



## Reginal Income and Expenditure: The Household Accounts of Maria of Castile and Aragon, Queen of Portugal, in 1501–1508

Inês Olaia & Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues

To cite this article: Inês Olaia & Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues (2024) Reginal Income and Expenditure: The Household Accounts of Maria of Castile and Aragon, Queen of Portugal, in 1501–1508, Journal of Medieval History, 50:5, 637-668, DOI: [10.1080/03044181.2024.2416108](https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2024.2416108)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2024.2416108>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 30 Oct 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 367



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

# Reginal Income and Expenditure: The Household Accounts of Maria of Castile and Aragon, Queen of Portugal, in 1501–1508

Inês Olaia <sup>a</sup> and Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Centre for History, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal; <sup>b</sup>Department of History, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal

## ABSTRACT

**This article is part of a research cluster in this issue on the economic power of medieval queens.** This paper explores the only known surviving detailed economic register of a queen of Portugal's expenses up to the early sixteenth century. Covering the early years of Maria of Castile and Aragon's queenship (1501–1508), the document gives extraordinary insight into the queen's household and the management of her finances. The study conducted over the book allows us to become acquainted with some of Queen Maria's ladies, officials, and servants, detect expenditure patterns, and get a glimpse of daily life at court, along with how the queen constructs her image, exercises her patronage and consolidates her authority. It is also possible to better understand how connected Portugal and Castile were, both economically and culturally, even before the Dual Monarchy.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 17 February 2024

Accepted 15 May 2024

## KEYWORDS

Queenship; account books; income; expenditure; Portugal

In 2005, when attempting to analyse the wealth of queens in medieval Europe from a comparative perspective in her groundbreaking study on this subject, Amalie Föföel noted that this study was more advanced in England, owing to the greater abundance of sources on the subject; France and Germany lagged in this field, as did the other European countries.<sup>1</sup> In the nearly twenty years that have passed since then, the situation has changed drastically, as interest in queen consorts and their economic resources spread far and wide, reaching even the peripheral zones of Europe. An issue with the sources remains, though. Using marriage contracts, donations, and other documents concerning the transfer of properties, assets, and rents from their families of origin and husbands to royal brides, it has been possible to estimate the potential resources of queen consorts. However, these sources do not tell us what the queens actually received as income.<sup>2</sup> For that information, we need their account books. Yet these books have rarely survived and those that have are unevenly distributed among kingdoms.

**CONTACT** Inês Olaia  inesolaia@edu.ulisboa.pt  Centre for History, University of Lisbon, Alameda da Universidade, Lisbon 1600-214, Portugal

<sup>1</sup> Amalie Föföel, 'The Queen's Wealth in the Middle Ages', *Majestas* 13 (2005), 25–26.

<sup>2</sup> Attila Bárány, 'Medieval Queens and Queenship: A Retrospective on Income and Power', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 19 (2013), 168.

In England, a few of the surviving account books of the medieval queens have been published and studied in various ways, allowing the reconstruction of the queens' movements, the structure and composition of their households, their religious and artistic patronage, and many other aspects of their queenship.<sup>3</sup> In the Crown of Aragon's case, most of the numerous extant account books are unpublished and only those of fourteenth-century queens have been used to analyse in depth both their income and expenditure.<sup>4</sup> For other Iberian kingdoms, the situation is worse. In Castile, medieval account books only exist for the regnant queen Isabel I,<sup>5</sup> not for queen consorts, and the same absence could be observed in Portugal up until now. However, a document, which at first sight seemed to be the account book of the treasurer of Queen Maria (1482–1517), the wife of King Manuel I (r. 1495–1521), has recently been discovered.<sup>6</sup> This prompted us to undertake this study because, while there is some knowledge about the potential income of the queens of Portugal during the medieval and early modern periods,<sup>7</sup> we have been unaware of what they actually received and especially how they spent their funds.

By analysing the inflows and outflows of money from Queen Maria's treasury, we can determine if she received all the income she was entitled to, whether her spending pattern was similar to that of other contemporary queens and what her particularities were in this area. We can also assess whether she managed her resources in a balanced manner or incurred debts as was the case for other royal women, and why. In the end, this analysis will clarify many aspects that are still obscure about Maria's queenship.

## A Queen of Portugal and Her Revenues

What is most well-known about Queen Maria is her familial heritage. Maria was the fourth child of Isabel I of Castile (r. 1474–1504) and Fernando II of Aragon (r. 1479–1514), the Catholic Monarchs; she had a twin stillborn sister and four living siblings. She married the king of Portugal, Manuel I, in 1500, two years after his previous wife, her sister Isabel (1470–1498) died in childbirth.<sup>8</sup> A widower with only a sickly child as

<sup>3</sup> A. R. Myers, 'The Household of Queen Elizabeth Woodville, 1466–7', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 50, no.1 (1967), 207; Joanna Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens: English Queenship 1445–1503* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Lisa Benz, *Three Medieval Queens: Queenship and the Crown in Fourteenth-Century England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Retha Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York and Her Six Daughters-in-Law: Fashioning Tudor Queenship, 1485–1547* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Elena Woodacre, *Joan of Navarre: Infanta, Duchess, Queen, Witch?* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2023).

<sup>4</sup> Lledó Ruiz Domingo, *El Tesoro de la Reina. Recursos i gestió econòmica de les reines consorts a la Corona d'Aragó (segles XIV-XV)* (Madrid: CSIC, 2022).

<sup>5</sup> A few have been printed or summarized, others remain unpublished – *Cuentas de Gonzalo de Baeza, tesorero de Isabel la Católica*, ed. Antonio de la Torre and E. A. de la Torre, 2 vols. (Madrid: CSIC, 1955–56); Rosana de Andrés Díaz, *El último decenio del reinado de Isabel la Católica a través de la tesorería de Alonso de Morales (1495–1504)* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2004 and CD-ROM).

<sup>6</sup> We are grateful to Pedro Pinto for bringing this book to our attention and providing us with a reproduction.

<sup>7</sup> Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues and Manuela Santos Silva, 'Private Properties, Seigneurial Tributes and Jurisdictional Rents: The Income of the Queens of Portugal in the Middle Ages', in *Women and Wealth in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Theresa Earenfight (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 209–28; Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues, 'For the Honor of Her Lineage and Body: The Dowries and Dowries of Some Late Medieval Queens of Portugal', *e-Journal of Portuguese History* 5 (2007) [https://www.brown.edu/Departments/Portuguese\\_Brazilian\\_Studies/ejph/html/issue9/html/arodrigues\\_main.html](https://www.brown.edu/Departments/Portuguese_Brazilian_Studies/ejph/html/issue9/html/arodrigues_main.html) (accessed August 29, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> On Isabel's life, see Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, 'Duas irmãs para um rei. Isabel de Castela (1470–1498) e Maria de Castela (1482–1517)', in Isabel dos Guimarães Sá and Michel Combet, *Rainhas consortes de D. Manuel I. Isabel de Castela. Maria de Castela. Leonor de Áustria* (Lisbon: Circulo de Leitores, 2012), 26–107; Ruth Martínez Alcorlo, *Isabel de Castilla y Aragón: princesa y reina de Portugal (1470-1498)* (Madrid: Sílex Ediciones, 2020).

an heir, Manuel I began to seek a new match soon after his wife's demise. Interested in maintaining the alliance with Portugal, the Catholic Monarchs proposed the union with Maria and he accepted.

The marriage contract was signed on 10 September 1500.<sup>9</sup> Maria would bring a dowry of 200,000 gold Castilian *doblas* and her husband would provide her with a dower of one-third of that value. The revenues of Viseu and Montemor-o-Novo secured both amounts, should it be necessary to pay them to the wife due to the dissolution of the marriage. Manuel would also entrust Maria with the queen's lands, the traditional source of income for the queens of Portugal,<sup>10</sup> as soon as the dowager Queen Leonor de Viseu (1452–1525) died. Yet, as nobody knew when this would happen – ultimately Leonor survived Maria – the Catholic Monarchs would provide their daughter with an annuity of 4,500,000 *maravedís* 'for the governance and sustenance of her household [...] located in places certain and secure to her'.<sup>11</sup> They did not specify the locations from which the annuities would be drawn in the contract, but ten days later they issued a letter of privilege stating that these revenues would originate from the city of Seville and its townships of Frexival, Aracena, Caçalla, Costantina and Alcanis, and would be paid in three instalments each year.<sup>12</sup>

Maria's parents also committed themselves to obtaining the necessary papal dispensation for the marriage, which cost them considerable effort and expenditure.<sup>13</sup> Manuel I needed a wife to produce an heir – his son with Isabel died in 1500 – but the Catholic Monarchs needed to ensure that he did not ally himself with the French against them, nor support the claims of Juana de Trastámara (1462–1530) to the Castilian throne.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, they did everything within their power to secure the marital alliance, even at the cost of significant concessions.

If these financial clauses primarily imposed burdens on the bride's parents, the result proved to be more balanced. Though the marriage contract stipulated that only 10,000 *doblas* (3,650,000 *maravedís*) could be deducted from the dowry on account of the jewels and silverware brought by the bride, eventually Manuel allowed the deduction of more than three times that value: 12,000,000 *maravedís*.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, after the consummation of the marriage, King Manuel I entrusted Maria with two towns – Torres Vedras and Viseu –<sup>16</sup> and granted her an extra income of

<sup>9</sup> *As Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, 12 vols. (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1960–1977) 7: 487–95, no 4228.

<sup>10</sup> Rodrigues and Silva, 'Private Properties.'

<sup>11</sup> 'para la gobernacion y sustentacion de su casa [...] situados en lugares que le sean ciertos y seguros' – *As Gavetas*, 7: 493.

<sup>12</sup> *As Gavetas*, 7: 107–14, no 4160.

<sup>13</sup> Twelve thousand gold *ducados* and the archbishopric of Valencia, according to Marino Sanuto cited by Sá, 'Duas irmãs', 116.

<sup>14</sup> Juana was the unfortunate daughter of Enrique IV (r. 1454–1474) and Joana of Portugal (1439–1475) from whom Isabel I of Castile seized the throne in 1474. She sought refuge in Portugal at the end of the War of the Castilian Succession and lived there until her death, posing a permanent threat to the Catholic Queen. See Susannah Humble Ferreira, 'Juana la Beltraneja, Dynastic Fears, and Threats of Marriage (1475–1506)', *Renaissance and Reformation* 43 (2020), 79–100; Tarsicio de Azcona, *Juana de Castilla, mal llamada La Beltraneja: vida de la hija de Enrique IV de Castilla y su exilio* (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2006); Óscar Villaroel Gonzalez, *Juana La Beltraneja: La construcción de una ilegitimidad* (Madrid: Sílex Ediciones, 2014).

<sup>15</sup> Miguel Ángel Zalama, 'Lujo y ostentación. El tesoro de María de Aragón y Castilla, esposa de Manuel I de Portugal', *Goya. Revista de Arte* 358 (2017), 3–4.

<sup>16</sup> Antonio de la Torre and Luis Suárez Fernández, eds., *Documentos referentes a las relaciones con Portugal durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, 3 vols. (Valladolid: CSIC, 1958–1963), 3: 76, no. 496. Torres Vedras was a traditional queenly town that had belonged to her sister Isabel; Viseu was the seat of Manuel's duchy before he became king.

1,500,000 *reais*.<sup>17</sup> This income was subsequently elevated to 2,000,000 *reais* in 1504<sup>18</sup> and 2,160,000 *reais* in 1507.<sup>19</sup> He also granted her an annuity of 100 *arrobas* of sugar from the island of Madeira, which was doubled in 1508.<sup>20</sup>

All of these were the resources that, potentially, ensured the queen a level of expenditure suitable for her status. But did she actually receive what was promised to her? That is what we will attempt to ascertain after conducting a critical evaluation of the source.

## The Treasurer and His Book: Understanding the Source

The source under analysis is a manuscript composed primarily by Ochoa de Isasaga, who held the position of treasurer to Queen Maria. The manuscript transcends the confines of a simple account ledger, evolving into a profoundly personal registry, replete with documents and entries with personal significance to Isasaga and extending beyond his tenure in Queen Maria's service.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, it is important to understand his role and background before delving into the manuscript's contents.

Isasaga assumed the role of Queen Maria's treasurer in the period between August 1501 and October 1508, succeeding Alfonso Patiño in that capacity. It is unclear why Patiño left the post but a ciphered letter sent to Isasaga in June 1501 by Queen Isabel I of Castile suggests some discomfort with Patiño's performance or between him and Queen Maria's confessor, Friar García de Padilla.<sup>22</sup> Isasaga was, in any case, familiar with Queen Maria's finances. He had been involved in the negotiations for the arrangement and funding of her household, as proven by letters sent to him by the queen's parents.<sup>23</sup>

Ochoa de Isasaga was born into the ranks of the urban oligarchy of Villafranca de Ordizia, in the Basque Country, at an undetermined date. By 1494 he had become the town's castle governor. He received a few donations from the Catholic Monarchs in 1498.<sup>24</sup> While in Portugal, he undertook the roles of treasurer for Queen Maria and ambassador from her parents to the Portuguese crown. This can be deduced from a series of letters and instructions he received to deliver information directly to King Manuel, as well as letters he wrote about Queen Maria's state to her parents.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo (hereafter ANTT), Chancelaria de D. Manuel, L. 13, fol. 57r. This donation also did not specify the source from which this income should come. However, from one of Maria's letters of acquittal to her treasurer, it is evident that it originated from the *Casa da Mina*, the institution that received and managed the royal revenue coming from the overseas territories. See Nicolás Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos de las hijas de los Reyes Católicos: María (primera parte)', *De Medio Aevo* 9, (2016): no. 12, 171–73.

<sup>18</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de D. Manuel, L. 21, fol. 31v.

<sup>19</sup> The donation amounted to 200,000 *reais* more, but 40,000 *reais* were deducted to cover an annuity granted by the queen to António Carneiro which was being paid by the king. See ANTT, *Leitura Nova*, L. 38, fol. 128r.–128v.

<sup>20</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de D. Manuel, L. 38, fol. 84v.; *Corpo Cronológico*, parte II, mc. 14, no. 13. According to the reform of weights and measures by King Manuel I, the *arroba* weighed 14.5 kilograms. Thus, she received 1,450 kilograms of sugar annually, later increased to 2,900 kilograms. See Luís Seabra Lopes, 'As pilhas de pesos de Dom Manuel: contributo para a sua caracterização, inventariação e avaliação', *Portvgalia* (new series) 39 (2018), 239.

<sup>21</sup> Archivo Provincial Histórico de la Comunidad de Padres Franciscanos de Zarauz, Convento de Zarauz, *Obras curiosas*, n. 1803, hereafter referred to as M. (Manuscript).

<sup>22</sup> M., fol. 67v.

<sup>23</sup> M., fol. 66v. The original letter can be found in: Real Biblioteca del Palacio Real de Madrid (hereafter RBPRM), IBIS RB II/3284, doc. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Álvaro Aragón Ruano, 'Linajes urbanos y Parientes Mayores em Guipúzcoa a finales de la Edad Media (1450–1520)', *En la España Medieval* 35 (2012), 266.

<sup>25</sup> A famous example is the letter Isasaga sent to Queen Maria's parents detailing the Christmas festivities of 1500, the first that the queen spent in Lisbon. See De la Torre and Suárez Fernández, *Documentos referentes a las relaciones*, no. 497, 77–85.

By November 1507, Queen Maria sent Isasaga to Castile to address certain issues that had arisen in the collection of her income in Seville.<sup>26</sup> A few letters prove that he was also attempting to arrange a meeting between King Fernando and King Manuel, which ultimately failed.<sup>27</sup> In May 1508, he returned to Portugal, resumed his duties, and concluded his tenure as Queen Maria's treasurer in October of the same year.

At first glance, the source under scrutiny appears to be an account ledger emanating from the Queen's treasurer. However, a meticulous analysis advises us to use caution. The book seems to have served as a personal register of financial management, diplomatic endeavours, and other lifelong engagements for Isasaga. The initial section of the manuscript contains 52 folios detailing expenses Isasaga made as Queen Maria's treasurer. Nonetheless, the book continues through an additional 148 folios (See [Table 1](#)).

The 66 folios that follow the queen's expenses record documents pertaining to Isasaga's work for the crown. In the first few folios, there are copies of documents concerning Queen Maria, as well as Isasaga's ambassadorial activities including a copy of the marriage contract between Queen Maria and King Manuel, a copy of her first testament and copies of many letters from the Catholic Monarchs and Queen Maria herself. These documents include messages Isasaga was trusted to deliver to King Manuel. These are not the only contents of this section, though. There are letters which date to far beyond Isasaga's stay in Portugal.

The last two sections of the book concern matters of more personal meaning. One section details the genealogy of Isasaga's family, a record completed beyond his death and well into the seventeenth century. The last 54 folios contain personal financial records for Ochoa de Isasaga. They start with his residency in Portugal in 1501–1508 and extend to 1531, when he was again living in his ancestral homeland.

In the queen's section, the document contains expense lists, typically organised by year. There is reason to believe that the treasurer wrote these himself. When closing the expense lists for Queen Maria, Isasaga makes a statement and signs the page with his name.<sup>28</sup> The handwriting on this page is very similar to the one throughout Queen Maria's expenses.<sup>29</sup> The annual lists are interrupted from time to time by letters of acquittal (*cartas de pago*) for the previously noted expenses. Moreover, reoccurring annotations are appended to these lists by the queen's auditor (*contador*), acknowledging he received the documents bearing the queen's orders for the payments. The auditor did not write all these annotations. Some were written by Isasaga stating the date he delivered the payment orders to be audited.<sup>30</sup>

Queen Maria issued the letters of acquittal following the auditor's inspection of Isasaga's accounts. They stated the conformity of the accounts and presented an overarching balance of the period they covered. However, they were not issued regularly: the first

<sup>26</sup> Nicolás Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos de las hijas de los Reyes Católicos: María (segunda parte)', *De Medio Aevo* 10, no. 2 (2016), no. 59, 252–3; no. 61, 253–4; no. 63, 256–7.

<sup>27</sup> RBPRM, IBIS RB II/3284, doc. 33, summarised in Marqués de Pidal and D. Miguel de Salvá, eds., *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España (CODOIN)*, 112 vols. (Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda de Calero, 1854–96), 25: 433.

<sup>28</sup> M., fol. 51r.

<sup>29</sup> Except for the short period when Antonio Salvago acted as the queen's treasurer, as we shall see later.

<sup>30</sup> Example for a note by Isasaga: on M., fol. 29v. he states that he delivered the payment orders to Fernando Arias, the queen's auditor on May 17, 1505; further on (fol. 32r.) he states again the deliverance of these documents, but now two days later (May 19, 1505, though crossed). In fol. 33r. he closes the accounts stating that the accounting for July 1504–June 1505 was audited on June 20, 1505. The following page starts with the letter of acquittal. The initial practice was to have the Queen's auditor write a note on the book stating something similar (fols. 6v., 12v. among others).

**Table 1.** The contents of Isasaga's book.

| Folios      | Contents  |
|-------------|---|
| 3r.–52r.    | Registry of expenses as Queen Mary's treasurer, with copies of letters of acquittal |
| 52v.–118r.  | Copies of documents concerning services to the crown                                |
| 119r.–131v. | Genealogical History of the House of Isasaga  |
| 136r.–190r. | Personal economic records   |

encompassed the period from August 1501 to July 1503, the second from August 1503 to June 1505, and the third from July 1505 to October 1507. The ledger is subsequently somewhat disorganised: Isasaga recorded some expenses in October and November 1507, then left for Castile. He was temporarily replaced by Antonio Salvago, a Genoese merchant who oversaw Queen Maria's affairs in Seville.<sup>31</sup> Salvago started registering expenses incurred from late November 1507 on a new folio, disregarding the division by years.<sup>32</sup> Isasaga resumed his duties in May 1508, recorded a few more expenses in the space available at the end of his previous notations,<sup>33</sup> and eventually ended his duties as the queen's treasurer. A final letter of acquittal issued by Queen Maria on 23 January 1509, released the treasurer from any further responsibility over all the funds received during his tenure, from August 1501 to October 1508.<sup>34</sup>

### General Overview of Queen Maria's Income and Expenses

As noted, the source under analysis organises the queen's resources and expenses in two different and sometimes conflicting ways: by year and by letter of acquittal. Since the cycle marked by the letters of acquittal is irregular, we decided to follow the yearly cycle to establish general trends in income and expenditure. Isasaga opened a new page with a header for each year, starting on December 25. We thus kept this date as the beginning of the year. Occasionally, he would add, in the previous year, an expense made a few days after the 25th. Every time this happened, as this seems to have been a deliberate choice by the treasurer, we kept it within the year it was recorded.

Some further aspects of the source deserve attention. The entries for the year 1501 encompassed only five months, and 1508 comprised just ten months of entries, owing to the commencement and conclusion dates of Isasaga's tenure as treasurer. As to the written record itself, the general writing language is Castilian, even though sometimes Portuguese words appear. The same hybrid character is evident in the currency used: most of the entries are in *maravedís* (hereafter referred to as *mrs*) – a Castilian money of account not used in Portugal at the time –, but sometimes sums delivered in person on certain occasions are recorded in *cruzados de ouro*, a Portuguese gold coin. The treasurer did the conversion himself, with 390 *mrs* equivalent to one *cruzado de ouro*.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> In Seville since at least 1484, Antonio Salvago was a ship owner, a merchant, and the consul of Genoese merchants in that city in 1495 – Juan Manuel Bello León, 'Mercaderes extranjeros en Sevilla en tiempos de los Reyes Católicos,' *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 20 (1993), 64–5. He was also a nobleman of Queen Maria's household and managed her revenues in Seville – Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (primera parte)', no. 12, 171; Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (segunda parte)', no. 55, 248.

<sup>32</sup> Salvago's records occupy fols. 49v.–50v.

<sup>33</sup> This means that there are expenses recorded from May to September 1508 on fols. 48v.–49r., before Salvago's records for the last months of 1507 and the beginning of 1508.

<sup>34</sup> M., fols. 51v.–52r. in Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (segunda parte)', no. 71, 262–64.

<sup>35</sup> The same rate was commonly used at the time to convert *reais*, a Portuguese currency, to *cruzados de ouro* – Manuel Bernardo Lopes Fernandes, *Memória das moedas correntes em Portugal desde o tempo dos romanos até o*

**Table 2.** Queen Maria's income (1501–1508) in *maravedís*.

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1501                 | Alonso Patiño's tenure:<br>Seville, through Salvago: 1,600,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 1,050,000 (Surplus transferred to Isasaga: 660,068.5)<br>Ochoa de Isasaga's tenure:<br>Seville, through Salvago: 2,900,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 450,000 |
| 1502                 | Seville, through Salvago: 4,500,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 1,500,000  |
| 1503                 | Seville, through Salvago: 1,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 375,000<br>Carrança <sup>36</sup> : 48,223<br>Vazques <sup>37</sup> : 1,400<br>Salvago: 3,500,000<br>Salvago: 1,125,000  |
| 1504                 | Salvago: 4,500,000<br>Salvago: 1,500,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 500,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 100,000<br>Household <sup>38</sup> : 85,547  |
| 1505                 | Salvago: 800,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 166,666.66<br>Salvago: 5,200,000<br><i>Casa da Mina</i> : 333,333   |
| 1506                 | Salvago <sup>39</sup> : 6,460,000   |
| 1507 (until October) | Salvago: 1,340,160  |
| 10.1507 to 10.1508   | c. 5,600,000  |

Sources: Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (Primera Parte)', no. 12, 171–73 and no. 22, 180–82; Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (Segunda Parte)', no. 55, 248–50 and no. 71, 262–64.

A concise analysis of Queen Maria's income is possible due to the structure of the letters of acquittal. Even though they span irregular periods of over two years each, these letters state the bulk sums the treasurer received from different sources every year. In Table 2, there is a summary of the queen's income, as quoted in the letters. The years that stand at the beginning and the end of the period need to be looked at carefully. Isasaga only started being Queen Maria's treasurer in August 1501, but the income received by the previous treasurer in that year is noted. There is no letter of acquittal for 1507–1508, only a last letter covering the whole duration of Isasaga's tenure as treasurer. From it, we can calculate the queen's income from October 1507 to October 1508: 5,600,000 *mrs.*

The first thing to note is that Queen Maria does not appear to have received any income from Torres Vedras and Viseu, the two towns that were entrusted to her by her husband. The only revenues entered by her treasurer came from Seville and *Casa da Mina*. This is peculiar, as lands and towns had formed the foundation of resources

---

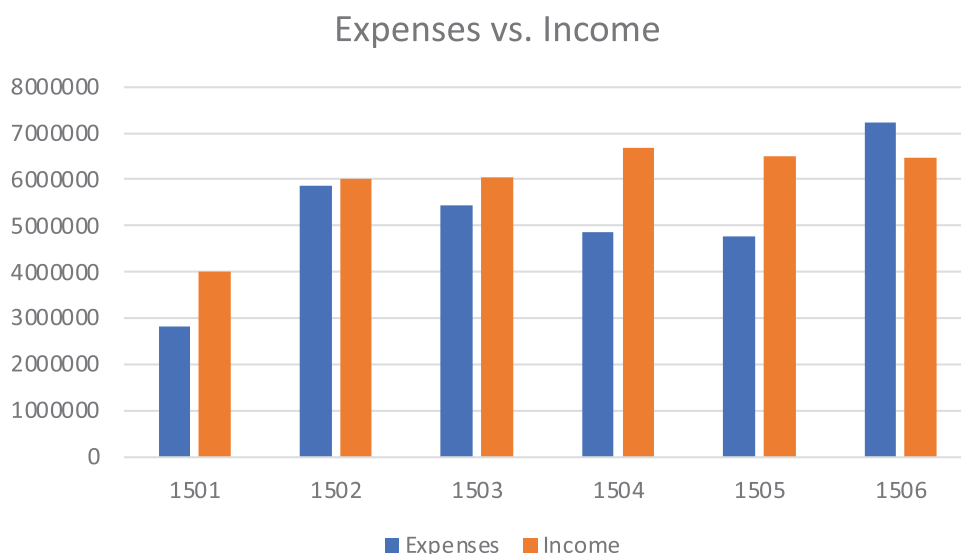
*anno de 1856* (Lisbon: Typ. da Academia, 1856), 113. This, along with the use of *maravedís* in place of *reais* in the letters of acquittal for the sums the queen should have received in *reais*, points to a conversion rate between *real* and *maravedí* of 1:1.

<sup>36</sup> Money that this official returned to the treasure after buying barley for the stable.

<sup>37</sup> Money that this official returned to the treasure after going to Madeira to collect the queen's sugar.

<sup>38</sup> We will explain the origin of this income later when referring to the Stable.

<sup>39</sup> It is possible that over time, Antonio Salvago moved from controlling Queen Maria's income in Seville to controlling what she received from *Casa da Mina* too. In her letters, the queen changed from explaining that Salvago was 'the one who collects my income in Seville' to just stating he 'gave X money' to the treasurer. Since the sums Salvago delivered increased and *Casa da Mina*'s income ceased to be referred to separately, his collecting the whole of the queen's income seems the rightful explanation.



**Figure 1.** Expenses versus income.

for the queens of Portugal during the Middle Ages, even though the significance of annuities collected for maintenance had been increasing throughout the fifteenth century.<sup>40</sup> Conversely, the queen seems to have received the entirety of the funds to which she was entitled. According to the commitments made by the Catholic Monarchs and King Manuel to her, she should have received annually a total of 6,000,000 *mrs*, increased to 6,500,000 *mrs* in 1504 and to 6,660,000 *mrs* in 1507. She did appear to receive the full sum, at least in the years for which reliable data is available, namely, between 1501 and 1506. This is noteworthy, as it was common for queens to not be able to obtain all the income promised to them at the time of their marriages.<sup>41</sup>

Not only did Queen Maria receive the totality of the expected income but she also managed it wisely. A breakdown of the queen's expenses by year, aligned with the income received by the treasurer as stated by the letters of acquittal reveals a surplus almost every year.<sup>42</sup> The queen's income increased by 10% in 1504, but for the remainder of the period oscillated very little. Compared with the expenses, for at least two years (1504 and 1505) the treasurer spent over 25% less than what he received. This only changed in 1506, when he spent 11% more than the yearly income. The surplus for 1502 seems very small (c. 150,000 *mrs*) when compared with the enormous surpluses for 1504 and 1505 (over 1,800,000 *mrs* each year). These accumulated surpluses help to explain why an expenditure of over 700,000 *mrs* more than what was received did not trouble the treasurer too much in 1506.

The years 1507 and 1508 present challenges. According to the ledger, the January to October expenses of 1507 amounted to over 5,500,000 *mrs*, in line with expenses from previous years. The income recorded, however, is only a little over 1,300,000. For the period between October 1507 to October 1508, the estimation made possible by the

<sup>40</sup> Rodrigues, 'For the Honor of Her Lineage and Body'.

<sup>41</sup> See Elena Woodacre's article in this issue.

<sup>42</sup> See Figure 1.

general letter of acquittal leaves room for c. 5,600,000 of income. We know, through the ledger, that Isasaga himself noted only c. 1,800,000 *mrs* of expenses, while Salvago noted over 3,340,000 *mrs*, totalling over 5,200,000 *mrs* when combined. Even if the surplus from previous years offset the expenditure of 1507, which it did not entirely, mathematically speaking, it would still be extremely close for Isasaga's term to conclude with a positive balance. The last letter of acquittal, however, acknowledges over 913,000 *mrs* in expenses that are not recorded in his expense lists. This probably reflects the conclusion we reached when studying the book's structure: that this account is not the final record, but a notebook Isasaga kept for himself. It is possible that not all expenses were recorded, even more so if we account for the general disorganisation of the last couple of years. However, a deviation of 2% between what is acknowledged as properly spent in the last letter of acquittal and the total sum of expenditure for the entire book should not deter us from studying this record. The deviation is not so high in proportion that it might compromise any major conclusions of this work.

Moreover, in general, each letter of acquittal comes with a small deviation from the numbers recorded in the ledger: for 1501–1503 Isasaga is freed of 1% more of what the book records, in 1503–1505 of –0.19% (his ledger records 21,000 *mrs* more in expenses) and in 1505–1507 the positive deviation is of 1.8%. The largest gap between Isasaga's records and the letter of acquittal that ends his tenure seems to be a result of general problems with the recording of expenses in 1507–1508. If we consider all the numbers misaligned between his book and the letters of acquittal, the actual difference between the last letter of acquittal and the book is c. 500,000 *mrs* in a total expenditure of over 43 million *mrs*.

We now turn our attention to the structure of expenditures. We organised Queen Maria's expenses into nine categories, following some of the trends revealed by the source, to be analysed in detail ahead:

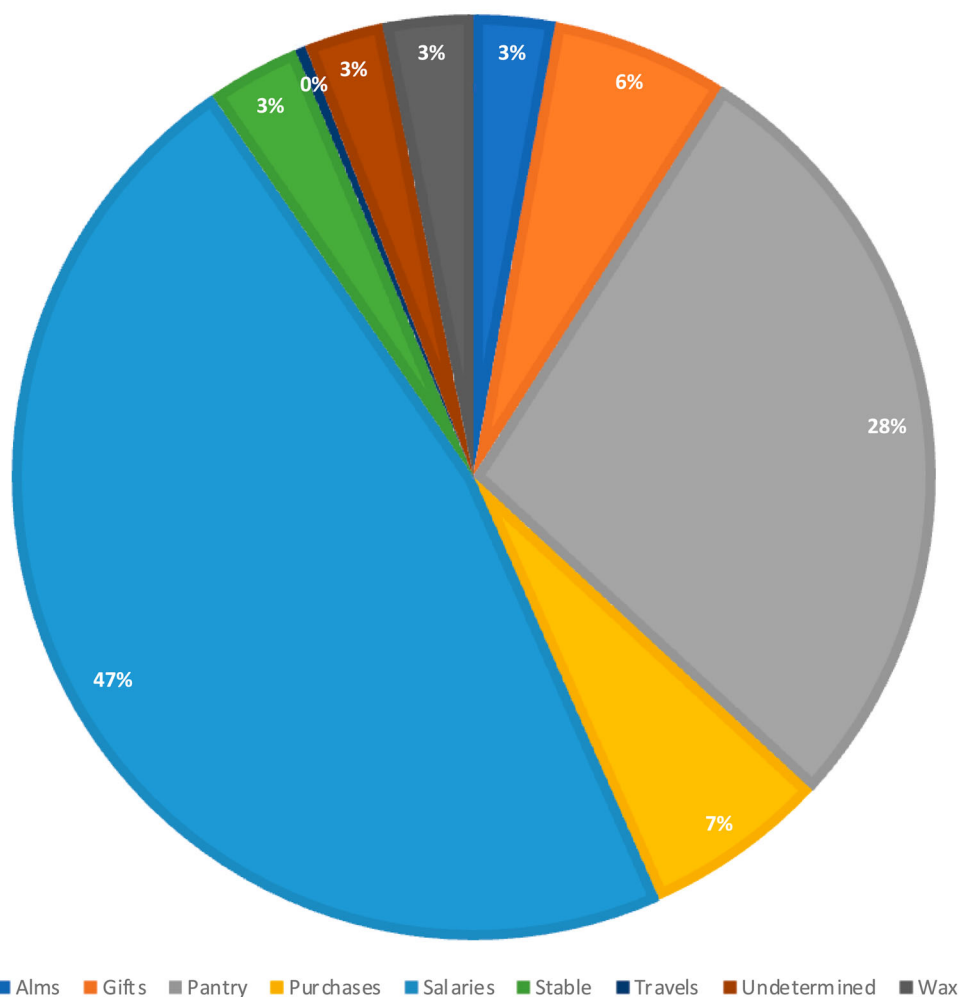
- Salaries: regular payments to the queen's household members.
- Pantry: regular payments to the official in charge of stocking the queen's pantry.
- Wax: regular payments to the official in charge of supplying the queen's household with wax.
- Stable: regular expenses with the purchase and transport of barley for the queen's stable.
- Travels: sums paid to officials for their travels in the queen's service and payments to couriers.
- Purchases: payments for goods bought for the queen and her service which are not regular expenses.
- Gifts: gracious donations to household members and other people.
- Alms: consistent sums allocated for the queen's almoner, confessor, and chaplains to distribute alongside additional contributions explicitly designated as charitable donations.
- Undetermined: financial outlays lacking specific attribution to a particular purpose or rationale.

The total sum of expenses presented in the source reveals some of the general trends that the yearly expenses will follow with varying degrees of fidelity.<sup>43</sup> Almost half of the

---

<sup>43</sup> See Figure 2.

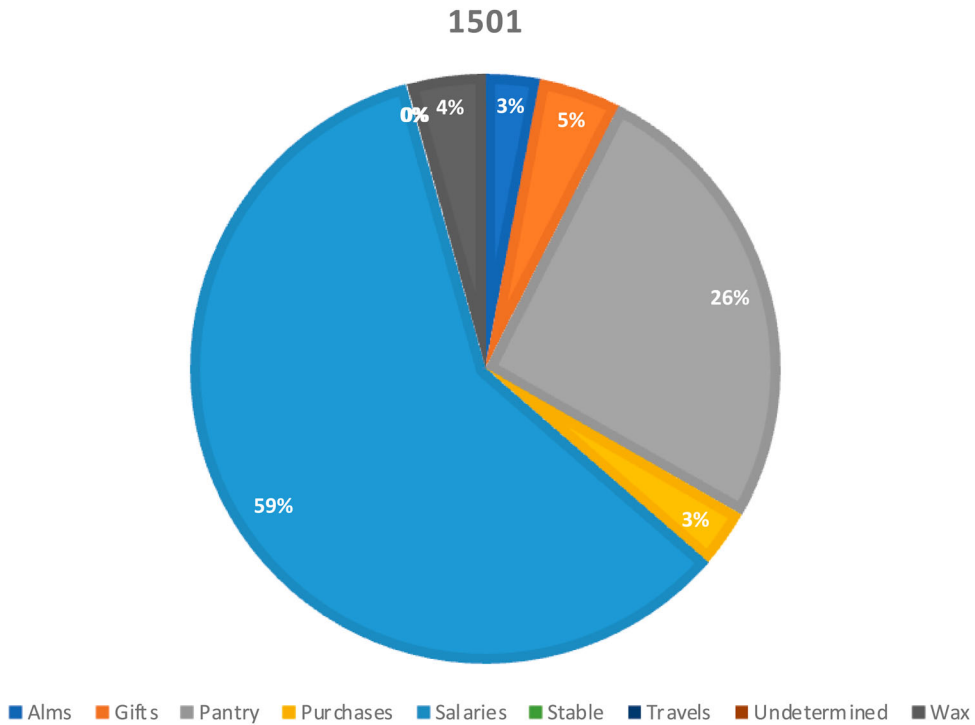
## GLOBAL EXPENDITURE



**Figure 2.** Global Expenditure, by category.

expenditure was allocated to Salaries. The Pantry came next, with a little over a quarter of the overall expenditure. Compensating and providing sustenance for her household was no doubt the queen's primary concern. Purchases (7%) and Gifts (6%) followed with their highly variable nature.<sup>44</sup> Then, regular expenses came into play once again: Stable, Wax, and Alms, each of them reaching 3% of the total. Undetermined expenses were at the same level. Finally, Travel did not even attain 1% of the overall expenditure. When we shift from the overall sum to the annual amounts for each of these categories, however, the situation does not always remain the same, as we shall see next.

<sup>44</sup> Salaries and food were also the major expenses of the queens of Aragon, followed by luxury products (which make up most of our Purchases) and gifts. With a significant difference, however: often, debts would accumulate, and their repayment became one of the primary, if not the primary, expenses. See Ruiz Domingo, *El Tesoro de la Reina*, 169–225. See also Lledó Ruiz Domingo's article in this issue.



**Figure 3.** 1501 Expenses, by category.

### Salaries

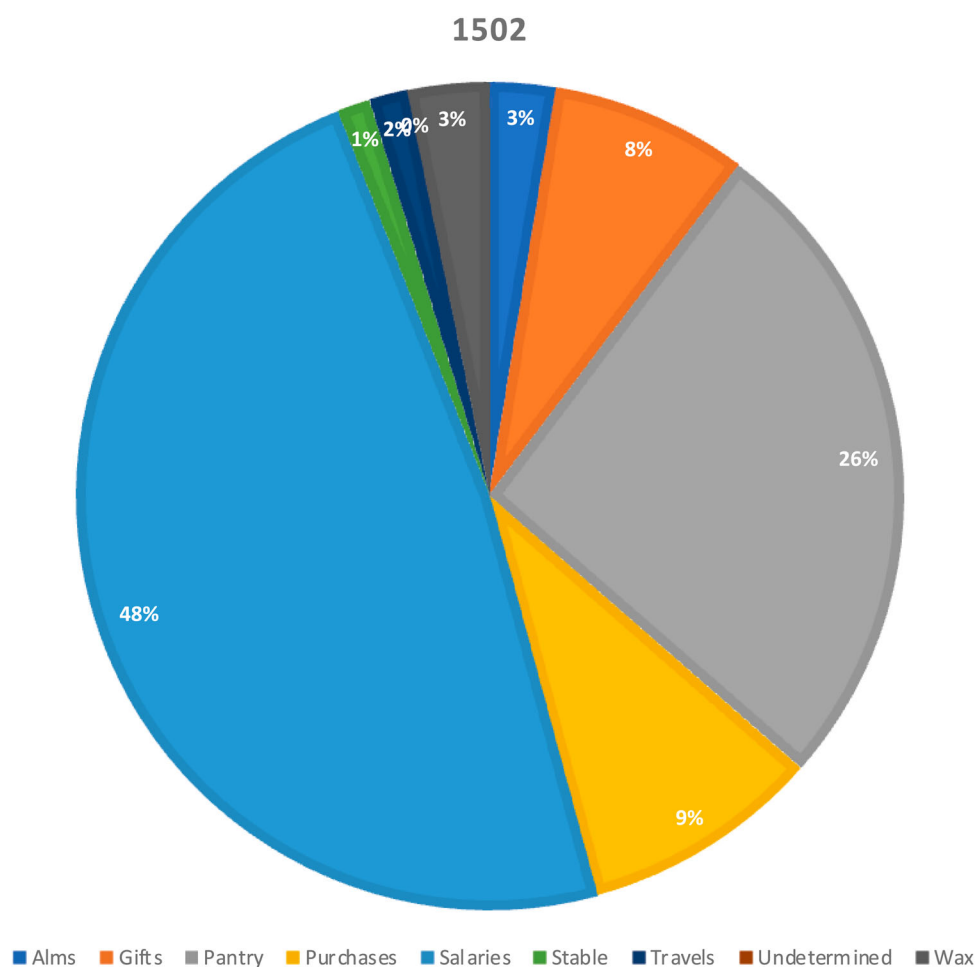
The major portion of Queen Maria's expenditure was always allocated to remunerating the members of her household. The sum constituted approximately half of her total expenses.<sup>45</sup> Yet the expenditure on salaries fluctuated heavily: it decreased by 30% from 1503 to 1504 and increased by more than 69% from 1505 to 1506.<sup>46</sup> The queen did not receive extra income in 1506, nonetheless, the total expenditure increased by c. 50%. The salaries followed the trend, but the general balance in the treasure does not seem to have been offset since there is no evidence of other delayed payments. As we do not know when exactly the money was delivered to the queen, we can assume that some liquidity constraints delayed bigger payments, finally made possible in 1506.

Under the category 'salaries', we included diverse forms of payments, such as general recompense to household members (usually called *quitaçion* in the source), annuities designated for specific individuals, maintenance allowances (*mantenimiento*), regular salaries (*soldada*), provisions for attire and *ayudas de costa*.

Among these subcategories, the most prominent expense pertained to payments directed to household members regularly. Usually referred to as *quitaçion*, they were

<sup>45</sup> It even exceeded that figure in 1501, the first (incomplete) year of Isasaga's tenure as Queen Maria's treasurer. See Figures 3–10.

<sup>46</sup> See Figure 11.



**Figure 4.** 1502 Expenses, by category.

apportioned in thirds (*terçios*) over the year.<sup>47</sup> The exact timing of the disbursement of each third is uncertain, as there was frequently a delay between the order issued by the queen and the registration of payment in the accounts. The initial third was usually paid between April and June,<sup>48</sup> with an instance of entry occurring in mid-July.<sup>49</sup> The second third tended to receive authorisation from the queen in late August-September,<sup>50</sup> and the payment could be recorded as late as November.<sup>51</sup> The final third consistently appeared in December or January of the following year.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> The same system was used at the court of Isabel I of Castile, Queen Maria's mother. See María del Cristo González Marrero, *La casa de Isabel la Católica. Espacios domésticos y vida cotidiana* (Ávila: Institución 'Gran Duque de Alba' de la Excma. Diputación de Ávila, 2005), 45.

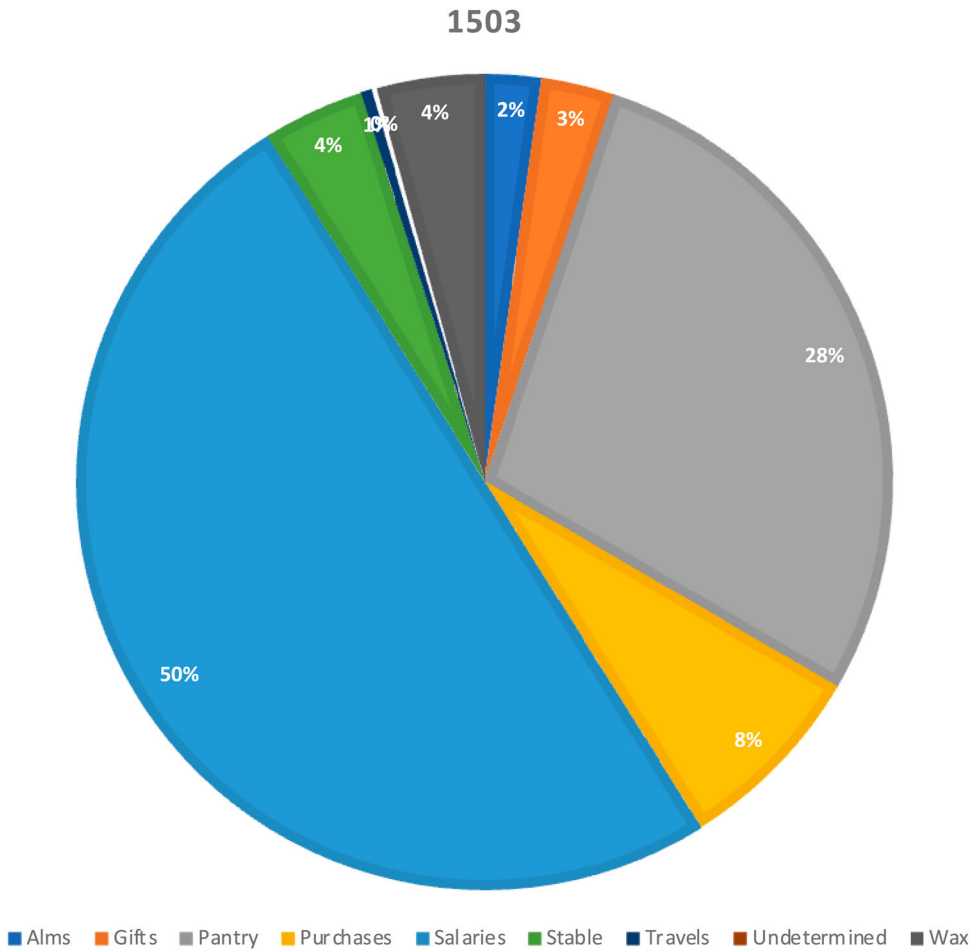
<sup>48</sup> M., fols. 10v., 2nd; 28r., 9th; 39r., 12th; 43r., 8th.

<sup>49</sup> M., fol. 21v., 1st.

<sup>50</sup> M., fols. 4v., 5th; 40v., 6th; 44r., 7th.

<sup>51</sup> M., fols. 25r., 2nd; 30r., 4th.

<sup>52</sup> M., fols. 6r., 7th; 16r., 2nd; 26v., 4th; 31v., 5th; 41r., 9th.



**Figure 5.** 1503 Expenses, by category.

The year 1505 emerges as an oddity, though. The first third of that year was recorded in June,<sup>53</sup> the second in January 1506,<sup>54</sup> and the third in April 1506, despite being authorised in January.<sup>55</sup> The upward trajectory observed in the amounts disbursed, reaching its peak in the second third of 1504, might have caused liquidity constraints that had consequences in the following year.<sup>56</sup> Interestingly, the anomaly does not appear to have caused other delays, since the first third of 1506 appeared promptly in May of the same year.<sup>57</sup>

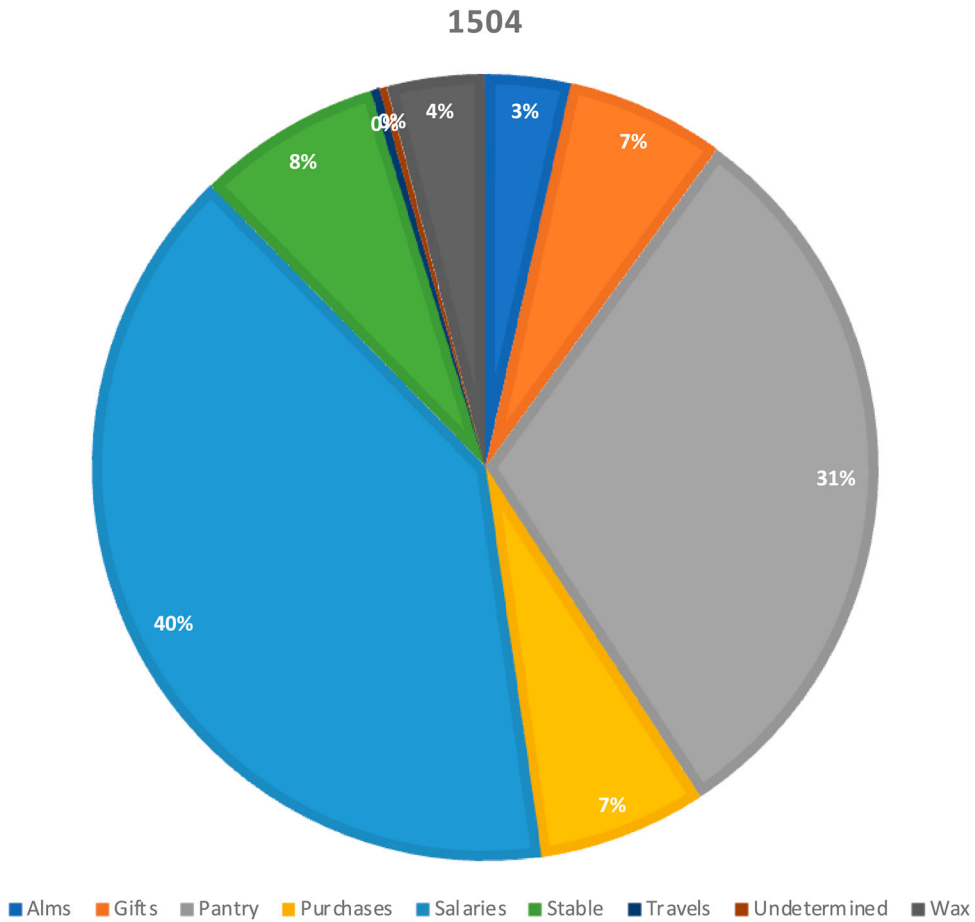
<sup>53</sup> M., fol. 32v., 11th.

<sup>54</sup> M., fol. 37v., 5th.

<sup>55</sup> M., fol. 38v., 8th.

<sup>56</sup> It may also have been the reason for the financial reinforcement that Manuel I decided to grant to his wife in 1504, as mentioned previously.

<sup>57</sup> The end of 1507 seems to present a similar situation, with the last third of the year being paid only in April 1508, but the first of 1508 following suit in May. The delay or confusion on the record might be due to the change in treasurer (M., fol. 50v., 11th, 12th).

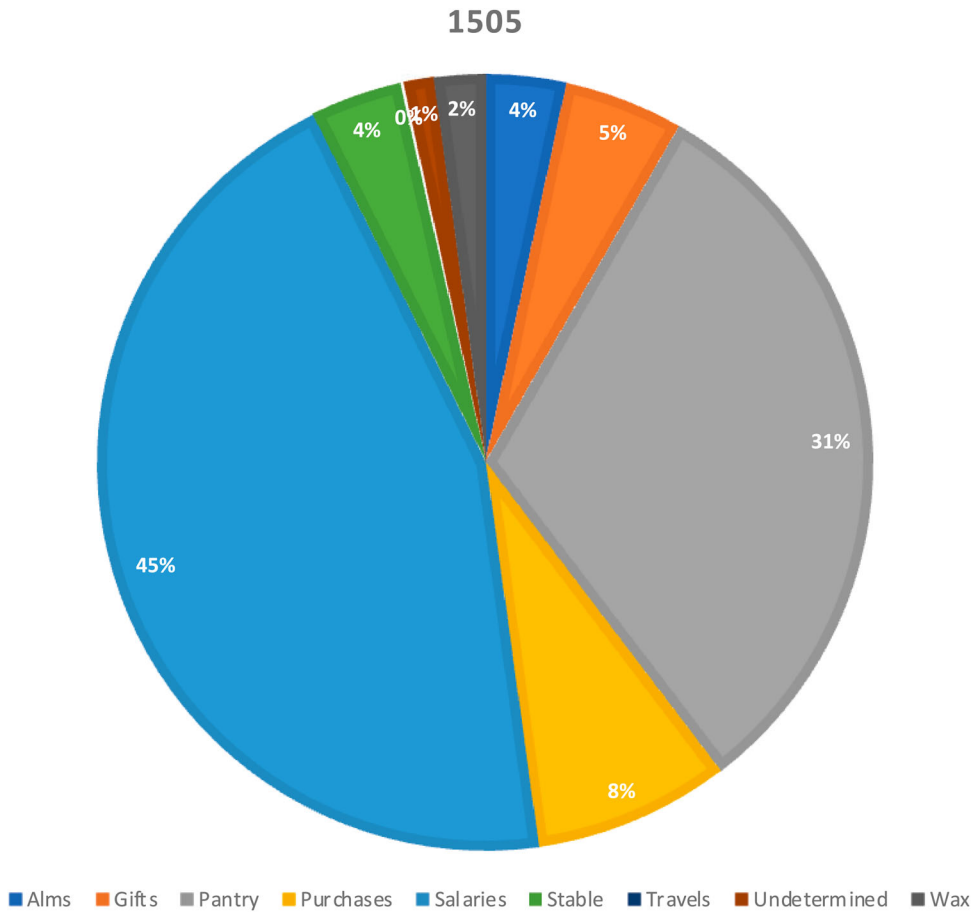


**Figure 6.** 1504 Expenses, by category.

These entries typically encompassed the entire sum as a single entity, instead of itemising the individual beneficiaries. Spanning the entire duration of this period, the sums disbursed for these payments varied between 615,000 and 910,000 *mrs*.<sup>58</sup> This variation can be attributed to the elastic nature of the household, capable of accommodating new members while allowing the departure of others. Furthermore, individuals could be absent at the times of payment due to various reasons and collect their sums later (or even earlier).<sup>59</sup> While these occurrences seem frequent in the source, the amount paid to individual members of the household seldom exceeded 7% of the aggregate total. Only in two instances did it approach 10% when a few officials received payments due to their temporary absence with the queen's consent in 1501. Payments made outside the usual framework due to officials travelling home seem more common in the initial years of Queen Maria's reign, between 1501 and 1503.

<sup>58</sup> The lowest value corresponded to the first third of 1508 and was paid during Isasaga's absence (M., fol. 50v., 15th) while the highest was paid for the first third of 1504 (fol. 28r., 9th).

<sup>59</sup> Examples for both cases: M., fols. 8r., 4th; 9v., 8th.



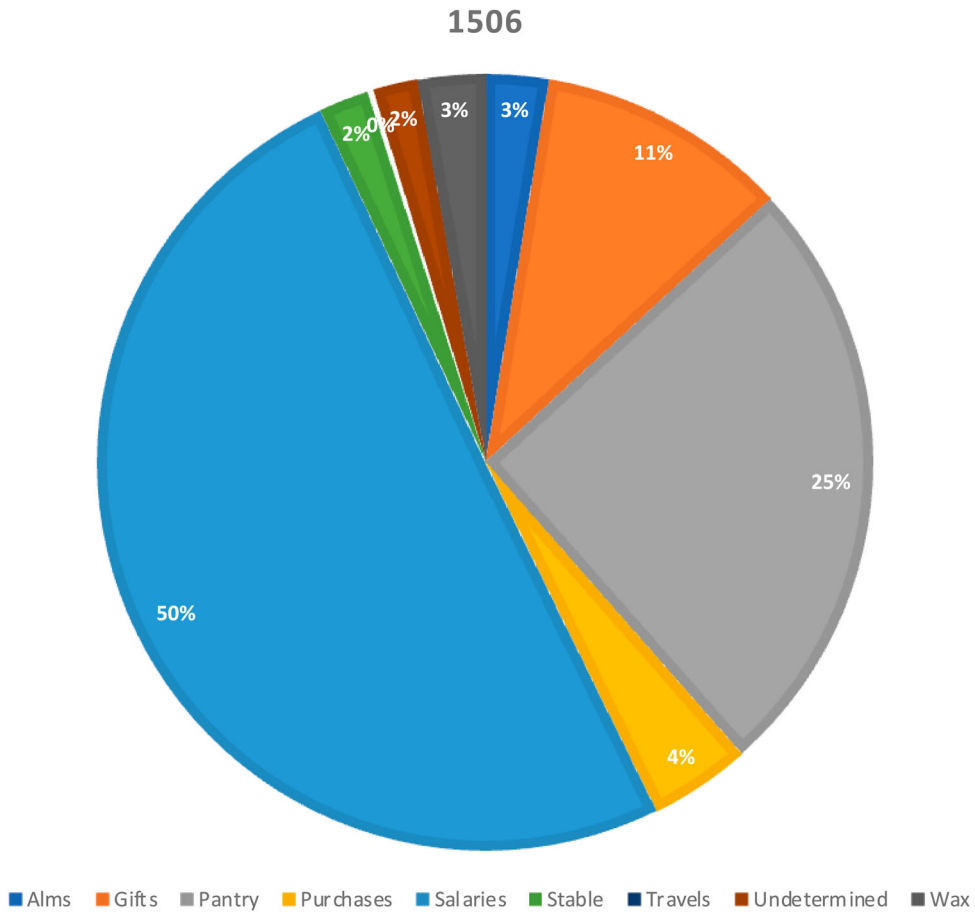
**Figure 7.** 1505 Expenses, by category.

The other payment types included in the Salaries seem residual when compared to the scale of the previous section. Friar García de Padilla, the queen's initial confessor, was the only person to receive maintenance (*mantenimiento*), a monthly stipend of 6000 *mrs.*<sup>60</sup> Next, the term *soldada* indicates a daily service and its corresponding payment, akin to a regular service for specific duties. Apart from the confessor's *criados*,<sup>61</sup> only the kitchen attendants (*moços de cozinha*) seem to receive such remuneration.<sup>62</sup> Both types of payment appear only in the early folios of the ledger, implying a potential change in practice subsequently.

<sup>60</sup> M., fols. 3r., 2nd, 6th; 3v., 7th; 4v., 8th; 5v., 6th; 7r., 5th; 7v., 7th; 8r., 2nd; 8v., 4th; 9r., 7th; 9v., 9th; 11r., 8th. *Mantenimientos* were also paid at the court of Queen Isabel I of Castile. See González Marrero, *La casa de Isabel la Católica*, 49–50.

<sup>61</sup> A *criado* was a person brought up in a lord's household. There were high-rank *criados*, such as the children of courtiers brought up at the King's or the Queen's household, and more modest ones, such as the clergy's *criados* who were often their illegitimate children. See Rita Costa Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society: Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 205–8.

<sup>62</sup> For the *criados*: M., fol. 4v., 5th; for the kitchen attendants: fol. 8v., 2nd. Notably, the sum for the kitchen attendants is not given to them, but to the head cook.



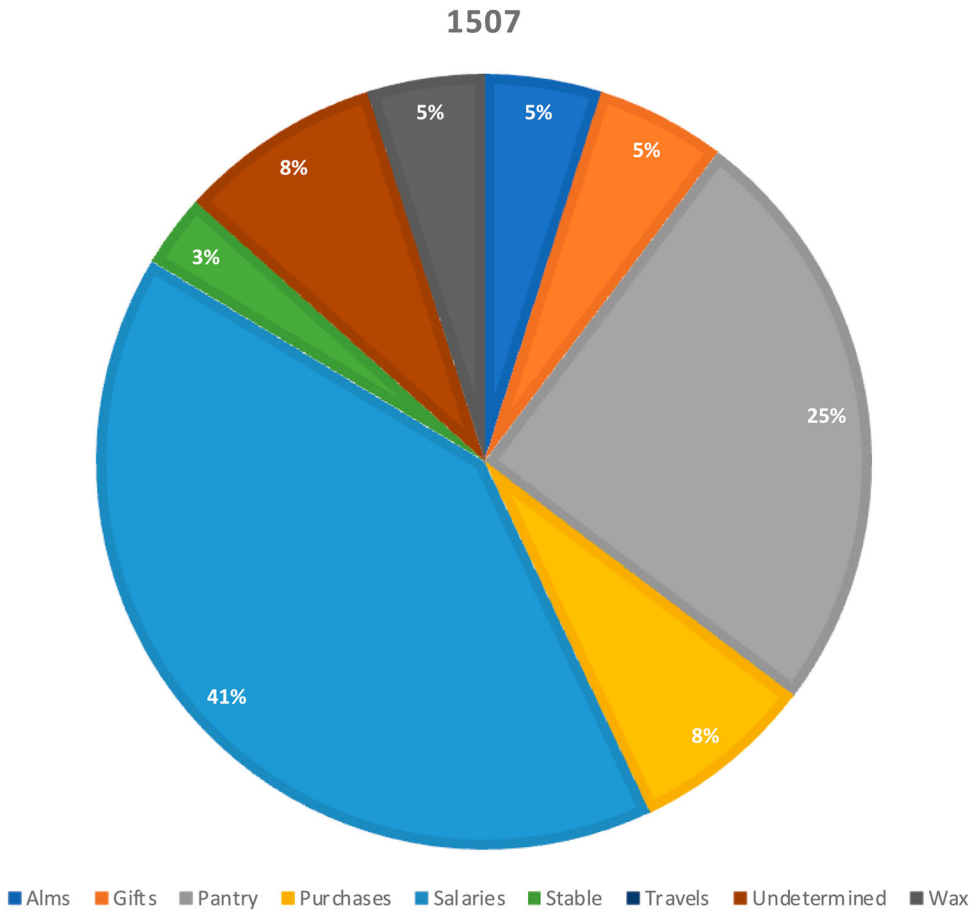
**Figure 8.** 1506 Expenses, by category.

A similar pattern emerges when looking into clothing, wherein only the young men who escorted the queen in her progresses (*moços d'espuelas*) received clothing directly from her.<sup>63</sup> This occurred as a collective grant within the initial year of Queen Maria's presence in the kingdom and again in 1506.<sup>64</sup> We can link to these allocations for clothing the sums 'for mourning' (*luctos*) provided to the ladies and officials of the queen's household after the demise of Queen Isabel I of Castile, which occurred in November 1504, as well as after the deaths of Infanta D. Beatriz, King Manuel's mother, and Philip the Handsome, duke of Burgundy and king consort of Castile (husband of Queen Juana I), both of which took place in September 1506.<sup>65</sup> Isasaga's records do

<sup>63</sup> These also received clothing at Isabel I of Castile's court – González Marrero, *La casa de Isabel la Católica*, 112–13. The distribution of liveries seems to have been much more extensive and widespread in England and France in the previous centuries. See Malcom Vale, *The Princely Court: Medieval Courts and Culture in North-West Europe 1270–1380* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 93–135.

<sup>64</sup> M., fols. 16v., 1st; 39r., 11th. Yet a single *moço d'espuelas* received a sum for clothing a month later than his fellows, possibly because he was absent on the day of the collective distribution – fol. 39v., 11th.

<sup>65</sup> M., fols. 31v., 6th; 41r., 8th.



**Figure 9.** 1507 Expenses, by category.

not specify the nature of these mourning garments, but the accounts of Queen Isabel I mention the distribution of mourning fabrics (*paños de luto*) and black caps (*tocas negras*) in similar circumstances.<sup>66</sup>

Lastly, *ayudas de costa* seems to be a Castilian practice unknown in Portugal. These were originally exceptional payments, later collected as an additional part of the salary.<sup>67</sup> For instance, Isasaga received 30,000 *mrs* as an *ayuda de costa* for 1502,<sup>68</sup> while the head butler (*mayordomo mayor*) received 40,000 *mrs* on at least three occasions.<sup>69</sup> Apart from these high-ranking officials, the queen's tailor appears to have been a regular recipient of these payments.<sup>70</sup> Other records suggest sporadic instances of disbursement unless these amounts were considered integral to the general third payments.

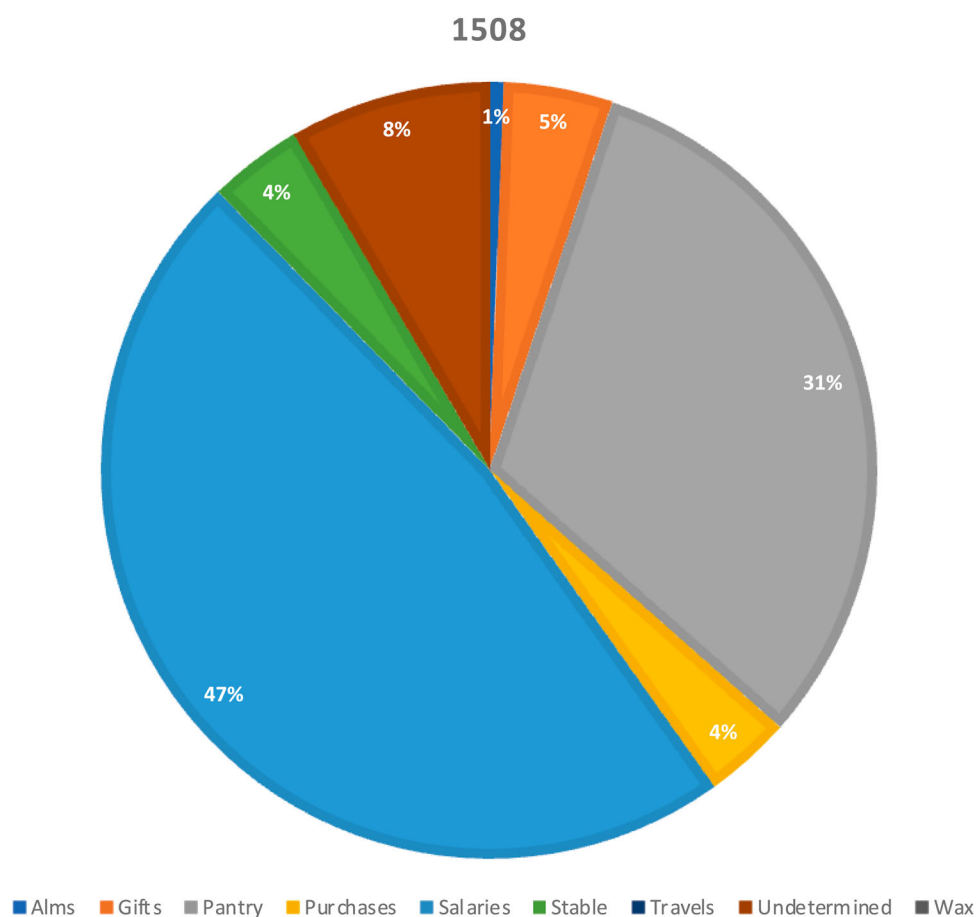
<sup>66</sup> Andrés Díaz, *El último decenio del reinado de Isabel I*, CD-ROM nos. 620, 796, 1260, 1294, among others.

<sup>67</sup> González Marrero, *La casa de Isabel la Católica*, 50.

<sup>68</sup> M., fol. 15r., 3rd.

<sup>69</sup> M., fols. 30v., 8th; 36r., 9th; 38r., 3rd. In this case, it is specified that the *ayuda* is for the year.

<sup>70</sup> M., fols. 30v., 2nd (5,000 *mrs*); 32v., 3rd (7,000 *mrs*).



**Figure 10.** 1508 Expenses, by category.

The idea of *ayudas de costa* was contemplated by Queen Maria's mother when preparing her daughter's household. A letter by Queen Isabel I incorporated in Isasaga's manuscript evidences the difficulty of establishing a household in Portugal with Castilian people and expectations. Dated 17 October 1500, and dispatched from Granada,<sup>71</sup> the missive appoints Rui de Sande, Portuguese ambassador, and future overseer of Queen Maria's finances (*vedor da fazenda*), as the person responsible for structuring payments to her officials according to Portuguese customs. Nevertheless, the letter stipulates that these payments should not fall short of what these people would receive in Castile. When discussing payments due to the women of the queen's chamber, Queen Isabel I suggested that these *ayudas de costa* would cover the difference between Portuguese and Castilian traditions. According to the letter, the chambermaids should receive 10,000 *mrs* each, consistent with Castilian practice. However, it should be recorded that they received 6000 *mrs* in alignment with Portuguese standards and the remaining 4000 as *ayuda de costa*. Queen Maria's ladies should receive 7000 *mrs* with an additional

<sup>71</sup> M., fols. 66v.-67r.; original in RBPRM, IBIS RB II/3284, doc. 2.



**Figure 11.** Salary expenses per year.

20,000 *mrs* of *ayuda de costa*.<sup>72</sup> Age mattered in this case: one younger lady had her income capped at 17,000 *mrs*.

## Pantry

Providing food and drink for the royal family and their suitors was a fundamental function of the court.<sup>73</sup> It is, therefore, not surprising that the second position among Queen Maria's expenditure was consistently taken by the pantry (*despensa*).<sup>74</sup> As no separate expenses were registered for the fruiter, the larder, the kitchen, or other similar departments, we believe that this designation included everything related to the procurement, preparation, and distribution of food and drink to the queen and her household.

An overview of the pantry's financial outlays reveals that the initial years of her reign saw the highest expenses.<sup>75</sup> Between August and December 1501, the total expenditure sits close to half of what was spent between 1502 and 1505, suggesting a similar total for 1501, if the record of that year were complete. The total amount spent in each of those years sits close to 1,500,000 *mrs*. 1506 represents an increase of c. 25% compared to 1505 (1,800,000 *mrs*), but soon the totals spent returned to amounts closer to the original levels.<sup>76</sup>

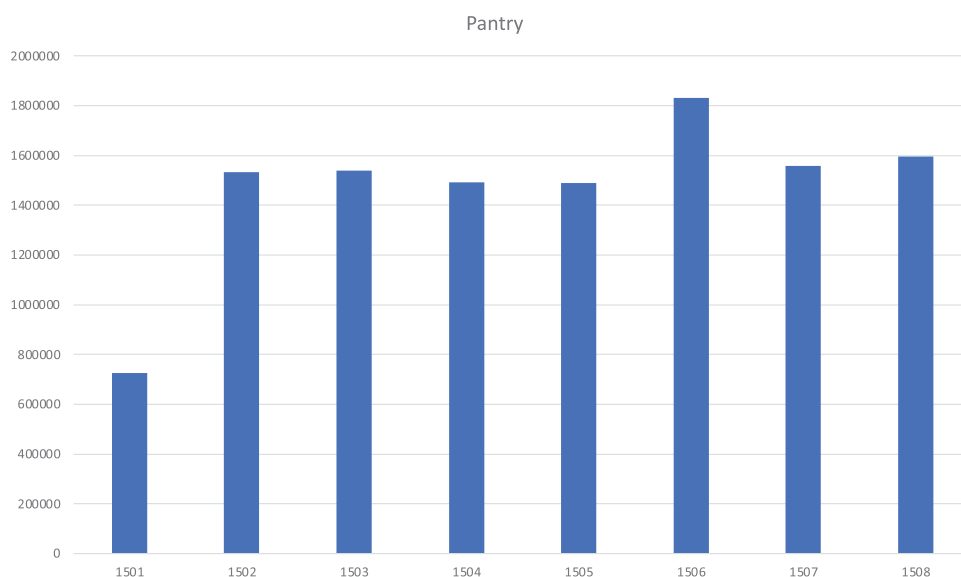
<sup>72</sup> Most of Queen Isabel's ladies were also paid 27,000 *mrs* per year, but a few of them collected much more, between 40,000 and 250,000 *mrs*. See González Marrero, *La casa de Isabel la Católica*, Table 2.7., 54–5.

<sup>73</sup> Rita Costa Gomes, 'Os convivas do rei e a estruturação da corte (séculos XIII a XVI)', in *A mesa dos reis de Portugal*, eds. Ana Isabel Buescu and David Felismino (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 2011), 26.

<sup>74</sup> See Figures 3–10.

<sup>75</sup> See Figure 12.

<sup>76</sup> In comparison, the expenditure on the pantry of the household of Queen Maria's father, King Fernando II of Aragon in 1503, was 1,800,000 *mrs* and that of her mother Queen Isabel I was 5,003,025 *mrs*. See Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, 'La Hacienda Real en Castilla en 1504. Rentas y gastos de la corona al morir Isabel I', *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 3 (1976), 334.



**Figure 12.** Pantry expenses per year.

The disbursements for the pantry seem to have followed a consistent pattern: typically, there was an initial payment at the beginning of each month to cover the expenses for that month, followed by additional payments in the subsequent months to account for any expenditure exceeding the initial budget. The years spanning from 1501 to 1505 offer the most comprehensive and stable records for analysis. However, as time progressed, the financial records became less precise, occasionally noting a lump sum paid for the pantry's expenses without specifying the period covered.

By the years 1506–1507, a combination of monthly payments and general pantry expenses (lacking specific references to the corresponding period) became more commonplace. Finally, in 1508 the pantry's expenses were paid in full at the end of each month. This change in payment structure might be attributed to itinerancy, as in October 1505 the royal couple and the court departed from Lisbon, fleeing an outbreak of plague, and journeyed to Almeirim, Abrantes, Tomar, and Coimbra, returning to Lisbon by roughly the same route three years later.<sup>77</sup>

In 1501, the monthly allocation for the pantry consistently stood at 120,000 *mrs*.<sup>78</sup> However, a noticeable reduction occurred in January and February 1502, when it dropped to 95,000 *mrs*.<sup>79</sup> It then stabilised at 100,000 or 120,000 *mrs* for the remainder of the year. From 1503 to 1505, the budget was typically set at 100,000 *mrs* per month. Yet, the actual pantry expenditure tells a different story. To gain a more accurate understanding, it is necessary to consider the retroactive payments made in subsequent months.

<sup>77</sup> Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues and Inês Olaia, 'L'expressió territorial del poder reginal a Portugal: els itineraris de les reines, d'Elionor de Lancaster (n. 1458–m. 1425) a Elionor d'Àustria (n. 1498–m. 1558)', *Recerques* 81 (2022), 146.

<sup>78</sup> See Figure 13.

<sup>79</sup> M., fol. 7r., 4th and fol. 7v., 5th respectively.

During the initial years of Queen Maria's reign, the expenditures related to the pantry exhibited a higher degree of variability. This fluctuation can be correlated with shifts in the composition of the household during this period, with individuals frequently arriving from and departing to Castile, as indicated earlier. Another potential factor contributing to the variability is the possible learning curve experienced by the monarch's officials. It is conceivable that the early period was characterised by a process of learning and adaptation of Queen Maria's officials to the requirements of their lady and her household, as she settled into her new role and kingdom. The presence of two additional expenses during this period, namely, barley for the pantry and bread being paid separately in September and October 1501,<sup>80</sup> also appears to support this idea: it seems logical that these should have been covered by the general budget for the pantry, but instead, they were directed to the treasurer himself.

In general terms, the peaks in expenses with the pantry seem to coincide loosely with the times of payment of thirds to the queen's officials. This could mean that a larger number of people stayed at the court while payments were being made.

## Wax

Wax was a highly significant commodity during this era, as it served to illuminate nocturnal and closed spaces and found extensive use in both religious and secular ceremonies.<sup>81</sup> In Queen Maria's household, the expenditure for wax seems to follow a regular cycle of increase and decrease throughout the years but with wide variations: the total amounts spent can vary from year to year by as much as 98%, almost doubling the previous expense.<sup>82</sup>

Wax supply appears to have undergone certain structural modifications throughout this period. Isasaga's records depict a comparable approach to that of the pantry during the first year of his tenure: initially, the individual responsible for provisioning the household with wax received an allowance to cover this expenditure over a month or from two to two and a half in spring.<sup>83</sup> However, an alteration emerged by February 1503, characterised by the discontinuation of explicit indications of the month to which payment was allocated. Nonetheless, the pattern of disbursements remained consistent, with a payment generally made at the end of each month, presumably intended for the ensuing month.

In late 1506, the practice of making monthly payments ceased and the amounts disbursed increased significantly. In 1507, only three payments were documented, with the final payment in June totalling 204,000 *mrs.*<sup>84</sup> No payments were recorded for the year 1508. These particulars may indicate a change in strategy. Instead of providing the queen's household with smaller, regular quantities each month, it is possible that

<sup>80</sup> M., fols. 3v., 5th; 4r., 9th.

<sup>81</sup> Yet the religious use of wax has been more studied than the secular. See, for instance, Alexandra Sapoznyk, 'Bees in the Medieval Economy: Religious Observance and the Production, Trade and Consumption of Wax in England, c. 1300–1555', *The Economic History Review* 72 (2019): 1152–74.

<sup>82</sup> This happened from 1505 to 1506; from 1504 to 1505, there had been a decrease of 48%, so this increase brought 1506 in line with 1504. See [Figure 14](#).

<sup>83</sup> M., fol. 7v., 9th. Payment for 'the future months' done in mid-February. The next instalment only appeared in late May, for June (fol. 9v., 4th).

<sup>84</sup> M., fol. 43r., 11th. As a point of comparison, the wax expenditure of the household of Queen Maria's father for the whole year of 1503 amounted to 430,000 *mrs.*, while for her mother's it amounted to 323,731 *mrs.* See Ladero Quesada, 'La Hacienda Real en Castilla', 334.

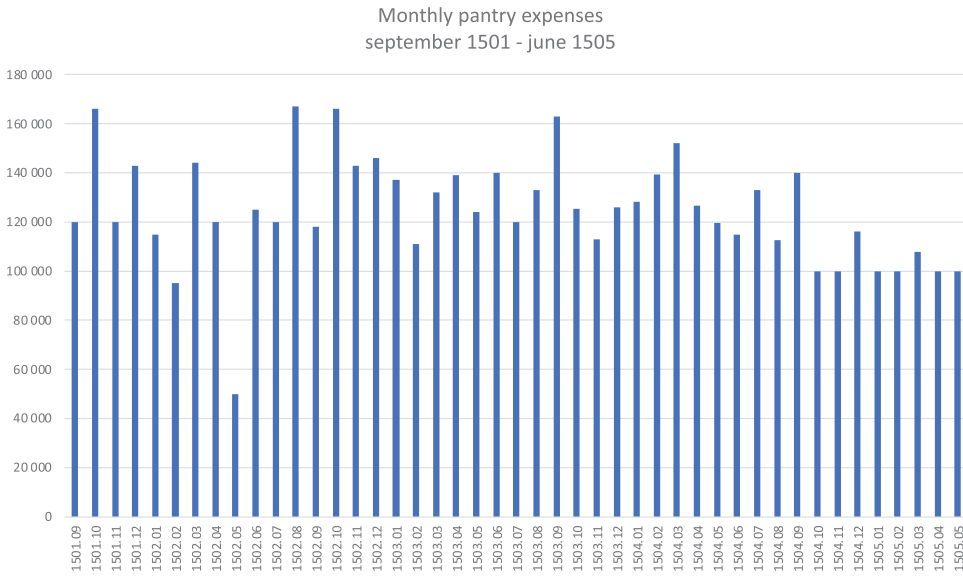


Figure 13. Monthly pantry expenses.

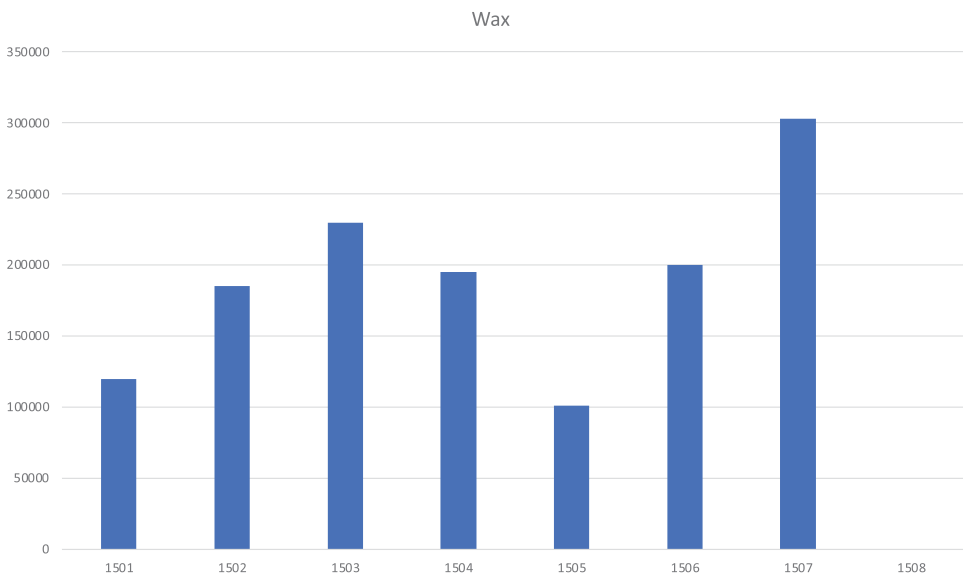
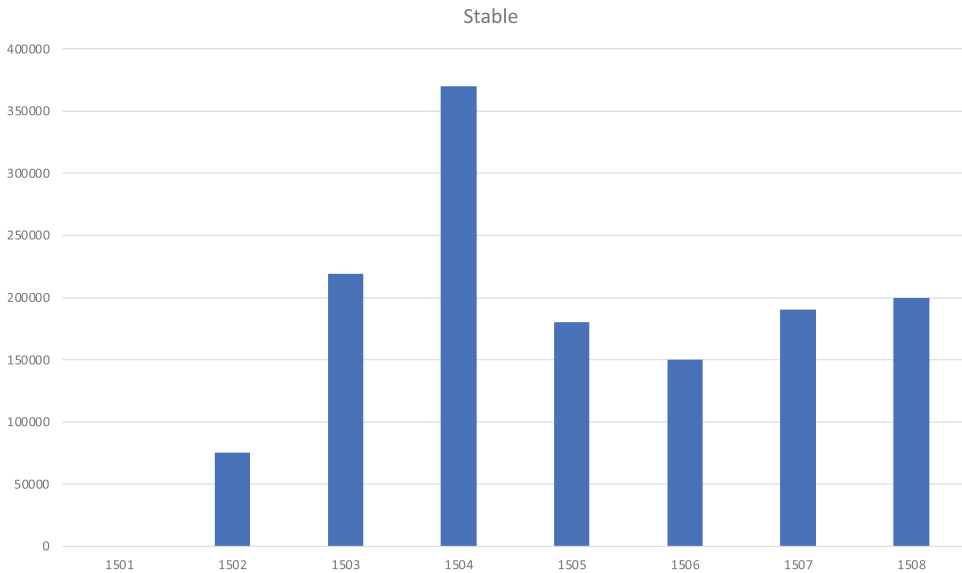


Figure 14. Wax expenses per year.

the official in charge chose to procure wax in bulk to address this issue. This shift could also be correlated with the queen’s travel itinerary, given that the years 1505–1508 were characterised by extensive travel, as previously mentioned.

In the period when records were consistently organised monthly or bi-monthly (from May 1502 to February 1503), there appears to be a pattern of allocating slightly higher funds for the procurement of wax during the autumn and winter months. Notably, in the year 1502, which exhibited the most consistent monthly records, there



**Figure 15.** Stable expenses per year.

was a noticeable variance of between 3000 and 5000 *mrs* more allocated for the winter months.

## Stable

Early modern monarchs remained itinerant, though they undertook less extensive journeys than their medieval counterparts.<sup>85</sup> Thus, they still needed well-stocked stables with horses and pack animals for their travels – animals that had to be fed even when not on the move. It is therefore not surprising that the expenditure incurred to purchase and transport barley to supply Queen Maria's stable had a significant impact on her finances.

While expenses related to the stable are a consistent part of the overall total,<sup>86</sup> there does not appear to be a regular spending pattern. After the first few months without expenses, the amounts spent increased steadily.<sup>87</sup> In 1502 there was a single payment of 75,500 *mrs*. For 1503, eight payments directed at supplying the stable are recorded, with the total expenses attaining 212,000 *mrs*.<sup>88</sup> The year 1504 represents a peak in the provisioning of the queen's stable: over 300,000 *mrs* were spent to acquire cereal, plus 45,000 *mrs* for transportation. After a decline in 1505 and 1506, expenditure rose again in 1507, attaining 190,000 *mrs*. The last year, 1508, seemed to promise to surpass 1507: a total of 200,000 *mrs* were spent in ten months.

<sup>85</sup> In Portugal, in the sixteenth century, the itinerancy of the kings came to be between Santarém, Lisbon, and Évora, excluding the rest of the kingdom. See Rita Costa-Gomes, 'Les déplacements de la cour portugaise. Deux axiomes et quatre hypothèses pour une comparaison des monarchies ibériques', *e-Spania* 8 (2009) <http://journals.openedition.org/e-spania/18853>. (accessed 21 September 2023).

<sup>86</sup> See Figures 3–10.

<sup>87</sup> See Figure 15.

<sup>88</sup> By comparison, King Fernando II of Aragon's expense for the stable (*caballerizas* and *acemillería* together) amounted to 1,270,000 *mrs* in 1503 while Isabel I of Castile's amounted to 1,422,386 *mrs*. See Ladero Quesada, 'La Hacienda Real en Castilla', 334.

It is not easy to explain these fluctuations in the provisioning of the stable, as expenditure increases while the court is stationary and starts to decrease when it begins to move, which is counterintuitive. Between 1501 and 1504, Queen Maria and her household resided in Lisbon, spending the summer months in nearby Sintra. In October 1505, because of a sudden outburst of plague, the court began to move northwards, only to return to Lisbon in 1508, as previously noted. If these movements of the court were not what determined the fluctuations in cereal provisioning, then what did? The availability of grain might be an explanation.

Portugal experienced a grain deficit throughout the Middle Ages, necessitating imports from various regions, including Castile.<sup>89</sup> Queen Maria took advantage of her close relationship with her mother to secure several permissions to buy grain for her pantry and stable in Andalusia.<sup>90</sup> Queen Isabel's first letter of permission, directed to an official from Jerez de la Frontera, appears in July 1502,<sup>91</sup> while the payment for the stable's cereal is recorded in Seville, in December of the same year.<sup>92</sup>

Some of the eight 1503 payments directed at supplying the stable may still be connected to Queen Isabel's permission to acquire barley in Andalusia: at least the first one is said to cover the price of carrying grain from Seville.<sup>93</sup> However, the substantial acquisitions made in 1503 were possibly excessive for the needs of the stable, since over 85,000 *mrs* in barley and wheat were allocated to 'certain people from the household' in exchange for a payment.<sup>94</sup>

In late 1503, Queen Isabel I issued a second letter allowing her daughter to acquire barley for her stable in the area of Jerez de la Frontera.<sup>95</sup> The first disbursement recorded in Queen Maria's expenses is for transportation from Jerez, by a boatman of Seville.<sup>96</sup> In January 1504, Queen Isabel issued a third letter in which, among other issues, she again allowed her daughter to collect barley for her stable in Castile.<sup>97</sup> This time, though, it is possible that the permission was directed to Seville: in August of the same year, one of Queen Maria's officials was sent to Seville and exchanged money to buy grain for the queen's stable.<sup>98</sup> Following these two letters, 1504 was the year in which the most barley was purchased, which could explain the reduction in 1505: the stable was well-stocked.

The years 1505–1508 seem to suggest a change in provisioning strategy. There are no permits from the Queen of Castile to Queen Maria to gather cereal in Andalusia<sup>99</sup> nor

<sup>89</sup> On this issue, see A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *Introdução à história da agricultura em Portugal. A questão cerealífera na Idade Média* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1978).

<sup>90</sup> However, while the source provides several accounts of the acquisition of barley for the stables in Castile, as we shall see shortly, it never clarifies where the cereal purchases for the pantry were conducted.

<sup>91</sup> Archivo General de Simancas, CCA,CED,6,3,1. Regarding the significance of Jerez de la Frontera as a hub for grain production and export, see Juan Manuel Bello León, 'Mercaderes del siglo XV en Jerez de la Frontera', *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 41 (2014), 14–19.

<sup>92</sup> M., fol. 15v., 2nd.

<sup>93</sup> M., fol. 17r., 1st.

<sup>94</sup> 'ciertas personas de nuestra Casa' Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (Primera Parte)', no. 22, 181.

<sup>95</sup> Archivo General de Simancas, CCA,CED,6,229,1.

<sup>96</sup> M., fol. 27r., 1st.

<sup>97</sup> Archivo General de Simancas, CCA,CED,6,236,2.

<sup>98</sup> M., fol. 29r., 5th.

<sup>99</sup> Queen Isabel I passed away in November 1504. Her death was followed by a power struggle between her widower, Fernando II of Aragon, and Philip the Fair, the husband of her successor, Juana I. This turbulent period was not conducive to Queen Maria obtaining privileges from her sister similar to those that had been granted to her by their mother.

records for the transportation of grain from Castile. The number of entries decreases. Except for 1507, when there are two such entries,<sup>100</sup> there is normally only a single entry for each year. This may suggest that, as in the case of the pantry and the wax, there was a learning process and the officials in charge of provisioning the stable eventually started buying amounts that better matched the household's needs each time.<sup>101</sup>

## Travel

Expenses incurred to fund travelling outside the queen's progress were almost insignificant.<sup>102</sup> They were even non-existent in 1507 and 1508, which would lead us to believe that the queen's household had limited external interactions. However, in addition to funding journeys made by her command, Queen Maria also granted frequent rewards for the acquisition of horses and travel, as will be stated later in Gifts, thereby multiplying opportunities for contact.

The journeys undertaken in service of the monarch primarily pertained to her economic interests. For example, in 1501 and 1502 a certain Vasques was sent to the island of Madeira to obtain the sugar King Manuel granted his wife.<sup>103</sup> Officials were also frequently directed towards Seville or Jerez de la Frontera to acquire grain for the queen's stable, as we have just seen, or to purchase items sought by the queen.<sup>104</sup>

Many journeys to Castile were intended to transport mail.<sup>105</sup> The queen also rewarded those who brought her good news from abroad, as we shall see later. All this indicates that there were frequent exchanges of letters between her and her relatives.<sup>106</sup> On the other hand, Friar García de Padilla was sent to visit Princess Juana in Castile in 1502.<sup>107</sup> Lope de Robles, keeper of the queen's silver, received 35,930 *mrs* on two occasions to go on a journey to England in the same year to visit the Princess of Wales; the freight of the ship he took cost 2340 *mrs* more.<sup>108</sup> Pero Sanjurjo was also sent to England in 1506.<sup>109</sup> Queen Maria appears to have had close relationships with her sisters, and especially with Catalina, whose portrait she commissioned from a painter along with her own, as we shall see in the next section.

## Purchases

Purchases (*compras*) constituted the most significant non-regular expense.<sup>110</sup> Many sums were recorded by Isasaga for purchases without further specification,<sup>111</sup> or only with an

<sup>100</sup> M., fol. 43r., 10th; fol. 43v., 11th.

<sup>101</sup> There was no specific buyer for the stable. Usually, the pantry's buyer purchased grain for the stable separately. Yet other queen's officials could also be dispatched to Seville or Jerez de la Frontera to acquire and transport barley – M., fols. 15v., 2nd; 30r., 9th; 24v., 7th; 29r., 5th.

<sup>102</sup> See Figures 3–10.

<sup>103</sup> M., fols. 4r., 4th; 9v., 5th.

<sup>104</sup> M., fol. 20v., 2nd.

<sup>105</sup> M., fols. 10r., 2nd; 11v., 7th; 13r., 4th, 8th; 15v., 7th; 20v., 7th; 30r., 1st; 30v., 1st.

<sup>106</sup> Her epistolary relationship with her mother seems to have been intense, but no letters to her father are known. See Sá, 'Duas irmãs', 138–39.

<sup>107</sup> M., fol. 12r., 4th.

<sup>108</sup> M., fols. 12r., 6th, 7th; 16r., 5th.

<sup>109</sup> M., fol. 37v., 3rd.

<sup>110</sup> It held the third or fourth position among the expenses. See Figures 3–10.

<sup>111</sup> M., fols. 4r., 2nd; 6r., 3rd, 6th; 7v., 3rd; 9r., 5th, 6th; 12r., 8th; 13r., 6th among many others.

indication of the origin,<sup>112</sup> or the intended recipient of the concerned goods.<sup>113</sup> Yet many others were accompanied by a brief justification that informs us of the nature of the items purchased. As expected, due to the queen's need to signal her status and reflect her husband's magnificence,<sup>114</sup> many of these expenses concerned luxurious objects and fabrics.

Initially, Queen Maria used the services of the king's silversmith (*platero*) Juan Calderón to supply her with works in precious metals.<sup>115</sup> Later on, she had her own silversmith, Diogo Rodrigues who made several pieces for her starting from May 1504<sup>116</sup> and received certain quantities of silver from Antonio Salvago presumably to craft more objects for the queen.<sup>117</sup> Two other men provided her with unspecified works of silver or gold: Luís Fernandes, initially referred to as *platero* and later as *ourives* (goldsmith)<sup>118</sup> and Luis de Rosales, jeweller (*joyero*).<sup>119</sup> Yet some precious objects were purchased whose author is unknown, among which a silver infant (*niño*) and a silver lamp stand out.<sup>120</sup>

Juan de Salcedo and Pero de Lazcano, gold thread weavers (*texedores de oro tirado*), were paid 70,994 *mrs* in 1503 for a silver fabric weighing over twenty marks.<sup>121</sup> Salcedo produced another fabric for the queen the following year for 10,850 *mrs*.<sup>122</sup> Other purchases of luxurious fabrics and materials included silks,<sup>123</sup> artistically painted or embossed leather (*guadamecís*),<sup>124</sup> and bed fittings worth more than 180,000 *mrs*.<sup>125</sup>

Sometimes, the treasurer paid Queen Maria's ladies for precious objects she 'took' (*tomó*) from them. These included a gold reliquary costing 12,090 *mrs* from her chief chambermaid Elvira de Mendonça;<sup>126</sup> over one mark of gold thread from Leonor de Millan and Ángela Forbra;<sup>127</sup> and silk worth 1470 *mrs* from the same Leonor de Millan.<sup>128</sup> These ladies may have purchased these fabrics for the queen, but the reliquary could be a personal object of devotion that the chambermaid could not refuse to her queen when she asked for it.

The expenses also included works of art. On 6 October 1501, the painter León Picardo<sup>129</sup> received ten *cruzados* (3900 *mrs*) for painting the portraits of Queen Maria

<sup>112</sup> Certain things were brought from 'the fair' (*la feria*), possibly the famous Castilian fair of Medina del Campo, others from Seville, Flanders, and Valladolid – M., fols. 27r., 8th; 30r., 4th; 31r., 2nd; 31v., 7th.

<sup>113</sup> Certain goods were bought for the prince alone, the prince and his sisters, or a certain Maior de Narbaez who is not listed among the Queen's ladies or attendants – M., fols. 29r., 7th; 30v., 7th; 31v., 7th.

<sup>114</sup> Richard Barber, *Magnificence and Princely Splendour in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2020), 95.

<sup>115</sup> M., fol. 9r., 8th.

<sup>116</sup> M., fols. 27v., 7th; 28r., 7th, 8th; 39r., 7th; 41v., 1st; 42v., 9th.

<sup>117</sup> M., fols. 42v., 10th; 44r., 11th.

<sup>118</sup> M., fols. 28r., 6th; 30r., 2nd; 32r., 7th; 37r., 5th; 37v., 7th; 44v., 6th; 45r., 2nd; 50r., 4th.

<sup>119</sup> M., fols. 4r., 5th; 36v., 5th; 41v., 3rd.

<sup>120</sup> Together with a few unspecified gold pieces, they were worth 1875.5 *mrs* – M., fol. 13r., 7th.

<sup>121</sup> M., fol. 19r., 6th.

<sup>122</sup> M., fol. 29r., 1st.

<sup>123</sup> M., fol. 33r., 2nd.

<sup>124</sup> M., fols. 11v., 1st; 12v., 1st; 43r., 2nd.

<sup>125</sup> M., fol. 15v., 5th.

<sup>126</sup> M., fol. 5r., 6th.

<sup>127</sup> M., fol. 24 v., 4th.

<sup>128</sup> M., fol. 6r., 5th.

<sup>129</sup> A painter with this name is attested in Burgos from 1509. The fact that he worked for Queen Maria in 1501 means that his arrival on the Iberian Peninsula can probably be anticipated by a few years. 'Picardo, León', in *Museo del Prado. Enciclopedia* <https://www.museodelprado.es/aprende/enciclopedia/voz/picardo-leon/05d24fe6-cb7a-4e08-8412-f28238dade1e> (accessed 18 August 2023).

and her sister, the Princess of Wales Catalina.<sup>130</sup> On 1 June 1502, he received six *cruzados* (2340 *mrs*) as an advance payment for other images (*ymagines*) he was creating for the queen.<sup>131</sup> Later that year, an additional payment of 6880 *mrs* was assigned to him for providing sixteen panels depicting the Mysteries of the Rosary.<sup>132</sup> Meanwhile, Bernaldo Miguéis, one of the queen's chaplains received 1710 *mrs* to illuminate a Book of Hours and to purchase three more.<sup>133</sup> Other books were bought for the queen's confessor Friar García for 3000 *mrs*,<sup>134</sup> and the same amount was spent on a single chant book for the queen's chapel.<sup>135</sup>

Yet the queen's acquisitions could encompass more modest items, such as soap for the laundresses,<sup>136</sup> chests and reams of paper for the use of the queen's administration,<sup>137</sup> and Estremoz pottery mugs (*púcaros*) presumably for the kitchen.<sup>138</sup> From time to time, a horse or a female slave were purchased.<sup>139</sup> The king's apothecary also received occasional payments for providing the queen's household with medicines.<sup>140</sup>

## Gifts

Giving and receiving were essential gestures of majesty. To meet his subject's expectations, no king could escape prodigality and neither could his consort.<sup>141</sup> Thus, Queen Maria expended a considerable portion of her resources on bestowing favours upon members of her household and other individuals.<sup>142</sup>

Almost anything could be turned into a gift, from food to silverware to jewels.<sup>143</sup> Yet the only gifts registered by Isasaga were those given in the form of money.<sup>144</sup> For this analysis, we considered gifts all the sums that were granted by the queen as 'favour' (*merced*), even if they concerned matters for which she also gave alms (*limosnas*), such as the ransoming of captives<sup>145</sup> and the support for religious institutions,<sup>146</sup> or pertained to services rendered by the recipient. For example, the highest *merced* – 100,000 *mrs* – was granted to Alonso Patiño, the queen's first treasurer, after he left her service.<sup>147</sup> Ochoa de Isasaga himself received the same sum when he interrupted his tenure as

<sup>130</sup> M., fol. 3v., 8th.

<sup>131</sup> M., fol. 9v., 7th.

<sup>132</sup> M., fol. 12v., 7th.

<sup>133</sup> M., fol. 11r., 6th.

<sup>134</sup> M., fol. 14v., 1st.

<sup>135</sup> M., fol. 29r., 3rd.

<sup>136</sup> M., fol. 40v., 8th.

<sup>137</sup> M., fol. 33r., 1st.

<sup>138</sup> M., fol. 20v., 6th.

<sup>139</sup> M., fols. 12r., 5th; 40r., 4th; 42r., 3rd; 43r., 4th; 42v., 12th.

<sup>140</sup> M., fols. 8r., 15th; 20r., 8th; 32r., 3rd; 43r., 1st.

<sup>141</sup> Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 89. See also Michele Seah's article in this issue.

<sup>142</sup> Gifts held between the third and the fifth position among the expenses. See [Figures 3–10](#).

<sup>143</sup> Heal, *The Power of Gifts*, 31–59.

<sup>144</sup> With two notable exceptions: he presented silk and cloth to Tavira, an attendant of the queen of Castile, upon his return home and ten yards of Valencian fabric to Queen Maria's physician, both at the queen's behest – M., fols. 24r., 7th; 27v., 1st.

<sup>145</sup> Elena Escarina, the Greek countess of Levante, received two donations, one of which explicitly to free her sons who were held captive by the Turks – M., fols. 5r., 2nd; 14r., 2nd.

<sup>146</sup> The king's wetnurse, Justa Pereira was awarded a total of 49,000 *mrs* on two different occasions for the building works of the Monastery of Jesus de Setúbal she had recently founded – M., fols. 16r., 6th; 24r., 1st.

<sup>147</sup> M., fol. 7v., 2nd.

treasurer in 1507.<sup>148</sup> Other officials received lesser favours when they were dismissed,<sup>149</sup> but a few people received them explicitly as compensation for their services.<sup>150</sup> The queen also rewarded generously the midwives who helped her deliver her children<sup>151</sup> and the wet nurse who breastfed her daughter Isabel.<sup>152</sup>

Sometimes, no reason was given for the gift.<sup>153</sup> Yet Queen Maria granted *mercedes* to secure the release of someone from prison,<sup>154</sup> purchase mounts,<sup>155</sup> go on journeys,<sup>156</sup> help attain the cure of illnesses or wounds,<sup>157</sup> replace objects lost in a fire,<sup>158</sup> and express gratitude for the delivery of good news,<sup>159</sup> the same kind of rewards granted by English queens.<sup>160</sup>

Gifts could also be granted for marriage.<sup>161</sup> ‘Marriage’ (*casamento*) – the choice of a suitable spouse and the provision of a dowry – constituted an obligation of the queen towards her maidens and her *criados*.<sup>162</sup> However, we believe these were simple marriage aids to complement what the newlyweds received from their families, except in the case of Maria de Montoro, who was a *criada* of the queen and received more than all the other recipients: 50,000 *mrs*.<sup>163</sup>

## Alms

Though Portuguese kings were neither crowned nor consecrated by a religious authority,<sup>164</sup> they maintained close relations with the Church and were expected to exhibit unwavering piety and moral exemplariness. These expectations were even more pronounced for queens, who were supposed to serve as paragons of virtue for other women.<sup>165</sup>

Queen Maria compares favourably with other queens regarding one of these virtues: charity, given that almsgiving (*limosnas*) represented from c. 1% to c. 5% of her total expenditure,<sup>166</sup> while this rubric rarely accounted for more than 1% in the expenses of the queens of Aragon.<sup>167</sup> Queen Maria’s highest annual expense in alms – 304,430 *mrs*

<sup>148</sup> M., fol. 49r., 2nd.

<sup>149</sup> M., fols. 28v., 10th; 32r., 1st; 36r., 3rd.

<sup>150</sup> M., fols. 4r., 1st; 12 v., 6th; 13v., 7th, 8th; 27r., 2nd.

<sup>151</sup> M., fols. 10r., 8th; 24v., 8th; 31r., 4th.

<sup>152</sup> M., fol. 38r., 5th.

<sup>153</sup> M., fols. 5v., 5th; 7r., 6th; 13v., 4th; 32v., 5th; 36r., 4th, 6th; 38v., 8th.

<sup>154</sup> M., fols. 5r., 2nd; 14r., 4th.

<sup>155</sup> M., fols. 5r., 4th; 12r., 4th; 17v., 4th.

<sup>156</sup> M., fols. 8r., 7th; 9v., 6th; 10r., 3rd; 11r., 5th, 7th; 12v., 8th, 9th; 13v., 3rd; 18r., 6th; 18v., 4th; 20r., 4th; 24r., 6th, 7th, 8th; 27v., 3rd, 4th; 28v., 6th, 10th; 29v., 3rd.

<sup>157</sup> M., fols. 8v., 1st; 17r., 5th, 6th.

<sup>158</sup> M., fols. 10r., 5th; 10v., 7th.

<sup>159</sup> Such as the successful delivery of a child by Queen Maria’s sister Juana or the conquest of Goreta – M., fols. 18v., 3rd; 27r., 5th; 37r., 6th.

<sup>160</sup> Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York*, 79.

<sup>161</sup> M., fols. 6r., 2nd; 9r., 1st; 36v., 1st.

<sup>162</sup> As defined by Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society*, 218–19.

<sup>163</sup> M., fol. 28v., 4th.

<sup>164</sup> Peter Linehan, ‘Utrum Reges Portugaliae Coronabantur Annon’, in *2º Congresso histórico de Guimarães, Actas do congresso*, 7 vols. (Guimarães: Câmara Municipal de Guimarães – Universidade do Minho, 1997), 2: 389–401.

<sup>165</sup> Lledó Ruiz Domingo, ‘Prácticas devocionales y espacios litúrgicos de Sibila de Fortià, reina de la Corona de Aragón (r. 1377–1387)’, *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 13 (2021), 214–15.

<sup>166</sup> See [Figures 3–10](#).

<sup>167</sup> Ruiz Domingo, *El Tesoro de la Reina*, 169–225. A similar trend can be seen in Joan of Navarre’s expenditure. See Woodacre, *Joan of Navarre*, 175.

in 1507 – multiplied her lowest by ten.<sup>168</sup> However, this was a generosity strictly regulated and with little room for spontaneity. The treasurer provided money directly to the queen for almsgiving on very few occasions such as at the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul on 29 June<sup>169</sup> and at the Feast of the Guardian Angel, in the middle of July,<sup>170</sup> a feast established by King Manuel I in 1504 but possibly celebrated before.<sup>171</sup> Isasaga also provided the queen with a total of 9110 *mrs* on four different occasions for her to offer to ‘the conception of Our Lady’.<sup>172</sup> Given the dates, this intriguing formulation does not appear to refer to the Feast of the Conception of the Mother of God on 8 December, but rather to the religious house of Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Lisboa, referred to in her testament.<sup>173</sup>

During the remainder of the year, the funds for almsgiving were allocated to the queen’s confessors, almoners, and chaplains for them to distribute as part of their duties. Initially, these clerics received random sums of money for that purpose without any apparent regular periodicity.<sup>174</sup> From 1503 onwards, they began to receive fixed annual amounts paid in thirds like the salaries. For example, Friar García de Padilla, the queen’s confessor, received 52,000 *mrs* per year for almsgiving.<sup>175</sup> Juan Bravo, one of her chaplains and almoner, received 150,000 *mrs*,<sup>176</sup> the same amount that was allocated to another chaplain, Rodrigo Alonso.<sup>177</sup> Andrés de Tamayo, a later chaplain, only received 60,000 *mrs* per year for almsgiving.<sup>178</sup>

The treasurer also distributed alms to institutions and individuals in need at Queen Maria’s behest. Among the latter, there was Pedro Arrais<sup>179</sup> for whose ransom the sovereign contributed 20,000 *mrs* and a ‘poor woman’ who received 1060 *mrs*.<sup>180</sup> All the other recipients of the queen’s generosity belonged to the clergy: two friars of the monastery of San Agustín de Burgos,<sup>181</sup> two others from the convent of Penhalonga,<sup>182</sup> the prior of the convent of Santo Elói de Lisboa,<sup>183</sup> a hermit of Nossa Senhora da Pena,<sup>184</sup> and the abbess of Santa Clara de Lisboa.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Queen Maria’s mother, being a reigning queen, expended significantly larger sums annually on alms: from the lowest of 512,000 *mrs* in 1500 to the highest, 1,540,000 *mrs* in 1494 and 1496. See *El libro del Limosnero de Isabel la Católica*, ed. Eloy Benito Ruano (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2004), 56.

<sup>169</sup> M., fols. 10v., 8th; 20v., 3rd; 29r., 4th; 48v., 4th. Yet, in 1506, the offering of that Solemnity was handed over by the treasurer not to the queen but to the almoner, for him and the other chaplains (we ignore whether to distribute or to keep for themselves) – M., fol. 40v., 3rd.

<sup>170</sup> 16 July 1502, and 14 July 1507 – M., fols. 23r., 8th; 43 v., 6th.

<sup>171</sup> Rodolfo Petronilho Feio, ‘Porque é o que mais a festa faz: legislação das festas cívico-religiosas, em Coimbra, nos inícios do século XVI’, in *A vida quotidiana da cidade na Europa medieval*, eds. Amélia Aguiar de Andrade and Gonçalo Melo Silva (Lisbon: IEM – Câmara Municipal de Castelo de Vide, 2022), 552–53.

<sup>172</sup> ‘a la conceçion de nuestra señora’ – M., fol. 10r., 6th.

<sup>173</sup> Ávila Seoane, ‘Documentos ... María (primera parte)’, no. 9, 162.

<sup>174</sup> M., fols. 5v., 6th, 7th; 6r., 4th; 11v., 4th; 12r., 5th; 14r., 6th, 7th; 15r., 1st.

<sup>175</sup> M., fol. 9r., 4th.

<sup>176</sup> M., fols. 27r., 6th; 28v., 2nd; 29r., 3rd; 30r., 7th; 31v., 3rd; 32r., 4th; 42v., 4th, 11th; 43v., 2nd; 44r., 8th; 49v., 7th.

<sup>177</sup> M., fols. 3r., 4th; 4r. 8th; 11v., 4th; 15r., 9th; 17v., 6th; 19r., 1st.

<sup>178</sup> M., fols. 44v., 8th; 48r. 1st, 7th.

<sup>179</sup> M., fol. 4v., 6th.

<sup>180</sup> ‘vna muger pobre’ – M., fol. 13r., 3rd.

<sup>181</sup> M., fol. 7r., 1st.

<sup>182</sup> M., fol. 8r., 8th.

<sup>183</sup> M., fol. 9r., 3rd.

<sup>184</sup> M., fol. 10r., 9th.

<sup>185</sup> M., fol. 12 v., 3rd.

A few monasteries and convents also benefitted from Queen Maria's donations: Santa Maria do Espinheiro,<sup>186</sup> São Francisco de Setúbal,<sup>187</sup> and São Dinis de Odivelas.<sup>188</sup> As in the case of individual churchmen and women, the queen's donations were directed towards a diverse set of orders. Although showing a certain preference for the more recent orders such as the Secular Canons of St John Evangelist and the Hieronymites, she did not exclude the older ones like the Augustinians and Cistercians. These trends are reiterated in her last wishes as expressed in her testament of 1516.<sup>189</sup>

## Undetermined

The total of the undetermined expenses, for the period covered, only amounts to c. 3%.

Yet they increased throughout the period, from none recorded, to residual amounts, and then to over 8% of the total in 1507–8.<sup>190</sup> This growth in the final period is likely due to less meticulous record-keeping when António Salvago replaced Ochoa de Isasaga at the head of the treasure since most of the undetermined expenses occurred in that time-frame. Thus, it is possible that this category had an impact on other totals since some values recorded without specific attributions might belong to other categories.<sup>191</sup>

A number of these sums were directly given to the queen without any other specification; they might be seen as a sort of petty cash account, a bit of money for discretionary spending.<sup>192</sup> By the end of 1504, the treasurer notes, for example, that he gave personally to the queen a total of 13,120 *mrs* split across four occasions.<sup>193</sup> The phrasing 'in the queen's hand' is repeated in 1503, 1507, and 1508 when the queen received several sums, recorded either in *maravedís* or *cruzados de ouro*.<sup>194</sup> The queen also appears in other instances, without that specific mention, namely in 1508,<sup>195</sup> or through her officials.<sup>196</sup> We do not know the use given to this money, but we can speculate that it could have to do with some donation the queen wanted to make herself (ex. giving alms in times of travel or audience, making gracious donations herself) or other activities at court for which she needed money at hand.

People from the household also received money without any further explanation besides the queen's order. The sums are sometimes very specific: Isabel de Loroña received 1657 *mrs* on one occasion,<sup>197</sup> and Teresa and María de Cardeñas, both the queen's ladies-in-waiting, also collected money without further justification.<sup>198</sup> The

<sup>186</sup> M., fol. 3r., 3rd.

<sup>187</sup> M., fol. 5r., 5th.

<sup>188</sup> The nuns received 8 *cruzados* to buy wax for St Denis' Feast, on 9 October – M., fol. 13v., 9th.

<sup>189</sup> Sá, 'Duas irmãs', 158–60.

<sup>190</sup> See Figures 3–10.

<sup>191</sup> For example, infanta Isabel's wetnurse received 8,666.68 *mrs* in 1505 (M., fol. 37r., 2nd), a sum that aligns with the type of parcels used for each third payment of the *quitacion*. However, without knowing exactly how much the wetnurse should receive in total, it is impossible to make a firm guess of what this payment was. Something similar can be said for the head butler: in 1508 he collected 40,000 *mrs* without explanation (fol. 50r., 12<sup>th</sup>). That sum is the same amount he had collected previously for *ayuda de costa*, but it would not be too odd if this time the money served another purpose.

<sup>192</sup> We wish to thank the anonymous reviewer who suggested this possibility.

<sup>193</sup> M., fol. 30v., 10th.

<sup>194</sup> M., fols. 18r., 3rd; 45r., 6th; 49v., 1st.

<sup>195</sup> M., fol. 49v., 14th.

<sup>196</sup> M., fol. 44v., 12th.

<sup>197</sup> M., fol. 29v., 6th.

<sup>198</sup> M., fols. 36v., 2nd; 40r., 8th.

same is true of the head butler, Lope de Valdevieso in 1507.<sup>199</sup> Another reoccurring presence in this type of expense is the almsgiver, Juan Bravo.<sup>200</sup> Again, without a clear explanation, we cannot know for sure, but it is possible that some of these amounts were extraordinary alms ordered by the queen. By 1508, the appearance of the official in charge of supplying the pantry or the queen's silversmith among the receivers of sums for undetermined purposes probably indicates less detailed record keeping.<sup>201</sup>

## Conclusion

The meticulous examination of the economic records of Queen Maria's treasurer offers insight not only into the management of her finances but also into the practice of queenship in general. The application of the methodologies used here, which we have borrowed from Lledó Ruiz Domingo,<sup>202</sup> to other sources of the same type thus presents enormous potential for expanding and transforming the study of the economic foundations of queenship.<sup>203</sup>

The first thing to note is how important it was for any queen to have a well-stocked household of people from both her home and adopted kingdoms to be able to perform her queenly duties. It was in paying, clothing, and feeding the members of her household that Queen Maria spent most of her income: approximately three-quarters of the total. However, even though she provided these individuals with regular salaries, she also ensured to reward them, expressing gratitude for their services when they left, or assisting them at pivotal moments in their lives. In this way, she kept them connected, fostering their loyalty and obedience. By also bestowing gifts upon individuals outside the circle of her household, Queen Maria extended her power base, establishing valuable connections and tying people to her through bonds of dependence and duty. The fact that she was approachable to sort problems in people's lives without even resorting to intercession with the king, no doubt contributed to her reputation and prestige.

The second aspect to consider is the importance of representation for a queen. The level of Queen Maria's expenditures on textiles, silverware, and other luxury commodities indicates her awareness of the necessity of being surrounded by the most beautiful and precious objects and projecting a splendid appearance. As such, she was a true daughter of Isabel *la Católica*, whose magnificence is well known.<sup>204</sup> Queen Maria brought with her an opulent trousseau, provided by her mother,<sup>205</sup> and her husband endowed her with splendid jewels upon her arrival in Portugal.<sup>206</sup> Yet neither of these prevented her from continuing to place orders and make acquisitions of luxury products throughout her reign.

<sup>199</sup> M., fol. 44r., 9th.

<sup>200</sup> M., fols. 31r., 11th; 37r., 1st; 50r., 11th.

<sup>201</sup> M., fols. 49v.-50r.

<sup>202</sup> Which consists, essentially, of collecting all data related to income and expenses contained in the reginal account books and subjecting them to statistical operations, followed by quantitative and qualitative analyses. See Ruiz Domingo, *El Tesoro de la Reina*.

<sup>203</sup> As stated by the anonymous reviewers, whom we wish to thank for their comments, suggestions, and words of praise.

<sup>204</sup> *Isabel la Católica la magnificencia de un reinado: Quinto centenario de Isabel la Católica, 1504–2004* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales; Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2004).

<sup>205</sup> Miguel Ángel Zalama, 'Lujo y ostentación. El tesoro de María de Aragón y Castilla, esposa de Manuel I de Portugal', *Goya. Revista de Arte* 358 (2017): 3–19.

<sup>206</sup> De la Torre and Suárez Fernández, *Documentos referentes a las relaciones*, 3: 70–75, no. 495.

Nonetheless, she was also a compassionate monarch, deeply concerned for the welfare of those around her, and a generous almsgiver. Due to the lack of detailed records, Queen Maria's standardised almsgiving tells us little about her charitable concerns, which we can better approach through her last will. She privileged the new monastic orders and their members without forgetting the old ones, assisted in the ransoming of captives and the repayment of debts, and occasionally gave money to impoverished women. Yet her chapel was as splendid as her chamber, with its silver images, illuminated manuscripts, and painted panels depicting the Mysteries of the Rosary. In this way, she fulfilled her duties as a devout Christian and consolidated her reputation as a pious queen, without neglecting the splendour befitting her position.

In a broader historical context, Queen Maria's prudent financial management, resulting in positive year-end treasure balances and the absence of outstanding debts, challenges conventional notions of reginal finances. While her counterparts often grappled with financial insolvency, Maria, as a queen consort, maintained a remarkably disciplined approach. The stability observed in regular expenditure after some initial fluctuations suggests that the queen and/or her officials learnt from experience: a trial-and-error period was followed by a certain maturation in the management of her finances.

However, what has been revealed about Queen Maria through the book of her treasurer went far beyond mere financial matters. Queen Maria was only one of the many Castilian *infantas* who married Portuguese kings and brought several damsels and officials with her to her new kingdom. Yet she was the first to support her household with annuities coming simultaneously from Castile and Portugal and stipulated in both currencies. She was thus the first to have a fully dual household, with Portuguese and Castilian members who received different remunerations based on their national origins. Moreover, Queen Maria mixed both languages in her writings<sup>207</sup> and possibly in her oral expression too. As such, she contributed decisively to the Castilianisation of the Portuguese court, one of the factors that helped smooth the annexation of Portugal by the Spanish king Felipe II in 1580.

## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Funding

This work was supported by Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia under grants 2020.04440.BD, UIDB/04311/2020, UIDP/04311/2020 and 2022.14988.CBM.

## ORCID

Inês Olaia  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0528-4666>

Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6539-8801>

---

<sup>207</sup> Her last will, written in her own hand, bears witness to this. Ávila Seoane, 'Documentos ... María (segunda parte)', no. 93, 281–90.