

4. *Mare Clausum* and *Secret Science*: João Pereira Dantas and the Portuguese Strategies to Control French and English Overseas Plans (1557–68)

Abstract

This chapter deals with the Portuguese strategies to counteract the French and English acquisition of Portuguese maritime knowledge during the critical period of the 1550s and 1560s. The study of the correspondence of a Portuguese ambassador to France and England will be used to understand how Portugal attempted to stem the flow of Portuguese maritime knowledge and expertise from entering French and English service. The chapter focuses on the Portuguese *Mare Clausum* and *Secret Science* policies, and demonstrates the difference between these policies and their actual results.

Keywords: Elizabeth I, Charles IX, Catherine de' Medici, maritime espionage, Philip II, secrecy policies

Introduction

Mostly known as the diplomat who harbored Portuguese pilots, cosmographers, and cartographers in his house abroad, João Pereira Dantas is also on record as the man who proposed the fortification of the Cape Good Hope to King John III (1521–57) in 1556.¹ However, in 1557, when Dantas was appointed ambassador to France, he came to be known for quite different reasons. His embassies to France, between 1557 and 1568, and to England, in 1562, were

¹ Maria Emília Madeira Santos, *O carácter experimental da Carreira da Índia. Um plano de João Pereira Dantas, com fortificação da África do Sul (1556)* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, 1969).

marked by his attempts to impose the Portuguese *Mare Clausum*² during the same period that *France Antarctique* was being launched in Brazil (between 1555 and 1560), and major English expeditions under Queens Mary I (1553–58) and Elizabeth I (1558–1603) were underway. The Portuguese government relied on Dantas's ability to ease maritime tensions and prevent the departure of English and French expeditions. A fierce opponent of France and England's overseas ambitions, Dantas resorted to classical espionage and counter-espionage to ensure that Portuguese nautical experts did not serve France and England. In the course of these activities, Dantas's maneuvers were widely commented on, leading to his renown across Europe.

In his role as a diplomat and advisor to the Portuguese government, Dantas sought to control French and English overseas movements through a combination of espionage and diplomacy. Utilizing the diplomatic and legal rhetoric that had been developed by Portugal since the late 15th century,³ Dantas attempted to persuade France and England to respect Portuguese rights to *Mare Clausum*,⁴ and all its commercial monopolies in West Africa and Brazil. Besides diplomacy, Dantas employed a *Secret Science* policy, which entailed housing Portuguese nautical experts abroad and negotiating their return to Portuguese service in an effort to uphold Portugal's secrecy policies.

During the tenure of João Pereira Dantas as ambassador to France and England, the task of protecting Portuguese control over the seas (*Mare Clausum*) became increasingly difficult due to the maritime leadership of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny in France, and Queen Elizabeth I's determination to shore up England's overseas presence. While France and England informally collaborated abroad against the Portuguese and the Spanish, Dantas understood that Portugal needed, more than ever, to make a formal maritime league with Spain to protect its own *Mare Clausum*. Thus, the collaboration traced in chapters 2 and 3 between Portuguese and Spanish diplomacies intensified during Dantas's term. Maritime intelligence (in the form of details of English or French overseas fleets) and even Portuguese nautical experts' careers became the focus of formal interchanges, alliances, and tensions between Spain and Portugal in their shared attempts to disrupt French and English overseas expeditions. Again, like in the previous chapters, processes of emulation and rivalry went hand in hand and Dantas's

2 Pereira Ferreira, "Da defesa do monopólio," 159–66.

3 On this topic see Pereira Ferreira, *Problemas marítimos*, 136–40 and also Ana Maria Pereira Ferreira, *Portugal e a origem da liberdade dos mares* (Lisbon: INCM, 1988).

4 Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, 105–34.

embassies constitute eloquent proof of the failure of Portuguese and Spanish secrecy policies.

Despite the importance of Dantas's missives and the existence of some studies on his career,⁵ there has been no systematic examination of his embassies. The purpose of this chapter is to focus on his ambassadorial activities, insofar as they document maritime knowledge exchanges, utilizing Dantas's letters whenever possible. Dantas's correspondence is incomplete, and only around 150 letters written by or addressed to him between 1557 and 1568 have been identified. Complementing this corpus with Spanish, English, and French sources, it will be possible to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Portuguese *Mare Clausum* and *Secret Science* policies during a time when France and England emerged as serious competitors to the Iberians. The influence of French and English overseas projects also had an impact on the Dutch Republic, which was just beginning to emerge as a maritime power following the rebellion against King Philip II. Through this examination, it will become clear that despite being formal adversaries, Dantas used similar methods as the French (as detailed in the previous chapter) and English ambassadors for the acquisition of maritime intelligence. Dantas is also an example of the complexification of diplomacy,⁶ as bribery and espionage played a key role in his operations from the outset.

This chapter will begin by analyzing Dantas's activities in Valois France, and will later address his approach towards Elizabethan England. In the first section, a thorough examination of the maritime affairs of Dantas's embassy in France will be essayed. In the second section, the focus will shift to Dantas's strategies concerning specific cases of Portuguese nautical experts residing abroad, and his attempts to negotiate their return to Portuguese service. Additionally, and within the context of Dantas's embassy in France, the issue of Portuguese-Spanish diplomatic collaboration will be explored, in order to understand the reasons behind his downfall in 1567-68. The second major part of this chapter deals with Dantas's espionage activities in Elizabethan England. First, both the antecedents and Dantas's embassy to Queen Elizabeth I in 1562 will be probed. Then, the consequences of the 1562 diplomatic failure of Portuguese goals will be considered in light of the intensification of Portuguese espionage and counter-espionage activities

5 Madeira Santos, *O caracter experimental*, and Madeira Santos, *João Pereira Dantas*; Pereira Ferreira, "Da defesa do monopólio," and Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. I, 222-42 and vol. II, 158-86 and more recently Chichkine, "Mirage d'une alliance," 44-51.

6 Dante Fedele, *Naissance de la diplomatie moderne (XIIIe -XVIIe siècles): l'ambassadeur au croisement du droit, de l'éthique et de la politique* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2017).

with regard to England. The importance of leaks of Portuguese knowledge and agents circulating for the systematic launch of French and English maritime voyages in this period will be highlighted. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the significance of Dantas's embassies in the processes of Portuguese maritime knowledge circulation.

4.1 João Pereira Dantas's Embassy to France (1557–68)

4.1.1 Spying on the French: Dantas and the French-Portuguese Maritime Rivalry

Dantas arrived in France with a commission by King John III to negotiate the renewal of the previous treaties of mutual détente concerning maritime attacks between French and Portuguese seafarers with King Henry II (1547–59). Most likely what was at stake was the fact that, in 1556, King Henry II had renewed a letter of marque against the Portuguese originally given to the Dieppe merchant Guillaume Scot in the 1530s.⁷ Dantas most certainly received an order to attempt to have the renewal reversed, although no documentary proof has survived. Still, the ambassador succeeded in securing the renewal of the treaty shortly after his arrival, in June 1557.⁸ However, the French challenge in Brazil most likely constituted the main driver of Dantas's embassy when he departed from Portugal. As has been underscored in the previous chapter, in 1556, Simon Renard, Emperor Charles V's ambassador in France, warned Queen Catherine of Austria (1507–78), of Nicholas Durrand de Villegagnon's (1509–1571) request for military reinforcements to *France Antarctique*.⁹ Yet in 1557, after appointing Mem de Sá as the new Portuguese governor to Brazil, although no further documents are known, Dantas was chosen as ambassador to France. From the beginning, he was to serve not as a mere envoy, but as an ambassador, signaling the importance of his appointment for Lisbon.

There are some indications that Dantas's appointment had already been made in the final months of King John III's life, although he only left for France some days after the monarch's death. Although his formal instruction is lost, the Spanish diplomatic network in Lisbon commented upon it. In one document, undated but likely from June 1557, it was asserted that

7 Bibliothèque de Saint Geneviève, Ms. 3429, fl. 48–56.

8 Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. I, 222.

9 Provençal and Mariz, *Villegagnon e a França Antártica*, 103.

Dantas had set out on his French embassy some days after King John III's death (June 11). His departure took place amidst rumors in Lisbon that Brazil had been lost to the French, something that must have motivated the Portuguese regent, by then Queen Catherine of Austria, to order Dantas to present a Portuguese protest against *France Antarctique* at King Henry II's court.¹⁰ As a consequence, Dantas tried to ensure that in the 1559 Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis between Spain and France,¹¹ King Henry II would forbid Frenchmen from sailing to other Portuguese overseas areas. But by July 1559, D. Francisco Pereira, the Portuguese ambassador to King Philip II, confirmed that France had yet to commit to this in writing.¹² Thomas Perrenot de Chantonnay (1521–71), the Spanish ambassador to France between 1559 and 1564 and brother of the famous Cardinal Granvelle,¹³ likewise negotiated with King Francis II (1559–60) to secure that France would respect Spanish and Portuguese *Mare Clausum*.¹⁴

One of Dantas's letters, undated but probably from March 1559, mentions that he revoked several French letters of marque against Portugal and had new Portuguese and French judges appointed for the court of Bayonne to judge maritime incidents between Portugal and France. He also mentioned that France was not committing on not sailing to Portuguese overseas areas, despite all his attempts, and those by the Portuguese ambassador in Flanders and by Granvelle.¹⁵ Furthermore, D. Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, duke of Alba (1507–82), a member of the Spanish delegation in Paris that was further negotiating details of the peace treaty between Spain and France, wrote an interesting piece to Rui Gomes da Silva, the influential Portuguese courtier in King Philip II's service.¹⁶ In a missive penned on July 22, 1559, Alba stated that he had spoken with Charles de Guise, the cardinal of Lorraine (1524–74). As Lorraine was a member of the French delegation, Alba spoke with him regarding limiting French navigation in Spanish and Portuguese overseas areas. At the end of the conversation, Lorraine requested a written agreement

10 Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 379, doc. 153.

11 On the treaty negotiations see: Haan, *Une paix*.

12 *Archivo Documental Español*, vol. I (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1950–59), 1950, 39.

13 On Chantonnay's embassy in France see Jean-Baptiste Vaisman, "La correspondance de Thomas Perrenot de Chantonnay, ambassadeur espagnol à la cour de France, 1559–1564: l'acculturation politique d'un diplomate franc-comtois" (PhD diss., École Nationale de Chartes, 2012).

14 Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo (ANTT), *Cartas Missivas*, Maço 2, n° 141, fls. 1–2; *Archivo*, Vol. I, 1950, doc. 23.

15 ANTT, *Fragmentos*, box 1, maço 1, n° 34, fls. 1–IV.

16 On Rui Gomes da Silva see: Boyden, *The Courtier and the King*.

from Alba. In turn, Alba went to speak with Dantas, so that he could provide the Portuguese government's written position. Alba noticed how "familiar" (*plático* in Spanish) Dantas was with navigational issues, due undoubtedly to his abovementioned interest in nautical science. Dantas's writing was later sent to King Philip II,¹⁷ who responded approvingly in a letter dated August 7, 1559. The king moreover acknowledged that the French would likely not commit to any more than they already had, but expressed a desire for the written agreement to be promptly published in French ports. Nevertheless, Philip instructed Alba to secretly negotiate further before leaving Paris to compel France to recognize the Spanish ban on French overseas voyages.

The Spanish project for King Francis II to sign on the limitation of French navigation according to certain lines in the Atlantic stated in vague terms that France would not sail to the lands discovered by the kings of Portugal and Spain. However, this arrangement was not accepted. The only agreement reached was that if French sailors were caught navigating outside of the agreed boundaries without authorization, they could be arrested and tried by Portuguese and Spanish courts, and France would not be able to intervene.¹⁸ This oral agreement between Spain and France also allowed the French to navigate in the northern hemisphere, up to the tropic of Cancer, including all of North America and West Africa. This was a significant concession made to France by Spain, but it was not accepted by Portugal, as it allowed Frenchmen to enter the Portuguese *Mare Clausum*.¹⁹

Another major factor contributing to the failure of Portuguese and Spanish diplomatic efforts to limit French navigation was the opposition of Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle (1517–86), one of King Philip II's most influential advisors. In a letter dated October 1558, Granvelle argued to the king that it would be unwise to jeopardize the benefits of securing peace with France over less significant issues, such as Portuguese maritime rights overseas.²⁰ Although Philip and Princess Juana of Austria (1535–73) had issued a *real cédula* in October 1559 ordering the Spanish ambassador in Portugal to press Portuguese authorities to support Spanish diplomacy and force France to respect Iberian overseas territories, nothing came of this. This second failure took place, as the *real cédula* mentions,²¹ and it is known that French delegates argued at Cateau-Cambrésis, because France

17 *Archivo...*, vol. I, 1950, doc. 21.

18 *Archivo*, vol. I, 1950, docs. 21, 23 and 25.

19 Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 211.

20 M. Ch. Weiss, ed., *Papiers d'État du Cardinal de Granvelle*, vol. V (Paris: Imprimerie National, 1844), doc. XCI.

21 Archivo General de Indias (AGI), *Indiferente* 425, book 23, fls. 429r.–30v.

distinguished between Spanish and Portuguese overseas territories and used this to reject any ban from both sides. This likely contributed to Dantas's warning to Portugal that the French promises regarding Iberian overseas territories at Cateau-Cambrésis should not be taken seriously.²²

As previously suggested (but not explicitly documented, due to the lack of primary correspondence for the years 1557–59), it is likely that after arriving in France in 1557, Dantas pressed the French government to respect Portuguese rights to *Mare Clausum* in Brazil. It was only when this strategy failed, as has been underscored in the previous chapter, that the Portuguese regent ordered the departure of the reinforcement fleet, in September 1559, that would allow Mem de Sá, the Portuguese governor of Brazil, to expel the French from Fort Coligny.²³ However, the return of Villegagnon to France, followed in 1560 by the news of the Portuguese capture of Fort Coligny, soon forced Dantas to negotiate with the formal leader of *France Antarctique*.²⁴

On March 25, 1561, in a letter to King Philip II, Thomas Perrenot de Chantonnay highlighted the impact of Fort Coligny's loss in France. He specifically mentioned the "feeling" of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, whom Chantonnay identified as the person who ordered the expedition, and insinuated the likelihood of him seeking revenge.²⁵ In April 1561, Dantas received news from Álvaro de la Quadra (?–1564), bishop of Aquila and the Spanish ambassador to England between 1559 and 1563, and from Manuel de Araújo, a Portuguese agent in England, that Villegagnon was departing with a huge fleet to avenge the loss of Fort Coligny.²⁶ The Spanish government's concern about Villegagnon's plans was well-justified. In the Cateau-Cambrésis negotiations of 1559, Spain had been worried about the possibility of France establishing a permanent base in Brazil to raid Spanish ships. The news of Villegagnon's departure in 1561 were linked to rumors that he would sail to Peru. This news was taken seriously, as the previous year François Le Clerc had attacked the Spanish Caribbean and reached as far as Panama. But such fears were alleviated by the French response: Villegagnon only had a letter of marque against the Portuguese and would not attack any vassal of King Philip II.²⁷

22 Maria do Rosário de Sampaio Themudo Barata Azevedo Cruz, Vol. I, 1992, 76, 233 and 236.

23 Couto, "A disputa luso-francesa," 49.

24 On *France Antarctique* see: Couto, "A disputa luso-francesa"; Lestringant, "Au rendez-vous brésilien," 25–40; Bethencourt, "Le Brésil face à la France," 21–33; Peillard, *Villegagnon*; Provençal and Mariz, *Villegagnon e a França Antártica*.

25 *Archivo*, vol. II, 1950, doc. 268.

26 ANTT, *Corpo Cronológico* (CC) I–3–2 and I–104–114, fl. 1.

27 McGrath, *The French in Early Florida*, 29–30.

Nevertheless, in the end, Villegagnon did not depart on any expedition, to the relief of both the Portuguese and Spanish. Instead, Dantas was summoned to the Conseil Privé to explain the Portuguese takeover of Fort Coligny. Dantas argued that France had violated the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas with Villegagnon's expedition, and that the French had attacked the Portuguese shortly after their arrival. France claimed, based on Jean Nicot's previously discussed intelligence, that the order to attack Fort Coligny had come from Lisbon. Unsurprisingly, Dantas demanded to see proof of this. As the Valois government was unable to present any evidence, Dantas asserted that French contentions were baseless, and the issue was closed.²⁸ As Chantonay reports, the matter was so important that the queen mother, Catherine de' Medici (1519–89), took part in the encounter and witnessed Admiral Coligny's angry and abrupt termination of the meeting.²⁹ Despite this initial success, Dantas was forced to keep negotiating with Villegagnon, primarily to prevent a formal reaction from the French Crown.

In January 1563, Dantas reported that Villegagnon had approached him with documents from the Conseil Privé demanding financial compensation. Dantas confessed his difficulties in countering Villegagnon's sophisticated arguments. Besides being a prestigious military and maritime leader, Villegagnon was also well-educated. Having studied at the University of Paris, Villegagnon knew well how to bargain effectively. Under such circumstances, Dantas advised Portugal to pay the compensation, as he considered Villegagnon to be a dangerous adversary, as well as a devout Catholic. Dantas's reference to Villegagnon's Catholicism is linked to his role in fighting the Huguenots in the first French civil war, something that the Portuguese admired. Dantas also sent all the details of Villegagnon's process to Portugal and asked for instructions. By March, Dantas assumed that he had dissimulated and delayed the dealings with Villegagnon, in order to take advantage of his downfall in court. Upon Villegagnon's return to France, he and Coligny had become public enemies due to Coligny's conversion to Protestantism and Villegagnon's Catholicism. Although Villegagnon was able to secure the support of the Guises, his position in court circles became increasingly unstable following the news of the surrender of Fort Coligny.³⁰ Nevertheless, Villegagnon continued to exert pressure as, in July, Dantas opened negotiations with Coligny and Michel de l'Hôpital, the French chancellor, in an effort to persuade them to serve

28 ANTT, CC I–106–4, fl. 1v.

29 *Archivo*, vol. III, 1951, 217.

30 Provençal and Mariz, *Villegagnon e a França Antártica*, 119 and 125.

Portuguese interests in Villegagnon's Brazilian enterprise. In this context, Dantas even sent a copy of the letters he was exchanging with Coligny to King Sebastian (1557–78).³¹ Dantas's negotiations with l'Hôpital may have been motivated by the French chancellor's receipt of a dictionary of the Tupi language from Villegagnon, which served as evidence of the latter's efforts to gain the support of influential political figures for his Brazilian endeavors.

In May 1564, despite having received orders from Portugal to proceed, Dantas delayed the negotiation once again. As Villegagnon approached him with additional documents from the Conseil Privé, Dantas re-addressed them to Lisbon and requested the Portuguese court's final position. He admitted that he had been paying Coligny and L'Hôpital since 1562 in order to further his own case, but warned that he had suspended further payments until he received the final instructions. By November 1564, Dantas had not yet departed to accompany King Charles IX and the queen mother on their grand tour of France, as he intended to meet personally with Coligny at his personal estate in Châtillon. In a February 1565 letter, Dantas describes his meeting with the French admiral. Coligny had received him with many demonstrations of affection, but had also pointedly mentioned the execution of eleven Frenchmen in Lisbon. Dantas had asked Coligny to defend himself in the Conseil Privé and was unable to discuss Villegagnon's case. Dantas justified his negotiations with Coligny by noting that King Charles IX did not make any important decisions without the admiral's advice.³² He likewise tried to persuade Coligny not to send French expeditions to Guinea and Mina, but D. Francés de Alava y Beaumont (1519–86), the new Spanish ambassador to France since 1564, reported that Coligny was not convinced.³³ In addition to his maneuvers with Coligny, Dantas likely attempted to gain the support of other powerful figures in French court circles. A letter dated February 1566, in which Dantas praised Constable Anne de Montmorency, suggests that he may have sought to bribe him to serve Portuguese interests.³⁴ This hypothesis is not implausible, given that King John III had previously ordered his agents to bestow gifts upon Montmorency, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, it is not possible to reach a final conclusion regarding Dantas's actions, as no further documents have been found.

31 Biblioteca da Ajuda (BA), 49–X–9, fl. iv., 17v. and 30–30v. Unfortunately, none of the annexes that Dantas mentions in his letters have survived.

32 BA, 49–X–9, fls. 47–48, 51, 65 and ANTT, CC I–107–41, fls. 1–1v.

33 *Archivo*, vol. VII, 1953, 90.

34 ANTT, CC I–107–105, fl. iv.

In an important letter to King Sebastian dated March 1565, Dantas details the negotiations he conducted with regard to the Villegagnon affair. Commenting on the formal response from the Conseil Privé, Dantas expresses his surprise, and, to explain the unexpected outcome, he recounts all the events that had unfolded thus far. He begins by noting that he had paid Coligny in 1562, 1563, and 1564, and L'Hôpital in 1563 and 1564, and that additional payments had been agreed upon. In exchange, L'Hôpital and Coligny would argue in the Conseil Privé that the Villegagnon affair did not concern the French Crown, but only Villegagnon. Dantas even mentions a written agreement with Coligny and L'Hôpital. In a previous meeting with Coligny, Dantas had prepared a gift and another payment for him, but Coligny had refused it, stating that he would still serve Portugal. Concerned by Coligny's response, Dantas had written to a friend of L'Hôpital's, offering to pay his wife a pension with a diamond from a friend. However, L'Hôpital's friend accused Dantas of bribery and refused. Thus, Dantas maintained that the previous payment arrangements, as ordered by the Portuguese court, had led to this situation. He also criticized Lisbon for ordering him to engage in such dishonorable tactics. As Dantas had previously refused the idea of giving up Fort Coligny to the bishop of Orleans in exchange for him renouncing it on King Sebastian, he advised ending the payments altogether. Instead, he suggested exploiting the personal tensions between the Catholic Villegagnon and the Huguenot Coligny, as they would never agree and the French Crown would not assume responsibility for the Villegagnon affair. He concluded the letter by requesting final instructions.³⁵ The ultimate position of Lisbon on this matter is not known, but it is documented that Portugal did approve compensation to Villegagnon in exchange for his renunciation of the Brazilian project.³⁶

Dantas's concern and negotiations with Villegagnon were fully justified by the rumors surrounding his departure, the letter of marque that was to be given to him, and the French overseas voyages that were in preparation in retaliation for the loss of Fort Coligny. Recently, Jean-Marc Montaigne has documented the fact that the loss of Fort Coligny in 1560 did not stall French voyages to Brazil in 1561 and 1562. The logs from Rouen alone, one of the main French ports at the time, contain records of several such expeditions. However, the author expressed doubt that Villegagnon was ever given a formal letter of marque.³⁷ This interpretation is somewhat difficult to accept,

35 BA, 49-X-9, fls. 70-71 and 72v.

36 Heulhard, *Villegagnon, roi d'Amérique*, 242-45.

37 Montaigne, *La découverte du Brésil*, 94-95 and 285.

given the documented negotiations between Dantas and Villegagnon, as well as the maritime intelligence on French overseas attempts that was sent to Portugal, which even led to Dantas's correspondence being seized by Queen Catherine de' Medici.³⁸ The queen mother's seizure of Dantas's correspondence is a clear signal of her personal interest in the matter, as it is well-known that she used to issue such orders every time she sensed that France's geostrategic interests were at stake.³⁹

I concur with Charles-André Julien, who compared Dantas's negotiations with Villegagnon to those that Portuguese diplomacy initiated when Jean Ango received a letter of marque against the Portuguese in 1531. Julien pointed out that Dantas's discretion and skill allowed the Portuguese to resolve the issue much more easily than in 1531.⁴⁰ Additionally, Dantas's aim was to permanently hinder all French overseas expeditions to Brazil, and the compensation that Villegagnon received from Portugal was important.⁴¹ While Dantas was occupied with these negotiations, he also fulfilled his orders to break other letters of marque against the Portuguese and spied the French expeditions to Florida.

Although Florida was outside the Portuguese sphere of influence according to the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, Dantas warned Portugal of the preparations by Jean Ribault (1520–65), noting that the French had been there already in 1539.⁴² Dantas's December 1562 missive reveals not only his personal interest in the region, but also the fact that he had undertaken an espionage mission against the French. In this letter, Dantas detailed all the geographical discoveries made by Ribault's expedition in 1562. He described the coast of Florida and stated that he had in his possession the rutter and

38 Heulhard, *Villegagnon, roi d'Amérique*, 203–6.

39 Precisely for this reason, Queen Catherine ordered the seizure of the Spanish ambassadors' correspondence and even the key to their cypher on several occasions. For more details see: Valentín Vásquez de Prada, *Felipe II y Francia. Política, Religión y Razón de Estado* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 2004), 32–36.

40 Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 212.

41 It allowed Villegagnon to rebuild his life in France. It is important to underscore that after the deal with Dantas, Villegagnon remained a Catholic fighting the Huguenots in the French civil wars. Still, his life was complicated by his relations with the Huguenots to the point that he even considered entering King Philip II's service as he had served Emperor Charles V at Tunis in 1535. However, nothing came of this. It is worth highlighting this, though, as proof of how shifting circumstances could lead great naval commanders to serve a party they had previously perceived as their enemy. On Villegagnon's later days see: Provençal and Mariz, *Villegagnon e a França Antártica*, 133–35.

42 ANTT, *Fragmentos*, box 1, maço 1, n.º 22, fl. iv.–2. On Ribault, already considered in the 1540s as one of France's greatest mariners, see: Paul Bertrand, *Jean Ribault, marin dieppois et lieutenant du roi en Neuve-France, Floride française, en 1565* (Paris: la Pensée Universelle, 1971), 30.

cartography of the entire region made by the French. He offered to send the material to King Sebastian upon request—Dantas was worried about the effects of Ribault's expedition, and eager to provide advice to Lisbon. Firstly, he warned that the French had sent Huguenots to deceive the inhabitants of the land. Secondly, he stated that the French were falsifying all the rutters and cartography to claim that the entire region had been discovered by them, in order to assert French ownership over the area in competition with Spain. Thirdly, he pointed out that the French were emulating the Portuguese tradition of placing landmarks with the arms of France on various sites to formally claim the area for the Valois. Dantas sent this intelligence because he feared that the French would attempt the same in Portuguese overseas areas. He also secretly sent his informant to Lisbon, requesting a reward for him.⁴³ But why was Dantas so worried about Ribault?

The Portuguese ambassador knew well that Jean Ribault had started his career privateering against Portuguese and Spanish navigation in the fleets of Jean Ango in the English Channel. It is likely that Dantas was aware of Ribault's previous dealings with England and France. What Dantas certainly did not ignore, and this would be chief among the reasons he transmitted the abovementioned details to Portugal, was that Ribault had the reputation of being one of France's greatest naval commanders. Before Ribault's departure in February 1562, Dantas must have been made aware that he was not going to sail to Portuguese overseas areas, as he lacked experience in long-distance Atlantic voyages.⁴⁴ However, considering how French maritime plans against Spain frequently ended up targeting the Portuguese as well, Dantas decided to warn Lisbon before it was too late. As always in Dantas's missives, promptly delivered maritime intelligence was the key to a successful response by the Portuguese government.

The information that Dantas sent to Lisbon was quickly assimilated by the Portuguese king, who instructed André Teles de Meneses, the Portuguese ambassador in Madrid, to inform King Philip II of the French plans in Florida. Despite the loss of the original, the contents of the letter that Dantas wrote to the king, detailing all the aspects of Ribault's fleet and its departure in February 1562, were shared with King Philip II on March 6, 1562. In the communication, the Portuguese king explicitly mentioned the intelligence sent by Dantas from France. He instructed his ambassador to argue to King Philip II that Spain should take the French challenge in

43 BA, 49-X-9, fls. 4v.-5.

44 For Ribault's career between France and England see: McGrath, *The French in Early Florida*, 50-56.

Florida seriously, as a French success would encourage even more raids by Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Scotsmen against the Iberian *Mare Clausum*. At this point, the Portuguese king came to his main argument: Philip II's conflict with France in Florida was similar to the one Portugal had with the French in Brazil and West Africa. As such, Spain should respond swiftly.⁴⁵ Notably, on May 18, 1563, D. Alonso de Tovar, the Spanish ambassador in Lisbon between 1561 and 1567, also reported some details to Philip II. Based on intelligence provided by the Portuguese government, Tovar mentioned preparations for another Anglo-French privateer fleet that had departed from Le Havre with the intention of attacking Spanish overseas territories.⁴⁶ Once more, the source of such details is likely to have been João Pereira Dantas's letters from France. Still, how did Dantas obtain all this secret information, particularly on Jean Ribault's expedition, which did not even target a Portuguese overseas area?

His correspondence reveals that, like his predecessors in France, Dantas had spies in the French ports. The Spanish ambassador Chantonay reports in January 1563 how Dantas had acquired the intelligence: he had convinced the best pilot that the French employed in the expedition, who happened to be Portuguese, to return to his homeland.⁴⁷ A recent study has told the story of the Portuguese pilot who had provided information to Dantas. Initially on the service of Spain, and later kidnapped by the French in the Caribbean, the Portuguese pilot Bartolomeu Borges was forced to guide French raids in the area and afterwards Jean Ribault's expedition. The French continued to rely on Portuguese pilots for these purposes well after Borges. For instance, in 1575, Luís Marques, a Portuguese pilot from Coimbra, was serving the French in the Caribbean.⁴⁸ The situation recurred so frequent that a Spanish report sent from Santo Domingo to Spain in 1581 noted that "no French corsair ship comes to this land [the Caribbean] that does not bring a Portuguese pilot."⁴⁹ When Ribault's fleet returned to France, Borges sought refuge and requested Dantas's assistance going back to Portugal. Dantas provided him conditions to sail to Portugal, and it must have been part of the bargain that Dantas seized all the technical details of Ribault's expedition from Borges.⁵⁰ Thus, in a sense (and knowing that Ribault's

45 Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 381, doc. 41.

46 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 380, doc. 88.

47 *Archivo*, vol. V, 1952, 18.

48 *Documents Concerning English Voyages to the Spanish Main, 1569–1580*, ed. Irene A. Wright, vol. I, (London, Hakluyt Society, 1932), 110–11.

49 Barros, "A rivalidade luso-castelhana," 317.

50 Vila-Santa, "The Untold Story," 82–102.

expedition, as ordered by Coligny, was a continuation of French overseas plans in Brazil, albeit to a Spanish area),⁵¹ Dantas profited from this situation to gather details on the new geographical knowledge and to present it to King Sebastian. Dantas's actions were not dissimilar to those of his rival ambassador Jean Nicot, as has been argued in the previous chapter, when he sent the work of Pedro Nunes to France. Both were attempting to take personal advantage of their countries' maritime needs.

Nevertheless, Dantas's interest in Florida and Ribault extended beyond mere gathering of intelligence. In March 1563, he informed Portugal that Jean Ribault had fled to England with a complete set of rutters and charts and warned that the English were rumored to be preparing expeditions to Florida. Although Dantas did not believe the rumors, he was concerned that English ships could use a French establishment in Florida as a base to launch raids on the Azores and specially against Portuguese East Indies vessels making their stopover there. He advised King Sebastian to discuss the matter with his advisors. Dantas did not mention the Englishman Thomas Stukley (1525–78) by name or his plans for a voyage to Florida in 1563 using Ribault's pilots, but it is clear that Dantas was aware of these intentions. It is likely that Dantas did not report this to Portugal, although Stukley was given ships by Queen Elizabeth I to sail to Florida,⁵² but he did not voyage there. Cognizant of Coligny's negotiations to bring Ribault back into Valois service, Dantas also sent word of Ribault's failed attempt to return to France in July 1563.⁵³ Dantas's letters reveal that he was abreast of the collaboration at sea between French Huguenots and Protestant English against the Portuguese and Spanish. In May 1563, he discovered that the supposed English expedition to Florida was actually headed to Guinea and Mina. He lacked confirmation about French ships joining the English, as his agent Manuel de Araújo had refused to gather intelligence in French ports, due to fear of discovery and execution by the French. Taking stock of the situation, Dantas advised Portugal to send a fleet to the area to fight the English and French vessels,⁵⁴ which is what ultimately happened. In this case, Dantas was well-informed and possessed accurate intelligence, even

51 Lestringant, *Le Huguenot et le sauvage*, 28; Frank Lestringant and Jocelyn Nayrand, *Chroniques de la guerre de Floride: une Saint-Barthélemy au Nouveau monde, 1562–1568 / Laudonnière, Le Challeux et de Gourgues* (Congé-sur-Orne: le Passager Clandestin, 2012), 12.

52 Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 231–32. Susan Ronald, *The Pirate Queen: Queen Elizabeth I, her Pirate Adventurers, and the Dawn of Empire* (Sutton Publishing 2007), 30. On Stukley's career see: Juan E. Tazon, *The Life and Times of Thomas Stukeley (c. 1525–1578)* (Ashgate Publishing, 2003).

53 BA, 49–X–9, fls. 21v.–22v. and 31v.

54 ANTT, CC I–106–70, fl. 1.

if he did not mention that Coligny provided victuals and materials for the English ships in 1563.⁵⁵

Dantas's letters demonstrate that he was well-versed in the traditional exchange of maritime knowledge between England and France, specifically regarding Coligny and King Henry II's efforts to bring French pilots and cartographers, such as Jean Rotz or Jean Ribault, back to France.⁵⁶ In a way, Dantas made his own contribution to the French defeat in Florida by providing critical intelligence on Ribault's expedition. The Portuguese royal family in February 1566 summoned D. Alonso de Tovar, the Spanish ambassador in Lisbon, to congratulate Spain on Pedro Menéndez de Avilés's (1519–74) victory over Jean Ribault.⁵⁷ Thus, it is likely that Dantas also presented similar compliments to the Spanish ambassador in France, although no concrete reference is known. Dantas's correspondence also proves that, in addition to the abovementioned case of the Portuguese pilot on the Florida expedition, he employed all means necessary to prevent Portuguese nautical and cartographical expertise from landing in the hands of France and England. Dantas's attempts reveal the connection in his action between the Portuguese *Mare Clausum* attempts vis-à-vis France that have been traced so far, and his *Secret Science* policy. This policy was aimed at depriving France of Portuguese pilots for its overseas expeditions and also at disrupting their departures, the topic that will be analyzed below. Once more, Dantas's maneuvers are remarkably similar to what has been documented in chapters 1 and 2 for Spain and England. However, in Dantas's case, more details of Portuguese maritime espionage and counter-espionage are documented.

4.1.2 Dantas's House of Talents: Harboring Portuguese Expertise Abroad

During Dantas's embassy to France, encounters with Portuguese nautical experts were frequent. As in the previous case with Florida, they often involved Elizabethan England and later influenced King Philip II's action against Dantas. This was because Dantas's behavior towards the Portuguese in France was considered outrageous by Alava, the Spanish ambassador to France, and by some of King Sebastian's advisors.⁵⁸ A description of each of

55 Claire-Éliane Engel, *L'Amiral de Coligny* (Genève; Labor et Fides, 1967), 162.

56 Baldwin, "The Development and Interchange," vol. II, 215–19.

57 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* does not have folio numbers. The document in question is in the middle of the papers in a letter to King Philip II dated February 12, 1566.

58 Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. II, 161.

these instances, from the least to the most significant, will lay the foundation for the subsequent discussion of Dantas's downfall.

In October 1559, as France and England were contemplating sending a joint embassy to the sultan of Morocco, Dantas received word that the Portuguese Belchior Vaz de Azevedo was to depart as the ambassador. France had attempted to send Azevedo to Morocco in 1556, but he had been imprisoned in Spain. Upon his release, Dantas learned through his brother-in-law that Azevedo was secretly planning to negotiate an alliance between the sultan and Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, with the goal of expelling the Portuguese from their Moroccan fortresses and invading southern Spain. In a letter to Portugal, Dantas revealed these plans, promised to place a spy on board Azevedo's vessel, and requested Portuguese-Spanish collaboration to prevent the French from landing in Morocco. In this case, he also recommended the execution of traitorous Portuguese like Azevedo.⁵⁹ However, depending on the circumstances and on his own evaluation of Portuguese deserters' motives, Dantas sometimes advocated for different strategies.

In December 1561, Dantas wrote a lengthy letter to Gaspar Ribeiro, a Portuguese merchant who had recently arrived in Lyon. Drawing upon arguments of biblical predestination, Dantas urged Ribeiro to return to Portugal, stressing the costliness of life in France and locals' mistreatment of the Portuguese, as well as Ribeiro's obligations as a patriot. Dantas stated that since Ribeiro's departure from Portugal, he had been meaning to write him, despite this not being his usual practice. In response to Dantas's letter, Ribeiro clarified that he had not come to France as a traitor, but rather because his wife and daughter had been imprisoned in Portugal and that he and his family had been received well in Lyon. He expressed gratitude for Dantas's concern, but averred that he would not be returning to Portugal.⁶⁰ Another missive from Dantas reveals that his actions were motivated by the circumstances under which Ribeiro had come to France: due to enticements from Jean Nicot. Dantas was outraged at Nicot's negotiations to have Portuguese pilots sent to France;⁶¹ it has been underscored in the previous chapter how Coligny and the cardinal of Lorraine had made this special request of Nicot. Nevertheless, Dantas appears to have succeeded in sending Ribeiro away from France.⁶²

59 ANTT, CC I-103-125, fls. 1-3.

60 ANTT, CC I-105-68/73.

61 ANTT, *Fragments*, box 1, maço 1, n.º 22, fls. 1-IV.

62 Ribeiro departed for business in Venice in June 1563. BA, 49-X-9, fl. 32v.

In the case of Gaspar Ribeiro, although there is no conclusive evidence of Ribeiro's Jewish or New Christian origin, Dantas may have been influenced by the effects of a formal decree signed by King Henry II during the 1550s. This decree offered special conditions to Portuguese merchant Jews and New Christians who wanted to settle in France.⁶³ Foreseeing the dangers of their capital moving from Portugal to France, Dantas intervened in such cases, and recommended that the Portuguese Inquisition soften persecution of Portuguese Jews and New Christians. Dantas presented this advice to King Sebastian in August 1562. Dantas excused himself for daring to speak about such delicate religious affairs, but maintained he did so due to the negative impact on his activities that the exodus of Portuguese Jews and New Christians from Portugal, and the resulting influx of money and knowledge into France, was having. He stated that he had personally met some of these families in France, and that most of them should be included in a general pardon that he proposed Portuguese authorities could issue in order to stop the draining of money and resources. There is no sign that Dantas's advice on sensitive Inquisition persecutions against New Christians in Portugal was seriously considered.

In other cases, Dantas did not hesitate to steal servants from Queen Catherine de' Medici to enlist them for Portuguese service, as he had done in the case of rutters and cartography on Florida. In January 1563, Dantas recommended to King Sebastian the services of the German Nicolau de Lambarch, whom he envisaged as a possible informant on Huguenot maritime movements against Portugal. Dantas states that he had negotiated in secrecy to have Lambarch come to Portugal, and had convinced Lambarch that the queen mother was unable to pay him what she had promised because France had been torn asunder by the first civil war. As Lambarch had an unspecified secret invention, and to ensure his departure to Portugal, Dantas offered him better conditions than the queen had.⁶⁴ Despite their formal rivalry, a Portuguese ambassador (Dantas) could employ the same methods for acquiring knowledge as a French one (Nicot)—even if Dantas had criticized Nicot for this very tactic in the case of Gaspar Ribeiro.

In May 1564, Dantas accommodated a talented, 26-year-old German polyglot in his home, who besides his mother tongue spoke Flemish, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and a little English. He recommended that King Sebastian employ him as a royal interpreter and vowed that Portugal would never again find such a gifted individual. By March 1565, Dantas

63 Montaigne, *La découverte du Brésil*, 581–84.

64 ANTT, CC I–106–45, fl. 1v.–2.

indicated that he was still housing this interpreter and promised to bring him along when he returned to Portugal. It is unclear if this German savant entered Portuguese service when Dantas returned to Portugal,⁶⁵ but it is undeniable that despite being disturbed by the attempts of foreign crowns to woo Portuguese experts, the ambassador was always keen on recruiting foreign personnel into Portuguese service. It is not far-fetched to assume that he accommodated even more scientific experts in his house than those mentioned explicitly in his correspondence.

Meanwhile, Dantas also kept a close eye on Portuguese pilots arriving in France. In March 1563, he wrote that he had convinced the abovementioned Bartolomeu Borges (one of Jean Ribault's pilots) to return to Portugal to prevent any damage from him speaking out. He was surprised therefore that King Sebastian had allowed him to return via Flanders, rather than directly by ship, which increased opportunities for Borges to flee. In this instance, as previously mentioned, Dantas intervened to ensure that Borges would sail to Portugal and not elsewhere. Additionally, in October 1564, Dantas commented on a denunciation against the pilot Gonçalo Birão sent from Portugal. Although Dantas does not mention the nature of the accusation, he advised caution in any dealings with the denouncers, as they could be lying. He warned that a good Portuguese pilot in France was not necessarily a traitor to Portugal, emphasizing the need to carefully analyze each case before reaching final conclusions.⁶⁶ Such an outlook explains why Dantas would come to the defense of Portuguese pilots despite the officially declared goals of the Portuguese government, as will be detailed in the next section. Dantas's reasons for hosting the Homem brothers, Portuguese cosmographers, are less obvious.

In September 1562, Dantas reported that the sons of Portuguese cosmographer Lopo Homem had been staying with him for two years,⁶⁷ and requested stipends to them. But by July 1563, none had arrived from the Portuguese king, and Dantas complained of his difficulty retaining André, António, and Tomé Homem. He even claimed that they had considered fleeing his house, and that he had only prevented their escape with promises that King Sebastian would grant them an income in Portugal. Dantas insisted that all, but especially André, were leading experts in the science of chart

65 BA, 49-X-9, fl. 53-53v; ANTT, CC I-107-59, fls. 1-1v.

66 BA, 49-X-9, fl. 32v. and 65.

67 There has been a controversy over whether André Homem was the son of Portuguese cosmographer Lopo Homem, or a more distant relative. However, Dantas's letters mentioned in the next note clearly refer to him as Lopo Homem's son.

production and reiterated his own extensive experience and longstanding interest in this sort of personnel. He contended that the king should not hesitate to grant them what they asked, as they could find work in any part of the world, and requested a stipend of 100 cruzados so that he could convince the brothers to embark for India. He finished the letter by stating that it would be a terrible mistake not to prize the value of common people with such abilities as Lopo Homem's sons. In May 1564, when Dantas finally received the money, he delayed the brothers' departure in the face of André's complaints that the payment was insufficient. As Dantas was about to leave Paris, he assured King Sebastian that, in his absence, André Homem would inform him about everything.⁶⁸ Dantas probably employed André as his agent for spying on Admiral Coligny's movements and intentions.

Nevertheless, it is probable that during Dantas's absence, as he accompanied King Charles IX and Queen Catherine de' Medici on their grand tour of France, André entered Coligny's service. Dantas reports in a March 1565 letter that, André had an altercation with one of his servants in July 1564, fled his home, and went to Coligny's house to present him a globe. Coligny had in return given him money to keep him in French service. Thus, León Bourdon's hypothesis that Dantas tried to negotiate André Homem's repatriation in his meeting with Coligny at Châtillon, in late 1564,⁶⁹ is very plausible. In the March 1565 missive, Dantas mentions that he had been trying to convince André to return to Portugal.⁷⁰ André Homem, in a February 1565 letter to Dantas, states that he had already been accepted as King Charles IX's cosmographer and that Dantas's efforts to undermine his scientific reputation had failed. He also notes that he had offered the globe to Coligny because Dantas had not fulfilled his promise to secure him a pension of 1350 cruzados from King Sebastian. André Homem states that he would still consider returning to Dantas's house if his debts were paid and the pension was granted.⁷¹ Dantas's reply to this letter seems not to have survived. Regardless, by late 1566, the Spanish ambassador Alava reports that Dantas sent António and Tomé, but not André, to Portugal.⁷²

Dantas's involvement with André Homem can be attributed to the exceptional cartographical abilities of the latter, as demonstrated by the atlas he authored in Antwerp in 1559. The date of André's departure from

68 BA, 49-X-9, fls. 32v.-33, 52v. and 87.

69 Bourdon, *André Homem*, 16-17.

70 ANTT, CC I-107-60, fls. 1v-2.

71 ANTT, CC I-107-47, fls. 1-2.

72 Bourdon, *André Homem*, 22-23.

Portugal is unknown, although it has been argued that it was prior to 1554.⁷³ Though the individual or organization that commissioned the atlas remains unknown, Dantas's abovementioned letters indicate that André Homem came to Dantas's house shortly after its completion in 1560. As a man with a personal interest in nautical charts and cartography, Dantas may have learned of André Homem's atlas in 1559–60. Moreover, given that Dantas maintained regular correspondence with Rui Mendes de Vasconcelos, the Portuguese overseer/consul at Antwerp, to whom he sent Bartolomeu Borges (one of Jean Ribault's pilots) in 1563, it is possible that Dantas was informed of André Homem's atlas by Vasconcelos in 1559–60. It is likely that, as he did in the case of the merchant Gaspar Ribeiro, Dantas wrote to André Homem inviting him to his house in Paris and offering him employment. This must remain speculation, however, as Dantas's correspondence for this period (1559–60) is conspicuously incomplete.

After entering Coligny's service, it appears that André Homem spent some time in the service of King Charles IX. In 1567, he traveled to England with the Portuguese pilots Gaspar Caldeira and Antão Luís to propose an expedition to a West African Eldorado to Queen Elizabeth I. While it is unknown whether André Homem or his brother Diogo Homem, a well-known Portuguese cartographer with several maps made in Venice, was the first to arrive in England, it seems likely that it was André. Given the similarities in cartographical technique between André Homem's Antwerp atlas of 1559 and his brother Diogo Homem's atlas commissioned by Queen Mary I in 1558, it would appear that André had convinced his brother Diogo to come to England. But André Homem left England under hazy circumstances, and at some point, Diogo Homem was jailed by English authorities.⁷⁴ When

73 Alegria, Daveau, Garcia, and Relano, "Portuguese Cartography," 989.

74 This hypothesis arises from the fact that Diego Guzmán da Silva, the Spanish ambassador to England, mentions the imprisonment of Diogo Homem in a missive. However, Forquevaux, the French ambassador in Spain, mentions André Homem's presence in northern Spain with the pilots Caldeira and Luís, when they were jailed. Therefore, it is possible that André initially went to England with Caldeira and Luís, but left before them. The lack of available documentation does not allow confirmation. It is known that Diogo Homem was jailed in England and after his release, he chose to live out his final days in Venice, far away from any attempts by Portugal to repatriate him by force in Spain, France, or England. By 1567–68, Diogo Homem had already made another atlas (estimated to have been created between 1563–65 according to some experts), which is preserved today in Russia and could have been used by any maritime power to plan overseas expeditions (as the atlas included charts of the entire world). However, it remains unclear what Diogo Homem's intention was when he designed the atlas, but there is no doubt that it is another example of the exceptional cartographical skills of the Portuguese in the Late Renaissance (Kildushevskaya and Pinheiro Marques, *Atlas Universal*, 158, 189 and 255).

André returned to Coligny's house (at an unspecified date, but probably still in 1567), Dantas sent Miguel Guedes to keep track of his movements. By 1567, Dantas seems to have regained André's trust, for the latter had agreed to stay at Coligny's house to spy on his activities.⁷⁵

Dantas's interactions with André Homem had an added element that differentiated them from his dealings with other Portuguese nautical experts. The Pereira lineage, of which Dantas was a descendant, had a special connection with the Homem lineage dating back to medieval times. According to one story, the first Homem had been nicknamed Homem by an influential Pereira after a fierce battle. To praise his soldier, Pereira called him "Homem" ("man" in English), to suggest that his military deeds had transformed him into a great man. From then onwards, there was a relationship of service and dependency between the two lineages, of which Dantas was certainly aware. One can sense remnants of this tradition between the Homem and Pereira lineages in the way he treated André Homem.

The cases of Gaspar Caldeira and Antão Luís, two Portuguese pilots Dantas attempted to accommodate in his house for some time, provide insight into Dantas's espionage and counter-espionage activities in France and England. In order to understand Dantas's maneuvers, we must first become acquainted with Caldeira and Luís and their reasons for migration. Caldeira and Luís left Portugal because the regent, Cardinal Henry, had seized their illegal trade cargos from West Africa in Lisbon. At the time, Caldeira and Luís belonged to a long list of private Portuguese adventurers who attempted to make personal profit by violating the Portuguese Crown's commercial monopoly in West Africa. Within this context, Caldeira and Luís fled to Spain in 1564, where they proposed to organize an expedition to a non-fortified Portuguese area in West Africa. King Philip II gave them six months to launch the expedition and provided them with written documents formally authorizing their journey. When they failed to prepare it, they fled to France.⁷⁶

By July 1565, Dantas reported, without mentioning their names, that two Portuguese men disguised as pepper and gold merchants had appeared at the Valois court. They were quickly received by the Queen Catherine de' Medici and by the Constable Anne de Montmorency. Although Dantas was unable to discover what they said, he immediately suspected that they were to guide a French expedition to Benin. At that moment, he only knew that

75 León Bourdon, *Deux aventuriers portugais: Gaspar Caldeira et Antão Luís (1564–1568)* (Lisbon: Livraria Bertrand, 1955), 14.

76 Bourdon, *Deux aventuriers portugais*, 8–9.

they had been sent to serve Captain Peyrot de Monluc (?–1566), who was preparing a fleet for Canada in Guyenne. Possibly because of this, in August, during his secret meeting with the duke of Alba at the Franco-Spanish border in Bayonne, Dantas proposed a maritime alliance between Portugal and Spain against French and English forays into Florida and other places. The letter also implies that Dantas suggested an agreement to Alba to prevent Portuguese experts from crossing the Franco-Spanish border. Alba would have quickly recognized the importance of Dantas's proposal, and consequently promised Dantas that he would raise the issue with the king upon his return to Madrid, and that King Philip II would reply directly to King Sebastian. Some days later after meeting Alba, Dantas already had Caldeira and Luís spied upon.⁷⁷

Examining Spanish documents, there are strong indications that Dantas was informed of the arrival of Gaspar Caldeira and Antão Luís in France by D. Francés de Alava, the Spanish ambassador in France, though Dantas did not admit it. In a letter dated June 13, 1565, which was written before Dantas's first communication on the topic, Alava reported the arrival of Caldeira and Luís at the Valois court. Both were identified by Alava as "well-versed in the Indies of Portugal." Alava stated that they had been attended to by the French constable, the queen mother, and all members of the Conseil Privé. After the meeting, the vice-admiralty of Guyenne had been granted to Peyrot de Monluc, and a new maritime expedition was being prepared with financial contributions from Peyrot's uncle (the bishop of Valence) and Michel de Seure (?–1593), the French ambassador to Portugal between 1557 and 1559. Alava suspected it was to head to two islands near Brazil, but he could not be certain. Not long before, Alava had also been informed of two unnamed Portuguese sailors who had arrived in England with enticing promises for the English. As the matter was delicate, Alava informed King Philip II and Dantas.⁷⁸

Another missive, this time from the duke of Alba to Juan Manrique and King Philip II, dated June 28, 1565 and signed from Bayonne, mentions Alba's meeting with Dantas. The letter is relevant in that it reveals how Dantas went about proposing a maritime alliance between Portugal and Spain to Alba. To gain Alba's favor, Dantas began by expressing sympathy with Spain regarding the French expeditions to Florida, which Dantas deemed intolerable. Although Alba did not explicitly state it, it is likely that Dantas reminded Alba of his previous provisions of intelligence to Spain on French

77 BA, 49–X–9, fls. 79v.–80 and 83.

78 *Archivo*, vol. VI, 1952, doc. 1081.

plans in Florida. Only after this ingratiating prelude did Dantas formally propose a maritime alliance between Portugal and Spain to defend both overseas hemispheres, not only from France but also from other potential intruders (an indirect reference to England). Alba replied that he was not familiar with those seas (i.e., the Atlantic) but that he considered Dantas's suggestion worthy of consideration and would raise the issue with King Philip II.⁷⁹ With a well-crafted speech, Dantas had sought to both impress King Philip II's court, and again attempted to secure Spain's defense of Portuguese interests, arguing that doing so would deter not only France but also England. But Dantas's scheme had motives concerning the pilots Luís and Caldeira that were hidden from his interlocutor.

In August 1565, in response to Caldeira's and Luís' plans, Dantas interrupted his ambassadorial duties to accompany King Charles IX. Having discovered that the two pilots were being held prisoner in a castle in Guyenne, he sent the friar António Pinto and then his servant Diogo Ribeiro to speak with them. Dantas stated that Luís and Caldeira had a limited understanding of their fates. Still, Luís was more open to the idea of returning to Portugal than Caldeira. Dantas even sent King Sebastian his correspondence with Caldeira and Luís to further push them to go home, but stated that he did not promise them what had been promised to pilot António Eanes Pinteado when he fled to England in 1551–52 (and ended up training English seamen). Dantas further reported that Luís and Caldeira had presented Portuguese nautical rutters and charts to the French, some of which had been confiscated by Captain Peyrot de Monluc. For his part, Caldeira had complained that if he had known the French would treat him like this, he would have gone to serve in Istanbul, a comment revealing that what truly mattered to Portuguese nautical experts was being properly compensated for their technical knowledge. Hearing all this, Dantas was understandably worried that the nautical and cartographical intelligence presented by Caldeira and Luís to Monluc would motivate the French to sail not to Canada, as was officially stated, but to Guinea and Mina. Thus, Dantas urged the Portuguese king to send a fleet to the region and immediately spoke with his friend Jean Monluc (1502–79), the bishop of Valence and uncle of Captain Peyrot de Monluc. Dantas confronted him with his nephew's designs on Portuguese overseas areas and threatened to bring the case before King Charles IX. The bishop swore to Dantas that he knew nothing of it. Thus, Dantas advised Lisbon to send a formal protest letter to King Charles and he asked for instructions on what he should do regarding Caldeira if he did

79 *Archivo*, vol. VI, 1952, doc. 1103.

not agree to return to Portugal. Essentially, Dantas was asking for formal authorization to order his killing. He finished this letter to King Sebastian by recommending a generous grant to Michel de Seure, as he disapproved of Peyrot de Monluc's anti-Portuguese plans.⁸⁰

Seure's statement was intended to mislead Dantas about the true intentions of Monluc's ships. As Alava confirmed, he was one of the investors of Monluc's fleet, and the evidence put forth in the previous chapter demonstrates Seure's anti-Portuguese approach both during his embassy in Lisbon and afterwards. Uncertainty about Monluc's final destination is also attested in Spanish documents. In a letter to King Philip II, dated August 5, 1565, Alava asserted again that Monluc would sail to Brazil. However, in an October 31, 1565, missive addressed to King Philip II, he reported that a Portuguese woman had arrived in France with intelligence on the Portuguese war fleet, which she had given to Monluc. Thus, Alava was unsure whether Monluc might mean to simply attack the Portuguese war fleet. On March 2, 1566, further doubts were cast by another agent of King Philip II in France. This agent mentioned that although Monluc's preparations were ostensibly for Brazil, he considered this to be a misdirected rumor. Instead, he believed that Monluc would sail to Florida to avenge Jean Ribault's death and the defeat that Pedro Menéndez de Avilés had inflicted on the French. As late as October 1566, shortly before Madeira was attacked, Alava wrote to King Philip II that according to some mariners from Monluc's fleet who had returned to Brittany, Monluc had his eye on the Portuguese fortress of Mina, which was not ready to withstand a surprise French attack.⁸¹

Alava's mixed intelligence had also proved wrong in 1565 with respect to Jean Ribault's expedition to Florida the same year. Alava had not taken the maritime preparations in Normandy seriously, and this fact had forced King Philip II to send a special spy from Madrid, Dr. Enveja, to check on the activities personally. Dr. Enveja was quick to confirm that Ribault's ambitions were greater than what Alava had thought.⁸² Thus, in the 1566 Monluc case, as in 1565 regarding Ribault, Alava's intelligence was largely incorrect. The true destination of Monluc's expedition was a closely guarded secret, and neither Portuguese nor Spanish spies were able to find out that it would attack Madeira.⁸³

80 BA, 49-X-9, fls. 85-85v. and 87v.-88v.

81 *Archivo*, vol. VIII, 1954, docs. 1126, 1157, 1204 and 1300.

82 McGrath, *The French in Early Florida*, 129.

83 On Monluc's expedition see: J. Andrieu, "L'expédition maritime de Peyrot de Monluc en 1566," *Revue de l'Agenais et des anciennes provinces du sud-ouest. Société des Sciences, lettres & arts d'Agen* 22 (1895): 105-13; Edmond Falgairolle, "Une expédition française à l'île de Madère en

As has already been argued, there are good reasons to believe that Admiral Coligny also intervened in the affair (specifically by convincing Peyrot de Monluc to attack the Portuguese overseas to avenge the French defeat at Fort Coligny). It is important to remember that Dantas's abovementioned reference to Coligny's refusal of his bribe (in the March 1565 letter) could be connected with the admiral's change of position. This shift might also have been influenced by events that led to the second French civil war in 1566. To help France recover from the religious wars, Coligny continually sought to unite French Catholics and Huguenots in a war against Spain; by supporting Peyrot de Monluc, he could achieve two goals simultaneously. He could continue to promote his anti-Spanish policy overseas, while simultaneously exploiting the rivalry between a Catholic son (Peyrot de Monluc) and his Catholic father (Blaise de Monluc), which would certainly be of interest to Coligny as a Huguenot leader.⁸⁴ Additionally, there is documentary evidence in one of Coligny's letters to Queen Catherine de' Medici that he aided French explorations on the West African coast in 1566,⁸⁵ lending further credence to the possibility of his involvement with Peyrot de Monluc. Coligny's interference here would not have been dissimilar to what had occurred in 1565 with Jean Ribault's expedition to Florida. Initially, Coligny had ordered Ribault not to wage war against the Spanish, but at the last moment, he wrote to Ribault informing him of Spanish plans against him and authorizing military action. This fact is confirmed by Ribault's own speech to his men, already in Florida, when he was confronted with the arrival of the Spanish fleet of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. Ribault brandished Coligny's letters, showing all present that the French admiral had written "Ribault, we have been warned that the Spaniard wants to attack you; see that you yield him nothing and you will be doing right."⁸⁶

In February 1566, shortly before departing for Portugal, Dantas expressed hope that Luís would return to Portugal but stated that Caldeira would still serve the French, as Peyrot de Monluc's fleet had not yet set sail. Taking stock

1566," in *Mémoires de l'Académie de Nîmes* tome XVII (Nîmes: 1894); Paul Gaffarel, "Le Capitaine Peyrot Monluc," in *Revue Historique* 9, no. 2 (1879): 273–332; Gabriel Loirette, *Expédition maritime du Capitaine Peyrot de Monluc en 1566*. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1941) and more recently the re-evaluation by António Brehm and Cristina Trindade, "O Saque ao Funchal em 1566 e as suas repercussões no reinado de D. Sebastião," *Arquivo Histórico da Madeira* no 2 (2020): 15–79.

84 Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 227 and 264.

85 Mickael Augeron, "Coligny et les Espagnols à travers la course (c. 1560–1572): une politique maritime au service de la Cause protestante," in *Coligny, les protestants et la mer. Actes du colloque organisé à Rochefort et La Rochelle les 3 et 4 Octobre 1996*, ed. Martine Acerra and Guy Martinière (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1997), 158.

86 McGrath, *The French in Early Florida*, 141.

of the situation, Dantas wrote to King Sebastian that the Portuguese war fleet was not needed at sea to fight the French.⁸⁷ This unfortunate letter would tarnish Dantas's reputation; Peyrot de Monluc attacked Madeira in October 1566, and Luís and Caldeira guided the French fleet as pilots. Under unclear circumstances, Luís ultimately abandoned Dantas to serve Peyrot de Monluc. This is quite reminiscent of what had transpired with André Homem, and may in part explain why Luís and André Homem ended up collaborating against Dantas in England. Nevertheless, soon after Dantas returned to France in late 1566, he was ordered by Cardinal Henry to arrest Luís and Caldeira and send them to Portugal. This mandate triggered a counter-espionage operation involving England, France, and Spain, orchestrated by Dantas in an effort to capture the two pilots.

In February 1567, Dantas received word that the English were planning an expedition to China by sailing westwards, in which a prominent Portuguese cosmographer (likely André Homem or his brother Diogo Homem) would participate. By May 1567, Diego Guzmán de Silva, the Spanish ambassador to England between 1564 and 1568, reported that Caldeira and Luís had arrived in England. By September 1567, news confirmed that they were set to take part in John Hawkins's (1532–95) third voyage, which would sail for Guinea and Mina.⁸⁸ In response, Dantas ordered two of his men to travel to England and convince Luís and Caldeira to return to his service, and warned Portugal of their departure with Hawkins's fleet. The dealings of Gabriel Pereira, one of Dantas's agents, with Luís and Caldeira read like a 16th-century police thriller, complete with emotional accounts of persecution and accusations of treachery.⁸⁹ Although Pereira failed to convince Luís and Caldeira to return, it is highly probable that they largely fled Hawkins's service because of Dantas's promises. One letter by Guzmán de Silva, dated September 27, 1567, states that Caldeira and Luís abandoned Hawkins because of Dantas's assurances of a safe return to his house in France.⁹⁰

Prior to these events, Guzmán de Silva had revealed that Luís and Caldeira had arrived in England under the guise of Spanish names, carrying letters from King Philip II detailing the organization of an expedition to West Africa. However, they had been met with suspicion as it was believed they could easily propose the same plan to France, which was, after all, closer to the intended destination. Thus, Luís and Caldeira attempted to hide

87 ANTT, CC I-107-105, fls. 1-1v.

88 ANTT, CC I-108-31 and I-108-54.

89 ANTT, CC I-108-72 and I-108-74. Also see illustration 4.

90 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558-1567, 433.

the fact that they had guided Monluc's fleet to Madeira. Their attempt was prompted by Dantas's early efforts to ensure that Queen Elizabeth I would not harbor any of Monluc's men in England, as shall be detailed in another section of this chapter. After Luís and Caldeira's ploy had failed, both entered into direct contact with London merchants. It was at this point that Guzmán de Silva discovered their true identity and warned King Philip II of their involvement in guiding Monluc to Madeira.⁹¹ Still, both successfully absconded from Hawkins, deceiving William Wynter (1519–89) and the queen,⁹² to whom they had again proposed the expedition to a West African Eldorado. Hawkins was considered responsible for their escape by Edward Clinton (1512–1584), the English Lord Admiral, and had to justify himself to Queen Elizabeth I. In the end, Caldeira and Luís flight was also motivated by the theft of their goods by Anthony Godart, John Hawkins's fleet interpreter, and John Hawkins was able to use their fresh escape to confuse Guzmán de Silva about the final destination of his voyage.⁹³

Dantas must have promised Luís and Caldeira that he would convince King Sebastian to pardon them. In late 1567, Dantas temporarily sheltered them in his home before sending them to the Spanish border in disguise,⁹⁴ where they were arrested and sent to Portugal. In February 1568, Gaspar Caldeira, Antão Luís, and another pilot, Belchior Contreiras, were publicly executed in Lisbon for their guidance of Peyrot de Monluc's expedition to Madeira. Caldeira's and Luís's imprisonment at Fuenterrabia was only made possible, as Raymond de Fourquevaux (1508–74), the French ambassador to Spain between 1565 and 1572, noticed, because in November 1567, Portugal and Spain agreed to bar the arrival of Portuguese pilots and cartographers in France.⁹⁵ Dantas's proposal to Alba and King Philip II in 1565 had finally taken effect in 1567. The agreement that Fourquevaux mentions was the Iberian reaction to another remarkable success of French nautical espionage in both Portugal and Spain during the same year.

After the appearance of the Portuguese cosmographer Bartolomeu Velho (?–1568) in France in 1567, the Spanish ambassador in Lisbon succeeded in preventing the Portuguese nautical expert Fernando Oliveira (1507–85) from entering Valois service.⁹⁶ The hiring of Velho and Oliveira had been

91 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 666–67.

92 Loades, *England's Maritime Empire*, 93.

93 Kelsey, *Sir John Hawkins*, 47 and 54. See also *Calendar of the Cecil Papers*, 1: doc. 1139.

94 Bourdon, *Deux aventuriers portugais*, 16–18, 21–22 and 26–30.

95 Bourdon, *Deux aventuriers portugais*, 31.

96 Avelino Teixeira da Mota, *O cosmógrafo Bartolomeu Velho em Espanha* (Coimbra, offprint Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar, 1966), 5–7.

arranged by the Italian merchant Francisco d'Albaigno, who had contacts in Lisbon and wrote to both on behalf of the king of France with various promises. Later, when visiting Lisbon, Albaigno presented his proposals in person.⁹⁷ It is plausible that the hiring of Velho had also involved Coligny, as it is unlikely that the negotiation in Lisbon could have been completed without the French admiral's knowledge.⁹⁸ This negotiation might have been facilitated by Nicot's acquaintance with Oliveira's work and probably a meeting with him in Lisbon somewhere between 1559 and 1561. Julien has argued that it was Nicot who suggested Coligny to hire Velho in 1567.⁹⁹

For this reason, it is also likely that Coligny was interested in having Fernando Oliveira in the service of the Valois, given his previous services to France.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, it is plausible that Nicot met Velho during his embassy in Lisbon, as Velho was probably Nicot's informant on the secret package that Nicot had sent in April 1561 to Queen Catherine de' Medici (regarding the "meridional countries"). Though, as has been demonstrated, Nicot did not specify the geographical area or identity of his informant, his report aligns with what Velho proposed to France in 1567: an expedition to a third continent rich in gold and free from Portuguese and Spanish presence. It is possible that Nicot's "meridional countries" and Velho's "third continent" refer to the same place: *Terra Australis*, which cosmographers commonly placed in low latitudes above the Strait of Magellan. If this is the case, it would explain why Nicot suggested that Coligny recruit Bartolomeu Velho and possibly Fernando Oliveira.

Even though Velho's arrival in France did not immediately result in the materialization of French overseas plans, his ideas and data continued to be used by Coligny in 1571 and by the Huguenot writer Lancelor Voisin de La Popelinière (1541–1608) in 1582 for new French overseas projects. During the

97 On André de Albaigne see: Ernest-Théodore Hamy, "Francisque et Andre d'Albaigne," *Bulletin de Géographie Historique et Descriptive*, (1894): 405–33; Ernest-Théodore Hamy, "Nouveaux documents sur les frères d'Albaigne et sur le projet de voyage et de découvertes présenté à la cour de France," *Bulletin de Géographie Historique et Descriptive* (1899): 101–110; Ernest-Théodore Hamy, "Documents relatifs à un projet d'expéditions lointaines présentés à la cour de France en 1570," *Bulletin de Géographie Historique et Descriptive* (1903): 266–73; Ernest-Théodore Hamy, "Francisque et André d'Albaigne, cosmographes lucquois au service de la France," *Études historiques et géographiques* (1896): 241–60.

98 Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 267.

99 Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 265–66.

100 On Oliveira see: Contente Domingues and Guerreiro, *Ars Nautica*; Livermore, "Padre Oliveira's Outburst," 22–41; Loureiro, "Experiencia de navegación," 41–49; Couto, "Some Remarks," 194–209. On the negotiation to have him in France in 1567 see: Bourdon, "Episodes inconnus," 439–53 and Teixeira da Mota, *O cosmógrafo Bartolomeu Velho*.

1580s, and like Richard Hakyluyt in England, La Popelinière clearly conceived the Portuguese overseas empire as a model worth emulating and studying. His 1582 *Les trois mondes* included entire sections about Portuguese overseas discoveries,¹⁰¹ and in 1584 he published *L'amiral de France*, a plea addressed to the French admiral at the time for France to follow Portuguese and Spanish maritime and overseas examples.¹⁰² Returning to Velho, the importance of his material is revealed by another fact. He had brought a proposal to France to measure longitude at sea with a sun watch, as can be seen in his *Principles of Cosmography* preserved today in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.¹⁰³ Once Velho's arrival in France was known in Portugal (certainly via a now lost letter by Dantas), Cardinal Henry asked King Philip II to jail André d'Albagnò, Francisco d'Albagnò's brother, as he had used his residence in Spain to assist Velho in his passage from Spain to France. Spain granted this Portuguese wish, but King Philip II later released André d'Albagnò at King Charles IX's request, after Velho's and Francisco d'Albagnò's deaths in France.¹⁰⁴ The cardinal also ordered one of his officers to investigate how Velho had been able to leave Portugal without being noticed.¹⁰⁵

The French attempts to hire Velho and Oliveira are directly related to Coligny's maritime plans up to his death in 1572. Although they are not the focus of this chapter (as they fell outside the period of Dantas's embassy), it is important to stress that the French admiral's most aggressive maritime policy against Portuguese and Spanish overseas interests came precisely between 1568 and 1572. A good example of this is Jacques de Soria's famous 1570 attack on a Portuguese fleet that carried several Jesuits and the new Portuguese governor of Brazil, D. Luís Vasconcelos e Meneses. The assault resulted in a similar outcome to the attack on Madeira of 1566, with some sources claiming that the sea turned red with blood. Soria acted under the direction of Coligny, who had long supported his vice-admiral. Likewise,

101 This could have been inspired by the author's acquaintance with a manuscript version of the *Treatise* by the Portuguese António Galvão (1490–1557), which was an earlier Portuguese attempt at recounting Portuguese overseas history in the 16th century (See Giuseppe Marcocci, *The Globe on Paper: Writing Histories of the World in Renaissance Europe & the Americas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 76–77).

102 Lancelor Voisin de La Popelinière, *L'amiral de France* (Paris: chez Thomaz Perier, 1584), ffs. 85, 88v., 89v. and 90–92v.

103 Cortesão, *Cartografia e cartógrafos portugueses*, vol. II, 243; For Velho's cosmography see: Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), GE 266.

104 *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica*, vol. II (Lisbon: INCM/Casa da Moeda, 1987), 90–91.

105 Maria Alice Beaumont, *Cartas e alvarás dos Faros da Casa Vimieiro: incluindo dezanove cartas do Museu-Biblioteca do Paço Ducal de Vila Viçosa* (Cascais: Câmara Municipal/Museu-Biblioteca Conde de Castro Guimarães, 1968), 153.

in 1571, Coligny spent some months in La Rochelle, gathering geographical intelligence from Portuguese cartographers and pilots. His use of Portuguese pilots for French expeditions hints at a reason for his decisive intervention to save the Portuguese pilot Mimoso from execution by the French (to the fury of the Spanish ambassador Alava, as will be discussed in the next section). Coligny's intention to employ Portuguese pilots and cartographers was already evident previously when dealing with Portuguese cosmographer André Homem, whom he placed in King Charles IX's service in 1564, and with Bartolomeu Borges, the Portuguese pilot who guided Jean Ribault to Florida in 1562.¹⁰⁶ Thus, future investigations may yet reveal further cases of Coligny's hiring of Portuguese nautical experts.

Coligny's maritime policy was not only anti-Spanish, it was also anti-Portuguese, a fact that explains his becoming one of the greatest enemies, not only of King Philip II,¹⁰⁷ but also of King Sebastian. It is no coincidence that the Portuguese and Spanish courts were pleased by the admiral's death in the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre in August 1572.¹⁰⁸ With Coligny out of the picture, the Valois court lost the only man in France with a systematic policy for building up a French overseas empire, free from any attempts to disrupt his plans from outside (by Spain and Portugal) and from within France (the Catholic party and Queen Catherine de' Medici's general opposition owing to the fear of open war with Spain).¹⁰⁹ Coligny's maritime and Protestant leadership against Portugal and Spain also made an impact on England and later on the Dutch Republic, opening a door for newcomers to try their hand at overseas expansion. Again, it was not by chance that Coligny always maintained close relations with Protestant maritime leaders in both places and even prepared joint expeditions with English and Dutch leaders targeting the Spanish and the Portuguese.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ See Vila-Santa, "The Untold Story."

¹⁰⁷ Augeron, "Coligny et les Espagnols," 162, 170 and 180.

¹⁰⁸ This fact is revealed by both courts' appeal to King Charles IX to organize a final "crusade" against the Huguenots. In King Sebastian's case, this even motivated a long letter and the dispatch of D. Dinis de Lencastre, of Portuguese royal lineage, to King Charles IX (Chichkine, "Mirage d'une alliance," 53).

¹⁰⁹ Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 269; Augeron, "Coligny et les Espagnols," 175.

¹¹⁰ Throughout this chapter, various examples of Anglo-French maritime collaboration have been identified. In particular, the Dutch case is noteworthy for its early occurrence, as only three years after the initiation of the rebellion against King Philip II in the Netherlands, Coligny began utilizing Dutch mariners in the French navy under the Protestant banner, as part of his anti-Iberian policy. This collaboration was further strengthened in 1571, with the arrival of Louis of Nassau, the brother of William of Orange, in France. Together, they assembled a fleet of seventy to eighty ships and formulated plans to launch attacks on Spanish overseas settlements

Still, even Coligny's death did not mean that French overseas ambitions and attacks against the Portuguese declined. Good evidence to this effect is provided in the correspondence of Monsignor Andrea Giovanni Caligari, the papal collector in Portugal between 1575 and 1577, with Rome.¹¹¹

It is important to return to the question of whether Dantas was aware of Coligny's plans, Albagno's negotiation in Lisbon, and Bartolomeu Velho's defection to France. There is no known record of Dantas's activities at this time, as the critical moments in these episodes unfolded in Lisbon, and Dantas's correspondence in 1567 is incomplete. Still, some authors have proposed the hypothesis that Velho's premature death shortly after arriving in France might have resulted from traditional Portuguese secrecy policies.¹¹² Indirectly, it has even been suggested that Dantas might have been behind such a plot to kill Velho. Given Dantas's espionage network, it is likely that at the very least he was apprised of the latest events, and it is still possible that some new documents may be found implicating Dantas in the premature death of Velho, as such a course fits well with his *Secret Science* policy. The dangers of the espionage and counter-espionage that Dantas undertook in France and England were noticed by Spain. Indeed, Dantas's non-collaboration with Spain (due to the Portuguese pilot Mimoso) would shape the twilight of his embassy, in 1567–68.

4.1.3 “French and Huguenot”: Spain and Dantas's Downfall

The termination of Dantas's diplomatic mission to France can be traced back to the French attack on Madeira and to the negotiations for King Sebastian's possible marriage with Princess Margaret of Valois (1553–1615). However, it must be noted that Dantas was not dismissed from his role as ambassador due to his alleged weak performance at the Valois court following the Madeira affair, but rather as a result of a systematic campaign against him by Alava, the Spanish ambassador to France. In order to fully understand Dantas's downfall, it is crucial to contextualize these events.

(for more details see Augeron, “Coligny et les Espagnols,” 166–74). As a result, by 1569, a squadron of Dutch Sea Beggars participated in a Huguenot operation against the Spanish in Nombre de Dios (Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean*, 136).

111 In several of his letters, dated 1575, Caligari reveals his astonishment at the audacity of French Huguenot corsairs and pirates from La Rochelle, who not only robbed the Portuguese of large amounts of money, but nearly entered Lisbon's harbour with impunity. According to his report, their raids were so frequent and successful that they even caused the Portuguese King's planned voyage from Algarve to Morocco to be aborted in 1575 (Vatican Apostolic Archive (VAA), *Nunziatura di Portugallo*, 2, fls. 60–61 and 124–124v.)

112 Kildushevskaya and Pinheiro Marques, *Atlas Universal*, 106.

In March 1566, Queen Catherine de' Medici dispatched Dantas to Lisbon with the task of negotiating a dynastic marriage between King Sebastian and her daughter Margaret of Valois. On March 16, 1566, Alava reported the details of Dantas's departure for Portugal to King Philip II. He began by noting that "of this ambassador of Portugal there is the opinion that he is so French in every way, as if he were a native of Paris." Alava then denounced Dantas for frequently meeting with Admiral Coligny, which had raised suspicions about his intentions. After speaking with Queen Catherine de' Medici on two or three occasions, Dantas approached Alava to express his grievances. He questioned why King Philip II was opposing the marriage of King Charles IX with Princess Elizabeth of Austria (1554–92), Emperor Maximilian II's daughter (1527–76), instead advocating for King Sebastian to wed her. Dantas argued that such a marriage would not serve the best interests of Portugal, and pointed out that if King Sebastian were to marry into the French royal family, both Portugal and France would be united by marriage, as well as Spain.¹¹³ After delivering his public defense of King Sebastian's marriage in France, Dantas made an impassioned speech to Alava on the greatness of Portugal, "that killed me," as Alava commented. In response to Dantas's argument for King Sebastian's marriage to Princess Margaret of Valois, Alava excused himself for not taking a stance, citing his lack of knowledge about the details of King Philip's negotiations with Emperor Maximilian, and promised Dantas that Spain would always defend Portuguese interests.

Ultimately, Alava revealed to King Philip II that Dantas had been dispatched by Queen Catherine de' Medici and the French Constable Anne de Montmorency to propose the marriage of King Sebastian with Princess Margaret of Valois. If this marriage were to be successfully negotiated and consummated, the Portuguese Princess Mary would receive all the money that was owed to her on her French estates.¹¹⁴ Dantas would also financially benefit from this arrangement, as Princess Mary had promised to share a portion of the recovered funds with him. Alava concluded his letter to King

113 Dantas was referring to the fact that King Philip II had already married Queen Elizabeth of Valois, also known in Spain as "Isabelle of Peace", as part of the Cateau-Cambr sis peace treaty. In his speech, Dantas argued that a French-Portuguese marriage alliance would also aid efforts to improve Franco-Spanish relations. He attempted to convince Alava that Portugal would align itself with Spain in urging France to consider Iberian marriage proposals, as opposed to other potential offers from England, Germany, or Italy. Once again, Dantas employed wise arguments based on European politics to make his case.

114 These negotiations dealt with the Portuguese princess's inheritance in southern France, left to her in her mother's last will. For more details see: Serr o, *A Infanta Dona Maria*.

Philip II by reporting that Dantas would not be traveling to Portugal by land, but by sea, which was in line with his political stance of supporting the French position over the Spanish one. Upon reading this letter, King Philip II wrote: "it is important to consider warning Portugal or my sister."¹¹⁵ Here, Philip had more in mind than just informing his sister Princess Juana of Austria, whom he knew to be opposed to the French marriage of her son King Sebastian. He was also thinking of his ambassador in Portugal, and particularly of his aunt, Queen Catherine of Austria, who, he expected, would not approve either of a French marriage for King Sebastian.

This letter from Alava illustrates several key points that must be taken into account when examining the circumstances surrounding Dantas's dismissal from his role as ambassador. Firstly, through his behavior, statements, and position, Dantas made it clear to Alava that he was opposed to any matrimonial alliance between Portugal and the Habsburg sphere of influence. Although Dantas advocated for a Spanish-Portuguese alliance in maritime matters, he believed that a French-Portuguese matrimonial alliance would be more advantageous for Portugal, particularly in terms of avoiding a Spanish claim to the Portuguese throne, as ultimately occurred in 1580. This is further highlighted in Alava's letter, when he describes Dantas's speech on the greatness of Portugal, which was intended to remind Alava that politically, Portugal was not dependent of Spain. Secondly, Dantas's position helps to explain why Alava, besides his insinuation of Dantas's entanglement with Admiral Coligny, which will be examined in the next paragraphs, wrote that Dantas behaved like a Frenchman from Paris. If Dantas had succeeded in negotiating a French-Portuguese matrimonial alliance, it would have represented a meaningful diplomatic defeat for Spain, and would have been widely discussed throughout Europe, particularly as Philip II had always presented himself as King Sebastian's protective older uncle. Recognizing the potential dangers that Dantas's stance could pose to Spain, Alava promptly informed Philip so that the Spanish court could respond swiftly.

Therefore, this letter represented the first move in a campaign against Dantas. It should be emphasized that this did not prevent continued Spanish-Portuguese collaboration in maritime matters against France and England. However, it is relevant to consider the impact of Dantas's position. By agreeing to serve as Queen Catherine de' Medici's ambassador to Portugal, Dantas was openly challenging Spanish interests and diplomacy. In fact, the issue of a French-Portuguese marriage alliance and the repercussions of

115 *Archivo*, vol. VIII, 1954, doc. 1205, 267–268.

Peyrot de Monluc's attack on Madeira not only affected Dantas's embassy, they ultimately led to his dismissal.

In July 1566, already back in Lisbon, Dantas wrote to the Queen Catherine de' Medici to remind her of her promise to safeguard Portuguese interests before his departure from France. He asked her to stop any expedition led by Peyrot de Monluc headed for Guinea, Brazil, or Congo. Dantas argued that it was false to maintain that Monluc's expedition was bound for Canada, as he had intelligence confirming its actual destination.¹¹⁶ The means and tone Dantas employed in this letter to Catherine was not that of a simple Portuguese ambassador—it was the letter written by the queen's own ambassador to Portugal, who did not ask, but rather demanded that Portuguese interests be defended in France during his absence, while he was publicly advocating French interests in Portugal. What Dantas could not anticipate in his relationship with Queen Catherine was how spectacularly his gamble would fail.

Another document preserved in Simancas reveals that an improbable outcome was on the brink of occurring: before Monluc's departure, King Philip II opened negotiations through his agent Bordaxi to try to coax Monluc into his service. Although this did not come to fruition,¹¹⁷ it reveals a pattern in how Philip dealt with his greatest maritime enemies: he tempted them with money and career offers. What the Catholic King ordered regarding Peyrot de Monluc parallels his approach to aborting the voyage of Thomas Stukley to Florida in 1563, and mirrors Guzmán de Silva's multiple negotiations with John Hawkins to bring him into Spain's service. As a pragmatic leader in a time when maritime threats were becoming too numerous and serious, King Philip knew well that the right amount money and promises of rewards could keep more unpleasant developments from troubling him. Nor is his pattern of action much different from what has been documented in chapter 1 concerning King Charles I and his own orders to his ambassadors in Portugal vis-à-vis Portuguese nautical experts.

116 Matos, *Les Portugais en France*, 188–90.

117 In June 1566, as Monluc was preparing his fleet, Bordaxi wrote to King Philip II, suggesting that Spain enlist him in its service. However, for this to happen, Philip would have to formally request King Charles IX's permission. Philip replied too late, in November 1566 (after Monluc's departure to Madeira). He instructed Bordaxi to convey to Monluc his admiration for all the information Monluc had provided to him (probably about the French Catholic wars against the Huguenots, as Monluc was the son of the famous Blaise de Monluc, a well-known Catholic leader). Philip II asked Monluc to continue his loyal service to Catholicism, in order to avoid conflicts and to allow him to travel to the Netherlands. Both documents are at AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo K 1506 in the months of June and November 1566.

But Peyrot de Monluc did not enter Spanish service, and instead he attacked Madeira in October 1566, confirming Dantas's worst fears. Since by this time Dantas was in Lisbon, it was one of his agents, Manuel de Araújo, who formally presented a complaint at the Valois court. Araújo confronted the queen mother and King Charles IX, both of whom condemned the attack and averred that they had not authorized it. They issued documents forbidding the return of Monluc's fleet to France, but in a letter to Cardinal Henry, Araújo blamed Dantas for the attack, claiming that he had knowledge of the expedition before its departure but failed to take action. Nevertheless, Araújo offered to serve as temporary ambassador until Dantas's return. In a second letter, also dated November 1566, Araújo advised hanging the Portuguese pilots who led Monluc to Madeira,¹¹⁸ and that is precisely what happened in February 1568 in Lisbon after Dantas's counter-espionage in France and England.

Araújo's criticism of Dantas's track record requires closer examination. Not only had Dantas previously complained about Araújo for refusing to inspect the French ports as a disguised spy, but it seems that Araújo had also been the victim of a murder attempt in France while Dantas was in Lisbon. The intricacies of these events are fully revealed in D. Alonso de Tovar's letters to King Philip II, which detail Dantas's sojourn in Lisbon. The analysis of these letters discloses important aspects of the maritime tensions between Portugal, Spain, and France. In a missive penned from Lisbon on May 12, 1566, Tovar informed his master of the latest events. He had discovered that Dantas had come from France with a commission from Queen Catherine de' Medici to negotiate King Sebastian's marriage with Princess Margaret of Valois. Although this was not new to Tovar and Philip II, what worried Tovar was the fact that Dantas had been "shut up in a room with Cardinal Henry for several hours, and alone," making his case for the benefits of the French marriage. At a time when Philip was mediating a possible marriage for King Sebastian with Princess Elizabeth of Austria, he was concerned about this turn of events. In Tovar's letter he annotated "keep me informed on any development on this matter."¹¹⁹ Later, Philip II even instructed Tovar to secretly raise objections to Sebastian's French marriage, at least while he was waiting a final response from Austria. King Philip counselled Tovar to contend in Portugal that France's proposals were never to be trusted,¹²⁰ an

¹¹⁸ ANTT, CC I-107-8, fls. 2-3v and I-108-10, fl. 1.

¹¹⁹ "Que avise siempre de todo lo que deste entendiére" – AGS, *Secretaría de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* is not numbered. The document is at the beginning.

¹²⁰ AGS, *Secretaría de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* is not numbered; King Philip II's undated instruction is in the middle of it.

eloquent testimony to the degree of mistrust still poisoning Franco-Spanish relations since Cateau-Cambr sis.¹²¹

Tovar's response to King Philip II's order was obsessive, monitoring Dantas's movements and assiduously reporting on his activities. On June 17, 1566, in a letter to the king Philip, Tovar reported that it had been decided that Dantas would return to France, but with a "short commission." Portugal would not agree to the Valois marriage proposal without seeing the dowry that France would pay and other conditions. This news was good for Spain, but Tovar did not fail to inform Philip of another sensitive matter: his discovery that Dantas had exchanged letters with important French figures regarding the marriage proposal. Tovar had even obtained one of those letters and sent it enclosed to the king.¹²² At Simancas, there is a missive in French by Dantas, dated August 13, 1566, and seemingly directed to Princess Margaret of Valois. In the letter, Dantas reported his negotiations in Lisbon with Cardinal Henry, stating that the matter was so delicate that it would take him longer than expected to wrap things up in Portugal. He also noted that he had communicated all the details regarding the negotiations to the French Constable Anne de Montmorency.¹²³ Thus, it becomes obvious that Tovar spied on Dantas while the latter was in Lisbon, even stealing his personal correspondence, mainly because he deemed Dantas's intentions unfavorable to Spanish interests.

Two other letters by Tovar prove that he remained vigilant with respect to Dantas's movements until his return to France. In a November 21, 1566, missive originally cyphered and addressed to King Philip II, Tovar commented at length on Dantas's affairs in Lisbon. He reported that Dantas would not be permitted to return to France as a scandal had broken out. The Portuguese law officer Manuel de Almeida,¹²⁴ would instead be sent to France to petition the Valois court on the Madeira affair and the French marriage proposal. The cause of Dantas's demotion was that it had been noticed in Lisbon not long before that some members of his household in France had denounced his Lutheran friends and unsavory contacts in France. Dantas believed that his untrustworthy spy in French ports, Manuel de Ara jo, was responsible for these accusations and as a result, ordered

121 On this topic see Ribera, *Diplomat e et espionage*, particularly the author's conclusions.

122 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* is not numbered, but the document is in its middle.

123 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* is not numbered, but the document is in its middle.

124 The same figure that Jean Nicot blamed for mistrusting Frenchmen in Lisbon, as has been underscored in the previous chapter. This was perceived by Tovar as favorable to Spain.

his men to kill him. Tovar stated that Araújo had miraculously managed to escape the attack.¹²⁵

Dantas's alleged instruction to murder Araújo may not have been solely motivated by the damaging accusations mentioned above, but also by a letter that Araújo had written to Cardinal Henry, in which he blamed Dantas for Monluc's attack on Madeira and suggested that he should replace Dantas in the French embassy. Dantas, who was known for his strong reactions, would not have tolerated such insubordination from a spy whom he had personally instructed as an agent to England in 1560–61 (as will be detailed in the next section). However, a second letter from Tovar to King Philip II, dated December 16, 1566, shows that Dantas's influence in the Portuguese government remained strong even after this scandal. Together with Portuguese secretary of state Pedro de Alcáçova Carneiro, Dantas convinced Cardinal Henry not to rule out the French marriage proposal, even after the attack on Madeira.¹²⁶ Just a few days later, Dantas was officially cleared to return to France as the Portuguese ambassador.

A recent investigation of the Madeira attack has proven that King Charles IX and Queen Catherine de' Medici did not authorize Monluc to attack either the Spanish or the Portuguese. Their hesitance was rooted in the Spanish ambassador Alava's threat that if Monluc attacked any Spanish area, there would be open war between France and Spain. Knowing that King Philip II would back the Portuguese against any hypothetical attack from the French, the queen mother and King Charles, like Peyrot's father (Blaise de Monluc), refrained from supporting Monluc's plans outright, but allowed him to sail on the condition that he did not attack Iberian interests.¹²⁷ Still, Monluc's approach to the Iberians was but a repetition, albeit from a different area in maritime France (in this case Guyenne instead of Normandy, Picardy or Brittany),¹²⁸ of the activities of earlier French and later English "sea-dogs", as has been argued by Frank Lestringant.¹²⁹ An example can be found in a letter written by John Hawkins in June 1570, in which he proposed to Queen Elizabeth I to sail to the Azores and raid the Portuguese and Spanish fleets, a scheme akin to French precedents.¹³⁰ The

125 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* is not numbered, but the document is in the middle.

126 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 384. This *legajo* is not numbered, but the document is one of the last.

127 Brehm and Trindade, "O Saque ao Funchal," 31–33.

128 Boucher, *France and the American Tropics*, 42.

129 Lestringant, *L'Huguenot et le sauvage*, 158.

130 C. S. Knighton and David Loades, eds., *Elizabethan Naval Administration* (London: Routledge, 2016), 612.

fact that Hawkins specifically mentioned the French strategy highlights the level of exchange and influence between the French and English in maritime matters. In the next section, this same conclusion will be reached when analyzing Dantas's embassy to England in 1562.

In light of the attack on Madeira, Dantas was consulted in Lisbon on the Portuguese response. Cardinal Henry sent him back to France to protest, stipulating he should only proceed with the negotiation for King Sebastian's wedding if the Valois court restored the stolen goods and pay compensation for the damage caused on Madeira.¹³¹ In Spain, while on his way to France, Dantas arrested a Breton merchant, allegedly connected with the Madeira affair.¹³² After his arrival, in November 1566, Alava testified that Dantas came out of his meeting with the queen mother and King Charles IX empty-handed.¹³³ He convinced King Charles IX to forbid Monluc's men from returning, but France would not pay compensation. By December 1566, Dantas had no choice but to write two angry letters to the lord of Fresnes, Florimond Robertet, who was the French secretary of state in charge of Spanish and Portuguese matters.¹³⁴ Dantas complained that the decree barring Monluc's men from returning had not been published in all the French ports. He also asked for the formal French answer to Portugal to avoid more scandal.¹³⁵

Shortly after these events, a meeting of the Conseil Privé was held. In it, the cardinal of Lorraine, whom Dantas greatly admired,¹³⁶ condemned the bloodshed caused by Monluc at Madeira. However, Coligny argued that the attack was the revenge for Villegagnon's defeat in Brazil and, considering Monluc's death, urged King Charles IX to pardon his men. Like Spain with respect to Florida, Portugal never received any official compensation for the destruction caused at Madeira. One of the reasons for this outcome was a rumor that spread in 1565, which alleged that some Portuguese had

131 ANTT, *Colecção de São Vicente* (CSV), vol. III, fls. 19–19v.

132 Abbé Douais, *Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roy Charles IX en Espagne 1565–1572*, vol. II (Paris: E. Leroux, 1886), 145.

133 *Archivo*, vol. IX, 1955, 96.

134 Sutherland, *The French Secretaries of State*, 30.

135 Matos, *Les Portugais en France*, 202–4.

136 Dantas's admiration for Lorraine was connected to his Catholic position and his support for the Guises. Proof of Dantas's good relations with Lorraine can be found in a letter by Lorraine to Sébastien de L'Aubespine, then French ambassador in Spain, dated May 1560. In it, Lorraine begged L'Aubespine to help the Portuguese Lopo Vaz de Sequeira at the Spanish court, as Dantas had asked Lorraine to assist him. Sequeira knew Dantas and Lorraine promised Dantas that he would attempt to help him (Daniel Cuisat, *Lettres du Cardinal Charles de Lorraine (1525–1574)* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1998), 396).

participated in the Spanish final assault on the French in Florida. Although false (neither French nor Spanish sources mention any Portuguese involvement in these events), this rumor decisively shaped Peyrot de Monluc's course of action. Not only did Monluc's men claim vengeance against the Portuguese collaboration with the Spanish in Florida during their attack on Madeira in 1566, but all of Monluc's preparations in France were molded by news of the bloodshed in Florida. It is also important to bear in mind that the same 1565 attack instigated French Dominique de Gourges's (1530–95) retaliatory assault, in 1567, on the Spanish outposts in Florida. Thus, as has been convincingly argued, Monluc's preparations took place in a distinctly anti-Iberian (not solely Spanish, but also Portuguese) context.¹³⁷ Following Coligny's effective speech at the Conseil Privé, Monluc's men returned and an envoy was sent to Portugal to explain the shift in the French position.¹³⁸ This unnamed French envoy is likely the one mentioned in the communications D. Alonso de Tovar, the Spanish ambassador to Portugal, sent in early 1567.

Writing to King Philip II on January 27, 1567, Tovar asserted that a French gentleman from King Charles IX's household had just arrived in Lisbon. He came to apologize, on Charles's behalf, for Monluc's attack on Madeira. Tovar suspected that his true purpose was to bolster the French marriage proposal for King Sebastian. Although he had yet to confirm this point, Tovar noted that the Portuguese had received him well, since many of them still advocated the marriage. Tovar also mentioned that he had refrained from reporting this matter to Philip II as he supposed that Alava had already done so. Like the episode with Seure in 1557, the arrival of the French envoy had caused a dispute over precedence at the Portuguese court. Tovar was humiliated by the fact that the French envoy was installed in the house of the duke of Aveiro,¹³⁹ believing that this place should have been reserved for him. But Tovar's and Spain's concerns over etiquette were soon eclipsed by graver matters.

Using his contacts, Tovar got word, on January 30, 1567, from an important Portuguese bishop that the Frenchman had only come to apologize for the Madeira attack. Another unnamed Portuguese informant reported to Tovar that he had come to apologize for the attack, and to do so in such a way that it seemed as if all of France was deeply remorseful for the injustice done to the Portuguese. The Frenchman also stated that King Charles IX

¹³⁷ McGrath, *The French in Early Florida*, 163.

¹³⁸ Brehm and Trindade, "O Saque ao Funchal," 56.

¹³⁹ The duke of Aveiro, together with the duke of Braganza, was the most powerful, rich, and influential nobleman in Portugal. This is why Tovar felt personally humiliated.

had ordered the detention of Monluc's men, authorized the hanging of some of them, and delivered all the stolen goods from Madeira to Dantas (something that never actually happened). After this, like Seure had done in 1557, the Frenchman promised France's support to Portugal in any war against the Muslims, the Ottomans, or the Spanish, reasserting the old French-Portuguese alliance. Only then had he asked for Portugal's formal position regarding King Sebastian's marriage in France. The unnamed Portuguese informant acquired all this intelligence from a "man" who had spoken with the Frenchman. This "man" also reported that the Frenchman was offered several feasts by some of the most powerful men of the Portuguese regent's (Cardinal Henry) entourage.

Based on this intelligence, Tovar briefed King Philip II of all these events on February 6, 1567. He recounted how the Frenchman was warmly welcomed due to the Portuguese desire for a marriage between King Sebastian and the French royal household. Tovar revealed that the Frenchman had brought a letter from Queen Catherine de' Medici, which emphasized the need for a marriage between King Charles IX and Princess Elizabeth of Austria. He acknowledged that he had obtained this intelligence from his secret informants at the Portuguese court, and implied that the bishop of Miranda was among them. Tovar attributed the Frenchman's reception to the Portuguese eagerness for the French marriage, and mentioned again that he had been greeted by Cardinal Henry and the Portuguese secretary of state Pedro de Alcáçova Carneiro at Almeirim. Queen Catherine of Austria was absent at the time and the Frenchman bribed Alcáçova. Cardinal Henry disguised his wish for the French marriage when he received the envoy in secrecy with very few of his servants. Then came the part that King Philip II feared the most: there were already rumors that France was preparing to appoint a new ambassador to Lisbon, prompting Philip to write the following comment in the margins: "The King has read this document but has nothing to say for now."¹⁴⁰ Still, until 1568 the remaining correspondence of Tovar and D. Fernando de Carrillo de Mendonza, his successor in the Portuguese embassy between 1567 and 1570, is filled with concerns about King Sebastian's possible marriage and entry into the French orbit. Thus, Dantas's support of the French marriage proposal influenced Philip's attempts to block him from the Portuguese embassy in France.

As Dantas did not want to close the door on a French marriage for King Sebastian, he refrained from loud complaint at the Valois court about the

140 AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 385. This *legajo* is unnumbered, with these documents in its middle.

Madeira attack, as Constable Anne de Montmorency recorded in a letter to Portugal. Montmorency's communication was driven by the fact that he had become a leading proponent within the Valois court of the French marriage, as Tovar and Alava duly informed King Philip II. Dantas's position, especially after the Madeira attack, soon prompted the advice to Cardinal Henry that he be dismissed from the French embassy. But the cardinal declined.¹⁴¹ Documents prove that, even after receiving the order to return to Portugal, Dantas managed in February 1568 to negotiate a formal treaty between Portugal and France to exchange traitors and rebels. The document does not detail whether pilots and cartographers were included, but its terms seem to imply that they were.¹⁴² This particular hypothesis is connected to what French sources state about Dantas's behavior, once he had returned to France, regarding the surviving men from Monluc's expedition.

Two French chroniclers mention the "persecutions" of Monluc's men ordered by the Portuguese ambassador in France.¹⁴³ It is also well-known, from Jacques Auguste de Thou's (1533–1617) account,¹⁴⁴ that the fate of Monluc's men was debated at the tense meeting of the Conseil Privé mentioned above (in which Coligny confronted his deadly enemy the cardinal of Lorraine). Coligny's emotional speech about Peyrot de Monluc's recovery of French maritime pride so impressed King Charles IX that, as has been stressed, the king changed stance and honored the survivors of Monluc's expedition. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Dantas was attempting to make up for his earlier actions, which had been criticized at the Portuguese and Spanish courts. Nonetheless, like the earlier Portuguese requests in Spain and England detailed in chapters 1 and 2, there is no evidence that any Portuguese traitor was ever returned to Portugal by France.

During the year 1567, the deterioration of Dantas's position in France was not caused by lack of results in the Madeira affair or in the negotiations for King Sebastian's marriage, but was primarily due to his perceived allegedly treacherous (in Spanish eyes) behavior towards Portuguese pilots. This was the main cause for Alava's campaign against Dantas, although it has been underscored in the previous section how Dantas was still able to send the Portuguese pilots Antão Luís and Gaspar Caldeira to Portugal in 1567, where they were publicly executed. Previously, Dantas had also collaborated

¹⁴¹ Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. II, 167 and 170–72.

¹⁴² ANTT, CSV, vol. III, fls. 445–446.

¹⁴³ Agrippa de Aubigné, *Histoire universelle*, tome II (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1887), 328; Lancelor Voison de La Popelinière, *L'Histoire de France* (Paris: L'Imprimerie, 1581), fl. 385v.

¹⁴⁴ Jacques-Auguste de Thou, *Histoire universelle de Jacques Auguste de Thou depuis 1543 jusqu'en 1607*, vol. V (London, 1734), 502.

with the Spanish ambassadors to France (Chantonney and Alava). Dantas shared information with his Spanish colleague Chantonney about the abovementioned French embassy to Morocco and even asked him to arrange a secret meeting with King Philip II.¹⁴⁵ Alava also trusted Dantas to send a courier with his correspondence to Spain and also praised Manuel de Araújo, Dantas's agent in the French ports, whom he even sent on a mission to Spain.¹⁴⁶ Still, as previously mentioned, in March 1566 Alava briefed King Philip II about Dantas's frequent talks with Coligny at Châtillon and how he was seen as a "Frenchman from Paris." Although Dantas tried to convince Alava that he was in discussions with Coligny because of French plans in Guinea, Alava found it strange that Dantas always stopped at Châtillon and met so regularly with Coligny at the Valois court.¹⁴⁷ Alava's suspicions were further cemented by Dantas's behavior towards the Portuguese pilot Francisco Dias Mimoso. To grasp the role Mimoso played in Dantas's downfall, it is critical firstly to examine who Mimoso was.

Francisco Dias Mimoso was a Portuguese pilot who joined the French navy at an unknown date during the reign of King Henry II. By 1559, he had obtained a letter of naturalization as a Frenchman and had settled with his family in Le Havre. In 1561 and 1564, Mimoso participated in French attacks on Spanish navigation in the Atlantic, which led to demands for his execution by Spanish ambassadors Chantonney and Alava. Despite this, Mimoso continued to take part in French expeditions, including the 1564 voyage to Florida and the 1566 expedition to Madeira led by Peyrot de Monluc. Alava viewed Mimoso as a threat due to his knowledge of Spanish Atlantic routes, a concern the Spanish court had with regard to Jean Ribault who was executed in Florida for the same reason. In 1566, when Dantas learned that Monluc intended to employ Mimoso (who had previously been sentenced to death) in the expedition that ended in Madeira, he attempted to convince Monluc to hand him over. Dantas argued that this would prevent Mimoso's execution as a Portuguese traitor in France.¹⁴⁸ Once again, when he deemed it appropriate, Dantas was ready and willing to defend a pilot.

Despite Dantas's efforts, he did not manage to convince Monluc to hand over Mimoso and Dantas twice refused to collaborate with Alava in pressuring the queen mother and King Charles IX to carry out the pilot's death

145 *Archivo*, vol. I, 1950, 152, 377 and 398.

146 *Archivo*, vol. VI, 1952, 151–52 and 394.

147 León Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso. Le "pilote portugais borgne" (1559–1569)* (offprint by Revista da Faculdade de Letras, 1956), 66–67.

148 Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso*, 6–13, 16, 18 and 20–22.

sentence. When Mimoso returned to France after the expedition to Madeira in March 1567, Alava was furious. He ordered his agents to spy on and then arrest Mimoso, and upon searching his belongings, Alava discovered letters from Dantas and the Valois court guaranteeing his safe passage to Paris. Alava confronted Dantas, who claimed that he was not betraying Portugal and that Alava would see that he was right. However, Alava found it suspicious that Dantas had not come to speak with him when Mimoso was arrested, citing illness as the reason for not leaving his bed (in fact, Dantas's poor health is recurrent in his missives). Alava also had suspicions about Dantas's behavior towards Mimoso while he was in prison; according to Alava, Dantas had sent some of his own servants to comfort the pilot during his incarceration.¹⁴⁹

In light of all these considerations, Alava wrote to King Philip II accusing Dantas of breaking his promise to provide assistance in the Mimoso affair, and suggesting that Dantas's secret dealings with Coligny were intended to steer French expeditions towards Spanish overseas territories instead of Portuguese ones. He advised King Philip to discuss the issue at the Consejo de Indias. Alava's misgivings about Dantas were further fueled by the fact that Dantas had only formally approved of Mimoso's arrest at Alava's orders.¹⁵⁰ On May 25, 1567, Alava reported to King Philip II that Dantas had been attacked. A group of men from Gascony had appeared at Dantas's house and assaulted three or four of his servants, leaving them severely wounded. Although Alava did not comment on the reasons for the attack, in the same letter, he warned that France was already aware that the Portuguese king had sent a large naval fleet to strike French raiders.¹⁵¹ As Dantas was the representative of Portugal in France, he was perceived as the informant of King Sebastian and had fallen into the line of fire. Simultaneously, Dantas was the object of French hostility due to his attempts to establish a *Mare Clausum* in France, and was perceived by Spain as a traitor and collaborator with Coligny. These bilateral, and on their face mutually exclusive, apprehensions would only intensify until Dantas was eventually demoted.

In response to the information sent to Madrid, in October 1567 King Philip II informed Alava that he had ordered his ambassador in Lisbon to denounce Dantas's abnormal conduct in France and to request formal collaboration in the matter of the pilot Mimoso.¹⁵² However, King Philip's

149 *Archivo*, vol. IX, 1955, docs. 1381 and 1386.

150 Bourdon, *Francisco Díaz Mimoso*, 23–30 and 66–67; *Archivo*, vol. IX, 1955, doc. 1399.

151 *Archivo*, vol. IX, 1955, doc. 1437.

152 Justina Rodríguez and Pedro Rodríguez, eds., *Don Francés de Alava y Beamonte. Correspondencia inédita de Felipe II con su Embajador en París (1564–1570)* (Pamplona: Donostia-San Sebastián, 1991), 194.

orders were not the first in this regard, as he had already received news in February 1567 that the king of Portugal, through Dantas, was paying an annual bribe of 3,000 ducats to Coligny.¹⁵³ This indicates that the Portuguese attempts at bribing Coligny continued even after Dantas's complaints and suggestions to end it in his aforementioned 1565 letter. Lisbon still hoped to buy Coligny's loyalty, as it had in the 1530s with the French Admiral Philippe de Chabot. However, as this chapter has demonstrated, even when Coligny accepted Portuguese bribes, he did not abandon his anti-Portuguese maritime plans, as evidenced by his speech at the Conseil Privé against the cardinal of Lorraine. In this respect, as Dantas's 1565 letter illustrates, the failure was not Dantas's personally, but rather an inevitable result of Lisbon's policies. Dantas in his final days, like Nicot before him, became a victim of his homeland's court position.

Returning to the issue of the pilot Mimoso, in May 1567, the regent Cardinal Henry replied to King Philip II, stating that he had written to Dantas and directed him to collaborate with Alava. By June 1567, Alava informed Philip that Dantas had delayed receiving Cardinal Henry's courier. He also noted that Dantas had justified his actions to Coligny by claiming that he had not sent Mimoso to Paris to be kidnapped by Alava. Alava then insinuated that Dantas mistrusted Coligny and was in the habit of sending his men to Coligny's home every ten days.¹⁵⁴ Summing up, Alava accused Dantas of collaborating with Coligny for a second time, warning Philip II that he might have struck a deal with Coligny to leave Portuguese overseas areas alone in exchange for the Portuguese experts harbored in Dantas's house.

In a missive penned on August 19, 1567 to King Philip II, Alava further escalated his imputations. Alava claimed that Dantas's maneuvers with Coligny, including his attempts to stop French expeditions to West Africa, only fed Coligny and his corsairs' desire to organize new voyages to the region. Indeed, Coligny was lining up new expeditions to the area, with the planned participation of Portuguese pilot Gaspar Caldeira. Alava reminded the king that he had confronted Dantas seven or eight months prior about his harboring of pilots who had betrayed the Portuguese king. Upon reading Alava's suggestion that the French ambassador in Madrid should be confronted with this fact, Philip II wrote in the margin that this matter should instead be discussed with the Portuguese ambassador at his court. By September 12, 1567, in another letter to King Philip II, Alava could confirm that the French fleet was preparing to depart to West Africa with secret

¹⁵³ *Archivo*, vol. IX, 1955, doc. 1363.

¹⁵⁴ Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso*, 72–76.

approval by Queen Catherine de' Medici. He took this as confirmation of his earlier suspicion: Dantas was informing Coligny on West Africa. This time, Alava decided not to warn Dantas of Coligny's plans.¹⁵⁵

Yet in July 1567, King Philip II ordered his ambassador in Lisbon to press Queen Catherine of Austria and Regent Cardinal Henry once more on the matter. They both wrote to King Philip II with reassurances that they had ordered Dantas to collaborate with Alava in the Mimoso affair. But by the time the Spanish ambassador in Lisbon approached Queen Catherine of Austria and Cardinal Henry for the third time, the situation had become increasingly contentious. While the queen grew wary of Dantas's intentions, the cardinal replied that he had ordered Dantas to accommodate the traitorous Portuguese pilots in France with the promise of a royal pardon, so that they could be sent to Portugal and executed at his own orders. This included Portuguese pilot Mimoso. The cardinal also contended that if any Portuguese nautical expert were to be executed by French authorities, all the others would flee, Dantas would lose the chance to repatriate them, and they would never face justice in Portugal. At this stage, the Spanish ambassador in Lisbon concluded his argumentation, understanding that Dantas's policy in France was no more than the enactment of the cardinal's design (an outcome confirmed in D. Fernando de Carrillo y Mendonza's original missive to King Philip II dated September 19, 1567, and preserved at Simancas).¹⁵⁶ Carrillo's fourth meeting on October 5, 1567 was again ineffective, with the cardinal stating that he still hoped to hear Dantas's side of the story. Aware of a surprise attack at night on Dantas's house, possibly ordered by Alava, the cardinal added that Alava was clearly campaigning against Dantas,¹⁵⁷ revealing that he also knew of Alava's surveillance of Dantas. Thus, Cardinal Henry condemned Spain's espionage on Dantas, forcing Carrillo y Mendonza to drop the issue.

Unfortunately, it appears that most of the letters from Dantas during this period have been lost, with the exception of a fragmentary letter from 1567 in which he seems to defend himself against accusations related to pilots. However, as the document is incomplete and does not contain a date, it is impossible to determine if it was written during the critical months when King Philip II was pressuring the Portuguese regent to demote Dantas. It is plausible, nonetheless, that he did reach an agreement with Coligny to

¹⁵⁵ *Archivo*, vol. IX, 1955, docs. 1468 and 1478.

¹⁵⁶ AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 385. This *legajo* is not numbered. The document is in its beginning.

¹⁵⁷ Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso*, 76–80.

prevent French attacks on Portuguese territories overseas. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that Dantas continued to advocate for King Sebastian's marriage in France, even after the attack on Madeira. In so doing, Dantas may have sought to take advantage of Coligny's anti-Spanish sentiments and policies.¹⁵⁸

Given Cardinal Henry's responses to Carrillo y Mendonza in Lisbon, it is also possible that Cardinal Henry instructed Dantas to deceive Coligny with the promise of Portuguese collaboration. As the attempts at bribing Coligny were floundering, the Portuguese regent may have adopted a new strategy. This is consistent with what Cardinal Henry confided to Carrillo y Mendonza: that he had ordered Dantas to provide shelter to all Portuguese traitors, promising them pardons, so they would return to Portugal and be executed. Such a step from Cardinal Henry would have been a reaction to Bartolomeu Velho's recent escape to France, which took place in 1567, and an expression of his wish to stop Portuguese nautical experts from offering their knowledge to France and England. This also explains why Cardinal Henry consistently defended Dantas's intentions when Carrillo y Mendonza's claimed that he was being deceived by the French. Without more letters from this period, the question of whether this change in strategy was communicated by Cardinal Henry to Dantas, or suggested by Dantas himself, remains uncertain. However, it is clear that events in Lisbon and Madrid went beyond stratagems Dantas could devise to defend himself against these serious accusations.

On October 22, 1567, the fifth petition of the Spanish ambassador in Lisbon achieved King Philip II's desired outcome: Dantas's recall.¹⁵⁹ Consultation of the original letter reveals that even after ordering Dantas's recall, Cardinal Henry argued that Dantas had served the Portuguese Crown loyally for years, and that he still did not believe that Dantas had acted in bad faith. Nor could the cardinal support his being publicly dishonored.¹⁶⁰ For this reason, the formal letter of recall states that Dantas was returning to Portugal because of his poor health, which could not withstand another winter in France.¹⁶¹ Previously, Dantas had already asked for King Charles IX's and Queen Catherine de' Medici's authorization to depart to Portugal due to the unhealthy climate of France.

¹⁵⁸ Whitehead, *Gaspar de Coligny*, 335–36.

¹⁵⁹ Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso*, 81.

¹⁶⁰ AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 385. This *legajo* is not numbered, but the document is in its middle.

¹⁶¹ This letter, alongside other diplomatic documents relating to Michel de Seure, Jean Nicot, and João Pereira Dantas's embassies are preserved at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg. For details see: Chichkine, "Mirage d'une alliance," 52.

Raymond de Fourquevaux, the French ambassador to Spain, reveals that Dantas's house had been spied on by four or five men on orders of ambassador Alava at least since July 1567. When it came out in Madrid that Dantas was to be exiled to his property in Portugal, Fourquevaux reported that he was under accusations of heretical activities with Coligny. It was in this precise context that Fourquevaux observed how Dantas was perceived by Philip II as a "Frenchman and Huguenot." He observed that Philip appeared satisfied with the souring of French-Portuguese relations, preferring war to peaceful coexistence.¹⁶² The fact that Alava surveilled Dantas's movements is not a surprise. Permanent ambassadors like Alava and Dantas were often regarded with suspicion.¹⁶³ Fourquevaux's observations that King Philip II was pleased with French-Portuguese tensions supports an assertion that has already been made: namely, that Spain did not want Portugal to be aligned with France, regardless of the reason.

Dantas' return to Portugal took place in May 1568, as Alava's missives evidence. In February 1568, Dantas had received formal authorization from King Charles IX and Queen Catherine de' Medici to return to Portugal. He asked to bring the pilot Mimoso with him and they agreed, much to Alava's anger. In April 1568, Dantas was still purchasing horses to bring to King Sebastian. He ultimately failed to return to Portugal with the pilot Mimoso, who was murdered by Alava's agents in February 1569.¹⁶⁴ Dantas may have been aware that Alava intended to kill Mimoso, with this concern motivating his request to bring the pilot with him. Insofar as Mimoso was only killed after he had left France, Dantas had arguably succeeded in his aims. Dantas also tried to repatriate the Portuguese cosmographer André Homem, but he refused. Dantas was consequently accused of involvement in a failed plot to kill André (allegedly because André had revealed Dantas's secrets). Although Dantas was summoned by King Charles IX to explain himself, no further repercussions are recorded in the lamentably incomplete extant documentation. André Homem's continued employment in Valois service was noticed. Alava informed King Philip II that "it is said that André Homem is now the first man here that prepares nautical charts [for the French]."¹⁶⁵ Thus, Dantas's inability to bring back André Homem was no minor matter for Portugal and was again full of consequences.

162 Abbé Douais, *Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roy Charles IX en Espagne 1565–1572*, Vol. I, (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1896), 277, 298 and 395.

163 Bély, *L'art de la paix en Europe*, 34.

164 Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso*, 44 and 82–83.

165 Kildushevskaya and Pinheiro Marques, *Atlas Universal*, 108.

Dantas departed on May 22, 1568 after pleading with the French chancellor to protect Portuguese interests, as he knew he would not have a formal successor in the embassy. When he finally returned to Lisbon, in August 1568, he was unable to defend himself adequately before King Sebastian, according to León Bourdon.¹⁶⁶ However, in D. Fernando de Carrillo y Mendonza's original letter, dated August 5, 1568, there is no mention of Dantas's attempts to justify his actions; the missive merely states that he had arrived three or four days before.¹⁶⁷ Nor, for that matter, is there any other reference to Dantas's supposed botched defense. Dantas's personality, as illustrated by all the episodes narrated so far, was hardly one that would accept the previous accusations without clearly replying to them at the Portuguese court.

As in 1566, there is evidence that Dantas in 1568 still hoped to be reappointed as ambassador to France. When ambassador Raymond de Fourquevaux contacted him (due to ongoing negotiations for King Sebastian's wedding in France), Dantas informed him that he was to return to France as an ambassador to proceed with the discussions in December 1569. This was not to be—Dantas died in January 1570 without ever regaining his position in France.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, Dantas's illegitimate heir, Tomé da Silva, faced accusations of Protestantism by the Portuguese Inquisition in the next years. Even though he was deceased, Dantas was himself repudiated by members of his household for having employed a Lutheran tutor to raise his heir in Paris.¹⁶⁹ It should be recalled, though, that this allegation only surfaced after Dantas's death, further indicating his influence in Portugal even after his demotion from the French embassy.

In summary, Dantas's downfall was primarily caused by his controversial harboring and use of Portuguese nautical experts in France. This was an uncommon reason for an ambassador's undoing, particularly for previous Portuguese ambassadors in France, but it was the basis on which Alava could cast Dantas as Huguenot sympathizer and traitor to Portugal. Nevertheless, Dantas's commentary on the French civil wars readily demonstrates that, far from being a crypto-Protestant, he was a staunch Catholic. In reality, Dantas's strategy was rooted in his belief that to better defend Portuguese *Mare Clausum* policies in France, particularly during a time when Coligny's

¹⁶⁶ Bourdon, *Francisco Dias Mimoso*, 37–38 and 84.

¹⁶⁷ AGS, *Secretaria de Estado*, Legajo 385. This *legajo* is not numerated. The document is toward the end.

¹⁶⁸ Douais, *Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux*, vol. II, 1900, 159, 162 and 174.

¹⁶⁹ ANTT, *Tribunal do Santo Ofício*, Inquisição de Lisboa, book 193, fl. 243.

leadership was perceived as a significant threat to Portugal, he needed a *Secret Science* policy that could adapt to changing circumstances. Thus, as was observed, Dantas formed specific opinions and tactics for each case involving Portuguese nautical experts. Additionally, Dantas's actions in France and his controversial dealings with Coligny were a reaction to the emergence of major maritime expeditions under Queen Elizabeth I, a topic that will now be analyzed. Ultimately, Dantas was the first Portuguese ambassador in France who had to simultaneously coordinate a Portuguese response to two maritime rivals: France and England.

4.2 Dantas and Elizabethan England (1558–68)

4.2.1 Fighting for *Mare Clausum*: The Antecedents and Dantas's Embassy to England (1558–1562)

In July 1558, the Portuguese pilot Roque Fernandes was returning to Portugal on his ship. His vessel and cargo had previously been seized by the French, but Dantas had negotiated the devolution of the cargo and ship in France. On the way to Portugal, Fernandes was attacked by an English pirate who stole all his cargo, Dantas's letters and books, and who also kidnapped the Portuguese pilot Francisco Dias Salgado, who was already known to the English.¹⁷⁰ The letter from Roque Fernandes which was sent at the start of Dantas's diplomatic mission to France highlights the growing concern about the maritime ambitions of the English, who were known to hire Portuguese pilots. Those ambitions were evident as early as Thomas Wyndham's first voyage to Guinea in 1553, when Portuguese agents had tried to convince the Portuguese pilots Francisco Rodrigues and António Eanes Pinteado to return to Portugal. As documented in chapter 2, both ended up participating in the expedition because Edward Clinton (1512–85), the English Lord Admiral, imprisoned Portuguese agents until the departure of Wyndham's fleet.¹⁷¹

When news of Queen Mary I's death reached Portugal, D. João Pereira, the son of D. Francisco Pereira, the Portuguese ambassador to King Philip II, was instructed to visit Queen Elizabeth I and offer his congratulations on her succession to the throne. It has previously been assumed that it was Dantas who visited Elizabeth in 1559, but an examination of the historical

¹⁷⁰ ANTT, CC I–102–113, fls. 1–2.

¹⁷¹ Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*, 106–7.

documents reveals that this was not the case.¹⁷² As has been underscored in chapter 2, D. João Pereira was nominated in January 1559 and he may have arrived in England by March or April, since his accreditation letter in the State Papers dates from April 15.¹⁷³ Queen Elizabeth's formal response to Queen Catherine of Austria, who was serving as regent of Portugal at the time, was positive and emphasized the long-standing alliance between Portugal and England.¹⁷⁴ Still, the Portuguese Crown had not forgotten the English voyages to Guinea and Mina, nor could it fail to remember the embassy of Diogo Lopes de Sousa, who had formally pressured Queen Mary to forbid her English subjects from sailing to Portuguese overseas areas. This episode and its results, achieved through Portuguese diplomacy and espionage in England (as detailed in chapter 2), served as a template for Dantas's own approach.

Consequently, after D. João Pereira's return to Portugal, and possibly even at Dantas's suggestion, Francisco de Mesquita was sent as an envoy to Queen Elizabeth in 1559 to protest against the renewed English navigation to West Africa.¹⁷⁵ Concurrently, the bishop of Aquila, the Spanish ambassador in England between 1559 and 1563, was entrusted by King Philip II with the task of petitioning the English government on the recent capture of a Portuguese vessel sailing between Flanders and Portugal. Elizabeth I's response was to request that the case be analyzed in the Court of Admiralty.¹⁷⁶ It was not long before Dantas was required to travel to England as an ambassador, as he was undoubtedly aware of the outcome of D. João Pereira's mission in 1559. This may not have been the first time Dantas had a hand in English affairs. In March 1559, after the peace treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis had named

172 It has previously been assumed that Dantas, who signed as "João Pereira Dantas," was D. João Pereira, the son of D. Francisco Pereira, the Portuguese ambassador to King Philip II. This confusion arises from the fact that both individuals were named João Pereira. It should be noted that Dantas did not use the Portuguese nobiliary title of "D." in his signature. Additionally, the earl of Feria, who reported on his meeting with Queen Elizabeth I to King Philip II, referred to the Portuguese envoy as the son of the Portuguese ambassador to King Philip II. This further demonstrates that Dantas and D. João Pereira are distinct individuals (Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 49).

173 Joaquim José da Silva Mendes Leal, Visconde de Santarém, and Luiz Augusto Rebello da Silva, *Quadro elementar das relações políticas e diplomaticas de Portugal com as diversas potencias do mundo, desde o principio da monarchia portugueza ate aos nossos dias*, vol. III (Paris: Oficina Typografica de Fain et Thunot, 1842), XCI and 102.

174 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 48–49.

175 Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. I, 224.

176 Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth*, 1559–60 (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1865), 355 and 490.

Portugal the arbiter in the Calais affair between France and England,¹⁷⁷ Dantas had received information from master André de Escochard on related Anglo-French dealings in his role as Portuguese ambassador in France.¹⁷⁸

In 1560, when the Portuguese government decided to send Manuel de Araújo to the English court to protest, Dantas wrote a letter in French, dated February 26, 1560, to Nicholas Throckmorton, the English ambassador in France between 1559 and 1564.¹⁷⁹ In the missive, Dantas humbly requested Throckmorton's assistance in ensuring a favorable reception for Araújo at the Tudor court, going so far as to ask that Araújo be received as if he were Dantas himself.¹⁸⁰ The style of the letter suggests that Dantas was not particularly familiar with Throckmorton, although he did know him personally. This distance was likely due to Throckmorton's dealings with Huguenots, which Dantas criticized in his correspondence about the first French civil war. Despite knowing that these negotiations were related to English plans for recovering Calais, Dantas predicted from the beginning that France would not, under any circumstances, return Calais to England.¹⁸¹ The specifics of Manuel de Araújo's mission to England in 1560 are unknown, but it is clear that Dantas instructed him, as the abovementioned letter to Throckmorton shows. It is probable, considering the general pattern of such missions during this period, that Araújo's primary aim was maritime espionage, but no documents from his journey of 1560 are currently known, nor does Dantas's correspondence mention Araújo's activities in that year.

In 1561, however, accumulating news of English overseas movements greatly worried Dantas. In April, he got word of English plans to attack Madeira. By September, the bishop of Aquila informed Dantas that an English fleet had recently returned from Mina, despite navigational difficulties, and that London merchants were already preparing for another voyage. Additionally, Queen Elizabeth was reported to be planning to send one of her own ships on the expedition, and to open negotiations with the Huguenot Louis de Bourbon, prince of Condé (1530–69), to send a joint ambassador to

177 Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. II, 175.

178 ANTT, *Fragmentos*, box 2, maço 2, n.º 66.

179 On Throckmorton's embassies in France and Scotland and his major role in the early years of Queen Elizabeth I's reign see: Cary Carson, "The Embassies of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, 1559–64: Towards a New politics for Divided Europe" (PhD diss. Harvard University, 1973).

180 British Library (BL), Add MS 35830, fls. 72–72v.

181 On Dantas's perspective on the French civil wars and more general problems of European politics see Nuno Vila-Santa, "Reporting for a King: Valois France and Europe through the Eyes of Ambassador Dantas (1557–1568)," *Culture & History Digital Journal* 12, no. 1 (2023): 1–15.

the sultan of Morocco. In a letter to King Sebastian, also from September, the bishop of Aquila expressed regret at his inability to prevent the next English fleet from sailing, and warned that five French ships would be sailing alongside the English.¹⁸² Aquila's dispatch had been prompted by a Portuguese request to lodge a protest in England, as Portugal did not at the time have a permanent ambassador in England (a state of affairs confirmed by a letter from Michel de Seure, the French ambassador to Queen Elizabeth, dated November 29, 1561 and addressed to King Charles IX).¹⁸³

Araújo's original second appointment to England dated back to December 30, 1560 and had been ordered by King Sebastian, who had written to William Cecil (1520–96) requesting that Araújo be received cordially.¹⁸⁴ Given that Araújo had previously worked for Dantas, one may assume that he departed for England after discussing strategy with Dantas, although the surviving documents are silent on this possibility. On March 14, 1561, before Araújo's arrival in England, Nicholas Throckmorton wrote to William Cecil stating that while he favored granting the envoy entry to England as a normal diplomatic courtesy, he believed that Araújo's main objective was to end English trade in West Africa.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, English documents confirm that Dantas followed Araújo's mission to Elizabeth's court from France.

On April 8, 1561, Manuel de Araújo presented a formal protest in which he demanded that the English cease their voyages to West Africa and Morocco. He also urged that this prohibition be published in all English ports, and decried the seizure of Portuguese ships by the English. Additionally, citing the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, Araújo petitioned Elizabeth to prevent Scottish pirates from entering English ports after raiding Portuguese ships.¹⁸⁶ In response, Araújo was informed that the English queen had just equipped vessels to fight pirates, but that she did not acknowledge any Portuguese right to dictate where Englishmen could or could not sail. Queen Elizabeth did agree to impose heavy penalties on any Englishmen found to be assisting Scottish pirates,¹⁸⁷ while Cecil and the lord admiral heard counsel on how best to reply to Araújo's complaints.¹⁸⁸

182 ANTT, CC I–104–114, fl. 1, I–105–34, I–105–63, fl. 1 and I–105–64.

183 David Potter, ed., *A Knight of Malta at the Court of Elizabeth I: The Correspondence of Michel de Seure, French Ambassador, 1560–1561* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 107–8.

184 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1559–60*, doc. 467.

185 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 29.

186 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, docs. 96 and 97.

187 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 98.

188 Robert Lemon, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547–1580* (London: Longman, 1856), 173.

At this point, it is likely that Araújo wrote to Dantas to update him on the situation, a hypothesis supported by Nicholas Throckmorton's correspondence. In two letters, dated April 20, 1561, and sent to the English queen and Cecil, the English ambassador in France noted that Dantas was uneasy with the news of French preparations for voyages to West Africa, and was disturbed by the rumors that Araújo was being treated just as Dantas himself had been in the past.¹⁸⁹ This suggests that before Araújo's departure, Dantas had spoken personally with Throckmorton about the English voyages and received a similar reply. Only after this had Araújo lodged his final complaint, in which he tried to explain, with reasoning akin to that which Dantas would employ the next year, how the Portuguese *Mare Clausum* rights to all of West Africa implied a ban on English incursions.¹⁹⁰

On April 24, 1561, Queen Elizabeth I formally replied to the Portuguese regent, Queen Catherine of Austria, stating that she had received Araújo in the presence of the bishop of Aquila, the Spanish ambassador to England. Following their conversation, she had ordered that no Englishmen be allowed to sail to West Africa. However, in the safe-conduct given to Araújo for his return, also dated April 24, 1561, it was asserted that the English queen did not agree with the Portuguese arguments, and had merely issued the prohibition for the sake of good relations. The official response also stipulated that collaboration between Englishmen and Scottish pirates was prohibited.¹⁹¹ Subsequently, on May 1, 1561, she issued a directive to Lord Admiral Clinton to promulgate the prohibition decree in English ports.¹⁹² She also wrote to Queen Mary Stuart (1542–87) about the Portuguese protests against Scottish pirates, an intervention which caused a Scottish letter of marque against the Portuguese to be revoked.¹⁹³ Notwithstanding these gestures, there is evidence that Englishmen and Scotsmen jointly assaulted Portuguese vessels as early as 1563.¹⁹⁴

Once apprised of the formal response, King Sebastian wrote to Queen Elizabeth approving the measures taken by England, and instructed the

189 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, docs. 124 and 125.

190 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 128.

191 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, docs. 137 and 138.

192 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 157.

193 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, docs. 452 and 488.

194 The Englishman Montgomery explicitly begged Cecil and Queen Elizabeth I to be allowed to bring Scottish captains with a letter of marque against the Portuguese to English ports: Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1562* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1868), docs. 175 and 177.

bishop of Aquila to deliver his compliments.¹⁹⁵ King Sebastian also acknowledged the bishop of Aquila's assistance to Araújo's mission. Two letters from Aquila in 1561 prove that he did more than simply lodge Araújo in his house. As Araújo's debates with members of the Privy Council took place in Aquila's house, the Spanish ambassador intervened in them directly in his effort to strengthen Portuguese arguments against English rhetoric.¹⁹⁶ But while these negotiations and replies were underway, and despite the apparent success of Araújo's mission, Martin Frobisher (1535–94) sailed to Mina.¹⁹⁷ This provides a clear indication that Elizabeth was well on her way to adopting the policy of her predecessor, Queen Mary I, as discussed in chapter 2. There is further evidence of this tendency in another missive from Elizabeth, dated July 28, 1561, shortly after Araújo's mission to the Tudor court. In the letter, the queen ordered the seasoned Captain John Lok, who had captained the English voyage to West Africa in 1554–55, to lead a new expedition to Guinea that would include royal ships. Although Lok refused, the queen's decision to openly challenge Portugal's overseas claims is unmistakable.¹⁹⁸

Thus, when Dantas at the end of 1561 received the troubling intelligence from England that the queen's prohibition was not being respected, he hastened to inform King Sebastian. The king of Portugal reacted by instructing the bishop of Aquila to lodge another protest to Queen Elizabeth I, and commanded him to endeavor to disrupt the departure of the English expedition (as Aquila confessed in a letter to King Philip II in November 27, 1561).¹⁹⁹ In March 1562, a denunciation of Aquila to the English authorities even stated that he used to provide maritime intelligence to Spain and also to Portugal to help oppose English voyages to West Africa.²⁰⁰ Thus, Aquila paid personally for his defense of Portuguese interests at the Tudor court. In the meantime, Dantas provided all the details of the next English voyage: the fleet was composed of six ships and, worse still, it would carry materials to build a fortress in West Africa. Dantas suggested that Portugal send a formal ambassador to complain about such English voyages, just as he had discussed with Aquila. Although he could not recommend anyone,

195 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 628.

196 Le Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove, ed., *Relations politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre sous le règne de Philippe II*, vol. II (Brussels: F. Hayex, Imprimeur de L'Academie Royale de Belgique, 1883), 607–8 and 631–32.

197 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 51–54.

198 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 74–75.

199 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, doc. 144.

200 Kervyn de Lettenhove, ed., *Relations politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre sous le règne de Philippe II*, vol. III (Brussels: F. Hayex, Imprimeur de L'Academie Royale de Belgique, 1883), 1.

Dantas observed that this ambassador would have to make a case against Law, and argue directly before secretary of state William Cecil and Lord Clinton. Dantas's advice was astute, but he could not predict how the new English queen's tenacity would affect the final outcome.²⁰¹

By late 1561, Dantas had again sent his agent Manuel de Araújo to England to gather details on the next English fleets, and it is probable that some of the intelligence that he delivered to Portugal came to him via Araújo. In January 1562, to his great pleasure, Dantas was able to inform Lisbon that the English expedition had gone home, although he could not be sure whether the fleet would return to the sea in the future. Later that month, the bishop of Aquila told Dantas that he found it very unlikely the English fleet would depart in the winter, and reported that the English were planning to join the French in the Berlengas Islands to attack ships *en route* to continental Portugal.²⁰² It was undoubtedly after this letter that Dantas was named ambassador to England, and on April 25, 1562, Dantas wrote to Aquila revealing his joy at having the opportunity to kiss the hand of a monarch for whom he harbored a personal admiration: Queen Elizabeth I.

Nicholas Throckmorton's warnings to England before Dantas's arrival at the English court are worth stressing here. Well aware of Dantas's intelligence gathering methods on French and English maritime movements, Throckmorton alerted Queen Elizabeth, in a letter dated March 6, 1562, that the Portuguese king had both received reports on the characteristics of all the English vessels heading for West Africa, and been notified that the expedition included both private and royal ships. As a result, Portugal had prepared a fleet to pursue the English and had even given orders to attack the queen's ships.²⁰³ Although Throckmorton could not be certain, it is obvious that Dantas was the informant of Portugal. Having cautioned the queen, Throckmorton kept a vigilant eye on Dantas.

When reports of Dantas's appointment to Elizabeth's court emerged, Throckmorton warned Cecil that Dantas "is in great estimation here [France], and with his Queen [Catherine of Austria], and such as govern in Portugal [King Sebastian]."²⁰⁴ On April 24, 1562, he confirmed to Queen Elizabeth I that Dantas was about to depart to England, having waited for D. Afonso de Lencastre, his replacement in France, to arrive.²⁰⁵ When Dantas

201 Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, vol. II, 630–34, 640–41, 644–45 and 650–51.

202 ANTT, CC I–105–62 and I–105–88.

203 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 924.

204 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 944.

205 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 1043.

was finally ready to set sail, Throckmorton wrote to Cecil, on April 27, 1562, with all the details. The way Throckmorton described Dantas shall now be quoted in full, so that readers may appreciate how Dantas, mortal enemy to France and England's overseas ambitions, was understood by his rival ambassador:

"Sends herewith a packet for the Bishop of Aquila from Don Juan Pereira Dantes, late Ambassador of Portugal in France, and now delegated to go in legation from his King to the Queen. He will take his journey from hence about the end of this month, and will lodge with the Bishop of Aquila. He is a devout servant to the Pope and this estate, and there with a cunning negotiator. Amongst his errands for navigation and such matters, Cecil may hear of an overture of marriage, and, in the end, of sending to the Council. The King has dealt liberally with him to make this journey, so he is like to come in good order, and expects to be entertained there accordingly. The King of Portugal has made him a Cavaliero di Christo for his services done in France, and has given him a good commandry."²⁰⁶

The Venetian ambassador to France also commented on Dantas's departure. Marc'Antonio Barbaro's letter to Venice, dated April 29, 1562, corroborates Throckmorton's words. Upon learning that Dantas would be sent to Queen Elizabeth I as an ambassador, Pope Pius IV (1560–65) reportedly stated that Dantas should address religious matters with the English queen and convince her to send delegates to the Council of Trent. Additionally, Barbaro noted that Throckmorton had confided in him that Dantas would propose a marriage between Queen Elizabeth I and King Sebastian, though Throckmorton was not convinced of its feasibility due to the twenty-year age gap between the two monarchs. Overall, Barbaro, like Throckmorton, recognized that Dantas's mission was a typical *Mare Clausum* embassy.²⁰⁷ The grants that Throckmorton said Dantas received in 1562 in the context of his embassy to England are likewise substantiated in Portuguese documents. In 1561, Dantas was given a new grant prior to being instated as a knight of the Order of Christ (the main Portuguese military order of the time). The next year he received his appointment. Finally, in 1563 he was formally named counsellor to King Sebastian.²⁰⁸ These documents signal the importance

²⁰⁶ Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 1060.

²⁰⁷ Brown and Bentinck, *Calendar ... Venice, 1558–1580*, doc. 285.

²⁰⁸ Madeira Santos, *O caracter experimental*, 45–46.

attached to his mission in 1562, as Dantas did not receive any substantial awards until his death despite repeated requests.²⁰⁹

When Dantas at last arrived at Elizabeth's court, as the abovementioned documents show, his identity and mission were hardly a surprise. Queen Elizabeth I and Cecil knew who he was and quickly understood that this time Portugal had named an experienced diplomat, as it had done with Diogo Lopes de Sousa in the reign of Queen Mary, to deal with English affairs. Throckmorton had not failed to report, as Alba had some years before, Dantas's familiarity with nautical matters. Thus, the queen and Cecil must have suspected that Dantas would lodge the usual Portuguese protests, but they were still uncertain whether he had any other important cards to play, especially given his clearance to propose an English marriage for King Sebastian. Once more, Portugal intended to use a matrimonial proposal to appease Anglo-Portuguese overseas rivalry, precisely as had transpired under Queen Mary, as detailed in chapter 2. For Dantas's embassy, however, any such aims failed to materialize. Apart from Elizabeth's well-known desire not to wed, there were other serious reasons, even prior to Dantas's arrival, that convinced the Tudor court to reject any Portuguese offer of marriage.

The first of these was Nicholas Throckmorton's warning to Cecil on May 5, 1562 about the objectives of Dantas's embassy: that he sought to impede English navigation to Morocco and West Africa, and threatened the use of force.²¹⁰ The most serious cause for misgivings came on May 11, however, when English agent Randolph wrote to Throckmorton after speaking with a Portuguese nobleman. This unnamed nobleman had passed on alarming rumors that there were Portuguese agents in England planning a Catholic uprising against Queen Elizabeth.²¹¹ Given Throckmorton's earlier assertions that Dantas was a loyal servant of Pope Pius IV, and considering the fact that he intended to stay with the bishop of Aquila, suspicion that the ambassador was somehow involved in the alleged plot quickly surfaced. Under such circumstances, the possibility of a Portuguese marriage proposal could not be accepted at the Tudor court until both Dantas and the Portuguese king were cleared of any suspicion. In truth, it is still unknown whether Dantas or Sebastian were actually involved in the scheme. Still, the chief issue at hand was the maritime tension between England and Portugal and the continuation of English voyages to West Africa and Morocco. This led to an

209 On this topic see Vila-Santa, "Reporting for a King."

210 Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1562* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1867), 9.

211 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1562*, 31.

exchange of arguments between Dantas and the Privy Council (recorded in the State Papers). Dantas seems to have personally written them in French, although some appear to be unfinished.²¹²

Dantas presented an initial petition to Queen Elizabeth on May 22, using the traditional *Mare Clausum* rhetoric already employed by his ancestors in the French embassy during the 1530s. The next day, he wrote a letter to William Cecil's wife offering her a rent, on behalf of Portugal, for the dowry of her daughter. Dantas reminded Mildred Cecil of King Sebastian's prestige, pressing her on these grounds to accept the offer. However, there is no record of acceptance by Mildred Cecil. The Privy Council replied by contesting Portugal's maritime property rights to regions without a fortress, and requested that Dantas specify the locations of Portuguese garrisons so that Queen Elizabeth could formally forbid her subjects from entering those areas. In contending that the Portuguese only had fortresses in Mina and Axem, the queen relied on Martin Frobisher's report about West Africa, as he had been a prisoner of the Portuguese there for some time.

Dantas had anticipated these arguments, as the French had also used them several times. Writing on May 25, 1562, he explained that Portuguese *Mare Clausum* rights included not only fortresses, but extended to all West Africa via the tributes and commercial rights that the Portuguese Crown had acquired. He further insinuated the extent of Portuguese power in West Africa with the disclosure that Portugal annually sent around 15,000 men to the region and maintained a permanent fleet there to deter intruders. Dantas added that Portugal occupied the area for missionary purposes, and insisted that no one in Europe dared to contest Portuguese rights. Renowned mathematicians, historians, and cosmographers praised Portugal for its role in civilizing the region and introducing it to Europe. Days later, Dantas wrote to William Cecil offering him a pension on behalf of Portugal if he agreed to become the protector of Portuguese interests in England. He demanded a written answer should Cecil refuse, so that the world could know how unjustly the English treated ambassadors like him. Cecil did not, however, respond to the letter,²¹³ since by this time both he and Throckmorton maintained that the English Crown should freely patronize English trade in West Africa, and sought to convince Queen Elizabeth I of the same. One of the reasons Dantas could not secure reparations for English seizures was that Cecil and the Privy Council were tasked with

212 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 59–62.

213 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 62–66 and 118–24; Mendes Leal and Rebello da Silva, *Quadro elementar*, vol. XV, CII–CVII.

handling these issues, and Cecil was a staunch supporter of English overseas expansion. Moreover, for Cecil, Throckmorton, and Queen Elizabeth, the prospect of a maritime war with Portugal seemed less worrisome than one with Spain, and continued tension with Portugal appeared preferable to fomenting internal rebellion because of further governmental prohibitions on sailing to West Africa.²¹⁴

Under such circumstances, fundamental disagreements about the nature of *Mare Clausum* persisted without any clear winner. As Patricia Seed has rightly noted, for Dantas and for Cecil, crucial Portuguese words meant something else when translated into English. While for the Portuguese, possession meant occupying an area by maritime trade rights, for the English possession only meant effective occupation.²¹⁵ This fundamental difference in 1562 was not new: previously, King Francis I's ministers had made this argument against the Portuguese, as had King Charles I of Spain in the run-up to the Treaty of Zaragoza. Given Dantas's failure to institute a court for arbitrating Anglo-Portuguese maritime clashes, as had been arranged with France in the 1530s,²¹⁶ he addressed his final protest to the Privy Council. In this lengthy document, dated June 19, 1562, Dantas rejected all England's arguments and stated emphatically that he had come to negotiate directly with Queen Elizabeth and not with the Privy Council. This was part of Dantas's new response. When he realized his goals were failing, Dantas united his protest with the Spanish ambassador in England. But, instead of strengthening the Portuguese position, Dantas only weakened it as the queen asserted that her answers to Portugal were not to be confused with those to Spain.²¹⁷ Dantas then wrote that Queen Elizabeth should read his papers and that he was prepared to discuss each point with her. He refuted Cecil's accusation that he had deployed subtle and sibylline arguments, underscored the traditional alliance between Portugal and England and announced that he would return to France. Dantas also wrote another protest directly to Queen Elizabeth on June 25. The very same day, the

214 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 69, 81 and 191.

215 Patricia Seed, "Taking Possession and Reading Texts: Establishing the Authority of Overseas Empires," in *Early Images of the Americas. Transfer & Invention*, ed. Jerry M. Williams and Robert E. Lewis (Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1993), 119–21. See also: Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). On this topic see also: Ken MacMillan, *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

216 Cruz, *As regências na menoridade*, vol. I, 179.

217 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1562*, 84 and 94–96.

English queen replied formally to King Sebastian, stating that Dantas's demands had not been met but praising his courtesy.

After returning to Paris, Dantas wrote again to the queen, promising that he would arrange for the production of a better pair of gloves to send her, as she had requested. It is also likely that Dantas's met other important actors while in England. It is known that he became acquainted with Thomas Smith (1513–77),²¹⁸ the famous English writer and Throckmorton's successor at the English embassy in France between 1564 and 1566.²¹⁹ Dantas could hardly guess that Smith would be defeated by him in a quarrel over diplomatic precedence at the Valois court in 1565.²²⁰ Thus, despite some strained relations during the 1562 *Mare Clausum* embassy to England, Queen Elizabeth I and Dantas admired each other, as the documents clearly demonstrate.

But there was another aspect of the Anglo-Portuguese tensions during Dantas's embassy to Elizabeth in 1562 that still needs to be addressed: Belchior Vaz de Azevedo, a Portuguese New Christian (of Jewish origin). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Azevedo had long been on the radar of Portuguese and Spanish authorities, as he had served both Francis I and Henry II. When King Henry II named him French ambassador to the sultan of Morocco in 1556, Portuguese and Spanish authorities collaborated to incarcerate him. When King Henry II died, Azevedo entered the service of Antoine de Bourbon, the king of Navarre, who used him in an attempt to restore control of Spanish Navarre. Dantas became aware of Azevedo's plans through one of his relatives and alerted Thomas Perrenot de Chantonay, the Spanish ambassador in France. The first phase of the scheme, Dantas related, was the landing of a French fleet in Morocco, after which they would establish a garrison in the abandoned Portuguese fortress of Seinal and attack Portuguese Ceuta and Tangier. With a French foothold in Morocco, Antoine de Bourbon would then launch a full-scale invasion of southern Spain to force King Philip II to cede Spanish Navarre to him. In the abovementioned letter to King Sebastian, Dantas ridiculed the plot (which he considered childish), but promised that he would place a spy on board Azevedo's vessel, and avowed that Portuguese like Azevedo deserved to be killed.²²¹ Nevertheless, Azevedo safely departed and successfully negotiated commercial and maritime privileges for France with the sultan of

218 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 66–67 and 137–51. On Smith see: Mary Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (London: The Athlone Press, 1964).

219 Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1563*, doc. 1245.

220 On this issue see Nuno Vila-Santa, "Reporting for a King."

221 As for Dantas's references of his plans with Navarre and the suggestion to kill Azevedo see his letter dated October 19, 1559: ANTT, CC I–103–125, fls. 1–3.

Morocco in 1559.²²² Nor was there any need to kill Azevedo upon his return from Morocco as, shortly after, he fled with his family. The reason for his flight was that Antoine de Bourbon's family was attempting to convert his family to Protestantism. After learning of this, Azevedo had approached Perrenot de Chantonay to request assistance in returning to Portugal and information on any new French plans (intelligence which he promised to likewise offer to Spain).²²³ When his maneuvers with Spain proved fruitless, Azevedo contacted Nicholas Throckmorton, Queen Elizabeth I's ambassador in France, which in turn made him the subject of discussions between the English queen and Dantas in 1562.

In a letter dated June 29, 1561, Throckmorton reported to William Cecil that Azevedo had approached him, offering his services to England. He would guide the English to the most profitable and suitable places to trade on the Moroccan coast, as he was familiar with them, having lived in the region for around twenty years. In addition to the commercial opportunities that Azevedo promised, Throckmorton informed Cecil that Azevedo was an experienced nautical expert. A month later, he notified Cecil that he had accepted Azevedo's offer and that he was sending him to England, alongside eight seamen who were Portuguese, French, Spanish, and English. All were to be presented to the lord mayor of London and to the English lord admiral, as Azevedo had promised to bring with him "the best pilot in the world," as Throckmorton wrote.²²⁴ Yet the London merchants' reaction was unenthusiastic: they informed Cecil that the locations to which Azevedo had offered to guide them were already familiar places of trade, known to them since the time of Queen Mary. Nevertheless, the bishop of Aquila's correspondence to King Philip II shows rumors that Azevedo would sail to West Africa in an English voyage in the summer of 1561,²²⁵ as Cecil retained an interest in Azevedo.

When Dantas came to England in 1562, he eagerly used Azevedo as an example of Portuguese *Mare Clausum* violations during his arguments with Queen Elizabeth and the Privy Council. Dantas pointed out that Azevedo had traveled to the Moroccan coast under the English flag, in breach of previous English prohibitions. Furthermore, he stated that Azevedo had brought along and sold Jewish books and bibles, scandalously undermining Portuguese

²²² Julien, *Les voyages de découverte*, 286–87.

²²³ For Perrenot de Chantonay's references to Azevedo see: *Archivo*, vol. I, 1950, docs. 58 and 123, Vol. II, 1950, doc. 366.

²²⁴ Stevenson, *Calendar ... 1561–62*, doc. 279.

²²⁵ Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, docs. 139 and 140.

religious orthodoxy and missionary activities in the region. Elizabeth replied that she did not know anything about these allegations and, with some irony, commented that she found it strange that Dantas was worried about Jews proselytizing Moors. Dantas replied that he simply wanted to inform the queen, adding that Azevedo's books had been printed not in England, but in Flanders.²²⁶ It remains unknown whether Dantas played any part in Azevedo's decision to return to Portugal in 1564 with a safe-conduct from the Portuguese king. Given the numerous abovementioned cases in which Dantas's interventions are documented, however, it would not be surprising if this were the case. For Dantas, Azevedo, with his bargaining of nautical knowledge between Spain, France, and England, was yet another menace to Portuguese interests, cast in the same mold as the pilots Bartolomeu Borges, Gaspar Caldeira, Antão Luís or the cosmographer brothers of the Homem family. Dantas's object was always the same: to repatriate them and prevent them from serving France and England.

Meanwhile, Dantas's dealings in England did not go unnoticed to other relevant actors. In a missive directed to King Philip II on June 6, 1562, the bishop of Aquila noted that Dantas "presented his written petition with sound and good arguments, but they have answered him as usual, and even worse, so that he was forced to reply, although unwillingly. I have helped him all I can, but nothing will bring these people to their senses." As relations between Aquila and Queen Elizabeth I were already strained (owing to some suspicions that Aquila was plotting with English Catholics), Aquila admitted that Dantas had tried to assist him with Elizabeth. Nevertheless, the English queen expressed the conviction to Dantas that Aquila only sought her ruin.²²⁷ Still, it is apparent that even though Dantas fell short of his aims, he cultivated a good personal relationship with Queen Elizabeth (an accomplishment that Aquila could not boast of). Indeed, Dantas's diplomatic courtesy was noticed not only in England, but in France and Spain and by the pope.²²⁸ Such polished manners fulfilled a key function in his missions not only in France or England but in all Europe: that is, to embody King Sebastian's, and more broadly, Portuguese, power abroad.

Dantas's mission to England in 1562 did not pass unnoticed to Paul de Foix (1528–82) either, the French ambassador in England between 1562 and

226 A more detailed analysis of Azevedo's interesting career can be found in José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, "Uma 'estranha tolerância' da Inquisição Portuguesa. Belchior Vaz de Azevedo e o interesse das potências europeias por Marrocos (segunda metade do século XVI)," in *Entre el Islam y Occidente. Los judíos magrebíes en la Edad Moderna. Judíos en tierras de Islam*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal, (Madrid: Casa Velasquez, 2003), 101–23.

227 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 240 and 243.

228 On this issue see Vila-Santa, "Reporting for a King."

1566. In May 1562, Foix informed Queen Catherine de' Medici of Dantas's arrival and first meeting with Queen Elizabeth. He stated that Dantas came to stop English voyages to West Africa and to ask for compensation of Portuguese losses at English hands in West Africa. Some days later, he confirmed the contents of Dantas's mission to the queen mother. But it was in June, when Dantas had his discussions with the Privy Council, that Foix reported the most relevant issues. He started by noting that Dantas, like previous Portuguese agents and ambassadors in England, did not take any action without Spain's advice. He also wrote that latterly, Dantas had been publicly displeased with the answers he received. This motivated Foix to promise that he would lay his hands on the formal English replies to Dantas. A week later, Foix acquired these documents and sent them to the queen mother. Foix stated that Queen Elizabeth had decided not to answer Dantas orally, entrusting everything to the Privy Council.²²⁹ Foix's comment strongly suggests that Elizabeth's decision was an attempt not to worsen Anglo-Portuguese relations even more. Still, it is important to note that Foix not only reported the main moments of Dantas's embassy, but also sent one of the Privy Council's answers, as he understood that Dantas's quarrel was similar to the ones he had in France. This was the main reason why Foix sent this intelligence to France and also reported that Dantas was staying with the bishop of Aquila. One of Aquila's missives demonstrates that Dantas had lived there ever since the beginning of his stay at the Tudor court.²³⁰ Aquila extended his help as he had done with Manuel de Araújo in 1561. Once more, Portuguese-Spanish diplomatic collaboration did not go unnoticed.

In his 1562 embassy to England, Dantas adopted the same strategy that he employed in France with Coligny and Michel de L'Hôpital. But if Dantas had enjoyed some success in France, the results were quite the opposite in England (with Cecil). It remains unknown whether Dantas also tried to bribe Lord Clinton. Although there is no explicit evidence, the possibility should not be dismissed, given that Dantas previously suggested that any ambassador to England in 1562 ought to petition him directly. The outcome of Dantas's second embassy to England was to heighten concerns about English maritime expeditions. Precisely for this reason, in December 1562, the bishop of Aquila had to concede to King Philip II that he was unable to forestall the departure of another English fleet to West Africa, despite

229 David Potter, ed., *The Letters of Paul de Foix, French Ambassador at the Court of Elizabeth I, 1562–1566* (Cambridge: Royal Historical Society, 2019), 46, 50, 53 and 57.

230 Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations politiques*, vol. III, 56

all the protests he made at the behest of the king of Portugal to Queen Elizabeth.²³¹ Understanding from 1562 onwards that he could not stop English voyages to West Africa, Dantas changed his strategy, resorting to espionage and counter-espionage, as his correspondence for the next years clearly shows. This was a clear consequence of Dantas's perception that under Queen Elizabeth, London merchants had greater official support and backing in their trading ventures. Dantas may also have known that the profits acquired during the 1561–62 English voyages to West Africa seem, by all standards, to have been the highest achieved during the 1560s;²³² this could help explain his change of tactics.

4.2.2 Spying on the English: Dantas's Espionage and Counter-Espionage in England (1563–68)

Prior to his departure from England, Dantas was aware of the renewed interest of London merchants in West Africa. He knew that he could rely on the contacts of Rui Mendes de Vasconcelos, the Portuguese overseer/consul in Antwerp, to keep him informed of the latest events. Vasconcelos had established his network of informants in England during the 1540s. On September 5, 1562, Vasconcelos informed Portugal that the English voyage to Mina had been successful, and that the English had purchased additional merchandise for the West African trade in Flanders. On September 26, Vasconcelos wrote to Dantas, advising that Portugal should deploy an armed fleet to sink all English ships in the region and without any mercy, as that would be the only way to deter England from entering what he considered Portuguese waters. He expressed the hope that Dantas's influence would convince Lisbon to seriously face the English challenge.²³³ In response to Vasconcelos's warning, Dantas dispatched Francisco Costa Pontes as his agent to England.²³⁴ Pontes also alerted Dantas in September of the English preparations, reporting that a Jewish traitor (unnamed, but possibly the abovementioned Belchior Vaz de Azevedo) was providing sensitive information to the English and requesting further instructions. Dantas promptly relayed this intelligence to Cardinal Henry. In October, the bishop of Aquila also informed Dantas that Queen Elizabeth had authorized the departure of three ships bound for Mina. Dantas likewise received

231 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 276.

232 Blum, "Empire Later," 56–57 and 66–67.

233 ANTT, CC I–106–11/23.

234 Mendes Leal and Rebello da Silva, *Quadro elementar*, vol. XV, CXIII.

confirmation that six French ships were joining the English fleet, but heading for trade in Morocco. From Antwerp, Vasconcelos also confirmed all English preparations in October.²³⁵

Based on the intelligence he had received, on November 20, 1562, Dantas briefed King Sebastian about the impending departure of the English fleet to West Africa after Christmas. He informed the king that John Hawkins had already set sail, and that French Huguenots were serving on the English ships. On December 13, Dantas wrote the Portuguese king that the English fleet was not sailing south, but instead heading for West Africa, and that Hawkins's ship was carrying only merchandise. By December 30, Dantas passed along to King Sebastian the names of the two English ships that were scheduled to depart for Mina on January 10, 1563, stating that Portugal still had time to send its fleet there, and that France would not be sending any ships, as previously rumored. By February, Pontes, Dantas's agent in England, was arrested by English authorities for attending Mass at the house of the Spanish ambassador. Dantas reassured King Sebastian that he was working to secure Pontes's release, and warned that the English ships had orders to trade before the castle of Mina.²³⁶ Dantas's intelligence proved important in the naval battles that took place in the area that year and resulted in English losses. This pattern continued in subsequent years, as English expeditions to West Africa were marked by violence and plunder due to the presence of Portuguese war fleets.²³⁷ For the year of 1563, as has been underscored, Dantas likewise relayed intelligence on Thomas Stukley's aborted voyage to Florida and on William Rutter's voyage to West Africa.

In 1564, as reports of English preparations continued to accumulate, Dantas once again took action. On July 2, Diego Guzmán de Silva, the new Spanish ambassador to England, warned Dantas that Queen Elizabeth I was preparing two ships to join two other merchant ships heading for Guinea. On July 16, Dantas forwarded Guzmán de Silva's letter to King Sebastian. By August 5, Pontes had come directly to Paris to warn Dantas that the English would send eight to ten ships for John Hawkins's second voyage, with instructions to sail to Guinea and Mina and to establish contact with a friendly African prince. The next day, Dantas communicated to King Sebastian all the details that Pontes had furnished, assuring him that his good spies ("bons espías" in Portuguese) in French ports had confirmed to him that no French ship was to join the English expedition. He also explained

235 ANTT, CC I-106-22, I-106-24 and I-106-26; BA, 49-X-9, fl. 86v.

236 BA, 49-X-9, fls. 2v.-4, 13-13v. and 15v.; ANTT, CC I-106-43, fl. 1.

237 Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*, 109-10.

that the English investment in Guinea that year was larger because the Flanders market was closed to English trade,²³⁸ and the English wanted to prevent any Portuguese attack like that of 1563. On September 15, Dantas updated King Sebastian on Hawkins's fleet, with details sent by Vasconcelos and based on intelligence provided by the Spanish ambassador in England. Dantas did not give the news any credence and even stated, with unmistakable exaggeration, that the Spanish ambassador to England had worse spies in the English ports than he did. Finally, on September 29, Dantas briefed King Sebastian on Hawkins's departure, denounced his intention to build a fortress, buy slaves, and then sell them in Spanish Santo Domingo.²³⁹ As before, Dantas's intelligence on the preparations for John Hawkins's fleet was mostly accurate.²⁴⁰

The reports sent by Dantas to Portugal were instrumental in convincing Lisbon to appoint Aires Cardoso as envoy to England in September 1564, with the purpose of lodging another formal protest to Queen Elizabeth I.²⁴¹ Since Dantas's embassy to England, in addition to the voyage undertaken by John Hawkins in 1562, other voyages by William Rutter and David Carlet in 1563 and 1564 respectively had sailed to West Africa with full support from the queen.²⁴² Aires Cardoso has already been mentioned in chapter 1, as King John III's agent in the Canary Islands, where his task was to spy on Spanish voyages to West Africa in the 1540–50s. Thus, Cardoso was far from being untrained in Portuguese espionage when he was appointed to England in 1564. In this role, Cardoso's orders were very clear. He should stop first in France, where Dantas was to instruct him on how to deal with the English, based on his previous experience. Once in England, Cardoso was to swiftly proceed to the Spanish ambassador's house, since Guzmán de Silva was responsible for arranging a meeting with Queen Elizabeth. Cardoso was also ordered to dissimulate ("dissimular" in Portuguese) while he was in England, to gather any and all intelligence on old and new English fleet preparations and to try to prevent them from departing.²⁴³ If Cardoso found

238 This comment by Dantas reveals that he was well-aware that Anglo-Spanish commercial relations were suffering due to piracy attacks in the English Channel after John Hawkins's return from his first voyage to England in 1563 (Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean*, 115).

239 ANTT, CC I-106-142, fl. 1, I-107-4, fls. 1-1v and I-107-12, fl. 1; BA, 49-X-9, fls. 58, 60v-62.

240 Kelsey, *Sir John Hawkins*, 19-20.

241 On Cardoso's mission see A. de Magalhães Basto, "A missão de Aires Cardoso a Inglaterra em 1564," *Ocidente XVII* (1942): 355-67.

242 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 83-85.

243 Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto (BPMP), Ms. 85. The manuscript has no folio numeration. Cardoso's instruction is in the end.

evidence of Queen Elizabeth's personal involvement in naval preparations, he was authorized to confront the queen in person and even to threaten the possibility of open war between Portugal and England.²⁴⁴

In November 1564, Dantas wrote to King Sebastian to inform him that Cardoso had reached his house safely and had already departed. After explaining the details of his 1562 embassy to Cardoso, Dantas had provided him a supplementary lesson on Portuguese espionage in Europe, instructing him on the itinerary to follow in England. Dantas ordered Cardoso to gather intelligence on the English maritime preparations before arriving at the Tudor court, as he would not be able to do so upon his return to Portugal, since by that time the English would publicly know that he was the envoy of Portugal.²⁴⁵ Dantas's advice to Cardoso was motivated by the maritime tensions between England, Spain, and Portugal. The Spanish ambassador to France predicted in November 1564 that Cardoso would be fiercely attacked when the English discovered that he was lodging another complaint with Spanish support.²⁴⁶ Given Dantas's role, by December 1564, King Sebastian refused his requests, due to his poor health, to return to Portugal, as there was no suitable successor.²⁴⁷

Cardoso's protest is recorded, but it was not successful. Cardoso had been allowed to formally forgive Queen Elizabeth I for patronizing all previous English voyages to West Africa, on the condition that she handed over all Portuguese collaborators in such voyages.²⁴⁸ It is not known if this was authorized personally by King Sebastian, but it seems more likely to have been Dantas's last-minute handiwork. Seeing that his previous strategies with England had foundered, Dantas might have changed his approach in an attempt to achieve a different outcome. If this was Dantas's idea, the results were disappointing. Guzmán de Silva, the Spanish ambassador in England, once again assisted Cardoso in his meetings with the queen. Even before the formal meeting, Guzmán de Silva warned King Philip II that a new English expedition had just departed and that there were no reasons to expect a different answer. When the meeting took place, Guzmán de Silva noted that Queen Elizabeth used the same arguments that she had employed with Dantas two and half years ago: she could see no reason why

244 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 67–70; Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1564–1565* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1870), docs. 804 and 824.

245 BA, 49–X–9, fls. 65–65v.

246 *Archivo*, vol. VI, 1952, 507.

247 BA, 49–X–9, fl. 66.

248 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 86.

Englishmen would be prohibited to sail where the Frenchmen had already sailed so many times.²⁴⁹ The queen also only formally replied to Cardoso when Hawkins was already ready to depart.²⁵⁰ Later Queen Elizabeth I wrote to King Sebastian stating that Cardoso's protest had been accepted, when she had simply reiterated the response Dantas received in 1562.²⁵¹

The details of Dantas's espionage with regard to the 1565 and 1566 English voyages to West Africa have not been preserved. However, as the abovementioned cases of the participation of the Portuguese pilots Gaspar Caldeira and Antão Luís in John Hawkins's third voyage in 1567 demonstrate, Dantas continued his espionage and counter-espionage activities in England with some success. The loss of several of Dantas's letters for the years 1566–1568 prevents further tracing of his operations in England. What is known is gleaned from English documents. On December 13, 1566, Dantas wrote to Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester (1532–88), to ask him to pressure Queen Elizabeth to give a formal answer to Guzmán de Silva, the Spanish ambassador in England, on the issues he had raised. No formal reply is known. Most likely, these questions were connected with Peyrot de Monluc's attack on Madeira and a possible English involvement that Portuguese authorities were investigating. On December 13, 1566, Dantas also wrote directly to Queen Elizabeth I. In the letter, he stated that the English ships that had been arrested in Lisbon when the news of Monluc's attack arrived had already been released. However, for some unmentioned reason, possibly related to the contents of the English reply, Dantas became outraged and even offered an injury to Henry Norris (1525–1601), the English ambassador in France between 1566 and 1570.²⁵²

Dantas's behavior is even more strange in light of his writing to Guzmán de Silva to ask him to plead with Queen Elizabeth to bar ships and men from Monluc's expedition from entering England. In this request, Dantas was attempting to prevent the Portuguese pilots Gaspar Caldeira and Antão Luís from being accepted into formal English service. Dantas's wish was granted. Guzmán de Silva had also discussed Monluc's attack with the French ambassador in England, who condemned it in such terms that Guzmán de Silva expected France to offer a litany of apologies to Portugal. All of this can be found in Guzmán de Silva's letter to King Philip

249 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 394–96.

250 Ronald, *The Pirate Queen*, 89.

251 Mendes Leal and Rebello da Silva, *Quadro elementar*, vol. XV, 157–63; Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 67–70.

252 Allan James Crosby, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1566–1568* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1871), docs. 851, 852 and 959.

II, dated January 6, 1567.²⁵³ Thus, Dantas's actions against Norris may be explained by another piece of intelligence that Guzmán de Silva sent to Antwerp, in October 1566, and that Dantas probably also received: that a new voyage to West Africa was being prepared in the utmost secrecy by the English.²⁵⁴ The details of the voyage were also confirmed to Dantas, in February 1567, by Rui Mendes de Vasconcelos. Vasconcelos averred that an unnamed but great Portuguese cosmographer (as stated previously, this was probably André Homem or Diogo Homem) was assisting the English in preparing an expedition to China by sailing westwards.²⁵⁵ Dantas may have discovered that this unnamed Portuguese had been recruited by the English in secrecy, as had happened with ambassador Throckmorton's abovementioned recruitment of the Portuguese Belchior Vaz de Azevedo in France. If this was the case, Dantas may merely have lost his patience with Ambassador Norris. This would hardly be uncharacteristic—as has been mentioned, Dantas readily resorted to violence when defied, even if there was a risk that this behavior could become publicly known. Indeed, this irascibility was documented in Dantas's dealings with the Portuguese cosmographer André Homem at the Valois court in 1568, and when he ordered an attack on his own spy Manuel de Araújo, also at the French court in 1566.

It is very probable (although this is not documented in his correspondence) that Dantas sought to conceal other Anglo-Portuguese maritime collaborations, as he had with Portuguese pilots in France; for example those of the Portuguese pilot Bartolomeu Baião, who attacked the Cape Verde Islands with the English in 1565.²⁵⁶ Incidentally, Baião had also entered the service of John Hawkins and participated in the latter's triangular voyages between England, West Africa, and the Caribbean.²⁵⁷ Indeed, as has been shown in chapter 1, Bartolomeu Baião had begun his trajectory by presenting his nautical proposals to the Spanish court. As they were not likely to be accepted (no formal answer to him has been found), Baião went to England. This was something that might have caught Dantas's attention as Baião claimed that he had been jailed in Lisbon and received no justice before

253 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 608.

254 Hume, *Calendar ... (Simancas)*, 1558–1567, 585.

255 ANTT, CC I–108–31. This voyage was likely influenced by a letter sent to Queen Elizabeth I on November 1566. The letter was signed in Naples by an English agent, conveying news of the riches the Portuguese had obtained in the Moluccas and China, although it also mentioned the difficulties of sailing to the region. See *Calendar*, 1890, doc. 1119.

256 Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*, 110–11.

257 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 95.

coming to England.²⁵⁸ Baião's reasons for migration were, thus, a repetition of those of the pilots António Eanes Pinteado and Antão Luís and Gaspar Caldeira, as underscored previously.

This hypothesis is further supported by the consequences of Aires Cardoso's mission to England in 1564. One of these was Portuguese maritime retaliation against English vessels in Guinea and Mina, during which one of the Wynter brothers' ships was seized as revenge for John Lovell's 1566 attack on Portuguese ships in the Cape Verde Islands.²⁵⁹ In 1567, this incident prompted Queen Elizabeth I to send ambassador Thomas Wilson to Lisbon. Simultaneously, the Portuguese court made its own complaints about John Hawkins's assaults on Portuguese ships.²⁶⁰ As a result, Wilson's embassy achieved nothing, but it had the effect of forcing Portugal to name a permanent ambassador to England: Manuel Álvares, who served from 1567–68.²⁶¹ Furthermore, the episode triggered an intervention by D. Fernando de Carrillo y Mendonza, the Spanish ambassador in Portugal, when Wilson arrived in Lisbon.²⁶² Although Álvares's diplomatic missives appear to have been lost, the Simancas archives contain some valuable information on his mission.²⁶³ War was on the brink of being declared in 1569, when

258 Baião's reply was the answer to the Spanish ambassador in England's formal complaint. For this reason, the answer was translated from Spanish-Portuguese to English (BL, Add MS. 35831, fls. 337–339).

259 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 96.

260 Harry Kelsey, 2003, 62–63.

261 McBride, "The Politics of Economic Expansion," 102–3.

262 A passage in Carrillo's letter dated October 22, 1567, reveals that Carrillo spoke with Wilson. Wilson stated to Cardinal Henry that the English respected the Portuguese rights overseas and that they only went to West Africa to purchase slaves, an answer that angered Cardinal Henry. Carrillo informed Wilson that his words had offended Portugal, and that he should not offend Portugal as it also meant offending Spain. He also advised Wilson to adopt a cautious attitude and conduct himself as a prudent minister, in a clear reference to Wilson's Protestant faith. Carrillo noted that Wilson took this advice to heart and left Portugal on good terms, but Carrillo still acknowledged that Anglo-Portuguese relations had not improved as there were many complaints from both sides (AGS, *Secretaría de Estado*, Legajo 384 – This *legajo* is not numbered, but the document is toward the end). On Wilson's embassy see also: Susana Oliveira, "Networks of Exchange in Anglo-Portuguese Sixteenth-Century Diplomacy and Thomas Wilson's Mission to Portugal," in *Exile, Diplomacy and Texts: Exchanges between Iberia and the British Isles, 1500–1767*, ed. Ana Sáez-Hidalgo and Berta Cano Echevarría (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 32–54.

263 In a record from August 13, 1568, King Sebastian replied to King Philip II, informing him of Álvares's departure to the court of Elizabeth, and that, as usual, Portugal had requested Spanish diplomatic support. As King Philip II had inquired about the content of Álvares's mission, King Sebastian replied that Álvares was to petition the English government regarding the violation of the Portuguese *Mare Clausum* and that, as King Philip II had similar complaints with regard to England, Portugal hoped to unite diplomatic efforts with Spain. However, Portugal had yet to

King Sebastian, incensed by the lack of a formal diplomatic response from Queen Elizabeth, suspended the alliance with England and seized all English ships and properties in Portugal.²⁶⁴ By this time, Dantas was no longer ambassador. However, he had played a vital role in the English decision to withdraw from West Africa in the late 1560s due to the effects of French competition and the presence of the Portuguese war fleet.²⁶⁵ Nevertheless, even after Dantas's embassy in France had ended, Portuguese nautical experts continued to provide important nautical and geographical advice to the English. The Portuguese pilot Simão Fernandes, who served in English expeditions to North America during the 1570–80s under the command of figures such as Humphrey Gilbert (1539–83), Richard Grenville (1542–91), and Walter Raleigh (1552–1618), and was considered the most important Portuguese seafarer of the Elizabethan era,²⁶⁶ is a noteworthy example, though not the only one.

All available data points to the fact that after his embassy to England in 1562, Dantas operated as a sort of informal Portuguese ambassador to England. Although Dantas did not personally return to England, he had an intelligence network at his disposal that allowed significant intervention in affairs abroad. It must be stressed that this was the first time that the Portuguese diplomatic scenario had operated on such a scale; understandably, perhaps, since no previous Portuguese ambassador to France had had to deal with such a significant threat of English and French overseas expansion. If in the English case (as indeed in the French), this required a degree of collaboration with the Spanish diplomatic network, it is notable that Queen Elizabeth I treated the Portuguese and the Spanish ambassadors at her court differently. While the Spanish were frequently accused of treason

receive letters from him after Álvares's arrival in England. As a result, King Sebastian could not provide further updates on his mission. The second document is a chapter in Diego Guzman de Silva's letter, the Spanish ambassador in London, dated August 9, 1568, in which he comments that, at King Philip II's orders, he had accompanied Álvares when he spoke personally to Queen Elizabeth. He warned the queen that she should not refuse the Portuguese ambassador's demands. Thus, Queen Elizabeth and the Privy Council had softened their reply to Álvares. Nonetheless, Guzmán de Silva recognized that despite the queen's ban on English navigation to the Indies, Hawkins had just returned with slaves from West Africa. He suspected that Hawkins intended to continue his voyages to Portuguese and Spanish overseas areas. Both documents are in AGS, *Secretaría de Estado*, Legajo 385. The *legajo* is not numbered but the documents are at the end.
²⁶⁴ Mendes Leal and Rebello da Silva, *Quadro elementar*, vol. XV, 1842, CXIX and CXX; Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 80–85.

²⁶⁵ Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*, 112.

²⁶⁶ David Quinn, "Simão Fernandes, a Portuguese Pilot in the English Service, Circa 1573–1588," in *Actas do Congresso Internacional de História dos Descobrimentos*, vol. III, (Lisboa: Comissão para a Comemoração do V Centenário da morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1961), 463–64.

and sometimes expelled, this never happened to Portuguese ambassadors in England in the 1560–70s. Even when Portuguese ambassadors were detained for possible involvement in Catholic plots, or were found to be collaborating with Catholic French and Spanish ambassadors to England, Queen Elizabeth always provided them good living conditions and status at her court.²⁶⁷ Possibly for Queen Elizabeth I's good treatment to Portuguese ambassadors at her court, Dantas also made his contribution when he favorably impressed Queen Elizabeth I in 1562. Further studies are still needed to understand whether the Queen's relation with Dantas influenced her behavior to later Portuguese ambassadors.

Conclusion

It is now time to assess Dantas's embassies to France and England and to discuss the effect of his missives to the Portuguese attempt to enforce policies of *Mare Clausum* and *Secret Science*. As has been demonstrated, one of the *leitmotifs* of Dantas's embassy, possibly stemming from royal instructions that have not survived, was to prevent English and French expeditions from departing to what Portugal considered its *Mare Clausum*. This policy is well-known. However, what is less broadly acknowledged but is clearly documented by Dantas's correspondence, is how closely *Mare Clausum* policies were tied to a policy of *Secret Science* (that is, a systematic effort to prevent the circulation of Portuguese nautical expertise to France and England). Dantas's espionage and counter-espionage in France and England are largely explained by the use of *Secret Science* as an instrument for *Mare Clausum*. As Baldwin rightly contends, the movement of Portuguese nautical experts to France and England and French and English espionage with regard to Portuguese nautical science became gravely problematic from the 1550s onwards.²⁶⁸

In the cases of Michel de Seure's and Jean Nicot's French embassies to Portugal between 1557 and 1561, this phenomenon is well-documented, particularly through Nicot's dispatch of pilots, Portuguese rutters, and cosmographical works to France. With respect to England, the influence of the Iberian connection is generally recognized in accounts of the English overseas expansion. While England benefited from relatively good relations with Portugal and Spain, the same cannot be said of France, which had

267 Oliveira, "Uma cartografia das mentalidades," 118, 124 and 137.

268 Baldwin, "The Development and Interchange," vol. I, 40.

troubles with Spain and at times better relations with Portugal. Anglo-Hispanic amity permitted England to import nautical knowledge until Queen Mary I's reign.²⁶⁹ Moreover, the existence of an alliance between England and Portugal from the late 14th century facilitated contacts with Lisbon and led to the slow growth of a Portuguese community in England that would provide personnel for English maritime expeditions. Yet despite the 1559 peace treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis and the prospect of an alliance, France's relations with Spain remained fraught with difficulties. As a result, France was forced to rely on Huguenot personnel to launch its maritime expeditions, and to clandestinely seek out Portuguese nautical and cartographical knowledge. In this light, one can appreciate fully why the enlistment of Portuguese cosmographers André Homem and Bartolomeu Velho, together with André Thevet's (1516–90) works, were so vital for France during the 1560–80s.²⁷⁰ However, the French civil wars deprived France of the conditions to mount a full-fledged challenge to the Iberian *Mare Clausum*. This was particularly true after Coligny's presumed anti-Iberian maritime and overseas policies. Still, it is hard to deny that Coligny's leadership of the Protestant brotherhood, especially after his death in 1572, served as pattern for the English (and later, the Dutch) in their maritime programs.

Aware of English and French interest not only in what he considered to be the Portuguese overseas areas, but more generally in Portuguese nautical experts, Dantas tried to prevent experts from entering English or French service. As is evident in the cases of the pilots Gaspar Caldeira, Antão Luís, Francisco Dias Mimoso, and the sons of Portuguese cosmographer Lopo Homem, Dantas resorted to a variety of strategies, some dubious and dangerous. While he tried to "buy" the favor of elites in the French (Coligny and Michel de L'Hôpital) and English (Cecil and possibly Clinton) courts, he also worked assiduously to represent himself and Portugal in the best possible light, particularly in his dealings with Queen Catherine de' Medici, King Charles IX, and Queen Elizabeth I. Most of Dantas's bribery and scheming proved feckless, as had previously already been the case with Portuguese diplomacy in France during the 1520s and 1530s,²⁷¹ ultimately raising Spain's suspicions and precipitating his downfall. However, Dantas was successful in cultivating relationships with Queen Elizabeth I, the Queen

269 Waters, *The Iberian Bases*; Wright, *English Explorers' Debt*.

270 Baldwin, "The Development and Interchange," vol. I, 242, 244 and 246.

271 On this topic: Pereira Ferreira, "Subornos, espões e espionagem," 1–16 and Oliveira Borges, "Rivalidades entre Portugal e a França," 165–84.

Mother Catherine de' Medici, and King Charles IX.²⁷² Yet throughout his maneuvering, Dantas was too often alone, battling the wave of French and English overseas expansion without sufficient support. His main innovation, although one not without antecedents, was the proposal of a maritime alliance between Spain and Portugal to prevent France and England from achieving major overseas successes.²⁷³ In preferring to side with Spain in maritime, not in political affairs, Dantas reiterated what was by then a historical pattern, with the French overseas menace bringing Portugal closer to Spain.²⁷⁴ This is the reason why, in Dantas's letters, it can often be noticed that he waited for instructions from Lisbon in some cases, while explicitly disobeying the orders he had received in others.

Dantas's position is also related to the fact, reported in his letters, that France and England collaborated both formally and informally to fight Iberian maritime hegemony at sea and in political arenas such as Morocco. It is hard not to notice that the Anglo-French collaboration Dantas reports took place despite the traditional Anglo-French rivalry, and continued even when tensions arose between the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I and the Catholic Valois. In a sense, this Anglo-French collaboration highlights the difficulties that the English and French faced when they attempted to seriously challenge the Iberian *Mare Clausum*, just as Portuguese-Spanish diplomatic and military cooperation reveals the gravity of the French and English overseas threat. Dantas grasped that Portugal simply could not simultaneously engage in a maritime rivalry with France and England, and that it needed to build a more robust *Secret Science* policy. His insistence on an alliance with Spain can only be understood in this context. Until his dying breath, Dantas never supported a Portuguese-Spanish political alliance, as his defense of the French marriage of King Sebastian corroborates. His correspondence is testament to the attention Portuguese diplomacy paid to France and England, with recourse to Spanish collaboration only as a last resort. Dantas's strategies are mirrored by French diplomats to King Philip II's court, especially Ambassador Raymond de Fourquevaux,²⁷⁵ by French ambassadors to Portugal, such as Michel de Seure and Jean Nicot, and by Spanish diplomats to Portugal, such as D. Juan de Borja or D. Juan de Silva, as detailed in chapters 2 and 3 respectively. For all these figures, the same goals can be observed (to obtain access to maritime knowledge

272 For further details see Vila-Santa, "Reporting for a King."

273 Pereira Ferreira, "Da defesa do monopólio," 159 and 166.

274 Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, 157.

275 Ribera, *Diplomatie et espionage*, 433–516.

in the form of important nautical treatises, nautical cartography, or the hiring of nautical personnel), as well as similar methods.

Dantas's position was, thus, that of a man of truly European vision who understood that Portuguese maritime and overseas interests had to be fought primarily in Europe and only secondly at sea.²⁷⁶ His correspondence also testifies to the maritime nature of Portuguese power and prestige in Europe. Nevertheless, Dantas's embassies are also proof of how France and England mirrored Portuguese maritime knowledge and experience as a model worth of emulation. This is why both Elizabethan England and Valois France were always keen on hiring Portuguese pilots and cartographers, and Dantas, in his *Secret Science* policy, had to turn his home into a kind of center of Portuguese talents abroad. The international careers of André Homem and his brother Diogo Homem also show that Portuguese knowledge was highly prized. It is no coincidence that Richard Hakluyt (1553–1613) wrote to Walter Raleigh in the 1580s that André Homem was the prince of cosmographers of his time or that, in 1622, Richard Hawkins (1552–1622) still argued that England had much to learn from the Iberians.²⁷⁷

After Dantas, during the late 16th century, the Portuguese Prince D. António's (1535–95) exile in France and England provided further opportunities for Portuguese nautical knowledge to be disseminated. D. António's political dealings with the French court and Elizabethan England included significant overseas concessions and the exchange of maritime knowledge. This process involved the other major protagonist that was about to emerge: the Dutch Republic. Although the Dutch benefited mainly from maritime knowledge exchanges with England and France, the importance of the Iberian connection should not be neglected. As this contribution took place mainly after the 1580 Iberian Union, the nature of the exchange cannot be found in diplomatic documents, but in the career of a decisive intermediary: Jan Huygen van Linschoten. The next chapter will detail how this famous Dutch traveler, resorting to non-classical espionage techniques comparable to those that have been described, compiled Iberian maritime knowledge that boosted Dutch overseas expansion in the 1590s.

²⁷⁶ Madeira Santos, *João Pereira Dantas*.

²⁷⁷ Bourdon, *André Homem*, 28; Baldwin, "The Development and Interchange," vol. I, 195.

