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### Miscelânea Sebástica da Ajuda. Edição crítica, estudo e notas. Ed. José Miguel Martínez Torrejón

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***Miscelânea Sebástica da Ajuda. Edição crítica, estudo e notas.* Ed. José Miguel Martínez Torrejón.**

Fontes. Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, 2020. Pp. 194. ISBN 978-972-565-677-8 (paperback) n.p.

There are still occasions in which good fortune befalls scholars and they are able to get their hands on an original source that they can edit and study. Such is the recent case of the collection of texts in poetry and prose that the seasoned Hispanist José Miguel Martínez Torrejón has brought to light in a wonderfully annotated edition published by the National Library of Portugal. Martínez Torrejón, who already has important editorial projects to his credit, is a noted scholar of the world of letters of the Spanish Golden Age and of the literary and cultural age of Portugal in the sixteenth century. He is uniquely placed to edit these texts, which, by their nature and themes, straddle Spain and Portugal and their national literatures at the end of that century.

The texts that Martínez Torrejón presents in this volume are named the *Miscelânea Sebástica da Ajuda*, a title aptly given by him to the compositions that were in the manuscript he found in the Ajuda Library in Lisbon. The Ajuda Library, formerly the library of the royal palace of Ajuda, is a storied repository of literary, historical, artistic, and musical sources that still hold many surprises. Thanks to his sleuthing, Martínez Torrejón was able to bring this collection to the attention of readers. Taking up a little less than one hundred folios, the texts are in Spanish and Portuguese, with a disproportionate number in Spanish. The texts, most of which are in verse and with some in prose, are brought together by the themes and content that describe the fateful moment in Portuguese history of King Sebastian's (1557–78) brazen and doomed attempt to invade Morocco, which culminated in the disastrous Battle of Alcácer Quibir on 4 August 1578. The result of the episode is well known, as it placed Sebastian's uncle Cardinal Henry on the throne for a short-lived reign (1578–80) and allowed for the subsequent occupation of the throne by the Habsburgs from Philip II onwards in what is known as the Iberian Union of Spain and Portugal (1580–1640).

The texts (34 poems and 3 prose works) were written in a period in which bilingualism was normal among the educated in Portugal, with the majority of Portuguese poets writing at some point in Castilian, which in some way harkens back to the events of 1578 and their aftermath. Some of the works were authored by well-known poets such as Jerónimo Corte-Real (c. 1533–88) and

Diogo Bernardes (c. 1530–c. 1596) while others are anonymous. The shadow of Alcácer Quibir and the disaster it represented for Portugal is present in all of them. Some of the texts evoke the folly of the king's reckless venture, putting into question the guidance that the young monarch (twenty-four years old at the time) received that led him to undertake the invasion of the North African realm imbued with the impetus of a crusader. In the compositions, he is, at times, alluded to as the victim of ill advice or of his own arrogance. The very motivations for the foray, ostensibly to assist the Moroccan pretender ascend to the throne, Abu Abdallah Mohammed II Saadi, against his Ottoman-backed uncle Abd al-Malik who had usurped it, are criticized and judged in some of these poems that see the battle as a chastisement.

Diogo Bernardes, like thousands of other Portuguese who accompanied the king in his invasion and remained captive until his freedom was obtained, lamented the incursion, the battle, and the ordeal of exile in the strange and hostile North African land. While known as the author of other poetic works written in captivity in Morocco, Bernardes's poems that are included in this collection shed a new light on his work.

As Martínez Torrejón shows in his introduction, the content and tone of the poems in the Ajuda manuscript range from the critical to the satirical, taking to task and in jest not only the youthful rash monarch but also the subsequent rulers who placed the Atlantic kingdom on the path to ruin. With meticulous care, Martínez Torrejón situates the compositions, some of which existed in copies in manuscripts in other libraries, comparing them with a view to identifying the episodes and events they allude to and understanding the structure and organization of the texts themselves. The result is a painstakingly edited collection that includes meticulous annotations and reflects philological rigour. The edition is to be hailed for bringing to light this series of poems that will teach us more about such a decisive moment in Portuguese history.

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