

# Medieval and Early Modern Whaling in Portugal

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**ABSTRACT** Mainland Portugal is not renowned for having been a whaling nation of significance. However, preliminary studies have brought to light enough historical references to suggest that whaling occurred from at least the 13th century, and the present work identifies 38 historical sources documenting whale use or whaling on the Portuguese coast between 1201 and 1728. A peak of whale-related sources occurred during the 13th and 14th centuries, and almost all Portuguese accounts are contemporary to those found from the French and Spanish Basque countries, such that the beginning of the whaling activity seems to be coeval. No geographical cluster of whaling activities can be established—they seem to have been unevenly scattered along the entire coastline. Nor can a chronological north–south movement of coastal whaling activities be discerned. The geographical and chronological patterns give support to the assumption that whaling was not introduced to Portugal by the Basques, who are known to have spread westward from the French Labour (11th century), via Golf of Biscay, to Asturias, and southward to Galicia (14th century). Rather, Portuguese whale use seems to have originated independently of Basque influence. Several of the sources specify “black whales” as the target species. This is consistent with modern knowledge about the distribution and migration patterns of North Atlantic right whales during Basque medieval and early modern whaling. The Portuguese sources are not clear as to numbers of whales taken, nor to the whaling technology used, but the activity was sufficiently well organized and developed to warrant the levying of tithes in the feudal system of 13th-century Portugal.

**Keywords:** Basque whaling, historical sources, Portugal, whale use, whaling



Whaling has emerged wherever human beings have encountered whales. The first western people to hunt large whales in an organized and intentional manner were the Basques, and they became the paradigms of early occidental whaling, establishing the way the industry would be characterized for hundreds of years (Ellis 2002; Fontaine 2007). The Basques pursued whales in small, open boats, attacking them with hand harpoons and lances. This basic technique, which began in the 1050s (Reguart 1791; Ciriquiain 1979; Aguilar 1986; Reeves and Smith 2006) was used for many centuries. This was a highly

specialized and dangerous activity and was conducted from the Basque shores (Huxley 2000). The Basques hunted mainly the Biscay right whale (also known as the Black right whale, *Eubalaena glacialis*), so called because of the early location of whaling in the Bay of Biscay (Aguilar 1981; Fontaine 2007).

The Basques ventured to distant regions across the Atlantic Ocean, where they set up permanent or semi-permanent shore stations for processing whales (Zubizarreta 1878; Aguilar 1986; Huxley 2000; Fontaine 2007). But before that, a local and regional expansion occurred, since its early beginnings along the shores of Bay of Biscay in the north of Spain (Azpiazu 2000; Huxley 2000). As shown by Aguilar (1986), Basque historical sources indicate that whaling started in the Basque French country and followed on over the years to the south and west, through a process of information and technology transfer. Along the French and Spanish Biscayan coasts there are several towns and villages whose seals and coats of arms depict whale-fishers. Ancient whaling bases have been discovered along the length of this coastline, which also encompasses the provinces of Santander, Asturias, and Galicia (Ellis 2002).

In contrast, mainland Portugal is not renowned for having been a whaling nation of significance. In the 20th century, there were two periods when short-lived enterprises operated whaling shore stations on the mainland and used modern, Norwegian-type whaling technology (Brito 2007). Apart from the important presence of land-based whaling from the archipelagos of Madeira and Azores, also mainly during the 20th century, no other significant episodes of whaling are historically recognized for Portugal. However, preliminary studies have brought to light enough historical references to suggest that this activity has occurred since at least the 13th century (Brito 2009a). At that time, several whale products started to be utilized in different Portuguese fishing villages (Castro 1966; Calado 1994). Also, the Portuguese shoreline is, and most certainly was, favored by good tides, temperate climate, and an abundant and diverse marine fauna, and was amenable to several different fisheries and to marine salt extraction. Consequently, it is not surprising that medieval Portuguese populations turned to the exploration of local marine resources following a probably much longer tradition (Castro 1966). The same is true for the exploitation of large whales and small cetaceans in the inshore waters of mainland Portugal, which seems to be significantly older than expected.

The objectives of the present study were to establish if medieval and early modern whaling occurred in Portugal, when it started, its temporal and geographical span, and the species captured.

## Methods

In order to understand what occurred historically on the continental shores of Portugal, an extensive search for Portuguese sources was conducted. An investigation was carried out mainly at the National Library (Lisbon), where important references on the history of Portugal, as well as for the history of fisheries, were consulted. Research was also conducted in some regional archives, such as those at Nazaré, Sesimbra, and Faro, where old village books and church documents were studied. As a result, the present work identifies 38 historical sources documenting whale use (scavenging of stranded whales) or whaling on the Portuguese coast between the years 1201 and 1728 (see Appendix 1). Primary sources are presented whenever they were directly consulted. All secondary sources consulted and referred include verifiable primary sources and do not merely reflect the opinions of the authors concerned.

A review of Basque whaling in published scientific and historical bibliography was also undertaken and a comparison with the Portuguese sources is presented. The research on

Basque whaling sources was limited to the beginning of the activity in northern Spain and how this evolved in the Bay of Biscay and adjacent shorelines, as this was the main historical material to compare with possible Portuguese data. No information was compiled regarding the migration of Basque whalers and expeditions to northern European seas and across the Atlantic to North America (for a review, see du Pasquier 2000). Also, Portuguese influence on transatlantic and overseas whaling (coast of Brazil and some tentative offshore voyages) is not explored in this paper. The paper concentrates on the beginning of the activity of whaling or whale use in mainland Portugal and documents the available sources.

## Results

### *Basque Whaling Sources*

A compilation of Basque sources (Aguilar 1986) shows the evolution of the number of whaling references for that region, starting earlier in the French Basque Country (Figure 1) and moving west and south along the northern shore of the Iberian Peninsula. A peak in whaling sources emerges in the 13th century for the French Basque country and later on during the 16th century for Galicia, where whaling activities only began in the 14th century (Table I). Following this known migration pattern of Basque whaling, it would be expected that whaling in Portugal started from the 15th century onward, and if so, the main historical sources would be found for during and after that period. A very comprehensive review of the history of whaling and of cetaceans in Galicia and Spain, covering the period from the Middle Ages (13th century) up to the present time, is given by Hansen (2010).



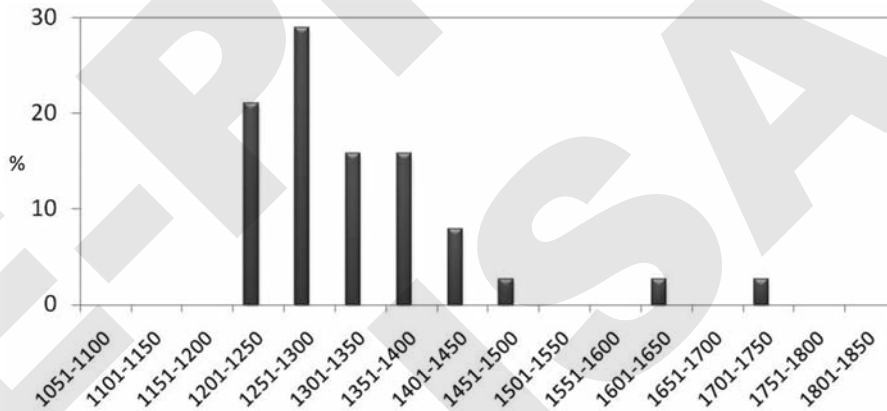
**Figure 1.** Map of Iberian Peninsula and geographical localization of French Basque Country (1) and Spanish Basque Country (2) where early Basque whaling occurred, and Galicia (3), the last stronghold of Iberian Basque whaling.

**Table I.** Location of Basque whaling through number of historical sources (*n*), period of its occurrence, and peak of the activity within the respective period (data compiled from Aguilar 1986).

Location	<i>n</i>	Period	Peak
French Basque Country	22	11th to 16th centuries	13th century
Spanish Basque Country	77	12th to 18th centuries	14th to 16th centuries
Santander	54	12th to 18th centuries	16th to 17th centuries
Asturias	38	13th to 18th centuries	16th to 17th centuries
Galicia	33	14th to 18th centuries	16th to 17th centuries

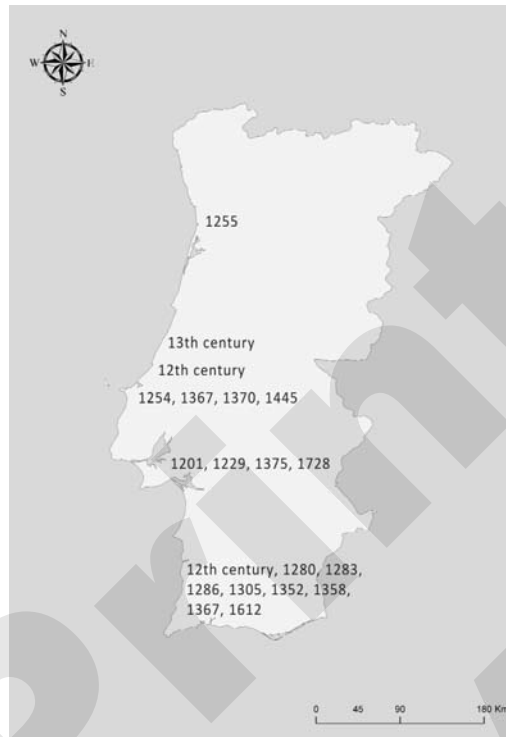
**Portuguese Whaling Sources**

For Portugal it is known that fish (which also includes shellfish), dolphins, and whales, were exploited, exported, and internally traded since the medieval period (Castro 1966), but no study has ever been dedicated to just whaling. My extensive review produced a compilation of Portuguese primary and secondary sources with whaling related references (Appendix 1), and the evolution of the number of these references, from the 13th to the 18th century, is presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Percentage distribution of historical written sources related to whaling/whale use operations in Portugal mainland over time: 50-year periods, starting in 1051 and ending in 1850 (*n* = 38)

A total of 38 references and historical sources were found regarding whale use (scavenging of stranded whales) or whaling in mainland Portugal between the years 1201 and 1728. A peak of whale-related sources appears referring to the 13th and 14th centuries, and almost all Portuguese sources (92%) are contemporary to what can be found for the French and Spanish Basque countries. Whale hunting also seems to have occurred in several places along the Portuguese shores (Figure 3) and to have been unevenly scattered along the entire coastline. Also, there is no temporal continuity along the coast as would be expected if a transfer of techniques had occurred from the Bay of Biscay and Galicia to the north of Portugal. Rather, Portuguese whale use and whaling clearly seem to have been activities originating independently of Basque influence.



**Figure 3.** Map of Portugal and distribution of some Portuguese whaling sources along the coastline, showing years of respective historical references in each geographical location.

Portuguese whaling references are not as detailed as the Basque sources when referring to applied techniques and species captured (both on species identification and number of individuals). It can only be assumed that very simple technology was used: probably lookouts on land, open boats travelling close to shore, and hand harpoons, considering this was typical for the Basque whaling (Reguart 1791). These were the same techniques transferred to the Azores (Ribeiro 1998) and Brazil (Ellis 1969) by early settlers (Brito 2009b).

Also, referring to captured species, there is one historical source cited in Castro (1966) referring to the “black whale” that could be caught off Pederneira, Nazaré, west central Portugal (see Appendix 1). This generic name probably refers to North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*). Some of the historical sources considered here also refer to the capture of dolphins (“toninhas,” “delfins,” and “golfinhos”) or other small odontocetes, so we can assume that, alongside whaling, dolphin hunting also occurred, using several distinct methods (from harpoons to nets and other fishing gear). This traditional fishery was also common in the north of Iberia (Galicia and Bay of Biscay) since medieval times until the 19th century, both using opportunistic and direct methods (Hansen 2009).

### ***Importance of Whaling in Portugal***

Whaling or whale use must have assumed some relevance in certain coastal areas. At the 600-year-old St. Leonardo Church at Atouguia da Baleia (situated in the central west coast), a left baleen whale jawbone, reportedly some 500 years old, is still on display (Figure 4)—an iconic



**Figure 4.** Left baleen whale mandible on display at S. Leonardo Church (Atouguia da Baleia, central west Portuguese coast).

presence and showing its importance to the village. In the 13th century, the king ordered the payment of a debt to a monastery, with the money obtained from whale oil and fish captured in that region, and in the 14th century special benefits were given to local fishermen (sometimes referred to as whalers) (Castro 1966; Calado 1994): *the whalers of the region obtained from the king the annulment of a previous tax, which was substituted for another so that the thirty rowers of the region were not obliged to offer their services to royal whaling [activities].*

In medieval Portugal, taxes were obtained and revenues were paid from the communities occupied with marine activities, such as fishing and salt-extraction. Along the entire coast, maritime products were subjected to different taxes which were to be paid to the individual or institution entitled by feudal law, sometimes to the king, or to a monastery, cathedral, or military order, or even to a land-holding aristocrat (Castro 1966). This occurred both in the small villages of the littoral, as well as in more highly developed areas. In addition to custom duties paid at port and tithes and other taxes levied upon the transactions of these products, such as by the monger and price-fixer, there was also a tax that was paid directly by the fishermen. This tax was quite high and could even reach half the value of the fish and salt obtained, initially paid as a percentage of products in-kind, and later, as society evolved, it was converted into monetary payments (Castro 1966).

Besides the levying of tithes on captured whale and fish, there are also references to tithes being levied on stranded or captured whales in this region. Frequently, the whales stranded on the sea shore were included in the feudal right to the “sea spoils” specified in detail as “ship, boat or anything with its merchandise, or a whale and everything else the sea throws away” (Calado 1994). In Atouguia da Baleia and several other coastal locations, the king kept his

royal rights on whaling and whale products, including stranding remains, instead of ceding it to the land owners (Castro 1966). Again, this testifies to the economic importance of the activity and the value of the products obtained from it. This is a feudal-law practice consistent with similar feudal regulations in Europe and with medieval customary maritime law applicable to wrecks and “royal fish.” The whale was a magic and symbolic “monster” that soon became a mundane animal (Szabo 2008). In fact, as in other parts of Europe, whales were an exploitable marine resource, and early strandings and captures were of great interest and of significant economic value to distinct social groups of medieval Portugal.

## Discussion

The economic realities of medieval life demanded the exploitation of all available protein resources, including whales (Szabo 2008). Though archival or archaeological sources are scarce, methods to obtain whale products may have involved scavenging of stranded whales or of whale carcasses found floating dead in the sea (Barthelmeß 1999; 2003). Like the Basques, medieval Portuguese sought to supplement a limited supply of plant and animal protein from the land with protein from the sea (Castro 1966; Fontaine 2007).

For the Basque country, hundreds of documents, acts, contracts, drafts of law suits, and so on, have been found, that shed light on the importance of early shore-based whaling and of Basque maritime traffic and expertise-transfer across the Atlantic (Huxley 2000; Fontaine 2007). For Portugal, fewer written sources are available, but their character—many legal texts—testifies to a certain economic importance of coastal whaling and related activities.

Historical sources strongly suggest that early whaling occurred off mainland Portugal. This activity did not emerge chronologically as a geographical displacement from the French and Spanish Basque countries along the coast of the Iberian Peninsula to the south, but rather as an activity contemporary to early Basque whaling. No geographical cluster of whaling activities can be established. Nor can a chronological north–south movement of coastal whaling activities be discerned. The absence of geographical and chronological patterns gives support to the assumption that whale use and whaling were not introduced to Portugal by the Basques, which are known to have spread westward from the French Labourd (ca. AD 1000), via Biscay (11th century), to Asturias, and from Cape Finisterre southward to Galicia (14th century). Portuguese early whaling probably emerged as an activity in its own right as a result of the capacity to exploit available marine resources.

In later periods, especially after the 16th century, Dutch, British, and other non-Basque entrepreneurs and whalers may also have been involved in the whaling trade from European ports and their overseas territories (du Pasquier 2000). However, the Basques and, probably, the Portuguese were pioneers in undertaking whaling off their local shores, as well as in the expansion of this activity across the world. Basque navigators had shown the way on whaling enterprises and, for a long time, Basque whalers and pilots were employed on many ships, transferring the experience gained during their heyday (Fontaine 2007). For instance, once in Brazil, during the 17th century, Portuguese settlers started a shore whaling business, but a Basque crew was recruited for the first couple of seasons (Ellis 1969).

Sources specify “black whales” as the possible target species in early whaling off mainland Portugal. It is generally accepted (Aguilar 1981) that the North Atlantic right whale was the target species for the Basque whalers, and so this species was most probably targeted off Portuguese shores. This is consistent with modern knowledge about the distribution and migration patterns of this species during Basque medieval and early modern whaling (Aguilar 1981). The

recent appearance of a right whale off the coast of Portugal is evidence of the potential presence of the species in the area (Martin and Walker 1997) in medieval times. Even though right whales dominated the catch, it is possible that other large whales, for example sperm whales, may have been caught as well (Graells 1889). Several documents mention that toothed whales, from the head of which several barrels of oil could be extracted, were hunted by Basque whalers (Fontaine 2007). So for Portugal, we can assume the capture of right whales, but cannot exclude other whale species and even small cetaceans.

The Portuguese sources are not conclusive as to the number of whales taken, nor to the whaling technology used, but the activity was sufficiently well organized and developed to warrant the levying of tithes in the feudal system of 13th century Portugal.

Whaling and the presence of whales off the Basque shores has created a typical iconography and culture in that region, over the centuries (Azpiazu 2000; Huxley 2000; Barthelmeß 2009), and again this is not found in mainland Portugal—this is one important aspect to be considered in the future. Further research on the economy and culture of medieval and early modern whaling in Portugal may not only result in a more complete picture of this activity, but may also shed light on the species exploited and the intensity of exploitation.

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**Appendix 1.** Medieval and early modern Portuguese whaling/whale use sources between the 12th and 18th centuries.

Year	Region	Original Citation	Translated Citation	Notes	Original Source	Secondary Source
12th century	Pederneira (Nazaré)	"que a baleia negra seja almotaçada per esta guisa"	"that the black whale be taxed in this way"	Referring to the taxes applied to several species of fish caught	Costumes de Torres Novas	Castro (1966)
12th century	Grijó (Algarve)	"baleião" "baleação"	"whaling"	References in several monastery books	Mosteiro do Salvador de Grijó	Castro (1966) Viterbo (1983)
12th century	Ericeira	"no século XII abundava a pesca destes cetáceos na Ericeira, como noutras regiões marítimas"	"in the 12th century, fishing these cetaceans was common in Ericeira and other maritime regions"		Floral da Ericeira de 1513	Alves (1993)
12th century	Berlengas/Baleal	"o rei ofereceu [aos monges do mosteiro das Berlengas] as ilhas (...) e as pescarias numa ilha em redor dessas ilhas, o que incluía tanto os peixes como as baleias"	"the king offered [to the monks of the Berlengas monastery] the islands (...) as well as the fisheries within a mile of these islands, including both fish and whales"			Calado (1994) Brito (2002)
12th century	Atouguia da Baleia	"as baleias arrojavam nas praias e morriam sufocadas sob o peso do próprio corpo"	"the whales were stranded on the beaches and suffocated under their own weight"			Calado (1994)
1201	Sesimbra	"almadravas do atum e da toninha"	"fishing traps for tuna and dolphin"		Foral de Sesimbra (1728)	Monteiro (2001)
1229	Ericeira	"ordem de Avis cobraria um vigésimo de cada baleia capturada e proibido que lá se faça baleação doutros lugares até ao fim"	"the order of Avis charge one-twentieth of each captured whale and strictly prohibited people from other places from whaling there"		Foral da Ericeira de 1229	Castro (1966)
1254	Salir e Atouguia da Baleia	"el-rei mandou aplicar ao pagamento de uma dívida existente para com um mosteiro as rendas que se tiravam do azeite das baleias como de outras cousas de parte de Salir e Atouguia"	"the king ordered the payment of an existing debt to a monastery with revenue from the oil extracted from whales and other things from the region of Salir and Atouguia"			Calado (1994)

1255	Vila Nova de Gaia	"respetante à normalização e arregimento legal de quantos se empregavam no arpoar das baleias"	"with regard to the standardization and legal regulation of all those who are employed in the harpooning of whales"	Forais de Gaia e Vila Nova (1943)	Mendonça (1966) Castro (1966)
1258	Porto	"pescadores só pagavam renda ao monarca pela pesca da baleia e doutros animais como golfinhos e toninhas, renda esta que atingia metade da produção"	"fishermen would only pay revenue to the king for fishing whales and other animals such as dolphins, on up to half of the production"	Inquirições de 1258	Castro (1966)
1266	Silves (Algarve)	"a coroa reteve para si as baleações ai existentes"	"the crown retained [the right to] whaling there"	Foral de Silves de 1266	Castro (1966)
1277	Castro Marim (Algarve)	"a coroa reteve para si as baleações ai existentes"	"the crown retained [the right to] whaling there"	Foral de Castro Marim de 1277	Castro (1966)
1279	No information	"um recibo passado por Afonso III aos seus uchões, nos dá a conhecer a entrada na régia ucharia de 2658 postas (talhos) de baleia, tudo resultado de serviços e colheitas de povoações piscatórias"	"a receipt from D. Afonso III to his kitchen staff informs us of the arrival in the royal storeroom of 2658 portions of whale (meat), resulting from [fishing] and harvesting by the [small] fishing villages"		Castro (1966)
1280	Atouguia da Baleia	"trinta remadores prestassem anualmente serviço ao rei, por mar, na sua frota, durante seis semanas, com suas armas e viveres"	"thirty rowers must offer their services annually to the king, by sea, in [their] fleet, for six weeks, with [their own] arms and supplies"	Letter from the king, Monumenta Henricina (1960–1974) 12 April 1280	
1280	Aljezur (Algarve)	"a coroa reteve para si as baleações ai existentes"	"the crown retained [the right to] whaling there"	Foral de Aljezur (12-VI-1280)	Castro (1966)
1283	Cacela (Algarve)	"a coroa reteve para si as baleações ai existentes"	"the crown retained [the right to] whaling there"	Foral de Cacela (17-VII-1283)	Castro (1966)
1286	Porches (Algarve)	"a coroa reteve para si as baleações ai existentes"	"the crown retained [the right to] whaling there"	Foral de Porches (20-VIII-1286)	Castro (1966)
1288	Vila Nova de Gaia	"respetante à normalização e arregimento legal de quantos se empregavam no arpoar das baleias"	"with regard to the standardization and legal regulation of all those who are employed in the harpooning of whales"	Forais de Gaia e Vila Nova (1943)	Mendonça (1965)

## Appendix 1. Medieval and early modern Portuguese whaling/whale use sources between the 12th and 18th centuries. ...continued from page 297

Year	Region	Original Citation	Translated Citation	Notes	Original Source	Secondary Source
13th century	Baleal	"a renda das casas de morada que el-rei mandou fazer no Baleal onde moram os baleeiros"	"the revenue from the houses constructed by the king in Baleal, where the whalers reside"			Calado (1994)
13th century	Torres Novas	"convem a saber, congros, ou cações, ou baleia, ou toninha, ou outros pescados que nam saia de scama"	"let it be known [this includes] congors, or sharks, or whale(s), or dolphin(s), or other fish without scales"	How much to be paid on the captured fish	Inéditos da História Portuguesa	Castro (1966)
13th century	No information	"as regateiras vendiam carne de baleias"	"the women fish-venders would sell whale meat"			Castro (1966)
1305	Algarve	"D. Dinis autoriza o seu lançamento a João Momedes e Bonanati e lhe concede um empréstimo de 1500 dobras, mediante o pagamento da dzima e sétima parte dos atuns, espadartes e golfinhos capturados"	"D. Dinis authorizes João Momedes and Bonanati, and concedes a loan of 1500 dobras, to be paid in parts of a tithe and one-seventh of the value of the captured tuna, swordfish, and dolphin"			Castro (1966)
1335/1336	No information	"e o dito rendeiro deve a haver todas as baleias cocas busaranhas roazes sereas e todos os peixes semelhantes a estes que os baleeiros matarem"	"and the said tenant must have all the whales, cocas, busaranhas, roazes sereas and all the fish similar to those which the whalers kill"			Castro (1966)
1340	All the coastline	"concedeu todas as baleações do reino a Afonso Domingues em que se obrigava o fornecimento de sal necessário em troca de determinadas rendas anuais"	"[he] conceded all the whaling of the Kingdom to Afonso Domingues, who was obliged to supply the salt required in exchange for the fixed annual revenues"	Letter from the king	Carta a 28 de Setembro de 1378	Castro (1966)
1352	Algarve	"em Tavira morriam muitas baleias e em Porto Novo morriam igualmente baleias vindo almocreves carregá-las"	"in Tavira many whales died and also in Porto Novo and carters come to collect them"	Letter from the Village Council	Carta da vila a 1 de Setembro de 1352	Castro (1966)

1359	Lagos (Algarve)	"confirmados os privilégios dos matorais da sua baleação em Março de 1359"	"confirmed the privileges of the individuals responsible for the whaling in March 1359"	Silva (1953) Castro (1966)
1367	Atougia da Baleia	"os baleeiros da região conseguiram que el-rei anulasse o imposto que pagavam anteriormente substituído-o por outro em troca de não fazerem parte do recrutamento de trinta remeiros do concelho para as galés nem de prestarem serviço nas baleações reais"	"the whalers of the region obtained from the king the annulment of a previous tax, which was substituted for another so that the thirty rowers of the region were not obliged to offer their services to royal whaling [activities]"	Castro (1966) Calado (1994)
1367	Silves (Algarve)	"D. Fernando doava ao bispo de Silves uma parte de cada baleia pescada no Algarve"	"D. Fernando offered to the Bishop of Silves a part of each whale caught in Algarve"	Foral de Silves de 1367 Castro (1966)
1370	Atougia da Baleia	"concedidos a Aires Gomes da Silva os direitos reais da Atougia salvo os das baleias que permaneciam para a coroa"	"conceded to Aires Gomes the royal rights of Atougia, except for those concerning to the whales belonging to the crown"	Castro (1996)
1375	Sines/Sesimbra	"entre Sines e Sesimbra pesca-se atuns e espadartes, toninhas e golfinhos, alguma balea ou bateato ou serea ou coca ou roaz ou musaranha ou outro pescado grande"	"between Sines and Sesimbra, tuna and swordfish, dolphins, some whale or small whale or serea or coca or roaz or musaranha or other large fish are fished"	Silva (1953) Castro (1966)
14th century	Algarve	"hum objecto mui attendivel da nossa industria nacional a pescaria da balea feita nas costas do Algarve"	"an important goal of our national industry is the whale-fishing on the Algarve coast"	Silva (1953)
14th century	Atougia and Algarve	"entrada da baleia vinda da Atougia e também do Algarve"	"the arrival of whales from Atougia and also from Algarve"	Silva (1953) Information from Lisbon border

Appendix 1. Medieval and early modern Portuguese whaling/whale use sources between the 12th and 18th centuries. ...continued from page 299

Year	Region	Original Citation	Translated Citation	Notes	Original Source	Secondary Source
1445	Baleal	"regente D. Pedro emitiu uma carta, em que, a pedido do infante D. Henrique, privilegiava na forma constante da mesma, até vinte homens que morassem continuamente no seu lugar da Baleia, a fim de ele ser povoado"	"King D. Pedro issued a letter stating that, at the request of Infante D. Henrique, he would continue to give privileges for up to twenty men to reside in Baleal to maintain the population there"	Letter from the king, 14 January 1445	Monumenta Henricina (1960–1974)	
1486	No information	"já noutros tempos foram feitas casas em que se salgavam as baleias e em que assim jazendo por terra poderá já haver 30 até 40 anos"	"in the past houses were constructed to salt the whale [meat] but they have been abandoned for at least thirty or forty years"			Pedrosa (1987)
16th century	Ericeira	"no século XVI, a raia, o rodvalho, a pescada, ocupavam os lugares mais importantes nas pescarias, para além das toninhas"	"in the 16th century, rays, hakes, and other fishes were the most important catches, besides dolphins"		Foral da Ericeira de 1513	Alves (1993)
1612	Faro	"e assim são nossas todas as baleas e outros peixes reaes que vieram a costa ou os tomaram e mataram por qualquer maneira os quais não serão apropriados a nenhuma venda da dita vila"	"and hence all the whales and other royal fish that come to the shore or are taken and killed in any manner are ours [and] cannot by any purchase be appropriated by the said village"		Livro do Direito das Mercadorias (1612)	
1728	Sesimbra	"declarem e pagarem a dita Igreja uma dizima de todos os pescados e sardinhas, e toninhas que eles pescarem e tomarem na costa do mar"	"they declare and pay to the said church a tithe from all fish and sardines, and dolphins, that they catch and take from the sea coast"		Livro do Tombo da Vila de Sesimbra (1728)	