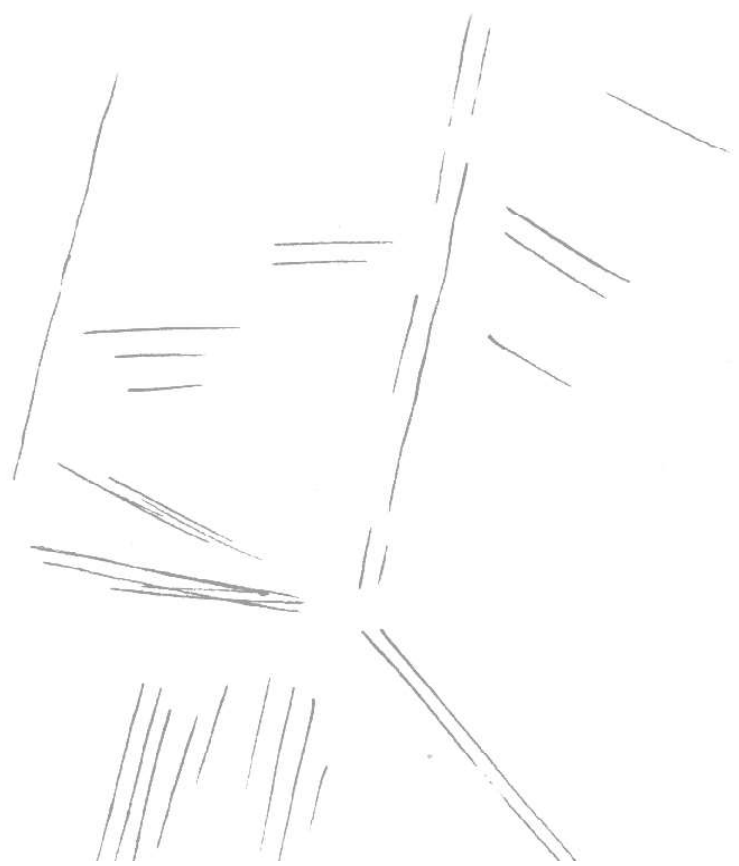
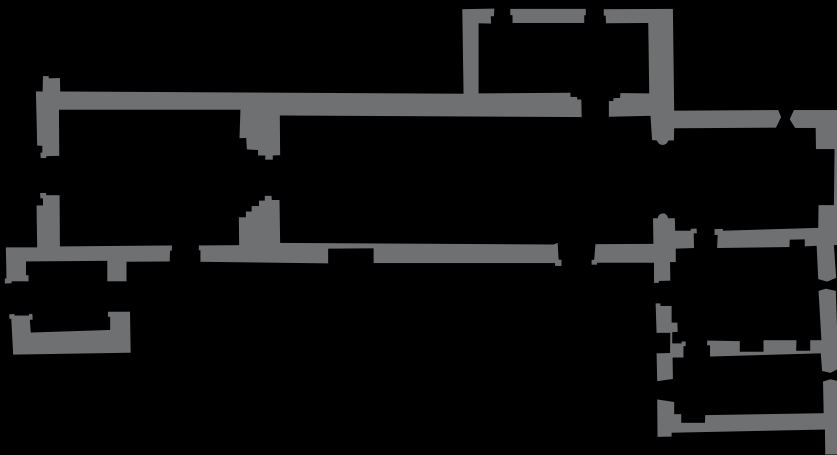




MONASTERY
OF SAINT
MARTIN
OF MANCELOS
AMARANTE



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Plan.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The toponym Mancelos appears in the “Carta da Província de Entre-Douro-e-Minho”, from 1729, made to integrate the work *Mapa de Portugal antigo e moderno*, by João Baptista de Castro (1762). Located close to Amarante, pointed out and highlighted in the map with a circular defensive structure that in fact never existed, Mancelos is graphically depicted as the memory of a Monastery and a “couto” [a type of Portuguese administrative division], whose importance and autonomy endured in regional and national memory, despite its extinction and incorporation in other monastic institutions. The memory, provided by tradition, stones and documents was, thus, translated into a first cartography abiding by this logic of importance, not always geographically understood, but that an analysis of the Humanistic and Illuminist memoirs would help to explain.

The fact that Mancelos, like so many other monastic institutes from the period of the nation’s foundation, is associated with the name of King Afonso Henriques reveals the interest in bequeathing the importance of its creation for posterity despite sometimes lacking the necessary documentation. However, the building’s location and the extension of the remaining traces are real legacies of its importance and the need for its foundation: ensuring social and economic control over a region where, in the 12th century – the chronology associated with its foundation –, there was already a convergence of several political interests.

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Entre-Douro-e-Minho province (adapted from Castro, 1762).



Aerial view.

Built on the edge of the tilled plain of the brook of Cruz, Mancelos is, therefore, a legacy of the interest that manorial and ecclesiastic powers had in taking the proper advantage of a region where different boundaries and jurisdictions met. While, in the Middle Ages, Mancelos was part of the “terra de Sousa” [a type of Portuguese administrative division], in the Modern Period, it appears as a “couto” under the influence of the municipality of Santa Cruz de Ribatãmega. Close to Amarante and to the limits of the diocese of Braga, to which it belonged until the 19th century, it was eventually disturbed by the interference of patrons’ relatives and fell into a commendatory management; it was donated in 1540 by King João III (k. 15231-1557) to the Dominicans from Amarante.

Although the foundation of the Monastery of Mancelos is ascribed to the couple Mem Gonçalves da Fonseca (from the Ribadouro family) and Maria Pais Tavares¹, who lived during the reign of King Sancho II (k. 1223-1245), it is likely for the Monastery to have been under the sphere of influence of the Portocarreiro family. The genealogical narratives mention Raimundo Garcia (the second known element from that lineage, documented between 1129 and 1152),

¹ One of the elegies about this couple’s connection to Mancelos is the one written by Francisco Cræsbeeck (1992: 231). According to this memoirist, the toponym “Mancelos” came from the name and surname of the founder “Mem Gonçellos” (Mem Gonçalves), from the “honra” [a type of Portuguese administrative division] of Fonseca, who would have built his manor house here (despite stating to be from Fonseca, São Martinho de Mouros (Resende), which immediately strikes us as quite odd).

as “the one who provided something great to Mancelos” (Sottomayor-Pizarro, 1997: 912). The cenoby already existed, at least, in 1120, as specified in the Bull of Pope Callixtus II (p. 1119-1124) regarding the terms of the diocese of Porto (Ribeiro, 1810-1836: 6). So, it is possible for its foundation to have taken place in the first quarter of the 12th century, during the life of Garcia Afonso and Elvira Mendes, the first members of the Portocarreiro lineage². Mancelos was passed on as a patronage and family ecclesiastical space to their descendants, particularly the Fonseca family, and is, therefore, considered a true paradigm of private churches³. In fact, in the 14th century, the number of familiars who claimed rights and revenues associated with this Monastery was truly impressive⁴. The series of assets included subsidiary chaplaincies, among which was the one of Ermida do Douro (Cinfães), located on the south bank of the Douro⁵.

Although the authority of the Canons Regulars of Saint Augustine is associated with the initial ownership of the Monastery, the order itself, in its chronicles, reveals an almost complete lack of knowledge on the origin of the monastic space, a fact that reveals the strategies of private foundation, more concerned with territorial domain than with the creation of evangelising centres.

In the 15th century, the archbishop of Braga, Francisco da Guerra (?-1467) and his entourage were accommodated in the Monastery for several times. The archbishop, who was simultaneously the commander of the monastic institute, dealt with the issue of the regency following the death of King Duarte (k. 1433-1438) from Mancelos. There are records of his presence in this Monastery between the 1430's and the 1460's, so this was a privileged spot in the itineraries and inspections of the active prelate and, perhaps, of the following ones (Marques, 1978: 89-182).

In 1540, King João III (k. 1521-1557) donated Mancelos to the monks of Saint Gonçalo of Amarante, a deed confirmed by Pope Paul III (p. 1534-1549) two years later. The rights associated with the “couto”, where there was a judge, a prosecutor and a magistrate that worked in the civil area – given that the criminal area was handled by Santa Cruz de Ribatãmega – were transferred to this convent in Amarante.

Francisco Craesbeeck summarises the transfer of Mancelos and justifies it very clearly: “under the obligation to oblige (...) the canons [of Saint Gonçalo] and provide (...) friars to India, Brazil and other conquests of the Kingdom, and to preach and indoctrinate residents and neighbours of the said “couto” and parish” (Craesbeeck, 1992: 232), i.e., the transference of the revenues and rights from the old institute to the Dominican sphere favoured the order's catechetical service and, specially, the flourishing of their house in Amarante.

After the 16th century, Mancelos became a centre of administrative and evangelising activity associated with the Preachers of Saint Gonçalo of Amarante, which was one of the most important monastic complexes of that order in Portugal.

² Little is known about this couple except that they had two sons, the already mentioned Raimundo and Monio Garcia (Sottomayor-Pizarro, 1997: 912).

³ On private churches, please read Oliveira (1950: 126).

⁴ On this subject, please read the work by Sottomayor-Pizarro (1997), which mentions several descendants from the Portocarreiros and Ribadouro lineages, as well as relatives from Mancelos. They were compiled by São Paio (1987: 45-71).

⁵ José Marques (1988: 809) places it in the land of Panoias, but it is actually the chapel of D. Pinho, after the church of Saint Peter, a parish on the south bank of the Douro and in the term of Ferreiros de Tendais.



West façade.

THE MONUMENT IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The Church of Mancelos features a longitudinal plan and is defined by a considerable difference between volumes from which the rectangular nave stands out; it is higher than the chancel and the galilee, both with square plans. Showing a clear contrast with this longitudinal volume, the bell tower adjoined to the south side of the galilee emerges as a vertical element that stands out from the surrounding landscape. First of all, this monumental ensemble stands out for integrating this massive tower, but also and mainly because it still preserves the galilee in front of the main façade, which is sheltering the portal.

The Monastery of Mancelos was built in a place still currently dominated by agricultural activities, as proven by its surrounding landscape, which is characterised by a rotational use of small plots of land that, together with herding, are a sign of an intensive use of the lands. The monasteries were always very attracted by fertile agricultural lands – which provided their main livelihood –, particularly during the Middle Ages. And these were considered even better if they allowed herding activities and if, close by, there were forests to supply wood, which was such an essential element back then... As explained by João de Barros around 1549, in the valley where the Monastery of Mancelos was built, a monastery of “Canons Regular of Saint Au-

gustine, there was plenty of “Vinho Verde” [slightly sparkling white or red wine from Northern Portugal] and many trees, thus producing each eight and ten almudes [former Portuguese unit of measurement] of Wine” (Barros, 1919: 77).

Although it has undergone several transformations over the centuries, this Church maintained significant portions of the Romanesque Period. The existence of an inscription engraved on a loose ashlar, which may still be found today in a space located next to the Church, where once stood the cloister, near the sacristy, takes us back to 1166 (Barroca, 2000: 314-315). We should not forget that this cenoby dates back, at least, to 1120. In this inscription we can read: IN Era M^a CC^a IIII^a.



Cloister. Inscription.

However, as it only mentions one date, “Era of 1204”, this epigraph tells us nothing of the nature of the event being commemorated, especially since it is currently out of context. Nonetheless, according to Mário Barroca, there is an aspect we should take into account, which is precisely that of its epigraphical quality, certainly achieved due to an *ordinatio*, i.e., following specific pagination and shape guidelines that had been previously defined (Barroca, 2000: 107). The characters were outlined on the support using a paintbrush and ink, charcoal, the dry point technique or even a chisel, following the desired layout. In this inscription there are several features that lead us to conjecture the existence of an *ordinatio*: the regularity of the characters that define a balanced and elegant calligraphy and are centred on the space limited by the two lines, defining the height of the rule. And, so, this is the reason why it is believed that this inscription may commemorate a particularly important moment in the monument’s history, perhaps the “Consecration” or the “Dedication” of the Romanesque building (Barroca, 2000: 315).

Thus, by comparing this chronology with the remaining Romanesque traces of Mancelos, which tell us of a later period, we believe it is safer to say that we stand before a building that, at some point during the 13th century, was subject to deep rebuilding works. Or, alternatively, and as a mere conjecture, considering the fact that this building was subject to deep transfor-

mations during the Modern Period, is it possible that this epigraph actually belonged to the chancel, thus meaning that it commemorates an act of consecration or dedication? Bearing in mind the slowness of the Romanesque construction process, we cannot fail to suggest the possibility that this building began being built in the mid-12th century and that its chancel was opened to worship after its dedication and consecration, possibly in 1166. An interruption in the construction process or a slower evolution of the nave's construction may fully justify the late nature of the portal that, unsurprisingly, was only finished more than a century later. We may suggest several hypotheses that shall only be clarified, one day, through documentary sources. But, when these are absent, there is nothing better than the monument itself – a material legacy of the utmost importance – to provide us with a lot of information.

The galilee is an extremely simple volume. Opened by a slightly broken arch that allows accessing the interior, its gable is interrupted by a niche that once may have sheltered an image. Would it belong to Saint Martin, the patron saint? Probably. Given the difference in height between the galilee and the Church's façade, it is possible to see the façade's gable rather well. Here we find a series of merlons similar to the one that decorated the galilee (which recall the outline of the Gothic front corbels), as well as a narrow crevice that allows illuminating the nave's interior. On the top of the gable's angle there is a terminal cross with a Baroque outline.

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Church, West façade, Galilee, External view.



Church, West façade, Galilee, Interior view.

The main portal of the Church of Mancelos is sheltered inside the wooden-covered galilee; this is one of the elements that allows us to better define a chronology for the construction of this building. Its four slightly broken archivolts rest on elegant capitals whose exquisitely designed sculpture is already very attached to the frustum, a revealing feature of the upcoming Gothic style. There are bas-relief botanic motifs based on the model of the Corinthian volutes that provide the ensemble with a certain homogeneity, despite the compositional differences between the various capitals. Here, we identify several types of stylised and open leaves, similar to fleurs-de-lys⁶; they are combined with phytomorphic motifs that form twistings and remind Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida of a few specimens from the collegiate of Guimarães⁷. The elaborate impostos composed of overlapping round elements confirm the late nature of the ensemble whose monumentality is emphasised by the dihedral tori found on the archivolts; the origin of this element is clearly associated with Porto and we find it in other monuments like Travanca and Freixo de Baixo, both in Amarante. The surrounding arch shows us a decorated modénature with chained geometric motifs. The plain tympanum is supported by two corbels where two Atlas-shaped figures, a female one and a male one, were carved.



Church. West façade. Portal. Capitals and corbel.

⁶ We find the iconographic interpretation suggested by Lois García (1997: 18-27) for this portal's capitals somewhat exaggerated. On the observer's right, from the outside to the inside, the author identifies a lily, almond trees, a twisted vine and a lemon tree. On the opposite side and in the same sense, he identifies an olive tree, reinterpretations of the almond tree and the vine and, finally, a palm tree.

⁷ In general, the capitals of the cloister of the collegiate of Our Lady of the Olive Tree of Guimarães are already considered Gothic; part of their foliage is very naturalistic and others are the origin of the late Gothic capitals featuring protruding panels (Almeida, 1978: 228, 233).





Church. South façade. Nave. Portal.

So, it is based on the elements that shape this portal that one may suggest a late chronology for this Church (or rather, of part of this Church?), sometime during the turn of the 13th century to the 14th century (Almeida, 1978: 233).

Francisco Craesbeeck (1992: 234) mentions an inscription whose current location is unknown: MCCC / OBI[it] M / ARTINUS.

According to the author, this ashlar was placed on the jamb of the access door to the cloister, i.e., on the south side. Although currently we have no idea about the whereabouts of this funerary inscription, it is likely that Martin was the abbot of the Monastery of Mancelos. When, in 1258, the inspectors sent by King Afonso III (1248-1279) arrive in Mancelos, the most important witness they hear is a man called “Martinus Martini” who, despite not being explicitly treated as an abbot, probably held such position (Barroca, 2000: 889). So, by alluding to the decease of Martinus in 1262, the existence of this inscription makes us wonder about the importance that the abbot had at the time in order to be celebrated in this way. Nearly a century later, the Monastery of Mancelos contributed with 600 “libras” [former Portuguese currency unit] to the crusades, a significant amount when compared to the one that was charged to other monasteries from the same region in 1320 (Sousa, 2005: 190). Therefore, we immediately infer the regional, or even national, importance that the monastic ensemble of Mancelos achieved, and so its reconstruction or improvement intervention in such an early period is not at all surprising. At the same time, its peripheral nature in relation to major artistic centres may easily justify the containment that characterises the built ensemble as a whole.

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The tower, addorsed to the galilee, proudly shows its Medieval masonry work composed of ashlar with different sizes. It is surmounted by a double belfry on the main façade, which is placed on a cornice and reveals a Classicist language which is the result of an intervention carried out in the Modern Period, in the 18th or 19th century, as proven by the pinnacles and small fins that crown it. On the side and rear elevations we also see a series of merlons with a pyramidal profile which recall the rhetorical military nature that was intentionally associated with this type of buildings. We enter the Church through a round-arched portal interrupted by a lintel and, along its axis, from the bottom to the top, we see a narrow crevice and a rectangular window.

The Church’s masonry work is irregular and it’s both square and rectangular ashlar appear in different sizes. On some of them it is possible to identify a few initials, which are another evidence of the late nature of the building of Mancelos. In addition to the sections of Romanesque walls still visible on the side elevations, a series of plain modillions, whose shape is similar to those of the closed corbels that support wooden beams, immediately stands out. On both façades, two rectangular glass panes, characteristically Modern, were torn in the Romanesque vestments, for better lighting of the nave’s interior. On the south side, halfway up the nave, a series of corbels suggests the existence of a porch-like structure. Here there is also a straight-lintel door that allows accessing the nave’s interior.

We should not forget that this side of the Church is facing the space where once there was once a cloister. This must contribute to the understanding of the location of the arcosolium, which shelter a sepulchral chest and is opened at ground floor level. In 1944, Armando de Mattos mentioned this tomb with a “zoomorphic representation” (Barroca, 1987: 373) for the first



Bell tower.

Church. West façade. Portal. Corbel.



Church. North wall. Nave. Initial.



Church. South façade.

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time. Mário Barroca integrated this sarcophagus in the family of those that have “simple motifs” (Barroca, 1987: 373). The author of the article in *Guia de Portugal...* mentions the three curious symbols that appear next to a figurative medallion: a cross and two jennets (Dionísio, 1985: 446).



Church. South façade. Nave. Arcosolium.

In order to allow the access to the cloister, an essential element in the organization of any monastery, the tower was cut by a round communication arch. An analysis of the sacristy's façade shows us the presence of three broken arches, which are currently walled up and allow us to assume that there was an adjustment of an older space to new functions. That it also cor-

roborated by the existence of a cornice supported by a series of modillions, identical to that of the nave. A series of corbels placed on the wall, on the level immediately above the arches, allows us to confirm this possibility. What kind of space would it be? A former sacristy, or even, a chapter room? Considering the fact that it was built with stone, it was certainly one of the noblest spaces associated with the monastic life. We cannot say which one. Another conjecture. The adjustment of this space to work as a sacristy occurred sometime during the Modern Period, as indicated by the quadrilobed shape of the porthole and by the shape of the niche, both opened on the central arch. A few straight-lintel doors surmounted by circular oculi were opened on the limiting arches. We believe this intervention to be coeval of the one which designed the bell which finishes the tower.

On the north side of the nave, we highlight several scars on the outer walls, reflecting the different transformations to which the building was submitted.



Church. Sacristy. West façade.



Church. North façade.



Church. General interior view from the nave.

Closed by a wooden barrel vault, the nave of the Church of Mancelos is extremely sober; its granite walls are completely exposed and combine crevices of a clear Romanesque flavour with large windows, typical of the Modern Period. Surmounted by a flared crevice, the triumphal arch stands as a remaining element of the Romanesque Period. Although it is composed of two slightly broken archivolts without any ornamental elements, its capitals are pierced. Over the capitals, we find an impost identical to the one in the main portal. Close to the portal, we find the granite font placed on our left when entering the nave. It does not bear any decorative element besides the ring that surmounts the upper part of the base that supports the bowl, protected by a wooden railing.

As we may infer from what has been said above, the Romanesque Church of the Monastery of Mancelos was subject to a striking intervention in the Modern Period that not only updated its architectural language, through the opening of several spans and windows but also modernised its liturgical furnishings, thus, answering the new liturgical and catechetical needs.



Church. Triumphal arch and chancel.

THE MONUMENT IN THE MODERN PERIOD

The rest of the intervention the Church of Saint Martin of Mancelos was subject to is mostly a result of the Baroque spirit and taste introduced under the Dominican management. From the Augustinian period, only a few architectural changes remained; these include the opening of spans and windows and the construction or refurbishment of new areas, namely the transformation of the old chapter house into a sacristy, as we have mentioned above.

On the other hand, the major contemporary changes had crucial impact on the organization of the ecclesiastical space, leading to the elimination of decorative elements and even of movable and integrated heritage. This fact leads us to redouble our attention when it comes to analysing, and considering as part of the historical path of any monument, objects or even items of furniture we may currently observe. There were two particularly important moments that determined the striking changes in the organization of the ecclesiastical assets: the Decree issued on May 30th, 1834, and the Separation Law of April 20th, 1911. Following these two moments, there were periods that determined the migration and destruction of movable and integrated assets, as well as other actions, not always documented. Following the liberal Decree of 1834, some implements were removed from the monastic churches and distributed amongst the neediest parishes while, over the 20th century, the interventions designed by the DGEMN – Direção-Geral dos Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais [General Directorate for Buildings and National Monuments] resulted in the destruction of altarpieces or in their transfer to other religious buildings. The images themselves, as movable assets, were subject to constant changes as a result of collective preferences and transfers of devotional affections. Faced with the absence of inventories or, should these exist, with the lack of detail on the objects, the researcher may feel tempted to integrate in the historic path of the building elements that do not fit into the chronological continuum of the structure (or fit into later periods of its existence). So, we should be particularly careful while considering the heritage which is currently part of the monument, placing the factual explanation behind its presence in the corresponding collection above its formal description.

Inside Mancelos, the changes imposed over the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries determined the sober appearance of its ornamentation. From the Baroque campaign only the Johannine [style which develops during the reign of King João V (k. 1706-1750)] main altarpiece that takes up the entire back wall of the chancel remains. Here, a modest four-stepped plinth with a throne, which is surmounted by a pediment and flanked by four twisted columns, marks the central point of the structure to which the devotee's attention is drawn, both when the priest removes the holy host from inside the tabernacle and during the display of the Blessed Sacrament on the throne.

Between the columns there are four corbels with images of the patron saint – Saint Martin of Tours –, Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Dominic of Guzman and Saint Gonçalo of Amarante. These are sculptures whose chronological arc spans between the second half of the 17th century and the second half of the 18th century. Their iconography does not go beyond the usual canons: the 17th-century Saint Martin is represented as a bishop with a crozier and a mitre and Saint Francis is shown in one of his most common Post-Tridentine figurations: that of a meditative ascetic whose gaze is lost between the crucifix and the skull, symbols of eternity and human frailty.

On the Epistle side, Saint Dominic of Guzmán and Saint Gonçalo highlight the Dominican presence. The former, according to his usual representation, is wearing the white habit of the Order of the Preachers while holding a cross in his right hand and a book with a red cover in his left hand; at his feet there is a small dog with brown fur. The blessed man from Amarante who is commonly known as Saint Gonçalo rests on a two-arched bridge, showing a similar outfit, pose and attribute to those of his order's patriarch.

Along the nave there are three altars – two collateral altars and a lateral one – that shelter contemporary devotions represented by the Modern images of the Virgin of the Rosary of Fátima, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Virgin of Sorrows. This Marian altarpiece also shelters a lying Christ; this is an 18th-century processional sculpture. However, it is natural that the Modern nature of the invocations to indicate not only spiritual transformations but also of changes in terms of heritage, as suggested by the sculpture and painting collection scattered across the Church. The images of the Virgin of the Rosary (18th century), the Virgin of Lapa (18th century) and Saint Anthony may have been objects of devotion that were, in the meantime, removed from their altars. Although there is no memoir for this parish in 1758 (perhaps due to its status as a branch of the branch of the convent Saint Gonçalo), a few years earlier, in 1726, chronicler Francisco Craesbeck described it as an “ancient temple” with “a tabernacle and a fine chancel”. He also mentioned the altar of Our Lady of the Rosary and its corresponding confraternity, to which he added another one, dedicated to the Lord (Craesbeeck, 1992: 233).

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Church. Chancel. Main altarpiece.



Church. Nave. South wall. Painting. *Saint Dominic being served by angels.*

Regarding the paintings of the Church of Saint Martin, which, in addition to monastic, was the Church of the parish and “coutho” of Mancelos, we should highlight the existence of an interesting collection, currently scattered across the ecclesiastical space. Despite unaware of the original positions of the paintings, which the existing documents do not mention or overlook, we should assume that these are a result of Modern or Contemporary changes of which the nave’s altarpieces stand as evidence.

Along the Church’s body and chancel we find six oil paintings, five on chestnut wood and one on a linen canvas⁸. The latter, which is the largest of them all (93 centimetres high by 168 centimetres wide), shows a collective meal shared by 12 clergymen who are having bread and wine served by two angels and watched by two dogs that seem to be waiting for their turn to be fed. The scene is as unusual as the presence of the canvas on the Church’s south wall. It was clearly not commissioned for this ecclesiastical space, and we may conjecture whether it was intended for the refectory or other welfare-related area from the monastic complex.

It is an 18th century work and it seems to depict the miracle commonly known as *Saint Dominic being served by angels*⁹. This depiction is a partial corruption of the narrative included in the hagiographies of Saint Dominic, according to which, one day, there were about 40 brothers gathered in the convent of Saint Sixtus, in Rome (Italy), who had nothing to eat except a piece of bread that the prayerful Saint Dominic divided into small pieces that were then distributed. The comfort provided by the master urged his brothers to sit down and listen to the holy reading in silence, while they prepared themselves to eat the meagre nourishment. Suddenly, after Saint Dominic’s blessing and prayer, “two extremely beautiful young men carrying bright

⁸ These paintings are not included in the series of items described in the inventory of worshipping-related assets of 1937 (PORTUGAL. Ministério das Finanças – Secretaria-geral – Arquivo. Comissão Jurisdicional dos Bens Culturais, distrito do Porto, concelho de Amarante, arrolamento dos bens culturais de Mancelos (Arquivo/CJBC/PTO/AMA/ARROL/027), fols. 1-5).

⁹ The entry in the online inventory of the diocese of Porto incorrectly names it as *Ceia no Santo Sepulcro em Roma* [Lord’s Supper at the Holy Sepulchre in Rome] and mentions 11 clergymen instead of 12 (Costa, 2008).

white cloths filled with bread appeared in the refectory” (Vieira, 1987: 68)¹⁰. In the painting from Mancelos there are 12 figures, perhaps in the painter’s attempt to associate or combine this scene with the Last Supper, thus emphasising the role of imitator of Christ that Dominic seemed to play during his life. The presence of certain mundane elements, like the dogs, or the visible dissimilarity between the friars, may indicate the transposition of elements and individuals from everyday life to the scene, thus meeting the time and the commissioners’ taste.

On the same south wall there is an oil painting on wood with the traditional representation of the martyr *Saint Sebastian* – naked and pierced with arrows – which might have been part of an altarpiece, destroyed in the meantime. The painting, which may be dated back to the 17th century, was damaged by later repainting’s and interventions and shows an effeminate young man whose defective anatomic treatment reveals the work of a poorly skilled artisan. On the opposite wall, an interesting depiction of the *Virgin of the Rosary* recalls a devotion that was very often found in parish churches, but was particularly relevant for the Dominicans who welcomed Her in their preaching and evangelising actions in a specially warm and spiritual way.

Although the popularisation of the devotion to the Rosary is often ascribed to Saint Dominic, it was another preacher, the French Alain de la Roche (1498), who stimulated it by writing the work *De dignitate et utilitate psalterii...*, where he celebrates and asks for prayers to the mysteries of Christ and His Mother.

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In this painting, and unlike the usual inclusion of the rosary as an accessory which is generally hanging from her hand, the Virgin is surrounded by an almond-shaped border made of roses. The Infant Jesus is squirming on Her lap and, leaning over His Mother’s right arm, is dropping a few flowers on a male figure, whose half body is emerging from the lower left corner as if he was expressing his gratitude and posing in veneration. It is surely the commissioner or patron of this work, a nobleman from the 17th century, as denounced by the colours and shapes of his clothes.

In the chancel there are three paintings: on the Epistle side, we find a representation of *Saint Anthony* and a painting that the inventory of the diocese of Porto calls “São Tomás de Aquino” [Saint Thomas Aquinas]. On the Gospel side, we find *Saint Martin seating on a cathedra*.

It is likely for this depiction of *Saint Martin* as a seating bishop equipped with the corresponding prelate insignias to be a remain from an altarpiece made before the 16th century, i.e., still coeval of the Augustinian presence in Mancelos. It is one of the best examples of paintings from the Renaissance, whose models lasted for a long time in the works produced by local or regional workshops and artists.

As for the supposed *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, we cannot fail to highlight the strangeness of his depiction: seating at a table presided by a crucifix and where there are an ink bottle, a quill and three books, we find a friar from the Order of the Preachers who is leafing through one of the books and writing down a few excerpts on the other. The most commonly found depictions of Saint Thomas, also known as *doctor angelicus*, usually show him as a more robust and older man accompanied by the dove of the Holy Spirit; sometimes he is wearing a chastity belt decorated

¹⁰ The miracle is narrated by Sister Cecilia Romana, from the Order of the Preachers, in the series of miracles that occurred in Rome (Italy). Friar Constantino Orvieto (1988) integrates this fantastic event in the legend he wrote about the life of Saint Dominic, as well as *Legenda Aurea* [Golden Legend], de Jacobus de Voragine (1480), although none of the narratives makes specific references to angels.





Church. Nave. South wall. Painting. *Saint Sebastian*.



Church. Chancel. North wall. Painting. *Saint Martin*.

with a star or a sun and, less frequently, he is carrying a model of a temple, a sign of his status as a Doctor of the Church (Réau, 2002: 282). The representation of Mancelos shows him with a relatively young appearance and without any sign of holiness, namely the nimbus. So, it could be a portrait of any individual connected to the Dominican Order who was especially important for the Church of Mancelos. Someone who was fairly recognised by his culture or intellect. But what remains even more unclear regarding the identification of the depicted figure is the mitre placed close to the reading table. The position of this accessory reveals his resignation or refusal to receive the cathedra. Although both the Dominican Saint Albertus Magnus (another potential name for the identification) and Thomas Aquinas are associated with self-resignation, the two feature obvious signs of holiness that, in this case, are totally absent. Moreover, Saint Albertus is invariably wearing the episcopal insignias and there are no known allusions to the episcopal position that Saint Thomas Aquinas never actually held.



Church. Nave. South wall. Painting. *Friar Bartholomew of the Martyrs* (?).



Church. Chancel. South wall. Painting. *Saint Anthony*.

So, we believe this may be a depiction of *Friar Bartholomew of the Martyrs* (1514-1590); his biography tells us that he was closely connected to the construction of the convent of Saint Gonçalo to which the revenues of Mancelos contributed. As it is known, Friar Bartholomew resigned the mitre of Braga in 1582, following the Courts of Tomar. He was an erudite man whose participation in the Council of Trento left recognised marks in the Christian culture of the time. And the fact that he was only deemed venerable in the 19th century and canonised very recently (in 2001) might explain the absence of identifying venerability signs.

This is a late representation made by an artisan unknowledgeable of the episcopal figure in a period that saw an increasing interest in Friar Bartholomew (17th century)¹¹, whose virtues crowned him with sanctity even before its official acknowledgement, thus justifying the presence of this painting in Mancelos.

¹¹ The laudatory biographies by writers from the Dominican Order and the popular interest in the figure of Friar Bartholomew, to whom several miraculous interventions were ascribed, are coeval of the period in which this painting was made (Santos, 2004: 35-41).

CONTEMPORARY INTERVENTIONS

We see that, in 1864, the parish priest of Mancelos answered the survey sent to all the parishes from the bishopric of Porto, under the request made by the Ministry of Public Works to Victor Le Cocq, regarding the production of a map depicting the state of repair of all the buildings under that Ministry's responsibility, together with the corresponding repairs and authorised expenditure (Rosas, 1995: 511). These buildings included those considered monuments, parish churches and public chapels, among others.

At the time, the parish priest of Mancelos, Joaquim Lopes de Carvalho, considered the condition of the parish Church as “deplorable”¹². The rapporteur states that in the parish archive there was “an ancient manuscript stating that the Church of Mancelos was founded before the acclamation of the Holy King Afonso Henriques”. Besides, he considers that the tower was a “work of the Moors”, an aspect that emphasises the symbology and rhetoric that was always associated with this type of elements whenever they were built together with a religious building. This enhancement of the somewhat legendary antiquity of the monument meets the Romantic atmosphere of the time. Father Joaquim also revealed the main portal, supported by “eight columns and before this door, it also features a church foyer or Galilee”¹³.

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To date, we do not know whether, following this inquiry, there were any conservation works implemented in the Church of Mancelos. We only find institutional reports regarding this monument again in the 20th century. First of all, because it was only classified as a Public Interest Building in the 1930's¹⁴. The importance of the remaining monastic ensemble, whose conventual structure is currently in private hands and adapted to residential functions, justified, years later, the definition of a special protection zone by governmental order (Passos, 1989: 181). As specified by the Basic Law of Heritage, “the protection zones are administrative easements in which, neither the council, nor other entities, may grant construction permits or permits for any building works that change the topography, the alignments and heights and, in general, the arrangement of the volumes and roofs or the external coating of any buildings without the prior favourable assent of the competent cultural heritage management body”¹⁵. The special protection zones may include *non aedificandi* areas¹⁶.

In 1945, the then parish priest of Mancelos, Joaquim Teixeira Soares Moreira, addressed the Direção de Monumentos Nacionais do Norte [Northern Directorate for National Monuments] in order to raise this institution's awareness about the advanced state of degradation of the Church of Mancelos, which was in need of “urgent repairs”¹⁷. The main cause for such

12 Carvalho, Joaquim Lopes de – Missiva de 19 de outubro de 1864. IRHU/ Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREM, Cx. 3216/3. Correspondência igrejas do concelho de Amarante. 1864-1867.

13 Idem.

14 DECREE no. 24347. O.G. [Official Gazette] Series I. 188 (34-08-11) 1513.

15 Article 43, point 4, LAW no. 107. O.G. [Official Gazette] Series I-A. 209 (2001-09-08) 5808-5829.

16 Article 43, point 3, Idem.

17 Moreira, Joaquim Teixeira Soares – Missiva de 13 de janeiro de 1945. SIPA.TXT.00899774.PTDGEMN:DSARH-010/026-0080 [Online]. Available at [www: <URL: http://www.monumentos.pt>](http://www.monumentos.pt) [Nº IPA PT011301230006].

degradation was precisely the rain. In order to expedite the process, the parish priest mentions the willingness of the parishioners in providing wood and taking care, for free, of the “transportation of the materials about to be applied”.

In the following year there was a selection of the main works that should be carried out¹⁸:

“– Complete demolition and reconstruction of the roofs over the Church and its annexes, including a proper framework.

– Complete demolition of the choir, which is considered as inappropriate.

– Consolidation of the masonry work, including the replacement of a few stones.

– Reconstruction of pavements, window and door frames, miscellaneous painting works, etc.”.

However, due to a lack of allocation¹⁹, these works were not immediately begun so, in 1949, the parish priest of Mancelos appeals to the Director of the Direção de Monumentos Nacionais do Norte [Northern Directorate for National Monuments] once again aiming to actually begin the works²⁰. But it was only in the transition from the 1960's to the following decade that the restoration works actually began in Mancelos (Noé, 1997).

We notice that there was a special concern in the understanding the sacristy's façade, facing the old cloister. Its arches were even subject to several surveys, which led to the conclusion that “it was impossible to find a solution for the restoration of this façade”²¹. The possibility of opening the broken arches, which are still walled up today and “merely sheltering the inner chamber with a porch supported by the modillions found on the façade and their pillars”, was also considered²².

Besides the works listed in 1946, most of which were only carried out between 1979 and 1985, we highlight the elimination of the large woodwork pelmet that surmounted the triumphal arch. It is worth mentioning that, on the wall that surrounds this arch, there are still visible marks that prove the fact that this ornamental woodwork element was fixed there. We have already mentioned the triumphal arch's pierced capitals. Although the photos taken before this intervention do not allow us to be absolutely sure, it does seem that these same capitals had an attached gilded woodwork element that created a capital itself. We notice the special attention paid by the Building Commission of Mancelos to the restoration of the internal space, where they removed the “whitewash from the walls, immediately” leaving them “with a rustic look”²³. The choir was demolished. Until then, the galilee's interior was whitewashed.

The work, funded by the parish itself, was carried out under direct administration by the aforementioned Building Commission, duly monitored by DGEMN's technical services²⁴. In addition to the aforementioned works, this intervention also included the restoration of the tower, improvement works on the roofs, the interior renovation of the sacristy, the beginning

18 Ofício n.º 3088 de 20 de setembro de 1946. SIPA.TXT.00899777. Idem.

19 Ofício n.º 84 de 6 de janeiro de 1950. SIPA.TXT.00899788. Idem.

20 Moreira, Joaquim Teixeira Soares – Missiva de 25 de dezembro de 1949. SIPA.TXT.00899787. Idem.

21 Memória de 17 de março de 1964. SIPA.TXT.00623687 e SIPA.TXT.00623688. PT DGEMN:DSID-001/013-1820/3 [Online]. Available at www: <URL: <http://www.monumentos.pt>>. [Nº IPA PT011301230006].

22 Idem.

23 Moreira, António M. C. – Missiva, 9-11-83. IRHU/ Arquivo ex-DGEMN/DREMNDM – DGEMN:DREMNDM-2415.

24 Relatório, 18 de março de 1985. Idem.

of the electrical installation and improvement works on the Church's pavements²⁵. These works were only completed in 1988, this time with governmental funding.

A special attention was also given to the bell tower that had “a belfry with two windows at the level of the *chemin-de-ronde* (...), a shed to shelter the bell ringer that, besides being an-aesthetic”, was an imminent danger at the time taking into account the degree of decay of the woodwork that made up its structure²⁶. It was also decided to build a staircase inside the tower based on the levels of the primitive floors, thus taking advantage of “the slits on the walls where the primitive beams had probably been inserted”²⁷.

In 2010, the Monastery of Saint Martin of Mancelos became part of the Route of the Romanesque. As a consequence of this new institutional framework, a proposal for the conservation, protection and enhancement of the building has been drawn up (Costa, 2012). [MLB / NR]



Church. Nave before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN (1968). Source: IHRU archive.



Church. West façade. Galilee and portal before the intervention carried out by the DGEMN (1954). Source: IHRU archive.

25 Ofício n.º 614 de 28 de junho de 1988. Idem.

26 Memória de 17 de março de 1964. SIPA.TXT.00623687 e SIPA.TXT.00623688. PT DGEMN:DSID-001/013-1820/3 [Online]. Available at [www: <URL: http://www.monumentos.pt>](http://www.monumentos.pt). [Nº IPA PT011301230006].

27 Idem.

CHRONOLOGY

1120: the Monastery of Mancelos already existed as a house of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine;

1129-1152: between these dates, Raimundo Garcia, from the Portocarreiros lineage, probably made a donation to Mancelos;

13th-14th centuries: possible chronology of the remaining Romanesque traces;

14th century: Mancelos was a commendation of the archbishop of Braga;

1320: the Church of Mancelos paid a tax of 600 Portuguese "libras" to support the Crusades;

1540: donation of the Church of Mancelos to the convent of Amarante, which belonged to the Order of Preachers, by King João III;

1542: Pope Paul III confirms the donation made by King João III;

17th-18th centuries: records of interventions focused on the integrated and movable heritage of the Church of Mancelos, namely the design of the main altarpiece and its corresponding imagery;

1864: the parish priest of Mancelos, Joaquim Lopes de Carvalho, considered the state of the building as "deplorable";

1934: the Church of Mancelos is classified as Public Interest Building;

1960's: beginning of the restoration works;

1979: definition of a special protection zone around the monastic ensemble;

1979-1985: conservation works carried out under the Mancelos Building Commission's responsibility;

2010: the Monastery of Mancelos becomes part of the Route of the Romanesque.

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