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Delmira Espada Custódio



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EDITOR'S NOTE

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- 1 This thesis aims to show that Books of Hours played a central role in late medieval Portuguese society and in the relations with the main European royal houses. This study allowed us to retrace the path of some of these codices and confirm the prestige of Portugal among the main houses of the time, the enthusiastic reception of Flemish art by the Portuguese nobility, and its influence on the national production. Because the vast majority of these manuscripts have never been studied, we carried out a comprehensive survey of the Books of Hours, manuscripts, and loose folios currently preserved in Portugal, as well as a brief study of sixteen exemplars from foreign institutions, which are clearly linked to the Portuguese royal house. By systematically identifying and inventorying the works and by elaborating a critical reflection on the historiography of the topic and the specimens under analysis, we were able to build a corpus and identify

the general features of this type of book, as well as the specific characteristics of the exemplars of Flemish origin.

- 2 The fact that we had direct access to the codices and to national and international databases, which now have a large part of their archives online, was invaluable to our study of the images; it also allowed us to identify exemplars linked to the Portuguese royal house that are currently held by various foreign institutions. Being able to visually compare them with similar manuscripts allowed us to develop a critical perspective of the Portuguese specimens and understand how they fit into a broader context.
- 3 Thus, the seventy-eight exemplars we flagged in Portugal were the subject of an analytical study that included the identification of their origin and iconographic programmes (together with an indication of the section they belong to), as well as specific literature for each manuscript. For the Books of Hours of Flemish origin, most of which came from the Portuguese royal collection, we performed a detailed codicological study that included, in addition to the above elements, the identification of the illuminators, the elaboration of detailed scientific records, and a full transcript of the texts. To assess their impact, we compared them to other works by their illuminator, to the painting and illumination of the time, to earlier works, and to the work produced by the next generations of illuminators. This study had a significant impact on the codices under analysis, such as the reconstitution of what we consider to be the original format of the so-called *Book of Hours said to belong to Prince Ferdinand or Queen Catherine* currently held by the National Ancient Art Museum, an outstanding piece that can now be placed at the centre of the discussion in Portugal and abroad.
- 4 Another aspect that we wish to emphasise is the identification, analysis, and edition of primary documentary sources, a process that we began – and that has been facilitated by the fact that the manuscripts are now at least partially studied –, but that must be, in our opinion, continued and furthered. Thus, we thank the National Library of Portugal, whose partnership – which has not yet been fully explored – proved to be greatly advantageous because it led to the rediscovery of six important new description instruments that were instrumental to the study of these illuminated manuscripts. This joint effort allowed us to trace the path travelled by the codices through various institutions, to assess the most recent damage, and to recreate part of the history of the book.
- 5 The chronology of the manuscripts under study – which cover the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth century – and the complexity of the economic, social, and cultural relations between the main European courts led us to organise our corpus into four chronological groups that correspond to four moments in the history of Flemish illumination. Organising this archive by chronology and workshop allowed us to show the evolution of the pictorial language that marked the Flemish illumination of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; on the other hand, comparing it to the production of the time helped us better understand the process of book production and the circulation of models, the choices of the Portuguese elites, and the value of the codices in our possession.
- 6 The first group covers the first half of the fifteenth century and focuses on the court of King John I of Portugal and the princes of the Illustrious Generation, especially Edward of Portugal, Isabella of Portugal, Duchess of Burgundy, and Prince Henry the Navigator. Two manuscripts in this set, *The Book of Hours of King Edward* and the *Hours of Prince Henry the Navigator*, are especially interesting because they were illuminated by two important

aesthetic currents that marked the Flemish and Dutch production of the first half of the fifteenth century: the Masters of the Gold Scrolls and the Masters of Otto de Moerdrecht.

- 7 Like their contemporaries, these artists were not overly concerned with the individualization of the figures, which were delicate and poetic, or with the depiction of perspective, focusing instead on developing strongly ornamental languages that relied heavily on the use of gold. Another aspect revealed by the study of these Books of Hours is the presence of a longstanding shared visual culture between workshops of different regions, which can be seen in elaborate codices but also in simpler manuscripts, indicating that they were produced in large numbers and to serve different audiences.
- 8 Our study of the *Hours of King Edward*, which had previously been studied by Mário Martins and Ana Lemos, brought new contributions to our knowledge of the codex, which can now be discussed. Among those contributions is the addition of a document published by Jacques Paviot detailing the binding of six codices in 1431 for Isabella's personal use, which we believe can be confirmed by the hypothesis posed by several authors that this codex was commissioned by the princess as a gift; but there were also three other moments in 1428 when the codex could have been brought to Portugal: the arrival in Portugal of Philip the Good's entourage, the return of Peter, Constable of Portugal from his long travels in Europe, and the marriage of King Edward.
- 9 We relied on direct observation to obtain a more detailed outline of the book's journey through Portugal, which points to Princess Catherine, daughter of King Edward, as the possible owner of the codex. Furthermore, we identified and systematised the texts that were added to the codex in Portugal, several of which are presented here for the first time, and confirmed that the removal of the illuminated folios from the Office of the Virgin was done after their sequence had been changed – a minor detail but one that, when compared to the date of the book's last binding, allowed us to establish a timeline for when the damage was done. As mentioned above, this stands as a warning of the urgent need to reflect on the recent history of the collections and of our illuminated heritage, a task that we expect will require the full cooperation of the institutions.
- 10 With regard to the *Illuminated Hours of Prince Henry the Navigator*, an attribution we consider to be provisional, our greatest contribution has been to bring to the discussion an unpublished work in fragile condition, but that shows signs of having once been an elaborate book, produced for a member of the royal house; the same is likely true of other codices in the Évora collection. Comparing those works to other exemplars produced in the same period allowed us to attribute the illumination to the Masters of Otto de Moerdrecht and to present a proposal to restore the codex to what we believe may have been its original format.
- 11 The second group covers the third quarter of the fifteenth century and mainly refers to the illuminated Hours commissioned by Eleanor, Queen of Portugal, and to the artistic production linked to the circle of Willem Vrelant. The Flemish illumination of this period, which is strongly marked by the aesthetics of this illuminator, is characterised by idealised, graceful figures (in continuity with the previous period), backgrounds with a variety of characters, and margins adorned with floral elements, using wide surfaces where areas of virgin parchment can still be found. This period also saw a resurgence of the grisaille, a resource explored by several artists, which, as we shall see, was well received by the queen.

- 12 In our master's dissertation, we addressed the *Most Perfect Hours*, a masterpiece of the grisaille, a study that we have now consolidated by comparing the book to a large number of works to gain a broader perspective on the Flemish illumination of the time, the practices used in workshops, and the *modus operandi* of their illuminator. However, we have not yet found a definitive answer that clearly identifies the patron of these Hours because, while the analysis of the marginal figures suggests someone connected with the Valois court, the unusual depiction of the Mass for the Feast of St. Andrew points to the house of Burgundy and, thus, continues to intrigue us; unfortunately, we were unable to find anything to confirm this hypothesis in the letters written by Isabella of Portugal.
- 13 The *Hours with alternate colours*, which we discovered in Baltimore, constitute a new element and a welcome revelation for the history of Portuguese illumination, even though, regrettably, we were unable to consult the original. Their identification contributes to a better understanding of the Queen's library and preferences, and is a first step towards reconstituting the artistic heritage of our elites – one of several avenues that we believe must be explored. Our study revealed an extensive iconographic programme, quite specific in some respects, which, if our proposed reorganisation is correct, is lacking seven iconographic themes with the chromatic errors corrected.
- 14 The third group consists of the works produced in the last quarter of the fifteenth century and also reflects the artistic patronage of Queen Eleanor and her connections to the house of Austria, especially to Maximilian I, with whom she kept regular contact. The illumination of the late fifteenth century is strongly linked to the aesthetics of the Ghent-Bruges School, which is characterised by highly colourful margins populated by natural elements in *trompe-l'oeil*.
- 15 This new commitment to reality brought to light the essence of Flemish painting and illumination, which distinguished itself from other currents of the time by the refined aesthetic and pictorial sense of its surfaces. The *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal* and the *Hours of Sister Joan of God*, illuminated by the Master of Mary of Burgundy and by Alexander Bening, respectively, are some noteworthy examples in this set.
- 16 Like the *Hours of Prince Henry the Navigator*, the first work does not reflect the quality of the original codex due to its current state of preservation. The reconstitution of the original structure – which we are certain is missing 16 illuminated folios –, the iconographic analysis, the identification of the illuminator, and the fact that the book has been proved to belong to the queen led us to believe that there may be a link between this Book of Hours and the court of Maximilian I.
- 17 The *Hours of Sister Joan of God*, illuminated by Alexander Bening, one of the main Masters of the turn of the century, is a good example of the changes that marked book production in sixteenth century Flanders, where it had become common practice to repeat models in elaborate works. This transitional phase is also characterised by a high degree of plastic experimentation and by the search for innovative solutions in works of varying importance. Among the books we analysed, the Évora 14, which Teresa Botelho Serra attributes to the Master of Antoine Rolin, is a good example of this, as it combines the grisaille with polychromatic illumination in the opening of some sections. However, the greatest challenge was reorganising the contents based on our analysis of the text and on our understanding of the iconographic programme.
- 18 The last group is the one we have studied in more detail, and perhaps the one about which much more is yet to be said. The first half of the sixteenth century is represented

by three key names in sixteenth-century illumination – Gerard Horenbout, Simon Bening, and António de Holanda –, and by highly elaborate works with iconographic programmes developed and executed by several talented artists. This collaboration between the main workshops and artists, who combined their efforts to be able to take on large orders, and the replication of models mentioned above, are striking features of the illumination of the time.

- 19 Among the pieces preserved in our institutions are two important manuscripts from the collection of the Portuguese royal house: the so-called *Book of Hours said to belong to Prince Ferdinand or Queen Catherine* (it is “so-called” because its current composition does not allow us to call it a Book of Hours, and it is said to belong to Ferdinand Fernandes or Queen Catherine because, as we shall attempt to demonstrate, the book may have been commissioned by a Portuguese monarch), with Gerard Horenbout as main illuminator, and the *Book of Hours said to belong to King Manuel I*, illuminated by António de Holanda with the collaboration of other artists. In our opinion, the intervention on the first manuscript is our most important contribution because it restored meaning to an invaluable artistic and historical piece. The identification of the illuminator and the formal similarities between this manuscript’s calendar and the calendars of the *Very Rich Hours of the Duke of Berry* and the *Grimani Breviary* allowed us to date it to the patronage of Margaret of Austria, for whom Horenbout worked. The allusions to the Portuguese royal house and the historical context suggest it was commissioned as a gift to commemorate the union of these two important dynastic families. Reconstituting it in its original format by adding the *Hours of the Dukes of Devonshire* allowed us to classify the codex and restore it to a dimension appropriate to the prestige of its owner and the importance of the occasion for which it was commissioned.
- 20 A Flemish illuminator in the service of the Portuguese court illuminated the second manuscript, and it differs from the others since it uses a specific language with Iberian influences. António de Holanda was a unique case among the illuminators of this period; his stay in Portugal and the contact with the Portuguese art of the sixteenth century may have kept him isolated from the Flemish practices, allowing him to develop his own language, which was clearly influenced by the national artistic production.
- 21 Therefore, although *the Hours said to belong to King Manuel* have been the subject of an in-depth study by Dagoberto Markl, there is now need for a comparative study with other works of Portuguese painting and illumination, which we would have liked to have carried out; however, for a variety of reasons, this study did not fit within the scope of this project.
- 22 Thus, we opted by focusing on other research avenues that would allow us to correct the number of illuminated folios in the codex – 57 instead of the 58 indicated by several authors –, to remark on the loss of the introductory folio of the Penitential Psalms, to reflect on how the MNAA 13 influenced its design, to present a new reading for the double folio that marks the Office of the Dead, more in keeping with the importance that the Jerónimos Monastery had in King Manuel’s political project, and to point out the signs of a work that, in our opinion, is not yet complete.
- 23 We have no hesitation in attributing to Simon Bening the loose folios known as the *Book of Hours of Santos-o-Novo*, which consists of seven unpublished pieces of outstanding quality. Together with the exemplars mentioned above and those held by foreign institutions, these pieces confirm that the Portuguese court and, of course, the noble houses that gravitated around it, was familiar with the best works produced in the Flanders region

and was known internationally by its wealth and prestige, which was reflected in the quality of the works associated with those houses. The strong appreciation of the Portuguese elites for Flemish art also had an impact on the national artistic production and on the high quality of the illumination produced in Portugal during the reigns of the *Fortunate* and of his successor. It should be noted that the Portuguese artistic production of the sixteenth century underwent a similar process as the works that marked the apogee of fifteenth-century Flemish illumination; that is, without completely rejecting the iconographic and aesthetic forms which they valued so much, they were able to develop their own language, similar in quality to the Flemish art, as we can see in the frontispieces of the work known as the *New Reading*, in the *Chronicles*, in the *Heraldry Books*, in the *Commitments* and in some *New Forais*. These works produced by the royal workshops reflect the Flemish aesthetics found in some of the works analysed here, and inaugurate a new language that was part of King Manuel's project to renew the country. Like Philip the Good, King Manuel I also sought to consolidate the legitimacy and international prestige of his rule by, among other things, strongly endorsing the arts.

AUTHOR

DELMIRA ESPADA CUSTÓDIO

Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Instituto de Estudos
Medievais, 1069-061, Lisboa, Portugal
delmiraespada@gmail.com