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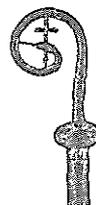
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O SERVIÇO DE DEUS E O SERVIÇO DO REI:
ATTITUDES DO PRELADO DO PORTO D. VICENTE MENDES (1260-1296)

MARIA CRISTINA CUNHA
MARIA JOÃO OLIVEIRA SILVA

O episcopado de D. Vicente Mendes, porque bastante longo e situado cronologicamente numa época de grande conflituosidade do episcopado português com a monarquia, serviu de mote a uma primeira abordagem ao posicionamento do referido prelado face à luta que então os bispos travavam com o poder central. Baseadas em documentação relativa à diocese do Porto reunida até ao momento, as autoras ensaiaram igualmente uma análise diplomática dos actos que, de algum modo, reflectem o papel de D. Vicente Mendes enquanto responsável pela Diocese.

THE KING'S SERVICE AND GOD'S SERVICE:
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Due to its longevity and chronological place at a time of conflict between the Portuguese bishops and the Monarchy, the episcopate of D. Vicente Mendes opened the possibility to a first approach to this prelate's life and to the analysis of his standing on the face of the struggle held by the bishops against the central power. Based on a considerable amount of documentation from the diocese of Oporto, the authors also prepared a diplomatic analysis of the documents that somehow reflect D. Vicente Mendes' role as the man behind the Diocese.

THE KING'S SERVICE AND GOD'S SERVICE:
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1. INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, Professor Armindo de Sousa wrote: "It is often regarded as commonplace word that bishops of Porto and the central power did not see eye to eye. So much was this that this relationship has become an object of study"¹. Generally speaking, this either quarrelsome or consensual relationship is well known, thanks to the work of this and other authors, but it seems to us that there is still a long way to go in the analysis of this process (or processes...), which culminates in 1406, when the city of Porto ceases being an episcopal feud. Specific documentation of the Diocese is insufficiently known, and commonplace opinions (of frequently unknown origin) are carelessly repeated. Due to its longevity at a time of great conflict between the portuguese episcopate and the monarchy, the episcopate of D. Vicente Mendes gave way to a first approach to the referred prelate's position in the face of the struggle held by the bishops at that time with the central power. Such focussing will be based on documentation concerning the diocese of Porto, collected so far, not only in the *Livros dos Originais* existent in the A.D.P., in monastery archives of Porto's diocese, but also in the SIEP database of the Project (FASTI) that brings us together today.

First of all, we will try to relate the information given by the documentation about D. Vicente Mendes with the wider context of relations between the portuguese episcopate and both D. Afonso III and D. Dinis, followed by the diplomatic analysis of the actions that somehow reflect D. Vicente Mendes' role as the person responsible for the Diocese.

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¹ SOUSA, Armindo de – Os bispos do Porto e o Poder Central na Idade Média. In HENRIQUE, o Navegador: *Exposição comemorativa do 6º Centenário do nascimento do Infante D. Henrique*. Porto: Comissão Municipal Infante 94, 1994, p. 75.

2. THE KING'S SERVICE

Son of D. Mendo and D. Teresa, “noble and rich people”, according to Monsenhor José Augusto Ferreira², D. Vicente Mendes was dean of Porto at least since February of 1252, before reaching the bishop’s throne. It is with that dignity that he represents D. Afonso III as his *procurator*, on an issue concerning the rights of a certain church³. After the death of D. Julião Fernandes, at the end of October of 1260, *magister Vicencius*, as he called himself until then, was elected bishop of Porto by the canons and presented to the archbishop of Braga by D. Afonso III⁴, to certify his election⁵. In March of 1261 he is still designated *electus Portugalensis*⁶, but in August he was already a consecrated bishop.

The first years of his episcopate seem to reflect a certain peace in the relations between the king and the prelate: not only does D. Vicente attend the baptism of D. Dinis, but he also establishes with him the exchange of the church of Lamegal for the church of Cabanões, which was more of his interest⁷. An agreement dated from 1264, established between the city lord and the king on the rights of fishing in the Douro river and the revenue of fluvial traffic, has been interpreted by António Cruz as a first sign of misunderstanding between them⁸. But was it really so? In fact, it is also possible that the period of harmony between them might have lasted more than that since, in 1265, the king writes to the bishop warning him about the existing problems concerning the election of the priest in the church of Vandoma⁹. Such attitude can be seen as an act of cordiality or, at least, as an act of non-open conflict.

However, in 1267/8 the bishops of Braga, Coimbra, Viseu, Lisboa, Porto, and Guarda, as well as the solicitors of the bishops of Lamego and Évora, were all at the Roman Curia, presenting to the Pope a long list of complaints about the king of Portugal’s actions¹⁰. What could explain such attitude by the Portuguese

² FERREIRA, José Augusto – *Memórias archeológico-históricas da cidade do Porto (Fastos episcopais e políticos) (século VI- século XX)*. Tomo 1. Braga: Cruz e C.ª, 1924, p. 249, nº 6.

³ 1254.06.12 [Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais/Torre do Tombo (IAN/TT), *Gav.* 19, m. 5, nº 31].

⁴ According to the *inquirições* of 1258 the bishop’s election had been done by the chapter, and confirmed by the king afterwards. (FERREIRA – *Memórias archeológico-históricas*, p. 249, nº 5).

⁵ FERREIRA – *Memórias archeológico-históricas*, p. 249-250.

⁶ FERREIRA – *Memórias archeológico-históricas*, p. 249, nº 4.

⁷ 1261.08.08 [Arquivo Distrital do Porto (ADP), Cartº Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1662 (4), fol. 2 e 9-13v.(inserto); Publ. *CENSUAL do Cabido da Sé do Porto*. Porto: Imprensa Portuguesa, 1924, p. 246-247].

⁸ The same opinion has MARQUES, Maria Alegria – *O Papado e Portugal no tempo de D. Afonso III (1245-1279)*. Coimbra, 1990, p. 389. Dissertation, PhD: Universidade de Coimbra.

⁹ IAN/TT, *Gav.* 10, m. 3, nº 15 (cópia).

¹⁰ “(...) se o bispo do Porto se queixa de um facto ocorrido em Julho /1261, é de notar que em Agosto faz o escambo da vila do Lamegal com o rei (ao que se diz, também obrigado; cfr. *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 246-247) e em Outubro desse ano foi padrinho do infante D. Dinis (*HISTÓRIA da cidade do Porto*. Dir.

clergy at this time? What provoked such a change in their relationship as we had witnessed them in the previous years? In Porto the problems seem to occur in a much more aggressive form: D. Julião Fernandes, the previous bishop, wanted to extend his jurisdiction beyond Rio da Vila, using the deceitful process of changing the wording of previous documents. "It was exactly because of this and other things that the king ordered inquiries in Porto and other cities (1258)"¹¹. In what concerns the majority of the Portuguese dioceses, we believe that neither the inquiries of 1258/59 nor some laws issued then were responsible for the reactions provoked. We find evidence of this in the law of 1261 concerning the *iure patronatus*, in the law of 1264 concerning the power of the *alcaides* (which the bishops also complained), and the law of 1265 concerning the *anúduvas* (a sort of tax on free manual labour which forced people to help repairing military structures). But above all, the bishops found one other law of April 1265 a particularly aggressive law of disentanglement impossible to accept. Probably, this law was "the last drop" that unleashed the episcopal reaction.

Whether motivated or not by the enquiries of 1258, the fact is that the clergy reacted to this by releasing a general interdict over the kingdom and asking for the Pope's protection. At this time, their main representatives in the Roman Curia were the archbishop of Braga, and the bishops of Porto and Coimbra (former bishop of Viseu).

The general outlines of this conflict have been very well known for a long time. The documentation examined proves that D. Vicente was in the Diocese for extended periods of time until May of 1274, at which time he could be found at Lyons, where he confirmed an act and attended the second ecumenic council of Lyons¹². We do not know until when did he remained out of his Diocese, but in 1275 the vicars were still ruling the *portucalensis* territory by his *mandato et auctoritate*¹³. The prelate's presence in Lyons accounts for his knowledge of the council's determinations. This is mentioned in a letter of 5 June 1277, in which the bishop, D. Vicente, while staying at Viterbo, asks the chapter of Porto to elect as treasurer his *consanguinis* Vicente Eanes, canon of the above mentioned cathedral, on the condition that he should become a priest within a year or else

Damião Peres, António Cruz. Vol. 1. Porto: Portucalense Editora, 1962-1965, p. 205). Nestas condições estarão empoladas as queixas do bispo ou o último facto seria mais um expediente do rei para, ligando-o por laços de compadrio, lhe impedir movimentos de oposição? Se era esta a intenção, bem lhe escapou..." (MARQUES, Maria Alegria – *O Papado*, p. 436, footnote 161).

¹¹ SOUSA, Armindo de – *Os bispos do Porto e o Poder Central*, p. 77.

¹² 1274.05.29 (IAN/TT, *S. Salvador de Moreira*, mc.9, doc. 27). As Peter Linehan says (*La iglesia española y el papado en el siglo XIII*. Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1975, p. 185, note 149), The bishop of Porto was one of the 20 peninsular prelates that were at Lyons in July.

¹³ 1275.12.03 (IAN/TT, *S. Pedro de Cete*, m. 2, n.º 16); 1275.09.05 (IAN/TT, OSB, *S. Pedro de Pedroso*, mc. 6, doc. 38); 1275.11.02 (IAN/TT, OSB, *Sta. Maria de Tarouquela*, mc. 8, n.º 19).

he would have to abandon the honour *iuxta constitutionem Concilii Lugdunensis*¹⁴.

At this time the majority of the Portuguese episcopacy was also at the Roman Curia.

When D. Dinis became associated to the kingdom's government, in the beginning of 1277¹⁵, D. Vicente was, in fact, in Viterbo¹⁶. When D. Afonso III died, in 1279, there was a favourable mood towards an agreement between king and church, mainly because the monarch, on his deathbed, had finally given in to Rome's demands. For this reason, D. Dinis is believed to have accepted several bishops' nominations made by Nicolaus III.

In 1281 D. Vicente had already returned to his Diocese and visited the monastery of Vairão¹⁷ in June and the church of S. João de Ver¹⁸ in August. The vacancy that followed the Pope's death, in 1280, prevented the negotiations from taking place before the end of 1281, when the king met up with the portuguese bishops in Guarda. There, the prelates evaluated the papal charters issued in 1275 (Gregorius X) and discussed the different aspects of the issue which opposed them to the king. By that time, D. Dinis had moved to the Alentejo and summoned Cortes in April, meeting up again with the prelates, which presented to him the results of the meeting in Guarda. By then, the relationship between the monarch and D. Vicente was much more peaceful: not only did the king confirm the aforementioned agreement settled in 1264¹⁹, on the traffic and fishing conditions in the Douro river, but he also cancelled a contract done by his father and D. Julião, former bishop of Porto. The prelate claimed that the reason for this was that the Pope had written him a letter explaining how the Diocese would be prejudicated by such an agreement. Another royal document, with the same date, states that D. Vicente was getting ready to leave for the Roman Curia²⁰, taking with him the document which had been elaborated by the bishops in Guarda and approved by D. Dinis, so that Martinho V could confirm it. As it is known, the Pope would only react in 1284, demanding several modifications. Meanwhile, the king had nominated representatives in the Roman Curia (Martinho Pires, canon of Braga and *cantor* of Évora, and Estêvão Lourenço, which would be replaced by João Martins de Soalhães).

¹⁴ *Censual do Cabido*, p. 529-532.

¹⁵ PIZARRO, José Augusto Sotto Mayor – *D. Dinis*. Lisboa: Circulo de Leitores, Lisboa, 2006, p. 58.

¹⁶ 1277.06.03 (IAN/TT, OSB, *S. Pedro de Pedroso*, mç.8, doc.26) e 1277.06.05 (*CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 529-532).

¹⁷ 1281.06.16 (IAN/TT, *S. Salvador de Vairão*, mç. 4, nº 46).

¹⁸ 1281.08.05 (ADP, Cartº Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1670(12), fol. 6 e 1688(30), fol. 33).

¹⁹ 1282.04.28 (ADP, Cartº Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1664(6), fol. 72, doc. 3).

²⁰ 1282.04.28 (ADP, Cartº Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1664(6), fol. 72, doc.). In this document, the king obliges the *almoxarife* of Porto to accomplish what was settled with D. Vicente, replacing the former agreement.

In the Cortes of Lisbon of 1285 the King returned to the same old topic, only to state that, with the Pope's death, his requirements had no longer any effect. As a result of this, the episcopate was very displeased and complained to Honorius IV (who had already nominated a group of three cardinals to audit the issue with the king's lawyers). However, the Pope died in 1287, thus provoking a new impasse which was only to be solved in the time of Nicholas IV.

As it has already been noticed, "the king showed some signs of good will towards the clergy while all this process was being unfolded"²¹. An example of this is precisely the permit given to D. Vicente so that he could buy landed properties up to 2000 *libras*. This document, firmed little before the signature of the *Concordata* of 1289, effectively appears as one more attempt to "buy" the good graces of the prelates, in this case of the bishop of Porto²². After the *Concordata*, the conflicts between King and Church did not end, but they would never attain the same scale they had done before. In fact, Holy Church was not even summoned to solve them...

The interdict on the kingdom was finally lifted in 1290. Before that, the Pope had discharged D. Dinis of the excommunication that hung upon the kings of Portugal, since Gregorius X.

In June of 1292 the king travelled to Porto, in order to solve some questions which had been raised by the bishops, mainly by D. Vicente: the complaints made at that time lead us to conclude that some of the articles of 1289 were not fulfilled by the king and, in a matter of much more importance, that the laws of *desamortização* of 1286 and 1291 had not been accommodated by the clergy. Given this context, it is easy to understand the donation of a church in Gaia and three more *casais* made by the monarch to D. Vicente, as well as the confirmation of the exchange of the church of Cabanões²³ made by D. Afonso III. Once again, the king tried to comply with the clergy²⁴, signing the *Concordata dos Cinco Artigos* in August, after having done several donations to the various cathedrals of the kingdom, from churches or *padroados* to the restitution of honours²⁵.

As Hermínia Vilar has already pointed out, "the year of 1292 would conceal a cycle of changes. First of all, changes in the relationship between the King and the Church. Secondly, changes in the interior of the episcopate. Generally speaking, the set of prelates that lead the fight against Afonso III will be gradually replaced,

²¹ PIZARRO – *D. Dinis*, p. 87.

²² D. Vicente took advantage from this situation: in 1292.03.04 he bought a *herdade*, having royal permission for that.

²³ 1292.06.20 (ADP, Cart^a Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1662(4), fol. 3 e fol. 5-8; 1688(30), fol. 10).

²⁴ As PIZARRO – *D. Dinis*, p. 128, pointed out, "a D. Dinis interessava-lhe contemporizar com o clero, numa fase em que vinha a impor importantes medidas de carácter anti-senhorial".

²⁵ PIZARRO – *D. Dinis*, p. 128 and VILAR, Hermínia Vasconcelos – O episcopado do tempo de D. Dinis: trajectos pessoais e carreiras eclesiásticas (1279-1325). *Arquipélago. História*. 5 (2001) 593.

during the next two decades”²⁶. We believe this meant that, in what concerns the diocese of Porto, D. Vicente was left alone, in the beginnings of the decade of 90: his pairs had already died, his struggle no longer made any sense. All he had left to do was to fully enjoy the “graces” that the king had granted him...

3. GOD’S SERVICE

For a bishop, to serve God is to serve the Church. And there were several ways of serving the Church: to administrate the assets of the *ecclesia*, to judge and to give sentence to cases of various natures and with several participants, to confirm, to nominate, and even to seal and validate documents. All these and other episcopal activities, carried out by D. Vicente Mendes, implied the production of documents that would certify and perpetuate them. The responsibility for that production was shared between two entities: the cathedral chancery and the public notaries. Each of them had a different weight in the documentary production. The reasons of such fact essentially have to do with their type and legal nature.

Before we focus on that aspect, it is important to remember that the origin of the episcopal chancery confounds itself with the restoration of the diocese with D. Hugo (1113-1136)²⁷, whilst the first *publicus notarius* is attested for Porto only in 1242²⁸. During the episcopate of D. Vicente, there were at least nine notaries, named *civitatem portugalensis*²⁹, but with no reference to a status of royal notaries. Apart for these there are six other officers who produced documents in this period. However, these were already *publicus notarius* or *publicus tabellio in curia Portugalensis venerabilis domni Vicentii episcopi et civitate eiusdem*³⁰, because they were under the bishop’s direct jurisdiction, therefore clearly distinguishing themselves from the others.

This distinction finds reflection not only on how these men were entitled. The *dictamen* of their documents was also different, as we were able to check by

²⁶ VILAR – *O episcopado*, p. 593.

²⁷ About the episcopal chancery cf. SILVA, Maria João Oliveira – «Scriptores et Notatores»: *a produção documental da Sé do Porto (1113-1247)*. Porto, 2006. Dissertation, MA: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto.

²⁸ It was Martinho Eanes, conf. NOGUEIRA, Bernardo de Sá – *Tabelionado e instrumento público em Portugal: génese e implantação (1212-1279)*. Lisboa, 1996, vol. 1, p. 140, vol. 3, p. 28. Dissertation, PhD: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa.

²⁹ They are: Martinho Eanes (1260-1262), Martinho Soares (1271-1287), Pedro Pires (1277-1288), Pedro Salamanca (1277-1296), Francisco André (1287-1296), Pedro Eanes (1287-1295), Estêvão Mendes (1287-1293), Martinho Afonso (1292-1294) and João Colaço (1295).

³⁰ They are: Mateus Soares (1261), Domingos Domingues (1263-1265 or 1296), Pedro Martins (1281), Martinho Soares (1285-1291), Domingos Martins (1290-1293) and Pedro Eanes (1295).

analysing the similar documents and similar grants produced by both entities. Because of this, it is possible to recognize the existence of a chancery of the cathedral of Porto during this episcopate. A chancery serving a bishop that served God and the Church.

Of the 91 documents collected for this episcopate having as one of the parts involved either the bishop or members of the cathedral, 51 were drawn up in the chancery, 17 of which by the notaries of the curia, 22 were made by the notaries of the city, nine by notaries from outside Porto, seven by royal services, and two by scribes of monasteries. These values clearly show that the chancery of the cathedral had the greatest responsibility for the documentary production during D. Vicente's bishopric. But what types of documents were made during this prelate's episcopate? To what extent do those documents give us the knowledge of D. Vicente's episcopal activity?

Legal acts («acta juridica») constitute the majority of documents produced in the cathedral's *scriptorium*, representing almost 60% of its total. From this list, we may sort out the 17 nominations of clergymen done by the bishop generally after a monastery's presentation (for example, Paranhos, Valongo, Régua³¹); two nominations and two acceptances of dignity³², by presentation of the chapter; one Diocesan Constitution³³, produced after the accomplishment of a Cathedral Synod (and the first known Constitution to the diocese of Porto); and the *Statuta Capituli*³⁴, in which the cathedral's resident canons' obligations, namely concerning presence, substitution and penalties for the absence in the daily and nightly holy tasks were established. The importance of this type of documents and its production in the chancery is strengthened by evidence that only five of these acts were made by the city notaries³⁵. The juridical acts are proper in the exercise of the episcopal power, because we can clearly see the consequences these documents produce, further more than the will of their grantors. In other words, they reflect the D. Vicente's activity serving the Church.

Jurisdictional acts are equally fundamental for the episcopal exercise. They are the "proper acts of the exercise of power or judging activity"³⁶. They materialise the bishop's appearance as an "instância" with *jus dicere*, jurisdictional

³¹ IAN/TT, OSB, S. Pedro de Pedrosa, mc. 8, doc. 26, IAN/TT, OSB, Sta. Maria de Tarouquela, mc. 8, nº 19, *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 197-198.

³² *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 529-532 e 537.

³³ *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 541-542, also published in *SYNODICON hispanum*. Dir. Antonio García y García. Vol. 2: Portugal. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1982, p. 344-346.

³⁴ *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 505-506.

³⁵ Namely: an acceptance of dignity (*CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 504-505 e 532-533), an "apelatio" (IAN/TT, OSB, S. João de Pendorada, mc. 21, s./n.), an nomination of abess (IAN/TT, OSB, S. Cristóvão de Rio Tinto, mc. 4, doc. 6) and two acceptances of property (*CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 516-517).

³⁶ CUNHA, Maria Cristina Almeida e – *A Chancelaria Arquiepiscopal de Braga (1071-1244)*. Galiza: Editorial Toxosoutos, 2005, p. 132.

power, which is shown in sentences and compositions not only of ecclesiastic and spiritual nature, but also of civil and temporal kind, as he held both the ecclesiastic power (in the diocese) and the jurisdictional power over the city of Porto. During his episcopate, D. Vicente and his chapter pronounced nine sentences, mostly involving monasteries and private individuals, four of which were written in the chancery³⁷, other four by notaries of Porto³⁸ and one other by a notary of Feira³⁹. There are four sentences of civil nature, which seems to imply that the bishop, as the lord of civil power, is called to pass sentences on civil deeds, too. The remaining five, were pronounced by the bishop as an ecclesiastical lord, and usually refer to disputes of ecclesiastical nature. *Sedente pro tribunali*, the bishop is called to serve God and men through his capacity to judge and to sentence.

Judicial acts are directly related to jurisdictional acts. They often occur during processes, as seen in the cases of two witnesses' inquiries we process. They were both ordered by the bishop and even though they are related with ecclesiastical quarrels⁴⁰, they were not written by notaries of the episcopal curia. Its importance in the context of the service to the Church clearly has to do with the episcopal "obligation" to solve conflicts both inside the diocese and with other dioceses.

Confirmation acts are those "in which the episcopal *scriptorium* gives probatory strength to pre-existing documents"⁴¹. Six documents of this type have reached us from the episcopate of D. Vicente. Five of them were effectively written in the chancery of the cathedral and were authenticated with the prelate's seal⁴², even though he was not the grantor in any of them. "*In ecclesia nostra cathedralis utilitatem...*"⁴³ or "*ad petitionem capituli*"⁴⁴ are two of the reasons which may explain why D. Vicente thought that confirming acts also meant serving his Cathedral, his chapter and his Church.

³⁷ IAN/TT, OFM, *Provincia de Portugal, Sta. Clara*, mç. 59, doc. 3, IAN/TT, *S. Pedro de Cete*, mç. 1, doc. 39, IAN/TT, *S. Salvador de Vairão*, mç. 4, n° 46, IAN/TT, *S. Salvador de Moreira*, mç. 9, doc. 34.

³⁸ IAN/TT, *S. Salvador de Vairão*, mç. 4, n° 26, ADP, Cart° Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1685(27), fol. 28, e 1681(23), fol. 36, *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 533-536.

³⁹ IAN/TT, *S. Salvador de Moreira*, mç. 9, doc. 31A.

⁴⁰ One results from doubts concerning the rights of "padroado" and presentation in the church of de S. João da Foz do Sousa (IAN/TT, *S. Pedro de Cete*, mç. 1, doc. 37 e 38) and other about doubts regarding the payment of the "votos de Santiago" by the residents of Canidelo (ADP, Cart° Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1675(17), fol. 4).

⁴¹ CUNHA – *A Chancelaria Arquiepiscopal de Braga*, p. 133.

⁴² IAN/TT, C.R., *S. Domingos do Porto*, mç. único, doc. 9 e 10, ADP, Cart° Cab., *Liv. Originais*, 1670(12), fol. 6, *CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 347-350 e 526-527, IAN/TT, *S. Martinho de Cedofeita*, mç. único, doc. 2.

⁴³ Extract of a confirmation of a composition made by the ancestors of D. Vicente and the monastery of Celanova (*CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 349).

⁴⁴ From a confirmation of a composition made between D. Julião Fernandes and the chapter of Porto (*CENSUAL do Cabido*, p. 527).

The service of the Church also implied the administration of secular assets. Within this context, legal transactions occur very often. Far more important than seeing how D. Vicente managed the diocese's patrimony, emphasis must be put on the fact that the majority of the deals involving members of the Cathedral as grantors were chiselled by public notaries, while the episcopal chancery practically limited itself to writing acts where private individuals were involved. We think that the explanation for this situation should be found in the fact that these private individuals were, in the majority of the cases, monasteries of the diocese. Using the bishop's presence to their advantage by the time he was either making pastoral visits or having one certain moment of proximity, the representatives of the monasteries requested the chancery's notary who escorted the prelate to write the document with *consensu et auctoritate*⁴⁵ of the bishop and sealed by him. In this case, more than service to God, the prelate is serving men, using the power given to him as a man of the Church.

4. CONCLUSION

The variety and amount of documents granted and sealed by D. Vicente Mendes strengthen our conviction that this bishop was, without doubt, a man who served God and the King. These same documents as well as others that we managed to congregate, allow us to conclude that this prelate first served Kings, then fought against them and, finally, walked away from them. In fact, our opinion is that towards the end of his episcopate, D. Vicente Mendes' attitude concerning monarchy was nothing more than ignoring it, especially since the moment when he found himself alone: the "war" of the new bishops, nominated for reasons which had much more to do with the proximity they had to the king than to any other reason⁴⁶, was not his war any more. Nevertheless, by the end of his life, D. Vicente had not forgotten the service he had made to the king. In his will, one can read: "por mercee a Nosso Senhor El Rey polo serviço que fizemos a seu padre e a ele e por nosso affilhado e nosso conpadre que he [...] que deffenda os executores" of his will.

⁴⁵ IAN/TT, S. Salvador de Vairão, mç. 4, nº 22.

⁴⁶ VILAR – O *episcopado*, p. 587, says that "o episcopado que nos alvares dos anos noventa governava as dioceses portuguesas tinha, na sua maioria ascendido a esses cargos já sob o domínio de D. Dinis ou nos primeiros tempos do seu reinado e, ao contrário do que uma análise geral pode fazer supor, parece-me que a importância do serviço régio ou, pelo menos, o grau de proximidade entre muitos dos eclesiásticos nomeados para o episcopado e o rei, é bastante profundo ao longo destas duas décadas,"