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SEMINARI D'ESTUDIS MEDIEVALS (CURS 2023-2024)

SEMINARIS D'ESTUDIS DOCTORALS

Dimarts, 19 de desembre de 2023, 17:00h

The Social Elite in Central Italy in the 10th and 11th Century

Luca POCHER (Universität Heidelberg)

El ethos caballeresco a la luz del Cantar de mio Cid

Joanna MENDYK (Universidad de Zaragoza/Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

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The Social Elite in Central Italy in the 10th and 11th Century

Luca POCHER (Universität Heidelberg)

The transition period between the Early and the High Middle Ages was a pivotal phase in the history of Central Italy. The economic and demographic growth that characterized this time favoured the development of new elite groups all over the region. The massive phenomenon of castle-building (Incastellamento) and the rapid increase in the production of written documents were both important aspects of this change. The archives of the Benedictine monasteries were especially important for preserving thousands of private contracts concerning the sale, lease and donation of land properties throughout this period. These documents, mostly stipulated between the monks and the members of local elites, open a window on the features of Central Italian leading classes in this time.

This PHD project is based on seven of these chartularies: Camaldoli and Coltibuono in Tuscany, S. Maria Val di Ponte in Umbria and Farfa, Subiaco, S. Maria in Campo Marzio and S. Erasmo di Veroli in Latium. These source collections, chosen to cover the three regions in a balanced way, contain over 2,000 documents from the 10th and the 11th century. The research focuses on five main elements common in the texts: honorary titles, professions, public offices, given names and geographical origins. The final aim is to obtain a more complex and three-dimensional picture of the Central Italian elites of this time, especially concerning the lower and middle elites who didn't play a decisive role in the political events, but were still protagonists of the many social, legal and economic changes of this historical phase.

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El ethos caballeresco a la luz del Cantar de mio Cid

Joanna MENDYK (Universidad de Zaragoza/ Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

The Cantar de mio Cid is without a doubt the most relevant example of the epic genre called cantares de gesta. Although the poem has been examined from many research perspectives, no scholar has approached it as a source for a study of chivalric ethos. This fact is striking given that this genre has often been employed in studies of knightly mentality in France, including those of the Annales historians. The poem, nonetheless, shows a variety of chivalric virtues and attitudes. Some of them were probably inspired by the models found in French poetry —such are the cases of courtesy or the motif of war as a fête épique. Others —for instance, the notion of honour or the attitude towards struggle against infidels— were impacted by the realities of medieval Iberia, especially those of the borderland between Castile and Al-Andalus, where the poem was composed. All those virtues and patterns of behaviour, when put together, make up a complex chivalric microcosm, which contributes to our comprehension of medieval Iberia. The paper will present an approach to a study of the chivalric ethos in High Medieval Iberia in the light of epic poetry, with a particular emphasis on the Cantar de mio Cid, as well as to discuss the methodology of such research and the difficulties in employing the poem in studies within the histoire des mentalités paradigm. The paper is related to my doctoral project titled The Chivalric Ethos in the Iberian Peninsula of the 12th and 13th c. in the light of the Cantar de mio Cid and other selected epic poems.

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