

## THE MUSLIM *ALJAMA* OF TORTOSA IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES: Notes on Its Organisation<sup>1</sup>

Tortosa is a city located in Catalonia, near the mouth of the Ebro River. In the Middle Ages, the Ebro was navigable and was a conduit of communication and commerce between the interior of the Iberian peninsula and the Mediterranean coast. Although Tortosa is not located on the shore itself, it is very near to the coast, and for that reason is considered a maritime city. In the Islamic era it flourished, especially once it became the capital of the independent *taifa*, or principality of Tortosa. When it was conquered in 1148 by Ramon Berenguer IV, Count of Barcelona, a great number of Muslim inhabitants remained in the city to live under Christian dominion.<sup>2</sup> In the surrender agreements concluded with the Christians, these Muslims received assurances that they would be able to remain in the area of the city, given that they leave the very centre and move their homes to the extramural suburbs.<sup>3</sup> The successors of Count Ramon, the kings of the Crown of Aragon, respected these concessions and authorised many other privileges for the Muslims of Tortosa, giving heed to their complaints as these arose. Frequently, at least one time in each reign, the Muslims strove to have the privileges which had been authorised by the reigning monarch's predecessors confirmed. In 1370, for example, Pedro the Ceremonious confirmed the privileges of Tortosa, including the text of the *carta puebla* authorised by Count Ramon Berenguer IV in 1148, as well as another privilege conceded by Alfons the Troubadour in September 1180.<sup>4</sup> A similar confirmation was conceded by Martí the Humane in 1408, enhanced with concessions which responded to specific complaints made by the Muslims regarding the interference of Christian officials in the

*SCRIPTA MEDITERRANEA*, Vols XIX-XX 1998-1999, 143

---

<sup>1</sup> The following article was written as part of the research project, "The Crown of Aragon and the Islamic Countries in the Late Middle Ages: 1 the Politico-Military Setting and the Economic and Cultural Exchanges" (PB 94-0123).

<sup>2</sup> J. M. Font Rius, *Cartas de población y franquicia de Cataluña*, 2 vols., vol. 1, *Textos* (Madrid-Barcelona, 1969), 770-775.

<sup>3</sup> P. Bofarull, *Colección de documentos inéditos del Archivo de la Corona de Aragón*, vol. 4 (Barcelona, 1849), 130-135.

<sup>4</sup> Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Cancelleria, registre. 918, ff. 114 r.-116 v. (1 February, 1370).

internal affairs of the *aljama*. This concession prohibited, as well, the imposition of taxes on the performance of troubadours or singers at weddings — a matter which we will return to.<sup>5</sup> Later, in 1419, a little after he came to the throne, Alfons the Magnanimous also confirmed the privileges conceded by his predecessors to the *aljama* of the Muslims of Tortosa.<sup>6</sup>

The *aljama* of Tortosa, along with that of Lleida, was one of the two great urban *morerias* of Catalonia. Nevertheless, the importance of the Tortosan *moreria* has not been given the attention that it deserves. The internal sources of the *moreria* no longer exist, and so we have to approach them through the study of the Christian documentation. I have made use principally of the register of the royal chancellery of the Archive of the Crown of Aragon to write this article, which itself is a preliminary to a more extensive study that I hope to complete in the future.

The authors who have studied the *aljama* of Tortosa up to now have not been able to agree on the location of the *moreria* within the city. According to Lapeyre, it was located in the modern suburb of Vilanova;<sup>7</sup> according to Miravall, in the place known as Garrofer<sup>8</sup> and, according to Bayerri, in Remolins.<sup>9</sup> It is this last suggestion that seems most credible. Several documents corroborate in citing Remolins in relation to the Muslims of Tortosa. For example, a letter of Jaume II written to Guillem de Ceret, *battle* ["bailiff," approximately] of Tortosa in November 1313 comments that a complaint of the *aljama* of Remolins has reached the king on account of certain men of Tortosa who had entered the house of Facen Jaba against the will of the *cadi* of the *aljama*.<sup>10</sup> We also know that the Muslim artisans (and indeed the Jewish ones too) had been obliged to locate themselves in "Market Street" in Remolins, an order to which they did not all comply, which precipitated a loss to the royal fisc, given that this area fell under the dominion of the king and was a source of revenue through taxation of its tradesmen.<sup>11</sup> The butcher shops where Muslims were obliged to buy their meat was also found in this suburb.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2206, ff. 45 r.-47 v. (4 September, 1408).

<sup>6</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2585, f. 74 r. (8 August, 1416).

<sup>7</sup> H. Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne morisque* (Paris, 1959), 104.

<sup>8</sup> R. Miravall, *Tortosa i els tortosins* (Barcelona, 1969), 81.

<sup>9</sup> E. Bayerri Bartomeu, *Historia de Tortosa* (Tortosa, 1953-1960), vol. 6, 374; vol. 7, 479, 613ff.

<sup>10</sup> The complaint was registered again by the king in 1316: ACA, C, reg. 158, f. 297 r. (4 March, 1316).

<sup>11</sup> ACA, C, reg. 115, f. 394 v. (17 April, 1300).

<sup>12</sup> ACA, C, reg. 171, ff. 25 v.-26 r. (18 December, 1320).

The documentation that I have studied does not provide any information regarding the location of the nerve centres of the *moreria*, such as the congregational mosque and baths. Nevertheless it can be assumed that there were municipal baths that Muslims, Christians and Jews all used. According to the *Costums* of Tortosa and other earlier ordinances, Muslims, both men and women were to use the baths on Fridays only. Moreover, there must have been other baths outside of the walls which were shared by members of the different faiths.<sup>13</sup> In 1406 King Martí the Humane published a decree by crier which referred to the rights of the Muslims and which also authorised that, if it was judged necessary, the royal flag be raised over the gate of the *moreria* as a visible sign of royal protection.<sup>14</sup>

Just like the other *aljamas*, that of Tortosa was ruled by a *cadi* [Arabic: *al-qāḍī*].<sup>15</sup> In principle, the *cadi* had clearly established judicial powers, established with the first holder of this office, Abubaquer Avinahole.<sup>16</sup> He was to administer the "*sunna e xara*", just as is specified for other *aljamas* such as those of Orihuela, Elx, and Elda.<sup>17</sup> But other duties are laid out as well, including the gathering of taxes (as in Elx) or notarial duties (as in Asp).<sup>18</sup> The *cadis* collected and administered taxes in Tortosa as well, a matter with which we are acquainted owing to the number of complaints of abuses which the *aljama* registered with the kings. In May of 1298, for example, the Muslim community complained to the king that two former *cadis*, Nuanelle (or Eunile) Habib and Mahomet Gavarreix (or Gabbareig) did not wish to give accounts to the *aljama* of the sums that they had taken as loans or had received as, and the community's taxes (such as the *questia*), as well as

<sup>13</sup> D. Romano, "Los judíos en los baños de Tortosa (siglos XIII-XIV)," *Sefarad*, 40 (1980): 57-64.

<sup>14</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2204, ff. 71 v.-72 r. (10 December, 1406).

<sup>15</sup> For more on this figure, so crucial to *aljama* government, see J. Boswell, *The Royal Treasure: Muslim Communities under the Crown of Aragon in the Fourteenth Century* (New Haven CN, 1977), 77-79; R. I. Burns, *Islam under the Crusader. Colonial Survival in the Thirteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia* (Princeton, 1974), 224-234, 258, and 375ff.; J. Mutgé i Vives, *L'aljama sarraïna de Lleida a l'Edat Mitjana. Aproximació a la seva història* (Barcelona, 1992), 21-22; M. B. Basáñez Villaluenga, *La aljama sarracena de Huesca en el siglo XIV* (Barcelona, 1989), 30-31.

<sup>16</sup> ACA, C, pergami de Juame I, 4, ed. by R. Argemí, *Els Tagarins a la Ribera de l'Ebre al segle XIII*, Tesis de licenciatura (Departamento de Filología Semítica de la Universidad de Barcelona, 1972), 95. The selection of the *cadi* was made by the Commander of the Temple and by Ramon de Montcada, lords of the city.

<sup>17</sup> M. T. Ferrer i Mallol, *Les aljames sarraïnes de la governació d'Oriola en el segle XIV* (Barcelona, 1988), 59, 62 and 76-77.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 63 and 77.

for other unspecified reasons. In addition, it seems that their legal competency was placed in doubt because they borrowed money in the name of the *aljama*, but without its permission. The *aljama*, naturally, did not wish then to pay the public loans undertaken by the former *cadis*, apart from those which had been directed to the benefit of the community, and which they had been authorised to take.<sup>19</sup> A copy of one of these loans is preserved in a parchment of King Alfons II. It treats of a loan by Bernat Llorenç, a citizen of Tortosa, of twenty-two *libras jaqueses* to Mahomet Gavarreg, *cadi* of Tortosa, his wife Elfi, Alfag Abinaule, Eunile Habib, Moferrig Abinahomet, *alamin* of Benifallet, Jucef Abingena, Moferrig Abnelfaqui, Abrafim Abehaudo and Ali, son of Moferrig Arrahaudi, with the *cadi* acting in the name of the whole *aljama*.<sup>20</sup> Despite the complaint of the community, the debt seems to have been endorsed then by a group widely representative of the *aljama*, and so the protest may have been a result of a clash between parties within the administration. Less contentious was the performance of the *cadi* as notary. In 1321, Jaume II demanded that the emir Isma'il, son of the king of Granada, return a shipment of oil valued at sixty-one *libras* and twelve *sous* which Pascual Cifre had entrusted to two Muslims of Tortosa and for whom the *cadi* had written a "*carta morisca*."<sup>21</sup>

The appointment of the *cadi* passed into the hands of the king in 1294, having previously been a seignorial appointment, as we have seen. The first of these officials cited in the documents was a certain Mafomet, nominated in 1174.<sup>22</sup> At that time the candidate was typically chosen from among the king's entourage, and directed the office by means of an intermediary.<sup>23</sup> This occurred for example in May 27, 1316, when Haçon, son of the deceased Abraham who had been the scribe of the "*manescal*" of the king, was appointed. We hear of a minor palace intrigue in which, in order to divert some of the revenue of the *aljama* to him, Haçon was given the office and allowed to hold it indirectly.<sup>24</sup> Later, in May 1316, Hamet Saragoci, another inhabitant of Tortosa, who was perhaps a suitable candidate but with less influence at court, was appointed as *cadi* of the *aljama* of Valencia. This community was less populous than that of Tortosa and was therefore less desirable to hold as an office. Nevertheless, Hamet Saragoci's merits did not long go unnoticed and in January of 1321 he was given the office of *cadi* of

<sup>19</sup> ACA, C, reg. 110, f. 157 v. (5 May, 1298) and reg. 111, f. 232 r. (21 May, 1298).

<sup>20</sup> ACA, C, pergamiés d'Alfons II, 10 (14 February, 1291), ed. Argemí, 137-138.

<sup>21</sup> ACA, C, reg. 173, f. 204 r.-v. (20 July, 1321).

<sup>22</sup> ACA, C, pergamiés d'Alfons I, 159, ed. Argemí, 109.

<sup>23</sup> ACA, C, reg. 232, ff. 229 v. and 230 r. (27 May, 1316).

<sup>24</sup> ACA, C, reg. 232, f. 340 v. (21 May, 1316).

Tortosa at the king's pleasure, later for life in 1324.<sup>25</sup> The office remained in the hands of the Sargoci for the succeeding years. In March of 1396 Azmet Saragoci, who was no doubt a descendent of Hamet, obtained the same office for life when its previous holder died. Martí the Humane confirmed him in this post in July of 1397.<sup>26</sup>

In 1433 the *batlle* of Tortosa intervened in the nomination of the *cadi*, an interference which met with an immediate reaction on the part of the reigning queen, Maria, wife of Alfons the Magnanimous. The *batlle* in question, Bartomeu Domènec, had fired the current *cadi* in order to put a Muslim of Valencia in his place. The *aljama* of Tortosa complained of this act of the *batlle* on the grounds that it contravened their privileges, which upon examination showed that the nomination of the *cadi* was the exclusive right of the king, or the queen reigning in his name. In addition, the queen admonished Bartomeu for having brought in a *cadi* from Valencia, given that the judicial norms in Valencia and Tortosa differed. This distinction is very interesting. For all of that, the queen ordered the *batlle* to restore the deposed *cadi* to his office, and thereafter to proceed in such matters only with her judicial assessor, who normally accompanied her when she presided over tribunals.<sup>27</sup>

The *salmedina* was an official who played an important role in the life of the *aljamas* of the thirteenth century, but who came to be converted into a mere assistant of the *cadi* in the fourteenth. One of his principal occupations was the supervision of the market, although his precise duties varied from place to place.<sup>28</sup> In 1174, a certain Nage is mentioned as *salmedina* in a document which predates the earliest mention of the *cadi*.<sup>29</sup> In the nomination of Abubaquer Avinahole in 1216 the lords of Tortosa instructed the *cadi* that he not infringe on the role and jurisdiction of the *salmedina*, as the latter should not interfere with his own.<sup>30</sup> Much later, in March 1386, the office was conceded to Mahoma Capo, caulker of Tortosa, a nomination confirmed by Joan I in March of 1387.<sup>31</sup> In 1408, certain controversies arose between the *cadi* and *salmedina* vis-à-vis their respective powers, as well as between them and some of the royal officials regarding the functioning of the

<sup>25</sup> ACA, C, reg. 233, f. 146 r. (1 January, 1321) and f. 246 r.

<sup>26</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1916, f. 165 v, (6 March, 1396) and reg. 2114, f. 28 r. (5 July, 1397).

<sup>27</sup> ACA, C, reg. 3125, f. 60 r.-v. (18 December, 1433).

<sup>28</sup> Burns, 235-237.

<sup>29</sup> ACA, C, pergami d' Alfons I, 159, ed. Argemí, 109.

<sup>30</sup> ACA, C, perg. de Jaime I, 4, ed. R. Argemí, *Els Tagarins de la Ribera d'Ebre al segle XIII* (Barcelona, 1972), 95.

<sup>31</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1912, ff. 147 v.-148 r. (26 March, 1387).

administrative offices of the *aljama*. Martí the Humane ruled that no *alguacil* (a Christian post) should interfere in any matter that was in the province of the *salmedina*, nor the *salmedina* in the affairs of the *cadi*, and further that neither the Christian, Jewish nor Muslim *batlle* might have any power in the province of the *cadi*.<sup>32</sup> This document implies that some of the functions of the *salmedina* must have overlapped with those of the *alguacil*, both of whom were authorised to carry out sentences of the *cadi* among the Muslims.

The *aljama* also had one or two *adelantats*, although there are few citations of this office and those which we have are late. In general one supposes that the function of the *adelantats* was similar to that of the *jurats* of the *universitats*, or Christian municipalities. It appears that they were elected either by the *aljama* or by the departing *adelantats*. Their powers and the duration of their tenure varied widely from one place to another.<sup>33</sup> In the *aljamas* of the southern zone of the kingdom of Valencia the *adelantats* were referred to as elders or "*vells*" and their function appears to have been similar to those of Tortosa.<sup>34</sup> The notices that I have discovered regarding Tortosan *adelantats* shed little light on their precise duties, although it is clear that they were involved in the economic sphere of the *aljama*. In 1389, an *adelantat* named Çayd Alqueya intervened in the negotiation of the payment of the *aljama's* tax instalments to the king.<sup>35</sup> In 1399, the Queen Maria de Luna reprimanded Guillem Gocet, a commissioner appointed by the king, because he had obliged the Jewish and Muslim *aljamas* of Tortosa to show their accounts-payable although the king had ordered that he not exercise his office in those *aljamas* that fell under the jurisdiction of the queen. Maria de Luna sent the king's letter to the Jewish and Muslim *adelantats* of Tortosa. Clearly, the *adelantados* must have been involved in the fiscal affairs of the community.<sup>36</sup> In May 1400, the king again assigned the *adelantats* of Tortosa a task of financial nature: the authorisation to redeem the *aljama's* mortgages [*censales muertos*] that

<sup>32</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2206, ff. 45 r.-47 v. (4 September, 1408).

<sup>33</sup> F. Macho y Ortega, "Condición social de los mudéjares aragoneses (s. XV)," *Memoria de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad de Zaragoza*, (1922-23): 158-159. Cf. also F.A. Roca Traver, "Un siglo de vida mudéjar en la Valencia medieval (1238-1338)," *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón*, 5 (1952): 128; Boswell, 72; Burns, 394-398; Mutgé, 17-21; Basáñez, 22-23.

<sup>34</sup> Ferrer, 59-62 and 78.

<sup>35</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1871, f. 111 v. (25 January, 1389).

<sup>36</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2337, f. 86 (23 October, 1399), publ. F. Macho y Ortega, "Documentos relativos a la condición social y jurídica de los moros aragoneses," *Revista de Ciencias Jurídicas y Sociales*, 5 (1922): 148-149.

had been sold at a low price and with a high annual interest rate and to sell new ones at a higher price and with lower interest, so that they could pay the redemptions. This time the king mentions “*adelantats*” in plural, which indicates that there had been at least two,<sup>37</sup> whereas in 1406 it appears that there was only one. Homado Alquena is cited by name in a notarial request that was presented to Homado, the *cadi* Azmet Saragoci, and to the *aljama*’s elected representative [*sindico*] Çayd Alfaceni in order to pay a mortgage owed by the *aljama*.<sup>38</sup>

Muslims like the Christians were obliged to pay ordinary taxes, (both direct and indirect) as well as extraordinary levies motivated by wars, royal marriages, coronations and other special events. Ordinary taxes included the *questia* or *peita*, the *cena* and the *monedaje* although, for our purposes, only the first two will be of concern, given that the *monedaje* is not mentioned in connection with the *aljama* of Tortosa. Muslims were also obliged to pay certain specific taxes, such as the “*adache*”, and a tax on weddings. With all of this, extraordinary taxes, or subsidies, and the general state of indebtedness of the *aljama* must also be taken into account. Unfortunately, the sources that relate to the taxation of the *aljama* are not very abundant, owing to the fact that for many years the community belonged to the *camara* of the queens and patrimonies of the *infants*, the correspondence of which has disappeared from the royal chancellery.

Among the Muslim communities of Valencia, the *questia*, *peita* or “*alfarda*” was a direct contribution of both a local and global character, which is to say, the king asked for a fixed and annual quantity from each of the local Jewish and Muslim communities in each municipality of his kingdoms. Each community then had to share out the tax burden among its members according to the resources of each.<sup>39</sup> The rate of the *peita*, *questia* or ordinary tax which the Muslims of Tortosa paid is difficult to determine. In 1174 Alfons I established that the rate was to be four hundred *mazmudinas* of gold per year, a quantity that would increase or decrease according to the level of population of the *aljama*.<sup>40</sup> Later in 1287, some of the accounts of the Templars and the king show us how the taxes of Tortosa were shared by the Order and the king, who received one third of the total. The accounts in question correspond to one month, in which period the rate had risen to eighty *sous*, of which twenty-six *sous* and eight *diners* went to the king. Yearly, this would

<sup>37</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2194, f. 157 r. (22 May, 1400).

<sup>38</sup> Arxiu Històric Provincial de Tarragona, man. del notari Jaume Pont, reg. 1136, f. 53 v. (18 July, 1406).

<sup>39</sup> M. T. Ferrer, *Les aljames sarraïnes de la governació d’Oriola*, 123-130. Mutgé, 122-125.

<sup>40</sup> ACA, C, pergami 159, ed. Argemí, *Els tagarins a la Ribera de l’Ebre*, 109.

have made for a *questia* of nine hundred and sixty *sous*.<sup>41</sup> In 1386, after a reduction had been conceded, the *aljama* paid twelve hundred *sous barcelonesos* over two years.<sup>42</sup>

The origin of the *cena* was to maintain the king and his entourage when they passed through a village or town. It came to be converted into an ordinary and general tribute, in that it applied both to Christians and Muslims, and came to be distinguished between the "absent" *cena* ("*cena d'absència*" or simply, "*cena*") and the "present" *cena* ("*cena de presència*"). Although during the thirteenth century the king's lordship in Tortosa had been reduced to a third of the city, the crown continued to try collect this tax. In 1284 Alfons, the first-born of King Pedro, ordered Ramon de Montcada, Lord of Fraga, and one of the lords of the city, that he not impede the collection of the *cena* from the Jews and Muslims. Ramon for his part and the Muslims for theirs, assured the *infant* that they were not in fact obliged to pay, and after an investigation had been launched, the prince desisted from his demands.<sup>43</sup>

After the whole of the lordship and jurisdiction of Tortosa had passed into the hands of the king in 1294, all of these taxes were reinstated with vigour. Nevertheless, the Muslims succeeded, under the pretext of the poverty, misery, and oppression from which they had suffered, in getting Jaume II to concede a five-year *franquicia* from the *cena*, the *questia* and other new taxes which he was levying, but they did not find it so easy to make the *batlle* respect this concession. In May 1298, they complained that this official had demanded that they pay those very taxes, leading the king to grant them a new concession.<sup>44</sup>

Once this concession had expired, Queen Blanca, wife of Jaume II, who had received the rents and possessions of the *aljama* in order to maintain her household, decided in 1303 to authorise a reduction of the *cena*, which then was to remain fixed at two hundred *sous* annually. The said concession was confirmed by Jaume II after the death of the queen in 1311.<sup>45</sup> Much later, in 1382, Pedro the Ceremonious conceded to the *aljama* that during thirty years they would not have to pay more than two hundred *sous* per year for the *cena de presència* such that the

<sup>41</sup> ACA, C, Pergamís de Tortosa, armari 4, 17.

<sup>42</sup> ACA, C, reg. 848, f. 76 v. (14 March, 1386).

<sup>43</sup> ACA, C, reg. 62, f. 104 r. (8 December, 1284) and 132 v. (9 March, 1285), publ. Argemí, *Els tagarins a la Ribera de l'Ebre*, 130-131.

<sup>44</sup> ACA, C, reg. 110, f. 154 v. (5 May, 1298).

<sup>45</sup> The concession of 3 January, 1303 was confirmed in 1311. [ACA, C, reg. 207, f. 205 v. (18 February, 1311)].



amount would be equal to that paid for the *cena d'absència* during the reign of Queen Blanca.<sup>46</sup>

The privilege of levying a *cena* was soon extended to the procurators or governors of the kingdoms, who rationalised their entitlement to maintenance as representatives of the king, and tried to place this demand on Jews as much as Muslims.<sup>47</sup> In 1297, the Muslim and Jewish *aljamas* of Tortosa complained that Ramon Folc of Cardona, procurator of Catalonia, was imposing this tax on them. According to the king, neither the Jews nor the Muslims were obliged to pay, and he ordered Ramon to cease demanding it from these communities (and from the Muslims and Jews of Lleida, for that matter).<sup>48</sup> Later, the *cena* taxes of the first-born of the king and of the governor-general of the kingdoms were consolidated, rising, at the end of the fourteenth century, to a rate of sixty-six *sous* and eight *diners*. Martí the Humane ceded the payment of the "*cena* of the first-born" to Sister Graïda de Torrelles, a Clarissan nun of the Convent of San Daniel in Barcelona, but in 1413, the *infant* Alfons (later King Alfons the Magnanimous) recovered it, on the basis that it rightfully belonged to him as first-born of King Ferdinand of Antequera.<sup>49</sup>

We also have references to the agricultural taxes charged to the Muslims of Tortosa, by means of the protests which these taxes produced. In 1298, Mahomet Gabarreig (or Gavarreix) complained that the Muslims' exemption from the taxes on chickens and wood was not being observed. This exemption had been granted by the Temple and by Ramon de Montcada, when they were the lords of the city, and had subsequently been reclaimed by the *honores* which were held in the city.<sup>50</sup> The "*sadache*" or "*sadacha*" should also be mentioned, as should the tax levied per jar of oil, which by the end of the fourteenth century had been converted to a fixed payment of fifteen hundred *sous*, an amount that appears to cover both of these obligations. At any rate, one of the documents on which this observation is based states that this is the case. In 1376, Pedro the Ceremonious conceded a rebate of three hundred *sous* of the said figure over a three year period, in such a fashion that the Muslims only had to pay twelve hundred *sous* annually. This rebate

<sup>46</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1518, f. 101 v. (10 December, 1382). This concession was confirmed by the first-born *infante* Juan [ACA, C, reg. 1689, f. 173 r.-v. (26 May, 1384)].

<sup>47</sup> L. Klüpfel, "El règim de la Confederació catalano-aragonesa a finals del s. XIII," *Revista Jurídica de Catalunya*, (1930): 99-100.

<sup>48</sup> ACA, C, reg. 106, f. 151 r.-v. (16 December, 1297).

<sup>49</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2450, f. 169 r. (30 January, 1413).

<sup>50</sup> ACA, C, reg. 107, f. 266 r. (1 March, 1298).

was renewed in 1384, this time for four years and for the same amount, owing to the debts by which the Muslims were oppressed.<sup>51</sup>

Weddings, and more specifically the performance of musicians and singers at these festivities were also the object of a tax. This imposition also elicited vocal protests on the part of the Muslims, and was suppressed and reintroduced a number of times. In 1180, Alfons I had already had to intervene in favour of the Muslims of Tortosa because they had been obliged to hire a singer or musician at their weddings, whether they were rich or poor, and whether or not they wanted such entertainment. No doubt this was enacted in order to guarantee the collection of this fee at every wedding. In any event, the king decided that if anyone wanted to have one of these artists present at a wedding, they would not have to pay anything to the *batlle* for it.<sup>52</sup> The Muslim singers themselves paid a tax which in July of 1287 was assessed at ten *sous*, of which the king received three *sous* and one *dinero*.<sup>53</sup> Needless to say, it was in the interests of the authorities that the singers be busily employed. Much later, it was the Christian municipality of Tortosa which tried to reintroduce this wedding tax, thereafter referred to as "*aldehees*." In 1399, Queen Mary had to intervene again to ask the procurators of Tortosa to cease demanding this tax from the Muslims.<sup>54</sup> Her prohibition, however, cannot have lasted long, for in 1408, when the Queen had died, King Martí the Humane again forbade that the Muslims be taxed for wedding performances.<sup>55</sup> It should also be remarked that there was a tax on Muslim prostitutes which, during the year ending in May of 1282, had brought in twenty-two *sous*, as much as had the taxes on inheritances.<sup>56</sup>

In Tortosa, as in other locales, we know that there were conflicts between the Christian and Muslim communities regarding the contributions that the latter were obliged to make with the Christians in communally assessed taxes. For instance, in May of 1316 the Christians had seized Muslim property because of this. The *batlle* of Tortosa, Arnau d'Agramunt had tried to return these confiscations, but the representatives [*síndics*] of Tortosa had opposed this, alleging that the restitution of those confiscated goods would have been against the uses and customs

<sup>51</sup> ACA, C, reg. 929, f. 195 r. (19 November, 1376), reg. 943, f. 23 r.-v. (17 February, 1384).

<sup>52</sup> CA, C, pergami d'Alfons I, 299, copy of 1247, publ. Argemí, *Els tagarins a la Ribera d'Ebre*, 103.

<sup>53</sup> ACA, C, pergami de Tortosa, armari 4, 17, publ. *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>54</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2337, f. 14, publ. Macho y Ortega, 147.

<sup>55</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2206, ff. 45 r.-47 v. (4 September, 1408).

<sup>56</sup> ACA, C, pergami de Tortosa, armari 4, 39 and 29 (5 May, 1292 and 8 February, 1294), publ. Argemí, *Els tagarins de la Ribera de l'Ebre*, 139-144.

of the city. The problem was that this position would result in an infringement of the rights of the Muslims, and for this reason, the king asked the *batlle* to initiate an inquiry to clarify this question. In the meantime, the *batlle* was instructed that the Muslims of the city were not to be forced to contribute with the Christians. The procurators of the city, for their part, were trying to suppress information pertinent to the investigation, so the king ordered the *batlle* to consult his predecessor, Guillem de Ceret, to resolve the matter.<sup>57</sup> The question must have been resolved in favour of the Muslims, because in 1324, the king admonished the collectors of the subsidy for Sardinia in the city and the *veguers* of Tortosa because they were demanding these taxes from the Muslims and were making confiscations on this basis, when in fact the Muslims were not obliged to contribute to such levies.<sup>58</sup> This distinction was clarified in the later practice of assessing extraordinary levies on each community separately. In 1329, the Muslim *aljama* was taxed twenty-two hundred *sous barcelonesos* for the subsidy for the Crusade against Granada, but nothing was in fact collected, given that the city had been given by the king to the *infant* Ferdinand in December of 1328.<sup>59</sup> This situation continued up to the death of the *infant* in 1364.<sup>60</sup>

At the end of the reign of Pedro the Ceremonious, the Muslims of Tortosa, just like all of the communities of the realm, be they Islamic, Jewish or Christian, found themselves in economic difficulties due because of the great financial demands that had been placed on them in order to satisfy the demands of the king, and which were destined to support the great wars of the mid-century. The war against Castile was particularly expensive, lasting from 1356 to 1369, with no firm peace until 1375. Although the king found himself with few resources, he was forced to moderate his fiscal demands in order to give some breathing space to his subjects. In 1376 and in 1386, he had to concede various tax reductions to the Muslims of Tortosa, including the conversion of a subsidy of eight hundred *sous barcelonesos* to six hundred *sous* in 1376, and rebates of the *sadaque*, the *cena de presencia* and of the *peita*.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless in 1385, he asked for a new subsidy for the juridical and military operation which he had undertaken against Empuries, a county which had been defying his authority. The Muslims of Tortosa were

---

<sup>57</sup> ACA, C, reg. 161, f. 51 v. (23 July, 1316).

<sup>58</sup> ACA, C, reg. 224, f. 117 r. (13 February, 1324).

<sup>59</sup> M. Sánchez Martínez, "'Questie' y subsidios en Cataluña durante el primer tercio del siglo XIV: el subsidio para la cruzada granadina (1329-1334)", *Cuadernos de Historia Económica de Cataluña*, 16 (1977): 19.

<sup>60</sup> Ferrer, *Oriola*, 35-36.

<sup>61</sup> ACA, C, reg. 929, f. 198 r. (19 November, 1376).

taxed two hundred and fifty *florins*, half of the amount of Zaragoza and Xativa, less than Huesca (which had to pay four hundred), but more than those of Lleida or Tamarite (assessed at one hundred fifty).<sup>62</sup> In 1389, the royal treasury concluded an agreement with the *aljama* so that they would be able to pay the ordinary and extraordinary tribute they owed up to the first of May of that year. The *adelantat* Çayd Alqueya agreed to the payment of one hundred fifty *florins* annually for four years.<sup>63</sup> In 1399, when the fiscal preparations for the wedding of Martí the Humane got underway, Pere Martes, the commissioner charged with assessing the taxes for the event demanded a contribution from the *aljama* of Tortosa; but at the moment the *aljama* belonged to the queen, Maria de Luna, who affirmed that they were not obliged to contribute to this imposition.<sup>64</sup>

The imposition of local taxes on produce were also a source of litigation among Christian and Muslim communities in those areas in which they cohabited. Controversies arose over the Muslims' liability for the taxes on consumption which Christian municipalities levied. In many instances this meant the collection of funds that would have ordinarily gone to pay the royal taxes of the Christian community, so Muslim resistance is understandable. In 1328, in the reign of Alfons the Benign, the *aljama* of Tortosa had been protesting because they had been asked, in violation of their custom, to pay a tax on meat slaughtered in their butcher shop and for certain other foodstuffs. The monarch asked the *batlle* to investigate the matter, but we are unaware of how the affair was concluded.<sup>65</sup>

In 1371, in reaction to what surely must have been recurring protests, King Pedro the Ceremonious ordered that the Muslims of Tortosa should not be obliged to contribute with the city in tolls and other exactions, except for works relating to the walls and ditches, and for sentries and defence. This exemption was conceded due to the debts that had been contracted in previous years owing to the tax burden of the wars.<sup>66</sup> This privilege met with fierce opposition on the part of the procurators of the city, who arranged that it remain suspended until they could determine the resulting impact on their rights, which they

<sup>62</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1289, f. 77 v. (6 January, 1385).

<sup>63</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1871, f. 111 v. (25 January, 1389).

<sup>64</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2337, f. 14. publ. Macho y Ortega, 147.

<sup>65</sup> ACA, C, reg. 430, f. 28 v. (18 October, 1328), publ. R. Mayordomo, "Notas históricas sobre la carnicería de la aljama sarracena de Tortosa (siglo XIV)", in *Homenatge a la memòria del Prof. Dr. Emilio Sáez. Aplec d'estudis dels seus deixebles i col(laboradors* (Barcelona, 1989), doc. 5.

<sup>66</sup> ACA, C, reg. 920, f. 96 r.-v. (20 February, 1371).

argued were thus prejudiced. Finally in 1393, it appears that the city *batlle*, Arnau Torrelles, had managed to convince them to cede this point.<sup>67</sup> But this concession was not to last. In 1397, Martí the Humane had to insist that his officials in Tortosa not ask the Muslims of that city to pay taxes on bread, wine, meat and other products such as the Christians did, because they had been relieved of this burden by the privilege of 1371. The monarch considered, furthermore, that the Muslims were already sufficiently burdened by the ordinary and extraordinary taxes that they had to pay.<sup>68</sup> This resolution gave rise to renewed protests on the part of the city of Tortosa, but the king confirmed it because it was in accord with the original charter of the city and the privilege of Pedro the Ceremonious already alluded to, which had maintained that it was upon the city of Tortosa that the burden of proof fell in this regard.<sup>69</sup>

The various contributions to the royal fisc that were demanded of the *aljama* certainly provoked its indebtedness, to the extent that it was obliged to sell "*censals morts*" or certificates of debt. In 1400, Martí the Humane authorised the conversion of these *censals*, recovering a previous sale that had been made at high interest rates, and substituting one at lower rates.<sup>70</sup> The *aljama* had the right to issue certificates of debt as well as contract loans with its goods standing as guarantee, without the express permission of the king or of his representative, the *batlle*. It appears, however, that this provision notwithstanding, those who lent money to the *aljama* sought the signature of the *batlle*, thinking that by this they would secure a greater guarantee on their credit. The refusal of the *batlle* to do this, given that this was not according to protocol, led some to rescind their loan offers, prompting the king to solemnly ratify the custom of the Muslims of Tortosa in 1408, which permitted them to indent themselves without royal permission. This, of course did not apply if the goods that comprised the collateral were held in enfiteusis by the king — for these royal licence was required.<sup>71</sup> Alfons the Magnanimous ratified this deposition, so vital for the *aljama* in 1416.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1884, f. 26 r.-v. (29 April, 1393).

<sup>68</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2111, f. 48 v. (17 July, 1397).

<sup>69</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2117, f. 28 r.-v. (27 February, 1398).

<sup>70</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2194, f. 157 r. (22 May, 1400).

<sup>71</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2206, ff. 49 r.-v. (23 September, 1408).

<sup>72</sup> ACA, C, reg. 2586, ff. 38 v.-39 r. (27 February, 1416).

Royal patrimony, in the Middle Ages, was comprised of properties, various rents, taxes and numerous *regalias*.<sup>73</sup> Prominent among these seigniorial privileges was the right of monopoly over certain public services: mills, ovens, butcher's shops, baths, olive presses, and so on. Of these monopolies, some carried a religious connotation for the minorities, such as the butcher shops and the ovens, and because of this, they were often eager to have such services, especially butcher's shops, in their respective neighbourhoods. Islamic law prohibits the consumption of the meat of animals which are not drained of blood at the time of slaughter, which drown, which have been killed by other animals or which die accidentally, and in which the blood has congealed. Pork and blood are generally prohibited.<sup>74</sup> Obviously, it was very much in their interests to have control of an abattoir in order to assure the legality of their meat. This privilege, however, did not come without a tax — a *sisà* or *lleuda*, which was customarily one *dinero* for every pound of meat (gross weight) slaughtered.<sup>75</sup>

If the Muslims of Tortosa had had a butcher's shop during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they had lost it by the end of that century. In 1298, they obtained a four-year licence to buy meat in whichever butcher's shop of the city they pleased, not only the Jewish one to which they had been previously limited. The act that authorises this liberty is one of those which has the stated intention of relieving the poverty of the *aljama* ("*attendentes inopiam et paupertatem quam ... patimini*"), and confirms that their previous butcher shop had been burdened with a *sisà* or a *lleuda*, which increased its prices. The other privilege extended by Jaume II was, in fact, an exemption from the payment of whatever *lleuda* to which they had been liable for the same four-year period.<sup>76</sup> This period having passed, they were obliged, once more and for some years thereafter, to buy their meat from the Jews of the city.

As it happened that in many towns and villages neither the Jewish nor the Islamic community was sufficiently numerous to support their own separate butcher's shops, at times they had to share this service with Christians (although the meat was handled according to their own rites). In the instances where Muslims shared an abattoir with

---

<sup>73</sup> *Regalias* might take the form of monopolies (such as over ovens or other utilities) or general rights of sovereignty (such as the right to impose taxes).

<sup>74</sup> J. Caro Baroja, *Los moriscos del Reino de Granada* (Madrid, 1976), 132; R. M. Blasco, "Una carnicería regentada por moriscos en el arrabal de San Juan, de Elche," *Sharq Al-Andalus*, 2 (1985): 76.

<sup>75</sup> Macho y Ortega, 184-185; Boswell, 96-98 and 102-103; Mutgé i Vives, 11-12.

<sup>76</sup> ACA, C, reg. 196, f. 232 v. (21 May, 1298). publ. Mayordomo, doc. 1.

Jews, a co-operative arrangement often resulted, wherein Muslims (having less strict dietary laws) could consume some animal parts were not acceptable to Jews, thus permitting the more efficient use of the animal in question, and greater profit for the butcher shop. The Muslims, however, often felt their dignity slighted by this circumstance, and this led at times to conflict. In 1320, for instance, some Jews of Tortosa were taunting the Muslims, saying that they had to buy a certain type of ram's meat (*molto*) which had been butchered by Jews in the royal abattoir of Remolins, and which was referred to as "*trufeas*." This meat, it was said, sat for sale because the Jews did not consider it worthy of consumption. The king ordered the Jews to cease taunting the Muslims in this manner.<sup>77</sup> Then, however, it was the Jews who began to complain to the king regarding the attitude of the Muslims, who now wanted to establish an abattoir of their own, in which they would not have to buy the meat rejected by Jews. The complaint was that this loss of business would result in higher prices for the Jews. In this case, the king ruled in their favour, doubtless given that a reduction of income of the Jewish butcher's shop would entail a reduction of royal revenue.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, the Muslims were eventually successful and in May of 1321 the king authorised them to construct an exclusive butcher's shop between the city gate known as Vinpeçol and the dye works in Remolins; this despite a process of the *batlle* of Tortosa that had been to the contrary. They appealed to the king regarding the *batlle*'s ruling and he upheld their right in this regard, although in exchange they were obliged to pay an annual tax of six hundred *sous barcelonesos*.<sup>79</sup>

The Jews continued to protest, now on the grounds of the location of the new abattoir, which they considered prejudicial to their interests. Finally the king chose to recommend to the *batlle* of Tortosa, Bernat Vidal, that he order the construction of the butcher's shop to take place within the boundaries of the *moreria*, with the order to destroy any butcher's shop built in contravention of this. He further authorised non-Tortosan Muslims to buy their meat from whichever butchers they pleased.<sup>80</sup> According to subsequent Jewish complaints that the abattoir had in fact been constructed outside of the *moreria*, Jaume II, following

---

<sup>77</sup> ACA, C, reg. 170, f. 277 v. (1 December, 1320).

<sup>78</sup> ACA, C, reg. 171, ff. 25 v.-26 r. (18 December, 1320).

<sup>79</sup> ACA, C, reg. 219, ff. 306 v.-307 r. (1 May, 1321), publ. Mayordomo, doc. 2. Regarding this, see also D. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1996), 171-172.

<sup>80</sup> ACA, C, reg. 220, f. 15 r. (25 May, 1321), publ. Mayordomo, doc. 3.

his earlier mandate, ordered it torn down and a new one constructed in conformity with the original licence.<sup>81</sup>

But the problems did not disappear, for the Jews then asked for a new butcher's shop for themselves. Ramon de Sentenat, who held the concession for its construction, wanted to build it in Market Street, but as this site was quite close to that of the Muslims, the king ordered him to construct it farther away, between the mansions of Vidal Bonsenyor and of Chue Avinacara, in order to avoid further controversies. This would have meant making a hole in the wall of the Jewish neighbourhood (or *call*) and constructing an arch, which would thereafter be blocked up from the inside so that the security of the Jewish quarter would not be compromised. Before proceeding, the king sought the opinion of the city of Tortosa. This solution was not deemed acceptable and after further inquiries, the Jewish butcher's shop was constructed out of two shops, in a location that was, in the end, very close to the Muslim abattoir.<sup>82</sup>

The oven appears to have been a source of much less conflict than the butcher's shop. We know that Jewish and Muslims bakers had their own ovens, but that they were also used by Christians, although this was eventually forbidden by Jaume II and offenders ordered punished because it prejudiced the royal oven of Remolins.<sup>83</sup>

The irrigated fields along the Ebro in the northern region of Tortosa's limits were very extensive, and there were many Muslims who harvested olives in the village of Benifallet. While there is no reference to support the existence of a Muslim olive press in Tortosa—a logical conclusion, as the city's inhabitants would have been more involved in artisanal pursuits than agriculture—there is mention of an olive press rented by a Muslim named Jafia Avinolle Alfach at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Jafia's father, Alhaig Avinolle had obtained this mill in *enfiteusis* from the nobleman Ramon de Montcada, a descendant of Guillem Ramon de Montcada, one of those who had accompanied Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Tortosa in his conquest of the city in 1148. This nobleman had received, in exchange for his services, one third of the city, a share which was exchanged by the king for another property in 1294, when the latter acquired lordship over the city.<sup>84</sup> The concession of the press had been in the form of a monopoly, which is to say, all of the Muslims of Benifallet had been obliged to carry their

<sup>81</sup> ACA, C, reg. 220, f. 40 r.-v. (28 June, 1321), publ. *Ibid.*, doc. 4.

<sup>82</sup> ACA, C, reg. 222, ff. 43 v. y 69 r. (1 July and 17 August, 1322).

<sup>83</sup> ACA, C, reg. 115, ff. 394 v.-395 r. (17 April, 1300).

<sup>84</sup> S. Sobrequés i Vidal, *Els barons de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1961), 60.



olives to that press, and no other Muslim of Benifallet could have a press. In exchange for this concession the Avinolles had to pay the Montcada family twenty *càntirs* of olive oil annually, while they had promised to pay the Avinolles sixty *sous* if the monopoly was not respected. In 1311, by which time the lordship of Tortosa had already passed to the king, a Christian named Pere d'Almenara built a press in Benifallet and this act provoked a protest on the part of Jafia. The king left the resolution of this complaint to the *batlle* of Tortosa, who was obliged to resolve it to the satisfaction of Jafia.

Then, some years later, another situation arose which violated Jafia's monopoly.<sup>85</sup> In 1317, certain Muslims of Benifallet had begun to sell their olives "on the branch" (which is to say, before they were harvested) to non-residents of the village. These buyers then took the olives to other locales to have them pressed. In response to Jafia's protest, the king declared that even these non-residents were obliged to respect his monopoly and take any olives harvested in Benifallet to his mill. Many years later, in 1433, Queen Maria, the wife of Alfons the Magnanimous, intervened in the affairs of the olive press of Benifallet, the functioning of which was threatened by the confiscation of the two animals that powered the mill, due to the debts of the *aljama* of Benifallet. The queen asked the *batlle* to confiscate whatever else he could before the animals in question so that the press could continue to function. It is not certain if the mill still belonged at this point to Jafia's family.<sup>86</sup>

In the sphere of individual rights, the Muslims of Tortosa were subject to certain restrictions but were also, by law, guaranteed various liberties. The theoretical obligation of Muslims to dress in a manner distinct from that of the Christians complemented the rules of segregation that the Church had imposed on Christian monarchs who had Muslim subjects. The fourth Lateran council of 1215 enjoined rulers to impose vestimental distinctions on Muslims, so that they might not be confused with Christians. This was implemented in order to reduce the risk of sexual relations among people of different religions — relations which might endanger the purity of the Christian faith. In the period immediately after the conquest of this territory, the problem of maintaining such a distinction was not so acute, given that the latter continued to wear their traditional garb. But later, out of either imitation or the desire not to appear distinct from the dominant culture, they came

---

<sup>85</sup> ACA, C, reg. 159, f. 101 r. (20 November, 1311) and ff. 196 v.-197 r. (3 January, 1317).

<sup>86</sup> ACA, C, reg. 3125, f. 61 v. (18 December, 1433).

to adopt Christian clothing and fashions. This, in turn, led Christian authorities to regulate such matters.

It appears that the "*Costum*" of Tortosa (1272 and 1277-1279) was the first legal compilation that addressed this concern. It established the requirement that Muslims cut their hair in a round style and wear their beards long. As for clothing, they were to wear an *aljuba* or *almeixa*, except when they were at work. Muslim women, as Jewish women, were to wear the *aldifara* over their normal clothes.<sup>87</sup> By 1384, things had changed significantly. One of the city's messengers to the king complained that for some time Muslims had been dressing in the same manner as Christians; some had even gone so far as to cut their beards like clerics while others imitated the styles of young lay Christians. Out of this lack of differentiation, there arose many dangers, particularly the risk of sexual relations with Christian women. The messengers also complained that Muslims were going about armed with swords and daggers. They asked that this be controlled, so that the Muslims would not be tempted into greater audacities, since it had given rise, they said, to the speaking of insults and improprieties towards Christians. Pedro the Ceremonious responded by ordering his steward Arnau Torrelles, who was *batlle* of Tortosa, to impose the distinction of dress and impose arms control on the Muslims.<sup>88</sup>

The *batlle* must have acted, for a few months later, the Muslims lodged complaints that the *batlle* had obliged them to wear clothing and hairstyles distinct from those of the other Muslims of the land.<sup>89</sup> As it is not stated explicitly, we are not aware of the measures that the *batlle* had imposed, although it is possible he had adhered to the letter of the Custom of Tortosa, whereas in other places at this time, Muslims commonly wore their hair longer and parted in the middle, so that it fell over their ears.<sup>90</sup> The difficulty in making them submit to these norms of appearance gave rise to the imposition of another means of distinction. The *Cortes generales* summoned by King Joan I in 1390 approved a regulation that required all Muslims of Catalonia, men and women of ten years and older, to wear a yellow band of half a palm in length by two centimetres in width on the right sleeve of their garment. The band was to be red if the clothing in question was yellow. This law was very badly received by the Muslims, and for all intents and purposes, was never put into practice, aside from for a few months in 1397

<sup>87</sup> M. T. Ferrer i Mallol, *Els sarraïns de la Corona catalano-aragonesa en el segle XIV. Segregació i Discriminació* (Barcelona, 1987), 41-42.

<sup>88</sup> ACA, C, reg. 841, f. 49 v. (17 November, 1384).

<sup>89</sup> ACA, C, reg. 842, f. 132 v. (16 February, 1385).

<sup>90</sup> Ferrer, *Els sarraïns de la Corona catalano-aragonesa*, 43-55.

under the authority of the queen, Maria de Luna. In that same year, Martí the Humane decided to abolish this requirement, no doubt in exchange for a donation from the *aljamas*. The record does show that the *cadi general* of the king, Ali de Bellvis, along with the *cadi* of the *moreria* of Tortosa, Hamet Saragoci, and Ovecar de Bellvis were given the task of explaining this regulation to the *cadis*, *alamins*, *adelantats* and Muslim *aljamas* of Catalonia.<sup>91</sup>

In theory, Muslims of Tortosa enjoyed the liberty to change their place of residence, but this was not always an easy matter. Women had the most difficulties, especially if they were single, as they comprised an important element in maintaining and increasing the population of any given place, and therefore of maintaining the revenues of the lord in question.<sup>92</sup> In 1319, Mahomat, son of Ali Saragoci, had to pay an expensive remission, which amounted to eight hundred *sous*, to receive a pardon for the offence of having married a Muslim of Valencia who had already been engaged to another, and carrying her off illegally from her city. After the first payment of one hundred fifty *sous*, which had been ruled as invalid given that it had been paid in Tortosa, he was obliged to pay afresh the full amount of eight hundred. Six hundred of this went to the owner of the tax licence of the *moreria* of Valencia, who felt prejudiced by the abduction of the woman, while the rest went to the king.<sup>93</sup>

When Muslims changed their place of residence, one of the most serious difficulties that they encountered was how to move their belongings to their new locale. It appears that this was not governed by any general legislation, and the rules varied from place to place according to local custom. The rules of the county of Tortosa and of the Ribera d'Ebre happened to be amongst the most strict and generated a great number of suits and complaints due to seignorial acts that the Muslims considered to be abusive. At times, these controversies even brought different Christian lords into conflict.

During the reign of Pedro the Great, in 1282, some Muslims of Tortosa having obtained the authorisation of the king, moved to the city of Amposta. The Commander of the Temple in Tortosa, however, impounded their goods, arguing that the customs of the city provided him this right when Muslims moved from place to place. When the Muslims in question filed a suit before the judge of Amposta, the king ruled

---

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 55-59.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-120.

<sup>93</sup> ACA, C. reg. 217, ff. 213 v.-214 r. (2 December, 1319). The king wrote to the bailiff of Tortosa in a similar tenor [ACA, C. reg. 217, f. 214 r.-v.].

that the ancient privileges of the Muslims allowed them to move about without losing their belongings. He then confirmed this privilege and ordered the "sotsveguer" of Tortosa, Sebastià Mas, to oblige the Commander to return the goods that had been seized.<sup>94</sup> This restitution was not made and, in the end, the *batlle* of Amposta seized the goods belonging to the Templars, which lay within his jurisdiction. At the protests of the Templars, Alfons the Liberal, successor of Pedro the Great, overrode his father's decision and ordered the *batlle* of Amposta to return the Templars' goods if the customs of Tortosa were found to support their case.<sup>95</sup>

In another case, the lord of a place away from which some Muslims had moved, tried to exert his right to make them return and even to punish them. Pere Marí, a citizen of Barcelona and a member the entourage of Queen Constanza of Sicily, the mother of Jaume II, had acquired the lordship over La Aldea, and according to him, the Order of the Hospital, which was lord of the place between 1206 and 1280<sup>96</sup> had established certain treaties with the Muslims that specified this right. The pacts referred to included, no doubt, the *carta de població* granted to La Aldea by the Order in 1258, and which specifies, "*Et si aliquis vestrum ierit et recesserit a dominatione nostra et elegerit alium dominum, ut sit incursus ad voluntatem nostram sed alii non teneantur nobis in aliquo de illo qui fugitur.*"<sup>97</sup> Pere Marí's protest was motivated by the departure of some of the Muslims of La Aldea, who had gone to live in Tortosa. In 1297, Jaume II entrusted the resolution of this case to the bishop of Tortosa.<sup>98</sup>

The customs of the Ribera d'Ebre permitted the mobility of Muslims but sanctioned the forfeit of their goods, both movable and immovable, which they had possessed in their original residence. In 1301, Ali Alcaez, a Muslim formerly of Miravet, a place that belonged to the Temple, moved to Tortosa. It appears that he took the precaution of secretly taking his belongings with him, but lost his immovable goods. He then brought a protest before the *batlle* of Tortosa, Bernat de Fonollar, who asked the Commander of Miravet to restore all of Ali's property, threatening to confiscate property of the Order if he did not com-

<sup>94</sup> ACA, C, reg. 59, f. 110 v. (6 October, 1282) and f. 191 r. (4 January, 1283) publ. Argemí, *Els tagarins de la Ribera de l'Ebre*, 123-124 and 126.

<sup>95</sup> ACA, C, reg. 66, f. 117 r. (9 June, 1286), publ. *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>96</sup> J.M. Font Rius, vol. 1, 785-786, and vol. 2, 727; P. Català Roca, "Presidència de la Suda -o castell de Sant Joan- de Tortosa. Comentari marginal," in R. Dalmau ed., *Els castells Catalans*, 4 (Barcelona, 1973), 577-578.

<sup>97</sup> Font Rius, vol. 1, doc. 303, 446.

<sup>98</sup> ACA, C, reg. 107, f. 170 v. (29 December, 1297).

ply. The king intervened and asked the *batlle* to send him information regarding the customs of Miravet and Ribera d'Ebre. When this information arrived, the king found that the Commander had in fact acted within his rights in confiscating Ali's goods, and in fact that the *batlle* should return the rest of Ali's property to the Order as well.<sup>99</sup>

The truth is that the custom of Tortosa was not much more generous than that of Miravet. This is demonstrated by the case of Matfuna, a Muslim of Tortosa who moved to Miravet, where he married in 1321. This was, in other words, the opposite of Ali Alcacez's case. When the *batlle* of Tortosa, Arnau d'Agramunt, found out that he had married in Miravet, he confiscated a house which Matfuna had possessed in the *moreria* of Tortosa and which he had given to his niece Mariam who had then sold it. Matfuna appealed to the king and he ordered the *batlle* Bernat Vidal, who had in the meanwhile succeeded Arnau, that he rule over this case with all speed so that neither Matfuna nor Mariam would be prejudiced.<sup>100</sup>

It may have been in order to prevent just such complications that Haumell, son of Ubequer de Asco, asked for royal authorisation to buy property in Tortosa, where he intended to move in 1322. At the same time he also sought permission to leave his present properties in the hands of his brothers.<sup>101</sup> It was probably this second point that worried Haumell the most, for indirect inheritances were often a source of legal complications.

Tortosa attracted a Muslim population not only on the regional level, from the whole zone of the Ebro, but also immigrants from beyond the frontiers of the Catalano-Aragonese Crown, and in particular Navarre. The case of Abdalla el Castellano is particularly interesting. This Muslim of Tudela was imprisoned by the *merino* of Zaragoza, Domingo López Sarnes, when he boarded a boat along with his wife and family and all of his goods and set out to move to Tortosa. The king was forced to intervene and order the *merino* to free Abdalla and his family, letting him proceed with his goods from Zaragoza. It is uncertain what exactly led the *merino* to detain Abdalla. There may have been some bureaucratic problem, a missing authorisation or some unpaid toll, or it may well have been that he tried to detain the Muslim in the *moreria* of Zaragoza in order to augment that community's population and revenue. In any case, aside from the resolution of Abdalla's deten-

---

<sup>99</sup> ACA, C, reg. 121, f. 27 r.-v. i reg. 122, ff. 161 v.-162 r. (19 June and 27 July, 1301), reg. 124, ff. 152 v. and 153 r. (16 May, 1302); M. T. Ferrer, *Els sarraïns de la Corona catalano-aragonesa*, 121.

<sup>100</sup> ACA, C, reg. 173, f. 92 v. (18 May, 1321).

<sup>101</sup> ACA, C, reg. 222, f. 72 r. (24 August, 1322).

tion, the king sent another more general order to the *merino*, instructing him not to mistreat any Muslims who were coming from Castile or Navarre in order to settle in his realms. He was concerned, having been informed that many would-be immigrants were dissuaded by fears of imprisonment and confiscation of their goods, of the precise nature that Abdalla had suffered.<sup>102</sup>

The *aljama* of Tortosa had a substantial population and was an important centre of commerce and although this alone may explain the attraction it held for migrating Muslims, there is little doubt that Muslims of other realms saw it as a stepping stone to immigration further abroad — to Islamic lands. From here, it was possible to embark on commercial voyages to the Maghrib, superficially justifiable by the normal economic activity of the *aljama* but which allowed Muslims to prepare their eventual emigration and guarantee a greater chance of success abroad.

The preliminary sketch of the structure and life of the *aljama* that I have presented here is far from complete; the nature and practice of the economy, of the artisanal, commercial, and agricultural activities of its members have hardly been touched on, nor the administration of justice. This is indeed the ground work for a fuller study on which I am currently involved, but the data presented here should provide an illustration of the type of information that we can gather about the Muslim communities of the Catalano-Aragonese Crown and may prove useful as comparative material for scholars interested in minority communities in the Crown or beyond.

*Institució Milà y Fontanals, CSIC (Barcelona)*

*(Translated by Brian Catlos)  
Centre for Medieval Studies, U. of Toronto*

---

<sup>102</sup> ACA, C, reg. 1226, ff. 37 r.-38 r. (5 January, 1370).