



Maria Catarina FIGUEIREDO, “The Convento dos Cardais” in *Biblioteca DigiTile: Azulejaria e Cerâmica on line*, Susana Varela FLOR (coord.), Artis – Instituto de História da Arte da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa/ Biblioteca de Arte da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian/ Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia under the scope of the R&D Project [PTCD/EAT- EAT/117315/2010], Lisbon, 2015.



## INTRODUCTION

A critical analysis of the Convento dos Cardais was not envisaged in the grant application of the “DigiTile Library – Tiles and Ceramics Online” project submitted to the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia in 2010.<sup>1</sup>

However, once the transcription of the documents housed at the Biblioteca de Arte da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian had begun, it

became clear that João Miguel dos Santos Simões had developed a fairly in-depth study on this Carmelite convent and that there was a vast amount of material available on this subject.

## PART I: OVERVIEW OF DOCUMENTARY COLLECTION

According to the document entitled “Antigo Convento de Nossa Senhora de Cardais”, which contains his first description of the convent’s tile composition,

<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Colloquium “The DigiTile and Robbiana Projects: Researching and disseminating tiles and ceramics”, held at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on 18 and 19 April 2013. The English translation of this text was produced by Hanna Pięta and revised by John Elliott under the DigiTile Library project (PTDC/EAT-EAT/117315/2010). All the images from this text belong to the Art Library of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation / Santos Simões Collection.



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Santos Simões visited the convent for the first time on 6 May 1945.<sup>2</sup> In a later document, Santos Simões wrote: *“For the first time I have visited the Igreja de Cardais to see the famous tiles that I had known only through a specialised bibliography. Little did I know at that time that I would come to know so well the convent to which this church belonged, and that I would dedicate a book to this convent. There, in the midst of noisy Lisbon, near the Bairro Alto district, is a mysterious and reserved old convent, full of memories.”*<sup>3</sup>

The aforementioned text informs us not only about the first impressions that the Convento dos Cardais provoked, but also about Santos Simões’ intention to publish a short monograph dedicated to this monument. This is why, at the Art Library, there is an extensive collection of documents, gathered together between 1945 and 1968 (the latter being the date of Santos Simões’ last visit to the Grupo Comissão de Cultura da Paróquia de Arroios).

After the analysis of the entire collection of documents, it was possible to distinguish four different types of material. We will look at these in more detail below.

## **1 – Documents on the bibliographical search at the archive and library of the convent**

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<sup>2</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Azulejos de Lisboa: antigo Convento de Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Cardais (visita em 6/5/45)”. EMD001.240

<sup>3</sup>Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais – Bosquejo Histórico e resenha descritiva de um convento por J. M. dos Santos Simões”, EMD001.248. The original reads: *“Entreí pela primeira vez na Igreja de Cardais para ver os célebres azulejos assinados que apenas conhecia através da bibliografia da especialidade. Mal imaginava, então, que havia de vir a conhecer tão bem o antigo convento, de que a igreja era parte, e que lhe viria a dedicar uma monografia. Ali, no centro dessa Lisboa buliçosa, junto ao Bairro Alto, mantinha-se misterioso e reservado um velho mosteiro prenhe de recordações.”*



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As part of his archival research on the Convento dos Cardais, Santos Simões consulted the “Livro das Eleições”, “Livro das Entradas” and “Livro das Vidas”<sup>4</sup> about the nuns of the convent, which allowed him to familiarise himself with the personal stories of the convent’s Carmelite sisters.

As pointed out by Santos Simões, the convent’s archive was missing a number of important books, such as the “Livro da Fundação” and the “Livro das Contas”,<sup>5</sup> as well as records from the foundation of the convent containing accounts concerning its construction, renovation and maintenance. He had learned about the existence of these books indirectly, via information from the “Livro das Eleições” which recounted the history of the convent and the life of its donator and patron, Luísa de Távora.

## **2 – Santos Simões’ notes, which served as the basis for the study (bibliographical transcription, genealogical trees, descriptions of the convent’s archive)**

The collection of documents produced by Santos Simões contains handwritten record cards with information on the history of the convent, including a review of the literature, an artistic archive, and a list of nuns who lived there from the 17th until the 19th century.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “[Livros do Arquivo do Convento dos Cardais]”, EMD001.244

<sup>5</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Convento de Cardais: Resenha Histórica do convento, rebuscada no seu magro arquivo”, EMD001.246.

<sup>6</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Convento dos Cardais: Verbetes de Livros e Freiras”, EMD001.250



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It also contains reconstructions of genealogical trees, composed of three branches: those of Luísa de Távora, the Saldanha family and, finally, the Mascarenhas and Almeida families.<sup>7</sup>

As is clear from the document entitled “Carmelitas Descalços”, Santos Simões took further notes from a large typewritten map that contained the chronology of all the Barefoot Carmelite convents from Spain, Italy and Portugal.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, this group also includes notes on indulgences, relics and images that were to be found at the convent, accompanied by a detailed description of the collections at different convents.<sup>9</sup>

### **3 – Texts that Santos Simões used as the basis for his lectures and guided tours.**

The final part of this collection of documents contains texts produced for the purposes of Santos Simões’ lectures. Particular attention should be paid to the document dated 20 January 1946, which consists of fourteen pages.<sup>10</sup> In this lecture, delivered to the “Grupo Amigos de Lisboa”, Santos Simões provides details on the history of the convent, its foundation and its historical contextualisation. He also describes the convent’s archive, paying special

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<sup>7</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “[Árvores Genealógicas]. Tábua I – Ramo de D. Luísa de Távora (tt.º Mendanhas). Tábua II – Ramo de Saldanhas (tt.º Saldanhas). EMD001.232 and “[Árvores Genealógicas] Tábua III – Ramo de Mascarenhas (Marquês de Fronteira) e Almeidas (Condes de Assumar). EMD001.233

<sup>8</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Carmelitas Descalços – Notas tiradas de um grande mapa tipografado”, EMD001.242

<sup>9</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “[Claustro de cima...]”. EMD001.237; “Cardais: Indulgências, Relíquias, Imagens, etc.”. EMD001.243

<sup>10</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais: Palestra proferida na visita do “Grupo dos Amigos de Lisboa”, 20/1/1946, EMD001.228



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attention to tiles, sculptures, marbles, woodcarving, painted wooden panels, canvases, images of saints, and pottery.

The remaining material corresponds to two plans for lectures/visits, one taking place on 18 February 1968 at the Comissão de Cultura da Paróquia de Arroios and the other undated and probably meant for the Direção da Associação do Asilo dos Cardais.<sup>11</sup> The former seems to focus more on the historical and foundational aspects, while the latter is explicitly on tiles and the “proposals or solutions for certain architectural problems”.<sup>12</sup>



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#### 4 – O Convento dos Cardais: a book proposal

In June 1946, in a letter to Carlos de Passos, Santos Simões wrote that he had been working on a monograph dedicated to the subject of the Convento dos Cardais. Although this monograph was never published, there are very concrete records

indicating Santos Simões’ plans for publication, to be entitled “Bosquejo Histórico

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<sup>11</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Convento dos Cardais: Guião para uma visita guiada, em 18 de Fevereiro de 1968 para a Comissão de Cultura da Paróquia de Arroios”, EMD001.230; “O Convento de Nossa Senhora dos Cardais: Plano para uma Palestra”, EMD001.238

<sup>12</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento de Nossa Senhora dos Cardais: Plano para uma Palestra”, EMD001.238. The original reads: “propostas ou soluções de certos problemas arqueológicos.”



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e Resenha descritiva”.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, it is important to mention the existence of the following documents:

- Two proposals for the table of contents, consisting of the following: Prologue, Introduction (which was supposed to include a description of the origins of the Order of Carmelites), four chapters, namely: Chapter One – The History of the Foundation of the Convent; Chapter 2 – The History of the Building; Chapter 3 – The Tiles; and Chapter 4 – The Artistic and Devotional Contents of the Convent. Added to these were Appendices and Indices (General, Onomastic and Systematic) and relevant illustrations.<sup>14</sup>

If we analyse the overall production of this document, it becomes clear that the monograph was practically ready for publication, although full of repetitions. Its structure runs as follows: the introduction to the monograph is taken from “O Convento dos Cardais”<sup>15</sup>; the first chapter is taken from “A Resenha Histórica do Convento, rebuscada no seu magro arquivo” and contains a description of the convent’s archive, its founders and their rigorous life as well as of the convent’s subsequent suppression;<sup>16</sup> the second and third chapters are taken from the text of a talk given in 1946, which included an analysis of the building and its tiles.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Museu Nacional do Azulejo, *Fundo Santos Simões – Correspondência*, “Carta se Santos Simões a Carlos de Passos”, Pasta D, [23 de Junho de 1946].

<sup>14</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais: Bosquejo Histórico e Resenha Descritiva por J. M. dos Santos Simões”. EMD001.231 and “O Convento dos Cardais – Bosquejo Histórico e resenha descritiva feita por J. M. dos Santos Simões”. EMD001.247

<sup>15</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais: Introdução”, EMD001.234

<sup>16</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Convento de Cardais: Resenha Histórica do Convento, rebuscada no seu magro arquivo”, EMD001.246

<sup>17</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais: palestra proferida na Visita do ‘Grupo dos Amigos de Lisboa’, em 10/II/1946”. EMD001.228



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While the reasons why this material was never published could not be identified, it seems important to recall that there existed yet another unpublished study in Santos Simões’ vast collection.

## PART II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With a view to properly contextualising the study of Convento dos Cardais that Santos Simões carried out in the 1940s, it is necessary to review the literature dealing with this monument. Santos Simões himself can help us in this task, since, for the purposes of his monograph, he drew upon a number of previous sources, which he organised in a document entitled, “Azulejos de Lisboa”.<sup>18</sup>

Santos Simões consulted the following works: “A Crónica dos Carmelitas Descalços Particular do Reino de Portugal e Província de S. Filipe”<sup>19</sup>, “História dos Mosteiros, Conventos e Casas Religiosas de Lisboa”<sup>20</sup> and a work by Padre António Carvalho da Costa<sup>21</sup>. This third source provided Santos Simões with the information that the convent had formerly served as a shelter for women, which led him to conclude that “*the original buildings would have belonged to the old shelter, which also included the upper cloister, the kitchen and other buildings*”

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<sup>18</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Azulejos [de] Lisboa: Convento de Cardais”. EMD001.239

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Belchior de SANTANA, *Crónica dos Carmelitas Descalços Particular do Reino de Portugal e Província de S. Filipe*, Tomo I, na Oficina de Henrique Valente de Oliveira, Lisboa, 1657.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Durval Pires de LIMA (ed.), *História dos Mosteiros, Conventos e Casas Religiosas de Lisboa*, Câmara Municipal de Lisboa, [1708/ 1950-1972].

<sup>21</sup> António Carvalho da COSTA, *Corografia Portuguesa...*, vol III, Lisboa, na Oficina de Valentim da Costa Deslandes, 1706-1712.



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located in the Rua dos Cardais, where one can see the remains of 17th-century tiles<sup>22</sup>

For the purposes of the artistic description, Santos Simões consulted the work of Cyrillo Volkmar Machado, who attributes the altarpiece from the main chapel to the painter José Caetano Ciríaco.<sup>23</sup> Santos Simões also mentioned that the painting depicting “Senhor dos Passos” had been attributed to the painter Inácio de Oliveira Bernardes and that this attribution had been corroborated by Raczynski.<sup>24</sup>



Santos Simões also pointed out that Cyrillo had failed to provide the date of the production of the tiles in the church and that he seemed not to have been familiar with the work of Van Oort. Furthermore, he mentions Cyrillo’s lack of knowledge about the church’s sepulchre and the burial of Marquis de Valada.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Convento dos Cardais: Verbetes de Livros e Freiras”, EMD001.250. *os edifícios primitivos seriam os do velho recolhimento dos quais julgo que fazia parte o Claustro Cimeiro, Cosinha e mais edifícios do lado da rua dos cardais, onde se encontram vestígios de azulejos do século XVII.*

<sup>23</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Azulejos [de] Lisboa: Convento de Cardais”. EMD001.239. Cf. Cyrillo Volkmar MACHADO, *Coleção de Memórias*, Lisbon, 1823

<sup>24</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais: Palestra proferida na visita do ‘Grupo dos Amigos de Lisboa’, em 10/1/1946”. EMD001.228 e EMD001.239

<sup>25</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “O Convento dos Cardais: Palestra proferida na visita do ‘Grupo dos Amigos de Lisboa’, em 10/1/1946”. EMD001.228 and “Convento dos Cardais: Verbetes de Livros e Freiras” - ficha “Convento dos Cardais – Fundação”, EMD001.250





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Santos Simões confessed that the most valuable bibliographical help came from the work of Júlio de Castilho<sup>26</sup>. Nevertheless, he compares his data with those gathered by de Castilho: for instance, the date of the foundation of the Convento dos Cardais is identified by Santos Simões as 8 December 1681 (Immaculate Conception) and not 18 December, as de Castilho had stated.<sup>27</sup> He also mentioned that Júlio de Castilho had been aided in his research by the documents provided by the Marquis of Rio Maior, but had not found any evidence supporting the episodes narrated in *Lisboa Antiga*, namely those referring to the sheltering of Dona Mariana Rita de Castelo Branco at the Convento dos Cardais.

Santos Simões only returned to the study of the Convento do Cardais in 1959, in a published work, but this time his focus was on Dutch tiles, which, according to Santos Simões, had been commissioned by Luísa de Távora in 1681, but which had only been installed in the convent in 1688, in accordance with a royal ban imposed by the State Council.<sup>28</sup> This work, published in 1959 in the Hague, does not contain all the information from the Art Library, as it focuses predominantly on the figure of the founder of the convent and on the description of tiles from the north of Europe. It is also worth mentioning that this text provides interesting insights into the social background of the nuns from the Convento dos Cardais.

After Santos Simões, a number of other authors made attempts to contribute to the study of the history of the convent, as was the case with Jorge

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Júlio de CASTILHO, *Lisboa Antiga*, 2ª Ed., IVº Vol., Lisbon, 1904, p. 203 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Biblioteca de Arte da FCG, *Coleção Santos Simões*, “Convento de Cardais: Resenha Histórica do convento; rebuscada no seu magro arquivo”. EMD001.246 and “Convento dos Cardais: Verbetes de Livros e Freiras”. EMD001.250

<sup>28</sup> Cf. João Miguel dos SANTOS SIMÕES, *Carreaux Céramiques Hollandais au Portugal et en Espagne*, Haia, Ed. Martinus Nijhoof, 1959, pp. 49-54.



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Henriques Pais da Silva,<sup>29</sup> José Pavia Cumbre<sup>30</sup> and Rainer Marggraf.<sup>31</sup> In the case of the last of these, a German author, particular prominence should be given to his study of the Van Oort workshop and his elucidating analysis of Dutch tiles in Portugal.

2003 saw the publication of a work entitled *Veios da Memória*, resulting from an interdisciplinary project consisting of campaigns aimed at the restoration of the Convento dos Cardais that took place between 1990 and 2003. Art History studies were carried out by key scholars from the field, such as Irisalva Moita, José Meco, Vítor Serrão, Fernando Grilo and Vítor Mestre, etc.<sup>32</sup>

These authors, who used material collected by Santos Simões, presented fresh information on the artistic history of the convent by analysing artworks and by tracing the authorship of these artworks to José Rodrigues Ramalho, João Antunes, Bento Coelho da Silveira, André Gonçalves, and Valentim de Almeida, among others.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Jorge Henriques Pais da SILVA, “Igreja e Convento de Nossa Senhora dos Cardais”, in *Monumentos e Edifícios Notáveis do Distrito de Lisboa*, Vol. V. T. II. Lisboa, Junta Distrital de Lisboa, 1975, pp. 78-81.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. José Paiva CUMBRE, “Convento dos Cardais” in *Dicionário da História de Lisboa*, [Dir. Francisco SANTANA e Eduardo SUCENA], Lisbon, Lisboa 1994 – Carlos Quintas & Associados, 1994, pp 301-304.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Rainer MARGGRAF, “ A influência dos Azulejos de Faiança Holandesa na produção portuguesa (por volta de 1700) in *Flandres e Portugal na confluência de duas culturas*, Lisbon, Edições Inapa, 1991 e 1994 - Rainer MARGGRAF, “Os azulejos de Van der Kloet em Portugal” in *Os azulejos de Willem van der Kloet em Portugal*, catalogue, Lisbon, Instituto Português de Museus, 1994.

<sup>32</sup> Ana Maria VIEIRA; Teresa RAPOSO (coord.), *O Convento dos Cardaes – veos da memória*, Quetzal Editores, Lisbon, 2003.



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More recently, Maria João Pereira Coutinho and Sílvia Ferreira provided new historical and artistic insights into the convent’s sculpture and woodcarvings.<sup>33</sup>



### Conclusion:

Santos Simões’ study of the Convento dos Cardais, housed at the Art Library of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, is still awaiting publication. Only a part of this study, centred on the analysis of Dutch tiles, has been published, in a work entitled “Carreaux Céramiques”. More recently, new studies have, to some extent, addressed the gap in the book market that the absence of such a study has caused.

Although knowledge of this convent has evolved substantially since Santos Simões first produced his work, his personal way of seeing, feeling and describing the Portuguese artistic heritage has ensured that he remains the leader in his field.

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Sílvia FERREIRA and Maria João Pereira COUTINHO, “José Rodrigues Ramalho (c. 1660-1721): Um artista do Barroco Lusófono na Casa Professa de São Roque”, in *Brotéria*, Lisbon, Vol. 159, Agosto/Setembro 2004, pp. 165-194.