

NÁJERA

16th International Meetings of the Middle Ages

2019

**LAW AND AUTHORITY IN THE
MEDIEVAL ATLANTIC CITY
(AND BEYOND)**

CALL FOR PAPERS

Nájera (La Rioja).

SPAIN

28-29 November 2019

Venue: Escuela de Patrimonio Histórico de Nájera

Funding Institutions



SUPPORTED BY the Town council of Nájera, Consejería de Desarrollo Económico e Innovación de La Rioja, Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, Escuela de Patrimonio Histórico de Nájera, GOBPORT Research Group of the University of Cantabria and Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales

This Academic Meetings seek to provide an interdisciplinary forum for the discussion of all aspects of medieval studies. Each Congress has one particular special thematic strand on an area of interdisciplinary study in a wider context.

Next Autumn the city of Nájera (La Rioja, Spain) will once again host the International Meetings of the Middle Ages, organized by the Medieval Research Group of the University of Cantabria, supported by the Town council of Nájera, Dirección General de Cultura de la Consejería de Desarrollo Económico e Innovación of the Government La Rioja, Escuela de Patrimonio Histórico de Nájera, Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, GOBPORT Research Group of the University of Cantabria and Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales.

The international conference will take place in Nájera (Spain), 28th and 29th November, 2019.

The topic of this year is about:

Law and Authority in the Medieval Atlantic city (and beyond)

Much of the sophistication of the late medieval public sphere at both the state as the local level came from legal practice, and the discourse that it generated. In the period between 1250 and 1550, rapid changes within the juridical and political history of communities took place. More law was written down, and more new law was made. More people went to public courts, and far more judgments were written down. While the juridical power of lords, kings, and emperors has already abundantly been studied, a systematic comparison of urban law and legal practices across Europe has not yet been undertaken. Townspeople (both the elite as well as the less powerful inhabitants) were coming to be involved in the arena of written law, everywhere, which in itself tied them into the political networks of the town. Even if this participation was not always willing, and took place in contexts of subjection and contention, the legal world was touching everyone by the later Middle Ages. Furthermore, political thinking about legal practices and the government of towns was increasingly written down by lawyers and secular clerks, sometimes resulting in the production of treatises on 'how cities should be governed'.

The growing production of texts in the later medieval towns (verdicts, agreements, ordinances, treatises, and legal records) enables historians to study the political history of law within an urban context. Therefore we invite speakers to think about the following questions. Who took the initiative to make law in the medieval town? Perhaps more than we think, the political interaction between townspeople rather than the personal opinions of urban rulers seems to have been responsible for the

creation of new rules in towns. Which ideas did motivate townspeople to participate in the law making process? Where did the authority of law makers come from? Their political power gave urban magistrates the right to promulgate town ordinances, but one wonders which kind of principles lay on the basis of their active engagement to do so. Why did people increasingly go to court to settle conflicts? Why were these settlements written down? Town magistrates created archives and 'written memories' of legal practices, but one wonders what motivated them to do so. Such questions can only be answered by studying both the political as well as the legal history of towns. As a result, this conference wants to unite historians combining both aspects in their work.

Concrete topics could be:

- ✓ A study of political or legal treatises on urban government
- ✓ Law-making and decision-making processes within towns
- ✓ Legal practices of townspeople
- ✓ Confrontation and conflicts about the jurisdiction of town governments
- ✓ political discourse of local judges
- ✓ Writing practices of town councils: the codification of law ('cartularies') and the recording of verdicts
- ✓ The role of the various 'socio-political actors', formal and informal groups, of the Atlantic town-ports in the elaboration of norms regarding private and public affairs
- ✓ Comparison of the urban legislation and the influence in shaping the social and political order of the urban community
- ✓ The regulation of port activity and the sea in legal systems, charters and local law

This fascinating conference may be a good springboard to facilitate this goal.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Historians, PhD researchers and Graduate students are encouraged to submit abstracts for research presentations or posters on topics related to **Law and Authority in the Medieval Atlantic city (and beyond)**

Abstracts should be no more than 500 characters and should clearly state the purpose, thesis, methodology, and principal findings of the paper to be presented. Successful proposals will be published in 2020. All abstracts and a short CV should be submitted electronically to Jesús Solórzano at: solorzaja@uncan.es and Jelle Haemers jelle.haemers@kuleuven.be

The deadline for submissions will be **September 1st, 2019**.

GRANTS

Spanish Society of Medieval Studies established a fund to support students participation and attendance in the Conference. The Conference Fund is available to all students, both undergraduate and graduate, who are looking for funding to attend a conference related to their academic or professional goals. The purpose of these grants is to encourage and assist student presentations at this academic conference related to his/her goals by off-setting the cost of lodging.

The application for grants is open to all students who meet the following:

- The student is in good academic standing
- The student is enrolled into a degree of Grade, Master or PhD
- Good knowledge of modern languages

The deadline for submissions will be on **September 1st, 2019**.

The languages of the meetings are Spanish, English, French, Italian and Portuguese.

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration opens on June 1st, 2019

- Normal: € 75
- Reduced: € 45 for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Free: € 0 for presentations, unemployed, retired and residents in La Rioja.

Payment by bank transfer to ES93 2038 7465 05 6000012392 , indicating "16th International Meetings of the Middle Ages in Nájera 2019".

The deadline for registration will be on **November 28th, 2019**.

Secretariat

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16th INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN NÁJERA
Law and Authority in the Medieval Atlantic city (and beyond)
Nájera (La Rioja). Spain, 28-29 November 2019

ORGANIZA:



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This conference is part of the research project:

“Politics, institutions and Governance of the townports and seaports of Atlantic Europe in the Later Middle Ages: a transnational comparative analysis” (HAR2017-83801-P)