

La città medievale è la città dei frati? *Is the medieval town the city of the friars?*

a cura di Silvia Beltramo e Gianmario Guidarelli



Giotto e aiuti, *Cacciata dei diavoli da Arezzo*, 1295-1299 ca.
(Assisi, Basilica superiore di Assisi).

1 ARCHItettura MEDievale

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è la città dei frati?**

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B.
Territorio, città
e architettura degli
Ordini mendicanti:
fonti e metodi

Arezzo. San Francesco, interno della chiesa, corpo orientale con l'abside maggiore e le due minori laterali (foto Silvia Beltramo).



CATARINA ALMEIDA MARADO

The friars in medieval Portugal: territorial and urban settlements

The Mendicant friars arrived in Portugal in the early XIII century and rapidly spread throughout the entire kingdom. By the end of the XV century, they had settled in almost all cities and towns in continental Portugal and had also begun to establish themselves in the Portuguese overseas territories, namely in North Africa and in the Atlantic Islands. In Portugal, as in the rest of Europe, the arrival of the friars had a strong impact on the urban structure, both on a social and a spatial level, and their buildings played an important role in shaping the medieval urban landscape.

Based on the results of a research project,¹ that aimed to understand the role that the Mendicant Orders played in shaping of the Portuguese cities, this paper will present a comprehensive overview of the relationship between the Mendicant houses and the cities in medieval Portugal. It will start with the analysis of the territorial expansion of the Mendicant Orders throughout the Portuguese kingdom between the XIII and the XV centuries, identifying the different foundational dynamics of the friar's communities, both chronologically and geographically, and relating them with the political, social, economic and territorial contexts, and also with the Mendicant's spiritual transformations that occurred in this period. Within this methodological framework, the territorial analysis will address the dichotomy between the north and the south of the country, between the most central and the peripheral areas, and between the larger and the smaller cities. The second part will be dedicated to the analysis of the establishment of the friars in the major Portuguese cities in the XIII century, focusing on some specific questions such as: i) the social and financial support for the settlement of the friars in the cities; ii) the opposition they had to face to establish themselves in the urban space; iii) the internal competition for the 'preaching places' within the city; and iv) the social and physical characteristics of their location sites. Finally, a brief reference will be made to the impacts that the convents had in the cities, both at a micro and a macro-scale.

While trying to achieve the difficult task of presenting a general overview on such a complex subject, this paper intends to point out the major issues regarding the friar's presence in the Portuguese cities throughout the medieval period. At the same time, it will make punctual reference to the methodological aspects of the study that involved textual, cartographic and iconographic sources together with the analysis of the material evidence, both on the buildings themselves and their surrounding urban landscape, in a comparative analysis using cartography and mapping as essential interpretation tools to understand spatial change.

¹ This research was supported by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia – Portugal (SFRH/BPD/78198/2011 – postdoctoral research project *Monastic urban systems in Portugal*, 2012-2018).

	Franciscans	Dominicans	Carmelites	Augustinians	total
1217-1225	4	1	-	-	5
1226-1250	8	3	-	-	11
1251-1275	5	2	1	2	10
1276-1300	-	1	-	-	1
1301-1325	-	-	-	1	1
1326-1350	1	-	-	-	1
1351-1375	-	-	-	1	1
1376-1400	7	2	1	1	11
1401-1425	5	2	-	-	7
1426-1450	7	1	1	-	9
1451-1475	7	2	-	-	9
1476-1500	4	-	1	1	6
	48	14	4	6	72

tab. 1 – Portugal. Mendicant foundations between the XIII and the XV centuries, per quarter of century.

1. Territorial expansion (XIII-XV centuries)

The friars Minor and the Preachers arrived in Portugal in the early XIII century and the other two Mendicant Orders (the Carmelites and the Augustinian Hermits) at the beginning of the second half of the century. After that, these four religious Orders spread throughout the entire kingdom with different rhythms of growth and territorial distribution. By the end of the XV century, they have founded 72 friaries in continental Portugal.²

The rhythms of growth of the Mendicant Orders in Portugal in the three first centuries of their presence in this territory can be summarized in three main periods. The first delineates a phase of intensive growth of the Mendicant communities, especially on the second and third quarter of the XIII century.³ This corresponded to the peak of the Mendicant phenomena in Portugal and it was coincident with the end of the *Cristian Reconquista* and with the beginning of the definition of the territorial, administrative and political organization of the kingdom throughout the D. Afonso III and D. Dinis kingdom,⁴ where the cities played an important role. The second period corresponds to a long stage of one hundred years with very few new foundations, which began on the final quarter of the XIII century and went on through the first three-quarters of the following century. This was a difficult period for the friars, since it was marked by a series of political, economic, social and religious crises, and the Mendicant Orders were not immune to this turbulence. On the other hand, the emergence of the observant movement also created difficulties within the Orders, especially in the Order of friars Minor. Finally, in the third period, which started at the end of the XIV century, there was a sudden increase of the new foundations, mainly due to the entrance in Portugal of the Franciscan observant movement. After this, the growing tendency stabilized until the end of the XV century (*tab.* 1).

Throughout these three centuries, the different Mendicant Orders had nearly the same pattern of growth, but in Portugal, like in the other European countries,⁵ the friars Minor had a more significant presence than the other Orders. During this period, the friars Minor founded 48 religious houses, which represented more than sixty per cent (60%) of the

² On the number of foundations of religious houses in Portugal see *Ordens Religiosas* 2005; GOMES 2014.

³ For the rhythms of growth of the friars Minor in Portugal in the XIII century see MATTOSO 2002.

⁴ ROSSA, TRINDADE 2005, p. 80.

⁵ For France see GUERREAU 1981.

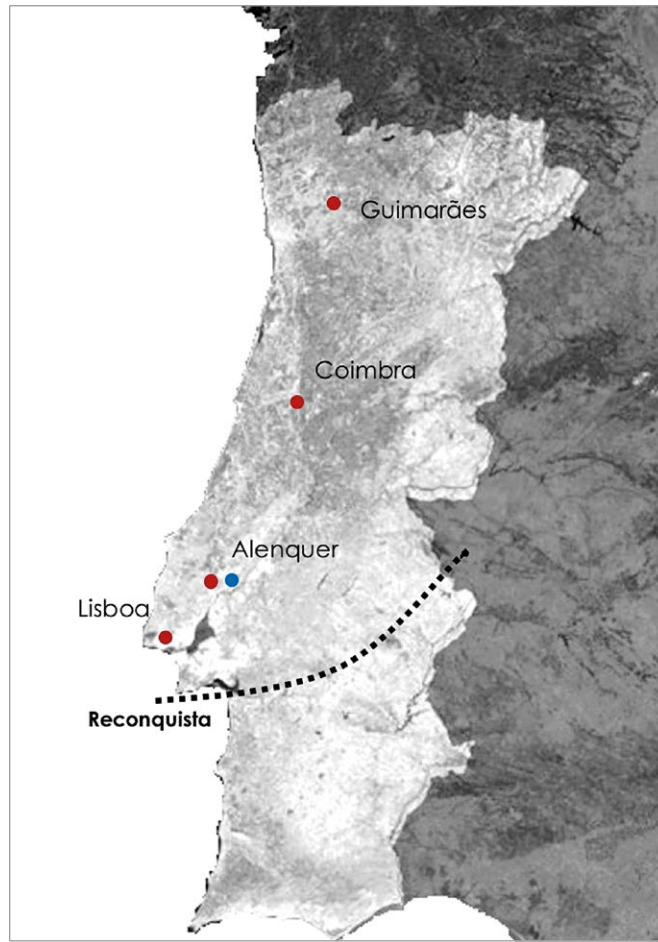


fig. 1 – Portugal. Mendicant foundations, 1217: in red friars Minor, in blue Preachers (map by the author).

total of the Mendicant houses in Portugal, and three times more than the Preachers (*tab. 1*).

Each of the growing dynamics of the Mendicant phenomena in Portugal had a different territorial expression marked by distinct phases.⁶ According to the XVII-century chronicle, on the two first years of their arrival, between 1216 and 1217, the friars Minor established themselves in four different towns: Guimarães, Coimbra, Lisbon, and Alenquer.⁷ The first three were the most important Portuguese towns by that time, and the latter was a smaller town that belongs to the king's sister (D. Sancha) who gave strong support to these friars.⁸ It was also near this small town that the Preachers establish their first settlement in Portugal in 1217 (*fig. 1*).⁹ However, at this early phase, the friars did not establish themselves within the cities, but rather in isolated places in the area surrounding these urban settlements.

This early phase of the Mendicant communities was marked by the eremitic experience. The friars followed a life of individual and collective poverty, practicing itinerant preaching and living in hermitages in remote places in the area surrounding the urban settlements.¹⁰ The first Mendicant settlements in Portugal reflected this initial eremitical form of life. They

⁶ On the friars Minor see MARADO 2019.

⁷ Although the Order Chronicler refers that the friars arrived in 1216 (ESPERANÇA 1656, p. 62) other authors affirm that they arrived only in 1217, after the Assis General Chapter (GOMES 2018, p. 21).

⁸ ESPERANÇA 1656, pp. 77-78.

⁹ CACEGAS 1767, pp. 45-46.

¹⁰ PELLEGRINI 1975; MERLO 1995a; GODET-CALOGERAS 2007.

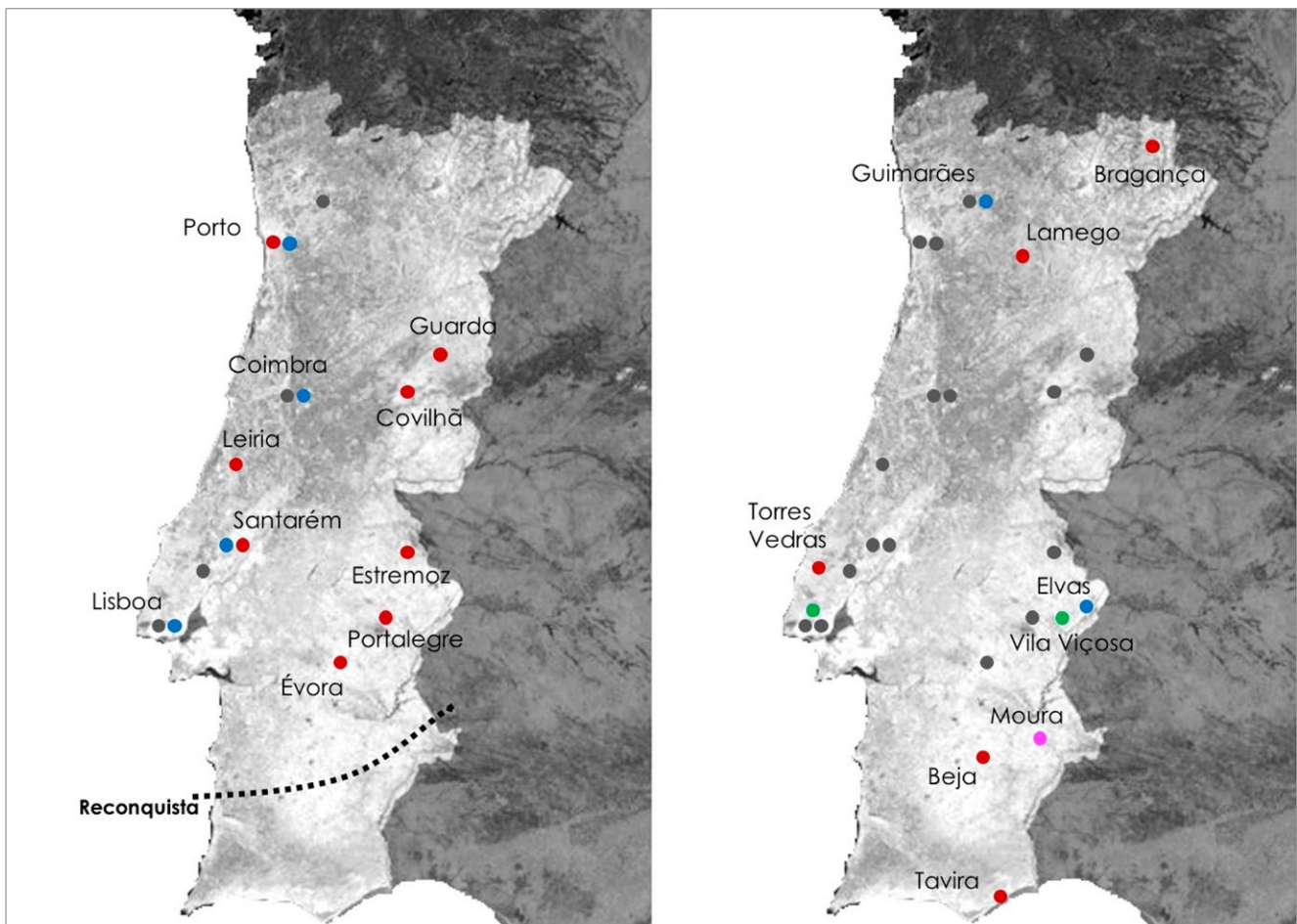


fig. 2 – Portugal. Mendicant foundations, 1225-1250 and 1250-1275: in red friars Minor, in blue Preachers, in rose Carmelites, in green Augustinians (map by the author).

were all temporary establishments, founded in pre-existing small churches located in distant and isolated places. The Preachers settled at the top of a mountain around 14 kilometres north of Alenquer, while the friars Minor established themselves around two kilometres of the town's limits in the case of Guimarães, Coimbra, and Alenquer, and in Lisbon, they settled in a small church, around 500 metres from the city's boundaries.

Since the «urbanization» of the Order of friars Minor coincided with its process of «clericalization» which only began in the 1220s,¹¹ the proximity of their location site to the urban centre in the case of Lisbon seems very unusual in this period. It can be justified by the king's will, since that it was D. Afonso II that offer them the church in which they settled.¹² However, considering that there are no coeval documents to confirm that the friars Minor settled in Lisbon in 1217 and that the first documented reference to their presence in the city is from the 1240s,¹³ while the earliest date is indicated by the XVII-century chronicles that must be critically analysed because they tend to anticipate the foundation dates as well as their relationship to the royalty¹⁴ – it is probable that the friar Minor only arrived in Lisbon in the next phase of their establishment in the Portuguese territory, where they established themselves definitively in the cities.

¹¹ BRUZELIUS 2008, p. 212.

¹² ESPERANÇA 1656, p. 186.

¹³ GOMES 2018, pp. 21-22.

¹⁴ FARDILHA 2001.

On the second phase of the territorial expansion of the Mendicants in Portugal, between the 1220s and the 1240s, the friars settle in the most important and populated cities on the central part of the country, which had received a significant number of people due to the conflicts that took place in the northern part (*fig. 2*).¹⁵ For that, the friars had the king's support in the majority of the cases. On the second half of the century, as the *Reconquista* ended, both Orders went to the most remote towns in the south and northwest of the country, especially the friars Minor that established houses both on the northern limit of the Portuguese kingdom and on the recently conquered territories in the southern part. It was also on the second half of this century that the Carmelites and the Augustinians founded their first houses in Portugal (*fig. 2*).

All the 21 convents founded by the Mendicants in this phase were located near the city's limits and this was also the moment in which the friars started to transfer their first isolated houses to near the cities. The first ones were the Preachers that transfer their first house from the mountains near Alenquer to Santarém in 1221, followed by the friars Minor, who did the same in Alenquer (in 1222), Coimbra (in 1242) and Guimarães (in 1271).

As I mentioned before, the XIV century, in general, was a difficult period and consequently, the friars founded very few convents (*tab. 1*). However, throughout the final quarter of the XIII century and the first three-quarters of the following century, in Portugal, the Preachers and the friars Minor continue their journey to the south, founding one convent each in the southern cities, while the Augustinians founded two convents in the central part of the kingdom.

At the end of the XIV century, the first Franciscan observants entered Portugal and founded, by themselves, seven houses in few years, mainly in that northern area of the territory.¹⁶ These were clustered in two smaller geographic areas: in the mountainous region north of Alenquer (where the early friars Minor had settled at the beginning of the XIII century) and in the northern lands bordering Galicia (*fig. 3*). The rigorous observance of the initial principles of the Order, which this group endorsed, meant a return to greater isolation and a rejection of the urban world. In such a context, they build their convents in isolated areas, around three kilometres from the urban settlements, but in the surrounding territory of small villages rather than near big cities, as in the previous century.

It was also in this period, that the Preachers founded their second house in the city of Lisbon, but also at a quite significant distance from the city's limits, and a convent in a rural area, celebrating the Portuguese victory over the kingdom of Castile (Convent of Batalha). However, on the contrary, the other two Mendicant Orders (the Carmelites and the Augustinians) establish themselves inside the urban space, in Lisbon and Santarém (*fig. 3*).

Finally, through the XV century, the Mendicants spread throughout the entire kingdom, settling both on isolated places and on the city's boundaries, and also both in the major cities and in the smaller towns (*fig. 3*). This was particularly evident in the Order of friars Minor, that in this century was marked by «a series of dilemmas», since while the Observants advocated a return to a more stringent adherence to poverty, humility, and retreat from

¹⁵ MATTOSO 2002, pp. 244-246.

¹⁶ On the Franciscan observants in Portugal see TEIXEIRA 2010.

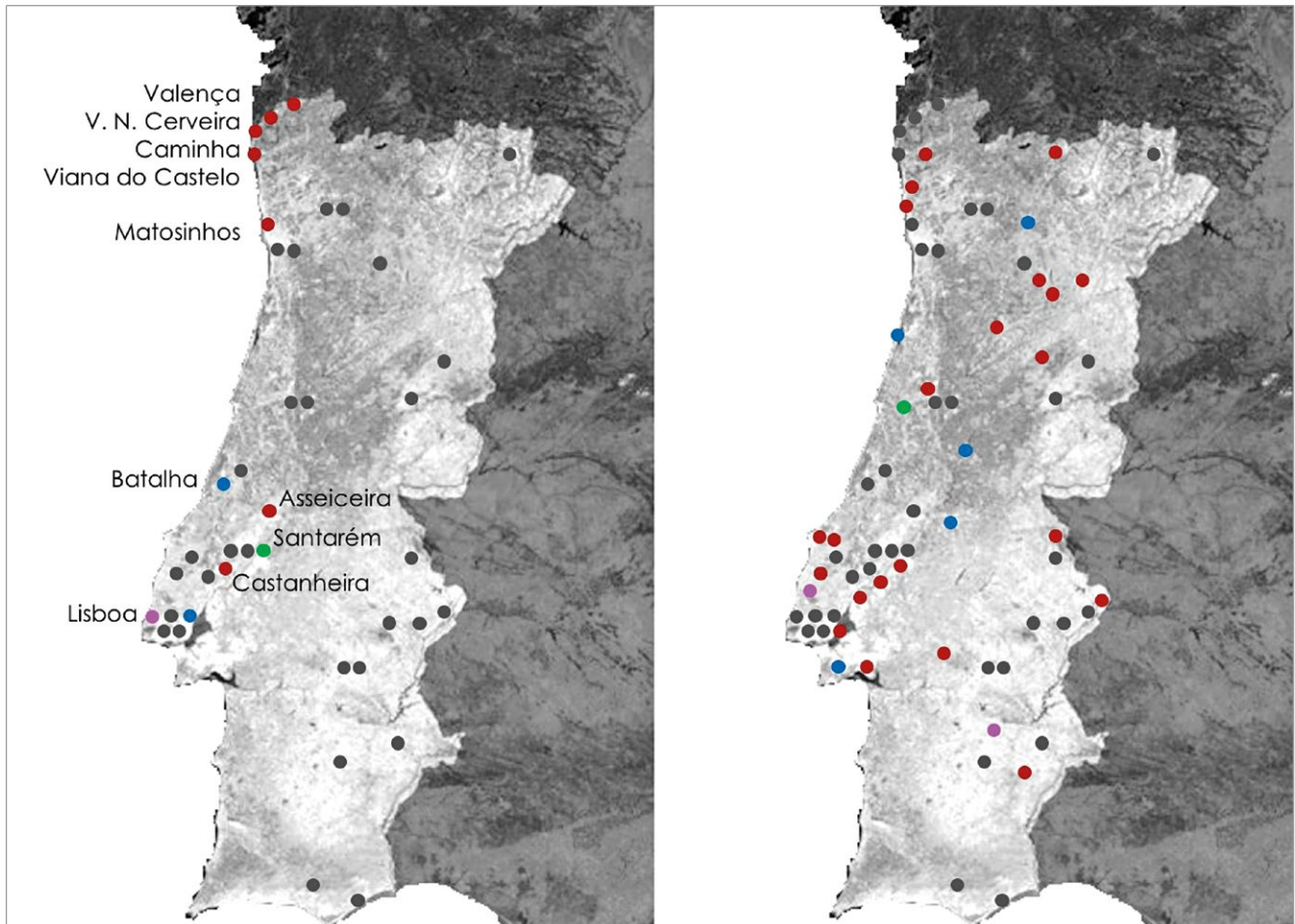


fig. 3 – Portugal. Mendicant foundations, 1376-1400 and 1401-1500: in red friars Minor, in blue Preachers, in rose Carmelites, in green Augustinians (map by the author).

society, which meant they sought more rural settings for their settlements, the Conventuals increasingly identified themselves more with the city, becoming indispensable elements of urban life.¹⁷

2. The establishment in the major cities (XIII century)

In Portugal, although the friars have settled in more than 50 cities and towns, only six of them had more than one friary. Those were the main cities of the kingdom: Lisbon, Santarém, Évora, Oporto, Coimbra, Guimarães. A brief chronological analysis of the foundation dates of these friaries clarifies some of the most important aspects of the establishment of Mendicant houses in Portugal (*tab. 2*). Firstly, it shows that almost all these religious houses were founded in the XIII century (three in Lisbon and two in the other cities).¹⁸ Secondly, it reveals that two of the friaries that were founded at the end of the XIV century (one in Lisbon and other in Santarém) were Carmelites and Augustinians houses. And finally, it also shows that the one founded in the turn of this century together with the ones founded in the XV century were second houses of the friars Minor and the Preachers in Lisbon and Santarém. These three friaries, however, were located in a rural environment, at around two to three kilometres from

¹⁷ MARTIN 1975, p. 94.

¹⁸ Some of these cities had also convents of other religious communities like the Regular Canons of Saint Augustinian, the Trinitarians, the Poor Clare, and the Dominican Nuns.

tab. 2 – Portugal. Mendicant convents in the main Portuguese cities (foundation dates).

	Franciscans	Dominicans	Carmelites	Augustinians	Total foundations		
					13 th	14 th	15 th
Lisbon	1217 + 1455	1241 + 1399	1386	1271	3	2	1
Santarém	1242 + 1470	1221 (1225)		1376	2	1	1
Évora	1245	1286			2		
Porto	1233	1237			2		
Coimbra	1217 (1247)	1227			2		
Guimarães	1216 (1271)	1270			2		

the city's limits. For this reason, I will not consider them in the analysis of the establishment of the friaries in these cities and will focus mainly on the XIII-century foundations that corresponds to the peak of the Mendicant phenomena in the Portuguese cities.

The first questions I would like to address is the social and financial support for the friar's settlement in these cities, and for that Oporto is a good example, also because of the strong opposition that both the friars Minor and the Preachers suffered in this town.¹⁹ In Oporto, the friars Minor were the first to arrive and they settled in the lower part of the city, near the recent expansion area outside the town walls. But the bishop, who owned the town, opposed to the friar's presence in the city and took several violent actions against them. He orders to set fire to their convent, try to stop the construction works, and finally, manages to expel the friars Minor, forcing them to go to the other side of the river (*fig. 4*).²⁰

While attacking the friars Minor, the bishop invited the Preachers to settle in the city,²¹ offering them a small church and some land near the first friars Minor settlement. But, after that, he also attacked the Preachers, by not allowing them to preach and to develop other apostolic activities. Some years later, in 1244, the friars Minor manage to return to their first location, both with the pope and the king's help, who saw the Mendicant convents as instruments to assert his power in the cities.²² This led to the unusual location of the two Mendicant houses in Oporto, that stayed side by side, with only one narrow passage between their conventual precincts (*fig. 4*).

Another aspect that I would like to mention is the friar's competition for the «preaching places» within the city,²³ and for that, I will take the case of Santarém. On the contrary of all the other six cities, in Santarém the Preachers were the first to arrive. As I mentioned before, in 1221 they transfer their initial house from the mountains near Alenquer to the city of Santarém. Initially, they settle on the northern part of the city, near the riverside *extramuros* neighbourhood, but a few years later they transfer the convent to the other side of the town, and finally moved again to a third location near the main city gate (Leiria Gate). According to the Order's chronicle, they moved because they wanted to be nearest to the city.²⁴ Two decades later, the friars Minor arrived in Santarém and establish their convent on the other side of the Leiria Gate (*fig. 5*). It was then that the conflicts began, and they only ended (we suppose) in 1261 through an agreement that intended to solve several problems between the two Mendicant communities.

¹⁹ SOUSA 1984.

²⁰ ESPERANÇA 1656, pp. 397-405.

²¹ On the presence of the Preachers in Oporto see AFONSO 2014.

²² RIBEIRO, MELO 2012, pp. 27-28.

²³ On this subject see MARADO 2015.

²⁴ CACEGAS 1767, p. 129.

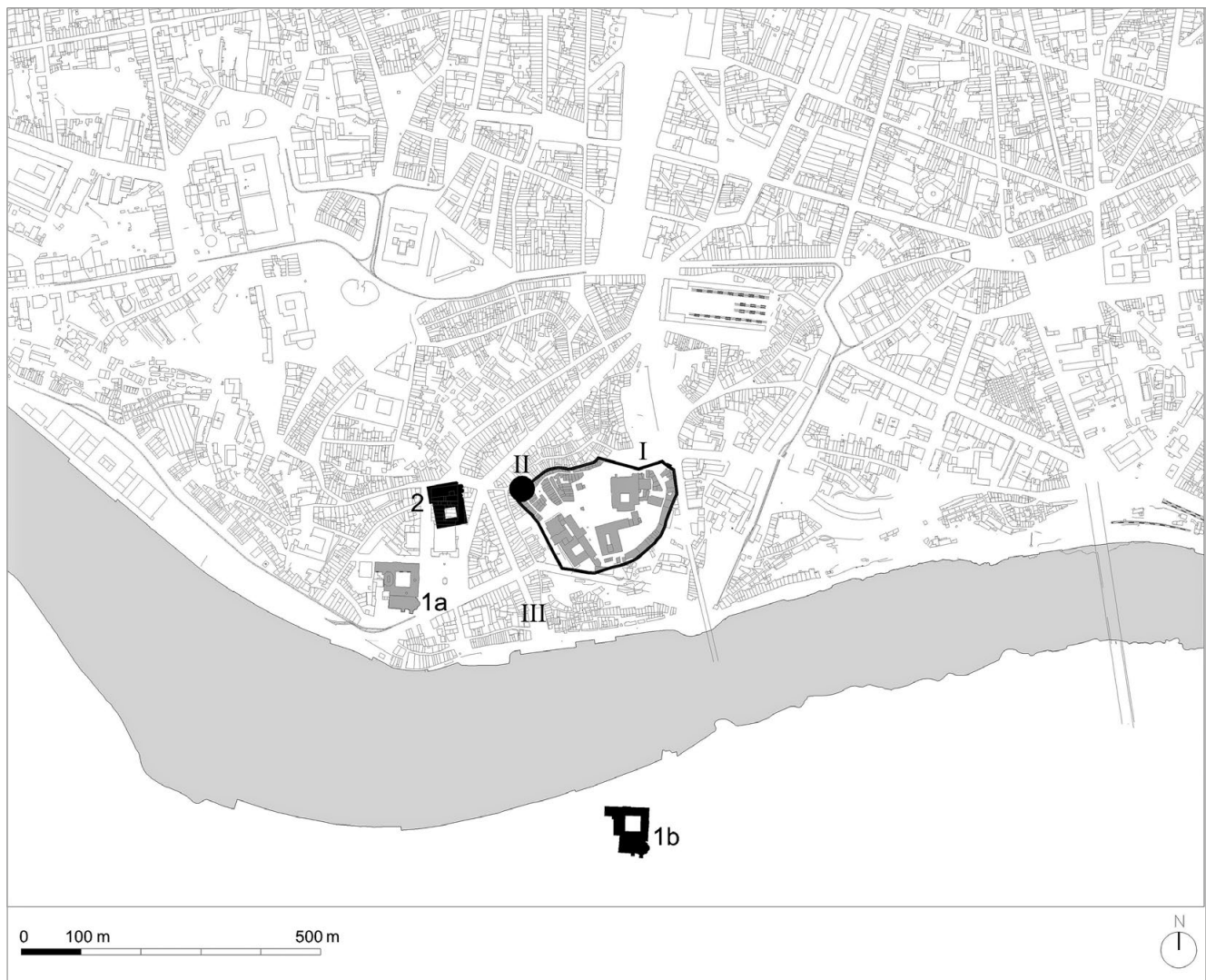


fig. 4 – Oporto. Location of the religious houses, XIII century: 1a. friary of friars Minor, first and final location (1233, 1244); 1b. friary of friars Minor, hypothetical second location (1237-1244); 2. friary of Preachers (1237); I. first city walls; II. main gate (Sant’Ana gate); III. *extramuros* expansion (Ribeira). The conventual precincts are not represented (map by the author).

According to the agreement document,²⁵ the Preachers complained about the friars Minor because they have built their house near their lands and in the space between their convent and the castle and they also claimed that the friars Minor were trying to enlarge their territory even more in their direction. They simultaneously declare that they had given protection to a community of cloistered women that had settled near the friars Minor convent in order «to prevent them from extending their territory, even more, in their direction». And they also protested because they were prevented from preaching by the friars Minor by a *dual reason*: the *reason of place*, because the *preaching place* of the friars Minor was closer to the town than that of the Preachers, they claim; and the «reason of time and place», because they both preached at the same time and their *preaching places* were, according to them, very near.²⁶

Finally, and to «put an end all the conflicts» and «to prevent any motive for more conflicts in the future», both communities set a series of rules to be followed. The first was to transfer the women that lived near the friars

²⁵ *Sentença-arbitragem entre Dominicanos e Franciscanos com intervenção do Mestre Geral da Ordem dos Pregadores e arbitrada por Frades Menores, 1261, 17 de Novembro, Santarém*, published in MATTOSO 1985.

²⁶ MATTOSO 1985, pp. 112-115.

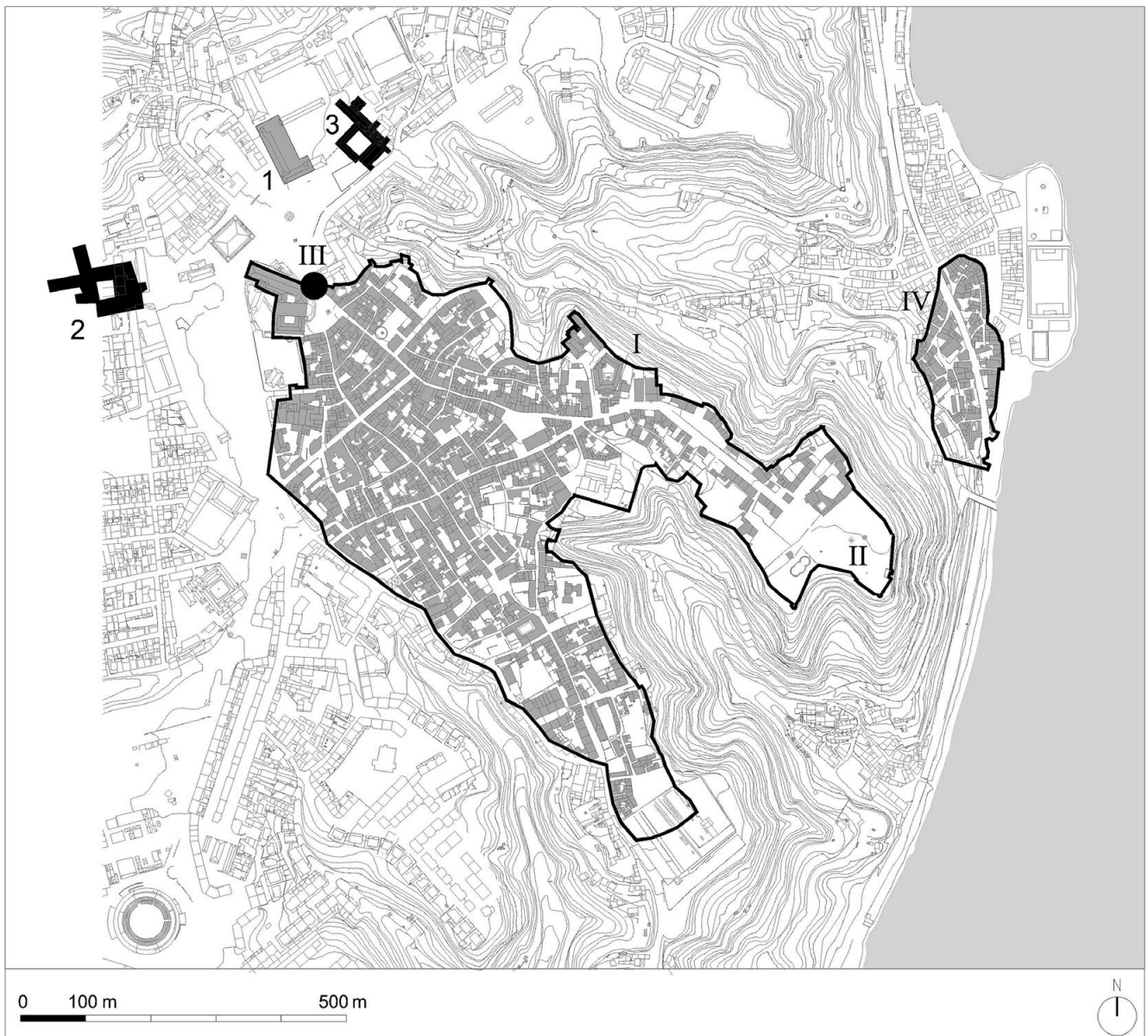


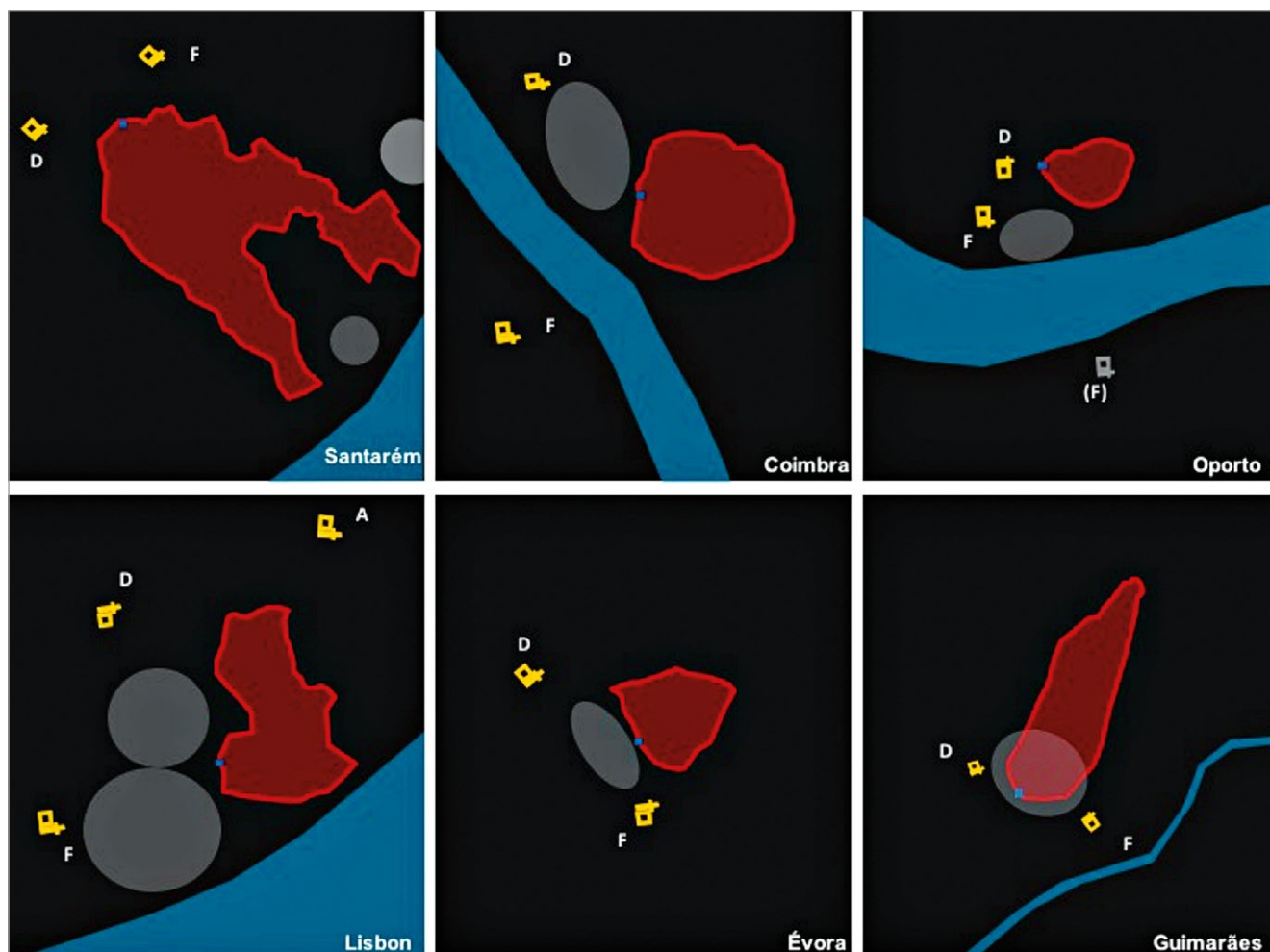
fig. 5 – Santarém. Location of the religious houses, mid-XIII century:

1. Trinitarian friary (1207); 2. friary of Preachers, third and final location (1225); 3. friary of friars Minor (1242); I. city walls; II. castle; III. main gate (Leiria Gate); IV. *extramuros* expansion (Ribeira).

The conventual precincts are not represented (map by the author).

Minor and that were protected by the Preachers, to another location; and the second was to divide up the *time and place* for preaching between the two Mendicant communities of Santarém by establishing an alternation between their *preaching places* (in front of their respective convents) through a specific calendar. Additionally, they also set out rules for the assistance at burials, the participation in processions, and even the use of some words that could offend the other community.²⁷ Besides the setting of a calendar to preach in their *preaching places*, these two communities also establish rules for the preaching in the city. For that, they agree to divide the 21 churches of the town into two groups and each year each community should preach in one different group of churches. The mapping of all these documentary data together with the cartography analysis of the city demonstrates a rigorous parity between the two communities, that is also evident in other aspects of the friar's life in the cities, such as the many testamentary documents, where people would leave the same amount to the friars Minor as to the

²⁷ MATTOSO 1985, pp. 115-116.



Preachers, or the king's donations, who often give the same amount to the two communities.²⁸

Conflicts between the Mendicant communities, like the one that occurred in Santarém, happened all over Europe, and their frequency and intensity led to the definition of *minimum distance* rules between the convents by the Pope, first on one case basis, and then, in 1265 and 1268, extended to all the Mendicant buildings.²⁹

But these were not the only factors that determined the location of the XIII-century Mendicant convents. By analysing the characteristics of their sites in the six main cities we can point out several similarities. As I mentioned before, in the XIII century in each of these cities a pair of Mendicant convents were founded, one of friars Minor and one of Preachers, that in most cases, were built simultaneously. It was only in Lisbon, that a third Mendicant convent (of Augustinian canons) was founded in this period. Through a schematic representation of the six cities maps, we can see that all of them, without exception, were located outside the city walls, and the vast majority were established in the low part of the town, near to the river and the first expansions of the city beyond the walls (*fig. 6*),³⁰ with the most significant exception being the two convents in Santarém, where the

fig. 6 – Santarém, Coimbra, Oporto, Lisbon, Évora, Guimarães. Schematic representation of the Mendicant convents location (friars Minor, Preachers, and Augustinians), XIII century. The conventual precincts are not represented (map by the author).

²⁸ GOMES 1998, pp. 163-168.

²⁹ Papal bull *Ad consequendam* (ANTT – Coleção Especial, Cx. 3, N.º 79, microfilme 2823) and *Quia plerumque* (POTTHAST 1874, p. 1641).

³⁰ MARADO 2018, pp. 119-41.

topography of the place did not allow for them to be placed on the banks of the Tagus, although the Preachers have tried, by first settling in a lower area next to the riverside neighbourhood (*fig. 5*).

Since the pioneer study developed by Jacques Le Goff in the 1960s,³¹ many scholars have addressed the location characteristics of the Mendicant friars and the factors that have motivated them. In such a short text, I do not have space to conveniently discuss these issues. Nevertheless, I would like to mention that the 'Portuguese case' confirms the location of the Mendicants in the suburban space, around the first city walls, since all the convents founded in Portugal in the XIII century, with no exception, had this same location. And although the apostolic reasons pointed out by Jacques Le Goff, and confirmed by several other authors, were an important factor to determine this suburban location, since the friars sought to settle near the poor and recently arrived inhabitants that had no spiritual assistance, we must also consider some external reasons,³² like the dependency on the founder's offers, the opposition of the clergy, the Mendicant's internal competition, and the physical constraints and economic and social conditions of each city. In all this, the local particularities were extremely important.³³ Furthermore, there was not only pragmatic reasons to settle outside the city but also symbolic ones, since these spaces functioned as symbolic expressions of their religious message.³⁴

Regarding Portugal, through the analysis of the cartography of the six cities (*fig. 6*), we can also see that the two Mendicant convents were flanking the city's main gate and the *extramuros borghi*, that is, each convent was located on each side of the gate. The only exception is Oporto, where, as I mentioned before, although the convents were located near the main city gate, they stayed side by side due to the changes to the location site of the friars Minor convent as a result of the opposition of the bishop. We can then conclude that the convents stay both at a 'convenient distance' from each other and at 'equivalent distance' from the city gate, thus responding to the concerns that the Preachers clearly express in their complains towards the friars Minor in the Santarém conflict. This location feature was, I assume, the natural result of two important needs of the friars that are clearly stated in the Santarém agreement document: first, the need to be integrated into the religious and social structure of the city; and second, the need for apostolic activities to be divided up between the two communities.

3. Impacts on the urban spatial structure (XIII-XV centuries)

In Portugal, as in the rest of Europe, the arrival of the friars had a strong impact in the cities, both on a social and a spatial level, and their buildings played an important role in shaping the medieval urban landscape. We can look at these impacts on two different scales: first at a 'micro-scale' since the establishment, the building up and the continuous enlargement of each convent directly impacted on the urban topography; and second, at a

³¹ LE GOFF 1968a.

³² SIMONS 1987.

³³ TRIO 2010.

³⁴ LESTER 2010.



fig. 7 – Lisbon. Armindo Aires de Carvalho, Church of friars Minor and Igreja de Nossa Senhora dos Mártires, before the 1755 earthquake, 1977 (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Catálogo da coleção de desenhos, nº1097, d-107-r, iconografia).

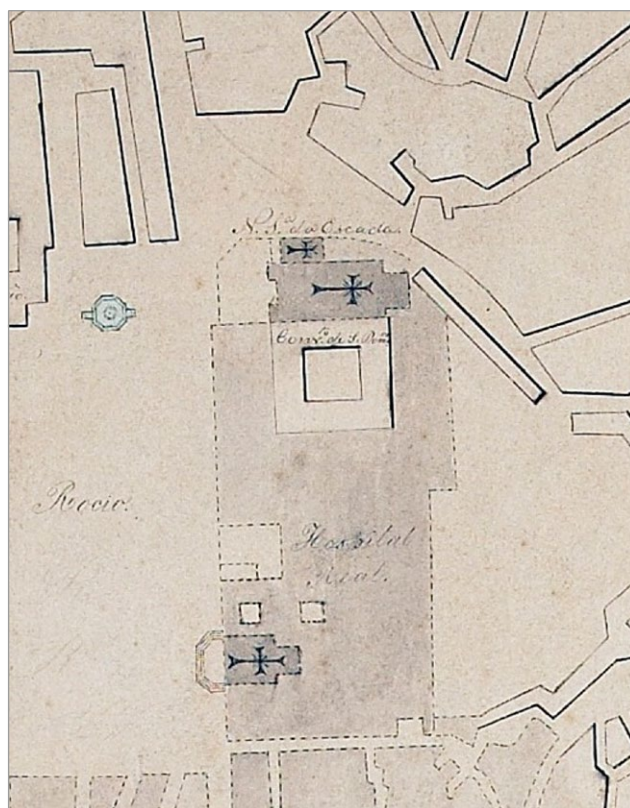


fig. 8 – Lisbon. Armindo Aires de Carvalho, Church of Preachers and Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Escada, before the 1755 earthquake, 1977 (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Catálogo da coleção de desenhos, nº 1097, d-107-r, iconografia).

‘macro-scale’ level since the networks of convents had a significant impact in the major spatial dynamics that marked the medieval Portuguese towns.

In the XIII century, by settling in the new expansion areas outside the city walls, the friars had an important role in shaping the built environment around their convents. First, throughout the transformation of the buildings were they initially settle, since the great majority of them establish in existing small churches (or hospitals) that they gradually transformed into their churches and friaries, and secondly, through the continuous enlargement of their buildings and grounds throughout the centuries.

In Portugal, according to the documentary sources, the «conventualization of Mendicant space»³⁵ through the transformation of the old small churches into monastic buildings started in the 1240s, first and earlier by the Preachers and then followed by the friars Minor. However, in the processes of absorbing of the old church, Lisbon was an exception. In this city, neither the friars Minor nor the Preachers, transformed the churches where they initially settle into conventual churches, as it happened in all the other cases. In Lisbon, both religious communities build their convents next to the existing church, with the two churches (the pre-existing and the conventual one) staying side by side, as we can see both in the XVI and the XVIII-century cartography and iconography (figs. 7-8).³⁶

³⁵ BRUZELIUS 2014a, pp. 30-36.

³⁶ Today only the Preachers’ church exists.

After that, the transformation of the Mendicant convents went on throughout the centuries, through a long process of building and continuous enlargement, not only of the buildings but also of their conventual precincts. This produced a considerable impact on the urban space as convents act as agglutinating poles for the urban growth, by promoting the expansion of the city in their direction and the creation of new neighbourhoods in their surroundings. On the other hand, they also produce strong barriers to this same expansion, by blocking the development of the city with their monumental buildings and vast grounds. At the same time, they transformed the areas where they were located, either at the time of their foundation or throughout their presence in the urban space through the aggregation of urban plots, or later, on the contrary, and in specific situations, returning part of their precincts to the city.³⁷ Consequently, all this gave rise to more conflicts, not for apostolic causes but for urbanistic reasons.³⁸

Besides the impacts that each convent had, individually, in shaping the urban landscape, the conventual networks that they constitute in the cities had a significant role in the major spatial dynamics that marked the medieval Portuguese towns. Initially, they have participated in the development of the *extramuros* urban expansions throughout the XIII century. Secondly, they take part in the formation of a «new urban centrality» outside the old city walls, which began to develop between the XIII and the XIV century in some cities. And finally, they served as a reference for the definition of the second city walls that were built in the XIV century.³⁹ This last ‘macro-scale’ impact is clearly noted in Lisbon. In this city, the three Mendicant convents that settled outside the first city walls – together with the Trinitarian convent on the west and the Regular Canons monastery on the east – formed a ring around the urban area and establish the limits of the XIII-century city, acting as obstacles to the urban development. Later, in the XIV century, this network of religious houses served as a reference to the definition of the second city walls (*fig. 9*).

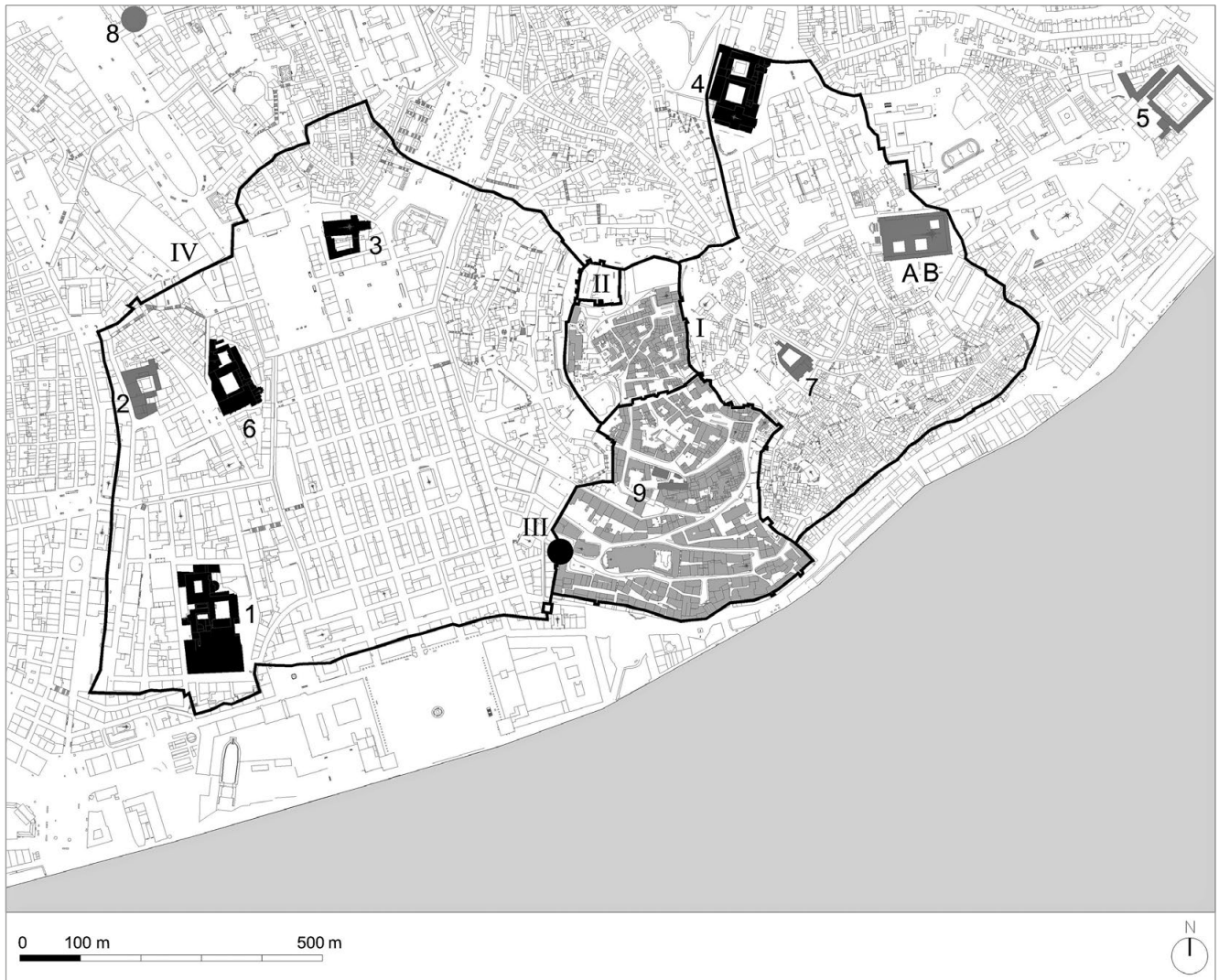
Finally, in Lisbon, like in other Portuguese cities, the convents that were founded in the city in this period had a completely different location typology.⁴⁰ The XIV-century friars, on the contrary of the ones of the previous century, do not settle outside the city boundaries, but rather in the consolidated urban space inside the city walls. Consequently, they had much more spatial constraints to build their convents and to set up their precincts, for that reason they were, in general, smaller than the ones built on the previous century. They were also not supported and financed by the king, but rather by the nobility, that also supported the construction activity of the older Mendicant convents, together with the royal power. That was the case of the Carmelites, whose convent was founded in 1386 by D. Nuno Álvares Pereira within the consolidated urban area, precisely between the friars Minor and the Preachers convents, thus guaranteeing the *minimum distance* rule between religious houses (*figs. 9-10*).

³⁷ For Lisbon, see CARITA 1999; MARADO 2020b, pp. 353-356.

³⁸ On the Mendicant conflicts in the cities see MARADO 2020a.

³⁹ MARADO 2018, pp. 237-260.

⁴⁰ MARADO 2018, pp. 197-206.



4. Final considerations

In the Middle Ages, in Portugal, like in other European countries, depending on the different historical periods, the friars settled in different territorial contexts, with the support of different donors, in different types of urban centres – from big and central cities to small and peripheral towns – and also, in different location sites, settling in isolated places in the cities surrounding areas, near the city limits, or within the consolidated urban space.

At each historical moment, this was determined not by one single factor, but by the conjugation of a multiplicity of circumstances, both internal and external to the religious communities, and either from a local or a universal dimension or even from a pragmatic or symbolic nature. However, and despite all this, in Portugal, as in the rest of Europe, the convent's location in the XIII century is intimately connected with the urban development.⁴¹ Thus, the establishment of the Mendicant friars in the cities in this period must then be understood within a broader transformation context – not only spatial but also economic, social, and political – that marked the Portuguese medieval cities in this period and that largely took place in the suburban space.

fig. 9 – Lisbon. Location of the religious houses, XII-XV century: A. canons regular of Saint Augustine monastery (1147); B. canons regular of Saint Augustine nunnery (1160); 1. friary of friars Minor (1217); 2. Trinitarian friary (1218); 3. friary of Preachers (1241); 4. Augustinian Hermits friary (1271); 5. Poor Clares nunnery (1288); 6. Carmelite friary (1386); 7. nunnery of Preachers (1392); 8. canons regular of Saint Anthony (1400); 9. secular canons of Saint John the Evangelist Monastery (1442); I. first city walls; II. castle; III. main gate (Ferro Gate); IV. second city walls. The conventual precincts are not represented (map by the author).

⁴¹ GUIDONI 1981; GUIDONI 1989.



fig. 10 – Lisbon. Carmelite friary, aerial photography, XX century (Aerial photography, DGPC, SIPA, Igreja do Convento do Carmo / IPA. 00006521, FOTO.00538886).

In the XIV century, the Mendicant friars were very different from the ones of the XIII century. They were completely integrated into the urban society and had the support of all the social classes and the cities where they settled were also very different. This gave rise to completely different location types. The XIII-century cities were expanding outside the walls, with the Mendicants following this movement, but the XIV-century cities were on a consolidation and reformulation processes and the friars were important agents of this transformation.

In all these different periods, is clear that the friars played an important role in shaping the urban landscape. However, these dynamics depended not only of the historical period and the location site of the convent but also of the metabolism of each city.⁴²

Besides the political, social, economic, territorial and urban specificities, in most European cities and towns we can surely identify similar strategies, procedures, constraints, and impacts of the friar settlements in the urban landscape. For that, and aided by new interdisciplinary approaches and research methodologies, projects like the *Medieval city. City of the Friars* are most needed in taking the research from a local and national level to a transnational dimension, which characterizes the scope of the Mendicant Orders themselves.

⁴² GASPAR 2002, p. 88.