

NEWSLETTER
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RESEARCH HISTORIANS ON MEDIEVAL SPAIN

Volume 8:2

April, 1982

DECEMBER, 1981 MEETING (LOS ANGELES)

No business was transacted at the winter meeting of the Academy; the principal activity was the session, entitled "Military and Religious Orders of the Iberian Peninsula" and organized by Professor Paul Freedman of Vanderbilt University. Summaries of the following papers have been submitted for inclusion in this edition of the Newsletter:

1. "Christian Settlement in the Urban Reconquista Frontier,"
Jane C. Wilman (University of California, Los Angeles)

The settlement of the Reconquista frontier in the Mediterranean littoral was problematic for Jaume I, king of the confederated Crown of Aragon. Within the perspective of the attempt to colonize and control the newly conquered land of Valencia, it is instructive to examine the career of one settler as paradigmatic for the larger movement. Using forthcoming and unpublished documents from the royal chancery archives of the Archivo de la Corona de Aragon in Barcelona, the career of one settler has been traced from his earliest mention in the royal records (a land grant in Valencia's Repartimiento) to orders issued to his daughters' guardian following his death in 1271. We learn not only the public aspects of his life, such as property ownership and service in public office, but personal aspects as well: his marriage in early 1258, his four daughters (two of whom were illegitimate), and his circle of friends and fellow entrepreneurs. Through an in-depth examination of one settler's life, a tentative pattern of one class of colonist may be formed.

2. "Medieval Urban Topography: Case Studies of the Jewish Quarter of Thirteenth-Century Barcelona,"
Leila Berner (University of California, Los Angeles)

This paper is the result of a combination of archaeological and documentary evidence obtained during Ms. Berner's recent research stay in Barcelona. The documentary evidence, gleaned primarily from the royal registers of Jaume I, el Conqueridor (1213-1276) at the Archives of the Crown of Aragon, reveal much valuable information concerning Barcelona's Jewish community in its physical environment. Ms. Berner used this data to discuss Jews' interactions with their Christian neighbors, the establishment of public community structures (such as a synagogue, ritual bath, public oven, etc.) and the Jews' activities in the purchase and sale of real estate in Barcelona and its environs. The central focus of the paper is on a royal concession to a prominent Jew, Astrug Bensenyor,

to make repairs and changes in his home within Barcelona's Jewish quarter (the calle iudaica). In the process of investigating this grant, Ms. Berner attempted to solve some important topographical puzzles concerning the Jewish quarter. The results of her research revealed the exact location of Astrug Bonsenyor's home and the location of an important entrance gate into the Jewish quarter. Neither the house nor the entrance way has been hitherto pinpointed with any certainty. In addition to the archaeological and documentary discussion, the methodological point of Ms. Berner's paper was to illustrate how specific, small-scale studies (of individual houses, gates, streets, etc.) are essential to the social historian who must use the tools of many trades to establish a comprehensive picture of the social history of a particular city or ethnic group.

SPRING MEETING (Kalamazoo, May 8, 1982)

A session entitled "Historico-Literary Relationships in León-Castile," has been organized by Professor Robert A. MacDonald of the University of Richmond. It is scheduled for 3:30 p.m., Room 314. The usual business meeting will follow. Papers to be presented include:

1. "The Portrait of Alfonso VI in Jiménez de Rada's De Rebus Hispaniae,"
Bernard Reilly (Villanova University)
2. "Alfonso VI: Hero in Search of a Poet,"
Salvador Martínez (New York University)
3. "The Chronicles of Pero López de Ayala: A Literary Form of History,"
Heanon M. Wilkins and Constance L. Wilkins (Miami University)

WINTER MEETING (Washington, December, 1982):

A session, entitled "The Western Mediterranean Crescent: Catalonia and Languedoc in the Central Middle Ages," has been organized by Professor James F. Powers of the College of the Holy Cross. Comment will be provided by Professor Bernard Reilly of Villanova University. Papers include:

1. "Southern France or Valencia at Mid-Thirteenth Century: Last Chance for a Choice by Jaume the Conqueror,"
Robert I. Burns, S. J. (University of California, Los Angeles)
2. "The Mercedarians in Perpignan,"
James W. Brodman (University of Central Arkansas)
3. "The Papacy as the Leader of Southern French and Catalan Society, 900-1417,"
Archibald R. Lewis (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)

CALLS FOR PAPERS:

1. Ninth St. Louis Conference on Manuscript Studies, October 15-16, 1982. Participants are invited to present papers in these areas of manuscript research: codicology, paleography, illuminations and texts. Duration is limited to twenty minutes. Abstracts

should be sent (before June 1, 1982) to: Conference Committee, Manuscripts, Pius XII Memorial Library, St. Louis University, 3655 West Pine, St. Louis, Missouri 63108.

2. Eighth Conference of the Southeastern Medieval Association, October 15-16, 1982. Program contributions should be addressed to Professor Bonnie Wheeler, c/o SEMA Conference, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX 75275. Questions concerning arrangements can be sent to Professor Jeremy Adams at the same address.

ACTAE ALFONSINAE seeks to serve as a clearing house for recent, current and future scholarly activity dedicated to the cultural legacy of Alfonso X. It solicits notices of work in the areas of history, art, music, literature and language. Actae Alfonsinae will be distributed free of charge upon indication of interest. Letters of interest, support and information, should be sent to: Anthony J. Cardenas, Seminary of Medieval Spanish Studies, 1130 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706, or after July 31, 1982, to: Department of Romance Languages, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67208.

OTHER NOTICES

Annual dues in the amount of \$3.00 should be paid as soon as possible to: Professor Bernard Reilly, Secretary/Treasurer of the AARHMS, Department of History, Villanova University, Villanova, PA 19085. Professor Reilly also solicits comments and suggestions for a proposal to include as a regular feature of the Newsletter reviews of books not ordinarily treated in the major journals.

The Newsletter continues to be interested in providing a bibliography of current publications of the membership. These along with any changes of address should be sent, in time for the October 1 and April 1 deadlines, to: Professor James W. Brodman, Department of History, University of Central Arkansas, Conway, AR 72032.