



**ÁRVORES, BARCOS E HOMENS
NA PENÍNSULA IBÉRICA
(SÉCULOS XVI-XVIII)**

FORSEADISCOVERY PROJECT (PITN-GA-2013-607545)

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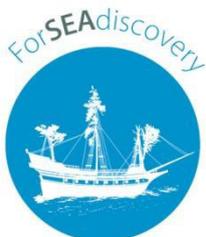
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ÍNDICE

PROTECTION AND PRODUCTION: SOTO DE ROMA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY Félix Labrador Arroyo	1
REGIMEN POLISINODIAL Y CLIENTELISMO EN LA GÉNESIS DE LA POLÍTICA FORESTAL Y NAVAL DE FELIPE II Alfredo José Martínez González	13
MADERAS PARA EL REAL SERVICIO Y EL BIEN COMÚN. APROVECHAMIENTOS FORESTALES EN LA PROVINCIA MARÍTIMA DE SEGURA DE LA SIERRA (SS. XVIII-XIX) María Amparo López Arandia	25
MAR DE ÁRBOLES, VORÁGINE DE JURISDICCIONES. LA COMPLICADA RELACIÓN ENTRE LA REAL ARMADA ESPAÑOLA Y LOS BOSQUES DEL PIRINEO OCCIDENTAL PENINSULAR EN EL SIGLO XVIII Álvaro Aragón Ruano	41
IBERIAN BIZCAYAN SHIPBUILDING AND THE TRANSITION OF A TRANSNATIONAL NETWORK, 1550-1650 Beñat Eguiluz Miranda	55
RECONSTRUCTING TREES FROM SHIP TIMBERS: DATA ANALYSIS AND SCHEMATICS Adolfo Miguel Martins	63
THE REPRESENTATION OF VESSELS IN EARLY MODERN PORTUGUESE TILE Mariana Almeida, Rosa Varela Gomes, Filipe Castro	77
NAVETAS PARA INCENSO: EMBARCAÇÕES EM PRATA NAS ROTAS DO IMPÉRIO PORTUGUÊS Nuno Vassallo e Silva	99
OS NAVIOS DA EXPANSÃO NA PINTURA IBÉRICA DOS SÉCULOS XVI-XVIII Rui Carita	107
THE ROYAL PRESERVES OF PORTUGAL IN THE MODERN AGE: A PROTO-LABORATORY OF FORESTRY? Cristina Joanaz de Melo	117
TREES FOR SHIPS. FOREST DECREES FROM THE REIGN OF D. MANUEL I UNTIL D. SEBASTIÃO (1495-1578) António Rocha Santos	125
WHO PROTECTED PORTUGUESE FORESTS? SAFEGUARDING AND PRESERVING ROYAL AND PRIVATE FORESTS IN PORTUGAL (1605-1640) Koldo Trápaga Monchet	135

NAVIOS E ARMADAS IBÉRICAS NA DEFESA DO ATLÂNTICO (1580-1640)	
Augusto Salgado	149
<hr/>	
A ARQUEOLOGIA DA FRENTE RIBEIRINHA DE LISBOA NOS SÉCULOS XVI A XVIII. CONTRIBUTOS DE UMA INVESTIGAÇÃO EM CURSO (2012-2017)	
José Bettencourt, Alexandre Sarrazola	157
<hr/>	
CURIOSITIES IN IBERIAN SHIPBUILDING, AND THE CONFUSED COG	
Richard Barker	165
<hr/>	
BELINHO 1: REGISTO E ANÁLISE PROVISÓRIA ÀS MADEIRAS DO NAVIO	
Adolfo Miguel Martins, Filipe Castro, Nigel Nayling	181
<hr/>	
CARAVELS	
Filipe Castro	193
<hr/>	
O PAPEL DAS EMBARCAÇÕES INDÍGENAS NO ÂMBITO DA EXPANSÃO PORTUGUESA ATRAVÉS DE UMA PINTURA MURAL NO FORTE DE JESUS EM MOMBAÇA, DATÁVEL DO SÉC. XVI/XVII	
João Palla Lizardo	211
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THE REPRESENTATION OF VESSELS IN EARLY MODERN PORTUGUESE TILE

Mariana Almeida*, Rosa Varela Gomes**, Filipe Castro***

RESUMO

O presente artigo aborda a representação de navios em azulejos portugueses fabricados durante a Idade Moderna. Será feito um catálogo de ocorrências baseado não só no território nacional mas também nas antigas possessões ultramarinas, em grande medida na consulta de bibliografia da especialidade, pelo que este não se encontra de modo nenhum fechado e certamente existirão outros painéis de azulejos com representações de navios. Os painéis em questão são divididos em tipologias consoante o tipo de cena que mostram e a relação dos navios nesse quadro, com a descrição de todos os barcos envolvidos e, sempre que possível, uma categorização dos mesmos de acordo com a nomenclatura naval. Será analisada a simbologia destes elementos, a sua correspondência com modelos de navios seus contemporâneos, bem como a sua inserção no espaço envolvente e no quadro político e social de cada período.

INTRODUCTION

Besides being an important architectural cover, Portuguese tiles had decorative and educational purposes. This feature is particularly noticeable inside religious buildings, where panels narrate biblical episodes almost in a “comic book” fashion. The use of tiles in profane buildings offers varied depictions of more or less elaborate landscapes mythological scenes, great deed that enhance the owner’s family reputation as it is a form of conspicuous wealth of the owner and also portside views.

This paper analyses the depiction of boats and ships in Portuguese tiles. It is almost impossible to present an exhaustive list of all these occurrences, given their abundance, the long time span under analysis, from the late 16th to the late 18th century, and the geographical distribution of Portuguese tiles, which encompasses continental Portugal, its islands, and some of its former colonies around the world (Meco, 1998: 9). We have tried, however, to be as exhaustive as possible, resorting to both written sources and actual physical visits and observations whenever possible.

Some of the panels analysed have been moved from their original place, as is the case of a substantial part of the MNAz collection (Museu Nacional do Azulejo / National Tile Museum), which was formed with pieces from monastic houses – often salvaged after their dismantlement, following the dissolution of monasteries in 1834 (Pais and Esteves, 2014: 83, 84). The tiles’ original and current locations will be given when known.

The Portuguese names of the places, where our subjects are present, where not translated, even when the invocations of Mary that lended their names to churches and convents have an equivalent in English.

The ships painted in single figure tiles were not considered in this paper since they are too stylized and simplistic. Furthermore, the number of sites with this type of tiles is too great to be included in the present study. The characteristics of this type of tiles and the large numbers used on each site make their inventory and study difficult. Moreover, almost all ships represented in single tiles are similar, with two masts, triangular sails, sometimes a rudder, and almost no further details.

Also out of the scope of this analysis are the compositions called *chinoiserie*, a type of compositions popular on the second half of the 18th century, so-called because they used far eastern and Chinese motifs such as landscapes and Asian daily life scenes, which fulfilled an European curiosity with the exotic east, mostly fuelled by engravings published by Jesuits priests (Correia, 2013: 111, 112). While admittedly other contemporary compositions were mostly copied from both foreign and national engravings, *chinoiserie* panels had almost no relation with the Portuguese shipbuilding reality. If nothing else, Portuguese tile painters could hypothetically get directly inspired by going to the docks and see the ships, whereas they could not do so with Chinese models, and had to trust foreign engravings, leaving little room for improvisation or creative variations. Of particular note are the *chinoiserie* tiles from Palácio Pimenta (Lisbon), Palácio

Andrade-Ceia (Lisbon), Palácio de Queluz, Quinta dos Azulejos (Lisbon) and Quinta de Nossa Senhora da Piedade (Vila Franca de Xira) (Câmara, 2005: 163-168).

For organization purposes, the panels containing depictions of boats and ships were ordered by chronology and theme.

The 16th century presents itself with only one ship representation case, so it did not need further organization. The number and diversity of occurrences in the 17th century required a division into two categories: religious and profane tiles, while the extent of these representations from 18th century called for an additional separation.

Religious motifs fall mainly into three categories: scenes from the life of Peter, *ex votos* or miracles, and other religious images, which cannot be included in the previous two, and are in lesser number.

Religious 18th century tiles depict three main scenes: the passages of the Bible usually called the *Miraculous Draught of Fish*, where the apostles were unsuccessfully fishing and Jesus performed a miracle, filling their nets with fish (John, 21: 1-13); *Jesus Walking on Water* and saving Peter from drowning while the other apostles remained inside the boat (Mark, 6: 45-53); and *Calming the Storm*, where Jesus and the apostles were crossing the sea of Galilee in a boat when a storm threatened to sink the vessel but was appeased by Jesus (Mark, 4: 35-41). These three passages share a similar iconography, with a small fishing boat, with a single mast and oars, and are common in churches dedicated to Saint Peter. The boats represented in these tile panels are almost always similar.

Ex votos are gestures of appreciation either for a safe journey or for surviving a battle or an attack at sea. We have included in this category depictions of miracles performed by saints and these tiles are not necessarily an expression of personal piety by a specific commissioner, in response to a particular event, but often are a religious representation of a canonical miracle, performed by a popular saint. They follow a formula, with the Virgin appearing on a cloud, the main image illustrating the miracle itself, and usually a caption stating who commissioned the tiles, when and where the miracle took place, and other relevant information.

Profane panels were divided into six categories: economic activities; historical events; naval battles; real and fictional landscapes; isolated vessels; and mythology

and allegories. The first deals with depictions connected directly to economic activities such as fishing and commerce, although commerce is harder to distinguish solely based on the design of the ship. The following two categories might seem redundant, since some of the painted naval battles were real (like the Battle of Lepanto) but when we have no documents which state what battle we are facing, it is very difficult to do so based only on the flags and ship design, and thus we have chosen not to try to identify unnamed battles. There is also the possibility that the vessels in combat do not reflect a real event, but rather an imagined or allegorical one. We understand as real events those which do not involve warfare, such as journeys of famous characters. The function of creating a landscape, a pleasant, nature filled ambience, without a clear function in the main figuration is very common in the 18th century, sometimes that being the sole purpose of a composition, which brought the outside inside. Sometimes these landscapes translate the reality of a port city such as Lisbon and can be valued as important historical documents. Depictions of shipyards and scenes connected to the building and maintenance of ships were included in this study as well. Isolated vessels were assembled in the fifth category, which encompasses vessels that appear as the sole figuration of a panel, either large and significant in the overall decoration of a given space, or simply as a smaller figure, sometimes in the background. Finally, the last group, mythology and allegories, includes figurations taken from classical or biblical mythology, which usually have a particular set of characteristics that tell them apart, specifically the decoration of the vessels, much more ornate than the "real" vessels, often represented with lions or other animals.

As it would be expected with such a numerous assemblage, the iconography of some panels shows an overlap between different subjects, even of religious and profane, by depicting a real event related to the history of the saints or congregations. We have chosen to place these images in the group that more closely concerns the vessel itself, and not the broader theme of the panel, since the boats and ships are the subject of this study.

Some sites present multiple panels, sometimes with distinct themes, which fall under different groups. Each panel was analysed accordingly, and therefore the same site may appear in several categories, even if it means repeating information. This reasoning is applied to sites such as the Convent of São Vicente de Fora, and the University of Évora.

It is important to point out that tile painters might not have known how to differentiate between the different types of vessels of their time, perhaps following one model for all the tiles, because the ship itself was seldom important for the message conveyed. It is known, especially since the late 17th century, that most tile panels are based on engravings and other stock pictures, adapted to the sensibility of the artist, or of the commissioner of the work (Simões, 2010: 44-47). Said message could be religious (since the ship may represent the evolution of the soul and the Virgin Mary, as well as the church itself, *vide* Cirlot, 1971: 294-295) or profane, as part of a pleasant landscape, which might be the centre of the composition meant to illustrate leisure activities such as hunting or social gatherings (Câmara, 2005: 151, 152). Depictions of naval battles or views of Lisbon – presenting the grandiose capital of the empire – often meant to reinforce the authority of the ruler and the Portuguese naval and commercial power. Some discrepancies of scale reinforce this argument, where the crewman are too big for the size of the ship, which serves a symbolic role. Examples of these situations will be given throughout the text.

Another fact to take into account is that in elaborate tile panels, as it happens in painting, there are different levels of perspective. Thus, objects at the centre stage, so to speak, are depicted in much greater detail than those further in the back, and that is often the case of ships (Meco, 1985: 55, 56). Furthermore, it is known that often in large and complex compositions the most important things were painted by the master painters and/or the background and less important details (trees, clouds, hills, etc.) were painted by the apprentices. Although the use of representations of local vessels should not be entirely excluded, since the main tile production centres were located near the coast, it is likely that the vessels might resemble contemporary models, a good example of this is the Great Panorama of Lisbon, from the 18th century. Furthermore, it is known that other European ceramic production centres engravings, illustrations and paintings were replicated. Santos Simões, one of the most prominent Portuguese authors on tile studies, stated as early as the 1970's that the vessels painted in tile panels were often archaic and stereotyped because painters used old models and were not worried with authenticity (Simões, 2010: 85).

16TH CENTURY

Tiles have been produced in Portugal since the beginning of the 16th century (Barros *et al.*, 2012: 702). The first productions copied Spanish models in technique and decoration, following a Muslim, or *mourisco*, tradition. The decorations shown in these early tiles are mostly phytomorphic, geometric and heraldic, with some animal exceptions (Meco, 1989: 187-191). In the late 16th century, tiles started being produced using the Italian *majolica* technique, and following Italian and Dutch decorative styles (Meco, 1989: 196-198) and presenting a wide variety of themes, ranging from mythological to religious and historical panels (Meco, 1985: 19, 20). The production of tiles in Portugal is usually associated with the manufacture of faience, although the exact date when both these activities started is still unknown. The fabrics of tiles found in kilns from Santo António da Charneca (Barreiro), dating to the early 16th century, have clearly shown that the south bank of the Tagus River copied Spanish models (Vieira *et al.*, 2014: 838). The oldest known dated tiles can be found in the funerary chapel of Garcia de Resende, Évora, dating to 1520. Later, in 1621, there were already thirteen kilns specifically used for tile production in Lisbon (Queiroz, 1907: 245; Santos, 1960: 38).

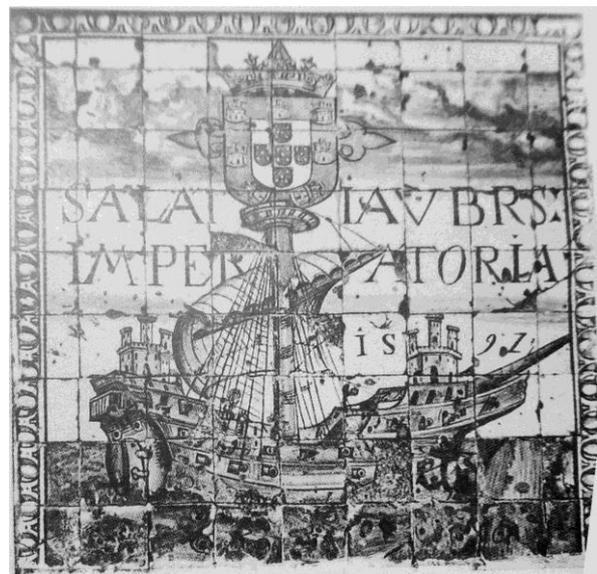


Figure 1. Ship from Alcácer do Sal, showing a good representation of a large ship's hull, with only one mast and fictional castles depicted over its fore and aft castles.

The first known ship representation dates from 1592, from Alcácer do Sal, placed in a public fountain (Simões, 1990: 138). It is a 9 x 9 panel depicting a ship with a forecastle, a stern castle and a single mast from which stems a large coat of arms with the Cross of Saint James, the symbol of the Order of Santiago, which was the proprietor of the village at the time. The ship should be a caravel, since it is still part of the coat of arms of Alcácer do Sal until today.

17TH CENTURY

The 17th century saw the rise of patterned tiles, with geometric and phytomorphic decoration, which dominated the first three quarters of that century (Pais, 2012: 83). However, we can also find figurative tile decoration during that period, both in secular and religious spaces – one particularly interesting point is that a tile panel within a religious place does not necessarily imply that it has a religious theme, and this reasoning is valid for all chronologies (as an example, see the church of Abrunhosa do Ladário, Sátão, whose six panels, painted by the master Teotónio dos Santos (1688-1730?) represent only profane themes such as hunting or social gatherings (Lopes, 2001: 181-182). At this time, tile panels were significantly smaller and less refined than future 18th century compositions, generally focusing on one single scene (Meco, 1989: 202).

One author states that the first representations with maritime-related themes date to the end of the 17th century, and consist of single image tiles with ships (Câmara, 2005: 175), although the ships represented in them are almost always similar.

17TH CENTURY RELIGIOUS-THEMED SHIP DEPICTIONS

Two altarpieces from the second half of the 17th century show small boats, drawn in a simplistic manner, both single-masted ships amidst other symbolic imagery. One, now in Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, Coimbra, but from unknown provenance, shows the ship connected to immortality and resurrection symbols, with the emblem of the Carmelite Order as the main subject of the piece (Monteiro, 1998: 171). The other is still in its original place, the church of Almagem do Bispo, Sintra, and the ship is identical to the previous one, but with a man at the rudder (Monteiro, 1998: 165).

A more popular expression of faith which finds its way to tile compositions is the *ex voto*, a votive offering made in gratitude for a blessing. Being a country of fishermen and seamen, Portugal has a tradition of maritime *ex votos* where the Virgin Mary in her many invocations helps those who appeal to her.

In the parish church of Vagueiros, Santarém we can see a 4 x 4 panel depicting a carrack with the Portuguese flag and Our Lady of the Rosary appearing before it. The tiles were dated to 1639 but unfortunately we do not know the story behind this composition. (Simões, 1997: 177, pl. XLV).

In the church of Vila do Conde, Porto, there is a panel with Saint Elm on a cloud and two three-masted ships with a caption stating that the ship *Corpo Santo* left that village bound for Angola in 1622 and a promise was made for its safe arrival, the panel itself might date from around 1650 (Simões, 1997: 41, pl. VII). In the same temple there is a panel with the same scheme of the two ships and a saint on a cloud, this time *Nossa Senhora da Boa Viagem* (eng. Our Lady of the Safe Journey). The caption states that an unknown woman promised to pay for the tiles of her chapel if her son returned safely from a journey he was about to make (Simões, 1997: 41, pl. VII).

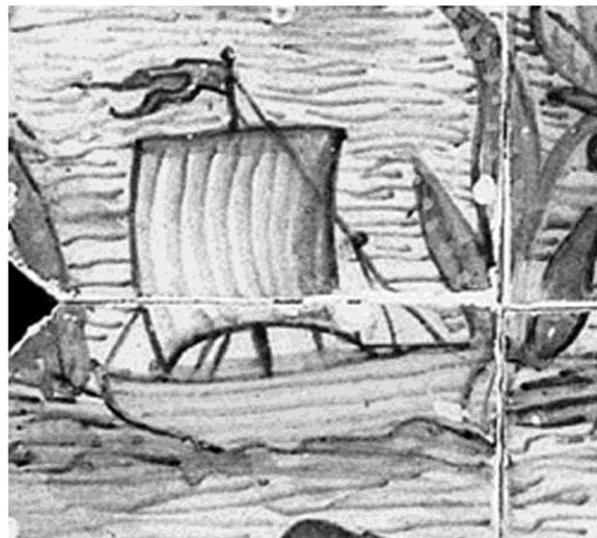


Figure 2. Small square rigged boat with a stern panel from the altar from the Museu Machado de Castro. (after Monteiro, 1998: 166).

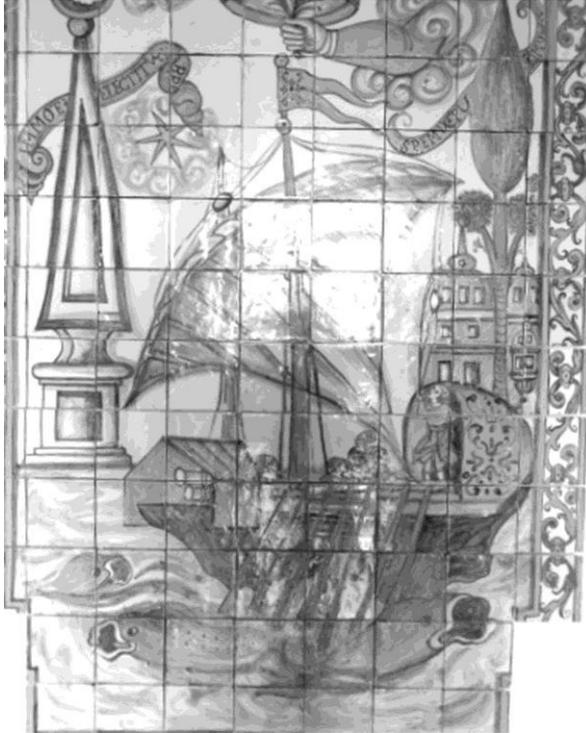


Figure 3. Stylized representation of a galley from the moral emblems panel at the MNAz. Photo by the author.

Another panel, filled with moral emblems, depicts a ship with the saying «*Remo et aura*» (eng. oar and sail, conveying the message that “an escape can be a victory”) and now stands at MNAz. Each moral emblem bears a subtitle taken from the work of Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco (1539-1613), *Emblemas Morales*, (Pais, 2012b: 272, 274, 279). The ship in this panel is slightly more detailed than the previous ones, with two masts, two cannons, crewman, and a row of oars that identify it as a galley.

17TH CENTURY PROFANE SHIP DEPICTIONS

One of the largest collection of boats for this period can be found in the Palace of the Marquises of Fronteira, in Lisbon (Sabo and Falcato, 1998: 98-105, 203). Built by D. João de Mascarenhas in 1667, it belonged to a high nobility family whose power was connected to the newly established dynasty of Braganza. The palace, and especially its large gardens, are decorated with tiles from the second half of the 17th century (Sabo and Falcato, 1998: 100; Castel-Branco, 2008: 113, 114). Among the various subjects depicted (mythology, kings of Portugal, battles of the Portuguese Restoration War, etc.), are fishing, coral

fishing, and boat outing scenes, which decorate the lowest part of the garden benches and serve as frames for other compositions. There are twenty boats in total, simply drawn like most boats represented in tiles from this period. Some boats show a single mast but the majority are rowboats.

Another collection, originally located at Quinta dos Chavões, Cartaxo, presents a more diverse, although smaller, collection of ship and boat drawings. These panels are now located at Fundação Ricardo Espírito Santo Silva. These panels date from the third quarter of the 17th century (Flor, 2013: 293). The most famous of these panels show a noble woman with lute players being transported in a *bergantim* pleasure barge with three rowers. She has sometimes been identified as Catherine of Braganza but the latest analysis of this panel contradicts that interpretation (Flor, 2013: 293; Monteiro, 2012: 315). This image stands between a heavily armed and manned fortress and a warship with two masts, armed warriors and a large, disproportionate horse figurehead. The stern of the ship is also highly decorated (Monteiro, 2012: 319). A second panel displays the exact same figures (fortress and warship), perhaps portraying a real battle of the Restoration War. A third panel from this collection depicts a port scene where a well-dressed couple overlooks the loading or unloading, of three small rowboats with a crane (Simões, 1997: pl. XLI). There is yet another boat in these gardens. It is a small rowboat with four rowers and two well-dressed ladies, against a bucolic landscape which includes a man fishing with a cane. This is perhaps the earliest example of a type of composition that will be very common in the following century.

These two palaces, on the outskirts of Lisbon, belonged to a newly established nobility that orbited around the new Braganza dynasty, which raised to power through a coup in 1640. The palaces of these nobles reflected their ascension and status through an architectural and decorative program (Martinho, 2012: 293-295).

Despite being a religious environment the church of São Vicente, Abrantes, shows two small mid-17th century 6x6 panels standing side by side, each depicting the same vessel, placed facing each other. The ships represented are carracks from *the Carreira da Índia*, with stern and bow castles and the cross of the Order of Christ painted on the sails. Two birds in flight flank each ship (Simões, 1997: 154).



Figure 4. Small rowing leisure vessel from the Quinta dos Chavões. (After Flor, 2013: 293).

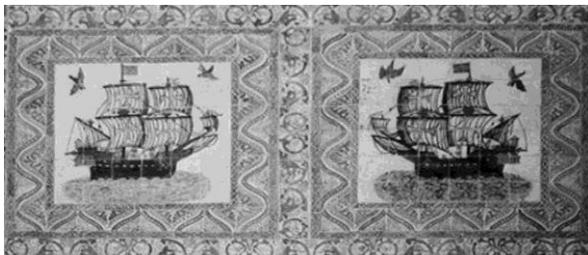


Figure 5. Representations of three-masted ships from the church of S. Vicente, Abrantes. Image taken from <http://porabrant.es.blogspot.pt/tag/igreja+de+s%C3%A3o+vicente>.

18TH CENTURY

When we reach the 18th century, the number of tiles increases exponentially or at least our knowledge of them, and of course the existing amount of boats and ships representations is far larger. Tiles of this century are painted only in blue until its third quarter, when polychromous frames with a blue central composition become usual. The use of colour becomes common towards the end of the century (Meco, 1989: 69, 71).

Water as a theme for tile compositions (with other closely related subjects such as the sea, ships, riversides, seaside, ports, shipyards and naval battles) is a staple of the second half of the 18th century. Rivers and the sea are almost omnipresent in Portuguese tile panels, either as charming spaces of leisure, pleasure, or as a form of

intimate and permanent contact with nature (Câmara, 2005: 176).

18TH CENTURY RELIGIOUS THEMED BOAT DEPICTIONS: LIFE OF PETER

A panel in the Church of São Pedro of Penaferrim, Sintra, depicts *Jesus Walking on Water*, following an engraving of Rafael Sanzio. The tiles date from around 1725/45 (Lopes, 2001: 206, 294).

The Church of São Pedro of Palmela presents 22 panels with passages from the life of that saint painted by Nicolau de Freitas in 1730/40. Five of them show boats: Jesus and the apostles eating near Lake Tiberias with small fishing boats on the background; Jesus appearing before the apostles on a boat with others fading in the distance; *Jesus Walking on Water* with the apostles on a boat and another one on the background; the *Miraculous Draught of Fish* with a boat in the foreground and two others in the distance; and Calming the Storm where only one boat was painted, very detailed with the rudder and the fasteners clearly depicted (Serrão and Meco, 2007: 85, 186-189).

The Convent of São Francisco, Horta, Faial, shows *Jesus Walking on Water* and a slightly different variation of the Calming the Storm scene. In the first one we see the apostles' boat, the usual one mast small fishing boat with a rudder, while in the background is a boat similar to the previous one, and further in the back a large three mast galleon. The second panel is more uncommon since it does not illustrate the miracle itself but the moment immediately before, when Jesus is still asleep. Two ships similar to those in the first panel are depicted, together with the silhouette of two ships in the distance which are difficult to discern (Simões, 1963: 61-63).

The Church of Santa Iria da Azóia, Loures, shows a panel with the *Miraculous Draught of Fish* story, representing the apostle's boat on the foreground and several others of the same type in the background. These tiles are dated from around 1750 (Simões, 2010: 387).

The chapel of São Pedro in the Cathedral of Viseu shows a panel with the *Miraculous Draught of Fish* dating from 1722 (Simões, 2010: 182). The Church of Misericórdia of Chaves displays a panel with *Jesus Calming the Storm* (Cerimónias, 1927: 35).



Figure 6. Representation of an undecked boat with a single mast, square rigged and depicted too far forward to be realistic, from the Convent of São Francisco, Horta, Faial. Image taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarde/9554533184>.

Two panels now in the upper cloister of MNAz show the *Miraculous Draught of Fish* and *Jesus Walking on Water*, both with Latin inscriptions quoting the bible and with features which place both compositions in around 1750-1760. In the first scene the boat depicted is a small, one mast fishing boat, with only Peter and Jesus on board, both using crosses as oars, an allusion to their manner of death. The mast is also vaguely cross shaped, possibly to reinforce the symbolism of the scene. The second panel shows the two characters alone in the sea with Jesus saving Peter by pulling him with a cross. The ship is further in the background and was painted with little detail, being a smallish two-masted ship.

18TH CENTURY RELIGIOUS THEMED BOAT DEPICTIONS: EX VOTOS AND MIRACLES

The church of Nossa Senhora da Nazaré of Luanda, Angola, has a panel unlike others of this type, where the Virgin and the ship occupy the same area in the composition, dividing it diagonally. The ship is sinking due to a storm, showing disproportionate crewman praying. Only half of the ship is shown, with two masts and the stern castle, all somewhat stylized. The chronology of the piece is around 1740-1750 (Simões, 2010: 87).

We can find four tile panels in the Church of Nossa Senhora da Boa Viagem (eng. Church of Our Lady of the Good Voyage) of Salvador, Brazil, alluding to miracles in 1720, 1726, 1731 and 1737, and made in the workshop of Bartolomeu Antunes in Lisbon, around 1740-170. All four panels have captions with the description of the

events, whom they happened to, and the date (Simões, 1964: 98, 100; Mecco, 1998b: 68). It is important to point out that all the ships depicted in these panels are similar, with very faint differences, indicating that all were painted in the same workshop, for the same commissioner. The first miracle performed by the Virgin tells the story of a fleet traveling from "the islands" to Portugal that were attacked by four Moorish ships, which were dispersed by a sudden storm. The panel shows eight ships in total, with different degrees of detail and proximity. All ships have three masts, one row of guns and a stern castle, being completely similar in all except the flags, even though it is unlikely that the Ottoman ships were similar to the Portuguese ones. As we have mentioned above, these representations are symbolic and nobody seems to have considered important to accurately represent the ships involved. As with painter's workshops tile makers are known to have used stock images regardless of the motive and the date of the representations (Russell, 1983). The image of the Virgin stands on a cloud on the top of the composition.

The second panel, dating to 1726, tells the story of another attack of a Portuguese ship by two Muslim ships, while sailing from Brazil to Portugal. The miracle performed consists on the fact that after a five hour battle all the passengers survived and the ship arrived safely at port. The tiles show two scenes side by side, with three ships each, telling the story of the attack: first the Portuguese ship, flying a Portuguese flag, is approached by the two Muslim ships, recognizable from crescents on their flags; on the second scene the three ships are depicted engaging in battle.

The third panel, from 1731, tells the story of António Roiz, who fell overboard sailing from Brazil to Lisbon and survived through the intervention of the Virgin. He is depicted in a disproportionate way to better convey the story. His ship was part of a fleet of which five vessels are depicted, all flying the Portuguese flag.

The last miracle, dated to 1737, is the story of a ship sailing from Rio de Janeiro to Pernambuco, both cities in Brazil, and its passing unharmed through an area of dangerous reefs during the night (Simões, 1965: 97-100, pl. XV; Simões, 1998: 68).



Figure 7. Representations of three-masted armed vessels with typical 17th century sterns from Igreja da Boa Viagem, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. Image taken from <http://www.comunidade.culturaearte.com/a-historia-do-azulejo-portugues/>

The main chapel of the Church of Nossa Senhora dos Navegantes, Cascais, shows two almost symmetrical panels with a large ship on the foreground, among others on the background. On the Gospel side the panel shows a very detailed ship, a galleon or an armed merchantman, with one row of guns and three masts, flying the royal flag. On board the characters pray to the Virgin, which appears on the upper right corner. Four other ships appear in the distance, a smaller two-masted fishing boat, and a larger ship on each side. On the side of the Epistle, the panel is very similar, but with the tutelary image of Saint Peter González (also known as Saint Telmo or Saint Elmo), with the same main ship in a similar position and almost the same background (Simões, 2010: 87, 266).

Also from Cascais, the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Conceição of Porto Seguro, holds a panel from around 1740 shows an allegory to the salvation at sea with a very interesting ship with obvious perspective problems, somewhat cubist since we can see all parts of the ship from different angles. Inside the vessel are the disproportionate images of Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Anthony, and a Virgin stands on a cloud above and between the two other characters. (Simões, 2010: 87, 265; Falcão, 1984: 39).

Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Guia has a panel where a ship is in peril due to a storm. The ship is dwarfed by the size of the Virgin and angels, and there are two other ships outlined, one smaller than the other, showing almost no detail, and looking like large commer-

cial vessels (Simões, 2010: 157, 158).

The Church of Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Salvador, Brazil, has a panel that shows Saint Dominic saving the shipwrecked crew of a sinking ship with a rosary, the Virgin on a cloud above him, and a man with crutches on its left. On the right is part of the sinking ship but we can only see part of the bow and one mast, all represented with little detail (Simões, 1964: 111, pl. XX).

A panel from the Convent of Graça, Torres Vedras, displays a scene from the life of Saint Gonçalo of Lagos where he saves his nephew from drowning in a storm. Two vessels can be seen in the background, one further in the back than the other, large in style but with little to no detail and only silhouetted (Simões, 2010: 425).

The Chapel of the Regato farmstead in Perre, Viana do Castelo, dating to circa 1749, has a panel depicting the miracle of Saint Francis Xavier and the crab, which took place in the island of Baranura, in 1546. In it we see the saint and a group of people to the right, a large vessel also to the right, highly stylized, and the outline of a second ship on the distance (Simões, 2010: 96).

OTHER 18TH CENTURY RELIGIOUS THEMED BOAT AND SHIP DEPICTIONS

A few other panels also fall into the religious sphere, mainly due to the symbolic role of the ship, as an allusion both to Mary and the Church itself. One is located in the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Piedade in Castelo Branco, and shows a very schematic three-masted ship with other silhouetted boats fading in the distance. The ship has what appears to be a smaller boat by its side, connected to it through a rope, and standing below a main figuration of the Adoration of the Magi. The chapel is decorated with large panels with scenes of the life of the Virgin, ten in total, with smaller panels below them showing symbols connected to the virgin, the ship among them. The tile decoration of the chapel dates from 1739, painted by Bartolomeu Antunes (Simões, 2010: 232, 233; Salvado, 2012: 104, 105). The same iconography can also be seen in the church of the Convent of Nossa Senhora da Conceição of Braga, where the iconographic program consists of symbols connected to the Virgin (rose, ship, lily, star, mirror, moon, tower and the sun), and dating from 1740/1750. The ship itself seems to be a frigate, with three masts, one row of guns and a stern castle (Simões, 2010: 115; Carvalho and Silva, 2016: 180-183).



Figure 8. Typical 17th century armed vessel from the Igreja da Assunção, Cascais. (After Simões, 2010: pl. LII).

Another religious figuration with a ship comes from the Church of Assunção, Cascais, where a galleon stands with a large and disproportionate monstrance on its stern castle, and with a caption saying that the tiles were paid by the fishermen in 1720 (Simões, 1997: 264, 265, pl. LII). It is highly unlikely that this figuration has any correspondence with reality and is just a symbolic representation of the host, which was not allowed on board.

A religious themed ship depiction can also be found in the chapter house of the Monastery of São Jorge de Milreus, Coimbra, dating to 1756. The vessel represented is very detailed, with three masts, collected sails, a row of guns and four cherubs playing among the rigging. A flag at the stern bears the inscription "*Dei onje portans panem suum Prov 31.14*" (She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar) (Simões, 2010: 215, pl. XXXVIII). The ship in this passage symbolizes the church itself, which brings the souls of the faithful to good port.

Ships and boats sometimes serve as background for religious themes without any meaning. It is the case of the panel from the Church of the old Convent of Our Lady of Penha de França, Lisbon, with scenes from the

life of Saint Francis of Assisi and dated from c. 1728/1730 (Carvalho and Silva, 2016: 146, 147, 150). The four ships (probably two galleons and two smaller vessels) are silhouetted in the background, contributing to create a pleasant landscape along with buildings and diverse other natural elements. The same thing happens in a panel from the Church of the old Convent of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, Braga, where the main theme is the lives of hermits, represented on a landscape with a configuration very similar to the previous one. In them we see two ships, one on each corner, fading in the distance and only outlined. On the left side stands a small fishing boat and on the right a large vessel (Carvalho and Silva, 2016: 181, 182). The same composition happens on a panel from the Convent of Santo António, Belém do Pará, Brazil, representing that saint preaching to the fishes, having a very small silhouetted ship fading in the distance, possibly a large galleon (Simões, 1965: 204, pl. XLIV).

18TH CENTURY PROFANE BOAT AND SHIP DEPICTIONS

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The Convent of Nossa Senhora das Neves, Olinda, shows in a corridor several tile panels from 1720, one of which displays a small fishing boat with one mast and two men unloading baskets full of fish, using a wooden plank. In the distance we can perceive two other vessels, hard to discern (Simões, 1965: 237, pl. LIV).

A panel from the Dr. José Coelho da Cunha collection, housed at São Vicente Palace, Lisbon, shows a hunting scene on the left and a harbour landscape on the right, with a man unloading goods from a small rowboat. A large commercial ship is docked on the background, with three masts, stern castle, no guns and little decoration or detail. Close to the first boat, in the forefront, are timbers which are clearly the remnants of a discarded boat, an unusual detail in these compositions. Far away on the skyline are the silhouettes of two other large ships (Simões, 2010: 337).

A panel from around 1780-90 in the noble house Vila Garcia, Lisbon, shows a river side landscape with a fortress on the left close to which are three small row boats. At the centre stands a half hidden boat from which we can only see the masts and rigging. Two men are unloading barrels from that boat. A small rowboat can be seen at the left, with a man fishing in it (Simões, 2010: 364, 365).

In the collections of the MNAZ, without indication of provenance, stands a landscape with a central architectural element separating a bucolic landscape, to the right, from a riverside scene, to the left. It presents a boat with three pairs of rowers approaching a stone pier. In the distance four similar boats do the transshipment of men and goods from a larger vessel, which stands far away and is represented with little detail (Pereira, 1995: 87).

In the former public granary of Lisbon, a panel from around 1770 shows boats near a stone pier unloading wheat, which is the only hint of a different colour, since the rest of the composition is entirely in blue. The vessels are small one-masted transport boats, filled with goods and men. To the right, two well-dressed gentlemen stand before a table where they keep record of the wheat being unloaded (Simões, 2010: 371; Câmara, 2007: 183-185).

An interesting panel comes from the parish church of Cernache, dating from 1770 and produced in Coimbra. This panel represents the construction of Noah's ark and is included here because although it is a religious (or even mythological) scene, it nonetheless gives a good insight into shipbuilding in the 18th century, showing the tools on the ground, in the forefront, while eight men (more than those who traditionally worked on that vessel) are building the frame, according to the principles of "skeleton first" construction (Simões, 2010: 193,194).

The Palace of Independência or Palace Almada, Lisbon, displays a panel on the first floor dated to around 1730 with a seaside scene, probably inspired by engravings from northern Europe. To the left of the composition is a boat with what appears to be a tent where a man sells goods to another man, standing on a small rowboat. Two small boats propelled by poles approach the dock, and at the centre of the composition two men handle wooden planks which clearly were the framework of a ship, in an evident case of reuse. Further in the background is a large vessel, possibly a galleon, and faded in the distance we can see the silhouettes of three other ships, almost impossible to distinguish (Meco, 1981: 35, 42, 43; Sampaio, 1988: 29, 33, 34, 55; Simões, 2010: 340).

A very similar composition with approximately half the size, possibly done by the same hands, is in the MNAZ collection, with an unknown provenance. We can see the same rowboat at the dock, the same group of people sitting on the right edge of the composition, the same

wood planks, and the boat with the tent, although it stands with no occupants in the background. Even the natural landscape and buildings are similar. (Pereira, 1995: 86).

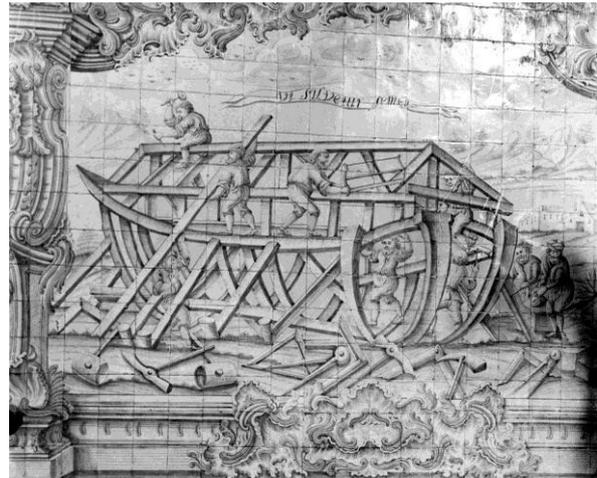


Figure 9. Noah's Ark. This representation depicts a team of carpenters building the transversal framing of a ship, from the parish church of Cernache. Image taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarte/9253759119/in/album-72157634557767487/>.

The building from Guarda Mor Street, nº 20 in Lisbon, holds a panel from approximately 1790, with a port scene, with men working on the dock while two boats are approaching in the background, although represented with little detail and very stylized, almost as silhouettes. The vessel on the left is rigged with two triangular sails and has moderate dimensions, probably representing a local transport vessel, while the one on the right is a large vessel, with three masts and what seems to be a row of guns (Simões, 2010: 368).

The Colégio do Espírito Santo, in the University of Évora, has a panel in one of its rooms with a double feature scene. The right side is a boar hunt, but on the left side we can see a small boat in the middle of a calm river, with one man handling a pole and another man casting a fishing net (Mendeiro, 2002: 47, 50; Simões, 2010: 523)

The sacristy of the Convent of São Francisco in Salvador, Brazil, presents a panel from around 1710-14, entirely dedicated to fishing. On the left two men at the beach cast nets while two small rowboats approach the nets, the one closer to the observer showing nets still

inside it. On the distance we can see the triangular sails of five single-masted small ships, probably also fishing vessels, and the silhouette of one large ship in the distance (Meco, 1998b: 61; Simões, 1965: 117, 118).

The Convent of São Vicente de Fora, Lisbon, shows three panels depicting fishing scenes. In one of them we can see three nobly dressed gentlemen walking near a river and gazing at a small boat, which is casting fishing nets. The same gentlemen are present in another panel, looking at a group of men dragging fishing nets to the shore, while a boat with one sail stands at some distance of the casting nets. A rowboat and a larger two-masted vessel are visible in the skyline. The third panel is almost similar to the first one, but only two men are by the shore (Simões, 2010: 310, 314).

The São Lourenço farmstead in Pragal, near Lisbon, has an interesting decorative program consisting of sea and navigation related scenes dating to 1742, and based on Dutch engravings. One of them presents shipyard scenes and shows the actual building of a large ship on the left, almost complete, again according to the “skeleton first” principle of construction. A group of workers on the left of the ship pull a rope while others choose timbers for the ships’ structure. Behind them stands a small group of noblemen, looking at the ships, perhaps representing the ship owners. Since the ship is not complete, it is not possible to say what type it would be. The right side of the panel is occupied by another group of workers caulking another large vessel, which is placed on its side with the help of a barge (Raposo and Reis, 1994: 110, 111; Simões, 2010: 454).

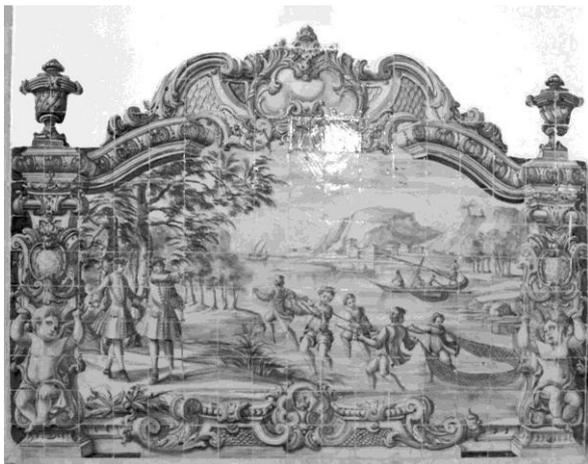


Figure 10. Fishing scene from the Convento de São Vicente de Fora. Photo by Rita Varela Gomes.

HISTORICAL EVENTS

The Convent of Graça, Torres Vedras, shows a panel from 1725 with the caption “*D. Aleixo de Menezes, arcebispo primaz das Indias Orientais faz entrada em Goa em 1595*”, (D. Aleixo de Menezes, archbishop primate of the East Indies makes an entrance in Goa in 1595). This event took place almost two hundred years before, but was understandably represented because he was a patron of that monastic house. The panel depicts the ships still at sea and therefore the scene would be unintelligible without the caption. Several ships and boats are represented: two large galleons flying the Braganza flag, which did not exist in 1595, one with highly decorated stern castle. A decorated pleasure barge with rowers is represented with a blank flag. In the horizon four large vessels and silhouetted. A small boat with one mast is also depicted, together with seven landing boats, one of which with a nobleman standing up, possibly the clergyman mentioned in the panel (Simões, 2010: 414-416).

A panel depicting the arrival of Saint Francis Xavier in China can be seen at the church of the Convent de Nossa Senhora da Encarnação das Comendadeiras de São Bento de Avis, Lisbon, and dates from around 1730. This panel shows the saint with a Chinese entourage on the shore and a large three-masted vessel with a decorated stern castle. Although it seems that the ship does not mount any guns, its bow is hidden by smoke from an unknown origin. The panel also contains three small rowboats, used to transport the passengers to land (Simões, 2010: 285). A similar theme can be seen in a panel from the Hospital of Arroios, Lisbon, from circa 1740-50. On the left Saint Francis Xavier is represented leaving Lisbon to India on April 2nd 1541. He is depicted in a small row boat bound for a larger vessel represented on the background, very stylized and with almost no detail. On the left stands a fortress where king John III watches him depart, and on the right is a different composition with the saint already in Asia, preaching to the indigenous population. Another panel with passages of the life of the saint show another vessel, on the background of a scene where he is being martyred by flames, to convert a sinner, while the landscape features exotic flora and a ship, of which we only see the bow and sails, but that looks like an 18th century frigate (Veloso and Almasqué, 1996: 81, 83; Simões, 2010: 288).

One of the panels from the Hospital of São José, former Colégio de Santo Antão of the Jesuits in Lisbon,

recounts the episode of the siege of Syracuse in 212 b. C., where Archimedes allegedly burned the sails of some Roman ships through the use of concave mirrors. As it was the rule in this period, the ships do not have the features of classical ships, but instead are similar to other 18th century warship representations. Two of them can be seen in this panel (Veloso and Almasqué, 1996: 61; Simões, 2010: 284). The same event is depicted at the University of Évora, in tiles dated to around 1746-49, with the same composition of ships, again with no features of classical ships. Two rowing lifeboats are represented moving away from the burning ship. This panel is larger than its Lisbon counterpart and includes two other large ships and two lifeboats of the Roman fleet (Mendeiros, 2002: 131, 135; Simões, 2010: 521). The same site includes another panel with an historical event in 40 b. C., where the poet Virgil congratulates his friend Caius Asinius Pollio for being nominated consul while he presents his infant son in a cradle. Two galleys stand to the left of the main characters, stylized and half hidden by a fortified city (Mendeiros, 2002: 78-80; Simões, 2010: 522).

The cloister of the Church of the Ordem Terceira de São Francisco in Salvador, Brazil, shows has sixteen panels from around 1750, dedicated to the wedding of prince D. José (the future king José I) with D. Maria Ana of Austria in 1729. More specifically, they depict the wedding boat procession that started in Montijo (south bank of the Tagus, opposite to Lisbon) to Belém, which then continued by carriage crossing the streets of the capital, and stopping in the Royal Palace of Ribeira. Three of these panels show the fluvial procession, the first shows a highly decorated *bergantim* with the royal flag, followed by a rowboat and several small ships, four of which bearing two triangular sails each, and three arming only one sail. Some of these ships bear flags. The second panel considered shows a small (and disproportionate) two-masted vessel with a stern castle and a large royal flag. The scene includes three rowboats, five single-masted boats with triangular sails, and a small two-masted boat in the forefront. It should be pointed out that the landscapes in these two panels is fictional and romanticised, with castles on hills, while a third panel displays the approach to Belém with recognizable buildings such as the Tower of Belém and the Jerónimos Monastery. This panel presents the same decorated two *bergantim* seen in the first composition, three rowboats, and a single-masted small boat (Simões, 1965: 117; Simões, 1998: 22-28).

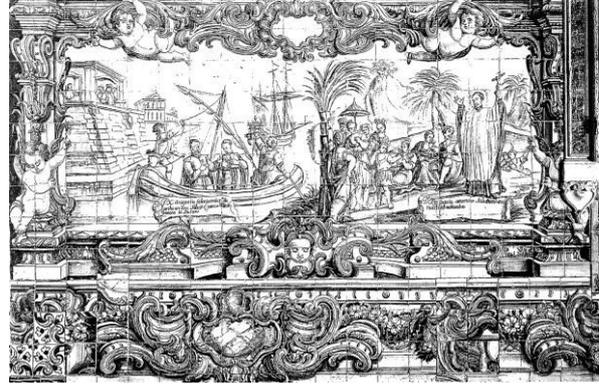


Figure 11. Representation of a one-masted vessel with a square rig. On second plan a large three-masted ship. The panel stands at the Hospital of Arroios. Image taken from <http://aps-ruasdelisboacomhstria.blogspot.pt/2012/10/praca-do-chile-xi.html>.



Figure 12. Three-masted armed ship with typical 18th century bow and stern from the Church of the Ordem Terceira de São Francisco, Salvador, Brazil. Image taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarte/9492797455/in/album-72157620632205823/>.

REAL AND FICTIONAL LANDSCAPES

The last flight of stairs of the Cathedral of da Bahia, Brazil, presents an invitation figure and a bucolic countryside landscape, both from around 1730-1740. In it a small single mast boat can be seen, in the river background (Simões, 1965: 82, 83, pl. IX).

The manor of the Counts of Arcos in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, presents three panels from approximately 1795-1800, depicting ships. All vessels are represented in the central medallion, within a broader decoration. The decoration presents bucolic landscapes with houses to one side and small passing boats to the other. One of the landscapes also offers a larger vessel, possibly a frigate (Pereira, 1998: 219-222).

In the balcony of the former Bishop's Palace of Olinda, Brazil, one of the panels shows a bucolic scene with a shepherd with his flock near the shore, and two men talking, while on the water we can see a boat with one row of oars, probably a fishing vessel (Simões, 1965: 239, 240, pl. LII).

The chapel of Senhora da Conceição (da Jaqueira), Recife, Brazil, contains a panel in the vestry with a countryside landscape dated to approximately 1770-1780, where we can see a small bridge over a river with a house to the side. On the water stands a small rowboat with three men holding fishing rods (Simões, 1965: 246, 247, pl. LVIII).

The Chapel of Capela de Nossa Senhora da Nazaré, São Martinho, Madeira, painted by António de Oliveira Bernardes in 1720, has a tile panel displaying the miracle associated to that invocation of Mary (preventing the horse of knight D. Fuas Roupinho from falling off a cliff). The miracle invocation is, however, just a small detail on the background, while the main focus of the composition is a sea port landscape, with a fortress flying the Portuguese flag. The composition contains eleven ships in total, none of them highly detailed. Four are small rowboats, three seem to be larger and armed three-masted vessels, and four are smaller, one-masted vessels, possibly fishing boats (Simões, 1963: 162-164).

In a side chapel of the Cathedral of Funchal, Madeira, is a panel from around 1730-50, which exhibits a gallant scene with two well-dressed men, a fortified city on the background, and a small rowboat with three elegant gentlemen on board (Simões, 1963: 180-181, pl. LXVII).

The noble house Vila Garcia, Lisbon, has two panels from around 1780-90, with an imaginary city, probably taken from Dutch or French engravings. The first shows ruins to the right with a *bergantim* partially visible, sailing behind the city. Only part of the sails and the bow are clearly seen. Two smaller boats stand in the background, and a more unusual vessel was depicted closer to the observer, in the process of lowering its single sail. The other panel shows a fortification to the left, in front of which a small boat is sailing, maned with a pole. Another small boat stands behind the fortress and similarly to the other panel, in this one only its mast and bow are visible (Simões, 2010: 364, 365).

A panel from the Vargos Manor, Torres Novas, from

around 1760, displays a gallant scene where a well-dressed couple enters a small *bergantim* with a rower and a man at the pole. In the distance are two other sailboats, hard to classify. One of them seems to be a large vessel while the other is smaller, probably a fishing boat (Simões, 2010: 444).

A house at São Miguel Street, nºs 2 and 4, in Porto, presents a panel on its street level façade, dating to circa 1776-80, which once belonged to the neighbouring Convent of São Bento da Vitória. It presents a large vessel, possibly a frigate, but with the water line unusually high, as it was sometimes the style. The composition also includes a small boat approaching the dock, maned by two men with poles (Simões, 2010: 149).

Among its vast collection of post 1755 earthquake tiles, Palace Pombal, Lisbon, has four panels which exhibit ships. The first shows a landscape scene reminiscent of northern European engravings, with a fortified island in the middle, a rural landscape to the left, and a harbour with several vessels to the right. From closer to the observer to further in the back we can see a small one-mast boat with a semi-folded sail, a small rowboat, a vessel with two masts, and a small rowing boat transporting men ashore. The outline of what seems to be another small vessel, with the oars and triangular sails is also depicted in the background. The second panel displays a church to the left and a beach to the right, with three boats on the sand, these are small, one-masted, and probably fishing boats. Away in the background we can also see the faded silhouette of a large ship. The third panel shows two small single mast boats, similar to those in the previous panel, near the riverbank, while on the opposite shore stands what looks like a large palace. Finally, the last pane exhibits a river with the same single mast boat with a man at the rudder, further in the background is another similar vessel, together with a rowboat (Simões, 2010: 340; Câmara, 2007: 54, 86, 87).

The staircase of the Palace of the Marquises of Lavradio, Lisbon, holds a panel with a harbor landscape from around 1760, based on an engraving from French Gabriel Perelle (1604-1677). It depicts three ships in total, one away in the distance and two small commercial ships, one with a single mast and another one slightly larger with two masts (Câmara, 2007: 53; Simões, 2010: 345).

Three panels from the Rebelo de Andrade-Ceia Palace deserve mention here. They are displayed in the palace's great hall in Lisbon, and show portside land-

scapes from around 1770, clearly based on Dutch engravings. The first presents a small boat propelled by a pole and approaching a pier where a group of men and parcels stand. In the distance we can see the silhouette of two ships with two masts, one of them with a Portuguese flag. The second panel shows a seaside landscape, with houses in the background. In the foreground left there is a group of men sitting, and to the right a small sailboat stands near a small boat propelled by a pole. The last composition shows a small decorated *bergantim* with men and women stylishly dressed, with rowers and a large flag, followed by a small rowboat. To the left side stands a larger vessel, with three masts, a large flag at the stern, but no stern castle, which has a rowboat tied to it (Câmara, 2005: 437-439, 481; 2007: 84-85; Simões, 2010: 357, 358).

Tucked between two tile panels, the Palace Praia e Monforte presents a small panel with a medium sized ship, two masts and sails forming a tent by the bow (Câmara, 2010: 190, 191).

The old Mello Palace, now incorporated in the Capuchos Hospital, Lisbon, has a vast collection of tiles, one of them, from around 1740, shows a group of four ladies playing instruments in a pleasure barge decorated with flowers, and two *putti*, one handling the oars and the other playing trumpet by the stern. A table is set in the barge and two bottles of wine are hanging on the side of the boat to keep them cool (Velooso and Almasqué, 1996: 113, 144; Simões, 2010: 297).

The Colégio do Espírito Santo, University of Évora, contains eight tile panels with landscapes which include ships and boats, dating from 1746 to 1749, all showing the same style of compositions, with bucolic landscapes and pleasure scenes, often including line fishing as a leisure activity. Room 103 shows three panels with a sea port, a fusta docked on the right with a stripped flag, two rowboats and another large vessel faded in the distance. The second panel shows a bucolic scene with ruins to the left, shepherds to the right and a river in the middle with a small rowing boat with men fishing in it. The other panel depicts one rowboat and two vessels in the distance, probably a frigate and a smaller transport ship. Room 104 presents three panels with riverside scenes: one with a small wooden pier where two small one mast boats are docked, with two others in similar conditions in the distance. A second one with a landscape full of vegetation and men idly spending their time in the greenery,

while a small one mast boat sails on the river. A third panel with vegetation shows a group of hunters to the left and a river to the right, where a small one mast boat is represented, together with a rowboat silhouetted in the distance, while a rowboat filled with men stands on the foreground, possibly engaging in a race. Room 123 has two panels with vessels, the first depicting a harbour with two large ships approaching, possibly frigates, and five rowboats transporting men, with a fortified city in the background. The second panel bears the date 1746 and presents a scene where gentlemen stand before a stone wharf on a river, where we can see a rowboat with five men line fishing (Mendeiros, 2002: 39-42, 47-51, 163, 165-167; Simões, 2010: 520-523).

The Convent of São Vicente de Fora, Lisbon, presents sixteen panels on its cloisters with landscapes bearing vessels, most of them are bucolic landscapes with leisure activities such as hunting and fishing. Most of the times only one boat is present in any given panel, and the majority are either small one mast vessels or rowboats. The first panel presents a scene with a wooden pier where a man is line fishing and a large vessel can be seen in the distance, possibly a nau. The second panel depicts a lighthouse in the forefront with a ship half hidden behind it, mounting two masts and a tent on the deck, while a similar vessel and three rowboats stand in the distance. The third panel portrays two men fishing by a river, with a rowboat standing on it. The fourth panel, in the staircase, presents a landscape divided by vegetation, with a hunting scene to the right and a fluvial landscape to the left, where a man is fishing on a small one mast boat. The fifth panel offers bucolic scenery with a fortified city to the left and a river where two small boats stand, one of them with a single mast, and men fishing in the margin. The sixth panel shows a churchyard to the right and a landscape to the left, which includes a river with a small sail boat. The seventh panel presents a river in the centre, with a fortified city to the left and wilderness to the right. On the river are two sail ships in the distance, a large ship, possibly a frigate, only outlined, and a rowboat in the forefront. In the eighth composition we can see a river by a fortress, with a northern-European ship with two masts, a cloth stern castle and tent on the deck. The ninth panel shows a group of ten men to the right side of the composition, while the left side offers a landscape with a river and a rowboat. The 10th composition depicts a river with a bridge and a fortified city to the right, and on that river stands a small boat

propelled by a pole. The 11th panel displays a fortress in the centre, perhaps the Tower of Belém, and in the water we can see three rowboats and a larger vessel in a strange position, or simply badly drawn, with a bow much larger than it should be. The 12th panel shows a bridge over a small creek, leading to a palace, resembling the French Château de Chenonceau, and two small rowboats in the water. The 13th panel is very similar to the seventh panel described, with two men fishing on the margin of a small river with two rowboats and a larger vessel, possibly a frigate. The 14th panel displays a fortified city by a river with a rowboat. The 15th panel shows a bridge as the main composition, under which passes a rowboat. Finally, the 16th panel displays a composition similar to that of the background of a panel found in Palace of Independência in Lisbon, with a man on a small rowboat receiving goods from a man on a slightly larger ship, with a tent on the deck and a small rowboat attached to it with ropes (Simões, 2010: 306-321).



Figure 13. Leisure vessel with a flat stern panel, from the Convento de São Vicente de Fora. Photo by Rita Varela Gomes.

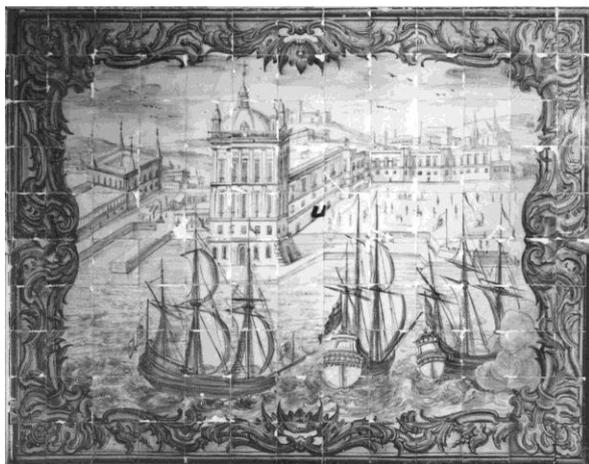


Figure 14. Three ships on the Tagus River with typical 17th century sterns from the Correio-Mor Palace in Lisbon. Image taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarte/2670274475/in/album-72157605052605544/>.

The Correio-Mor Palace, Loures, holds two panels from the first half of the 18th century, which clearly depict the Lisbon riverside. The first shows the Tower of Belém and the Bugio Lighthouse. The ships are stylized. We can see a frigate with the Braganza flag, a small fishing boat with a single mast, and a small rowboat. The second panel shows the Royal Palace of Ribeira, with three frigates with the Portuguese flag. All large vessels are similar and displayed almost in the same position (Sebo and Faleiro, 1998: 159; Simões, 2010: 380).

The tile composition known as the Great Panorama of Lisbon, from around 1735, with 1376 tiles in total, belonged to the Palace of the Counts of Tentúgal, Lisbon, and is now a part of the MNAz collection. This view of the city from the river, as if the observer is partaking on a cruise downstream, is quite rigorous in the depiction of the main buildings and water front, but somewhat more stylized in the urban neighbourhoods. It spans almost 14 km, from the Jamor Valley in the west, to Xabregas on the east side. There are 19 vessels depicted in total, 16 on the water and three being built in shipyards throughout the city. Ships are concentrated in two main areas, between the Tower of Belém and the Royal shipyards west of the Royal Palace, and standing in front of natural beaches and places with less buildings behind them and therefore not blocking the view of the city. East of these places the river itself is almost not painted at all in order to show as much of the city as possible. All ships have little detail, assuming the role of symbols for the Portuguese naval power, so detail and authenticity in ship depictions were not the main goals. Only five of the ships represented are large, with three masts and guns, the one is represented with more detail and shows intricate decorations on the stern castle. Six boats arm one mast with triangular sails, corresponding to transport or fishing boats. The other vessels represented are small rowboats, transporting people and goods between other ships and the shore, as well as between the two margins of the Tagus (Henriques, 2004: 11-24; Simões, 2010: 287).

The consistory room of the Church of the Ordem Terceira de São Francisco in Salvador, Brazil, contains 10 panels, from around 1750, which depict views of Lisbon with a caption on each important building. Seven of these compositions include representations of ships and boats, indicating the close relationship of that city with the River Tagus. The first shows the customs house with its dock, where two transport vessels with two masts each are unloading goods with the help of a crane, while three

rowboats are transporting people to and from land. The second panel features the cathedral and the castle in the background, while in the river we can see two large ships which seem to be frigates flying the Braganza flag, with three masts, stern castles, decorated figure heads, and one row of guns. There are also two rowboats and one sleek small boat with a triangular sail. The third panel shows the Convent of Santa Clara and the public fountain of Bica do Sapato. A *bergantim* slides down the river along with a small one sail boat, a two-sail boat, and three rowboats. The fourth panel depicts the Convent of Santos, what seems to be the same *bergantim* from the previous panel, and two rowboats. Another two rowboats are visible in the fifth panel, which depicts the Fort of Madre de Deus. The eighth panel shows only one small rowboat along with the Palace of the Counts of Unhão, while the ninth panel depicts the Convent of São Vicente de Fora, a public fountain, and a small dock filled with boats: two rowboats, two small one-mast boats and a larger two-masted vessel filled with goods ready to be unloaded (Simões, 1965: 118, 119; Simões, 1998: 45-50).

The upper cloister of the same institution presents a panel, based on an engraving by Antoine Wateau (1684-1721). It is a fluvial landscape with a city in the background, a group of people strolling to the left, and a river to the right. We can see two large ships in the middle of the composition, possibly frigates, three rowboats and two small one mast boats (Maia, 1998: 92, 98).

NAVAL BATTLES

The Convent of Nossa Senhora das Neves, Olinda, Brazil, presents several panels with daily life scenes from around 1720 on its hallway. One of them shows two oceangoing ships exchanging gunshots with a small fort (Simões, 1965: 237, pl. LIV).

The battle of Matapan, in 1717, is depicted in a panel from the Church of São Lourenço, Porto, from around 1730. The composition is truncated and we can only discern a castle and part of two ships, one of them with the Turkish flag (Simões, 2010: 152).

The Barruncho farmstead, in Póvoa de Santo Adrião, holds a panel from approximately 1740 displaying the Battle of Lepanto, which took place in 1571. Although this battle is famous for the use of galleys, this composition shows 18th century warships, and the different na-

ionalities of the ships can only be discerned through their flags. This panel in particular shows two ships in the forefront locked in battle, with Christian fighters boarding the enemy ship and engaging in close combat. A central nobly dressed character stands on the Christian vessel, perhaps depicting John of Austria, the admiral of the Holy Alliance fleet. There are nine other vessels in the background, all similar in style (Simões, 2010: 385).

In the church of Ordem Terceira de São Francisco, Santarém, stands a panel from approximately 1717 by the painter Manuel de Oliveira. The scene shows two warships in the forefront, one with a Portuguese flag, which seems to be a large galleon, and another with the Turkish flag, a galley with a round bow and oars, which leads us to assume that it is the battle of Matapan. Two other vessels can be seen in the distance, faded, only outlined and hard to discern, since the focus of the composition seems to be the landscape and not the battle itself (Simões, 2010: 438).

The Convent of São Vicente de Fora holds a panel with a naval battle, which we believe to be the Battle of Lepanto, with a ship in the forefront which looks like a ship of the line, with three tiers of guns. This ship shows the Turkish flag and is sinking due to shots being fired by a ship on the right, and its crewmen are fleeing the vessel in small rowboats. Four other similar vessels can be seen amidst the smoke (Simões, 2010: 313).

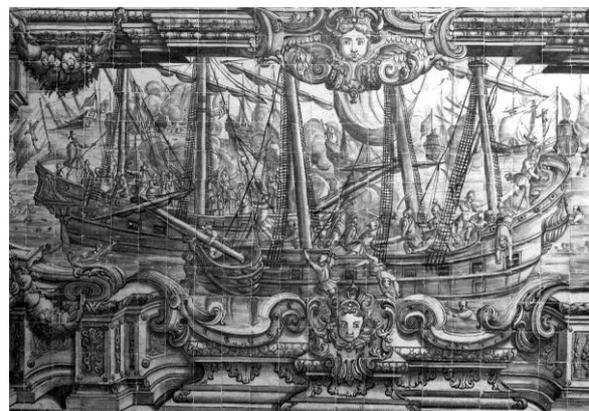


Figure 15. Naval battle between ships with 18th century style bows and 17th century style sterns from the Barruncho farmstead. Image taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarte/9414016873>.

The naval battle depicted in the parish church of Estômbar, dated to around 1743, shows a sinking ship

bearing the Turkish flag in the foreground, with three other similar vessels and the sails of two others, which can only be glimpsed through the smoke. The ships are all similar, with three masts and two tiers of guns. To the left of the composition we can see a scene with a Christian soldier being decapitated under the gaze of a monarch on a throne, holding a sceptre and a laurel crown. Santos Simões identifies this battle as Lepanto, but the composition just described makes us doubt that interpretation (Simões, 2010: 554, 555).

The Palace of the Marquis of Pombal in Oeiras presents a panel with a naval battle with seven ships and part of another one, which is sinking, plus three small lifeboats. One of the ships hoists a Dutch flag, but the battle is unidentified (Simões, 2010: 396, 397).

The Calhariz manor, in Lisbon, holds a panel from around 1730, with a battle between four large ships, very stylized and represented with little detail. A fifth vessel is partially seen while sinking, as well as four small rowboats. One of the ships flies a Turkish flag and another one flies the Braganza flag, which leads us to believe that it is a representation of the battle of Matapan (Simões, 2010: 470).

The naval battle panel from the Palace Praia e Monforte, Lisbon, depicts a fortress to the right with a Portuguese flag. To the left stands the battle itself, with three large vessels and the sails of a fourth showing amidst the smoke, as well as a small lifeboat. The ships are large warships, with three tiers of cannons, one of them holding a Turkish flag, another a Portuguese flag and a third showing a flag with what looks like the keys of Saint Peter. These flags suggest that this is the battle of Matapan (Câmara, 2007: 64, 190-192).

The Palace of the Dukes of Palmela, also known as Quinta do Espie, Lisbon, has on its garden a bench with a scene where a fortress shoots artillery rounds against a three-masted ship with a stern castle but apparently no guns. A small rowboat is also visible. There are no flags or other elements to guide us towards an identification of this scene (Câmara, 2007: 125, 128). A similar composition can be seen in room 104 of the University of Évora, with the guns to the right and the vessels to the left. This time we can see two rowboats leaving the dock, probably taking men to the two large ships in the distance, which are only partially seen due to the smoke (Mendeiros, 2002: 51).

The naval battle presented in the São Lourenço farmstead, Pragal, from 1742 and based on foreign engravings has been identified as the battle of La Hogue (1692), despite the fact that that battle was fought between English, French and Dutch, and only the two latter flags can be identified in this panel. It shows two warships shooting against each other, and the smoke conceals details of both ships. Behind them we can glimpse the sails of two similar ships (Raposo and Reis, 1994: 114; Simões, 2010: 454).

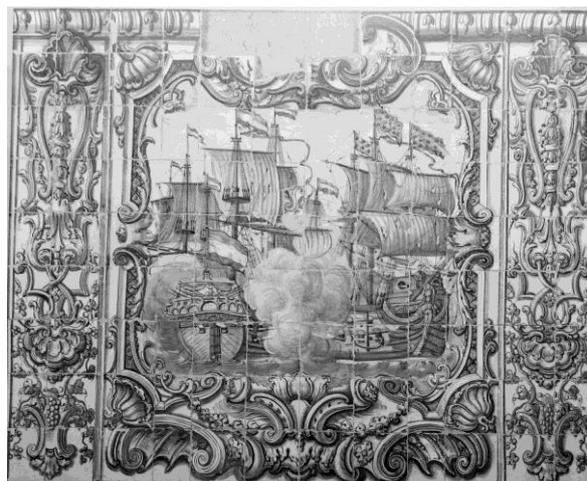


Figure 16. Naval battle between ships with 18th century style bows and 17th century style sterns from the São Lourenço farmstead in Seixal (after Raposo and Reis, 1994: 114).

The grand staircase of the Hospital of São José, Lisbon, is decorated with panels from approximately 1730, displaying numerous themes in its various levels. Two of them have naval battles, the one on the right showing two large vessels locked in combat in the foreground, one of them with a striped flag. A third ship stands between them, partially hidden by gun smoke. To the left, in the distance, are four smaller ships near the ruins of a tower, with triangular sails that look like transport vessels. On the upper right corner stands another warship in the distance, with a flag too small to discern. The second panel also shows two warships in combat, the one to the right presenting an Ottoman flag with a crescent. Two more warships can be seen in this panel, in the background. To the left of the composition stands a curious boat, small in size, with two sails and a man that appears to be wearing monks clothing (Veloso and Almasqué, 1996: 55; Simões, 2010: 283).

In the halls of the Count of Calheta Palace in Lisbon, currently the Jardim-Museu Agrícola Tropical, are panels representing two naval battles. All ships involved have two masts, one or two tiers of guns and brow and stern castles. One panel shows the stern of a ship to the left, with a painted crescent, and next to it a Christian ship with a striped flag. This ship has gunports in the stern castle. The other naval battle exhibits four large ships, the one on the left with a Portuguese flag while the others, although bearing flags, are impossible to discern, and possibly representing the battles of Lepanto or Mátapan (Simões, 2010: 332).

ISOLATED VESSELS

In the chapel of the Barruncho estate, Póvoa de Santo Adrião, Odivelas, between other panels with maritime scenes, we can find an isolated ship, surrounded by a frame of *putti* near a corner of the building. This small panel dates, as the rest of the chapel's decoration, to 1740 and probably works as a filler or sorts, to occupy a vacant space where a larger panel would not fit. The ship shows some degree of detail, especially in the rigging, three masts and one tier of guns. Inside it are somewhat proportionate crewmen (Simões, 2010: 385).

Three of the panels of the São Lourenço farmstead, Pragal, present isolated ships, one on each panel, almost certainly reproductions of Dutch engravings, all of them depicted with great detail. One shows a galley with faintly drawn rowers and a Maltese cross on the stern. Next to

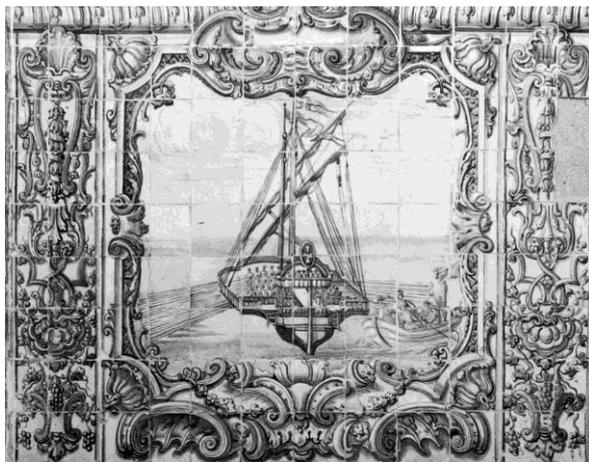


Figure 17. Galley rowed a scalocio (with four or five rowers per oar) from the São Lourenço farmstead, Seixal (after Raposo and Reis, 1994: 115).

the ship stands a small rowboat with a nobleman standing up. The second panel represents a large war vessel with the Dutch flag, three masts, stern and forecastle and a beautifully detailed figurehead of a mermaid holding a crown. The last panel, perhaps the most interesting one, reveals a ship smaller than the previous ones, which is based on Dutch ones but had the Portuguese flag and other Portuguese features such as a triangular sail (Raposo and Reis, 1994: 114, 115; 2010: 454).

MYTHOLOGY AND ALLEGORIES

A panel from the first half of the 18th century stands in the Quinta do General farmstead, Borba, adorning the garden pool. Originally it was placed in the Galveias Palace in Lisbon. The composition shows a vessel on the left and dry land on the right side, with a group of lions attacking a cow herd while a man in armour tries to kill the lions, perhaps illustrating a passage of the Iliad (v 161-164; 554-560). The ship itself is a large vessel, with two masts and presenting some of the features associated to the depiction of classical ships in this period, the decorations of acanthus leaves in the stern and bow, the overall round lines and the absence of guns. (Carita, 1987: 121-124, 126, 127; Simões, 2010: 509).

The Palace of the Marquesses of Tancos, Lisbon, hosts a panel painted by Policarpo de Oliveira Bernardes (1695-1778) representing the kidnap of Helen, based on the engraving by Jean Lepautre (1618-168). The group of men carrying the women are going towards a small boat driven by a pole man. The bow of this boat is round, with the pole coming out of the mouth of a bearded face surrounded by garlands. This design is fictional and its characteristics are typical in depictions of Greco-Roman ships. However, other two vessels in this panel do not share Classical features, being large warships with decorated stern castles, the one on the right with a forecastle, and the other ship showing a compromise design on the bow, with decorations of the classical ships' representations. Between these larger vessels stands a small rowboat (Correia, 1998: 182, 196, 197; Simões, 2010: 344).

The Palace of the Correio-Mor, Loures, contains a panel depicting the fall of Icarus. He, Icarus, is placed in the forefront with a troubled maritime landscape behind him, consistent with the classical story, which takes place in an island. The background is filled with ships in varying degrees of proximity and detail. From closest to furthest

away, we see the stern castle of a sinking ship, a small boat with a pole, a large warship with a rowboat attached to it, and two boats with a single mast and triangular sail. Again, despite this clearly being an illustration of a Greek myth, none of the ships shows the usual features of classical ship depictions (Simões, 2010: 380).

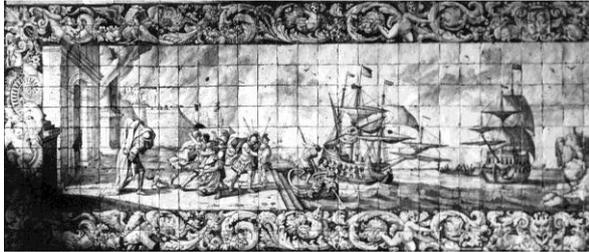


Figure 18. Typical early 18th century warship from the Palace of the Marquesses of Tancos, Lisbon. Image taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarte/2669555052/in/album-72157605052605544/>.

The Palace Almada or Palace of Independence, Lisbon, holds several panels with mythological subjects and inscriptions, dating to around 1730. One of them (without an inscription) shows a couple standing on a hill, with the man clad in armour, which we believe to be Paris and Helen. In the distance is a small sailboat, possibly the one used by the couple to escape to Troy. An identical composition, similar in all details but mirrored, done by the same painter and with the same chronology, can be seen in the parish church of Carnide, Lisbon (Meco, 1981: 34; Sampaio, 1988: 53; Simões, 2010: 240).

The Palace of the Counts of Anadia, Lisbon, has two panels which complete each other in theme. One shows the escape of Cleopatra and the other the escape of Marc Anthony, both in triremes with some of the features we associate with 18th century representations of ships from Greco-Roman mythology, namely the round lines of the stern and prow. The Cleopatra panel shows a developed stern castle decorated with *putti* and a closed crown, a flag on the stern depicting a snake, and lines that suggest a pleasure boat. Cleopatra is surrounded by other ladies and soldiers. The boat holding Marc Anthony is a warship, devoid of decorations. The main character on the centre is surrounded by soldiers. The ship presents a bow with a ram and does not have stern or forecastle. In both cases, the characters are highly disproportionate.

The biblical story of Jonah and the whale is depict-

ed in a panel from the church of the São Francisco Convent of Horta, Faial, Azores. The saint and the whale occupy the centre stage, with three vessels in the background: a small fishing rowboat with men casting nets, a small boat with two masts and triangular sails, and a larger vessel with three masts and a stern castle (Simões, 1963: 61-63).

In the Church of Salvador, Horta, Azores, we can find a panel illustrating the shipwreck scene from the life of Saint Paul, in Malta in 60 a. D. The saint and other characters stand by an open fire on the left while a ship sinks on the right. The ship itself has the bow decorated with a lion head and round lines consistent with representations of classical ships, possibly because that is the time frame of this episode, and the reason we choose to place this panel in this category, even though it is part of the Christian mythology (Simões, 1963: 64, 65, pl. XV).

The great hall of the Palace of the Counts of Anadia, Mangualde, shows a set of 10 panels from around 1750, with allegories of the "world upside-down". The ninth shows "noble horsemen hunting animals in the water (deer, boar, fox) while fishes are in the air". In the distance, in the skyline, we can see four large ships, highly stylized, with almost the same design of known single figure tiles (Simões, 2010: 172, 173).



Figure 19. Stylized ship with fictional bow from the Church of Salvador, Horta. Imagem taken from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/biblarte/9554801266/in/photostream/>.

The Hospital of São José, in Lisbon (Veloso and Almasqué, 1996: 61; Simões, 2010: 284), has a panel with three large ships depicted to the right with the caption “*por mares nunca d’antes navegados*” (through seas never before sailed, a quotation from *The Lusíads*), an allusion to the Portuguese Age of Discoveries. The ships have three masts and two tiers of guns, one of them is flying a Portuguese flag. On the left a *putti* operates a mechanism that produces clouds and wind. A similar composition can be seen in the University of Évora, former Colégio do Espírito Santo of the Jesuits, dating to 1746-49, where a small angel operates a similar mechanism but to create vacuum. To the right is a large vessel, very stylized and simple, and a rowboat (Mendeiros, 2002: 97, 99; Simões, 2010: 522).

That site also contains other panels consistent with mythology and allegories. A room dedicated to the months of the year and zodiac signs presents panels with boats: a barge propelled by a pole going down a river filled with flowers for the month of May, and two small rowboats used by swimmers on a stream for the month of June (Mendeiros, 2002: 63, 66; Simões, 2010: 522, 523). The geography room in this university, filled with allegories for the four continents, four seasons, and the four elements, has a boat representation on the panel for water, AQVA, which is represented by a woman sitting on two marine monsters guided by two *putti*. On the right there is a large stylized vessel as a symbol for seafaring (Mendeiros, 2002: 151, 156, 157; Simões, 2010: 520).

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Through our investigations we have found 71 sites with depictions of boats and ships (one for the 16th century, eight for the 17th century, and 62 for the 18th century). It is likely that this number is slightly below the real number, since further inquiries are needed, which are logistically very difficult. It is interesting, albeit not unexpected, that these sites are mostly concentrated on the coastal areas, where ships play an important role on the lives of the populations and on the landscape itself.

Water is an important symbol, and the rivers and seashores crossing many landscapes portrayed in the tile panels often divide two realities, presenting the dichotomy tamed-wild and maritime-rural landscape. These contrasting elements follow the baroque aesthetic and conflicting aspects also seen in other types of art.

The representations of economic activities connected to the sea in the palaces of the nobility might function as a reinforcement of the way their owners gained their economic power. Furthermore, shipyard and naval battle scenes emphasise the importance of Portugal as a maritime power and the importance of those industries to the people.

As a representation of daily reality, it is also important to highlight that depictions of Lisbon, the capital of the empire and stage to the royal and noble power, which served a double role of social validation to those who possessed the tile panels, but also of creating a sense of belonging and approximation of the distant colonies of Africa and Brazil to the centre of power.

As for the battle scenes, it is significant to point out that, with the exception of the representation of the La Hogue between Christian nations, all other battles inventoried represent fights against the Ottoman Muslims. Representations of the battles of Lepanto and Matapan are frequent, not only in Portuguese tiles but throughout most catholic countries. They are a part of the rhetoric of the Counter Reformation, of European superiority against the Muslim foe, which was still very present throughout the 18th century. Even though Lepanto was just a battle in a lost war (the 1570-1573 War of Cyprus), it is celebrated as one of the largest naval battles of all time, Western historians consider it an undisputed success, and Catholics claim that victory was the result of a miracle by pope Pius V. The Battle of Matapan was a victory of the Portuguese navy, strategically important in the conflict with the Ottoman Empire and significant in the Portuguese standing in the international stage, with the captain of the fleet D. António Manuel de Vilhena being appointed as Prince and Grand Master of the Order of Malta. This attitude can also be clearly seen in the *ex votos* from the Brazilian Church of Nossa Senhora da Boa Viagem in Salvador, where two encounters with Moorish ships only did not end up in tragedy through divine intervention, proving the spectre of a Muslim menace was still very much alive.

Another interesting feature that is worth a mention is that almost all ships depicted in scenes from antiquity or ancient mythology share a set of stylized characteristics, which were mentioned already, quite possibly to facilitate the comprehension of the theme being portrayed. The boats and ships depicted often look impractical or unreal, with too much decoration and unlikely

shapes, indicating a romanticized construction of the antiquity.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are no representations of the great maritime deeds of the Portuguese with the typical ships associated to the Age of Discoveries, the caravel. Only one panel mentions this theme at all, with a quotation from Camões and contemporary ships, and even then we must take into consideration that it stands in a former Jesuit school, now a public hospital, and therefore that it might be represented in relation to History or Literature, just as other rooms are decorated with scenes illustrating Astronomy or Geography.

The revival of the Portuguese “golden age of discoveries” happens much later, and dates to the 20th century, during the Estado Novo, an authoritarian regime which used it for propaganda and to promote nationalism.

Lastly, it is essential to understand that most tile representations, particularly from the 18th century, are based on northern European drawings and engravings, especially when it comes to the bucolic landscapes. This means that most ships depicted in Portuguese tiles were not used in Portugal, and were made from stock images, sometimes originating abroad. We know that tile painters would not paint in sight of the real ships, nor go to the docks with the intent of representing existing vessels as faithfully as possible. Ship’s roles in the tile compositions were merely symbolic and meant to be enjoyed by a society that was not very literate in the intricacies of ship design.

In some instances it seems that artists tried to adapt the images in the engravings, in an attempt to make them more Portuguese, like the case of the São Lourenço farmstead, or to simplify the design. In the words of Maria Alexandra Gago da Câmara: “The circulation of engravings and their copy through Europe originated tile representations, especially those with leisure and idealized landscapes, that are not necessarily a national reality, but rather supra-national, which illustrates a series of values common to the period, such as the invocation of the country life and a certain *modus vivendi*” (Câmara, 2005: 163).

The use of elaborate and well-crafted tile panels, both in religious and profane environments, was a luxury that not everybody could afford. Inside religious buildings

these compositions, along with profuse gilded woodcarvings, aimed to subdue the faithful to both temporal and divine power, while in profane locations tiles not only decorated, but also conveyed a political and social message of wealth, taste, and power. In both cases vessels were represented, from humble fishing boats to large warships, in ways that allow reality to cross paths with imagination.

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