

Religious festivals in the Misericórdia of Braga (18th century)

Fiestas religiosas en la Misericórdia de Braga (siglo XVIII)*

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Resumen: El presente trabajo pretende recrear los escenarios y vivencias de las fiestas religiosas en la Misericórdia de Braga en el siglo XVIII. Los actos festivos en las Misericórdias de vuelta desde el comienzo de su fundación, con la Misericórdia de Lisboa en 1498, y se promueve con el establecimiento de esta hermandad en el país y su vasto imperio durante siglos.

Palabras clave: la religión; fiesta; rituales.

Abstract: The present work intends to recreate the scenarios and experiences of the religious festivities in Misericórdia of Braga in the 18th century. The festive manifestations in the Misericórdias date from the beginnings of its foundation, with the Misericórdia of Lisbon in 1498, and were promoted with the institution of this confraternity in national territory and in its vast empire throughout the centuries.

Keywords: religion; feast; rituals.

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One of the main manifestations of the social forum present in society is the party¹, which has developed in a collective space-time relationship several sacred and profane rituals. The festive manifestations occurred in the most varied contexts, but always with the same purposes and motives: religion, politics and society. It was in the exercise of power that party was used for the promotion of public order. In addition, it also allowed private social control, since each individual organized his calendar consisting of two paradoxes, leisure and work².

Since its beginnings, Catholic worship has been associated with festivity and various manifestations of popular character³, as a means of expression and expansion of religious fervor, creating its own liturgical calendar, organized cyclically with the numerous devotions and celebrations, sometimes more time to worship than to work. Subsequent to the Council of Trent, with the Counter-Reformation, the faithful were required to have a great level of compassion for the faith, and in this way the invocations of the saints, and consequently the legacies and celebrations, grew. Early modern man was requested a great exaltation and proof of faith, which was externalized through the practices of worship and scenic manifestations that came with the culture of the baroque⁴.

The confraternities were undoubtedly one of the most dynamic organizations in this scenario. Which Francois Lebrun defines as associations of devotion. The confraternities created or revived in the 17th century, integrated by lay people under the aegis of the clergy had as characteristics the veneration of a certain saint, spiritual protection and ties of brotherhood; and had their own internal operation⁵.

Braga was a strongly religious center that assumed an important role in the growth of the confraternal movement⁶, which allowed a greater mutual support among the confraternities to enhance the religious cult and to foment the diverse devotions. Within the wide variety of confraternities was the Misericórdia, founded with the particularity of promoting a network of assistance.

In 1498, the first *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* appeared in the city of Lisbon, under the royal initiative of the queen D. Leonor, in the context of the movement for the reform of the mechanisms of assistance and public health, which throughout the Early Modern Age had reached the Metropolis Portuguese and in his Empire. They were

¹ Enrique GIL CALVO, *Estado de Fiesta: feria, foro, corte y circo*, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1991, p. 78.

² Edward MUIR, *Fiesta Y Rito en la Europa Moderna*, Madrid, Editorial Complutense, 1997, pp. 58-92.

³ The popular devotion has allowed the creation of new devotions, adapted depending on the emotional and moral needs of the Catholic Church. Willem FRIJHOFF, "Popular religion" in Stewart J. BROWN; Timothy TACKETT (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Enlightenment, Reawakening and Revolution 1660–1815*, vol. VII, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 194.

⁴ José Antonio MARAVALL, *La cultura del Barroco*, Barcelona, Editorial Ariel, 1986, pp. 129-306.

⁵ François LEBRUN, "As reformas: devoções comunitárias e piedade pessoal" in Georges DUBY; Philippe ARIÈS (org.), *História da Vida Privada: do Renascimento ao Século das Luzes*, vol. 3, Porto, Edições Afrontamento, 1990, pp. 89-90.

⁶ In the 18th century there was a decrease in the number of confraternities in Braga. Tiago FERRAZ, *A morte e a salvação da alma na Braga setecentista*, Braga, Universidade do Minho, 2014, pp. 86-87. Doctoral thesis.

governed by a commitment⁷, composed of the fourteen works of mercy, some of them practiced with greater zeal and rigor in the festive seasons of the Catholic liturgical calendar and in small local devotions. These manifestations were moments to stimulating the relations of sociability between its members⁸ and those who sought material and spiritual support, but also to assert themselves in the environment, in which they were inserted, eventually increasing some of the most important devotional practices of the Portuguese Early Modern period with rituals exercised in the streets, such as the processions⁹.

In the manuscript copy of the first commitment of the Misericórdia of Lisbon, three ritualized moments were mentioned in which the brothers were obliged to attend, which were the day of St. Elizabeth or the Visitation, since it was the elections of the confraternity; the Thursday procession of *Endoenças*; and on the day of All Saints to follow the procession, which became known as the procession of the bones. The Misericórdias were its main promoters, participating also in some of the local festivities. Becoming holders of a relevant booty in vestments, ornaments, and liturgical implements¹⁰.

Over time some of these solemn manifestations have been borne financially by the benefactors and various incomes from legacies, money to interest and property, due to the institutionalization of the Misericórdias. Throughout the 18th century, they are faced with various kinds of difficulties, and therefore, these moments of sociability, were of particular importance to strengthen relations between its members and society, in order to attract the largest number of donations¹¹. The economic weakness, we could also associate the range of political and social transformations that began in a period between 1775 and 1846, associated with the passage of the absolute regime to liberal and constitutional monarchy¹².

The Misericórdia of Braga was exposed equally to this scenario and it was no different from its other counterparts, giving the city some of the main devotions that culminated in festive demonstrations and worship practices, we will portray in this present work.

⁷ The first commitment of the Misericórdia of Lisbon was approved by king D. Manuel I, in 1498.

⁸ This institution was composed of two groups of confreres, who were the first condition, as nobles, ecclesiastics and magistrates; and those of the second condition, as masters of trades, merchants, and husbandmen. Maria Antónia LOPES, “Musealizar misericórdias conhecendo a sua história” In Rita Fernanda PEDRAS (coord.), *Jornadas de museologia nas Misericórdias. Atas*, Penafiel, Misericórdia de Penafiel, 2015, p. 51.

⁹ Maria Marta Lobo de ARAÚJO, “As manifestações de rua das Misericórdias portuguesas em contexto barroco” in *Hispania Sacra*, LXII, 125, 2010, p. 110.

¹⁰ José Pedro PAIVA (coord.), *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, vol. 3, Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Religiosos; União das Misericórdias Portuguesas, 2004, p. 386.

¹¹ Manuela MACHADO, “Festividades e devoções na Misericórdia de Braga em torno do culto a S. João Marcos (século XVIII)” in *Interconexões – Revista de Ciências Sociais*, vol. 1, nº 1, 2013, p. 96.

¹² José Viriato CAPELA, “A Misericórdia e a sociedade bracarense” in José Viriato CAPELA; Maria Marta Lobo de ARAÚJO, *A Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga 1513-2013*, Braga, Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, 2013, p. 326.

The festive rituals

Under the authority of the Misericórdia of Braga found themselves two places of worship: the church of *Misericórdia* and *S. Marcos*, the latter aggregate to the hospital with the same name, and equally administered by the brotherhood. These places were the scene of various devotions and festive manifestations of religious nature, some with great impact and social and economic expression. Therefore, we will reconstruct the most festive moments of the Misericórdia of Braga. Focusing in on festive demonstrations and larger worship practices, mostly established by religious calendar, establishing the symbiosis between the sacred practices, handed down by the Catholic Church, and the profane. They are organized sequentially according to the calendar of the Misericórdias, except for the manifestations that took place in the church of *S. Marcos*.

The administrative year of the Misericórdias began on July 2, the day of St. Elizabeth. This day celebrating a biblical episode, the Visitation (Lk 1: 39-56)¹³, in which Mary, after the Annunciation already visited her cousin Elizabeth, pregnant with John the Baptist. The visit was an act of charity of the Virgin to her cousin, who became pregnant at an advanced age¹⁴. At that moment, she became the confraternity's motto, practicing compassion towards others, visiting hospitals, homes and prisons¹⁵.

This devotion was synonymous with election day and the beginning of a new administrative year. To be a solemn moment, the brothers were statutorily required to attend¹⁶. The rite of election was slow, consisting of a set of rituals carefully followed for two days.

Religious worship was made on the feast day by the office of vespers, mass and sermon, and the second day the election day with the mass of the Holy Spirit. The electoral system has become a set of rituals, closely followed exactly. Although the institution was under royal protection, the spaces alternated between the church and the *Casa do Despacho*. In the first one, the brothers' conscience was appealed to by the presence of a chaplain, with moments of reflection, oaths and other sacred rites, and in the second space only the guidelines were verified and proceeded to the voting. The ritualization of the process gave it legitimacy, since it was dependent on the common sense of each of the brothers¹⁷. The rituals of worship were not limited to these two days and during the year the brothers-elect had to confess and commune on the first Sunday of each month, and on the four days of the jubilee of the archbishopric that were Our

¹³ *Bíblia Sagrada*, Lisboa, Difusora Bíblica, 1971, pp. 1334-1335.

¹⁴ The Archangel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias, Elizabeth's husband to announce the pregnancy of his wife. This one was mute by not believing the promise of the angel, since the couple already was old. Gaston DUCHET-SUCHAUX; Michel PASTOREAU, *Guía iconográfica de la biblia e los santos*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, S.A, 1996, p. 204.

¹⁵ The brothers go to meet the next one voluntarily was something recurrent in the first years of the Misericórdias. Still far from the practice, which Isabel dos Guimarães Sá mentions as "bureaucratic charity" with the writing of petitions addressed to the *Mesa*. Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, "As Misericórdias da fundação à União Dinástica", [...], op. cit, p. 36.

¹⁶ Arquivo Distrital de Braga (ADB), Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga*, 1628-1630, nº2, fl. 4v.

¹⁷ Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, *As Misericórdias Portuguesas de D. Manuel I a Pombal*, Lisboa, Livros Horizonte, 2001, p. 86.

Lady of the Assumption, All the Saints, Christmas, Thursday of *Endoenças* and the day of the Holy Spirit¹⁸.

It was a moment that also represented a large number of expenses, involving those responsible for the crafts, the frames, lighting, cleaning, music, the acquisition of certain objects of worship. Another act of this festival was the public charity with the distribution of alms to the Misericórdia door and preaching sermons. There are still two practices to which we do not find evident references in the sources consulted that are the dinner of the day of election and the procession.

There are several representations of the Virgin Mary¹⁹, and the Misericórdia invoked as their patron saint Our Lady of Mercy, “*pera execução das obras da Misericórdia que nesta Irmandade se ão de exercitar em serviço de nossa Santa Advogada e padroeira desta Caza*”²⁰. As already mentioned the day of Misericórdia was the July 2, but it was not St. Elizabeth your patron saint, which is celebrated was the episode of the Visitation. In 1773, the *Mesa* determined that a feast to Our Lady of Mercy be held on September 8, which in the liturgical calendar corresponds to the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin. The practice of worship included the Exposed Blessed Sacrament, morning sermon and vespers²¹, and from 1774 song to chant²².

Rites before death assume important contours in the world of the living. In spite of the various teachings on “good death”, which all Christians would have to follow, the worship of death, that is, burial and praying for those who had left was an expense that not everyone could bear. And for this very reason, one of the actions of the Misericórdias was to provide the well-deserved rest to those who could not do it properly, as well as to defray their souls. One of his obligations was charity for those condemned to death, practiced on All Saints' Day on 1 November, and on the All Souls' Day on 2 November. This was also a moment of charity for the living, offering alms at the door in money and in kind, and attending to private petitions. In these two days there would be mass and sermon. After the mass and sermon on All Saints Day, the commitment of the Misericórdia of Braga, in its twenty-sixth chapter, stipulated that the steward was called upon to call the brethren for them “*irem buscar a forca da coutada as ossadas dos que padecem por justiça*”²³. At the end of the day, after vespers, the confrères dressed in black in a scenic procession seek the bones.

Also in November, after the All Souls' Day, one of the statutory obligations was to attend the anniversary of the deceased, to remember the deceased brothers and to pray for the living. In this ceremony two hundred masses were said for the souls of

¹⁸ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga*, 1628-1630, nº2, fl. 10v.

¹⁹ To know more about the evolution of the figure of the Virgin Mary read Miri RUBIN, *Mother of God : a history of the Virgin Mary*, New Haven : Yale University Press, 2009.

²⁰ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga*, 1628-1630, nº2, fl. 1v.

²¹ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, 15.º *Livro dos Termos*, 1769-1776, nº 17, fl. 190v.

²² *Ibidem*, fl. 206.

²³ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga*, 1628-1630, nº2, fl. 32.

deceased confreres and benefactors²⁴. It should be noted that the commitment of the Misericórdia of Braga does not mention the exact day of this, nor how the ritual would proceed²⁵.

The holiday season began on December 8, with the Feast of Our Lady of the Conception²⁶. Time dedicated to the birth of Christ, which allowed to expand not only the cult of the figure of the baby Jesus, but also, together with the Virgin and St. Joseph, the cult of the Holy Family. Christmas Day, 25 December, was preceded by a period of penance which was Advent. As the Advent rite was performed until Christmas Day in the Misericórdia of Braga it was not possible to draw from the sources, but it could include a vigil the day before, which included the canonical hour of matins²⁷, just as the chaplains were responsible for praying a mass at Wednesdays and Fridays in the Advent period²⁸.

Already on Christmas day, the chaplains were responsible for lighting six candles²⁹. The expenses were likewise composed of frames, music, supper to the servants on Christmas Eve and alms. The main one was instituted by Pedro da Lomba in 1685, which consisted in buying wood chariots annually, valued at 8000 *réis*, with the money he paid to Misericórdia to distribute to the poor mendicants³⁰.

Lent is par excellence one of the primordial periods of the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar, not only for its duration, forty days, but for its rigor and complexity. It began on Ash Wednesday. In the Misericórdia of Braga we know that in Lent since 1603 it was decided that every Wednesday of Lent there would be mass with music and sermon, which the brothers would have to attend³¹. The preacher of the sermon was the responsibility³² of the *Provedor*³³. As for the alms, the grateful ones were above all those who were already a recurring obligation, such as the «beatas of Campo da Vinha»³⁴, the servants of the house, the friars of St. Fructuosus of Braga and the prisoners, being alms in foodstuffs.

²⁴ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, 9.º *Livro dos Termos*, 1709-1723, nº 11, fl. 257v.

²⁵ In the Misericórdia of Lisbon this happened in the day of St. Martin of Tours to 11 of November. The choice of this saint might have a purpose for his most famous legend portrays an act of charity, by dividing his cloak with a poor man who found almost naked. Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, *As Misericórdias Portuguesas de D. Manuel I a Pomba I*, [...], op. cit, pp. 91-92.

²⁶ António Camões GOUVEIA, “O controlo do tempo” in Carlos Moreira AZEVEDO (dir.), *História Religiosa de Portugal*, vol. 2, Lisboa, Círculo de Leitores, 2000, p. 321.

²⁷ João Francisco MARQUES, “Oração e devoções”, in Carlos Moreira AZEVEDO (dir.), *História Religiosa de Portugal*, [...], op. cit, p. 615.

²⁸ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Regimento para os reverendos Capellães do Choro da St.ª Caza da Mizericordia 1746-1794*, Nº 708, fl. 3v.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, fl. 12.

³⁰ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, 7.º *Livro dos Termos*, 1678-1694, nº 9, fls. 59v.-60.

³¹ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, 2.º *Livro dos Termos*, 1598-1632, nº4, fl. 30v.

³² ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, 10.º *Livro dos Termos*, 1723-1734, nº 12, fl. 200v.

³³ The equivalent of an ombudsman.

³⁴ The consumption of the meat was jealously controlled. The «beatas» were forbidden to ingest on Mondays and Wednesdays, except if it relapsed on a holy day. Manuela MACHADO, “Alimentar o corpo e saciar o espírito no recolhimento de Santo António no século XVIII”. In Maria Marta Lobo de ARAÚJO; Alexandra ESTEVES (coord.), *Hábitos Alimentares e práticas quotidianas nas instituições portuguesas da Idade Moderna ao Período Liberal*, Braga, Lab2PT, 2015, pp. 32-33.

However, even during the Lenten period there were two great moments that the confraternity paid special attention to, which were the three days dedicated to the *Lausperene* and the Thursday of *Endoenças*.

The *Lausperene* was instituted in Braga in the year 1710 through a bull issued by Pope Clement XI (1700-1721), for Archbishop D. Rodrigo de Moura Teles (1704-1728) had enormous devotion for the Blessed Sacrament³⁵. This ritual took place on the forty days of Lent, where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for forty-eight hours in the principal churches, beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending with the procession of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday³⁶.

At the time of the establishment of the *Lausperene*, D. Rodrigo de Moura Teles was the *Provedor* of the Misericórdia, and for that reason, from 1710 onwards expenses were incurred in the early years of this cultic practice on material goods and services rendered, such as paying the servants for to keep watch over the space³⁷, to the watchmaker to ring, to the sacristan of the *Sé* of Braga who squeaked the bells³⁸, the incense, the oil³⁹, the wax, the music, the sermons, the frames, the cleaning and maintenance of the space. During these three days three masses were said, which was at the charge of the chaplain⁴⁰. In 1780 his office began to be celebrated with matins and lauds⁴¹, and the matine should be sung⁴².

The Maundy Thursday, in particular the procession of *Endoenças*, a word derived from the Latin of indulgences⁴³, is one of the principal rites of the Misericórdias⁴⁴. We do not know for sure when it began in the Misericórdia of Braga, but it was already in the middle of the 16th century. The intention of this procession was to recall the biblical episode of the Roman Court⁴⁵, and was therefore also called the

³⁵ Boaventura Maciel ARANHA, *Epítome da vida, e virtudes do excelentíssimo senhor D. Rodrigo de Moura Telles, arcebispo de Braga Primaz das Hespanhas*, Lisboa, Officina Pinheirense, 1743, p. 683.

³⁶ Monsenhor J. Augusto FERREIRA, *Fastos Episcopais da Igreja Primacial de Braga*, tomo III, Braga, Edição da Mitra Bracarense, 1932, pp. 239-240.

³⁷ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Mordomos – Despeza*, 1717-1748, n° 682, fl. 29v.

³⁸ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, *12.º Livro dos Termos*, 1746-1751, n° 14, fls. 103-103v.

³⁹ The almude is a measure of capacity for liquids used mainly for wine. Nowadays it is equivalent to 16.95 liters. Isabel M. R. Mendes Drumond BRAGA, “Circulação e distribuição interna” in Joel SERRÃO; A. H. de Oliveira MARQUES (dir.), *Nova História de Portugal: Do Renascimento à crise dinástica*, vol. V, Lisboa, Editorial Presença, 1998, 1998, pp. 207-208.

⁴⁰ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, *17.º Livro dos Termos*, 1780-1787, n° 19, fl. 178v. In 1787 it is recalled that the chaplains had the “indispensável obrigação do assistir ao lausperene na sua exposição e inserramento e a procição de 5ª feira de Endoenças”. ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *18.º Livro dos Termos*, 1787-1791, n° 20, fl. 17.

⁴¹ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, *17.º Livro dos Termos*, 1780-1787, n° 19, fl. 36.

⁴² ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *19.º Livro dos Termos*, 1791-1799, n° 21, fl. 190.

⁴³ Raphael BLUTEAU, *Vocabulario Portuguez & Latino*, vol. 3, Coimbra, Collegio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1728, p. 102.

⁴⁴ This was also a practice in the Misericórdia of Lisbon since its foundation, since it is evidenced in a manuscript of its first Commitment in 1498, indicating that the brothers were obliged to appear on Thursday night for the procession of penitents who they would visit the tombs. José Pedro PAIVA (coord.), *Portugaliae Monumenta Misericordiarum*, [...], op. cit, p. 386.

⁴⁵ José da Silva LIMA, “Festas”, in Carlos Moreira AZEVEDO (dir.), *História Religiosa de Portugal*, [...], op. cit, p. 260. This biblical scene is found in the Gospels of Matthew (Mt 27: 11-26), Mark (Mark 15: 1-15), John (John 18: 28-40) and Luke (Luke 23: 1-25).

procession of the *Ecce Homo*, Latin name of the announcement of Pontius Pilate «Behold the Man» (Jn 19: 5), in the event narrated in the Gospel of St. John, when the Roman governor Pontius Pilate presented Jesus, already flagellated, bound and with the crown of thorns⁴⁶.

During this day there were matins and lauds in which the «ofício das Trevas»⁴⁷ would take place, which was celebrated in the last three days of Holy Week. There was also the washing of the feet, inspired by the biblical episode in which Jesus washed the feet of his disciples during the Last Supper (Jn 13: 1-18)⁴⁸. Although we found no clear evidence of this ritual, the existence of this pious act was inevitable, for it was a recurrent practice in the Misericórdia, where the *Provedor*, humbly disposed on his knees, washed the feet of twelve poor in the Misericórdia church. Being a rite witnessed by all with a great symbolism⁴⁹, these were selected, after having proved their social situation.

After this ceremonial was served a dinner representing the Last Supper to these twelve poor. The hierarchical arrangement with which they sat at the table was paramount. By the end of supper they could still receive a handout in cash. In some Misericórdias, the expense was borne by the main office of the brotherhood, the *Provedor*⁵⁰.

At night, around eight o'clock in the afternoon⁵¹, the procession of *Endoenças* began, in which the brothers were obliged to appear in the statuary⁵². This procession wrapped in a scenic environment of pain and penance, went through an itinerary established in the commitment of the Misericórdia⁵³.

The elements that formed it were also defined in the commitment beginning with the «fogaréus» or «farricocos», who were a penitential figure that served to illuminate the streets and also responsible for calling the faithful to the procession with their best known «ruge-ruge» like rattle. Following these figures we would have the lanterns, one of the flags of the house, the people who carried the wax, the flag of the brotherhood, the brothers divided into two rows with torches, among them the flag with the image of *Ecce Homo* accompanied by priests, the andor of *Ecce Homo*, and finally the cruxifix⁵⁴. There would still be brothers who would distribute the sweets and all that

⁴⁶Gaston DUCHET-SUCHAUX; Michel PASTOREAU, *Guía iconográfica de la biblia e los santos*, [...], op. cit, p. 144.

⁴⁷ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Despesa dos Mordomos*, 1693-1717, nº 681, fl. 134.

⁴⁸*Bíblia Sagrada*, [...], op. cit, pp. 1394-1395.

⁴⁹This was only a symbolic moment, since the poor materially did not receive benefits. It was, as many other times, a ritual of power, where the temporarily rich became poor. Isabel dos Guimarães SÁ, *As Misericórdias Portuguesas de D. Manuel I a Pombal*, [...], op. cit, p. 93.

⁵⁰Maria Marta Lobo de ARAÚJO, “Festas e Rituais de Caridade” in *Coloquio Internacional piedade popular- sociabilidades e representações*, Lisboa, Terramar, 1999, pp. 507-508.

⁵¹ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga*, 1628-1630, nº 2, fls. 28v.-29.

⁵²*Ibidem*, fl. 4v.

⁵³*Ibidem*, fls. 28v.-29.

⁵⁴ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *3.º Livro dos Termos*, 1632-1645, nº5, fl.15.

was necessary for the penitents who were self-flagellated during this journey. The psalm of *Miserere Mei Deus* was to be sung by «coros em canto de órgão»⁵⁵.

The organization of this processional procession rather than to maintain order served to demonstrate the hierarchy within the fellowship and its position in society, for even the transport of flags and sticks, would have to be done by noble brethren. Their greatness and organizing ability were also evident. The use of fireworks, lanterns, candles and torches allowed a solemn and intense scenic reproduction, as the baroque required. However, the penitentes or disciplinantes, that were flogging throughout the procession, symbolizing the martyrdom, were one of the main characteristics of this procession. This common practice was approved by the post-Tridentine Church as a way of spying on sins and saving the soul demonstrating the superiority of the spirit in relation to the body⁵⁶.

During this solemnity some disturbance occurred, which was not surprising, if we take into account the crowds of believers. For example, in the 16th century, city councilors in Braga determined a disposition due to debauchery behaviors on the night of the procession of *Endoenças*, that men were not among women, nor were they in the procession in disguise. The municipal and religious entities showed a concern in the moralization of customs⁵⁷.

Throughout the 19th century the completion of the procession of *Endoenças* encountered some difficulties, and a cool in devotion. In 1822, it was debated by the clerks that «huma das principais desta casa a que provisoriamente se acabava suspensa por motivos de iconomia somente», but the *Mesa* decided that the expenses of this festivity did not jeopardize the performance of other obligations⁵⁸.

Another feast that took place in the church of the Misericórdia was by invocation of St. Peter of Verona, on April 29, due to the confraternity of the families of the *Santo Ofício* of Braga, to whom the Misericórdia granted him an altar in his church in 1624 to be able to celebrate to your party⁵⁹. In regard to this the confreres ordered that the day before the song was recorded with music or chanting and organ. And on the day of mass he would sing with a sermon⁶⁰.

Now we portray two devotions that fostered two festivities held strictly in *S. Marcos* Church. One in honor of the saint who gave the name to this church, St. John Mark, and another to St. John of God.

The story of how the relics of St. John Mark were taken to Braga, or whether they are really of the saint is still uncertain today. Some sources of the time, such as the

⁵⁵ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga*, 1628-1630, nº 2, fls. 28v.-29.

⁵⁶ Maria Marta Lobo de ARAÚJO, “As manifestações de rua das Misericórdias portuguesas em contexto barroco”, [...], op. cit, p. 108.

⁵⁷ Constantino Ribeiro COELHO, “Braga antiga, velharias bracarense, ... memórias de velho tempo e outros textos”. In *separata de “theologica”*, vol. XXIV – XXVI, 1989-1991, pp. 209-210.

⁵⁸ ADB, Fundo da Santa da Misericórdia de Braga, *22.º Livro dos Termos*, 1817-1826, nº 24, fl. 155.

⁵⁹ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *2.º Livro dos Termos*, 1598-1632, nº4, fl. 147v.

⁶⁰ ADB, Fundo dos Manuscritos, *Compromisso para a congregação de S. Pedro Mártir dos Familiares do Sancto Officio, estabelecida na Real Caza da Sancta Misericórdia desta cidade de Braga no anno de 1805*, nº 1020, fls. 9v.-12.

*Peregrino Curioso da vida, Morte, Trasladação e Milagres do Gloriosissimo Senhor S. João Marcos na Augusta Cidade de Braga e a Noticia da Trasladaçam dos ossos do Glorioso S. Joam Marcos*⁶¹ attribute as being St. John Mark, one of the apostles of Jesus, who accompanied Paul and Barnabas in the mission of evangelization. This is several times confused with the evangelist John, who has his relics reclaimed both in Venice and in Alexandria⁶². However, the legend says that it was D. Gualdim Pais who brought them to the chapel⁶³.

The cult of the relics was one of the greatest devotions of the Catholic faithful during the Early Modern Age, seeking solace or the answers to their problems. This practice developed from the 8th century in Rome, having a large presence in the Mediterranean area⁶⁴. But it was in the twenty-fifth session of the Council of Trent that the veneration of relics and sacred objects was consolidated. This allowed for the appearance of new cults and the construction and renovation of religious heritage⁶⁵. The rediscovery of the Roman catacombs in 1578 also contributed to the proliferation of this cult.

During the 18th century the cult of relics in the area of Galicia was reactivated, in part, due to the sending of relics from Rome⁶⁶. It was possibly with this panorama, associated with the attention and dedication of Archbishop D. Rodrigo de Moura Teles, as well as the tenacity of the Misericórdia, which enabled the worship and devotion to St. John Mark to become grateful, placing his relics in a place because they lay, by order of Archbishop D. Diogo de Sousa (1505-1532) since the 16th century in an arcossol of the wall of the chapel⁶⁷.

D. Rodrigo de Moura Teles on March 14th of 1718 sent a letter to the *Cabido*, expressing the will of the *Provedor* João Alpoim da Silva and the brothers of the Misericórdia, to transfer the relics of St. John Mark to a “tumulo mays decente” on April 27 of that year. With the approval of the *Cabido*, the archbishop requested the appearance of this authority in the triduum, that is, during the three days of the saint's

⁶¹ António de Mariz FARIA, *Peregrino Curioso da vida, Morte, Trasladação e Milagres do Gloriosissimo Senhor S. João Marcos na Augusta Cidade de Braga*, Lisboa, Officina de António Pedrozo Galvão, 1721, pp. 1-114.

⁶² David Hugh FARMER, *The Oxford dictionary of saints*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 323.

⁶³ According to a legend that dates back to the 17th century the original building of *S. Marcos's* Hospital, it had been the room of the Order of the Knights Templar, given by Archbishop Paio Mendes, since the Grand Master, D. Gualdim Pais had retired in Braga and with him took the remains of St. John Mark, Bishop of Atina. ADB, Fundo dos Manuscritos, *Memorias de Braga Escriptas e Illustradas por João Baptista Vieira Gomes*, 1828-1850, n.º 1059, p. 219.

⁶⁴ Peter BROWN, *The cult of the saints: Its rise and function in Latin Christianity*, Chicago/Londres, The University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 73.

⁶⁵ Manuela MACHADO, “Festividades e devoções na Misericórdia de Braga em torno do culto a S. João Marcos (século XVIII)”, [...], op. cit, pp. 89-90.

⁶⁶ Domingo Luis GONZÁLEZ LOPO, “El papel de las reliquias en las prácticas religiosas de los siglos XVII y XVIII”. In *Actas de la II Reunión Científica de la Asociación Española de Historia Moderna*, vol. II, Moratalla, Universidad de Murcia, 1992, pp. 248, 259.

⁶⁷ Monsenhor J. Augusto FERREIRA, *Fastos Episcopais da Igreja Primacial de Braga*, [...], op. cit, p. 254. In the 16th century, D. Diogo de Sousa denounced an enormous affluence of the faithful to the tomb of St. John Mark. ADB, Fundo dos Manuscritos, *Memorias de Braga Escriptas e Illustradas por João Baptista Vieira Gomes*, 1828-1850, n.º 1059, p. 221.

transfer. In the same correspondence he mentioned that the commencement of the celebrations would take place on 27 April⁶⁸.

It was three intensive days of celebration, in which there were masses, sermons and the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. This cultic practice during the triduum would continue throughout the 18th century with novena, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, music, lamps, sermons⁶⁹ and procession with the Blessed Sacrament on the last day in Campo dos Remédios⁷⁰. The day of the saint was also celebrated on September 27, leaving the *Cabido* in procession until the church of S. João Marcos in processional parade⁷¹.

The expansion of this cult was due in large measure to the rapidity with which the countless reports of miracles worked by the saint spread. It stands out the work published by Jose Mascarenhas in 1718 *Noticia da Trasladaçam dos ossos do Glorioso S. Joam Marcos* that narrates some of these miracles⁷². The influence of devotees to visit the relics was enormous, and it became indispensable for the Misericórdia to take some measures for a better organization of the space and of the different types of alms offered to the saint, that could be from alms in money as in genres⁷³.

In 1733 the Misericórdia decided to revive the devotion to St. John of God⁷⁴, that was celebrated the 8 of March being the expenses contributed by the incomes of the hospital. To the faithful were offered, in the church, some baked bread rolls, called “moletinhos” of St John of God. There were years in which these “moletinhos” were not distributed due to the hospital's governing bodies and the Misericórdia not always reach a consensus and the great influx of people who showed up to visit the hospital, causing huge monetary losses and instability to the sick because circulated through the corridors of the wards⁷⁵.

Conclusions

Manifestations and rites of popular character with pagan reminiscences and associated with different devotions, religious festivals were one of the main means of sociability and relations between the different social groups in the Early Modern Age, largely due to the increase in the number of confraternities and, consequently, to the devotions associated with it. It was in this scenario that the Misericórdias built their

⁶⁸ ADB, Fundo das Gavetas do Cabido, *Livro das Cartas do Arcebispos de Braga do anno de 1426 ate 1725*, tomo 7º, nº 127, não paginado.

⁶⁹ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *9.º Livro dos Termos*, 1709-1723, nº 11, fl. 230v.

⁷⁰ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *17.º Livro dos Termos*, 1780-1787, nº 19, fl. 43v.

⁷¹ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, *Instituição da Capella do Spirito Santo do hospital de S. Marcos*, 1682, nº 397, fls. 4-4v; Fundo dos Manuscritos, *Livro Curioso*, nº 341, pp. 651-652.

⁷² José Freire de Monterroio MASCARENHAS, *Noticia da Trasladaçam dos ossos do Glorioso S. Joam Marcos, Bispo de Attina, Apostolo de Celtiberia, Martyr da primitiva Igreja, hum dos 72 Discipulos de Jesu Christo N.S.*, Lisboa, Officina de Pascoal da Sylva, 1718, p. 8-15.

⁷³ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *9.º Livro dos Termos*, 1709-1723, nº 11, fls. 172-174.

⁷⁴ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia, *10.º Livro dos Termos*, 1723-1734, nº 12, fl. 308v.

⁷⁵ ADB, Fundo da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Braga, *17.º Livro dos Termos*, 1780-1787, nº 19, fls. 37v.-38.

festive manifestations, which reached its maximum exaltation and grandeur in the first half of the 18th century due to the baroque.

The Misericórdia of Braga, through the sources consulted, developed very relevant festive moments, as was the case of the days of St. Elizabeth, All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day, Christmas and the Lenten period, which saw the birth of *Lausperene*. It also allowed to celebrate and to grow other cults like St. Peter of Verona and in the church of S. Marcos, St. John Mark and St. John of God.

It is important to note that in the church of S. Marcos the celebrations of the liturgical calendar were celebrated, but we did not find references that allowed us to elaborate a panorama of these celebrations. We thought, however, that they would not depart from the rituals promoted in the Misericórdia church.

In both churches, we have already predicted that expenditures in the second half of the seventies are much smaller than in the first, and there are even cuts in certain festivities because they can not afford so much expense. This situation was felt much more in the church of S. Marcos, because the hospital management was a priority, along with the constant works and remodeling that the church suffered; putting festive gadgets in the background. For these reasons, but also for others of varied nature, they lost the splendor and exaltation of the baroque, giving place to the cultural movement of the Enlightenment, which sought to mobilize the power of reason.