

Fresno paragraph

During his time as an undergraduate at St John's College Annapolis, the present author studied the Great Books, which meant engaging with these primary sources on their own terms uninfluenced by the interpretations of them by later secondary sources. He had loved history for as long as he could remember, but it was only upon engaging with classical works of history at St. John's that he felt a desire to be a historian.

Meanwhile, the author came across Professor Brian Catlos's book, *Kingdoms of Faith: A New History of Islamic Spain*. As he read through it, all of the present author's assumptions about the so-called "Reconquest" of Spain and Portugal by Christians were overturned., Dr. Catlos's book showed that this nearly 800-year process was not a concerted effort between Christian powers to expel "foreign" Muslims, but included the formation of alliances across religious boundaries against co-religionist just as often as alliances between Christian and Muslim powers.

Since beginning his degree program at CU Boulder, the author has the begun researching the Mudejar (Muslim) population of the Aragonese Kingdom of Valencia in the fourteenth century. Since they were in many cases given the same wary and occasionally hostile treatment by their Christian neighbors and seem to have had occupied similar socioeconomic niches as their Mudejar ancestors, the author plans to extend his research chronologically up to 1609, when the nominally Christian Moriscos were expelled from Valencia.

The author is also developing Armenian studies as a secondary field for the sake of obtaining a fuller picture of the ethno-religious history of another subaltern population at the other end of the Medieval Mediterranean.