

Sixth centennial of the death of King Martin the Humane: The International Conference *Martin the Humane, the Last King in the Barcelona Dynasty (1396-1410): The Interregnum and the Compromise of Caspe*

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The year 2010 marks the six hundredth anniversary of the death of King Martin I of Aragon, also known as Martin the Humane, the last king in the Barcelona dynasty (1396-1410). He was a distinguished king who brought Sicily into the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon and undertook an expedition to Sardinia which ultimately led to total dominion over the island. Nevertheless, in the last years of his life he was lacking the forces he needed to pacify the factional infighting in Valencia and Aragon. The monarch's main mistake was not having named a successor upon the death of his son, his only legitimate heir, which unleashed an institutional crisis and the last enthronement of a Castilian dynasty.

To commemorate King Martin, the History-Archaeology Section of the IEC, in conjunction with the Spanish National Research Council,** organised an international conference entitled *Martin the Humane, the Last King in the Barcelona Dynasty (1396-1410): The Interregnum and the Compromise of Caspe*. This conference was held at the headquarters of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (IEC) in Barcelona from the 31st of May to the 4th of June 2010.

The conference was divided into eight main sections categorising the 30 lectures and seven papers about King Martin delivered by the diverse international experts over the course of the week.

The opening session featured a welcome by IEC President Salvador Giner and a keynote lecture by Maria Teresa Ferrer, Scientific Coordinator of the conference, who spoke about the figure of Martin the Humane and his reign.

The first section, "The Government of the Kingdoms", entailed a brief survey of the political situation in the different kingdoms within the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon during Martin's day.

First of all, in his lecture entitled "The Government of the Kingdoms: The Legal System of Catalonia", Tomàs de Montagut from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra and the IEC analysed aspects of Martin the Humane's reign related to the political constitution and the law of the Crown of Aragon, as well as the legal and political significance and the regulations produced by the Courts of Perpignan, Sant Cugat del Vallès and Barcelona held between 1405 and 1410. After an introduction to the political and legal aspects of the courts, Montagut conducted a study of the legal system in place in Catalonia during the reign of King Martin and the reforms of this system by the Catalan Courts. He compared the drafts and the regulations that were ultimately approved. Montagut concluded his talk with several opinions by jurist Tomàs Mieres (1400-1474) on the meaning of the courts of Martin the Humane, stressing that the regulations issued by these courts was an essential milestone in validating Catalonia's political constitution based on the rule of law and legal pactism.

In his talk entitled "The Government of the Territory and Factions", Flocel Sabaté from the Universitat de Lleida analysed how the land was organised in the different kingdoms. He stressed the importance of the municipalities in politics given the legal fragmentation of the Crown. In this context, Professor Sabaté highlighted each municipality's reaction aimed at its own benefit, and he stressed that this was not incompatible with the fact that they were internally divided into factions. These factions ended up characterising all late mediaeval politics and can be seen in the division of municipal power. This factional system was even more evident once the crisis of succession broke out.

In her talk "The Courts and the Generalitat de Catalunya", Maria Teresa Ferrer of the IEC and the Institució Milà i Fontanals explained the content of the parliaments which we are aware were held during the reign of Martin

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** Through the financed research project *The Crown of Aragon in the Mediaeval Mediterranean: Bridge among Cultures, Mediator between Christianity and Islam* (HUM2007-61131) and the consolidated research groups on the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon, Islam and the Mediterranean World (2009SGR 1452) and Feudal Income and Taxation in Late Mediaeval Catalonia (2009SGR 1367) from the Department of Mediaeval Studies of the Institució Milà i Fontanals.

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Figure 1. Close-up of the altarpiece of Saint Severinus from Barcelona's Sant Sever Hospital, which includes a depiction of King Martin the Humane. *Trasllat de les relíquies de Sant Sever a la Catedral de Barcelona (Transfer of the Relics of Saint Severinus to the Cathedral of Barcelona)*. Pere Nunyes and Enric Fernandes. Oil and tempera on wooden panel. Barcelona (1541-1542). (Source: Diocesan Museum of Barcelona. inv. no. 38).

the Humane between 1396 and 1397. However, some authors believe that they constituted a single court aimed at preparing Catalonia's defence against the threat posed by the Count of Foix. She also discussed the 1400 parliament held in Tortosa to discuss the defence of Sardinia and the sea routes. Professor Ferrer mentioned that the absence of the King, who was in Sicily, prevented the courts from meeting. The only general court was the Perpignan-Sant Cugat-Barcelona one held from 1406 to 1410, which never concluded due to the monarch's death. There, the legality of the cavalry branch was discussed and the king secured aid to help fight against the Arborea Kingdom on Sicily. The talk also addressed the vicissitudes of the Generalitat de Catalunya, founded just a few years earlier (1359) during the reign of Peter the Ceremonious.

In his talk entitled "The Courts and the Government of Aragon during the Reign of King Martin the Humane", Esteban Sarasa from the Universidad de Zaragoza studied the courts and the government of Aragon, the *Diputación del General*. The courts were only convened twice in the Kingdom of Aragon: specifically, in Zaragoza in 1398 and 1400, where the grievances submitted to the monarch were discussed, and in Maella in 1404, which revealed the concern with the public and private order and the impor-

ance of drawing up a population census for taxation and revenue purposes. Sarasa stressed that the courts of Aragon followed the same dynamic as the preceding courts, especially the ones of Peter the Ceremonious, and dealt with the same concerns and difficulties that would later continue in the Interregnum. Nevertheless, the results were favourable for the kingdom in terms of governance issues, territorial administration, taxation and the institutions of the *Diputación del General* in Aragon.

In a similar vein, in her talk entitled "The Courts and the Generalitat Valenciana during the Reign of Martin the Humane", Rosa Muñoz from the Universitat de València analysed the courts of Valencia held between 1401 and 1407. The goal of the courts was, in the words of the monarch himself, to fulfil the code of law, resolve grievances and secure revenues to redeem the royal assets. These courts were marked by social conflicts and the economic hardships arising from the expansionist policy of Peter the Ceremonious and John I's poor oversight. Professor Muñoz stressed that the importance of these courts lay in their consolidation of the structure of the *Generalitat Valenciana*, even though it did not gain solid ground as a permanent entity until 1418, along with the creation of a 32-member commission (eight per branch and eight on behalf of

the king) which was later dissolved in 1407 when the courts were brought to an end once the new code of law and the expansion of contributions had been approved.

The paper by Josep Alanyà from the Diocesan Archive of Tortosa entitled “The Governance of Martin the Humane in the Territory of the Bishopric of Tortosa” studied the records of King Martin’s governance in the diocese of Tortosa, including the ones that reveal the monarch’s concern with the status of Tortosa’s church as a result of the Western Schism, as well as the records that show the social problems of the day and provide us with an overview of society and the church in Tortosa between 1350 and 1410.

In their paper entitled “The Petty Nobility’s Intervention in the Courts of Aragon during the Reign of Martin I”, Juan Abella and Mario Lafuente, members of the CEMA Group at the Universidad de Zaragoza, set forth the characteristics of the petty nobility that attended the Courts of Zaragoza and Maella in 1398-1400 and 1404, respectively, by analysing the typology and examining the votes and grievances submitted by this social class.

The paper by Isabel Sánchez de Movellán from the Universidad a Distancia de Madrid entitled “The Administration of Justice in the 15th Century” studied the different attempts at reform of the administration of justice in the Principality of Catalonia through the trials of the courts held between 1405 and 1437. Sánchez stressed that the majority of proposals came from the branches and that most of them failed at first, although they were gradually implemented in the long term.

The second section of the conference was entitled “The Royal Assets, Taxation”, and it encompassed the lectures and papers that discussed the monarch’s treasury and assets.

In his talk entitled “The Administration of the Royal Assets and the Recovery of Transferred Assets”, Enric Guinot from the IEC and the Universitat de València analysed the royal assets, which had been depleted since Peter the Ceremonious given the economic crisis which led the monarchs to transfer part of their assets in the desperate quest for money to benefit the nobility. This transfer consisted mainly of the sale of royal rights and the seigneurialisation of royal villages. Professor Guinot also stressed the tentative recovery of these assets during the reign of Martin the Humane, oftentimes at the cost of the inhabitants of the transferred localities.

In his paper entitled “The Municipal Treasury of the Kingdom of Mallorca at the Turn of the Century (1390-1410)”, Ricard Urgell from the Archive of the Kingdom of Mallorca studied the treasury in the Kingdom of Mallorca between 1390 and 1410. He stressed its relationship with the attack on the Jewish quarter in 1391, the creation of an administrator of common currencies, a rise in municipal taxation through the creation of new taxes, the desire to control the administration of public debt, the presence of factions and the audit of accounts in 1406.

The third section, entitled “The Consolidation of Power in the Central Mediterranean”, featured international experts who analysed the power struggles in Sicily and Sardinia.

In his talk “A Kingdom for Martin, Duke of Montblanc and his Children: The Restoration of Queen Maria of Sicily”, Henri Bresc from the Université Paris X (Paris-Nanterre) examined the motives behind the marriage of Maria of Sicily, the daughter of Constance of Aragon, and Martin the Younger, the son of Martin the Humane, and its consequences on the political situation in the Kingdom of Sicily. He stressed how Queen Maria of Sicily was the legitimate ruler of the Sicily, the heir to a long struggle against the Anjou dynasty yet a kingdom without a king. Within this context, Professor Bresc stressed that Martin the Younger was both the perfect link between his father Martin the Humane’s aspirations to rule the island and the political legitimacy that Maria of Sicily was seeking.

In her lecture entitled “The Struggle against the Arboreas in Sardinia: The Expedition of Martin the Younger (1408-1409) and the End of the *Giudicato*”, Luisa d’Arienzo from the Università di Cagliari examined the status of studies on relations between the Crown of Aragon and the Arborea Court between the 13th and 15th centuries based on the bull issued by Pope Boniface VIII in 1297, in which the Pope created the *Regnum Sardiniae et Corsicae* and enfeoffed King James II of Aragon. Professor Arienzo conducted an in-depth analysis of the infighting on the island of Sardinia between the Arboreas and the other courts, as well as the alliance that William II forged with the anti-Catalans, later to be defeated by Martin the Younger in 1409 in the Battle of Sanluri.

The fourth section, entitled “International Politics”, was devoted to international politics during the reign of King Martin the Humane.

With his lecture entitled “The Western Schism in the Politics of King Martin”, Prim Bertran from the Universitat de Barcelona studied the relations between King Martin and Pope Benedict XIII within the Western Schism. In his talk, he particularly spotlighted the evolution in relations between the Catalan court and the papacy. He revealed that the Schism—the factions supporting either Roman Pope Urban VI or Avignon Pope Clement VII—was a problem of the Crown inherited from 1378 during the reign of Peter the Ceremonious. This monarch chose neutrality, although his family sided with Avignon. His primogenitor, John I, sided with the Avignon pope, and this loyalty was heightened upon the election of Pope Benedict XIII, who was of Catalan-Aragonese descent. When he rose to the throne, Martin the Humane continued to support the Avignon pope and siege was laid to the city (1398-1403), while Martin the Humane remained under the obedience of Benedict XIII. When it was decided at the Council of Perpignan (1408-1409) that the Avignon pope would step down and the pope sought King Martin’s favour, Martin denied it given the pope’s own indifference towards the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon.

Carles Vela from the Università di Palermo focused on “Martin the Humane’s International Policy”. In his talk, he analysed the different aspects of King Martin’s international policy, a continuation of the policies conducted by his brother and predecessor, John I. Vela particularly focused on relations between the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon and Navarre, France, Castile and the Mediterranean countries. He stressed the renewal of peace with Navarre (1399) and the negotiations for the marriage between his son Martin and Blanche of Navarre. With France, he particularly stressed the cordial relations and the signing of a treaty on mutual reprisals in 1402. Regarding the Mediterranean, Martin the Humane aimed to solve the problem of the Berber and Christian corsairs first with military measures and ultimately with diplomacy by signing several treaties. Professor Vela noted that relations with Castile became strained during the reign of Henry III, especially regarding the marquise of Villena.

The fifth section examined “Society and Economy during the Reign of King Martin” with talks on numerous subjects such as spirituality, production, relations with Jews and Muslims and internal and international trade.

In his talk entitled “The Church and Religious Life, Proselytising”, Josep Hernando from the Universitat de Barcelona analysed the Church in the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon during Martin’s reign. He stressed how the Church became part of the political system as the nation adopted the structures of a state (courts, the Diputació del General, etc.). He particularly spotlighted to the religious, cultural and political development of the religious orders, especially the mendicant orders. Professor Hernando recounted how at that time society was organised around religion and stressed the importance of the sacraments from the Roman liturgy, the religious funeral rites, festivities linked to devotional cycles (Christmas, Easter) and festivals linked to the saints and their miracles, as well as the social clout of the brotherhoods. He also mentioned the importance that ownership of Bibles and other religious books came to have, as seen through wills and inventories. He concluded his talk by analysing the sincerity of Jewish conversions after the 1391 pogrom and the spread of the Inquisition and proselytising.

In his talk entitled “Rural and Urban Production”, Gaspar Feliu of the IEC and the Universitat de Barcelona analysed the repercussions of the Black Plague on both cities and the countryside. First, there were a series of upheavals in the countryside that led to the diversification of production and a surge in social problems, especially among peasant serfs. Likewise, in the cities there were problems as a result of a lack of labour, yet new markets in the East also opened. It should be borne in mind that a major share of the output was set aside for exports, and that these exports were highly exposed to competition and the political and military changes that dominated the developments of the international markets.

In his talk entitled “‘Entre eulx plusieurs Sarrazins’: Jews and Muslims in the Reign of Martin I”, Brian A. Catlos of the University of California at Santa Cruz studied the status of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities during the reign of Martin the Humane. Regarding the Jews, he focused on the impact of the pogroms, particularly the one in 1391. With respect to the Muslims, he analysed the process of economic decline and the rise in social marginalisation they underwent. Professor Catlos studied Christian proselytising against both groups and their relations with the Crown and with the King; indeed, despite their profound religiousness, King Martin and his wife Maria de Luna protected Jews and Muslims because these two minorities helped the king both economically and politically. With the end of the Barcelona dynasty, the monarchy’s protection of the Jewish and Muslim minorities also came to an end.

In his talk entitled “The Food Supply in the Cities of the Crown of Aragon”, Antoni Riera from the IEC and the Universitat de Barcelona examined the food supply in the large cities in the Crown between the so-called “year of famine” (1374) and the hardships of 1428. To do so, he focused on two basic foodstuffs: wheat and meat. He studied the original markets, the trade routes, the urban distribution circuits and the role of merchants purveying in these goods. He analysed how the town councils intervened to maintain prices and help boost the supply in order to ensure the salubrity of products and the protection of the suppliers, as well as to step up imports at times of crisis.

In her talk entitled “Internal Trade: Fairs and Markets. Redistribution through Land, River and Coastal Sailing Routes”, Dolores López from the Universitat de Barcelona analysed internal trade within the Crown of Aragon. She stressed the prominence of studies on international trade until recently compared to the scant focus on internal trade. She examined the fairs and market and their importance in the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, spotlighting the fact that not only were they concentrated in the large capital cities but could also be found inland, encouraged by river trade or a location near major Roman thoroughfares. She also stressed the importance of coastal trade at the time via the Catalan coastal ports.

In her talk entitled “International Trade at the Time of King Martin”, Maria Elisa Soldani from the Institució Milà i Fontanals analysed trade at the time of King Martin the Humane with a particular focus on the economic repercussions of the monarch’s economic policy, bearing in mind the policies of his predecessors and successors. Professor Soldani also studied the evolution in international trade from the leading mercantile centres in the Crown (Barcelona, Valencia and Mallorca) through the main commercial routes (in the East, West, Maghreb and Tyrrhenian zone), which were quite clearly articulated and interconnected through a system of reciprocal relations and mutual dependencies. Finally, she analysed the effects of military spending and Martin the Humane’s pro-

tectionist economic policy on the activity of Catalan merchants and the foreign merchants operating within the Crown of Aragon.

In his paper entitled “Lords, Salt and Saffron: Regional Economy and Urban Oligarchies in the Town and Countship of Cardona in the early 1400s”, Andreu Galera i Pedrosa from the Municipal Archive of Cardona analysed the town of Cardona, its local oligarchy and their relations with the Count of Cardona and King Martin the Humane. He also discussed the privileges secured by the town in the preceding years, including the recovery of the rights to Cardona salt and the privilege of holding trade fairs. These privileges are what make it possible to study the economy of the zone of Cardona around the year 1400.

In the talk entitled “Consulates of the Sea and Overseas Consulates: The Defence of Maritime Space”, Daniel Duran i Duelt from the Institució Milà i Fontanals studied how the reign of Martin the Humane was a pivotal time in the organisation of the institutional and legislative system that had taken shape in the Middle Ages at the service of merchants and seamen who wanted more autonomy. Professor Duran analysed the changes that took place during the reign of Martin and their significance within the overall framework of consulates of the sea and overseas consulates.

The fifth section was devoted to analysing “Culture and Art in the Reign of King Martin” by examining subjects like literature, universities, royal ceremonies, architecture and art.

In his talk entitled “The Literary Scene in the Reign of King Martin: Bernat Metge and Eiximenis”, Albert G. Hauf from the IEC and the Universitat de València stressed King Martin’s solid classical and literary education, helped in part by his sedentarism and his profound religiousness, which earned him the title of *Eclesiast*. This meant that the monarch was fond of studying and reading. Many of the texts that have survived from the time of Martin the Humane are religious, such as the ones by Brother Joan Eiximeno and Brother Antoni Canals, who wrote some works for the king’s personal use. Late in life, Eiximenis finished his *Vida de Jesucrist* (Life of Jesus Christ) and dedicated it to Maria de Luna, Martin’s wife. These profoundly religious works contrast with the oeuvre of Bernat Metge, royal secretary, especially his *Lo Somni* (The Dream). It is known that King Martin had a copy of *Lo Somni* brought to Zaragoza, and Albert Hauf considered what the monarch’s interpretation of the book might have been given his profoundly spiritual vantage point.

In his talk entitled “Martin the Humane’s Creation of the Estudi General de Medicina of Barcelona and his In-



Figure 2. Picture of the opening session of the congress held in Prat de la Riba Hall at the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (Photo: Jordi Pareto).

terest in the World of Universities”, Salvador Claramunt from the Universitat de Barcelona analysed how through the monarch’s impetus the *Estudi General de Medicina* (Faculty of Medicine) was founded in 1401, which would later become the *Estudi General de Barcelona*, the forerunner of the University of Barcelona. Professor Claramunt stressed that King Martin followed in the footsteps of his father, Peter the Ceremonious, in this matter, yet that he soon came upon several stumbling blocks. The first was Barcelona’s strong physicians’ guilds, whose members were afraid of a clash with the physicians that would eventually graduate from this school. The second was the monopoly on teaching held by the *Consell de Cent* (Council of One Hundred), which was against the *Estudi General* at first until it realised the benefits the city would reap as the home to a university. Nevertheless, the monarch was forced to abandon some of his initiatives in order to deal with clashes with the different institutions.

In his lecture entitled “Monarch, Reign and City: The Language of the Ceremonies in the Crown of Aragon at the Time of Martin the Humane”, Miquel Raufast from the *Institució Milà i Fontanals* examined the importance of ceremonies in all public events in the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon during the Middle Ages. After an introduction in which he outlined the somewhat theatrical importance of coronations, royal entries, receptions, processions, funeral rites and other popular festivals, Raufast focused particularly on the ceremonial activities of Martin the Humane and his family in the different lands (Catalonia, Aragon, Valencia, Sicily) and main cities (Barcelona, Zaragoza, Valencia, Palermo) within his realm. He stressed the importance of the visual representation of the Crown in all these events.

In his talk entitled “An Impossible View: Catalan Political Will and Mediterranean Architectural Creation under Martin the Humane (1396-1410)”, Xavier Barral from the IEC and the *Université de Rennes* took stock of King Martin’s royal architecture, mainly in Barcelona and Poblet, although he also considered other places in the kingdom at a time when northern trends were reaching the more Mediterranean Gothic art. Professor Barral analysed how these more decorative international Gothic forms were brought to Mediterranean austerity, and he compared King Martin’s architectural initiatives with those from other hotspots of royal creation such as Italy, Avignon and other sites in northern France. He also studied the internal and external structure of royal residences in terms of both monumentality and functionality.

In her talk entitled “Martin the Humane: Figurative Likenesses of the Last King from the House of Barcelona and the House of Aragon”, Marta Serrano from the *Universitat Rovira i Virgili* analysed the most important iconographic depictions of King Martin which still survive. Based on manuscripts, coins, seals and works of art, she examined portrayals of the monarch, stressing the continuity of the iconographic innovations introduced by his

father as well as his profound religiosity and the desire to sanctify the monarch.

The sixth section was devoted to studying “The Family of King Martin” by examining a variety of subjects, including the monarch’s wives, the succession of the kingdom of Sicily and its queens and the King’s illegitimate descendants.

In her talk entitled “Two Queens for a King: The Wives of Martin the Humane”, Núria Silleras from the University of Colorado at Boulder analysed the figures of Maria de Luna and Margaret of Prades. The monarch married the former in 1372, and he lived with her for 34 years until her untimely death. He then married Margaret of Prades in 1409, when he was already an old man. Professor Silleras stressed the fact that, contrary to the norm, Martin married two local noblewomen, one from Aragon and the other from Catalonia. She paid particular attention to the role of the queen in the Crown and how the monarch’s two wives performed this role, as well as their relationship with Martin. She highlighted the role and power of Queen Maria de Luna, a harbinger of the Iberian queens’ greater participation in politics in the 15th and 16th centuries.

In the talk entitled “The Sicilian Queens: Maria of Sicily and Blanche of Navarre”, Laura Sciascia from the *Università di Palermo* analysed the wives of King Martin the Younger, Martin the Humane’s son. Maria of Sicily married Martin the Younger in 1396 and died in 1402. The same year, Martin married Blanche of Navarre and remained married to her until his death in 1409. Children were born from each marriage, none of whom reached adolescence. Both queens reigned over the Kingdom of Sicily: Maria of Sicily did so upon the death of her father, Frederick, and Blanche of Navarre followed suit upon the death of her husband, Martin the Younger. Professor Sciascia performed an in-depth analysis of these two queens and their positions towards the king and the kingdom.

In his talk entitled “Martin the Younger and the Succession of the Kingdoms of Sicily and Aragon”, Salvatore Fodale from the *Università di Palermo* analysed the development of the deeds that led Martin the Younger to marry Maria of Sicily so that the Kingdom of Sicily would join the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon. The different popes denied the Catalan kings’ rights to the throne of Sicily and favoured Louis of Anjou as the king of Sicily, which meant that the only way the Crown could secure the kingdom was through the marriage of Maria and Martin the Younger.

In her talk entitled “The Royals: The Illegitimate Descendants of Martin the Younger. The Descendants of John I. The Descendants of Peter the Ceremonious. The Descendants of Alphonse the Benign. The Descendants of James II”, Josefina Mutgé from the *Institució Milà i Fontanals* studied the princes of royal blood who might have aspired to becoming the king of the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon when King Martin the Humane died

with no legitimate heirs in 1410. Professor Mutgé analysed these royals, that is, the individuals who might ascend to the throne because of their royal blood. Some of the most prominent pretenders to the throne were Frederick, Count of Luna; Prince Louis III of Anjou; the Duke of Gandia; Ferdinand, from the House of Trastámara; and James II, Count of Urgell. The latter was considered the most likely aspirant to inherit the kingdom since he was the Governor General, a post always given to the heir to the throne, but his enemies managed to ensure that all the candidates competed equally under the same conditions. The final struggle was between Ferdinand and James, and the former ultimately prevailed.

The last section was devoted to “The Interregnum and the Compromise of Caspe”, which analysed the Interregnum and the different kingdoms within the Crown (Catalonia, Mallorca, Valencia and Aragon), as well as the significance of the Compromise of Caspe.

In his talk entitled “Catalonia and the Crown of Aragon: National Language and Political Structure”, Jaume Sobrequés from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona stressed that the Interregnum seems to have been the first time that Aragon, Valencia and the Principality of Catalonia fully felt that they shared a common fate that bound them and required them to find a shared solution to an internal problem that affected them all equally. The innovation of Professor Sobrequés’ talk was the mission to study the national language and politics of the authorities gathered together at the courts of Barcelona and Tortosa from 1410 to 1412 and to demonstrate the constitutional strength and cohesion of the confederation.

In her talk entitled “The Interregnum on Mallorca”, Maria Barceló from the Universitat de les Illes Balears stressed how little interest historians have shown in this subject until recently. She noted that the seminal work in this field today is the 2003 study by Álvaro Santamaría. Regarding the Interregnum on Mallorca, Professor Barceló spotlighted the fact that despite all its attempts to participate actively, Mallorca remained on the sidelines of the process of electing the new monarch, a relatively incomprehensible fact since it played an equal role within the confederation. She mentioned the emissaries’ difficulties in making their voices heard in the debates that led first to the Concord of Alcañiz and later the decision at Caspe.

In his talk entitled “Citizen Government and Factional Infighting: The Interregnum in Valencia,” Rafael Narbona from the Universitat de València explained how the Interregnum marked the end of a disastrous era for the Kingdom of Valencia that had started in around 1375, when the social and political relations established after

the War of the Two Peters had begun to deteriorate. Professor Narbona stressed that the Interregnum in Valencia attempted to settle not only a dynastic issue or legal procedure but also a long-standing rivalry among a group of families vying for hegemony which had been dragging on and gaining momentum for some time.

In his talk “Interregnum and Factions in Aragon”, Josep-David Garrido from the Universidad Miguel Hernández of Elche explained how just like in Valencia, there had been factional infighting in Aragon for years which was heightened upon the death of King Martin. The conflicts between the Maria de Luna’s family and the Urreas, the in-laws of Maria de Luna’s sister Brianda, unleashed a rivalry which started as a question of honour but ended up becoming a struggle for power and influence in the kingdom. All of this factional infighting reached the time of the Interregnum and the election of a new king, when James, Count of Urgell, who enjoyed the sympathy of the Lunas, was thus automatically despised by the Urreas.

In his talk entitled “The Compromise of Caspe: Its Significance. The View from Historiography”, Antoni Furió from the Universitat de València performed an in-depth assessment of the significance of the Compromise of Caspe to the Crown of Catalonia and Aragon. First, he stressed its importance as a seminal event in the history of the Crown, as well as in the political and institutional history of Western Europe, due to the unusual way the monarch was chosen by the delegates of the different confederated kingdoms. Professor Furió further stressed the consequences of the enthronement of the Castilian Trastámara dynasty and the assessments of this event throughout history by both sides, the Catalans and the Castilians.

Finally, in his paper entitled “The Candidacy to the Throne of Infante Fernando de Antequera and the Castilian Intervention in the Crown of Aragon during the Interregnum”, Víctor Muñoz from the Universidad de Valladolid shared the Castilian view of Fernando de Antequera’s pretensions to the throne. He highlighted Castile’s deployment of means to promote Fernando: diplomatic actions were conducted, troops were sent and money was spent to promote this candidacy over the others.

After this talk, a debate session was held, and the conference concluded with words by Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, President of the History-Archaeology Department of the IEC and scientific coordinator of the conference. To cap it off, the conference participants visited the cathedral of Barcelona, where they were able to see several artefacts related to King Martin.