

in Portingalia . . . trans Neptunum

English and Portuguese in exchange (1100–1500)

A workshop on forms of ‘international’ contact
in medieval Western Europe

Friday, 28 May 2010 at St John’s College (New Seminar Room), Oxford

Contact between the peoples of England and Portugal has been a reality since at least the mid twelfth century, with a relationship of mutual interest developing gradually as centuries wore on. These interactions culminated in an alliance of perpetual friendship in 1386, which would lead to deeper commitment still, fostering further exchange at all levels. Anglo-Portuguese communications did not cease with events such as the English Reformation, or with the affirmation of new political allegiances in the European scene, but by this time their nature had perhaps already changed.

The aim of this workshop will be not to focus on the discrete political, military, or economic events involving the two medieval kingdoms over this period of time. Rather, we shall look at specific moments of contact as stepping-stones from which an ongoing liaison may have developed. Papers and discussion will thus be orientated towards the issues of transmission and exchange at all possible levels of meaning, while trying to ponder on this long-standing relation of peoples as a dynamic and everyday process. To think about their results, the lasting as well as the short-lived, while considering the idea of exchange in areas apparently as distinct as, for example, royal marriages or the trade in staple goods, will be our objective.

Themes in discussion are to include:

- travel and travellers
- intellectual ideas
- geography and space
- friendship and conflict
- goods, merchants and trade
- conceptions and perceptions
- identities
- art and literature
- dwellers and communities
- policy, politics, and diplomacy

We hope that in considering all aspects of *exchange* and its manifestations, this workshop will relate, and be of interest, to any students and researchers of other areas and contexts in the medieval world.

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