

DE NOVISSIMIS IN THE *LAUDES E CANTIGAS ESPIRITUAIS* BY FREI ANDRÉ DIAS**Manuel Lázaro Pulido**

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Resumen

El presente estudio pretende exponer el contexto de la reflexión escatológica en la obra *Laudes e cantigas espirituais* de Frei André Dias. La obra del obispo de Megara muestra la expresión literario-doctrinal sobre la cuestión de los *novissimis* (muerte, juicio, paraíso, infierno). Se presenta el contexto doctrinal y religioso de su tiempo en la reflexión sobre la muerte y la retribución, especialmente en el tema del purgatorio y el juicio final, con el fin de comprender el porqué de su presencia en los *Laudes* que desde su literatura anticipa la teatralidad que se abrirá paso en los siglos XVI y XVII

Paraules clau: escatología, *novissimis*, André Dias, teología del siglo XV, pensamiento peninsular

Abstract

The present article discusses the context of the eschatological reflection in the work *Laudes e cantigas espirituais* by Frei André Dias. The work of the bishop of Megara elaborates on the literary-doctrinal expression of the *novissimis* or last things (death, judgment, paradise, and hell). The doctrinal and religious context of his time is evident in his reflection on death and retribution, especially regarding the subjects of purgatory and final judgment. The aim is to understand their presence in the *Laudes*, which anticipates the theatricality that will emerge in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Keywords: Eschatology, *novissimis*, André Dias, Fifteenth-century Theology, Iberian Thought

1. Introduction. Context of the Reflection on the *Novissimis*

In theological terms, to speak of eschatology means to speak of theological anthropology. The subject of the destiny of the universal human being and of the particular human beings who make up human society is always a question of great interest in every age, whatever its thematisation. It is true that eschatological topics such as death, judgement, purgatory, paradise and hell, as concepts that have been brought together in the theological language under the original formula of the Desert Fathers of *novissimis* are, as a whole, alien to today's language. But the reality behind language never ceases to be relevant. In this sense, the destiny of humans confronted with judgement on account of their passage through the world –individually or collectively, or both at the same time– is no stranger to the expectations of humans subsumed in immanent projections in terms of utopia and dystopias. In any case, the presence of studies on the theme of Heaven and Hell –and of the *novissimis* in general– in Western culture is a reality, dependent on medieval reading (SCHMITT 1994; CAROZZI 1994; FOURNIÉ 1997), especially since Jacques Le Goff published, in 1981, his work *La Naissance du purgatoire* (1989) where he addressed a non-specialist academic audience within the field of religious history studies. Le Goff –as Philippe Ariès points out following A. Vauchez's expression– refers to these theological spaces, especially purgatory, to an 'archeo-Christian' ("archéochristienne") time that evolves in the cultural and religious context (ARIÈS 1983: 152).

In this evolution of the study of eschatological places as a form of expression of human destiny, the 15th century was particularly sensitive to the problem of humans and also to eschatology, following the doctrine established by Pope Benedict XII in the Constitution "Benedictus Deus" of January 29, 1336, which we will address later.

On the one hand, it is a century of transition that is torn between the security of tradition –based on medieval concepts, forms and methods– and the force of innovation. On the other hand, this effort of synthesis and broadening of perspective in turn meant the construction of the basis of a new mental universe, in which *Christianity* is consolidated through the renewed character of the deepening and broadening of *humanity's* mind. The 15th century preserves a foundational humanist spirit that represents, despite what some scholars believe (RÜEGG 1994; GIL 1981), a character of transition, combination and tension.

The implicit debate is the exact place of this humanity, with its burden of fallen nature and received historical inheritance (*latinitas*), in the Western project. This anthropological question is substantiated in the differentiation between the study of human and theological disciplines in the universities of Christian Europe –Paris and Salamanca, among others– at the hands of Pope Benedict XIII and Pope Martin V, in a way in which the humanist and Renaissance spirit becomes permeable and makes the foundation of modern thought possible.

Many authors flourished in university classrooms, but also gravitating around them, at the same time as holding positions of civil or ecclesiastical responsibility, or remaining close to them. Having a family member in an ecclesiastical post was the result of a family endeavour, which they saw as the best way to reap the benefits of sending their children to a university –thus making the most of their economic effort– a strategy that would last for several centuries, as Mauro Hernández has pointed out (HERNÁNDEZ 1995). That is why the works of the time are aimed at (KRISTELLER 1992: 16) and, often, have as protagonists, men from all walks of life, in a project that seeks to elevate and bring to the vertical from the horizontal, in a double legitimising movement. This plurality of agents is reflected in a diversity of forms of communication of thought: theological, philosophical and natural philosophy treatises, liturgical literature, sermon literature, narrative and poetry of various kinds.

André Dias (also known as Andreas Hispanus, Andreas Escobar, Andreas Megarensis, Andreas Ulixbonensis, Andreas Didaci), was born in 1348 and died in 1441, and therefore lived in a period between the 14th and 15th centuries (COSTA 1967). The religious laudatory literature, i.e. the dramatic and literary laude –different from the “de louvor” which is laudatory literature in praise of a person– of the author to whom we are devoting this study, is not unusual in this period. In fact, according to the studies of Manuel Calderón (CALDERÓN 1993) y de Mário Martins (MARTINS 1983) influences from the Italian laudes (“lodi”) can be identified, as the work is believed to reflect a translation and expansion of an Italian “laudário”, adapted to Portuguese lyrical and metrical usage, where the hymn –in Portugal significantly dedicated to Our Lady– culminates with a “ladainha” or litany (MARTINS 1961: 152).

Literary studies have shown the importance of the laudatory literature of Maestre André Dias because his “laudário”, contained in the work we will be analysing –the *Laudes e cantigas espirituais*–,¹ helps to fill the gap in the chronology of the development of troubadour lyric poetry and cantigas, especially among the Galician-Portuguese tradition (CALDERÓN 1993) and the carols of Gil Vicente (CALDERÓN 2000). This religious literature has a very important pedagogical purpose –pastoral in ecclesiastical terms– because it promotes significant mnemonic techniques, as can be seen from its study. Literary studies point to the technical and musical elements that are reflected in the use of zejelesque stanza structures or the introduction of dramatic elements (CALDERÓN 2000: 119-120).

In the case of André Dias, the didactic character is yet another feature of a theological production that is especially concerned with communication, with reaching the greatest number of people. This effort is undoubtedly in line with the preaching activity of the time, which was particularly marked in Portugal (ODBER DE BAUTBETA 1991) and carried out especially, due to its very nature,

¹ Biblioteca Nacional Portuguesa (BNP). André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens em prosa e verso vulgar de louvores e excellência do Santissimo Nome de Jesus e dos milagres que Deus obrou...* perg. Ms. Il. 61, 80 f., 2 cols., 25-26 l. (DIAS 1951).

by the mendicant orders –Franciscans and Dominicans– and also in line with the ecclesial and political moment of the time, which pushed for a more intense communication effort, namely the reform atmosphere of and on the conciliar doctrine (LOMAX 1969), the issue with the Jews (FERRO 1982) and the constitution of a political, religious and social project around the Crown, especially on the Iberian peninsula (both in Portugal and in Castile).

André Dias thus combines a pastoral literature with the so-called doctrinal political-didactic poetry (SEVERIN 2004), keeping the didactic form and defining the political question from theological doctrinal legitimation. Thus, in his “laudário”, he uses liturgical moments, the theological doctrine of the life of the Church (the birth and passion of Christ, the life of the saints, the Virgin Mary and spiritual-ascetical themes) to promote piety and doctrinal evangelisation, as Veridiana Skocic points out:

...as composições do beneditino parecem apresentar também um carácter instrumental a partir do qual podemos divisar (nos moldes da homilética) uma proposta evangelística, doutrinária e pastoral. Os textos parecem ser direcionados, portanto, não apenas ao enaltecimento do Filho de Deus, mas também à divulgação da fé, da disciplina e da instrução religiosa do laicado. Ao instruir os crentes e propor-lhes a aceitação de Jesus e Maria na obra Redentora, o autor parece enfatizar uma religiosidade mais intimista percebida, principalmente, pela humanização dos seres celestiais (SKOCIC 2011: 11).

André Dias was an excellent preacher. It is not surprising that some authors, speaking of medieval preaching in Portugal, place the bishop of Megara almost on the same level as Anthony of Lisbon (PÉREZ 1985: 127-128). Undoubtedly, in addition to his personal disposition and his early training as a Dominican friar, he was also involved in pastoral work and the care of souls characteristic of his episcopal office. In the 15th century, bishops were very careful in their use of words when conveying their message. As ministers of Christ, the prelates had to pay great attention to preaching and this is emphasised by the ecclesiastical doctrine that strengthens the doctrinal authority of the episcopate in the face of an illiterate flock often vulnerable to heresy (LONGÈRE 1983). On the other hand, 15th-century preaching, carried out especially by Franciscans and Dominicans, focuses on apostolic preaching, on the death and resurrection of Christ, on the universal redemption brought about by the humanity of God, who redeems –with his suffering on the Cross– the original sin of humans, who are marked with the sign of physical (sickness), human (poverty) and social (oppression) weakness. Preaching gives voice to the images –and art images to the voice (FRAGA 2007)– to help visualise the Passion of Christ, a privileged theme in the liturgical iconography (altarpieces) and social iconography (confraternities) of the Iberian Baroque. These elements can be found in the work of André Dias. An example of this preaching is that of Bernardino de Siena, who –according to Mário Martins– master André introduced in Portugal, since they possibly met in Italy (DIAS 1951: 11). Bernardino’s preaching became a paradigm of communication with the people of God, and was widespread in the Iberian Peninsula

to the point that some scholars speculate that he visited the Iberian Peninsula. While it is unlikely that this would have happened (VÁZQUEZ 1980), rumour is undoubtedly a sign of his indirect presence through preachers, as in the case at hand.

In this context, *Laudes e cantigas espirituais* should not be regarded as a work of little relevance in the production of the Benedictine master, as its theological depth is second to none when considered against the backdrop of the religious debates of its time, such as *De Schismatibus*, written between 1416 and 1417, and *Graecis errantibus*, written in 1437 (GOMES 2009: 119). *Laudes* is of great value in the history of Portuguese thought, not only because it is a unique work of its kind, constituting one of the first works of Portuguese religious poetry, but also because this poetry, this literature, presents in an eminently pedagogical and eloquent (laudatory) narrative form, the doctrinal elements that feed on theological speculation (doctrinal) to nourish intellectually the whole People of God (written preaching). In this last aspect, it is important to point out that, typically, the sets of sermons put into writing have a didactic intention in the formal and internal sense, that is, they help the students of the *ars predicandi* to learn how to craft sermons and preach. An example of this is the text of his fellow countryman Alfonso de Alprão (ÁLVAREZ, LÁZARO 2013a, 2013b). Thus, the work of André Dias is not a collection of exemplary and paradigmatic poems of good composition. These poems are designed to communicate, to reach the ears (“orelhas”), to be absorbed and expressed, so that they can be received with:

grande misericórdia e benygnidade aas mynhas petyções e rogos e soplicações que apresento e dou e offereço em estes meus cantares e canticas e laudes, hymnos, prosas e orações gratissimas e contemplativas...

e commygo estes melodyosos cantares, hymnos, prosas e laudes; que aqui e em este livro conpiley e escrevy aa honrra do boom Jhesu. Altas vozes, cantade, baylade, dançade, orade, tangede... com trombas, com anafis, com guytarras, coma alaudes e com arrabis ante o seu altar (DIAS 1951: 19).²

This introduction by André Dias, which features forms of monologues and “enacted” dialogues that are reminiscent of the Italian *laude* (“lodi”) of the time (CALDERÓN 2000: 117), set the work in a terrain of theatricality (GÓMEZ 1991: 83) or “paratheatricality” (DÍAZ 2015: 72) which heralds the dramaturgical development of the social and existential themes that would take place, in other terms, in the Iberian Baroque.

Together with the “laudária” (laudatory) poetry, the doctrinal poetry, the oral and visual force of preaching, the communicative impetus that takes Bernardine of Siena as an example (DÍAZ 2015: 10), the episcopal responsibilities, and the presence of Italian representative forms, we have also pointed out the importance of the theme of the passion that begins, in a paradigmatic way, with Francis of Assisi –in the proto-laude *Laudes creaturarum*– (CARMONA, HERNÁNDEZ, TRIGUEROS 1986: 469) and which, with the help of the mendicant orders, especially the Franciscans, promoted

² André Dias, *Livro de orações*, f. 2rb, 3ra.

the development in the Iberian Peninsula of a mysticism of the Passion that would be expressed in various artistic forms: not only literary, pictorial or sculptural, but also musical (CARDOSO 2006: 64), as André Dias' text anticipates.

2. The Doctrine of the *Novissimis*

2.1. The *Laude*

The work of André Dias, *Laudes e cantigas espirituais* is made up of various books devoted to the different religious and theological themes of the time. Martins states that “As páginas de Fr. André Dias podem agrupar-se em vários sectores poéticos, sob o aspecto formal e ideológico. Contudo, nem sempre estas laudes e cantigas oferecem fácil catalogação e ainda bem” (DIAS 1951: 183). The theme of the Passion, as we have noted, is very prevalent and contemplative in nature. The editor has placed the *laudes* and *cantigas* devoted to this topic in chapter IX of his work, under the heading “Cantigas e laudes do nome de Jesus e de tendências místicas” (DIAS 1951: 221-278). On the other hand, those referring to eschatology are those of the *Novissimis*. In the edition of Dias' work, the resurrection, hell and paradise appear in chapter VII devoted to “Temas doutrinários e ascéticos” (DIAS 1951: 183-204).

The verses that focus on eschatological themes follow a poetic structure with a doctrinal content in which the symbol of the apostolic faith is set forth (DIAS 1951: 185-190).³ Both the exposition of the symbol, and the distribution of the verses introduced by the apostles, are typical of the period and will be adopted later on by other authors. This is the case –the editor points out– of the *Cathecismo pequeno* by D. Diogo Ortiz (DIAS 1951: 190; ORTIZ 2001). Indeed, we have pointed out elsewhere the context and the heritage of the treatise of the Bishop of Viseu regarding this doctrinal exposition, which is not only manifested in the sacramentals, but also in a literature that highlights the confession of the faith:

Preceding testimonies are the works already written in the 14th century such as *Pobre libro de las confesiones*, by Martín Pérez (PÉREZ 2002) (widely distributed in Portugal) and *Manipulus curatorum* by Guido de Monte Roterio (1333), a treatise that partly illuminates the work of Diego de Ortiz. Already in the 15th century it is worth mentioning, among others, the *Tratado de confesión* by Juan Martínez de Almazán (ca 1410) (SOTO 1982; 1981; 1998) and the interesting *Confesiones (mayor y menor o general)* by André Dias de Escobar, where the themes of Diego de Ortiz are addressed, although in a different order, since *Cathecismo Pequeno* represents a more evolved stage (LÁZARO 2012: 78).

André Dias follows in the wake of a doctrinal literature that spread throughout the Catholic world, and logically throughout the Iberian Peninsula, in the 16th century, a century of dense doctrinal debate that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pyrenees. An example of this kind of literature is *Doctrina Christiana* by Bernard Etxepare (ALDEKOA 2010). Within this important

³ André Dias, *Livro de orações*, f. 22rb-24rb.

doctrinal context, the author presents the symbol of faith, or «Credo mayor que sse diz nos domingos e festas nas egregias»,⁴ followed by the symbol “*Quicumque*” or “Athanasian”, thus called because it was attributed in the Middle Ages to St. Athanasius, and which was intended to secure the faith, especially by strengthening the Catholic identity against other religions and against ecclesiological and conciliarist polemics (PERO-SANZ 1998), and which will be commented on by 15th century authors such as Pedro de Osma (REINHARDT 1977).

The theme of eschatology is developed through the prism of the *Novissimis*: death, judgement, paradise, hell. Faith being the principle and life project of the Christian, the measure and compass from which to guide human actions, the contrast between the vanity of the world and the eschatological projection is presented as a necessary theological (and moral) place.

The editor of Dias’ work indicates that unlike in the poetic and laudatory work *Le Laude* by the Franciscan Jacopone da Todi (1976; 1996; D’ASCOLI 1925) –which was widely popular in Italy, despite its great theological difficulty, as shown by its manuscript circulation and, later, the translation that reached the Peninsula (TOTO 2002; MENESTÒ 2001)– in Dias’ *Laudes* “vêem-se poucas páginas ascéticas” [there are very few ascetic pages], although those few follow on the steps of Jacopone (DIAS 1951: 196).⁵

2.2. Death

André Dias’ topics reflect the concerns of his time, faithful to the didactic-pastoral tenor of the work. In relation to the eschatological theme, the Augustinian, Stoic-style topic of the vanity of the world can be glimpsed in the Benedictine author: “toda cousa de este mundo he nyente” (DIAS 1951: 196),⁶ underpinned by the anthropological reality of death and subsequent retribution: “e cada hum, assy boom como maa / deste mundo se partira / e toda vy(d)a morrera / e a sua alma seera gualardoada, / segundo as obras que fez em esta vyda” [and each one, both good and bad / from this world will depart / and all life will die / and their soul will be rewarded / according to the deeds they do in this life] (DIAS 1951: 196).⁷

André Dias’s composition belongs to a homiletic environment led by the Franciscan order, where, as the current historiography shows (GUIJARRO 2016: 9-16) death is a much more present reality than the rest of the *novissimis*, since it has been made evident –dreadfully– through the Plague of 1340, which underlines the final judgement (TENENTI 1955). Death “se convierte en obsesiva en el arte, la literatura, los sermones, y, en general, en todas las manifestaciones culturales posteriores

⁴ André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens*, fl. 24vb-25vb.

⁵ André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens*, fl. 19vb.

⁶ André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens*, fl. 19vb.

⁷ André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens*, fl. 19vb.

a los años 1350” [becomes an obsessive topic in art, literature, sermons, and, in general, in all cultural manifestations after the 1350s] (RUCQUOI 1988: 51) and is depicted in the dances macabres, in the iconographies of the early 15th century –reaching their full dramatic intensity in the *Artes moriendi* (HUIZINGA 1967: 151, SPICA 2005: 9), and enhanced by Jean Gerson’s *Opus Tripartitum* (FÀBREGA 1955: 80)– and in the literature through the *meditatio mortis* developed in later centuries (INFANTES 1997; MARTÍNEZ 1993: 32-65).

André Dias is sensitive of the intimacy reflected in the external manifestations (theatrical, processional, liturgical) where the intimate spirituality of the Christianity of his time, characteristic of the *Imitatio Christi*, nourishes the experience of the *Artes moriendi*. Death is a reality that is embedded in a person’s moral commitment and that must be taken into account as part of the existential basis of their life and the projection in time of present decisions, because the joy of the present world must not overshadow the fact that the only true joy is to win the favour of God who, in the end, is the one who guarantees everlasting wealth. The reflection on death and the retributive process that makes use of eschatological places has a personal and communal theological reading, thus becoming an aid to the organisation of individual and collective — ecclesial and socio-political— life. A moral reflection on death thus guarantees something that is present in the fifteenth century and which José Luis Fuertes has aptly described in his commentary on the consequences of this time in Pedro de Osma, which also seems to apply to our author:

el supuesto principal que late (...) es el de la fe, la preeminencia de la fe, y el relato que desde ella emerge como orden dador de sentido e inteligibilidad.

Es la fe creída y vivida, como orden dador del sentido de la existencia y de la historia. Es fe, al igual como acontecerá en toda la segunda escolástica, que compromete la existencia y posibilita el discernimiento y la salvación. Es por ello que la fe debe regir y la razón se debe ajustar a ella (FUERTES 2011: 212).

As both a theological and a practical guide, the interlocutors often appear as “boa/s gente/s” [good person/people], mostrando el autor que interpela a los oyentes dentro de su discurso de forma parenética y señalando, así, la necesidad de la fe para explicar la realidad humana más fundamental (la salvación eterna en la historia humana como *historia salutis*), frente al exceso de confianza en el discurso racional. Indeed, the “good people” are those who “live well” in order to “die well”, «buena gente» es la que «vive bien» para «bien morir», what constitutes the art of living (CARVALHO 1990) and of preparation for death (e.g. the *Art de be morir* by Francesc Eiximinis deals with this matter). We are talking about a programmed, temporal, liturgic, sacramental and spiritual way of “dying well” that will be fully developed during the 16th century (MILHOU-ROUDIE 1993: 15-16).

2.3. The Reward after Death

From the 15th century onwards, the topics of death and choice of present life in order to ensure the future life are linked to the divine judgement (DELUMEAU 1983: 64-65). Facing death in daily life entailed then a concern about eschatological rewards (ARIÈS 1977). God's judgement of one's soul is a concern of the period when the fate of humans after death is established. Thus, the "vision of the divine" becomes crucial for this purpose, formulating a purely intellectual definition of eternal life while explaining the vision of God through cognitive parameters (in the same way that Hell is vested with a penal dimension): "en el día del juicio todos los hombres comparecerán con sus cuerpos 'ante el tribunal del Cristo', para dar cuenta de sus propios actos, 'a fin de que cada uno reciba lo propio de su cuerpo, tal como se portó, bien o mal' [2 Cor 5, 10]" [For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.] (DENZINGER, HÜNERMANN 2012: 400 [§ 1002]). The constitution of Pope Benedict XII, «Benedictus Deus» (January 29, 1336) responded to the neglect of the vision of God when talking about death, a topic underlined by Pope John XXII in his sermon of November 1st 1331 –to which he added two other sermons, one on December 15th 1331 and later on January 5th 1332– when he sustained that the souls of the just would have to wait in Abraham's bosom until the general judgement before enjoying the Beatific Vision of God.

John XXII retracted his own doctrine with the bull "Ne super his" on December 3, 1334, in these terms:

We therefore confess and believe that the purified souls separated from the body are gathered together in heaven, in paradise and the kingdom of the heaven [sic], with Christ in the company of the angels, and that they, according to the common precept, clearly see God and the divine essence face to face, insofar as the state and the condition of the separated soul allows. (DENZINGER, HÜNERMANN 2012: 398 [§ 991]).

The question of death and reward is a debate on the intermediate state, i.e. about the purgatory, which, according to Le Goff became a doctrinal standard between 1150 and 1250 (LE GOFF 1989: 14). As the French historian point out, it is in this moment when the intermediate state "between Hell and Heaven" is established (LE GOFF 2000: 298). The purgatory is close to Hell, but it is very different, since the final destiny of the soul of the just is always Heaven, although this soul has to be purified (purged) first.

The doctrine was contested by different groups such as the Waldensians and the Cathars, the latter in frontal opposition (DUVERNOY 1976: 101). The question of the enjoyment or deferral of the essential reward was very important –particularly in a century marked by the decimation of the European population– hence the relevance of the theological debate between John XXII and Benedict XII. This controversy is the paradigm of the tension between the different ways to understand the purgatory in relation to the Final Judgement (BRATU 1993). But we also have to

look for the origin of this theological tension in the spread of religious piety. Michelle Bastard-Fournié (1980: 5) points out that *Voyage au Purgatoire de St. Patrice* (1903) was widely circulated at least in Southern France and Aragon, señala que existe una circulación extendida, al menos en el sur de Francia y en Aragón, de *Voyage au Purgatoire de St. Patrice* (1903), which has echoes of the *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii* attributed to Henry of Saltrey (1855), and written compuesto at the end of the 12th century (ALONSO 2012: 49).

Thus, the controversy surrounding the intermediate eschatology had a personal and individual dimension, becoming not only a theological issue, but a source of concern for the faithful. To this scenario we have to add yet another layer of complexity, the fact that the purgatory was a source of debate and conflict between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches during the ecumenical Council of Florence. Thus, the bull “Laetentur caeli” (July 6, 1439) deals with the procession of the Holy Spirit, the fate of the dead (i.e. the purgatory) and the order of prominence of the patriarchal seats and the Roman primacy (DENZINGER, HÜNERMANN 2012: 438-440 [§ 1300-1308]).

Although the controversy over Purgatory dragged on for a long time, an agreement on its essential aspects was soon reached given that: Aunque la discusión sobre el Purgatorio se dilató en el tiempo debido a la discusión propiamente argumentativa, en principio el debate en lo esencial se cerró pronto, puesto que:

«l'ensemble des Grecs, y compris Marc d'Éphèse, admettaient les deux seuls points définis dans l'Église catholique, de nos jours encore, sur le Purgatoire: à savoir l'existence d'un état intermédiaire entre le ciel et l'enfer, et l'utilité des suffrages des vivants pour les âmes placées par la justice divine dans cet état, qui ne doit pas se prolonger au delà du jugement dernier» (JUGIE 1921: 270).

[the Greeks, including Mark of Ephesus, admitted the only two points defined by the Catholic Church, even today, on Purgatory: namely, the existence of an intermediate state between heaven and hell, and the usefulness of the suffrages of the living for the souls placed by divine justice in this state, which must not be prolonged beyond the last judgment.]

This theological and religious context nourishes the poetics of André Dias in *Laudes* when he introduces the theme of the intermediate eschatology as a final eschatology (Parousia) when he writes «Contemplaçon do dya do Juizo, em a qual penssarar antre ty, se quyseres hyr ao parayso» (DIAS 1951: 197-198).⁸

The theme of the final judgement as an eschatological judgement during the Second Coming is not an alien concept for the population target of the *Laudes*. In fact, this theme is very present in the art and iconography of the 15th century (spread from Italy to the Iberian peninsula, as it was the case of the *Juicio final* [Final Judgement] in the altarpiece of the old cathedral of Salamanca

⁸ André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens*, fl. 20rb-21vb.

painted by Niccolò Delli in 1445), as an expression of the preaching and poetic themes, such as in *Signos que aparecerán antes del Juicio final* by Gonzalo de Berceo (1980) or in the *Octavas sobre el Juicio Final* by Francisco de Aldana (1985). In any case, the matter is treated poetically, far from the antichrist and doomsday themes of the manuscript of Besançon *Mystere dou jour dou jugement* (2000) and closer to representation developed in Florence. We find in Dias a doctrinal author, a pastor fond of the penitential literature of the masters of Salamanca of his time, and not a millenialist drawn to prophetic literature.

After a prayer, the *Laudes* reflect on and devote a few verses to the glory of Paradise. This part bears the title of “Prosa e cantica da gloria do paraíso muyto virtuosa, pera sse o homem guardar de pecar”, and with it Dias culminates the thematic of the *novissimis* (DIAS 1951: 200).⁹ It is worth noting in this text the image of Christ, crowned as king of the Universe, and the Virgin Mary in an ambience of true joy, far from any pain or evil. This is an eschatological image taken from the Apocalypse, but it is not an apocalyptic image, but one that emerges from faith. André Dias thus closes the cycle of death, judgement, paradise and glory.

By contextualising the *novissimis* in the work of André Dias we aim to highlight the relevance of this theme in the 15th century and understand the theological style brewing in a period when it is necessary to strengthen the faith of a world that is changing. It is a time when the theological literature makes use of stylistic devices, when communication with the flock does not hide the need to strengthen faith, and thus reason circulates through other literary forms (*laudes*, *cantigas*, penitentials, sermons, ...), such as those used in the *Laudes e cantigas espirituais*, which herald the start of the “performance” in the “great theatre of the world”.

⁹ André Dias, *Livro de oraçoens*, fl. 21rb.

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