

# Shaping and Appropriation of Space in the Iberian Empires, 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century

## Doctoral workshop

The appropriation and transformation of landscapes and territories are at the core of the colonial processes in the Iberian empires<sup>1</sup>. By focusing on the modalities of space transformation, this workshop will interrogate the specificity of the tools and practices developed in the Iberian Empires to control space and exploit territories, between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The workshop will address the diversity of landscapes and lived spaces in Iberian societies by bringing together examples from the Portuguese and the Spanish empires (including Peninsular territories). The transformation of spaces and the appropriation of territories will be examined in a long-term perspective, covering the 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the diversity of populations which characterize the Iberian empires is a key element of the workshop. We will devote special care to inquire the strategies of indigenous groups, populations brought with the slave trade, or of the variety of migrating groups and diasporas that shaped the Iberian empires. This approach aims to tackle the problems of power dynamics and domination processes inherent to the control of space in a colonial context, but also to consider the disruption, reformulation or revitalization processes that enlighten the complexity and variability of colonial landscapes. We seek to examine how the multiplicity of actors and strategies to inhabit and appropriate space shaped multi-layered landscapes, that is of porous surfaces evolving constantly, upon which various generations have successively inscribed their own values and concerns without erasing their ancestors<sup>2</sup>.

Discussions will be organized in four thematic groups:

### **1. Agriculture, soils exploitation and land tenure**

Agricultural changes are the most obvious manifestation of space transformation following the conquest of new territories by the Iberian monarchies. The introduction of new plants and domestic animals induced new agricultural practices as well as lasting alterations of landscapes. It created new relationships with soils and nature which translated into new delineation process but also new legal definition of property and tenure often leading to land dispossession. Local/indigenous elites adapted to these changes by fostering European plants and cattle on their lands, for example. This reality illustrates the extent of the modification of agricultural practices and colonial spaces.

### **2. Settling and controlling space**

The colonization of extended territories led the Iberian empires to adopt new ways of controlling space. One of its spatial manifestations is the concentration of European and indigenous populations in a few strategic places. The ways in which towns and more modest populating points (military outposts, *presidios*, missions, ...) contributed to the territorialisation of Iberian powers should be considered. The word "*poblar*" used to describe both the

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<sup>1</sup> CHANCE (1978); SEED (1995); plus récemment DAVIES (2016).

<sup>2</sup> TILLY (2004) et WALSHAM (2011)

foundation of urban centers and the expedition of settlers enrolled in the Iberian Peninsula, encapsulates the colonial processes of the 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. This section will also question specific military and juridical practices (military campaigns, *visitas*, etc.) and their role in the structuration and control of space by Iberian powers.

### **3. Knowing and representing the empires' territories**

The construction of the Iberian empires goes hand in hand with the development of new tools to measure, represent and delineate territories. One can consider the evolution and constitution of new cartographical techniques and knowledge or the various iconographic figurations of the "new worlds". The role played by *visitas* and other judicial and juridical procedures in the circulation of information and the appropriation of territories can also be questioned. Finally, the Indigenous knowledge plays an important part in the representation of colonial territories even though they were drastically impacted by the aftermath of colonization.

### **4. The Christianisation and occidentalisation of spaces**

Evangelisation as well as the introduction of the Castilian municipal model deconstructed and reshaped indigenous territorialities. They modified landscapes and moreover the modalities of spatial occupation. Hence, it is important to consider how forced displacements of colonized populations, the christianisation of landscapes or the occidentalisation of public and lived spaces impacted indigenous societies relation to their territories and collective identities. For example, by joining and investing in christian and municipal institutions or activities, these populations produced new localities<sup>3</sup> and could reformulate some of their practices of collective identification.

The doctoral workshop will take place at Campus Condorcet (Aubervilliers, France) on the **1<sup>st</sup> of June 2022** and will be held in hybrid mode (on site and online).

We welcome young researchers in Social sciences and Humanities to apply and present their current research, from Master's degree students to postdocs. Communications can be given in French and Spanish, but also in English or Portuguese provided the speakers send to the moderators a written version of their paper a week before the workshop . The workshop will be held in hybrid form to remain accessible to a larger audience. Nevertheless, we have a moderate budget to be used to help pay the transportation fees of some of the speakers. Should you wish to benefit from such aid, please, specify your situation as well as your travel route in the attached formulary.

Applications must contain:

- A presentation of your research, under 300 words, in which you should specify the thematic group you wish to contribute to.
  
- A short bibliography

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<sup>3</sup> APPADURAI (1995)

- The attached formulary duly completed

Please, send your application file before the **20<sup>th</sup> of March 2022, 20h (Paris time)**, to the following address : [transformer.approprier.espace@gmail.com](mailto:transformer.approprier.espace@gmail.com)

Should you have any questions, please, contact Elfie Guyau ([e.guyau@parisnanterre.fr](mailto:e.guyau@parisnanterre.fr)) Or Antoine Duranton ([antoine.duranton@ehess.fr](mailto:antoine.duranton@ehess.fr))