

their purchase for the library of the University of Salamanca. Philologically, Aldus's five-volume set of the works of Aristotle (1495–98) was enormously influential, some of its texts being used as one of the models for future editions.

In the next essay, Escobar explores the attempts of sixteenth-century Spanish humanists to publish an edition and translation of Aristotle's *opera omnia*, a project launched by Cisneros, taken over by Hurtado de Mendoza during the Council of Trent, but never materialized. Additionally, the influence of Aldus had an impact on the education of Phillip II. Sánchez Molero argues that the well-attested presence of Aldine editions in the library of the Spanish king reinforces the thesis that he received a truly humanistic education before the religious intolerance of the second half of the sixteenth century. Other topics in this collection include the impact of Aldine bindings, the Aldine editions of Greek works in Hurtado de Mendoza's library, the gradual use of the Aldine semicolon by Spanish printers, and the Aldine books in the library of the Cathedral of Córdoba.

To conclude: these essays are an important contribution to book history in sixteenth-century Spain, and are a must read for anyone interested in intellectual history, reception studies, and material culture.

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*Il Consolato del mare di Barcellona: Tribunale e corporazione di mercanti (1394–1462)*. Elena Maccioni.

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Every scholar interested in medieval legal history and the Spanish mercantile community in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries should read *Il Consolato del mare di Barcellona*. Elena Maccioni proposes a novel approach to the study of the Sea Consulate of Barcelona, one of the three maritime courts created by the Crown of Aragon (in addition to the Sea Consulates of Majorca and Valencia) to promote and regulate trade in the Mediterranean. Formally established in 1347 by Peter IV the Ceremonious, the Sea Consulate of Barcelona became one of the most important institutions of the Catalan capital. Between the end of the fourteenth century and throughout the fifteenth century, it established itself as the major center for the administration of maritime-mercantile justice, promulgating a series of maritime customs and laws collected in the *Llibre del Consolat* (The book of the sea consulate; first printed in Barcelona in 1502), which served as the basis for international maritime law.

Promoting the economic activity of Spanish trade, the Sea Consulate of Barcelona legitimized the growing power of Catalan sea merchants, ultimately contributing to their rise as a ruling class. Radically diverging from this current historiographic trend, Maccioni presents a stimulating reinterpretation of the history of Barcelona's Sea Consulate by

examining the role played by Catalan merchants in the foundation and development of this maritime-mercantile court. Through a dense, source-rich analysis of the commercial and social links between the institution of Barcelona's Sea Consulate and Catalan sea merchants, Maccioni demonstrates how the major forces behind the longevity of the consulate was the Catalan sea merchants' fear of privateering and pirate attacks, and the international economic interests the merchants wanted to promote and protect.

The introductory chapters (1–3) explore the years before the foundation of the Sea Consulate and its legal evolution during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Maccioni discusses the privileges granted by James I of Aragon to the maritime community of seafarers, shipowners, and merchants living in the Ribera, the neighborhood near the shore of Barcelona. In particular, the 1258 privilege allowed the Ribera's *proboms* (prominent men) to form a council and elect a representative, which laid the foundation for the establishment of Barcelona's Sea Consulate. By 1348, two representatives, known as Sea Consuls, could be elected, and during the second half of the fourteenth century, the court continued growing in power thanks to further privileges, the most important of which was the creation in 1394 of a Council of Merchants, who supported the activity of the consuls and the appointment of two Defenders to defend mercantile affairs in court cases. The fifteenth century opened with a significant shift in the administration of the court from the *proboms* to the merchants, with the creation of the *dret del pariatge*—a tax levied by the consulate from 1401 until 1410 on all goods passing through the Spanish ports, but managed by the merchants to arm a fleet for the protection of trade with Sardinia, whose waters were infested with pirates.

The second portion of this book (chapters 4–6) focuses on the legal procedures enforced by the consuls and the judicial cases administered by the maritime-mercantile court through the analysis of literary evidence provided by the *Llibre del Consolat*. Maccioni's detailed study depicts a scenario in which Barcelona's Sea Consulate had expanded its jurisdictional sphere of influence and established itself as a place for the defense of the merchants' economic and political interests, gradually gaining the ability to negotiate with local and international institutions. The last portion, which is the most interesting, examines those primary sources dealing with the consulate's activity related to the *pariatge*, which demonstrates how the economic policy and political strategies enacted in the collection and administration of the *pariatge* ultimately promoted and increased the wealth and power of the mercantile class, which ranked, during the first half of the fifteenth century, at the top of the social elite.

Maccioni's book will be of profound interest to economic, social, and legal historians, and provides a stimulating addition to current debates in medieval Mediterranean history, introducing a new reading of the history of Barcelona's Sea Consulate that will foster more intensive research.

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