

AN APPROACH TO FISHING, SALE AND CONSUMPTION OF DOLPHIN IN THE CROWN OF ARAGON (FOURTEENTH- FIFTEENTH CENTURIES)

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ABSTRACT

This paper is the first contribution in Spanish historiography to the study of the role of dolphin in Medieval alimentary habits. It deals with the capture, regulations of trade and consumption, and recipes of Catalan haute cuisine. It is part of a wider research project on selected marine foods in the Crown of Aragon (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries). The role of dolphin meat within different food systems is useful to help understand the consumption patterns of the privileged, because it was a symbol of social distinction.

KEYWORDS

Crown of Aragon, Fishing, Fishermen, Royal fish, *Mostassaf*.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Corona Aragonium, Piscatio, Piscatores, Piscatio regalis, *Muhtasib*.

1. Introduction. Sources and methodology¹

At first sight, the topic selected might seem bizarre. Is it really important to study a foodstuff consumed occasionally by a social elite? It is, indeed, relevant, because, this paper argues the presence of dolphin meat as an indicator of social rank. First, the sources and methodology for achieving this objective are explained. The main sources of this paper are ordinances and proclamations compiled in books of the *mostassaf* and recipes of Catalan cuisine, both from fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Prior to explaining the first of sources we should define the *mostassaf*, who was a local official with absolute jurisdiction over all social classes. He was primarily in charge of the control of the weights and measures of the sellers, of enforcing the laws issued by the council and juries, of monitoring the cleanliness of public roads and of addressing urban planning issues as a justice of the peace.² His multifarious duties are detailed in a compendium of the office to a notary, usually consisting of a compilation of standards (ordinances and proclamations). This manuscript is called the book of the *mostassaf*.³ This study focuses on his duties as an urban market inspector.

Over six years, ninety-one archives, especially municipal ones, have been consulted. Following this research, I have documented a total of one hundred and twenty-eight market inspector's manuals, twenty-three edited, sixty-eight unpublished and thirty-seven unpreserved but quoted from other local sources. The spatial distribution of the sources allows the analysis of the office of *mostassaf* in most states that were part of the Crown of Aragon (Kingdom of Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia and Principality of Catalonia). Of these manuscripts, there are ten that include compilations of regulations about the sale of fresh and salted dolphin meat, seven edited and three unpublished. The edited ones are the books used

1. Used abbreviations: ACOS, Arxiu Comarcal d'Osona; AMG, Arxiu Municipal de Girona.

2. Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval a través del oficio del mustaçaf*. Valencia: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1957: 25; Pons Pastor, Antonio. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca*. Palma de Mallorca: CSIC, 1949; Chalmeta Gendró, Pedro. *El "Señor del zoco" en España: edades media y moderna: contribución al estudio de la historia del mercado*. Madrid: Instituto Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, 1973; Chalmeta Gendró, Pedro. "El Almotacén a través de los *Llibres de Mustaçaf*". *Aragón en la Edad Media*, 20 (2008): 203-223; Chalmeta Gendró, Pedro. *El zoco medieval. Contribución al estudio de la historia del mercado*. Almería: Fundación Ibn Tufayl de Estudios Árabes, Fundación Cajamar, 2010; Glick, Thomas, "Muhtasib and Mustasaf: A Case of Institutional diffusion". *Viator*, 2 (1970): 51-81; Riera Melis, Antoni. "Del agoranomos al mostassaf. La inspección de los mercados y los controles de calidad en el Mediterráneo, desde la antigüedad hasta los tiempos modernos", *Los mercados del Mediterráneo*, Eulàlia Janer, coord. Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, Institut Europeu de la Mediterrànea, Lunweg Editores, Mercabarna. Mercats de Barcelona, Catalunya Turisme, Fòrum de Barcelona, 2004: 62-77; Riera Melis, Antoni. "Mercat i regulació: inspecció, controls de qualitat i defensa dels consumidors als mercats medievals ibèrics", *El mercat de Balaguer. Una cruïlla*, Flocel Sabaté, ed., Robert Cuellas, coord. Balaguer: Ajuntament de Balaguer, 2015: 65-79; Roca Traver, Francisco. "El mustaçaf de Castellón y el Libre de la Mustaçaffia". *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 28 (1952): 455-492; Almela Vives, Francisco. "El Libre del Mustaçaf y la vida en la ciudad de Valencia a mediados del siglo XVI". *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 25 (1949): 1-24.

3. Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 174.



as manuals by the officers from Valencia, Barcelona, Saragossa, Cagliari, Palma, Alicante and Castelló de la Plana.⁴ The unpublished ones are those with correspond to Girona, Montblanc and Vic.⁵ Five of these sources had been written by notaries who were also local officers (Valencia, Barcelona, Saragossa, Cagliari and Palma in Majorca).

Any manuscript of the *mostassaf* from a capital was usually the oldest manual in the kingdom or territory. They applied the legal principle *qui prior tempore potior iure*, first in time, first in law. Thus, every book in a nearby town and village was usually a copy of the capital one. Therefore, the inspector of the capital city and his book were models of the office. Consequently, despite the small number of rules on dolphin meat, they are representative as five of the books were models of law in their respective territories.⁶ Town councils that were coastal, with the exception of Saragossa, owned all books of the *mostassaf* with regulations about the sale of dolphin.

Additionally, there are four cookbooks on Catalan cuisine, all of them published: *Llibre de Sent Soví*, *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar*, *Llibre de totes maneres de potatges* and *Llibre del coc*.⁷ Two of them, *d'aparellar de menjar* and *de totes maneres de potatges* are the ones that contain dolphin recipes. *Sent Soví* has an index rubric, but not the cetacean recipe. The dating of the cookbooks is complicated because the extant copies are not the originals. Joan Santanach Suñol has carried out four studies, one for each source, and has developed the following hypotheses: the original manuscript of *Sent Soví* dates possibly from the first half of the fourteenth century, *d'aparellar de menjar* from the middle of the same century, *de totes maneres de potatges* from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, and finally *de Coc*, between the final decades of the fifteenth century and the early sixteenth decades.⁸

4. Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval*; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona i les seves funcions en el segle XVI*. Edició del "Llibre de les Ordinacions". Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 1994; Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni dei consiglieri del Castello di Cagliari del secolo XIV*. Cagliari: Prem. Tip. Giovanni Ledda, 1927; Falcón Pérez, María Isabel. *Ordinaciones reales otorgadas a la ciudad de Zaragoza en el siglo XV. De Fernando I a Fernando II*. Saragossa: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2010: 249-251; Pons Pastor, Antonio. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca*; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf" de la ciutat d'alicant*". Alicante: Ayuntamiento de Alicante, 1989; Colón i Domènech, Germà, "Sobre els peixos gerret i xucla", *Estudis romànics*, 23 (2001): 97-98; Roca Traver, Francisco A. "El Mustaçaf de Castellón y el Libre de Mustaçafia". *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 1907. Roca Traver, Francisco A. "El Mustaçaf de Castellón y el Libre de Mustaçafia". *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 1952: 455-492. Roca Traver, Francisco A. *El Mustaçaf de Castellón y el Libre de la Mustaçaffia*. Valencia: Diputación de Valencia, 1973.

5. AMG, *Llibre del mostassaf*, RG 17490; ACCB310-23-T2-28475; ACOS, *Llibre d'ordinacions del mostassaf*, ms. 16. 44.

6. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 229-368.

7. *Llibre de Sent Soví*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2016; *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2015; *Llibre de totes maneres de potatges*, Mònica Barrieras, ed. Barcelona: Barcino, 2017; *Mestre Robert. Llibre del coc*. Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2018.

8. Santanach, Joan. "«Per aparellar los bons menjars ne les bones viandes»: El *Llibre de Sent Soví* i altres receptaris de cuina de la tardor medieval catalana", *Llibre de Sent Soví*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2016: 114-116; Santanach, Joan. "Cuiners, copistes i comensals



The comparative analysis of the content of the ordinances makes possible to develop general characteristics regarding the legislation of the sale of dolphin in fishmongers. The same method is applied with dishes compiled in cookbooks that have cetacean as the main ingredient. In addition, a brief analysis of its fishing is carried out because it helps to understand in particular the local regulations on its sale. This article does not include either detailed studies on the taxation during the urban circuit that centralized the sale of dolphins, nor documentation of customs duties, generality records, *lezdas*, tolls or other sources containing trade data.⁹ There is no analysis of the books as *memoriales de cuentas*, *libres de messió de casa*, *constituciones cibariorum*, *Leges palatinae*, *Ordinacions de la Casa y Cort*, and other cooking manuscripts, such as *ars cisoria*.¹⁰ In addition, the literary works of Ramon Llull, Francesc Eiximenis, Vicente Ferrer, Jaume Roig, Anselm Turmeda and Ausiàs Marc, among other authors, have not been consulted, providing data on fishing and fish consumption, complementing and pointing out the other cited sources.¹¹ All this documentation will be analyzed in a future publication on the role played by meat, fat, bones and dolphin entrails in the different food systems. Thus, this work are the first results of ongoing research focusing on an approach of the fishing, sale and consumption of fresh and salted cetacean meat.

al *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar*", *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2015: 54-82; Santanach, Joan. "«Suplic les vostres beniginitats que prengau mon servici en grat»": sobre la composició i el contingut del *Llibre de potatges*, *Llibre de totes maneres de potatges*, Mònica Barrieras, ed. Barcelona: Barcino, 2017: 67-91; Santanach, Joan. "Sobre els orígens, la redacció i el contingut del *Llibre del coc* de mestre Robert", *Mestre Robert. Llibre del coc*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2018: 85-100.

9. Rodrigo Estevan, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado, seco, remojado: abasto y mercado de pescado en Aragón (siglos XII-XV)", *Alimentar la ciudad en la Edad Media: Nájera, Encuentros Internacionales del Medievo 2008, del 22 al 25 de julio de 2008*, Beatriz Arízaga Bolumburu, Jesús Ángel Solórzano Telechea, coords. La Rioja: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos: 547-577.

10. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans. 2. La cuina i la taula de la noblesa: l'ostentació de la qualitat", *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2015: 22-24; Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans. 3. L'alimentació dels canonges regulars dels capítols catedralicis: uns comensals cultes i exigents", *Llibre de totes maneres de potatges*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2017: 23-25; Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans. 4. La taula del príncep: gastronomia, representació i política", *Mestre Robert. Llibre del coc*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras, eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2018: 31-38.

11. Aparici Romero, Frederic. "La pesca durant l'edat mitjana a través de les fonts literàries catalanes", *Nuevos estudios multidisciplinares sobre historia y cultura medieval: fuentes, metodología y problemas. Nous estudis multidisciplinaris sobre història i cultura medieval: fonts, metodologia i problemàtiques*, Jerónimo Méndez Cabrera, Diego A. Reinaldos Miñarro, coords. Murcia, Centro de Estudios Medievales de la Universidad de Murcia, Universidad de Murcia. Servicio de Publicaciones, 2012: 13-24.



2. Fishing, sale and consumption of dolphin

2.1. Fishing

What does dolphin mean in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries sources? Studies on the designation of cetaceans in the Middle Ages have as space the Principality.¹² Its conclusions can serve to understand this situation in the Kingdom of Aragon, Palma, Sardinia and Valencia, without publications about this. Jordi Lleonart Aliberas makes an analysis of the use of this word in compilations of Catalan ordinances and recipes of the fourteenth century. After this study, he raised the following hypothesis: several species of cetaceans were generically called dolphins in medieval Catalonia.¹³ At least they would be the common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*), mular (*Tursiops truncatus*), listing (*Stenella coeruleoalba*) and long nose or coastal (*Delphinus capensis*). In addition, the harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), an animal that was common along the Levantine coast, was also likely to be named dolphin, as this is a common circumstance in medieval Europe, due to the remarkable physical resemblance to the other species mentioned.¹⁴ The seafarers of the time knew how to identify each of these marine mammals, distinguishing them by their physical differences and knew well their particular behaviors.¹⁵ Thus, dolphins are understood in this article as a set of similar marine species morphologically and equally named, although fishermen particularly knew each of them.¹⁶

12. Mercader Bravo, Lluís. *Tots els peixos del mar català: diagnosi i claus d'identificació*. Barcelona: IEC, 2003; Corriente, Federico. «Arabismos del catalán y otras voces de origen semítico o medio-oriental», *Estudios de dialectología norteafricana y andalusí*, 2, (1997): 67.

13. Lleonart Aliberas, Jordi. "Els mamífers marins i els seus noms". *Terminàlia*, 5 (2012): 9-14; Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "El problema pesquero con los delfines y su persecución en Galicia (siglos XIII al XX)". *Cuadernos de Estudios Gallegos*, 51/117 (2004): 316.

14. Shipley, Joseph T. *Dictionary of Early English*. Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014: 423.

15. Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "El problema pesquero...": 316, 340.

16. Lleonart Aliberas, Jordi. «Els mamífers marins...»: 12-13; Riera Melis, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo occidental durante la Baja Edad Media", *La pesca en la Edad Media*. Madrid: Universidad de Murcia, 2009: 121-143; Igual Luis, David, "El tráfico de pescado en la España meridional y su proyección hacia Italia durante el siglo XV", *Terzo convegno nazionale di Storia della Pesca. La pesca nel Lazio. Storia, economia, problemi attuali*, G. Doneddu, coord. Roma: Ed. Scientifica, 2007: 277-309; Igual Luis, David, "Pesca y pescadores en el reino de Valencia (siglos XIII-XV)", *Pesci, barche, pescatori nell'area mediterranea dal medioevo all'està contemporanea. Atti del Quarto Convegno Internazionale di Studi della Pesca*, Valdo d'Arienzo y Biagio Di Salvia coords. Milano: Franco Angeli, 2010, pp. 68-84; Igual Luis, David, "Proyección marítima y sectores laborales en una ciudad del siglo XV: Valencia, de la pesca a la construcción naval", *El mar vivido. Perfiles sociales de las gentes de mar en la larga duración (siglos XV-XXI)*, María Dolores González Guardiola, David Igual Luis, eds. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2020: 49-70; Deyà Bauzá, Miguel. "La pesca en el Regne de Mallorca en els segles XV-XVI", *XVIII Congrés d'Història de la Corona d'Aragó (València, 2004)*. *La Mediterrània de la Corona d'Aragó, segles XIII-XVI & VIII Centenari de la sentència arbitral de Torrellas, 1304-2004*, Rafael Narbona Vizcaíno, coord. València: Publicacions Universitat de València, 2005: 1029-1044; Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La vida quotidiana de la gent de mar a la baixa edat mitjana", *Arqueologia nàutica mediterrànea*, Xavier Nieto, Miguel Ángel Cau, eds. Girona: Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya, 2009: 585-592. Monografies del CASC, 8.



Dolphin fishing in the Crown of Aragon has received few studies, basically because of the lack of primary sources.¹⁷ However, studies on this subject in other peninsular kingdoms allow to reconstruct it.¹⁸ They pay attention to the right of fishing, when to fish them, who and how. The dolphins were considered royal fishes, reason why the monarchy had royalty rights to them. An example of this is the copy of the *lezda de Colliure* (1317), made at the court of King Sancho of Majorca, where half of the cetaceans caught in Colliure by the local fishermen were ordered to be for the sovereign, who in return gave them with *I quartó* of good wine and a common bread.¹⁹

Fishermen fished dolphins all the year because these cetaceans were autochthonous.²⁰ For example, around Barcelona, they were captured up to twelve leagues from the shore.²¹ Women were not involved in dolphin fishing, as the case with other cetaceans.²² It is possible that the reason behind their absence was because of the menstrual blood, considered a focus of transmission of evils. The menstrual period was a cursed time when rubbing with the woman's body, even her mere presence, caused misfortune. In the case of food, it spoiled them hopelessly.²³ Peninsular scholastic medicine felt that this female blood was veer by emanating corrupt vapors throughout a woman's life, even in menopause.²⁴ The rotten airs emanating from bad substances were the starting point of epidemic diseases, which were feared in the Middle Ages. These causes would help to understand the exclusive male presence in cetacean capture and the prevention of female contact with capture. Fishermen did not embark to go only to catch dolphins, as they did with other large species, such as red tunas. There were three possibilities for catching cetaceans: first, they harpooned when they stood on the bow of the ships; second,

17. Pujol Hamelink, Marcel. "La pesca durant l'Antic Règim als Països Catalans: una anàlisi historiogràfica". *Per a una història de la pesca dels Països Catalans. Recerca i reflexions historiogràfiques*, J. Ll. Alegret, A. Garrido, eds. Palamós: Museu de la Pesca, 2017: 20-33.

18. Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "El problema pesquero...": 313-362; Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "Pescadores y delfines en el norte de España. Historia de su interacción desde la Edad Media hasta el siglo XX". *Itsas Memoria. Revista de Estudios Marítimos del País Vasco*, 6: 629-641.

19. Sobrequés Callicó, Jaume. *Estudis d'Història de Catalunya. Edat Mitjana. Edat Moderna. El Pactisme*. Barcelona: Editorial Base, 2008: 97.

20. Igual Luis, David, "Pesca y pescadores...": 74-75.

21. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...: 370*.

22. de Leizaola, Jesús Maria. *La marina civil vasca en los siglos XIII, XIV y XV. Siglo XIV*. San Sebastián: Sendoa, 1988, vol. 2: 58-60; Huxley, Selma. "Unos apuntes sobre el papel comercial de la mujer vasca en el siglo XVI". *Zainak. Cuadernos de Antropología-Etnografía*, 1 (1982): 163; Alegret, Joan Lluís. "Aproximació a l'activitat pesquera a la regió de l'Empordà (segles XV-XVIII): adaptacions a un medi en constant transformació". *Estudis d'Història Agrària*, 19 (2006): 39; Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "Pescadores y delfines...": 633.

23. García Herrero, María del Carmen. *Las mujeres en Zaragoza en el siglo XV*. Saragossa: Ayuntamiento de Saragossa, 2006, vol.1: 175-176.

24. Salmón Muñiz, Fernando; Cabré i Pairet, Montserrat. "Mujeres fascinantes. El mal de ojo en la escolástica médica". *Sexo y género en medicina: una introducción a los estudios de las mujeres y de género en ciencias de la salud*, Montserrat Cabré i Pairet, Fernando Salmón Muñiz, eds. Santander, Editorial de la Universidad de Cantabria, 2013: 99-102.



they were captured when they were stranded on the beaches; third, they were trapped in nets, especially *almadrabas*, fishing art to capture especially tuna.²⁵ In all cases, other instruments would be used in addition to harpoons, such as weapons, and even stones and sticks.²⁶

Cetaceans are predators. Their nature made them natural enemies of fishermen. The repair of networks destroyed by them was a significant economic damage in disrupting the normal development of fishing activities.²⁷ In addition, cetaceans were blamed for the absence or scarcity of fish on the coast, because they chased them away.²⁸ On the other hand, sardines, basic in the feeding of these mammals, were one of the best commercially value salted during the low Middle Ages.²⁹ The circumstances set out explain the violence in its fishing and finishing, using all kinds of weapons and objects for it.³⁰ The *mular*, the largest cetacean among dolphins, was an opportunistic predator and had the worst reputation. It was known for being a great net destroyer. His bad reputation was a breeding ground for seafaring legends, such as the white dolphin, a large snow-like cetacean who ate all the fish caught from the nets and could never be caught.³¹ Another noteworthy aspect was that men used dolphins for catching other fish. The behavior of each species were known in detail. Observation of cetacean pots was useful in providing important data on sardine banks and other high-demanded fish. It was known, according to

25. Riera Melis, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo": 126; Bas, Carlos, Morales, Enrique, Rubió, Manuel. *La pesca en España. I. Cataluña*. Barcelona, CSIC, 1955: 161-162; Garrido, Alfons. "Historia de la pesca de atún en Cataluña. La almadraba de Cap de Terme y l'Ametlla de Mar", *I Jornada científica del Atún Rojo*. Ametlla de Mar, Museu de la Pesca, 2008: 6, 13-14; Bernabé Pajares, Alberto. "Los ganaderos del mar: la almadraba barbateña", *VIII Congreso de Antropología. Vol. 3: Antropología de la pesca: simposio III*, Antonio García Allut, José Pascual Fernández (coords.). Santiago de Compostela: Federación de Asociaciones de Antropología del Estado Español, 1999: 231.

26. Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "Pescadores y delfines...": 630.

27. Alberich Forn, Núria. "La feina d'en terra de la gent de mar: les remendadores de Cambrils". *Quaderns de l'Institut Català d'Antropologia*, 15-16 (2000-2001), pags. 94-98; Barceló Crespi, Maria. "Oficis relacionats amb la mar a la ciutat de Mallorca baixmedieval", «Ciutat és congregació concordant de moltes persones». La ciutat a l'edat mitjana, Tina Sabater Rabassa, Magdalena Cerdà Garriga, Antònia Juan Vicencs, coords. Palma de Mallorca: Edicions UIB, 2020: s. n. No tiene paginación porque es un libro electrónico.

28. Alberich Forn, Núria, "La feina d'en terra de la gent de mar: les remendadores de Cambrils". *Quaderns de l'Institut Català d'Antropologia*, 15-16 (2000-2001), pags. 94-98; Barceló Crespi, Maria. "Oficis relacionats amb la mar a la ciutat de Mallorca baixmedieval", «Ciutat és congregació concordant de moltes persones». La ciutat a l'edat mitjana, Tina Sabater Rabassa, Magdalena Cerdà Garriga, Antònia Juan Vicencs, coords. Palma de Mallorca: Edicions UIB, 2020: s. n.

29. Ferreira Priegue, Elisa María. *Fuentes para la exportación gallega de la segunda mitad del siglo XV: el peatge de Mar de Valencia*. Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 1984; Ferreira Priegue, Elisa María. *Galicia en el comercio marítimo medieval*. Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela. Fundación "Pedro Barrié de la Maza", 1988: 145-155, 732; Ruiz de la Peña Solar, Juan. "Las villas castellanas de la costa cántabro-atlántica y su proyección comercial en el Mediterráneo occidental", *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 11 (2000): 63.

30. Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "El problema pesquero...": 314.

31. Valdés Hansen, Felipe. "El problema pesquero...": 340.



their way of acting, what type of fish they were hunting, the size of the fish bank, their direction and depth.

1.2. Sale

Once the cetacean was caught, it had to be brought to the market. Here the regulations of the books of the *mostassaf* give an idea of the urban network for the marketing of the fish, both fresh and salted. First, it shows what a fishmonger was normally like in a town of the Crown of Aragon. Second, it analyses the urban circuit of the dolphin was, and third, it interprets the relevant regulations.

According to the regulations of the *mostassaf* books, the fishmonger was the place where fish, either fresh or salted, and other products from the sea, were sold. It was usually located under a portico and had one or more tables fixed to the floor. In coastal towns it was generally located close to the shore. In Barcelona, for example, fishmongers lay next to the church of *Santa María del Mar* and the *fossal de las Moreras*.³² In Palma, they were located a short distance from the shore, near the *plaza de las coles*, where the vegetables and fruit were sold.³³ In Valencia, they thrived in *plaza redonda*, which is not too far from the *Cabañal*, the fishermen's and boatmen's quarter.³⁴ In smaller towns they were located in the main square, next to the butcher's shop.³⁵ It is undeniable that the fishmonger had a wide variety of customers: from day labourers to *compradors* or servants in charge of purchasing the monarch's groceries, who went to the market and/or fair of the town where the court stayed.³⁶ Thus, the analysis of the regulations of that urban space provides data relevant to the study of the vast majority of cetacean consumers because they were customers.

Detailed how it was and where the place of sale of fresh and salted fish was located, the urban circuit of the cetacean is analysed. The first challenge was how to deliver the dolphin to the fishmonger in fresh and whole condition. Of course, it was a complicated transfer from the shore, as an adult specimen of the previously analysed species easily reaches and exceeds 100 kilograms in weight. Particular case is the longest-lived adults of the *mular*, who weigh about 650 kilograms. Existing sources do not give a clear picture of the transport process. They were probably carried in the same way as sharks, in baskets and *aportaderas* carried on the backs

32. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca i el proveïment de peix fresc", *Proveir Barcelona. El municipi i l'alimentació de la ciutat, 1329-1930*, Mercè Renom, ed. Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2016: 151.

33. Barceló Crespí, Maria, Rosselló Bordoy, Guillem. *La ciudad de Mallorca. Vida cotidiana en una ciudad mediterránea medieval*. Palma de Mallorca: Lleonard Muntaner, 2006: 292.

34. Sanchís, Antonio. *Historia del Grau*. Valencia: Carena editors, 2005: 66.

35. Mira Jódar, Antonio José. *Entre la renta y el impuesto: Fiscalidad, finanzas y crecimiento económico en las villas reales del sur valenciano (siglos XIV-XVI)*. Valencia: Publicaciones Universidad de Valencia, 2005: 77-78.

36. *Ordinacions de la Casa i Cort de Pere el Ceremoniós*, eds. Francisco M. Gimeno Blay, Daniel Gozalbo, Josep Trenchs. Valencia: Universitat de València, 2009: 77.



of pack animals.³⁷ Dolphin is a perishable food that in spring and summer should be consumed within twenty-four hours maximum. In the rest of the year it can last little longer, about twenty-six hours. This governed its distribution and sale: it generally captured the night before.³⁸ Once the capture arrived at the fishmonger's, it was weighed on a scale located next to a table, where a tax was paid.³⁹ When weighed on this scale, every fish without scales had its tail, head and bowels removed.⁴⁰ This job was carried out in a special closed space, the *compartiment* or *casa closa*, somehow separated from the tables. This is how it was done in Barcelona, as Antoni Riera Melis explains.⁴¹ No further information on other places has been found, but most likely it was done the same way in large cities and villages in Catalonia, Aragon, Sardinia, Majorca and Valencia.

The chopping of the different parts was done in the *compartiment*, on large special chopping blocks. These were larger than the standard ones for sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), liza (*Chelon labrosus*) and mugil (*Mugil cephalus*) and other smaller species.⁴² There is no detailed information on the chopping technique, although it must have been pretty much the same as with other cetaceans, such as whales. The toughest part was the skin, which required a thick knife. Once it was taken off, the fat was separated from the meat.⁴³ Once the dolphin was chopped, the pieces were laid on the fishmonger's table.⁴⁴ They were presented to customers in baskets made of wicker or reed. After dealing with the distribution and sale cycle, we analyse the regulations. These were issued by *jurados* and *consejeros* (ordinances and proclamations). The *mostassaf* made sure that they were observed.⁴⁵ According to the available sources, Christians were the main consumers of dolphin meat, and they were the targets of all local regulations. Jews were not allowed to have it because it did not meet the conditions of the *kashrut*.⁴⁶ Muslims, both *moriscos* and slaves, would not eat dolphin, because it was not a *halal* meat.⁴⁷ Dolphin was generally classified as a chopped fish, to differentiate it from other fish that was sold whole. It was also classified as "beasty" fish.⁴⁸ According to contemporary doctors, such as

37. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca...": 154.

38. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca...": 154.

39. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca...": 154.

40. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca...": 154; Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni*: 196.

41. Riera Melis, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo...": 138, nota 76. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...: 379-387*.

42. Riera Melis, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo...": 138, nota 76.

43. Ciriquiain-Gaiztarro, M. *Los vascos en la pesca de la ballena*. Vizcaya: Biblioteca Vascongada de los Amigos del País, 1961: 143.

44. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca...": 154; Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni*: 196.

45. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...: 298-299*.

46. Blech, Zushe Yosef. *Kosher Food Production*. Iowa: Willey-Blackwell, 2008: 123.

47. Armanios, Febe, Ergene, Bogac. *Halal Food: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018: 51-57.

48. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...: 181-190*; Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...: 290, 375*; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...: 115-116, 120, 176*; Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...: 26-29*; Colón i Domènech, Germà, "Sobre els peixos gerret i xucla...": 97-98. Roca Traver, Francisco A. "El Mustaçaf de Castellón...". Roca Traver, Francisco A.



Arnau de Vilanova, this kind of animal had no scales and had a beastly, monstrous appearance. To keep a healthy diet, they recommended not eating it.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, elites highly appreciated dolphin food. It featured in fishmonger's regulations.

Sometimes fishermen or fishmongers flouted the regulations to get higher profits and avoid the *mostassaf's* quality controls. They sold their stuff in expressly forbidden locations: the shore, the fishmonger's or fisherman's home, a narrow street, a square or a secluded place outside the city walls. The most common fines for this behaviour amounted to between five and twenty shillings.⁵⁰

The *mostassaf* must be present when the dolphin was chopped. A City of Majorca ordinance dated in 1445 says that the penalty for his absence was the confiscation of the day's catch.⁵¹ A fourth-century regulation in Cagliari prescribed not only the *mostassaf's* presence, but also that he himself should be initiated the chopping by taking the tail off. Non-compliance with this law was punished in the same way as in Majorca, with the confiscation of the day's catch.⁵² If a piece was not cleaned properly, the fishmonger would be fined. Unlike in the butcher's case, no *tornas* or amounts could be added to complete the required amount of dolphin meat. Fines for not proper cleaning, or for including the head or tail, ranged from five to twenty shillings.⁵³ The leftovers must be thrown into the sea or river, far away from populated areas, to avoid epidemics. The penalty for not doing this was five shillings.⁵⁴ Women were not allowed to take part in these tasks. It was believed that the menstruation blood was deleterious to the fish.⁵⁵ Once the dolphin was cleaned, chopped and displayed in baskets, women could handle and sell it. Indeed, they were the usual dealers, as Mireia Comas and Teresa Vinyoles have shown.⁵⁶ Most regulations had to do with the prevention of scams. Dolphins were weighed on

"El *Mustaçaf* de Castellón...": 455-492. Roca Traver, Francisco A. *El Mustaçaf de Castellón*; ACCB310-23-T2-28475, Llibre d'ordinacions del *mostassaf*, ff. 9r-11r. AMVic, ms. 16. 44, f. 9v; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 369-405; AMGi, Fons Ajuntament de Girona, Llibre del *mostassaf*, RG 17490, f. 129r; Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni...*: 20, 196.

49. *Arnaldi de Villanova. Opera Medica Omnia X.1. Regimen sanitatis ad regem aragonum*, Luis García-Ballester, Michael R. McVaugh, Pedro Gil Sostres, Juan A. Paniagua, eds. Barcelona: CSIC, 1996: 233.

50. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 182. ACCB310-23-T2-28475, Llibre d'ordinacions del *mostassaf*, ff. 9r-10v. AMVic, ms. 16. 44, f. 10r. Roca Traver, Francisco A. *El Mustaçaf de Castellón y el Libre de la Mustaçaffia*. Valencia: Diputación de Valencia, 1973: 90. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 371, 374. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 26-28. Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 118, 176; Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni...*: 18-20, 194-196.

51. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 28. Lo mismo sucedía en Barcelona, Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 379.

52. Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni...*: 196.

53. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 378, 384; Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 27-28; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 118.

54. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 29.

55. Riera Melis, Antoni, "La pesca en el Mediterraneo...": 138; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 384; Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 160.

56. Comas Via, Mireia, Vinyoles Vidal, Teresa. "La pesca...": 152; Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 27; Freire Moliner, Ma. José. *El Libro registro de los privilegios de la Albufera de Valencia*. Saragossa: Anubar, 1995: 92.



scales that were hanging from the ceiling, different to the one used when arriving at the fishmonger's.⁵⁷ The most common fraud was to modify one of the eleven pieces that made up the Roman balance where the cetacean was weighed so that the initial weight was not 0, but 0.2 or 0.5 kilograms. The result was that less product was purchased than paid for by the customer. Fines for committing such fraud were usually of twenty shillings.⁵⁸

Another quite common scam was to use the fishmonger's measure instead of the butcher's. The former was 30 ounces, while the latter was 36 ounces. This entailed a penalty of twenty shillings.⁵⁹ This is how it was done in fifteenth-century City of Majorca, while in Cagliari the same fraud entailed only five.⁶⁰ The preference for this measure means that dolphins were considered mammals rather than fish. Their meat looked more as that of other hot-blooded mammals sold in the butcher's shop, rather than as fish. This measure ranged from eight (608 g) to thirty-six ounces (14.976 Kg), depending on the kingdom and territory.⁶¹ The sale of stale fish was frequent. The *mostassaf*, and probably also experienced customers, could notice it by three signs: darkened eyes, changed colour of the flesh, and unpleasant smell. Fines were usually ten shillings.⁶² In addition, any rotten piece must be thrown away, far from populated sites, preferably into the sea. These measures prevented the spread of disease through the consumption of stale food. The stench of stale food could also contribute to the spread of plague.⁶³ Further, to prevent the consequences of hoarding, a dealer who was not also a fisherman was allowed to buy no more than five baskets per day. Salted dolphin was also produced, but not before fresh cetacean had been sold, and the price could not be lower.⁶⁴ The regulations allowed salting on the third day. Doing it before was fined with ten shillings. The reason for this was they were often pre-salted: a layer of salt was first applied to them prior to the final salting process. The pieces were then placed inside brine containers, where they

57. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 184; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 373-374, 388.

58. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 185; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 386-390; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 116; Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 29.

59. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 29; Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 104-105, 290; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 115-117; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 376, 384; Pascual, Eusebio. "Capitols sobre los fors del peix (1361-1365)". *Bolletí de la Societat Arqueològica Lul·liana*, 7 (1897-1898): 120.

60. Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni...*: 20.

61. Alsina, Claudi, Feliu, Gaspar, Marquet, Lluís. *Pesos, mides i mesures dels Països Catalans*. Barcelona: Curial, 1990: 100; Feliu, Gaspar. "Les mesures tradicionals catalanes: un garbuix racional". *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics*, 15 (2004): 18; Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 290. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 376, 378; Pinna, Michelle. *Le Ordinazioni*: 20.

62. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 185; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 391; Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 26; Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 290; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 117.

63. Riera Melis, Antoni, "La pesca en el mediterraneo occidental...": 138.

64. Carrasco Pérez, Juan. "Peajes navarros. Sangüesa (1380)", *Príncipe de Viana*, 33/126-127 (1972): 129-150.



would bleed out and acquire some consistency. Apparently, the process was done at the fishmonger. In any case, the fine for marketing salted dolphin at a price and time not allowed by local ordinances was twenty shillings.⁶⁵ The number of tables to lay on the fish depended on the population. In Valencia, the capital of the kingdom, there were ten tables, while in Montblanc, a ducal village, there was only one.⁶⁶ The usual fine imposed for putting cetaceans on the floor was five shillings.⁶⁷ Tables often buckled under the weight of heavy pieces, and then they had to be put on the floor. But that would be unhealthy, since the floor was never clean.

The price of fresh and salted dolphin increased in times of abstinence, especially in Lent, when it was compulsory to eat fish. Each city and town with a sufficiently consolidated municipal government had the power to set fixed prices for dolphin. This is undoubtedly the most regulated aspect of dolphin sale in the books of the *mostassaf*. In practice, only fresh fish was regulated, because it was the most consumed by wealthy people. In the City of Majorca (1361-1365) it cost one shilling a pound, in Valencia (1369), Alicante (1369), Castelló (1381) and Montblanc (fifteenth century), the cetacean was sold for five shillings.⁶⁸ In Castelló (1392, 1393) and Vic (fifteenth century) it was marketed at six pences, and in Barcelona (1390, 1396, 1397, 1399, 1401, 1405, 1409, 1428, 1431, 1441, 1443, 1458, 1468, 1473, 1485) at eight pences.⁶⁹ In Girona (1474) twelve pences was the price of a pound.⁷⁰ It is difficult to analyse the retail price of the dolphin in Lent. Transportation costs seem to have been irrelevant. Thus, in Montblanch (five *dineros* per pound), an inland town, it was more expensive than in Barcelona (eight *dineros* per pound), a coastal municipality. Other factors, such as taxation, intervened. It was the duty of the *mostassaf* to ensure that elites had reasonably priced food all year.⁷¹

Antonio Riera Melis, after studying abundant compilations of municipal regulations, proves that there was a rigid hierarchy of fish according to the price. There were six categories according to size and taste.⁷² The sturgeon stood at the top; secondly, surmullet (*Mullus surmuletus and Barbatus*), brill (*Scophthalmus rhombus*), dusky grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*), corb (*Sciaena umbra*), jewfish (*Argyrosomus regius*),

65. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 29; Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 380.

66. Igual Luis, David, "Pesca y pescadores...": 69; ACCB310-23-T2-28475, *Libre d'ordinacions del mostassaf*, ff. 9r-11r; Felip Sánchez, Jaume. «Les rendes reials de Montblanc (segles XIII-XV)». *Aplec de Treballs (Montblanc)*, 27 (2019): 89.

67. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 378; Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 27; Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 290.

68. Pascual, Eusebio. "Capitols sobre los fors del peix...": 120; Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 375; Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 120; Colón i Domènech, Germà, "Sobre els peixos gerret...": 97; Roca Traver, Francisco A. *El Mustaçaf de Castellón...*: 90-91. ACCB310-23-T2-28475, *Libre d'ordinacions del mostassaf*, f. 11r.

69. Colón i Domènech, Germà, "Sobre els peixos gerret...": 98; AMVic, ms. 16. 44, f. 9v. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona*: 391.

70. AMGi, Fons Ajuntament de Girona, *Libre del mostassaf*, RG 17490, f. 129r.

71. Alcover Cateura, Pablo José. *Els mercats urbans alimentaris...*: 386.

72. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans". *Llibre de Sent Soví...*: 61-62.



tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*, *maccoyi*, *obesus* and *thynnus*), big fishes and prawns (*Penaeus kerath*). Thirdly, common pandora (*Pagellus erythrinus*), mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*), red scorpionfish (*Scorpaena scrofa*), gilt-head bream (*Sparus aurata*), European bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), flathead grey mullet (*Mugil cephalus*), dolphin (*Delphinidae*), fish over a pound and large squid (*Loligo vulgaris*); fourthly, sardines (*Sardina pilchardus pilchardus*), congers (*Conger conger*), Mediterranean moray (*Muraena helena*), dreamfish (*Sarpa salpa*), swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and fish of less than a pound; fifthly, *chucla* (*Spicara flexuosa*), anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*), common smooth-hound (*Mustelus mustelus*) and small-spotted catshark (*Scyliorhinus canicula*). Finally, rockfish, generally used for the production of broths and soups, was the most economical. The dividing line between select and popular fish would be between the third and fourth categories. Dolphin features in the select categories.⁷³

The regulation of dolphin resale must be understood in close relation to the duty of the *mostassaf* to ensure that citizen elites had food at affordable prices. This was generally allowed intramural and extramural. One exception was Barcelona, where it could only be resold in fishmongers.⁷⁴ Like the other fish sellers, if the fresh product was not traded on the same day of its capture, they were fined ten *sueldos*.⁷⁵ They were also normally fined five *sueldos* for operating without proper scales duly verified by the local market inspector.⁷⁶ Resellers especially took advantage of Lent to acquire the entire captured dolphin and then trade it at a high price. The penalties for buying fresh or salted fish in large quantities for resale were usually sixty *sueldos*.⁷⁷ Occasionally, it was directly forbidden to buy fish for resale, with fines of twenty *sueldos*.⁷⁸ Barcelona is an exceptional case: the resale of dolphin or other chopped fish was forbidden from 1390 until at least 1485. The penalty in this case was a fifty-*sueldos* fine and the confiscation of the fish.⁷⁹ Finally, it was forbidden for a reseller or other person to purchase any kind of fish from another neighbour or foreigner. The fine for this fraud was usually twenty shillings.⁸⁰ The reseller must buy the fish in the fishmonger's, with penalties of twenty to one hundred *sueldos* for not doing it. This was the highest fine in the regulations, and shows awareness of fundraising and public health, because by buying in the allowed place, they complied with local laws.⁸¹ The foregoing analysis of the *mostassaf* regulations shows the concerns

73. Lleonart, Jordi; Maynou, Francesc; Salicrú Lluch, Roser. "Marine species and their selling prices in the Crown of Aragon. An initial approach with some examples from the 14th to the 17th centuries", *Moissonner la mer. Économies, sociétés et pratiques halieutiques méditerranéennes (XVe-XXIe siècle)*, Gilbert Buti, Daniel Faget, Olivier Raveux, Rivoal Solène, dirs. Paris: Karthala, 2018: 159-173.

74. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 375.

75. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 26. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 381.

76. Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 118.

77. Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 119.

78. Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 121-122. Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 290.

79. Bajet Royo, Montserrat. *El mostassaf de Barcelona...*: 382-383.

80. Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 119.

81. Pons, Antoni. *Libre del Mostassaf de Mallorca...*: 28. Sevillano Colom, Francisco. *Valencia urbana medieval...*: 290. Cabanes, Maria L. *El "llibre del "mustaçaf"...*: 116, 119.



of the authorities: to ensure an adequate supply, limit sales to local fishmongers, monitor product quality, prevent the spread of epidemics and control the activity of resellers.⁸²

1.3. Consumption

Fishermen caught the cetacean for its commercial value and it could end up for sale in a fishmonger's. But who tried dishes with dolphin? An approximation to its consumption can be made through the recipes, which report exclusively on aristocratic cuisine, that is, preferably the royal family, the nobility, the high ecclesiastical hierarchy and the urban oligarchy.⁸³ These four social categories, despite their differences in rank, shared the availability of a large economic power for consumption, a mastery of written culture, gastronomic preparation, and a desire for leadership.⁸⁴ The lower classes ate low-priced fish. Dolphin was not usually one of them.⁸⁵

The absence of cetacean in working class diets and its presence in high-class recipes means that those whose eating preferences were for it were the aforementioned four groups of privileged.⁸⁶ Thus, recipes are a useful source for studying the role of this product in feeding its most common consumers. The luxury was not so much in the product as in its preparation.⁸⁷ It is here that the recipes allow the researcher to understand the role played by the dolphin in the world of haute cuisine of the late Middle Ages and beginnings of early modern times. The food of the privileged took on a decisive role as a symbol of its status and as a social indicator from the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries.⁸⁸ The Catalan recipes of the Crown of Aragon were works designed to fulfil, among others, three basic objectives: firstly, to highlight the supremacy of the ruling classes through cooking. Secondly, to try to avoid eliminating the differences between these upper classes and other groups of urban and rural societies that progressively accessed foods and seasonings that were

82. Igual Luis, David, "Pesca y pescadores...": 71.

83. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. 2...": 22.

84. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. 2...": 22.

85. Riera Melis, Antoni. "Los sistemas alimentarios de los estamentos populares en el Mediterráneo noroccidental durante la baja Edad Media", *Comer, beber, vivir: consumo y niveles de vida en la Edad Media hispánica. XXI Semana de Estudios Medievales. Nájera del 2 al 6 de agosto de 2010*, Esther López Ojeda, coord. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2011: 78-79; Wheaton, Barbara Ketcham. *Savoring the Past: The French Kitchen and Table from 1300 to 1789*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996: 12.

86. Villena, Enrique. *Obras completas de Enrique de Villena: Los doce trabajos de Hércules. Tratado de la lepra. Arte cisoria. Tratado de consolación. Exposición del salmo "Quoniam videbo". Tratado de fascinación o de alojamiento. Epístola a Suero de Quiñones. Arte de trovar. Exposición del soneto de Petrarca. Cartas. Tratado de astrología*. Barcelona: Turner, 1994: 165.

87. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, "Consumo de productos alimenticios de lujo en la baja Edad Media", *Comer, beber, vivir: consumo y niveles de vida en la Edad Media hispánica. XXI Semana de Estudios Medievales. Nájera del 2 al 6 de agosto de 2010*, Esther López Ojeda, coord. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2011:122.

88. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, "Consumo de productos": 97-101.



typical of traditional aristocracy, such as white bread and sugar, during the late Middle Ages. Thirdly and lastly, it was a way to teach cooking to professionals who worked for large stately homes.⁸⁹

In the *Llibre de Sent Soví*, heading 77 is titled *Freixures de delfí*. Unfortunately, it does not retain the text, only its title.⁹⁰ In contrast, *the Llibre d'aparellar de menjar* includes all the information:

[cap. 118] *Tonyinade fresque o delfí*

Prin-la e fe'n troços. E mit-le a coure ab aygua e ab sal; e couge tant tro que sie bé cuyte. E puy tre-le'n. E taya-la manera de freixures menut. E sofrig-le ab oli. E puy aye hom apareylade de bone salse.

La salsa se fa axí. Pren hom pan torrat remuylat en vinagre e pique'l bé. E aya hom cebe que sia sofrida ab lo pex, e pica'n hom ab lo pa. E ayes de bones spècies bé picades e met-les-hi hom. E axeta-u ab lo sebrer de le tunyina. E met-hi I poc de mel, e axeta-la hom per guisa que no.n fassa massa. E mit-ho a bolir, la salsa e el pex. Puy va per escudelles.⁹¹

[cap. 129] *Si vols dar dalfí*

Coets-lo bé en aygüe. E dats-lo ab salse qui sie fete ab molt pebre e ab vinagre e ab oli, e puy bullits-lo; o, si no, dats-lo ab espinachs.⁹²

Here are the two dolphin recipes collected in the *Llibre de totes maneres de potatges*:

[cap. 207] *Qui parla com sa deu aperellar tunyina ffresqua ho dolffí*

Si vols aperellar tunyina ffresqua ho dolffí, se ffa axí: prin la tonyina ho lo dolffí e ffe'n trossos, e met-los a coura en aygua ab sal e ab holi; e coguen tro sia ben cuyta. E puy traune-la, e talla-le a manera de ffreixures menut, e soffrigho ab de bon holi. E puxes aperella de bona salsa, que.s ffa axí: prin pa torrat mullat en vinagre, e picau-ho bé; e ages ceba que sia sofrida ab lo pex; e prin la polpa del pex, e ages de bones salces. E picau-ho tot encemps, e axeta-ho ab lo brou de la tunyina. E mit-hi un poc de mel ho arop; e axeta-la en guissa que no sia massa clara. E met la salsa e.l pex, e bulla. E puy per escudelles.⁹³

[cap. 211] *Qui parla con deu hom donar deuffí cuyt en aygua*

89. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, "Consumo de productos": 105.

90. Santanach, Joan, Barrieras, Mònica. "Llibre de Sent Soví". *Llibre de Sent Soví*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2016: 178.

91. "[chapter 118] Fresh tuna or dolphin. grab it and cut it into pieces. and cook it with water and salt; and cook until well cooked. and then take it out. and cut it into small fringes. And fry them in oil. and then accompany it with a good sauce. This is how the sauce is made. Take a toast soaked in vinegar and chop it well. and mix a fried onion with the fish, and chopped with bread. and have good, well-chopped spices and put them with the tuna. And put a little bit of honey in it, but doesn't cook it too much. And boil the sauce and the fish. So go for bowls". *Llibre d'aparellar...*: 232.

92. "[chapter 129. If you eant dolphin. Cook it well in water. and give it to the sauce made with much pepper and vinegar and oil, and then boil it; or, if not, with spinach". *Llibre d'aparellar...*: 242.

93. "[chapter 207] Who talks about how to cook fresh tuna or dolphin. If you want to cook fresh tuna or dolphin, do it this way: take the tuna or dolphin and cut it into pieces, and cook them in salted water and oil; and let them cook until well cooked. and then take them out, and cut them into small pieces, and fry them in good oil. and then put a good sauce, which is done like this: take toasted bread soaked in vinegar, and chop it well; and add onion that is fried with the fish; and take the pulp of the fish, and add some good sauces. and chop it all together, and mix it with the tuna broth. and add a little honey



*Si volets donar dalffí, cohets-lo en aygua; e donats-lo ab salsa que sia ffeta ab pebre e ab vinagre e ab holi que sia bolit. Si no, donats-lo ab espícies.*⁹⁴

The unpreserved recipe of *Llibre de Sent Soví* would be the original and would have two versions. These would appear together in the manuscript, as often happens in recipe books.⁹⁵ The two other books were written using a copy of *Sent Soví* as a base in large parts. The compilers separated the two versions from the original, which are preserved. Thus, the remarkable resemblance between these culinary texts makes sense. On the other hand, the differences, which are few, explain as well as possible steps and procedures.⁹⁶

Continuing with the study of recipes, the type of cooking is analysed first; second, the type of fat used; third, seasonings; and fourth, whether the recipe in relation to the others of fish and seafood is original or not and why. Boiling is the type of cooking common in the four recipes. In three of them, chapters 118 and 129 of the *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar* and chapter 207 of the *Llibre de totes maneres de potatges*, it is noted that cetacean or tuna is boiled well, as its meats are quite tough. There are two boils in chapters 118 and 129 and only one in the other two. A single boil intoxicated food, and could have a hygienic function. In the case of the second boil, it gave personality to the dish. Here everything was taken advantage of, using the first broth, and the vegetables used for the sauce. In addition, it added bread and vinegar well chopped, some spices, sweetener and some dolphin meat or boiled tuna.⁹⁷ Recipes with two firings include between these a step where the pieces of fish are fried based on an onion sauce. In all texts the fat used for cooking is olive oil. Although used in penitential periods on opulent tables as a substitute for animal fats (bacon, lard and butter), its multiple uses in haute cuisine are also noteworthy, as Antoni Riera Melis explains in detail.⁹⁸ Dolphin dishes are a good example of the transcendence of this vegetable fat, the role of which should not be reduced to abstinence. Seasonings are salt, spices and vinegar. The use of salt during the first boil allowed the aromas and flavours of the food largely not to pass into the water, but to stay in the product. The one used in the recipe was probably gemstone salt, a gourmet product more expensive than the fine sea salt, at least in the case of the cuisine of the cathedral canons.⁹⁹ The species enhanced the organoleptic qualities

or syrup; and mix it into a stew that is not too light. and put the sauce and the fish, and boil. and put in bowls". *Llibre de totes maneres...*: 328.

94. "[chapter 211]. Who talks about how to cook dolphin with water. If you want to give dofi, cook it in water; and mix it with pepper sauce and vinegar and boiled oil. If not, mix it with spices". *Llibre de totes maneres...*: 333.

95. *Llibre de Sent Soví...*: 190, 192, 198, 210.

96. *Llibre de totes maneres...*: 86.

97. Fundació Alcía. "Anàlisi culinària del Llibre d'aparellar de menjar", *Llibre d'aparellar de menjar*, Joan Santanach, Mònica Barrieras eds. Barcelona: Barcino, 2015: 98.

98. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans. 2...": 34-35; Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans. 3...": 37.

99. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptoris medievals catalans. 2... ": 45; Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric dels receptoris medievals catalans. 3...": 37-38; Hinojosa Montalvo, José,



of fresh food, increased consumer health, showed the elegance and good taste of the hosts and credited their gastronomic knowledge.¹⁰⁰ These seasonings were expensive and superfluous for nutrition. Therefore, they constituted a luxury and brought a touch of distinction to the dishes.¹⁰¹ The only species cited in dolphin recipes is pepper, which does not mean that it was the only one used.¹⁰² Pepper had a gastronomic value that was progressively devalued throughout the Late Middle Ages and sixteenth century, due to an increase in supply that caused a decrease in prices.¹⁰³ Finally, vinegar was used to dissolve the sauce and was common in the kitchens of the different states.¹⁰⁴

Other ingredients cited are bread, onion, honey and *arrope*. The bread, usually toasted, thickened and accentuated the flavour and colour of the sauce and the second broth.¹⁰⁵ It was the staple food of the majority of the population. The economically less-favoured artisan and lower classes consumed a large amount of bread per day, between 400 and 700 grams per adult.¹⁰⁶ The privileged had less bread, but of better quality by the standards of the time, that is, made with high quality, finely ground wheat flour.¹⁰⁷ Its uses in aristocratic cuisine were multiple, and among them, that of improving the sauces was fundamental. The onion played its humble, non-vulgar role in the sauce, again being a principle ingredient. This modest and popular product, like the rest of the vegetables, was very cheap, but had an advantage over most others; it was not seasonal as its different varieties allowed it to exist all year round.¹⁰⁸ The sweeteners thickened and sweetened the sauce and second broth. Both were popular and economical compared to the use of sugar, preferred by the privileged, although there were expensive honeys, such as the Catalan one from Mequinensa and the French one from Narbona, both of which could have been used in these preparations.¹⁰⁹

Dolphin recipes for fish and shellfish recipes are not original. The procedure is not original because it is repeated in other preparations compiled in the kitchen texts.¹¹⁰

“Sal, fiscalidad y cultura material en el Reino de Valencia a fines de la Edad Media”, *Mundos medievales. Espacios, sociedades y poder. Homenaje al Profesor José Ángel García de Cortázar y Ruiz de Aguirre. Tomo II*. Beatriz Arízaga Bolumburu, ed. Santander: Editorial de la Universidad de Cantabria, 2014: 1467.

100. Riera Melis, Antoni. “El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. 2...”: 42.

101. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, “Consumo de productos...”: 110.

102. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, “Consumo de productos...”: 110.

103. Riera Melis, Antoni. “El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. 2...”: 42.

104. Riera Melis, Antoni. “El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. 2...”: 45.

105. McGee, Harold. *La cocina y los alimentos. Enciclopedia de la ciencia y la cultura de la comida*. Barcelona, Debate, 2017: 620.

106. Riera, “Los sistemas alimentarios...”: 75.

107. Riera Melis, Antoni. *Els cereals i el pa en els països de llengua catalana a la baixa edat mitjana*. Barcelona: IEC, 2017: 364.

108. Riera Melis, Antoni. “Jerarquía social y desigualdad alimentaria en el Mediterráneo noroccidental en la baja Edad Media”. *Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia*, 16-17 (1995-1996): 190.

109. Gual Camarena, Miguel. *Vocabulario del comercio medieval: colección de aranceles aduaneros de la corona de Aragón, siglos XIII y XIV*. Tarragona: Diputación Provincial de Tarragona, 1968: 359.

110. *Llibre d'aparellar...: 245, 247; Llibre de totes maneres...: 337-339.*



There is nothing unique about the seasonings either. Saffron, which is mentioned in other penitential day recipes, is not quoted in cetaceans. However, it cannot be ruled out that it was used, when cited in preparations that use good spices. This expression could undoubtedly include saffron, a highly appreciated spice, fashionable in the late Middle Ages and possibly the most expensive of the time.¹¹¹ Why cetacean preparations are not original is a difficult question to answer. These dishes have a high technical complexity that needed the participation of professional chefs, whose services were a luxury generally reserved for the privileged. In addition, some select ingredients such as dolphin and spices are used and that fact distinguishes this dish from those of the most humble classes. Thus, one of the reasons for the absence of originality would be that there was no need if the social distinction of the ruling classes was transmitted correctly through cooking.

When you look at the preparations, two questions arise. Why are there recipes with dolphin and not with another fish? and why would the daily offer of fishmongers be chosen for dishes that were symbols of social distinction? There are several elements to consider. The dolphin was not considered a normal food, but had an exotic trait. It was rare to find it in the markets, as its rare mentions in the books of the *mostassaf* attest. Thus, in general, its availability was only in the fishmonger's of large villages and cities, particularly in coastal areas or quite close to the coast. It does not appear in customs duties or in the generality registers of the Kingdom of Aragon under medieval. Although cetacean was salted, this product does not appear to travel too far from the coastal and pre-coastal area, for reasons not yet resolved. In any case, it is claimed that his presence at the table of the richest and most powerful was only in special moments. Consequently, its exoticism, its rarity and high price compared to the marine species consumed by the popular regions, made it attractive to the privileged, as it could be used as an indicator of its social rank. In particular, it was a symbol of distinction between "inland" populations.¹¹² This marine food gave its name to haute cuisine preparations because it enabled the host to show off his social standing, distinction and opulence through his kitchen and table. The limited consumption of this product can also be due to the recommendations of the reputable doctors of the time, whose patients were mainly the great fortunes and lineages; in other words, the most common consumers of dolphin.¹¹³ *Bestinal* fish, according to Arnau de Vilanova, was more of a food to avoid than to be ingested. Good fish had to be white, with scales and little smell. In addition, it required an intense taste, it should not be strange to the touch, nor have a slimy texture.¹¹⁴

The Four Masters of Montpellier stated that large fish, in other words, sturgeons, whales, dolphins, porpoises and sharks, among others, should not be eaten

111. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, "Consumo de productos...": 111.

112. Sesma Muñoz, Ángel, "Consumo de productos...": 109; Rodrigo Estevan, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal": 559.

113. Riera Melis, Antoni. "El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. 1...": 62.

114. *Arnaldi de Villanova opera medica omnia 10.1. Regimen sanitas ad regem aragonum*, eds. Luis García-Ballester, Michael McVaugh, Juan A. Paniagua, Pedro Gil-Sostres. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, Fundació Noguera, 1996: 233.



because their meat is very hard and indigestible. The great masters of medicine of the centuries under medieval agree that the intake of these salted species should be avoided.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the dolphin, fresh and salty, was not classified as good food and should be avoided to eat a healthy and balanced diet. Doctors at the time also emphasized that marine fish was better than freshwater fish, because freshwater fish when living in stagnant waters was a source of disease. In fact, the recipes, and other sources, such as memorials of the accounts and *llibres de la messió de la casa*, which provide data on the food regime of the economically more solvent groups, agree that only river and lake fish were taken in case the sea fish did not arrive in good condition in the kitchen. It is the case of King Peter the Ceremonious, who on his summer visits to the Pyrenees, in search of good fresh weather, took, on days of abstinence, trout from San Lorenzo de Morunys.¹¹⁶

The consideration of the dolphin as food worthy of aristocratic palates should also have influenced its having a prominent place in the “chain of being”, which conditioned the social distribution of food in late medieval Europe. Within this chain, cetacean was classified as the best of all fish. The reasons for being on the cusp of marine food are that, when jumping out of the water, breathing through the use of lungs and the spiracle, they came into direct contact with the air, one of the best elements and reserved for the most privileged. In this way, the intake of dolphin meat would be a right typical of the upper classes.¹¹⁷

All dolphin recipes are placed in the texts next to others which were to be prepared in times of abstinence.¹¹⁸ Cetacean was a substitute for meat, ubiquitous at aristocratic tables on normal days, which were about 205 a year. The preference for fresh dolphin is remarkable. You could also buy it in brine or make this in the kitchen. The reason why one was preferred over another is still unknown, but the choice of this fresh food over other marine products could be accounted for, among other reasons, by its intense red colour that made it look similar to meat and reminded one of it. Meat was a more highly valued food and was more appreciated by the upper classes than any saltwater product.

2. Conclusions

The term dolphin encompasses several species that were differentiated from each other. They all had similar behaviour and were captured in the same way. The total absence of women in their capture and preparation for sale showed the taboos that surrounded menstrual blood. Women were not allowed to prepare it, yet they

115. *Arnaldi de Villanova...*: 233.

116. Riera Melis, Antoni. “El context històric del receptaris medievals catalans. I...”: 62.

117. Grieco, Allen J. “Food and Social Classes in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy”. *Food: A Culinary History*, Jean-Louis Flandrin, Massimo Montanari, eds. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013: 308.

118. *Llibre d'aparellar...*: 245, 247; *Llibre de totes maneres...*: 337-339.



were allowed to sell it. Women stayed next to the clean, chopped dolphin meat, and touched it with their hands during weighing and delivery to the customer. The cause of this apparent inconsistency remains a mystery.

Dolphin fishing was occasional or opportunistic. There was no specific fishing industry or activity for its capture. However, they were welcome when caught because they had commercial value. In addition, fishermen eliminated a natural enemy whose reputation was tarnished, as they were guilty or at least blamed for harm to their fragile economy. Sometimes violent methods of catching cetaceans are proof of fishermen's low appreciation for them. However, they were also observed and used to obtain valuable data from the fishing banks of sardines and other fish that were in high demand from the citizenship of the Crown of Aragon.

The comparative study of dolphin sales rules makes it possible to establish general characteristics of this legislation: firstly, the authorities' main concern was to ensure that cetaceans were always reasonably priced for their preferred consumers, the most privileged. Secondly, the catch was ensured to follow, step by step, the distribution and sales circuit that was centralised in the fishmongers. Thirdly, the causes behind the sales circuit regulations would be to ensure the collection of taxes, to ensure product quality and to prevent diseases and epidemics by ingesting and/or the stench of rotting parts.

Cetacean consumption was preferably aristocratic. Its rarity, exoticism, position in the "chain of being" and high price compared to fish consumed by the popular classes, made it a food suitable for the elite because it adequately met their needs of luxury and ostentation. Being a symbol of social distinction would largely explain its use as the main ingredient in haute cuisine recipes. Its presence in recipes helps to understand why these texts were manifestations of privileged classes that showed their social superiority with food. The role of the dolphin in different food systems is consequently useful to help understand the consumption patterns of the privileged versus those of popular states. This marine food gave its name to some haute cuisine recipes, as it was apt to show the host's opulence, distinction and social rank when he was holding a banquet at the table.

The use of the butcher's pound instead of the fishmonger's for the sale by weight of cetacean may be owing to its similarity to meat. Dolphin consumption was usually during Lent, as an alternative to meat, in privileged households. The reason for this choice might have been the physical resemblance to beef, which was preferred over any kind of fish or seafood.

