



Call for Papers

International Conference

Mapping Public Ritual in the Early Modern Portuguese Empire

Lisbon, July 6-7, 2020

Instituto de Ciências Sociais - Universidade de Lisboa

Convenors

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Performed in every part of the early modern Portuguese empire that extended across four continents, public rituals (e.g. festivals, entries, funerals, processions) represent a key site for comparing cultural and political practices in different areas and for studying their transmission and transformation on a global scale. This conference aims to address the spatial and geographic dimensions of public rituals and to encourage dialogue between History and a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including the possibilities afforded by GIS (Geographic Information Systems) or other digital humanities tools.

The conference is part of the “Public Rituals in the Portuguese Empire (1498-1822)” research project (www.rituaispublicos.wordpress.com), which is engaged in digitizing ritual and festival-related texts held at the National Library of Portugal and National Library of Ajuda, and aims to build a GIS platform to map, visualize, and study them.

We encourage papers that compare public rituals in different parts of the Portuguese empire, as well as ones that identify patterns of cultural exchange with African, Amerindian, and Asian societies or with other European and non-European imperial actors. Among the questions that papers could address are the following:

- Where were accounts of public rituals written, published, and circulated?
- What were their channels of dissemination and forms of reception on local, imperial, or international levels?
- How do these accounts of public rituals relate to the formation of urban elites in the different localities of the Portuguese empire?
- How, when and in which circumstances were the different archives and collections of manuscript and printed accounts created?
- Where did public rituals occur, and how are those spaces (the city/territory, or more specific places within it) represented in the accounts of the events? What do they reveal about the symbolic role of those places in the geopolitics of empire?
- How was the empire imagined and performed in the metropolis and in the colonies? How were non-European spaces represented in Portuguese public rituals and festivals, and how did non-European peoples participate in them?
- How mobile were public rituals and festivals, and what processes of cultural translation did they undergo in order to adapt to the African, Asian, and Atlantic territories in which they were performed? Did they appropriate—or were they forced to accommodate to—local/native rituals?
- How can GIS or other digital humanities tools be used to map public rituals in the Portuguese empire?

The **working languages** of the conference are **Portuguese, English and Spanish**.

Paper abstracts up to 200 words and a brief 1-page CV should be sent to publicrituals@gmail.com by February 15, 2020.