

THE FORMS OF MARTYRDOM: ELEMENTS FOR THE ICONOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE MOROCCO PROTOMARTYRS IN PORTUGAL (THIRTEENTH- SIXTEENTH CENTURIES)

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Date of receipt: 8th of February, 2021

Date of acceptance: 15th of June, 2021

ABSTRACT

The aim of the current article is to present the latest research endeavors dedicated to the hagiographic formulas from which the Protomartyrs of Morocco main artistic forms were conceived during the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age in Portugal.

Based on the analysis of the main documentary sources and the interpretation of the several artistic collections —mainly composed by reliquaries, paintings, and sculptures— it is possible to gather a set of specific elements to trace the iconographic major themes of the Five Franciscans martyred in North Africa in 1220. Despite the evolution of devotional manifestations over time, the iconography maintained very conventional procedures, which are still evoked by the Catholic Church¹.

KEYWORDS

Morocco Protomartyrs, Martyrdom and religious conflicts, Relics cult, Iconography, Portuguese Medieval Art.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Protomartyres Marocenses, Martyrium et pugnae religiosae, Cultus reliquiarum, Iconographia, Ars medaevalis Lusitana.

1. Study justification

In 2020, the eight hundred years of the five Franciscan friars' martyrdom in Morocco were celebrated with several cultural events, art exhibitions and scientific congresses. After the conference *Mártires de Marrocos: Evocação dos 800 anos do martírio*², that we co-organized in Coimbra, on January 16th, we received the invitation from the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, in Lisbon, to prepare a study for the exhibition catalogue *Guerreiros e Mártires. A Cristandade e o Islão na formação de Portugal*³. Other two events had been programmed but the pandemic outbreak cancelled one and postponed the other⁴.

Our first research studies dedicated to the Protomartyrs of Morocco theme were launched in 2005. Through the Department of Cultural Heritage of the Diocese of Coimbra we had participated in the protocol celebrated with the Paleodemography and Paleopathology Laboratory of the Department of Anthropology of the Faculty

1. This article is part of a research project financed by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Portugal, through the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (UIDB/04666/2020), and supported by the Centro de Humanidades, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa and Universidade dos Açores (CHAM NOVA FCSH / UAC). We would like to express our gratitude to a number of persons for providing the assistance on this study, such as Cristina Brito, Alice Santiago Faria and Inês Coelho from our research centre: CHAM – Centro de Humanidades of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa; Gonçalo Piolti Cholang for the English translation and revision; to Father Francisco Prior Claro from the Diocese of Coimbra; Carla Azevedo from the Divisão Municipal de Bibliotecas of the Câmara Municipal do Porto; to José Luís Catalão from the Divisão de Bibliotecas e Museus of the Câmara Municipal de Setúbal; and to the Elsa Lourenço and Isabel Sucena from the Departamento da Cultura of the Câmara Municipal da Golegã. An acknowledgment should also be addressed to the scientific reviewers of the article requested by *Imago Temporis: Medium Aevum* journal. Used Abbreviations: AL, Arquidiocese de Lisboa/ Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Alenquer; BPMP, Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto; CJ-MS, Convento de Jesus-Museu de Setúbal; DA, Diocese de Aveiro; DC, Diocese de Coimbra; MB, Museu dos Biscainhos (Braga); MNAA, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga; MNFMC, Museu Nacional Frei Manuel do Cenáculo (Évora); MNMC, Museu Nacional Machado de Castro (Coimbra); PNM, Palácio Nacional de Mafra; PNP, Palácio Nacional da Pena (Sintra); TMCV, Tesouro-Museu da Catedral de Viseu.

2. Pacheco, Milton Pedro Dias. “Guardar para venerar: O culto das relíquias dos Protomártires de Marrocos no Mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra”, *Mártires de Marrocos nos 800 anos do seu martírio. História, Esperiritualidade e Materialidades*, Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho, Carlota Miranda Urbano, Maria Amélia Álvaro de Campos, Milton Pedro Dias Pacheco, eds. Coimbra: Coimbra, Igreja de Santa Cruz de Coimbra, 2021: 147-194.

3. Pacheco, Milton Pedro Dias, “Os Protomártires de Marrocos. Das fontes hagiográficas às obras iconográficas”, *Guerreiros e Mártires. A Cristandade e o Islão na formação de Portugal*. Caetano, Joaquim de Oliveira, Macias, Santiago, eds. Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga - Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda, 2020: 54-65.

4. We planned an exhibition project dedicated to the several Franciscans Friars missionary groups that went to North Africa after the Protomartyrs of Morocco, namely Saint António of Lisbon/Padova's journey. The exhibition calendar was programed to coincide with the organization of the international congress dedicated to the Franciscan vocation of Saint António in January 2021, at the end of the Jubilee Year dedicated to the Five Martyrs of Morocco and Saint Antonio. While the exhibition was canceled due to the lack of institutional support, the international congress *Santo António – 800 anos de vocação franciscana*, initially programmed for 14, 15 and 16 of January of 2021, suffered several changes that ended up reducing the number of lectures by international researchers and concentrated all presentations in just one day. Even so, a new pandemic wave forced the event to be postponed to June 2021.



of Sciences and Technology of the University of Coimbra for the study of relics deposited in the reliquary-ark from the Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra. Since the collaboration with the anthropology research centre, we started to collect documentary elements and identified devotional works. Meanwhile, in 2009, we presented our first publication⁵, revised and republished recently, in 2020⁶.

The aim of this article is to examine the main documentary sources with the purpose of gathering as much information as possible to proceed with the study of the hagiographic formulas from which the Protomartyrs of Morocco main artistic forms were conceived in Portugal from the Late Middle Ages until the Early Modern Age.

After the historical context, a brief analysis of the documentary sources will be carried out, since they contain the main events descriptions. They are the abundant hagiographic sources, hagiographies, martyrologies and liturgical books; and the scarce chronistic ones, the historical chronicles dedicated to the first Portuguese kings and their reigns. Naturally, we will have to take into account the general studies related to them, but for obvious reasons they will not deserve the same in-depth examination.

Under the sponsors instructions, the artists conceived reliquaries, painting and sculpture works in which the iconographic major themes were inspired on the information that sources have kept and perpetuated since the thirteenth century. In this second part the original provenance of the located pieces will be observed, identifying the main promoters and analyzing the material and artistic objects conceived within the scope of the Martyrs' devotional manifestations in Portugal.

2. The Morocco Protomartyrs journey. A brief contextualization

At the dawn of the thirteenth century, the glorious martyrdom attained by five Italian Franciscans at the hands of the Almohad caliph and the dangerous rescue of their relics carried out by an outcast Portuguese *Infante* echoed throughout Christendom. Having defined the objectives of the evangelization mission proposed by Francesco d'Assisi [c.1181-1226], a group of six lesser friars left from Assisi, between May/June of 1219, toward the Iberian Christian kingdoms. After their passage through Aragon, Friar Vitale [?-1220?] got sick and abandoned his companions. To Portugal continued the priest and preacher Friar Berardo da Calvi [?-1220?], priest Friar Ottone da Stroncone [?-1220], deacon Friar Pietro da

5. "Os proto-mártires de Marrocos da Ordem de São Francisco. Muy suave odor de sancto martyrio", *Martírios e Massacres – Revista Lusófona de Ciência das Religiões*, Lisbon: Universidade Lusófona, 2009: VIII, nsº. 15/16, 85-108.

6. "Os proto-mártires de Marrocos da Ordem de São Francisco. Muy suave odor de sancto martyrio". Osswald, Cristina and Franco, José Eduardo, eds. *Fazer da morte uma Vitória. Martírios e Massacres*. Lisbon: Theya Editores/ Instituto Politécnico de Macau/ Edições Universitárias Lusófonas, 2020: 151-185.



Sangeminiani [?-1220], and the professed brothers Friar Accursio da Aguzzo [?-1220] and Friar Adjuto da Narni⁷ [?-1220].

When reaching the Kingdom of Portugal, the mendicant friars were received and supported by the Royal Family, in Coimbra by the Queen D. Urraca of Castile [c.1186-1220], wife of King D. Afonso II [1186|1211-1223], and in Alenquer by the *Infanta* D. Sancha Sanches [c.1180-1229], sister of the monarch. Properly prepared for the evangelic mission, they departed to Seville⁸, a city under Islamic rule where they tried unsuccessfully to convert the emir. This impudence resulted in several prison arrests, multiple verbal insults and countless bodily offenses⁹.

Avid to expel the lesser brothers into Christian territories, due to the transgressions against the Islam and the Prophet Muhammad [571-632], the advisers of the Sevillian emir eventually persuaded him to send them to North Africa. They left under the escort of D. Pedro Fernandez de Castro [? -1220], the Castilian King's¹⁰ former chamberlain and also the knight that participated in the military incursion led by the King of Leon against Portugal in March 1212¹¹.

From Ceuta they went to Marrakesh, the capital of the Almohad caliphate and the seat of government of the fifth caliph of Morocco and al-Andalus, Abū Ya'kūb Yūsuf al-Mustanşir [c.1203|1213-1224], son of Muḥammad al-Nāşir¹² [c.1181|1199-1213], the great defeated of the Battle of Navas de Tolosa occurred in July 1212¹³.

After their arrival, they soon tried to resume their mission. The Franciscan friars' missionary purpose was based on the proclamation of the Gospel at the Caliphate court. On the other hand, Yūsuf al-Mustanşir, commonly referred in the Portuguese historical sources as the Miramolim —the misinterpretation of *amīr al-mu'mimīn*, the Father of the Believers—, tried to persuade them to embrace the Islamic religion¹⁴.

7. *Tratado da vida e martyrio dos cinco Martires de Marrocos enuiados per são Francisco*. Coimbra: Printer of João Alvarez, 1568, chaps. I-III; Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica da Ordem dos Frades Menores de S. Francisco na Provincia de Portugal*. Lisbon: Printer of Antonio Craesbeeck de Mello, 1656, I, 287; Buffon, friar Giuseppe, "La geopolitica francescana della frontiera portoghese". *Itinerarium. Oito séculos de presença franciscana em Portugal. Memória e Vivência*, 221/222, 2019: 37-54 especially 37-39.

8. Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz. *Superstição, fé e milagres na Idade Média*. Coimbra: Instituto Nacional de Telecomunicações, 1995: 21.

9. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: I-X; Lisboa, frei Marcos de. *Primeira Parte das Chronicas da ordem dos frades Menores do seraphico padre sam Francisco*. Lisbon: Printer of Ioannes Blavio de Colonia, 1557: CXLIX; Esperança, friar Manoel da. *Historia Serafica...*: I, 71, 288.

10. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XI-XII; Vilar, Hermínia Vasconcelos. *D. Afonso II*. Rio de Mouro: Círculo de Leitores, 2005: 88.

11. Brásio, António. "O infante D. Pedro, senhor de Majorca". *Anais da Academia Portuguesa de História*, 9, 1959: 163-240 *maxime* 167.

12. Huici Miranda, Ambrosio. *Historia Política del Imperio Almohade*. Tetuan: Editora Marroquí, 1956: I, 433, 437-439, 450; Shatzmiller, Maya. "AL-MUWAḤḤIDŪN", Clifford Edmund Bosworth, Emeri van Donzel, Wolfhart Heinrichs, Charles Pellat, eds. *Encyclopédie de L'Islam*. Leiden: Brill, 1993: VII, 804-805; J.D. Latham, "NAŞRIDES". Clifford Edmund Bosworth, Emeri van Donzel, Wolfhart Heinrichs, Charles Pellat, eds. *Encyclopédie de L'Islam*. Leiden: Brill, 1993: VII, 1022; Fernandes, Hermenegildo. *D. Sancho II*. Rio de Mouro: Círculo de Leitores, 2006: 145-146.

13. Vilar, Hermínia Vasconcelos. *D. Afonso II...*: 129-130, 135.

14. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XIX-XXI.



The continuous confrontations with the population and, above all, the continuous offenses directed at the caliph would determine their death penalty. They thus achieved martyrdom in Morocco on January 16th, 1220¹⁵.

In Marrakesh, as a vassal of the caliph, there could be found the Portuguese *Infante* D. Pedro Sanches [1187-1256], the second male son of D. Sancho I [1154|1185-1211] and brother of King D. Afonso II. He was the future count of Urgel and lord of Mallorca¹⁶. D. Pedro not only was responsible for hosting and protecting the friars during their stay in Marrakesh but was also the mentor of the operation to recover the friars' corpses after their public execution¹⁷. Almost immediately the population violently attacked the corpses which were thrown out from the Caliph palace. While some mutilated the corpses, others threw their heads at the burning fires, which never burned¹⁸.

The preparation of the mutilated corpses was made by the D. Pedro's pageboys under the supervision of D. Joam Roberte, the canon of the Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra who served the Portuguese *Infante* in Marrakech as a private chaplain. Properly wrapped in local fabric pieces the bones were then deposited inside two chests since they were already considered authentic relics¹⁹. Soon the transportation journey would begin on an itinerary comprised by the cities of Marrakesh, Ceuta,

15. The osteological analysis of the relics allowed to identify three adult male individuals, two of them aged between thirty and forty years. Cunha, Eugénia; Silva, Ana Maria. *Os Mártires de Marrocos. Análise antropológica*. Coimbra: Departamento de Antropologia da Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia da Universidade de Coimbra, 2005: 3-4.

16. The involvement in the military incursion led by Afonso IX de Leon [1188-1230], in March 1212, in aid of his sister, D. Teresa Sanches, the former Queen of Leon, forced D. Pedro to leave the Kingdom, a journey that started in November of that year, heading first to Leon and then to Morocco. Brásio, António. "O infante D. Pedro, senhor de Majorca...": 165-169, 174, 181; Vilar, Hermínia Vasconcelos. *D. Afonso II...*, 102, 105-108.

17. Although the rescue was successfully achieved, with the five corpses delivery, two of D. Pedro's knights that had participated on mission were killed. One of them was D. Pedro Fernandez de Castro, the same one who helped them reach Marrakesh. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: IV, XI-XII, XXII-XXIII.

18. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XXIII. Although the sources are omitted in this question, it is quite possible that the purpose of the people was to destroy the corpses entirely, considering the importance given to the physical body in the resurrection and salvation context of the Christian religion since the Late Antiquity. This may have been the reason why the Muslims dismembered and tried to burn the corpses and why the Christians collected them. Klein, Holger A. "Sacred Things and Holy Bodies. Collecting Relics from Late Antiquity to the Early Renaissance", *Treasures of Heaven. Saints, relics, and devotion in Medieval Europe*. Martina Bagnoli, Holger A. Klein, Griffith Mann, James Robinson, eds. New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2010, 55-67 *maxime* 55.

19. The scrapping process of removing the flesh from the bones left visible physical marks on some bone elements attributed to the Martyrs of Morocco. Despite the fragile state of the bones conservation, the pathologies detected suggest the possibility that some of the fractures may have resulted at the time of the individuals' death, thus corroborating the violence exerted. The transverse fractures in two atlases, belonging to two distinct male individuals, suggest that they were made by sharp objects, thus reinforcing the hypothesis that we are facing at least two beheaded individuals. The results obtained with the osteological analysis thus corroborate, in several aspects, the narrations mentioned in the hagiographic texts of the martyred. Cunha, Eugénia; Silva, Ana Maria. *Os Mártires de Marrocos...*: 3. This anthropology report will be also published by both authors at *Mártires de Marrocos: Evocação dos 800 anos do martírio* publication (please see note 1).



Astorga and Coimbra. During the long expedition, D. Pedro escort traveled through arid deserts, repelled wild animals, deceived the Almohad armies which were in their pursuit and faced tumultuous sea storms²⁰.

Once the entourage reached Coimbra, the relics were delivered at the Augustinian Monastery of Santa Cruz. It was the main house of the community that adopted the *Regula ad servos Dei* attributed to Saint Augustine of Hipona²¹ [354-430], the famous propagator of Christian monasticism in Africa. Several centuries later this evangelization enterprise would be continued by the Seraphic Father fellow brothers²².

Enveloped in a mystical and providential aura from the first moment²³, the event of the relic's delivery at the Monastery of Santa Cruz occurred in two possible dates in 1220. While for the Franciscan authors it occurred on November 3rd²⁴, for the Augustinians happened on December 10th²⁵. During the procession which headed towards the Cathedral of Santa Maria, organized by the bishop of Coimbra, D. Pedro Soares [? | 1192-1232], the mule that transported the relics chests suddenly entered the monastery church, only moving again once its cargo was lifted from its back²⁶.

Despite the historical sources precision about the relics delivery, the real intention of D. Pedro when depositing them in the cathedral must be questioned. In fact, the relics were initially arranged to be delivered to the cathedral, yet they eventually were taken to the monastic church, where the direct predecessors of D. Pedro, the first two kings of Portugal, were buried. Furthermore, this was the community house of the Augustinian canon D. Joam Roberte²⁷, the religious who played a crucial role in the entire process of treating and packaging the relics in Marrakesh²⁸.

The Monastery of Santa Cruz, already considered one of the most famous relics sanctuaries in Portugal (see illustration 1), would thus become the radiating epicenter of the first worship celebrations and the main devotional manifestations around the Protomartyrs.

20. *Tratado da vida, e martyrio...: XXIV-XXVII*; Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas da ordem dos frades Menores do seraphico padre sam Francisco*. Lisbon: Printer of Ioannes Blavio de Colonia, 1557, CLVII; Tarouca, Carlos da Silva (Critical edition of), *Crónica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal*. Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa de História, 2009, I, 205-206; Pina, Ruy de, *Chronicas de El-Rei D. Affonso II e de El-Rei D. Sancho II*. Lisbon: Escriptorio, 1906, 54.

21. Gomes, Saul António, *In Limine Conscriptio. Documentos, Chancelaria e Cultura no Mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra (Séculos XII a XIV)*. Viseu: Palimage Editores, 2007, 75-84.

22. *Tratado da vida, vida e martyrio...: XXXIII*.

23. *Tratado da vida, vida e martyrio...: XXXI*.

24. Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica... I*, 294.

25. Meirinhos, José Francisco. "Santa Cruz 53/ N.º Geral 93", Nascimento, Aires Augusto and Meirinhos, José Francisco (Coordination of), *Catálogo dos Códices da Livraria de Mão do Mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra na Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto*. Oporto: Edição da Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto, 1997, 255-256.

26. *Tratado da vida, vida e martyrio...: XXX*.

27. Vilar, Hermínia Vasconcelos, *D. Afonso II...*, 146, 221-226.

28. Gonçalves, Flávio, "A Representação Artística dos "Mártires de Marrocos". Os mais antigos exemplares portugueses", *Museu*, 1963, December, 6, 20-50 *maxime* 21.



The canons of Santa Cruz would become directly responsible for sharing their relics, first with the Monastery of Santa Maria of Lorvão, located in Penacova—about 20 kilometers from Coimbra—, and then with many other regular communities and ecclesiastical entities. The martyred remains were mainly shared with the opulent Augustinian monasteries and the poor Franciscan convents, passing, of course, through some of the most important religious and diocesan communities.

The human remains of the friars touched by sanctity at the end of earthly life in Marrakesh—the identified real specimens and the assigned representative ones— can be grouped in three categories²⁹. The first relics category belongs to the bodily remains, namely bones, teeth and hair³⁰; the second category gathers the instruments of martyrdom³¹; and the third category is comprised by the objects in direct contact with the previous ones, such as the fabrics that the relics were

29. Smith, Julia M. H., “Relics. An Evolving Tradition in Latin Christianity”. Hahn, Cynthia and Klein, Holger A. (Edited by), *Saints and Sacred Matter. The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyond*. Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2015, 41-60 *maxime* 43.

30. From the Monastery of Santa Cruz, several relic fragments were removed and distributed until very recently, so it will be possible to calculate, even hypothetically, the existence of a large quantity of relics belonging and attributed to the Protomartyrs, a circumstance that makes the identification and location completely impossible. Nevertheless, relics were tracked in Coimbra (Mosteiro de Santa Cruz, Igreja de Santo dos Olivais), in Lorvão, Penacova (Mosteiro de Santa Maria do Lorvão – some deposited in the Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro, Coimbra), in Lisbon (Mosteiro de São Vicente de Fora, Convento de São Francisco, Convento de Nossa Senhora da Esperança, Mosteiro da Madre de Deus de Xabregas – Museu Nacional do Azulejo, Colégio de São Roque – Museu de São Roque), in Maia (Mosteiro do Salvador de Moreira), in Vila Nova de Gaia (Mosteiro do Salvador da Serra), in Grijó (Mosteiro do Salvador), in Águeda, Aveiro (Igreja de São Miguel de Travassô), in Sacavém (Convento de Nossa Senhora dos Mártires e de Conceição dos Milagres), and in Beja (Convento da Conceição – today deposited at the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, in Lisboa). *Tratado da vida, e martyrio...*, [chap.] “Repartição dalgũas reliquias”; Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica...* I, 295-296, 420, 645; Borges, Nelson Correia, *Arte Monástica em Lorvão. Sombras e Realidade. Das origens a 1737*. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian/Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, 2002, I, 146-147, 557; *Crónica de Cinco Reis de Portugal. Inédito quatrocentista reproduzido do cód. 886 da Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto* (Critical edition of Basto, Artur de Magalhães). Oporto: Livraria Civilização, 1945, 244; Santa Maria, D. Nicolau. *Chronica da Ordem dos Cônegos Regrantes do Patriarcha S. Agostinho*. Lisbon: Printer of Ioam da Costa, 1668, II, 69, 150, 258, 282, 286, 289, 313; São Caetano, D. Antonio de, *Breve compendio da vida, e martyrio dos cinco gloriosos Martyres, de Marrocos*. Coimbra: Printer of Bento Secco Ferreyra, 1711, 74-75; Brandão, Mário. *Actas dos Capítulos do Mosteiro de Santa Cruz*. Coimbra: Publicações do Arquivo e Museu de Arte da Universidade de Coimbra, 1946, pp. 146-149; Mártires, D. Timoteo dos. *Crónica de Santa Cruz*. Coimbra: Edição da Biblioteca Municipal, 1958, II, 7; Soledade, friar Fernando da. *Historia Serafica Chronologica da Ordem de S. Francisco na provincia de Portugal*. Lisbon: Printer of Manoel and Joseph Lopes Ferreyra, 1709, IV, 70; Moura, Carlos. “Relíquias e bustos-relicários do núcleo tardo-quincentista”, *Casa Perfeitíssima. 500 anos da Fundação do Mosteiro da Madre de Deus. 1509-2009. Catálogo da exposição*. Lisbon: IMC, 2009, 256-264, *maxime* 262-263; Silva, Nuno Vassallo e, “Breve Historial do Santuário das Relíquias de S. Roque”, *Esplendor e Devoção: os Relicários de S. Roque*. Lisbon: Museu de São Roque, 1998, 11; Parra Martínez, Julio. “Nota explicativa sobre as metodologias seguidas no inventário da coleção de relicários da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa”, *Esplendor e Devoção: os Relicários de S. Roque*. Lisbon: Museu de São Roque, 1998, 82; Caetano, Joaquim Oliveira, Carvalho, José Alberto Seabra, Franco, Anísio and Orey, Leonor d’, “Relicário”, *Inventário do Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga. Coleção de Ourivesaria. Do Românico ao Manuelino*. Lisbon: IPM, 1995, I, 108-109.

31. They were found in Gouveia, Portugal (at the Convento do Espírito Santo) and in Valladolid, Spain (Convento de San Francisco). Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica...* I, 295-296, 645.





ILLUSTRATION 1. RELIQUARY OF THE FIVE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO IN THE RELIC'S SANCTUARY OF THE MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA. COIMBRA WORKSHOP- ANONYMOUS AUTHOR. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (SECOND HALF). CARVED WOOD, POLYCHROME AND GOLD. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT LOCATION: MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA. ILLUSTRATION PROVIDED BY MILTON PEDRO DIAS PACHECO.

involved in Marrakesh and the chests where they were transported from there to Coimbra³².

The restricted sharing of relics from the monasteries of Santa Cruz of Coimbra and Santa Maria of Lôrvão was done, above all, but not exclusively, through the intervention of some elements belonging to/or connected to the Portuguese Royal

32. In the Monastery of Santa Cruz there are still some wood fragments from the primitive chests, deposited at the reliquary-urn, and the liturgical chasuble of the Martyrs, made with the fabrics in which the relics came involved.

Family: by D. Pedro Sanches, D. Afonso II, D. Sancha Sanches and D. Teresa Sanches [c.1175?-1250] in the thirteenth century³³; by D. Fernando [1433-1470], Duke of Viseu and father of the future King D. Manuel I [1469|1495-1521] in the fifteenth century³⁴; by D. Catarina d'Eça [c.1440-1521], abbess of Lorvão, between 1472 and 1521, and descendant of King D. Pedro I³⁵ [1320|1357-1367], and also by D. Catarina of Austria [1507-1578], wife of the King D. João III [1502|1521-1557], in the sixteenth century³⁶.

Although the religious cult appeared on the axis of Coimbra and Lorvão, in two monastic communities with strong institutional relations to the Portuguese Crown, the first devotional manifestations sparked spontaneously in Marrakesh. Not only the bones were treated and prepared as relics in Morocco but also during the journey that would bring them to Coimbra several miraculous prodigies were operated. And in Coimbra several public manifestations were prepared to receive them.

Based on popular religiosity with strong acquaintances to the surrounding local area³⁷, the devotional celebrations and worship manifestations ended up gradually approaching the canonical premises defined by the Holy See. Despite antiquity and longevity, the most worshiped holy martyrs during the Middle Ages in Portugal³⁸ only ascended to the Church altars on August 7, 1481, with the canonization confirmed by the bull *Cum alias animo reuolueremus merita beatorum martyrum*, granted by the Pope Sixtus IV [1414|1471-1484], the former Minister General of the Order of Saint Francis³⁹.

Despite the multiple dissemination of religious forms defined around the Martyrs, found shortly after the relics arrival in 1220, the canonization process took much longer. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, their cult extended to the east of the Iberian Peninsula. After the failed attempt of James II of Aragon [1267-1327], in 1321⁴⁰, the canonization process was reinvigorated by the Augustinian

33. Vilar, Hermínia Vasconcelos, *D. Afonso II...*, 93-95.

34. Caetano, Joaquim Oliveira, Carvalho, José Alberto Seabra, Franco, Anísio and Orey, Leonor d', "Relicário"..., I, 108-109.

35. Borges, Nelson Correia, *Arte Monástica em Lorvão...*, I, 151-152.

36. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: Especially chapter "Repertição dalgũas reliquias".

37. Coelho, Maria Helena da Cruz *Superstição, fé e milagres...*, 37. In the Monastery of Santa Cruz, the so-called bell of the Martyrs of Morocco is still kept, an eighteenth century implement that was requested to grant protection to agricultural fields, crops and animals, perhaps replacing an earlier one. Krus, Luís. "Celeiro e Relíquias: o culto quatrocentista dos Mártires de Marrocos e a Devoção dos Nus", Gonçalves, Iria (Organization of), *Passado, memória e poder na sociedade medieval portuguesa. Estudos*. Redondo: Patrimonia, 1994, 149-169 *maxime* 160-161.

38. Marques, José. "Os Santos dos Caminhos Portugueses", *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. História*. Oporto: 2006, 7, 243-262, *maxime* 248.

39. Wadding, Luke. *Annales Minorvm. In quibvs res omnes trivm ordinvm a S. Francisco institvtorum ex fide*. Lyon: Sumptibus Claudij Landry, 1625, I, 241; Walsh, Michael. *Dicionário de Papas*. Lisbon: Edições 70, 2007, 194-195.

40. Bertazzo, friar Luciano. "I Protomartiri Francescani tra storia e agiografia", Bertazzo, Luciano and Cassio, Giuseppe (Coordination of), *Dai protomartiri francescani a Sant'Antonio di Padova. Atti della giornata internazionale di studi*. Padua: Centro Studi Antoniani, 2011, 23-41, *maxime* 40. He was brother of the Queen of Portugal, D. Isabel of Aragão [c.1270|1336], acclaimed as Holy Queen shortly after her death



canons, once again, in the fifteenth century, first with the records compilation of the prodigies operated and then with the renovation of the relics chapels at the church of the Monastery of Santa Cruz.

In a time of spiritual expansion and political implantation, the providential choice of the Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra for the relics depositing contributed to the ennoblement of the main devotional center collaborating directly with the Portuguese Crown. The community involved in the production of governmental, administrative and diplomatic documents for the Kingdom and in the biographies of the Kings would also continue to write the Church's sacred memory⁴¹. Alongside the hagiographic compositions dedicated to the first saints and martyrs from the Coimbra region⁴², the Augustinian canons were also responsible for the writing of the history of the five lesser friars martyred in Morocco in 1220. Probably the first ones.

3. Hagiographic and chronistic sources

3.1. Liturgical, festive and martyrologic texts

After placing the relics in a safe and solemn space, D. João César, the prior of the Monastery of Santa Cruz between 1205-1212 and 1219-1228⁴³, ordered the compilation of the testimonies transmitted orally by the bearers, the direct and indirect intermediaries responsible for relics transportation from Marrakesh to Coimbra. Having gathered the oral statements, the canons began writing the hagiographic texts dedicated to the evangelizing mission and the consequent martyrdom. Probably, these manuscripts records were the basis of the so-called *legenda antiqua* composition destined to perpetuate the martyr's narrative and sow the fame of the relics treasure.

Originally conceived in this monastic house, the miscellany codex *Santa Cruz 40*, organized according to the saintly and votive criteria of the Augustinians, gathers a *Missale Sacramentarium* containing the votive liturgical mass oldest formulas dedicated to the Martyrs in Portugal, written in the first third of the thirteenth century⁴⁴.

in 1336 and whose devotional manifestations in Coimbra seem to have outshone to those of the Martyrs of Morocco. Krus, Luís. "Celeiro e Relíquias...": 165.

41. Gomes, Saul António. "Hagiografia, arte e cultura no Outono da Idade Média", *Revista Diálogos Mediterrânicos*, 6 (2014): 29-55, especially 42-44.

42. Freire, José Geraudes. "Problemas literários da "Vita Sancti Theotonii"", *Santa Cruz de Coimbra. Do século XI ao século XX*. Coimbra: [Diocese of Coimbra], 1984: 85-117, especially 87-89.

43. Martins, Armando Alberto. *O Mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra na Idade Média*. Lisbon: Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa, 2003: 64.

44. Marques, Bernardino da Costa. "Santa Cruz 40/ N° Geral 53", Nascimento, Aires Augusto and Meirinhos, José Francisco (Coordination of), *Catálogo dos Códices da Livraria de Mão do Mosteiro de Santa*



In the codex *Santa Cruz 29*, a volume compiled between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, there are two of the ancient hagiographic texts devoted them: a *Passio et miracula quinque fratrum minorum martyrum in Marochio*, the text considered to be the oldest and most complete; and the *Legend quinque fratrum minorum martyrum in Marochio*, a latter and more concise version that was written close to that date —both published in *Portvgalliae Monvmenta Historica*, in 1856, although with different titles⁴⁵—, and a festive music hymn: *the Commemoratio sanctorum martirum quinque fratrum minorum*⁴⁶.

The codicological volume *Santa Cruz 38*, collected in the same monastic fund around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, preserves one of the miracle lists: *In hoc libro continentur miracula sanctorum martirum Beraldi, Otti, Adiuti, Petri et Occurssy in beate Crucis monasterio tumba honorifice collectorum*⁴⁷. In addition to the list, composed in the fifteenth century probably within the scope of the canonization process, there is an illuminated painting with the oldest representation of the Protomartyrs of Morocco martyrdom (see illustration 2).

With the development of the printing press in the sixteenth century, medieval *scriptores* gradually gave way to modern printers in the production of liturgical and devotional texts. The *Breuiarius secūndum usum insignis monasterii sc̃e crucis colibriēsis* was printed in the monastery in 1531, a book in which some of the formulas defined for the liturgical feast of the Moroccan Protomatyr are found⁴⁸. It was used in the celebration of Divine Offices in Santa Cruz, namely in the festive masses of the Martyrs, on January 16th, until the year of 1568 at least⁴⁹.

The existence of several documentary sources at the Monastery of Santa Cruz, both handwritten and printed but increasingly fragmented, sparse and contaminated over the centuries, testifies to the long tradition of producing contents intended to evoke the Martyrs sacred history. In order to disseminate the religious manifestations, the prior of Santa Cruz, D. Jorge de Barbosa, decided to promote the

Cruz de Coimbra na Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto. Oporto: Edição da Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto, 1997: 215-216, especially 215-216.

45. The first is the *Legenda sanctorum martirum quinque fratrum minorum colimbriensium, in venerabili conuentu sancte crucis eiusdem quiescentium*, composed by fifty-one small chapters: forty-six readings and five complementary entries regarding the miracles and relics of the Protomartyrs and the Franciscan vocation of Saint António of Lisbon/ Padova; and the second is the *Prologus in Legenda sanctorum martirum quinque fratrum minorum*, composed only by nine *lectios*. Herculano, Alexandre (Compilation of). *Portvgalliae Monvmenta Historica. Scriptores*. Lisbon: Typis Academicis, 1856: I, 104-116.

46. Meirinhos, José Francisco. “Santa Cruz 29/ N.º Geral 52...”: 162-163; “Santa Cruz 53/ N.º Geral 93...”: 255-256.

47. Lencart, Joana. “Santa Cruz 38/ N.º Geral 770”, Nascimento, Aires Augusto and Meirinhos, José Francisco (Coordination of), *Catálogo dos Códices da Livraria de Mão do Mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra na Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto*. Oporto: Edição da Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto, 1997, 211-212, *maxime* 211-212.

48. *Breuiarius secūndum usum insignis monasterii sc̃e crucis colibriēsis*. Coimbra: Printer of Germano Galhardo, 1531: 301.

49. Madahil, António Gomes da Rocha. “Notas”, *Tratado da Vida e Martírio dos Cinco Mártires de Marrocos. Texto arcaico reimpresso de harmonia com o único exemplar conhecido*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1928: 81-153, especially 83-85.





ILLUSTRATION 2. BEHEADING OF THE FIVE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO. COIMBRA WORKSHOP-MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA (?). FIFTEENTH CENTURY. ILLUMINATED PARCHMENT. DIMENSIONS: 25.8 CM HEIGHT X 17.9 CM WIDTH. FOLIO DIMENSIONS: 38 CM HEIGHT X 25.5 CM WIDTH. ORIGINAL LOCATION: MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA. CURRENT LOCATION: BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA MUNICIPAL DO PORTO (INV. NO. SANTA CRUZ 38- GENERAL NO. 770, FOLIO I V). BY COURTESY OF THE BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA MUNICIPAL DO PORTO.

translation of the oldest relation from Latin into Portuguese, complemented with the ancient texts of the royal chronicles⁵⁰. He entrusted the task to an anonymous writer —certainly an Augustinian canon from his own community—, the same one who admitted, in a critical tone, that in the distant thirteenth century there was no care in describing and perpetuating subjects as glorious as this, which is why many

50. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: “Prologue”.

were lost⁵¹. Although it is not possible to date the beginning of the composition, the *Tratado da vida e martyrio dos cinco Martires de Marocos enuiados per são Francisco* was completed in 1567, since the publication by the royal printer João Aluarez occurred on February 7th, 1568.

Reflecting the religious context marked by the reformist Council of Trent⁵², the *Tratado da vida e martyrio dos cinco Martires de Marocos* is structured in thirty-three chapters in which the multiple events are diachronically explored. After presenting the convocation of the friars by Francesco d'Assisi and the itineraries traveled in southern Europe and in North Africa the author listed the contacts established with some Royal Family members in Coimbra and Alenquer. Afterwards the bodily torments suffered during the evangelizing process were enumerated, first in Seville and then in Marrakesh. Then the apotheosis of martyrdom was described: the execution of the five friars, the rescuing of their corpses and the transportation of the already considered to be relics to the Monastery of Santa Cruz in the presence of the Portuguese monarchs themselves.

Alongside the main events, complemented with spiritual edifying dialogues, the hagiographic treatise incorporates some aspects of the Franciscanism in Portugal. After dealing with the foundation of the Franciscan Convent of Alenquer—associating the passage of the five Italian friars in the court of the *Infanta D. Sancha*, who, in 1219, had welcomed the missionaries in person—, and having explored the reaction taken by Saint Francis during his Gospel mission in the East, the author mentions the awakening from the seraphic vocation of the Augustinian canon D. Fernão Martins de Bulhões [c.1191-1231], acclaimed by the Church of Rome as Saint António of Padova or Lisbon.

According to the dominant narrative, D. Fernão Martins de Bulhões had contacted the five minor friars in Coimbra in 1219 (See Illustration 3), before their departure to Alenquer, but the decisive moment was when he saw the relics coming in 1220. In front of the complete nucleus of the Protomartyrs of Morocco relics he decided to abandon the rich mozzetta of Saint Augustine and accept the poor hood of Saint Francis⁵³. After taking up the vows of poverty, humility and obedience, Friar António of Coimbra went, in the company of Friar Filipe, to North Africa, in 1221⁵⁴, in order to continue the evangelization mission. However, his brief passage in Morocco did not allow him to obtain the palm and crown of martyrdom, which he had hoped to receive, unlike many of his brothers⁵⁵, but it certainly contributed

51. *Tratado da vida e martyrio*....: XXXII.

52. Dias, Isabel Rosa. "La légende des cinq martyrs franciscains du Maroc (1220) dans son contexte portugais", *Franciscana. Bollettino della Società internazionale di studi francescani*, 11 (2009): 1-27, especially 7.

53. *Tratado da vida e martyrio*....: IV, V, XXXIII; Herculano, Alexandre. *Portvgalliae Monvmenta Historica*..., I, 116-130.

54. ESPERANÇA, *Historia Serafica*... : I, 333-334.

55. The Franciscan friars Daniele, Samuele, Agnelo, Leone, Nicola, Ugolino and Donnolo were killed in Ceuta on October 10, 1227. They are known as the Seven Martyrs of Ceuta, or Morocco, and they are represented in painting collections in Portugal, namely at the Museu Nacional Frei Manuel do Cenáculo (MNFMC), in Évora (Inv. No. ME 1378) and at the Colégio de Santo António da Pedreira, in Coimbra. Later on, were killed also in Marrakesh on September 16, 1232, other five Franciscan friars, Leone,



to the departure of many others that would be responsible for the foundation of the first Franciscan house in Morocco⁵⁶.



ILLUSTRATION 3. D. FERNÃO MARTINS DE BULHÕES (SAINT ANTÓNIO OF LISBON) RECEIVES AT THE MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA THE FIVE ITALIAN FRANCISCAN FRIARS (THE PROTOMARTYRS OF MOROCCO). COIMBRA WORKSHOP - ANONYMOUS AUTHOR. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (SECOND HALF?). MONOCHROMATIC TILE. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT LOCATION: MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA. ILLUSTRATION PROVIDED BY MILTON PEDRO DIAS PACHECO.

Ugo, Domenico, Giovanni and Electo. Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas...*: CLIXv-CLX; Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica...* I, 320-325; Fortino, Ippolito. *I Martiri di Ceuta. Alle origini del francescanesimo in Calabria*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2006, 81-84; Jeusset, Gwenolé. *Francesco e il Sultano*. Milan: Editoriale Jaca Book SpA, 2008: 150.

56. *Tratado da vida, vida & martyrio...*: XXXII. The establishment of the first Franciscan community in North Africa took place during the caliphate of al-Ma'mun between 1227 and 1232. Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica...* I, 316-317; Fernandes, Hermenegildo, *D. Sancho II...*: 189-190.

The treatise ended with a prayer dedicated to the *gloriosis Martyrũ*, a concise list of the relics dispersed through royal intervention, and a catalogue of nineteen witnessed prodigies, recorded in a chronology marked between 1410 and 1530—the first two counting the origins of the Procession of the Naked (*Procissão dos Nus*)—but excluding the eight miracles incorporated in the text of the *Tratado da vida e martyrio*⁵⁷.

During the reprint of the *Tratado da vida e martyrio*, in 1928, the historian António da Rocha Madahil [1893-1969] collated the manuscript sources and the printed works from the Santa Cruz monastery in order to analyze the origin of the primeval texts dedicated to the Franciscan martyrs:

“In the general chronicles and those of the Order that could have influenced it by his date, this episode of the journey to Morocco and the martyrdom of the five priests was included with slight variations; we compared all that we could have at hand and, undeniably recognizing a common background, diluted a little in successive and worse copies and enlargements, it seems beyond doubt that the two lessons of Santa Cruz mentioned above were the direct source of the Treatise; there are whole sentences in it that are the word-for-word translation of those Latin texts”⁵⁸.

Rocha Madahil thus presented new historical information about the treatise, dividing the textual corpus into three chronologically distinct parts: the prologue that inaugurates the work; the text itself that results from the translation of an old Latin narrative from the monastery, complemented by chronicles dedicated to the first Kings of Portugal; and the list of miracles, although not all correspond to those of the registration process celebrated by the Coimbra judicial notary Jorge Vaaz⁵⁹.

Based on the ancient chronicles, among which would be the account attributed to the Bishop of Lisbon, D. Matheus [?1262-1282], and the primitive hagiographic treatise of Santa Cruz, also Friar Marcos de Lisboa [c.1511-1591], the general chronicler of the Order of Saint Francis—who in Coimbra attended the College of *São Boaventura*—, paid particular attention to the cult of Protomartyrs in the *Primeira Parte das Chronicas da ordem dos frades Menores*, printed in the city of Lisbon in 1557⁶⁰.

An identical trajectory in the production of hagiographic texts followed his successor, Friar Manoel da Esperança [1586-1670], the Franciscan chronicler

57. *Tratado da vida e martyrio*...: XVIII, XXIV-XXVIII and miracles 1-19.

58. Original quotation: “Nas crônicas gerais e nas da Ordem que pela sua data podiam tê-lo influenciado, êste episódio da viagem a Marrocos e martirio dos cinco padres foi incluído com ligeiras variantes; cotejámos tôdas as que pudemos haver às mãos e, reconhecendo-lhes inegavelmente um fundo comum, diluído um pouco em cópias e ampliações sucessivas e pioradas, parece-nos fora de dúvida terem sido as duas lições de S.^{ta} Cruz acima citadas a fonte directa do *Tratado*; há nêlê frases inteiras que são a tradução palavra a palavra daqueles textos latinos”. Madahil, António Gomes da Rocha. *Tratado da Vida e Martírio*...: IX, XLII.

59. Madahil, António Gomes da Rocha. *Tratado da Vida e Martírio*...: XXXVI, XLI; Lencart, Joana. “Santa Cruz 38...”: 211-213.

60. Lisboa, friar Marcos de. *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: VII, CLVIII.



who, about a century later, denounced the aforementioned original manuscript disappearance:

“There used to be a book, in which it was written how many there were, what virtues and outstanding were their actions, and what miracles had worked for them the great power of God; and this declared to us the Legend of the five Martyrs of Morocco, which is kept in the monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra. [...] But this book does not appear today, nor do we know that an evil spirit, or what a disaster of time, drowned the memory of our ancestors in so much forgetfulness.”⁶¹

In fact, the same hagiographic memorial was found in all Franciscan convents during the governance of Friar João da Póvoa⁶², apparently a work he had requested to Friar Francisco of Sevilla in 1476⁶³.

Despite the theme’s complexity, due to the dispersion and destruction of the original documentary sources and the contamination of the content published by several authors—in a first and longer phase by Augustinians and Franciscans—, it is still possible to trace some historical elements regarding the authorship of the two referenced hagiographic texts.

In the oldest works dedicated to the Five Martyrs of Morocco dating from the thirteenth century, many authors—such as the Franciscan Friar Giordano da Giano⁶⁴ [c.1185-c.1262], the Dominican Friar Vicent of Beauvais⁶⁵ [c.1190 (?)–c.1264], and the anonymous author of *Legenda Prima* consecrated to Saint António in 1232, also known as the *Assidua*⁶⁶—, highlighted the contribution made by the Portuguese Infante D. Pedro Sanches. He is appointed as a potential responsible for gathering the first martyrdom testimonies, which would be transcribed by Estevão Annes, of Vila Franca, probably in the second half of the fourteenth century⁶⁷.

Although it is not possible to prove his direct participation in the composition of the old hagiographic treatise—who knows if it was intentionally hidden due to

61. Original quotation: “Auia antigamente hum liuro, no qual andaua escrito quâtos erão, que virtudes, & acções forão as suas insignes, & que milagres tinha obrado por eles o grande poder de Deos; & isto nos declarou a Lenda dos sinquo Martyres de Marrocos, que se guarda no mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra. [...] Porém este liuro ja hoje não apparece, nê sabemos q̃ espirito maligno, ou q̃ desastre do tẽpo nos afogou a memoria de nossos antepassados em tâto esquecimẽto”. Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica...* I, 75.

62. Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica...* I, 75.

63. Pereira, Francisco Maria Esteves. “Martyrio dos Santos Martyres de Marrocos”, *Revista Lusitana. Archivo de estudos philologicos e ethnologicos relativos a Portugal*. Lisbon, 1902, VII, 189-198, maxime 189-191; Basto, Artur de Magalhães. *Estudos. Cronistas e crônicas antigas: Fernão Lopes e a «Crônica de 1419»*. Coimbra: Por Ordem da Universidade, 1960: 41.

64. Bertazzo, friar Luciano. “I Protomartiri Francescani tra storia e agiografia...”: 28.

65. Beauvais, friar Vicent de. *Speculum historiale*. Venice: Printer of Hermann Liechtenstein, 1494: 314r-315v.

66. Herculano, Alexandre, *Portvgalliae Monvmenta Historica...* I, 116-130.

67. Bolland, father Jean. *Acta Sanctorvm. Ianuarii*. Antwerp: Printer of Ioannem Mevrsivm, 1643: II, 64; Herculano, Alexandre, *Portvgalliae Monvmenta Historica...*: 104-105; Pereira, Francisco Maria Esteves, “Martyrio dos Santos Martyres de Marrocos...”: 189-191; Basto, Artur de Magalhães. *Estudos...*: 36, 42.



the incompatibilities between King D. Afonso II and *Infante* D. Pedro Sanches⁶⁸ and later forgotten in the maelstrom of the times—, the *Infante* was who most intensely experienced the main events. He not only witnessed the reception of the Franciscan friars in Marrakesh and their execution at the hands of the Almohad caliph as he was also responsible for the recovery, transport and delivery of the relics, information that would meanwhile be completed with the reports of the Portuguese Royal Family members and the knights of the *Infante's* House. In addition, it is important to underline the personal intentions of D. Pedro himself throughout his own political-devotional enterprise, once he had the necessary financial and human resources to do it, perhaps through the direct contacts established by his personal chaplain, D. Joam Roberte, who accompanied him during the African journey.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to ignore that D. Pedro Nunez, an Augustinian canon from the Monastery of Santa Cruz that became the personal confessor and spiritual guide of Queen D. Urraca of Castile—and who witnessed and reported the Queen apparition after her death⁶⁹— could have, apparently, the skills⁷⁰ to have been one of authors.

It should also be noted that other knights who were at the service of D. Pedro Sanches were responsible for publicizing the events witnessed on January 16, 1220. It seems that the hagiographic composition, which was written by the Bishop of Lisbon, D. Matheus, was equally ancient, albeit in a more concise textual format⁷¹, and proven legitimate based on the reports of the companions in arms of the Portuguese *Infante*. Among the known names are Estevom Pirez, a natural knight from Santarém⁷² and one of the three chamber boys of the *Infante* responsible for the relics preparation in Marrakesh—the same one who swore an oath to the Bishop D. Matheus, regarding the witnessed events⁷³— and Ruy Fafez⁷⁴. Strangely both names were never mentioned in the *Tratado da vida e martyrio* of 1568.

Naturally, it should also be hypothesized that this version was composed using some other older manuscripts, probably the primeval text attributed to the inner circle of D. Pedro Sanches⁷⁵, as well as other descriptions reported by the knights of his House to the Lisbon prelate, as evidenced in the chronicler text *Crónica dos Sete Reis* of Portugal: “and other knights of the Infante’s house told him many times after

68. Dias, Isabel Rosa, “La légende des cinq martyrs franciscains...”: 13.

69. *Tratado da vida e martyrio*...: XXXI.

70. Pina, Ruy de, *Chronicas de El-Rei D. Affonso II e de El-Rei D. Sancho II*...: 57.

71. Besse, friar Bernard. *Anacleto Franciscana sive Chronica aliaque varia documenta ad Historiam Fratrum Minorum*. Quaracchi: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1897: III, 592; Basto, Artur de Magalhães. *Estudos*...: 157-158.

72. *Crónica de 1419*. Calado, Adelino de Almeida (Critical edition of). Aveiro: Universidade de Aveiro, 1998: 113.

73. Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: CLVI.

74. *Cronica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal*, Tarouca, Carlos da Silva (Critical edition of), Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa de História, 2009: I, 204-205, 207.

75. Basto, Artur de Magalhães. *Estudos*...: 37-38.



all this that we said about these holy Martyrs in this way and other things”⁷⁶. As in the previous case, this succinct version of the hagiographic treatise also underwent several transcriptions, namely by Friar Arnaldo Serrano⁷⁷, between the years 1360 and 1374⁷⁸, having even served in the composition of the seraphic chronicles of Franciscan authors, from Friar Bernard Besse⁷⁹, around 1280⁸⁰, to Friar Manoel da Esperança, in 1656⁸¹.

Without the possibility of an exhaustive analysis, it is important to point out that the narrative structure of events follows a very close chronological-spatial line between the Franciscan chronicle of 1557 and the Santa Cruz treatise of 1568. One of the possible examples is the description of the *Infanta* D. Sancha mystical vision in her palace in Alenquer at the precise time that the friars were killed in Marrakesh, at eleven o'clock on January 16th, 1220⁸², between the chapters dedicated to the body's decapitation and corpses mutilation.

The few most evident divergences found in the texts, when compared, alter, but not in essence, some events: such as the alternative route of the five Franciscan friars from Alenquer to Seville, by land, through Alentejo⁸³, or by sea, through Lisbon⁸⁴; or the transport of relics to the Kingdom of León, from Tarifa directly to Galicia⁸⁵, or from Tarifa, Seville and only then to Galicia⁸⁶. Moreover, the authorization granted by Miramolim to D. Pedro to inhumate the friars⁸⁷ and the identification of the text rapporteurs attributed to the Lisbon bishop⁸⁸ are not included in the *Tratado* of 1568.

The main hagiographic contents were formulated according to the prevailing models of medieval *passiones sanctorum*, the genesis of modern martyrology and calendar of saints, after the printing of the *Chronicas* of 1557 and the *Tratado* of 1568, the works of Portuguese and foreign Franciscan authors would multiply. Among them are the Irish Friar Luke Wadding [1588-1657], in 1625⁸⁹, the Portuguese,

76. Original quotation: “e outros cavaleiros da casa do Jffante lhe contarom depojs per muytas vezes todo esto que disemos destes santos Marteres, por esta maneyra e ajnda outras cousas”. *Crónica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal*...: 206-207.

77. Dias, Isabel Rosa, “D. Pedro Sanches e a lenda dos cinco mártires de Marrocos...”: 127.

78. Pereira, Francisco Maria Esteves, “Martyrio dos Santos Martyres de Marrocos...”: 190-191; Bertazzo, friar Luciano, “I Protomartiri Francescani tra storia e agiografia...”: 39.

79. Besse, friar Bernard, *Anacleta Franciscana*...: 579-596.

80. Besse, friar Bernard, *Anacleta Franciscana*...: 579-596.

81. Esperança, friar Manoel da, *Historia Serafica*...: I, 286-299.

82. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio*...: XXI; Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: f. CLVI v.

83. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio*...: VI.

84. Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: CXLIX.

85. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio*...: XXVII.

86. Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: CLVII.

87. Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: CLIV.

88. Lisboa, friar Marcos de, *Primeira Parte das Chronicas*...: CLVI.

89. *Annales Minorvm. In quibvs res omnes trivm ordinvm a S. Francisco institvtorvm ex fide*. Lyon: Sumptibus Claudij Landry, 1625: I.



Friar Manoel da Esperança, between 1656 and 1666⁹⁰, or the Spanish Friar Damian Cornejo [1629-1707], in 1727⁹¹. The Jesuits also explored this hagiographic theme, like the Frenchman Father Jean Bolland [1596-1665], in 1643⁹², as well as the Portuguese Augustinians, like D. Antonio de São Caetano [1683-?], in 1711⁹³, and D. Joaquim da Encarnação [1724 -1798], in 1761⁹⁴.

With the evangelization mission explained and the proselytizer martyrdom exposed, many of these authors, not always exempt from historical inaccuracies and pious fables, imposed by the distance between factual events and written records, provided accurate data that allowed to identify and locate the relics, as it was demonstrated above. In addition, they also identified several others devotional manifestations instituted by the Augustinian and the Franciscan in their community houses.

In those monasteries and convents, the Five Martyrs of Morocco were venerated and evoked through the reading of sermons and antiphons and the chanting of novenas and prayers composed for the festive days established in the Church Liturgical Calendar on January 16th. Moreover, other festivities around the relic's delivery were celebrated in November, at the Franciscan houses, and December, at the Augustinians ones.

3.2. *The chronistic texts*

The impact of the five Italian friars' martyrdom and the contribution made by some of the Portuguese Royal Family members had a direct impact on the chronical narratives dedicated to the reigning monarch in 1220. They are historical texts that, by organizing the information presented, seek, in a way, to corroborate the events mentioned in the hagiographic works dedicated to the subject.

As was evident, the writing of the 1568 treatise was also based on the chronicles of the first Kings of Portugal⁹⁵, referring to the anonymous author, most likely, to the (re)written texts in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries dedicated to D. Afonso II: in the *Crónica de Cinco Reis de Portugal*, a manuscript also from the Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra and currently deposited in the Municipal Public Library of Porto (General 886); in the *Crónica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal*, copied in 1499

90. *Historia Serafica da Ordem dos Frades Menores de S. Francisco na Provincia de Portugal*. Lisbon: Printer of Antonio Craesbeeck de Mello, 1656/1666: I-II.

91. *Chronica Seraphica*. Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda de Juan Garcia Infançon, 1727: II.

92. *Acta Sanctorvm. Ianuarii*. Antwerp: Printer of Ioannem Mevrsivm, 1643: II.

93. *Breve compendio da vida, e martyrio dos sinco gloriozos Martyres, de Marrocos*. Coimbra: Printer of Bento Secco Ferreyra, 1711.

94. *Notícia dos Santos Protectores de Coimbra*. Coimbra: Oficina da Academia Litúrgica, 1761.

95. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...: "Prologue"*.



for the Cadaval noble house (Cod. 965) —both variants of the *Crónica* of 1419⁹⁶—; and in the *Chronica* of royal chronicler Ruy de Pina⁹⁷ [c. 1440-1522].

The author of the Afonsine chronicle inserted in the *Cinco Reis de Portugal* codex appears to have resorted to the most extensive hagiographic text from the Monastery of Santa Cruz, the place where it may have been equally written⁹⁸. The chronicle *Llibre del Feits* of Jaime I of Aragon [1213-1276], when emphasizing the contribution of D. Pedro Sanches in the delivery of the relics, clearly mentions the existence of a manuscript in its history which could be found in the Augustinian house of Coimbra where the Martyrs of Morocco rest⁹⁹. With regard to the chronicle of D. Afonso II from the codex of the *Crónica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal*, the author, also anonymous, resorted to the shorter version of the hagiographic text attributed to the Lisbon prelate¹⁰⁰.

The joint analysis of these two works makes it possible to assert that the main events were dealt with in only three chapters, corresponding chronologically to the reign of D. Afonso II, with the particular distinction that in the text of the first chronicle the *Infante* D. Pedro had obtained an autonomous chapter¹⁰¹. As the evangelizing mission of the five Franciscan friars was announced, the main events related to the monarchs and the *Infantes* were immediately dealt with. In this context, one can find an exploration of the contacts and the support given to the friars by Queen D. Urraca, in Coimbra, and by the *Infanta* D. Sancha, in Alenquer; the rescue and transport of the remains of the martyred by D. Pedro Sanches, from Marrakesh; and the reception of relics by D. Afonso II and D. Urraca in Coimbra.

Over eight of the sixteen chapters of his *Chronica*¹⁰², (re)written between 1490 and 1522¹⁰³, Ruy de Pina explored the episode of the route, death and delivery of the relics of the Five Martyrs of Morocco, expressing a preference for the version recorded by the bishop, but without ignoring the other *legenda antiqua*. D. Pedro Sanches, as in the other chronicles, took a preponderant role in the whole process, but Pina asserted that the *Infante*, with fervent zeal, was part of the delegation responsible for the delivery of the relics of the Martyrs in Coimbra¹⁰⁴, a perspective that would eventually be challenged in 1557, by Friar Marcos of Lisboa¹⁰⁵, and

96. Dias, Isabel Rosa. “D. Pedro Sanches e a lenda dos cinco mártires de Marrocos...”: 128.

97. Basto, Artur de Magalhães. *Estudos...*, 46, 157-159; Guerreiro, Henri. “Del santo Antonio de Padua a los cinco mártires de Marruecos. Rui de Pina y Mateo Alemán: aproximación crítica a uma fuente portuguesa”. *Crítica*, 31 (1985): 114-116.

98. *Crónica de Cinco Reis de Portugal...*: 230-248.

99. Dias, Isabel Rosa, “D. Pedro Sanches e a lenda dos cinco mártires de Marrocos...”: 127.

100. *Crónica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal...*: 197-207; Dias, Isabel Rosa. “La légende des cinq martyrs franciscains...”: 16.

101. Dias, Isabel Rosa. “D. Pedro Sanches e a lenda dos cinco mártires de Marrocos...”: 128.

102. Pina, Ruy de. *Chronicas de El-Rei D. Affonso II e de El-Rei D. Sancho II...*: 41-59.

103. Dias, Isabel Rosa. “La légende des cinq martyrs franciscains...”: 20-21.

104. Pina, Ruy de. *Chronicas de El-Rei D. Affonso II e de El-Rei D. Sancho II...*: 15, 23; *Crónica de Cinco Reis de Portugal...*, 243; *Crónica dos Sete Primeiros Reis de Portugal...*: 197.

105. Lisboa, friar Marcos de. *Primeira Parte das Chronicas...*: CLVII.



later in 1630, by the Cistercian Monk António Brandão [1584-1637], the author of the *Monarquia Lusitana*¹⁰⁶. Still in *Crònica o Llibre del Feits*, a work dedicated to the reign of Jaime I of Aragon, the direct participation of the Portuguese *Infante* in the gathering of the human remains of the martyred in the fields around Marrakesh is clearly suggested¹⁰⁷.

But despite the variations of the texts, both hagiographic and chronistic, the contribution made by the *Infante* D. Pedro Sanches in the accompaniment and reception of the five friars in Morocco and in the rescue and transport of their relics to Portugal is unequivocal¹⁰⁸, to the detriment of the *subdued* reign of D. Afonso II, marked only by the conquest of Alcácer do Sal, in Alentejo, the disagreements against his sisters—a dispute that led to the invasion of Portugal by the King of Leon and supported by the *Infante* D. Pedro himself—and by the reception of relics in Coimbra¹⁰⁹.

As it has been shown, many sources were consulted, directly and indirectly, by the several identified and anonymous authors, all involved in the multiple hagiographic compositions and chronistic narratives around which the Martyrs sacred memory was registered. And despite the royal chronicles not having the same dissemination and influence scale as the hagiographic texts, they allowed to reinforce, nevertheless, the message before the Royal Family and the Court that accompanied it.

In all documentary sources, whether those produced in a devotional context by religious at the service of their communities, or by the royal chroniclers in a historical-political context at the service of the Crown—although there is, of course, a strong religiosity on the part of the Royal Family members—the support given by the King D. Afonso II near relatives is quite evident.

It is important to point out that the King himself had the least intervening role in the entire process, not only was he absent of Coimbra during the passage of the Franciscan friars by Portugal, he had no part in rescuing their corpses. After the relics arrival, the ceremony in which he participated with the Queen, the King seems to have endeavored to spread their cult. However, the authors were not able to give a greater emphasis to the royal figure, not even in the texts of the chronicles dedicated to him. Furthermore, despite the value of these texts, their dissemination seems to have taken place essentially in the most restricted social and certainly intellectual nobility and the clergy circles.

It is likely that the first relics distributed from the Monastery of Santa Cruz had the King direct intervention. In addition to his religiosity, relics not only gave him protection but also put him closer to the sacred, so it is imperative to consider the monarch's interest to derive some political benefit taking into account the disagreements between D. Afonso II and the *infante* D. Pedro Sanches.

106. Basto, Artur de Magalhães. *Estudos...*: 42-43.

107. Dias, Isabel Rosa. "D. Pedro Sanches e a lenda dos cinco mártires de Marrocos...": 127.

108. Dias, Isabel Rosa. "D. Pedro Sanches e a lenda dos cinco mártires de Marrocos...": 127.

109. Pina, Ruy de. *Chronicas de El-Rei D. Affonso II e de El-Rei D. Sancho II...*: 28-30.



4. Iconographic forms

The latent conflict of the Holy War, so driven by the Holy See throughout the thirteenth century, resulted in a combative religiosity to be carried out not only with weapons on the battlefield, but also with words in Christian churches. Pope Gregory X [1210|1271-1276] when calling, in 1272, the Second Council of Lyon, meeting two years later, appealed to the Christian princes and kings to assist in the undertaking of the new crusade with their armies¹¹⁰. In the context of the so-called Iberian Reconquest, which aimed at the victory of the Christian cross over the Islamic crescent, the Apostle Saint James cult¹¹¹ —a saint to whom the Protomartyrs of Morocco would join in the fight against the Saracens—, would gain particular expression after the sacrifice which took place in North Africa in January 1220.

In order to preserve the bodily remains and worship the sacred memory of the Martyrs, different receptacles and multiple objects were made for veneration in sacred spaces, such as public churches and private chapels. Conceived as privileged devices to establish a continuous dialogue between God and the assemblies of believers, through the intercession of the Protomartyrs—but always through the direct mediation of the ecclesiastical ministers—, the sets of reliquaries, sculptures, illuminations and paintings served with a catechetical and doctrine purpose, inside and outside the main festive days of the celebrations established in the Church's Liturgical Calendar. Consequently, they soon acquired a twofold importance of a political-devotional matrix when they were used to boost cross-cultural endeavors among the populations, by exhorting, publicly and collectively, the feeling of a holy war on the part of the Christian kingdoms, especially the Iberians territories.

Within the scope of artistic production, the iconographic programs explored the main contents of the available hagiographic narratives, which were quite restricted until 1557-1568, dates that mark the beginning of the circulation of Friar Marcos de Lisboa's *Chronica* and the anonymous Augustinian *Tratado*, both written based on the old thirteenth century manuscripts. Using a specific imagery representations set, based on a visual discourse with a strong dramatic component drawn from hagiographic documentary sources, the contacts established between the lesser friars—the humble Christian *hero*-martyrs—and the Miramolim of Morocco—the dominant Muslim *villain*-infidel— during the evangelization mission in North Africa, which resulted in the inevitable martyrdom, a key event that became the main canon in a chronological horizon that has survived until our times:

“As well as the bodily vision of the saints' paintings, a spiritual memory of their unique lives and merits is made, and through it the devotion in souls is renewed to honor and follow them. And for this reason, the Catholic Church, our Mother and Teacher, puts us before each day, in different ways, the glorious memories of

110. Esperança, friar Manoel da. *Historia Serafica da Ordem dos Frades Menores de S. Francisco na Provincia de Portugal*. Lisbon: Printer of Antonio Craesbeeck de Mello, 1666: II, 5-6.

111. Robinson, James. *Finer than Gold. Saints and relics in the Middle Ages*. London: The British Museum Press, 2011: 31.



the blessed, who struggling in this life against the Devil, world and flesh, were crowned with rest perpetual in glory and immortal fame on earth. How were the five friars' disciples of Saint Francis who will suffer a unique martyrdom in Morocco at the hands of King Miramolim for the faith of Christ and his holy name"¹¹².

Conditioned by the sponsors' material possessions, some of the most expressive works of Portuguese religious art were ordered to the artists, from the collective religious communities to the devout private nobles. Since the thirteenth century, unique pieces that reveal the aesthetic canons and the values disseminated by emerging and dominant artistic currents would be executed, mainly by the Coimbra circle artists.

Although the monasteries of Santa Cruz of Coimbra and Santa Maria of Lorvão took over the radiating nuclei of the first liturgical celebrations and the main devotional manifestations around the Five Martyrs of Morocco—which is proven by the antiquity of the known texts—it is in the extensive network of Franciscan and Clarist convents that the largest number of iconographic representations can be found. In certain cases, a single religious house was responsible for the dissemination of exclusive hagiographic interpretations, associating the journey of the Martyrs with the history of their community and / or the person responsible for its foundation. In others, the awakening of the Franciscan vocation of Saint António is evident from the first contact with the Martyr's relics. And it was precisely in the influence sphere of the Seraphic communities that, from the seventeenth century onwards, new hagiographic themes were explored, as it would also happen in the Augustinian monasteries from the second half of eighteenth century onward.

The analysis of the pieces conceived in the chronological epoch between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries, occasionally complemented by other later ones, makes it possible to point out the privileged themes explored by the artists workshops between the Low Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period. Although many others have appeared already at the dawn of the Contemporary Era¹¹³. The devotional iconography dedicated to the Protomartyrs of Morocco, mostly dealt with in the collective, can be grouped into six thematic categories within the hagiographic narrative cycle, two ordinary ones: a) the martyrdom of the five Franciscan friars

112. Original quotation: "Assi como tãbem polla corporal vista das pinturas dos sãctos se faz spũal memoria de suas singulares vidas & merecimẽtos, & por ella se renoua deuação nas almas, pera os hõrrar & seguir. E por esta rezam a egreja catholica nossa mãy & mestra nos põe diante cada dia p^a diuersas maneiras as gloriosas memorias dos bẽauẽturados, que pellejãdo nesta vida cõtra o diabo, mũdo, & carne, forã coroados cõ descãso perpetuo na gloria & inmortal fama na terra. Como forã os cĩco frades discipulos de são Francisco q̃ padeçarãõ singular martyrio em Marrochos per mão del Rey Miramolĩ polla fee d̃ Christo & seu sancto nome". *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: "Prologue".

113. The parts list presented here is by no means exhaustive. It was only intended to refer to the oldest and most expressive sets in the context of Portuguese art.



(represented in ensembles of illuminations¹¹⁴, paintings¹¹⁵, sculptures¹¹⁶, bas-reliefs¹¹⁷, and engravings¹¹⁸ dated between the fifteenth and twenty-first centuries); b) the collective and individual representation of the same friars, presented martyred and / or in celestial glory, accompanied by the instruments and / or the palms and crowns of martyrdom (represented in sets of paintings¹¹⁹, sculpture¹²⁰, gold smithery¹²¹, stained glass¹²² and engraving¹²³ dated between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries), and four classifieds as extraordinaryes:

- a. the friars' attempt to convert the Almohad caliph (a thirteenth century sculpture¹²⁴ component);

114. BPMP, *Beheading of the Five Martyrs of Morocco*. Illuminated parchment. Workshop of Coimbra – Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra (?). Fifteenth century (Inv.No. Santa Cruz 38 – No. Geral 770, f. IV). See Illustration 3.

115. MNMC, Coimbra: Reliquary-oratory of the Martyrs of Morocco. Painting over silver. Portuguese workshop – Henrique Domingues and António Domingues (anonymous painter?). 1514 (Inv. No. 6089/O23). See figure 8; MNAA, *Beheading of the Five Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on oak wood. Portuguese workshop – Francisco Henriques. Around 1508-1511 (Inv. No. 89 Pint); CJ-MS, *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on wood. Portuguese workshop – Jorge Afonso. Around 1517-1530 (Inv.No. MSCJ 15/PR.15). See figure 9; DC - Igreja de Santo António dos Olivais, *Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on canvas. Workshop of Coimbra. Pascoal Parente. Eighteenth century; MB, *Bandeira processional dos Holy Martyrs of Morocco processional banner*. Oil on canvas. Portuguese workshop – anonymous author. Eighteenth century (Inv. No. 3221 MEP); DC-Igreja de Santa Cruz, *Martyrs [of Morocco] Passion, [Saint] Anthony [of Lisbon] Paison*. Oil on canvas. Brazilian workshop (São Paulo) – Paulo Frade.

116. PNM, *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*. Polychromic terracotta. Portuguese workshop – anonymous author. Eighteenth century (Inv. No. PNM 1012).

117. MNAA: *Five Martyrs of Morocco*. Gilded and polychromic wood. Portuguese workshop – anonymous author. Eighteenth century (Inv. No.: 191 Esc); DC: Igreja de Santa Justa, Coimbra: *Beheading of the Five Martyrs of Morocco* (retable panel). Gilded and polychromic wood. Workshop of Coimbra – anonymous author. Eighteenth century.

118. MB: *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*. Monochromic paper. Workshop of Oporto – R. J. da Costa. Nineteenth century (Inv. No. DEP 697 MEP).

119. MNMC: *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on wood. Portuguese workshop – Simão Rodrigues. Sixteenth century (Inv. No.: 2157/ P 21); MNFMC: *Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on wood. Portuguese workshop – anonymous author. Sixteenth century (Inv. No.: ME 437); DC: Mosteiro de Santa Clara-a-Nova, Coimbra: *Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on wood. Workshop of Coimbra - anonymous author. Eighteenth century; MB: *Processional banner of the Holy Martyrs of Morocco*. Oil on canvas. Portuguese workshop – anonymous author. Eighteenth century (Inv. No.: 3221 MEP).

120. Private collection of Luis Vasconcelos e Sousa, Lisbon: *Martyrs of Morocco*, Carved, polychrome and gilded wood | Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Eighteenth century.

121. DC: Igreja de Santa Cruz, Coimbra: *Busts of the Martyrs of Morocco*, Jewellery, Coimbra workshop – João Rodrigues, 1510. See figures 5 and 6.

122. PNP: *Morocco Martyrs*, Polychrome stained glass, Dutch workshop – anonymous author, 1644 (Inv. No.: PNP 2762); DA: Igreja Matriz de São Miguel, Travassô (Águeda): *Morocco Martyrs*, Polychrome stained glass, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Twentieth century.

123. MB: *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*, Monochrome paper, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Nineteenth century (Inv. No.: DEP 5575 MEP).

124. MNMC: *Reliquary of the Martyrs of Morocco*, Portuguese limestone (Ançã limestone), Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, c.1290-1320 (Inv. No.: 578/E15). See figures 7 and 2.



- b. the martyrdom revelation of the five friars to the *Infanta* D. Sancha in Alenquer (painting¹²⁵ and a tile set¹²⁶ from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries);
- c. the alms distribution by the Augustinian canon D. Fernando Martins de Bulhões (Saint António of Lisbon/Padova) to the five Italian Franciscans (a tile set from the eighteenth century¹²⁷);
- d. and the relics reception at the Monastery of Santa Cruz, associated with the mule episode, at the exact moment when D. Fernando Martins de Bulhões/Saint António appears to receive them (engraving¹²⁸ from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries)

Despite the presented list, it is important to mention that there are references to other artistic works of which the hagiographic models of representation and composition are unknown. For instances, the missing painting commissioned to the Portuguese painter Cristóvão de Figueiredo [? -1543], in 1533, for the main altar of the Church of the Convent of Santo António de Ferreirim, nearby Lamego, which apparently exhibits the martyred friars with Saint Francis and Saint Antonio¹²⁹. Could them be the Martyrs represented in the same painting composition or were they flanked by both Franciscan saints' independent pictures?

In order to facilitate the analytical reading of the pieces selected for this study, each theme's section opens with an excerpt from the *Tratado* of 1568, thus allowing the identification of the main protagonists and the supporting subjects, locating the action of the events and contextualizing the sequential episodes that occurred in 1220 which are most frequently explored in hagiographic works. Unfortunately, it is not possible to proceed, for the time being, to the analysis of the less representative and latest artistic groups in Portuguese Art, despite the interest they gather around the iconography of the Protomartyrs of Morocco as a justification for the continuity of the devotional practices throughout of the centuries. For this reason, we chose to focus our analysis on the older pieces known between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.

125. AL: Church of the Convento de São Francisco, Alenquer: *Appearance of the Five Martyrs of Morocco to D. Sancha Sanches at the time of martyrdom in Marrakesh*, Oil painting, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Eighteenth century.

126. AL: Convento de São Francisco, Alenquer: *Appearance of the Five Martyrs of Morocco to D. Sancha Sanches at the time of martyrdom in Marrakesh*, Monochromatic tiles, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Seventeenth century.

127. DC: Igreja de Santa Cruz, Coimbra: *D. Fernão Martins de Bulhões (Saint Anthony of Lisbon) grants alms to the five Italian Franciscan friars (Martyrs of Morocco) in Coimbra*, Monochromatic tiles, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Eighteenth century.

128. MA: *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*, Monochromatic paper, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Eighteenth century (Inv.º N.º: 20/Hg); MB: *Holy Martyrs of Morocco*, Monochromatic paper, Portuguese workshop – anonymous author, Nineteenth century (Inv. No.: DEP 664 MEP).

129. Gonçalves, Flávio, "A Representação Artística dos "Mártires de Marrocos": 46-47.



4.1. The Five Martyrs of Morocco

The first physiognomic descriptions of the five Martyrs of Morocco, mentioned in the *Tratado* of 1568 dedicated to the audiences of the friars with Queen D. Urraca, in Coimbra, and the *Infanta* D. Sancha Sanches, in Alenquer, reveal that their faces were wrinkled and emaciated, with evident signs of great food abstinence, and wearing the habit of thick burel —a wool fabric— girded by rope and barefoot¹³⁰. During the long journey between Alenquer and Marrakesh, the friars, for a moment, wore some secular attire over their habits, and grew their beards in order to appear as lay travelers in order to go unnoticed by the Saracens¹³¹.

However, it is in the chapter dedicated to the first meeting between the friars and D. Pedro Sanches, which took place in Marrakesh, that the most enlightening physiognomic and bodily descriptions emerge. At this meeting the friars presented themselves:

“Thin, full of wrinkles, and yellow in complexion, like withered men, the skin had stuck to the bones, the eyes were inward, which was something that was misshapen in appearance [...] the bodies were bent and displayed all their weakness, for the great abstinence and for the many blows and lashes received in Seville, their flesh was broken and smitten”¹³².

Also, the vile robes, which departing from their passage in Portugal showed the commitment to the vows which had been taken in Assisi and the torments experienced in Sevilla, as they were:

“Habits of thick and rough burel, short, narrow and full of patches, exhausted of all their art and with curious features, tight and girded with ropes, they seemed like such, in their costumes and in their enthusiastic words, as in everything else, dead men or those who came from another world to this one and totally mortified”¹³³.

Although all these descriptive elements were not taken into account, especially around the martyred, the artists conferred in some of their works particularizing aspects of their genuine status. In the majority of the painting works, the lesser

130. *Tratado da vida vida e martyrio...*: II.

131. *Tratado da vida vida e martyrio...*: III. Actually, seven years later, on March 17, 1227, this would be a precept adopted among the Franciscan Order. Bertazzo, friar Luciano. “I Protomartiri Francescani tra storia e agiografia...”: 30.

132. Original quotation: “magros cheos de Rugas amarelos e como de homens mirrados, á pelle tinhã pegada nos ossos, os olhos metidos por dentro que hera cousa deforme seu aspeito [...] os corpos herã curuados e postos em toda a fraqueza, polla grande austinência e muitas pãcadas e açoutes q̃ em Seuilha tinhão passado com q̃ suas carnes herã quebradas e desbaratadas”. *Tratado da vida vida e martyrio...*: XII.

133. Original quotation: “habitos de burel grosso e asparo, curtos, estreitos e cheos de remendos fora de toda arte e feiçam curiosa, apertados e cingidos cõ cordas, bẽ pareciam assi nos trajos e suas feruêntes pallauras como em tudo o mais homens mortos ou que vieram do outro mûdo, e a este totalmête mortificados”. *Tratado da vida vida e martyrio...*: XII.



brothers were usually represented with different facial anatomical features and with the tonsure, an identifying element of the entry into the clerical state of three of the five friars, in contrast to two without the head border.

Only the reliquaries-busts pair ordered for the Monastery of Santa Cruz assumes a particular preponderance in the detailed individualization of two of the five martyrs (See illustrations 4 and 5). Although the two anthropomorphic receptacles were ordered by D. Pedro Vaz Gavião [?-1516], in 1510, it was King D. Manuel I, on February 14, 1520, who had paid eighty silver marks for both. Each one of the reliquaries, with their padlocks and keys, weighed twenty-three marks and six silver ounces¹³⁴ and were designed with articulating bodies to allow the display of the relics kept inside during the celebrative dates at the monastic church, especially but not exclusively, in January and December.

The rigor and accuracy of some anatomical features allow the identification of two distinct individuals, both friars with tonsure wearing a Franciscan habit,



ILLUSTRATIONS 4-5. RELIQUARIES-BUSTS OF THE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO AT THE SANTA CRUZ MONASTERY. COIMBRA WORKSHOP – JOÃO RODRIGUES. C. 1510. SILVER, GOLDEN SILVER, IRON, GLASS AND DAMASK FABRIC – BONE RELICS. DIMENSIONS (LEFT BUST): 32 CM HEIGHT X 21,5 CM WIDE X 12.5 CM DEEP. DIMENSIONS (RIGHT BUST): 31 CM HEIGHT X 20 CM WIDE X 13 CM DEEP. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT LOCATION: MONASTERY OF SANTA CRUZ OF COIMBRA. ILLUSTRATIONS PROVIDED BY MILTON PEDRO DIAS PACHECO.

134. Santa Maria, *Chronica da Ordem dos Cónegos...*; 69, 258: *Livro primeiro da primeira parte das Chronicas da ordem dos frades menores*. Lisbon: Printer of Manoel Ioam, 1566: f. CXL v; Encarnação, D. Joaquim da, *Notícia dos Santos Protectores de Coimbra*. Coimbra: Oficina da Academia Litúrgica, 1761: 55.



recognized by the hood that falls on their back. In order to exalt the patron's memory, the reliquaries-busts were endowed with an inscription on the lower rear section, divided into two independent cards that complement each other.

Despite having a central role in this entire hagiographic episode, the caliph Yūsuf al-Mustanşir —commonly identified as Miramolim—, was never physically described. The only description reveals his state of mind during the last of the three hearings granted to the friars¹³⁵, which took place on January 16, 1220. At that moment, as in other previous ones, as we shall see, the Miramolim was utterly outraged by the friars psychological and physical resistance, eventually suffering a ferocious reaction “full of venomous anger and with red eyes”¹³⁶.

4.2. *The Five Franciscan Friars attempt to convert the Miramolim in Marrakesh*

The oldest iconographic representation of the Moroccan Protomartyrs evokes the audience granted by Miramolim to the five friars in Marrakesh, one of the three mentioned in the 1568 treatise, a hagiographic text that makes it possible to know part of the dialogues and the reactions of the main protagonists¹³⁷.

Approached by Abozaide, a servant from the caliph's court, Friar Ottone pleaded with him: “We do not ask you to do anything else, except that you would be pleased and do well and take us before the King [the Miramolim] so that we can see his face, because we hope that he will come into the knowledge of the truth of the faith of Christ”¹³⁸.

After the first hearing was achieved, Friar Berardo presented himself to the caliph Yūsuf al-Mustanşir as the superior of the group of Franciscan missionaries tasked with delivering the “faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, which if you firmly believe in you will not be condemned to eternal death in Hell with your false Muhammad”¹³⁹. Naturally, the Christian friar's arrogant stance and the proposal to convert to Christianity outraged the Almohad caliph:

“With these words the King became very angry, and with anger he got up and left for a little time and meanwhile the saints were saying to each other. Brothers, here is the time we wait, this is the day of our health. We should be very happy because

135. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XV-XVII, XIX.

136. Original quotation: “cheo d peçonhenta colera e com os olhos encarniçados”. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XVII.

137. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XVI-XVII, XIX.

138. Original quotation: “outra cousa te nam pedimos, se nã que te apraza e ajas por bem de nos leuares diante del Rey p^a que lhe vejamos o rostro, porq̃ esperamos que vindo elle e conhecimẽto da verdade da fee de Christo”. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: XIV.

139. Original quotation: “fee de nosso senhor Jesu Christo, ha qual se firmemente crendo nam tiueres serás julgado aa morte eterna pera no Jnferno com teu falso Mafamede seres castigado”. *Tratado da vida e martyrio...*: I, XVI.



our Lord was happy to let us reach out to preach the divine word to this king and his unfaithful people in the righteousness of God whose death saved us”¹⁴⁰.

This is the moment, the first one of the three audiences granted, chosen symbolically for the design of the reliquary-urn intended to receive the relics offered to the Monastery of Santa Maria of Lorrvão, the oldest known artistic representation dedicated to the Protomartyrs of Morocco (See illustrations 6-9).

Regardless of the most assertive title to designate the confrontation engraved in stone, from the religious dispute¹⁴¹ to the theological debate¹⁴² originated between the Italian friars and the Muslim caliph considering his conversion to the Christian faith¹⁴³, the composition shows the protagonists in a clearly westernized setting designed to place the represented action in space and date it in time, the Marrakesh Caliphal Palace days before January 16th, 1220.



ILLUSTRATION 6. RELIQUARY-URN OF THE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO LOCATED AT THE MOSTEIRO OF LORVÃO CLOISTER BETWEEN 1862 AND 1875. PORTUGUESE SCULPTURE WORKSHOP – COIMBRA CIRCLE. AROUND 1290-1320. ANÇÃ LIMESTONE. ORIGINAL LOCATION: MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA OF LORVÃO. CURRENT LOCATION: MUSEU NACIONAL DE MACHADO DE CASTRO (INV. NO. 578 / E15). ILLUSTRATION PROVIDED BY MILTON PEDRO DIAS PACHECO.

140. Original quotation: “Com estas palavras se toruou muyto el Rey & com força de jra se aleuantou & se foy da lij hũ pouco espaço & êtretãto ficaram os sanctos dizêdo hũs aos outros. Jrmãos ex aqui ho tẽpo que esperamos, este he o dia de nossa saude. Muito nos devemos dalegrar pois aprouue a nosso seõor d nos deixar chegar a pregar ha pallaura diuina a este rey & a seu pouo infiel, portanto cõ forte animo soframos as penas q̃ temos recebidas & ao diante recebermos p^a que mortos ao pecado viuamos na justiça de d[eu]s com q̃ cuja morte somos saluos”. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio...*: XVI.

141. Gonçalves, Flávio. “A Representação Artística dos “Mártires de Marrocos...”: 26.

142. Pacheco, Milton Pedro Dias. “Os proto-mártires de Marrocos da Ordem de São Francisco. Muy suave odor de sancto martyrio”, *Martírios e Massacres – Revista Lusófona de Ciência das Religiões*. Lisboa: 2009: 15/16, 85-108, especialmente 93.

143. Recently Pato de Macedo identified in the represented scene the way in which the lesser brothers left for the Infidels territories and could live spiritually among them. Macedo, Francisco Pato de. “Devoção aos Mártires de Marrocos em Portugal”, David Chado Castro, Isabel González, Fernando López Alsina





ILLUSTRATION 7. RELIQUARY-ORATORY OF THE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO. COIMBRA WORKSHOP - HENRIQUES DOMINGUES AND ANTÓNIO DOMINGUES. 1514. SILVER, GOLDEN SILVER, PEARLS, WOOD AND BONE RELIC. DIMENSIONS: 36 CM HEIGHT X 26.6 CM WIDTH. X 6 CM DEPTH. ORIGINAL LOCATION: MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DE LORVÃO. CURRENT LOCATION: MUSEO NACIONAL DE MACHADO DE CASTRO (INV. No. 6089 / O23). ILLUSTRATION PROVIDED BY MILTON PEDRO DIAS PACHECO.

Represented in his real condition, the Miramolim, enthroned and wearing Western attire, has his head and left arm raised, bodily gestures that suggest the dialogue he had with the lesser brother —apparently, Friar Berardo, the main interpreter of the evangelizing mission and the most (or the only one?) knowledgeable in the Arabic language¹⁴⁴— represented in a reverential position, with his head uncovered and tilted, his hands juxtaposed and his leg slightly genuflected. In our point of view, the identification of Yūsuf al-Mustanşir and Friar Berardo da Calvi is quite evident.

Their fellow missionaries seem to be apparently oblivious to the speech, probably because they do not speak the language. The execution of the sculptural figures reveals a marked anatomical disproportion, with the over-dimensioning of the head in relation to the body, smoothed only by the technical effects introduced in the heads position, in the disposition of the bodies, in the placement of the lower limbs and the gesticulation of the upper limbs, and in the modeling of facial expressions.

Conceived within the models of the current national tombs and close to the molds of imported foreign reliquaries chests, the receptacle urn was executed in a single block of the delicate limestone from Ançã,

a village nearby Coimbra, in a trapezoidal shape. With the disappearance of the original top, a wooden one was placed, as shown by a photographic record from the end of the nineteenth century. Probably it was executed in formal proximity and stylistic models as the one which was created for the Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra, since it was in one part wider than in the other, containing at the main facet the narrative of martyrdom¹⁴⁵. This main front, the only ornamented section of the reliquary-urn, appears to have been polychromed as suggested by the identification of different present elements.

eds. *Franciscanos en la Edad Media. Memoria, cultura y promoción artística*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2018: 315-332, especially 324.

144. Lisboa, friar Marcos de. *Primeira Parte das Chronicas...*: CXLVII.

145. Madahil, António Gomes da Rocha. "Notas...": 118-119.

The consensually accepted chronology for its execution is found between the years 1290 and 1317, a period corresponding to D. Constança Soares' time as abbess¹⁴⁶. But the detailed analysis of the work makes it possible to find in the trilobed arches, converted into small buildings to compartmentalize the characters, a solution already known since the second half of the thirteenth century, in the facet of the tomb of *Infante* D. Rodrigo Sanches [?-1245] located at the Monastery of Salvador of Grijó¹⁴⁷, in Vila Nova de Gaia. Other microarchitecture elements used in different thirteenth century sculptural ensembles can be found, such as in the bas-relief from the Chapel of Santa Comba, in Coimbra, illustrating a Calvary and the delivery of the chasuble to Saint Ildefonso episodes¹⁴⁸. In the historical capitals of the Monastery of Santa Maria of Celas cloister, in Coimbra, other resemblances can be also identified, namely on the episodes of the Annunciation in the Marian capital, of the Last Supper in the capital of the Passion either of Saint Bento or Saint Bernardo in the capital with the Cistercian founders¹⁴⁹.

Could the Celas capitals set, probably conceived in the second half of thirteenth century, have been made in the same workshop responsible for the execution of the Lorrain reliquary-urn, as already suggested by some Art historians¹⁵⁰? Furthermore, in pieces with identical functions and/ or shapes executed on a previous date, it is common to find the same trilobed arches to stress the protagonists of a prodigy or miracle, such as the reliquary of the Magi from the Cologne Cathedral, dated 1170-1230, the reliquary of the head of Saint Eustachian originating from the Cathedral of Basel, from c.1180-1200¹⁵¹, and the reliquary chest belonging to the Cathedral of Viseu Treasury¹⁵².

There are older objects models produced in this same European religious context and historic time that could have influenced its conception, namely reliquaries, but for the time being is not possible to assure that the sponsors and artists had known them, especially in the distant and peripheral Coimbra. Without reliable documentary sources this exercise cannot be done.

146. Gonçalves, Flávio. "A Representação Artística dos "Mártires de Marrocos...": 25; Borges, Nelson Correia, *Arte Monástica em Lorrain...*: I, 146.

147. Dias, Pedro. *A Escultura de Coimbra do Gótico ao Maneirismo*. Coimbra: Câmara Municipal de Coimbra, 2003: 22.

148. Dias, Pedro. *A Escultura de Coimbra do Gótico ao Maneirismo...*: 24-25.

149. Fernandes, Carla Varela. *Santos, Heróis e Monstros. O claustro da abadia de Santa Maria de Celas*. Lisbon: Edições Colibri, 2020: 22-27, 112-115.

150. Gonçalves, Flávio. "A Representação Artística dos "Mártires de Marrocos...": 26; Dias, Pedro. *A Escultura de Coimbra do Gótico ao Maneirismo...*: 24.

151. Robinson, James. *Finer than Gold. Saints and relics in the Middle Ages...*: 35-36, 74-77.

152. Reliquary-chest, metallurgy-enamel. French workshop, anonymous author (Twelfth century). TMCV, Inv. No. 80.



4.3. The martyrdom of the five Franciscan Friars in Marrakesh

During the second hearing given by the Miramolim, probably in January 1220, the friars, anticipating the desired sacrifice, answered to him: “Our bodies belong to you, do unto them all evil and pity that you want and can do, but know that the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God [...] at the time that our souls are separated from the bodies, in that same [time] we will be with Christ”¹⁵³. After the third and final hearing, granted on January 16th, with the refusal of all premises by the friars, the angry caliph:

“Asked for his sword and as soon as it was brought to him, publicly, before the many people, he separated them from each other, and thus separated, with his own hands, being on his knees and with the hands and spirits raised to heaven, to all cut off the heads in the middle of the forehead. And after that, lying their bodies on the ground, the Miramolim, not satisfied and not yet tired of that cruelty, with double fury of a red wolf, asked for two more swords and with the three of them, beheaded them, one after another, applying ugly and very cruel blows to the bodies. from which came that precious blood that washed the soil of the courtyard”¹⁵⁴.

The day of glorious martyrdom had finally arrived: “just as they offered their bodies and whole spirits to receive Him in Christ, so He, with all the sacred company of angels and saints, received their blessed souls at once in glory”¹⁵⁵. These are the textual excerpts of the most ancient hagiographic treatise on which the main figurative representations of the lesser brothers are based, who, when transgressing Koranic laws, the crime of blasphemy against Islam and offense against the Prophet —*Ja’fari*—, and in the refusing of the conversion to Islam, received death as punishment.

The fourteenth century illuminated parchment from the Santa Cruz Monastery, where it would certainly have been designed and coloured, presents the oldest imagistic representation of the martyrdom of the five Franciscan friars, perhaps inspired or used as a model for the reliquary-urn iconographic program, commissioned by the same community in 1458.

153. Original quotation: “nossos corpos em teu poder estã, todo mal & pẽna que lhe quiseses & poderes fazer fazelho, porẽ sabe que as almas dos justos na mão de Deos estão [...] na hora q̃ nossas almas foreẽ apartadas dos corpos, nessa mesma seremos cõ xpõ”. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio...*: XVII.

154. Original quotation: “pedio a sua espada, & tanto q̃ lhe foy trazida publicamẽte perante muito povo estremou hũs dos outros, & assi apartados cõ suas proprias mãos, elles postos de giolhos cõ as mãos, & spũs aleuantados ao ceo a todos hũ & hũ lhes cortou as cabeças pollo meo da testa. E apos isto jazẽdo seus corpos no chãõ nã contete nẽ farto daq̃lla crueldade cõ dobrada furia pedio outras duas espadas & cõ todas tres jũtamẽte como lobo ãcarniçado hos degolou, hũ apos outro, fazẽdo nelles hũs golpes crueys & muy feos, đ q̃ sayo aq̃lle precioso sãgue enxurrando & lauando a terra do pateo”. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio...*: XIX.

155. Original quotation: “assi como elles offerecerã seus corpos & inteyras vontades pera o receber por xpõ, assĩ elle cõ toda a sagrada companhia dos Anjos & scõtõs recebeo suas bẽauẽturadas almas no mesmo instante na gloria”. *Tratado da vida vida & martyrio...*: XIX.



The *Beheading of the Martyrs of Morocco* shows the exact moment of preparation for the execution of the second friar by the Almohad caliph in Muslim territory, in North Africa, as he intends to illustrate in the representation of the soil punctuated by crescent moons (see Illustration 2). The scene shows the Miramolim, wearing an outfit and wielding an object of a clear Westernized matrix, grabbing the second friar's tonsure with his left hand, while wielding the sword with his right one, already bloodied from the blow to the first friar, whose head lies at his feet and whose corpse was still holding upright since it was supported by the third friar's body.

The violence of the act seems to be overcome by the contemplative attitude of the first two friars. One of them is already dead and the other is in the imminence of death, as suggested by the position of the hands juxtaposed in a praying attitude, and by the presence, at the top of the scene, of two angels in charge of collecting the cleared soul of the first martyr as well as those of the following. All of them wear a brown Franciscan habit, tied by a white rope with three knots, but only one, the fifth friar, holds the attribute associated with the mission that had taken them to North Africa to receive martyrdom: the Gospel book.

This same martyrdom concept was overcome in the pictorial composition that adorns the reliquary-oratory commissioned by D. Catarina d'Eça, the Monastery of Lorvão abbess, not only because of the representation of the Miramolim, wearing a traditional Arabian robe and scimitar, but, above all, for the presentation of the five friars stripped of their habits, wearing only their undergarments, and the dissemination of blood in the soil (See illustration 7). This receptacle, a piece endowed with an identical trilobed arch at the top, used in the stone reliquary urn of the same monastic house, is without any doubt one of the most reliable pictorial representations of the moment of the martyrdom inflicted by Miramolim over the Franciscan friars¹⁵⁶.

From the sixteenth century onwards, the hagiographic themes and artistic models were maintained, with the presence of the friars receiving the blows inflicted by the caliph and his servants —thus revealing open wounds, running blood and spiked cutlasses— with only an increase in the number the executioners who help the latter in collective execution.

Denoting the influence of Nordic artistic workshops in the Portuguese cultural context, the painting of the *Beheading of the Five Martyrs of Morocco*, conceived by Francisco Henriques [?-1518] for the main altarpiece of the Church of the Convent of São Francisco of Évora, between 1508 and 1511. This painting shows the moment of the execution of the last friar, not by the Miramolim —who in his royal condition only watches the scene—, but by the two executioners of his court. In the hagiographic context and in the artistic panorama, the pictorial composition acquires greater importance due to the detail given to the habits of the friars, individualized by the different colour gradation of the burels in correspondence with the respective

156. Reliquary-oratory of the Martyrs of Morocco. Silver, golden silver, wood, pearls, semi-precious stones and relics (human bone). Portuguese workshop, Henrique Domingues and António Domingues (c. 1514). Dimensions: 36 cm Height X 26.6 cm Width. X 6 cm. MNMC, Inv. No. 6089/ O23.





ILLUSTRATION 8. HOLY MARTYRS OF MOROCCO. PORTUGUESE WORKSHOP- JORGE ALFONSO. AROUND 1517-1530. OIL ON WOOD. DIMENSIONS: 180 CM HEIGHT X 110 CM WIDTH. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT LOCATION: CONVENTO DE JESUS-SETÚBAL MUSEUM- CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DE SETÚBAL (INV. NO. MSCJ 15 / PR. 15). BY COURTESY OF JOSÉ PEDRO ABOIM BORGES.

sacred orders: two priests (Friars Berardo and Ottone), one deacon (Friar Pietro) and two professed brothers (Friars Accursio and Adiuto).

Epochally and formally close to the previous painting, endowed with an elaborate compositional scheme in order to place the main protagonists in its center, executed by Jorge Afonso [c.1480-1540] for the Clarist Convent of Jesus of Setúbal¹⁵⁷, nearby

157. Caetano, Joaquim Oliveira. *Jorge Afonso. Uma interrogação essencial na pintura primitiva portuguesa*. Évora: Tese apresentada à Universidade de Évora para obtenção do Grau de Doutor em História da Arte,

Lisbon, there is the retable painting of the Protomartyrs of Morocco. The work is still in display in a museum context at the Museu de Setúbal (see illustration 8).

The composition shows the Franciscan friars who were subjected to their executioners, four in number, and unlike the previous work, the Miramolim participates in their execution. While the executioners display the corresponding clothing and armament with their North African cultural origin, the friars—four still alive—, wear habits with different gradations of colour. The scene takes place outside the palace, building a clear European conception, at the moment when the souls of the martyred are about to ascend to God.



ILLUSTRATION 9. ARRANGEMENT OF THE URN-RELIQUARY OF THE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO IN THE ORATORY OF THE CLOISTER IN THE MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DE LORVÃO BETWEEN 1862 AND 1875. ORIGINAL LOCATION: MUSEU CARLOS RELVAS - CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DA GOLEGÃ (INV. NO. MCR 00014-000-089). BY COURTESY OF THE CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DA GOLEGÃ.

From the sixteenth century onwards, this was certainly the most reproduced hagiographic episode dedicated to the Protomartyrs of Morocco in Portugal, not only in large pictorial compositions or small pieces of devotional jewelry, but also in simple engravings, such as the one that illustrates the frontispiece of the *Primeira Parte das Chronicas da ordem dos frades Menores* printed in 1557.



5. Final conclusions

The impact caused by the five Franciscan friars martyrdom had strong repercussions not only among Christians but also among Muslims. While several missionary groups continued to leave from the Christian kingdoms, among them the famous Saint António of Lisbon/Padova, in the Muslim territories there was some openness that allowed the first Franciscan communities to establish in Morocco. However, until then, many martyrs gave their lives to make this possible.

Meanwhile, at the Monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra the first worship celebrations and the main devotional manifestations would arise, and the Monastery of Santa Maria of Lorvão would soon follow suit. From these two monastic houses, relics were preserved, and shared, hagiographic texts were produced and distributed, and iconographic models were created and disseminated around the Portuguese Kingdom.

The contribution of the leading religious communities established in Portugal, in all their devotional and venerating practices promoted around the Protomartyrs of Morocco, was unequivocally supported by the main members of the Royal Family of D. Afonso II despite the disagreements among several siblings of the King. If the outcast D. Pedro played a crucial role in the relics rescue in Morocco and then with their delivery to Coimbra, his sisters promoted and supported the martyr's cult through the monasteries under their protection. The monarchs, on the other hand, participated on the reception ceremony at the Monastery of Santa Cruz and actively supported their worship, interceding directly in the delivery of the first relics and in the sponsoring of some of the first reliquaries. Despite the differences between D. Afonso II and his brothers, which even originated a military conflict years before, the support given by all to the Protomartyrs veneration made it possible to reunite family members in faith and fame.

The profound connection between the Crown and the Martyrs of Morocco cult would continue to attract the attention of successive Portuguese monarchs, through the sponsoring of chapels and altars, reliquaries and other sacred objects. Among some of those offers were the receptacles that kept the corporeal remains of the martyred, exquisite and valuable reliquaries in which the relics were deposited, veiled and worshiped. Studies carried out on the largest relics set made it possible to confirm some of the written and transcribed descriptions from the thirteenth century.

Despite the abundance of ancient sources, even if partial and conceived without a long-term vision between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, this is a difficult topic to delve into for the initial period since the works that have reached us have been contaminated by the authors responsible for copying them over the centuries. The many reservations expressed throughout the study are mainly founded on the difficulty of finding a reliable and cohesive documentary base, as the variant narratives show up.

The context in which these sources were conceived reveals an intentional appropriation by the main coeval institutions, directly and indirectly related to



the rescue of relics and the impulse of the first devotional manifestations. The Monastery of Santa Cruz should be pointed out once again. While the Church had the obligation to extol the names of those who had defended the Christian Faith with their own lives, the Crown had the necessity to reaffirm the support given to the Church and consequently to reinforce its own political power.

The historical elements perpetuated in the documentary sources, especially in the hagiographic works promoted by the Portuguese Church, considering that the royal chronicles would end up having a more restricted circulation among society, were continually being explored by the artists through the instructions entrusted to them. The various moments of the biographical/ hagiographic journey of the five Franciscan friars were thus passed on to the sculpted stone, the painted canvas, wood and parchment, and the cast silver. And the central point of the artistic narrative was essentially concentrated mostly on the friars and caliph reunion, which would result in their death. However, the intention to dignify the friars' figures led the artists to hide innumerable human and material figurative elements, such as body scars, and wear and tear resulting from the ill-treatment received for several months in Seville and especially in Marrakesh. Only in some paintings the friars' extreme thinness is quite evident.

The violence of the beheading act represented at different stages, with a greater dramatic intensity especially when painting was applied in reliquaries, made it possible to appeal to the innermost believers' feelings. In a clear and unequivocal way as the oldest examples known in Portugal demonstrate, it can be said that the iconography privileged the moment of the five Franciscan friars' massacre either by the orders or by hands of the Almohad caliph himself. At the same time, these representations made it possible to nourish the Holy War spirit against the enemy of the Christian Faith. However, this was not the motive that had driven the various Franciscans groups. Among these particular and original set of art works produced in Portugal it is necessary to emphasize the importance of a single representation that portrays one of the encounters between the friars and the caliph, in a clear allusion to the true Franciscan spirit, with the mission of converting the infidels to the Christian religion not through weapons but through words. The message would eventually be distorted and would fuel successive bloody religious conflicts that still persist in some regions of the world today.

