

V DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF ECONOMIC HISTORY
OF THE MIDDLE AGES



TAXATION AND STATE BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE AGES

VALENCIA

29 JUNE -1 JULY 2026



Facultat de
Geografia i Història

Call for Papers

The research group *Cultures i Societats de l'Edat Mitjana* (CiSEM) at the University of Valencia is organizing the 5th Doctoral School in Medieval Economic History, to be held from 29 June to 1 July 2026. In this fifth edition, the School will focus on *Taxation and State Building in the Middle Ages*.

The study of public finances during the Middle Ages constitutes a topic with a long historiographical tradition and numerous implications for the analysis of aspects ranging from political and institutional history to the socioeconomic conditions of the societies of the period. This long-established field of study, particularly in its relationship with processes of state formation, has received renewed attention since the proposals of Jean-Philippe Genet and Wim Blockmans in the 1980s, when various international projects, many of them funded by European institutions, promoted new research that led to the formulation of interpretative models such as those outlined by Richard Bonney and Mark Ormrod on the development of fiscal states in Western Europe during the medieval and early modern periods, themselves inspired by classical approaches such as those formulated by Joseph Schumpeter at the beginning of the previous century.

This renewed interest has generated innovative contributions concerning issues such as fiscal sociology and the role of agents involved in tax collection and administration, as well as analyses of public debt and expenditure, all accompanied by increasingly precise knowledge of institutional realities. Above all, these studies have highlighted the close relationship between taxation and the construction of political power, underscoring the essential role of fiscal resources in consolidating representative institutions responsible for negotiating and granting taxes and levies, as well as in the emergence and strengthening of intermediary bodies charged with their administration—processes that were fundamental, for example, to the development of the European city as an important political entity endowed with autonomy. In this respect, more recent research, such as that of David Stasavage and Mark Dincecco, has linked these dynamics not only to higher levels of political participation but also to processes of economic growth and even to changes in standards of living in the transition toward welfare states, without forgetting, as Guido Alfani has pointed out, that this growing extractive capacity of the state could also result in increasing economic and social inequality.

The study of public finances is also fundamental for understanding many other aspects of medieval and early modern societies, such as processes of wealth accumulation and redistribution, market dynamics, and the evolution of monetary systems. Ultimately, fiscal sources constitute a privileged means of understanding realities as diverse as economic inequality, demographic transformations, and even the material conditions of life in societies of the period. In this way, the analysis of taxation not only helps illuminate these areas, but, conversely, advances in these fields over recent decades have made it possible to reinterpret key issues related to the management of public resources. At the same time, new avenues have opened for analyzing the impact of public finances on the economy, mechanisms of resource transfer, and the redistributive effects of fiscal action—topics of growing interest among historians that also connect this field to broader debates on economic and social development in preindustrial Europe.

This body of research has provided a new perspective on studies of European public finances between the late medieval crisis and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, consolidating a field of study that has advanced without losing sight of its productive historiographical roots. In this context, the Doctoral School will offer an opportunity to examine the most recent theoretical and methodological developments in the analysis of public finances, ranging from quantitative and econometric approaches to perspectives based on social network analysis and the identification of the various agents involved in fiscal administration, without neglecting more traditional perspectives related to the political sphere, the study of income and expenditure balances, or the analysis of beneficiaries of resource redistribution. In this way, the relevance of this field for a fuller understanding of medieval and early modern societies, as well as its connections with other major historiographical issues, will be highlighted.

For this reason, the Doctoral School will address the most recent research on public finances, taxation, and state building, with particular attention to the theoretical and methodological training of doctoral candidates and early career researchers. Papers and communications will serve as the main mechanism for understanding the relationship between state formation and the history of taxation, thus offering a more comprehensive view of the deep interconnection between both elements and their impact on the broader history of medieval society and economy.

Applications

To highlight the wide range of available sources and methodological approaches on the subject, the Doctoral School will feature internationally renowned scholars delivering keynote lectures. This will be followed by presentations by doctoral students and early-career researchers. The three invited professors are Wim Blockmans (Leiden University), Leonor Freire Costa (Universidade de Lisboa) and Armand Jamme (CNRS). In addition, senior professors and researchers from various Spanish universities involved in the School's activities will also participate.

We encourage doctoral students and early-career researchers interested in the topic to submit their proposals. Submissions should be sent in PDF format to fedgalgam@uma.es and luis.almenar-fernandez@uv.es by 30 April 2026 and must include:

- Short résumé (1,000 characters max)
- Contact information
- Summary of the proposal (2,000 characters max.) highlighting:
 - The sources employed
 - The geographic and temporal scope

In order to ease the dialogue between researchers from different countries, the language of preference will be English, although presentations may also be made in Spanish, Catalan, French, and Italian. Those using one of these languages should complement their oral presentation with a PowerPoint presentation in English.

The scientific committee will select the accepted proposals in May 2026. Selected participants will have 20 minutes for their presentation during one of the different sessions of the Doctoral School.

The Universitat de València will cover the accommodation and living expenses of the speakers during the days of the School. Travel expenses will be paid by the participants. The Spanish Society of Medieval Studies (SEEM) and the Association Societas Historicorum Coronae Aragonum (HISCOAR) offer complementary grants for members who wish to attend (see <https://medievalistas.es/becas-seem/> and <https://hiscoar.org/participation-in-events/>).

This course is supported by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation research project “Mercados, instituciones e integración económica en el Mediterráneo occidental (siglos XIII-XVI)” (PID2021-128038NB-I00) and the Generalitat Valenciana excellence project “Rompiendo jerarquías. Movilidad social, dinamismo económico y desarrollo institucional en el Mediterráneo Occidental (siglos XIII-XVI)” (CIPROM/2022/46). In addition, it is part of the research group Cultures i Societats de l’Edat Mitjana (CiSEM) and of the Arca Comunitat network on fiscal history.

Director:

Antoni Furió (Universitat de València)

Coordinators:

Laura Miquel Milian (Universitat de València)

Lledó Ruiz Domingo (Universitat Jaume I)

Federico Gálvez Gambero (Universidad de Málaga)

Luis Almenar Fernández (Universitat de València)

Scientific Committee:

Carlos Álvarez Nogal (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid), Mathieu Arnoux (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales - Université Paris Cité), Alexandra Beauchamp (Université de Limoges), Pere Benito i Monclús (Universitat de Lleida), David Carvajal de la Vega (Universidad de Valladolid), Élisabeth Crouzet-Pavan (Université Paris-Sorbonne), Enrique Cruselles Gómez (Universitat de València), José Ramón Díaz de Durana Ortiz de Urbina (Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea), Jessica Dijkman (Universiteit Utrecht), Laurent Feller (Université Panthéon-Sorbonne), Amedeo Feniello (Università degli Studi dell'Aquila), Franco Franceschi (Università di Siena), Ángel Galán Sánchez (Universidad de Málaga), Elena García Guerra (CCHS-CSIC), Juan Vicente García Marsilla (Universitat de València), Jean-Louis Gaulin (Université Lyon 2), Enric Guinot Rodríguez (Universitat de València), António Castro- Henriques (Universidade de Lisboa), David Igual Luis (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha), Luciano Palermo (Università degli Studi della Tuscia), Paulino Iradiel (Universitat de València), Carlos Laliena Corbera (Universidad de Zaragoza), Paolo Nanni (Università di Firenze), Maria Giuseppina Muzarelli (Università di Bologna), Giampiero Nigro (Università di Firenze), Angela Orlandi (Università di Firenze), Pere Orti Gost (Universitat de Girona), Gabriella Piccinni (Università di Siena), Flocel Sabaté Curull (Universitat de Lleida), Phillipp Schofield (Aberystwyth University), Esther Tello Hernández (IMF, CSIC), Lluís To Figueras (Universitat de Girona), Giacomo Todeschini (Università di Trieste), Pere Verdés Pijuan (IMF, CSIC), Evelyn Welch (University of Bristol).

