

Religion and Civil Society Project

The Mobility of the Court: Cartography or Royal Sites

By its very nature and circumstances of context, the lives of medieval kings are characterized by a continuous displacement and movement. Rita Costa Gomes and Julia Pavón proposed research on emerging issues regarding the constant displacement of the kings, especially of a political and military type. As the governmental apparatus of the kings becomes more rational and efficient, and the royal courts increase their dimension, there is more investment in the mechanisms that facilitate the mobility of the Kings. These royal displacements will be interpreted (1) in their political and ritual dimension, and (2) as manifestations of a sophisticated cultural and symbolic system, related to the specific forms of territoriality. More specifically, the project includes analysis of the centers of power and the rituals of sovereignty in the kingdom of Portugal during the late Middle Ages, trying to relate them and compare them with the remaining Christian kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula: Leon / Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and even with the Muslim kingdom of Granada.

The main objective and the result of this comprehensive study are as follows: (1) a systematic description of the type of residence (urban, peripheral-urban, rural, monastic castle), (2) of archival and bibliographic data available for each of the types of residences, (3) their chronological evolution and (4) provide a systematic and comprehensive map of the royal residences -spatial distribution and chronological evolution- in the Iberian Peninsula during the early Middle Ages, representing the original and unprecedented contribution, which could be projected into the early Middle Ages, which represents an original and unedited contribution that could be subsequently projected into the later middle ages.

The resources for this research are based on bibliographic data obtained from Refwork, accessible at Towson University, and documentary sources from reference works, monographs, articles and primary sources. The data obtained will be systematically classified in different entries, each of which include: the type of residence (urban, peripheral urban, rural, monastic, castle), (2) a brief summary of the available bibliographic sources; (3) evaluation of representativeness; (4) chronology that has been covered; (5) archival data; (6) specialization level of interest (local history, general history, regional history, art history).

A systematic record of the available maps of the Medieval Kingdoms of Castile, Portugal, Corona de Aragón, Navarra and Granada, will be carried out, building a comprehensive map of royal residences in the late Middle Ages of the Iberian Peninsula. These maps will specifically represent the spatial distribution and chronology of royal residences, information that up to now has not been available; this would also facilitate a similar study for eras before the Middle Ages. A particular processing of materials will be needed for this subject, and it will be very important to take into account digitalization processes, as shown in the budget.