

MAJORCA AND THE IMPORT OF WHEAT FROM THE ATLANTIC PORTS (1230-1350)¹

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Resumen

El estudio de los hábitos alimentarios y sus fuentes de aprovisionamiento se mueven sustancialmente en el ámbito mediterráneo, obviando otras regiones. El presente artículo abre un nuevo marco en el que el mundo atlántico, atravesando el siempre complejo espacio geográfico del estrecho del Gibraltar, deviene en fuente primordial del abastecimiento frumentario del reino de Mallorca.

Palabras clave: alimentación, trigo, Mallorca, comercio, Atlántico

Abstract

The study of food habits and its sources of supply have mainly focused on the Mediterranean area, neglecting other regions. The following study offers a new framework in which the Atlantic world, always throughout the complex geographical passage of the Strait of Gibraltar, becomes a basic source of grain supply for the kingdom of Majorca.

Key words: food, wheat, Majorca, trade, the Atlantic Ocean

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1. Introduction

The main function of a municipal government has traditionally been feeding its people. Providing the city's necessary sustenance ensures, in words of Machiavelli, social peace, good governance and a favourable political future for the leader who manages to do so. Yet if victualling a city requires a complex organisation, supplying an island involves a much greater effort.

Majorca suffered a secular wheat deficit, especially after the population growth that followed the Christian conquest. The *Llibre del Repartiment* studies the spatial distribution of the different crops. Whilst in 1232 the mountain area produced grapevines, olives, fruit and vegetables, and the flat land was destined for cereal –wheat, barley and rye–, at the turn of the century the tendency changed, and wheat timidly conquered the terraces of the lower mountain areas whereas vineyards gained ground over the traditional cereal areas (SANTAMARÍA 2005: 171,172).

As an endemic misfortune of medieval Majorca,² the deficit had to be covered by imports, primarily from Barbary. This trade³ has been mainly studied by scholars focused on the Mediterranean coast, neglecting the Atlantic Maghreb.⁴

The Almoravids had already turned to the Genoese and Pisans⁵ for supplies, which allowed the consolidation of Italian colonies in Madina Mayurqa. The storming of the city by the troops of Jaume I and the subsequent colonization and population growth revived the need for grain, and it became necessary to resort to the Atlantic ports for its supply.

² Public announcements and regulations meant to preserve the island supply are constant during the analysed period. The banning of the exports was the principal factor, yet if the sustenance was scarce any ship navigating close to the Balearic coast had its goods confiscated under the promise of an appropriate fair value. The export of figs, oil or wine does not cover the monetary bleeding, which was only balanced by the systematic exercise of the *Art de la mercaderia* (the Trading Art) taking advantage of the strategic location of the archipelago to economically sustain the kingdom.

³ Despite having primary sources, the Balearic historiography has traditionally delegated on foreign authors for the studies of the trade exchange between Majorca and Maghreb. The early work of Charles-Emmanuelle Doufourcq (*L'Espagne catalane et le Maghrib aux XIII et XIV siècles*) published in 1966, was followed by the thesis of María Dolores López Pérez (*La expansión económica catalonoaragonesa hacia el Magreb Medieval*) published by the Department of Medieval Studies of the Institution Mila i Fontanals in 1999.

⁴ In the cited works the scarce issues referring to the Christian presence are tangentially studied and the grain trade is neglected. This is determinant when dealing with the 13th and the first half of the 14th century, period for which no monographs dealing with trade have been published. Hitherto this is a pioneering study, which awaits similar investigations for Genoa, Barcelona and Valencia in order to confirm or refute the supremacy of Majorca within the Atlantic Barbaric ports.

⁵ Pisa and Genoa based their expansionism within the Muslim world on words and not weapons, an extremely positive attitude for their interests. Thus, the agreements with Majorca specify the contribution of products, which Innocent IV considered strategic such as ships or even weapons to fight the Saracens in North Africa. In exchange they are allowed to build *fonducs* and they are granted safeguard in case of shipwreck.

2. The Balearic Juncture in the 13th Century

A constant trait can be perceived throughout the genesis of the onslaught of Majorca: the interest of the Crown of Aragon, specifically, that of the emerging Catalan mercantile bourgeoisie, in the Strait of Gibraltar. One of the two ships that Abu Yaha intercepted and refused to return came from Ceuta. With the city of Majorca under Christian rule, sailors and traders started to negotiate in Barbary. Such was the power of Ceuta that in the early 13th century it was considered the lady of the Strait, *la señora del Estrecho*. Moreover, it was the final destination of one of the branches of the gold route and consequently a powerful redistributive trade-market; it became the perfect area to optimize yields because its higher price rate generated huge profits, increasing the feudal revenue of Minorca several times over. Such was the case that, in 1246, the Genoese Iacomo di Mari⁶ exported to the port of Ceuta part of the grain that the island of Minorca payed in virtue of the Treaty of Capdepera.⁷ On 16 October, he arranged with A. Font the freight of the *leño* (the medieval evolution of the lembus) of Bernat Moler and the galliot of Pere de Tortosa for 2,050 silver bezants. The load consisted of nine hundred modius of barley and one hundred of wheat. The *leño* would carry most of the load (eight hundred and six modius and three hundred and ten *cuarteras* of wheat), reserving the rest for the galliot. That is, the *leño* stowaged eight thousand seven hundred and fifty litres of grain and the galliot twenty-one thousand seven hundred.

On 22 June 1247, they satisfied the percentage with cattle—increasing the royal treasury in one hundred cows, three hundred goats, two hundred sheep and two quintals of butter—on 13 December, Arnaldo Font, the magistrate of Majorca, would issue a settlement letter in favour of Sayd Abel Fachen, from Minorca, acknowledging the receipt of the cereal tribute.⁸

Majorcan trade towards the Atlantic was in the hands of sailors and merchants of Marseilles and Genoa until the middle of the century, using the island as a staging point and freight contracting market. However, people from the oceanic coasts lived in the city of Majorca. Such as the Portuguese Martins (ORTEGA 2008a) or Bisilduno from Bayonne, who in 1256 entrusts A. Cercós with sixteen *cuarteras* of grain.⁹

⁶ Surname that will be part of the Genoese lineage who will be pioneers in the consolidation of the Strait of Gibraltar.

⁷ Archive of the Kingdom of Majorca (ARM), *Escribania de Cartas Reials* (ECR)-343, fol. 104v. *A de fonte recognosco me habuisse et recepisse a uobis Ser Jacobus de mari MCCII besantes et medium boni argenti et recti pensi, et pro naulio DCCCC mudinorum ordeï et C mudinorum frumentum DCCC XL VII besantes et III millareses et tersa, cur boni argente et recti pensi, curribiles in Septa. Et sic sunt inter totum duo milia L besantes. Quod ordeum et frumentum deportatur apud Ceptam in ligno bernardi de molendino, scilicet, CCCX quarterias frumenti et DCCCCVI quarterias (o)rdei, et superfluum honeratur in Galioto P. de tortosa. Quod totum bladum debet ire, stare et redir(e) ad uoluntatem dei et ad redegum uestri J. de marino...*

⁸ ARM, ECR-343, fols. 181v and 239v. CATEURA 2004.: *A. de Fonte, baiulus in Maioricis pro dompno Carrocio, gerente vices illustrissimi domini regis Aragonum, cum presenti carta confiteor et in veritate recognosco bobis Sayd Abel Fachen, arreys domino Minorucarum, me habuisse et recepisse a bobis ex parte domini regis DCCCC mundinos ordeï et centum frumenti, quos vos eidem domino regid are teneamini in unoquoque anno, et sun dicti mundini ordeï et frumenti (...) anno Domini MCCXLVII, quod est sarracenicò sexcenti XLV annis, unde renunciando et cetera...*

⁹ ARM, ECR-344, fol. 300v: *A. cerco(si), comorans in parrochia Sancta eulalie, confiteor tenere in comanda auobis bisilduno de bay(on)a de (...) Sent an(...)l XVI quarteras et medium, videlicet, VIII quarteras et medium (...) (...)*

The decade of the 1270s brought about the consolidation of the Christian power over the Muslim and the consequent institutionalization of what would become the major economic artery of the European Middle Ages: the merchant Atlantic-Mediterranean connection, established by the Genoese,¹⁰ masters of the Strait, which were either paid by Castile or dominated the route to the Balearic Islands. Jaume II of Majorca soon realized of the Atlantic market potential and his diplomatic efforts were directed to strengthen the presence of the Nasrid and the Marinid in the port of the city of Majorca, despite the increasing control exercised by the Portuguese and Castilians.

The galley of the Ligurian Pedro Camilla, under Castilian contract, stormed the ship of his compatriot, Guillermo Deloportto, in late 1284, which was sailing to Majorca with the grain of Abenficce Mahomet from Algeciras. This circumstance caused the activation of the pertinent procedures by the bailiff of Majorca in March 1285, funded by the despoiled merchants. The aggrieved demanded the restitution of the expenses arisen from the efforts to recover Abraham, the Saracen envoy, and the merchandise, especially the wheat sold in Majorca. The settlement of the amount of 7 *lliures* and 13 Valencian *sous* was witnessed, among others, by Mahomet Alethal and Mahomet Abenali, from Ceuta.¹¹

The insecurity in the Strait had led to the requirement of obtaining a navigation licence in Majorca to set off towards Barbary or Seville, a fact studied by Riera Melis.¹² Licences towards Seville were issued to captains from Genoa and Majorca, such as the *leño* of Pere Bo or the ship of Antic Salavert. Furthermore, Berenguer Mattelli, a Genoese from Noli, hired for his ship the Ligurian sailor Ugo Bonavía, while Giovanni Musso acted as the guarantor.¹³

et VIII quarteras ordi boni et pulcri... Despite the Castilian-Marinid struggle, the navigation throughout the Strait of Gibraltar is not difficult for armed vessels. After the capture of Seville, the Atlantic-Mediterranean traffic is consolidated. A good example of this could be the one of infant Enrique of Castile who marches to exile from Cadiz to territories of the Aragon Crown in a ship from Valencia. Outlawed in turn by Jaime I, he went to France and, from there, in ships from Bayonne disposed for him by Eduardo I, he marches *ad partes Africanas*. See ORTEGA 2008b: 199. ¹⁰ Once cancelled the Muslim danger of the European Atlantic coast, the latitudinal commerce is established and the presence of vessels from the North Sea becomes customary in Cadiz and Seville. Such is the case that Alfonso X choses *Aleman el mercadero* as the merchant prototype when encoding the Castilian contract when freighting *Las Partidas*. The hypothetical agreement contemplates the route Sevilla-La Rochelle route. Alfonso X himself uses ships from Asturias and Galicia for his equipment on his way to Avignon by *l fecho del Imperio*, ordering to transport to Marseille the necessary victuals.

¹¹ ARM, ECR-349, fs. 252r-v: *...profitemur et in ueritate recognoscimus vobis guillelmo deloportto, januensi, et Mahomet abenficce, Sarraceno de Algeçira Dahadre, mercatoris et uestris nos soluisse et restituisse nobis omnes missiones quas anno transacto proximo, scilicet, in mense nouembris, nos fecimus pro recuperandis rebus et mercaturis multis quas galea Regis Castelle, de qua erat Almirallus P. de camilla, januensis, reciperat de nauí tui Guillelmi delo porto pro recuperando quodam nuncio Sarraceno tui Mahomet nomine Abraham quod sim(iliter) ceperat dicta galea... ..qua fungebamur in hac parte discarricare totum frumentum quod erat honeratum in dicta nauí et vendere in terra maiorice dictum frumentum adduxissent ad tro(...)(...) vel essent in portu uel partibus dicte insule maiorice...*

¹² RIERA 1979-1980. The licences are issued between 23 January and 18 March 1284, which implies that there is no seasonality among the merchant exchange in the Strait of Gibraltar.

¹³ **Item**, *Ugetus bonauia, Ianuensis, habuit licenciam eundi pro nauta in Nauí berengarius mattelli, Ianuensis de Noli, de mayoricis apud xibiliam et promisit rediuisse ad terram maioricarum per totum mensem aprilis proxime et*

The Majorcan involvement in the coastal navigation on the second half of the 13th century can be inferred from these data, yet it is not documented until May 1296. On this date Nicolau Tarida and Daniel Torres constituted a society and decided to embark on the ship of the Genoese Daniel Can¹⁴ with saffron, pepper and gold doubloons towards Seville, where they associated with the Ligurian Luquin Dugo to carry cereal from Larache to La Rochelle in sight of the imminent ending of the Anglo-French confrontation and the food shortages in that town. For this purpose, they acquired a cog in Seville, supplied it with wheat in Larache, and set course towards the North. Nicolau Tarida died at sea and his body was disembarked in Lisbon, continuing his two partners to Santander—a port specifically mentioned in the regulations of Alfonso X as a natural scale in the Atlantic coastal navigation—where Lanfranco Nigro joins them, a Genoese with Majorcan citizenship. Upon arrival to the Cantabrian port they realized that the route towards La Rochelle was blocked due to the incipient war with Bayonne,¹⁵ reason why Lanfranco Nigro, facing the forced non-payment of Daniel Torres,¹⁶ promoted the seizure of the ship in Santander. Once its value was appraised by distinguished citizens, ship captains and merchants, the city mayor proceeded with the auction.

3. The 14th Century

The second phase of the reign of Jaume II is characterized by the Balearic consolidation within the Atlantic enclaves at the beginning of the 14th century, despite the recurring Christian-Marinid conflict in the Strait.¹⁷ The bonds with Ceuta¹⁸ prevailed whilst merchants consolidated their presence in the Atlantic ports. With peace instituted momentarily in the area, the Majorcan colony of Anfa required a notary to authenticate the commercial transactions, and the notary Guillem Alghero acted as such whenever he was in town for personal reasons.¹⁹

inde obligauit etc... Et inde dedit fideiussorem Johannis musso qui obligauit etc... Ita quod si dictus ugetus ad dictum tempus non redierit ad terram majoricarum, dictus Johanem musso teneatur dare baiulo nomine penes X libras

¹⁴ A captain of Ligurian origin, he acquires the Majorcan citizenship and connects with the court of Jaume II. Such is the case that the royal rigging will be temporarily stored in his warehouse. He is also the first to build a cog in the banks of the city of Majorca.

¹⁵ A main consequence of the conflict is the creation of the so-called *Hermandad de las Cinco Villas* (Brotherhood of the Five Towns), led by Castro Urdiales.

¹⁶ The impossibility to arrive to the french town makes unviable the obtention of any kind of revenue. Daniel Torres has to face the equivalent payment of two thirds of the value of the cog and the stowage.

¹⁷ A new period of relations between Castile and Granada is reestablished due to the enthronement in 1303 of Muhammad III and his surrender of Tarifa. After the change in the political balance of the area, the discomfort of Jaume II of Aragon is added to the Marinid concern. The former, in successive clauses of Agreda/Campillo and the subsequent Sentence of Torrellas, will consolidate an alliance of the peninsular kingdoms in order to preserve the waters of the Strait of Gibraltar. Initially offside due to his involvement in the conflict with his namesake due to the tax on goods imposed on the Catalans, Jaume II of Majorca finds in Genoa the perfect ally to maintain his commercial penetration in the area.

¹⁸ Chart with the arrival ports in the Atlantic Muslim region and a map with the routes of Majorcan coastal navigation can be found in ORTEGA 2008b: 176,190. In *La marina mercante medieval y la Casa de Majorca: entre el Mediterráneo y el Atlántico*, (in press, editorial Milenium, Lérida) I include maps with the Majorcan, Valencian and Catalan navigation areas according to the impositions of the first half of the 14th century.

¹⁹ ORTEGA 2008b: 64,165. Jaume II consents in April 1305, assigning him the salary of a golden doubloon and the

The uprising of Uthman, who controlled Asilah, Larache and the Gumara region in 1307, together with the assassination of Abu Ya'qub and the early death of his successor Abu Tabit, would prolong the conflict until 1308, the year of the accession of Abu-l-Rabi to the throne. Once again, Ceuta was the trigger for a new conflict in the area, which will led the galleys of Jaime II of Aragon to support Abu-l-Rabi in the conquest of the enclave (ORTEGA 2008b: 63). However, the merchants of the kingdom of Majorca were safe from the conflict and maintained their traditional settlements on the Atlantic coast. To this fact contributes the policy led by the sovereign of Majorca, who promoted agreements between Fernando IV and Muhammad III with a view to redress the damage done to the island traders by the war between Majorca, Tunis, Béjaïa and Tlemcen together with the aforementioned conflict in the Strait.²⁰

The documents from this period do not mention the transacted goods, citing only some orders of Flemish fabrics. The scarcity of detailed accounts of freight is an endemic problem of the records concerning the trade exchange on the oceanic coast. The war between Fernando IV and Abu-l-Rabi,²¹ and the consequent Castilian control of the Strait, would show the trade of the Atlantic wheat destined to the Balearic Islands.

4. *Sanç I*

Supported by Nazarites and Marinids, his reign (1311-1324) was especially fruitful for the insular trade exchange with Larache, Arcila or Anfa as vital enclaves, remaining Anfa as a thriving colony. Therefore, he continued the policy of his father and devoted great efforts to keep navigable the route of the Strait of Gibraltar despite the obstacles set by the peninsular kingdoms in their confrontation with the Marinid, not hesitating in seeking agreements with Castile and appealing to the Pope in his disputes with Portugal (ORTEGA 2009). However, Castilian captains would supervise the patrons from the archipelago on their return. Pedro Moro was proclaimed the guardian of the Strait, and on 2 November 1311, he intercepted at Cape Espartel the *San Jorge*, Jaime Tender's ship, when it was sailing from Anfa to Ceuta. Once verified the legality of the

right to practice ...*posit in scriptura et testamenta et alia scribere et conficere tamquam notarius publicus in dictis partibus de Nife et des garp...* with the equal validity as the notaries residing in the kingdom: ...*habeantur firmam et credatur tanquam facta a notario publico dominum Regis in toto Regno Maiorice et jurisdictione domini Regis...*

²⁰ ARM, Pergamins, *Castilla-1*. ...*Et otrosi, me embio rrogar don Remon de Granano, su ffiel ome, que me troxo su carta de creença que los mercadores moros e judios delas dichas tierras delos moros puedan yr en ssaluo con sus mercadurias alas tierras del dicho rrey de Mayorgas e de aquestas mismas tierras que puedan tomar otrosi en ssaluo alas sus tierras con lo suyo en nauios o en lennos delas jentes del rrey de Mayorgas en manera que non pueda dellos venir danno...*

²¹ Fernando IV states that the petition of Jaime II is a consequence of the imminent war declaration: ...*Et agora quel ffizieron entender que yo que queria começar guerra contra el rrey de Granada e contra el rrey Aborrabe e contra los moros dela berberia. Et por quelos mercadores delas sus tierras an grand tranze en estas tierras ssobredichas de moros et con ellos an sus mercadurias, embio me rrogar mucho affnaidamente que touiesse por bien e enbiasse mandar alas mis jentes e a todos los otros aportellados de mios regnos, dela mar e dela tierra, que dexassen passar en ssaluo alos mercadores delas sus tierras con todas sus mercadurias alas tierras ssobredichas de moros...*

freighted wheat²² it was returned and granted safe-conduct.²³ Ruiz Goceris Tello, senior constable of Sevilla, ratified this decision.²⁴ The *tarida* of Bernat Beltran²⁵ and Esteban Lladó, had no such luck, its grain was confiscated,²⁶ and the same happened to Daniel Can and the grain shipped by him together with several merchants from Majorca in Larache,²⁷ which was confiscated by the fleet of the *adelantado* Sancho Sánchez de Velasco, who, quite cunningly, sought to obtain profit from selling the wheat seized in Majorca as his own. To this effect he relied on the Genoese James Catano, who arrived to the port of the city of Majorca with his cog, where confiscation was decreed, since the events occurred in the Strait were already well known.

²² Complementary to the naval blockade, the Castilian information service alerted its captains concerning the Christian ships engaged in the Muslim coastal navigation. On this occasion, Jaume Tender has to resign to confirm, during the interrogation to which he is subjected, that the defeat led him to Ceuta, because Pedro Moro gives clear evidence of knowing all the details: *...e por esto yo, el ditxo Capitan, costrenyi al ditxo Jaymes tender que jurase sobre santos auangelios que me dixesse la uerdad, que yo la sabia ya por otros e que non mela negasse el patron sobre ditxo; pues que vido que yo la sabia e por la Jura otrossi que fiço, dixo me la uerdad en como yua el trigo a Çepta, assi como se contiene en Iª carta de escriuanos publicos...* ARM, Lletres Reials (LR)-3, f. 136r.

²³ ARM, LR-3, fol. 136r: *A todos quantos esta Carta vieren que deus honre e guarde de mal. Demi Pero moro, Capitan dela mar por el Rey. Salutz como aquellos por aquien queria mutxa honra e bona ventura. Sepades que io tome con dos galeas e un lenyo la Nau que dizen Sant jorge, de que es patron Jaymes tender de Mayorcha, e tomamos la sercha del Cabo del Espartel Cargada de trigo que salie de Niffe e hiua por a Cepta; e yo, el ditxo Capitan, assagure el ditxo Jaymes tender e los marineros e la Nau e los apareios disendome el la uerdad de quien era el trigo...*

²⁴ Written as an open letter, it confirms the safe-conduct.

²⁵ The load belonged to Majorcan, among which appears Aulí Arnau, whose lineage coincides with that of the illustrious family of notaries from Pollensa, which were very interested in the Atlantic trade: *...enla dita Tarida foren carregats entre tots mercaders dauayl Escrits ho lurs companyons Quaranta un Caffiç de forment a mesura dalaraix, dels quals Onze caffiçs (den) (P) (de) ualgar(nera) e deu cafiçs den Domingo Cima, e deu cafiçs den Arnau auli, e Sinch caffiçs den Bernat fferer e Sinch cafiçs den huguli dombeyl...* See ORTEGA 2010.

²⁶ The Lieutenant reports the facts to: *...domino Regi Castelle et nobili Infanti don Pedro, auunculo et tutori dicti Regis Castelle, et Consilio Ciuitatis Xibilie et Reuerendo patri in christo don Ferrando, Archiepiscopo de Xibilia...* through his ambassador Ramón Graner. Since these events happened during the minority of Alfonso XI, the Castilians postpone the decision until the election of a tutor for the young monarch is held in the Court of Palencia, in order to resolve the dispute. In the lawsuit the pertinent parity measures are taken to quantify the economic loss. In this way, the confiscated grain was traded at 14 *suelos/cuartera*, where the *cahiz* of Larache is equivalent to thirty-six Majorcan *cuarteras*: *...Lo qual forment tot ensemps, ablatarida e exarcies e apperelaments daquela, pres fo per lodit P. moro e tolt als dits patrons e mercaders; los (quals) Quaranta un cafiçs, arao de Trenta sis quarteres per Cascun cafiç, axi com prouat fo e mesurat, pugen a Mil e quatrecentes Setanta sis quarteres a mesura ho quartera de malorques qui valien en aquel temps arao de Quatorze solidos per quartera, Mil trentadues liures, quatre solidos de reyal de malorques, segons que les damunt dites coses plenerament probades foren.*

²⁷ He had to carry three hundred *cahices* in his ship, but the merchants had previously accepted in Larache to stow ninety-one in the cog commanded by Nicolás Montferrer and owned by the Castilian *adelantado*, therefore he had set sail with two hundred and nine in the hold. ARM, LR-3, fols. 130v-131r: *...ad instancia et supplicacionem Johannis de pax et Jacobi de claperiis et aliorum mercatorum Maiorice qui naualeauerunt Nauem Danielis canis pro portando de alaraxio apud Maiorice in dicta sua Naue Ducenta cafficia frumenti ultra Centum cafficia que dictus Daniel, de suo proprio debebat caricare ad complementum carrici, fecimus per curiam nostram inquiri et partes recipi ad exhibendam mercante de toto frumento quod caricatum fuit pro predictos mercatores et eorum socios apud Alaraxium in dicta Naue pro defferendo seu portando ad terram Maiorice; et receptis inde pluribus testibus omni excepcione majoribus et etiam pro plurima legitima documenta constat nobis in rei veritate quod predicti mercatores carricauerunt in dicto loco de Alaraxio in predicta naue dicti Danielis Centum nouem cafficia frumenti, quodquidem frumentum una cum frumento dicti Danielis fuit captum et eis ablatum per Armatam xibilie Illustris domini Regis Castelle. Residiumque ipsius frumenti fuit per predictos mercatores in dicto loco de Alaraxio caricatum in quadam Cocha Sancii Sanxis de Valascho, Adelantat xibilie, quam ducebat seu nauigabat Nicholusius de monte ferrar, pro defferendo seu portando apud Maiorice...*

The ambush had been articulated in Seville. Hugo Orts, the envoy of the bourgeois Pedro Causit from Montpellier, had bought the wheat to export it to his hometown. The lawsuit reveals the involvement of the Atlantic men in the Mediterranean business. Pedro Causit had arranged with merchants of Montpellier, Narbonne and Bayonne, that is, with subjects of Eduard II of Bar,²⁸ the transaction of one hundred and twenty *cahices* of grain seized by the fleet of Fernando IV. Sanç I, aware that “sit valdem necessarium ville nostre Montispesulani ubi est carestia magna bladi”, ordered his subjects to either restitute the grain to its owners or to compensate them with 1,000 *lliures* from Barcelona.²⁹

Such was the turnover of cereal exchange that during 1311 three hundred and forty-one *cahices* were imported, plus the twenty five that Jaume Tender transported from Anfa to Ceuta in the *San Jorge*. That is, 13,176 Majorcan *cuarteras*, which, at a rate of 14 *sous/cuartera*, amounted to 9,223 *lliures* and 4 *sous*.

The Anglo-Flemish conflict developed between 1313 and 1318 forced the English monarch to grant safe conduct—in April 1316—to foreigners who arrived with grain, particularly those who came from the Kingdom of Sicily, Hispania and the Genoese, who in 1317, in Seville, agreed to assemble in Anfa or Larache eight thousand *minas* of African wheat to be shipped to Southampton or Sandwich. With the Scottish front open, Edward II settles the Flemish campaign and negotiates with Genoa the freight of five armed galleys against Robert I. The contract explicitly states that the aforementioned galleys, considering the continuous shortage of food, must carry one thousand *minas* of Hispanic wheat to English lands.

5. *Minority and Reign of Jaume III*

The Sources do not mention the wheat traffic from the Strait of Gibraltar until 1326. Like the *adelantado* Sancho Sánchez de Velasco, Pedro Alfonso, Gonzalo de Cubas and others, seized thirty-nine *cahices* and four and a half modius of wheat that Pere Carrera, from Vic, had acquired

²⁸ The presence of merchants and captains from the Bay of Biscay anchored in the port of the city of Majorca is evident in October 1319. Pedro Fiyol, the captain of the cog *Santo Espiritu*, property of Arnaldo de Santo Luca from Bayonne and Pedro Arnaldo –from San Juan de Luz– acknowledges a debt to Pedro de Segur and Martín de Güello, both from San Sebastián, 30 silver sterlings in good English crusaders, invested in the ship and valued at the price stipulated by the parties in Majorca. The document was written on the dock ...*intus dictam cocham, tenente dicta cocha ancoras in portu...* and they pledged themselves to repay the amount in San Sebastian.

²⁹ ARM, LR-3, fols. 12v-13r: *Sancius, dei gratia Rex Maiorice... ..Ex parte petri causit, burgenssis nostri Maiorice Montispesulani oblata nobis supplicatio continebat quod hugo de ortis, instructor suus, eius nomine empti ciuitatis Sibilie CXX cafficia frumenti que portau faciebant in Montispesulani in nauí Jacomo catanio, Januensem, cum alio frumentum mercatorum Narbone, et cum dicta Nauis venit in Maiorice ubi est dictum frumentum arestatio eo quod aliqui de Maiorice dicunt dicta CXX cafficia frumenti pertinere ad eos, quod fuerunt de illo frumento quod armata Hhustris-Regis Castelle abstulit gentibus nostris Maiorice, quod dictis P. causit et eius pro(curatorem) difficetur allegans aliquas rationes per quas videtur esse non posse. Cum agitur frumentum predictum sit valde necessarium ville nostre Montispesulani, ubi est carestia magna bladi, volumus, et vobis mandamus, quot dictum ffrumentum, videlicet, dicta CXX cafficia frumenti, faciatis absolui et tradi predicto ius(...) dicti Petri causit...*

for the island market, and were to be transported by his partner. After its storage in a shop of Cadiz, it was dispatched to the island where it was sold by Francisco García. Pere Carrera accused Francisco García Dargomero in Majorca, as the instigator of the events.

Because Cadiz was the logistical base for the Balearic trade, Jaume Valls, Bernat Corbera, Guillem Coll and Ramon Terrades, fearing to see their properties confiscated, recused the accusation of the merchant from Vic. The protest reached the court of Perpignan, and, on 30 September 1327, Prince Regent Felip determined that the price of the grain had to be returned to its legitimate owner.³⁰

In the meantime, the same year, a new legal front will be open by the case of a Spanish cog anchored in the bay of Palma under the command of Nicolás Samarina, a figure who does not hesitate playing a dual role as privateer and merchant. There were attempts at remedying the recurrent cereal crisis by importing Atlantic grain. In April 1327, Nicolás Samarina and Juan Goceris assaulted the *Santa Maria*, the cog owned by Lamberto Vulter and Bernardo Murgull, during its route Anfa-Ceuta,³¹ and subsequently unloaded the grain in Cadiz; this will have consequences in the city of Majorca, because after the events occurred in the Strait Nicolás resumes his trade activity, reaching port in Majorca with the purpose of selling the wheat and other products previously plundered. Once his presence on the island is discovered, Bernat Murgull presents a complaint against him, to which the Castilian responds with a plea to the authorities, countered with a firm condemnation request by the victims, who claim damages that amount to 4,600 *libras*. Given the delicate situation, his attorney Ramon de Medalia collects testimonies in Seville—among others, the Admiral Alfonso Jofre Tenorio, royal officials, the Consul of Majorca, Pedro Tarin and certain merchants—,³² Cadiz³³ and even in Santander, which can be explained by his origin.³⁴ Against him, the four months of imprisonment in Seville and

³⁰ ARM, LR-7, fols. 138r-v: *...subsequenter uero Petrus alfonso, Gonsaluo de cubas, cum aliquibus hominibus complicitis suis, violenter ceperunt et ad manus suas etiam occupauerunt dictum frumentum quod fuit inmissum in quadam botigia intus Ciuitatem de cadis; et postea simile causa alio frumento deportatum ad terram Maioricarum et inibi venditum per ffrancischu Garcia dargomero seu per alium loco eius...*

³¹ It is a consequence of the blockade decreed by Alfonso XI concerning the Saracens because of the conflict maintained, especially, with Granada and Ceuta: *Item, intendit probare quod locus de Cepta est conuicinus terre de ispania seu de Granata et modico freto separatus ab ea qui locus de Cepta multum obuia adquisicione dicti Regni de Granata que adquisitio spectant ad dominum Regem Castelle; et ratione dicti loci de Cepta prouenit continue dicte terre de Granata magnum subsidium et adiutorum, tam victualiam quam gentium, in magnum preiudicium et dampnum dicti Regis Castelle.* ARM, *Arxiu Històric* (AH)-436, fol. 129r.

³² ARM. AH-436, fol. 126v. Eleven merchants are called to testify: Bernat Pintor, Guillermo Deporto, Bonanat Maimó, Pere de Vilafranca, Ramon Reixach, Bernat de Monsaliri, Ferràn Proxidior, Guillem Cases, Obert Pilós, the notary Juan Martí, Arnaldo Bonavia, Simó Civebats and Bernat Dalmau.

³³ *Ibid.*. Juan Martinis Alfonso, Joan Delpuny, Pericono Cases (agent of Guillermo Cases in Cádiz), Berenguer Cases, Ferrán Gonzálbez and his son, Juan Mancebo and his son, Juan Finario and Juan Montero.

³⁴ *Ibid.*. The witness list includes residents of Seville and Santander: *Item, apud Xibiliam uel apud Sen tender, testes sequentes ad quos petet sibi dari et concedi tempus seu dilacionem secundum distanciam locorum.* Juan Sanchis, Pedro Díaz, Domingo Peris de Malval, Sancho de Binepero, Pedro Beltrán, Martino Arart, Domingo Pondo, Ferrando, Marcono and Juan Martini.

the inaction of Alfonso XI concerning the request of Jaume III and Alfons IV. The trial begins in April 1330, and will be favourable to Bernat Murgull, who will receive from Nicolas Samarina 1,120 *lliures* and 9 *sous*.

A good example of the powerful activity of the Balearic colony in Anfa is the freight of the cog of Bernat Anselm in 1329 to carry “quoddam carigium frumenti” to Majorca³⁵ or Colliure, depending on the choice of the merchants, who would opt for the village of Roussillon. Once informed the juries of the island, they were intercepted near Alicante, and ordered to head to Majorca. Pere Figuera raised a lawsuit understanding that he had lost 700 *lliures* of the freight plus the 200 of the costs caused by retaining the goods two weeks in the dock of Portopí.³⁶

When the regency of the *infant* Felip came to an end, handing the kingdom over to Jaume III in 1329 in Zaragoza, the Crown of Majorca had, in the words of Alvaro Santamaria, the institutional strength, political stability, economic prosperity and, a century after its conquest, the highest population growth. There were attempts to alleviate the cereal crisis through the massive shipping of Balearic vessels to Atlantic ports, also frequented by Castilian captains to import mainly wheat, exporting quality cloths, cinnamon and medicinal products (ORTEGA 2008b: 173-179). All aimed to mitigate the damage caused by the entry of the kingdom of Majorca in the Catalan-Genoese war, a prelude to the difficult years that were yet to come for the throne. The response of the Majorcan society to the imposition decreed to cover the high cost of the galleys that had to be built and armed, was the preparation of a memorandum³⁷ where the damages suffered by the Balearic economy in the early stages of the conflict are detailed, highlighting the two hundred thousand *lliures* in which the damage caused by the Ligurians were estimated, or the wheat losses in the Atlantic ports, estimated in twenty thousand *lliures*, only for the year 1330.³⁸

³⁵ Not only was the archipelago supplied with Atlantic grain, but the captains of the island also cooperated with Valencian supplies by carrying wheat from Seville, such as Bonaiuncta Galiot: ...*Attenens esser a nos çert per Carta publica feyta per en Guillem de çeruia, notari de valencia, VIº nonas marcii, Anno domini Mº CCCº vicesimo VIIIº, que uos, en Gil de çiuera, en bonanat Redon e en Bernat Dezcoll fees venda an Ramon muntaner, an Berenguer de ripoll, an Bernat canou en an Salvador Rich, la donchs Jurats dela dita Ciutat, ço es saber, de DCCC fins en DCCCC kafissos de forment de mesura de Sebilía a obs dela uniuersitat dela dita ciutat, araho de XXXII solidos lo kafis de mesura de Valencia, sots certes condicions en la dita Carta contegudes. Attenens encara esser çert anos... per auctoritat dela dita venda fees aportar, ço es saber, en la cocha den Bonaiuncta Galiot, ciutada de Malorques, II mille CCL VI kafisos, unam fanecha de forment a mesura de Valencie...* Arxiu Històric Municipal de Valencia (AHMV) A-2, *Manuals de Consells*, fol. 109v.

³⁶ ARM, *Suplicacions*-7, fol. 273r: *Et cum dicta Nauis cum dicto suo carigio fuit in partibus maris de alacant preceptum fuit sibi, ex parte Berenguer de Sancta cilia militis gerens vices, verbas, sub pena corporis et bonorum suorum, quod ipse veniret hic in Maiorice cum dicta sua Cocha et cum rebus uectis in ea, quod factum fuit ad instanciam et requisitionem juratorum de Maiorice...*

³⁷ Arxiu Diocesà de Majorca (ADM), *Miscel-lànea* (MSL)-373, fol. 16r: *Aquestes son les rahons pers les quals la uniuersitat de Malorques a honor e faeltat del Senyor Rey e (...) a utilitat del Regne e dels sotzmeses seus aescusar que no poden fer major armada contrals (dits) jenoueses sino segons fo tractat e ordenat primerament perlos Senyors Reys de Malorques e Darago per los prohomens de barchinona.*

³⁸ They list the economic damages suffered by the Majorcan economy because of what they sometime denominate the *injusta guerra* (unjust war) with the Genoese. The debts of the kingdom with the monarch and other organizations amounted to 60,000 *lliures*; the Ligurians produced losses estimated in 200,000 *lliures*; another 100,000 had been

In this context, Arnau de Cardellach, lieutenant of Jaume III, granted licence to Bartomeu Gironés, Pere Guitard and Jaume Condomines on 23 March 1330, so that they might unload the cereal purchased in Anfa or at the beaches they deemed appropriate, reminding the crew of the unavoidable obligation to abide by their labour contract which requires them to navigate where the aforementioned merchants decided with the exception of enemy ports³⁹.

The fear of being involved in the war is justified because the cog of Bernat Pont and Berenguer Viader, under the command of Perico Cases from Cadiz, suffers the misfortune of being captured by Saracen galleys in the direct route Anfa-Majorca.⁴⁰ Their liberation by the army of Barcelona will be very damaging, for the load was considered of a Muslim origin and the grain and other goods sold in Alicante.⁴¹

In the midst of the confrontation with Genoa, the galleys of the Ligurian Lanfranqui Gisolfo and Horseto Escarsafiga departed on 17 September 1331, after two cogs from Bayonne, which once supplied in the harbour of Majorca, were headed to Flanders. They managed to overcome the boarding, yet the cog from Julián Escala was captured and taken to Almería with grain in its hold. On the 27, Pedro Tarín, warned by the consul of Málaga, notifies the Ligurian activities to the jurors of Valencia. They had arrived to Malaga with two victims: the cog from Bayonne *Den Colom*, stowed with wheat from Juan Negre purchased in Salé, for which they demanded a ransom of 2,000 golden doubloons, and the ship *Den Figuera*, captured in the port of Cadiz.⁴²

lost in the Flemish route and the amount of the negotiated and purchased Atlantic wheat damaged was 20,000 *lliures*. ADM, MSL-373, fol. 16v: **Item**, *es cert que layn passat molts e diuerses mercaders e nauegans del dit Regne foren molts dampnificats en una gran quantitat de forment dela playa que auien comprada e volien nauegar en diuerses parts, los quals dampnatges poden puja a vint Milla libras.*

³⁹ ARM, AH-436, fol. 113v: *Per latenor deles presents vos fem saber que nos, per causa, hauem licenciats en Berthomeu girones, en P. guitart, en Jacme de conomines, mercaders e Ciutadans de Malorches, losquals deuen carregar, deus ajudant, ladita Nau en lopresent viatge de gra a Niffe o en lesplages, que la dita Nau ab son carrech pusquen fer menar e portar la hon mes se uolran. Per que volem e ordenam e encara espressament manam auos e atots los mariners dela dita Nau que abayla(sic) e ab son carrech deiats anar drete uia la hon los dits mercaders vos manaran e segons que serets en couinenses ab eyls, no contrestan altre manament que daqui auant vos fos fet de part nostra. Exceptats, empero, lochs denemichs e qui son vedats per la cort del dit senyor Rey generalment...*

⁴⁰ ARM, AH-4389, fol. 12r: *Compereut denant nos en Bernat pont, mercader Ciutada de Malorches, dix e afferma que eyl en lany present trames pertent del port de malorches anan enles plages del port de niffe una cocha enlaqual aqueyl Bernat pont auia dues parts e laltre terça part era den Berenguer viader e dels companyons mercaders e Ciutadans de Malorches, del qual era patro en perico de cases, de cadis; en loqual loch de Niffe ladita cocha fo carregada de forment e daltres mercaderies per tornar a Maylorches e con aquela cocha, pertent del dit port deles plages vinent drete via a Malorchas, sia estada trobada en mar de hura epresa per galeres de corsaris sarrains.*

⁴¹ ARM, AH-4389, fol. 12r.: *Eles galees de la armada Reyala de barcelona agen aquela cocha tolt e presa de mans dels dits corsaris sarrains e aquela, ab tot lodit carech del forment e deles altres coses que enaquela eren, sen agenmenada el vostre loch de alacant, en aquella de tot lodit carech an des carregada e feta des carregar...*

⁴² Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó (ACA), *Cartes Reials*, Alfons III- n 1576: *...Senyors, uos fem saber que per I altre coreu uosen uiam I altre letra en queus sertificauem dabnatge que II galeas de jenoueses auien fet en esta mar. Eare, Senyors, uos fem asaber que diguous a XXVI iorns de Setembre reebem I letra quel consol de malicha nos en uia en quens feu asaber que a XXIII iorns del dit mes reabe letres dels mercados delmaria en que li feyen saber que les dites II galeas, de que son caps la franquí de(gi)nsolfó e horseto es carsa figa, entraren en al meria ab I nau den figera que prengueren al port de cadis e ab I cocha bayonescha den colom a X de setembre, la qual cocha del dit colom auia caragada de gra en (Johan) negre asale e que seia rescatada II^m dobles dor... SÁNCHEZ 1986: 431-462.*

Despite the aforementioned losses declared by the jurors in 1331, the Atlantic-African strongholds still imported goods, such as wheat and wax.⁴³ Corsair incidents on ships sailing to and from Nasrid and Portuguese territories reported the quantities and their estimation. The *Santa Catalina*, the *tarida* owned by Guillem Orts⁴⁴ commanded by his nephew Pere Gotmar, was freighted in 1331 by several merchants to navigate to Salé searching for cereal. The planned itinerary, always random and related to the willingness of freighters,⁴⁵ foresaw scales in Almería and Málaga.⁴⁶ The latter was the port where the Genoese Manuel Nigro pillaged and partly dismantled the ship, intending to use the wood for the cog he is arming together with Mohammed IV.⁴⁷ The intervention of the island authorities allowed the *tarida* to return home after purchasing in Málaga the necessary rigging in order to navigate back to Majorca⁴⁸ because it had become “inepta, destructa, male stagnam et sine cohoptera et arboribus et aliis exarciis”. With the *tarida* reconstructed, on 15 August 1332, Pere Gotmar agrees with Bernat Febrer to obtain grain in Salé, and set again destination course to the Nasrid ports at a rate of four and a quarter doubloons of freight per each *cahíz* of grain according to the measures of Salé,⁴⁹ that is, the price already fixed in the unfortunate precedent journey.

The participation of foreign ships in the Balearic trade proofs the extreme need of grain of the island. In December 1332, Esteban Maladi, a captain from Lisbon, requests Jaume III to revoke the ban hanging over his cog due to the accusation of Ferrer de Comabela, in order to initiate his journey to Flanders. The origin of this claim can be found in Anfa. Bernat Pi, merchant and agent

⁴³ The importance of the Atlantic market for the economy of the kingdom of Majorca is such that Jaume III does not hesitate in appealing in his *Leges Palatinae*, written in 1337, to the Marinid Sultan in order to exemplify the correspondence models that the chancery should use to address to the Saracen monarchs: *Regibus uero Sarracenis scribitur in lingua materna ut melius legantur eisdem per mercatores uel alios laycos quod in litteris continetur: Al molt alt e excellent princep Albutequier, Rey de maroc. De nos en Jacme, per la gracia de deu Rey de malorches. Saluts axi con a Rey per qui uolem honor e molta boauentura... Similar treatment was given to the English market, appearing in this case the archbishop of Canterbury in the letters addressed to the archbishops: *Primatibus autem sic scribitur: Reuerendo in Christi patri domino G., dei gratia Cantuariensem archiepiscopo anglieque primati. Jacobus etc... ut supra de patriarchis.**

⁴⁴ The *tarida* had been built on the shore of Palma by the *mestre d'aixa* (shipwright) Joan Colliure in 1328 and intended to Mediterranean navigation.

⁴⁵ MARUGÁN 1988: 297-305, published part of the source (fols. 31r-32v). The mention of the ports of Granada led to the supposition of a stable route between the Balearic Islands and the Atlantic, connected with the Nasrid kingdom. The truth is that such layovers were not common in the managed documentation, for the freighters preferring a direct navigation to the Majorcan enclaves of the oceanic coast. Ligurian privateering based in Granada is maintained until 1333, when the war was declared to Genoa and Gibraltar was sieged.

⁴⁶ ARM, Suplicacions-8, fols. 31r-35v: (31r) ...*supplicando aserit Guillelmus de ortis, ciuis Maiorice, Dicens quod nuper ipse nauleauit quandam suam taritam quibusdam mercatoribus Maiorice causa eundi apud almariam et malicam ubi debebat exonerare aliquas merces, et inde recedendo debebat ire apud Sale causa onerandi ibidem de grano, et vehendi et ducendi ad terram Maiorice...*

⁴⁷ Ibid.: ...*Et accidit quod cum dicta tarita esset in portu Malicha, sub fide et fiducia Regis granate, et in eodem portu esset quedam cocha manuelis de negro, januensem, in qua dictus Rex Granate medietatem pro indiuiso habebat...*

⁴⁸ According to the *remolars* (carpenters specialized in making oars), shipwrights and captains during the round of depositions, the value loss suffered by the *tarida* is evident, because when it arrived to port they affirmed that they would not have given more than a hundred *lliures* for it, when new it would be acquired by eight hundred.

⁴⁹ ARM, Suplicacions-8, loose fol. -C-

of a Majorcan company with a subsidiary in Seville, received in Majorca 1,640 golden doubloons to invest in the cereal import with the cog of Clara Domínguez, from Sevilla, and the Portuguese Julián Domínguez, commanded by the aforementioned Esteban Maladi.⁵⁰ They agreed on a freight valued in 16 or 17 silver *grossos* per *cahíz* of grain unloaded in Majorca.⁵¹ With the wheat in the hold and already on journey, rumours concerning the presence of Genoese privateers—who had seized the cog of the Castilian Juan Fos—reached them in the Cape of Palos.⁵² Given the potential danger of suffering the same fate, the merchant and the patron agreed to rectify their course and set sail to Lisbon, not before reducing approximately 40% of the agreed freight, also reducing the rate to 10 *grossos/cahíz*. The weather conditions also turned out to be adverse and a storm kept them moored during three weeks, period in which Bernat Pi fell seriously ill, and upon arrival, shortly before his death, he ordered to unload the cereal.⁵³ Reason why his partners in Seville consigned an envoy to urge in Lisbon the return of the grain.

The following years are of generalized conflict and the sources clearly show the difficulties that the Balearic trade had within a framework of open hostility. The Ligurian front and the instability in the Strait was aggravated by the end of the peace agreement with Granada and the Marinid conflict. Once the conflict with Genoa came to an end, the Islamic front remained open and the diplomacy of Jaume III sealed new deals with Granada –1336– and Tunisia –1337–. However, the reconciliation with the Marinid⁵⁴ was not closed until 15 April 1339, when the Majorcan legation

⁵⁰ Ibid., fol. 15r : *...humiliter supplicando significant geraldus lexoni, Nicholo de Rustico, Bartholomeus guillelmi, Bernardum Ferrari, Jacobus Roso, mercatorum maiorice, dicentes quod Symon de banino et P. Bertdi, mercatorum ciuis maioricarum, qui propositi sunt per mercatorum maioricarum ad nauleandum et conducendum naues pro viagio flandarum nalearunt et conduxerunt pro dictis mercatoribus quandam chocam que est cuiusdam mulieris vocate clare dominguis, castelle, et filiorum suorum nec non et Juliani dominguis, Regni portugalie, quam quidem cocham ducit et est in ea magister Stephanus maldii, Regni predicti...*

⁵¹ ARM, Codex 153, fols. 13r-v: *Existentis Stephanus maldii, Regni portugalie magistris cuiusdam nauis Choque vocate Sanctus Nicholaus... ..*

⁵² The ship that suffered the pillaging was the cog of the Castilian Juan Fos.

⁵³ ARM, Codex 153, fols. 13r-v: *...aduxit quoddam carricum tritici dicti ferrarii a loco de Niffe apud portogal, quod carricum dictus Stephanus portare debebat hic in maioricarum quod salua magestatis vestre regie Reuerencia minime continet veritatem. Nam cum dictus Ferrarius nauleasset uel conduxisset cocham dicti Stephani, idem Stephanus eidem assignauit pro mercatore et factore suo Bernardum pini, ciuem maiorice, quem proposuit Regimini et negociatus in predicti frumenti qui cum dicto Stephanus nauigauit et Transfretauit Recedendo de maiorice usque ad locum de niffe, de partibus barbarie, qui Bernardus in dicto loco de niffe honerari fecit quantum de visum fuit de tritico omnia apportandi apud maiorice...*

⁵⁴ The confrontation is initiated when two Majorcan cogs assault a Saracen galley in 1333, and the response of Abu-l-Hasan is meant to be strong. In 1334 he seized in his lands goods worth 18,000 golden doubloons, the value captured in the aforementioned galley. The conflict continues over time and includes the attempt of assault to the harbour of the City of Mallorques on Saturday, 22 August 1338. Informers of Algiers, Cherchell, Honein, Mestghamen and Seville notify of the intentions of Abu-l-Hasan to punish the Balearic coast, and especially its capital, with a large fleet of thirty-five or forty units and four Guelph galleys expected in mid-August for the feast of St. Mary. ARM, AH-1, f. 94v: *Rogierius de Rouenacho etc... Locum tenenti Minorice. Tenore presentium vobis significamus certa noua habere de algeer, de Sarcello, de hone, de Mostagani et de Sibia per litteras plurium mercatorum et ab aliquibus patronis lignorum ac etiam a duobus spiis nostris que de illis partibus reuenerunt quod Rex Garbi facit congregacionem de XXXV ad XL vela, inter que erunt viginti Galee grosse et ultra, cum quibus... debent esse quatuor Galee januensium guelforum de quibus dicitur quod venient ad offendendum insulas Regni Maioricarum, et debent esse congregate et ad recedendum parate circa festum Sancte Marie mensis augusti...* ORTEGA 2008b: 87,179,180.

led by the Viscount of Narbonne, Dalmau de Castellnou, and Hugo de Totzó, sealed an agreement with the Marinid monarch in the palace of Tlemcen, ensuring the subjects of both kingdoms, their goods, protection and freedom of movement, except weapons, wheat, leather and horses, which led to the closure of the Moroccan grain market⁵⁵ and the end of the aforementioned Maghreb, for it explicitly vetoed vital products to confront a state of war.⁵⁶ To these facts, the arbitrariness of the fleet of Admiral Jofre Tenorio is added, which Alfonso XI alleviates by providing an assurance letter to the Majorcans.⁵⁷

The last years of the reign of Jaume III are therefore precarious to the islands due to the resolute attitude of his brother-in-law to take over the archipelago, with the corresponding blockade in the form of privateering and the interdict of grain import, both African and Italian, causing the shortage of wheat on the island. Therefore, the lieutenant, under royal precept, determined in March 1339 the compulsory unload in the city of Majorca of any ship arriving to any of the ports in the archipelago,⁵⁸ which forced foreign ships to moor up the coast, fearing the foreseeable blockade against the subjects of Pere IV. This was the case of the *San Antonio*, a two deck cog owned by Miquel Scola of Barcelona, who will anchor in Ses Salines with ten thousand *cuarteras* of wheat and fifteen hundred of barley; or the *San Antonio*, a ship from Bayonne, owned by the catalan Jaume Serra which in May, “*veniens de partibus insule Sardinie onerata pro maiori parte frumento*”, berths at Capdepera. Both the ships will obtain the suitable safe-conduct from the lieutenant Roger de Rovenach who, at the request of the jurors, supported the seizure in Autumn, prior economic compensation, of all the grain arriving to the Majorcan coast.⁵⁹

Forced again by his interests, Pere IV, a few months after signing the aforementioned trade agreement with Abu-l-Hasan, will again declare war, although he will first warn him that

⁵⁵ This standard will be repeated by Pere IV in the final phase of harassment of Majorca when he suspended the North African supplies of grain. The negotiations between Jaume III and Abu-l-Hasan were affected by the messengers that the former submitted to the Marinid court, fact which raises the suspicion of the Majorcan king and the immediate dispatch of a new emissary.

⁵⁶ Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), *Latin 9261*, 37: *...Item, quels mercaders del Seyor Rey de malorcha no trauen dela terra del Seyor Rey don Abolchiçen cauayls ni armes ni blat ni cuyrs salats ni adobats, sos asaber, cuyrs de bous e debochs, etotes altres coses hie pugen trer que mercaderies sien pagan los mercaders los dretz e marxens segons costuma corrent enles terres del damondit Seyor Rey don Abaichaçen...*

⁵⁷ ARM, Codex 1, fs. 110v-112r.

⁵⁸ ARM, AH-1, fs. 255r-v: *...al patro e al scriua e notxer e als mariners expres manament sots pena de cors e dauer que decontinent deguessen venir dreta via per descarregar al moll de Mallorques. E si no eren sots meses del dit Senyor Rey que per la pus secreta manera que poguessets vos ensenyorissets del Nauili qual que fos prenen los la barcha, lo patro, scriua e notxers e tots altrs mariners e aquells deguessets anos trametre decontinent...*

⁵⁹ ARM, AH-1, f. 359r: *Denos en Roger de Rouenach etc... als faels eamats tots esengles sots meses del dit Senyor Rey, patrons de naus de coches de lenys e de tots altres nauilis portans forment, ordi als quals les presens peruendran. Salut etc... Per tenor deles presens uos fem saber que en la Ciutat e en lo Regne de Mayorchas agran fretura de blat, per que ad instancia dels jurats de Mayorches de part del dit Senyor Rey, deym emanam espressament sots pena de cors e dauers, aquascun de uosaltres que ab vostres naus, coches, lenys o altres nauilis, sens mudar altre viatge deiats venir dreta via al port de Mayorches per descarregar aquí vostre carrech. Certificam uos que uos prohuehirem aquascun de uosaltres sobre guany couinent faedor enles dites coses axi consera de egalat eraho ental guisa ques en porets contentar...*

everything has been done to avoid it, in an attempt to preserve trade. In consequence, the policy of confrontation that Alfonso XI and Pere IV performed against the Marinid forced Jaume III to send –on the early summer of 1341– Andreu Vilafalet to *deffisar lo Rey desgarp*. For this purpose he requests the collaboration of Pedro de Moncada, admiral of the Aragonese fleet, for an effective evacuation of Majorcan subjects.⁶⁰

Majorcan merchants who had traditionally negotiated in these strongholds and after the final closure of the Atlantic African market had emigrated to Portugal, placed their hopes in those *illes noueylament trobades enles parts de ponent*.⁶¹ As an epilogue, it has to be underlined that only after the kingdom is taken by Pere the Cerimonious, would African strongholds return to normal and the insular community based in Anfa resume its activities.⁶² Such is the case of the captains Pere Garbi, Guillem Maimón and Pere Ros who in 1344 would agree with Moorish merchants to transport wheat to Ceuta; however, infringing the agreement, they resolved to trade it to Majorca due to the secular grain need afflicting the archipelago. This irregularity was detected by the island authorities who recorded the value of the confiscated goods on a changing table, with a view to its return, for they did not want to disrupt the wheat trade.⁶³

In conclusion, it can be inferred from the preceding pages that there is a need to expand the geographic spaces traditionally surveyed by historiography regarding the grain market. A highly sensitive area as the Strait of Gibraltar had focused the interest due to military matters and the large-scale opening of trade exchange between the two economic poles of 14th-century Europe: Mediterranean maritime powers in opposition to London and Bruges.

⁶⁰ ARM, AH-2, f. 61v: *Al molt noble epoderos Senyor en P. de moncada, caualer e almirayl del estol ho armada del molt alt princeps e Senyor lo Senyor en Pere, per la gracia de deu Rey Darago, ho al vis almirayl ho capita ho altre loctinent ho procurador del dit noble almirayl als quals les presens peruendran. Roger de Rouenach, Caualer etc... Saluts ab tot apperelament de seruehi e donor. Con de part deldit Senyor nostre Rey monsenyor vaia cert misatge per deffisar lo Rey desgarp, per la qual cosa los mercaders de Mallorcha e altres sotmeses del dit Senyor nostre Rey aien atrer lus robes e mercaderies que an en les teres del dit Rey desgarp per que los conue trametre los vexels e Nauelis ales teres del dit Rey desgarp per trer ne lus robes e mercaderies ayxi quant es dit elurs companyons, emacips e fasedors...*

⁶¹ Five licences are issued in April 1342 for the expedition that sets sail from the bay of Majorca towards the Canary isles, studied by Romeu de Armas and Gabriel Llompart Moragues. For a first approach to the families involved in the Atlantic African trade see ORTEGA 2010: 601-610.

⁶² However, there is scant documentation between the years 1343 and 1347. Only the *Exida de Sarrains* of 1344 attests to the departure of Mahomet, a Saracen slave of Bernat Desclapers to Safi. The protocols of Pere Antich, Bernat Olives, Francesc Batlle or Guillem Pere Tasoni, preserved in the Chapter Archive of Majorca, contextualize the intensity of the trade exchange.

⁶³ Since the agreement was not fulfilled, Pere Borrell was retained, and he appealed for his release to the consul and merchants settled in this village. The beginning of the transfer of the aforementioned appeal is eloquent: *pro Petro borelli qui remansit pro Racena in loco de Niffe pro Cocha Petri garbini et aliorum que fuerat onerata ibi grano. ARM, AH-5, fs. 296v-297r: De nos narnau darill, Governador general dela Ciutat e Regne de Mallorques e delas yles aaquella adjacens per lo molt alt Senyor Rey Darago, als discrets e amats el Consol e mercaders de niffe. Saluts e dileccio. Ffem vos saber que hauem vistes vostres letres continents que XXII dies de janer era deuant vos comparegut en P. borell lo qual era Romas enlodit loch de niffe per Recena de I^a Cocha den P. garbi e den Guillem maymo e den P. Ros, patrons, laqual hauia carragat enlo dit loch de niffe de gra de mercaders moros per pasar e descarragar aquell en Septe; e que con ladita Cocha ab lodit gra sia en apres venguda e juncta, segons que deys a Mallorques...*

The birth of the Kingdom of Majorca will predispose its merchants to an Atlantic vocation. The bull granted by Gregory IX in 1240 at the request of Prince Pedro of Portugal, will open the Muslim markets to those Majorcans who aimed to maintain economic areas not subjected to the interests of other peoples and therefore, the inclusion of the Marinid coastal navigation will allow the operation of a virgin grain market such as the Atlantic coast for the Christians.

The volume of the trade is such that, in 1331, due to the forced participation of Majorcans in the war against Genoa, the island merchants will report losses up to 20,000 *lliures*, only concerning the wheat from the Atlantic. The commercial companies established in the area are, as Madurell Marimon's classical division states, of a medium size with average investments of 3,000 *lliures*, against companies which operate in the Mediterranean Maghreb whose capital did not usually reach 1,000, a clear indicator of the economic relevance of the Atlantic market for the economy of Majorca.



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