

BADÍA, Lola, CIFUENTES, Lluís y SALICRÚ i LLUCH, Roser (eds.)*La vida marítima a la Mediterrània medieval. Fonts històriques i literàries*

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SALICRÚ i LLUCH, Roser (ed.)*Tripulacions i vaixells a la Mediterrània medieval: fonts i perspectives comparades des de la Corona d'Aragó*

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Evidence of pre-modern Mediterranean seafaring survives from many cultures, across various genres of texts, and in archival documents, iconographical sources and material evidence. Scholarly literature about the Mediterranean and the waters surrounding it is comprehensive and derives from multiple viewpoints. However, lived experiences of sea-travel have not commonly been the focus of study. Despite some excellent analyses of the pre-modern maritime world, extensive treatment of experiences on board is negligible. Studies of early travellers typically focus on motives and experiences after arrival rather than occurrences during the journey. Also, scholarly work about early maritime activities has traditionally been 'top-down' rather than «bottom-up» and typically concerned itself with the design and construction of boats, methods of navigation, warfare, and trade.

This focus on coastal communities and terrestrial experiences is a consequence in part of the challenges presented by the types and quantities of sources available

for understanding the human factor in pre-modern Mediterranean sea travel. Despite the many detailed narratives available describing voyages which cross the Mediterranean, few dwell on the time spent aboard ships. Exceptions of course exist, including the well-known *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr (1145-1217), details in Jean de Joinville's (1224-1317) *Vie de Saint Louis*, and narratives from the pilgrim Felix Fabri (1441-1502) and the condottiero Roberto da Sanseverino (1418-87).

However, recent work by some scholars is demonstrating that diving deep in archives and considering with a different agenda a variety of both well-known and new evidence allows the development of a more vivid and more personal picture of human experience at sea in the pre-modern Mediterranean than was previously thought possible. Chief among these scholars is Professor Roser Salicrú i Lluçh (IMF-CSIC, Barcelona), the editor of both volumes discussed below, who with her students and other collaborators is enriching the picture of human experiences of maritime life, particularly focused on the territories of the former Crown of Aragon.

The two volumes considered here bring together articles following two seminars held at the Museu Marítim de Barcelona, which initiated and involved the research group CAIMMED (La Corona catalanoaragonesa, l'Islam i el món mediterrani). *La vida marítima a la Mediterrània medieval. Fonts històriques i literàries* edited by Lola Badia, Lluís Cifuentes and Roser Salicrú i Lluçh, from a seminar in 2016, focuses on experiences of life at sea, with contributors highlighting new sources and considering how well-known sources can be used in different ways to illuminate this subject. *Tripulacions i vaixells a la Mediterrània medieval: fonts i perspectives comparades des de la Corona d'Aragó*

edited by Roser Salicrú i Lluch, results from a seminar in 2014. This volume focuses on the Crown of Aragon and the late medieval Mediterranean with comparative case studies included. The volumes are broadly interdisciplinary, considering sources from archives, chronicles and other narratives, letters, hagiography, archaeology, iconography, and literature.

The first volume has sixteen essays, organised in alphabetical order by author's surname. Here are found descriptions of voyages, such as Eduardo Aznar Vallejo's examination of the testimony of the Venetian merchant, Ca da Mosto (1432-88) from his Atlantic excursions to the coasts of West Africa. Also, Rafael Beltrán revisits historiography about the maritime campaigns of Pero Niño, he argues that the later biography of Niño, *El Victorial*, appears to draw on eyewitness evidence and therefore likely used an onboard logbook as a source. Michel Bochaca compares the style and content of two *a posteriori* narratives from different perspectives of the same journey (1428) and back again (1430) where a Burgundian embassy travelled to Portugal to negotiate the marriage of Duke Philippe le Bon and the Infanta Isabella. One (an embassy report) is measured, somewhat idealistic, and slightly vague; a story of terrestrial people at sea by a terrestrial person at sea. The other (the diary of Luca di Maso, a captain of Florentine galleys) focuses on navigational elements including desertions, damage, and sailing errors. Bochaca notes that no human emotion figures in this latter text, this is the perspective of a professional sailor. The author includes detailed maps which catalogue the voyage.

The first essay considering the chronicle of the Catalan mercenary Ramon Muntaner, this by Veronica Orazi, considers Muntaner's

depiction of naval battles and contrasts his descriptions of them with his descriptions of battles on land. The Battle of Nicòtera (1282) is in focus in the essay by Marta Peracaula and Xavier Renedo. The authors examine and compare descriptions of the battle — a confrontation between Charles of Anjou and Peter the Great — from the chronicles of Ramon Muntaner and Bernat Desclot in conjunction with other pertinent contemporary sources.

Shifting to a more literary focus, Lluís and Miriam Cabré consider a fifteenth century poem, now extant in a manuscript in Barcelona's Biblioteca Universitària, which presents a satire of the experience of the Levantine trade route. Josep Pujol Gómez considers images and metaphors of seafaring in the writings of Joan Roís de Corella (1435-1497), with attention to potential sources of inspiration, his agenda, and the meaning he intends to convey to his audience. David Guixeras and Sadurní Martí similarly focus on maritime elements in the works of Francesc Eiximenis with particular focus on commerce and military strategy. They also highlight Eiximenis' idealisation of the merchant. Gabriel Ensenyat Pujol examines Ramon Llull's remarks on the art of sailing, navigational instruments, and associated meteorological phenomena along with his general interest in the maritime world as evidenced through various mentions across many of his writings. This draws on Llull's own personal experience as a native of Mallorca and from his travels in the Mediterranean. As with Eiximenis, this essay also reflects on Llull's elevation of the figure of the merchant in his works.

Hagiographical links to the maritime sphere are considered in the essay by Francesca Español. The religious response of people at sea to danger is presented via

various cases with a particular focus on Marian examples including the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. Images of miracles at sea, in addition to the textual sources, contribute to the detail of the picture presented. Christine Gadrat-Ouerfelli looks at accounts of travel to the Holy Land by the pilgrim-travellers Ludolf von Sudheim and Felix Fabri, with a focus on their accounts of the maritime space itself and their experiences therein. Ludolf and Felix recounted the logistics, dangers, and strange and unusual phenomena for those who would travel after them as well as audiences who would never leave their village or monastery. Descriptions of maritime experiences, particularly storms, in the poems of Ausiàs March are the subject of the essay by Francesc J. Gómez. The author demonstrates that March's poetry is replete with metaphors and similes of the sea and navigation which are a significant compositional device used by the poet. Gómez highlights the long tradition in which this poet worked and the symbolism drawing on the likes of Petrarch, Virgil, Ovid and the Christian tradition.

Similarly drawing on the classical past, Roberta Morosini presents examples of confinement, exile and civility in Boccaccio's *De mulieribus*. With a focus on women including Nicostrata, Dido, Io, and Theoxena, she considers Boccaccio's account of their interventions in the foreign spaces in which they settled, where they all play different civilising roles. Through these examples, this essay considers the sea as a space of political escape from oppression as well as how Boccaccio uses the sea as an extension of the city as part of his larger agenda in this work. Continuing the focus on the Italian Peninsula, Raúl González Arévalo considers the only merchant navy belonging to an inland state in the late medieval Mediterranean,

Florence. He highlights the important place of the fleet project in contemporary narrative sources and in the city's comprehension of itself. This essay also demonstrates that these texts present information of great interest which would not be contained in official documents from the institutions of the republic. This information is helpful to better understand life aboard the mercantile galleys of Florence. Antonio Musarra analyses the representation of the Mediterranean in the *Annales Ianuenses* and other twelfth and thirteenth century Genoese chronicles, including Giovanni Balbi (Catholicon). He highlights the representation of ties and contrasts between people along the sea's coasts against the backdrop of the agenda of the different authors of the texts. Musarra includes an appendix of naval terminology used in the texts under consideration.

Finally, technological innovations of the naval revolution in the late Middle Ages, 1280-1360 are the subject of the chapter by Marcel Pujol i Hamelink. By way of conclusion, Marina Montesano reflects on the Mediterranean as a concept and the relative newness of the current notion of this body of water as one holistic space.

The second volume, again arranged in alphabetical order, contains seventeen essays and takes a more concentrated focus on Aragon. It opens with Enrico Basso reviewing some known archival collections with the intention to examine living and working conditions of ships' crews. He details access to provisions and rations among other elements and considers disparities in rights among those aboard dependent on status. He demonstrates the utility of using a range of such sources for this exercise, whilst pointing out the issues presented by decisions that were taken when cataloguing some archives.

Moving attention to Valencia, Andrés Díaz Borrás considers sources that reveal medieval maritime activities in the city. He demonstrates the possibilities for research with the aim to generate interest in establishing a field of historical research concerned with maritime Valencia. In this vein, David Igual Luis considers the Valencian *Manifest del Mar*, a register of certain royal taxes charged on maritime imports. This is a fiscal source, which provides a record of the companies that docked in the port of Valencia. The author assesses the difficulties presented by employing it as a source for historical writing, including the challenges of identifying people named in the manifests. Nevertheless, he demonstrates that its utility extends beyond the intended functional purposes for which it was composed, reaching to more general evidence for analysis of medieval crews including information about those responsible for commercial items and evidence for components of seafaring. Juan Leonardo Soler Milla considers ships' *patrones* with a focus on Valencia in the fourteenth century in the context of the expansion of Mediterranean trade from the city. He includes as an appendix a table of sales of ships in the Valencian market during the fourteenth century.

To life aboard, José Miguel Escribano Páez, examines life in the navies under Charles V from the perspective of those on the ground (or the sea). He highlights the formative role of these naval men as actors in creating the new monarchical/imperial policy, negotiating their own place in this world, not passively accepting a regime imposed from above. Further east, Raúl González Arévalo utilises the diary of Luca di Maso degli Albizzi, the *Quadernuccio* by Luigi Vettori, and Benedetto Dei's *Chronicle* in order to understand more about the crews

of Florentine merchant galleys as well as the relative value of these texts as sources for this exercise. José Vicente Cabezuelo Pliego presents an inventory of equipment, supplies and luggage for a fleet launched from Barcelona during the so-called «war of the two Pedros». Continuing on this theme, Guillem/Guillermo Morey captained two galleys (Santa Miquel and Santa Coloma) between August and December 1358. Alberto Reche Ontillera constructs a micro-historical study of their journeys, demonstrating that if extant account books are used in combination with other sources, a very rich picture of these voyages can be compiled. Some examples of the entries employed are collated in an appendix. Cases from the *llibres d'acordament* are in focus in the essay by Roser Salicrú i Lluç. These rich and fascinating documents record the enrolment of crews for ships and shed light on networks, relationships and other activities involving these crew members, providing surprisingly personal details of the lives of people from the era who are typically unreachable for historians. Gemma T. Colesanti and Rosanna Alaggio examine sources for private fleets to assess maritime activities in the Kingdom of Naples in the early period of Aragonese rule there. Contrary to the rich picture available for Aragonese territories in the Iberian Peninsula, that for Naples is less well-known, partly due to differences in survivals of sources; Colesanti and Alaggio here begin to rectify that.

Continuing in the Italian Peninsula, Antonio Musarra focusses on registers in the State Archives of Genoa which contain documents about Genoese galleys in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries to show the potential inherent in this rich set of archival sources. Musarra recommends that to understand what these sources can tell us about sea voyages, the entire collection should be

systematically analysed. Angela Orlandi asks new questions of the well-known Datini correspondence to ascertain what it can tell historians about ships and preparing them for seafaring as well as specific events which affected a maritime journey.

Considering logistics, Mario Orsi Lázaro considers the military side of navigation, examining two fleets sent to conquer Alghero (1353-54) highlighting organisation, naval operations and administration. *Le dret d'ancoratge*, the mooring fee at the port of Barcelona and the associated right to anchor in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is the subject of Mikel Soberón's essay. He clarifies some of the basic characteristics of this tax, associated evidence of ships arriving in Barcelona in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and highlights that evidence for the tax is also evidence for the totality of economic activity in the port of Barcelona. He includes useful tables detailing the types of ships anchoring at Barcelona during particular periods. Marcel Pujol i Hamelink examines the role of master shipwrights in Catalonia, with details of both their craft in shipyards as well as as navigators, in the late middle ages.

With a turn to documents, here from the archives of the Crown of Aragon, Pinuccia F. Simbula considers building and outfitting galleys in the Barcelona shipyards in the late fifteenth century, incorporating fascinating detail about, for example, relative

costs of equipment. This is examined in the context of the wider city, its economy, local artisans, and the circulation of goods. From the diocesan archives of Mallorca (Arxiu Diocesà i Arxiu Capitular de Mallorca) Antonio Ortega Villoslada highlights the value of ecclesiastical archives for research related to medieval maritime activity. They reflect social and cultural aspects of daily life, not to mention religion; therefore presenting a picture of human experience which is different to that which can be distilled from records of tax and notaries.

These are generous and informative volumes which highlight new sources, new methods, and new subjects for investigation as well as new ways of looking at well-known topics and materials. The essays considered here make clear that rich archival sources about the lives and experiences of crews, navies and other maritime travellers do exist but have not previously been analysed or at least not with a view to understanding personal experiences of seafaring. Also, that narrative, iconographic, and archaeological sources, many of which are well-known, are also rich evidence for the social and experiential elements of pre-modern Mediterranean sea travel. One can only hope that more research of such breadth, variety, and insight is to be forthcoming on this subject.

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