

Commemoration of the Eighth Centenary of the Birth of James I: Conference Organized by the History and Archeology Section of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans in Barcelona

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We are commemorating this year, 2008, the eighth centenary of the birth of James I 'the Conqueror', the son of King Peter I 'the Catholic' and Mary of Montpellier, who was born in Montpellier during the night of 1-2 February 1208.

He was unquestionably the most important of our kings, both on account of his conquests and because of the governmental action he carried out during his long, sixty-three-year reign.

To the states he inherited – Aragon, Catalonia and the seignery of Montpellier – he added two more – Majorca and the Valencian Country – which were captured from the Moors, resettled, and organized as kingdoms in their own right. This was the largest outward thrust ever achieved by the Catalan-Aragonese crown and permitted the formation of the cultural area, also known as the Catalan Countries, where Catalan is still spoken to the present day.

James I encouraged the growth of Catalan trade and the Catalan navy, founded the first overseas consulates, and laid the foundations of what was to become the Consolat de Mar (Consulate of the Sea). He contributed decisively to the development of municipal government in the cities and towns of the *braç reial* (those that depended directly on the crown) and set up several borough councils, including that of Barcelona. In the course of his reign the composition of the parliament, or Corts, was modernized: starting from the meeting held in Lleida in 1214, which is considered Catalonia's first full parliament, representatives of these same royal cities and towns were also present.

The History and Archeology Section of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, independently or in cooperation with other bodies, has organized a series of conferences as part of these commemorations.

The conference the Section held at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans in Barcelona from 31 March to 4 April, in partnership with the Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània, was the first in the series. It focussed on two major topics: "El poder reial i les institucions administratives i representatives" (Royal Power and Administrative and Representative Institutions) and "Les relacions internacionals" (In-

ternational Relations). A total of two lectures and twenty-four papers were given.

At the opening session the President of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Salvador Giner, and the Director of the Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània, Senén Florensa, both spoke about the eighth centenary celebrations and two lectures were given. In the first of these Maria Teresa Ferrer of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans offered an outline biography of King James I and an assessment of his reign. She referred to the aspects of his rule that were to be studied in each of the conferences and recalled the historian Robert I. Burns, a specialist in James I, who was unable to be present on account of his delicate state of health.

The seventh centenary of the birth of James I, a century ago, was marked by a major conference which gave rise to a series of conferences on the history of the Crown of Aragon. The lecture given by Salvador Claramunt of the University of Barcelona provided an account of that conference and of the other celebrations held in 1908, which caused considerable impact in Catalonia.

At the session devoted to the first of the major topics addressed by the conference, "Royal Power and Administrative and Representative Institutions during the Reign of James I", Vicent Garcia Edo of the Universitat Jaume I in Castelló described and analysed the monarchy of James I. No special internal characteristics distinguished it as an institution: power was concentrated in the hands of the king, who had the hereditary right to reign and this right, according to the beliefs of the period, was granted by God to a dynasty with the object of imparting justice. In order to attain this very goal, laws had to be promulgated and this, in the speaker's view, was the most important feature of James I's long reign. His great legislative task was accomplished in the different states of the Crown and took a variety of forms. These included charters of settlement, privileges and different types of grants, new municipal customs and modifications to certain earlier customs, overall legal codes for Valencia and Aragon (*Furs* and *Fueros* respectively), maritime laws, the maintenance of the Muslim population's existing law and new legislation for the same group. All this required constant discussions with the different estates and minorities in each of the king's realms. Professor Garcia Edo underlined the im-

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portance of the consolidation of the royal Chancery, which became more professionalized when lawyers and notaries entered the service of the Crown and generalized the use of *ius commune* from Italy in both the substance and the form of the documents they drew up. James I also enlisted the support of specialists in decretals and *furs* (in Spanish *fueros*), who advised him on special rights. The speaker went on to examine the legislation of Majorca and Valencia, the *Fueros* of Aragon, the law of Catalonia, municipal law, and the law of the Muslim population.

Besides the central institution – the monarchy –, the political and territorial structure of the states of the Catalan-Aragonese crown were studied in various papers.

Flocel Sabaté of the University of Lleida discussed the topic “Poder i territori als estats originaris, Catalunya i Aragó” (Power and Territory in the Original States, Catalonia and Aragon). The king’s attempt to reinforce his power over his territories through the deployment of delegated officials met with head-on opposition from the nobility and more subtle resistance from the very powerful royal boroughs. The latter tried to appropriate the royal officials charged with exercising territorial jurisdiction and to concentrate socio-economic power in their own hands. Professor Sabaté evoked the king’s very strained relations with the nobility, which more than once led many nobles to sever their bonds of vassalage and sparked off armed clashes. This process, he remarked, was still ongoing towards the end of the reign and the king did not dare to go on posting officials throughout Catalonia and Aragon because the nobles, in the name of tradition, rejected his Roman law arguments.

Pau Cateura of the University of the Balearic Islands gave a paper entitled “Jaume I i el govern de Majorca i d’Eivissa (1230-1276)” (James I and the Government of Majorca and Eivissa [1230-1276]). He described how the king established Majorca as a separate kingdom after the conquest instead of annexing it to Catalonia and how, not long afterwards, in 1230, he granted settlers on the island a Carta de Franquesa (Charter of Liberties) in which he undertook not to give the kingdom away or exchange it but to maintain its links to the crown. Despite this pledge, policy requirements at home led him to entrust the government of Majorca to his cousin Prince Peter of Portugal in 1232. Then he ruled the island himself from 1244 to 1254, returned it to Prince Peter of Portugal from 1254 to 1256, and in 1256 handed it over to his son, Prince James. While it was under direct royal government, the king created the borough of Majorca (1249), ensured that wheat supplies were under public control, and put the administration of justice into professional hands. Professor Cateura analysed the Carta de Franquesa and gave an outline of the method used to share out land: lots of 130 *cavalleries* each were assigned to 101 knights, each of whom was under the obligation to help defend the island with one armoured horse. He also studied various aspects of the rule of Prince Peter of Portugal, that of the king, and that of Prince James.

José Vicente Cabezuelo of the University of Alacant analysed the government of Valencia after the conquest. He explained how, after the city of Valencia had been captured but before the conquest of the rest of the kingdom was complete, the king gave shape to its political and legal system, endowing it with a legal code of its own, the *Furs*. James I organized the municipalities and the government of the new land. Initially he ruled it by delegating his powers to other persons when he was absent, but later he appointed permanent officials who acted whether he was present in the kingdom or not. These officials were given a variety of names, until eventually the term *procurador* became established.

Another topic discussed in the section devoted to this first major theme was the redefinition of the inner boundaries, notably those between the principality of Catalonia and the kingdom of Aragon. In his paper entitled “La frontera del Principat de Catalunya amb el regne d’Aragó” (The Frontier between the Principality of Catalonia and the Kingdom of Aragon), Josep Alanyà of the Tortosa Diocesan Archive studied the ill-defined territorial status of the region lying between the mountain range of Els Ports and the River Ebro, which has close geographical links to the region of Lower Aragon between Alcañiz and Caspe. Often settlers in the region were called upon by Aragon to pay taxes or take part in hosts and cavalcades, whereas spontaneously they identified more strongly with Catalonia. In all likelihood, the action of the bishop of Tortosa, whose jurisdiction included part of the region of Mataranya – now within Aragon –, was partially responsible for this.

The discussions about government would have been incomplete without a study of municipal power. This was provided by Pere Verdés of the Institució Milà i Fontanals of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) and Max Turull of the University of Barcelona. They underlined the crucial importance of the reign of James I in the legal and institutional development of the Catalan municipalities, occurring as it did at the period when *ius commune* reached Catalonia. Roman law gave rise to the concept of the *universitas* – the embodiment of the population of towns and cities – which became established at that period. The nascent municipalities – first and foremost Barcelona – became important actors in politics, as is shown by the presence of the *braç reial* in the incipient Corts. The authors recalled the important contribution made by J. M. Font i Rius to the study of the evolution of municipalities at the period, primarily with respect to the origins of Barcelona city council. They showed how the king’s demands for taxes and the community’s own financial needs led to the formation of municipal councils as the organs that expressed the will of the *universitas* primarily in those two fields. Later their institutional functions became more complex and they acquired a series of other attributions.

Albert Torra, the vice-director of the Archive of the Crown of Aragon, spoke about the royal Chancery, which

was a vital component of the government and administration of the states of the Catalan-Aragonese crown in the day of James I. He noted that the transition from the counts' old-fashioned scribes' office to the highly organized Chancery, where Roman law exerted considerable influence, took place during the reign of James I and stressed the decisive role played by the chancellor Andreu d'Albalat (1254-1258), who was also bishop of Valencia, in organizing the Chancery. The rest of the paper concentrated on the registers from the reign of James I, the earliest documents of their type in the collection of documentation of the Crown of Aragon, which is richer than any other collection on a European monarchy. On the basis of descriptions found in early 14th century archival documents, Albert Torra reconstructed the registers as they were at an approximately contemporary period (their present state is somewhat disorderly, with books and pages that are later additions). He noted that two sets of registers were kept: one was general in nature, while the other contained financial documents.

Since the venue for that day's session was the Palau del Lloctinent, participants had an opportunity to visit the exhibition of documents on James I organized by the Archive of the Crown of Aragon, which was taking place there. This exhibition had been inaugurated on 1 February 2008 to commemorate the date of James I's birth.

The army and navy were other key institutions of the monarchy. Paul E. Chevedden of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in the United States spoke about the army – first and foremost the artillery – in his paper “King James I the Conqueror and the Artillery Revolution of the Middle Ages”. He considered James I as a groundbreaking monarch. Like certain other contemporary kings, he was not merely a passive beneficiary of the changes that were taking place in the Europe of his day but helped speed these changes up. This trait was also shown by the use he made of military equipment. In his day the war engines of the classical era were replaced by engines powered by a counterweight which hurled projectiles weighing hundreds of kilos that could demolish fortifications. The most powerful of these devices was the trebuchet. The technique of the trebuchet was perfected in the 13th century and James I immediately adopted it in his military enterprises when laying siege. Professor Chevedden described the technical characteristics of these machines and the different models – mangonels, trebuchets, *fonèvols* and bricoles – and even used a wooden model to demonstrate how they operated. He analysed the spread of the trebuchet from East to West and the way James I used it in his different military ventures.

Albert Estrada, a professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, gave a paper entitled “Jaume el Conqueridor i la marina de guerra del seu temps” (James the Conqueror and the Navy of His Time) in which he studied the fundamental role of the navy in the chief military enterprises launched by James I. He focussed primarily on the fleet used to conquer Majorca, the support fleet

that helped to conquer Valencia, and the armada formed for the abortive crusade to the Holy Land. He stressed that the naval experience built up during the reign of James I was fundamental to the expansion of the Crown of Aragon across the Mediterranean. The different types of vessel that made up the fleets, the functions of each, and the organization of the fleets came in for special attention.

Tomàs de Montagut of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona addressed the theme “Jaume I a les *Constitucions y altres drets de Cathalunya*” (James I in the *Constitucions y altres drets de Cathalunya*). The work quoted in the title is a major compilation of general Catalan law made on orders from the 1413 parliament in Barcelona. It comprised basically the *Usatges de Barcelona* and the legislation passed by the Catalan Corts, in other words, the *constitucions i capítols de Cort*, and its purpose was to control enforcement of the laws. It was published in 1588-1589 in an enlarged and updated form under the title referred to in the title of the paper and republished in 1704. Though it was partially repealed by the Decree of Nova Planta in 1715-1716, some aspects remained in force until 1960. The speaker identified the laws promulgated by James I, which became part of this compilation and remained in force for many years. He also examined the normative typology and contents of this legislation to ascertain which were the troublesome issues to which a solution had to be found and how James I helped to shape certain distinctive traits of Catalan law, its source system, and the country's public and private institutions.

Another major theme examined in the section devoted to royal power and administrative and representative institutions was the tax structure and monetary policy. Thomas N. Bisson of Harvard University, in a study he modestly described as provisional because he had not had access to all the documentary sources, spoke about the royal treasury under James I between 1230 and 1276. Professor Bisson, who had previously studied the finances of the young James I, from 1228 to 1236, noted that the king reverted to his father's practice of dealing directly with officials and creditors, instead of using the Knights Templar or his accountants as intermediaries, as during the early years of his reign. Towards 1240, moreover, his own solvency had been enhanced by the enlargement of his domains and he found it easier to raise loans than to wait for surpluses to arise from the regular administration of the monarchy's own revenues, the pioneers of which had been the scribes of King Alfons I in the 12th century. He did however maintain a close watch over his finances so as to balance his resources and requirements and from 1241 to 1257 attempted to keep a copy of his accounts, first on loose sheets of paper and later in registers, in order to monitor his debts.

Vicent Baidal of the Institució Milà i Fontanals (CSIC) gave an interesting overview of the royal tax system in the Crown of Aragon by making a comparative study of the direct taxes levied by the monarchy in the different territories. He highlighted the differences between the main

direct taxes raised in royal charter towns – *pechas* in Aragon, *quèsties* in Catalonia, *peites* or *quèsties* in the kingdom of Valencia, and *subsidiis* in the kingdom of Majorca – and the distinct evolution of each. He examined the fiscal contributions made by all the estates in the various territories – the Aragonese and Valencian *monedatge* or the Catalan *bovatges*, for instance – which were characterized by the fact that they were granted or institutionalized by parliamentary assemblies. He also attempted to account for the diverse developments observed in each territory, despite the overall trend towards increasing fiscal pressure and royal centralization.

Miquel Crusafont, the president of the Societat Catalana de Numismàtica, analysed monetary policy in the time of James I and stressed the vital importance of his reign in this field. James I followed his predecessors' example by restricting the nobility's minting activities and centralizing minting in Barcelona. He also strove to establish monetary coordination between the different territories under his sovereignty. The pivotal feature of his policy, however, was the role he gave to representatives of the city of Barcelona in the supervision of minting, since it placed a curb on royal power in one of the most quintessential aspects of sovereignty. Thus guards were appointed by the city to guarantee the parameters of the coinage, an innovation that had great political repercussions and constitutes one of Catalonia's differential traits within the Iberian, and even the European context. Moreover, by introducing the *diner de tern* (a coin made from an alloy of copper and silver) he laid one of the main foundations of the Catalan monetary system, which remained in force throughout the rest of the Middle Ages. Towards the end of James I's reign, the first steps were taken towards the creation of the *gros de plata* or *croat de Barcelona* – the second basic element of the system –, and this confirmed Catalonia's position as one of the most advanced countries of its day.

Whereas on the first day conference participants had been the guests of the Archive of the Crown of Aragon at its headquarters in the Palau del Lloctinent, on the second day they were welcomed by the Museu d'Història de Catalunya and had an opportunity to tour the museum.

On 3 April, the conference returned to the premises of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, where papers devoted to the Corts, or parliament, during the reign of James I were given. Pere Ortí of the University of Girona summarized the evolution of the Corts in Catalonia during this initial period, and went on to focus on the tax known as *bovatge*, which is associated with the Corts and their predecessors, such as the *assemblees de pau i treva* (assemblies of peace and truce). The *bovatge* tax, which had been created by these assemblies as a ransom for peace, evolved into an accession tax that was raised at the beginning of each reign. Furthermore, it became the first instance of the new state tax system which was beginning to emerge in most of the feudal monarchies of western Europe. It was a direct tax, levied on all the inhabitants of Catalonia, whatever jurisdiction they belonged to, which required the ap-

proval of an assembly of all the estates and served to finance a military campaign. It was requested in 1211 for the expedition against the Almohads, which led to the victory of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), and for James I's successive expeditions against the Moors in Majorca (1228), Valencia (1232) and Murcia (1264).

Esteban Sarasa of the University of Saragossa gave a paper entitled "La gestación de las cortes de Aragón en el reinado de Jaime I" (The Gestation of the Cortes of Aragon in the Reign of James I) in which he highlighted the relationship between three processes: the development of the Cortes, the establishment of a single, uniform body of law for the kingdom of Aragon, the *Fueros* – a mission entrusted to Vidal de Canelles, the Catalan bishop of Huesca, who had studied in Bologna –, and the creation of the Justicia Mayor, the purpose of which was to uphold Aragonese law. The *Fueros* were approved at a meeting of parliament held in Huesca in 1247, and the Justicia, the chief magistracy of Aragon, was set up at the 1265 parliament in Ejea. Professor Sarasa stressed that James I's achievements in this field were of great importance to Aragon, as was the development of the municipalities during his reign. The gatherings held in 1214 and 1217, in his view, were not true parliaments but meetings of the Curia attended by a greater or lesser number of councillors, and he considered that the sources – the *Llibre dels Feits* and other documents – add to the terminological confusion. There has been some controversy as to whether the reign of James I was part of the parliamentary or pre-parliamentary era. For Professor Sarasa, the Cortes took shape very gradually over this period. The topics discussed at the meetings that are known to us were the same as those subsequently dealt with at the fully constituted Cortes. Moreover, the supporters of the Aragonese Union would not have asked King Peter 'the Great' in 1283 to hold a general meeting of the Aragonese parliament once a year if there had not been a prior tradition of such gatherings. The speaker pointed out that pressure from the nobility was an important factor in the formation of the Cortes in Aragon, whereas at the earlier assemblies of peace and truce held in Catalonia, churchmen played a very prominent role.

María Rosa Muñoz of the University of Valencia gave a paper entitled "Las instituciones parlamentarias valencianas durante el reinado de Jaime I (1238-1276)" (The Valencian Parliamentary Institutions during the Reign of James I [1238-1276]). After commenting on existing historiography on the topic, she underlined the need to re-examine the chronicle and the contemporary documentation because the Cortes did not generate procedural documents at that period and in order to study the history of the institution one has to rely on indirect sources, chiefly summonses and the *Furs*. Professor Muñoz has undertaken the task of reviewing these documents, starting with those already published in a wide range of collections. There is currently no agreement among historiographers as to the number of summonses to parliamentary

meetings that were issued in the kingdom of Valencia or the dates on which they were held. The 1238 meeting of the three estates is believed to have been the first, but Pedro López Elum sees it as an epilogue to the Monzón parliament of 1236. Professor López Elum agrees that parliamentary meetings were held in 1261, 1271 and 1281, whereas there is doubt over the assemblies held in 1273 and 1276. Professor Muñoz pointed out, nonetheless, that there is no evidence that all three estates were present in 1261. The passing of legislation, an essential task for a new kingdom, was the most important achievement of these parliaments. The speaker has searched for ordinances approved by the Corts to ascertain what work was done there.

The second part of the conference dealt with James I's international relations. Maria Teresa Ferrer of the Institució Milà i Fontanals (CSIC) and the Institut d'Estudis Catalans drew a broad panorama in which she sought to link together the aspects addressed in other papers and comment on those to which no paper was devoted. She observed that international policy received much more attention during James I's long reign than it did from his predecessors. Though it still focussed chiefly on nearby countries – Occitania, France, England, Navarre, Castile, Portugal, the Muslim lands of the Iberian peninsula and the Maghreb, Pisa, Genoa, Sicily and the Holy See –, it also reached out to more distant lands, such as Hungary, where the king's second wife came from. Contacts with the Byzantine Empire were stepped up and official relations were initiated with Egypt in response to the interests of Catalan merchants, whose presence in the eastern Mediterranean was increasing. There were also contacts with Armenia and the Tartars. The king abandoned the project of expanding into Occitania, but reinforced his power in Iberia by conquering Majorca and Valencia. The marriage of Prince Peter to Constance of Hohenstaufen, the daughter of King Manfred of Sicily, had important consequences for the future. During the reign of Peter 'the Great' this alliance with the Sicilian branch of the German imperial family brought the Catalans into conflict with the Holy See, France and the House of Anjou, a minor branch of the French royal dynasty, but also enabled them to expand into the central Mediterranean. The speaker laid particular stress on commercial and political relations with the Italian maritime cities of Genoa and Pisa, with which the king signed treaties after the conquest of Majorca (1229) so that they could retain the privileged relationship with the island they had enjoyed while it was under Islamic domination. Other agreements were also reached with Genoa, some of which were still related to that city's collaboration in the conquest of Tortosa. In 1233 it was agreed to set up Genovese trade consulates in the maritime cities in James I's domains and a Catalan consulate in Genoa. The chief purpose of the latter was to provide support to merchants in Islamic territory.

Martí Aurell of the University of Poitiers had been invited to give a paper on the end of the Catalan expansion

into Occitania. He remarked that the Conqueror was clearly not interested in Occitania, since during his youth he concentrated his military activity on the conquest of Majorca and Valencia and neglected the affairs of Languedoc and Provence. This earned him criticism from the troubadours and in fact he allowed France to take over Languedoc. His diplomatic efforts in Provence were unsuccessful for he failed to persuade Count Ramon Berenguer V, who had been brought up with him in Monzón, to give him an opportunity to secure the Provençal succession (1245). Instead it was Charles of Anjou who set himself up as count of Provence, with help from the Pope, and then launched his conquests in Italy from there in competition with Peter 'the Great'. Professor Aurell recalled that both the Treaty of Corbeil (1258) and the affair of the Provençal succession are ignored in the *Llibre dels Feits*. The Treaty put an end to the expansion into Occitania initiated by the counts of Barcelona in 1067-1070, while Louis IX granted Catalonia feudal independence, a development which, in the speaker's view, had a symbolic importance that should not be underestimated. He also analysed the possible reasons for the relinquishment of the Occitanian project. One factor could have been the conviction that the balance of forces was favourable to France and that any intervention would have triggered a clash with the Holy See, an outcome the king wanted to avoid at any price.

Manuel González Jiménez of the University of Seville gave a paper entitled "Jaime I el Conquistador y Alfonso X el Sabio: Una compleja relación de encuentros y desencuentros" (James I 'the Conqueror' and Alfonso X 'the Wise': a complex relationship of accord and discord), in which he traced the history of the family and personal ties between the two kings. The marriage between Alfonso X and Violant, the daughter of James I, aimed to improve relations between the Catalan-Aragonese confederation and Castile, which had deteriorated badly owing to the failure of James I's own marriage to Leonor, the aunt of King Ferdinand III, and the struggle for political control over Navarre. But it was not until much later that cordial relations were resumed and meanwhile numerous clashes took place. The first occurred in 1244 when Alfonso attempted to seize Xàtiva. This constituted a violation of the Treaty of Cazola, according to which the frontier of the kingdom of Valencia, which James I was then conquering, ran through Biar. Another was caused by the Anglo-Castilian alliance of 1254, which was directed against Navarre and led to an alliance between James I and Navarre and to border skirmishes. Later on there was the – limited – complicity of James I with rebellious Castilian nobles, and the freedom of passage given by Alfonso X to Al-Azraq, the famous Muslim knight who rebelled so frequently against James I. The imperial aspirations of Alfonso 'the Wise' were also a cause of anxiety to James I because Alfonso hoped to use the title to impose Castilian supremacy over the peninsula. According to the speaker, when Alfonso's positions came close to those of the

Guelphs, James I responded by allying himself with Manfred of Sicily, who was a Hohenstaufen, and negotiating the marriage of the latter's daughter, Constance of Sicily, to his own son Prince Peter (1260), a move which incurred Alfonso's wrath. On the other hand, James I received no compensation when he conquered Murcia for his son-in-law in 1265-1266, and welcomed him to his realms with great honours when he travelled through on his way to request the Pope's support for his claim to the Empire.

Juan Carrasco of the Universidad Pública de Navarra studied James I's relations with Navarre in his paper "El reino de Navarra y la Corona de Aragón en tiempos de Jaime I el Conquistador (1208-1276)" (The Kingdom of Navarre and the Crown of Aragon in the Times of James I 'the Conqueror'). He recalled that during the first fifteen years of the reign of Sancho VII of Navarre (1194-1234), the latter's relationship with the Catalan-Aragonese confederation had alternated between hostility and peace because of the agreements between the kings of Castile and Aragon over the sharing out of Navarre. Shortly before James I's birth in 1208 a rapprochement took place and the king of Navarre made a loan to King Peter 'the Catholic', who was in severe financial difficulties. Years later, in 1231, King Sancho, who had reached the age of seventy without legitimate offspring, chose King James, then a young man of twenty-three, to succeed him on the throne of Navarre through the formula of mutual adoption. Subsequently Sancho rescinded the agreement and, when he died in 1234, the Navarrese, now that Castile was no longer a threat, instead chose his nephew Theobald of Champagne to be their king as Theobald I of Navarre. James I was obliged to accept the new situation and he signed truces with Theobald I. Professor Carrasco explained how friction again broke out between Navarre and Castile after the death of Theobald I because he had appointed James I to be his own heir's guardian and James tried to protect him. When yet another crisis over the Navarrese succession arose in 1274, James I seized the opportunity to stage a military intervention and imposed Prince Peter as regent. He also betrothed a daughter of the deceased monarch to Prince Peter's eldest son, on the undertaking that he would uphold the independence of Navarre. Though Prince Peter was accepted as king of Navarre at the parliament held in Olite in 1274, revolts of Aragonese and Catalan nobles prevented the project from being carried out.

James I's relations with Islamic countries were analysed by Carles Vela of the University of Girona, who observed that the Catalan-Aragonese crown began to maintain relations with the majority of contemporary Islamic states during his reign. King James I's early policy towards the Muslim lords of Valencia, like that of previous counts of Barcelona and count-kings of Aragon, was based on interference in internal conflicts and protection in exchange for tribute. Nor was military conquest the only method he used to dominate the kingdoms of Majorca and Valencia, which were highly divided in political terms: other exam-

ples of the way he extended his authority over the Muslims included the protectorate over Minorca and various agreements he reached with Valencian lords (with Al-Azraq or the lords of Xàtiva in the 1240s, for instance). Certain aspects of the Catalan presence in North Africa – such as the Christian militias in various states of the Maghreb – were also inherited from the previous period. Professor Vela added that we should ask ourselves whether James I's policy towards these countries from 1240 onwards truly constituted a break with the past or whether it is merely the virtual absence of series of documents prior to these years that creates the impression that James I was building up a new way of relating to the Islamic countries based on the protection of Catalan trade, for Catalan merchants were undoubtedly trading in the area before the first evidence of diplomatic relations between James I and Tunis, Tlemcen or Ceuta appears. He concluded by stressing that closer relations with Cairo and other oriental monarchies – whether Muslim or not – and the episode of the unsuccessful crusade to the Holy Land do indeed distinguish the reign of James I from those of his forebears.

In the conference programme, the paper by Ernest Marcos of the University of Barcelona on the crusade to the Holy Land in 1269 was included in the section devoted to war and the navy because of difficulties in the speaker's agenda. Here I return it to its proper place, because the crusade was not just a military expedition but involved relations with eastern Mediterranean states as well. In the opinion of Professor Marcos, despite the criticism voiced by some of James I's contemporaries and the negative opinion of numerous historians, the 1269 crusade to the Holy Land was not an unrealistic venture. Rather it was the culmination of an innovative trend in his international policy which commenced towards 1260 with the alliance with King Manfred of Sicily, the head of the Ghibelline party, and the marriage of Prince Peter to Manfred's daughter Constance. After the defeat and death of his son's father-in-law, Manfred, at the hands of Charles of Anjou's French troops in 1266, James I maintained this decision, which signalled the reversal of the House of Barcelona's traditional pro-Guelph stance. The plans laid by Baybars, the Mamluk sultan of Egypt, to conquer the crusader states triggered a movement to mount a crusade to save them and James I offered to carry the cross. However the Pope invited him instead to join the crusade being prepared by Louis IX of France, which was ultimately to have Tunis as its objective. The Catalan king ignored the French project and became involved in a parallel initiative which did not have the Pope's blessing: a proposed crusade against the Mamluks, backed by the Mongol Ilkhan Abaqa of Persia, his father-in-law the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus, and other eastern Christian powers. Professor Marcos considered that this crusade was not only anti-Angevin – in view of the enmity between Charles of Anjou, the king of Sicily, and the Byzantine emperor – but that it transgressed the ideological boundary which hindered understanding between

Christian monarchs and pagans and heretics. Its military failure, moreover, which was due more to circumstance than to faulty planning, does not detract from its value or interest as the only instance of an offensive military alliance between western and eastern powers. James I tried ultimately to persuade the Council of Lyon (1274) that his project was a good one, but by that time he was too old and infirm for an enterprise of this nature.

The relations between James I and the Holy See came in for attention from Damian Smith of Saint Louis University in the United States, who singled out various stages in the king's relations with the papacy. The first, during the pontificates of Innocent III and Honorius III, was marked by the protection offered by both popes to the infant king. James I held Innocent III in high esteem: he considered him the best pope the Church had known, and the man who had restored his realms to him and, acting through the cardinal legate Peter de Benevento, had ensured his rights were upheld. Honorius III continued to afford him protection but also threatened to launch a crusade against his realms if Count Sanç of Rosselló-Cerdanya and his son did not abandon their belligerent attitude towards the French crusaders. The king's coming of age opened a phase of collaboration with the papacy, notably during the pontificate of Gregory IX. After James I's major conquests, which earned him great international prestige, it was the Church that needed him rather than the other way round. Finally a last phase of confrontation commenced in 1260, when he decided to establish a dynastic alliance with King Manfred of Sicily, the head of the Italian Ghibellines, through Prince Peter's marriage to Manfred's daughter Constance. Pope Clement IV was scandalized by the king's private life and disapproved of his 1269 plan for a crusade. Professor Smith stressed that it is difficult to study James I's relationship with the Holy See because it spans eleven different pontificates and involves the actions of more than a hundred cardinals, some of whom played a crucial role.

After this last paper had been given, the Vice-President of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Antoni Riera, made a short speech to close the conference.

It should be stressed that other conferences also feature among the events to mark the eighth centenary of James I. One was held by the Institución Fernando el Católico in

Saragossa from 14 to 16 May. The topic was "La sociedad en Aragón y en Cataluña en el reinado de Jaime I" (Society in Aragon and Catalonia during the Reign of James I) and participants included both Aragonese and Catalan scholars.

The History and Archeology Section of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, in cooperation with the Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, which will be in charge of the organization, will be holding another conference in Lleida from 16 to 19 September 2008. The subject will be: "L'Església en temps de Jaume I" (The Church in the Time of James I).

We are organizing a conference in Majorca from 13 to 15 October in partnership with the Consell Insular de Majorca and the Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània. The focus will be on four themes: "L'expansió territorial vers les illes" (Territorial expansion into the Balearic Islands – in other words, the conquest, resettlement and organization of Majorca); "L'economia comercial i marítima" (The Commercial and Maritime Economy – the growth of trade and navigation, consulates, and manufacturing); "La política successòria de Jaume I i la creació del regne de Majorca" (James I's Succession Policy and the Creation of the Kingdom of Majorca); and finally "La figura de Jaume I en el seu temps i en la cultura moderna i contemporània" (The Figure of James I in His Own Time and in Modern and Contemporary Culture).

On 27-28 November 2008 we will be staging another conference in Gandia, this time in collaboration with that town's Centre Alfons el Vell. The topic will be twofold: "El món de la cultura en l'època de Jaume I" (The World of Culture in the Age of James I – featuring papers on art, scientific knowledge, literature and language); and "L'expansió territorial a València" (Territorial Expansion into Valencia – in other words the conquest of Valencia, the resettlement and organization of the kingdom, and the conquest of Murcia).

The academic events to mark the eighth centenary will close with a conference in Girona on 1-2 December 2008 funded by the Department of Public Works of the Generalitat (the Catalan government). It will be devoted to two themes: "L'economia rural i l'articulació urbana a Catalunya" (The Rural Economy and the Shaping of Catalan Cities) and "La família reial, la cort i la cultura cortesana" (The Royal Family, the Court and Courtly Culture).