

THE STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY IN MEXICO

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ABSTRACT

This article offers an evaluation of the development of Medieval studies in Mexico in the 20th century in four areas: teaching, dissemination, the organization of exhibitions, and publishing. The completed research affirms that despite a growing interest in the Middle Ages both in academic and cultural settings, Mexican medieval studies are still in their infancy. This is due, among other things, to the lack of specialists in academic institutions, the difficulty of training graduate students in History as medievalists, and the limited number of monograph studies produced in our country, especially in the area of history. The conclusion offers a proposal to begin to overcome these obstacles.

KEYWORDS

Middle Ages, Historiography, Mexico.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Medium Aevum, Rerum gestarum libri, Mexicus.

1. Introduction

At the end of September, 2009, Professor Flocel Sabaté gave a seminar at the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma* in Mexico on “The Crown of Aragon in the Middle Ages (9th-15th centuries)”. In it, he outlined the expansion of the Aragonese kingdom and described the salient features of the political structure of that political entity. One year previously, in November of 2008, Professor Dominique Iogna-Prat, a member of *The Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS) and the *Laboratoire de Médiévistique Occidentale de Paris* (LAMOP), offered similar instruction in a seminar on “The Church in the Middle Ages” through the Marcel Bataillon professorship sponsored by the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM) together with the French Embassy in Mexico. The presence of two important European medievalists in Mexico City is indicative of the vigor that medieval studies have recently acquired in our country, but also of the historiographic dearth in Mexican academic entities, especially in the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* of UNAM. This is a way in which they are beginning to address a grave lack in the area of history: the study of the Middle Ages.

Mexico has a solid historiographic tradition with numerous centers for historical research. However, medieval history has only recently been established as a course of study at a university level, and the majority of the professors that teach the history of the European Middle Ages were not trained as medievalists. This explains why, as a consequence of the articulation in the 1920s and 1930s of a nationalist, post-revolutionary discourse with a decidedly indigenist slant, the cultural inheritance that contemporary Mexican culture received from Spain was ignored or scorned and the Meso-American past —pre-Spanish— was disproportionately exalted. This idyllic state was violently destroyed, according to this interpretation, by Spanish conquerors. In this view, European (Spanish) influence was presented as foreign to Mexican culture and the viceregal period —referred to historiographically until recently as “colonial”— was presented in the official historical discourse as a “dark” age in which the “good” indigenous peoples were exploited by the “bad” Spaniards; over the course of 300 years, the Spaniards brought to an end indigenous language, religion and customs, as illustrated by Diego Rivera in the murals he painted in the *Palacio Nacional* in Mexico City, commissioned by the then secretary (minister) of education José Vasconcelos. As such, with the European cultural and historical tradition not forming a part of the official discourse, it was not necessary to study it. For that reason historical research in Mexico between 1940 and 1990 focused on the study of the many historical periods of the current Mexican territory with the intention of contributing to “the solution of the great national problems.” In this context, studies of great historiographic relevance such as those by Luis Weckmann,¹

1. Weckmann, Luis. *La herencia medieval de México*. Mexico: El Colegio de México-Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994; Weckmann, Luis. *La herencia medieval del Brasil*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993.



Edmundo O’Gorman,² or Juan Antonio Ortega y Medina³ were exceptions in their time.⁴

The double necessity of connecting differing historiographic schools of thought and of placing local phenomena and processes within a regional or global context, as well as the facility of communication allowed by current electronic means, in addition to the initiation of a generational changing of the guard in many Mexican academic entities, has led various centers of research to open up their traditional lines of investigation to other historiographic spheres and themes; these include, precisely, European medieval history and the history of Spain in the modern and contemporary periods.

This institutional opening has coincided with, on the one hand, a growing interest by the general population in the history of medieval Europe and, on the other hand, with a shift in the official historical discourse that has ultimately recognized a fundamental and constituent element in Mexican identity from its Spanish roots.

In the first case, this interest can be demonstrated by the large number of visitors to two great exhibitions in Mexico city. The first, organized in 1998 by the *Colegio de San Ildefonso* and dedicated to Charles V, gave ample space to the reign of the *Reyes Católicos*, Philip I, and Joan I of Castile. The second, titled *España medieval y el legado de occidente* (Medieval Spain and the Legacy of the West), was put forth in 2005 by the *Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional* and the *Instituto Nacional de Antropología* and brought in nearly five hundred attendees.⁵

The second case refers to an interpretive turn that former president Vicente Fox emphasized in the words he dedicated to the opening of the second of the aforementioned exhibitions. He expressed his “profound” gratitude in the name of the people of Mexico for “Spain’s generous gesture in allowing Mexicans to access one of the least known yet richest veins of our own history.” And he added, “the works of Spanish and Mexican specialists, as well as professional curating, will reveal to those consulting this book how our customs, artistic patrimony and public institutions, as well as the unique way in which the people show their religious devotion—all elements still relevant to the present— came to be.”⁶

Together, these three factors—the historiographic broadening on the part of the academic institutions, growing popular interest in the Middle Ages, and the change

2. O’Gorman, Edmundo. *La invención de América. Investigación acerca de la estructura histórica del Nuevo Mundo y del sentido de su devenir*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977 (1st ed. 1958).

3. Ortega y Medina, Juan Antonio. *El conflicto anglo-español por el dominio oceánico (siglos XVI y XVII)*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1981.

4. To this political condition—which deserves, itself, a detailed analysis—is added another of scientific and pragmatic nature: the impossibility between 1940 and 1990 of easy access to sources which might allow a rigorous study of the Middle Ages.

5. The Comisión Estatal de Acción Exterior (CEACEX) was in charge of realizing the exposition. (“España medieval y el legado de occidente”. CEACEX. 2005. Comisión Estatal de Acción Exterior. 24th september 2009 <www.memoria.ceacex.com/app/data/descargas/45.pdf>).

6. Fox, Vicente. “Mensaje del rey de España y del presidente de México”, *España medieval, el legado de Occidente. Octubre 2005- febrero 2006. Catálogo de la Exposición*. Madrid: SEACEX-Lunwerg Editores 2005: 3, <www.espanamedieval.inah.gob.mx>. This was the official website for the exposition.



in the official historical discourse— make it feasible for Mexico, and specifically the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* through the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas*, to initiate a far-reaching program designed to promote academic study of the Middle Ages, particularly in the spheres of history and archaeology. In time, this will allow Mexico to forge and consolidate its own school of historiography that, together with those of Argentina, Chile and Brazil, would contribute to the development of medieval studies from Latin America.

A plan such as this should, of course, take into consideration the work done by many institutions and individuals in the study of the Middle Ages. Contributions date back to the middle of the 20th century and have developed in four major areas: teaching, the organization of colloquia and congresses, the organization of exhibitions, and publishing. In the following pages, I will provide a synthesis of the advances achieved in each of these areas in order to offer a general evaluation of the development of medieval studies in Mexico.

2. Teaching

One of the first developments in medieval studies in our country is the offer of university courses and seminars at various institutions of higher education, particularly at UNAM.⁷

It was Luis Weckmann, who completed his doctoral thesis with Ernest Kantorowicz, who began the teaching at the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* in the 1950s.⁸ After him, the greatest contributor to the advancement of medieval studies has been Antonio Rubial García, professor of the College of History in the same school. Their work was realized in four areas: teaching (Rubial has offered the course, *La cultura en la Edad Media* [The Culture of the Middle Ages], uninterrupted since 1977); overseeing graduate and undergraduate works and theses on medieval topics;⁹ publishing reviews, books and

7. The *Universidad Iberoamericana* (UIA), the *Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia* (ENAH) and the *Instituto Mora* offer general courses on Europe in the Middle Ages for undergraduates. The *Universidad Hebrea* offers a masters in Hebrew studies that includes several course hours dedicated to the study of the Middle Ages.

8. This work, realized in various institutions, was intermittent due to Weckmann's frequent travels as a member of the Mexican diplomatic corps starting in the 1960s.

9. In chronological order these are: Franco, Gilda. *Místicos en la Edad Media*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Degree in History), 1982. Unpublished; Hubermann, Mariam. *La danza de la muerte como reflejo de la cultura y la sociedad bajo medievales*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Degree in History), 1986; Rojas, Eduardo. *El Poema del Mío Cid y los valores caballerescos en la sociedad hispano medieval de los siglos XII y XIII*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Degree in History), 1996. Unpublished; Ríos, Martín. *La guerra de Granada. La consolidación de la diarquía de los Reyes Católicos*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Degree in History), 2000. Unpublished; Romero, Margarita. *Hildegarda de Bingen y la medicina a partir de los textos de Dioscórides*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Master in History), 2006. Unpublished. Rubial has also directed a thesis addressing the Middle Ages at the *Universidad Iberoamericana*: Hanhausen, Margarita. *El tapiz de Bayeux: un cantar de gesta sobre tela*. Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana (Degree in History), 1984. Unpublished. I am grateful to Professor Rubial for giving me a copy of his curriculum, from which I gathered this information.



articles on the medieval period;¹⁰ and, lastly, giving numerous conferences and talks on the Middle Ages both in UNAM and in less specialized forums.

The names of other professors in the same *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* who have also made inroads into the Middle Ages should be added to that of Rubial. For example, between 1976 and 1996 Luis Ramos OP offered a course on the *Imperio Bizantino* (Byzantine Empire) (which was continued by Clara Inés Ramírez¹¹), and from 1976 to 1993 he taught a general course on *La Edad Media Europea* (The European Middle Ages), which is now offered by Felipe Castro. Recently, I, myself, have taken on a general course titled *Europa occidental en la Edad Media* (Western Europe in the Middle Ages) and a second level Masters seminar on *La guerra contra el Islam en la península ibérica (s. IX-XIII)* (The War Against Islam in the Iberian Peninsula [9th-13th centuries]).¹² In the sphere of art history, Juana Gutiérrez Arce gave a course focused on medieval art in the Italian peninsula, while courses on Islamic, Byzantine, and Christian art in the Middle Ages have been given by

10. Rubial, Antonio. *El régimen de la tierra en el reino astur leones hace mil años*. *Históricas*, 2 (1980): 18-20; Rubial, Antonio. *La Hermana pobreza. El franciscanismo: de la Edad Media a la evangelización novohispana*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1996; Rubial, Antonio. "Las metáforas del cuerpo en la religiosidad medieval", *Historiae Variae. Edición conmemorativa del XXV aniversario de la fundación del Departamento de Historia*, María Teresa Franco, ed. Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1983: I, 105-120; Rubial, Antonio. "Cristianismo-paganismo. La Iglesia ante la religiosidad popular en la Edad Media y el Renacimiento", *Teoría e Historia de las religiones*, Mercedes de la Garza, Carmen Valverde, eds. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1998: 207-222; Rubial, Antonio. "Instituciones y estructuras medievales", *Introducción a la cultura medieval*, Aurelio González, María Teresa Miaja, eds. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2005: 7-17; Rubial, Antonio. "Entre el cielo y el infierno. Cuerpo, religión y herejía en la Edad Media tardía". *Revista Acta Poética*, 20 (1999): 19-46; Rubial, Antonio. "Isabel de Castilla y los movimientos religiosos en España durante su reinado. Su impacto en América", *Isabel la Católica y la política. I Simposio El reinado de Isabel la Católica*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto de Historia de Simancas-Ambito, 2001: 351-362; Flori, Jean. *Caballeros y caballería en la Edad Media*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2001. Review: Rubial, Antonio. "Es de caballeros". *Historias. Revista de la Dirección de Estudios Históricos del INAH*, 64 (2006): 147-150.

11. Clara Inés Ramírez has recently directed a first undergraduate thesis on Byzantine history: Pastor, Daniela. *Mujeres y poder en Bizancio a través de la mirada de Ana Comneno*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (*Licenciatura en Historia*), 2007, unpublished. Also, the translation of a fragment of the *Mémoires* of Philippe de Commines: Olivares, Omar. *Edición de una fuente medieval. Las memorias de Philippe de Commines*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (degree in History), 2009, unpublished. This second work has turned out to be of great historiographic relevance. It is the first translation of a medieval source that has been presented as a undergraduate thesis in the History Department of the aforementioned *Facultad*, and the young historian worked directly from the 1552 edition in the National Library of France, comparing it with later editions, including the first translation into Spanish in 1624 credited to Iván Meursio.

12. I had the opportunity to direct the undergraduate thesis of Diego Amendolla Spínola in which he analyzed the way in which the literature of the medieval period reflected the social and political structures of "feudal society". Amendolla, Diego. *Chretien de Troyes y la Francia del siglo XII: una aproximación a las estructuras del feudalismo a través de la literatura cortesana*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009, unpublished. Mention should also be made of the undergraduate thesis directed by Marcelo Ramírez Ruíz, professor of Historic Geography in the *Colegio de Geografía* of the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* on Sir John Mandeville: Platas, Iris. *El libro de las maravillas de Juan de Mandeville (s. XIV)*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Degree in History), 2007, unpublished.



Guadalupe Avilés, who has also made several research trips to the *Museo Nacional de Arte de Cataluña* to study Romanesque painting.

Two seminars offered at the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* on medieval topics also deserve mention. The first was the *Seminario de Estudios Medievales (Medieval Studies Seminar)*, inspired by this author and other colleagues under the tutelage of Luis Ramos over the academic years 1996-1997 and 1997-1998. It was supported by UNAM through participation in the *Programa de Iniciación Temprana a la Investigación y la Docencia (Early Initiation of Research and Teaching Program) (PITYD)*. In the seminar, diverse aspects of medieval history were addressed, a first lecture series on the Middle Ages in the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* was organized in which various professors from the center participated,¹³ an anthology was prepared—currently in preparation for publication—and I completed my undergraduate thesis on the War with Granada thanks to an acceptance in the *Programa de Becas de Titulación (Thesis Grant Program)*.

The second seminar began in 2005 at the request of several students looking for the support and tutelage of Antonio Rubial, who then began to oversee works in this area. Officially titled, *Seminario Interdisciplinar de Estudios Medievales (Interdisciplinary Seminar in Medieval Studies)*, it gained the support of UNAM through incorporation in the *Programa de Becas de Titulación (Thesis Grant Program) (PROBETEL)* and the *Programa de Apoyo a la Investigación y la Docencia (Research and Teaching Support Program) (PAPID)*. This allowed the members to prepare a Spanish edition of the Fulcher of Chartres Chronicle (from the Latin edition requested directly from the National Library of France), organize diverse activities for the dissemination of information (a film series on the Middle Ages, Masters lectures, meetings between students and professors), promote the future acquisition of monographs and other resources, support the granting of degrees to its members,¹⁴ and, lastly, organize the

13. Lecture series on medieval history, “*Razón y fe en el medioevo (Reason and Faith in the Medieval Period)*”, October 20 – November 3, 1997. The lectures, in chronological order, were the following: María José Sánchez Usón, *Monacato, sociedad y cultura en la España medieval*; Ariel Arnal, *Las culturas de al-Andalus: judíos, musulmanes y cristianos*; Luis Ramos, *Cátaros y valdenses*; Guadalupe Avilés, *La mezquita de Córdoba. Arte e historia*; Antonia Pi-Suñer, *La expansión mediterránea de la confederación catalano-aragonesa. Siglos XII al XV*; Richard Dorfsman, *La cercana conexión entre los anacoretas y la sociedad inglesa*; María Pía Lamberti, *razón y fe en la Divina comedia*; Felipe Castro, *La herejía del libre espíritu*; Antonio Ramos, *Las cinco vías de Santo Tomás*; Elsa Cecilia Frost, *Franciscanos: espirituales y fraticelli* y Antonio Rubial, *Cristianismo-paganismo: la Iglesia frente a la religiosidad popular*. Personal files of Martín Ríos.

14. The thesis associated with this seminar that are currently in progress are the following: Reyes, Paulina. *Vita Karoli Magni (Introducción, traducción y notas)*; Adave, Dulce María. *Liber Kalilae et Dimnae (Introducción, traducción y notas)*; Zamudio, Paola. *El universo onírico en “El Palmerín” de Oliva*; Gutiérrez, Daniel. *El diablo y lo diabólico en El baladro del sabio Merlín de 1498*. Rubén Borden y Daniel Sefami have already obtained their degrees in this program with the thesis, *Historia Roderici Campidocti (introducción, traducción y notas)* and *La Historia Hierosolymitana. Una traducción comentada. Prólogo y capítulos I-V*, respectively. It is remarkable that all these students are either in the *Colegio de Letras Hispánicas* or the *Colegio de Letras Clásicas* in the *Facultad*, and that there have not been any history thesis, so to speak. Thanks are due to Guillermo Velázquez for providing me with this information.



Primer coloquio Historia y Literatura: textos del Occidente medieval (First Literature and History Colloquium: Texts of the Medieval West) in November of 2007.¹⁵

At this point mention must be made of the space that the UNAM *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* has opened for medieval studies through the Marcel Bataillon chair, started in 1996. Thanks to this initiative, the *Instituto* has welcomed within its walls Henric Bresc, who gave a course on *La cultura material en las tierras del latifundio* (Material Culture on Large Estates) (1996), Jean Claude-Schmitt, who gave a seminar on *La imagen. Funciones y usos de las imágenes en el occidente medieval* (The Image: Function and Use of Images in the Medieval West) (2000)¹⁶ and the previously mentioned Dominique Iogna-Prat, who gave a lecture series on the Church in the Middle Ages (2008) that will be published by the *Instituto* in 2010.¹⁷

Within the context of the opening towards the Middle Ages by the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas*, that course on the history of Spain, *Curso de Historia de España* (2008, 2010), coordinated by this author for an introductory level audience is of note. The first two modules have been dedicated to the history of al-Andalus and the history of the Christian kingdoms of Spain respectively. Also, Professor Sabaté's course on the Crown of Aragon should be remembered. Texts from this course will be published next year.¹⁸

This section would not be complete without a mention of the instruction developed by Jérôme Baschet, since 1997 attached to the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (EHSESS) of Paris, at the *San Cristóbal* campus of the *Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas*. Because of his teaching, a number of Mexican students have traveled to Paris to participate in the *Group d'Antropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval* (GAHOM). A series of reflections on the influence of the medieval world in America has also been produced, which have focused on the structural process of conquest and colonization in America.¹⁹

15. Among the names of the proponents of the colloquium are those of Antonio Rubial, *Ermitaños: su historia en la literatura del occidente medieval*, Aurelio González, *Historia y Romancero*, and Axayácatl Campos, *Retos y estrategias para el estudio de la narrativa caballeresca*. The second Colloquium was held in November 2010.

16. We must add to these names that of Catherine Vincent who gave a seminar about "the medieval fraternities" in 1996 in the College of Mexico and Dominique de Courcelles, who gave a 2003 seminar about "the writing of the history of Spain and New Spain in the 16th century: theology, politics and aesthetics", whose two modules were titled: "How the history of the conquest of New Spain was written from the reading of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas de Aquinas", and "Medieval chronicles of Spain and the early chronicles of the New World". Data obtained from "Recent Archive" of the "Institute of Historical Research" in the *Universidad Autónoma de México*, sill incatalogued.

17. Iogna-Prat, Dominique. *La Iglesia en la Edad Media*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010. The publication of the texts by Iogna-Prat is an authentic historiographic milestone for the *Instituto de Investigaciones Historicas*. It is the first work dedicated to the Middle Ages published by this institution in more than four decades.

18. This method has proved to be very fruitful. As such, following the model of the Bataillon chair, the *Instituto* plans to invite the following professors to give seminars on medieval topics: Alessandro Vanoli (Universidad de Bolonia), Pascual Martínez Sopena (Universidad de Valladolid), Martin Aurell (Universidad de Poitiers) and Jaume Aurell (Universidad de Navarra).

19. The following books are products of this valuable experience in Mexico: Baschet, Jérôme, coord. *Encuentros de almas y cuerpos: entre mundo medieval y mesoamericano*. San Cristóbal de las Casas: Universidad



The list of courses and lecture series open to the public outside of UNAM is extensive, and it is only possible to mention some of them here. For example, in 1996 the *Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia* hosted the course *Fuentes escritas en la Edad Media* (Written Sources in the Middle Ages), given by María José Sánchez Usón. The positive public reception led Sánchez Usón to offer an introductory course on the Middle Ages that same year in the Department of Continuing Education of the *Universidad Iberoamericana*. Also, the *División de Estudios Históricos* in the *Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia* has enjoyed the presence of Jérôme Baschet, who gave a series of lectures on the medieval period in the summer of 2001.²⁰

3. The organization of colloquia and conferences

The academic pursuit of the Middle Ages has also been encouraged through the celebration of colloquia and conferences on medieval topics. In addition to the rather modest events mentioned above, organized through the *Seminarios de Estudios Medievales* (Seminars in Medieval Studies), those of greater magnitude should also be mentioned.

The biannual conference held since 1990 by the group *Medievalia* tops the list as both the longest standing event and with regards the quality and number of speakers that participate. In the summer of 2010 they held their third meeting. In addition to speakers from various Mexican institutions, there have also been participants from Spain, Argentina, France, the United States, and other countries who have enriched the exchange of ideas with their diverse topics, perspectives and methods of approaching the study of medieval civilization. However, it should be pointed out that despite the fact that the organizing committee strongly supports a multidisciplinary approach, in practice the majority of the talks are on literary, philological or theological aspects of the late Middle Ages. Until recently, papers of a particularly historical or iconographical nature have been few, and those on archaeology or material culture have been nonexistent.²¹

One of the most successful events, not only for the chosen topic but also because of the participation of well-known Spanish medievalists, was one organized by the recently death Julio Valdeón in November 2000 to commemorate the quincentennial of the death of Isabel I. Thanks to the sponsorship of sir Antonino Fernández and the support of the *Instituto de Historia de Simancas* and the help of María Teresa Mija in Mexico, it was possible to hold two workshops in the UNAM *Facultad de Filosofía y*

Autónoma de Chiapas, 1999; Baschet, Jérôme. *La civilisation féodal. De l'an mil à la colonisation de l'Amérique*. Paris: Aubier-Flamarion, 2004.

20. The lectures were, respectively. *La representación del parentesco divino en el Occidente* and *De la Europa medieval a la América colonial ¿continuación del feudalismo?*

21. This can be seen by reviewing the programs of the various events found on the project website: Company, Concepción; González, Aurelio; Walde, Lilian Von Der. *Medievalia*. Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa Colegio de México. 12th August 2009 <www.medievalia.org.mx>.



Letras, extending the day's events which took place at the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* of the *Universidad de Valladolid*. All of these events were part of a project of greater magnitude by the University of Valladolid's *Instituto de Historia de Simancas* to organize four introductory events in different Latin American countries with the goal of holding a grand colloquium in Spain in 2004.²² The sessions at the University of Valladolid enjoyed the presence of major specialists on the Christian kingdoms of Spain such as Miguel Ángel Ladero, Isabel del Val, José Manuel Nieto Soria, Tarsicio de Azcona and Juan Carretero Zamora. Participants in the Mexican sessions included Julio Valdeón, Isabel del Val, Aurelio González, Antonio Rubial, María Dolores Bravo and Beatriz Ruiz Gaitán. The papers from this first event were published under the title *Isabel I de Castilla y la política*²³ and exemplified the fact that it is possible for provocative and rigorous works on the Middle Ages to come out of Mexico.

With the goal of encouraging further study of the Middle Ages in the sphere of history, the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* at UNAM held an International Conference in the summer of 2008 titled, *El mundo de los conquistadores. La península Ibérica en la Edad Media y su proyección en la conquista de América* (The World of the Conquistadors: The Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages and the Conquest of America), coordinated by this author. The colloquium was held with the objective of providing a detailed analysis of the continuities, changes and innovations in the Spanish tradition during the conquest and colonization of the New World. To this end, prominent medievalists such as Carlos de Ayala, Francisco García Fitz, Ma. Isabel Pérez de Tudela, Eliana Magnani, Alejandro Morán, Eric Palazzo, Patrick Hen-

22. Thanks to Professor María Isabel del Val Valdivieso, a member of the organizing committee along with Luis Ribot and Elena Maza, for having provided me with this valuable information.

23. Valdeón, Julio, ed. *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001. Texts presented in Mexico were the following: Valdeón, Julio. "Isabel la Católica. La monarquía de todas las Españas", *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001: 337-348; Rubial, Antonio. "Isabel de Castilla y los movimientos religiosos en España durante su reinado. Su impacto en América", *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001: 351-362; Ruiz, Beatriz. "Los Reyes Católicos y el Mundo Renacentista", *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001: 365-386; González, Aurelio. "Romances de la época de los Reyes Católicos", *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001: 387-406; Dolores, María. "Protagonismo real y dramático de los Reyes católicos en especial de Isabel", *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001: 407-421. In Mexico, Professor Valdivieso presented a paper under the title, "Isabel princesa", which covered the material of the paper presented in Valladolid, Val Valdivieso, María Isabel. "La herencia del trono", *Isabel la Católica y la política. Ponencias presentadas al I Simposio sobre el reinado de Isabel la Católica, celebrado en las ciudades de Valladolid y México en el otoño de 2000*, Julio Valdeón, ed. Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia de Simancas-Ámbito, 2001: 15-50.



riet, Daniel Baloup, Dominique de Courcelles, Alessandro Vanoli and Klaus Herbers were invited to debate with prominent Mexican modernists such as Antonio Rubial, José Rubén Romero, Federico Navarrete and Miguel Pastrana, among others. As such, the conference intended to link the diverse Mexican institutions of higher education in order to further develop the study of the history of the medieval period, facilitate contact between specialists on both sides of the Atlantic, encourage relationships between UNAM and various institutions of higher education in Europe, and, in the long term, inspire joint research projects in which both interested students and professors could participate.²⁴

4. The organization of exhibitions

Geographic separation and economic barriers for many Mexicans desiring to visit Europe have made the two major exhibitions which we alluded to in the introduction into a unique space for a popular audience to approach the Middle Ages and universal culture.

The first exhibition was titled, *El mundo de Carlos V. De la España Medieval al Siglo de Oro* (The World of Charles V: From Medieval Spain to the Siglo de Oro) and took place at the *Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso* from November 4, 2000 to February 25, 2001.²⁵ Inaugurated by the queen of Spain and curated by Isidro Bango, the exhibition brought together more than two hundred items including codices, tapestries, sculpture, documents, maps, paintings, books and furnishings on loan from the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, the El Greco House, the El Prado Museum, the *Archivo General de Indias*, and the Escorial Monastery, among others. Such a display could only be realized through a collaboration between the Mexican *Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes* (CONACULTA), the *Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V*, and the financial support of various private institutions. During the exhibition, there were also concerts of period music, courses, talks, and activities for children.²⁶

24. The conference proceedings are currently being prepared for publication and are due out in the summer of 2010. Thanks to the connections made at this conference, the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* is participating in a project directed by Professor Carlos de Ayala titled, *“Iglesia y legitimación del poder político. Guerra santa y cruzada en la Edad Media del occidente peninsular (1050-1250)”* and is supporting, together with the University of Bologna, the initiation of a project titled, *El Mediterráneo y su proyección atlántica: entre medioevo y modernidad*.

25. *El mundo de Carlos V. De la España Medieval al Siglo de Oro. Catálogo de la exposición*. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal Para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes-Ciudad de México, 2001.

26. Rangel, Lourdes. “El mundo de Carlos V, una de las más grandes exposiciones presentadas en México: Rafael Tovar”. Consejo Nacional para la Cultura. 30th September 2009 <www.cnca.gob.mx/cnca/nuevo/diarias/271000>; Altamirano, Liliana. “El mundo de Carlos V, patrimonio cultural universal en diálogo de México con el mundo”. Consejo Nacional para la Cultura. 30th September 2009 <www.cnca.gob.mx/cnca/nuevo/diarias/061100>.



Beyond the artistic and cultural value of the works in the exhibition, whose appearance on this side of the Atlantic was evidence of a considerable effort, I must highlight the ideas which drove the various entities and personalities to join forces and bring the exhibition to Mexico. Pilar del Castillo, who was the Spanish minister of culture at the time, described Charles V as “a figure who was full of contradictions,” because he was born at a time “between two cultural conceptions that were slowly growing apart: the fantastic world of the “waning of the Middle Ages” [...] and the cultural complex of Renaissance humanism.” In this sense, Del Castillo understood the exhibition to be “a voyage through the key points of that cultural evolution in Spain, excellently illustrated by nearly two hundred works,” and she believed that “those key points (were) also the origin of an essential part of Ibero-American culture, like a crossroad with one path originating from the many European influences that came together in the Spanish monarchy.”²⁷ The members of the Mexican committee, on the other hand, conceived of the exhibition “as a tour through the rich and varied culture of Spain under Charles V (1516-1556), offering at the same time a wide panorama of its medieval roots, its reality, and its reflection in American lands.”²⁸ Lastly, Juan Carlos Elorza, president of the *Sociedad Estatal*, explained in his paper that the exhibition’s goal was to “take the figure of the Emperor, Charles, as the pivot point between the medieval kingdoms of Spain and the modernity of the Austrian monarchy, (and put forward) a vision of Spanish culture from 1500-1700 without forgetting the medieval roots of some of the most important themes appearing in the nine divisions of the exhibition.”²⁹ It is worth noting that in these three papers, the authors only conceive of the Middle Ages as an antecedent to the brilliance of Imperial Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries. None of them were medievalists, and it is logical, to a certain degree, that the splendor of the 16th century would draw more attention, being the focal point of the exhibition. Yet this remains an example of the conception one could have of the medieval period in Mexico ten years ago: a simple antecedent to the conquest of America and not a historical period with its own value.

The introduction to the catalog is, itself, the keynote speech that Isidro Bango gave at the *Colegio de San Ildefonso* as an inauguration. In this paper, the art historian covered the medieval era, from the Visigothic period through the end of the Christian kingdoms, including several paragraphs on medieval art of the Iberian

27. Castillo, Pilar del. “Presentación”, *El mundo de Carlos V. De la España Medieval al Siglo de Oro. Catálogo de la exposición*. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal Para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes-Ciudad de México, 2001: 15-16.

28. Fuente, Juan Ramón de la; Tovar, Rafael; Robles, Rosario. “Presentación”, *El mundo de Carlos V. De la España Medieval al Siglo de Oro. Catálogo de la exposición*. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal Para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes-Ciudad de México, 2001: 17.

29. Lorza, Juan Carlos. “Presentación”, *El mundo de Carlos V. De la España Medieval al Siglo de Oro. Catálogo de la exposición*. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal Para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes-Ciudad de México, 2001: 19.



Peninsula, all in only ten pages.³⁰ This was all an interested reader could find on the medieval period in Spain, given that even when the authors of other papers in the catalog do turn back to medieval times it is only to search for the origins of the world of Emperor Charles.

In spite of these criticisms, the truth is that the exhibition was of great importance as regards the goal of dissemination. It offered not only an overview of the Spanish monarchy in the 16th and 17th centuries and its universal character, but it also allowed thousands of Mexicans to view authentic gems of the Middle Ages such as the *Virgen de las Batallas* (c. 1225-1235), from the Monastery of San Pedro de Arlanza;³¹ the *San Mateo*, by Maestro Mateo (c. 1211);³² the *Juicio Final*, by Miguel Jiménez and Martín Bernat (15th C.);³³ the *Retablo de San Juan Bautista u Santa Catalina de Alejandría*, by the Maestro de Sigüenza (15th C.)³⁴ and a nobleman's tomb from the 14th century.³⁵

The Federal government, encouraged by the large number of people who attended the exhibition on Charles V and with the goal of fostering closer cultural relationships between Spain and Mexico, organized the exhibition, *España Medieval, el legado de Occidente* (Medieval Spain: the legacy of the West), in the Museum of Anthropology as mentioned above, with the support of the *Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior* and the *Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes*, and with the additional sponsorship of the *Casa Real*.

The exhibition contained more than three hundred works: illuminated books, sculptures, tapestries, textiles, images, armor, etc. It was divided into three major sections. "*La formación medieval de España* (The development of Medieval Spain)" covered political history from the Visigothic period through to the 16th century. "*España medieval: sociedad, religión y cultura* (Medieval Spain: Society, Religion, and Culture)" studied everything "from the role of the monarchy, nobility and clergy in the organization of the State and formation of political thought to the controversial coexistence of religions." Lastly, "*El encuentro entre dos mundos: el legado de occidente* (The Meeting of Two Worlds: the legacy of the West)" was dedicated "to the influence of European culture in America."³⁶ At the same time, film series, workshops, talks and a "medieval parade" were organized, which brought the medieval world to thousands of surprised inhabitants of the capital.

More than the works themselves —such as a reliquary from the end of the Middle Ages, a facsimile of the book by Fernando I and Sancha, and a copy of the 14th

30. Bango, Isidro. "De la realidad histórica y cultural de España y de las Españas heredadas por Carlos V", *El mundo de Carlos V...*: 25-34.

31. *El mundo de Carlos V...*: 167.

32. *El mundo de Carlos V...*: 295.

33. *El mundo de Carlos V...*: 223.

34. *El mundo de Carlos V...*: 169.

35. *El mundo de Carlos V...*: 221.

36. *España medieval, el legado de Occidente. October 2005-February 2006. Catálogo de la Exposición*. Madrid: SEACEX-Lunwerg Editores, 2005. Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior-Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes-Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia. <www.espanamedieval.inah.gob.mx> This was the official web page for the exhibition.



century *Gesta comitum*— it is the catalog of the exhibition that grabs my attention for two reasons: On the one hand, the papers were given by medievalists with great international prestige,³⁷ which gave a solid backing to curatorship and museum stewardship; on the other hand there is the same interpretation of Mexican history that we mentioned in the introduction.

5. Publications

The publication of monographs on the Middle Ages is perhaps the area in which Mexico has made the largest contribution to medieval studies in general, given that these are not only available in Mexico but also in a good part of Latin America and Spain.

Mexico's strong editorial tradition made it possible for numerous texts on medieval topics to be published throughout the 20th century, with support predominantly from the *Fondo de Cultura Económica*.³⁸ One of the best editorial decisions made by the *Fondo* has been to publish a few of the most representative texts by the great masters of medieval studies. Some of these publications, on more than one occasion, have become the first edition available in Spanish.

The series began with the publication of *Historia económica y social de la Edad Media* (Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages) by Henri Pirenne in 1939.³⁹ This reflects, without a doubt, the need to address the dearth of material on the economic and social aspects of the Middle Ages. But it also demonstrates the intent of the directors of the *Fondo de Cultura* to place Mexico on the forefront of historical investigation by publishing recent and innovative monographs, as was the case with *Historia económica*, whose French edition dates from 1933. Considered by March Bloch to be an “admirable synthesis of economic history,”⁴⁰ Pirenne's *Historia*

37. This was the case with: García Moreno, Luis A. “La Monarquía visigoda: la herencia de la Antigüedad clásica y la aportación germana”, *España medieval, el legado de Occidente. Octubre 2005- febrero 2006. Catálogo de la Exposición*. Madrid: SEACEX-Lunweg Editores 2005: 25-36; Viguera, María Jesús. “Esplendor y decadencia de al-Andalus: de la invasión musulmana a la toma de Granada”, *España medieval, el legado de Occidente. Octubre 2005- febrero 2006. Catálogo de la Exposición*. Madrid: SEACEX-Lunweg Editores 2005: 37-62. María Jesús; Ladero, Miguel Ángel. “El orden político: teorías, estructuras, instituciones”, *España medieval, el legado de Occidente. Octubre 2005- febrero 2006. Catálogo de la Exposición*. Madrid: SEACEX-Lunweg Editores 2005: 175-196; Valdeón, Julio. “Las religiones del libro y la España de las Tres Culturas”, *España medieval, el legado de Occidente. Octubre 2005- febrero 2006. Catálogo de la Exposición*. Madrid: SEACEX-Lunweg Editores 2005: 197-210.

38. See the catalog prepared by the *Fondo de Cultura Económica* on its seventieth anniversary: Fondo de Cultura Económica. *Catálogo histórico 1934-2004*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004.

39. Pirenne, Henri. *Historia económica y social de la Edad Media*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1939. I use the 2003 reprinting, which includes a prologue and a critical and bibliographic appendix by H. Van Werveke, both written in 1962.

40. Werke, Van. “Prólogo”, *Historia económica y social de la Edad Media*, Henri Pirenne. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1939: 5-7, especially 5; Bloch, Marc. “Une synthèse de l'histoire économique médiévale”. *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*, 7 (1935): 79-80.



presented, as we know, various aspects of the economic structure of medieval Europe: urban institutions and the activities of the bourgeois and merchant class; trade on the Adriatic and North Seas; markets, money and lending, seigniorial organization and agricultural transformation, the development of capitalism and more. An outstanding work in economic history, the book was also an example of the new type of history put forward by the *Annales*. In this sense, it should not be forgotten that only a decade after the first edition of the aforementioned journal Mexico would publish a representative work in the same historiographic vein.

The high regard in which the editors of the *Fondo de Cultura* held the work of Pirenne is demonstrated by the publication of his *Historia de Europa. Desde las invasiones al siglo XVI* (A History of Europe: From the invasions to the 16th century) in 1942.⁴¹ Here Pirenne sketches the social, economic and political history of medieval Europe and synthesizes his most famous ideas, such as that of the fracturing of Mediterranean unity and the change in the structure of the Late Antique world as a direct consequence of Muslim expansion.⁴²

The 1949 publication by the *Fondo* of the work of the Argentine scholar, José Luis Romero, titled *La Edad Media* (The Middle Ages) was destined for a wider audience and has already reached its 26th edition. Included in the *Breviarios* collection, the work offered readers a general panorama of the period between the 4th and 15th centuries. The text was divided into two parts: a first part dedicated to political events, including the Byzantine and Islamic worlds, and a second part on topics pertaining to culture, such as political theory, the conception of the universe and knowledge. Written in the 1950s, the work presents the Middle Ages as divided in three periods, the Early (4th - 9th century), High (10th - 13th century) and Late (14th - 15th century) Middle Ages.⁴³

In response to the need for overviews encompassing various historic periods, works such as those by Alfons Dopsch, which focused on the social and cultural aspects of the transition from Antiquity to the Medieval period,⁴⁴ by Federico Chabod, who analyzed the cultural transformations between the 12th and 16th centuries,⁴⁵ and by Michel Mollat, who wrote on the first voyages of discovery and their historical, economic, political and cultural implications,⁴⁶ were printed.

41. Pirenne, Henri. *Historia de Europa. Desde las invasiones hasta el siglo XVI*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1942.

42. Pirenne, Henri. *Historia de Europa...*: 35-39. See Hodges, Richard; Whitehouse, David. *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe. Archaeology and the Pirenne Thesis*. London: Cornell University Press, 1983.

43. Romero, José Luis. *La Edad Media*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1949.

44. Dopsch, Alfons. *Fundamentos económicos y sociales de la cultura europea: de César a Carlomagno*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951.

45. Chabod, Federico. *Escritos sobre el renacimiento*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990.

46. Mollat, Michel. *Los exploradores del siglo XIII al XVI: primeras miradas sobre nuevo smundos*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990. Mention should also be made of the study by Phillips, John. *La expansión medieval en Europa*. Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994, published by the subsidiary of *Fondo* in Spain.



With respect to published monographs, the first were the works of Johannes Böhler on culture and daily life in the medieval period published in 1946,⁴⁷ the first edition in Spanish of *Los reyes taumaturgos* (The Miracle Kings) by Marc Bloch only appearing in 1988;⁴⁸ Michel Mollat's study on poverty should also be mentioned.⁴⁹ This last text is very interesting not only for the topic it addresses —poverty from the Late Romanesque period to the 15th century— but also for the different perspectives from which the data was analyzed: material realities, theological and secular discussions (sermons, prayers, treatises), and institutions that confronted the problem (hospitals, *albergues*, etc.).

Special mention should be made of the publication of Luis Weckmann's works. The *Fondo de Cultura* published the essay *La herencia medieval de México* (The Medieval Inheritance of Mexico) together with *El Colegio de México*, and published *La herencia medieval del Brasil* (The Medieval Inheritance of Brazil) alone.⁵⁰ Both studies were conceived of with the goal of demonstrating the importance of the European cultural inheritance manifested in historical and mental points of reference to which Europeans turned to explain the American reality: the seigniorial and chivalric mindset of the first conquistadors, geographic conceptions, ideas on extraordinary beings, mystic experiences, economic realities, the organization of the first troops of *conquistadores*, etc, etc, etc.⁵¹

The monumental edition of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* is particularly useful and interesting as a primary source.⁵² Criticized by specialists for its poor translation and a weak *Estudio Preliminar*,⁵³ the truth is that it was not only the first Spanish version of the work of this Tunisian historian, but it was the only one for the whole of the 20th century: With this, Elías Trabulse's objective of making "a classic work of universal historiography" and "historic thought" accessible once again was satisfac-

47. Böhler, Johannes. *Vida y cultura en la Edad Media*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1946. This note reminds us of the many valuable translations done by various Spanish scholars exiled in Mexico, such as Wenceslao Roces (1897-1992).

48. Bloch, Marc. *Los reyes taumaturgos*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988.

49. Mollat, Michel. *Pobres, humildes y miserables en la Edad Media: estudio social*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988. Mention should also be made of the work on *Matilde di Canossa*: Fumagalli, Vito. *El poder y la soledad de una mujer en el Medioevo*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1999, prepared for the Argentinian subsidiary of *Fondo*, which I have been unable to access.

50. Weckmann, Luis. *La herencia medieval de México*. Mexico: El Colegio de México-Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994; Weckmann, Luis. *La herencia medieval del Brasil*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993.

51. Another of Weckmann's works should be added to the list: Weckmann, Luis. *Glosario de términos heráldicos*. Mexico: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 1995.

52. Jaldún, Ibn. *Introducción a la historia universal (Al-Muqaddimah)*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977.

53. This is evident in several of the texts that include the volume as part of the exposition on Ibn Khaldun in Seville in 2006. Viguera, María Jesús, coord. *Ibn Jaldún. El Mediterráneo en el siglo XIV. Auge y declive de los imperios. Exposición en el Real Alcázar de Sevilla. Mayo-Septiembre 2006*. Sevilla-Granada: Fundación El Legado Andalusi-Fundación José Manuel Lara, 2006.



torily achieved.⁵⁴ The publication of the work of Ibn Khaldun would be completed a few years later with an edition of a study by the Lebanese scholar Nassif Nassar.⁵⁵

The last accomplishment by the *Fondo* was an anthology of the texts of Georges Duby by Beatriz Rojas, published a few years after the death of this great French medievalist.⁵⁶ The volume, preceded by a biography of the author, had “[...] the goal of providing the reader with a general vision of the work of Duby.”⁵⁷ This objective was fully achieved, not only because the volume offered an overview of medieval society from the 11th to the 13th centuries, but also because several of the author’s most representative studies, along six different lines of research, were included: 1) autobiographical reflection,⁵⁸ 2) theoretical-methodological reflection,⁵⁹ 3) studies on feudal society,⁶⁰ 4) research on social and economic history,⁶¹ 5) studies on the history of *mentalités*,⁶² and 6) essays on artistic expression in the Middle Ages.⁶³ The preparation of this compilation should be very well regarded, as it brought to the Mexican public—particularly to university students—texts that are difficult to obtain at these latitudes, due to high importation costs, the year of their publication in French, or, even still, due to the lack of knowledge among our students of French and other languages necessary for the study of history, such as Italian, German and Latin.

54. Trabulse, Elías. “Estudio preliminar”. *Introducción a la historia universal...: 7*.

55. Nassar, Nassif. *El pensamiento realista de Ibn Jaldún*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980.

56. Duby, Georges. *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999.

57. Rojas, Beatriz. “Presentación”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999.

58. Duby, Georges. “El placer del historiador”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999: 21-43. Reedition of Duby, Georges. “Le plaisir de l’historien”, *Essais d’egohistoire*, Pierre Nora, dir. Paris: Gallimard, 1987: 109-138.

59. For example, Duby, George. “Historia de las mentalidades”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999: 44-66. Reprinting of Duby, Georges. “Histoire des mentalités”, *L’histoire et ses méthodes*, Charles Saraman, dir. Paris: Gallimard, 1961: 937-966.

60. For example, Duby, Georges. “Las sociedades medievales: una visión de conjunto. Lección inaugural pronunciada en el College de France en 1970”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999: 140-155. Reprinting of Duby, Georges. *Les sociétés médiévales. Un approche d’ensemble*. Paris: Gallimard, 1972.

61. For example, Duby, Georges. “Economía patrimonial y economía monetaria. El presupuesto de la abadía de Cluny entre 1080 y 1155”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999: 203-221. Reprinting of Duby, Georges. “Economie domaniale et économie monétaire: le budget de l’abbaye de Cluny entre 1080 et 1155”. *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 7/2 (1952): 155-171.

62. For example, Duby, Georges. “Moral de los sacerdotes, moral de los guerreros”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999: 293-315. Reprinting of “Morale des prêtres, morale des guerriers”, Duby, Georges. *Le chevalier la femme et le prêtre*. Paris: Hachette, 1981: p. 27-60.

63. For example, Duby, Georges. “Los tiempos de las catedrales”, *Obras selectas de Georges Duby*, ed. Beatriz Rojas. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1999: 410-448. Reprinting of Duby, Georges. “Les temps des cathédrales”, *Les temps des cathedrales. L’arte et la société 980-1420*. Paris: Gallimard, 1976: 115-162.



In direct response to the publication of the work of Duby, María del Carmen Elizundia prepared an anthology of papers on medieval topics in 2004⁶⁴ that made accessible to the Mexican public works in which an integrated and positive view of the Middle Ages was presented, describing “historical events”; “politics, economy and society”; “education, science and technological advances;” “philosophical thought”; and “art.”⁶⁵ However, in spite of these virtues, it is also true that the chosen studies were written in the 1970s and 1980s —the most recent is from 1997⁶⁶— and offer a general overview of the topics mentioned.

In the sphere of publication, work by the History Department of the *Universidad Iberoamericana* should be highlighted, in whose collection of *Antologías Universitarias*, a volume on the crusades by Guy Rozat, has been included. It has the “misleading” title of *Historiografía medieval. Relatar las cruzadas* (Medieval Historiography: Recounting the Crusades).⁶⁷ I say misleading because a reader would expect to find a collection of historiographical sources on the crusades, like the chronicles of Guibert of Nogent or Fulcher of Chartres; however, what the reader finds is a compilation of contemporary studies by the most important specialists on the crusades —Michaud, Alphandéry, Grousset, Pirenne and Runciman— preceded by an introductory study in which Rozat analyzes the rise of the idea of the “Middle Ages” and outlines the current historiography on the study of the crusades.

One publishing house that has made significant contributions to the education of university students is the Mexican subsidiary of *Editorial Siglo XXI*, because of the affordable cost of the volumes they publish. Six titles are available in the collection “*Historia Universal Siglo XXI*” and together they cover our period of interest in its totality: *Las transformaciones del mundo mediterráneo. Siglos III-VIII* (The Transformations of the Mediterranean World: 3rd - 8th Centuries), by Franz Georg Maier;⁶⁸ *La Alta Edad Media* (The High Middle Ages), by Jean Dhont;⁶⁹ *La Baja Edad Media* (The Late Middle Ages), by Jacques Le Goff;⁷⁰ *Los fundamentos del mundo moderno. Edad Media tardía, reforma, renacimiento* (The Foundations of the Modern World: The Late Middle Ages, Renais-

64. Elizundia, María del Carmen, comp. *Antología de textos. Época medieval*. Mexico: Miguel Ángel Porrúa-Universidad Anahuac del Sur, 2004.

65. Along similar lines, mention should also be made of the compilation by Durán, Norma. *Formas de hacer historia. La historiografía grecolatina y medieval*. Mexico: Ediciones Navarra, 2001 which has been impossible for me to access for inclusion in this article and about which I have knowledge only through the collection at the “Francisco Javier Clavijero” library at the *Universidad Iberoamericana*.

66. The articles include, among others, Ruiz Domènec, José Enrique. “La reconquista española”. *Historia universal*, José Pijoan, dir. Barcelona: Salvat Editores, 1980: VII, 7-30; Suárez, Luis. *Raíces cristianas de Europa*. Madrid: Palabra, 1986; Sherrard, Philip. *Bizancio*. Mexico: Ediciones Culturales Internacionales, 1987; Stewart, Desmond. *El antiguo islam*. Mexico: Lito Ofset Latina, 1997.

67. Rozat, Guy, comp. *Historiografía medieval. Relatar las cruzadas*. Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1995.

68. Maier, Franz Georg. *Las transformaciones del mundo mediterráneo. Siglos III-VIII*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 2004. (1st ed. in Spanish 1972; 1st ed. in German 1968).

69. Dhont, Jan. *La alta edad media*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1995. (1st ed. in Spanish 1971; 1st ed. in German 1967).

70. Le Goff, Jacques. *La baja edad media*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1992. (1st ed. in Spanish 1971; 1st ed. in German 1965).



sance, Reformation) by Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Teneti;⁷¹ *Bizancio* (Byzantium), also by Maier⁷² and, lastly, the work on *El Islam I. Desde los orígenes hasta el comienzo del imperio otomano* (Islam I: From its Origins to the Rise of the Ottoman Empire), by Claude Cahen.⁷³ As is evident, these varied works, written by experts, offer students a complete and detailed panorama of each of the historical periods they address.

One can find various monographs on medieval topics brought out by this publisher. The series begins with two studies by José Luis Romero. The first is titled *La revolución burguesa en el mundo feudal* (The Bourgeois Revolution in the Feudal World) (1979),⁷⁴ and in it, using the perspective of social history, the author analyzes the rise of the bourgeoisie, the crisis of the Christian feudal order, and the formation of what he called “the feudal-bourgeois world”, as well as the political, social and mental repercussions to which these processes led. The second volume, *Crisis y orden en el mundo feudoburgués* (Crisis and Order in the Feudal-Bourgeois World), is a continuation of the earlier work and is centred on the study of the social transformations in the 14th and 15th centuries.⁷⁵ In turn, Perry Anderson’s study titled *Transiciones de la antigüedad al feudalismo* (Transitions from Antiquity to Feudalism) (1979) was, at the time, presented as the “more up to date” alternative to Pirenne’s economic history. This, together with the force of materialist models in Mexico, made the book one of the major references on economic history of the Middle Ages at that time.⁷⁶ The important work of Reyna Pastor on peasant revolts should be added to the list. As is well known, she analyzes the way in which the peasants of the Leonese and Castilian kingdoms faced the feudal transformation in the northeastern peninsula from the 10th to the 13th century from the perspective of historical materialism.⁷⁷

The *Colegio de Michoacán*, for its part, has made a valuable contribution to knowledge of the medieval history of the Iberian Peninsula by editing Adeline Rucquoi’s monograph, which is doubtless the most complete synthesis on the peninsular Middle Ages at this time. It must also be said, furthermore, that this is the only edition in Spanish.⁷⁸

71. Romano, Ruggiero; Teneti, Alberto. *Los fundamentos del mundo moderno. Edad Media tardía. Renacimiento. Reforma*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1995. (1st ed. in Spanish 1971; 1st ed. in German 1967).

72. Maier, Franz Georg. *Bizancio*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1991. (1st ed. in Spanish 1974; 1st ed. in German 1973).

73. Claude Cahen, *El islam I. Desde los orígenes hasta el comienzo del imperio otomano*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1991 (Historia Universal, 14) (1st ed. in Spanish 1972; 1st ed. in German 1968).

74. Romero, José Luis. *La revolución burguesa en el mundo feudal*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1979 (1st ed. in Argentina in 1967).

75. Romero, José Luis. *Crisis y orden en el mundo feudoburgués*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1980.

76. Anderson, Perry. *Transiciones de la antigüedad al feudalismo*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1979 (1st ed. in English 1974. I have the 19th edition from 1994).

77. Pastor, Reyna. *Resistencias y luchas campesinas en la época de crecimiento y consolidación de la época feudal. Castilla y León siglos X al XIII*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1990.

78. Rucquoi, Adeline. *Historia medieval de la península Ibérica*. Zamora (Michoacán): El Colegio de Michoacán, 2000.



Through its various departments, the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* has contributed to the enriching of knowledge on the Middle Ages. However, it is necessary to underline the fact that the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* itself has lagged behind in the publication of medieval subject matter to such a degree that it is currently only possible to list three works published by their press.

The first two works are from the pen of Luis Weckmann.⁷⁹ The first text is titled *Las bulas alejandrinas de 1493 y la teoría política del papado medieval. Estudio de la supremacía papal sobre las islas 1091-1493* (The 1493 Bulls of Donation and the Political Theory of the Medieval Papacy: A Study of Papal Supremacy over the Islands 1091-1493), and was published in 1949, accompanied by an introduction by Ernest Kantorowicz.⁸⁰ This work merits special attention not only because it was the thesis that Weckmann defended at the University of Berkeley under the direction of Kantorowicz, learning, as such, the role of the medievalist, but also because it is precisely a book on the Middle Ages produced with the methods and resources particular to medieval history. Weckmann's thesis consists of pointing out that the 1493 Bulls of Donation were medieval documents both in form and conception because they obey what he calls the "Omni-Insular Doctrine." To demonstrate this, he brought his study back to the 11th century with the goal of showing how the papacy considered as its own all the known islands not under the jurisdiction of any Christian ruler throughout the Middle Ages. The fact that the director of his thesis was none other than one of the great experts in the study of medieval political conceptions⁸¹ allowed the young Mexican medievalist to complete a rigorous, original and well-documented study that Kantorowicz himself considered a "remarkable contribution to medieval historical studies in general."⁸²

Weckmann's second book is an essay whose objective is "to reveal some of the transcendental foundations of medieval political thought" and offer material for appreciating the usefulness of such thought at the time it was written "for the

79. Weckmann, Luis. (born in 1923) received his Masters in 1944 from the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*, later transferring to the University of Berkeley where he wrote his doctoral thesis under the direction of Ernest Kantorowicz and defended it in 1949. After an extended research trip to Paris (1950-1952), he returned to his classes at the *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* at *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* and later joined the *Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia*. In 1952 he began his diplomatic career as Secretary of the Mexican Embassy for the Czech Republic and France, becoming the Mexican Ambassador to Israel in 1967. He was also the Ambassador to Austria, Iran, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and the United Nations Organization and the Mexican Representative to the European Union. Mussacchino, Humberto, dir. *Milenios de México. Diccionario enciclopédico de México*. Milan-Mexico: Sifra International-Raya de Arena, 1994: IV, 3255. Weckmann describes his diplomatic work in: Weckmann, Luis. *Diario político de un embajador mexicano, 1967-1988*, ed. Daniel Leyva. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1997.

80. Weckmann, Luis. *Las bulas alejandrinas de 1493 y la teoría política medieval. Estudio de la supremacía papal sobre las islas 1091-1493*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1949. It was reprinted forty years later with Weckmann, Luis. *Constantino el Grande y Crsitóbal Colón. Estudio de la supremacía papal sobre las islas (1091-1493)*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992.

81. Kantorowicz, Ernest. *The king's two bodies: a study in mediaeval political theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

82. Kantorowicz, Ernest. "Introduction", *Las bulas alejandrinas de 1493 y la teoría política medieval. Estudio de la supremacía papal sobre las islas 1091-1493*, Weckmann, Luis. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1949: 7-11, especially 9.



improvement and consolidation of international relations.”⁸³ Using the research from his doctoral thesis as a base and with the assistance of juridical studies, the book analyzes the political foundations of international relations in the medieval period, the Renaissance, and the modern era. Special attention is given to themes and concepts such as the *Christian Republic*, the conception of empire, vassalage and, of course, ideas formed by the Church on power and sovereignty and their transformations through the 16th to 18th centuries before arriving at the 19th-century State. Once again, as with the aforementioned study, this was a medieval history monograph in every sense of the term.

The last work, which the *Instituto's* electronic catalog itself calls “a true rarity” in Mexican historiography, is from the pen of Sir Claudio Sánchez Albornoz.⁸⁴ An erudite and polemic work like all those by Sir Claudio, *Estudios sobre las instituciones medievales españolas* (Studies on Spanish Medieval Institutions) brings together diverse texts written between 1914 and 1965, grouped by “subject”: “economic and fiscal history,” “history of the social classes,” and “political and juridical institutions,” in which studies on “legislation, feudalism, seigniority, monarchy, etc.” are included.⁸⁵ Sir Claudio pointed out that none of his monographs “(had) been made obsolete so far” and offered the Mexican public, among others, a study on “*Los libertos en el reino astur-leonés* (The Manumitted Slave in the Kingdom of Asturias-Leon)” (p. 317-351); 365 pages on the counties and *behetría* settlements of Castile and Leon; an analysis on “*La sucesión al trono en los reinos de León y Castilla* (Succession to the Throne in the Kingdoms of Leon and Castile)” (p. 639-689); and a transcription and study of “*Un ceremonial inédito de coronación de los reyes de Castilla* (An Unpublished Ceremonial of the Coronation of the Kings of Castile)” (p. 739-763). We do not know what the intention of the authorities at the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* was at the time that they published this miscellanea that contributed little to knowledge of the Middle Ages for all its erudite character. In any case, the edition represented for Sánchez-Albornoz the opportunity to bring to light various works that he had improved or corrected and therefore include the University of Mexico “among the number of institutes of higher learning” to which he would be eternally “grateful”.⁸⁶

To these three works should be added Antonio Garrido Aranda’s study titled *Moriscos e indios: precedentes hispánicos de la evangelización en México* (Moriscos and Indians: Hispanic precedents in the evangelization of Mexico), published by the *Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas*⁸⁷. Interested in a complete understanding of the evangelism of the first missionaries to New Spain, the author turned to the period immediately after the conquest of the kingdom of Granada with the

83. Weckmann, Luis. *El pensamiento político medieval y las bases para un nuevo derecho internacional*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1950: IX.

84. Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. *Estudios sobre las instituciones medievales españolas*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1965.

85. Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. *Estudios sobre las instituciones...*: 7.

86. Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. *Estudios sobre las instituciones...*: 8.

87. Garrido, Antonio. *Moriscos e indios: precedentes hispánicos de la evangelización en México*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1980.



objective of analyzing the mechanisms put in place first by Talavera and later by Cisneros to convert Muslims to Christianity in the framework of the Capitulations of Santa Fe. His study demonstrated that the years 1492-1512 were basically a time of experimentation and that during that time a struggle between the two forms of understanding conversion would solidify: one being based in the ideas of conversion through conviction and faith that reached for a better understanding of the culture to be Christianized, and the other holding to the political principle of the religious unity of the Spanish monarchy that brought its representatives to burn ancient codices and hold mass conversions.

The *Proyecto Medievalia*, deserves special mention. In the past fifteen years it has not ceased its contributions to the study and dissemination of the culture, philology, and literature of the Middle Ages. The project was born in 1989 of a common interest of various scholars of medieval literature and philology —Concepción Company (*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*), Lillian von der Walde (*Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana*) and Aurelio González (*El Colegio de México*)— with the objective of linking the different institutions of higher learning in Mexico City in a wide-reaching research project.⁸⁸ In addition to publishing the proceedings of the biannual conference, *Medievalia* has published, more or less regularly, a journal of the same name that had already reached number 34 by the year 2004. They have also published diverse monographs making in-roads into philology, literature and philosophy.⁸⁹

7. Conclusions

The survey I have completed allows me to point out that throughout the second half of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st the Middle Ages have been of continual interest, both in academic spheres —particularly at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*— and among the general public. As such, this study allows us to state that this interest has significantly increased in the last ten years, as is evidenced by the opening of a position in the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* at UNAM dedicated to the Middle Ages, the growing number of student theses dedicated to this historical period, the existence of a graduate course on medieval topics in the UNAM *Posgrado en Historia*, the increase in the number of publications on medieval subject matter —including anthologies, the organization of two large exhibitions— particularly *España: el legado de occidente (Spain: the legacy of the West)*, the many international conferences held, and the presence of prominent medievalists at UNAM and other institutions, such as *El Colegio de México* or the *San Cristóbal* campus of the *Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas*.

88. Company, Concepción; Arias, Beatriz. “Los estudios medievales en México. Informe sobre el proyecto *Medievalia*”. *Medievalismo. Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales*, 4 (1994): 229-230.

89. The full catalog of publications is available on the project’s web page: Company, Concepción; González, Aurelio; Walde, Lillian Von Der. “Publicaciones de *Medievalia*”. *Medievalia*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas-Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa-Colegio de México. 12th August 2009 <<http://www.medievalia.org.mx>>.



However, in spite of all this, it is impossible, even today, for a graduate student to find specialized dictionaries, recent monographs, or collections of documents in Mexico to use in writing a doctoral thesis; and both individuals and institutions must face the high price of works published in Europe.⁹⁰ Additionally, it should be pointed out that the majority of professors that give classes related to the Middle Ages in the various institutions of higher education are not medievalists by training and that the offers are general in character. It is, therefore, difficult to explore all of the subject matter in depth, but students who wish can go on to obtain the methodological and theoretical training (medieval palaeography and Latin, for example) necessary to become medievalists. Finally, dissemination, in general, does not follow a systematical program of continuing education, but is rather inspired by the interests of a person or particular group who, in general, turn to the topics most attractive to the general public, such as courtly love, knights, or magic and astronomy, neglecting dissemination to a greater public of themes dear to medievalists in the sphere of history such as the debates surrounding the transition from antiquity to the medieval period or the establishment of feudalism and the process of *incastellamento*, or even topics such as the development of the seigniorial domain, the structure of kinship, the growth of trade routes, the role of cities and their economic elites, the evolution of the liturgy, the Gregorian reform, the role of monastic orders, holy war and crusade, symbols of power, the structure of political power, historiography, material culture or the recent developments brought to the table by archaeological study.⁹¹

As a result of this general situation, I can say that even if both knowledge of the Middle Ages and the positive assessment of that period by academic and governmental institutions have been enriched over the last twenty years, it is also true that “Mexican medievalism” is still in its infancy and that in the sphere of history the Mexican academy lags significantly behind with respect to other Latin American countries like Argentina and Brazil, where the Middle Ages have been studied in an uninterrupted and productive manner since the middle of the 20th century.

In this sense, medieval studies in Mexico have a long road ahead, and the immediate tasks are enormous and varied. The first of these tasks is to disseminate a new vision of the Middle Ages in which this historic period is considered as valuable in and of itself—rich, complex, diverse—and as one of the roots of Mexican culture. This should bring with it greater receptivity among academic institutions, which would make possible the creation of new research positions dedicated to the study

90. At the present time, the author of this study is developing a bibliographic project at various university entities in Mexico City, including the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, with the objective of creating a database of the materials related to the Middle Ages that these hold, and from that information systematically increase the recourses of the *Universidad Nacional* through donation, exchange, or purchase of more recent materials.

91. This is not meant to detract from the important work in the area of dissemination carried out in recent years by the *Seminario Interdisciplinar de Estudios Medievales* as well as the group, *Medievalia*, but it should point to the imperative need to broach subject areas different from those traditionally dealt with. The challenge of dissemination is greater given that these topics are lesser known, often dry, and encompass a greater complexity than those topics of greater popularity among general audiences.



of the Middle Ages, at least in those entities of greater national prestige, adding to the previously created post at the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas*. The increasing number of specialists would, on the one hand, allow students to be offered a graduate program on the Middle Ages, and, on the other hand, encourage the creation of a Mexican Society of Medieval Studies through which members could make connections with other similar groups in America and Europe.

The second task consists of developing a long-term plan with the following considerations: In the first place, enrich the universities' bibliographic resources with recent monographs that cover such topics as the history of the Church and monastic, mendicant and military orders; the history of popular religiosity and spirituality; material culture and economy; the study of castles and archaeology; power structures and diplomacy; etc, etc, etc. In this regard, it is absolutely essential to obtain the proceedings from annual conferences of great international prestige such as those of the *Semanas de Estudios* from the *Centro Italiano de Estudios sobre el Alto Medioevo de Spoleto* (CISAM), the *Curso de Estudios del Condado de Urgell*, the *Congreso Anual de la Fundación Sánchez-Albornoz* or the *Estella Semanas de Estudios Medievales*, for example.

In the second place, subscriptions to academic journals on medieval topics should be promoted with the goal of enriching the print resources of Mexican libraries;⁹² such subscriptions could be facilitated by the current loan agreements. Within this same framework, it becomes necessary to promote the creation of a medieval journal with international circulation based in the spheres of history and archaeology that complements the journal *Medievalia*, which, as mentioned, is focused on the spheres of literature and philology.

Thirdly, the largest possible quantity of edited medieval sources must be obtained. Today it is possible to acquire the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* or the *Patrologia Latina* on CD and make them available to researchers.⁹³ As such, through exchange or donation, the acquisition of other collections, such as the famous *Colección de Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa* or the *Colectio Canonica Hispana*, should be promoted.

On the other hand, it is essential to encourage, particularly at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*, the publication and translation of medieval sources through the establishment of multidisciplinary teams including latinists, historians and philologists. This would not only place sources from which to write medieval

92. In the Rafael Granados Library of the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* one can find, among others, the following journals which specialize in or publish articles on medieval history: *Al-Andalus* (1977-1998); *Al-Qantara* (1980-1982); *Annales* (1946-2007); *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* (1990-2007); *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* (1958-1997); *Cuadernos de Historia de España* (1944-1991); *Hispania* (Madrid) (1979-1983); *Hispania* (Zaragoza) (1940-1997); *Medievalia* (Barcelona) (1992-1998); *Medievalia* (México) (1990-2000); *Revue Historique* (1990-2006); *Sefarad* (1978-1982); *Studia Stórica. Historia Medieval* (1987-2006). To these titles the following ones, for example, should be added: *Anuario de Historia Medieval del CSIC*; *En la España Medieval*, from the *Universidad Complutense*; *Edad Media. Revista de Historia*, from the *Universidad de Valladolid*; *Medium Aevum*, from Oxford University; *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, from the *Universidad de Lérida* and *Revue Mabillon. Revue internationale de littérature et d'histoire religieuse*, to mention only a few examples. The *Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas* at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* regularly receives *Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*.

93. Both collections are accessible through the web portal, *Cooperatorum Veritatis Societas. Documenta catholica omnia*. 12th August 2009 <www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu>.



history within the reach of Mexican scholars (students and professors), but it would also be a way in which UNAM could increase its participation in the editorial circles in Latin America and Europe. Other institutions, like universities from the interior of the country and the *Colegio de México*, could join in this initiative.

Along the same lines, it will become necessary to develop a project specific to Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México that connects their own *Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* with the *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* with the aim of “recruiting” students who could write undergraduate, masters, or doctoral theses in the area of medieval studies and/or could participate in the publication of sources and anthologies of medieval material.⁹⁴ This would also facilitate Mexican students’ attendance at the various courses offered in Europe throughout the year, such as the *Semanas de Estudios* at the *Centro de Estudios Superiores de Civilización Medieval de Poitiers*, the *Semanas de Spoleto*, the *Curso de Estudios del Condado de Urgell*, the aforementioned *Semanas de Estella* or the training courses offered by the Sánchez-Albornoz Foundation.

In a similar way, institutional ties should be established and joint research projects should be encouraged with the centers and departments of Medieval History in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the United States, and Europe to give incentive to the exchange of teachers and students and to hold periodic academic gatherings in Mexico.

Lastly, a dissemination project should be undertaken that allows for the systematic introduction of medieval history to the general public through continuing education courses and conference cycles and the participation of the mass media, including, of course, the internet.⁹⁵

The tasks mentioned here are certainly not simple and could take years to accomplish. The reason that Mexico currently finds itself behind in medieval studies lies in the official post-revolutionary discourse that systematically denied—as is shown so clearly in Diego Rivera’s murals—the Spanish and therefore western inheritance of Mexican culture. In consequence, the academic institutions of our country dedicated themselves nearly exclusively throughout the 20th century to the cultivation of a national history that gave preference to the Meso-American past. However, it is clear that in the face of the 21st century, Mexico should open itself to the study of other areas of history and particularly to the study of the European Middle Ages, thereby both increasing its presence in international academic spheres and contributing to a better understanding of the cultural roots that make up its very nationhood.

94. Within the framework of the course, “Comentario de Textos”, last semester this author began the preparation of an anthology of medieval texts that will be forthcoming next year.

95. The Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* has given the green light to a project whose objective is to establish a university web site dedicated to the academic study of the Middle Ages.

