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AARHMS Newsletter: Spring 2005

American Academy of Research Historians of Medieval Spain

The American Academy of Research Historians of Medieval Spain (AARHMS) was founded in 1974 by a small group of historians who shared a common interest in medieval Iberia. Since 1976 it has been an 'affiliated society' of the American Historical Association, and has continuously sponsored research presentations at the AHA annual meetings, at the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo, and in other national and regional settings.

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1. ELKA KLEIN: in memoriam

Elka Klein, assistant professor of Judaic Studies at the University of Cincinnati, died March 28, 2005, after a nineteen-month fight with ovarian cancer. She is survived by her parents, Suzanne Silk Klein and Martin Klein, emeritus professor of African history at the University of Toronto; her brother; her husband, Yoseff Francus; and their children, Dina and Shaul.

Elka began her academic career at Yale University, where she was graduated summa cum laude in 1988 with majors in History and Religious Studies. Both majors were earned with distinction. From there, she went on to a graduate career studying with Thomas Bisson at Harvard University. After graduation, she was Dorot Postdoctoral Fellow at New York University. Since 2001, she had taught in the Judaic Studies Department at the University of Cincinnati.

Although her career was brief, Elka had already produced an impressive body of research. Her first book, *Hebrew Deeds of Catalan Jews, 1117-1316* (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans and Patronat Call de Girona) appeared in 2004. An edition and translation of deeds in Hebrew from the archiepiscopal archive, this important book made use of Elka's rare expertise in both Hebrew and Latin. Her monograph, *Jews, Christian Society, and Royal Power in Medieval Barcelona*, is forthcoming this winter from the University of Michigan's series on History, Languages, and Cultures of the Spanish and Portuguese Worlds and promises to revise fundamentally our understanding of the Jewish community's relationship with the Christian community in which it was situated.

Donations may be made in her memory to The Wellness Community in Cincinnati. Instructions are available at their website:

<http://www.thewellnesscommunity.org/cincinnati/donations/>

Acknowledgments can be sent to:

Yoseff Francus
2281 Royal Oak Ct.
Cincinnati, OH 45237

by Gretchen Starr-LeBeau
University of Kentucky

2. URGENT CALL for session proposals: AARHMS Sponsored Sessions at AHA, Philadelphia, January 2006

AARHMS invites all members and prospective members to submit proposals for sessions to be given at the next AHA Annual Convention, to be held at Philadelphia in early January 2006. As an affiliate association of the AHA, AARHMS can sponsor sessions or panels to be included in the general AHA program.

If you are interested in proposing a whole session or presenting an individual paper, please contact Teofilo F. Ruiz , no later than 20 May 2005. Complete proposed panels with designated chairs and commentators will be given priority. AARHMS must provide the AHA with all information for sponsored sessions by 1 June 2005.

(If your AARHMS membership is not current, please renew your membership at the same time as your proposal. Session participants need not be AHA members.)

3. AARHMS Renewal and MEMBERSHIP APPEAL

The current year is an exciting one in that several projects are underway to instill new growth into AARHMS: a significant revamping of the website; a drive to increase new and renewed membership; a projected expansion of the book-review program; a commitment to increased presence at national conferences; and--perhaps most exciting--renewal and expansion of the LIBRO server of e-books on medieval Spanish history. The current LIBRO site may be visited at:

<http://libro.uca.edu>

In an effort to recapture members, this newsletter is being sent to all reachable current and past members of AARHMS. You are all hereby invited to bring your membership up to date by sending your contact information, with payment of dues (\$10, payable by check to AARHMS), by U.S. Mail to:

Helen Nader
Department of History
University of Arizona
P.O. Box 210027
Tucson, AZ 85721
USA

You may also fill in the membership / contact form on the AARHMS website (choose "Join" under "AARHMS" from the menu at left).

4. Call for BOOK REVIEWERS

Simon Doubleday seeks to solicit book reviewers for the AARHMS newsletter and web site. Please let Simon know if you are interested in reviewing (either now or in the future). Simon currently has three books available for review:

1. Renee Levin Melammed, *A Question of Identity: Iberian Conversos in Historical Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2004).
 2. Jeffrey A. Bowman, *Shifting Landmarks: Property, Proof, and Dispute in Catalonia around the year 1000* (Cornell University Press, 2004).
 3. Lucien Wolf, ed. and trans., *Jews in the Canary Islands, Being a Calendar of Jewish Cases Extracted from the records of the Canariote Inquisition in the Collection of the Marquess of Bute* (originally published by the Jewish Historical society of England, 1926; reprinted, Renaissance Society of America / University of Toronto Press, 2001).
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5. NEW OFFICERS and STAFF CONTACTS

The new officers and staff of AARHMS, for 2005/2006, are:

Teofilo F. Ruiz -- president
Department of History, UCLA
tfruiz@history.ucla.edu

Helen Nader -- secretary / treasurer
Department of History, University of Arizona
naderh@email.arizona.edu

Simon Doubleday -- book review editor
Department of History, Hofstra University
Simon.R.Doubleday@hofstra.edu

Mark D. Johnston -- website editor
Department of Modern Languages, DePaul University
mjohnst4@depaul.edu

Nathaniel Taylor -- newsletter editor
Committee on Medieval Studies, Brown University
ntaylor@post.harvard.edu

6. MEMBER NEWS and NOTES (received since December 2004)

James F. Powers, Professor Emeritus at the College of the Holy Cross, lectured aboard Cunard Lines' Caronia on the Columban Voyages of Discovery and Spain's Role in the Mediterranean.

Recently edited by Helen Nader: *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650* (University of Illinois Press, 2004).

Kevin R. Poole, Department of Spanish and Portuguese at The Ohio State University, has completed a paper entitled "Berceo, the Crusades, and the Apocalypse", to be published as part of a project entitled *Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages*, sponsored by the University of Bristol.

Jerrilynn Dodds was named Distinguished Professor of History and Theory at the School of Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture of City College of the City University of New York.

Paul Freedman became chairman of the Department of History, Yale University, in July 2004.

Teofilo Ruiz is stepping down as chairman of the Department of History, UCLA, as of June 2005.

(Teo: congratulations!; Paul: condolences!)

We will continue to print notices of recent publications, appointments, awards, honors and other news

concerning current and past members. Please send news and notes to the newsletter editor, Nathaniel Taylor, at ntaylor@post.harvard.edu.

7. Something Unusual: When a CHIROGRAPH Is NOT a COPY

Nathaniel Taylor is interested in thoughts from readers about two complementary chirograph halves from the Arxiu de la Corona d'Arago, which do not reproduce the same text. See the chirograph (photographs, Latin texts and brief orientation) on a page of his website at:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~nathanieltaylor2/ACChirograph.htm>

This newsletter is being sent to all current and past members of AARHMS on record as of 2 May 2005. It is being sent as an e-mail to those members for whom we have an e-mail address on file; it is also being sent by U.S. Mail to members with invalid or no known e-mail addresses. Members or prospective members receiving the newsletter on paper are invited to submit a current e-mail address and to declare their preference for paper or electronic copy. The AARHMS e-mail distribution list will not be made public, sold or otherwise used except for the distribution of the semi-annual AARHMS newsletter.

Please send address corrections (especially updated e-mail addresses) to Nathaniel Taylor, newsletter editor, at ntaylor@post.harvard.edu.

Current and past newsletter issues are available on the this website: choose "Newsletter" from the menu at left.

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