

NEW YORK MEETING (December 27, 1985)

The Academy held its semi-annual meeting at the New York Marriott Marquis Hotel in conjunction with the American Historical Association. The program, entitled "The Crown of Aragon in the Middle Ages," was chaired by James W. Brodman; comment was provided by Robert I. Burns, S.J. Summaries of the papers that were presented follow.

Jill R. Webster (University of Toronto), "Apostasy in the Crown of Aragon"

Our long-term research into the history of the Carmelites and Franciscans in the Crown of Aragon has turned up some interesting documents on apostasy, defined for this purpose as a change of faith, heresy or an abandonment of the religious life. Some friars changed from one Order to another, often finally abandoning the Order of their second choice and either opting for a third or returning to lay life. What made these friars become apostates? To what extent does this minority reflect changing ideas which later culminated in the Reformation? Was this a symptom of social malaise? For the moment these questions must remain unanswered but we hope that further research will provide the solution to them. Fr. Joan Guerau of the Franciscans of Gerona left the House after his novitiate, sowed his "wild oats" and on obtaining special permission to do so, returned to the Franciscans. Fr. Ramon de Luvia became tired of the Cistercian Order, transferred to the Franciscans and finally reverted to the Cistercians at the monastery of Poblet. Two fugitives from the Franciscan house at Calatayud, Fr. Martin Ouent(?) and Fr. Martin Pere raided the Xativa house from which they stole altar cloths and wounded some of the friars. Indeed, at times, friars even committed murder -- to wit the case of Fr. Egidi Mercader. Fr. Guillem Escriva, a Carmelite, was recommended to the patron of the Perelada House, the viscount of Rocaberti, presumably because he too had committed some crime. Another Carmelite, Fr. Bernat d'Algerna, a former Dominican, returned to old haunts and stole a box of money left there for safekeeping. Well-known is the extreme case of Fr. Anselm Turmeda who became a Muslim and that of the many beguins and spiritual Franciscans of the Tarragona region of the early 14th century. These and other instances of unorthodox behavior are scattered through the Chancellery Registers of the Kings of Aragon. We wonder whether these and other documents pointing to the disaffection with the religious scene of their time can be seen as mild protests and therefore a

part of a slow reformation in thought in Aragon. Should we begin to consider the possibility of an incipient Reformation in the Iberian Peninsula, traditionally considered to be untouched by the currents of reform? Certainly theological thought in the late Middle Ages was not too different in the Peninsula from elsewhere. At present, however, we have insufficient evidence to support such a conclusion but believe that future research may well lead us to challenge the traditional view that the Reformation was solely a northern European phenomenon.

Mark D. Meyerson (Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto), "The War Against Islam and the Muslims at Home: The Mudejar Predicament in the Kingdom of Valencia during the Reign of Fernando 'el catolico'"

Fernando's internal policy of fostering communities of Muslims, or Mudejars, in the territories of his own Crown of Aragon seems at odds with a foreign policy which involved crusades against the Islamic states of Granada and the Maghrib, and encounters with the Ottoman Turks further east. This contradiction can be explained partly by the union of two Crowns with somewhat divergent interests. Whereas Isabel's Castile supplied the impetus and the majority of the manpower for the crusades, still vital in Aragon were the habits of Mediterranean frontier life, which admitted the necessity of minority enclaves and impelled Catalan and Valencian toward the Maghrib and Granada for commerce... This paper discusses how conflict with specific Muslim foes affected Fernando's perception of and policy toward his Muslim subjects in the kingdom of Valencia, and how the Mudejars themselves responded to the intensification of the perennial confrontation between Christianity and Islam. Of the Islamic powers which Fernando faced, the expanding empire of the Ottomans posed the greatest threat. The danger peaked in August, 1480, when the forces of Mehmet the Conqueror captured Otranto on the Italian mainland, possibly as a prelude to the conquest of Sicily, an Aragonese possession, and of Rome itself. The crisis passed when the death of Mehmet compelled a Turkish withdrawal. During these critical months, Spain's ascendancy over Islam in the west suddenly seemed precarious. Turkish advances rendered the sultanate of Granada more formidable and the allegiance of Fernando's Muslim subjects more uncertain. Fernando was anxious about the possibility of a Mudejar reaction in Valencia to Ottoman successes... By way of conclusion, the international clash between Christianity and Islam did not have in Valencia an impact sufficient to unravel the resilient fabric of Muslim-Christian convivencia. The Mudejars did not express their identification with Islam by rebelling against their crusading king; nor did that king harshly oppress his Muslim subjects while he was warring with Islamic states. The occasional Mudejar collusion with Muslim enemies was borne as a customary feature of frontier life, an insignificant annoyance in comparison with the economic

benefits accruing from the Mudejar presence. A key factor in explaining why Valencia's Christians and Muslims did not rise up in violence against each other in response to the promotion of crusade is that for them Christian-Muslim conflict, on either the local or international scale, was not anything new. Ever-present in the social formula of convivencia itself was the element of ideological antagonism, which was either mitigated or aggravated by economic and social factors. Indeed, economic and social distress, the result of forces external to the fundamental religious difference, was usually most responsible for the eruption of violence. More novel than war with Islam was the harnessing of Aragon to the Castilian juggernaut, which, while it allowed for the final conquest of Granada, also unleashed forces within Valencia that threatened its traditional Mudejarism. Although the union of the two Crowns set the stage for Spain's imperial achievements, it redirected the destinies of its constituent societies in sometimes tragic ways.

Leila Berner (Swarthmore College), "A Modest Enterprise: Jewish Moneylenders in Thirteenth-Century Barcelona"

Focusing on Barcelona during the reign of Jaume I, 'el Conqueridor,' (1213-1276), this paper examined the extent and scope of Jewish moneylending activities in that city. Several stubborn stereotypes regarding Jewish domination and monopolization of the moneylending profession are addressed and refuted in this paper. Careful quantitative and qualitative examination of over 500 documents from the Archives of the Crown of Aragon and the Capitular Archives of Barcelona reveals that Jewish loans to Barcelona's Christians were modest, the scale of operations was small, Jews did not depend on their profits as moneylenders to support themselves and their families and they exercised no significant control over the city's general economy. Additionally, evidence emerges that Jews also borrowed from Christians and that there were even partnerships between Jewish and Christian moneylenders. Finally, the common image of the Jewish usurer engendering Christian enmity and fueling the fires of medieval anti-Semitism is dispelled by the archival records, which indicate a comfortable and pragmatic reciprocal relationship between members of both faiths.

Clifford R. Backman (University of California, Los Angeles), "Personal Relations between James II of Aragon and Frederick III of Sicily"

Kings Frederick III of Sicily (1296-1337) and James II of Aragon (1292-1323) ruled the western Mediterranean in the closing years of the dramatic War of the Sicilian Vespers, which rocked the medieval world for more than twenty years, and beyond. Out of these years of conflict emerged the extensive realms of Aragon, which stretched from the Catalan and Valencian coasts in the west

to the duchy of Athens in the east, and an independent Sicily freed for the first time in her history from foreign domination and governed at last by a power of her own choosing. In many ways the reign of Frederick III represents the highest point in Sicilian history: though no longer very rich (as in Norman days), the unhappy island was at least governed by a friendly and familiar authority. This period also marks the zenith of the wealth and international importance of the Crown of Aragon under Frederick's brother, James II. The precise political relationship between Sicily and the Crown of Aragon in these years has long interested, and usually, confused medieval historians. One reason for this is the contradictory nature of that relationship: outwardly and officially hostile to each other, the two kingdoms actually (though secretly) maintained close and friendly ties. The personal relations between the two brother-kings paralleled this contradiction. Frederick and James, though diplomatic foes, maintained close and affectionate ties--even to the point of exchanging warm letters while their armies clashed with each other. Throughout their long reigns Frederick and James continually took diplomatic and even military steps against each other; and yet each usually gave the other advanced warning of those very actions. The most remarkable example of this curious state of affairs is the letter sent by James to Frederick just prior to the Battle of Cape Orlando (4 July 1299), in which James warned Frederick of the size of the army being sent against him and even suggested to him the most effective defense to prepare. The complexity of this relationship (which is closely connected to their political connections) has caused many historians to shy away from it. It cowed even Jesus Martinez-Ferrando, who omitted the issue entirely in his otherwise magisterial study of Jaime II de Aragon: su vida familiar. Clearly the diplomatic relations between the two kingdoms cannot be understood without first grasping the nature of the personal relations between the two brothers. Fortunately an abundance of archival materials is available. Frederick and James were prolific letter-writers, both to each other and to other friends and family members as well. From these private letters, plus more formal diplomatic correspondence and a variety of narrative sources, it is possible to study this curious relationship in detail. After sifting through the evidence, this study concludes that the two kings remained personally devoted to each other; that their political conflicts were forced upon them by their ties to other Mediterranean powers; and that their letters give strong evidence that James, though officially opposed to Frederick (in order to placate the papacy and the House of Anjou), actually though secretly was his brother's strongest ally.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

The assets and expenditures of the Academy as of December 1, 1985 are stated below:

Cash received from the previous secretary-treasurer: \$1,248.96

Income (February 2 to December 1, 1985)

Dues.....288.00
Interest..... 65.10
Check credit..... 8.94
TOTAL INCOME.....362.04

Expenditures

NEWSLETTER.....166.93
Check charge..... 5.90
Postage..... 7.99
Dues notice..... 26.37
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:207.19

Net income: 154.85

Carryover: 1248.96

Current Assets: \$1,403.81

UP-COMING PROGRAMS

The Twenty-first International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, at Kalamazoo, is the site for an Academy-sponsored program entitled "Medieval Catalonia." This is scheduled for May 9, 1986 at 3:30 p.m. in Room 203. The papers to be presented are:

Donald J. Kagay, "Noble Dissent Under Jaume I"

Martha J. Pierce, "The Urban Patriciate and Business in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Century Barcelona"

A session entitled "The Writing of History in Medieval Spain during the Middle Ages," has been organized for the December meeting with the AHA in Chicago. Thomas N. Bisson will preside and a comment will be provided by James F. Powers. The papers include:

Lynn H. Nelson, "Aragonese Historiography in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries"

Bernard F. Reilly, "Latin Historical Writings in Leon-Castilla during the High Middle Ages"

NOTICES

The editorial board of Medieval Iberian Peninsula. Texts and Studies, published by E.J. Brill of Leiden, has recently been constituted anew. The new editors are Professors Rachel Arie of Paris and Hans-Rudolf Singer of Mainz. Both these and the Pub-

lisher hope to bring life again to the series, which had led a quiet existence for many years. They invite authors of suitable manuscripts to submit their works for consideration. The series includes monographs and text editions relevant for the study of medieval Iberia, both Christian and Muslim. Authors may be asked to find a subsidy towards the printing cost of their books. Authors of suitable English- or French-language manuscripts may write to Prof. Arie at 7, rue Catulle Mendès, 75017 Paris; those of German-language manuscripts to Prof. Singer at Bahnhofstrasse 6, 6728 Germersheim, Federal Republic of Germany.

The Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (October 23-25) invites proposals for papers on any topic in the sixteenth century. Contact Prof. Helen Nader, Department of History BH 742, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

The Noticiero alfonsi is an annual bilingual newsletter constituting an official international and interdisciplinary nexus dedicated to the legacy of Alfonso X. Its purpose is to list every scholarly or cultural interpretation of this legacy since 1 January 1980. Four issues have been published since 1982 listing over 75 books, 190 articles, and 110 conference papers. The Noticiero alfonsi is available for US\$3 per issue for individuals and US\$5 for institutions from: Anthony J. Cardenas, Modern and Classical Languages, Wichita State University, Wichita KS 67208.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual membership dues in the Academy remain at \$3.00 per year and are now due for 1986. Your check made out to the AARHMS should be sent to the secretary-treasurer: James W. Brodman, Department of History, University of Central Arkansas, Conway AR 72032.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Academy is in the process of preparing its session for the 1987 Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo. Members who wish to propose an entire panel or an individual paper are invited to send their suggestion to the secretary-treasurer (see address above) prior to May 30, 1986.

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

J.N. Hillgarth has published Visigothic Spain, Byzantium and the Irish (London: Variorum, 1985); with G. Silano, "A Compilation of the Diocesan Synods of Barcelona (1354)," Mediaeval Studies 46 (1984): 78-157; and "Spanish Historiography and Iberian Reality," History and Theory 24 (1985): 23-43.

Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne served as medieval editor for the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1979) and is working on St. Augustine's "Sermons on the Saints" for the Ancient Christian Writers Series.

James W. Brodman has published Ransoming Captives in Crusader Spain: The Order of Merced on the Christian-Islamic Frontier (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).

Norman Roth has published "Two Jewish Courtiers of Alfonso X Called Zag (Issac)," Sefarad 43 (1984): 75-85; "Again Alfonso VI, 'Imbaratur dhu'l-Millatayn,' and Some New Data," B.H.S. 51 (1984): 165-69; and ibid. 62 (1985): 179-82.

Robert I. Burns, S.J. has recently published The Worlds of Alfonso the Learned and James the Conqueror: Intellect and Force in the Middle Ages (Princeton, 1985); Alfonso the Learned, Emperor of Culture, 1284-1284 (New York: Fordham University Press, 1985); his The Jesuits and the Indian Wars of the Northwest has recently been reprinted by the University of Idaho press. Father Burns received a doctorate honoris causa from the University of Valencia on November 29, 1985; his address "Years of Triumph, Years of War: The Muslim, Christian and Jewish Communities of Valencia in the Registers of James the Conqueror" has been published by the University of Valencia as a monograph volume.

Father Burns has also been named to the editorial board of Anuario de Estudios Medievales and has received a grant from US-Spain Treaty funds for a project undertaken jointly with the Department of Arabic at the University of Alicante.

To: James W. Brodman, Editor
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Conway, AR 72032

From: _____

Dues enclosed: _____ \$3.00 for 1986

Subject: Contributions for October, 1986 Newsletter

Recent Publications:

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New Appointments:

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