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## Clergy and royal service: the case of King Fernando's Chancery\*

André Madruga Coelho and Armando Norte

### Introduction

The following study is a result of a research work developed during the initial stage of the DEGRUPE project “*The European dimension of a group of power: the ecclesiastics and the construction of the Iberian Monarchies (13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries)*”.

The material discussed here was extracted from the prosopographical database built specifically within the scope of the aforementioned project, designed to allow collecting information on clergymen with connections to the Hispanic monarchs of the Middle Ages, with the aim of reconstructing their networks of relationships, clienteles and influences. In order to achieve that, all the research works were based, since the beginning, on the survey of very specific archival collections, with an emphasis on royal documents, namely the chancery records.

In fact, the royal chanceries kept verbatim copies or, in some cases, summarized versions of the letters sent at the king's commandment or by middlemen appointed by the king within the scope of the kingdom's government and administration, which are valuable and very reliable sources for the identification of clergymen called upon to play different roles in the king's various spheres of influence and activity: as officers in the administrative structure - the *desembargo* - or as servers in the royal household; as spiritual intercessors in the relationships between the kings and the divine; or as beneficiaries of the royal grace. To that extent, these sources allow creating lists of individuals that, despite being samples of a necessarily broader universe, allow making a number of relatively solid remarks on the characteristics and trends of the group of clergymen that surrounded the king.

We should note that, in the medieval context, the chancery services corresponded to the public and administrative services provided by royal officers - under the superintendence of a chief chancellor, the *chanceler-mor* - who were responsible for writing, notarizing, filing and sending documents issued by the king<sup>1</sup>. These records were filed in different

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<sup>1</sup> On the nature, composition and duties of the Portuguese royal chancery in the medieval period, cf. the definitions by HOMEM, Armando Carvalho - *O Desembargo Régio: 1320-1433*. Lisboa/Porto: INIC, 1990, p. 155; COSTA, Avelino Jesus da - “A chancelaria real portuguesa e os seus registos, de 1217 a 1438”. *Revista da Faculdade de Letras*, 2.<sup>a</sup> série, XIII (1996), pp. 72-74.

types of books, or rolls, the most common ones being the records of properties, also known as *tombos de propriedade*; the lists of the institutions, individuals and assets taxed by the Crown; the inventories of ecclesiastical benefits from royal patronages; the lists of inquiries (*inquirições*) and the chancery's own records, strictly speaking<sup>2</sup>.

The choice to focus this study on King Fernando's chancery (1367-1383) was the result of a combination of various factors, either with a political or a notarial nature. Regarding the former, we should mainly point out the historical importance of the reign of King Fernando, strongly marked by internal and external conflicts and negotiations; as for the latter, we should mention the fact that this chancery is unlike any other Portuguese Medieval chancery<sup>3</sup>, something that might have contributed for the relative lack of knowledge regarding this reign.

So, we have a dual aim – on the one hand, and according to a methodological approach based on a case study, we intend to discuss the potential and the limitations of this kind of source for the reconstruction of social networks and groups in their relation with the Crown while, on the other hand, based on the same limited universe of individuals, we want to project some of the foreseeable results of the DEGRUPE project.

We should also add that the document collection kept at the Torre do Tombo National Archive (ANTT) has an increased interest because it presents singularities related to its composite nature that set it apart from the other royal chanceries. It is a type of collection that is usually known in the field of diplomatic science as a passive chancery, i.e., it is a series of documents issued by the administrative services of the royal Curia for the purpose of keeping internal records<sup>4</sup>. Strictly speaking, that is the passive chancery analyzed in this study, meaning that, right from the start, we exclude the documents issued by the same service that were intended to be presented to the recipients of the royal letters, i.e., that which is commonly known as active chancery<sup>5</sup>, whose surviving originals are scattered across several national archival collections, in university archives

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<sup>2</sup> COSTA, Avelino Jesus da - "A chancelaria real portuguesa e os seus registos..." p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> Up to this moment, the Portuguese royal chanceries of the medieval period that have been published are those of King Afonso Henriques (AZEVEDO, Rui de (ed.) - *Documentos Medievais Portugueses*, vol. 1, t. 1, 2. Lisboa: Academia Portuguesa de História, 1958); King Sancho I (AZEVEDO, Rui, COSTA, Avelino Jesus da and PEREIRA, Marcelino R. (eds.) - *Documentos de D. Sancho I: 1174-1211*, Coimbra: Centro de História da Universidade de Coimbra, 1979); King Sancho II (BERNARDINO, Sandra - *Sancius secundus rex portugalensis. A Chancelaria de D. Sancho II: 1223-1248* (master thesis). Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra, 2003); King Afonso III (VENTURA, Leontina, OLIVEIRA, António R. (eds.) - *Chancelaria de D. Afonso III*. Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 2006); part of King Dinis' chancery SÁ-NOGUEIRA, Bernardo (ed.) - *O Livro das Lezírias d'el rei D. Dinis*. Lisboa: Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa, 2003; MARREIROS, Rosa - *Chancelaria de D. Dinis: livro II*. Coimbra: Palimage, 2012); King Afonso IV (OLIVEIRA MARQUES, António H. (ed.) - *Chancelarias Portuguesas: D. Afonso IV*. Lisboa: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1990-1992), King Pedro I (OLIVEIRA MARQUES, António H. (ed.) - *Chancelaria de D. Pedro I: 1357-1367*. Lisboa: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1984); King João I (*Chancelarias Portuguesas: D. João I*. Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Históricos, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2004-2005), and King Duarte (*Chancelarias Portuguesas: D. Duarte*. Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Históricos, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> NEVES, João António Mendes - *A "formosa" Chancelaria: Estudo dos Originais da Chancelaria de D. Fernando (1367-1383)* (master thesis). Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras, Universidade de Coimbra, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> NEVES, João António Mendes - *ibidem*...

(University of Coimbra Archive), district archives (Porto District Archive, Braga District Archive, Guimarães District Archive), or municipal archives (Lisbon Municipal Archive, Porto Municipal Archive).

From the point of view of its composition, King Fernando's passive chancery has four volumes divided into two well-defined sets. One set includes a selection of documents made during the reformation undertaken by Gomes Eanes de Zurara in the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>6</sup>, corresponding to books 1 and 2. Both are, in general, well preserved and result from copies dated 1463, produced by a single scribe on folios with two columns written in round humanist characters. In total, they have over fifteen hundred documents (specifically, 1569), divided unevenly among the two books. Book 1 has 201 folios with documents from the period between 1367 and 1377, while book 2 has 112 folios that contain copies of documents issued between 1377 and 1384.

As for the second set of documents, it is composed of two volumes with original documents issued during the reign of King Fernando, which are identified as books 3 and 4. Book 3 is, like the previous ones, well preserved; in total, it has 440 documents written between 1378 and 1383, contained in 97 folios with a single column, in which we can identify the presence of several scribes. As for book 4, it includes 172 documents regarding the period between 1371 and 1378. It is composed of 28 folios from various original books; their organization does not seem to follow any specific rule, and they were written by different scribes. Of all the books, this is the one in the worst condition, something that often makes it difficult to read.

So, this *corpus* has 2181 hand-written documents that are unevenly distributed and very heterogeneous both in terms of shape and content. However, a characteristic that is common to the four books is their bilingualism, although Portuguese is largely dominant and Latin has a merely residual presence associated with very specific uses, namely the presentation of clergymen to certain benefits or positions. From a different point of view, the set as a whole reveals that King Fernando's royal chancery was somewhat itinerant, settling for shorter or longer periods in Lisbon, Santarém, Évora and Coimbra - the kingdom's main cities during that period and the focal points of its administration.

Essentially, and regarding its purposes, the diplomatic production of King Fernando's chancery can be divided into five different sections, according to a fairly consensual typology: royal graces; the general administration of the kingdom; treasury management;

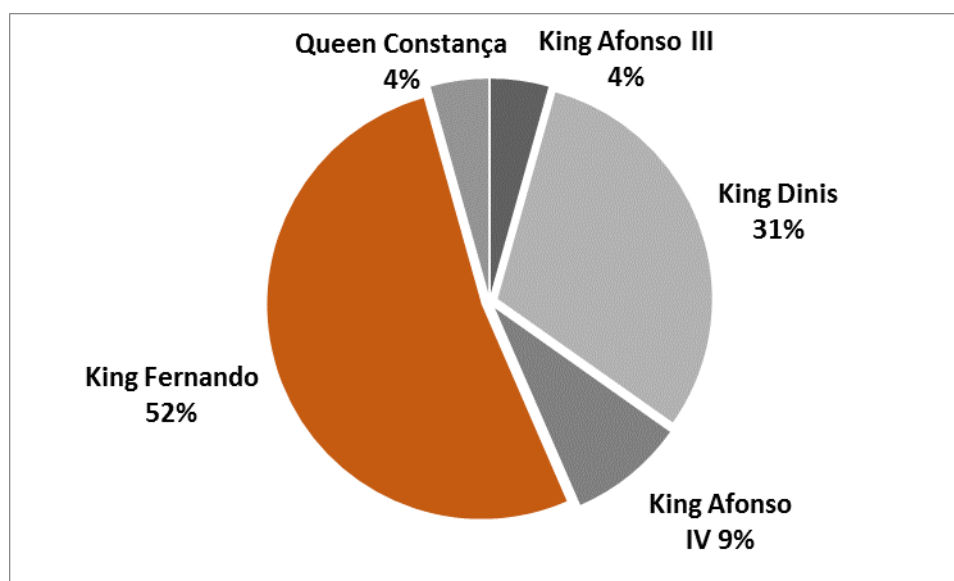
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<sup>6</sup> The reformation of the royal chanceries, which came to be known as the "Zurara Reformation", was a reorganization of the royal documents ordered by King Afonso V, upon request of the Courts of Lisbon, and carried out by the chancellor and chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara with the goal of making it easier to carry out research works at the Torre do Tombo. In practice, it involved a selection and copy of records made by previous chanceries, which led to the destruction of many original documents.

judicial administration, and document preservation<sup>7</sup>. The royal graces included royal privileges, royal exemptions, donations involving jurisdictional exercises and donations of assets and rights. On the other hand, the general administration section includes letters for both the regulation of local jurisdictions and the defense and regulation of military expenses. In terms of treasury, we should mainly highlight documents related to taxation, levies, leases, rights and exemptions, as well as to exchanges and emphytheusis. In the field of justice we find pardon letters, while in terms of document preservation we must highlight the production of copies aimed at perpetuating memory, controlling assets and preserving the archival records.

### 1. The universe of royal clergymen in King Fernando's chancery

In such a varied set of documents, it was possible to identify the presence of 23 individuals who complied with the survey's requirements: on the one hand, they were clergymen; on the other hand, they presented themselves as royal servers; royal service is understood here in a broad sense, encompassing the king himself and the royal household (Pic. 1)<sup>8</sup>.



Pic. 1: Clergymen in the royal service – Dependencies

Despite the fact that their name is mentioned in the documents produced by King Fernando's chancery, many of these clergymen are related to previous chronologies and reigns, something that is a consequence of the production of copies, which had been a

<sup>7</sup> The document typology we adopted follows the one defined by HOMEM, Armando Carvalho - *O Desembargo Régio...*, p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Appendix 1, n°. 1-23.

very common notarial practice in the diplomatic routine of the Portuguese chancery since its inception. The original texts were often copied and inserted as part of the content of new documents, as in this case.

Under these circumstances, it was possible, for example, to find master Domingos Eanes Jardo, mentioned in a document filed in King Fernando's chancery as King Afonso III's clergyman<sup>9</sup>. It was an individual who had a long and well-documented career; he was bishop of the cathedrals of Évora (1285-1290) and Lisbon (1290-1293), and played an important role in terms of assistance in the early years of the general Portuguese study, by providing scholarships to poor students at the Santos Paulo e Elói hospital, which he had founded. He began by serving King Afonso III as his clergyman, chaplain and advisor, and he was also appointed as Prince Dinis' tutor, when he was a child, naturally thanks to his great erudition. Later, King Dinis himself appointed him as royal chancellor (1279-1291), a sign of the trust and esteem with which he regarded him, as well as of the recognition he had for his former tutor<sup>10</sup>.

Other clergymen who were surely at the service of King Dinis and are also found in documents filed in the records of King Fernando's chancery, all of them appointed as royal clergymen, are Estêvão Afonso, mentioned as choirmaster of Évora<sup>11</sup>; Francisco Domingues, identified as prior of the collegiate of the church of Alcáçova in Santarém<sup>12</sup>; Gonçalo Eanes, mentioned simply as the dean of the Braga cathedral<sup>13</sup>; master Gil das Leis; master João; Martinho Lourenço, and, finally, Rui Gonçalves<sup>14</sup>. For similar reasons, analyzing King Fernando's chancery allows us to identify two other clergymen who were in the service of King Afonso IV, namely Miguel Vivas - mentioned as royal clergyman and *vedor da chancelaria*, i.e., a kind of supervisor of his chancery - and Pedro Eanes de Abiul - mentioned as royal servant and canon of the

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Appendix 1, n.º. 2.

<sup>10</sup> NORTE, Armando - *Letrados e Cultura Letrada (sés. XII-XIII)* (PhD thesis), vol 2, Lisboa: Faculdade de Letras, Universidade de Lisboa, 2013, p. 52-55.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Appendix II, docs. 6-7. In the documents there are no references to the name Estêvão Afonso, only to the individual's position; however, a crossed chronological reference with the role of choirmaster of the Évora cathedral allows us to determine with certainty that he held that position. Vid. VILAR, Hermínia Vasconcelos - *As Dimensões de um Poder: A Diocese de Évora na Idade Média*. Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 1999, p. 318.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Appendix II, docs. 11-14. Despite the fact that the individual in question is not mentioned in the sources, but simply referred to as the prior of the church of Alcáçova in Santarém, it is possible to determine that this was the prior Francisco Domingues by comparing the documents in question with the documents contained in King Dinis' *Livro das Lezírias*. Vid. *O Livro das Lezírias d'el rei D. Dinis...*, pp. 201, 203, 216, 218, 220, 239, 245.

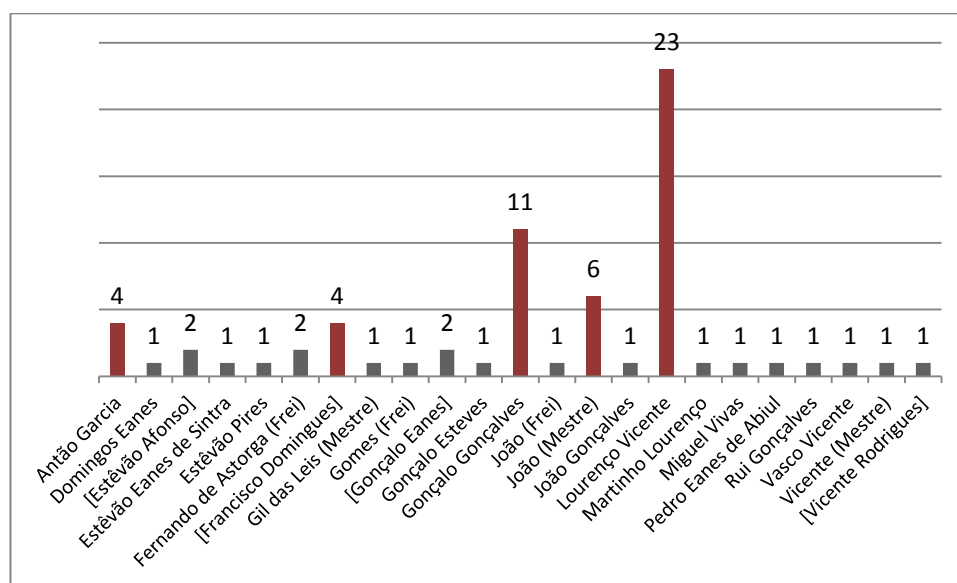
<sup>13</sup> Cf. Anexo II, doc. 17-18. In the documents in question there are no references to the name of the clergyman, only to his position as dean of the Braga cathedral. However, the identification of this character is possible based on prosopographic studies on the Braga diocese that mention, without reservations, the name Gonçalo Eanes. Cf. AA.VV.- *Os Capitulares Bracarenses (1245-1374)*. Lisboa: Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa-Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2005, p. 61.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 3, 7, 8, 10, 14, 17, 20.

Évora cathedral in a legitimation letter granted to one of his sons<sup>15</sup>.

However, as might be expected, most of the clergymen in the royal service found in King Fernando's royal documents are directly associated with his reign. In this respect, we can mention the names of Gonçalo Esteves; master Vicente; Lourenço Vicente, who would later become archbishop of Braga and play an important role during Western Schism and the dynastic crisis of 1383-1385; Vasco Vicente; Friar Gomes; Estêvão Eanes de Sintra; Friar João; Vicente Rodrigues (who is subsumed in the role of abbot of Sto. Tirso and royal chaplain<sup>16</sup>); Gonçalo Gonçalves; João Gonçalves; Estêvão Pires and Friar Fernando de Astorga<sup>17</sup>. Among the individuals who served the royal household, we should also mention the name of Antão Garcia, prior of Brustus, who held the position of executor of the will of Princess Constança, King Fernando's mother<sup>18</sup>.

Regarding the presence of the aforementioned clergymen in the documents, there is a variety of situations, which range between occasional mentions and recurrent references, although the latter are largely exceeded by the former (Pic. 2).



Pic. 2: Clergymen in the royal service – Presence in the documents

The most common situation is that of clergymen who are mentioned only once. That is the case of Domingos Eanes, Estêvão Eanes de Sintra, Estêvão Pires, master Gil das Leis, Friar Gomes, Gonçalo Esteves, Friar João, João Gonçalves, Martinho Lourenço,

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 18, 19.

<sup>16</sup> It is known that the abbot of the monastery of Santo Tirso and royal chaplain found in the documents is Vicente Rodrigues thanks to information available in a study on the aforementioned monastery. Cf. CORREIA, Francisco Carvalho - "A organização dos estudos no mosteiro de St.º. Tirso". *Humanitas*. 63 (2011), p. 429.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no 1

Miguel Vivas, Pedro Eanes de Abiul, Rui Gonçalves, Vasco Vicente, master Vicente and Vicente Rodrigues<sup>19</sup>. With just two references we find the clergymen Estêvão Afonso, Friar Fernando de Astorga and Gonçalo Eanes<sup>20</sup>. With a more assiduous presence in the documents, being mentioned in four documents, we find the priors Antão Garcia and Francisco Domingos<sup>21</sup>. The ones that are most frequently found in the documents are master João, with six references<sup>22</sup>, Gonçalo Gonçalves, with eleven<sup>23</sup>, and Lourenço Vicente, by far the most frequently quoted name, referenced in twenty three documents<sup>24</sup>.

The justification for this disparity between figures is directly associated with the positions held by the various members of the clergy found in the documents (Pic. 3). So, holding a position as a writer is the main common denominator between many of these individuals, such as the royal clergymen Estêvão Afonso; master João and Rui Gonçalves; the prior Francisco Domingues; the dean of Braga, Gonçalo Eanes; master Gil das Leis; the *vedores da fazenda* João Gonçalves, Gonçalo Gonçalves and Lourenço Vicente; the Bachelor in Law Vasco Vicente, as well as the *vedor da fazenda* Miguel Vivas<sup>25</sup>.

Naturally, the fact that these individuals were appointed to occupy notarial positions was largely the result of their education and their great familiarity with the fields of humanities and law, in a period when scholars were still mostly integrated into the Church, despite the fact that this reality was slowly changing during the Fernandine period, as we shall see further ahead. In this respect, we should note that four of the clergymen who were serving King Fernando had an unequivocally legal education: Gonçalo Gonçalves had a degree in Law, i.e., he was a specialist in Roman law; João Gonçalves had a degree in laws and decrees, meaning he had knowledge in the fields of civil and canon law; Lourenço Vicente and Vasco Vicente are mentioned as Bachelors in Law<sup>26</sup>. On the other hand, two of King Dinis' servers – João and Gil das Leis – are presented in the sources as masters, a title that, in this context, necessarily refers us to an academic degree and that, in the last case, surely corresponds to a legal education, considering the epithet it was associated with<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 5, 8, 9, 15, 16, 19, 30, 37, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 6, 7; 10 (of which there is a copy in book 3); 17-18.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 1-4; 11-14.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 31-36.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 20-29.

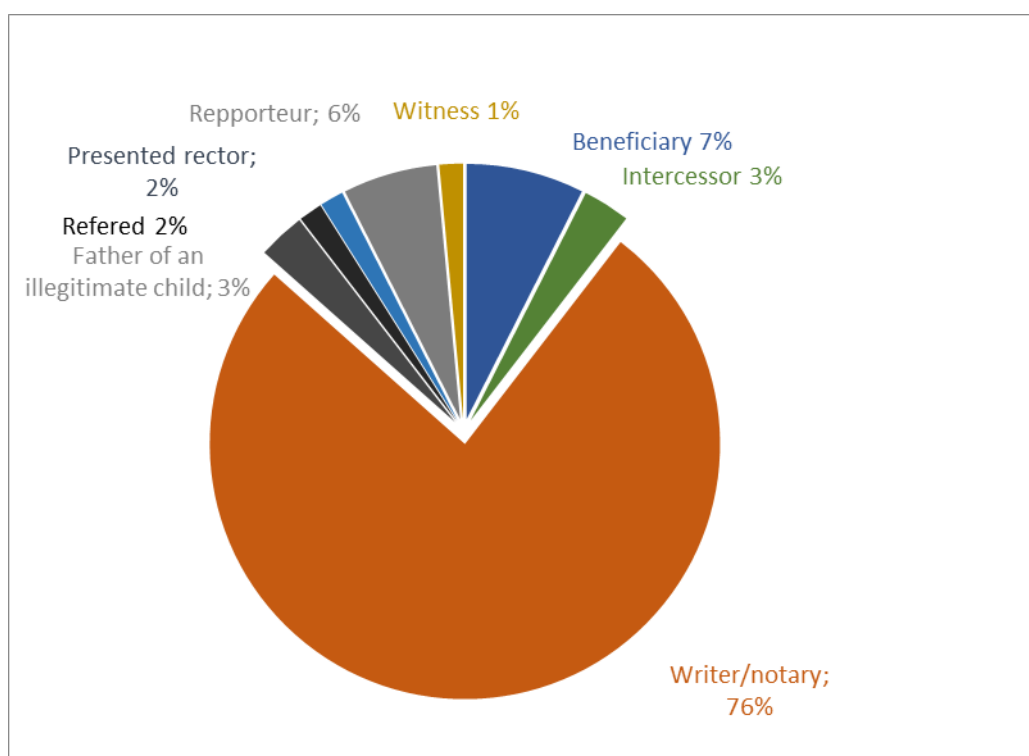
<sup>24</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 38-59.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 12, 15, 16, 21.

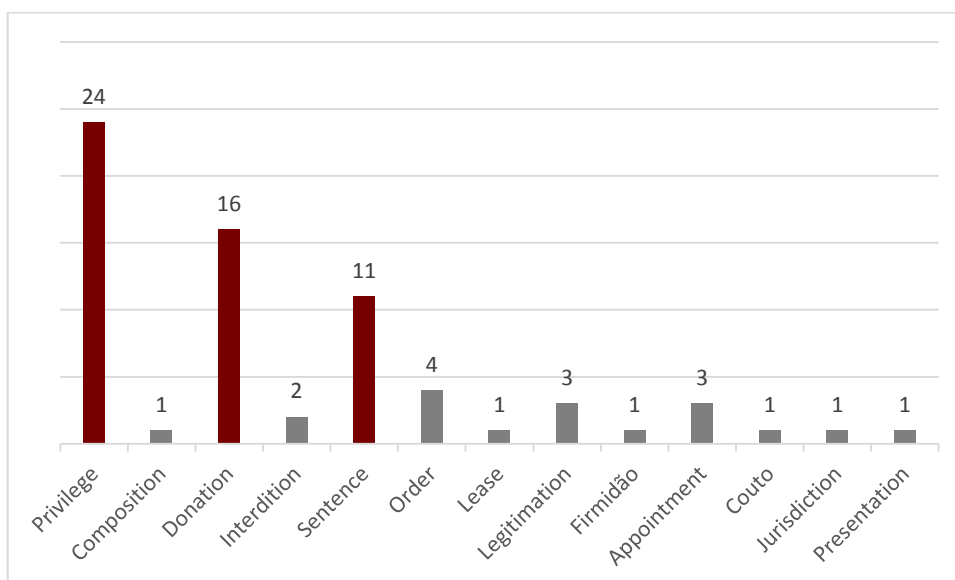
<sup>27</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 8, 14.





**Pic. 3: Clergymen in the royal service – Role played in the document**

From a different point of view, looking at the distribution of the clergymen in the royal service according to their presence in the different document typologies, we see that they are mainly found in privilege letters, donations and sentences (Pic. 4)



**Pic. 4: Clergymen in the royal service – Types of documents**

The frequency with which the clergymen are included in privilege letters is not that surprising, considering that the core of King Fernando's chancery was built precisely upon the bestowal of privileges, rights and exemptions. Hence, the number of clergymen

in documents with those characteristics reflects the structure and composition of the chancery itself, when seen as a whole.

Strictly speaking, there were thirteen clergymen in the royal service to whom there were references in privilege letters, mostly in their capacity as writers. That was the case of Estêvão Afonso, Francisco Domingues, Gonçalo Eanes, master Gil das Leis, Gonçalo Gonçalves, master João, Lourenço Vicente and Rui Gonçalves<sup>28</sup>. But there are also cases of clergymen who were benefited by the king, such as Vicente Rodrigues, who was authorized to sell wine in Porto despite the existence of rules that expressly forbade clergymen from doing that; or Friar Fernando de Astorga who got the king to grant the exemption to provide lodging to the monasteries of the order of St. Francis<sup>29</sup>. On the other hand, there were situations like those of the royal chaplain Estêvão Pires and the royal almoner Friar João, both in the service of King Fernando, who are mentioned as intercessors for royal favours, namely in an exemption granted to a clergyman that exempted him from the forbiddance to purchase properties, and in a benefit granted to several individuals<sup>30</sup>. On the other hand, Antão Garcia, prior of Brustus, is mentioned as the rapporteur of facts in three privilege letters: one that foresees the existence of butchers, winegrowers, bakers and fishermen in the village of Nogueira; another one that granted rights to the farmers of the Sanguinhal estate, in Óbidos, and a third one that recognized the right of the farmers of the Azeitão estate, in Sesimbra, to elect a judge<sup>31</sup>.

Donation letters are the second set of documents in which the presence of clergymen in the royal service is more significant<sup>32</sup>. Again, that presence is related to the role of writer or notary played by most of those clergymen. But in this case, it is also possible to notice that some of them were beneficiaries, like the royal confessor Friar Gomes, the king's chaplain Gonçalo Esteves and the *vedor da fazenda* Lourenço Vicente<sup>33</sup>, a matter we shall discuss further ahead.

Thirdly, the presence of clergymen close to the king in the documents was also significant in sentences, to a large extent as a direct consequence of the many letters written by Gonçalo Gonçalves while he was King Fernando's *vedor da fazenda*<sup>34</sup>.

Rather more residual is the presence of the clergymen from the aulic circle in other types of documents, namely in composition letters, such as the one that mentions Domingos

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 10, 66.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 9, 30.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 1-3.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 8, 16, 19, 38, 41, 44-46, 48-49, 51-53, 56-57, 64.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 9, 11, 16.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 20-29, 37.

Eanes Jardo<sup>35</sup>; in interdiction letters, like the ones subscribed by Francisco Domingos and master João<sup>36</sup>; in orders, whose drafting was made by Francisco Domingos and master João, but also by Lourenço Vicente<sup>37</sup>, or in lease letters like the one that was also drafted by Lourenço Vicente<sup>38</sup>. The same is applicable to the *couto*, *firמידão*, jurisdiction and presentation letters, in which the royal clergymen seemed to be less present, considering the data obtained from the chancery books<sup>39</sup>.

We should probably put a greater emphasis on the legitimation and appointment letters. Among the former we find the legitimation granted to the son of Pedro Eanes de Abiul - canon of the Évora cathedral and server of King Afonso IV -, a benefit that was also granted to the son of Lourenço Vicente, King Fernando's royal clergyman<sup>40</sup>. The latter is mentioned again in a new legitimation letter, this time as a writer, in a case that involved the recognition of the son of a master of the order of Santiago, Gil Fernandes de Carvalho<sup>41</sup>. As for appointment letters, and always in the role of writers, we can find two of King Dinis' clergymen - the dean of the Braga cathedral, Gonçalo Eanes, and Martinho Lourenço -, as well as Miguel Vivas, the supervisor of King Afonso IV's chancery.

In short, before moving on to an analysis that is exclusively focused on the clergymen who served King Fernando, it is possible to outline a series of trends found in the Fernandine chancery; in some cases, these can be generalized to other periods and reigns, while others require further studies that may confirm or allow inferring the leads suggested by the collection under study. So, first of all, it is important to understand King Fernando's chancery as a documentary collection with an undeniable interest for the identification of clergymen in the royal service. Secondly, we should highlight the fact that the sphere of influence of those clergymen was not limited to the reign of King Fernando; it existed in previous reigns and continued due to the persistence of certain notarial routines throughout the Fernandine diplomacy. A third evidence has to do with the summoning of many clergymen to take up positions in the chancery services themselves, which was thoroughly consistent with the typical erudition of the ecclesiastical group, mostly inseparable from its legal knowledge, which was, necessarily, the most convenient one for the undertaking of notarial responsibilities. Finally, we should highlight the fact that several of these clergymen were beneficiaries of royal

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 5.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 11, 33.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 12, 31, 34, 42.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 40.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 4, 55, 59, 65.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 58, 62.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 43.

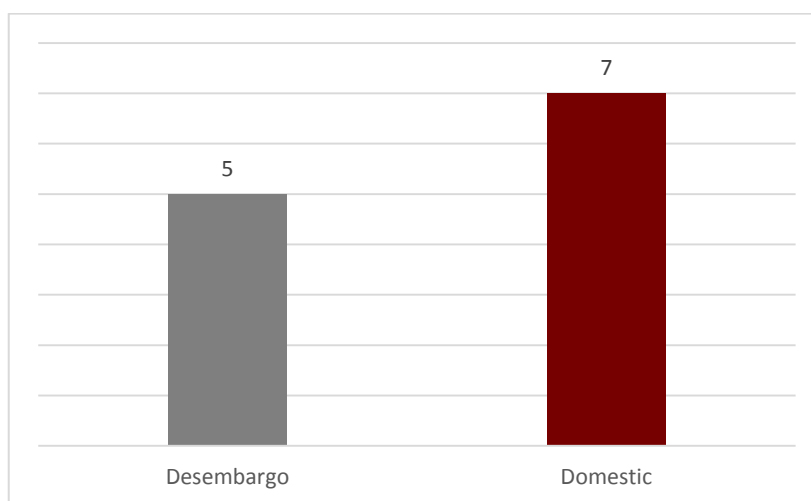
concessions, suggesting the existence of a diversity of ways to reward the royal service, corroborated by the detailed analysis of the group of clergymen who served King Fernando, which we present below.

## 2. Clergymen in the service of King Fernando – spheres of activity

As we've been ascertaining, the information found in the documents filed in the chancery's records is not exclusively limited to the reign of King Fernando, as there are also records regarding previous periods. The number of references to clergymen who were serving before 1367 is almost equal to that of the period in which King Fernando held the throne, a proportion that is fairly significant, despite the fact that other chanceries reached similar, or even higher, figures.

Now we intend to reflect on the available data provided by this source that may allow us, as far as possible, to make a series of proposals regarding the group of clergymen that were specifically in the service of King Fernando and to present potential research lines for the future.

That said, it is time to limit the universe of analysis to those whose path involved the Fernandine service. In order to do that, we applied a selection criterion that allowed filtering a group of clergymen and consisted on individualizing those who were mentioned as performing tasks or holding positions related to King Fernando<sup>42</sup>; in this way, it was possible to find 12 individuals<sup>43</sup>, distributed as follows (Pic 5):



Pic. 5: Clergymen in King Fernando's royal service – service spheres

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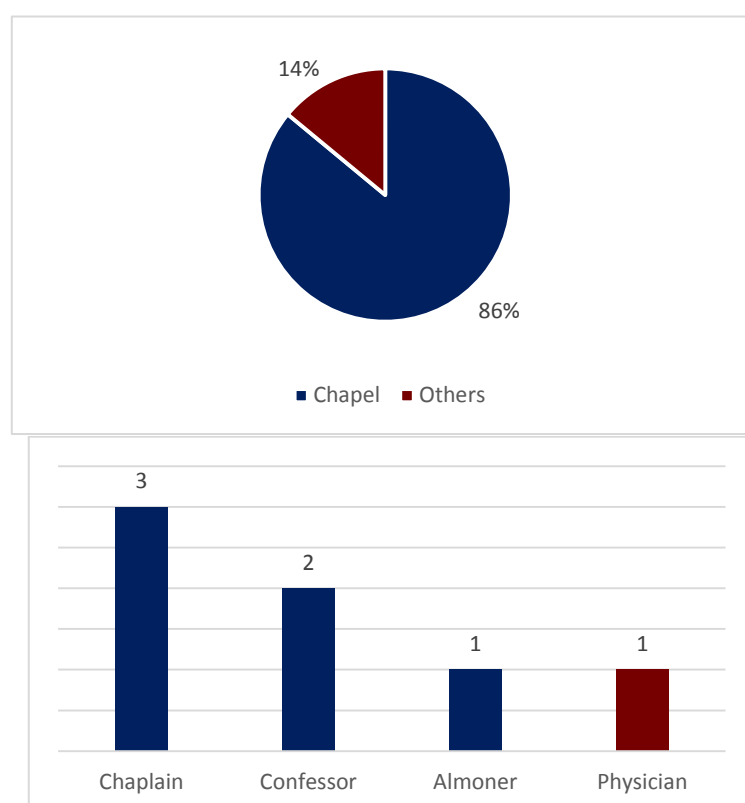
<sup>42</sup> As others, such as Rita Costa Gomes, we should underline the complex reality of the medieval court. In line with the characteristic society of the time, the public and the private spheres got mixed and intertwined, revealing the presence of administrative and governative structures that were closer to the king's domestic and private spaces – cf. GOMES, Rita Costa - *A Corte dos Reis de Portugal no final da Idade Média*. Lisboa: Difel, 1995, pp. 21-23. Despite the fact that the border between the two spheres was elusive and undefined, finding its limit is necessary for the viability of our analysis.

<sup>43</sup> For a list of all these clergymen and their corresponding positions, please see Appendix 1, no. 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22 e 23.

In specific terms, the greater weight held by clergymen with household functions, i.e., those who performed tasks in the king's private sphere, when compared to those who played roles in the *desembargo*, i.e., in the kingdom's bureaucratic-administrative apparatus, does not seem to be that significant, amounting to a residual difference of two individuals. Still, this division allows us to ascertain the spheres of influence of the clergymen who surrounded the king: the domestic service and the royal *desembargo*.

### 2.1. The domestic service

The domestic service provided to the medieval kings comprised a series of men who played roles related to the king's purity and, therefore, were personally closer to the king and able to spend time with him. This sphere of intimacy is one of the hardest issues to study due to the small number of testimonials that reached our days, moreover in a source such as the chancery, built on a discourse that was increasingly standardized and bureaucratic; however, despite being limited by these constraints, the closeness between the individuals can often be perceived, and this is not a secondary matter considering that this was a time when it was common for the political and the personal spheres to overlap. The following charts show the roles played by the clergymen involved in King



Pics. 6 and 7: Clergymen in King Fernando's royal service – the domestic service

We need no more than a quick overview to understand the predominance of the clergymen from the royal chapel. In addition to the physical location of the place of worship, the chapel comprised a series of individuals who, following the court, were responsible for ensuring the organization and celebration of liturgical rituals and to meet the other religious requirements of the king and his entourage. Therefore, its members had a privileged access, not only to the king as a physical entity, but also to his mind, so the idea that they could influence the strategies of the kings they were supporting is not inconceivable; quite on the contrary. Furthermore, the analysis of this body is extremely interesting because, despite the fact that it was founded for spiritual purposes, its jurisdiction was temporal and controlled by the stewardship of the monarchy it was serving, thus becoming a point of contact between the spiritual and the temporal powers<sup>44</sup>.

According to this logic, the role of the confessor, who was responsible for hearing the king in confession, in one of the monarch's most private moments, becomes particularly important<sup>45</sup>. In this context, and in 1371, there is a reference to Friar Gomes, probably a Franciscan monk<sup>46</sup> and, in 1383, close to the end of the reign, to Friar Fernando de Astorga, a Franciscan friar and a provincial minister of the Franciscan order, i.e., the highest representative of the minor friars in the region<sup>47</sup>.

The choice of these individuals was made according to a trend that has already been identified: a preference for mendicants for the provision of moral and ethical support to the Portuguese kings during the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>48</sup>; even Friar Fernando remained as King João I's confessor, despite the change of ruling dynasty.

Another trend revealed by the chancery is that of the choice of Cistercian monks for almoners. Apparently, during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, it was common for the abbot of the monastery of Alcobaça to hold the position of royal chief almoner<sup>49</sup>, being responsible for managing the alms collected by the crown and, naturally, having a say in the

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<sup>44</sup> As highlighted by VILLARROEL GONZÁLEZ, Óscar - "Capilla y capellanes reales al servicio del rey en Castilla. La evolución en época de Juan II (1406-1454)". *En la España Medieval*, vol. 31 (2008), p. 310.

<sup>45</sup> Regarding the characteristics and the political importance of the royal confessor, please see NOGALES RINCÓN, David - "Confesar al rey en la Castilla bajomedieval (1230-1504)". In CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel, RÁBADE OBRADÓ, María del Pilar (coord.). *Pecar en la Edad Media*, s. l., Sílex, 2008, pp. 55-79 and NIETO SORIA, José Manuel - *Iglesia y genesis del Estado moderno en Castilla (1369-1480)*. Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 1993, pp. 140-150. Despite the fact that they regard the Castilian monarchy, the remarks made by the two authors on the role played by the royal confessors in this period can easily be applied to the Portuguese case.

<sup>46</sup> See Appendix I, no. 9 and GOMES, Rita Costa, *A Corte dos Reis de Portugal...*, p. 119.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Again, the extent of the influence exerted by these individuals on the kings' reasoning and decisions is very hard to ascertain. From this point of view, we suggest João Dionísio's review of one of the most important works from the Portuguese cultural panorama of the early 15<sup>th</sup> century - *Leal Conselheiro*, by King Duarte; he identifies the presence of several elements of the Franciscan reasoning throughout the text, despite the doubt regarding their first-hand use - cf. DIONÍSIO, João - "Literatura franciscana no *Leal Conselheiro*, de D. Duarte". *Lusitania Sacra*, 2.<sup>a</sup> série, n.º 13-14 (2001-2002), pp. 491-515.

<sup>49</sup> GOMES, Rita Costa - *A Corte dos Reis de Portugal...*, pp. 117-118.

appointment of the other almoners. Despite the fact that Friar João is only identified as an almoner, it is quite likely that he had links to Alcobaça, since the reason for his reference in the chancery is an intercession for the granting of privileges on behalf of a series of residents in the monastery's lands<sup>50</sup>. However, we should note that there is no express reference in the chancery to the chief almoner, something that shows the need to cross information from different document collections in order to reconstruct the group of clergymen who formed the Fernandine chapel.

As for the chaplains, it was possible to identify three - Gonçalo Esteves, Vicente Rodrigues e Estêvão Pires<sup>51</sup>. The first one, Gonçalo Esteves, mentioned right at the beginning of the reign, in May 1367, had already been a chaplain for King Pedro, being an example of a continuity of services that was not uncommon in these contexts; on the other hand, the fact that King Fernando<sup>52</sup> gave him a vegetable farm in Beja may suggest a connection to an institution located in southern Portugal. The other ones, Vicente Rodrigues and Estêvão Pires, were both from institutions located in the northern part of the kingdom, specifically in the archdiocese of Braga – Vicente Rodrigues was the abbot of the monastery of Santo Tirso and Estêvão Pires was the abbot of the church of Castro Laboreiro.

Finally, we should mention the king's physician, master Vicente, presented in 1368 to the rectorate of the church of Santa Maria de Guimarães<sup>53</sup>, something that allows raising the possibility of the use of the rights of royal patronage as a reward for services rendered, an issue we shall resume further ahead.

The choice of clergymen for the king's household wasn't likely to be a secondary process, because the religious ceremonies played a prominent role in the symbolic apparatus of the late medieval monarchies, since the king was seen as the promoter and defender of the *common good* with a power that had a divine origin; so, the ethical and pious dimensions and the clerical participation in the royal life had taken on a central importance in the strategies to strengthen the royal authority in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>54</sup>.

Regarding these individuals' religious obediences, the reports taken from the chancery

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<sup>50</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 30.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 11, 23 and 5.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 19.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 65.

<sup>54</sup> The Portuguese medieval monarchy was well aware of the theory of the divine origin of the royal power, as noted in HOMEM, Armando Carvalho - "Dionisius et Alfonsus, Dei gratia reges et communis utilitatis gratia legiferi". Offprint from *Revista da Faculdade de Letras*, 2.<sup>a</sup> série, vol. XI (1994), pp. 30-34. According to the author, the *common good*, salvation and justice were precisely the purposes for which this power should be used. Cf. also FREITAS, Judite Gonçalves de - *O Estado em Portugal (séculos XII-XVI)*. Lisboa: Alêtheia Editores, 2012, pp.16-18. For an example of the propagandistic use of the religious dimensions, please see NIETO SORIA, José Manuel - "Imágenes religiosas del rey y del poder real en la Castilla del siglo XIII". *En la España medieval*, vol. 9 (1986), pp. 709-729.

emphasize the regular clergy: four of the seven clerical elements of the king's household belonged to a monastic order – two were Franciscans, one was Cistercian and the other one was Benedictine. In terms of secular clergy, the chancery recorded the existence of two royal chaplains - the abbot of the church of Castro Laboreiro and the rector of the church of Santa Maria de Guimarães. Only Gonçalo Esteves is mentioned without any reference to his observance.

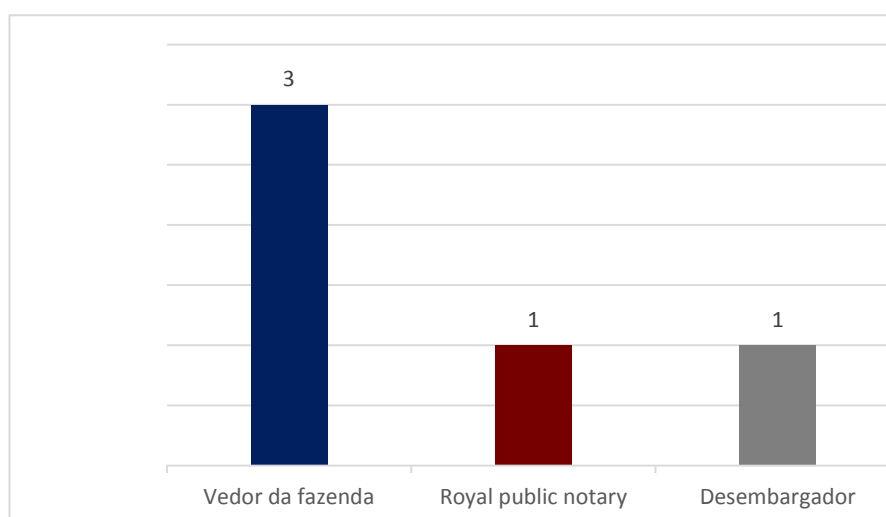
However, despite these numbers, it is risky to draw final conclusions. It is possible to establish a framework and there is surely a trend whose confirmation must necessarily involve further research works.

Finally, after dealing with King Fernando's purity, it is time to focus this study on the clergymen who dealt with bureaucracy.

## 2.2. Working in the *desembargo*

Our study of the clergymen who worked in the royal *desembargo* must be preceded by two notes: first of all, the notion that the production of the chancery books, their writing and organization was precisely one of the tasks of this service, which was supervised by the chancellor and other officers who were under his dependency<sup>55</sup>; on the other hand, from the historical point of view, we should not forget that the reign of King Fernando witnessed a decline in the presence of clerics in the monarchy's administrative machine, to the detriment of lay individuals whose profiles were closer to the study of law.

That being said, we should consider the following distribution (Pic. 8):



Pic. 8: Clergymen in King Fernando's service – the *desembargo*

<sup>55</sup> We recall the definition provided by Armando Luís de Carvalho Homem in his essential work about this body: "...the group of officers and services that, being close to the king, ensures, on the one hand, the publication of the corresponding laws and, on the other hand, the clearance of current Administration issues..." – HOMEM, Armando Carvalho - *O Desembargo Régio...*, pp. 23-24.



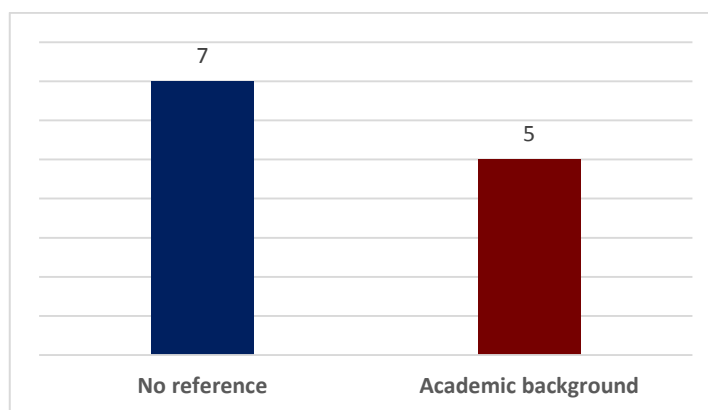
First of all, we should note that three of the five clergymen who are identified as officers of the *desembargo* held specific positions, namely Lourenço Vicente, Gonçalo Gonçalves and João Gonçalves, all mentioned as *vedores da fazenda*<sup>56</sup>.

Appendix II is a good illustration of the tasks ascribed to these officers – they took part in the clearance of decisions regarding donations, privileges and leases, and they were also responsible for managing assets, finances and royal rights. Lourenço Vicente is a particularly paradigmatic example of the nature of the *vedor*'s interventions, which, in his case, are reflections of the royal liberality, but whose granting and consequent alienation corresponded to an implicit asset management strategy developed under these individuals' guidance<sup>57</sup>.

The creation of the position of *vedor da fazenda* was part of a process towards an increasing complexity of the bureaucratic apparatus and of the monarchy's political and governmental action witnessed at the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century; the first references to this position date back precisely to the reign of King Fernando<sup>58</sup>.

It is not surprising that, due to the demanding nature of the tasks related to the treasury supervision and the administration, all those who were mentioned as officers of the royal bureaucracy have references to their education among their personal information.

We can see them in the following chart (Pic. 9):



Pic. 9: Clergymen in King Fernando's service – education

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 16, 12 and 15.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 38 to 59. Despite the fact that they do not fit into the logic of service that has been guiding this reflection, we should mention the letters that involved the religious and the military orders, such as the donation of the bread tithe by the convent of the order of Avis to the commander of Cano, or the sentence that granted the order of Christ the right to receive the tribute paid for fish and bread in Castro Marim; similarly, in 1374, King Fernando donated the churches of the royal patronage to the Guarda cathedral to help in the works to repair the damages caused by the war. Obviously, the documents issued by the chancery reflected the armed conflict with Castile that marked the Fernandine reign, both in terms of the conclusion of agreements with the military orders and in terms of the treatment of the wounds caused by the confrontations; we should note that, for example, 1374 was also the year in which the construction of the wall of Lisbon began.

<sup>58</sup> During the reign of King João I, one of the members of this group became bishop of Porto: João Afonso Aranha. First a royal *contador* and then a *vedor da fazenda*, he reached the Portuguese cathedral in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century; his career demonstrates the relationship between the royal service and the rise in the ecclesiastical hierarchy - cf. HOMEM, Armando Carvalho - "Da vedoria da fazenda ao bispado do Porto – a carreira de D. João Afonso Aranha". In *Portugal nos Finais da Idade Média: Estado, Instituições, Sociedade e Política*. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1990, pp. 214-220.

From this perspective, four of the five individuals who attended university were educated in law-related areas and members of King Fernando's *desembargo*<sup>59</sup>; i.e., even in Vasco Vicente's case, an officer without any other specific tasks, legal knowledge was probably also an advantage in his recruitment for the royal service<sup>60</sup>.

Outside the *desembargo*, only master Vicente, the king's physician, by showing the title of "master", seems to have been trained in the academia of the time or, at least, to have attended more specialized studies together with other medical practitioners and connoisseurs, gaining enough mastery in his occupation to justify the fact that he was chosen to take care of the king's own health.

The increasing complexity of the monarchy's government and administration demanded officers with greater skills, and the knowledge of law was surely crucial; in this scenario, although the presence of scholars in the chancery had been a characteristic of that body since the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it is during this period that the specification of the legal education became more pronounced<sup>61</sup>. The clergy was still being privileged in the recruitment of these individuals thanks to the specific abilities and skills of its members, namely those in the intermediate and higher hierarchical levels, something that justifies, for example, their presence in the diplomacy of the Iberian reigns during the following decades<sup>62</sup>.

However, the Fernandine chancery's records do not provide us with the information that would allow assessing the extent to which the clergymen were involved in foreign policy during the reign of King Fernando, or even their potential involvement in the decision-making process and in the definition of political paths as members of his council; again, it is crucial to resort to other sources that may complete the information that was collected, namely treaties and marriage contracts negotiated during the game of alliances and armed movements that unraveled during these troubled years, or even chronicles written about that period.

The chronological serialization of the universe of documents under study allows us also to outline an analysis of the rhythms and durations of the careers of the clergymen who

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 13, 15, 16 and 21.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 21.

<sup>61</sup> This is probably a good moment to introduce the association made by Hermenegildo Fernandes between the resettlement of the university in Lisbon in 1377 and the existence of a Fernandine political programme, expressed through the systematic production of legislation during those years – Cf. FERNANDES, Hermenegildo - "Introdução". In FERNANDES, Hermenegildo (coord.) - *A Universidade Medieval em Lisboa. Séculos XIII-XVI*. Lisboa: Tinta-da-China, 2013, p. 31. Despite being an issue that is not exclusively limited to the ecclesiastical dimension, this perspective can become an interesting research and reflection line on this reign.

<sup>62</sup> This aspect has already been highlighted by Hermínia Vasconcelos Vilar – cf. VILAR, Hermínia Vasconcelos - "O rei e a Igreja – o estabelecimento das concórdias (1245-1383)". In AZEVEDO, Carlos Moreira - *História Religiosa de Portugal*, vol. I – *Formação e Limites da Cristandade* (coord. de Ana Maria Jorge e Ana Maria Rodrigues). Lisboa: Temas e Debates, 2004, p. 327. We also suggest the study by Óscar Villarroel on Castile, which defines the profile of the clergymen who were sent in missions as representatives of the Castilian king in other courts: individuals with a legal education and a close connection to the royal bureaucracy and purity – VILLARROEL GONZÁLEZ, Óscar - "Eclesiásticos en la diplomacia castellana en el siglo XV". *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 40/2 (julio-diciembre de 2010), pp. 791-819.

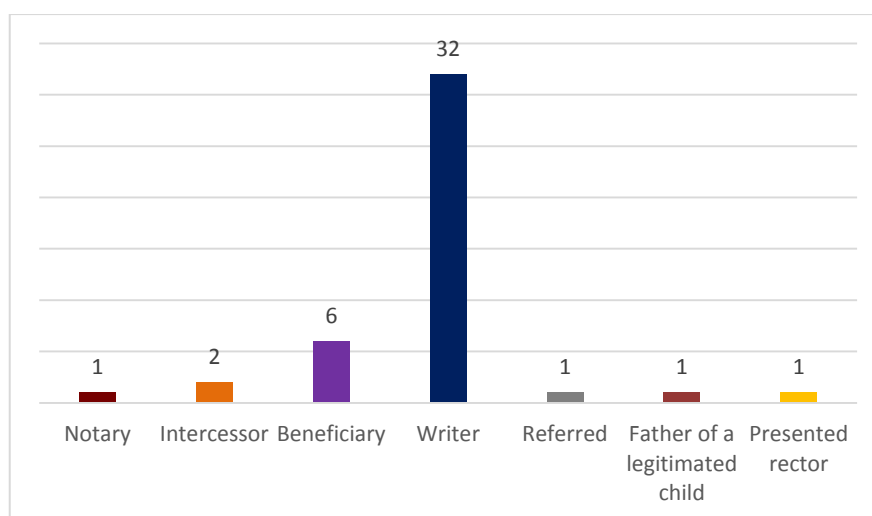
worked in the *desembargo*. According to the signatures on the letters that were sent, only Lourenço Vicente and Gonçalo Gonçalves seem to have had relatively durable careers: the former between 1370 and 1372, and the latter between 1380 and 1382, i.e., nearly 3 years in both cases<sup>63</sup>.

However, this perception should be put in perspective, because Lourenço Vicente took part in the composition of almost twice the number of documents as Gonçalo Gonçalves and his presence close to the king was much more constant, particularly between May and July 1370, and in the same period in 1371; in fact, the only in the document from 1372 is the latter simply mentioned, without any further references to an active role in its production. So, these were short careers in a period in which these were decreasing<sup>64</sup>.

Finally, we should mention the overlap of the roles played by Estêvão Eanes de Sintra, who is simultaneously mentioned as an apostolic notary and as the king's public notary<sup>65</sup>. After examining the composition of the spheres of activity and service in which these clergymen operated there is a decisive issue: establishing the reasons why they are mentioned in the documents. In other words, when they didn't write the documents, what other reasons led them to deserve the king's special attention?

### 3. Type of intervention – targets of the royal grace

The chart presented below reveals the reasons why the clergymen are mentioned throughout the four chancery books. In this regard, we should clarify that the same person can play different roles in different documents, for example, as the writer of a letter and the beneficiary of another one.



Pic. 10: Clergymen in King Fernando's service – role played in the document

<sup>63</sup> See Appendixes I and II.

<sup>64</sup> HOMEM, Armando L. de Carvalho - *O Desembargo Régio...*, pp. 187-190.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 4.

Unsurprisingly, most of these references are related to tasks carried out by clergymen within the scope of chancery services. There are 32 documents in which they are the signatories of the eschatocol of royal letters, meaning that they were acting in their capacity as notaries.

A simple quantitative analysis may lead us to conclude that the clergymen who worked in the *desembargo* were more important than the members of the royal household; however, this inference may be somewhat hasty, since it would be necessary to cross that analysis with a qualitative survey of the content of the other letters in which they were also involved, either actively, as intercessors, or passively, as the recipients of bestowals.

Gonçalo Esteves and Vicente Rodrigues, the king's chaplains, appear in the condition of beneficiaries, as well as Friar Gomes and Friar Francisco de Astorga, the king's confessors<sup>66</sup>. The donations made to Gonçalo Esteves and Friar Gomes involved the granting of assets – Gonçalo received a vegetable farm in Beja<sup>67</sup>, while Friar Gomes was promised to receive garments on an annual basis<sup>68</sup>.

On the other hand, Vicente Rodrigues and Friar Fernando Astorga were awarded with privileges: the former was authorized to sell his wine in Porto, despite the bans in force<sup>69</sup>, while the latter benefited from the exemption to provide lodging granted to all the monasteries of the order of Saint Francis located in the kingdom of Portugal<sup>70</sup>.

The discharge granted to the minor friars was actually obtained upon a request made by Friar Fernando himself to the king, in an intercession that is not a unique case. There are also the requests made by Friar João, the king's almoner, regarding the exemption of municipal services for some residents of the *couto* of the monastery of Alcobaça<sup>71</sup>, and the one made by the royal chaplain Estêvão Pires, asking for a permission that would allow Aires Pires, the chaplain of Castro Laboreiro, to buy properties<sup>72</sup>.

Donations and privileges are two typologies that translate an expression of the royal grace, a sign of the monarch's will to reward and favour the recipients. It refers us to "the issue of retributions" within the courtly circle, i.e., of the payments made by the kings to those who were closer to them, both through the payment of monetary sums, which could take various forms, and through the appointment for certain positions<sup>73</sup>. Supporting and

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Appendix II.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 19.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 16.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 66.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 10.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 30.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 9.

<sup>73</sup> Please see GOMES, Rita Costa - *A Corte dos Reis de Portugal...*, pp. 186-197. In these pages, the author discusses the various types of monetary rewards given by the king in return for services rendered; this issue does not end with payments in cash. Taking up certain positions, due to the political capital and influence they granted, was interesting for the personal ambitions of these individuals, who were thus able to pursue careers in the monarchy's bodies that were

rewarding those who surrounded him was, in fact, one of the obligations of the king, or of the great lord, according to the feudal mentality. Rewards didn't always have to involve an improvement of material conditions, as proven by the legitimation of Martinho, the son of Lourenço Vicente<sup>74</sup>, one of the most active clergymen in the Fernandine *desembargo*.

The bestowals mentioned in the previous paragraphs can be seen according to this logic, but they are not the only examples. In 1368, right at the beginning of the reign, King Fernando presented his physician, master Vicente, to the church of Santa Maria de Guimarães, integrated into the royal patronage<sup>75</sup>. This presentation is all the more significant as, in the previous centuries, this church had been a crucial point in the upward mobility of the king's clergymen within the Church's hierarchies; this allows raising the issue of the use of ecclesiastical benefits as rewards for the royal service, an issue on which we cannot improve our knowledge through a simple analysis of the chancery.

In any case, master Vicente is not the only example of a double – royal and ecclesiastical – dependence; the abbot of the monastery of Santo Tirso, Vicente Rodrigues, was also the king's chaplain<sup>76</sup>; Estêvão Pires, the abbot of the church of Castro Laboreiro, was also a chaplain<sup>77</sup>, and Estêvão Eanes de Sintra was simultaneously the king's public notary and an apostolic notary<sup>78</sup>, two roles that required very similar skills.

After all, the service had its compensations. Despite the quantitative discrepancy between the total number of documents with references to this group of religious men, by exploring the contents of this diplomatic universe we can understand how the members of the royal household were particularly benefited and, in the cases in which benefits were obtained through their intercession, how their closeness to the monarch and, specifically, the personal access to the king, was increasingly important, despite the growing bureaucracy and standardization of the administration<sup>79</sup>.

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often combined with the roles they played in the Church; i.e., the appointment for positions, both in the royal household, and in the *desembargo*, was a remarkable reward due to the dividends that could be obtained through them – regarding this issue please see, for example, the suggestions made for the previous centuries in NORTE, Armando - *Letrados e Cultura Letrada em Portugal...*, vol. I, pp. 295-314. The Church was another means of social mobility provided to the men of the Ancien Régime as we can see, regarding the following centuries, in OLIVAL, Fernanda e MONTEIRO, Nuno Gonçalo - "Mobilidade social nas carreiras eclesiásticas em Portugal (1500-1820)". *Análise Social*, vol. XXXVII (2003), pp. 1213-1239. The possibility of following a career close to the crown was one more attractive reason to choose this life path.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Appendix II, doc. 58.

<sup>75</sup> Please see Appendix II, doc. 65. As an example, we can examine the diocese of Évora between the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, in which several prelates had close service and dependence connections with their contemporary kings, being part, in several moments, of the political chessboard of the time – VILAR, Hermínia Vasconcelos - *As Dimensões de um Poder...*, pp. 27-101.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 23.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 5.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Appendix I, no. 4.

<sup>79</sup> The figure of the *privado* became increasingly central, as shown by José Manuel Nieto Soria for the case of the Castilian monarchy – NIETO SORIA, José Manuel - *Iglesia y genesis del Estado moderno...*, pp. 133-140.

### Final remarks

It is now time to run through some of the remarks that were made about the information found in King Fernando's chancery and, thus, to present an assessment of the validity of this source to study the clergymen who served kings during the late Middle Ages.

First of all, we should underline that, due to the notarial practices of the time, the information we found is not limited to the reign of King Fernando; it is possible to find data regarding earlier chronologies, with an emphasis, in this case, on the Dionisian period. So, the chancery stands out as a crucial source for the construction of a list of individuals who were close to the crown, which can cover a wide temporal arc.

On the other hand, the chancery reveals the importance that these clergymen had as writers of the documents compiled in these books, despite the fact that, in the long run, there was a decrease in the ecclesiastical presence in the administration; the reign of King Fernando takes on a central position within this process. However, they still had the necessary skills to deal with the increasing complexity of the administration thanks to their legal knowledge and academic degrees. It is no coincidence that three of these clergymen held positions related to the management of the crown's assets and rights.

However, we should note that, beyond these tasks in the administrative sphere, we found no evidence related to clergymen involved in political activities, either as King Fernando's representatives or as his advisors; this may be a result of the characteristics of the documents filed in the chancery, which do not include, for example, treaties and powers of attorney. Similarly, we can improve our knowledge about the composition of the royal chapel by resorting to other, both royal and ecclesiastical, document collections.

But while, quantitatively, the protagonism of the clergymen in the *desembargo* seems to be much higher than that of the other individuals, mainly due to the role they played in the drafting of royal letters, a qualitative analysis allows us to relativise that inference. In fact, we should highlight that the reason why the clergymen in the royal service are mentioned in the chancery has to do with their roles as beneficiaries and intercessors, showing the importance that the personal closeness to the king had. On the other hand, the bestowal of privileges and donations by King Fernando was surely a sort of reward for services rendered.

However, in order to further study certain issues, such as that of the positions held by many of these individuals in the ecclesiastical structure itself, it will be necessary to cross the information found in the chancery with that of other document collections; while, in some cases, the religious observances and benefits held are easy to ascertain, in other cases there is no information that may allow us to establish reliable connections. For that

reason, the weight that the passage through the royal service had in the rise of these religious men within the Church, or vice-versa, as well as their presence in later reigns are matters that deserve further studies and should guide future research works. Finally, the royal chanceries prove to be fundamental bases for the construction of lists of clergymen involved in the royal service, which suggest trends and characteristics related to the activity and composition of these groups of men; however, this is only a starting point that should be complemented with information from different origins in order to strengthen the prosopographic elements related to these individuals and attest the inferences that were made. Nevertheless, it would be utterly interesting to apply an exercise similar to the one developed in the pages above to other reigns and to conduct transversal analyses.

**Appendix I**  
**Ecclesiastics in the service of the king in the royal documents:**  
**The case of King Fernando's chancery (1367-1383)**

**List of ecclesiastics in the royal service (23)**

<b>Id</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Dependencies</b>	<b>Dependents</b>	<b>Kindred</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Privilege</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Donation</b>	<b>Interdiction</b>	<b>Sentence</b>	<b>Order</b>	<b>Lease</b>	<b>Legitimation</b>	<b>Firmidão</b>	<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Couto</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Presentation</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	Antão Garcia (1367)	Prior of Brustus	Writer	Queen Constança				3										1			<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	Domingos Eanes Jardo (1274)	Royal clergyman	Witness	King Afonso III					1												<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	[Estêvão Afonso] (1311)	Choirmaster of Évora; clergyman	Writer of Royal	King Dinis				2													<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	Estêvão Eanes de Sintra (1374)	Apostolic notary; Royal public notary	Notary	King Fernando						1											<b>1</b>
<b>5</b>	Estêvão Pires (1383)	Royal Abbot of Laboreiro	chaplain; Intercessor of Castro	King Fernando	Aires Pires (his chaplain)			1													<b>1</b>
<b>6</b>	Fernando de Astorga, Friar (1383)	Minister of Province Santiago; confessor	of the Beneficiary; of Intercessor Royal	King Fernando				2													<b>2</b>
<b>7</b>	[Francisco Domingues] (1312)	Prior of Alcáçova in Santarém;	Writer of Royal	King Dinis				2			1		1								<b>4</b>



<b>Id</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Dependencies</b>	<b>Dependents</b>	<b>Kindred</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Privilege</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Donation</b>	<b>Interdiction</b>	<b>Sentence</b>	<b>Order</b>	<b>Lease</b>	<b>Legitimation</b>	<b>Firmidão</b>	<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Couto</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Presentation</b>	<b>Total</b>
		clergyman																			
<b>8</b>	Gil das Leis, Master (1307)	Royal clergyman	Writer	King Dinis				1													<b>1</b>
<b>9</b>	Gomes, Friar (1371)	Royal confessor	Beneficiary	King Fernando						1											<b>1</b>
<b>10</b>	[Gonçalo Eanes] (1310)	Dean of Braga; Royal clergyman	Writer	King Dinis				1									1				<b>2</b>
<b>11</b>	Gonçalo Esteves (1367)	Royal chaplain	Beneficiary	King Fernando						1											<b>1</b>
<b>12</b>	Gonçalo Gonçalves (1380-82)	Royal clergyman; <i>Vedor da fazenda</i>	Writer; Referred	King Fernando	Vasco Vicente (his notary); João Martins de Guimarães (his notary)		Degree in laws	1				10									<b>11</b>
<b>13</b>	João, Friar (1377)	Royal almoner	Intercessor	King Fernando				1													<b>1</b>
<b>14</b>	João, Master (1309-1312)	Royal clergyman	Writer	King Dinis				3			1		2								<b>6</b>
<b>15</b>	João Gonçalves (1381)	Clergyman; <i>Vedor da fazenda</i>	Writer	King Fernando	Vasco Vicente (his notary)		Degree in laws and decretals					1									<b>1</b>
<b>16</b>	Lourenço Vicente (1370-72)	Royal clergyman; Writer;		King		Martinho	Bachelor's	5		12			1	1	2	1			1		<b>23</b>

<b>Id</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Dependencies</b>	<b>Dependents</b>	<b>Kindred</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Privilege</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Donation</b>	<b>Interdiction</b>	<b>Sentence</b>	<b>Order</b>	<b>Lease</b>	<b>Legitimation</b>	<b>Firmidão</b>	<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Couto</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Presentation</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<i>Vedor da fazenda</i>	Father of an illegitimate child	an Fernando	(son)		degree in laws														
<b>17</b>	Martinho Lourenço (1310)	Royal clergyman	Referred as writer	King Dinis													1				<b>1</b>
<b>18</b>	Miguel Vivas (1327)	Royal clergyman; <i>Vedor da fazenda</i>	Writer	King Afonso IV													1				<b>1</b>
<b>19</b>	Pedro Eanes de Abiul (1367)	Canon of Évora; Royal servant	Father of an illegitimate child	King Afonso IV		Soeiro Peres, escolar (son); Maria Eanes (son's mother)									1						<b>1</b>
<b>20</b>	Rui Gonçalves (1307)	Royal clergyman	Writer	King Dinis				1													<b>1</b>
<b>21</b>	Vasco Vicente (1370)	Royal clergyman	Writer	King Fernando			Bachelor's degree in laws			1											<b>1</b>
<b>22</b>	Vicente, Master (1368)	Rector of Sta. M <sup>a</sup> de Guimarães; physician	Presented Royal rector	King Fernando																1	<b>1</b>
<b>23</b>	[Vicente Rodrigues] (1378)	Abbot of Sto. Tirso; Royal chaplain	Beneficiary	King Fernando				1													<b>1</b>

## Appendix II

### Ecclesiastics in the service of the king in the royal documents: The case of King Fernando's chancery (1367-1383)

#### List of documents (66)

Name	Type	Doc.No.	Date	Document summary	References
Antão Garcia	Privilege	1	1367-04-15	Privilege that allowed the village of Nogueira, which belonged to the chapel of Queen Constança, to have butchers, winegrowers, bakers and fishermen	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 5-5v
		2	1367-04-15	Privilege granted to the farmers of the Sanguinhal estate, in Óbidos, which belonged to the chapel of Queen Constança	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 5v
		3	1367-04-25	Permit that allowed the residents of the Azeitão estate, in Sesimbra, to elect a judge	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 6-6v
	Coutada	4	1367-04-20	Coutada of the Azeitão estate, in Sesimbra, which belonged to the chapel of Queen Constança	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 5
Domingos Eanes Jardo	Composition	5	1274-02-03	Composition between King Afonso III and the monastery of Santiago regarding river and sea ports	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 174-175
[Estêvão Afonso]	Privilege	6	1311-09-16	Privilege that allowed students to have their weights and measures inspectors together with the city's ones	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9v
		7	1311-12-01	Privilege that allowed students to receive their provisions regardless of their place of origin	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9v

<b>Estêvão Eanes de Sintra</b>	Donation	8	1374-05-22	Donation of all the royal patronages of the churches of Abrantes to the Guarda cathedral	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 145v-146
<b>Estêvão Pires</b>	Privilege	9	1371-07-21	Request for Aires Pires, the chaplain of the church of Castro Laboreiro, to be exempted from the ban that forbade clergymen from purchasing properties	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 3, fl. 78
<b>Fernando de Astorga, Friar</b>	Privilege	10	1383-03-16	Exemption to provide lodging granted to all the monasteries of the order of Saint Francis	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 100-100v e liv. 3, fl. 61v
<b>[Francisco Domingues]</b>	Interdiction	11	1312-05-25	Ban that forbade students from carrying weapons during the night for the risk of losing them	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9v-10
	Order	12	1312-05-25	Order for the construction of houses in Coimbra where students could live in	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 10
	Privilege	13	1312-05-25	Letter instructing the privileges granted to the students of Coimbra to be kept	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 10
		14	1312-05-25	Privilege that allowed providing students with houses, as long as they were not leased to other people	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 10-10v
<b>Gil das Leis, Master</b>	Privilege	15	1307-01-27	Confirmation of the constitutions of the general study of Coimbra	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 10v-11
<b>Gomes, Friar</b>	Donation	16	1371-07-10	Donation involving the annual offer of a clothing item	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 5v
<b>[Gonçalo Eanes]</b>	Privilege	17	1310-09-16	Privilege that exempted the students of Coimbra from the payment of tolls and customary tributes in the entire kingdom	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9

	Appointment	18	1310-09-16	Appointment of a business proxy for the general study of Coimbra	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9v
<b>Gonçalo Esteves</b>	Donation	19	1367-05-07	Donation of a vegetable farm in Beja	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 7v
<b>Gonçalo Gonçalves</b>	Sentence	20	1380-06-13	Sentence establishing that the boatmen who travelled between Santarém and Lisbon should retrieve the equipment seized by the Santarém authorities	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 63-63v
		21	1380-08-04	Sentence establishing that the order of Christ should receive a tribute for the fish and bread of Castro Marim	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 67v-68
		22	1380-08-30	Sentence establishing that the municipality of Valhelhas should have a 40-year exemption from paying the tribute to the order of Alcântara, as well as from its civil and criminal jurisdiction	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 69v-70
		23	1380-10-04	Sentence establishing the distribution of bread in the Pabolide estate, Viseu	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 71v-72
		24	1380-10-05	Sentence establishing that Pedro Eanes, a farmer who worked in the king's vineyards, had to make payments in wine and money, since it had been proven that he had no exemptions	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 72v-73
		25	1380-11-20	Sentence ordering the residents of Covas, Celorico de Basto, to pay the rents owed to the king	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 79v-80
		26	1381-01-12	Sentence establishing that Afonso Martins, the <i>alcaide</i> of Tavira, should elect the town's weights and measures inspectors, because the judges and the good men wanted to do it without consulting him	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 78v-79
		27	1381-03-09	Sentence establishing that the residentes of the crown land of Alcalá, near Alcáçovas, should pay the rents owed to Fernão Gonçalves de Sousa	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 80v-81

		28	1381-09-08	Sentence establishing that the municipality of Atouguia should pay 600 pounds to the king	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 3, fls. 22v-23
		29	1382-09-12	Sentence establishing that the <i>alcaide</i> of Abrantes should take over the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the village of Tramagal	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 3, fl. 27v e liv. 2, fl. 95v
<b>João, Friar</b>	Privilege	30	1376-11-15	Request of privileges to Rodrigo Eanes, Afonso Lourenço, Gonçalo Esteves and Estaço Martins, residentes in the <i>couto</i> of Alcobaça, which would exempt them from the municipality's services	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 21v
<b>João, Master</b>	Order	31	1309-07-01	Order by King Dinis for the municipality of Coimbra to give sheep to the city's students	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 11
	Privilege	32	1309-07-01	Privilege that allowed the students of Coimbra to order their provisions from wherever they wanted	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 11
	Interdiction	33	1312-05-25	Ban that forbade students from carrying weapons during the night for the risk of losing them	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9v-10
	Order	34	1312-05-25	Order for the construction of houses in Coimbra where students could live in	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 10
	Privilege	35	1312-05-25	Letter instructing the privileges granted to the students of Coimbra to be kept	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 10

	Privilege	36	1312-05-25	Privilege that allowed providing students with houses, as long as they were not leased to other people	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 10-10v
<b>João Gonçalves</b>	Sentence	37	1381-03-08	Sentence establishing that the municipality of Atouguia should send 30 men for the king's galleys	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fls. 94-94v
<b>Lourenço Vicente</b>	Donation	38	1370-05-01	Donation of an estate in Ribeira de Loures, Lisbon, to Gonçalo Vasques do Rego	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 57
	Privilege	39	1370-05-06	Privilege that offered an estate in Azambuja to the monastery of Santa Cruz of Santarém	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 61v
	Lease	40	1370-05-08	Letter regarding <i>marinhas</i> leased in Santo António, near Lisbon	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 57v-58
	Donation	41	1370-05-15	Donation of São Félix dos Galegos to João Rodrigues Carreiro	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 61-61v
	Order	42	1370-05-17	Letter ordering the kingdom's chief magistrates and justices to instruct those who lived in lands belonging to the order of Santiago to serve their master in whatever he saw fit	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 62v
	Legitimation	43	1370-05-18	Legitimation of Gonçalo Gil Carvalho, the son of Gil Fernandes de Carvalho, master of the order of Santiago, and Maria Domingues	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 60-60v
	Donation	44	1370-06-02	Donation of movable assets and properties to Rui Vasques das Penas Juntas	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 62

		45	1370-06-10	Donation of a royal winery that should be added to the old Jewish quarter to offset the demolition of houses for the construction of barns	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 63-63v
		46	1370-06-12	Donation of houses in Monforte to Aires Gomes da Silva	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 63
	Privileges	47	1370-06-23	Confirmation of privileges granted to the prior and the convent of the chapel that used to belong to D. Roberto, in the <i>judgado</i> of Monção	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 64
	Donation	48	1370-07-03	Donation of the land of Sande and the castle of Santa Cruz to Álvaro Rodrigues de Lima	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 64v-65
		49	1370-07-03	Donation of the town of Milmanda to Álvaro Rodrigues de Lima	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 65
	Privilege	50	1370-08-07	Privileges granted to the monasteries of the Botão wood	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 68
	Donation	51	1370-10-28	Donation of the estate of Quarteira, Loulé, to Martim Garcia, a knight	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 69v
		52	1371-01-01	Donation of houses in Lisbon to the admiral Lançarote Pessanha	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 68v
		53	1371-05-23	Donation of a barge known as Santiago	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 1
	Privilege	54	1371-06-09	Exemption from the obligation to have a horse granted to Diogo Afonso	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 2



	“Firmidão”	55	1371-06-14	Release of the imprisoned Moors through the payment of a ransom by the emissaries of the king of Benamarim	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 2v
	Donation	56	1371-06-22	Donation of rents from a barge to Dr. Gil do Sem	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 4
		57	1371-07-29	Donation of houses in Santarém to Martim Fernandes, a servant of King Afonso IV and King Pedro	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 4, fl. 5v
	Legitimation	58	1372-10-02	Legitimation of Martinho, the son of Lourenço Vicente	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 114-144v
	Jurisdiction	59	1373-03-27	Submission of the jurisdiction of Porto to the city’s bishop	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 119-119v
<b>Martinho Lourenço</b>	Appointment	60	1310-09-16	Appointment of a business proxy for the general study of Coimbra	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 9v
<b>Miguel Vivas</b>	Appointment	61	1327-06-06	Letter ordering the acknowledgement of the role of the conservator of the general study in the entire kingdom	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 12
<b>Pedro Eanes de Abiul</b>	Legitimation	62	1367-12-30	Legitimation of Soeiro Peres, a student, the son of Pedro Eanes de Abiul and Maria Eanes	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 21-21v
<b>Rui Gonçalves</b>	Privilege	63	1307-01-27	Confirmation of the constitutions of the general study of Coimbra	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fls. 10v-11
<b>Vasco Vicente</b>	Donation	64	1370-05-01	Donation of the castle of Aveleda and its jurisdiction to Fernando Velho	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 54v

<b>Vicente, Master</b>	Presentation	65	1368-08-25	Presentation as rector of the church of Santa Maria of Guimarães, archbishopric of Braga	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 1, fl. 31v
<b>[Vicente Rodrigues]</b>	Privilege	66	1378-12-08	Permit to sell wine in Porto, regardless of the ban imposed on the prelates and friars who lived in the city	ANTT, <i>Chancelaria de D. Fernando</i> , liv. 2, fl. 35v