

## **Critical Review**

**Valladares, Rafael (2010). *The conquest of Lisbon – military violence and political community in Portugal, 1578-1583*. Lisboa: Texto Editores, 332 pp (ISBN 978-972-47-4111-6)**

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In this essay, Rafael Valladares, a researcher at *Instituto de Historia del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC)*, analyses how, following the battle of Alcácer-Quibir, Philip II prepared and accomplished the "Spanish-Portuguese dynastic union" by simultaneously playing the political-diplomatic and the legal games, despite never disregarding the use of military strength.

The command of the military force of 18.000 men was given to the Duke of Alba, and, according to the author, the occupation campaign caused thousands of dead and wounded. When referring to his three-year campaign (1580-1583) and the subsequent annexation of Portugal, Philip II admitted: "I inherited it, I acquired it, and I conquered it".

Romero de Magalhães, quoted in Valladares, writes about Portugal's erasure of that war from its memory: "The remembrance of the violent occupation of the Kingdom (...) was forgotten or attenuated." Valladares generalizes on this topic, stating: "Any society punished by military violence tends to omit, therefore, cross out, any reference to past suffering", refusing to narrate that period of history and denying it.

One of the sources Valladares quotes recurrently is the controversial *Historia dell'unione del Regno di Portogallo alla Corona de Castiglia*, by Girolamo Franchi Connestagio. The book was published in Genoa for the first time in 1585, and, at the time, was successively translated into several European languages, becoming, as the author puts it, a "sort of bible for the 1580 events".

Connestagio's book, frequently perceived as too favourable to the Habsburgs or the "Austrias", has, to date, never been translated into Portuguese or published in Portugal. Another inevitable source Valladares uses is the *Historia de Felipe II, Rey de España*, by Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, which was published in Madrid in 1619.



However, Valladares' research extended to *Archivo General de Simancas* (Spain's National Archive), the *Casa de Alba* Foundation, the historical archives of Spain's Ministry for External Affairs, the Collection of Original Documents for the History of Spain, *Archivium Romanum Societatis Iesus*, the Vatican Apostolic Library, and, in Lisbon, to the National Library (*Biblioteca Nacional*) and Ajuda Library.

This new contact with the collections of documents kept in these institutions, as well as the crossing of information found there with existing literature on "Habsburg Portugal" confer Valladares' research a deeper and more comprehensive stance on Philip II's campaign, the nature of the resistances he met, and the way he overcame them

The assault on Lisbon and the battle of Alcântara, the feeling of being orphan, the abandon on the part of several social bodies, Philip II's belief that the crumbling of the political community would result in the Portuguese "killing each other", and the slow resurgence of an opposition, particularly popular in nature, to the Philippine occupation, gain a new dimension in Valladares' essay, who is attentive to the slow rebuilding of a community identity in the occupied country.

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