



**The cult of the dead in Medieval Europe:
revisiting a historiographical theme in times
of crisis¹**

**O culto aos mortos na Europa Medieval: revisitando um tema
historiográfico em tempos de crise**

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Between November 2019 and the end of 2021, our planet lived a strange and singular daily life dictated by unexpected circumstances. During the epidemic caused by the spread of COVID-19, the daily news began with death tolls. For the first time in most of our lives, this wasn't counting the number of victims of war, massacres or natural disasters. The deaths tallied during that period were, instead, the result of the spread of a respiratory virus, infection with which could be – and *was* in many thousands of cases – lethal. In fact, large-scale death had never been so significant for an inhabitant of post-World War II Europe, nor had the agent promoting the infection spread so quickly and easily in the various spaces and circles of society and socialisation.

In order to minimise the impact of the disease, social distancing and self-confinement meant that new forms of 'contact', socialising, work and the transmission of knowledge needed modelling and streamlining. The health crisis exposed the inequalities in access to this secure space thus, as well as the right to comfort and privacy in the domestic domain – whilst also emphasising the growing tendency towards individualism and the risks of isolation and loneliness in certain social and age groups. These were some of the themes that called the Social and Human Sciences to public debate and the promotion of new lines of research, emphasising, for example, the change in relational paradigms imposed by health concerns³.

For the historian, this atypical moment that society was traversing represented yet another reason to consider the past and observe it in its many dimensions. Respiratory transmission, the rapid spread of infections and the impact on social and economic structures led medievalists to draw parallels with the Black Death and the great mortality of the years 1348-1350. Historians studying other eras invoked knowledge of more recent epidemics such as the Spanish flu, also known in Portugal

³ On these themes, the essay by the philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, has been particularly publicised. LÉVY, Bernard-Henri – *Este vírus que nos enlouquece*. Lisboa: Guerra e Paz Editores, 2020.

as *pneumónica*⁴. Courses, collections and interviews in podcast format proliferated which, at the time, were as extraordinary as the period being lived through, making it possible to transcend domestic, institutional and territorial boundaries⁵. By multiple and varied means, disease and epidemics gained greater prominence in historians' agendas, while the order of the day prompted the revision and revisiting of studies on death, the cult of the dead and ceremonies of and for the dead. Thus, projects and studies focussing on the themes of death and the social and political representations and projections of individuals after death⁶, were joined by new manners of thought about these themes. New approaches were added to the work centred on the Black Death, both as a determining periodisation framework for understanding social and economic structures⁷, and as an event that transformed cultural and artistic expressions⁸.

To summarise, after the COVID-19 health crisis, the study of death and illness has gained momentum, either sporadically as mentioned above, or in a more

⁴ FERREIRA, Antero; OLIVEIRA, Célia – “O impacto da “gripe espanhola” na cidade de Guimarães (1918-1919)”. *Journal of Iberoamerican Population Studies*, XXXVIII/III (2020), pp. 55–79.

⁵ Among many others, the interview with Winston Black should be highlighted, on the Medievalist.net website <https://www.medievalists.net/2020/03/black-death-covid-19/> ; the 2021 course by Patrick Boucheron, at the seminar *Histoire des pouvoirs en Europe occidentale, XIII^e-XVI^e siècle*, at the Collège de France, dedicated to the Black Death <https://www.college-de-france.fr/site/patrick-boucheron/course-2021-01-05-11h00.htm> ; and the podcast collection coordinated by Flávio Miranda *Pandemias e História* <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhWsaawvoCBL28S521-bKn0PFxfE4UgP8&feature=shared> , at CITCEM, at the University of Porto.

⁶ See the research projects Migravit. *La muerte del Príncipe en Francia y en los Reinos Hispánicos (siglos XI-XV). Modelos de comparación*, funded by the Agencia Estatal de Investigación, Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades de España (Ref. HAR2016-74846-P) and the project *Sepultus. Enterrar al príncipe en Francia y en la Península Ibérica (siglos X-XV). Un análisis comparativo*, UAM-Casa de Velázquez, 2017-2019, coordinated by Fermín Miranda, among other experts. Of these projects, the works MIRANDA GARCÍA, Fermín; LÓPEZ DE GUEREÑO SANZ, María Teresa (coord.) – *La muerte de los príncipes en la Edad Media: Balance y perspectivas historiográficas*. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2020. <http://books.openedition.org/cvz/22697> and LÓPEZ DE GUEREÑO SANZ, María Teresa; MIRANDA GARCÍA, Fermín; CABRERA SÁNCHEZ, Margarita – *Migravit a seculo: muerte y poder de príncipes en la Europa Medieval: perspectivas comparadas*. Madrid: Sílex, 2021 are highlighted.

⁷ See BAILEY, Mark – *After the Black Death: Economy, society, and the law in fourteenth-century England*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2021, which is the result of the publication of a series of lectures given in 2019. Regarding the Black Death as a periodisation milestone, Patrick Boucheron's seminar at the Collège de France in 2022 was dedicated to the theme *Après la Peste*.

⁸ See, for example, Samuel Cohn's conference “The Post-Black-Death Century: Economic Equality and its Consequences”, at the University of Glasgow, in May 2021: https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/research/researchclusters/religion-challenge-change/news-and-events/headline_982044_en.html which gives an overview of his recent research project, funded by the European Research Council that same year: ARTandINEQUALITY – *Art and Inequality in the Post-Black Death Century*.

consolidated way. As a result of organised scientific events and the topicality of the subject, collective works have been published⁹, as well as thematic texts in scientific journals, from the Iberian Peninsula¹⁰ to Eastern Europe¹¹, via the United Kingdom¹², among other geographies. In these texts, various affirmed ‘states of the art’ on the subject of death dating back to the early 1970s, carrying through to the present day, reveal the different dimensions in which these historiographical lines have been approached¹³.

The text presented today is one of the outputs of the COMMEMORTIS exploratory project, funded by the Foundation for Science and Technology, which consisted of both a proposal built on the long-term academic career of its coordinators and a response to a current social challenge. On one hand, the research programme aimed to apply a computer infrastructure that both coordinators had used in their doctoral theses, as well as the study of the city and sociability groups that they had both been working on for many years¹⁴. On the other, at the end of winter 2021, as the application was written, ‘What survives after death?’ was a question as valid for the past as it was for the present.

⁹ See, for example, JONES, Lori; VARLIK, Nühket – *Death and Disease in the Medieval and Early Modern World. Perspectives from across the Mediterranean and Beyond*. Suffolk, New York: Boydell & Brewer, 2022.

¹⁰ In Coimbra, at the end of 2021, the Portuguese Magazine of History launched the thematic notebook “Epidemias: uma abordagem histórica”, see NETO, Margarida Sobral; RIBEIRO, Ana Isabel – “Nota Introdutória”. *Revista Portuguesa de História* 52 (2021), pp. 11-13. https://doi.org/10.14195/0870-4147_52_0.1. GARCÍA HUERTA, María del Rosario – “La muerte y los rituales funerarios en la Historia. Presentación del dossier / The Death and the Funeral Rituals in History: Introduction to the Dossier”. *Vínculos de Historia*, 12 (2023) https://doi.org/10.18239/vdh_2023.12.

¹¹ For example, the Slovakian journal *Forum Historiae*, see HLAVACKOVÁ, Miriam; LYSÁ, Žofia – “For salvation of the soul: Rituals before and after death in the Middle Ages (An introduction)”. *Forum Historiae* 17/1 (3 July 2023). <https://doi.org/10.31577/forhist.2023.17.1.1>.

¹² See a Special Issue, SCOTT, Bruce; GORDON, Stephen – “Vigor Mortis: The Vitality of the Dead in Medieval Cultures”. *Journal of Medieval History* 48, fasc. 2 (March 2022).

¹³ GORDON, Stephen – “The vitality of the dead in medieval cultures”. *Journal of Medieval History* 48/2 (2022): 155–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2022.2049516>. BENITO, Julia Pavón – “Is it necessary to continue researching death? A historiographical reflection and new perspectives”. *Vínculos de Historia Revista del Departamento de Historia de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha* 12 (28 June 2023), pp. 65–83. https://doi.org/10.18239/vdh_2023.12.03.

¹⁴ RIBEIRO, Ana Isabel Sacramento Sampaio – *Nobrezas e governança: identidades e perfis sociais: (Coimbra, 1777-1820)*. Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras, 2012 <https://hdl.handle.net/10316/24349> and CAMPOS, Maria Amélia Álvaro de – *Santa Justa de Coimbra na Idade Média: o espaço urbano, religioso e socio-económico*. Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras, 2012 <http://hdl.handle.net/10316/21840>, later published in CAMPOS, Maria Amélia Álvaro de – *Cidade e Religião: a colegiada de Santa Justa de Coimbra na Idade Média*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.14195/978-989-26-1316-1>.

In the experiment that was determined and desired to be carried out, there was a central desire to understand the potential of the information contained in necrological sources, produced in an ecclesiastical and parish context. This was underpinned with a focus on the management of the cult of the dead and heritage associated with suffrage ceremonies, using this information to characterise urban parish communities using the aforementioned computer infrastructure. This was a revival of the relevance of a historiographical theme that dates back to the 1970s and the founding works of Philippe Ariès¹⁵, Michel Vovelle¹⁶, Jacques le Goff¹⁷, and Jacques Chiffolleau¹⁸, among others. At the same time, the strong influence of the work of Clive Burgess should be recognised, focussing on the characterisation of pastoral care, founded by lay communities linked to a parish¹⁹. In the same way, historiographical influences in studies around the concept of ‘civic religion’²⁰ and in more recent projects that precisely investigate the spirituality and devotional practices of the laity in the late Middle Ages and the Modern Period was definitively sought²¹. The urban setting, the appeal to art historians and the manner of emphasising the topography of the burials revealed the inspiration in Vanessa Harding's work²². Finally, both in the favoured theoretical framework and the team

¹⁵ ARIÈS, Philippe – *L’homme devant la mort*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1977.

¹⁶ VOVELLE, Michel – *Mourir autrefois: attitudes collectives devant la mort aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*. Paris: Gallimard, 1990 ; VOVELLE, Michel - *La mort et l’Occident: de 1300 à nos jours*. Paris: Gallimard, 1983.

¹⁷ LE GOFF, Jacques – *La naissance du purgatoire*. Paris : Gallimard, 1981 e CHIFFOLEAU, Jacques – *La Religion flamboyante*. Paris: Seuil, 1988..

¹⁸ CHIFFOLEAU, Jacques – *La comptabilité de l’au-delà : les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d’Avignon à la fin du Moyen Age, vers 1320-vers 1480*. Roma: École française de Rome, 1980.

¹⁹ BURGESS, Clive – “Chantry in the Parish, or “Through the Looking-Glass”. *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 164/1 (2011), pp. 100–129. <https://doi.org/10.1179/174767011X13184281108009>; BURGESS, Clive – *The right ordering of souls: the parish of All Saints’ Bristol on the eve of the Reformation*. Woodbridge, UK ; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2018.

²⁰ Historiographical concept developed under the coordination of VAUCHEZ, André – *La religion civique à l’époque médiévale et moderne (Chrétienté et Islam)*. Actes du colloque de Nanterre (21-23 juin 1993). Roma : École française de Rome, 1995. For a more recent framework on the concept and its state of the art, see BROWN, Andrew – “Civic religion in late medieval Europe”. *Journal of Medieval History* 42/ 3 (2016), pp. 338–56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2016.1162729> and BOURLET, Caroline ; BOVE, Boris – “Religion civique ou affiliation communautaire ? Le témoignage des testaments parisiens des XIII^e-XV^e siècles”. *Histoire Urbaine*, 60 /1 (2021), pp. 71–96. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rhu.060.0073> .

²¹ FOLKERTS, Suzan (ed.) – *Religious connectivity in urban communities (1400-1550): reading, worshipping, and connecting through the continuum of sacred and secular*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2021.

²² HARDING, Vanessa – *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500-1670*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

of researchers and consultants that was assembled, there was a persistent interest in highlighting the study of necrological sources²³, the analysis of wills²⁴, as well as elaborating these author's experience with the study of lay and ecclesiastical urban parish communities²⁵.

In order to meet the main objective of the exploratory project, two case studies for the city of Coimbra were produced²⁶, publishing their respective databases²⁷ and analyses between the different parishes in the city were carried out²⁸. While the

²³ In this respect, the work of Thierry Pécout and of Anne Chiama. See, among others, CHIAMA, Anne ; PÉCOUT, Thierry (eds.) – *Les obituaires du chapitre cathédral Saint-Sauveur et de l'église Sainte-Marie de la Seds d'Aix-en-Provence*. Paris: Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres diffusion de Boccard, 2010; PÉCOUT, Thierry – *Le livre du chapitre du chapitre cathédral Notre-Dame de la Seds de Toulon*. Paris: Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres diffusion de Boccard, 2020 and PÉCOUT, Thierry – *Le nécrologe du chapitre cathédral Sainte-Marie et Saint-Castor d'Apt*. Paris : Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres diffusion de Boccard, 2016.

²⁴ See, among others, the following work of Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho and Leontina Ventura: COELHO, Maria Helena da Cruz – “Um testamento redigido em Coimbra no tempo da Peste Negra”. *Revista Portuguesa de História* XVIII (1980), pp. 312–31. COELHO, Maria Helena Cruz; VENTURA, Leontina – “Vatatsa – una Domina nella vita e nella morte”. *Intemelion. Cultura e territorio*, 14 (2008), pp. 43–80; VENTURA, Leontina – “Testamentária Nobiliárquica (século XIII). Morte e sobrevivência da linhagem”. *Revista de História das Ideias*, 19 (1997), pp. 137–56 and VENTURA, Leontina – “O testamento de D. Pedro Martins, bispo de Coimbra, e as suas relações de parentesco com a aristocracia medieval coimbrã”. *Lusitania Sacra*, 39 (2019), pp. 177–213. <https://doi.org/10.34632/lusitaniasacra.2019.9657>.

²⁵ MASSONI, Anne – “Les confraternités entre chapitres séculiers et communautés régulières : l'exemple du diocèse de Limoges (X^e-XII^e siècle)”. In DE CEVINS, Marie-Madeleine ; GALLAND , Caroline (eds.) – *Le salut par procuration : Jalons pour une histoire des confraternités ou affiliations régulières*. Rennes : PUR, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pur.193921> e MASSONI, Anne; NOIZET, Hélène – “La religion des Parisiens, introduction”. *Histoire urbaine* 60/1 (2021), pp. 5–8. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rhu.060.0007>.

²⁶ BARREIRA, Mariana Castro – *A vida e a morte das comunidades laicas e eclesíásticas da paróquia medieval de São Bartolomeu de Coimbra: uma abordagem a partir do Timelink*. Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras, 2023 <https://hdl.handle.net/10316/108473> and BONORA, Gabriel Martinez – *Atitudes perante a morte na sociedade medieval portuguesa. Os ca(u)sos da paróquia de Santiago de Coimbra*. Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras, 2023. <https://estudogeral.uc.pt/handle/10316/111735>.

²⁷ The São Bartolomeu de Coimbra database, which includes data from CAMPOS, Maria Amélia Álvaro de – *A comemoração dos mortos no calendário dos vivos. O obituário medieval da Colegiada de São Bartolomeu de Coimbra. (Edição crítica e estudo do manuscrito)*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 2020 <https://doi.org/10.14195/978-989-26-1699-5> e Lisboa, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Colegiada de São Bartolomeu de Coimbra, m. 1-14 (https://timelink.uc.pt/mhk/s_bartolomeu_coimbra/show/explore.vm?utoken=LXtPMBpNFhtEVN2nArN_b4lppYs) and the Santiago de Coimbra database, which includes data from SANTOS, Maria José Azevedo – “Un libro de aniversarios de la colegiata de Santiago de Coímbra. Contribución al estudio del culto del Apóstol en la Edad Media”. *Ad limina : revista de investigación del Camino de Santiago y las peregrinaciones* 9 (2018), pp. 185–224 https://www.caminodesantiago.gal/documents/17639/549501/Ad_limina_IX.+07_Maria+Jose%cc%81+Azevedo+Santos.pdf (https://timelink.uc.pt/mhk/santiago_coimbra/show/explore.vm?utoken=ZepvztkxiOTTmXg4Ro3d7mWGp4k).

²⁸ CAMPOS, Maria Amélia – “Death Commemoration Strategies in Medieval Portugal: A Mirror of Lay Participation in Religious Parochial Life (The Case of Coimbra)”. *Religions* 14/12 (2023) 1443. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14121443>.

project's coordinators and fellows focused their efforts on the study of Coimbra, prioritising the analysis of wills, obituaries and anniversary books written in the collegiate churches of the suburbs, the rest of the team focussed on the sources produced in the city, especially the cathedral²⁹.

The international meetings organised by the project promoted these approaches, as well as encouraging the participation of multi-national researchers examining the different aspects of commemorating the dead in the Middle Ages³⁰. For the final meeting, a call for papers was made that favoured approaches considering documents produced in the context of the management of the cult of the dead in an ecclesiastical context – such as wills and obituary calendars – but which also fomented a challenge to analyse other dimensions of the study of urban society in the face of death. The concept was to study urban parish communities, the relationship between parishioners and their church and the welfare and fraternal association of the faithful, with a view, among other things, to guaranteeing a dignified and participatory funeral ceremony. Another aspect was the study of commemoration strategies, analysing the management of funeral legacies and the choice of intercessors for salvation. The study of the role played by heirs, in contexts of greater or lesser conflict or confluence of interests, when executing wills was emphasised, particularly the action of widows and orphans. The burial sites and the tomb were also the subject of this challenge, as an integral part of the symbolic construction of individual, family and community memory among the living parishioners.

²⁹ In addition to the articles published in this issue, the following have been submitted for publication: VENTURA, Leontina; MATOS, João da Cunha – “O aquém e o além no testamento do bispo de Coimbra Egas Fafes de Lanhoso” [“The here and the hereafter within the will of the bishop of Coimbra, Egas Fafes de Lanhoso”], *Medieval Spain*, (forthcoming) and COELHO, Maria Helena da Cruz; MORUJÃO, Maria do Rosário – “Wills and Testamentary Executors in Medieval Portugal”. In GEJROT, C.; JENSEN K. V.; SALONEN, K.; TOCK, B. M. (eds.) – *Testaments as Historical Documents*. Stockholm (forthcoming).

³⁰ See the programme of the COMMEMORTis Workshop – *What Survives After Death in the Medieval City? Interim discussions on an ongoing research project*, Madrid 30 and 31 January 2023: <https://commemortis.wixsite.com/my-site/post/madrid-workshop-interim-discussions-on-an-ongoing-research-project> and the programme of the International Conference COMMEMORTis – *What Survives After Death? Parish Communities and Death Commemoration Strategies in the Medieval City*, Coimbra 10 to 12 July 2023: <https://commemortis.wixsite.com/my-site/programme>.

In this Special Issue, portions of the research worked on during the two and a half days of the event is published, albeit after it had been subjected to double anonymous peer review and consequent improvements³¹. From a geographical and chronological point of view, this work considers the environs of the Iberian kingdoms of Portugal and Navarre, with special emphasis on the cities of Coimbra and Pamplona, during the Early Middle Ages. Furthermore, to the north and east of the Pyrenees, French territories are under study, namely the cities of Limoges and Lyon, Flanders, with a case study of Douai, and Prussia, with an approach to the city of Torún, extending from the Early Middle Ages to the dawn of the Modern Period. Finally, the publication includes an article on the liturgy of the dead in the Monastery of Lorvão, from the thirteenth century to the end of the Middle Ages, which, as will be explained below, serves as a counterpoint to the scope of analysis favoured in this collective work.

Opening this Special Issue is the article by Maria Helena da Cruz Coelho entitled ‘A crise dos vivos: uma crise na comemoração dos mortos? A propósito do “Livro das Capelas” da catedral de Coimbra (século XIV)’ [‘The crisis of the living: a crisis in the commemoration of the dead? Regarding the ‘Book of Chapels’ of Coimbra Cathedral (fourteenth century)’]. It highlights the particularities of the document on which the analysis is based and which reflects the liturgical and economic vicissitudes associated with the cult of the dead in Coimbra Cathedral following the Black Death. The author places the production of the document in the distinct context of the socio-political relations and tensions established between the city's main dignitaries whilst emphasising the multiple dimensions of the cathedral's life conditioned by the cult of the dead.

This is followed by a study based on the analysis of Navarrese wills by Fermín Miranda García in ‘Enterramientos aristocráticos y redes eclesiásticas en Navarra. Una breve comparativa (siglo XIV-XV)’ [Aristocratic burials and ecclesiastical networks in Navarre. A brief comparison (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries)], in which the author shows the main families of Pamplona and their relationship with the

³¹ Unfortunately, the tight timetable for the project did not allow all the insights presented on those days to be included in this collective publication.

city's ecclesiastical network. By studying the choice of graves and the foundation of chapels, a map of influences that was perpetuated after death and linked several generations in the city can be seen. The comparative approach of the results achieved for this city with the realities studied for Estella and Tudela reinforces the demonstration of the social specificities of the kingdom of Navarre, evident when it came to choosing graves and founding commemoration ceremonies.

Continuing the exploration of the typology of sources available for the study of death and strategies for commemorating the dead in the Middle Ages therein, the work of Hervé Chopin is presented: '*The liber sepulturarum* of the collegiate church of Saint-Paul of Lyon: topography and sociology'. In order to analyse the book of tombs of the collegiate church of Saint-Paul of Lyon, the author created his own database, which he introduces to us at the same time as presenting the main conclusions it provides. Drawn up at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the document reflects the choice of burial sites made in previous decades, framed within the religious and institutional daily life of the church and the parish network of that city.

In turn, Maria do Rosário Morujão focusses on the presentation of the two main obituaries produced in Coimbra Cathedral, following an exploratory approach with a view to characterising the ceremonies for the dead with her study 'A comemoração dos mortos em tempos medievais: uma abordagem exploratória com base no caso da Sé de Coimbra' ['The commemoration of the dead in medieval times: an exploratory approach based on the case of Coimbra Cathedral']. Faced with the interspersed, often even truncated, view that these documents provide when trying to reconstruct the cult of the dead in an ecclesiastical institution, the author proposes the articulation of the data provided in the two manuscripts and demonstrates the possibilities and advantages of a joint and intertwined analysis.

This is followed by a study of the strategies chosen by clerical groups to commemorate the dead. In 'Clergyman as a Subject and Object of Death Commemoration in Late Medieval Prussian Town. Case studies from Thorn (Toruń) at the turn of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century', Marcin Sumowski analyses the foundation of chapels and ceremonies for the soul by socially and economically

prominent clergymen. After placing the founders in the urban and social context of Torún, the ceremonies envisaged in each of these foundations are characterised, demonstrating the liturgical and ritual complexity decided upon by the representatives of the group which, in this case, was both the agent and the target of the intentions for the soul.

Bringing another perspective, Anne Massoni worked mainly on the wills and testamentary clauses of lay parishioners, trying to understand the relationship they had with their parish church and the care that the church's chapter took in celebrating the dead. In her article, 'Les paroissiens de Saint-Pierre du Queyroix de Limoges et la communauté des prêtres: des liens jusque dans la mort au XIV^e siècle' [The parishioners of Saint-Pierre du Queyroix in Limoges and the community of priests: links even in death in the fourteenth century], it is the relationship between the two worlds – secular and ecclesiastical – that the author seeks to problematise, presenting, in this context, the transfer of practices and knowledge and highlighting the relationship of devotion and service that was established bilaterally in the parish universe.

By analysing the community of Beguines of Douai and the way in which they were the privileged target of many requests for intercession from the town's inhabitants, Mary Anne Gonzalez brings another important expression of medieval spirituality into this thematic volume in an urban context. In her study 'Commemoration and the Beguine Movement in Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Douai', the author analyses a relevant sample of the city's wills and demonstrates how the participation of the Beguines in funeral prayers and in the care of deceased bodies, at the time of the funerals, was very much required. The articulation of the actions of these women with those of the representatives of the parish churches and mendicant convents was a hallmark of the cult of the dead in this city.

The final article in this issue invites one to get out of the city, away from the parish clergy and into the stony walls of one of the most important female Cistercian monasteries in the kingdom of Portugal. Authored by Luís Miguel Rêpas and Catarina Fernandes Barreira, 'A morte e a memória no Mosteiro de Lorvão' ['Death

and Memory in the Monastery of Lorvão'] begins by setting out the Order's general rules for the cult of the dead, and then introduces the individuals and families who chose to be buried in this monastery or founded memorial ceremonies there. This study emphasises the monastery's role as a depository for the commemorative intentions of its deceased nuns, members of the royal family and the main noble lineages. In contrast to the urban and parochial world that this thematic volume favours, this last article journeys back to the other dimensions of medieval society and religiosity in the study of the cult of the dead, leaving the reader and the researcher open to further approaches to the subject by questioning other contexts and institutions.

This Special Issue is dedicated to the memory of Clive Burgess, Emeritus Professor at the University of London Royal Holloway, consultant to the COMMEMORTIS project, who passed away in August 2023, just a few weeks after visiting in Coimbra. In addition to the inspiration that his work gave to the construction of this research project, we express our deepest gratitude and appreciation for the generosity, kindness and elegance with which he honoured us not only in his participation in the International Conference, and in the many conversations we had here, but also in the numerous correspondence we exchanged during the application and execution of this programme of work.

After death, survives the memory, the gratitude, and our deep respect...

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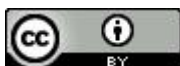
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