



# The Confraternal Movement in Braga (Portugal) in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Devotion, Music, and Power

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Résumé de l'article

The confraternal movement in Braga dates back to the early Middle Ages with the existence of at least two confraternities from that time: the Confraternity of São João do Souto (St John [the Baptist] of Souto), a parish in the diocese of Braga, documentation for which can be traced back to 1186; and that of the Santíssima Trindade (the Most Holy Trinity), founded in 1381 in Braga Cathedral. However, it was from the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century that confraternities developed most fully in this region of Portugal. This article aims to identify and analyze devotional celebrations through references to music in the statutes and regulations of the main confraternities and brotherhoods in Braga between the years 1500 and 1700. The festive celebrations of patronal feast days and other important feasts in the liturgical calendar will be discussed as practices of sociability and power in which the musical investment was of particular importance. The confraternities of São João do Souto and the Misericórdia in Braga are the focus of the contribution confraternities made to the urban soundscape.

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Elisa Lessa

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*Summary:* The confraternal movement in Braga dates back to the early Middle Ages with the existence of at least two confraternities from that time: the Confraternity of São João do Souto (St John [the Baptist] of Souto), a parish in the diocese of Braga, documentation for which can be traced back to 1186; and that of the Santíssima Trindade (the Most Holy Trinity), founded in 1381 in Braga Cathedral. However, it was from the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century that confraternities developed most fully in this region of Portugal. This article aims to identify and analyze devotional celebrations through references to music in the statutes and regulations of the main confraternities and brotherhoods in Braga between the years 1500 and 1700. The festive celebrations of patronal feast days and other important feasts in the liturgical calendar will be discussed as practices of sociability and power in which the musical investment was of particular importance. The confraternities of São João do Souto and the Misericórdia in Braga are the focus of the contribution confraternities made to the urban soundscape.

Lay confraternities involving townspeople who gathered together under the advocacy of a particular saint or tenet of faith are well documented in Braga from the Middle Ages. As elsewhere in Europe, their main aims were to save the souls of their members through spiritual assistance upon their death and in commemoration of them, and to promote acts of devotion and charitable welfare in their lifetimes, without which it was believed there would be no salvation. Over time, and through such acts, these institutions attracted increasing numbers of members, and their influence expanded to the extent that they became major players in urban society, capable of generating and reflecting power structures, integrating into the community and enhancing social cohesion, and acting as agents in the creation of group identity. With increased influence came rivalries and disputes, and, although membership of most confraternities of a devotional kind was generally open to all, in reality it was often the case that existing social hierarchies pertained and the related exercise and display of political power continued to operate within them. Yet, the devotional and liturgical

activities they carried out, especially those in the name of their particular advocacy or patron saint, added to the spiritual life of the urban complex and contributed in identifiable ways to its soundscape.

The historical importance of Braga, situated in the north of Portugal, in terms of political and religious developments in the Iberian Peninsula, dates back to Roman times. It was an episcopal see from at least the fourth century and was promoted to an archiepiscopal see in 1071. The city developed around its cathedral, which was consecrated in 1089. There was already a significant number of Portuguese confraternities, mainly in urban centres, by the twelfth century, and that number increased significantly over the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. At least nine devotional confraternities were active in Braga from the later Middle Ages onwards: São João do Souto; Corpo de Deus; Jesus (administered by the city council); Santa Maria do Rocamador; Santíssima Trindade; São Francisco Xavier (based in the cathedral); São Marcos; São Pedro dos Clérigos; and Santos do Paraíso.<sup>1</sup> The Confraternity of São Francisco Xavier da Sé de Braga was founded in 1615 by Cónego Francisco da Costa, and its earliest statutes date from that year.<sup>2</sup> There were probably other confraternities for the same period, but at present they remain undocumented.

### **Devotion to St John in Sixteenth-Century Braga: The Confraternity of São João do Souto**

According to the historian José Marques, the earliest document preserved in the archive of the Confraternity of São João do Souto, in the parish by that name in Braga, dates back to 1186.<sup>3</sup> Marques records the existence of an inn and a hospital for the poor belonging to the brotherhood, founded by Pedro Ourives and his wife before 1128, although this is documented only from 1253.<sup>4</sup> The membership of this lay brotherhood under the advocacy of St John the Baptist, patron saint of the church of São João do Souto, was drawn from a range of different professions and social backgrounds in Braga, including tailors, shoemakers, goldsmiths, merchants, and members of the clergy. The feast day of St John the Baptist (24 June) was celebrated in the church from at least the fifteenth century and included a procession for which the brotherhood assumed organizational

<sup>1</sup> Araújo, “A morte e a concorrência entre as confrarias de Braga”; Pimentel, “A assistência à morte na confraria.”

<sup>2</sup> Arquivo da Ordem Terceira de S. Francisco. *Estatutos da archiconfraria do cordão do Seráfico S. Francisco na Santa Sé de Braga pelo Reverendo Francisco da Costa conigo da ditto é no anno de 1615.*

<sup>3</sup> Marques, “Os pergaminhos da Confraria de S. João de Souto,” 9–11.

<sup>4</sup> Marques, “Os pergaminhos da Confraria de S. João de Souto,” 16.

responsibility. During this early period in the confraternity's history, the festivities became part of the calendar of Braga Cathedral, with the category of a solemn feast, second in terms of scale and prestige only to that of Corpus Christi, reflecting the importance of local worship of St John.<sup>5</sup>

The municipal acts of Braga reveal that, over the course of the sixteenth century, religious feasts held in honour of St John the Baptist formed part of a group of statutory festivities in the city, namely those held by the churches of São Sebastião, São Pedro de Rates, Corpo de Deus, Santa Isabel, Anjo-custódio, São Tiago, and São Geraldo. The minutes of 18 June 1569 record details of where and how the festivities for the eve and feast day of St John were to be held that year, which were to include festive dances organized by the confraternity as part of the celebrations. These were led by two emblematic figures—the King and the Emperor—whose dances, accompanied by instrumentalists, had a key role in the ceremony. The dancers were dressed in silk and fine wool cloth (*chamalote*), and the musicians added to the spectacle as well as to the soundscape. On the morning of the feast day, a Moorish-style dance (*mourisca*) accompanied the city's standard at the head of the procession. The “King of the Dance” (“Rey da Mourisqua”), very well attired, was to parade with all the other dancers, both on the eve and day of St John, and the dancers were to have 500 réais for their refreshments:

they agreed that the King of the Moors should enter with all his followers in a very ordered way, both on the eve and the day [of St John's], to accompany the lantern-bearers and the city standard; and that the procurator [legal representative] of the council should give them 500 réais for their refreshment, or whatever the councillors decide, with a fine of 2000 réais for failure to pay on each occasion.<sup>6</sup>

This was to be followed by the dance of the two *Pélas*,<sup>7</sup> to be danced by two women bakers, bejewelled and dressed in fine clothes:

they further agreed that the dance of the two *Pélas* was to be danced, in accordance with tradition and custom, by the women bread

<sup>5</sup> Marques, “Os pergaminhos da Confraria de S. João do Souto,” 20.

<sup>6</sup> “Mourisca Item 11 – acordarom que o Rey da Mourisqua saya com toda sua gemte muito bem concertada asy na vespora como no dia pera acompanharem os candileiros e a bandedeira da cidade. E o Procurador do comçelho lhes dara pera almocarem quinhentos reais ou aquilo que elles Regedores ordenarem sob pena do que faltar pagar dous mil reais da cadea.” “Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga,” 584.

<sup>7</sup> The word “pélas” may derive from the Latin word for girl, *puella*, and may allude to the fact that this dance, from its origins, was performed only by women.

makers, [who were to be] very well adorned with gold jewellery and dressed in silk or *chamalote*; and they should go early, both on the eve and the day, one to the royal place and the other to the emperor's palace, since the lantern-bearers will not wait for them to set off, because that is the custom; and the procurator of the council should give 110 réais to each of the two men who are to accompany them, for the eve and the day, or whatever the councillors ordain.<sup>8</sup>

The dance of the *Pélas* originated in the fourteenth century and was traditionally linked to the Corpus Christi processions that took place around the country. This dance consisted of pairs of girls, in which each pair was formed by a girl who would stand on the shoulders of the other. Although there are many references to this dance, there is still disagreement as to its exact nature.<sup>9</sup> There were also to be two sword-dancers, who were each to be paid 50 réais, with 30 réais for each of the bagpipers who accompanied the dance.<sup>10</sup>

A further tradition that took place on St John's Day (as well as on the feast of the Holy Sacrament), probably at dawn, was that of the Candle-Holder (*Candeleiro*, derived from the Latin *candela*, meaning candle or light);<sup>11</sup> this was also accompanied by music. The *Candeleiro* is the oldest tradition associated with festivities held in honour of St John, with references dating back to 1489. Little is known about the form it took, but Rui Ferreira has suggested that possibly it included a float with the figure

<sup>8</sup> "Péla Item 8 – acordaram mais que as duas Pelas as façam as Padeiras como está por vreaçom e custume muito bem comcertadas de joyas douro e vistidos de seda ou chamalote E iram muito cedo asy na vespora como no dia huma a casa do Rey outra a casa do Emperador que nam esperem por ellas pera irem nos candileiros e ao porquo como he custume. E o Procurador do Comcelho dara a cada hum dos homens que as trouxerem cento e dez reais pela vespora e dia ou aquilo que elles Regedores ordenarem." "Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga," 585.

<sup>9</sup> Ferreira, "Os cantares polifónicos a S. João," 52.

<sup>10</sup> "Dança das espadas. Item 9 acordaram mais que as duas dancas d espadas que hão dir diamte do Rey e Emoerador i Procurador do Comcelho dará a cada damça cinquenta reais e cada gaitero que lhes tamger trimta reais ou aquilo que eles Regedores determinarem" "Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga," 585.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Marks, in his study of the relationship between image and devotion in the late Middle Ages, suggests that light signaled the active participation of saints whose images were painted or carved in the church. Candles or lanterns were kept alight before them, and the number of lighted candles indicated the relative importance of the image or, as in this case, patronal feast. The annual renewal of the lighting called for a procession in which the members of the confraternity went to the church bearing candles. See Marks, *Image and Devotion*, 162 and 165.

of St John the Baptist surrounded by candles or torches.<sup>12</sup> It may simply have been a very large candle taken through the streets on a float. The minutes of the city council reveal that after Vespers on the eve of the feast (23 June), the *Candeleiro* should be in the cathedral, ready to participate in the procession. Following the procession, the *Candeleiro* was returned to the cathedral and placed in front of the altar of the Holy Sacrament. Those present, including members of the confraternity, would demonstrate their devotion by dancing and singing songs.<sup>13</sup> It is clear from the confraternity's 1652 statutes that this ceremony formed an important part of its activities on St John's day:

The *Candeleiro* ceremony was a very important feast for us, at which not only the members of the confraternity, but also the nobility and the populace, gathered, and still today, at dawn on the feast of the Baptist, distant memories and traces of the old *Candeleiro* can be seen, even though it was stopped for good reason.<sup>14</sup>

The tradition of the *Candeleiro*, the ceremony of the standard, and the dancing the *pélas* and *mourisca* that formed part of the St John's day festivities owed much to the Corpus Christi procession, that, established in the thirteenth century as a mandatory celebration, inspired and influenced the rhythm of other urban ceremonies. The *mourisca*—of particular interest as an example of the representation of alterity—was a widespread festive element throughout Portuguese urban centres as well as at court. On Sundays and feast days at the court of King Manuel I (r. 1495–1521), dining was accompanied by music played by Moorish musicians, performing on a variety of instruments while the noblemen danced:

<sup>12</sup> Rui Ferreira, *As Festas de S. João em Braga*, 46. The *Candeleiro* was also celebrated on other feast days, such as that of St Sebastian.

<sup>13</sup> Some idea of this ceremony can be gleaned from the description of festivities held for the feast of St Sebastian, which were probably very similar: "The Feast of St Sebastian, Item 1: in the meeting it was recalled that on the eve and day of the martyr St Sebastian [...] that the trumpets, shawms and drums came to this house and played when the candles were lit" ("Festa de S. Sebastião Item 1 na dita camara acordaram que se fizesse a festa em bespora e dia do martir Sam Sebastião [...] que as trombetas e charamelas e os tabales venham a esta casa e tamgerom enquanto a fugara arder"). "Acordos e Vreações da Câmara de Braga," 550.

<sup>14</sup> Presumably because of danger of fire; see the Statutes of the Confraternity of S. João do Souto (1652): "O candeleiro foi entre nos hua festa celebre, onde não somente concorriam os confrades mas a Camara nobreza e Povo, e ainda hoje na alvorada do dia do Bautista, se vem huns longes e sombras do candeleiro antigo que se extinguiu por justas cauzas"; cited in Marques, "Os pergaminhos da Confraria de S. João de Souto," 21.

every Sunday and feast day, he [Manuel I] ate and dined to musical accompaniment of shawms, cornetts, harp, tambourines, and rebecs, and, on major feast days, of drums and trumpets; and each took their turn to play while he ate. In addition to these, he had Moorish musicians who sang and played lutes and square tambourines (*pan-deiros*), to the sound of which—together with shawms, harps, rebecs and drums—the young nobles danced during lunch and dinner.<sup>15</sup>

Court practice may have influenced the *mourisca*'s sound and movement so that it came to be considered a desirable festive component of the Corpus Christi and other major urban processions. A *Letter of Ordinance and Privilege* confirmed at a meeting of the city council held in Braga on 2 May 1532 at which João Fernandes, a shoemaker living in the outskirts of the parish of São Marcos, attended as the Moorish king for that year, ordained that, from that time on, the city would have a good *mourisca* with twenty people including king, Moors, and the musicians, an event that was deemed to bring happiness to the populace and honour to the city. The drummers, whose drumming was an integral part of the sonic experience, were obliged, at their own expense, to dress in fine clothes when they attended the processions on Corpus Christi, on the eve and feast day of St John, and the eve of St James. According to this statute, the *mourisca* would also have to take part in urban festivities during the rest of the year, whenever the council officials ordered them to do so:

with this document of statute and privilege, [the confraternity] is advised that, given how pleasant and delightful a well presented Moorish dance [*mourisca*] is for the honour and accompaniment of the Corpus Christi procession, and other festal processions during the year, [and] for the happiness and joy of the city's inhabitants and the ennoblement of the city [...] we order that henceforth there should, in this city, be a good *mourisca* in which twenty people, including the Moorish king and other Moors, tambourine-players and drummers, should participate, and they should be obliged, at their own expense, to wear and be attired in rich and elegant costumes and to come in this manner to accompany the Corpus Christi procession, and likewise the millers, on the eve of St John and of St James, and

<sup>15</sup> *Chronica do Serenissimo Senhor Rei D. Emanuel*, 637: “[...] todolos domingos e dias santos jantava e ceava com música de charamelas, sacabuxas, cornetas, arpas, tamborins, & rabecas, & nas festas principaes com atabales, & trombetas, que todos em quanto comia tangiam cada um por seu gyro, alem destes tinha músicos mouriscos que cantavam e tangiam com alaúdes e pandeiros, ao som dos quais & assim das charamelas, harpas, rabecas e tamboris dançavam os moços fidalgos durante o jantar e a ceia [...]”

also in the morning of St John's Day and on other feast days and at other times that the officials of the city hall ordain with just cause.<sup>16</sup>

It is not known how long the *mourisca*, organized by the Confraternity of São João do Souto, with its distinctive contribution to the processional soundscape, continued to form a regular part of urban processions in Braga. In the late seventeenth century, the French priest François de Tours witnessed the procession of St. John in Braga. In his account of the event, he mentions the intervention of more than a hundred masked people in the procession. From his position on a balcony of the palace of Archbishop D. João de Sousa (1696–1703), François de Tours was impressed by the giants, a dwarf and a float with a representation of St John the Baptist, on which a small boy of about three years of age was surrounded by water fountains. Immediately after the float came eight masked dancers who caught his attention by dancing in front of the archiepiscopal palace. The French priest noted that they seemed to him to be more pagan than Christian.

I will begin by referring to the more than one hundred masked people who were there [...]. I saw the whole procession perfectly since I was on a large balcony of the archbishop's palace, in the company of two of his nephews [...]. These giants were made of cardboard and each one was placed on a man's shoulders so that, in this way, [the supporting man] could not be seen. With them went a small dwarf who could not have been taller than a foot and a half. Then came St John the Baptist in the desert, on a float with water fountains and a naked boy of about three years of age who represented St John the Baptist [...]. Then came eight masked [dancers] who stopped in front of the palace, which I liked very much, as I had never witnessed this kind of procession in which masked dancers participated. In truth, there was nevertheless a pagan element in all this, since it has never proved possible to abolish these customs, so little appropriate to Christianity.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Gomes, *O São João em Braga*, 15–16: “[...] fazemos saber a vós que esta carta de ordenança e privilegio virem, como considerando nós quão aprasível e deleitosa cousa é uma mourisca bem ordenada para a onra e companhia da procissão da festa do Corpo de Deus e d’outras festas do anno e para contentamento e alegria das gentes e ennobrecimento da dita cidade [...] ordenamos que d’aqui em diante aja n’esta cidade uma boa mourisca em que ajam vinte pessoas entre Rey e mouriscos, tamborileiro e atabaqueiro e estes serão obrigados á sua custa ter vestidos e atabios louçams e gallantes e assi vir e acompanhar a procissão e festa do Corpo de Deus e assi os moleiros vespera de São João e de S. Thiago e tambem no dia de S. João pela manhã e outras festas e tempos quando pelos officiaes da Camara com justa causa lhes for mandado [...]”

<sup>17</sup> Cordeiro, *Novo Almanach de Lembranças*, 168: “Começarei por me referir a mais de 100 pessoas mascaradas que ali havia [...] Eu vi perfeitamente toda esta procissão, porque estava



Tours goes on to describe that in front of the palace, a Moor sounded a trumpet signal to commence the battle between Christians and Moors, with the Christians as victors (as always in these representations). The Christians then danced together singing of their victory to the sound of guitars, harps, and viols. The procession then continued with a large group of regular clergy.<sup>18</sup> According to Inácio José Peixoto, the Archbishop of Bragança (1741–1756) prohibited those dances and representations that were considered to be less suitable for the religiosity of the procession, whether that of the Corpus Christi or the feasts of St John.<sup>19</sup> However, the religious drama *Relação do Festivo Aplauso* (*Account of Festive Applause*) of 1754 refers to a musical interlude that included the sound of bugles, giants, and gypsy dances. According to Rui Ferreira, this description is very similar to the one by François de Tours. The evidence suggests that Moorish dances consistently formed part of the festivities held for St John; today's *Dance of King David* is believed to be the heir to that tradition.<sup>20</sup>

The São João festivities in Braga, with their roots in the Corpus Christi procession, came to form part of statutory urban ceremonial in the remit of the confraternities and lent a sense of continuity to their activities. In these festive events, religious and popular traditions merged to create a distinctive soundscape that signalled the identity of the city on major feast days, such as that of St John the Baptist. Manuel Pedro Ferreira has commented on the influence of ecclesiastical practice on popular singing in unwritten polyphony in Minho's archaic folk songs dedicated to St John that are still sung today, which he considers to be “a musical interpenetration that played out in Braga in the fifth to seventh centuries and which, from the end of the eleventh century onwards, had a fundamental role in the diffusion of Christian culture.”<sup>21</sup> It seems likely that these more archaic polyphonic songs have their roots in the sixteenth century, and may be similar to those sung on the festivities held for the patron saints of the brotherhoods of Braga, in particular for the Feast of St John the Baptist.

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numa grande sacada do palácio arquiépiscopal acompanhado por dois sobrinhos do senhor arcebispo. [...] Estes gigantes eram feitos de cartão e postos às costas de cada homem que, aliás, se não via. Traziam entre eles um anãozito que não media mais de pé e meio de altura. Vinha depois São João Batista no deserto, num andor onde havia repuxos de água e um menino nuzinho, de três anos pouco mais ou menos, que representava São João Batista. [...] Seguiam, depois, oito pessoas mascaradas que pararam diante do palácio, o que muito me aprouve, porque nunca havia assistido a esta espécie de procissões onde participassem dançarinos mascarados. Em verdade isto tem o seu quê de pagão, contudo, nunca foi possível abolir estes costumes tão-pouco conformes com o cristianismo.”

<sup>18</sup> Oliveira, *Relato das viagens de padre François de Tours*, 10.

<sup>19</sup> Peixoto, *Memorias particulares*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Ferreira, “As festas de S. João,” 73–75.

<sup>21</sup> Ferreira, “Os cantares polifónicos a S. João,” 12.

## The Founding of a New Devotional Confraternity in Braga: The Misericórdia

In 1498, the creation of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia in Lisbon reflected the rise of the devotional confraternities that, although they continued to be involved in some charitable works, shifted the emphasis of their principal activities to the promotion of religious worship. This devotional practice was directed mainly at confraternal members, but also resulted in an increase in their contribution to the religious life of the city—and its sonosphere—more generally. In Braga, the Misericórdia confraternity was founded in about 1530;<sup>22</sup> it came to be based at the church of that dedication, completed in 1562 (fig. 3.1). The confraternity had the support of the Lisbon Misericórdia and shared some of its privileges (originally granted by King Manuel I); it thus became the most important brotherhood in local terms. The statutes of the Braga Misericórdia, dated 28 January 1625, include references to liturgical musical practice. The regulations regarding members who left their property to the Holy House (*Santa Casa*) of the Misericórdia express this clearly: the sung Office of the Dead should be celebrated with organ playing, singing, and music by Cristóbal de Morales (1500–1553).<sup>23</sup> The specific indication of composer is highly unusual in confraternity statutes and offers an insight into what was surely a well-established musico-liturgical praxis. The office of three lessons celebrated the following day was also to include polyphonic singing and playing of the organ.

This holy house has an obligation to see that an annual Office of three lessons is celebrated in the Octave of the faithful of God [All Souls], after the cathedral chapter celebrated theirs, which is to be attended by thirty brothers who say thirty Masses, with a sung Mass, which is to be with music by [Cristóbal de] Morales, and to be celebrated as solemnly as possible with polyphony [...] And the following day there is to be an Office of the Dead of three lessons in polyphony, to be attended here by the singers, for the soul of his Lordship the Archbishop Dom Augustinho, whom God preserve.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Later, in 1581, another important brotherhood was founded in Braga, the Confraternity of Santa Cruz.

<sup>23</sup> The reference to Morales's four-voice Requiem being sung in 1625 adds to the evidence for the longevity of his music; see Knighton, "Morales in Print."

<sup>24</sup> "Tem mais obrigação esta santa casa, mandar fazer hum officio todos os anos de três Lições no Oitavairo dos fieis, de Deos depois do Cabido fazer o seu ao qual assistirão trinta padres, que dirão trinta missas com missa cantada que seja de Moralles, e melhor se poder ser oficiada em canto d'orgão [...] Ao dia seguinte se fara hum officio de Três lições em canto de órgão aqui assistirão os coreiros pela alma do Senhor Arcebispo D. Agustinho que Deos tem."

The register of deaths for Braga Cathedral, as in the Misericórdia's statutes, also includes several references to Morales's Mass of the Dead being sung by eight singers at funerals. A good example is the register of the death of Isabel de Medeiros Pimentel, who died on 20 June 1629 and was buried in the Augustinian monastery of Santa Maria do Pópulo by the brotherhood of the Misericórdia:

and then, on the following day, the same fathers of [Santa Maria] do Pópulo celebrated an Office with general Masses, and on the day after we celebrated the second Office for her with thirty priests, and the Office was of nine lessons in polyphony, and the Mass sung was by Morales.<sup>25</sup>

Sacred polyphony was thus not only heard regularly in Braga Cathedral, but also in other city churches, such as that of the Misericórdia. It is not clear when polyphony began to be sung in the cathedral, but probably from at least the fifteenth century. Certainly, the performance of liturgical polyphony in alternatim with instrumental music has been documented from 1435 when a private chapel in Braga Cathedral was served by ecclesiastical singers and lay musicians who were required to reside in the city and assist in the processions and feasts organized both by the archbishops and by the most important confraternities.<sup>26</sup>

The reference in the statutes of the Misericórdia is probably to Morales's *Missa Pro defunctis* for four voices, which was copied in MS 965 preserved in Braga District Archive (RISM: *P-BRad* 965), fols. 34<sup>v</sup>–51<sup>v</sup> (fig. 3.2). The first twenty-three folios of this manuscript contain plainchant for the Office of the Dead, and in addition to the Morales Requiem, it features polyphony by local composers from round 1600: Lourenço Ribeiro, chapel master of Braga Cathedral (c. 1594–c. 1606);<sup>27</sup> and António Milheiro (d. 1618), who was born in Braga and became chapel master of Coimbra and Lisbon cathedrals. Earlier polyphony by a local Braga composer survives in MS *P-BRad* 967. Alvarenga considers this small choir book, marked “Liber Introitus” and dating from 1615, to be the earliest extant witness to polyphonic practice in Braga.<sup>28</sup> It includes eighty-five pieces with chant

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Arquivo Distrital de Braga, Fundo da Misericórdia, nº1: Livro dos Estatutos e assentos desta Santa Casa da Misericórdia.

<sup>25</sup> “e logo no outro dia lhe fizeram os mesmos padres do populo hum officio com missas gerais, no outro dia fizeram digo lhe fizemos o 2º officio com trinta clérigos o qual officio foi de nove lições em canto dorgão com sua missa cantada de Morales.” Arquivo Distrital de Braga, Freguesia da Sé. Livro Misto nº 1, nº 312 (1601–1642).

<sup>26</sup> Alvarenga and Rui Cabral, “A polifonia na liturgia bracarense,” 152.

<sup>27</sup> Lourenço Ribeiro, *Missa Pro Defunctis* a 4, *P-BRad* 96, fols. 51–65.

<sup>28</sup> See Alvarenga and Rui Cabral, “A polifonia na liturgia bracarense.”

and integrated polyphony for the Intros and Communions of the main feasts and Sundays of the liturgical year, attributed to Miguel da Fonseca (?–1544), chapel master of Braga Cathedral after 1540.<sup>29</sup>

The repertory in this manuscript reflects a polyphonic improvisatory practice and has a quite distinctive character to the elaborately contrapuntal Morales's Mass, with which it is contemporary.<sup>30</sup> The Fonseca pieces are characterized by unvaried, homophonic textures engendered by the combination of consistently full-voice polyphony built around the plainchant presented in equal note values. In this context, Morales's Requiem, imported into the Braga polyphonic repertory at some point during the sixteenth century and established as appropriate for major funerals, including those of members of the Misericórdia confraternity, must have sounded impressive.<sup>31</sup>

The Braga confraternity's Commitment of Mercy<sup>32</sup> of 1627 is even more explicit as regards musical practice in its dedication of chapters to the duties of the choir of chaplains, the position and obligations of the head chaplain, and the chapel master. This choir of chaplains was founded in the Misericórdia on 20 May 1629 to lend the church and its confraternity

<sup>29</sup> The musico-liturgical practices of the Misericórdia of Braga followed the autochthonous ritual of Braga; a copy of the 1558 edition is preserved at the confraternity's archive. António Pereira de Figueiredo established in the eighteenth century that Braga's liturgical tradition was rooted in the Benedictine rite of Cluny, which was brought to Braga from the south of France by Archbishop Geraldo (1099–1108); see Ferreira, "Um panorama histórico da música na sé de Braga até 1501," 27.

<sup>30</sup> It is also very different from the more international polyphonic repertoires of Coimbra studied by Owen Rees; see Rees, *Polyphony in Portugal*.

<sup>31</sup> The Misericórdia statutes also refer to the obligation to celebrate a Mass sung in plainchant by the chaplains of the confraternity's church for members' souls, and a plainchant office for the soul of Domingos Peres, established by testamentary legacy.

<sup>32</sup> The Commitment is the document of statutes based on the fourteen Works of Mercy. The Lisbon Misericórdia Commitment (1516) was followed by all the Misericórdia confraternities founded in Portugal and Portuguese territories. Chapter 14 of the 1516 Commitment was concerned with "The chaplains and other matters of the Confraternity. The Confraternity will have an educated chaplain, a spiritual man of good character, who will sing Mass and pray every Wednesday. And on the feasts of Our Lady he will sing Mass, but not pray, if they do not fall on Wednesdays or a visitation day [...] And there will be two other priests who are obliged to officiate at sung Mass, and to attend funerals [of members] of the confraternity" ("Dos capellães e cousas outras que ha d auer na confraria. Capitulo. xiiij. Avera na dita confraria huu ~ capellam letrado: homem de boa vida e spiritual em seus costumes: que diga missa cantada e pregue todas as quartas feiras. E os dias de nossa senhora dira a dita missa cantada sem preguar se nom cayr na dita quarta feira ou dia de visitaçam. [...] E auera mais dous capellaães obrigados pera oficiarem as missas cantadas, e pera hyrem aos enterramentos dos que ouerem de seer enterados polla dita confraria"); *Compromisso* of the Misericórdia of Lisbon (1516), fol. 10; available on-line at: <https://www.sclm.pt/cultura/arquivo-historico/o-compromisso/>.

status and propriety in divine worship, and was approved by Archbishop D. Rodrigo da Cunha ten days later. The choir's primary duty was to celebrate divine worship with as much splendour as possible, so music assumed a prominent role. The published application for entry into the choir specifies the chaplains' liturgical obligations: every day at three o'clock in the afternoon, Mass was to be sung in polyphony; admission to the chaplains' choir was by competition; and when there was a vacancy in the chaplaincy, the announcement of the competition was posted on the church door. Clerics who wished to participate had to observe the following conditions: they had to be "old" Christians,<sup>33</sup> people of virtue, and of the right age (about thirty years old). In the entrance examination, candidates were required to demonstrate to the chapel master and master of ceremonies extensive liturgical knowledge based on the norms contained in the Roman ceremonial:

so that the House of Mercy might have greater authority and God might be as highly praised there as He should, there should be chaplains in the house to celebrate divine office in accordance with the custom of the Roman Church, and as elaborately as possible. These chaplains are to be those with the responsibility for the chapels situated in the same House under their administration (fig. 3.3).<sup>34</sup>

Thus plainchant and polyphony, including Morales's Requiem Mass, were sung by the chaplains of the Misericórdia and were quite regularly heard both at the funerals of confraternity members and at a daily Mass celebrated in the church in the afternoon. However, music also had a prominent role in processions organized by the confraternity, especially those held on Maundy Thursday and on the Feast of St Elizabeth.

### **Other Musico-Liturgical Practices of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia**

Even more than liturgical services celebrated in the church, processions heightened the presence of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia in the city,

<sup>33</sup> In the ideology of the period "Old Christians" meant that the person concerned was descended from a Christian family without known Islamic or Jewish blood. Members of the clergy and singers were generally required to present a legal document that attested to the "purity of blood."

<sup>34</sup> "Para que a caza da Misericordia tenha mais autoridade e Deos seja nela louvado como convém, haverá na casa capellas que celebrem os officios divinos, segundo o costume da Igreja Romana com a mayor decência que for possível. Estes capelaes serão aqueles que terão a seu cargo as capellas que estão situadas na mesma caza debaixo da sua administração." Arquivo Distrital de Braga, Fundo da Misericórdia, n° 2, fol. 22: *Compromisso da Misericordia de Braga feito no anno de 628; Compromisso que hora se guarda. Original do compromisso que actualmente se guarda* (1747).

both visually—through the images taken in the procession—and sonically. The procession of *Endoenças*, held on Maundy Thursday and referring to the suffering of Christ, was particularly associated with the Misericórdia in Braga and contributed to its identity, created a strong impression on the populace, and legitimized its acts of mercy. Expenses for the music performed during this procession, and that for the feast of St Elizabeth (2 July)—in addition to that for the Masses and services for members (living and deceased), for Masses sung in Lent, and for the priests who sang the Passion—are recorded throughout the seventeenth century.

The Maundy Thursday *Endoenças* procession—also known as the Ecce Homo procession—was the high point in the Misericórdia's Lenten ceremonies, in which music had a major role in heightening its impact on those present and contributing to the soundscape of Holy Week in Braga. The framework and realization of the procession were also included in the Commitment of the Braga Misericórdia. This document describes how, during the procession, the priests were to sing the Miserere (Psalm 50) in polyphony. The feast of St Elizabeth, celebrated on 2 July, and known as St Elizabeth Day, was also stipulated in the 1516 Lisbon Commitment. In addition to singers, trumpeters, shawmists and sackbut-players participated. In 1619 and 1620 Gregório Gomes was paid a 160 réais for playing the sackbut. Gregório was the son of Pero Gomes, master of the shawm-players of the cathedral music chapel in the time of Archbishop D. Frei Agostinho de Jesus (1588–1609). In June 1634, the treasurer entered expenses amounting to 2640 réais for eleven musicians, in addition to payments to the organist and five singers (*tiples*).<sup>35</sup> The instruments played by these musicians included the dulcian, harp, and small violin (*rebequinha*).<sup>36</sup>

Table 1. Expenses Paid to Musicians by the Confraternity of the Misericórdia in the Seventeenth Century

1619–1620	Gregório Matos sackbut	165 réais
1634	Eleven musicians, including players of the dulcian, harp and small violin, organist, chapel master and five singers	2640 réais
1692	Organist (responsible for the bellows blower)	annual salary of 4000 réais

<sup>35</sup> Books of expenses, treasury accounts, and payment books (*Livros dos Ordenados dos Capelães*) of the Misericórdia archive (Arquivo Distrital de Braga) help to identify a significant number of organists, chapel masters, and singers in the service of the confraternity in the seventeenth century.

<sup>36</sup> Castro, *A Irmandade e Santa Casada Misericórdia de Braga*, 252–254.

The Misericórdia confraternity of Braga offers a good example of the influence of the Counter-Reformation and the resulting process that changed the functions of devotional confraternities in Portugal and elsewhere. As greater emphasis was placed on providing spiritual and material assistance for the people, the fomentation of local piety, and doctrinal guidance to consolidate and enhance the lived Catholic experience in the post-Tridentine period, the brotherhoods' devotional activities—often capturing the attention of the urban community through sound and music—became more closely tied to the Church, as we see in other confraternities active in Braga. A good example is the Confraternity of Santa Cruz, founded in 1581 as a youth brotherhood and led by the schoolmaster Jerónimo Portilo. His special devotion to a cross placed outside the city walls in the sixteenth century by Archbishop D. Diogo de Sousa resulted in the choice of the advocacy of the Vera Cruz, as a symbol of Christ's Passion. Initially a brotherhood of scholars and students, it later came to represent the city's powerbrokers. Originally located in the old church of Espírito Santo, it built its own church in the first half of the seventeenth century. At the other end of the social spectrum, in 1556 the poorest clergy founded the brotherhood of São Pedro dos Clérigos, located in Braga Cathedral.

### **Other Confraternities in Braga**

Through their devotional activities, the Confraternities of São João do Souto and the Misericórdia made a particularly important contribution to the urban ceremonial of Braga, but much research remains to be done on the other brotherhoods that were expanded or founded in the conventual and parish churches of the city in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Three particular case studies for research appear to have considerable potential for gaining insight into the contribution of confraternities to the soundscape of Braga: those founded in the Franciscan convent of Our Lady of Mercy and Remedies; that of St. Nicholau Tolentino; and that of Souls in Purgatory in the church of São Vicente. I will briefly summarize this work-in-progress here.

#### *Confraternities in the Convent of Nossa Senhora da Piedade e dos Remédios*

The convent of Nossa Senhora da Piedade e dos Remédios, one of the earliest female convents to be established in Braga, was founded in 1544–1549 by the Franciscan Bishop D. André de Torquemada, assistant to Archbishop D. Diogo de Sousa.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> The fact that a city such as Braga founded a female religious community only in the mid-sixteenth century was related to the prerogatives imposed by the archbishop in the city and

Convent of [Our Lady of] Remedies This was the first convent to have been founded in Braga. [...] The first abbess, D. Maria d'Abreu, confirmed by D. Manuel de Sousa on 22 January 1549, at the age of twenty-eight, came to this convent with three companions, Brites do Presépio, Antonia de S. Bento, and Guiomar da Saudação, from the convent of Santa Anna in Viana do Castelo.<sup>38</sup>

The convent church was rebuilt in 1608, and there were at least four confraternities based there over the course of the seventeenth century: the Confraternity of Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Our Lady of Pity), founded in 1611, which transferred in 1796 to the chapel of Nossa Senhora de Guadalupe; the Confraternity of São João Evangelista, active from 1646; the Confraternity of the Almas do Purgatório (Souls of Purgatory), founded with the financial support of some of the nuns in 1671 to intercede through divine worship for the forgiveness of souls and their release from Purgatory; and the Confraternity of Nossa Senhora da Graça (Our Lady of Grace) founded in 1697 by Helena de São Pedro, to be her eternal protector, the statutes for which were approved in 1703 and later revised in 1756. These confraternities were intended to provide material and spiritual assistance—primarily to their members—, to encourage divine worship, and veneration of their patron saint the Virgin Mary, or other devotion with the celebration of their respective feast days that marked high-profile events in the social calendar of the city. In addition to the ceremonies held by the confraternities based in the church, other brotherhoods of the urban milieu of Braga also sought out the convent church to hold the feast days of their own patron saints there. Elaborate musical accompaniment was ensured by the nuns, who were excellent singers and instrumentalists.<sup>39</sup>

The nuns took pleasure in a musical genre that linked sacred and secular musical worlds in convent performance practice: devotional *vilancicos* (also referred to as *chançonetas*). Throughout the seventeenth century, they performed this repertory at Christmas and New Year, introducing vernacular texts and popular melodies into the Latin liturgical offices.

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surrounding area, which appear to have discouraged the mendicant orders from founding institutions in the city; they preferred the town of Guimarães.

<sup>38</sup> Bellino, *Inscrições e letreiros*, 157: “Convento dos Remédios Foi este o primeiro convento que em Braga se fundára. [...] A primeira Abbadessa D. Maria d'Abreu, de 28 annos de idade confirmada por D. Manuel de Sousa em 22 de Janeiro de 1549, veio para este convento com três companheiras, Brites do Presépio, Antonia de S. Bento e Guiomar da Saudação, do convento de Santa Anna, de Vianna do Castelo.”

<sup>39</sup> Silva, *Casar com Deus*, 335.



These works grew increasingly elaborate and varied, alternating polychoral writing with solo voice accompanied by instruments.<sup>40</sup>

*The Confraternity of São Nicolau Tolentino*

The Confraternity of São Nicolau Tolentino was established at the Augustinian monastic church, known as the Pópulo,<sup>41</sup> and founded by Archbishop Fr. Agostinho de Jesus (1588–1609), himself a member of the order from 1596. The date of the brotherhood’s founding is unknown; the earliest known reference dates from 1627. The much later 1740 statutes state that in 1627 Archbishop Dom Rodrigo da Cunha (1626–1634) was accepted as a member after his arrival in the city. His sister Isabel also joined and donated an altarpiece and an ornament for the confraternity’s chapel where an image of the saint was placed.<sup>42</sup>

St Nicholas Tolentino (1245–1305) was canonized in 1446, the first saint of the Augustinian Order. His dedication to the sick and his miraculous intervention with the poor in his lifetime in southern Italy led to his advocacy in matters of health and, in particular, the plague, but from early on he was also considered to be the protector of souls in purgatory, and popular devotion to him was widespread throughout southern Europe. The confraternity was dedicated to the rescue and salvation of souls in Purgatory through the good works and prayers of living members, especially through the celebration of Masses.<sup>43</sup> The confraternity celebrated sung Masses on a daily basis for the souls of deceased members, while the annual patronal feast day (10 September) involved *son et lumière* effects to please existing members and attract new ones. The expenses for music incurred in 1686 are recorded in the confraternity’s account book for the years 1682 to 1710:

Masses	4610 réais
For the music of the Confraternity of Souls	2200 réais
For the wax purchased	7350 réais

<sup>40</sup> In 1620 the Archbishop of Braga, D. Afonso Furtado de Mendonça (r. 1619–1627), prohibited the performance of any plays—*autos*, *comedias* or *colóquios*—in the convent. Lessa, “Musical life in Portuguese Benedictine and Clarissan Convents,” 331; see also Lessa, “Nuns’ Musical Activity, in the Convents of Portugal.”

<sup>41</sup> This church was modelled on that of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome, a church of great significance for the Augustinian order.

<sup>42</sup> Arquivo da Capela de S. Miguel-o-Anjo, *Livro dos estatutos da confraria do glorioso Sam Nicolau Tolentino como protector das Benditas Almas do fogo do Purgatorio com a invocação da Correa de Santo Agostinho, sita na igreja e collegio de Nossa Senhora da Grala do Populo, desta cidade de Braga*, 1740; cited in Araújo, “Para cuidar da salvação das Almas,” 5.

<sup>43</sup> Knighton, “Music for the Soul.”

For the remoulding of old wax	3105 réais
For incense and paper for the candleholders	140 réais
Total expenses:	15,800 réais <sup>44</sup>

The cost of musicians pales beside the amount spent on wax, but nevertheless represents a considerable outlay. Further research into this confraternity will surely reveal more about its devotional activities dedicated to saving souls from Purgatory and the music it contributed to the soundscape of Braga.

### *The Confraternity das Almas of the Church of São Vicente*

The church of São Vicente de Braga had its origins in a Visigothic building that had occupied the site from at least the seventh century; a tombstone from 618 CE is preserved in the sacristy. Another tombstone, on the main façade, refers to works carried out in 656, when the first church was built; it was later remodeled in 1565 and 1691. The existing Baroque church can be attributed to the most prestigious architects of the city of Braga, such as André Soares (1720–1769), and Carlos Amarante (1748–1815). Although the date of foundation of the brotherhood of São Vicente is not known, it already existed in 1594, according to the register of elections held in that year.<sup>45</sup> According to Manuel Amaro Martins Ferreira, this confraternity was dubbed the brotherhood “of the people and the city” and in 1783 was joined by the Santo Homem Bom, a tailors’ corporation.<sup>46</sup> Some singular features distinguished the Confraternity of São Vicente from its counterparts in Braga: in addition to visiting and providing support for sick members, they also undertook responsibility to visit prisoners and work to free them. The Confraternity of the Almas do Purgatorio was also founded in São Vicente in 1666, and its statutes of the following year provide some information on its musical activities (fig. 3.4). For example, the head of the confraternity was to pay for the music for Vespers and the solemn Mass the following day.<sup>47</sup> The bells of the church of São Vicente were to be rung frequently to announce the religious activities taking place, for however many

<sup>44</sup> Arquivo da Capela de S. Miguel-o-Anjo, *Livro de despeza da confraria das Almas de S. Nicolao Tolentino do convento do Pópulo 1682–1710*, fols. 7<sup>r</sup>–9: “Com missas gerais 4.610 réis; com a música do Ofício das Almas 2.200 réis; com a cera que se comprou 7.350 réis; com o feito da cera velha 310 réis; com pibetes e papel para debaixo dos castiçais 140 réis; total das despesas 15.810 réis.”

<sup>45</sup> Arquivo da Igreja de S. Vicente, *Livro de termos 1594–1609*, no. 3464.

<sup>46</sup> Martins Ferreira, “O Desaparecimento de um símbolo em Braga.”

<sup>47</sup> Arquivo da Igreja de S. Vicente, “Estatutos da Confraria, e devoção das Almas do Purgatorio instituída na igreja do mártire S. Vicente desta cidade de Braga por ser altar preveligiado de muitas e inúmeraveis indulgencias Apostolicas, principiada e eregida no anno de 1666, Ano

days they lasted. Bell-ringing was paid for on the most solemn occasions by the brotherhood. The sound emanating from the bell tower established communication with the inhabitants of the city, announcing the occasions that required the presence of the faithful. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the church of São Vicente maintained an intense religious activity, boosted by the various brotherhoods it housed. The burials, processions, and other festivities they organized gathered many of the faithful, and lent it great presence, both visibly and sonically.

## Conclusions

Counter-Reformation Catholicism marked its increased influence through the building of churches and the founding of confraternities. Its prestige and influence was made manifest through the decoration of these places, and, above all, in the liturgical and devotional ceremonial achieved through the visual arts, music, dance, and theatre. These modes of expression have often been linked to age-old religious phenomena, and many festive cycles originated from the seasonal and daily rhythms of life. The festive celebrations organized by confraternities—with their processions, pilgrimages, and other manifestations of spiritual devotion and joy through gesture, movement, sound, and words—were seen by the Church as a means of enhancing social relations and demonstrating its influence over the laity, in Braga as elsewhere. Brotherhoods, especially those endowed with a rich artistic and cultural heritage, offered a stage for the performance of festive events. Many of these festivities were essentially devotional, as, for example, the Holy Week processions of the Confraternity of the *Misericórdia*, but others had a more ludic component that combined the sacred with the profane, as in the case of the patronal feast day celebrations of the Confraternity of São João do Souto. This festive ambience, imbued with symbolism and the manifestation of joy was justified in sacred texts as a way of praising God. The confraternities were one of the main organic and social institutions accepted by the Church to frame and express the religious life of the laity. Although in many ways they deepened and legitimized existing differences in society, they played an important role in the construction of the identity of various social groups, reinforced processes of integration and cohesion in urban communities, and multiplied the spaces, times, and forms of sociability centred around festivities and religious ceremonies in which music assumed particular importance. Music was an integral part of liturgical ceremonial, but the sounds of bells, singers, and instrumentalists of different kinds could also serve to demonstrate

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de 1667, se fiserão os ditos Estatutos.” The statutes mention that the celebration should take place fifteen days after the feast of All Souls.

the confraternity's sphere of influence and economic reach: the more musicians and the more sonic exuberance, the greater the admiration for and attraction of the confraternity.

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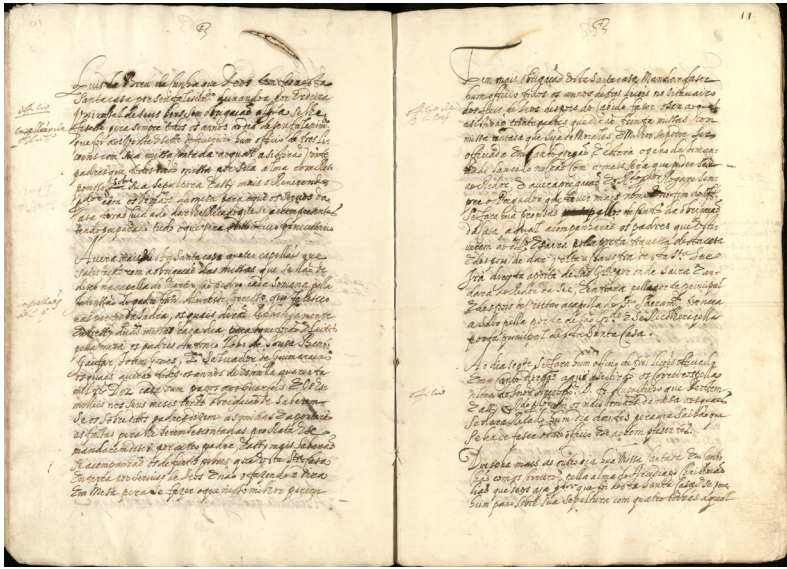


Fig. 3.3. The 1628 statutes of the Misericórdia, with the chaplains' duties. Braga. Arquivo Distrital. Fundo da Misericórdia, nº. 2, fol. 22: *Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga feito no anno de 628; Compromisso que hora se guarda*. Original do compromisso que actualmente se guarda (1747), fols. 10<sup>o</sup>–11<sup>o</sup>.

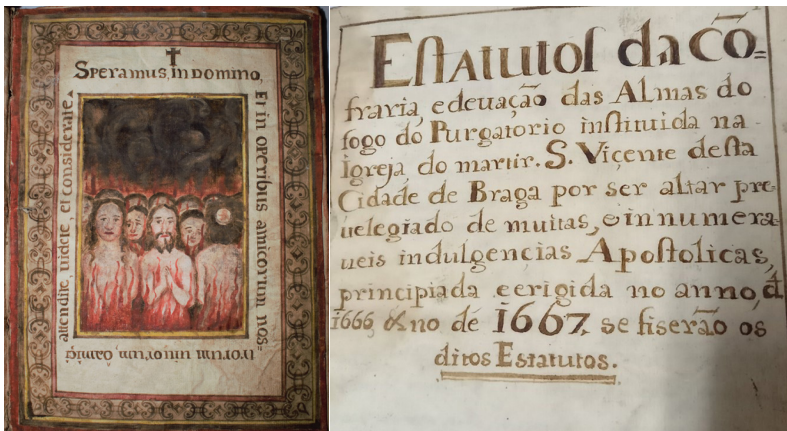


Fig. 3.4. The 1667 Statutes of the Confraternity of Almas do Purgatorio, based in the church of São Vicente, Braga: first opening. Braga. Arquivo da Igreja de S. Vicente. *Estatutos da confraria, e deuação das Almas do fogo do Purgatorio*. Photo: Elisa Lessa.