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Books and Bookmaking

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by the king in the *repartimiento* of Seville and named a royal official in 1252.

Bonifaz's descendants dominated the social, economic, political and ecclesiastical life of Burgos for the next century and a half, holding important benefits (including the deanship of the cathedral chapter of Burgos) and municipal and royal positions. They also invested heavily in the land and real estate market in and around Burgos, a policy already initiated by the elderly Bonifaz.

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BOOKS AND BOOKMAKING

The codicology of medieval Spanish books is still in its infancy. While there are good general studies available on the history of decorative bookbinding and manuscript illumination in Spain, monographic treatment of the archeology of the book is still wanting, and the difficulty results from many factors. Exemplars prior to the tenth and eleventh centuries are scarce, and many books were carelessly rebound in later centuries, including our own. Many fine examples of Spanish craft bindings were executed by and for Muslims and Jews whose works were destroyed by Islamic and Christian censors; our best information on practices among these Iberian connoisseurs of the book comes from witnesses elsewhere throughout the medieval Islamic (Tunisian, Moroccan) and Jewish worlds. As early as 531, prestigious Christian books were ravaged for their covers decorated with jewels, metalwork, and carved ivory or suppressed because of their contentious theological or liturgical content. Finally, the examination of the design, structures, and supports of books as integrated physical objects has commonly been subordinated to an interest in their decoration, whether on the illuminated page or on their tooled leather surfaces.

In terms of writing supports, Hispano-Romans probably employed the same materials as in the rest of Romania—namely, sheets of lead, papyrus, split wood, and wax tablets (still in use during the life of Gonzalo de Berceo). The long distance from Egypt and the disruption of sea lanes made the importation of papyrus to Iberia unreliable. Isidore of Seville records the availability of parchment from animal skins, and the same support later supplied the needs of the legendary libraries of the caliphate of Córdoba, which were reputed to boast 400,000 volumes. The adoption of parchment and the definitive adoption of the codex form date from the early Visigothic period. The classic Spanish codex, with gatherings of inscribed bifoliate leaves sewn across cords or parchment straps that were then attached to wood boards and covered with leather (sometimes with a Moorish-style flap that wraps around over the front cover), endured through the transition from parchment to paper and only saw serious modification with the advent of printing, when the leather-clad boards were replaced with cheaper limp covers.

Paper was introduced into al-Andalus by Islamic craftsmen in the twelfth century and grew into a highly advanced industry. Spanish paper, counted among the most prized in the Islamic world, was exported to sites as far away as Damascus and presumes a large number of local paper mills, mostly in the eastern half of the Iberian Peninsula but with several in the Guadalquivir valley below Córdoba. The most famous site of Moorish paper manufacture was in Játiva (Valencia), gradually incorporated into the kingdom of Aragón after 1244 by Jaime I, who inflated and nearly ruined the industry by optioning the entire output of its mills to stoke his paper-based bureaucracy, the first in Europe. Alfonso X included cautionary restrictions on the use of paper in the *Siete Partidas*, (Partida III.28.5), perhaps based on lingering prejudices against this Moorish artifact but also due to its still limited market as a taxable commodity within and beyond Iberia. The existence of a lively local trade in paper in southern Spain already in the mid-thirteenth century is suggested by the reams of blank script for sale in the miniature accompanying *cantiga* 173 in the *códice rico* (Escorial T.I.1). Paper established itself as the dominant book support in Spain by the early fourteenth century.

As elsewhere in premodern Europe, the production of books in Spain was a principally monastic affair until the start of the thirteenth century. Medieval Spanish universities, usually under royal rather than ecclesiastical patronage, never succeeded in sustaining a commercial infrastructure of parchmenters, stationers, book manufacturers, copyists, illuminators, and binders, as happened in Oxford and Paris. Interestingly, however, the visionary Alfonso X codified rules (Partida II.31.11) for maintaining stationers and certifying the reliability of the textbook chapters they rented out to students at the newly chartered universities in Salamanca (1254) and elsewhere. These rules antedate evidence of similar arrangements in Paris (1275) by a quarter of a century. Alfonso X can be credited with being the first true bibliophile of Spain—both commissioned books and treasured them as aesthetic objects—but noble patronage of the book arts did not

flower as a by-product of class until the fifteenth century.

Romanesque and Gothic bookbindings manufactured in Spain, especially in the northeast, are much like their counterparts elsewhere in medieval Europe. One distinctively Spanish style of blind tooling on leather covers is commonly dubbed *hispano-árabe* or *mudéjar*, in not a few cases the creations of named Jewish and Moorish artisans working in the traditions of figured Cordovan goat skin. *Mudéjar* here refers to the fusion of Islamic decoration—precise interwoven plaitwork within sometimes complex geometric frames creating an interplay between areas of light and shadow—combined with the serial die stamping of transpyrenean decorative styles including straight lines and hatchwork with stamped rows of small figures of animals and other heraldic devices. Subsequent fifteenth-century styles incorporate effects of raised (*repujado*) covers with larger devices, in leather or applied metal work, sometimes set against or above rich cloth surfaces. Surviving bindings of this latter type include those made for the Marqués de Santillana and Queen Isabel I the Catholic, two of the earliest secular patrons of the book arts whose bindings survive in sufficient numbers for study. Toward the end of the fifteenth century, Flemish bindings (and the plastic arts in general) grew in influence in Spain, and a certain Antonio de Gavere of Bruges was court binder to Felipe el Hermoso. Full-cover stamping plates, decorating with patterning wheels, and mosaics of colored leather patches are all postmedieval phenomena, but tooling in gold leaf, a clearly Renaissance innovation in the rest of Europe, was already practiced by Muslim artisans in Spain in the thirteenth century and apparently spread, along with *mudéjar* decorative motifs, to the rest of the continent during Aragón's possession of Naples in the mid-fifteenth century.

New areas of study that focus on the medieval book in Spain are emerging in recent decades. There is fresh interest in the book as a symbolic object representing and bearing power within medieval society, and also as a nexus for the negotiation of meaning between writers and readers. The physical constraints of the medium enlighten studies of how books circulated and were reproduced, and also how they were used and shared by their consumers. The written page, with or without other decoration, is increasingly seen as an aesthetic unit worthy of examination, especially as it modulates the message of the text presented on it. The study of the evolution of the formal elements of Spanish books as cultural artifacts is also gaining greater regard as scholars explore their ties to the burgeoning market economy, the expansion of literacy, the diffusion of intellectual trends, the growth of private collections, the privatization of intellectual pursuits, and the interiorization of devotional practices.

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BOURGEOISIE

The development of the bourgeoisie in medieval Castile is closely related to the renewal of urban life in the region. The growth of towns in northern Castile, the conquest of great Muslim urban centers (Toledo, Córdoba, and Seville), and the foundation of new cities along conflicting frontiers led to the emergence of distinct patterns of economic development and social organization. If by *bourgeoisie* in the medieval context one understands as those urban middling groups who stood outside the so-called feudal relations and who, moreover, did not obtain their income from the land but from artisanal crafts, commerce, and financial transactions, then there was no bourgeoisie in Castile. It is doubtful that there were well-defined feudal ties between lords and vassals in the region, or, at least, in the manner in which those ties existed in France and England. There were a few cities and small towns in which the middling urban groups derived most of their income from long distance trade—Burgos, some of the ports on the Bay of Biscay (Bilbao, San Sebastián, etc.)—but even in such places, there is ample evidence that the bourgeoisie invested heavily in land and often lived a good part of the year in their rural estates. What types of social grouping, of social and economic organization can be thus described for medieval Castile?

The Revival of Urban Life

Most of the towns in the ancient kingdom of Asturias and later in its successor, the kingdom of León,