

**In memory *ad perpetuum*. An analysis of medieval testaments**

**En memoria *ad perpetuum*. Un análisis de testamentos medievales**

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**Abstract:** The testament is an official document written at times long before death occurs, due to its omnipresence in medieval times, showing not only practical matters related with the dispositions of possessions, but also establishing the manner in which the deceased wants to be remembered and trying to prolong their memory for as long as possible. This paper proposes a simultaneous analysis of attitudes towards death, of moments of the ritual performed in favor of the dead, of the testamentary documents in which are expressed the last wishes and representations in funerary art.

**Keywords:** Testaments; Liturgy; Ritual; *Postmortem*; Funerary.

**Resumen:** El testamento es un documento oficial, escrito a veces mucho antes de que se produzca la muerte, debido a la omnipresencia de la muerte en la época medieval, lo cual muestra no solo cuestiones prácticas relacionadas con el hecho de disponer de las posesiones, sino que también establece la forma en que el difunto quiere ser recordado e intenta prolongar su memoria por el mayor tiempo posible. Este trabajo se propone analizar simultáneamente las actitudes hacia la muerte, la Liturgia de los Muertos, los documentos testamentarios y el arte funerario.

**Palabras clave:** Testamentos, Liturgia, Ritual, *Postmortem*, Funerario.

**Sumario:** 1. Introduction. 2. The testaments. 3. The Tombs. 4. Conclusion. Bibliography.

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## 1. Introduction

The present article results from the development of the PhD thesis “The Medieval Funerary Art in Portugal: a relation with the Liturgy of the Dead” where, in order, to know the rituals performed for the dead we had to compile a vast corpus of testaments.

The motivations behind the representation of scenes in the arks of tombs have been for a long time one of the main questions in medieval studies about art. There were many reasons appointed for the embellishment of the arks, such as: devotional, esthetic, superstitious, magic... but it was found a strong influence of the Liturgy of the Dead in the themes, going deeper into the iconographic meaning of the images.

The observation of tombs in the Iberian Peninsula showed several pieces with scenes of moments of the liturgy of the dead: either on the ark, or in the surrounding iconographic program.

Scenes like the administration of the *viaticum* and of the last rites in the tomb of

King Peter, the first, of Portugal; and also the iconographic programs belonging to Lope de Fontecha in the Cathedral of Burgos, and the one of the *unknown bishop* in the cathedral of Ourense: constitute perfect examples of tombs with scenes of moments of the liturgy of the dead. In these examples it's like the observer is attending to a mass or being present in the funeral.

In the Middle Ages, funerary art was used by the upper classes as a form of immortalization in the earthly world. The main concern was to be forever present in the memory of the living so they could intercede for the soul of the deceased.

The success in the afterlife required several rituals such as masses, so the departed could ascend more rapidly into Salvation. To ensure this care, long before death, testaments served to predetermine how the *antemortem* procedures, burial and *postmortem* rituals should take place, and, in exchange, the Church would receive a significant part of the testator's possessions. The testaments related to the art pieces themselves revealed the anguish caused by the idea of disappearance over time.

The testament is an official document written at times long before death, due to the its omnipresence in daily lives, showing not only practical matters related with the dispositions of possessions, but also establishing the manner in which the deceased want to be remembered and trying to prolong their memory for as long as possible.

In these documents, certain *formulas* are systematically found for the *pro commendatione animae*<sup>1</sup> and for the celebrations that were to be carried out, not only daily –with prayers– but also on special occasions like in the *Dies Natalis*<sup>2</sup>, day of a rebirth to an eternal life.

The prayers were *for* the Dead and not *to* the Dead. This matter is so relevant in the medieval attitudes towards death that it was shown in the arks of tombs through the representation of funeral scenes depicting mourners. The recumbent –representing the image of the deceased person— and the ark as a whole formed a *monumentum*<sup>3</sup> that enclosed the principal features of the role that the person played while living and reflected the idea of a deep believer with boundless faith.

This paper proposes a simultaneous analysis of attitudes towards death, of moments of the ritual performed in favor of the dead, of the testamentary documents in which are expressed the last wishes and representations in funerary art.

## 2. The testaments

*El testamento, manifiesto de las voluntades de los vivos para com la muerte pr3pria, se convierte, en el estudio de la Edad Media, en un elemento a te1ner en cuenta si se quiere analizar el*

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning “for the commendation of the soul”.

<sup>2</sup> Meaning “day of birth”, although it alludes to the day of death.

<sup>3</sup> Meaning “monument”.

*sentimiento religioso de la época*<sup>4</sup>.

Testaments are a privileged source of study, in which we find elements that allow us to understand the attitudes towards death. We have been studying testaments from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>5</sup>, comprising the main fears of the testators regarding the afterlife.

The documents under analysis attest to great concerns with the final arrangements for both material and spiritual matters. These documents are filled with references to moments which are not part of the official liturgy itself but are still *paraliturgical*<sup>6</sup>, such as: the institution of chapels –physical or not—, requests of intercession for the soul, the so called *pro commendatione animae* or the *pro remedio anima*<sup>7</sup>, and the commands for perpetual *postmortem* rituals. We should take in account that the term chapel in the medieval sense means the institution of perpetual suffrages for the sake of the institutor's soul, who donates part of his estate to the church where the chapel is established; in some cases, apart from the rituals mentioned previously, it can also mean the construction of an altar or chapel in which suffrages are celebrated, thus corresponding to an architectonic and/or artistic programme<sup>8</sup>.

The *paraliturgical* moments focus essentially on the rituals that should be performed perpetually in order to remain alive in the memory of the living. This restless need to perpetuate their memory results from the urge of intercession for the soul through prayers. Praying was a crucial means to minimize the time of passage through Purgatory, which was imagined to be as daunting as Hell, but with the hope of a finite stay. Purgatory is described as a place “where the cruelty and harshness of the punishments are so great that no human tongue can describe it”<sup>9</sup>.

The testament was so important that it became a binding religious act imposed by the church under the threat of excommunication<sup>10</sup>. It aimed to

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<sup>4</sup> Maria Dolores BARRAL RIVADULLA, “De Historia, Arte y Arqueología. Sueños en piedra en La Coruña Medieval” in *Muerte y ritual funerario en la historia de Galicia*, (Semana: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 2006), nº 17, p.119.

<sup>5</sup> The *corpus* of testaments analyzed is restricted to the Iberian Peninsula.

<sup>6</sup> *Paraliturgical* is a term used to describe rituals which are not official and are not recognized by the church, but still, as if it were, are seen as mandatory.

<sup>7</sup> Meaning “for the sake of the soul”.

<sup>8</sup> Phillipe ARIÈS, *O Homem perante a morte*, (Mem Martins: Publicações Europa-América, 2000), pp.212-213; also see, Elisa Maria Domigues da Costa CARVALHO, “A fortuna ao serviço da alma, da família e da memória, através dos testamentos dos arcebispos e dignatários de Braga na Idade Média (séculos XII-XV)”, *Lusitania Sacra*, 2ª série, 13-14 (2001-2002), pp. 29-30. .

<sup>9</sup> Teofilo F. RUIZ, *From Heaven to Earth. The reordering of Castilian Society, 1150-1350*, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 28.

<sup>10</sup> Marta CENDÓN FERNÁNDEZ, “El obispo ante la muerte en la Castilla de los Trastámara”, *Archivo Ibero-americano. Revista Franciscana de estudios históricos*, nº58, (Septiembre-Diciembre 2007), p.690.

achieve two goals: one, the organization of family life, and the other, securing a place in heaven<sup>11</sup>. As Teofilo Ruiz mentioned in his work, testaments were used as a form to negotiate the salvation of the soul. Jacques Le Goff called it a “passport to Heaven” and Philippe Ariès, a “safe-conduct on earth”<sup>12</sup>.

We will now show some examples to demonstrate what has been said before. In “*A Sé de Lamego na primeira metade so século XIV (1296-1349)*”<sup>13</sup>, a master’s thesis by Anísio Saraiva wherein he compiles all the documents found in the cathedral of the city of Lamego, Portugal, we find the transcript of three documents where concerns with the afterlife are quite obvious through the fixation of several *paraliturgical* moments. These are particularly significant because they register the institution of a chantry chapel.

Nicolau Peres, dean of the Cathedral of Lamego, instituted the chantry of Saint Marinha. in September 1299, for the sake of his soul and his parent’s souls. He also ordered that in that chapel two chaplains were to celebrate the canonical hours and assure that a lamp was lit night and day until eternity, *que esses capelães façam alumear hua lanpada que arda dia e de noite ante essa capela...mantenham-na asy pera sempre*<sup>14</sup>.



Fig. 1. Tomb of King Pedro I of Portugal. Monastery of Alcobaça, Portugal.  
Image taken from Imago.

<sup>11</sup> Marta CENDÓN FERNÁNDEZ and M. Dolores BARRAL RIVADULLA, “Donantes e Promotores: su imagen en la plástica gótica gallega” in *Semanata Cultura, poder y mecenazgo*, ed. Vigo Trasancos (Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago, 1998), nº10, p.391.

<sup>12</sup> Phillipe ARIÈS, *O Homem perante a morte...* p. 226.

<sup>13</sup> Anísio Miguel de Sousa SARAIVA, *A Sé de Lamego na primeira metade so século XIV (1296-1349)*, (Leiria: Edições Magno, 2003).

<sup>14</sup> Free translation: *May those chaplains light a lamp that burns day and night in front of the chapel...keep it that way forever.* IBIDEM,451.



Pedro Peres de Távora, canon in Lamego, instituted the chapel of Saint Mary Magdalene in the cathedral in May 1300. Like Nicolau Peres, he also requested the services of two chaplains, who had to sing and celebrate masses, but also keep a lamp lit at all times, *mando que estes capellães tenham hua lampada sempre alumeada*<sup>15</sup>. There is a document dated from the same day, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1300, where the same clergyman instituted another chapel, this one dedicated to Saint Peter, determining that the chapel should be maintained forever and the light should be kept lit day and night forever as well,

*manter essa capella pero todo sempre e que cantem en ela cada dia missa e digam has outras compridamente e per seer hy mantehuda e alumeada hua lampada de diia e de noite pera todo sempre.*<sup>16</sup>



Fig. 2. Tomb of Inês de Castro. Monastery of Alcobaça, Portugal. Image taken from Imago.

The importance of light in the liturgical and *para-liturgical* rituals has to be acknowledged. The constant presence of light in funerary rituals led Jacques Chiffolleau to define what he called the *liturgy of the light*.<sup>17</sup> According to Richard MARKS, light assured an active participation of the saints painted or

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<sup>15</sup> Free translation: *command that these chaplains have one lamp always lit*. IBIDEM, 456.

<sup>16</sup> Free translation: *Keep that chapel forever and ever and that may sing in it every day a mass and say the others extensively and must be maintained and lit a lamp by day and night forever*. IBIDEM, 457.

<sup>17</sup> Jacques CHIFFOLLEAU, *La comptabilité de l’Au-delà. Les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d’Avignon à la fin du Moyen Age (vers 1320-vers 1480)*, (Rome: École Française de Rome), p. 282.

sculptured inside the churches.<sup>18</sup> The importance of the image of a saint could be determined by the quantity of light that he or she had around them. Specific objects to provide light and other objects to maintain the certainty of the existence of light were one of the most important elements referred to in testaments, because they were crucial for the development of the rituals.

In the *Testamenti Ecclesiae Portugaliae* - a compilation of one hundred and fifty one testaments by clergymen<sup>19</sup> - we came across with the testament of Domingos, archdeacon of Braga, which instituted a chapel:

*constituatur una capellania in ipsa ecclesia Bracharensi et instituaturs ibi capellanus perpetuus per archiepiscopum et capitulum ejusdem ecclesie qui celebret pro anime domni Stepahni Bracharensis archiepiscopi qui nunc est et pro mea*<sup>20</sup>.

As in other examples, he also requested the perpetual services of chaplains as caretakers of his soul and intercessors for the soul of the archbishop of Braga at that moment. The request of intercession for the soul of archbishops, contemporary or not of the deceased conceals an institutional aspect. It was imposed by the Church to pray for the souls of the archbishops who had passed way<sup>21</sup>.

The major expression of Episcopal power resides in the institution of a funerary chapel and in the signs of the institutor's status that they are represented with.

We will provide other examples of requests for the intercession of the souls and references to the preparation of the *paraliturgical* rituals. In the testament of Godinho, archbishop of Braga, dated July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1188, he left the church several material possessions to obtain his own salvation, and the same for his parents and brother:

*Mando etiam ipsi ecclesie hereditatem de Ulvaria pro anima mea et pro anima fratris mei domni Gomizo (...) illuminant unam la[m]padam in ipsa ecclesia pro anima patris mei et fatris mei et mea.*<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Richard MARKS, *Image and devotion in Late Medieval England*. (S./l.: Sutton Publishing, 2004). p.162.

<sup>19</sup> *Testamenti Ecclesiae Portugaliae (1071-1325)*, ed. Maria do Rosário Barbosa MORUJÃO, 6 vols. (Lisboa: Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa Universidade Católica portuguesa, 1995-2010), VI (2010).

<sup>20</sup> Constitutes a chapel in the same church of Braga and institutes perpetual chaplains for the archbishop and chapter of the same church to celebrate the soul of the archbishop of Braga Estêvão who is alive and for my soul. IBIDEM, 55-56.

<sup>21</sup> Elisa Maria Domigues da Costa CARVALHO, "A fortuna ao serviço da alma...29.

<sup>22</sup> Free translation: *I send to the same church my property in Ulvaria for my soul and for the souls of my parents, I, Lord Gomizo...light one lamp in the same church for the soul of my parents, my brother and mine. Testamenti Ecclesiae Portugaliae...41*

We note that he considered light an element of intercession for the souls.

Apart from the requests for the souls and illumination there is another crucial element in ensuring the ascension of the soul into heaven: masses. In all testaments seen so far, the testators ordered several masses, not only on the day of their death, but spread over time: in the days following the funeral, for the trental<sup>23</sup> and during the year or on special occasions.

If we look again at the document of the institution of the chapel of Nicolau Peres, he determined the functions of the chaplains as *cantem cada dia en sa capela as oras dos mortos e as oras do dia por aquelas que eu perdi en guissa que nunca se percam nem essas missas*<sup>24</sup>, and leaves his breviary to the chapel so that masses can be celebrated, *per que ressem essas oras en essa capela*<sup>25</sup>.

In the *Testamenti* there are often references to anniversary masses. In the testament of Estêvão Soares da Silva, archbishop of Braga, dated August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1228, there are references to all rituals mentioned so far:

*Item dabit in die Sancti Johannis Bap[ti]ste quolibet anno duodecim aureos ad tres la[m]padas illuminadas unam altare majus, alteram ante altare Sancte Marie Magdalene, alteram vero ante sepulcrum Beati Geraldi santissimi confessoris under sempre illuminetur de die et de nocte per thesau<ra>rium Bracarensem preter omne alias que illuminantur in ecclesia Bracarensi...Item dabit quinquaginta aureos duobus cappellanis qui cotidie celebrent du[a]s missas pro anima mea et ambo similiter si fieri potest veniant ad monumentum meum cum aqua benedicta et responsorio vel uterque per se et istos quinquaginta aureos dabit annuatim per tercias anni ipsis capellanis a festo Sancti Johannis usque ad sequens festum ejusdem. Item in festo Sancti Michaelis annuatim dabit quadraginta aureos ipsis canonicis de quibus aureis ement triticum ut habeant inde panem per annum quantum suffecerint. Et canonici a die Sancti Michaelis usque ad decem dies sequentes continuos facient annuatium pro anima mea totas horas veniendo cum processione ad monumentum meum*<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Meaning “a series of thirty masses celebrated in consecutive days aiming the release of the soul from Purgatory”.

<sup>24</sup> Free translation: *Sing every day in that chapel the hours of the dead and the hours of the day for the ones that I have missed in a way that will never be lost not even those masses.* Anísio Miguel de Sousa SARAIVA, *A Sé de Lamego*...451

<sup>25</sup> Free translation: *To pray the hours in that chapel.* IBIDEM, 451

<sup>26</sup> Free translation: *And give each year, in the day of Saint John Baptist, twelve pieces of gold for three lit lamps one located in one of the main altars, other in front of the altar of Saint Mary Magdalene, another in front of the tomb of the Blessed Saint Martyr Geraldo always lit by day and night, paid by the treasure of Braga like others that illuminate the church of Braga...and give fifty pieces of gold for two chaplains that celebrate daily two masses for my soul and both similar and they must go to my monument (tomb) with Holy water and say a Response and give fifty*



The testament is much more extensive, he left no margin for error and covered all aspects of the rituals: obsequies, place of burial, prayers, masses, chaplains, processions, light, charities and anniversaries.

The funeral commemorations were also mentioned in testaments because a funeral is above all a public act where the significance and glory of a particular person is shown. Much of this type of visibility resides in the tomb that immortalizes the deceased and their status in the ark and recumbent<sup>27</sup>.



Fig. 3. Ark of the tomb of King Pedro I de Portugal. Monastery of Alcobaça, Portugal.  
Image taken from Imago.

### 3. The tombs

In Portugal and Galicia, tombs representing moments of the rituals of the Dead and/or *paraliturgical* moments were found, such as the administration of the *viaticum*<sup>28</sup> and the administration of the last rites, in the tomb of King Pedro I of Portugal<sup>29</sup>; processions where we can see different classes of the

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*pieces of gold annually for the office of Terce to same chaplains in the Feast of St John continuously until the next same feast day. Also in the feast of St. Michael give annually they shall give forty pieces of gold to the same canons to buy wheat and bread enough for a year. And in the day of Saint Michael the canons must perform for the sake of my soul the celebration of all (canonical) hours during ten sequenced days without interruption and go with procession to my monument.*

<sup>27</sup> Marta CENDÓN FERNÁNDEZ, “La muerte mitrada. El sepulcro episcopal en la Galicia de los Trastámara” in *Muerte y ritual funerario en la historia de Galicia. Semana, Ciencias Sociais e Humanidades*, nº17, (Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 2006), p. 163.

<sup>28</sup> Meaning “provision for the journey”.

<sup>29</sup> King Pedro’s tomb is found in the Monastery of Alcobaça, along with Inês de Castro’s tomb.



clergy and mourners, and objects used in the rituals, such as a processional cross, for example in the tombs of the unknown bishop commonly called *Obispo desconecido* and in the tomb of Lope the Fontecha. But these kinds of representations are rare and most tombs present the figures considered essential in the iconographic programme of the ark: the theme of Christ and the apostles, as in the case of the tomb of Archbishop Gonçalo Pereira.

Historiography showed us it is impossible to talk about the tomb of King Pedro I without mentioning the tomb of Inês de Castro, since they are both part of the same artistic/iconographic programme (see Images 1 and 2). These are the two most exquisite tombs in Portugal; they are true works of art due to the details and the gentle plastic expression on every character, on every element. What interests us in what we have been referring to is the foot side (see Image 3) of the tomb of King Pedro I<sup>30</sup>.



Fig. 4. Representation of the administration of the *viaticum* in the tomb of King Pedro I. Monastery of Alcobaça, Portugal. Image taken from Imago.

Here, there are two representations, in one of them we can see the administration of the *viaticum* (see Image 4): the king is reclined on his death bed with his mouth open while one of the clergymen next to him gives him the body of Christ with both hands.

On the same side of the tomb, but on the right side of this scene, is another representation quite similar to the previous one: again the King in his bed, this time sitting, and although the hands are severed, we can see that both the king and

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Concerning their tombs, see: Carlos Alberto Ferreira de ALMEIDA and Mário Jorge BARROCA, *História da Arte em Portugal – O Gótico*, (Lisboa: Editoria Presença, 2002), nº2, pp.235-240.; Francisco Pato de MACEDO, “O descanso eterno. A tumulária” in *História da Arte Portuguesa – O “modo gótico” (séculos XIII-XV)*, ed. by Paulo PEREIRA, (Mem Martins: Círculo de Leitores, 1995-1997), pp. 120-128. Luís Urbano AFONSO, *O ser e o tempo. As idade do homem no gótico português*, (Lisboa: Caleidoscópio, 2003).

<sup>30</sup> Luís Urbano AFONSO, *O ser e o tempo...* 28-29.

the clergy were holding an object probably a book of prayers for the dead (see Image 5). This moment has been considered as the extreme unction, but in our opinion, there is no evidence at all for that identification. These scenes express clearly the king's desire for a *good death*.

Both tombs were seriously damaged, and hands and heads have nearly disappeared in every figure. These acts of vandalism were likely deliberate because the heads and position of the hands allow us to identify the persons represented, their degree of importance and the relationships between them. Among others factors, one of the main reasons behind this destruction over time was the *damnatio memoriae*<sup>31</sup>.

In Galicia, there are two tombs, among others, with quite evident representations of rituals of the dead. One of these tombs, located in the cathedral of Ourense, belongs to an unknown bishop, and is probably dated from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (see Image 6). The recumbent is surrounded by a group of clergymen, each one holding a book, along the arcosolium and beyond. In the interior of the wall of the arcosolium, there is a lower band with ten men fronting the viewer. Above this band and covering the rest of the wall, there is a representation of Our Lady holding baby Jesus, surrounded by four figures; two of them are angels, at the extremities.

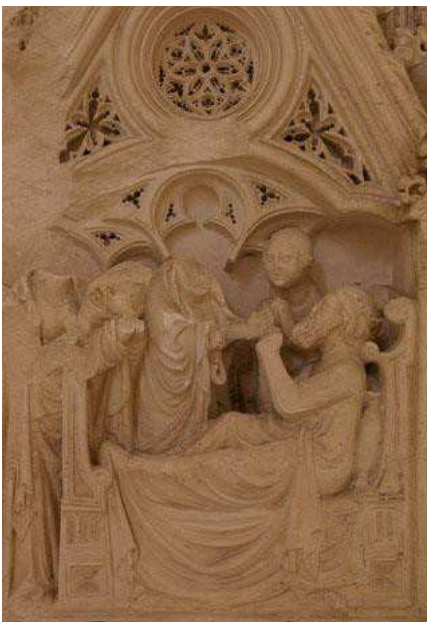


Fig. 5. Unidentified scene in the ark of the tomb of King Pedro I de Portugal. Monastery of Alcobaça, Portugal. Image taken from Imago.

Fig. 6. Backwall of the arcosolium in which is located the tomb of the unknown bishop, *obipso desconocido*. Cathedral of Ourense, Spain. Image taken from FlickrR.

We can see that they are religious men and although they are wearing capes and holding books, all of them hold the books in different positions, which gives an outstanding naturalism to the figures, as if they were alive and the action were real, caught at that precise moment. On the extremities, of the feet and

<sup>31</sup> IBIDEM, 18-19. “*Damntio memoriae*” means damnation of the memory.

head, there are more distinguished figures meaning higher ranks of the church, easily identified by the different garments and liturgical implements. The angel by the feet of the recumbent holds a censer.

This type of tombs teaches us how relevant it is to study the space surrounding the tomb, as if it were part of the tomb itself.

Another tomb worth mentioning is the one of Lope de Fontecha in the chapel of Saint Gregory, in the Cathedral of Burgos, by an unknown author and dated from 1351 (see Image 7)<sup>32</sup>. The iconographic programme is very similar to the one of the unknown bishop but has a greater naturalism and the figures are better executed. Here, we know that there is a reading going on by a minister. The main action is taking place in the wall of the arcosolium above his head (see Image 8), as if a real funeral were taking place. No character looks alike; every one of those figures is in a different position and doing different things. The iconography conveys unparalleled vividness.

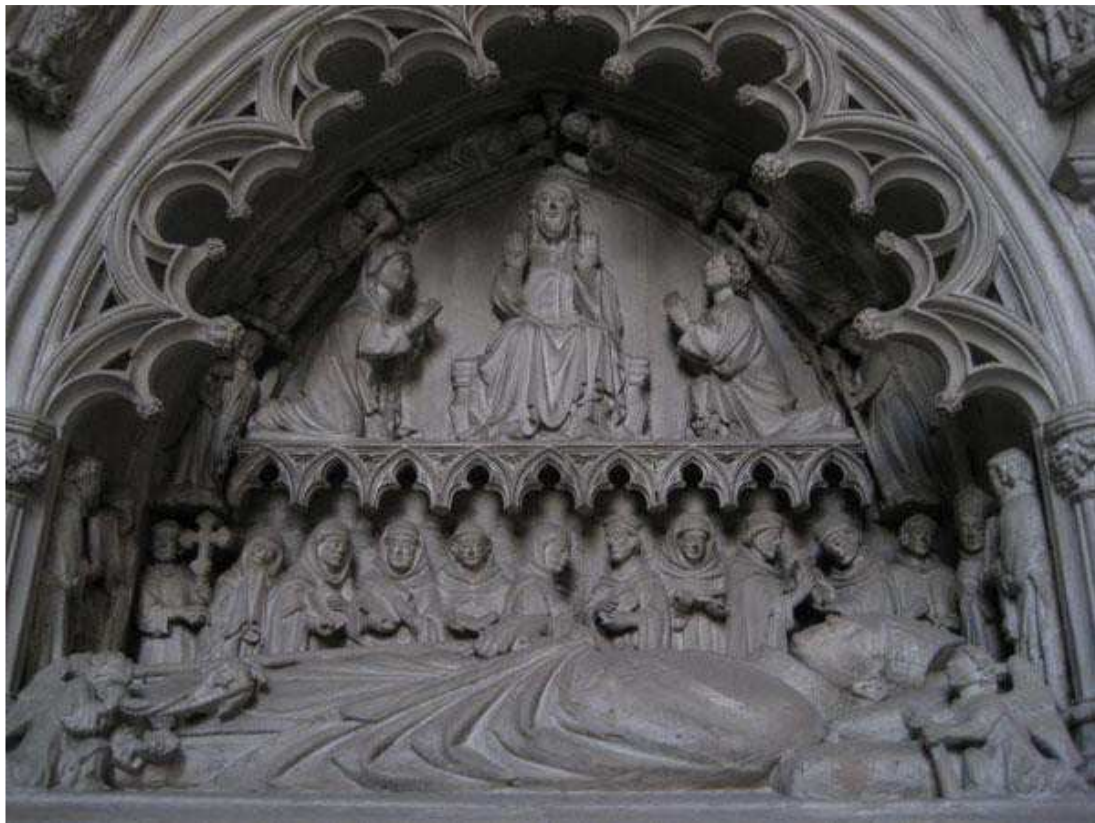


Fig. 7. Tomb complex of Lope de Fontecha. Cathedral of Burgos, Spain. Image taken from Flickr.

This tomb is even more compelling than the one of the *unknown bishop*; it convinces us that we are actually witnessing a real moment taken from a funeral or another ritual concerning the death of the bishop. By his feet, one of the clergymen is holding a processional cross and the other has an attitude of mourning (see Image 9).

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<sup>32</sup> José Angel García de CORTÁZAR y Ruiz de AGUIRRE, *Vida y muerte en el monasterio románico*, (Aguilar de Campoo, Palencia : Fundación Santa María La Real, 2004), p.158.





Fig. 8. Detail of the tomb of Lope de Fontecha.  
Image ceded by Professor Marta Cendón Fernández.



Fig. 9. Detail of the tomb of Lope de Fontecha.  
Image ceded by Professor Marta Cendón Fernández.

In Portugal, another clergy, an archbishop, took great care in the arrangements required in order to have a *good death*. Gonçalo Pereira was the Archbishop of Braga for twenty years. He was not only a religious man but also a politician, a diplomat, a warrior and an ambassador at the service of the King.

He left the document of institution of his funerary chapel, *ordeno e estatuo*



*a minha capella de Samta Maria a qual eu fiz edificar a par da igreja de Sam Geraldo*<sup>33</sup>, dated April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1334<sup>34</sup>. Later on, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Pero de Sousa, choirmaster of Braga cathedral and administrator of the chapel, ordered the translation of the document into Portuguese. This document is a cornerstone for studies on medieval funerary art because both the document and the chapel have been preserved to today. Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho mentions that when the archbishop instituted the chapel, he was excessively thorough, handling issues like economic feasibility, internal regulations, administration and the building<sup>35</sup>.

An aspect of the document that stands out is the *formulas* that make it very much like a testament, especially the use of “confession” and “intercession” for the souls. In the formulas of *confession*, the bishop recognizes himself as a *miserio e muito ingrato pecador* and continues,

*envolto nos humanos negouçios aos quaaes com mais forces apliquei os movimentos de meu coração non guardamdo seus preceptos e saudavees mandamentos fui negligente e remiso em celebrar os divinos obsequios e outras cousas que a meu ofiço pertemcião*<sup>36</sup>.

In the *formulas* of *intercession pro anima* or the *pro commendatione animae*, Gonçalo Pereira ordered masses for the souls of Pope John XXII, King Dinis and for the soul of Afonso IV, son of Dinis and later king, and also ordered the celebration of several masses to relieve him of his sins on earth and beyond,

*polas almas do ditto Papa meu senhor e do ilustre senhor Dom Denis rey que foi de Portugal e do Algarvee da esclarecida memoria de que reciby muitos beens e do esclarecido Dom Afonso aguora ylustre rei ed Portugal e do Algarve de seus filhos e dos outros reis que polo tempo forem nos dittos regnos e delle descendam.*<sup>37</sup>

Regarding the service, the archbishop asked to be performed by a group of

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<sup>33</sup> Maria Helena da Cruz COELHO, *O arcebispo D. Gonçalo Pereira: Um querer, um agir*, in IX Centenário da dedicação da Sé de Braga Congresso Internacional. Actas. (Braga: Universidade Católica Portuguesa; Faculdade da Teologia de Braga; Cabido metropolitano e primacial de Braga, 1990), p.446.

<sup>34</sup> IBIDEM, p.389.

<sup>35</sup> IBIDEM, p.409.

<sup>36</sup> Free translation: *As miserable and an ungrateful sinner before God (...) I was surrounded by the “human” affairs in which I applied the strength of my heart...I neglected and was careless in celebrating the divine rituals and other things that belonged to my position.* IBIDEM, 389 and 445.

<sup>37</sup> Free translation: *For the soul of the Pope my lord and the famed lord Dinis king of Portugal and Algarve and the enlightened memory from whom I received many goods and from the enlightened Afonso now king of Portugal and Algarve for his sons and other kings over time that may descend from him (Afonso IV).* IBIDEM, 409 and 446.

six chaplains, three boys serving those chaplains, a lay servant or slave to serve them and run the kitchen and do other things that they might need; the service also relied on the participation of the canons of the cathedral.

The chaplains had to conduct daily masses according to the canonical hours and the tradition of Braga at all four altars. The archbishop asked to be celebrated

*senhas missas cada dia as horas canonicas e da bem aventurada Virgem e tambem dos defuntos na dita capela segundo custume de Bragaa em boas sobrepelizes e limpas(...)em voz não muito alta nem muito baixa diguão na dicta capela ho officio das matinas e asy diguão nella as outras horas canonicas de todo o dia aas horas e tempos devidos asi como os dizem na dyta egreja de Bragaa*<sup>38</sup>.

If they did not proceed as instructed, they were to be penalized for their failures. He requested from the chaplains faith, obedience and rigor, living a righteous life in a house adjoining the chapel. In that house, they were to eat, sleep and live in community; they were not allowed to leave or be absent in any circumstance. The chaplains could not hold public offices or ecclesiastical benefits. As promised by the Archbishop, they would be well compensated for all these requirements<sup>39</sup>.

As for the matter of illumination regarding the rituals, he ordered that there be enough olive oil for five lamps, two in front of the altar of the Virgin lit day and night, and the other three in front of other altars which had to be lit throughout the night. Also, there had to be enough wax for the lamps to be lit for an entire year, and wine, wafer and incense for the masses. He ordered that on solemn occasions

*orne e afeite os alatares com decentes e honestos ornamentos e acenda as lampas da cappella e minister e dee camdeas hostias vinho e augua e incenso pera as missas e outros divines officios*<sup>40</sup>.

The analysis of Gonçalo Pereira's document instituting the chapel pinpoints his concerns with his place of burial and the *postmortem* liturgy. The whole chapel obeys an iconographic programme imposed by the bishop. In the chapel, we find four altars, each devoted to a different figure: one dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and the archbishop stated *pera que ella diante d Elle seja intercesora por*

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<sup>38</sup> Free translation: (*celebrate*) Masses every day the canonical hours and (*masses*) from the good fortunate Virgin and (*masses from the dead*) in the referred chapel according to the custom of Braga in good and clean surplices (...) in a voice not very loud and not very low may be said in the referred chapel the office of the morning and the other canonical hours of all day at the right time like it's done in the referred church (of Saint Gerald). *IBIDEM*, 446.

<sup>39</sup> *IBIDEM*, 410.

<sup>40</sup> Free translation: (On solemn occasions that they may) *adorn and primp with decent and honest ornaments and lit lamps of the chapel and celebrate and give lamps hosts and water and incense for the masses and other divine services*. *IBIDEM*, 451.

*mim*, another to Saint Andrew because he was a perfect apostle and the archbishop was not, another to Saint Mary Magdalene, so that God may forgive his sins like He forgave hers, and the last one to Saint Lawrence and Saint Vincent, who may act as intercessors for the forgiveness of God<sup>41</sup>.



Fig. 10. Tomb of the archbishop Gonçalo Pereira. Cathedral of Braga, Portugal.  
Image taken from Imago.

The tomb (see Image 10) is situated in the centre of the chapel. The work was started in 1334 by Master Pero and by Telo Garcia. The sculpture of the archbishop presents him at a *perfect age*, when he was at the peak of his life. That is how he wanted to be remembered.

The ark bears great significance. We should focus on the right wall of the ark where the archbishop decided to represent an *official mass*<sup>42</sup> at the time that was the name of a mass of *requiem* after the celebration of the service of the dead, solemnized by ministers, incense and chants (see Image 11). According to Viterbo, the requests for celebration of official masses were quite common. These twelve figures are a symbol of that mass so that solemnization of the death could be recorded forever. The characters appear repeated in pairs, but not symmetrically, with their mouths open like they are chanting. The objects they hold lead us to believe that they are referring to different tasks inside the

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<sup>41</sup> Free translation: *so that she may intercede for me in front of her Son*. IBIDEM, p.446.

<sup>42</sup> Joaquim de Santa Rosa de VITERBO, *Elucidário das palavras, termos e frases que em Portugal antigamente se usaram e que hoje regularmente se ignoram : obra indispensável para entender sem erro os documentos mais raros e preciosos que entre nós se conservam*, (Lisboa : A. J. Fernandes Lopes, 1865).

church. This scene clearly shows the representation of a moment of the liturgy of dead, the tomb becomes a mirror of reality and an eternalized desire. It is not as evident as in the tombs of Galicia, but still the intention is present in a more stylized form.



Image 11. Detail of the ark of the tomb of the archbishop Gonçalo Pereira, Cathedral of Braga, Portugal. Image taken from Imago.

On one of the sides of Queen Saint Isabel's tomb, a work by the same artists of the recumbent and ark of Gonçalo Pereira, we find the same type of scene in a representation of a group of female monks symmetrical to the side of the Apostles. They are probably the monks that will care for the soul of the Holy Queen.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, these persons felt the need not only to immortalize themselves and their memory, but also the caretakers of their souls. Amongst the themes represented in funerary art are those that aim to emulate reality and the themes of an invisible world where the souls rest forever. The tomb cannot be studied isolated from its original placement, because it was once part of a whole iconographic programme inside the chaotic medieval churches. Only a profound iconographic and iconological analysis allows us to perceive the art piece in its true nature.

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