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## The Image of the *Immaculata* as Patroness of Portugal and a Motif in Traditional Jewellery Pendants

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Gold and silver pendants representing Our Lady of Conception were some of the most common examples in traditional Portuguese jewellery during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, following a typological variety of crosses and hearts. In popular culture, these images reflect the great devotion, service and defence that the Dogma of *Immaculata* had in Iberian Peninsula, strongly supported by the Franciscan Order, which sustained the idea that the Virgin was conceived without sin. This belief, intensified during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was politically supported by D. João IV, the first monarch of the dynasty following the Declaration of Independence of Portugal after the Spanish dominance, in 1640. In the *Cortes* of 1646, D. João IV declares the Virgin of Conception as patroness of the Kingdom, a decision confirmed by Pope Clement X in 1671. This study is intended to reflect on the popularization of these images, display the iconographic model, the techniques used to make these pieces during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and evaluate functions, practices and contexts of use. This work is the result of conducted research in archives, goldsmith workshops that still keep moulds with these images, the study of pendants preserved in public and private collections, as well as photographic archives, including individual and group portraiture, where the objects can be seen in their usual context.

**Keywords:** Immaculate Conception, Patroness of Portugal, jewellery pendants, jewellery techniques, iconography, photographic portraits

### Popular devotion and jewellery pendants

“Frequent image in the chains’ pendants, sometimes of considerable weight (...), it is the Lady of Conception, hands on her chest, eyes towards the sky, feet on the crescent moon”.<sup>1</sup> These words by the Portuguese researcher and ethnographer Luis Chaves (1888-1975), an important figure of 20<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese culture, summarize some of the most relevant aspects of this theme: the inclusion of images of Our Lady of Conception among the most used pendants in the last century; their association with the chain (the jewel of reference for Portuguese jewellery of this period); the question of the weight and size of these pieces and a brief iconographic description. The author’s statement is corroborated by the popular songbook, a direct reflection of structural schemes of sensitivity and devotion, as can be seen in the following verses in Celorico de Basto, northern Portugal:

“Our Lady of Conception  
You are the most blessed of saints  
Because you have the altar in the chest  
Of these most beautiful girls”.<sup>2</sup>

Also known as “Conception Virgins”, “Our Ladies of Caneco”, “due to the similitude between the crown and the vessel used to carry the water from the fountain”<sup>3</sup> or simply “Conception/s”, these figures are among the most sought after in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, residing side by side with hearts, crucifixes and butterflies<sup>4</sup>. The popularity of this image also explains the diversity of techniques used to manufacture the Immaculate, among which

sand-casting, stamping and enamelled medals should be highlighted. In iconographic terms, there is a stabilization of a common model: Mary is represented alone, standing, hands joined in a prayer, “not as begging or in prayer,” according to Carlos Azevedo, but showing an attitude of an oblate offering from one who “only listens to the voice of God”.<sup>5</sup> A solemn figure of an idealized beauty, the Immaculate stands on clouds, from which emerge small heads of angels highlighting the celestial atmosphere. For the majority of known copies, the crescent appears only in an allusive or very stylized way, and in some cases, there is a reference to the serpent coiled at the Virgin’s feet, a symbol of the victory of Woman over sin, of the new Eve that opens the way to Salvation. This jewellery reflects a greater or lesser stylization of an iconographic model that has been imposed since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, inevitably subject to the nature of materials, to the techniques of jewellery used and to the production volume necessary to satisfy an ever-growing demand.

This paper aims to relate the popularity of these pendants with the affirmation of the cult of Our Lady of Conception, from 1640 onwards, with the Restoration of the Independence of Portugal; it also aims at commenting on their presence in 19<sup>th</sup> century documents and in individual or group photographs, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and, finally, it aims to analyse the main techniques of jewellery making used to create these pieces.

### **The Immaculate Conception in jewellery before the Restoration of Independence**

The document sources of the 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries refer to the existence of pendants with the image of the Immaculate. This is the case of the Pragmatics of 1609,<sup>6</sup> where the Ladies of Conception appear among the types of jewellery most referred to.<sup>7</sup> The enamels were, in fact, recurrent pieces in these two centuries. Only a few pieces have reached our times and a particularly important one is the pendant from the convent of Santa Clara a Velha, in Coimbra, nowadays displayed in the Machado de Castro National Museum (fig. 1). It is a gold object, of rock crystal, pearls and blue enamels, shaped like an inverted triangle, inside which a small image of Our Lady of Conception surrounded by an uneven glow is inscribed.<sup>8</sup> The Lady is standing with her hands clasped on her chest, wearing a long robe and a blue enamelled cloak, with long, loose hair on her back. The representation of Mary follows the iconography derived from the Assumption of the Gothic period and respects the image consolidated in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, since the Virgin is represented alone, without the Child, in a praying attitude, hair loose or partially covered by a very thin veil, as a direct reflection of her virginal condition.<sup>9</sup> The blue cloak, placed over her shoulders and held by the arms at the waist, symbolizes the purity of the Lady and reinforces the path to Salvation.

Other pendants with enamel medals integrated in filigree frames or other techniques can also be seen in Portuguese museums, signalling the existence of different production types and techniques of these pieces that prove the great devotion to the Immaculate Dogma in the Iberian Peninsula at this time. This cult was strongly promoted and disseminated in the Iberian Peninsula, first by the Order of St. Francis and later by the Society of Jesus. The union of Portugal to Spain, with the oath of Philip I as king of Portugal in the “Cortes de Tomar”, 1581, and the proclamation of Independence in 1640, with the victory in a war that only ended in 1668, forced a long process of Legitimation of Power by the new House of Bragança that needed divine protection and direct intervention, in this particular case, of the Immaculate Conception.

### **The *Immaculate* - Patroness of Portugal**

In the Cortes of 1646, six years after the proclamation of independence from Spain and in total war with the Spanish, D. João IV consecrated Our Lady of Conception as Patroness of Portugal. The initiative, of a strong political and symbolic character, was fully accepted by the different social groups, given the great devotion to this cult in Portugal, which was strongly encouraged by the Franciscans and Jesuits. In fact, in 1646 Cortes, the Franciscans showed to the King a memorial where they presented the “causes and conveniences that were hap-

pening to the order that these same states would be sworn into the Conception of the Holy Virgin.<sup>10</sup> The monarch welcomed the proposal that he explained to the three States of the Nation, adding the obligation to “venerate with a particular affection and solemnity the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God.” Our Lady of Conception is not only recognized as patroness by all, but also “as queen of the kingdoms and landlords of Portugal,” when the King pledged to ask for the confirmation of the Holy See and to pay an annual tribute of fifty gold *cruzados* to the shrine of Vila Viçosa as a sign of vassalage to Our Lady.<sup>11</sup> The oath took place in the royal chapel of Terreiro do Paço, on March 25<sup>th</sup> that same year, Annunciation and Branch Day, joined by a city in celebration and properly decorated, with the bells ringing in all the churches and with everybody singing the antiphon *Tota pulchra es Maria*. The monarch again took up the commitment made in the Cortes that had ended just a few days before when he claimed: “[...] together in the Cortes, with the three states of the kingdom, I proposed to them the obligation we had to renew and continue this promise (made by the first king of Portugal, D. Afonso Henriques), to venerate with particular affection and solemnity the feast of His Immaculate Conception, and in there, with everyone’s consent, we set about taking the patroness of our kingdoms and lordships to the most holy Virgin, our Lady of Conception [...] and offer her again [...] to her holy house of Conception, in Vila Viçosa, because it was the first in Spain of this invocation, fifty gold *cruzados* each year, as a sign of tribute and vassalage [...]”.<sup>12</sup> The ceremony continued in the streets “so filled with fireworks” that “it seemed as if it was day,” accompanied by the sound of the explosions and of the artillery of the ships in the Tagus and the voices of the people who sang “Long live Portugal, the Conception of Mary, without original sin”.<sup>13</sup>

From this date onwards, the Kings of Portugal would never again use a crown on their heads, which appeared in portraits on a table, next to them, and Our Lady came to be recognized in popular tradition as “the Queen of Portugal”.<sup>14</sup> D. João IV immediately sent royal letters to all the divisions of the Kingdom so that they, together with the clergymen and clerics in the cities, would welcome Our Lady as their patron saint. The papal confirmation of this decision arrived, however, many years after the death of the monarch, when Portugal was already at peace with Spain. In the brief *Eximia dilectissimi*, of May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1671, Clement X confirmed Our Lady of Conception as Patroness of Portugal.

Following the festive events described above, D. João IV had special gold and silver coins minted in honour of the Patroness of Portugal, which began to circulate in 1651. The King determined that some of these coins should be ready by December 8<sup>th</sup> 1650, after using those to pay for the tribute promised to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Vila Viçosa.<sup>15</sup> Later, in October 1651, a law was approved allowing the distribution of the coins with the image of the Patroness of Portugal, the first in the country with a clear celebratory character to be drawn and minted using the medal technique as was done in other European countries.<sup>16</sup> Our Lady is represented on one of the sides, surrounded by some of Her attributes, as can be seen from the earliest description of the drawing known, dating from 1655: “[...] On one side there is the Image of Our Lady of Conception, with the feet on the half-moon under the globe; and on the other side the Sun, and other metaphorical attributes, because it is invoked from the Church, as well as the Sun, the Mirror, the Final Garden, the House of Gold, the sealed Fountain, the Ark of the Shrine, and the words: Tutelaris Regni; and on the other the Royal Arms, with a closed Crown placed in the middle of the Cross of the Order of Christ; and the words *Ioannes Quartus D.G. Portugalliae, & Algarbiae Rex*”.<sup>17</sup>

These coins, minted between 1650 and 1685 (figs. 2, 3), and reproduced later, were very popular in Portugal, and were used not only as trade objects but also as regal offerings and as pendants to be worn on the breast as insignia of veneration to the Immaculate, to whom the Portuguese attributed “the success of national liberation from the Spanish”.<sup>18</sup> It is known that the officers of the Brotherhood of the Conception Slaves, confirmed by Dom Pedro II in 1694, wore these coins as insignia hanging from ribbons around their necks,<sup>19</sup> a usage that certainly spread to other groups and individuals which became common in the eighteenth century.

Some examples of jewellery from the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries confirm this devotion to the Immaculate and the use of the image as a pendant, as a token of faith and belief in the protective power of the Blessed Virgin conceived without sin. These pendants follow several forms and typologies: small stamped or cast images inte-

grated into glass receptacles surrounded by metal frames and precious stones;<sup>20</sup> enamelled medals with diverse contoured frames, a type that would last up until today; isolated images, obtained by casting or stamping, the most popular models in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. These “Ladies of Conception” respect the iconography described above, standing in the praying position, robe and cloak, loose hair over the shoulders and back, in some cases with delicate touches of chiselling. They are easily distinguishable due to the presence of the Crescent Moon at the feet of the Lady, which in the richest examples can be covered by gems<sup>21</sup> or superimposed angel heads, and by the imperial crown with a cross on top, an attribute that became common from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards (fig. 4). In some 18<sup>th</sup>-century examples, the crescent moon and the globe are not present, but Mary stands on a cloud filled with small angel heads and a serpent coiled at her bare feet, a symbol of the victory of the New Eve over sin. This is the case of the pendant of the Luís Ferreira & Filhos Jewellery Shop collection in Porto, which is of considerable size (155 mm height), and a work from the eighteenth century. It is a hollow jewel, made by stamping, a model which was often repeated in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in more simplified versions (fig. 5).

In 1818, D. João VI instituted the Military Order of Our Lady of Conception of Vila Viçosa in Brazil, in honour to the Patroness of Portugal, based on his devotion to the Lady. The Order was regulated the following year and its establishment provided the creation of other pieces, in the form of commendations and habits, whose references can be found in nineteenth century documents. These pieces were added to the 17<sup>th</sup>-century practice of using military insignia, namely the Military Orders of Christ, Santiago and Avis, which have had great political and social significance in Portugal in the Modern Age. This was a very significant piece of jewellery but of very diverse monetary value.<sup>22</sup> The pieces evaluated, between 1865 and 1879, by the gold contrast of Vicente Manuel de Moura, in Porto, provide some information about their owners and the material and formal characteristics of these commendations and habits. These pieces are inventoried mainly at the time of the death of their owners, normally members of the Portuguese nobility such as counts, viscounts, councillors and barons. Such pieces could have different Troy weights in gold or silver, sometimes golden silver, to which gold emblems, enamelled and brilliant elements – generally of little monetary value – were added. Habits were often associated to suspended chains.<sup>23</sup> These pieces, for male use, highlight the prestige that the Immaculate had in Portugal, following the women’s jewellery that was also used at that time.

The declaration of the Immaculate Dogma by Pope Pius IX in 1854, through the Papal Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, put an end to a long period of theological controversy and provided the full expansion of a devotion already deeply rooted in Portugal. In the words of F. Félix Lopes, the dogmatic definition was welcomed in Portugal with demonstrations of enormous joy, and solemn celebrations were held in all cathedrals; “All Portugal applauded its patron saint”.<sup>24</sup> The atmosphere was thus favourable to the multiplication of the images of the Immaculate and one has to take into consideration that the initiative of Pius IX helps explain the proliferation of the “Conceptions” on the chest of Portuguese women, which is seen in the documents and portraits during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The Ladies of Conception in documents, portraiture and public and private collections**

Documents and iconographic sources attest to the proliferation of the use of the Ladies of Conception in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reproduced with various techniques and following diverse stylistic solutions. The study published by Gonçalo de Vasconcelos e Sousa, regarding the certificates of evaluation of pieces of jewellery and silverware registered by the *Contrastaria do Porto*, shows the pieces of jewellery belonging to some of the most illustrious families and individuals residing in the municipality and city of Porto as well as bordering cities, in particular Vila Nova de Gaia, Gondomar, Valongo and Feira. His assets were given to the aforementioned gold contrast by Vicente Manuel de Moura, in most cases because of the death of relatives: husbands, wives, parents and, to a lesser extent, uncles, siblings, in-laws and even housemaids.<sup>25</sup> The analysis of this source shows that the pendants in the shape of “Conception” were one of the most frequent, and their possession was transversal to the social groups, which were, in the case of almost all the reg-



1 OLC pendant, beg. 17<sup>th</sup> c., 4.8x4.8 cm, Machado de Castro National Museum (photo: G. Bordino)



2-3 Conception medal-coin (D. João IV), 1648, silver, 42mm (© Casa da Moeda Museum, nº 2935)



4 OLC pendant (1114 Joa), end 18<sup>th</sup> c., gold, Arte Antiga National Museum (photo: J. Pessoa)



5 OLC pendant, 18<sup>th</sup> c., 155mm h, gold, Luís Ferreira & Filhos Jewellery Shop collection, Porto

istered pieces, associated with the chain. The number of “Conception” pieces was only surpassed by the number of hearts and crosses of different shapes and techniques. The chain consists of a long gold thread with a length of between 2 and 2.40 m and made up of links that were traditionally hand-hooked by the so-called “couplers” – the name given to the women in charge of this task in the municipality of Gondomar, an important centre for the production of these pieces – and the long thread was hooked by a ring. Due to its length, it was mainly folded in several rounds around the neck (the longest allowed up to four rounds), and it was the main piece of jewellery exhibited on the female upper chest and an important economic investment. The chain represented great social prestige and ostentation, along with the other pieces that hung from it, and it was used by every social group, from the rural world to the fishing communities and gypsies, but also to the city bourgeoisie and members of the aristocracy.<sup>26</sup> The weight and Troy weight were quite varied and could range from 20 gr to close to a kilo, with the “gold carat” of 4000 cts and 1665 cts.<sup>27</sup>

The same information and the same interest by the Ladies of Conception can be seen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century testaments that were studied, in particular those of the Gondomar Registry Office. See, for example, the case of the widow João Martins Jorge, who, in a will dated 1863, offers to his “goddaughter Josefina [...] a gold chain with a Lady of Conception, also of gold, in the value of, approximately, 60,000 rs,” which means that at that time it weighed a little bit more than 100 grams; in 1866, Maria dos Santos Rocha and João de Castro, also “owners of some gold,” gave their goddaughter Maria “the chain with a Lady of Conception [...] under the obligation of paying ten masses on the soul of each of us [...]”<sup>28</sup>

In the individual or group portraits, dating from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Ladies of Conception clearly appear on the chest of the ladies. These portraits that were meant to circulate as a visual image intended to be shared and exchanged, were widely popular in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and became iconographic sources fundamental to the study of the jewellery of that time. While defining social and economic values, gold ornaments were used for this purpose in portraits and paintings of the time. In the Northwest of Portugal, the fashion of the social elites was even developed so as to represent them with the popular costumes, a romantic tradition established between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The drawing “Woman of Avintes” (fig. 6) by the well-known Portuguese painter Columbano Bordalo Pinheiro, dated 1880,<sup>29</sup> is a good representative of this trend, contextualized at a time of nationalist and cultural momentum that sought to reach the genuine and true purity of the Portuguese. On the chest of the “Woman of Avintes”, the large “Conception” occupies a prominent place and it is surmounted by the filigree heart and the typical Cross of Malta. Also of a considerable size is the suspended image of a shackle (thick chain with large links) that shows the child next to the mother in the 1900 portrait of the family Avelar do Ferradal, from Santa Maria da Feira (fig. 7)<sup>30</sup> and on the “Peasant Woman of Viana do Castelo,” also dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (fig. 8), among many others, corroborating the taste for hollow pieces during this period. According to Amadeu Costa, the acquisition of a “Conception,” a shackle or a girdle (a medal of great dimensions and decorative complexity suspended from a thick chain with the same name) “showed a woman of many lands and possessions”<sup>31</sup>

The portrait photograph also serves to note that the hollowed or sand-cast “Conceptions” were equally contemporaneous with the enamelled medals that had an image of the Immaculate. These enamelled pieces surrounded by a more or less elaborate gold frame and with a suspension ring, prolong a type of jewellery dating back at least to the 17<sup>th</sup> century (figs. 9, 10). Although these medals were smaller than the pieces previously analysed, they had the advantage of colour and iconographic richness, with the watery white of the back and the robe among the blues of the cloak and the gold of the crescent and stars standing out. Iconographically, they are similar to the images of the *Immaculate* in the medals of the Slaves of Our Lady of Conception, with Mary standing, and praying, her head raised to the sky, over the globe with a crescent moon and the serpent at her feet, surrounded by cherubs, wearing a long white robe and a blue cloak covered with stars.<sup>32</sup> The colourful and representative characteristics of these images are reminders of the description suggested by the Spanish painter Francisco Pacheco, who greatly contributed to the dissemination of the iconography of the Immaculate in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries: “There must, therefore, be painted in this most clever mystery this Lady in the prime of her age, from twelve to thirteen years, a most beautiful girl, beautiful and serious eyes, with a perfect nose and mouth, and pink cheeks, beautiful long hair, golden, in full, as much as possible close to the human brush [...]. It must be painted with a white robe and a blue cloak [...]; dressed in sunshine, a sun full of ochre and white, surrounding the whole image, sweetly united with the sky [...]”<sup>33</sup>

Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the increasing devotion and worship of the Lady of Fátima, as a result of the belief in the apparitions of the Mother of God to the three shepherds at Cova da Iria, in 1917 explains the appearance of medals with this image, thus rivalling those of the Lady of Conception or other rarer invocations. Rosa Mota integrates them among the most used daily by the northern Portuguese women and consequently among the most sold pieces in the sixties and seventies of the past century, hanging from gold chains.<sup>34</sup>



6 *Woman of Avintes*, Columbano Bordalo Pinheiro drawing, 1880



7 Mother and daughter, portrait of the family Avelar do Ferradal, Santa Maria da Feira, c. 1900



8 *Peasant Woman of Viana do Castelo*, beg. 20<sup>th</sup> c., "Costumes de Portugal" postcards collection



9-10 Enamelled medal with Our Lady of Conception, mid-20<sup>th</sup> c., private collection



11 Sand casting, goldsmith Silvério Barros Lima, Gondomar, Portugal, 1999



12-13 Stamping, workshop of Fernando Martins Pereira, Lda., Gondomar, April 2016



14 OLC pendant (inv. 1935 MB),  
1865-1880, gold, 5.8x2.0  
(© Biscainhos Museum, Braga)



15 OLC pendant (inv. 1244 MB),  
1865-1880, gold, 10.3,x4.0  
(© Biscainhos Museum, Braga)





16 OLC pendant (OUR 72/87), 1865-1880, gold, 11.35x4.35, 19/20 gr., Popular Art Museum (photo: J. Pessoa)



17 OLC pendant (inv. 2465 MB), 1865-1880, gold, 5.7x2.0 (© Biscainhos Museum, Braga)



18 OLC pendant (inv. 1260 MB), 3.8x2.5, gold (© Biscainhos Museum, Braga)



19 *Mordoma* of the "Agonia" Feast, 2009

\* OLC – Our Lady of Conception

### The Immaculate in the jewellery: techniques

The study carried out in the workshops of Gondomar, one of the largest centres for the production of jewellery in Portugal, and the analysis of the written documents and existing pieces in public and private collections, show that sand-casting and stamping were the main techniques used to produce "Ladies of Conception." Only once was an indication found of a "Conception" in filigree, in the year 1873, which seems to indicate the existence of pieces also produced with this technique, which was very common in Portugal, but which seems to have met with less success in the production of this type of pendant.<sup>35</sup> Also in vogue, and continuing a 17<sup>th</sup> century tradition, it is important not to forget the enamelled medals with the representation of Our Lady of Conception that were analysed previously.

The inventories and collections of jewellery and goods confirm that such pieces of jewellery were already produced in the 18<sup>th</sup> century using a sand-cast technique.<sup>36</sup> The sand-cast technique was developed from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards<sup>37</sup> and it can be iconographically documented, e.g. in the engraving by Etienne Delaune dated 1576, in which it is possible to see the interior of a goldsmith's workshop and the presence of iron boxes hanging on the right wall.<sup>38</sup> In Portugal it is referred to in 1548, as a secret of the smelter and tinker João Fernandes,<sup>39</sup> and Raphael Bluteau describes it in some detail in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, implying that it was a technique frequently used by the goldsmiths of that time.<sup>40</sup> These sources reveal the popularization of this technique until the 20<sup>th</sup> century because it is a relatively fast and efficient means of mass production. It consists of filling with well compacted wet sand the two parts that make up iron box (male and female) and pressing the moulds (usually made of silver or lead) into the sand, and then removing them (fig. 11). The shape created by the mould is then filled with the molten metal, originating the "crude castings" or "tree," in the slang of goldsmiths. The pieces are then separated with scissors, filed, carved, chiselled, bleached and honed to recover the characteristic brilliance of gold.<sup>41</sup> The pieces obtained by sand casting are solid, heavy, more expensive, but smaller. This may be the reason for the preference shown towards Ladies of Conception produced by stamping, that are hollow, but of greater dimensions, and could be seen in public and private collections, and on the chests of Portuguese women in portraits. The stamping technique consists in obtaining a relief on a metal sheet from a mould, a manual process carried out by successive hammer strokes on the die until the metal sheet is the right shape. During this process, the sheet is annealed, in other words, heated with a gas torch in order to make the metal more malleable and consequently easier to work with. The operation is repeated several times until the goldsmith considers that the relief is correct, thus obtaining one of the halves of the piece (figs. 12, 13). After this, sawing, soldering, bleaching, enamelling (if applicable) and polishing are used to provide colour and brilliance to the objects.<sup>42</sup>

As far as iconography is concerned, the models are similar - Our Lady is represented with her hands clasped in a prayer, standing on a cloud over which the crescent is suggested and with the great imperial crown on her head. The 18<sup>th</sup> century piece of the Luís Ferreira & Filhos Jewellery Shop collection, already analysed, is a very representative example of this technique (fig. 5), whereas the pendant that is preserved in the Biscainhos Museum, in Braga, with the name of the goldsmith Miguel Corado Gonçalves e Silva, from about 1865-1880 (inv. 1935 MB), confirms the expansion of this model with slight differences in representation: the Immaculate is standing on the globe, with the serpent coiled at her feet, a crescent moon and heads of cherubs, in a long robe and with a covered and crowned head (fig. 14).<sup>43</sup>

The great demand for these pendants and the need to increase mass production must have justified, however, the simplification of the iconographic model. The pendant of the Biscainhos Museum (inv. 1244 MB) and that of the Museum of Popular Arts of Lisbon, follow the stylistic characteristics of the moulds studied in the workshop of Fernando Martins Pereira, of Gondomar, with the same chronology (c. 1865-1880; figs. 15, 16). The Lady is still represented standing and praying, with long loose hair, in elaborate and decorative robes, with a large imperial crown, but the crescent, the globe and the cloud are only suggested. The Biscainhos Museum preserves another piece of a similar model (fig. 17). Another application of the stamped "Conceptions" can be seen in the

same museum - two pieces with a small image of a stamped Our Lady, placed on a laced surface to resemble a medal (fig. 18).

### The jewellery of the Immaculate nowadays

The recognition of the Immaculate Conception as patroness of Portugal from 1646 onwards provided a strong impetus to her worship, making it one of the most present and most represented invocations in Portuguese art and culture in the following centuries: images, tile panels, pieces of jewellery, place names, songs and prayers and even first names of people, confirm the strong devotion to the Immaculate in Portugal.<sup>44</sup> Nowadays, these pendants are used by women who participate in traditional festivities especially those in the district of Viana do Castelo, in the north of Portugal (fig. 19). On the other hand, the success of these festivities and the increasing demand by national and international tourists, impressed by the magnificence of the gold that shines on the chests of the Minho women, has contributed to the promotion and consequent continuity and demand for these traditionally manufactured pieces.

These ornaments are also part of the treasures of sacred images that we find throughout the country and can even be used in the images of Our Ladies that are carried in procession at the feasts in their honour such as the example of Our Lady of the Light in Constantim, Vila Real.<sup>45</sup> Festivities, Golden Ladies, feast organizers and tourists participating in the festivities also make it possible to continue with the production of such pieces nowadays.

The devotion to the Immaculate Conception has been widely disseminated in Portugal since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which serves to explain the use of these images as pendants, a sign of faith and belief in the protection of the "noble patroness," loved by the people "chosen among all".<sup>46</sup> The intense faith in the "Queen of Portugal" also provided for the development of different typological and technical solutions by the goldsmiths. Thus, Vera Teixeira's position cannot be considered entirely correct when she considers that these images should be previously associated with the iconography of Our Lady of Assumption.<sup>47</sup> It is a fact that the iconography of the Lady of Conception is anchored in the medieval images of the Assumption and that in many copies the main attributes of Our Lady of Conception, such as the globe, the crescent moon, the serpent or the stars of the apocalyptic "Woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and with a crown of twelve stars on her head" are not present (Ap. 12, 1). Nevertheless, those who wore these pieces knew that they had the image of the Lady of Conception or simply of the "Conception" or "Conceptions," as they were tenderly named, on their chests.

### Sources for images

- Figs. 1, 4, 17      Direção-Geral do Património Cultural / Arquivo de Documentação Fotográfica (DGPC/ADF)  
 Fig. 6              From: *À Volta do Mundo*, journal, n.º 14, 1880  
 Figs. 7, 9          From: "O Trajar do Povo em Portugal", in: R. M. dos S. MOTA, *O uso do ouro popular no Norte de Portugal, no século XX*, Porto, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, vol. 2, p. 48 and 72

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1      L. CHAVES, *As filigranas*, Lisboa, Edições SPN, n/d, p. 13.  
 2      F.C.P. DE LIMA, *Cantares do Minho*, Barcelos, 1937, p. 96.  
 3      A. COSTA-M.R. FREITAS, *Ouro Popular Português*, Porto, Lello & Irmão Ed., 1992, p. 155. R. Mota also presents an explanation where she associates the similitude of the suspension clamp of the vessel with the wing of the pitcher or vessel used to carry the water from the fountain, and claims that this name was mostly used from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

- R.M.S. MOTA, *Glossário do Uso do Ouro no Norte de Portugal*, Porto, UCE, 2011, pp. 97-98; R.M. dos S. MOTA, *O uso do ouro popular no Norte de Portugal, no século XX*, Porto, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, vol. 2, 2014, p. 239.
- 4 Pendant shaped as an inverted heart with engraved decoration with burin.
- 5 C.A.M. DE AZEVEDO, *Estudos de iconografia cristã*, Vila Nova de Gaia, Fundação Manuel Leão, 2016, p. 68.
- 6 Filipe II of Portugal decreed the 1609 Pragmatics on October 29<sup>th</sup>, imposing a restriction to the lavish use and decoration of textiles and jewellery. A volume was thus drawn up as a register of the assets of the population of Porto and its surroundings. G. de V. e SOUSA, *O Luxo na Região do Porto ao Tempo de Filipe II de Portugal (1610)*, Porto, UCE, p. 7.
- 7 It is the case of an enamelled image of Our Lady of Conception registered in the assets of D. Jorge d'Eça. G. de V. e SOUSA, "Pratas Douradas e Jóias na Região do Porto ao Tempo de Filipe II de Portugal" in: *O Luxo na Região do Porto ao Tempo de Filipe II de Portugal (1610)*, Porto, UCE, pp. 58-60.
- 8 *Inventário da Coleção do Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro. Ourivesaria sécs. XVI e XVII*, Lisboa, Instituto Português de Museus, 1992, pp. 338-339.
- 9 A. PASTOR TORRES, "Iconografía e iconología de la Inmaculada en el monasterio sevillano de Santa Paula" in: *La Inmaculada Concepción en España: religiosidad, historia y arte: actas del simposium*, vol. 2, 2005, pp. 938-939. Loose hair was a sign of virginity since married women were supposed to cover their hair with headdresses.
- 10 Fr. Fernando da Soledade quoted by D. MAURÍCIO, "Iniciativa da consagração de Portugal a N<sup>a</sup> Senhora da Conceição", in: *Brotéria*, vol. XLIII, Lisboa, 1946, p. 626.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 631.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 636.
- 13 According to the chronicle of Fr. Fernando da Soledade in *História Seráfica*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 638.
- 14 A.P. TRIGUEIROS, "A Conceição: moeda, medalha e venera da Padroeira de Portugal" in: *NVMMVS*, 2<sup>a</sup> S., XXXVII, Porto, S.P.N., 2014, p. 47.
- 15 P. BATALHA REIS, "O culto de Nossa Senhora da Conceição na Numismática" in: *Brotéria*, 1946, vol. XLIII, p. 620. The tribute to the Patroness of Portugal, in Vila Viçosa, was duly paid until 1807, the year of the first French invasion, never to be renewed again. A.P. TRIGUEIROS, *op. cit.*, 2014, p. 52.
- 16 A.P. TRIGUEIROS, *op. cit.*, 2014, p. 48.
- 17 Description by Manuel Severim de Faria quoted by A.P. TRIGUEIROS, *op. cit.*, 2014, p. 49.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 20 N.V. e SILVA-P.B. de A. BRANCO, *Luxo, poder e devoção. Jóias do século XVI ao século XIX*, Porto, V.O.C. Antiquidades, Lda., 2015, p. 80.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- 22 G. de V. e SOUSA, "A Corte Portuguesa de Setecentos e a joalheria: elementos para o seu estudo" in: *Revista de Artes Decorativas*, nº 4, 2010, p. 114.
- 23 G. de V. e SOUSA, *Tesouros privados. A Joalheria na Região do Porto (1865-1879)*, Porto, UCE, 2012. This work studies and publishes approximately 2900 certificates of evaluation of the pieces of jewellery and silverware, registered between 1865 and 1879 by the Contrastaria do Porto, afterwards entrusted to Vicente Manuel de Moura and which are now in the Archive of the Casa da Moeda, in Lisbon, *Papéis de Vicente Manuel de Moura*, Los. 1-4.
- 24 M. de OLIVEIRA-M. das NEVES, *A Padroeira de Portugal. Notas e Documentos*, Lisboa, Edições Letras e Artes, 1940, p. 33.
- 25 G. de V. e SOUSA, *op. cit.*, 2012.
- 26 R.M.S. MOTA, *Glossário do Uso do Ouro no Norte de Portugal*, Porto, UCE, 2011, pp. 66-70.
- 27 According to the percentage of gold in the alloy. G. de V. e SOUSA, *op. cit.*, 2012.
- 28 A.C.C. de SOUSA, *Ourivesaria estampada e lavrada. Uma técnica milenar numa oficina de Gondomar*, Porto, FLUP, 1997, p. 137-138.
- 29 Drawing taken from the magazine *À Volta do Mundo*, nº 14.
- 30 R.M. dos S. MOTA, *O uso do ouro popular no Norte de Portugal, no século XX*, Porto, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, vol. 2, p. 48.
- 31 A. COSTA, "Em que circunstâncias a Vianesa põe ou não o seu ouro", in: *Ourivesaria do Norte de Portugal*, Porto, Fund. Eng. António de Almeida, 1984, p. 163.

- 32 At the time of the registering of the Royal House assets, this medal was, in 1911, in the “Bedroom chambers of Her Majesty D. Maria Pia”, together with her personal jewellery. Made of gold, silver and enamels, it should date from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after it was acquired in 1991 at the auction “Orders and Decorations, Silver, Porcelain, Glass and Memorabilia from the Collections of King Manuel II of Portugal,” by Sotheby’s, in Geneva, 16<sup>th</sup> May 1991, through a joint sponsoring action by Banco Espírito Santo and Banco Totta e Açores. <http://www.matriznet.dgpc.pt/MatrizNet/Objectos/ObjectosConsultar.aspx?IdReg=992346>
- 33 Quoted by A. PASTORTORRES, *op. cit.*, 2005, vol. 2, p. 939.
- 34 R.M. dos S. MOTA, *op. cit.*, 2014, vol. 2, p. 92.
- 35 In an evaluation made at the request of José Francisco Vilarinho after the death of his wife, Maria Augusta Correia Vilarinho, inhabitants of Porto. The piece is associated to a chain, both of good gold (carat gold) and integrated in a wealth of jewellery. G. de V. e SOUSA, *op. cit.*, 2012, vol. I, p. 592.
- 36 TT, *Orfanológicos*, Letra C, Maço 14, nº 7 Condessa de Ficalho, D. Isabel Josefa de Menezes Breyner Calçada da Estrela, Freguesia de Santa Isabel Inventario que se fez por óbito da Excelentíssima Condessa de Ficalho D. Isabel Josefa de Menezes Breyner que se continuou com o Ilustríssimo Pedro de Melo Breyner seu filho 1795 (Palaeographic transcription carried out by Lina Maria Marrafa de Oliveira in the the Project: “A Casa Senhorial em Lisboa e no Rio de Janeiro, Séculos XVII, XVIII e XIX”), p. 6. <http://www.casaruibarbosa.gov.br/acasasenhorial/index.php/fontes-documentais/inventarios/49-inventarios/381-d-isabel-josefa-de-menezes-breyner-1795> (accessed 1 December 2016).
- 37 H. NEWMAN, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewellery*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1981, p. 268.
- 38 J. CHERRY, *Medieval Craftsmen Goldsmiths*, London, British Museum Press, 1992, p. 27.
- 39 M. RIBEIRO, “Laças de ouro e jóias afins. Elementos para o estudo de joias portuguesas de carácter popular”, in: *Memoirium António Jorge Dias*, Lisboa, 1974, p. 348.
- 40 Translator’s note: “The goldsmith shapes and presses the piece in the sand, or in the *caiba* of the *ciba*. A moulding box in which large or small pieces of work are poured into the sand, which first has to be sifted through a sieve, or alva, tempered with water, and tightened by hand, until it is the right shape, and then will be capable of moulding the whole work.” R. BLUTEAU, *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino*, Lisboa, Na Officina de Pascoal da Sylva, 1716, Vol. V, pp. 540-541. <https://books.google.pt/books?id=QcdKAAAACAAJ&pg=PA540&lpg=PA540&dq=ca%C3%ADca+da+ciba&source=bl&ots=Wpt6paiYTK&sig=K11PajK5xOFOZ5aGBDU3jzcyYsc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjS3qKlgtPQAhUB2hQKHcYcUBvQQ6AEIHTAA#v=onepage&q=ca%C3%ADca%20da%20ciba&f=false> (accessed 1 December 2016).
- 41 Concerning the detailed production of this process refer to, A.C. SOUSA, *Metamorfoses do ouro e da prata. A ourivesaria tradicional no Noroeste de Portugal*, Porto, CRAT, 2000, pp. 24-27. This traditional technique was gradually replaced in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century by “centrifugal casting”, a modern version of the “cire perdue”, process that allows the production of a large number of pieces of jewellery in a very short time.
- 42 The collection exhibits a rich set of about a thousand and a half bronze moulds, destined mainly to the production of diverse and outstanding types of earrings. The Modern Era also developed the technique of stamping by means of a machine, the press. A.C.C. SOUSA, *op. cit.*, 1997; A.C. SOUSA, *op. cit.*, 2000, pp. 28-30.
- 43 G. de V. e SOUSA, *Colecção de Jóias do Museu dos Biscainhos*, Porto, UCE – Porto, 2011, pp. 102-106.
- 44 L. CHAVES, “A Imaculada Conceição” nas tradições e no folclore de Portugal”, in: *Brotéria*, pp. 579-590.
- 45 As can be seen in the poster of the Constantim Feast 2010. On the breast of Our Lady, there is a “Conception” among other pieces.
- 46 Verses of the popular liturgical song “Salve, Nobre padroeira”.
- 47 V.P.M. TEIXEIRA, *Forma, função e simbologia na joalheria. Viagem através da colecção de Marta Ortigão Sampaio*, Porto, FLUP, 2010, p. 92.

Ana Cristina Sousa

**Prikaz Bezgrešnog začeca - od zaštitnice Portugala do tradicionalnog nakita**

Zlatni i srebrni privjesci s likom Djevice bezgrešno začete bili su jedni od najčešćih primjera u tradicionalnom portugalskom nakitu u 19. i prvoj polovici 20. stoljeća, uz raznolike oblike križeva i srca. Taj je komad nakita često bio pokazatelj statusa i bogatstva, velik i šupalj, rađen u metalu tehnikom kovanja ili lijevanja pa predstavlja čvrst predmet koji se od druge polovice 20. stoljeća postavlja na emajlirane medaljone. U popularnoj kulturi ovakvi prikazi odražavaju veliku privrženost, služenje i obranu dogme o *Bezgrešnom začecu* na lberskom poluotoku, što su snažno podupirali franjevci. Vjerovanje da je Marija začeta bez grijeha politički podupire D. João IV, prvi monarh dinastije nakon proglašenja nezavisnosti Portugala od španjolske dominacije 1640. U "Cortesu" 1646. João IV. proglašava Djevicu Immaculatu zaštitnicom Kraljevstva, a odluku potvrđuje papa Klement X. 1671, čime ona postaje ultimativni simbol kraljevstva, ispred krune. Vjerovanje u Bezgrešno začecje poprima nacionalno značenje u kontekstu španjolsko-portugalskih ratova, koji će potrajati do 1668. Dogmatski status Bezgrešnog začeca imao je kao rezultat definiciju ikonografskog modela tijekom 16. stoljeća, koji se poziva na tekst iz *Knjige otkrivenja*: "žena uz koju je Sunce, Mjesec joj pod nogama, te kruna s 12 zvijezda na glavi" (Otk 12:1). Taj su prikaz osobito popularizirali španjolski barokni umjetnici, šireći ikonografiju Marije koja gazi opaku zmiju, te kao nova Eva izbavlja ljude od istočnog grijeha, okružena oblacima iz kojih izranja mnoštvo anđela. Ovaj se model tijekom 17. i 18. stoljeća koristi u Portugalu u izradi nakita. U ovome se tekstu raspravlja o navedenim prikazima, njihovoj ikonografiji, tehnikama izrade nakita, te tradiciji, praksi i kontekstu nastanka i korištenja privjesaka. Ovaj je rad rezultat provedenog istraživanja u arhivima (ponajprije pominim čitanjem oporučnih i darovnih knjiga), studija nakita u javnim i privatnim zbirkama te u fotografskim arhivima, (uključujući individualne i grupne zbirke portreta, gdje se objekt može vidjeti u svom uobičajenom kontekstu) te istraživanja u zlatarskim radionicama u kojima se i dalje proizvodi prema tradicionalnim modelima.

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