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ABSTRACTS

François BORDES, *Urban space in Toulouse as seen through administrative documents of the city* 5

Study of the municipal administrative documents of Toulouse that relate to town-planning and building allows one to analyse the relationships between the city authorities and the urban space which they controlled. Effective action was taken over matters relating to public hygiene and security (fire-prevention), but little attention was given to either the regularity of street planning or to considerations of beauty such as might have been appropriate for the second most important city in France. However, indications can be found in these documents, particularly where measures are taken against the obstruction of streets, of a consciousness of urban planning which was to be put into action by the city authorities in the early sixteenth century.

Alain BADIN DE MONTJOYE, *The archaeology of medieval urban plots, based on a study of some buildings in Grenoble* 17

Observations made during the last twenty years on large city renovation sites taking in whole districts of Grenoble have led to the discovery of several aspects of its medieval settlement, which have then been studied in greater depth. It is now thought that the basic plan of the old town was already in place by the 13th century, this consisting of longitudinal walls separating individual plots which constituted the ground-base of the whole built-up area. However, the information gathered up until now refers mainly to the town suburbs which grew up during the 11th and 12th centuries, and one cannot necessarily extrapolate these findings to apply to the whole of the medieval town.

In the absence of any study of the regulations and customary practices in Grenoble relating to construction, land use, or party walls, archaeology is the only method of catching a glimpse of the dynamics at work during the Middle Ages that shaped the morphology of the built environment. Several specific examples are used to show the evidence for various ways in which the density of buildings was increased, and hypotheses are proposed for a theoretical reconstruction of the earliest conditions.

Gilles SÉRAPHIN, *A medieval method of urban planning: binary divisions of land plots* 37

Those responsible for the design and planning of the urban landscape in the Middle Ages, faced with the need to rationalise plot divisions, had a choice between several models which have been revealed during the course of studies on medieval 'bastide' towns. One of the most remarkable is that put into action by the Capetian administration in Villefranche-de-Rouergue in the mid-thirteenth century. This method of building plot organisation by means of double rows at right-angles to the street alternating with transverse lanes was widely used in south-west France. It is not however a local development as it is also found in Bilbao, in the Italian Piedmont and in some areas of Paris.

Philippe BERNARDI, *Writing-up a building site: construction through texts* 53

The contribution of texts to our knowledge of medieval houses is well-established but the development of multi- and inter-disciplinary studies has resulted in a very clear accentuation of the fact that the written word interposes filters between a researcher and what one might term the reality of sites. Technical

terminology used in the south of France is one of the most obvious of these screens, as also one of the most obscure confronting the historian. This paper deals with this vocabulary and the problems raised in analysing it. Basing itself on examples collected from Provence in the latter centuries of the Middle Ages, it examines first the relationship between source and vocabulary, or, to put it another way, the coherence of the text as a whole. The actual words themselves are treated next, and are considered firstly as conventional signs whose meaning or meanings can be sought with the aim of drawing up a technical glossary whose form and relevance must be discussed. Lastly, the words are studied in their historical dimension, as witnesses or as discrete sources, in order to emphasise the fact that attention given to their origin, their semantic evolution, their replacement or abandonment, can help one to define and delimit with greater accuracy certain technical developments.

Nelly POUSTHOMIS, *Stone in the construction of dwellings in the south of France during the Middle Ages* 61

This is a vast and multi-faceted theme which cannot be treated exhaustively here. This essay bases itself on studies published during the last 25 years or so, studies on techniques, monographs or regional syntheses concerning medieval housing in the south of France. This survey raises the question of the place accorded to stone in publications (and thus in research), and that of the reasons for variability (the writers' origins, the conditions and angle of study, the evolution of interest over time). Beyond these first reflections, this essay attempts to define questions pertaining to the use of stone, from its quarrying to its final employment, and to sketch an outline of an enquiry into its importance and role in medieval civil architecture in the south of France from the 11th to the 15th century. Among these questions are those of specificity to the south ("a stone Europe" contrasted to "a wooden Europe"), those of social markers (a noble material?), of chronology, and of possible factors specific to houses, rather than to other types of buildings, when considering how stone is used.

Dominique BAUDREU, Claire-Anne DE CHAZELLES, and François GUYONNET, *Medieval houses in the south of France constructed of solid earth: a survey of the current position* 85

It is only recently that thought has been given to studying buildings using earth (clay) in the south of France. Observations carried out during the last few years in the Rhône area of Provence and the area around Toulouse have provided details of how earth was used as a solid building material, either as cob or as a clay and straw mixture. In buildings of several stories, this material on its own is load-bearing. A few examples from Carolingian times attest the antiquity of the use of "bauge" (a clay and straw mixture), but so far no example of cob-construction has been found dating from earlier than the late 12th or early 13th century. The most spectacular recent discoveries of architecture using clay have been on urban sites. In several towns, studies preceding the renovation of run-down blocks of houses have revealed earthen houses on medieval plots. The remains have been sufficient to allow outline sketches reconstituting this type of dwelling.

Anne-Laure NAPOLÉONE, *Medieval timber-frame dwellings in the south-west of France: a survey of the current position* 113

Studies carried out in the last few years on medieval houses have shown that timber-frame construction had varying importance in towns of this area. Unfortunately, the traces of such construction are usually only in the 'negative' image left behind, and actual remains are rare and not easily recognisable. However, some such buildings have been identified which may be from earlier than the mid-15th century, dendrochronology sometimes helping to confirm the age. It is not yet possible to draw up a detailed picture of the different timber-frame methods used in medieval times, but two types of elevations can now be perceived. One suspects great variety in shape and form according to periods and regions, but far more study is needed before these can be defined. It is nevertheless urgent to study these fragile vestiges which disappear from view each time new building work is carried out and whose number is decreasing year by year.

Pierre GARRIGOU GRANDCHAMP, *Reflections on the building construction of urban houses in the south of France between the 12th and the 15th centuries* 147

The aim of this paper is to review methods of construction assuring stability and covering of living spaces; in other words, to describe forms adopted to produce the outer envelope of buildings, and then the internal structures dividing spaces. The study examines both vertical structures, which fulfil load-bearing roles, and horizontal structures. This question has not given rise as yet to many syntheses, most studies looking usually at one particular problematic concerning one aspect of construction, often those concerning walls or timber-frames. A typological study therefore, but which also opens on to fertile interrogation of the mental and economic processes leading to one choice rather than another, thus aiding our understanding of these buildings. Regional particularisms will be looked for, and if found, the conditions giving rise to these will be questioned. This inquiry has not yet been carried out on a large-scale level, and at this stage it is more a matter of presenting observations and asking questions than of bringing systematic answers.

Diane JOY, *The forms and functions of cellars in medieval houses in the south of France* 179

The south of France seems to have few towns where medieval cellars to houses have been authenticated and studied. Lille, Douai, Provins, and Vézelay would seem to have no counterparts in more southern areas. However, Bayonne and Riom have preserved a high number of remarkable cellars, known of from long ago. Elsewhere, systematic surveys and specific studies have led to discoveries which allow glimpses of this rich heritage. Medieval civic buildings are gaining generally in recognition, but cellars are benefiting greatly from new research as they may well have been preserved underneath towns that have been reconstructed in modern and contemporary times. They thus allow one to approach the buildings to which they were linked, and are also the tangible witnesses to a town that has disappeared. The most basic cellars, dug out of the rocky substratum, provide little evidence of dating nor of their possible function. Architectural cellars, usually vaulted, seem at first to offer more, but sometimes reveal such variety of form and structure that dating is not easy. Physical remains relating to any particular use are rare. The position and treatment of openings, as also the architectural solutions chosen, aiming at an increase of the available space, tend to make these highly polyvalent areas, despite their underground position. Apart from their primary function as storage areas, cellars can thus be used as shops, more rarely it seems as workshops and also as wine-production areas. In general it is difficult to define the uses made of these spaces with few distinguishing features. Textual evidence sometimes comes to the aid of questions about use and function, but such texts are rare and their study too seldom linked to that of the buildings above. Archaeological studies of the built environment and of stratigraphy are still far too few.

Maurice BERTHE, *The élite class in castle boroughs in the Toulouse area during the 13th and 14th centuries* 207

In several regions of south-west France, the central areas, the small towns and rural boroughs, had their existence assured by the castle towns which possessed all the attributes of urban centres: demography, administrative and judiciary systems, economic and religious structures, size of area within their purview, topographical and urban configuration (urban civil and domestic architecture), participation in regional representative assemblies. All of these, of whatever size or importance, had in common one specifically urban factor, that they gave rise to social groups inconceivable in purely rural areas. This urban factor was their capacity to engender long-lasting élite groups particular to urban society.

The study focuses on the little town of Lautrec, the *chef-lieu* of a viscounty in the Albi area. Abundant archives from the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, in particular the valuable register known as the *Domanial de Lautrec* which records the findings of the French royal inquiry of 1338-39, has allowed an in-depth analysis of the dominant social group and of changes within it, as also some approximate knowledge of relative wealth. A description of the successive methods used by these élites to rule the vast territory of the town and the lordship dependent on the viscounty leads to tentative explanations of the power and the endurance of this group. The sources reveal that the élite group of Lautrec, the town chosen to exemplify