THE DUKE AND HIS CLERGYMEN: ECCLESIASTICS DURING THE REGENCY OF PEDRO, DUKE OF COIMBRA (1438-48)

EL DUQUE Y SUS CLÉRIGOS: LOS ECLESIÁSTICOS DURANTE LA REGENCIA DE PEDRO, DUQUE DE COIMBRA (1438-48)

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Abstract

This article is aimed to study the convulsed regency of Infant Pedro, duke of Coimbra, during king Afonso V’s nonage, and in particular, the clergymen related to his party, in opposition to the king’s mother, Queen Leonor, during the ten year period of his government (1438-48). The analysis of the sources will focus on one hand, on the Portuguese national conjuncture marked by a duality of crises, and on the other, on the role and the importance of these ecclesiastics in the construction of the Portuguese state with the final aim of bringing new data and some hypothesis to the state of the art of this topic.

Keywords: Clergy, Portugal, 15th century.

Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo es el estudio de la regencia del Infante don Pedro, duque de Coimbra, durante la minoría del rey Alfonso V. En particular el trabajo se concentra sobre los eclesiásticos que apoyaron este partido en oposición a la madre del rey, la reina Eleonor, durante los diez años de gobierno de don Pedro (1438-1448). El análisis de las fuentes se concentrará por un lado sobre la coyuntura nacional portuguesa marcada por una doble crisis, y por el otro sobre el papel de los eclesiásticos en la construcción del estado portugués, con el objetivo final de ofrecer nuevos datos y nuevas hipótesis para actualizar el estado del arte sobre este tema.

Palabras clave: Clero, Portugal,
1. Introduction

The death of D. Duarte, king of Portugal (1433-38) leads not only to uncertainty regarding who should tutor his son, king Alfonso V, the heir to the Portuguese throne, but also about who the regent of the kingdom’s governance should be until the king’s adulthood. This political chaos brought a violent conflict between two antagonistic parties with their own different interests at stake, at one side Queen Leonor, Alfonso V’s mother, and at the other Pedro, duke of Coimbra, his uncle. This situation led to a bitter and violent conflict between the supporters of each party: there were interests at stake for different sides, which reaffirms the notion of the existence of a multiplicity of powers and negotiations between different political spheres. Distinct positions about this disturbed political period of Portuguese 15th century are known to have been taken by members of nobility, towns and counties. But, in all these parties’ imbroglio, what is really the clergymen’s position?

Despite of the great interest that this issue brings to historiography, this matter is not very much discussed. Fortunato de Almeida was the first to make a great effort in the subject of the History of the Portuguese Church\(^1\), but the following generations of historians punctually approached more specific matters related to dioceses, monasteries, religious and military orders, convents and parishes. Therefore the History of the Church in Portugal suffers from a lack of general and monographic studies. In the last decade of the 20\(^{th}\) century there were two studies which contributed greatly to the role of the ecclesiastics in the political State Building of the Portuguese monarchy in this chronology by José Marques\(^2\) and Margarida Garcez Ventura\(^3\).

When reflecting on the role and importance of the clergymen on the creation of a space of mobility and circulation of cultural and political models

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\(^1\)Almeida, F., (1967/70), História da Igreja em Portugal, (4 Vol), Porto, Portucalense/Civilização.


\(^3\)Ventura, Margarida Garcez (1997), Igreja e poder no século XV. Dinastia de Avis e liberdades eclesiásticas (1385-1450), Colibri, Lisboa.
that can be extended to European Christianity, as well as the comparative deepening of its contribution for the construction of the peninsular monarchies (Portugal, Castile and Aragon), we paid special attention to this social group, in other words, to “the visible face of the Church in the multiplicity of the elements belonging to its hierarchical chain, of which the Roman Pontiff is the living expression(...), and on the diverse associative forms of its members”.

This article’s intends to bring a new analysis of the several strata of ecclesiastical hierarchy that allows for a series of evaluations of the members of the Church who emerge as allies of the monarchy through previous and/or permanent ties, but also the ecclesiastical elites which assume different stances with some supporting the cause of Infant D. Pedro, while others of D. Leonor.

1. A new beginning

The tensions between the king and the clergy were regulated during the kingdom of D. Dinis (1278-1325), at first with the agreement signed by the king and the clergy at Guarda in 1281, and later by a concordat formed by forty articles, followed by another with eleven articles. Between the last quarter of the XIIIth century and the first half of the XIVth century, the West European monarchies had intensified their action in the sphere of their competence, progressively managing to exert effective power. The relations between the royal power and the ecclesiastical power played a major role in this process that varied among opposition, compromise and even the taking of sacral functions by the king.

The division of Christianity during the Schism is more an institutional than a doctrinal one, having its roots in the opposition among Christian kingdoms that aligned by different allegiances, and it can be seen as a political maneuverer. In this context, the recent Portuguese dynasty will serve, but also

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4This was the main objective of the project “DEGRUPE: The European Dimension of a Group of Power: Ecclesiastics and the political State Building of the Iberian Monarchies (13th-15th centuries)”, on which I was a grantee from 2013 to 2015.

obtain support, in the faction favourable to Rome, using this position to clarify its legitimacy.

The power conquered by the Avis dynasty is consolidated by the combination of these forces. The royal power paid the received support and safeguarded its future by means of donations of material goods or of jurisdiction capacities this way, the situation of dynastical crisis, started in 1383 when king Fernando (1367-83) died, suffers a discontinuity with the signature of the peace treaty with Castile in 1411 and the conquest of Ceuta in 1415. The aggregation factors between the king and the clergy were altered since the maintenance of Ceuta was not attractive enough for the clergy to be willing to contribute to its economic demands. On the other hand, the conquest of Ceuta was explored in terms of prestige of king João I (1385-1433) as defender of the Faith fighting the Moors. It is precisely in this context that a very important political action was entrusted to D. Duarte, first born son of the king and heir to the throne, with government responsibilities and his own officials, becoming the advisor for the Council, Justice and Treasury matters. There were new internal situations, new situations at diplomatic level, and new relations with the Church. In practical terms, he was the new ruler.

The action of the young new ruler is visible in several aspects, especially from a legislative point of view. Duarte had a clear and well defined idea of what he wanted for the Portuguese clergy. The Jacobinas laws, published by Doctor Diogo Martins at 19th of December of 1419, intended to limit the economic and jurisdictional field of the clergy, and to refer all the material subjects to the lay sphere or the secular justice, aimed to restrict the clergy to the spiritual sphere. The kingdom of Portugal, as many others of the Christianity, by means of theological arguments and Roman law, considered to be its own right to exert jurisdiction on various matters that the clergy had so far considered to be exclusively their own.

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7Ventura, Margarida Garcez (1997), Igreja e poder no século XV. Dinastia de Avis e liberdades eclesiásticas (1385-1450), Colibri, Lisboa.pp.78-81 and 94-5.  
According to José Marques, these twelve laws can be regarded as one of the most fundamental steps for the retrenchment of liberties and privileges of the Church and the control of ecclesiastic power by state legislation\(^9\). There is no need to state that the clergy was very displeased with these measures, as all laws that engage the Church as well as its everyday application, had an implicit project for the clergy.

The royal attempt to reform the Church is present in several texts that suggest concrete proposals. These proposals had the creation of a “national Church” as final objective by means of the temporal ordination of the Churches, reconversion and spiritual formation of the believers, union between the schismatic Christians and the Catholicism, urge for peace among Christian princes, the limitation of the application of the excommunication, among others.\(^{10}\) These suggestions had a strong repercussion, especially during the Concilium, in which the king and the clergy of Portugal, aligned with the pope and against the conciliarists, with the exceptions D. Luís do Amaral, bishop of Viseu, and D. Antão Martins de Chaves, bishop of Porto\(^{11}\).

The beginning of the reign of Duarte (1433-38) is marked by the increase of the royal intervention in the clerical sphere, even reaching a climate of global conflict that led to the cut of the relations between the new king and the archbishop of Braga, Fernando da Guerra, previously a supporter of the royalty\(^{12}\), until the establishment of material restitutions for the archbishop.

In Portugal, the king and the Church both supported the pope against the Concilium of Constance. But, although he was loyal to the pope, the king continued to follow his own interpretation of the ecclesiastical liberties.

2. The king’s pupillage

\(^{9}\)Marques, José (1994), Relações entre a Igreja e o Estado em Portugal, no século XV. Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, História, 11, p. 143.

\(^{10}\)Ventura, Margarida Garcez (1997), Igreja e poder no século XV. Dinastia de Avis e liberdades eclesiásticas (1385-1450), Colibri, Lisboa.pp.55-75.


On the 9th of September 1438\textsuperscript{13}, Duarte, king of Portugal draws his last breath. There is no question about the succession – Afonso V is enthroned and acclaimed the very next day his father’s passing\textsuperscript{14} – neither any problem of regal authority, but the king’s nonage causes a serious discussion about the person who will effectively rule until the king’s adulthood. After the reading of the Eloquente’s will it was clear that he wanted Queen Leonor to be, on her own, \textit{in solidum} testamentary of his soul, tutor and curator of his children and regent of the Kingdom\textsuperscript{15}.

This testamentary disposition was well received by an important sector of the more traditional nobility but, on the other hand, a different current quickly appeared inside the nobility itself, with the support of the cities and towns of the country, which felt apprehension about the implied consequences of these clauses. The fact that the governance of the Portuguese Kingdom was in the hands of a non-native could be a threat to the aspirations of the overseas expansionist movement that had been building up for decades\textsuperscript{16}, especially if that person was from the rival House of Trastâmar. We must also keep in mind the extreme hostility that existed in the relationship between the widowed queen and her sister-in-law, Isabel of Urgel, duchess of Coimbra, since the father of the latter, Jaume, last count of Urgel, had been excluded from the throne of Aragon by the Caspe agreement in 1412, in favour of the Castilian Fernando de Antequera, Leonor’s father. It is in this context that one understands that king Duarte, through his will, wanted to avoid that the oldest daughter of the late count of Urgel might seek revenge on his wife and queen, Leonor, as she embodied the House of Trastâmar in Portugal.

The courts at Torres Novas, since November to the end of 1438, resulted in a solution of compromise, a co-regency regime between Leonor and the Infant Pedro. Through much of the following year it was effectively observed

the sharing of power between them, but a cut of relations was soon to follow\textsuperscript{17}. It seems that the queen has shown not to be lenient in the govern and exercise of royal power over the three states\textsuperscript{18}, “calling to herself the exclusive decision of the matters of greater and more substantial political relevance besides some absence of connection and sync between the two regents, elements of which pointed to the prejudice and damage to the kingdom”\textsuperscript{19}.

The strong union between the Portuguese Infants Pedro, Henrique and João is the result of the need to stop Queen Leonor’s brothers, the Infants of Aragon, from a military attack. Infant Henrique understood the need, if possible, of a peaceful and non-violent resolution in order to maintain political stability in the kingdom. Infant João was a staunch supporter of the duke’s cause, and urged him to take completely control of the regency and force Queen Leonor to exile\textsuperscript{20}. At the same time, the people united around the Duke of Coimbra see him as a fierce opponent to the territorial expansion policy in Africa, and the intensification of the Atlantic explorations.

The feeble political understanding celebrated between them resulted in political chaos. Pedro quickly headed towards Coimbra with the purpose of recruiting his private army, and marched towards Lisbon on the 30th October 1439, where he was proclaimed regent and defender of the kingdom on the 1st of November. That proclamation is confirmed at the courts in Lisbon on the 10th of December of the same year.

After the celebration of courts in Lisbon and the proclamation of Pedro as sole regent, the threat of a military intervention in favor of the queen on the part of the Infants of Aragon over Portugal was a real. Infant D. Pedro proceeded to organize his army, while D. Leonor fled to Crato after popular upheaval in the capital, and from there to Vila de Albuquerque, in Castile.

\textsuperscript{17}Vd. Moreno (1979-1980) A Batalha... p.25.
\textsuperscript{19}GOMES (2005) D. Afonso V... p.49.
\textsuperscript{20}Moreno, Humberto Baquero, and Freitas, Isabel Vaz de (2006), A corte de Afonso V. O tempo e os homens, Trea, Gijón. pp. 75-78.
The Duke of Coimbra made a last attempt to reconcile with the Queen through the intercession of his half-brother Afonso, count of Barcelos, illegitimate son of the late king João I, but with no results. In Castile, Queen Leonor sent several embassies to Portugal, some of them on a peaceful tone, while others indicated a strong intention to war\textsuperscript{21}.

The takeover of the castle and the village of Crato by the Duke of Coimbra, with military support of Estêvão de Aguiar, abbot of the Monastery of Alcobaça, from Friar Nuno Gonçalves de Góis, prior of the Order of Hospital, supporter of the queen’s cause\textsuperscript{22} marks the end of the first stage of the ducal military campaign, and the beginning of a confiscation policy of the belongings of the supporters of D. Leonor and the attribution of privileges to the supporters of D. Pedro.

3. The partisans

We resorted to primary and secondary sources, both unedited and published, amongst which several documental collections such as Monumenta Henricina, Monumenta Portualiæ Vaticana, and the Chartularium Universitatis Portugalensis. The royal chanceries of king Duarte (1433-38) and king Afonso V (1438-81) were also of relevant interest, as well as some unedited documents of the 1ª and 2ª Incorporação do Cabido da Sé de Coimbra of the registry of the cathedral chapter of Coimbra. The use of the Chronicle of king Afonso V of Rui de Pina was also important.

The adopted methodology was the prosopographic survey of the mentioned sources and its insertion on a table structured in two modules “Profile” and “Document” at the project’s online database, (http://degrupe.cidehus.uevora.pt/). The first module consists of eight fields with information regarding the identification of the individual, their position, ecclesiastical category, clientele, family, kin and general observations. The second, in eleven fields, specifies the topic date, typology, documental

\textsuperscript{21}Pina, Rui de (1901), Chronica d’El Rey Dom Affonso V. Edicão crítica por Gabriel Pereira Esriptorio, Lisboa, pp. 106-108.
summary, issuing entity, quota and general observations, amongst others. The registry in the mentioned database enables not only the recording of information but also research through filters, by profile and or document(s), which allow the researcher to value and compare elements.

In order to cross the data from the partisans of each side, we choose to present this data conjointly, not separating the ecclesiastic linked to the Queen or the Duke. We believe that in this way of presentation it will be easier for the reader to compare not only the benefits and privileges donated or confiscated to them, but also the social arise that some of these individuals experienced.

Infant Pedro had accompanied his father, king João I, during the conquest of Ceuta in 1415, where he was knighted, and subsequently nominated Duke of Coimbra. His father had significantly and successively increased the extension of his duchy, by means of several donations, at least until 1428, when Pedro travelled around Europe. He returned in the same year and married Isabel of Urgel. It is then that an intense epistolary activity with the Coimbra Town Council started, aiming to nominate for, and exempt from, several duties people of his inner circle. This determination will be a constant part of his action until the end of his life.

The Duke of Coimbra has constantly manifested a sheer interest in the organization and management of his dukedom, but also in benefiting the people who were subordinated to him. Infant Pedro surrounded himself with well-educated and intellectual men; he used their knowledge for his own causes, and protected those who served him well, either laic or clergymen.

In what concerns the clergy, Infant Pedro actively and consistently intervened in the papal curia in order to grant privileges to the people of his inner circle, sending several supplications to Rome. On the 29th of November 1417 he pleaded to Pope Martin V in favor of Master João, rector of the church of S. Miguel of Montemor-o-Velho, Coimbra, who had a degree in Medicine23, and on the 26th of July 1420 he pleaded in favor of his chaplain Vasco Martins,

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presbyter in the diocese of Évora and bachelor in canon law, in order to receive the canonry and benefice of the church of Santa Maria de Barbacena24. On the 18th February 1423 he invoked in favor of his confessor, Dominican Friar João Verba, the _comenda_ of the monastery of S. Jorge of Coimbra, and beseeched the pope to nominate him as a papal chaplain25. Both requests were immediately granted26, and an order was issued to Pedro Lourenço, canon of Lisbon, to execute this demand27. A week later he pleaded in favor of his chancellor, Estêvão Afonso, archdeacon of Santarém, who had a degree in civil law, to be able to accumulate several ecclesiastical benefits28.

There are some particular cases of kinship between the duke and the benefited gentlemen. Pedro de Ataíde, a noble clergyman of Coimbra, who was raised since his childhood in the duke’s chamber, was studying canon law at the University of Lisbon when the duke pleaded to Pope Eugene IV to pardon the assumption and gathering of ecclesiastical benefits that Pedro de Ataíde had been accumulating29. The duke also pleaded in favor of Fernando Afonso, nobleman and rector of the church of S. Pedro de Abragão, to be dismissed from impeachment on another parochial church30, and in favor of João Figueiredo, a noble clergyman of Braga and his own kin, to become rector of the

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parochial church of S. Martinho de Recezinhos, in the diocese of Porto. Unfortunatelly, we do not know if the pope’s response was affirmative.

However, Eugene IV did concede to António Martins, kin of Infant Pedro, a canonry in the See of Viseu and the reserve of a benefice and perpetual portion of the parochial church of S. Miguel, in Aveiro.

Notwithstanding it was not only the Duke who sent supplications to the pope beseeching benefits and privileges for his own. On the 13th September 1435, Queen Leonor, alongside king Duarte, beseeched the canonicies and benefices that rightfully belonged to doctor and chaplain Fernando Álvares Cardosó, bachelor in Arts and Medicine, in the dioceses of Lisbon and Coimbra. She also invoked, alongside Álvaro, bishop of Coimbra, in favor of Mendo Rodrigues Leitão, archdeacon of Seia, the *comenda* of the parochial church of S. Pedro de Coja, in Coimbra.

Although there is absolutely no record of supplications sent by the Queen to the papal curia after king Duarte’s death, which does not mean that the clergy did not support her during the political conflict that opposed her to the duke. Actually, many were those who stood beside her, from the highest to lowest positions of ecclesiastical hierarchy: aside from the aforementioned Friar Nuno Gonçalves de Góis, also Pedro de Noronha, Archbishop of Lisbon, and for a brief period of time, Fernando da Guerra, Archbishop of Braga, Mossem Gabriel Lourenço, head-chaplain of Leonor, Gil Vasques, archdeacon of

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35 There is yet no biography on this political figure of the 15th Portuguese century. Nevertheless, José Marques was one of the authors who researched this prelate’s life. For example, Os itinerários do Arcebispo de Braga D. Fernando da Guerra (1417-1467) in Revista de História, 01, 1978, pp.89-182; O Testamento de D.Fernando da Guerra, Arcebispo de Braga Sec.XV, 1979, and also D. Fernando da Guerra e o abastecimento de água à cidade de Braga. In Separata de Minia, 2ª Série, Ano III, nº4, 1993.pp 127-37, amongst others.
Guarda, Álvaro Gonçalves and Gomes Eanes, queen’s chaplains, Gomes Afonso, queen’s clergyman, Álvaro Almeida, clergyman from Lisbon, Friar Vasco, Friar João de Santo Estêvão, and Friar João de Moura, her confessors.

Mossem Gabriel Lourenço was deprived by the Duke of Coimbra from the priory of Santa Maria de Sintra, which went to Luís Pires, king’s chaplain, instead. Gil Vasques, archdeacon of Guarda and at Queen Leonor’s service, had his property at Arruda and his terminum, confiscated and donated to Rui Lourenço, guard of Jaime, formerly archbishop of Lisbon and cardinal, son of the Duke of Coimbra. Also Fernando Eanes, chaplain of the queen, was dispossessed of a benefit by Infant D. Pedro.

In fact the majority of men connected to the regent were contemplated with possessions belonging to people related to the house of Queen Leonor. This data indicates a policy directed to benefit the partisans of the duke over those of the queen, thus weakening the adversary party at an economical and landowning level. The Duke also exonerated the Queen’s partisans from public offices, for he could not allow them to have relevant decision making positions.

Concerning Álvaro Almeida, there is a reference to him only in 1445, when Afonso V, king of Aragon, recommends to Afonso V, king of Portugal, Álvaro Almeida, bachelor of Law and cannon of Lisbon, great server of her late mother as prosecutor in roman court. It is possible that this individual was in Rome at the moment of greater tension among these antagonizing parties and decided not to return to Portugal, or that he accompanied Leonor in her

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36Vd. Moreno (1979-80) A Batalha... p. 179.
38Moreno, Humberto Baquero, and Freitas, Isabel Vaz de (2006), A corte de Afonso V. O tempo e os homens, Trea, Gijón, p. 78.
41Moreno, Humberto Baquero, and Freitas, Isabel Vaz de (2006), A corte de Afonso V. O tempo e os homens, Trea, Gijón. p. 86.
exile to Castile, despite not being mentioned by Humberto Baquero Moreno as one of the partisans that moved to the neighbouring kingdom.

The regency of the Duke of Coimbra had two fundamental aspects: the treasury and the army. At an external level, D. Pedro had to take into account the possibility of an attack by the Infants of Aragon, and the Castilian civil war, during which he sent aid, several times, to Juan II, king of Castile, and to Álvaro de Luna, his political ally. At an internal level, he arranged to organize a military and administrative network that was essentially entrusted to squires and servants of his own house, seeing as “only with people of his trust would be possible to set and assure the continuity of a strongly centralized regime”.

At the side of Infant D. Pedro stood some of the personalities that occupied the highest positions of the Portuguese ecclesiastical hierarchy, such as D. Afonso Nogueira, later archbishop of Lisbon, D. Álvaro Ferreira, bishop of Coimbra and Garcia Rodrigues de Sequeira, head-commander of Avis. Fernando da Guerra, archbishop of Braga, supported the Queen’s cause at least until the courts at Torres Novas, but quickly turned to the Duke’s side, and was nominated high chancellor by the regent’s direct order.

However, at the beginning of the decade of 1440 there is a strong and aggressive action against some members of the Church who didn’t support the duke’s party. Luís Coutinho is not allowed to take over the bishopric of Viseu by a direct order of Pedro, while Pope Eugene IV adverted the Infant at least on three occasions. Likewise, Rodrigo Dias, dean of the See of Braga, is stopped to take over the bishopric of Silves, thereafter the pope remarked the “strangeness” of the duke’s actions and asked Infant Henrique, Duke of Viseu, to persuade his brother to allow Rodrigo Dias to assume the bishopric in Algarve. The initial period of government by Pedro was marked by a fierce

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43 Vd. Moreno – O Infante D. Pedro, Duque de Coimbra... p. 103.
44 Moreno (1979-80) A Batalha... p. 665.
46 Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Coleção Especial, parte 1, caixa 6, maço 4, n° 56 (inserted). Edited in Monumenta Henricina, vol 7, p. 279.
47 Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Coleção Especial, parte 1, caixa 6, maço 4, n° 56. Edited in Monumenta Henricina, vol 7, pp. 282-83.
prosecution of several clergymen who had stood out during the reign of king D. Duarte, such as the aforementioned Garcia Rodrigues, Luís Amaral, bishop of Lamego (1426-31) and Viseu (1431-39) and Cardinal Antão Martins de Chaves, who strongly opposed the ruling of the Duke of Coimbra, of which the exile of Pedro Noronha, archbishop of Lisbon, and the assassination of D. Álvaro de Abreu, bishop of Évora, are relevant examples48.

Infant Pedro tried at all costs to supervise the provision of dioceses, and to regulate the possession of root goods held by churches and monasteries. On September 20, 1442, a diploma was issued regulating the possession of property that churches and monasteries possessed at the time of the death of king João I49.

On the other hand, we verify that some clergymen were connected to his service, precisely at the bishopric of Coimbra, through the confirmation of Churches, privileges and also with public functions. Antão Gonçalves, chaplain and tenor of the chapel of the Duke, is confirmed as rector in the church of Almalaguês50, Luís Gonçalves, head-chaplain and confessor of the dukes of Coimbra, is introduced by Infanta D. Isabel, duchess of Coimbra, to the church of Podentes51. The clergyman Mem Rodrigues, scribe of the chamber of Infant D. Pedro and also his servant, is beneficed with the canonry that had become vacant by the death of Vasco Afonso52. Friar Afonso, confessor of the Infant, is the receiver of a pecuniary penalty applied to Gonçalo Eanes, of Tondela, for having taken part in an aggravation between Abraão and his son, jewish men from Covilhã, and after having escaped from prison53. Afonso Gonçalves, chaplain of Infant Pedro is a general notary public whose jurisdiction is

49Ventura, Margarida Garcez (1997), Igreja e poder no século XV. Dinastia de Avis e liberdades eclesiásticas (1385-1450), Colibri, Lisboa. p. 106.
50Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo., Cabido da Sé de Coimbra, 2ª Incorporação, maço nº55, doc 2112.
51Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo., Cabido da Sé de Coimbra, 2ª Incorporação, maço nº59, doc 2215.
52Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo., Cabido da Sé de Coimbra, 2ª Incorporação, maço nº95, doc 4599
53Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo., Chancelaria de D. Afonso V, liv. 20, fl 60.
extended to the entire kingdom, and was authorized to draw up judicial and extrajudicial acta\textsuperscript{54}.

The performance of public functions by staff of the house of Infant D. Pedro is nothing new, however its undertaking by clergymen is a rare occurrence. There is actually a progressive sub representation of the nobility and the clergy on the royal dispatch since the reign of king Fernando, which enabled Armando Luís de Carvalho Homem to consider the political society from the reign of king João I predominantly laic\textsuperscript{55}.

The duke kept craving benefits and privileges for his people, even more so during the period of his regency. During the duke’s government the supplications to the papal curia in order to praise the clergymen of his House and dukedom multiplied.

Pedro Afonso, clergyman of Coimbra and student of canon law, was granted several benefits by Pope Eugene IV from 1441 to 1447. He was bequeathed with the ecclesiastical rents of the parochial churches of S. Miguel de Pinhel\textsuperscript{56}, S. Lourenço de Bairro\textsuperscript{57}, in the bishopric of Coimbra, and a canonry of that See\textsuperscript{58}. In 1446 he had already completed his studies, and as canon of the cathedral chapter of Coimbra and rector of S. Lourenço de Bairro, pleads to the papal curia yet another canonry that had been renounced by Lopo Rodrigues, at the chapter of Silves\textsuperscript{59}. In the following year he invoked to Pope Nicolas V to be


dismissed from receiving any sacred orders apart from the sub deaconry he already had\textsuperscript{60}.

During the duke’s regency, Estêvão Afonso, archdeacon of Santarém and duke’s chancellor, at least since 1423 as we have already mentioned, occupied the charge of regent’s counsellor, position which brought him even more benefits\textsuperscript{61}.

Álvaro Afonso, clergyman of Coimbra and bachelor in civil law, obtained a canonry and a benefice at the cathedral chapter of that bishopric, in 1442\textsuperscript{62}. Six years later he had already achieved the charge of the regent’s high chancellor, and the position of \textit{magisterscolarum} at the chapter of Coimbra, which he could retain with any ecclesiastical benefit with cure of alms\textsuperscript{63}.

Thus, it is clear that the duke of Coimbra intervened in favor of his “favourites”, the relatively small group of men who were either with him in is most intimate circle, and who had the knowledge and experience of the utmost importance for his service, João Alpoim, archdeacon of Guarda and kin of Infant Pedro, was escussed of receiving sacred orders while he resided at the papal curia, or studied at a university, or when he was at the duke’s service\textsuperscript{64}.

Fernando Gonçalves, bachelor in theology, clergyman of Coimbra, was granted the rents of the parochial church of S. Pedro de Lourosa, in that bishopric\textsuperscript{65}.


Friar João Verba, who was in 1440 the conductor of the chair of Theology at the University of Lisbon, and provincial prior of the Order of Carmelites in Portugal, had several benefits conceded, among which was the concession of benefits from St. Benedict order, now extended to Cistercian Order.

A paradigmatic case seems to be the one of Fernando Martins, clergyman of Coimbra. Fernando Martins studied canon law from 1431 to 1438 when he finally got a degree from the University of Bologna. He had several concessions by pope Eugene IV, amongst which the treasury of the chapter of Lamego, vacant of treasurer since the renounce of Diogo Lopes, a canonry and benefice at the chapter of the cathedral See of Porto, vacant after resignation of Estêvão Rodrigues, and another canonry and benefice, at the chapter of Silves. He also pleaded to an act of grace: the privilege to be absolved by any priest, even on the cases that were exclusive needed a papal absolution. There is no record of the papal confirmation for this last request.

Unfortunately, the documents do not quench the full extent of our curiosity on the spectrum of action of the above mentioned in this climate of tension between two antagonist parties. Nevertheless, the fact that these

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individuals are unequivocally linked to the service of D. Pedro, and these references date precisely between the chronological space comprised by the regency of the Duke, leads us to consider these privileges as yet another form of partisan strengthening on the part of the Infant, resorting mainly to recruiting within his own dukedom people of his deepest trust for the undertaking of several functions.

These references date from the beginning of the regency until 1446. There are few references for the final period of the Duke’s regency, especially from 1447 onwards. Vasco Fernandes, also clergyman of Coimbra and bachelor in civil law, pleaded on the 28th September 1448 to Pope Nicolas V the privilege of plurality of benefits74. That plea was surely denied, because Vasco Fernandes pleas for the exact same privilege shortly after, on the 30th October of the same year75. That is exactly the period of time that Infant Pedro leaves the regency of the kingdom, and the government passes to king Afonso V. With the governance of the kingdom away from his hands, the men he protected and benefited would abruptly witness their privileges decrease astonishingly.

Queen Leonor, who trusted her brothers’ military power, insisted, after the victory at Medina del Campo, on receiving again the government of the kingdom of Portugal and to resume the education of the young monarch. However, the aid of her brother Afonso V, king of Aragon, who, jointly with the Duke of Milan, was at war against Francesco Sforza, was only available at the end of 1442, and although some diplomatic correspondence took place, it was not successful. Not even the direct interventions of her sister-in law Maria, who could serve as a mediator between the two factions since she had intervened in favor of the weddings of the daughters of Count of Urgel, had any effect.

In 1444, D. Juan II, king of Castile, supported by Constable Álvaro de Luna, Lords of Calatrava and Alcântara and by Pedro, Duke of Coimbra,

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managed to free himself from the submission to the king of Navarre and to Henrique of Aragon, thus changing completely the political scenario in Castile\textsuperscript{76}. Queen Leonor, politically ruined, died by poison in Toledo less than a year later.

The publication of the *Ordenações Afonsinas*\textsuperscript{77} arose a climate of conflict between the duke and the clergy, for it compiled several laws that establish royal justice and its actions towards the control of ecclesiastical liberties. Amongst them were two specific laws of the reign of king Dinis that forbade clergymen to acquire assets, even for debt payments, and precluded churches and monasteries to inherit assets\textsuperscript{78}.

The dissatisfaction caused by the costs of the politics of military and financial action of D. Pedro gave a major contribution for the decreasing of his prestige as a ruler, and he was already at a precarious and politically irreversible situation at the Courts in Lisbon in 1446\textsuperscript{79}. The entire clergy of the kingdom decided to meet on the 1\textsuperscript{st} of August 1447, and it is possible that it decided to globally position itself against the duke of Coimbra, especially because no one from the high ecclesiastic hierarchy of the Portuguese church joined Infant Pedro at Alfarrobeira.

Thus, his functions came to an end in 1448, and his partisans were immediately subject to inquiries ordered by the king.

4. The aftermath

In 1446, king Afonso V gets to the age of 14 years and there is a change in the kingdom’s politics that opposed the king directly to Infant Pedro who loses capacity to act as regent. The growing tension of conflict led to a climate of civil war. Afonso, Duke of Bragança, took advantage of this situation to withdraw from the positions in his territories the men loyal to Pedro and replace them by


\textsuperscript{77}The *Ordenações Afonsinas* is a legislative compilation enacted during the reign of king Afonso V of Portugal. The code consisted in five books, which regulated administrative, judicial, civil and penal aspects of the Portuguese kingdom.


men of his trust. In the north, where the seignorial domain was stronger, there was an intense urban agitation. In Lisbon, antagonist factions arose and insecurity was installed.

During the months previous to the battle, king D. Afonso is outraged with the behaviour of Infant D. Pedro who refused to hand over the royal arms and didn’t allow the passage of Duke of Braganza through the lands of the duchy of Coimbra. These attitudes led the king to consider the Duke of Coimbra to be disobedient, rebel to his royal will. War was inevitable.

The climate of tension resulting from the end of the regency and the flight of partisans of Pedro to Castile, as well as the return of Leonor’s partisans, now supporting king Afonso V, contributed to the rush to the battlefield. Among the clergymen at Pedro’s side we essentially find clerics, chaplains of the Infant and canons of his dukedom. At the king’s side were Álvaro Afonso, bishop of Algarve, Luís Coutinho, bishop of Coimbra, João Manuel, bishop of Ceuta and head-chaplain of the king, Pedro de Noronha, archbishop of Lisbon, Friar Fernando Álvares, head-commander of the Order of Christ, Friar Pedro de Góis, commander of Santa Vera Cruz, and Soeiro, abbot of Santo Tirso. Apart from the presence of some canons and clerics, we can clearly evidence that at the king’s side was predominantly the high clergy of the kingdom.

All came to an end on 20th of May 1449, when Pedro, duke of Coimbra, paid the ultimate price for the actions during his regency, at the Battle of Alfarrobeira. The dukedom was extinct and only restored in other conditions and with a smaller dimension, when king Manuel I (1495-1521) nominated the second duke, D. Jorge, illegitimate son of king João II (1481-1495), more than half a century later, on 25th of May 1500.

The king proceeded to confiscate the assets that belong to the Duke of Coimbra’s partisans, and immediately privileged the men of his trust.

Luís Coutinho, bishop of Coimbra, was benefited with the villages of Figueiredo, Ornelas, Barbadão and Lagoa, that had until then belonged to Rodrigo da Cunha, prior of Santa Maria de Guimarães and servant of the Infant

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Pedro, who had fought alongside the late duke of Coimbra, at Alfarrobeira. Also Rodrigo da Cunha’s servant, Gonçalo Martins, lost all his assets in Guimarães.

King Afonso V repossessed Fernando Eanes, chaplain of Queen Leonor, of a benefit that had been disposed by a direct order of Infant D. Pedro.

Álvaro Afonso, former high chancellor of Pedro, duke of Coimbra, during his regency was deprived of all his benefits by Luís Coutinho, bishop of Coimbra, after the battle, and was restored by papal order of Nicolas V on the 25th July 1450.

Notwithstanding, Afonso V also pardoned several people who had fought alongside Infant Pedro, some of them clergymen, such as Luís Eanes, chaplain of Infant Pedro, and Luís Esteves, vicar of Buarcos. A different fate was of Luís Esteves, canon of Santa Maria da Alcâçova of Lisbon who was incarcerated by order of Pedro Noronha, archbishop of Lisbon. Diogo Gonçalves, chaplain of the Infante lost all his assets.

Pedro Gonçalves, chaplain and servant of Infant Pedro, who had been nominated as rector of church of Castelões in Coimbra on the 21st of March 1444, lost his charge by a direct order of king Afonso V.

In 1453 Martim Fernandes de Gouveia, also chaplain of Infant Pedro, claimed that he had been usurped of a benefit by Pedro de Noronha, Archbishop of Coimbra, and solicited its immediate restitution to Pope Nicolas V. He also claimed that he had been in exile, and was at the time at the service of Cardinal Jaime, son of the late duke of Coimbra, who was now in Burgundy with his brother João, for their aunt Isabel was married to Phillip the Good.

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85 Cabido da Sé de Coimbra, 2ª Incorporação, maço nº57, doc 2136.
86 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Reg. Suppl. 466 fls 244-244v. Referenced in Moreno (1979-80) A Batalha... p. 462.
Cardinal Jaime, clergy of Coimbra and apostolic notary, was conceded by Pope Calisto III with the monastery of Santo Tirso, after resignation of Afonso Lourenço, presbyter of Évora and bachelor in Theology, who had followed as abbot of that exact same monastery after the death of Soeiro\textsuperscript{87}.

Fernando da Guerra, archbishop of Braga, did not participate in the battlefield. In the beginning of the regency he started at Queen Leonor’s side but quickly moved to the Duke’s, and after his death at Alfarrobeira, the archbishop maintained his position at the royal service, with no apparent friction with king Afonso V.

Nevertheless, the clergy will still struggle with royal power. Shortly after the end of the regency of the Duke of Coimbra the clergy presented their complaints in 15 articles at the courts in Lisbon in 1455 and 12 articles at the courts in the following year\textsuperscript{88}.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion the division of the clergymen during D. Pedro’s regency is clear, as we have just demonstrated. After becoming the regent, there is a replacement of prelates of the reign of D. Duarte. These positions are taken by men of the duke’s trust, characterized by their study of Law at Italian universities, their experience at the Roman curia, their involvement with the governance and their openness to discuss the Church’s destinies through their participation at councils\textsuperscript{89}, as, for instance, the council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence (1431-45). They hold positions at the royal dispatch and even at governance and administration of the bishoprics. However, the weakness of the system set by the regent during his government is also at its incapacity to attract members of the main nobility and the upper clergy of the kingdom, who were exactly the major beneficiaries of the confiscation and donation of his possessions, as well as those from his partisans, either clergymen or laics.


\textsuperscript{88}Marques, José (1994), Relações entre a Igreja e o Estado em Portugal, no século XV. Revista da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, História, 11, pp. 151-55.

\textsuperscript{89}Vd. Gomes, R.C., (1995), A corte dos Reis de Portugal na Idade Média, Linda-a-Velha, Difel p. 162.
We can summarize our conclusions in a few topics:

- Party polarization of the clergy at the beginning of the regency;
- The partisans of Queen Leonor at the beginning of the regency of the Duke will support king Afonso V at the end of the regency;
- Concession of goods, benefits and privileges to the Duke supporters, specifically the clergy, that had its peak during the period of his regency;
- Some changes among the partisans of the Duke of Coimbra, that occur from the beginning to the end of his regency, show the successive lack of support which directly reinforced the party of Afonso V;
- Progressive political weakening of the Duke of Coimbra, who couldn't even influence the choice of the bishop for his own duchy;
- The battle of Alfarrobeira shows that almost all the kingdom backs king Afonso V, practically leaving Pedro with just some men of his duchy.

The king’s nonage sets an atmosphere of political instability and creates a climate of polarized tension. Despite the events that occurred during the childhood of Afonso V and the regency of the Duke of Coimbra, a similar instability could be found in other kingdoms. Juan II, king of Castile, had a particularly conflicting relationship with the clergy during the regency of Fernando, his uncle, and Catarina, his mother, in what concerns politics, economics and jurisdiction\textsuperscript{90}. This situation was even used to insert exiled Portuguese into the Castilian society, and their contact with the high ecclesiastical hierarchy contributed to their claims of privileges, thus enlarging their influence in the court, the governance of the kingdom and its dioceses\textsuperscript{91}.

In Portugal, the national conjuncture will live a duality marked by a climate of crisis. The tensions that grow in the fifteenth century are the reflection of several crises, more or less generalized, and are in sharp contrast to

\textsuperscript{90}Villarroel González, Óscar (2011), \textit{El rey y la iglesia castellana, relaciones de poder con Juan II (1406-1454)}, Fundación Ramón Areces, Madrid. pp. 48-67.

\textsuperscript{91}González Sánchez, Santiago (2013), "Los obispos castellanos en los inicios del siglo XV (1407-1420)", Revista EPCCM, 15, 209.
the novelty and repercussion that the exploitation of the African coast and the Moroccan conquests produce at a national level. Economic progress would be illusory and a fallacious expansion would not produce a positive effect to the majority of the people.
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