

Visão sensorial, visão espiritual

*As suas expressões ibéricas
no longo século XV*

Editores

Joana Matos Gomes

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Mário João Correia



A Idade Média é um dos mais ricos períodos da história do pensamento, caracterizado por um desenvolvimento vibrante nos seus quatro grandes domínios geoculturais principais na bacia do Mediterrâneo, grego, hebraico, latino e árabe, cada um deles marcado pela prevalência de uma religião predominante: judaísmo, cristianismo, islamismo. É também o período de emergência do léxico filosófico nas novas línguas românicas, anglo-saxónicas e germânicas, de que as línguas contemporâneas são herdeiras e continuadoras. No longo período de mil anos que corresponde à Idade Média, virtualmente todos os problemas da tradição filosófica foram renovados, repropostos, reinventados e daí emergirão os fundamentos do pensamento e das ciências modernas. É esta complexa diversidade que a coleção *Textos & Estudos de Filosofia Medieval* procura espelhar através de estudos atualizados, da tradução de obras de autores medievais e da escolástica tardia, ou da edição de obras medievais em vernáculo.

**VISÃO SENSORIAL, VISÃO ESPIRITUAL
AS SUAS EXPRESSÕES IBÉRICAS NO LONGO SÉCULO XV**

TEXTOS & ESTUDOS DE FILOSOFIA MEDIEVAL

DIRETOR

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DREAMS AND VISIONS IN FERNÃO LOPES AND GOMES EANES DE ZURARA

TYOLOGIES AND FUNCTIONS

Joana Matos Gomes¹

Filipe Alves Moreira²

1. Introduction

Fernão Lopes and Gomes Eanes de Zurara, two of the most emblematic chroniclers of 15th-century Portugal, explored the theme of supernatural³ revelations in their works, integrating them in a way that transcended mere historical record. Through visions, dreams, and prophecies, these transcendental elements not only conferred an almost divine legitimacy to the narrated events but also played a central role in consolidating identities and strengthening the project of constructing a collective memory. This study aims to uncover the narrative and visual strategies used by both authors. Throughout this analysis, the objective is to understand how these supernatural elements are employed to construct historical narratives and how they relate to the theological and philosophical

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- 3 In the sense that they exist beyond the natural order of things or come precisely to disrupt that order (R. Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages (The Wiles Lectures)*, Cambridge: CUP, 2008, p. 8). There is an abundance of literature dedicated to this subject, here are few key references: J. Le Goff, «Os sonhos na cultura e na psicologia coletiva do Ocidente Medieval», in *Para um novo conceito de Idade Média*, Lisbon: Estampa, 1980, pp. 281-310; B.M. Semple, *Discourse of the spirit: Dream and vision in medieval literature*, Doctoral thesis presented to the University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania: 1991; S.F. Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge: CUP, 1992; J. Le Goff, «O Cristianismo e os sonhos» in *O Imaginário Medieval*, Lisbon: Estampa, 1994, pp. 283-350; V. Bach, *Les clefs des songes médiévaux (XIII^e-XV^e siècles)*, Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007.

discussions of the time. We will focus solely on episodes in which phenomena identified as visions and dreams, either explicitly or implicitly, occur. Other supernatural premonitory elements, such as omens and prodigies, which also appear frequently in their chronicles, will be set aside.

2. Dreams and visions in Fernão Lopes

The chronicles of *Dom Pedro*, *Dom Fernando* and *Dom João I* (*Primeira* and *Segunda Parte*), written between 1430 and 1445, constitute the main historiographical testimony of the events related to the dynastic crisis that took place at the end of the 14th century and the resulting wars⁴. Amid the description of these events, a very specific objective stands out: to politically legitimize the new Avis dynasty, particularly its founder, Dom João I⁵. In pursuing this goal, which serves as the guiding thread of the entire Lopes' narrative, the invocation of supernatural elements—such as dreams, miracles, visions, omens, and portents—plays a crucial role in reinforcing Dom João I's political legitimacy. However, in the three chronicles of Fernão Lopes under scrutiny here, neither the references to dreams and visions nor their distribution are balanced. They are entirely absent from the *Crónica de Dom Fernando*, while the *Crónica de Dom Pedro* contains only references to dreams. The *Crónica de Dom João I*, however, is more eclectic, incorporating references to both dreams and visions, as well as a theoretical classification of revelations, which we will examine next.

4 For information on Fernão Lopes and his chronicles, see the data and bibliography compiled in BITAGAP – Bibliografia de Textos Antigos Galegos e Portugueses (bioid 1028; texid 1045, 1046 and 1063).

5 See on the matter L.S. Rebelo, *A Concepção do Poder em Fernão Lopes*, Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1983, pp. 57-77; M.G. Ventura, *O Messias de Lisboa. Um estudo de mitologia política (1383-1415)*, Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1992. H. Macedo, «Fernão Lopes, a sétima idade e os príncipes de Avis», in F. Gil – H. Macedo, *Viagens do Olhar: Retrospeção, visão e profecia no Renascimento Português*, Porto: Campo das Letras, 1998, pp. 143-173, cf. 151-161; A.-M. Quint, «Chronique d'un avènement annoncé (Fernão Lopes et le Maître d'Aviz)», in A. Redondo (ed.), *La prophétie comme arme de guerre des pouvoirs (XV-XVII)*, Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2000, pp. 57-67.

2.1. Theory: Lopes' classification of revelations

In chapter XXIII of *Crónica de Dom João I*, Fernão Lopes introduces a classification of different types of revelation. He begins by distinguishing those linked to the body from those related to the spirit and then subdivides them according to the type of knowledge they provide:

We say that there are four modes of revelations: two corporal and two spiritual. The corporal ones are external; the spiritual ones pertain to the soul. The first corporal mode occurs when the bodily eyes are open to see the heavens, the earth, and other things; this revelation or demonstration is imperfect because, through it, we do not attain the virtues of the things we see. The second is when we see something external that has an inner mystery, as in the case of Moses, who saw the burning bush, which symbolized the incarnation of the Son of God. Of the other two spiritual ones, one occurs when, with the eyes of the soul, through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we perceive knowledge of something; the other happens when, through human intellect and natural ingenuity, we investigate something, which we then truly come to know, as did the philosophers who understood the natural courses of the planets and other things⁶.

The text establishes a hierarchy among the four categories of revelation, distinguishing itself from the more common tripartite classification advocated by authors such as St. Augustine. This hierarchy is based on the type of knowledge each category provides. Revelations linked to physical perception are considered inferior to spiritual ones: corporeal revelations, mediated by the senses, offer only superficial and imperfect knowledge, whereas spiritual revelations allow for a deeper understanding, whether through human intellect or divine

6 «...dizemos que os modos das revelações som quatro, scilicet dous corporaes e dous esprituas. Os corporaes som da parte de fora; os esprituas da parte da alma. O modo primeiro corporal he quando os olhos corporaes som abertos a ver o ceo e a terra e outras cousas; esta revelaçom ou demonstraçom nom he perfeita, porquanto per ela nom acalçamos as virtudes das cousas que vemos. O segundo, quando vemos adefora cousa que tem mesterio de dentro, assi como Moisés, que vio arder o espinheiro per que se mostrava a encarnaçom do filho de Deus. Dos outros dous esprituas, huñ he quando com os olhos da alma per alumeamento do Espritu Santo vimos em conhecimento dalguña cousa; o outro, quando per humanal espritu e sotileza de natural engenho, investigamos alguña cousa, a qual verdadeiramente depois sabemos, assi como foram os filosofos que souberam os naturaes cursos das planetas e assi doutras cousas», Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira parte*, ed. T. Amado, Lisbon: IN-CM, 2017, p. 59.

intervention. This framework also suggests that bodily visions occur when the subject is awake, while spiritual visions take place during sleep.

In the next segment, based, unlike the previous one, on an identified source — the *Commentary on Cicero's Dream of Scipio* (*Commentarium in Ciceronis Somnium Scipionis*) by Macrobius⁷, — Lopes treats a particular type of revelation: dreams. These are divided into five types: dream, vision, prayer, non-dream, phantom. 'Non-dream' and 'phantom' have a problematic origin: they can be triggered by excess or lack of food, intense emotions, or even demonic deception⁸. Their strong connection to matter disqualifies their cognitive value and, whether by a matter of coherence or mere coincidence, Fernão Lopes does not refer to them again. It can be presumed, therefore, that the remaining types provide some form of valid knowledge. 'Dream', 'prayer', and 'vision' are hierarchized by their degree of transparency: in prayer, the transmission of future knowledge occurs directly between a divine being (God or an angel) and a virtuous person. A 'vision' is initially revealed in a dream but becomes clear when the recipient awakens. Finally, a 'dream' is a revelation that the recipient cannot understand and, as such, requires interpretation by others to be fully comprehended⁹.

7 The relationship between the *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio* and this section of the *Chronicle of Dom João I* by Fernão Lopes has been studied by various authors. See: L.S. Rebelo, *A concepção do poder*, cit., pp. 103-104, n. 61. See also: H. Macedo, «Fernão Lopes, a sétima idade...», cit. p. 154. It is worth noting that the examples cited are drawn from the Bible, indicating a Christian or monotheistic adaptation of Macrobius' text, which originally features different examples to illustrate the various types of dreams (see Macrobius Ambrosius Theodosius, *Comentarios al Sueño de Escipión*, ed. J. Raventós, Barcelona: Siruela, 2005, pp. 32-34).

8 «And these two moods sometimes come from swelling of the stomach; sometimes from lack of desire; sometimes from love for someone we love; sometimes from fear; sometimes from a deep thought of menacing humour. And sometimes through the deceit of Satan, who transforms himself into an angel of light, so that to these two posthumous ways, no one can give an interpretation that is certain» («E estes dous modos postumeiros alguãas vezes vêm per inchimento do estamago; outras per mingua de vianda; outras por amor dalgua pessoa a que gram bem queremos; outras vezes per gram temor; outras per azo de profundo pensamento d'humor menencolico. E às vezes per engano de satanáas que se trasfigura em angio de luz, de guisa que a estes dous modos postumeiros, nehuñ pode dar interpretaçom que certa seja»), Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira parte*, cit., p. 59.

9 «Prayer is when the Lord God or someone else appears to a good man and tells him what to do or what to keep himself or someone else away from. A vision is when a man sees clearly by sight what he has seen in a dream, like the dream Pharaoh saw of the cows and the ears of corn. A dream is when a man sees something which he cannot tell or know for himself, and there is a master who interprets it for him, as was the case with the dream of Pharaoh's

These two classification systems, which come from different sources, complement each other by cataloguing the modes of knowledge provided by different types of revelations and, above all, by reflecting on the credibility of the knowledge obtained through them. This concern aligns Fernão Lopes not only with Gomes Eanes de Zurara — as it will be later seen — but also with the society of his time, as this issue was widely debated throughout the Middle Ages¹⁰. We will now examine whether this concern is reflected in episodes where these elements assume an explicit narrative function.

2.2. Practice: dreams, visions and revelations with narrative function

2.2.1. Dreams

In Chapter XXIV of the *Crónica de dom Pedro*, within the context of conflicts between Pedro I of Castile and Henrique of Trastámara, it is recounted that, in the city of Cofra, a Dominican monk approaches Pedro of Castile and tells him of a prophetic dream he had: visited by Saint Domingos, he is warned that the king must be cautious of his brother Henrique; otherwise, Henrique will kill him with his own hands. The king reacts poorly, believing the monk to be provoking him, and orders him to be burned alive in front of him¹¹.

cupbearer» («Oraçom he quando a alguõ homem de boa vida aparece o senhor Deus, ou alguõ angio e lhe diz as cousas que há-de fazer, ou de que se deve de guardar, ele ou outra pessoa. Visom he quando homem, aquelo que vio em sonhos, vê depois claramente per vista, assi como o sonho que vio Faraó das vacas e das espigas. Sonho he quando homem vê alguõa cousa, a qual per si nom pode declarar nem saber e há mester quem lho interprete, como foi o sonho do copeiro delRei Faraó»), Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira parte*, cit., p. 60).

- 10 J. Le Goff, «Cristianismo...», cit., pp. 283-284, B. Newman, «What Did It Mean to Say “I Saw”? The Clash between Theory and Practice in Medieval Visionary Culture», *Speculum*, 80/1 (2005) 1-43.
- 11 «...and the king went there with his forces and passed through a place called Cofra. There, a Mass cleric from San Domingo de la Calzada came to him and told him that Saint Dominic had appeared to him in a dream, instructing him to go to the king and warn him that if he did not guard himself against Count Dom Henrique, the Count would kill him with his own hands. The king thought the cleric was speaking under some influence, though the cleric insisted otherwise, and so the king ordered him to be burned before him» («e elRey foi alla com seu poder, e possuiu em huum logar que chamam Cofra; e alli cheou a elle huum clerigo de missa, natural de Sam Domingos da calçada, e contoulhe que Sam Domingos lhe dissera em sonhos, que vehesse a elle e lhe dissesse que fosse çerto, que nom se guardando do comde Dom Hemrrique, que ele o avia de matar per sua mão; e elRei cuidou que o

This episode comes from the chronicle of Pero López de Ayala to which Fernão Lopes often referred¹². In this case, Pedro of Castile is confronted with a prophetic revelation expressed through a dream. Reflecting on the significance of this episode in Ayala's *Crónica de Dom Pedro I*, Pénélope Cartelet highlights its connection to biblical-style prophecies, emphasizing that this is a specific type of prophecy, since the prophetic dream is accompanied by a hypothetical condition that determines the fulfillment of the prediction¹³: the possibility of Pedro I changing his behaviour (evident in the expression introduced by a conditional «si vos non guardades» — «if you do not heed»). This warning relates to the function that this episode plays in Pedro de Ayala's chronicle, which goes beyond merely prophesying the king's death at the hands of his brother: it serves as a critique of Pedro I's behaviour, presenting him as the key factor that will lead to his fatal destiny.

The interpretation of this same episode in Fernão Lopes' *Crónica de Dom Pedro* doesn't differ much from that outlined by the aforementioned author, since Lopes copies the episode in its entirety without significant changes. He seems, therefore, to accept the Castilian chronicler's perspective regarding Pedro I's behaviour, which left a lasting impression of impulsiveness and intolerance, traits that defined his imago's legacy. It is Pedro I's negative qualities that led him to reject the message conveyed to him. Furthermore, this episode indicates, albeit not explicitly, that during that historical period, there were doubts concerning the premonitory power of dreams. Here, however, the legitimacy of the advice given rests on the identity of the dreamer (a Dominican monk) and the messenger (Saint Domingos). The religiosity of one and the sanctity of the other serve as a guarantee of the truth of the message. The later account of Pedro I's death confirms the veracity of the message, legitimizing the prophetic dream as a valid means of knowing the future.

clerigo lho dizia per emdizimento, pero o clerigo dizia que nom, e mandouho queimar ante si»), Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom Pedro I*, ed. D. Peres, Porto: Livraria Civilização, 1994, Chapter XXVI, p. 122.

- 12 T. Amado, *Fernão Lopes, contador de História*, cit. See also on the relationship between the two chroniclers: R.P.M. Santos, *Representações da aristocracia nas Crónicas de Pero López de Ayala e Fernão Lopes*. M.A. thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto, Porto 2017.
- 13 P. Cartelet, «Chapter VI. El uso histórico-político de la profecía merliniana en España» in P. Cartelet, *Fágote de tanto sabidor*. *La construcción del motivo profético en la literatura medieval hispánica (siglos XIII-XV)*, Paris: e-Spania Books, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.esb.1042>, Paragraph 92.

In Chapter XLIII of the same chronicle, Fernão Lopes narrates another episode in which dreams and prophecy are once again linked. This is the well-known dream of King Pedro I of Portugal. Engaging in a dialogue with the Master of the Order of Christ, the king reflects on which of his two sons named João will save the kingdom of Portugal. He distinguishes them by their social status: «Infante dom Joham», son of Inês de Castro, and «a son Joanne», the future Dom João I, born from his relationship with Teresa Lourenço. Although he places this judgement in God, the king then shares with his interlocutor the strange dream he had, which will clarify his doubt:

Although I strongly suspect that this will be the one, and no other—because one night, I had the strangest dream you have ever seen. It seemed to me, as I slept, that I saw all of Portugal burning in flames, in such a way that the entire kingdom appeared to be a great bonfire. And as I stood there, astonished by such a sight, I saw this son of mine, João, coming with a staff in his hand, and with it, he extinguished all the fire¹⁴.

As pointed out by other scholars, this episode serves as the first step in Dom João I's triumphal journey¹⁵, and should be read in connection with the episode involving Friar João da Barroca, which will be discussed later. Here, this objective is achieved through two means: a genealogical one, as the dream establishes a direct link between Dom João and his father¹⁶, thereby reinforcing his status as his rightful successor to the throne of Portugal, and a providential one, as it anticipates the Master's consecration as God's chosen one, granting him legitimacy superior to that of his half-brother.

Furthermore, regarding the acceptance of dreams as a form of prophetic knowledge, it is notable that the validity of its content is not put into question. This shows an implicit trust in the revelatory nature of dreams, recognizing them as potential bearers of truth. The king's reactions of strangeness and

14 «Como quer que muito me sospeita a voontade que este hade seer, e outro nenhuum non, ca eu sonhava huuma noite o mais estranho sonho que vos vistes: a mim parecia em dormimdo, que eu viia todo Portugal arder em fogo, de guisa que todo o reino parecia uma fugueira; e estando assi espantado veemdo tal cousa, viinha este meu filho Johanne com huuma vara na mão, e com ella apagava aquelle fogo todo», Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom Pedro*, cit., p. 196.

15 M.G. Ventura, *O Messias de Lisboa*, cit., pp.17-18; H. Macedo, «Fernão Lopes, a sétima idade...», cit., pp. 153-154; A.-M. Quint, «Chronique d'un avènement annoncé...», cit.

16 H. Macedo, «Fernão Lopes, a sétima idade...», cit.

amazement («the strangest dream I had» and «being thus astonished at seeing such a thing»), as well as his awareness that it is necessary to consult «some of those who have the ability to understand such things» to interpret the message, recalls the biblical model of the king's dream¹⁷. Additionally, they align with the typological classification of dreams previously mentioned: in this case, there is a correspondence between the terminology used in that classification and the way in which the truth conveyed by Pedro I's dream is accessed. At the same time, the recognition that it is necessary to resort to interpreters also shows that Pedro of Portugal acknowledges his limitations, demonstrating humility and prudence. This attitude distinguishes him from Pedro I of Castile, suggesting that this episode may serve to further establish an opposition between the two monarchs.

In the *Crónica de dom João I* there is only one reference to a dream, but it allows one to explore the validity of dreams as a means of prophetic knowledge. In Chapter CLII, the narrative focuses on Nuno Álvares Pereira. He is in Palmela and decides to go to Lisbon to join the Mestre by taking a boat from Montijo. There, he is approached by a squire, Vasco Martins do Outeiro, who, evoking a dream in which the boats are rammed by the Castilian fleet, attempts to persuade the *Condestável* to abandon his journey¹⁸. The latter responds in the following terms:

My friend, I thank you for your good counsel, but God will see to this matter better than you say. And so that you do not witness what you have dreamed, I command you to stay behind and not come with me. In this way, you will not see your dream fulfilled, nor will it please God for things to happen as you have envisioned. [...] Nuno Álvares, disregarding all vain dreams and omens, did not change his

17 Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom Pedro*, cit., p. 197. J. Le Goff, «O Cristianismo...», cit.

18 «Vasco Martinz do Outeiro spoke to Nuno Alvarez and said: — Nuno Alvarez, I beg you by your mercy not to want to go on this barge, nor make such a voyage beyond, ca I tell you that I dreamt this night how I was going with you on this barge, and that you were taken by the galleys of Castile, and all the rest of us who went with you. I was so disgusted by it that I wanted to kill myself when I saw such a loss. And yet it seems to me that it is good that you should excuse this journey for the time being» («Vasco Martinz do Outeiro falou a Nuno Alvarez adarte e disse: — Nuno Alvarez, eu vos peço por mercê que nom queiraes entrar em este batel, nem fazer tal viagem pera além, ca eu vos digo que eu sonhava esta noite como ia convosco em este batel, e que vos tomavom as galés de Castela, e todos nós outros que convosco iam. Da qual cousa eu tomava tamanho nojo que me queria matar quando via tal perda. E porem me parece que he bem que escusees esta ida por ora»), Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira*, cit., p. 291).

resolve from what he had intended and boarded the boat with some of his men at the hour of midnight¹⁹.

This episode comes from another chronicle dedicated to Nuno Álvares Pereira — the *Crónica do Condestabre*²⁰. Compared to the version in that chronicle, Fernão Lopes made some significant changes, both stylistically (for example, a greater use of dialogue) and in terms of content. Firstly, he identifies the previously anonymous squire as Vasco Martins do Outeiro. More significantly, in the *Crónica do Condestabre*, the squire is introduced in the following way: «A very brave (*valente*) squire spoke and said: ‘Sir Nuno Álvares, I dreamt last night...’». In other words, in the source text, the reference to the dream introduces an ironic tone to the adjective ‘*valente*’, as it serves both as an excuse to avoid a more perilous journey and as a subtle indication of cowardice. However, in the *Crónica de Dom João I*, the ‘*valente*’ is omitted. As a result, the irony vanishes, and the focus shifts to the theme of the truthfulness of dreams. This shift is further emphasized by a statement from Nuno Álvares Pereira, who asserts that «only God can truly know the future». In addition, the narrator adds that Nuno Álvares rejects «all dreams and vain omens», a stance consistent with skepticism toward the prophetic nature of dreams expressed by many medieval theologians and philosophers²¹.

2.2.2. Visions

The *Crónica de Dom João I* also contains the only episode in which a vision is mentioned. It occurs in Chapter CIX of *Primeira Parte*, on the verge of the arrival of the Castilian fleet in the Tagus to prepare for the siege of Lisbon. In this context, the Portuguese fleet is about to sail for Porto and, before its departure, a procession is held with the Portuguese banner, which is then handed over to the fleet commander. That same night, the Moors and Christians guarding the walls near the church of São Vicente de Fora witness the following phenomenon:

19 Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira*, cit., p. 291.

20 Anónimo, *Estorya de Nuno Alvarez Pereira: edição crítica da “Coronica do Condestabre”*, ed. A.A. Calado (Acta Universitatis Conimbrigensis), Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1991, chap. XXXVI, pp. 88-89.

21 S.F. Kruger, *Dreaming*, cit., pp. 7-13.

And it was a marvel that on the following night that the Christians and Moors who were keeping watch over the wall near São Vicente de Fora—close to where a chapel was built, called the Chapel of the Martyrs, in honor of those who perished during the city’s reconquest from the Moors—witnessed an extraordinary event. At midnight, as some of them stood watch, they saw twenty men dressed in white robes like priests. Four of them carried lit candles in their hands, and they walked in a procession, entering and exiting the church while speaking in hushed voices, as if reciting prayers. Those on the wall, upon seeing this, were greatly astonished and began calling others to witness such a great miracle. And at that very moment, as they spoke amongst themselves about what they had just seen, they noticed bright flames appearing atop the four corners of a tower—clear and shining lights that burned for about an hour. This event was witnessed and attested to by seven Christians and three Moors who were keeping watch over one of the towers²².

The event is then reported to the inhabitants of Lisbon who immediately accept it as miraculous and, in recognition of this, celebrate a procession the following day²³. The description of the procession of these twenty figures dressed in white, clearly associated with the clergy and prayer, shows the protective nature of the vision witnessed by the guards on the walls at a time of uncertainty and disquiet in the face of the Castilian threat. This protective dimension of the procession of the ‘good souls’, a theme that appears with some frequency

22 «E foi maravilha na noite seguinte que cristãos e mouros que velavam o muro da parte de Sam Vicente de Fora, acerca donde he feita huia capela que chamam dos Martires que foram na tomada da cidade quando foi cobrada de mouros, que à mea-noite, velando alguis, virom vinte homens vestidos em vestiduras alvas assi como sacerdotes, e quatro deles trariam nas mãos quatro cirios acesos, e iam e vinham em procissom entrando dentro na igreja, e falavom muito baixo antre si, como se rezassem alguias horas. Os do muro quando virom aqesto, ficarom muito espantados, e começaram de chamar os outros que olhassem tam grande milagre. E logo nessa hora falando huís com outros em esto, virom, nas pontas das lanças que estavam nas torres, senhas candeas acesas de claro lume que durou acerca dhuia hora. E desto derom testemunho sete cristãos e três mouros que velavom huia torre Fernão Lopes», *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira*, cit., p. 201.

23 «The people of the city, upon hearing the next day about the miracle recounted by the guards of São Vicente de Fora, were greatly pleased with it and with other such signs that the Lord God chose to reveal during this time. The bishop and the clergy, along with all the people, proceeded in a procession to the Church of the Martyrs, offering many thanks and praying for its aid» («Os da cidade quando em outro dia ouvirom aquel milagre que contavom os da guarda de Sam Vicente de Fora, foram mui ledos com ele e com outras taes cousas que nesta sazom ao senhor Deus prazia mostrar. E o bispo e crelezia com todo o pobo em procissom foram àquela igreja dos Martires, dando-lhe muitas graças e pedindo-lhe mercê que fosse em sua ajuda»), Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira*, cit., p. 201.

in other 15th and 16th century texts²⁴, is further reinforced by the appearance of the four lighted candles at the four corners of one of the wall towers.

By linking the procession of souls to the chapel of the Martyrs of the Monastery of São Vicente de Fora, the burial place of the martyrs linked to the conquest of the city of Lisbon²⁵, it is implied that the men dressed as priests represent the victorious warriors of the past, returning to protect the city and its inhabitants — almost erasing the boundary between the living and the dead. This vision thus transcends the temporal circumstance in which it occurs, as it connects past, present and future in a continuum that highlights the providential destiny of the city — and, by extension, of the kingdom of Portugal.

Considering the context and the meaning of the episode in which this supernatural experience unfolds, one would assume that Fernão Lopes considered this vision as conveying true meaning. However, there are indications that this may not have been the chronicler's position: in her study on sermons in the *Crónica de Dom João I*, Teresa Amado notes that, in the sermon delivered after the Portuguese victory over the Castilians, Friar Pedro recalls the true prophetic signs that, according to him, foretold the destiny of the Mestre de Avis, but he does not include this vision among them. For this reason, Teresa Amado suggests that Lopes may have been skeptical about the validity or occurrence of this miracle²⁶.

However, another interpretation is possible: the importance of the procession of the 'good souls' is not solely tied to its prophetic message, as neither the procession nor the appearance of the candles explicitly announces the end of the siege. The fact that this vision is first shared by a group of warriors (both Christians and Muslims) and then communicated to all the city's inhabitants suggests that the text places as much, if not more, emphasis on the collective experience of the event as on the type of knowledge it conveys. In other words,

24 L. Rosa, *As almas herdeiras. Fundação de capelas fúnebres e afirmação da alma como sujeito de direito (Portugal, 1400-1521)*, PhD thesis presented to Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, 2005, pp. 236-237. Also published as a book (*As almas herdeiras. Fundação de capelas fúnebres e afirmação da alma como sujeito de direito (Portugal, 1400-1521)*, Lisbon: INCM, 2012). See also by the same author: L. Rosa, «Por detrás de Santiago e além das feridas bélicas. Mitologias perdidas da função guerreira», in L. Rosa, *Longas Guerras, Longos Sonhos Africanos*, Porto: Fio da Palavra, 2010, pp. 109-126.

25 «Indiculum foundationis monasterii Beati Vicentii Vlixbone» in A.A. Nascimento (ed.), *A conquista de Lisboa aos mouros: relato de um cruzado*, Lisbon: Vega, 2001, pp. 178-197.

26 T. Amado, *Fernão Lopes, contador de História*, cit.. Dissenting opinion in M.G. Ventura, *O Messias de Lisboa*, cit.

the episode highlights the collective awareness that this vision generates among the people of Lisbon, bringing them comfort and encouraging them to resist the threat posed by the Castilian siege.

2.2.3. Revelations

Finally, it is also necessary to consider the episode of Friar João Barroca, whose story is told immediately in the aforementioned chapter XXIII, where the theoretical classification we have already referred to is introduced. Fernão Lopes establishes a connection with this classification, which we will analyze further ahead:

Now, whether it was through one of the aforementioned ways or another that we have not mentioned here, Friar João — who would later be called ‘da Barroca’ — came to be, we have no further knowledge, except for what we find written in certain stories about him. These accounts say that long before the Master killed the Count, there lived a devout and pious man in Jerusalem who had walled himself in as a hermit and was of Castilian origin. It was revealed to him in a vision that he should go to the port of Jaffa, where he would find a ship ready to sail to Portugal, specifically to the city of Lisbon, and that he should board it, for it would take him there²⁷.

As many scholars have pointed out, the story of Friar João da Barroca is fundamental to Fernão Lopes’ literary construction of the political rise of the Mestre de Avis²⁸. His arrival in Lisbon, determined by providence, joins the efforts of others to convince the indecisive King João to remain in Lisbon, an essential step in achieving his destiny. Against the rational arguments that the master invoked, Friar João countered with God’s plan to see the Master as king of Portugal.

In contrast to the episodes we have analyzed — and somewhat surprisingly, given that the chapter in which this episode is inserted begins with a taxonomy of revelations and dreams — the chronicler is vague regarding the content

27 Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I. Primeira Parte*, cit., p. 60.

28 M.G. Ventura, *O Messias de Lisboa*, cit., pp. 29-31. H. Macedo, «Fernão Lopes, a sétima idade...», cit. A. Zierer, «Paraíso, Escatologia e Messianismo em Portugal à Época de D. João I», *Politeia: História e Sociedade* 6/1 (2006) 123-148, pp.131-133.

or means by which Friar João da Barroca obtained knowledge of God's will: Lopes chooses the more generic term 'revelation'²⁹. In any case, many chapters ahead, it is through the words of the already-mentioned Friar Pedro that Friar João's revelation is unquestionably validated: in the «official ecclesiastical speech celebrating the victory»³⁰ over the Castilians, Friar Pedro includes the prophecies of Friar João da Barroca among the true ones³¹. Perhaps due to the narrative strategy adopted, Fernão Lopes does not question the validity of the revelations in this episode. However, given the objective of his chronicle—not only to dissuade the *Mestre* from abandoning the kingdom of Portugal but, more importantly, to make the «*Mexias de Lisboa*» aware of the providential destiny that awaited him—it was not relevant to do so either.

Considering our analysis, the significance of incorporating the theoretical framework on revelations and dreams in Chapter XXIII becomes clearer, even though the relationship between theory and practice is not always linear or consistent, as was often the case. On one hand, some of the terminology introduced in that section is applied to specific episodes, particularly those involving dreams or revelations. On the other hand, the celestial vision during the siege of Lisbon is not explicitly identified as such. Beyond the relationship between theoretical terminology and practical application, Lopes's chronicles also question the credibility of the prophetic capacity of these supernatural experiences: important figures, such as Nuno Álvares Pereira, adopt a skeptical stance towards this possibility.

Regarding visions, there is less data to be able to determine whether they were always considered as means of gaining knowledge of the future. In the only episode where a vision appears, it does not provide explicit knowledge about the outcome of the siege of Lisbon, but it does reinforce the idea that the city's defense is sanctioned by God. The celestial vision, accessible to all Lisbon's

29 A. Zierer, «Paraíso...», cit., p. 132, considers this revelation to be somewhere between a dream, a vision and an oracle. We don't share such a categorised opinion, since the text itself even hints at the possibility of this being an unidentified type of revelation. In fact, the dissonance between theorising about dreams and the empirical experience of dreaming as an activity was pointed out by Barbara Newman: «Theorists persistently tried to impose some kind of dichotomy on these nightly encounters with the uncanny, but the dreamworlds of experience no less persistently escaped and demanded a more subtle typology» (B. Newman, «What did it mean to say I saw?...», cit., p. 8).

30 T. Amado, *Fernão Lopes, contador de História*, cit.

31 Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de Dom João I, Segunda parte*, ed. W.J. Entwistle – L.F. Lindley Cintra, Lisbon: INCM, 1977, chapter XLVIII, pp. 114-121.

inhabitants, is open even to those who don't share the same faith, uniting the city's defenders. Unlike dreams, which are individual, the vision requires collective validation, and its prophetic value depends on community acceptance.

3. Dreams and visions in Gomes Eanes de Zurara's *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*

The *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, written by Gomes Eanes de Zurara around 1450 (before he even assumed the role of *cronista-mor*), is one of the main accounts of the early stages of Portuguese expansion in North Africa, detailing the inaugural moment of this process—the conquest of Ceuta in 1415³². More than a simple recounting of military events, this work is imbued with signs, visions and dreams, granting an aura of divine legitimacy to Portuguese military expansion and rule³³. Supernatural experiences play an essential narrative role, framing earthly events within a broader context of premonitions and divine intervention. Within this general framework, however, it seems possible to identify both an overarching narrative logic and certain particularities in how the chronicler narrates, describes or references dreams and visions. As we did in the case of Fernão Lopes, this analysis will set aside other types of phenomena, such as premonitory signs (for example comets and similar omens) and astrology – an area in which Zurara was particularly prolix and interested but which was already subject of scholarly attention, notably in Helena Avelar de Carvalho's master's dissertation³⁴. We will, therefore, focus exclusively on

32 On this work and author, see the constantly updated bibliography compiled by BITAGAP – *Bibliografia de Textos Antigos Galegos e Portugueses* (Texid 1047).

33 Providentialism and its variants have been much less studied in Zurara than in Fernão Lopes. Nevertheless, the following studies, among others, should be noted: A. Gil, *A identidade nacional na Literatura Portuguesa. De Fernão Lopes ao fim do século XIX*, Coleção 'Teses', Ponta Delgada: CHAM, 2015 [specially chapter 4.1, entitled «O providencialismo de Fernão Lopes e de Gomes Eanes de Zurara»] and A. Figueiredo, «O narrador e o herói na Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta», in A. Branco (coord.), *Figura. Actas do II Colóquio da secção Portuguesa da AHLM*, Faro: Universidade do Algarve, 2001, pp. 89-110; M. Ventura, «O elogio do contraditório. Reflexões sobre a cronística de Zurara», in M. Filho — L. França (coord.), *A escrita da história de um lado a outro do Atlântico*, São Paulo: Cultura Acadêmica, 2018, pp. 143-166.

34 H. Carvalho, 'Vir sapiens dominabitur astris'. *Astrological knowledge and practices in the Portuguese medieval court (King João I to King Afonso V)*, M.A. thesis presented to the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences of Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, 2011.

episodes that explicitly feature or allude to dreams and visions. Let us first briefly outline these episodes.

The first of these occurs in Chapter XI, where King João I consults scholars regarding the legitimacy of the conquest of Ceuta. These counsellors defend the campaign using different kinds of arguments and, in conclusion, caution the monarch against being swayed by opposing opinions—or even by supernatural visions—since many such experiences could be mere illusions of the devil:

We determine that Your Majesty may wage war against any infidels, whether Moors, Gentiles, or any others who in any way deny any of the articles of the Holy Catholic Faith, through which endeavor you shall earn great reward from Our Lord God for your soul. And beyond this, do not heed anything that may be said to you on this matter, nor even if they appear to you as visions in the likeness of divine things—do not give them faith. For understand truly that it is the evil spirit that comes to lead you away from your good and holy purpose³⁵.

The following reference occurs in Chapter XXVI, in which Zurara evokes the Transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor, referring to it as «celestial vision»:

And Our Lord God, when He was transfigured on Mount Tabor, did not fail to admonish those three apostles whom He took with Him to keep secret the mystery of that celestial vision, even though those three were the principal ones whom He always kept, as far as His humanity was concerned, in the bosom of His counsels as witnesses to His mysteries³⁶.

35 «determinamos que uossa merçee pode mouer guerra contra quaaesquer jmfiees assy mouros como gentios, ou quaaesquer outros que per alguñ modo negarem alguñ dos artijgos da samta ffe catholica, per cujo trabalho mereçerees gramde gallardom do nosso Senhor Deos pera a uossa alma. E aalem desto nom ouçaaes cousa que uos ouçerqua dello seja dito nem ajmda que uos pareçam uisoões em semelhamça de cousas diuinaaes nom lhe dees ffe. ca emtemdee uerdadeiramente que he ho espiritu maligno que uem pera uos tirar de uosso boom e samto proposito», Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta por el-rei D. João I composta por Gomes Eannes de Zurara*, ed. F. Pereira, Lisbon: Academia das Ciências, 1915, p. 37.

36 «E nosso Senhor Deos quando foy a sua transfiguraçom em monte Tabor, nom ouue por mall de amoestar aaquelles três apostollos que apartou comssyguo, que callassem o segredo daquella çelestriall uisom, como quer que aquelles tres eram os primçipaaes, que elle sempre tijnha quamto aa humanidade no seo de seus comselhos por testimunha de seus segredos», Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., p. 79.

The example serves to highlight the exceptional nature of these phenomena, reserved for only a few, just as only a small group of noblemen is informed of the king's plans for the conquest of Ceuta. The point is to emphasize the need for even those in whom the king has full confidence to keep his plans secret.

The first vision to be reported appears in Chapter XXXV. Here, a Dominican friar from Porto experiences a series of visions during morning prayers, one of which is specified: King João I, kneeling before the altar of the Virgin Mary, receives from an unidentified celestial being a sword with a supernatural glow. However, the friar, because he was a «simple man»³⁷, hesitated to report his vision, sharing it only with another friar. This reflects his doubt about the meaning of the vision while also reiterating the idea that visions are the privilege of the few.

The next episode occurs in Chapter RIV, where Zurara recounts the visions of Queen Filipa de Lencastre at the time of her death³⁸. There are references to the «infernal visions» that usually occur at the time of death and an apparition of the Virgin Mary who comes to comfort the queen in her final moments. The queen reveals that she is aware of her imminent death and knows the fate of her soul, stating that: «I will ascend on high, and from on high I will see you»³⁹. The episode therefore has a special semantic density, highlighting the role of death as a moment in which visions may hold a special significance.

Two dream accounts are also recorded. The first is the dream of a Moor during Ramadan, described in Chapter LVIII⁴⁰. In the dream, the Moor sees bees covering the city and a crowned lion leading sparrows, which in turn eat the bees. This is a clear metaphor for the imminent Christian invasion⁴¹. This episode highlights the universality of dreams as omens in both Christian and Islamic traditions, and Zurara used it to reinforce the inevitability and righteousness of the conquest of Ceuta. The message conveyed by the dream suggests that the conquest was part of a larger divine plan, predestined and unavoidable.

37 Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., p. 112.

38 Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., pp. 134-138.

39 «Eu sobirey no alto, e do alto uos verey», Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., p. 135.

40 Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., pp. 171-174. An analysis of this dream, partially coinciding with ours, in P. Barbosa, «...as abelhas significamos nós outros e os pardais são os cristãos»: a visão do mouro na *Crónica de Zurara*», in J. Fonseca — J. Maia — L. Soares (coord.), *Ceuta e a Expansão Portuguesa. Actas XIV Simpósio de História Marítima, 10 a 12 de Novembro de 2015*, Lisbon: Academia da Marinha, 2016, pp. 357-365.

41 As is also reiterated in chapter LXXXVI: Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta...*, cit., p. 231.

Finally, Chapter LXXXIX⁴² presents another significant narrative, in which a Moor recalls a dream he had, in which he saw a woman surrounded by children and a bridge linking Africa to the Algarve. This dream is interpreted as an omen of the destruction of Ceuta and the subsequent Christian invasion. The symbolic bridge connecting the two continents suggests an inevitable link between the fates of Europe and Africa, with the conquest of Ceuta (which takes place in the same chapter) being the first step in this process of unification under Christian rule. Here, once again, the vision serves to justify the actions of the conquerors, integrating them into a broader framework of the fulfilment of God's will.

3.1. Literary tradition and imagery

All these episodes are constructed based on themes that are easily recognisable in the literature of the time; from that perspective, and as expected, they are not particularly original. Queen Filipa's visions are clearly related to the imagery of a good death⁴³, and the text itself establishes analogies with similar episodes involving other figures, namely Queen Santa Isabel (probably a reference to the mid-14th century's *Legenda da Rainha Isabel* and how it narrates the death of King Dinis' wife)⁴⁴.

The celestial apparition to the Dominican friar of Porto echoes very common motifs in hagiography and historiography⁴⁵, and the premonitory dreams of the Muslims, either because of the symbolism they develop or because they

42 Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., p. 237-240.

43 Among many others, and with perspectives centred on the long term or specifically the Middle Ages, see A. Lahtinen — M. Korpiola (coord.), *Dying prepared in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Col. «The Northern World», vol. 82), Leiden: Brill, 2018; F. García — M. Sanz (coord.), *La muerte de los príncipes en la Edad Media. Balance y perspectivas historiográficas*, Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2020; P. Goldey, «A boa morte: salvação pessoal e identidade comunitária», in R.G. Feijó — H. Martins — J. Cabral (eds.), *A morte no Portugal contemporâneo: aproximações sociológicas, literárias e históricas*. Lisbon: Editorial Quercó, pp. 175-215.

44 Anónimo, *Vida e milagres de dona Isabel, Rainha de Portugal. Texto do século XIV, restituído à sua presumível forma primitiva e acompanhado de notas explicativas*, ed. J. Nunes, Lisbon: Academia das Ciências, 1919.

45 There are many examples of apparitions of angels or similar in medieval literature, including texts as famous as the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Cantar de Mio Cid* (with differences that are not worth exploring here). Some other examples of apparitions of this type can be seen in: A. Antunes, *Vida de São Martinho: Estudo Introdutório, tradução e comentário*. M.A. dissertation in Classical Studies, area of specialisation in medieval and renaissance studies presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Coimbra, Coimbra, 2014;

originate from adversaries/enemies, resemble similar episodes found in several chronicles and other textual genres, such as ancient epic poetry⁴⁶.

The imagery with which these episodes are constructed is also common in the Middle Ages (and other historical periods). For example, the vision of the Dominican friar is not merely a symbol of power, but also a form of political legitimation. The sword received in the vision is not only a weapon of war, but a sacred artefact, conferring on the king both the military leadership and the divine right to rule — a dual symbolism often associated with swords⁴⁷.

Another important symbol is the lion, which appears in the Moor's dream in Chapter LVIII. The lion was a symbol of royalty and power in both the Christian and Islamic worlds⁴⁸. In the context of Zurara's narrative, the crowned lion can be seen as a representation of divine power, guiding the destiny of earthly kingdoms. Its leadership over the sparrows, smaller and weaker creatures, can be interpreted as a metaphor for Christian domination over the Muslims, suggesting the inevitability of the Portuguese victory.

The sparrows and bees in the dream also have relevant symbolism. Bees, aside from representing hard work and order, were also associated with the community of believers, in both Christianity and other religious traditions, where everyone had their role to play in God's grand plan⁴⁹. Sparrows, on the other hand, were seen as fragile and small creatures, but also persistent⁵⁰, a possible allusion to the tenacity of the Muslims in defending their city, though their fate was inevitably sealed by the superior power represented by the crowned lion.

A. Moreno, *Claves hagiográficas en la literatura española (del Cantar de Mio Cid a Cervantes)*, Col. Medievalia Hispanica, vol. 11, Frankfurt: Vervuert Verlagsgesellschaft, 2008.

46 R. Homet, «Caracteres de la conciencia histórica: los sueños y visiones en la *Estoria de España*», *En la España Medieval* 25 (2002) 85-112.

47 D. Lobach, «Medieval Sources of the Modern Symbolic Meaning of the Sword», AA. VV. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Contemporary Education, Social Sciences and Ecological Studies (CESSSES 2018)*, (Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, volume 283), Dordrecht: Atlantis Press, pp. 779-783.

48 W. González, «Las profecías de la batalla del Salado», *Al Qantir* 15 (2013) 101-127; N. Salive, *Lions and Kings: the transformation of lions as an index of power in the Middle East*, Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the College of Literature, Science, & Arts at the University of Michigan in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Art, Detroit, 2017.

49 H. Chan, «*Sicut Apis Operosa*: Honey, Bees, and Chastity in the Early Medieval World», *Ex-position* 45 (2021) 47-63. DOI: 10.6153/EXP.202106 (45).0004.

50 P. Chambel, *Os animais na literatura clerical portuguesa dos séculos XIII e XIV – presença e funções*, PhD dissertation in Medieval History presented to the FCSH of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, 2003 [max. pp. 219-222].

As for the dream described in Chapter LXXXIX, it involves a Muslim figure who sees a woman surrounded by children and a bridge linking Africa to the kingdom of the Algarve. The woman and children can be interpreted as a metaphor for the future generations of Muslims who would live under Christian rule, while the bridge between Africa and the Algarve represents the symbolic and literal control the Portuguese sought over the Strait of Gibraltar, a crucial strategic point for trade and territorial expansion. It should also be linked to the historical connection of Ceuta to the Christian world. This shared past is recalled by the chronicle itself in Chapter II, which is partially based on Muslim sources⁵¹, and serves as a supporting argument for the conquest undertaken by the Portuguese. Thus, this dream not only foretells the conquest of Ceuta, but also the broader ambition of the Portuguese to establish rulership in North Africa.

3.2. Order of episodes; dreams *versus* visions

The order in which Zurara presents these episodes seems to reveal an underlying organisation: first, the chronicle evokes the existence of false and true visions (in the episode of the counsellors) and, later, a biblical vision. Finally, it recounts contemporary episodes, which are also well-organised: first the visions, then the dreams. More than that: this organisation can be correlated (for the moment we don't dare use more than this verb, 'correlate') with different conceptions and functions attributed to dreams and visions.

The vocabulary employed by Zurara to describe visions and dreams follow, indeed, certain patterns and thus seems to reflect an attempt to distinguish between the various types of premonitory experiences. Two aspects seem particularly worth highlighting. The first is that, in this chronicle, visions only occur with Christian characters, while dreams are associated with Muslim characters. It is possible that there is a kind of hierarchical structure of these phenomena, though this does not necessarily imply a devaluation of dreams. More evident are the differences in the use of the terms 'dream' and 'vision'. The word 'vision' is used to describe phenomena that explicitly have a supernatural

51 «E conta della Abilabez que foy grande doutor antre os Mouros», Gomes Eanes Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta...*, cit, p. 10. Joaquim de Carvalho conjectures that it was Aben-Habib: J. Carvalho, «Sobre a erudição de Gomes Eanes de Zurara (Notas em torno de alguns plágios deste cronista)», in *Obra Completa de Joaquim de Carvalho*, Vol. II, Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1983, pp. 185-340. On Aben-Habib, see L. Simon, «Jews, Visigoths and the Muslim Conquest of Spain», *UCLA Historical Journal* 4 (1983) 5-33.

origin, linked to celestial or demonic interventions. In Chapter XXXV, for example, the vision of the Dominican friar, despite his hesitations, is clearly a manifestation of celestial power, symbolised by the luminous sword that the king receives and, above all, by the presence of the being who hands it to the king, and the expression ‘divine thing’ is used. Here, the term ‘vision’ carries a sacred weight, indicating a direct link between the divine and earthly realms. In contrast, in the speech of the counsellors, the existence of demonic visions is admitted, created with the purpose of leading one away from the righteous path. The visions of hell at the time of death, described upon the death of Queen Philippa, are of this type; they share the same origin as the previous ones and serve the diabolical purpose of causing the dying person to «lose true fortitude», i.e. the resigned acceptance of death. These differences are reflected in the diversity of the vocabulary used, with terms like ‘celestial vision’ (transfiguration of Christ), ‘marvellous visions’ (Dominican friar) and ‘infernal visions’ (visions of hell that occur before death).

The term ‘dream’, in turn, appears in association with premonitory contexts, but not necessarily involving celestial figures, the supernatural, or the demonic. Other causes are admitted, and the chronicler even provides a typology, with which we will conclude.

3.3. Zurara’s classification of dreams

In chapter LVIII, where he recounts the first of the premonitory dreams experienced by Muslims, Zurara inserts an aetiology of dreams whose aim was to distinguish true premonitory dreams from false ones and supernatural dreams from natural ones. The passage is as follows:

And because the Moors at that time [of Ramadan] observe their fasts, just as we do during our Lent, they believe that any signs that appear during that period, or significant dreams—which they greatly trust—hold meaning. For they say that dreams come to any man during sleep for one of four reasons: first, due to an excess of food, which causes the stomach to be burdened; second, due to a lack of nourishment; third, due to the force of thoughts that a man carries in his mind during the day about something; and fourth, by divine revelation⁵².

52 «E porque os mouros em aquelle tempo [do Ramadão] fazem suas austinências, assi como nos outros fazemos em nossas coesmas, pensam elles que quaaesquer sinaaes que naquelle

It should first be noted that the reference to Ramadan is not casual (apart from the fact that the preparations for the conquest of Ceuta indeed took place during this time). This reference introduces an ambiguity: on the one hand, Muslims place special emphasis on any signs (including dreams) that occur during this period, which is especially conducive to man's relationship with God; but on the other hand, the chronicler hints at a possible physical reason that could explain them, fasting. What is initially subtly stated then becomes more explicit. Zurara uses a typology of the origin of dreams that was already established. It seems to closely resemble the classification made by Aristotle in *De Somnis*, which was later taken up and reworked by, among others, Thomas Aquinas.

Aristotle analyses dreams as natural phenomena⁵³ that arise from physical and psychological causes. According to his thinking, dreams can occur due to:

- Overeating (stomach overload),
- Food deficiency (hunger),
- Activities or mental preoccupations that the person had during the day.

These three types of causes are directly reflected in Zurara's description⁵⁴:

- «by excess of food with which the stomach is overburdened»,
- «by lack of sustenance»
- «by the burden of thoughts that a man bears throughout the day upon some matter».

Thomas Aquinas follows a line of reasoning similar to Aristotle's when discussing if dreams are caused by physical and psychological factors, mentioning the following:

- Physiological changes (such as food intake and body condition),
- Mental processes or worries that carry over into sleep.

tempo apareçam, ou sonhos assinados per que elles muito crem. ca dizem que per hũa de quatro cousas vem a qualquer homem os sonhos quando dormem, a primeira per sobegidam da vianda, de que o estamago este empachado, a segunda per mingoa de mantimento, a terceira per força de pensamentos que o homem traga de dia em alguũa cousa, e a quarta per rreuelaçam diuinal», Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., p. 172.

53 Aristotle, *On sleep and dreams*, ed. and transl. D. Gallop, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996, 461a8-25, p. 99.

54 Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, cit., p. 172.

However, Aquinas also incorporates the idea that some dreams can be caused by divine intervention⁵⁵, an element that is close to Zurara's fourth category, 'divine revelation'. Although Aristotle provides the basis for the division of physical and psychological causes, Thomas Aquinas (or some other author in this tradition) therefore seems to be the author whose typology most closely resembles Zurara's. In his classic and always indispensable study on the erudition of Gomes Eanes de Zurara, Joaquim de Carvalho⁵⁶ showed how, in the chronicler's work, both direct knowledge of Aristotelian texts and indirect knowledge (through, among others, the *Virtuosa Benfeitoria* of infante D. Pedro) coexist, but he doesn't analyse this passage specifically, as he focuses solely on the sections where Zurara mentions the authors he is following, which is not the case here. At the current state of research, we must be content with the likely Thomistic origin of this classification, without being able to pinpoint the chronicler's concrete source.

4. Conclusion

Let's now examine, in conclusion, the key similarities and crucial differences between Fernão Lopes and Gomes Eanes de Zurara in how they incorporate supernatural phenomena into their chronicles. Although both chroniclers assign dreams and visions a central role in historical and divine legitimization, their use of these elements differs in terms of narrative approach and symbolic function.

One notable distinction lies in their attempts to classify these phenomena. Fernão Lopes demonstrates a concern with developing a conceptual typology of revelations and dreams. In Chapter XXIII of the *Crónica de D. João I*, he distinguishes corporeal (physical) revelations from spiritual ones (related to

55 Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 12, a. 1 co.: «Uno modo ex hoc quod futura praeexistunt in mente divina; et haec propheta donum spiritus sancti ponitur, et haec non est naturalis. Illa enim quae fiunt divinitus sine causis naturalibus mediis, non dicuntur esse naturalia, sed miraculosa. Huiusmodi autem futurorum revelatio fit absque mediis causis naturalibus; cum non hoc modo revelentur prout rationes futurorum sunt in causis creatis, sed prout sunt in mente divina, a qua derivantur in mentem prophetarum».

56 J. Carvalho, «Sobre a erudição...», cit. "Classic and always indispensable", we reiterate, despite some conceptions that are already outdated (more than dated), as it can be seen by the use of the term "plagiarism" in the title. On the role of erudition in Zurara's work from a recent perspective, see J. Guimarães, «Os letrados nas crônicas de Gomes Eanes de Zurara», *E-Letras com Vida* 8 (2022) 84-103.

the soul), ranking them according to the degree of knowledge they provide. Zurara, on the other hand, in Chapter LVIII of the *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, categorizes the causes of dreams, stating that they may originate from physical factors (excess or lack of food), psychological influences (daily thoughts), or divine revelation. This comparison highlights how both chroniclers employ explanatory models, but with different approaches: Lopes focuses on the hierarchy of content and the cognitive value of revelations, whereas Zurara emphasizes the distinction between the causes of dreams without delving into their epistemological significance.

Furthermore, in Fernão Lopes, the episode in which King Pedro of Portugal shares a dream (Chapter XLIII of the *Crónica de D. Pedro*) underscores the importance of external interpretation, a characteristic of the biblical tradition. This dream, concerning his choice between his two sons, only acquires meaning through those «who have the ability to understand» such matters. Here, Lopes contrasts the humility of Pedro of Portugal, who acknowledges the limits of his understanding, with the arrogance of Pedro of Castile (Chapter XXIV of the same chronicle), who disregards a Dominican monk's warning about his brother's impending betrayal, rejecting the legitimacy of the divine message. This contrast reflects Lopes' emphasis on character, highlighting the relationship between humility, prudence, and the acceptance of supernatural messages.

Zurara, however, treats dreams differently. In Chapter LVIII of the *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, the dream of a Muslim during Ramadan—where bees, sparrows, and a crowned lion symbolize the imminent Muslim defeat—is used to reinforce the inevitability of Christian conquest. Although the chronicler acknowledges fasting as a possible physical cause of dreams, he clearly values this one as a divine omen. This episode contrasts with Lopes' criteria: while Zurara admits that a dream can have multiple origins, its prophetic value is determined more by the narrative context and symbolic purpose than by the legitimacy of the dreamer or the need for external interpretation.

As for visions, both chroniclers attribute them a valid supernatural status, in contrast to dreams. In Fernão Lopes, Chapter CIX of the *Crónica de D. João I* describes a celestial vision of figures dressed in white protecting Lisbon during the Castilian siege, emphasizing the collective nature of visions, which are directed at the people rather than just individuals. In Zurara, Chapter XXXV of the *Crónica da Tomada de Ceuta*, a Dominican friar's vision of King João I receiving a glowing sword from a celestial being grants divine legitimacy to the monarch and underscores the symbolic power of kingship. In both cases, visions serve to reinforce political or spiritual messages, but while Lopes

highlights their communal aspect, Zurara presents them as a divine privilege reserved for a select few.

Thus, while Fernão Lopes makes a structured—if not entirely systematic—attempt to conceptualize revelations, exploring their limits and validity based on the nature of the figures involved and the type of manifestation, Zurara adopts a more symbolic and functional approach, in which dreams and visions reinforce providential and apologetic narratives. These differences underscore how each chronicler shaped the relationship between the natural and the supernatural to serve their narrative objectives.

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O presente volume reúne um conjunto de estudos que têm como tópico comum o tema da visão – tanto nas suas dimensões sensoriais como espirituais – na literatura da Península Ibérica do longo século XV. O objetivo que orientou a sua conceção foi o de discutir de que forma o sentido da visão é retratado num conjunto heterogéneo de textos escritos em Portugal e Castela durante este período, procurando determinar se existe uma perspetiva comum sobre a visão enquanto experiência percetiva ou mental ou se, pelo contrário, existem dissonâncias e posições variadas sobre este conceito. Os estudos aqui reunidos demonstram como a visão, tanto na sua dimensão sensorial como na sua dimensão espiritual, se manifesta como um importante elemento integrador, marcando presença em vários domínios da cultura escrita medieval ibérica, e em distintas áreas do saber como é o caso da literatura, da filosofia, da teologia, da historiografia e dos manuais de ensino de surdos. A variedade de perspetivas e dos temas tratados contribui para uma compreensão mais aprofundada das modalidades de expressão da experiência visual no período em estudo.

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