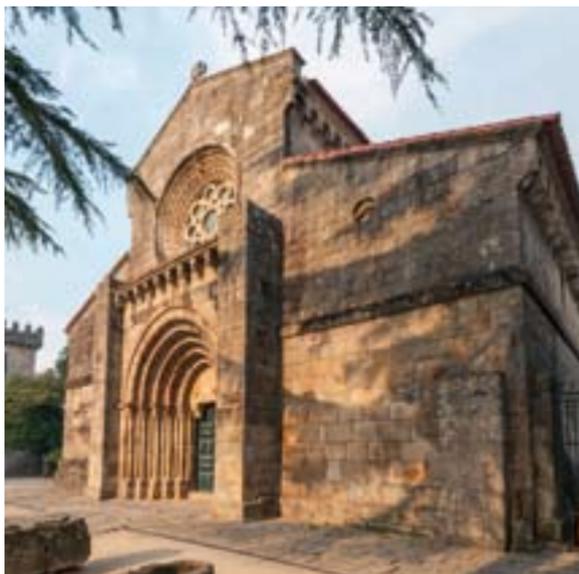
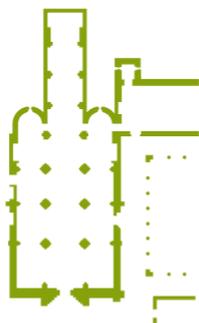


18.

MONASTERY**OF THE
SAVIOUR
OF PAÇO
DE SOUSA**

Largo do Mosteiro
Paço de Sousa
Penafiel



41° 9' 57.398" N
8° 20' 41.085" W



+351 918 116 488



Saturday, 9 pm
Sunday, 7.30 am
and 11 am



Divine Saviour
6th August



National Monument
1910



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Yes

The Monastery of Paço de Sousa is a rather important monument for understanding the Romanesque of Vale do Sousa. Its unique characteristics, both in terms of architecture and sculpture, as well as the fact that it keeps the tomb of Egas Moniz (1080-1146), the Governor and Schoolmaster of King Afonso Henriques (k. 1143-1185), the first king of Portugal, turn this former Benedictine Monastery into one of the most appealing and prestigious legacies of Portuguese Romanesque architecture.

The Church features its very own decorative style, both by the subjects and the techniques used in the sculptures. This sculpture, which is typical from the Sousa and Baixo Tâmega basins, uses prismatic columns on the portals, bulb-shaped bases, bevelled decorative patterns with botanic motifs and long friezes inside and outside the churches, much like in the architecture of the Visigoth and Mozarabic periods.

In this framework, the Monastery of Paço de Sousa was a paradigmatic building that combined local traditions with Romanesque influences from Coimbra and Porto, thus standardizing the “nationalized Romanesque” style of the Sousa and Baixo Tâmega basins.

The origin of Paço de Sousa lies in the foundation of a monastic community dating back to the 10th century. Its oldest documentary reference dates back to 994. During this period, the Monastery - which was founded by Trutesendo Galindes and his wife Anímia - probably followed the peninsular monastic traditions; the Benedictine Rule was adopted during the abbacy of Sisnando, between 1085 and 1087.

In their will, dated 1088, Egas Ermiges and his wife Gontinha Eriz donate movable and immovable assets to the church of the Saviour - which was consecrated by Pedro, the bishop of Braga -, aiming at the salvation of their souls. This Church does not correspond to the current Romanesque temple, but everything suggests that its architecture left its mark on the building that later came to be built in the 13th century.

This Monastery headed a "couth" [a type of Portuguese administrative division] donated by Count Henrique (1066-1112), Afonso Henriques' father, and eventually became one of the most fa-

mous Benedictine monasteries and it was related to an important family from the Entre-Douro-e-Minho region - the Ribadouros. Egas Moniz, to whom tradition ascribes the Monastery's foundation, was a member of this family.

The Gascos of the Ribadouro family probably had a foreign ancestry. According to the information from the books of lineages, the first member of this family - Mónio Viegas I - presumably came from Gascony (France). This family managed to master almost all the monasteries of the region located to the east of the Sousa, i.e., Paço de Sousa, Valpedre (Pena-fiel), [Al]Pendorada, Vila Boa do Bispo (p. 163), Vila Boa Quires (p. 168) and Tuías, the fourth located in Marco de Canaveses. Within this context, the patronage of the Monastery of Paço de Sousa was passed on to the descendants of the founder's daughter, Vivili, i.e., to Egas Ermiges (1071-1095) and Egas Moniz, the "Governor and Schoolmaster".

The temple includes sections from different periods. There are reused friezes and other elements that belonged to an older





construction, probably from the second half of the 12th century; other elements are of a clear Pre-Romanesque nature and inspired the artists who worked on the building site in the 13th century.

The Church of Paço de Sousa features three naves, a false transept inscribed in the plan, and wood roofs resting on diaphragm arches. The chevet is composed of three interconnected chapels: the Romanesque lateral chapels, with a semi-circular section (apses), and the central chapel with a rectangular plan, which is the result of a transformation carried out in the Modern Period.

The new construction, which had begun on the west side, was developed in accordance with the pre-existing Church. So, it is possible to highlight a first construction phase that corresponds to the first western bay and to the axial portal whose elements, namely its capitals and modillions, show an older profile than the others: some were clearly inspired by the Cathedrals in Coimbra or Porto; the others, by other different places.

We may identify a second construction phase in the south portal that, compared with the western portal from the first phase,

is less archaic. The bay located further to the west, which is part of the first construction phase, is wider and higher, while contrasting with the narrower and lower bays from the second phase, thus proving a reduction in the size of the initial project.

Regarding the third construction phase, we highlight the chevet's apses covered by a broken barrel vault, due to the fact that they feature rather evolved Romanesque elements, namely in its crevices, which are similar to the ones found on the chancel of the Church of the Monastery of Cête (Paredes) (p. 78), which probably dates back to the early 14th century.

The Church's fourth and final construction phase may be identified on the transept's roof and on the tower built above the crossing that, due to its indisputably late profile, already resembles Gothic mendicant architecture. The north section of the transept's wall includes friezes and imposts carved long before the 13th century. The frames in the apses' crevices bear a Mozarabic appearance. Some of the capitals, such as the ones from the south apse that feature protruding leaves, also convey clear Mozarabic memories.

The revivalist Proto- or Pre-Romanesque elements, like the bevelled decorative friezes with botanic motifs placed along the walls, both inside and outside, are inspired in the motifs and profiles of Pre-Romanesque impostos. The use of diaphragm arches in the naves is also an element that recalls the sense of space of Peninsular Pre-Romanesque churches.

On the outer face of the nave's south wall, close to the access door to the cloister, there is a funerary inscription. This epigraph, dated 1202, is associated with Mónio Ermiges, the abbot of Paço de Sousa, who belonged to the family responsible for the Monastery's patronage. Inside the Church, it is possible to identify a few elements that are the result of the renovation that took place during the Modern Period. The chancel's area, narrow and deep, underwent several work campaigns, as exemplified by the mid-18th century intervention which was carried out during the ruling of abbot Friar

Manuel das Neves. Regarding the main altarpiece, it is obvious that its design and decoration indicate a chronology that is already associated with the Late Modern Period, given that there is a noticeable fusion between the Rococo style and the emerging Neoclassical style, which would definitely assert itself around the turn of the 18th century. The cloister and what remains of the monastic building correspond to the renovations carried out in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The Monastery underwent major restoration works in the 19th century, which took place between 1883 and 1887. Between 1920 and 1924, was the recovery of the building's roofs and walls. The 1927 fire outbreak, which began in the monastic outbuildings, reached the Church's body and destroyed the roof, two altars, liturgical ornaments and objects and a few decorative stonemasonry works. The restoration works began that same year and lasted until 1938.



THE CHAPEL OF THE CORPORAL

Demolished in 1605, it was contiguous to the current Romanesque Church, on the north side; it communicated with the building through the end of the transept, as stated by friar Leão de São Tomás in his work *Beneditina lusitana*.

This was the place where Egas Moniz was buried and his tomb remained there until the moment when friar Martinho Golias ordered the chapel's demolition due to its worrying state of decay. In the mid-16th century, João de Barros mentions the existence both of the chapel of the Corporal and of Egas Moniz' tomb that, at that time, was still kept there. It was probably built in the 11th century, thus being coeval of the consecration of the older church by bishop Pedro in 1088. This chapel was the main pantheon of the Ribadouro family, although several members of this lineage chose to be buried in other churches.



THE TOMB OF EGAS MONIZ

As a result of the demolition of the chapel of the Corporal, Egas Moniz' tomb was moved into the Church's chancel together with those of his children; the father's tomb was placed on the Gospel side and the children's tombs on the Epistle side. According to the transfer record, during this operation it was discovered that the grave had been previously disturbed because it no longer contained all the bones. Only the arms, the legs and part of the head, together with the iron of the weapons and the sword's sheath were found. According to the Order's chronicler, friar Leão de São



Tomás, the bones belonged to a large man, which actually surprised abbot Golias during the transfer ceremony. Finally, during the restoration works in 1929, the tombs were rebuilt, thus resulting in the double tomb chest that is currently kept inside the Church. Egas Moniz belonged to one of the most powerful noble lineages of the Entre-Douro-e-Minho region. He was the son of Mónio Ermiges de Ribadouro and Oroana, married



Doroteia or Mor Pais and, later, Teresa Afonso, the founder of the Cistercian monastery of Salzedas (Tarouca). He was the "tenens" of Lamego, Neiva, Sanfins and Parada. He held the position of major-domo of the Curia, with a few interruptions, between 1136 and 1145. His feat is related to the siege of León to Guimarães (1127), when Egas Moniz led the army of León to lift the siege under the promise that King Afonso Henriques, the first king, of Portugal would pledge his allegiance to the king of León, Afonso III. When Afonso Henriques failed to keep that promise, Egas Moniz presented himself before King Afonso VII, in Toledo, together with his wife and children wearing ropes around their necks and offering his life and that of his family to the king of León as the price for perjury.

In the cenotaph, which is from a later period, this tradition is narrated again in a developed way and with remarkable artistic quality. This cenotaph, presumably related to the self-aggrandizement of the minstrel João Soares Coelho, an illegitimate descendant of Egas Moniz, probably dates back to the mid-13th century. The reliefs already appear carved in perspective and depicting movement, turning this example into a significant landmark in the evolution of Portuguese funerary sculpture.

From this new cenotaph, two lateral faces and a lateral one remain. On the bottom face, there is a representation of the holy, witnessed death. Egas Moniz is lying on a bed and there is a naked figure coming out of his mouth: it represents his chosen soul being taken away by two angels. By his side, there are four women crying who, much to the medieval iconography's style, are pulling their hair as a sign of pain. On the smaller face there is a celebration of Egas Moniz' funeral rites through the representation of a scene that includes a bishop, identified by a miter and a crosier, and two men who are placing the cadaver in the sarcophagus together with two barely noticeable [professional] weepers.

On the lateral face, there is a representation of the trip to Toledo carved in medium- and high-relief with technical aplomb. The lids of the double tomb are gabled. In the oldest one we find a funerary inscription from 1146:

HIC : REQUIESCIT : F(amu)LusS : DEI : EGAS : MONIZ : VIR : INCLITVS / ERA : MILLE-SIMA : [ce]ENTESIMA : 2XXXII [II].



DON'T MISS OUT

- 6.4 km: Quintandona – "Aldeia de Portugal" (p. 263)