1776, 1778, 1781, 1783, and 1784. By comparing the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks with Oldewelt's data it is possible to establish in which respect Oldewelt's data should be corrected. To do so the data from both sources have been summarized for sixteen categories. The categories are:

1. The Baltic
2. North Sea, including all ships from the *Kleine Oost*, Hamburg, Bremen and the West coast of Denmark
3. The Arctic, including all ships coming from the Archangel region
4. Norway
5. Great Britain, including ships from Scotland, England, Wales, and Ireland
6. The Atlantic, including ships coming from the Atlantic coasts of France, Spain and Portugal
7. The Mediterranean
8. Far East, including ships from Ceylon, India, China and the East Indies
9. Iceland, including ships from Iceland, Greenland, Davis Streets, and Spitsbergen
10. Africa, including ships from all African ports outside the Mediterranean
11. The West Indies
12. North America, including all ports in the region that is now covered by the United States and Canada

13. South America, including all ports from the South American continent, mainly from Suriname and Essequibo and Demerara, but also small numbers from Brazil and Venezuela
14. Central America, including ships coming from Central America, mainly from Honduras
15. Others, including all ports which could not be identified
16. The Netherlands

Using this categorization I calculated the average error for these six years for every category. This error could be expressed as a percentage and this percentage could be used to correct the data for all the years. The results of this method were unacceptable to me, because it produced figures for some categories, especially for the ships from the North Sea ports, which are very unrealistic. Furthermore, such a correction has no influence on zero-values, because a percentage of nothing is still nothing.

An ideal correction would take three things into account. First, some sort of absolute correction based on the average error which was calculated. But just adding an absolute number of ships does not do justice to conjunctural fluctuations. So secondly the solution should also reflect conjunctural influences, which can be done using an indexed correction. The data Heeres published on the annual revenues of the levy of the *Paalgeld*, which cover the whole period, were used to calculate index-figures for every year, using the average revenue over the whole period as root. (see table 5). These index figures were then used to compute the actual correction for each category for the years in which the data are available. For obvious reasons the correction was not applied in cases it would produce a negative number. Third and finally, the correction should take into account that for some years partial correct information is available: for some years the total number of ships can be taken from the accounts of the *Lastgeld*, for some years there is information for specific regions. Lindblad has published the total number of ships coming from the Baltic for the years 1739-1795, and the data of the Asiatic trade are known from the NHDA-data set. Likewise, my own research for the next chapter of this book provided exact data on the *West Indian* trade from the *Paalgeld* portbooks. In all cases where such data were

Region	difference
Baltic	70
<i>Kleine Oost</i>	1280
Arctic	4
Norway	-120
Great Britain	-38
Atlantic (F,S,P)	16
Mediterranean Sea	18
Far East	-5
Greenland etc.	-74
Africa	3
West Indies	7
North America	3
South America	5
Central America	0
Unidentified	2
Netherlands	6

**Table 4** Average error per region of Oldewelts data



year index	year index	year index	year index
1734 74	1754 86	1774 114	1794 121
1735 70	1755 80	1775 123	1795 53
1736 70	1756 85	1776 113	1796 112
1737 70	1757 97	1777 119	1797 92
1738 75	1758 84	1778 125	1798 82
1739 75	1759 106	1779 127	1799 66
1740 81	1760 113	1780 143	1800 95
1741 83	1761 118	1781 59	1801 115
1742 62	1762 117	1782 114	1802 143
1743 84	1763 109	1783 166	1803 112
1744 79	1764 111	1784 138	1804 137
1745 72	1765 118	1785 134	1805 151
1746 78	1766 112	1786 118	1806 128
1747 78	1767 105	1787 120	1807 124
1748 67	1768 116	1788 115	1808 30
1749 91	1769 113	1789 135	1809 14
1750 92	1770 107	1790 139	1810 9
1751 78	1771 117	1791 128	
1752 83	1772 116	1792 140	
1753 81	1773 115	1793 77	

**Table 5** Index figures based on the average revenue of the *Paalgeld* Levy, 1734-1810 Source: W.G. Heeres (1982,1)

available, the constructed figures have been adjusted to fit the real data. Usually this meant that the extreme correction that was computed for the *Kleine Oost* was diminished. So, in all cases where *real* data were available, they were used instead of the results of complicated corrections on imperfect data sets. The aim was not the exercise in itself, but to create a trustworthy time series stretching over one and a half centuries, which would put the

developments at the end of the eighteenth century in a better perspective.

The indexed correction method was used to correct Snapper's data, using the three years for which his data overlap with the *Paalgeld* portbook data--1783, 1785, 1786--as the basis to compute the average error. Table 6 clearly shows that it is not only the number of ships coming from the *Kleine Oost* that produce the error. This is the main factor, but underestimating the magnitude of this error, Snapper did not realize that there were also serious deviations in other categories. Although the Ship tidings and the General Lists are sources of the same nature, there are some striking differences. The General Lists overstate the number of ships coming from the Baltic by about 152 ships, but the Ship tidings understate the number of ships coming from that region by about 70 ships. But this is caused by the fact that two of the six overlapping years, 1742 and 1776, show very large understatements, resp. 241 ships and 446 ships, while the other years, 1778, 1781, 1783, and 1784, show smaller overstatements, resp. -88, -70, -42, and -69. This pattern corresponds to Snapper's data, for which the overlapping years all come from the 1780's (1783, 1785, and 1786). In this period quite a number of ships coming from the Baltic-area must have gone to

other ports than Amsterdam, because they cannot be traced in the *Paalgeld* portbooks. Another remarkable feature of these figures concerns the trade with Norway. On average only about 50% of the ships arriving at Texel and in Het Vlie from Norway actually sailed on to Amsterdam: only in 1742 is the number of ships arriving from Norway as computed from the *Paalgeld* portbooks higher than that computed from Oldewelt's data from the ship-tidings. For all the other years the Norwegian trade of Amsterdam is not as high as suggested by the General Lists and the Ship tidings. Ships coming from Greenland, Iceland, and Davis Straits are rarely found in the *Paalgeld* portbooks: most of these ships must have been whalers, that did not sail on to Amsterdam but to the towns that were specialized in this trade, like De Rijp.

The number of ships coming from Great Britain and arriving in Amsterdam, was not as high as those arriving at Texel or in Het Vlie. Quite a number of them--about 20%--found their way to other ports on the Zuider Zee. The other differences between the data compiled from the *Paalgeld* portbooks and from Oldewelt's and Snapper's data are less spectacular and are indicative that indeed most of the ships coming from the other regions did indeed bring their cargoes to Amsterdam.

Using the various corrections described I have calculated a new series based on the data that Oldewelt based on the Lastgeld, on the corrected data from the ship tidings, published by Oldewelt also, the corrected version of Snapper's *Generale Lijsten*, the data from the *Paalgeld*, and the data that Van Nierop published, corrected for the West Indian trade. To complete the series for the missing years 1788-1794 I have used the totals that Snapper counted from the *Paalgeld* portbooks for these years. The whole series was corrected using the NHDA-data set on Dutch Asiatic shipping.<sup>27</sup> Since the VOC-ships were not mentioned in the *Paalgeld* portbooks, the years that were based on these data had be corrected (1742, 1771-

Region	difference
Baltic	-152
<i>Kleine Oost</i>	718
Arctic	-4
Norway	-233
Great Britain	-63
Atlantic (F,S,P)	-23
Mediterranean Sea	-31
Far East	-11
Greenland etc.	-57
Africa	-7
West Indies	-10
North America	1
South America	1
Central America	0
Unidentified	-8
Netherlands	4

**Table 6** Average error in Snapper's Data set with respect to various regions

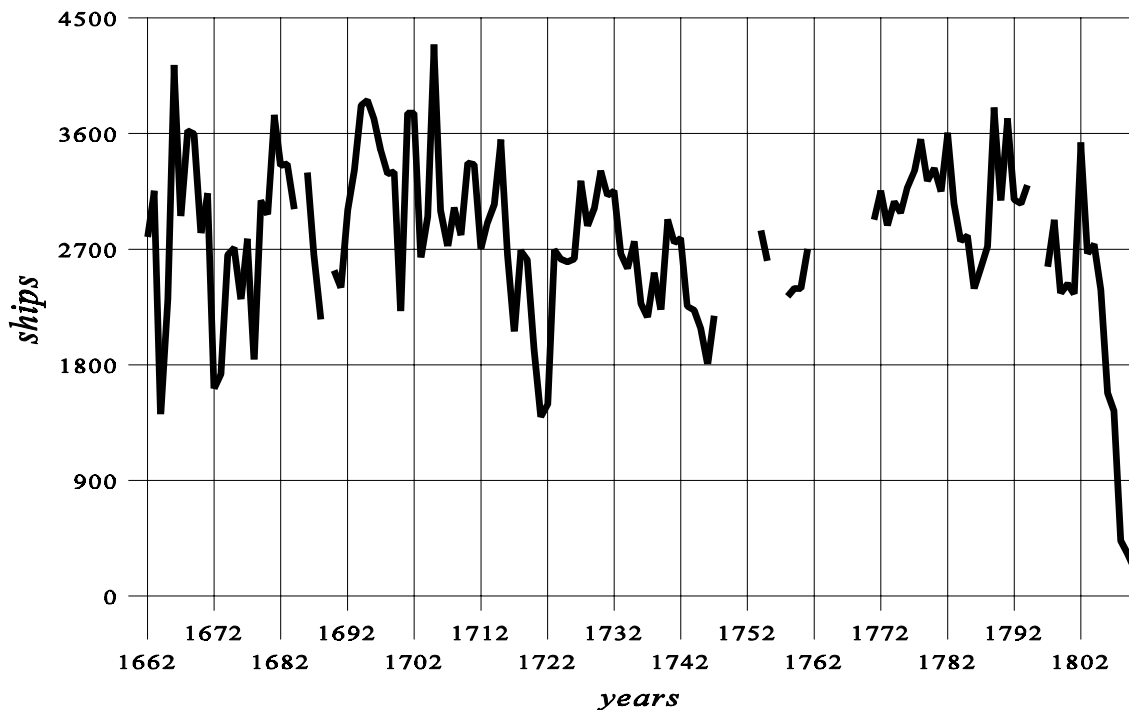
<sup>27</sup> F. Snapper (1985)

year	ships	year	ships	year	ships	year	ships	year	sips	year	ships
1662	2796	1689	-	1716	2662	1743	2255	1770	-	1797	2564
1663	3155	1690	2534	1717	2062	1744	2225	1771	2931	1798	2929
1664	1416	1691	2403	1718	2689	1745	2079	1772	3155	1799	2361
1665	2311	1692	3005	1719	2618	1746	1809	1773	2887	1800	2431
1666	4135	1693	3319	1720	1925	1747	2184	1774	3071	1801	2354
1667	2960	1694	3820	1721	1395	1748	-	1775	2983	1802	3532
1668	3623	1695	3861	1722	2490	1749	-	1776	3183	1803	2667
1669	3599	1696	3710	1723	2696	1750	3055	1777	3312	1804	2738
1670	2827	1697	3469	1724	2625	1751	-	1778	3556	1805	2383
1671	3135	1698	3287	1725	2602	1752	2796	1779	3233	1806	1578
1672	1619	1699	3304	1726	2625	1753	-	1780	3330	1807	1440
1673	1731	1700	2219	1727	3232	1754	2847	1781	3150	1808	432
1674	2658	1701	3761	1728	2882	1755	2608	1782	3605	1809	332
1675	2713	1702	3761	1729	3013	1756	-	1783	3057	1810	216
1676	2313	1703	2637	1730	3310	1757	-	1784	2765		
1677	2780	1704	2956	1731	3120	1758	2333	1785	2805		
1678	1841	1705	4293	1732	3156	1759	2396	1786	2394		
1679	3080	1706	3002	1733	2666	1760	2394	1787	2557		
1680	2972	1707	2727	1734	2552	1761	2702	1788	2718		
1681	3746	1708	3027	1735	2762	1762	-	1789	3804		
1682	3353	1709	2810	1736	2279	1763	-	1790	3080		
1683	3365	1710	3373	1737	2174	1764	-	1791	3720		
1684	3012	1711	3359	1738	2518	1765	-	1792	3085		
1685	-	1712	2707	1739	2231	1766	-	1793	3056		
1686	3297	1713	2907	1740	2932	1767	-	1794	3200		
1687	2661	1714	3045	1741	2751	1768	-	1795	-		
1688	2152	1715	3555	1742	2787	1769	-	1796	-		

**Table 7** Total number of ships arriving in Amsterdam, based on corrected figures for the *Lastgeld*, the *Scheepstijdingen*, the *Generale Lijsten*, the data published by Van Nierop (corrected for the West Indian trade) and the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, corrected for the Asiatic trade. 1662-1810

1789) by adding the number of ships that arrived in Amsterdam from Asia.

Now I can produce a graph which allows a good overview of the development of the traffic to Amsterdam for almost 150 years after 1662. However, the curve is still broken, because for some years there are no data. The quality of the data is not exactly equal and probably some further correction is also needed for the years based on Van Nierop's figures, but for reasons explained above I will use them here as she presented them. Figure 1 shows that on average a greater number of ships arrived in Amsterdam in the last part of the seventeenth century, reaching a peak in 1702, after which a decline set in which--with some short interruptions--lasted until the 1740's. Then, halfway what Jonathan Israel calls 'the age of decline' an upswing began, which lasted until the beginning of the 1790's, only interrupted by a number of bad years around the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war. After 1790 a decline sets in



**Figure 1** Total number of ships arriving in Amsterdam, based on corrected figures for the *Lastgeld*, the *Scheepstijdingen*, the *Generale Lijsten*, the data published by Van Nierop (corrected for the West Indian trade) and the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, corrected for the Asiatic trade. 1662-1810

interrupted by a short revival of the trade after the peace of Amiens in 1802. After this last peak the Napoleonic measures bring the trade down to an all time low at the end of the period under study.

Comparing the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, it is remarkable that the intensity of the fluctuations seems to have been much higher in the seventeenth century. This suggests that in this period the trade was much more dependant on external factors as politics and weather. The third and fourth quarter of the eighteenth century were slightly better than the second quarter and almost the same as the first quarter. After the low point of 1809 ships in 1746-only 1721 was a worse year, when only 13 ships put in-within twenty-five years there was a recovery to an average level of about 3000 ships a year. In 1789 there is the peak of this period: 3804 ships. Until 1793 an average of about 3000 ships arrived, but then it slowly drops during the Batavian Republic in spite of a minor peak in 1802, when 3542 ships put in, to fall to a dramatic low point in 1810, when only a miserable 216 ships were seen in the port, according to Van Nierop's data.

So the whole corrected series is based upon the data from the accounts of the *Lastgeld*

for the years 1662 until 1747, from *Paalgeld* portbooks for the years 1742, 1771-1789 -of which the yearly totals from 1788 and 1794 come from Snapper's data- corrected for the number of ships coming from Asia from the NHDA-data set. The numbers for the years 1758 and 1759 are the corrected figures from the General Lists, that Snapper published. Because the data for the Baltic-trade that were produced for the years 1790-1793 based on Oldewelt's figures using the correction did not match very well with the totals Snapper counted from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, these data were corrected using his figures for these years to correct the totals. The data Lindblad published on the Baltic trade were used to correct the constructed data for this region.<sup>28</sup> The remaining differences were solved by adjusting the correction on the number of ships coming from the *Kleine Oost*. The data for 1797 to 1810 are the figures that Van Nierop published, which have only been corrected for the number of ships coming from Asia and the West Indies. The data for the other years have been computed from Oldewelt's data, which have been corrected using the indexed correction method.<sup>29</sup> For the regional analysis of the trade of Amsterdam the data from the Lastgeld and Snapper's totals from the *Paalgeld* portbooks cannot be used. For these I will rely only on my own work on the *Paalgeld* portbooks, and on the corrected figures computed from the data sets of Oldewelt, Van Nierop and Snapper.

The corrected total has a slightly better correlation, but still poor relation with the data from the annual revenue of the *Paalgeld* levy: 0.654 to 0.653. Normally this would be seen as a very small improvement, but in this case correlation has very little value. If I look at the period 1771-1794 for which the best data are available I find a surprisingly low correlation between the number of ships and the actual revenue of the *Paalgeld*: 0.01. First of all this is an indication that an analysis based only on the number of ships, or only on the revenues of taxes, is bound to be incomplete. It is not the number of ships that influences the amount of taxes raised, but the volume and value of the cargoes carried! Secondly, two different curves can have almost the same correlation with a third curve if they are on a different absolute level or if the variations occur at different points. In this case it is up to the historian to decide which curve fits best within the historical developments. If deviations in curve A can be

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<sup>28</sup> J.Th. Lindblad (1982)

<sup>29</sup> F. Snapper (1985,1979), W.F.H. Oldewelt (1953), L. van Nierop (1924)

explained by events and the deviations in curve B cannot the historian will chose curve A and will blame the deviations in curve B on random effects.

Maybe the correlation would improve if Van Nierop's data were corrected further. But since for these years the *Paalgeld* portbooks are available, it is better to rely on actual data rather than on complicated corrections. The justification for the correction of data sets of Oldewelt and Snapper is to be found in the fact that they provide information for some years for which the *Paalgeld* portbooks have not survived. Van Nierop's data can be verified completely by processing the *Paalgeld* portbooks for the same period. The data which are available for the period April 1744 until December 1748 from the registers of the *controrolleur*, that can be found on the same micro-film as the first volumes of the *Paalgeld* portbooks. will probably provide very few new insights, though they could fill another gap of four years in the time series.

### **5.2.3 The trade with various regions**

To understand the developments of the trade and to see the influence of the political circumstances it is necessary to have a closer look at the flow of traffic. Total figures can easily hide contradictory trends, which can only be discovered by looking at the data at a lower level of aggregation. In order to get a good look at details and still keep a good overview over the global developments it is of great importance to make a good categorization. Large categories may hide internal developments, when there are contradicting tendencies at work within the category. Putting Spain, Portugal and France in one category can be counterproductive for periods, when the political circumstances for these three countries were rather different. On the other hand, since to a great extent the same products came from these regions, it can make sense to put them together in one category for some purposes. Small categories produce a chaotic picture in which it is very hard to discern any trends. This might happen if we examined the flow of trade strictly on a port basis. It is common knowledge that merchants moved their business from one place to another when political circumstances ordered them to do so: flag-flight was a normal practice. Van Nierop even claims that in some years the majority of the fleet of Amsterdam was actually registered

in Emden.<sup>30</sup> Looking at ports in an isolated way one might see great fluctuations due to political circumstances, while these fluctuations would even out if one would take in to account other ports which functioned as alternatives. In this chapter I will adopt a slightly customized version of the categorization used by d'Alphonse in his analysis of the Dutch trade.<sup>31</sup>

1. *le commerce dans le Levant et la Méditerranée.*
2. " " *en Espagne.*
3. " " *Portugal.*
4. " *avec la France.*
5. " " *l'Angleterre.*
6. " *sur la Baltique.*
7. " *l'Elbe et le Wezer.*
8. " *le Rhin.*
9. " *la Meuse et l'Escaut.*"

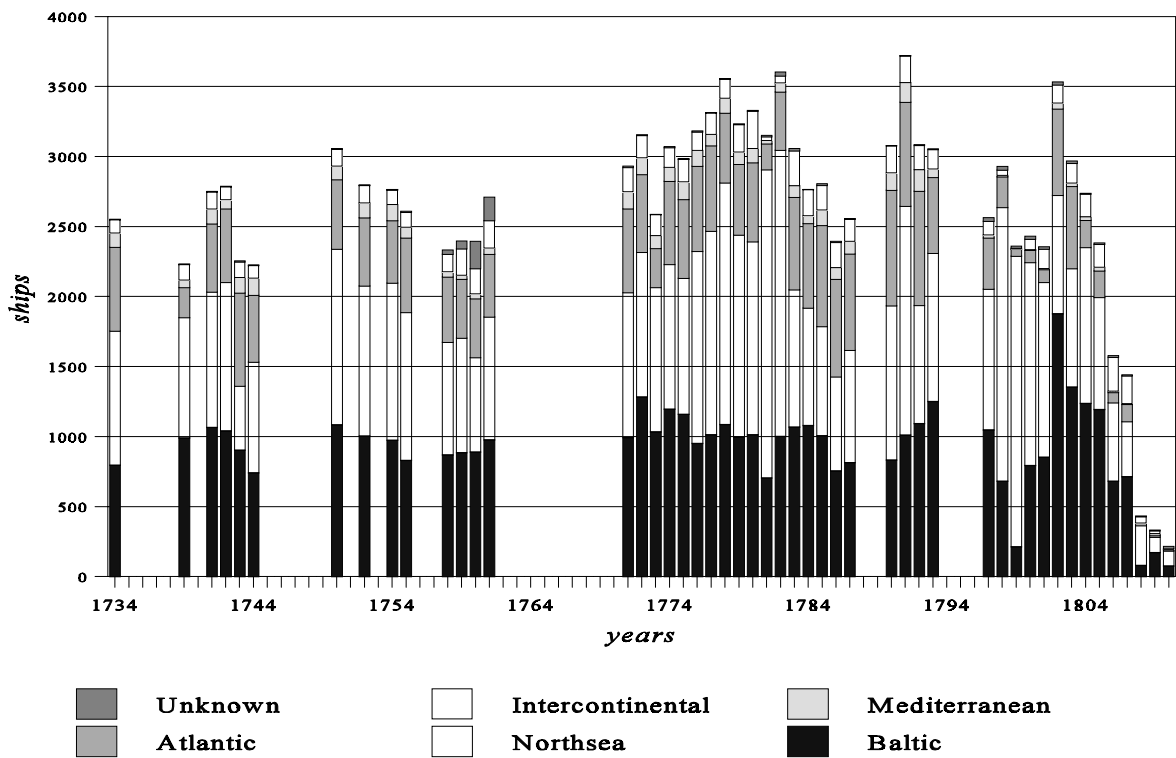
For this analysis I have decided to make a different organization for some of his categories. Since the Mediterranean trade is quite different from the Atlantic trade, it would make more sense to include the trade with the French and Spanish Mediterranean ports in the first category, while putting the whole continental Atlantic trade in one category, but I have decided to make no adjustments here. What is included in d'Alphonse's '*le commerce sur l'Elbe et le Wezer*' is labeled '*Kleine Oost*' in this study, since that is the term commonly used at that time. Category 8, '*le commerce sur le Rhin*' is not included, since this trade left no traces in the *Paalgeld* portbooks, which only recorded overseas imports. Only for a very short period do we have any data on the Rhine-traffic, compiled by Van Nierop. Category 9 is mentioned in this study as the trade with the Austrian Netherlands. There I have introduced a new category to include the African, Asian, and trans-Atlantic trade: the intercontinental trade. Under African trade I understand only the trade with Africa outside the Mediterranean, just as the Mediterranean parts of Asia are not comprised in the Asian trade. It is notable that d'Alphonse has no category for the Trans-Atlantic trade, though he acknowledged elsewhere in his report the growing importance of the American trade.

Figure 2 shows the complete regional breakdown of the trade of Amsterdam. To

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<sup>30</sup> L. van Nierop (1924)

<sup>31</sup> F.J. d'Alphonse (1810)



**Figure 2** Regional breakdown of the origin of ships arriving in Amsterdam compiled from various sources, 1734-1810 (see figure 1).

improve the readability of this graph it was necessary to group regions in even larger categories than mentioned before and still it is hard to read the graph. In the category Baltic is included the trade with Norway, the Arctic trade with Russia, the trade with Greenland, and Iceland. In his analysis of the trade of Amsterdam d'Alphonse includes these regions in one category, because they belonged to the same political entities. The category North Sea comprises the trade with the Austrian Netherlands and the trade on the *Kleine Oost*. It should be mentioned that the trade with the Austrian Netherlands seldom involved more than twenty ships in one year. The category Atlantic consists of Great Britain, France, Spain and Portugal. Since d'Alphonse includes the Mediterranean parts of France and Spain in the categories France and Spain, I have followed him here. The category Mediterranean includes all other ports on the Mediterranean Sea, being mainly Italian harbors, a few ships from the Levant, and in some years small numbers from Barbary. The Intercontinental category comprises the trade with the East Indies, China, India, Africa, the West Indies, South America and North America. It should be noted that the trade with the Far East never involved more than 20 ships



in one year: the vast majority of ships from this category were involved in the trans-Atlantic trade.

Creating these large categories does obscure some of the real changes that took place. Treating the whole Baltic area as one and even including the Norwegian trade and the trade on Archangel implies ignoring great regional differences in importance. This graph obscures the relative share of the various regions in the trade with Amsterdam. In the following paragraphs I will take a closer look at the regional level.

The other problem of figure 2 is one of scale: the differences between the various regions are so big that relatively great changes in a region from which not so many ships came are hardly visible. There is no real solution to this problem but to have a closer look at all the categories by themselves. This will obscure some of the mutual influences, but will allow us to examine the developments for all the regions

It is obvious that by far the greatest number of ships were involved in the trade with the Baltic and with the *Kleine Oost*. The intercontinental trade was only a very small part of the total trade, seldom more than 10%. However, this representation may be very misleading. Small ships and large ships have equal weight, so this graph gives no real impression of the volume of the various parts of the trade. Since the *Paalgeld* portbooks have no information on the size of the ships, this problem cannot be remedied. A better impression of the importance of all branches of the trade of Amsterdam can be given by estimating the value of the trade.

### **5.2.3.1 The value of the trade: prices of commodities**

In order to compare the various regions with each other, I have made estimates of the value of the trade with these regions based on the total amount of *Paalgeld* paid by ships coming from that region. For most of the products the *Paalgeld* levy was a 0.2% levy. Based on the assumption that the levy on all products was 0.2%, it was possible to estimate the total value of the trade by multiplying the *Paalgeld* totals by 500. Of course this is a not very precise estimate, but in this way a number of complications could be avoided. Given the amount of detail that is available for the cargoes of the ships in the European trade it would have been possible to calculate exactly which volume of a good was imported and to multiply that quantity by the price that was paid for that good on the exchange in Amsterdam. The

prices for most goods that were traded have been recorded in *Prijscouranten*, lists of prices which were the foundation for the “opus maximus” of Nicolaas Posthumus, *The Price history of the Netherlands*, a book that is one of the cornerstones of Dutch economic history.<sup>32</sup> Because of the importance and overall acceptance of this book, it is necessary to explain with some detail why I decided not to use prices published by Posthumus for this study.

In the early nineteen-thirties a group of economic historians formed the *International Scientific Committee on Price History*. Posthumus represented the Netherlands on this committee. The members agreed to publish time-series of commodity-prices for their home-countries. The main object of the committee was to provide a standardized form to publish the data in order to facilitate data-comparison. However, the course of history intervened. The Second World War disrupted the international contacts of the committee. Professor Posthumus, who was to publish two volumes on Dutch price-history, decided to stick to the standards to which the International Committee had agreed before contact was interrupted.

In 1943 the first volume of the *Nederlandsche Prijsgeschiedenis* (Dutch Price-history) was published and in 1964 the second volume. Professor Posthumus had died in April 1960 and this last volume was completed by F. Ketner. The importance of these publications can hardly be overestimated: since then almost every book that deals with social-economic history of the Netherlands has used these data. There has been minor criticism of this annotated source-publication, but a thorough evaluation has never been attempted, most likely because of the sheer mass of data.

The main source for the first and most important volume were the lists of current prices (price-currents) of commodities on the Amsterdam Exchange, for which a long series has survived. For a little over 200 products Posthumus published price-series, of which some started with data from the sixteenth century and all end with data from the early twentieth century.

Price-history may seem to be a rather dull subject to most people, but every social and economic historian will agree that it is the basis for any “*standard of life*” discussion. When Posthumus and his assistants did the research for this book together they had no access to all modern electronic devices that we are used to, such as calculators and computers. My earlier experience with re-doing by computer medium scale quantitative research that had been done

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<sup>32</sup> N.W. Posthumus (1943)

before manually, had left me highly skeptical of the accuracy of manually performed quantitative research.<sup>33</sup> If Posthumus's work had the same flaws, this would undermine a lot of Dutch historical studies. In 1984 I did a feasibility study to see if an electronic version of the price-history could be made and studied the personal archive of Posthumus, which he had left to the Netherlands Economic Historical Archive, of which he was the founder. This foundation owns all the price-currents which he used for this publication and also a number of price-currents that were acquired after both volumes were published. To examine the quality of this work I decided to concentrate on the period that forms the basis for the index numbers, the years 1721-1745. This period had been chosen by the international committee and Posthumus stuck to it, although his sources for this period are anything but complete: for nine years in this period he did not have a single price-current!

First of all the accuracy of Posthumus and his assistants, of whom some later became famous historians, was tested. Processing the same data with a computer should produce the same results, the only difference would be improved accuracy. But these price-currents are not the simple source they seem to be on first glance. First of all, prices were recorded in three different currencies: Pounds Flemish, guilders and gold-guilders.<sup>34</sup> This can be quite confusing for manual calculations, but can be solved by a simple function to convert everything to metric with a computer.

Posthumus had a dubious way of solving the problem of missing data, which can be explained by examining how he calculated his index figures. He spends about two pages of his introduction<sup>35</sup> on an explanation of his method for calculating the index numbers. He uses three forms of index numbers:

- unweighted index numbers
- two forms of weighted index numbers
  1. weighting factors were determined from data on the returns, which he had gathered from other sources

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<sup>33</sup> G.M. Welling (1992)

<sup>34</sup> 1 Pound Flemish = 20 schellingen (shilling) = 240 groten  
The value of 1 pound Flemish was about 6 guilders. 1 Guilder = 20 stuivers = 320 penningen. 1 Gold-guilder = 28 stuivers = 448 penningen.

<sup>35</sup> N.W. Posthumus (1943), XCVII - XCIX .

2. weighting factors were determined from data on the returns and the volume of trade.

This last method is very arbitrary since he did not have really valid data on the amount of goods on the market.

period	Posthumus	Computer	New Data
1721-1725	95	91	95
1726-1730	106	-	106
1731-1735	97	90	88
1736-1740	97	95	95
1741-1745	112	118	115

**Table 8** Weighted Averages of relative prices of 44 goods according to Posthumus, a recalculation based on the same data, and a recalculation based on all available price-currents, 1721-1745

contains three hundred months. Posthumus used a total of sixty-nine price-currents, though at that time hundred and six were available for this period. The spread of these price-currents over the whole period was very uneven.<sup>36</sup> As may have been expected I ended up with different results, though I used exactly the same data (see table 8).

Of the 44 goods that were used for the index numbers, Posthumus calculated the average

Commodity	Posthumus	New
Milanese Rice	5	14
Figs	14	24
Roman Alum	14	23
English copperas	15	24
Cadix salt	14	22
Full herring	12	12
Swedish Iron	15	21
Flax	15	19
Dantzig potash	13	24
Train-oil	14	24
Bologna Organzine	12	21
French wine of the highlands	15	24
Königsberg wheat	15	25
Frisian winter-barley	15	25

**table 9** Number of years for which a minimum of one price-notation is available.

His method was rather straightforward: he used one price-current for every month, preferring the one dated as close as possible to the 15th of that month. The whole period of twenty-five years that were the basis for the index-numbers

of the highest and the lowest price on the price-current. If data for a month were not available, he interpolated them by using the average of the two closest periods for which he had data. A simple calculation shows that his series of index numbers must be based on 3036 real data and 10164 interpolations. But reality is even worse: on a number of price-currents the prices for some products fail. For example, the price for rice is only given in five of the sixteen years.. In table 9

I have put together the goods for which

<sup>36</sup> There are even more available on a micro-film from the Djakarta archives, but this film is in a very bad state.

Posthumus had less than 16 yearly averages available: a close examination shows that for a number of years there was not a single price-notation for some products. In that same table 9 figures are presented based on all data that are available now. For the period 1725-1729 he gives an index of 106, based on the mean of one year: it is certain however, that he had no data for this period. For none of the other periods did computer-calculations produce the same figures as Posthumus. From this I conclude that his calculations were not very accurate or reliable.

In addition his method of dealing with the problem of missing data is rather primitive. Just taking the average of the two adjoining periods does not take into account that there may be seasonal patterns of price-changes. These patterns could have been established from the rest of the data.

Finally, his treatment of the problem of more than one price-notation for a product can be questioned. For some products the price-currents have multiple prices: it is rather obvious that these prices cannot be the highest and lowest period-prices. For some goods they are in ascending order and for other in descending order. Actually, we do not know the meaning of these multiple notations. Using the average of the highest and lowest price-notation for a commodity was the solution chosen by Posthumus. For a number of reasons this is a questionable approach.

First of all, there is no information about what volume of goods was traded for the higher and what volume for the lower price. Looking at the prices for a pigment like common madder (*gemeene meekrap*) we regularly see a high price that is more than twice the low price: variations from 16 to 34 stuivers. Such variations must be indications of something other than just price-variations. But there is another indication that you cannot just take the average of the highest and the lowest price. For some goods there are more than two prices given (cinnabar, powder). There are even periods that for some goods five price-notations are given. The sequence of high and low prices varies per product. Posthumus solution was a practical one, dictated by the facilities he had. If he had taken another approach it might have taken another twenty years to complete his Herculean task. Although the sheer number of data used by Posthumus tends to correct his errors for the long run, they can be very distorting for detailed work such as this research.

Using the figures that Posthumus published would have created more problems than solutions, only suggesting an impression of correctness for which the foundation is missing. When all the intricacies of the price-currents are solved, there still remains the problem that they only mention about two hundred varieties of commodities, while the *Paalgeld* portbooks list about six hundred different goods as cargo. This would imply that for most of the goods other sources would be needed to provide price indications.

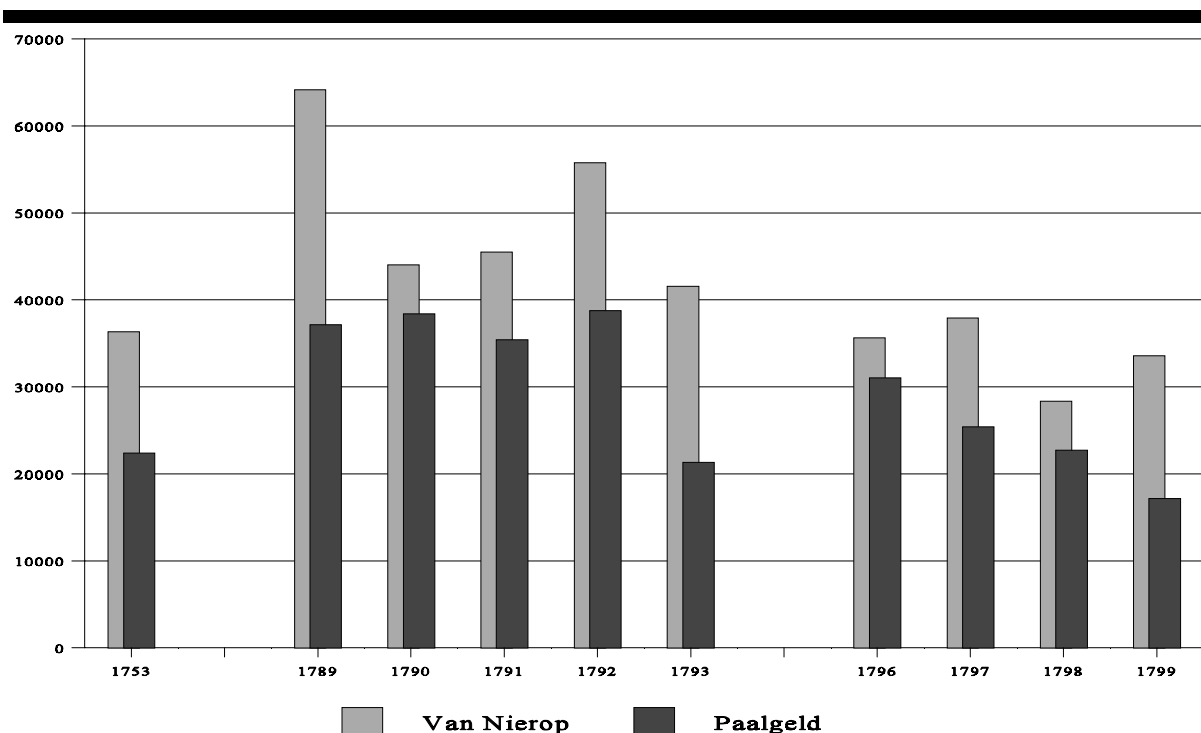
The method of estimating used in this study may be a bit rough, but it saves a lot of time and avoids a minefield of measure conversions. In the appendices I have given the complete list of goods imported to Amsterdam from all origins, which may be used by other researchers to come to more exact estimates. There I have used the total amount of *Paalgeld* paid for a commodity and divided it by the levy for the normal measure to reconstruct the total imports of one good: so if one stuiver had to be paid for every two lasts of rye, a total *Paalgeld* levy of 100 guilders for rye would implicate that 4000 lasts were imported ( $(100/.05)*2$ ). The declarations of some goods were not made in the standard measure for that good. I have assumed that the amount of *Paalgeld* paid would have been the same if the clerks would have done the measure conversion.

The *Paalgeld* portbooks which were processed only have the data on imports of Amsterdam from the *Paalgeld* portbooks for the years 1742, 1771-1787. The data for these years have been processed with the computer and though it is impossible to avoid all mistakes in projects of this scale, I assume that the results are very reliable. Since I will discuss the development of the trans-Atlantic trade for a much longer period, it was necessary to provide a point of reference for the later period from other sources. I used the data that Leonie van Nierop published on the imports and exports of Amsterdam for the years 1753, 1789-1793, 1796-1799.<sup>37</sup> In two publications she gave the lists of imported and exported goods from various regions. To compare these data with the data gathered from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, her data had to be processed in the computer. Based on the quantities she gives for all goods I calculated how much *Paalgeld* should have been paid. As figure 3 shows, the differences with the amount of *Paalgeld* that was actually paid according to Heeres are quite remarkable.<sup>38</sup> The

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<sup>37</sup> L. van Nierop (1917,1922)

<sup>38</sup> W.G. Heeres (1982,1)



**Figure 3** Amount of *Paalgeld* paid according to Heeres (1982,1) and the amount of *Paalgeld* computed from Van Nierop's (1917,1922) data in guilders, 1753-1800

explanations for these differences are not completely satisfying.

Probably a part of the difference can be explained by inaccurate measure conversions. The lists that Van Nierop reproduced record the quantities of the majority of goods in pounds. The *pound* was not the commonly used measure for most goods, that was the *Last*. In the *Observantie van de Heffing van het Paalgeld* the last is usually defined as the Last of 4000 pounds. To convert Van Nierop's data all her quantities given in pounds were converted to lasts by dividing them by 4000. It is not certain that this conversion is correct for all goods, because the meaning of the *pound* may not have been the same for all goods. Measurements in this period were not standardized and though the names were the same in many places, the amount they stood for varied from town to town. A spectator like *De Koopman* filled many pages with conversion tables for measures to help merchants in their affairs with other places.<sup>39</sup>

The difference between the computed *Paalgeld* from Van Nierop's information and the actual *Paalgeld* levied can also be interpreted as an indication on the amount of goods that

<sup>39</sup> *De Koopman of Weekelyksche By-dragen ten Opbouw van Neerlands Koophandel en Zeevaard.*

were not properly declared. It is common knowledge that tax evasion was quite substantial. Complete tax-evasion was not very common. Normally some “arrangements” were made with the tax-collectors. Underestimating the total volume was one of the arrangements. Another was declaring the goods not by volume but by value, if that would result in lower taxes. Following the rules for the levy of the *Paalgeld* some goods had to be declared by weight, for example in Lasts. However, if the levy of one stuiver for two lasts (standard for grain) would result in a higher levy than declaring the goods value in guilders, which would result in a one stuiver levy for every twenty five guilders worth, it might be interesting to declare the goods by value. Although I have not systematically analyzed this form of tax evasion, it is my impression that it was quite common. This procedure may have been the cause of the difference between the calculated *Paalgeld* levy form Van Nierop’s data and the actual income from this levy. If this is the case all estimates of the value of the trade are about 30% too low!

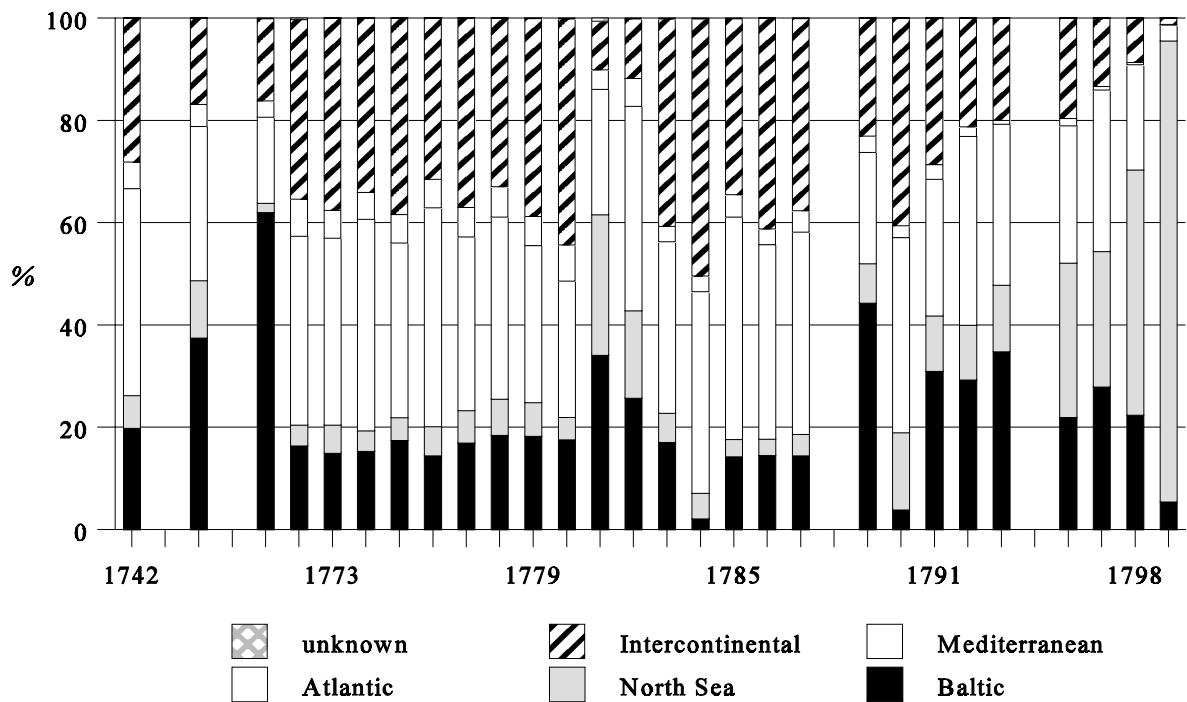
It is obvious that Van Nierop’s data cannot be used with the same confidence as the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks. Still the correlation of 0.75 between the two series should be sufficient to use her data as an indication of developments in that period. A major problem of these data is that they contain no information on the intercontinental trade, including the trans-

Atlantic trade, which is a serious drawback for this study. On the positive side, it should be noted that this data-set allows us to have a look at the Rhine trade of Amsterdam. Since all the other sources used only have information on the overseas trade of Amsterdam one is tempted to underestimate the importance of that trade. Table 10 shows that the share of the Rhine trade was much influenced by the political circumstances. In 1753 the value of the Rhine trade was only about 10% of all other European trade. In the years of international tension in the late nineties this share rises to about 30%. Keeping open the sea routes was much harder than keeping open the

year	Rhine	% of total trade
1753	f 1.853.500,00	9.4
1789	f 6.547.000,00	17.1
1790	f 3.832.500,00	150
1791	f 3.359.000,00	130
1792	f 4.017.000,00	12.7
1793	f 2.939.500,00	12.5
1796	f 3.444.000,00	16.2
1797	f 4.833.500,00	20.4
1798	f 5.561.500,00	28.3
1799	f 5.577.000,00	249

**Table 10** Estimated value in guilders of the Rhine trade based on Van Nierop’s data, 1753-1800.





**Figure 4** 100% chart of the estimated value of Amsterdam's overseas trade with various regions, 1742,1753, 1771-1787, 1789-1793,1796-1799. Sources: L. van Nierop (1917,1922) and the *Paalgeld* portbooks

river connection with the German hinterland.

I shall only use Van Nierop's data for this study to describe the fluctuations of trade between Amsterdam and various regions. All estimates are based on the same formula used for estimates based on the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks: calculating the total amount of *Paalgeld* which should have been paid and multiplying this by 500.

To even out the differences between the data gathered from the *Paalgeld* portbooks and from Van Nierop's data, I have represented the values in a 100% chart in Figure 4, which does not show the absolute figures, but reveals the development of proportional share of the various branches of the trade. It is quite remarkable that the trade with the Baltic, in which on average almost one third of the ships coming to Amsterdam were involved, only represents one fifth of the total value of the imports. The value of trade with the *Kleine Oost*, which involved another third of the ships on average, is highly unstable. It is striking that the value of this trade seems to be heavily influenced by political circumstances. While comprising usually just under 10% of the total value of trade, during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war that percentage rises to over 20%. During the first few years of the Batavian Republic (1796-

1799), once again the share of the trade with the *Kleine Oost* rises to amazing heights: 90% of the total trade in 1799. This is another indication of the importance that neutral states played during times of trouble. When direct connections to far off destinies were cut, the neutrals acted as intermediaries. Goods that were imported directly in times of peace, were now imported via Hamburg, Emden and Bremen. In a great number of cases the ships involved were only nominally registered in neutral states and were still owned by merchants from Amsterdam. In times of international tension the bonus of neutrality was quite substantial for ports like Emden, which saw several times the number of ships that were expected in times of peace.

Another interesting aspect is the part of the Atlantic trade. On average around 20% of the ships that put in to Amsterdam were involved in that trade, but these ships carried cargoes that were much more valuable than the goods that came from the Baltic. The value of this “rich trade” covered around 35% of the total value of trade. However, in this category I include the trade with Spain, Portugal, France, and Great Britain. The development of trade with these regions was quite different and in the next section I will discuss the importance of these four regions.

The trade with the Mediterranean was never very important for Amsterdam in this period. In no year did more than 5% of the total number of ships come from this area. The value of the goods they carried was never over 7% of the total value of imports. This implies that the goods these ships carried were precious, but the volume of the trade was never impressive.

The intercontinental trade, in which so few ships were involved, formed an important part of the total value of the imports. Since Van Nierop’s data have no category for the intercontinental trade, these were taken from the *Paalgeld* portbooks in the case of the trans-Atlantic trade is. The data on the Asiatic trade were computed from the NHDA-data set on the Asiatic trade. However, for the years after 1795 there are no data available for this trade. Considering the declining numbers in the period just before, and the political situation after 1795, when the Batavian Republic was in a constant conflict with Great Britain, it may be assumed that the importance of the Asian trade was reduced to almost zero.

While in no year in this period were more than 8% of the ships involved in the intercontinental trade, the value of the imports from these regions on average covered 30% of the total value of the imports. This may be partly caused by using the fixed amount of *Paalgeld* that the East India Company (VOC) paid per ship as an indication of the real value of their cargoes. The fixed sum of 400 guilders results in an estimated value of each cargo of 200,000 guilders. After the dismantling of the VOC no ship coming from the Far East ever paid more than 250 guilders *Paalgeld*. This may indicate that the value of the East-India trade and hence of the intercontinental trade may be overestimated. But as will be discussed in the next chapter, the share of the East-India trade in the total intercontinental trade was usually around one third. The trans-Atlantic trade was at all times twice as important, even if the figures for the East India trade are not adjusted for overestimation. Still, even if minor changes should be made to the figures, the importance of the intercontinental trade for Amsterdam is clear. It can even be assumed that the temporary rises in the value of the trade with the Baltic and the *Kleine Oost* were actually caused by the fact that during times of war-- such as the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war--ships from Denmark and the West coast of Sweden and Norway acted as neutral intermediaries in the intercontinental trade. The changes of goods carried during these periods from these regions is confirms the interpretation that they act as intermediaries: suddenly ships from the Baltic put into Amsterdam with sugar, coffee, tea and other colonial goods, which they only very seldom carried in other years.

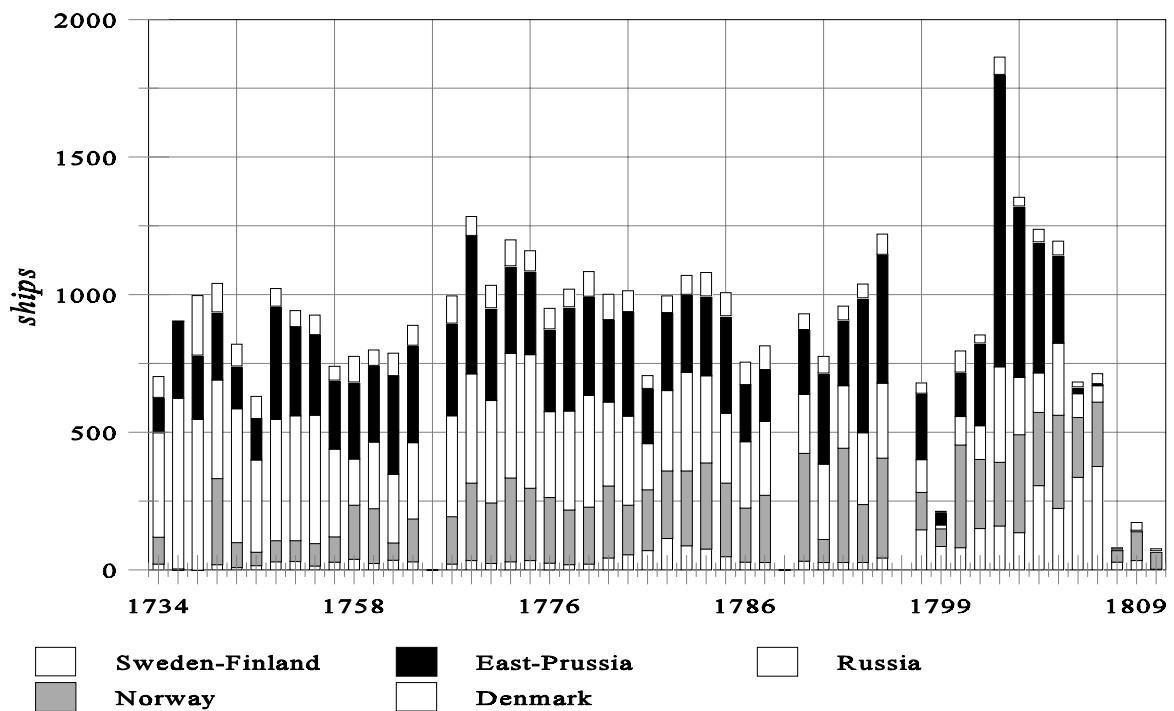
The value of the trade from ports which could not be identified was never over 1% and will be neglected in the analysis.

Years	d'Alphonse in Francs	in Guilders	<i>Paalgeld</i>	Estimated imports	Difference	%
1803	231.143.984 F	f 92.457.594	f 30.796	f 15.398.000	f 77.059.594	17
1804	262.040.247,00 F	f 104.816.099	f 37.887	f 18.943.500	f 85.872.599	18
1805	248.400.312 F	f 99.360.125	f 41.667	f 20.833.500	f 78.526.625	21
1806	241.321.369 F	f 96.528.548	f 35.229	f 17.614.500	f 78.914.048	18
1807	242.456.399 F	f 96.982.560	f 34.289	f 17.144.500	f 79.838.060	18
1808	163.311.123 F	f 65.324.449	f 8.232	f 4.116.000	f 61.208.449	6
1809	155.602.066 F	f 62.240.826	f 3.752	f 1.876.000	f 60.364.826	3

**Table 11** Dutch imports according to d'Alphonse in French francs and converted to Dutch guilders compared with estimates based on the revenue of the *Paalgeld*, 1803-1809

For the first decennium of the nineteenth century d'Alphonse has reported the imports and exports of the Netherlands for a number of years. These data cannot be used in this research for a number of reasons. (See Table 11) First of all the discrepancy between the total value of the trade for each year that he gives and the estimates based on the revenues of the *Paalgeld* is beyond explanation, even if I do take into account that d'Alphonse is referring to the imports of the Netherlands and the *Paalgeld* data only concern Amsterdam. In figure 11 the total imports according to d'Alphonse are given in French Francs and converted to guilders using the conversion rate that d'Alphonse published: these figures are not exactly the same as d'Alphonse has given them; his summaries proved to be wrong and have been corrected by me. In none of the seven years do the estimated totals based on the revenues of the *Paalgeld* come close to just a quarter of the imports according to d'Alphonse. A part of these differences can be explained. In the *Paalgeld* revenues the imports via the Rhine and the Asiatic imports are missing. However, these are not enough to explain the enormous differences. A second reason not to use the data of d'Alphonse is the fact that his list has no regional subdivisions, to allow comparing the developments with those of earlier times. A third reason is formed by the inconsistencies in the table he produced. After having put all his data in a spreadsheet it was clear that his calculations were incorrect. Since the source material on which this table is based is not available, it is impossible to make corrections. It is simply impossible to decide whether on the one hand the calculations are correct, which implies that the values in the cells must be adjusted, or whether on the other hand the values in the cells are correct, which implies that the calculations must be redone. Next to that there is also the possibility of misprints. Finally, d'Alphonse gives only values of the goods expressed in French Francs, which he states elsewhere were worth two and a half guilder. It is not clear how he calculated these prices of goods, if he used a fixed price for the whole period or the current exchange rates. His data can be used without knowing all these things, as long as they are not put into a series with prices from other sources, which may have a completely other bias. They can give an impression of the imports for the period described, but they should be used with great care.

In the next section I shall discuss the developments of the various branches of the European overseas trade of Amsterdam, for which I shall mainly rely on the data computed from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, completed with data published by Van Nierop, Snapper, and



**Figure 5** Number of ships coming from the Baltic area to Amsterdam, 1734-1810. Sources: *Paalgeld* portbooks and Lindblad (1982).

Oldewelt for those years for which the *Paalgeld* portbooks are not available or have not been processed. I will only use figures which have corrected using the methods described above. The intercontinental trade will be discussed mainly in the next chapter. For the whole discussion I will use the analysis of d’Alphonse as starting point. Discussing the value of the trade I will only rely on the information gathered from the *Paalgeld* portbooks and on the import data published by Van Nierop.

### 5.2.4 The Baltic Trade

The Baltic trade is probably the best documented trade of Amsterdam. A great number of publications have covered this trade, which has been nicknamed *de moeder negotie*, the mother of all trades of Amsterdam. D’Alphonse wrote

*“Le commerce sur la Baltique a toujours été pour la Hollande l’un des plus intéressants. Il comprenait le Danemark, la Suède, la Russie, la Pologne, la Prusse, la Poméranie et le Mecklenbourg.”*

Which implies that he includes the trade with Norway and the Arctic trade with Russia in the Baltic trade. He even includes the Greenland and Iceland trade, since they were part of the Danish kingdom. During this period the borders changed often and it is difficult to define categories which have no anachronistic traits: there are probably just as many arguments against the categorisation made by d'Alphonse as pro.

There are various reasons for the privileged place of the Baltic trade in the attention of scholars of the last two centuries, but the most important must be the fact that there are very good and more or less complete sources on this trade. The best known source are the Danish accounts of the Soundtoll, which have been used for many studies.<sup>40</sup> In these accounts all eastward and westward passages of the Sound have been recorded, including a description of all the goods carried both ways, their origin and destination. This source, which is in many ways comparable to the accounts of the levy of the *Paalgeld*, has been the source *par excellence* for many studies. One shortcoming of this source is that Elsinore, where the toll in the Sound was levied, was not the destination or place of departure for most ships. The Soundtoll accounts provide an exact view on the number of passages, of what these ships carried, and where they came from. However, where they actually went is less certain. Ship masters had to declare their destination, but they may very well have ended up in a completely different port. To remedy this problem this source has been used in combination with local tax-accounts. Good examples are the studies of Knoppers, De Buck, Lindblad and Snapper. In the 1980's the Soundtoll data of the years 1784 to 1795 have been entered in the computer on magnetic tape.<sup>41</sup> These tapes however are heavily coded and, although they were available, could not be used in this project without a serious time investment to convert these data to a form in which they could be used in combination with the data of the *Paalgeld* portbooks. It would be a very exciting project for the future.

	PG	SAC	DIF
1784	739	782	-43
1785	720	837	-117
1786	532	560	-28
1787	537	533	+4
1790	878	718	+160
1791	772	619	+153
1792	1109	943	+166
1793	1089	760	+329

**Table 12** Differences between actual arrivals in Amsterdam according to *Paalgeld* portbooks (PG) and Sound-passages headed for Amsterdam according to Johansen's calculations from the Soundtoll Accounts (SAC), 1784-1793.

<sup>40</sup> J.A. Faber, J. Knoppers, H.C Johansen, F. Snapper etc.

<sup>41</sup> See: H.C. Johansen's Sound Toll Tables, Faber(1984)

Because of the fact that this trade has been studied so intensively, the data presented in Figure 5 and Table 13 are not surprising, although there are some differences with the figures given by Johansen. Table 12 shows that for those years for which our data are derived from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, a lower number of ships arrived in Amsterdam than had stated in Elsinore that they were going there. The differences for the other years may be caused by a mistake in the correction on Oldewelt's data. This correction is based on overlapping years between his data and the *Paalgeld* portbook data. All these years lie before the 1790's and the correction maybe over influenced by the weight of earlier years.

The ups and downs of the curve have been explained by indicating the influence of the political circumstances. Faber indicates that the five cycles he discerns in the Baltic trade at the end of the century, a downswing from 1784 to 1787, an upswing from 1788 to 1792, a downswing from 1793 to 1799, an upswing from 1800 to 1805 and a final downswing from

Year	Total	Baltic	Baltic %	Year	Total	Baltic	Baltic %
1734	2252	703	31	1781	3150	705	22
1739	2231	904	41	1782	3605	1002	28
1741	2751	997	36	1783	3057	1068	35
1742	2766	1041	38	1784	2765	1081	39
1743	2255	819	36	1785	2805	1007	36
1744	2225	631	28	1786	2394	754	31
1750	3055	1023	33	1787	2557	815	32
1752	2796	942	34	1790	3080	930	30
1754	2847	926	33	1791	2720	775	28
1755	2608	740	28	1792	3085	959	31
1758	2333	776	33	1793	3056	1039	34
1759	2396	798	33	1798	2929	679	23
1760	2394	787	33	1799	2361	212	9
1761	2702	888	33	1800	2431	795	33
1771	2931	994	34	1801	2354	853	36
1772	3155	1284	41	1802	3532	1863	53
1773	2887	1034	36	1803	2667	1354	51
1774	3071	1197	39	1804	2738	1237	45
1775	2983	1158	39	1805	2383	1194	50
1776	3183	952	30	1806	1578	683	43
1777	3312	1015	31	1807	1440	713	50
1778	3556	1087	31	1808	432	80	19
1779	3233	999	31	1809	332	172	52
1780	3330	1014	30	1810	216	76	35

**Table 13** Total number of ships arriving in Amsterdam and the number and percentage of ships from the Baltic, 1734-1810. For a number of years there are no data available. Sources: see Figure 1.

1806 to 1812, were all triggered by political changes in the area.<sup>42</sup>

Figure 5 shows us, that the first light downswing must have started even earlier in 1772 and had a short interruption during the fourth Anglo-Dutch war, when the Baltic countries this time grabbed the prize of neutrality and carried as neutral freighters carried many of the goods which could no longer reach Amsterdam directly in Dutch ships. It also shows that in the second part of the eighteenth century the Baltic traffic on the whole was on a higher level than during the first part of the century, though a part of the recovery of the early 1790's may be a freak of my computations. It is certain however, that there were signs of a return to normal business and the years 1802 and 1803 were very good. But then the Napoleonic measures put a temporary almost complete halt to all traffic.

The overall increase of the traffic may have been caused by the fact that the average size of the vessels in this trade fell.<sup>43</sup> As Faber noticed, the rise in numbers may have been

year	Denmark		Sweden-Finland		Russia		East Prussia	
	<i>Guilders</i>	%	<i>Guilders</i>	%	<i>Guilders</i>	%	<i>Guilders</i>	%
1742	f 369.240	19	f 162.870	8	f 948.700	49	f 455.210	24
1771	f 409.485	15	f 329.180	12	f 1.263.840	47	f 671.685	25
1772	f 620.800	20	f 165.810	5	f 1.280.300	41	f 1.026.215	33
1773	f 373.030	14	f 211.775	8	f 1.326.990	48	f 843.945	31
1774	f 402.725	14	f 194.210	7	f 1.570.715	56	f 642.955	23
1775	f 541.400	16	f 222.380	6	f 1.874.880	54	f 834.825	24
1776	f 524.250	20	f 188.200	7	f 1.266.465	48	f 633.360	24
1777	f 480.750	15	f 179.750	6	f 1.660.750	53	f 835.025	26
1778	f 524.150	15	f 247.825	7	f 1.833.475	51	f 963.050	27
1779	f 1.118.325	31	f 231.250	6	f 1.515.650	42	f 775.800	21
1780	f 1.057.950	27	f 244.725	6	f 1.607.175	42	f 947.475	25
1781	f 1.153.375	40	f 232.250	8	f 998.600	34	f 524.125	18
1782	f 1.903.750	46	f 355.825	9	f 1.149.700	28	f 724.275	18
1783	f 1.677.275	42	f 303.650	8	f 1.261.175	31	f 791.500	20
1784	f 1.251.250	33	f 344.950	9	f 1.407.750	37	f 774.250	20
1785	f 818.700	28	f 312.025	11	f 1.021.950	35	f 742.175	26
1786	f 720.775	27	f 290.425	11	f 984.750	37	f 656.125	25
1787	f 657.325	24	f 455.625	17	f 1.033.475	38	f 583.850	21

**Table 14** Estimated value in guilders and percentage of the total value of the Baltic trade for four Baltic regions, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

<sup>42</sup> J.A. Faber (1984), 106

<sup>43</sup> J. Knoppers (1976)



Year	Total Baltic	Denmark	Norway	Russia	East-Prussia	Sweden-Finland
1734	703	21	98	379	128	77
1739	904	0	5	619	280	0
1741	997	0	0	548	232	217
1742	1041	19	313	359	246	104
1743	819	9	90	487	155	79
1744	631	16	48	336	150	81
1750	1023	30	77	440	411	65
1752	942	31	76	454	323	58
1754	926	15	81	467	292	70
1755	740	29	92	318	251	49
1758	776	39	196	168	280	93
1759	798	24	199	242	278	55
1760	787	36	62	249	358	82
1761	888	30	156	276	354	72
1771	994	22	172	367	336	98
1772	1284	34	282	396	503	69
1773	1034	24	220	372	336	82
1774	1197	30	305	453	317	94
1775	1158	34	263	486	303	74
1776	952	25	239	311	301	74
1777	1015	19	199	359	379	64
1778	1087	22	207	406	359	90
1779	999	44	262	305	299	92
1780	1014	55	180	324	379	76
1781	705	70	221	168	201	46
1782	1002	115	245	292	283	61
1783	1068	88	272	358	283	69
1784	1081	76	314	315	290	86
1785	1007	49	267	254	353	84
1786	754	29	196	241	207	82
1787	815	27	245	268	188	86
1788	930	32	392	214	235	57
1790	775	27	84	274	330	61
1791	959	28	415	226	239	51
1792	1039	28	210	261	490	50
1793	1221	44	363	272	467	74
1798	679	146	136	119	241	37
1799	212	86	63	15	45	3
1800	795	81	373	104	161	76
1801	853	151	251	123	299	29
1802	1863	160	232	346	1062	63
1803	1354	136	356	208	622	32
1804	1237	307	266	143	476	45
1805	1194	224	339	261	320	50
1806	683	337	217	87	24	18
1807	713	376	235	58	8	36
1808	80	29	42	4	0	5
1809	172	35	104	5	0	28
1810	76	3	62	3	1	7

**Table 15** Number of ships coming to Amsterdam from Baltic regions, 1734-1810. For some years there are no data available. Source: see Figure 1.

necessary to bring the same amount of goods to Amsterdam in smaller ships. The greater traffic may even hide an actual decline in the flow of goods from the Baltic to Amsterdam. We will examine this more closely when I discuss the value of the cargo that was carried to Amsterdam from the Baltic, although I do not have that data for exactly the same years as I have information on the traffic.

Table 13 shows that the part of the Baltic trade in the total number of ships that put in to Amsterdam was on average 35% for the whole period, with some extreme peaks of over 50% in the first few years of the nineteenth century, but also deep lows 9% in 1799. If we look at the development over the decennia the picture becomes clearer: 1730-40, 39%, 1740-50, 35%, 1750-60, 36%, 1760-70, 34%, 1770-80, 35%, 1780-90, 32%, 1790-1800, 21%, 1800-10, 44%. On the whole this trade was very stable with short-term interruptions, which Faber explained from the influence of political circumstances.<sup>44</sup>

The modern concept of the Baltic area normally only includes countries with coasts on the Baltic Sea and quite often Denmark, Sweden and Russia are not regarded as Baltic countries. However, in this period the Baltic consists of many countries with varying

year	Denmark	Holstein	Iceland	Greenland	Norway
1742	f 77.775	f 0	f 0	f 0	f 291.465
1771	f 214.880	f 0	f 0	f 0	f 194.605
1772	f 364.500	f 0	f 0	f 0	f 256.300
1773	f 134.290	f 2.400	f 0	f 0	f 236.340
1774	f 108.675	f 0	f 0	f 0	f 294.050
1775	f 245.445	f 425	f 450	f 0	f 295.080
1776	f 238.550	f 0	f 0	f 0	f 285.700
1777	f 246.875	f 0	f 0	f 0	f 233.875
1778	f 286.625	f 600	f 0	f 0	f 236.925
1779	f 720.300	f 1.150	f 0	f 0	f 396.875
1780	f 792.525	f 600	f 0	f 600	f 264.225
1781	f 901.225	f 36.500	f 0	f 0	f 215.650
1782	f 1.653.475	f 44.150	f 0	f 0	f 206.125
1783	f 1.324.825	f 500	f 0	f 0	f 351.950
1784	f 890.950	f 14.075	f 0	f 0	f 346.225
1785	f 546.325	f 150	f 0	f 0	f 272.225
1786	f 441.125	f 0	f 0	f 2.350	f 277.300
1787	f 306.800	f 600	f 0	f 0	f 349.925

**Table 16** Estimated value of the trade with the Danish kingdom, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

<sup>44</sup> J.A. Faber (1984)

boundaries. It may not be correct to deal with this whole region as one entity, but here I follow d'Alphonse. Russia expanded, swallowing Estonia and Latvia in 1721, Kurland in 1795, parts of Poland in 1793 and 1795, and Finland in 1809. Sweden lost territories to Russia and Prussia. Poland gradually disappeared from the map in the three partitions of Poland (1772, 1793, 1795), losing most of its territory to Russia and Prussia, and a small part to Austria-Hungary. The Danish Kingdom was more or less stable in this period. Prussia incorporated more and more ports on the south of the Baltic, stretching from Pomerania up to Memel, with an enclave in the west in East Frisia, until that was lost to the Dutch kingdom in 1807. These political developments affected the trade with one country more than with the another. Some profited from the disturbances in other areas, but the pendulum always made its swing back again. Discussing the value of the Baltic trade is rather complicated. Since Van Nierop gives no further regional specification than *the Baltic*, her data cannot be used to compare the various regions. So the only period for which the value of the trade can be estimated for the various regions is from 1742, 1771-1787, for which the *Paalgeld* portbooks have been processed.

Since the purpose of this section is to serve as a point of reference for the trans-Atlantic trade, which is the focus of this study, it is justifiable to restrict the analysis to the central themes, and treat the others a bit more impressionistic. Still, it is necessary to examine the various regions of this trade a bit closer and for this I will cite the analysis of d'Alphonse once more. About the trade with Denmark--which then included Norway--he says:

*“L'on exportait de la Hollande pour les Etats danois des rixdales, du sel, du houblon, de la chaux, des briques, du tabac, des épiceries, des toiles de coton imprimées, de la quincaillerie.*

*L'on importait en Hollande de la Norvège une grande quantité de bois de sapin, du cuivre, du stokvisch.*

*De Copenhague et Elseneur du stokvisch, d'Islande, du suif, du chanvre, de l'alun, des bas et mitaines d'Islande.*

*De Jutland beaucoup de boeufs maigres pour être engraisés en Hollande. Mais cette exportation a eu principalement lieu avant le 18e siècle. Les droits auxquels elle a été soumise, l'ont rendue plus difficile. Mais dans les derniers temps et jusqu'à ce que le Danemark a été entraîné dans le guerre, son pavillon et ses vaisseaux étaient de la plus grande utilité pour le commerce hollandais.”*

The region that is now modern Denmark was not the most important trade-partner in the Baltic, though d'Alphonse indicates that it was of growing importance. Not one of the more important cargoes that Johansen mentions were imported in great amounts from Denmark

(linseed, wheat, rye, potash, balks, deals and hemp). But the trade with Norway, then a part of the Danish kingdom, was very important and involved a large number of ships carrying the wood that was needed for all forms of construction. The figures show an increase in the value of the trade during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war 1780-1784, when the Danes played the role of neutrals and were so important for the Dutch trade, as d'Alphonse mentions in the last line of the quote. In these years almost half of the total value of the Baltic trade came from the Danish kingdom. This was mainly caused by the fact that the East and West Indian trade used Copenhagen as a safe harbor during the war. The Norwegian trade was more stable over the whole period. The changing political circumstances seem to have had less influence on this trade.

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**Sweden and Finland**

Year	Value	% Value	Ships	% Ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 162.870	1,7	104	3,8	f 1.566	
1771	f 329.180	1,7	98	3,3	f 3.359	
1772	f 165.810	0,9	69	2,2	f 2.403	
1773	f 211.775	1,2	82	2,8	f 2.583	
1774	f 194.210	1,1	94	3,1	f 2.066	
1775	f 222.380	1,1	74	2,5	f 3.005	<b>whole period</b> f 3.371
1776	f 188.200	1,0	74	2,3	f 2.543	
1777	f 179.750	1,0	64	1,9	f 2.809	
1778	f 247.825	1,3	90	2,5	f 2.754	
1779	f 231.250	1,2	92	2,8	f 2.514	
1780	f 244.725	1,1	76	2,3	f 3.220	
1781	f 232.250	2,7	46	1,5	f 5.049	
1782	f 355.825	2,2	61	1,7	f 5.833	
1783	f 303.650	1,3	69	2,3	f 4.401	
1784	f 344.950	1,6	86	3,1	f 4.011	
1785	f 312.025	1,5	84	3,0	f 3.715	
1786	f 290.425	1,6	82	3,4	f 3.542	
1787	f 455.625	2,4	86	3,4	f 5.298	

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**Table 17** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Sweden and Finland, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

Over the centuries Sweden has been an important trading partner and part of this trade has been described very well by Lindblad in his *Sweden's trade with the Dutch Republic*

1738-1795.<sup>45</sup> D'Alphonse characterizes the Swedish trade as follows:

*“La Hollande exportait beaucoup plus de la Suède qu'elle n'y importait. Ses importations se réduisaient à peu près aux mêmes objets, qu'elle importait dans les états danois. Mais l'on exportait de la Suède et particulièrement de Stokholm beaucoup de bois, de la poix, du goudron, du soufre, du suif et surtout beaucoup de fer, de cuivre, de fil d'archal et des chaudrons de cuisine. Il arrivait souvent, que le prix du cuivre n'était pas plus élevé à Amsterdam qu'en Suède; la raison en est que si le cuivre est commun en Suède, l'argent y est très rare et qu'alors les Suédois étaient obligés d'envoyer du cuivre à Amsterdam pour l'échanger contre des espèces. Il en résultait que le cuivre était alors vendue à bas prix.”*

Though d'Alphonse mentions Sweden for the wood-trade, this was not the most important item of trade. As can be seen in the appendices, iron and iron goods were much more important. For wood, the trade with Norway was much more important. The importance of volume of the trade with Sweden declined when Sweden's political influence diminished after

year	Petersburg		Archangel		Esthonia		Livland		Kurland	
	guilders	%	guilders	%	guilders	%	guilders	%	guilders	%
1742	f 385.095	41	f 206.800	22	f 47.815	5	f 288.980	30	f 20.010	2
1771	f 352.820	28	f 350.150	28	f 37.700	3	f 439.055	35	f 84.115	7
1772	f 275.525	22	f 377.400	29	f 31.025	2	f 541.055	42	f 55.295	4
1773	f 399.205	30	f 335.200	25	f 10.875	1	f 482.410	36	f 99.300	7
1774	f 389.930	25	f 386.825	25	f 24.625	2	f 655.470	42	f 113.865	7
1775	f 408.190	22	f 341.800	18	f 22.880	1	f 985.050	53	f 116.960	6
1776	f 406.885	32	f 280.875	22	f 19.675	2	f 515.830	41	f 43.200	3
1777	f 555.875	33	f 235.025	14	f 10.850	1	f 694.625	42	f 164.375	10
1778	f 705.425	38	f 385.375	21	f 18.225	1	f 568.800	31	f 155.650	8
1779	f 724.175	48	f 154.200	10	f 14.950	1	f 512.825	34	f 109.500	7
1780	f 710.650	44	f 224.450	14	f 15.650	1	f 517.775	32	f 138.650	9
1781	f 284.250	28	f 196.850	20	f 9.575	1	f 454.250	45	f 53.675	5
1782	f 352.175	31	f 200.775	17	f 15.100	1	f 522.075	45	f 59.575	5
1783	f 354.975	28	f 203.950	16	f 17.625	1	f 588.325	47	f 96.300	8
1784	f 654.450	46	f 216.950	15	f 2.800	0	f 443.825	32	f 89.725	6
1785	f 309.175	30	f 146.650	14	f 5.350	1	f 495.625	48	f 65.150	6
1786	f 450.775	46	f 186.150	19	f 0	0	f 323.250	33	f 24.575	2
1787	f 447.975	43	f 235.350	23	f 400	0	f 309.725	30	f 40.025	4

**Table 18** Estimated value of the trade with various regions that were part of Russia in the Napoleonic time and their percentage of the total Russian trade, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

<sup>45</sup> J.Th. Lindblad (1982); see also: P. de Buck and J. Th. Lindblad (1983)

the Great Northern War, which left Russia as the premier power in the region.<sup>46</sup> Still, the value of the Swedish trade on the whole was increasing. The growing international tensions created a greater demand for the strategic goods that came from Sweden: weaponry and iron.

It is not so surprising that d'Alphonse then turns to the Russian trade, instead of the trade with Poland and Prussia, which has always been regarded as one of the most important trades of Amsterdam, maybe even the most important trade. From Johansen's data Königsberg/Pillau was by far the most important trade partner, then Riga, Narva, St. Peterburg, Danzig and Memel. All ports east of Memel became Russian ports before d'Alphonse wrote this:

*“Longtemps le commerce en Russie n'a eu lieu que par les ports de Revel et de Nerva dans la Livonie qui appartenait alors à la Suède. Ce ne fut qu'en 1581 que les Hollandais commencèrent à fréquenter directement le port d'Archangel. Lorsque en 1604 le Czar en eut fait un port-franc, il encouragea particulièrement le commerce hollandais et depuis cette époque il l'a constamment protégé. La ville de St. Pétersbourg*

Russia (Petersburg-Archangel-Livland-Kurland-Estthonia)					
year	value	% value	ships	% ships	av.cargo
1742	f 948.700	9,7	359	13	f 2.643
1771	f 1.263.840	6,6	367	12,5	f 3.444
1772	f 1.280.300	6,9	396	12,6	f 3.233
1773	f 1.326.990	7,2	373	12,8	f 3.558
1774	f 1.570.715	8,5	456	14,7	f 3.445
1775	f 1.874.880	9,3	490	16,3	f 3.826
1776	f 1.266.465	7,1	308	9,6	f 4.112
1777	f 1.660.750	9	362	11	f 4.588
1778	f 1.833.475	9,4	407	11,4	f 4.505
1779	f 1.515.650	7,6	305	9,4	f 4.969
1780	f 1.607.175	7,3	326	9,9	f 4.930
1781	f 998.600	11,6	168	5,3	f 5.944
1782	f 1.149.700	7,3	289	8,1	f 3.978
1783	f 1.261.175	5,4	358	11,8	f 3.523
1784	f 1.407.750	6,6	317	11,4	f 4.441
1785	f 1.021.950	4,9	256	9,1	f 3.992
1786	f 984.750	5,4	241	10,1	f 4.086
1787	f 1.033.475	5,5	268	10,4	f 3.856
					<b>whole period</b>
					f 4.060

**Table 19** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Russia, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

<sup>46</sup> Van Koningsbrugge (1995)

*étant devenue la nouvelle capitale de l'Empire de Russie, les Hollandais abandonnèrent le port d'Archangel et ce fut avec la nouvelle capitale qu'ils établirent leurs relations de commerce. Mais les conquêtes de la Livonie, de la Courlande et de la Pologne ont ouvert aux Russes un commerce plus étendu et celui de la Hollande avec la Russie s'est accru dans la même proportion.*

*Les Hollandais importaient en Russie des ducats, des rixdales, des vins, des eaux-de-vie, des bois de teinture, des épiceries, des harengs, des peaux de castor et divers autres objets.*

*Les Hollandais tiraient d'Archangel et de Pétersbourg des pelteries, des chanvrés, des mâts des bois, de la poix, du goudron, de la potasse, de la védasse, du suif, de la colle de poisson, du caviar, du saumon fumé et salé et des nattes d'emballage.*

*Ils tiraient de Riga, de Revel, de Newa, de Pernau, de Mitau et Libau beaucoup de mâts de vaisseaux; beaucoup de verges de moulins et d'autres bois, des grains, surtout une grande quantité de seigle et d'orge, de la graine de lin, de la cire et de chaux."*

The sheer number of products d'Alphonse mentions is an indication of the importance of this trade. Two of the ports on which the trade of Amsterdam was concentrated--Riga and Narva--were in this region.<sup>47</sup> The impact of the political events of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Dutch were French allies, can clearly be traced in the figures. It is also clear from the figures that the policy of the czars to concentrate their foreign trade in St. Petersburg was quite successful. If the later acquisitions of territory are not included, the St. Petersburg area attracted twice as much trade with Amsterdam than the Archangel area.<sup>48</sup> Although Riga, Pernau and Libau were important trading partners of Amsterdam, the trade with St. Petersburg represented the highest value.

The importance of the Russian trade was even greater if we take into account that in 1809 Sweden had to give the whole of Finland to Russia, bringing another number of ports into the czar's possession, that were frequently mentioned in the *Paalgeld* portbooks. Russia had become the major trading partner in the Baltic.

At the end of the eighteenth century those regions that had dominated the Baltic trade with Amsterdam for so long had almost all been incorporated into the Prussian kingdom. But it is quite enlightening to see the conciseness with which d'Alphonse describes the trade with these regions:

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<sup>47</sup> H.C. Johansen (1983)

<sup>48</sup> Archangel and St. Petersburg are used as labels in the table to indicate the whole region around these ports.

“Les Hollandais importaient dans la Prusse, la Pologne, la Poméranie et le Holsace, des ducats, des rixdales, des sels de Portugal et de France, des vins, des eaux-de-vie, des vinaigres, des épices, des couleurs, des toiles grossières, des oranges, des limons, de la faïence, du sucre raffiné, des étoffes de laine, des étoffes de soie, du beurre, du fromage et du hareng.

Les ports principaux fréquentés par les Hollandais étaient:

pour la Prusse et la Pologne ceux de Memel, Koningsbergen, Elbing et surtout Dantzig;

pour la Poméranie et le Brandebourg ceux de Stettin et de Straalsund;

pour la Holsace celui de Lubec.

Ils exportaient:

de Memel et de Koningsbergen de la graine de lin, de la graine de chanvre, des grains de toute espèce, de l'ambre, de la cire;

de Dantzig et d'Elbing des grains de toutes espèces, de la laine, de la cire, de la toile de Pologne, des peaux, de la potasse, de la védasse, des bois, de l'ambre, des plumes, du houblon, du cumin, de la graine d'anis;

de Stettin et de Straalsund des grains et des bois;

de Lubec du chanvre, de la laine et des grains.

Il y a quelques années que le pavillon prusien n'était pas moins favorable au commerce hollandais que le pavillon danois.”

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**South Baltic: East Prussia to Lubeck**

	Value	% Value	Ships	% Ships	Av. Value	
1742	f 455.210	4,7	246	8,9	f 1.850	
1771	f 671.685	3,5	336	11,5	f 1.999	
1772	f 1.026.215	5,5	503	15,9	f 2.040	
1773	f 843.945	4,6	336	11,6	f 2.512	
1774	f 642.955	3,5	317	10,3	f 2.028	
1775	f 834.825	4,2	303	10,1	f 2.755	
1776	f 633.360	3,5	301	9,5	f 2.104	
1777	f 835.025	4,5	379	11,4	f 2.203	<b>Whole period</b> f 2.460
1778	f 963.050	5,0	359	10,1	f 2.683	
1779	f 775.800	3,9	299	9,2	f 2.595	
1780	f 947.475	4,3	379	11,4	f 2.500	
1781	f 524.125	6,2	201	6,4	f 2.608	
1782	f 724.275	4,5	283	7,9	f 2.559	
1783	f 791.500	3,4	283	9,3	f 2.797	
1784	f 774.250	3,6	290	10,5	f 2.670	
1785	f 742.175	3,7	353	12,6	f 2.102	
1786	f 656.125	3,6	207	8,6	f 3.170	
1787	f 583.850	3,1	188	7,4	f 3.106	

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**Table 20** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the region from Lubeck to Memel, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks



This conciseness reinforces the earlier analysis of the value of the various trades: although the Baltic trade was still of major importance, it was no longer so important that a contemporary writer like d'Alphonse, who had a very keen eye for what was vital for the Netherlands, would devote more lines to it. He mentions the ports which dominated the Baltic trade for centuries, and the goods that were imported to Amsterdam. Most of these were bulky goods on which small profits were made, which had to be carried in large quantities to make the trade worthwhile. Except for some years of great political tension in the Atlantic regions, the value of Baltic trade did not even come close to the value of the trade with France, Great Britain, Spain and Portugal at the end of the eighteenth century.

In spite of the lower value of many of the goods imported from the Baltic, over the whole period this traffic was one of the cornerstones of the trade of Amsterdam. In the amount of traffic I see very little difference between the first and second half of the century. Excluding the fluctuations caused by periods of political instability over the whole century between 800 and 1000 ships set sail from the Baltic to Amsterdam yearly and brought the goods that were so important.

First of all they secured the political importance of Amsterdam as one of the main centers of the grain trade. In a period when famine was always just around the corner, the value of this position can hardly be overestimated.

Secondly this trade provided Amsterdam with the goods it needed for the other branches of its trade, as well as it provided a market for the products purchased all over the world. Next to that it was the main source for all the goods which were needed to keep the fleet afloat.<sup>49</sup> For centuries this trade had brought the greatest number of ships to the port of Amsterdam. The combined trade with the Baltic and the *Kleine Oost* involved about two third of all ships in the harbor. These ships may not have been as impressive as the larger vessels of the intercontinental traffic, the value of the cargoes may not have been as high even, but their sheer numbers made them responsible for a major part of all the activity along the quays.

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<sup>49</sup> Many more details of the Baltic trade have been produced as a side effect of this research. And this is not only the case for the Baltic trade, but for the other categories as well. Since it would be a foolish waste of all the invested time and energy to leave these results unused, they will be made available in electronic form. See appendices for details.

### 5.2.5 The trade with the *Kleine Oost* and the Austrian Netherlands.

Conflating the trade with the region that was known as the Austrian Netherlands before the annexation by France in 1795, with the trade on the *Kleine Oost*, the region that stretched from Emden to the West coast of Denmark, is a good example of ill chosen categorization. It is like taking the average between a midget and a giant. D'Alphonse at the end of the period of our study said:

*Le commerce de la Belgique ne comprenait pas seulement le commerce avec les Pays-Bas autrichiens, mais il comprenait aussi le commerce avec les Pays-Bas français de la Flandre française. Ce commerce n'était pas à beaucoup près aussi étendu qu'il l'avait été précédemment. La réunion de plusieurs provinces autrichiennes à la France l'a diminué encore. Les marchandises, qui étaient importées dans les pays soit autrichiens soit français, consistaient principalement dans des épiceries, des étoffes de laine, de la potasse, de la védasse, du sucre, des harengs et du poisson salé. Dans les Pays-Bas autrichiens les villes d'Anvers, Bruxelles, Malines fournissaient à la Hollande des dentelles, du fil, des tapis. Les villes de Louvain et Diest fournissaient de la bière. Gand et St. Nicolas fournissaient des grains de lin, des toiles, du fil.*

The Austrian Netherlands					
Year	Value	% of total	Ships	% of total	av.value cargo
1742	f 1.000	0,0	1	0,0	f 1.000
1771	f 6.575	0,0	4	0,1	f 1.644
1772	f 33.775	0,2	1	0,0	f 33.775
1773	f 1.500	0,0	2	0,1	f 750
1774					
1775	f 375	0,0	1	0,0	f 375
1776	f 625	0,0	4	0,1	f 156
1777	f 750	0,0	5	0,2	f 150
1778	f 500	0,0	3	0,1	f 167
1779	f 52.825	0,3	11	0,3	f 4.802
1780	f 5.100	0,0	9	0,3	f 567
1781	f 477.550	5,6	62	2,0	f 7.702
1782	f 1.014.825	6,3	72	2,0	f 14.095
1783	f 447.375	1,9	41	1,3	f 10.912
1784	f 34.825	0,2	4	0,1	f 8.706
1785	f 35.625	0,2	13	0,5	f 2.740
1786	f 16.450	0,1	10	0,4	f 1.645
1787	f 2.950	0,0	10	0,4	f 295
					<b>Whole period</b> f 5.264

**Table 21** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the Austrian Netherlands, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

*La ville de Bruges fournissait des basins, des serges, des toiles, des dentelles.  
 Les villes de Menin et de Courtray fournissaient des toiles.  
 Dans la Flandre française la ville de Lille fournissait des étoffes de soie, des étoffes de laine, des tricots, des camelots, des dentelles.  
 La ville de St. Omer fournissait par Duinkerken des grains.  
 La ville de Cambrai fournissait des toiles.*

The overseas trade with the Austrian Netherlands did not have a great importance for Amsterdam. Only during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war did it amount to anything serious. (see table 21) But even in that peak-year 1782 only 72 ships put in from South of the border. The Dutch still controlled the Scheldt river estuary and Antwerpen played a minor part in the concert of European trade. Ostende and Dunkirk were the main trading partners of Amsterdam in this region. After 1789 this trade collapsed and was reduced to nearly nothing after 1795.

The trade with the *Kleine Oost* was a completely different story, which is accurately depicted by d'Alphonse, who speaks of this trade as the trade on the Elbe and the Weser.

<b>Hamburg, Bremen, <i>Kleine Oost</i></b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>Ships</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>av. value cargo</b>
1742	f 613.295	6,3	1037	37,5	f 591
1771	f 690.690	3,6	1023	34,9	f 675
1772	f 706.810	3,8	1002	31,8	f 705
1773	f 782.815	4,3	1020	35,3	f 767
1774	f 684.885	3,7	1031	33,6	f 664
1775	f 743.920	3,7	971	32,3	f 766
1776	f 941.380	5,2	1339	42,4	f 703
1777	f 1.065.225	5,7	1451	43,8	f 734
1778	f 1.368.050	7,1	1719	48,3	f 796
1779	f 1.173.900	5,9	1428	44,2	f 822
1780	f 937.325	4,3	1361	40,9	f 689
1781	f 1.858.150	21,8	2142	68,0	f 867
1782	f 1.677.250	10,4	1955	54,6	f 858
1783	f 886.725	3,8	939	30,7	f 944
1784	f 781.925	3,7	832	30,1	f 940
1785	f 634.850	3,1	760	27,2	f 835
1786	f 553.250	3,0	659	27,5	f 840
1787	f 783.675	4,2	795	31,1	f 986
					<b>Whole period</b>
					f 788

**Table 22** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the *Kleine Oost*, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

*Le commerce sur l'Elbe et le Wezer n'était regardé en Hollande que comme un appendix de celui sur la Baltique. Aussi il était connu sous le nom de petit commerce de l'Est, tandis que le commerce sur la Baltique était connu sous le nom de grand commerce de l'Est. Néanmoins depuis que le commerce sur la Baltique était devenu plus difficile, celui sur l'Elbe et le Wezer avait acquis plus d'intérêt.*

Here he explains the name *Kleine Oost*, meaning *Small Eastern Trade*, as opposite to the *Great Eastern trade*, by which the Baltic trade was meant.

*Les villes anséatiques étaient devenues des entrepôts, où la Hollande se fournissait même des denrées coloniales, dont elle avait été elle-même l'entrepôt le plus important. Mais ce n'est pas de cette époque qui change la marche du commerce, que date ce que nous avons à dire sur cet article mais de son état ordinaire.*

*Ce que les Hollandais exportaient dans ces contrées, se réduisait à des étoffes de laine, des étoffes de soie, des épiceries, des drogues, des couleurs, du sucre, de l'huile, de l'huile de baleine et une grande quantité de hareng.*

*Quoique les gros vaisseaux de mer ne pouvaient pas s'en approcher, la ville de Hambourg n'en était pas moins fréquentée par les Hollandais. Les marchandises y étaient transportées par des allèges ou bien elles étaient déchargées à Altona, où plusieurs négociants de Hambourg tenaient des bureaux.*

*C'était principalement les grains que fournit le pays, qui environne l'Elbe, qui constituaient le commerce de la Hollande avec Hambourg. Néanmoins cette ville était aussi l'entrepôt principal des productions de la Silésie et des pays voisins et c'était par elle que les Hollandais exportaient la toile et le fil de Silésie, le cuivre et le fer d'archal de la Saxe, les douves de Silésie, la potasse, le fer blanc, le miel. C'était aussi surtout par Hambourg que se faisait le commerce avec Leipzig et Berlin.*

*Les foires de Leipzig étaient très fréquentées par les Hollandais. Ils y débitaient beaucoup d'épiceries et d'autres produits des Indes, des dentelles et des draps et ils en exportaient du fil, du fer blanc et diverses autres marchandises. La ville de Berlin fournissait des glaces, des ouvrages d'acier et de la quincaillerie. La ville de Bremen fournissait de la bière de Bremen et de Brunswick, des poêles de fer, du fil, des toiles et des grains.*

*La ville d'Emden, qui faisait alors partie de l'Ostfrise et des états prussiens et qui fait maintenant partie du Département de l'Ems oriental, fournissait les toiles de Munster et de Paderborne, des chevaux et des boeufs maigres, que l'on engraisait dans les prairies de la Hollande.*

D'Alphonse is quite clear: this trade had become more and more important: it no longer was an appendix to the Baltic trade, but was of great interest of its' own right. He is also explicit about the importance of the hinterland, mentioning the fairs of Leipzig, products from Berlin and even from Silesia.

Another aspect of this trade has been mentioned many times.<sup>50</sup> These ports were beloved as a sort of second home-port for the merchants of Amsterdam. In times of political tensions in which the Dutch Republic was involved, large numbers of ships that normally had Amsterdam as their home base were now registered in all ports in the *Kleine Oost*, especially in Emden, which was more or less an annex of Amsterdam. As long as these ports remained in the hands of neutral powers in the greater conflicts in Europe, they could serve as temporal way stations for goods which came from regions that were not neutral in these conflicts. Here they could be reloaded into small ships, which could sail the shallow waters of the Wadden Zee and hence could escape the attention of the great men-of-war that tried to seal up the sea gates of Amsterdam to bring commerce to a halt and hence the Dutch Republic on its' knees.

For almost the same reason--the smallness of the ships involved--this trade has not received the attention of scholars that it deserves. Almost a third of the ships in the port of Amsterdam came from this region. The cargoes they carried were the cork that kept the port of Amsterdam afloat, when all other connections were cut off. In 1810, the last year for which I have gathered data on the total trade, this trade covered 107 of the miserable 216 ships that put in to Amsterdam.

### **5.2.6 The European Atlantic trade**

The category that I have labeled Atlantic trade only comprises the European part of the Atlantic trade: the trans-Atlantic trade is not included. This trade will be the subject of the next chapter. What is included is the trade with the whole of France, Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain. So, what I have labeled the Atlantic trade actually comprises even a part of the Mediterranean trade. In his analysis d'Alphonse makes no distinction between the trade with the Atlantic ports of France and Spain and those on the Mediterranean, and since his almost contemporary view is the point of departure for this description of the trade, this can be justified.

Bringing these regions together in one category does have some serious problems. This was a period in which the political tensions were mainly caused by frictions between France and Great Britain. The Dutch Republic was the official ally of Great Britain until the Fourth

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<sup>50</sup> L. van Nierop (1922)

<i>year</i>	<b>Great Britain</b>			<b>France,</b>	<b>Spain,</b>	<b>Portugal</b>	<b>Total Atlantic</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<i>Ships</i>	<i>%Atlantic</i>	<i>%Total</i>	<i>Ships</i>	<i>%Atlantic</i>	<i>%Total</i>	<i>Ships</i>	<i>%Total</i>	<i>Ships</i>
1734	143	24	6	455	76	18	598	23	2552
1739	5	2	0	208	98	9	213	10	2231
1741	0	0	0	487	100	18	487	18	2751
1742	221	42	8	303	58	11	524	19	2787
1743	213	32	9	453	68	20	666	30	2255
1744	115	24	5	364	76	16	479	22	2225
1750	128	26	4	368	74	12	496	16	3055
1752	118	24	4	370	76	13	488	17	2796
1754	135	30	6	312	70	14	447	20	2283
1755	142	27	5	392	73	15	534	20	2608
1758	154	33	7	312	67	13	466	20	2333
1759	110	26	5	310	74	13	420	18	2396
1760	119	28	5	301	72	13	420	18	2394
1761	111	25	4	338	75	13	449	17	2702
1771	222	37	8	378	63	13	600	20	2931
1772	227	41	7	329	59	10	556	18	3155
1773	215	37	7	364	63	13	579	20	2887
1774	209	35	7	386	65	13	595	19	3071
1775	209	37	7	353	63	12	562	19	2983
1776	207	34	7	402	66	13	609	19	3183
1777	261	43	8	350	57	11	611	18	3312
1778	199	40	6	298	60	8	497	14	3556
1779	203	40	6	304	60	9	507	16	3233
1780	223	39	7	343	61	10	566	17	3330
1781	60	33	2	124	67	4	184	6	3150
1782	143	34	4	273	66	8	416	12	3605
1783	292	44	10	370	56	12	662	22	3057
1784	264	44	10	337	56	12	601	22	2765
1785	281	39	10	440	61	16	721	26	2805
1786	308	44	13	388	56	16	696	29	2394
1787	310	45	12	378	55	15	688	27	2557
1790	392	48	13	433	52	14	825	27	3080
1791	356	48	10	389	52	10	745	20	3720
1792	350	43	11	467	57	15	817	26	3085
1793	340	63	11	203	37	7	543	18	3056
1797	152	42	6	214	58	8	366	14	2564
1798	129	58	4	93	42	3	222	8	2929
1799	0	0	0	51	100	2	51	2	2361
1800	1	1	0	90	99	4	91	4	2431
1801	11	12	0	78	88	3	89	4	2354
1802	379	61	11	239	39	7	618	17	3532
1803	100	35	4	188	65	7	288	11	2667
1804	1	1	0	194	99	7	195	7	2738
1805	0	0	0	190	100	8	190	8	2383
1806	8	11	1	63	89	4	71	4	1578
1807	6	5	0	117	95	8	123	9	1440
1808	0	0	0	18	100	4	18	4	432
1809	0	0	0	10	100	3	10	3	332
1810	2	20	1	8	80	4	10	5	216

**Table 23** Number of ships coming from the European Atlantic regions to Amsterdam, 1734-1810. Sources: see Figure 1.

Anglo-Dutch war in 1780, which was partly caused by the almost overt support for the rebels in America. The Republic then changed allies and for a short period joined forces with France. When the French made a separate peace with Great Britain, the Dutch had very little choice but to accept the rather unfavorable terms of peace with Great Britain in 1784. For the next nine years of internal turmoil in the Republic, the official alliance was with Great Britain and Prussia. Once again there was a change of sides, after the French invasion in 1795. From then until 1814 there was no real choice of alliance. The French dominated the scene and had great influence in a number of more or less client-states on the continent, one of them the Batavian Republic. But Britannia ruled the waves. One after another all the colonies of the

year	Portugal		Spain		France		Great Britain		Total Atlantic	
	Value	%	Value	%	Value	%	Value	%	Value	%
1742	f 332.975	3	742.820 F	8	f 2.404.570	25	f 465.830	5	f 3.946.195	40
1753	f 316.500	2	2.076.000 F	12	f 2.961.000	17	f 1.108.000	6	f 6.461.500	36
1771	f 579.425	3	1.693.515 F	9	f 4.419.635	23	f 528.705	3	f 7.221.280	38
1772	f 598.145	3	1.393.230 F	7	f 4.246.815	23	f 696.630	4	f 6.934.820	37
1773	f 753.240	4	1.162.655 F	6	f 4.030.145	22	f 738.505	4	f 6.684.545	36
1774	f 751.155	4	1.664.995 F	9	f 4.578.735	25	f 595.210	3	f 7.590.095	41
1775	f 742.730	4	1.329.750 F	7	f 4.176.680	21	f 547.565	3	f 6.796.725	34
1776	f 901.590	5	1.610.870 F	9	f 4.679.215	26	f 533.205	3	f 7.724.880	43
1777	f 682.025	4	1.550.075 F	8	f 3.521.025	19	f 560.350	3	f 6.313.475	34
1778	f 698.525	4	1.908.575 F	10	f 3.722.575	19	f 549.125	3	f 6.878.800	36
1779	f 987.975	5	1.659.225 F	8	f 2.342.000	12	f 1.110.975	6	f 6.100.175	31
1780	f 1.133.850	5	1.555.425 F	7	f 2.497.350	11	f 650.325	3	f 5.836.950	27
1781	f 707.350	8	271.650 F	3	f 757.525	9	f 349.800	4	f 2.086.325	24
1782	f 1.145.600	7	747.600 F	5	f 3.166.625	20	f 1.346.800	8	f 6.406.625	40
1783	f 1.152.050	5	1.211.150 F	5	f 4.399.050	19	f 1.129.150	5	f 7.891.400	33
1784	f 1.089.475	5	1.286.000 F	6	f 3.749.925	18	f 896.900	4	f 7.022.300	33
1785	f 824.625	4	1.855.950 F	9	f 5.016.100	25	f 1.087.650	5	f 8.784.325	43
1786	f 721.150	4	950.500 F	5	f 4.432.925	24	f 829.700	5	f 6.934.275	38
1787	f 870.750	5	1.227.600 F	7	f 4.281.600	23	f 1.050.925	6	f 7.430.875	39
1789	f 488.500	2	4.771.000 F	15	f 1.447.500	5	f 2.254.500	7	f 8.961.500	28
1790	f 975.500	4	4.376.500 F	20	f 1.627.000	7	f 1.769.000	8	f 8.748.000	40
1791	f 693.500	3	3.665.500 F	16	f 1.627.000	7	f 2.415.500	11	f 8.401.500	37
1792	f 597.000	2	6.124.000 F	22	f 2.506.000	9	f 3.725.500	13	f 12.952.500	47
1793	f 218.000	1	3.568.500 F	17	f 320.500	2	f 3.939.000	19	f 8.046.000	39
1796	f 377.500	2	4.261.000 F	24	f 419.500	2	f 897.000	5	f 5.955.000	33
1797	f 501.500	3	1.152.500 F	6	f 1.490.000	8	f 3.723.500	20	f 6.867.500	36
1798	f 75.000	1	236.500 F	2	f 154.500	1	f 2.700.000	19	f 3.166.000	22
1799	f 112.500	1	35.500 F	0	f 143.500	1	f 227.000	1	f 518.500	3

**Table 24** The European Atlantic trade by country. Estimated value in guilders and the percentages of the total trade based on the *Paalgeld* portbooks 1742, 1771-1787 and L. Van Nierop (1915, 1917) for the other years.

French clients were captured by the British. A complete misunderstanding of the internal situation in Great Britain led to short-lived plans for an invasion by combined revolutionary forces from the continent. Some assumed that the population of the British isles, especially of Ireland,<sup>51</sup> would immediately join the invading forces under the banner of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*. Reality was quite different. The British navy won almost every naval battle of the period.

On October 11, 1797, the Dutch fleet under admiral Winter met the British under Duncan for what would be the last major naval battle of a long series of about two centuries. Some had hoped that it would bring the Batavian Republic back to a position where it could really challenge the British dominance of the open seas. Their unrealistic dreams were shattered when the Dutch navy was smashed to pieces right before the eyes of the spectators, who watched from the coast.<sup>52</sup> Losing the battle of Camperdown (Kamperduin) meant the definite end of the Dutch as a leading naval power. From that moment all connections with the colonies were insecure and even the ships in the European trade were easy prizes for the British. The continuation of the trade had become dependent on French protection and shipping in neutral vessels. Neutral nations, like the United States of America, were the great beneficiaries of these circumstances. The merchants of Amsterdam had two options to continue the trade; either they could charter neutral ships and pay the required price for that, or they could become owners of neutral ships themselves by registering their ships in one of the small German principalities. This flag-flight makes it very difficult to ascertain if the large number of ships coming from the *Kleine Oost* were really foreign ships or if they were actually ships that had been registered in Amsterdam before, but now sailed under a new flag and a new name.

In a period of almost constant international conflict, Great Britain with its formidable naval power was constantly the enemy and the Batavian Republic and later the Kingdom Holland had no means to secure the seaways anymore. Napoleon's Continental System, meant to bring Great Britain to its knees, probably hurt the continent, including the Netherlands, more than it hurt Great Britain. Of course this had repercussions for traffic and trade. Quite

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<sup>51</sup>Mayo uprising of 1798

<sup>52</sup> S. Schama (1977), 282



often the British blockaded the sea gates to Amsterdam. On the other hand, the alliance with France brought more French trade in times when the port could be reached. It is quite clear from the number of ships that put in to Amsterdam from the Atlantic region after 1797 that the wars had a devastating influence on the trade. When the Baltic trade and the trade with the *Kleine Oost* still showed respectable numbers, the trade with the Atlantic partners became almost negligible. Before the end of the 1780's the Atlantic trade had brought about 20% of the total number of ships in the harbor to Amsterdam. In the late 1780's it rose to almost 30%, but then it fell steeply to a dramatic low of only 5% at the end of the period in 1810, when only 10 ships put in. During the whole period the trade with France was the most important of the region. The estimated value of this trade was about one fifth of the total value of the trade of Amsterdam. To produce a longer time-series than can be extracted from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, I have used the data that Van Nierop published about the imports to Amsterdam.<sup>53</sup> These data were coded like the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks and then the amount of *Paalgeld* due for these goods was calculated. On this basis the total value of the trade was estimated. The differences between the estimated totals based on Van Nierop's data and the totals calculated from the *Paalgeld* portbooks are so small that it is acceptable to present them in one table (see table 24).

Only during a short period from 1789 until 1796 did the trade with Spain and Great Britain surpass the French trade in value, but these were the years of the French Revolution and of the wars of revolutionary France with the rest of Europe.

### **5.2.6.1 The trade with Great Britain**

The trade with Great Britain was interrupted periodically when the political circumstances brought the Republic and Great Britain to different alliances. However, only in very few years did the traffic come to an absolute standstill: 1741, 1799, 1805, 1808 and 1809. In all other years at least one ship managed to make it to the port of Amsterdam. It is quite striking that during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war (1780-1784) only in the first year of the war the number of ships fell significantly: after that it was business as usual. It is clear that the trade with Great Britain became more and more important in the period from 1783 to 1793, covering just

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<sup>53</sup>L. van Nierop (1917)

under half of the total Atlantic trade, and bringing more than 10 percent of the total number of ships to Amsterdam. Under the French domination of the Batavian Republic and the Kingdom of Holland, trade with Great Britain was illegal in many years and it can be doubted if the figures presented here give an accurate picture of reality. Smuggling is usually not registered. The quick recovery to normal numbers of ships in the peace years 1802-1803 may be an indication that not all connections were closed during the other years.

The description of the trade with England (Angleterre) of d'Alphonse gives a good impression of the importance of this trade.

*L'on a précédemment observé que déjà sous l'Empire romain la Hollande avait commencé à avoir des relations commerciales avec l'Angleterre et qu'elles a'étaient soutenues constamment avec plus ou moins d'étendue. La situation de la Hollande à l'embouchure du Rhin et à celle de plusieurs autres fleuves et en face des îles britanniques en a été la cause. Ce commerce a été très intéressant et il l'aurait été davantage encore, si l'importation de plusieurs objets en Angleterre n'avait pas été prohibée ou rendue plus difficile par les droits auxquels elle était assujettie.*

*La ville de Rotterdam par sa position géographique a été le siège principal du commerce de la Hollande avec l'Angleterre. Néanmoins les villes d'Amsterdam, de Dordt et la Zélande y ont pris part et c'est par la part aussi que la ville de Schiedam y a prise dans le milieu du 18e siècle, qu'elle est parvenue au point d'élévation, qu'elle avait atteint.*

*Les marchandises exportées de la Hollande en Angleterre consistaient dans des toiles fines, des toiles communes, du chanvre, du papier, des fanons, des épiceries, des toiles de cambrai, du beurre, du fromage, des légumes, les belles fleurs de Haarlem et, d'autres productions, tant de la Hollande que de l'Allemagne et de la Belgique. Dans les derniers temps le genièvre, quoique l'introduction en fut sévèrement défendue, était l'un des objets principaux de l'importation en Angleterre.*

*Les Hollandais exportaient :*

*de Londres le vitriol, l'étain, le plomb, l'alun, le verre, les cristaux, le liège des cuirs; des draps, des étoffes de laine, des bas de soie, des bas de laine, des bonnets de laine, des chapeaux, de la craie, de la faïence et avant l'indépendance des Etats-Unis de l'Amérique, le tabac de Virginie;*

*d'Exon, Hulle et Bristol une grande quantité d'étoffes de laine de différentes espèces et des bas de laine;*

*de New Castle et Sunderland, une grande quantité de charbons de terre;*

*d'Edinbourg des étoffes de laine et du charbon de terre;*

*de Dublin et de Cork des draps, des étoffes de laine, de la viande salée, des peaux, du suif.*

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 7.025	1	10	4	f 703	
1771	f 12.200	1	11	4	f 1.109	
1772	f 36.050	2	15	5	f 2.403	
1773	f 8.750	0	11	4	f 795	
1774	f 36.625	2	20	7	f 1.831	
1775	f 25.125	1	23	8	f 1.092	
1776	f 41.000	2	30	9	f 1.367	<b>whole period</b>
1777	f 21.325	1	27	8	f 790	f 1.174
1778	f 17.550	1	24	7	f 731	
1779	f 12.500	1	14	4	f 893	
1780	f 19.775	1	28	8	f 706	
1781	f 4.225	0	5	2	f 845	
1782	f 48.800	3	45	13	f 1.084	
1783	f 31.550	1	33	11	f 956	
1784	f 11.225	1	15	5	f 748	
1785	f 39.000	2	34	12	f 1.147	
1786	f 81.525	4	32	13	f 2.548	
1787	f 39.150	2	28	11	f 1.398	

**Table 25** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Scotland, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks.

It is clear from d'Alphonse's description that there were great differences between the products coming from the various parts of great Britain.

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 398.550	41	204	74	f 1.954	
1771	f 512.805	27	208	71	f 2.465	
1772	f 660.580	35	212	67	f 3.116	
1773	f 728.605	40	203	70	f 3.589	
1774	f 494.045	27	187	61	f 2.642	
1775	f 517.440	26	185	62	f 2.797	
1776	f 491.005	27	176	56	f 2.790	<b>whole period</b>
1777	f 538.725	29	208	63	f 2.590	f 4.047
1778	f 531.575	27	174	49	f 3.055	
1779	f 1.097.725	55	173	54	f 6.345	
1780	f 629.475	29	190	57	f 3.313	
1781	f 343.575	40	54	17	f 6.363	
1782	f 1.260.375	79	94	26	f 13.408	
1783	f 1.096.150	46	258	84	f 4.249	
1784	f 885.050	42	245	89	f 3.612	
1785	f 1.048.650	52	246	88	f 4.263	
1786	f 748.175	41	276	115	f 2.711	
1787	f 998.700	53	278	109	f 3.592	

**Table 26** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with England and Wales, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

The trade with Scotland, mainly with the port of Sunderland, consisted mainly of a regular stream of ships carrying coal to Amsterdam. The number of ships involved in this trade shows an increase over the period for which data are available from the *Paalgeld* portbooks, and the average estimated value of each ship's cargo also increased. But the trade with England and Wales involved much more ships and the average cargo was worth much more. The period for which the data from the *Paalgeld* portbooks are available show the much higher average value per ship of over 4000 guilders, although this average is influenced a bit too much by the extreme value of the year 1782, when during the war a much smaller number of ships put in to Amsterdam. These were probably loaded a bit heavier than normally, to cover the risks involved with higher profits. If this year is excluded, the average cargo value is still just under 3500 guilders.

The trade with Ireland involved so few ships, that random influences on the averages are too great to be of any significance. In many years not one ship from Ireland was seen in the port of Amsterdam.

The trade with Great Britain was very important, but since most of the trade came via London to Amsterdam, I have little exact information from the *Paalgeld* portbooks on this

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 60.255	6	7	3	f 8.608	
1771	f 700	0	3	1	f 1.233	
1772						
1773	f 1.150	0	2	1	f 575	
1774	f 64.540	4	3	1	f 21.513	
1775	f 5.000	0	1	0	f 5.000	
1776	f 1.200	0	1	0	f 1.200	<b>whole period</b>
1777	f 300	0	2	1	f 150	f 3.332
1778						
1779	f 750	0	2	1	f 375	
1780	f 1.075	0	1	0	f 1.075	
1781	f 2.000	0	1	0	f 2.000	
1782	f 37.625	2	3	1	f 12.542	
1783	f 1.450	0	2	1	f 725	
1784	f 625	0	1	0	f 25	
1785						
1786						
1787	f 13.075	1	3	1	f 4.358	

**Table 27** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Ireland, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

trade, because the cargoes of ships coming from London were not registered. The ships paid a fixed sum per last, just like the ships coming from Archangel.<sup>54</sup> Of all the other ports involved, Hull, New Castle, and Sunderland, were the most important.

### 5.2.6.2 The trade with Spain

The trade with Spain has received much attention recently, since it was a trade in what Jonathan Israel has named the “rich trades”. Although this concept has received some serious critique because his definition of “rich trades” is rather fuzzy--sometimes even inconsistent -- and can even include bulk goods at time, no one will question the fact that the trade with Spain involved precious goods and was very important for Amsterdam.<sup>55</sup>

Once again I will quote the analysis of d’Alphonse, who gives a good detailed description of this trade.

*Avant la guerre de 80 ans les Pays-Bas étaient l'entrepôt du commerce entre l'Espagne et le Nord de l'Europe. L'on a précédemment fait connaître comment la Hollande est devenue alors l'entrepôt de ce commerce jusqu'à ce que Philippe III eut brisé toutes relations commerciales avec ses anciens sujets. La paix de 1648 rétablit les relations et les Hollandais les entretenirent avec plus d'avantages encore. La guerre de la succession n'y apporta qu'une interruption temporaire et de peu de durée.*

*Le port de Cadix était celui que les vaisseaux hollandais fréquentaient le plus et les autres villes d'où il s'exportait le plus de marchandises étaient celles de St. Lucas, Séville, Malaga, Alicante, Valence, Majorque, Allemande, Barcelone, St. Sébastien et Bilbao.*

*Les marchandises que l'on exportait pour l'Espagne consistaient dans du bois, des grains, des toiles à voile, de la cire blanche, des épingles, des aiguilles, du gingembre des épiceries, des toiles de coton imprimé, des étoffes de laine et de soie, ainsi que des toiles.*

*Les marchandises que l'on exportait de l'Espagne en Hollande consistaient: pour Cadix dans la laine, le sel, le vin de Canarie et de Xéres l'huile les figes, les raisins et d'autres fruits; pour St. Lucas dans une grande quantité de sel; pour Séville dans l'huile et la laine; pour Malagan dans la laine, l'huile, des raisins, des vins; pour Alicante dans la grains d'anis, le vin, les raisins, les savons; pour Valence dans des amandes; pour Majorque dans l'huile des oranges; pour Allemande dans une grande quantité de sel; pour Barcelone dans les eaux-de-vie; pour St. Sébastien et Bilbao dans des châtaignes, du safran et de la laine.*

*Mais indépendamment des avantages que les Hollandais tiraient de ce commerce*

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<sup>54</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>55</sup> L. Noordegraaf (1992)

*avec l'Espagne, ils en tiraient un autre plus grand encore, celui d'entretenir malgré les défenses du gouvernement espagnol, un commerce interlope avec ses colonies. Les Hollandais avaient des commissionnaires à Cadix qui recevaient les marchandises, qui leur étaient envoyées et qui employaient des Espagnols pour les vendre dans les colonies et recevoir en échange des productions des colonies, telles que l'or, l'argent, les diamants, les perles, l'indigo, la cochenille, le quina, le tabac de Varinas et de Havane, le gallate, la vanille, plusieurs drogues, des bois de teintures, des peaux et de la laine de vigogne.*

The data gathered from the *Paalgeld* portbooks permit a good look at this trade for a short period. It is clear that the average cargo was worth five times as much as of the ships coming from England: 14,960 guilders for Spain to 3,496 guilders for England. The average value of ship cargoes was only higher with ships coming from the Atlantic coast of France, 15113 guilders, the Mediterranean coasts of France, 23,377 guilders, Italy, 19,999 guilders, and the ports of the Levant, 22,826 guilders. Only for a short period after 1789 did the value of this trade pass the average 8 to 10% of the total value of the total trade of Amsterdam, though on average only 3.5% of the total number of ships were involved. The appendices permit a very precise examination of all the goods were carried from Spain to Amsterdam.

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 742.820	76	68	25	f 10.924	
1771	f 1.693.515	89	92	31	f 18.408	
1772	f 1.393.230	74	83	26	f 16.786	
1773	f 1.162.655	63	85	29	f 13.678	
1774	f 1.664.995	91	113	37	f 14.734	
1775	f 1.329.750	67	94	31	f 14.146	
1776	f 1.610.870	89	109	35	f 14.779	<b>Whole period</b>
1777	f 1.550.075	83	105	32	f 14.763	f 14.960
1778	f 1.908.575	99	94	26	f 20.304	
1779	f 1.659.225	83	96	30	f 17.284	
1780	f 1.555.425	71	114	34	f 13.644	
1781	f 271.650	32	19	6	f 14.297	
1782	f 747.600	47	58	16	f 12.890	
1783	f 1.211.150	51	79	26	f 15.331	
1784	f 1.286.000	61	76	27	f 16.921	
1785	f 1.855.950	92	119	43	f 15.596	
1786	f 950.500	52	83	35	f 11.452	
1787	f 1.227.600	65	92	36	f 13.343	

**Table 28** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Spain, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

### 5.2.6.3 The Trade with Portugal

The trade with Portugal, especially the salt-trade with Setubal, but also the trade in colonial goods, has received the same sort of attention as the Spanish trade: because of the nature of the goods involved it is supposed to be one of the “rich trades”. Once again the description of d’Alphonse offers a good concise analysis.

*La réunion du Portugal à l'Espagne et la guerre avec l'Espagne interrompirent le commerce entre la Hollande et le Portugal. Mais la paix de 1661 le rétablit et il est devenu pour la Hollande l'un des plus avantageux.*

*Les marchandises, que l'on exportait de la Hollande pour le Portugal, consistaient dans une grande quantité de tissus de différentes espèces, dans des toiles de coton imprimées, des habits tout faits, du papier, des ustensiles de cuivre, de la dragée de plomb, du plomb, de la poudre à canon et beaucoup d'autres marchandises, dont la plus grande partie était destinée pour le Brésil.*

*Les ports principaux fréquentés par les Hollandais étaient Lisbonne, Port à port, St. Ubes et Madère.*

*Lisbonne fournissait du sel, du sucre, du tabac de Brésil, du bois de teinture, des peaux, de la laine, de l'huile, du vin, des raisins, des figues, du gingembre, des oranges, des limons, des confitures, des drogues, des perles, des diamants et d'autres pierres précieuses.*

*Port à port fournissait une grande quantité du sumac, St. Ubes fournissait la plus grande quantité du sel, Madère fournissait du vin, du sucre et des confitures.*

This analysis and the data that Van Nierop published also indicate that it was no one-way trade:<sup>56</sup> Portugal, Spain, France, and the Mediterranean regions were not only suppliers of precious goods, but also an important market for Dutch produce, or goods Dutch merchants had acquired elsewhere. Other countries, like Great Britain and France, may have gained a greater part in this trade, even at the end of the eighteenth century it was still a very important market for merchants of Amsterdam.

During the period for which the data of the *Paalgeld* portbooks have been processed, an average of 64 ships came from Portuguese ports, mainly Lisbon, Setubal, and Oporto. This was an average of about 2.0% of the total number of ships coming to Amsterdam, but it involved about 4.0% of the total value of all trade. The appendices will show the correctness of the d’Alphonse’s analysis for this period.

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<sup>56</sup>L. van Nierop (1917)

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 332.975	34	61	22	f 5.459	
1771	f 579.425	30	60	20	f 9.657	
1772	f 598.145	32	54	17	f 11.077	
1773	f 753.240	41	86	30	f 8.759	
1774	f 751.155	41	69	22	f 10.886	
1775	f 742.730	37	69	23	f 10.764	
1776	f 901.590	50	77	24	f 11.709	Whole Period f 13.261
1777	f 682.025	37	63	19	f 10.826	
1778	f 698.525	36	52	15	f 13.433	
1779	f 987.975	50	65	20	f 15.200	
1780	f 1.133.850	52	55	17	f 20.615	
1781	f 707.350	83	48	15	f 14.736	
1782	f 1.145.600	71	55	15	f 20.829	
1783	f 1.152.050	49	58	19	f 19.863	
1784	f 1.089.475	51	74	27	f 14.723	
1785	f 824.625	41	78	28	f 10.572	
1786	f 721.150	40	61	25	f 11.822	
1787	f 870.750	46	49	19	f 17.770	

Table 29 Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Portugal, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

#### 5.2.6.4 The trade with France

Probably the most important trade with regards to value and number of ships involved was the trade with France. On average about 220 ships sailed between Amsterdam and the Atlantic coast of France yearly, while another 14 ships came from the Mediterranean coast, carrying a great variety of cargoes. On average a ship coming from the Atlantic coast had goods on board worth about 15,113 guilders. If a ship came from the Mediterranean coast those goods would be worth about 23,378 guilders. Although the number of ships involved in the Mediterranean trade fluctuated much more than that of the Atlantic trade, the average value of the ships cargoes remained very stable.

When d'Alphonse starts his analysis he first has to define what is understood by the geographic term France, because when he wrote his analysis France had annexed Belgium and a number of other territories, which he wanted to treat separately. When he speaks of France, he meant France within its old boundaries

*Le commerce de la Hollande avec la France ne doit s'entendre vue de l'ancienne France et non pas de la France agrandie par toutes les réunions, que ses triomphes ont amenées.*



*Ce commerce n'a jamais été pour la Hollande d'un grand avantage, soit parce que les exportations de la France en Hollande surpassaient de beaucoup les exportations de la Hollande en France, soit parce que les prohibitions ont souvent mis des entraves au commerce avec la France. Ces prohibitions sont devenues depuis le commencement du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle nuisibles à la France elle-même. Les Hollandais préférèrent alors de tirer de l'Allemagne et de l'Angleterre les objets que la France leur fournissait précédemment, par la raison qu'ils ne pouvaient pas solder par les produits de leur industrie et de leur commerce les achats, qu'ils faisaient en France. Néanmoins cet état de choses a changé peu à peu à mesure que le système prohibitif a été moins rigoureux.*

*Les ports principaux que les Hollandais fréquentaient étaient Marseille, Bayonne, Bordeaux, Libourne, la Rochelle, Nantes, St. Malo, Rouen et Dieppe.*

*L'on exportait de la Hollande pour la France du beurre, du fromage, du lin, de la graine de lin, des harengs, du saumon salé et d'autres poissons séchés, de l'huile de lin et de navet, des fanons, de l'huile de baleine, de la poix, du goudron, des épiceries, des drogues du soufre, des couleurs, du vitriol, du suif, de la potasse, des mâts de vaisseaux, des planches, des douves de tonneaux et différentes espèces de bois, du chanvre, du cuivre, du fer, du fer blanc, de l'acier, du fil d'archal, des plumes, du caviar et autres objets.*

*Les Hollandais importaient en Hollande:*

*de Marseille de l'huile, des olives, des câpres, du savon, du miel, des amandes, des figues, des raisins, du vert-de-gris, du pastel, des châtaignes, du café et d'autres marchandises du Levant et souvent même c'était par Marseille que les Hollandais faisaient leurs expéditions pour le Levant;*

*de Bayonne des vins, de l'eau-de vie, des prunes, des raisins, des châtaignes de l'huile, de la térébenthine, du miel et de la laine;*

*de Bordeaux une très grande quantité de vins, des eaux-de-vie, du vinaigre de vin, des châtaignes, des prunes, des noix, du miel, du safran de Montauban et du bois de noyer. Les deux foires annuelles de Bordeaux étaient très fréquentées par les Hollandais;*

*de Libourne des vins de Bergerac et des châtaignes ;*

*de la Rochelle des eaux-de-vie, du sel, du bois de noyer et du papier;*

*de Nantes du miel, du safran, des eaux-de-vie, des prunes, des sirops et quelquefois des marchandises des Indes, que la Compagnie des Indes de France faisait vendre soit à l'orient soit à Nantes;*

*de St. Malo des peaux, du sucre de St. Domingue, du papier et des étoffes d'Amiens et de Reims;*

*de Rouen de la rouennerie, des chapeaux de caudebec, du verre, des pommes;*

*de Dieppe des denteiles et des vitraux.*

*Les Hollandais tiraient aussi de Lyon, Tours et quelques autres villes des étoffes de soie, des taffetas, des tisaus mêlés d'or et d'argent et de la quincaillerie.*

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 22.396.500	229	201	73	f 11.143	
1771	f 39.570.750	208	268	91	f 14.765	
1772	f 36.396.850	193	228	72	f 15.964	
1773	f 37.790.200	206	219	76	f 17.256	
1774	f 43.745.550	238	247	80	f 17.711	
1775	f 36.762.250	185	230	77	f 15.984	
1776	f 44.768.650	248	266	84	f 16.830	<b>Whole Period</b>
1777	f 32.241.000	173	217	66	f 14.858	f 15.113
1778	f 33.203.500	172	177	50	f 18.759	
1779	f 21.631.500	109	180	56	f 12.018	
1780	f 19.787.250	90	206	62	f 9.605	
1781	f 7.366.750	86	67	21	f 10.995	
1782	f 30.689.250	191	168	47	f 18.267	
1783	f 38.769.500	164	253	83	f 15.324	
1784	f 33.808.000	159	205	74	f 16.492	
1785	f 45.897.000	227	273	98	f 16.812	
1786	f 41.151.500	226	281	117	f 14.645	
1787	f 39.589.500	210	271	106	f 14.609	

**Table 30** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the Atlantic coast of France, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

Although the trade with France was hindered by all sorts of tolls, levies, taxes and prohibitions in France, it still was of extreme importance for Amsterdam. The sheer variety of goods and the quantity in which they were carried underline the importance of this trade. Although d'Alphonse suggests that there was a negative trade of balance with France, one can wonder if the merchants of Amsterdam would carry on a trade on such an intensive scale for so long if there were no great profits involved. It is almost impossible to quantify the balance of trade for this period because too many data are missing. French goods were not only meant as imports to the Netherlands, but many were also used in other sections of the trade of Amsterdam: wine bought in France was traded again in the Baltic.

It is quite obvious from the figures given in Table 31 that the French Mediterranean trade deserves the name *rich trade* even more than the Atlantic trade, but it also clear that there were much greater fluctuations in the number of ships involved.

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 164.920	17	9	3	f 18.324	
1771	f 462.560	24	22	8	f 21.025	
1772	f 607.130	32	29	9	f 20.936	
1773	f 251.125	14	12	4	f 20.927	
1774	f 204.180	11	7	2	f 29.169	
1775	f 500.455	25	26	9	f 19.248	
1776	f 202.350	11	8	3	f 25.294	<b>Whole Period:</b> f 23.378
1777	f 296.925	16	11	3	f 26.993	
1778	f 402.225	21	17	5	f 23.660	
1779	f 178.850	9	7	2	f 25.550	
1780	f 518.625	24	20	6	f 25.931	
1781	f 20.850	2	1	0	f 20.850	
1782	f 97.700	6	5	1	f 19.540	
1783	f 522.100	22	16	5	f 32.631	
1784	f 369.125	17	12	4	f 30.760	
1785	f 426.400	21	25	9	f 17.056	
1786	f 317.775	17	16	7	f 19.861	
1787	f 322.650	17	14	5	f 23.046	

**Table 31** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Mediterranean coast of France, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

The importance for Amsterdam of the whole Atlantic trade can hardly be overestimated. The trade with France was clearly the most important. But also the Portugese and Spanish trade were of great interest for Amsterdam. Only in the 1780's and the early 1790's the trade with Great Britain had a major share in the European Atlantic trade. Political circumstances hindered the further development of this trade. It was a combination of the number of ships involved and the value of the cargoes they brought to Amsterdam that made the Atlantic trade of vital importance. Not only did it involve precious goods, but the size of the traffic guaranteed a good level of activity in the port. Maybe other ports had a greater share of this trade. I have not studied that. But it is quite clear that the Atlantic trade was one of the cornerstones of commercial success of Amsterdam. After 1795 the picture changes. The share of this trade in the value of the whole trade of Amsterdam begins to drop.

### 5.2.7 The Mediterranean trade

Although only a very small percentage of the total number of ships that arrived yearly in the port of Amsterdam came from the Mediterranean regions, the value of the cargoes was so

high, that in a number of years the total value of this trade was even higher than that of the trade with the *Kleine Oost*, in which about ten times as many ships were active. The analysis of d'Alphonse in this case is even more interesting than his other short characteristics of the other trades that the Dutch merchants and specially the merchants of Amsterdam were involved here. He depicts the Mediterranean trade not only as a trade in which precious goods were fetched, but he also shows this region as an important export market for Amsterdam. Some of the items that d'Alphonse mentioned were products of the domestic industries, other were re-exported goods acquired in other trades. The importance of this trade is also emphasized by the existence of a special association of merchants involved in this trade: the *Directie der Levantsche handel*, the Directorate of the trade on the Levant, which was licensed to impose a 1% levy on all imports from this region. From the revenues the protection of this trade was financed. D'Alphonse also mentions the special role played by Jews in this trade who had fled to Amsterdam to escape the repression and pogroms elsewhere in Europe, via the contacts they had possessed even before they came to Amsterdam. He also mentions the custom of sending young merchants as correspondents to the major ports to act as intermediaries for their employers.

*Le commerce connu sous le nom du commerce du Levant et de la Méditerranée comprend les états de l'empire ottoman et l'Italie. Jusqu'à l'époque, où les Portugais eurent découvert un chemin plus court et plus facile pour se procurer les productions des Indes, c'était par des caravanes qu'elles arrivaient à Smirne et à Alep. Vénise les y achetait et les autres nations les achetaient à leur tour à Vénise et ainsi que nous l'avons dit, la ville d'Anvers fut une de celles, qui eut avec Vénise des relations commerciales plus étendues et qui en retira le plus de prospérité. Mais la découverte des Portugais fut funeste au commerce du Levant. Ce ne fut qu'au 17e siècle que les Hollandais commencèrent à y prendre part et la première impulsion leur en fut donnée par les Juifs espagnols et portugais, qui s'étaient réfugiés en Hollande et qui y avaient porté comme partout leur esprit de commerce. Quelques-uns de ces juifs au moyen de leurs compatriotes établis dans le Levant, y exportèrent de la Hollande des épiceries et d'autres marchandises, qui précédemment en avaient été extraites. A leur exemple les négociants d'Amsterdam envoyèrent des jeunes gens s'établir en Italie, dans les îles de l'Archipel, à Constantinople, à Smirne et à Alexandrette et par là ils ouvrirent de nouvelles relations de commerce avec ces contrées.*

#### ***Direction du commerce du Levant et de la navigation dans la Méditerranée.***

*Un collège sous le titre de direction du commerce du Levant et de la navigation dans la Méditerranée fut formé en l'année 1624 dans la ville d'Amsterdam. Il fut chargé de la surveillance de tout ce qui concernait le nouveau commerce, qui s'établissait du paiement des consuls et autres agents employés dans les villes principales, des présents*

à faire aux gouverneurs turcs et autres personnes de distinction, aussi que de pourvoir à tout ce que la sûreté et la prospérité de ce commerce pouvait exiger. Pour mettre ce collège à même de faire face à ces diverses dépenses, les états-généraux lui avaient accordé un droit de 1% sur la plupart des marchandises du Levant, qui étaient introduites en Hollande. Les membres qui composaient le collège étaient choisis parmi les négociants les plus recommandables.

Les marchandises exportées de la Hollande pour le Levant consistaient dans des épiceries: du cacao, du gingembre, du thé, de la porcelaine, des indiennes, des mousselines, des étoffes de soie des Indes, des toiles fines, des draps fins, des étoffes de laine, des rubans, des fanons, du cuivre, du fer, de l'étain, du plomb, du fer blanc, de l'ivoire, des bois de teinture, de la garance et des harengs. La ville d'Amsterdam était le centre de ce commerce.

Les marchandises, qui étaient exportées du Levant dans la Hollande étaient différentes suivant les pays, d'où elles étaient tirées. Elles consistaient:

Pour l'Italie dans des étoffes de soie, des tapis, des étoffes d'or et d'argent, la soie brute, l'huile, le savon, le riz, les drogues et le marbre. Ces marchandises étaient tirées du port de Gênes.

Livourne fournissait principalement du café et du coton; Venise les dentelles, des verres, des glaces, des drogues, du soufre, de la graine d'anis, le riz de Vérone, la soie de Bergame, de Turin, de Boulogne, de Modène et de Parmesan.

Pour la Turquie dans le poil de chameau, des drogues, des noix de galle, l'alun, le coton, des tapis, de la futaine, du Cordova de la soie; ces marchandises étaient tirées de Constantinople. L'on tirait des ports d'Alexandrette et d'Alep des noix de galle, des poils de chèvres, du coton, de l'encens, de la soie, de peaux de chagrin et des toiles et d'Alexandrie et du Caire des drogues, du safran, des momies et divers autres objets.

L'on voit aisément que le commerce hollandais dans le Levant n'était pas à

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value ship	
1742	f 271.895	2.8	23	0.8	f 11.822	
1771	f 544.255	2.9	29	1.0	f 18.767	
1772	f 705.440	3.7	37	1.2	f 19.066	
1773	f 466.490	2.5	34	1.2	f 13.720	
1774	f 529.270	2.9	30	1.0	f 17.642	
1775	f 723.285	3.6	46	1.5	f 15.724	
1776	f 371.630	2.1	21	0.7	f 17.697	
1777	f 651.675	3.5	26	0.8	f 25.064	
1778	f 592.725	3.1	24	0.7	f 24.697	
1779	f 966.175	4.8	40	1.2	f 24.154	
1780	f 1.186.100	5.4	37	1.1	f 32.057	
1781	f 301.000	3.5	11	0.3	f 27.364	
1782	f 461.500	2.9	21	0.6	f 21.976	
1783	f 476.125	2.0	23	0.8	f 20.701	
1784	f 329.525	1.6	18	0.7	f 18.307	
1785	f 567.325	2.8	37	1.3	f 15.333	
1786	f 331.400	1.8	19	0.8	f 17.442	
1787	f 498.050	2.6	27	1.1	f 18.446	
						<b>Whole Period</b>
						f 19.999

**Table 32** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Italy, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

Year	value	% value	ships	% ships	av. Value cargo	
1742	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1771	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1772	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1773	f 36.750	0.2	1	0.0	f 36.750	
1774	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1775	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1776	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	whole period
1777	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	f 3.144
1778	f 147.250	0.8	21	0.6	f 7.012	
1779	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1780	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1781	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1782	f 114.050	0.7	15	0.4	f 7.603	
1783	f 62.675	0.3	12	0.4	f 5.223	
1784	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1785	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1786	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1787	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	

**Table 33** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Ports on the Black Sea, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

*beaucoup près sans intérêt. Mais ce n'est pas depuis que les calamités de la guerre ont bouleversé tout le système commercial et qu'il est sans règle et dans la confusion au point que l'on a vu la Turquie recevoir de l'Angleterre des productions des Indes, pour les revendre ensuite en Allemagne et en France.*

Now I shall examine briefly the role the various regions played in this trade.

### 5.2.7.1 The trade with Italy

Although not many ships were involved in this trade, the estimated average cargo value of just under 20,000 guilders indicates that this really was a trade in very expensive goods. Only for the period that I have processed the *Paalgeld* portbooks are reliable data available on the value of the cargo and the exact number of ships in this trade. Just like for all the other regions, all products on board the ships arriving in Amsterdam and their ports of origin can be found in the appendices.

After 1789 this trade collapses. The safety of sea routes to the Mediterranean was very vulnerable and the Dutch navy was no longer capable of offering the protection that was needed in times of political crises. After 1789 first the French hindered the Dutch ships going

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 32.505	3	4	1	f 8.126	
1771	f 178.105	9	9	3	f 19.789	
1772	f 208.925	11	8	3	f 26.116	
1773	f 176.400	10	7	2	f 25.200	
1774	f 105.025	6	5	2	f 21.005	
1775	f 63.575	3	4	1	f 15.894	
1776	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	<b>Whole period</b> f 8.600
1777	f 12.025	1	1	0	f 12.025	
1778	f 20.075	1	1	0	f 20.075	
1779	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1780	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1781	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1782	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1783	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1784	f 6.575	0	1	0	f 6.575	
1785	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1786	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	
1787	f 0	0	0	0	f 0	

**Table 34** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the African Mediterranean ports , 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks.

to Italy and the other regions of the Mediterranean, and after 1795 the British took over this disruptive part. After 1797 almost no ships put in to Amsterdam from these regions.

### 5.2.7.2 The Black Sea trade and the trade with the African Mediterranean regions

The trade with the ports on the Black Sea , here regarded as an annex to the Mediterranean trade, is a good example of how the value of the cargo need not increase with the distance of the trade.

Although in most years no ships from these regions arrived in Amsterdam and the numbers are too small for a good statistical analysis, it is clear from the figures from the years in which some ships did arrive from the Black Sea ports that they carried cargoes that were even much less precious than cargoes carried from the African Mediterranean coast.

Also for this trade the number of ships involved is so small that all sorts of random influences can be expected. This trade, mainly involving ports on the Barbary coast, was of minor importance.

### 5.2.7.3 The Levant trade

The trade with the ports in Turkey and other parts of the Levant was of much greater significance than the trade with the African Mediterranean ports or the ports on the Black Sea and usually some fifteen ships per year sailed for Amsterdam from this region. The port that is mentioned most in the *Paalgeld* portbooks is Smyrna. Cargoes of ships coming from this port always consisted of a great variety of goods. The estimated average value of the cargoes was almost 23,000 guilders, just a little below the value of the cargoes coming from the French Mediterranean coast. If the value of the cargo is a good indication then this was a *rich trade*-- some of the most expensive goods were carried in these ships. From the names of the captains of these ships one gets the impression that it were not the Dutch themselves who were active in this trade, but ship masters from those remote ports. This impression may be completely incorrect, because many of the Amsterdam merchants had and have names that do not sound very Dutch. Since traditionally quite a number of the Jews who used their connections in these regions for their commercial enterprises were descendants of refugees from Spain, Portugal and Antwerp using names as an indicator of nationality can be misleading. Still, this

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 203.745	21	7	3	f 29.106	
1771	f 643.715	34	27	9	f 23.841	
1772	f 453.075	24	17	5	f 26.651	
1773	f 287.865	16	16	6	f 17.992	
1774	f 329.865	18	17	6	f 19.404	
1775	f 318.800	16	16	5	f 19.925	
1776	f 631.615	35	30	9	f 21.054	<b>Whole Period</b>
1777	f 403.850	22	16	5	f 25.241	f 22.826
1778	f 386.125	20	17	5	f 22.713	
1779	f 180.600	9	7	2	f 25.800	
1780	f 364.025	17	12	4	f 30.335	
1781	f 23.500	3	2	1	f 11.750	
1782	f 302.225	19	14	4	f 21.588	
1783	f 169.525	7	9	3	f 18.836	
1784	f 222.350	10	7	3	f 31.764	
1785	f 320.550	16	15	5	f 21.370	
1786	f 233.075	13	12	5	f 19.423	
1787	f 288.800	15	12	5	f 24.067	

**Table 35** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the Levant, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks



may be an indication that this trade was brought to Amsterdam by the refugees and was not built by the merchants of Amsterdam themselves. Although never more than one percent of all the ships coming to Amsterdam was involved in this trade, the estimated value of the goods they carried was 1.75% of the total estimated value of the Amsterdam's trade.

There were even more ships coming from these regions but they cannot be categorized correctly and their number is too small to form a category on their own. Every once in a while a ship came to Amsterdam in which the captain just stated that it came from the Mediterranean Sea without further indication of a port of origin. Since this happened only three times in the period for which the *Paalgeld* portbooks have been studied, I will not treat these ships as a separate category.

### **5.2.8 The intercontinental trade<sup>57</sup>**

In his analysis of the Dutch foreign trade d'Alphonse dedicates no section to the trade with Africa and with the Far East. This is rather strange, because so much value has been attached to the trade with the East Indies. The *Paalgeld* portbooks offer no information on this topic and hence I have relied on the figures compiled from the earlier mentioned NHDA-data set on Asiatic shipping. For the estimates of the value of this trade I have used the same formula as for the other trades of Amsterdam: I used the amount of *Paalgeld* paid as an indication of the real value of the cargoes carried. However, I suppose that in the case of the Asiatic trade this may have produced estimates that were too high. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) paid four hundred guilders *Paalgeld* for all ships coming from the Far east to Amsterdam. The formula used leads to an estimated value of the cargo of each ship of 200,000 guilders. After the dissolution of the VOC ships coming from this part of the world seldom paid *Paalgeld* like all other ships. A cursory glance at the amount they paid then-seldom more than two hundred guilders-gives the impression that the estimate of the value of the Asiatic trade may be twice as high as it actually was. However, since no other information was used for this study, I thought it would be best to stick to the same formula of estimation

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<sup>57</sup> In this section I shall only discuss the trade with the Far East and with Africa. The trans-Atlantic trade shall be discussed in the next chapter.

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 1.000.000	102	5	2	f 200.000	
1771	f 2.600.000	136	13	4	f 200.000	
1772	f 2.600.000	138	13	4	f 200.000	
1773	f 2.200.000	120	11	4	f 200.000	
1774	f 2.400.000	131	12	4	f 200.000	
1775	f 2.410.825	121	13	4	f 185.448	
1776	f 2.400.000	133	12	4	f 200.000	
1777	f 2.000.000	107	10	3	f 200.000	<b>Whole period</b>
1778	f 2.000.000	103	10	3	f 200.000	f 183.480
1779	f 2.000.000	100	10	3	f 200.000	
1780	f 1.800.000	82	9	3	f 200.000	
1781	f 400.000	47	2	1	f 200.000	
1782	f 401.125	25	3	1	f 133.708	
1783						
1784	f 2.000.000	94	10	4	f 200.000	
1785	f 1.400.000	69	7	3	f 200.000	
1786	f 2.000.000	110	10	4	f 200.000	
1787	f 2.200.000	117	11	4	f 200.000	

**Table 36** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with the Far East, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *NHDA-Dataset* “thisvaarten”.

as was used for the rest of the trade. Only in two years, 1775 and 1782, did ships arrive from Asiatic ports pay their *Paalgeld* according to the actual cargo they carried. In both cases the amount paid was much lower than the four hundred guilders the VOC paid for each ship.

Although a small number of ships was involved in the Asiatic trade, these ships were some of the largest of their time and were able to carry huge loads. Even if the estimated value of this Asiatic trade may be too high, it is still obvious that this trade was of vital importance for Amsterdam. On average about 10% of the total value of the imports of Amsterdam came from Asia. Another 1.5% of the estimated total value came from the trade with Africa outside the Mediterranean, being mainly Morocco. The number of ships involved in this part of the African trade was rather small, but an estimated average cargo value of just under 52,000 guilders indicates that the goods shipped from these regions to Amsterdam were very expensive. Ships coming from Mogador were always filled with gum, all sorts of leather goods, hides, copperware etc. The details for every product and port can be found in the appendices.

year	Value	% value	Ships	% ships	av.value cargo	
1742	f 209.730	2.1	2	0.1	f 104.865	
1771	f 219.875	1.2	4	0.1	f 54.969	
1772	f 200.000	1.1	1	0.0	f 200.000	
1773	f 307.075	1.7	7	0.2	f 43.868	
1774	f 307.225	1.7	8	0.3	f 38.403	
1775	f 777.415	3.9	12	0.4	f 64.785	
1776	f 107.125	0.6	8	0.3	f 13.391	<b>Whole period</b> f 51.923
1777	f 360.800	1.9	11	0.3	f 32.800	
1778	f 160.550	0.8	9	0.3	f 17.839	
1779	f 436.100	2.2	6	0.2	f 72.683	
1780	f 469.675	2.1	7	0.2	f 67.096	
1781	f 33.500	0.4	3	0.1	f 11.167	
1782	f 0	0.0	0	0.0	f 0	
1783	f 672.475	2.9	7	0.2	f 96.068	
1784	f 342.100	1.6	9	0.3	f 38.011	
1785	f 579.725	2.9	13	0.5	f 44.594	
1786	f 134.675	0.7	9	0.4	f 14.964	
1787	f 229.325	1.2	12	0.5	f 19.110	

**Table 37** Estimated value, percentage of the total value of trade, number of ships and average value of the cargoes in the trade of Amsterdam with Africa outside the Mediterranean Sea, 1742, 1771-1787. Source: *Paalgeld* portbooks

The estimated value of the rest of the intercontinental trade, the trade with Latin America, the West Indies, and North America, which will be treated in the next chapter, was on average 20% of the total value of the total trade. If I take into consideration that the value of the Asiatic trade is probably estimated a bit too high, I must conclude that the trans-Atlantic trade was at least twice as important as the combined Asiatic and African trade. This supports the view that it was the trans-Atlantic trade, and not the Asiatic trade that carried the greatest weight for merchants of Amsterdam at the end of the eighteenth century. Not only the number of ships involved was much greater, but also the total value of the trade. The number of ships are an indication of the amount of activity that this trade generated in port. From this I conclude that the trans-Atlantic trade had a greater influence on employment in the port itself than the Asiatic trade. I will abstain from estimating the employment generated by further processing of the imported goods. For the port itself the trans-Atlantic trade was more important.

The whole intercontinental trade brought 30% of the estimated total value of the imports of Amsterdam, which is about the same as the European Atlantic trade. So the picture evolves, that about two thirds of all ships coming to Amsterdam were involved in the trade

with the Baltic and the *Kleine Oost*, while on the other hand two thirds of the value of all imported goods came from the European Atlantic trade, the trans-Atlantic trade, and the trade with Africa and Asia.