

***História da Diocese de Viseu*, 3 volumes. José Pedro Paiva (coord.). Viseu: Diocese de Viseu e Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2016. ISBN: 978-989-98269-1-5.**

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Published by the Diocese of Viseu and the Coimbra University Press, this work results from the ambitious endeavors of a team coordinated by José Pedro Paiva, a Coimbra University professor who is among the foremost Portuguese experts on Religious History. The ecclesiastical circumscription in question is studied over a 1400-year time span in a work that goes beyond the parameters of local history and which—in the words of its coordinator—seeks to observe “on a global scale, the perspectives opened up by so-called micro-history (...) bearing in mind the concept of connected histories.”

The *História da Diocese de Viseu* comprises three volumes, organized in a chronological-thematic way. The first volume (600 pp.) deals with the diocese from its documented origin (569 AD) until the beginning of the Early Modern Age in Portugal, the period to which the second volume (682 pp.) is dedicated, covering events from 1505 to 1819. The chronology of the third volume (713 pp.) covers the period from Liberalism to the end of the *Estado Novo* (1820-1974). Each volume is divided into five chapters: The Territory; Normative and Doctrinal Context; Agents and Forms of Institutional Organization; Diocese Governance and Relations between Powers (this chapter is subdivided into two in the first volume only); and Christianity and the Faithful: the Christian Sacred Experience.

Departing from the approaches used in the study of other Portuguese dioceses in books written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries whose authors and discourses had a commitment to the Church, the main purpose of this work is to account for the construction of the Diocese of Viseu and understand the ways in which this institution shaped the territory and population of its area of implantation. Thus, a history that was apparently intended to be institutional in nature involved the convergence of methodologies of Territorial History and Archaeology, Social History, History of Mentalities, History of Spirituality, and Religious Sentiment. In this way, it was possible to link together different studies of the territory, the Church’s personnel and its norms and

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directives—providing the basis for religious and pastoral service—as well as the Church’s moral control over lay persons.

The Diocese of Viseu is analyzed with the use of several documentary collections, housed in over 40 institutions, archives, and libraries, at home and abroad. In Portugal, the most important sources of such documents include the Torre do Tombo National Archive, the Viseu Historic Archive, and the Viseu District Archive. Abroad, we should mention, in particular, the information retrieved from the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano*. Listed at the end of the third volume are the indexes of sources (manuscript and printed) and a bibliography supporting the research. Finally, the work is enriched with the inclusion of an onomastic index of the persons and places studied, which simultaneously enables and encourages future research.

Subjecting diverse chronologies to similar methodologies and research surveys enables the reader to comprehend the diocese’s history over a long time span. It also allows us to view different historical facts and events concerning the country and the Catholic Church through the contextualizing reflections offered by several authors—whether by framing the subjects and time periods that they study or by making in-depth analyses of their reflections and consequences at the diocesan level.

The territorialization of the Church (structured at the outset through its parishes, archdeacons, and dioceses) and its gradual complexification have stimulated academic debate within the most recent European historiography. Linked to this debate is the first chapter in the *História da Diocese de Viseu*, which explores the establishment and evolution of the Diocese of Viseu in its territory, as well as describes the material expression of that presence, from the see of the diocese to each of its parishes.

To this end, the various authors analyzed data relating to geography and historical demography, identifying patron saints, their appearance, and their spatial distribution, while also revealing the networks of influence and power spread across the diocese by studying the right of patronage. In this sense, the contribution of archaeology was essential to the first volume, in particular for studying the period before the diocese’s definitive restoration in 1147. Equally valuable was the Crown’s production of administrative documents, such as the list of churches in the kingdom dating from 1320. For the early modern and modern periods, the detailed analysis of the parochial network was preceded by a study of quantitative demographical data, using specialized sources already available for these periods.

In turn, art historians look at the material evidence of the Church's implantation in this diocese. From the Romanesque and Gothic stylistic programs of the Middle Ages, to the baroque transformations of temples, to the restoration initiatives promoted by the *Direção Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais* in the 1930s, what stands out in particular is the study of the buildings' structural features in accordance with an analysis of the context and the initiatives of the commissions that were made for the building and decoration of churches, as well as the conjunctural and pastoral motivations behind them. In the field of painting, a thorough analysis of the works of art commissioned for the cathedral made it possible to observe Viseu—especially in the days of the painter Grão Vasco—within the context of a vast international landscape of artistic models and programs.

Using knowledge and approaches from several fields of research, the study of the territory processes a variety of data and results in a rich, multi-disciplinary analysis. Nevertheless, the collaboration of a great number of authors—especially in the first volume—gives rise to an excessive fragmentation of the information, making for difficult reading. The inclusion of a critical synthesis at the end of each chapter in each volume would have favored a more global, integrated, and problematizing grasp of the data previously presented—of which a large part was previously unpublished, coming from sources never before explored—using a predominantly descriptive and demonstrative approach.

The following chapters start by placing this diocese in the context of the evolution of the Church's normative parameters, proceeding from there to present its local administrative structures and, next, to analyze the men who were a part of them. Among other things, the authors study the following subjects in particular: the agents and forms of institutional organization; the episcopate and the prelates; the chapter, the canons, and the canonical dignities; and the parishes and their pastors. To better understand the profile and behavior of the clerical actors, stress is placed on analyzing the clergy's background and preparation, beginning with the diocese's early days. In this way, we are provided with an outline of the first chapter school, the creation of the post of Schoolmaster within the Chapter, the foundation and workings of the Seminary, the difficulties it encountered in the last few centuries, and its sociocultural role in this region of the country. Careful attention is also given to the monastic network of Viseu by studying the foundation and institutional history of each monastery and reflecting on the pastoral influence that these exerted on the territory either in parallel with, or as part of, the parochial network.

In Volume I, the period before the diocese's definitive restoration, which is practically devoid of sources, is studied through a detailed analysis of the Church's conciliar canons, produced between the fourth and twelfth centuries. The participation of representatives from the Viseu clergy in the Iberian councils is only documented from the sixth century onwards. After 1147, the study turns to a reliance on documents which are diverse in the origin and context of their production, allowing us to capture the inner workings of the diocese as well as the multiple outside influences on the diocesan dynamics of Viseu. As an example, we have an analysis of the interference by the Portuguese king and Coimbra's Santa Cruz Monastery in the restoration and restructuring of the diocesan administration.

The evolution of the diocese in the Late Middle Ages reveals different trends, resulting from varying national and European historical conjunctures. We see, for instance, the weakening of the Portuguese Crown's influence and control, yielding to the centralizing Papacy of Avignon. The clarity of this analysis comes from an examination of diocesan and pontifical documentation in detail, combined with a deep and thorough knowledge of the international context. In relation to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it would, however, have been innovative to problematize in greater detail the implications of the Lateran councils for this territory—since we are speaking of key moments in the Church's territorialization, in the context of the Gregorian Reformation *latu sensu*, occurring simultaneously with the process of construction and emancipation of the kingdom of Portugal, in which the Church played a very important part.

The second volume turns its attention to the contextualization and analysis of the Tridentine Councils, the major subject of a series of productive academic discussions held at Universidade Católica Portuguesa in 2013 with the participation of some of the authors of this volume. Here we can read the results of these recent debates and their application to the territory of the Diocese of Viseu. We can follow the response of Viseu to the guidelines issued by the Council of Trent and the transformations that these brought to the lives of laymen and clerics through such significant aspects as regulating the celebration and register of the sacraments, the action of prelates in controlling the parochial network, and the renovation of the churches, among many others. We should note that the records of episcopal visitations produced within this context were fundamental sources at various stages in the compilation of this volume.

In turn, the chronology dealt with in the third volume shows the way in which this diocese adapted to the difficult circumstances of the liberal republican anticlericalism of the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries, analyzing and problematizing such measures as the extinction of civil and lay patronages (excluding royal patronage) and the suppression of tithes. An effort is made to interpret some landmark laws in the history of Portugal at the local level, such as the Law of the Separation of Church and State (1911), although these are not always particularly well analyzed.

What is more, it is very stimulating to read the pages dedicated to the regular clergy of Viseu, which allow us to view the birth, life, and, in some ways, the death of the whole monastic network. Saul Gomes's very detailed analysis of each monastery in Viseu—from the time of their foundation until the Liberal period—is further enhanced by Jaime Gouveia's reflection on the various phases of liberal and republican anti-congregationalism, debating the sociocultural and economic impact of the measures adopted in the context of both Viseu and Portugal. To this end, Gouveia focuses on the consequences of those impacts on this city and region, including, for instance, the processes of returning property to common law in various monasteries and the different steps taken in the extinction of the religious orders, resulting in the closure of their convents. Despite the relative silence of this period's ecclesiastical sources, this historian manages to extract some names belonging to the extinct communities and to trace their later careers in the secular world.

The diocesan institution is thus characterized through its different administrative instances, outlining the history of its foundation, its functioning, and the tax structure that ensured its funding. This portrait of the diocese's central apparatus and of its extension to the whole district is based on the study of such relevant sources as the general laws of the Church and the kingdom, the correspondence received in Viseu from the papal curia and the royal court, the conciliar canons, the synodal constitutions, the statutes of the chapter, and, of course, the ecclesiastical institutions' archives. This is then followed and completed by a study directed more towards the lay world, the laypeople's religious experience, and the resulting artistic manifestations.

It would be impossible to comment on all the impressively novel analyses made in this work, the data revealed, the ambition of their epistemological premises, and, above all, the way in which they examine the inner workings of the whole diocesan structure. Attention is, however, drawn to the prosopographical method used to reconstruct the careers of the various ecclesiastical actors, namely the prelates. Particularly notable are the studies by Mário Farelo in his critical introduction to the 27 prelates (1147-1505), as well as the one by José Pedro Paiva, which reconstructs the process of accession to the cathedra of Viseu and the ecclesiastical careers of 24 bishops (1505-1819), and Paiva and Sérgio Ribeiro

Pinto's analysis of nine prelates (1820-1974). Although this is characterized by an almost complete absence of sources, we should not forget the work undertaken by Catarina Tente in identifying and framing the prelates of Viseu from 572 to 982.

The application of the prosopographical method to such a large structure covering such a long time span allows us to understand the role of Viseu's episcopate within a landscape of ecclesiastical and secular, as well as national and international, influences. We obtain a close-up view of both the human and the political sides of Viseu's bishops over the centuries, as well as their family backgrounds, the composition of their entourages, and the networks of sociability and favors which supported them and which they in turn supported. Case by case, the intervention of outside powers—namely the Portuguese Crown and the Holy See—is identified over the centuries in the appointments of clergymen to their leading positions, confirming the interference of both secular and ecclesiastical powers in the administration of the diocesan jurisdiction.

The results of this effort to identify, reconstruct, and interpret the careers of the prelates of Viseu, from 1147 to 1974, represent a truly extraordinary advancement for the historiography of the Portuguese Church. In this regard, we note only the lack of a systematic, chronological list of all those individuals, which would help in carrying out future studies. Nonetheless, given the dimension of the whole work, the decision not to include such a list is understandable.

From our reflection on this work, we conclude that, henceforth, it will be almost impossible to conduct any study in Portugal about the History of the Church without quoting from this text. This is due to the diverse range of subjects that it covers, as well as the wealth of sources, the depth of the research, and the novelty of the information it gives us. The large team who made it a reality and José Pedro Paiva must be congratulated. Furthermore, it is to be hoped that other Portuguese ecclesiastical sees will also be subjected to this type of research, using the same high standards.