Kingship, Justice and Religion in a Global Setting

1.1. Diogo Lopes Rebelo, *De republica gubernanda per regem* [On the Government of the Republic by the King] (1496)

The probable publication date of *De republica gubernanda per regem* is 1496. Its author, the clergyman Diogo Lopes Rebelo (?–1498), studied theology at the university of Paris and subsequently served as professor at its Collège de Navarre. In this ‘mirror for princes’, Rebelo aims at providing the maxims of good government to the newly enthroned Manuel I.

The excerpt below was translated from Diogo Lopes Rebelo, *Do governo da república pelo rei*, trans. Artur Moreira de Sá (Lisbon: Instituto para a Alta Cultura, 1951).

The book *De republica* properly begins, in which divine sentences of the Holy Scripture and many noble precepts are noted, which are necessary for a good and happy life.

Chapter I: In Which it is Proved that the Republic Necessarily Requires Government, and the Different Ways of Governing it

It is necessary that the republic, which is made up of a multitude of men and women, be governed, in order that it not be extinguished and perish. In fact, it is everyone’s natural right to wish to protect one’s own life and being. Natural law is the common law of all nations, since it is held by
natural instinct, not by any constitution. Jurists say that natural law is that which nature has taught all animals. Thus, Cicero, in the first book of *On Duties*, says: ‘From the beginning, every type of animate being was assigned by nature the tendency to protect its life and the body, to repel all that seems harmful, seeking everything necessary for its good health, such as food, shelter and so on.’ Indeed, if other animals are by nature sociable in order to [better] defend and protect themselves, even though nature has given them hides to cover themselves, and self-defence tools such as nails, horns and birds’ feathers, how much more gregarious and sociable ought man to be, given his natural weakness and his lack of so many similar things [for his individual protection]? For the same reason, Aristotle defines man thus: ‘Man is a sociable animal by nature.’ Therefore, it is necessary for men to live together and to congregate in order to help one another, so that what one lacks he may find in another through mutual aid. We see from experience that swarming bees make honeycombs and distil honey, which they would not do if they flew away from each other and each went its own way. How much more important is it for men to join together, who were created to come to one another’s aid! Plato says: ‘We are born not for ourselves alone, but our country claims a part for itself, and our friends a part.’ And, as the Stoics would agree, everything in this world was created for man’s use, and men, to help each other.

It is therefore necessary for men, by their very nature, to come together. Their congregations, their councils and their meetings, with right to assembly, are called cities, and cities and strongholds collected together under the same ruler or head are called provinces or kingdom. The kingdom is also called a republic, because all who live in the same kingdom have the same rights, laws and institutions, created by the same prince or king for all who fight under one’s lord.

But not all who live in the same city or kingdom live in the same manner. Some are priests and pontiffs who pray to God for the health of the people and the country; others are military men who bear arms, using them and other machinery of war to defend the country; and yet others, artisans who exercise the mechanical crafts. For, as we see in our natural body, the limbs are separated each with its own function, and each needing the help of the other. As the Apostle explains well, in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 1 the hand is not called the eye, because it is not

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the eye of the body; neither is the foot called the hand, because it is not the hand of the body. But the eye of our body must avail itself of and have use of the foot to bring it to the place it wants to see, and the foot needs the eye so that it does not bruise itself when walking. Likewise, it needs the help of the hand to give and gather things that must be kept and exchanged among men. Thus, in a republic, men are divided into sorts, some wanting the help of others.

But because there are some in the republic who want to live life at the bidding of their desires, and disturb and subvert this harmony and good concord that must exist in the government and the republic, a type of government by one, or more than one, was invented, so that the good and the righteous, moved by the love of virtue, should be rewarded with honours and dignities; [while] the wicked, the rebellious, the disobedient and those who want to disturb the republic should recoil from evil for fear of punishment, and be punished, so that they should not carry out any such things, and that others should hesitate before [committing] any offence, for the punishment of one shall be the fear of another.

Let us briefly describe the four ways of governing the republic. Philosophers have differed on this point. Some have said that the republic must be governed by the wise and the best. Socrates was of this opinion, whence this type of republic is called Socratic. Others insist that it should be governed only by the rich and the powerful. Yet others argue that it must be governed by the regimen and authority of the people, and the philosopher Democritus was of this opinion. The people sometimes imposed laws called plebiscites. Others, however, have said that the most common opinion is that the republic should be surrendered to the government and rulership of one, as king and supreme prince, and that all things should be directed by one, as prince and supreme lord. This was the opinion of Aristotle, the Prince of the Peripatetics.

In the next chapter, we will discuss the most appropriate and convenient mode of ruling and governing the republic, and how many types of government there are, for it is clear from the aforesaid that the republic necessarily needs a form of government.

2 ‘regimen’: old word for the system of government of an urban centre or a state. In this context, it refers to ‘democracy’, a form of government in which supreme power is vested in the people.
Chapter II: In Which it is Proved that Monarchical Rule is the Best and Most Convenient for the Government of the Republic

The task awaiting us in this second chapter is to prove that the form of government of the republic by a supreme prince, who recognizes no one superior to himself, or by a king, is the most fitting and convenient for the whole community of the republic. The truth of this may be proved by authority, reason and example.

First, it is proved by the authority of Aristotle, who wants all multitude and plurality to be reduced to unity or the smallest possible number. He argues this in the twelfth book of his *Metaphysics*: that amid such a great multitude of beings and things produced and created, it is possible to arrive at a first being or a first cause, which is like a general to his army. Just as there is a supreme chief in the army, by whose words and orders all things are commanded, so everything in the whole community of beings is governed by a first entity or a first cause, which we Christians call the one and true God. In his *Politics*, Aristotle says that the republic is better governed by one supreme prince or king than by many, because of the unity of the one responsible for the conservation of all things. Indeed, in any given kingdom or territory the king is like God in the universe, but in a particular way. In the universe there is one God, not many; thus, in the kingdom, too, there must be one king and supreme lord, governor and rector of the whole republic. Consequently, a republic that is governed by one supreme prince or king is better and more properly ruled than by many.

This can also be proved by reason, by deducing from the things that exist in the natural body. Just as we see that in the natural body there is only one heart that influences the other members, and this one is called king and prince (since there is only one in any natural body), so there must also be in the kingdom one king and supreme prince, by whose authority, sign and command all things are governed.

This is confirmed by yet another reason: the republic is not well governed by many of different habits, because they often disagree and do not come to one decision. On the contrary, there are as many opinions as there are heads; as many rulings as there are wills. Hence, if there were three or four supreme rulers in a kingdom, they would dissent from each other, and each would want their own opinion to prevail. This would lead to dissension, discord and schisms in the kingdom (which one hopes will not come to pass). It was well said by Cicero, whose words I recall, in the
book entitled *On Duties*: ‘There is no inviolable alliance, nor [good] faith in the kingdom. Indeed, where many desire to rule, such a great struggle often arises that it is very difficult to preserve this sacred bond.’\textsuperscript{13} Therefore, it is very convenient that the republic should be governed and directed by one, as king or supreme prince of the community.

This truth may also be proved by example. We read in the Holy Scriptures, in the first book of Kings, that the prophet Samuel anointed David king by the order of the Lord, to command all the people of Israel. And, in the third book of Kings, the priest Zadok anointed Solomon king.\textsuperscript{4} And Saul, who was the first king of the Jews, was anointed king by Samuel by God’s command, though he later transgressed against the law and commandments of the Lord. Behold how in all these examples the Lord did not want the Israelite people, who were close to Him and were favoured by Him, to be ruled by domineering plebs, as Democritus said that the republic should be, nor by the rich or the wise, as Socrates wished, but by a king who was the supreme lord, and recognized no secular lord superior to himself in the province or kingdom.

It should be noted, however, that while the republic is better governed by a king than by the power of many, or by popular acclamation, yet the king must have around him wise and learned men, sober military men and barons, upon whose counsel and authority he relies. He may promote them and make use of them to hear suits and requests, settle disputes, arbitrate, and refer to the royal majesty when necessary and in especially opportune cases, so that the king may know what is going on in the kingdom, and does not overlook that which requires his presence and cognizance. After all, the king, who has the universal care of the whole kingdom, cannot hear the cases and affairs of all, and settle, disentangle and resolve them [all].

We have an example in the Holy Scripture, in the book of Exodus, of how greatly Jethro rebuked Moses, his son-in-law, who from morning till night sat in judgement over the disputes of the children of Israel. Said Jethro to Moses: ‘You and these people who come to you [and who follow

\textsuperscript{3} Cicero (*De officiis*, I) expressed the view that a community (*societas*) could not last long without a set of bonds to hold it together. In order to be effective, such bonds had to have a connection with the influence (Roman) gods exerted on human beings. Cicero employs the term ‘sacred’ not just to evoke the godly component of these virtues, but also to underscore their importance in social life and politics.

\textsuperscript{4} In old bibles, such as the Vulgate, there were four ‘Books of Kings’. In modern bibles these are denominated 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel and 1 Kings and 2 Kings.
you] will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. [. . .] But select capable men from all the people – men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain – and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, [. . .] and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. [. . .] Moses listened [. . .] and did everything he said. 

From this authoritative example, those who are selected to be judges, officials and governors should diligently think to possess the following four qualities from that example: first, to be powerful, which is to say, wise; second, to be fearful of God, that is, of the righteousness of God, and to have before their eyes the bounties of paradise which He bestows only on the good, and the punishments of hell with which the wicked are castigated; third, that within them resides the truth of righteousness, doctrine and good living; and fourth, to despise covetousness and to refuse gifts, because Deuteronomy states: ‘Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the innocent.’

From this it is evident how the republic is much better ruled by royal power, and that the royal dignity is most suitable for its government and regime.

Let us now speak of the condition of the royal dignity and the duties of the king, constituted in such great loftiness and royal majesty.

Chapter XI: Which Treats of the Laws and their Conditions, Which the King Must Impose upon the Subjects of his Kingdom

It pertains to the dignity and the judicial power of the king to impose laws on his subjects, so that they may live a peaceful life. Since the king has true power over his own [subjects], and is their true and supreme lord, it is licit for him to impose laws upon them. If men lived without them, they would be like beasts and brutes governed by no judgement of reason, but impelled only by pleasure. It was therefore necessary to impose and institute laws by which mankind should live honestly, give no offence to others and [whereby] each would be given his due. Thus, the whole purpose of the establishment of laws was to restrain human audacity and

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5 Exodus 18: 18–24.
6 Deuteronomy 16:19. Rebello’s text has ‘tips the scales of justice’ rather than ‘twists the words of the innocent’.
to limit the possibility of doing evil. This is the opinion of our Isidore [of Seville], in the fifth book of the *Etymologies*, when he states: ‘Laws have been made to restrain human boldness by fear, to protect innocence from the wicked, and, by keeping the latter in dread of punishment, to restrain their audacity and the ability to cause injury.’ Thus, anyone in the kingdom may impose laws. But two conditions must be satisfied for doing that: having power, like the king who has absolute and full power over his own [subjects] and is the supreme prince in the republic; and, second, knowing how to make [laws]. Hence it is necessary that kings and princes always have by their side learned and wise men, skilled in jurisprudence, to consult with on matters of conscience, and to establish honest laws and constitutions according to the form of government of their kingdom. The law which the royal majesty establishes in his kingdom must satisfy the following conditions, as Isidore would have it: to be honest, just and feasible, in conformity with nature, that is, with natural reason, according to the customs of the country, appropriate for the time and place, necessary, useful and clear, which is to say, transparent. It should be noted that once the law is established and made public, no one is allowed to pass judgement against it; and all the kingdom should treat it with great respect, and the judges should pass judgement in accordance with it. The king should see which of the laws, customs and tributes he has instituted, or which have been imposed on the people by his predecessors, cause great harm to the latter, and are seen as vexatious and accepted out of fear. Such laws, regulations or taxes, imposed on the people by his predecessors, [the king] must destroy and annihilate. The king being the father of the country, and of those who dwell therein, he should not impose great burdens upon them, but relieve them, care for them and nourish them, so that they may be ready with their soul and heart to swiftly take up arms, and always be inclined to render him every kind of assistance and service.

It should also be noted that kings and emperors should not enact laws against the divine law. Laws must comply with, or at least not be contrary to, this law. That is why Saint Augustine writes to Boniface: ‘He is greatly rewarded who refuses to obey the laws of the emperors which are made against the will of God’, and gives as an example the sacrilegious law enacted by King Nebuchadnezzar: ‘As soon as you hear the sound of

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7 Isidore of Seville (c.560–636), *Etymologiae*. Rebelo is mistaken: the quotation is from bk. 2, ch. 10, para. 5.
the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.’ A great reward was obtained by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who refused to obey.8

Thus, a wicked law does not deserve the name of law. This is the opinion of Saint Augustine in the book On Free Choice of the Will, where he states that what is not just does not have the semblance of law.9 And the prophet Isaiah in the fifth chapter writes, ‘Woe to those who enact wicked laws!’10

It should be noted that although the king, being the supreme lord of all his kingdom, is not obliged to live by, nor adhere to, his laws, yet it is right and fitting that he should comply, according to this opinion of Saint Isidore: ‘It is just [for the king] to obey his laws. For when he himself shows respect for his laws, they will be deemed worthy to be upheld by all.’11 And the Sage in his precepts says, ‘Suffer the law which thou hast made.’12 And in the canon it is written: ‘Each one must himself use the law which he has established for others.’13 This is confirmed by the example of our Saviour, who was not bound by the law He had imposed on the Jewish people, but still wanted to abide by it, as He said in His own testimony: ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them.’14

It should also be noted that kings cannot impose laws on the bishops and priests of their kingdom. They belong to another law and jurisdiction. In fact, there are two jurisdictions that are distinguished as the secular and the ecclesiastical, and which are called two stars: the minor star and the major star. Thus, Pope Gelasius, writing to Emperor Anastasius, says: ‘There are two powers by which this world is ruled, august emperor: the sacred authority of the pontiffs and the authority of kings.’15 And, as Pope Nicholas says, and is also stated in the canon [law], these two powers should be held in such a way that the emperor or king must not usurp the rights of the pontiff, nor he the rights of the king.16

8 Saint Augustine (354–430), theologian, philosopher and bishop of Hippo: Letter 185, ch. 8, para. 2; Daniel 3:5–6.
9 Saint Augustine, De libero arbitrio, bk. 1, ch. 5.
10 Rebeio is mistaken: the quotation is from Isaiah 10:1.
11 Isidore, Sententiae, bk. 3, ch. 51.1. 12 This is an adage of Roman law.
13 Digest, bk. 2, tit. 2. 14 Matthew 5:17. 15 Pope Gelasius (d. 496), Letter 12.
16 Pope Nicholas I (d. 867); Decretum Gratiani (twelfth-century collection of canon law), 96.
I say, in conclusion of this matter, that there being equality between these two estates, the secular and the ecclesiastical, yet kings need the pontiffs to attain eternal life, and the pontiffs require the succour and assistance of kings for temporal things.

1.2. João de Barros, *Panegírico de Dom João III*  
[Panegyric to João III] (1533)

The humanist, courtier and crown official João de Barros (c.1496–1570) proclaimed this panegyric to João III most likely in 1533. Employing ancient Roman models of this literary genre (in particular Pliny the Younger’s ‘Panegyric in Praise of Trajan’), and drawing on his vast knowledge of ancient culture, Barros underscores the qualities of the Portuguese monarch and portrays him as an ideal Renaissance prince. João de Barros is also the author of text 1.5.


There is no worldly triumph nor victory that can compare with the bounty of a true peace. Therefore, those Christian kings who fight and make war on one another go against the peace which Our Lord has so much enjoined on His disciples, and in His name on the whole Catholic Church. When they seek to avenge their passions at the cost of the blood of their vassals, they rend in pieces the robe of Christ, in which there is no seam nor join. Let Your Highness, on the other hand, remain steadfast, as you are, in your most holy intentions of waging war on the infidels and Moors of Africa, and, moved by the most holy zeal, of converting Ethiopia¹⁷ and Arabia, Persia and India, to the true faith of Christ.

[...]

It is the general opinion of all that the Portuguese nation is the most powerful and stalwart of all Spain [Iberia].

¹⁷ The ‘Moors’ were north African Muslims of mixed Berber and Arab ethnicity. In the early modern period the term ‘Ethiopia’ sometimes referred specifically to the kingdom roughly coterminous with the modern country in the Horn of Africa; at other times to unspecified areas of sub-Saharan Africa.
In the first days, with many differences of state, it was inevitable that factions and civil wars should arise. In more recent times, the divisions have been few and if there were any they were soon eradicated. So it is clear how much more prosperous is the present state than that of former times, which was already notorious during the reign of the most victorious King Manuel,¹⁸ your father of blessed memory, and now in the time of Your Highness, whose glorious reign brings so much admiration, honour and credit to Portugal, so greatly does the glory of its government and conquests exceed the fame and memory of your ancestors.

Which prince—and I do not mean of Portugal, but of Europe—has triumphed over Ethiopia, Arabia, the Persians and the Indians, discovered so many seas, so many islands, has given so many unknown lands to the world? Which prince has converted to the Faith of Christ so many provinces, so many multitudes of souls, whose rapture cannot be disentangled from its cause [conversion]? Which prince has with his victories and armed triumphs girdled the Ocean Sea [the oceans beyond the Mediterranean and Black Seas], surpassed the bounds and limits of general navigation, achieved such great fame in the furthest part of the Orient, has been so feared by powerful kings and distant lords, at long last brought into contact with Christians and the nations of our Occident?

Such glory was undoubtedly intended and reserved for the most victorious King Manuel and for Your Highness. Both of you have worn it well, and have exerted yourselves, and proved capable of making headway [in the said conquests], for which it is well that the father and the son share in the same glory. The kings—your ancestors—were very rightly praised for the victories that were won within this kingdom. Your Highness, besides keeping his own people in great peace and justice, continually sends by sea and land armies and great naval armadas against the infidel, always seeking new triumphs and victories. Thus, peace is tempered by war, so that neither do your kingdoms lack the bounty of peace, nor is the strength and valour of the people lost by lack of exercise of arms.

Always and very justly chief praise has been given to those who ordained things belonging to God and his true religion. After them were lauded those who founded Republics, and were able to conserve them with much peace. These in turn are followed by the kings and

¹⁸ Manuel I (1469–1521), king of Portugal from 1495.
princes, who with arms and armies increase their estate. The fourth place is assigned to the lettrados [graduates in law], and then each is honoured according to their rank. And if each of these estates merits so much in its own right, how much honour is due to the good prince, who can lay claim to the main part of so many and such a quantity of goods?

[...]

Who could express the generosity of Your Highness in endowing the hospitals, monasteries and churches of your kingdoms, many of them magnificently built, others adorned with sumptuous altarpieces and ornaments, and generally always giving alms to all, including many outside of your kingdom?

What shall I say about your continual care for the reformation of the [religious] Orders, the veneration of divine worship, and the preservation of the Christian faith? Always seeking new means, so that no thing that touches your conscience may offend the will of God. Your true devotion is manifest to the world, a clear and good example, which you make of yourself in this, as in all the other virtues. How much these three parts befit a prince: justice, love of peace and religion! How well they combine and reinforce one another!

Surely no better or more beautiful thing can be painted for the eyes than the true faith and love of God varnished with peace [...].

1.3. Damião de Góis, *De rebus et imperio lusitanorum ad Paulum Iovium disceptatiuncula* [Brief Reply to Paolo Giovio on the Affairs of Portugal and its Empire] (1539)

The cosmopolitan and well-travelled Damião de Góis (1502–74) was a humanist philosopher who served at the Portuguese trading post in Antwerp. Góis corresponded with prominent learned men of his time, and *De rebus et imperio lusitanorum* was written in this context. In a letter to the Italian humanist Pietro Bembo, Góis responds to attacks made by Paolo Giovio on the Portuguese overseas conquests.19 In addition to rejecting Giovio’s claim that the main motivation of the

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Portuguese king was material profit, Góis underscores Portugal’s deeds and sacrifices in spreading the Catholic faith.

This text was translated from a modern Portuguese version: Damião de Góis, *Opúsculos históricos*, trans. Dias de Carvalho (Porto: Civilização, 1945).

Most learned Bembo, every day in Africa and Asia the Portuguese perform so many great deeds in defence of our holy Catholic faith that if Paulo Jóvio [Paolo Giovio] – undoubtedly an erudite man, a native of Como – had known about them he would never have had printed what he wrote during his embassy to Moscow, misled by information from a certain Paulo Centurião [Paolo Centurioni], citizen of Genoa. The above-mentioned Paulo expresses his indignation at our people [the Portuguese], accusing us of barring the way to India to other nations with our expeditions, and trading the spices we brought from there in Lisbon, selling spoiled goods at vast profit and keeping the unspoiled [for ourselves].

This Paulo’s words do not deserve credit.

It is true that every year all the spices that come from India are retailed among the merchants, and that they never exceed what is consumed in Europe, except for pepper, which can be kept for a long time without spoiling. I believe that this Genoese Paulo does not speak in defence of the public good, but of his own interests; because [other] nations value our sea voyages more for their material advantages than for the expansion of our faith.

It is no shame to admit that we are also seeking profit and riches, without which all of Europe would not have been sufficient to compensate us for the enormous and regular outlay. But we deserve praise for not ploughing the seas, as many peoples of Italy, Spain and France have formerly done, and continue to do today, as unarmed merchants seeking only spices: but with armies and navies, well equipped against the enemy, not so much for the expansion of our empire as for the expansion of our beliefs. It should be noted that not all the [overseas] voyages are profitable for us, because, fighting for the sake of the faith, we have often suffered great losses in both men and goods, as has been the case in Mauritania and along the Atlantic coast, to overcome and subdue those infidels who once ruled Lusitania [Portugal] – fighting for many years, with few people and scarce means.
We later defeated the Castilians, with their allies and the Gauls [French], in a single battle near Santarém [1147], and, having expelled them from the kingdom, we then set out to conquer Ceuta, the famous city built on the Pillars of Hercules [Straits of Gibraltar]. After subjugating, in great campaigns, the kings of Fez and the Hespalides, we took Tangier, Arzila, Alcácer, Tétouan, Safi, Castelo-Real and Azamor, Ticio and Mazagan, the patrimony of these kings, and other cities that were destroyed. From all these feats of arms our kings derived no benefit, but rather incurred enormous expenses and suffered the loss of many nobles, buried over there in perpetuity.

It is a pity that this very learned Jóvio had not considered all this, as well as the actions of our people in Ethiopia, where, through our efforts, the mighty king of Congo has converted to our holy faith along with all his kingdom, which is 3000 miles long, and 2000 wide, and every day adheres more closely to it. It’s a pity, too, that he is ignorant of how we may [now] preach the religion of Christ in all the kingdoms of Guinea and along the coast of Africa – which are so many – almost to the Mountains of the Moon [the region of the source of the Nile], and in the kingdoms of Sofala, Benamataxe, Mozambique, Quiloa, Mombasa and Malindi [modern coast of East Africa], and many more on the vast southern coast of Brazil, where we have now established many colonies. Many of these kingdoms have been converted to the truths of religion by our missionaries alone. And also with our armies and navies – at great expense – we were able to bring to the Roman court [Holy See], to salvation, the ambassadors of the mighty Prester John, emperor of Ethiopia, who brought messages from their prince to the Sovereign Pontiff, as well as offering the obedience of his subjects to the Catholic Church. This fact is so extraordinary in itself that, if we were true followers of Christ, it should be received with great joy and not with contention and hatred. And we have not yet mentioned our many raids from the Red Sea to Suez, devastating the Muslim coastal cities and destroying the mosques – which cannot be done without great expenditure and losses, with scarcely any material gain.

In addition, we made into tributaries the kingdoms of Aden and Fartak, subjugating to our dominion almost all the Persian Gulf, where are to be found the kingdom and the islands of Hormuz, already legitimate property of the kings of Portugal.

20 The modern location is unknown. 21 See Part I, note 17 above.
Furthermore, around that time we subdued the kingdom of Cambay [Gujarat] and occupied the fortified city of Diu, where Viceroy Francisco de Almeida defeated a large armada of the Sultan of Babylon, and took the city, although it was defended by many Christian soldiers, among others, 300 ships – which they call *atalaias* – belonging to the king of Cambay, and forty sent by the king of Calicut [Kozhikode], which they call *paraus*. Many of these ships were captured and others sunk, with great losses to the infidels.

I must also not forget the Deccan, Chaul, Dabul, Banda and the island of Goa, which already obeys the Law of Christ.

Finally, we are obeyed by the kings of Narsinga, Honavar, Baticala, Otisa, Delhi, Cannanore, Calequi [Kayamkulam], Calicut, Cochin, Kollam and the Ceylon Islands, and, beyond the Ganges, by the rulers of Bengal, Pegu [Bago], Siam and the great island of Malacca, which Governor Afonso de Albuquerque – to whom we also owe the emporia of Goa and Hormuz – subjugated to our dominion, and which belonged to Sumatra, with Java Major and Minor, and the islands of Banda, the Moluccas and Borneo; we have carried our faith as far as China and the Lequios [Ryukyu Islands] – peoples scarcely known until then. All of these, and many more that I omit are, thanks to our zeal, and the great labours and losses that we have sustained, serfs, tributaries, allies, or friends of our king, and, because of us, the Law of Christ is known to all from the Pillars of Hercules to China and the Lequios, it is spoken about everywhere, even in public places, and shrines and temples are dedicated to the glory of the Christian religion. Truly it may be said that ‘their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world’ [Psalm 19], and it is justly hoped that the faith of Christ will be carried to the most remote wilderness, with God’s grace and through the perseverance of our missions.

Having all this in mind, and the obligation that weighs upon our king to regularly provision his navigations to India, keeping an army of nearly 20,000 men at his expense, without any help, in Mauritania, India, and throughout his empire; a fleet of 300 sails of all kinds, never idle, but rather continuously employed in expeditions; large extraordinary expenses for unforeseen wars wherever it is necessary to defend borders, protect allies, extend their conquests – what pious Christian has the right to offend us with his malevolent remarks, to condemn a profit so necessary to compensate for such [great] expenditures? The truth is that we should not be the object of envy, but everyone should assist us in such
a great enterprise, buying our spices for the best price – which we always sell cheaper than other nations used to do – and with that money we may exterminate the race of the unbelievers from the earth and preach the Holy Law in peace, while the other Christian princes, oblivious of their duties, fight one another.

If the honourable Paulo Jóvio were acquainted with all these facts, he would not speak of the greed of our people, nor accuse us of selling spoiled spices as good. In fact, by royal decree, and with the approval of the whole kingdom, they are incinerated, as I have always seen done in Lisbon when I served as Moço de Cámara [Chamberlain] of the prudent King Manuel. If abuses do sometimes occur, this is the responsibility solely of the merchants, the speculators and the pedlars, who value only profit.

If Jóvio had seen this [all that is related here], he would certainly not have besmirched our reputation, but would undoubtedly have celebrated it with his great eloquence.

I have opportunely added this commentary to the ‘Siege of Diu’ [published 1539], where I narrate the illustrious deeds of our [fellow] Portuguese so that, due to your great influence, your favour and recommendations, this memorandum, by virtue of your authority, will be trusted by all.

Greetings.

1.4. Luís de Camões, Os Lusíadas [The Lusíads] (1572)

Written by Luís Vaz de Camões (c.1524/5–80) and first published in 1572, Os Lusíadas is an epic poem widely regarded as the most important work of Portuguese literature and is frequently compared to Virgil’s Aeneid. It celebrates the discovery of a sea route to India by the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama (1469–1524), but also includes critical remarks about the impact of overseas expansion on Portuguese society.

The text below, including annotations, but without the translator’s italics, is reproduced from Luís Vaz de Camões, The Lusiads, trans. Landeg White (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 139–41. A modern Portuguese edition is

**Canto VII, stanzas 1–14**

1. At long last, they were nearing the land
   So many others before had longed for,
   Spread out between the River Indus
   And the Ganges which rises in Eden.
   Courage, heroes! You have aspired
   So long to bear the victor’s palm,
   You have arrived! The land of your pleasure
   Extends before you, with all its treasure!

2. To you, heirs of Lusus, I have this to say:
   Your share of the earth is a small one,
   And small, too, your portion of Christ’s Fold,²² shepherded from Heaven;
   You, whom no forms of danger
   Prevented from conquering the infidel,
   Nor greed, nor reluctance in sacrifice
   To the Holy Mother of God in paradise;

3. You, Portuguese, as few as you are valiant,
   Make light of your slender forces;
   Through martyrdom, in its manifold forms,
   You spread the message of eternal life;
   Heaven has made it your destiny
   To do many and mighty deeds
   For Christendom, despite being few and weak,
   For thus, O Christ, do you exalt the meek!

4. Consider the Germans,²³ haughty stock
   Who graze on such rich meadows,
   In revolt against Peter’s successor²⁴
   Devising a new pastor, a new creed;
   Look at the hideous wars they wage

²² ‘Christ’s Fold’ is the Catholic Church. *The Lusiads* was composed when the Reformation was splitting Christendom.
²³ ‘Consider the Germans’: Luther’s home and the heart of the Reformation, in revolt against Emperor Charles V.
²⁴ ‘Peter’s successor’: the pope.
(As if blind error were not enough!),
And not against the overbearing Turk
But against the Emperor in his holy work.

5
Look at that rough Englishman,²⁵ self-styled
King of the ancient, most Holy City,
Where the Muslims are now in control
(What title was ever so fraudulent?),
Disporting amid his northern snows
With a new brand of the faith, as against
Christ’s people he directs his stratagem
Instead of winning back Jerusalem.

6
While an infidel monarch occupies
The earthly city of Jerusalem,
He violates the most sacred law
Of the Jerusalem in the heavens.
And what of you, unworthy Gaul?²⁶
You took the name ‘most Christian’
Not to defend and cherish and enjoy it
But to rise up against and destroy it!

7
You lay claim to other Christian lands
As if your own were not enough,
So why not to Barbary and Egypt
Historic enemies of the sacred name?
The sword’s razor edge should be tested
On whoever rejects earth’s corner-stone.
Are you Charles’s heir? and Louis’s? You degrade
Their name and land, denying their crusade?²⁷

²⁵ ‘rough Englishman’: Henry VIII (1509–47), attacking the English Reformation, and his claim to the title ‘King of Jerusalem’, then under Turkish control. It has been urged that this stanza must have been composed before Henry’s death. But in this survey of Christendom’s divisions, the English break with Rome comes appropriately after Germany’s revolt.

²⁶ ‘unworthy Gaul’: Francis I of France, also d. 1547, criticizing his claims to Naples and Navarre, and his alliance with Suleiman II of Turkey against Charles V. Charles and Louis are Charlemagne and Louis IX (Saint Louis).

²⁷ Camões [sic] in fact argues that Francis I inherited from Charlemagne and Louis IX the ‘most Christian name’ and the ‘claim to the Christian lands’, but that the conflicts in which he embroiled France did not fulfil the criteria of ‘just war’. A literal translation would be: ‘From Charles, from Louis, the name and the land / You inherited, but not the causes of the just war?’
And what of those who, in luxury
And the indolence which partners it,
Waste their lives pursuing wealth,
Forgetful of their ancestors’ valour?
Then tyranny gives birth to feuding
As a brave people turns against itself.
It is you I have in mind, Italy,
Enslaved by vice, your own worst enemy!

Wretched Christians! Are you sprung
From the dragon’s teeth sowed by Cadmus,28
That you deal murder one to the other
When all are sprung from the same womb?
Do you not see the Holy Sepulchre
Occupied by dogs who now encroach
With one accord against your own terrain,
Their credit soaring with each new campaign?

You see how, by practice and requirement
Which they follow to the last degree,
They keep their restless army united
By fighting the followers of Christ.
But with you, the Furies never cease
Sowing the hateful tares of discord.
What safety lies in such a stratagem
– To have two enemies, yourselves and them?

If it is greed for vast dominions
Sends you conquering lands not your own,
Have you forgotten the Pactolus and Hermus
With their gold-bearing sands?
In Lydia,29 they weave with threads of gold;
Africa buries it in shining seams;
Perhaps dreams of such riches will spur you
If the Holy Sepulchre cannot stir you.

These dreadful new inventions, guns
And instruments of artillery,
Why not deploy them in action against

28 ‘dragon’s teeth’: Cadmus, after slaying the dragon which killed his companions, took Minerva’s advice and sowed the dragon’s teeth, which sprang up as armed men and fought each until five survivors helped him build Thebes.

29 ‘Lydia’: home of King Croesus, containing the gold-bearing rivers Pactolus and Hermus.
The strongholds of Byzantium and Turkey?
Drive the Turkish multitudes back
To the caves of the Caspian mountains
And cold Scythia, before they conjure up
Any more troubles for wealthy Europe.

13 Greeks, Thracians, Armenians, Georgians,\textsuperscript{30}
Cry out to you the brutal people
Are levying children, dragooning them
Into the teachings of the Koran.
In punishing such vile acts,
You would be praised for courage and vision
Far greater than the arrogant renown
Of victories secured against your own.

14 But while in your blind, insane frenzy
You thirst for your brothers’ blood in Christ,
There will be no lack of Christian daring
In this little house of Portugal.
In Africa, they have coastal bases;
In Asia, no one disputes their power;
The New World already feels their ploughshare,
And if fresh worlds are found, they will be there.

\textsuperscript{30} ‘Greeks . . .’: after capturing Constantinople (Byzantium) in 1453, Turkey occupied Athens and much of the Balkans.