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**Council, City and Citizens.
Citizenship between legal and daily
experiences in 15th century Barcelona**

Carolina Obradors Suazo

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Antonella Emina (direttore responsabile)
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Council, City and Citizens. Citizenship between legal and daily experiences in 15th century Barcelona

Carolina Obradors Suazo

Abstract

This article is an attempt to analyse citizenship in Late Medieval Barcelona in all its richness and complexity through the rather exceptional sources that have been conserved on this topic: the *Informacions de la Ciutadania*. The first section will discuss the progressive articulation of a citizenship law in medieval Barcelona, in order to understand the context in which these sources appeared. Subsequently, a detailed analysis of the *Informacions* will make it possible to contrast this more legal approach to citizenship with its daily experience and perception.

Keywords

Citizenship, Citizens, Barcelona, Council of the Hundred, Public fame, Urban community, Identity.

Resumen

Este artículo pretende analizar la ciudadanía de la Barcelona bajomedieval en toda su riqueza y complejidad, tal y cómo la presentan las fuentes excepcionales que se han conservado a este respecto: las *Informacions de la Ciutadania*. En un primer lugar, se presentará la progresiva articulación de una ley de la ciudadanía en la Barcelona de los siglos XIII y XIV. Con ello, se pretende dar a entender el contexto en el que dichas fuentes aparecieron, ya a finales del siglo XIV. En segundo lugar, el análisis se concentrará en las *Informacions*, permitiendo contrastar esta dimensión legal de la ciudadanía con su percepción y experiencia más cotidiana.

Palabras Clave

Ciudadanía, ciudadanos, Barcelona, Consejo de Ciento, Fama pública, comunidad urbana, identidad.

*Introduction**

In 1419, the merchant Huguet Blanchart returned the citizenship charter, which he had been granted two years earlier, to the municipal authorities of Barcelona¹. No potential reason is given for this action in the sources at our disposal, besides his return to his native town of Arlès. A few years before, Gabriel Salvador, a poor young sailor, who was fatherless and head of his family, had asked for a citizenship charter². In so doing, he relied on the very positive testimonies of neighbors and family friends, all of whom stated that Gabriel deserved the charter because he was born in the city and had acted as the best of sons; therefore, he had shown repeatedly that he was a good citizen of Barcelona. This surprising conscience of citizenship among Barcelonians is also found within other social groups. The merchant Llorenç Lluquès considered that his companion Joan Belmenya, a merchant from Montpellier, was a much better citizen of Barcelona than many others, as he fervently expressed, «it would please God that there were many others like him that could deserve to be citizens as much as he does»³. Many years later, Miquela, wife of the glassmaker Miquel Reia, provided a very different example. Repeatedly accused of disturbing the coexistence of the neighborhood where she lived, the authorities of Barcelona confirmed the accusations by organizing an investigation on her habits and misbehavior. After hearing the long list of insults she directed to her

* This paper is a result of the doctoral research I am conducting at the Department of History and Civilization, European University Institute. The research is funded by the program 'Salvador de Madariaga', Spanish Ministry of Education. Abbreviations to be used throughout the paper: AHCB (Historical Archives of the City of Barcelona), CODOIN (Collection of Unpublished Documents of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon), AHPB (Historical Archives of Notarial Deeds of Barcelona).

¹ AHCB,1C-V,3 (Informacions de la Ciutadania) *Registre*, f. 71r. (1417, February, 9th). The actual citizenship record of Blanchart includes a marginal note stating that he returned the charter in August the 13th 1419.

² AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1407, June, 1st).

³ AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1414, February, 7th). Original quote in Catalan: « e plagués a Deu que nich hagués molts de semblants que meresquessen tam bé de ésser ciutadans »

neighbors, as well as the disturbances she caused, they decided to expel her from the neighborhood⁴.

In their specificities, the cases of Huguet Blanchart, Gabriel Salvador, Joan Belmenya and Miquela Reia suggest how differently citizenship could be approached, felt and experienced in 15th-century Barcelona. From a more institutional perspective, these examples can also illustrate how determining the municipal authorities of Barcelona were in the various processes of rejection, admission and exclusion. The aim of this paper is to retrace this sort of dual dimension of Barcelonian citizenship, which on the one hand had an obvious legal and institutional dimension but on the other revealed itself as a cultural phenomenon⁵. To put it briefly, this is an attempt to understand how and why the citizen of Barcelona emerged at the end of the 14th century as a legal statute and a social position, constantly negotiated between the powerful and rather autonomous municipality of Barcelona (the Council of the Hundred) and Barcelonians themselves.

To do this, I will first present the institutional evolution of Barcelonian citizenship from the 13th century onwards, linking it very briefly to the complex political, social and economic vicissitudes that the city underwent. From this context, it will be possible to shed light on how citizenship was legally and institutionally featured at the end

⁴ AHCB, 1C-V,5 (1457, April, 8th). The surprising case of Miquela Reia's expulsion is also referred in C. Carrère, *Barcelona 1380-1462*. (vol.1) p. 413.

⁵ As it has been argued from a theoretical perspective by Pietro Costa in his *Civitas Storia della Cittadinanza in Europa*, where the author defined citizenship as based on three fundamental pillars: rights, the individual and belonging. The issue was approached from a similar perspective in L. De Angelis, "Immigrazione e concessioni di cittadinanza" pp. 423-437. The author insisted here on the necessity of approaching medieval citizenship as a deeply complex phenomenon conditioned by the diversity of feelings of belonging that coexisted within the walls of any city. As it will be shown in this paper, the role of reputation in the definition of the citizen becomes crucial when trying to approach medieval citizenship from a cultural perspective. Some scholars have already pointed towards this direction. See for the case of Venice: R. Mueller, *Immigrazione e cittadinanza*, pp. 42-46. In regard to the actual city of Barcelona, Elisa Soldani has also reflected on the value of reputation in the integration of those Tuscan merchants that were willing to stay permanently in the city and wanted to become citizens of Barcelona. See in M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, pp 137-139.

of the 14th century. This study will be based on the exceptional sources that are conserved for Late Medieval Barcelona regarding the issue of citizenship: the *Informacions de la Ciutadania*. The detailed analysis of this documentation will allow an indepth analysis of the rights and duties of the citizen in the third part of the paper. Finally, I will finish with some notes on the mechanisms of institutional exclusion and the issue of citizenship rejection.

Barcelona through its right to citizenship (13th-14th centuries).

Although earlier references to the term “citizen of Barcelona” should not be forgotten⁶, I would argue that full institutional recognition of this figure dates from the year 1232, when King James I granted a set of interesting fiscal exemptions to the “citizens and inhabitants of Barcelona”. These exemptions mainly referred to the taxes to be paid in the entrance and exit of any merchandises. They were principally applied throughout all the territories under the dominion of the King of the Crown of Aragon⁷. A few years before the birth of the municipality (1249)⁸, the citizen of Barcelona emerged as a privileged figure,

⁶ In 1148 a group of rich Barcelonians helped financially the Count Ramon Berenguer in his endeavor of conquering the city of Tortosa. Literature on the issue has automatically identified this group of wealthy Barcelonians as citizens of Barcelona. T. Montagut, “La societat de Barcelona i el seu dret”, pp 183-193 and J. Miret, “Los ciudadanos de Barcelona en 1148”. Furthermore, some scholars referred to an even earlier list of citizens of Barcelona (1145) that might have been done in order to organize the payment of specific direct taxes. P. Ortí, *Renda i fiscalitat*, p. 587. More importantly, the main feudal legal code of Catalonia, the *Usatges de Barcelona* also mentioned the figure of the citizen (cf. Usatge number 10: *Cives autem*), understanding it mainly as those free men who lived within the walls of a city or in its immediate surroundings.

⁷ The text of the privilege is reproduced in A. Capmany, *Memorias históricas*, (vol.II) pp 14-15.

⁸ Privileges granted by King James I to the city of Barcelona in 1249 gave birth to the municipal institution of this city, the so-called Council of the Hundred. There is an important literature on this issue in which the work of Josep Maria Font Rius stands out. I will mention here the more recent contribution of S.P. Bensch, *Barcelona i els seus dirigents*, p. 288.

defined and protected by the monarchy. This status was recognized throughout the Catalan-Aragonese confederation, a feudal State that was about to initiate a stunning expansion throughout the Mediterranean.

These fiscal exemptions to the citizens and inhabitants of Barcelona became a defining feature of the city and were frequently renewed by the Monarchy throughout the 14th and 15th centuries. The Crown's interest in updating the privileges granted to Barcelonians reflected the city's growing influence throughout the 14th century. From an institution basically devoted to satisfying the fiscal necessities of the Crown, the Council of the Hundred evolved into one of the most powerful feudal institutions of the Principality of Catalonia⁹.

The literature has traditionally approached this meteoric rise by focusing on the fiscal mechanisms that conditioned it. The municipality of Barcelona was first born as an extension of royal power in the city, in charge of controlling its social tensions but also as an organ through which to exercise a more efficient fiscal pressure on Barcelonians¹⁰. In its infancy, the Council relied on communal funds to satisfy the growing financial demands of the monarch. All in all, as Stephen Bensch puts it, Barcelona and its Council became one of the most precious treasures of the Crown¹¹.

In return for the constant loans provided to the Monarchy, the city and its authorities gained increasing autonomy over the management of their resources. As a result, a tax system solely controlled by the Council and, above all, by the counselors, emerged. The evolution of these new fiscal policies determined the appearance of a complete new model of "State taxation", based on a powerful municipal-

⁹ P. Ortí, "El Consell de Cent", p. 46.

¹⁰ Such tensions were at that early time very much focused on the control of the commercial and maritime potential of the city. See in S. Bensch, "Poder, dinero y control del comercio", pp 49-58. On the first fiscal functions of the Council of the Hundred, see in Idem, *Barcelona i els seus dirigents*, p. 291.

¹¹ *Ibidem*. It should be noted that, although being stronger in the case of Barcelona, these mechanisms generally conditioned the birth and evolution of municipalities in the Principality of Catalonia. See, for instance, in P. Verdés, "La ciudad en el espejo", pp 157-193.

ity that subsidized the monarchy rather than blindly subject to its economic demands. By the last third of the 14th century, the balance of power between the city and the Crown changed, in that the emergence of a self-financing system in Barcelona strengthened the political influence of the municipality and laid the path to a consolidated municipal autonomy¹².

This process of political consolidation corresponded with the emergence of a few powerful families that came to monopolize the government of the city, ruling it *collegially*, as Pere Ortí suggested by using the image of a “collegial lordship”¹³. The strong and increasingly political and economic predominance of these few families conditioned Barcelonian society, encouraging social revolts and riots already in the late 13th century¹⁴. Social tensions would only increase at the end of the century, with the mass arrival of migrants that abandoned their native localities in the countryside after the ravages caused by the Black Death. Nonetheless, the dynamism of Barcelona remained unquestionable until the second third of the 15th century, due to its position as an important center in the Mediterranean trade¹⁵.

¹² P. Ortí, “El Consell de Cent”, p. 46. In this regard, Ortí interestingly claims the Council needs to be approached from this historical perspective, not presupposing it enjoyed the power and influence it reached at the end of the 14th century in the previous century.

¹³ *Ibi*, mainly pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ Famine, war but also the political monopoly that a few families were only beginning to exert are the factors that need to be taken into consideration when approaching the revolt that pushed Berenguer Oller, a humble craftman of Barcelona, to lead an important revolt against the municipal and royal authorities of the city (1285). Much later, a revolt of merchants (1433) also tried to contest the political and economic monopoly exerted by the oligarchy. For these events see C. Batlle, *La crisis social y económica de Barcelona*, pp 36-44, 138-139. In this view, the brutal program against Jews that took place in 1391 cannot be forgotten.

¹⁵ As it was shown by Mario del Treppo in his classical book *I mercanti catalani e l'espansione della Corona d'Aragona nel secolo XV*. Treppo made evident the dynamism that Barcelona maintained until the second half of the 15th century by retracing the major features of maritime traffic in Barcelona from 1418 to 1446. In so doing, he was able to nuance the categorical interpretations of other classical scholars (i.e. Vicens Vives, Carrère, Vilar) who defended that the crisis that burst in the second half of the 15th century was already clearly affecting the Catalan economic

My intention in retracing so briefly the basic social, political and economic features of Late Medieval Barcelona was to insist on how the predominance of this city within the Principality of Catalonia was progressively built throughout the 14th century, the 1370's having been considered as the turning point in which the autonomy of the Council of the Hundred was fully established¹⁶. This political evolution is crucial in order to understand the progressive definition of Barcelonian citizenship from an institutional perspective. Indeed, while emerging in the 13th century as a prerogative of the Crown, the definition and granting of citizenship progressively fell into the control of the municipality, which transformed its nature when reaching the height of its influence. I will use a specific set of sources (i.e royal privileges and municipal acts) to retrace the main features of this evolution in the following paragraphs.

In concert with this political evolution, it was the monarchy that first engaged in elaborating a citizenship law for medieval Barcelona. Confirming in perpetuity the rights and customs of Barcelona, the privilege *Recognoverunt Proceres*, granted in 1284 by King Peter the Great, defined the citizen of Barcelona as any individual who had stayed in the city for one year and one day¹⁷. As some scholars have argued, this was more a rule to regulate feudal possession over serfs than a clear attempt to give legal solidity to the citizen of Barcelona¹⁸. Indeed, the same chapter of the privilege (53) specified that no serf would be subjected again to his former lord if he had lived within the city for a year and day – citizens of Barcelona being, first and foremost, free men.

structures at the end of the 14th century. On this debate, see G. Feliu, "La crisis catalana de la Baja Edad Media", pp. 435-466 and M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, p. 19.

¹⁶ P.Ortí, "El Consell de Cent", mainly pp. 46-48.

¹⁷ The published version of the privilege in CODOIN vol. 43 (*Privilegios reales concedidos a la ciudad de Barcelona*), pp. 8-17.

¹⁸ E. Roca, "Unde Cathalanus quod stans" p. 19. The same author reminds that the regulation of one year and one day is drawn from the Germanic tradition, rather than from the Roman one, which is known for granting the citizen statute after a ten-year residence.

Throughout the 14th century, the monarchy continued to regulate citizenship, as the fiscal exemptions granted to citizens raised fears of fraud. In need of a clearer definition of the citizen of Barcelona, Kings James II (1312) and Alphonso IV the Benign (1334) granted new privileges which specified that a citizen of Barcelona was not only to be defined by the duration of his stay but mainly by his rootedness in the city. This was expressed principally through the creation of a household and the maintenance of a family within the walls of Barcelona¹⁹.

Breaking with his predecessors, King Peter the Ceremonious in the last third of the 14th century developed a rather confusing approach towards Barcelonian citizenship. In order to redefine who should benefit from fiscal exemptions, he presented the citizens of Barcelona as:

those that have been living in the aforementioned city for one year and one day, or those that, by will and *de facto*, have established their habitation in the before mentioned city and also those that, according to the ancient customs, have been and will be accepted amid the citizens of this same city by our officials or counselors or have been and will be aggregated to the citizens of this same city²⁰.

Reinterpreting the *Recognoverunt Proceres*²¹, and in contrast with his predecessors, King Peter the Cerimonious did not seem interested in clarifying which were the defining features of the citizen of Barce-

¹⁹ Both privileges are mentioned and copied in the letter Peter the Ceremonious sent to his representatives in Barcelona in 1385. As it will be noted later, the purpose of this letter was to derogate his own previous regulations and recognize again the validity of these other privileges granted by his predecessors. See in AHCB, 1B XV-1 *Diversorum*, vol 1, f. 230r and following.

²⁰ « habentes pro civibus dicte civitatis quoscunque qui per annum et diem in civitate steterunt antedicta vel qui animo et re suum domicilium constituerint in eadem seu qui secundum usum antiquatum recepti fuerunt aut fuerint per officiales nostros vel consiliarios in cives ipsius civitatis aut numero civium eiusdem civitatis eiusdem congregati » AHCB, *Llibre Verd* vol II f. 414. Letter sent by the King to his royal representatives in the city of Barcelona. There is a later copy of the letter in AHCB, 1B XV-1 *Diversorum* f. 230r and following.

²¹ E. Roca, "Unde Cathalanus quod stans", p. 19.

lona. On the contrary, he approached this figure through a variety of possibilities, mixing the feudal norm promoted by the *Recognoverunt* with the ‘ancient customs’ and the processes of acceptance directed by the Council of the Hundred. Interestingly, he also mentioned the very ambiguous image of the ‘aggregated’ citizens – which could be interpreted as referring to citizens who were socially integrated in the community, but also as those that were named citizens by the King himself, mainly in return for rendered services²².

Nevertheless, such an ambiguous definition of the citizen dramatically increased the practices of fiscal fraud. This situation prompted tax collectors to ask the monarch for an annulment of these regulations. As a result, Peter the Ceremonious sent a new letter to his royal representatives in Barcelona in 1385. In it, he restored the aspects that were previously imposed by his predecessor as defining features of the citizen: family and stable residence within the walls of the city²³.

I would argue that the maneuvers of the King can most probably be explained through fiscal interests and strategies – the intention of satisfying and compensating his financiers being one of them²⁴. Nonetheless, one can also note the potential political reasons of this unsuccessful intervention. Indeed, in defining such an ambiguous citizen, the King was surely trying to reimpose his will and control over Barcelonian citizenship, both for its fiscal and social connotations. Although the abovementioned privileges and letters clearly illustrate that the Crown had an important role in the legal definition of the citizen, it had lost the prerogative of granting the actual citi-

²² F. Carreras, *La ciutat de Barcelona*, p. 525. On the image of the ‘aggregated’ citizen in this document see E. Roca, “Unde Cathalanus quod stans”, p. 19. This ‘aggregated’ citizen remains rather undefined in the document; it somehow recalls the existence of citizens de *gratia* in Venice, who would acquire the charter they required even if not fulfilling the necessary requirements. See in R. Mueller, *Immigrazione e cittadinanza*, p. 20.

²³ See in AHCB, 1B XV-1 *Diversorum* vol I, f. 230r and following.

²⁴ In the sense that this ambiguous definition of the citizen would help some of the financiers of the Crown to easily access the citizenship charter – many of these financiers being foreign merchants.

zenship charters²⁵. Since the beginning of the 14th century, the granting of citizenship charters had been controlled by the Council of the Hundred, as it was shown by the municipal acts (*Llibre del Consell*) of the city where citizenship charters were copied from 1302 onwards²⁶.

These charters can be easily found throughout the municipal acts of the city for the first half of the 14th century, mostly in the 1320's. These were documents used by the Council of the Hundred to identify an individual as a citizen and inhabitant of Barcelona. As such, he was entitled to fiscal exemptions as were Barcelonians thanks to the 1232 privilege, which was generally reproduced in every individual charter²⁷. Interestingly, the presence of these charters in the municipal acts became rarer from the second half of the 14th century onwards²⁸. At that time, another type of document emerged in the acts: the *privileges of habitatio*²⁹. As I will show, this second type of source illustrates the high degree of demographical control held by the municipality.

Much shorter, these documents were brief and concise and stated that the authorities of Barcelona had legally accepted a new inhabi-

²⁵ The granting of citizenship charters had previously been a prerogative of the Crown as it is shown by the oldest conserved citizenship charter granted by Peter the Great to Dino Silvestre, a merchant from Lucca, in 1283. See F. Carreras, *La ciutat de Barcelona*, p. 525. Also E. Duran, *Apuntes*, p. 55.

²⁶ On the citizenship charters registered in the municipal acts see C. Cuadrada, "Barcelona (ss. XIV-XV)", mainly pp. 327-328. The author does not consider directly these documents as citizenship charters but rather as "instrumentum franquitatis", safe-conducts that were strictly protecting the mobility and trading movements of its owners. However, I would argue that these "instrumentum franquitatis" can be considered as citizenship charters, in that they had an almost identical structure to those that have been conserved for the 15th century. First and foremost, these documents generally were open with the recognition of those that had received them as citizens and inhabitants of Barcelona. For instance, the charter of Bartomeu Tomàs, granted in 1302 includes the following clause: «*Noveritis quod Bartholomeus Thomas lator presentium est civis et habitator Barchinone*». See AHCB, 1 B I-1 (*Llibre del Consell*) ff 90v-91v.

²⁷ The charters could be integrally copied or just mentioned (with the name of the beneficiary) after a previous granted charter had been registered.

²⁸ C. Cuadrada, "Barcelona (ss. XIV-XV)", esp. Pp 327-328.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, the author mentions that *privileges of habitatio* were also registered in the previous period but they were more widely recorded for the period 1349-1361.

tant to reside within the walls of the city (*fuit receptus in habitatio*). The *privileges of habitatio* found in the municipal acts are usually abridged, making it very difficult to draw from them enough information about the characters involved. Similarly, little can be said on the defining features of the legal figure of the inhabitant – and, therefore, on its differences in regard to the citizen³⁰.

Throughout the 14th century, citizenship charters and *privileges of habitatio* emerge as the mechanisms through which the Council of the Hundred controlled and defined the limits of the Barcelonian society. Interestingly, the different nature of these documents illustrates the diverse economic and social dynamics that characterized the city of Barcelona at that time. On the one hand, citizenship charters became useful tools for those free peasants and artisans that tried to introduce their products in the city's markets. First and foremost, the charters and the exemptions they entailed were much desirable for Catalan, Occitan, Genoese, Pisans and Florentine merchants who arrived to Barcelona to live, work and negotiate in a city that was increasing its commercial prestige³¹. On the other hand, famines, plagues and bad harvests had acted as catalysts for immigration to urban centers in 14th-century Barcelona, as in many other European centers. Within the context of Late Medieval Catalonia, these nega-

³⁰ An example: «Die Sabbati, nonadecima anno a Nativitate Domini M CCC sexagésimo, fuit receptus in habitatio civitatis Barchinone Ffranciscus de Montpedrós. Et promisit et juravit sub forma solita Testes Franciscus Morator, Bernardus Colom, Gerardus Pratis et Franciscus Ferrari, scriptores Barchinone» See in AHCB, 1 B1, 21 (*Llibre del Consell*) f. 41r.

³¹ This is a reductive mention of the relevant arrival and influence of foreign merchants in the economic dynamism of Barcelona. For instance, the impact of these groups changed throughout time, the role of Florentines as fiscal operators becoming most important during the second half of the 14th century. First and foremost, the relation of the autochthones with Florentines was much tenser than the one held with Pisans or other collectives. On these issues, see M.T. Ferrer "Els Italians" pp. 393-465. A more recent approach to the presence and integration of Tuscan merchants in Barcelonian society is presented in M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*. Here, the author deals with the approach developed by these merchants towards citizenship, see pp. 131-139. Eadem, "Mercanti «facitori di facciende grosse»", pp. 116-118 (for the growing presence of Florentines in Barcelona), 140-143 (on expulsions).

tive dynamics turned Barcelona into a centripetal center of attraction, this phenomenon being particularly evident in the second half of the century. As some scholars noted, these migration flows were sometimes at the origin of social tensions, since difficulties drove some foreigners toward criminal bands of the city³². Taking these aspects into consideration, the *privileges of habitagio*, mainly produced in the period 1349-1374 (103)³³, can very well be approached as the mechanism the authorities developed in order to control the arrival of migrants³⁴.

It is difficult to interpret the diminishment of citizenship charters in the municipal acts of the second half of the century. For sure, it cannot be imagined that there was a drop in demand. On the contrary, specific registers with which to control the granting of the charter were started, at least from 1375 onwards³⁵. A clear influence of the privileges of *habitagio* over these new citizenship registers should be noted here. Indeed, I am referring here to volumes that consisted of short and concise records³⁶, the first of which indicated that the new owners of the charter had also been “receptus in habitatio”. As in the *privileges of habitagio* previously included in the municipality acts, the new citizen was here swearing fidelity to his new city. More crucially, this is a new documental tradition which included a clearer mention to the terms and conditions of the citizenship oath. While the few citizenship records that have been conserved for the late 14th century illustrate that new citizens had to swear they would contribute to the taxes of the city, their promise

³² C. Batlle, *La crisis social y económica de Barcelona*, p. 82.

³³ C. Cuadrada, “Barcelona (ss. XIV-XV)”, p. 327.

³⁴ This was a rather common concern of the then urban authorities that conditioned their willingness to grant the citizenship privilege in some Italian cities, for instance. See some bibliographical references on this topic in G. Navarro, “Política municipal y avecindamientos”, p. 101.

³⁵ The first conserved register, a rather short one, is kept in AHCB, 1CV-3 (*Informacions de la Ciutadania*).

³⁶ I use the term “record” to refer to each of the documents included in these citizenship registers. These documents were concise paragraphs of around 10 lines in which the granting of the citizenship charter to a specific individual was registered, as well as his fidelity oath to remain in the city.

was focused on their permanent residence in the city from the early 15th century onwards.

My point here is to propose that two documents of very different nature and two mechanisms of diverse purposes turned into one single bureaucratic process at the end of the 14th century. In the peak of their power, and in their attempt to build a solid urban community, the municipal authorities of Barcelona fused together citizens and inhabitants: a privilege and mechanism of demographical control. The differences between these two legal statutes had never been clear³⁷, but it is important to note that this maneuver altered the meaning and nature of Barcelonian citizenship. While the citizen of the first half of the century emerges as a fiscal privileged figure, with rather undefined duties, the sources seem to point that it was only under the absolute control of the municipality that the citizen turned into a figure definitely committed to the city, living stably in it, paying taxes and swearing fidelity to it.

From that moment onwards, the nature of citizenship interestingly changed, and its cultural features became valued and recognized. To better grasp these aspects, I will now give a detailed description of these 'new' citizenship registers and the citizenship reports that were produced together. Thus, the description and analysis of the *Informacions de la Ciutadania* comes under the microscope in the next section.

³⁷ Since the *Recognoverunt Proceres*, the constant use of "citizen" and "inhabitant" as coupling terms makes it very difficult to unravel whether there was an actual conceptual difference between them or not. While used differently in notarial deeds, these terms were used together (citizens and inhabitants) in more official documents, perhaps as an indicator of the importance stable residence had in the definition and recognition of the citizen. The inhabitant has been approached, however, as a clear different statute in other urban realities, which had its own rights and duties. See in D. Bizzarri, "Ricerche", pp. 48-51. It had also been approached as a sort of intermediary statute in the path to citizenship acquisition in G. Casarino, "Tra estraneità e cittadinanza", p. 100.

Towards a new documental tradition: description and analysis of the Informacions de la Ciutadania(1375- 1457)

The *Informacions de la Ciutadania* emerge as the last step in the legal and institutional articulation of citizenship in Late Medieval Barcelona. Held in the Historical Archives of the City of Barcelona (AHCB), this set of sources consists of two citizenship registers in which the fidelity oaths of new citizens were recorded. The registers cover the period 1375-1381 (ff. 36) and 1413-1425(ff. 192). In addition, the boxes in which these registers are gathered contain around 400 public interrogations conducted by the authorities to neighbours, friends and acquaintances of those candidates to receive the citizenship charter of Barcelona. Exemplars of these interrogations (*informes*) are conserved for the period 1395-1457. Although the richness of this material cannot be questioned, it should still be noted that the imbalance between registers and interrogations suggests an important documentary loss that is, however, difficult to value.

More importantly, a very first approach to these sources underlines the importance the municipal authorities gave to public opinion in their definition and acceptance of new citizens. In so doing, the actors of the dialogue on which the definition of the citizen was based, changed, Barcelonians themselves playing a protagonist role that allows me to focus on the actual practice and experience of citizenship.

I will begin by describing this complex set of sources, focusing on the first citizenship register (1375-1381) which, as previously suggested, plays a sort of transitional role between the methods that the municipality developed in an earlier chronology to deal with citizenship and demographical control throughout the 14th century and the emergence of a more complex systematization of citizenship in late 14th–early 15th-century Barcelona. As a result, this register reveals itself as a fundamental piece, since its richness and complexity helps to approach the fascinating and progressive gestation of a renewed bureaucratic process – which refers, in this case, to the control in the access to the citizenship charter.

The variety of documents included in this short volume of 36 pages already suggests that we are dealing here with the initial steps of a new documentary practice. As mentioned, the volume opens

with very simple documents: plain privileges d'*habitagio*. Little is known about the first new citizens appearing in this register. Generally, their name and origin are the only information provided. It is only in a few cases that we can actually find indications of their professions. The acceptance in the city was presented here as a contract, in which the new inhabitant was supposed to get involved by promising to pay the taxes of the city. In contrast with the privileges of *habitagio* conserved in the municipal acts, the newly accepted member of the community was now supposed to present a guarantor, which suggests that some primary links and relationships between the individual and the city were somehow necessary when acquiring the citizenship charter.

Progressively, the documents included in this register became somehow more complex, developing in detail the diverse formula of the document, so that the obligations of the accepted inhabitant appeared more clearly: to transfer his household to the city with the intention of staying stably within its walls (*animo remanendi*) and, interestingly, to participate in the host of the city. All in all, the citizen clearly emerged as a figure permanently at the service of the city, assuming many of the features that were generally required to citizens in other cities of Europe.

Around 1379³⁸, the records became significantly longer, suddenly including a significant amount of new data about the life and habits of the new citizen. The personal promise of foreigners to maintain their household in the city was included, as well as their address and the number of years they had been continuously living in the city. On some occasions, notes ensuring they were free or redeemed men were also included. More crucially, it was also suggested that the officials in charge had been gathering this information by consulting with other inhabitants of the city on the habits of the candidate (*re-*

³⁸ Certainly, records are systematically longer from that point onwards but some of these more complete examples are also found in even earlier times, such as the one of the merchant Francesc Puig in 1375, in which there is even reference to the search of information on the habits of the candidate. See in AHCB, 1C-V,3. *Registre*, f. 5v.

cepta informatione). The name of these witnesses, however, was not always given.

The structure of the volume changes substantially in its final pages, where the citizenship charters that had been previously granted were listed in the form of simple and concise sentences³⁹. Interestingly, many of the individuals whose charter was referred to in this list had a corresponding record in one of the previous pages, through which they had formally committed themselves to the city, by agreeing to fulfil the duties of the good citizen. This was not the case, however, for all the listed charters, suggesting that some of the candidates did not need to achieve this previous stage in order to access the precious charter and have it registered in this list. As later documentation will prove, this duality already suggests that there might have been two different ways to access citizenship at the end of the 14th century.

Though brief, incomplete and unsystematic, this first citizenship register illustrates that the authorities of Barcelona wanted to make sure that the charter was only granted to those who could prove they had been living in Barcelona with their family and, more importantly, to those that intended to reside in the city until the end of their lives. From royal documentation to municipal bureaucracy, these aspects have repeatedly been emerging as the main and most important duties of the citizen of Barcelona. In order to confirm these obligations were properly fulfilled by the candidates, the authorities themselves did not hesitate in investigating them, appealing, thus, to other citizens and inhabitants for statements on the prospective citizen's public reputation. Although there is little direct evidence for this phenomenon in the first citizenship register, these signs are the first expression of a dialogue between the municipal authorities and Barcelonians in the process of defining the citizen of Barcelona. As a result, the records of this first volume clearly point towards a culture of reputation that strongly influenced the building of civic identities

³⁹ For instance: «Item fuit facta similis carta ciuitadanagii sive franquittatis Guillelmo Pujades. Sub data Barchinone vicesima octava die Marcii, anno a Nativitate Domini Millessimo Trecentesimo septuagesimo septimo». See AHCB, 1C-V,3. *Register*, f. 19r. (1377, March, 28th).

at that time. In the following, I will show how this culture of reputation reached the core of the citizen identity in the early 15th century.

To this purpose, I will now move from this first volume to the analysis of the rest of sources included in the whole collection of the *Informacions de la Ciutadania*: the public interrogations (400) and a voluminous second volume with more than 600 records (1413-1425). This transition should show the continuity between the two volumes and that this set of public interrogations corresponded to a development in information gathering on the candidates. Likewise, the second register will correspond more to the control of the granted charters. While this control seemed to have been established through a simple list of names and dates in the first register, it occupies more than 300 pages in the second one, which covered a short period of 12 years. This important contrast in dimensions and proportions reflects the complete consolidation that the bureaucratic process of citizenship acquisition had reached by the beginning of the 15th century.

In her analysis of the *Informacions*, Eulàlia Duran defined this process through 4 clear and definite steps⁴⁰. To begin with, those interested in the acquisition of a citizenship charter were supposed to send a formal petition to the authorities of the city, most probably to the Counsellors⁴¹. Being concerned about whether the candidate really deserved the privileges the citizenship charter entailed or not, the authorities organized public interrogations, which became, therefore, the second step in the process of citizenship acquisition⁴². Once

⁴⁰ E. Duran, *Apuntes*, pp. 55-60.

⁴¹ Unfortunately, only one of these petitions has been conserved for the case of Barcelona. Hierònim Alemany, native of Zaragoza and resident in Barcelona for more than forty years asked to be recognized as a citizen of Barcelona. Alemany's petition was not dated but a paleographical analysis led Duran to consider it was surely produced in a later period, namely, the end of the 15th century. In spite of the uniqueness and later date of this document, I would still argue that it is feasible to imagine some sort of personal petition as the first step to be done in order to acquire the citizenship charter. See E. Duran, *Apuntes* pp. 55-56. Also M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, p.133.

⁴² I would not dare to affirm that the resort to public interrogations was a phenomenon unique to Barcelona. On the contrary, some references of a similar procedure have been indirectly documented in 14th century Venice, for instance, where the requirements to fulfil in order to receive a citizenship charter were much

the interrogations were done, one of the notaries of the Council was in charge of transmitting the information to the leading authorities who then had to decide whether the candidate deserved to be granted the citizenship charter or not. The approval of the Counselors determined the last step of the process.

The granting of the charter was subsequently recorded, as it is shown in the conserved registers. The record of this charter acted as a fidelity oath from the new citizen to the city of Barcelona. In order to be complete, it required the presence and signature of a guarantor as well as two or three testimonies.

Petition, interrogations, the approval of the authorities and a final oath were the four steps featuring the process at the end of which a candidate could expect to receive a citizenship charter. A more systematic analysis of the documentation conserved for the period 1413-1425, where both interrogations (*Informes*) and registers have been conserved, suggests that this apparently clear mechanism should be observed in closer detail, since it can still show interesting nuances.

Certainly, it should be noted that the second citizenship register (1413-1425) presents two different types of records. As early as 1413, it is possible to distinguish those records that clearly referred to the production of a previous interrogation (*tamen primus informatione a fidedignis recepta*) (29%) from those that did not include any sort of similar mention (70.5%). These proportions suggest that the well-defined procedure described above might not always have been applied. While interrogations have been conserved for 69% of the cases where the record mentioned a previous inquiry, no *informe* has been conserved for 95.6% of the records where no mention to a previous interrogation was done⁴³. Ultimately, this more complete and sys-

stricter than in Barcelona. Nonetheless, I would argue that Barcelona may be one of the rare cases for which such an important and fascinating amount of documents of the sort has been conserved. For the reference on Venice, see R. Mueller, *Immigrazione e cittadinanza*, p. 19: "spesso la residenza veniva rilevata attraverso deposizioni giurate di testimoni".

⁴³ A more precise numerical approach should be given here: there are 618 citizenship records in the citizenship register I am referring to (1413-1425). Among which, 182 (29%) include a mention to a previous interrogation; whereas 436 (70.5%) do not include such a mention. More in detail, it should be noted that the large

tematic set of sources seems to confirm what the first citizenship register already suggested: the collection of public information about the candidates was not always conducted and, therefore, two different ways of accessing citizenship existed.

A quantitative approach to the *Informacions* indicates that a large part of the candidates obtained the citizenship charter through some sort of direct approval of the Counsellors and without them having to endure the process of public interrogations, which emerge now as a complementary rather than an essential step within the mechanisms of citizenship acquisition.

A more qualitative analysis helps to reflect on the factors that conditioned this duality. To begin with, it should be considered that it was rather automatic for sailors, skippers, peasants and foreigners to be involved in the production of interrogations. Mainly due to professional reasons, these types of candidates tended to have a 'nomadic' style of life which could come to question their intention to live stably in the city – hindering their access to citizenship. This was particularly true for wealthy peasants who, although renting or owning houses in Barcelona, continued to live and work on the lands and properties they had in the countryside. Regarding foreigners, their application to citizenship generally included public interrogations, since their commitment to the city was, of course, less clear than in other cases. This procedure was applied equally to humble merchants native from other Catalan towns, as well as to foreigners with more prestigious social origins such as Filippo Strozzi, who applied for Barcelonian citizenship in November 1441⁴⁴. On the contrary, merchants from the wealthiest families (i.e. Llobera, Salavert, Junyent), the notary of the Council of the Hundred, Bernat

majority of the *Informes* conserved for this period (173) actually correspond to records including this famous mention to a previous public interrogation. Only 29 *Informes* did not result into a final registration, suggesting they might refer to unsuccessful or unachieved applications. It is only for 17 cases (4%) that an *Informe* is conserved, in spite of not being mentioned in the corresponding ration.

⁴⁴ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1441, November, 15th). This Filippo Strozzi was a cousin of the more renowned Filippo Strozzi the Elder. On the Strozzi in Barcelona, M.E. Soldani *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, pp. 441-454.

d'Esplugues⁴⁵, and members of the royal household such as Bartomeu Gras⁴⁶, treasurer of the Queen, and Berenguer Espigoler⁴⁷, notary of the King, could appeal for a direct registration when applying for the citizenship charter of Barcelona. Within such a polarized society as the Barcelona's one, these observations are, again, relatively evident: individuals whose conditions made it more difficult to ensure a fix stay in the city were closely investigated, while the social and political position of more reputed individuals was considered qualification enough. Nonetheless, these observations should not lead to a reductive interpretation of the whole phenomenon since it cannot be automatically assumed that direct registration was reserved to elite members of the city. If anything, this elite group were the exception that proved the rule for the majority. Indeed, the group of candidates who registered 'directly' also included individuals from a diverse range of socio-professional positions. The presence of merchants, for instance, was particularly important. Merchants were heterogeneous agents, including those with wealthy fortunes as well as more modest traders⁴⁸. Besides merchants and reputed characters, a diversity of craftsmen is found among the individuals 'directly' registered. For instance, the presence of tailors, candle makers, silk makers, tanners, silversmiths, drapers and wool carders were particularly evident.

Nonetheless, the presence of renowned characters of Barcelonian society among those individuals who were 'directly' registered remains suggestive, in that it highlights the role of fame and reputation in the definition and recognition of the citizen.

All in all, these considerations lead me to conclude that the citizenship charter was only granted to those who were already considered and publicly recognized as citizens of Barcelona. From this perspec-

⁴⁵ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (*Registre*, f. 35r) (1415, July, 8th). As notary of the Council of the Hundred, Bernat d'Esplugues was in charge of the production of the citizenship reports and registers that are here under consideration. On this character see J.A. Iglesias "El bibliòfil Bernat d'Esplugues" pp 57-78.

⁴⁶ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (*Registre*, f. 81v-82r) (1417, May, 25th).

⁴⁷ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (*Registre*, f. 84v) (1417, July, 14th).

⁴⁸ T.M. Vinyoles, *La vida quotidiana*, p.98.

tive, the citizenship charter emerges as the official recognition of a previous statute rather than the definite moment of creation of the citizen. Thus, it was only in the case of those candidates whose reputation was considered ambiguous that public interrogations were conducted. Being a mere fiscal privilege, the charter was granted to citizens and not supposed to turn individuals into citizens. In this view, the intention of public interrogations was not to prove that the candidate deserved to become a citizen but that he already was a full-fledged citizen of Barcelona, deserving, therefore, to enjoy the privileges of his city.

From the *Informacions*, the definition of citizenship in Late Medieval Barcelona appears to be heavily linked to the actual reputation and recognition of the citizen. In the following section, I will analyse the criteria determining and conditioning this reputation. To that end, I will now engage deeply with the qualitative potential of this unique and versatile source.

The Citizen in 15th century Barcelona: Rights, Duties and Ambiguities

The *Informes de la Ciutadania* are an unique window into Barcelonian daily life within which habits, relationships, acquaintances, alliances, favours and rumours constantly built the reputation and fame of the good citizen. The direct voices of testimonies provide images and anecdotes on the one hand and transmit the importance of mutual observation and gossip in the streets of Barcelona on the other, enabling the historian to grasp the main elements and criteria that were defining the image of the citizen within the public sphere.

This image is projected through the questions the authorities' representatives asked and the answers that they received, as well as through the comments and reflections added by each of the testimonies⁴⁹. Rather than following new approaches to the features of the citizen, a focus on the cultural dimension of this figure allow me to consider how some of the legal characteristics of the citizen were re-

⁴⁹ As it is also pointed out by M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, p. 133.

interpreted and understood by the inhabitants of Barcelona: its citizens, rulers, and foreigners. In this view, the incidence of the following aspects in the perception of the citizen will be considered in particular: 1) the issue of stable residence, 2) fiscal obligations, and 3) other elements such as independence and the attendance to festivities.

a) On stable residence.

The *Informacions* were mainly structured through one clear question, repeatedly asked to every witness: «Interrogated if he knows or he has heard if the above mentioned (name of the candidate) is a citizen of Barcelona, namely, if he has his own habitation in which he stays continuously with his household, as a true citizen is supposed to do»⁵⁰. Such a question makes it clear again how fundamental residence was as a defining criterion of the citizen.

As well as legal regulations, Barcelonians also considered stable residence in the city as the main requirement of the good citizen and, therefore, tended to answer this question in detail. Now, a detailed reading of the *Informes* shows that they had a very flexible understanding of the issue, which went far beyond the famous regulation of one year and one day.

Certainly, Barcelonians showed a relative indifference towards the amount of years the candidate had spent living in the city⁵¹. When acting as witnesses, they tended to give a rather blurry idea on this

⁵⁰ As mentioned, this formula occurs throughout the *Informacions*. Original version in Catalan, taken, for instance, from the report on Joan Belmenya, merchant native from Montpellier [AHCB, Consellers 1C-V,3 1414, February, 7th]: «Interrogat si sab of ha hoyt dir que lo dit Johan Belmenya sia ciutadà de Barchinona ço és queych tinga sa pròpia habitació en la qual estiga e habit continuament ab tot son domicili segons de ver ciutadà se pertany estar e habitar». On this topic, see T.M. Vinyoles, *La vida quotidiana*, pp. 57-58.

⁵¹ An indifference that might have its legal expression in the privilege granted to the city by King Peter the Cerimonious in 1379. In this new intervention, the monarch pretended to grant citizenship to those candidates living in the city, independently of how long they had stayed within its walls. E. Duran, *Apuntes* p. 5. Nonetheless, I only know about this privilege from Duran's work and, thus, cannot comment on the actual appliance of it, since the regulation of one year and one day is mentioned throughout a few citizenship records well into the 15th century.

issue, referring in many cases to very diverse numbers of years, as well as to anecdotes and their own memories, concluding in some occasions that the candidate had been in the city “for a very long time”. While legality tended to identify a citizen by defining his past, daily life – in this case Barcelonians, were more focused on valuing and analysing his future, giving more importance to his intention to remain in the city rather than to his actual residence. Legality had also traditionally considered the intention to remain as an essential defining criterion of the good citizen⁵². Nonetheless, this intention was usually fixed with a number of years. By hearing the testimony of other citizens and inhabitants, the authorities of Barcelona could now have access to different expressions of this intention to remain. Beyond temporal references, Barcelonians valued the candidates’ purposes by directly talking and listening to them, noticing carefully who was manifestly building a stable life within the city. It is certainly common to find witnesses declaring they have heard the applicant himself affirming he intended to stay in the city forever. The physician Lluçia Saconomina and his son Pere, a law student, stated that Joan Campells, a merchant from Perpignan, came to Barcelona with the sole intention of becoming a citizen. In so doing, he had been saying and repeating to them that he intended to live in Barcelona until the end of his life⁵³.

The creation of a family, as well as the presence of other family members coming to Barcelona, could also be interpreted as proofs of intention that the candidate had decided to remain permanently in the city. In this respect, we can return to the merchant Joan Belmenya, in whose *Informe* the witness Llorenç Luquès declared «he [Belmenya] is here with the courage and intention of remaining here, otherwise I would not endeavour in finding a wife for him and he

⁵² For instance: P. Riesenberg, *Citizenship*, p. 131. Regarding the case of Barcelona, the ‘animus remanendi’ was even explicitly mentioned in some early citizenship registrations of the first citizenship register conserved (1375-1381), as mentioned earlier.

⁵³ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1427, January, 24th).

would not accept her»⁵⁴. Similarly, witnesses tended to present the interest candidates might have shown towards mothers, sisters and brothers as another sign that the applicants intended to remain in the city – if it were otherwise they would certainly not have brought their parents with them. Once more, a very explicit example can be mentioned on this point. Joan Volart, a merchant from the town of Besalú, close to Girona, came to live in Barcelona with his mother and his sister, both of whom were widows. In the eyes of his neighbors and acquaintances of Barcelona, these two women became actual guarantors of Volart’s stability in the city. Thus, the merchant Francesc Bosch declared he was sure that Joan intended to remain in the city since «this is why he asked his mother and his sister to join him»⁵⁵.

In a few cases, the actual “moving in” of candidates became almost a sort of theatrical experience which was, once more, interpreted by public opinion as a proof of their intention to settle in the city. Such behaviour was usually highlighted by witnesses when the candidate had just recently arrived to Barcelona. The merchant Guillem Miró relied on testimonies who did not hesitate in considering him as a citizen, although he had been living in the city for less than one month. Acting in the street by loading and unloading a large amount of goods, he managed to make his neighbours believe he intended to create a new household in this city, with his family and all his possessions: «Guillem Miró has come here with the intention of staying until the end of his life, and this seems quite convincing since the above mentioned Guillem keeps bringing everyday beds, boxes and other things he might need», said Joan Vergés, silversmith and citizen of Barcelona⁵⁶.

⁵⁴ «ell hic és per coratge e intenció de aturar hic car si jo sabia lo contrari, no treballaria jo en dar-li muller e ell, que és tal, no la prendria». AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1414, February, 7th).

⁵⁵ «e dix que hoc car per aquexa raho hic ha mendades sa mara e sa germana de Besalú on estaven» AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1424, April, 12th).

⁵⁶ «lo dit Guillem que s’en és vengut ací ab coratge d’habitar hic totemp de sa vida e appar ver semblant car tot dia se pobla lo dit Guillem de lits e de caxes e de so que ha necessari». Guillem Miró came from Ribes, around 50 kilometres south from Barcelona. For his *Informe*: AHCB, 1C-V, 3 (1415, March, 22nd). Guillem was

All in all, direct communication, family responsibilities and certain behaviours built up a public perception on applicants' intentions to remain, this being the main aspect that the actual citizenry took into account when accepting a new citizen within the urban community. From this perspective, it becomes easier to understand why Barcelonians tended to act openly, showing that recent immigrants, as well as individuals having stayed in the city for more than twenty years or even natives of Barcelona, could equally deserve to be "considered and reputed as true citizens of Barcelona"⁵⁷. Ultimately, the importance given to public intention led Barcelonians to be more than flexible when it came to value the importance of a long and fixed residence in the definition of a citizen's reputation.

This flexibility was actually linked to a feeling of empathy. Many witnesses had previously been foreigners; they might also have applied for a citizenship charter themselves. Therefore, they were well aware of how strongly personal vicissitudes could determine intentions and expressions. The reading of the *Informes* clearly suggests that it was generally accepted that personal conditions redefined how intention to remain and stable residence were understood. For instance, the witnesses of those merchants, peasants or sailors that were usually absent from the city due to professional reasons would still highlight other aspects that equally showed the commitment of these candidates to the city, compensating their more 'nomadic' style of life. While it was noticed that the French merchant Joan Anziau actually owned a house in the city, witnesses exposed that the fisherman Antoni Monistrol needed to travel constantly but that his mother, sister, and later his wife lived stably in the city, guaranteeing his return⁵⁸.

granted with the citizenship charter a few days later: AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f.28r (1415, April, 4th).

⁵⁷ Very common formula used throughout the *Informes*, usually at the end of each of the testimonies. In Catalan: "pot ésser haut e reputat com a ciutadà de Barchinona".

⁵⁸ Joan Anziau was a native from the city of Toulouse. He was often absent due to professional constraints. His witnesses, however, insisted on the fact that he had recently purchased a house in the street of Montcada with the intention of staying in Barcelona until the end of his life. See in AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1409, November, 15th).

b) Using citizenship: The citizen as a fiscal actor.

When analysing citizenship in medieval Perpignan, Philip Daileader affirmed that the payment of taxes turned into a constitutive element of citizenship in the 13th century⁵⁹. Though the prominence of residence in the case of Barcelona is unquestionable, it is still impossible to mention the main features of the citizen without considering its fiscal rights and obligations – these being at the core of the “bundle of rights and duties” that guaranteed an effective relationship between the city and its inhabitants⁶⁰.

It is time now, therefore, to analyse the diverse fiscal rights and duties of the citizen in medieval Barcelona. In so doing, I will start from a close reading of the citizenship charter, my intention being to approach the actual effect of economic exemptions and obligations in citizens’ lives.

On fiscal rights.

A careful reading of the citizenship charter reveals that Barcelona’s citizens, or rather the owner of such charters, were exempted from paying any trading tax. Reproducing the privilege of 1232, the charter listed these exemptions in detail:

[citizens] should benefit from the exemption, immunity and freedom of *leudam, pedagium, pedaticum, portaticum, mensuraticum, pensum, usaticum, moxeriffatum, duanam, anchoragium, travetagium, passagium, gabellam* or any other sort of tax and custom – being these taxes new or old, already established or to be established in the future. These [exemptions] will be applied in the kingdoms and regions of the King and, specially, in the city and locality of Tortosa and in its fortresses,

The successful outcome of his application is, however, not sure. Citizenship registers for this period have not been conserved but Anziau is still branded as merchant from Toulouse in later notarial documentation. For Antoni Monistrol, fisherman from the town of Badalona, in the surroundings of Barcelona, see AHCB 1C-V,3 (1409, March, 16th).

⁵⁹ P. Daileader, *True citizens*, p. 15. Referred by P. Verdés, *La ciudad en el espejo*, p. 178.

⁶⁰ J.L. Van Zaden – M. Prak, “Towards an economic interpretation of citizenship”, p. 114.

as well as in the towns and localities of Alacant, Oriola, Elx, and Guardamar and in the adjacent localities which are in the Kingdom of Valencia, beyond the town of Xixona and also in whatever other city, town and locality of the King, wherever it would be located, provided it is under the dominium of the King or his predecessors, gained either through conquest, exchange, purchase or with any other title, being these possessions already acquired or to be acquired in the future⁶¹.

These exemptions usually corresponded to taxes on products (for instance, the *lezda*, *pensum* and *mensuraticum*) and their circulation (like the *portaticum* and the *passagium*). However, my intention here is far from trying to analyse the fiscal insights and meanings of these lucrative prerogatives. Rather, I intend to reflect on how citizens of Barcelona could actually use their citizenship charter to enjoy the privileges it entailed. Indeed, in using this charter, new and older citizens developed a rather pragmatic approach towards citizenship. In order to ensure obtaining the exemptions they were interested in, merchants did not hesitate in asking for the charter on more than one occasion. In some cases, it seems that the petitions were even directed to specific businesses and negotiations. For instance, the merchant Guillem de Montcofa asked for a new charter in 1419, together with his associates the merchants Nicolau Sala and Joan de Reus and

⁶¹ Original quote in Latin, extracted from one of the copies of the citizenship charter: «habeant franquitatem inmunitatem et libertatem de non dando vel solvendo aliquam leudam, pedagium, pedaticum, portaticum, mensuraticum, pensum, usaticum, moxeriffatum, duanam, anchoragium, travetagium, passagium, gabellam vel aliam quamcumque impositionem seu consuetudinem, novas vel veteras, statutas vel statuendas, in regnis et terris eiusdem domini regis et specialiter in civitatis et loco Dertuse et in castris, villas et in locis suis de Alacant, de Oriola, de Elx, de Guardamar et eisdem adiacentibus qui sunt in parte regni Valencie ultra Sexonam et in aliis etiam quibuscumque civitatibus, villas et locis iamdicti domini regis, ubicumque situatis, per ipsum dominum regem vel eius predecessores, per modum conquiste, concambii vel emptionis vel quovis alio titulo hactenus adquisitis vel in posterum adquirendis [...]». AHCB, 1C-V, 4 *Registre* fol 2v.

the sailor Nicolau Aulomar⁶². Most probably, this common petition was directed to benefit the society they had previously created, which can be traced back to at least 1414⁶³. The use of the charter is also mentioned, interestingly, in some powers of attorney. These documents could include a formula whereby principals delegated to their attorneys the power of using their charter on their behalf, so that the exemptions could still be respected. The reputed merchant Antoni Salavert associated with the candle-maker Francesc Vilardell and other Barcelonians. All together, they named Joan Perelló, a sailor and citizen of Barcelona, as their attorney. In so doing, they stated that Perelló was supposed to «use for us and on our behalf the exemptions and immunities that were granted to each of us as citizens of the mentioned city»⁶⁴.

These latter examples present the charter as a very flexible tool that one could transfer and accumulate. On some occasions, the pressure of fiscal fraud and protectionist measures challenged, however, the actual prerogatives of the charter. Indeed, in the 1430s, the access of foreigners to the fiscal exemptions was complicated. Besides the possession of a citizenship charter, the promise never to abandon Catalonia first and the requirement to marry a Catalan later on were presented as essential criteria to reach the exemption⁶⁵. It was precisely in this context that, Gabriel Carmau, a merchant from Savoy, was compelled to pay the *lezda* of Mediona in 1434, although having been granted with a citizenship charter of Barcelona ten years ear-

⁶² AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f. 116v (1419, March, 18th). A previous record on Montcofa's previous citizenship charter can be found in AHCB, 1 C-V,4 *Registre* f. 30v-31r (1415, May, 8th) and *Registre* f. 102v.(1418, May, 14th).

⁶³ AHPB, Bernat Pí, *Manual 1414* 113/7 ff. 39r-39v (1414, May, 1st). This seems to be a renewal of a previous contract, since it is mentioned that Guillem Montcofa got involved in the company in 1413. Another renewal of the company in AHPB, Bernat Pí, *Manual 1415-1416* 113/10 ff 81v-82r (1416, July, 2nd).

⁶⁴ «consti et ordi vos dictum Johannem Perelló procuratorem nostrum et cuislibet nostrum etc. ad utendum pro nobis et nomine nostro et cuislibet nostrum franquitatibus et inmunitatibus nobis et cuique nostrorum ut civibus dicte civitatis concessi » in AHPB, Bernat Nadal, *Manual 1416-1417* 58/55 f. 91r (1417, February, 23rd). This strategy was also adopted by Tuscan merchants as it is shown in M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, p. 135.

⁶⁵ C. Carrère, *Barcelona 1380- 1462*, p. 253.

lier⁶⁶. A husband and a father, Gabriel Carmau died in Barcelona a few years later⁶⁷. Therefore, his stability and rootedness in the city could hardly be questioned. This problematic case remains, however, rather suggestive as it points towards the limits that could occasionally complicate the use of the citizenship charter – this being a difficult aspect to explore in contrast with the frequency with which merchants used to employ their citizenship charters to their advantage.

On fiscal duties.

In order to analyse the citizen's fiscal duties, we must return on the actual charter text, in which the municipal authorities firstly mentioned that the new citizen was to be recognized as such because of his regular contribution to the taxes and tributes of the city:

we recognize that [*free space to write the name of the new citizen*] is a citizen and inhabitant of the mentioned city of Barcelona, and that he paid and contributed in tributes and all other demands and common collections that are paid and approved by all other citizens and inhabitants of this city⁶⁸.

In contrast with the detailed enumeration of the citizen's exemptions, the expression of his duties is rather general and makes it difficult to determine how the citizen was actually supposed to contribute in the city's fiscal welfare. Furthermore, what seemed to be the principal requirement in the citizenship records of the first conserved register (1375-1381), is not even mentioned a few years later, in the records of the second citizenship register (1413-1425). At that moment, the issue can only be retraced through the text of the actual citizenship charter. Interestingly, the authorities never raised the issue throughout the *Informacions*. Nonetheless, witnesses added in

⁶⁶ R. Salicrú, *El tràfic de mercaderies*, p. 13. The archival reference for Gabriel Carmau's citizenship interrogation and record is: AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1423, February,25th) and AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1423, March, 6th).

⁶⁷ M.E. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari e mercanti toscani*, p 177.

⁶⁸ AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f.2r. Original quote in Latin: «deducimus per presentes quod [*free space to write the name of the new citizen*] est civis et habitator dicte civitatis Barchinone et quod solvit et contribuit in tallis et aliis exactionibus et colletis comunibus in quibus aliis cives et habitatores eiusdem civitatis nutunt et solvunt».

some cases that candidates were contributing scrupulously to the taxes that the good citizen was supposed to pay, mainly when referring to foreign candidates or individuals in more a difficult position. Thus, it was not uncommon for witnesses to affirm that the candidate 'had contributed to the impositions and other charges of the city, as any other citizen'⁶⁹. From this perspective, fiscal duties became a sort of public act, but their nature remained as general and undefined as in the official text of the charter.

To shed some light on this lack of interest, it could be argued that the payment of taxes became such an obvious duty that it was only highlighted in more specific and difficult cases. Such an assumption would somehow point towards a high degree of 'fiscal acculturation' experienced by the Barcelonian citizenry. Using this term, Pere Verdés presented fiscality as the pillar on which the collective identity of municipalities in Late Medieval Catalonia was built. This abstract approach to the issue has its empirical expression in the lists of tax-payers (*estimes*) that the municipalities produced and which included only those who were considered citizens⁷⁰.

To better understand this point, the taxation system of Barcelona needs further explanation. At that time, direct taxation had actually become exceptional in Barcelona, the requirements of the city and the promised subsidies to the Crown being mainly guaranteed by indirect taxation, which was applied to all sorts of products sold in the market: wine, meat, flour, oil and wood among many others⁷¹. Progressively developed, these indirect charges became permanent municipal taxes from the mid-14th century, as well as the major source of income of the city. These indirect taxes, by definition were paid by everybody: citizens of the city as well as inhabitants, and even foreigners and visitors. The *imposicions*, as these indirect taxes were called, should not be included, therefore, among the specific duties of the citizen.

⁶⁹ The original clause in medieval Catalan was: «e ha contribuït en imposicions e altres càrrecs de la ciutat, axí com altre ciutadà».

⁷⁰ P. Verdés, *La ciudad en el espejo*, pp 175- 180.

⁷¹ J. Broussolle, *Les impositions*. P.Ortí, *Renda i fiscalitat*, p. 526 onwards.

Returning to the *Informacions*, a more ‘humanized’ dimension of fiscality emerges. Indeed, the accomplishment of some communal services was mentioned on the rare occasions in which testimonies asserted that the candidates were participating in the contributions and ‘charges’ (*càrrecs*) of the city. One such contribution could be the act of buying the wheat that the municipality distributed among the inhabitants of Barcelona in times of scarcity. A sign of concern and solidarity towards the vicissitudes of the city, such an action was publicly observed and, therefore, positively valued. Thus, one of the testimonies of the peasant Bernat Muntmany remembered clearly that «she saw that he was given the wheat the city used to distribute among the houses and he took it»⁷². More generally, the acts of commitment shown by citizens were linked to their close collaboration with the public works of the city. The artisans Pere Munt and Jaume Soler were praised by their testimonies for their direct involvement in building the walls of the city and draining its moats⁷³. Similarly, it was known that the merchant Ramon de Boldú, who was apparently in close contact with the mercantile elite of the city, made important economic contributions for these works⁷⁴. Interestingly, the duties of the citizen seemed to adapt to the socio-economical level of the candidates. A similar contrast can be perceived when considering another common service to the city: the citizen’s commitment to protect it. Indeed, while the involvement of the peasant Guillem Costhoer

⁷² « ha vist que li han donat del forment que la ciutat solia donar per les cases e que ell ho reebia » See in AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1395, January, 21st) Clearly expressed also for the case of the peasant Bernat Ponç, see in AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* ff. 160v-161r (1422, March, 6th)] The *Informe* of Bernat Ponç, conserved among those of 1419, is not dated. About the public selling of wheat by the municipality see T.M. Vinyoles, *La vida quotidiana*, p. 86.

⁷³ For Pere Munt’s citizenship report: AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1413, July, 17th) For Jaume Soler’s citizenship report: AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1414, July, 2nd).

⁷⁴ For Ramon de Boldú’s citizenship report: AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1417, January, 9th) His citizenship ration can be found in AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f. 69v (1417, January, 15th). His close contact with the mercantile elite of the city is attested by his relationship with the reputed merchant Bernat de Casasàgia, with whom he lived when he required the citizenship charter in 1417 and who he even named as his executor in his will in January 1421.

was shown by highlighting his participation in the city's guard⁷⁵, the merchant Boldú manifestly maintained a good mount that he could always use to serve and protect the city⁷⁶.

From exemptions to services the fiscal actions of the citizen contributed, together with many other aspects, to form an image that was constantly judged and observed. It is time now to proceed and explore which other aspects the testimonies of the *Informes* took into account when identifying this image in the candidates to the citizenship charter.

c) Other aspects: Independence and the attendance to festivities.

Linked to the availability of contributing in the city's welfare was the question of the candidate's civic and economic independence. The citizen was supposed to serve exclusively the city in which he lived, showing his continuous commitment and involvement in the pursuit of the common good. As a result, there was, theoretically, no place for serfs (*homs de remensa*) within the civic community of Barcelona. As mentioned, however, citizenship was actually regulated in the *Recognoverunt Proceres* as a possessory norm, ensuring freedom to those serfs that managed to stay in the city for one year and one day without being required by their lords. Citizenship was, therefore, available to those who had redeemed their condition.

Independence as a defining feature of the citizen was considered to be very important by the authorities granting the citizenship charter and, therefore, they did not hesitate in insisting on the candidate's status, as soon as the latter was identified as a native from a feudal lordship. In extreme cases, they could consider necessary to undertake new interrogations in order to establish the condition of the candidate. Alternatively, they could even directly consult with their former lords in order to ensure that the redemption had effectively been pursued. The relevance given to the issue of independence ap-

⁷⁵ AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1414, February, 13th).

⁷⁶ In the words of Bernat de Casasàgia: «and he has in his house his own good mount and he is wealthy enough». Original quote in Catalan: «E té lo dit Ramon en casa sua sa bona cavalcadura pròpia e està bé de si mateix». AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1417, January, 9th).

pears clearly in the case of the skipper Pere Feliu, for whom the authorities decided to repeat the whole interrogation, insisting very clearly on his potential condition as a serf. In contrast, some of Pere's witnesses took a clear position in defending him. Without denying his difficult position, it was affirmed that Pere came from the lordship of Bernat de Cabrera who, being generally absent from his Catalan domains, was not pursuing his fugitive serfs⁷⁷.

The importance that the authorities gave to this issue of independence becomes also evident from the case of the sailor Gabriel Covaner. Although testimonies manifested that Gabriel was a redeemed serf and therefore a free man, the authorities needed to be certain of this issue before granting the citizenship charter. Thus, a marginal note in Gabriel's report indicates that the authorities of Barcelona directly interrogated his former lord, the provost of his native coastal town of Lloret, about this issue. In his answer, the provost affirmed that the candidate had previously paid 44 *solidos* in order to become a free man⁷⁸.

As far as the independence of the candidate could be proved, both Barcelonians and their authorities were ready to consider former serfs as members of the citizenry. A new sign of Barcelonian society's openness, the concern shown by the authorities illustrates how ambiguous their position was on this issue, at least in the early 15th century. While the insistence on ensuring the civic freedom of candidates points towards their will of avoiding problems with the feudal nobility, their tendency to accept these applicants as new citizens can be interpreted as a sign of the traditional opposition between the city and this same nobility.

Independence as a criterion for citizenship did not only refer to freedom but had also a more economic sense, guaranteeing the payment of taxes that the citizen was supposed to fulfil. As a result, the citizen was supposed to be able to live by his own means (*menjar e beure del seu propi*). This issue was raised particularly by the authorities in cases where the lifestyle of the candidate could be put into

⁷⁷ AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1411, January, 23rd).

⁷⁸ Gabriel Covaner's report in AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1414, February, 12th) and Covaner's citizenship record in AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f. 12r (1414, February, 15th).

question by his means and resources. For instance, testimonies tended to insist on the fact that candidates lived by their own means when referring to young merchants, who were usually single and rented rooms in other merchant's houses⁷⁹. The case of Gabriel Covaner is useful again in showing to what extent self-maintenance could be publicly shown. Covaner's testimonies were certainly convinced that he was living by his own means since they had seen him paying for half of the supplies that his host's wife used to buy. From a much more wealthy position, the merchant Bernat Forner provides another interesting example of the attention given to economic independence. Known as the son of a citizen of Barcelona and owner of a house within the walls of the city, his condition as a citizen may seem obvious. Nonetheless, his continuous trips and the fact that he was living in his cousin's house put his stability into question. In order to assess to what extent he depended on his cousin, the authorities organized an interrogation in which witnesses were directly asked about the means Forner depended on. Many of them answered they did not really know whether the candidate was really living off of the benefits of his work or not. In any case, however, they had seen him bringing precious jewels from his trips, which he would always give to his host's daughter. In the eyes of those surrounding Forner, these gifts were generously covering the expenses of his living and guaranteeing, therefore, his reliability as a citizen⁸⁰. All in all, freedom and a solid personal economy were the main factors conditioning the independence that a citizen was supposed to enjoy.

This description of the features that composed the image of the citizen in 15th century Barcelona ends by mentioning a more marginal aspect: the attendance to festivities. On a few occasions, testimonies affirmed that candidates were acting as true citizens of Barcelona because they were always present in the main festivities of the city, sharing the rituals and the joys of the rest of the citizenry. This aspect was, however, a secondary issue only mentioned in 18 cases throughout all the *Informacions* that were produced at that time. Most

⁷⁹ C. Carrère, "La vie privée du marchand barcelonais", pp. 263-291.

⁸⁰ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1422, May, 22nd) Forner was granted the citizenship charter one day later. AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f. 162v. (1422, May, 23rd).

probably, it was taken for granted that true and good citizens would attend and participate in the so-called 'annual festivities' of the city (Easter, Pentecost, Christmas and one more day of special local celebrations)⁸¹. Showing once more the adaptability of the citizen's reputation, presumably this feature only became a defining aspect of the good citizen in cases where candidates could not easily prove their residential stability within the walls of the city. Depending on their furnaces in the outskirts of the city, the glassworkers Francesc Satorra and Pere Pujalt had a rather unstable lifestyle, continuously coming back and forth from the locality of Bigues, where their furnace was, and Barcelona⁸². It was the effort they repeatedly made to be in Barcelona during times of celebration which led their witnesses to affirm that they acted as "true citizens should do".

In the context of the late 1300s and early 1400s the municipal authorities, now powerfully autonomous, approached citizenship in continuity with what had previously been established by the monarchy. Therefore, stable residence, the maintenance of a family, a specific fiscal role and freedom stand as the pillars on which the official definition of the citizen of Barcelona rested. Through such an institutional source as the *Informacions*, however, we are able to perceive how the authorities turned to the actual citizenry to value and explore the accomplishment of these criteria when time came to grant the rights of the citizen. In so doing, citizenship and the figure of the citizen became somehow richer, in that they incorporated a diversity

⁸¹ These four festivities were officially recognized as such throughout all the territories of the Crown of Aragon by King Peter the Catholic in 1200. T.M. Vinyoles, "Festes i alegries", p. 43.

⁸² Since 1324, glass furnaces were prohibited by municipal prescription. In so doing, the intention of the authorities was to reduce the risk of fires in the city. As a result, glass workers needed to entertain a furnace outside the walls of the city. C. Carrère, *Barcelona 1380-1462*, p. 412. Curiously, the same furnace (in the locality of Bigues) seems to have been used by Francesc Satorra first (1407) and by Pere Pujalt later (1423). For the citizenship report of Francesc Satorra see in AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1407, January, 3rd). For Pere Pujalt's citizenship report: AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1423, February, 11th) and for his citizenship ration: AHCB, 1C-V,3 *Registre* f. 168v (1423, February, 13th).

of experiences and conditions that could only be recovered by dealing intensively with some of the many cases offered by these sources.

At the crossroad of institutional and cultural history, the *Informacions* demonstrate that the reputation of the citizen was fully accepted as the basis of citizenship by the Council of the Hundred and its counsellors. Indeed, addressing the citizenry and readily granting the charter on the basis of witnesses' observations, memories and opinions, the authorities gave legal validity to a citizen seen through the eyes of Barcelonians, defined by and accepted for his public fame.

But when dealing with the institutional approach to citizenship it is also necessary to deal with the more negative dimensions of it. Besides accepting and recognizing new citizens as the *Informacions* showed (*Admetre en Ciutadanatge*), the authorities also expelled citizens, which implied a withdrawal of the citizenship charter (*Expel·lir/Gitar de ciutadanatge*). Ultimately, they even had to deal with those who wanted to abandon the city and their privileges and obligations as citizens (*Sortir de ciutadanatge*). An open window into the solidarity and fluidness of Barcelonian society, the *Informacions* do not provide that much insight into these latter issues. Nonetheless, these aspects still need to be considered, at least briefly, in order to reach a more complete image of the institutional mechanisms that determined the experience and vicissitudes of the citizen.

'Gitar' and 'sortir' de ciutadanatge: Some thoughts on exclusion and rejection in the institutional building of Barcelonian citizenry.

Beyond the importance of public fame and reputation in the definition of citizenship, it should not be forgotten that the capacity to grant the charter and the rights it entailed gave to the Counselors a tool with which to guarantee the political and the social control of the city: political control in that citizenship became an instrument with which to ensure a certain discipline; social control in that the Counselors' decisions on the granting of charters ultimately established whose reputation was not worthy of a citizen.

I will not consider here how the municipal authorities used citizenship as a tool of political exclusion. From the sources underpinning my work, it is certainly more rigorous to analyze to what extent citizenship was used by the municipality as a tool with which to guarantee its social control over the citizenry of Barcelona. Therefore, I will go back to the *Informacions* and, more specifically, to the period 1413-1425 for which both interrogations and citizenship records have been conserved. This double track makes it possible to cross both interrogations and final citizenship records, in order to distinguish applicants who were never registered as new citizens and to whom, therefore, the citizenship charter was supposedly not granted.

The denial of the charter did not imply expulsion from the city but rather official exclusion from the citizenry, namely from the group of inhabitants that were supposed to commit themselves to the city in return for protection, exemptions and other privileges. Such a negative would therefore suggest that by citizen's standards, the reputation of the candidate was still in question. Nonetheless, refusal to grant the charter was not a common practice: it has been documented in only 29 applications of the total number of 173 interrogations that were produced during the period 1413-1425⁸³. Furthermore, it is generally difficult to determine why the granting of the charter was actually refused. On some of these occasions, the candidates seemed to have followed the requirements even more carefully than other successful applicants. For instance, the charter was not granted to Esteve Coloma, a merchant who had been living in Barcelona for more than thirty years when he asked to be granted the citizenship charter. More surprisingly, one of the testimonies stated that «Esteve has been a citizen for more than thirty years» - but such a claim did not seem to convince the authorities⁸⁴. To shed light on some of these more contradictory cases, I would argue that it is very probable that some candidates were suddenly no longer interested in

⁸³ This corresponds to a 16,7% of the petitions. It is to be noted that many of these unsuccessful applications were done throughout the year 1418.

⁸⁴ AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1413, August, 26th) «El dit Esteve ha més de XXX anys que és ciutadà».

being granted the charter and decided to withdraw their applications.

Therefore, it is important to note that not all the non-registered cases should be identified as individuals that were officially rejected as citizens. Nonetheless, it is true that some of these 29 supposedly failed applications can help to identify the features that the municipal authorities did not use to approve, considering them to be unworthy of a good citizen of Barcelona. In so doing, the analysis points back again to the defining features of the citizen's reputation, although interestingly approached now from a negative perspective.

A first good example can be seen in the case of Martí Saperà, a wool comber who travelled intensively, seeking professional opportunities. In addition to this sort of geographical instability, none of Saperà's testimonies were able to confirm that the candidate was not a serf or, if he was, that he had never been required to return to his lord's service. Taking into account that he had been born in a feudal dominion, his origins were not clear enough and his request might have been denied on these grounds. Similarly, the inexistence of a record suggests that the charter was not granted to the merchant Arnau Porta who was apparently, as one of his testimonies affirmed, a native of Barcelona where «he had been raised out of poverty»⁸⁵. Though I would argue that poverty was not a factor that damaged reputation at that time⁸⁶, it could, of course, compromise the capacity of the candidate to deal with the fiscal charges of the citizen and become, therefore, a potential factor of exclusion. Fiscal obligations also need to be taken into account when trying to understand why the

⁸⁵ AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1421, July, 11th).

⁸⁶ In other more fortunate cases, candidates who were also presented as poors by their own testimonies reached and obtained the citizenship charter. See, for instance, the case of the weaver Guillem Julià in AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1415, March, 8th) and AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre*, ff. 27r-27v (1415, March, 15th). Furthermore, Pere Pujol, poor and beggar, was identified as 'citizen of Barcelona' in notarial documentation, when recognizing that the dowry of his wife had been paid. AHPB, Bernat Nadal 58/62 ff 41r-41v (1423, January, 23rd). In this view, Pere Verdés reminds that poors were generally included in the *estimes*, lists of tax payers produced by the municipal authorities where only citizens were registered. P. Verdés, *La ciudad en el espejo*, p. 178.

charter was denied to the merchant Bernat Soler. Professionally trained in the city, Soler had been living in Barcelona for more than twenty years when he applied for the charter. His commitment to the city was, however, questionable, as he had not participated in the building of the walls of the city, despite having paid his taxes and contributed towards other needs of the city. Publicly showing his unwillingness to help in the protection of his city, the authorities considered that Soler did not deserve to be recognized as a citizen⁸⁷. Besides unclear juridical status, insecure resources and defaulting on civic contributions, the lack of rootedness was also considered as a factor of rejection, due to the fundamental importance of stable residence in the definition of the citizen. This issue was very clear in the case of the merchant Joan de Montconill. An active merchant, Montconill led a mercantile company in Barcelona, where he had been living for six years and where he had entertained a set of professional relationships. In spite of his active professional activity, nobody in the city seemed to know where he actually stayed, not even the landlady from whom he rented his shop since she clearly stated that “the mentioned Joan goes somewhere else to sleep since she is a widow and she could not suffer a man sleeping in her house, where there is no lord”⁸⁸.

These examples point towards the capacity of the authorities to deny the granting of the citizenship charter, deciding to maintain certain individuals outside the limits of the privileged and also committed citizenry. It could be assumed that these more radical, and also rare, decisions responded to the authorities’ attempt to guarantee co-existence among Barcelonians, by creating a solid and reliable civic community; just as important, this ensured the fiscal interests of the municipality.

⁸⁷ AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1418, October, 10th). His witness and landlord, the reputed merchant Guillem de Cabanyelles, affirmed: «e contribueix en imposicions en altres càrrechs de la dita ciutat exceptat en la obra del mur».

⁸⁸ « està en veritat que lo dit Johan va jaura en altra part com ella testimoni sia vídua e no soferia que null hom jagués en casa sua, pus que senyor no-y ha» AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1422, February, 27th).

In spite of this practice of denials, the actual nature of Barcelonian citizenship – that we have been presenting as open, flexible and generally sensitive to personal conditions and vicissitudes – turned Barcelona into a space of double opportunities, in which access to citizenship could be obtained later, although previously denied. A merchant from the town of Cervera, Mateu Novella was not granted the charter when he first applied for it in 1413⁸⁹. His wife had just given birth in Barcelona but his constant trips to his native town, where he still kept most of his business, might very well have decided the negative outcome of his application. Though still travelling a lot, the maintenance of a family in the city, the acquisition of a house and slaves, and the general growth of his affairs eventually secured him the official recognition of his citizen condition in 1421. This case and a few others of the sort are interesting in that they illustrate how progressive the making of the citizen could be. Being the result of this constant dialogue between the city and its inhabitants, the making of the citizen was not unidirectional. Pushed by political or social necessities and interests, the city had the power to deny the right of citizenship, showing and ensuring their control over the citizenry. But the citizen himself could also decide to reject it.

Far from being a personal decision, the practice of rejecting the privilege of citizenship had relevant economic nuances that arose the concern of the Council of the Hundred and its Counselors. Indeed, the citizen has been presented as a major fiscal actor in the city and to lose a citizen ultimately meant to lose an important contributor. Though some municipal sources provide deeper insights into this issue⁹⁰, I will concentrate here on what the sources at the center of my work suggest on the matter.

⁸⁹ Cervera is a town in the center of Catalonia, around 100 km away from Barcelona. In regard to Mateu Novella, see AHCB, 1C-V,3 (1413, September-December, 6/14) for his first application and AHCB, 1C-V,4 (1421, September, 10th) and AHCB, 1C-V,4 *Registre* f. 155r-155v (1421, September, 12th) for his second application.

⁹⁰ In 1397, the Council of the Hundred decided that those who avoided citizens' taxes (*contribució de ciutadandatge*) – mainly by selling their possessions to non-citizens, would have to pay a penalty. This is an aspect to be further developed in my dissertation. See in AHCB, 1.B.1 (*Llibre del Consell*), vol 27 ff. 91r-92v (1397, June, 5th). The terms of this regulation were commented by E. Bruniquer, *Rúbriques*

At this point, it should be noted that those records included in the citizenship register of 1413-1425 illustrate that, when swearing their oath of citizenship, citizens had to promise to return the charter or (*vel*) to pay a fine of 100 *lliures* in case they decided to abandon their stable and fix residence in the city of Barcelona. More specifically, the formula is as follows:

in the case he himself [refers to the new citizen] would abandon his habitation in the city he would return the mentioned citizenship charter or pay as a fine one hundred *lliures* of Barcelona, of which the venerable royal magistrate of Barcelona (vicario) would receive half and the City the other half⁹¹.

The voluntary act of abandoning the citizenship has been documented very rarely and always as a response to the need for leaving the city. Acting as a guarantor, the weaver of veils Joan Castell returned his son's charter, specifying that the latter had decided to transfer his habitation to the city of Vic, where he will live with his wife.

In the cases that have been documented, those deciding to leave the city chose to return the letter, losing the privileges that citizen status implied. But as the text of the oath itself suggests, the authorities allowed for another possibility, permitting those leaving the city to conserve their charter provided they pay a fine that would be devoted to the city's public works. This double possibility actually sheds light on some contradictions, namely the presence throughout different sorts of sources of individuals that identified themselves as citizens of Barcelona in spite of being officially domiciliated in other

I/3 pp. 87-88 and by F. Carreras, *La ciutat* p. 525. Also In E. Duran, *Apuntes*, p. 55. I would like to thank Prof. Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol not only for providing the reference of this important regulation but also for offering her own transcription of it.

⁹¹ This is found in any of the 618 rations included in the citizenship register AHCB, 1C-V,4. Original quote in Latin: «quo casu quo ipse deserat habitationem dicte civitatis restituet dictam cartam ciutadenagii vel exsolvet pro pene et nomine pene centum libras barchinonenses, adquirenda scilicet medietas venerabili vicario Barchinone et altera medietas dicte civitati».

towns and localities, breaking the main requirement of citizenship. In 1424, the merchant Francesc Sarrovira sold a slave to Antoni Rifós, who was identified as a citizen of Barcelona and inhabitant of the parish of Sarrià⁹². More interestingly, Roser Salicrú documented how Bernat Ferrer, inhabitant of the town of Mataró, refused to contribute in the payment of his town's redemption, affirming he was a citizen of Barcelona⁹³.

Having reached a point of control in the process of citizenship acquisition, the authorities introduced somehow their concerns on rejection in the citizenship oath, as it is shown in those records that have been conserved. To face those that wanted to abandon the city with the choice of returning the charter or paying a fine would force them to choose between a definitive renouncement of the privileges of the city, and the compensation of their attitude by paying an amount that was to be devoted to the fulfillment of the city's necessities. Though the main interest of the city was, undoubtedly, to guarantee its fiscal resources, it could also be said that their attempts to define and control the mechanisms of citizenship rejection were actually forcing bad citizens to act as more accomplished ones.

Conclusions

When explored in detail, both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective, the *Informacions de la Ciutadania* present the public fame and reputation of the citizen as the basis on which citizenship was defined in Late Medieval Barcelona. This reputation was approved and validated by the city's municipal authorities and was in continuity with the monarchy's previous definition. Thus, in 15th-century Barcelona, the citizen was publicly identified as a free individual living stably in the city, creating a household in the city and being committed to its needs – whether they were economic, military, or otherwise. In exchange, the citizen was supposed to be protected by the city's authorities and enjoy fiscal privileges, usually affirmed

⁹² AHPB, Bernat Nadal 58/63 f.17r (1424, January, 15th).

⁹³ R. Salicrú, *Mataró, carrer de Barcelona*, p.18.

through the acquisition of a citizenship charter. These aspects, based on the rights and duties of the citizen, are repeatedly found when approaching the figure of the citizen in other Mediterranean cities⁹⁴. Furthermore, I would also argue the legal validity the municipal authorities granted to a citizen, who was defined through the opinions and memories of his neighbors, was not exceptional in a medieval context where reputation generally had a very significant impact in legal culture⁹⁵. In regard to the actual issue of citizenship, the determining role of “vox et publica fama” in the recognition of the good citizen has been documented in Venice, for instance⁹⁶.

These observations aim at emphasising that the relevance of Barcelona and its sources within citizenship studies does not depend on its specificities, but rather on its usefulness in illustrating how a cultural approach can help to reach a better understanding of medieval citizenship. As mentioned, it is certain that the *Informacions de la Ciutadania* is not a complete collection and suffers from a degree of documentary loss that is difficult to evaluate. Nonetheless, the amount of survived sources is still unique, making it possible to affirm that the municipality completely relied on Barcelonians when having to discern whether a candidate was a good citizen or not. Therefore, a dialogical dimension in the building of the citizenry emerges from these sources. Within this dialogue, Barcelonians reinterpreted the tradi-

⁹⁴ Indeed, I will need, in a further step of my research, to undertake an asymmetrical comparison between Barcelona and other Mediterranean cities, in order to grasp better the meaning and specificities of the Barcelonian case. Cities like Marseille, Florence and Venice will be interesting references of comparison. As mentioned, the case of Venice has been studied in depth by Reinhold.C Mueller. Nonetheless, it will be particularly interesting to compare Barcelona with other cities of the Crown of Aragon, mainly with Valencia and Zaragoza for which some suggestive work has already been produced. For instance, Enrique Mainé and Susana Lozano have intensively researched on the urban elites of Zaragoza (honoured citizens), while the status of the ‘neighbor’, which is not to be found in Barcelona, has been approached for the case of Valencia and other Castilian cities. See, for instance, E. Mainé, *Ciudadanos honrados de Zaragoza* and, for Valencia, M.Cabanes, *Avehinaments (València, s. XIV)*.

⁹⁵ The work of Daniel Lord Smail highlights significantly this issue. See, for instance, D.L. Smail, “Témoins et témoignages”, pp. 423-437.

⁹⁶ R. Mueller, *Immigrazione e cittadinanza*, pp. 42-46.

tional criteria defining and conditioning the citizen. To recreate these interesting reinterpretations was one of the main intentions of this paper. In so doing, the citizen of the Late Middle Ages revealed himself as a figure strongly determined by personal conditions, vicissitudes and experiences: a complex identity that integrated diversity and was full of nuances.

Interestingly, the analysis of the *Informacions* suggests that this flexible and rich dimension of citizen identity was born at the time that the municipality consolidated its autonomy over the Crown. It was just in the peak of its power that the Council of the Hundred seemed to promote a personal citizen identity that was flexible, diverse, and comprehensive but that was supposed to be at the basis of one solid and reliable citizenry. Here, I would only dare to suggest this existing tension between personal and collective identity, which reproduces to a certain extent the constant dialogue between the municipality and Barcelonians in the definition of citizenship. In spite of the limits of this research, which focuses on a limited chronological period and on one type of source, I would argue that all the above leads to considering the figure of the citizen and citizenship as a laboratory from which to explore the mechanisms that determined the building of the urban community. For instance, it seems that a fluid citizenry emerged in Barcelona as the best option with which to face the aftermath of the late 14th-century crisis. Indeed, it was surely this open and diverse citizenry that contributed actively with the Council in the recovery of the city that, after the effects of the plague, fiscal bankruptcy and economic pressure had become an important center of demographical and economic attraction, a trading center which maintained its dynamism until, at least, the 1430s.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that hierarchies were clearly established within this open and fluid citizenry, in which a diversity of ways of living and understanding citizenship were included. More specifically, strong social tensions towards a monopolizing oligarchy need to be considered, since they would play a crucial role in the confrontations of the Catalan Civil War during the second half of the 15th century. These tensions are, however, difficult to grasp from the *Informacions de la Ciutadania*, which tend to give a very optimistic

view of the cohesion of Barcelonian citizenry that needs to be nuanced.

These limitations notwithstanding, this paper has insisted on the value and uniqueness of this source, in an attempt of enhancing the methodological meaning and potential of medieval citizenship. Indeed, in highlighting the dialogical nature of citizenship and its strong cultural dimension, the case of Barcelona shows how the complex links between citizenship and identity formation can be used as an analytical tool with which to reflect on the diversity of strategies, conditions, cases and vicissitudes that determined the constant building of the urban community.

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