

## *From Allies to Rivals: Portuguese Maritime Espionage in England, 1551–1559\**

The reign of Mary I (1553–1558) has been the subject of a wave of recent studies and new interpretations. Many of these studies have attempted to overcome the temptation to distinguish the ‘successful’ Elizabeth I (1558–1603) from her less successful predecessor. Anna Whitelock, for example, highlights the significance of Mary as the first queen to rule England and the role that her governance had for asserting female authority from the English throne, decisively shaping the Elizabethan era.<sup>1</sup> Queenship studies have also focused on the connections between Mary and Elizabeth, stressing how the sometimes over-glorified image of the Elizabethan era negatively affected evaluations of Mary’s reign. New perspectives on both reigns, and also on that of Edward VI (1547–1553), have contributed to new insights into Mary as a queen who had clear ideas, projects and agendas,<sup>2</sup> and also into how Marian history has been written.<sup>3</sup> David Loades, despite pointing out some strategic errors during her rule (such as the Spanish marriage and Philip’s general interference in English maritime affairs, the too-powerful role of Cardinal Reginald Pole and what Loades called a non-English mode of governance), recognised that Mary nonetheless played a fundamental part in the maritime achievements of Elizabethan England. Specifically, Loades mentioned the importance of the creation of the Muscovy Company in 1555, and the growth of the English war fleet.<sup>4</sup> More recently, Benjamin Redding has drawn attention to Mary’s policy of reinforcing the English navy against the strategic menace posed by France under Henry II (1547–1559). Redding also connects this process

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1. A. Whitelock, *Mary Tudor: England’s First Queen* (London, 2009), p. 310.

2. On this topic, see A. Hunt and A. Whitelock, eds, *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (New York, 2010), esp. the editors’ introduction, pp. 1–10.

3. For instance, V. Schutte and J.S. Hower, eds, *Writing Mary I: History, Historiography and Fiction* (Cham, 2022).

4. D.M. Loades, *Mary Tudor* (Stroud, 2012), pp. 269–71. The making of the Elizabethan navy has also been thoroughly analysed by Loades: D.M. Loades, *The Making of the Elizabethan Navy, 1540–1590: From the Solent to the Armada* (Woodbridge, 2009).

with events during the early years of Elizabeth's reign, namely the final loss of English strongholds in the continent, which increased England's insularity and prompted the English to focus on maritime exploration.<sup>5</sup>

All these authors have in various ways advocated a re-evaluation of Mary's reign, rejecting the traditional image of the 'bloody' queen and arguing for the significance of her reign for key events of the Elizabethan era. Nevertheless, re-evaluations of this type have been somewhat lacking when it comes to the first English voyages to West Africa and the overall process of English overseas expansion. The purpose of this article is to invite scholars to consider the impact of Mary's reign in this area, but from a different perspective: that of Portuguese ambassadors, agents and spies dispatched to England with the aim of sabotaging the English maritime expansion that the queen patronised.

Mary I ruled at a time of increasing competition between European maritime powers in search of wealth and new trade opportunities. This process often involved the combination of state interests, sometimes in conflict, at others in co-operation, with private initiatives. In the early 1550s, Marian England became a new key actor in the long-standing overseas rivalries between Portugal, Spain and France. Much as in the case of France, English commercial and overseas ambitions first collided with Iberian interests in West Africa. The search for gold and slaves and the first English claims against alleged Portuguese maritime rights in the region provoked a stern Portuguese reaction. This reaction was felt in a military context, but, before that, it also triggered a process of diplomatic protest and espionage. Although this last topic has been mentioned by scholars in passing,<sup>6</sup> it has not yet been studied in depth. Indeed, maritime relations between England and Spain in this period have received much more attention than those with Portugal. The main goal of this article is to bring into a clearer light the broader context of Anglo-Portuguese relations and its impact on the overall process of English overseas expansion in the Marian period. This analysis will show that, as recent historiographical trends suggest, there was not a rupture but a continuity between Marian and Elizabethan policies, in this case concerning overseas expansion.

Using the instructions given to Portuguese agents dispatched to England, I will show that the English maritime revival under Mary I was perceived by kings John III (1521–1557) and Sebastian (1557–1578) of Portugal as an urgent threat that needed to be addressed before the English could become serious competitors (as they eventually

5. W.D.B. Redding, 'English Naval Expansion under the French Threat, 1555–1564', *International Journal of Maritime History*, xxviii (2016), pp. 640–53. For the author's more detailed argument, see W.D.B. Redding, *The English and French Navies, 1500–1650: Expansion, Organization and State-Building* (Woodbridge, 2022).

6. Manuel Francisco de Barros e Sousa, Visconde de Santarém, Luiz Augusto Rebello da Silva and Joaquim José da Silva Mendes Leal, eds, *Quadro elementar das relações políticas e diplomáticas de Portugal com as diversas potências do mundo, desde o principio da monarchia portugueza ate aos nossos dias* [hereafter *Quadro*], XV (Lisbon, 1865), pp. LXV–XCI.

did) to Portuguese interests in West Africa. These instructions are to be found mainly in the Coleção de São Vicente at the Portuguese National Archives, Torre do Tombo, which houses a record of sixteenth-century Portuguese diplomatic instructions. Most of the documentation that has been preserved seems to be the original dispatches written at the king's order by his secretary. Some of these documents have annotations and have been redacted; it is therefore unlikely that these were the final versions delivered to Portuguese ambassadors, agents and spies sent to England. Still, they allow us first-hand insights into the Portuguese king's personal ambivalence towards the apparent English challenge to a Portuguese *mare clausum*. They are thus highly relevant when examining the overall state of Anglo-Portuguese relations under Queen Mary. By matching these documents with other Portuguese documentary collections and with English sources and studies, I present an account of the maritime rivalry and scientific relations between England and Portugal. Often the documents raise more complex questions that relate more broadly to tensions in the Iberian Peninsula and in England that affected both sides. I therefore also highlight the value of diplomatic and espionage documents for the study of commercial, political and maritime rivalries in early modern Europe.

To interpret correctly the news brought by the instructions given to Portuguese ambassadors, agents and spies, it is important to start with the influence of Iberian connections in English overseas expansion before Mary's reign. Attention will then be directed to the effects of the arrival in Edward VI's England of a figure who decisively influenced Anglo-Portuguese maritime relations in the Marian period: the Portuguese pilot António Eanes Pinteado, who served in the first English voyage to West Africa. As I argue here, it was Pinteado's case that decisively shaped Portuguese maritime espionage in England. This is particularly evident in King John III's instructions to his ambassador Diogo Lopes de Sousa in 1554, and in the departure of the spy João Rodrigues Correia in 1555 and the overall Portuguese diplomatic reaction to Thomas Wyndham and John Lok's voyages to West Africa. The same approach can be also observed when investigating Portuguese espionage relating to William Towerson's voyages and how King Sebastian reacted to Queen Elizabeth's succession by sending a new envoy and a spy to England. Before concluding, I link Portuguese espionage to the development of a scientific milieu that favoured maritime expansion under Queen Mary.

## I

The Anglo-Portuguese maritime rivalry that emerged fully under Mary I first manifested in the fifteenth century. Early English voyages to Morocco in 1465 and 1469, together with King Edward IV's petition to

the Pope to authorise English trade in the area,<sup>7</sup> were the first signs of Portugal and England's conflicting overseas interests. Still, the Treaty of Windsor of 1386 (which confirmed the original alliance between the two realms) prevented a major breakdown of relations. Under King John II's reign (1481–1495), however, tensions escalated. At stake was the prevention of two Englishmen from participating in the Atlantic ventures that Lopo de Albuquerque, the Portuguese earl of Penamacor, who had fled to England, intended to organise. Soon after, the Spanish Duke of Medina Sidonia also attempted to hire Portuguese and Englishmen to aid in his Atlantic ventures against Portuguese interests. Attentive to these events, John II sent two embassies to England to disrupt the plans. He succeeded in reconfirming the long-standing alliance with England, but only after several fruitless bids to have Penamacor jailed in the Tower of London. While Penamacor was, in the end, imprisoned for some time, John II's wish that he be delivered to Portuguese authorities to face justice was never satisfied. English maritime ambitions in this period were very limited as England lacked the requisite nautical knowledge, at that time only accumulated by the Iberians.<sup>8</sup>

Still worried about possible English interest in West Africa, John II erected the fortress of Mina (in present-day Elmina, Ghana) and pressed King Henry VII (1485–1509) to hand over Portuguese exiles who might assist in the preparation of any English expeditions. In 1485, Henry VII agreed to forbid the participation of Englishmen in such schemes, but refused to extradite Portuguese collaborators. To confirm the formal alliance between the two realms, Henry VII also approved a law prohibiting non-Englishmen from serving in the English navy. Nevertheless, he subsequently took steps to facilitate the naturalisation of foreign seamen, thus guaranteeing that England would have a constant supply of the best nautical knowledge for overseas voyaging. It was in this context that, in 1489, John II forced the Catholic Kings to pass a motion forbidding English merchants in Spain from recruiting Iberian pilots to sail for Guinea.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, Anglo-Portuguese maritime contact remained very intense during the 1490s and was not fully controlled by the Portuguese crown. The first voyages of John Cabot in the service of Henry VII, although not targeting areas granted to the Portuguese by the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, were financed and secured by an Anglo-Portuguese

7. R.M. Puga, "Scramble for Africa": As viagens inglesas à África Ocidental no reinado de D. João III, in *D. João III e o Império: Actas do Congresso Internacional comemorativo do seu nascimento* (Lisbon, 2004), pp. 726–7.

8. D.M. Loades, *England's Maritime Empire: Seapower, Commerce and Policy, 1490–1690* (Harlow, 2000), pp. 20–21.

9. C. Varela, *Ingleses en España y Portugal, 1480–1515: Aristócratas, mercaderes e impostores* (Lisbon, 1998), pp. 47–52; *Europeans in West Africa, 1450–1560: Documents to Illustrate the Nature and Scope of Portuguese Enterprise in West Africa, the Abortive Attempt of Castilians to Create an Empire there, and the Early English Voyages to Barbary and Guinea*, II, ed. J.W. Blake, Hakluyt Society, lxxxvii (1942), pp. 264–6.

syndicate from Bristol.<sup>10</sup> This collaboration took place in the context of significant commercial contact between Bristol and Portugal,<sup>11</sup> and can be fully understood when looking at Portuguese commercial networks in late medieval Europe,<sup>12</sup> which included important connections to England. As a consequence of this collaboration and following his aforementioned policy, Henry VII naturalised some of the Portuguese members of this syndicate.<sup>13</sup> King Manuel I (1495–1521) disputed with Henry VII the supposed discovery and rights of occupation in Newfoundland in the wake of the Corte Real brothers' expeditions, though the controversy did not last long, as both monarchs later dropped their plans.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the intersection between Portuguese and English private interests was already a reality in these first episodes of Anglo-Portuguese maritime rivalry and continued to play a pivotal role in subsequent relations.

The (temporary) loss of Sebastian Cabot to Spain in 1512, combined with the accession of Henry VIII (1509–1547), meant a check to English overseas plans. Still, in 1517, profiting from the knowledge brought by Cabot's expeditions, a new (albeit unsuccessful) mission to explore Newfoundland was launched from Bristol. While not so vocal a supporter of oceanic exploration as his father, Henry VIII played a key part in English maritime expansion. In 1513, he passed a motion enabling the hiring of experienced pilots who were not English or Scottish by birth for the main commercial and sailing routes that the English used in Northern Europe and the Mediterranean, thus creating the conditions for foreign pilots to pursue legitimate careers in England.<sup>15</sup> In a way, this was a continuation of his father's law of 1489. Taking advantage of England's contacts with maritime ports in France, the Iberian Peninsula, the Netherlands and Scandinavia, Henry VIII was able to develop a systematic policy for recruiting French, Spanish and Portuguese pilots. If his focus was mainly trained on European policy, Henry VIII did not, however, neglect new opportunities.

In 1526, Robert Thorne and some English merchants of Seville arranged for the participation of Roger Barlow and Henry Latimer in Sebastian Cabot's expedition to the River Plate. During this expedition,

10. K.R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of British Empire, 1480–1630* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 47–9.

11. On the topic, see F. Miranda and H. Casado Alonso, 'Comércio entre o porto de Bristol e Portugal no final da Idade Média, 1461–1504', *Anais de História de Além-Mar*, xix (2018), pp. 11–36.

12. For more details, particularly on Anglo-Portuguese trade, see F. Miranda, 'Portugal and the Medieval Atlantic: Commercial Diplomacy, Merchants and Trade, 1143–1488' (Univ. of Oporto Ph.D. thesis, 2012), pp. 72–80 and 207–13.

13. J.S. Hower, *Tudor Empire: The Making of Early Modern Britain and the British Atlantic World, 1485–1603* (Cham, 2020), p. 81.

14. Varela, *Ingleses en España y Portugal*, p. 63.

15. R.C.D. Baldwin, 'The Development and Interchange of Navigational Information and Technology between the Maritime Communities of Iberia, North-Western Europe and Asia, 1500–1620' (2 vols, Durham Univ. M.A. diss., 1980), i, pp. 208, 220.

Barlow accumulated experience and knowledge not only from the Spanish, but also from several Portuguese with whom he made contact during the voyage. Previously, Barlow had also acquired trading experience in Portuguese fortresses on the Moroccan coast and Portuguese Atlantic islands.<sup>16</sup> Henry VIII was duly informed of these events. The king was urged to organise an expedition to Asia by way of the Strait of Magellan, but instead patronised the 1527 voyage of John Rutt in search of a route to Asia through the Arctic.<sup>17</sup> Between 1525 and 1527, the Tudor court discussed buying the Spanish rights to the Moluccas, which were being negotiated between Portugal and Emperor Charles V's Spain at that time. Despite Archbishop Edward Lee of York's favourable opinion, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey opposed the idea and it was abandoned.<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, Roger Barlow failed to convince Sebastian Cabot to return to England in 1530. Still, he continued to gather important geographical information in case the English crown decided to advance its explorations, and for this reason dedicated his *Brief Summe of Geography* to Henry VIII.

Although the 1530s were not conducive to the plans that Barlow wanted to put in practice, the decade witnessed the voyages of William Hawkins the Elder to West Africa and Brazil in 1530, 1532 and 1540. William Hawkins, like his son John Hawkins, employed Portuguese pilots for such expeditions whenever possible,<sup>19</sup> but his voyages did not make much of an impact due to lack of support from the English crown, and more generally its limited support of oceanic navigation. Despite this, João Fernandes Lagarto, a Portuguese spy in France, travelled to England around 1541–42 as a result of information that French ships from Dieppe were being prepared in English ports to head for Brazil. He found, moreover, that an unnamed Englishman had been promised a role in that voyage and a share of its profits.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, the 1540s marked a change in English attitudes towards oceanic navigation. In 1541, Henry VIII wrote to John III asking for permission for some Englishmen to sail to Calicut (Kozhikode) in Portuguese India Run ships, a request firmly refused by the Portuguese monarch.<sup>21</sup> Henry VIII's interest in navigation to Asia may be linked with the fact that in 1533 John More, son of Thomas More, had translated

16. H. Dalton, *Merchants and Explorers: Roger Barlow, Sebastian Cabot, and Networks of Atlantic Exchange, 1500–1560* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 23–4, 87, 90.

17. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, pp. 53–5.

18. Baldwin, 'Development and Interchange of Navigational Information', i, p. 222.

19. L.B. Wright, *English Explorers' Debt to the Iberians* (Coimbra, 1980), pp. 5–6; D. Waters, *English Navigational Books, Charts and Globes Printed down to 1600* (Lisbon, 1985), p. 5. Neither author gives the Portuguese pilots' names.

20. M. Oliveira Borges, 'O trajecto final da Carreira da Índia na torna-viagem (1500–1640). Problemas da navegação entre os Açores e Lisboa: Acções e reacções' (2 vols, Univ. of Lisbon Ph.D. thesis, 2020), i, pp. 354–5.

21. S.P. de Magalhães Oliveira, 'Uma cartografia das mentalidades: A diplomacia portuguesa na corte isabelina' (Univ. of Lisbon Ph.D. thesis, 2018), p. 42.

into English a report written by the Portuguese humanist Damião de Góis about Prester John and Ethiopia.<sup>22</sup> It is also well known that the main character in Thomas More's *Utopia*, the bringer of news, was the Portuguese Raphael Hythlodæus. More's choice of a Portuguese character can be interpreted as a sign of burgeoning English curiosity about the new worlds being discovered by the Iberians.

In the light of ongoing wars with Francis I of France (1515–1547), Henry VIII saw fit to strengthen the English navy, creating the post of Lord Admiral in 1545 and offering it to John Dudley, later duke of Northumberland.<sup>23</sup> With the Anglo-French rivalry unfolding alongside a long-standing and continuing interchange of information, Henry VIII displayed an increasing concern with acquiring French maritime knowledge. In 1542, he hired Jean Rotz as his royal hydrographer and arranged for Rotz's famous atlas, originally meant for Francis I, to be dedicated to him. The king's evident concern with cosmographical and mathematical knowledge likewise prompted the German mathematician Petrus Apianus to send the monarch some of his work in 1546.

In terms of his nautical practitioners, Henry VIII sought experts of various national origins. French experts such as Jean Ribault and Nicholas de Nicolay were successfully persuaded to serve the English crown, and John Dudley stopped at nothing, including prison, to deter them from returning to French employ.<sup>24</sup> The Portuguese Father Fernando de Oliveira, an important authority on nautical construction who was captured in a naval fight, also collaborated in 1546 with James Baker and his son Mathew, appointed by Henry VIII to reinforce the English navy.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, Mathew Baker's treatise on shipbuilding, written during the Elizabethan era and the first to be composed in English,<sup>26</sup> shows some influence from Oliveira. Later, Oliveira was sent to Portugal by Edward VI with an embassy.<sup>27</sup> A similar story took place with the Portuguese cartographer Diogo Homem, who was also in England, alongside other Portuguese, in 1547, where he composed an important atlas.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, it was not only for geographical purposes that the English monarch drew on foreign knowledge—when building up his fleet, Henry VIII frequently engaged Portuguese shipbuilders.<sup>29</sup>

22. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", p. 748.

23. On Dudley, see D.M. Loades, *John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, 1504–1553* (Oxford, 1996).

24. Baldwin, 'Development and Interchange of Navigational Information', i, pp. 225–6; E.G.R. Taylor, *The Haven-finding Art: A History of Navigation from Odysseus to Captain Cook* (London, 1971), p. 194.

25. On this topic, see R. Barker, *Fernando Oliveira: The English Episode, 1545–47* (Lisbon, 1992).

26. S.A. Johnston, 'Making Mathematical Practice: Gentleman, Practitioners and Artisans in Elizabethan England' (Univ. of Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1994), pp. 114–19.

27. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", p. 728.

28. A. Cortesão and A. Teixeira da Mota, *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica* (1960; facs. edn, 6 vols, Lisbon, 1987), ii, p. 5.

29. A.B. Wallis Chapman and V.M. Shillington, *The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal* (London, 1907), p. 131.

By the time of Henry VIII's death, the English interest in oceanic exploration was becoming deeply rooted, thanks in part to the king's several key contributions. No wonder, then, that there were important developments under Edward VI. Owing to Northumberland's regency, Sebastian Cabot was offered appealing conditions for a return to England, and a more systematic training in astronomical and oceanic techniques was put into action.<sup>30</sup> Richard Chancellor's inaugural voyage to Russia in 1553, supported by Edward VI, Dudley and Cabot, takes pride of place as the first product of a systematic school of navigation in the English context. In the same year, Richard Eden began translating the work of the German cosmographer Sebastian Munster into English.<sup>31</sup>

From 1548 onwards, profiting from a recent Portuguese withdrawal from some fortresses in the region, Dudley supported the full resumption of English trade with Morocco.<sup>32</sup> This proposition emerged against a background of considerable diplomatic tensions, as John III had lately been notified that Englishmen were selling weapons to Muslims in North Africa. With the English refusing to cease this trade, the problem soon escalated; this was certainly not ameliorated by the first English voyage to Guinea, which occurred soon after and was guided by a Portuguese pilot newly arrived in England. These issues must be borne in mind when considering Portuguese maritime espionage in England under Queen Mary.

## II

António Eanes Pinteado was born in Oporto. Few details about him are known, except that he was a skilled pilot and became an important captain and merchant doing business from Northern Europe to the South Atlantic. Pinteado also had a personal history with England. In 1545, he appeared in England to complain about the seizure, by English privateers, of French cargos. In 1547, John III appointed him to escort Portuguese ships to Brazil because of the ongoing French–Portuguese maritime rivalry. In this capacity, Pinteado was noted for his victories against French interlopers. After he seized a French ship, Pinteado was jailed at John III's orders upon his return to Lisbon, possibly in 1548.<sup>33</sup> A letter from Pinteado to the Portuguese king, dated 4 April 1553, by which time he had arrived in England, together with other sources, allows us to reconstruct these events.

30. On this topic, see E.H. Ash and A. Sandman, 'Sebastian Cabot between Spain and England', *Renaissance Quarterly*, lvii (2004), pp. 813–46.

31. D. Waters, *The Art of Navigation in England in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Times* (London, 1958), pp. 83, 86.

32. Taylor, *Haven-finding Art*, p. 195.

33. E.G.R. Taylor, *The English Debt to Portuguese Nautical Science in the Sixteenth Century* (I Congresso da História da Expansão Portuguesa no Mundo offprint; Lisbon, 1958), p. 6.



Pinteado began his letter by saying that he had felt forced to go to England because of the injustices he had suffered. He stressed that he was Portuguese by birth and had not wanted to betray his king, and underscored the fact that John III's ministers had ordered him to serve with his ship in Morocco, Guinea and Brazil against the French. Pinteado pointed to his long career at sea and to the reputation he had acquired by fighting the French and the Scottish. He then complained that he had spent two years jailed in Lisbon because of the accusations that a Portuguese and a Spaniard had made against him. In consequence, and doubting that he would ever be treated fairly, he had fled to England. Since his arrival, Pinteado continued, the English had tried to enlist him in their maritime expeditions, but he had refused. Instead of a royal decree from John III promising that Portuguese authorities would not prosecute him for a year, Pinteado proposed his own conditions for returning home: he would come back if all his seized goods were restored to him, and if granted a reward. He finished by noting that although he was an old man, he was still able to serve the king.<sup>34</sup> But, we might ask, why did Pinteado choose to flee to England above all other possible places?

The letter summarised above indirectly explains this decision. As he had already exchanged hostilities with French ships, he could not think of following the example of other Portuguese pilots and fleeing there. Spain, too, was a risky option—it was the first place where Portuguese pilots tended to go when defecting, and Pinteado's previous quarrel with a Spaniard made it more likely that he would face an extradition order if discovered. In Edward VI's England, however, Pinteado knew that apprehension by Portuguese authorities was improbable, given that religious differences had somewhat diminished political relations between the two realms. Furthermore, he must certainly have heard of the resumption of English voyages to Morocco from 1548 onwards, and may have been aware of Thomas Wyndham's North African voyages in 1551 and 1552 (the second of which was completed with a ship bought from a Portuguese settled in Wales).<sup>35</sup> As Pinteado himself had served in Morocco, he was probably acquainted with the fact that Wyndham traded in the abandoned Portuguese fortresses of Safi and Azamor. Wyndham had had a long career as a privateer against Iberian vessels in the English Channel under Henry VIII and Edward VI, and had learned nautical techniques with French sailors. Thus, when Pinteado decided to go to England, he knew that he would have a ready market for his knowledge in Wyndham.

Foreseeing the danger of having a skilled oceanic pilot offering his knowledge to England, the Portuguese king reacted immediately.

34. Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo [hereafter ANTT], Corpo Cronológico [hereafter CC] I-89-120, fo. 11r-v.

35. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, p. 101; Waters, *Art of Navigation*, pp. 89–90; *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 271–2 and 305.

In late 1551, he knighted Pinteado and gave him the corresponding pension. With Pinteado still abroad, John probably asked his brother, the Infante Dom Luís, to write to him in December 1552. This letter was published by Richard Hakluyt in his *Principal Navigations*. In it, the Infante begged Pinteado to return, assuring him that John III had already given him a royal pardon and that he would grant him new privileges upon his arrival. As proof of the Portuguese king's good will, the Infante stated that he was also sending an emissary, Pedro Gonçalves, to convince Pinteado to come back.<sup>36</sup> When Pinteado replied to the king in his letter of April 1553, though, other events had already transpired.

Together with the Portuguese pilot Francisco Rodrigues, well versed in West African navigation<sup>37</sup> and also in England by that time, Pinteado had offered his services to Wyndham. Richard Eden, who met him personally and later published the report of the first English voyage to Guinea, stated that Pinteado was 'a wise, discreet, and sober man, who for his cunning in sailing' was 'as well an expert Pilot as a politike captaine'. Eden envisaged Pinteado's coming to England as a happy miracle. When reprinting Eden's original report, Hakluyt not only published the aforementioned letters to Pinteado, but also Eden's final notes in defence of Pinteado (as he was ultimately mistreated by Wyndham during the voyage).<sup>38</sup> During this period, Rodrigues made a proposal to Wyndham that he should be the pilot of the English expedition to Guinea and Pinteado the captain.<sup>39</sup> After all, it was Pinteado who had suggested to Wyndham that such a voyage be organised in the first place.<sup>40</sup> Pinteado also supported Richard Chancellor's plan to sail to Russia and gave to Richard Eden the *Decades of the New World of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera*, which Eden later translated into English.<sup>41</sup> In the end, neither Pinteado nor Rodrigues were captains during the first English voyage to Guinea, but their role throughout the expedition is well documented.<sup>42</sup> Thus, when Pinteado wrote to John III, he had already decided not to return to Portugal. As Hakluyt states, he feared being killed.<sup>43</sup>

Pinteado's action was also intimately tied into the context of Sebastian Cabot's initial voyages, in which the interests of different actors, such

36. Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of The English Nation*, ed. Edmund Goldsmid (16 vols, Edinburgh, 1885–90), xi, pp. 76 and 82–3.

37. Although the document is undated and does not permit a full confirmation, I think this Francisco Rodrigues is the same man who offered his knowledge to António Carneiro, Portuguese secretary, to organise mercantile voyages to Guinea in partnership with a man from Oporto: F. Sousa Viterbo, *Trabalhos Náuticos dos Portugueses, Séculos XVI e XVII* (Lisbon, 1988), pp. 307–8.

38. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, ed. Goldsmid, xi, pp. 82–3.

39. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", p. 743.

40. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, XI, ed. Goldsmid, xi, p. 82.

41. Taylor, *English Debt to Portuguese Nautical Science*, pp. 6–7.

42. E. Smith, *Merchants. The Community that Shaped England's Trade and Empire* (New Haven, CT, 2021), pp. 15–16.

43. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, ed. Goldsmid, xi, pp. 82–3.

as merchants, seamen and cosmographers, converged. It was precisely this milieu that fostered the creation of the Muscovy Company in 1555. It is important to highlight how Pinteado, who was both a seafarer and a merchant, mixed well within this English maritime and commercial milieu, just as other Portuguese sailors had previously mixed well in the Anglo-Portuguese syndicate from Bristol that financed John Cabot's expeditions. This pattern of collaboration continued to influence Anglo-Portuguese maritime relations.

But the arrival in England of King John III's agents, Estêvão da Mota and Pedro Gonçalves, also contributed to Pinteado's final decision. Although their instructions are unknown, it seems clear that they were sent to spy on the first English voyage to Guinea and, if possible, sabotage it. Mota and Gonçalves managed to convince Francisco Rodrigues to return to Portugal, as well as other Portuguese that lived in England. Such repatriations were sometimes attempted with a considerable degree of coercion. Pinteado himself faced such threats, but Wyndham intervened. Mota and Gonçalves's actions are confirmed by a letter written to Lord Admiral William Howard on 28 February 1553.<sup>44</sup> On 3 March 1553, Wyndham asked the High Court of Admiralty to jail Mota and Gonçalves, as they were attempting to disrupt his departure by threatening Rodrigues and Pinteado. He reminded the High Court that the voyage had been personally authorised by Edward VI. The agents, he noted, had also pronounced offensive words against the English. Wyndham's request was enacted, the agents imprisoned and plans for the voyage to Guinea continued unimpeded.<sup>45</sup>

Jean Schefve, Charles V's ambassador in England, reported in a letter to his master, dated 7 March 1553, that Pinteado and Rodrigues were planning to sail in an English expedition. He stated that Pinteado had used his pardon letters from the Portuguese king to bolster his reputation before the Privy Council, a ploy so effective that Schefve considered Pinteado to be solely responsible for the imprisonment of the Portuguese agents.<sup>46</sup> On 11 May, after being asked by Charles V to facilitate the Portuguese agents' release, Schefve replied that he would attempt to help them, but that Pinteado would sail with the English nonetheless. He did not know for sure whether Pinteado was going to sail with Wyndham to Guinea or with Chancellor to Russia;<sup>47</sup> it is indeed very likely that Pinteado collaborated with Sebastian Cabot in planning Chancellor's voyage to Russia, and he was certainly acquainted with John Dudley. Thus, when Pinteado wrote his letter of 4 April 1553 to King John III, his aim was to deceive the king and his agents—he had already chosen his path. The Portuguese authorities maintained

44. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", pp. 735–7.

45. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 313–14.

46. *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, Relating to the Negotiations between England Spain* (13 vols in 20, 1862–1954) [hereafter *CSP Spain*], 1553, p. 14.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9.

their vigilant watch on Pinteado's movements even after his departure with Wyndham for Guinea, although this proved a constant challenge. News of Pinteado's death only reached England when Wyndham's fleet returned in August 1554.<sup>48</sup> By that time, Queen Mary had ascended the throne and Portugal had a new strategy for avoiding overseas clashes with England.

Shortly after her coronation, Mary's court seriously considered reviving the 1537–38 negotiations to marry the now queen to the Portuguese Infante D. Luís.<sup>49</sup> Aware of these deliberations, on 20 September 1553 John III instructed his ambassador, Lourenço Pires de Távora, to congratulate Mary personally on her succession and discuss the plan in the English court. He even wrote to Charles V with news of his matrimonial proposal.<sup>50</sup> Infante D. Luís was a highly suitable candidate for Mary's hand, as they were close in age.<sup>51</sup> But Charles V could not lose the opportunity to place his son on the English throne. For this reason, he detained Távora in Brussels for a month, buying himself time to negotiate Prince Philip's marriage with Queen Mary. He also had to stall the negotiations, already very advanced, for Philip's wedding with the Portuguese Infanta D. Maria. Even after receiving formal confirmation from England of the intended marriage, when Távora was finally authorised to leave Brussels to visit Queen Mary in December 1553, Charles V ordered agents to spy on his movements so that Portugal's proposal would not spoil his plans.<sup>52</sup> Up to the death of D. Luís in 1555, another potential marriage, this time with the future Queen Elizabeth, was debated, but the project came to nothing.<sup>53</sup>

The failed Portuguese attempt to marry Infante D. Luís to Queen Mary was also intimately linked with other events in Portuguese–Spanish relations that also impacted Anglo-Portuguese relations: the premature death of the Portuguese heir John Manuel, the birth of the future King Sebastian, and the later return of Infanta Juana, Princess of Portugal, to Spain. As Juana left Portugal and never assumed a role as regent, this facilitated the Spanish abandonment of the original negotiations for marrying Philip to Infanta D. Maria. In turn, the Spanish *volte-face* facilitated the Tudor court's disapproval of the proposed Portuguese marriage of Queen Mary. Thus, Mary married Philip in 1554.

48. *CSP Spain, 1554–1558*, no. 28.

49. H.F.M. Prescott, *Mary Tudor: The Spanish Tudor* (1940; rev. edn, London, 2003), p. 272; S. Duncan, *Mary I: Gender, Power, and Ceremony in the Reign of England's First Queen* (New York, 2012), pp. 61–4. For a more recent overview, see A. Samson, *Mary and Philip: The Marriage of Tudor England and Habsburg Spain* (Manchester, 2020), p. 82.

50. ANTT, Coleção de São Vicente [hereafter CSV], vol. III, fo. 220. Almost all of the letters from this collection that will be quoted are undated.

51. Loades, *Mary Tudor*, p. 140.

52. *CSP Spain, 1553*, p. 380.

53. H. Carvalhal, 'Casar para reinar: A política europeia quincentista e as propostas matrimoniais do Infante D. Luís', in A.M. Rodrigues, M. Santos Silva and A. Leal Faria, eds, *Casamentos da Família Real Portuguesa: Diplomacia e Cerimonial* (Lisbon, 2017), p. 368.

It is perfectly possible that John III's interest in the marriage of his brother to the English queen was related not only to the fact that England had returned to Catholicism but also to the re-emerging Anglo-Portuguese maritime rivalry. Since it is widely known that, as king consort of England, Philip used his power to delay the emergence of Anglo-Spanish overseas rivalry, one should ask if this was not also John III's intention in 1553–54. I consider that this strategy was attempted by John III, but the aforementioned Portuguese–Spanish relations disturbed the Portuguese king's original plans. In any case, Philip's marriage to Mary was immediately used by Portugal to reinforce its claims in the Tudor court, as the appointment of ambassador Diogo Lopes de Sousa shows. Nor, for that matter, was the 'Pinteado problem' forgotten.

### III

Sometime in October–November 1554, John III ordered his secretary to write a first draft of instructions to Diogo Lopes de Sousa.<sup>54</sup> Sousa, a wealthy nobleman from an important Portuguese lineage, was formally named to visit Philip in England and to congratulate him and Mary on their recent marriage. He was entrusted with letters to be delivered to Privy Council members, and was told to inform Lisbon of the degree to which Philip was accepted by his English subjects and whether he was in direct communication with Charles V. But the real purpose of this first instruction lay beyond these tasks. The king noted that Sousa must have heard of a certain 'Pinteado born in this kingdom', about whom all manner of rumours were circulating. Some stated that he had sailed with an English expedition that had gone badly and had perished. Others insisted that Pinteado was alive and well, and that the English had already loaded many goods along the Mina coast. Those who were of this latter opinion averred that Pinteado was planning to return that very year to the region, and that the English were already preparing the ships. The king therefore ordered Sousa to inform him 'of what had happened [with Pinteado], and about the route they [the English] made and what happened to that expedition [Wyndham's]'. Sousa was also asked to report on all the merchandise that the English trafficked, as well as where they acquired it and from whom. Concerning the new English fleet said to be in preparation, Sousa was instructed to provide intelligence on the names of the ships, the people and artillery that went on board, and the route and schedule for departure. He was asked to report on all these details without delay. Towards the end of the instruction, the king stated that Sousa would take with him 'a cypher so that you can write me all the things that seem to you important in a manner that nothing that you may write to me shall be lost'. Only in

54. The first instruction is undated but it is probably from October–November 1554.

closing the instruction did the king mention that Sousa should present the Tudor court with his formal condolences for the death of Edward VI.<sup>55</sup>

In appointing a formal ambassador to England, John III was in reality sending over a maritime spy. Sousa's *de facto* goal was to make use of Philip's rule to disrupt new English expeditions to West Africa. It is important to highlight that the Portuguese king not only wanted to know commercial details, but also ordered Sousa to undertake technical espionage by acquiring information about the routes in play. These orders were not merely connected to organising a naval response to the English challenge. John III wanted to be informed of the quality of the English art of navigation to West Africa, as he knew the English were sailing with Portuguese knowledge. As a consequence, he also ordered Sousa to report on the route the second expedition would follow, so that he could determine if the English had improved their nautical expertise. His concern that other Portuguese might be assisting the next English fleet is clear from the request for intelligence about people on board. By this time, John III had already got word of his agents' failure in England, and knew that two of the ships in Wyndham's voyage were supplied by Edward VI.<sup>56</sup> It is no surprise, then, that John III instructed Sousa to react dispassionately to Edward's death. The way in which the instruction was written also strongly suggests that Sousa was to act more as an ambassador to Philip than to Mary, as the Portuguese king could not be sure of Mary's reaction to Wyndham's voyage. Indeed, other documents delivered to Sousa further illustrate how uneasy the king felt.

On 7 November 1554, Sousa was given an additional instruction. Large parts of this dispatch are crossed out, pointing to some hesitations. The king reminded Sousa of Pinteado's action against Portuguese interests and ordered him to press Philip and Mary to respect Portuguese maritime rights in West Africa. The king explicitly asked that Sousa propose the cancellation of the next English expedition, invoking his personal affection for Philip and good relations with Queen Mary as justification for their satisfaction of this request.<sup>57</sup>

Another undated document, probably from November 1554, allows us to understand the confusion reigning in Lisbon before Sousa's departure. Its author is unknown, but I believe it was probably the Provedor dos Armazéns, the Portuguese officer in charge of organising the departure of Portuguese fleets at Lisbon's Casa da Índia. News had recently arrived from England that a new English fleet was being prepared to sail to Mina and that the English merchant Alexander Coles had come to Lisbon to buy merchandise and recruit Portuguese

55. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fos 457–462.

56. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, p. 106.

57. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fo. 463r–v.

pilots for the expedition. In the light of these developments, the author of the document warned several Portuguese pilots not to betray the Portuguese crown and recalled the fact that all pilots had sworn their loyalty to John III. As this news was important, the author also delivered the warning to Sousa, which explains why the document ended up among Sousa's instructions.<sup>58</sup>

John III ordered that Sousa, after personally visiting Philip and Mary, should also visit the Duke and Duchess of Alba and Rui Gomes da Silva.<sup>59</sup> In the official accreditation letter to Philip and Mary, however, John III merely presented Sousa as an ambassador arriving to congratulate Mary on her marriage.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, a list of the documentation delivered to Sousa shows that in addition to all these documents, he was given a cypher and five letters. These five letters had already been filled in by John III. Sousa was merely to add a heading specifying the addressee once he had arrived in England and chosen members of the Privy Council to appeal to.<sup>61</sup> Unfortunately, the content of those letters has not survived. What is extant from the documents transmitted to Sousa nonetheless merits comment.

First, the English fleet mentioned in these documents is that of John Lok, brother of Thomas Wyndham. Although, at the time of writing these documents, the Portuguese king did not know that Pinteado had already died, he was worried that the English would sail again to West Africa. For this reason, and foreseeing that he could not prevent Pinteado from further navigation with the English, he instructed Sousa to present a diplomatic protest to Philip and Mary. This objection was to be made first to Philip and only afterwards to Mary. The purpose of this strategy was to exploit Portugal's closer relationship with Philip and, in turn, make use of the love and reverence that Queen Mary always evinced for him. Should this prove inadequate, the Portuguese king instructed Sousa to obtain the support of important advisors whom Philip had brought to England: the Duke of Alba and the Portuguese Rui Gomes da Silva, who had grown up with Philip while he was a prince, was an intimate friend and advisor, and would end his days as Prince of Eboli.<sup>62</sup> Silva, the king reasoned, could play an important mediator role.

To complement this strategy, John III issued letters addressed to Privy Council members so that they could be convinced of his main goal: that England respect the Portuguese maritime right to occupy and monopolise all trading in West Africa. Such Portuguese intentions were merely a repetition of what had happened previously with France,

58. *Ibid.*, fo. 471.

59. *Ibid.*, fo. 470r-v.

60. *Ibid.*, fo. 465.

61. *Ibid.*, fo. 474.

62. On the career of Rui Gomes da Silva, see J.M. Boyden, *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Phillip II, and the Court of Spain* (Berkeley, CA, 1995).

and even with Spain. As for the addressees of these missives, and the potential use of bribery, nothing definitive may be said, since the letters themselves have been lost. That bribery may have been attempted is, nevertheless, plausible—in analogous situations with France, John III ordered his agents, envoys and ambassadors to ply key figures with gifts and money. In 1562, too, when João Pereira Dantas, the Portuguese ambassador to France, was appointed to visit Queen Elizabeth on a *mare clausum* embassy, he attempted to bribe William Cecil.<sup>63</sup> It is also likely that John III gave Sousa oral instructions to get closer to Cardinal Reginald Pole, Mary's chief minister,<sup>64</sup> as the king ordered the Archbishop of Braga and other bishops to celebrate England's return to Catholicism and Pole's final authorisation, in 1554, to come back to England.<sup>65</sup> As I shall later detail, the king even wrote personally to Pole.

Meanwhile, the king was also notified that the English had sent Alexander Coles to Lisbon in search of Portuguese pilots for their next expedition to West Africa. Coles was an English merchant involved only in the trade with Morocco (and not with Guinea and Mina);<sup>66</sup> John Lok's 1554–55 voyage had no Portuguese pilots on board when it set sail from England in October 1554.<sup>67</sup> But this does not mean that the English did not still need Portuguese nautical knowledge. Indeed, Wyndham's pioneer voyage had not gone well in nautical terms. His early death and that of Pinteado had forced Francisco Rodrigues to guide the fleet, as English sailors were not familiar with the Guinea currents that complicated any returning voyage to Europe. It is plausible that, in 1554, Coles was sent to gather such knowledge by hiring Portuguese pilots. Similarly, as Hakluyt records, Robert Tomson's 1555 voyage to New Spain was only made possible by his several years' sojourn in Seville at the house of the English merchant John Fields, where he learned Spanish and the customs of the land.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, the cases of Coles and Tomson bear a resemblance to Robert Thorne's espionage and training in Seville during the 1520s.

The English need for Portuguese pilots and Portuguese nautical knowledge remained critical as late as Drake's circumnavigation, with Drake completing a maritime spy mission in Lisbon before the voyage, and later employing the Portuguese pilot Nuno da Silva during the

63. As was the case with ambassador Rui Fernandes de Almada in the 1530s: (M. do Rosário Cruz, *Rui Fernandes de Almada: Diplomata português do século XVI* (Lisbon, 1971), p. 148. On Dantas's 1562 embassy to England, see N. Vila-Santa, 'Fighting for a *Mare Clausum* and Secret Science: France, England and Spain in the Strategies of Ambassador Dantas (1557–1568)', *Vegueta*, xxiii (2023), pp. 1115–1511. On Portuguese maritime espionage, see also M. Oliveira Borges, 'Rivalidades entre Portugal e a França e o papel dos espões portugueses nos portos franceses (1503–1566)', *Revista de História da Sociedade e da Cultura*, xxi (2021), pp. 165–84.

64. On Pole, see T.F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000).

65. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fos 273–274.

66. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 275–6.

67. Puga, "'Scramble for Africa'", p. 737.

68. Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, ed. Goldsmid, xiv, p. 138.



circumnavigation itself.<sup>69</sup> David Waters states that between 1558 and 1568 all English fleets sailing oceanic routes, with one exception, were piloted by Portuguese, Spanish or French pilots, and that in 1577 the president of the Spanish Council of the Indies attested that most English fleets were still being guided by Portuguese pilots.<sup>70</sup> As Taylor argues, it took England almost fifty years to raise sailors prepared to compete, in terms of skill, training and the requisite nautical knowledge for long oceanic routes, with their Iberian counterparts.<sup>71</sup> By the early 1550s, when England was recommencing its maritime expansion, this need for nautical knowledge was more salient.

For John III, the English maritime reawakening was disturbingly reminiscent of all the worry and rivalry at sea that he had been experiencing with Valois France. As in his previous attempts with France, John III tried also with England, in 1554, to control the acquisition of nautical knowledge by his rival, a reality that can also be observed in Franco-Spanish or even Anglo-French maritime relations in the period. Thus, the French–Portuguese maritime rivalry unmistakably underpins the orders he gave to Sousa in 1554.

Soon after landing in England, probably in December 1554, Sousa wrote a letter to the Portuguese secretary declaring that he had not been able to present his protest to Philip and Mary; when he arrived, John Lok's expedition had already departed, and John III had not explicitly directed him to do so under such circumstances.<sup>72</sup> It may be that the crossed-out order mentioned previously was not included in the final instruction delivered to Sousa, as a result of John III's hesitations on this point. Tracking Sousa's subsequent actions is impeded by the loss of most of his letters and the fact that his extant communications do not address maritime affairs and espionage. Still, other surviving documents show how the Portuguese king envisaged and directed his mission.

Probably in January 1555, the king asked Sousa to petition Philip on the issue of French navigation to the Portuguese *mare clausum*, as soon as war between Spain and France came to a close. The request was made because Charles V was too busy with war against the Valois to take up the issue himself.<sup>73</sup> John III also wrote a formal letter to Philip and Mary congratulating them on their marriage and England's return to Catholicism and another, in May 1555, praising them on the birth of a son.<sup>74</sup> Queen Mary's response to the wife of John III, Queen Catherine of Austria, on 30 January 1555, is also known. The

69. See J.M. Moreno Madrid and D. Salomoni, 'Nuno da Silva's Third Relation: An Unknown Report on Francis Drake's Voyage (1577–1580)', *Terra Incognita*, liv (2022), pp. 64–82.

70. Waters, *Art of Navigation*, pp. 82–3, 101.

71. Taylor, *Haven-finding Art*, p. 195.

72. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Coleção Pereira e Sousa, maço 6, fos 306v–307.

73. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fos 476–477.

74. *Ibid.*, fos 173, 175, 177, 485 and 487r–v.

English queen reported that Sousa had been very well received at her court, and expressed her admiration for the Portuguese queen.<sup>75</sup> On 18 August 1555, Mary wrote to John III thanking him for the January letter regarding the restoration of Catholicism in England.<sup>76</sup>

As a consequence, Sousa only made his formal protest after Lok's return. As Sousa put it in his letter of 20 August 1555, it was thanks more to Queen Mary than to Philip that the decision to embargo the next English voyage to West Africa had been made. Sousa stated that when he approached Philip, he was already working on the issue with Mary. He also mentioned that Philip demanded of him the record of the English shipowners and merchants who had participated in Lok's expedition, which Sousa immediately delivered.<sup>77</sup> When reporting these events, Sousa was recognising what has been underscored previously: that at his departure, John III had doubted that Mary's position could be more favourable to Portugal than Philip's, an idea that was not confirmed by the reality.

In this first conversation, Sousa had benefited from the fact that Philip was still in England, something that changed after Charles V's abdication. Under these circumstances, and doubtless influenced by Lok's successes in his voyage (despite encounters with the Portuguese in Mina and Martin Frobisher's imprisonment there), John III decided to send a new envoy to England. Sousa was supposed to return to Portugal as soon as Manuel de Melo Coutinho, the Portuguese ambassador to Charles V, was appointed ambassador to Philip in the Netherlands.<sup>78</sup> Sousa's mission was, by all indications, complete, although awaiting the arrival of John III's new agent prolonged his embassy in England. If the embargo on English navigations was complicated by Philip's absence from England, the Portuguese could still rely on his influence in English affairs, as he was kept well informed on all important business by Cardinal Pole,<sup>79</sup> maintained an ambassador in England and received minutes of the topics debated by the Privy Council. Still, the orders John III gave to his new agent prove that the Anglo-Portuguese maritime rivalry continued to escalate.

In August 1555, John III chose João Rodrigues Correia for a mission in England. He provided him with three different sets of instructions, each of them documenting more Portuguese efforts at maritime espionage in England. By the time of his appointment, Correia was already an experienced agent trained in the classical 'schools' of Portuguese maritime espionage in Europe: Spain and France. In 1553, the king had sent him to Spain with secret orders to secure the document from the Spanish Council of the Indies by which Charles V forbade his Spanish

75. ANTT, CC1-94-107.

76. ANTT, CC1-96-61.

77. ANTT, CC1-96-65.

78. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fo. 489r-v.

79. G. Parker, *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* (New Haven, CT, 2014), p. 47.

subjects in Asunción and Peru to cross the Brazilian border in search of gold. Correia was also directed to intercede with Philip in order to abort an expedition, being prepared in Seville, for the River Plate (which John III claimed belonged to Portugal).<sup>80</sup>

Correia's first instruction for his mission in England was written after Lisbon received a letter from the captain of the Mina fortress, originally dated January 1555, in which the presence of Lok's six ships was mentioned. John III complained about the violation of Portuguese rights and noted indignantly that the English gold trade in the area constituted an overt challenge to his monopoly. The king expected Philip, on the grounds of their mutual affection and familial ties, to punish his English subjects. He demanded that measures be taken against the English merchants and shipowners who had financed Lok's voyage and that any Portuguese collaborator be delivered to him. Correia was given a list of people who had participated in Lok's voyage so that English authorities would have no excuse not to act immediately. In a deleted section of this letter, the king authorised Correia to insinuate that there would be military retaliation should the English attempt to return to Mina and Guinea. He also ordered Correia to collaborate with Sousa to gather more intelligence on the ships, people, goods and merchants involved in Lok's voyage. If the English prepared another expedition, Correia was asked to gather the same information and to report on the new ships' names, routes and schedule for departure. This information was to be sent to the king quickly—it was a matter of urgency.<sup>81</sup> In seeking out such intelligence with respect to the second English voyage to West Africa, John III again aimed at evaluating the state of English nautical knowledge.

The second instruction to Correia was written after the king received Sousa's letter, dated 17 July 1555, in which the ambassador mentioned that the Privy Council had asked for the rights to Portuguese property in West Africa. John III conveyed his astonishment at such a request and demanded a full embargo on English vessels sailing to West Africa, with the handover of Portuguese collaborators and of all goods acquired during Lok's voyage. He could not understand how the Privy Council dared to ask for Portuguese rights, as they would never have had the audacity to contest Charles V's rights to the Antilles. It was in this context that John III allowed Correia to threaten the use of force if the English returned to West Africa, depending on how Sousa's negotiations progressed in London. Once again, Correia was to apply to Philip before approaching Mary. If Philip had already left for the Netherlands, Correia should make his appeal to Mary and the Privy Council. Correia was then to present the case to Cardinal Pole, to whom the king addressed a letter. Additionally, he was ordered to speak

80. ANTT, *CSV*, vol. III, fos 49, 93.

81. *Ibid.*, fos 156–161.

with Rui Gomes da Silva, the Earl of Arundel, and the English chancellor (by then Stephen Gardiner). In closing this second instruction, the king ordered Correia to inform him of the results with all haste.<sup>82</sup>

Correia's third instruction is even more full of amendments than the previous ones, with almost all of its text crossed out and with annotations to several parts. John III ordered him to confirm a critical piece of intelligence he had received from Sousa: that Lok's fleet included ships owned by Queen Mary.<sup>83</sup> The king wanted to know if Mary was following the example of Edward VI, in which case, diplomatic approaches would need to be adjusted. Attached to Correia's third instruction were other relevant documents. Firstly, there was a letter to Cardinal Pole, in which John III praised his role in English Catholic affairs and informed him that he was sending Correia to assist Sousa in a very important matter, for which he begged Pole's attention. This 'matter' is not specified in the letter. Secondly, the letter to Rui Gomes da Silva thanking him for his services and enlisting his help once more was attached. Thirdly, there were the accreditation letters given to Correia, in which the Mina–Guinea affair is not mentioned directly. Instead, the letters state that Correia was sent to present the king's response to an 'exorbitant' affair that endangered the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. Fourthly, there was a letter to Sousa asking him to assist Correia in his meetings, but to let Correia take the lead and deliver the main speech. Sousa was also instructed to accompany Correia when he spoke with Cardinal Pole and Rui Gomes da Silva. Fifthly, Correia received a list of the London merchants who had financed Lok's voyage, with the English names in a Portuguese form. Among the merchants involved, there seems to be one Portuguese (one 'Peter George, marchyant aportugall') and a note that Lok had hired three French pilots to guide his expedition and one surgeon from Rouen.<sup>84</sup>

Thus, Correia departed with clear orders and instruments to pressure the Privy Council and Queen Mary personally. For the first time, John III allowed the use of force against England to be hinted at. The king, however, accustomed as he was to the traditional Portuguese rhetorical, diplomatic and legal approach to the maritime rights conferred on Portugal by the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, failed to understand that this could not be treated as a political matter between two states. Indeed, the organisation of Wyndham and Lok's voyages surpassed by far Philip and Mary's ability to encompass all its details, something that John III did not realise. This may be because Portuguese and Spanish maritime expeditions were usually organised officially by the crown, whereas in this early period of English maritime expansion, English expeditions were organised by private merchants and the direct involvement of the

82. *Ibid.*, fos 164–169v.

83. *Ibid.*, fo. 170.

84. *Ibid.*, fos 174, 176r–v, 178–180, 182–183, 188.

English crown was not always clear. This fact certainly confused the Portuguese king, explaining why John III asked for details on this issue.

Behind the dispute on political and maritime compensation between Portugal and England was the combination of commercial and private interests that underpinned Wyndham's and Lok's expeditions, precisely as had happened previously for John Cabot's expeditions. This time, the London merchant Barne played a key role in financing and organising both Wyndham's and Lok's voyages.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, to ensure that no new English voyage would depart, more than a diplomatic protest was required. Direct attempts to sabotage or to negotiate with the voyages' promoters were needed, especially considering that 1555 was the foundational year of the Muscovy Company. The company was formally approved by the English crown and the appointment of Sebastian Cabot as its first director (a position he maintained until his death)<sup>86</sup> signalled to Portuguese agents that English maritime plans would not stop, but, on the contrary, had received a new boost. This explains why, when he received Correia, Ambassador Sousa understood that his stay at the Tudor court was by no means finished.

Prior to Correia's arrival, Sousa had already succeeded in halting the departure of a new fleet.<sup>87</sup> Unfortunately, I have not found documentary evidence for the means he employed. But with Correia's arrival, Sousa had an increased margin of manoeuvre to petition the English government, even though Philip was already in the Netherlands. On 21 October 1555, Giovanni Michelli, the Venetian ambassador to England, wrote to the Venetian Senate and Doge that John III had sent an envoy (Correia) to complain about the English voyages to Guinea and Mina. He stated that the envoy had issued a warning: if English ships were again found there by the Portuguese, the English should expect an attack. On 4 November, the petition was presented to Queen Mary and the Privy Council, and the Venetian ambassador reported that Correia was expecting a final answer as soon as Philip had been acquainted with the case. On 16 December, Michelli wrote that Sousa had achieved all his goals. After hearing Philip's views, Queen Mary had declared an embargo for London merchants on the expedition to West Africa. He also mentioned the expenses that the London merchants had accrued in preparing the expedition, and their complaints over its cancellation. The merchants asked for final authorisation to depart, while Sousa claimed Portugal's rights in coastal areas that the Portuguese were unable to control. Finally, on 23 December, the Venetian ambassador reported that Sousa had also managed successfully to oppose the formal authorisation of the expedition. Still, Michelli stated that two or three

85. R. Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 17.

86. Dalton, *Merchants and Explorers*, p. 183.

87. *Quadro*, XV, pp. LXXXIII/94–96.

ships were able to depart in secrecy.<sup>88</sup> The English merchants presented a formal complaint to Mary and Philip for their losses, demanding that they be authorised to make the voyage as they had not previously traded in Portuguese-held areas.<sup>89</sup> As a consequence, Mary and Philip asked Portugal for financial compensation for the merchants, suggesting that John III should buy up the goods that had been assembled for their journey.

The issue was also debated in Brussels between Philip and the English envoy John Masson; in a letter of 17 December 1555, Masson reported meeting with Philip to discuss the topic. Masson understood that Philip would ask John III to compensate the English merchants for their losses but was forced to apologise when he perceived Philip's preference for a policy of interdicting all English sailing to West Africa.<sup>90</sup> Shortly after, on 18 December, Queen Mary wrote to John III informing him that she had forbidden her subjects from sailing to Mina and Guinea. As for Portuguese collaborators on the English voyages, she was unable to hand them over as they were absent or dead.<sup>91</sup> But if Sousa was able to delay the departure of a new expedition as soon as Lok returned, he was unable to prevent William Towerson from departing before the end of 1555, as he sailed prior to Queen Mary's formal prohibition.<sup>92</sup> Towerson's small fleet left England after news had spread that the French were preparing a voyage to Mina and Guinea, which motivated London merchants to risk the venture.<sup>93</sup>

Towerson's first voyage was a success, as he followed Lok's route and returned in May 1556 with profits. It is possible that the protests of Sousa and Correia did not prevent other departures since, on the return voyage, Towerson found other English ships heading for West Africa.<sup>94</sup> Thanks to Lok's voyage, Richard Eden was able to publish the first English nautical rutter on navigation to West Africa,<sup>95</sup> thus codifying English knowledge of the area. John III was probably not informed of this, as he continued to fight for a formal decree, signed by Queen Mary's government, forbidding English navigation to West Africa. Despite the queen's formal position of August 1555, however, the Privy Council delayed the publication of such a decree until August 1556 because of the resistance it provoked among merchants.<sup>96</sup> This is another example of the tensions aroused in early modern states by conflicting

88. *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs ... in the Archives of Venice* (38 vols in 40, 1864–1947), 1554–1558, nos 251, 269 and 316.

89. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 355–8.

90. *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Mary, 1553–1558* (1861), no. 441.

91. Frei Luís de Sousa, *Anais de D. João III*, II, ed. M. Rodrigues Lapa (Lisbon, 1954), p. 306.

92. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 290–91.

93. Wallis Chapman and Shillington, *Commercial Relations*, p. 138.

94. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, p. 291.

95. Waters, *Art of Navigation*, p. 91.

96. D.M. Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, Government, and Religion in England, 1553–58* (London, 1991), p. 186.

public/state intentions and private/commercial interests. In the case of Towerson's first departure, even when the English government had decided in favour of Portuguese protests, the tensions between the queen's will and the Privy Council played a key role in the continuation of English voyages to West Africa. It is not surprising that Portuguese protests and espionage continued, as the extant documents prove.

In early 1556, John III wrote to Manuel de Melo Coutinho, the Portuguese ambassador to Charles V, informing him that he had previously sent Correia to England to urge Mary and Philip to embargo English navigation to West Africa. Subsequently, he had received news that Correia had accomplished his goals and had rejoiced at this. To maintain good relations with Queen Mary, John III had also ordered Rui Mendes de Vasconcelos, the Portuguese consul/overseer in the Netherlands, to buy from the English merchants the goods assembled for the aborted voyage. In another letter, also addressed to Manuel de Melo Coutinho and rife with deletions and annotations, John III revealed his true feelings on recent events. He wrote that it was unfair to ask him to buy the goods from the English merchants, as they had violated his rights by planning such a voyage to begin with. He had refrained from making a formal protest only because of his love for Mary and Philip, and his appreciation for the way they had reacted to the situation. He therefore sent letters to Mary and Philip thanking them for their interventions, although not without hinting at his displeasure over paying the London merchants (in the letter to Mary). John III then authorised Sousa to return to Portugal and instructed him to leave Correia in charge of all diplomatic affairs. Finally, the king wrote to Rui Mendes de Vasconcelos confirming his orders to buy all the goods that the English merchants had bought, working together with Sousa and Correia if needed.<sup>97</sup>

While these letters were being written, neither Sousa nor Correia left England. On 19 May 1556, Queen Mary addressed another letter to John III stating that she and the Privy Council had once more interdicted English navigation to Mina and Guinea. Mary so trusted Sousa that she informed John III that he could speak as her proxy, as he had been present at the Privy Council meeting that deliberated on the matter of West African navigation.<sup>98</sup> Cardinal Pole also wrote to the Portuguese king, on 25 May, answering John III's previous letter. He, too, signalled his support for Sousa's position on the Mina–Guinea affair. Pole likewise promised John III that he would continue to protect Portuguese claims, and even insinuated that Mary and Philip were so deeply obliged to Portugal that John had no cause for further concern.<sup>99</sup>

97. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fos 69–70, 71–72, 505r–v, 509, 511, 513r–v and 519r–v.

98. *Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, ed. A. da Silva Rego, I (Lisbon, 1960), pp. 764–5.

99. *Calendar of State Papers ... Venice, 1554–1558*, no. 493.

Successfully maintaining a monopoly, however, required constant diplomatic and spying activity. When Towerson returned from his first voyage, Sousa had hastened to petition, in May 1556, for another embargo on English voyages to the Portuguese monopoly zones. Yet despite the letters mentioned above (and Sousa and Correia's opposition), Towerson soon set off on his second voyage.<sup>100</sup> As a consequence, Sousa found himself presenting yet another protest in July 1556, demanding that Mary and Philip forbid all English navigation to Mina, Guinea and Brazil. Sousa's wish was granted the same month.<sup>101</sup>

The interdiction of sailing to Brazil poses the question: did Portugal already envisage an English interest in that area? Although there is no known or documented English voyage to Brazil in these years, it is perfectly possible that, owing to the first shipment of slaves to England in Lok's voyage and especially after the formalisation of the Muscovy Company, English merchants were already planning to expand their trade market to Brazil and the Caribbean. It is likely that Sousa perceived this interest and intervened to prevent its realisation by demanding that Mary sign a prohibition.

It was probably after being informed of the queen's prohibition that John III ordered Correia to return to Portugal, considering his work in England to be satisfactorily completed. Around this time, John wrote to Cardinal Pole and Rui Gomes da Silva thanking them for their assistance and begging their help in securing Correia's authorisation to leave England. Only after this did John III definitively allow Correia to return, informing him that he had already thanked Cardinal Pole for his aid. Following up on the matter of the London merchants, he directed Rui Mendes de Vasconcelos to pay Rui Gomes da Silva the money awarded to the thwarted traders, as Silva had agreed to advance funds for the compensation and the Portuguese king did not want to inflict debts on a devoted servant of his cause. Although all these letters are undated, they seem to have been written after July–August 1556, when Sousa effected the aforementioned formal prohibition.<sup>102</sup>

Meanwhile, Towerson's second voyage was another success, as he struck an alliance with the French captain Blundell to fight Portuguese ships, and received a local proposal to build an English fortress in West Africa. After his return, Towerson readied a third expedition to depart in October 1557. Blake states that Portugal appealed to the English government to forbid the voyage,<sup>103</sup> but I could not find documents to this effect in Portuguese archives. Assuming that this voyage did trigger another pressure campaign, who lodged the complaints to the English monarchs: Sousa, Correia or both? It is possible that Sousa returned to Portugal in 1556 and that Correia remained in England until 1557

100. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, pp. 108–9.

101. *Quadro*, pp. LXXXVII, 98–100.

102. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fos 521–523, 525.

103. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 292–3.



to fulfil his mission, despite the aforementioned letters of John III allowing him to return.

Ultimately, the Portuguese king could not hazard being without a good agent in England to report on English maritime preparations. Even if John III had decided to recall Sousa and Correia, he could rely upon his ambassador to Philip to get updates on English maritime movements, since Philip was still king consort of England. This was precisely what happened when Towerson returned in 1558. The expedition had been a disaster, even though Towerson had charted all the West African coast in his second voyage and brought on board for this third voyage the Portuguese pilot Francisco Rodrigues.<sup>104</sup> The fact that he found a strong Portuguese fleet in West Africa, when combined with the war declared between France and England in Europe, forced him to leave the area without trade, resorting instead to privateering against the French to recuperate his losses.<sup>105</sup> When Towerson returned, he lacked both means and favourable conditions to repeat the voyage. Did Portuguese espionage in England influence this outcome?

Towerson's third voyage had departed from England in January 1558.<sup>106</sup> A formal decree by the Privy Council, on 22 January 1558, forbade Towerson from sailing again to Guinea. However, he departed on 30 January, thus disregarding this order.<sup>107</sup> As I have underscored previously, the tension between the queen's orders and the Privy Council's intentions offered a chance to all the voyage organisers to defy the queen's orders,<sup>108</sup> without fear of incurring royal displeasure. After all, the profits that could be achieved were considerable, as Lok's and Towerson's previous voyages had shown. Once more, Portuguese agents immediately understood the danger to Portuguese interests. But this time, a stronger reaction was in train.

After Towerson's departure, the Portuguese ambassador to Philip had pressed him to take a stand on the matter. As a consequence, on 4 February, Philip ordered his representative in England, the Earl of Feria, to protest again against Towerson's voyage. On 26 February, Philip had been informed of the Privy Council's existing prohibition and he thanked Feria for his role in Queen Mary's measures.<sup>109</sup> In July 1558, new problems emerged when the English seized the Portuguese ship *Raposa*. Portugal immediately urged Philip to step in, for aboard the ship was the correspondence of the Portuguese ambassador in France, several books and the now-kidnapped Portuguese pilot Francisco Dias Salgado, already a familiar character to the English. In response to an outcry from the pilot Roque Fernandes over his captured comrade,

104. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", p. 743.

105. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, p. 292–4.

106. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, pp. 108–9.

107. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, p. 410.

108. Loades, *England's Maritime Empire*, p. 66.

109. *CSP Spain, 1554–1558*, nos 398 and 408.

Portugal made it clear that the ship and all its contents were to be returned.<sup>110</sup>

Lisbon issued an ultimatum to Philip: if he did not intervene, Portugal would send another ambassador to England to present a formal protest. In reply, Philip ordered Feria to press Queen Mary to return the ship, the cargo and the artillery to the Portuguese, and told the Portuguese ambassador in the Netherlands that there was no need for Portugal to send a new envoy to England. He would handle the situation himself, out of love for his nephew, the new Portuguese king, Sebastian.<sup>111</sup> But things rapidly became more complicated than they had originally seemed. On 25 November 1558, Feria replied to Philip, stating that even though Queen Mary had given orders favourable to Philip's wishes, her death (on 17 November) had endangered the outcome. The new circumstances brought about by Queen Elizabeth's accession left Feria in a difficult position. He promised Philip that he would do his best, but realised he was unable to make any guarantees. The situation was a dangerous one.<sup>112</sup>

Some days earlier, and indeed only twelve hours after the death of the queen, Cardinal Reginald Pole had also died, leaving Philip without an important support in the Tudor court. With Queen Mary's death, Philip ceased to be king consort of England. Furthermore, Philip and Mary had struggled, almost since the beginning of their reign, with a party in England that opposed the re-Catholicisation programme, and likewise with resistance to the limits placed on English overseas expansion for the sake of Iberian interests. The English corsair Killigrew, who seems to have been responsible for capturing the aforementioned *Raposa*, is a good example. Since he was prohibited from entering the Spanish *mare clausum*, Killigrew had made his living from seizures in the English Channel, later taking to privateering around Guinea and Mina.<sup>113</sup> The tension worsened in Mary's final months of life, when Calais was lost to France. Although the queen defied Philip's original orders relating to Calais, her premature death appreciably reduced the space in which Philip could manoeuvre in defence of Portuguese maritime interests.

Confirmation of Towerson's return from his third voyage cast further doubt on Philip's capacity to protect Portuguese interests, especially when it was discovered that two ships provided by Queen Mary and two by the Lord Admiral, William Howard, had sailed with the fleet. Despite formal prohibitions to her subjects, then, Queen Mary herself was a supporter of English voyages to West Africa, and had acted exactly as Edward VI had when he patronised Wyndham's first voyage

110. ANTT, CC I-102-113, fos 1-2.

111. CSP Spain, 1554-1558, no. 459.

112. *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas* (4 vols, 1892-9), 1558-1567, no. 4.

113. Prescott, *Mary Tudor*, p. 478.

to Guinea. For Portugal, this demonstrated for the first time that Mary had given an official cover to English sailings to West Africa, something that contradicted her previous action in forbidding her subjects from sailing to the Portuguese *mare clausum*. As Portugal considered Philip responsible for the failure to halt Towerson's voyage, trusting that Spanish diplomacy could lead to a good resolution appeared now to be a less attractive option. Instead, and especially given Elizabeth's recent accession, the Portuguese debated a more aggressive approach: sending agents to England.

Dom Francisco Pereira, the new Portuguese ambassador to Philip in the Netherlands, addressed a letter to King Sebastian on 21 November 1558 (that is, after Queen Mary's death) expressing his outrage at Towerson's return and stating that he was considering sending his son Dom João Pereira to protest. Since his son was then ill, he sent in his place an agent, Manuel de Figueiredo, to ask Feria to represent Portuguese interests. D. Francisco Pereira wrote that he had also pressed Philip on the matter, and had been instructed to address the issue to Feria. Finally, he promised Sebastian that he would gather all possible intelligence related to Towerson's third voyage. In the meantime, he advised the Portuguese king to station a powerful fleet on the Mina and Guinea coasts, and to sink all English and French interlopers without mercy. To Pereira's mind, harsh measures were the only way to prevent the damage the English and the French were inflicting on Portugal and conclusively to stop what he considered an intolerable challenge to Portuguese monopolistic rights.<sup>114</sup>

Shortly after, in a letter probably dating from December 1558, the Portuguese king thanked Pereira for the information he had sent regarding Towerson's third voyage and for his appeals to Philip to punish those involved in the expedition. Having been apprised of Mary's death in a letter of December 1558 from Spain, the Portuguese king also approved Pereira's offer to enlist Feria's assistance and urge the Elizabethan government to hand over the *Raposa*. In another letter, King Sebastian ordered Pereira, as John III had previously, to raise the issue of French navigation to the Portuguese *mare clausum* in the negotiations for the Cateau-Cambrésis peace treaty between Spain and France.<sup>115</sup> Thus, in the absence of a formal ambassador or agent after João Rodrigues Correia's probable departure from England sometime in 1557, Portugal used the Spanish network and its ambassador to Philip to manage English affairs.

It was probably in January 1559 that King Sebastian notified D. Francisco Pereira of his decision to send his son D. João Pereira to visit Elizabeth and congratulate her on accession. D. João Pereira was also to deliver letters to the new queen from King Sebastian and Queen

114. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, p. 341.

115. ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fos 344–345, 348.

Catherine of Austria, then the Portuguese regent during the minority of her nephew.<sup>116</sup> These missives offered the expected congratulations, and moreover included requests for formal confirmation of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. In tandem with this typical diplomatic envoy, King Sebastian launched an unofficial mission in January 1559. He ordered Francisco de Mesquita to accompany D. João Pereira, providing him with a set of guidelines entitled ‘instructions to you that shall reside in the court of England’. This document, like so many others discussed here, was subject to many revisions. It shows that Mesquita was not to work as a permanent ambassador, but was primarily intended to operate as a spy.

The king began the instruction by noting that he had sent D. João Pereira to congratulate Elizabeth on her accession, but had seen fit to enlist Mesquita to take care of ‘other affairs’. On arriving in England, Mesquita was to proceed immediately to Feria’s house. Feria would arrange his meeting with Elizabeth, since he had been handling the issue of English navigation to West Africa with Philip and Elizabeth. Before speaking to Elizabeth and the Privy Council about the seizure of the *Raposa* in his capacity as official Portuguese envoy, Mesquita should hear the advice of Feria. During his time in England, King Sebastian instructed Mesquita to ‘have particular care in knowing the names of ships, the qualities of people that are planning the voyages, the route they will follow, which port they are from, the munition and artillery they bring and the calendar in which they plan to depart. All of this you shall warn me as soon as you can’. The king also added: ‘If you come to know that some of these ships are being prepared to the Mina coast or any other of my overseas places, you will work, within your possibilities, to sabotage it and you will immediately demand the Queen [Elizabeth] and her Council [the Privy Council] not to allow it’. Finally, the king ordered Mesquita to report on the Elizabethan return to Protestantism, but as a secondary mission, and provided him with a cypher.

Attached to this letter was another one from the Portuguese king to Feria, acknowledging his assistance in the Mina affair and begging him to assist Mesquita in his mission. Interestingly, King Sebastian recognised in the letter that the Spanish ambassador in England had defended Portuguese interests because of Philip’s love for him.<sup>117</sup> Philip was probably also informed of Mesquita’s mission as, on 20 January 1559, he wrote to Feria again with instructions to settle the affairs the Portuguese had on hand in England. He also wrote personally to Elizabeth on the matter, as a letter in the High Court of Admiralty proves.<sup>118</sup>

116. *Ibid.*, fos 341r–v, 352r–v, 354.

117. *Ibid.*, fos 29–32, 258.

118. *Europeans in West Africa*, ed. Blake, pp. 432–3.

Thus, even after losing his role as king consort of England, Philip continued to play an active part in political affairs, often in the defence of Portuguese interests. Although the outcome of D. João Pereira's and Francisco Mesquita's espionage remains unknown because their letters have not survived, it is clear that Queen Elizabeth was pleased by the desire of King Sebastian and Queen Catherine of Austria to confirm the traditional alliance. D. João Pereira was well received, as the queen wrote in letters to both Sebastian and Catherine,<sup>119</sup> even though his mission was a reaction to Towerson's third voyage.<sup>120</sup> As for the Portuguese protests against Towerson's third voyage, neither Elizabeth nor Cecil was able to provide a definitive answer. The fact that Towerson was not able immediately to launch another expedition in the wake of his disastrous third attempt must in part be attributed to opposition from Portugal and Spain.

Nevertheless, English navigation to West Africa continued, forcing the dispatch of another Portuguese spy, Manuel de Araújo, in 1561. Araújo's correspondence is incomplete, but it is evident that he worked for João Pereira Dantas, the Portuguese ambassador in France, for whom he had previously acted as an agent in the French ports. The preparations for John Hawkins's first voyage would also prompt King Sebastian to appoint Dantas to a mission to England the next year. In 1562, and again in relation to Hawkins's voyages of 1564 and 1567, Dantas and Portuguese maritime espionage and counter-espionage are documented in England.<sup>121</sup> But, as the documents that I have presented here prove, Dantas's activities in the 1560s were merely an escalation of a process already underway during the reign of Queen Mary.

This takes us back to the initial argument that Mary and Elizabeth shared important features in their maritime policies. Why did Portugal envisage Marian England as a serious competitor, as all this maritime espionage indicates? The answer is connected to the development of a scientific milieu under Mary of which Elizabeth became the main beneficiary. This was also the ambience in which all the Portuguese maritime espionage took place, and it played a role in the escalation of tension on both sides. Thus, aside from the superficial maritime rivalry, there was another key factor that influenced English maritime expansion: Anglo-Iberian maritime knowledge interchange.

#### IV

In 1555, when Mary and Philip approved the charter (prepared in previous years) for the creation of the Muscovy Company, Philip hoped

119. *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth* (23 vols in 26, 1863–1950), 1558–1559, pp. 216–17.

120. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", p. 742.

121. See n. 63 above.

to avoid a clash between England and Spain overseas. His support of the charter is usually seen as an attempt to divert the English from dangerous overseas ambitions,<sup>122</sup> although it is also clear that, in Europe, and particularly in relation to France, he intended to promote Anglo-Spanish maritime collaboration. The chief importance of the company's creation was that it allowed for the systematic training in oceanic and astronomical navigation of the first generation of England's great sailors. Within the framework of the Muscovy Company, after Richard Chancellor, Stephen and William Borough were trained, side-by-side with other major figures of the Elizabethan era: Richard Record, Richard Eden and John Dee.<sup>123</sup> It was also within this company that Richard Eden started to translate the aforementioned works of Apianus, Pietro Martire d'Anghiera and González de Oviedo into English. The English translations of the first Spanish accounts of the Americas played a pivotal role in instructing and inspiring the first sailors of the Elizabethan era. But, once more, neither the arrival of this information in England nor Eden's work can be understood without considering the particulars of Mary's reign.

It was because of Mary's marriage with Philip that, in 1558, Stephen Borough was allowed (by Philip himself) to make a personal visit to the Casa de la Contratación de Indias in Seville. In this way, the dynastic bond between England and Spain, together with Philip's attempt to acquire more information concerning the English ambition of sailing to Asia via an Arctic route (an idea under consideration within the Muscovy Company),<sup>124</sup> provided the English with a crucial technical work: the nautical treatise of Martín Cortés de Albarca, which contained knowledge from Portuguese nautical science.<sup>125</sup> Borough brought this book to England, and was so impressed by the Spanish system he witnessed in operation that, in 1561, he urged the Elizabethan government to create the office of pilot-major of England.<sup>126</sup> Interestingly, it later became clear that the English did not fully understand the workings of the institution they were trying to emulate.<sup>127</sup>

Although his idea was not adopted, Borough was able to convince the Muscovy Company merchants to finance the translation of Cortés's treatise into English. Richard Eden soon completed this and it became the most important manual for the sixteenth-century English sailor.<sup>128</sup> After Borough's visit to Seville and the appearance of the English edition of Cortés, English development of the art of navigation was correctly

122. Waters, *Art of Navigation*, p. 101; Baldwin, 'Development and Interchange of Navigational Information', i, p. 233.

123. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, p. 29.

124. Baldwin, 'Development and Interchange of Navigational Information', i, pp. 231, 237–8.

125. D. Waters, *The Iberian Bases of the English Art of Navigation in the Sixteenth Century* (Lisbon, 1970), p. 14.

126. Waters, *Art of Navigation*, pp. 496, 513–14.

127. On this topic, see Ash and Sandman, 'Sebastian Cabot'.

128. Taylor, *Haven-finding Art*, p. 197.

deemed inevitable. Following the deaths of Richard Chancellor and Sebastian Cabot during Elizabeth's early years, Stephen Borough and John Dee stepped in to their approximate roles. Queen Elizabeth inherited a scientific and maritime milieu fully favourable to maritime expansion.<sup>129</sup>

Thus it is no wonder that we find in Elizabethan London a globally connected city with conditions ripe for making contributions to the Scientific Revolution, as has been described by Deborah Harkness.<sup>130</sup> But this link cannot be explained without acknowledging the critical role that Queen Mary played, whether in the creation of the Muscovy Company, by supporting William Towerson's third voyage or, more dramatically and despite her marriage to Philip, by continuing to deny Spain's requests to turn over Sebastian Cabot. The most important moment in the Marian refusal to hand over Cabot to Spain came in 1555, when the Muscovy Company was created and Cabot's appointment as its governor meant that England could no longer consider allowing Cabot's return to Spain, given his critical role in directing maritime expeditions.<sup>131</sup>

Another vital element for the successes of the Elizabethan era which had roots in Mary's reign was the activities of John Dee. Dee was trained in the milieu of the Muscovy Company and came to play a key role during Elizabeth's reign as a cosmographical and scientific advisor to several English maritime expeditions. It was during Mary's reign and Elizabeth's early years that Dee began to publish his most important works. Among his important contacts was the Portuguese royal cosmographer Pedro Nunes. Dee not only kept Nunes's works in his personal library throughout his life, but in 1558 appointed Nunes executor of one of his mathematical works in the event of his death.<sup>132</sup> In 1559 and 1560, two more of his works were dedicated to Nunes,<sup>133</sup> and as late as 1584 Dee was to be found performing experiments with nautical instruments originally designed by Nunes.<sup>134</sup> Although the letters that Nunes and Dee exchanged do not survive, this scientific connection is worth highlighting, since it is analogous to the Spanish cases discussed above. Did Nunes, owing to his pan-European reputation as a great mathematician, serve as a scientific role model for Dee in the same manner that the pilot-major of the Casa de la Contratación did for Stephen Borough? It is impossible to provide a final answer, but

129. Baldwin, 'Development and Interchange of Navigational Information', i, p. 524; Waters, *Art of Navigation*, p. 94.; Taylor, *Haven-finding Art*, p. 194.

130. D.E. Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven, CT, 2007), pp. 2, 10, 260.

131. Loades, *England's Maritime Empire*, p. 58.

132. B. Almeida, 'On the Origins of Dee's Mathematical Programme: The John Dee–Pedro Nunes Connection', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, xliii (2012), pp. 461, 468.

133. S. Johnston, 'John Dee on Geometry: Texts, Teaching and the Euclidean Tradition', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, xliii (2012), p. 471.

134. *The Diaries of John Dee*, ed. E. Fenton (Charlbury, 1998), p. 165.

the possibility should not be forgotten when considering the ways that Anglo-Iberian nautical/scientific relations of the 1550s influenced the English overseas expansion.

The character of these relations has been the focus of this article thus far, since it is under the umbrella of such exchanges that Portuguese maritime espionage in England under Queen Mary arguably falls. The same avenues for the circulation of maritime and scientific knowledge that led Dee to Nunes's works also motivated Portuguese pilots, such as António Eanes Pinteado or Francisco Rodrigues, to come to England to offer their nautical expertise. It was also the intensity of these connections between Portugal and England that explains why William Cecil, Elizabeth's chief adviser, commissioned a recently rediscovered piece: the first manuscript history of Portugal written in English (*circa* 1570).<sup>135</sup> If it was with Spanish manuals of navigation (in particular, those of Cortés and Pedro de Medina) that the English were trained in the art of oceanic navigation during the 1550s and 1560s, their formative interactions with Portuguese pilots should not be neglected. Thus, beneath the surface of Anglo-Portuguese maritime rivalry, there was also a less visible process of English tutelage with Portuguese and Spanish counterparts in the art of navigation. This process contributed to the cultivation of an English nautical literature from the late 1560s onwards. Once more, the roots are to be found in Queen Mary's reign.

## V

We may now turn to a final important question: how do these nautical knowledge exchanges between Portugal and England relate to the surprisingly intense Portuguese maritime espionage in England under Queen Mary? We will approach this topic by first considering the particulars of Portugal's relations with its European maritime rivals and England, and then discussing the globalisation of nautical knowledge.

It is my conviction that the maritime espionage conducted by John III and Sebastian in England during the 1550s cannot be explained without taking into account the growth of the English maritime and scientific milieu under Queen Mary. For John III, the cases of the pilots António Eanes Pinteado and Francisco Rodrigues were merely worrisome repetitions of previous incidents he had had to cope with. During the 1530s, the Portuguese pilot João Afonso went into the service of Valois France, ultimately being naturalised under the name of Jean Alphonse de Saintonge. Afonso participated in French voyages to West Africa, and in Jean-François de Roberval's expeditions to Canada

<sup>135</sup> On this topic, see N. Vila-Santa and K. Lowe, 'An Unknown History of Portugal (c.1570) in William Cecil's Library: Commissioning and Writing History during the Elizabethan Era', *Antiquaries Journal*, published 9 Dec. 2024, available at <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003581524000167>.



in the 1540s. He also wrote two cosmographical works (published posthumously in French) and helped transmit Portuguese nautical and cartographical knowledge to France.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, Afonso is usually seen as one of the Portuguese who contributed most significantly to the cartographical school of Dieppe.<sup>137</sup> John III did everything he could to prevent him from entering French service, including passing a letter of pardon for him, but his attempt was unsuccessful.<sup>138</sup> Other, albeit less conspicuous, cases of Portuguese pilots working in France and piloting French expeditions during John III's reign have also been identified.<sup>139</sup> Thus, Pinteado's activities in England are directly comparable with those of João Afonso in France. In both instances, John III attempted to bring the pilots back to Portugal, fearing the consequences of important nautical experts serving his rivals and leaking Portuguese maritime knowledge.

But John III's concern was not limited to France and England. His greatest unease was with respect to the Portuguese working in the Casa de la Contratación in Spain, a topic examined by Edward Collins.<sup>140</sup> Afonso and Pinteado's stories are mirrored by the well-known cases of Ferdinand Magellan and the Faleiro brothers, who went to Spain to prepare the first circumnavigation of the world. Other important Portuguese pilots, including Estêvão Gomes and Simão de Alcáçova (Esteban Gómez and Simon de Alcazaba in Spanish), also worked for Spain during the 1520s. Both ended up participating (on the Spanish side) in the negotiations that resulted in the 1529 Treaty of Zaragoza, by which John III bought from Charles V his rights to the Moluccas. Again, John III attempted, without success, to repatriate them.<sup>141</sup>

Thus, by the 1550s, John III's main aim with regard to Marian England, fully documented in his instructions to Diogo Lopes de Sousa in 1554 as well as in his dispatch of Pedro Gonçalves to England in 1553, was to prevent Pinteado from following in the footsteps of pilots like João Afonso or Simão de Alcáçova. For this reason, it is notable that in the king's instructions there are orders to gather intelligence on possible Portuguese collaborators working in English ventures, as well as to transmit constant updates on the technicalities of the routes that

136. On Afonso, see D. Larochelle, 'Du ciel au bateau: La "Cosmographie" (1544) du pilote Jean Alfonse et la construction du savoir géographique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle' (Univ. de Sherbrooke M.A. dissertation, 2001).

137. M. Saurer, *Voyages dans l'école cartographique de Dieppe au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: Espaces, altérités et influences* (New York, 2014), p. 1.

138. L. de Matos, *Les Portugais en France au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: Études et documents* (Coimbra, 1952), pp. 33–48.

139. A.M. Pereira Ferreira, *Problemas marítimos entre Portugal e a França na primeira metade do século XVI* (Redondo, 1995), pp. 213–16.

140. E. Collins, 'Francisco Faleiro and Scientific Methodology at the Casa de la Contratación in the Sixteenth Century', *Imago Mundi*, lxxv (2013), pp. 25–36; E. Collins, 'Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de la Contratación and the Exámenes de Pilotos', *International Journal of Maritime History*, xxvi (2014), pp. 179–92.

141. Sousa Viterbo, *Trabalhos Náuticos*, pp. 66–8, 164–5.

each English expedition to West Africa was following. Only with such information could John III monitor the state of the English art of navigation and knowledge of West Africa. If English navigators became too sophisticated, Portugal would be forced to assign more naval forces to West Africa. It is necessary to bear in mind that, for John III, it was not merely monopolistic commercial rights that were at stake. The larger and more serious concern for Portugal was preventing England from becoming a 'second France'. In this light, John III's orders and policy *vis-à-vis* Mary I's England were directly paralleled by the diplomacy surrounding the earlier French–Portuguese maritime rivalry.

In dealing with France, John III had also endeavoured to disrupt expeditions, end the losses of Portuguese pilots and even bribe French admirals to cancel their voyages. In this process with Marian England, as with France, the Portuguese king resorted to a plurality of agents ranging from the ambassador (Sousa) to the special envoy (Rodrigues Correia) and to classical spies (Mesquita). This indicates how complex the diplomatic apparatus was becoming,<sup>142</sup> in this case in the wake of intensified maritime rivalries. However, despite some successes, John III proved unable to control the circulation of Portuguese nautical experts and knowledge to France. Nor could he restrain France from becoming a serious competitor in areas such as West Africa and Brazil from the 1530s onwards. In this practical arena (rather than in the programmatic and legal defence of its supposed *mare clausum* rights) John III knew that Portugal lacked the resources to patrol the immense Atlantic Ocean with his fleets—the same problem that the far more powerful Philip II would have with English expeditions under Queen Elizabeth.

The Portuguese king concentrated on fighting the impact of the French strategic menace in the same way he approached the problem with England under Queen Mary. In this light, the documents presented here plainly demonstrate that John III considered Marian England to be an emerging maritime power. This English awakening could seriously harm his overseas imperial policy and the chances of success for his diplomacy, which was based on maritime strategies. The growing difficulties of that maritime policy help explain why the Portuguese shared strategies with Spanish diplomacy,<sup>143</sup> as I have detailed in discussing the role played by Philip and his ambassadors, particularly from 1558 onwards. It was for these reasons that John III engaged in maritime espionage against England and concomitantly sought to control more rigorously the flow of information and expertise (although even in Queen Mary's case, the results were disappointing).

142. D. Fedele, 'Plurality of Diplomatic Agents in Premodern Literature on the Ambassador', in M. Ebben and L. Sicking, eds, *Beyond Ambassadors: Consuls, Missionaries, and Spies in Premodern Diplomacy* (Leiden, 2021), pp. 38–59.

143. J. Borges de Macedo, *História diplomática portuguesa: Constantes e linhas de força* (Lisbon, 2006), pp. 126, 129.

Marian England refused to deliver Sebastian Cabot to Spain. This was despite the queen's marriage with Philip, and can be compared with her decision never to hand over to Portugal the Portuguese collaborators. Mary's approach was not novel—the case of the Portuguese earl of Penamacor (another figure, like Pinteado, powerfully influencing the emergence of English maritime expansion) had been handled in a similar manner.<sup>144</sup> I have also underlined how Henry VII and Henry VIII patronised the emergence in England of a true pilot's profession, particularly by ensuring good conditions for non-English experts in the navy. On a related topic, Mary's prohibitions from sailing to West Africa did not prevent Towerson's voyages, and we have seen the role played by the combination of Sebastian Cabot with merchants and sailors' private interests.

Mary I's position has clear counterparts in the reigns of Francis I and Henry II of France. Both kings, when facing diplomatic pressure from Portugal, issued analogous orders (and triggered protests) but this did not actually forestall the departure of such expeditions, which, as in the English case, escaped the full controlling abilities of early modern states. This was precisely the policy that Mary inaugurated in 1557, when it is very likely that she authorised William Towerson's third voyage and financed two ships of his fleet. In doing so, Mary was not only following the example of Edward VI in 1553 in relation to Wyndham's pioneer voyage: she was also providing the model that Queen Elizabeth followed for John Hawkins's second voyage in 1564.<sup>145</sup>

Such a policy, combined with the development of a scientific milieu in England under her rule and the marriage alliance with Spain, correctly shows Queen Mary to be an undeclared (but effective) supporter of the English overseas expansion that would bear fruit under Queen Elizabeth. However, during England's nautical 'apprenticeship' with Spain, the traditional alliance with Portugal also played an important role. Despite their best efforts, kings John III and Sebastian were unable to stop Portuguese nautical experts from passing into English service. If it would have hardly been possible for an Englishman to visit the Portuguese Casa da Índia as Stephen Borough did with the Casa de la Contratación, even in the context of a possible marriage alliance, one should not forget the changing dynamics that the first globalisation introduced into sixteenth-century Europe.

Indeed, one of the many consequences of that process was the circulation of nautical knowledge and experts between maritime rivals on a wider scale. For these nautical experts, the borders of kingdoms were easily crossed, as the maritime milieu was, by its nature, international.

144. Puga, "Scramble for Africa", p. 752.

145. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, pp. 104, 108–9.

The sixteenth-century geographical revolution and first globalisation only accelerated this process. In this article I have focused on Portuguese cases, but there is an abundance of similar instances in Anglo-French relations. Jean Ribault provides an interesting example. As we have seen, he was initially hired by Henry VIII, but the French king Henry II was able to draw him back to France for some time. When Henry II died, however, the French nautical expert fled to Elizabethan England because of his Huguenot sympathies. When Gaspard de Coligny, the Huguenot admiral of France, tried to have him repatriated, Ribault was jailed for a time in the Tower of London. Still, Coligny was eventually successful, and enlisted him to participate in the 1562 French expedition to Florida. Unfortunately for Coligny, Ribault handed over all the knowledge he had acquired during the expedition to the English when he returned. His notes were first published in England and their contents shaped the English imaginary and later plans for North America. The importance of French maritime and scientific knowledge to the English maritime expansion is also evident in the way which André Thevet's works fuelled Elizabethan ambitions in Brazil.<sup>146</sup>

These micro-processes of knowledge acquisition (either by espionage, by bribery or by the simple but often undocumented circulation of nautical experts) amounted to a major force shaping the dynamics of European overseas expansion. As R.C.D. Baldwin has argued, in sixteenth-century Europe nautical knowledge became a truly international type of knowledge that everyone was interested in acquiring.<sup>147</sup> This world on the move of nautical experts,<sup>148</sup> to recall a turn of phrase applied to the Portuguese early modern maritime empire (but which also suits this European reality), had dramatic consequences. The flow of information and experts had become unstoppable, as John III would discover first with respect to Spain and France, and then, in the time of Mary I, with England. The Portuguese king understood in the 1550s that Marian England was putting together all the necessary elements to become a sea-borne nation, ready to challenge Portuguese interests abroad. His fears were fully confirmed by his successor during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The documents presented here demonstrate both this, and the repeated failures of the Portuguese king's policy.

Still, the dynamics of globalisation continued to defy each new attempt at maritime hegemony overseas. Within half a century, the tables would turn once more. With the English by then masters of

146. See n. 5 above. On the importance of the previous Anglo-French interchange in the political and military arenas, see also D. Grummitt, ed., *The English Experience in France, c.1450–1558: War, Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange* (Aldershot, 2002).

147. Baldwin, 'Development and Interchange of Navigational Information', i, p. 529.

148. A.J.R. Russell-Wood, *The Portuguese Empire, 1415–1808: A World on the Move* (London, 1998).

oceanic navigation, the Dutch Republic would assume the role hitherto played by the English, appropriating their knowledge and, for a time, overpowering them at sea. But, as with the Anglo-Portuguese rivalry discussed here, at the root of such trends was the transmission of maritime knowledge between maritime rivals—a topic that demands further study.

*Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal*

NUNO VILA-SANTA<sup>o</sup>