

Carissimo in Christo filio Alfonso illustri Portugalensium regi: re-framing the relationship between the papacy and Portugal in the twelfth century

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Abstract: This article explores the path that ultimately led to the concession of the bull *Manifestis probatum* in light of recent historiographical developments, with a particular focus on the Roman point of view, as part of an attempt to understand how the Apostolic See saw the new political institution led by Afonso Henriques, the kingdom of Portugal. The relations between the papacy and Portugal are here considered as an interaction between two emerging entities of the Middle Ages, both looking for acknowledgement. This need for legitimisation can only be understood through the changes in the European political and ecclesiastical context, which profoundly influenced the formulas and language adopted by these entities in their documentation, especially by the papal chancery. With each successive pope, the same expressions acquired different nuances and meanings, there was not a linear and organised programme.

Keywords: papacy; Portugal; Ecclesiology; *Manifestis probatum*.

Carissimo in Christo filio Alfonso illustri Portugalensium regi: un nuevo encuadramiento de las relaciones entre Papado y Portugal en el siglo XII

Resumen: El presente artículo analiza el percurso que llevó a la concesión de la bula *Manifestis probatum*, a la luz de las nuevas investigaciones historiográficas, con especial atención al punto de vista romano, para entender como la Sede Apostólica vió la nueva institución política presidida por Afonso Henriques. Las relaciones entre el Papado y el Reino de Portugal serán interpretadas como contactos entre dos realidades emergentes de la Edad Media, todavía no plenamente organizadas y ambas en busca de reconocimiento. Esta necesidad de legitimación se puede entender sólo a través de los cambios en el contexto político y eclesiástico europeo. Estas transformaciones influyeron profundamente en las fórmulas y en el lenguaje adoptados por estas realidades en su documentación y especialmente por parte de la cancillería papal, en que las mismas expresiones podían tener diferentes matices y significados en cada pontificado, sin suponer un programa previamente establecido y organizado.

Palabras clave: Papado; Portugal; Ecclesiología; *Manifestis probatum*.

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On 23 May 1179, Pope Alexander III issued the famous letter *Manifestis probatum* to Afonso Henriques, acknowledging him as king and addressing Portugal as a kingdom for the first time.¹ The historiography has long read this political entity as being a vassal to the Apostolic See and *Manifestis probatum* as the founding document of Portugal because the epistle was issued by an institution, the papacy, that was fully developed and acknowledged by the whole *Christianitas*. This view is one of the results of the model of the so-called «Gregorian Reform.» Yet, this model has been questioned since the 1960s, a critique recently resulting in historiography understanding *Manifestis probatum* only as the concession of Apostolic *protectio* and an acknowledgement of an already existing situation.

This article² explores the path that ultimately led to the grant of *Manifestis probatum* in light of recent historiographical developments and from a Roman perspective in order to understand how the Apostolic See saw the new political entity created by Afonso Henriques. This perspective has been frequently overlooked by scholars, who have mainly focused on the image of royalty created by the king's chancery.³ Relations between the papacy and the kingdom of Portugal are here understood as interactions between emerging institutions always searching for new opportunities for acknowledgement.⁴ Special attention will be devoted to changes in the European political and ecclesiastical context: they played a decisive role in these relations and influenced the formulas and language included in the documentation, especially in letters issued by the papal chancery. Indeed, seemingly identical formulas entailed different nuances and meanings according to each pope, without following any fixed or linear programme or model. After a historiographical overview, the essay re-frames the relationship between Rome and Portugal through an analysis of the extant documentation, proposing new understandings of some of the key passages that led to the concession of *Manifestis probatum*.

The topic of the relationship between the papacy and the kingdom of Portugal has been at the core of numerous studies. In 1996, José Mattoso provided the first overview of the studies concerning the reign of Afonso Henriques, including the king's relations with the Apostolic See.⁵ He warned against the risks of the teleological and nationalist view that affected most of the works dealing with the first king of Portugal from the nineteenth century to the 1970s.⁶

More recently, Francesco Renzi has «updated» Mattoso's overview, and therefore here it will suffice to include only those works which resulted in significant steps forward for the historiography.⁷ The earliest interpretative model was proposed in the nineteenth century by Alexandre Herculano in his *História de Portugal*, where the author portrayed the events of the twelfth century in a negative light for the papacy, seeing it being forced to agree to the acknowledgement of the new Portuguese kingdom in exchange for the payment of an annual *census*.⁸ This view was questioned by Carl Erdmann in 1935.⁹ His *O Papado e Portugal no Primeiro Século da História Portuguesa* argued how papal international policy played a decisive role in the relations with the kingdom of Portugal, for example, in the refusal to acknowledge the royal title of Afonso Henriques in 1144. Moreover, he read about relations between Rome and Portugal in light of the ongoing conflict between Braga and Toledo over the primacy of *Hispania* (which Urban II had granted to Toledo in 1088, leading to severe controversies). According to Erdmann, this clash was itself a further consequence of the conflict between Afonso Henriques and Alfonso VII of Leon-Castille.

These classic models have been questioned by various scholars. Among them, it is worth noting the participants in the conference organised for the 800th anniversary of *Manifestis probatum* in 1979; Luís Carlos Amaral's works on the institutional and patrimonial formation and development of the archdiocese of Braga; the works of Mattoso, who recently wrote a biography of the first king of Portugal in which particular attention is devoted to the king's relations with Rome; and Maria João Branco's studies, which on various occasions have focused on relations between Portugal and the Apostolic See.¹⁰ All these investigations, beginning from narrower case studies, have highlighted the extreme complexity of these relations. The work of Damian Smith and his systematic analysis of the relations between twelfth-century popes and *Hispania* are also important.¹¹ Finally, Renzi and Benedict Wiedemann have recently pointed out the importance of the context and of the differing nuances of papal language in showing how, in contrast to the classic historiography, the concept of vassalage should not be used when referring to the relations between Rome and Portugal.¹²

The development of a historiographical model stressing the benefits of a mutual relationship between a *centre* (Rome) and the *peripheries* of *Christianitas*, proposed by German scholars in volumes such as *Römisches Zentrum und kirchliche Peripherie* and *Rom und die Regionen*, has played a fundamental role in the history of the papacy, re-framing the process of the development of the Roman church.¹³ On the one hand, they have questioned the view of a pro-

¹ *VIII Centenário* 1979, 231.

² A preliminary version of this essay, translated into Portuguese, *Duas realidades medievais «emergentes»: observações sobre as relações entre a Sé Apostólica e Portugal (século XII)*, was included among the proceedings of the series of seminars *Seminário de História Religiosa - O Catolicismo Português em diáspora: Agentes, instituições e sensibilidades religiosas*, where the paper was originally presented, see Veneziani 2024. This is an updated, corrected, expanded, and developed version.

³ The image of royalty created by the royal chancery is not the focus of this work. However, comparisons are made when needed. It is important to stress that the image proposed by the royal chancery was also a «work in progress», developing in accordance with the context and the needs of each king. See Mattoso 2015, 636-645. See also the fundamental work of Linehan 1996.

⁴ Renzi 2019, 256.

⁵ Mattoso 2000b.

⁶ Mattoso 2000a, 469-474.

⁷ Renzi 2019, 237-274.

⁸ Herculano 1980-81, 449. By contrast, Afonso Henriques is depicted by Herculano almost as a hero, see Mattoso 2000a, 471.

⁹ Erdmann 1935.

¹⁰ The historiography on *Manifestis Probatum* is vast. See as a starting point *VIII Centenário* 1979; Amaral 2007; Mattoso 2007; Branco 2009a. For the events before the issuing of this document see also Sotto Mayor Pizarro 2015.

¹¹ Smith 2012.

¹² Renzi 2019; Wiedemann 2015.

¹³ Johrendt, and Müller 2008, 2012.

active papacy, showing, on the contrary, how popes and the Curia mainly reacted to, and adopted solutions dictated by, external events. The image of «sleepwalkers» proposed by Chris Wickham in depicting the first Italian communes can be adopted in this context for the Apostolic See—however, we should not exaggerate in turning to this view, there were always some «coerenze» shared by each pope, especially concerning the claims of primacy.¹⁴ On the other hand, German and Italian scholars have also pointed out how the model of a «Gregorian reform», entailing a single monolithic reform of the Church that first developed during the papacy of Gregory VII (1073-1085), with an unchanging programme adopted by each successor and lasting more than a century aiming to free the Church from the control of lay powers and corruption and in open hostility with the Empire, has lost its value, proving to be only an oversimplification of more complex events.¹⁵ Questioning the «Gregorian model» and adopting a view of Rome as an emerging entity have proven to be particularly important approaches in the analysis of documents issued prior to *Manifestis probatum*—in addition also to this letter—helping to avoid anachronism and a reading of the sources without considering the context when each letter was issued. Indeed, much information can also be gathered through an ecclesiological analysis of these epistles, considering which images the papal chancery adopted and their meanings according to the different views of the Church and of the world upheld by each pontiff. Considering these historiographical developments, we now turn to an examination of letters issued as part of papal-Portuguese relations.

On 13 December 1143, Afonso Henriques addressed the letter known as *Claves regni* to Pope Innocent II.¹⁶ In it, Afonso, who already called himself *Dei gratia Portugallensis rex*, performed *hominium* (homage) to the pope via the hands of the papal legate, Cardinal Guido of Vico; he offered his kingdom to Saint Peter and to the Roman Church through the annual payment of a *census* (a payment which his successors would also be compelled to make); and he titled himself *miles beati Petri et Romani Pontificis* and asked for Apostolic protection for himself, his kingdom, and his successors. This document has traditionally been understood both as Afonso's request for acknowledgement of his royal title—a request that was not met, as shown by Lucius II's answer, the letter *Devotionem dilecte*, analysed below—and as a search for a relation of vassalage through *hominium* paid to the pope, thus «freeing himself» from the vassalage owed to King Alfonso VII of Leon-Castille.¹⁷ However, this view is problematic, from a few perspectives. Many scholars have argued for the existence of multiple loyalties and vassal relations in the Middle Ages.¹⁸ As pointed out by Giuseppe Sergi, Chris Wickham, and Timothy Reuter, the model of a so-called «feudal pyramid» does not depict the fluidity of the «horizontal» reality between

the ninth and twelfth centuries.¹⁹ Moreover, Alfons Becker noticed the sporadic use of the institution of vassalage by the papacy generally, and Sandro Carocci pointed out how the instances where vassalage was used by the papacy were very specific and usually concerned institutions belonging to the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*.²⁰ The language that might refer to vassalage (such as *hominium* or *homagium*) had multiple meanings, and not only in papal language. In particular, Becker noticed, for example, how the word *hominium* might refer to the will to keep a promise or to fulfil a freely agreed contract.²¹ Mattoso added that this word could also mean a «sworn agreement», without entailing any kind of subordination between the parties.²² This last meaning of *hominium* might even be the most common in the Iberian Peninsula, as pointed out by Wiedemann in his analysis of the formation of the league of Huesca in 1191.²³

Therefore, it is possible that the word *hominium* had this same meaning of sworn agreement in *Claves regni*, entailing confirmation in the hands of the legate of the concessions included in the document. Indeed, André Vitória has pointed out that *Claves regni* does not include any mention of the word «fidelity».²⁴ According to Wiedemann, further evidence that the arrangement was not one of vassalage might be the disappearance of the word *hominium* in future correspondence between Rome and Portugal, with only one exception, in *Devotionem dilecte*.²⁵ There are further elements that have not been considered but can help in our understanding of the relationship between Afonso Henriques and the papacy at this juncture. The *arenga* refers to some classic elements of Roman primacy that could have been used as *captatio benevolentiae* for the papacy. The king acknowledges that Christ gave Peter (and therefore his successors, the popes) the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, the *potestas ligandi et solvendi*. This is a reference to Mt 16:18-19, the foundation for every claim of primacy made by Rome.²⁶ Its inclusion is peculiar for a royal document: was it the result of some kind of «suggestion» made by the papal legate, who perhaps was involved in the creation of the document, as argued by Renzi?²⁷ We know for certain that the legate played a significant role in the negotiations, as attested by the performing of *hominium* via his hands.²⁸ Moreover, the use of the title *miles beati Petri*, a formula appearing only in Afonso Henriques's correspondence with Rome, which never bestowed this title to the king of Portugal

¹⁴ Wickham 2015. For the concept of «coerenze» see Cantarella 2005, 27-47.

¹⁵ For an updated overview of the historiographical debate over the concept of «Gregorian Reform», see Renzi and Veneziani 2021. See also the classic works of Fliche 1924 and Capitani 1965.

¹⁶ Azevedo 1958, 250-251. On the extant copies of *Claves regni* see Vitória 2012, 18-19.

¹⁷ See for example Martín Martín 2009, 116.

¹⁸ Renzi 2019, 244 and the bibliography cited here.

¹⁹ Sergi 2000; Reuter 2008; Wickham 2019, 166-174. In particular, for the Iberian Peninsula and the process of «feudalisation» see at least the works of Escalona Monge 2001; 2002; 2020; Escalona Monge and Martín Viso 2020; Martín Viso 2000; 2020; 2023.

²⁰ Becker 1995, 412-415; Carocci 2010.

²¹ Becker 1995, 426.

²² Mattoso 2015, 709.

²³ Wiedemann 2015, 438-439.

²⁴ Vitória 2012, 19.

²⁵ Wiedemann 2015, 436-437.

²⁶ «And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven». The historiography on *Petrinity* is vast but see as a starting point Maccarrone 1991.

²⁷ Renzi, forthcoming.

²⁸ On the role of papal legates in the Iberian Peninsula see Fleisch 2008, 2009.

– despite this formula being in use by the papal chancery –, might be further evidence of the legate's intervention.²⁹ The concession of the kingdom to Saint Peter might be a reference to an ecclesiological model in use in the Roman *milieu*. Maria João Branco, on the other hand, has shown how the language used in *Claves regni* may have been influenced by documents sent to Rome by the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarra in order to push successfully for acknowledgement by the Apostolic See, thus showing a deep knowledge within Afonso's chancery of the strategies adopted by other Iberian kings.³⁰ Both of these hypotheses are plausible: in either case, there was extreme precision in the composition of *Claves regni*.

The notion that Afonso resorted to language familiar to Rome may also be strengthened by another well-known document. As early as 30 April 1073, at the beginning of his pontificate, Gregory VII wrote a letter to all *principes* wishing to go to *Hispania* to fight the *paganos* and reminded them how this *regnum* pertained to the *ius* of Saint Peter from antiquity and how these lands in the hands of enemies of the faith belonged to the Apostolic See.³¹ As pointed out by Glauco Maria Cantarella, although the origins of this claim cannot be easily identified, it was prominent in the Roman *milieu*.³² Afonso Henriques was therefore turning to an image that was familiar (and intelligible) to Rome, «forcing» the pope to grant the desired Apostolic protection. *Protectio*, which was the real objective of *Claves regni*, was a concession that did not entail any kind of vassal relationship between the parties.³³ Considering the requests for Apostolic protection made by monasteries and churches, Smith has shown how *protectio* entailed merely some kind of «shield» by a prestigious institution that actually had few (if any) chances of interfering in the policies of the entities granted protection.³⁴ This may have been one of the reasons for the king's decision not to welcome any secular or ecclesiastical *potestas* into his kingdom, except the pontiff himself or one of his envoys. Although the offices of papal legates and judge delegates were quickly developing and adapting to the new European dimension the papacy was reaching, Rome was still very far away and had little ability to interfere actually on the internal dynamics of a kingdom. Finally, it is worth noting that the document was signed by the most important Portuguese ecclesiastics, the archbishop of Braga and the bishops of Porto and Coimbra. The Portuguese clergy was with Afonso Henriques, and Rome would have to keep this support in mind.³⁵

An element that has often been overlooked by the historiography is the dating of *Claves regni*. The document was issued on 13 December 1143. By that date, the papal legate had already left the kingdom: an extant document attests his presence in Girona in November 1143.³⁶ Smith has highlighted this chronological discrepancy, concluding that *Claves regni* may not have been written with the legate present.³⁷ This is quite strange: usually, this kind of document was written in the presence of a papal legate. Why wait so long before writing the document? The time the royal chancery needed to produce the letter cannot be the only reason for this apparent «delay.» Moreover, why not send the document with the legate? *Claves regni* was instead taken to Rome by a negotiator or a messenger of Afonso Henriques: the choice fell upon the archbishop of Braga, João Peculiar, one of the greatest supporters of, and collaborators with, the king, who had already been summoned to Rome by Innocent II in a letter dated 1 May 1143 because of a dispute between Coimbra and Braga.³⁸ One might even think that the absence of the legate was not entirely accidental. Might it be that *Claves regni* did not entirely reflect the negotiations that had occurred with the papal representative? Is it possible that Afonso Henriques created the situation, addressing Rome with requests that differed from what had been agreed with the papal legate Guido, perhaps, in particular, those concerning the claims to the titles of *rex* and *miles Petri*? The latter was a foundational part of the image of a warrior king, an image being stressed by the royal chancery to legitimise the new Portuguese king.³⁹ Moreover, this title was peculiar to the language adopted by the first Portuguese kings as shown below and was not claimed by other kings in the Iberian Peninsula.⁴⁰ Did *Claves regni* refer to acts or titles that could not have been fully accepted by the papal legate if he had been present? Had Afonso Henriques followed the advice of João Peculiar, who must have known how to move in the Roman *milieu* and how to «use» the Roman language because of his journeys to the Curia in 1135 and 1139?⁴¹

A final observation concerns the political context in which *Claves regni* was written. If Afonso Henriques's reasons for issuing such a document have already been fully considered, the same cannot be said for the papacy: why did the king write to Innocent II at that precise moment? This was not the first contact between them, as attested by two letters written in 1135 and 1139 concerning the papal *protectio* granted to the monastery of Santa Cruz

²⁹ Renzi 2019, 246. For an example of the multiple meanings of the image of *Miles Sancti Petri*, see Becker 1995, 424-426.

³⁰ Branco 2010, 109, although the image adopted by Afonso's chancery in *Claves regni* is not that of the *miles Christi*, as argued by Branco.

³¹ Caspar 1920-1923, Vol. I, 11-12.

³² Cantarella 2018a, 112.

³³ Branco has also identified the concession of *protectio* as Afonso Henriques's true aim. Branco 2010, 41.

³⁴ Smith 2016, 193.

³⁵ This care in stressing the support from the prelates of the kingdom was already noticed by Erdmann in his analysis of various journeys of the archbishop of Braga, João Peculiar, to Rome, when the ecclesiastic often brought with him and gave to the Curia documents sent by Afonso Henriques, as in the case of *Claves regni*. Erdmann 1935, 49.

³⁶ *Els pergamins* 2010, Vol. iii, 1334-1339. On Cardinal Guido of Vico's legation, see Mattoso 2007, 210-213.

³⁷ Smith 2016, 192 footnote 61. See also Branco 1993, 615 and Rodamilans Ramos, 2018, 796-797.

³⁸ On João Peculiar's journey to deliver *Claves regni*, see Mattoso 2007, 215. On João Peculiar's reasons for this journey, see Renzi, and Mariani 2022.

³⁹ For an overview of the different portrayals of Afonso Henriques by the sources see Mattoso 2000a. On the chancery of Afonso Henriques and its link with the archbishop of Braga and the monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra see the classic Azevedo 1938; and Costa 1975; Mattoso 1985; Morujão 1997; Gomes 2007; Branco 2009b, 147-148; Guerreiro 2010.

⁴⁰ I would like to thank Dr Francesco Renzi for pointing out to me this.

⁴¹ On this hypothesis see Mattoso 2017, 21-22.

of Coimbra.⁴² Although Innocent was already dead in December 1143 when *Claves regni* was issued—he had died in late September 1143—, news of this may not have yet reached Portugal (the letter was addressed to Innocent), and therefore we should look at the political situation in Rome during 1143 – a quite difficult time for the papacy. Conflict with the Roman *populus* had reopened a fracture between Innocent and the city. Di Carpegna has argued that this new opposition may have been rooted in the drastic measures taken by the pope to regain control of the city after the end of the schism in 1138 (Rome had been in the hands of Anacletus II and his supporters), such as the obligation for judges and advocates to swear an oath to him.⁴³ The clash with the city was the result of Innocent's soft attitude in the war against Tivoli and the agreement signed (or which the pope was forced to sign) with the Norman King Roger II in 1139. The Roman rebellion started between July and September 1143 and was the prelude to the *renovatio senatus* and the establishment of a commune, which was also to prove a problem for the following popes.⁴⁴ Afonso Henriques may have hoped for a *do ut des* agreement, considering it a favourable context for the pope to grant his requests in exchange for the opportunity to spread more widely the Roman primacy and gain a new ally in a moment when Innocent's *auctoritas* was deeply threatened, even in the *Urbs*. Of course, if news of Innocent's death had already reached Portugal, there are other considerations to be made. In considering that the *census* promised by Afonso Henriques was quite small (four ounces of gold, a small amount in comparison for example to the gold paid by Alfonso VI of Leon-Castille to Cluny annually), might we see here a *ballon d'essai* for Celestine II, an attempt to probe the view of the new pontiff and establish a relationship with him?⁴⁵ This is a possibility entailed by the very nature of *Claves regni*, argued by Vitória to have been an «offering.»⁴⁶ The *census* would indeed be increased in *Manifestis probatum* up to two marks of gold, a fourfold increase.⁴⁷

The reply to *Claves regni* was Lucius II's *Devotionem dilecte*, issued on 1 May 1144 by Celestine's successor.⁴⁸ The letter has been read as a refusal to acknowledge Afonso Henriques's royal claim: he is addressed simply as *illustris Portugalensis dux*. This decision has been traditionally read as evidence of a papal desire not to jeopardise the

relationship with King Alfonso VII of Leon-Castille, the most powerful sovereign in the Peninsula. Actually, there would later be some protests by Alfonso VII, but only during the papacy of Eugenius III in 1148, four years after Lucius's reply.⁴⁹ The lack of vassal-beneficiary language in *Devotionem dilecte* immediately stands out because the document only grants the protection of Saint Peter to Afonso Henriques, his soul, and his successors. The title of *miles beati Petri* likewise does not appear, which again may have been part of the strategy adopted by the Portuguese king to be accredited with Rome. Renzi has argued that in this period, ultimately the search for this kind of relationship with Rome was «unilateral» because the pope «rimaneva su una posizione più prudente,» resorting to diplomatic ambiguity, a necessary instrument in navigating the complex and intricate reality of *Hispania*.⁵⁰

However, more can be said about the document. Firstly, the use of the title of *dux* was nothing new – it continued a choice already present in the letters sent by Innocent II to Afonso Henriques in 1135 and 1139 – but it can be interpreted in two different ways.⁵¹ Reinhard Elze considered it some kind of «promotion,» because Afonso Henriques's father, Henrique of Burgundy, appears in sources (even in documents later issued by his own son) only as *comes*.⁵² Rodrigo Ximénez de Rada's *De rebus Hispaniae* also hints toward some kind of change in the title used by Afonso Henriques (*dux*) in comparison to his father.⁵³ This may have not been a small change if one considers, for example, that Pope Honorius II went to war against *comes* Roger II, the future king of Sicily, in 1127 when the latter claimed the succession to the duchy of Apulia.⁵⁴ It is also worth noting how Afonso Henriques never called himself *comes*, referring to himself only as *infans* or *princeps* and then, from 1139, as *rex*.⁵⁵ Alternatively, the papacy may have used the title *dux* only in its literal meaning, as «military leader.»⁵⁶ There were no duchies in the Iberian Peninsula, the office only being created later in this area. And this image of a military chief appeared in the so-called *Gesta de Afonso Henriques* and in

⁴² Ventura and Santiago Faria 1990, 77 (20 May 1135) and 84 (27 April 1139).

⁴³ Di Carpegna Falconieri 2004. For an excellent and up-to-date overview of the different historiographical views on the Schism of 1130-38, see Anzise 2011; Milanese 2013, 27-86. Studies on the 1130 double election have been affected by the model of the Old-New Gregorians, first proposed by Hans-Walter Klewitz 1939 and then by Franz-Josef Schmale 1961. Palumbo 1942 is still the best analysis of the double election, read as a political fight among Roman families that gained a European echo due to the new dimension the papacy was achieving.

⁴⁴ Di Carpegna Falconieri 2004.

⁴⁵ I would like to thank Prof Glauco Maria Cantarella for pointing out to me this second hypothesis.

⁴⁶ Vitória 2012, 20.

⁴⁷ Wiedemann, 2015, 436, where the scholar has also calculated the corresponding amount of gold.

⁴⁸ Migne 1899, Vol. 179, 860-861. It is worth noting that *Claves regni* was included in the *Registrum* of Lucius II. Erdmann 1935, 45 footnote 1.

⁴⁹ Various scholars have already questioned the idea that Alfonso VII's complaints resulted from Afonso Henriques's claims to the royal title – which seems to have been acknowledged by the same Alfonso VII, as attested by some documents produced by his chancery after a meeting in Zamora in 1143. Reilly 1998, 80-81; Smith 2016, 193; Renzi 2019, 248-253. For a more «classic» view, see Erdmann 1935, 50.

⁵⁰ Renzi 2019, 233.

⁵¹ Innocent II addressed his letters to «dilecto in Christo filio illustris viro Alfonso Portugalensium duci» (20 May 1135) and to «dilecto in Christo filio Alfonso illustris Portugalensium duci» (27 April 1139). For the first two journeys of João Peculiar to the *Curia*, see Costa 1984, 59-83; Erdmann 1935, 39-40 and Mattoso 2007, 121-123; 185-188.

⁵² Elze 1993, 30; see also Renzi 2019, 248.

⁵³ Fernández Valverde 1987, 227. On the titles adopted by Afonso Henriques see Guerreiro 2010. See also Renzi 2019, 248 and 249.

⁵⁴ On this episode, see Cantarella 2020, 66-81. On Honorius II, see Veneziani 2023a.

⁵⁵ Branco, 2009b, 145; Guerreiro 2010, particularly 77-81. Guerreiro has shown how the title *dux* was only used once by Afonso, see Guerreiro 2010, 78.

⁵⁶ A quick survey of the papal letters included in *Patrologia Latina* issued during the papacies of Innocent II and Lucius II has shown how the title *dux* was only used with the meaning «duke», usually appearing in documents sent to the Normans or to the Outremer.

De expugnatione Scalabis.⁵⁷ Both hypotheses seem plausible and show how Pope Lucius II was aware of the value of titles and resorted to a prudent attitude in line with that of his predecessors. In the context of the Iberian Peninsula, it is worth noting that the title of *imperator totius Hispaniae* adopted by Alfonso VII had not been acknowledged by the papal chancery, which continued to call him *rex* – but this did not prevent Alfonso's chancery from using the title in all its documents.⁵⁸

The *arenga* of *Devotionem dilecte* is also significant because it was composed for this precise moment. The papal letter begins with a reference to Roman primacy and the inclusion of Afonso Henriques among the «sheep» entrusted by Jesus to Saint Peter («quod temetipsum de illis ovibus recognoscens quas Dominus noster Jesus Christus Petri custodire commendavit»).⁵⁹ This image comes before references to the *hominium* performed to the papal legate and to the delivery of the kingdom and of the person of the king to Saint Peter. The justifications mentioned by the pope for the *hominium* being done via the hands of the legate – Afonso Henriques not being able to go to Rome for the *visitatio ad limina apostolorum* due to his fight with the Muslims and unspecified *negotia secularia* – have never been examined. Here, Lucius II resorted to the «softer» version of the formula concerning the *visitatio*, focusing the whole matter of the *visitatio* on the pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles. This formula had already appeared, for example, in the letter sent by Pope Honorius II to the bishop of Coimbra on 22 December 1128-29 concerning the conflict raised by his consecration, which pertained to the archbishop of Compostela (his metropolitan) but was performed by the archbishop of Braga, who was supported by Afonso Henriques (it is worth noting that Bernardo, the new bishop, had been archdeacon of Braga).⁶⁰

One of the greatest twentieth-century experts in the history of the Apostolic See, Michele Maccarrone, already noticed how mention of the Apostles started to disappear in the first half of the twelfth century and how the papal chancery focused the whole formula of the *visitatio* on the figure of the pope, turning the journey to Rome into an act of homage to the pope—as seen in a letter addressed from the same Honorius to Diego Gelmírez, archbishop of Compostela, in 1129.⁶¹ Avoiding this latter meaning, Lucius kept a moderate and diplomatic attitude. His choice might also be read as a hint toward how Rome wanted to read Afonso Henriques's *hominium* only from the point of view of Apostolic *protectio*—which is indeed mentioned immediately after—and not as entailing any kind of vassalage, for which the latter meaning of *visitatio* would have been more appropriate. It is worth remembering that Lucius II, as Cardinal Gerard, had been one of the most important legates of the first forty years of the twelfth

century, entrusted with legations in Germany (one of the most conflict-ridden areas) and Southern Italy, dealing with Montecassino and Roger II of Sicily.⁶² Therefore, he had significant diplomatic experience and must have been well-versed in the art of dialectic, an indispensable skill for a papal legate. Here was a cleric accustomed to the use of the «speech» as a tool for governing and to all the nuances of papal language. He chose his words carefully.

Devotionem dilecte ends with the concession of Apostolic protection.⁶³ Therefore, the letter should not necessarily be understood as a defeat for Afonso Henriques: *protectio apostolica* was a prestigious and legitimising concession that could be used in relations with the other Iberian kings and had little practical risk in the form of Roman interference in Portuguese affairs.⁶⁴ Pope Lucius II could also be satisfied. He had not acknowledged Afonso's royal title, thus avoiding jeopardising other relationships (in particular, those with Alfonso VII), and he had also gained an initial contact with the new Portuguese political entity, which could be further developed by his successors.⁶⁵ As mentioned above, the claims to the royal title and to the designation as *miles Petri* might have been additions made by the royal chancery when drafting *Claves regni*. These additions were then rejected by the pope, who was turning back to the original concessions agreed in the negotiations with the papal legate, that is, the concession of Apostolic protection and a «promotion» to the office of *dux*. Furthermore, although entailing a few (if any) practical repercussions, *protectio* was still an acknowledgement of Roman primacy, an additional legitimation that could be used against the Roman senate – the dispute between the papacy and the *senatus* would turn into a real conflict with the failed papal attack on Campidoglio later in 1144 and the (failed) negotiations with Roger II.⁶⁶

The lack of further requests for acknowledgement until 1179 – despite the existence of letters between 1144 and *Manifestis probatum* – might be further proof that Apostolic *protectio* was considered a sufficient outcome by Afonso Henriques. Papal acknowledgement of the royal title does not appear to have been extremely urgent for Afonso. He kept calling himself *rex*, even in correspondence with Rome, and other chanceries of the Iberian Peninsula used this title when addressing him. *Protectio* and the status quo may have also been satisfying for the papacy.

Things might be different for the title of *miles Petri*, a designation which could be bestowed by the pope alone. In 1156-57, Afonso Henriques wrote to Pope Adrian IV, entrusting him with the monastery of Santa Cruz and informing him that he had granted the regular canons the *castrum* of Leiria.⁶⁷ Erdmann has already shown how this

⁶² Milani 2006.

⁶³ «Nos itaque, qui, licet, indigni, beati Petri loco residere consuevimus, tam te quam filios tuos et successores vestros intra heres ipsius Apostolorum principis ipso adjuvante suscipimus, ut in ejus benedictione et protectione tam animarum quam corpore maneatis, per quam ab hostium visibilium et invisibilium expugnatione defensi, ad coelestia regna pervenire largiente Domino valeatis», Migne 1899, Vol. 179, 861.

⁶⁴ Renzi 2019, 252.

⁶⁵ Renzi 2019, 253.

⁶⁶ Milani 2006.

⁶⁷ Ventura and Santiago Faria 1990, 94-95.

⁵⁷ Mattoso 2000a, 477-479; Saraiva 1979; Portugaliae 1856, 93-95.

⁵⁸ Smith 2016, 193-194.

⁵⁹ Migne 1899, Vol. 179, 860.

⁶⁰ «Quod autem ad apostolorum limina et nostram presentiam tanquam deuotus et specialis beati Petri et sancte Romane ecclesie filius uenire desideras, gratum habemus» Erdmann 1927, 183-185. For an analysis of this episode see Mattoso 2007, 68-17 and Veneziani 2023a, 110-113.

⁶¹ Maccarrone 1991, 1137-1141.

period saw intense conflict between Coimbra and Braga due to the deposition of the prelate of Coimbra in a synod summoned by the archbishop of Braga. Afonso Henriques seems to have been involved in some way in the dispute: in a letter addressed to the archbishop of Toledo on 10 June 1155, Adrian IV threatened to issue an interdict upon the Portuguese lands if the Portuguese *dux* continued to refuse to reintegrate the bishop of Coimbra.

Afonso's letter was taken to Rome by a canon of Santa Cruz accompanying João Peculiar in his journey to the Curia to reestablish good relations with the papacy, also on Afonso Henriques's behalf.⁶⁸ In the document Afonso calls himself *rex* (this time *Portugalis*, no longer *portugallensis*), in spite of the lack of any papal acknowledgement.⁶⁹ Moreover, the first sentence of the text reveals the king's wish to be considered *miles* and *filius devotus* of the pope as his predecessors had been («non ignoret sublimitas vestra, Pater Sancte, me militem vestrum et devotum filium esse velle, sicut fui apostolicorum qui fuerunt ante vos»). This claim was a rhetorical *factio* as there is no evidence for it. These formulas show once more how these *topoi* belonged to the self-depiction of Afonso's power but were never acknowledged by Rome. Stating the desire to be *miles* and *filius devotus* inevitably shows that these titles had not been granted to Afonso. Indeed, the royal chancery later focused on better defining this image. Finally, it is worth noting how the formula used to ask for papal protection for Santa Cruz, *sub tutela et defensione Sancte Romane Ecclesie suscepistis*, entailed again the deployment of *protectio*, which «protected» Santa Cruz with no practical possibilities of papal interference, something that Afonso Henriques probably wished to avoid in this monastery. Santa Cruz might be considered almost an *Eigenkirche* of Afonso and his relatives, although the king was not its actual founder or at least not the only founder.⁷⁰

The letter sent by Adrian IV to Afonso Henriques on 14 June 1158 again concerned Santa Cruz: the monastery was entrusted to the care of the king of Portugal.⁷¹ This document attests to the re-establishing of good relations with the papacy after João Peculiar's journey.⁷² Again, Afonso Henriques is addressed as *Portugaliensium dux*, this time with the addition of the praise of his devotion towards religious men, the premise justifying the request of protection made by the pontiff («quia plurimum de animi tui devotione et mentis sinceritate confidimus pro viris

religiosis et divino cultui mancipatis preces magnitudini tue porrigere minime dubitamus»). There is no mention of the title *miles beati Petri*.

The title of *miles beati Petri* reappears in the letter Afonso Henriques sent to Pope Alexander III, which Rui Pinto de Azevedo dated between March 1162 and August 1163, asking for the renewal of the protection for Santa Cruz. Several of the letters we are considering survive because they were copied in the *Livro Santo*, the first cartulary of the monastery.⁷³ During the papacy of Alexander III, there was an increase in the frequency of contact between Rome and the Iberian Peninsula, perhaps due to the election of a rival pope, Victor IV, and the consequent necessity to be acknowledged by the largest possible number of institutions.⁷⁴ Indeed, acknowledgement by the kingdoms of Portugal and Aragon was not straightforward. As pointed out by Smith, regarding Portugal, the first document issued by Alexander III only dated 15 December 1162, with the confirmation of a hospital in Braga granted to the Templars by Archbishop João Peculiar and the cathedral chapter – that is, three years after Alexander's election in 1159.⁷⁵ Therefore, the letter issued in 1162-1163 was likely the first official contact between Afonso Henriques and the pope now acknowledged by him as legitimate. Once again, Afonso's epistle was probably taken to Rome by João Peculiar during his seventh journey to the papal Curia.⁷⁶

After the use of the title of *Portugaliensium rex*, Afonso resorted to a different image, that of *filius specialis*.⁷⁷ Again, this was a formula in use in the papal chancery. It is found, for example, in a letter of Honorius II addressed to the king of France, Louis VI, on 31 March 1125-1128, in which the pope took the king's son under Apostolic protection, as he turned towards an ecclesiastical career.⁷⁸ What Afonso wanted to express by resorting to this *topos* is explained later on in the text: many powerful people inherited from their parents many lands pertaining to the *ius* of Saint Peter, but either they did not increase their holdings or they considered the new acquisitions as personal possessions. Afonso, on the contrary, had increased the lands that his parents left him, tearing away most of the new acquisitions from the *Saracens* and expanding the Apostolic *patrimonium* (perhaps a further reference to the idea of *Hispania* pertaining to the *ius* of Saint Peter?) and proving himself as *miles beati Petri*.⁷⁹

⁶⁸ Erdmann 1935, 60-61.

⁶⁹ On the different titles used by the Portuguese kings and on changes in how they were understood, see Guerreiro 2010 and Matoso 2015, 785-791. Guerreiro in particular has shown how the use of the titles «king of Portugal» or «king of the Portuguese» was not consistent and alternating between them was the result of multiple factors, Guerreiro 2010, 47-50; 53-54 for different stages of the documentation issued by Afonso Henriques's chancery; 62-64; 81-84, where Guerreiro pointed out a preference for the title «King of the Portuguese». For a comparison with the reign of Sancho I see Guerreiro 2010, 118-120.

⁷⁰ On Santa Cruz of Coimbra, see *Santa Cruz* 1984; Martins 2003. In a letter issued to Urban III by Sancho I in 1186-1187 (analysed below), the king indeed referred to Santa Cruz as «a patre meo fundatum et secundum regulam Beati Augustini institutum», Azevedo 1979, 35.

⁷¹ Ventura and Santiago Faria 1990, 98.

⁷² Erdmann 1935, 61-62.

⁷³ Ventura and Santiago Faria 1990, 102-103.

⁷⁴ For an overview of the relations between Alexander III and the Iberian Peninsula, see Erdmann 1935, 65-67 and especially Smith 2016, 203-242.

⁷⁵ Smith 2012, 206. Concerning Aragon, the first document is dated 20 May 1162 and is a privilege of protection to Santa Maria de Besalú. For a short overview on the relations between Aragon and the papacy between the XI and XIII centuries, see Veneziani, 2023b.

⁷⁶ Erdmann 1935, 69-70.

⁷⁷ «Satis superque satis novit vestre paternitatis sublimitas me vestre sanctitatis ita esse filium specialem ut aut nullum penitus aut vix aliquem michi per omnia habeatis consimilem» Ventura and Santiago Faria 1990, 102-103.

⁷⁸ Dufour 1992-1994, Vol. 2, 468.

⁷⁹ «Alii enim imperatores, reges, duces, principes, ceterique potentes a parentibus propriis terras de iure Beati Petri acceperunt, cum quibus celsitudini vestre et Romane Curie obsecuntur. Ceterum aut nulla supraditiunt aut si qua a barbaris nationibus lucrantur sue tanquam proprie potestati adiciunt. Ego autem cum his que de possessionibus parentum meorum per Dei gratiam mea industria acqui-

According to Afonso Henriques in this instance, his conquests are the condition for resorting to the use of the titles of *miles beati Petri* and *filius specialis*. Unlike the 1156-57 letter sent to Adrian IV, this time there is no plan seeking acknowledgement by Rome —the conditions for being *filius specialis* and *miles beati Petri* were factual realities. The link between the title of *miles beati Petri* and the royal image created by the royal chancery is made explicit—Afonso's royalty is legitimised by his fight against the enemies of the faith. Once again, the title of *miles beati Petri* is the one that stands out in Afonso's letter. It seems that this title was more important than that of *rex*. However, this overturns the image of Afonso Henriques as «blinded» by the need for acknowledgement of his royal title by Rome (up to this moment, at least), an *ex post facto* reinterpretation by the historiography from the letter *Manifestis probatum*, almost as without this acknowledgement, Afonso's royalty was not complete and legitimate.

Finally, the last document considered in this essay is the famous *Manifestis probatum*, sent by Alexander III to Afonso Henriques on 23 May 1179, in which the son of Countess-Queen Teresa and Count Henrique of Burgundy was addressed as *illustris Portugalensium rex* by Rome. Mattoso has pointed out how this acknowledgement of the royal title by the papacy occurred all of a sudden, arguing for some kind of link with the making of the testament of the Portuguese king.⁸⁰ Branco has highlighted how this concession came at a convenient time for the kingdom, especially considering the precarious situation that had arisen between 1174 and 1179 regarding the succession to Afonso Henriques who, although still alive, had associated his son Sancho to the throne, in particular after his defeat at Badajoz and the injuries he sustained there, which prevented him from fully governing the kingdom.⁸¹ Moreover, she highlights that *Manifestis probatum* proved to be an immediate and important juridical instrument in supporting the claims of the Portuguese kings.⁸² Finally, she notes how, with the death of João Peculiar in December 1175 and the election of a new archbishop of Braga, Godinho, a significant obstacle that had prevented negotiations with Rome was removed – difficulties had arisen due to João's illness in his last days, unable to travel to Rome, and to his intransigent attitude toward the question of the primacy of Toledo.⁸³ Renzi, building on Stephen Lay's works, has viewed *Manifestis probatum* as evidence of a dialogue between two emerging entities, because Alexander's position, despite his victory in the schism and the celebration of the Third Lateran Council in March 1179, was neither safe nor stable.⁸⁴ In particular, his power in Rome was insecure: later

in this same year, the pontiff was forced to leave the city once again (he had already been exiled from Rome for ten years, returning only in 1178) due to an insurgence by part of the Roman aristocracy, and he would die exiled in Civita Castellana in 1181. When the body of the pope returned to the *Urbs*, it was met with insults and stones by the Romans. Therefore, in 1179 Alexander III might have benefitted from the acknowledgement of Afonso. Negotiations took place either during the Third Lateran Council of 1179, as implied by a letter of Innocent III issued on 9 December 1198 and addressed to Sancho I (although the presence at the council of Portuguese ecclesiastics, such as Godinho, is not attested beyond doubt) and by the *Liber Censuum*, or during a diplomatic mission of *magister* Julião Pais who, in September 1180, was rewarded for his services by Afonso Henriques.⁸⁵

Either hypothesis would also explain the puzzling privilege granted to the Templars on 13 April 1179 (therefore, before *Manifestis probatum*, granted on 23 May), where Afonso Henriques is already addressed as *illustris Portugalensium rex*.⁸⁶ Finally, Becker, Wiedemann, and Renzi have shown how the language the Apostolic See used when referring to the kingdom of Portugal in *Manifestis probatum* belongs to the sphere of Apostolic protection and not to that of vassalage.⁸⁷ Some formulas used here also appear in various papal privileges: for example, the formula *sub beati Petri et nostra protectione suscipimus* adopted here for the king, the provisions concerning the payment of the *census*, and the sanctions for those who trespass the decision taken in the letter. The clause concerning respect of the integrity of the kingdom – which would play an important role in the dispute between Afonso II and his sisters over the territories left them by Sancho I in his testament, located in a vital area of Portugal and, therefore, a potential threat to Afonso II—was a customary provision in privileges.⁸⁸ It must be remembered that Alexander III is regarded as one of the greatest lawyer-popes of the twelfth century (long been upheld in the historiography even in spite of his incorrect identification with the Bolognese canon Rolandus), one of the pontificates where the formulas used by the chancery became increasingly precise in order to avoid any possible misunderstandings.⁸⁹

As pointed out by Wiedemann, the reference to *protectio* distinguishes *Manifestis probatum* from Innocent II's *Quos dispensatio*, the confirmation of the concession of the royal title to Roger II of Sicily in 1139, frequently compared with

⁸⁵ Renzi 2019, 258-260; Mattoso 2007, 360.

⁸⁶ Erdmann 1927, 248. See also the two letters sent by Cardinal Jacinto during his second legation in *Hispania* and the use of the royal title in relation to Afonso Henriques in 1173, Smith 2012, 221.

⁸⁷ Becker 1995, 442-445; Wiedemann 2015, 441-445; Renzi 2019, 262-267.

⁸⁸ On the dispute between Afonso II and his sisters see Sousa Costa 1963; Vasconcelos Vilar 2008, 69-141; Branco 2009a, 147-171; Vitória 2012, 20-24.

⁸⁹ On Alexander III as a lawyer-pope, see Liotta 1986; De Fraja 2012; Duggan 2012. On the incorrect identification of Alexander III with the canonist Rolandus Bandinelli, see Noonan 1977, and Weigand 1980. The Portuguese kings began to resort to counsellors expert in law from the end of the twelfth century and in particular during the reign of Afonso II, see Sousa Costa 1963; Branco 1999; Branco 2009b, 150-152. On the legal culture in Portugal see Vitória 2012 and Fleisch 2006.

sivi, Beato Petro fideliter serviens plura quam haberem per eius auxilium sarracenis abstuli, unde et ea libens apostolico patrimonio adieci animo gerens strenuus Beati Petri miles existere et vestre paternitatis semper iussionibus obedire» Ventura and Santiago Faria 1990, 102-103.

⁸⁰ Mattoso 2007, 359-362.

⁸¹ Branco 2010, 80-81; 106.

⁸² Branco 2009a, 127-171; 2010, 112-113.

⁸³ Branco 2010, 102-103. On the key role played by political powers and by some ecclesiastics in the process leading to the independence of Portugal see Soto Rábanos 2007.

⁸⁴ Renzi 2019, 257-258; Lay 2009. For a different view, see Branco 2010, 104.

the former document.⁹⁰ Most of the formulas in the two letters are similar, and Innocent's letter was likely used as a model for the one sent to Afonso, a clear example of how the papal chancery worked in the twelfth century and how *Manifestis probatum* should be reconsidered in light of the context of Alexander's papacy. The key difference between the two documents is really the lack in *Manifestis probatum* of elements characterising the kingdom as a vassal to Rome, as was the case with the Norman kingdom in Southern Italy. Firstly, there is no mention of *ligium homagium*, an element so central in the document to Roger II, nor is there an oath of fidelity sworn to the pontiff. In place of these, the letter includes the formula for the *protectio*, which is absent in the 1139 text.⁹¹ Moreover, the provision concerning devotion to the Roman church includes a significant change because the reference to *servitium* in Innocent's letter is replaced by a less strong word in *Manifestis probatum*, *obsequium*.⁹²

Further elements refer to the specific context of each document. The two *arengae* display significant differences, though there are features shared across both letters, notably the characteristics that, according to the papacy, made the two kings suitable to rule each kingdom and the praises of their efforts in the fight against the enemies of the Christian faith and the spread of Christianity (what Luís Ribeiro Soares called *dispensatio celestis*, a *topos* that is not entirely new, as shown by Honorius II's letter to Baldwin II, king of Jerusalem, issued on 29 May 1129, where the pope mentioned the king's war efforts against the Muslims).⁹³ In 1139, Innocent II rewrote the events that led to the concession of the title of king of Sicily, first mentioning Robert Guiscard, addressed by the pope as *miles beati Petri*, then making up a first concession of the kingdom of Sicily by Honorius II, which Innocent was therefore only confirming.⁹⁴ A similar tactic seems to have been adopted by Innocent in his correspondence with Emperor Lothar III, who, he claimed, was confirmed as king of Germany by

Honorius II—and the imperial support was vital to Innocent in the ongoing schism at that time.⁹⁵ In regard to Roger, this strategy allowed Innocent to erase the previous concession by Anacletus II, his rival in the 1130 schism, who had crowned Roger II in 1130.⁹⁶ The context of and the reasons for the issuing *Quos dispensatio* were completely different from those of *Manifestis probatum*.

In both 1139 and 1179, popes, therefore, acknowledged *de facto* realities, as attested by the formulas used and by the justification of their decisions as something the Apostolic See ought to do in order to grant the rightful requests made by those chosen to lead people—a further *topos* that usually appears in privileges to ecclesiastical institutions. Anacletus II behaved entirely differently, as shown by Glauco Maria Cantarella, because that pope created an actual «algorithm» made of a triple formula stating «*concedimus et donamus et auctorizamus*» the kingdom to Roger II.⁹⁷ This was a very significant declaration of primacy from a position of strength, which the papacy lacked in both 1139 and 1179. It is worth noting the continued absence of the image of *miles Petri* in *Manifestis probatum*: the papacy never wanted to bring its relations with Afonso Henriques to this level, granting him only the title of *bonus filius*. This time, however, Afonso Henriques seems to have deemed the acknowledgement of the royal title sufficient. Perhaps changes in the context—i.e., problems that had arisen with his succession—and the development of the idea of royalty as portrayed by his chancery forced the king to focus on other elements, that is, the title of *rex*.

It is worth noting how the title *miles Petri* would appear again under Afonso's successor, his son Sancho I. In his only extant letter written to a pope, the epistle sent to Urban III between January 1186 and 7 May 1187, the king asked the pontiff to acknowledge the monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra—as we have seen, one of the pillars for the Portuguese kings and where Sancho wished to be buried—as part of the *Patrimonium Petri*, as his predecessors had done.⁹⁸ Here, Sancho referred to himself as «*militem vestrum [Urban III] et Curie Romane devotumque filium esse velle sicut pater meus vestrorum extitit predecessorum*».⁹⁹ Once again, a Portuguese king called himself *miles Petri*, a title that he used to justify his requests to the pope even after the acknowledgement of the royal title to his father. The juxtaposition of *miles Petri* and *filius devotus* and the strategic mention of how his father had had these titles acknowledged by Urban's predecessors seem to be references to the above-mentioned letter of Afonso Henriques sent to Adrian IV in 1156-1157, which was probably used by the royal chancery as a model in composing Sancho's letter. Why did Sancho claim this title? The context may have played a key role for both parties. Urban III found himself in a difficult situation due to the increasing deterioration of his relations with the Empire

⁹⁰ Wiedemann 2015, 434-435. The text of *Quos dispensatio* is found in Migne 1899, Vol. 179, 478-479.

⁹¹ Renzi 2019, 246-247.

⁹² «Tua ergo, fili charissime, interest, ita te erga honorem atque servitium matris tuae sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae devotum et humilem exhibere» in 1179 turned into «Tua itaque intererit fili karissime ita circa honorem et obsequium matris tue sacrosanctae Romanae ecclesiae humilem et devotum existere» VIII *Centenário* 1979, 231.

⁹³ «His autem duabus subnixis virtutibus, quae a praedecessoribus tuis, gloriosis viris duce Godofredo et rege Balduino, per sudores bellicos parta sunt in pace regali prudentia retines, et multa alia praestita tibi de coelo victoria per plurimas fatigationes viriliter acquisisti. Multa namque mortis subeundo pericula, amaritudinem vulnere et saevientium paganorum tetros carceres, serviles etiam catenas pro Christi nomine, qui, cum sit aequalis Patri, formam servi accepit, sustinuisti» (Honorius II, 29 May 1128, Migne 1854, Vol. 166, 1280). On *dispensatio celestis*, see Soares 1979, 179-182; Branco 2010, 110-111.

⁹⁴ «Unde et praedecessor noster religiosus et prudens papa Honorius, nobilitatem tuam de praedicta generositate descendente intuitus plurimum de te sperans, et prudentia ornatum, iustitia munitum, atque ad regimen populi te idoneum esse credens, valde dilexit, et ad altiora provexit. Nos ergo ejus vestigiis inhaerentes, et de potentia tua ad decorem et utilitatem sanctae Dei Ecclesiae spem atque fiduciam obtinentes, regnum Siciliae, quod utique, prout in antiquis refertur historiis, regnum fuisse non dubium est, tibi ab eodem antecessore nostro concessum, cum integritate honoris regii et dignitate regibus pertinente, excellentiae tuae concedimus, et apostolica auctoritate confirmamus» Migne 1899, Vol. 179, 478-479.

⁹⁵ Veneziani 2023a, 136-144.

⁹⁶ Cantarella 2018b. Anacletus II's letter issued on 27 September 1130 is found in Migne 1899, Vol. 179, 715-717.

⁹⁷ Cantarella 2018b.

⁹⁸ The letter has been edited by Azevedo 1979, 35. Between 6 and 11 May 1187 Urban III issued seven letters confirming the rights and privileges of Santa Cruz, see Branco 2010, 139.

⁹⁹ Azevedo 1979, 35.

– he could never reach Rome due to imperial control of communications and he spent his entire papacy in Verona. On 27 January 1186, Frederick I's son, Henry VI, married (for the second time) Constance of Hauteville, daughter of Roger II of Sicily, thus reifying the danger for the papacy of a *unio regni ad imperium*.¹⁰⁰ Sancho may have considered the pontiff more open to acknowledging this title in exchange for his support. The king himself was also in an unstable position.¹⁰¹ As shown by Branco, after a period of apparent tranquility in the first months of his reign, Sancho embarked on a military campaign in the south to resume Afonso Henriques's expansion in this area. This is attested by some documents dating to October 1186 concerning the dispute between Braga and Compostela.¹⁰² The end of summer in 1186 also saw the dismissal of the royal *mordomo*, Vasco Fernandes de Soverosa (who had held this position since 1176). He then begins to appear in documentation issued by Fernando II of León's chancery, thus switching sides.¹⁰³ As argued by Branco, both episodes might be connected but it is not possible to say anything more than this due to a lack of sources.¹⁰⁴ In this situation of instability, the king may have sought a stronger relationship with the papacy.

One last thing ought to be said about the provision concerning the payment of the *census* in *Manifestis probatum*. This clause includes a reference to *utilitas*, one of the instruments developed during the reforms of the eleventh century, which, when invoked, linked a decision to the sacramental sphere, the real essence of *Christianitas*, as shown by Ovidio Capitani.¹⁰⁵ Actually, the decision to resort to this belonged to the pope alone. *Utilitas* was mentioned, for example, when Innocent III ordered Sancho I to pay the *census* on 24 April 1198, since the kings of Portugal had never paid it from the time of *Manifestis probatum*—and this was Innocent's first letter to Sancho.¹⁰⁶ As argued by Renzi, on this occasion, the pope gave a peculiar interpretation of *Manifestis probatum*, understood as the concession of the royal title by the papacy and not only a confirmation of an existing situation, as it had been in the time of Alexander III—thus entailing the threat that a concession can always be withdrawn.¹⁰⁷

In conclusion, *Manifestis probatum* certainly marked a turning point in the relationship between Rome and Portugal, but it was only one among many milestones and cannot be understood in isolation. The acknowledgement was renewed several times in very specific moments during the reigns of Sancho I and Afonso II (and modified on one

occasion). On the other hand, as pointed out by Branco, it proved an important instrument for Portuguese kings when creating laws.

Approaching these issues from a Roman point of view has helped better frame some of the documents and highlights the importance of context in understanding the images and language adopted by both papal and royal chanceries. Lack of attention to the historical moment has sometimes resulted in some elements being stressed too much, such as the attempts to seek an acknowledgement of the title of *rex*: it is not possible to explain the forty-year «break» between the first request by Afonso Henriques to Innocent II and *Manifestis probatum* otherwise. On the contrary, analysis of some of the letters sent by Afonso's chancery to Rome shows a recurrent focus on the title of *miles Petri*, as if this image was more important than being acknowledged as king for the legitimacy of the new political reality – a title also claimed by Afonso's son and successor Sancho I. Despite Afonso's attempt to force the situation, the consistent papal refusal to acknowledge the formula might have been the result of a prudent *Realpolitik* avoiding any possible contrast with other political institutions in the Iberian Peninsula and of the reactive nature of the medieval papacy. The situation only changed (temporarily) with *Manifestis probatum* when the acknowledgement of the title of *rex* was deemed sufficient by Afonso.

The analysis of papal language has also benefitted from an attention to historical context and comparison with other documents, as attested by the adoption of words apparently belonging to the sphere of vassalage but which were used by the papal chancery to indicate a variety of different relationships, without necessarily entailing a feudal link.

Considering both the kingdom of Portugal and Rome as two emerging entities helps us understand their relations, showing how the so-called «peripheries» played an important role in the creation of the Roman primacy. Switching the model suggested by the majority of the historiography, one might say that the continuous need for acknowledgement by external institutions was stronger for the Apostolic See than for the kingdom of Portugal, where Afonso Henriques already exercised practical authority. He was a king who was already recognised, although with highs and lows, in the complex universe of the Iberian Peninsula.

¹⁰⁰ Grillo 2020.

¹⁰¹ Neither the title *miles Petri* nor the image of a warrior king would be applied by the papal chancery to Afonso II. In the renewal of *Manifestis Probatum* on 16 April 1212 Rome resorted to an image different from that used with Afonso Henriques and Sancho, adapting the document to the reality of a king affected by a serious (although not clearly identified) disease, and highlighting other skills as evidence for Afonso II's suitability «ad gubernationem regni», see Branco 2009a, 152-158, who has argued how this change resulted also in the emergence of the concept of the 'kingdom of Portugal'. On the whole creation of the concept of 'sovereignty', see Branco 1999.

¹⁰² Branco 2010, 142-143.

¹⁰³ Branco 2010, 143-149.

¹⁰⁴ Branco 2010, 152.

¹⁰⁵ Capitani 1986.

¹⁰⁶ Branco 2009a, 145-146; 2010, 259-260.

¹⁰⁷ Renzi 2019, 268-273.

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