

A “COMPROMISSO” FOR THE FUTURE

500th anniversary of the first printed edition of the *Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia*



A “*Compromisso*” for the
future: 500th anniversary
of the first printed edition
of the *Compromisso of the
Confraternity of the Misericórdia*

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Edition
© Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (April 2017)

Publication and Distribution
Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
Largo Trindade Coelho
1200-470 Lisboa

Printing and Finishing
Clássica Artes Gráficas 2.
Unipessoal, L.da

Print Run
500 copies (Portuguese)
200 copies (English)

Materials Used
Cover: Pop'Set Infra violet 320g
Inside pages: Printed on Pure Munken 130g and Novatech Gloss 150g paper

ISBN
Portuguese version
978-989-8712-60-8
English version
978-989-8712-61-5

Legal Deposit
XXXXXXXXXX

Exhibition

10 May to 10 September 2017

General Coordination
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Partnerships
Musei Vaticani



Museo de Arte Sacro de Teruel



Museum Project
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Graphic design
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Lighting
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Consultancy for Hygrothermal Conditions
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SCML Audiovisuals and Multimedia
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Acknowledgements

The Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa wishes to thank all the Portuguese and foreign institutions and organisations that have loaned works for this exhibition or collaborated in its organisation.

Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra – Maria José Silva Pereira

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal – Maria Inês Cordeiro (Director General) and Teresa Lança (Coordinator of the Department for the Conservation of Collections)

Bishop Carlos A. Moreira Azevedo – Delegate of the Pontifical Council for Culture at the Vatican

Câmara Municipal de Lisboa – Carmo Rosa, Filipe Almeida and Marta Ferreira (General Secretariat, Brand and Communication Department, Outdoor Advertising Section)

Câmara Municipal de Sesimbra – Cristina Conceição (Culture and Libraries Department)

Embassy of Portugal in Madrid – Francisco Ribeiro de Menezes (Ambassador) and Maximiano Gomes (Liaison Officer)

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Nunziatella Alessandrini

Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Alcochete – Estêvão das Neves Boeiro (Provost)

Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Évora – Francisco Lopes Figueira (Provost)

Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lagos – Fernando Barros Graça Reis Costa (Provost) and Isabel Batista (Consultant)

Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Montemor-o-Velho – Manuel Marques Carraco dos Reis (Provost) and Lídia Pagaimo (Consultant)

Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Sesimbra – Manuel Adelino Veríssimo Januário Bernardino (Provost) and Ana Cruz (Vice-Provost)

Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto – António Tavares (Provost) and Alice Azevedo (Director of the Historical Archive)

9 – 10	Presentation <i>Pedro Santana Lopes</i>
11 – 12	Introduction <i>Maria Margarida Montenegro</i>
13 – 24	The possibility of mercy is the heart of the poor man <i>Henrique Leitão</i>
25 – 30	The duty of mercy today <i>Guilherme d'Oliveira Martins</i>
31 – 77	The Fifth Centenary of the first printed edition of the <i>Compromisso</i> : 1516-2016 <i>Helga Maria Jüsten</i>
79 – 120	Some contributions towards a comparative study of the <i>Compromissos</i> of the “Confraternity of the Misericórdia”: the first half of the sixteenth century <i>Francisco d'Orey Manoel e Nelson Moreira Antão</i>
121 – 158	Pivotal moments: the Foundation of the Misericórdia de Lisboa and its First <i>Compromisso</i> Printed in 1516 <i>Isabel dos Guimarães Sá</i>
159 – 187	Queen Leonor and the works of mercy <i>Lisbeth Rodrigues</i>
189 – 244	The scripture of images: the didactic narrative of the works of mercy <i>Celso Mangucci</i>
245 – 256	The Panel of the Virgin of Mercy from the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel <i>Pedro Luis Hernando Sebastián</i>
257 – 295	Pieces on exhibition

Pedro Santana Lopes

Provost of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa

If there is one date that the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (SCML) should be proud to celebrate, it is that of the publication of the first printed edition of the *Compromisso*, adopted five hundred years ago by all the Confraternities of the Portuguese Misericórdias. Because the *Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia is the soul that lies at the foundation of our institution, and it has always been our guiding compass, the torch that lights our way.

This is a fundamental work for understanding our origins and the very fibre of our being, and it was because of this that it seemed important to mark the five centuries since the publication of this document, not only with its re-edition, but also with an exhibition that shares the guiding principles of the SCML, which we fulfil with great pride, commitment and dedication, and that serves to publicise the mission that has been entrusted to us. This is why the fifth centenary of the *Compromisso* could not be allowed to pass unnoticed.

In the rapidly changing times that we are living through today in the twenty-first century, I believe that it is essential to remember, honour and express our gratitude for these important references from the past. But, even more than this, we should honour the *Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia by conducting a detailed examination of our performance and evolution as an institution. In this sense, it seems to me to be crucial to state, not out of any feeling of vanity or vainglory, but with justifiable pride and joy, that the SCML has always been concerned with going beyond the limits of the mission with which it is charged, broadening the scope of its action and seeking to find pioneering social answers to today's problems. I have always been most enthusiastic in saying this: "*the SCML must expand its horizons*". It must look for new forms, new responses and new approaches. But always, as has been the case throughout these past five centuries, with the human person, in its spiritual, emotional and material dimension, as our central concern.

We have sought to help more, to do better, to go further. And despite the adversities and challenges that have arisen, we have remained true to ourselves, to our mission and beliefs.

Today, we continue along the same path with the wisdom gained by those who have covered many miles in their struggles to ensure that the day-to-day life of the most vulnerable and needy can be made less arduous. But let no one be in any doubt: we will always strive to do more and to perform even better.

We firmly hope and believe that the twenty-first century will bring greater solidarity and equality, with the promise that we will continue to invest in the scientific and technological discoveries of new solutions for some of the great problems of our present day and age, particularly in the fields of neuro-degenerative diseases and vertebral-medullary lesions.

May this continue to be so, as long as there are those in need of our help.

Maria Margarida Montenegro

Head of the Department of Culture of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa

As we celebrate the fifth centenary of the publication of the first printed edition of the *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia, the exhibition displayed in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery of the Santa Casa offers the public the chance to look at this foundational document that marks the beginning of a history that already spans more than five centuries. Dated 1516, the fundamental text of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia transformed the printed word into a mission of charitable good deeds. This now remote gesture, not only established the identity of our institution on paper, but it also made it possible to share a framework for action that spread across the globe, offering the countless Confraternities of the Misericórdia set up all around the Portuguese territory a pioneering model that could be followed, replicated and adapted.

In its pages, the *Compromisso* contained the guiding principles of the Confraternity, mainly expressed in the fourteen works of mercy, seven corporal and seven spiritual, the compass for the performance of good deeds, in the past as well as in the present. A great deal of time has passed since these fourteen maxims were established as the great flagship of the Santa Casa, yet their pertinence has not in any way diminished, and has always been renewed in the light of the challenges and demands that each historical period has brought to bear. Their contemporary nature cannot be questioned, since they have been unceasingly updated; the way in which these works are practised has changed, but their guiding spirit remains unchangeable.

Today, the investment made by the Santa Casa in the creation of palliative care units and the funding given to research in the area of neuroscience are in keeping with one of the age-old works of mercy, namely healing and providing assistance to the sick. Just as the current efforts being made to welcome refugees may be interpreted as a new way of interpreting the maxim “to give shelter to the pilgrims”. Originally intended to provide support for people undertaking

voluntary religious journeys and who required doors to be opened to them, in the present-day political and economic conjuncture such works bring us face-to-face with the urgent need to help those who are now forced to be “pilgrims”, in a global movement of migration that involves thousands of people fleeing from war, famine, poverty and political, religious or ethnic persecution. Times may change, but not the guidelines for the commitment and determination shown by this Santa Casa. It is still the same compass of the fourteen works of mercy that continues to direct our mission.

As the starting point for a journey that explores the genesis of the Lisbon Misericórdia, this exhibition, in which the *Compromisso* occupies a central position, is not a mere exercise in memory, or a simple tribute to the past. It testifies to the timeless commitment of this Santa Casa to the Christian and ethical values of solidarity that lay at its origin, and which were chosen as the foundations for building a future.

The possibility of mercy is the heart of the poor man

Henrique Leitão
University of Lisbon
Guest Curator



Tile panel from the Convent of São Pedro de Alcântara (Lisbon)
Showing St. Peter giving food to an old blind man and a child.

Things have not always been as they are today. For those who lived in ancient times – at least for some of them – mercy had a more ambiguous status than it does nowadays: it was not always considered a virtue and sometimes it was not even considered to be admirable. Understood as a certain form of compassion, a feeling of pity towards the suffering of another, a human sympathy that is aroused when faced with the misery that afflicts another, mercy – although it called for noble gestures of help, a tempered judgement, the mitigation of punishments, and pardon – was not always considered to be positive.¹ This was partly due to the fact that, in the Roman world, *miseriordia* was sometimes considered to be a transitory disposition, an impulse, a feeling, which had to be stimulated, but which did not even have the stability that was attributed to the other virtues or dispositions with which it was frequently associated.² For the stoics, for example, mercy expressed, above all, a certain sadness that is experienced in the presence of someone who is suffering, especially someone who is suffering unfairly; but, because of this, it was also understood as a human weakness, a weakness of the spirit, which disturbed inner peace.³

There seem to have been objections of another type. Everything leads us to believe that, for some Romans, the practice of mercy was found to be disturbing, as it contained within itself what appeared to be a claim to superiority. The fundamental objection was formulated in the way that Seneca referred to clemency, a disposition that was very close to mercy, as a “mildness of a superior towards an inferior in determining punishments”.⁴ Even though *miseriordia* was not totally equivalent to *clementia*, it was affected by this way of understanding the former, and thus the exercise of mercy ran the risk of being considered nothing more than the expression of a position of power, of a superior towards an inferior, with the additional problem of its being the manifestation of an arbitrary power. A power that, in the very act of mercy, manifested its discretionary character and which could often be nothing more than the result of very practical or cynical objectives: the famous “*clementia Caesaris*” may have been nothing more than just a consequence of his despotism. According to some historians, the Roman senatorial

¹ Hélène Pétré, «“Miseriordia”: Histoire du mot et de l’idée du paganisme au christianisme», *Révue des études latines*, 12 (1934), pp. 376–389; Ursula Rombach and Peter Seiler, «Eleos – Miseriordia – compassion. Transformationen des Mitleids in Text und Bild», in Martin Harbsmeier and Sebastian Möckel (Hrsg.), *Pathos, Affekt, Emotion: Transformationen der Antike* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009), pp. 250–276.

² In the Roman world, many terms expressed feelings or dispositions that were very close to that of mercy (*miseriordia*) – *clementia*, *lenitas*, *humanitas*, *mansuetudo*, *liberalitas*, *comitas*, *modestia*, *temperantia*, *magnitudo animi*, *modus*, *moderatio*, etc. – and it is not always easy to disentangle their different meanings. See K. Winkler, «Clementia», *Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 3 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1957) cols. 206–231. In the ancient world, mercy was often associated with clemency, but one should note the contrast between the verbs that were used with *miseriordia* (*commovetur*, *movetur*, *orior*, *elicere*, etc.) and those that were used with *clementia* (*utor*, *ostendere*, *habere*, etc.). See David Konstan, «Clemency as a virtue», *Classical Philology*, 100 (2005), pp. 337–346 [esp. pp. 342–343]. For a more exhaustive discussion, see David Konstan, *Pity Transformed* (London: Duckworth, 2001).

³ H. Pétré, «“Miseriordia”: Histoire du mot et de l’idée du paganisme au christianisme», p. 378.

⁴ “*lenitas superioris adversus inferiorem in constituendis poenis*”. Seneca, *De clementia*, 2.3. See D. Konstan, «Clemency as a virtue», p. 339. See also Guillaume Flamerie de Lachapelle, «Trois traits négatifs de la *miseriordia* dans le second livre du *De clementia* de Sénèque», *Les Études Classiques*, 72 (2006), pp. 309–318.

aristocracy had been particularly critical of this way of exercising authority, seeing in Caesar's merciful gestures the exercise of a despotic power, which did not accept the constraints of the law and manifested its total power precisely in its merciful acts.⁵ Perhaps for this reason, Cicero, on referring to Caesar, denounced his "insidiosa clementia". Although it could be associated with acts that were recognised as good and valid – pardon, help, succour – and although a positive connotation could be identified, mercy in the ancient world also had less noble connotations, and, for this very reason, a somewhat ambiguous status.

Christianity introduced profound changes in the understanding and practice of mercy. The word was therefore invested with a range of meanings that, although they were not completely original, acquired an unexpected force and novelty. At the heart of these transformations is the double meaning with which mercy appears in the Christian doctrine. In other words, it is simultaneously considered to be an attribute of God and, at the same time, an obligation for mankind, a double meaning that is summed up in Christ's statement: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your father also is merciful" (Luke, 6, 36). Mercy began to be understood, above all, as a disposition of God himself and the way in which God related with mankind. It was the responsibility of men, above all, to imitate this divine characteristic in their relationships with one another. Christian mercy therefore calls for a response to suffering and hardship that is similar to the one that God has already shown towards us.

In its more external aspect, Christian mercy begins with a recognition of the weakness and needs of others, and of the distress that we feel when faced with such suffering. St. Augustine explains: "What is mercy? It is nothing other than feeling a soreness of heart caught from others. It gets its Latin name, *miser cordia*, from the sorrow of someone who is miserable; it is made up of two words *miser*, miserable, and *cor*, heart. It means being heartsore. So when someone else's misery or sorrow touches and pierces your heart, it is called *miser cordia*, or soreness of heart."⁶ But the commotion that we feel is more complex, because this soreness and the desire to help others does not only derive from a suffering that can be seen and which disturbs us, but, first of all, from the recognition of something that we ourselves lack; it springs from our having previously been the beneficiaries of the mercy of God, who, on seeing our weakness, came to our aid. As a scholar recently explained: "in St. Augustine's writings, the word "mercy" expresses, first and foremost, the experience that a man has of God when he is converted and thereafter the experience that he has of his neighbour in his moments of need".⁷ While, for the ancients, mercy did not contain this aspect of looking in upon oneself, for Christianity, however, this inward gaze and the recognition of having already been an object of mercy oneself are the starting point for engaging in its practice.

⁵ This is, for example, the position of Ronald Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958); see D. Konstan, «Clemency as a virtue», p. 338.

⁶ St. Augustine, *Sermon 358/A*, 1. *Apud* Isabel Alçada Cardoso, «O Bom Samaritano do Novo Testamento à Patrística: uma nova humanidade?», *Vida Católica*, ano IV, n° 8 (Janeiro-Abril 2016), 167-186 [quoted on p. 173].

⁷ I. A. Cardoso, «O Bom Samaritano do Novo Testamento à Patrística: uma nova humanidade?», p. 173.

This was the path through which Christianity announced the need for practising mercy as an imperative for believers. Over the centuries, that imperative came to be embodied in the definition and practice of the works of mercy, which should now be remembered: The seven corporal works of mercy: 1. To feed the hungry; 2. To give drink to the thirsty. 3. To clothe the naked; 4. To shelter the homeless; 5. To visit the sick; 6. To visit the imprisoned; 7. To bury the dead; and the seven spiritual works: 1. To counsel the doubtful; 2. To instruct the ignorant; 3. To admonish sinners; 4. To comfort the afflicted; 5. To forgive offences; 6. To bear wrongs patiently; 7. To pray for the living and the dead.

The history of Christianity in Europe and the world has as one of its most distinctive features the history of the implantation of the “works of mercy”, expressed in quite different forms and evolving over time in response to specific situations from each period. This history is indissociable from, and frequently overlaps with, the history of the foundation and development of the *Misericórdias*. Besides the institutional aspects and the effective performance of the “works” on behalf of those most in need, it can also be said that, with these actions and these gestures, the Christian notion of mercy began to be spread, thus becoming part of the heritage of the western world. But it would be a little optimistic to expect the very core of what this Christian mercy means to have been captured perfectly at all times, which also explains why, over the centuries, there have been repeated appeals made about this subject by Popes and the Church’s magisterium. It is at this point that we should raise the question of the modern-day relevance of the works of mercy, not only as the modern realisation of these gestures of aid towards those most in need in today’s world, but also as a way of recovering a more profound and intimate understanding of what mercy is. Perhaps the example of a famous text will help to clarify this matter.

A famous and dramatic appeal for exercising mercy is to be found in William Shakespeare’s play *The Merchant of Venice*, in the passage known as “The Quality of Mercy”, in Act IV, Scene I. The situation is well-known, and therefore just a brief summary is sufficient for our purposes here. Antonio, an honourable merchant from Venice, had been named as the guarantor of a loan that Shylock, the Jew, had made to Antonio’s friend, Bassanio. Trusting in the profits that he would make with the arrival of his ships laden with riches, Antonio had given as his guarantee for the loan a pound of flesh from his own body. But there was a terrible storm and all the vessels were shipwrecked, which meant that Antonio was unable to guarantee the payment within the stipulated time. Shylock therefore claimed the pound of Antonio’s flesh to which he was entitled. The matter was taken to court, where Shylock simply demanded that justice be done and that Antonio should comply with what had been agreed. Shylock does not ask for more than he is due, and requests nothing more than the simple exercise of justice. In the

court, Portia, in disguise, attempts to dissuade Shylock from pressing ahead with his claim, requesting him to show mercy towards Antonio. Portia's speech is the famous passage known as "The Quality of Mercy":⁸

The quality of mercy is not strain'd; it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven; upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes: 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes; the throned monarch, better than his crown; his sceptre shows the force of temporal power, the attribute to awe and majesty, wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings; but mercy is above this sceptred sway, it is enthroned in the hearts of kings, it is an attribute to God himself; and earthly power doth then show likest God's, when mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew, though justice be thy plea, consider this, that, in the course of justice, none of us; should see salvation: we do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render; the deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much; to mitigate the justice of thy plea;

It is difficult not to be moved by these words of Shakespeare: "in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation: we do pray for mercy". The Christian message, which influenced Shakespeare's work so deeply, is clearly expressed here.

The theme of mercy is very frequently addressed in Shakespeare, who considers it to be a virtue of the "mighty" and of kings, and who notes that good government demands more than justice, as is made evident in this passage. There is naturally a great deal that could be said about this episode, but the only point that needs to be stressed here is that the tension that Shakespeare highlights, that of justice versus mercy (although here this is demonstrated in a particularly sublime fashion), is a dichotomy that has since been treated in many places and by many authors from many historical periods. The passage from Shakespeare therefore describes a certain conception of mercy, one that is widespread and regarded as a moral position "above" justice (above the sceptred sway) – in other words, a conception that contains respect for justice, but which also demands something higher, imposing on it an even more superior, "more moral", conception. Quite rightly, as a Christian, Shakespeare does not forget that mercy "is an attribute to God himself" and that it manifests God's power in a special way. In this respect, he follows the tradition of the Church closely; St. Thomas Aquinas had already remarked upon this: "Further, it is said of God that He manifests His omnipotence especially by sparing and having mercy."⁹ Yet, throughout the passage, the willingness to exercise mercy would thus be the sign of a moral superiority. This is why Shakespeare considers it to be the attribute of the great and the powerful, of kings.

⁸ *The Merchant of Venice*, Act IV, Scene I.

⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, Q. 30, Art. 4. The whole question 30 of part II-II is dedicated to "De misericordia". See also Pope Francis, *O Rosto da Misericórdia. Misericordiae vultus. Bula de proclamação do Jubileu Extraordinário da Misericórdia* (Prior Velho: Paulinas, 2015), p. 7.

As we saw earlier, this conception of mercy has its roots in the classical world, and it is one that has become particularly common in our societies and in public discourse: we are all called upon to exercise mercy towards the weak and the unprotected and the fact that such mercy is exercised by a king indicates a special sensitivity and moral integrity. But nor can we deny that, although it is not an equivocal conception, it seems to be lacking something, perhaps something essential. Furthermore, as can be immediately understood, by constituting an appeal to a certain higher power, it contains in itself the possibility of being considered a vanity, and, in this sense, of becoming a mundane form of mercy.

It was not in this way that Pope John Paul II regarded the matter when, in 1980, he presented his encyclical *Dives in Misericordia – Rich in Mercy*, where he wrote: “The present-day mentality, more perhaps than that of people in the past, seems opposed to a God of mercy, and in fact tends to exclude from life and to remove from the human heart the very idea of mercy.”¹⁰ This is an unexpected and even surprising diagnosis because, if there is one thing that modernity insistently claims about itself, it is that it is fairer and more moral than the past. Do our societies and our culture not permanently insist on our obligation not to commit the same immoral acts as those of our ancestors and our opponents? Are we not, ourselves, fully convinced that, despite all our defects and limitations, we are, in fact, more moral than those who preceded us? And is it not true that, as a confirmation of this fact, we publicly exercise gestures of mercy and that, in our societies, there are ever more institutions and initiatives offering help to those in need? Yet, curiously, Pope John Paul II seems to have had a different opinion. According to him, it seems that the contemporary mentality, seen from this point of view, represents a step backwards in comparison with the past. And the same Pope went on to explain: “The word and the concept of “mercy” seem to cause uneasiness in man, who, thanks to the enormous development of science and technology, never before known in history, has become the master of the earth and has subdued and dominated it. This dominion over the earth, sometimes understood in a one-sided and superficial way, seems to have no room for mercy.”¹¹

Once again, we are faced with a passage that is highly surprising and which points to a largely unexpected understanding of what mercy is. Here, mercy appears as a negation of the impulse for dominion. It is true that, later on in this encyclical, the Pope returned to the more traditional question of the relationship between justice and mercy, drawing a picture of the concept of mercy, beginning in the Old Testament, and questioning whether “justice will be enough”, but it is equally true that his most direct concern is directed towards these conditions of present-day life, which seem to have made today’s men and women – in other words, we ourselves – incapable of showing mercy. In the reading of Pope John Paul II’s encyclical, there seems to be, in the present-day situation, and especially

¹⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Rico em Misericórdia. Carta Encíclica Dives in Misericordia* (Braga, Editorial A. O., 1987), p. 8.

¹¹ Pope John Paul II, *Rico em Misericórdia. Carta Encíclica Dives in Misericordia* (Braga, Editorial A. O., 1987), p. 8.

in the richest and most developed societies, a real difficulty in living in a merciful way, and furthermore it appears that this difficulty is rooted in a belief in dominion and power over the world, in a certain “rich” heart of the modern man.

The understanding of what really is at stake in Christian mercy was powerfully expressed in a passage from Pope Benedict XVI that was afforded widespread coverage: “Mercy is in reality the core of the Gospel message “ and then he went on to say: “it is the name of God himself, the face with which he reveals himself in the Old Testament and fully in Jesus Christ, the incarnation of creative and redemptive Love. This love of mercy also illuminates the face of the Church, and is manifested through the sacraments, in particular that of reconciliation, as well as in works of charity, both of the community and individuals. Everything that the Church says and does shows that God has mercy for man.”¹² By reminding us that mercy “is the name of God himself”, Benedict XVI insisted on a central point of the Christian understanding of mercy, and, just like Pope John Paul II, he invited us all to reflect more deeply on the human situation.

That mercy is in reality “the core of the Gospel message” and that “it is the name of God himself” are characterisations that appeal directly to all believers, but not only these people. Everyone, whether believers or not, is obliged by these formulations to at least engage in some reflection. What do these expressions mean exactly and in what way are they related with the “works of mercy”? What were these popes seeking to tell us by reminding us that mercy does not refer just to “works of charity”, but also to the sacraments, “in particular that of reconciliation”?

As is well known, a very particular insistence on the central importance of mercy, as a way of understanding the divine, and on the relationship that modern men have with their neighbours, has come to be a distinguishing feature of Pope Francis’s Pontificate. In his interview with Andrea Tornielli, later published in a book whose title “The Name of God is Mercy” marks a return to Pope Benedict XVI’s famous expression, Pope Francis had the opportunity to develop his thinking about the subject.¹³ After reminding us that the centrality of mercy in the life of the Church “is Jesus’ most important message.” (p. 23), and that, according to its etymology, “*miseriordia* (mercy) means opening one’s heart to those who are unhappy” (p. 26), the Pope rapidly moves on to his essential point, noting that “when someone feels the mercy of God, he feels a great shame for himself and for his sin” (p. 27). Yet, according to the Pope, this is the central nub of the question, since “only he who has been touched and caressed by the tenderness of his mercy really knows the Lord. For this reason [...] the place where my encounter with the mercy of Jesus takes place is my sin” (p. 48).

In reminding us of the situation of hardship faced by the agent of mercy, the Pope makes it clear that there is a close connection with what the Christian

¹² Homily of Pope Benedict XVI, 30 March, 2008.

¹³ Pope Francis, *O nome de Deus é Misericórdia. Uma conversa com Andrea Tornielli* (Lisbon: Planeta, 2016).

doctrine traditionally calls poverty, and although, as is well known, he seeks to avoid the formulations and terminology that are traditionally used, he does not offer any doubt that this is his intention. When the Pope speaks insistently about the need for us to be merciful, if we make only a superficial reading of his words, we might be led to consider that he is simply inviting us to be “more moral” – something that modern people have always claimed that they are. However, the appeal goes much deeper and, in a certain sense, it is more uncomfortable for all of us, since what the Pope is inviting us to do is to live with a poorer heart and one that, by being conscious of its own weakness, consequently becomes more attentive and sympathetic to the suffering of others. The link between poverty and mercy is, in fact, made explicitly by Pope Francis when he states that “the poor are the privileged of the Divine Mercy”¹⁴. Simply, what might not be clear at first glance is that these poor people are not just those towards whom we direct our merciful actions; these poor people are us ourselves.

With this, we are led to the figure of St. Francis of Assisi, so beloved by Pope Francis, and so directly implicated in his texts and speeches, especially in the encyclical *Laudato Si*, in which he dramatically denounces the excesses committed by present-day societies in their dominion over the Earth. If we look closely at the personality of St. Francis of Assisi, we finally understand why Pope John Paul II associated the modern difficulty in living a merciful life with “the enormous development of science and technology” and with a humanity that has “subdued and dominated” the Earth. The two most famous traits in St. Francis’s personality – his radical way of living in poverty, and his profound love for the world created by God, for nature, for each animal and for each plant – are generally presented as precisely this: two traits of a rich and complex personality. What the encyclical *Laudato Si* reminds us is that these two aspects are just one. St. Francis’s poverty and his enchantment with, and respect for, the beauty of the natural world are one and the same thing. What Pope Francis once again reminds us is that the only way of correctly using the goods and resources of Nature and of the Earth is if we use them with the heart of a poor man, who knows that everything was given to him, who does not have his hope or his heart placed in transitory things, and who makes use of everything with the happiness, freedom and respect of someone who knows that, at root, he depends on God for everything.

The possibility of mercy is the heart of a poor man, precisely because the wish to be merciful springs from the wish to be with others as God was first with us. It springs, therefore, from a sense of disproportion, and the awareness that, in an essential way, there is a complete equivalence between ourselves and our neighbour who stands before us in a state of need. The hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick and the afflicted that the works of mercy speak of are also we ourselves, and, if we take action in defence of the more unprotected that are around us – as we must necessarily do – it is because we recognise ourselves as equal and as also

¹⁴ Pope Francis, *O Rosto da Misericórdia. Misericordiae vultus*, p. 16.

being in need of mercy. What lives in the heart of the merciful is not the ambition to attain a purer morality, nor even a more complete ethical correctness, above and beyond justice. What lives there is the compassion of the poor heart, which sees a gift in everything and in life, and which gives to others because it knows that, in the final analysis, everything that it has was also given to it.

Um Compromisso para o Futuro is an exhibition commemorating the fifth centenary of the first printed edition of the *Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia, and the current relevance of its message. Published for the first time in 1516, this document corresponds to what today would be referred to by the name of “Statutes”, establishing the regulations for the organisation, activities and functions of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia and making it a fundamental element in the history of the Misericórdias in Portugal. Together with its normative aspect, the *Compromisso* was also the formal announcement, in print, of the moral imperative of the Works of Mercy and of the commitment to provide material and spiritual aid to those in greatest need. In the words of the text itself, “[so that] all the works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal, may be fulfilled, insofar as possible, to succour the tribulations and miseries that are suffered by our brothers in Christ”. The *Compromisso* therefore served the purpose not only of structuring and organising the Confraternity of the Misericórdia, but also of establishing the ideals and practices of the Misericórdias over the centuries, continuing until the present day.

The exhibition *Um Compromisso para o Futuro* reminds us of the crucial importance of the first edition of this document. The first section presents not only a copy of the first printed version of the *Compromisso*, but also copies of all the sixteenth-century editions, as well as other subsequent editions until the nineteenth century. In this way, an attempt has been made to highlight not only the present-day relevance of the works of mercy, but also the various typographical features of the different copies.

The second section is devoted entirely to the iconography of mercy and contains an important group of art works from Portugal and abroad, including, most notably, two fifteenth-century paintings that have never previously been shown in Portugal: *Opere di Misericordia: Seppelire i morti*, which forms part of a group of six panels depicting the Works of Mercy painted by Olivuccio de Ciccarello, in 1404, for the Church of Santa Maria della Misericordia, in Ancona, which was destroyed during the bombing of the city in the Second World War. This painter was considered to be one of the leading artists of the late-Gothic Ancona school, which was active between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In fact, this situation was clearly demonstrated when he was commissioned to paint the frescos of the Santa Casa di Loreto and was given the title of *Magister Alegutius Cicarelli* of Ancona. Because of the richness and originality of its iconography and its remarkable technical quality, the *Virgen de la Misericordia* (Our Lady of Mercy), attributed

to the “Master of Teruel” and belonging to the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel, Spain, is considered to be one of the most significant works of Gothic painting from the Spanish medieval kingdoms, which explains why, until now, permission has never previously been granted for the painting to be exhibited outside Spain. Among the Portuguese works on display is the magnificent sixteenth-century painting of *Our Lady of Mercy*, attributed to Gregório Lopes and belonging to the Santa Casa da Misericórdia in Sesimbra. This painting underlines the great quality of the works commissioned by the Portuguese Misericórdias.

The last section of the exhibition includes a series of photographs commissioned from young Portuguese photographers, which illustrate the modern relevance of the works of mercy, highlighting the support that the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa continues to give to Portuguese culture and artists.

In marking the fifth centenary of the publication of the *Compromisso*, our intention is not only to give visitors to the exhibition an opportunity to appreciate the historical and symbolic value of this text, but also, through it, to demonstrate the current relevance of the practice of the works of mercy in view of the great challenges that we now face in the 21st century.

The Exhibition is accompanied by this Catalogue, in which, following the introductory texts by Dr. Pedro Santana Lopes, Provost of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia, and by Dr. Guilherme d’Oliveira Martins, you can find a series of studies by some leading specialists in the areas that are dealt with. The study by Helga Jüsten, as well as the one by Francisco d’Orey Manoel and Nelson Antão, deal specifically with aspects linked to the typographical and editorial history of the first printed version of the *Compromisso* and its subsequent editions. The studies by Isabel dos Guimarães Sá and Lisbeth Rodrigues deal with questions linked, above all, to the history of the Misericórdias in Portugal, while those by Celso Mangucci and Pedro Hernando Sebastián deal with more specific themes related with art history. Together they constitute a group of academic works of great value, substantially adding to the already rich corpus of studies about the Misericórdias and their history.

★ ★ ★

The invitation that was addressed to me by the Provost of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia, Dr. Pedro Santana Lopes, to act as the curator for this Exhibition, was a great honour, but, in a certain way, also a surprise. There is no question that my academic interests and research into cultural and scientific history have always been centred, above all, on the sixteenth century in Portugal and that, because of this, I often came across the history of the Misericórdias in our country and the

text of the *Compromisso*. However, my familiarity with these subjects has never been such that I would consider myself to be a specialist on this matter. But then I understood that it was exactly this challenge that the Santa Casa was seeking to issue by inviting me to serve as the curator of the exhibition that celebrates the 500th anniversary of the publication. They were looking for someone who, although they had some contact with the subject, could, at the same time, bring an “outside” look upon the matter. If I had any initial doubts about accepting such an invitation, these were immediately dissipated in the first meetings that I held with the Cultural Department, headed by Dr. Margarida Montenegro, and with Dr. Francisco d’Orey Manoel and Nelson Antão, from the Historical Archive, whose professionalism, profound knowledge of the history of the *misericórdias*, and total dedication to this project, overcame all my failings; they are the true architects of this initiative. I have also had the good fortune to be able to rely upon the backing of a remarkable group of academics – specialists in the various themes touched upon in this exhibition – who so promptly agreed to contribute to the event with immensely valuable studies, transforming this catalogue into a document that henceforth will be considered indispensable for any future study, not only of the *Compromisso*, but also of the history of the Misericórdia in the sixteenth century.

The duty of mercy today

Guilherme d'Oliveira Martins

Trustee of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

At a time when we are beset with indifference and a lack of values, when the abyss of violence attracts yet more violence, the theme of Mercy takes on even greater importance. Etymologically, the word *miser cordia* refers to the “compassionate heart” – *miseratio, miseratio nis*, which in Latin means pity or compassion, and *cor, cordis*, which means heart. We are, therefore, at the very centre of understanding that ethical values only acquire meaning when they are seen in a concrete, and not in an abstract, sense. A reference to something as good, beautiful, fair, just or true can only be understood by example. The parables of the Good Samaritan or the Prodigal Son show how our love for our neighbour does not follow a recipe or a model, but is linked to the possibility of our finding a response to the unexpected in the most unaccustomed situations. This “compassionate heart” leads us to embark on an arduous journey, in which understanding others and their differences is seen as an essential part of human relations. People and communities relate to one another in such a way that freedom and responsibility are allowed to complete one another, equality and difference are linked to one another and exchanges and gifts are made so that the economy and society are directed towards human dignity.

At a time of profound changes in global society, clearly demonstrated by the financial crisis whose harmful effects we are still experiencing, the notion of Mercy leads us to the idea of sobriety, in other words to striking the right balance between means and needs, between justice and efficiency. More than simple speeches, we need concrete action. More than charitable handouts, we need social responsibility and a fair and equitable distribution of resources. More than proselytism, we need coherence between words and deeds... Hence, the need to give greater value to justice and peace, placed at the service of the common good. Pope Francis tells us that “no-one can be excluded from the mercy of God” and that the Church, as a mystical body and as an institution, “is a house where everyone is welcomed and no one is rejected.” “Her doors remain wide open, so that those who are touched by grace may find the assurance of forgiveness. The greater the sin, the greater the love that must be shown by the Church to those who repent.”

We are therefore faced with the difficult understanding and acceptance of those who fall and then pick themselves up again in order to continue on their way. The truth is that no-one can be excluded from this responsibility and this natural request. We all make mistakes, we all fall down and we are all called upon to make our way along a path that is full of hazards and risks. We are all called upon to become involved. And what method should be applied to Mercy? It is less a question of presenting certainties and more a matter of understanding, respect and love. “The Church condemns sin because it has to relay the truth: ‘this is a sin’. But at the same time, it embraces the sinner who recognises himself as such, it welcomes him, it speaks to him of the infinite mercy of God. Jesus forgave even those who crucified and scorned him. We must go back to the Gospel.”

The present-day relevance of the works of mercy is linked to our need to understand that we are not alone – we have others, and we know that the other is the other half of ourselves. We therefore need to correspond to what the other needs from us. We are faced with the realisation that the dignity of the human person begins with our understanding that we are brothers and that the law of loving our neighbour is the touchstone of the Christian calling. The Good Samaritan was the only one in the parable who understood who his neighbour was. It is, therefore, not a question of historical references, but of our considering today that development is the new name for peace and that caring for others and for the common good, both in the present and in the future, is the same expression of the law of love and charity. Paul Ricoeur told us that solidarity gives us obligations towards our partners and that love gives us obligations towards our neighbours. And is not the virtue of love the one that is truly eternal? How can we forget that it is Christ who addresses us when we are called upon to give food to the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked and comfort the afflicted, to heal the sick, to give shelter to pilgrims, refugees and the poor, to visit the prisoners or to bury the dead? It is a duty of justice that we are called upon to fulfil.

There are 2.2 billion poor people, or people living on the poverty threshold, in a total world population of 7 billion, and 1.2 billion of these live on 1.25 dollars or less per day. According to the United Nations, providing the world's poor with basic social benefits would cost less than two per cent of world GDP. 781 million adults are illiterate and two thirds of these are women. Child mortality, the lack of protection for women during maternity, the spread of infectious diseases, isolation and loneliness, aging without the support of the community, the absence of hygiene measures, the lack of protection for drinking water and the shortage of measures to protect the environment are all examples relating to the works of mercy nowadays. There must be a connection between personal generosity and the actions of public policies, science, and health and education professionals, so that injustice ceases to be the norm.

The phenomenon of poverty must be distinguished from deprivation and social exclusion. We cannot mix everything together, since by doing this we are distancing ourselves from the very heart of the actions that are needed. Equality means different treatments for what is different. Alfredo Bruto da Costa stated that, because of this, poverty is a serious political problem to which attention must be paid. Poverty is a situation of deprivation arising from a lack of resources, whereas deprivation in general corresponds to not having one's basic needs guaranteed, due to a lack of resources or for some other reason – ranging from a dependence on some addiction or a disease to the incapacity to manage one's own property. For each of these cases, the solutions are very different. In the case of poverty, we must help people to acquire the necessary resources; in the case of deprivation, we must support them so that they can manage these resources in a

better way. Poverty can only be resolved through autonomy. The fishing rod is important, but it is worth very little in itself if we do not prepare people, train them and accompany them. Speaking of Mercy today means taking part in these solutions – with generosity and professionalism.

Poverty is one of the forms of social exclusion, but it is not the only one. There are others, such as the isolation of old people, who may have material resources, and the social discrimination displayed towards immigrants or the disabled, etc. Unemployment is also a different phenomenon from that of poverty: it is undoubtedly very serious, but it is highly diverse as well. Roughly 40% of the members of poor families have a job and another 30% receive retirement pensions. Now, when we have 40% of poor people in active employment, we can see that the problem is not just one of the distribution, but of the primary sharing of income. Poverty is a scourge that requires economic policies that are capable of correcting inequalities. It is often asked whether we should first have economic growth in order to be able to distribute it afterwards, or whether we should choose from among the various forms of growth and wealth creation the one that ensures a better distribution from the outset. We cannot wait for the day and the moment when there is sufficient growth to be distributed. We must combat inequalities, not only through equal opportunities, but also through the active correction of inequalities – through distributive justice and intergenerational equity. Contributing to an increase in indebtedness means violating the works of mercy.

If, so far, I have mentioned the corporal or material works of mercy, I must not overlook the spiritual ones – which are based on care and attention. And, in today's language, we must necessarily speak of the duty of education, of giving good advice, positively correcting those who have done wrong, consoling those who are suffering, forgiving those who have wronged us, patiently bearing insults and praying to God for the living and for the dead. And here there is a natural convergence with the material works of mercy, since it is our duty to reject indifference, in the same way that setting an example is the best way to show the path of justice and peace. We cannot just sit with our arms folded, as if the solutions were merely the obligation of others and not our own, too. We cannot reject our obligation to share in the defence of the common good. The notion of public service is not linked only to the State and the market, but to the community and to people. The Welfare State must thus represent society and its citizens, which means that public service must always correspond to a network of initiatives developed by creative and participative citizens. This is why, today, the works of mercy must combine personal commitment and generosity with social and civic responsibility – not according to a logic of mere charitable assistance, but according to a sense of justice.

As Pope Francis has insisted, we have to acknowledge our smallness and the fact that we cannot consider ourselves to be satisfied with our relationship with others and with the world. Let him who is without sin cast the first stone!

Hence, we must start from small things and from the situations that are close to us. We must always be asking: who is our neighbour and where is he? And if he is our neighbour and asks for our presence and our help, the truth is that our fragilities can never be forgotten. To speak of Mercy increasingly means to relate humanity with its responsibilities. A “compassionate heart” cannot limit itself to making a speech about abstract and rootless values. We cannot operate according to double standards: I cannot spend my time constantly pointing to the small mote in the eye of the other, but not see the beam in my own eye. The same must be said of those who complain about the lack of safety or the limited quality of the services provided in their city when, at the same time, they do not participate in civic life or pay their taxes, deceiving the State and reducing its ability to pay for the defence of the common good. Solidarity, caring for others and charity are paths that must be followed with a view to human development, distributive justice, social cohesion, trust and the reduction of inequalities. The “duty of Mercy” obliges us to separate the wheat from the chaff – so that, side by side with the “ethics of conviction”, we can find the “ethics of responsibility”, which will become a factor enriching the reality that surrounds us, acting on behalf of the dignity of the human person. We cannot remain indifferent to those who are knocking at our door. We must always be attentive to the others and take care of our duties and responsibilities, which are the natural counterparts to freedom.

The fifth centenary
of the first printed edition
of the *Compromisso*: 1516-2016

Helga Maria Jüsten

CEH/CHAM, Universidade Nova de Lisboa

For *A, F, H, J, M and P,*
with gratitude

PAST AND PRESENT

The Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (SCML) has made the excellent decision to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the first *Compromisso da Misericórdia* printed in 1516. When such celebrations are well planned and carefully organised, they not only give rise to the studied review of certain subjects, but also provide an opportunity for the appearance of new contributions that complete and/or update the history of the work as a whole.

In the past, various scholars and bibliographers have turned their attention to the study of *O Compromisso da confraria de(a) Misericórdia*, underlining one fact that is quite clear and visible in the comparison of its frontispieces, namely that there were at least two different versions printed with the date of 1516.

In fact, the differences in the typographical material used in the two editions have been studied by a variety of scholars, and even now, in the present, there are still echoes and repetitions of certain statements that were made in the past, not to mention some discordant voices that deviate from the main path based on a series of rather poorly documented observations.

Our entry into these “hidden paths”, already indicated by Ataíde e Melo¹, had to wait for the development of a research study that entered into its second phase in 2006.

These current celebrations are perhaps the ideal time for updating this subject-matter, by presenting relevant documentation that has been gathered together in our research undertaken into the typographical material of Portuguese printing works that were in activity between 1519 and 1565, principally the one belonging to Germão Galharde, which followed on directly from the first printers who had been active since roughly 1488².

“THE PATH IS MADE BY WALKING”³

The study of the printing press in Portugal, from its beginning in circa 1488 until 1565, looking at the printed works above all as a typographical product, has been developed at its own steady pace, in keeping with the maxim chosen as the heading for this section.

In order to compose this study, we followed the various stages required by the rigorous methodology that has served as our guide so far.

¹ Alfredo da Cunha, *A Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Fundão*, Porto, Officina de “O Commercio do Porto”, 1925, especially pp. 50-63, with the note (1) in which Arnaldo Faria de Ataíde e Melo proposes the “1530s and even the 1540s” as a possible date for the printing of the variant, “and at the typography of the printer Luís Rodrigues, at the beginning of his professional activity”.

² Helga Maria Jüsten, *Incunábulos e Post-Incunábulos Portugueses, (ca. 1488-1518)*, (*Em Redor do Material Tipográfico dos Impressos Portugueses*), Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Históricos, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009.

³ Antonio Machado, *Poesías Completas*, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, S.A., 1946, p. 212.

Original

O Compromisso da Confraria de Misericórdia

SCML, L.A. XVI, 114



Thus, the preliminary (but essential) phase consisted of locating and closely examining existing copies of the *Compromisso in situ*, which was followed by an appreciation of the printed works, essentially centred upon the typographical material.

Although we spent some time looking at the different editions of the *Compromissos da Misericórdia*, such as those from 1640 and 1704, which are housed in the collections of the various Santas Casas, and a late manuscript copy of the edition printed in 1516, which is now housed at the Santa Casa in Faro, it is not our purpose here to extend this study beyond the original edition printed in 1516 and its counterfeit version.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CONTROL

One can never underestimate the importance of remembering one of the essential precepts for studying printed works, i.e. attempting to locate and examine the greatest number of copies. Only in this way (and particularly so when the study involves variants of an original edition, as is the case with *O Compromisso da confraria de(a) Misericórdia*) will it be possible to fully examine and classify the copies that have survived until the present day.

So far, and overlooking any possible new discoveries that may be unearthed as a result of the commitment demonstrated by the Historical Archive of the Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Lisboa, we have succeeded in compiling the following table, which shows both the copies located by us and those whose existence was already previously acknowledged.

Bibliographical control – Record of Copies [+ images of reproductions]

Original	Counterfeit Version I	Counterfeit Version: Variants
<p>1 – *SCML, XVI, 114 [« Aveiro »] +</p> <p>2 – **Misericórdia Abrantes + [incomplete, fols. 1 and 2, and fol. J are missing]</p> <p>3 – **Viseu, incomplete, fols. 1 and 4 are missing [?] photocopy: **BNP, Res. 4407 V]</p> <p>4 – **SCMChaves, [incomplete, fol. 1 is missing]</p> <p>5 – Harvard, Houghton Library, Typ. 535.16.525F</p>	<p>1 – *SCML, XVI, 115 [F. M. Orey, 2010, 9 and 10; Velloso, SCML (XVI), T.P. 17 fols. j, iij, vii, xij are missing, restored, in 1992, based on the Ajuda copy] + »»»»»»»»</p> <p>2 – **Misericórdia Alcobça</p> <p>3 – **Private collection. Dr. Francisco Gil Meneses [incomplete, fol. 2 is missing]</p>	<p>Variant I:</p> <p>6 – **BPMP, XI-2-21+ [Frontispiece] Variant: the last line is missing, Ch. xij, manuscript</p> <p>[photocopies: *BNP, Res. 4405 V and 4406 V are from the same copy, which is not, however, identified, but they are from the copy of the BPMP]</p>

Original	Counterfeit Version I	Counterfeit Version: Variants
<p>Original, Variant I fol. j, with initials printed in black</p> <hr/> <p>6 – **BPBraga, Res. 705 V [good copy]</p> <p>7 – **Misericórdia Beja [incomplete, fols. 1,2 and 4 are missing]</p> <p>8 – **Misericórdia Evoramonte [» photocopy: **BNP, Res. 4408 V]</p> <p>9 – **Misericórdia Montemor-o-Novo [incomplete, fol. ij is missing]</p> <p>10 – #/**Cabeço de Vide</p> <hr/> <p>10 copies</p>	<p>4 – New copy: # Library of Catalonia, Res. 143-5 Digital copy: Google Books</p> <hr/> <p>5 – Leilão P. Azevedo, November 2013 [copy of the frontispiece] + : provenance ? / » current owner ?</p> <hr/> <p>5 copies</p>	<p>Variant II:</p> <p>7 – **Ajuda 50-XII-4 + [cf. the copy at SCML = Restoration; Variant: fol. v, verso, title not aligned with the print space of the text]</p> <p>8 – **BP, F.F. -14 + [« Livraria Conde Tarouca] Variant: fol. v, verso, title not aligned with the print space of the text]</p> <p>9 – **Misericórdia Fundão [copy, Variant: fol. v, verso, title not aligned with the print space of the text] +</p> <hr/> <p>4 copies</p>

Earlier bibliographical references confirmed during the observation *in situ*

<p>Alfredo da Cunha⁴, 1925:</p> <p>1 – Aveiro [»SCMLisboa]</p> <p>2 – Abrantes</p> <p>3 – Vizeu</p> <p>4 – Beja</p> <p>5 – Montemor-o-Novo</p> <p>6 – Evoramonte</p>	<p>Alfredo da Cunha, 1925:</p> <p>1 – Ajuda</p> <p>2 – BPMP</p> <p>3 – Livraria Conde Tarouca</p> <p>4 – Misericórdia Fundão</p>	<p>Fernando da Silva Correia:⁵</p> <p>+/#/**Cabeço de Vide</p> <p>+/#/** Chaves</p> <p>+Vila Real/Trás-os-Montes: Ø [28.3.2016]</p> <p>+ Óbidos: Ø [28.3.2016]</p>
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[* Copy examined *in situ* / ** Other copies examined / # New copies / + Whole or partial copy / Ø Bibliographical reference not confirmed / non-existent]

The examination *in situ* of the copies marked in the above table, resulting from our travels all around the country during the preparation of this work, enabled us not only to locate a total number of 19 copies, but also to identify variants of both the original edition and the counterfeit version.

In fact, Variant I of the original edition, namely the printing in black of the initials of fol. j, recto, had already been identified by F. J. Norton⁶, in his note P 12, when he mentioned: “3 a: ¶ [red] Ho compromisso (...) [black] (D⁸) om Manuel (...)” However, such a variation is not usually mentioned, probably

⁴ Alfredo da Cunha, *op.cit.*, p. 55.

⁵ Fernando da Silva Correia, *Origens e Formação das Misericórdias Portuguesas*, Lisbon, Livros Horizonte, 1999, p. 561.

⁶ Frederick John Norton, *A descriptive catalogue of printing in Spain and Portugal (1501 – 1520)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 508.

due to the lack of images reproduced from a copy that is conserved far from the main centres. By way of curiosity, we emphasise that the copies situated in Alto Alentejo and Baixo Alentejo are all of the Variant I type.

And so that these variations may now be known, we present a comparison of the copies, showing the original edition with the already-mentioned initials printed in red, and, alongside it, the copy from Evoramonte, classified as Variant I, with the same initials printed in black.

Original edition,
SCML, L.A. XVI,114



Santa Casa da Misericórdia
de Evoramonte



THE PRINTED WORKS AS HISTORICAL PRODUCTS⁷

From the very moment that the printed work leaves the printing press on its way to its readers and future owners (and, in this phase of the History of the Book, the typographical product is still circulating in the form of gatherings), it begins to add supplementary information that it is not always easy to reconstruct over the centuries.

⁷ In the organisation of this work, we follow the methodological stages summarised by Julián Martín Abad in his work *Los Libros Impresos Antiguos*, Valladolid, Universidad de Valladolid, 2004.

In this way, the study of the origin of printed matter in a certain collection of published works represents a specific area of research. In the case of the copy of *O Compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, which is housed at the SCML with the reference number XVI, 114, in the frontispiece we find that the words “da uilla daueiro” (from the town of Aveiro) have been added, informing us of what was probably the place of its first ownership.

The examination *in situ* of the copies of *O Compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, shown in the above table, allows us to present an interesting aspect regarding printed works as a historical product. As far as the copies that are considered to be the original works are concerned, we mainly noticed that an addendum had been added after the colophon, in which the King “ordered that the pledge (*Compromisso*) be fulfilled”, addressing himself to a certain Misericórdia, on a date that was not always explicit, and that it was signed at the end. In some cases, this addendum makes it possible to establish the time when the Misericórdia first began its activity, both from the date and from the king’s signature (that of either Dom Manuel I or Dom João III).

In the case of the counterfeit printed works, with and without variants, it was not possible to note a similar addendum immediately after the colophon, except for a final note recorded in the copy of the Banco de Portugal, with an order from the *Desembargo do Paço* (the Tribunal of the Palace, which was the Supreme Court of Justice at that time) and the mention of the year 1561. In the other copies that were looked at, there were, in fact, judicial orders or notes about a certain Misericórdia, without any specific reference being made to the beginning of its activity. We draw attention to the profusion of handwritten records, frequently bound together with the printed version of *O Compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, namely in the copies to be found at the Misericórdias of Fundão, Viseu and Alcobaça.

Greater difficulties are to be found in those cases where the works were sold, by private individuals or antiquarian booksellers, without leaving us any clue as to their origin or destination. In fact, special care is required with the information that is stated in commercial catalogues, because this may lead us to create phantom copies, if the reference is conveyed in an incomplete and haphazard fashion.

By way of example, we present the following information referring to the sale that was made of a copy in 2013. At an auction of the “Library of Dom Diogo de Bragança, the eighth Marquis of Marialva and other important books”, the antiquarian bookseller Pedro de Azevedo sold, as item No. 202, a counterfeit copy of *O Compromisso Da confraria da Misericórdia*, adding: “Lisbon: Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos (in fact, Germão Galharde?), 1516 (in fact, from 1544 to 1548) (...)”, with the base price of between 2,000 and 3,000 euros. We are therefore left without any knowledge of the identity of either the last or the current owner. However, the same copy contained handwritten notes and a “royal charter from the king Dom João III, dated 20.6.1554”, which may lead us to attribute the

original ownership of the printed work to the safekeeping of the “*misericórdia da villa d’atouguja da balea*” (*Misericórdia* of the town of Atouguia da Baleia). The copy is therefore referred to with some reservations, without any record of the complete path followed by this work as a historical product, in view of the fact that the commercial logic did not coincide with the methodological presuppositions of the History of the Book.

However, when a new copy is discovered in the preliminary phase of the bibliographical control, we find ourselves overcome with the “delight” that Odriozola⁸ spoke of, because such moments are rare and, at the same time, they call for a responsible checking of the facts.

It happened that, in March of this very year, during our preparation for this work, through the electronic catalogue: <http://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu> we located a copy that had been digitised by <https://books.google.pt>, of *O compromisso Da confraria da Misericórdia*, i.e. a copy of the counterfeit version, in the collection of the Library of Catalonia, a discovery that, immediately afterwards, was confirmed through subsequent research conducted in the catalogue of this same library, under the reference number Res. 143-4. The copy is very beautifully bound, displaying a *super libros* that represents an *agnus dei*, with several folios and handwritten annotations. The news about the location of the copy itself would be incomplete without the precious help of an eminent palaeographer, a researcher at CEH, my friend and colleague Dr. Pedro Pinto. At my request, the researcher undertook a reading of the handwritten folios and gave me the invaluable information about the copy that is currently to be found in the Library of Catalonia, namely that “Diogo Gil Argulho and Manuel Dias de Andrade have been identified as living in Ceuta around this time. Ceuta chose not to recognise Dom João IV as its sovereign. The Castilian control of the fortress town may serve to explain the course followed by the printed copy as it wended its way towards a Spanish library”. Now, after consulting the *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiae*⁹, it can be seen that the Santa Casa da Misericórdia in Ceuta was set up during the reign of Dom Manuel I, which is in keeping with the earlier information about the provenance of the copy recently located by us.

THE PRINTED WORKS AS A TEXTUAL TESTIMONY

Although they both bear the date of 1516, the two editions of *O Compromisso* (...), namely the original and the counterfeit versions, are distinguished from one another above all by the different typographical material that was used, a particularity that will be the subject of a comparative study developed later on.

⁸ António Odriozola Pietas, “Alegrías y tristezas de la investigación sobre impresiones españolas de los siglos XV y XVI”, Offprint from *Homenaje a Pedro Sáinz Rodríguez. Tomo 1: Repertorios, textos y comentarios.*, Madrid, Fundación Universitaria Española, 1986, pp. 67-91.

⁹ *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, José Pedro Paiva (ed.), vol. 3, Lisbon, União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2004.

Looking at the two printed versions from a textual point of view, it is interesting to note that the contents were kept the same, with a concern being displayed for presenting the same text in a similar layout, even though the typographical material is different. In fact, the contents are very similar with an identical distribution of the text over the same folios.

Between the original version and the counterfeit version, there is just one difference to be noted in the way that the text is distributed in the print space, namely when one compares the initial and the prologue, as can be seen from the following images.

Original printed version,
SCML, L.A. XVI,114



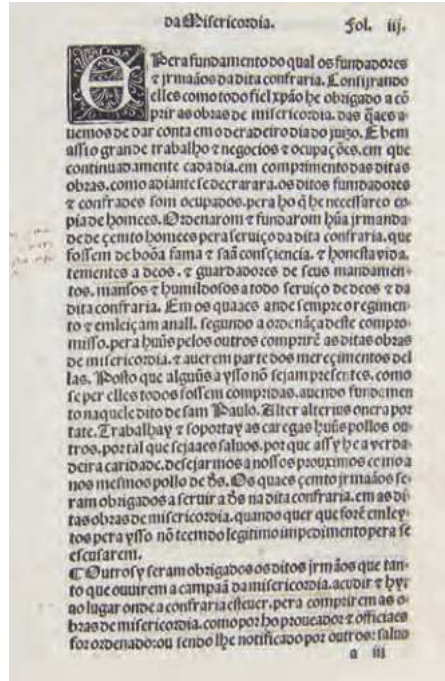
Counterfeit version,
BPMP, X1-2-21[2]



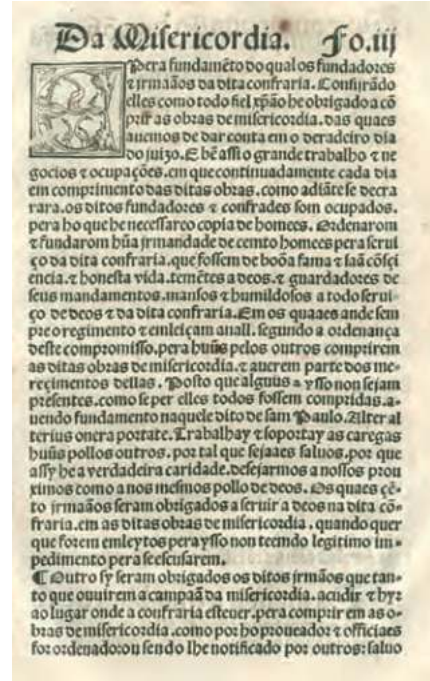
Different print space

Thus, when the actual “*Compromisso*” itself begins, we can see the similarity of the way that the text is distributed over the print space, therefore facilitating the task of quoting certain materials, regardless of the version that is consulted. In fact, there cannot be any doubt about the fact that the original edition was used as the basis for the composition of the counterfeit version.

Original printed version,
SCML, L.A. XVI,114



Counterfeit version,
BPMP, X1-2-21[2]



However, while they are similar textual products, the printed versions are rarely absolutely identical. It is, in fact, enough to look at the titles of the frontispiece to distinguish the original publication from the counterfeit version.

Original printed version,
SCML, L.A. XVI,114



↓
de

Counterfeit version,
BPMP, X1-2-21[2]



↓
da

THE PRINTED WORKS AS AN EDITORIAL PRODUCT

When we look at the printed works from the viewpoint of their constituting an editorial product, we are essentially trying to understand the motive that lay behind the printing of this edition, to identify those responsible for its printing, as well as their legitimate or illegitimate intention in the promotion of a work.

Editions are in fact a commodity, besides their serving other purposes, which obliges us to reflect upon the time and the opportunity of their printing and the people for whom they were destined, particularly in the case of the illegitimate or counterfeit editions, as is the example with *O compromisso Da confraria da Misericordia*, which maintains the name of the previous printers, as well as the date of the original printed version. This is, therefore, a recurrent phenomenon, as João José Alves Dias observes when he alerts us to the fact that “the reprinting of works, without any updating of the printer’s name or of the date of the work’s printing, was normal practice in the early days of typography.”¹⁰ Since this is the case, the same author points out why the counterfeit version repeats the text of the original edition, without any alterations.

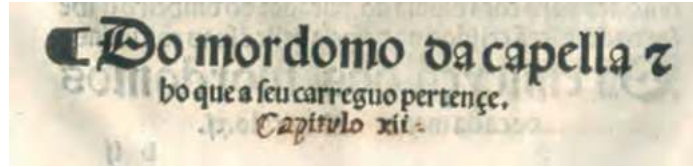
We therefore mention, in passing, an edition that was authenticated at the end with the mark of the printer Luis Rodrigues, printed in 1539 with the title *Regimento de como os contadores das comarcas ham de prouer sobre as capellas: ospitaes: albergarias: confrarias: gafarias: obras: terças (...)* [Regulations as to how the auditors of the district courts must proceed with regard to the supply of chapels, hospitals, inns, brotherhoods, leper hospitals, building works, and the collection of the “terça” tax (...)], repeating the date of the 1514 document, and, in the frontispiece, it is stated as follows: “E per especial mandado de sua Alteza Ioham Pedro de Bonhomini de Cremona ho mandou empremir. Com pruilégio.” [“The printing of this book was specially commissioned by His Highness Ioham Pedro de Bonhomini from Cremona. With privilege.”] In fact, in his note no. 1955, Anselmo had already indicated that this was a “full and faithful copy of the *Regimento* printed in 1514 by João Pedro de Cremona.”¹¹ For the time being, let us leave this *Regimento* to one side, because it will represent a fundamental piece later on when we talk about comparing typographical material.

The existence of an original edition and a counterfeit version of *O compromisso da confraria de Misericordia*, with a printing date of 1516, not only obliged us to locate copies of these works, but also to observe the largest possible number of copies in order to identify possible variants. The path that has so far been followed in the observation *in situ* of the copies that have been located and confirmed has also made it possible to identify variants in the counterfeit printed versions. One first variation certainly arose as a result of negligence in the printing of a counterfeit copy, namely the one to be found at the Municipal Public Library in Porto, reference number X1-2-21[2], in which the last line of folio x, verso, was not printed – due

¹⁰ João José Alves Dias, *Ordenações Manuelinas 500 anos depois. Os dois primeiros sistemas (1512-1519)*, Lisbon, BNP-CEH, 2012, p. 25.

¹¹ António Joaquim Anselmo, *Bibliografia das Bibliografias Portuguesas*, Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, 1923.

to a lack of ink, because there are traces of the upper part of the types – with the text having later been completed manually, and identified by us as Variant I:



Another variation that is present in at least three counterfeit copies (Biblioteca da Ajuda, Banco de Portugal and Misericórdia do Fundão) is related with the deviaton of the title on folio v, verso, which is placed outside the print space of the text, as may be observed from the following picture, with such copies being grouped together under the category of Variant II.

Bibl. Ajuda, 50-XII-4

Banco de Portugal, F.F.14



Finally, if we consider the fact that there were over sixty Casas de Misericórdia dotted around the country and the overseas provinces during the reign of Dom Manuel I and that, between 1522 and 1580, almost another hundred were created,¹² we can understand the need to reprint the Compromisso, and even for handwritten copies to be produced of the first *Compromisso*, as we shall see later on.

¹² Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiae, José Pedro Paiva (ed.), vols. 3-4, Lisbon, União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2004-2005.

THE TYPOGRAPHICAL PRODUCT

The approach developed so far, as well as the pictures chosen, have demonstrated the most essential aspect of this typographical product, namely that we are faced here with two different printed versions because of the different typographical material used in their production, regardless of the fact that the name of the initial printers and the original date are both the same.

Since the original edition of *O compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, printed in Lisbon by Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos, in 1516, was already dealt with in our previous study, we will use the same abbreviated references as before, both for the original edition and for the counterfeit version.¹³

The research study that is currently in progress and which, from the very beginning, has been centred on the Portuguese typographical bibliography, based on a lengthy process of observing the different copies and their consequent digitisation, has so far made it possible to rediscover poorly classified or unknown typographical material. This whole set of studies has also benefited *O compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, with the addition of new data to the first approach that we made to the study of this work a decade ago.¹⁴

Original Edition
without the 12th Apostle, St. Philip



SCML, L.A. XVI, 114, [fl. 4r]

From the Workshop of VF »
Germão Galharde, of 11 Apostles » 12



Justiniano Lourenço, *Ho livro(...) da conuersaçam dos monges*, Coimbra, 1531, fl. 1v, BNP, Res. 166 A

¹³ Helga Maria Jüsten, *Incunábulo e Post-Incunábulo Portugueses*, (ca. 1488-1518), (Em Redor do Material Tipográfico dos Impressos Portugueses), Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Históricos, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009, henceforth referred to as Jüsten, together with the page number.

¹⁴ We draw attention to our article: "Algumas Achegas sobre o Material Tipográfico da Oficina de Germão Galharde e de sua Viúva (1519-1565)", published in issue No. 2 of the journal *Fragmenta Historica – História, Paleografia e Diplomática*, Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Históricos, in which we examine the question of the identification of the 12th Apostle who is missing from the original edition of *O compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, printed by Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos in 1516.

The rediscovery of an engraving, bringing the number of apostles once more to the correct total, i.e. 12, therefore serves to underline the fact that nothing is definitive in the area of the typographical bibliography, which is always subject to revisions, additions and corrections.

In this way, the invitation that was addressed to us by the Director of the Historical Archive of the SCML, Francisco d'Orey Manoel, to undertake a comparative study of the two editions, the original and the counterfeit versions, enables us to present a summary of this work about the typographical material used in the two printed editions.

With the aim of making a thorough investigation of the differences in the typographical material used in the two printed editions, the original and the counterfeit versions, we will begin by placing side by side the respective images of the engravings, the borders, the initials and the types used in the printing of these two works.

Next, and already centred only on the counterfeit version, we will present the images and the documents considered essential for the identification of the typographical material used, proposing a possible printer and a probable date for its printing.

COMPARISON OF THE TYPOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL
USED IN THE PRINTING

Engravings

SCML. L.A.XVI, 114, original edition	BPMP, X1-2-21[2], counterfeit version
	
	<p>flaw ↓</p> 

SCML. L.A.XVI, 114,
original edition



[fl. 2v]

BPMP, X1-2-21[2],
counterfeit version



[fl. 2v]














[fl. 4r] – [only 11 apostles]






[fl. 4r]

Borders

SCML. L.A.XVI, 1114, fl. 1r original edition			SCML, XVI, 1115, fl. 1r counterfeit version		
					
HMJ, T.50 A (137x13)	HMJ, T.50 B (247x13)	HMJ, T.50 C (137x13)	HMJ, Tp.1 (169x29)	HMJ, Tp.2 (66x13)	HMJ, Tp.5 (169x25)
					
		HMJ, T.50 D (249x13)	HMJ, Tp.3 (66x13)	HMJ, Tp.4 (66x13)	HMJ, Tp.6 (135x9)
					
					HMJ, Tp.7 (59x9)

HMJ = Helga Maria Jüsten

SCML. L.A.XVI, 114, fl. 2v original edition	SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v counterfeit version		
<p>in fl. 2v, the borders are identical: HMJ, T. 50 A-D</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 8 (135x22)</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 6 (135x9)</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 9 (74x9)</p>
	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 10 (135x23)</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 11 (75x8,5)</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 12 (135x8,5)</p>

SCML. L.A.XVI, 114, fl. 4r
original edition

SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r
counterfeit version

∅
no fl. 4r
there are no borders



HMJ, Tp. 13
(59x24)



HMJ, Tp. 14
(59x24)

Initials

Title/Incipit: *O compromisso da confraria de Misericordia*

Place of printing: Lisbon, Valentym fernandez and Harmam de campos

Year: 20.12.1516 – original edition

A



fl. 12r

E



fl. 4r

E



fl. 5r, 6r, 10v, 11r, 11v, 13r

I



fl. 13v

I



fl. 13v

I



fl. 14r

N



fl. 9r

O



fl. 8r, 9r, 9v, 10r

O



fl. 10r, 15v

P



fl. 6r, 16r, 16v

Reference number of digitised copy: SCML. L.A., XVI, 114 – Original Anselmo, n° Ø – does not refer to this edition; Jüsten, n° 35

Title/Incipit: *O compromisso da confraria da Misericordia*

Place of printing: [Lisbon, Valentym fernandez and Harmam de campos = Luís Rodrigues]

Year: [20.12.1516 = post 1543] – counterfeit version

A



fl. 12r

E



fl. 4r/5r

E



fl. 6r

E



fl. 10v/11r

E



fl. 11v

E



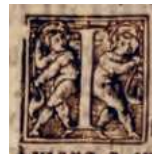
fl. 13r

I



fl. 13v

I



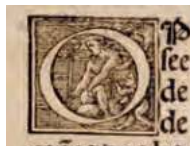
fl. 14r

N



fl. 9r

O



fl. 8r, 9v

O



fl. 9r, 10r, 15v

O



fl. 10r

P



fl. 6r, 16r

P



fl. 16v

Y (Usado como I)



fl. 13v

Reference number of digitised copy: BPMP, X1-2-21[2], counterfeit version
Anselmo, n° 559; Jüsten, n° X 35

Types












































Typographical material – Workshop of Valentim Fernandes / Hermão de Campos

Type: HMJ, VIII^c-18: 122 G [= 20 lines / 122 mm]

Title/Incipit: O compromisso da confraria de Misericordia

Place of printing: Lisbon; Valentim Fernandes and Harmam de campos

Year: 20.12.1516 – original edition

A	B	C	D	E
				
F	G	H	I	K/L
				
M	N	O	P	Q
				
M ₁ M ₂				
R	S	T	V	Y/Z
				
a	b	c	d	e
				
f	g	h	i/j	k/l
				
m	n	o	p	q
				
r	s	t	u/v	x/w/z
				
	s ₁ s ₂			
				
pilcrow	et-	abbreviation:	abbreviation:	abbreviation:
[marks the paragraph/ parts of the text]	abbreviation: e	em/en	om/on	que

Reference number of digitised copy: SCML, L.A., XVI, 114 – original edition

Anselmo, n° Ø – does not refer to this edition; Jüsten, n° 35

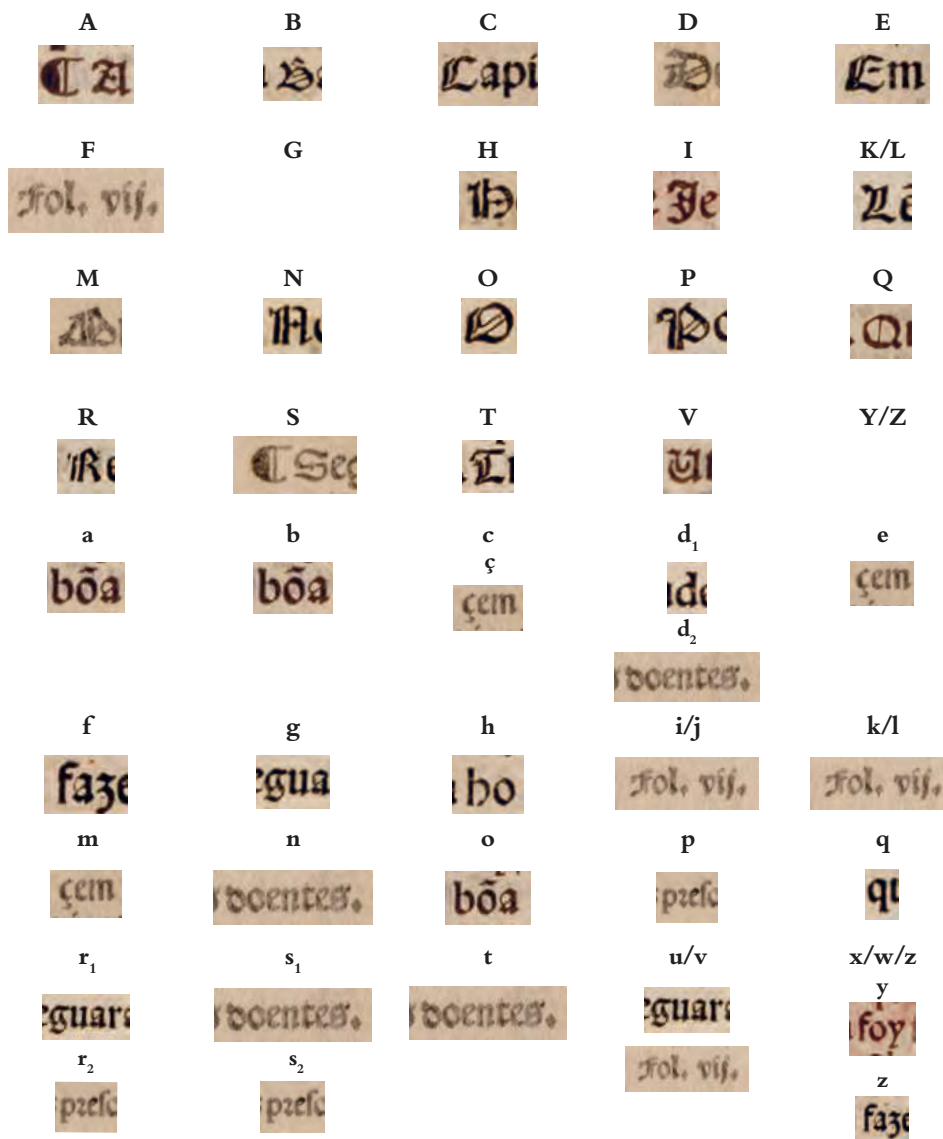
Typographical material

Type HMJ[III], LR: 106/108 G [= 20 lines / 106/108 mm]

Título/Incipit: *O compromisso Da confraria da Misericordia*

Place of printing: [Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos = Luís Rodrigues]

Year: [1516= post 1543] – counterfeit version






Reference number of digitised copy: BPMP, X1-2-21[2] – Counterfeit version
Anselmo, n° 559

With the documentary base that has been reproduced through images, we believe that we have convincingly demonstrated that the typographical material came from printers who were different from the ones that are repeated in the colophon of the counterfeit version. Once again, we refer back to our previous study, as well as to the pictures presented in it, to prove our statement that the typographical material of the counterfeit version was not to be found at the print works of Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos.¹⁵

The detailed study of the typographical material is normally accompanied by an analysis of the support used in the printing, in this case paper. As yet there is no research currently covering the watermarks used in the first Portuguese printed works, we have usefully resorted to the study by Ataíde e Melo. In fact, it must have been his knowledge of filigree watermarks that enabled him to make the claim mentioned earlier about Luís Rodrigues being the probable printer of the counterfeit edition of the 1516 *Compromisso*.

As we are well aware of the limitations of analyses of watermarks made against the light, which is the only form of observation *in situ* that is permitted and used in these cases, the fact remains that, nonetheless, this allows us to gauge the probable dates of printing. Ataíde e Melo's study presents the watermark of the "Jug" (or Ewer) with or without drawings on its bulge, and with or without crowns, situating it in the 1530s¹⁶. In fact, from this decade onwards, the supremacy of the variants of the "gloved hand" with a flower began to compete with the "ewer" in its various forms and there also appeared hands with crowns, as can be seen in the following reproductions.¹⁷ It can therefore be stated that the watermarks of the counterfeit edition are to be found in other editions printed at the workshops that were active in Lisbon in the late 1530s.

Luís Rodrigues, <i>De re medica</i> , 1540	Germão Galharde, <i>Capítulos de cortes</i> , 1539	Germão Galharde, <i>Constituições Arcebispado de Braga</i> , 1538
		

¹⁵ Helga Maria Jüsten, *Incunábulo e Post-Incunábulo Portugueses, (ca. 1488-1518)*, (*Em Redor do Material Tipográfico dos Impressos Portugueses*), Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Históricos, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009, p. 414 onwards.




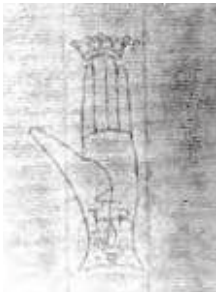

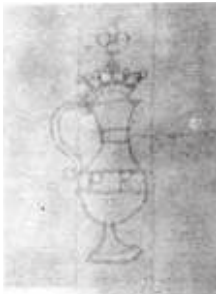
¹⁶ Arnaldo Faria de Ataíde e Melo, *O Papel como Elemento de Identificação*, Offprint from *Anais das Bibliotecas e Arquivos*, Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, 1926, No. 30.

¹⁷ The images are included in the book by Maria José Ferreira dos Santos, *Marcas de Água: séculos XIV-XIX. Coleção TECNICEIPA*, Santa Maria da Feira, Tecniceipa and Câmara Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira, 2015.

When engaged in the phase of restoring its copies, the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa made a record of the watermarks of the two copies – the original printed edition and the counterfeit version – whose images are presented below.

During the observation of the printed works (both the original edition and the counterfeit version), it was in fact possible to prove the existence of the watermarks reproduced, albeit with greater clarity on the last folio of the copy from the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Viseu. It should be stressed that the filling in of the print space does not always make it possible to detect the existing watermarks in full detail.

Watermarks

SCML. L.A.XVI, 114 Original	SCML. L.A.XVI, 115 Counterfeit version	SCML. L.A.XVI, 115
		
		
		

PROPOSAL FOR THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE COUNTERFEIT VERSION

In various approaches to the question of the provenance of the typographical material used in the counterfeit version of *O Compromisso da confraria de [da] Misericordia*, it is customary to find the name of the printer Germão Galharde, whose workshop was in operation between 1519 and 1565, being mentioned as the person responsible for printing the counterfeit edition.



His activity followed on from that of the earlier printers Valentim Fernandes, Hermão de Campos, and also José Pedro Bonhomini de Cremona, and, in this way, it is possible to observe what was, in fact, a common practice at that time. Namely the fact that Germão Galharde ended up in possession of all or part of the typographical material used by his predecessors, introducing his own variations to mark the innovative nature of his presence in the market. However, the recurrent references to the name of Germão Galharde as the person “responsible” for – or the owner of – the typographical material used in the counterfeit version of *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericordia* are based on an (extremely partial) use that was made of an engraving and of two initials, originating from his predecessors and which were, in fact, passed on to the workshop of the French printer.

Another justification for the attribution of the counterfeit version to the workshop of Germão Galharde has to do with the fact that there is quite frequently some confusion made between two such different criteria as “similar” and “identical” when appreciating the typographical material used in the early days of the printing press and throughout the sixteenth century. While, in the past, with the deficient methods that existed for the reproduction of images and the corresponding difficulty in gaining access to trustworthy copies, there was some justification for a certain lack of objectivity in the appreciation of the typographical material used at the various print works in activity in a particular country or city, such an impediment has now been overcome through the possibility of digitising and comparing images. Thus, by placing the images of the printed editions side by side, we must conclude that, in fact, the counterfeit edition of *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericordia* mainly used material that did not originate from the workshop of Germão Galharde, although there are some borders that are identical and others that are merely similar.

After this, we embarked upon a comparison of the printed versions in order to be able to put forward a proposal for the attribution of the counterfeit edition of *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericordia*. For this purpose, we broadened the scope of our observation to include the printed editions signed between 1539 and 1549 by Luís Rodrigues, in view of the fact that he used, above all, text types in the Gothic, southern rotunda style, which were similar to those to be found at Germão Galharde’s print works. What therefore remains for us to do is to elaborate a proposal for the attribution of the counterfeit edition, based on the comprehensive documentary evidence that has been collected and which can be considered conclusive for another hypothesis for the printing of *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericordia*.

The comparison of the typographical material begins with the observation of the borders:

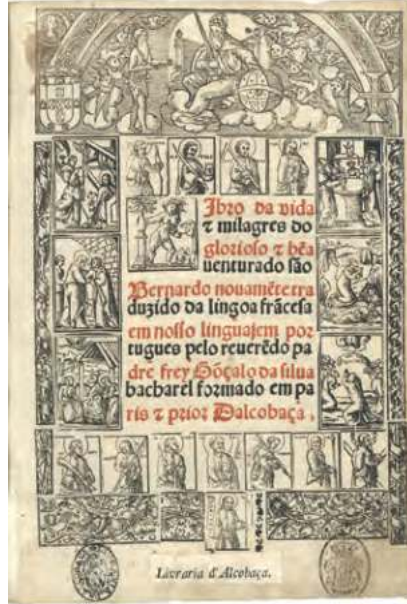
Borders

Copy of the counterfeit version	Typographical material of the printers who were active between 1519 and 1565		
 <p>HMJ, Tp. 7 (59x9 mm) SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 1r</p>	 <p><i>Libro verdad fe</i>, Lx., Luís Rodrigues, 1543; fl. 3r</p>	 <p><i>Norte Confessores</i>, Frontispiece, Lx. Luís Rodrigues, 1546</p>	 <p>similar, but not identical: <i>Contemptus mundi</i>, Lisbon, Germão Galharde, 1542; BGUC, R-6-10</p>
 <p>HMJ, Tp. 6 (135x9mm) SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v</p>	 <p><i>Fiameta</i>, Lx., L. Rodrigues, 1541</p>		

Copy of the counterfeit version	Typographical material of the printers who were active between 1519 and 1565		
 <p>→ HMJ, Tp. 9 (74x9 mm) SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v</p>	 <p><i>Libro verdad fe</i>, Lx., Luís Rodrigues, 1543; fl. 19v (inverted)</p>		
 <p>→ HMJ, Tp. 11 (75x8,5 mm) SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v</p>	 <p>worn in the upper part; HMJ [II], T. 181; <i>Contemptus mundi</i>, Lx. Germão Galharde, 1542; BGUC, R-6-10</p>		

Copy of the
counterfeit version

Typographical material of the printers who
were active between 1519 and 1565



HMJ, Tp. 12
(135x8,5 mm)
SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v

Libro verdad fé, Lx.,
Luís Rodrigues, 1543

Vida S. Bernardo, Lx., L. Rodrigues,
1544, frontispiece



HMJ, Tp. 8
SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v; [135x22 mm]; counterfeit version



Libro verdad fé, Lx., Luís Rodrigues, 1543, fl. Aiiijr
[ex. ULFL, 241, purl.pt. 14304]



HMJ, Tp. 10
SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 2v; [135x23 mm]; counterfeit version



Libro verdad fe, Lx., Luís Rodrigues, 1543, fol. Vr.
[ex. ULFL, 241, purl.pt. 14304]



HMJ, Tp. 13
SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r; [59x24 mm];
counterfeit version

Ø



HMJ, Tp. 14
SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r; [59x24 mm];
counterfeit version




Libro verdad fe, Lx., Luís Rodrigues, 1543, fol. cxxxij, r
[ex. ULFL, 241, purl.pt. 14304]

The similarity has quite frequently been pointed out between some borders originating from the printer Tory, referred to as using the motifs of “flowers and insects”, and the material used by Germão Galharde from 1539 onwards.

However, as can be seen from the reproduction that we have made, these are nothing more than merely similar, and are therefore not identical, a confusion that is easily explained by the profusion of Tory borders that were used, above all, by the printer Luís Rodrigues, who acquired this typographical material in France and then made it available to other printers, and also, of course, to Germão Galharde.¹⁸

Borders G. Tory

No borders were used at Germão Galharde's print works	Counterfeit version <i>Compromisso</i>		
≠	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 1 SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 1r; [169x29 mm] Tarja « Tory, fl. b_or [=d_or]</p>		
≠	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 5 SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 1r; [169x25 mm] Tarja « Tory</p>		
	 <p><i>Regimento Contadores</i>, Lx., L. Rodrigues, 1539 [Tribunal de Contas, LA 004, ass. b, recto]</p>		
≠	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 2 SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 1r; [66x13 mm] « Tory, fl. a_ort</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 3 SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 1r; [65x13 mm] Tarja » L. Andreae Resendii, Lx., L. Rodrigues, 1540</p>	 <p>HMJ, Tp. 4 SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 1r; [67x13 mm] « Tory, fl. a_or » <i>Arte da Guerra</i>, Coimbra, J. Álvares, 1555</p>

¹⁸ Artur Anselmo, "O Livreiro Luís Rodrigues, Impressor de Textos Humanísticos", in *Estudos de História do Livro*, Lisbon, Guimaraes Editores, 1997, pp. 77-85.



Hore in laudem (...), Paris, Simon du bois, [1527]
BNP, Res. 1298; purl.pt. 24271


HMJ, Tp.4



L. Andreae Resendii, Lx.,
L. Rodrigues, 1540

Just as is documented regarding the provenance of the borders found in *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericordia*, which were mostly used in printed editions signed by Luís Rodrigues, so there was similarly only a minimal use made of engravings originating from Germão Galharde's print works, as can be seen in the following images.

Engravings

Copy of the counterfeit version	Typographical material of the printers who were active between 1519 and 1565	
 <p> HMJ, Gp. 1 [32x22mm] SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r » </p>	 <p> HMJ[II], G. 527; <i>Cartilha, Lx.</i>, Germão Galharde, [1537?] BPE, Res. 300-A </p>	
 <p> HMJ, Gp. 2 [32x22 mm] SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r </p>	 <p> <i>Grammatica</i>, L. Rodrigues, 1539 fl. 11r; 23v – engraving Salve Regina </p>	 <p> <i>Breviarium Eborensis, Lx.</i>, L. Rodrigues, 1548 </p>
		 <p> <i>Brev. Bracharensis</i>, Braga, J. Barreira. J. Álvares. 1549 </p>

Counterfeit version:
 SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r
 [in the engravings, the T = 4 points*]

Grammatica, Lx., L. Rodrigues, 1539:
 [» *Vida de S. Bernardo, Lx., Luis Rodrigues, 1544*] Engravings [32x22 mm]



HMJ, Gp. 3
 [IUA NES] = chalice



HMJ, Gp. 4
 [PE TRUS] = key



HMJ, Gp. 5
 [AN DREAS] = saltire cross



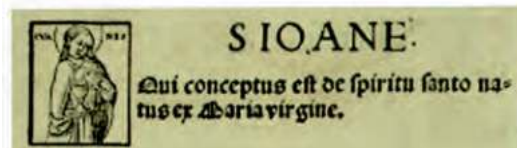
HMJ, Gp. 6 [IA COBUS] =
 objects of pilgrimage/gourd



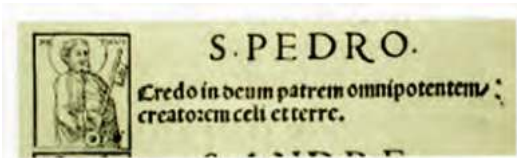
HMJ, Gp. 7
 [IACO MINOR] = club



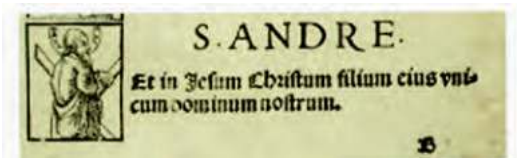
HMJ, Gp. 8
 [BAR TOLO] = knife



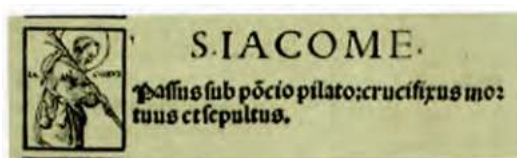
fl. 9v



fl. 9r



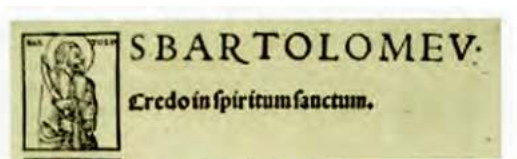
fl. 9r



fl. 9v



fl. 9v



fl. 9v

counterfeit version:

SCML, XVI, 115, fl. 4r
[nas gravuras, o T = 4 pontos*]

Grammatica, Lx., L. Rodrigues, 1539:

[»Vida de S. Bernardo, Lx., Luís Rodrigues, 1544] Gravuras [32x22 mm]



HMJ, Gp. 9
[SI MON] = saw



HMJ, Gp. 10
[MA TIAS] = halberd



HMJ, Gp. 11
[IU DAS] = club



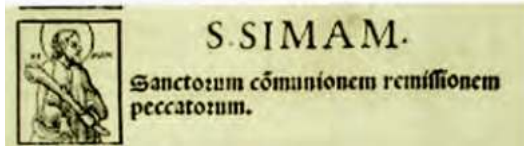
HMJ, Gp. 12
[MATE US] = sword



HMJ, Gp. 13
[FELI PUS] = T-shaped cross



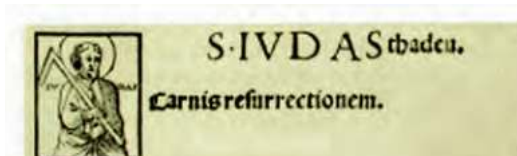
HMJ, Gp. 14
[TOM AS] = lance



fl. 10r



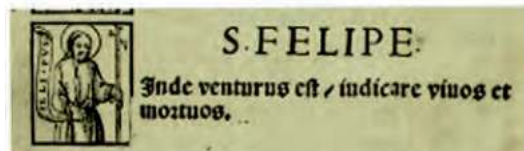
fl. 10r



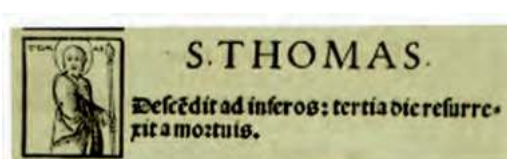
fl. 10r



fl. 10r



fl. 9v



fl. 9v

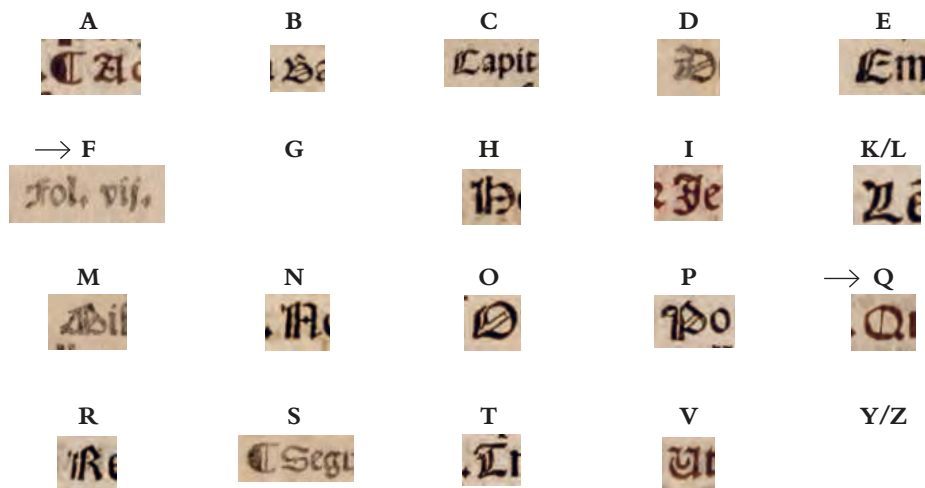
*symbols of the Apostles, cf. Otto Wimmer, *Kennzeichen und Attribute der Heiligen*, Innsbruck-Wien, Tyrolia-Verlag, 1983.

Comparison of the text types

Title/Incipit: *O compromisso Da confraria da Misericordia*

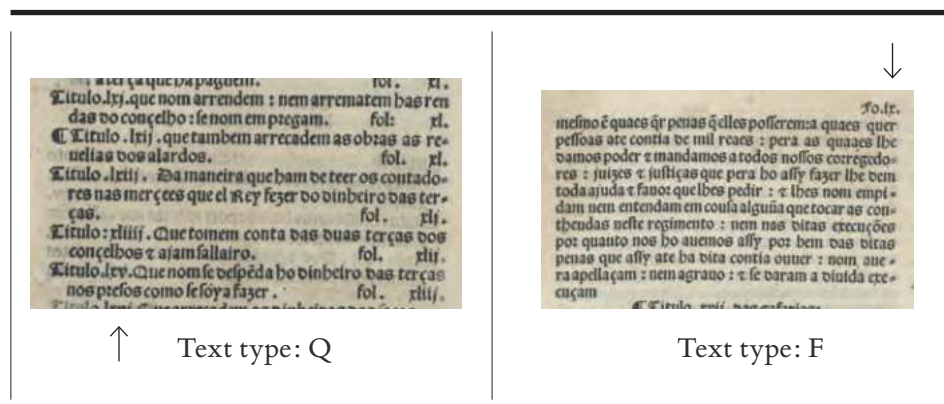
Place of printing: [Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos = Luís Rodrigues]

Year: [1516; = after 1543] – Text type of the counterfeit version




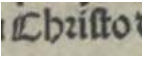


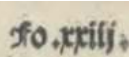
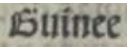



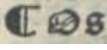





Reference number of digitised copy: BPMP, XI-2-21[2] – counterfeit version
Anselmo, n° 559

Regimento dos Contadores, Luís Rodrigues, 1539











Attention is drawn to the same design, namely of the letters F and Q, when compared to the counterfeit version of the *Compromisso* and the text types used by Luís Rodrigues, in 1539, for the printing of the *Regimento dos Contadores* (Auditors' Regulations).













Text type – *Regimento dos Contadores*, Luís Rodrigues, 1539

Comparison of Initials

Counterfeit version SCML, XVI, 115	Luís Rodrigues	
A		
 fol. 12r; [20x20 mm]	 A. Lodouici, <i>De occultis</i> , 1540	 A. Resende, 1540
E		
 fol. 4 e 5, recto; [29x28 mm]	 <i>Repetitio</i> , 1539	 <i>Panagyrica</i> , 1539
 fol. 6, recto [30x29 mm]	 A. Lodouici, <i>De occultis</i> , 1540. BNR, Res. 2988.2.V, fol. 52r	

Counterfeit version SCML, XVI, 115	Luís Rodrigues	
 <p>fol. 10v/11r; [22x21 mm]</p>	 <p><i>Fiameta</i>, 1541</p>	
 <p>fol. 11v; [20x20 mm]</p>	 <p><i>Regimento Contadores</i>, 1539</p>	 <p><i>Fiameta</i>, 1541</p>
 <p>fol. 13r; [22x21 mm]</p>	 <p><i>Preceitos morais</i>, 1540</p>	
I		
 <p>fol. 13v; [30x30 mm] Y [usado como I]</p>	 <p><i>Lucano</i>, 1541</p>	 <p><i>Historia Iglesia</i>, 1541</p>
 <p>fol. 13v; [29x29 mm]</p>	 <p>A. Lodouici, <i>De occultis</i>, 1540</p>	
 <p>fl. 14r</p>		

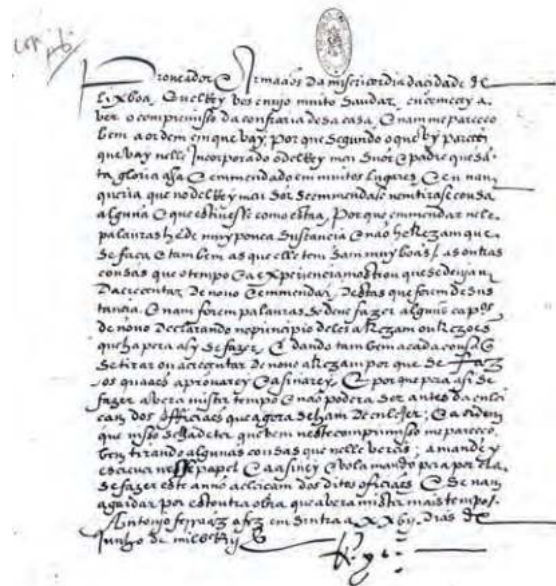
Counterfeit version SCML, XVI, 115	Luís Rodrigues	
N		
 <p>fol. 9r; [20x20 mm]</p>		
O		
 <p>fol. 8r, 9v; [20x23 mm]</p>	 <p>G. Coelli, 1540</p>	
 <p>fol. 9r, 10r, 15v; [28x28 mm]</p>	 <p>A. Lodouici, <i>De occultis</i>, 1540</p>	 <p><i>Lyuro obras Garcia Resende</i>, 1545</p>
 <p>fol. 10r; [31x31 mm]</p>	 <p>Petri Nonii Salaciensis, 1542</p>	
 <p>fol. 6r, 16r [27x28 mm]</p>	 <p><i>Ho preste</i>, 1540</p>	
 <p>fol. 16v [32x31 mm]</p>	 <p><i>Passionarium</i>, 1543</p>	

As is believed to have been demonstrated with the presentation of the documentary corpus, there was a series of proposals for its attribution, beginning with Ataíde e Melo in 1925, Francisco G. da Cunha Leão and João José Alves Dias in 1995¹⁹, which indicated the path and guided this present review of the subject.

Walking along “hidden paths” and following the maxim of not being in a hurry to obtain bibliographical results, we have assumed that the counterfeit version of *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericórdia* was made with typographical material used by Luís Rodrigues, as is proved by the provenance of the engravings, borders, initials and text types of editions signed with his seal.

Since the typographical material belonged to Luís Rodrigues, who began his activity as a printer in 1539, the use of engravings, borders, initials and text types dated from that time onwards, with the most frequent use, however, being found in the year 1543. Consequently, the dating of the counterfeit version still needs to be established with precision. The review of the subject of the dating of *O Compromisso da confraria da Misericórdia* would be incomplete without the precious help of History, which, based on the available documents, frequently provides the proof that we were missing when drawing up our hypotheses.

In fact, let us first examine the document:



Sintra, 1543, June, 27

Charter, issued in the name of the king, establishing that no amendments should be made to the text of the original *Compromisso da Misericórdia*, which was to be maintained in its initial form, and establishing that all alterations of its substance and not of its words, when necessary, should be justified in separate chapters. Lisbon: A.N.T.T., Corpo Cronológico, Parte 1.ª, maço 73, doc. 109 [PT-TT-CC-1-73-109] – Charter, Sintra, 1543, June, 27, Lisbon

¹⁹ No *Quinto Centenário da Vita Christi*, Lisbon, Instituto da Biblioteca Nacional e do Livro, 1995.

And let us follow the transcription closely:

Proueador e Irmaãos da misericordia da çidade de Lixboa,
Eu el Rey vos enujo muito Saudar,
eu comecey a ver o compremisso da confraria desa casa, e nam me pareço bem a ordem em que vay, por que segundo o que vy parece que vay nelle Incorporado o del Rey meu Senhor e padre que santa gloria aIa e emmendado em muitos lugares, e eu nam queria que no del Rey meu Senhor Se emmendase nem tirase cousa alguña e que estiuesse como estaa, Porque emmendar nele palauras hé de muy pouca sustança e não he Rezam que se faça e tambem as que elle tem sam muy boas,.
as outras cousas que o tempo e a experiencia mostrou que se deujam d acreçentar de nouo e emmendar, destas que forem de sustança, e nam forem palauras se deue fazer alguñs capitulos de nouo declarando no principio deles a Rezam ou Rezões que ha pera asy se fazer, e dando tambem a cada cousa que se tirar ou acreçentar de nouo a Rezam por que se faz , os quaães aprouarey e asinarey,
E porque pera asi se fazer avera mister tempo e não podera ser antes da enleçam dos offiçiaes que agora se ham de enleIer;
e a ordem que nisso se ha de ter que vem neste comprimisso me pareço bem tirando alguñas cousas que nelle vereis; a mandey escreuer nesse²⁰ papel e aasiney e vola mando pera por ela se fazer este año a eleiçam dos ditos ofiçiaes e Se nam agardar por est outra obra que avera mister mais tempo,.
Antonjo ferraaz a fez em Sintra a xxbij . dias de Iunho de mil b^c Riiij [= 1543] •

a) Rey

pera o proueador e Irmaãos da miserycordia da çidade de lixboa,..

Provost and brothers of the Misericórdia of the city of Lisbon:

I, the King, send you my greetings. I began to look at the Compromisso of the brotherhood of this House and the order in which it is arranged did not seem to me the best one, because, according to what I could see, it seems to have incorporated into it the document of my lord and father the King, may he rest in glory, emended in many places; and I do not wish that anything should be emended or removed from this document of my lord the King, and that it should remain as it is, because emending in it words is of very little substance and there is no reason for doing so, and also because the words that it has are very good. As regards the other things that it is wished should be newly added and emended, of those that are of substance and not merely words, some chapters should be made anew, stating at the beginning thereof the reason or reasons that exist for so doing and giving also, for each thing that is removed or newly added, the reason why this is done, which I will approve and sign. And because, in order to do so, time will be needed, and because this cannot take place before the election of the officers that are now to be elected; and the order that will be needed in this matter, which is in this Compromisso, seemed good to me, except for some things that you will see therein. I ordered this to be written on this document that I have signed and that I send to you so that you can proceed this year to the election of the said officers and not have to wait for this other work, which will need more

²⁰ Palavra emendada; primeiro escreveu «neste».

*time. – António Ferraz made it, in Sintra, on the twenty-seventh day of June, 1543.
signed The King
for the provost and brothers of the Misericórdia of the city of Lisbon.*

It was therefore this document written by the king, Dom João III, that was required to justify the printing of a counterfeit version, as from this date of 1543, and which, as was stated above, maintains the essential wording of the original edition of *O Compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*, thus fulfilling the king's wishes that “[no]thing should be emended or removed [...] and that it should remain as it is”.

Both these wishes of the king and the fact that, at least since 1536,²¹ there are no printed copies of the original *Compromisso* of 1516, may lead us to formulate the hypothesis that the king Dom João III commissioned a new printing of the document.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PRODUCT

Having begun with the initial bibliographical control and then embarked upon a long (real and mental) path, we may therefore return to our initial typographical bibliography, with the due corrections.

Typographical bibliography n°: 35*²²

[G4 – Workshop IV, 4 – Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos, 2]

Header

- a) Author Responsible: Santa Casa de Misericórdia, Lisboa
- b) Abbreviated title: *O compromisso / da confraria de / Misericórdia*.

Footer

- c) Place: Lisbon
- d) Printers: Valentim fernandez and Hermam de campos
- e) Date: Aos .xx. dias do mes de dezembro. Anno de mil e quinhentos e.xvj.
(20 December, 1541)

Technical notes

f) Format: 2nd

h) Collation

Signature: [] 2 a-c6; 20 fl.

Numbering of folios: [2] j – xvij [1]

²¹ We wish to thank Professor João José Alves Dias for the most valuable pointer that he gave us about the existence of a manuscript copy of the 1516 *Compromisso*, with a royal privilege, made in 1536 for the Misericórdia of Caminha, and currently housed in Viana de Castelo. This copy was consulted in May 2016, through: [http://digitarq.advct.arquivos.pt/viewer?id=1064949].

²² Helga Maria Jüsten, *Incunábulo e Post-Incunábulo Portugueses, (ca. 1488-1518)*, (*Em Redor do Material Tipográfico dos Impressos Portugueses*), Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009, pp. 255-261.

Directory

- *SCMAbrantes
- *SCMLisboa, SCML, L.A.XVI, 114
- *BPBraga, Res. 705 V
- *SCMBeja
- *SCMCabeço de Vide
- *SCMChaves
- *SCMEvoramonte
- *SCMMontemor-o-Novo
- *SCMViseu

[GB – Cambridge, UL, Classmark, 9745^a.1. = cópia do exemplar de Evoramonte]

USA – Harvard, Houghton Library, Typ 535.16.525F

[Typographical bibliography n^o: 35]*

[X – Counterfeit version]

Header

- a) Author Responsible: Santa Casa de Misericórdia, Lisboa
- b) Abbreviated title: *O compromisso da confraria da Misericórdia*

Footer

- c) Place: [Lisboa]
- d) Printers: [Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos = i.e. Luís Rodrigues]
- e) Date: [20 December 1516= i.e. post.1543]

Technical notes

f) Format: 2nd

h) Collation :

Signature: A⁸, b-c⁶; 20 fl.

Numbering of folios: [2], xvij [1]

Directory

- *Library of Ajuda, 50-XII-4
- *Library of Banco de Portugal, F.F.-14
- # Library of Catalonia, Res. 143-5; [digital copy: Google Books]+
- *Porto Municipal Public Library, XI-2-21[2]
- *SCM Alcobça
- *SCM Fundão
- *SCM Lisboa. SCML. L.A. XVI, 115
- *Private collection of Dr. Francisco Gil Meneses
- * Copy sold at the auction of P. Azevedo, Lisbon, November 20¹³

CONCLUSION

This present work would be incomplete without the inclusion of small histories, as is the case with the copy of the *Compromisso* of the Santa Casa in Abrantes, which, although it is mentioned in the study of A. da Cunha in 1925, seems to have vanished into thin air until the year 2004, when it was sent to the Head of the Santa Casa, coming from Figueira da Foz, and thus returning to its legitimate home.

Nor can we omit to express our gratitude and recognition to the Santas Casas that were visited, recalling the kind and warm welcome afforded by the Heads of these institutions, the Directors of the Historical Archives, and all those who received us during our journey around the country.

Finally, we have left to the very end our contemplations about the country that once again we were able to get to know in the course of a journey of almost 3,000 kilometres. Our research provided us with a number of supplementary teachings, enriching with the warmth of human contact a historical purpose that does not seem to have any life, but which continues to transmit the soul with which it was produced.

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- Braga: Braga Public Library,
- Beja: Archives of S. C. M. Beja,
- Cabeço de Vide: Archives of S. C. M. Cabeço de Vide,
- Chaves: Archives of S. C. M. Chaves,
- Evoramonte: Archives of S. C. M. Evoramonte,
- Lisboa: Archives of S. C. M. Lisboa (copy from Aveiro),
- Montemor-o-Novo: Archives of S. C. M. Montemor-o-Novo,
- Viseu: Archives of S. C. M. Viseu.

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Some contributions
towards a comparative
study of the *Compromissos*
of the “Confraternity of the
Misericórdia”: the first half
of the sixteenth century

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Olivuccio di Ciccarello

Opere di Misericordia: Seppellire i morti, 1404. Detail.

Pinacoteca Vaticana

(No. 20 in this catalogue)

It should be noted that the cult of Our Lady of the Cloak (Our Lady of Mercy) was already widely disseminated in the early fifteenth century, as can be seen in the pennon represented in this painting.

Among the extremely valuable archival and bibliographical heritage of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (SCML), pride of place is enjoyed by the first printed edition of the *Compromisso* (or “Statutes”, as this document would now be called in contemporary parlance).

The *Compromisso* is considered to be among the most significant documents kept at the Historical Archive of the SCML, not only because of its rarity, its great heritage value and highly decorative appearance, but also, and above all, because of its symbolic value as a fundamental text establishing the activities to be performed by an institution that already boasts 519 years of uninterrupted activity. Such works, guided by the centuries-old mission of doing good and doing it well, were set out in a most striking fashion in the *Compromisso*, printed for the first time in the now distant year of 1516.

Having withstood the ravages of time and human action, this document stands as a Monument, forever reminding us of the values of helping our neighbour, compassion, charity and forgiveness – the cornerstones of the fourteen works of mercy, which have always guided and will continue to guide the activities of the Santa Casa.

Thus, in order to commemorate the fifth centenary of the printing of the *Compromisso* that was adopted by all the Confraternities of the Misericórdia, we must first highlight the importance of this historical testimony, thereby promoting studies that can enrich our knowledge about this document, which, because of its specific and versatile nature, allows for different, and certainly rewarding, approaches.

With this aim in mind, we seek here to present a small contribution that should be regarded mainly as a starting point for further study, and never as a complete and finished work.

THE STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE MISERICÓRDIA IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The Confraternity of the Misericórdia de Lisboa was founded by Queen Leonor¹, the sister of King Manuel I, and widow of King João II, with the clear intention of mobilising the lay population to engage in religious practices and acts of Christian charity in the Portuguese society of the sixteenth century². Its members were obliged to fulfil the fourteen works of mercy, whenever it was possible for them to do so.

¹ For a synthesis of the influences and antecedents linked to the creation of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia de Lisboa, see, in particular, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa – *Da descoberta da Misericórdia à fundação das Misericórdias (1498-1525)*. Porto: Granito, Editores e Livreiros, 1999, pp. 156-174. We should also like to stress that both the cult and the practice of the works of mercy were disseminated throughout the whole of the medieval western world, frequently being associated with pennons of Our Lady of the Cloak (Our Lady of Mercy), as is clearly shown in the painting by Olivuccio di Ciccarello, entitled *Opere di Misericórdia* (No. 20 in this catalogue), where members of the confraternity can be seen burying a dead person, with one of them transporting the pennon with the image of the Virgin Mary protecting the people under her cloak.

² Cf. *Idem, ibidem*, pp. 144-145 and *passim*.

p¹

Irmãos Nobres que foram aceitos
em Junta Grande de 22 de Março
de 1807.

Jacinto Tommas da Costa Bandeira — 20
 D.^o Pedro de Souza Holstein — — — 23
 O B.^o Alexandre de Gusmão
 Sobr.^o — — — Escuzado
 Francisco Joze Gonçalves Escuzado
 Joao Evangelista de Souza
 Jorge — — — Escuzado
 Joze e Manoel Correa — Escuzado
 O Capp.^o Luiz Joze Sinot
 de Cordes — — — Escuzado

Marquês de Marialva D. Fernando de Lima
 Marquês de Penela D. Antonio Thomaz da Costa Almeida
 Conde de Almadaff Marquês de Abrantes O. Joze

Mons.^o Lou.^o Joaquim de Salo. Albuquerque
 Mons.^o D. Encarnação Joze de Vici
 Fran.^o de S. Paulo Maria Jose da Silva
 M.^o Antonio de S. Paulo Joze de S. Paulo
 Paulo J. de S. Paulo

Antonio de S. Paulo
 Antonio de S. Paulo

Terms of acceptance of the members of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
 book 1, folio 1, 1 (listing those of the nobles), 1756-1795
 Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa,
 (reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/IRM/02/001).

Irmaos Officiaes que foram aceitos
em Junta Grande de 22 de Março
de 1807

Joze Herculano da Cunha Ma- tre Curives do Ouro com loja no seu arruaal Freguezia de S. Ju- liao	23
Joze Vasques Martins do Officio de Marceneiro	Escuzado
Joze Anastacio d'Oliveira Pinto do Officio de Selloiro	24
Henrique Luiz Pereira Mestre d'Obras do Officio de Carpinteiro	47
Vicente Ferreira dos Santos Mestre Entalhador	49
Candido Joze de Menes do Officio de Curives do Ouro	13
Mattias Joze da S. Pe- reira do Officio de Car- pinteiro e Mestre d'Obras	Escuzado
Joaquim Maria Coelho Compozitor de letras	Escuzado
Manoel Luiz Piconi- ques Abridor da Impres- saõ Regia	Escuzado

Terms of acceptance of the members of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
book 1, folio 31 (listing those of the artisan officers), 1756-1795.
Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa,
(reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/IRM/02/001).

The original *Compromisso* disappeared, probably being destroyed in the 1755 earthquake and the fire that followed it, which razed the Confraternity's Manueline headquarters and its archives to the ground. At the Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, we have nonetheless managed to preserve a manuscript copy dating from 1502³, the two printed copies from the sixteenth century (the original⁴ and the counterfeit version⁵), as well as the illuminated manuscript version dated 1520⁶.

The text of the *Compromisso* established the structure of this institution based on a confraternity that included one hundred “*homens bons*” (good men)⁷. On the day of the feast of Our Lady of the Visitation (2 July), the confraternity elected its head or Provost, who was to be a man of noble and honourable origin, and twelve officers, whose task was to ensure that the activities established in this text were carried out. Of these twelve officers, six were nobles, and six were “*mecânicos*” (artisans). A noble officer and another officer who was a *mecânico* were appointed as the *mordomo de fora* (the “steward from outside”, whose job it was to deal with the legal processes of the prisoners, as well as with the purchases that were necessary for the full operation of the Confraternity) and the *mordomo da capela* (the “chapel steward”, who was always to be at the chapel, in order to undertake the duties related with the support needed for religious worship, as well as to provide spiritual help), both of which actions were particularly demanding. Thus, due to this highly intense work, their election took place on a monthly basis.

In the *Compromisso* printed in 1516, the process established for this annual election was based on indirect suffrage, with a fairly complex system when compared with the one that was established in the other sixteenth-century *Compromissos*, and with the following distribution in terms of posts and functions:

- two *conselheiros* (elected officials of the board of guardians) to visit the hospitals and the “sick poor” of the city;
- two *conselheiros* who were also responsible for visiting the sick poor, whom they accompanied spiritually, especially when these were about to die;
- two *conselheiros* to visit the imprisoned poor⁸;

³ It is said that this copy was brought from Barcelona to Portugal, and later purchased at the Livraria Histórica Ultramarina by the Misericórdia of Lisbon, in 1961.

⁴ This document was purchased by the Misericórdia of Lisbon in 1913, for the sum of 45 escudos (2nd deliberation of the meeting of the Board of the Santa Casa, on 18 February of the same year). As was recorded by Vítor Ribeiro, the archivist of the Misericórdia, this copy was sold by Marques Gomes, from the city of Aveiro (see the manuscript folder, file “Compromisso da Misericórdia”).

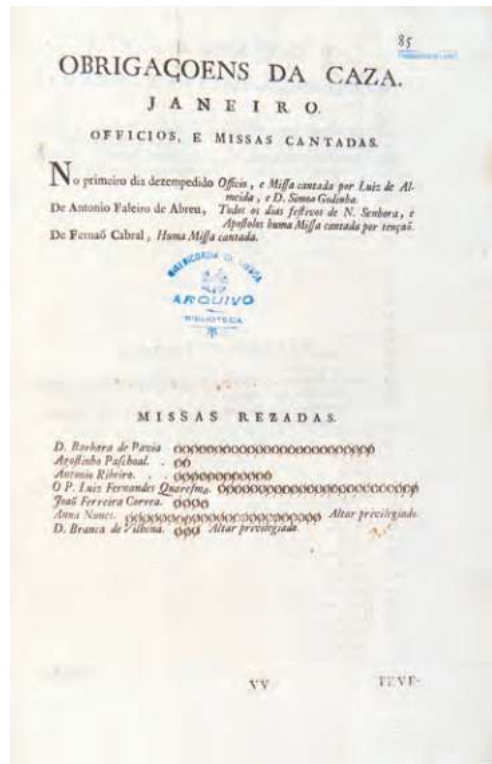
⁵ This book had been subjected to a great deal of use over time, and, as it had no binding, various fragments were lost, as well as folios 1, 4, 7 and 12. It was restored in 1992.

⁶ This document was purchased at an auction by the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa in 1879, having previously belonged to the bookshop of the Counts of Castelo Melhor. The price paid was 27,560 réis, as stated in the minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Misericórdia of Lisbon, on 4 March of that same year.

⁷ Notwithstanding the regulations set out in the *Compromisso*, regarding the structure and organisation of the Confraternity, some imbalances were noted, which resulted, for example, in the failure to establish precise rules for the admission, departure and recruitment of members. In the case of those aspects that were not covered by the text of the regulations, the prevailing tendency was clearly to follow the procedures that had been established through customary practices.

⁸ Besides the spiritual aspect and the granting of alms, the visits to prisoners and to the “sick poor” had a component that involved providing medical aid and assistance, through the presence of a physician, whenever necessary, in order to treat corporal ailments.

Livro das capelas da Misericórdia de Lisboa
 (Book of the Chapels of the Misericórdia of Lisbon)
 no. 1, folios 85 and 88, 1756. Historical Archive
 of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa,
 (reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/
 IG/MS/03/001)



- one *conselheiro*, accompanied by the scribe, to visit the *envergonhados* (the “ashamed” poor, people who had unfortunately fallen upon hard times);
- two *conselheiros*, who collected the alms delivered to the Confraternity;
- two *conselheiros*, one to serve as the *mordomo de fora* and another to serve as the *mordomo da capela*.

The Confraternity also had a literate chaplain, who, on certain days, celebrated a sung mass, together with a sermon.

Each month, the officers of the Confraternity appointed three of its members, or other people, in each parish, who were given the task of collecting the bread for the poor that were supported by the Confraternity.

All of the members of the Confraternity assembled on All Saints’ Day (1 November), joining together in a procession, in which they would collect and bury the bones of those who had been executed. The task of burying the bodies of those sentenced to death was also an important aspect of the work performed by the members of the Misericórdia, who kept their own register of these burials.

The members also met every Maundy Thursday, to participate in the important procession of the penitents⁹.

Besides the actions that have already been described, the *Compromisso* indicated another way of disseminating the works of mercy, which consisted of promoting “friendships”, in order to reconcile people who were in dispute with one another. This action was recorded in a book signed by the Provost and four witnesses “so that the parties that had forgiven one another could not later deny their actions, because the enemy of the cross always strives to hinder all good deeds so that the Christian faithful cannot save them”.

Each member took part in the activities of this confraternity without any type of monetary reward, expecting only spiritual recompense, namely that the other members would pray for their soul, or that of their wife, when they left the earth. Besides this aspect, participation in this confraternity afforded significant prestige to each of its members in the social milieu in which they lived.

Due to the demanding tasks that they performed at the Misericórdia, the Provost and Officers were exempt from certain obligations, and the Confraternity had a series of privileges, namely:

- exemption from the residence tax;
- exemption from municipal and lodging taxes;
- priority in the purchase of meat for feeding the prisoners and sick people under the responsibility of the Confraternity, establishing fines for those who did not comply with this ruling, the revenue from which was used for the benefit of the prisoners supported by the Misericórdia;

⁹ For a detailed description of the objects linked to processional practices, among others that are also mentioned in the *Compromisso*, see Francisco d’Orey Manoel – *Visita a 516 anos por boas causas*. In Maria Margarida Montenegro, (general coordinator) – *Visitação. O Arquivo: Memória e Promessa*. Lisbon: Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, 2014, pp. 135-141.

1

Exm. Sra.

Dei Manoel Félix Távora, mestre sapateiro morador
eãoz desta Santa Casa de Misericórdia de S. Roque, das contas que esta Santa Casa tem
suma de seis mil e trezentos e noventa e sete réis e quarenta e quatro dinheiros e seis
quintaes e seis grãos de Comprimido, para que

A Exm. Sra. Payador e mais
contas e hancoria e demoras e sumas e contas
mas como Et. Estillo

Declaro e suplico, ser natural desta cid. de Lisboa. Não legítimo de António de S. Pedro
e irmão de S. Pedro, desta Santa Casa de Misericórdia de S. Roque. Não legítimo de António de S. Pedro
e irmão de S. Pedro, desta Santa Casa de Misericórdia de S. Roque. Não legítimo de António de S. Pedro
e irmão de S. Pedro, desta Santa Casa de Misericórdia de S. Roque.

Manoel Félix Távora

Applications for admission to the Confraternity

1757-1767 Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa,
(reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/IRM/05/001/001)

Petition of Manuel Félix de Távora, a master shoemaker, applying for
admission as a member and officer of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.

- delivery of four fifths of the contraband of textiles and other goods apprehended, to cover the institution's expenses;
- free access to visit and treat the prisoners for whom the Misericórdia was responsible, gathering all the necessary information about the needs of these people;
- greater speed in the resolution of legal processes and in the fulfilment of the respective sentences of the prisoners supported by the Confraternity, namely those sentenced to exile;
- priority in legal hearings for the attorneys dealing with the cases of the prisoners supported by the Misericórdia;
- burial of the bodies of the hanged persons sentenced to perpetual exposure on the gallows of Santa Bárbara, on All Saints' Day, or on a subsequent day;
- free reception of the patients supported by the Misericórdia de Lisboa at the city hospitals;
- granting of a monopoly for the public collection of alms for prisoners, the crippled and the *envergonhados*;
- the members of the Confraternity could freely choose the processions in which they participated.

THE PRINTED EDITION OF THE COMPROMISSO OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE MISERICÓRDIA IN 1516

The Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa has two copies of the *Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia*, printed in the sixteenth century.

One of these volumes was used by the Misericórdia of Aveiro, as proved by the handwritten texts added on the title page and on the last folio. This copy was printed in Lisbon by Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos, on 20 December 1516.

The aim of this first edition was to disseminate, as quickly and economically as possible, the basic text adopted by all the confraternities of the Misericórdia, not only among those that had been newly established in the Kingdom of Portugal, but also for those that were to be created in the vast territory of the Empire, including those in Africa, in the far-off Orient and in the southern region of the American continent, where the Portuguese had also settled.

At the same time, the use of printing made it possible to guarantee that the printed text was revised in detail, avoiding any distortions that might occur in the handwritten documents produced by copyists. Furthermore, the printed document displays a concern with greater textual rigour, allowing for a better interpretation of the established rules and precepts¹⁰. This aspect gave great credibility to the printed content, which was made available through this new technology.

¹⁰ By way of example, we may refer to the passage establishing those cases in which, due to old age or sickness, the *mordomo de fora* could exchange positions with the *mordomo da capela* (folio 8v).

In fact, although printing was just beginning to take its first steps, it had, however, come into being in an already highly mature state, since printed works were produced that displayed great technical and artistic quality, as was the case with the *Compromisso*, where the typographic characters were designed with great subtlety and the various engravings were printed with great skill and mastery.

Thus, on the title page of this book, we can see that an image was printed there of Our Lady of Mercy, whose cloak (supported by two angels) protects clergymen, nobles and children (some naked). Added beneath this engraving was the title of this work, using Gothic letters, with space having been left to allow for the addition of the owner's name, as happened in the case of this copy, where the words “*da uilla d aueiro*” were written. All of this is decorated with a border composed of stars and shells, with some authors¹¹ identifying this latter element as being the representation of a ribbon (a continuous galloon or frill) or of a cloud¹².

The engraving of Our Lady of Mercy is again printed on folio 2v, but on this occasion above three images, representing, from left to right, the shield of Portugal, the figure of St. Peter and an engraving with the armillary sphere. This composition maintains the same border, decorated with shells and stars.



The Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia, 1516.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
(No. 1 in this catalogue)

¹¹ Consult, for example, page 62 of the article «*As edições quinhentistas dos Compromissos da Misericórdia de Lisboa*», a study by Francisco G. Cunha Leão, published in the volume *Mater Misericordiae: simbolismo e representação da virgem da Misericórdia* (June, 1995).

¹² The reference to the stars and clouds is mentioned, for example, by Alfredo da Cunha on page 58 of his work entitled *A Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Fundão*.

On folio “ij” there also appear engravings representing 11 apostles, the first of whom is St. Peter, an image that had appeared earlier on folio 2v. On this same folio, an artistic “E” has been added, formed from vegetal elements.

Folio “j” is decorated with the initial capital letters “D” and “O”, artistically drawn and printed in red. It should be stressed that decorated initial capital letters are used throughout the text, as is the case with:

- “A” on folio “x”.
- “D” decorated and printed in red on folio “j”.
- Besides appearing on folio ij, “E” also appears on folios “ij”, “iiij”, “viiij” verso, “ix”, “ix” verso and “xj”;
- “I” with three variants, which appear on folio “xj” verso and folio “xij”;
- “N” on folio “vij”;
- “O” decorated and printed in red on folio “j”;
- The letter “O” also appears on folios “vj”, “vij”, “vij” verso, “viiij”, with a variant also appearing on folios “viiij” and “xiiij” verso,
- “P” on folios “iiij”, “xiiij” and “xiiij” verso.

This *Compromisso* was printed on paper made by the same manufacturer, and its sheets include only one watermark, which consists of the depiction of a hand with a wrist, the thumb on the left and the other fingers open, with the middle finger surmounted by a flower. There are also some lines drawn on the palm of the hand, possibly a representation of the characteristic features of this part of the human body¹³.



**Watermark used on the sheets
of the copy printed in 1516.**

¹³ This watermark is reproduced in the catalogue *A Arte do Livro na Misericórdia de Lisboa: Os Cimélios da Santa Casa*. 2nd edition. Lisbon: SCML, 2010. p. 12.

This copy consists of two initial folios, which are unnumbered, followed by 17 folios marked in Roman numerals.

Gatherings	Signatures	Sheets	Folios	Watermarks
Bifolio		1		
		2		
Ternion	a	3	j	
	a ij	4	ij	Hand with flower
	a iij	5	iij	
	a iiij	6	iiij	
		7	v	
		8	vj	Hand with flower
Ternion	b	9	vij	
	b ij	10	viiij	
	b iij	11	ix	
	b iiij	12	x	Hand with flower
		13	xj	Hand with flower
		14	xij	Hand with flower
Ternion	c	15	xiiij	
	c ij	16	xiiij	
	c iij	17	xv	Hand with flower
	c iiij	18	xvj	
		19	xvij	Hand with flower
		20	(missing)	


This copy has some annotations, some of which have their text truncated, since the sheets of this book were trimmed when it was bound. Attention is drawn, in particular, to the final note, as it includes the king's signature.

The volume was, once again, restored in 1992, when its leather binding (decorated with gilt engravings) was reinforced, and some sheets of paper were removed, which originated from earlier restoration works.





THE COUNTERFEIT VERSION OF THE PRINTED COMPROMISSO





The other *Compromisso* includes the same initial engraving representing Our Lady of Mercy, but surrounded by borders decorated with birds, insects¹⁴ and flowers. This same image appears on folio 2v, but this time with borders decorated with anthropomorphic elements (in the upper and left borders), and vegetal elements (in the lower and right borders), also including the figure of an owl in the lower border.

As far as the vegetal elements are concerned, we sought the help of Professor Ireneia Melo (a technician from the Botanic Garden/National Museum of Natural History and Science, of the University of Lisbon), whom we also thank for providing us with the following table, which serves to identify the plants represented on folio 1 of the 1516 *Compromisso*. The description of the elements begins in the bottom left corner of the border, moving clockwise thereafter:

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Twisted stems interspersed with flowers	Flor do malvaísco	<i>Althaea officinalis</i> L.	

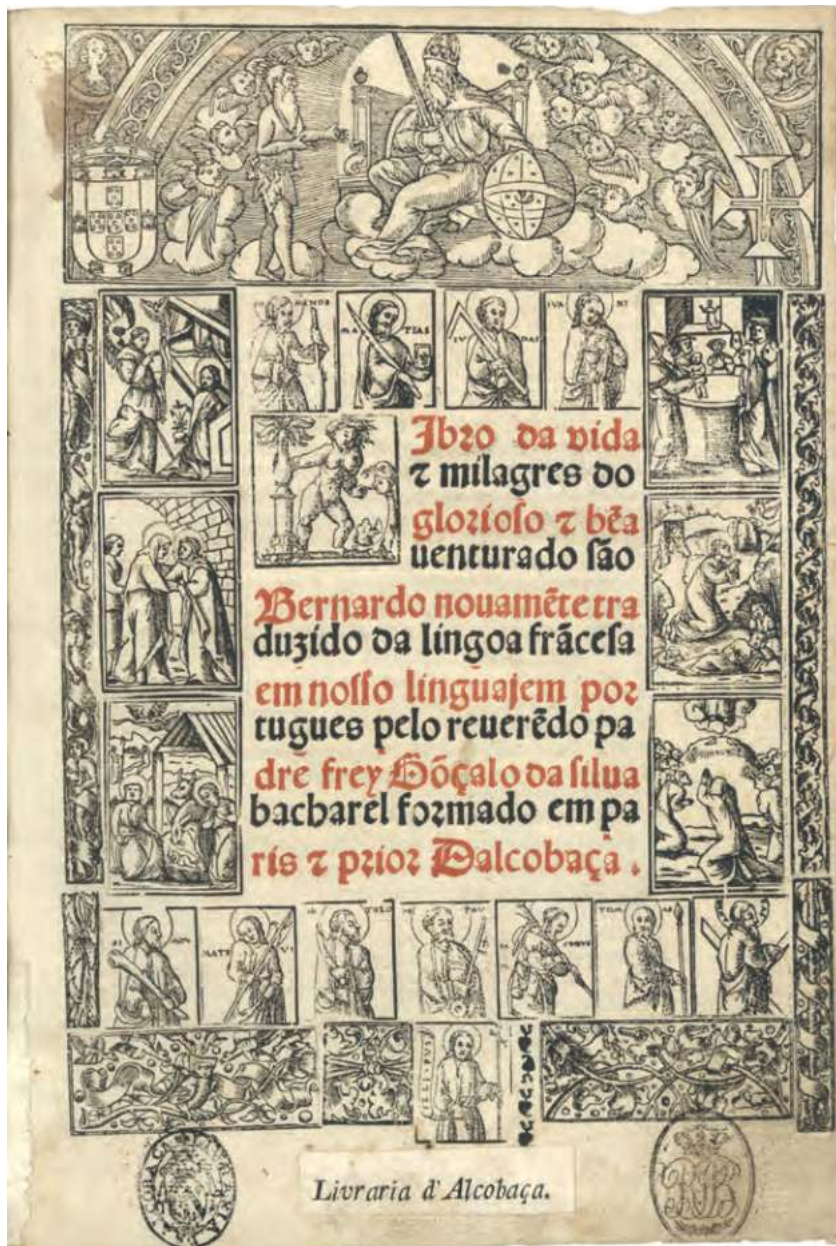
¹⁴ As far as the birds are concerned, there seem to be depictions of a stork, a peacock and a jay, while the insects include representations of what appears to be a bee (in the top border), a ladybird (in the right border), a dragonfly and what seems to be a night butterfly. In identifying the birds, we benefited from the invaluable help of Professor Teresa Catry, from the Department of Animal Biology, of the Faculty of Science, University of Lisbon. In turn, in the recognition of the insects, we received the support of Dr. Luís Filipe Lopes, from the National Museum of Natural History and Science. We wish to thank these specialists for the important help that they gave us.

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Flowers with five petals, dilated calyx with united petals	Bladder campion	<i>Silene vulgaris L.</i>	
Five toothed petals, lanceolate-linear leaves	Carnation	<i>Dianthus caryophyllus</i>	
Composite family, 'flower' still closed	Insufficient data to enable identification		
Flowerheads, serrated leaves	Corn marigold	<i>Chrysanthemum segetum L.</i>	

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Vegetal elements around a bird	Insufficient data to enable identification		
Irregular flowers, erect, pedicelated	Violet	<i>Viola odorata L.</i>	
Flowerheads, serrated leaves (base)	Corn marigold	<i>Chrysanthemum segetum L.</i>	
Flowers with spurred petals (base)	Columbine	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris L.</i>	

Identification of the plant species represented on folio 2v, of the 1516 *Compromisso*:

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Twisted stems interspersed with flowers	Marsh mallow	<i>Althaea officinalis L.</i>	
Thorn-shaped sepals, bent (base)	Wild artichoke, St. John's artichoke	<i>Cynara humilis L.</i>	



Work printed by Luís Rodrigues¹⁵, in 1544,
where the same engravings representing all the Apostles were used.
Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (Reference No.: RES. 161 A.)

¹⁵ The engravings representing the Apostles appear in various works, such as the *Libro da vida e milagres do glorioso e benauenturado são Bernardo nouamente traduzido da lingua francesa em nosso linguajem portugues pelo reuerendo padre frey Gonçalo da silua bacharel formado em paris e prior D alcobaça*. – [Lisbon]: em casa de Luys Rodriguez, 1544.

This copy was not bound, so that its state of conservation was fairly precarious. The sheets were in a bad state of conservation, especially those at the beginning and end of the book, with a partial loss of the support. Besides this, folios 1, 4, 7 and 12 were missing.

Appearing on folio “ij” are the Apostles (but now there are 12 and not just 11 images), with different representations having been used, each identified by their name and accompanied by their identifying attributes. The composition also includes another two images: one in the upper part representing Christ, and the other in the lower part representing Our Lady of the Conception, flanked by two borders with vegetal elements. The graphic composition is further enriched with an “E” (formed from animals and plants), and with a layout of graphic types, in which emphasis is given to the titles.

The title of this book is also printed in Gothic letters, but with a slightly smaller font size, although it is nonetheless highlighted through the use of red ink. As in the previous edition, on folio “j”, the same initial capital letters were used for “D” and “O”, whose design enriched the first folio artistically. Afterwards, throughout the text, decorated initial capital letters are used, although the engravings that are used are different and more elaborate. Nonetheless, these initial capital letters are located in the same parts of the text of the copy described earlier:

- “A” on folio “x”.
- “D” decorated and printed in red on folio “j”.
- “E” on folios “ii”, “ij”, always appearing with different formats on folios “iii”, “vij” verso, “ix”, “ix” verso and “xj”;
- “I” with three variants, which appear on folio “xj” verso and folio “xij”;
- “N” on folio “vii”;
- “O” decorated and printed in red on folio “j”;
- “O”, with a human figure: folios “vi” and “vij” verso;
- “O” with a representation of an animal with cloven hooves, using a spoon to eat from a bowl that it is holding in the other hand: folios “vii”, “viii” and “xij” verso;
- “O” decorated on folio “vij”;
- “P” on folios “iii” and “xiii”, with a variant on folio “xiii” verso.

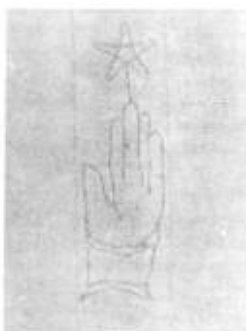
This *Compromisso* was printed on paper with various watermarks¹⁶:



a) a hand with a wrist (containing a central patch), surmounted by a crown that appears to be incomplete¹⁷.



b) a hand decorated in the area of the wrist with the letters “HB” and a fleur-de-lys, all surmounted by a crown.



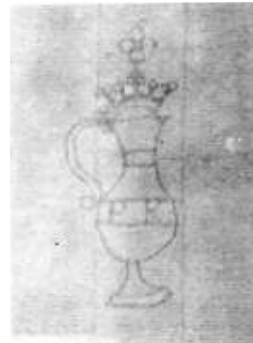
¹⁶ These images have already been reproduced in the catalogue *A Arte do Livro na Misericórdia de Lisboa: Os Cimélios da Santa Casa*. 2nd edition. Lisbon: SCML, 2010. p. 13.

¹⁷ Some authors classify this type of images as being representations of gloves.

c) a hand, whose wrist is formed only from lines and is surmounted by a flower. This watermark is identified in a volume that is kept in the Reserves of the National Library, page 176 – hand 6.1.1. from the year 1543, no. 351¹⁸.



d) a representation of a hand similar to the previous one, where a ring appears to have been added, placed on the middle finger. This watermark (represented in a clearer form) is identified in the above-mentioned volume kept in the Reserves of the National Library, page 176 – hand 6.1.1.1. from the year 1538, no. 387. In volume XV of the work *Monumenta Chartae Papyrae Historiam Illustrantia*, this hand appears reproduced in print no. 1664, with the proposed dating of between 1535 and 1540.



e) a pot-bellied jug, with an S-shaped handle on the left and a round lid, surmounted by a crown and a flower. In the centre, between two lines, are the letters “PR”. A very similar watermark is identified with the number 30 in the work by Arnaldo Faria de Ataíde e Melo¹⁹.

¹⁸ This is a survey of watermarks (from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), in two volumes, by an unidentified author. According to Dr. Maria Valentina C. A. Sul Mendes, a former employee at the National Library, in an annotation included at the beginning of the first volume (dated 6 March, 2003), the drawings of the watermarks were made by Arnaldo Faria de Ataíde e Melo, who used them as the basis for his work *O papel como elemento de identificação*, 1926.

¹⁹ See the page with the representation of prints relating to the watermarks of the paper produced between 1501 and 1550, belonging to the work *O papel como elemento de identificação*. Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1926. Offprint from: *Anais das Bibliotecas e Arquivos*, nos. 17 to 23. In turn, in the first file of the survey of watermarks, which is kept in the Reserves of the National Library, this watermark appears with the date of 1537 and is referred to on page 56 – “Jug 3.1.9. from the year 1537, no. 400”.

Gatherings	Signatures	Sheets	Folios	Watermarks	
Quaternion	A ij	1		Hand a)	
	A iij	2			
	A iiij	3	j (missing)		
		4	ii		
		5	iiij		Hand a)
		6	iiij (missing)		
		7	v		
		8	vi		Hand a)
Terno	b	9	vii (missing)	Hand d)	
	bij	10	viiij		
	biiij	11	ix		
		12	x		Hand d)
		13	xj		Hand c)
		14	xij (missing)		
Terno	c	15	xiii	Hand b)	
	cij	16	xiiiij		
	ciiij	17	xv		
		18	xvi		
		19	xvij		Jug e)
		20			

This copy also has annotations. In 1992, this book was restored, with the flaws in its support being repaired, while the missing folios were also reconstituted. In order to repair the various flaws and to reinsert the non-existent text, reproductions were made of the copy preserved at the Biblioteca da Ajuda. On that same occasion, betagraphs were taken that enabled us to easily identify the watermarks of the paper that was used as a support. For the better protection of the three gatherings that compose this book, a parchment binding was made.

After this analysis of these sixteenth-century copies of the *Compromisso*, we may conclude that the contents of the texts are the same, with just the following differences:

- alterations in the decoration, namely in the border that surrounds the image of the initial folio and on folio 2v, as well as in the initial capital letters;
- alterations in the types of letters used in the printing, as well as in the layout of the printed text, as is the case with the colophon (the final note that provides references about the printing, the place and date of the making of the work), whose typesetting was laid out in a V-shape, in the printed copy that was published later, and which has been identified as the “counterfeit” version;
- the 1516 edition contains a recurrent mistake, consisting of the replacement of the letter “n” with the letter “u”;
- in the copy that has been identified as the “counterfeit” version, there is a misprint, which can be noted in the expression “*sem embargo*” being replaced by the expression “*tem embargo*” (penultimate line of folio 15v).

As far as the identification of the printer and the respective date of publication of this second copy are concerned, various authors may be consulted. However, in order to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the publication of this extraordinary sixteenth-century work, the researcher Dr. Helga Maria Jüsten was invited to undertake an in-depth research with the aim of updating the study of these two copies. This unprecedented work can be consulted in this catalogue.

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS OF THE PRINTED COMPROMISSOS WITH THE MANUSCRIPT VERSIONS KEPT AT THE MISERICÓRDIAS IN PORTO, COIMBRA AND LISBON

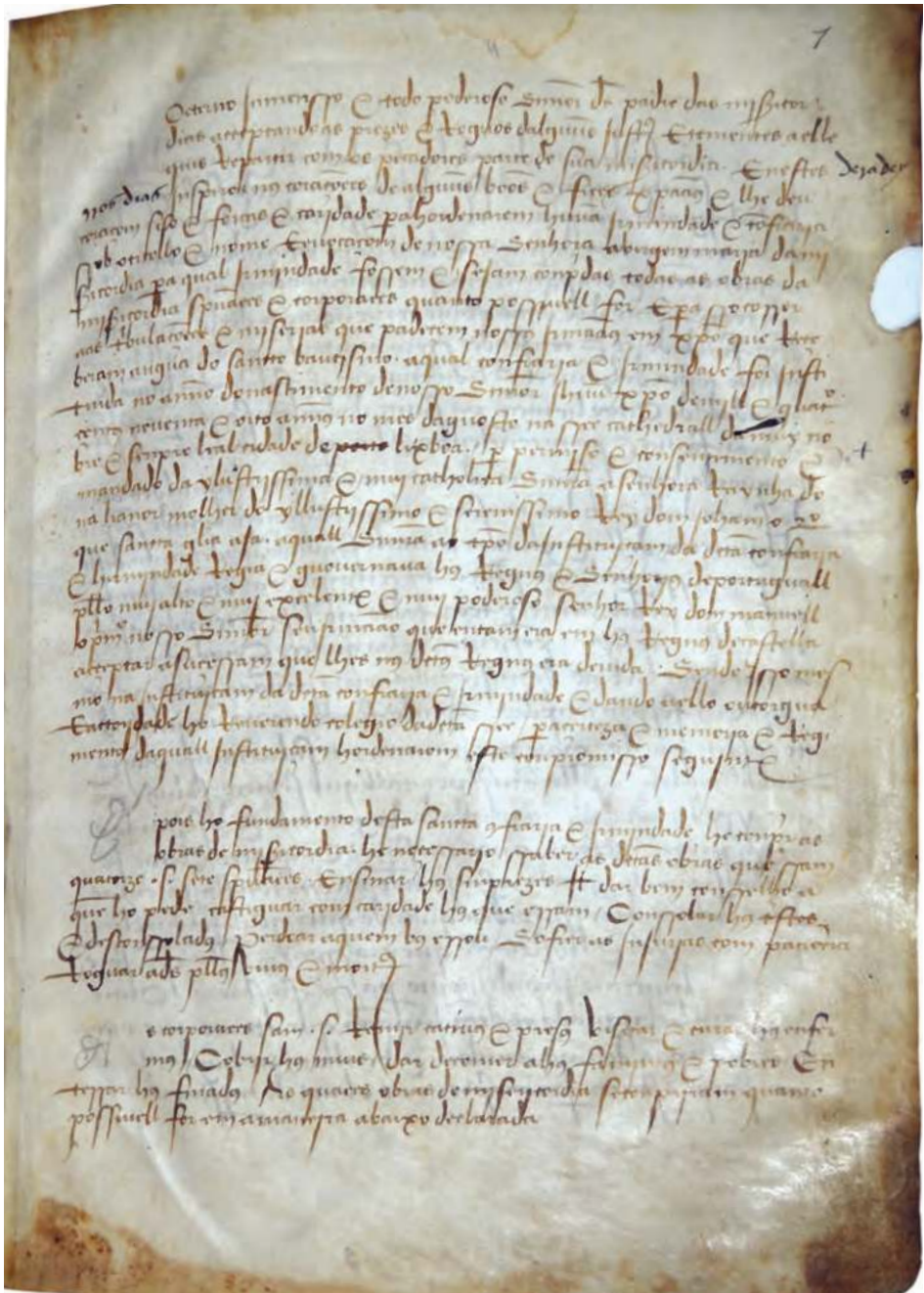
The original *Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia, which was certainly written in 1498 (the year when the Misericórdia was created), disappeared when the institution’s archives were destroyed in the earthquake of 1755. This text served as the basis for the reproduction of manuscript copies, which were sent to the various towns where other Misericórdias were also created.

We currently know of the existence of three sixteenth-century manuscript copies that have been preserved and which include the text of the *Compromisso*.

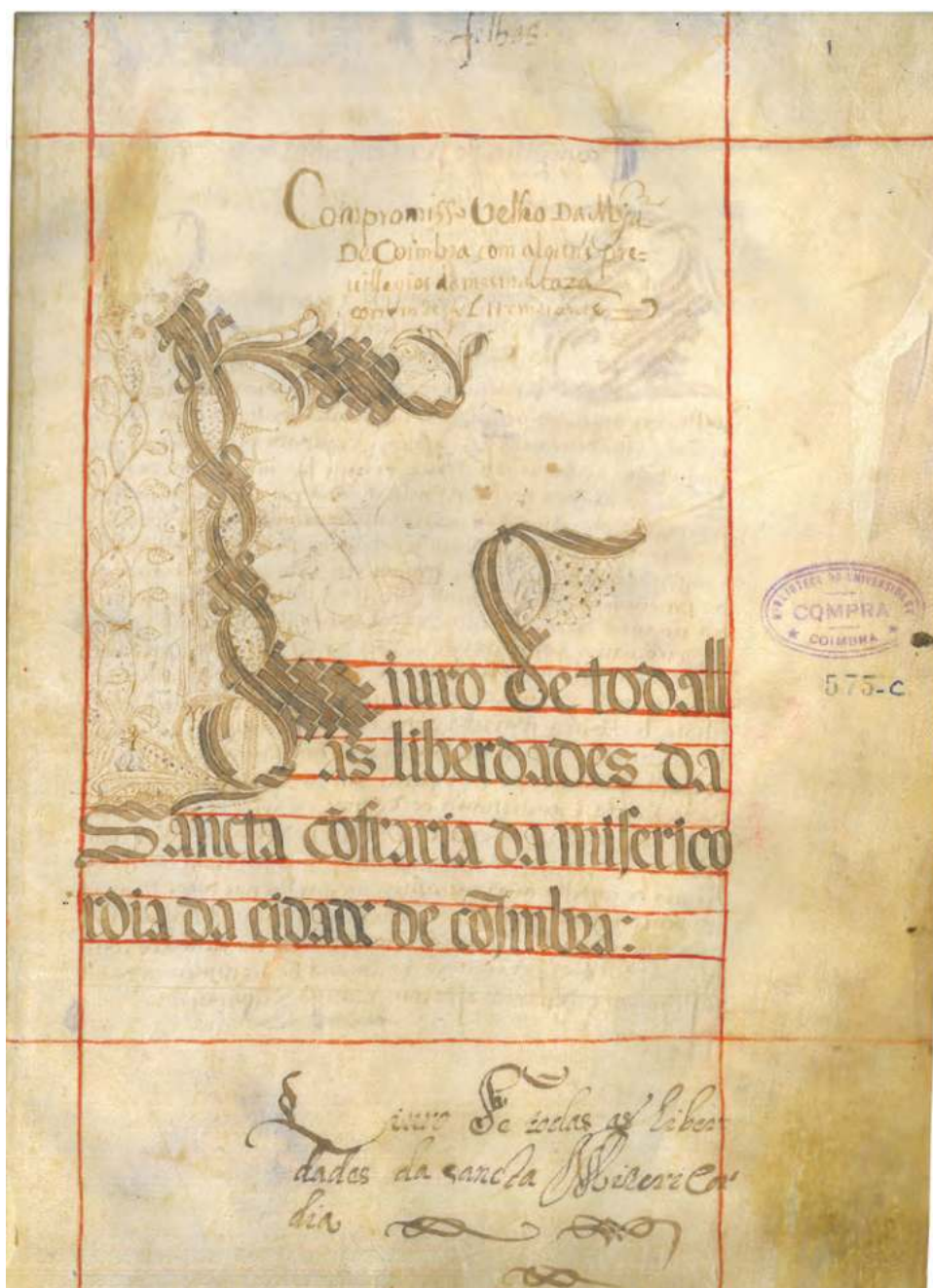
The copy that is kept at the Misericórdia of Porto is believed to be the oldest of these and is said by Ivo Carneiro de Sousa to be a copy that was made between 1499 and 1502²⁰.

At the Santa Casa in Coimbra, there is also a manuscript copy, dated 1500, which the same author considers to be a copy of the original Lisbon *Compromisso*.

²⁰ Cf. Ivo Carneiro de Sousa – *Da descoberta da Misericórdia à fundação das misericórdias (1498-1525)*. Porto: Granito, 1999, p. 225.



The Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia of Lisbon
 Copy made in 1499 and sent to the city of Porto.
 Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto.
 (No. 4 in this catalogue)



Livro de todallas liberdades da Sacta cofraria da misericórdia da cidade de Coimbra. [Book of all the freedoms of the Holy Confraternity of the Misericórdia of the city of Coimbra], [1500].

It includes a copy of the first *Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia of Lisbon, sent in 1500 to the newly-created Confraternity of the Misericórdia of Coimbra. Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra (No. 5 in this catalogue).

There is also a manuscript copy on parchment, dated 22 August 1502, which is kept at the Historical Archive of the Misericórdia de Lisboa.



The Compromisso of the Misericórdia of Lisbon, 1502.
 Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.
 (No. 6 in this catalogue).

After conducting a comparative analysis between these three texts and the contents of the printed copies, we noted that, apart from a few minor textual differences, there were also some others that were more significant. In particular, we draw attention to the following.

In the copy that is kept in Porto (folio 1v), two of the corporal works of mercy were not mentioned, namely “giving drink to the thirsty” and “giving shelter to the pilgrims and the poor”. This was certainly an oversight, since, in the 1502 manuscript, the description of the corporal works only mentions three of these, with the sentence ending with the word “etc.”. The use of this term may well demonstrate that these fourteen works were so widely known by the population that it was not considered necessary to enumerate them.

In the sixteenth-century *Compromissos*, the expression “Holy confraternity” is used²¹. It was this concept of “holiness” that certainly gave rise to the subsequent attribution of the title “Santa Casa” to each of the Misericórdias.

²¹ In the *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia of Porto, on folio 1v, and at the end of folio 5v in the Coimbra text, on folios 2 and 6. In the 1502 manuscript, on folio 5v. In the 1516 printed text, on folio 8v.

In the different copies of the *Compromisso*, when the intention was to illustrate the spirit of the confraternity, a biblical passage was chosen from the Letters of St. Paul. However, in the manuscripts kept at Porto (folio 1v) and Coimbra (folio 2v), the prayer that is mentioned is “*Orate pro invicem ut salvemini*”²², whereas in the 1516 printed copy (folio 3) and in the 1502 manuscript (folios 1v and 2) the prayer that was chosen was “*Alter altetrius onera portate*”²³.

Only the Porto copy (folio 2) does not mention the inclusion of religious orders and the clergy in the procession on All Saints’ Day, which accompanied the burial of the bones of those that had been executed. In the Porto and Coimbra texts, as well as in that of the printed copy, it is said that, in this procession, they went to fetch the bones of the executed from the area of Santa Bárbara, which suggests that these texts are a copy of the original text that was written for the Misericórdia of Lisbon²⁴.



Olisippo. Lisabona

Engraving of Lisbon made by Peter Van Aa, 17th century.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.

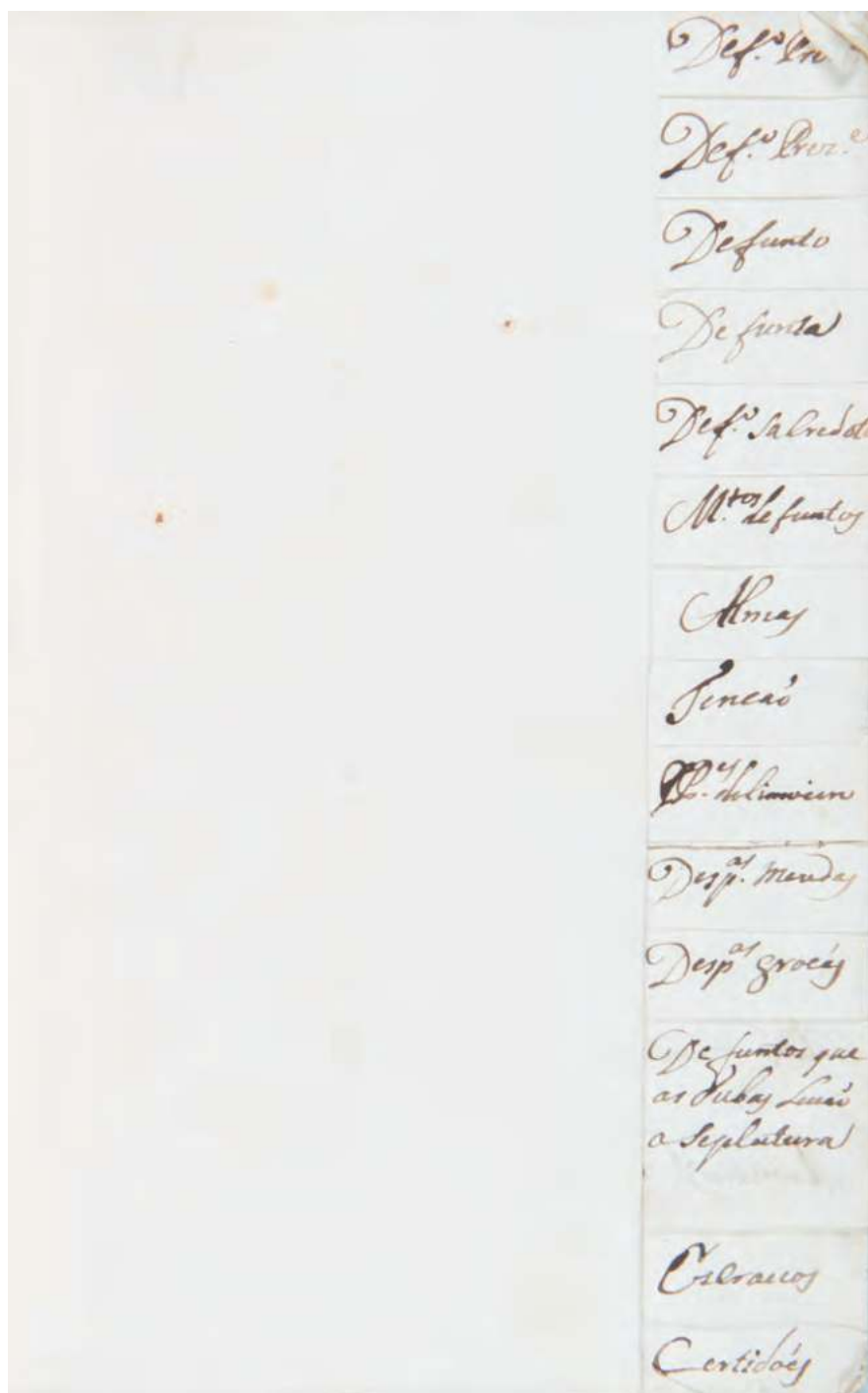
²² This expression is developed in the *Compromisso* as follows: “Pray and work for one another so that you may be saved, because this is the true charity, to pray and to wish unto our neighbours as we would unto ourselves”.

²³ This expression is developed in the *Compromisso* as follows: “Work and bear the burdens for one another so that you may be saved, because this is the true charity, to wish unto our neighbours as we would unto ourselves”.

²⁴ The enclosure of Santa Bárbara was one of the places in the city of Lisbon where those that were sentenced to death were executed by hanging.



Livro de capela (Chapel register), n.º 1, folio 1, with the title page, 1756
Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
(reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/GF/DR/03/03/001)



Livro de capela (Chapel register), no. 1, folio [2], which includes the table of contents of the liturgical obligations, 1756. Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, (reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/GF/DR/03/03/001).

11

Novel. Ino. Estado com a ração Maria m^{ra} de Paula
Novel. Ino. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Novel. Road. Francisca de Paula. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Em 4

Domingo de Paula. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Francisca de Paula. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Novel. Ino. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Em 6

Paula de Paula. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Maria de Paula. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Joze de Paula. Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula
Estado com a ração de Paula de Paula

Calvarios
Certidões

Livro de capela (Chapel register), no. 12, folio 1, which includes the record of the liturgical accompaniment of the poor who were taken to be buried in the tomb of the Misericórdia de Lisboa, 1756. Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, (reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/GF/DR/03/03/001).

The 1502 manuscript (on folio 2v) and the 1516 printed edition (on folio 4) are the only copies in which, in the part dedicated to the accompaniment of the dead members of the Confraternity and the suffrage for their souls, the prayers that were prescribed were based on a passage from the apostle St. James²⁵.

As has already been mentioned, the printed *Compromisso* establishes more complex rules for the election of the members of the Board of the Confraternity (folio 4v and ff.), although all the copies establish that the board comprised six *mecânicos* (artisans) and six officers “of a better condition”²⁶.

The board members/visitors were obliged to present a list recording the names of all those people to whom they gave assistance, but the text of the 1516 *Compromisso* (folio 7) adds that this list should also mention the addresses of the beneficiaries of the help provided. Furthermore, this text itemises the procedures that the visitors should follow in providing spiritual support to the sick (folio 7v).

Once again, perhaps as an oversight, the Coimbra text (1500) is the only *Compromisso* that does not include a specific chapter with elements relating to the visiting of poor prisoners.

In the 1516 printed version (folio 8), we, once again, noted that the text displays a greater concern with the control of expenditure, when it establishes that yet another list should be drawn up with the name of the *envergonhados* that were assisted and the respective amounts of money that were handed to them.

It should also be stressed that only the text that is kept at the Misericórdia do Porto does not refer to the participation of the *mordomos da capela* and the *mordomos de fora* (or those who were responsible for the prisoners) in the processions of the Confraternity, with the 1502 *Compromisso* and the printed copy being the ones that best specified the respective duties.

In all of the *Compromissos* that we analysed, we noted that, for certain activities, it was established that people who were not members could also participate in specific activities of the Confraternity, as was the case with the “*pedidores de pam*” (those who collected bread) for the needy, including the prisoners, the sick poor and the *envergonhados*²⁷.

Only the Lisbon *Compromissos*, the 1502 manuscript copy and the 1516 printed copy mention that the city’s school children also took part in the accompaniment of those who were in need of help, praying for those who were condemned to death, and that a mass was celebrated, before the execution took place, which reveals a concern with saving the soul of the condemned man²⁸.

²⁵ “*Orate pro inuicem ut salvemini*”: “Pray for one another so that you may be saved”.

²⁶ Indicated in the 1499 *Compromisso*, folio 3; in the 1500 *Compromisso*, folio 3v; in the 1502 *Compromisso*, folio 3.

²⁷ In the 1499 *Compromisso*, folio 9; in the 1500 *Compromisso*, folio 8v; in the 1502 *Compromisso*, folio 8; in the 1516 copy, folio 11v

²⁸ As shown in the 1502 *Compromisso*, folio 8v; in the 1516 copy, folio 12v.

Relação das Despesas feitas com os Prisioneiros das Casas de S. Vicente, Castello, e Bellum de que se tem e se tem por conta da Sta. Casa da Misericórdia em todo o presente mez de Outubro d'1824.

	Foral	Motab	Total
<i>Despesas de Lim. e Foral</i>			
Pl.º de rendimento com Des. por não chegar ao de receita de Agosto, como se tinha de ser	100,000	99,800	199,800
Item em utranhas e concertos e cadaveres em sua banca na for. de Bellum, como de receita N.º 2	19,500	9,500	19,500
<i>Na Cas. de Bellum</i>			
N.º al.º de fugas - - - - - 650 r.º	6,000	5,700	11,700
Óstabeis - - - - -	-	5,400	5,400
Na de S. Vicente - - - - -	-	3,300	3,300
Linha - - - - -	-	4,000	4,000
Arquit. e transportes - - - - -	-	3,800	3,800
<i>Juramentos</i>			
Na for. de Lim. e Foral, como de receita N.º 3	-	2,940	2,940
Na Cas. de Bellum - - - - - N.º 4	-	940	940
<i>Juram.</i>			
Item com des. dos Prisioneiros, como de receita N.º 5 a 15	45,200	57,658	102,858
<i>Operarias</i>			
Na for. de Lim.º - - - - -	2,400	2,400	4,800
Na Cas. de Bellum - - - - -	2,400	2,400	4,800
Na for. de Lim.º - - - - -	2,400	2,400	4,800
Na Cas. de Bellum - - - - -	1,200	1,200	2,400
Na Cas. de Bellum de ar.º - - - - -	-	2,400	2,400
Pl.º de receita de S. Vicente e ar.º - - - - -	109,600	209,868	319,468
Plus p.º Linha portens.º ao S.º de Outubro	2,400	1,840	4,240
<i>Total</i>	167,200	202,228	369,428

Alf.º de S. Vicente *Jos. Antonio d'Almeida*

Register of the expenditure of the mordomos of the prisoners, 1824-1829. Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (reference code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/GF/DR/03/10/001).



The Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia of Lisbon, 1520.
 Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
 (No. 3 in this catalogue)

The Porto *Compromisso* is the only one that does not mention those who were condemned to be burned to death, while the others indicate that the institution's Provost would send a volunteer or pay someone to perform the service, ensuring that the bones would be collected and buried, "so that the dogs do not take them from the said place of suffering"²⁹.

ANALYSIS OF THE 1520 MANUSCRIPT COMPROMISSO

In 1520, King Manuel I sent an illuminated manuscript document, written on parchment and dated 27 April, with the text of the "*Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia of our City of Lisbon". He ordered that this copy should be bound and covered in crimson velvet, or another good colour "and that it should be lasting, with copper gilt decoration and studs, and that it should all be well made and elegant, as it deserves to be"³⁰.

²⁹ Referred to in the 1500 *Compromisso*, folio 10v; in the 1502 *Compromisso*, folio 9v; in the 1516 copy, folios 13-13v.

³⁰ This copy was restored and rebound in the late nineteenth century, as mentioned in the first deliberation of the meeting of the Board of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, on 23 October 1890, at the expense of António Augusto de Carvalho Monteiro.

The text of this copy is the same as that of the printed editions, with only a few small alterations, namely in the case of some expressions and the linking together of ideas, which results in a more precise, clearer and more carefully written text.

Besides this, there are also other alterations, namely:

– the chapter dealing with the election of the members to the various posts (folio 7v) does not include indirect election, such as this is referred to in the printed texts (from folio 4v to folio 6), reflecting a concern with simplifying the process of annual election. However, this change in the text may be explained by the reinsertion of the contents of the original manuscript *Compromisso* (certainly written in 1498); for this hypothesis, we should pay heed to what Artur de Magalhães Basto pointed out when analysing the manuscript existing at the Misericórdia do Porto, namely that this text was written at the end of the fifteenth century, and that this copy, as well as those from Coimbra (1500) and Lisbon (1502), all spoke of the direct election of officers³¹.

– it is made clear that the punishment to be applied by the Provost to his officers includes only the spiritual aspect, as is mentioned on folio 10v: “to impose spiritual pain...”. This aspect reflects the importance of an intense religious life and, on the other hand, it may also manifest a concern with establishing precisely the type of punishments that the Provost could impose, presumably in order to avoid abuses on the part of the person who held this position.

– in the chapters that refer to the support given to the sick (folio 11v), to prisoners (folio 12v) and to the *envergonhados* (folio 13), a final text is added, with the aim of imposing a greater financial control, stating that the *conselheiros* responsible for these services would have to present accounts to the Provost justifying the sums that they spent. This situation was already provided for in the printed *Compromissos*, but it only related to the *conselheiros* who collected the alms for the Confraternity.

– at the end of the manuscript text, a new chapter is added, entitled *Da devoção dos fiéis de Deus*, where it is mentioned that the Confraternity also prayed for the souls of those lying in Purgatory.





More importantly, it should be stressed that the 1520 *Compromisso* does not include the final text, relating to the privileges of the Confraternity (see chapter xxj in the two printed copies), so that the only privilege that was officially recorded was that of the exemption from the obligation to perform council duties, in the year or month in which each officer was in the service of the Confraternity (see folio 9v).





³¹ BASTO, Artur de Magalhães – *História da Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto*. Vol. I. Porto: Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto, 1934, pp. 105-106.




A significant aspect of this manuscript *Compromisso* is the set of profusely illuminated folios, whose drawings are of high quality. Attention is drawn to the image of Our Lady of Mercy with the royal coats of arms, flanked by borders decorated with various plants and insects, just as also happens with the printed counterfeit version. For the identification of the plant species, we once again benefited from the help of Professor Ireneia Melo, who provided us with the following table.

The description of the elements begins in the bottom left corner of the border, moving clockwise thereafter:



Folio 5v:






Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Blue or pink-coloured flowerheads, almost linear 'sepals'	Insufficient data to enable identification		
Double flowers, with red petals, pink 'buds'	Rose-tree	<i>Rosa L.</i> (there are more than 100 species of roses and thousands of cultivars with just the name of this genus, selected since antiquity)	
Blue letter "D" with a stylised acanthus leaf	Acanthus	<i>Acanthus mollis L.</i>	
Blue flowers, acuminate petals, prominent cone-shaped anthers	Borage	<i>Borago officinalis L.</i>	

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Yellow flowerheads, serrated leaves	Corn marigold	<i>Chrysanthemum segetum L.</i>	
Flowers with five rose-coloured petals, calyx with linear segments larger than the petals	Corncockle	<i>Agrostemma githago L.</i>	
White flowers, multiple fruit of achenes in a pulpos red vessel	Wild strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca L.</i>	
Blue flowers yet to open	German iris	<i>Iris germánica L.</i>	

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Blue flowers, almost erased (base)	Blue pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis L.</i>	
Stylised flowers (base)	Acanthus	<i>Acanthus mollis L.</i>	
Bunch of small blue flowers (in the centre, after the phrase "Dom Manuel")	Myosotis	<i>Myosotis sp.</i>	

Folio 6:

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Pink-coloured flowerheads	Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense L.</i>	
White petals, flowers, with a serrated edge	Wild strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca L.</i>	

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
Pink-coloured flowers, yet to open, toothed coriaceous calyx	Carnation	<i>Dianthus caryophyllus L.</i>	
Blue flowers, acuminate petals, prominent cone-shaped anthers	Borage	<i>Borago officinalis L.</i>	
Flowers with different-coloured petals	Milkwort (under reserve)	<i>Polygala vulgaris L.</i>	
Pink-coloured flowerheads ringed with imbricated bracts	Mantisalca	<i>Mantisalca salmantica (L.) Briq. & Cavill.</i>	
Flowers with different-coloured petals	Milkwort (under reserve)	<i>Polygala vulgaris L.</i>	

Characteristics	Common name	Scientific name	Images
White flowers, multiple fruit of achenes in a pulpous red vessel	Wild strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca L.</i>	
Blue flowers yet to open and others already open	German iris	<i>Iris germánica L.</i>	
Double flowers, with red and pink petals, rose 'buds' (base)	Rose-tree	<i>Rosa sp.</i>	
Blue flower, isolated (base)	Blue pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis L.</i>	
Leaves composed of three leaflets, stylised, placed around the shield	Columbine	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris L.</i>	

Also represented in the 1520 *Compromisso* are insects that, according to Dr. Luís Filipe Lopes (from the National Museum of Natural History and Science), represent night butterflies that do not seem to belong to the Portuguese fauna.



Insects represented in the illuminations of the *Compromisso of the Misericórdia of Lisbon*, 1520.

FINAL REMARKS

With this study, we hope to encourage further research about this document, which is pivotal not only for the history of the Misericórdia de Lisboa, but also for understanding the everyday life and mentalities of people in the sixteenth century, as well as their religious and charitable practices.

The Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa is responsible for the conservation of a significant collection of copies of the *Compromisso*, which is available for consultation by scholars seeking to undertake more in-depth research into some of the aspects referred to in this text.

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Pivotal moments:
the Foundation of
the Misericórdia de Lisboa
and its First *Compromisso*
Printed in 1516

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The Seven Acts of Mercy by Caravaggio

In 1607, Caravaggio painted the seven corporal works of mercy, for a confraternity of Neapolitan nobles, the *Pio Monte della Carità*. He brought these seven acts together for the first time in just one single image, instead of painting separate panels, and made the good actions of men dependent upon divine grace, personified by the sacred figures in the upper part of the canvas.

INTRODUCTION: A CONFRATERNITY FOR CHRISTIANS¹

He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction. (William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act III, Scene 1)

This text is well known: it is a monologue spoken by Shylock, in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, first performed in the late sixteenth century. Shylock, a Jewish moneylender, demands the fulfilment of a promise: a pound of Antonio's flesh for the money that he lent him to invest in maritime trade.



The seven works of mercy
Master of Alkmaar, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Antonio is left ruined by the loss of his ships in a storm, and, against all the rules of Christian piety, Shylock insists on the payment of the bloody debt. The words that he then utters reveal his resentment over the discrimination he receives; if we pay close attention to them, we can see that they are a kind of negative expression of the Christian works of mercy, which he knows are refused to him because he is a Jew. Shylock claims respect for his humanity, which is given to him, above all else, by his possession of a body, with eyes

¹ The author, who acknowledges full responsibility for any eventual errors or omissions, wishes to thank Francisco d'Orey Manoel and Tiago Reis C. P. Miranda for their careful reading and comments of an earlier version of this text.

and hands, subject to pains and diseases, and also vulnerable to feelings and emotions. Nothing separated him from the Christian, not even the right that he claimed to seek revenge in the face of insults and humiliations.

Let us go back in time another hundred years. In Lisbon, in 1498, a confraternity was created that was dedicated to the fulfilment of the fourteen works of mercy and was open to all those who were baptised. The text could not be more explicit, as is shown by this excerpt taken from the first paragraph of the *Compromisso* of the confraternity published in 1516: “[so that] all the works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal, may be fulfilled, insofar as possible, to succour the tribulations and miseries that are suffered by our brothers in Christ who have received the water of the Holy Baptism.”²

Christians, therefore. In a city that just under two years earlier had embarked on a process of eradicating its Muslim and Hebrew minorities, and then extended this procedure to the whole kingdom.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE MISERICÓRDIA DE LISBOA: THE CONTEXT

On 4 or 5 December, 1496, King Manuel I (1495-1521), under pressure from the king and queen of Castile (this was how the Portuguese referred to Fernando and Isabel, both before and after the Pope granted them the title of the Catholic Monarchs in 1496), applied through their eldest daughter, Isabel, determined that the Jews of the kingdom should be given a period of time during which to convert to Christianity or else abandon the kingdom by the following October³. Traumatized by the tragic death of her first husband, Prince Afonso, and already living in retreat at a convent, the princess refused a second marriage and demanded as a condition for marrying the Portuguese king that he should expel the Jews from the kingdom⁴. This was a measure of spiritual purification, and it closely followed what had been happening in Spain since at least 1478, when the Inquisition of Castile had been founded. The main blow against the religious minorities, however, was delivered with the order to expel the Jews from the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon in 1492, shortly after the successful completion of the conquest of

² *Compromisso da confraria de Misericórdia*. Lisbon, Valentim Fernandes and Hernão de Campos, 1516. We shall quote from the first printed version of the *Compromisso* published in Isabel dos Guimarães Sá and José Pedro Paiva (eds.), *A fundação das Misericórdias: o Reinado de D. Manuel I, Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, vol. 3, Lisbon, União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2004 (henceforth referred to as *PMM*, vol. 3), pp. 410-423. All datings of spelling that have been made in the transcription of this text, as well as the underlinings made for the purposes of emphasis, are the author's responsibility.

³ Through a charter sent to the municipal councils ordering the expulsion of Jews and Moors by October of the following year. This same charter was then incorporated into the ordinances of the kingdom (*Ordenações Manuelinas*, Lisbon, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1984, livro II, tit. 41, pp. 212-214).

⁴ Isabel of Castile and Aragon was a princess of Portugal through her marriage to the Infante Dom Afonso, the heir to the Portuguese throne, who died in 1491.

the kingdom of Granada by the Catholic Monarchs. The princess demanded that the same procedure should take place in Portugal in order for her marriage to be realised, all the more so because it was clear that many of the Jews expelled from Spain had fled to Portugal. King Manuel gave in to the princess's pressures (and perhaps, above all, to those exerted by her parents), paying a high price for this, as he would have to dispense with a community that had proved useful to the Iberian monarchs. We now know that he later preferred to forcibly baptise them rather than to see them leaving the kingdom.

If we look at the political moment in itself, perhaps King Manuel's option to forcibly oblige the Jews to convert was the better of the two choices open to him. The second option would be to yield to the international pressures brought by Spain and Venice and to ally with them against France by joining the Holy League. Charles VIII of France had entered Italy, marching against Naples, the kingdom over which he claimed dynastic rights, during the year of 1496. In this way, he began the Italian Wars, which would continue to be waged throughout the sixteenth century. François Soyer states that the king of Portugal, who wished to invest in the Portuguese expansion into the Indian Ocean region, did not want his resources to be dispersed and committed to fighting wars in Europe. Also, according to the same author, King Manuel had just one single purpose, to avoid participating in the inter-state wars of Europe: to protect his resources and to leave himself room for manoeuvre in order to pursue the project of reaching India by sea. Despite the contrary opinions expressed by his council, which met as soon as he became king in 1495, King Manuel insisted on trying to reach India by sea⁵. This aim was realised after the marriage of King Manuel I to Isabel, for which the contract was signed on 30 November 1496; Vasco da Gama set sail for Calicut on 2 July 1497, and returned to Lisbon on 28 August 1499.

The 'lesser evil' soon showed itself to be far more problematic than the king had predicted, all the more so because his wish was to keep the Jews in the kingdom, as was clearly highlighted at the end of December 1496, only a few weeks after the order of expulsion had been decreed. The subsequent measures promulgated by King Manuel, however, were to place the Portuguese Sephardic community at risk, and meant that shortly afterwards there would be a repression brought against the Jewish people, motivated by their resistance to these same measures. It would seem that the king had not expected to meet with any great opposition on the part of the Jews, which proved to be wrong. At Easter time in 1497, King Manuel ordered the children of the Jews to be taken away from them, in order to be brought up and educated by Christians, which, as was to be expected, caused a tremendous shock among the Jewish community. Meanwhile, he had limited their possibilities of leaving the kingdom, progressively restricting the number of ports where they could embark, until they were permitted to leave exclusively from the port of Lisbon.

⁵ François Soyer, *The Persecutions of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal. King Manuel I and the End of Religious Tolerance (1496-97)*, Leiden, Brill, 2007, pp. 169-181.

April of that same year was, very probably, the month of the (enforced) mass baptism of Jews. These were gathered together on the land behind the Estaus Palace, in Lisbon, where they were piled on top of one another under inhuman conditions. Some preferred to commit suicide rather than to renounce their faith. Historiography has remained silent regarding the most violent aspects of the events of 1497, but those studies that have made use of Hebrew sources have drawn attention to this difficult period in the life of the Jews in Portugal, which was particularly acute in the city of Lisbon⁶. Immediately afterwards, on 13 May 1497, perhaps in order to relieve the tension, King Manuel ordered that the newly-converted Jews should not be prosecuted for errors of faith for a period of twenty years.

The repression of the Jews posed problems for the monarchy. In the Middle Ages, they had enjoyed immediate royal protection, and monarchs and members of the royal family lived happily together with Jews, whose services they constantly solicited. In Portugal, there is evidence that, without ever having converted to the Christian faith, Jews were to be found actively employed in various fields, such as medicine, tax collection, and the manufacture of weapons; some were indispensable as lenders of capital to the crown and the high nobility⁷. The situation was similar in Spain, although most of the individuals to be found working under these circumstances were converts to the Christian faith. Many of them performed highly important roles in the upper echelons of royal officialdom, as well as holding leading positions at ecclesiastical institutions, as can be seen in the long lists drawn up by Spanish historians⁸. While, in the neighbouring kingdoms, there had been countless conversions following the persecutions that had begun in 1391, in Portugal such cases were relatively low in number before 1497⁹. Moreover, the Spanish Inquisition, which was founded in the kingdom of Castile in 1478, and then shortly afterwards in Aragon, justified its existence through the fact that it was generally believed that the Jews that had converted to Christianity were exposed to bad influences by those who had remained loyal to the Jewish faith.

Legally, the Jews were under the king's protection, and the same situation also applied in Castile and Aragon before 1492. The monarchs levied high taxes on the Jewish communities, but they were also capable of protecting them in situations where it was predicted that their houses could be attacked as a result of the people's anger. Besides these moments, Lent and Easter were other chronic occasions when attacks on the cities' Jewish quarters were a recurrent event, as well as during those periods when there were small power vacuums caused by the death of the monarchs. In 1449, at the time of the Battle of Alfarrobeira, which marked

⁶ Elias Lipiner, *Os baptizados em pé. Estudos acerca da origem e da luta dos Cristãos-Novos em Portugal*, Lisbon, Vega, 1998, in particular pp. 35-36. Soyer, *The Persecution of the Jews*, cit., pp. 182-240.

⁷ On the question of the Jewish merchant bankers of Lisbon, linked to the court, cf. Maria José Pimenta Ferro Tavares, *Os Judeus em Portugal no século XV*, vol. I, Lisbon, Universidade Nova, 1982, p. 131 and following.

⁸ Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, *La España de los Reyes Católicos*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1999, pp. 315-316.

⁹ François Soyer, *The Persecution of the Jews*, cit., pp. 84-88.

the transition from the regency of the Infante Dom Pedro to the reign of King Afonso V, through the death of the former, the Jewish quarter of Lisbon was attacked and robbed and some Jews were killed while the king was in Évora. The situation was such that only the king could resolve it: after a “request of the greatest urgency”, King Afonso V ended up coming to Lisbon in person and ordering the customary executions of those believed guilty, a measure that many considered to have been implemented with far too much haste, believing that several innocent people had been executed. The courts arrested those who were found in possession of property that had been stolen from the Jews, without there being any proof that they were the ones who had stolen it¹⁰. There is evidence that both King João II and his wife, or even King Manuel, before the years 1496–1497, wrote letters to various municipal councils ordering them to protect the Jews in situations when attacks were expected on the Jewish quarters. For example, when King João II lay dying in the Algarve, and the people were apparently preparing to attack the Jews of Évora, Queen Leonor and her brother wrote to the municipal councils of Évora and Lisbon, asking that measures be taken to prevent this from happening¹¹. The fact is that the expulsion of the Jews decreed by the Catholic Monarchs in 1492 led to many of them fleeing to Portugal, causing situations of tension and conflict in various towns and villages.

One must, however, guard against exaggerating the royal protection that was afforded to the Jews, dictated, above all else, by pragmatic reasons, related both with the functions that they performed and with the taxes that they paid. The social relationships that were conducted in private with Jews did not mean that there was any real tolerance for Judaism: in their sermons, Franciscans and Dominicans, for example, exhorted the urban populations to engage in violence against the Jews, whom they associated with the sin of usury. It may be said that anti-Semitism, with all of its ambiguities and contradictions, was a major structural component of late medieval culture¹².

While King Manuel hesitated between imposing the public and abstract violence of the law and allowing for tolerance in private towards the presence of people of Jewish origin in his kingdoms, the inhabitants of the cities were clearly and manifestly anti-Hebrew¹³. It was often evident to the monarchs that the Jews needed protection against the violence of the urban populations, especially during critical periods of the liturgical calendar, such as Holy Week (the Jews were held

¹⁰ Rui de Pina, “Chronica do Senhor Rey D. Afonso V”, in *Crónicas de Rui de Pina*, M. Lopes de Almeida (ed.), Porto, Lello, 1977, pp. 758–759.

¹¹ Arquivo Distrital de Évora, *Livro 3.º de Originais (73)*. Letter from the queen to Dom Fernando de Castro, seeking to protect the Jews of Évora, fl. 129 (1495.10.24, Alcácer do Sal); *Idem*, *Livro 3.º de Originais (73)*, Letter from Dom Manuel I to the city of Lisbon, asking for measures to be taken to prevent riots from being perpetrated against Jews as a result of the king’s death, fl. 136 (1495.10.27, Alcácer do Sal).

¹² On these aspects, cf. Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, “A Ferida na Parede” in *Idem*, *A Prática do Novo Historicismo*, São Paulo, Edusc, 2005, pp. 89–127, in particular pp. 93–94, and the respective note no. 7, with various bibliographical references relating to works about anti-Semitic writings by the mendicant preachers.

¹³ Benzion Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 3rd ed., Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972, p. 41.

responsible for the death of Christ), or during periods of crisis, such as famine and plague, when the anger of the people was directed towards the religious minorities, whom they blamed for their misfortunes. Francisco Bethencourt attributes these anti-Jewish revolts not only to the practice of money lending and/or the collection of taxes and rents, but also to the urban competition for economic resources, which caused resentment among the poor population in particular¹⁴.

As we have seen, a particularly acute moment was experienced in Lisbon when the Jews were confined within a walled and empty plot of land behind the Estaus Palace, where the headquarters of the Inquisition (founded in 1536) and the Dona Maria theatre (1836) would later be built¹⁵.

The violence and intolerance that could be felt in the streets of Lisbon were logically compensated by the formation of a confraternity that sought to personify love for one's neighbour. However, in its very first *Compromisso*, the Misericórdia de Lisboa declared that the confraternity was intended for all Christians, reflecting the generalised anti-Jewish climate. It was only open to Christians, among whose number the New Christians were now included, in other words, the Jews who had received the water of baptism. The expression therefore takes on a new meaning when examined in the light of what was happening in Lisbon during those two crucial years.

The role that the Misericórdia de Lisboa played in pacifying the city's social relations was not confined to the moment of its foundation. Years later, it entered into action once more, albeit on an *ad hoc* basis. After the violence that had marked the massacre of 1506, when crowds already made desperate by the plague that was devastating the city (those who stayed there were the common people and the city council, because the court had already fled), and further incited by some Dominican friars, massacred thousands of Jews, with Christians also in the midst of them, the Misericórdia once again performed its special role, which was always associated with pacifying actions. When the massacre was over, the brotherhood came out of the cathedral in a procession, publicly whipping themselves in an act of self-flagellation and seeking to bring an end to the situation. According to the chronicle: “/and the very next day, which was Thursday, a very devout procession of the brotherhood of the Misericórdia came out of the cathedral, with many disciplinants, all shouting /peace / peace / with which the said killing was completely extinguished”¹⁶.

Let us now return to the summer of 1498. King Manuel had departed on 29 March, with his wife pregnant, leaving Queen Leonor as his regent. He had been

¹⁴ Which, according to the author, was later made much worse with the conversion to the Christian faith and the consequent transformation of the Jews into New Christians. Francisco Bethencourt, *Racisms. From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2013, p. 145.

¹⁵ See the representation of that space on a sixteenth-century map, reproduced in Soyer, *The Persecution of the Jews*, *cit.*, p. 221.

¹⁶ Gaspar Correia, *Crônicas de D. Manuel e de D. João III (até 1533)*, José Pereira da Costa (ed.), Lisbon, Academia das Ciências, 1992, p. 31. On the massacre, cf. François Soyer, which is based on Correia's account, although it does not refer to the passage now quoted. “The Massacre of the New Christians of Lisbon in 1506: A New Eyewitness Account”, *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas*, no. 7, 2007, pp. 221-244.

solemnly sworn as the heir to the throne of Castile at Toledo Cathedral and had set out en route to Saragossa, where the kingdom of Aragon was supposed to perform a similar act. However, things did not go so well here: the Aragonese showed themselves to be reluctant to accept an heir to the throne who came to them through a female line, since they followed the Salic law, which eliminated women from the order of succession. Their rejection of the king was being negotiated and the court was waiting in Saragossa, because Queen Isabel was nearing the end of her pregnancy. But the worst part was that the queen died just a few hours after giving birth to a son, who survived. Because of the death of his wife, King Manuel lost the right that he had to the thrones of Castile and Aragon, which passed to his son, Dom Miguel da Paz, who was to be raised and educated in Castile under the guardianship of his maternal grandparents and died two years later¹⁷.

Tradition has created the idea that the Misericórdia de Lisboa was founded on 15 August 1498, although, in truth, it is impossible to determine whether it actually happened on that day¹⁸. All known versions of the first *Compromisso*, as well as the second one, dating from 1577, refer only to the month of August, without mentioning the exact day; all mention of the circumstances of its foundation was to completely disappear in 1619. But, *se non è vero è ben trovato*: the Virgin Mary was the patron of the confraternity, and because 15 August was the day of her assumption to heaven, and therefore a holy day, there may well have been a procession to celebrate the event. However, despite everything that has been said, there is one incontrovertible fact: it was Queen Leonor who founded the confraternity, since her brother the king was absent from Lisbon from the end of March until October in that year of 1498. King Manuel sent his sister instructions for the government of the country during his absence, but none of those that have survived makes any mention of the Misericórdia, and so it is possible that Queen Leonor did in fact take the initiative to found this institution. We now know that this foundation was inspired by, but not copied from, the homonymous confraternities of Tuscany. It is likely that the queen's devotional culture, as well as her frequent social contact with members of the clergy, contributed to this initiative, which may have been completely unknown to King Manuel. We know that Queen Leonor, just like the whole of the court in fact, had dealings with the influential community of Florentine merchants who lived and conducted their business in Lisbon. It is perfectly plausible, therefore, that these people spoke to her about the Tuscan *misericórdias* and that Queen Leonor took her inspiration from them¹⁹.

¹⁷ Queen Isabel died on 23 August 1498, and the prince died on 19 August, 1500, in Granada.

¹⁸ As noted by Gonçalves de Carvalho Amaro, *Uma Igreja, Duas Histórias. Um percurso pela história e pelo património da antiga igreja manuelina da Misericórdia de Lisboa (actual Conceição Velha)*, Lisbon, Santa Casa da Misericórdia, 2015, p. 14, note 5.

¹⁹ Marco Spallanzani, *Mercanti Fiorentini nell'Asia Portoghese*, Firenze, Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1997, pp. 13-22; Kate Lowe, "Rainha D. Leonor of Portugal's Patronage in Renaissance Florence and Cultural Exchange", *Cultural Links between Portugal and Italy in the Renaissance*, K. J. P. Lowe (ed.), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 225-248; Nunziatella Alessandrini, *Na comunidade italiana os florentinos em Lisboa e a Igreja do Loreto: subsídios para o seu estudo no século XVI*, 2 vols., Master's Degree thesis, Lisbon, Universidade Aberta, 2002, in particular vol. I, pp. 122-144.

The new confraternity was founded in one of the chapels of the cloister of Lisbon Cathedral, the chapel of Our Lady of Piety, or of Nossa Senhora da Terra Solta, as it was also known, which still exists there today. This is a relatively tiny space, a simple place of meeting and worship, from where the brothers would set forth to undertake their works of mercy in the city of Lisbon. Or, in other words, at this initial moment of its foundation, the confraternity relied on the support of the Cathedral chapter, although, as the text of the 1516 *Compromisso* makes clear, the initiative was the responsibility of the queen regent: “Being in this way [involved] in the institution of the Confraternity and Brotherhood, with the permission and help being granted by the reverend college of the said cathedral²⁰. Several Portuguese *misericórdias* were to be installed in chapels in the cloisters of cathedrals and collegiate churches where they remained for the first years of their existence, as was the case in Porto and Guimarães. Only later was the Misericórdia de Lisboa to be given its own church, built roughly between 1517 and 1534, and situated between the present-day streets of Rua da Alfândega and Rua dos Bacalhoiros²¹.

Meanwhile, in October, the king arrived in the city at night, incognito, but taking care to immediately go and speak to his sister. The fact that the city was in mourning prevented him from being received by the municipal council with organised festivities, as was the norm²². The proof that the idea pleased him can be found in the way in which he used his authority as king to encourage the creation of *misericórdias* throughout the whole kingdom of Portugal and its conquests. This latter aspect of the origins of the *misericórdias* is better known, but this façade that the king demonstrated may have given the impression that Queen Leonor’s important actions amounted to little more than working behind the scenes.

We know today that the dowager queen had a remarkable influence on her brother the king, who was eleven years younger than she was. We are given to understand this from certain passages of the chronicle of Damião de Góis, some of which were later censured by the Count of Tentúgal, and from the report of a Venetian spy who expressly mentioned that King Manuel never did anything without first asking his sister. For Damião de Góis, Queen Leonor had been no more and no less than the person who had made her brother the king of Portugal: the ‘sole cause’ to use his inescapable words²³. We also have other indirect indicators of the queen’s influence on the king, such as the fact that the latter continued to be generous towards his sister insofar as the concession of property was concerned. For the historian Anselmo Braamcamp Freire (1849–1921), who idolised King João II and disparaged King Manuel, this latter figure was a weak man, at the mercy of the

²⁰ In the original: “Sendo isso mesmo na instituição da Confraria e Irmandade e dando a elo outorga autoridade e ajuda o reverendo colégio da dita sé”. Prologue to the *Primeiro Compromisso*, *cit.*, in *PPM*, vol. 3, p. 411.

²¹ Gonçalo Amaro, *Uma Igreja, Duas Histórias*, *cit.*, p. 13.

²² Biblioteca Nacional da Ajuda, *cód.* 51-V-69, fl. 209.

²³ “... which Lady was the sole cause of his being appointed in the succession of these Kingdoms...”. Damião de Góis, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel*, new edition in accordance with the first edition of 1566, Coimbra, by order of the University, 1949, part I, p. 9.

pressures exerted upon him by the three women in his family, his mother Beatriz and his two sisters, Queen Leonor and the dowager Duchess of Bragança, Dona Isabel²⁴. We should therefore consider the hypothesis (which unfortunately it is impossible to prove) that Leonor was the *éminence grise* behind her brother, and that he always treated her with a consideration that King João III did not show her in the last four years of the queen's life, between 13 December 1521 and 17 November 1525, which were the dates of the deaths of King Manuel and Queen Leonor respectively.

In one of the few letters in which she allowed herself to make a more personal remark, Queen Leonor was to say that she “was the cause” of the foundation of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia. This was much later on, in 1524, in her reply to the provost and brothers of the Misericórdia do Porto who had asked her to intercede with King João III on behalf of the confraternity, since they had not been paid the alms in money, sugar and incense that they had previously received in the time when his father was king²⁵. Probably the queen wished to say that the idea had been hers, and that her brother had taken credit for it, and she was not referring in the letter just to the Misericórdia do Porto, but in fact to all the *miseri-córdias* in the kingdom, created after the one set up in Lisbon²⁶.

In Autumn 1498, when King Manuel returned to Lisbon, he found the Misericórdia de Lisboa already founded. We do not know whose idea this was, whether the two siblings had planned its foundation before the king left, or even whether the latter had been taken by surprise and then gone along with it. What is certain is that, from then on, *miseri-córdias* were founded almost everywhere where there were Portuguese to be found. Queen Leonor abandoned the regency and it fell to her brother to protect the new confraternities since he was now the king; we will always know very little about the role that the queen played after the founding moment in the evolution of the *miseri-córdias*.

The movement that led to the foundation of the *miseri-córdias* must be seen within the context of a Manueline tendency for the standardisation of institutions, which took place in specific areas such as the publication of the Ordinances (1512-4) and of the new charters (1497-1520), and it should not be seen as part of a supposed centralisation of the royal power²⁷. In short, the *miseri-córdias* brought together nobles and the most highly skilled artisans of each urban centre, marking a dividing line between the elites and the rest of the population. They established social boundaries between different groups, dividing their own members into

²⁴ Anselmo Braamcamp Freire, *Crítica e História. Estudos*, Lisbon, Gulbenkian, 1996, pp. 97-132, in particular pp. 115-116.

²⁵ In Artur de Magalhães Basto, *História da Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto*, vol. I, Porto, Edição da Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto, 1934, pp. 356-358. The letter was written in Xabregas on 18 May 1524.

²⁶ This is also the interpretation of Artur de Magalhães Basto, *História da Santa Casa, cit.*, vol. I, p. 357.

²⁷ Nuno Gonçalo Monteiro, “O Reino Quinhentista”, in Rui Ramos (coord.), Bernardo Vasconcelos e Sousa and Nuno Gonçalo Monteiro, *História de Portugal*, Lisbon, Esfera dos Livros, 2009, p. 228. We may add to these actions the taking of the inventories of the chapels and hospitals, which was carried out from 1505 onwards (Góis, *Crónica do Felicíssimo cit.*, pp. 227-228. Silva Dias also talks about the intention to undertake a general reform of the monastic orders of the kingdom in around 1501. J. S. da Silva Dias, *Correntes do sentimento religioso em Portugal (séculos XVI a XVIII)*, Coimbra, Universidade de Coimbra, 1960, vol. I, Tomo I, p. 98.

noble brothers and officers, and excluding those who might come to need alms. Only in theory, since they constituted powerful elements of self-help and helped to guarantee the social reproduction of the elites themselves, who enjoyed privileged access to the confraternity's financial resources.

In 1498, therefore, a confraternity was founded in Lisbon destined for the practice of the fourteen works of mercy, "insofar as possible". While charitable practice was an extension of one's love for one's neighbour, a basic principle that had been present in the Christian religion right from its very beginning, the enumeration of the works of mercy has a history that needs to be told, albeit if only in a very general fashion. It is a difficult narrative to elaborate, since the historians of charity have not paid any real attention to the subject²⁸. A recent work, which deals with the evolution of the philosophical and political concept of mercy, does not even mention them²⁹. The historians of art, on the other hand, have dealt with the theme in some depth, since the iconographical representations of the works are mostly based on earlier texts³⁰. In very general terms, and mentioning only the most influential of these texts, let us briefly review the main moments of this evolution, merely to underline the fact that the medieval formulation of the works of mercy is the result of an evolutionary doctrinal process, and that their presence in the *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia de Lisboa is of great importance, because of the didactic value that it explicitly recognised, as well as the role that it played in structuring the activities of the confraternity.

THE ENUNCIATION OF THE FOURTEEN WORKS OF MERCY: THEIR GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT

In the Christian religion, charity and mercy are close to one another, but they are not equivalent. Charity, one of the three theological virtues, is related to one's love for God and for one's neighbour, whereas mercy, although it arises from charity, is not the same as this, since it presupposes compassion for the suffering of others. As the 1516 *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia de Lisboa made clear in its prologue: "succouring the tribulations and miseries that our brothers in Christ suffer from"³¹.

There are many passages in the Bible that refer to acts of mercy, but among them the most important is the passage from the Gospel according to St. Matthew, which inspired the seven corporal works of mercy³². Addressing the righteous,

²⁸ With the exception of Maureen Flynn, *Sacred Charity. Confraternities and Social Welfare in Spain, 1400-1700*, London, Macmillan, 1989, pp. 44-47.

²⁹ Alex Tuckness and John M. Parrish, *The Decline of Mercy in Public Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

³⁰ Maria do Rosário Salema Cordeiro Correia de Carvalho, ...*Por amor de Deus. Representação das obras de misericórdia, em painéis de azulejo, nos espaços das confrarias da Misericórdia, no Portugal Setecentista*, Master's degree thesis, Lisbon, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 2007, pp. 14-82. The literature survey that is made in this thesis refers to art historians who have examined this theme at an international level. See also Federico Botana, *The Works of Mercy in Italian Medieval Art (c. 1050-c. 1400)*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2012.

³¹ *Compromisso* of 1516, in *PMM*, vol. 3, p. 410.

³² For a survey of these episodes, see Maria do Rosário Carvalho, ...*Por amor de Deus, cit.*, pp. 17-21.

Jesus promised them the kingdom of heaven, saying “for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” (Matthew, 25: 35-36).

Not in the person of Christ, but in that of the poor, who thus began to be identified with him: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew, 25: 40). The eternal life was therefore within reach of those who practised these precepts, and eternal punishment, through *anthonomasia*, awaited those who failed to fulfil them. The passage could not be placed within the context of a more relevant whole – the Last Judgement – nor could it be more explicit about the fact that the poor (the “least of these my brethren”) are situated on the Christians’ path to eternal salvation.

The formulation of the works of mercy such as it appears in the Gospel according to St. Matthew also highlights an historic moment. Not included in this list is the seventh work of mercy – burying the dead – since cremation was still part of the funerary practices of the Roman Empire. It was precisely the idea of the Last Judgement, and of the resurrection of the flesh, that this practice should be replaced with burial. In the Bible, this work of charity is mentioned in the Book of Tobias, whom God praised for having buried the dead (Tobias, 8-14). As we shall see later on, one of the medieval Portuguese confraternities, the confraternity of *Santa Maria da Anunciada* in Setúbal, was to incorporate this precept in its version of Chapter 25 of the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

As is known, the Bible adopted by the Catholic world dates back to the fourth century, corresponding to the Vulgate of St. Jerome (347-420), who in 382 was entrusted by the Pope with the task of compiling a group of texts in different languages and translating them into Latin, although he was not always the author of these translations³³.

A contemporary of St. Jerome’s, Augustine of Hippo (354-430), was to insist that faith in itself was insufficient for obtaining salvation and that it needed to be complemented through charitable works. The formulation of the corporal works is similar to the one that we already know, but some of those that would later become the spiritual works of mercy were already being sketched out. For St. Augustine, forgiving those who sin against us was already a work of charity: “provided what they say is what they do, for to forgive a person who asks for pardon is itself an almsdeed”³⁴. He went on to say:

“And so the Lord’s words, *Give alms, and everything is clean for you* (Luke, 11: 41), apply to any work of mercy that benefits somebody. Not only somebody who offers food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, hospitality to

³³ The Vulgate was to be rejected by the Protestant reforms, whereas the Catholic Church reasserted its official character by ratifying it in the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

³⁴ 71, the Lord’s Prayer. Saint Augustine, *The Augustine Catechism: the Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Charity*, Hyde Park, NY, New City Press, p. 99.





Works of mercy
Giving drink to the thirsty
and clothing the naked

the traveller, asylum to the refugee, a visit to the sick or the prisoner, redemption to the captive³⁵, support to the weak, guidance to the blind, comfort to the sorrowful, medicine to the unwell, a path to the wanderer, advice to the uncertain, or whatever is necessary to a person in need, but also one who offers pardon to the sinner, is giving alms. And one who uses the whip to correct someone over whom he has power, or disciplines him in some way, and yet puts away from his heart that person's sin by which he has been hurt or offended, or prays that it may be forgiven him, is giving alms not only through forgiveness and prayer but also in reproof and correction by some punishment, for thus he is showing mercy"³⁶.

In this way, St. Augustine proposed an expansion of the contents of the Gospel according to St. Matthew relating to the Last Judgement, as referred to above (Matthew 25: 31-46), extending it to include all acts that might benefit someone. He already refers to what would later be some of the spiritual works of mercy, albeit without their definitive formulation: the second, to counsel the doubtful, the third, to admonish the sinners with charity, the fourth, to comfort the afflicted; the fifth, to forgive offences willingly; and the sixth, to bear wrongs patiently. Only the first, to instruct the ignorant, and the seventh, to pray for the living and the dead, are missing.

In turn, the Benedictine rule represented a powerful instrument for the dissemination of the works of charity, because of the structural role that this religious order played in the Christian west after its foundation with St. Benedict of Nursia (480-543). In its Chapter IV, this rule enumerated the "instruments of good works", a set of 78 principles drawn from the most diverse biblical sources. Some corporal works of mercy are clearly enunciated therein: to succour the poor, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and to bury the dead. And other precepts were found that were in keeping with the spiritual works of mercy, although they were referred to without any apparent logical sequence: to comfort the afflicted; not to seek vengeance, not to commit injustices in relation to anyone but to bear the injustices that they do unto us patiently; not to repay evil with evil, and to love our enemies³⁷. These recommendations, which were made for the use of monks, did not apply to everyone and were not restricted to the works of mercy, which became lost in the profusion of precepts. They did not yet contain the systematisation that the works of mercy were to have later on, when they were reduced to fourteen, seven spiritual and seven corporal.

In the life of the monks, the works of mercy were above all reflected in the duty of hospitality to the poor and to travellers, who should be received as if they were Christ himself, always in keeping with the idea that is so dear to the chapter referring to the Last Judgement in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. After

³⁵ In the *Enchiridion*, there is no mention of burying the dead, but Maureen Flynn states that St. Augustine included this work of mercy in other writings (Flynn, *Sacred Charity...cit.*, p. 45).

³⁶ Saint Augustine, *The Augustine Catechism, cit.*, pp. 99-100.

³⁷ In *Règle des moines. Pacôme. Augustin. Benoît. François d'Assise. Carmel*, Paris, Seuil, 1982, pp. 65-68.

they had been welcomed, the guests would pray together with the monks, give the kiss of peace and have their feet washed; they would eat and sleep separately, in the abbey's lodgings, which also included its own cooking facilities³⁸. As we can see, this system was quite different from the urban practices that we will find in the last centuries of the Middle Ages.

Some centuries later, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was to definitively establish in his *Summa Theologica* the programmatic value of the works of mercy for the devotional practice of the Christian, by promoting the idea that charity came above the other two theological virtues, faith and hope, because it signified union with God, stating that no true value was possible without charity³⁹.

St. Thomas also provides a point of arrival in the enumeration of the works of mercy, expressed with clarity in his *Summa Theologica*:

For we reckon seven corporal almsdeeds, namely, to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to harbour the harbourless, to visit the sick, to ransom the captive, to bury the dead; all of which are expressed in the following verse. "to visit, to quench, to feed, to ransom, clothe, harbour or bury". Again we reckon seven spiritual alms, namely, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to reprove the sinner, to forgive injuries, to bear with those who trouble and annoy us, and to pray for all, which are all contained in the following verse: "To counsel, reprove, console, to pardon, forbear, and to pray," yet so that counsel includes both advice and instruction"⁴⁰

While this was the formulation proposed by St. Augustine, which was very close to the one that would figure in the first printed *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia de Lisboa, its definitive doctrinal format was not yet universal⁴¹. For example, in the Iberian Peninsula, the *Siete Partidas*, a body of rules drawn up in Castile under the auspices of Afonso X (1252-1284), which sought to impose some standardisation on the laws of the kingdom, already listed the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, albeit in an incomplete form and under the heading of "alms". The dates of the elaboration of this code are uncertain, but it was published in the second half of the thirteenth century; if these works of mercy were not exactly contemporary to those of St. Thomas Aquinas, they did at least date from close to the same time.

"Law IX: how many kinds of alms there are

There are spiritual and corporal alms: as is shown by the law of the holy church which divides them in this way, showing that the spiritual alms are of three kinds. The first is to forgive as if someone has suffered harm and without

³⁸ *Règles des moines, cit.*, pp. 116-118.

³⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Kindle edition, Coyote Canyon Press, Claremont, Ca., Part II-II, question 24, answer to objection no. 5, position 47745 to 48183.

⁴⁰ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Suma Teológica*, São Paulo, Edições Loyola, 2004, *Summa Theologica*, Part II-II (Secunda Secundae), Question 32, art. 2, Kindle Edition, position 49643 and following.

⁴¹ The spiritual works of mercy are listed in practically the same order, with only the third one (admonishing the sinners) changing places with the fourth one (comforting the afflicted). As far as the corporal works are concerned, the order is far from being the same, with only the seventh one being the same in the two documents (burying the dead).

reason from another to forgive him through the love of God. The second is to admonish others through the love of God when it is seen that they are wrong. The third is to teach the things that are good for the health of their soul to those who do not know these things and to guide them to the path of truth. And the corporal alms are in the works of mercy, which are these: to give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, and to clothe the naked, and to visit the sick and those who are in prison.”⁴²

These were the things that God demanded on the day of judgement; also, as the soul was superior to the body, the spiritual alms had precedence over the works of mercy. As can be seen, this formulation is not yet the one that we will have later, with only three types of spiritual alms (not even referred to as spiritual works of mercy), and only five corporal works. The sixth one is missing (to give lodging to the pilgrims and the poor), although this may be included in those that mention giving food and drink to the poor; the most glaring omission is that of the seventh corporal work, to bury the dead. This list is therefore more complete with regard to the corporal works of mercy and less complete in the case of the spiritual ones.

When did the enumeration of the works of mercy begin to be disseminated in Portugal?

While the medieval texts indicating the chapter referring to the Last Judgement in the Gospel according to St. Matthew were relatively numerous and preceded the explicit formulation of the works of mercy in Portugal, these latter works did not appear before the fourteenth century. Perhaps the oldest formulation of these works was included in the erudite *Compromisso* of the confraternity of Santa Maria da Anunciada in Setúbal, which is dated 1330⁴³. Clearly enunciated here are the seven corporal works of mercy, completed with the inclusion of the seventh – to bury the dead – inserted in a version of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, which now included them (*Fuy morto e soterrastes-me* – I was dead and ye buried me)⁴⁴.

Until the first half of the fourteenth century, the *Compromissos* of the confraternities talked about ‘good works’, ‘works of piety’ or ‘pious works’, but never about ‘works of mercy’⁴⁵.

⁴² Alfonso el Sabio, *Las siete partidas (Texto antiguo)*, Barcelona, Linkgua Digital, 2013, partida I, t. XXIII, lei IX, pp. 272-273. Original Spanish version: “Ley IX: quantas maneras son de limosna – Espirituales y corporales ay limosnas: segund muestra el derecho de santa yglesia que faze departimiento entre ellos desta guisa mostrando que limosna espiritual es en tres maneras. La .i. en perdonar como si alguno ouiesse sofrido daño y sin razon de otro y lo perdona por amor de dios. La .ij. es en castigar otrosi por amor de dios al que viesse que erraua. La .iij. es enseñar las cosas che fuesen a salud de su alma al que no sopiese & tornarlo a carrera de verdad. E la limosna corporal es en las obras de misericordia: que son estas: dar de comer al fanbriento & a beuer al sediento: y vestir el desnudo: y [fol. 72 v.] visitar el enfermo & lo que yace preso.”

⁴³ Ana Filipa Avellar, *Compromisso da Confraria de Setúbal (1330)*, Master’s degree dissertation, Lisbon, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1996, pp. 64-94.

⁴⁴ José Pedro Paiva, Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Saul António Gomes, *Antes da Fundação das Misericórdias*, in José Pedro Paiva (coord.), *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, vol. 2, p. 334 (henceforth referred to as *PMM*, vol. 2).

⁴⁵ See the numerous documents published in *PPM*, vol. 2. To focus on just a few, cf. the *Compromissos* of confraternities from the thirteenth century between p. 265 and p. 329.

Only in the fifteenth century did the formulation of the works of mercy become widespread in Portugal. The best known version was that of the king himself, King Duarte, who included them in his *Leal Conselheiro*, written in around 1438. On this occasion, we find a complete enumeration, including the seven spiritual and corporal works, duly explained. Among the first were, “to give sound counsel, to teach well and virtuously those who do not know and to put on the right path those who are lost, to console the afflicted of sight, word and work, to bear the pain of the evil and the loss of your neighbour, providing him at all times with the best you can, to pray to God for pilgrims and wayfarers upon the sea, to pray for the dead in general and especially for those to whom we are obliged. And the seven corporal works that belong to the body, namely to clothe those in need, to give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, to visit the sick, to visit the imprisoned, to give lodging to pilgrims, to bury the dead.”⁴⁶

Clemente Sanchez de Vercial (c. 1370-1426), an archdeacon of Valderas, in Leon, was the author of the *Sacramental*, written between 1421 and 1423, at the end of his life, a work that was, above all, intended for the instruction of priests in the Christian doctrine, whose ignorance the author recognised in the respective prologue. This work enjoyed enormous success until it was banned in the Index of Valdes, in 1559, promulgated in Valladolid, and then later accepted by the Cardinal King Henrique of Portugal: thirteen editions were published in Castilian, and four in Portuguese⁴⁷. This was the first book to be printed in Portuguese, in Chaves (1488)⁴⁸. It was followed by the editions published in Braga, between 1494 and 1500, Lisbon (1502), and once again Braga in 1539⁴⁹.

This brief review of the appearance and dissemination of the formulation of the works of mercy allows us to see that, in Portugal, before the fourteenth century, there was no textual evidence that these works were known in their definitive version, such as it appears in the catechisms, and in the prologue to the 1516 *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*. It cannot be said that they were an absolute novelty, but their repetition arose from a process of affirmation (and consolidation) that took place throughout the fifteenth century. Hence the need for their inclusion *ipsis verbis* in the *Compromisso* of the new confraternity, while, at the same

⁴⁶ Duarte, king of Portugal, 1391-1438, *Leal Conselheiro*. In *Obras dos Príncipes de Avis*, M. Lopes de Almeida (ed.), Porto, Lello & Irmão, 1981, pp. 325-327. *PMM*, vol. 2, p. 469. Original Portuguese text: “dar são conselho, ensinar bem e virtuosamente o que não sabe e encaminhar o que vai ou anda desencaminhado, consolar o desconsolado por vista, palavra e obra, doer-se do mal e perda de seu próximo, provendo-lhe em todo o tempo o que bem puder, rogar a Deus pelos caminhantes e andantes sobre o mar, fazer oração pelos finados em geral e especialmente por aqueles a que somos obrigados. E as sete corporais que pertencem ao corpo, silicet vestir os que hão mister, dar de comer aos famintos e de beber aos sedorentos, visitar os enfermos, visitar os encarcerados, dar pousada aos caminheros, enterrar os finados.”

⁴⁷ Cf. José Barbosa Machado, “Introdução”, in Clemente Sánchez de Vercial, *Sacramental [Chaves, 1488]*, José Barbosa Machado (ed.), 3rd edition, revised, Braga, Edições Vercial, 2014, pp. 7-9.

⁴⁸ José Marques, “O arcebispo D. Jorge da Costa e as impressões flavienses do *Sacramental* e do *Tratado de confissom*”, *Revista Aquae Flaviae*, 1 (Jan.-Jun.), 1989, pp. 23-45. For a recent edition of this version, see Sánchez de Vercial, *Sacramental [Chaves, 1488]*, *cit.*

⁴⁹ Clemente Sánchez de Vercial, *Sacramental*, sl., s.n., entre 1494 e 1500; Sacrame[n]tals / [por] Crimente Sanchez daverçhial bacharel en leys.. Lysboa: per Ioha[m] pedro de Cremona, 28 Sete[m]bro 1502; [Sacramental / por Crime[n]te te sanchez de vercial]; Braga: Pedro dela Rocha: per Iohã Beltrã: Pero Gõc[aluares], 15 feueyeyro 1539].



Works of mercy
Burying the dead

time, contemporary (or slightly later) catechisms also referred to them. The most paradigmatic example is the *Manual dos Costumes* from the diocese of Coimbra, in which the works of mercy appeared in connection with the summary of Christian doctrine. It contained the twelve articles of the Catholic faith, divided into fourteen (!), seven belonging to the divinity and another seven to the humanity of Christ; the ten commandments, the first three belonging to the honour of God and the others to one's neighbour, the five commandments of the Church, the seven sacraments, the seven deadly sins, the seven virtues, the five senses, the seven gifts of the holy spirit, and the fourteen works of mercy, seven spiritual and seven corporal. The catechism called for the commitment of these items to one's memory at a time when it was necessary to learn things by heart, because of the lack of possible forms for duplicating texts that would make them available to all. The number of items given in the case of each doctrinal group had the function of helping the Christian to learn the basic notions by heart, making use of the fingers of his hands: seven deadly sins, ten commandments (three against God and seven against men); eight beatitudes, etc.⁵⁰

CONFRATERNITIES AND THE WORKS OF MERCY

Albeit in a very general way, it is relatively feasible to trace the genesis of the works from a textual point of view, but it is undoubtedly even more difficult to track their implantation in the devotional practices of Western Europe. The enunciation of the works of mercy corresponds to the fixed establishment of what was understood by the idea of charitable practices at a precise time in history, during the period of economic growth in the medieval western world, between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries.

The works of mercy were addressed in particular to lay persons; these were the ones who should improve their knowledge of the doctrine and duties that this concept implied. Among the religious organisations that had a special vocation for congregating lay persons around common eschatological concerns were the confraternities, founded all over Europe, especially from the eleventh century onwards. These were associations of faithful believers who met to practise religious worship in all its forms: prayers of suffrage, processions, the upkeep of sacred places and things, aid to those who were weaker. Death and its rituals were, however, the pivotal moment around which the actions of the confreres most tended to come together. The practices of worship were intended to prepare the eternal life, and the giving of alms played a fundamental role in this. Many of these confraternities sought to promote the spread of devotional practices to the poorer and less educated segments of the population. Many of these men barely knew

⁵⁰ *Manuale secundum consuetudinem colibriens ecclesie*. Lixbonen: Nicolaum Gazini de Pedemontio, 1518, fls. LXXXIIIv-LXXXVIv. In *PMM*, vol. 3, pp. 530-534.

the Bible, but they learned the doctrinal precepts through their participation in the confraternities, albeit in a rather general fashion. It was in such a context that the works of mercy were to be understood: as Clemente Sanchez de Vercial said, in his already-mentioned *Sacramental*, they were a “prayer of work”, or, in other words, a way of worshipping and praying to God.

“Mercy is feeling the pain of the misery and affliction of your neighbour and Christian. And the work of mercy is a prayer of work. Here it must be known that there are two forms of prayer. One is vocal and comes from the mouth, just as the prayer that we make in beseeching God and asking him for something. Another is real, which is the prayer of work. And this is the giving of alms. And this prayer of work is the works of mercy or some of them.”⁵¹

This precise nature of medieval charity needs to be underlined: in the eyes of its mentors, it was just one of various forms of worship that competed with one another, amongst which were prayer and penitence. It was not by chance that many of these confraternities engaged in self-flagellation in processions, and, in the Holy Week, found the high spot of their devotional activity.

The confraternities exuded an attitude whereby the active life had primacy over the contemplative tradition of the cloister. Without the cities they would not have existed; confraternities and urban growth went hand in hand with one another. The works of mercy corresponded to the fixed establishment of what were understood to be charitable practices at a precise time in history, the already-mentioned period of economic growth enjoyed by the medieval western world from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. The population of the cities grew, above all, through the emigration from the countryside into the city, bringing together highly heterogeneous people. These were communities divided by frontiers of gender, levels of wealth, age group, social status and legal condition. The confraternities were formed above all because of their organisational and normative power over the life of the different communities, which were scattered into fragmented entities and where religion, which from a certain time onwards was turned into a single whole (through the exclusion of religious minorities), represented the cohesion that was possible in territories divided by the fact that people belonged to different jurisdictions, by social stratification and different levels of status and wealth.

These associations had highly diverse contexts and purposes: they promoted liturgical singing in churches, organised festivals and banquets (religious ones undoubtedly) and provided funerals for their members. And they also practised the virtue of charity, helping the poor who most of the time were divided into specific categories (poor maidens, prisoners, those who were condemned to death,

⁵¹ “Titolo lxxij, que cousa he mia” in Clemente Sánchez de Vercial, *Sacramental* [*Chaves 1488*], *cit.*, p. 121. Original Portuguese text: “Misericórdia é doer-se homem da miséria e coita de seu próximo e cristão. E obra de misericórdia é oração de obra. Cá é saber que duas maneiras são de oração. Uma vocal que é da boca, assim como a oração que fazemos rogando a Deus pedindo-lhe alguma coisa. Outra é real que é de obra. E esta é esmola. E esta oração de obra são as obras de misericórdia ou alguma delas.”

etc.). The communities were also divided into specific groups, such as the confraternities based on different professions (seafarers, craftsmen, magistrates, confraternities of beggars, of the blind, etc.); the *confrarias de nação* (“national confraternities” set up in order to provide shelter for travellers who came from a given political unit); and, from the sixteenth century onwards, there were also the ethnic confraternities (for black people or mulattos)⁵².

The medieval western world probably did not invent the confraternities, which already existed in the Roman world, but, during this period, they became considerably more numerous and were afforded greater diversity. According to Michel Mollat, the confraternities that were dedicated to the practice of the works of mercy appeared in the twelfth century, many of them being societies of mutual aid that functioned within a closed circuit, in other words benefitting their own members, and also sometimes, albeit far more rarely, the poor people of the local area⁵³.

In Portugal, the first known confraternities date back to the twelfth century. There were confraternities that provided for burials, and for clothing or feeding the poor, among other acts, but they did not clearly announce in their *Compromissos* that they practised the respective works of mercy. Or, in other words, they did not reveal a clearly defined “doctrine” of “mercy”. There is a parallel that can be drawn between this lack of a clear textual definition in the formulation of the works of mercy until the first half of the fourteenth century and the appearance of confraternities explicitly dedicated to the practice of one or more works of mercy. As we shall see, the Misericórdia de Lisboa, and then its counterparts around the kingdom and in its overseas territories, proposed the practice of all the works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal. The first *Compromisso* of the Lisbon confraternity enumerated these works as follows:

Of the works of mercy, which and how many they are. Chapter one. Since this holy confraternity was founded in order to fulfil the works of mercy, it is necessary to know the said works.

The first is to instruct the ignorant.
The second is to give good counsel to those who seek it.
The third is to admonish with charity those who do wrong.
The fourth is to console the sad and disconsolate.
The fifth is to forgive those who have done us wrong.
The sixth is to bear wrongs with patience.
The seventh is to pray to God for the living and the dead.
And the seven corporal works of mercy are as follows, namely,

⁵² On the different types of confraternities, cf. John Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994, or also Christopher F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

⁵³ Michel Mollat, *Les pauvres au Moyen Âge*, Brussels, Éditions Complexe, 2006, pp. 125-135.



Works of mercy

The emergence of the practice of the corporal works of mercy cannot be dissociated from the urban growth of the last centuries of the Middle Ages. In the figure, 'giving food to the hungry'.

The first is to ransom the captives and to visit the prisoners.
The second is to cure the sick.
The third is to clothe the naked.
The fourth is to give food to the hungry.
The fifth is to give drink to the thirsty.
The sixth is to give shelter to the pilgrims and the poor.
The seventh is to bury the dead.⁵⁴

The didactic purpose of this enunciation of the works is made clear by the underlined phrase “it is necessary to know the said works”, which points to the fact that they were not yet fully inculcated among everyone as doctrinal principles. While, as we have seen, the Crown and the religious elites were already familiar with their formulation, the same may not have been the case in regard to the confreres and brothers who practised good works at the confraternity of the Misericórdia de Lisboa.

CHARITABLE PRACTICES AND THE WORKS OF MERCY

Before moving on to the analysis of the way in which the works of mercy were practised in the first days of the Lisbon confraternity, it is important to draw attention to the role reserved for the Virgin Mary, recognised as the “title, name and invocation of Our Lady the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary of Mercy”, immediately on the very first lines of the prologue of its *Compromisso*. The *mater omnium* (mother of all) presided over the charitable works that were practised and it was she, more than Christ or God the Father, who was responsible for pardoning the sins of mankind. Unlike the other two figures, she did not judge, but sheltered everyone under her protective cloak. This matrical role (in the literal meaning of the word) that was assumed by the mother of Christ is not found in the Bible, and it is an example, among many others, that the evolution of the Christian religion (in this case, Catholic) was not always based on texts, but on the customary tendencies and ways of thinking of its believers. The Virgin dressed in her cloak was established as one of the most common representations of the spirit of charity, and of the need for protection felt by men and women, becoming one of the most recurrent images of the visual culture of that time. Together with the figuration of the Virgin and Child, this image represented the idea of the mother of sinful humanity. Always young and beautiful, impermeable to the less

⁵⁴ Original Portuguese text: Das obras de misericórdia quais e quantas são. Capítulo primeiro. Pois o fundamento desta santa confraria é de cumprir as obras de misericórdia é necessário de saber as ditas obras. A primeira é ensinar os simples. A segunda é dar boõ conselho a que o pede. A terceira é castigar com caridade os que erram. A quarta é consolar os tristes desconsolados. A quinta é perdoar a quem nos errou. A sexta é sofrer as injúrias com paciência. A sétima é rogar a Deus pelos vivos e pelos mortos. E as sete corporais são as seguintes, *scilicet*. A primeira é remir cativos e visitar os presos. A segunda é curar os enfermos. A terceira é cobrir os nus. A quarta é dar de comer aos famintos. A quinta é dar de beber aos que hão sede. A sexta é dar pousada aos peregrinos e pobres. A sétima é enterrar os finados.

noble human emotions, the figure of the Virgin did not, however, correspond to the condition of women, who were always subordinate to, and dependent upon, men⁵⁵. At the Portuguese *misericórdias*, the representation of the Virgin in her cloak was transformed into their visual *leitmotiv*, depicted in stone, in paintings on canvas and wood, on glazed decorative tiles, and also on paper. The *Compromissos* themselves reproduced the Virgin: in the *Compromisso* printed in 1516, the same engraving was reproduced twice: in the frontispiece, and after the table of contents, in an image that occupied the whole page⁵⁶. This representation was maintained in the frontispieces of the *Compromissos* printed after this, although it occupied less space⁵⁷.

As is known, the Misericórdia de Lisboa was replicated throughout the kingdom and its conquests, beginning in the very same year as its foundation. One of the ways in which the confraternity was disseminated was via the texts of the Lisbon *Compromissos*, which each new confraternity acquired, sometimes adapting them to the local reality⁵⁸. There are several such texts, but we must see in the *Compromisso* printed in 1516 a turning point, brought about by the establishment and fixing of the respective text, which was now in print and therefore could be reproduced more easily. Although it underwent a number of alterations over time, some of which were quite profound, it served as the basis for the *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia de Lisboa of 1577 and that of 1618. Besides its organisational and administrative aspects, and despite the fact that the explicit formulation of the works of mercy disappeared in the 1618 *Compromisso*, the charitable practices of the Portuguese *misericórdias*, which were eminently wide-reaching, owed a great deal to the initial formulation of the 1516 text.

Revisiting the way in which the Portuguese *misericórdias* practised the works of mercy helps us to understand the mental universe of these social actors and their attitudes towards the poor.

Above all, the corporal works of mercy meant the need to provide for poor people's needs for physical survival: not dying of hunger or thirst, but being provided with shelter and being cared for in sickness, as well as receiving lodging during their long journeys, which were generally undertaken on foot. The spiritual works of mercy were not, however, intended only for the poor, but were related with rules of social intercourse: to bear wrongs patiently, to give good counsel to those seeking it, to make peace between enemies. To use a more modern vocabulary, we should say nowadays that the aim of such works was to safeguard the dignity of each person

⁵⁵ Flynn, *Sacred Charity*, *cit.*, p. 78.

⁵⁶ *O Compromisso da Confraria da Misericórdia*. Lisboa, per Valentym fernandez e Harmam de ca[m]pos, 1516, (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, purl.pt/27090).

⁵⁷ *Compromisso da Irmandade da Casa da Sancta Misericórdia da Cidade de Lisboa*. [Lisbon], by Antonio Alvarez, 1600 (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, purl.pt/15178). *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, Lisbon, Pedro Craasbeck, 1619 (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, purl.pt/13349).

⁵⁸ For the manuscript versions of the *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa* prior to its printing in 1516, cf. *PMM*, vol. 3, pp. 385-410 and Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *Da Descoberta da Misericórdia*, *cit.*, pp. 225-243.

when faced with adverse situations, in such a way as to contribute to the harmony of the community, or at least to avoid the exacerbation of already existing conflicts. They required self-control, in order to prevent the escalation of tensions, in societies that were marked by high levels of physical and verbal violence. The spiritual works of mercy thus consisted of precepts of good social interaction, based on the exercise of the virtue of charity. Or, in other words, the work of bearing wrongs patiently was an attempt to suggest the moral inferiority of those who were committing the wrong, calling for benevolence on the part of those who were wronged.

St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas had already insisted on the need for the good Christian to love his enemies. The spiritual aspect of the *misericórdias* was not therefore linked to the relationship between the poor and the non-poor, but had to do with the communities in general, and it could also take into consideration the relationship between equals. Consequently, it is quite understandable that the spiritual works should figure considerably less in the *Compromissos* than the corporal works, with the latter being directed more towards helping the poor. Some works of mercy were never taken seriously, although they were included in the *Compromissos*. The first spiritual work, for example – to instruct the ignorant – was related not to the teaching of literacy, but to the learning of the doctrine, and it does not seem to have been practised by the confraternities of the *misericórdias*, because it was not specifically stated that they should teach the catechism.

On the other hand, the fourteen works of mercy should not be understood in isolation, because most charitable practices tended to consist of a combination of these works. The most customary practice was to perform several works simultaneously, both corporal and spiritual. Let us take the hypothetical example of a pilgrim. If he were undernourished, he could be fed and clothed; he could receive the holy sacraments if he had been missing communion, or receive the last rites; if he were sick, he could be visited by a physician or be tended to by a brother, and so on. We should not therefore consider the works in isolation, but instead see them as a unified whole.

In its chapter 19, under the heading of “How to proceed in order to make friendships”, the 1516 *Compromisso* included the act of making peace between enemies, which we might wish to see as a combination between the fifth spiritual work (to forgive those who have wronged us) and the sixth (to bear wrongs patiently). There is evidence that the confraternity did its best to cause people who were in disagreement to make peace with one another in public, at ritualised ceremonies, generally undertaken during Holy Week. The difficulties in reconciling people who were in disagreement with one another were immediately evident in the text, which prescribed the taking of written records of the reconciliations that were made in the presence of four witnesses, so that the parties could not deny it at a later date. This chapter was later included in the *Compromissos* of 1577 and 1618, although in this latter case various exceptions were added to cover situations that might cause harm to the common good.



Works of mercy
Healing the sick

The most influential spiritual work of mercy in the *praxis* of the Misericórdia consisted in praying to God for the living and the dead. Because of the importance that the living attributed to eternal salvation, and to the third place between Heaven and Hell – Purgatory – organising masses to pray for their souls was a priority among the benefactors of the *misericórdias*, which clearly relegated to a secondary place the donations made with a view to the exercise of corporal works of mercy by the brothers. Since these masses were set up in their thousands at each *misericórdia*, either as separate events or in combination with others, they turned the *misericórdias* into important agents for hiring clergy, so that they could fulfil the seventh spiritual work of mercy. On the other hand, the donations that were made with the aim of curing the “sick poor”, ransoming captives, helping prisoners, providing dowries for orphan maidens and alms in the form of clothes, money and food, were far less popular among the benefactors. The poor received far fewer resources than those given to the souls of the deceased, although sometimes there were surpluses from the funds donated to set up masses, which, if they were not used, especially from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, the Portuguese *misericórdias* profitably invested in treasury bonds or deposited in banks and turned into capital loans.

In the early days of the *misericórdias*, the idea of the “visit” as a moment imbued with sacred significance was particularly important for charitable practices. Since these confraternities did not have hospitals or other charitable institutions of their own (such as the ones that they would later come to administer), special emphasis was placed on the visit as a privileged moment of compassion for one’s neighbour. Visiting not only prisoners, but also the sick and poor in their own homes became one of the most regular practices at the *misericórdias* in the first few decades of their existence.

The illustration of scenes from the Gospels once again became an important part of the cult of the Virgin Mary: it was Mary who, after receiving the annunciation of the birth of Christ, had visited her cousin Elizabeth, pregnant with St. John the Baptist and especially deserving of compassion due to her advanced age (Luke, 1: 39-56). This episode, known as the Visitation, which, in the liturgical calendar took place on 2 July, was transformed into the *leitmotiv* of the *misericórdias* and the date became that of the day of the brotherhood, when changes were supposed to take place in the leadership and the accounts from the previous year were presented.

To visit prisons and hospitals, royal letters patent were required, giving permission for the brothers to enter these places, as well as making it possible for them to go there out of hours, with it being necessary to ensure that they could carry weapons with them (which were prohibited after the bell had been sounded for the curfew). Prisoners also had a peculiar symbolic value according to the logic of salvation that existed at that time. The analogies established between prisoners and



Works of mercy
Ransoming captives and visiting prisoners

the souls of believers, imprisoned in their own corrupt bodies, made the captive a living metaphor for the situation of the Christians. It was also a society where the soul took precedence over all aspects of material life.

Beyond the eschatological meanings of prison, the prisoners found themselves living in situations that were highly restrictive from a physical point of view: they were often kept chained up in dark and filthy cells and were only given food if they could pay their jailors for it, or if their family and friends helped them. In this way, communication was ensured with the world outside the jail, so that the prisoners could receive food or money, frequently donated in the form of alms. In the case of poor prisoners, the situation was even worse, since they ran the risk of dying of starvation. Prison was only a place where one awaited one's sentence, which could be a release from jail, exile, death, or the cutting off of one's limbs, a punishment that was still practised in the reign of King Manuel. Sentencing prisoners to a term of imprisonment was not yet part of the normal practice, so that the prison was merely a waiting room (although, in actual practice, some prisoners were kept in jail for months and even years on end). In this way, shortening the time between the imprisonment and the judicial sentence – the “deliverance” – was a priority in terms of the charitable act that was provided. At the Appeal Courts of Porto and Lisbon, the members of the respective *misericórdias* frequently tried to encourage the litigants to reach amicable agreements in order to avoid subsequent legal procedures. Such procedures led the brothers to serve as mediators between the parties in dispute, obtaining pardons in the name of the king⁵⁹. These pardons were always granted in the case of minor crimes, related with personal disputes, or verbal insults, so that we can include these amicable agreements among the confraternity's practice of spiritual works of mercy.



Visitare i carcerati

Façade of the Ospedale Santa Maria del Ceppo (Pistoia)

⁵⁹ Marta Tavares Escocard de Oliveira, *Justiça e Caridade: a Produção Social dos Infratores Pobres em Portugal, séculos XIV ao XVIII*, PhD thesis, Niterói, Universidade Fluminense, 2000, pp. 250-257.

This state of affairs meant that the brothers of the *Misericórdia* could enter into prisons, clean them, give food to the prisoners, tend to them in sickness, providing the help of a physician if necessary, but also dealing with their lawsuits at the courts. This explains why the first corporal work of mercy (to ransom captives and to visit the imprisoned) is represented in the visual arts through the depiction of men visiting prisons, sometimes equipped with buckets, as in the case of the frieze of glazed ceramic tiles at the Hospital do Cepo in Pistoia.

The aid that was provided to the prisoners also included a spiritual dimension, by ensuring that they could attend mass on a regular basis, which was mostly celebrated in a chapel in front of a prison window, so that the prisoners could establish visual contact. In this context, special significance was also attached to the removal of the bodies of those who were sentenced to death from the place where they were executed, and to their subsequent burial. It was important to tend to the souls of everyone, mainly those who found themselves in a flagrant situation of sin, as, for example, in the case of penitents and convicts.

Other types of poverty also existed in medieval Portugal: helping to pay the ransoms of captives was always one of the most important works. These captives were prisoners of a religious war, and hanging over them was the spectre of Hell if they converted to the enemy's religion. With the conquests of North Africa, which prolonged the crusading ideals of the Medieval Reconquest, the figure of the captive was given even greater value and importance. On both sides, there was a thriving market in ransoms; the most complicated aspect was to purchase the freedom of poor captives, and it was here that the works of mercy entered into action. Public collections of money were made, and people bequeathed legacies in their wills to help pay for the prisoners' ransom. There were some religious orders that had a special vocation for dealing with such cases, such as, for example, the Trinitarians, who were installed in Portugal in 1207, and who claimed for themselves the exclusive right to exercise this work of mercy in the second half of the sixteenth century. However, there was no end to the involvement of the *misericórdias* in this matter; the *Misericórdia do Porto*, for example, continued to busy itself with the ransom of fishermen and seafarers kidnapped by pirates in the north of Africa.

Religious values took precedence over all other considerations, defining the sacraments as a priority for some charitable practices. For example, ensuring that foundlings received a solemn baptism (contrasting with the urgent need for care that they frequently exhibited at the moment of their abandonment) was more important than creating effective conditions for the survival of such children. In the same way, the last rites or the delivery of the soul of a deceased pauper were the real criteria underlying the charitable help and assistance that were provided to him.

The transition from the late Middle Ages to the modern period brought with it a worsening of the condition of women, to the point where some historians, such as Nicholas Terpstra, have understood that this was the driving force behind the charitable

reforms in the cities of the Italian Renaissance⁶⁰. Single mothers and bastards were condemned to an increasingly marginal social condition, compared with the Middle Ages when their presence was considered a normal affair and was much more readily tolerated, not only by their families, but also by the authorities⁶¹.

As far as Portugal is concerned, there are still no data enabling us to confirm the increase in the numbers of poor women and the consequent creation of institutions to help them, but there are some indicators that this was in fact the case. For example, regarding the forms of worship, there existed the figure of the *merceeiro* or *merceira*, men and women who received board and lodging from charitable donors in exchange for praying for their souls and for those of their deceased family. This was a way of providing charitable care and assistance for abandoned people who otherwise would not be able to enjoy decent living conditions⁶². In most cases, such people corresponded to the *pobres envergonhados*, people who had fallen on hard times and whose relatively high social status evidently contrasted with the penury that they now experienced, being too “ashamed” to acknowledge their poverty in public. There are indications that there was a tendency for *merceeiros* to consist more and more of women in the late Middle Ages. The endowment of poor orphan girls was a practice that already existed in medieval times and became increasingly frequent in Portugal, especially from the first half of the sixteenth century onwards. Charitable donors were increasingly concerned with setting up dowries to help arrange marriages for girls who otherwise would not be able to find husbands, and whose souls might be lost by their succumbing to the temptations of the devil. The provision of dowries became one of the most successful charitable practices until the end of the modern period, but the emphasis that was placed on female sexual honour was transformed into an instrument of repression to be used against women. The endowment of poor women is an example illustrating the fact that the works of mercy were insufficient for dealing with every form of deprivation, since these situations were not covered by the list of fourteen works.

In any case, the works of mercy were never practised as an absolute gift; they were part of an exchange economy, based on the gift and counter-gift, as Marcel Mauss suggested⁶³. The poor provided the givers with one of the paths to their salvation, together with the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the Saints, with prayer and penitence. On the other hand, they also provided services, attending funerals in exchange for praying for the soul of the dead. They received clothes, food and drink, and other forms of aid, but they were not exempt from

⁶⁰ For the author, most of the poor people were women, and the new institutions were largely intended for their use. Nicholas Terpstra, *Cultures of Charity. Women, Politics and the Reform of Poor Relief in Renaissance Italy*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2013, p. 2.

⁶¹ David I. Kertzer, *Sacrificed for Honor. Italian Infant Abandonment and the Politics of Reproductive Control*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1993, pp. 17-19.

⁶² Maria José Pimenta Ferro Tavares, *Pobreza e Morte em Portugal na Idade Média*, Lisbon, Presença, 1989, pp. 91-96 and 131-133.

⁶³ Marcel Mauss, *Ensaio sobre a Dádiva*, Lisbon, Edições 70, s.d., pp. 76, 162 and 175.

obligations. It was a relationship of exchange, which today has been lost when one accepts a grant from a private or state institution, since this gift has become transformed into a right. Contrary to a fiscal system in which the state taxes the taxpayers according to supposedly objective criteria, charity belongs to a world of voluntary transfers of wealth, so that the amount of the donation, the time and the form under which it is made, are all left to the criterion of the donor⁶⁴. The benefactor's absolute freedom is a mark of his economic and social power, and an important factor in the continued reproduction of this same power. On the other side, in return for the act of giving, the receiver had the duty of gratitude and the obligation to repay the gift by praying.

The works of charity conferred order and significance upon the divisions created in society by economic and social inequalities. Charity played an important role in the stabilisation of the social order; its purpose was not to change reality, but to maintain it. It did not seek to change the social and economic structures, or to narrow the gap between rich and poor, but only to serve as a vehicle for salvation. The poor would not cease to be so; and, in the same way, the middle strata of society, namely artisans working in urban areas, because they were vital for the economy of cities, were the ones who most benefited from charitable resources. Did this aid actually make a difference? In political and social terms, charity was designed to maintain the established order; it called for submissiveness and discipline on the part of the poor, as well as others who were less poor but also in need of help.

The Portuguese *misericórdias* sought to perform all the works of mercy, whereas the confraternities in other regions of Europe with the same charitable invocation concentrated on just one or two of these works, but never on them all at the same time. The Tuscan *misericórdias*, for example, specialised in emergency services, because they had been founded in times of widespread plague, when the first need was to collect all the bodies from the streets and to bury them; in no case had they specifically been designed to offer a system of general care and assistance, since their stated purpose was not to fulfil all the works of mercy⁶⁵. There were numerous confraternities in the Spanish world that were designated *misericórdias*, but these did not have the same wide-reaching nature as the Portuguese ones. The one in Madrid, for example, had as its main objective to remove vagrants from the street and to oblige them to work. Not all the Spanish *misericórdias* with an invocation to Our Lady of Mercy had this degree of specialisation, however; some, such as the one in Zamora, buried the dead, visited the poor in hospital, and gave shelter to pilgrims⁶⁶.

What made the Portuguese *misericórdias* clearly original was their broader scope of action and their replication on a global scale – in Portugal and the various areas of Iberian expansion – something that, as far as is known, was unprecedented in

⁶⁴ Carlo M. Cipolla, *História Económica da Europa Pré-Industrial*, Lisbon, Edições 70, s.d. [1974], p. 30 and following.

⁶⁵ Cf. the *Compromissos* of the Italian *misericórdias* (respectively Florence-1490; Rome-1501 and Rome-1518), in Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *Da descoberta da Misericórdia*, cit., pp. 269-309.

⁶⁶ Flynn, *Sacred Charity...cit.*, pp. 51 and 74.



Works of mercy
Giving shelter to pilgrims and the poor

any other confraternity⁶⁷. It is true that there were confraternities of the Rosary or of the Holy Sacrament to be found all over the Portuguese Empire to some extent. But these did not operate as part of a network, nor did they have the same political and social importance as the *misericórdias* at a local level⁶⁸. Formally placed under the control and supervision of the royal power, the *misericórdias* operated in accordance with a form of equilibrium established between the central and the local power: such a balance was frequently precarious or under threat from royal pressures, but, even so, it was an enduring one, since it was only called into question by the first threats brought by the Enlightenment, although these did not seriously affect it, nor even succeed in bringing about its replacement by another system⁶⁹. This combination of characteristics made the Portuguese *misericórdias* unique: they operated according to the same rules; they sought to fulfil all the works of mercy at the same time; and they all enjoyed royal protection.

The Portuguese *misericórdias* were original because they were widespread and all-inclusive, but they did, however, follow European patterns, namely in their obedience to Catholic rules. Or, in other words, charity led to the organisation of institutions throughout the Catholic world based on private bequests or donations made by living persons, submitting the poor people to prior selection. Their particularities generally had to do with local specificities, sometimes being linked to small political units, of which the extreme fragmentation of the Italian Peninsula is a paradigmatic example. Unlike Italy, Portugal managed to achieve a relatively homogeneous pattern throughout its European territory (relatively small in terms of size and without any regional differences from a political point of view), which it then exported to territories scattered all around the world. Charles Boxer described them, together with the municipal councils, as the twin pillars of Portuguese colonial society, in a description that has become quite famous, but which could also be extended to the metropolis⁷⁰. This pattern included something that was rare in Catholic Europe: a great autonomy in regard to the Church's control and supervision of charitable institutions, guaranteed by the existence of the *misericórdias*. We would, in fact, go much further and state that the foundation of a series of such institutions, sponsored by King Manuel I, corresponded to a very precise moment in the history of Portugal, a time when the

⁶⁷ There were *misericórdias* in the areas of Spanish overseas expansion, such as Buenos Aires and Manila. On the other hand, towns such as Ceuta and Olivença maintained their *misericórdias*, even after they had fallen under the jurisdiction of the Spanish monarchy.

⁶⁸ This is not the place for explaining this subject, but the Portuguese *misericórdias*, although they remained independent and autonomous from one another, not only shared rules (disseminated through the *Compromissos* of the *Misericórdia de Lisboa*), but also communicated with one another through a well-structured and regular correspondence.

⁶⁹ Maria Antónia Lopes, "Parte II – De 1750 a 2000", in Isabel dos Guimarães Sá and Maria Antónia Lopes, *História Breve das Misericórdias Portuguesas*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 2008, p. 66 and following; Laurinda Abreu, "Limites e Fronteiras das Políticas Assistenciais entre os séculos XVI e XVIII. Continuidades e alteridades", *Vária História*, vol. 26, 2010, no. 44, p. 351.

⁷⁰ C. R. Boxer, *O Império Colonial Português*, Lisbon. Edições 70, s.d. [1969], p. 263. This statement is generically true, although such bipolarity is inexact for some places, as in the rare cases where the *misericórdia* was relegated to a secondary position by another confraternity or even in those cases where the municipal council was run by the bishop/chapter or by a monastic order that enjoyed hegemony at the local level.

new riches enjoyed by the Crown had enabled it to strengthen its power and assert its position in the world. When the Council of Trent took place, the Portuguese kings already had an interest in preserving the existing reality, freeing the *misericórdias* from the control of the Church. The *misericórdias* began to have the status of lay confraternities under royal protection, so that they could only be visited by bishops in the case of matters relating to the churches and the equipment and implements used in worship. However, aspects such as the foundation of a new confraternity of the *misericórdia*, or the approval of *Compromissos* depended solely upon the king⁷¹.

This new-found autonomy of the *misericórdias* in relation to the Church's institutions – and, above all, in relation to Rome – must also be seen in the context of other changes that were introduced during the reign of King Manuel I, which his successors would then continue or effectively implement: the consolidation of the Portuguese patronage in the Orient, the appropriation of the leadership of the military orders by the Crown, the reform of the religious orders, and the creation of the Inquisition.

However, the specific nature of the organisation of charity in Portugal must be viewed in terms of its actual scale: the Portuguese model always remained a local one, like so many others existing in the different political units of Europe, ranging from Protestant to Catholic cities. The most substantial difference, and the one that afforded it a scale that it would not have had otherwise, was the existence of territories where the Portuguese presence had become established as a result of the country's overseas expansion. In the early sixteenth century, even at the height of its economic development, Portugal was far from being a pioneer as far as the invention of models of charitable aid were concerned. As is known, that role fell to the Italians, who, in the fifteenth century, already had all the institutions that the rest of Europe, and above all the Catholic countries, would later adopt: the large hospital, as well as hospitals for foundlings, the granting of marriage dowries for poor girls, refuges, the *Monti di Pietà* (mutual loan institutions) and also the *misericórdias*.

EPILOGUE

This already long text has sought to demonstrate that both the foundation of the Misericórdia de Lisboa and its *Compromisso* were important structural elements in the formation of the Portuguese reality, representing substantial turning points in the country's history, in the transition from the medieval to the modern period, and they must be viewed in conjunction with other important changes that occurred between the late fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth century.

⁷¹ This subject was dealt with for the first time in recent Portuguese historiography about the *misericórdias* in Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, "Shaping Social Space in the Centre and Periphery of the Portuguese Empire: The Example of the Misericórdias from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century", *Portuguese Studies. Papers given at the Conference Strangers Within. Orthodoxy, Dissent and the Ambiguities of Faith in the Portuguese Renaissance, University of London 30 June–2 July 1994*, volumes 11 (1995) 12 (1996) 13 (1997), p. 211.

What would have happened if Queen Leonor and King Manuel had not founded the *misericórdias*? This is a difficult question to answer, and all the more so when the historian has no means of knowing the changes that would have occurred. We can only put forward a series of conjectures, which are the same as those that we might make for any system of social cohesion based on the idea of Christian charity. It would be impossible to continue to belong to a religion that allowed its members to die in the streets, including children (who were considered innocent) abandoned by their parents, that did not rescue its captives from the hands of the infidel, that did not protect the virginity of its women and delivered them – and its men too – to the temptations of the devil, that did not give food and drink or a roof to its pilgrims, or that left its prisoners to rot in jails. The total absence of any care and assistance for those in need would imply the destruction of a set of religious ideals that were based on love for one's neighbour, and which, in many doctrinal writings, identified the figure of the poor man with their own prophet, Jesus Christ. One can also guess the rupture that would take place in the existing economic and social order, since any form of government, when it is exempt from the use of explicit violence, justifies its existence through the protection that it offers to the weakest members of its society. In the cities, ceasing to give help to the artisans when they were incapacitated and unable to work, or to their widows, would imply the destruction of the productive fabric; ceasing to come to the aid of the starving country folk who came there in order to try their luck, or just to bring an end to the famine that, in bad years for agriculture, would give rise to social uprisings. This was a fear that was frequently felt when it came to implementing systems designed to provide aid in situations of emergency. On the other hand, the process of constructing the state would have taken place differently, since the *misericórdias* were everywhere to be found in the overwhelming majority of territories under Portuguese administration, contributing to the institutional uniformity of the Empire and to the balanced relationship between central and local power.

In recent years, we have once again been most keenly confronted with the importance and urgency of the works of mercy and charity when faced with the displacement en masse of populations that have been devastated by war and by natural catastrophes. They continue to remind us of the basic needs of human life: clothing, food, health, a roof over one's head. If today we still need to try and understand the ways in which the men and women of the late Middle Ages and the early Modern Age included their duties towards their neighbours in their obligations of worship, the harsh realities that the works of mercy referred to are still far from having disappeared. What has disappeared, however, is the idea that these works are to be applied only to those who have received the water of baptism. There is only one humanity.

Queen Leonor and the works of mercy

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This text is guided by one simple, but fundamental question: what motivated Queen Leonor to act in defence of others? This topic is not a new one, since it is frequently addressed in the various studies that have been made about the queen and her foundations. However, in attempting to provide some possible answers to the question formulated above, this text focuses on the Queen's relationship with the programme of the works of mercy. For this purpose, we will look at the Queen's spiritual matrix, not only through the books that she owned but also through those whose publication was sponsored by her. At the same time, it will be important to establish parallels between the life of Queen Leonor and that of other female royal figures, with the aim of identifying similar spiritual roots. Finally, we conclude this text by looking at one of her most significant foundations: the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, in Caldas da Rainha. As we shall see, the hospital constitutes a paradigmatic case study of Queen Leonor's relationship with the programme of the works of mercy.

BOOKS AND THE WORKS OF MERCY

“God supports us and takes away our miseries, expecting nothing from us in return, but acting only out of kindness, and so we should similarly act to relieve the misery of our neighbour not for our own profit and gain, but for his health and salvation and out of love for divine goodness”¹.

It was in 1495 that these words written by Ludolph of Saxony (c. 1295-1377), a Carthusian monk, rolled off the press “in the vernacular language”, at the orders of Queen Leonor. The passage reproduced above is just a small part of the *Vita Christi* (c. 1348-68), a complex work of spirituality, which, as its title suggests, offers its reader episodes from the life of Christ. After warning about the worthlessness of “making treasure on earth”, an idea that was dear to St. Chrysostom, the Carthusian monk defined “mercy” and “charity”. The former is presented as a characteristic and virtue of God, who is merciful and sympathises with the suffering of Man; while the latter – “charity” – consists in the love for God (expressed through devotional ties) and for one's neighbour (expressed through the relief of his miseries). It is, therefore, through “works” that the notion of mercy, or, in other words, compassion for the suffering of one's neighbour, acquires its meaning. In this way, the works of mercy not only spring from the exercise of charity, but should also be seen as the means through which the giver and the receiver relate to one another. In this relationship, which is nothing more than an exchange, the parties involved favour one another mutually: the giver

¹ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, part 1, Lisbon, printed by Nicholas of Saxony and Valentim Fernandes, 1495, fl. 123 (<http://purl.pt/22010/3/>).

helps the humble and the latter, through the “privileged spiritual position” conferred upon him by poverty, helps the giver to attain salvation of the soul, in what is a clear invocation of the Gospel according to St. Luke “Give, and it shall be given unto you” (Luke 6, 38)².

In Portugal, the doctrine of mercy was already known at the time Queen Leonor and King João II sponsored the printing of the fourth part of the *Vita Christi*, in 1495³. However, in what concerns us here, the work of Ludolph of Saxony takes on special importance since it allows us to glimpse the relationship that Queen Leonor had with the works of mercy. But, to understand this relationship, we must, first of all, situate the queen’s spirituality in the religious context of that time. At the end of the fourteenth century, as a result of the new requirements of faith on the part of laypersons, a movement had begun to emerge known by the name of *Devotio Moderna*. Originating in the Netherlands and initiated by Geert Groote (1340-1384) and Florent de Radewijns (c. 1350-1400), this movement proposed the renewal of the Church through the active participation of the laity in religious life. Invited to adopt a life of simplicity, poverty, and humility, they were offered the opportunity to enjoy a genuine approximation to the humanity of Christ. The movement, which rapidly gained support, was to take on a whole new dimension with the ascetic and mystical teachings of Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471) in his famous work *The Imitation of Christ* (1427). The movement’s main lines of thought are synthesised in this work and may be condensed into three fundamental points: 1) reading and meditating on the sacred texts (especially on the theme of the Passion of Christ) as a way of communicating with God, 2) adopting a humble way of life, devoid of personal property, and 3) practising charity. As a work that stimulated meditation on the human and divine nature of Christ, the *Vita Christi* was written prior to this movement and, according to some authors, served as the inspiration for the founders of *Devotio Moderna*⁴.

It should also be noted that this movement of spirituality displayed some points in common with Franciscanism (especially as far as voluntary poverty and the practices of charity were concerned), of which Queen Leonor was herself a follower. In general, the queen’s spirituality was part of a tendency that encouraged the laity to reflect upon the mysteries of human life, developing an inner piety that, together with humility, ascetic life and charitable works, brought them closer to spiritual perfection and the image of Christ. In this context, not only the books that

² Maureen Flynn, “Charitable Ritual in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain”. *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 16, n.º 3, 1985, p. 348.

³ On the dissemination of the doctrine of the works of mercy in the medieval period, see José Pedro Paiva, “Introdução”, in *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, José Pedro Paiva, Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Saul António Gomes (eds.), vol. 2, Lisbon, União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2002, pp. 7-20 (henceforth referred to as PMM, vol. 2); and the chapter of Isabel dos Guimarães Sá in this same volume. It should be noted that King Duarte had already used part of Chapter VIII of the *Vita Christi* in his *Leal Conselheiro*, in particular in Chapter LXXXVII “Trallado da Vita Christi”.

⁴ Elsa Maria Branco da Silva, *A Fortuna da “Vita Christi” no medievo em Portugal: pensar a espiritualidade à luz da tradução*, Coimbra, Alma Azul, 2006, p. 10.

Queen Leonor possessed, but also those whose publication she sponsored, help us to understand the themes and devotions that were most dear to her and, in concrete terms, the place of the works of mercy within the context of her spirituality.

The analysis of the remaining fragment from the will of Queen Leonor that has survived until the present day gives us an idea of the importance of the spiritual life in the queen's everyday existence. From among the group of possessions that she left to the monastery of Madre de Deus, in Xabregas, two types of objects stand out: the devotional objects and the books. It is now known today that Queen Leonor had a library with a considerable number of books (231) that dealt with a variety of themes, but with a clear predominance of works of a religious nature⁵. It was, in fact, these works that she detailed in the eighth clause of her will: "all my books in Latin, and those in the vernacular language, and any breviaries, diurnals, notebooks, contemplations, prayers, such as may be found in my Chapel, Oratory and chests (...) and so the monastery may be given the Breviary, which I have now ordered to be made so that they may pray through it in the Choir (...) and also the books through which they read to me at the table with all the others that may be found in my house"⁶. It should be noted that not only were the books associated with designated areas of private prayer (the oratory and the chapel), but also with the practice of reading as a form of meditation and spiritual purification.

While there is no need to develop further the subject of Queen Leonor's generous patronage of the arts, it is important to note that her support for literature (the printing press and playwriting) can be understood as the fulfilment of a work of mercy, since, through the publication of works "*em lingoagem*" (in the vernacular), the queen made the dissemination of the doctrine much easier. This was clearly stated by Valentim Fernandes in the prologue to *Os Autos dos Apóstolos* (The Lives and Passions of the Apostles), whose publication received the support of Queen Leonor in 1505: "Your Most Liberal Kindness has sought to provide your subjects with spiritual guidance, performing a great work of mercy in commissioning me to print the books of the *Vita Christi* in the vernacular, at extremely great cost and expense, so that your subjects, who are lacking in the Latin language, shall not be lacking in such lofty and holy doctrines"⁷. This same opinion was reiterated ten years later, in 1515, by the printer Hermão de Campos in *Boasco Deleytoso*: "As always, with all your virtue and good deeds, you have

⁵ Isabel Vilares Cepeda, "Os livros da rainha D. Leonor segundo o códice 11352 da Biblioteca Nacional, Lisboa". Offprint from *Revista da Biblioteca Nacional*, série 2, n. ° 2, 1988, pp. 55-81; Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *A rainha D. Leonor (1458-1525): poder, misericórdia, religiosidade e espiritualidade no Portugal do Renascimento*, Lisbon, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, 2002, p. 775.

⁶ Frei Jerônimo de Belém, *Chronica seráfica da Santa Província dos Algarves da regular observância, de nosso seráfico padre S. Francisco, em que se trata das fundações de dez conventos de frades, e três mosteiros de freiras*, part 3, Lisbon, Mosteiro de São Vicente de Fora, 1755, p. 86.

⁷ Prologue of the *Auto dos Apóstolos* in Bernard of Brihuega, *Vidas e paixões dos Apóstolos*, Isabel Vilares Cepeda (critical edition and study), vol. 2, Lisbon, INIC, 1982, p. 436. Cf. *Vidas e Paixões dos Apóstolos* compiled by Bernard of Brihuega, copied by Frei Bernardo and Frei Nicolau Vieira, monks from Alcobaça, at the initiative of Dom Frei Estêvão de Aguiar, Alcobaça: 1442-43 (<http://purl.pt/24126>).

**Prologo de sant hieronimo
presbitero cardenal en los li-
bros intitulos. las vidas delos san-
ctos religiosos de egypto: 7 que en scy-
thia: thebas: 7 mesopotamia moraron
7 no solamente escriuio delos q̄ cō grā
trabajo alcãço: 7 vio: mas hañ muchas
cosas rezadas por auctores dignos d̄ se
con gran diligēcia noto: 7 algunos pe-
quenos libros de doctores autēticos fi-
elime de griego en latin trassado: 7 los
trassados de otros en la presente obra
puso.**

folio de mago

Endito dios
cuya volūdad es
q̄ se saluē todos:
7 vengā al cono-
cimēto dela ver-
dad. El qual en-
dereo nuestro ca-

mijno a egypto: 7 nos mostro grandes
marauillas para apuechar a la memo-
ria delos q̄ vernan. delas quales no so-
lamente naciēse para nos causa de sa-
lud: mas hañ se scriuiesse histoia proue-
cho: 7 para la enſeñança dela caridad
muy cōueniente que por la se delas co-
sas passadas muestre ancha carrera a
los q̄ el camjino dela v̄tud querrā fazer
E puesto que a scriuir cosas tamanas
yo no abaste: ni parezca digna cosa d̄ se-
chos grandos ser los auctores baros: 7
pequenos: 7 dezir cō bajo estilo tan so-
bradas v̄tudes. Em̄po por q̄ los religi-
osos q̄ morā conigo en el s̄to mōte oli-
ueto a menudo me pide q̄ la vida de los
monges de egypto: 7 las v̄tudes del anj-
mo: 7 el acaramjeto d̄ dios 7 el rigor dela
abstiniēcia. q̄ vi en ellos escriua: por sa-
tisfazer a los ruegos delos q̄ esto man-
dan tomare esta cōp̄sa no t̄to por ha-
uer alabanga del estilo: quāto por q̄ spe-
ro apuechar a los q̄ leeran esta histoia
mientras cadaqual encendido por los en-
rempos delo passado se esforçara de ab-
horreçer los affalagos del mundo: 7 se-
guir la folganga: 7 exerciçios de caridad

**Pues vi: 7 verdaderamēte vi el theso-
ro de christo en vasos humanos escōdi-
do: el qual despues de fallado no quise
esconder como embidioso: mas como pa-
ra muchos sacar le fuera: 7 fazer comū
siendo cierto q̄ quātos mas de el se enri-
queçieren: tanto mas ganare yo: La
mas rico sere quando la salud delos o-
tros cō la mercaderia de mi trabajo se
cōquistara. Pues en el comjço de nue-
stro dezir rogamos q̄ nos ayude la gra-
cia de nuestro señor ihesu christo por cu-
ya v̄tud en los mōges de egypto son to-
dos estos exerciçios de caridad. La vis-
mos entre ellos muchos padref q̄ en este
mūdo puestos angelica vida fazian: le
uantados como nuevos p̄phetas assi en
las v̄tudes como en el officio de p̄pheti-
zar a los quales paral testimonjo d̄ sus
mereçimientos seguida de señales: 7 mi-
lagros no fallecia: 7 cō gran razon. La
por q̄ los que ninguna cosa dela tierra:
ni dela carne codiciā: no ternā el pode-
rio del cielo: La algunos dellos ymos
de toda maldad: p̄samjeto: 7 sospecha
tan ajenos q̄ ni se recordauā haun si se
fazia algun mal en el mūdo: 7 t̄to era
el reposo de su ymaginacion: 7 tanto se
les hauiā cōuertido en v̄to la affection
dela bondad: q̄ dellos se podia cō razon
dezir. Señor paz mucha a los q̄ tu nō
bre amā. esta por el yermo derramados
7 apartados en sus cellas: mas en la ca-
ridad muy jutos: 7 la razō por q̄ assi mo-
rā es por q̄ el reposo d̄ su silērio: 7 el p̄-
posito de su corazo q̄ vā las cosas diu-
nas buscādo por algūa voz: o topamj-
to: o vanas fablas no se turbe: 7 assi ca-
da q̄ en su lugar cō los anjmos atētos co-
mo buenos padres sperā quādo ebiara
dios por ellos: o como el cauallero q̄ esta
en el cāpo adreçado sperando la venida
del caudillo: o como sclauos leales q̄ ari-
endē quādo vernā su señor: d̄ q̄n speran
libertad: 7 dones. pues todos estos nin-
gun cuydado tienē de comer: o vestir: o
cosa alguna de estas. La sabēti que fra-
scripto todo esto piensan las gētes. mas**

*Este libro he da casa da m̄ de d̄s nã se pode
dar aũa pessoa por q̄ a Rainha dona leonor
cũto for omne hũa esenmũha ya todos os livros
a laixon ha esta rca q̄ fora m̄ d̄s de latin como*

Prologue of *Vitae Patrum* [St. Jerome]
Saragossa, by Pablo Hurus (1491).

This book belonged to the library of Queen Leonor, and was later transferred to the monastery of Madre de Deus, in Xabregas, and, later, to the Hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, in Caldas da Rainha. "This book is from the house of Madre de Deus and cannot be given to anybody because it was the property of Queen Leonor, so that an excommunication has been placed on all the books that she left to this house, which were many in number, both in Latin and (...)." Arquivo Distrital de Leiria, Fundo do Real Hospital das Caldas da Rainha.]

seen fit in your zealous kindness and with all of your Christian soul to order that the following book entitled *Boosco deleytoso* should be printed, with your Highness seeing in it so much spiritual gentleness and continuing to promote it with so many examples and figures, inviting many to share in the doctrine of our redeeming Jesus Christ”⁸.

Given the impossibility of mentioning all of the works printed at the initiative of Queen Leonor, let us take just the following four as an example: *Vita Christi* (printed by Nicholas of Saxony and Valentim Fernandes, 1495), *Os Autos dos Apóstolos* (printed by Valentim Fernandes, 1505), *Boosco Deleytoso* (printed by Hermão de Campos, 1515), and *O Espelho de Cristina* (printed by Hermão de Campos, 1518). Of the many topics of interest, it is important here to stress one in particular: the discourse on the twin poles of the Christian life (the “active life” and the “contemplative life”). As will be seen, the dichotomy between these two ways of life is an important aspect of learning about Queen Leonor’s relationship with the programme of the works of mercy. Also deriving from this topic are several others that are equally interesting for the study of this relationship, namely the themes of humility and poverty.

The last chapter of the first part of the *Vita Christi* – “about the mystery or occupation of Martha and the leisure or idleness of Mary Magdalen” – touches on the two poles of the Christian life. The narrative draws on the Gospel according to St. Luke (10, 38–42), where these two women define the “active life” and the “contemplative life”. Martha, who was always very busy with various services, personifies the “active life” and all those “who do not yet know of the divine contemplation and live in works of fraternal love”⁹. In turn, Mary, Martha’s sister, who delighted in listening to the word of Christ, represents the “contemplative life”, or, in other words, the solitary life given over to God.

From this association, Ludolph of Saxony enumerated different activities that comprised each of these ways of life. In the “active life”, he included, for example, public reading and prayer, punishment and the correction “of those who are wrong”, the instruction “of those who do not know how to support the poor”, giving advice to those who seek it, curing the sick and “performing all works of piety”¹⁰. In turn, the “contemplative life” comprised reading and study “by oneself and in secret, thinking about the law of God”, prayer in a private place, “having feeling and taste for savouring the sweetness of glory with the angels”, and rejecting temporal goods¹¹. Although the “contemplative life” was preferable to the “active life”, the author nonetheless underlined that either of them enabled the Christian to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

⁸ *Boosco deleytoso*, Lisbon, printed by Hermão de Campos, 1515 (<http://purl.pt/15049>). Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *A rainha D. Leonor*, p. 921.

⁹ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, part 1, fl. 181v.

¹⁰ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, part 1, fl. 183.

¹¹ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, part 1, fl. 183.

In 1505, seeking to follow on from the publication of the book of the *Vita Christi*, Queen Leonor sponsored the printing of *Os Autos dos Apóstolos*, an anthology about the life and passions of Christ's followers, compiled in the late thirteenth century by Bernard of Brihuega. In the prologue to the work, Valentim Fernandes "a German servant and printer of Your Highness" identified the three blessings: the delicious life, the active life, and the contemplative life. The first, characterised by an abundance of external goods, "is an impediment to the blessing to come" (understood here as the celestial glory); the second (the active life) consisted in the exercise of the works of mercy "which we do unto our neighbours, either from duty or voluntary kindness"¹². This was considered by Valentim Fernandes as the life that "disposes and orders the blessing to come". However, and just as in the *Vita Christi*, he insists on the idea that the work itself is only good when it is free of second intentions, or, in other words, when it is done only for the voluntary benefit of our neighbour: "But when you give alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing (...) This therefore means that you should not show the intention of any malice when working to comply with God's teachings"¹³. As far as the "contemplative life" is concerned, the author added, "if it is perfect, it is especially that same blessing to come; if it is imperfect, it is a beginning thereof".

Written in an unequivocally laudatory tone, the prologue to *Os Autos dos Apóstolos* refers to Queen Leonor as the prototype of "voluntary poverty" (and therefore rejecting the delicious life), since she did not cease to practise works of mercy (and therefore used the active life to attain celestial glory) and, at the same time, dedicated herself to contemplation, "because you [Queen Leonor] have devoted yourself so greatly that, until today, no other person of your status has been found postponing all worldly business, and following the Seraphic Father Saint Francis"¹⁴. It is, therefore, in this context that we should understand the doctrine and the programme of the works of mercy as part of the spirituality of Queen Leonor, or, in other words, the works as a form of attaining the "life to come".

It is perhaps in *Boosco Deleytoso* (1515) that this theme is discussed more fully. Having been led to a solitary place that is convenient for reflection, the reader is encouraged to meditate upon his condition as a sinner and upon the importance of repenting before his union with God. It is at that moment that the sinner is faced with two types of life. While the contemplative life is explained by the total renunciation of the world, "devoid of all business and remaining only in the love of God", the active life "was spent in works of justice and in helping others (...) engaged in the use of the present works"¹⁵. Although these two ways of life did not compete with one another, the author of *Boosco Deleytoso* was clear as to the supremacy of the former: "the active life is

¹² Bernard of Brihuega, *Vidas e paixões cit.*, vol. 2, p. 435.

¹³ Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, part 1, fl. 233.

¹⁴ Bernard of Brihuega, *Vidas e paixões cit.*, vol. 2, p. 435.

¹⁵ *Boosco deleytoso*, Chapter LXXV.

good, but the contemplative life is better”. He did not, however, cease to recommend to the sinner that he should adopt the active life with the aim of attaining contemplation, or, in other words, union with God. Thenceforth, the sinner would tread the paths of contemplation that would lead to the true mystical experience.

The same theme is dealt with in *O Espelho de Cristina* (Christine’s Mirror), originally the *Livro das Três Virtudes* (The Book of the Three Virtues), written by Christine de Pisan (c. 1363–1430) at the beginning of the fifteenth century¹⁶. Although this literary genre was different from the works mentioned so far, Christine de Pisan posed the question of the duality of the two poles of Christian life, adapted on this occasion to the female gender. Printed in 1518, by Hermão de Campos, *O Espelho de Cristina* sought to instruct women from different social segments, beginning with the “good princess”. Because of her position, this figure showed herself to be a model for all other women. The first advice offered by Pisan was that one should love and fear God “because this is the beginning of wisdom and it is from here that all other virtues are born and descended”¹⁷. In later chapters, and in particular in chapters V and VI, the “good princess” is advised about the two ways of life, without, however, forgetting to stress the superiority of the contemplative life in comparison with the active life: “although the active life is good and necessary for helping and succouring many people, the contemplative life is better because we must abandon all our needs (...) in order to think only of God”¹⁸. Since it was impossible to abandon the secular world to devote herself to contemplation, Pisan recommended to the “good princess” that she should embark upon the active life: “for blessed are those who can perform the works that this [life] requires (...) Lord God may thou do unto me that I may at least in that life perfectly serve thee, ministering and doing service to thy members: to the poor through my love for thee”¹⁹. This was, in fact, the situation of Queen Leonor, who, as we shall see, adopted the “active life” without neglecting the “contemplative” one. Just as in the *Vita Christi* or in *Boosco Deleytoso*, Pisan reminded us that damnation does not lie in the “status” of each person, but rather in the ignorant use that is made of that same “status” and of the wealth associated therewith. She also offered her readers some examples of kings and queens (among these, for example, was St. Elizabeth of Hungary) who, notwithstanding their position, had provided genuine models of the virtuous life, achieved through the practice of the works of mercy, or, in other words, of the “active life”²⁰.

¹⁶ The Portuguese translation of this book was commissioned by Queen Isabel (1432–1455), the wife of King Afonso V, in around 1450.

¹⁷ Christine de Pisan, *Aqui come[n]sa o livro chamado espelho de Cristina o qual falla de tres estados de molheres. E he partydo em tres partes*, Lisbon, printed by Herman de Campos, 1518, fl. 1 (<http://purl.pt/15289>) (henceforth referred to as *O Espelho de Cristina*).

¹⁸ Christine de Pisan, *O Espelho de Cristina*, fl. 4v.

¹⁹ Christine de Pisan, *O Espelho de Cristina*, fl. 5.

²⁰ Christine de Pisan, *O Espelho de Cristina*, fl. 5v. On this subject, see Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, “Rainhas e cultura escrita em Portugal (séculos XV–XVI)”, in *Religião e linguagem nos mundos ibéricos: identidades, vínculos sociais e instituições*, Luciana Gandelman (ed.), Margareth de Almeida Gonçalves, Patrícia Souza de Faria (orgs.), Rio de Janeiro, Laboratório de Mundos Ibéricos, 2015, pp. 169–180.

The books that Queen Leonor had and those that she ordered to be printed help us to understand not only the background to her spirituality, but also the meaning of the works of mercy involved in her various undertakings. It was, in fact, the ideas conveyed by these devotional and didactic works that served as her inspiration for the realisation of various projects, such as, for example, the foundation of the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo in 1485, or the foundation of the Misericórdia de Lisboa in 1498. The motive that presided over these initiatives was not only the salvation of her soul, but also the attainment of a virtuous life, capable of offering a true union with God.

The life of Queen Leonor was, in fact, marked by these two poles of the Christian life, which, without opting for one of them over the other, she managed to put to the best possible use. Her history shows that she never had to prefer the “contemplative life” in detriment to the “active life”. Aware of her status and of the way in which she should use her personal riches, Queen Leonor invested in the “active life”, dedicating a significant part of her widowhood to the fulfilment of the works of mercy. Her various investments in the area of social welfare, as well as in artistic and religious patronage, show that she was a woman who sought to climb the steps needed to attain the virtuous life, which, in turn, would afford her a genuine mystical experience. She did not, however, neglect to meditate on the mysteries of the life of Christ as a form of spiritual purification. On the contrary, throughout her life, and above all in her widowhood, her markedly Franciscan spirituality became even more intense and guided much of her religious *praxis*.

THE FEMALE MODELS OF MERCY

“The good person will not be ashamed to visit for herself the hospitals and the poor people, accompanied according to her status. She will speak to the poor and the sick and touch them and comfort them gently, offering them great and bountiful alms, And the poor person is more comforted by the visit and comfort offered by a great lady than by another inferior one, and this is because the desperate person thinks that the world has forgotten him. And when he sees that such a great lady is pleased to visit him, he understands that he has recovered some honour”²¹.

This was how Christine de Pisan wrote about “the paths of charity that the devout princess will have”. From the above passage, it is possible to infer the virtues that the “good princess” should possess: humility, patience and charity. These qualities were, however, all the more important when “the person is greater” since such women were considered as models for the others²². Although

²¹ Christine de Pisan, *O Espelho de Cristina*, fl. 7v-8.

²² Christine de Pisan, *O Espelho de Cristina*, fl. 8.

it was not exclusive, the practice of charity was considered as an attribute of a person's gender, being generally associated with women from the higher segments of society. In this context, the association of female royal figures with the works of mercy is not an original feature on the part of Queen Leonor. Before and after her, other women organised and developed their spirituality centred around their actions in defence of others, with it being possible to identify a kind of pattern of female conduct, which, in some concrete cases, functioned as a model for life itself. Although there are no documents that openly acknowledge Queen Leonor's admiration for the life of other women, this does not mean that we cannot look for comparisons between Queen Leonor's life and that of other female figures. There are multiple examples that can be found, but it is enough to mention three names: Isabel of Aragon (1271-1336), the wife of King Dinis, the Duchess of Beja, D. Beatriz (1403-1506), the mother of Queen Leonor, and Princess Joana (1452-1490), the sister of King João II²³.

The life of these three women was marked not only by their faithful adherence to the mendicant principles (of the Franciscans and Dominicans), but also by the allocation of their personal resources to charitable practices. It is, however, the story of Isabel of Aragon – the Queen Saint – that provides various parallels with that of Queen Leonor. Despite the chronological gap between them, three fundamental axes can be identified in the spirituality of these two women: their Franciscan devotion, their support for religious orders, and their charitable practices. Both followed the rule of St. Francis, in particular the female practices disseminated by St. Clare. Queen Isabel, who certainly took St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231), her great aunt, as her model, rejected all luxuries from a very early age, living a life that was governed by humility, fasting and continuous prayer. Long after her death, the chronicles and hagiographies gave multiple accounts of the episodes of Isabel's life, in which the predominant feature was her incessant practice of acts of penitence: “there was much admiration in seeing a queen in the springtime of her life, completely given over to harsh mortifications, wearing rough haircloth under her royal garments. Not only did she mortify herself, abstaining from all pleasures, but she also abstained from food (...)”²⁴. Her penitence, fasting, and prayer were combined with acts of charity towards the poor, for whom, for example, she would “kneel down and wash their feet, and then wait upon them at table”, in an apparent position of humility²⁵.

²³ The association of Queen Leonor with other female royal figures is not a new topic. See, for example, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *A rainha D. Leonor cit.*, pp. 764-769, which identifies some points of contact between the queen and the queen saint, or between the former and the Infanta Dona Mafalda (1195-1256), the daughter of King Sancho I. On the “performative devotion” of the queens, see Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, “Rainhas e cultura escrita cit.”, p. 169-180.

²⁴ António Caetano de Sousa, *Agiologio lusitano dos santos, varões ilustres em virtude do reino de Portugal, e suas conquistas, consagrado à Imaculada Conceição da Virgem Maria Senhora Nossa, padroeira do reino*, part 4, Lisbon, Officina Sylviana e Academia Real, 1744, p. 42.

²⁵ António Caetano de Sousa, *Agiologio lusitano cit.*, part 4, p. 42. The virtue of humility is a common feature running through all the different reports of the miracles attributed to Queen Isabel. See the various episodes narrated by Damião de Góis in *Lenda da Rainha Dona Isabel chamada a Sancta molher delrei Dom Denis a qual fundou a Casa do Spirito Sancto da vila d'Alenquer*, 1548-1557, available at <http://purl.pt/24909>.



Pilgrim's Staff of Queen Isabel (14th century)
Confraria de Santa Isabel (Mosteiro de Santa Clara-a-Nova de Coimbra).

The narratives that have been constructed around the figure of the Queen Saint, and also that of Queen Leonor, emphasise the “privilege of poverty”, where these women are seen to have adopted the Franciscan way of life without, however, ever taking vows. Their biographies show them following the two paths, which, according to the texts mentioned above, led the “good princess” to the kingdom of God: the “contemplative life” and the “active life”. Thus, while, on the one hand, they reinvigorated their spirituality, dedicating part of their daily life to devotional activities, such as moments of private prayer, attending divine worship, fasting, confession, and communion, on the other hand, they also renounced their worldly possessions in favour of poverty, attenuating the misery of the more humble, either through the direct provision of alms or the foundation of hospitals and/or other charitable institutions.

But while the biographical details of the lives of Queen Isabel and Queen Leonor show that the mendicant influence had first been felt in the “springtime of their lives”, it was above all in their widowhood that the already-mentioned virtues of these women began to take on another dimension. In the case of Queen Isabel, it was the death of her husband, King Dinis, in January 1325, that initiated a new period in the queen’s life, marked by her abandonment of court circles and her dedication to charitable works²⁶. In a symbolic gesture, the Queen decided to journey as a pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela, where, in July 1325, she donated various jewels and other luxury objects, in a clear sign of her voluntary renunciation of her earthly possessions. It was on this occasion that she received a bourdon or staff from the hands of the archbishop, the symbol of the pilgrims’ humility and penitence, with which she was to be buried in 1336. After this episode, she withdrew to her palace next to the monastery of Santa Clara in Coimbra where she lived in retreat and began to wear the habit of the Poor Clares, dedicating herself to works of charity. The years of her widowhood did, in fact, coincide with the refoundation of the convent of Santa Clara and the foundation, in its surrounding neighbourhood, of a hospital and religious lodgings for 15 men and 15 women “poor from shame and good living”, which she symbolically dedicated to Saint Elizabeth of Hungary²⁷. Besides this, the two wills that she ordered to be drawn up are paradigmatic examples of her dedication to poverty; her bequests covered almost all the categories of poor people (prisoners, “paupers”, “*emparedadas*” (women who lived in secret reclusion in walls close to the church), orphans, the sick and infirm, and lepers), with an apparent preference for hospitals (the children’s hospital in Lisbon and Santarém, the hospital of Roncesvalles, and, generally speaking, “all the hospitals and inns of the kingdom”)²⁸.

It is quite likely that Queen Leonor’s model of spiritual life was not unaffected by that of Queen Isabel, all the more so because her beatification took place in 1516,

²⁶ Maria Filomena Andrade, *Rainha santa, mãe exemplar: Isabel de Aragão*, Lisbon, Círculo de Leitores, 2012, pp. 225-229.

²⁷ PMM, vol. 2, p. 506.

²⁸ PMM, vol. 2, pp. 506-508.

in the reign of King Manuel I, Queen Leonor's brother²⁹. It is known today that, together with other pieces that she kept for her private use, the Queen left to the Colettine Poor Clares of Xabregas "a wooden painting of Queen Saint Isabel", currently to be found housed at the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin³⁰. In this painting from the first quarter of the sixteenth century, which has been attributed to a continuer of the work of the artist Quentin Metsys, Queen Isabel appears represented with some Franciscan symbols, such as, for example, the cord that she wears around her neck, and a large halo, the emblem of her "sainthood".

Although in the case of Queen Leonor the proposal for her canonisation has never been acted upon, she is recognised to have displayed the same religious intensity. If we pay close attention to the biography of Queen Leonor, written recently by Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, it is possible to find points of contact with the history of Queen Isabel. As in the case of Queen Isabel, Queen Leonor's widowhood, which lasted roughly 30 years, marked the beginning of her gradual retreat from public life and her dedication to various investments both in the patronage of the arts and literature and in works of charity³¹. After the death of her husband, King João II, in October 1495, Queen Leonor set up her home in her palace in Santo Elói. It was there that she had her own sizeable private oratory filled with objects of worship, books of meditation, altarpieces, and liturgical implements. The description of some pieces of furniture that formed part of this oratory testifies to her Franciscan spirituality, such as, for example, a table on whose top there was a representation of Christ's Passion or a cupboard with paintings of St. Francis and St. Anthony on its doors³². It was therefore in this oratory that Queen Leonor organised her private spirituality, centred upon prayer, worship, reading and meditation about the spiritual texts that were mentioned earlier.

Just as in the case of Queen Isabel, Queen Leonor's widowhood was characterised by a greater intensity regarding the "active life", or, in other words, the practice of the works of mercy. Except for the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, in Caldas da Rainha, all charitable institutions founded at the initiative of Queen Leonor appeared in the years of her widowhood (the Misericórdia de Lisboa in 1498, the hospital of Santa Ana in 1502, and the religious lodgings for women in Torres Vedras in 1525). The same can be said regarding the support given to religious orders, especially the order of St. Clare, whose reform was to take on another dimension with the foundation of the monastery of Madre de Deus, in Xabregas, in 1509. However, even earlier, in 1492, together with her

²⁹ Isabel of Aragon was canonised on 25 May 1625 through the bull of Pope Urban VIII.

³⁰ Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (henceforth referred to as BNP), Códice 11.352 – Relação dos bens legados pela rainha D. Leonor, mulher de D. João II, ao convento da Madre de Deus em Xabregas [1537?]. Frei Jerónimo de Belém, *Chronica seráfica cit.*, part 3, pp. 85–89. José Alberto Seabra Carvalho, "Pinturas da Madre de Deus do tempo da rainha D. Leonor", in *Igreja da Madre de Deus: História, conservação e restauro*, Teresa Campos *et al.*, Lisbon, Ministério da Cultura, 2002, p. 54.

³¹ Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *De princesa a rainha-velha cit.*, p. 174.

³² Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *A rainha D. Leonor cit.*, p. 177.

husband, Queen Leonor had already founded the Convento de Jesus in Setúbal, dedicated to the first rule of St. Clare. But the support and protection for the religious orders were to reach their peak with the support given to the reform of the Colettine Poor Clares of Xabregas. It was in fact from the Convento de Jesus that seven nuns were to come to Lisbon to found the monastery of Madre de Deus, together with other ladies from the Queen's household, where they embarked upon a convent life of prayer, penitence, radical poverty and contemplation.

The iconographical representations of these two queens also showed them to be supporters of Franciscanism. In the case of Queen Leonor, the *Panorama of Jerusalem* (c. 1517), a painting that was probably offered by the emperor Maximilian, or the painted wooden panels of the *Arrival of the Relics of St. Auta at the Madre de Deus Church* (c. 1520–25) depict the queen dressed in the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis and kneeling upon a book. As for Queen Isabel, an illumination of the manuscript *Genealogy of the Royal Houses of Spain and Portugal*, at the British Library, commissioned by the Infante D. Fernando (1507–1534), the son of King Manuel I, shows her arrival at Santiago de Compostela; here, we see her crowned, dressed in the habit of the Poor Clares, and with a pilgrim's crook in her hand³³. Without ever having taken vows, both queens fulfilled, among other rules, the Franciscan principle of voluntary poverty, channelling their resources into works of charity.

To add to the various features that have already been touched upon, we need only refer to one other characteristic that was common to them both: “how the good princess will work to bring peace between the prince and his barons whenever there is disagreement”³⁴. As far as Queen Isabel is concerned, her intercession in various conflicts is well known, especially in the one that involved King Dinis and D. Afonso, their son, in the dispute over the succession to the throne³⁵. In the case of Queen Leonor, her opposition to the legitimisation of D. Jorge, the bastard son of King João II with Ana of Mendonça, and the consequent accession to the throne of King Manuel I were considered by Jorge de São Paulo to be the first of the eight “heroic works of Queen Leonor”³⁶.

But the trail of spiritual influence was not the exclusive preserve of the Queen Saint Isabel. Although, as Isabel dos Guimarães Sá has noted, it is unknown exactly to what extent the Duchess of Beja, D. Beatriz, participated directly in her daughter's education, it would not be surprising to discover that the latter served

³³ British Library, *Leaves from the Genealogy of the Royal Houses of Spain and Portugal* (the ‘Portuguese Genealogy’) (1530–1534), MS 12531, fl. 9 (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_12531_f001r).

³⁴ Christine de Pisan, *O Espelho de Cristina*, fl. 6v.

³⁵ Maria Filomena Andrade, *Rainha santa cit.*, pp. 166–183.

³⁶ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas da Rainha até ao ano de 1656*, vol. 1, Lisbon, Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 1967, p. 46. According to Jorge de São Paulo, the eight heroic works of Queen Leonor were: 1) having provided the legitimate heir to the throne of Portugal, 2) setting up the Misericórdia de Lisboa, 3) foundation of the Hospital of Caldas, 4) foundation of the Monastery of Madre de Deus, 5) the Unfinished Chapel of the Monastery of Batalha, 6) the Convent of Anunciada, 7) the Church of Nossa Senhora da Merceana, and 8) the seven religious lodging houses at the Convent of Santo Agostinho, in Torres Vedras.

as a model for Queen Leonor³⁷. It should, furthermore, be noted that, together with her husband, D. Fernando (1433-1470), the Duchess, who was also a devout follower of the Order of St. Francis, founded a community of Observant Poor Clares in around 1459: the convent of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, in Beja³⁸.

In turn, Princess Joana, the sister of King João II, was to enter the monastery at Odivelas from an early age, where she joined her aunt, D. Filipa. Later, for political reasons, she settled in Aveiro, at the Mosteiro de Jesus, belonging to the order of Dominican nuns. It is unknown to what extent the princess and the queen spent time together in direct contact with one another, but Queen Leonor must have discovered in the Princess the image of a woman who always fought hard for the right to enter into the monastic life³⁹. Furthermore, their paths would have crossed with one another, at least between 1481 and 1490, the period when D. Jorge, King João II's bastard son, was kept under the guardianship of his aunt at the Mosteiro de Jesus, in Aveiro⁴⁰.

Given the impossibility of our delving any deeper here into the examples and episodes from the lives of these queens, Infantas and princesses, it simply remains to be said that the life of Queen Leonor must have served as an example for other ladies from the court. At least, this is what can be inferred from the testament of Princess Maria (1521-1577), the daughter of King Manuel and Queen Leonor of Austria (1498-1558). In referring to the hospital that she had founded in Lisbon – the Hospital da Luz – she declared, “I command the executors of my will to make this hospital, following, insofar as possible, the regulations that my aunt Queen Leonor left at the hospital that she founded in Caldas”⁴¹.

In the three cases already mentioned, the mendicant devotion appears as the common denominator in the lives of these women. Although the association of these figures with the doctrine and programme of the works of mercy is a fundamental element running through their lives, there was a clear reinforcement of their spirituality and their actions in defence of others when they were dowager queens. The intensification of the “active life” of these women must be understood within the broader context of a search for contemplation and for the mystical experience. Through their fulfilment of the works of mercy, which included, for example, the foundation of hospitals, they sought to imitate Christ and to attain the salvation of their souls.

³⁷ Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *De princesa a rainha-velha cit.*, pp. 28-34.

³⁸ Frei Jerónimo de Belém, *Chronica seráfica cit.*, part 2, pp. 475-478.

³⁹ Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *De princesa a rainha-velha cit.*, p. 72.

⁴⁰ Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *De princesa a rainha-velha cit.*, pp. 72-73.

⁴¹ Abílio José Salgado, Anastácia Mestrinho Salgado, *O espírito das Misericórdias nos testamentos de D. Leonor e de outras mulheres da Casa de Avis*, Lisbon, Comissão para as Comemorações dos 500 anos das Misericórdias, 1999, pp. 149-150.

THE HOSPITAL OF NOSSA SENHORA DO PÓPULO AND THE WORKS OF MERCY

“I pass by the great repairs and decorations that Your Royal Highness never ceases to make to churches, monasteries and hospitals, in vestments, gold, silver and buildings, and mainly at your sumptuous and highly esteemed hospital of Nossa Senhora Sancta Maria del Populo, in your town of Caldas, where most of your income is spent on pious works and in the service of God, all of which is famous throughout the world”⁴².

Together with the foundation of the Misericórdia de Lisboa in August 1498, the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, in Caldas da Rainha, is one of the most significant examples of the religious *praxis* and, in particular, of the “active life” of Queen Leonor. Although other foundations could be mentioned here – namely the establishment of the Hospital de Santa Ana, in Lisbon, for destitute women, or various religious lodgings for women in Óbidos and Torres Vedras – it is important to highlight the foundation of the hospital in Caldas for two main reasons. First of all, because it was the first of several undertakings carried out by Queen Leonor, and secondly because in it we can find the full expression of the programme of the fourteen works of mercy.

The exact date of the hospital’s foundation is unknown, although it has been the subject of various legends. According to conjectures that were made in the mid-seventeenth century by the hospital’s chronicler, Jorge de São Paulo, the first stone was laid at the time of the anniversary of the marriage of King João II and Queen Leonor, on 22 January 1485 (St. Vincent’s Day)⁴³. There is relatively little information available about the motivations that lay behind the hospital’s foundation, but, even so, the first lines of the book of the *Compromisso* (the hospital statutes), signed 27 years after its foundation (18 March 1512), inform us that:

“May the works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal, done with charity on behalf of our neighbours, be accepted by Jesus Christ Our Lord. Through his piety he saw fit to manifest and order through St. Matthew in Chapter 25 that we should show greater effort and affection in their fulfilment. And so, as we the Queen Leonor (...) wish to execute such works both because Our Lord so ordered and considering that these might perfectly and entirely be fulfilled in the service of God in any place, we herewith determine and order, in praise of God and Our Lady the glorious Virgin Mary, his mother, and, because we practise charity towards our neighbours, that a church shall be built with the invocation

⁴² Bernard of Brihuega, *Vidas e paixões cit.*, vol. 2, p. 436.

⁴³ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, p. 95. Jorge de São Paulo was the purveyor of the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo between 1653–1656 and 1662–1664. In his first term as head of the institution, he wrote a detailed compendium about the hospital, which is to be found in the safekeeping of the Historical Archive of the Hospital Termal das Caldas da Rainha. On Jorge de São Paulo, see Pedro Vilas Boas Tavares, “Jorge de S. Paulo (C.S.J.E) e o seu “Epílogo e Compêndio de Memórias”. Traços de um padrão contra o esquecimento”, in *Quando os frades faziam história. De Marcos de Lisboa a Simão de Vasconcelos*, José Adriano de Freitas Carvalho (dir.), Porto, Universidade do Porto, Faculdade de Letras, 2001, pp. 120–141.



Book of the Compromisso of the Hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo (1512).
 Museu do Hospital e das Caldas/Centro Hospitalar do Oeste, Inv. 379.

of Our Lady of the People and a hospital within our town of Caldas, in which we wish that the said spiritual and corporal works of mercy shall be fulfilled insofar as possible, for the soul of the king Dom João, my lord, and for mine and that of Prince Dom Afonso, our son, and for the glory of God”⁴⁴.

It can be understood that the reasons that motivated the queen to found the hospital were devotional in nature, in particular the fulfilment of the fourteen works of mercy “insofar as possible” (an expression that is, moreover, also used in the *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia de Lisboa). It is known today, and not by chance, that other reasons lay at the origin of this initiative, namely reasons of a political and a feudal nature⁴⁵. Notwithstanding the different versions of the foundation, it was in the queen’s compassion (or mercy) on seeing some paupers making use of the thermal springs in Caldas that we find the basis for her justification in building a hospital in a place that was almost completely unpopulated⁴⁶.

Attention is also drawn to the idea formulated in the last lines of the passage reproduced above: the association of the works of mercy with the salvation of the soul. It is in Chapter 25 of the Gospel according to St. Matthew that the works of mercy appear in parallel with the moment of the Last Judgement: “And these [those who did not do these works] shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 25, 46). Seen from this perspective, the foundation of the hospital was shown to be a work of mercy performed in the service of the poor, with various benefits for its founder: first of all, it brought Queen Leonor closer to the image of Christ (“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful” (Luke 6, 36)); afterwards, as a materialisation of charity, the foundation was regarded as an important intercession at the time of the Last Judgement (“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5, 7)); and, no less significant, the collective strength of the hospital in the celebration of masses in prayer for the soul of Queen Leonor (“He who is merciful has many who pray for him, and it is impossible that the prayers of many should not be heard”)⁴⁷.

Whereas the work on the construction of the hospital continued until the beginning of the sixteenth century, in 1488, the necessary conditions already existed for its provisional operation. In general terms, the queen built, at her

⁴⁴ “Compromisso do Hospital das Caldas da Rainha, dado pela rainha D. Leonor sua fundadora”, in *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, José Pedro Paiva (dir.), vol. 3, Lisbon, União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2004, p. 132 (henceforth referred to as PMM, vol. 3).

⁴⁵ João B. Serra, *21 anos pela História. Caldas da Rainha, estudos, notas e documentos*, Caldas da Rainha, Património Histórico, 2003, pp. 292-295.

⁴⁶ Jorge de São Paulo was the first author to mention the legends of the hospital’s foundation. Cf. Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 83-88. Of the three legends, the one that narrates the episode of July 1484 is the one that is most widely accepted in the historiography. On that date, when she was travelling from Óbidos to Batalha, Queen Leonor passed through Caldas, where she saw some paupers making use of pools of water, noting that there was “only one house standing, while the others were derelict, and in the surrounding area there was nothing more than barren scrubland, and Ameaes and some arable fields”. After being told that these were sick people suffering from rheumatic diseases, and seeing the poor conditions of the place, the queen decided to found the hospital.

⁴⁷ St. Jerome, quoted in Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi*, part 1, fl. 123.

expense and on her lands, a hospital with 100 beds: 60 for the “sick poor” (men and women), 20 for religious and/or honourable people, and the remaining 20 for pilgrims, servants and slaves of the hospital. Available to the “sick poor” were three tanks of thermal spring water, where, according to certain social and gender-based hierarchies, they could enjoy the “medicine of the baths”. Further added to these were medicines, food, clothing, medical care and spiritual comfort provided on a daily basis between April and September, given the seasonal nature of the institution. As will be seen later on, the church of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo was a crucial element, not only for the town that was to be formally created in 1511, but, above all, for the fulfilment of the spiritual works of mercy. Annexed to the “main” nucleus (the hospital and church) were other buildings that completed the hospital circuit laid out by Queen Leonor: a hospital for pilgrims and a street with houses (*Rua Nova*) for some servants and for the town’s first residents.

Although this is not perhaps the appropriate place, it is important that we should divert our attention a little to the invocation of the hospital and church of Caldas da Rainha: Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, or, in other words, Our Lady of the People. The Italian influence of this patron saint has been pointed out by various scholars, who suggest a possible connection with Cardinal Alpedrinha, D. Jorge da Costa (1406–1508). In 1488, the cardinal founded a chapel dedicated to St. Catherine at the Roman church of Santa Maria del Popolo, next to the Via Flaminia. It may be inferred that, as these dates were so close to one another (1485 being the year of the hospital’s foundation, and 1488 being the year of the acquisition of the chapel), perhaps D. Jorge suggested the invocation to Queen Leonor. Furthermore, his influence in the Caldas project was to manifest itself in other matters, as, for example, in the obtaining of papal bulls or in the correction of the *Compromisso* which, according to some notes made by Queen Leonor in November 1507, “was begun by his hand”⁴⁸. In any case, and just as was to happen with the brotherhoods of the Misericórdia, Queen Leonor chose the figure of the Virgin Mary, in this case “of the People”, as the patron for her first charitable project; an invocation that directs our attention not only to the idea of a hospital destined for the more humble segments of society, but also to the idea defended by Isabel dos Guimarães Sá that Mary was “the true model of perfection” for Queen Leonor⁴⁹.

As we have seen, the hospital was begun while King João II was still alive. However, it was as the dowager queen that Queen Leonor intensified her efforts in relation to the Caldas project⁵⁰. Between 1495 and 1525, she succeeded in putting

⁴⁸ Arquivo Distrital de Leiria (henceforth referred to as ADLRA), Fundo do Real Hospital das Caldas da Rainha, Pergaminhos – Apontamentos da rainha D. Leonor, Dep.VI-Gav.3-Doc.26.

⁴⁹ Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *De princesa a rainha-velha cit.*, pp. 213–214. The monastery of the Colettine Poor Clares in Xabregas was also to acquire the invocation to the Virgin Mary: Madre de Deus (Mother of God).

⁵⁰ The queen’s presence in the town coincided with the period of her widowhood, namely in May 1501, 1504, May 1507, and between November 1518 and March 1519.

together a remarkable set of supports and privileges, which were to transform the hospital into a new seigniory in Estremadura⁵¹. In September 1496, she obtained spiritual grace for all those who visited the hospital and its chapel on the day of the Epiphany (6 January), on the day of the Annunciation (15 March), and on the day of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary (15 August). In the following year, she obtained another bull, this time granting full remission for all sins to those who died at the hospital or who bequeathed their property to it. It should be noted that it was only after attending to the spiritual side of the institution that Queen Leonor devoted her attention to its temporal aspects. This precedence that was given to religious over secular matters was, as we shall see, something that applied to the whole of the institution's daily life and reveals the secondary nature of the body in relation to the soul.

Once the support of Rome had been obtained, and certainly because of the greater availability of resources afforded to her through her status as a widow, Queen Leonor allocated an impressive amount of income and property to the hospital, which culminated in the establishment of a perpetual donation in 1508⁵². Among other topics of interest, this charter of donation synthesised the motives for the hospital's foundation: to serve God and the Virgin Mary, to save her soul through the foundation of a hospital that had as its objective the fulfilment of the works of mercy. It should be noted that this is the first document to mention the works explicitly; until then the manuscripts had only referred to the queen's compassion for the poor. In this context, and given the chronology, it is legitimate to question whether the full programme of the works of mercy had been associated with the hospital from the very beginning, or whether it had been "contaminated" by the foundation of the brotherhood of the Misericórdia in 1498. Until that date (1498), there had only been three documents relating to the hospital: the charter of privileges granted by King João II to the new residents of Caldas (December 1488), and two bulls granted by Pope Alexander VI (*Etsi profeta dicente* from September 1496, and *Hospitalium et aliorum* from June 1497). In none of these three documents, however, was there any reference to the works of mercy; just simply to the "pyedosa deuaçam" (pious devotion) or the "feruor de devaçom" (devotional fervour) of Queen Leonor⁵³. Thus, the first manuscript that linked the hospital to the works of mercy came after the foundation of the Misericórdia de Lisboa. This was the charter of donation that Queen Leonor made to the hospital in 1508, in which she stated: "for the service of Our

⁵¹ Lisbeth de Oliveira Rodrigues, *Os hospitais portugueses no Renascimento (1480-1580): o caso de Nossa Senhora do Pópulo das Caldas da Rainha*, PhD thesis, Braga, Universidade do Minho, 2013, pp. 295-296.

⁵² ADLRA, Fundo do Real Hospital das Caldas da Rainha, Pergaminhos – Doação da rainha D. Leonor da administração do hospital de Caldas da Rainha, Dep.VI-Gav.3-Doc.29.

⁵³ ADLRA, Fundo do Real Hospital das Caldas da Rainha, Património e privilégios, Privilégios (1576-1750), Dep. VI-3-A-4, fl. 3; The papal bull *Etsi profeta dicente* and the papal bull *Hospitalium et aliorum* in Saul António Gomes, "A documentação do Arquivo Distrital de Leiria dos séculos XV a XVIII relativa ao hospital das Caldas da Rainha". *Actas do colóquio sobre a História de Leiria e da sua região*, 1, Leiria, Câmara Municipal de Leiria, 1991, pp. 103-108.

Lord and of the blessed, glorious and always Holy Virgin Mary, his mother and our lady (...) we order to be built in the said place houses such as can be used to serve the works of charity and mercy”⁵⁴.

Although the corporal works of mercy are easier to identify than the spiritual ones, what stands out from the reading of the book of the *Compromisso* (1512) is Queen Leonor’s concern with including the complete programme of the works of mercy. The formulation of the spiritual works precedes the corporal ones, being reminiscent of the gospel according to St. Matthew: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6, 33). Except for the second and sixth works of mercy – “to counsel the doubtful” and “to bear wrongs patiently” – all of the others are included in the *Compromisso*. It is curious to note that the queen did not omit, for example, the need for the hospital’s slaves to receive instruction in the doctrine [1 – “to instruct the ignorant”], or to determine that the hospital’s purveyor should admonish those who performed their tasks badly [3 – “to bear patiently those who wrong us”], that the vicar should visit the sick “with comforting words and especially those who are at the point of death” [4 – “to harbour the harbourless”], that the sick should confess and take communion [5 – “to forgive offences willingly “], or even that she should ask God to save her soul, that of King João II and that of D. Afonso, her son, who at that time were already deceased [7 – “to pray for the living and the dead”]⁵⁵.

Besides the *Compromisso*, other sources also indicate the fulfilment of the spiritual works of mercy. In 1537, for example, a *Flos Sanctorum* was purchased “so that it could be read by the sick in the infirmaries, as the other one was already completely torn”, suggesting that the patients should have access to spiritual books⁵⁶. Two other books were purchased in that year, a book of hours of Our Lady and a psalter that could be used to teach the purveyor’s servant. Although it lies outside the chronological scope of this study, in the seventeenth century, Jorge de São Paulo, the hospital’s chronicler and purveyor, warned that, as there were no alms for the poor, the purveyors should not fail to pronounce “words of courtesy and urbanity”, which “cost no money and are worth a great deal”⁵⁷.

The seventh spiritual work [“to pray for the living and the dead”] is perhaps the one that is best documented. The hospital’s everyday life was marked by a series of ritualised acts that were designed, amongst other things, to perpetuate the memory of Queen Leonor. These began immediately with the obligation

⁵⁴ ADLRA, Fundo do Real Hospital das Caldas da Rainha, Pergaminhos – Doação da rainha D. Leonor da administração do hospital de Caldas da Rainha, Dep.VI-Gav.3-Doc.29.

⁵⁵ PMM, vol. 3, p. 138.

⁵⁶ ADLRA, Fundo do Real Hospital das Caldas, Livro de receitas e despesas (1536-1537), Dep. VI-3-B-5, fl. 143v, 146v, 147, 151v, 161v. Also purchased in this same year was an *Esplendiam* and a *Floriscendo*, probably chivalric romances; a book of new constitutions for the church, “a book that the priest and purveyor ordered to be brought to Lisbon for him to read”, “two books that the priest ordered to be brought to Lisbon for his entertainment”.

⁵⁷ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 2, p. 307.

stipulated by the queen herself to celebrate three masses each day for her soul and for those of her husband and son. Besides this, other rituals may have encouraged the sick to remember the queen and to pray for her soul. Each day, the purveyor visited the sick in the company of the physician and other servants. During these visits, the purveyor would use a cane that, according to tradition, had belonged to Queen Leonor and had been used by her when she visited the sick in the hospital⁵⁸. Furthermore, the continued memory of the queen was emphasised by the constant presence of her emblem – the shrimping-net – in the objects of worship, in the religious vestments or on various architectural features of the hospital and church. However, the hospital community did not pray only for the queen. It should be noted that some of the “sick poor” drew up their wills at the hospital, which included legacies in exchange for the celebration of annual masses.

Since this is acknowledged to be Queen Leonor’s personal project, it is not surprising to discover, from the reading of the *Compromisso*, that it is her devotional preferences that most stand out. As part of their prayers in chorus at the canonical hours, the hospital’s vicar and three chaplains were obliged to celebrate cycles of masses in honour of some particular saints, including St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Anthony, St. Silvester, St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. As we have seen, the first of these were linked to the queen’s Franciscan devotion. We will, once again, find this obligation reinforced in the same document in the chapter alluding to pilgrims and friars. There (Chapter XXIV), it was determined that the observant friars of St. Francis should be received at the hospital free of charge, regardless of their state of health, a rule that was in fact respected, as is proved by the different items of expenditure associated with the mendicant friars⁵⁹.

As far as the corporal works of mercy are concerned, the queen asked all the servants to show diligence in ensuring that “when [the sick] come they find charity and remedy and that the works of mercy are fulfilled with them” [2nd work: “to visit and cure the sick”]⁶⁰. Although the “sick poor” appear as the most privileged group amongst the poor, the works of mercy were also extended to others, such as pilgrims and travellers, the disgraced poor, or even the hospital’s slaves, who “will be well treated and provided for at the expense of the said hospital (...) whenever the purveyor sees that there is need for this and that they have been punished because of this when it is fulfilled. And they will have their Sunday clothes to go to Church and to be taught so that they might know and deserve, for they shall serve in the service of God”⁶¹.

The third, fourth and fifth corporal works – “to clothe the naked”, “to feed the hungry” and “to give drink to the thirsty” – generally appear together. The accounting ledgers do not leave us in any doubt as to the charity that was

⁵⁸ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 240–241.

⁵⁹ PMM, vol. 3, p. 149; Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 2, p. 56.

⁶⁰ PMM, vol. 3, p. 147.

⁶¹ PMM, vol. 3, p. 134.

practised; there are repeated references to alms given to the disgraced poor, to “honest women” or to pilgrims and travellers. The “*porta da copa*” (the pantry door), or, in other words, the main entrance to the hospital, then took on an especially important significance for the poor people of the town, as well as for all those who, although they did not enter the institution itself, received charity from the purveyors. It is important to note that food and clothing were also distributed on specific occasions. An example of this is to be found in the years of a shortage of bread, as in 1545 and 1596, or at the year’s main festivals, when the generosity of the purveyors was most noticeable, with great quantities of bread, sweets and money being spent on the poor who came to the town.

As far as the poor pilgrims are concerned [6th work: “to give lodging to pilgrims”], on the south side of the main body of the hospital, there was a two-storey building with an area of roughly 123.2 m², which was used to fulfil the obligation of hospitality⁶². Although they were only allowed to stay for one night, the pilgrims received both material and spiritual comfort, ranging from accommodation, food and clothing to religious assistance at any time of the year. If they were to die in the town, they would be buried with the same solemnities as the hospital’s patients, with the organisation of the funeral procession being the responsibility of the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo⁶³.

The queen ended the *Compromisso* with the first corporal work of mercy: “to ransom the captive and to help the imprisoned”. The fulfilment of this work was dependent on the liquidity of the institution, and perhaps because of this it was the last one to be mentioned. The hospital was obliged to ransom captives with the remainder of its income, or in other words its surplus revenue, but only when it was “not required by the said hospital for the following year”⁶⁴. When this happened, the first captives to be ransomed were “the poor and unprotected Portuguese prisoners, young boys if there are any there”, and, if these did not exist, “they may be Castilians, and so forth, any Christians, in order to give full compliance to the works of mercy”⁶⁵. However, the conditional nature of this rule was such that it was never fulfilled.

Finally, “to bury the dead”. At the hospital, the preparation and celebration of death were collective acts that required the participation of the whole hospital community (“sick poor” and servants alike). The appearance of “mortal signs” in a patient set in motion a joint action of consoling the dying person: the vicar remained with him, inciting him to have hope in the mercy of God “and in the virtue of his most sacred passion, which will forgive him his sins and give him

⁶² Arquivo Histórico do Hospital Termal das Caldas da Rainha (henceforth referred to as AHHTCR), Tombo do hospital de Caldas da Rainha (1587), pasta 43, inv. 298, fl. 56v.

⁶³ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 1, p. 228. The funeral procession of the pilgrims was identical to that of the “sick poor” who died at the hospital, except for the fact that the religious patients were not obliged to attend the ceremonies and the hospital was exempted from the need to make any offering during the service.

⁶⁴ PMM, vol. 3, p. 151.

⁶⁵ PMM, vol. 3, p. 151.

glory”⁶⁶. At the same time, those patients that knew how to read would pray aloud to him “the seven psalms, with their litanies and some other prayers” and the others would say the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria* and the *Creed*⁶⁷. It is possible that the environment of the hospital wards, filled with religious images and objects, served to encourage meditation on the Passion of Christ, emphasising the importance of physical suffering on the road to salvation. For this purpose, it is important to draw attention to the Triptych of the Passion (c. 1510), one of the most important works arising from Queen Leonor’s patronage of the arts. There is still a great controversy today regarding the authorship and original location of this altarpiece, whose painted wooden boards represent (from left to right) the road to the cross, the crucifixion and the deposition in the tomb⁶⁸. If we believe that it was, as it is today, positioned in the arch of the chancel, then the sick would have enjoyed visual access to the various moments of the Passion, namely to Christ’s death and crucifixion. This theme was, moreover, common to other hospitals, serving to inspire the sick to meditate upon the salvational nature of Christ’s death and upon his Mercy.

Also, in the case of the last corporal work of mercy, it should be noted that there were various brotherhoods in Caldas: Nossa Senhora do Pópulo (1494?), Nossa Senhora do Rosário (1576), Espírito Santo, Santíssimo Sacramento (1539), Santíssimo Nome de Jesus, Almas do Purgatório (1612) and São Sebastião. For what concerns us here, let us focus our attention on the first of these. Jorge de São Paulo tells us that the queen founded a brotherhood that shared the same invocation as the church and the hospital: Nossa Senhora do Pópulo⁶⁹. There are no data that enable us to know the form that such a brotherhood took in the sixteenth century, or even to be certain of the truth of the chronicler’s statement. What is known for certain is that, together with the brotherhood of the Holy Sacrament (*Santíssimo Sacramento*), which was also based at the hospital church, the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo was the preferential beneficiary of the alms bequeathed in the wills of the patients who, not infrequently, called upon the brotherhood to accompany their body to its burial. The only known inventories date from the seventeenth century and, just like Jorge de São Paulo in 1656, list the religious ornaments used and the vestments typically worn by the brotherhoods of the *Santas Casas*, such as 52 hooded jackets made of black serge, two lanterns made of blackwood, 26 yellow candles, a flag, two tomb cloths, nine

⁶⁶ PMM, vol. 3, p. 151.

⁶⁷ PMM, vol. 3, p. 151.

⁶⁸ On the authorship and original location of the triptych of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, see Vítor Serrão, “O mecenato da rainha D. Leonor e a pintura de corte”. *Oceanos* 8, 1991, pp. 104-108; Manuel Batoré, *A pintura do mestre da Lourinhã. As tábuas do mosteiro das Berlengas na evolução de uma oficina*, Master’s degree thesis, Lisbon, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1995, pp. 193-244; Nicolau Borges, *O hospital termal das Caldas da Rainha: arte e património*, vol. I, Master’s degree thesis, Lisbon, Universidade de Lisboa, 1998, pp. 28-33.

⁶⁹ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 435-436. According to Jorge de São Paulo, in 1575, at the time of the reform of the *Compromisso* of the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, this institution was already 81 years old, or, in other words, it was founded in 1494.



Triptych of the Passion (c. 1510).
Church of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo.
Museu do Hospital e das Caldas/Centro Hospitalar do Oeste.



vestments for penitents, 21 faggots to be carried by penitents, among other objects used for religious worship and processions⁷⁰. The chronicler added that the tomb of this brotherhood “is like that of the other Misericórdias of the kingdom with its very rich and beautiful black velvet cloth with stripes of yellow canvas (...) so that the tomb, cloth, vestments, flag, bell and litter are in every respect similar to those of the Misericórdias of the kingdoms”⁷¹. It was, in fact, the work of this author that Ivo Carneiro de Sousa used as the basis for his hypothesis that “this renewed confraternal experience [of the brotherhoods of the Misericórdia] may have found in the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo one of its most interesting prefigurations”⁷². If we accept that it was Queen Leonor who founded the brotherhood dedicated to Nossa Senhora do Pópulo, then the Caldas project also included a structure for supporting some of its hospital activities, namely the corporal work of mercy of burying the dead⁷³.

In any case, the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo appeared as the queen’s first great charitable institution. While it is unknown whether, in 1485, Queen Leonor already had the intention of applying the fourteen works of mercy to the hospital, the fact remains that, since 1508, that idea has been linked to the history of the institution. The analysis of the hospital’s everyday life enables us to understand that Queen Leonor brought together in just one single institution, not only the doctrine of mercy, but also the practical and complete programme of the works of mercy, of which the brotherhoods of the Misericórdia were the most paradigmatic example.

⁷⁰ This inventory of the factory of the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo is included in an accounting ledger of the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário. ADLRA, Fundo da Confraria de Nossa Senhora do Rosário de Caldas da Rainha (1692-1718), Dep. VI 25-B-5; Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 485-486.

⁷¹ Jorge de São Paulo, *O hospital das Caldas cit.*, vol. 3, p. 486.

⁷² Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *Da descoberta da Misericórdia à fundação das Misericórdias (1498-1525)*, Porto, Granito, 1999, pp. 93-94.

⁷³ Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, *Da descoberta da Misericórdia cit.*, pp. 93-94.

FINAL REMARKS

The question formulated at the beginning of this text finds its answer in the Franciscan spirituality of Queen Leonor. Her association with the works of mercy must, therefore, be understood within a broader context that included, among others, the desire to attain spiritual perfection through a spirituality that was directly experienced in the first person. For this purpose, meditating upon, and reproducing, Christ's practices, particularly concerning one of his principal virtues (Mercy), gave the laity the chance to become united spiritually with God. As we have seen, the programme of the works of mercy was one of the ways of life that enabled the Christian to attain the kingdom of heaven. In this context, there were two ideas that structured Queen Leonor's relationship with the works of mercy. On the one hand, the relevance of these works for the salvation of the soul, and, indissociable from this, on the other hand, the idea that the fulfilment of these same works formed one of the possible paths to union with God. It is, then, in this dialectics between the practice of the works of mercy and communion with Christ, that we must understand the programme of the works of mercy within the scope of Queen Leonor's actions.

For this same reason, it is not surprising to find that other women from courtly circles followed spiritual paths that were identical to those of Queen Leonor. Although today it is difficult to discern when, and how, the monarch started to behave as she did, and who it was that influenced or inspired her, it is nonetheless revealing that we can identify a certain common pattern of behaviour between some female royal figures. Just as in other cases, Queen Leonor's widowhood was marked by the greater intensification of her spirituality, which resulted in different undertakings. Such spirituality was strongly marked by the programme of the works of mercy and by her contemplation of God.

Furthermore, it is these values that we can identify as influencing the foundation of the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo. Queen Leonor's project at Caldas was not only the first of her charitable works, but also the one that, together with the brotherhoods of the Misericórdia, undeniably expressed her relationship with the works of mercy. Even after her death, in 1525, the hospital continued to make these works the flagship for its activities, dispensing material and spiritual aid both to the "sick poor" and to those who sought assistance in the town of Caldas. Thus, the almost parallel development of the hospital of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo and the foundation of the Misericórdia de Lisboa is a clear expression of Queen Leonor's commitment to the programme of the works of mercy, a personal involvement that must be understood as a "Commitment to the Future".



The scripture of images

The didactic narrative of the works of mercy

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Frontispiece of the Compromisso of the Brotherhood of St. Luke
Eugenio de Frias, 1609.
Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga.

“...you do not give me credit, if it is not an explicit text from the Scripture.”¹

From the last few decades of the sixteenth century onwards, the churches of the Brotherhoods of the Misericórdia progressively incorporated representations of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy into their paintings, frescos and decorative tiles, constructing a wide-ranging discourse, so that their brothers might learn more about the various purposes of Christian *caritas*. In order to revisit the main groups of such works that have survived until the present day, we will describe the perennial relationship between the image and the sacred word, which have been joined together in various ways in the construction of the iconographical narratives of the Misericórdia.

In Europe, all religious art is an interpretation of a sacred referent that, for Christianity, is to be found, in the final analysis, in the words of the Bible, the place where the truth lies, even though it is open to various levels of interpretation. Both in painting and in sculpture, this divine substrate is missing, or, to be more precise, the credibility of images was called into serious doubt during the iconoclastic crisis that had begun in the early eighth century, and still continued during the period of the Reformation, under the main accusation that they promoted idolatry.

In reaction to this, for the period that is of interest to us here, after the Council of Trent, theologians proposed that the role of images should be afforded greater importance, on condition that they faithfully reproduced the teachings of Christ.

In their pursuit of a constant promise, the painters, the *pictor christianus*, eagerly threw themselves into this new role, emulating St. Luke, a writer and a painter, and the patron saint of the Lisbon confraternity of artists.

The path that was followed by these painters had multiple branches, since they were struggling for the recognition of the liberal nature of their profession and sought to free themselves from the shackles of the manual trades. While a substantial part of their intellectual prestige was founded upon their role and ability in interpreting the sacred word, painters were constructing an autonomous discourse, directed more towards the tastes of the market and of those who collected their works, in a process of secularisation that was also to occur a little later, and in a similar fashion, with regard to the social attitude towards poverty, which was no longer ideologically motivated exclusively by religious imperatives. Broadly speaking, looking at the question in perspective, it can be said that the poor person ceased to be a Christian and was transformed into a citizen, leaving the theological sphere and thus entering into the sphere of social policy. In short, greater privilege was given to caring for the body in detriment to saving the soul. On the other hand, in the case of artists, at the same time as a speculative and challenging universe was being opened up, based on a return to classicism and the pursuit of

¹ Francisco de Santa Maria, Sermam da Visitação de Nossa Senhora na Dominga Sexta depois do Pentecoste. Pregado em a Sancta Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa em 2 de Julho do Anno de 1684 (Coimbra: Officina de Manoel Rodrigues de Almeyda, 1685), 19.

new genres in painting, demands were being made for greater effectiveness and rigour in the transmission of the Catholic doctrine.

In order to be able to go back in time and understand the meaning of the works of mercy that we wish to examine here, it is essential that we go beyond the question of the image of the *misericórdia* in Portugal as an institution of social care and assistance and rediscover its ties with Christian morality, the indissoluble matrix that united, in the same project for salvation, both the merciful and the poor, combining the corporal and spiritual works of mercy with the redemption of eternal life. It is also necessary to understand how, in a process that was based on a long cultural tradition, Rhetoric was to establish itself as a guiding discipline not only for the use of words, but also for the creation of images.

It was under this Christian matrix that the glorious history of the brotherhoods of the *Misericórdia* was to be developed, spreading further and further around the world and becoming increasingly linked to the Portuguese political administration, with ever greater responsibilities at the level of local power. Since these brotherhoods had been created with a vocation that was largely designed to provide complementary support to the legal system, through the provision of care to prisoners², over which they enjoyed an exclusive monopoly, the evangelical ideals of the works of mercy were further supplemented with increasing responsibilities in the management of hospitals, in the care provided to patients, in the management of apothecaries and pharmacies, in the aid given to the rearing of orphans and foundlings and the support given to the marriage of young girls³.

And, just as importantly, the brotherhoods cultivated a relevant public presence in the cities, taking part in the everyday funeral ceremonies of the poor and their fellow brethren, in a most solemn manner, organising the Maundy Thursday processions and the Procession of the Bones of the Executed on All Saints' Day.

As has already been underlined on various occasions⁴, religious thought decisively guided the charitable options of this lay brotherhood, being concerned with guaranteeing the best conditions so that the merciful, the chosen ones and the blessed, could effectively organise their good Christian works, with a clear moral conscience, for the salvation of their own souls and those of others. Such wishes were much more far-reaching than the mere provision of social assistance, so that the confraternities of the *Misericórdia* concerned themselves with the salvation of the living, but also devoted considerable resources to caring for the dead and to the salvation of the souls in Purgatory.

² Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, «O compromisso primitivo das misericórdias portuguesas (1498-1500)», *Revista da Faculdade de Letras do Porto*, 1996, 268-72, repositorio-aberto.up.pt/handle/10216/8454. Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *Quando o rico se faz pobre: misericórdias, caridade e poder no Império Português, 1500-1800*, (Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 1997), 64-65.

³ Under the scope of a relatively recent project, the history of the *misericórdias* in Portugal was the subject of an in-depth review based on historical studies and exhaustive documentary research: José Pedro Paiva et al., *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, 8 vols. (Lisbon: União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2002).

⁴ Besides the texts already mentioned, see, in particular: Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, «Práticas de caridade e salvação da alma nas Misericórdias metropolitanas e ultramarinas (séculos XVI-XVIII): algumas metáforas», *Oceanos*, no. 35 (July, 1998): 42-50.

THE DIDACTIC IMAGE AND THE FIRST LETTERS

One of the particular cases involving the use of images to reveal the Christian message was their association with the primers used to teach the doctrine and the first letters of the alphabet to young children and the newly converted. Used as an illustration of the text, the images were adapted to the aim of teaching the basic concepts of the Christian faith as expressed in the sacred words of the Bible.

In 1616, the publisher of the Jesuit catechism, the German Georg Mayr, in a presentation that he made to the teacher priests, returned to this idea and underlined the great advantages of publishing a profusely illustrated edition of the *Doutrina Christam*, with a hundred engravings specially chosen to increase the primer's didactic effectiveness in the most diverse teaching contexts, because "...what the others read in writing, the idiots find in painting, because in this way they can see what they should follow, in this way they can see what they do not understand in the letters."⁵

Immediately after this paraphrase of the ideas of Pope Gregory I, the same Jesuit added his agreement with a similar argument from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, stressing this same universal power of communication that images possessed: "This man, who was no less learned than the holiest priest and all the others that Christ gave as Doctors to his church, clearly understood that with the use of sacred images, all would be taught, with greater ease, taste and firmness, in the Christian doctrine, and, above all, those of a younger age, so that "Segnius irritant ânimos demissa per aurem, Quam quae sunt oculis subiecta fidelibus"⁶

The publishing project was developed over a longer period, following the success of the editions illustrated with greater quality by Giovanni Battista Elaino (1586) and by Pieter Kanis (Petrus Canisius), with the engravings of Philip Galle (1589)⁷. At the time of the Portuguese edition, the "small primer" had already been published in ten different languages, always with the same simplified engravings, yet with different texts out of respect for the local didactic traditions.

For Portugal, as proof of their admiration and support for the missionary efforts, the German Jesuits financed the publication, preferring to use the traditional text of Father Marcos Jorge, already supplemented with the annotations of Father Inácio Martins⁸, published for the first time in 1566.

⁵ Marcos Jorge, *Doutrina christam de padre Marcos Jorge da Companhia de Iesu representada por imagens* (In Augusta: Christoual Mangio, 1616), 1.

⁶ "What is understood through the ear affects the spirit less effectively than what is seen through the eye of the faithful", in the translation by José dos Santos in the recently published critical edition: Marcos Jorge, *Doutrina Cristã escrita em diálogo para ensinar os meninos. Com introdução e notas de José Miguel Pinto dos Santos*. (Lisbon: Paulus Editora, 2016), 25.

⁷ Giovanni Battista Elaino, *Dottrina christiana nella quale si contengono li principali misteri della nostra fede, rapresentati con figure per istrutione de gl'idioti et di quelli che non sano leggere* (Rome: stamperia de Vincenzo Accolti, 1586); Petrus Canisius, *Institutiones Christianae seu parvus catechismus catholicorum*. (Antuerpiae: Christophorus Plantinus, 1589).

⁸ For a general analysis of the importance of the Jesuit catechism written by Peter Canisius, his influence on the "minor" primers used in Spain, Italy and Portugal, as well as his relationship with the artistic set of ideas of the Counter Reformation, see: Rafael Zafra, «El emblemático catecismo de la Compañía de Jesús y su influencia en la creación del imaginario doctrinal de la Contrarreforma», García, Rafael (ed.), *Imagen y cultura. La interpretación de las Imágenes como Historia Cultural II* (2008): 87–99.

M. Que cousa he persignar?



D. Fazer tres Cruzes cõ o dedo pole gar da mão direita, hũa na testa , outra na boca, outra nos peitos, falando com Deos nosso Senhor.

Mostrai

Que cousa he persignar?

What it means to cross yourself?

Christian Doctrine, 1616. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

The combination of the main foundations of Christian belief with the learning of the first letters, and consequently the inclusion of the seven corporal and seven spiritual works in the primer, reminds us of the central importance that charity had in Christian theology, and then, after the Trent Council, that the works of mercy had in the salvation of the soul, going far beyond the limits and intentions of a mere discourse for the institutional representation of the Portuguese confraternities.

Following a medieval iconographical tradition⁹, which was later continued most vigorously and with other purposes in Flemish painting, the corporal works of mercy were illustrated by actions that could be easily apprehended in their completely literal sense and, at the same time, were also a faithful representation of the biblical text which had its common origin in the Gospel according to St. Matthew (25: 34-46)¹⁰.

Following a different path, the didactic strategy of the engravings of the *Doutrina Christam* sought to effect a separation between the sacred history and the example that was intended to be shown to anyone taking their first steps in the doctrine. See, for example, the engraving of the first corporal work of mercy “Giving food to the hungry”, where the literal nature of the scene in the foreground is associated with an episode from the New Testament in the upper left corner, with the foreshortened representation of the miracle of Christ involving the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. There is a simple narrative that is established through the comparison between two individualised images, and which is intended to underline the Christian and spiritual origin of the works of mercy, without which, in fact, these charitable actions would have no meaning.

The representation of a biblical referent also occurs in the second work, “Giving drink to the thirsty” (Moses causes water to gush from the rock), in the third one, “Clothing the naked” (the prodigal son) and in the fifth one, “Giving shelter to pilgrims” (Abraham offers hospitality to the three angels).

As a work of transition to a new narrative language, for the fourth one, “Visiting the sick and imprisoned”, the image retains the function of representing reality, with three distinct episodes, with the representation of an apothecary and the visit of the Holy Sacrament to the sick.

With this same intention, the engravings of the *Doutrina Christam* are also open to a new enhancement of the works of mercy, which are much more in agreement with the reality of the missionary work being undertaken by the Jesuits. The representation of the cell in which two Christian prisoners are preparing to be released, is a literal expression of “Ransoming the captives”, considered to be the sixth corporal work of mercy, and particularly effective in the context of the evangelical mission.

⁹ Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955), tomo II, vol. II, pp. 747-750.

¹⁰ For a detailed study of the possible biblical sources for the iconography of the corporal works of mercy, see: María Luisa Gómez Nebreda, «Las Obras de Misericordia. Fuentes textuales para su iconografía», em *La Biblia en El Arte y en la Literatura. V Simposio Bíblico Español*, vol. II, II vols. (Valencia Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1999), 417-28.

A primeira.



Dar de comer
Aos que hão fome.

A segun-

Giving food to the hungry
Christian Doctrine. 1616.
Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

Responding not directly to the Gospel according to St. Matthew, but to a theological reflection with traditions that date back at least to the time of St. Augustine¹¹, the seventh work “Burying the dead”, is represented by two episodes: the funeral procession and the burial. As in the case of the visit to the sick, the representation of the public ceremonies that characterise religious practice fits perfectly with the specific discourse of the image and with its effectiveness in the exemplary figuration of the exercise of the works of mercy.

In the iconographical programmes of the Portuguese *misericórdias*, the representation of the Life and Passion of Christ, the model and the ultimate aim of Christian meditation, was to completely occupy the programme of the main altarpieces of the chancels, ultimately because the Saviour, in his dual quality as God and Man, is the perfect example of Mercy, as we are taught by Father Manuel Fernandes, in his *Alma Instruída*: “. . . and we warn here that this Mercy is only found complete in the Son of God; because this Mercy includes two conditions: one is compassion, which pricks the heart and moves the entrails; the other is succour, which removes the misery from the poor man. The first condition has no place in God, nor in the Angels, because they are incorporeal Spirits and do not have a heart and entrails, where this compassion is received and felt. This first condition is found only in man; however, the second may be missing in him; because a man cannot perfectly succour another; so that, as we were saying, it is only in Christ that complete Mercy is found, because he is both God and man; and so as a man he has his own compassion and as God, he has his own subvention, and succour, with which he can help.”¹²

Even the theme of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary to St. Elizabeth, an emblematic piece with specific liturgical uses on the day when the confraternities of the *Misericórdia* celebrated the feast and held their elections, and which progressively began to invariably occupy the central niche of altarpieces, had its real starting point in Christ, as explained by the preacher and historian Francisco de Santa Maria, in the sermon that he gave at the *Misericórdia* de Lisboa, in 1684: “Let us turn to our Gospels: in the first of these, we see that the Holy Virgin showed herself to be very merciful with the Baptist, but that the ultimate aim of this mercy was Christ: the Baptist had to be the precursor, and it was convenient that long before he should be free of guilt and blessed with grace and enriched with great gifts and prerogatives, so that men with the grandeur of the ambassador should infer the greatness of the Prince. This is what is commonly said by the Holy Priests, so that Our Lady used great mercy with the Baptist, but that Christ was the aim and the ultimate reason for this mercy.”¹³

¹¹ On the theological roots of this seventh work, not mentioned in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, see: *Ibid.*, 419–22.

¹² The publication of the work in three volumes, in the reign of King Pedro II, emanated from the circles that were closest to the political power. As the author states, this represents an effort to consolidate the Christian doctrine, in order to increase the knowledge of God’s word and to support the missionary efforts, as well as for Christian recreation. Manoel Fernandes, *Alma instruída na doutrina e vida cristã pelo padre Mestre Manoel Fernandes, da Companhia de Jesu, confessor del Rei Dom Pedro Nosso Senhor* (Lisbon: Officina de Miguel Deslandes, 1688), vol. III, Capítulo III, Documento II, pg. 696.

¹³ Francisco de Santa Maria (1653–1713), a priest from the Congregation of St. John the Evangelist, a chronicler of his religion and a *qualificador* (qualifier or censor) for the Inquisition, enjoyed great prestige as a speaker, being invited to give various public sermons of great importance, with attention being drawn in particular, because of its public dimension, to the one delivered at the Auto de Fé that took place in Rossio, in 1706. See: Francisco de Santa Maria, *Sermam da Visitação de Nossa Senhora*, 15.



Altarpiece of the chancel of the Misericórdia de Almada

Giraldo Fernandes de Prado, 1590.

Misericórdia de Almada.

The choice of this episode, with the representation of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, and through antonomasia the Mother of the Eucharist, is a kind of iconographical peak, for, at the same time, it enables us to establish a significant link between her role as a mediator of the Divine Mercy, associated with the image of the *Mater Misericordiae*¹⁴, the true institutional emblem, and her participation in the mystery of the Eucharist, which is celebrated at annual ceremonies, at the feast of 40 hours, on the throne of the high altar.

Finally, it is also in the figure of Christ that an equivalence is established, a kind of contract, where the Divine Mercy that offers eternal life must correspond to an effective human mercy. That is one of the basic principles of the doctrine, as we are reminded by the primer of the Jesuit priest João da Fonseca, published in Évora, at the University print works, in 1688: “*What is to be gained through the exercise of these works? All those that have exercised these works will, on the day of judgement, hear that gentle voice of Our Lord Jesus Christ; Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Because those works of Mercy that ye have done unto one of the least of my poor brethren, ye have done unto me.*”¹⁵

As a development of the programme of the Life and Passion of Christ, it was only in the last few decades of the sixteenth century that secondary representations began to be incorporated into altarpieces, being placed at the level of the small panels of the predella, with the representation of the corporal works of mercy¹⁶.

In the first known example, from 1581, the altarpiece of the Misericórdia de Sintra, for which the carpentry work was designed by the architect Nicolau de Frias and the paintings were done by Cristóvão Vaz¹⁷, for the main panels of “Christ carrying the Cross on his back”, the “Calvary”, the “Lamentation”, the “Visitation” and “Our Lady of Mercy”, the painter represented on the predella Christ as *admonitore*, displaying, in two separate panels, the way in which the hungry and the thirsty should be helped by the brothers of the confraternity. The presence of Christ as a teacher and the positioning of the two panels (without any

¹⁴ On the iconography of Our Lady of Mercy, see the exhibition catalogue and particularly the article by Joaquim Oliveira Caetano, «Sob o Manto Protector. Para uma iconografia da Virgem da Misericórdia», in *Mater Misericordiae: simbolismo e representação da Virgem da Misericórdia*, Nuno Vassalo e Silva (ed.) (Lisbon: Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, 1995), 14–51.

¹⁵ The text of the primer closely follows the verses of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. See: João da Fonseca, *Escola da Doutrina Christã: em que se ensina o que he o brigado a saber o Christam ordenada por modo de Dialogo entre dous Estudantes hum Filozof, por nome Marcelino, & outro Theologo, por nome Diodoro com exemplos accomodados às materias, que se tratam dedicada á Purissima Virgem, Gloriosa Rainha dos Anjos, maria Santissima Senhora Nossa da Victoria* (Évora: Officina da Universidade de Évora, 1688), cap. XVII, pp. 186–189.

¹⁶ In the contract for the lost altarpiece of the Igreja da Misericórdia in Braga, signed with the painter António Zuzarte, in 1577, mention is made of the representations of the corporal works of mercy. Vítor Serrão (ed.), *A pintura maneirista em Portugal: a arte no tempo de Camões* (Lisboa: C.N.C.D.P. F.D, 1995), 461.

¹⁷ On the contract for the painting of the altarpiece of the Misericórdia da Ericeira and the artistic persona of Cristóvão Vaz, a disciple of Diogo Teixeira, see: Vítor Serrão, «O pintor Cristóvão Vaz, mestre dos retábulos da Misericórdia de Sintra (1581–1589)», *Boletim Cultural da Assembleia Distrital de Lisboa*, III, n. 85 (1979): 21–24. Currently the altarpiece is housed at the Igreja da Misericórdia in Colares, where, by all accounts, it was transferred in the eighteenth century: Vítor Serrão, «Notas sobre a pintura quinhentista no Concelho de Cascais», in *Um olhar sobre Cascais através do seu património*, vol. II (Cascais: C.M. A.C, 1989), 75. According to Francisco Lameira, the structure of the altarpiece was altered in the seventeenth century, with the opening of a central niche: Francisco Lameira, *Retábulos das Misericórdias Portuguesas*, 4 (Universidade do Algarve and União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2009), 67.



Giving food to the hungry

Predella of the original altarpiece of the Misericórdia de Sintra. Cristóvão Vaz, 1581. Misericórdia de Colares.

concern for representing all of the works) on either side of a Last Supper, makes it possible to establish a narrative relationship for the whole group, outside the paintings themselves, comparing the consecrated bread and wine, the giving of food and drink, the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist and the commitment to performing the works of mercy.

Two centuries later, we can confirm the continuing vitality of that quite simple didactic discourse, which was, in fact, accompanied by successive editions of the Jesuit primer, in the coffers of the painted ceiling of the Igreja da Misericórdia da Ericeira¹⁸, a work that was produced in 1761, resulting from the partnership between the Lisbon tile-painter Manuel António de Góis and Sebastião de Carvalho, from Cascais. Here, the works of mercy (which, in the eighteenth century, were invariably represented together as a complete whole) include the spiritual works and are accompanied by the representation of the seven sacraments, in an association that demonstrates the intention to present the basic notions of the Christian catechism, by joining together, in just one programme, the works of mercy, as an appeal to individual effort, and the sacraments associated with the divine grace, both of which are essential contributions to the salvation of the soul. The literal images, used both for the corporal and for the spiritual works, framed in elegant rocaïlle cartouches, have the curiosity of depicting the brothers of the Misericórdia, dressed in their black capes and fulfilling their obligation to help the poor. But the main narrative is established for the whole group through a numerical and mnemonic device: seven corporal works of mercy, seven spiritual works of mercy, seven sacraments.

¹⁸ The initial programme for the ceiling at Ericeira, which had less correspondence with the actual doctrine, was planned to include a representation of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy complemented with the partial representation of the Seven Deadly Sins and the coat of arms of the Confraternity. The painting of the ceiling was undertaken by two artists who were inexperienced in this particular speciality, and an accidental fall from the scaffolding caused the death of Sebastião Carvalho. See: Manuel Luís Violante Batoréu, *A pintura e os pintores da Santa Casa da Misericórdia da Ericeira*, Arte e Património (Ericeira: Mar de Letras, 1998), 28-49. After undertaking a second work in Ericeira, for the chancel of the Igreja de São Pedro, the tile painter Manuel António de Góis (1730-1790) was to return to the manufacture of decorative tiles and to Lisbon, with a brief passage through the Real Fábrica do Rato, after which he abandoned the art in around 1771, disappointed with the hostile climate that culminated in the dismissal of the factory's first director, Tomás Brunetto. See: Cirilo Volkmar Machado, *Collecção de memórias, relativas às vidas dos pintores, e escultores, architetos, e gravadores portugueses, e dos estrangeiros, que estiverão em Portugal* (Lisbon: Imprensa de Victorino Rodrigues da Silva, 1823), 318-19.



Giving good counsel to those who seek it, Spiritual Work of Mercy
Giving drink to the thirsty. Corporal Works of Mercy
Ceiling of the Igreja da Misericórdia in Ericeira.
Manuel António de Góis, 1761. Misericórdia da Ericeira.

NARRATIVE AND ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION

Another way of using the images, also with didactical purposes, was the elaboration of a narrative, understood not only as the simple arrangement of events according to a traditional order, but as the creation of a new discourse of interpretation of the different levels of meanings of the sacred word. Using the precepts of the new scholastics, the narrative was transformed into an erudite discourse, organised as a piece of oratory with a much vaster persuasive objective of revealing the knowledge of the literal, allegorical, tropological and anagogical meanings expressed in the Bible.

The ceiling of the Hospital Real de Todos os Santos, which was the work of the royal painter Fernão Gomes¹⁹, disappeared following the unfortunate fire of 1601, but it is known to us through the project entitled “*As estórias deste desenho são tiradas do testamento, novo E velho aplicadas ao ospital*” (The stories of this drawing are taken from the Old and New Testament, applied to the Hospital). It was one of the first narratives to contain allegorical representations of the corporal works of mercy²⁰.

Allegorical knowledge²¹ (in the particular sense that is attributed to it, through biblical exegesis, of understanding and deciphering the sacred word) is expressly shown in the descriptive title given to the drawing, which refers to a crucial correspondence between the Old and the New Testament, in which the episodes from the history of the Archangel Raphael, and from that of the patriarchs Abraham and Lot, are linked together, in parallel, as prefigurations of Christ’s merciful actions.

The paintings of the ceiling organised a narrative with episodes from various stories, which, arranged in three horizontal rows and grouped together according to the themes of Salvation, Hospitality and Healing, sought to reveal the biblical and sacred foundations for the programme of action followed by the Hospital²², an institution that, from 1564 onwards, was controlled by the Misericórdia de Lisboa²³.

The whole process of allegorical interpretation has, as its ultimate aim, to display the spiritual message of the theme that is represented, or, to use the scholastic

¹⁹ On the work of the painter Fernão Gomes (1548–1612), and particularly on the work in question, see: Dagoberto L. Markl, *Fernão Gomes um pintor do tempo de Camões: a pintura maneirista em Portugal* (Lisbon: Comissão Executiva do IV Centenário da Publicação de «Os Lusíadas», 1973); Vítor Serrão (ed.), *A pintura maneirista em Portugal: a arte no tempo de Camões* (Lisbon: C.N.C.D.P., 1995).

²⁰ The extensive iconographical programme of the Igreja do Hospital de Todos os Santos included a royal portrait gallery, in which the kings and queens were represented as benefactors of the Hospital and the Misericórdia de Lisboa, as well as an allegorical programme for the ceiling of the chancel, dedicated to the theme of the Virtue of Mercy, and executed by the painter Francisco Venegas, perhaps from only a few years earlier, for which there still exists a preparatory drawing, which is now housed in the collections of the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (inv. 666). Vítor Serrão, *A pintura maneirista em Portugal*.

²¹ For a fuller description of the concept of Christian allegory, informed by the scholastic doctrine and distinct from the classical rhetorical allegory, see: Henri de Lubac, *Exégese médiévale: les quatre sens de l’Ecriture* (S. l.: Cerf DDB, 1993), vol. IV, 125–144.

²² This statement is essentially based on the historical information and the iconographical interpretation published by Vítor Serrão and Dagoberto Markl, «Os tectos maneiristas da Igreja do Hospital de Todos os Santos (1580–1613)», *Boletim Cultural da Assembleia Distrital de Lisboa*, n. 86 (1980): 161–215.

²³ For an archaeological and historical reconstruction of the building, see: Ana Cristina Leite (ed.), *Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos: séculos XV a XVIII*, catalogue (Lisbon: Câmara Municipal, 1993).



Design for the ceiling of the Hospital de Todos os Santos

Fernão Gomes, c. 1585-90.
Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa.

terminology, the anagogical meaning of the works of mercy. Thus, the key piece for the reading of the programme is the central medallion with the representation of a rare theme, a “Spiritual Supper”, where, in the midst of clouds, Christ distributes food to all the blessed ones who are grouped together around a round table, illustrating the verse²⁴: “*and will come forth and serve them*”, of the Parable of the Vigilant Servant, from the Gospel according to St. Luke (12: 37). That episode, a replication of the Last Supper and the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist, also has the advantage of creating a supreme model in Christ for a reversal of social roles in which the rich serve the poor and needy.

A fairly inventive choice for guiding the narrative was that of the verse from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (25: 35), which seeks to reveal a particular aspect of the Last Judgement, represented in the cartouche on the right: “*I was a stranger, and ye took me in*”, with Christ surrounded by male and female saints, in a celestial court, offering (in this form of interpretation) hospitality in heaven.

The other guiding thread of the narrative was to be established through the panel on the left, with Christ sending the Archangel Raphael, “*who heals all sick people*”, as pointed out by the Latin inscription, to accompany Tobias²⁵, introducing the episodes in which the archangel-doctor plays a leading role: the “Healing of the crippled beggar” and the “Healing of Tobias’ blindness”. The other three episodes, the “Miracle of the fig-tree with no fruit”, the “Healing of the bleeding woman” and the “Healing of the Leper” reinforce the idea of Christ the Healer, a theme that was so beloved by St. Augustine²⁶, in which the power of true healing emanates solely and directly from the Saviour.

Demonstrating the use of a consolidated formulary, the five episodes chosen for the representation of Hospitality (“Christ asks for the hospitality of Zacchaeus”, “Lot gives shelter to two angels”, “Christ at Martha’s house”, “Abraham offers hospitality to the three angels” and the “Meeting with the disciples on the road to Emmaus”) are referred to in the engraving “*Hospitio peregrinos excipere*”, from the series “*Septem Opera Misericordiae Corporalia*”²⁷ produced by Philip Galle, in 1577, a few years before the paintings were made for the hospital ceiling, probably

²⁴ We are following here the Portuguese version of Padre Matos Soares, trad., *Bíblia Sagrada. Antigo Testamento* (Porto: Tipografia Porto Médico, 1932).

²⁵ “*Rafael ut omnes sanet aegros*” Himni, 5. The characterisation of Raphael as a doctor angel, based on the episode of the healing of the blindness of Tobias the father, had a continuing cultural tradition with several chapels in his name, and was still effective in the seventeenth century, as is mentioned by the priest Manuel Fernandes: “*And it can also be clearly seen that João Molano, in his Diário dos Medicos, in which every month he notes down the doctor saints, among whom he puts in first place the Angel St. Raphael, the companion of Tobias the Younger, in whom he discovered the virtue of a certain medicine for restoring the sight of his father.*” Manoel Fernandes, *Alma instruída na doutrina e vida christã pelo padre Mestre Manoel Fernandes, da Companhia de Jesu, confessor del Rei Dom Pedro Nosso Senhor.*

²⁶ On the importance of the sermons of St. Augustine for the consolidation of the evangelical theme of Christ “*as the complete doctor of all our wounds*”, see the article by Rudolph Arbesmann, «The Concept of “Christus Medicus” in St. Augustine», *Traditio*, no. 10 (1954): 1–28.

²⁷ The engraving is part of an album of prints representing the seven sacraments, the seven corporal works of mercy and the seven spiritual works of mercy, composed by Philip Galle and published in 1577. An adaptation of those engravings, with the same biblical references and images for each of the works of mercy, is also to be found in the work of the poet Giulio Roscio, *Icones operum misericordiae cum Iulij Roscij Hortini sententiis ...* (Rome: Impensis Bartholomaei Grassi, 1586).



Spiritual Supper

Central cartouche of the project for the ceiling of Hospital de Todos os Santos, Fernão Gomes, c. 1585-90. Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa.

between the years 1584 and 1590. In that same series, the engraving “*Aegrotos Invesere*” represents the name of Jesus ringed in a halo of light, in the upper part of the arch of the doorway, and a verse from the Book of Psalms (102: 3): “*Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases*”, repeating the central idea of the programme of the Hospital de Todos os Santos.

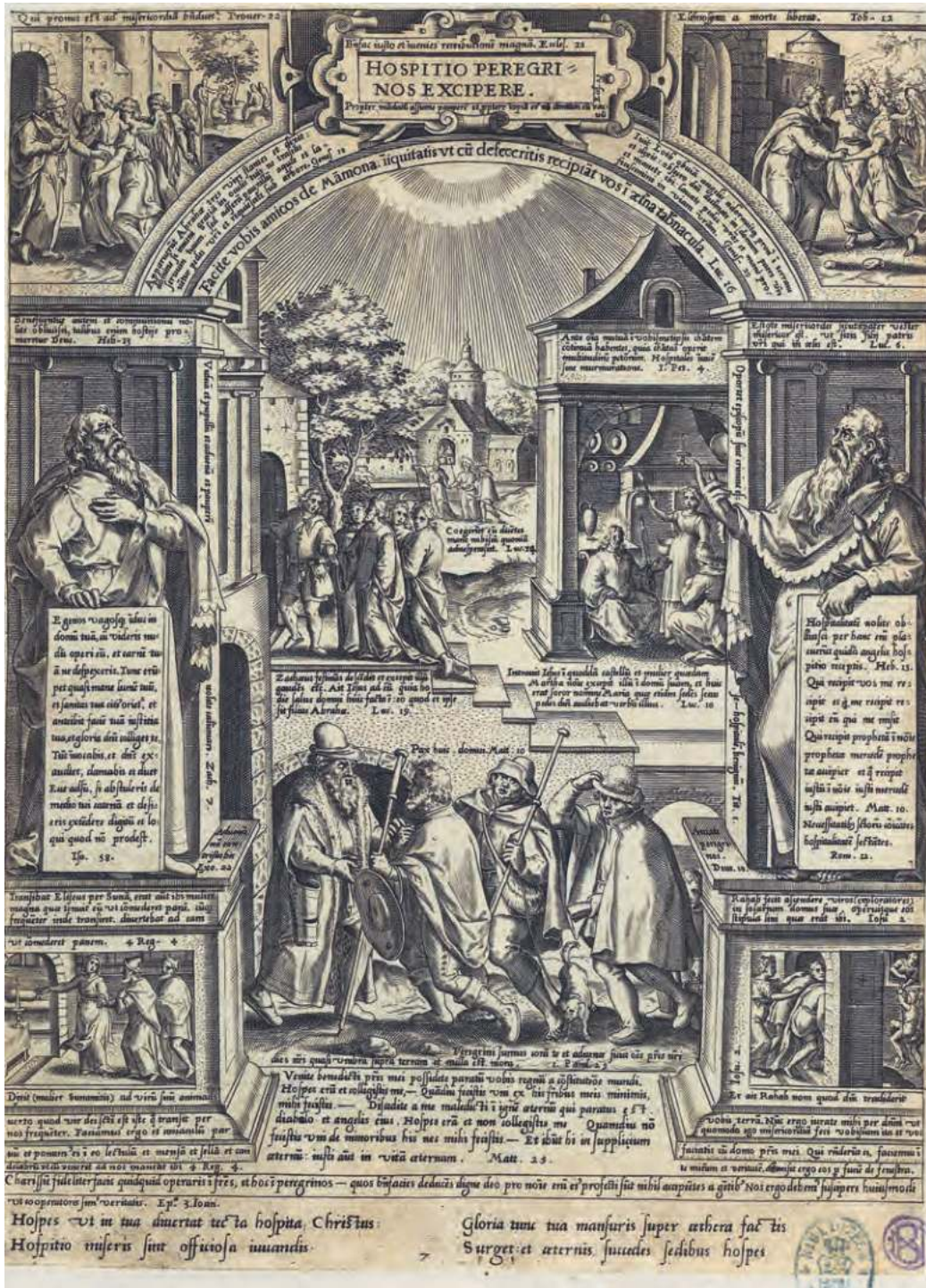
The sequence of biblical episodes chosen to display both hospitality and the care of the sick is designed to establish the tropological meaning, the particular moral scruple that should guide charitable action, as is clearly underlined in the verses: “*But I opened my doors to the traveller*” (Job, 31: 32) in the representation of the prophet Lot with the angels, and “*... as a stranger received of us*” (Esther, 16: 10) in the episode at Martha’s house, in a clear reference to the hospital’s programme of welcoming all, without exception, including travellers and strangers. This same care in practising a universal Mercy, regardless of a person’s nationality or social status, further justifies the choice of the verse “*Pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant*” (Genesis, 18: 3), to underline the representation of Abraham’s hospitality.

We should also note that, quite unusually in the construction of iconographical programmes, as in the case of the first two episodes mentioned above, the chosen verses do not necessarily correspond to the biblical passages represented in the images, and the discourse is developed in an effective complementarity between the two arts of painting and the written word.

As we have seen, in order to understand the spiritual dimension, it was fundamental that Christ was proposed as the ultimate recipient of the works of mercy, which meant that this dimension was linked to the redeeming action present in the verses of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. In this way, the idea that giving hospitality to the sick is a commitment with Christ is also enunciated three times in the structure of the narrative of the Hospital de Todos os Santos, in which He is given help and lodging by Zacchaeus, Martha and the fellow disciples in Emmaus.

The description of the ceiling of the Hospital de Todos os Santos would not be complete without a mention of two secondary episodes from the central row, represented in small reserves, without the accompaniment of the biblical verses: the “Bronze Serpent”, when Moses, in the desert, creates a kind of simulacrum of the cross with healing powers, and the “Good Samaritan”, who heals and provides lodging to a traveller that has been attacked and wounded by thieves. Both of the episodes function as a primeval allegory and, at the same time, express the specific meaning of healing and hospitality that will only be fully revealed with the coming of Christ. The first compares the cross of the serpent with the crucifixion and thus makes the healing of the body equivalent to the “healing” of the soul in the redemption of the eternal life²⁸. The second episode, that of the Good Samaritan, compares human mercy to the divine mercy, which offers healing and eternal hospitality in Heaven. This form of comparative discourse was a

²⁸ This allegorical reading is justified in the actual text of the Bible, in the Gospel according to St. John (3: 14).



Hospitio peregrinos excipere
 Philip Galle, 1577.
 Biblioteca Nacional de España.

proposal for the interpretation of the episodes and demonstrated to the brothers the profound coherence of God's wisdom and the divine mercy, of the whole vast meaning and consequence of the principles that are outlined in the Old Testament and then developed further in the New Testament. As a secondary narrative, these small images serve to emphasise the themes of the main discourse.

This whole combination of images is in keeping with a rhetorical organisation of the narrative, revealing the careful theological training that lay behind the construction of the iconographical programme. It also reveals the proximity of Fernão Gomes to the model of the Christian painter, committed to combining a narrative discourse with the image and the word, even though he probably enjoyed the collaboration of an erudite iconographer, capable of using his doctrinal wisdom to make the precise cut that was needed in the verses for each of the chosen themes.

This was the only time that an iconographical programme of Mercy had the idea of the Last Judgement as its core, albeit coloured with the Eucharistic representation of the Spiritual Supper. In 1604, after the fire, the same Fernão Gomes, in partnership with Diogo Teixeira, was to paint the new ceiling of the chancel, now with a triumph of the Eucharist, accompanied by the eight beatitudes personified by winged female figures, and complemented, just as they should be, with "...their inscriptions in large letters, which can be read below...".²⁹

LITERAL AND SACRED NARRATIVE

After examining the singular case of the allegorical narrative of the Hospital de Todos os Santos, we can now present another unique work, the iconographical programme of the Igreja da Misericórdia de Évora, where, with another narrative form, the complete set of the corporal works of mercy are presented as literal representations of charitable acts, performed in everyday settings.

In Évora, the campaign of fresco painting which, it would seem, was conducted between the years 1590 and 1596, in keeping with the completion of the building of the new church³⁰, coincided with the last years of the archbishopric

²⁹ The contract contains a rigorous description of the work that was to be realised through the partnership between Fernão Gomes and Diogo Teixeira. See: Dagoberto L. Markl e Vítor Serrão, *Os tectos maneiristas da igreja do Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos, 1580-1613* (Lisbon: [s.n.] 1981), 35–36.

³⁰ The works of the new Igreja da Misericórdia in Évora had a lengthy and somewhat chequered history over almost half a century. They began in 1554, with a contract with the master builder Manuel Pires, who freed himself from the execution of the building work in the following year, as shown in the documentation published by Vítor Serrão, «A igreja-salão de Nossa Senhora da Lagoa em Monsaraz: da empreitada de Mateus Neto à traça de Manuel Pires, arquitecto do Cardeal-Infante D. Henrique (1560)», *Artis, Revista do Instituto de História da Arte*, 1a, n. 5 (2006): 217–36. In 1574, although the walls were already "wedged" in place, the possibility was still being discussed (and eventually rejected) of transferring the site of the Igreja da Misericórdia to the city's Porta Nova. In 1596, in what can be considered to have been among the last works in the completion of the project, the master stonemason Mateus Neto laid the church's stone floor. See: Armando Nobre de Gusmão, *Subsídios para a história da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Évora, 1567-1667*, (Évora: s.n., 1969), 337.



Giving food to the hungry
Giving drink to the thirsty
Giving shelter to pilgrims
Misericórdia de Évora,
Francisco João, c. 1590-1595
José Miguel Potes Cordovil
Misericórdia de Évora.

of Dom Teotónio de Bragança³¹ (1578–1602). It was, therefore, part of a brilliant cycle of decorations of stucco and fresco paintings, frequently complemented by the use of gilded woodcarving, paintings on wooden panels and glazed decorative tiles that were a common feature of the interiors of both civil and religious architecture, with erudite iconographical programmes, and which we can still admire in the various campaigns that were undertaken at the Paço dos Condes de Basto (1578–90), on the ceiling of the chapel of São Lourenço in the transept of Évora Cathedral (1597), in the sacristy of the Igreja do Espírito Santo (1599), in the Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Graça do Divor (c.1600), and in the Ducal Palace of Vila Viçosa (1602–1603).

Unfortunately, we can only know the iconographical programme in part³², since it was mutilated and covered over³³ by the ostentatious campaign of gilded woodcarving, canvas paintings and tiles, carried out between 1710 and 1716.

From what it is known, the painter adapted the engravings of Dirck Volkertsz Coornhert, published in Leiden, in 1552, to form a frieze above the moulding on the side walls of the nave, where, for example, there was a depiction of the poor man kneeling and receiving bread, the benefactor welcoming the pilgrim by the hand at the door to his house, the thirsty man drinking water directly from the pitcher and the nobleman sitting at the bedside of the sick man. Even the suggestion of representing the benefactors at a slightly higher level, two or three steps above the others, is taken from the engravings and is repeated in the works “Giving food to the hungry” and “Giving shelter to pilgrims”.

Systematically, all the manifestations of the heroic body and the unrealistic poses, characteristic features of that Italianate aspect of Nordic Mannerism, were shaped according to a new decorative context, in which care was taken to represent the furniture, garments and other objects according to contemporary standards, such as the small table with the medicines and infusions, the ceramic pots and the bowls of water, the patched-up clothes, the crutches, the typical garb worn by the pilgrims of Santiago de Compostela, and the complex attire of the nobles, with shoes, stockings, ruffs and a hat.

³¹ For an overall view of the patronage of the archbishop Dom Teodósio of Bragança, see: *Vitor Serrão, Arte, religião e imagens no tempo de D. Teodósio de Bragança, arcebispo de Évora (1578–1602)* (Vila Viçosa: Fundação Casa de Bragança, 2015).

³² It is possible that, besides the Virgin of the Cloak (or the Virgin of Mercy), the high altar included other fresco paintings, justifying their replacement and updating, just a few decades later, through the placement of a new structure of gilded woodcarving, in 1665. See: Jerónimo de Alcântara Guerreiro, *Subsídios para a história da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Évora nos séculos XVII a XX (1667–1910)*, vol. III (Évora: s.n., 1979), 52–53. Following the period of baroque decoration in the eighteenth century, some of the remaining paintings were transferred to the Ermida de São Sebastião, where they were adapted to the main altarpiece. The themes of the painted wooden panels were identified by Túlio Espanca and attributed to the painter Sebastião Lopes, who would have painted them in around 1550. They must have belonged both to the altarpiece of the chancel of the Igreja da Misericórdia and to other altarpieces dedicated to St. John the Baptist and the Holy Christ. See: *Túlio Espanca, Inventário Artístico de Portugal: Concelho de Évora* (Lisboa: Academia Nacional de Belas Artes, 1966), vol. I, pp. 322–23.

³³ Insofar as possible, the presence of the frescos was recorded during the course of an intervention undertaken by the architect José Miguel Potes Cordovil for the purposes of conservation and restoration of the paintings of the nave and altarpiece, between 1985 and 1986.



Giving shelter to the pilgrims
Visiting the sick
 Dirck Volkertsz, 1552
 Rijksmuseum.



Giving drink to the thirsty, detail
Giving shelter to the pilgrims, detail
 Francisco João, c. 1590-1595
 José Miguel Potes Cordovil
 Misericórdia de Évora.

The connection with the model is established in a utilitarian fashion, only making use of its compositional structure, since the series of engravings produced by Dirck Volkertsz, which opens with the scene of the Last Judgement, is proposed as a narrative of the already-mentioned verses from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (25: 34-46), written in the lower part of the engraving. It should be noted that, in respect for the interpretive coherence of this biblical discourse, Christ is depicted on two occasions among the needy and among the hungry and the naked.

Unfortunately, the seventh work, Burying the Dead, which was not represented in the Flemish series, was badly damaged through the inclusion of the gilded baroque frames and the degraded state of the mural support, but it is still possible to make out the upper part of the narrative, with the representation of the funeral procession, with the brothers dressed in black capes, displaying the flag of the Misericórdia.

Forming part of that same campaign was the representation of Our Lady of Mercy, which crowned the main altarpiece, and which, following the guidelines established by the Misericórdia de Lisboa, in 1576, included the poor, protected under the Virgin's cloak: a naked man, and a mother with two small children, breastfeeding³⁴.

This was one of the first times, in the representation of the works of mercy, that an attempt had been made to go beyond the simplified literal portrayal in order to get to know and represent the poor man in his conventional characteristics, also making use of the disparity that separated him from his opposite number, the nobleman. Contrary to what had been the case at the Hospital de Todos os Santos, the political discourse of the images was made without the support of biblical quotations, and with a pictorial narrative being assumed in the context of the traditional iconography.

The reasons normally given for the representation of the corporal works of mercy as tasks that were being performed in the present time (and thus distanced from a religious ideological matrix), as a sign of the new bourgeois virtues that accompanied the secularisation of charitable social assistance in the cities of northern Europe, were barely echoed at all in Portugal during those years³⁵.

On the contrary, if we remember the vigorous commitment of the archbishop Teotónio de Bragança in fighting the crisis situations of both famine and plague, which combined with one another in the *annus horribilis* of 1580, and in his patronage of the foundation of the Hospice, Brotherhood and Boarding House of Piedade, as well as the two refuges of São Mansos and Madalena, in order to provide help to prostitutes and poor young maidens, we can better understand the atmosphere that governed people's lives at that time in the society of Évora³⁶.

³⁴ Joaquim Oliveira Caetano, «Sob o Manto Protector. Para uma iconografia da Virgem da Misericórdia», 24.

³⁵ For an analysis of the representations of the works of mercy in Flemish painting, and particularly in mannerist engravings, see: Vincenzo Paella, *Caravaggio Le settee Opera di Misericordia* (Italy: Artstudiopaparo, 2014), 57-73.

³⁶ For a study of the social aspect of the life of the Archbishop Dom Teotónio de Bragança, see: Laurinda Abreu, «O arcebispo D. Teotónio de Bragança e a reestruturação do sistema assistencial da Évora Moderna», em *Igreja, Caridade e Assistência na Península Ibérica (sécs. XVI-XVIII)*, Laurinda Abreu (ed.) (Lisbon: Colibri, 2004), 155-165.



Giving food to the hungry
Dirk Volkertsz, 1552.
© Trustees of the British Museum.

Preoccupied with fighting the scourge of hunger and contagious diseases with an active policy that went beyond the mere response to situations of crisis, the archbishop of Évora invited the Spaniard Miguel Giginta, the author of the *Tratado de Remédio de Pobres*, published in Coimbra, in 1579, to go to Évora to accompany the works of the Hospice of Piedade. Without the aim of creating a new institutional form, despite the fact that he shared in these new ideas for the implementation of Christian charity, the archbishop of Évora set up the Brotherhood of Piedade according to the model of the confraternities of the Misericórdia, which operated in perfect harmony with the latter, also offering care to poor people after they had received treatment at the Hospital do Espírito Santo.

Fuelled by a desire to eliminate various problems associated with the constant movement of beggars, Miguel Giginta's ideas were marked by a stigmatisation of mendicity, which he saw as a factor that led to a whole series of social vices. The plan for the new institution to provide help to the poor, besides offering them shelter and integrating them into society through the provision of vocational training, corrected the negative effects caused by the harmful action of exercising feigned poverty: *“The dissolute idleness of the feigned poor will be done away with and they will cease to wound themselves and martyr themselves in order to arouse compassion; many who do not wish to cure themselves will be healed and they will abandon their crutches and false trickery. They will not place their children in the situation of beggars, nor will there be anyone who maims or blinds their children; there will be no abortions or infanticides in the women beggars; already grown children will not be stolen so that they can have their own feigned children. There will be an end to the harm that the feigned poor cause by attracting young boys and girls to this idle and dissolute occupation. Many lazy farm workers who beg in order not to work will no longer abandon their lands. Many will return to family life who have abandoned their wife and children to flee from the burdens of marriage and have gone off to beg. The feigned poor will walk away or will work, since they will cease to have a way of making money, and many will avoid the danger of falling ill...”*³⁷

It is possible that the persistent depiction in the frescos of Évora of child poverty, a kind of warning of the true, ingenuous poverty, was a way of expressing this questioning about the evils of false beggars.

But the great novelty of the period was the representation of nobles as benefactors, contradicting the idea of anonymity that was supposed to lie behind Christian charitable actions. Among the most important models, we should recall the now disappeared gallery of royal paintings in the nave of the church of the Hospital de Todos os Santos, and the magnificent painting attributed to Amaro do Vale³⁸, with the portraits of Felipe II and his retinue praying for the souls of

³⁷ As an example, we have transcribed only an excerpt from a highly numerous list of vices associated with feigned poverty. See: Miguel Giginta, *Tratado de remedio de pobres*, Félix Santolaria Sierra (ed.) (Barcelona: Editora Ariel, S.A., 2000), 117 and following.

³⁸ Although there is no documentation regarding its provenance, the most likely fact is that the painting was produced for a Confraternity of the Souls of Purgatory, in close relationship with the Igreja da Misericórdia de Lisboa, whose foundational iconography it draws upon. For an analysis of the problems presented by the iconological interpretation, see: Paulo Morais-Alexandre, «Adoração de Cristo pela Corte Celestial, pela Igreja, por Felipe II e seu séquito», *Brotéria Revista de Cultura* 151, n. 1 (Julho de 2000): 59–81.



Prayer for the salvation of the Souls of Purgatory

Amaro do Vale, 1612-1619.

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga.

Purgatory, a spiritual work of mercy. The same representation of an aristocracy committed to the practice of acts of mercy was to be made in the campaign of fresco painting at the church of Vila Nova da Baronia, probably painted by José de Escobar, in 1613, and clearly inspired upon those to be found in Évora³⁹.

At a time of profound economic crisis and the affirmation of the dual monarchy, this was a form of social justification of the status of nobility through Christian ideals, stimulated by a desire to assert the legitimacy of the new political order, and certainly coherent with the principles that guided the more progressive initiatives of Dom Teodósio de Bragança.

The relative novelty of the pictorial discourse of Évora in the context of the programmes of the Misericórdia also found its roots in a precise formulation about the role of images, a reflection that had begun at the Council of Trent and had been progressively developed by the theoreticians of the Counter Reformation, as already mentioned.

In his work *Discorso intorno alle imagine sacri et profane* (1582), Gabriele Paleotti, the influential archbishop of Bologna claims that the visual arts are essentially distinguished, not by their origin or the materials and techniques used in their making, but by the fact that they form “images” that, despite maintaining the same nature, can be subdivided into either sacred or profane works. In a very simple and comprehensive manner, Paleotti defines the sacred image as a kind of higher degree of the natural, a level that has been achieved through the theme and its purpose: “...because it is through the theme that it contains that it is a sacred thing, and because of the faith from which it is formed, and because of the purpose for which it is destined, that it immediately acquired a certain sanctification.”⁴⁰

In developing his argument, the archbishop of Bologna drew a parallel between the book and the painting, both of which were governed by the discipline of Rhetoric, and defined the preferential limits of the Christian pictorial representation centred around the values of simplicity and similarity with reality, by establishing that “...the purpose of painting is to resemble the thing that is represented, which some call the soul of painting, because all other things, such as “*vaghezza*”⁴¹, variety of colours and other decorative features, are accessory; as Aristotle said in the *Poetics* that, of two paintings, the one that is full of beautiful colours, but is not similar, is considered inferior to the one that is formed from simple lines but is similar: and

³⁹ Túlio Espanca, *Inventário Artístico de Portugal*: Distrito de Beja: concelhos de Alvito, Beja, Cuba, Ferreira do Alentejo e Vidigueira (Lisbon: Academia Nacional de Belas Artes, 1992). Vol. I, 61-63. In 1603, José de Escobar formalised the contract for painting the fresco of the altarpiece of the chapel of the Brotherhood of the Souls, at the parish church of Vila Nova da Baronia. Vítor Serrão, *O maneirismo e o estatuto social dos pintores portugueses* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda, 1983), 332–34.

⁴⁰ Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre et profane* (Bologna, 1582), cap. XVI, p. 56. Our translation. The Latin edition was published in 1594, broadening the spread of his ideas.

⁴¹ The expression reveals the genuine interest in the painting of that time and the knowledge of the artistic vocabulary of that period, used to describe the ill-defined representation of the limits of the forms and colours. It is a term that would also be used, for example, in the *Trattato dell'arte de la pittura, scoltura et architettura*, by Paolo Lomazzo, published in Milan, two years later, in 1584.



Burying the dead

Ransoming the Captives

José de Escobar (?)

Igreja da Misericórdia de Vila Nova da Baronia, 1613.

Direcção-Geral do Património Cultural (DGPC)

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Arquitetónico (SIPA).

the reason is because the former contains an accident of painting while the latter embraces that which is the very basis and strength of the painting, which consists in expressing clearly that which it desires to imitate."⁴²

This influx, which was an invitation to orthodoxy and to the renewal of painting through a sensible naturalism, was ruled by the notion of the respect that is due to sacred things and was known through the example of the best works produced in Lisbon and Seville, the main referent for the realisation of the programme of the Misericórdia de Évora.

As a working hypothesis, we may suppose that the painter Francisco João, who enjoyed great prestige in the city and was a painter for the Inquisition and an assiduous participant in the life of the Évora confraternity⁴³, was responsible for the campaign of fresco painting, even though no work of his is known to exist using this technique. (But he would not have lacked knowledge of this same technique, since already in 1565, in the company of the painter and gilder Manuel Fernandes, he undertook an examination of the fresco paintings at the Ducal Palace of Vila Viçosa⁴⁴). The spontaneity of the brushstrokes, the arrangement of the composition in episodes distributed along the surface of the wall, characteristic features of fresco painting for an architectural space, may not find any correspondence in the oil paintings produced in those same years for the convents of Santa Clara and Santa Helena do Monte Calvário in Évora. Closer to the frescos of the Misericórdia de Évora was the descriptive sense, with some tradition in sixteenth-century painting, with which he approached the popular typology in the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, a work that he painted for the Mosteiro de São Bento de Cástris⁴⁵.

⁴² Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre et profane*, cap. XIX, pp. 63–64. Our translation.

⁴³ The painter Francisco João was received as a brother in 1563, having been chief steward in 1567, 1579, 1583 and 1584 and 1591. See: Túlio Espanca, «A obra do pintor Francisco João», *A Cidade de Évora XII–XIII*, no. 37–83 (1955–1956): 183–200.

⁴⁴ Vítor Serrão, *O fresco maneirista no Paço de Vila Viçosa, Parnaso dos Duques de Bragança (1540–1640)* (Fundação Casa de Bragança, 2008), 155.

⁴⁵ For an examination and a reassessment of the corpus of the work of the painter Francisco João, see: Helena Ferreira dos Santos, «O pintor Francisco João (act. 1563–1595). Materiais e técnicas na pintura de cavalete em Évora na segunda metade do século XVI» (Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2012).



Altarpiece of the chancel of the Misericórdia de Silves
c. 1640–50. Misericórdia de Silves.

DIDACTIC AND HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The elaboration of an historical narrative, defined in its time with verisimilitude, gradually began to impose itself as the natural role of painting and added greater substance to the didactic purposes of the coaching provided in the elementary principles of the Christian doctrine.

Dating from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and also the fruit of a simpler spirit, was the altarpiece of the Igreja da Misericórdia do Louriçal, by the painter Álvaro Nogueira de Penacova, composed of nine panels, with paintings alluding to St. Peter, St. Benedict and the corporal works of mercy on the predella⁴⁶.

In the same vein was the altarpiece of the Misericórdia de Silves, painted by a regional artist from the second quarter of the seventeenth century, where, for the first time, the corporal works of mercy earned the right to be included in the main altarpiece at the same level as the representations of the Calvary and the Visitation⁴⁷. The possibility of establishing a continuous discourse between the Passion and the Works of Mercy was founded on the idea of Christ being represented as a pauper, as explained by the beautiful sermon that António Vieira preached at the church of the Hospital de Todos os Santos, in 1647:

*“And such, or similar, is the way in which Christ is hidden and disguised as a poor man, because in the case of the poor it is not sufficient just to be a man for Christ to be within him, (who, for this reason, is not in the other men), but it is necessary to be a man suffering from the accidents of hunger, thirst, nakedness, and other miseries, and the needs of which poverty is composed or not.”*⁴⁸

With the power of his argument and his profound theological knowledge, António Vieira followed the recommendations of the Council of Trent in seeking to find the best doctrinal form for defending the absolute centrality of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, as well as the commitment to the works of mercy. Taking his argument further, the Jesuit priest proposed that mercy should be considered as a second sacrament⁴⁹ implicit in the first one of the Eucharist, as if the transubstantiation of Christ's body were replicated, through a process of transfusion, in the body of the poor man: *“And, as in this profound and occult mystery of mercy and*

⁴⁶ José da Silva Ruivo, *A igreja da Misericórdia do Louriçal* (Louriçal: Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Louriçal, 1992).

⁴⁷ There is no documentation associated with this commission for the Misericórdia de Silves. Besides the recent restoration, the altarpiece underwent an intervention in 1772, with new fresco paintings that complemented the wall's surface with ornate rococo decorations. This was the work of the Algarve painter Joaquim José de Sousa Rasquinho, who also repainted the panel of the Visitation. See: Vítor Serrão, «As sete obras corporais de Misericórdia pintadas no retábulo maneirista da Misericórdia de Silves», *Monumentos*, no. 23 (2005): 116-27; João Vasco Reis, *Mater Misericordiae: tempo e identidade* (Silves: Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Silves, 2015), 266.

⁴⁸ António Vieira, «Sermão das Obras de Misericórdia», in *Collecção dos principaes Sermoens* (Lisbon: Herdeiros de Antonio Pedroso Galraõ, 1754).

⁴⁹ On the sacramental nature of Vieira's arguments, and the links with the culture of the time, see: Alcir Pécora, *Teatro do Sacramento: a unidade teológico-retórico-política dos sermões de António Vieira* (São Paulo and Campinas: EDUSP, 1994), 101-102.



Giving drink to the thirsty
 c. 1640. Misericórdia de Silves.

Christian Doctrine. Giving drink to the thirst
 1616. Bayerisch Staatsbibliothek.



divine goodness, through his particular way of providing assistance, Christ is in the poor man, and the poor man, through his particular form of identity, is converted into Christ; this is the second Sacrament of the same Lord, by which I mean that poverty and mercy have led him to take the sacrament a second time."⁵⁰

Without seeking to fulfil such an elevated purpose, the painter from Silves made free use of a combination of the engravings of Dirck Volkertsz, identified as the model for the representation of "Clothing the naked", with the engravings from the edition of the *Doutrina Christam* by the priest Marcos Jorge, which was used for the representation of "Giving drink to the thirsty". In this way, he succeeded in conferring upon the corporal works of mercy a discourse that was simultaneously didactic and Eucharistic.

Revealing a common orientation, and once again in the Algarve, the corporal works of mercy were part of the pictorial discourse of the main altarpiece. Contrary to what is normally stated⁵¹, this commission was made during the last decade of the government of the bishop Dom Francisco Barreto I (1634-1649), perhaps not the work of Avelar Rebelo, but probably of the English painter John Gresbant⁵². Once again, the engravings of Dirck Volkertsz, which formed the iconographical basis for some of the representations of the corporal works of mercy, were adapted with other expressive intentions, this time more erudite and personal in nature, going beyond the constraints of the verist discourse and offering a poetic description of the materiality of the body and the drapery, revealed through the modulation of the light, in the form of chiaroscuro contrasts.

With a tradition in the representation of the corporal works of mercy⁵³, and following the same model as an engraving that we have not been able to identify, in both of these painting campaigns in the Algarve, the ransoming of captives is represented in the form of a commercial transaction, taking place around a table, led by the Trinitarian provincial, dressed in the appropriate hat and his traditional white garments, who is finalising the business of the ransom of the Christian slaves from the hands of the Muslim leaders, identified through their sumptuous turbans.

⁵⁰ In Vieira's oratory, the Christian imperative becomes the condition for a genuine reciprocal contract: ...*Quando Christo no Sacramento do Altar se nos dá, e nos sustenta em quanto sacramentado em pão, he com condição, e obrigação de que lhe havemos de pagar esse mesmo pão, sustentando o também a elle em quanto sacramentado no pobre.*" António Vieira, «Sermam das Obras de Misericórdia», 7.

⁵¹ In exchange for a small amount of money, the painter João Rodrigues Andino limited himself to restoring the canvases in 1677, and adapted the Visitation to the new gallery, wider and with a greater depth, for the display of the Holy Sacrament, made by the master Gabriel Domingues da Costa. See the documentation of the campaign of the painter from Tavira published in Vítor Serrão, «Uma página da Inquisição. O programa pictórico da Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Cruz, em Faro (1692)», in *A Cripto-História de Arte: Análise de obras de arte inexistentes* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 2001), 184–88.

⁵² John Gresbant (João Gresbante) was active between the years of 1640 and 1680, and has been identified through a small set of signed works, which includes four canvas paintings of the Passion, now in the Parish Church of Belas, in Sintra, which can be compared with the paintings from Faro. For a characterisation of the painter's work, see: Vítor Serrão, «A Pintura Proto-Barroca em Portugal, 1612-1657» (Universidade de Coimbra, 1992), vol. II, p. 275.

⁵³ The first known reference to the ransom of the captives dates from 1577, mentioned in the contract signed with the Misericórdia de Braga, and now a work that has unfortunately disappeared. Vítor Serrão, *A pintura maneirista em Portugal*, 461. In 1613, the representation of this work of mercy, in Vila Nova da Baronia, was produced by two Trinitarian monks in the company of an officer from the Tribunal.



Histoire de Barbarie et ses corsaires
Gilles Rousselet, 1637.
University of Toronto Library.

Ransoming captives
c. 1640. Misericórdia de Silves.

Ransoming captives
João Gresbante, 1640-1649.
Misericórdia de Faro.



The choice of that moment corresponds to the exact translation of the terms of the agreement reached with King Sebastião, in 1561, who reinstated the right to perform the spiritual work of redemption at the Order of the Holy Trinity, after this same right had been removed through the creation of the *Tribunal da Redenção dos Cativos* (Tribunal for the Redemption of Captives), in around 1460. The wording of the agreement established that whenever a general ransom took place, the Provincial of the Holy Trinity should appoint two Trinitarian monks to conduct the negotiations in conjunction with the officer of the tribunal.⁵⁴ The *misericórdias* were always called upon to help in these general ransoms, a collaboration that was publicly acknowledged with processions that included the churches of the confraternities on their route.

All of these iconographical elements, both for the characterisation of the commercial transaction and for the characterisation of the garments worn by the North African Muslims, were probably taken from the engraving of the frontispiece of the work *Histoire de Barbarie et ses corsaires*, by the priest Pierre Dan, published for the first time in 1637, affording an historical and verist undertone to the narrative of the episode, with the same purposes that were included in the writing and representation of the seventeenth-century hagiographies.

In the mid-eighteenth century, the same literal narrative of the corporal works of mercy had its own simultaneously didactic and fanciful counterpart, with its chivalrous and unpretentious translation into the blue and white tiles of the consistory court of the Misericórdia de Estremoz, a work that can be attributed to one of the many painters who gravitated towards the workshop of Valentim de Almeida⁵⁵. In what amounts to a kind of conclusion of an improbable challenge, the evangelical context of the explicit representation of Christ as hungry, thirsty, naked, sick and a pilgrim, depicted in this way in sixteenth-century engravings⁵⁶, and also suggested in seventeenth-century sermons, was to gain a place in the pictorial representation of the programmes of the Misericórdia in Portugal.

But the eighteenth-century representation of the corporal works of mercy for Christ in Estremoz (and in an identical fashion in Tavira) seems to have been constructed with pieces that did not match one another. The merciful, that is to say the noble benefactors, are represented in seventeenth-century costumes, with capes and plumed hats, while the ladies have their hair arranged in ringlets and their necks bare, in a mixture that evokes both the past and the foreign style of dress, which was very far removed from the way in which the brothers of the Misericórdia were represented, during those same years, on the ceiling of the church in Ericeira.

⁵⁴ Edite Alberto, «Um Negócio Piedoso: o Resgate de Cativos em Portugal na Época Moderna» (Universidade do Minho, 2010), 85–91.

⁵⁵ On the work of the painter Valentim de Almeida (1692–1779) and his collaborators, see: Celso Mangucci, *Quinta de Nossa Senhora da Piedade: história do seu palácio, jardins e azulejos* (Vila Franca de Xira: Câmara Municipal, 1998), 69–79.

⁵⁶ Besides the presence of Christ in the engravings of Dirck Volkertsz and Crespin de Passe, there is a series of six engravings of the corporal works of mercy, by Georg Pencz, published in 1534, in which Christ is represented as a poor, hungry, thirsty, naked and sick figure, etc.

Somewhat surprisingly, even knowing the liberality with which the Church was to be decorated, a humble Christ is served at the table by a young page or is shown drinking from glasses with tall stems, and it would be strange that this was done out of deference for the noble status of the giver or, equally, for the sacred status of the receiver, at a time when these figures were being represented under the “accidents” of human poverty. Hidebound by the conventions of the specific figuration that was used in eighteenth-century tiles, the representation of the works of mercy was made with the same agreeable brushstrokes, with the same sense of escape that also characterised mythological scenes, *chinoiseries* and hunting scenes. Indeed, in this game of contrasts between wealth and poverty, the mercy of Christ is also underlined with doctrinal correctness and didactic purpose, through his humble and generous assumption of the human condition, even in his moments of greatest pain.

THE ELOQUENT NARRATIVE: ALLEGORIES AND EMBLEMS

The main feature of the eighteenth-century decorative programmes, mostly expressed in the form of tile panels, was the elaboration of a complete discourse, in which care was taken to include the spiritual works of mercy, in order to express all the nuances and implications of Christian mercy.

With the same sense of unity, variety and complementarity of a “*bel composto*”, the narrative, resulting from the joining together of all the parts of the discourse, pursues an ideal of completeness, accumulating all kinds of registers, in which each of the images would have a constant referent that linked it to the main discourse.

The best workshop of that time⁵⁷, led by António de Oliveira Bernardes and his son Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes, produced an important sequence of iconographical programmes in tiles⁵⁸ for the churches of the Misericórdia in Estremoz (1712), Évora (1716), Grandola (c.1720) and Viana do Castelo (1719-1721).

Unfortunately, the first programme of this series, the one produced for Estremoz, which combined the corporal and spiritual works of mercy with the theological and cardinal virtues, and a series of emblems, was partly dispersed due to the secularisation of the Igreja da Misericórdia.

⁵⁷ The marriage of António de Oliveira Bernardes (c.1660-1732) to the daughter of Francisco Ferreira de Araújo, a tempera painter for the king, broadened the family support of a leading workshop of painters and decorators from Lisbon. Together with his brother-in-law José Ferreira de Araújo, he would be responsible for the painting of ceilings of grotesques, canvas paintings and painted tiles, and they were particularly aware of the contribution made by the campaigns they undertook for the organisation of a coherent discourse, both at the decorative and at the iconographical level. Anísio Franco, «António de Oliveira Bernardes e a unidade decorativa do espaço barroco», em *Jerónimos, 4 séculos de pintura*, vol. II, II vols. (Lisbon: Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico, 1992), 206-17.

⁵⁸ For an exhaustive description of the theme of the corporal works of mercy in eighteenth-century decorative tiles, see: Maria do Rosário Salema Carvalho, «Por amor de Deus: representação das obras de misericórdia, em painéis de azulejo, nos espaços das confrarias da Misericórdia, no Portugal setecentista» 2007, repositório.ul.pt/handle/10451/1775.

Despite some changes, the Igreja da Misericórdia in Évora⁵⁹ still conserves the major part of an exemplary programme displaying this tendency, with the added interest of its being well documented and with the tiles being complemented by sumptuous gilded woodcarving and oil paintings, the latter being the work of a painter and brother of the Misericórdia, Francisco Lopes Mendes, who, following the indications given to him by the committee of the confraternity, was commissioned to represent the corporal works of mercy through episodes from the Holy Scripture.

As in many cases, the initiative for the baroque renovation of the church came from the Archbishop Sebastião da Gama (1703-1715), who was, at the same time, also the provost of the Misericórdia de Évora. The renovation work was conducted by his assistant bishop, Dom Diogo da Anunciação Justiniano, who did, in fact, manage the day-to-day business of the archbishopric, in view of the continued absence of the Archbishop, in Lisbon, where he had been summoned to deal with the affairs of the kingdom.

As the assistant bishop of Évora and a Lóio brother, Dom Diogo Justiniano had already supervised the commissioning of the tiles for the convent of the Congregação de São João Evangelista in Évora⁶⁰, painted by António de Oliveira Bernardes, between 1710 and 1711, beginning a relationship of close collaboration in the organisation of the iconographical programmes adapted to architecture⁶¹.

In 1710, it was the archbishop himself who, together with the master woodcarver Francisco da Silva, signed the contract for the great frontispiece of the chancel and for the gilded woodcarving of the mouldings on the side walls of the nave, a work that defined the reconfiguration of the whole decorative and iconographical programme, and which was intended to compose a kind of manual for the perfect brother of the Misericórdia, in keeping with the models of Jesus and Mary, similar in every respect to the intention expressed in the already-mentioned sermon of Francisco de Santa Maria: “*In order to satisfy such great commitment, it is therefore my purpose here today to describe and compose a perfect brother of the Misericórdia, who is always viewed in the two mirrors or examples of Jesus and Mary, proposed in the Gospels of Friday and Sunday*”⁶².

⁵⁹ For a description of the baroque renovation work undertaken at the Igreja da Misericórdia de Évora, see: Celso Mangucci, «Francisco da Silva, Francisco Lopes Mendes e António de Oliveira Bernardes na Igreja da Misericórdia de Évora», *Cenáculo, Boletim on-line do Museu de Évora*, Setembro de 2008.

⁶⁰ See: Celso Mangucci, *A iconografia de São Lourenço Justiniano nos Azulejos dos Conventos Lóios de Évora e Arraiolos* (Évora: Centro de História da Arte e Investigação Artística da Universidade de Évora, 2013).

⁶¹ Dom Diogo Justiniano's interest in the arts dated from at least 1685, the year when he was invited to deliver the sermon for the festival of painters in Lisbon. Without any great novelties, his ideas underlined the continuing persistence of the rhetorical organisation of the discourse of the images and the model of the Christian painter, an emulator of the Gospel writer St. Luke. Celso Mangucci, «*Sob o império da Retórica. Os programas iconográficos de Santiago e São Mamede de Évora*», *Invenire. Revista de Bens Culturais da Igreja*, n. 8 (Junho de 2014): 34-47. Although the main ideas of the programme were already clearly delineated when the contract was signed with the master woodcarver, the death of Dom Diogo Justiniano, in 1713, was to leave the final decisions about the iconographical programme of the tiles in the hands of António de Oliveira Bernardes.

⁶² Francisco de Santa Maria, *Sermam da Visitação de Nossa Senhora*.

In order to be able to interpret and understand that mirror, or that exposition of the virtues of mercy to the brothers, we can begin our reading at the church entrance, in the area of the sub-choir, where there still exist the cartouches with the original inscriptions of the baroque decorative campaign carried out by the Oliveira Bernardes brothers⁶³.

The verses that were chosen do not speak about the works of mercy, but about the concept of mercy itself in its most profound sense, pointing out its double meaning, as a kind of promissory contract made with Christ, associating the works of mercy with the salvation, and the New with the Old Testament, in a message addressed to the brothers of the Santa Casa: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew, 5: 7) and “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.” (Psalms, 40: 2)

The other four figurative panels of that set represent male and female hermit saints, in a work by Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes, and they are crowned, in the upper part, with two emblems that alert us to the importance of preparing ourselves for eternal life, reminding us of the fact that we do not know the time of our death, with the representation of a coffin and the verse “Be ye therefore ready also” (Luke, 12: 40), and of the need not to concern ourselves with material possessions, with the representation of lilies and the verse “Consider the lilies of the field [how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin]” (Matthew, 6: 28).

St. Anthony, the abbot, St. Paul, the hermit, St. Thaïs and St. Mary of Egypt, isolated from the world, in prayer, ignoring the most basic needs of the body, such as food and clothing, are examples of penitence, of the remission of sins and of care for the spirit⁶⁴. That is a virtuous poverty, of which António Vieira speaks, because a distinction must be drawn between the poverty that is forced, the miserable poverty, and the poverty “*that is virtue, and the voluntary poverty, with which all worldly things are scorned.*”⁶⁵

But practising penitence is also an important work of mercy, as explained by the priest João Fonseca: “*We can exercise these works of mercy with the dead in three ways: the first and most important of these is with the Sacrifice of the Mass, saying and ordering to be said many masses for them; the second is with prayers: the third is with penal works, such as fasts, penitences, alms, pilgrimages and other similar works, and gaining indulgences through them.*”⁶⁶

It was also in order to gain indulgences for the souls of Purgatory that the brothers of the Misericórdia de Évora, in the procession for the Burial of Our Lord, were encouraged to seek penance, clothed and covered, without any public identification, which was considered vainglorious.

⁶³ In 1765, the renovation of the doorway and the large window meant that the tiles on the back of the façade would have to be destroyed and replaced by panels simulating an architectural structure that was funereal in nature.

⁶⁴ On the iconography of the hermits in the Portuguese tile art of the eighteenth century, see: Patrícia Roque de Almeida, «Apontamentos sobre a iconografia dos Eremitas na azulejaria setecentista no Entre Douro e Minho», *Revista da Faculdade de Letras*, I, IV (2005): 271.

⁶⁵ António Vieira, «Sermam das Obras de Misericórdia», 4.

⁶⁶ João da Fonseca, *Escola da Doutrina Christã*, cap. XII, fl. 275.



St. Mary of Egypt

Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes, 1716.
Misericórdia de Évora.



The Widow of Zarephath feeds the Prophet Elijah

Francisco Lopes Mendes, 1714.
Misericórdia de Évora.

In the upper part of the nave of the church, only two of the works of mercy have survived from the original programme undertaken by Francisco Lopes Mendes. These represent the work “Giving food to the hungry” through the episode in which the widow of Zarephath feeds the prophet Elijah (1 Kings, 17: 2-6) and “Giving drink to the thirsty” through the help that Rebekah gives to Eliezer, his men and camels (Genesis, 24: 15-21).

It is highly probable that the remaining episodes chosen to be represented here corresponded to passages from the Old Testament, following the doctrine codified by the priest Manuel Fernandes, who listed, as allegorical prefigurations of the Virgin Mary as the Mother of Mercy, precisely the Widow of Zarephath, Rebekah, the wife of Isaac, and also the seamstress Tabitha, who dressed the widows of the city of Joppa, the Queen who visited the sick Balthazar, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, who welcomed the pilgrims, Miriam, who helped her brothers, Moses and Aaron, to free God’s people from slavery in Egypt, and the devout Rizpah, who guarded the body of her children until they were buried⁶⁷.

It is also easy to understand that this narrative recurrence was similarly to be found in Évora, functioning in a broader fashion and in such a way as to associate Thais and St. Mary of Egypt with the Virgin Mary. The same allegorical intention, divided between male and female, and presided over by the figures of Christ and the Virgin Mary, is to be found in the organisation of the series of engravings *Sylva Anachoretica*⁶⁸, produced by Boetius Adam Bolswert after the work of Abraham Blommaert, which served as a faithful model for the penitent saints of the sub-choir.



St. Mary of Egypt
 Boetius Adam Bolswert
 after Abraham Blommaert, 1619.
 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

⁶⁷ Ibid., vol. I, 783-793.

⁶⁸ Abraham Blommaert, *Sylva Anachoretica* (Antuerpie: Henrici Aertsii, 1619).



Ransoming the Captives
José Xavier de Castro, 1737.
Misericórdia de Évora.

Probably because these were not easily identifiable biblical stories, only two decades later, in 1737, another painter from Évora, José Xavier de Castro, repainted five of the seven episodes from the corporal works of mercy, with representations that were traditionally associated with the programmes of the Misericórdias, as we can see from the work “Ransoming the captives”, which matches its counterparts in Faro and Silves.

Maintaining the original programme, the tiles contain a representation of the Life of Christ, in the midst of a monumental architecture, with an expressive individualisation of emotions in both the pose and the face of each of the characters. Besides the quality of the brushwork of António de Oliveira Bernardes, which is not inconsiderable, the blue-and-white tiles provide an updating of the dimension of the spiritual works in the programme of the Misericórdias, underlining the original and last commitment to contribute to the salvation of the souls. They also reveal António de Oliveira Bernardes as a good interpreter of allegorical narratives in which the image matches the sacred words, in a persistent re-edition of the model of the Christian painter.

As a complement to this allegorical discourse, at the foot of the large figurative panels, the corporal works of mercy were, for the first and only time, afforded an emblematic representation, the work of a collaborator from the workshop, the painter Teotónio dos Santos. Apart from the fact that the proposed formula was quite unprecedented, the set of tiles at the Misericórdia de Évora had the added interest of proposing a detailed description of the institution’s activities, instead of being restricted to the text of the Gospels. In the tiles, the emblems provide a metaphorical figuration of “Feeding the prisoners”, “Feeding the orphans and foundlings”, “Transporting the sick to the hospital”, “Tending to the sick”, “Mercy for all”, “Giving lodging to the poor”, “Marrying the maidens”, “Clothing the poor”, “Accompanying the burial of the poor”. Sadly, the programme was more extensive, but the set of tiles was mutilated with the introduction of the pews for the confraternity’s governing committee, probably in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In most cases, the symbolism was constructed from the image of a tree or plants from a garden, a metaphor suggested by the Book of Psalms [1: 1-3], where the blessed are compared to a tree that bears fruit and prospers⁶⁹. Accompanied by a motto subdivided into two Latin phrases, purposely written for these emblems, all that is now known of these is an engraving⁷⁰ that served as the basis for the representation of the preparation of medicines at the apothecary, taken from one of the best-known series of Jesuit emblems.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Metaphor mentioned and explained by Diego de Yepes, *Discursos de Varia Historia, que tratam de Las Obras de Misericordia, y otras materias morales* (Toledo: Pedro Rodriguez, 1592).

⁷⁰ José Júlio García Arranz, «“Las Obras de Misericordia y la emblemática: los azulejos de la iglesia de la Santa Casa da Misericórdia en Évora (Portugal)”», in *Florilegio de Estudios de Emblemática – Actas del VI Congreso Internacional de Emblemática de The Society for Emblem Studies* (A Coruña: Sociedad de Cultura Valle Inclán, 2004), 366-69.

⁷¹ In the emblem, the Society of Jesus is identified as a cure for all the evils of the soul. *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu a provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem societatis repraesentata* (Antuerpiae: ex officina plantiniana Balthasar Moteti, 1640), 454.



Preparing the remedies at the apothecary
 Functiones Misericordia



Feeding the prisoners
 Largire Detentos Eleemosinis Fouet



Feeding the foundlings
Expositos Nutrit



Transporting the sick to the hospital
Languidos in xenodochium baiulat



Tending to the sick
Charitatem erga infirmos exercet



Mercy for all
Misericors in omnes



Giving lodging to the poor
Vagos hospitio excipit



Marrying the maidens
Innuptas in matrimonium colocat ne perecliten'



Clothing the poor
Egenus vestit



Accompanying the burial of the poor
Pauperum funera obit

As far as the production of emblems and their deciphering is concerned, the symbolic language is deeply rooted in the Jesuit didactic practice, where it functions as an exercise of memory, in order to teach people how to register key ideas or concepts. The deciphering of the symbol as a metaphorical enigma (in the case of Évora, this was fairly simple, since the Latin phrases were already translated) was, in turn a pleasurable exercise of comprehension, encouraging people to engage in an intellectual game that lay at the root of most of the poetry produced during this period.

Contrary to what might be supposed, since these were lay brotherhoods, the iconographical programmes of the churches of the Misericórdia were frequently decided upon by the highest ecclesiastical hierarchy, which defined the guidelines and doctrinal ideas that were to shape the theme of Christian Mercy. In the best cases, the painters, aware of the objectives of the narrative discourse used, contributed decisively to the coherence of the narrative through its most appropriate expression in picture form, and to the effectiveness of the discourse, both in its more simple aspects and in the organisation of more elaborate discourses.

Beginning with the repainting of some of the episodes in Évora, the interventions that were made under the scope of the programmes of the Misericórdias, in the second half of the eighteenth century, suggest a preference for a narrative discourse that, despite the fact that it involved a representation of sacred episodes, nonetheless reserved for the images a role of universal effectiveness, which we have already found proclaimed in the Jesuit primers. This was the case with the tiles at the Misericórdia de Arraiolos⁷², produced in 1753, where the works of mercy are accompanied by a set of Virtues, as well as at the Misericórdia de Vila Franca de Xira, where they take the form of a dialogue, with Christ as the teacher of the complete set of the corporal and spiritual works, with the Latin phrases coming from the lips of the Saviour and suggesting more erudite references.

As in the case of the other sets studied, the effectiveness of the discourse depends on the internal coherence of the narrative, linked together through the attribution of a specific role to both images and words, where an attempt was made to describe for the brothers the Christian meaning of the works of mercy, in their contribution to the salvation of the souls.

⁷² Maria do Rosário Salema Carvalho, «A iconografia das Obras de Misericórdia em Arraiolos. Azulejos e Gravuras», in *Iconografia e Fontes de Inspiração. Imagem e memória da gravura europeia. Actas do III Colóquio de Artes Decorativas* (Lisbon: Fundação Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva and Instituto de História de Arte da Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2006).



Christ resuscitates Lazarus

Consoling the afflicted

António de Oliveira Bernardes, 1716.

Misericórdia de Évora.



Giving good counsel

c. 1770-1780.

Misericórdia de Vila Franca de Xira.

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The Panel of the Virgin of Mercy from the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel

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The panel of the Virgin of Mercy housed at the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel is one of the most significant works of Gothic painting from the time of the Spanish medieval kingdoms. The key elements justifying this statement are the richness and originality of its iconography, as well as its great technical quality.

ICONOGRAPHY

If we undertake an iconographical study comparing the form and meaning of the different elements represented in the painting, we will notice that none of them is either anecdotal or superfluous. In fact, although this is a general characteristic that can be attributed to the whole of Gothic panel painting, in this case attention is drawn to the role that even the smallest detail can play in transmitting the message of the work to the spectator.

The image of the Virgin Mary is placed at the centre of the composition, so that she presides over the whole scene, which is organised around her. She is depicted wearing a blue tunic, and a cloak of the same colour. The significance of the contrast between the colours red and blue, as used throughout the History of Art since the Middle Ages, is well known. The customary symbolic explanation is that blue represents divinity, while red represents the character's human nature. If we accept this proposal, then this would mean that the intention was to highlight the Virgin's divine nature, since the same blue colour is used for both of her garments, which, on the other hand, is not customary. The red colour appears solely in the inner lining of the cloak, making it more evident for the spectator and seeking, in this way, to emphasise her human condition. Because of this arrangement, we understand that it is the Virgin's human side that moves her to protect the faithful kneeling at her feet. The blue of her divine dimension appears on the outside, while the red of her human side appears on the inside. This is the first symbolic binomial that we can see in this panel, but we shall also see that it is not the only one.

Another iconographical curiosity is the great architectural structure that surrounds and frames the whole scene. It is not very customary to see this type of framing in representations of the Virgin of Mercy. The Virgin is normally only shown protecting her faithful against a neutral background. For this reason, it is interesting to analyse the presence of this element in the panel. If we look at other depictions of the Virgin, as, for example, the Virgin and Child, it is not unusual to see enclosed spaces, architectures that separate the place occupied by the Virgin from the spatial environment in which she is situated. Some iconographies, such as that of the *Hortus Conclusus* (enclosed garden), which appears in the Song of Songs, and is designed to illustrate the Virgin Mary's purity, had the same meaning, which was to dignify the image of the Virgin by individualising it through some specific feature.

In this case, the form does not remind us so much of an enclosed garden, or of a real architectural construction, but instead of a throne. It has the same form as the thrones on which many sacred characters and saints sit when represented in Gothic painting. The Virgin remains standing but, on both sides, the lateral distribution of the so-called thrones is maintained, contained in separate levels, just as happens, for example, in the representation of St. Dominic of Silos enthroned, in the painting by Bartolomé Bermejo, which is currently housed at the Museo del Prado. Thus, it is not possible to see this feature as something anecdotal, but instead as part of the message that is intended to underline the importance of the Virgin Mary as the queen of heaven.

This message may be associated with the one that is conveyed by her crown, which stands out because of its size and the richness of the pieces that compose it, shaped as if they were branches. Nonetheless, the most important aspect is the symbolic value of the pearls that decorate it, signifying beauty and purity. The same pearls can be seen on the decorative border of the cloak, alternating with red and blue precious stones, in a pattern that is reminiscent of the one displayed by the tunic in contrast with the inside lining of the cloak. A similar decoration is to be found in the decorative bands around the necks of the angels placed on either side of the Virgin Mary. Although these have the same order in terms of colours and precious stones, we must not consider it to be merely accidental that the central stone securing the dresses of both angels is, in one case, red and, in the other case, blue.

As far as the angels are concerned, attention is drawn to the detail given to their wings, as well as to each of the feathers that compose them and to their overall appearance. The angel on the right is wearing a pink dress and has green wings. His hand is resting gently on the Virgin's shoulder. The angel on the left is dressed in green and has pink wings. Both of them are also performing another function, namely that of holding the Virgin's cloak, opening it so that she can protect all the faithful. The protection that she offers is, therefore, that of divinity over humanity, since it is not the Virgin that is opening the protective cloak, but instead the divine action performed through the angels. This detail is intended, once more, to express the divine duality of punishment and forgiveness. Christ will fire the arrows against sin from up above, but it will be the Virgin, with the help of the same cohort of angels, who brings forgiveness to those who repent, not as an earthly, but as a celestial being.

In the upper left corner of the painting is the image of Christ. He is apparently sitting, although no throne or stool is visible. He appears suspended on a blue cloud, interrupting the golden uniformity of the panel's background. He is wearing a blue tunic and is covered in a large pink cloak decorated with pearls in a similar style to those of the Virgin Mary. His gesture is a serious one, as if corresponding to the attitude that he is intended to display, that of the judge punishing the sinners. The arrows that he is firing symbolise this punishment of sin. In his left hand, he holds three arrows, and, with his raised right hand, he is preparing to fire one of them.



Virgem da Misericórdia
Museu de Arte Sacra de Saragoça de Teruel.

The divine punishment directed towards men and symbolised by elements that are fired from heaven derives from the most ancient classical tradition. This is the case with the thunderbolts fired by Zeus. In medieval Christian iconography, these thunderbolts are replaced by arrows, given the need to explain to the faithful, through a symbol, the real existence of God's punishment when faced with sin. We do not really know whether the faithful truly believed that arrows could rain down on them from heaven because of their sins, but we do know of countless artistic scenes in which this scenario is represented. One of the best known of such scenes to be depicted during the Middle Ages and part of the Modern Era was that of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian. The arrows fired by the soldiers, with the saint tied to a tree, are interpreted as the arrows of God's punishment directed against sinners, and, for that reason, St. Sebastian has come to be considered as the quintessential protective saint. He is placed between God and men, receiving all these arrows in his body.

For all of these reasons, we consider it to be evident that the role played by the figure of Christ in the composition is that of the impartial judge who metes out punishment, and, by extension, that the role played by the Virgin is that of the protectress who covers her faithful with her cloak and prevents them from being struck by the arrows. However, once again, it is in the detail that we are shown the quality of the work that we are dealing with here. Christ is accompanied by two angels. The one on the left is wearing a green tunic and the one on the right is wearing a bright red tunic, but what really matters are the elements that they are holding in their hands. The one on the left wields a sword of fire. Just like the sword of fire that guards the access to the tree of life and which is mentioned in the Book of Genesis, or the one that is carried by the archangel Uriel in the traditional oriental iconography, this sword is a sign of punishment. The angel on the right is holding a bunch of flowers, more specifically a bouquet of white lilies, such as the ones that normally accompany the Virgin Mary and the archangel Gabriel in the scene of the Annunciation and are a sign of purity and virginity. The angel holding the sword has a serious look, while the angel on the right is visually depicted as being in conversation with Christ, and, with a gesture of his hand, seems to be asking him not to fire any more arrows. With this, the artist seems to show us a reflection about the relationship between punishment and forgiveness. Christ will be implacable in his judgement and will fire his arrows, but he will also act with kindness and benevolence. This is the message that the two angels bring to the symbolic interpretation of the scene.

This small detail makes the temporal discourse of the scene extraordinarily clear. The visual relationship must not be understood as being between Christ and the Virgin Mary, but instead between Christ and the angel who is asking him to stop the punishment. The temporal discourse is a very complex matter in the scenes portrayed in Gothic painting. There are scenes in which different episodes are superimposed on one another in the same ground or in which artists use landscapes to indicate the course of the narrative... In this case, the characters tell us the story in the following way: in the past, Christ fired arrows upon the sinners, with the

support of the angel holding the sword of fire. These arrows struck those who had yielded to the greatest temptations and committed deadly sins. By intervening with her protective cloak, the Virgin Mary prevented these arrows from striking any of her faithful. In the present, the angel holding the bouquet of white lilies asks Christ to stop, and the Virgin raises her hand with the same purpose. The reading of the future implies that Christ will stop his punishment, that the Virgin's faithful devotees will be saved and that the sinners will receive their sanction.

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

It is at this point that we should mention one of the most original features of this work, the allusion to the seven deadly sins.

In all of these cases, the figures that personify them are performing an action that will lead them to commit a sin. We might interpret this as being a conscious action that forms part of the human being's freedom to sin, since the act perfectly matches its traditional description. The characters are performing the actions that everyone knows will lead to sin (in sloth, the character is depicted sitting down; in gluttony, the character appears with a dish in his hand...). At the moment when this action is being performed, the punishment arrives in the form of an arrow that will become embedded in the part of the body that is also typified as the possible vehicle through which the sin affects the soul (envy in the eyes, wrath in the breast...).

In the Christian treatises, mention is made of the relationship that exists between sin and the gender of the sinner. In this way, a sin such as lust seems to be more likely to be committed by a woman, while greed seems to be fundamentally male in nature. In this case, and although we should bear in mind the extent of the restoration work that was given to some figures, we believe that they are all male.

Envy is a character dressed in a green tunic and orange cloak, peeping through the semi-circular arch of the mansion in which he is housed. He is clearly depicted as looking out. The arrow hits him in one of his eyes.

Greed is represented in a rather strange way. It was customary in medieval iconography for this figure to be depicted with a purse around his neck. He could also appear as a soul in hell submitted to all types of torments, an allusion to the description that is made in the holy scriptures about the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. In this case, the character is dressed in a green costume with an orange belt. He is also wearing trousers of the same orange colour. His anatomical posture seems slightly deformed, perhaps because of the painter's limited expertise. The arrow has struck him in the back. One of his legs is naked, with half of his trousers rolled down. We admit that we know little regarding the origin of this representation, although it seems to us that it may result from a certain confusion with lust, since, on other occasions, the two sins are represented as a pair. Another clue may

be provided by the analysis of the character's posture, for he seems to have been surprised by the arrow at a particular moment in his everyday life, which may have been when he was changing clothes. Greed, seen as an uncontrollable urge to accumulate goods, was also depicted as the hoarding of these same goods with the intention of using them without sharing them in any way. The Old Testament contains what later would become a thought that spread throughout the Middle Ages, that the miser would die and lose his riches. The Book of Ecclesiasticus (11, 18-20) states: "*There is one that is enriched by living sparingly, and this is the portion of his reward. In that he saith: I have found me rest, and now I will eat of my goods alone: And he knoweth not what time shall pass, and that death approacheth, and that he must leave all to others, and shall die.*" Perhaps this is the miser who accumulates his riches, thinking only about enjoying them for himself without using them to help the needy, ending up dying unexpectedly and losing everything.

The figure that represents sloth is depicted sitting down. He is wearing a blue tunic and a pink cloak, and his head is covered with a curious-looking hat. Its strange shape, which does not correspond to the Spanish fashion of that time, is reminiscent of some of the characters from the Gothic paintings of Central Europe. The arrow has struck him in his right leg, as it is the legs that drive the human body. In medieval Christianity, sloth is considered to be one of the worst deadly sins, for it may lead to others. The lack of action gives rise to carelessness and neglect, which, in turn, give rise to sadness and despondency. Whereas greed feels the pain of the arrow in his back, sloth contemplates the arrow with the inertia that characterises him.

In the holy scriptures, the concept of lust is understood as an uncontrollable desire for possession, and is not exclusively of a sexual nature. Despite this, in the art of the Early Middle Ages, it was customary to represent lust in the form of a naked woman with two serpents biting her breasts. In this case, the artist chose another type of representation. The character covers his head with a red cowl, but his cloak is short, leaving his stockings visible, which are also red. The state of conservation of the painting and the restoration work that has since been done to it do not allow us to add any further information other than the fact that this is a figure that is hiding himself away in his search for carnal pleasure, a characteristic feature of medieval love. The place where the arrow has struck him reinforces the sexual content of this deadly sin.

Gluttony. The figure of gluttony has been greatly restored, since the whole of this side area of the panel was in a very bad state. The arrow has struck him in his stomach.

Wrath, however, is in a better state of conservation. The character appears with a dagger in his right hand, and is opening his dress with his left hand, allowing us to see the naked breast into which he will plunge the blade. This is the most exalted gesture of wrath, that of reaching such a state of mental disorder that it leads to self-mutilation and suicide. At that moment, the arrow strikes him and will be plunged into the place that is identified with the sin.

Pride is the last of the sins. It is represented in the form of a bust, and not as a full-bodied figure, although it is possible that this part of the panel was cut off. The figure is placed in a different position from the rest, since it appears at the bottom of the scene and not at the sides. The character is dressed in a rich green costume with a blue headdress. It is surrounded by a kind of throne with pink-coloured architectural forms. The arrow that was fired by Christ has struck him in the neck. He seems to be carrying some object in his right hand, but it is no longer possible to make out what it is. His position and his separation from the rest of the sins mean that the spectator pays greater attention to this image. In fact, pride is considered by Christianity to be the worst of the deadly sins, as it is considered to be the origin of most of the other sins. What the artist does is signal to us this tradition.

THE CHARACTERS REPRESENTED BENEATH THE CLOAK

The artist pays the same attention to the description of the characters placed beneath the Virgin's cloak as he did to the images of the Virgin, Christ and the seven deadly sins. We are therefore presented with an extraordinary graphic document of the sixteenth-century style of dress.

On our left are the members of the Church's hierarchies. At the bottom is the Pope, wearing the papal tiara and the red cloak with gilt decorations. Next to him, one after another, are a cardinal, a bishop, a Franciscan monk, a Dominican monk, and others representing the simple clergy.

On our right are the representatives of civil society. In the foreground is the king, dressed in a rich costume of pink printed silk and wearing a crown of pearls. Next to him is the queen, in a blue dress, with a white headdress embroidered with green and red. In the middle ground are rich men and women with leather headdresses and silk dresses. The common people appear in the background, with artisans and manual workers at their head, dressed in a one-piece garment with a hood.

In order to describe this crowd of characters, the artist uses the criterion of perfectly characterising the figures in the foreground, as is the case with the heads of the church and the royal personages. For the characters in the middle ground, he makes small changes to the anatomy of the faces, but follows the same model. The face of the cardinal and the bishop are practically the same. The Franciscan monk has the same model for his face and posture as the character that is behind the Dominican monk. The two tonsured clergymen next to the Dominican monk have the same face, the only difference being that they are looking in opposite directions.

Similar effects may also be appreciated in the case of civil society, always produced with a mastery that does not give the impression of repetition, but instead of diversity. Only one character is not looking at the Virgin's face. It is the bearded man who covers himself with a light blue hood. The gesture is so obvious that the spectator cannot help wondering about the reason for this scene.

OTHER EXAMPLES

The panel of the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel is not the only one dealing with this theme in the region. There are other images of the Virgin of Mercy in the province of Teruel, which demonstrates the success that this iconography had in the Gothic period and in the territories in the south of Aragon. A similar iconography can be found in the panel of the Virgin of La Carrasca, originating from Blancas, a village in the province of Teruel, attributed to the painter Bonanat Zahortiga. Just as in the panel from the museum, two angels can be seen holding the cloak in such a way as to protect the people. In this case, the way in which the characters are placed in the picture is different, since the men appear on our left while the female characters are on the right, mixing their social condition.

In the same province, it is also possible to find another representation of the Virgin of Mercy, originating from the church of San Pedro in Langa del Castillo, attributed to the so-called Master of Langa, and painted during the first half of the fifteenth century.

In the same geographical context, mention should be made of the large altarpiece of the parish church of Anento (Saragossa), dedicated to St. Blaise, the Virgin of Mercy and St. Thomas Becket, attributed to Blasco de Grañen and his workshop, since it is dated between the years 1415 and 1435.

Another case is that of the Virgin of Mercy attributed to the painter Diego de la Cruz. However, this is not part of the artistic production of Aragon, and, at the stylistic level, it is somewhat removed from the work that we are dealing with here, since it is a work with a much greater Renaissance influence. In the panel, beneath the Virgin's cloak are the portraits of the Catholic Monarchs and their family, on one side, and, on the other side, the nuns of Las Huelgas. In this example, as in the case of Teruel, the Virgin not only offers shelter, but she also offers protection from the arrows fired by the demons placed in the upper part of the scene. She catches the arrows with her hands and prevents them from reaching their target.

With a similar iconography, in which the Virgin Mary is presented as the protectress from the wrath of God delivered in the form of arrows, all that is known is the Virgin of Mercy with St. Michael and St. John the Baptist, attributed to the painter Bernardo Serra, and produced in 1441, which now forms part of the Abelló collection.

AUTHORSHIP

After all this, the main historiographical problem that is found on studying this work is the question of its authorship. It was not possible to find any documentary reference explaining the origin of the work, the place for which it was originally painted, its patron or even its author. All of the existing data suggest that the work has always been in the city of Teruel. It would therefore be logical to assume that a work of this nature would have been placed in an important creative environment, in other words that it was commissioned for a significant religious building, such as the church of Santa María, now Teruel Cathedral, some of the city's convents, the palace of the king of Aragon, or the more private apartments of the ecclesiastical hierarchies of Teruel.

The reason for this lack of information is certainly to be found in the events of the Spanish Civil War. During this period, when the most important works of art of the Spanish cultural heritage were being transferred and protected against the ravages of the conflict, this work was registered as originating from the diocese of Teruel. The churches of San Juan and San Martín, the building of the Seminary, the castle and the king's palace, and a large part of the episcopal place itself were practically destroyed, and, with them, a considerable part of the archives in which there would undoubtedly have been records containing information about a piece with these characteristics.

Faced with this panorama, the art historians who have studied this work, such as Gudiol Ricart or Maria del Carmen Lacarra, have established comparisons with other works from the same period, also taking into account a certain geographical proximity. However, not even in relation to these questions is there any agreement about the authorship of this piece or the school from which it originated.

Gudiol Ricart gives the name of the Master of Teruel to this unknown artist. In this sense, he is attributed with a certain influence from Valencian expressionism, which had its greatest exponents in artists such as Marzal de Sax. Carmen Lacarra places its authorship in the Aragonese school of the fifteenth century, and she relates it to works with which there is an evident formal relationship, such as the panel of the Coronation of the Virgin Mary, which is now housed at the Museo Lázaro Galdiano, in Madrid. The greatest similarity between the two paintings can be seen in the image of Christ crowning the Virgin and the scene of Christ with the arrows in the panel from Teruel. Similarities can also be found with the altarpiece of the church of Velilla de Jiloca, in the province of Saragossa, dedicated to the Virgin and Child, St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Barbara. For this reason, we can also find the name of the Master of Velilla being mentioned as one of the authors of this Virgin of Mercy.

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A “*Compromisso*” for the
future: 500th anniversary
of the first printed edition
of the *Compromisso of the
Confraternity of the Misericórdia*

Pieces on exhibition



1. *O Compromisso da Confraria de Misericórdia*, 1516.

Lisbon: printed by Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos (26 cm). Folio [2v].

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A.XVI.114

First printed edition.



2. *O Compromisso da Confraria da Misericórdia*, 1516.

Lisbon: printed by Valentim Fernandes and Hermão de Campos (28 cm). Folio [2v].

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A.XVI.115.

Counterfeit version of the original edition, attributed by some authors to the print works of Luís Rodrigues, Lisbon, circa 1543.



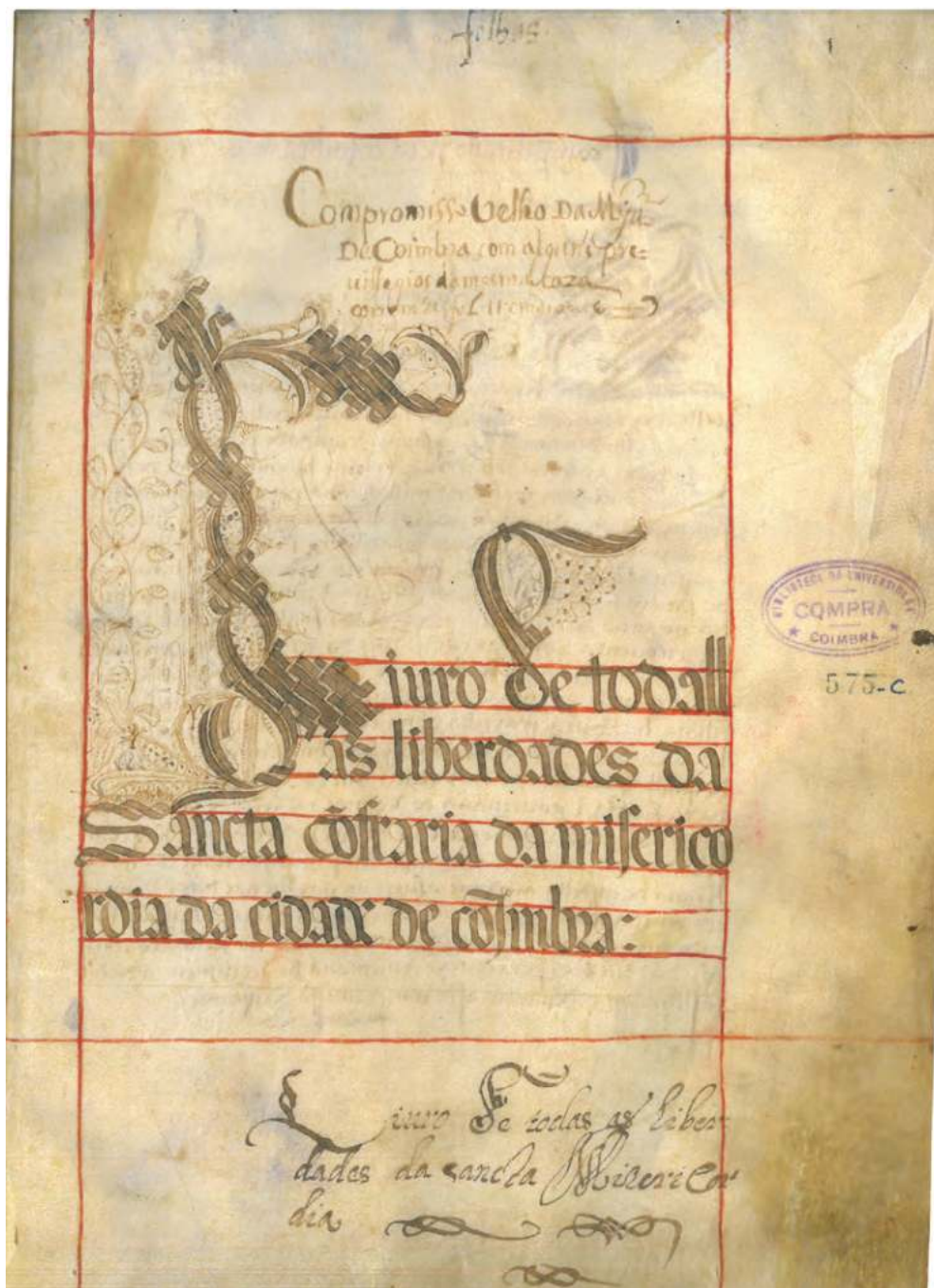
3. *O Compromisso da Confraria da Misericórdia*, 1520.

24.5 x 36.2 cm; 34 folios; polychrome illuminated parchment and paper. Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference code: PT-SCMSB/SCML/CR/07/02
Illuminations attributed to António de Holanda.



eterno immen
sillo & todo pote
roso scior deos
p. adre d. misericor
dias Comeco
meo & fin de toda
bondade acceptam

co. as preces & rogos de allguis mis
tos etimentes . nelle quis repartir co
os peccadores parte da sua misericor
dia Em estes de trez dias inspi
rou nos coracis de allguis boos &
fices xpianos Elle deu cora com sillo
e foras cantada de per ordenarem hu
ia remandade & confraria sob oti
tollo effome & enuocacim de nosse
nhora amadore de deo unigeni maria da
misericordia per aquall umindade tolle
eserim compradas todas as obras



5. Livro de todallas liberdades da Sancta co[n]fraria da misericordia da cidade de Coimbra, [1500].
29,5 x 21 cm; 25 folios; polychrome illuminated parchment.
Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra. Reference No.: BGUC Ms.3124
Includes the copy of the first *Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia de Lisboa,
sent, in 1500, to the newly-created Confraternity of the Misericórdia de Coimbra.

doentes que nella cidade houverem fazendo pimento diligencia acerca
dellos de suas necessidades. E achando que se lhe deram esmolha
cada dia semana ou segundas feiras de pan e doo segundo
vare necessidade de cada hum dos quaes. E foram seno
mes e setes em hui Reol que os ditos visitadores teram
lhes daram possesões e terras e comolhes parecer bem e pollo p
uecedor foi mandado. E em ho casto do dno e repartiçam delle
pellos cabros sam curdos em suas concelias de que daram e
soma contra ao puecedor. **Doz doentes**

Istem Outros doze conselheiros na maneira q' duto he trezi
C' cargo de visitar os doentes pobres asy p'sos como da cida
de Similoz han co mezmhas m'fios e terras e possesões
como lhe bem parecer e pollo puecedor lhes se hozedenado e pollo
fisco da c'fina dos quaes teram hui caderno aos quaes se
dado dno pa despendereim em as ditas confas. E teram m'ito
mayor curdado de puecedor os ditos doentes e em ferias co
mezmhas e sp'itua es. e co ac'fissim e com ho santo siara
marco da cuminhã. E asy a h' extrema uncom por que p'ne q'
sam p'ntos das confas e p'ntas os m'ito mais heram he q'
sejam das confas da alma. E quando alguma dos ditos do en
tes estiver em passimento touz dos ditos sumãos ou q' q'
asy tenerem cargo delles. E foram com elle Reolado ho C'redo
e horas de mortos e os sete psalmos com ladainha e cento
com sigo e h'mien do canafiro e h'na canãa co agoa beente.
E onom de se pararam atee queo de h'ie pa sp' nos quaes do
conselheiro e se duto dno pa despendereim co os ditos doentes
e na de h'ie se delle sam curdos em suas concelias e daram sua

côta em soma Ao duto pncedo: **Item** presoe . . .
Item Quatro dous côselleiros teram cuidado de dar de
comer aos pfoz saãos pobres .i de semprado segundo e traierê
p' hool Ellez daram duas nezes na semana de comer .s. a do
migo pam que lhez abaste atee aquarta feira e luma pasta
de carne acada lhm e mea canada de umbo Caas quarta e feira
pam que lhez abaste atee ho domingo e mea canada de vinho de
maneira que toda a semana tenham q' comer Ao q'uaes affia
aas su dudo d'ro pa carne e outras cousas q' p'ra coz sim nece
sariaz e em adp'esi delle sim arduoz em suas conaenaa e tra
tam côta em soma ao pncedo: **Das emmergonhadaz.**
Item Quatro côselleiro t' ho e sep'iam teram cuidado de mi
strarem os emmergonhadaz do que lhez fo: p'ollo pncedo: e o fia
naes ordenado fuzido p'meiro Inquiraa p'olla e curis das l'gras
e côfelleiros e as p'olla m'nhaca onde az tuas p'elloas unq'ê
e teram muito cuidado de terê em seu hool todallas p'elloas e
v'gonhadaz q' omerê em esta cidade pa serem p'uidas em ma
neira que n'õ p'eream a am'gra p' suas m'gr'entaa: E na
despeza do d'ro como de m'ridos sim curis em suas conaen
taaz de que daram côta em soma ao pncedo: **Das esmol**
Item Quatro dous côselleiros teram cuidado: **Item**
de arrecadar as esmolaa que os de fructos e h'oz levarem
na côf'aria Casp' as Rendaz e foroz se em algum tempo ac'õsu
na az terê Casp' q'uaes quez restum'eros ou cousas q' sob'etue
rem asy como Requem'eros de demandas e quaes quez outra
cousas extra admanaz que p'ereerê na côf'aria segundo p'ollo
pncedo: l'he su ordenaço E q'ndo l'he pa alguma das d'itas con

6. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1502.
30 x 21,5 cm; 12 folios; polychrome parchment. Folios 4v and 5.
Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.
Reference Code: PT-SCMLSB/SCML/CR/07/01.



8. *Compromisso da Irmandade da Santa Misericórdia da cidade de Lisboa*, 1600.

Lisbon: printed by António Álvares (father) (29 cm).

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal. Reference No.: RES. 1999//1 V.

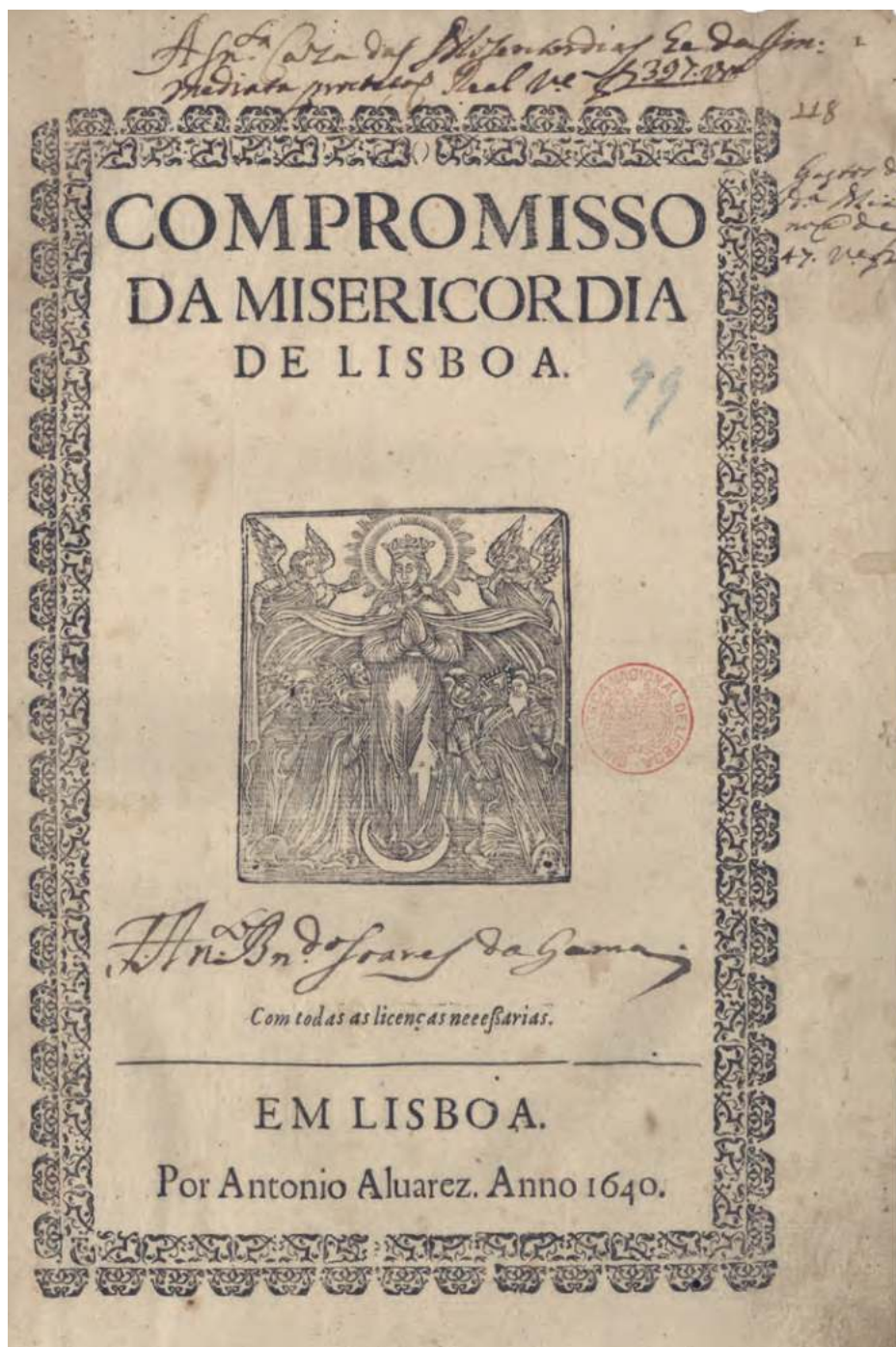


9. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1619.

In Lisbon: printed by Pedro Craesbeck (26 cm).

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A.XVII.0720

Includes the *Regimento que se fez para os mordomos dos presos* (...) [Regulations that were made for the steward of the prisoners], besides handwritten notes on folios inserted throughout the text.



10. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1640.
In Lisbon: printed by António Álvares (son) (28 cm).
Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal. Reference No.: RES. 99 A.



11. *Compromisso da Irmandade da Casa da Santa Misericórdia da Cidade de Lisboa*, 1645.

In Lisbon: printed by António Álvares (son) (25,3 cm).

Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra. Reference No.: BGUC R-28-17



12. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1662.

Lisbon: printed at the print works of Henrique Valente de Oliveira, printer to Our Lord the King (26 cm). Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal. Reference No.: S.C. 3607 V.

COMPROMISSO DA MISERICORDIA

DE LISBOA.



EM LISBOA

Com todas as licenças necessárias.



Na Officina de FRANCISCO VILLELA.

Anno de 1674.

MISERICÓRDIA DE LISBOA
ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO

13. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1674.

Lisbon: printed at the print works of Francisco Vilela (29 cm).

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A.XVII.0690

Donated to the Misericórdia de Lisboa by the benefactor Pedro Ançã.



COMPROMISSO DA MISERICORDIA

DE LISBOA.
CAPITULO PRIMEIRO.

*Do numero, & qualidades, que hão de ter os Irmãos
da Misericordia.*

§. 1



ARA execução das obras da Misericordia, que nesta Irmandade se hão de exercitar em serviço de Nossa Senhora advogada, & Padroeira desta casa, & de seu benditissimo Filho Christo Jesu, Pay, & remedio de peccadores: he necessario que aja copia de Irmãos, que com facilidade, & sem notavel trabalho acudam às obrigaçoens della, os quaes serão seiscientos: trezentos Nobres, & trezentos Officiaes, & os vinte Letrados, que além deste numero custuma aver.

§. 11.

§. 2 E porq̃ a experiencia té mostrado a falta q̃ no serviço fazem os Irmãos que se achão ausentes, & impedidos: todo o Irmão assi nobre como official quando tiver algum justo impedimeto, q̃ aja de durar muyto tempo, ou quiser fazer algũa ausencia comprida faloá a saber à mesa para que sendo já muytos possa tomar em seus lugares até trinta Irmãos sómente, tendo respeyto a condiçãõ dos Irmãos de que ouver mòr falta, para que dessa sejaõ os mais dos trinta: com tal declaraçãõ, que tornando ao serviço algũs Irmãos dos ausentes, ou empedidos, os de novo elleitos em seus lugares, iraõ entrando nos lugares dos Irmãos que faleçerm, ou já

A

forem

14. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1704.

Lisbon: printed at the print works of Miguel Manescal, printer to the Holy Office of the Inquisition (30 cm).
Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A. XVIII.0512
Incomplete copy.



15. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1745.

Lisbon: printed at the print works of José da Silva da Natividade (29 cm).

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A.XVIII.0514



16. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1749.

West Lisbon: printed at the print works of Manuel Fernandes da Costa (31 cm).

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal. Reference No.: S.C. 3610 V.



17. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa, 1755.*

Lisbon: printed at the print works of José da Silva da Natividade (30 cm).

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: L.A.XVIII.0517

Includes the oath to be said by members of the Administrative Board of the Confraternity upon taking office. Also includes the oath to be said by the new brothers.

COMPROMISSO
D A
MISERICORDIA
D E
L I S B O A .



L I S B O A . 1818.

NA TYPOGRAFIA DE BULHOENS.

Com Licença da Meza do Desembargo do Paço.

18. *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Lisboa*, 1818.

Lisbon: printed at the print works of Bulhões (31 cm).

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa. Reference No.: XIX.0362.

The image of Our Lady of Mercy, belonging to the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel, is a tempera painting on wood. In the centre of the composition, the Virgin Mary opens her cloak to cover and protect the faithful. She is depicted with larger dimensions than the other characters, occupying roughly a third of the painting's pictorial surface.

She is dressed in a one-piece garment, blue in colour and held in place by means of a long pink belt, decorated with gilded flower-shaped elements. She is covered in a cloak that is also blue, trimmed with a golden band and decorated with pearls and precious stones. The inside of the cloak is lined with silk printed in shades of pink. On her head, she is also wearing a rich crown decorated with pearls, which includes in the centre a large red stone. Her beautiful face is turned towards the right. On either side of the Virgin are two angels holding her cloak, which covers a large group of people.

This is the representation of medieval society, formed by characters from all social classes and conditions. On our left are the figures that represent the different religious strata, arranged in a descending order of their hierarchical importance. In the foreground are the high ecclesiastical dignitaries – the Pope, the cardinals and the bishops. Appearing in the middle ground are the friars, one Franciscan and one Dominican, and, finally, the remainder of the clergy. On our right, we can see the civil society. Following the same organisation, we find the king and queen in the foreground and then, as we move towards the background, we see, successively, the nobles, the artisans, the workers and the common people.

This whole group of people, as well as the image of the Virgin Mary herself, is framed by a large architectural structure. On either side are three arcades or arched balconies placed on top of one another, in which have been placed the symbols of the seven deadly sins. From left to right, and from top to bottom, we find, on one side, envy, greed and sloth, and, on the other side, lust, gluttony and wrath. Completing the set, in the central part of the painting and removed from the rest of the context at the Virgin's feet, appears the sin of pride. Each of these figures has an arrow embedded in the area of the human body in which tradition customarily locates the sin in question.

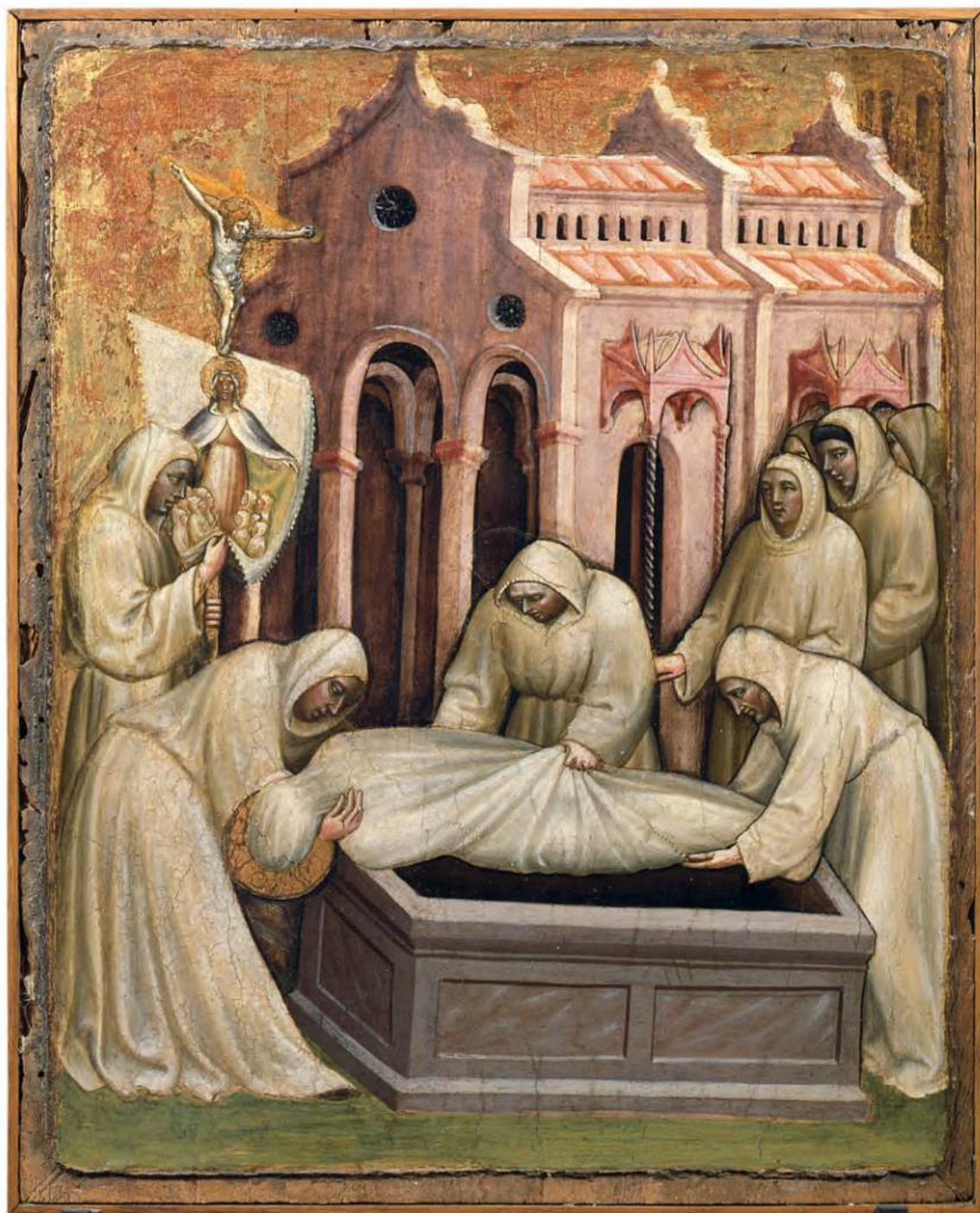
The arrows have been fired by Christ, situated in the upper left corner of the composition, from the spectator's point of view, suspended on a cloud and accompanied by angels. In this scene, Christ shows himself as the Son of God, who punishes sin, and this punishment is symbolised by the arrows. But Christ is also forgiving, as symbolised by the bunch of white flowers that is handed to him by one of the angels. All of this emphasises the protective and merciful power of the Virgin Mary, who intercedes, as a mother, before her Son, in order to obtain pardon for the faithful congregation.

This work has been attributed to the so-called Master of Teruel or the Master of Morata. Unfortunately, we do not have any further information about the artist, nor even about the original provenance of this work.

Pedro Luis Hernando Sebastián
Director of the Museo de Arte Sacro de Teruel



19. Mestre de Teruel [attributed to the]
Virgen de la Misericordia, first half of 15th century.
Tempera on wood. 133 x 93.5 cm.
Museo de Arte Sacro de Teruel, Aragon, Spain. Inv. No. Mus-020.



20. Olivuccio di Ciccarello (? – 1439).

Opere di Misericordia: seppellire i morti, 1404.

Tempera on wood. 36,7 x 29,4 cm.

Vatican Museums, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Inv. No. 40201.

Part of a set of six panels painted for the Chiesa di Santa Maria della Misericordia, in Ancona, Italy.

This panel belongs to a series of six that represent the *Seven Works of Mercy*, since the painter joined together the two scenes *Giving shelter to pilgrims* and *Giving drink to the thirsty* in just one single painting. Represented in the other four panels are the works *Giving food to the hungry*, *Clothing the naked*, *Visiting the sick* and *Visiting the prisoners*.

It is likely that the panels formed part of an altar frontal, but it is still not yet clear what its original structure would have been, so that various hypotheses have been put forward for the central panel (Minardi 2013).

On 13 March 1837, Monsenhor Gabriele Laureani, who was responsible for the Vatican Library, purchased six small panels from Gaetano Ciccarini depicting “the Works of Mercy”, considered at the time to have been painted “by Giotto or his school” (B.A.V., fald. 65, cc. 280 and 360, quoted in Rossi, p. 80). Initially intended for the Sacred Museum of the Vatican Library, they were transferred to the Pinacoteca Vaticana in 1909.

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, the Works of Mercy are presented as a means for entering into the Kingdom of Heaven: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” (Matthew, 25, 34-36)

The work “*Burying the Dead*”, which is represented here, is not included among the works of mercy mentioned in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, but it was added in the twelfth century to the *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* by the French theologian Jean Beleth (Rossi 1994, p. 78).

If we look closely at each scene in the series, it can be seen that the poor man is always represented with a halo, paraphrasing the words of Christ: “Verily I say unto you. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matthew 25, 40).

Each episode has as its scenario a Gothic city where the architectural proportions are pure fantasy, with inconsistent perspectives (Borobia 2011, p. 120), the colours are bright and contrasting, and the characters are well characterised and clothed in the style of the time.

In this panel, in an open space, we can see some members of the confraternity dressed in their “habits”, piously accompanying the burial of a dead man wrapped in a shroud, whose head is ringed by a halo. In the foreground, one of them is carrying the processional banner of the Confraternity, with a crucifix at the top. On the banner is the image of Our Lady of Mercy, shown in the act of welcoming, under her blue cloak, the faithful dressed in rigorous fashion. Among the various proposals presented for a hypothetical central panel that would have completed the set is that of the panel that is housed at the Museo Diocesano in Acona and which represents Our Lady of Mercy with a martyr saint (Pasut 2009). The two depictions of Our Lady, hieratic and subtle, are similar to column statues, dressed in a red habit tightened beneath her bosom and welcoming the faithful worshippers and the members of the confraternity beneath her ample blue cloak. In the background, on the panel from the Vatican is an elegant church of

somewhat inconsistent architecture in a dream-like Roman-Gothic style. The light pink colour of its walls is suggestive of Adriatic art, and, in particular, of Ancona Cathedral, which is dedicated to St. Cyriacus. It is probably a representation of the headquarters of the Confraternity, perhaps the Church of the Misericordia in Ancona, which no longer exists. This church was founded in 1348 and restructured in 1399, having been granted special favours in 1404 (Pirano and Battaglini 1988), this being the date when the panels may have been made, which are now kept at the Vatican (Rossi 1994, p. 80). It is documented that, in 1400, Olivuccio himself was registered as a member of the Confraternity (Falaschini 1903).

There is now general unanimity regarding the attribution of this work to Olivuccio di Ciccarello (Minardi 2013). After some uncertainties, the panels were placed by Sirèn (1921, p. 100) within the artistic context of the Italian region of *Marche*. In a communication sent to the Museum of Stockholm, Federico Zeri proposed the identification of the painter who had produced the panels as being Carlo di Camerino (Vitalini Saconi 1968, p. 226). Successive studies have shown that Carlo di Camerino was a fictitious character, with his name deriving from the incorrect interpretation of an inscription on the *Croce* of Macerata Feltria. When the *Croce* was being restored, it proved possible to correct this reading and, consequently, the body of works that had already been attributed to di Camerino, the “non-existent painter”, was instead attributed to Olivuccio di Ciccarello, until then a well-documented artist, but without any works in his own name (Mazzalupi 2002, p. 5; Marchi 2002b, p. 113; Mazzalupi 2008, p. 112, note 1).

The simple and highly refreshing language of Olivuccio, with its typical tone of popular fables producing an immediate impact on the spectator, maintains the fascination for tradition and, at the same time, highlights characteristic aspects of the taste for the fantastic and the irrational that were typical of the art of the Italian region of *Marche* from the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is enough to think about the work of Bartolomeo di Tommaso de Foligno, where it is documented that Olivuccio had contacts in Ancona in 1425. However, he is distinguished, above all, by the more rapid nature of his art work and the less courtly appearance of his painting.

Adele Breda

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21. Gregório Lopes (c. 1490-1550) [attributed to]
Nossa Senhora da Misericórdia (*Our Lady of Mercy*), 1530-1535.
Oil on oak. 180 x 217,5 cm.
Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Sesimbra. Inv. No. STACMS 2103.



22. Francisco de Campos (c. 1515–1580) [attributed to]

Flag of the Misericórdia: *Nossa Senhora da Misericórdia / Pietá* (Our Lady of Mercy/Pietà) c. 1550.

Oil on canvas glued to the wood. 121,8 x 101,7 cm.

Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Alcochete. Inv. No. D16.



23. Unknown artist, *Nossa Senhora da Misericórdia* (Our Lady of Mercy), século XVII.
Oil on wood. 82 x 71cm.
Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Montemor-o-Velho.



24. Ana Brígida

[*Untitled*], 2015.

77,4 x 116 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.

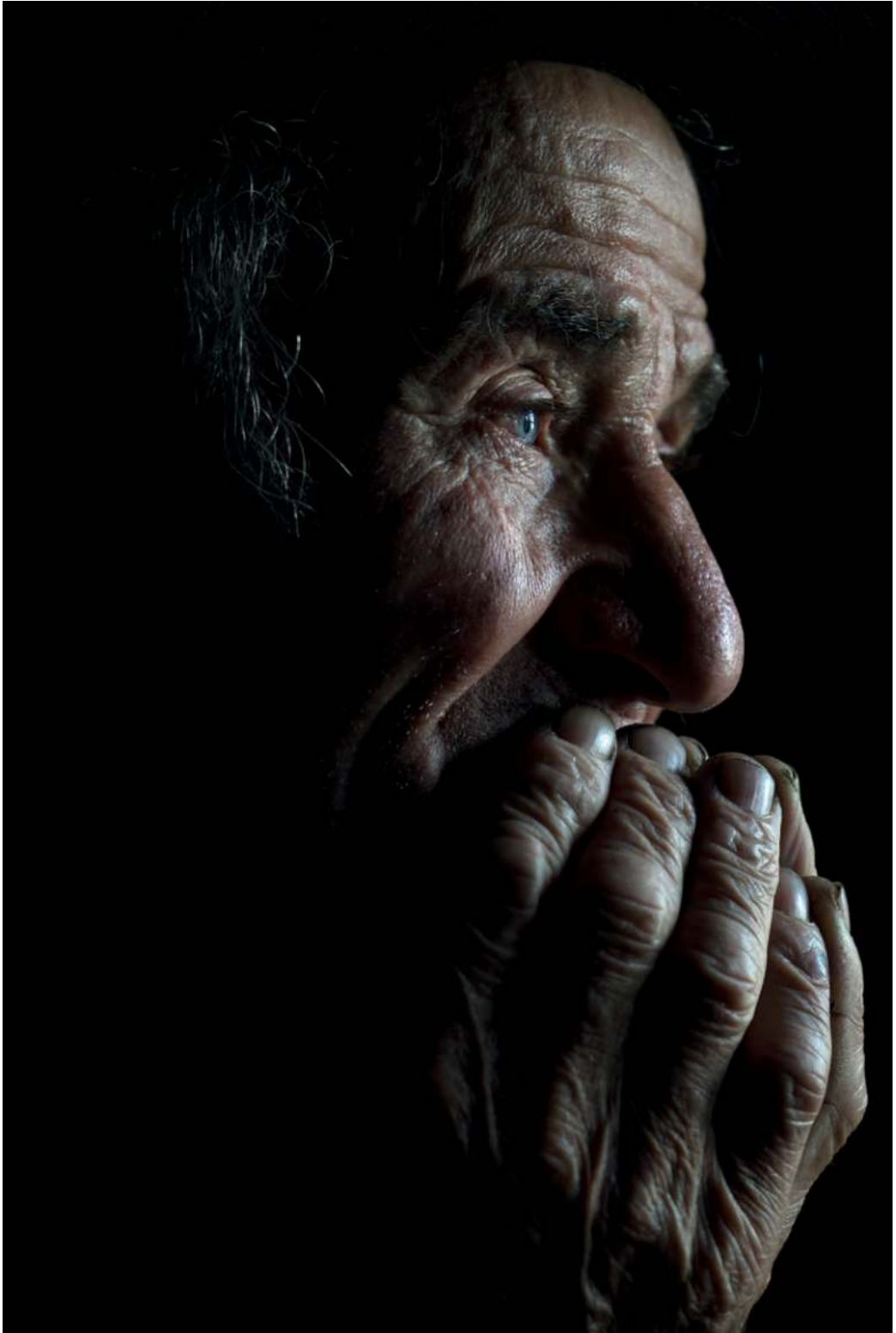
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25. Jorge Bacelar

[*Untitled*], 2016.

116 x 72,5 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.





26. António Pedro Santos

The Last Resting Place, 2015.

72,5 x 116 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.

27. Rui Duarte Silva

Solidarity, 2014.

72,5 x 116 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.





28. José Carlos Carvalho

Consolation, 2014.

72,5 x 116 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.

next page

29. Jorge Bacelar

[*Untitled*], 2017.

116 x 72,5 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa.





30. Rui Duarte Silva

For you, 2015.

72,5 x 116 cm.

Historical Archive of the Santa Casa
da Misericórdia de Lisboa.



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