

Dressed to impress: clothing, jewels and weapons in court rituals in Portugal (1450-1650)

Isabel dos Guimarães Sá<sup>1</sup>

Paper presented at the Conference *Clothing and the Culture of Appearances in Early Modern Europe. Research Perspectives*, Madrid, Fundación Carlos Amberes / Museo del Traje. 3-4 February 2012.

#### **Abstract**

This paper will explore the different attires required by some types of court rituals: ceremonial entries or other parades, games, theatrical representations (*momos*), and banquets. Still at a preliminary stage, this research focuses on narratives included in chronicles and ambassador reports, where we can find very detailed depictions of the material environment of rituals, such as horse attire, dress and objects. The main purpose is establishing what were the conventions concerning the proper dress in each type of ritual, the political messages they conveyed, and how changes occurred over the transition between the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. A special focus will be made on gender, social hierarchy, and power relationships such as they were staged during court rituals. What were the differences concerning dress between men and women? Were there markers of social hierarchy among courtiers conveyed by clothing? What kind of political messages were at stake in given configurations? How did courtiers and the royal family shift between “national” modes of dress?

---

<sup>1</sup> History Department, Universidade do Minho; associate researcher, Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa.

## Introduction

“And the king was dressed in the French way, with a tailing cloak made of rich gold fabric, lined with ermine, and over it a rich and big collar chain with precious stones, and a brocade clump (pelote), lined with rich minks with many slashes, and in them rich brooches with gems, and rich pearls, and a rich golden dagger over a rich belt, and a white hat with a white crest, over a beautiful horse colour pigeon, the bridle richly decorated, and behind him his pages richly dressed, and many lords and noble people”<sup>2</sup>.

The chronicler Garcia de Resende (1470-1536) described in this way the appearance of King João II (1455-1481-1495) when his daughter in law, Isabel of Castile and Aragon (1470-1498) entered the city of Évora to wed his only son prince Afonso (1475-1491) on the 28 November 1490.

This paper is about high luxury as Jan de Vries has defined it<sup>3</sup>. I have analysed clothes as part of a language pertaining to the court and high aristocracy. My main argument is that dress codes in this society have to be analysed together with artifacts used in ritual occasions, and also space. Space was dressed for each solemn occasion: beds were lavishly covered with quilts, canopies and curtains; tapestries covered the walls, and in most occasions a stage or platform (estrado) was also dressed; in the streets bedquilts and banners were exhibited in order to salute the royal cortège. Parading involved horses, mules or *facaneias* or *facas* (small horses used by women or children) which were to be also dressed for the occasion, their attire usually matching the fabrics and other materials used in the garments of their riders.

Portuguese iconography is scarce, although I am doing my best efforts to retrieve the existing images, and, except for liturgical vestments, that have

---

<sup>2</sup> “E el rei ia vestido à francesa, com uma opa roçagante de rica tela de ouro, forrada de arminhos, e em cima uma rica e grande cadeia de pedraria, e um pelote de brocado, forrado de ricas martas com muitos golpes, e neles ricos firmas de pedraria, e ricas pérolas, e uma rica adaga de ouro em uma rica cinta, e um chapéu branco com um penacho branco, e em cima de um mui formoso ginete ruço pombo, a brida com riquíssima guarnição, e detrás dele seus pajens ricamente vestidos, e muitos senhores, e nobre gente”. In Garcia de Resende, *Crónica de D. João II e Miscelânea*, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1973, p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behaviour and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present*, Cambridge, CUP, 2008, pp. 58-72.

been inventoried, civil clothing is virtually inexistent<sup>4</sup>. and the main sources used shall be textual, for the most included in chronicles of kings. Inventories, as important as they are, as Ulinka Rublack as remarked, do not inform us how objects were used and became part of relationships<sup>5</sup>. As Portugal is iconorexic, there is a further difficulty in the fact that paintings and sculpture can be imported from other areas of Europe, namely Flanders. Also, some artists working in Portugal were of foreign origin and trained in northern Europe for the most part; we can suspect that they represented clothes according to imported models. Thus, I will rely mostly on narrative sources. Some chronicles depict in utmost detail the way in which the main characters present themselves in ritual occasions, such as royal entries, court games, *momos*, coronations, weddings and funerals. Travel accounts can also give information about this subject<sup>6</sup>, together with other sources such as civility manuals, medicine treaties, etc. For the moment, however, I have relied mostly on chronicles and ambassador's reports, the latter being often included in the former.

Gender – men's attire: armour, jewels, weapons

As referred to, most descriptions of clothing occur within narratives of rituals, and as the latter are about power and authority, there is an unbalance between the description of women's clothes versus men's clothes. Rituals such as "alevantamentos" (the equivalent to coronations in Portuguese tradition), parliament (*cortes*) reunions, jousts and other games have men in the leading roles. Chroniclers, who were also recruited to write about kings, give them centre stage, obliterating women's visual appearance in such events. Also, some court rituals were not generally open to women such as *cortes*, or *alevantamentos*; others had them as spectators, such as court games, and

---

<sup>4</sup> See Teresa Alarcão and José Alberto Seabra Carvalho, *Imagens em Paramentos Bordados. Séculos XIV a XVI*, Lisboa, Instituto Português de Museus, 1993. It should be noted, however, that the main scope of this inventory was to retrieve items which include images, vestments without iconography being absent from the publication.

<sup>5</sup> Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up. Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe*, Oxford, OUP, 2010, p. 211.

<sup>6</sup> See Máximo García Fernández, "La dote femenina: posibilidades del incremento del consumo al comienzo del ciclo familiar. Cultura material castellana comparada (1650-1850)", dir. Isabel dos Guimarães Sá e Máximo García Fernández, Coimbra-Valladolid, Imprensa da Universidade e Universidad de Valladolid, 2010, pp. 138-145.

nothing is said about their attire. Even in weddings, when some attention is given to them, the main focus is on men<sup>7</sup>. As such, Portuguese sources match the general European pattern, whereby at the end of the Middle Ages, women played a secondary role in fashion; expenditure by queens and princesses on clothes was lower than men's<sup>8</sup>.

There is also an important tradition to be considered in the Western world, which is the replacement of loose vestments, an inheritance from the tunic in Antiquity, by the separate pieces of clothing that adjust to the body. The latter have a military origin, and have appeared since the low Middle Ages, being the equivalent to armour. Men dressed piece to piece, separating the different parts of the body: legs, waist, chest and head, without forgetting the feet. Clothing serves the requirements of agility and mobility of those who wear it. As such, it required cutting and sewing, and also accessories: belts, buttons (which made their appearance in the thirteenth century), and lace. Clothing in the form of dress or *opa* insists in the quantity of fabric that covers the body, often dragging the floor, and covering and hiding bodily forms. It is the dress of ecclesiastics, from secular priests to monks and friars, but also of kings when they are portrayed with their attributes. Forty years later, in his *levantamento* King João III wore a tailing cloak in brocade padded with marten, while mounted on a horse (also wearing brocade) led by one of his brothers, whilst two young fidalgos carried the cloak's tail. He was to leave the *Paço da Ribeira* and arrive to the Dominican convent where a wooden stand had been mounted next to its loggia. This stand was known as *cadafalso* (the same name afterwards given to scaffolds) and was an ephemeral construction entirely covered in tapestries and carpets. The king's seat was again of brocade, with brocade pillows at his feet<sup>9</sup>. As such, loose clothes are used in solemn

---

<sup>7</sup> As an example a letter describing the voyage of Catarina on her way to wed king João III. BA, cód. 51-VI-40, "Carta que foi escrita à Rainha D. Leonor sobre a vinda e recebimento da Rainha D. Catarina, mulher do rei D. João o 3º deste nome nosso senhor que Deus guarde", fls. 41-54.

<sup>8</sup> Piponnier, Françoise & Mane, Perrine, *Dress in the Middle Ages*, Mew Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, p. 77; Scott, Margaret, *Medieval Dress & Fashion*, London, The British Library, n.d..

<sup>9</sup> BA, Cód. Ms. 51-VI-33, "Esta é a ordem que se teve no levantamento del rei D. João o terceiro, por falecimento de el rei D. Manuel seu pai, e foi o dito levantamento na cidade de Lisboa a uma quinta feira a 19 dias do mês de Dezembro de 1521", fls. 201-205. According to Gaspar Correia (c.1495-c.1561), the main colour of the installation was crimson (Correia, Gaspar, *Crónicas de D. Manuel e de D. João III (até 1533)*, ed. José Pereira da Costa, Lisboa, Academia das Ciências, 1992, p. 177-178).

occasions, even in those of royalty with a profane character (public court hearings, assemblies – “cortes”, “alevantamentos”, etc.).

Although the tradition of bodices implanted itself, female clothing obeys to the need of hiding some parts of the body, such as hips, legs, and feet. We have on the one hand a secular, military tradition, and another framed by religious imperatives. They are radically opposed: in the former the body is exhibited, in the second it is concealed, although with important variations across time and gender. That is, whilst clothes adjusted to the body emphasized its use in profane chores, loose clothing are used in the middle and early modern period to stress the link to spirituality.

References to women attire become more concise when the intention of the chronicler is to stress their renunciation to the world. When princess Joana (1452-1490), entered a convent to become a nun, she was praised for her shirts and sheets of serge and wool, her honest dresses in “shape and prize of the cloth”, headdress of linen and cotton, etc. She gave up an emerald ring she had always worn, but kept the jewels that included relics<sup>10</sup>. In the convent, some nuns slept on cork litters covered in rough blankets, whilst wearing sackcloth and cilices<sup>11</sup>. In Portuguese sources, textual or visual, men’s clothes are adjusted to the body when non-ecclesiastical persons are concerned. As for the king, he wore a mixture of loose clothes with adjusted ones, in order to transmit his role as a recipient of authority by God’s will.

### Markers of social hierarchy and political allegiance

As we know, clothing means belonging to social groups. The livery is a good example, because it incorporated, in the literal sense, the individual into a certain entity, with its duties, but also its privileges<sup>12</sup>. As such, self-expression and individual expression became secondary, because the member of the household was to identify himself with the group he belonged to. Clothes were used as a form of payment to courtiers, together with food (they were listed in the *livros de cozinha*), and annuities in cash. In Portugal as elsewhere,

---

<sup>10</sup> *Crónica da Fundação do Mosteiro de Jesus de Aveiro, e Memorial da Infanta Santa Joana Filha Del Rei Dom Afonso V (códice quinhentista)*, ed. de António Gomes da Rocha Madahil, Aveiro, Edição do Prof. Francisco Ferreira Neves, 1939, p. 114-115.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*, p. 24.

<sup>12</sup> See Ann Rosalind Jones & Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance clothing and the materials of memory*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

the type of items given to each individual, and, above all, the textiles used in their production, were different according to rank. The sources document almost the same number and type of items given to slaves as to nobles, only in textiles of lesser price and quality. Even so, certain cloths were the exclusive to the king and the high nobility, such as *escarlata*, *menim* and *lila*, either because laws restricted their use or their price was too high. Arjun Appadurai has designated the consumption of such objects as royal monopolies, whose main function was to maintain sumptuary exclusivity, commercial advantage, and the display of rank<sup>13</sup>. Even so, vestments in court were always tailored, adapted to the body of their prospective users, a decisive contrast with the second hand trade, or the charitable giving of clothes to the poor.

It is not surprising that the production and commerce of textiles was the main economical activity that determined the prosperity of some areas in Europe, which had developed since the middle age's economic growth from the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Prosperous textile producing cities exported to Portugal since the Middle Ages. Luxury fabrics of Portuguese production were rare, and most textiles were imported from Flanders, England and Italy. The name of fabrics in Portuguese is often coincident with the city or area they were imported from: ipres (Ypres), londres (London), bristol, cambraia (Cambray), ruão (Rouen), damasco (damask), or olanda (Holland), castela, irlandia, etc<sup>14</sup>. Fabrics with a general designation were rare: *escarlata*, *chamalote*, velvet, *terciopelo*, silk, *fustian*, *estamenha* (stammel), down to the less priced cloth the "pano da terra" (local cloth)<sup>15</sup>. After the discovery of the maritime route to India, however, oriental textiles were to invade the Portuguese market, to the point that Manuel I intended to dispense the import of European silk<sup>16</sup>.

The importance of textiles and other luxury garments implied that lords often kept them in their treasure chambers as stock that was ready to be

---

<sup>13</sup> Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value", in Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge, CUP, 1986, p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> Ferreira, Ana Maria Pereira, *A Importação e o Comércio Têxtil em Portugal no século XV*, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, 1983, pp. 29-48, 107-131 e 153-154.

<sup>15</sup> Estamenha = spindled mediocre wool fabric; *escarlata* = silk or woolen fabric brightly red; *chamalote* = silk with camel hair or wool with silk.

<sup>16</sup> IANTT, Núcleo Antigo, *Livro de Registo de Leis e Regimentos de D. Manuel*, fl. 4v. (1516.12.18, Lisboa. Alvará proibindo a importação de seda, nem fiada nem em retroses, por haver muita no Reino, graças à produção própria e à que vinha da Índia).

transformed into clothes<sup>17</sup>. This also meant that they had to employ their own tailors, embroiderers, and the like, who were generally members of their households. Any account book or inventory from fifteenth century member of the royal family documents that were several teams of tailors. There was a division of quality and thus of status: those who made liturgical vestments (altar fronts, chasubles, dalmatics, altarpiece curtains, coffin covers), and those dedicated to the fabrication of clothes for profane use (including bed attire, canopies, hanging cloths, or horse and mule dressings).

The value of clothes matched their use: the newer the more valuable<sup>18</sup>. Portuguese sources usually use the expression “tirado da costura” (off seam) to designate brand new pieces of clothing. The recent sewing and production of the latter characterised new clothing, as it often was made of recycled cloth from other garments. This is often the case with liturgical vestments. There was a wide variety of decorative pieces, often very elaborated, such as fringes and clavises, often removed from one piece of clothing to another.

Clothing forms a powerful device of self-presentation and social positioning, and as such it generates identity. To give an example, a late sixteenth century source depicts Portuguese soldiers in India as going out the house in turns, in order to wear a convenient outfit, because there were not sufficient individual clothes for all of them<sup>19</sup>.

Besides the fact that a woman’s marital status translated itself into clothing (as well in hairdressing and bodily attitude) – clothing could communicate other situations, such as the transition from adolescence to adult age. In the Portuguese court of the sixteenth century, the *capote* (cloak) was worn only in the late teens, and pageboys could not wear it, but only *pelotes* (sleeveless coats by the knee)<sup>20</sup>. Another example: in the Colégio dos Nobres, a college founded to educate boys, at the end of the eighteenth century, pupils dress according to their order of birth: there is an outfit for

---

<sup>17</sup> Freire, Anselmo Braamcamp, “Inventário da infanta D. Beatriz 1507”, *Arquivo Historico Português*, vol. IX, Lisboa, 1914, p. 64-110; Freire, Anselmo Braamcamp, “Inventário da casa de D. João III em 1534”, *Arquivo Historico Português*, Lisboa, vol. VIII, 1910, p. 261-280, 367-390.

<sup>18</sup> Rublack, *Dressing up .. cit*, p. 214.

<sup>19</sup> John Huyghen van Linschoten, *The voyage of John Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies (1583-1592) – from the old English translation of 1598...*, New York, Burt Franklin Publisher, s.d., vol. I, p. 199-200.

<sup>20</sup> Damião de Góis, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel*, 4 vols., Coimbra, por ordem da Universidade, 1949-1955, parte I, p. 157.

firstborns, for second and third sons, etc<sup>21</sup>. That is, the dressing system matched the principle of primogeniture and the indenture system of property.

Ambassadors were dressed from head to toe, because they represented the king. It is thus no surprise that *Rui de Sande* (†1504), the Portuguese envoy to the wedding of Isabel of Castile and Aragon, eldest daughter of the Catholic Kings with Afonso prince of Portugal (1475-1491), in the report he wrote to king João II, takes a paragraph to describe how the three ambassadors were dressed for the occasion, each on a mule to match<sup>22</sup>. This group included the *regedor*, the chancellor and himself, as the embassy's secretary. Sande reported to the king the very evening the wedding took place, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1490.

Clothing could be also a sign of political allignment. An episode occurred in 1480 was taken by the king as evidence of disrespect. It took place at the cortes de Évora-Montemor, right after the death of king Afonso V, when the courtiers were supposed to use mourning clothes. The marquis of Montemor presented himself to king João II with his normal clothes beneath the mourning ones, and his horse also had a crimson attire, and this was interpreted as a sign of duplicity; the king was to tell him that he should respect his recently deceased father, who had bestowed the marquis with many honors<sup>23</sup>. This incident is narrated by the chronicler as a prelude to present the political tension between the new king, John II, and the high nobility that resented his tough grip on political power. In fact, the marquis was to be exiled after a further incident with the archbishop of Braga, and later took part in a conspiracy against the king in 1483, that caused his execution in ephigy.

---

<sup>21</sup> *Estatutos do Collegio Real dos Nobres da Corte, e Cidade de Lisboa*, Lisboa, off. de Miguel Rodrigues, 1761, p. 11-12.

<sup>22</sup> “Os embaixadores de vossa alteza iam desta maneira, a saber – o regedor levava uma roupa de veludo preto aveludado comprida até ao chão forrada toda de brocado rico e em cima um colar de esmalte e umas mangas de cetim alionado frisado de ouro com golpes abertos e tomados de muita pedraria rica. Ia em uma mula guarnecida de veludo preto franjada e guarnimento de ouro em muita quantia e lustro. O chanceler mor levava outra opa de veludo carmesim aveludado forrada de brocado raso e outro rico colar e sua mula guarnecida de veludo preto franjada de ouro e a chaparia da guarnição de prata bem lavrada. Eu senhor pelo terço da tamanha e tão excelente mercê que tinha neste dia levava uma opa de brocado rico forrada de cetim branco porque eram das cores da princesa nossa senhora e outro colar de ouro não somenos e [...] outra mula etc...”. In Correia, *Crónicas dos Reis...*, p. 223-224.

<sup>23</sup> Garcia de Resende, *Crónica de D. João II e Miscelânea*, Lisboa, INCM, 1973, p. 38.



Blood stained clothes were kept in monasteries as relics, testifying to the defeat of one's enemies. João II offered the clothes the duke of Viseu was wearing when he stabbed him to death to one of his confessors, who then gave them to the Franciscan convent of Leiria<sup>24</sup>. It was common to transform the objects appropriated from enemies into relics. Several Portuguese monasteries testify to this kind of procedures, which were ultimately designed to thank God for the victory. It was the case of the monastery of Alcobaça, which kept in its sacristy several objects gathered in battle, including garments transformed into liturgical vestments<sup>25</sup>. In this situation, the explanation seems more complicated. The intervention of the confessor (it is not stated if he was the king's or the duke's) suggests a penitential intention, but it was the king to decide to donate it. As such, it is a strange donation: a gesture we have difficulty not only in understanding, but also in explaining.

Dress according to types of rituals, political messages

Feasts and rituals, in the same way that they led to common meals, obliged to the use of special clothing. Ceremonial dress annuls practicality, as it is made in a way that prevents the performance of simple daily tasks; most attire worn in solemn occasions were very heavy and uncomfortable, requiring sacrifice from their users. Their main function was to be looked at, as semiophors, as they established communication between the visible and the invisible<sup>26</sup>. If we wish, to interpret such attire in the manner of Veblen, its value for the production of goods is null on the part of those who actually use them. However, we know how the production of luxury goods in this period implemented the development of a wide range of very sophisticated crafts, which employed a high number of artisans. But Veblen, however, was right when he enunciated that the more useless objects are in what he termed the

---

<sup>24</sup> “El Rei D. João 2º quando matou D. Diogo, duque de Viseu, às punhaladas, mandou dar tudo, a saber: camisa, gibão, roupeta, capuz, que tudo era de veludo e damasquilha, a arbítrio de seu confessor, Fr. António de Elvas, religioso deste hábito, o qual aplicou tudo a este convento”. *O Couseiro ou Memórias do Bispado de Leiria*, Braga, Typographia Lusitana, 1868, p. 97. Diogo was the elder brother of the king's wife, D. Leonor.

<sup>25</sup> Gomes, Saul António, *Visitações a Mosteiros Cistercienses em Portugal. Séculos XV e XVI*, Lisboa, IPPAR, 1998, pp. 59-71.

<sup>26</sup> K. Pomian, “Histoire culturelle, histoire des sémiophores”, *Sur l'histoire*, Paris, Éditions Gallimard, 1999, pp. 191-229.

“leisure class”, the higher their social and political value<sup>27</sup>. They serve to exhibit power, the harmony with God’s will, and above all, to inscribe solemn occasions in memory.

There was a preoccupation to dress horses and persons accordingly, choosing textiles of the same colour and texture. It is the same concern we find within churches, when the officiating priest dressed in pontifical, with diacons and prebisters dressed to match, sometimes even forming sets with altar frontals and curtains. In most Portuguese inventories of the fifteenth and sixteenth century we can find sets of matching vestments, according to liturgic colours (red, white, green, black, purple, golden and blue)<sup>28</sup>. In games, for instance, the same concern to dress the players of *jogo de canas* might cause the need to distribute identical clothes to the players, as happened between c. 1501 with the constable of the kingdom, D. Afonso (c. 1480-1502)<sup>29</sup>. This game, of a Moorish tradition, is one of several other markers of Muslim influence that can be found in Iberian court culture, such as the *estrados* (low wooden platforms - dais), or items of clothing such as shirts (*camisas mouriscas*)<sup>30</sup>. In the team games in the Portuguese court of the early sixteenth century the two opponents used ethnic differentiation to distinguish themselves in dress. One team dresses in the Christian manner and the other in the Moors. We can find the listing of Muslim garments in king’s inventories. With D. Manuel the list is complete with horse attire, clothing, turbans, and weapons<sup>31</sup>. The large number of items in each category suggests they were used to dress teams of players

---

<sup>27</sup> Veblen, Thorstein, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, New York, Penguin Books, 1994 [1899].

<sup>28</sup> The list of inventories could be longer, but some can be given as examples. At the end of the fifteenth century, we have the donations of the duke of Beja to the churches of the Order of Christ (IAN/TT, Gaveta VII, 18-1. Livro no qual estão declaradas as vestimentas, jóias e ornamentos que o duque de Beja, D. Manuel, como governador e perpétuo administrador da Ordem de Cristo, mandara para o convento de Tomar e todas as outras igrejas da mesma ordem. 1492.02.08). Between 1579-1598, the inventory of the cathedral of the city of Porto offers identical variety and range of colours (“Inventário do ouro, prata, ornamentos, tapeçaria e todas as mais coisas que ao presente foram achadas nesta sé do Porto conforme ao inventário que dantes fez o senhor bispo Aires da Silva e coisas que de novo cresceram”, *Manuscritos inéditos da BPMP*, II série, 2, Porto, 1984).

<sup>29</sup> IAN/TT, NA 798, “Livro do Tesouro do Condestável”, 1500-1502.

<sup>30</sup> BA, Cód. Ms. 51-V-26, “Livro da Recâmara dos Reis D. João III de Portugal e D. Catarina”, fls. 49-81 (includes seven Moorish shirts).

<sup>31</sup> Freire, Anselmo Braamcamp, “Inventário da Guarda-roupa de D. Manuel”, *Arquivo Historico Português*, Lisboa, vol. II, 1904, pp. 381-417.

During rituals, clothing was not only about dressing people, but also spaces: rooms, bedchambers, boats, ephemeral architecture such as *estrados* or *cadafalsos* were normally covered in tapestries and precious cloth such as crimson velvet and brocade. An example is the dressing of the boats that were to take *infanta* Beatriz (1504-1538) to the duchy of Savoy in 1521, where she was to meet her husband the duke. Not only her chambers, but also the captain's room were entirely covered in cloth, with the particularity that each room was dressed in matching textiles<sup>32</sup>. The sailors were also dressed uniformly in black livery, but the chronicles informs us that, as the trip was a short one, people were confident enough to lend their jewels and other luxury attire to the members of the infant's entourage.

Mourning required that tapestries and colourful textiles be taken off and replaced by black or neutral colours (such as non dyed fabrics, generally brownish). In festive occasions in court until the 1530s crimson and gold seem to be predominant. An example is the description of the baptism in 1527 of Maria (1527-1545), daughter of João III and Catarina de Áustria<sup>33</sup>. Mourning clothes were about absence of colour, because the latter presupposes joy and feasting, but also about coarse fabrics such as *burel*, *almáfega*, and *vaso*, related with expiating of sins through pain and are related to penance. Widows were supposed to be dressed in them for the remaining of their lives. However, after the death of the first wife of king Manuel I, in 1498, black took hold of mourning clothes, and the exequies of the king himself were to demonstrate, which took place in Lisbon's cathedral in December 1521<sup>34</sup>.

#### Shifting between national modes of dress

It is also possible to detect the signing of "national" modes of dress in such descriptions. We do not know for instance what it means to be dressed in

---

<sup>32</sup> Garcia de Resende, "Hida da Infanta D. Beatriz para Sabóia", in *Crónica de D. João II e Miscelânea*, Lisboa, INCM, 1973, p. 330. Also describing the decoration of the boats, Gaspar Correia, *Crónicas de D. Manuel e de D. João III (até 1533)*, ed. José Pereira da Costa, Lisboa, Academia das Ciências, 1992, p. 143-147.

<sup>33</sup> Gaspar Correia, *Crónicas de D. Manuel e de D. João III (até 1533)*, ed. José Pereira da Costa, Lisboa, Academia das Ciências, 1992, p. 237.

<sup>34</sup> Gaspar Correia, *Crónicas de D. Manuel e de D. João III (até 1533)*, ed. José Pereira da Costa, Lisboa, Academia das Ciências, 1992, p. 170-171.

the Portuguese manner, but we have a reasonable idea of what the Castillian, French, Flemish, Italian, German, etc. dress meant.

In 1490, at the occasion of his heir's wedding to the eldest daughter of the Catholic kings, João II was dressed in French attire. The Spaniards at the wedding might have been disconcerted, as the wedding was in fact the corollary of the peace treaties that had ended the Luso-Castillian (1475-1479) war 12 years before. We know from the Aragonese chronicler Jeronimo Zurita that the Portuguese king was suspected by Isabel la Católica and Fernando de Aragón of being an ally to the French, by then traditional enemies of Castille and Aragon<sup>35</sup>. If João II wanted to convey a political message, it was that his recent allegiance to the Spanish kings was not unconditional. Mutual suspicion, in fact, was to last until the end of his reign in 1495, and afterwards with king Manuel I.

King Manuel I was dressing in the Flemish mode at his daughter Beatriz's wedding in 1521<sup>36</sup>. By then, he was married to Leonor of Habsburg, his third wife and eldest sister of the emperor Charles V. If traces of ambiguity persisted in the relations between the two, Manuel was in a closer relationship with the emperor: he had lent him money to repress the uprisings of the *Comunidades*, and his third wife had received a Flemish upbringing. This was a controversial marriage at the time: his second wife had died a year before, and the bride was negotiated to wed his heir to the throne John III. But there might be a further reason to dress Flemish: in fact, the emperor had arranged Beatriz's marriage to Charles III of Savoy, in what was to be a high profile wedding<sup>37</sup>.

#### Changes over time

---

<sup>35</sup> Many excerpts in Zurita's chronicles testify to this lack of trust vs the two kings of Portugal on the part of the Catholic kings. As examples, see Jerónimo Zurita, *Anales de Aragón*, ed. de Ángel Canellas López. Edición electrónica de José Javier Iso (coord.), María Isabel Yague y Pilar Rivero, 2003. <http://ifc.dpz.es/publicaciones/ver/id/2448>, consulted 26 October 2010, libro XX, cap. 59 e cap. 84; Zurita, Jerónimo, *Historia del rey Don Fernando el Católico. De las empresas, y ligas de Italia, compuesta por Jerónimo Zurita cronista del reino de Aragón 1580*, ed. Electrónica de José Javier Iso (coord.), Pilar Rivero y Julián Pelegrín, 2005. <http://ifc.dpz.es/publicaciones/ver/id/2423>, consulted 26 October 2010, livro I, cap. 29, livro II, cap. 23, livro VII, cap. 50, livro VIII, cap. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Garcia de Resende, "Hida da Infanta D. Beatriz para Sabóia", in *Crónica de D. João II e Miscelânea*, Lisboa, INCM, 1973, p. 325.

<sup>37</sup> Jean Aubin, *Le Latin et l'Astrolabe. Études inédites sur le règne de D. Manuel 1495-1521*, 2006, vol. III, pp. 111-119.

Chronicles of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries do not develop descriptions of clothing, and the harmony between court dress, horse attire and textile decoration is no longer reported.

Reasons why this pattern of combining people's clothing with that of interior or exterior decorations disappeared over time are not clear yet. It is possible that the printing press, creating a new visual culture more dependent on pictures, engravings, and pamphlets, transformed spectacles into highly sophisticated and planned series of events, often based upon allegories, as Bouza Alvarez has suggested, about the marriage of king Afonso VI in 1666<sup>38</sup>. But, before the second half of the seventeenth century, court propaganda relied on the visual unity of images, often transmitted by matching clothing, dressing spaces, ephemeral architecture, and horses.

---

<sup>38</sup> Fernando Bouza Alvarez, "*Amor Parat Regna*. Memória visual dos afectos na política barroca", Ângela Barreto Xavier, Pedro Cardim, Fernando Bouza Alvarez, *Festas que se fizeram pelo casamento do rei D. Afonso VI*, Lisboa, Quetzal, 1996, p. 15.