

At a symposium about family archives organized by the Instituto de Estudos Medievais of Universidade Nova de Lisboa in 2010, we presented a communication which sought to demonstrate the importance of Sabugosa / S. Lourenço Archive in the context of my research for the study of the Royal Household during the reign of King D. Carlos. In that sense, we demonstrated how this archive could help answer some of the questions that arose during our investigation, including the lack of protocol rules and the absence of an expert service concerning the officers of the palace.

The family archives are privileged sources with regard to epistolary and autobiographical documentation, at least in relation to that produced in the nineteenth century. Thus, it is a natural source that is essential for the study of the everyday life of the Royal Household. Not wanting to dwell on considerations about the new direction that historiography has taken mainly from the late 20th decade of last century, particularly with the advent of the French journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* and later with the *Nouvelle Histoire*, which gave more importance to the history of mentalities to seek explanations for political events, economic and social, it is necessary to briefly understand the importance of knowledge of the quotidian.

Indeed, and just to mention an example of the national historiography, the study of Maria Paula Marçal Lourenço concerning the house of the Queen illustrates how the proximity of the royal household staff to the Queen allowed a greater enjoyment of its blessings¹.

Obviously, there are two questions which have to be answered at this point. Firstly, recall that the period in question represented the final years of constitutional monarchy. At that time, the Crown Assets, which usufruct was donated to the aristocracy as a reward for services rendered to the monarch was abolished, which means that the rewards for services rendered to the Crown would be different. Moreover, another question arises, particularly with the extinction of the Queens' Household and the Infantado Household. During the constitutional monarchy there was just one Royal household. This means that all the staff

¹ LOURENÇO, Maria Paula Marçal – *Casa Corte e património das rainhas de Portugal, 1640-1754. Poderes, Instituições e Relações sociais*. Lisboa: Universidade de Lisboa dissertação de doutoramento em Historia Moderna, 1999. 4 v. Tese de Doutoramento. P. 465.

employed in those different houses was integrated in a single royal household, providing services to different members of the royal family.

To talk about the everyday life of the royal family we have to point out several conditions that would further affect it, despite being well known by everyone.

First, we must refer the people who were part of the Royal Household. At the head, the royal family itself composed by six members. While the King, the Queen, the Crown Prince and the Infante D. Manuel initially resided at the Belém Palace and later the Necessidades Palace, the Queen Mother, D. Maria Pia and the Infante D. Afonso usually inhabited the Ajuda Palace. We can not properly speak of two courts serving two different spaces as these settings were multiplying, as we shall see. Nevertheless, we can identify two different groups of people working in each of these households. However, this perception is not very linear. For instance, some of the ladies appointed to be in-waiting to the Princess D. Amélia were also ladies of the Queen Maria Pia and the Mordomo-mor² of Queen Maria Pia, the Duke of Loulé, was Estribeiro-mor³ of the royal house too.

In this communication we will focus our attention almost exclusively on the superior officials of the Household, mainly because it becomes much more difficult to find documentation about the employees on categories below.

In addition to the usual residences, there were various locations where, throughout the year, the royal family and the staff detached to her service lived with. Also the entire court lived there. If between late autumn and late spring the days were spent in Lisbon, the summer was usually spent in Sintra. The Palace of Pena was preferably occupied by Queen D. Amélia and the Village Palace by Queen D. Maria Pia. In the autumn the Queen occupied an old fortress, the Cascais Palace, and the Queen Mother a chalet in Estoril. Occasionally, especially during hunting season, the King D. Carlos spent a few days or in Mafra, or in Vila Viçosa.

Further than the human agents and the space settings it is necessary to add the temporal component. Although the calendar was more or less flexible concerning time it was broken by specific events, resulting from the practice of sovereignty which dictated the daily rhythms of the Royal House. In this communication we will not pay attention on the great

² A literal translation should be Lord Steward but attending to his functions, we think more correct to use the Lord Chamberlain designation.

³ Equerry chief.

court ceremonies, such as gala days, official visits of heads of state or religious ceremonies, because we pretend to focus merely on everyday life of these people.

According to the study of Maria Paula Marçal Lourenço about the Queen's Household⁴, during the Ancient Regime and despite the co-habitation in the Palace of a vast entourage the access to the Queen's Chamber was very limited, unlike what happened in European courts, including the French. Already by the end of the constitutional monarchy is a Palace almost without people that we would find.

Indeed, it was only a very restricted group of people which held the top offices of the royal house that we may find daily in the service of the sovereign. The service was done weekly and rotating. This means a daily contact with the royal family. During one week, cyclically, from Saturday to Saturday, these people left their homes and their families to go live during that time the palace where the kings were. This palace does not always coincide, as we saw, but also because it has not always existed a simultaneous cohabitation by the spouses. Either because the King or the Queen were traveling abroad, either because the hunting and sea incursions on board the yacht Amélia, they were not in the kingdom's capital.

It's mainly about these people who made weekly service we focused our attention because they were those who shared their everyday life with the royal family, although the service was rotating, which means a few weeks off from direct contact with the rulers. Obviously there are other positions, such as the private secretary of the King, played by Count Arnoso, or the positions of chief steward of either the King or the Queen who would be in daily contact with them, but not necessarily permanent, despite they did not cohabit the same space. It is therefore this cohabitation, with all the mentioned conditions; this exhibition will define the daily lives of the royal house.

If we pay attention only to the superior officials at the service of the sovereign and his royal consort, we usually found in the service to the king a camarista or gentil-homem⁵, recruited from the aristocracy, an ajudante-de-campo⁶, and an oficial às ordens, both recruited from the military household of the king and so with military training. The service to the Queen was made by a dama camarista or dama de honor⁷ and a vedor, both recruited from the aristocracy. They may have a title or being the second sons of a aristocrat. Furthermore, there was a lady who, while serving the Queen, is deployed in the service of the Crown Prince and

⁴ LOURENÇO Maria Paula Marçal, - *Casa Corte e património...*, cit., p. 428.

⁵ Two different designations used on the sources which mean *Chamberlain*.

⁶ Aide de camp.

⁷ Two different designations used on the sources which mean lady-in-waiting.

Infante D. Manuel. It is the only person who occupies a superior function on the Royal Household who always resided in the Palace, where the princes were.

Although not necessarily belonging to the upper staff of the Royal Household, there is another group that did the weekly service, dwelling in that space of time the royal palace. These are the *médicos da Real Câmara*⁸.

There was a multitude of categories concerning to the lower status employees. We may have those who attend directly to the monarchs, as the *moços do quarto*⁹, *particulares*¹⁰, *criadas*¹¹, *bonnes*, but also all the staff that allowed the proper functioning of the royal palaces, from the kitchen, passing through the halls and stables. It is probable that those who were referred on first place were in direct service to the monarchs dwell with the royal family. The other staff was likely that only was in the palace during the work day.

The service was usually rendered on Saturdays at noon, just before lunch time. The doctors, at least in the case of Tomás Mello Breyner, usually came later, around five o'clock, because until then he divided his professional activity between hospital and office.

At lunch, the *camarista*, *ajudante de campo*, *oficial às ordens*, *dama* and *vedor* were on service. The Prince and the Infante D. Manuel did not sit down at the dining-table, because they were too young for it.¹²

Despite the cooks of the royal household being Portuguese during this period,¹³ we are lead to believe that were presented to the royal dining-table French specialties, as it happened on the great receptions, which followed the international cuisine. Accordingly, shortly after the rival of D. Amélia in Portugal, the Countess of Sabugosa sent her some

⁸ Royal Household doctors.

⁹ Groom.

¹⁰ Steward.

¹¹ Maid.

¹² When the Princes ate at dining-table it was an exception. MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – *[Diário] 1897, Jan. 29. Lisboa* [Manuscript] 1897. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

¹³ Casimiro Maurício and Salvador Mourinho on December' 1889. CASA REAL, – *[Lista de Ordenados] 1889, Dez. Lisboa* [Manuscript] 1889. (ANTT, Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Casa Real, Caixa 6365). José Maria da Conceição Baptista, Honorato José Gonçalves and Casimiro Maurício on January'1906. CASA REAL – *[Lista de Ordenados] 1906, Jan. Lisboa* [Manuscript] 1906, (ANTT, Lisbon, Portugal. Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Casa Real, Caixa 6157).

Portuguese specialties: bacalhau com batatas, bifés de cebolada, sardinhas fritas, feijoada, arroz com grão-de-bico¹⁴

The Duchess of Bragança then thank her, replying: “Je viens d’apprendre qu’un de nos cuisiniers Portugais savait faire ces plats, mais que les autres avaient toujours jugé celle cuisine indigne de nous être servi; Je les ai persuadés de contraire.”¹⁵

After lunch, the Queen had the habit to have some people in on one or two days a week, previously scheduled and the duration of those meetings depended on the number of people.

The Countess of Sabugosa and Murça tells us of one of these days: “After receiving, the Queen was drawing up to 5 hours with Casanova. She was always with him, and with António a bit; we took tea at six, then came Mariquita at 6 ½. I came to rest to the room. (...) We spent the night in the room with Queen, António and Tomás. Then I went to Elizabeth with the Queen and stayed with her until the arrival of Carlota at 11 ½.”¹⁶

Daytime activities were not varied. In the morning the Queen went with the lady-in-waiting to the dispensaries, which took about an hour: “(...) At ten o'clock I went with the Queen to the dispensaries; many children. There was Silva Carvalho. There are nearly 2000 admissions since Christmas last year. At 11 o'clock we come home. Blessing, Mass and Te Deum. (...)”¹⁷

At times, after tea, the royal family played law-tennis¹⁸. Or walked up on the Avenida: “(...) I took tea with the Queen and went to 4 hours to the Avenida with Their Majesties and Princes. We gave 3 laps. Few people. Pepita walked with Ficalho, João and husband, O'Neill's wife, walking with his son and A. Avilez. (...)”¹⁹

¹⁴ Codfish with potatoes, steak with onions, fried sardines, pork with beans and rice with chickpeas. MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Carta] s.d. S.l. [a] D. Amélia de Orleães. [Manuscript] s.d. (ANTT. Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Casa Real, Caixa 7378).

¹⁵ ORLEÃES, D. Amélia de – [Carta] s.d. S.l. [a] D. Mariana das Dores de Melo, [Manuscript] s.d. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal., MOR I, Gaveta M4, Caixa 3, Maço 11, 20).

¹⁶ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1895, Fev. 2. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1895. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

¹⁷ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1895, Mar. 19. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1895. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

¹⁸ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1902, Mar. 1902. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1902. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

¹⁹ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1896, Nov. 29. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

Horseback riding was another activity chosen mainly by the Queen who regularly picked the Tapada das Necessidades for her tours, which could last up to three hours²⁰. Another route was up to Benfica, Carnaxide and Belém²¹. The descriptions of these trips, made by Count Sabugosa were described during the weeks which we have attended to the Queen as *vedor*, and not as her *mordomo-mor*.²²

The evenings presented more entertainment. The dinners were usually at home or at the Ajuda Palace, though more rarely. They were served at half past seven or eight o'clock. The Countess of Sabugosa and Murça describes one of these dinners: "At 7 o'clock we went to dinner to Ajuda Palace. Only Queen D. Maria Pia, Infante [D. Afonso], Marquise de Belas, Serpa and officers of the guard and Their Majesties with the service. Conversation with little interest in the Marble Hall by half past ten, when Queen D. Maria Pia asked the Queen whether she would go to the theater, which she accepted with joy. Twenty minutes later we were in S. Carlos Theater."²³

Going to S. Carlos Theater, D. Amélia Theater²⁴, to the Zarzuela or even attending to D. concerts at the Conservatory were some of the usual distractions²⁵. However, many evenings were spent at home. Sometimes the King played the organ²⁶ and Isabel Ponte sang²⁷, but these

²⁰ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [Diário] 1890, Jan. 22. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1890. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²¹ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [Diário] 1890, Jan. 18. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1890. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²² MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [Diário] 1890, Jan. 17. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1890. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²³ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1897, Jan. 23. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1897. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²⁴ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1896, Dez. 1896. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²⁵ BREYNER, Tomás de Mello – *Diário de um Monárquico, (1905-1907)*, s.l.,: s.n., 1994, p. 169.

²⁶ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1899, Nov. 25. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1899. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²⁷ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1896, Nov. 1896. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

artistic performances were rare. The first references to the phonograph are at the end of the nineties. However, this modern equipment did not please everyone.²⁸

Nevertheless, the usual hobby was the card game and in almost all evenings it was practised. King D. Carlos wrote thus to the Count of Arnoso: “I am here alone and quite bored. I’ll be very happy if I had a bridge game tonight! Would you like to come here to play? And would you be able to figure out a partner? Here I have only the Costa, even Niko, who plays so bad, was called to Belas (...).”²⁹ By contrast, the evenings spent at Queen’s apartments were playing the bluff, which would not satisfy everyone, mainly if it was to be played for money. This is what the Countess of Sabugosa, told to her children in a letter: “At night we played the bluff and, as usual, Dad and I lost a lot, which is never pleasant.”³⁰ Just to have an idea of the sums that which person could win or lose, in January 1903 Isabel Ponte had an accumulated playing debt to the Queen of nearly 200 thousands réis.³¹

The card game, however, was played by all the aristocracy, as reported in this letter to the Queen, from Isabel Ponte: “Surely your Majesty will be pleased to know that I spent last night (...) at Eugenia Niza home. (...) It’s ridiculous I’ve being invited to play the bluff and do not even remember at the beginning how to distribute the cards; I’ve messed it up, and João d’Alarcão said that it was visible that I didn’t have the habit of playing cards. Ribeirinho (...) lent me money and I after the first moments I felt in my element: incorrigible as ever, went to the flush buying two cards (and so did one !!!). I was groping, sometimes paid, sometimes asked for more, at the end lost 2950 réis! And being dirt-cheap the game.”³²

This daily life was cut by the seasons in Mafra, where the distractions were composed mainly by hunting, if time permitted, as recorded the Count of Sabugosa: “Arrival at Mafra with showers. Little game. Lunch at the shed. (...) After lunch the rain continued. The Queen,

²⁸ The Countess of Sabugosa wrote on her diary: “*at evening, phonograph until eleven o’clock. What a bore!*”. MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1899, Jun. 1899. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1902. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

²⁹ BRAGANÇA, D. Carlos de – [Carta], s.d, s.l. [a] MELO, Bernardo Pinheiro Correia de, [Manuscript] s.d. BNP, Lisbon, Portugal, Espólio do Conde de Arnoso, Cartas do Rei D. Carlos, 3098).

³⁰ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Carta] 1894, Nov. 1899. Lisboa [a] MENESES, António Vasco de Melo César e, [Manuscript] 1894. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 3, Maço 18, 109).

³¹ GAMA, Isabel Saldanha da – [Carta] 1903, Jan. 23 Lisboa. [a] D. Amélia de Orleães. [Manuscript] 1903. (ANTT, Lisbon, Portugal. Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Casa Real, Caixa 7377).

³² GAMA, Isabel Saldanha da – [Carta] s.a, Jan. 23 Lisboa. [a] D. Amélia de Orleães. [Manuscript] s.a.. (ANTT, Lisbon, Portugal. Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Casa Real, Caixa 7377).

the Duke of Orleans and we both came to the Palace and went to the terraces, to shoot pigeons".³³

In Cascais, sea bathing³⁴ and yachting along the coast, day by day at the end of summer season, being preceded by a period in Sintra. The king, however, avoided Pena Palace. He wrote in August 1901 to the Marquis of Soveral: "I do not offer you anything from Sintra because I do not wish you to suicide of spleen."³⁵ Count of Ficalho made the best description of the environment that was going on in Pena's Palace, in a letter to the Count of Arnoso, on June 15th, 1902, which meant that no one would like to do the service at Pena: "Here everyone is shivering and shaking with the wind. It's horrible. And in the morning a hermitage, a monastery! Light up stoves, lamps and candles, but the cold is like January and a severe January Even Kerausch himself freezes in his room, remembering the tepid ice from the north, the snow from his land, relatively temperate in comparison to this marsh. Yesterday in the evening we had the narration of love performances of Alvito and the old cares of Botas. Today, while I'm writing, they are playing the bluff. The spectrum of the Isabel Ponte plaintively wails on these corridors, where the wind howls, while Alvito makes a card sequence."³⁶ Thus one can understand why the Countess of Sabugosa did not like to do service in the Pena Palace: "(...) The queen goes tomorrow to Pena and thankfully we are no longer in service."³⁷

However, it was in Sintra where they would go to picnics, usually on the Maçãs³⁸ or Adraga beaches "(...) Yesterday we went with the Queen and Princes to the Adraga beach, [Countess wrote to her son Sabugosa Jorge, on August 30th, 1901] were 31 people in cars,

³³ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [*Diário*] 1890, Jan. 21. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1890. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

³⁴ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [*Diário*] 1896, Set. 27. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

³⁵ BRAGANÇA, D. Carlos de – [*Carta*] 1901, Ago. 6 s.l., [a] SOVERAL, Luís Maria Augusto Pinto de, [Manuscript] 1901. (Arquivo da Casa de Bragança, Vila Viçosa, Portugal. Arquivo Soveral, Cartas do Rei D. Carlos, P. 22, 14).

³⁶ BREYNER, Francisco Manuel de Melo – [*Carta*], 1902, Jun. 15, Pena [a] MELO, Bernardo Pinheiro Correia de, [Manuscript] 1902. (BNP, Lisbon, Portugal. Espólio do Conde de Arnoso, Cartas do Conde de Ficalho, 3527).

³⁷ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [*Carta*] 1894, Maio, 4, Lisboa [a] MENESES, António Vasco de Melo César e, [Manuscript] 1894. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 3, Maço 18, 57).

³⁸ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [*Carta*] 1896, Julho, 30, s.l. [a] MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de, [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 2).

carriages and donkeys. We left at noon and returned at eleven o'clock at night. The Infante [D. Manuel] was not happy of riding a donkey in the evening and did everything to come on the carriage, and got into your father's one which much displeased the Queen. The prince had an indigestion tonight, because he ate a lot and also of the jingling donkey after. The food was made by Isabel Ponte, Pepita and Maria de Menezes. Ovos moles and arroz doce from Maria de Menezes, who say they were great. The servants played guitar during dinner."³⁹

The Alfeite, another real property on the south bank, was another trip destination. The Countess of Sabugosa tells us about one of these: "At ten o'clock we went to the Alfeite, I have already heard mass. (...) We arrived and the King went hunting with the Prince, Charters⁴⁰ and Moreira de Sá⁴¹. We stayed with the Queen (...) At noon, lunch at Antelmo⁴². (...) After lunch, great game, shooting oranges, between Their Majesties and Highnesses, Isabel Ponte, kids, Maria de Sá, Pedro d'Argos. All very funny. The dresses were not in such good condition. Then, we come to the pine forest by carriage, to the left side of the house, where the Queen was painting. I started reading Amitié Amoureuse.⁴³ Kids and Infante played. The King, the Prince and the service continued to hunt. At 5 o'clock we returned to Lisbon."⁴⁴

In vain the fun ambiance of these trips was not necessarily usual. The separation, even temporarily, of the family, caused quite homesick: "It's unnecessary to say how much I miss you. [wrote the Count of Sabugosa to his wife] and how I wish to have you here with me, and also to have the kids"⁴⁵. Also, the Countess of Sabugosa did not like to enter the service

³⁹ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Carta] 1901, Agosto, 1, Lisboa [a] MELO, Jorge Maria de, [Manuscript] 1901. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 3, Maço 20, 18).

⁴⁰ Guilherme Charters Henriques de Azevedo was General Staff of the Army's major in 1900 and effective Aide de camp. *Anuario Diplomático e consular Portugues relativo ao anno de 1901 e como appendice ao publicado em 1900*: Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, 1902.

⁴¹ João Jorge Moreira de Sá, capitain liutenant and efective officier on duty. *Anuario Diplomático e consular Portugues relativo ao anno de 1901 e como appendice ao publicado em 1900*: Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, 1902.

⁴² Quinta do Antelmo belonged to the Real Quinta do Alfeite. They were old properties of Casa do Infantado.

⁴³ It was a great success at the time (207th edition in 1920) written by Hélène Lecomte Du Nouy.

⁴⁴ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1897, Fev. 15. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1897. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

⁴⁵ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [Carta] 1888, Dez, 26, Vila Viçosa [a] MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de, [Manuscript] 1888. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 2).

without being with her husband: "(...) naturally I enter in service on 28, when the queen arrives. I'm bored when I get on service with António de Vasconcelos without Daddy."⁴⁶

Besides that, the relations between courtiers and those between them and the sovereign were not always the best. So, it was natural that there are some displeasures: "Behind the court scenes there has not been (so far) no greater unpleasant experiences, in addition to those already provided (...)"⁴⁷ wrote the Count of Sabugosa when he visited the Port in 1894.

The monarch himself was aware that the court environment was not always the friendliest and intrigues in the corridors were common, as he writes to the Marquis de Soveral: "(...) I do not need to recommend but you should be very careful with what you write and who you write to. There are here very long tongues and people who want to always show they know the latest news."⁴⁸

Beyond the intrigues, conflicts also succeeded, sometimes as a result of those. The Countess of Sabugosa confides to us: "(...) Antonio told me that on the eve Tomás had come to do the service instead Rosas. Before dinner he was going to talk to Isabel Ponte, which she refused, saying that she knew what he was speaking ill about her, about the King, and it was her who told him about the dispensary. Thomas was quite disturbed and embarrassed. He did not answer her and after dinner seems to António that she beg his pardon. Unpleasant scene and placed both in bad position. The Queen thinks that Isabel had not done well saying those things."⁴⁹

Despite these aspects, which can be dissuaders of the ambition to belong to the royal house, belonging to this institution remains a matter of great honor and happiness: "(...) The

⁴⁶ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de [Carta] 1894, Junho, 16, Lisboa [a] MENESES, António Vasco de Melo César e, [Manuscript] 1894. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 3, Maço 18, 80).

⁴⁷ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e – [Carta] 1894, Mar, 2, Porto [a] MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de, [Manuscript] 1894 (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal, MOR1, Gaveta LI, Caixa 2).

⁴⁸ BRAGANÇA, D. Carlos de – [Carta] 1904, Mar, 14 s.l., [a] SOVERAL, Luís Maria Augusto Pinto de, [Manuscript] 1904. (Arquivo da Casa de Bragança, Vila Viçosa, Portugal. Arquivo Soveral, Cartas do Rei D. Carlos, P. 24, 11).

⁴⁹ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1896, Jan. 14. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

Tarouca is here doing his first week and is the happiest man in the world”⁵⁰ wrote the Count of Ficalho to Count of Arnoso. Besides, that meant being close to the royal favors and beneficence. Not only the Christmas presents, as that one bought on Leitão & Irmãos, the suppliers of the Royal Household⁵¹ as well as decorations and grand crosses, usually given during the visit of foreign monarchs. The visit of King Alfonso XIII of Spain, in 1903, originated this comment of Fernando de Serpa Pimentel to the Marquis de Soveral “(...) They did a great hunt for decorations and especially the Grand Cross. It happened very hilarious scenes and resentments.”⁵²

Such favors could also be applied for the benefit of third persons. Not infrequently, Isabel Ponte asked the intercession, in most cases by money, to the Queen, on behalf of needy. Because of this, the Queen gave her the nickname of Pedinchona-mor.⁵³

The attempt was, therefore, the maintenance of royal good graces for the preservation of their status. And the officers were aware of that. That's what tells us the Count of Ficalho, in a letter to the Count of Arnoso, when he refuses to enter service, because he was in Serpa: “(...) I was told to go to Lisbon and enter on King's service but I do not go because it's absolutely impossible to leave here all the people and I have the physical impossibility to get them here on Friday. I wrote to the King to Vila Nova Count. I think the thing is thus arranged, and I hope you to come Sunday. Explain it if they talk about it, we would neither abandon the family in Alentejo, nor take ladies to Lisbon from one day to another, when we must find places, transport, etc. I will not because I can not go, and if they will not understand this, I submit myself to the consequences (...).”⁵⁴

⁵⁰ MELO, Bernardo Pinheiro Correia de – [Carta] 1901, Mar. 19 s.l., [a] SOVERAL, Luís Maria Augusto Pinto de, [Manuscript] 1901. (Arquivo da Casa de Bragança, Vila Viçosa, Portugal. Arquivo Soveral, Cartas do Conde de Arnoso, P. 12, 2).

⁵¹ MELO, D. Mariana das Dores de – [Diário] 1896, Dez. 4. Lisboa [Manuscript] 1896. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).

⁵² PIMENTEL, Fernando de Serpa – [Carta] 1903, Dez, 24 s.l., [a] SOVERAL, Luís Maria Augusto Pinto de, [Manuscript] 1902. (Arquivo da Casa de Bragança, Vila Viçosa, Portugal. Arquivo Soveral, Cartas de Fernando Serpa Pimentel, P. 39, 130).

⁵³ GAMA, Isabel Saldanha da – [Carta] 1903, Jun. 9 Lisboa. [a] D. Amélia de Orleães. [Manuscript] 1903. (ANTT, Lisbon, Portugal. Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Casa Real, Caixa 7377). Pedinchona means beggar.

⁵⁴ BREYNER, Francisco Manuel de Melo – [Carta], s.d., Serpa [a] MELO, Bernardo Pinheiro Correia de, [Manuscript] s.d.. (BNP, Lisbon, Portugal. Espólio do Conde de Arnoso, Cartas do Conde de Ficalho, 1224).

These consequences would be the definitive removal of the service to the Royal Household and the benefits arising therefrom, as happened with the Count of S. Mamede, Director of Finances of the Royal House. “The Queen”, writes the Earl of Sabugosa, “spoke to me about the story of the [Count of] S. Mamede. She told me he was hopelessly lost in their esteem. Besides being a bad administrator, She can not forgive him for having reduced the M. C.º. It is true that these are very strong reasons not to forgive him. But I remember that four months ago he was still the King’s favorite. I told the Queen that I felt sorry about it all mostly because they did give him so much and so many assignments which his weak head couldn’t stand. The power has gone to his head, stupefied and now had a great fall.”⁵⁵

In conclusion, it seems ungracious to say that despite the favours and honours that might accrue to the service in the palace were not comparable to those assigned during the absolute monarchy, yet they were attractive enough, even if for this was necessary to bear the intrigues and conflicts of the palace. Indeed, it was precisely on the everyday activities that relations were strengthened with the monarchs consolidating the confidence that allowed the royal gratitude.

⁵⁵ MENESES, António Maria de Melo Silva César e *[Diário] 1890, Jan. 18. Lisboa* [Manuscript] 1890. (Arquivo Sabugosa / S. Lourenço, Lisbon, Portugal. No call nr.).