

Portugal's Mission in Relation to the Mission of the West



Contents

The Forging of a National Identity	3
Northern Spain, the Grail Impulse and the Camino to Santiago	4
The Spiritual Foundations of the Kingdom of Portugal	10
And the Political Foundations	13
Gualdim Pais	15
Tomar and Portugal's Beginnings	17
The Cosmopolitan Nature of Early Portugal	19
King Denis, Queen Isabela and the Rebirth of the Templars	21
Henry the Navigator and the Transition to the Consciousness Soul Epoch	23
The Meeting of Various Streams	33
The Convergence between Portugal and Scotland	35
King Manuel I	42
Vasco de Gama	44
King John III and the Demise of the Order of Christ	46
The End of the Portuguese Templar Impulse	48
From Portugal to Holland and England	51

"There is no satisfactory answer today as to why all the remaining 'states' of the peninsula (Castile, Aragon, Navarre,...) have, over time, united into the 'federation of Spain', and Portugal has remained outside. You only have to look at the map to realize the mystery."¹

Paulo Alexandre Louçao

"What the present can gain by a spiritual interpretation of history, this is what we wish to show: for no other reason would we be engaged in research into the history of the Grail."²

Walter Johannes Stein

Little has been done in anthroposophical terms in exploring Portuguese history and the mission of Portugal, other than briefly, though quite effectively, by W. J. Stein, whose research plays an important role in this essay. This exploration has been accompanied by a deep cultural immersion into Portuguese culture through two eight-day visits to the areas between Lisbon and Coimbra on one hand, and northern Portugal on the other, visiting practically all sites mentioned in this work.

The founding of Portugal is an inspiring story of a spiritual impulse made reality at a national level. It was also a crucial step in the forming of the mission of the Anglo-Saxon West. Not surprisingly its founding was ushered in by the Templar Order, whose extensive presence in the continent revolutionized European economy.

The Forging of a National Identity

Northern Portugal formed an intimate cultural continuum with the kingdom of Galicia with which it was united at various times previous to its independence, and a political continuum with the rest of Spain, from which it had to wrest itself at different times of its history.

By 848 AD Porto expanded into Portugale, the territory enclosed between Douro and Minho rivers. Then followed a time in which it was incorporated into the realm of Galicia, freeing itself from it for a time. Subsequently the realm entered under the sphere of influence of Alfonso VI, who was fighting for the reconquest of Spain from the Moors.

Other influences were at play, bringing northern Spain and Portugal in contact with northern Europe. For good or for ill the Normans were the first to chart the sea routes of the European Atlantic coastline, helping to avoid the dangers of northern France, especially Brittany. For a time Portugal was

¹ Paulo Alexandre Louçao, *Os Templários na formação do Portugal*, 100, author's translation.

² Walter Johannes Stein, *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, 192.

plundered by their expeditions. The first record is that of the year 844, when the Normans ran up the Tagus and attacked Lisbon. The same happened in 968. They descended further into the region between Douro and Minho Rivers. In 1014 they invaded the region south of the River Minho and went inland toward Braga. Though repelled they continued their incursions in the southern coast.³

In the eleventh century Portugal became a stop along the way for the Crusaders. This was a central time for the relationships between the Iberian Peninsula and the northern Europeans. Some of the Crusaders from the Scandinavian lands continued the tradition of pillage and plunder of the Normans even under cover of the Crusades. Such was the case with an expedition landing in Sintra and Lisbon of Crusaders coming from Norway under the command of Sigurd I in 1109. Something similar was repeated in 1153 in Galicia, and again in 1189 in Portugal.⁴ Already at the time some of the Crusaders settled in Portugal.

To the above theme were added the pilgrimages to Compostela, which started in the ninth century and further familiarized the northern Europeans with the Iberian peninsula. The cities of the future Hansa League were particularly devoted to the cult of Saint James, especially among the newly growing bourgeoisie and the mariners. Almost all Hanseatic cities had churches devoted to St. James (e.g., Lübeck, Rostock, Stralsund, Stettin, Danzig and Riga) and very often this was the most important one.

Northern Spain, the Grail Impulse and the Camino to Santiago

The Grail impulse took its departure with the deeds of Joseph of Arimathea soon after the completion of the Mystery of Golgotha. It was Joseph who collected Christ's blood into the cup Jesus had used at the Last Supper. It results from Judith von Halle's spiritual research that Joseph attempted on the physical plane what Christ had done on the spiritual plane: the multiplication that would render Christ's blood accessible to human beings on European soil.⁵

Various legends indicate that Arimathea was abandoned to a rudderless boat, certain to take him to his death. Instead it took him to the southern French coast after a journey of several weeks. His mission became that of carrying Christ's blood in such a way as to prepare European soil to become a vehicle for the Christ impulse.

Arimathea had the capacity to detect those places where the etheric geography was most receptive to receive Christ's blood, places where the Earth

³ A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *Hansa e Portugal na idade media*, 30-32.

⁴ *Ibid*, 35-39.

⁵ Judith von Halle, *Joseph d'Arimathe et le chemin du Saint-Graal: Les racines chrétiennes de l'Europe entre Éphèse et la Gaule*, 67.

was already more spiritualized. After doing this around Toulon and Narbonne in southern France, he proceeded to the Massif Central, then to the area of Dornach-Arlesheim. From there he continued to Glastonbury, the country of Wales, and to Ireland's west coast, his final destination.⁶ In no other place than Ireland did Joseph find a fuller understanding for his mission and for the cosmic aspect of the Christ being. From Ireland the Grail impulse returned eastward and southward through the Christianizing impulse of the Irish monks.⁷

We can ask: how did the Christ blood operate on human souls once it was spread, as if in homeopathic doses, at special sites of the European etheric landscape? After Joseph's work potentizing Christ's blood throughout France and northern Europe, the Archai/Spirits of personality started working on the body and blood of the human being toward the end of the fourth century. Thus an initial etherization of the blood started to take place at that time.⁸

From the physical layers of European geography the Christ impulse could ray out into the physical human body via the blood. Christ's blood had an effect on the human ego via its own blood in such a way as to dissolve the old impulses tying human beings to clans and tribes. The ego, working through the blood, could become a receptive vessel joining itself actively to the Christ impulse. This stirring of the etheric depths of Europe stimulated the movements of migration in Europe and the mixing of the races.

For a long time after the initial impulse the Grail withdrew in the spiritual world, until the high initiate Titurel, with the help of the spiritual world, was able to prepare a place for it on Earth in the legendary, but also historical, site of Montsalvasch. This happened in between the eighth and the ninth centuries and had its initial stages in northern Spain within a very unique context. At this time European Christianity had been cultivated in Mystery centers that had survived after the Mystery of Golgotha.

At the fall of the Roman Empire, Spain had been conquered by the Visigoths, who created an empire which had its center and seat in southern France. In time the Arabs penetrated the peninsula from the south, first crossing the Strait of Gibraltar in 711. Soon would all of Spain be conquered by the Moors, except a narrow swath of mountains to the north, spreading from northern Pyrenees to Galicia. The whole of Spain would then be gradually reconquered by the northern Spanish kingdoms but not until 1492 would this effort be completed. In northern Spain the Gothic Mysteries were partly imbued by the Arab wisdom, and traces of this appear outwardly

⁶ Judith von Halle, *Joseph d'Arimathie et le chemin du Saint-Graal*, 79.

⁷ Judith von Halle, *Joseph d'Arimathie et le chemin du Saint-Graal*, 80.

⁸ Judith von Halle, *Les Templiers*, tome II: *L'impulsion du Graal dans le rite d'initiation de l'Ordre des Templiers*, chapter "Joseph d'Arimathie et la transformation de l'entité humaine par le sang du Graal."

even in the retelling of the legends of the Grail in the Arab knowledge of astrology.

There were various castles of the Grail, but the very first ones were located in northern Spain, though hardly known to modern history, and for good reason. Though the Grail castle existed, it "could be entered only by those who had been endowed by divine powers with the necessary faculties." Rudolf Steiner goes on to say that access was rendered difficult because one "had to break through brambles in order to penetrate to the spiritual temple that enshrined the Holy Grail."⁹ The brambles referred to are not only physical. They point to the prevailing opposition of external culture, of the Arab civilization, outwardly a magnificent expression of wisdom but deeply impregnated by the materialistic impulses forerunner of modern, materialistic science.

To Ilona Schubert Rudolf Steiner gave very exact indications about the location of the first two castles in the mountain range called "Sierra de la Demanda," which quite appropriately means "Mountain Range of the Question." Modern day Santo Domingo de la Calzada is located at the eastern access to the Sierra. The first castle lay deeply in the interior of the Sierra, the second one may have been more accessible, close to present-day San Milan de Suso.¹⁰

For this essay it is of great value to follow the successive places that became Grail castles, all of them mentioned by Steiner to Ilona Schubert. The third castle was likely still in Spain in the proximity of San Juan de la Peña. From there the Grail moves east. Its next destination was the castle of Montségur, specially built for the purpose by the Cathars. It suffered complete destruction in 1244. Other Grail regions were in the upper Rhine, at Malsch, in the Odilienberg (Alsace) and on the Dornach hill. Finally, the Grail returned to Jerusalem at Mount Moriah, at the time in which the place served as initiation center for the Templar Knights.

In short, the Mysteries of the Grail were the Mysteries of the Bread and Blood of the Lord, the bread as the Christianized image of etheric astronomy which would revive the old astronomy, the blood standing for the Christianized revival of an esoteric medicine.¹¹

Parzival makes his way to the Sierra de la Demanda, traversing the world of the senses, the temperaments, the world of the elements, the planetary spheres at work in nature. He then faces the pillars of Jachin and Boaz, or pillars of strength and of wisdom, leading him beyond the abyss to the realm of the fixed stars, and then finally to the castle of the Grail itself. It

⁹ Rudolf Steiner, *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy*, lecture of April 16, 1921.

¹⁰ Quoted in Virginia Sease and Manfred Schmidt Brabant, *Paths of the Christian Mysteries: From Compostela to the New World*, 66.

¹¹ Rudolf Steiner, *Materialism and the Task of Anthroposophy*, lecture of April 16, 1921.

is a path fraught with encounters with elemental beings and adversary forces of many different kinds. It is accompanied by great loneliness and wandering through the wilderness, leading to the soul's purification.

The forces that oppose the Grail, those of Klingsor, attack what lives in the blood in the form of sexuality. Klingsor is the black magician, the one who consciously pursues evil, seeking union with that force which Steiner calls "Iblis," a feminine aspect of Lucifer. The Grail castle is opposed by the strongholds of Calot Bobot in Sicily and Terra de Labur in Calabria.¹² The attack on human sexuality is expressed in the wound that Amfortas carries in the groin. And sexuality in the individual is reflected in the blood in what expresses itself collectively as nationalism, the exacerbated dependence on blood ties.



Vézelay, Abbey of Saint Mary Magdalen, central portal of the nave

The esoteric events of the Grail are mirrored in external history with the rediscovery of the grave of Saint James—somewhere between 812 and 830—and the opening of the pilgrimage path to Santiago de Compostela. Pilgrims started arriving from northern countries as early as 844. The Saint James thus discovered was the one considered the brother of the Lord, who bore an external similarity to the Lord's countenance, the one in which the pilgrims sought the image of the Lord.

It is challenging for a modern human being to picture what was required of a pilgrim along the Camino. It was first of all a great time commitment

¹² Rudolf Steiner, *The Mysteries of the East and of Christianity*, lecture 4 of 7 February 1913.

away from the moral compass of social mores, religious life, family ties, trades of the medieval life of cities or villages. All of a sudden the pilgrim became a sort of monk, a spiritual seeker, exposed to physical dangers of such a kind that scores of pilgrims died on the Camino or even before reaching it.

Due to a different, and more immediate relationship to nature, the pilgrim experienced the landscapes as soul experiences; they were exposed to the life of desires and passions and submitted to great temptations. To a lesser degree, and in an incomplete way, they underwent some of the experiences of initiation of Parzival in reaching the Grail castle.

Two biblical figures guided the pilgrim along the way; on one hand, obviously St. James and on the other Mary Magdalene. In fact, in a sense, the path can be considered to begin in Sainte Madeleine of Vézelay, in the heart of France, where stood an abbey in honor of the one Christ calls “blessed beyond all women,” and even places above the Apostles. James led the pilgrim to the end of the path at Santiago de Compostela. Manfred Schmidt Brabant sees in Mary Magdalene, according to Rudolf Steiner’s indication the representative of humanity’s sentient soul, connecting the pilgrim with the path and the world, whereas St. James is the bearer of the intellectual soul, the one who led the spiritual quest within.¹³

The spiritual journey of the pilgrim could be called the “path of nature initiation,” given the then present capacity to experience each landscape as a different soul experience and challenge, not just as something external to the soul as it would mostly be at present. The stages of this initiation have been described by Rudolf Steiner.¹⁴

The first two steps are inward and precede the Camino itself, but are its very prerequisites as pointed out earlier. In removing oneself from a familiar cultural environment, the pilgrim experienced first the world of the senses and of the personal temperament. Ideally starting from Vézelay, the world of the elements—air, earth, fire and water in this order alternating through the landscapes from Vézelay to Compostela—became an ordeal of the soul.¹⁵ The aspiring candidates were entrusted to the goddess Natura. Together with the elements were experienced the four realms of elemental beings. The staff of the pilgrim was that instrument through which the pilgrim established his connection with etheric geography and the symbol of the scallop (in French, “Coquille Saint Jacques”)—where the pearl can grow from the grain of sand—pointed to the goal of the Grail.

The planetary spheres were experienced comingled with the elemental realm because their influences are felt in the different landscapes.

¹³ Virginia Sease and Manfred Schmidt Brabant, *Paths of the Christian Mysteries*, 88.

¹⁴ Rudolf Steiner, *How Can Mankind Find the Christ again?*, lecture of December 29, 1918.

¹⁵ Virginia Sease and Manfred Schmidt Brabant, *Paths of the Christian Mysteries*, 96.

Examples of these are Jupiter and Venus in the air element, Mars in the element of fire, Moon in water, etc.. When the Camino was carried beyond Santiago de Compostela to Finisterre (latin for "end of the Earth") the pilgrim passed through the pillars of Jachin and Boaz to the soul abyss, opening to the ocean of the fixed stars.

Beyond these steps the more enterprising pilgrims were told in Compostela where to find the Grail, particularly in the two early centuries of the pilgrimage. The last step consisted therefore in taking up the Christ in the human ego. The path becomes thus the gateway to the cosmic Christ.

As mentioned above the Camino started in the eighth and ninth centuries, when Christian Mystery culture was still alive. The tympanum of Vézelay was built around 1135, the great portico de la Gloria of Compostela in 1188. Grail literature followed in between 1200 and 1400. However, already from the eleventh century Roman Christianity actively undermined the spiritual independence of Compostela, whose teachers called themselves "bishops of the Apostolic See" and "prelates of the whole world." Such a designation could hardly be tolerated by the Holy See, especially by Pope Innocent III, who had eradicated the Cathar movement and actively blotted out all remnants of the old Mysteries. By the fourteenth century the pilgrimage had entered a phase of complete decadence.



Compostela's Portico de la Gloria in a painting by Jenaro Pérez Villaamil

One of the last figures to preserve a “living Mystery-related Christianity” was Peter of Compostela.¹⁶ This is most likely the one known to history as Bishop Petrus of Compostela (985-1002), who still spoke of the goddess Natura as the handmaid of Christ and preserved in writing knowledge of the nature initiation path. These teachings then evolved into the rising Platonic School of Chartres, whose culture rayed out throughout all of Europe. The impulse was continued by the Cistercians and the Templars in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. What had come to an end in Spain would then find a continuation in a new form in the rising nation of Portugal in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.

Another, later impulse created a link with the spirituality of the Camino. It is known that Saint James became the patron of the alchemists, and these early scientists did work which they called the “Path to Compostela.” We will see one of them play a central role in bringing this art to a new stage, Basilius Valentinus, at the critical turning point of the age of the Consciousness Soul.

We have thus followed the original impulses that bound future Portugal to Spain, and most of all to Galicia, where a dialect close to Portuguese is spoken to this day. In spite of the common background between neighboring areas, the first stirrings for a separate Portuguese identity can be seen even in documents from as early as the ninth century, in the areas between the rivers Minho and Douro. In these the people of the emerging “Portugale” designate the Galicians as foreigners.¹⁷ These prophetic feelings were rendered a reality under the far-sighted plans of the House of Burgundy and of Saint Bernard, through the orders of the Templars and the Cistercians. It is interesting to note that Rudolf Steiner did not hesitate to qualify Bernard as one of the most important cultural figures of the twelfth century.¹⁸

The Spiritual Foundations of the Kingdom of Portugal ...

Through Alfonso VI’s marriage to Constance of Burgundy, the realm of Portugale passed under the rulership of Count Henry of Burgundy (1066–1112). Henry took to his task with keen interest in the local uses and traditions, learning the language, changing his name to Count Dom Henrique and settling at Guimarães, a place of pilgrimage. Dom Henrique fought in the Crusades and returned to Portugale in 1099, bringing back various relics from the Holy Land to the city of Braga. He later briefly returned to Palestine in 1103 and died in the defense of the city of Astorga from Alfonso I, King of Aragon and Navarre, at the age of forty-six.

¹⁶ Rudolf Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, volume 3, lecture of 13 July 1924.

¹⁷ Paulo Alexandre Louçao, *Os Templários na formação do Portugal*, 100.

¹⁸ “St. Bernard, perhaps the most outstanding personality of the twelfth century, and indeed of the age with which the fourth Post-Atlantean epoch of civilisation came to an end, manifested a structure of soul which after the fifteenth century was no longer possible in Europe.” (from *History and Repeated Earth-Lives*, lecture of 16 July, 1918)

The Order of the Temple, though only in its primordial stages, already had a working relationship with Dom Henrique before his death in 1114. They had received land around the Castle of Souré (Central Portugal) in 1111. This was done to reward them for their help against the Moors. At the time the town marked the southern border between Portuguese and Moor armies and was traded back and forth at various times. The gift of land is underlined by Afonso Henrique's telling words "I make this donation ... because within your Brotherhood and in all your works I am a Brother."¹⁹ It is all the more interesting since it happened seven years before the founding of the order, even seventeen before their official recognition by the Pope. Henrique also offered them a house in the city of Braga, situated near to a hospital, later also added to the Templar holdings.²⁰ To all practical purposes Braga became the first Templar operational center.

Hugues de Payens, founder of the Order of the Temple, was a noble Burgundian himself, and so was Godefroy de Bouillon, first ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Add to this that de Payens was the uncle of Bernard de Clairvaux. Dom Henrique met Hugues de Payens in Jerusalem, a few years after being stationed there. Another key figure coming to meet the other two was Arnaldo de la Rocha, the prior of the Order of Sion, very closely allied to the Templars.

Dom Henrique was succeeded by his son Afonso Henriques, who worked at creating the independent Portuguese kingdom, taking advantage of the woes of Castilla and Leon after the death of its monarch. Afonso's main mentor was Paio Mendes, Archbishop of Braga. The high prelate had rendered possible the acquisition of property by the Knights Hospitaller first, which he then transferred to the Knights Templar during Dom Henrique's reign.²¹ Afonso Henriques himself was invested as a knight and, according to various accounts, took both "the order of knighthood" and "the order of the militia."²² He could therefore have been a knight Templar. And this would be in line with the fact that the Order of the Temple contributed in raising an army for Afonso. Interestingly, tradition assigns the baptism of Dom Afonso Henriques to the Chapel of St Michael of Guimarães. Afonso himself considered St Michael his protecting Archangel.²³

The Templar Grand Master, Hugues de Payens, had sent four knights to Portugal "with power to establish the Portuguese crown": the four Procurators were Dom Guilherme Ricardo (a relative of Bernard), Dom Hugo

¹⁹ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation: How Eleven Knights Created a New Country and a Refuge for the Grail*, 137.

²⁰ Ibid, 57, 59.

²¹ Ibid, 78, 102.

²² Ibid, 82.

²³ This is probably historically unlikely. The reference to the St. Michael chapel seems to have mostly symbolic meaning.

Martiniense, Dom Pedro Arnaldo de la Rocha and Dom Gualdim Pais.²⁴ The first three, were of Burgundian origin.

A number of events took place shortly after. At the instigation of Bernard de Clairvaux a Cistercian monastery was built in the isolated valley of Tarouca. The abbey of São João de Tarouca was the typical Cistercian holding that required land reclamation. Another deed, signed sometime before 1128, shows the Templars were granted substantial land holdings in the proximity of both Braga and Gudemare.²⁵ The Templars built their first convent at Fonte Arcada, situated only 33 miles (53 km) west of Tarouca, the first of the Cistercian monasteries.

In 1126 Dom Guilherme Ricard was named first Master of the Knights Templar in Portugal. In essence the Templars were completely established in Portugal three years before they were officially recognized. The other knightly orders of the Hospitallers and the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher had been present in Portugal since 1104.



Monastery of São João de Tarouca

²⁴ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 96.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 105.

The Order of the Templars was officially recognized by Rome in 1129. Portugal had already become an ideal location for their independent growth at the time because of its distance from Rome. And it seems that Bernard cherished dreams of a Christian nation in which the Templars would play a central role.

In Portugal, more than elsewhere, the Knights Templar were explicitly asked to recognize their spiritual interlinkage with their brethren of the Cistercian Order. The oath taken by every Templar Master or Procurator specified: "I [name], knight of the Temple, ... grant sovereignty and obedience to the Grand Master of the Order, according to the statutes of our father Bernard ... and never to deny help to the religious, through words, arms and good deeds, in particular the pious of the Order of Cister [Citeaux] and its abbots, for they are brothers and companions."²⁶ What underlines this close proximity is also the role of Bernard in personally selecting many key Templar figures.

On June 24, 1128, Afonso Henriques returned to Portugal from the exile that had been imposed by his mother, Countess Tareja, who favored Spanish influence over the realm. With the support of the nobles, many of whom were of Burgundian descent, and of the Archbishop of Braga—the most important ecclesiastical authority of the region—he now confronted Tareja on June 24, 1128 close to Guimarães, at the battle of São Mamede. This event marked the symbolic birthdate of Portugal, seven months before the official birth of the Templar Order.

The Charter of Guimarães, written immediately after the military success, is a declaration of independence from Spanish influence. Remarkably, it bears fully visible the Templar cross. The king revealed he was a member of the Order already at age twenty, and probably since the ceremony of his knighting in Zamora (Spain, close to Portugal's north-east border).

... and the Political Foundations

The birth of Portugal was followed eleven years after the first turning point with the battle of Ourique against the Moors, fought on July 25th, 1139. Afonso Henriques was formally declared king of Portugal before the start of the hostilities. After the victory the king modified Portugal's emblem by adding to it the thirty silver bezants (coins) which stood for the symbolic entry requirement of aspiring knights.²⁷ Afonso Henriques was officially crowned in Lamego, in proximity of the Tarouca Cistercian abbey, by none other than Paio Mendes. He became the king of the first European nation-state. At the Treaty of Zamora, Dom Afonso Henriques was officially recognized by pope Alexander III as king of Portugal in 1143.

²⁶ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 126.

²⁷ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 141. The coins in the modern flag are now twenty-five.

The Templar Master Dom Guilherme Ricard died on the battlefield and Afonso named Hugo Martiniense his successor. He also ordained other Templars, among which Gualdim Pais, who was to play a central role in the future of the order, becoming Grand Master of Portugal from 1158 to 1195.



Alcobaça Monastery

In campaigning against the Moors, Afonso had taken the resolve thus recorded after the fact: "When they began their journey to the castle which is called Santarém, I made a proposition in my heart, and I took a vow, that if God in his mercy should permit me, I would give all the ecclesiastical possessions to God and the military brothers of the temple of Solomon,..." Since he was successful in his campaign he concluded in the same document: "I ... make the charter to the above-mentioned Knights of Christ for

every church in Santa Irene [Santarém], that they and all their successors might have and possess in perpetual right..."²⁸ Once they entered in possession of their Santarém holdings the knights left Braga to operate from the new city. They focused soon after in building the church of Our Lady of Alcobaça in honor of Bernard de Clairvaux.

Alcobaça became one of the most elegant churches of the Cistercians of the time. And the Order went on to accumulate more churches in Portugal than anywhere else in Europe, save the area of its origin. The Templars played a central role in such practical achievements.

Afonso had become the administrator of the Order of the Temple and very likely its military leader. He gave further generous land donations to the Cistercians, and the order became central to Portugal's future in matters of agriculture and education. They also promoted mining, boat building, fisheries and other enterprises. The Cistercians were instrumental in eliminating all traces of serfdom, guaranteeing payment of fair wages to their workers and caring for the hungry, homeless and elderly.

The close alliance of king and Cistercians was underscored by Bernard himself: "And so we have here presented a mystery, for heaven ordered that the reign of Portugal and the Cistercian Order should be born at the same time."²⁹ It may have been heaven's wish, but Bernard surely helped it in more than one way. In fact, all throughout Portugal's initial steps there is anecdotal evidence that Bernard used all his vast influence to send and arrange providential military help.

Gualdim Pais

In 1157 Dom Pedro Arnaldo de la Rocha had accepted the honor of becoming Master of the Temple; but he promptly passed on the mantle to his chosen successor, Gualdim Pais. Who was this very young knight to deserve such devoted attention from the Grand Master? A review of the early days of Portugal would not be complete without mention of this unique, towering individual.

Gualdim Pais (1118-1195) was born in Marecos, close to Braga, the son of high, northern Portuguese nobility, just a year before the founding of the Templar Order. The all important Paio Mendes was his uncle, and Pais had most of his spiritual instruction in the monastery of Santa Cruz in Coimbra, the most important cultural center of the time. Such was Pais' inner connection to the Templar impulse that it's no wonder that the future Grand Master died the very same day the Templars were arrested throughout France.

²⁸ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 158.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 162.

Gualdim fought at the all-important battle of Ourique that marked the birth of the nation-state. We saw that he had been dispatched to Portugal as one of four Procurators by Hugues de Payens in 1125. When that happened he was just eight years old! A Cistercian document explicitly states that Gualdim had practically been a Templar all his life and “the principal knight in this Kingdom, whom they were obedient to.”³⁰



Gualdim Pais

The friendship of Pais with King Afonso Henriques lasted fifty years. At age thirty Pais returned to Jerusalem to refine his knighthood skills for a five-year period. When he returned to Portugal from Palestine in 1150, he brought back some relics, and dedicated himself mostly to spiritual matters—such as the building of new churches or consolidating of existing ones. He did the utmost to secure Templar spiritual independence from the state, a matter made easy by Afonso’s joyful acquiescence.

King Afonso entrusted Pais the role of Templar Commander of the growing village of Sintra and the land around it. A document, concerning the donation of the village and a number of neighboring properties, was signed by the king while the knight was in the Holy Land. In it Pais is referred to as “Templar Master” five years before he was officially given the title, confirming that it was La Rocha’s intention to wear the Grand Master’s robes only for as long as Pais would not be able to do so.³¹

³⁰ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 174.

³¹ Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 308.

By Pais' time Templar holdings amounted to almost one third of Portugal. And all of this meant complete independence from Rome. The Grand Master was responsible for building the castles of Pombal, Tomar, Zêzere, Almourol, Idanha and Monsanto. Of all of these the most important for Portugal's future was certainly Tomar. The town would in fact become the final Templar headquarters in Portugal, after Braga, Fonte Arcada, Souré and Santarém. Tomar was chosen as the final residence of the fighting order in part because it displaced the center of gravity of the country toward the south from where it was easier to conduct the efforts of reconquest. In the country's future it would represent the ideal center of its geography.



Almourol Castle

Tomar and Portugal's Beginnings

Among the Templar figures most revered was Saint John the Baptist—the protector and spiritual guide of the Order—not surprisingly a forerunner, but also someone who brought a consciousness of the past to bear into the present. This is why the church of Saint John has a central place in Tomar town. Templar devotion also extended to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Mary Magdalen. One of the first churches in the new town was Santa Maria de Olival, where twenty-two future Portuguese Masters would be buried. It was dubbed the “mother church of all [Portuguese] Templar churches.” But

the most prestigious of Tomar's building would no doubt become the "Rotunda" or "Charola."

Tomar's famous and distinctive Charola was built in imitation of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Arabic sacred architecture. Originally it was very sober, divested of all artistic decoration. The building of this sanctuary absorbed Templar efforts for a few years before they turned to anything else, knowing that it would become the Templar headquarters for decades to come. What is most puzzling, however, is that it was never intended to be a church since it never included an altar. Moreover it has no main entrance, at least no door looking to the outside. And the question naturally arises as to what role the Rotunda performed in relation to the already present "mother church" of Santa Maria de Olival or that of Saint John.



Tomar's Charola

The unique building is a sixteen-sided polygon sustained by buttresses. In the middle of it is a central arcade of eight narrow columns, arranged in the shape of an octagon. It is possible that such a building housed an underground initiation chamber. There is indirect evidence that such a crypt

existed but was later destroyed by renovation work.³² The above hypotheses notwithstanding, it is clear that the building was not used for regular worship.

Even though Tomar is situated 60 kms (37 miles) from the ocean it was here that decisions were later taken concerning the initial maritime explorations. From here took shape the impulse of globalization and international trade. It is paradoxical that although Prince Henry the Navigator—considered one of the main initiators of the Age of Discovery—placed the center of his efforts in Sagres, Southern Portugal, he still officially resided in Tomar. Not surprisingly he also was the Grand Master of the later form of the Templars, the Order of Christ.

The Cosmopolitan Nature of Early Portugal

As Portugal was approaching the age of the Consciousness Soul, the cosmopolitan impulse was taking hold of the new nation. We have seen to what an extent early Portugal was a creation of the Burgundian nobility under the inspiration of Saint Bernard, the Cistercians and the Templars. In the latter lived an impulse that would lay the foundations for modern economy.

Saint Bernard had established the order in such a way that it accumulated riches, but could not make its members benefit from them, devoted as they were to poverty. Consider that not even a ransom could be paid for a captive knight!

An example within France shows with what power the Templars impacted economic life. It is estimated there were about two thousand commanderies spread out throughout France, covering about two million hectares.³³ Over this extension of land, people responded only to the authority of the Temple. Apart from land the order also controlled real estate. In Troyes there were an estimated fifty houses that it rented and many more than that in Paris.³⁴ More importantly the order had founded a bank, emitted coin, and the commanderies acted as local agencies. The Templars accepted goods for storage and even held the treasure of the king of France in Paris' Temple. They lent to the king, the bishops and privates. Moreover, they freed the serfs, and the roads from tolls and outlaws. Trade became safe, and over the two hundred years of the order's existence there were hardly famines in France, only temporary scarcity.³⁵

The order was not meant to accumulate money. It constantly reinvested, and in great part to the benefit of culture. The culmination of its efforts lay in the building of the cathedrals. Small towns like Chartres, or Amiens, of less than ten thousand inhabitants could hardly afford anything else than

³² Freddy Silva, *First Templar Nation*, 255.

³³ Louis Charpentier, *Les Mystères Templiers*, 131.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 97.

³⁵ Louis Charpentier, *Les Mystères Templiers*, 129.

small constructions, much less the concentrated efforts implying hundreds of workers and decades of time for building a cathedral. In less than hundred years more than eighty cathedrals and seventy churches of lesser importance sprouted over the territory.³⁶ Through the economic arm of the Templars and the cultural striving of Citeaux, the cosmopolitan influence of Chartres found a second breath through the centuries in the new land.

The Templar Order, which had such an important role in Portugal's beginnings, was unique among Christian orders. The knights, who carried further the Grail impulse, allied in themselves mystical and practical purposes. Much alike their closest brethren, the Cistercians, they can be called a religious brotherhood. On the other hand, they were alike and unlike other knights, since they carried a very specific spiritual mission. The Templars carried the spirit of Johannine Christianity under two aspects: on one hand the spirit of John the Baptist, who announced the coming of Christ, on the other the stream of Hiram/Lazarus-John in the building arts at which they were masters. We could say they united the Abel stream of the first with the Cain stream of the second. Of the Cain stream we have their manifestation in everything that they made possible in the spreading and building of the cathedrals; of the Abel stream the sowing of seeds for the future, even those which in a sense were premature, coming as they did just before the time of the Consciousness Soul. Theirs was a Promethean undertaking, shooting like a bright light ahead of its time.

The Cistercians on the other hand carried further the impulse of Chartres. Rudolf Steiner points out that among the Cistercians survived "the last relics of a striving to awaken Platonism—the Platonic world-conception, in unison with Christianity"³⁷ The teachers of Chartres, he states, were "personalities who ... with the characteristics of initiates went among people." And further, in relation to the likes of Bernard Silvestris, Bernard of Chartres and Alain de Lille (a Cistercian) "... [they] still went among other people with the character of an initiate, with the character of a person who knows much about the secrets of existence, like the great Joachim de Fiore, who was also initiated in the medieval sense."³⁸ Based on the recollections of initiations in previous incarnations, such individualities could infuse European culture with strong impulses of spiritual renewal.

Cosmopolitanism also reached Portugal through the influx of northern populations. Scandinavians and Germans settled in Portugal through the Norman incursions and Compostela visitations. And the Crusades contributed to establishing the basis for trade with the Germans and the Flemish primarily. Already by the time of the second king of Portugal, Dom Sancho I, "o Povoador," (the settler) explicit appeals were made for northerners to populate the uncultivated lands of Estremadura, Ribatejo and Alentejo.

³⁶ Ibid, 122-23.

³⁷ Rudolf Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, Volume 4, lecture of July 13, 1924.

³⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, Volume 8, lecture of August 14, 1924.

People coming from Flanders settled the lands around Santarém and Alenquer.³⁹ Many foreigners—primarily Germans, Flemish, Dutch, Scandinavians, French—settled in Portugal in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴⁰ The capture of Seville by Christian forces in 1248, as well as that of the Algarve in 1249, gave the Italians a new opportunity to expand economically in the southern areas of the Iberian Peninsula. Genoese communities settled in Lisbon.⁴¹

Commercial relationships wove other dimensions of Portuguese cosmopolitanism. The Portuguese fishing ships, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were already operating as far as in English waters and unloading in English harbors. This led to one of the first foreign trading treaties, signed around the year 1200.⁴² Reinforcing this special relationship, King Denis signed a commercial agreement with England in 1308. In order to lay the foundation for a Portuguese navy, in 1317 Denis engaged the services of the Genoese merchant sailor Manuel Pessanha (in Italian "Pezagno") and named him hereditary admiral of his fleet. Pessanha and his successors committed to providing Genoese captains to command the king's galleys.⁴³

King Denis, Queen Isabela and the Rebirth of the Templars

King Denis (1261–1325) has passed to history as the "Portuguese Justinian," who rendered the justice system easily accessible and efficient for all. Denis advanced the interests of the Portuguese merchants, and in 1293 set up a fund called the *Bolsa de Comércio*, the first documented form of marine insurance in Europe. He reclaimed the sand-dunes through the planting of pine forests, organized farming and encouraged agricultural improvements. The queen assisted him by building in Coimbra what possibly amounted to the first agricultural college for young orphan girls. While Dom Dinis was called "The Labourer," Isabel, was dubbed "The Patron of Labourers."

The king was an avid supporter of the arts, particularly poetry and literature. He wrote several books on topics ranging from government administration to science and poetry. He patronised troubadours, and even wrote lyric poetry in the troubadour style. He saw to the translation of many literary works into Galician-Portuguese, Portuguese not having yet fully evolved into its own.

Denis was a skilled diplomat. While managing to curb the abuses of the Church, in 1288 he persuaded Pope Nicholas IV to issue a papal bull that

³⁹ A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *Hansa e Portugal na Idade Media*, 43.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 44.

⁴¹ Malyn Newitt, *Portugal a História da Expansão Marítima: A grande aventura do povo português*, 22.

⁴² Eduardo Amarante, Rainer Daehnhardt, *Portugal, a missão que falta cumprir*, 128.

⁴³ From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denis_of_Portugal

separated the Order of Santiago in Portugal from its equivalent in Castile, to which it had been subordinated. With the extinction of the Knights Templar, he was able to transfer their assets in the country to the Order of Christ, specially created for this purpose. We will return to this below.

Denis' consort, Queen Isabel, deserves special mention, having played a moderating role in some of the dangers that could have carried heavy consequences on Portugal's future. Born in 1271 in Zaragoza, she was the daughter of Don Pedro, king of Aragon. Legend said she was born with a caul. She inherited the name from St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who was her aunt. Her life bore in fact some similarities with that of her relative.⁴⁴

Isabel played an important role in mediating between Denis and his brother, Afonso, and averting the continuation of an incipient civil war. The queen convened an arbitration council, which set up terms for reconciliation. When the two failed to come to terms, the undeterred Isabel resolved the issue by legating a part of her possessions to Don Afonso's niece.⁴⁵

The latter part of Denis' generally peaceful reign was marked by internal conflicts. The contenders to the throne were his two sons: Afonso, the legitimate heir, and Afonso Sanches—his bastard son and Denis' favored one—who quarreled frequently among themselves for royal favor. Afonso decided to kill his half brother and usurp the throne. He failed and the queen helped him escape the wrath of the king. For this reason she was banished to the town of Alenquer, midway between Lisbon and Coimbra. Even so, she was still able to intervene in the turmoil of the succession and convince her son Afonso to go to Leiria and reconcile with his father. Through her entreaties the king pardoned the son and all the insurgents.

However, the above was just a short reprieve. In 1320 the Infante newly concocted to bring about the death of Afonso Sanches. A new war ensued. The pretender occupied the city of Coimbra, that the king soon besieged. A bloody, undecisive battle took place on December 9th. The queen interceded anew and persuaded her son to seek reconciliation with his father in Pombal. A truce of a year and a half followed before a new war broke out in 1323. By this time the Infante had accrued a vast army and aimed at besieging Lisbon. The king avoided the trap by coming out in the open and confronting his son at Alvalade. In the middle of the battle was seen a mule at gallop forcing its way through the throng, ridden by a woman. It was Isabel, oblivious to the danger. The surprise was such to bring the

⁴⁴ Isabel was very devoted to works of charity, but her zeal was not understood, nor accepted by the king. One day in winter the queen was carrying money coins in her lap to give to the poor. Upon meeting with the king she expected to be scolded for her largesse. When the king asked to see what she was carrying only roses appeared instead of coins. Something similar had happened to her great-aunt Elizabeth of Hungary (Vincent McNabb, *St. Elizabeth of Portugal*, 35).

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 22.

combatants to a standstill. This brought a new and final reconciliation and the end of succession war.

In closing we can raise some further questions about the role of this remarkable figure. Rainer Daehnhardt calls 1318—year of the establishment of the Order of Christ—as “the most difficult year in the history of Portugal,” because in the turmoil of the succession crisis the very reason of Portugal’s existence could have been sealed by the fall of the Templars.⁴⁶ In this year the exiled queen introduced the cult of the Holy Spirit, for which she built a church in Alenquer. The cult is represented by the symbol of the temple, the dove and the cross. After the queen’s death, at the opening of her tomb in the seventeenth century, seven roses were found. Seven reliquaries sheltered each one of them, representing on one side the queen with the roses, on the verso her standard.⁴⁷

Pope Clemens V had decreed that the Templar patrimony in the Iberian peninsula would be confiscated by the Holy See. King Denis wanted to circumvent the decree and to this aim architected an agreement with Don Fernando of Leon and Castilla and Jaime II, king of Aragon in order to create a new military and religious order that would integrate the ex-knight Templars. After securing the agreement he turned to the Pope, expressing the urge of continuing the resistance against the Moors through the knightly orders in view of the threat they posed to the realms of the Iberian Peninsula. The Pope assented.

King Denis maneuvered in such a way as to have all Templar assets passed on to the crown. The Templars went into hiding for a short time, then returned to form the Order of Christ, to which all the former requisitioned land and goods were now transferred. To legitimize the façade of change the knights moved for a time to southern Portugal to the town of Castro Marim in 1321, to place themselves closer to the Moors and lend weight to Denis’ claims. However, the knights only resided in Castro Marim for thirteen years. Even during this short interval the first meeting of the Chapter of the Order took place in Tomar in the year 1327.⁴⁸ In essence the Templars survived unscathed under a new name.

Henry the Navigator and the Transition to the Consciousness Soul Epoch

Portugal and Spain’s destiny were deeply intertwined and succession crises recurred periodically. Such was the case in the critical years of the 1384-1387 civil war. The struggle for the succession to the Portuguese throne caused deep social divisions and widespread destruction that could have jeopardized Portugal’s survival as an independent kingdom. Lisbon was besieged by John I of Castile in 1384, but the following year an Anglo-

⁴⁶ Eduardo Amarante and Rainer Daehnhardt, *Portugal, a missão que falta cumprir* 73.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 74-75.

⁴⁸ José Armando Vizela Cardoso: *Templários em Tomar*, 86-87.

Portuguese army won an important victory against Castile at Aljubarrota.⁴⁹ Soon after this conquest, King John I of Avis signed a formal treaty of alliance with England and married Philippa, John of Gaunt's, Duke of Lancaster, and third son of King Edward III. Here appeared a more formal convergence of Portuguese and English interests. The ideals of the Portuguese Templars met with those of King Arthur's Round Table. Their joint courage secured Portugal's independent future. Two contrasting forces had faced off at Aljubarrota and would continue to play a role in the decades to come. On one hand the forming of cosmopolitan communities affirming Portugal's future-looking mission, on the other the holdover impulse to define the destiny of nations by blood descent of the rulers, through marriages and inheritances, which opened the door to intrigues and machinations.

In the aftermath of the decisive battle John I strengthened his power and established the new dynasty of Avis, which would prove to be stable, after the king won the favor of his people, and especially the common folks. The state of war with Castile lasted until the signing of the Treaty of Ayllón in 1411, after which constant vigilance on the borders was still required.



Batalha Monastery

The larger, global reality was also shaping the future of Portugal. For many centuries Islam had practically blocked European access to the East and its

⁴⁹ To celebrate the victory of Aljubarrota and give thanks for the divine help he believed he had received, King João I ordered the the construction of the Monastery of Santa Maria da Vitória (or Batalha Monastery) and the founding of the town of Batalha. King João I, Queen Filipa de Lencastre and Henry the Navigator are buried in the monastery.

markets. With the Mongol conquests in Central Asia in the thirteenth century, however, Genoese and Venetian merchants expanded their activity to Russia, Central Asia, the Far East and the Indian Ocean. Closer to home the last Islamic Spanish Emirate of Granada would be vanquished in the same decade in which Christopher Columbus arrived in the Americas (1492) and Vasco de Gama in India (1498). Before those milestones, another towering individual would pave the way for Portugal's maritime exploits, the one presently known as Henry the Navigator.

The accession to power of João I and Philippa brought a cleansing of the previously corrupt court of King Fernando. It was a period of moral regeneration in a country still devastated and impoverished by the succession war. It was almost a night and day change after the nation had spent a lot of its energy to retain its independence.

At the time there were four crusading orders: the famed Order of Christ, and the orders of Santiago, Avis and St. John. Portugal was a rather decentralized nation, prizing local self-government through the *concelhos*. There was, however, no rich middle class and almost no industries. The *fidalgos* were petty nobility who lived by the sword; if there were no enemies to fight their fortunes dwindled. Thus, keeping them busy was a constant concern of kings.

Family Background and Temperament

Queen Philippa was both very devout—often fasting and reading the Bible—and a practical woman with a sunny disposition. Although a foreigner she was quickly revered by the Portuguese. Henrique, the "Infante,"—title bestowed upon sons and daughters of the kings of Portugal—was her fourth son. He had uncommonly good relationships with his brothers Duarte, Pedro, Isabel, João and Fernando and his sister Isabel. It was in effect an unusual royal family. Duarte, the heir and Pedro, the second son, only one year apart, loved study, liked to moralize and philosophize, and tried their hand at literature. Fernando, the youngest, lived for religion and books. He had become Master of the Order of Avis, though he showed little inclination to fight.

No one used the epithet "Henry the Navigator" to refer to prince Henry during his lifetime or in the following three centuries. Rather, it was coined by two nineteenth century German historians. Later on it was made popular by another two British authors who included it in the titles of their biographies of the prince.



Henry the Navigator

Henrique was sociable, though for most people hard to truly know. His biographer, Elaine Sanceau, says he "gave away his soul to nobody."⁵⁰ He was serious and very earnest, and like his brothers, he too loved learning. However, unlike the others, what interested him most were mathematics, astronomy and the sciences, not to mention the practical pursuit of navigation. Interestingly, Henry had a mathematical genius, which rendered him able to figure out intuitively what others could only do with calculations. Alongside he carried an interest in theology and a mysticism of self-deprivation, similar to his mother's, which made him wear a hair shirt for almost all his life, and a fragment of the True Cross on his breast. Here was an unusual mix of disposition to action and contemplation. His urge to leave his mark was summarized in the motto "*talent de bien faire*" (talent for doing the good).

Henry inspired awe at first, then revealed himself both very pleasant and polite. On the other hand, his anger could simmer within and cut off the culprits from his sight. To all those he appreciated he would reveal himself very generous, even too generous, for the rest of his life. Another distinguishing leitmotif of his biography was a total lack of political ambition, though he had courage to spare. He had little liking for the life and pleasures of the court. The only times he had to intervene in the affairs of the kingdom he did so reluctantly, though resolutely, and the aftermath resulted most often painful to carry.

⁵⁰ Elaine Sanceau, *Henry the Navigator: The Story of a Great Prince and His Times*, 23.

Whereas the father John was a true representative of the Middle Ages, Henry and his siblings were already, at least partly, people of the Renaissance and Consciousness Soul. From the Middle Ages mindset Henry, however, inherited the love for knighthood and for the beautiful deed.

The Crusader

Knighthood was still the great pursuit of Portuguese youth of the time. And the brothers, intellectual though they may have been, were disappointed by not being able to earn this distinction through valiant deeds. The conquest of Ceuta supplied them a way to prove themselves, and it consumed Henry's thoughts. In the likelihood of the event the Infante had asked his father to let him be among the first to disembark.

Wanting to prove himself Henrique acted as a daredevil, putting himself and others at risk, so much so that Dom Mecia Coutinho, Henrique's preceptor and companion, sacrificed himself in the Infante's defense during the siege. When the king wanted to proceed to knighting him, Henrique desisted until his father knighted the brothers in their order of birth. Soon after Ceuta's surprisingly easy conquest, Henrique already considered laying siege of Gibraltar, in what could have caused a diplomatic dilemma, and only the king's intervention prevented such a rash enterprise. Overall, Henry was a reckless warrior and a rash commander, no matter how gallant.

Henrique continued the crusading spirit of his father. He wanted to conquer more of Morocco, but did not have the mind of a military strategist. In a second expedition aiming at the occupation of Tangier, Henrique once more disregarded the king's advise—in this instance his brother Duarte. With an expeditionary force of a few thousand he was facing various Moroccan kings and their combined forces of almost seventy thousand Arabs and Berbers, most of them on horse. Here once more he displayed useless heroism, and rash decisions that cost the Portuguese defeat and a hasty retreat of the expedition. In spite of the odds he put up a tremendous, cool resistance and guaranteed the safe retreat of what was left of his troops, by securing a truce and an exchange of hostages. His brother Fernando was left behind as a hostage, never to return to Portugal. The consequence of Henry's actions weighed heavily on him, no doubt to the end of his days, considering he had been the most responsible for his brother's captivity. To his credit he was ready to substitute him as a hostage.

Henry probably saw the conquest of Ceuta as a help to his exploration efforts. At the same time this was a way to carry further the Crusades against the Moors, a long-standing theme of Portuguese history that was to take on new dimensions at the dawn of the age of the Consciousness Soul.

The Promoter of Science

Henry pursued scientific and technological interests with the great single-mindedness, in response to the first stirrings of the Consciousness Soul. It is indicative that he was half Portuguese and half English by birth.

The Infante was also the first Grand Master of the Order of Christ, who in spite of devoting himself to chastity, was not devoted to poverty. He didn't divest himself of his duchy of Viseu, and amassed land and resources to finance his expeditions. Already during Henry's time the Order of Christ, though prestigious, had started to lose the strength of its original impulse. It counted under one hundred knights.⁵¹

Henry liked to retire on his own to the south-western tip of southern Portugal, in the modest house of Raposeira, close to Sagres, to read treatises on astronomy and watch the stars. However, even though he carried his most important work along the Atlantic coast, Henry still officially resided in Tomar, the headquarters of the order.

Before the Infante encouraged the settlement of Sagres most of the missions of exploration passed not far from there at Lagos. Sagres had been considered a sacred promontory by early Lusitan populations and the point to which, according to legend, the ravens had guided St. Vicente's boat. A very desolate place, it has remained associated with the Infante's name, in fact initially named *Vila do Infante*.

To encourage settlement Henry looked at the spiritual needs of the sailors by building a chapel in the town and above the harbor the church of Sainte Catherine with its own graveyard. He kept the town supplied with everything sailors might require and with pilots available, ready for the need. Apart from these he also built warehouses and pilot-stations. Even so, moving to the remoteness of Sagres required such stimulation that, we know from records, convicts' sentences were blandished by banishment to the cape.

Lagos remained the harbor of departure of caravels for long-distance voyages. And in Lagos' observatory astronomy was studied as a science for accurate navigation. Here too were the cartographers, who spent time improving geographical and navigational skills. And Henry spent most of his time acquiring, in own his words, the "knowledge from which all good arises."

Henry has been considered a recluse. More accurately, this meant primarily that he shunned the affairs of the court. He stood far from the limelight. However, in his milieu he was surrounded by men of all nations: Genoese, Venetians, Catalans, English, French, Germans, Scandinavians, Arabs, Jews, Moors, plus natives from many places—Canary Islands, Guinea,

⁵¹ Eduardo Amarante, Rainer Daehnhardt, *Portugal, a missão que falta cumprir* 161.

Berbers, Azenegue of western Sahara, etc. Many of his helpers were Jews; one of the most famous was Jaime of Maiorca, a recent convert to Christianity. He was an expert cartographer as well as builder of compasses and other precision instruments. And because Portugal wasn't a wealthy nation, Henry had to resort to the sponsorship of rich Venetian, Genoese and Florentine merchants to finance his navy.

In 1443 Henry convinced his brother Peter, at the time regent of Portugal, to award him a monopoly over all shipping that would sail south of Cape Bojador (ex Spanish-Sahara). Henry was granted all profits from trading within the areas he discovered as well as the sole right to authorize expeditions beyond Cape Bojador. Add to this that Henry also benefited from a monopoly on tuna fishing in the Algarve.

The Infante wanted to convince the Pope about his mission and nursed dreams of a mighty alliance with the king of kings, or Negus, the famed Prester-John, of which more shortly. In 1454 Pope Nicholas conferred on Henry rights to all lands to be discovered from Cape Bojador to India. The decision was accepted by all other monarchs. No doubt no other nation at the time had the means or the interest to pursue such distant endeavors. Those who could (e.g., Venice or Genoa) only did so from a purely commercial standpoint.

Henry was very generous to all who rendered him services, Moslem, Jew, Portuguese or other that they may be. He also invested himself in the expansion of the curriculums of the University of Lisbon of which he was the official Protector, adding faculties of mathematics and astronomy to the trivium, nearly creating a new curriculum of the seven liberal arts.

The major challenge presented to the Navigator was how to render his enterprises financially viable. Henry farmed his lands very profitably, owed dye-works and soap factories. He levied tribute from Guinean trade and revenue from Madeira, especially its sugar trade. And of course he administered the wealth of the Order of Christ. All in all he was a fair administrator, but vastly overextended. The naval enterprise engulfed vast capital, and so did the fleet that Henry maintained off the Moroccan coast. Add to this the fact that most of his explorations still gathered more inquiries than profit.

Not content with the above Henry also invested in public construction, not only in Sagres but in other parts of the country. He encouraged the construction of churches in Portugal, Madeira and the Azores. The chapel of Santa Maria in Santa Maria de Belen, Lisbon, was his initiative before King Manuel I expanded it to the now world-famous Jerónimos Monastery. He also invested in a new house of the Order in Tomar and embellished the town, adding a hospital for the poor and the strangers passing through. Because of all this activity, in spite of his vast resources, the Infante had

to borrow from the nobility, from the monks of Alcobaça and the Crown, leaving a debt at his death.

The Portuguese gathered a great collection of nautical maps. Compass, astrolabe, quadrant were already known to medieval observers. Soon after the first attempts to pass Cape Bojador, Henry realized there needed to be another way of sailing. He needed to send ships into the open ocean and understand the wind patterns, in effect a deepening of the science of navigation. This meant that sailors could be out of sight of land for weeks on end.

To Henry and the astronomers and mathematicians, physicists and cartographers around him, fell the task of adapting the traditional tools for use on the open sea. His scientists perfected the way to calculate the latitude of any place thanks to the astrolabe, through reference to the Pole Star and its position over the horizon. In time Portuguese pilots became experts who could teach all of Europe the art of open sea navigation. And the caravel was a Portuguese innovation and contribution to sailing the oceans with greater ease.

Explorations and Colonization

After the first unfortunate attempts at conquering the Canaries, Madeira and the Azores became the first successful Portuguese colonies. Here the explorers found no natives to oppose them. After less than twenty years Madeira already counted new towns and prosperous villages. Their rulers were the king's subjects with circumscribed power. Henry personally provided the materials—iron, steel, tools—that the colonists needed.

Exploration proceeded apace. In 1434 Gil Eanes passed Cape Bojador, just south of the Canary Islands latitudes, breaking a great perception barrier of the Middle Ages. Going past the cape was not as difficult as anticipated, but beyond it stood the large extensions of the Sahara desert. On top of that, coming back presented the difficulty of sailing against the north-east winds. After Henrique sent his ships to sail around the cape from 1421 to 1433, many of his captains would turn around and act as corsairs in the Mediterranean. Henri was patient but kept insisting that they try further.

For quite some time Henry had nothing to show for his efforts, partly because of the poverty and lack of resources of the first lands discovered. It was through exchange that the Portuguese often received slaves in gifts, not through raids, which the Infante did not encourage. Henry had little direct control over his sea captains and preferred further explorations to commerce of slaves. It was the captured slaves, nevertheless, that awakened public interest in the discovery enterprise.

In the fifteenth century the slave trade did not shock as it would later, and it rested on what Africans had done for centuries. It was not yet turned into

an organized commercial exploitation. The rationale of converting the captives to Christianity and ameliorating their lot was sincere, even if self-serving. The Infante himself acquired at times slaves but treated them generously. In the end there was no difference between them and others of his servants. They were treated with little difference in relation to all other Portuguese.

As the expeditions reached past Cape Bojador the prince's instructions became clearer and more explicit of not attacking or fighting the natives, nor retaliating against them. The best of his captains were diplomats who worked at rallying reluctant or adversary chiefs to the cause of peaceful trade.⁵²

Henry wanted to avoid violence and rally all parties to mutual commercial interest because he also wanted to Christianize the new populations. His captains took some time adapting to these ideas. Henry could hardly punish his people for insubordination or incapacity, knowing the limitations of his cash-strapped enterprise. He had little choice in many matters other than make the best of what was possible. After a time, however, Henry's political choices were respected; no more violence, just friendly relations and trade prevailed. He may have been a Crusader in relation to the Moors. For all other populations he believed in friendly coexistence as the gateway for spiritual progress and for the effort to Christianize.

By the end of Henrique's life Portuguese ships had reached Sierra Leone or slightly farther. The final triumph of African circumnavigation would still take half a century. However, by Henrique's lifetime the challenges of navigation had been resolved.

By Henry's time and shortly after, Portuguese trade goals covered roughly three areas:

- economic: this was not geared to immediate enrichment, at least originally. The goal was reducing poverty in Portugal.
- Scientific curiosity as we have seen above
- Spiritual factor: delivering a Christianity closer to the sources of the Order of Christ—a Christianity that differed from Rome and Spain and played a role in the first phases of empire, at least until the reign of Manuel I.

Portugal displayed different goals than those of Spanish empire. In this regard the legends of Prester John, confused and confusing as they would

⁵² An example of the above is given in Elaine Sanceau, *Henry the Navigator*, Chapter XX, *The Diplomacy of Diogo Gomes*. Gomes conducted exploration of the Gambia River, expanded trade and achieved peace with almost all the chiefs from Cape Verde to the Rio Grande (Guinea-Bissau).

become, played an earnest role in Prince Henry's lifetime as well as in Portugal's early exploration endeavors.

Prester John Legends

An element of Portuguese spiritual goals was their knowledge of a form of Christianity closer to the original in the form of the Coptic Christianity of Prester John. Wherever Henry's crews went he did not tire to request they inquire about Prester John. Thus, to the economic goals was added a more spiritual component, as it were, of making the world the realm of Prester John.

In Europe the legends portrayed John as a mighty Christian king and as a descendent of one of the three Magi. The images of the legends were taken at face value. In 1165 appeared in Europe copies of a letter pretendedly signed by Prester John, "Emperor of the Three Indias." Among other things it claimed that his kingdom had "horned men, one-eyed ones, men with eyes back and front, centaurs, fawns, satyrs, pygmies, giants, cyclops, the phoenix and almost all sorts of animals which dwell on earth."⁵³ The letter, which caused quite a stir, had been translated in many languages. Legends about the priest-king kept on growing. Among the rumors were those of Prester's subjects numbering three times the whole of Western Christendom, or of his army of one hundred thousand wielding solid gold weapons. By Henry's time it was believed he lived in Eastern Africa, no doubt because it was known that there were Christian Copts there. In fact, in 1306 Ethiopian ambassadors had visited the Pope in France, and the name Prester John was from then on applied to the patriarch of the Ethiopian Church. He was believed to be the chief of a mighty nation. During Henry's lifetime there was the first diplomatic mission to Ethiopia. In 1520 four hundred Portuguese were sent to Ethiopia by King Manuel I to reside onsite for seven years.⁵⁴

In the legends of Prester John we have on one hand the echoes of the legend of the Holy Grail, on the other distortions and exaggerations due to a new phenomenon of the time. At the transition into the age of the Consciousness Soul, in the fifteenth century and for a time after that, the Luciferic hosts heightened their activity. They did this by trying to preserve the ancient imaginations in a wrong way.

The Luciferic powers wanted to prevent the achievement of pure thinking, directed towards the understanding of physical existence; rather let thinking flow into a dreamlike, imaginative conception of the world. No longer able to maintain in the right way the experience of the old Imaginations, many human beings were not able to transplant their souls rightly and completely into this realm of experience. The result were distortions and misinterpretations like the ones we saw above. On the other

⁵³ Nigel Cliff, *The Last Crusade: The Epic Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, 84.

⁵⁴ Eduardo Amarante and Rainer Daehnhardt, *Portugal, a missao que falta cumprir*, 76.

hand the human being—unable to fully understand the world with the intellect alone—would not penetrate fully the sensorial experience of the physical world.⁵⁵

Henry's Legacy

By the end of his life, the Infante had seen four brothers die, three of them in tragic circumstances—Duarte, Fernando and Pedro. He was buried in the Gothic church of Batalha, his sarcophagus adorned with three shields: one with the standard of the Order of the Garter (founded by Edward III of England in 1348), one with the cross of the Order of Christ, the last one bearing his arms. Along the frieze stood his motto "*talent de bien faire*."

Of all Portuguese great figures Henry's is the most elusive, though his deeds are there for all to see, leading Sanceau to conclude "No public figure ever sought the limelight less." He inspired many initiatives but constantly remained in the background, except in his early warrior exploits. It seems he never bore ill or spoke ill of anyone and was known for his affability. In fact, many who served him formed deep bonds of friendship. This double-sided figure looked back to the past of Portuguese knighthood, especially in his youth. He carried mystic ideals and a strong, though at times naïve religious faith. With that came the zeal of the missionary, bent on evangelizing and civilizing. He brought up many African children to be evangelists to their own people and treated African chiefs as allies.

On the other hand he resolutely stood at the cusp of the scientific age, deeply steeped in its spirit of inquiry and discovery. Sanceau concludes that the Middle Ages came to their ending not with the fall of Constantinople in 1453—as is commonly agreed upon—but earlier on, when Henrique set forth his caravels. The dates do in effect correspond to the end of the Age of the Intellectual Soul.⁵⁶ With Sanceau we can conclude: "For good or for ill he introduced the modern world."⁵⁷ This marked in effect the beginning of globalization.

The Meeting of Various Streams

There is something puzzling at first sight in the Portuguese apparent "fixation" with Prester John, but also something more than meets the eye. In the Grail legend Parzival is the half-brother of Feirefiz via his father Gahmuret. The white Parzival is born of Herzeloide, the black and white Feirefiz of the Moorish queen, Belacane. In the end Feirefiz and Parzival will come together to the Grail. Feirefiz marries a woman of the Grail and returns to

⁵⁵ Rudolf Steiner, *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, 10, "First Study: At the Gates of the Consciousness-Soul: How Michael in the Spiritual World is Preparing for His Earth-Mission through the Conquest of Lucifer."

⁵⁶ A Timeline of Portuguese explorations: In 1434 the Portuguese pass Cape Bojador; in 1445 they reach Cape Verde; in 1471 they pass the equator and reach the Congo River; in 1483 the Cape of Good Hope; in 1497–1499 Vasco da Gama discovers the sea route to India.

⁵⁷ Elaine Sanceau, *Henry the Navigator*, 303.

the east. It is from this union that is born the king-priest Prester John. It is not surprising then that the members of the Order of Christ carried in their souls the image of the king-priest John, and sought to find his kingdom in the world. A call from the Holy Grail, preserved by the Templars, was still active in the search for the black and white Feirefiz on distant continents. The Johannine impulse of the Templars is here intimately united with that of the Grail.

The continuing impulse of the Grail manifests on the global scene in the Portuguese recognition of other Christian impulses. The Portuguese celebrated the reconnection with the Coptic Christians of Ethiopia and the Nestorians of both Socotra (island of Yemen, opposite to the horn of Africa) and India. In this attempt they ran counter to Catholic dogmatism, bent on eradicating Christian heresy almost as much as all other religions.

The battle of Aljubarrota won by the Portuguese army, allied with the English, was a victory in the realm of the ideals of the Holy Grail and the impulse of King Arthur's Round Table, which secured Portugal's continued independence from Spain and the Pope.

The knights of the Round Table emerged as an impulse around the fifth century A.D. Coming from the all-inclusive streams of Hibernia and later Celtic Christianity, they fought the longest for Michael to retain its domain over the cosmic Intelligence, whereas the Grail Stream already knew that the Intelligence would have to be sought on Earth.⁵⁸

W. J. Stein sees more than a symbolic convergence between the figures of Arthur and Prester John. Historical events point to how the figure of Arthur was replaced by that of Prester John in the countries under the sphere of influence of the Catholic church. An example of this ongoing attempt is that which surrounded the publication of Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d' Arthur*, reviving the previously existing Arthurian tradition at an opportune political moment. The publication of Malory's book—already printed in limited edition by 1476—was delayed to the year 1485 by the publisher William Caxton for political reasons. In England this was the beginning of the reign of the House of Tudor, that claimed to descend from the line of King Arthur. Henry VII called his son Arthur and sought links not only with the Holy Roman Empire but also with Spain and Portugal. Similar goals of reviving the Arthurian knighthood were pursued by Maximilian I (1459-1519), Holy Roman Emperor and son of Eleanor of Portugal. Henry VII had arranged for Prince Arthur to marry Catharine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabel, had not the prince died prematurely. Alchemy in Spain, had survived among the Knights of Saint James, with Ferdinand at their head. Thus the intended marriage was not only meant as a political alliance, but as a renewal of a cosmopolitan knighthood.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, volume 8, lecture of August 21, 1924.

⁵⁹ W. J. Stein, *The Death of Arthur: Arthurian Myth and Alchemy*, 130.

In the research that led to his book on the ninth century, W. J. Stein, traced the lineage of the Grail to the house of Saint Odile (662-720).⁶⁰ Among these were the Burgundians who founded the Templar Order, many of them related to Saint Bernard. Such was Dom Henrique and the first knights Templar sent to Portugal by Hugues de Payens to start the first monarchy of the nation state. The mission of this Grail lineage was to “expand what is bound up with the family with what is cosmopolitan ... to become the vessel of the world-irradiating Sun-impulse.”⁶¹ Through the Grail, starting from a very special bloodline, soul relationships were to replace blood relationships. Henrique’s ease in adapting to the conditions of Portugal is a shining example of this attempt. In this way the impulse of the Grail prepares the transition from the time of Gabriel to the time of Michael, and from the fourth to the fifth post-Atlantean cultural epoch. The Grail-inspired individuals were striving to expand the realm of Christian morality from individuals to groups and nations.

We turn now to a nation spiritually interconnected to Portugal through the Templar impulse and the coming of the Age of Discovery: Scotland.

The Convergence between Portugal and Scotland

Portugal and Scotland were the two places where the Templar Order survived after its persecution by King Philip IV of France. When the king proceeded to arrest the Templars and disband the Order, the knights found refuge not only in Portugal but also in Scotland, harbored there by Robert de Bruce.

In 1292 Robert de Bruce became Earl of Carrick, one of the most powerful fiefdoms of Scotland. The murder of John Comyn—his rival, who had submitted to England—was seen as an affront to the authority of the Pope. As a result, the Earl was excommunicated in 1306. In France Philip IV arrested the Templars in 1307. Having both lost the support of the Pope it was natural for Robert de Bruce and the Templars to turn to each other.

It is known to historical research that, parallel to Portugal, the Templars survived as a separate entity in Scotland for another two centuries. Even by 1338 the Knights Hospitaliers of St John had not taken possession of Templar lands. They kept their lands separate, as if in trust. At the end of the sixteenth century 519 sites in Scotland, 579 according to another document, were listed as “Terrae Templariae.”⁶²

The Templars may have played a role in the battle of Bannockburn on June 24, 1314, St John’s day, the decisive turning point of Scottish independence from England. This took place only three months after the death of

⁶⁰ W. J. Stein, *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, 291.

⁶¹ Ibid, 212.

⁶² Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge*, 96-98.

Jacques de Molay at the stake, four years before the founding of the Order of Christ in Portugal and one hundred and eighty-six years to the day after the spiritual affirmation of Portugal at the battle of São Mamede.

After Scotland's victory Robert de Bruce created two orders in which the Templars found refuge: the Order of Scotland with the king as its Grand Master, and the Royal Grand Lodge of Heredom. The Sinclair family presided over the latter as hereditary "Protectors of the King and the Crown Prince." They also had jurisdiction over the Scottish Orders and Guilds, which they claimed the Templars had permeated with their rites and customs.⁶³

From a very early time the Scottish Sinclair, originally St. Clair, were associated with the Templars. Hugh de Payens had married the French Catherine de St. Clair and founded the Templar headquarters at Balantrodoch, on St. Clair land, situated in fact between two of their castles. Members of the St. Clair family would later serve as canons of the Cistercians.⁶⁴

Finally, the St. Clair played an important role in the rebirth of the Scottish monarchy in the fourteenth century. It is believed that they had links with the Bruce family from both the Orkneys and Normandy. And it is known to history that three St. Clair fought alongside Robert de Bruce at Bannockburn. Later, William Sinclair, the architect of Rosslyn Chapel, near Edinburgh, was named Grand Master of the Royal Grand Lodge of Heredom in 1440 by King James II of Scotland.⁶⁵ In 1600-1601 another Sinclair was confirmed the hereditary patron of the craft. That claim still held in 1690.⁶⁶

From Portugal to Scotland, we find both the survival of the Templar Order and its impulse, and a striving for independence in which the Templars and their heirs played an important role. What we find that is unique to Scotland is a transformation of the impulse in ways that would play an important role, for good or for ill, in the furthering of the mission of the English-speaking West—the emergence of Scottish Freemasonry.

There is evidence carved in stone in graves and tombstones everywhere in Central Scotland, between Edinburgh and the opposite coast, from the Counties of Fife and Lothian to the Mulls of Kyntire and Knapdale, of a gradual shift from the original impulse to a new one. In churches and graveyards we can see abundant evidence of Templar emblems (Templar crosses, floral and eight-pointed crosses, 'engrailed' octagons, knight effigies, swords, five-petaled roses, etc.) on some tombs. Other tombs

⁶³ Andrew Sinclair, *The Sword and the Grail: of the Grail and the Templars and a True Discovery of America*, 160-161, 168-169.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 12, 33, 47.

⁶⁵ Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge*, 115-116.

⁶⁶ David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century, 1590-1710*, 57.

carry Masonic symbols (mostly set squares, hammers, compasses), and intermediary stages show the co-existence of the various symbols.⁶⁷

The first use of the word "lodge," or of the terms "entered apprentice" and "fellow craft" has also been registered in Scotland.⁶⁸ Lodge was originally a temporary construction or a lean-to on the building site, where masons could eat, rest and meet. The term, which first applied to a building, evolved into the description of a working group or an institution with its customs and rules. The evolution of the term "lodge" perfectly illustrates the nature of the transformation undergone over time in the organization of Freemasonry itself. The Crafts and Guilds, still influenced by the Templars, slowly became the new entity of Freemasonry.

The gradual evolution of the Crafts into Freemasonry is emblematically portrayed in the Rosslyn chapel built by William Sinclair, the Third Earl of Orkney, in 1440. It can be called the last of the Gothic churches of northern Europe. The village of Roslin, close to which it is built, occupies a remarkable place at the end of the Great North Road, also called Lactodorum (Milky Way), built by the Romans. This was in fact the northern limit of Roman expansion. It is of some interest to know that while the village is spelled Roslin, the church is specifically called Rosslyn. Its possible Celtic meaning is "knowledge passed down the generations." If so nothing could be more apt, for in Rosslyn we find many secrets engraved in stone.

William Sinclair must have been a very unusual and knowledgeable man to be able to personally design and direct the work of the Chapel instead of delegating the task, as was usual, to a Master of Works. A cross section of the building shows that it was built on the basis of the octagon, hexagon and triangles contained within the circle. The ground plan of the church matches what is known of Herod's Temple—built upon the old Solomon's Temple—particularly the placement of the walls and columns. The west wall of Rosslyn Chapel seems to be a replica of the ancient west wall of Herod's Palace, the only one that has survived destruction. This is now known as the "wailing wall."

Sinclair had taken care to reconnect the church with ancient tradition. Builders of the Gothic temples traced the origin and prototype of the cathedrals to the Temple of Solomon. Rosslyn's interior walls are a true explosion of natural forms. For this reason the Chapel has been called an "herbal in

⁶⁷ The following are some churches showing Templar and/or Freemason symbolism on tombstones: Saddle Abbey in the Mull of Kintyre, Chapel of Kilmory in the Mull of Knapdale, Cistercian Abbey in Culross (Fife), Balantrodoch (Templar headquarters), Melrose Abbey, Seton Collegiate Church, Collegiate Church at Costorphine (near Edinburgh), Douglas Chapel. A good example of an intermediate stage between Templar and Freemasonic symbols is the gravestone found in the Kilmory Chapel. In it is represented a knight; underneath him a Templar-style cross, above him a Masonic set square (Andrew Sinclair, *The Sword and the Grail*, 45-61)

⁶⁸ David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry*, 7.

stone.” Among the carvings is the story of Genesis, Adam and Eve chased from Paradise and an Angel with a flaming sword. A barrel-vaulted roof—unique in its kind and divided in five sections—represents the flowers of creation, culminating in the rose of Mary and merging into the stars of the firmament. To the south a Holy Dove is visible, flying with the Host in its beak. Below it is carved the symbol of the Grail, resembling a chalice or a crescent moon. Thus we have moved from the past, represented by Genesis, into the future suggested by the mission of the Grail. But there is more, which this time points to the future and to the West. Among the sculpted plants, two that would strike the visitor are maize and aloe, plants from the New World. Where could such specific knowledge come from, if not from a previous exploration? And what did Sinclair have in mind when he used these two plants in a building where nothing is strictly ornamental?



Rosslyn Chapel

We do in fact know of a Sinclair-led exploration to the New World. The so-called “Sinclair-Zeno expedition” is the only documented pre-Columbian landing in the New World. Antonio Zeno, who went to America with Sinclair, was a wealthy Venetian merchant who joined forces with Earl Henry Sinclair in 1398. The maps and documents left by Antonio Zeno were later found by his great-great-great-grandson. The idea of the exploration seems to have come to Earl Henry as early as 1397, upon hearing the story of a fisherman driven by a storm upon the island then given the Viking name of

Estotiland—corresponding to modern day Newfoundland—where he spent five years.

What the purpose of the expedition might have been we can only surmise. Yet all the circumstances seem to point in the same direction. The expedition arrived in America on Trinity Sunday, June 2nd 1398. Trin Harbor, the place of their landing, has been identified by the historian Frederick Pohl as Chedabucto Bay. In the Pictou area of Nova Scotia the expedition started building a city in a place that is considered the best harbor of the region. In near proximity, Antonio recorded the phenomenon of smoke and fire proceeding from a natural spring of pitch, located next to the ocean shore. This place is known as modern day Stellarton in Nova Scotia, which has vast deposits of pitch. It received its name from the so-called stellar coal, an oil coal that emits short bright flames like stars upon burning. Such natural phenomena are very rare. No others occur in the Northern continent close to the ocean.⁶⁹

East and West is thus a unique theme of the Rosslyn Chapel. On the other hand Rosslyn chapel marks a turning point between Scotland's past and future. A Latin inscription carved into an archway reads: "Wine is strong, a king is stronger, women are even stronger, but truth will conquer all." This is a motto later found in the Masonic ritual of the Babylonian Pass, previously believed to have originated in 1740. Another intriguing small carving shows a person initiating a candidate to a ritual, holding a noose around the latter's neck and a Templar cross on his chest. This represents once again what was thought to be a uniquely Masonic ceremony.⁷⁰ Elsewhere appears the carving of an eagle with two heads, known in Freemasonry as the Emperor of East and West, symbol of a Mason of the highest degree.

The above symbols need not be specifically Freemasonic symbols. They most likely are not, given the epoch in which the Chapel was built. Rather, they prove the continuity between the Templar ritual with the Craft Orders and later with Freemasonry. In 1475, stone masons of Edinburgh were granted a charter of incorporation as a guild. When Freemasonry emerged in Scotland, it initially centered around a "Lodge No 1", also known as Mary's Chapel. Interestingly, Saint Mary was the name under which the stonemasons of Edinburgh, then working at Rosslyn, were granted a charter of incorporation.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Frederick Pohl, *Atlantic Crossings Before Columbus*, 145 and 248-252.

⁷⁰ Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas, *The Second Messiah: Templars, the Turin Shroud and the Great Secret of Freemasonry*, 15-18.

⁷¹ Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge*, 116.

Rosslyn chapel stands as a reminder of the past and a pointer toward the future. It looks back to the East, Palestine and the Temple of Solomon, and towards the future, towards the West and America. It also foreshadows Freemasonry, which was soon to emerge.

Traces of yet another cross-pollination are present in a very specific and important artistic motif. When the Portuguese undertook their travels to India, they took with them—much like the Spaniards—St. James as their patron. In a sense the pilgrimage of Compostela was prolonged on one hand toward India and on the other toward northern Europe. The shells of St. James, that the pilgrims carried from Compostela, were used for the mortar to build Rosslyn Chapel.



Apprentice Pillar

In Rosslyn chapel we see at work a trace of Portuguese artistic influence, particularly of the later Gothic, so-called Manueline, which imported Indian artistic motifs.⁷² Traces of this are particularly visible in the so-called "Apprentice Pillar," representing the pillar of the Temple of Solomon. A similar column to this one is visible in the marketplace of Sintra, leading W. J. Stein to surmise that through Portugal, England entered in spiritual

⁷² The Manueline late Gothic adopted some recognizable key motives, representative of the Age of Discovery: the Templar Cross (or cross of the Order of Christ), the ropes that secured the sails and the anchors, and the armillary sphere that represented knowledge of the Indies.

contact with India. All in all we find in Rosslyn a crossroad between North and South and East and West.

On the other hand, parallel to Rosslyn though later in time, the Portuguese built the last of the large Portuguese Gothic cathedrals under King Manuel I in Lisbon's Jerónimos Monastery (started in 1514), the very celebrated swan song of Portuguese Gothic. It is significant that it is set in Santa Maria de Belém, where the Spirit of the Age set forth under the inspiration of Henry the Navigator, who continued the impulse of the Templars. Henry himself had ordered the expansion of the previous building, the church of Santa Maria de Belém.



Cloister of the Jerónimos Monastery

As we move past the fifteenth century and the time of the Consciousness Soul the Templar impulse had all but fulfilled its mission, even though it left strong seeds for the future. In more than one way there was a vast abyss between the Grand Master and his immediate circle of twelve and the rest of Christianity at the time preceding the advent of the Consciousness Soul. At the time of Jacques de Molay there were about one hundred commanders in the European regions. Among these the twelve around de Molay formed the highest degree of initiation.⁷³

⁷³ Judith von Halle, *Les Templiers*, tome I, chapter "Les buts des Templiers."

To the Templars fell the task of countering the recurring 666-year attack of the Sorat being. Already in the 7th century, through the development of the sciences in the Academy of Gondishapur, the Consciousness Soul would have blossomed prematurely in the human being. The individual could have unfolded a great treasure of knowledge but lay defenseless against a simultaneous acceleration of egotistic impulses. It was through a detour of world destiny that Mohamed's Islam countered and lessened the impact of Gondishapur.

The new Sorat, anti-Christian, challenge came through the alliance of Philip Le Bel, king of France, and his handpicked Pope, Clemens V. It was this formidable confrontation that cost the Templars great suffering and the death at the stake of many among them. The highest Templar initiates around Jacques de Molay, last of the Grand Masters, were inspired during their initiations by Christian Rosenkreutz and his own circle of twelve.⁷⁴ An impulse which had not yet blossomed was lending a hand to the Templars who were bringing to an end the preparations for the age of the Consciousness Soul. Though the Templars found a second breath in Portugal, by the time of King Manuel I the impulse was all but exhausted.

King Manuel I

The founding of Portuguese Empire saw its beginnings under King Manuel I. He is often described as vain and capricious, also as an autocrat who only called on the National Assembly three times in all his reign. He was pious in a zealous way, going so far as to drink only water and avoid food cooked or dressed in oil. He trusted his faith often above reasonable doubt or careful calculations.

Manuel had married Isabella of Aragon, and the marriage had been arranged on the explicit condition that the king would expel from Portugal all the unrepentant Jews who would not convert to Christianity. To his credit Manuel only fulfilled the letter of the agreement, rounding off all Jews and baptizing them by force, then practically ignoring all subsequent personal choices. However, he was otherwise more adamant with the Muslims, expelling almost all of them and declaring Portugal a purely Christian nation. The work of the Inquisition was delayed in relation to Spain. It took place in 1540, under the reign of John III, with already the first *marranos*—Jews often forced to convert to Christianity who continued to practice Judaism in secrecy—sent to their death at the stake.

Not surprisingly, the new king saw maritime exploration as a divinely ordained task of the nation. As soon as Vasco de Gama's exploits permitted it, Manuel pompously called himself "king of Portugal and of the Algarve, Lord of Guinea and of the Conquest of Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India." An old prophecy circulated in Europe that the "Last Emperor" would lead a crusade against Islam and take back the Holy

⁷⁴ Judith von Halle, *Les Templiers*, tome II, 62.

Land. The reconquest would then be followed by the apotheosis of a New Jerusalem and Christ's return to Earth. Manuel believed he would be that emperor, guided in great part by religious fervor, more than territorial ambition. He was convinced of being God's instrument in the fulfilling of the prophecy. The Last Crusade to recapture Jerusalem would turn out to be one of his cherished motives, lending credence to the idea that to the recapture of Jerusalem would follow the Last Days of the world.

The king was buoyed in his dreams by the discovery of Christian Indians living in Southern India. In fact, he was all too happy to be flattered and deceived in this matter. A certain Gaspar, a Jew first converted to Islam then to Christianity, had spread the rumors of Christians living in fourteen Indian states, a gross exaggeration. After Vasco de Gama's first exploration, deceived by this overestimation, Manuel readied a small fleet of six vessels ready to sail for the Indies in the fateful year 1500.

The letter the monarch asked to deliver to Calicut (Kozhikode)'s ruler, the "Zamorin," conveyed the urgency and seriousness of the king's mission: "For one should truly believe that God, Our Lord, has not permitted this feat of our navigation solely in order to be served in trade and temporal profits between you and us, but equally in the spiritual profit of souls and their salvation, which we ought to place higher. He considers himself better served by the fact that the holy Christian faith is communicated and joined with you and us as it was for six hundred years after the coming of Jesus Christ,..."⁷⁵

That maritime exploration and religion were close bedfellows, for better or for worse, is confirmed close in time by the ambitions of Christopher Columbus. The son of a Genoese weaver he had made his way to Lisbon and married the daughter of a Portuguese nobleman. Columbus liked to don a Franciscan habit and flattered himself by thinking that he had been chosen by God to save souls. He then began to hear voices telling him that God entrusted him to discover a new paradise on Earth. However, already from the beginning Columbus operated under a completely different spirit than the Portuguese of the Order of Christ. Together with his companions he committed plunder and sent five boats with cargoes of Native slaves to be sold in Seville.

Columbus had promoted to John II, Manuel's predecessor, the idea of reaching the Indies by way of the West. Columbus' offer was made in a very different spirit than that of the Order of Christ. It came with strings attached. The adventurer requested the rank of Admiral of the Seas in relation to all the lands he would discover, the title of Viceroy, and a tenth of the value of all metals discovered in the New World.

⁷⁵ Nigel Cliff, *The Last Crusade*, 283.

John II rejected his offer. When Columbus returned from the New World he first landed in Portugal to tell the king he had found the Indies. John was unimpressed and took advantage of the discovery to ascertain and figure out which dominions would fall to Spain and which to Portugal. It was a year after, in 1493, that Pope Alexander III determined that the lands to the East of the Azores would belong to the Portuguese, those of the West to the Spaniards.

Portugal tried to distract Spain in another direction than Africa and the East, keeping the way to India for its own. After the signing of the first and second Tordesillas Treaty, no Spanish ships could set sail toward Africa. Thus Columbus' discoveries of the New World—what he thought of as the Indies—had offered the ground for the signing of the treaty of Tordesillas and secured a free hand in Portugal's sea journeys.

Vasco de Gama

Dom Manuel's choice of Vasco da Gama as commander of the first great Portuguese expedition, amounted to an instinctive recognition and mutual sympathy because, on top of his youth, de Gama was an unexpected choice. Probably the field of choice was rather limited.

De Gama's ancestors had fought against the Moors in the Algarve. Vasco, the third of five legitimate sons, had been initiated into the Order of Santiago in 1484, and may have fought against the Moors in Morocco. Later he became a *fidalgo* in the king's household. His biographer, Nigel Cliff, describes him as "intelligent, ambitious, and willing to risk his life to make his fortune."⁷⁶ Soon he readied the attempt to reach the Indies by circumnavigating Africa.

On the occasion of the launch of the expedition the king delivered an address in which among other things he declared: "I hope with God's mercy that not only made the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ His son be proclaimed and adopted ... that we will wrest new kingdoms, states, and great wealth by force of arms from the hands of the Infidels." Here religion, politics and economics join hands. And Vasco de Gama absolved himself of his assignment in an astonishing feat. Not only did he pass the Cape of Good Hope, but he explored Africa's east coast and reached India. De Gama's exploit was so enormous that the whole of Europe was astonished, feeding no doubt Manuel's vainglorious dreams.

Like Henry the Navigator before him, the king cherished the hope of de Gama meeting with Prester John. In landing in Calicut the Portuguese party was brought into temples that they confused for heretic Christian churches. At that time all that wasn't Muslim was assumed to be Christian, at least in India, since Hindu religion was unknown. The gods portrayed in paintings were confused with saints. It was a common assumption that the Christian

⁷⁶ Nigel Cliff, *The Last Crusade*, 164.

Indians would be overjoyed to join with their western brothers and shake off what was considered to be the Muslim yoke. This went along with the idea that the Indians were simpleminded and easily exploited.

After some time in Calicut Vasco de Gama and his men were perplexed at why the Indians would not be overjoyed at their presence. Quite the contrary happened. The Muslim merchants, who had the ear of Calicut's Zamorin, spread rumors about the Portuguese's unreliability and evil intentions. They plotted to have de Gama and his men killed. Fortunately the Arabs lacked military experience and weaponry to seriously worry the Portuguese, though the latter were also conspicuously helped by luck.

De Gama's first expedition was followed by that of Pedro Alvares Cabral. Once he arrived in Calicut Cabral put out an impossible ultimatum to the Zamorin to banish all and any Muslim trader from his harbor, and naturally to ally himself with the pretendedly other Christian Indian states and hinder all Muslim trade. In these demands he had been advised by de Gama. In his journey East, Cabral had drifted West before reaching the Cape of Good Hope and accidentally discovered Brazil. His had been an unprecedented four-continent expedition.

King Manuel was disappointed by Cabral's relative failure to reach the pre-set goals and soon asked de Gama to return to India on a new mission. De Gama's political and temporal ambitions kept growing. By this time he obtained to be called Dom Vasco and had the suffix passed on to his descendants. He was named "Admiral of India" to rival Columbus' title of "Admiral of the Ocean Sea." He was likewise appointed to the royal council and granted a substantial annual pension. Later he was made Count of Vidigueira, one of nineteen noble families of the country.

Vasco de Gama sailed again for India in February of 1502. By this time the Portuguese venture garnered the interest of many Europeans: English, French, Germans, Genoese, Florentines, Spaniards, Flemish among them. The commercial goal was to support precarious Portuguese factories, obtain favorable trade deals in Africa and India and bring back a cargo of spices. Part of the fleet had a military mission of mounting a blockade against Arab shipping and paralyze Egyptian economy, eventually sail up the Red Sea and arrive at Jerusalem. This time around de Gama knew that the Indians would not relinquish Arab trade voluntarily; force would have to be used. He was still completely intransigent, and wanted the last Arab resident expelled from Calicut in order to promise peace to the Zamorin.

It was on this second trip that Gama met with a delegation of India's Christians, who told him they amounted to some thirty thousand. They narrated the legend of Saint Thomas' arrival and indicated that there was a great church in his memory in Quilon, which the apostle built just before dying. The Portuguese discovered the grave of Saint Thomas at Meliapor and

rebaptized it São Tomé. The Christians wanted de Gama to build a fortress on their land. No doubt this discovery overjoyed King Manuel who had entreated his captains not to return to Portugal until they would discover the famed Christian kings.

The Christians of India were Nestorians and had six bishops. Rome was not very keen on an alliance of Portugal with old forms of Christianity, foreign to its influence.⁷⁷ In fact Portugal paid a price for recognizing the Christians of India. When they discovered the reputed tomb of St. Thomas, they minted a coin in his honor, consecrating India to the apostle before receiving Rome's assent.

Gama signed a treaty with the king of Cochin, a city south of Calicut/Kozhikode), which allowed him to build a factory. The factor had jurisdiction over the Portuguese and the local Christians, making them subjects of the Portuguese Crown. In doing so, however, de Gama made a number of enemies among the neighboring rulers.

After establishing a second factory in Cannanore (Kannur, north of Calicut), the admiral sailed back to Portugal. Five ships were left behind to patrol the Indian waters, the first permanent European naval presence on the Indian Ocean. Remarkably, de Gama had not lost a single ship in the expedition. In comparison Columbus was facing one setback after another in the New World. Upon his third and short return to India Gama was the second to bear the name of Viceroy of the Indies after Francisco Alameda, an important figure in the present exploration.

King John III and the Demise of the Order of Christ

King John III, Manuel's successor, also started to fall into the delusions of grandeur of his predecessor. However, as the wars against the Muslims raised the costs of the Portuguese ventures, hardly any benefit resulted from the Empire, and the monarch had to tax his own people to maintain this grand illusion.

The Order of Christ came under persecution during the reign of John III, at the hands of the Inquisition. Responding to their entreaties John III modified it in such a way that he practically brought the order to an end. It was not surprising that shortly after, at the battle of Alcacer-Quibir in 1578, Portugal lost both its army and its independence.

The Portuguese merchant marine, backed by European merchants, soon found it was more profitable to confine itself within the Indian Ocean as far as Indonesia, China and Japan, without having to return to the mother country. Portugal found itself with an overextended, under supervised Empire. The journey East was appealing to a lot of questionable personalities,

⁷⁷ The Gospel of Saint Thomas had been excluded from the canonical books at the Council of Nicea.

dreaming of quick profits under little moral and judicial restraints; a motley crew of drop outs, jailbirds, criminal gangs and penniless younger sons. It was a race to the bottom without little judicial oversight or consequences for crimes committed. Many Portuguese behaved like a self-appointed aristocracy of the sword.

All sorts of excesses were commonplace. It was known that women were perpetually at risk, all the more so the *mestiços* (mixed-blood) or unmarried daughters with little means. Even more appalling was the cruelty against slaves. Governors themselves were often corrupt. It was all in all a rehearsal stage for all that later took place under many colonial powers, or in the American Wild West. Add to this that Southeast Asia already had its own measure of tensions and excesses even before the foreigners' arrival. With their unrestrained policies the Portuguese raised constant enmities, and lost what little support they had previously managed to gain. By now the original purpose of the voyages of exploration was all but forgotten.

Things could not have turned worse when John ordered the destruction of all the Hindu temples in Goa, then recommended that the Inquisition set shop in the colony. Soon after its arrival it outlawed all Hindu rites, threatening death sentences on the unrepentant. To this was added a wide set of discriminatory practices against the Hindus. The Inquisition then turned on hundreds of Portuguese who had fled from its grip in Portugal. They too died at the stake. Those who anticipated the events took refuge in Muslim territory. Finally, the persecution targeted the Christian Indians, labeled heretics. Their books were burned, their priests imprisoned or killed and mass conversions were forced on all of them. The Goan Inquisition attained unprecedented heights of cruelty.

The consequences of colonial expansion were dire for Portugal at home. Eighty thousand men had left a vacuum in a nation of a million, and this was followed by the plague's return to the nation. Many towns and villages fell into decay. Fortunately by then the appeal of the East had waned. In India much of the immigrant population was decimated by illnesses or violent death.

Shortly after the beginning of the age of the Consciousness Soul humanity came under the regency of the Archangel Gabriel (1510-1789). Before the cosmopolitan Michaelic regency could take effect, Europe had to develop a whole other spiritual orientation, which concentrated on the aspects of the material world. In tandem with the rising of anti-social impulses, humankind underwent the difficult but necessary developments of natural science, nationalism, capitalism and world trade, which gave us their strongest counter-image in the colonialism of the various national empires.

The End of the Portuguese Templar Impulse

We can look at the late part of Portugal's history through the eyes of W. J. Stein's research, which comes from two complementary aspects: on one hand historical spiritual scientific research, on the other karmic research leading to the recognition of a previous life—that of a key figure in the early phases of Portuguese empire.

W. J. Stein had a first significant karmic recollection, which deepened his resolve to research the historical background for the book *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*. In his diaries the German anthroposophist recorded a second "retrospect of past life" on June 27, 1924. He wrote about it to Steiner, and when they met Steiner confirmed it was the memory of Stein's last death, a violent one.⁷⁸ This is not unusual since recall of a traumatic death is often one of the first memories to emerge from a previous life. Stein traced the event to the Portuguese knight and Viceroy of India, Francisco de Almeida (1450-1510) at an important time in relation to the ushering of the epoch of the Consciousness Soul. He then pursued the karmic research together with the exploration of historical documents he consulted in Portugal.

In 1505 Francisco de Almeida, head of the order of Malta, became the first Viceroy of India. He had been present at the siege of Granada in 1492 in which the last Arab kingdom of Spain had been defeated. The Knights of Saint James, both Spaniards and Portuguese, played an important role in the victory. King Manuel I entrusted Almeida with setting up four forts on the southwestern Indian coast.

Previous to the Portuguese expeditions the Venetians had a virtual monopoly on the sale of spices. They were the most threatened by Portuguese expansion. They first tried to secure Portuguese alliance by flattering their Crusading impulses to distract them from the Far-East. When they failed, they abandoned all pretense and went all out toward the Egyptians, their commercial allies. The Signoria launched its own ships on the Red Sea. The Venitians won a victory against a small Portuguese fleet at Diu, a harbor at the mouth of the Indus delta, and Francisco's son Lourenço died in the battle.

Almeida was soon avenged the following year in a bloody way. Venice was humbled and the Egyptians were crushed. The resounding victory induced the Zamorin of Calicut to come to terms with the Europeans, letting them build a fortress in the city. However, Almeida soon became less than

⁷⁸ W. J. Stein attributed what brought the recollection to the kind of experience in which someone says to the individual in question something unpleasant that irritates and hurts his feelings. And this is the experience that one has to work into a living picture and carry into the night three times in a row. This is one of the specific exercises, the so called "Greater Karma Exercise," that Steiner offered as a tool for karmic recognition and insight. The "Greater Karma Exercise" is explained by Rudolf Steiner in *Karmic Relationships*, Volume 2, in the lecture of May 4, 1924.

enthusiastic about Manuel's plans. He did not see the need to fight the Indians on land and put Portuguese lives at risk, rather organize piracy against the Muslims.

Neither did Almeida share Manuel's grandiose, prophetic delusions. In Portugal religious fervor was ratcheting up. In two days two thousand Jewish men and women were massacred. Even though Manuel sentenced to death the ringleaders, and even the priests behind the events, his own messianic goals were not to be denied. Thus, he replaced Almeida with Afonso de Albuquerque, who envisioned a great Asian empire of a Christian stamp in stark opposition to Islam. Furthermore, on account of displeasing some in the Order of Malta, Almeida was recalled to the motherland and assassinated while he was on the way, in the Bay of Saldana (South Africa). The real motives behind this treason are not known to external history. They can only be understood through spiritual science.

We can complete the picture from W. J. Stein's research. Almeida had found in Granada, among the treasure of the Moors a sacred relic connected to "a form of alchemy." It could impart a kind of knowledge that goes back to Alexander the Great and Aristotle.⁷⁹ The Order of Santiago came to know about it and wanted it for itself. Almeida decided otherwise at the cost of his life. The knight, known to posterity as "the one who never lied or feared," passed on the artifact to an alchemist he had met in Compostela, Stefan Rautter—known to history as Basil Valentine—whose opus was later published by the Rosicrucians. Valentine himself mentions that he undertook a dangerous journey to Compostela.

Basil Valetine described the human tripartition of body, soul and spirit and worked with the transmutation of carbon, the *prima materia*, though unfortunately only *The twelve Keys* survived of his written work. Steiner indicates that in him Aritstotle's work was brought forward. Francisco de Almeida played an important role in woorld history in carrying Aristotle's scientific work from the Arab world to central Europe via the Iberian peninsula.

The Portuguese knight understood what was at work in world karma—the necessity to transmit this new, important knowledge not to the nations of the fourth epoch, but to those of the fifth one. In our time the knowledge of alchemy itself can be, as it were, transmuted. What applied to the mixing of substances within the human being is now elevated to the collaboration of many nations in the social realm, particularly in the economy. In this way the knowledge of the *Royal Art* went first from Spain to Alsace. Later in life, Basil Valentine went to England and Thomas Malory became his pupil. Stein indicates that proof of his discipleship appears in the seventh chapter of *Le Morte d'Arthur*, the most clearly esoteric part of the manuscript.

⁷⁹ W. J. Stein, *The Death of Merlin*, 91.

Almeida left us further important hints about world karma, and W. J. Stein gathered them in his research. In the word of the Portuguese, "In Alexander's time the interior of the country [India] had to be occupied; we, however, must rest content with fortifying certain points along the coast and thus securing the ocean path to India, for we must now wrest the trade from the hands of the Arabs and must take their place."⁸⁰

The above can be understood through the fact that Alexander the Great had died very prematurely and the Arabs were therefore not Hellenized, nor was Aristotle's work carried as far as India. This brought forward later the necessity of the Crusades and prolonged war against the Arabs at the time of the journeys of discovery. The Crusades' aim lay in strengthening the soul life through the feelings, rather than the thought life, and this is why they could more easily be attacked by the Luciferic forces.⁸¹

Something similar to the above can be said about the Templar impulse. For all the beauty of its striving, Steiner reminds us, "Humanity was not yet ripe to receive the impulse of wisdom, beauty and strength in the way the Knights desired. Besides, it was determined on grounds we have yet to learn, grounds that lie in the whole spiritual development of Europe, that the spiritual world was not to be attained in the way in which the Templars entered it. It would have been gained too quickly, which is the Luciferic way."⁸²

The continuation of the ideal of Prester John gives us an indication of the further goals of evolution to be achieved through the age of discovery. After achieving his quest Parsifal is allowed to take another person with him to the Grail, and he elects to take Feirefis. The theme announces how Eastern man can be inspired in the pursuit of his goals by the man of the West. This can be achieved by abandoning the quest of adventures of Arthur/Prester John and acting like knights of the Grail, "knights of the Word," rather than knights of the sword. This means taking hold of the spiritual knowledge that recognizes the brotherhood of nations, rather than past and present empires. The impulse of the threefold social order leads the way in this direction.

The new knighthood of the Word invites us to leave familiar traditions and security behind for the daring journeys of exploration into the unknown. W. J. Stein concludes "Let the genuine spirit, the noble soul, shimmer in the healthy body: that was the high ideal which the modern age inscribed on its standard."⁸³ The ideal of the Age of Discovery speaks for the new Age

⁸⁰ Ibid, 108.

⁸¹ Rudolf Steiner, *Inner Impulses of Evolution*, 25 September 1916 lecture.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ W. J. Stein, *The Death of Merlin*, 133.

of the Consciousness Soul, the cultivation of a healthy spirituality within a fully worldly stance.

Portugal is that country that ushered in the transition from the Medieval consciousness to the Consciousness Soul and paved the way for the preparation of the English mission. Stein sees the great knightly orders that followed the Templars as the instruments of the spirit of modern time. And the further mission of the Grail lies in bringing the Christ impulse not just to human beings but to folk-souls at the level of national impulses, and in fostering a new world economy of harmonious collaboration. It is to the post-Portuguese evolution of this impulse that we turn in closing.

From Portugal to Holland and England

The decline of Portugal on the world scene marked the ascent of Holland and England. In the centuries that preceded this transition trade increased from Portugal to northern Europe passing through the Hanseatic League. Portugal had been one of the main sources for the salt used in great part for preserving the herring. Trade then expanded to all agricultural produce of the kingdom. Since the times of King Denis the League resorted to using the Portuguese shipyards, first to repair, then to build ships in Portuguese harbors. Both large ships and even military navy ships were built in Portugal. Later these would serve the needs of the Age of Discovery.

The term Hansa, which designates a loose economic collaboration of primarily northern German cities, likely comes from Finnish *Kansak*, organized group of individuals. In the twelfth century, for political reasons the influence of Scandinavian countries waned and left a vacuum. The Germans, traditional commercial partners to these countries, filled the vacuum. In the middle fourteenth century the whole economic life of the Scandinavian kingdoms was in the hands of Hanseatic merchants, initiatives and capital.

In the thirteenth century the Hansa became an association of trading cities and of German merchant communities bound by a common trading law and loose sets of agreements. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we find among cities and German merchant communities an increase in the formation of guilds, corporations, confraternities, etc. that took in hand the trading policies of the towns.

The Hanseatic League was located between the consumer markets of Flanders, England and Northern France on one hand and the producers of raw materials of Eastern Europe—an area between London, Bruges and Novgorod. At that point they became the almost exclusive commercial agents in North European trade. They benefited from a network of trading posts and warehouses they established abroad. A trading post in London already existed in the eleventh century. In the thirteenth century they had another one as far as Bergen, Norway.

Portuguese relationships with the western Hansa were inaugurated in the thirteenth century through the intermediary role of Flanders. Already at that time there were Portuguese merchants established in Koln. Overall, however, it was Northern Europe that supplied the trade. Portugal mostly supplied the produce, since the country did not have the needed commercial and economic development and was too busy developing a navy for exploratory purposes first, and then for the colonization of the East.

Tension arose between English and Dutch on one side and the Hanseatic navy on the other, leading to attacks on merchant ships in the fourteenth century, to open wars at the end of the fourteenth century between England and the Teutonic Order who supported the Hansa, and in the first half of the fifteenth century between the Dutch and the Hansa.

Whereas the League could triumph over England it could not subdue the Dutch navy, which started to impact the League's commercial traffic even as early as the 1420s. With the peace that shortly followed the Dutch commercial fleet acquired unrestricted freedom of circulation in the Baltic. The remainder of the century was punctuated by confiscations, blockades, acts of piracy. These notwithstanding the Dutch came out strengthened and Holland emerged as a strong nation solidly grounded on commercial rights. When the Portuguese mission was ended through Spanish occupation, the baton was passed on first to the Dutch—who took over many of the original trading posts of the Portuguese—and later in time to England.

Wikimedia Photo Credits

Compostela's Portico de la Gloria

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El_P%C3%B3rtico de la Gloria de la Catedral de Santiago de Compostela, 1849, Jenaro P%C3%A9rez Villaamil, Palacio de la Moncloa, Madrid.JPG#file](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El_P%C3%B3rtico_de_la_Gloria_de_la_Catedral_de_Santiago_de_Compostela,_1849,_Jenaro_P%C3%A9rez_Villaamil,_Palacio_de_la_Moncloa,_Madrid.JPG#file)

Vézelay, Abbey of Saint Mary Magdalen

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eglise de la Madeleine - Portail central de la nef - V%C3%A9zelay - M%C3%A9diath%C3%A8que de l'architecture et du patrimoine - APMH00003874.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eglise_de_la_Madeleine_-_Portail_central_de_la_nef_-_V%C3%A9zelay_-_M%C3%A9diath%C3%A8que_de_l'architecture_et_du_patrimoine_-_APMH00003874.jpg)

Tomar's Charola

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tomar_BW_2018-10-08_09-51-00.jpg

São João de Tarouca

[https://commons.wiki-media.org/wiki/File:Igreja de S%C3%A3o Jo%C3%A3o de Tarouca - Portugal \(2720405654\).jpg](https://commons.wiki-media.org/wiki/File:Igreja_de_S%C3%A3o_Jo%C3%A3o_de_Tarouca_-_Portugal_(2720405654).jpg)

Alcobaça Monastery

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alcoba%C3%A7a October 2021-9a.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alcoba%C3%A7a_October_2021-9a.jpg)

Statue of Gualdim Pais

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monumento a Gualdim Pais - Tomar - Portugal \(52993301403\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monumento_a_Gualdim_Pais_-_Tomar_-_Portugal_(52993301403).jpg)

Almourol Castle

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue King Afonso Henriques Portugal.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_King_Afonso_Henriques_Portugal.JPG)

Monastery of Batalha

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Batalha September 2021-2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Batalha_September_2021-2.jpg)

Henry the Navigator

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Henry the Navigator1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Henry_the_Navigator1.jpg)

Rosslyn Chapel

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosslyn Chapel1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosslyn_Chapel1.jpg)

Rosslyn Chapel, Apprentice Pillar

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosslyn Chapel, The Apprentice Pillar \(3611600998\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosslyn_Chapel,_The_Apprentice_Pillar_(3611600998).jpg)

Jerónimos Monastery Cloisters

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cloisters of Mosteiro dos Jer%C3%B3nimos, upper floor, 2007-07-20, Lisbon 01.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cloisters_of_Mosteiro_dos_Jer%C3%B3nimos,_upper_floor,_2007-07-20,_Lisbon_01.jpg)