

Religion and Civil Society Project

The Ceremonies and their Symbolic Value: Self-coronation and the Secularization Process of Royal Authority

Exercising power and authority requires acts with great symbolic impact. The royal coronations have a particular function in the rites and ceremonies that attempt to strengthen the dignity and supremacy of the kings. Therefore, the emergence of self-coronation ceremonies in the Castilian and Aragonese monarchies in the 14th century is a very singular occurrence in medieval Europe and it deserves special attention in this project. The coronations become rites full of symbolism which are valuable proof of the complexity of the relationships between the physical body of the king and his mystic body, following the famous dichotomy presented by Ernst Kantorowicz.

More specifically, Teófilo Ruiz and Jaume Aurell will analyze the self-coronations of kings: Alfonso el Benigno [King Alfonso IV of Aragon, known as Alfonso “the Kind” or Alfonso “the Gentle”](1327-1336) and Pedro IV de Aragón [King Pedro IV of Aragon or Pedro “the Ceremonious”] (1336-1387) and of Alfonso XI de Castilla [King Alfonso XI of Castile] (1312-1359). This study starts off from the classical works of the German researcher Percy E. Schramm which were published in the 50s and the 60s and therefore, need to be reviewed. The classical works of Claudio Sánchez Albornoz and Bonifacio Palacios, the work of José Manuel Nieto Soria regarding royal ceremonies, collaborative work regarding the English ceremonial coronations, edited by Eloisa Ramírez will also be used for this project.

Documental sources to be used are as follows: (1) chronicle narrations, especially the *Crònica de Ramón Muntaner* (1328) and the book *Llibre de Pere el Ceremonioso* (1383); (2) the liturgical books; (3) diplomatic source of the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, the Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia and General Archive of Simancas, which has complementary data regarding these coronations and (4) complementary studies of other sources, especially royal ceremonies, and in particular, the one carried out by the King Pere “el Ceremonioso”.