Over the centuries, disasters, both natural and man-made, have been described as the products of “divine wrath.” The Christian conception of a vengeful God punishing His people is derived from the Jewish tradition and is a central and persistent theme in Western Civilization. The two speakers on this panel, Ana Valdez and Mark Molesky, will discuss how the Iberian Union (1580-1640) and the Lisbon Earthquake of 1755 were described and interpreted as acts of divine retribution. Valdez will show how the Jesuit António Vieira (1608-1697) portrayed the Iberian Union as an event orchestrated by God to punish the Portuguese people, an event from which the Portuguese would ultimately be redeemed. Molesky will examine the famous earthquake that destroyed the city of Lisbon in 1755 and ignited a continent-wide debate about the role of God in the natural world.

Speakers

Mark Molesky is an associate professor of history at Seton Hall University. He received his A.M. and Ph.D. in history from Harvard. His most recent book, *This Gulf of Fire: The Destruction of Lisbon, or Apocalypse in the Age of Science and Reason* (Knopf, 2015), was a finalist for the LA Times Book Prize.

Ana Valdez is Luso-American Foundation Visiting Assistant Professor in Portuguese Studies at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, with additional support from Elisa Saab and Luis Pedroso. Prof. Valdez is hosted by the UMass Lowell History Department and the Saab-Pedro Center for Portuguese Culture and Research. She received her Ph.D. in history from the University of Lisbon, held a postdoctoral fellowship at Yale, and has taught at Brown, Columbia, and Yale. She is the author of *Historical Interpretations of the “Fifth Empire”: The Dynamics of Periodization from Daniel to António Vieira*, SJ (Brill, 2011), and the co-editor-in-chief of the series *The Iberian Religious World* (Brill).

Place: Allen House
2 Solomont Way
Lowell, MA 01854

Date: April 21, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Reception to Follow

Free and Open to the Public

Parking: Wilder Lot, 61 Wilder St. Lowell, MA

For more information, contact the Saab-Pedroso Center at 978-934-5199 or email natalia_melo@uml.edu.
WITNESSING THE

Wrath of God

IN PORTUGUESE HISTORY:
The Iberian Union and the Lisbon Earthquake Disaster of 1755

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