

REVIEWS

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VISIGODOS, 2012. *Visigodos y Omeyas: el territorio*, L. Caballero, P. Mateos i T. Cordero (eds.), Mérida, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 340 p. ISBN: 978-84-00-09457-7

The 1999 International Symposium *Visigodos y Omeyas: Un debate entre la Tardoantigüedad y la Alta Edad Media* held at Merida, whose proceedings were published in the No. 23 of the AEspA in 2000, paved the way for later scientific meetings and publications on this interesting period of history. The symposium triggered a still-continuing debate that appeals to European historians interested either in archaeology or in documents. Ceramics, sculpture, and architecture have been the object of analysis during the subsequent meetings, but always focusing on the period between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.

The volume we are reviewing contains the contributions presented at the 2008 meeting held at Merida. The topic was territorial analysis: forms of human settlement, changes in the forms of resource utilization, definition of spaces of agricultural production and livestock farming, or spatial organization around cities such as Toledo. In all these cases the starting point is the same: the archaeological data obtained either from excavations in extension, isolated interventions or prospections, while not neglecting the input of written sources.

The first three contributions are more general, the approach being theoretical and methodological, and they also define new historiographical frameworks. G. P. Brogiolo suggests a theoretical-methodological approach where the future research lines are focused on the analysis of landscape transformations. J. Arce makes use of little-known texts to present a new approach to the study of rural spaces in Late Antiquity. I. Martín Viso proposes that the transformation of rural spaces during the 5th and 6th centuries occurred through four different mechanisms: the disarticulation of the Roman landscape, the establishment of new settlements around new centres of power, the emergence of small villages that provided the essential structure to the new spaces of agricultural production and livestock farming, and the increase of importance of formerly marginal areas of the Roman Empire.

Next, we find a selection of case studies: E. Cerrillo presents a broad-ranging analysis focused on Lusitania; A Vigil-Escalera and J.A. Quirós suggest future directions for research in the regions of Madrid and the southern Basque Country—though the title of the chapter makes reference to north-western Iberia; F. Arce and F.J. Moreno undertake a study of the churches in the Spanish Northern Meseta, analysing their role in the territorial organization; E. Ariño, S. Dahí, and E. Sánchez focus their attention on the region of Salamanca, where Visigothic settlements were built on the remains of former roman *villae*; T. Cordero and B. Franco analyse the region of Merida,

and provide an excellent overview of its territorial structure from the early Roman Empire to the Umayyad period; S. Gutierrez and I. Grau turn to the south-eastern Iberian Peninsula in order to study Eio, focusing on the agrarian spaces and their transformation; A. Malpica refers to the lack of theoretical approaches to the study of the central topic of the book and concentrates on the case of *Madinat Ilbira*, although the author leaves aside its surrounding territory; E. García and J. Vázquez suggest a reinterpretation of the data from the Guadalquivir basin on the grounds of an improved analysis of its ceramics; R. Barroso, J. Carrobles, and J. Morín survey the region around the city of Toledo and show, through an accurate and well-documented study, its evolution during the sixth and seventh centuries; S. Macias and M. da Conceição claim that the presence of copper and silver mines in the region of Beja had a direct effect on the organization of the settlement; S.F. Ramallo, L. A. García and J. Vizcaíno conclude this volume with a study of rural settlements in the region of Murcia.

Overall, this volume, in addition to the previous proceedings of the aforementioned meetings, allows us to build an increasingly comprehensive understanding of the period from the decline of the Roman Empire to the consolidation of the feudal system. Little by little we perceive the depth of the changes occurred, such as the crisis of the late Roman model of territorial organization based on the *villae*; the emergence of a network of small villages and farms that broke up the territory into smaller units, resulting in a change in the structure of agrarian production; the consolidation of episcopal towns as centres of power; the peasantry's perception of certain autonomy and the development of an internal hierarchy that would give rise to local elites; the difficulty to define the role of the rural churches and their characteristics, as well as their relation with monastic communities.

Finally, this volume evinces the different stages in the development of the research on this period. These differences are determined by various circumstances: specialized research teams; the great number of archaeological surveys conducted during the last years in connection with the construction of big infrastructures and real estate projects, as well as the fact that these surveys are not always coordinated by experts in this period, who would be able to review the archaeological records from previous interventions. Despite these differences, noticeable also in the contributions to this volume, we should be heartened by the increasing amount of data available from the study of this period. A period that, for the moment, we define in terms of what happened after and before, making use of the expression 'from the Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages'.

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CANDEL, Miguel, 2013. *Tiempo de eternidad. Reflexiones sobre y desde la filosofía antigua*, Barcelona, Montesinos, 361 p. ISBN: 978-84-15216-48-3

Tiempo de eternidad. Reflexiones sobre y desde la filosofía Antigua, the most recent book of Miguel Candel—professor of History of Philosophy at the University of Barcelona and member of the IRCVM—comprises thirteen research papers on Greek philosophy. As noted in the foreword, most of the works had been previously published in 2002 under the title *El nacimiento de la eternidad*, and some chapters (II, III, VIII, IX, XI, XII, and XIII) had been also previously published in different journals and proceedings, in shorter, larger, or slightly modified versions. Considering the main ideas and the contents of the book, we can classify the chapters into five categories: (a) onto-epistemology: “Filosofía solar, filosofía lunar” (I), “Realidad de las formas o formas de la realidad” (V), and “Naturaleza y razón” (VI); (b) physics: “Lo lleno y lo vacío: la realidad como límite entre dos infinitos” (III) and “La aporía del movimiento” (VII); (c) psychology: “El alma es acción” (X) and “No hay sujeto sin objeto” (XI); (d) logic: “La saludable levedad del ser. Una lógica con alma metafísica” (VIII) and “Posibilidad, necesidad y ser en Aristóteles”; and (e) applied philosophy: “Virtud pública y virtud privada en la *República* de Platón” (IV), “La amistad: el yo en el tú” (XII), and “El combate de Eros y Fobos” (XIII). The second chapter, “Filosofía y traducción”, has a methodological character, although it is also concerned with topics associated with the philosophy of mind. In the last section of this chapter (*Filosofía de la traducción y traducción filosófica*) the author notes the difficulty related to the translation of philosophical texts. If the translator does not have a comprehensive knowledge of the subject, then an error might occur, either in the interpretation of the original or in the transliteration into the target language. However, we must not forget that, occasionally, errors are fruitful, and have been the source of interesting interpretations in the history of thought (pp. 47-48). Professor Candel analyses two common misinterpretations: the greek “*tò ón*”, used by Parmenides and translated as “that which is”, which he suggests should be understood as “the reality” (p. 50); and the English “referent”, usually translated into Spanish as “referente”, that should be associated with the expression “refers to” and not with the designatum, and it should be translated as “lo referido” or “la referencia” (p. 51).

If we want to reflect upon and from Greek philosophy, the first thing we must consider is what we understand as “philosophy”, and more specifically “Greek philosophy”. Professor Candel claims that philosophy is an accident in human history, in the same way that the human species is an accident in the history of the universe (p. 13). If religion was perceived as the “fetishization” of the world, philosophy was introduced both as an inverse and a parallel process aimed at its “naturalization” (pp. 22-23). Thus, it is important to distinguish between the world of myths, a composite of unrelated areas, and that of philosophy, constituted by a fundamental unity (p. 24). The lack of unity of the non-philosophical thought is rooted in its inability to acknowledge the dispersed and plural nature of its contents. However, “unity” and “plurality” are correlated terms,

that is, we cannot understand one without the other, and the conceptual system they constitute is what we really call *unity*; therefore, we must accept—in agreement with *Metaphysics Z I*—that philosophy arises not so much from unity but rather from the unsatisfied conscience of a non-integrated plurality (p. 25). Thus, Greek philosophy will be, from Heraclitus to the Neoplatonists, a continuous ascent from the incoherent and unintelligible plurality to the comprehensive unity. The rational essence of nature becomes apparent through the fact that everything is interrelated. Professor Candel notes that the inevitable primacy of unity over plurality proposed by Plato is present in every stratum of Greek philosophy, either as the Heraclitian *logos*, the Platonic *eidos*, the Aristotelian *primus motor*, or the Stoic *pneuma* (p. 24). The author reminds us that philosophy—and some of its divisions such as ethics, logic or physics—has been, from Plato and his different formulations of the Theory of Ideas to Khun and his concept of *paradigm*, via Locke, Hume, Kant, Hegel and Husserl, nothing more than a struggle to give a general (and not just a particular) reason for its own way of giving reason for the particular through the general (p. 167).¹ Later, the author points out that ancient philosophy is “total knowledge”, both for its object and its self-sufficient purpose; and its essence is the same light that springs from it. This is why Candel, talks about a *Solar* philosophy (p. 38; also p. 40).

Everything after Greek philosophy has inevitably reflected its initial magnificence. This, as the author correctly points out, is key to understanding the origin of the great philosophical problems, particularly those related with medieval thought. The reason why Candel considers it to be so is not because Greeks were more intelligent than the societies that came after them, but because they thought about those problems before. Some of the issues we hold to be the greatest problems of medieval philosophy (the existence of two worlds: celestial and terrestrial, the eternal and the temporary, the authentic and the apparent, the problem of the universals, or the nature of the soul) have their origin in Greek philosophy. Thought, as language, is sequential, and cannot follow its course without considering the ideas previously developed. Therefore, just as we cannot explain the glow of the moon without the sun, we cannot understand medieval, modern or contemporary philosophy without acknowledging its *lunar* nature, heir to the old philosophy brought to life by Anaximander and baptized by Plato (p. 38).

Plato’s realism about universals has more nuances than later interpretations have been able to appreciate. The Neoplatonic and Augustinian interpretations substantiated the forms, elevating them to the status of content of the divine mind, while some pre-Kantian rationalist interpretations tend to perceive Platonic forms as drafts of the ideal essences that populate the metaphysics of possible entities; metaphysics devised by late scholastics such as Francisco Suárez, and systematized by Christian Wolff and his disciples. According to Candel, a better interpretation, more faithful to the original Platonic theory, would be one that brings this theory closer to an

¹ For these questions see also chapters V (on nature), VII (on identity), X (on beauty) and XII (on image) of the book *Lectures gregues*, by Antoni Bosch-Veciana (Barcelona, Publicacions de la Facultat de Filosofia. Universitat Ramon Llull, 2014).

“objective” Kantian scheme, thus showing that the differences between the Platonic theory and the classical hylomorphic theory arise mainly from Aristotle’s interpretation (pp. 120-121).

The author identifies a Platonic characterization of the universal on chapter 19 of Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics*. This characterization casts a shadow of doubt over the plausibility of a strict empiricist interpretation of the process of formation of the universal, a doubt that is confirmed by the following text: “when one of a number of logically indistinguishable particulars has made a stand, the earliest universal is present in the soul: for though the act of sense-perception is of the particular, its content is universal—is man, for example, not the man Callias. [...] Thus it is clear that we must get to know the primary premises by induction; for the method by which even sense-perception implants the universal is inductive” (II, 19 100a15-b5) (p. 170). Here we find a characterization of both the universal and the particular, according to which an unclear account of the former already emerges during the initial perception of the latter, which is not perceived as a particular in this first act of sense-perception. Consequently, Aristotelian induction can be no longer conceived as an ascent from the particular to the universal, but as a process of setting and refinement of something pre-existent whereby the universal is verified or refuted in the particular. This process would aim at the characterization of the particulars as members of a homogeneous category and, at the same time, as distinct and mutually irreducible elements (p. 171).

Aristotle can be considered a rationalist *avant la lettre* or a nominalist. Candel notes that medieval philosophers such as Peter Abelard or William of Ockham, among others, interpreted Aristotle’s position on “speaking” in a nominalist sense. However, “speaking” is for Aristotle much more than articulating sounds, and necessarily refers to a reality different from that of “speaking” itself. Aristotle does not distinguish between “naming” and “being”, because it only makes sense to “name” that which “is”. Hence, the alleged nominalism of Aristotle is less real than apparent, regardless of what modern theories have to say about universals. Candel explains that, back in Aristotle’s time, when someone held a clearly false or preposterous opinion it was said that he was claiming nothing. In view of that, we realize that Aristotle’s concept of universal should not be regarded as nominalist and, with all the more reason, a nominalist interpretation of Plato’s forms should be ruled out—though we ascribe to them, as traditionally has been done, the features Aristotle attributed to the universals (p. 120). Aristotle is not a realist, nor an empiricist or an innatist, not even a defender of the rationalist apriorism. According to Candel, Aristotle’s starting point is the known object, around which two dimensions can be defined: one that opens it to the spatio-temporality of what is dispersed and temporally singular, and other that folds it over itself in the unity and totality of its essence (p. 172).

Candel includes chapter V of book III of Aristotle’s *De Anima*—a chapter that stimulated a lively debate during the Middle Ages—² and points to it as the source of a secular tradition

² See the monograph of the *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval* (no. 9, 2002) on the agent intellect.

that places the centre of human activity, namely the intellectual knowledge, outside the person. That seems to be the case, for Aristotle claims that the intellect is immortal and eternal and, at the same time, acknowledges that humans, participants or holders of this intellect, are neither immortal nor eternal. There are two intellects: the active one, incorruptible, and the passive one, corruptible. According to Candel, this makes things more complicated, for corporeality and sensibility are bound to perish, but so is a part of the intellective sphere (pp. 306-307). It is worth noting the opinion of the author on this subject: the objectivist interpretation of the intellection as a derivative of the intelligible in act, which arrived to Averroes and the Latin Averroists via Proclus and the Muslim *falāsifa*, shows that our Western modern interpretation of the conscience as a strictly subjective phenomenon is not the only possible interpretation, nor the best we can come up with. Candel indicates that Hegel himself, from the summit of the German idealism, claimed that the subjective sphere is not the centre of reality, whose total dimension is beyond the dichotomy subject-object (p. 315). It is probably due to the Averroist interpretation—later adopted by Thomas Aquinas with some minor changes—that we interpreted Aristotle’s theory of the intellects in this way: the essence of the entities would have a distinctive intellectual faculty, dubbed “agent (or active) intellect”, as opposed to the patient (or passive) intellect (p. 167).

Alexander of Aphrodisias, object of the current research of Miguel Candel and his team, claimed that Aristotle had differentiated between three intellects, or three aspects of the same entity: (1) material, (2) in disposition to, and (3) productive. The first two are two different stages of the same entity: the potential intellect, as the ability to acquire knowledge, and the same intellect as the inclination to acquire it; as for the third, the productive or active intellect, it possesses an intellective dimension that entails not only the capacity to update the material intellect, but the ability to be observed, and also that of being actually observed (p. 308). The source of the active intellect is always external to the intelligent being, and this fact, in addition to its immortal and eternal nature, leads us to identify it with the divinity. According to Aristotle, the *primus motor*, defined as “the intellection of the intellection”, is the only immaterial form subsisting in the intelligibility that could be the essence of the intellect. This is also suggested in book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle presents the intellect as the most divine part of us. Small wonder, therefore, that Alexander outlined such association (pp. 313-314).

The distinction, made by Alexander, between pure and materialized forms leads us to accept the existence of a double progeny of the productive intellects: that consisting in the intelligibility of the immaterial forms, and that focusing on the intelligibility of the forms connatural with matter. What does Alexander understand by “pure” or “immaterial” forms? In a Platonic sense, we may understand them as mathematical entities. However, we know that Aristotle does not think the latter have an independent existence, and therefore they are related to matter. According to Aristotle, the only undoubtable case of independent immaterial entity would be the immobile *primus motor*.

It is not difficult to realize that Alexander offers a theological interpretation of the intellect. According to Candel, many philosophers have argued in similar terms, analysing the theory of the intellect from the point of view of their religious faith. This is particularly so for philosophers in the Christian tradition such as Augustine and his illuminism, or Malebranche and his occasionalism. However, is a non-theological interpretation possible? The author claims there are other plausible explanations for the external, immortal and eternal nature of the productive intellect; for example, a description where these attributes are placed in the very reality, considered in its generality and intelligibility, without which it would be impossible to have any notion of reality (p. 314). Of course, this is not the Aristotelian interpretation, but we cannot claim Aristotle ascribes divinity to the intellect, though he did ascribe intellect to divinity or to the immobile motor. The author is not interested in clarifying this historical-philosophical issue, but in shedding light on a possible interpretation of the human-world problem that outdoes the so-called “subject-centrism”, overwhelmingly hegemonic in Western philosophy already since the Late Middle Ages (pp. 314-315). Therefore, is it appropriate to consider two intellects, or two aspects of one intellect? According to Averroes, and considering that the agent (or productive) intellect is the formal or intelligible structure of reality, and the human being is part of the reality, one can affirm that it would only be possible to tell the potential (or material) intellect, which allegedly resides in the human being, from the productive intellect through human experience (p. 316).

In section 6 (*El nacimiento de la Eternidad*) of chapter I, the reader will find an explanation for the title of the book. Parmenides alludes to eternity—without explicitly mentioning it—as a structural feature of Being, which binds the scientific-philosophical knowledge to eternity by opposing to every notion of dispersion and temporality. Candel claims that associating “being” and “eternity” is not so much defining eternity as a lack of temporality—which could be interpreted as the nothingness—but understanding it as the sum of all times, or as the invisible guiding-unifying thread of every instant; or even as Time’s soul, as its deep essence and condition for temporal continuity. Thus, Candel suggests that eternity, the concept at the origin of Greece, endlessly (re)borns in time, and, therefore, the expression “birth of eternity” should be regarded more as a pleonasm rather than as an oxymoron (pp. 31-33).

At the beginning of the foreword (p. 7), the author proposes that understanding the world is, etymologically speaking, embracing it; but every act of assimilation of the world becomes a part of the world itself, thus forcing us to choose between two paths: try to figure out the implications of understanding, or give up. This book makes us see that renunciation is the wrong way.

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REDES, 2013. *Redes femeninas de promoción espiritual en los Reinos Peninsulares (s. XIII-XVI)*, B. Garí (ed.), Roma, Viella. ISBN: 978-88-8334-726-9

The collective work edited by Dr. Blanca Garí, takes us to a predominantly female space where new forms of spirituality take centre stage in conjunction with urban dynamics in the centuries discussed. The joint effort opens several windows that reflect the complexity of religion in relation with regional contexts, the private patronage of queens, theological debates, the private life of religious women, the relevance of sacred spaces as well as the manifold connections and links with society. In turn, the chronology studied pays attention to religious contexts, going over the strength of Franciscanism, monastic reforms, the effects of the Council of Trent and the impact of the Society of Jesus.

Throughout the thirteen articles, it is possible to observe a complex reality that brings us to the different actors of the moment. The first group is composed of civil authorities, monarchs, noblemen and bourgeois, being more important the role of women in the establishment of female monasteries. The efforts to institutionalize certain forms of religious life, the participation in discussions around evangelical poverty, and the concerns for the urban impact, among others, become visible in this volume.

In particular, queens and noblewomen assume a more active role, being the direct promoters of monastic foundations, either by opening new nunneries or transforming an existing one. These women act as patronesses and mediators, getting money, donations, relics, images, religious objects and privileges. In turn, they are linked to and participate in sacred spaces, as in life they visit the nunneries transforming their internal dynamics by strengthening spirituality through the presence of liturgical objects, frescoes and books. While building their mausoleums reflects the need for a posthumous recognition, their close study reveals that the queens sought to define themselves through both their public and private roles, focused on their personal conscience and in their need for a more transcendent end.

The detailed analysis of some promoters allows the visualization of the networks established with religious women, many of them based on family and social ties, creating a virtuous circle of mutual aid ranging from the material to the spiritual field. Thus, the network of connections reflect the life of cloistered women and their roles in the spiritual realm. Most of them come from the nobility as their dowries show, and, in addition, they served as aunts who educated their orphaned nieces.

However, this is only a reflection of the palpable urban environment, because through Beguins and Beguines we find original links between them and men and women of diverse backgrounds. Unlike religious women, they roam the streets of the town performing charitable acts and

begging. Spirituality is collectively experienced through readings and comments on them. Here the religious message is in motion, is dynamic and moves through diverse routes. Again it is women who take on a more prominent role, as a high female participation can be perceived in these communities.

This close connection between the spaces of female religious life, secular promoters and urban realities, provides an insight into sacred topography, accounting for the spirituality of the time. Inside the studied nunneries, Franciscan devotions predominate, such as mural paintings that evoke the Passion of Christ and the Life of the Virgin. The abundance of images evinces the need to understand what is immaterial on the basis of that which is comprehensible and material, thus allowing the development of contemplative prayer. Over the centuries, individual prayer and the development of a personal conscience that becomes visible in some nunneries through the presence of individual hermitages and the design of the monastery as the antechamber of death gain momentum. In other urban contexts, as in the case of Beguins and Beguines, devotions take on a different turn, as the collective reading and its discussion are essential for the implementation of an evangelical poverty and a charitable action reflected in the streets of the cities.

The value of this collective work lies in the effort to understand the different lifestyles of female religious spaces—either within nunneries or under non-institutional formats—and the multiple networks they belong to. This work provides insight into a multifaceted and multiform reality where various social actors are intertwined through family, social, religious and political ties. It is remarkable to note that the careful scrutiny of nunneries and their connections, erase their present image as confined spaces, and turns them into open windows that allow linking the secular and the religious world in constant dialogue with urban dynamics. Each of the articles that make up this book is therefore a key element, for they work as photographic fragments of an era in constant motion.

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AVENTÍN I PUIG, Mercè, 2014. *Vivències i sentiments de la mort: microanàlisi de famílies i comunitats rurals en temps feudals*, Barcelona, Edicions PangurBàn. ISBN:

The staff of the Department of Medieval History, Palaeography and Diplomatics has sought, with the edition of this book, to pay tribute to professor Mercè Aventín i Puig, who was their colleague for almost thirty years. The book, preceded by a foreword that provides some clues to understand the trajectory of Mercè Aventín as a historian, consists of six papers, plus the conclusions of her doctoral dissertation. The aim of this volume is to make known the author's personality through some of her most representative works, many of them hard to find elsewhere.

The first of this pieces, entitled *El castell nou de Llinars del Vallès* was first edited as an opuscle by the city council of this village in 1990. It is based on two exceptional documents the author found in the fonds of Can Llobera, *masia* de Llinars, when she was gathering information for her doctoral dissertation. These two documents show how the peasants of the barony of Llinars, at the behest of the lords of the castle, agreed (on 1 July 1548) to put together 1000 *lliures* to finance the construction of a new castle, given that the old one had been destroyed by an earthquake. Based on the information provided by these documents, Mercè Aventín draws up a list of the dwellers of the barony, which consisted of six parishes (Llinars, el Fou, el Coll, el Far, Collsabadell, and Sanata), and reconstructs its territorial structure. Moreover, she shows the development of institutions (*universitat*) by the community of peasants, the relation between the lords and the peasants, and she also estimates the agrarian production equivalent to the 1000 *lliures* contributed by the peasants.

La Vilanova de Vilamajor. Poblament i heretament en els segles XII i XIII, is the second of the reedited papers, and was initially published in 1991. The origin of this paper lies in the scientific expedition to the rectory of Sant Pere de Vilamajor, at the beginning of the 1970s. Manuel Riu, professor of Medieval History at the University of Barcelona, was in charge of the expedition, and the group also included Monsignor Joan Pintó, vicar of Santa Maria del Mar (Barcelona), Mercè Aventín and Josep M. Salrach. There, in a chest of drawers, there were around one hundred dusty, rolled-up parchments from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, an even bigger number of early medieval and modern parchments, and several documents in paper: death registers, registers of fulfilment of paschal obligations, records of anniversary masses, etc. After a few years, the most ancient parchments—which Mercè Aventín cleaned, straightened and restored—constituted the documentary base for her undergraduate thesis (1978), which was published later on under the title *Vilamajor, 872-1299. De la fi del sistema antic a la consolidació del feudalisme* (Sabadell, AUSA, 1990). The results presented in this second paper are a derivation of that initial material, and are based on a small number of documents from the rectory that allowed the author to trace back the origins of Sant Antoni de Vilamajor—for the first time—to the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth century. At that time, the bailiff of the king, on his behalf, allowed the establishment of settlers in a place that, from that moment until the nineteenth century, would be called Vilanova de Vilamajor, on the site of the present-day village of Sant Antoni. The paper also describes some aspects of the history of the peasants of Vilamajor, particularly those related to family and succession—the author’s main research topics.

Some of the major themes in Mercè Aventín’s research are present in the third chapter, *Mercat de rendes, mercat de la salvació*, which was first published in 1993. The proposed framework and methodology are characteristic of local microanalysis, and its topics: death, rent market, credit and the indebtedness of the peasants. The documentary base comes again from Sant Pere de Vilamajor. The author examines the last wills of peasants from the fourteenth to the sixteenth

century who arrange the celebration of masses for the salvation of their souls, a notion that she links to the birth of the purgatory. Mercè Aventín shows how the peasants from Vilamajor initially bought *censos* from their neighbours or established *censos* in the form of *quarteres* of wheat on their own land. In their last wills, these *censos* were destined to the foundation of anniversary masses, the parochial institution in charge of fulfilling the last will of the deceased in what concerned the celebration of these religious offices. The author also demonstrates the increasing popularity—since the mid-fourteenth century—of the *censal mort* system among the peasants of Vilamajor, who adopted it in order to finance the anniversary masses that would guarantee their salvation. The method is quite simple: the testator would assign a quantity of money for the celebration of the masses; after their death, the money would be used to buy *censal* pensions from peasants in need; thus, these pensions, an annual payment, would become a guarantee for the (also) annual anniversary masses; one *sou* collected in this way would pay for the anniversary mass. The tables elaborated by the author clearly show that almost every family from Vilamajor was involved, both as payer (of pensions) and as beneficiary (of anniversary masses) in this rent market, which was also a salvation market. This research allows the author to develop the hypothesis that the foundation of anniversary masses might have acted as a bank providing microcredits to families in need of money.

The fourth piece, *El crèdit a pagès als segles XIV-XV. Sobre la lògica econòmica del mercat de rendes*, first published in 1993, is slightly different from the previous articles: not so erudite, but, methodologically speaking, much more interesting. She includes key theoretical contributions, a fact that can be easily noticed just by taking a look at the footnotes, where she cites world-renowned historians and economists such as Bhaduri, Keynes, Fernández de Pinedo, Clavero, Le Roy Ladurie, North, Leroy Miller. Mercè Aventín, having already defended her doctoral dissertation, would present here an advance of its results, a product of the systematic analysis of the rent market in the Eastern Vallès between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century. The paper starts with a study of the origin and forms of indebtedness of peasants, and next she explores the source of credit money, illustrating this analysis with a very descriptive histogram of the market of *censals*, where the results are divided into the different social sectors (clerics are mainly buyers of *censal*, particularly so when compared to peasants, artisans and *universitats*, which are mainly sellers of *censals*). She also investigates the effect of dynamic factors in the money market (supply or demand?), the key factors for establishing the pertinent taxes (relatively low) and, finally, the question of risk assessment: meeting the requirements for sufficient collateral was not easy, and, therefore, failure to pay was heavily punished. The article is an essential, necessary and high-level introduction to the question of credits to peasants in the Late Middle Ages.

The best contribution of Mercè Aventín to the Catalan historiography is, without doubt, her dissertation, defended at the University of Barcelona in 1993 and published a few years later under the title *La societat rural a Catalunya en temps feudals* (Barcelona, Columna, 1996).

Therefore, it was only logical to include the conclusions of her dissertation in this volume. This chapter, entitled *Contribució a una teoria de la pagesia*, outlines the essentials of her work, and its footnotes show the perfect equilibrium between erudition and theoretical reflection, a trait characteristic of the most significant of her articles. The references to classical authors in the field of economy (Marx, Chayanov) are intertwined with references to historians, sociologists, anthropologists and renowned agrarian scholars (Dobb, Hilton, Bois, Redfield, Fontana, Berthe, Goody, Bhaduri, Tepicht, Harrison, Aymard, Levi, Kula, Dyer, Le Roy Ladurie, Freedman, Thorner, Sweezy, Keynes, etc.) Actually, her dissertation is an inquiry into the mechanisms of economic behaviour (economic rationality) of the traditional peasant society, and that is why the conclusions are a bridge between the model of analysis and interpretation of the peasantry and the dynamics of their system. The author proposes a model of analysis where family is the basic unit, and consists of the study of the economy of small working farms, the analysis of the community, and the research on the encompassing society, i.e. the seigneurial power, agents, mediators and interlocutors. In the second half of the article, devoted to the aforementioned dynamics, the author suggests an itinerary that starts with the study of self-subsistence and the *sostracció*, then progresses through the analysis of the transformation of peasants' natural economy of self-subsistence into a monetary and commercial economy, and arrives at the development of markets (markets of goods, markets of money or credit, and markets of land and rent). Guy Bois, who was her preceptor during her stay at Paris (1987-88), wrote this about her dissertation: "it is not only a fascinating immersion in the past of the rural Catalonia, likely to be of interest for a wide audience keen to know more about their roots. It is, above other considerations, a comprehensive work, and an important contribution to the understanding of the crisis and transformation of the European society of the Late Middle Ages."

In parallel to rural history, the author pursued two other research lines: the history of family and the history of death. The sixth paper, *La familia ante la muerte: el culto a la memoria*, published in 2000, is a reflection of these interests. Since the end of the 1970s, the author cultivated a friendship with Michel Vovelle, a historian specialising in the French Revolution and master in the field of the History of Mentalities, whose guidance and influence are clear throughout the article. Additionally, the influence of other French historians such as Delumeau, Fournié, Le Goff and Chiffolleau is also discernible. The author is here concerned with the way families live and die—and the consequences of death—in the Middle Ages. In order to do that, she makes use of emotions and responsibilities, traits that are examined through testaments and inheritance dispositions; and she employs the "system" of anniversary masses to analyse the memory and cult of the dead, and the solidarity of the living with the dead. At this point, when the bequests enter in the market of *censals*, she ponders whether it is possible to rationalize sentiments. This thought leads her to a paradoxical quote from Pascal: "All of our reasoning (and calculating is also reasoning) ends in surrender to feeling."

Finally, the last of the papers included in this book is *Ordenacions medievals de viles-mercat catalanes sobre el comerç i consum del vi*, published in 2004. This work looks into the core of the villages, and, particularly, into the core of the markets of goods, which constitute the essence of the economic dynamism in the Middle Ages. The inquiry is focused on the market villages of Granollers and Sant Celoni. After examining the role of the market village in the family and productive structure of the rural world and the feudal social system, the author narrows her analysis down to the market and the ordinances that regulated its functioning, and for this purpose she makes use of the *Llibre d'Ordinacions* of the *Consell* of the village of Granollers. She studies the office of the *mostassaf*, the supply of goods, the provision of protective measures for producers and consumers, prices, buyers, instruments employed in an exchange, the market's area of influence, relations between the market village and the city, the market taxation system, etc. Given that a thorough study of all the locally traded goods would exceed the limits of the paper, the author focuses on the wine market, which allows her to shed light on little-known (or unknown) aspects of this activity. To understand the background of this article (motivations and objectives) and the questions considered in it, one must take into account the role of the market in the feudal system—one of the concerns the author inherits from Guy Bois. Faithful to his guidance, the last of the works written by Mercè Aventín, entitled *Jaume I: una política mercantil?* is, precisely, an inquiry into the role of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchy in the development of the commercial activity in Catalonia.

The book, whose content we have just reviewed, is a good illustration of Mercè Aventín's career as a historian: her intellectual interests, the received influences, and her contributions. It is evidence of the intellectual and scientific itinerary of a historian that, even considering all the pertinent personal nuances, accurately reflects the changes in the Catalan medieval studies.

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AL-SAQATĪ, 2014. *Al-Saqatī al-Mālaqī. El buen gobierno del zoco*, P. Chalmeta, F. Corriente (eds.), Almería, Fundación Ibn Ṭufayl de Estudios Árabes (Textos andalusíes, 5), 320 p. ISBN: 978-84-116134-99-1

The authorship of this work already guarantees its quality. This is the edition, translation and study of the *Kitāb fī ādab al-ʾisba* or *Treatise on the good governance of the souk*, by the faqīh from Malaga, al-Saqatī. While Colin and Lévi-Provençal had already make it known,³ we now have an edition that should be considered final. The work by Corriente, a great expert in

³ G. S. COLIN i É. LÉVI-PROVENÇAL, "El 'Kitāb fī ādab al-ʾisba' (Libro del buen gobierno del zoco) de al-Saqatī", *Al-Andalus*, 32 (1967), 125-162, 359-398 i Id, 33 (1968), 143-195 i 367-434.

the Andalusian dialect⁴ and professor emeritus at the University of Zaragoza, has allowed the correction of erroneous readings and not-so-sound interpretations, and the study and translation by Chalmeta, also a recognized expert⁵ and professor emeritus at the Complutense, provides and analyses very interesting data on the functioning of the Andalusian market.

As Chalmeta explains in the introductory study (pp. 11 to 56, after a brief indispensable foreword for anyone who wants to learn about lousy actions performed by the Hispanic Arabists of the last third of the twentieth century), the treatise consists of the memoirs of a retired officer who had taken care of regulating the operations of provisioning, purchases, and sales carried out around him and under his responsibility and supervision.

The translation of the text (pp. 57-182), is followed by a comprehensive bibliography (pp. 183-201), very relevant indices (pp. 203-212), a plan of Malaga in 1487, and three reproductions of as many manuscripts. In separate pagination, we find the Arabic text in a careful and extensively annotated edition, followed by the corresponding anthroponymic and toponymic indices.

Al-Saqatī was probably a good *mustaqaf*, jealous of his work, who, without neglecting the experience of his predecessors, expresses his wish to present customary law and is concerned with ensuring market ethics. More than a theoretical jurist who, obviously, knows the regulations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah on trade, he clearly states that he does not intend to write, as others had done before, a work that "orders good and forbids evil" but that he aims to establish a genuine treatise on the "governance of the souk" that includes local practice. His work, written in the first half of the thirteenth century, not only enjoyed great fame in his time throughout the Maghrebi area but it seems that it was still cited as a legal basis even in 1932. His influence also reached Christian lands, as can be seen in the *Ordenanzas* of Malaga, Seville and Granada and in several *Llibre de Mustaqaf* of the Catalan area.

One of the advantages of *al-Saqatī* is that he kept formulas and recipes, the prices of many products, and explained how to fix the equivalence of weights and measures, prices and wages, which allow us a good understanding—we wish it was even more comprehensive!—of the economy of Malaga in this period: industrial volume, wages, etc., which can be compared, for example, with the price of everyday products such as bread.

⁴ His work is extensive, and I would like to highlight the *Dictionary of Andalusī Arabic*, Brill, Leiden 1997 and the *Diccionario de arabismos y voces afines en iberoromance*, Gredos, Madrid 2003.

⁵ Besides his doctoral dissertation, *El Señor del zoco en España: edades media y moderna, contribución al estudio de la historia del mercado*, Instituto Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, Madrid 1973, he has published numerous studies on Andalusian commercial practice and, more recently, recentment, *El zoco medieval: contribución al estudio de la historia del mercado*, Almería 2010.

One of the most interesting chapters deals with the various deceptions perpetrated, which roughly belong to one of the following three groups: decrease the amount agreed upon in the sale, mix food products of different qualities, and adulterate products. Many are concerned with the substances used in pharmacology and luxury goods such as saffron, and the author does a very useful inventory of how to detect them.

As for staples, he writes that it is necessary to command that each piece of bread bears a stamp carrying the engraved name of the baker, so that they can be identified. The bakers must have a set of scales to verify weights, and the same goes for flour vendors. He also explains the—not very profitable!—tricks used by millers to defraud in grinding cereals and legumes and measuring the resulting flour, the tricks of bakers when they bake bread, and those of the operators involved in various operations, and of the retailers that sell at a weight-rate.

Denouncing the different mixtures, *al-Saqaṭī* informs us of the existence of wheaten, millet, rye, and sorghum bread, fraudulently mixed with pea, chickpea or rice flour, and also with bran, algae, a whitish dirt that allegedly helped fermentation, cuttlefish bones. He even cites the case of a baker who threw into the mixture a ground skull.

As for meat, he claims that each animal and category must be sold in different stores, whereas the meat of the previous day, and fish, can not be mixed with fresh meat, whether raw or cooked. It is also interesting the treatment of the slaughter of animals according to Islamic rules. One of the systems he proposes to detect non-*alāl* meat is to immerse it in water: if the animal's throat was cut while it was still alive, the meat floats, and otherwise it sinks. The same should be done about poultry, game, and fish that have been found floating in the water.

Chalmeta performs a careful analysis of Andalusian dietary habits: the upper class (hypercaloric and extremely refined), the urban middle class (with satiating dishes to replace some of the essential nutrients) and the poor diet of the needy. He also deals with the study of weights and measures, a very complex issue if only because the metric system was alien to the Andalusian world. He warns that the proposed equivalences are approximate and based on the basic unit of the weight of a dirham, that he estimates in 1.56 grams. This does not mean that the results are not useful to scholars who have to deal with certain texts henceforth. Needless to say that the system for the measurement of lengths was anthropometric, i.e., based on palms, elbows, arms, etc.

As a result of the importance of the textile industry in the medieval Mediterranean, *al-Saqaṭī* devoted much of his work to the performance of distributors and intermediaries, as well as to some of their most common deceptions.

Is there something missing? It is striking that the Andalusian *mustaçaf* does not speak of the activity of the port (boats, caulkers, fishing, etc.), for Malaga is a port of first order; the references to prostitution, to women in general, and to the believers of other religions are also scarce.

Finally, I must say that this work is not only useful for scholars of medieval Hispanic economic history, society and anthropology, but also has literary quality, and a Custombrist style, and it is full of anecdotes, experienced or heard by the author. As Chalmeta notes, is one of the first rudiments of a genre that would later bloom in the Iberian Peninsula, namely the picaresque novel.

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MUNITA, José Antonio, DACOSTA, Arsenio, LEMA, José Ángel, PAZ, Agurtzane, DÍAZ DE DURANA, José Ramón, 2014. «En tiempo de ruidos e bandos». *Nuevos textos para el estudio de los linajes vizcaínos: Los Barroeta de la merindad de Marquina (1355-1547)*, Vitoria, Universidad del País Vasco / Servicio Editorial, (Colección. Inéditos de Historia, 8). ISBN: 978-84-9860-951-6

Private archives and all their diverse typologies (personal, family, patrimonial, business or organizational archives) have drawn the attention of the scientific community in recent years. This interest has been preceded by the work undertaken by the Administration to recover private archives, promote the deposit of their holdings in public archives, promote the archival research that has resulted in the development of finding aids ... Several studies have also led to a better understanding of these archives, their characteristics and potential for research. This initiative has also been carried out in areas outside the archival institutions, among them, the academic world stands out with the work performed, among others, by the Association of Rural History of the *comarques* of Girona. One of the books that has already become a reference is the study by Pere Gifre, Josep Matas, and Santi Soler, *Els arxius patrimonials*, which was published in 2002 and currently represents the best theoretical contribution to the subject. All the books that compile the finding aids of Catalan patrimonial archives, and the articles that present specific archives and their documents should also be mentioned. But we must also consider all the research based—whether exclusively or not—on the documents of private archives. Authors such as Mercè Aventín for the Vallès, Coral Cuadrada for the Maresme, Carme Sanmartí for the Bages, and Eva Serra, studying the Senmenats, are the most prominent examples that illustrate the statement above. Their research also shows the utility of private documents, which in the Middle Ages basically refers to patrimonial archives, especially in the Catalan case. These studies also enable that the documents preserved in these archives, many of them in private hands, come to light so that other researchers can benefit from their publication.

The context we have just described refers to the Catalan area but similar initiatives are being carried out in the Hispanic case. The research on private archives is yielding interesting results, as those presented in the book object of this review. We will only cite here the ARCHIFAM research network that, under the sponsorship of the Casa Velázquez, works with family archives and brings together Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese and French researchers. These researchers regularly present their work in workshops or through the publication of scientific articles and books.

This volume falls within the context we have just outlined. It represents the work of a research team that focuses on Basque family archives, which have authored different chapters that review the exhaustive documentation of a family archive in order to learn about a Basque lineage: the Barroetas. The years of hard work have been marked by the fonds produced by this family (1355-1547). The book has two parts, the first of which is devoted to studies based on the documents of the archive, whereas the second part includes the documentary appendix with the edition of the documents of the archive. The first part consists of four chapters devoted to the documentary fonds, the history of the lineage, the family patrimony and its management, and, finally, a chapter that deals with conflicts between Basque lineages. The first chapter outlines a comprehensive study of the Barroeta fonds, which belongs to the Gaytan de Ayala y Barroetas archive. The timeline Barroeta fonds spans from 1355 to 1547, the dates that mark the time limits of the book, which correspond to the end dates of the thirty-six documents published in the second part of this work. The volume includes the extensive study of these medieval documents, an overview of the history of the archive, the description of the fonds and a full diplomatic analysis.

The second chapter explains the origins of the Barroeta lineage. This is where the data from the archive itself intertwine with data from municipal, ecclesiastical, and legal documents. It also draws on previous works on family lineages and archives, which place the present study within a research line launched some time ago. In the third chapter the relationship between family documents and the management of family assets can be grasped. It focuses on the patronage of churches, also using data from ecclesiastical documents, and the relationship with the episcopal power. There is also a section that discusses the rural basis of the economy of the lineage, the management of their income and the economic problems the family underwent in the last years of the medieval period. Finally, the fourth chapter of this first part examines the conflicts for the control of patronages, the institutional conflicts and the fights between factions or lineages.

The second part corresponds to the edition of the texts. As befits all research work which contains a palaeographic transcription, this section includes an introduction that indicates the method followed in the edition, together with the rules of transcription. The collection consists of the transcription of thirty-six documents between the dates mentioned above, which, as mentioned, form the medieval fonds of the Barroetas. An onomastic index completes the edition of the documents.



The book shows the existence of an excellent teamwork. The authors, historians, paleographers and diplomatists, write the chapters working in pairs. In this way the research, the analysis of the sources, and the development of the contents result in a valuable contribution to the study of Basque lineages. We should also note that the book does not only study history on the basis of private documents. This publication makes available a collection of documents that can be used to complete other studies. The characteristics of this work, its structure and the research results are used to compare this archival reality with others, such as the Catalan case, where the amount of private documents kept in private hands is quantitatively and qualitatively remarkable. This book falls within the research line designed within the context described in the first paragraphs of this review. But the authors do nothing more than continue with their respective researches, as evinced by the bibliography used as reference within each chapter. They provide results to the aforementioned ARCHIFAM network to which they belong, and increase the list of books in a series in which this is already the third volume dedicated to lineages and archives.

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