

PROVISION AND CONSUMPTION OF FISH IN A CATALAN INLAND CITY DURING THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES: THE CASE OF LLEIDA

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the different supply methods of fish to an inland city in Catalonia. We have focused on Lleida, an inland city of the Crown of Aragon located at the confluence between Catalonia and Aragon. Although it is not near the sea, it is surrounded by rivers and canals which were also an important source of fish. What happened in Lleida is compared with other nearby towns such as Balaguer and La Seu d'Urgell as well as other areas like the middle part of the river Ebro. The article tackles the problem of which fish were consumed —marine and fresh water species—, the routes used to supply sea fish to the western Catalan inland cities and the principal fishing techniques practiced in rivers, lakes and canals.

KEYWORDS

Fishing, fish market, Lleida, inland, fish supply, Crown of Aragon.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Piscatio, Mercatus piscatorius, Ilerda, Terra interior, Supplementum piscarium, Corona Aragonum.

1. Introduction¹

Not much is known about fishing and fish supply in inner cities, products like meat, bread and wine have been studied more than fish; however, recently more studies have appeared trying to fill this gap.² As we will see, fish was very important in medieval diet due to the Christian calendar and sea fish played an important role in that diet. Coastal cities did not have many problems as fish was very accessible but for many inland cities provision of fish and fishing were an important part of their Council debates.

This article focuses on Lleida, an inland city of the Crown of Aragon located at the confluence between Catalonia and Aragon. In the research for this article we have used municipal documents from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is important to note that Lleida's Municipal Council Acts have been preserved in the municipal archive since 1340 and that might be the reason why some references to fish and to the local fish market are so late. To fill this gap, we have used medieval crime prosecution records (*Llibres de Crims*) —a documental series which starts in 1308— the *Consuetudines Ilerdenses* (1228), thirteenth century wills, privileges and the ordinations of several surrounding villages, among others.

2. The consumption of fish in the interior of Catalonia

In Christian lands the religious calendar imposed some sacrifices related to food which were followed and well known by the people. In fact, in the lands of the Crown of Aragon there were between 140 and 160 days which had alimentary restrictions.³ During the days of abstinence fish was the principal ingredient in all the tables, however on fast days, fish and meat were prohibited and the diet was mainly governed by bread and wine accompanied with vegetables —like cabbage or

1. I want to thank the archivists of the Arxiu Capitular and Arxiu Municipal of Lleida for their help in the search of images and documents. For the scientific name of many fish species we have mainly used: Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo Noroccidental durante la baja edad media", *La pesca en la Edad Media*. Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2009: 121-143. The other works used are cited in the footnote. Used abbreviations: ACA, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó; ACL, Arxiu Capitular de Lleida; AML, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida; BNE, Biblioteca Nacional de España.

2. Pujol, Marcel. "La pesca a l'Empordà durant l'Antic Règim (segles VIII-XIX): una visió sintètica", *Annals de l'institut d'Estudis Empordanesos*, 46 (2015): 136. See for example *La pesca en la Edad Media...*; Alegret, Joan Lluís; Garrido, Alfons, eds. *Per a una història de la pesca dels Països Catalans. Recerca i reflexions historiogràfiques*. Girona: Universitat de Girona-Museu de la pesca, 2018.

3. Vilanova, Arnau de. *Arnaldi de Villanova Opera Medica Omnia. X.I. Regimen sanitatis ad regem Aragonum*, ed. Luis García-Ballester, Michael McVaugh. Barcelona: Publicacions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 1996: 231. See also Mutgé, Josefa. "L'abastament de peix i carn a la Barcelona en el primer terç del segle XIV", *Alimentació i societat a la Catalunya Medieval*. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1988: 109-110.

broad beans— and cheese.⁴ A third of all the fresh fish consumed during the whole year was eaten during Lent, i.e. during one month of Lent in 1434 seven million sardines passed through the *lleuda* tax of Barcelona.⁵ Nevertheless, abstinence was not always obeyed, Flocel Sabaté advises about the diversity of situations, rules and practices carried out in Catalonia and the impossibility of generalization.⁶ In relation to this we have an interesting example when the City Council of Lleida, which in 1427, a few days before the beginning of Lent, complained about the scarcity of fish with the following words:

*Acordaren los dits prohomens que com per la fretura del peix que no hic ve se seguisque a la ciutat e a les persones de aquella gran dapnatge e axí a les ànimes com als corsors, and the document finishes; com molts per la dita freta mengen carn que non mengarien si ni havie abundància.*⁷

Nevertheless, fish was an important food for medieval people not just during Lent or other religious festivities but throughout year.⁸ This can be seen by analysing municipal ordinations, when authorities taxed fish differently for Lent or Fridays than for meat (*carnal*) when there were no religious alimentary restrictions. It can be seen in many Catalan cities, for example in the municipal ordinations of Balaguer (1313-1337), where tuna was sold for 10 *pences* for *pound* during Lent and for 8 *pences* during *carnal*, periods when meat could be eaten.⁹ Also in Sant Celoni sardines were cheaper during *carnal* and in Lleida, during Lent in 1440,¹⁰ the Council increased the price of some fish due to sellers petitions while other fish was

4. Sabaté, Flocel. “Menjar amb el veguer (segle XIV segona meitat)”. *Les Etudes Roussillonaises*, 11 (1992): 55-63.

5. Pujol, Marcel. “Tecnologia i pesca a la Baixa Edat Mitjana: les embarcacions de pesca i l’art de la batuda a la costa catalana”. *Barcelona Quaderns d’Història*, 21 (2014): 155; Salicrú, Roser. “En torno al comercio de pescado atlántico ibérico en el Mediterráneo catalanoaragonés del siglo XV”, *La pesca en la Edad Media*. Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 2009: 167.

6. Sabaté, Flocel. “Menjar amb el veguer...”: 62-63.

7. “The noblemen agreed that because of the scarcity of fish that does not arrive here, the consequence to the city and to its citizens is a great damage to their souls and also to their hearts” / “due to this shortage many eat meat that they would not eat if there was plenty of it (fish)”: AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Consells Particulars, 1420-1423, reg. 408, f. 17v.

8. Curto, Albert. “El consum de peix a la Tortosa baix-medieval”, *Ir Col·loqui d’Història de l’Alimentació a la Corona d’Aragó*. Lleida: Institut d’Estudis Ilerdencs, 1995: II, 149-150.

9. *Ítem tonyina, de cuaresma X diners la liura, e de carnal VIII diners la liura* (“Also tuna, for Lent 10 *pences* each pound and for carnal 8 *pences* each pound”). The same difference was made with *congre*, *corball*, *reig*, *amfós*, *carina*, *musols*, *lops*, *lices*, *orades*, *palomides*, etc. See Carreras Candi, Francesc. “Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer (1313-1337) (Continuació)”. *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 12/90-91 (1926): 421; for a recent transcription with corrections Cuellas, Robert. *El “Llibre de Costums, Privilegis i Ordinacions” de la ciutat de Balaguer*. Lleida: Universitat de Lleida, 2012: 169-179.

10. Carreras Candi, Francesc. “Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Sant Celoni (any 1370)”. *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 12/86 (1926): 147.



kept at the same price, *al fer qui-s acostume de venre en temps de carnal*.¹¹ Salted fish was a basic and cheap food consumed by poorer sectors of the population even outside the religious calendar.¹²

Some types of fish were considered an exquisite food and often had a place on the royal tables. Princess Mata d'Armanyac, first wife of King John I, had a very fine taste and liked mussels from Tarragona, oysters and langoustines from the coast of Girona and whale calf; while from the river she ate trout, sturgeons, salmon and lampreys among others. The majority of this fish came from the coast of Girona, the coastline controlled by Tortosa, and other points of the country, especially trout from Aragon and lampreys and sturgeons from the rivers Ebro, Llobregat and Mataró.¹³ In the book known as the *Llibre de Sent Soví* we can find some fish recipes that might help us to understand how this sophisticated food was prepared. Some examples are conger sauce, lamprey pie or stuffed octopus.¹⁴ Generally, these dishes were served like pastries or in casseroles seasoned with spices like ginger, different types of pepper, saffron and galangal.¹⁵

Some recipes used to preserve fish can be found in the *Llibre de Sent Soví*, like *escabetx*¹⁶ or *geladia*; the last one was made with sweet wine (*vi grec*), vinegar, water and spices, all put on top of the cooked fish.¹⁷ In fact, a *geladia* was the sauce prepared to preserve the sturgeon from Tortosa sent to princess Mata d'Armanyac when she could not have live fish.¹⁸

Physicians like Jaume d'Agramont (d. 1348) —a professor of medicine in Lleida's *Studium Generale*— or Lluís Alcanyís (d. 1506) —a fifteenth-century physician from Valencia who probably studied in Lleida—,¹⁹ advised against *bastinal* fish, that

11. "as it is usually sold during 'carnal'": AML. Fons Municipal. *Llibre d'Actes del Consell General*, 1439-1440, reg. 415, f. 34v. For Tortosa see: Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 152.

12. Pujol, Marcel. "Tecnologia i pesca...": 155-156; Aparisi, Frederic. "La pesca durant l'edat mitjana a través de les fonts literàries catalanes", *Nuevos estudios multidisciplinarios sobre historia y cultura medieval. Fuentes, metodología y problemas*. Murcia: Editum-Universidad de Murcia, 2012: 18.

13. Trenchs, Josep. "El peix a la taula de la princesa Mata d'Armanyac: Els capritxos i gustos d'una infanta", *Ir Col·loqui d'Història de l'Alimentació a la Corona d'Aragó*. Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, 1995: II, 309-328.

14. *Llibre de Sent Soví*, ed. Joan Santanach. Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 2006: 82, 105, 114; Aparisi, Frederic. "La pesca durant l'edat mitjana...": 16-17.

15. Nola, Ruberto de. *Libro de cozina*. Toledo: Ramon de Petras a costas y despensas de Diego Perez Dauila, 1525 (BNE. Sede de Recoletos, reg. 6918, ff. 116r-146r).

16. *Escabetx* it is not actually the name of a dish; rather, it is a way of preserving food with a base of vinegar that is, moreover, used as a kind of marinade.

17. *Llibre del Sent Soví*...: 64.

18. This can be understood from the text quoted by Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 154, in which the princess asks for some sturgeons: *Fet-les aquí coure ab vinagre e ab bon vi, mitg per mitg, amb una petita de sal, e com sien aquí cuytes, metets-les en una olla o en dues, amb vinagre e conservar sau fins ací, bé e sien envidriades les dites olles on vendran* ("cook them here with vinegar and good wine, half of each, and a little bit of salt, once cooked put them in a casserole or two with vinegar and preserve them until here, and the casseroles where you put them should be glazed"). ACA. reg. 1814, f. 71r.

19. Alcanyís, Lluís. *Regiment preservatiu e curatiu de la pestilències*, ed. Jon Arrizabalaga. Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 2008: 42.



means fish without scales, like: eel, tuna, dolphin and *mussola* (*mustelus mustelus*). On the other hand, they recommend sea fish like salmon, sturgeon, *moll* (*Mullus surmuletus*), *pagell* (*Pagellus erythrinus*) and *pelaia* (*Citharus linguatula* or *Solea vulgaris vulgaris*)²⁰. These fish should be cooked in a simple way, using only the grill and a powder—as Alcanyís said—made from: cinnamon, ginger, cloves and saffron during winter, and just vinegar in summer.²¹ Likewise, Jaume d'Agramont proposed two similar preparations: vinegar and *sols*, the last one is a receipt that appears in the *Llibre de Sent Soví*:²²

*Si vols fer sols a què et vulles, a carn o a peix, pren de la carn o del peix frit e fets-ne trossos, e gita'ls en vinagre; e dessús gita primerament farigola. E si vols lo sols cald, hages pebre e safrà e vinagre, e del brou de la carn o del peix, e ceba tallada, e detrempla-ho tot e gita-ho dessús.*²³

Even though many of the species mentioned are from the sea, there was not a clear opinion among physicians about which type of fish, sea or fresh water, was better.²⁴ Also different preparations can be found in the *regimina sanitatis*, like, for example, the recommendations that Arnau de Vilanova gave to the king of Aragon, James II, in his work *Regimen Sanitatis ad Regem Aragonum* written in 1308.²⁵

Even though there was not a clear opinion among physicians the documents show us a preference for sea fish, even in the interior lands.²⁶ The *veguer*—who was the king's officer in a certain demarcation—and his assistants went across the territory administrating justice. During their travels, they ate whatever there was in the town's market and registered all the costs in their account books.²⁷ The study about their diet shows us they ate fish when the religious calendar forced them to but outside these times, meat was the dominant ingredient in all meals.²⁸ All their

20. Palaia is *Citharus linguatula*, Pelaia or llenguado is *Solea vulgaris vulgaris*, see Alegre, Montserrat; Leonart, Jordi; Veny, Joan. *Espècies pesqueres d'interès comercial. Nomenclatura oficial catalana*. Sùria: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1992: 33-34; Duran, Miquel. "L'ús dels mots 'palaia' i 'llenguado' segons els ictiòlegs". *Estudis romànics*, 31 (2009): 323-326.

21. Alcanyís, Lluís. *Regiment preservatiu*...: 89-90. Curiously, summer preparations remember us of a typical Mediterranean receipt, *boqueró* (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) with vinegar.

22. Agramont, Jaume de. *Regiment de preservació de pestilència*, ed. Joan Veny. Tarragona: Publicaciones de la Excelentísima Diputación Provincial de Tarragona, 1971: 81.

23. "If you want to prepare *sols* with what you want, meat or fish, take fried meat or fish and cut it in pieces and put it in vinegar; after, first put thyme. And if you want to prepare *sols* hot, add pepper and saffron and vinegar and dissolve it in meat or fish broth with chopped onion and put it on the top": *Llibre de Sent Soví*...: 75.

24. Vilanova, Arnau de. *Arnaldi de Villanova*...: 232-233.

25. See Aparisi, Frederic. "La pesca durant l'edat mitjana...": 15-16.

26. Clearly noblemen preferred sea fish before salted or dried and ideally cooked with olive oil. See Riera, Antoni. "Jerarquía social y desigualdad alimentaria en el Mediterráneo noroccidental en la Baja Edad Media. La cocina y la mesa de los estamentos privilegiados". *Acta histórica et archaeologica mediaevalia*, 16-17 (1996): 192-193.

27. Sabaté, Flocel. "Menjar amb el veguer...": 55-56.

28. Sabaté, Flocel. "Menjar amb el veguer...": 68-69.



fish was cooked with oil or water thus avoiding any kind of animal fat.²⁹ Normally, the fish consumed was sea fish —salted or fresh— even in the inland territories like Roussillon and Berguedà.³⁰ Sometimes they had problems finding fish in the inland territories, like in the Camp de Tarragona or in the Roussillon, so they carried their fish with them.³¹ The documented species are conger, sardine, hake, *sard* (*Diplodus sargus*) and *moll*, all sea fishes. Just in some places —like Vallespir— fresh water fish appears and it is always trout.³²

Equally the analysis of municipal ordinations from inland cities like Balaguer, La Seu d'Urgell or Lleida provides more information about sea species than fresh water ones. For example, the ordinations from Valls³³ mention sardines and *bequeruts* (*Paralepis coregonoides*) and in the ordinations from Balaguer, although the text begins: *Primerament, que, tot pescador de la dita ciutat, sie tengut de vendre peix si l'ha, si és d'aygua dolç, o de mar, o d'estany, o encara tot peix salat...*³⁴, the seventy species taxed seem to be sea fish —even though so not all have been identified—³⁵ and there is no mention to fresh water fish —except sturgeon, which live in both rivers and salty waters, and a general reference to fish from ponds. Those species were not displayed daily, which is impossible due to their seasonal nature, but they were taxed as they could be sold in the inland cities fish markets.

2.1 Two cases to studying consumption of fish in Lleida

Throughout the pages of the *Llibre de Crims* (the records from Lleida's *curia* which was formed by two *paers*, municipal councilors, and the *cort i veguer*, the king's representative like his vicar),³⁶ we find some references to fish consumption. Specifically, we want to show two cases in which fish took an important role in the story and is described with some precisions, something unusual in this kind of texts.

The first case is from 1385, when around February the notary Andreu Cardós attacked Francesca while she was preparing dough for bread. As a result, she was severely injured but —as a commission formed by a physician and three surgeons

29. Sabaté, Flocel. "Menjar amb el veguer...": 69-70.

30. Sabaté, Flocel. "Menjar amb el veguer...": 69.

31. Sabaté, Flocel. "Un sistema alimentari de viatge a la segona meitat del segle XIV", *Ir Col·loqui d'Història de l'Alimentació de la Corona d'Aragó*. Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, 1995: II, 376.

32. Sabaté, Flocel. "Menjar amb el veguer...": 69.

33. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern de Catalunya. Ordinacions de Valls (1299-1325) (Continuació)". *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 12/88 (1926): 291.

34. "Firstly, that any fisherman from the city should sell fish, if he has it, from fresh water, the sea, a pond or even salted...": Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 419.

35. See appendix.

36. Sabaté, Flocel. "El Cort a Catalunya". *Acta historica et archaeologica Mediaevalia*, 22 (2001): 351-372; Sabaté, Flocel. "El veguer a Catalunya, anàlisi del funcionament de la jurisdicció reial al segle XIV". *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics*, 6 (1995): 147-159; Sabaté, Flocel. *Història de Lleida. Vol. 2. Alta Edat Mitjana*. Lleida: Pagès Editors, 2003: 228-231.



said—her life was not in danger.³⁷ The physician was Nadal Lebri, a famous professor of the *Studium Generale*, who in some occasions treated kings and wrote a medical book which has been lost.³⁸ It is not rare to find professors of medicine doing this kind of expert's report, *desospitacions*,³⁹ in Lleida.

The medical examination was carried out due to the petition of the *honrat religiós frare*⁴⁰ Bartomeu Cardós, the brother of the accused. It is probably the reason why the medical prognosis was so positive. Nevertheless, at the end of March, while Francesca was in the charge of the surgeon Ramon Ponç and the barber Arnau Ferrer she suddenly died. After she passed away the doctors explained to the authorities that Francesca had died because of her bad behavior, considering that the wound in her side had already healed and the wound to her head was almost closed. Ramon Ponç, the surgeon, considered her bad behavior to be due to the consumption of *mussola* and other types of fish and drinking wine, all things strictly prohibited to her. Arnau Morella, the barber, gave a less specific explanation, saying instead that she had eaten seasoned feet (probably mutton) with vinegar and fish from the river Segre with garlic and oil. A witness added that she saw her eating seasoned feet, *mussola* with sauce, *cigales* (*Scyllarus arctus*) and *molls* (*Mullus surmuletus*) and that she had drunk strong wine. Finally, Bosca, a woman who took care of the patient, agreed that she had given her some *lagostineta* (*Penaus kerathurus* or *Palinurus vulgaris*) and also a little bit of mutton foot and wine with water (*amerat*) but all following the advice of the physician.

The doctors pointed at river fish and *bastinal* fish as the cause of her death as they were not recommended for a convalescent, *per tal si mes-la febre e aquella la ha morta*—as the surgeon Ramon Ponç confirmed.⁴¹ Surprisingly a lot of the fish mentioned in the process are marine species and it seems certain that in 1385 the citizens of Lleida could consume sea fish regularly, even though the city is 100 km away from the nearest coastline. This affirmation is confirmed by Jaume d'Agramont's already mentioned recommendations from his work to prevent the Black Death.⁴² In a similar manner the physician Lluís Alcanyís also recommended consuming sea fish, preferably small and with scales, and to avoid tuna, eels and fish from lakes and

37. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1385, reg. 791, ff. 106v-107r.

38. García-Ballester, Luis. *Artifex factivus sanitatis. Saberes y ejercicio profesional de la medicina en al Europa pluricultural de la baja edad media*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2004: 130; Camps Clemente, Manuel; Camps Surroca, Manuel. "Nadal Lembri, mestre en Arts i Medicina, professor de l'Estudi General de Lleida". *Gimbernat*, 30 (1998): 111-117.

39. *Dessospitació* means literally taken out of suspicion of dying or losing members. See Ferragud, Carmel. "Expert examination of wounds in the Criminal court of justice in Cocentaina (Kingdom of Valencia) during the Late Middle Age", *Medicine and the law in the Middle Ages*, Wendy J. Turner, Sara M. Butler, eds. Leiden: Brill, 2014: 109-132.

40. "Honest religious brother".

41. "So she had fever and it has killed her".

42. See note 22.



muddy river banks. River fish caught near the city was also considered dangerous because of the filth polluting the water in which they lived.⁴³

The second case is from May 1395 when a man was supposedly poisoned by Caterina, an innkeeper and a procurer, in the municipal brothel.⁴⁴ The victim was Guillemó Guasch and when the authorities examined him he was lying in bed *e vanegave que parie fos fora de sen*⁴⁵ due to the poisoning. He, a prostitute, a man from Valencia and the so-called Caterina had eaten in the brothel a *pagell* coked in two ways, one half fried and the other half cooked in a casserole with water, and grilled sardines.⁴⁶ While they were eating a man called Pere Olivé arrived but he refused to eat as he was fasting, a clear reference to the variety of religious practices carried out during medieval times.⁴⁷ Caterina did not eat the fish from the casserole, as she preferred the other, and when Guillemó tasted it he found the fish bitter and spat it out. After lunch, in the inn of Soldevila where some friends were staying, he felt sick and the people there accused him of drunkenness. He tried to explain to them that he had been poisoned but he could not say a word. Finally he lost his mind and walked through the street and entered in the brothel threatening the people there with a knife. After, he was held by the royal vicar who gave him *aygua banyada en un anell de oricorn* and *cendra de serments de parrell a beure ab aygua*.⁴⁸ With these remedies he vomited green, black and bitter bile and finally had relief from the poisoning.

As we have seen sea fish was common in Lleida even if it was not always in the best condition; in fact, the second case seems to be food poisoning due to badly preserved fish.⁴⁹ There are many other references to sea fish in the *Llibre de Crims*, much more than to fresh water fish, which is scarcely mentioned and less varied. From fresh water we find: *barbs*, *madrilles* and eels⁵⁰ whereas from the sea we find: sardines, like the ones Pascuala had with hot bread before dying of a gastrointestinal illness;⁵¹ *mújol* (*Mugil cephalus*), like the ones Alfonso from Seville stole from the fish market;⁵² the hake that Ramon Purroy was frying the first Friday of Lent when he heard men fighting in the street;⁵³ the herring that two men shared, also in Lent, at

43. Alcanyís, Lluís. *Regiment preservatiu...*: 88-90; Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado, seco, remojado: abasto y mercado de pescado en Aragón (siglos XII-XV)", *Alimentar la ciudad en la Edad Media*, Beatriz Arízaga, Jesús Ángel Solórzano, eds. Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2009: 548.

44. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1394-1395, reg. 797, ff. 138r-140r.

45. "saying futile words like he was crazy".

46. *E menjave ell confessant ab los dessus nomenats pex en tres maneres, çò es pegell en caçola e frit e sardina frita* ("And he, the declarant, ate with the above mentioned fish in three ways, that is *pagell* in a casserole, fried and fried sardines").

47. Sabaté, Flocel. "Menjar amb el veguer...": 62-63.

48. "water in which had been a ring of unicorn"/ "ashes of vine shoot with water to drink".

49. Camps Clemente, Manuel; Camps Surroca, Manuel. "Metgesses, metzineres i dones remeieres a la Lleida del segle XIV". *Gimbernat*, 34 (1995): 103-112.

50. For this article we present data from the analysis of the volumes regarding to the fourteenth century of the *Llibre de Crims* (AML), that is from 1308-1400. The series are not full.

51. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1393-1394, 796, reg., f. 132r.

52. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1392-1393, reg. 795, f. 113r.

53. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1382-1383, reg. 790_01, f. 102r.



a tavern after robbing a pair of shoes;⁵⁴ or the conger which the merchant Ramon de Vilamajor stole from the merchants' load left in his hostel during Lent of 1308.⁵⁵

Also poor people had access to sea fish. In Lleida's *Pia Almoïna* in 1338 conger, provably salted, was served during penitential days accompanied with wine and bread. Meat was served on 235 days, principally mutton, cow and pig (bacon).⁵⁶ During the thirteenth century in Barcelona—due to the proximity of the sea—fish had a bigger presence on the table of the *Pia Almoïna*; however it was mainly served during Lent and winter.⁵⁷

Sea fish was the base of an intense commercial traffic. Using salted fish in barrels, different Catalan merchant families supplied the Catalan market with fish from the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean. They obtained tuna, sardines, hake and other salted and dried fish from Castile (mainly from Andalucía) and Portugal.⁵⁸ Anchovies from Bruges, hake, sardines and anchovies from Naples and Geneva and herrings from Sardinia.⁵⁹ Much of this fish was redistributed to western Mediterranean cities, for example they sold prawns—from Tortosa—, anchovies and sardines to Geneva, Agde, Marseille, Civitavecchia (Rome), Naples and also Constantinople.⁶⁰ However, we must bear in mind that salted or smoked fish was one of the many exported goods by Catalan merchants.⁶¹

3. The provision of fish in Lleida

Lleida's fish market was well supplied with salted, dried and fresh fish from the sea and also from the rivers, ponds and lakes near the city.

54. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1331-1332, reg. 770, f. 150r.

55. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1308, reg. 771, f. 36v.

56. Bertran, Prim. "La alimentación de pobres y peregrinos en la Cataluña medieval", *La alimentación en la Corona de Aragón (siglos XIV-XV)*, Manuel García, Elena Piedrafito, Juan Barbacil, eds. Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2013: 50.

57. Bertran, Prim. "La alimentación de pobres y peregrinos...": p. 53. However, in other places like the Hospital del Coll de Balaguer, between Tortosa and Tarragona, in 1411 fish was served just during Lent and every Friday; the same happened in the Hospital de Santa Caterina during 1484. See Camps Clemente, Manuel; Camps, Surroca, Manuel, "L'alimentació hospitalària a Catalunya a la Baixa Edat Mitjana", *Ir Col·loqui d'Història de l'Alimentació a la Corona d'Aragó*. Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, 1995: II, 887-890.

58. Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "El comerç català a la baixa edat mitjana". *Catalan Historical Review*, 5 (2012): 172-174; Bello, Juan Manuel. "La presencia catalana en la Andalucía occidental a finales de la Edad Media". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 40/1 (2010): 93-127.

59. Riera, Antoni. "Documentació notarial i història de la alimentació". *Estudis d'Història Agrària*, 13 (2000): 17-44, especially 27-32.

60. Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "El comerç català...": 163-165, 171-172, 173.

61. Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "El comerç català...": 159-193; Riera, Antoni. "Documentació notarial...": 17-43.





ILLUSTRATION 1. MAIN RIVERS AND ROUTES FOR FISH SUPPLY.
MAP PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

3.1 Sea fish

Sea fish appears in many sources, the documented species are: *congre* (*Conger conger*), *sardina* (*Sardina pilchardus sardine*), *mussola* (*Mustelus mustelus*), *cigala* (*Scyllarus arctus*), *moll* (*Mullus surmuletus*), *llagostí* (*Penaeus kerathurus*), *lluç* (*Merluccius merluccius*), *arengada* (*Clupea harengus*), *mujol* (*Mugil cephalus*),⁶² *pagell* (*Pagellus erythrinus*), *corball* (*Umbrina cirrosa*), *ca marí* (*Galeorhinus galeus*), *clavell* (*Raja clavata*), *caputxo* (*Raia oxyrhynchus*),⁶³ *gat* (*Scyliorhinus canicula*) and *romeguera* (*Raia Batis*).⁶⁴

62. It is a marine fish, pelagic and littoral, which adapts perfectly to continental waters entering into coastal salty waters. That is probably why it has been considered a fresh water fish in Cordova's region when studying ichthyology fauna in the Guadalquivir, see Llorente, Gustavo; Lope, Sílvia. *Guia dels animals que es venen al mercat*. Barcelona: Editorial Pòrtic, 1994: 118; Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial y el consumo de pescado en Córdoba (1450-1525)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 27 (1997): 1054.

63. Alcover, Antoni M.; Moll, Francesc de Borja, dirs. "Caputxo". *Diccionari Català, Valencià, Balear*. Institut d'Estudis Catalans-Institució Francesc de Borja Moll. 26 May 2019 < <http://dcvb.iecat.net/>>.

64. Alcover, Antoni M.; Moll, Francesc de Borja. "Romeguera". *Diccionari Català, Valencià, Balear*. Institut d'Estudis Catalans-Institució Francesc de Borja Moll. 26 May 2019 < <http://dcvb.iecat.net/>>.

In 1523 the Municipal Council prohibited the sale of some sea fish which was considered a source of pestilence. Some of the species mentioned, like *gradenyas* and *granyatats*, could not be identified, but as the other fish mentioned in the document are *bestinal* species we think they are some kind of shark or ray.⁶⁵

During the fourteenth century this fish was sold fresh or salted as mentioned in many municipal ordinations. Fresh sea fish was consumed in inland cities like Lleida, Balaguer, Saragossa and even La Seu d'Urgell—which is in the middle of the Pyrenees—; in this last city, as the *usances, privilegis e immunitats* from 1470 explain, before sale the fish had to be examined by the authorities.⁶⁶ In many cities, for example Mallorca, the authorities, knowing the problems that rotten fish could provoke, ordered that fresh fish could only be sold after an examination was carried out by the inspectors of the *mostassaf*.⁶⁷ During winter, fresh sea fish was easily kept in good condition by cold weather and was transported from the sea to inland, preserved with a small layer of salt and straw, a practice prohibited in the coastal markets.⁶⁸ In 1279 a canon of Lleida instituted a meal of 12 *morabatins* for his soul in the monastery of Poblet the day before Christmas. It consisted of fresh fish, but if fresh fish could not be found then it was substituted with salted conger.⁶⁹

During summer fish conservation presented several problems and its sale was strictly observed by municipal authorities. For example, in Balaguer (1313) during fasting days and Lent, fish had to be exposed until *tercia* (nine in the morning),⁷⁰ however during July and August this time was reduced until *hora de miga tercia* (half past seven); also, between the 29th of September —*Sant Miquel*— and Easter, fish could be in the city for three days but outside this period the number of days was reduced to two.⁷¹ In 1441 Lleida's Municipal Council declared that *en temps del stiu que pex de mar nos pot haver*.⁷² During summer sea fish trade reduced, even in the coastal regions, in May it was already lower and this decrease lasted until

65. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1519-1523, reg. 427, f. 138 r-v.

66. *E axí matex, de pex fresch qui's vene a pes, e que nuyt pex de mar que sie fresch, nos pot venre, tro los cònsols o algun d'ells los han vist e iutyat. E que aquel pex, pot, lo pescater, tenir per ayants iorns, com los dits cònsols volen, e no pus avant* ("And also, the fresh fish should be sold by weight and any fresh fish from the sea can not be sold until all the consuls or any of them had seen it and judge it. And the fishmonger can have that fish exposed as much time as the consuls want and not more"); Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Les usances o privilegis de la Seu d'Urgell (any 1470)". *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 11/83 (1924): 274.

67. Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo noroccidental...": 138.

68. Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo noroccidental...": 133-134; Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1084.

69. ACL. LP_05827.

70. Ortega, José Ignacio. "La medida del tiempo en la Edad Media. El ejemplo de las crónicas cristianas". *Medievalismo*, 9 (1999): 20-21.

71. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 419-420.

72. "in summer we can not have sea fish": AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1441-1442, reg. 417, f. 6v.



September, then trade increased slowly during autumn and was at its highest point during winter and Lent.⁷³

Sea fish sold in Lleida came from the coast near Tarragona —Tarragona, Salou, Tamarit del Camp and Cambrils— and the coastal region controlled by Tortosa, which are 100 and 122 km away respectively.⁷⁴ In 1313 Jaume de Cabestany transported a load (*somada*) of sardines —probably fresh—⁷⁵ from Tarragona to Lleida with mules but refused to sell it in the city. On the contrary, he waited until night and crossed Lleida towards Monzon passing through Tamarite de Litera.⁷⁶ In Lleida like in other cities —for example Sant Celoni or Solsona— the authorities could compel the merchants to stop and sell their fish if there was demand. However, in Lleida we have no explicit mentions of this.⁷⁷ In 1393, Alfonso de Sevilla was arrested for stealing a *llisa* (*Mugil cephalus cephalus*) from Tortosa in Lleida's fish market. He made a living from buying and selling haberdashery and arrived in Lleida the night before from Saragossa. The fishmonger Antoni Arnau, a witness, testified that he saw Alfonso robbing the fish from the basket where fishmonger Guillem Borràs kept the fish from Tortosa.⁷⁸ We do not know if that *llisa* was salted or fresh, but for Lent of 1440, fresh fish from Tortosa could be found in Lleida's fish market as the municipal council accepted the petition to increase the price of fresh fish, excepting *pex de Tortosa hi pex de bolliq com semblant pex*.⁷⁹

Fish from Tarragona came along the ancient roman road which, leading north, followed the river Francolí and crossed the mountain range of Prades beside the village of la Riba. From there the road went to Montblanc, les Borges Blanques and

73. Mutgé, Josefa. "L'abastament de peix i carn...": 114; 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): 30.

74. Lladonosa, Josep. *La ciutat de Lleida*. Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1956: II, 177-178.

75. The best time for fishing sardines was from March to April. See Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo noroccidental...": 132.

76. As the price of fish was taxed by municipal authorities many merchants tried to avoid some cities as they could not earn enough money there. *Demanat per què no-l vené en la ciutat. Dix que per tal quant no-y conxíe guany ni no-y avie trobat guany en ·l· somada que nich havie venuda* ("Asked why he did not sell it in the city. He answered that because he did not earn enough, and he did not find profits in one load he sold here": AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1312-1313, reg. 764, f. 116r.

77. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Sant Celoni...": 146-147; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya (segles XII a XVIII), Ordinacions de La Guardia dels Prats (any 1275), Ordinacions de Barcelona (any 1301), Ordinacions de Cabacers (1315), Ordinacions de Mostaçaferia de Solsona (any 1434)". *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 11/83 (1924): 322-323.

78. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1392-1393, reg. 795, f. 113r.

79. "fish from Tortosa and fished with *bolig* or similar fish": AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1439-1440, reg. 415, f. 34v. It refers to a way of fishing called *bolig*. As the physician Lluís Alcanyís said was, normally, small fish with scales because it was fished with a small net, a bigger net similar to *bolig* was called *xàvega*. See Alcanyís, Lluís. *Regiment preservatiu e curatiu*...: 89; Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el Mediterráneo noroccidental...": 136; Pujol, Marcel. "La pesca a l'Empordà...": 143.

finally Lleida after three days of travel.⁸⁰ Another option was the road that linked the interior lands with Cambrils.⁸¹

From Tortosa there was a main road travelled by both pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela and merchants, that lead to Saragossa. The road went up beside the river Ebro until Mequinenza where it took a secondary road following the river Segre until Lleida.⁸² This route was also important because of the river Ebro, which was navigable up and down between Saragossa and Tortosa, stopping in intermediate ports like Flix.⁸³ There was a towpath that Mediterranean merchants used to reach Saragossa from the south of Catalonia. They towed the ships from Tortosa, following the left bank of the Ebro, until Mequinenza where merchants and goods crossed the river and continued following the right bank.⁸⁴ The river Segre was also navigable using low draught boats but it was less used for commercial purposes. This kind of navigation is documented since Roman and Muslim times as river ports have been identified in Lleida and Balaguer.⁸⁵ In 1302 king James II used the river and the towpath during his journey from Tortosa to Lleida;⁸⁶ also in 1379 —maybe due to the earthquake of 1373—⁸⁷ the bridge that crossed the river Segre was severely damaged and had to be closed while repair works were carried out, Berenguer de Terrés offered his ship, which was in Mequinenza, to use as a ferry boat while the

80. Soto, Pau de. *Anàlisi de la Xarxa de comunicacions i del transport a la Catalunya romana: estudis de distribució i mobilitat*. Tarragona: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (PhD Dissertation), 2010: I, 177; II, 354-362, 361.

81. Riera, Antoni. "La red viaria de la Corona Catalanoaragonesa en la Baja Edad Media". *Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia*, 23-24 (2002): 449, 463. From Montblanc to Lleida the principal road can be identified using the hospitals build in the different villages, see: Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública a la Lleida baix medieval, la gestió dels espais públics, la pobresa i els hospitals*. Lleida: Universitat de Lleida (PhD Dissertation), 2017: 343-346.

82. Riera, Antoni. "La red viaria de la Corona...": 454; Massip, Jesús. "El pelegrinatge a Sant Jaume des de Tortosa", *El camí de Sant Jaume i Catalunya*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2007: 105-109. Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 342-343.

83. Carreras Candi, Francesc. *La navegació al riu Ebre*. Barcelona: Associació d'Amics de l'Ebre, 1993: 148-153.

84. Riera, Antoni. "La red viaria de la Corona...": 454. The importance of roads near the river Cinca is demonstrated in Villagrasa, Raül. "Hospitales y asistencia en Monzón y el Cinca medio (siglos XIII-XVI)". *Cuadernos CEHIMO*, 41 (2015): 183-240.

85. There is archaeological evidence of river ports in Lleida and Balaguer which date back from Muslim times and, probably, Roman. See Lorient, Ana. "El port fluvial de 'Medina Larida'. Realitat i hipòtesi de funcionament". *Revista d'Arqueologia de Ponent*, 26 (2016): 245-255; Soto, Pau de. *Anàlisi de la Xarxa de comunicacions...*: I, 230; Sabaté, Flocel. *Història de Lleida...*: 71.

86. Carreras Candi, Francesc. *La navegació...*: 176.

87. Riera, Antoni. "La societat catalana baixmedieval davant els sismes. I: els terratrèmols de 1373". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 16 (1986): 276-278; Olivera, Carme; Redondo, Esther; Lambert, Jérôme; Riera, Antoni; Roca, Antoni. *Els terratrèmols dels segles XIV i XV a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya-Generalitat de Catalunya, 2006: 71-72.



works continued;⁸⁸ finally, some of the Jews, who had to leave after their expulsion in 1492, used the river to depart with all their belongings.⁸⁹

Salted sea fish was the basis of an intense commercial traffic that did not necessarily have to come from the coast. In 1308 Ramon de Vilamajor had dried conger from Aragon in his hostel and, in 1393, Alfonso de Sevilla had a piece of conger that he brought all the way from Saragossa.⁹⁰ Dried conger from Galicia could perfectly be sold in Cordova, salted sardines from Valencia in Daroca and salted hake from Portugal in Barcelona.⁹¹

3.2 Fresh water fish

Even though there is not much evidences of fresh water fish it was very important during Late Middle Ages. It's fishing from rivers, lakes and canals near the villages was a common practice for self-supply related with the different periods of spawning and, obviously, fresh water fish was the most abundant in inner cities.⁹² Many of the rivers ichthyologic fauna was migrant, starting a great journey from the sea to the river —like the sturgeon or the *saboga*— or from the river to the sea searching salty waters —like the eel. These facts are helpful in understanding the temporary nature of river fishing, much more intense during spring, coinciding with these migrations and also with Lent, when a vast amount of fish was consumed in Cristian lands.⁹³ For this reason —contrary to what happened at the coast—⁹⁴ we do not find many fishermen in Lleida and just some tangential references to the profession. Many had

88. Ítem al feyt que hic és posat que en Berenguer de Terrés diu que ha ·I· barca a Miquinença e que és gran e bela e que sera bona a tenir lo pas de la aygua mentre lo pont se adobe. E que si la vol la ciutat que ell la farà venir ab ·I· letra que·y farà e la Ciutat que·y trametre puyts que s'avinguen ab ell. Acordaren que encontinent hi sie tramés ·I· hom ab la letra d'en Terrés e que la dita Barcha vingue decontinent ("Also, for the fact proposed by Berenguer de Terrés, he says that he has one ship in Mequinenza and it is big and beautiful and it will be good for crossing the water while the bridge is being repaired. And if the city wants it he will make it come with one letter that he will do after the city comes to terms with him. They agree to send one man with the letter written by Terrés and the ship should come"): AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1379, reg. 403, f. 30v.

89. Busqueta, Joan Josep. *Història de Lleida*. Vol. 3. *Baixa Edat Mitjana*. Lleida: Pagès Editors, 2004: 86. Supplying a city with fish transported by river was common in Andalucía, for example: Cordova was often supplied with sea fish from Seville trough the Guadalquivir river. See Hernández, Pilar: "La pesca fluvial...": 1080-1081.

90. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, 1308, reg. 771, f. 36v; 1392-1393, reg. 795, f. 113r.

91. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1087; Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 558-563; Salicrú, Roser. "En torno al comercio...": 168-172.

92. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1052-1057, 1077-1082; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Les usances o privilegis de la Seu d'Urgell...": 283.

93. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1053.

94. Aparisi, Frederic. "La pesca marítima en temps d'Alfons el Vell en el ducat de Gandia i el comtat de Dénia", *Comercio, redistribución y fondeaderos. La navegación a vela en el Mediterráneo: V Jornadas de Arqueología Subacuática*, José Pérez, Guillermo Pascual, eds. Valencia: Universitat de València, 2008: 373-381.



fishing as an alternative source of income to their main occupation.⁹⁵ For example, in 1351 there was a big argument between the fisherman Pere Joan and some men concerning the watering of their vineyards;⁹⁶ in 1389 the farmer Bernat Giner was accused of assaulting and injuring a woman. In his defence, he said he was not in Lleida as *venie de cavar cuchs per a pescar ab Ramon Çabater*.⁹⁷

In the documents we found: *barb* (*Barbus* sp.),⁹⁸ *anguila* (*Anguilla anguilla*), *llamprea* (*Petromyzon fluviatilis*), *esturió* (*Acipenser Sturio*), *saboga* (*alosa fallax* and *A. alosa*)⁹⁹ and *madrilla* (*Chondrosoma polylepis* or *Chondrosoma miegii*).¹⁰⁰



ILLUSTRATION 2. REPRESENTATION OF A *BARB* (*BARBUS* SP.) IN A CONSTITUTIONS BOOK OF LLEIDA'S CATHEDRAL, WHEN DESCRIBING THE TRADITION OF GIVING EACH CANON A BREAD OF ONE POUND AND A HALF, WELL COOKED AND WHITE. THE SCRIBE, PROBABLY THINKING ABOUT THE MIRACLE OF THE FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH, DREW A FISH THAT WAS CLEARLY CONSUMED. ACL, LC_0065, F. 23v.

95. Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 124-125; Sánchez, Julián. "Pesca y trabajo en el reino de Toledo. La cuenca alta y media del Tajo en los siglos XII al XVI". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 36/1 (2006): 147-148; Alegret, Joan Lluís. "Aproximació a l'activitat pesquera...": 34-37; Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. "A pesca fluvial na economia e sociedade medieval portuguesa". *Cadernos Historicos*, 6 (1992): 90.

96. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1351-1352, reg. 775, f. 99r.

97. "He was coming back from digging for worms to fish with Ramon Çabater": AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1389-1390, reg. 793, f. 36r.

98. Alcover, Antoni M.; Moll, Francesc de Borja. "Barb". *Diccionari Català, Valencià, Balear*. Institut d'Estudis Catalans-Institució Francesc de Borja Moll. 26 May 2019 <<http://dcvb.iecat.net/>>.

99. Very popular in the Ebro Delta when it enters into the low part of the river during the spawning season. Llorente, Gustavo; Lope, Sílvia. *Guia dels animals...*: 72; Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 155-158.

100. The identification of this species presents some trouble as the definitions are not clear. See: Alcover, Antoni M.; Moll, Francesc de Borja. "Madrilla". *Diccionari Català, Valencià, Balear*. Institut d'Estudis Catalans-Institució Francesc de Borja Moll. 26 May 2019 <<http://dcvb.iecat.net/>>, and also the definition for the Castilian name *boga de río* in Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1055.



There are many species of *barb*; the most liked are the ones living in pure waters.¹⁰¹ In 1339 a man called Vidal d'Algerri was murdered near a city gate. An innkeeper called Dolceta, who served him the night before, told the authorities he stood in her inn with three men, all well-armed. They gave her six pences (*diners*) to buy fish and she bought them four *barbs* and served it to them with bread. Also in 1430 the municipal council prohibited the raffle of several fresh fish including *barbs*.¹⁰² It was a popular fresh water specie documented in other rivers like Jiloca (Aragon).¹⁰³ (See Illustration 1)

The eel or *anguila* is a continental fish that migrates to sea waters for its reproduction. At the beginning of autumn, females travel to the mouth of the rivers where males are waiting for them. They then start a journey together to the Sargasso Sea where spawning takes place in spring. The exhausted parents die and the small larvae are transported back by the current to the shores of Europe and Africa. After three years, already near the coast, the larvae transform into elvers and go upriver during night. The ones who stay on the shore become males. The others who overcome the obstacles and get into the river become females. After nine or twelve years in fresh water females enter into their reproduction period and the cycle starts again.¹⁰⁴ For medieval physicians *anguiles* did not have any of the qualities attributed to fish and due to its resemblance with snakes it aroused suspicion.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, it was very much liked by the people and we can find many references to its consumption. For example, during July 1386 the fisherman Pedro de Pina put some traps in the river at night and caught many *anguiles*, he used *madrilla* as bait. He got robbed and later he saw that the farmer Antoni d'Albacar was selling *anguiles*, some like the ones he had fished, and denounced the robbery to the authorities. Antoni d'Albacar—as he declared—used snails as bait, so the *mostassaf*—the officer of the market—¹⁰⁶ opened up two *anguiles* to see what was inside them and deduced that they had been robbed.¹⁰⁷ *Anguiles* could also be salted, like the ones Domingo Martí from Seville sold twice, first to Francesca and later to a man called Serra. Domingo Martí also sold bitter oranges, sweet ones did not arrive to Europe until the fifteenth century after the Portuguese reached China.¹⁰⁸

101. Estruch, Glòria. "Barb". *Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana*. Fundació Enciclopèdia. 9 May 2019 <<https://www.enciclopedia.cat/EC-GEC-0083163.xml>>.

102. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1430-1431, reg. 410, f. 27r.

103. Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 555.

104. Llorente, Gustavo; Lope, Sílvia. *Guia dels animals...*: 69-70.

105. Vilanova, Arnau de. *Arnaldi de Villanova...*: 235.

106. About the *mostassaf* see Riera, 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. Balaguer: Ajuntament de Balaguer, 2015: 70-79; Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el mediterráneo...": 137-138.

107. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1386-1387, reg. 792, f. 54r.

108. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1389-1390, reg. 793, f. 169r; Riera, Antoni. "Las plantas que llegaron de Levante. Acerca del legado alimentario islámico en la Cataluña medieval". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 31/2 (2001): 808-810.



Llamprea can be found in the sea and in the river. It is an anadromous species. The young live in the sea until they are, at least one year old. Then during autumn they go up river for spawning. It was a species documented in Spanish rivers like the Tajo and Guadarrama but nowadays it is extinct.¹⁰⁹ In 1430 the Municipal Council prohibited the raffle of fresh water fish like *lampres*, *savogues*, *barps*, *anguiles*, *ni alguna natura de pex fresch* in an attempt to fight tax evasion.¹¹⁰

The *esturions*, also anadromous, are born in rivers but spend most part of their lives in the sea close to the shore. In spring when they reach sexual maturity, between eleven and fifteen years old, they travel to the river where they were born to spawn. They repeat the same routine every two years until males are twenty and females thirty. *Esturions* were fished from the river Ebro until 1935 when it was considered extinct.¹¹¹ On the 18th of July 1344 the City Council discussed the price of sturgeon and they agreed that a pound should be sold at 9 pences (*diners*), bearing in mind that every pound was divided into 24 ounces and that 8 ounces were sold at 3 pences (*diners*).¹¹² Sturgeon was considered a notable fish as Jaume d'Agramont explains. In the city of Tortosa it was used as a gift to show gratitude to noblemen.¹¹³

The *saboga* can be identified as *Alosa fallax nilotica* (Catalan and Spanish *saboga*) or *Alosa alosa* (Catalan *alosa*, Spanish *sábalo*). The first is similar to a sardine but bigger. It is a marine species which goes to the mouth of the river for spawning. It is very abundant in Ebro delta.¹¹⁴ The *Alosa alosa* goes up river over a great distance for spawning but avoids small tributaries as it prefers slow moving waters. However, there are cases of isolated communities adapted exclusively to fresh water. The best time to consume is during spring which coincides with the spawning season. Medieval Cordovan authorities considered that if it weighed over seven hundred grams then it was called *sábalo*, but if it weighed less it was called *saboga*.¹¹⁵

The *madrilla* is a small silver fish. Documents show it was used as bait for fishing so they refer to *madrilleta roja* (*Achondrostoma arcasii*);¹¹⁶ the adults can be between 4 to 10 centimeters long and its name is also related to a fishing device called *madrillera*.¹¹⁷ It is similar but smaller to the fish called *Madrilla* (*Chondrostoma miegii*)

109. Doadrio, Ignacio, ed. *Atlas y libro rojo de los peces continentales de España*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas-Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, 2002: 100.

110. "*llamprees*, *savogues*, *barps*, *anguiles* or any other kind of fresh fish": AML. Fons Municipal. Actes del Consell General, 1430-1431, reg. 410, f. 27r.

111. Llorente, Gustavo; Lope, Sílvia. *Guia dels animals...*: 66.

112. AML. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1344-1345, reg. 397, f. 22r.

113. Agramont, Jaume de. *Regiment de preservació...*: 81; Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 153-154.

114. Llorente, Gustavo; Lope, Sílvia. *Guia dels animals...*: 72; Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 153-158.

115. Doadrio, Ignacio, ed. *Atlas y libro rojo de los peces...*: 111-114; Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1053-1054.

116. Ordeix, Marc; Solà, Carolina; Bardina, Mònica; Casamitjana, Anna; Munné, Antoni, eds. *Els peixos dels rius i les zones humides de Catalunya. Qualitat biològica i connectivitat fluvial*. Manlleu: Agència Catalana de l'aigua-Museu del Ter-Eumo Editorial, 2014: 36-37.

117. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1386-1387, reg. 792, f. 54r; AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1441-1442, reg. 417, f. 6v.



which can reach thirty centimeters long and lives in strong currents. It can adapt to slow waters and goes up river for spawning between April and June.¹¹⁸ There is another similar fish called *boga de río* (*Chondrostoma polylepis*) in Castilian, it can reach fifty centimeters long and lives in the middle part of rivers. During spring it goes up river and to the small tributaries for spawning until it finds places with strong current and gravel soil. That is why it was caught in the Guadalquivir and in other tributaries throughout the whole year.¹¹⁹

There were different places where this fresh water fish could be caught. The main water courses near Lleida were the rivers: Segre, Noguera Pallaresa, Noguera Ribagorçana, Cinca and Noguera.¹²⁰ These rivers were used especially during spring and summer when to spawn, many fish went up river and fresh sea fish could not be bought. Near big cities, the rivers were very polluted due to the industrial and domestic waste generated by tanneries, fulling mills, etc. that is why sometimes it was forbidden to fish in them.¹²¹ Medical practitioners, such as Lluís Alcanyís, warned about this fact.¹²² In June 1441 the City Council lifted a ban on fishing in the river because *ara vegen ésser pus útil per servey de la ciutat e refrescament e plaher de les gents, maïorment ara en temps del stiu que pex de mar nos pot haver*.¹²³ This also meant that fishing in the city river was forbidden during cold months and therefore river fish was supplied from other places. Some went up the river for more clean waters, like Antoni d'Albacar who, in July 1386, went to Alcoletge (8.6 km from Lleida, and close to the confluence between the rivers Segre and Noguera Ribagorçana) to fish. He made a large catch of thirty-tree eels. He caught them using *ams ab bagnes* (a hook with barbs).¹²⁴ In October 1345 someone robbed a *pontó* (small low draught boat) which was tied on the left bank of the Segre. The owner had used it the day before in the afternoon to remove the *bertrols* he had used that morning.¹²⁵ A *bertrol* is a fresh water fishing devise composed of wooden circles and a net forming a funnel closed at the end. It is set against the current and mainly used for eel fishing.¹²⁶

118. Doadrio, Ignacio, ed. *Atlas y libro rojo de los peces...*: 177-178.

119. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1055; Doadrio, Ignacio, ed. *Atlas y libro rojo de los peces...*: 179.

120. Sabaté, Flocel. *Història de Lleida...*: 68.

121. Leguay, Jean Pierre. *La pollution au Moyen Âge*. Paris: Editions Jean-Paul Gisserot, 2003: 24-28; Val Valdivieso, Maria Isabel del. "Un factor de desarrollo urbano: el agua (Castilla, siglo XV)", *Morphologie et identité sociales dans la ville médiévale hispaniques*, Flocel Sabaté, Christian Guilleré, eds. Chambéry: Université de Savoie, 2012: 352; Córdoba de la Llave, Ricardo. "Eliminación y reciclaje de residuos urbanos en la Castilla bajomedieval". *Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia*, 19 (1998): 145-169.

122. *De aygues dolces, clares, corrents per lochs pedrosos o arenosos. E les riberes, encars que sien bones, no-s peixquen prop les ciutats per les immundícies que y decorren* ("From fresh waters, clear, and running through gravel and sandy places. And from the riverbanks, even if they are good, do not fish near the cities for the filth it runs through"). Alcanyís, Lluís. *Regiment preservatiu...*: 89-90.

123. "now they see it is useful for the city and for the refreshment and pleasure of the people as at this moment, in summer time, sea fish can not be found": AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1441-1442, reg. 417, f. 6v.

124. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1386-1387, reg. 792, f. 54r.

125. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1344-1345, reg. 774, f. 116v.

126. "Bertrol". *Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana*. Fundació Enciclopèdia. 14 May 2019 <<https://www.enciclopedia.cat/EC-GEC-0084118.xml>>. See Illustration 2.





ILLUSTRATION 3. DETAIL OF TWO TYPES OF FISH: EELS AND, PROBABLY, A RAY. FROM THE ALTARPIECE OF SANT CRISTÒFOL, BY THE MESTRE DE SANTA LIESTRA, FROM THE CHURCH OF L'ASSUMPCIÓ DE SANTA LIESTRA (SANTALIESTRA, SPAIN), LAST QUARTER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. MUSEU DE LLEIDA, DIOCESÀ I COMARCAL.

Other devises used were *nanses* and *vergats* which were different types of traps (similar to baskets) made with rush and left in the river for some time or used from a boat; fishing rods (*canya*), harpoons (*traire*) and different types of nets, called *filats* (i.e. *rall*), were also used.¹²⁷ We can not dismiss more archaic practices, documented in some Castilian villages, like fishing with the hands or throwing stones.¹²⁸ (see Illustration 6)

There were also many lakes, mills and canals where people used to fish for their own. We can find many toponyms related to certain fishing zones, like *carratals de la peixera*; meaning a path passable with a wagon and which was near a fishing point. The *assuts* or *peixeres* were walls constructed in rivers or canals to alter part of the water course and direct it to mills, field irrigation, etc. The main canals around Lleida were the canal of *Segrià* or of *Pinyana*, constructed during the second half of the twelfth century, and the canal of *Fontanet*, built during Muslim times.¹²⁹ The first one took the water out of the river Noguera Ribagorçana in the Andaní area

127. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1067; Mutgé, Josefa. "L'abastament de peix i carn...": 113; Carreras Candi, Francesc. *La navegació...*: 160; Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 556. *exceptat de peix ques prenga ab rall ni canya ni trayra* ("excepting the fish fished with *rall* or *canya* or *trayra*): ACL. LP_02505.

128. Sánchez, Julián. "Artes pesqueras en la cuenca alta y media del Tajo (siglos XII-XVI)". *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval*, 18 (2005): 237. Similar practices have also been documented in Portugal, see Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. "A pesca fluvial...": 92.

129. Sabaté, Flócel. *Història de Lleida...*: 317-322.



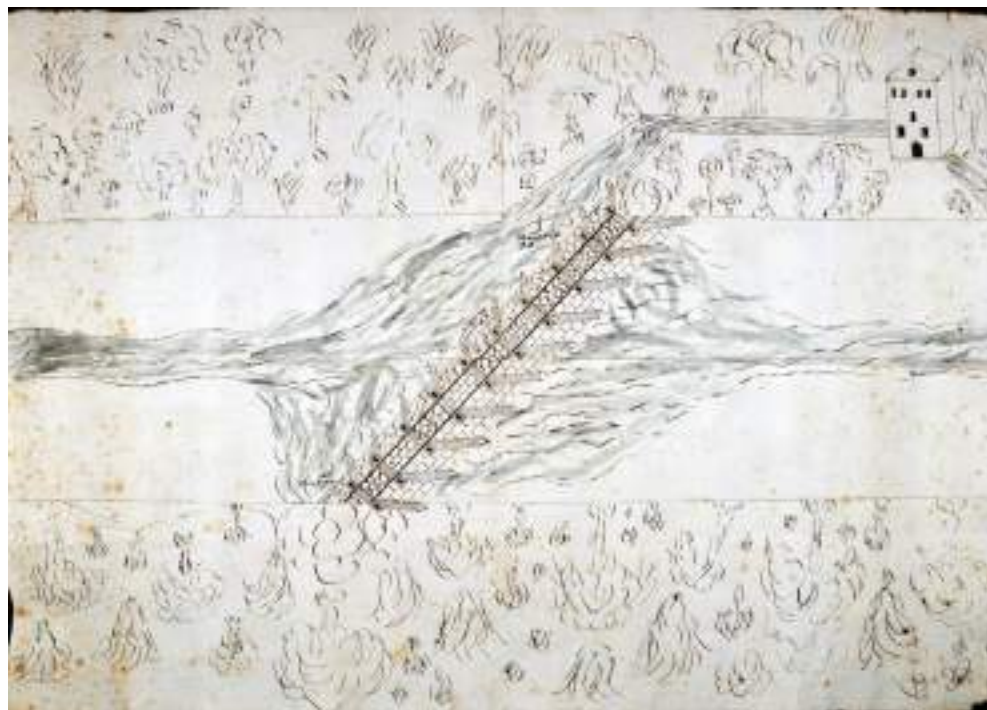


ILLUSTRATION 4. MAP OF THE *PEIXERA* THAT WAS GOING TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN ALFÉS IN 1619. ACL, P_0292, WITHOUT FOLIO.

and irrigated forty kilometers of land as far as the area of Alcarràs. The second one irrigated the left riverbank of the Segre over twenty-two kilometers.¹³⁰ These canals had been controlled by Lleida since 1213 when the owner, Pere Ramon Sassala, sold his rights over the watering of the Segrià (the region of Lleida) to the city for one-thousand *morabatins*.¹³¹ Since then the city had managed the canals and promoted some ecological measures to protect the quality of the water. For example, in 1308 they prohibited the use of water for anything that was not irrigating wheat, flax, vegetables and legumes. The ordinations from 1403 also prohibited the use of the canals for watering animals, transporting wood and fishing, among others.¹³² This indicates that fishing was practiced by some illegal fishermen; unfortunately, we have very little information about this group.¹³³

130. Busqueta, Joan. *Història de Lleida...*: 22.

131. Busqueta, Joan. *Història de Lleida...*: 23.

132. Busqueta, Joan. *Història de Lleida...*: 24-25.

133. Sánchez, Julián. "Pesca y trabajo en el reino de Toledo...":151-152. For other ecological ordinations, Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 554-555.

Cleaning and repairing the canals was a common headache for the Municipal Council who demanded help from the administrators, millers and users when it was necessary.¹³⁴ In Lleida it was common to clean the canals (*scombrar*) during March¹³⁵ to avoid any possible blockage of the water that could provoke illness, as the ordinations from Tortosa (1340) explain.¹³⁶

These canals and ditches had *peixeres* for the use of mills.¹³⁷ The best places for fishing were the canals where water passed freely when the mill was not working. There, fish dragged by the current could be easily caught with some nets laid in the low part of the mill.¹³⁸ Millers took advantage of the fish caught in them. Its sale was regulated by municipal councils, for example the ordinations from Balaguer (1313) stated that no one could help the millers to sell fish and that no one could buy fresh fish from a miller to resell it.¹³⁹ These *peixeres* (as documented in the village of Alfés in 1619) were important constructions supervised by experienced workers and constructed following instructions regarding depth, width, foundations... The

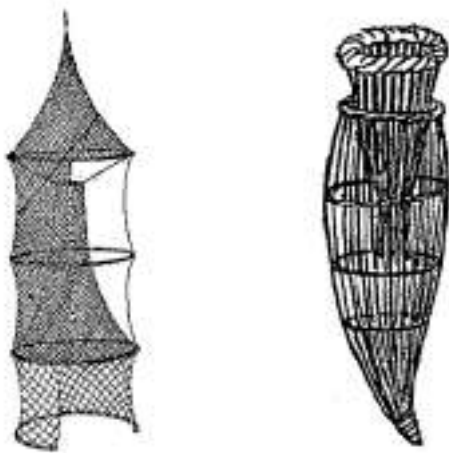


ILLUSTRATION 5. *BERTROL AND VERGAT*. SOURCE: ASSOCIATION DE SAUVEGARDE DU PATRIMOINE DE PRATS DE MOLLÓ "VELLES PEDRES I ARRELS". "AFFAIRES DE TRUITES". *VELLES PEDRES I ARRELS*. 18 MARCH 2017. 7 JUNE 2019 <[HTTP://WWW.VELLESPEDRES.FR/2017/03/18/AFFAIRES-DE-TRUITES/](http://www.vellespedres.fr/2017/03/18/AFFAIRES-DE-TRUITES/)>.

134. Between 1402 and 1435 it appears at least in: AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1402-1403, reg. 404, f. 25v; 1408-1409, reg. 405_01, ff. 12r, 35r; 1413-1416, reg. 406, ff. 2v, 67r; 1437-1438, reg. 414, f. 18r; and Llibre de Consells Particulars, 1430-1435, reg. 365, f. 82v.

135. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1366-1367, reg. 400, f. 56r.

136. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. (Segles XIII a XVIII) (Continuació) Ordinacions o establiments de Tortosa (1340-1344)". *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 11/84 (1924): 393.

137. A mill was composed by: *cum rego et caprego, aqualibus et aquarum ductibus, pexera, sequa, resclosa glebariis, arenis et arenalibus et omnibus ad usum molendinorum pertinentibus*, quoted by Sabaté, Flocel. *Història de Lleida*...: 335.

138. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1056.

139. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 419.



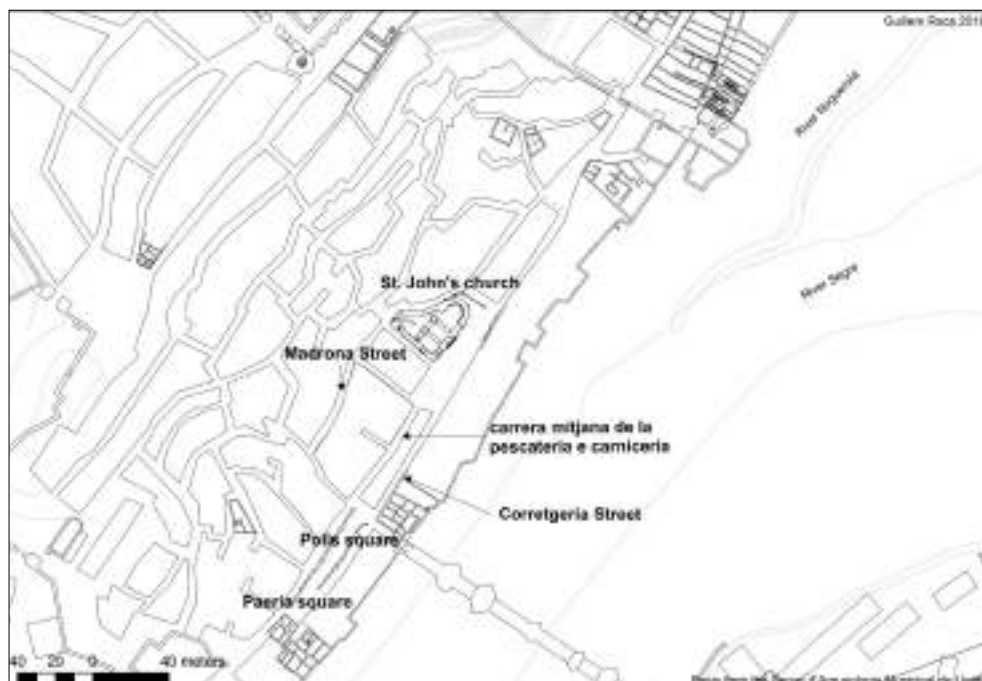


ILLUSTRATION 6. LLEIDA'S FISH MARKET LOCATED IN THE CARRERA MITJANA DE LA PESCATERIA E CARNICERIA. MAP PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

director was called *mestre de peixeres* and the fabrication of mortar (*argamassa*) was supervised by the master builder of Lleida's cathedral.¹⁴⁰ (Illustration 3)

Other *peixeres* (not related to mills) were constructed with sand, stones, wooden stakes and branches and their function was very simple. The stakes were placed in a part of the river making a cone shape. At the vertex, a net structure was placed in which fish were trapped.¹⁴¹ In Lleida, in 1372, in front of the town hall there was a *peixera* demarked with stakes which was the property of the Knights Hospitallers. The monks did not preserve the wooden structure and *açò és gran interès de la ciutat e d'an e peryll que sen porà seguir a aquells qui han alberchs davant aquella pexera*.¹⁴² In this case, the structure called *peixera* was a retaining wall built near the banks of a river to slow the current and prevent flooding. We do not know if it also had a fishing purpose but its construction and preservation was common in Catalonia and it is

140. ACL. P5B_M6_P5_C07_cp2_cm1, ff. 4r-5r; Martí, Ramon. *Alfés, més enllà*. Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs-Ajuntament d'Alfés, 2014: 318.

141. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1056.

142. "This is of a great interest for the city and damage and danger could be provoked to those who have houses in front that *peixera*": AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1372-1373, reg. 402, f. 36r.

also seen in Tortosa's ordinations.¹⁴³ There is a similarity with Castilian *judria* which can have the same two meanings.¹⁴⁴

Similar structures were used to block the water exit in ponds so the fish could not escape.¹⁴⁵ There was one of these ponds in Sidamon, it was for *servei comú del dit loch de Sidamon*,¹⁴⁶ and in 1331 one night, when everybody slept, some men came with their nets and stole the fish *que-y pescaren molts peix: anguilles e barbs*.¹⁴⁷ In many cases—like in Tortosa—these communal spaces were preserved by the neighbours.¹⁴⁸

Peixeres were among the favorites for donations in wills: i.e. on the 16th of December, 1240, Pere de Sigena, a canon of the cathedral, left two shillings (*sous*) to the *Paxerie pontis Ilerdensis* with some more money given to different charitable initiatives.¹⁴⁹ The donations continued throughout the fourteenth century. After the Black Death the City Council complained about all the money from wills given to the *peixera* and to the Town Hall that were lost because of the great disorganization.¹⁵⁰

Fishing in the river Segre required less complicated techniques than the ones practiced in deeper rivers like the Ebro. Here bigger boats and devices were needed. Similar to the ones used in the sea. There was no clear difference between the ships used to transport goods and those used for fishing.¹⁵¹ In the Ebro River some ports were used for fishing as well as commercial uses. They were managed by brotherhoods as in 1368 the *arraez* (captain) Domingo de Utebo, of the fishermen brotherhood of Saint Nicolas of Saragossa, designated the *arraez* García Esteban as an agent to visit and repair the ports of the Ebro.¹⁵² Their influence is visible in the ports of Flix (a village property of Barcelona) and Tortosa where in 1446 and 1447 some repairs were needed as it is mentioned in a petition of an *arraez* from Saragossa.¹⁵³

143. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. (Segles XIII a XVIII) (Continuació) Ordinacions o establiments de Tortosa...": 428-430.

144. Sánchez, Julián. "Pesca y trabajo en el reino de Toledo...": 154-155.

145. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. (Segles XIII a XVIII) (Continuació) Ordinacions o establiments de Tortosa...": 400-401.

146. "for the communal service of the place of Sidamon". AML. Fons Municipal. Llibres de Crims, reg. 770, f. 26r.

147. "and they fished many fish, eels and barbels".

148. Carreras Candi, Francesc. *La navegació...*: 160.

149. Busqueta, Joan Josep; Sardoy, Elena. "Testaments dels segles XIII conservats a l'Arxiu Municipal de Lleida", *Gombau de Camporrells, bisbe de lleida a l'alba del segle XIII*, Isidro Bango, Joan Josep Busqueta, eds. Lleida: Amics de la Seu Vella de Lleida, 1996: 133-136.

150. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1350-1351, reg. 399, f. 61v.

151. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1059. About the ships used see Pujol, Marcel. "Tecnologia i pesca...": 156-166.

152. Falcón Pérez, María Isabel. *Ordenanzas y otros documentos complementarios relativos a las Corporaciones de oficio en el reino de Aragón en la Edad Media*. Zaragoza: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1997: 101-102 (doc. No. 81).

153. Carreras Candi, Francesc. *La navegació...*: 142-145.



These boats used big nets to catch the fish (small ones were between twenty to forty meters in length and the largest ones were eighty to one hundred meters), the practice of which was regulated by the municipal councils.¹⁵⁴ One of the most used techniques was *bolig*, also used in the sea.¹⁵⁵ It consisted of setting a net of hemp against the current, this net was composed of different pieces of mesh with different thicknesses and floated between two waters. The ends of the net were then rowed to shore where a group of men pulled them to the surface.¹⁵⁶ Fish caught with this technique were consumed in Lleida and it appears in the Municipal Council acts with no other specification than *peix de bollig*.¹⁵⁷ This technique was not used in the river Segre but it is on record as being used to catch fish that is on sale next to fish from Tortosa. This fish, which was caught some distance from the city was transported mixed with salt and humid straw to preserve it, as it was done with sea fish. However, as it has been proved in England, fresh water fish could be kept alive in water barrels over a period of time; as long as the water was changed several times at roadside inns along the way.¹⁵⁸

4. The evolution of Lleida's fish market

Unlike other cities nearer the sea (like Tortosa, where some direct references to fishing can be found in early times) with Lleida we have to wait until the fourteenth century to find a few mentions of fishing and the sale of fish. It is then in the fifteenth century that more extensive regulations on the sale of fish appear. In Tortosa the first reference appeared in the municipal charter (*carta de poblament*) in 1149, when king Ramon Berenguer IV gave to the city the nearby rivers and canals and the sea for fishing and sailing —for Lleida (1150) the municipal charter just mentions the donation of waters and fountains.¹⁵⁹ There were other inland villages

154. For exemple in Zaragoza, Falcón Pérez, María Isabel. *Ordenanzas y otros documentos...*: 541-542 (doc. No. 238); Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 553-552; in Sevilla, Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1061-1068; in Molina de Aragón, Sánchez, Julián. "Artes pesqueras...": 234.

155. Pujol, Marcel. "Tecnologia i pesca...": 167; Pujol, Marcel. "La pesca a l'Empordà...": 143; Martín, Eloy. "La pesca en Cataluña en la Edad Moderna: una exitosa expansión por el litoral español". *Drassana*, 22 (2014): 79; Fernández, Roberto; Martínez Shaw, Carlos. "Els sistemes de pesca". *L' Avenç. Revista d'història i cultura*, 37 (1980): 49.

156. Banegas, Ramon A. "Travail et techniques des bouchers et des poissonniers dans la Catalogne rurale (XIV^e et XV^e siècles)". *Études Roussillonnaises, Revue d'Histoire et Archéologie Méditerranéennes*, 26 (2013-2014): 149-151; Mutgé, Josefa. "L'abastament de peix i carn...": 112-113; Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1064.

157. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1439-1440, reg. 415, f. 34v.

158. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1084.

159. Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 150. In Lleida the king said: *Donamus iterum vobis prata et paschuas, fontes et aquas, boschos et legamina...* while one month before in Tortosa he said: *Dono iterum vobis omnibus aquas dulces et mare ad piscandum et navigandum exceptis stagnis et salinis in quibus retineo solam meam novenam*. See Font i Rius, Josep M. *Cartas de población y franquicia de Cataluña. Vol. I. Textos*. Madrid-Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1969: 129-132 (doc. No. 79), 121-124 (doc.

with important rivers to which the monarchs secured communal fishing rights: Zaragoza (1127) and Tauste (1138).¹⁶⁰ In Tortosa the references increased during the fourteenth century and we find several ordinances regulating the buying and selling of fish, the first ones in 1342 and later in 1369, 1370 and 1393. In Valencia these regulations were even earlier in 1324.¹⁶¹

Lleida's legislative delay shows us the limited entity of this office, only five fishmongers are documented in 1429.¹⁶² Even though this information is unlikely to reflect reality it helps us imagine Lleida lagging behind the coastal towns in this sense; for example in Tortosa's *Consuetudines* (1272) the rights and duties of fishermen and fishmongers were already established while in Lleida's *Consuetudines* (1228) we only find a brief reference to the sale of fish inside the regulations for chicken, ducks, fruit, vegetables and fish.¹⁶³ The only explicit reference to fishmongers in Lleida during the fourteenth century is in the Municipal Council acts for the year 1350. Some fishmongers asked the Municipal Council if the prohibition of selling fish was still valid and the Council agreed that anyone could sell fish.¹⁶⁴

The earliest mention is from 1206 and it gives us some clues as to why no references are found before 1350. In this document the butchers agree that they will have the butchers' shops supplied *secundum temporum distincionem completam carnibus et piscibus*.¹⁶⁵ This is the first mention of the control exercised over the fish market by butchers and the relationship between fish and butchers' shops continued throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁶⁶ In 1328 the butcher Ramon Beçó accused one of his workers of stealing a book from him in which he detailed the debts for fish and meat that people owed him.¹⁶⁷ In July 1402 the fishmonger Francesc Fet complained to the City Council that the butchers' guild had asked him to pay money for the fish he sold in the fish market, even though he had already paid them a rent for a table there.¹⁶⁸ Until the middle of the fifteenth century the city's fish market shared the space with the butcher's shop and it had probably been like this since the thirteenth century. Similarly, in some Castilian villages the sale

No. 75); Sabaté, Flocel. *Història de Lleida...*: 337, documented some fishermen at the end of the twelfth century.

160. Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 550.

161. Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 151.

162. Bolós, Jordi. *Dins les muralles de la ciutat...*, p. 89. Nevertheless, many fishmongers can go unnoticed due to their double occupation, like Pasqual de Vilallonga who in 1475 was a fishmonger and a candle maker: ACL. Pergamins. L_1744.

163. Botet, Guillem. *Els Costums de Lleida*, ed. Joan Josep Busqueta. Lleida: Ajuntament de Lleida, 1997: 93, 135.

164. AML, Fons municipal, Llibre de Consells Generals, 1350-1351, reg. 399, f. 8r.

165. AML, Fons Municipal, Llibre vert petit, reg. 1372, ff. 119r-121r, document transcribed in Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 434-436.

166. Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 126-127.

167. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1328-1329, reg. 768, f. 17r.

168. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1402-1403, reg. 404, f. 18v.



of fish was entrusted to specific persons named *corredores* or *obligados* —with some differences between them— who enjoyed approval from municipality.¹⁶⁹

The market place was a place of games and illegal activities. It was here that people, while playing cards or dice, blasphemed or started fights as well as other serious incidents. That is why we find some descriptions of the market area in medieval crime prosecution records which help us locate the market place. In 1353 Guerau Avarca was murdered by a man who lived in the transverse street between Madrona Street and Fishermen Street. In 1378 the convert Bertomeu d'Aguilar went to buy fish in a place near the Polls Square and got involved in a fight with a butcher. The fight was witnessed by other butchers who had their stalls nearby.¹⁷⁰ Based on cases like these we know that the fish market was located in the centre of the city, in Saint John's parish (the most populated area)¹⁷¹ and in a street called *carrera mitjana de la pescateria e carniceria* (middle street of the fish market and butchers shop, which is precisely identified in fifteenth century documents).¹⁷²

In effect, the fish market existed but was regulated since the beginning of the fifteenth century, but it was still linked to the butcher's shop. The *carrera mitjana* is identified as the alley between two small streets called Madrona and Corretgeria.¹⁷³ In 1428 the carpenter Guerau de Recasens bought a yard in the same street called *carrera migana, apelada carniceria o pescateria*.¹⁷⁴ In 1434 it is said that it was forbidden to play in the Paeria square and in the street called *Carrera migana de la pescateria e carniceria*.¹⁷⁵ We can therefore deduce that the fish market must have been located near the main butcher's shop and the slaughter house called Triperia.¹⁷⁶ This was obviously not an immovable place because during the sixteenth century the fish market was located in the Magdalena quarter.¹⁷⁷

It was precisely during the fifteenth century when some regulations were introduced, however we should suppose that the previous regulations about cleaning up the butcher shops also affected fishmongers. In 1414 the noblemen approved the salted meat and fish regulations, specifically those concerning conger and hake.¹⁷⁸ From this moment there is an increase in the number of ordinations, a sign that there was a major interest in the control of fish sales. During the decade 1430-1440, the Council started to regulate the sale of fish and the organization of the fish market. In 1430 there was an ordinance forbidding the gambling or raffling of fresh fish, and

169. Sánchez, Julián. "Pesca y trabajo en el reino de Toledo...": 158-163; also in Cordova, see Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1091-1092.

170. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre de Crims, 1377-1378, reg. 779, f. 76r.

171. Bolós, Jordi. *Dins les muralles...*: 139.

172. Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 127-128.

173. Lladonosa, Josep. *Els carrers i les places de Lleida a través de la historia*, ed. Joan Ganau. Lleida: Ajuntament de Lleida-Universitat de Lleida, 2007: 471-474.

174. AML. Fons municipal. Llibre d'actes del Consell General, 1428-1429, reg. 409, f. 8v.

175. AML. Fons municipal. Llibre d'actes del Consell General, 1434-1435, reg. 411, f. 5v.

176. Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 77-80.

177. Lladonosa, Josep. *Els carrers i les places...*: 555-557.

178. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1413-1416, reg. 406, f. 59v.



it specifies *anguiles* and *sabogues*.¹⁷⁹ In 1438 the sale of salted fish in the fish market and the butcher's shop square was regulated by ordaining that salted fish might only be sold in the houses, stalls and other places where it was usually sold.¹⁸⁰ Salted and dried fish had less restrictions and could be sold in both the fish marked and private houses.¹⁸¹ This idea also reinforces the affirmation that many neighbours practiced fishing, or at least the sale of salted fish, as a complement to their domestic income.

The centralization and control of the market is justified by the authorities as a measure for the correct supply of the city with products at a reasonable price. It is a common practice in many towns like Barcelona, Tortosa, Balaguer, Valls, El Perello, Solsona, Empuries, Saragossa, etc.¹⁸² For example, the ordinances of Balaguer, to prevent the speculation during Lent, forced all the fishmongers to display all their fresh water fish in San Salvador square.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that the fish sold outside the city limits or raffled escaped municipal taxes. The *mostassaf* was in charge of seeing that nobody avoided those taxes.¹⁸⁴ The resellers were regular participants of the market and its purpose attacked the attempts of control carried out by the municipal council. Their business was simple, they bought fish outside the municipal territory or inside but free from municipal taxes, in this way they avoided municipal control. Later, the product was sold at a price higher than that allowed by the town hall obtaining a good profit. Nevertheless, their activity was accepted and regulated by the municipal council trying to assimilate it into the local trade.¹⁸⁵ The resale had time, spatial and weight restrictions that increased when it came to fresh sea fish.¹⁸⁶ In fact, salted fish had less tax, its resale was less regulated and even in some villages escaped from municipal or lord's taxation.¹⁸⁷

179. AML. Fons municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1430-1431, reg. 410, f. 27.

180. AML. Fons municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1437-1438, reg. 414, f. 46v.

181. Riera, Antoni. "La pesca en el mediterráneo noroccidental...": 139.

182. Mutgé, Josefa. "L'abastament de peix i carn...": 110-111, 114-116; Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 151; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 419-422; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya (segles XII a XVIII)...": 322-323. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern de Catalunya. Ordinacions de Valls...": 291; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya (segles XIII a XVIII) (Continuació). Ordinacions o establiments del Perelló (anys 1341-1342), La Galea (anys 1343, 1344 y 1385), Ordinacions o establiments d'Amposta (anys 1344 a 1346)". *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 12/85 (1925): 44. For Empúries there is a parchment: ACL. Pergamins. L_2505; Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 563.

183. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 419.

184. Curto, Albert. "El consum de peix...": 151; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. (Segles XIII a XVIII) (Continuació) Ordinacions o establiments de Tortosa...": 423.

185. Sánchez, Julián. "Pesca y trabajo en el reino de Toledo...": 164-166.

186. Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 420-421; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern de Catalunya. Ordinacions de Valls...": 195; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Sant Celoni...": 139-140; Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya (segles XII a XVIII)...": 311, 323.

187. See Empúries case where just fresh fish was charged with *delme*, which was a 5% of the catch; in 1597 the fishermen declared their catch to the officials (*delmers*) in l'Escala, a coastal village founded



Although, as we have seen, there had been a designated fish market connected to the butcher's shop since the end of the fourteenth century, the space started to be regulated in the period 1430-1440. One of the main worries of the municipal council was to avoid the mixing of good and bad fish in the same market stalls. Sea fish was on display in the market stalls for days, sometimes more than three. We can imagine the awful smell of the fish which, in addition, had endured the slow journey from Tarragona or Tortosa. For this purpose, in 1431, it was decided to build two stalls called *Boqueria*, where the fresh fish that had already been displayed for one day in the fish market would be sold.

*Als quals prohomenys fon proposat per los dits honrats pahers que huy dia damunt dit per lo Consell General que ses celebrat en la casa de la paheria és stat donat càrrech a ells que ensemps ab ·IIII· prohomenys per ells elegidos vessen en quin loch se porie fer una taula o dues per a la boqueria a vendre los peix que mes avant de ·I· dia hauria stat en la pescateria. Com los pescaters qui venen aquell ne abusen fort mal com venen lo peix que haurà dos o tres dies o pus, que ja és <ací hi és> molt pudent ab certes mollesties que-y fan dins la dita pescateria al fer de aquel que ve bé e ffresch de la mar. Perquè-ls placie acordar-hi.*¹⁸⁸

This “non-fresh” fish, which had arrived at the city two or three days before (so the Council explained) was fetid and caused damage to the other fresh sea fish displayed in the fish market. These two stalls were separated and situated away from the fish market; one was near the low part of the arch of Bernat d’Olzinelles’s house, and the other was near the small gate between the Main Street and Francesc Marçal’s house.

In 1438 there were some complaints about *pex pudós e podrit que-s diu que-s vent en la pescateria*.¹⁸⁹ The *Boqueria* was still not functioning correctly and the Council authorized the control of the stalls and the eradication of the harmful fish. Soon, however, the *Boqueria* was moved inside the fish market because the fishmongers continued mixing fresh and non-fresh fish. In 1441 it was located in the upper part of the fish market, near Pere dels Pontes’s house.¹⁹⁰ Three years later the same problem arose again: when the fishmongers did not have enough fresh fish to complete an order they made up the difference by using non-fresh fish.¹⁹¹

The use of the word *boqueria* for a fish market is not fortuitous and it is, as far as we know, unique in the Crown of Aragon. It reflects the importance that the

during those years, see: ACL. Pergamins. L_2505; Pujol, Marcel. “La Pesca a l’Empordà...”: 140, 150.

188. “To those great men was proposed by the honourable *paers* that today, by the General Council that it has been celebrated in the Paeria house, it has been commanded to them and to four great men, selected by them, the election of a place where a table or two for *boqueria* could be done to sell the fish that has been exposed in the fish market for more than one day. Due to the fact that fishmongers who sell it commit a great and a badly abuse because they sell the fish which it has been here for two, three or more days –very smelly and provoking bothers inside the fish market– like if it was fresh from the sea. So they ask for their approval.” AML. Fons municipal. Llibre de Consells Particulars, 1430-1435, reg. 365, f. 17v.

189. “Smelly and rotten fish which is said that it is sold in the fish market”. AML. Fons municipal. Llibre d’Actes del Consell General, 1437-1438, reg. 414, f. 63v.

190. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d’Actes del Consell General, 1441-1442, reg. 417, 33v.

191. AML. Fons municipal. Llibre d’Actes del Consell General, 1444-1445, reg. 418, 14v



butchers still had over the fish market during the fifteenth century. The *boqueria* was where the *boc* (billy-goat) meat was sold, one of the animals considered to be of low quality. That is why many *boqueries* were located outside the city and there the sale of low quality animals, like sick and injured ones, was permitted.¹⁹²

These years also saw the appearance of the lessees of the tributes taxing fresh fish, and presumably salted fish too.¹⁹³ At the same time that the seasonal market was regulated it was established that fish should be more expensive during Lent (excepting fish from Tortosa and *bolig*) increasing the profits of the merchants and ensuring a good supply during those religious dates.

In June 1441 a great number of stalls in the *Carrera mitjana* had disappeared due to the construction work to remodel the central square of the city, Sant Joan square. At that time the fish market was moved away and provably lost the bond that had connected it with the butcher shop since 1206.¹⁹⁴

5. Conclusions

Throughout this article we have tried to explain and discuss fish consumption, supply and fishing techniques in inland cities, focusing on Lleida. Although there are not as many studies about fish as there are about meat, wheat or wine, fish played a very important role in the medieval diet. This is obvious because its consumption was determined by the religious calendar and (as Antoni Riera pointed out) it was mainly during religious festivities when fish was eaten and it was relegated into a second place during *carnal* days.¹⁹⁵

The study of documents shows us the preference for sea fish which adds a new problem to inland territories that needed to control its transport and final quality; this also created different models of consumption in the interior lands and in the coastal regions. Municipal council deliberations revolve around fish quality, its price and its supply knowing that it was essential for Lent and its fast deterioration could provoke health problems. This entailed an improvement of the traditional conservation systems: dried, smoked, salted, with olive oil and marinated with vinegar.¹⁹⁶

To ensure a correct supply during periods of great consumption, especially during Lent, municipal authorities controlled the fresh fish trade, centering it in the fish

192. Banegas, Ramon A. *Sangre, dinero y poder. El negocio de la carne en la Barcelona bajomedieval*. Lleida: Editorial Milenio, 2016: 135-141.

193. AML. Fons Municipal. Llibre d'Actes del Consell General, 1439-1440, reg. 415, f. 34v.

194. Lladonosa, Josep. *Els carrers i les places...*: 555-557; Roca, Guillem. *Salubritat i salut pública...*: 131-132.

195. Riera, Antoni. "Jerarquía social...": 192; Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 547-548.

196. Hernández, Pilar. "La pesca fluvial...": 1087-1089. Among the ordinations of fishmongers in Balaguer one line about the correct way to measure oil appears, see: Carreras Candi, Francesc. "Ordinacions urbanes de bon govern a Catalunya. Ordinacions de Balaguer...": 421.



market where the *mostassaf* controlled its sale with strict hygienic regulations. This was also because food safety became the basis of an increasing indirect taxation which turned out to be a great source of income for municipal councils.¹⁹⁷

Although sea fish was preferred to fresh water fish and it is much more visible in the documents, we must not forget the consumption of fresh water fish. In inland cities, fishing was a seasonal activity due to the nature of the different species and it was mainly practiced during spring and summer when heat spoiled sea fish. It was carried out frequently as a complement for self-supply or like a pecuniary aid in times of economic crisis; adding complexity to fishermen's socio-labor category because they were often listed as having other occupations.¹⁹⁸ The existence of communal ponds, canals and specific areas in rivers dedicated to fishing tells us that these spots were exploited in a way that has left very little documentary evidence. We have documented the use of non-professional techniques¹⁹⁹ (fishing rods, harpoons or nets handled from the riverbanks) and also more sophisticated tools like big nets used from a boat or traps. However, we still have to study how the progressive privatization of the communal areas (like pastures, forest and also rivers) affected the activity of self-supply, probably centering it in conserved communal zones.²⁰⁰

Appendix. Fish mentioned in the ordinations of Balaguer from 1313

	Ordinations name	Common Catalan name	Scientific name	Comments
1	<i>Storio</i>	Esturió	<i>Acipenser Sturio</i>	
2	<i>Tonyina</i>	Tonyina	<i>Thunnus thynnus</i>	
3	<i>Conger (fresc i sec)</i>	Congre	<i>Conger conger</i>	Fresh or dried
4	<i>Dalfí</i>	Dofí	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	
5	<i>Corball</i>	Corball	<i>Umbrina cirrosa</i>	
6	<i>Reig</i>		<i>Argyrosomus regius</i>	
7	<i>Amfós</i>	Anfós	<i>Epinephelus marginatus</i>	
8	<i>Círvia</i>		<i>Seriola Dumerili</i>	
9	<i>Múgol</i>	Mújol	<i>Mugil cephalus cephalus</i>	

197. Riera, Antoni. *La pesca en el mediterráneo noroccidental...*: 143.

198. Alegret, Joan Lluís. "Aproximació a l'activitat pesquera...": 35.

199. Pujol, Marcel. "Tecnologia i pesca...": 155-156.

200. Rodrigo, María Luz. "Fresco, frescal, salado...": 550-552.



10	<i>Lop</i>	Llop	<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	
11	<i>Liça</i>	Llisa	<i>Mugil cephalus cephalus</i>	
12	<i>Orada</i>	Orada	<i>Sparus aurata</i>	
13	<i>Palomida</i>		<i>Lichia glaucus,</i> <i>Lichia amia,</i> <i>Tynnus pelamys</i>	
14	<i>Pagell</i>		<i>Pagellus erythrinus</i>	
15	<i>Moll</i>		<i>Mullus surmuletus</i>	
16	<i>Paguer</i>	Pagre	<i>Pagrus pagrus</i> or also <i>Sparus pagrus</i>	
17	<i>Scorpra</i>	Escòrpora	<i>Scorpaena porcus</i>	
18	<i>Gèmbol</i>			Unknown
19	<i>Garch</i>			Unknown
20	<i>Marbre</i>	Mabre	<i>Lithognathus mormyrus</i>	
21	<i>Verada</i>	Verat	<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	
22	<i>Esparegol</i>	Esperelló?	<i>Diplodus annularis</i>	
23	<i>Oblada</i>		<i>Oblada melanura</i>	
24	<i>Tort</i>	Tord	<i>Symphodus (Crenilabrus) melops</i>	
25	<i>Griva</i>	Tord negre o Grívia	<i>Labrus merula</i>	
26	<i>Carter</i>			Unknown
27	<i>Verat</i>		<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	
28	<i>Salpa</i>		<i>Sarpa salpa</i>	
29	<i>Corba</i>		<i>Sciaena umbra</i>	
30	<i>Xangló</i>	Xanguet?	<i>Aphia minuta</i>	



31	<i>Luerna</i>	Lluerna fosca, lluerna roja, lluerna rossa	<i>Chelidonichthys</i> <i>obscura</i> , <i>Chelidonichthys</i> <i>cuculus</i> , <i>Chelidonichthys</i> <i>lucerna</i>	
32	<i>Clavell</i>		<i>Raja clavata</i>	
33	<i>Mussola</i>		<i>Mustelus mustelus</i>	
34	<i>Lluç</i>		<i>Merluccius</i> <i>merluccius</i>	
35	<i>Aranya</i>	Aranya blanca, aranya de cap negre, aranya fragata, aranyó	<i>Trachinus draco</i> , <i>Trachinus radiates</i> , <i>Trachinus araneus</i> , <i>Echiichthys vipera</i> .	
36	<i>Rèmol</i>		<i>Schophthalmus</i> <i>rhombus</i>	
37	<i>Avenarda</i>			Unknown
38	<i>Palaya blanca</i>	Palaia misèries, llenguado, peluda vera or palaia rossa,	<i>Phrynorhombus</i> <i>regius</i> , <i>Solea</i> <i>vulgaris vulgaris</i> , <i>Arnoglossus laterna</i> , <i>Citharys linguatula</i> or <i>macrolepidotus</i>	There are different possibilities for this specie as the name may vary from <i>palaia</i> to <i>pelaia</i> or <i>llenguado</i>
39	<i>Zavoga de mar</i>		<i>Alosa fallax</i>	The document specifies from the sea
40	<i>Molera</i>	Mòllera?	<i>Tripsoterus minutus</i> <i>capellanus</i>	
41	<i>Jerla</i>	Gerla o xucla	<i>Spicara maena</i>	
42	<i>Besuch</i>	Besuc	<i>Pagellus acarne</i>	
43	<i>Bisol</i>	Bis	<i>Scomber japonicus</i>	
44	<i>Boga</i>		<i>Boops boops</i>	
45	<i>Sorell</i>		<i>Trachurus</i> <i>trachurus</i>	
46	<i>Bonítol</i>		<i>Sarda sarda</i>	



47	<i>Aguylla</i>		<i>Belone vulgaris</i>	
48	<i>Lagosta</i>	Llagosta	<i>Palinurus vulgaris</i>	
49	<i>Stadenya</i>			Unknown
50	<i>Banosa</i>			Unknown
51	<i>Lena</i>			Unknown
52	<i>Matell</i>			Unknown
53	<i>Peix d'estany</i>			Fish from lakes
54	<i>Oronella</i>			Or <i>Oronell</i> in some documents
55	<i>Malva</i>	Melva	<i>Auxis rochei</i>	
56	<i>Golfa</i>	Golfàs?	<i>Thunnus thynnus</i>	A young tuna
57	<i>Lagostí</i>	Llagostí	<i>Penaeus kerathurus</i>	
58	<i>Sardina bella</i>		<i>Sardina pilchardus sardina</i>	
59	<i>Ladella</i>	Lladella		Unknown
60	<i>Bequerut (exceptat magenqua)</i>		<i>Paralepis coregonoides</i>	Specifies excepting <i>majenca</i> , probably referring to another type of fish (also called <i>xanguet</i>) <i>Aphia minuta</i> (No. 30)
61	<i>Alatxa</i>		<i>Sardinella aurita</i>	
62	<i>Peix menut de carrava</i>			Small fish fished from a boat called <i>càrava</i> .
63	<i>Emperador</i>	Peix-espasa	<i>Xiphias gladius</i>	
64	<i>Spet</i>	Espet	<i>Sphyræna sphyræna</i>	
65	<i>Rajada</i>		<i>Raja alba</i>	
66	<i>Struta</i>			Unknown
67	<i>Gat (ab mocha)</i>		<i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i>	With the guts (<i>moca</i>)



68	<i>Sípia</i>	Sèpia	<i>Sepia officinalis</i>	
69	<i>Canadella</i>			Unknown
70	<i>Calamar</i>		<i>Loligo vulgaris</i>	

