

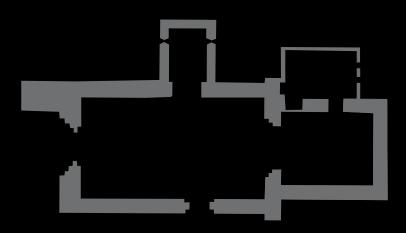


CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR OF TABUADO

MARCO DE CANAVESES

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY

he references to a strong manorial presence stand out from the numerous geographical and chorographical descriptions of Tabuado. Although it was considered as a "couto" [a type of Portuguese administrative division], a name that it would have received from the hypothetical foundation of a monastery dedicated to the Saviour, some authors insist on emphasizing the ruling predominance of certain families within this small territory located on the outskirts of the province of Minho. In fact, as explained by Crispiniano da Fonseca, the name "couto" applied to Tabuado collided with the strength of the manorial power that dominated the area and seemed to fit better into the legal attributes applied to the "honras" [a type of Portuguese administrative division], a terminology that, in fact, would appear during the 16th century (Fonseca, 1957: 353-379). However, this variability in jurisdictions, statutes and powers seems to conceal the interests of many different parties within this small territory, whose value may be explained by its toponym: tabuado, derives from the word "tábua" [board], a common expression used in the Middle Ages to designate wood that was suitable for construction¹.

In 1258, there is reference to Saint Mary of "Tabulata", indicating the "couto" and stating that the Church belonged to patrons from the Gosendo Alvares' family. The fact that, in that year, there is reference to a "Chapel of Tabulato" and to a "Chapel of Saint Mary of Tabulato" (Herculano, 1936: fasc. 8), and that the patron saint, called at the time as the "Holy Saviour" do not appear in the inquiries commissioned by King Afonso, seem to show that the main parish church was yet to be defined, thus giving expression to the tradition that indicates the existence of a monastic community (perhaps based in the Church of the Saviour, which then replaced Saint Mary's).

Once the "honra" became a "couto" (by the hand of Prince Afonso Henriques³) and the presumed monastic church became a secular abbey, the interests of both the church and the lay people and the confrontation between them were felt until quite late, as evidenced by the on-going claims and demands regarding jurisdictions over the territory and the Church. In 1320, the Church paid a tax of 105 Portuguese "libras" [former Portuguese currency unit], an amount that tells us very little about the importance of the building and of its income within the regional context (Almeida & Peres, 1971: 96). However, the subsequent references to the Church's properties, scattered across the region, are quite expressive (Fonseca, 1957: 358-359).

Tradition refers, therefore, that the "couto" would have been founded by the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, as was the case of other institutes nearby. Still, on this issue, there are very few facts collected in subsequent references by the Church that always fought against the interference of

¹ Crispiniano da Fonseca (1957: 355-356) and other authors (Correia et al., 1963) insist on the idea of "tavolado, as military exercise or a wooden tower", while ignoring that, more than the activities or objects, the material that allowed the construction (which could be abundant in the area), could be the in origin of the toponym.

² On the issue of the Holy Saviour and the Saviour, please read what we wrote in the Church of Ribas, Celorico de Basto. 3 Please note the similar case of the Monastery of Ancede, Baião.

laymen in the ecclesiastical assets and rights of Tabuado. According to C. da Fonseca, "in 1475, the bishop of Porto, José de Azevedo, authorised by Pope Sixtus IV, downgraded the "couto" to a secular abbey" (Fonseca, 1957: 355). Nevertheless, the patronage rights belonged to local families. There are several local genealogists and monographers who name them, such as Father Carvalho da Costa (1706: 138)⁴, who mentions the Farias, Montenegros, Sousas and Correias, or Francisco Craesbeeck (1992) who highlights the importance of the Barros family. On these, Felgueiras Gaio mentions the lineage of commanders from Tabuado, lords of the house of Novões, which began with Gonçalo de Barros, adding – on the beginning of this lineage and its mother-house – the following:

"(...) the information we have on this House is that its estates were taken from the Moors by one of its owners, who might have given them to the Canons of Saint Augustine from which the Church of Tabuado had been a Monastery: the remaining ruins of the House depict its antiquity rather well: this House had 3 Towers, and only two stand today (...)" (Gaio, 1938-1941).

Over several generations, the Barros held the patronage rights that were later coveted between lineages, to such an extent that there were disputes and political moves, one after the other, aimed at obtaining that privilege and dignifying the abbey, for example, through the annexation of the church of Saint John of Grilo. In 1758, when the Church's patron was António Gonçalo de Sousa Correia Montenegro, there was still an on-going dispute about who, among his heirs, should provide the abbot for Tabuado (Vasconcelos, 1758)⁵.

As Francisco Craesbeeck (1992) explains, "if the "couto" was transferred to the church, their abbots would be its lords and joint consultants of the "couto" in civil matters, a situation that gave rise to many disputes which went on for many years; but the decisions always favoured the abbots, meaning that the only privilege the Lords of the House had was the one of presenting the Abbey (...)". Together with this circumstance was the fact that the residents of Tabuado were bound, within the scope of criminal law, to the municipality of Gouveia.



Aerial view.

⁴ Francisco Craesbeeck (1992) contradicts him, not knowing the reason why he mentions "Farias".

⁵ About this dispute read Fonseca (1957: 370-371). The patrons' right to be buried in the chancel and to use this space during their lifetime (together with the claim of sitting on the stalls) are some of the statutory issues mentioned in several disputes.

Located on a plateau between the Ovelha, Galinhas and Lardosa rivers – on the foothills of the mountain of Aboboreira – at the end of the Ancien Régime Tabuado was part of an intricate patchwork of secular and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. As we have seen, it was part of the boundary of Gouveia, of the province of Minho (although the abbot Alberto de Vasconcelos calls it Entre-Douro-e-Minho in 1758) and of the judicial district of Guimarães. For ecclesiastical matters, the abbey of Tabuado belonged to the "comarca" [a type of Portuguese administrative and judicial division] of Sobre-Tâmega (Cunha, 1623: 425)⁶, which was part of the diocese of Porto.

THE MONUMENT IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Built halfway up the hillside and according to the canonical orientation, the Church of Tabuado fits into an ecclesial deployment model very common in the Middle Ages, which follows certain logics, not always understood in later periods. The study of the property at the time when it was built would provide us with very important elements to assess the reasons underlying the construction of many churches from the Medieval Period⁷. While, in the case of a few monastic churches, we may stand before a trace of the hermitic phenomenon, then duly shaped according to the ecclesiastical guidelines, in the case of ecclesial buildings, whose patronage remained in the hands of laymen (persistence of the private or family church model), we may be standing before a legacy of the intervention of an individual



General view.

6 In this case, we should understand "comarca" as "ecclesiastical boundary".
7 By way of example, please read the study by Mattoso, Krus & Bettencourt (1982: 17-74).

West façade







Monastery of Paço de Sousa (Penafiel). Church. West facade

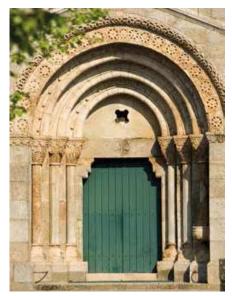
or lineage on the landscape was under construction during the post-Reconquest period. In any case, its permanence became the spiritual, social, economic and cultural axis that would define the landscape and the urban design of the following centuries.

The artistic assessment of the Church of the Saviour of Tabuado, with strong Medieval roots, should be made in a critical fashion, because we should bear in mind that this Church was subject to a major purist intervention, carried out mainly from the early 1960's onwards, although the author of DGEMN - Direção-Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais [General Directorate for Buildings and National Monuments]'s Bulletin no. 125 considers that the works were limited to "small readjustment details, aimed at restoring the dignity and harmony it once had, without the concern of performing any sort of comprehensive restoration task" (Freitas, 1972: 18).

Vergílio Correia pointed out that, unlike what occurs in the churches of the Douro valley, the Church of Tabuado was built on a slope, in a direction that is parallel to its inclination (Correia, 1924: 107). Its plan features a longitudinal shape, being composed of a single nave and a lower and narrower quadrangular chancel. This difference in height is quite visible from the outside due to the staggering of the volumes. Adjoining the north wall there are two rectangular volumes, the volume of the sacristy, at the same level as the chevet, and the volume of a chapel that was initially consecrated to Jesus, at the same level as the nave.

Although the available documents mention the existence of one or two temples in Tabuado, whose foundation occurred before 1131, as we have seen, the truth is that the remaining architectural traces in this Church of the Saviour tell us about a more recent chronology, which should already be placed after the mid-13th century, as several authors seem to agree (Almeida, 1978: 272; Graf, 1986: 98; Rosas & Sottomayor-Pizarro, 2009: 107). It is, therefore, considered as a valuable example of one of the evolution stages of Romanesque architecture in this region, already belonging to a transition period (Graf, 1986: 98). The main façade of this temple proves it well through the oculus that tops the portal and shows similarities with the solutions adopted in the Church of the Monastery of Paço de Sousa (Penafiel) (Rosas & Sottomayor-Pizarro, 2009: 106), which already dates back to the 13th century. Its composition





West facade, Portal.

Church of Sousa (Felgueiras). West façade. Portal.

shows a stonework grille drawn with small circles, a central one and six surrounding ones. The oculus is also adorned by an inner frame with rosettes carved in relief.

Manuel Monteiro draws our attention to the late chronology of the buildings built within Paço de Sousa's sphere of influence – 13th century, perhaps mid-13th century (Almeida, 1971: 93) -, as the specific characteristics from the "school" that came to be historiographically known as the "nationalised Romanesque" style (Monteiro, 1943: 5-21) so justify. This author acknowledged very early on the unitary nature of the Romanesque style from the Sousa region, defining it in its unity and in terms of its influences since the very beginning8. The late chronology of the Romanesque style from this region should be understood taking into account the prior construction of monuments in Coimbra that, in general, were built over the second half of the 12th century9; so, these would be "finished works" (or in a rather advanced construction stage) in a period when they could actually influence the constructions that began to be built in the following century¹⁰. Besides, because the construction sites from Coimbra were already in more advanced building stages, the need for workforce was naturally decreasing, and so their artisans surely felt the need to look for work elsewhere. And we must bear in mind the economic preponderance that the Vale do Sousa region was boosting at that time because, besides the hegemony of the monastic orders that were settling themselves in the area, it relied on important supports from the nobility, shown in the example of the relationship between the Sousões and the Monastery of Pombeiro (Felgueiras) or the connection between Paço de Sousa

⁸ So, Manuel Monteiro (1943: 5-21) identified the existence of all the features of what he defined as the "nationalised Romanesque" group in the monuments of the city of Coimbra, thus listing a series of features he considered as being typical from the Romanesque style of "terra" [a type of Portuguese administrative division] of Sousa, such as the arcatures that support the cornices, the composition of the portals, the almost complete absence of the human figure in terms of sculptural representation and the erudite nature of the sculpted ornaments' plasticity.

⁹ Miguel Salomão's episcopate (1162-1176) was probably the most active building period of the old Coimbra cathedral. 10 On the subject, please read Botelho (2010a: 405).





Bell tower

and the Ribadouro lineage through Egas Moniz, also known as the governor and schoolmaster.

On the main façade of Tabuado, the portal stands out. Composed of three already broken archivolts, decorated with pearls and defined by an elegant torus, it is surrounded by a rich braided frieze shaping a net of rhombi, which we may also find in Paço de Sousa. The capitals feature bevelled carvings and several themes, from bovine animals, to palmettes and knotworks. On the imposts, a refined outline draws foliages that extend themselves along the façade in the form of a flat frieze, a variation from the "stylised fleur-de-lys ivy", to which Joaquim de Vasconcelos assigned no 46 (Vasconcelos & Abreu, 1918: 72). The columns already show an alternation between plain and prismatic shafts, a sign of a fairly advanced chronology and a direct evidence of the influence that the Romanesque from Coimbra – particularly the church of Saint James – had on this wide region of Vale do Sousa and, even, of the Baixo Tâmega. The flat tympanum is supported by corbels shaped as bovine heads. Again, the elements that shape this portal show similarities with the Monastery of Paço de Sousa (Rosas & Sottomayor-Pizarro, 2009: 206), or even with the Church of Sousa (Felgueiras), considered by Manuel Monteiro as one of the best specimens of the so-called "nationalised Romanesque" style¹¹.

The belfry, which draws a perpendicular axis with this façade, takes the shape of a massive granite block. Seen from the north it almost looks like a defensive tower, strong and massive, in its thick ashlar masonry (Freitas, 1972: 14). The fortified and military nature of religious architecture during the Portuguese Romanesque Period, more rhetorical than actually military, was heavily glossed by the historiography that addressed the matter¹². At the top of the belfry, which is surmounted by a gable topped by a cross, there are two broken arches sheltering the bells. On the side that faces the portal, three corbels set at the height of the capitals confirm the pre-existence of a porch.

In the body of the nave, and at the chancel arch's level, two buttresses persist. We believe that their existence can be justified taking into account the sturdy nature of the wall mass that surrounds the building. The diameter of the arch, in relation to the size of the nave, protects the space of the chancel that, in Romanesque times, should be intimate and sheltered from the eyes of the devotees.

But let's return to the outside. On the north façade, despite the attached volumes, we clearly see two narrow crevices opened above the frieze that runs along the entire Church, as well as a cornice supported by plain corbels. In general, the south side repeats the scheme found on the north side, to which we add the presence of corbels that confirm the existence of a porch-like structure.



North façade.



South façade. Nave. Portal.

- 11 On the subject, please read Botelho (2010b).
- 12 On the subject, please read Botelho (2010a: 379).

With two broken archivolts, the portal that allows accessing the building's interior repeats a similar "modénature" to that of the main portal, though simplified, because it does not feature the pearls motif of the bovine heads that support the flat tympanum, which, in this case, rests on two protruding imposts. The capitals rest on plain shafts that feature bevelled botanic motifs.

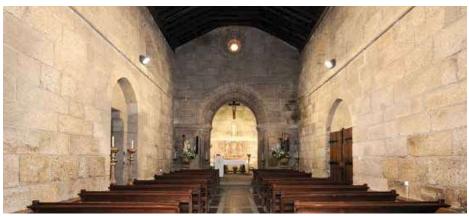
The flat treatment given to the sculptures is a constant feature in the Romanesque style from the Vale do Sousa region, so geographically close. This plasticity is the exact opposite of the plastic treatment given to Romanesque sculptures in the Braga-Rates axis, which is thicker and more turgid, providing the sculptural motifs with an enhanced volumetry and creating a real chiaroscuro effect. In the Sousa river basin, the sculptural treatment reminds Reinaldo dos Santos of the treatment given to bas-reliefs on wood, which is more engraved than modelled, sometimes suggesting Visigoth or Byzantine art (Santos & Novais, 1955: 80).

On the back façade, over the frieze, there is a crevice formed by two plain archivolts with sharp edges and stained glass panels, shaping a diamond. A cross "fleury" crowns the chevet's gable.

The inside of the building also features the same simple nature of the architecture and the same severity of the external ornamentation. The exposed granite in the nave is only decorated by a base, also made in ashlars, and by a triple-framed cornice, placed at a higher level. We ought to bear in mind, as we shall see further ahead, that this somewhat bare look of the interior of the Church of Tabuado is the result of a restoration intervention carried out in the 1960's.

From the Romanesque Period, what stands out the most is the triumphal arch, with a very original arrangement, presenting itself like a portal. Two broken-arched archivolts are surrounded by a frieze featuring a composition based on corded and denticulate motifs. The archivolts rest on two columns and the imposts are decorated with saw teeth and chained circles; the latter included in the inventory from 1918 with numbers 2 and 5 (Vasconcelos & Abreu, 1918: 69).

On the Gospel side, we find capitals with different compositions; one has birds with intertwined necks and another has the figure of a man attached to the capital's basket by a rope, showing how Romanesque art adapts sculpture to architectural elements (Rosas & Sottomayor-Pizarro, 2009: 106). Actually, we should mention that, according to Gerhard N. Graf (1986: 99), we could be standing before a representation of the detention or torture of an evildoer, in which case



General interior view from the nave.



Aprial view



this capital would have the purpose of intimidating the sinner. On the Epistle side, we see the rather common theme of the outraged and single-headed quadrupeds, and a large bird, perhaps a pelican, that Vergílio Correia called the "avejão [big bird]" (Correia, 1924: 112). Over the triumphal arch, there is an oculus opposite the one on the main façade.

The chancel is accessible by climbing a single step and, on its back wall, we find this Church's only remaining trace of a mural painting, which is organised around the figure of the Church's patron saint, the Saviour.

Christ as a patron saint has a very wide meaning or semantic field in terms of motivations or invocations: The ancient worship of the "Holy Saviour", also known as "The Blessed", "Saviour" or the "Divine Saviour" and the "(Holy) Saviour of the World", can be found across the entire Portugal, but especially in the North (Moreira, 2000: 237). Christ, the second figure of the Trinity, is known by many names, some of which derive from Hebrew names - Jesus, Emanuel or Messiah -, and other from Greek and Latin names, although many of them are nothing else other that the tradition of Jewish terms (Réau, 1957: 5). However, names like the "Saviour", the "Our Lord the Redeemer" or the "Verb" derive directly from the Greek and Latin (Réau, 1957: 6-7). The Greek word "Sôter" was the epithet of Asclepius, the warrior god¹³. This name was translated into Latin as "Servator", "Conservator" and later, after Tertullian, as "Salvador [Saviour]" (Réau, 1957: 6-7). This title is especially relevant as a reference to Jesus Christ, whose Hebrew name "Jehosuah" is translated precisely as "Jahweh is the Salvation" 14, meaning Christ "Messiah", the anointed¹⁵. In this context, we should use the name Jesus when we are referring ourselves to the historic figure that lived in Palestine and has been associated with the quality of being a man, while the name "Christ" should be preferably used when we are referring ourselves to His definitive Resurrection state (Pedro, 2000: 216-218).

Jesus Christ is praised as the "Saviour" right after his birth. The shepherds are informed that "today the Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2, 11). Jesus Christ also proclaims himself as Saviour during His public ministry: "For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost" (Mt 18, 11). That is the meaning of a few parables, such as the one of the "Lost Sheep" and the one of the "Prodigal Son"; this was the reason why the apostles preached Jesus as Saviour¹⁶ and the Gospel of the Lord was preached as the principle for Salvation¹⁷. It was under the name "Holy Saviour" that, during the Middle Ages, the churches dedicated to Christ were called. In fact, we should mention that this patron saint was one of the most popular during the Romanesque Period.



Triumphal arch. Capitals.

¹³ The most well-known legend regarding Asclepius is a legacy from Pindar. The legend tells us that, after the nymph Coronis got pregnant with Apollo's child, and fearing that this love would not last, she had decided to marry a mortal. The god, infuriated, decided to take his revenge, punishing her with death. But when the body of the young woman began to be consumed in the funeral pyre, Apollo, full of remorse, rescued his living son from his mother's womb. And he became Asclepius, his favourite son. Regarded by humans as the god of medicine, who kept or restored the heat of life and the light of day to mortals, Asclepius was seen with great devotion across the entire ancient world, both Greek and Roman. And his worship was not just for religious purposes, but also therapeutic (Hacquard, 1986: 48-49). Latin name Aesculapius (Esculápio) derives from his Greek name Asklepios.

^{14 &}quot;Salvatore" (Mercati & Pelzer, 1958: 684).

^{15 &}quot;Gesù Cristo" (Pedro, 2000: 216-218).

¹⁶ By way of example, we mention the following passages: At 4, 11-12; ITs 1, 10; ITm 1, 15 or Tt 2, 10-15.

¹⁷ Please read also: Rm 1, 16; I Co 1, 18 or At 13, 47.



The chancel: the mural painting

he only mural painting remaining in this Church features a single layer of polychromy, which is in a good state of repair. It is one meter above the existing pavement meaning that, if there ever was a painted skirting, taking into account the sections of plaster that are still preserved below the decorative and figurative painting, such was not preserved (Bessa, 2008: 367). Vergílio Correia, who believes that Tabuado was entirely covered by frescoes, much like the Romanesque churches of Our Lady of the Holm Oak of Outeiro Seco (Chaves) or the parish church of Barcos (Tabuaço), highlights the fact that the "reformers" forgot "to cover" this composition "with the inevitable layer of lime or mortar that almost obliterated all other compositions" (Correia, 1924: 113-114).

According to the same authors, the surveys conducted in several areas confirm that the rest of the Church had also been painted with figures taken from the sacred history or from hagiology (Correia, 1924: 114). Around 1660, the genealogist Cristóvão Alão de Morais mentions that Gonçalo de Barros, lord of the "couto" of Tabuado and of the tower of Novões, was "depicted in the Church of the Saviour of Tabuado; riding a horse with a spear in his hand and wearing a white suit armour, slaughtering the Moors: and the painting was under the Choir" (Morais et al., 1673: 289). The author of the DGEMN's Bulletin no. 125 questions if, instead, we were actually standing before a depiction of Saint James fighting the infidels (Freitas, 1972: 16). In 1924, the professor from Coimbra already mentions an "image of St. Christopher – a large Saint Christopher crossing the stream leaning against a pine tree and carrying the Infant Jesus over his shoulders –, that occupies the wall on the Gospel side until the trim, which was painted over the primitive figure" (Correia, 1924: 115).

Luís Urbano Afonso (2009: 737) rejects the existence of a large-scale fresco painting campaign carried out in Tabuado, thus refuting Vergílio Correia's words as follows: "there wasn't one centimetre left in the church that wasn't painted, including the sculptures from the portals" (Correia, 1924: 115). According to that researcher, the oldest photographs found in the archives of the DGEMN (Basto, 2006) (from the period when the main altarpiece was disassembled) only show whitewashed plaster on the nave's walls, close to the triumphal arch, in the area corresponding to the backside of the altarpieces from the altars, thus not allowing the detection of any figures.

So, let's base ourselves on the analysis that Paula Bessa (2008: 366-475) and Luís Urbano Afonso (2009: 735-741) propose for the remaining picture. The image of *Christ the Saviour* appears in the central area, under a ribbed vaulted ceiling, enthroned in a chair with a backrest and a fringed canopy; it's the figure of the *Pantocrator*. This depiction of Christ-Judge is flanked, as a sort of *Sacra Conversazione* (Bessa, 2008: 367-368), by *Saint John the Baptist*, the Precursor, who is pointing towards the direction of the Saviour with his right hand, and by *Saint James*, depicted as a pilgrim, featuring a scallop on his hat and holding a walking staff in his left hand. Featuring a red-painted background dotted with fleurs-de-lis and roses, these three images are framed within ribbed vaults. The lateral areas are occupied by a decorative pattern of geometrical nature shaped by several vertical axes, a sort of diamond-shaped wreath.

Luís Urbano Afonso (2009: 736) draws our attention to the fact that this mural painting was adjusted to the built space of the Romanesque chancel, since it respects the line of the stone frame that divides the chancel halfway up the wall, leaving the Romanesque crevice open. In addition, the centralised layout of the figurative panel, together with the small scale of the figure, should coordinate with a small-sized altar placed against the back wall. In fact, we should not forget that the early 16th century, within a context that was common to different areas of the country, marks the existence of a series of altarpieces commissioned to combine painting with sculpture or only sculpture (Rosas, 2003: 441). This means that mural painting should be understood as a less expensive way to answer the same liturgical, devotional and iconographic motivation.

In fact, the stylistic characteristics of this painting might indicate a campaign carried out still during the late 15th century. However, the fact that the patron saint is depicted to the centre of the back wall may indicate that this programme corresponds to the guidelines defined by Diogo de Sousa (episc. 1496-1505) in his synodal resolutions for Porto from 1469. But the motif with a wreath of rhombi, which runs along stripes that frame engravings of the *Epistole and Evangeli* printed by Pacini in Florence, in 1495, indicates that, in fact, the paintings from Tabuado already belong to the early 16th century (Bessa, 2008: 370). The use of a flattened vault to crown the space along which the three figures are distributed, moreover when there are discoidal corbels with spherical pendants, is also a solution already found in the Manueline period [style also known as Portuguese late Gothic, which develops during the reign of King Manuel I (k. 1495-1521)] (Afonso, 2009: 740).

The mural painting of the Church of Tabuado is a unique specimen, as there are no other known paintings made by the same atelier; its main characteristics are the schematic nature of the design and the white-based palette of flesh tones, which originated livid faces with well-defined outlines, purple lips and rounds eyes whose eyebrows quickly drop towards the bridge of the nose that almost draw right angles (Afonso, 2009: 740). According to Paula Bessa (2008: 368), the design is expressive, but rigid; it is substantially more careful in the faces than in the remaining body parts and it does not show any intention to produce a drawing based on the model. Instead, the artist intended to represent the idea of each of the holy figures so as to make them easily identifiable. A feature that justifies a somewhat archaic nature in terms of composition is the slight inclination to the left shown by the ensemble, a sign that this was freehand work, made without any preparatory drawing or other kind of aid in the spacial definition of the composition (Pestana, 2010: 6).



Chancel.

THE MONUMENT IN THE MODERN PERIOD

clipsed by the voraciousness of the intellectuals and technicians who, over the 19th and 20th centuries, wanted to retrieve the Medieval purity of the Romanesque churches, the Modern Period was almost obliterated by the perception of what "faithful" meant in that period. It is necessary to resort to the available documents in order to reconstruct the ecclesial space.

In the case of Tabuado, we have a few historic sources that cover the long period between the 16^{th} and the 19^{th} centuries and that allow, though partially, understanding the organisation of the church's different micro-spaces, each of them governed by a different jurisdiction or by various jurisdiction levels.

One of these sources is the *Inventário de peças e ornamentos* [Inventory of pieces and ornaments], which resulted from the inspections conducted by bishops from Porto to Tabuado between 1592 and 1672¹⁸. It is appended to the mixed parish record books of this parish, whose first entry dates back to 1587.

As we have mentioned, the first inventory dates back to 1592 and results from the instructions given by the bishop Jerónimo de Meneses (episc. 1592-1600), who visited Tabuado that same year (on September 2nd)¹⁹. The result of the series of precepts he defined (and about which we have no knowledge) was an inventory of the Church's implements and vestments. A list of objects intended for liturgical offices was drawn up by the hand of the priest Melchior Álvares, before the abbot Manuel Miranda de Sousa, the Church's proxy Domingos Fernandes and the parishioners Simão de Basto and Jerónimo Dias, from São Mamede. The fact that it is organised according to jurisdictions and their corresponding holders allows us to know the distribution of the objects within the Church.

The first heading regards the set of the "Abbot's pieces", which included 2 silver chalices, 1 white and red damask frontal; 1 coloured camalote²⁰ frontal; 1 black "bocassim"²¹ frontal, for Lent; curtains²² from the main altar; 2 damasked linen cloths from the main altar; 1 linen cloth "to place under the other"; 1 old cloth; 1 cloth to give the Blessed Sacrament; 5 corporal tables with their protections; 7 purificators; 4 "small cloths" from the altar; 1 thurible from the altar; 3 surplices (a cotton one and 2 woven linen ones)²³; 1 yellow damask vestment with its alb and amice; 2 other white damask vestments with red valances²⁴; 1 other new purple camlet vestment with its alb; another black camlet vestment with its alb and amice; another red camlet vestment with its alb and amice; another crimson velvet vestment, used, with alb and amice; a vestment²⁵ made from the coloured cloth of the main altar; 2 new brass candlesticks; 2 pairs of flagons; 2 bells for when the Lord is carried; 1 box for the holy oils with dish and cloth; 2 new mass books; an "Old-Roman

¹⁸ ADP – *Paroquiais, Tabuado, Inventário de peças e ornamentos*. Livro 009, fl. 206 ss. [Online]. [Visited on November 20th, 2011]. Available at www: <URL: http://pesquisa.adporto.pt/>.

¹⁹ From the inspections conducted during that period, we have collected the following dates: 2-9-1590; 14-10-1603; 17-10-1604; 7-11-1607; 27-9-1609; 22-10-1615; 22-10-1620, 22-11-1621; 30-11-1622; 8-10-1623; 3-10-1627; 4-12-1629; 15-9-1633; 4-5-1637; 22-11-1638; 18-6-1639; 18-10-1644 (Idem, ibid., fl. 217).

²⁰ Camlet, a wool fabric, sometimes ornamented with silk.

²¹ A cotton fabric

²² Curtains.

²³ It was crossed out by a different hand.

²⁴ Added using a different handwriting.

²⁵ Idem

mass book"; 1 manual from the new practice; 1 new constitution; 1 catechism; 3 altar stones; 1 safe to carry the Blessed Sacrament with an altar stone and a corporal and 1 box of corporals.

We assume that the abbot and the Church's patron were responsible for purchasing and repairing these items, which were part of the chancel's assets.

After the abbot's pieces came the parishioners', which included 1 large silver cross; another silver cross (smaller, with a brass foot); a brass cross; a silver chalice; 4 brass candlesticks and 2 iron candlesticks; a red camlet vestment; altar cloths for Lent; a shroud for the deceased; 1 chandelier for the crossing; 2 camlet frontals for its altars; 2 other cloth frontals for Lent; 4 altar cloths; two curtains on the altar of Saint Sebastian and 1 holy water vessel. According to the analysis of the listed objects, the parishioners were responsible for the decoration of the altars located on the Church's body and for the purchase of the implements used in mass and in collective rituals, namely processions, which were led by the people's cross. The Church judge and proxy were responsible for representing the parishioners in the procurement, purchase and management of those assets.

Finally, there is a list of the pieces related to the associations, first the ones that were owned by the brotherhood of the Blessed Sacrament and then the ones belonging to the brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The former's assets included 1 silver monstrance with its leather-covered box; 1 damask cloak²⁶; 1 crimson damask pallium; an Indian silk pallium; curtains with their canopies; a green taffeta canopy for the tabernacle; a red taffeta banner; a velvet cloth for the Tabernacle, with approximately 60 cm [?]; 2 red cloths intended for the tabernacle²⁷.

The assets of the brotherhood of Our Lady included pieces that composed an outfit intended for the image that was dressed, namely: 1 silver crown; 1 yellow damask robe; a red taffeta robe; 1 blue taffeta mantle; a blue camlet mantilla; linen curtains²⁸.

In the following visits, even though the inspects carry out some surveys, not very much is revealed on management of these 16th century assets. During the episcopate of Rodrigo da Cunha (episc. 1618-1627), the priest Gaspar Pinheiro declared the purchase of two new "lathed" chalices, a red and white damask frontal and a golden and silvery "woven leather" frontal – the latter offered by the abbot (called Martim de Sousa) out of devotion. Next, there is the list of pieces that were used in the Church of Tabuado in the second quarter of the 17th century. Although the ones used in the chancel and in the nave were not any different, both in number and materials, from the ones that had been inventoried in 1592, we should highlight the fact that the collection of the brotherhood of the Blessed Sacrament was enriched. In fact, between the 16th and the 17th centuries we witness the growth of this association's assets; the ecclesiastic interest, which was in line with the "increase of the Eucharistic worship promoted by the Catholic Reformation, was surely focused on this association" (Azevedo, 2000: 392).

Although the inventory of the ornaments allows us to have an idea on the arrangement of the integrated assets in the Church's plan – three altars, the larger one and two lateral or collateral ones dedicated to Saint Sebastian and to the Virgin, divided between the chancel and the nave – we can only find a more elaborate description in 1758. To the triad of altars, the then

abbot adds a chapel, located in the Church's body, which integrated the assets from the Church of Tabuado's patronizing lineage. Referring himself to the latter he explains:

"(...) it had four altars from which one, the largest, is where we have the Blessed Sacrament inside the Tabernacle with its own brotherhood, and the image of the Saviour, the parish's patron saint, and also a God Child and Saint Lucia, and two collateral altars, one of Our Lady of the Rosary with its own brotherhood, and another of Saint Anne and Saint Sebastian with its own brotherhood and a Chapel of Jesus inside the same Church with its own brotherhood where we find Our Lord of Agony and Our Lady at the Foot of the Cross. This Chapel belongs to the Patrons of this Church, who are the nobleman Antonio Gonçallo Correia de Souza Montenegro's heirs" (Vasconcelos & Abreu, 1918: 18-19).

So, the three altars were from the 16th century – the largest one (dedicated to the Saviour), the one of Saint Sebastian (accompanied by Saint Anne in the meantime) and the one of the Virgin, which, in 1592, would already be related to the invocation of the Rosary, despite the fact that the inventory makes no mention to it. The old Medieval invocation, which had already superseded the Marian patron saint mentioned in 1258, was followed by new devotions, more in line with the popular taste and according to people's individual and collective needs, such as the protector Saint Lucia, or Saint Anne, invoked for easing physical ailments and family problems.

From the inventory resulting from the nationalisation of 1911, drawn up by the republican leaders, we collected a description of the integrated assets that were still from the end of the Ancient Regime and from the Contemporary Period. At the time, it was said that the Church was "built of stone and lime" with a sacristy and a belfry with two bells²⁹.

The main altar, with an altarpiece and a throne, sheltered the images of the Saviour, Saint Lucia and the Holy Family and featured a tabernacle. The altar of the Rosary, also made of wood, featured the image of Our Lady of Sorrows and another one of the Infant Jesus (inside a "glass dome"), as well as a painting of the "Heart of Jesus".

The altar of Our Lady of Sorrows, with a wooden altarpiece, sheltered, besides its own image, the sculpture of a crucified Christ (with a "silver diadem and a blue satin mantle in a poor condition"), a pedestal upon which rested Saint Sebastian "with a silver diadem" and also an image of Our Lady of Conception.

Finally, the assessor reports an altar of Our Lady of Piety with a crucified Christ, a "full-size" image of that Virgin, all enclosed by "an iron door with the inscription PA".

Next, there was a list of mobile pieces from the Church, from the sacristy, in bronze and metal, silver, vestments and, finally, the description and inventory of the assets from the parish's chapels and parish residence. All of it was handed to the Republic, represented by the Jurisdictional Committee for Cultural Assets, according to an agreement signed on September 18th 1912. In 1929, an additional inventory was drawn up³⁰.

CONTEMPORARY INTERVENTIONS

n 1945, the parish priest of Tabuado, Joaquim Pereira da Cunha, addressed the Civil Governor of Porto informing that the Church "required urgent repairs because its state did not offer safety", so that "he could not morally be held accountable for what might occur during the acts of worship, which were very well attended, as a result of a disaster"³¹. Then, as far as we could ascertain, began an intense campaign in favour of an intervention by the DGEMN, because, sometimes, it even rained inside the building³².

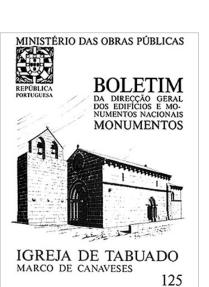
So, at the time, taking into account its state of repair, it was considered that the Church needed "general preservation works" (which included a complete renewal of the existing roofs to avoid rainwater infiltrations inside the temple), "together with several restoration works, in order to improve its existing conditions and to retrieve its primitive architectural profile"³³.

It was not until the late 1950's that the works began, reaching a period of particular intensity in the early 1960's. This process ended with the focus of the DGEMN's Bulletin no. 125, from 1972, on the intervention carried out in the Church of Tabuado. Although, as we have already mentioned above, it was considered that only "minor readjustment details" had been implemented, because "the Church of Tabuado reached our days with very few grafts and mutilations" (Freitas, 1972: 18), the truth is that through the text and the iconography included in this bulletin, we are left with the feeling that this was not the case.

Despite the clear intention of showing the works that were carried out, the 131 Bulletins published by the DGEMN play a significant role as an important documentary source for the study of Romanesque architecture, considering its iconographic richness. In fact, they have numerous photographs and graphic elements that, along with the texts, illustrate the monument in three different moments of the interventions carried out by DGEMN, i.e., "before", "during" and "after".

Taking into account the wide changing scope of most of these safeguarding interventions, these Bulletins let us realize to what extent are what we currently know as Romanesque legacies a result of the more or less intense reintegrationist policy applied by the DGEMN nearly until the mid-20th century. We should bear in mind that it was approximately between 1929 and 1940 that the DGEMN went through one of its most intense moments in terms of restoration activity, at the service of a specific policy and ideology³⁴. The "evident" preference that the DGEMN showed for the Medieval elements of the buildings in which it intervened, to the detriment of legacies from the Modern Period, especially the Baroque ones, eventually became so obvious that a few authors rose against this circumstance³⁵.

The national Mannerism and Baroque styles only began to be seen differently after the XVI International Art History Congress was held, despite the fact that there was still some prevailing



Reproduction of the cover of DGEMN's *Bulletin* no. 125 (1972), focused on the intervention carried out in the Church of Tabuado.

³¹ Cunha, Joaquim Pereira da – [Cópia] Missiva, 13 de janeiro de 1945. IRHU/Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREMN 2522. Igreja de Tabuado. Marco de Canaveses (January 14th, 1941 to April 24th, 1972). S2/E47/P.7 Cx.0049.

³² Tabuado, Marco de Canaveses. *O Comércio do Porto* (January 24th 1945). Idem

³³ Ofício 469, 26 de julho de 1945. Idem.

³⁴ Regarding this subject, please read Neto (2001).

³⁵ On the subject, please read Botelho (2010a).

disregard for the style until the mid-1960's (Pereira, 1989: 223). So, it is still within this context that we should understand the series of interventions carried out in the Church of Tabuado between 1955 and 1972 (Basto, 2006) that, "despite having no concerns of performing any full restoration tasks", were aimed at giving back to the Church "the dignity and harmony it once had" (Freitas, 1972: 18). And the restoration of that dignity and harmony involved, precisely, the valorisation of its Medieval – that is, Romanesque – architecture, and the "debaroquisation" of its internal space, thus retrieving what was considered as being its primitive image.



Nave before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN. Source: IHRU archive.



Nave before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN. Source: IHRU archive.

The listing of some of the "Performed Works" is quite explicit regarding these issues (Freitas, 1972: 18-19):

"Removal of the choir [1960's], which is very recent and poorly implemented, being accessed through an external staircase found on the lateral façade.

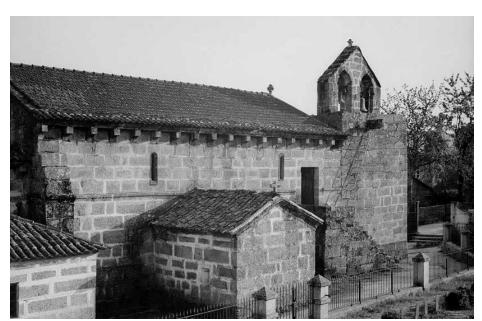
Removal of the altarpieces from the lateral and main altars, which have no artistic value (...).

Demolition of the baptismal chapel [on Gospel side's wall], an uncharacteristic and unnecessary construction, locating the primitive font close to the temple's main entrance".

Despite being carried out at the same time as other preservation works that included mainly the replacement of pavements and roofs, the truth is that the ones we have just mentioned show, in a unequivocal way, an urge to reintegrate this Church into its primitive style. Although the discovery of the mural painting, which is such a distinctive feature of the Church of Tabuado, was a result of the removal of the mail altarpiece, "whose style was clashing with the one of the church"³⁶, the truth is that there was also a decision to demolish the volume of the chancel's old altar. In a letter addressed to the DGEMN, the then parish priest of Tabuado, Joaquim Pereira da Cunha, asked on December 19th 1962, for the "replacement of the existing main altar, without any value, for one that matches the church's architectural style"³⁷. And

³⁶ Ofício 469, 26 de julho de 1945. Idem.

³⁷ Cunha, Joaquim Pereira da, 19 de dezembro de 1962 [SIPA.TXT.00627602] PT DGEMN:DSID-001/013-1835/2 [N° IPA PT011307240010] [Online]. Available at www: <URL: http://www.monumentos.pt>.



North façade before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN. Source: IHRU archive.

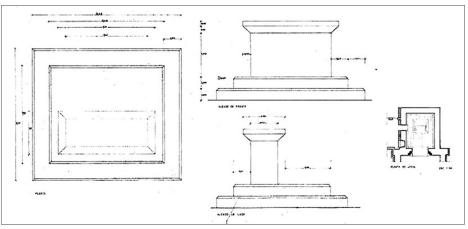
through the analysis of the administrative documents related to this monuments, we have a clear idea that the restoration intervention carried out in the Church of Tabuado, despite being "partial", had as ultimate purpose the one of "restoring" this building "to its primitive style"³⁸. In order to do that, the tasks that seemed more important were, precisely, "discovering the precious fresco concealed on the back side of the main altar and, simultaneously, replacing that altar with another one that would create a harmony with the church's style – the Romanesque"³⁹. However, a problem came up, raised by the parish priest Joaquim Pereira da Cunha, which proves the lay nature that this kind of intervention sometimes took on. Therefore, the priest asked for the installation, in the lateral chapel of "an altar matching its period with a tabernacle to place the Blessed Sacrament, since a tabernacle on the main altar would affect the view of the fresco"⁴⁰. So, a new stone altar table was designed for the chancel, after the pavement of this sacred space had been levelled. However, the option adopted in the meantime was replaced years later, in 1989, by another one – the existing one – composed of an altar built on a platform, all in chestnut wood (Basto, 2006)⁴¹.

As for the collateral altars that flanked the triumphal arch, "assessing what was already implemented in the chancel and on the nave's South wall, from which the existing ones were

^{38 [}Cópia, 20 de abril de 1963], [SIPA.TXT.00627617]. Idem. 39 Idem.

⁴⁰ Cunha, Joaquim Pereira da – Missiva, 3 de dezembro de 1964. IRHU/Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREMN 2522. Igreja de Tabuado. Marco de Canaveses (January 14th, 1941 to April 24th, 1972). S2/E47/P.7 Cx.0049.

⁴¹ SIPA.DES.0002732 e SIPA.DES.0002743 e IRHU/ Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREMN/DM – Igreja de Tabuado. Marco de Canaveses (January 14th, 1941 to April 24th, 1972). S2/E47/P.7 Cx.0049, Ref.^a "Empreitada de Igreja de Tabuado – Marco de Canaveses – Ventilação e protecção dos frescos do altar-mor".



Drawing of the altar table from 1967. Source: IHRU archive.

removed, and also in comparison with what has been made in other Churches, apparently it makes no sense to keep them"⁴², so the decision was to disassemble them. It is within this context that we should understand the criticisms that had already been made in May 28th 1964, by priest Afonso Ribeiro Moreira in the newspaper *O Comércio do Porto*: "the lateral altars were moved in order to reveal the columns from the chancel arch, which had been concealed" (Moreira, 1964). Appreciating their woodwork and the fact that they featured a docel (that is, a lambrequin), he laments their destruction, adding: "the images venerated by the people should be preserved on their corresponding altars or in simple devices placed next to them".

In the same chronicle, father Afonso Ribeiro Moreira eventually confesses two surprising features of the existing construction of Tabuado, which immediately lead us to consider to what extent the Romanesque elements we know are a result from the restoration interventions carried out in the 19th and 20th centuries⁴³. So, the three "flowery" terminal crosses that crown the gables were made by the stonemason of Saint Martin of Aliviada, Jerónimo Marinho, and were drawn by the parish priest himself "on cardboard, choosing from among the several models of crosses included in *A arte românica...*, by Marques Abreu, the one that pleased me [him, the parish priest] the most for its simplicity". Instead, the chancel arch's capitals and the decoration that runs towards the corner, i.e., the extension of the impost in the form of a frieze, "were made in cement by the accomplished author Miguel de Sousa". This restoration work, completed on January 17th 1925, was carried out within eleven days. When the DGEMN began its restoration and preservation intervention in the Church of Tabuado, nearly twenty five years later, the alterpieces were already places against the nave's lateral walls. These statements are essential for the legibility of this Romanesque Church but prove, above all, the importance

Drawing of the altar table from 1988. Source: IHRU archive.

⁴² Officio 1128, 2 de novembro de 1968. IRHU/ Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREMN 2522. Igreja de Tabuado. Marco de Canaveses (January 14th, 1941 to April 24th, 1972). S2/E47/P.7 Cx.0049.

⁴³ This is not the moment to debate this topic, however, it is our duty to draw attention to this rather paradigmatic situation within the context of our Romanesque architecture. For a further development of this topic, please read Botelho (2010a: 334).

that the study of the restoration and preservation of built heritage has for the understanding of our Romanesque heritage, which can't be separated from it.

The 17th-century sacristy – "whose state of repair did not allow a proper consolidation" (Freitas, 1972: 19) and "whose roof conceals a crevice in the chancel"⁴⁴ – was completely rebuilt. However, although it was decided to proceed with its "complete reconstruction on the same location", the truth is that the fact there was a change in the position of its access door to the outside is curious enough; first it was facing west and opposite the outside of the chapel of Jesus and then it was opened facing east, thus gaining more free space.

It is interesting that two of the goals defined in 1945 were not achieved⁴⁵: the relocation of the belfry "in order to provide some free space in front of the main façade against which it is placed and the total demolition of the adjacent chapel in order to open the nave's primitive lateral door that was absorbed by it and is partially destroyed". However, years later, when the works were already being carried out, the technical department of the DGEMN objected to the demolition of that chapel, claiming that although "it is not an original construction", it became an "element that was traditionally associated with the long evolution of its history", since it was closely related "to the bond of the Church's Patrons"⁴⁶. Besides these historic aspects, a few aesthetic factors were also taken into account, since it was considered that "its position on the lateral façade makes it volumetrically richer, being assumed that its elimination, which would lead to the construction of a new portal, would not benefit the small temple's expression". Then the possibility of its restoration was considered⁴⁷, and it was provided with an "altar to celebrate mass"⁴⁸, as the parish priest had requested a few years before. [MLB / NR]

Under the scope of its integration into the Route of the Romanesque, in 2013 the Church of Tabuado was subject to protection, preservation and valuation works. The project was developed with the aim of renovating the roofs (roof and ceiling) and preserving the external walls (Malheiro, 2010: 14-16). In the future, there are plans to intervene in the mural paintings found in the Church, thus improving their reading as an ensemble and their aesthetic presentation; a preservation and restoration project has already been developed for such purpose (Pestana, 2010). [RR]

⁴⁴ Ofício 469, 26 de julho de 1945. Idem.

⁴⁶ Informação, 21 de janeiro de 1964. IRHU/ Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREMN 2522. Igreja de Tabuado. Marco de Canaveses (January 14th, 1941 to April 24th, 1972). S2/E47/P.7 Cx.0049.

⁴⁷ Ofício n.º 1500, 15 de dezembro de 1964. Idem.

⁴⁸ Igreja Paroquial de Tabuado (imóvel de interesse público). Relação dos trabalhos realizados com as obras de restauro e conservação do imóvel, 3 de julho de 1972. Idem.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1258: first reference to "Saint Mary of Tabulata";
- 1320: the Church of Tabuado pays a tax of 105 Portuguese "libras";
- 1475: the "couto" of Tabuado is reduced to a secular abbey;
- 15th century (late): probable chronologic period regarding the development of the Church's painting campaigns;
- 1912: handover of the assets of the parish of Tabuado to the municipal commission for cultural heritage;
- 1955-1972: period of conservation and restoration interventions at the Church of Tabuado;
- 2010: the Church of Tabuado becomes part of the Route of the Romanesque;
- 2013: works for the renovation of the roofs and the preservation of the external walls.

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