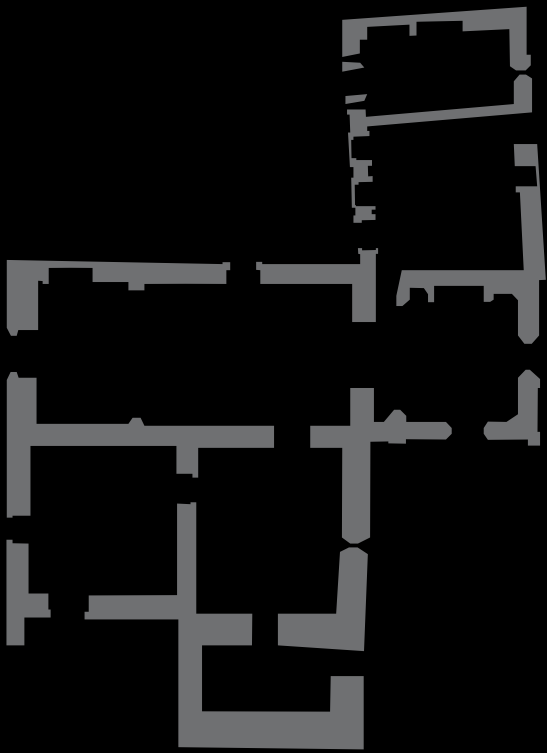






MONASTERY
OF SAINT
MARY OF
CÁRQUERE
RESENDE

MONASTERY
OF SAINT
MARY OF
CÁRQUERE
RESENDE



Plan.

THE MONUMENT DURING THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Located on the left bank of the river Douro, halfway up the hillside, the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere leaves a significant mark in the territory in which it is integrated. In 1919, when Vergílio Correia visited this monastic ensemble he was impressed with the surrounding landscape, alluding to the “steep slopes”, to “the canopy of trellis, to the blackened hills that climb up to the heights covered with trees” (Correia, 1919: 47-58). In the historiography of Portuguese Romanesque architecture, the deep relationship between this moment in the history of architecture and territory – which was sometimes understood just as landscape – was highlighted for a long time, emphasizing its spiritual impression and charm¹.

This relationship was not, and is not, a coincidence at all. The study of the locations of religious buildings allows us to have a better understanding of the reasons that were behind their foundation. As we know, eremitism left deep marks in the Medieval landscape, giving rise to many places of worship that were later turned into monastic institutions or parish churches. Religious orders, as the Benedictines or the Cistercians, followed strict criteria in choice of the ideal place to build their monasteries: “Benedictus montes, Bernardus valles amabat, Franciscus vicos, magnas Ignatius urbes” – Saint Bernard (Cistercian Order) loved the valleys, Saint Benedict loved the mountains, Saint Francis loved the villages and Saint Ignatius loved big cities. But before the arrival of the great monastic reforms, hermitages (paradoxically to what the word itself suggests) were visible from the villages; they weren't always in inaccessible thickets, but close to paths instead (Mattoso, 1997: 103-145).

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Aerial view.

¹ About the subject, please read Botelho (2010: 367).



General view.

The location of Cárquere, placed on a spur overlooking the Corvo valley, though not particularly exposed, may be a sign of the existence of an earliest eremitical settlement that was turned into a hermitage and later into a sanctuary; this condition was often inherent to these places that, by the telluric proximity and the sacrificial example of their inhabitants, left their devotional marks on the territory. The melting pot of legends connected to Cárquere, namely related to the discovery of relics and images next to a tree or thickets, suggests the existence of that earlier consecration which often had nothing to do with worship synchronisms or religious continuities, being nothing more than a sign of that eremitical movement².

Those buildings, of evident Medieval origin, drew the attention of the subject's historiography due to the charm of the traditions that are (supposedly) associated with them, which try to justify a legendary origin. Among these is, naturally, the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere.

² About this issue, please read Resende (2011).

The legend and the miracle of Cárquere

The legend that associates the origin of this Monastery with the story of a miracle that supposedly healed the future King Afonso Henriques (b. 1108/9?-1185) from a disability that he had in his lower limbs is quite well known. There is an older tradition associated with the image of Our Lady of Cárquere that surely contributed for the construction of that narrative.

The invocation of Saint Mary of Cárquere is quite old and, as we are told by Father Luís Cardoso in 1751, in his *Diccionario geográfico...*, “tradition says that at the time of King Rodrigo, upon the loss of Hespánias, a vault with precious relics, a few fine items, and a Cross”, together with the image of Saint Mary (Cardoso, 1751: 451-452) had been buried under a hill that is contiguous to the same parish. Another traditional version, perhaps alluding to the same image of Our Lady, states that the image was found inside a very old chestnut tree, together with a bell, a box of relics and a silver cross (Correia et al., 1936-1960: 994-995).

Although there is a tendency to ascribe a rather early chronology to the small image of Our Lady of Cárquere (Correia et al., 1936-1960: 57-58), dating it back to the time of the last and legendary Visigoth king (710-711), the truth is that we stand before a specimen whose chronology is more recent than the “miracle” it has been associated with, as we shall see.

So, according to the chronicle of King Afonso Henriques by Duarte Galvão, published in Lisbon in 1726 (Galvão, 1954), the Monastery of Cárquere, dedicated to Saint Mary, was built by order of Count Henrique after Egas Moniz (1080-1146), the governor and schoolmaster of the first king of Portugal, had a dream in which he was receiving instructions from the Virgin to rebuild a ruined and darkened temple from the Douro region in her honour. Obeying this calling, Egas Moniz rescued from the ruins the image of Saint Mary, laying before them the sick Prince who was immediately healed. According to the tale, Afonso Henriques would have been born “with his legs so crippled that in the mind of Masters and everyone, he would always be disabled and, as it says later, everyone thought he would never grow up to become a man”.

“And lying D. Egas asleep one night, and the Boy being five years old now, Our Lady appeared to him and said (...):

– “I am the Virgin Mary and I command you to go to a specific place”, giving him the directions, “and dig. You shall find a Church that has been started in my name in another time, and an image of Me; complete the Church and correct the Image built in my honour and, once this is done, thou shall keep vigil, placing the Child you are raising on the altar; and rest assure that he will be protected and healthy (...). Seeing D. Egas this pleasure and miracle, he gave praises to God and the Lady His Mother, thus creating and saving from that moment on with much greater care the Boy, whose tutor [governor and schoolmaster] he was always (...). And because of this miracle, the Monastery of Cárquere was then built with much devotion in this Church (...)” (Galvão, 1954: 21-25).

The narrative reproduces, in the subjects of clairvoyance and discovery, a model of inventions of relics and images that characterized the religious and political atmosphere of the Middle Ages. Cases of economic and spiritual rehabilitations of monasteries or churches – justifications against the theft or trade of relics – resulted in the dissemination of narratives with similar plots and characters (Christian Jr., 1990). Cárquere brought together many interests that nurtured and magnified this legend. The Canons Regular – guardians of royal memory and, therefore, of the idea of nationality – were succeeded by the Jesuits – zealous administrators of a physical and spiritual heritage whose promotion was convenient. The power of lineages pervaded across all congregations: first the regal authority, interested in anointing itself with divine aid, and later Egas Moniz’s descendants, committed to keeping their association with the kingdom’s construction.

As it is known, the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, particularly the ones installed in Santa Cruz of Coimbra, played an important role in terms of secular power, because they were associated with the royal curia, as well as with the high nobility and aristocracy of Coimbra (Gomes, 2000: 429). We should not forget that the church, their mother-house, houses the pantheon of the earliest Portuguese kings. It is in this sense that we should not forget the important role they played in terms of culture, by structuring a Portuguese political identity, enforcing the historiographical memory of the kingdom in chronicles, annals, “narratives...” (Gomes, 2000: 430). And considering that Saint Mary of Cárquere is one of the Crosiers’ foundations that were directly sponsored or fostered by their mother-house, Santa Cruz of Coimbra, we can easily understand the “creation” of this legend associated with the figure of King Afonso Henriques.

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Sculpture. Our Lady of Cárquere. Source: José Vicente’s private collection.

The image of Our Lady of Cárquere

Regardless of the chronologies ascribed to the tiny image of Our Lady of Cárquere, the words written by Vergílio Correia in 1919 regarding his observation of this ivory sculpture with a height of only 2.9 centimetres are nonetheless deeply sentimental (and nationalist)³.

Naturally, by observing this image, we are forced to place its chronology in a much later period within the Portuguese Middle Ages. It already belongs to the 12th century, or even to 13th century, taking into account the type of pleats on the Virgin's clothes; with a crown and a short veil on her head, the Virgin is enthroned and holds the Child, also crowned, on her left knee. Because of its gesture, this image reminded Vergílio Correia "of the Christs found in evangelistaries and enamels" (Correia, 1919: 56). In this period, the figure of Christ as Majesty appears both in paintings and in sculptures. In this specific case, represented still as a Child, He is sitting on His Mother's lap - as usual in the iconographic scheme of the time - holding a book in his left hand and blessing with his right hand. However, His clothes are less naturalistic than those of His Mother.

These representations of the *Maiestas Domini* (here still a Child) and of the *Maiestas Mariae* were very common in the Romanesque Period. In churches dedicated to Mary, the vision of the apocalyptic Christ was replaced by that of the Virgin as the throne of the Saviour and the mediator between God and men. The representation of Mary as the throne of the Infant Jesus was widely accepted during the Romanesque and - later - the Gothic Periods. So, iconographically speaking, this sculpture belongs to the *hodegetria* type in which the *Theotokos*, the Virgin Mother, shows Her Son, the Saviour, to the world.

The devotion to the Virgin Mary and to Her image gained a new importance especially from the Romanesque Period onwards, achieving a greater expressiveness during the Gothic Period; this fact should be understood in the context of the major changes that were felt at the time in terms of the evolution of the religious feeling (Almeida, 1983: 5).

The Virgin of Cárquere is one of the rare examples of Portuguese ivory works that managed to survive to this day, especially since it still features a few remaining traces of golden and red paint (SEC, 1992: 133). However, its greatest originality has to do with its small size.

³ "How we feel impressed under the arches of a primitive church, before an image seen and adored by kings, "ricomens" [noble men] and people from remote centuries, which was perhaps carried as a talisman in its minuscule silver reliquary, to the middle of the battles against the Moors which certainly ran the seven corners of the world, a world that we do not know, nor ever will we know!" (Correia, 1919: 58).



On the construction of the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere

In Resende, on the left bank of the river Douro, the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere forms an extremely interesting monumental complex with great regional significance, despite the very limited scope of its surviving Romanesque traces. Surrounded by cypress trees, it stands on a high place from where we are able to enjoy a magnificent landscape. On the Church's south side, the remains of what may have been a small monastery of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine – which historiography tends to call the “conventinho” [little convent] – and the crenellated tower mark the space in an unusual way. On the north side, a cloister would have occupied the area of the existing cemetery.

So, the foundation of the Monastery of Cárquere probably dates back to the second quarter of the 12th century, after the installation of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine in the monastery of Santa Cruz of Coimbra on June 28th, 1131, directly sponsored by King Afonso Henriques (k. 1143-1185). Following the international Gregorian guidelines – compliant with a severe apostolic life focused on a liturgical and intellectual education –, the Canons were fit to preach and provide assistance, especially in terms of healthcare (Sousa, 2005: 171).

As far as we know, in 1146 Egas Moniz left several legacies to this Monastery in his will. However, the lack of chronological elements associated with the limited scope of the remaining Romanesque sections do not allow us to state with any real confidence when the Romanesque Monastery of Cárquere was actually built. But, knowing that it was initially occupied by the Crosiers, everything suggests that its effective chronology only began probably around 1131. This possibility comes close to 1125, a date that was read by Friar Teodoro de Melo, a religious man from the Order of Christ who, in 1732, wrote a historical treaty on Resende, his birthplace⁴.

In fact, we stand before a monastic complex that witnessed the passage of several construction periods, which explains the scarcity of visible Romanesque traces. Despite the fact that it underwent many transformations according to the aesthetics and tastes of different periods, we still believe that there is a prevailing topography with a Romanesque flavour, mostly in the spatial organization of the monastic ensemble. So, taking as a central element, the longitudinal Church, comprising a single nave and quadrangular chancel that is narrower and lower than the former, curiously enough, we see that the primitive cloister was positioned on the left, i.e., to the north and that it corresponds, to a certain extent, to the existing cemetery. This also justifies the position of the pantheon of the Resendes, the lords of the land, as an independent chapel. We shall come back to this subject in further detail later on. On the opposite side, i.e., on the south side, we find the structures of what has been called as the “conventinho”, which contributes to emphasize the multiple meanings of the rich spatial articulation of this

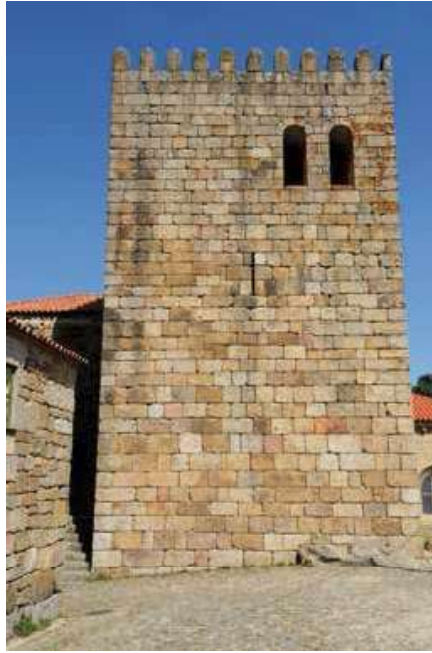


View of the tower in the early 20th century. Source: Nuno Resende's private collection.

⁴ “(...) we found that, in this year of 1732, despite the many and various changes, which they have gone through, was discovered, or better yet, noted, a stone which is preserved in that Monastery, tucked in the walls of the his Residential Manor, which goes from Our Lady's cruise till the courtyard, called a porch close to its first arch, which states in an ancient sign, very hard to read, that it is the Monastery founded in the year 1125, which is the year of Christ 1087, counting according to the year of Caesar, as it seems to count” (Duarte, 2004).



"Conventinho" [little convent].



Tower.

built ensemble. Comprising two floors, which can be accessed through a straight-lintel door found on the ground floor, this structure is difficult to date, given the vernacular nature of its somewhat irregular masonry work. The existence of multiple scars shows that it was subject to several transformations. However, the quadrangular and rectangular corbels place its chronology sometime within the Middle Ages, though they do not allow us to establish a specific chronology; therefore, we believe that this structure was built after the construction of the Romanesque Church.

We should not forget that, in the Portuguese Middle Ages, and particularly during the Romanesque Period, most conventual annexes were built using perishable materials and, therefore, didn't manage to survive to the present day. We only can only gather some knowledge about these constructions through documentary references or by comparison with foreign specimens or with legacies from the Gothic period that include, in Portugal, the example of Saint Mary of Alcobaca. The fact that in Cárquere there is still a series of buildings adjoining the Church, which might have fulfilled conventual functions during the Romanesque Period, makes this specimen even more illustrative of what may have been the spatial organization of a small rural monastery at that time.

This volume is connected by an arch to that which has come to be known as the "custodian's house". However, we should notice the persistence of scars in its upper register, suggesting an extension of what used to be the "conventinho" to the south or, alternatively, the existence of a passageway that allowed a connection between the monastic structure and the "custodian's house" (Duarte, 1994b: 162).

The entire ensemble is topped, on its southeast corner, by the robust crenellated tower that was built on a granite outcrop, with a clear Romanesque layout. This structure, with a defensive and manorial nature, may have been built in the same period as the monastic ensemble, which some authors date back to the last quarter of the 12th century (Graf, 1986: 86) or already to the 13th century (Pinto, 1982: 327). However, we should not forget that, according to Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida, these isolated towers located close to religious buildings were usually built after the churches are associated with. Besides, more than being used for hoisting bells, those structures – such as the ones in Manhente (Barcelos), Travanca or Freixo de Baixo (Amarante) – took on a clear defensive, in other words, manorial motivation (Almeida, 1971: 69).

Being separated from the Church's body, like in the Monastery of Travanca, this parallelepiped tower underwent a deep intervention in the 20th century, so we will go back to that subject later on.

The Church's chevet may have been built in the turn of the 13th to the 14th century, still within the Gothic style, as evidenced by the mullioned window with a small three-lobed oculus on the front wall, which is only visible from the outside since it is hidden by the main altarpiece on the inside. The structure chosen for the vault also refers us to the Gothic aesthetics, with ribs resting on columns, placed on the corners and closed by a finial. We should also notice the wide opening that, composed of a broken arch dotted by pearls, allows the access between the chancel and the existing sacristy. We shall come back to this subject later on. On the outside, the corbels suggest the same chronology: with a rectangular shape and predominant geometrical ornaments, some are dotted with pearls. However, interestingly enough, on the north side we identify a corbel in which there is a carved human figure resembling a bearded man sitting



Church. East façade. Mullioned window.



Church. Chancel.



Church. Chancel. Triumphal arch and vault.

with his legs crossed. Due to the fact that it has a more quadrangular shape than the others, we wonder if this corbel might be a reuse of a piece from the Romanesque construction.

The most likely situation is that this chevet replaced a previous Romanesque one. Only a section remains from this period; it is found on the existing nave, in the wall face on the Epistle side, as suggested by the three walled-up crevices that are clearly visible from the inside. Therefore, what we may conclude is that there was a clear reuse of the Romanesque construction during the Manueline [style also known as Portuguese late Gothic, which develops during the reign of King Manuel I (k. 1495-1521)] transformation of the nave's volume. In fact, we should note that the reuse of external walls, wall sections or just ashlar, as well as the reuse of the building's foundations, was quite common. The mason's initials found on the Church's south wall corroborate its chronology as a Romanesque building, besides confirming the good quality of its construction, which would have justified the fact that the Manueline builders kept this structure when they rebuilt or simply adapted the nave.

However, in the Church, and besides the wall on the Epistle side, there are still some prevailing traces, or reminiscences, from the Romanesque Period. We refer ourselves to the oculus that, on the main façade, surmounts the Manueline portal. Moreover, confirming a usual feature of most Romanesque buildings, we find a Romanesque crevice over the triumphal arch, whose impost shows a chequered motif. The archivolt is embedded in the thickness of the wall itself. Aesthetically, the triumphal arch is clearly Gothic, not only due to the large diameter of its span, but also due to the fact that its three archivolts – which are still round – show carved capitals with a refined language, in which floral and phytomorphic motifs prevail.

However, it is on the tomb chapel of the Resendes that we find this ensemble's most significant Romanesque sections.



Church. South façade. Nave.



The pantheon of the Resendes

Featuring a rectangular plan and opening to the space where once stood the cloister, the funeral chapel of the Resendes keeps four granite chests inside, whose monolithic lids are shaped as gabled roofs. Being about two meters long each, the ones placed on the left side of the chapel are framed by an arcosolium. The lids show the coat of arms of the Resendes⁵ and three inscriptions that identify the people who were buried in them: Vasco Martins de Resende (I), the grandson of Martim Afonso; his son, Gil Vaz de Resende; and the descendant of both, Vasco Martins de Resende (II).



Pantheon of the Resendes.

The first Vasco, documented in the first half of the 14th century, was a well-known troubadour, as well as a friend and supporter of Afonso Sanches, the illegitimate son of King D. Dinis. His later namesake, probably the troubadour's grandson, held the position of head of the parish council in the province of Entre-Douro-e-Minho during the reign of King Afonso V (1438-1481). He was the last member of the lineage of the Resendes that, since Egas Moniz (c. 1080-1146), had been ruling the “honra” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] or “beetria” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] whose spiritual seat was in Saint Saviour⁶. The wife of Vasco Martins de Resende (II), Maria Castro, took with her (after the death of her husband) the control over that “honra”, which she passed on, through her second marriage, to the Castros. From the 18th century onwards, the Castros held their position as lords of Resende, gaining that title as memory of the jurisdiction that they had indirectly received.

⁵ There are two black goats passing one above the other, which are made of gold and covered with gold drops.

⁶ In the Modern Period, the church of the Saviour of Resende (the name Saviour is still used), whose Romanesque construction was deeply changed, was the Pantheon of the Castros, the successors of the Resendes.

During the period of greatest influence of the Resendes, over the 13th and 14th centuries, this lineage exercised its powers in a wide region between Lamego and the river Paiva, where its members had material and religious interests, especially in Cárquere and Tarouquela (Cinfães) where Aldonça Martins de Resende, the daughter of Martim Afonso de Resende and Constança Rodrigues de Meira, ruled the spiritual and temporal domains for about sixty years (Sottomayor-Pizarro, 1997: 303-304)⁷. The remoteness of the court and the dilution of the surname along the female side weakened the prestige of a lineage whose memory eventually survived only in secondary lines.

Eça de Queiroz makes reference to Cárquere and, more specifically, to the family pantheon in his novel *A ilustre casa de Ramires* [The illustrious house of Ramires]. While describing the monastic space – albeit in broad and distorted strokes –, the 19th-century writer spared some words about the scenario that he may well have found while travelling across the Douro, or that he collected in the documents of his wife’s family, a legitimate descendant and the manager of the heritage inherited by Maria Castro:

“And then he was also taken by curiosity to visit this cloister, where he had not entered since childhood – when the Tower still kept its carriages mounted and the romantic miss Rhodes always chose Craquede for her thoughtful autumn afternoons. She pulled the mare, crossed the gate, went through the open space that was once the nave – filled with rubble, shards and loose stones from the vault that were drowning in the weeds. And through the crack on a wall that still held a piece of the altar – she penetrated the silent Afonsine cloister. Only two angled arcades are now left, sitting on rough pillars, paved with worn powerful slabs that the sexton had carefully swept that morning. And against the wall, where solid ribs drew other arches, stand the seven huge tombs of the ancient Ramires, blackened, plain, without decorations, like rough granite chests; some are heavily embedded in the flagstones, others are landing on balls splintered over centuries” (Queiroz, 1900: 229-230).

Apparently, the chapel’s structure is quite simple. However, it is here that we find the most significant architectural legacy bequeathed by the Romanesque Period in Cárquere: the crevice on the front wall. Composed of two round archivolt, this crevice is ornamented, both on the inside and the outside.

On the inside, a geometric language prevails, with carvings in relief on both archivolt; the inner archivolt has a zigzag motif, while on the outer one we identify a chained rope-shaped motif. However, if we look at it carefully, we can see that the voussoirs in this archivolt are not fully connected in terms of the motifs they depict, which leads us to believe that, for some reason, this crevice may have been reused, belonging to a different area of the building. That episode may make sense if we take into account the chronology assigned to the tomb chests kept in the pantheon and the fact that it is believed that the chapel may have already been built in the 15th century by Vasco Martins de Resende, according to the information contained in his will from 1433 (Duarte, 1994a: 178).

⁷ About this issue, please see Church of Tarouquela, Cinfães.



Pantheon of the Resendes. East façade.
Interior view of the crevice.



Pantheon of the Resendes. East façade.
External view of the crevice.

On the outside, the geometric-flavoured motifs of the crevice's outer archivolt stand out, while on each of the inner archivolt's voussoirs the highlight is put on the animals that are all facing forward and curving along the arch, which are not too modelled and show plenty of graphic elements. We stand before the so-called *beak-heads*, a motif imported from the Anglo-Saxon culture that, according to Manuel Real, was very well accepted among us as an outcome of the Benedictine action disseminated through São Pedro de Rates (Póvoa de Varzim) (Real, 1982: 59-60). Featuring a clear familiarity with the figures represented in the triumphal arch of Tarouquela, in the portal of the tower of Travanca and in a spare stave in the cloister of Paço de Sousa (Penafiel), Gerhard N. Graf says, regarding Cárquere, that we stand before "types of cats endowed, just below their heads, with a nondescript protuberance, similar to a beard" (Graf, 1986: 86).

These archivolts rest on sculpted capitals where, on one side, we find birds with their necks contorted and, on the other side, a bird with open wings whose head meets the capital's corner. Under this crevice there is a section of a frieze in which intertwined motifs stand out. If we take into account the quality of this ensemble, we may imagine the magnitude and artistic quality that the Romanesque Church of this Monastery would have had. This opinion is also shared by the aforementioned author, when he states that this crevice is a good proof of how it was possible to create artworks that went beyond the usual standards in stylistic and technical terms in Portugal, despite the atmosphere of instability created by the Reconquest and the reorganization of the territory (Graf, 1986: 86).



"The White" Virgin

Within the Gothic period, which marks the end of the presence of the Canons Regular in Cárquere, we find a Virgin with the Child which was called "the White". This is one of the best specimens of the works produced by Master Pêro de Coimbra's workshop or by a skilled craftsman who was close to him. This beautiful sculptural work stands out by the pronounced verticality of its shapes, shown in the Virgin's white robe (which gave it its popular name) and, especially, in the treatment of the hands that feature long slender fingers.

The Virgin is standing, holding a knot of her robe in her right hand and supporting a sitting Infant Jesus with her left hand. Her almost straight gaze provides her posture with a formalism that is still a legacy from the Medieval Period, which contrasts with the naturalist features found in her face and her son's face. He wears an open crown and a headdress. Over her robe, she wears a cloak tied around her chest with a brooch, whose design is similar to the ornaments found in other virgins made in master Pêro's workshop⁸.

Supported by the arm and hand of his Mother, the Child plays with the ribbon that buckles the robe just below the Virgin's bust. He seems to be looking at the sky and is also represented wearing a white robe from which the draped and buttoned sleeves stand out – a remarkable detail work.

Although the sculpture shows some polychrome and golden tones, as well as a good flesh-tone treatment, it is the whiteness of the robes of both the Virgin and her son that draw the attention of the observer and the devotees. The latter, especially women, quickly started calling it the White Virgin, invoking her in favour of good breastfeeding, which they sought by using powder obtained by scraping the image⁹. The therapeutic use of materials removed from sculptures was quite common and is related to the sacred qualities that communities ascribed to certain images, seen as having beneficial powers that were similar or greater to those of the relics.

The Church of Cárquere is, par excellence, a Marian sanctuary that received Augustinian and Jesuitic spiritual influences, both deeply attached to the Virgin and both proselytists when it came to the conveying their worships before and after the Counter-Reformation. It is within the sphere of influence of the former, whose mother-house was located in Coimbra, that we should understand the presence of the Gothic sculpture of the White Virgin in Cárquere.



Nave. Collateral altar on the Gospel side. Sculpture. "The White" Virgin.

⁸ Please see MUSEU NACIONAL DE ARTE ANTIGA – *Virgem com o Menino*. Inventário 1087, ascribed to Master Pêro, 2nd quarter of the 14th century.

⁹ This tradition is reported in 1758 by the parish priest of Cárquere (BORGES, Georges Botelho – [Memória paroquial de] Cárquere [Manuscript]. 1758. Available at the ANTT, Lisboa. PT/TT/MPRQ/9/142.). Other traditions related to birth and creation (which are intertwined with the more important tradition of the Prince's healing) lead us to the idea of a hagio and hiero-therapeutic sanctuary.

MANUELINE TRANSFORMATIONS

The Church of the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere underwent deep transformations within the context of the Manueline style that, from the early 16th century onwards, was very well accepted in Portugal. Since the Manueline was a decorative style, whose origin lies in the evolution of the flamboyant Gothic and in the specific economic, social and cultural conditions Portugal was experiencing at that time, it is easy to understand the acceptance and dissemination it achieved. The adoption of the so-called Manueline language in any building also appears as dignifying element.

It is in this sense that we should understand the stylistic update made in the Crosier Church of Saint Mary of Cárquere, especially because we know that in the 14th century this Monastery was the only house of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine in the bishopric of Lamego. This does not come as surprise to us if we bear in mind the deep transformation that the Crosiers' mother-house underwent between 1507 and 1515 in Coimbra. Therefore, it is natural that a monastic house, and those that were directly dependent on it, also followed the same principle of aesthetic update of its building by adopting a new taste and a new trend. Of course, when considering the introduction of the Manueline aesthetics in Cárquere, we should bear in mind its eremitical and peripheral nature, meaning that the solutions adopted here already show far more regional features.

So, in the path of art produced during the reign of King Manuel I (1495-1521) in the most important artistic centres – close to the assertion of royal power –, we see the creation of a number of artists who will spread all across the country taking a new language and a new *modus fazendi* with them, in a period of great architectural frenzy.

In Cárquere, the new main portal fits perfectly into the new aesthetic, as confirmed by the alfiz with flat transoms that surrounds the ogee arch, surmounted by a cross. Within it, three elegant round archivolt show the capitals whose fine carving work displays rope-shaped motifs, a very common theme in Manueline art. However, we should consider the scar that still remains over this Manueline portal, which shows us what might have been the size of the primitive Romanesque portal.

The portal on the north side façade was also modified in this period, most precisely in the early 16th century. Here, a multilobed and bent arch livens up the ensemble. Corbels with elegant foliages carved in relief indicate the prior existence of a porch-like structure on this façade, halfway up the wide crevices that illuminate the nave's interior, in addition to a small structure that probably sheltered only the portal. We should note that the central crevice is surmounted by an armillary sphere. The cornice is decorated with vegetal motifs carved in relief.

Although the transformation of the Church's portals is quite an obvious fact, the same cannot be said regarding the nave. As the lighting spans on the north side can attest, what is certain is that until any documentary evidence to this effect, we cannot say for sure if it was simply rebuilt or just transformed in this 16th century, taking advantage of a large part of the Romanesque building, as mentioned. The fact that the Romanesque crevices were preserved on



Church, West façade. Portal.



Church, North façade. Nave. Portal.



Church, North façade.



Church. Walls of the triumphal arch and the nave (behind the collateral altars). Mural painting. *Saint Anthony* and *Saint Lucia*.

the south side of the Church's structure, despite being walled up because this wall adjoins the "conventinho", may partly justify our thesis.

The mural painting campaign also dates back to this period; the sections that remained on the nave's front wall both on the Gospel and on the Epistle side, which are currently hidden by the collateral altars, were studied by Luís Urbano Afonso (2009: 180-184), whose interpretation we'll follow.

On the Epistle side, a sliding altarpiece hides a depiction of *Saint Anthony* (identified by a long-shaft wooden cross and the closed book on which there is a miniature Child) and of *Saint Lucia*, depicted as a courtesan (together with the palm of her martyrdom and the plate with a pair of eyes). Sharing a single space, these figures have a poorly sketched landscape as their background.

Despite being fragmented, Luís Urbano Afonso identified a set of four (?) *angels* fluttering around a black or dark-blue tapestry on the Gospel side. According to this author, and taking into account the display of the remaining elements, it is possible that the ensemble included the presence of an image of the altar's patron saint, which may have existed here under the shape of a statue or an easel painting, thus creating, through the mural painting composition, an active scene for the image, especially since the author is of the opinion that the angels seem to be holding (or depositing) a golden baldachin. Although there is no information about the figure of the patron saint, it did not belong to the Holy Family because the angels are holding palms of martyrdom in their hands.

There are also a few traces of decorative painting on the nave's north wall, close to the triumphal arch's wall, where we may identify several vegetal ornaments painted in white and the depiction of a wild man, a theme that Luís Urbano Afonso considers as being unusual in Portuguese painting.

According to the same author, knowing that, in 1541, the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere was given by King João III (1521-1557) to the Society of Jesus, it is quite possible that this mural painting campaign was already carried out under the patronage of the new order, meaning that its chronology would be positioned sometime between 1545 and 1560.



Church. Triumphal arch. Mural painting and collateral altars.

THE MONUMENT DURING THE MODERN PERIOD

In the late Middle Ages, Cárquere was an important cultural and economic centre within the Montemuro region. The leasing activities of this Monastery over the 15th century is quite remarkable, including acquisitions and term renewals, tax collections and demands that recall the strategic importance of certain movable properties or rights that had been acquired during the Middle Ages. Although the heritage of Cárquere was concentrated close to the house, split between hamlets, farmhouses, farms, settlements, vineyards, fisheries and small valleys in the neighbouring parishes of Resende and Cinfães, São Martinho de Mouros, São Romão, Freigil, Felgueiras, Feirão, Panchorra, Ramires, Ferreiros de Tendais, Oliveira do Douro and Cinfães, its priors managed properties and other rights (such as the patronage right), in a vast region between the Douro and the Beiras. They had interests in Alvarenga, Mões, Caria, Quintela da Lapa, Vila da Rua, Beselga, Penela da Beira, among others. Therefore, it is natural that such a wealthy estate, to which we should add the role of a sanctuary that was closely linked to the Crown, attracted the greed of men and institutions, as we may infered by the dispute it was involved in during the early decades of the 16th century.

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The independence of Cárquere, obtained through a bull of Nicholas III (p. 1277-1280) issued in 1279 (which subjected its clergymen to Rome, Italy), was lost in 1511 due to the death of the prior Diogo Coelho, which led the Monastery to be handed over to the Commander Francisco Suzarte. In the 13th century, the status of Cárquere was already standing out from the series of churches that paid taxes to support the Crusade of King Dinis, paying the considerable amount of 900 “libras” [former Portuguese currency unit] (Almeida & Peres, 1971).

However, it is from 1541 onwards that a new submission period begins, leading to the consequent death of the monastic space. In this year, King João III handed over the management of Cárquere to the introducer of the Society of Jesus in Portugal, Father and Master Simão Rodrigues (1510-1579). The new order, markedly urban, was not interested in the lonely and remote hamlet of Cárquere, so master Simão exchanged it for the monastery of Saint Anthony the Elder, near the castle of Saint George, in Lisbon, whose Commander was the bishop of Ressiona, Ambrósio Pereira. It seems that the house of Saint Anthony “brought little benefits” to Ambrósio Pereira, while to the Jesuits it was “rather convenient for it had a Church and plenty of houses”, as narrated in the chronicle of the Society of Jesus in Portugal (Teles, 1645: 80). The bishop moved to the Monastery of Cárquere, renovating it in spiritual and temporal terms, together with António Nogueira, a canon from Santa Cruz of Coimbra. However, upon the latter’s death, the Jesuits, who were not interested in the bucolic location but wanted to keep the revenues of Cárquere, resorted to the Cardinal Henrique making all possible efforts in order to take possession of its administration. In 1554, a severe and timely inquest fell upon the Monastery and its tenants, hastening the decline of the space as a spiritual refuge.

In that year, the Franciscan Francisco Quaresma arrives in Cárquere. Acting in his capacity as inspector, he starts a real persecution to the priors and canons of the Monastery. The allegations did not come only from external, popular and official witnesses from the region, but also from the

clergymen themselves, which shows the existence of strong dissensions and, perhaps, signs of greed and covetousness. So, the inquest revealed a distressing scenario for a Church that was being fully reformed: concubinage, nepotism, abuse of power and mismanagement. The main target was Melchior Sequeira, who was the main prior, but virtually all clerics were involved in the prosecution. One of the testimonies, provided by the parishioner João Gonçalves, is particularly significant:

“(…) It is appalling that all canons of this monastery, from the youngest to the eldest, have mistresses And have sons and daughters And go out at night And are very lazy and dishonest in their conduct, And seem more boys than friars And are very powerful and because of it being relatives of each other, they are very bold and deceitful and offensive in acts and disputes And they shall dishonour many women daughters of honourable men and leave them with no honour or marriage And, nevertheless, they are forced to keep silent and suffer their dishonour, afraid of being done much worse, because the said canons are all Brothers, uncles and nephews of each other And all the land is like that spiritually and temporally due to Melchior de Sequeira, prior of the hill fort who, after a mistress that he had been keeping for many years died eight or nine month before, dishonoured two lasses of very good families, parishioners of this monastery, daughters of poor men, and even had a baby girl with one of them, without no one holding him accountable (...)”¹⁰.

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This inspection was inconclusive. However, it determined the retirement of Ambrósio Pereira, who joined the monastery of Grijó (Vila Nova de Gaia) and was replaced by the Crosier António Nogueira who, shortly before his death in 1560, started a new investigation and its corresponding inquiry. The accused, Melchior de Sequeira, António de Almeida and Francisco Marques refused to appear before the court, fleeing ecclesiastical justice. Nevertheless, they did not manage to escape to the convictions that were imposed in absentia: the suspension of their orders and canonries (Assumpção, 1983: 200-2001).

In 1562 Cárquere was definitely handed over to the Society of Jesus and was no longer a monastic space – a fact confirmed by a bull of Gregory XIII (1572-1585) issued in 1578, which mentions the dissolution of the cloistered obligations and the confirmation of the transfer of the rents from the prior and conventual boards to the Jesuit College of Coimbra (Dias, 1976). The college created a vicarage and provided it with a secular man, Baltasar Botelho, who, having died in 1600, gave rise to a dispute¹¹.

There are few documented descriptions or testimonies of works carried out in the ecclesiastical and monastic structure during this tumultuous period. While it is possible that the pictorial campaigns in the nave are contemporary to the hectic times of change in the domain, it is certain that the Manueline building is still related to the Crosier administration and even to the period of Ambrósio Pereira (1554-1559)¹². It is between 1561 and 1576 that the slow agony

¹⁰ AUC – *Secção Universitária, Renda de Cárquere*. Estante 17, tabela 4, n.º 27, fl. 8. Even with the prejudices of the author and his time, this inspection was described by Assumpção (1893).

¹¹ This is included in a description from the 17th century. AUC – Estante 17, tabela 2, n.º 36, fólhos avulsos.

¹² Despite ascribing “major restoration works” to the priory of Ambrósio Pereira, the fact is that Dias (1976: 63) does not describe them.

of the complex begins; from then on it was handed over to two clergymen who were mere administrators and representatives of the College of Coimbra. Adapted to serve as a hospice, the “conventinho” became a housing unit for the canons who came from Coimbra to manage the Church and its domains; the cloister falls into ruin and with it the pantheon of the Resendes, which the Castros probably neglected, privileging the memory their own lineage.

The Jesuits, aware of the economic importance of the old Monastery, not only rehabilitated the devotional nature of the space, which was adapted to new functions at the time, but also promoted the management of the estate that was associated with it by adding capital gains, including the tithes of the churches of Alvarenga (Arouca) and Lumiães (Armamar). From Cárquere, the Jesuits built the economic and spiritual project of Lapa (Sernancelhe), which was considered as one of the most important Marian sanctuaries in Portugal until the 20th century¹³.

The 17th and 18th centuries are more expressive in terms of works, especially in terms of altarpieces. Their manufacture last throughout the entire 18th century, as evidenced by the associated documents and styles, showing a predominance of the National Style [1690-1725]¹⁴. According to a report written after the expulsion of the Jesuits (1759), they had an available amount of 14.000 “réis” [former Portuguese currency unit] per annum for the construction of the Church’s chancel and body¹⁵, wax for the tomb of the Holy Week, sermons, priests’ fees, remunerations of the deputy priest and the sexton, among other offerings intended for masses, the lamp of the Blessed Sacrament and the altar of Our Lady¹⁶. Although the Marian cult remains and prevails among all devotions, being represented by the invocations of Cárquere and the White Virgin, the



Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lapa (Sernancelhe). Source: IHRU archive.

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General interior view from the nave.

¹³ About this issue, please read Costa (2000).

¹⁴ The main altars - the one on the Epistle side and the one of Saint Sebastian, currently displayed in the sacristy - are National Style [1690-1725]. In 1705, master Luís Vieira da Cruz commissioned the work of the collateral altars of the Church of Cárquere to the attorney-general of the Society of Jesus (Queirós, 2006: 144, 305).

¹⁵ Excluded from the contract was the “left side altar inside the Chancel [...] because it belonged to Jacinto de Magalhaens from the City of Braga [...]”. About the issue of the construction there was a deed signed between the College and the bishop of Lamego, dated September 16th, 1675 (AUC – Estante 17, tabela 2, n.º 36, fólhos avulsos).

¹⁶ The document is not dated but is placed among other separate items from around 1800 (AUC, idem, *ibid.*).

Society of Jesus quickly replaced the Crosiers' devotions with images of the great men of their order: Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier, displayed on corbels in the main altarpiece.

But the greatest work of the Society of Jesus was the rehabilitation of Cárquere as an important sanctuary. The promotion of Marian and Christological worships was probably a mark of their intervention that was materialized in missionary activities which were certainly based in that house, the most important Jesuit centre in the Douro region. In the first case, we can only assume that they were somehow taking advantage of the miracle of King Afonso Henriques, which was linked to the foundational myths, in a period after 1640. On the other hand, they might have also been responsible for the rehabilitation of the grand festivities held in May and associated with the Holy Week – celebrations that still stood out at a regional level in the 19th and 20th centuries. There was a considerable number of processions that came to Cárquere from different parishes of Montemuro and from other parishes located outside that region. In the 19th century, the devotees still commended their body and soul to the Virgin of Cárquere, as proven by a few votive paintings that are kept in a museum in Lisbon (Chaves, 1970: 73-98)¹⁷.

With the asset confiscation (January 19th) and the extinction of the Society of Jesus in Portugal (September 3rd, 1759) through a political decree signed by the Marquis of Pombal, the Church and the heritage that was left from the monastic complex were transferred to the University of Coimbra, which became responsible for their administration. It performed its duties rigorously, as described in the extensive surviving documentation. Within the sphere of University bureaucracy, we highlight the concern with the management of movable and immovable heritage, as may be inferred from the request that the Royal Council of the University made to the parish priest of Cárquere in 1798. In his reply, he listed a detailed inventory of furnishings, implements and vestments, as well as of its income, expenses and a few statistical elements associated with the parish, which the rector Manuel Botelho Guedes described as a land of “self-sufficient, poor and miserable people”¹⁸. From this inventory we can collect a few notes about the artistic value of the Church's contents in the late 18th century, especially about the state of repair of the heritage, which was mostly worn and in need of palliative treatments.

In this context, the series of white, purple, red and black vestments kept in the sacristy's cases stood out. They had been used since the period of the Jesuits and, in 1798, they were old and ragged. The pulpit cloths “unfit to be shown in public”, the curtains for decorating altars on Holy Saturday¹⁹, a few trays, amices and bags with corporals and towels were also in a similar condition. Within the textile category, there was also a “sodairo” (a representation of the Shroud) bought for 12.000 “réis” at the building's expense.

In terms of furniture, the rector lists the already mentioned case for the vestments, a cabinet for candlesticks and cruets, stools, six torch holders, twelve benches (eight from the Church's body and three broken ones from the choir), two shelving units, twelve canopy poles and two chairs.

Apart from a “very old” chalice, the implements seemed to be recent pieces, some of them bought or already repaired at the Royal Treasury of the University's expense. The rector also listed



Church. Chancel. Main altarpiece.

¹⁷ Three paintings alluding to the miracles of the Virgin of Cárquere are still preserved.

¹⁸ At the time, the parish had 248 housing units, 755 persons of age and 79 children (AUC, idem, *ibid.*).

¹⁹ AUC, idem, *ibid.*

two silver ciboria, a silver monstrance, a thurible, four chalices, a tin situla (with its aspergillum), a wash basin and two pairs of flagons (old and made of tin). This collection also included a silver processional cross, “called the People’s Cross”. The Virgin of Cárquere had an “ancient silver crown with its stones and a scent of gold” and the Infant Jesus featured another one, also made of silver but smaller. Above the sculptures of Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier glittered two aureoles, probably made of the same material (the rector does not mention it).

The treasure included a set of relics with a piece of “the authentic Holy Cross inside a case covered with velvet and with silver plates on its four corners”. This work has been renewed and offered by judge João Ferreira²⁰.

In terms of imagery, besides the aforementioned sculptures of Saint Francis Xavier and Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the two Holy Christs – a much venerated one on the collateral altar and an “indecent” one in the sacristy – stand out. The state of the latter was partly a result of the place where it was displayed: the sacristy that, “for being under a room belonging to Joana Teodora from where all sort of filth was continuously falling on the priests and vestments”, suffered the hardships of negligence. This situation was a consequence of the state in which the Church and the attached houses had fallen after the confiscation of the Jesuitic assets²¹.

Indeed, after the expulsion of 1759, the Church of Cárquere kept on being used as a parish church, but the structures of the old convent, the priests’ house and other annexes were sold to an individual, the abbot of Lazarim, who, according to the inspectors’ report, took possession of the monument, handling the Church as if it were his own (he even claimed its patronage) and performing undignifying acts in a holy place. The inspections carried out during the second half of the 18th century inveighed against the abbot who proceeded with his abuses and, after him, against his daughter, Joana Teodora da Costa, mentioned in the inventory from 1798. Some of the walling-up works probably date back to this period, such as the closing of the door that provided a direct access from the old priests’ residence to the Church’s body²².

Moreover, and as we have already noted, even before the complex was emptied by the Crozier friars, the residential areas and cloister were already threatening to collapse, a condition that kept getting worse over the following centuries. Between 1775 and 1797, there were several complaints and admonitions from the inspectors, including the bishops of Lamego, Manuel

20 Although the rector doesn’t clarify it, he was probably the judge João Ferreira Ribeiro de Lemos, the brother of the bishop of Lamego, Manuel de Vasconcelos Pereira. He was married to Joaquina Doroteia de Melo Malheiro, the representative of the majorat of Velude and the owner of the house of the Enxertado, which was visible from Cárquere. Velude is a small village in the parish of Cinfães where, in the 14th century, the settlor of the majorat (Vasco Esteves de Matos) had his manor house.

21 This inventory appears as a consequence of the request filed by José Monteiro da Rocha, the vice-rector and chairman of the Treasury Board of the University of Coimbra, on January 31st, 1798 (AUC, idem, *ibid.*).

22 In 1783 there was already some information: “and the said parish church was then subject to the plight of being considered a chapel of a private home, and in addition to these and other nuisance and demands, was the one that caught the aforementioned Abbot [of Lazarim] with His Excellency the Bishop of Lamego on the trap door lock that ran from those same houses down to the choir of the church, surrounding from almost all sides, with its houses, the Church and its Tower, with nothing in the path but farms, thereby oppressing the Residence of the Parish Priests and wishing, alas, to claim the right of Patronage, intending, as it actually intended to exclude, by demand, the same University, especially deploying the Church from the Factory House, called Lamoza, of which the purchaser took possession, and the sacristy due to the situation of the houses below, a room exposed to too much indecency by excessive noises made therein, thus pouring water, carrying other furniture, singing when purchasers, or their heirs, attended, sometimes even converting the sacristy’s upper room into a kitchen (...)”, request dated 10-5-1786 (AUC, idem, *ibid.*).



Church. West façade before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN (1949). Source: IHRU archive.

de Vasconcelos Pereira and João Binet Pincio, who personally visited Cárquere. We believe that not all recommendations were followed, however we should point out some repairs.

In 1775, through his clerk, Manuel de Vasconcelos Pereira highlights the need to repair the chancel's vault and the pavements of the Church, the choir and the cloisters. There were glass panes missing and the sacristy – subject to the lack of civility of the owners of the chamber located above that space – had to be moved. It was also necessary to find three albs, mend the vestments, buy flagons and a bell²³.

The list of the money spent on the repair of the Church's floor, which included the installation of 34 graves for adults and 12 for children, was made in 1782. The steps to the chancel were put in place, the chancel was paved with slabs and there was a certain amount spent on the steps of the collateral altars. Bars were placed on the three crevices of the chancel and Church's body (together with the corresponding glass panes). The doors of the cloister were repaired, the Church tower was provided with new locks and the roofs were built using wood and roof tiles. The bell's iron fitting was also part of this work. Four years later, in 1786, there was a request for the renovation of the ciborium, a silk veil and the repair of the thurible, the incense boat and the people's cross. Black vestments for the celebrations of the Holy Week, two albs and a parish chair were missing²⁴.

On April 21st, 1788, the people's judge, António Loureiro Dias, ordered the purchase of “a new predella with tin candlesticks for the main altar” and, only two years later, during a visitation, the bishop of Lamego ordered the replacement of a ciborium (was it still the one from 1786?) whose condition was “more indecent than words could say”²⁵.

In 1794, João Binet Pincio asked for a new monstrance and ordered the increase of the parish priest's fee in 20 bushels of wheat, 40 of corn and 20 “almudes” [a Portuguese unit of measurement of volume used in Portugal, Brazil and other parts of the Portuguese Empire. The exact value of the “almude” was different from region to region. Portugal (modern standard): 16.7 liters] of wine.

However, the development of far-reaching works on the ecclesial building structure and its annexes only occurred in 1797. In that year, on September 4th, there was a commission of works worth 200.000 “réis” to fix the Church's transverse door; to tile, set up, lay the beams, pave and rebuild the tower's ladder; to whitewash the Church's interior and to plaster the cloister; to set up the galilee and give it a line; to pave the residence's houses and to build two new rooms by opening a door in the “loge” [storage room] of one of them. All of this was commissioned to the artists Joaquim José, from Enxertado, and José Pinto de Figueiredo, from Paços²⁶.

Around 1805 “part of the cloisters called Chapter House, which had belonged to the Canons Regular, and where the prelates of this Bishopric have chaptered collapsed”. The sacristy was finally moved to this location after the removal of the mobile assets at risk from the space threatened by the family of the abbot of Lazarim, as indicated in a request submitted by the rector Manuel Botelho Guedes, who also asked for the necessary financial support to ensure the works and the repair of the bell, or the purchase of a new one to replace the one that was broken.

23 AUC, idem, ibid.

24 AUC, idem, ibid.

25 AUC, idem, ibid.

26 AUC, idem, ibid.

INTERVENTIONS IN THE MONUMENT (19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES)

The 19th century, the Romantic century par excellence, was characterized by the gradual assertion of an entire culture around monuments, which exalted their historical value, a value whose safeguard became urgent in order to justify the origin of the Nation to future generations. As a mirror of the international atmosphere that was emerging, and despite the delay, we can also see that in Portugal, during the 18th-century, there was not only an increasing interest in the “documents” of the Nation, but also a growing sense of responsibility for their protection, considering the appeals we find both in literature and in the press²⁷.

Using the specific stage of the formation of nationalities as a starting point and by identifying the monuments of that period as the human creation that they are, the 19th century will simultaneously assign them a memory-related value as “documents” that witnessed that very past. Here we should recall the etymological origin of the word monument, deriving from the Latin *monumentum* that, in turn, derives from *monere* (to warn, to remember), which questions the memory (Choay, 2000: 16).

Quoting Lúcia Rosas (1995: 90), “the prestige of “old” architecture is a timeless phenomenon”. So, it is in this sense that we should understand the few interventions that were carried out between 1806 and 1832 in this Church, which historiography has come to voluntarily associate with the childhood of King Afonso Henriques. Therefore, according to the same author, it is quite natural that at a time when historical values prevailed, reflecting a constant yearning for a specific period of the past, there were attempts to “remake” the parts of the monument that were ruined.

Choosing the solution of “demolishing to rebuild”, these interventions shouldn’t yet be understood as restoration works; in this specific case, the works indicate that these interventions weren’t always modifications characterized by the taste of the period in which they were carried out (Rosas, 1995: 90). So, providing a response to the damages reported in 1805, right in the following year “a piece of the cloister which is collapsing will be demolished and rebuilt using only chestnut wood and new tiles, in order to have the same height as the sacristy” (Rosas, 1995: 90). Despite the fact that, in this first intervention, the new roof was built at a higher level in order to match the sacristy’s height, the same did not happen during the intervention that was carried out probably between 1829 and 1832, which restored the building to its previous shape. At that time, the Board of the Royal Treasury of the University of Coimbra made payments to stonemasons for repairs carried out in the Church, the sacristy and the residence of Cárquere (Rosas, 1995: 90). It is likely that this residence was the space which historiography has commonly been calling the “conventinho”.

We only have further information about interventions carried out in the Church and Monastery under study more than a century later. As far as we could ascertain, it was only in 1949 that the DGEMN – Direção-Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais [General Directo-

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²⁷ About the evolution of facts, concepts, means and personalities who presided over the raising of awareness towards heritage and the safeguard of built heritage in Portugal in the 19th century, please read Rosas (1995).



View of the Monastery before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN. Source: Nuno Resende's private collection.



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

rate for Buildings and National Monuments] conducted a thorough photographic survey of Saint Mary of Cárquere in order to assess its needs. This survey (Carvalho & Costa, 2001), by Alberto da Silva Bessa, the chief architect of the 2nd Section of the DGEMN, clearly shows the relative state of neglect in which the built ensemble could be found.

Once the needs were assessed, there were several improvement works carried out in the 1950s. As far as we could ascertain, the building works were not only aimed at the general preservation of the existing building, but they also tried to emphasize an actual Medieval nature, though rhetorically highlighted through the reconstruction of the tower. The south façade, “which was tilted and threatening to collapse” (Pinto, 1982: 327), was first anchored, and then entirely rebuilt. So, the works related to the tower were already taking place in 1951 and went on during most of this decade, given that they were only working on the upper openings of the south wall in 1957.

The small galilee built in the 19th century existed, at least, until 1952. Five years later it had already been demolished, as well as the wall that separated the churchyard from the cemetery, but the whitewashed background remained; however, it was removed in the meantime, in a praise to granite. In fact, we should mention that in the restoration works carried out by DGEMN it was usual to emphasize the granite's purity both externally – by removing the whitewash that covered so many of our churches – and internally, through the elimination of the stucco coating in some spaces (like in the naves of the Porto cathedral, for example) or the removal of the whitewash layer. Cárquere also fits into this last option because its interior was completely whitewashed. Today, in this Church, we see an assertion of granite, perhaps understood here as a sign of antiquity.



Walkway over the arch connecting the "Custodian's House" to the "Conventinho" before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN (1955). Source: IHRU archive.



Walkway over the arch connecting the "Custodian's House" to the "Conventinho", as it is today.

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Besides, a careful examination of the photographs that document the moment immediately prior to this intervention allows us to verify that the joints of the ashlar on the nave's north façade and on the chancel's back wall were also whitewashed, thus contrasting with the granite and creating a chiaroscuro effect. We believe that it was during the cleaning process of the latter that the Gothic mullioned window, which had been walled up until then, was revealed.

It was also during this large-scale intervention that the two-flight stair that allowed accessing the high choir from the outside and from the north elevation was demolished, as proved by a clear scar visible on the Gospel side. Currently, the existence of this access stair is still revealed externally by a scar on the wall, approximately under the large window located closest to the western façade, which was opened only in 1994 as an attempt to provide the first third of this elevation with some aesthetic and formal coherence.

In the following decade, there were improvement works carried out in the so-called "custodian's house" (1962-1964); these included the demolition of the passageway over the arch that connects this house to the "conventinho", which had been turned into a barn in the meantime. This upper volume, now turned into a "ruin", remains as the memory of a built space that was intended to be greater.

In the 1970's, besides repairing the Church's roof, they also opened the arch that connects the chancel with the existing sacristy, on the Gospel side. This intervention led the tomb chest of Ambrósio Pereira to be moved to the sacristy and the altar of the Souls, or of Saint John, to be transferred to the so-called Lamosa room, which was then turned into a "secluded and pious sanctuary with a beautiful image of Our Lady of Cárquere, connected to the church's nave" (Pinto, 1982: 329). The fact that this tomb was the base for the aforementioned altar explains the reason why it is mutilated, since it is possible that it once sheltered a corpse. Indeed, we



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



Church. Chancel. Arch connecting the chancel to the sacristy before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN. Source: IHRU archive.



Church. Chancel. Arch connecting the chancel to the sacristy, as it is today.

should note that the plan published by Vergílio Correia in 1924 shows the lower floor of the “conventinho” as a unified space, while currently it is divided into two spaces, housing also the parish hall (Correia, 1924: 57). That intervention is due to Father Abel de Sousa and was inaugurated on May 23rd, 1965 (Pinto, 1982: 329). It was also in this period that the top floor of this volume was turned into a performance hall, with its corresponding stage (Correia, 1924).

In addition to the conduction of an archaeological excavation in the building’s surroundings (1997), the subsequent years were marked by the implementation of several building preservation works, particularly focused on the roofs (2004) (Carvalho & Costa, 2001). The Monastery of Cárquere became part of the Route of the Romanesque in 2010. [MLB / NR]

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Church. Sacristy. Tomb of Ambrósio Pereira.

CHRONOLOGY

1125: Friar Teodoro de Melo read (in 1732) an inscription found on the walls of the Residential Manor, which he deemed as being a reference to the foundation of the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere;

2nd quarter of the 12th century: foundation of the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere;

1146: in his will, Egas Moniz is likely to have left several legacies to the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere;

12th-13th century: construction of the monastic ensemble of Saint Mary of Cárquere, including the tower;

1279: the Bull of Pope Nicholas III (1277-1280) confirms the autonomy and prerogatives of the Monastery of Cárquere;

13th-14th century: construction of the Church's Gothic chancel;

1320: the Monastery of Saint Mary of Cárquere was the only monastery held by the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine within the diocese of Lamego;

1st half of the 15th century: possible construction of the pantheon of the Resendes;

16th century: Manueline transformation of the Church of Saint Mary of Cárquere;

1511: the Monastery of Cárquere was handed over to the commendatory Francisco Suzarte;

1541: by order of King João III (1521-1557), Cárquere becomes part of the assets of the Society of Jesus;

1545-1560: mural painting campaign on the Church's volume;

1554: official inquiry to the Monastery and its canons;

1562: Cárquere is definitely handed over to the Society of Jesus;

1578: a Bull of Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585) dissolves Cárquere's cloistered obligations and confirms the transfer of its rents from the prior and convent boards to the Jesuit college of Coimbra;

1600: with the death of the vicar Baltasar Botelho, a dispute between the Jesuits and the bishop of Lamego breaks out over the ownership and presentation of the Church of Cárquere;

17th and 18th centuries: design of Cárquere's altarpieces;

1759: with the expulsion of the Jesuits and the confiscation of their assets, the monastic complex of Cárquere falls under the administration of the University of Coimbra;

1775-1797: the inspectors make several complaints and admonitions concerning the state of disrepair of the complex of Cárquere and its liturgical furnishings;

1797: Joaquim José, from Enxertado, and José Pinto de Figueiredo, from Paços, were hired to carry out thorough works in the ecclesiastical building's structure and annexes;

1798: upon a request by the Royal Council of the University of Coimbra, the parish priest of Cárquere prepared a comprehensive inventory of the furniture, implements and vestments, as well as of the incomes, expenses and a few statistical elements regarding the parish;

2nd half of the 18th century: the door that connected the priests' house to the Church's body was walled up;

1806: repair works in the cloister, where a wall had collapsed in the previous year;

1829-1832: several masonry works were carried out in Cárquere's Church, sacristy and residence;

From the 1950s to the present day: the remaining ensemble of the Monastery of Cárquere has been subject to several conservation interventions;

2010: the Monastery of Cárquere became part of the Route of the Romanesque.

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