

CHAPEL

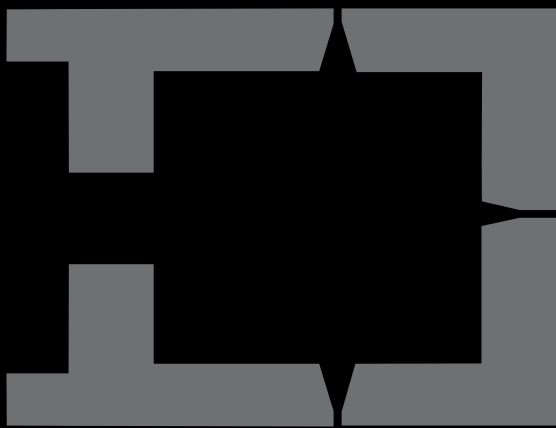
**OF OUR LADY
OF DELIVERANCE
OF FANDINHÃES**

MARCO DE CANAVESES

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Plan.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The church of Saint Martin of Fandinhães, of which only the memory of the patron saint remains, is a prime example of the difficulties that determined the formation and evolution of Iberian parishes, despite the mould ascribed to them by certain historiographical movements. From the movement supporting the idea that continuity, religious syncretism and the inflexibility of the parish network should adjust to previous circumstances (or result from them), as Alberto Sampaio and his followers (Sampaio, 1979)¹, to the discussion on the permanence or change of patron saints that revealed layers of occupation before and after the Reconquest (David, 1947; Costa, 1959), there were several attempts to associate the origin of the parish with a common model. The geographical differences, the intersection of various factors (demographic, economic) and the intervention of the lay and ecclesiastical nobility constrained this generalisation. The phenomenon of the formation of parishes is complex and requires a careful, case-by-case analysis². The one of Fandinhães/Paços de Gaiolo is particularly expressive and is not limited to the Medieval Period³.



General view.

¹ We find a good summary and review of the book and the subject of the formation of parishes from the point of view of Alberto Sampaio's coevals in Martins (1992: 389-409).

² The parish was only recently studied as a whole, as a space where different interests met. In this regard, please read the text (which may be a good introduction to this issue) by Almeida (1981).

³ On the excessive influence of the Medieval Period on the subject of the formation of the parish network, please read Resende (2001).

Built approximately at 500 meters above sea level and away from the circulation channels that ran parallel to the water courses, the small temple of Fandinhães began by being a private church of the ancestors of the archdeacon of Viseu, whose progeny held the patronage in 1258⁴. This is explained by prelate Mendo Egas, who added that only some of the church's properties located between "Fontanum Covum" and Canaveses paid taxes to the king⁵. The toponym "Fontão Covo" probably corresponds to Fonte da Cova, one of the hilltops of the Montedeiras mountain and a local geo-referencing point, in the horizon of the ancient church of Saint Martin. The limits of the small parish ended nearby; most of its hamlets are mentioned in the inquiries of King Afonso: Fandinhães or "Fandiaes", Ambrões ("Amaroes"), Mourilhermo, Paços de Gaiolo ("Palaciis de Goyal" or "Goyol"). The parish seat was eventually transferred to this village (where, in the 13th century, several witnesses were already residing and where there were references to several royal properties).

The change occurred in two stages: the first stage was the foundation of a chapel dedicated to Saint Clement in Paços de Gaiolo which became a curacy, already mentioned in 1690; in a second stage, demography clearly favoured Saint Clement to the detriment of Saint Martin, which was replaced in the meantime by Saint Blaise (and, later, by the Marian worship associated with the Virgin of Deliverance). There are still references to the curacy of São Martinho in 1706, however, in the late 18th century São Martinho and São Clemente are already a single parish (Moreira, 1984: 7-86)⁶.

Either associated with Saint Martin of Dume or with the bishop of Tours, this invocation reveals the precocious Christianisation of the local *paggi*, which may well have spread from Tongobriga, the *civitate*. But only archaeology could complete this hypothesis. However, the fact that the building was located in a suggestive plateau at the end of a small promontory overlooking the Roupeira valley does not go unnoticed. Nonetheless, the mentors of the church were not interested in turning the church to the human and agricultural space that Saint Martin was supposed to protect. Above all, the canonical orientation shows the concern in respecting ecclesiastical rules and the tradition that saw in Jerusalem and in sunrise the centre of a world, despite a distant one.

As we have already mentioned, the transfer to the hamlet of "paço de Gayol" or "Goyol"⁷, which, in 1258, was already much more tempting to nobility and the monks' covet, is explained by demographic movements. Above 400 meters, there are very few human settlements.



Chancel. Main altarpiece on the Epistle side. Sculpture. Saint Blaise.



Chancel. Main altarpiece on the Gospel side. Sculpture. Saint Martin.

4 From the census of the chapter of the Porto cathedral, we learn about some of those patrons. There is a list with 21 names to which we should add Pedrayras's grandchildren, Martim Ayras and Afonso Dias. This extraordinary offspring that, until 1302, devoured the revenues of the church of Fandinhães, agreed to give and assign the patronage to the bishop of Porto, Giraldo (BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA MUNICIPAL DO PORTO – *Censual do cabido da sé do Porto*. Porto: Imprensa Portuguesa, 1924, p. 175-176).

5 «Incipit parrochia Sancti Martini de Fandiaes Menendus Egee, prelati ipsius ecclesie, juratus et interrogatus de jure patronatus, dixit quod nihil ibi habet Dominus Rex. Et dixit quod est de archidiacono de Viseo et de sua progenie. Interrogatus undc habuerunt ipsam ecclesiam, dixit quod de sua avoenga. Et dixit quod ipsa ecclesia tenet hereditatem regalengam Domini Regis, quam ei dederunt ad forum illi maiordomi qui debent dare panem de regalengo quod jacent inter Fontanum et Canaveses» (Herculano, 1936: 1140).

6 In the entry 153 – "Fandinhães" (Moreira, 1984: 69-70), the author mentions the sources related to the dates mentioned.

7 The author of *Corografia portuguesa...* narrated the toponym's legendary origin. Giving voice to local traditions that praised the importance of the land (which memorialism has always made the most of until today), Paços de Gaiolo would be a surname "that remained from a Palace, owned by a Moorish Prince, father, or brother of Gaya, who also lived near the City of Porto, hence its name; and not only the name, but the intent to become a "beetria" [a type of Portuguese administrative division] shows that something has been more than common" (Costa, 1706: 397). About the "beetria" of Canaveses, please see Church of Saint Nicholas, Marco de Canaveses.

Except for Fandinhães, all the hamlets from Paços de Gaiolo are located on the south and west slopes of the stretch of the Montedeiras mountain, across which most of the parish's population is still currently distributed. In 1758, the abbot who wrote the parish memoir clearly explains the reasons behind the transfer:

“The patron of this parish is Saint Martin of Fandinhães and such by seniority, and so invested as stated in ancient traditions; As, though, it stood on a desert site and a very rough Mountain and considering that, for centuries, the Chapel of Saint Clement stood in a milder place in the middle of the Parish, now called Saint Clement of Passos de Gayollo, where's a Relic of that Saint, the Church was built in a modern fashion” (Carvalho, 1758).

The evolution of the patron saints may also clarify the death of the old worship of Saint Martin. In fact, he probably did not correspond to the communal yearnings like Saint Blaise, who superseded him, or the Virgin of Deliverance who is still currently worshipped in the existing chapel. Although the portion of the Romanesque church is a demographic consequence both of the Middle Ages and of the Modern Period, the worship survived in the chancel, certainly because there were still therapeutic devotions whose origin had been triggered by a place quite exposed to the elements. So it was called chapel, a popular name that means hermitage or small space open to public devotion and use.

Regarding the patronage, we should highlight what is mentioned by Rodrigo da Cunha in 1302: “the noblemen and people of São Martinho de Fandinhães gave the rights of patronage of the said Church to Bishop Giraldo and his successors” (Cunha, 1623: 114). The patronage was transferred to the majorat of Medelo, created by the bishop and managed by the Marquises of Marialva in the 18th century. In 1758 and according to the abbot of Fandinhães, Manuel de Carvalho, it was in the hands of the Kingdom's admirals.

In secular terms, both Fandinhães and Paços de Gaiolo were part of the municipality of Benviver and were limited, to the east, by the “couto” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] of Ancede, the “honra” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] of Lage and the term of Baíão; to the south, they bordered the municipalities of Cinfães and São Cristóvão de Nogueira (split in the middle by the river Douro). To the north and west, they were limited by Paredes de Viadores and Penha Longa, both parishes from the municipality of Benviver.

In 1912⁸ the Chapel of Saint Blaise/Virgin of the Deliverance was handed over to the Republic together with all the ecclesiastical assets of Paços de Gaiolo and, in 1924, it was requested by the corporation responsible for the Catholic worship. At the time, it is said that the Chapel located in the hamlet of Fandinhães, “where it had already been the parish church”, consisted of “a churchyard and surrounding ridges that communicate with the Chapel and are this parish's reserve, which also constitutes the Parish Priest's Property”⁹.



Chancel. Central section of the main altarpiece. Sculpture. Virgin of Deliverance.

⁸ Date included in the process filed in 1924 (please see the following note).

⁹ SGMF – Comissão Jurisdicional dos Bens Culturais, Porto, Marco de Canaveses, Arrolamento dos Bens Culturais, Paços de Gaiolo. Entrega à corporação encarregada do culto, da igreja paroquial, várias capelas, suas dependências e vários terrenos, nos termos do Decreto n.º 11887, freguesia de Paços de Gaiolo [1924]. ACMF/Arquivo/CJBC/PTO/MDC/ARROL/024 (Processo).

THE MONUMENT BETWEEN PERIODS

Although some authors mention 1873 as the year of the hypothetical demolition of the body of the church of Saint Martin of Fandinhães, the truth is that, in 1864, it is already said as being truncated and that the remaining structure (chancel) was in a deplorable state, as stated by the parish priest of the time: “as to public chapels, there is only one, the so-called Saint Blaise that was, like today is, the major Chapel of an early church whose patron saint was Saint Martin of Fandinhães, whose condition is simply deplorable” (Geraldez, 1864).

According to tradition, when the body of the nave – which has been deemed as ruined – was demolished, its stone would be reused to extend the current parish church. If that were the case, then the church of Fandinhães would have been reduced, first to a curacy, and later to a chapel (although the most appropriate word is hermitage) and it would have been demolished still during the 18th century, because, in 1758, it is said that the church of Saint Clement of Paços de Gaiolo was already “built to modern fashion with good perspective” (Carvalho, 1758), i.e., it surely presented its current configuration.

However, while alluding the hermitages and chapels in the parish, the same source explains: “One considers it more the chancel of the old main church” (Carvalho, 1758). So, we can now exclude 1873 as the year of the demolition of the nave of Fandinhães, because in the mid-18th century only the chancel of the old mother church remained. Based on the information were able to collect until now, we consider two possibilities: either the disassembling occurred before 1758 and the stone was reused to build the church of Saint Clement, which was built in the 17th century, or the nave was never built.

The thesis proposed by Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida meets this last possibility: the church of Fandinhães was never finished (Almeida, 1986). According to this author, among the reasons that led to the non-completion of the initial project is the fact that the villages located at higher altitudes began losing their interest from the Romanesque Period onwards and tended to become residual. We should recall that, in 1258, the increasingly populated hamlet of Paços de Gaiolo was already asserting itself, and that, in 1758, the parish priest compares Fandinhães (“a desert place and a very rough mountain”) with São Clemente de Paços de Gaiolo (“more pleasant, at the heart of the parish”). Besides, there are two other aspects we would like to highlight. Surely, the “very rough mountain” was not exactly favourable to the transportation of the ashlar from a would-be nave of a church, which had been demolished in the meantime. Besides, the type of walls found in the church of Saint Clement has little or nothing to do with the type of walls found in Fandinhães.

Both in Portugal and across Europe, the architecture from this period always established a deep relationship with the territory that accommodated it and with which it was involved. We may almost say that there is a reciprocal relationship between the Romanesque building and the environment or territory where it is deployed: the latter justifies its location, whose choice takes various factors into account; simultaneously, the building also conditions the experience



Parish church of Paços de Gaiolo
(Marco de Canaveses).

of the space that accommodates it, because it works as a catalyst for the lives of the people who use it, thus amplifying its centripetal force. According to Jaime Nuño González, the location of the Romanesque church may also tell us where the original population centre was located and to where it was later moved (Nuño González, 2002: 135).

While there are factors that explain the location of a Romanesque building in a given place (such as the closeness to a river, the territory's orography, the access to communication routes, the density and dynamism of the population, the preponderance of a given lineage, the territory's agricultural potential, etc.), they may also justify breakthroughs and setbacks in the construction process itself, resulting in interruptions and, consequently, in artistic and/or structural updates (that, like in Saint Peter of Rates (Póvoa de Varzim), are identified through a series of building inconsistencies¹⁰), in the downsizing of the original plan (as in the case of the church of Saint Eulalia of Arnoso (Famalicão) where the nave, whose interior is decorated with high blind arcades, was initially planned to be the chancel) or, alternatively, in extensions designed over the plan that had been originally imagined (as it has been suggested in the case of the Braga cathedral¹¹). In the specific case of Fandinhães, the migration of the population to places with lower altitudes may justify the fact that the Romanesque building was left unfinished¹². To this, we may add another one fact, no less meaningful. Until 1302, the patronage of the church of Fandinhães was in the hands of 21 heirs and, in that year, it was transferred to a single person; could that explain the lack of resources that inhibited the completion of the building of Fandinhães?

In this case, due to the lack of real documentary information, only the conduction of archaeological surveys would allow us to reach an accurate conclusion¹³. If the nave's foundations are identified, the hypothesis of the demolition is proved; otherwise, the thesis of the unfinished building prevails. The mystery remains. We are awaiting the results. So, from the primitive or planned church only the chancel remains, which was adapted to work as a chapel. Judging by the remaining traces, we stand before what would have/could have been a fine late Romanesque temple.

So, when the construction of this church, which was the parish seat of Fandinhães, was interrupted or when its (single) nave was demolished, the apse (rectangular, narrower and lower) was adapted to serve as a chapel by closing the chancel arch with a door, thus turning it into the church's main portal. This building holds a very peculiar position within the panorama of Portuguese Romanesque architecture if we consider its originality, which is associated with the fact that the foundations of the nave's lateral walls are still preserved and were arranged to appear as ruins.

Let us take a look at the existing main portal, previously the chancel arch. Composed of a single slightly broken archivolt supported by bulky columns, it features carved motifs on the impost that, in turn, extends as a frieze along the existing façade of the Chapel. However,

¹⁰ On the subject, please read Botelho (2010b: 213-228).

¹¹ On the subject, please read Botelho (2010d: 41-50).

¹² Here, we may establish a parallel with what happened to the Church of Saint Mammes of Vila Verde (Felgueiras) that, while being replaced in terms of parish functions by a new church built in the 19th century, not only witnessed the migration of its parishioners to a place located at a lower altitude, but also faced a gradual state of decay that could only be curbed in the early 21st century. For further developments on this subject, please read Botelho (2010c).

¹³ In 2015, archaeological surveys have been planned, under the scope of the Route of the Romanesque, in order to confirm (or not) the existence of the foundations of the old nave.



West façade. Portal and sepulchral lid.



West façade. Portal. North side. Imposts and capital.

a closer look will easily reveal a variety of motifs: intertwined motifs, linked spirals and tied circles. Surely the reuse of frieze sections. Perhaps intentional. Chronology? Is this composition coeval to the primitive church building or was it already made after the demolition of the church's nave? We should notice that in the existing churchyard there are two ashlar stones that, judging by their shapes, were probably part of a typical cornice supported by little arches. This model imported from the main façade of the old Coimbra cathedral spread across extended sections of Portuguese Romanesque architecture. Judging by the remaining traces, the Chapel of Fandinhães was surely a rather elaborate building.

On the observer's left – which corresponded to the Gospel side of the triumphal arch – we see a capital that represents the topic of serpents, whose single head appears in the capital's corner. On the other hand, on the Epistle side, following a similar model to that of one of the capitals of the chancel arch of the Church of Abragão (Penafiel) (Rosas & Sottomayor-Pizarro, 2009: 81-116) and of one of the capitals of the main portal of the Monastery of Travanca (Amarante), we find the representation of two atlas-shaped figures on the edge supported by protruding leaves, which are easily identifiable despite the corrosion they were subject to due to their exposure to the elements. So, we are standing before fine examples of how the depicted themes adapted themselves to the support offered by the Romanesque Period, by adjusting to it and, if necessary, by distorting their pristine shape. This is why Romanesque sculpture offers us a wide variety of fanciful hybrid beings which are hard to identify. Either sculpted in a more voluptuous way, or more attached to the frustum, the truth is that these elements that make up the history of sculpture are essential for understanding the Romanesque spirit and flavour, by revealing tastes, regionalisms, schools and workshops, but also by attesting the faith and spirituality of those who built and lived in the buildings we are studying. So, the study of



Churchyard. Ashlars. Cornice supported by little arches.



West façade. Portal. South side. Imposts and capital.

Romanesque architecture cannot be separated from the study of the culture associated with it.

This architectural legacy from the Romanesque Period is one more evidence of the itinerancy of shapes and artists so characteristic of this Medieval stage. Such fact is proven by the existence of dihedral tori on the crevices of the Chapel's old apse. This element of French origin spread across Portugal from the Porto cathedral and became a key feature of the Romanesque style developed around this city. Manuel Monteiro was the first author to draw our attention to the specificity of the dihedral tori of the monuments in Porto, whose "arrangement is common in Limousin, a School to the South and East of the Loire" (Monteiro, 1908: 150). This influence is easily understandable if we keep in mind that, in the late 12th century, the commercial and maritime relations between Porto and La Rochelle were intensified (Almeida, 1987: 32).

So, based on this assumption, as knowing that the dihedral tori appear in Fandinhães after being included in buildings like Águas Santas (Maia), Cedofeita (Porto), Travanca or Cabeça Santa (Penafiel), which are already from a rather late period, we should surely pinpoint the construction of this Romanesque temple in the 13th century, perhaps even in the second half or towards the end of the century, as suggested by Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida (1986: 98) and indicated by the above mentioned historical data.

We also find richly ornamented capitals on the crevices, either showing human figures whose hands are joined on the capital's angle, or just showing botanic themes. While we have already mentioned the influences from Porto, the fact is that Fandinhães is also a good example of the presence of elements from Braga in the area of Marco de Canaveses. We are talking of the south crevice where the theme of the so-called *beak-heads* creates a truly original composition on the surrounding arch. This animalist theme imported from the Anglo-Saxon culture was already common in the Tâmega and Douro region and we can find it on the crevice of the pantheon of the Resende family in Cárquere (Resende), on the triumphal arch of Tarouquela (Cinfães) or on the portal of the tower of Travanca. The model of the animals facing forward,



East façade. Crevice.



South façade. Crevice.



Church of Cabeça Santa (Penafiel). West façade. Crevice.



Monastery of Cárquere (Resende). Pantheon of the Resendes. East façade. Crevice.



South façade. Corbel.

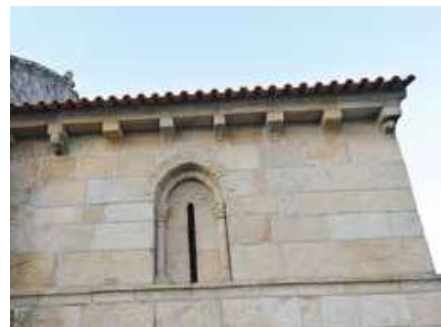
not too modelled and with plenty of graphic elements spread from São Pedro de Rates, was highly popular in Portugal. Besides, the presence of this theme in Fandinhães is a sign of the late chronology of this church which was surely not built before the mid-13th century. On the crevice's internal arch, under the dihedral torus, there are voussoirs decorated with inverted "ee" and with a motif that, were it not for its worn-out look, we could say it to be a denticulate or zigzag ornament.

Among the modillions, there are a few that show sculptural motifs. They are mostly flat and have predominantly square shapes, suggesting a late chronology. On the north side, some of them show a geometric ornamentation – a half-sphere, rolls, simple geometric figures. Two modillions represent human figures that are somewhat stylised. On the south side elevation, we should highlight two narrative modillions. Both feature human representations and one of them is placed at the end of the elevation, on the angle with the back wall. The other one, closer to the foundation of what used to be the nave, recalls – in terms of position and theme – a similar example found in the chancel of Tarouquela and currently sheltered by the Gothic chapel of Saint John the Baptist. Although the modillion of Fandinhães is much more corroded by erosion, it also represents the *exhibitionist* who, shaped like an atlas, is supporting the corbel's upper part. This is a naked squatting man with his right hand on his genitals and his left hand on his face, repeating the same scheme, but in an inverted way. Provocative and obscene iconography was a common feature of the European Romanesque style, although less explicit themes also related with the sin of lust were often used; these could be mermaids (Nuño González, 2006: 203), women together with serpents or just serpents, which we believe to be depicted on a capital from the existing main portal, on the south side.

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North façade. Corbels and crevice.



South façade. Corbels and crevice.

The nave also had a series of modillions, judging by the two specimens that survive on each side, aligned with the triumphal arch. While, on the north side, we see the representation of a bird (a pelican?), on the other side we see a new approach to the theme of the *exhibitionist*. It is a stylised representation of a man who is holding his beard with both hands, which reminds us of the design of the typology identified by Jaime Nuño González in the Spanish church of San Martín de Elines (Valderredible) (Nuño González, 2006: 206) or the figure on the corbel that supports the right side of the tympanum on the main portal of Paço de Sousa (Penafiel).





South façade. Corbel.



Monastery of Paço de Sousa (Penafiel). West façade. Portal. Corbel.

In the space that once belonged or would have belonged to the nave, two slabs identify two graves. The larger one has a carving that shows a rather stereotyped sword: a blade, a straight guard and a pommel. The other slab, smaller, has a simple cross.

Above the existing main portal we are still able to see the west-facing crevice that would illuminate the nave's body, although it has been recently covered by a polychrome tile panel with an image of the *Virgin and Child*.

Inside the Chapel, the back wall is taken up by the main altarpiece, which is divided into three panels defined by twisted columns that support an entablature of a Classicist flavour. The polychrome ornamental motifs that interrupt this gilded woodwork structure over a white background are vine leaves and angel heads. On each panel there is an imagery piece: Our Lady of Deliverance, in the middle, is flanked by Saint Blaise, on the Epistle side, and Saint Martin, on the Gospel side.

We should highlight the altar frontal with Mudéjar arista or cuenca tiles that form a geometric carpet-like composition based on a star-shaped floral motif surrounded by a circle. The cuenca or arista technique was developed around 1500 onwards and its tiles were the most common ones in Portugal. After defining a hole, the recessed moulds will print the motif on a raw clay plate, thus defining small edges between the different colours and creating a sort of protruding profile that prevents glazed surfaces from mixing during the firing process (Meco, 1989: 38-39). We may recall the geographically close examples of the frontals from the collateral altarpieces of the Church of Escamarão (Cinfães).



North façade. Corbel.

South façade. Corbel. *Exhibitionist*.

This enigmatic building of Fandinhães became part of the Route of the Romanesque in 2010 and the decision project regarding its classification as a Public Interest Monument and the definition of its protection zone was approved in March 2012¹⁴. [MLB / NR]



West façade. Niche. Tile panel. *Virgin and Child*.



Chancel. Main altarpiece and altar frontal.

CHRONOLOGY

1258: Fandinhães was a church whose patronage belonged to the descendants of an archdeacon from Viseu;

13th century (2nd half): construction of church of Fandinhães, considering its remaining Romanesque traces;

1302: relatives and patrons of the church of Saint Martin of Fandinhães donate the right of patronage to the bishop of Porto, Geraldo Domingues (1300-1308);

Early 16th century: manufacture of the Mudéjar tiles found in the main altarpiece's frontal;

1690: first record of the chapel of Saint Clement in Paços de Gaiolo;

1758: most of the inhabitants of the parish of Paços de Gaiolo were already and mostly concentrated on the southern and western slopes of the Montedeiras mountain;

– the patronage of Fandinhães was in the hands of the admirals of the Kingdom;

– the church of Fandinhães is still referred to as Saint Martin's

Late 18th century: São Clemente and São Martinho are already a single parish;

1864: the church's nave had already been dismantled;

1912: the collection and Chapel of Fandinhães were handed to the Portuguese Republic;

1924: the corporation in charge of the Catholic worship requested the Chapel from the State;

2010: integration of the Chapel of Fandinhães in the Route of the Romanesque;

2012: the Chapel of Fandinhães is classified as Public Interest Monument.

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