

THE ROLE OF THE *BATLLE GENERAL* AND ACQUAFREDDA CASTLE IN LATE 14TH CENTURY *REGNUM SARDINIAE*

ALESSANDRA CIOPPI
ISTITUTO DI STORIA DELL'EUROPA MEDITERRANEA
(CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE)
ITALY

Date of receipt: 13rd of May, 2014
Final date of acceptance: 19th of May, 2015

ABSTRACT

The present study analyzes the defense and supplies to Acquafredda the Catalan-Aragonese fortress in southern Sardinia survived in the end of the fourteenth century to the attacks of the troops Arborea. Crucial in this context is the role assumed by the general batlle Regnum Sardiniae, whose institutional prerogatives of director and head of the royal heritage mix up with political, management and defense functions of the Sardinian-Catalan kingdom, on the edge of collapse.¹

KEYWORDS

Acquafredda Castle, Supply and Defence, 14th Century, Crown of Aragon, Kingdom of Sardinia.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Castellum Acquae Frigidae, Commeatus et Morimem, Saeculum XIV, Corona Aragonum, Regnum Sardiniae.

The aim of this study is to examine the vicissitudes of Acquafredda castle, one of the Catalan-Aragonese *Regnum Sardiniae's* southernmost fortresses, in order to add a further piece to the complex mosaic of the Sardinian-Catalan kingdom's defensive organisation in the late 14th century.²

Whilst it is territorially limited and chronologically specific, an overview of the castle's history enables the historic context of which it is part to be better identified and evaluated. This essay will concentrate on the more concrete and domestic aspects of its everyday affairs throwing lights on elements, situations and customs which highlight the experiential character of its history and —interpreting the silence of the sources on the subject— contribute to our understanding and reconstruction of living conditions in medieval castles.

The documentary material at the heart of this essay is kept at the Archivo General de la Corona de Aragón in Barcelona and is made up of three account books which, Jordi de Planella compiled as a record of the expenses incurred in supplying and defending the surviving southern Sardinian Catalan-Aragonese castles including the Acquafredda fortress in his capacity as Sardinian *batlle general*.³ To carry out his duties de Planella had extraordinary funds at his disposal which were issued with huge difficulty by Aragon in a last ditch attempt to safeguard its Sardinian kingdom across the seas which, at the turn of the 14th century, was now on the verge of collapse.⁴

1. The *batlle general* case study in the *Regnum Sardiniae*

In the Crown of Aragon's states, the *batllia general* was an institution whose activities and influence were truly extraordinary not only in terms of the great importance and dignity of the role itself but also as a result of the myriad contacts which had to be kept up constantly with functionaries, aristocrats, influential individuals and, at the same time, ordinary people, the authority which it succeeded in exerting over these, the many contexts in which it was authorised to intervene and, above all, for the ongoing and fundamentally important relations which it kept up with the king.

The main duties of the *batlle general* were to administer the royal patrimony for which purpose taxes were raised, civil and criminal jurisdiction exerted in a very wide range of contexts and feudal and trading duties performed. His sphere of competence also included matters relating to fairs and markets, mills and public

1. Used abbreviations: ACA, Archivo de la Corona de Aragón; ASCa, Archivio di Stato di Cagliari.

2. Cioppi, Alessandra. *Le strategie dell'invincibilità. Corona d'Aragona e Regnum Sardiniae nella seconda metà del Trecento*. Cagliari: Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche)-AM&D Edizioni, 2012: 147-158.

3. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, 2485, 2486.

4. On the events of the great Sardinian-Iberian conflict, see Casula, Francesco Cesare. *La Sardegna aragonese*. 1. *La Corona d'Aragona*, 2. *La Nazione Sarda*. Sassari: Chiarella, 1990.



water, customs and vacant goods, booty and goods acquired from shipwrecks, and importing and exporting goods.⁵ In the performance of his duties, especially those relating to the royal patrimony and taxation, a fiscal prefect worked alongside him and —despite the eminence of his role— his financial management was subject to the supervision of the *Magistorum Rationarum*.

The office of *batllia general*, unknown in Sardinia but well established as early as the 13th century in the Crown of Aragon's other states, was set up in Sardinia by King John I and given the task of administrating the royal patrimony on the island in full autonomy and raising revenues for the severely compromised royal finances.⁶ The King had, in fact, taken note of the negligence and incompetence of the royal functionaries who he blamed for a financial collapse that meant that the kingdom's finances were no longer sufficient to pay even its urgent necessities let alone to ensure the defence of its Sardinian territories.⁷ However, whilst misappropriation of funds by officials was common practice and palpable, it was not the only cause of the financial crisis of a kingdom which underwent one of the most complex and delicate in its history from the late 14th to the early 15th centuries not only in the *Regnum Sardiniae* but in all crown territories. A virtually permanent state of war was the central feature of the Aragon crown's conflictive internal and external relations and the immense military expenses required on various fronts prompted the Catalan kings to progressively greater alienation of their patrimony.⁸

5. On the role of the *batlle general*: Aragó, Antonio Maria. "La Institución *Baiulus regis* en Cataluña en la época de Alfonso el Casto", *VII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón (Barcelona, 1-6 octubre 1962) Comunicaciones*. Barcelona: Vidua de Fidel Rodríguez, 1962: III, 137-142; Montagut, Tomàs de. "El batlle general de Catalunya". *Hacienda Pública Española*, 87 (1984): 73-84; García de Valdeavellano, Luis. *Curso de historia de las instituciones españolas. De los orígenes al final de la Edad Media*. Madrid: Ediciones de la Revista de Occidente, 1968: 516-517. About the *batlle general* in Valencia: Piles, Leopoldo. *Estudio documental sobre el bayle general de Valencia, su autoridad y jurisdicción*. Valencia: Institución Alfonso el Magnánimo-Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1970; Guinot, Enric. "La batllia general de València: gestors i beneficiaris", *Col·loqui Corona, Municipis i Fiscalitat a la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, Manuel Sánchez, Antoni Furió, eds. Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, 1997: 577-601. About *batlle general* in Catalonia: Sánchez, Manuel. "Batlle", *Diccionari d'Història de Catalunya*, Jesús Mestre, Josep Maria Salrach, Josep Termes, eds. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1992: 111. Note that it was only with the Decrets de Nova Planta (1707-1716) that the institution of the *batllia general* was dismantled in the Iberian Peninsula and his duties passed to the *Intendencia*.

6. John I attempted to exert greater control over the management of public offices in order to limit misappropriation. See ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, f. 173; Casula, Francesco Cesare. *Carte reali diplomatiche di Giovanni I il Cacciatore, re d'Aragona, riguardanti l'Italia*. Padova: CEDAM, 1977: 65 (doc. No. 36), 151 (doc. No. 129), 159 (doc. No. 135).

7. A reading of the documents of the era make clear that not only did royal officials not respect the king's orders but they also frequently pursued their own private interests. See Casula, Francesco Cesare. *Carte Reali Diplomatiche...*: 65 (doc. No. 36), 151 (doc. No. 129), 159 (doc. No. 135) and ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, f. 173r.

8. Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "El patrimoni reial i la recuperació dels senyorijs jurisdiccionals en els estats catalano-aragonesos a la fi del segle XIV". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 7 (1970-1971), 351-491: 351-353 and their final balance sheets relating to the years of patrimonial sales; Sánchez, Manuel. "La fiscalidad real en Catalunya (siglo XIV)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 22 (1992): 341-376; Guinot, Enric. "El Patrimoni Reial al País Valencià a inicis del segle XV". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 22 (1992): 581-655; Sánchez, Manuel. *El naixement de la fiscalitat d'Estat a Catalunya*. Girona: Eumo Editorial, 1995:



Specifically as far as the increasingly complex Sardinian question resulting from its state of ongoing war with the Giudicato of Arborea was concerned, King Peter IV had been attempting to overhaul the founding principles of the island's government for some time.⁹ He had made his presence felt on various occasions in this matter often on explicit request of the island's governors, bringing previously issued orders to their attention and issuing new ones on matters relating to royal administration and, in particular, on officials' salaries and duties.¹⁰

Despite this, when his son John succeeded him to the throne in 1387 the gravity of the situation forced the new king to take a more thoroughgoing and astute approach to the revenue issue.¹¹ At this challenging juncture, it would appear that the king channelled all his expectations into the establishment of the *batllia general*, entrusting the kingdom's financial management to a single individual with wide supervisory powers in the hope that this would increase the effectiveness of the crown's financial controls.¹² Having abolished the two Capo di Cagliari e Gallura and Capo di Logudoro administrations, John I created a new office whose duties were to encompass not only the prerogatives of its original institutional function

107-134; Sánchez, Manuel. *Pagar al rey en la Corona de Aragón durante el s. XIV*. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas-Institución Milá y Fontanals, 2003; Ortí, Pere. *Corts, Parlaments i fiscalitat a Catalunya: els capítols del donatiu (1288-1384)*. Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1997: 71-87; Mira, Antonio José. *Entre la renta y el impuesto. Fiscalidad, finanzas y crecimiento económicos en la villas reales del sur valencianos (siglos XIV-XVI)*. Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2005; López, José Francisco. "Para una historia fiscal de la Mallorca cristiana (siglos XIII-XIV)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 38/1 (enero-junio 2008): 101-184; Sabaté, Flocel. "L'augment de l'exigència fiscal en els municipis catalans al segle XIV: elements de pressió i de resposta", *Col·loqui Corona, Municipis i Fiscalitat a la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, Manuel Sánchez, Antoni Furió, eds. Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, 1997: 423-465 and all the essays in this miscellaneous volume.

9. Corruption amongst crown functionaries was already endemic in Peter IV's reign. See *Cort general de Montsó (1382-1384)*, Ignasi Baiges, Anna Rubió, Elisa Varela, eds. Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1992: 219-242.

10. Peter IV had already in 1352, prompted by the kingdom's general governor Rambau de Corbera, approved most of the latter's chapters issued as a result of his orders relating to a more detailed redistribution of salaries and a more appropriate re-organisation of public offices. See Arienzo, Luisa. *Carte reali diplomatiche di Pietro IV il Cerimonioso, re d'Aragona, riguardanti l'Italia*. Padova: CEDAM, 1970: 192 (doc. No. 377), 193 (doc. No. 193); Costa, Mercè. "Oficials de Pere el Cerimonios a Sasser (1336-1387)", *La Sardegna nel mondo mediterraneo. 2. Gli aspetti storici, Atti del primo Convegno internazionale di studi geografico-storici (Sassari, 7-9 aprile 1978)*, Manlio Brigaglia, ed. Sassari: Gallizzi, 1981: 291-314 and Costa, Maria Mercè. "Oficials de la Corona d'Aragó a Sardenya (segle XIV). Notes biogràfiques". *Archivio Storico Sardo*, 29 (1964): 340-343. On Peter IV's actions compare with Era, Antonio. *L'ordinamento organico di Pietro IV d'Aragona per i territori del Cagliariitano*. Sassari: Gallizzi, 1933: 1-78.

11. The original text is ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, f. 145-147v. The expenses amounted to such an enormous sum that the incomes deriving from revenues and the island's royal taxation together were not sufficient to cover it. In general terms, John I's pragmatic reposed the reorganisation orders relating to the Cagliari offices issued thirty-five years earlier by Peter IV. See Era, Antonio. *L'ordinamento organico...: 15-52*; Ferrer, M. Teresa. "El patrimoni real...": 351-491.

12. For the establishment of the Kingdom of Sardinia's *batlle general*, see ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, f. 171 and on the subject of the factors prompting the establishment of this office in the Sardinian kingdom see Ferrante, Carla. "L'istituzione del bailo generale nel regno di Sardegna (1391-1401)", *El poder real en la Corona de Aragón (siglos XIV-XVI), XV Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón (Jaca, 20-25 septiembre 1993)*. Saragossa: Diputación General de Aragón, 1996): 1/3, 93-109.



but also those of the two general governments of Sardinia and other jurisdictional functions.¹³

Despite these intentions, the *batllia* institution lasted only a relatively short time on the island. Martin I succeeded his brother John I in 1396 and abolished it in 1401 considering it incapable of governing the kingdom and raising the kingdom's revenues.¹⁴ In its place, he reinstated the office of general administrator and the two *Capo di Cagliari e di Gallura* and *Capo di Logudoro* governorates established by Peter IV.¹⁵

This change of direction, however, was not equally long lasting. The issues which had prompted the crown to set up the *batllia* institution in the Sardinian kingdom remained unresolved in the first decade of the century which followed precisely because its state of permanent war was also unresolved. It was only later, in 1413, during the reign of Ferdinand I and a climate of well-established peace on the island, that the important and effective measures that definitively settled the issue were put into practice.¹⁶ The two general administrations were once again abolished and replaced with a new, single patrimonial institution, the royal prefecture.¹⁷

The establishment of the Sardinian kingdom's *batllia general* was thus made official in February 1391 when John I appointed Berenguer Xicot to the office in a *cartha commissionis*.¹⁸ Five months later the appointment passed to Jordi de Planella, an eminent figure well known at court, whose activities were encompassed within and interwoven into the island's political-economic fabric from this moment on.¹⁹

13. The abolition of the two posts of general administrator appears in ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, f. 171r. On the duties of the Sardinian *batlle general*, see *charta commissionis* in ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, ff. 166v-168r; Cioppi, Alessandra. *Le strategie dell'invincibilità...*: 201-229.

14. On the brief life of the Sardinian *batllia general*, ACA. Cancillería, reg. 2226, ff. 167v-169r; ff. 181v-183v; Boscolo, Alberto. *La politica italiana di Martino il Vecchio re d'Aragona*. Padua: CEDAM, 1962: 77-80; Olla Repetto, Gabriella. "L'Istituto del «Procurator Regius Regni Sardiniae» sotto Alfonso il Magnanimo", *La Corona d'Aragona e il Mediterraneo: aspetti e problemi comuni da Alfonso il Magnanimo a Ferdinando il Cattolico (1416-1516)*, IX Congresso di Storia della Corona d'Aragona (Napoli, 11-15 aprile 1973). Naples: Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, 1982: II, 135-145. As well as the single office of the *batlle general*—which was generally considered ineffective—an attempt to unify the kingdom had also been made in 1387, once again by John I, when he created the office of treasury lieutenant of Aragon, another ultra short-lived institution. For a more in-depth study, see Tore, Gianfranco. "Il documento istitutivo dell'ufficio di luogotenente del tesoriere d'Aragona nel 'Regno di Sardegna' (1387)". *Archivio Storico Sardo*, 34. (1983): 111-123 and Olla Repetto, Gabriella. "L'Istituto del Procurator Regius...": 135.

15. ASCa. Antico Archivio Regio, B6, ff. 265r-268r.

16. Meloni, Giuseppe; Simbula, Pinuccia Franca. "Demografia e fiscalità nei territori regi del regno di Sardegna al principio del XV secolo", *El poder real en la Corona de Aragón...*: I/3, 155-188.

17. ASCa. Antico Archivio Regio, B6, ff. 265-267. On the establishment of the Sardinian royal prefecture and the roles and importance of this office, see Olla Repetto, Gabriella. *Il primo "liber curiae" della Procurazione reale di Sardegna (1413-1425)*. Rome: Ministero dell'Interno, 1974: 3-76 (Fonti e Sussidi. Pubblicazione degli Archivi di Stato. Archivio di Stato di Cagliari, V); Olla Repetto, Gabriella. "L'Istituto del Procurator Regius...": 136.

18. On the appointment of Berenguer Xicot, see ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1939, ff. 166v-168r; Ferrante, Carla. "L'istituzione del bailo generale...": 93-109.

19. The reasons for this passage from one royal mandate to another are still unclear today. Carla Ferrante (Ferrante, Carla. "L'istituzione del bailo...": 105) refers to the news of the replacement of Xicot



The continual state of war and the limits on royal power, conflicts of interest and political pressure at the local level, meant that in practice Planella acquired administrative, political and military duties which profoundly modified the office itself, its institutional functions and the nomination and distribution of his jurisdiction.

On this matter, the Barcelona archives provide us with interesting data with which to reconstruct the more practical aspects of his endeavours in the *Regnum Sardiniae* too. These saw him frequently involved in extraordinary activities aimed at safeguarding and recovering the Sardinian kingdom rather than simply the normal exercise of the duties and functions of the *batlle general*. In the three years from 1396 to 1399, in fact, assisted by other royal offices, Planella administered extraordinary revenues which involved the allocation of a large sum of money —15,050 Aragon gold florins— over three years²⁰ for the purpose of the island's defence.

An accurate account of this financial plan drawn up by the *batlle* has survived and shows this royal official accounting for his work. It is this which will be examined here. Each annual allocation of funds corresponded to an account book which notes all incoming and outgoing expense items subdivided into chapters. Original payment acts were attached as well as the receipts issued by the beneficiaries of the various expenses, creditors and suppliers of goods and services showing not only the truth of his accounts but also the effective necessity of the costs incurred.²¹

The contents of the account books goes well beyond purely local concerns and can thus provide an insight into some aspects of the problems encountered in the active and passive defence of Catalan-Aragonese Sardinia in the second half of the 14th century. Already at the end of Peter IV's reign, an extremely critical situation resulting from insistent and violent struggles with the Giudicato of Arborea had impacted seriously on Aragonese politics and the actions of the crown in favour of a suitable defence of the *Regnum Sardiniae*. The references in the account books to Planella *batlle* have supplied new and interesting elements to analyse which have enriched the academic debate and provided insights into the cost of war in the Sardinian kingdom in the last few years of the 14th century when, despite the best efforts of the Catalan monarchy, the stubborn, centuries' long resistance of the Sardinians across the seas risked dragging Aragon into total disarray.

by Jordi de Planella allo Xicot but reports that she found no mention of the appointment of the latter. The decree or *charta commissionis* (31st July 1391) with which Planella was nominated *batlle* has, on the other hand, been found in the Barcelona archive by Alessandra Cioppi. See Cioppi, Alessandra. *Le strategie dell'invincibilità...*: 217 and ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1940, ff. 79v-82v.

20. On the 29th of May 1396, the general administrators for the defence of Sardinia, Francesch Foix and Felip de Ferrera, entrusted Jordi de Planella with managing funds for the defence of the last surviving Catalan-Aragonese strongholds in the south of the island on the king's orders. See ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484 (1396-1397), f. 1; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485 (1397-1398), f. 1r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2486 (1398-1399), f. 1r.

21. Each recorded *reebudes* and *dates* is accompanied by a *carta debitoria* or *anàpocha*, authenticated by interested parties in the presence of a notary —always Guillem Casanova who worked at the time in *Castell de Càller*.



In particular, they allow for a reconstruction of the management of the castles which were still in Iberian hands and the financial costs involved in organising and defending them to the extent that the Catalan kings never gave up the idea of bringing the 'Sardinian question' to a definitive close. Above all the expense items relating to the three fortresses subject to extraordinary intervention are listed in minute detail. *Castell de Càller*, the capital of the kingdom—in serious jeopardy despite its imposing walls and fortifications; San Michele—irreplaceable outpost in the direction of the Cagliari hinterland and the Campidani; Acquafredda, bulwark of the vast Sigerro curatoria on the border with the Sulcis-Iglesiente mining region.

In particular, as far as this latter is concerned, the information contained in the *batlle general* documents provides abundant sources of useful material in tracing, however generally, the vicissitudes of this important fortress.

2. A Sardinian stronghold case study: Acquafredda

Acquafredda castle was built as a fortress in the Giudicato period, experienced in embryonic terms the socio-economic impulse of Pisan influence in the 13th and 14th centuries before going to the Tuscan Gherardesca family—the Donoratico counts—and then passing into the hands of Count Ugolino according to the most creditable accounts. The latter was the Ugolino who dominated the southernmost third of the former Cagliari giudicato with his brother Gherardo after the Pisan victory over the Genoese in 1258 and was imprisoned in the Torre della Fame by the Pisa comune before being placed by Dante in his innermost circles of hell.²²

The functions of a fortress which was very probably built for the purposes of mining management were essentially military and it was lived in prevalently by the soldiers given the task of defending this vast area with its great many silver and lead mines. Equipped with an external ring of walls—nowadays mainly ruined—the castle itself consisted of two outlying and one central tower, the so-called *mastio* (keep) whose last-ditch defence it was designed for. Joined together by battlemented stone bridges, the towers were equipped with machicolations, crossbow loops and squared off battlements which defended several buildings for specific uses: lodgings, warehouses, sheds and, above all, the water cisterns.²³

22. On Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, Count of Donoratico (Dante Alighieri, *Divina Commedia*, Inferno, c. XXXIII) and the members of his family involved in the Sardinian events, see *Genealogie medioevali di Sardegna*, Lindsay L. Brook, Francesco Cesare Casula, eds. Sassari: 2D Editrice Mediterranea, 1984: XI-XIII, 232-249; Toscanelli, Nello. *I conti di Donoratico della Gherardesca, signori di Pisa*. Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1937 e Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento. Iglesias dalle origini alla fine del Medioevo*. Naples: Liguori, 1985.

23. Fois, Foiso. "Il castello di Acquafredda di Siliqua. Contributo alla storia delle fortificazioni in Sardegna". *Studi Sardi*, 17 (1959-1961): 441-461; Coroneo, Roberto. *Architettura Romanica dalla metà del Mille al primo '300*. Nuoro: Ilisso, 1993: 289 and the volume. *Il castello di Acquafredda. Note di storia e archeologia*, Donatella Salvi, Ilaria Garbi, ed. Settimo Milanese: RTP Castelli di Sardegna-Soprintendenza Archeologica per le provv. di Cagliari e Oristano, 2010: 18-36.



After the Catalan-Aragonese conquest of the island, the fort passed directly under the control of the royal government as it was considered by Alfonso of Aragon to be a *magna fortitudinis*.²⁴ A castellan was appointed for this purpose and entrusted with the task of safeguarding the castle and the whole fortified settlement made up of a small network of neighbouring villages. Over time, this post became much sought after and extremely profitable as the appointment related to the command and defence of the fortress and control of the area around it. The duties of the castellan, in fact, included *praeses* functions in relation to the people resident in the castle and the hamlets both military or civilian and was he was responsible for managing an annual budget—the *retinença*— which was to cover his own pay,²⁵ ordinary building maintenance and supply costs, the salaries of a considerable number of mercenaries under his command and, lastly, the salaries of the guards—the *servents*— who ensured the defence of the fortress itself.²⁶

From 1334 to 1360, a number of eminent, high status figures were appointed castellan such as Napoleó and James of Aragon, King John II's illegitimate sons, Nicolau de Libiá and Amorós de Ribelles, both brothers of the realm's governor general, Ramon d'Empuries, Alegrança's husband and favourite nephew and heir of James of Aragon and Dalmazzo de Jardí, future vicar of Alghero and governor general of Capo di Logudoro.²⁷

The war of liberation which the Giudicato of Arborea fought against Aragon, above all from the latter half of the 14th century onwards,²⁸ obliged the latter to maintain its castles in a state of military preparedness and thus these only benefitted from feudal rights at the beginning of the period of domination and for a short time.²⁹ The bloody wars which Sardinia was subject to from the early decades of the 15th century led to a necessary return to ancient and virtually exclusively military

24. Simbula, Pinuccia Franca. "Il castello di Acquafredda: appunti sulla vita quotidiana in una fortezza sarda nel Trecento". *Quaderni bolotanesi*, 18 (1992): 265-299.

25. The castellan's income was 5000 *soldi* on average with values extremes ranging from 2,000 to 16,000 *soldi di alfonsini minuti*. See ASCa. *Procurazione Reale*, B6, f. 51, f. 78v, f. 92r, f. 125r; and Simbula, Pinuccia Franca. "Il castello di Acquafredda...": 272.

26. For the castellan's duties, see Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento...: 236-246*; Olla Repetto, Gabriella. *Gli ufficiali regi di Sardegna durante il regno di Alfonso IV*. Cagliari: Fossataro, 1969: 44-45; Era, Antonio. *L'ordinamento organico...: 30, 41-42, 72-73*.

27. Costa, Maria Mercè. "Oficials de la Corona d'Aragó a Sardenya (segle XIV). Notes biogràfiques". *Archivio Storico Sardo*, 29 (1964): 325-327, 363-369, 373-377. Napoleó de Aragó, born of Gerolda, wife of aristocrat Gualtiero Campagna di Mileto and concubine of King John II (Casula, Francesco Cesare. *La Sardegna aragonese...: II*, 366) was Jaume's half-brother and like him illegitimate son of the King of Aragon and a certain Sicilian woman who later married Vanno de Bonavita. See *Genealogie medioevali di Sardegna*: XL, 456-457. Amorós de Ribelles was, on the other hand, a member of the Ramon de Ribelles family, trusted counsellor of Infante Alfonso and governor general of the Sardinian kingdom from 1337 onwards. Nicolau de Libiá was probably Pere's brother and the latter was later governor general of the island (Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento...: 284*).

28. For a detailed account of events, see Casula, Francesco Cesare. *La Sardegna aragonese...: II*, 365-412; Anatra, Bruno. "Dall'unificazione aragonese ai Savoia", *La Sardegna medioevale e moderna. Storia d'Italia. X*, John Day, Bruno Anatra, Lucetta Scaraffia, eds. Turin: UTET, 1984: 189-663 (191-364).

29. Tangheroni, Marco. "Il 'Regnum Sardiniae et Corsicae' nell'espansione mediterranea della Corona d'Aragona. Aspetti economici", *La Corona d'Aragona in Italia (secc. XIII-XVIII), XIV Congresso di Storia della*



roles for castles and annihilated any ambitions to make these a source of income or grants reducing them to harsh front line outposts which were frequently attacked, sieged and struggling for survival. Static war thus played a hugely important role as a military tactic in Sardinia not only during the conquest itself but above all in preserving the kingdom from the mid 14th to the early 15th centuries.³⁰ In the absence of the resources required to maintain its overseas possession stably in the context of the financial difficulties it was experiencing, the Aragon monarchy was forced to resort to this type of conflict however difficult to manage and source of continual conflicts and contradictions.³¹ When hostilities with the Giudicato of Arborea ceased and the feudal rebellion led by the Marquises of Oristano at the end of the 15th century was crushed, the Aragon crown had no further need for these expensive fortified buildings. The great castle building period thus came to an end and almost all the Sardinian fortresses which had played such an important

Corona d'Aragona (Sassari-Alghero, 19-24 maggio 1990). Sassari: Carlo Delfino Editore, 1993: I, 49-88; Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento...*: 282-284.

30. The importance that this type of conflict has played in Sardinian history is the subject of a study by Maria Teresa Ferrer Mallol. Whilst designed to highlight the 'Catalan aspect' of the issue her analysis is certainly the most extensive and best documented.

31. Ferrer, Maria Teresa. *El patrimoni reial...*: 351-491; Ferrer, Maria Teresa. *Organització i defensa d'un territori fronterer. La governació d'Oriola en el segle XIV*. Barcelona: CSIC, 1990; Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "Barcelona i la política mediterrània catalana: el Parlament de 1400-1401", *La Corona d'Aragona in Italia...*: II/1, 427-443; Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "La guerra d'Arborea alla fine del XIV secolo", *Giudicato d'Arborea e Marchesato di Oristano: proiezioni mediterranee e aspetti di storia locale, 1° Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Oristano, 5-8 dicembre 1997)*, Gimpaolo Mele, coord. Oristano: ISTAR, 2000: 2/1, 535-620; Ferrer, Maria Teresa. "La organización militar de Cataluña en la Edad Media", *Conquistar y defender. Los recursos militares en la Edad Media hispánica*, Miguel Ángel Ladero, coord. *Revista de Historia Militar*, 45 (2001): 119-222. Alongside Ferrer's studies are those of: Sáiz, Jorge. *Guerra y nobleza en la Corona de Aragón. La caballería en los ejércitos del Rey (siglos XIV-XV)*. Valencia: Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2003 and Sáiz, Jorge. "La organización militar en la expansión mediterránea de la Corona de Aragón, siglos XIV y XV", *La Mediterrània de la Corona d'Aragó, segles XIII-XVI e VII Centenari de la sentència arbitral de Torrellas, 1304-2004, Actes XVIII Congrés Internacional d'Història de la Corona d'Aragó (València, 9-14 setembre 2004)*. Valencia: Universitat de València, 2005: I, 737-764; Hernández, Francesc Xavier. *Historia militar de Catalunya. Aproximació didàctica*. Barcelona: Dalmau, 2004; Bertran, Prim. "La nobleza catalana y la guerra de Cerdeña de 1354. La expedición de 1354". *Hidalguía*, 46/271 (1998): 737-755; Orsi, Mario. "Estrategia, operaciones y logística en un conflicto mediterráneo. La revuelta del juez de Arborea y la "armada e viatge" de Pedro el Ceremonioso a Cerdeña (1353-1354)". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 38/2 (2008): 921-968. Of fundamental importance to this research though referring to the Iberian area, see Cabanes, Maria Desamparados. "Los castillos de frontera en el reino de Valencia". *Estudios de la Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón*, 10 (1975): 653-669; Martínez, Luis Pablo. "La historia militar del reino medieval de Valencia: balance y perspectivas". *Militaria. Revista de cultura militar*, 11 (1998): 29-75; Sesma, José Ángel. "Guerra, ejército y sociedad en los reinos de Aragón y Navarra en la Edad Media". *Revista de Historia Militar*, 1 (2002): 13-48; García, Juan Vicente. "El mantenimiento de los recintos fortificados en la Valencia bajomedieval. Las reparaciones del castillo de Xátiva (1410-1412)". *Acta historica et archaeologica Mediaevalia*, 18 (1997): 475-493; García, Juan Vicente "Las obras que nunca se acaban. El mantenimiento de los castillos en la Valencia medieval: sus protagonistas e sus materiales". *Ars longa: cuadernos de arte*, 12 (2003): 7-15; Mitre, Emilio; Alvira, Martín. "Ideología y guerra en los reinos de la España Medieval". *Conquistar y defender...*: 291-334.



part in the island's political history were now function-less and began to fall into inexorable and irreversible wrack and ruin.³²

With its key strategic position in the defensive system of the *Regnum Sardiniae*, Acquafredda's functions had always been strictly military in nature and this was all the more the case when Arborea declared war on Aragon.

When war broke out after 1350, the stronghold managed to hold out against the multitude of attacks launched against it by the Arborea troops and, at the end of the 14th century, when events had turned to the favour of the Giudicato of Arborea, it once again played a key role in the reign's southern fortifications when it succeeded in holding out against ongoing attacks by the soldiers of Brancaleone Doria, impatient to invade the Cagliari area and definitively occupy *Castell de Càller*.³³

Reinforcing the fortress's defences and satisfying its continual supply needs and uninterrupted maintenance and repair requirements was thus a pressing concern for the Aragonese kings from the latter half of the 14th century onwards. Repairs were extremely frequent in the castle's long military history and the work carried out on it in the 14th and early 15th centuries cannot be listed here for reasons of space. It will suffice here to mention some of the many requests for action sent to the Court and underline the ability of the impregnable Sigerro fortress to resist.

In 1351, for example, King Peter IV himself urged new and indispensable renovation work to improve the fortified complex while in 1358, it was the castellan Dalmazzo de Jardí who was granted payment for the expenses he had incurred in certain modernisation work which he had requested not only for the fortress but also for the village around it.³⁴

From April 1365 when the wars with Arborea had flared up and conflict was imminent, measures were taken which were to impact on the southern regions of the kingdom. The governor general thus ordered that the Sigerro castle should be suitably modernised because the castellan's reports had highlighted a serious food supply problem in the event of an attack as well as a lack of the tools, equipment and arms required to cope with siege and arm the war machines.

In the months which followed, a resident of *Castell de Càller*, an expert in crossbows surveyed Acquafredda "*pro recognoscendis, abtandis et reparandis ballistis dictorum castrorum et eorum viratonis impenandis*".³⁵ The next year the fort resisted the attacks of the Giudicato troops and the soldiers stationed there pressed for continual repairs to its walls and buildings.³⁶

32. Casula, Francesco Cesare. "Castelli e fortezze", *Atlante della Sardegna*, Roberto Pracchi, Angela Terrosu Asole, Mario Giuseppe Riccardi, eds. Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 1980: II, 109-114 (table 40); Cioppi, Alessandra. "I sistemi di difesa nella Sardegna medioevale. Committenze e strategie", *Verso un atlante dei sistemi difensivi della Sardegna*. Rome: Istituto Italiano dei Castelli, forthcoming.

33. Casula, Francesco Cesare. *La Sardegna aragonese...*: II, 393 and 427.

34. Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento...*: 328-329 and 350.

35. ASCa. Antico Archivio Regio, K2, f. 73r. In August 1365, the crossbow archer Berenguer Almuzara visited Acquafredda and Gioiosaguardia castles to repair their crossbows and fletch their arrows. See ASCa. Antico Archivio Regio, K2, f. 82r.

36. ASCa. Antico Archivio Regio, K2, ff. 101v-102r; ff. 107v-109r; ff. 130v-131r.



It was, however, in the last decade of the 14th century that the situation became critical. Having left notions of great expeditions to one side —such proposals never left the drawing board— the Catalan-Aragonese defence of Sardinia was considerably down-sized and on occasions even precarious. It was a defence that, despite its limitations, managed to fulfil its main objective nonetheless— preserving the Iberian presence on the island. Whilst this presence was minimal and limited to control of a few inland castles and a number of strongholds on the coast it was still capable of ensuring Aragon the chance to recover whenever its domestic predicament might allow.

From the 1470s onwards, the fortresses which the Regnum Sardiniae still possessed were actually very few and encircled by hostile territory which left them totally isolated with consequent serious supply problems. Local revenues were nowhere near enough to pay for the keep of the soldiers manning the fortress and the revenues from the Iberian Peninsula fell short as a result of the many other ongoing disputes in the continent. Gathering the considerable funds needed to pay soldiers and Alcalde and maintain, modernise and supply castles was a not a straightforward matter.

In 1396, for example, under pressing and continual threat of attack by Brancaleone Doria, work was done on the walls of Acquafredda castle³⁷ and the water cistern there repaired in order to guarantee its long-term efficiency.³⁸ This work was made possible by the work of a courier, Anthoni Darcedi, who transported the necessary material from *Castell de Càller* to the Sigerro castle. He was escorted by five men and Anthoni Scarcello, the owner of a boat in which the party managed to sail up River Cixerri from the Santa Igia lagoon to the marshy Uta area, as close as possible to the castle in order to avoid ambushes by bands loyal to the Doria family.³⁹

In the first decade of the 15th century, on the other hand, when the war was petering out, wall repairs and carpentry work were needed. In the spring of 1407, castellan Bernat de Riera went to the extent of a “de gran adob” in the castle designed to make its rooms cosier and more comfortable, work that was much desired by his wife too.⁴⁰ To this end, a certain Jacme de Riusech, an Alcúdia native living in *Castell de Càller*, worked for sixty-six days earning the sum of 12 *lire* and

37. ASCa. Antico Archivio Regio, K2, ff. 130v-131r.

38. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, ff. 23-23v; Cioppi, Alessandra. “I registri di Jordi de Planella, ‘batlle general’ di Sardegna. Note sull’amministrazione di un ufficiale regio alla fine del XIV secolo”, *La corona catalanoaragonesa i el seu entorn mediterrani a la baixa edat mitjana*, Maria Teresa Ferrer, Josefina Mutgé, Manuel Sánchez, eds. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas-Institució Milà i Fontanals, 2005: 23-63 (46-47).

39. This information comes to us via Jordi de Planella’s account books. For this expedition Anthoni Darcedi was paid 1 *lira* and 14 *soldi* and for their journey from *Castell de Càller* to Acquafredda, Anthoni Scarcello and his companions received 1 *lira* and 4 *soldi*. See ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, ff. 23r-23v.

40. The Acquafredda castellan’s wife, who lived in the castle alongside her husband in accordance with the provisions of Peter IV (Era, Antonio. *L’ordinamento organico...: 72-74*), had very little in common with the ideal courtier model and resembled the female roles set out by Gabriella Olla Repetto to a much greater extent, Olla Repetto, Gabriella. “La donna cagliaritana tra ‘400 e ‘600”. *Medioevo. Saggi e Rassegne*, 11 (1986): 171-207.



12 *soldi di alfonsini minuti*. He was aided by an assistant who earned 6 *lire* and 10 *soldi di alfonsini minuti* for fifty-two days of work. This latter was also paid the sum of 15 *soldi* to transport just under three hundred terracotta tiles to be laid as floors in a number of rooms to the town in the castle. The ancient castle's renovation was then probably completed with whitewashing, a sign of the renewed faith in it of the Catalan-Aragonese crown.⁴¹

3. How to defend and supply Acquafredda

The data to be found in the 14th-century archive documents on Acquafredda fort—including the information supplied by the *batlle general's* account books—are almost exclusively administrative in nature and reflect only requirements relating to the castle's functions and defensive potential. They are sectorial and indirect sources focusing mainly on soldiers rather than the men at arms and weaponry which were part of the fort's *forment*—and as such the crown's property—as well as the small tools needed for repair, basic food supplies and warehouses to store them in.

Despite this, from the starting point of the space calculations and descriptions of objects in the sources, life within a Catalan-Aragonese stronghold in 14th-century Sardinia can be inferred and retraced.

At times in which the fortress was not directly involved in the war, we learn that the castellan's family could live with him in the residence as required by his appointment. In such circumstances, a small retinue of servants suitable to his rank populated the castle, enlivening its spaces and alleviating an isolation that must have been suffocating at times. The Acquafredda castellans, in fact, frequently complained of the state of extreme segregation which the castle forced them to live in and some were prompted by a desire to escape continual residence there to give up the post. A case in point is Ramon de Ampuries, while his successor Dalmazzo de Jardí paid a very high price for his sense of duty to his appointed role. Appointed castellan in 1355, he accepted the post and, not wanting to separate himself from his loved ones, moved into the castle with both wife and children. Just three years later, in 1358, he asked for permission to leave a replacement at the fortress in order to stay in *Castell de Càller* for at least six months a year on the grounds that both he and his wife were seriously ill and two of their children had died as a result of the terrible sanitary conditions in the castle. King Peter IV granted the request of his faithful servant and allowed him to alleviate the harsh conditions of castle life with brief visits to town.⁴²

Overall, however, Acquafredda castle must have been well organised and safe. Life there was perhaps not always pleasant but their military vocation did not stop

41. ASCa. Antico Archivo Regio K3, ff. 22r-22v; Fois, Foiso. "Il castello di Acquafredda di Siliqua...": 446.

42. Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento...*: 284-285; 350.



its residents from engaging, however marginally, in activities which were mainly possible in the absence of specific military threats.

The inhabitants of the fortress, in fact, engaged in hunting within its walls, carried out small maintenance tasks, cleaned and checked the weaponry, reorganised the warehouse and the tools. They stored away non-perishable material supplies.⁴³ They made dough and baked bread.

In this respect, an inventory of castle goods delivered to aristocrat Amorós de Ribelles, Acquafredda castellan in October 1338, shows that there were two mills inside the castle one of which was mule and the other horse-powered. A second inventory drawn up by castellan Ramon de Ampuries and passed on to his successor Dalmazzo de Jardí in July 1355 mentions a further two mills in the castle keep which were called “sardeschi” by the scribe.⁴⁴ To these, two further grindstones were added only one of which was complete and in working order.⁴⁵ A striking detail which emerges from these inventories is the diversity in mill types in the castle which was underlined by its castellans. The use of the ‘sardesco’ adjective implies the existence of a specific machine that must have been very small as it was kept inside a single room in the castle. Perhaps this was an ancient wheat grindstone like those which had been in use on the island since Roman times, consisting of a few stone, donkey-powered elements of a type which has survived unchanged to our own times in the millstones visible in the courtyards of farm houses.⁴⁶

When possible, the presence of the castellan’s wife certainly made life inside the castle more comfortable. Whilst she was capable of overseeing a range of tasks, her main duties were traditionally female ones. The various *canes* of canvas which reached Acquafredda, for example, had to be sewn and embroidered with the help of the village *serventa* to make napkins and simple garments as was customary in the European castles of the day.⁴⁷

The castellan’s wife was also responsible for salting meat and fish and eels in particular.⁴⁸ Her tasks included overseeing bread and biscuit making for the whole

43. ACA. Papeles para incorporar. Caja 24, ff. 1v-3r; ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1027, ff. 65v-67r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, ff. 21v-22r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, ff. 29v-31r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2486, ff. 29-30r.

44. The descriptions of objects listed in the 1338 (ACA. Papeles para incorporar, n. 24, ff. 1v-3) and 1355 inventories (ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1027, ff. 65v-67r) give an idea of the way Acquafredda castle was organised and the nature of its resident community subject to continual demands for work, renovation and defence. The text of the 1388 inventory is in Simbula, Pinuccia Franca. “Il castello di Acquafredda...”: 291-299; the text of 1355 is edited in Fois, Foiso. “Il castello di Acquafredda di Siliqua...”: 455-460.

45. ACA. Papeles para incorporar, caja 24 (1338, 15 ottobre), ff. 1r-6r; ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1027, ff. 65v-67r.

46. This agricultural machinery has been studied and described by Fois, Barbara. *Territorio e paesaggio agrario nella Sardegna medioevale*. Pisa: ETS, 1990: 115-121.

47. ASCa. Antico Archivio Real, K3, ff. 22r-22v; ff. 25r-25v; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2092, f. 124v; Power, Eileen. *Donne nel Medioevo*, Michael Moissey, ed., Sciana Loaldi Contri, trad. Milan: Jaca Book, 1999: 54-55; Duby, George; Perrot, Michéle. “Il modello cortese”, *Storia delle donne. 2. Il Medioevo*, Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, ed., Lilibiana Lanzarini, trad. Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1990: 310-329.

48. Manca, Ciro. *Aspetti dell’espansione economica catalano-aragonesa nel Mediterraneo occidentale. Il commercio del sale*. Milan: Giuffrè Editore, 1965: 33-46 (35).



community. The wheat for the castle's consumption was ground in the mills within the walls, which was then sifted with *garbells* and, lastly, large quantities of bread and biscuits were made with the help of all the *servents* and a few *serventa*.

Other aspects of castle life are more difficult to establish. It is impossible to calculate the number of people whose lives revolved around the castle. We certainly know the size of the military garrison with considerable accuracy and the extent to which this varied over the months and we can also estimate the considerable number of men working in farming in the village and castle and the subsequent trading of its produce.⁴⁹

When sieges or raids made regular supplies of fresh produce from the countryside impossible, the fortress was supplied every three/six months with the basic foodstuffs, arms and tools indispensable to daily life by means of routes designed to evade enemy ambushes. Water courses were frequently made use of as they could be navigated by small boats often right up to the base of the castle allowing food and weaponry supplies to be delivered and evading Arboria military surveillance.⁵⁰

Such journeys were almost always accompanied by a military escort and carried out by means of horse-drawn carts led by *carradors* many of whom were native to Villanova and Stampace, used to ensuring transport links between *Castell de Càller* and its adjuncts and on exceptional occasions with the Cagliari hinterland as well.⁵¹ The performance of such duties and the costs involved were strictly regulated by town laws in the general interests of trade and the community.⁵²

In our case, the *batlle* registers show that the preferred Acquafredda supply routes were rivers via small flat-keeled boats called *xius* which were particularly suitable for this type of transport to inland castles or *panescalm* (*penescalm*), faster boats with many oars mostly used for goods and passenger transport.⁵³ Food transport—much of which came from Catalonia—was organisationally demanding because the journey took nine days and was around 50 miles long.⁵⁴

Such transport usually required a succession of intermediate stages. The goods were generally placed in sacks and barrels inside carts driven by carters. After crossing the Santa Gilla pond the route navigated River Cixerri to *Sent Veneci* before continuing briefly overland to Acquafredda castle escorted by a company of more

49. Tangheroni, Marco. *La città dell'argento...*: 351-352; Cioppi, Alessandra. *Le strategie...*: 147-158.

50. Castellaccio, Angelo. "Utilizzazione militare di alcune acque interne nella Sardegna catalano-aragonese", *La Sardegna nel mondo mediterraneo*. 6. *Per una storia dell'acqua in Sardegna*. *Atti del terzo Convegno internazionale di studi geografico-storici (Sassari-Porto Cervo-Bono, 10-14 aprile 1985)*, Manlio Brigaglia, ed. Sassari: Gallizzi, 1990: 83-116.

51. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, f. 21r; reg. 2485, ff. 31r-31v; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2486, ff. 30v-31r.

52. Pinna, Michele. "Le Ordinazioni dei Consiglieri del Castello di Cagliari del secolo XIV". *Archivio Storico Sardo*, 17 (1929): 2-272; Manconi, Francesco. *Libro delle ordinanze dei Consellers della Città di Cagliari (1346-1603)*. Sassari: Fondazione Banco di Sardegna, 2005.

53. Simbula, Pinuccia Franca. *Corsari e pirati nei mari di Sardegna*. Cagliari: Istituto sui rapporti italo-iberici-CNR, 1993: 112-116.

54. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, f. 30v.



than one hundred soldiers.⁵⁵ At the time, River Cixerri was full of water and easy to navigate above all in the final section. In the farmland around Uta, where River Manno also joined it, an extremely marshy area was created which was easy to cross in small boats suited to goods transport at lower cost and less risk of attack. As the journey to Sigerro fort was rather long, those involved in transporting and escorting the river journey had to be paid and supplied. In this case, the food for the journey consisted of several *quintars* of rusks kept in sacks and plenty of wine, vinegar and oil transported in barrels.⁵⁶ Sometimes costs increased if it was felt necessary to send a number of spies ahead to check the route and report any dangers they found to the members of the party preparing to leave.⁵⁷

The evidence of the account books on the considerable variety of foodstuffs supplied to Acquafredda castle shows the extent to which supplies to the castle were in line with the popular consumption habits of the day.⁵⁸ The type of foods consumed did not, moreover, change over the course of the *batlle general's* three years of extraordinary budget and neither did it differ significantly from that generally guaranteed as basic supplies to troops stationed in castles or fortified towns under siege.

On the contrary, the supplies provided varied according to the availability of seasonal produce. Wheat, rice, barley, candi sugar, legumes and cheese, salt, vinegar, oil and garlic, salted pork and fish, above all eels, honey, dried fruit and nuts and wine—all this made up basic provisions which were never to be absent.⁵⁹ Wine was always *Sent Onoxet* (*Anuxet*), a good quality Calabrian wine from San Lucido supplied in both *blanch* and *vermell*, much appreciated and long-lasting.⁶⁰

55. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, f. 31v. *Sent Veneci*, also called *Santu Venuci* or *Santu Inesu* (San Genesio) was a village in the farmland around Uta, now no longer extant. See Asole Terrosu, Angela. “L’insediamento umano medioevale e i centri abbandonati fra il secolo XIV e il secolo XVII”, *Atlante della Sardegna*, Roberto Pracchi, Angela Terrosu, eds. Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 1974: 23 (a supplement of fascicle II). On the subject of the ancient settlement pattern in Sigerro and studies of the positions of abandoned villages, see *La curadoria del Sigerro. Vicende attorno al castello di Acquafredda*, ed. Giovanni Serreli, Simonetta Sitzia, Stefano Castello, Biblioteca Comunale di Siliqua. 10th April 2014 <<http://web.tiscalinet.it/biblsiliqua/curadoria.htm>>.

56. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, f. 30v.

57. Cioppi, Alessandra. “I registri...”: 43-60.

58. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. “La alimentación en la España medieval, estado de las investigaciones”. *Hispania*, 45 (1985): 211-220; García, Juan Vicente. “La alimentación en el Medievalismo Valenciano. Un tema marginado”. *Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia medieval*, 8 (1990-1991): 301-322; i contributi del volume miscelaneo *Alimentació i societat a la Catalunya medieval*. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas-Institució Milà i Fontanals, 1988); Montanari, Massimo. *L'alimentazione contadina nell'alto Medioevo*. Naples: Liguori Editore, 1979; Montanari, Massimo. *Alimentazione e cultura nel medioevo*. Milano: Laterza, 1988; Manca, Ciro. *Il libro di conti di Miquel Ça-Rovira*. Padua: CEDAM, 1969: 123-130.

59. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, ff. 21v-22r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, ff. 29v-31; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2486, ff. 29r-30r; ACA. Papeles para incorporar, no. 24, ff. 1v-3r; ACA. Cancillería, reg. 1027, ff. 65v-67.

60. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2484, f. 21v; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, f. 30r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2486, f. 29; ACA. Real Patrimonio.



The volume of spare food, on the other hand, varied from year to year in accordance with supply difficulties and thus at certain times of year it could be subsistence only, a reflection of economic crisis resulting from war, epidemic and depopulation. The expenses incurred by the *batlle* in paying for the produce sent to Acquafrèdda fitted in perfectly with the market fluctuations and financial considerations of those years.⁶¹

Supplying of the Sigerro fortress also involved a significant quantity of small tools and various commonly used everyday materials which were not available at the fort itself. Sacks, skins, leather, thread and wax were used for relatively uncomplicated repairs while pickaxes, sickles, hatchets, double-bladed axes, bill hooks, wrenches and nails in large quantities were useful for every type of work.⁶²

Lastly, various types of water containers, wooden bowls for drinking and plates to eat on were also listed⁶³ as were an additional grindstone for milling wheat,⁶⁴ sieves to sift the flour,⁶⁵ a pestle for further grinding the flour and a *pastera* to use for mixing the dough.⁶⁶ Interesting, in the context of these supplies, is the presence of a tablecloth for the dining room and a *caldera*. The latter was the classic copper, semi spherical recipient used to boil water or to cook meat in large quantities.⁶⁷

Maestro Racional, reg. 2092, ff. 93r-96v; ff. 124r-127r; ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2093, f. 45r.

61. Almost all agricultural and animal husbandry products were affected by the production and distribution crisis caused by continual warfare. See Manca, Ciro. "Notes sobre l'administració de la Sardenya catalana en el segle XIV: l'arrendament de les rendes e drets reynals". *Estudis d'Història Medieval*, 5 (1973): 73-74. On the Cagliari marketplaces, consequently, the prices of other food products such as barley, broad beans, cheese, salted meat and olive oil rose at the same rates as wheat. Red wine and vinegar prices, of which supplies were satisfactorily ongoing with limited variations thanks to imports from Calabria—the well-known red and white wines from San Lucido—and Sicily, were otherwise regulated. Sicilia. Manca, Ciro. *Il libro di conti...*: table 32, 121 and Pinna, Michele. *Le Ordinazioni dei Consiglieri...*: I, chap. 31-32, 24-25; 66, pp. 38-39; II, chap. 27, pp. 108-110; chap. 28, pp. 110-112.

62. The work tools cited in the register comprise both individual tools and those commonly used on building sites and the related costs—both relative and absolute—were certainly modest. On this subject, see Manca, Ciro. *Il libro di conti...*: 76.

63. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, f. 30r e v. *Gavetes* were water containers while *vernigats* were bowls. See "gaveta", Alcover, Antoni Maria; Moll, Francesc de Borja. *Diccionari català-valencià-balear*, Palma de Mallorca: Editorial Moll, 1985: VI, 241 (10 vols.) and "vernigat", Alcover, Antoni Maria; Moll, Francesc de Borja. *Diccionari català, valencià, balear...*: X, 747.

64. This was the *sardesco* type grindstone discussed earlier used to grind wheat supplies inside the castle. See note 45.

65. The sieve used was called a *garbell*. It was essentially a container with a perforated leather base used to separate the wheat from the chaff by beating the wheat with a stick. See "garbell", Alcover, Antoni Maria; Moll, Francesc de Borja. *Diccionari català-valencià-balear...*: VI, 183.

66. ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2485, ff. 30-30v. A *pastera* was a sort of small wooden chest on which bread was worked (see "pastera", Alcover, Antoni Maria; Moll, Francesc de Borja, *Diccionari català-valencià-balear...*: VIII, 312-313).

67. In our case, the *caldera* weighed 7 pounds (2.8 kg.). See ACA. Real Patrimonio. Maestro Racional, reg. 2486, f. 30 and "caldera", Alcover, Antoni Maria; Moll, Francesc de Borja, *Diccionari català-valencià-balear...*: II, 849-850.



Lastly, abundant supplies of weaponry to the castle were made up of daggers, crossbows and crates full of *passadors*.⁶⁸

4. Conclusions

The evidence contained in the *batlle general* registers confirms the challenging nature of the task of supplying and defending surviving Catalan-Aragonese strongholds at the turn of the 14th century but also shows just how indispensable and strategically important this was to the very survival of the *Regnum Sardiniae*.

The latter was chosen as a field of study in the light of the Sardinian *batlle general* administration documents but also of the large quantity of sources allowing for an adequate assessment of the state of static war as Catalan-Aragonese logistical-military status quo for the whole century of war of conquest and preservation of the island kingdom (1323-1420). It also confirms that this was a defensive instrument whose value was comparable to the battlefields themselves or to corsair warfare.

An analytical study of the data in the *batlle general* account books also allowed for a reconstruction of static war organisation and the techniques used in the Sardinian kingdom. The administrative management of the capital invested in it and its investors were also analysed and, lastly, the impact of this strategy on the island's military vicissitudes was also assessed.

Certainly some of Sardinia's fortresses played a front rank role historically and once they were no longer needed these passed from centrestage to complete neglect.

This was the fate of Acquafredda castle too. In peacetime, its vassals preferred the comfort of the towns to the harsh and solitary life of the fortress. High maintenance costs were a serious matter and these, together with the castles' isolated and inaccessible positions, led to their inexorable abandonment leaving them to fall into rack and ruin.

68. *Passadors* were crossbow arrows which Dimitre Virater had bought in Barcelona for 9 *lire* per thousand arrows costing a total of 23 *lire* and 18 *soldi di alfonsini minuti*. 15 crates of *passadors* arrived in Sardinia on Francesch Solanis's ship, which docked at *Castell de Càller* with all the crown's supplies for its *Regnum Sardiniae*. On medieval weaponry, see Contamine, Philippe. *La guerra nel Medioevo*, Tuckery Capra, trad. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1986: 247-252; and for Spain: Riquer, Martín de. *L'arnès del cavaller. Armes y armadures catalanes medievals*. Barcelona: Edicions Ariel, 1968; Cirlot, Victoria. *El armamento catalán de los siglos XI al XIV*. Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona (PhD Dissertation), 1980: 266-401 (directed by Martí de Riquer) and precious arms reproductions.

