

*Livro dos Copos. Vol. 1, (Luís Adão da Fonseca, Dir.), Porto,
Fundação Eng. António de Almeida, 2006, 767 pages
[Militarium Ordinum Analecta. Fontes para o Estudo das
Ordens Religioso-Militares, 7]*

Bernardo de Sá-Nogueira
Faculty of Letters
University of Lisbon
bsanogueira@netcabo.pt

The *Militarium Ordinum Analecta* series, dedicated to studies on the Portuguese Military Orders and their primary sources, has been published since 1997 under the supervision of Luís Adão da Fonseca. Its seventh volume, edited in 2006, contains the transcript of a cartulary called *Livro dos Copos*, the bulk of which was drawn up by Álvaro Dias de Frielas, royal and apostolic notary-public and scrivener of the Military Order of Santiago (Portuguese branch), in the penultimate decade of the fifteenth century.

In 1484, meeting in the town of Santarém, Dom João II, King of Portugal and supreme administrator of the Order of Santiago (Portuguese branch), together with the High Prior of the Order, Friar Pedro Dias, its High Commander, Dom Pedro de Noronha, and the Thirteen (the Chapter of the Military Order, composed of its commanders), ordered Álvaro de Frielas to copy and authenticate all papal bulls, royal charters and other documents that composed the archives of the Order of Santiago.

In 1490 Álvaro de Frielas completed the 19 sections into which the book had been divided, totaling 236 documents. At that point the scrivener stated that as he collected the papers for transcription, other important documents (numbers 237 to 249) had cropped up. He went on transcribing them by royal order – *por mandado da Alteza do dicto senhor Dom Johan som aqui tanbem asseentadas e como sua actoridade titulladas e fielmente de verbo ad verbum escriptas e sam estas que se seguem*.

The death of King Dom João II prevented Álvaro de Frielas from finishing his monumental task, which covered exactly 250 documents (numbers 1 to 249 and 252). In fact, the king's death caused him to lose his authority as notary-public to complete his job—i.e. validating the transcripts, by authenticating them with his subscription and *signum tabellionis*.

On 12 March 1498 the new king, Dom Manuel, issued a special order that authorized Álvaro de Frielas to validate and sign the public forms, thus certifying the cartulary and rendering it indisputably authentic (Document no. 250). On 15 November 1498 the former notary-public signed the final subscription of the book, which thus became fit for being used as evidence in a court of law if necessary, which constituted the original purpose of the transcript (Document no. 251).

These first 250 documents correspond to the original cartulary, copied according to a master-plan structured into the 19 sections mentioned above. The initial Table of Contents describes this structure, providing document summaries, though only for the first 236.

All charters in Section 1 are papal bulls dated from the 12th to the 15th century. Their key theme is the separation of the Portuguese branch of the Order from the Castilian Master, supported by a 1291 privilege of Pope Nicholas IV confirmed by another by Pope Celestin V, of 1294, which granted the Portuguese knights permission to have an autonomous government under a Provincial Master. The only document in this section that is not a bull is the last, a long undated roll dealing precisely with the abuses of the Castilian masters and the way in which they neglected the management of the Order's Portuguese territories.

Section 2 is exclusively composed of royal charters, dating from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth century.

Following the legal framework provided by the regulatory instruments issued by both the papacy and Portuguese royalty, sections 3 to 14 are geographically organized, containing documents related to each of the territories in which the Order had their main property in Portugal. For the Kingdom of the Algarve, special attention is devoted to the towns of Tavira (Section 3) and Loulé (Section 4). In the Alentejo we find Mértola (Section 5), Santiago de Cacém (Section 6, two documents). Sections 7 to 11 comprise documents related with Palmela, Almada, Arruda and Alcácer do Sal. Section 12 focuses solely on the town of Santarém. In sections 13 and 14 we find papers of miscellaneous geographical provenance – Cerveira, Soverosa, Lordelo, Atei, Coimbra, Lisboa, Messejana, Cacula, Portalegre, Alcoutim, Aiamonte, Sesimbra, Beja, Gestaçô, Casével, Almodôvar, Abiul, Samora Correia and Faro, among other places, thus indicating that property in these towns was possibly less important than in those included in sections 3 to 12. Section 15 is exclusively composed of discharge/acquittance papers. The four last sections, i.e. 16 to 19, apparently cover ecclesiastical matters, dealing with the relationship between the Order and the pope, the archbishop of Seville, the bishop of the Algarve (Silves) and the bishop of Évora.

Subsequent to the book's completion, another 82 documents were added between 1503 and 1750, totaling 334. As a result, the cartulary probably contains all relevant charters and privileges concerning the Portuguese branch of the Military Order of Santiago from 1175 to 1750. It is therefore, without doubt, the most important primary source for the history of this institution.

The publication of such sizeable cartulary, supervised by Luís Adão da Fonseca, was a project backed up by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology. It involved a team composed of Paula Pinto Costa (project leader), Maria Cristina Pimenta, Isabel Morgado S. Silva and Joel Mata, who split among them the key tasks (i.e. "Introduction", "Document Summaries", "Transcripts, Review").

The great merit of this book is to have made available to the general public a manuscript which the historian community had long waited for. The editors say that their work was often times made difficult by mistakes of the scribes involved in copying the texts.

Mistakes in Latin texts are enough to show that these deserved a more thorough revision. For example, a certain "Gunsalvo Menendi scutifo" (page 163) was certainly a "scutifero" (squire). The same applies to the name of a well-known mid-thirteenth-century knight of Coimbra, Suerius Menendi Petite (page 165), given in its unabbreviated (wrongly read) form, i.e. "Sugarius Mundi" (the "u" being mistakenly read for an "n"). On page 166

one can hardly understand that the abbreviated form of “regiminis” was twice transcribed “regm[in]is”. Also year 1507 is transcribed “milesimo quinquagesimo VII” (page 551), instead of “quingentesimo”. If a transcriber’s fault in the copy of the original is to blame, the editors ought to have corrected it given that the word is properly spelled some fifteen lines below on the same page.

(A side comment: neither is the general public knowledgeable in Latin, nor will the text’s interpretation by Latinized readers be jeopardized. Of course not. But it is an annoying mistake—and so are the others).

Useful summaries of all texts are provided at the end of the book, along with a precious list of the documents in chronological order (after page 679). Readers however cannot rely on the indispensable indices of personal names and place names that such voluminous cartulary requires. In the “Introduction”, the editors promise to publish a second volume with three indices—the two mentioned above, plus a thematic index, in addition to “alguns estudos relacionados com temáticas abordadas no ‘Livro dos Copos’”. We sincerely hope the promise can be kept. It will be another service rendered to the scientific community by the *Militarium Ordinum Analecta* series, a highly valuable collection for all researchers in Portuguese history.