

CISTERCIAN'S IN PORTUGAL: FROM ORDER TO CONGREGATION ACCORDING TO AN ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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The Cistercian Order was introduced in Portugal, in the 12th century and its monasteries were from the beginning associated with the development of the nation and the objectives of occupation and administration of the territory. The new monasteries were deployed to the image of Monastery of Clairvaux, from which branch they provide, defining a typology of the place. However, in 1567, occurs the separation of the Portuguese Cistercians from the obedience to Clairvaux, with the creation of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça. In the genesis of Cistercian architectural austerity is a new perspective on art that comes with the treaty of St. Bernard's "Apologia to Abbot William" (1125) resulting from a quarrel between Cistercians and Cluniacs, on the interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict. The Romanesque and then the Gothic, adjusted to the characteristics of the place, are the answer to the demands of the Cistercians, translating their spirituality. We must highlight the importance of the Cistercian Order, not only in Romanesque proliferation but also in the introduction of the Gothic, in Portugal, through the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça (1153). Portuguese Cistercian monasteries became worthy exemplaries of the European Cistercian architecture, although over time having been adapted, enlarged and transformed according to the styles of each epoch. After the extinction of the Orders (1834), underwent numerous transformations and the Cistercians moved out from Portugal to not come back. However, their architectural legacy, object of recoveries and rehabilitations, evoking the ideals and the Cistercian spirituality, does not let us forget of the importance of the Cistercian Order in Portugal. Order that originated a Congregation, that accompanied the first moments of the nationality, the maturation and the affirmation of a country, culminating with their extinction, but leaving their architectural legacy and memory alive.

Key-Words: Citeux, Order, Congregation, Architecture, Rehabilitation

INTRODUCTION OF THE CISTERCIAN ORDER IN PORTUGAL

The Cistercian Order was introduced in Portugal, in the 12th century, when the Order was still at the first phase of expansion and Portugal started to develop as a nation¹. It is traditionally appointed, as the first one, the Monastery of S. João de Tarouca (1143-1144)

¹ Cfr MARQUES, Maria Alegria Fernandes; *Estudos sobre a Ordem de Cister em Portugal*; Coleção Estudos; n° 24; Edições Colibri; Lisboa; Junho 1998

according to Cocheril² and, as the last one, the Monastery of Nossa Senhora de Tabosa (1692).

The foundations and affiliations of the Cistercian Order in Portugal were associated from the beginning with the objectives of occupation and administration of the territory, mainly during the birth and creation of the Portuguese nationality. These objectives joined a cohesion and interconnection, not only territorially but also cultural and civilizational, being the Cistercian monasteries, in the Portuguese context, also a mean of assertion and defense of the territory. This fact allows understanding the vast scale of occupation of the territory, the extent of its domains and areas of influence. It should be borne in mind that the Cistercian monasteries in Portugal were bound to Clairvaux, thereby defining a typology of insertion in the territory in all the monasteries (either of nuns or monks).

FROM THE EXISTENTIAL CYCLES OF THE ORDER TO THE AUTONOMOUS CONGREGATION

The history of the Cistercian Order in Portugal is divided into two basic moments. At first, the period from 1143-1567, that corresponds to the *Union* with the Cistercians, that is, the initial phase of the Order in Portugal (with foundations and affiliations in Clairvaux), as well as the most important Portuguese contribution from /to the *Novum Monasterium*.³ A second period, from 1567-1834, that corresponds to the *Separation*, from the Cistercians of Clairvaux, through the creation of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça, in 1567. These two moments are even increased by a third one, that can only be understood indirectly, and consequently only indirectly it can be considered as part of the history of the Cistercian Order in Portugal, corresponding to the period post-1834, that is to the *Extinction*: the monks departed but their legacy, whether material or immaterial, remains.

The Monasteries of S. João de Tarouca and of Santa Maria de Alcobaça are both highlighted for being the cradle of a large number of monasteries. As a result, the Portuguese Cistercian monasteries can be mainly divided into two geographical and temporal cycles. Therefore, there is the cycle of S. João de Tarouca, associated with the early days and the cradle of the Cistercians in Portugal; and furthermore there is the cycle of Alcobaça, which also encompasses the foundations of the Congregation of Alcobaça, associated with the development and expansion of the Cistercians in Portugal. For the same reason we must highlight the “*Coutos*” of Alcobaça and the “*Coutos*” of S. João de

² Cfr. COCHERIL, Maur; *Les Abbayes Cisterciennes Portugaises dans la seconde moitié du XX siècle*; Arquivo do Centro Cultural Português; Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian; Paris 1976 / Despite playing the primacy with the Monastery of Lafões, Cfr MARQUES, Maria Alegria Fernandes; op.cit.

³ *Novum Monasterium* was the reference name of the Abbey of Cîteaux in its beginnings

Tarouca, each one with their granges. From the 13th century, the feminine branch of the Cistercian Order associated with the Royal House it gains importance.



Fig.1 – St. Mafalda, founder of the Monastery of Arouca. (author's photography)

With the Portuguese untying from the Cistercian Order and the birth of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça (1567), new foundations arise, of which takes part the Monastery of Nossa Senhora da Assunção de Tabosa, in Sernancelhe, which was the last monastery to be founded in Portugal. This way, we can highlight the occurrence of three fundamental existential cycles for the consolidation of Cistercian Order in Portugal, to retain: the *Cycle of Tarouca*, associated with the *Beiras'* region and the beginnings of the Cistercian Order in Portugal; the *Cycle of Alcobaça*, associated with Alcobaça, with the development of the Cistercian Order in Portugal, but also the separation link with Clairvaux, and consequently with the Cistercians, through the creation of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça; and the *Royal Feminine Cycle*, linked to the establishment of the Cistercian Order, in its feminine version, overwhelmed and made possible through foundations and affiliations of monasteries held by female members of the Portuguese royalty.

The beginning of the Cistercian Order in Portugal took place when a small group of hermits, from S. João de Tarouca, affiliated at the Abbey of Clairvaux during the first half of the 12th century.⁴ To the cycle of Tarouca belongs Santa Maria de Aguiar (which initially was linked to Morerueta), S. Tiago de Sever, Santa Maria de Fiães (which later depended on

⁴ Cfr COCHERIL, Dom Maur; *Notes sur l'Architecture et le Décor dans les Abbayes Cisterciennes du Portugal*; col. Fontes Documentais Portuguesas; vol. V; Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro Cultural Português; Paris 1972; p. 2

Santa Maria do Ermelo) and S. Pedro das Águias – the old (the community of S. Pedro das Águias subsequently founded S. Pedro das Águias – the new, which depends on Santa Maria de Alcobaça).

The monasteries of Santa Maria de Salzedas, S. Cristóvão de Lafões and Santa Maria of Maceira Dão were also directly dependent of Clairvaux. Due to its proximity and relations with the monasteries from the cycle of Tarouca, those monasteries also entered that cycle.



Fig.2 – Monastery of S. João de Tarouca, dormitory. (author's photography)

The Monastery of S. João de Tarouca is inserted in the *Beiras* region, cradle from which many other monasteries of this Order were born. From this monastery remains the Church, which is still in activity and can be visited and from which is highlighted the sacristy; there are also the monumental dormitories, dated already from the 16th and 17th centuries, unfortunately in ruin, and the vestiges of the elaborated hydraulic system. Archaeological excavations have been performed and started to uncover the original 12th century cloister, as well as traces of the Chapter Room, kitchen and latrines. The monasteries of Santa Maria de Salzedas and S. Pedro das Águias, also inserted in the *Beiras*' region, have improved the Cistercian action on the country; provided the development of vineyard culture and the fomentation of the wine trade. Both are examples of transfer of settlements, practice which happened sometimes with the Cistercian monasteries. To the Monastery of Santa Maria de Salzedas corresponded an initial insertion in the Northwest, from which there are significant archaeological vestiges of the Old Abbey of Salzedas, on land of a particular (the *Quinta da Abadia Velha* which means literally Old Abbey's Farm). As for S. Pedro das Águias (the new) is concerned, it has a project for a rural hotel, after architectural works of rehabilitation, associated with a Port wine producer (Quinta do

Convento), having been preceded by the Monastery of S. Pedro das Águias (the old), from which remains the Church, that was restored and reconstructed by the Directorate General for National Buildings and Monuments (DGEMN) at the beginning of the 20th century, according to the theories in vogue at that time. At the Monastery of Santa Maria de Aguiar, dated from the 12th century and located at Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo, there is a Rural Hotel explored by a family, where coexist both the family housing and the rural hotel accommodations, in the building which corresponded to the guesthouse from the monastery. The Church is visitable. The land on which it is settled is linked to the production of wine. The remaining part of the monastery is a ruin, also visitable, although being private property.

A second pole of implementation of the Cistercian Order in Portugal is the region of Alcobaça. From the second half of the 12th century to the beginning of the 14th century, the Cistercians had a vast domain called the “*Contos* of Alcobaça”. Thanks to this domain, the proliferation of Granges occurred (the Farm of Valado dos Frades came to be the Agricultural School of the Monastery) which had a leading role in the cultivation and in the settlement of vast territories donated to the Abbey which were devastated by the struggles of the Christian Reconquest. Later those farms turned into flourishing towns.⁵ Therefore, to the Cycle of Alcobaça, are linked the following monasteries which truly depend on it: S. Pedro das Águias – the new (as was mentioned previously), Santa Maria do Bouro (of which depends Santa Maria das Júnias, that belonged to Oseira at its beginnings), Santa Maria de Seiça, Santa Maria de Tomarães, Santa Maria da Estrela, S. Paulo de Almaziva, S. Bento de Cástris, Santa Maria de Almoester, S. Dinis de Odivelas, S. Bento de Xabregas, Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Portalegre, Santa Maria de Cós, Nossa Senhora do Desterro. With the Portuguese untying from the Cistercian Order and the birth of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça (1567) new foundations directly linked to Alcobaça Abbey arised: Nossa Senhora da Piedade de Tavira (1530), Nossa Senhora da Nazaré do Mocambo (1653), Nossa Senhora da Assunção de Tabosa (1692) and the affiliation of Nossa Senhora da Nazaré de Setúbal which welcomed the nuns of Tabosa and Mocambo for a brief period of time during the Liberalism (ephemeral affiliation).

The Monastery of Alcobaça is an element of exception within the Cistercian Order not only for its dimensions but also for its plan. The Cistercians exerted great influence in

⁵ NATIVIDADE, Vieira J.; *Obras várias-II*; Ed. da Comissão comemorativa promotora das cerimónias comemorativas do I aniversário da morte do Prof. J. Vieira Natividade; Alcobaça; s/d; pp.11 e 63

Portugal, both at the level of settlement and cultural development of the country as well as regarding agriculture, art and politics.⁶

Initially the Cistercian Order did not provide for the existence of the Cistercians in the feminine version, but from the 13th century, with the founding of the Monastery of Tart, in Belgium, the female Cistercian branch arises. Thus, we must mention the repercussion of the Cistercian feminine monasteries: S. Mamede de Lorvão, Santa Maria de Celas, S. Pedro e S. Paulo de Arouca (which depended on S. Salvador das Bouças, affiliated in 1228).

These monasteries were prominent elements not only for its innovation, but also for its specificity therefore corresponding to the female version of Cistercians, with strong connotation with royalty, having been founded by the daughters of D. Sancho and granddaughters of D. Afonso Henriques: Teresa, Mafalda and Sancha. Soon the Cistercian Order became the order of election for women of Royal blood and high nobility, giving rise to the third cycle: the “*Royal feminine*”. The Cistercian Order as a female branch won increasingly accession.

FROM THE CISTERCIAN ROMANESQUE TO THE GENESIS OF GOTHIC

The architectural language associated with the beginnings of the nationality was the Romanesque and, for its side, the expansion of Romanesque architecture, in Portugal, coincided with the reign of D. Afonso Henriques. In the middle ages, especially during the 12th century, it is important to be aware of the existence of two parallel aesthetics, but entirely opposite regarding the spirituality of Art. As a result, there is a concept of Art spirituality defended by Suger of St. Denis (1081-1151), as well as by the Cluniacs in general, according to which is searched a balance between the senses, the beauty and the sumptuous *per visibilia ad invisibilia*.⁷ To Cluny corresponded the exteriority, the exuberance, the opulence, the effusive decoration of figurative and symbolic nature so as to give prominence to the house of God, the materiality was a means of achieving spirituality, it was necessary the “(...) *value of wealth and beauty as an homage to the faith, to enhance the clarity and the beautiful glow of divine light.*”⁸ For the Cluniacs, imbued with a deeply feudal spirit, God was the Lord, being therefore assigned great importance to the Divine office; consequently Liturgy was celebrated in grand structures. On the other hand, there is another concept of

⁶Cfr COCHERIL, Dom Maur; *Etudes sur le monachisme en Espagne et au Portugal*; Collection Portugaise sous le patronage de l'institute français au Portugal; societe d'editions “Les Belles Lettres” - Paris; Livraria Bertrand – Lisbonne; 1966 ; p.181

⁷Cfr. VIII, Goffredo (dir.); *Architettura Cistercense*; Edizioni Casamari; 1995; p.29

⁸ Cfr. DIAS, Geraldo Coelho; *Espiritualidade, comida e arte na polémica dos Monges da Idade Média* in “Bernardo de Claraval. Apologia para Guilherme, Abade”; Fundação Eng. António de Almeida; Porto; 1997; p.14

Art spirituality defended, in particular, by St. Bernard and by the Cistercians, as a result it is rejected the analogy between the earthly beauty and the celestial splendour, constituting the asceticism, and consequently the renunciation of the senses, a way of achieving God. The Cistercians wanted the mystical union with God, being the man in need of penance and highlighting the ascetic function of manual work in an environment withdrawn and humble.⁹ To St. Bernard, luxury is useless and dangerous, being not only in contradiction with the requirements of spiritual life but also in conflict with them. The soul, according to St. Bernard, requires inner concentration to attain knowledge.

Regarding architecture, this opposition between St. Bernard and Suger of St. Denis, demonstrates that the difference which distinguishes them cannot be regarded as purely architectural but according to theological and theoretical terms.

This new way of looking at art begins with the publication of one of the first of St. Bernard's treatises, the "*Apologia to Abbot William*" (1125) which was the result of a quarrel between the Cistercians and the Cluniacs, on the interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict and resulted in the response of St. Bernard (by then already Abbot of Clairvaux) to William, Abbot of St. Theodoric. As Dom Angelico Surchamp refers, two interpretations of the same Rule, both blessed by Providence, could only face each other sooner or later.¹⁰ In this ideological literary work we find the theoretical dissertation of the differences between the two observances of the Benedictine rule thus opposing "Benedictine Cluniacs" to "Benedictine Cistercians", Black Monks to White Monks.

The Cistercian architecture and art do not aim the delight. Nothing should distract the attention from God. As a result, from the plan of the abbeys to the simplicity of the chosen materials, everything combines to elevate the demand for God and the pursuit for Holiness. The Cistercian Order is a rigorous demand for perfection; the Cistercian art is austere, bare, disciplined, stating in search of the purity of lines. It is, thus, made an apology of the "aesthetics of poverty", according to which there should only be presented extremely simple functional shapes, limiting to the essence. Consequently, to a luxuriant opulence which is patent in the Romanesque art, opposes an aesthetic of poverty and simplicity which is limited to the essential, presenting only functional shapes of extreme simplicity but also full of meanings. It is this Romanesque decorative exuberance that St. Bernard criticizes for the Cistercian monasteries.¹¹ Indeed, St. Bernard condemned the

⁹ Ibidem; p.14

¹⁰ Cfr. SURCHAMP, Dom Angelico; *L'esprit de l'art cistercien* in "L'Art Cistercien – France"; Ed. Zodiaque; 1982; p.16

¹¹ Cfr. *Apologia*, cap. XII in DIAS, Geraldo Coelho (apresentação, tradução e notas); "Bernardo de Claraval. Apologia para Guilherme, Abade"; Fundação Eng. António de Almeida; Porto; 1997; pp.66-67 / Cfr.

ornamentation and sumptuous beauty not because he was insensitive to their charms, but precisely because he is able to feel them so he could realize that these constitute an invincible seduction, therefore an irreconcilable danger amid the requirements of the sacred, being for him more important the pursuit for Divine contemplation than the fascination for the art.¹² However, St. Bernard limits this criticism to monasteries and acknowledges the importance of art in other churches, other than those of monasteries. The criteria underlying Bernard's aesthetic were not properly artistic but ethical and ascetic. St. Bernard's criticism in "Apology to Abbot William" is essentially the elementary text in which his ideals can be found. Through a severe criticism to luxury and excessive ornamentation (*superfluitas*), deformity and fantastic distortions of Romanesque Art (*curiositas*), excessive proportion (*supervacuitas*), St. Bernard releases the way for an aesthetic of ornamental moderation (*moderatio*) where the need (*necessitas*) and the utility (*utilitas*) constitute the new aesthetic criteria.¹³



Fig.3 – Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça, church. (author's photography)

Therefore the Cistercian Abbeys were characterised mainly by the rationality in the articulation of spaces and the bareness of decorative elements. However there were used local solutions with materials available *in loco* assimilating the existing cultural traditions.

According to Otto von Simson, St. Bernard's artistic opinions, more than from someone who can be described as a puritan, are opinions imbued on the influence of St. Augustine¹⁴

Cistercians and Cluniacs. St. Bernard's apologia to abbot William; Michael Casey ocso (trad.); Cistercian Publications; Michigan; 1970; p. 66

¹²Cfr. PANOFSKY, Erwin; *O significado nas artes visuais*; Ed. Presença; Lisboa; 1989; p.92

¹³ MARTINS, Ana Maria Tavares; *Espaço Monástico: da Cidade de Deus à Cidade do Homem* in "Estudos em Homenagem ao Prof. Doutor José Amadeu Coelho Dias"; Vol. 1; Edição FLUP; Porto, 2006, pp.92-93

¹⁴ Cit. SIMSON, Otto von; *La catedral gótica*; Alianza Forma; Madrid; 2000; p. 60

Certainly, lies well patent the influence of St. Augustine in the thought of St. Bernard and may even be considered the existence of a parallelism between the musical experience of St. Augustine and the spatial experience of St. Bernard. In the opinion of Otto von Simson, the musical experience will be gaining the imagination of St. Augustine to the point he finds in *harmony* the appropriate term to designate the work of reconciliation with Christ. Could or could we not find parallel in this musical experience from St. Augustine, St. Bernard's own spatial experience, when he questions in his *De Consideratione*: "what is God?" While, at the same time, he replies stating He "is length, width, height and depth".¹⁵ Aren't these, on a simplified reading, also the intrinsic attributes of architecture?

The Cistercian Art refers neither to the senses nor to the world of sensations, but to the reason, to the rationality immersed in the simplicity and in the clarity of geometric relationships and pure geometry. As Architecture is concerned, while discipline, besides the principles of proportion and symmetry, there is also the concern about the intended use, that is, the use and purpose of space which is created, so that the functionality and the aesthetics must be brought into a harmonious whole. Cistercian architecture also focuses on these principles. Simplicity, functionality (St. Bernard called it "authenticity", instead), bareness and austerity which leave uncovered and visible walls and structures highlighting only the harmony and the beauty of the shapes *per se* without additions.

The rule of St. Benedict provided the monastery with a program that, in turn, generated the plan of its architecture. In fact, there isn't a formal regulation for the Cistercian architecture. However, beginning from impositions or delimitations, some directives can be established which consequently are reflected in the morphology of the Cistercian plan.

What the Cistercian architecture brings as innovative is an unprecedented simplicity and consistency for its time. For having been based on St. Bernard's reason and rigour of thought, it is often entitled as "*bernardine architecture*" and when there is a reference to the plan of the churches it's used the designation of "*bernardine plan*". St. Bernard joined the aesthetic experience and the religious allowing the withdrawal of conclusions about a construction and arrangement of different architectural spaces "*de more nostro*" based on the so-called "*bernardine plan*", even though nothing has been written about this subject. The plan of the churches reflects the ideas of St. Bernard: latin cross plan, deep sense of orthogonality and alignments based on a square module, also known as *bernardine plan*. As Ferreira de Almeida says: "*The Cistercian architecture, that has in Portugal some testimonies of great*

¹⁵ *Quid est Deus? Longitudo, latitudo, sublimitas et profundum*. Cfr. S. BERNARDO; *De Consideratione ad Eugenium Papam* in "Obras Completas de San Bernardo"; (Los Monjes Cistercienses de España, ed.); vol. II; Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos; Madrid; 1994; pp. 226

*value, is one of the most notable examples of how much an art of building can be marked by spirituality (...). The spirit of the Rule was so significant that made school in both the Romanesque stylistic version as in the Gothic's.*¹⁶

In the Cistercian Monastery, the Church constitutes itself as the most important element of the settlement. However, the Cloister, at shape level, was the epicentre of the monastic space. Three sides meet essential functions: *spiritus*, at North, where is located the Church, a specific place dedicated to prayer, to the spiritual insight and elevation; *anima*, at East, where the Sacristy can be found as well as the Chapter-house and the Scriptorium, places of work but also of intellectual and spiritual elevation; *corpus*, at South, where the kitchen can be found as well as the calefactory, the refectory and the latrines, that is, everything that was necessary for the survival and livelihood of the body; the fourth side, next to the cloister, at West, was opened to the Conversus, it was called the *Domus conversorum*, where the cellar could be found as well as the dormitory and refectory of the Conversus and the latrines. Note the difference of meanings and opposition between the side of *spiritus* and the side of *corpus*, revealing the dichotomies earth-heaven and matter-spirit.¹⁷

It should be pointed out the importance of the Cistercian Order not only in increasing the Romanesque style but also in introducing the Gothic in Portugal with the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça which was founded in 1153 and is associated with the foundation of nationality and also with the remarkable figure of D. Afonso Henriques. In its early years, the Cistercian architecture progressed quickly. As a result, at first, the Romanesque and then the Gothic, adjusted to the Cistercian austerity were presented in response to the demands of the Cistercians decoding perfectly the spirituality of the order. In the territories where the Cistercian Order was settled, innovative solutions were presented, which does not mean that they remained as such, outside of these territories, because the Cistercians always knew how to use the singular premises of the locations where they were settled. Therefore, it must be stressed the importance of the Cistercian spirit in both architectural styles, as Paulo Pereira says: “(...) when the Gothic style arrives in Portugal it arrives by cistercian way. Deprived and cold, clear and plane, luminous and ‘white’. It remains to know, in fact, if the Portuguese architecture, of the following centuries doesn't owe much or almost everything to this cistercian aesthetic that obstinately endured (...).”¹⁸

The Cistercian construction attests the influences not only from local particularities but also the homogeneity which was the result of a centralized organization and furthermore as

¹⁶ Cfr. ALMEIDA, Carlos Alberto Ferreira de; *Arquitetura* in “Nos confins da Idade Média”; IPM; 1992; p.77

¹⁷ Cfr. MARTINS, Ana Maria Tavares; *Uma Perspectiva da Ordem de Cister: o Legado Português*; Ed. Autor; Viseu, 2007; pp.27-29

¹⁸ Cit. PEREIRA, Paulo; *2000 anos de arte em Portugal*; Temas e Debates; Lisboa; 1999; p.155

due to the existence of the General Chapter (where all the decisions were taken towards all the monasteries besides the regular visitations). The Cistercian architecture already contemplated the improvement, or even the reconstruction, which extended beyond the Church and expanded into the dormitories, the kitchen, the refectory, and other necessary buildings, due to the planimetric arrangement of the building¹⁹

Since 1150, everything gains importance, an innovative way of arrangement and construction of different architectural spaces begins to be known as “*de more nostro*”, i.e. “our way”. Therefore, the architecture of a Cistercian monastery encloses: the distinctiveness of the *site*; the *size* of the community installed on it; the respect and need of the “*ora et labora*” that fulfils the life of the Cistercian monks, according to the Rule of St. Benedict; the existence of *two different groups*, two different societies in hierarchy and diverse composed both by the Choir monks as by the Conversus occupying different spaces. The economy of means, rigour, relation between volumes and light are translated through a perfect spiritual unity between an ideal and the selected form. Accordingly, the Cistercian architecture can be summarized through four fundamental definitions: the austerity, the simplicity, the functionality and the regionalisms which were absorbed and adapted to the construction where a Cistercian monastery was settled.²⁰ Consequently, the recurrence of its architectures was achievable due to the uniformity of thought and to the obedience to the Rule of St. Benedict. However there was always a place for autonomy possible by the regionalisms of these same architectures. The Cistercian austerity reflected not only in the daily routine of the monks, but also in the logic, rationality of articulation of every architectural spaces and bareness of decorative elements: “*In monasteries there shall not be paintings or sculptures, only wooden crosses (...) The doors shall be painted only in white (...) There shall not be made stone towers for the bells, nor wood, too high.*”²¹ The Cistercian space allowed the “*ora et labora*”, living and praying, with the soul, with the heart and also with the hands, having all been possible by architecture as the instrument which enabled this life, in harmony with the chosen place.

CISTERCIAN SETTLEMENT

Spiritual and material reasons exerted a decisive role in the choice of the place to build each Cistercian monastery. Often the Cistercians have settled their monasteries in valleys and

¹⁹ KINDER, Terry N.; *I Cisterciensi – vita quotidiana, cultura, arte*; Biblioteca di Cultura Medievale; col. Di Fronte e Attraverso; n° 468; Editoriale Jaca book spa; Milano; 1998; p.98

²⁰ AA. VV.; *LES BÂTISSEURS – des moines cisterciens...aux capitaines d'industrie*; Ed. LE MONITEUR; 1997; pp.22-23

²¹ In Statuta

needed to create an immense and profound transformation in the territory.²² Regarding the Cistercian architecture there is a mimesis with the surroundings, with the landscape, with the location were to be settled, that is, with the chosen site. This preference by valleys is referenced not only in the primitive Cistercian legislation²³ but also in the verses: “*Bernardus valles, colles Benedictus amabat, / Franciscus vicos, celebres Ignatius urbes.*”²⁴ According to Dimier, these verses have been inspired by a passage from “*Chronologia monasteriorum germaniae illustrium*” by the German poet Gasper Brush (16th century) when he wrote about the Cistercian Monastery of Königsbrunn in Württemberg: “*Semper enim balles sylvestribus undique cinctas / Arboribus, divus Bernardus amoenaque prata / Et fluvius; juga sed Benedictus amabat et arces / Caelo surgentes e quarum vertice late / Prospectus petitur; secessum plebia uterque*”.²⁵

The Cistercian monastic space can be understood as a territorial organism which is inserted in a territory in the way that it adapts the territory, modeling and altering it according to its needs but also as an architectural space which is constructed according to the needs of the spirit and body.

A Cistercian monastery should be considered as an ideal city and endowed with all necessary elements for subsistence, as the rule of St. Benedict says: “*If it can be done, the monastery should be so situated that all the necessities, such as water, the mill, the garden, are enclosed, and the various arts may be plied inside of the monastery, so that there may be no need for the monks to go about outside, because it is not good for their souls.*”²⁶ furthermore “*No monastery shall be erected in burgh, city or village. / A new abbot shall not be sent to make a new foundation without at least twelve monks, without having among the books, a psalter, an hymnal, an antiphony, a gradual, a Rule, a missal, nor before, in that same place, were raised the buildings of the oratory, the refectory, the guest-house and the gatekeeper-house; This, so as to immediately can serve God and lead a regular life. / Outside the walls of the monastery should not be build any housing, other than that of animals. / With the purpose of perpetuating the indissoluble unity among the abbeys, it was established the supreme norm that the Rule of St. Benedict will be interpreted in one only way (...).*”²⁷ Moreover its symbolism, the monastery is a functional location where everything has its reasons and fits into its place because the

²² Cfr. PÉREZ CANO, María Teresa; *Patrimonio y Ciudad*; Fundación Focus-Abengoa, Universidad de Sevilla; Sevilla; 1999 / KINDER, Terryl N.; *L'Europe Cistercienne*; Ed. Zodiaque; 1998

²³ Constituída por: *Exordium Parvum, Exordium Cisterci, Carta Caritatis Prior, Summa Cartae Caritatis, Capitula, Ecclesiastica Officia, Usus Conversorum*

²⁴ Tradução livre: *Bernardo amava os vales, Bento as colinas, Francisco as vilas, Inácio as grandes cidades.* Cfr DIMIER, Pe. Anselme; *Stones laid before the Lord*; CSS 152; Cistercian Publications; Michigan; 1999; p. 51. / Cfr DIAS, Geraldo Coelho; *Monaquismo, Arte e Arquitectura – o caso do Mosteiro de Alpendurada* in “Religião e Simbólica”; Granito Editores; Porto; 2001; p. 206 / KINDER, Terryl N.; *L'Europe Cistercienne*; Ed. Zodiaque; 1998

²⁵ Cfr DIMIER, Pe. Anselme; op.cit; pp. 51-52

²⁶ Cfr. Capítulo LXVI. in *Regra do Patriarca S. Bento*; traduzido e anotado do latim pelos Monges de Singeverga; Edições “Ora & Labora”; Mosteiro de Singeverga; 1992; p.132

²⁷ Cfr. *Capitula*, cap. IX in “CISTER: os Documentos Primitivos”; Tradução, Introduções e Comentários de Aires A. Nascimento; Edições Colibri; Lisboa; 1999; p. 57

monastery is a place of dwelling of men, but also of God.²⁸ The Cloister, according to Bernard of Clairvaux was the “*Paradisum Claustralis*”, being the life in the Cistercian cloister not only an ideal of life, but also an image and a glimpse of paradise. St. Bernard mentioned this paradise, in his Epistle 64²⁹, referring to the Abbey of Clairvaux wishing for the monks that it would be the heavenly Jerusalem on Earth.

CISTERCIAN ORDER IN PORTUGAL ACCORDING TO AN ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE

The spirit of the Cistercian Order from its beginnings was being lost gradually and this is perceptible already during the 13th century. The monastic buildings began to require conservation and/or remodelling works which were done at the taste of the epoch and according to new requirements. Over time the ideals and reality changed as well, but the space remained, being appropriated in a distinctive way or even similar one.

Starting from the 14th century, a certain change in the orientation of the Cistercians was undergone as well as the adulteration of the primitive Cistercian spirit based on the knowledge of the Fathers of the Desert and on the Charter of Charity. With the crisis, started in the 14th century and prolonged by the 15th century, the architectural-constructive activity of the Cistercians diminished, and there started the first complaints of the villages belonging to the “*Coutos* of Alcobça” against Alcobça Abbey itself, and quarrels between this and the population of “settlers” from its “*Coutos*”.³⁰

In Portugal during the 15th century, the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobça already had a vast domain. It was the time of Reform, of various religious conflicts and the existence of Commendatory Abbots ahead of the management of the Abbeys. For all Monasteries which could have new construction it was in accordance with the new Renaissance style. The dissatisfaction between the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobça and the populations colonising their “*Coutos*” was greatly exacerbated with the appointment of Commendatory Abbots, reflecting the problematic and malaise felt within the community of the monastery.³¹ The system of Commendatory Abbots was used widely throughout Christianity at the end of the middle ages. Along the way, the power was increased and the

²⁸ Cfr DIAS, Geraldo Coelho; *Do Mosteiro Beneditino Ideal ao Mosteiro de S. Bento da Vitória. História, espaços e quotidiano dos monges* in “O Mosteiro de S. Bento da Vitória. 400 anos ”; Edições Afrontamento; Porto; 1997; pp.13-37

²⁹ S. BERNARDO; *Epistola 64* in “Obras Completas de San Bernardo”;vol. VII; B.A.C.; Madrid; 2003; pp. 246-247

³⁰AA.VV.; *Arte Sacra nos Antigos Coutos de Alcobça*; IPPAR-Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico; Ed. ASA; 1995; p.19

³¹ *Ibidem*

influence, not only on politics but also in society, exerted by Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and Clergy led to a weakening of monastic-regular authorities, in particular of the oldest institution in the Portuguese territory such as the Benedictines and the Cistercians.³²

Pope Gregory XI, in the context of the Western Schism, proclaims the Supreme authority of the Pope which allows him the appointment of Abbots in any male monastic house. However, already its predecessor, Pope Urban V, had reserved to his own control the privilege to appoint and confirm the Abbots of Santa Maria de Alcobaça, being this Abbey a very premature case in this sense because: *“When in 1475, the Abbot in exercise, D. Nicolau Vieira sells its abbot’s position to Cardinal D. Jorge da Costa, with royal bliss, we can mention that we already had previous conditions which allowed a glimpse to a similar a solution at this Abbey existence(...).”*³³

The Portuguese Cistercian monasteries suffered severely during the Commendatory Abbots period and received the visitation of the Abbot of Clairvaux, Dom Èdme de Salieu and his secretary Claude de Bronserval, in the 1st half of the 16th century, thus all attention was focused on the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça (which always stood out by its importance and grandeur) as it was the gathering element of all Portuguese Cistercian monasteries.

However, it was during the abbatial government of both sons of D. Manuel I, the Commendatory Abbots, Cardinal D. Afonso and Cardinal D. Henrique, which emerged the great works at the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça, which could also be found afterwards in the villages of its dependency.

At the border, between the dawn of the modern world and the end of the medieval world, an historical fact can be found which is expressed by the attempt of trying to converge the monastic tradition with the medieval times. However, this fact should be seen as the new way to be modern, that is, according to individual, experimental and psychological aspects. But above all, this fact was only possible, as Rafael de Pascual³⁴, sustains, because the monks knew how to cultivate not only the dogmatic theology but also the history, the preaching, the Bible and the Patristic science, putting the theological science at the service of spirituality and of monastic life. But, as time went by, it was noticed a progressive distance between spirituality and dogmatic, between knowledge and life, between doctrine and holiness as it was evident on the Desert Fathers. The Cistercians monks of the

³² Cfr. GOMES, Saul António; *Visitações a Mosteiros Cistercienses em Portugal – séculos XV-XVI*; Edição do Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico (IPPAR); 1998; pp.20-21

³³ Cfr. Ibidem; p.21

³⁴ PASCUAL, F. Francisco Rafael de; *Las Congregaciones cistercienses de la Península Ibérica*; Abadia de Viaceli; s/d.; polycopied text; without paging

appearing Congregations, across Europe, and among which stands out the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça, no longer wanted to be pure “contemplative” as opposed to “practical Christians in the world”, but wanted to be able to achieve, through its primitive simplicity, the Christian synthesis of action and truth, presenting it again to the Church of that time.

Consequently, the Autonomous Congregations were connected with restructuring movements of regionalist nature, appearing not only by a strong desire for reform but also by a need for independence, considering the political influence of other countries, and the desire to protect smaller monasteries of the Visitations undertaken by foreign visitators.

In fact, in the 15th century, with the dawn of the modern world, weaknesses in the General Chapter’s actions and authority started to emerge, favoured not only by an exacerbated nationalism which marked this epoch but also by the wide renovation required by the Council of Trent and other ecclesiastical instances of several European Nations. The individualism of the Reform and the renaissance spirit, undoubtedly, achieved some exacerbations and nationalist exaggerations which, in turn, brought a few separatist tendencies.

The procedure followed for the autonomy of the Portuguese Cistercians was not immediate, being favoured by the Church history. In 1459, the Pope Pious II, through the “*Constitutus in specula*”, granted to the Abbot of Alcobaça the authority to exercise visitations into all Portuguese Cistercian monasteries.

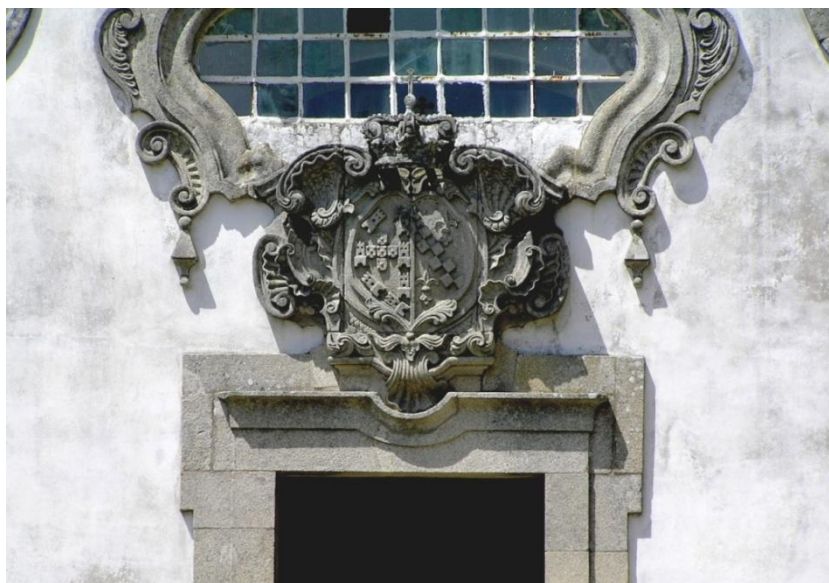


Fig.4 – Monastery of S. Cristóvão de Lafões. (author’s photography)

On the 26th of October of 1559, the Pope Pious V, through the “*Pastoralis officii*”, elevates the Portuguese Cistercian monasteries to the category of Congregation, with the official designation as “*Congregação de Santa Maria de Alcobaça da Ordem de S. Bernardo nos Reinos de*

Portugal e do Algarve” (Congregation of Santa Maria de Alcobaça of St. Bernard’s Order in the kingdoms of Portugal and the Algarve).³⁵ Consequently, the Cistercian Order in Portugal changes from “Order” to “Autonomous Congregation” and, therefore, is no longer under the “obedience to Clairvaux”, but owes “obedience to Alcobaça”.

In its origins there wasn’t an explicit attempt to cut with the authority of the General Chapter of the Cistercian Order, but it was a fact that the Portuguese Abbots did not participate in the Abbots’ General Chapter from a long time. Cardinal D. Henrique obtained from Pope Gregory XIII the privilege to be the responsible for the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça and to be the first General Abbot of the Congregation.

With the Autonomous Congregation it was established a triennial abbot’s regimen and, as in other Cistercian Congregations, old habits were eliminated. As a result, the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça also had a “General Abbot” who was, in Portugal, simultaneously the Abbot of the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça. The Abbots were elected by the General Chapter and could be elected for two times. The Visitators had full powers to apply the standards of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça. It was intended to re-establish and to improve the Cistercian observance, by adapting it to changing times away from the medieval times and uses. The Cistercian observance was adapted to the norms and reforms of the Church and religious Orders dictated by the Council of Trent. The monks no longer had the vow of stability, and could even be moved to other monasteries through the vow of obedience.³⁶

This was a time of spiritual renewal, of great works and renovations, investment in education, everything that led to the existence of monks or nuns who were simultaneously great intellectuals and men or women of grand value.

Therefore, the Cistercian Order endeavoured a new period of construction and renovation of its monasteries according to the new Baroque’s taste, distinguishing its architectures from the architectures of protestant nature and simplicity which began to flourish in Europe. The Cistercian Romanesque and Gothic legacies were obscured, or even

³⁵Cfr. *Ibidem*

³⁶ Cfr. PASCUAL, F. Francisco Rafael de; *Las Congregaciones cistercienses de la Península Ibérica*; Abadía de Viaceli; s/d.; texto policopiado; s/paginación / Cfr. GOMES, Saul António; *Visitações a Mosteiros Cistercienses em Portugal – séculos XV-XVI*; Edição do Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico (IPPAR); 1998 / Cfr. GOMES, Saul António; *A Congregação cisterciense de Santa Maria de Alcobaça nos séculos XVI e XVII: elementos para o seu conhecimento* in “Lusitania Sacra”; tomo XVIII; 2ª série; Centro de Estudos de História Religiosa – Universidade Católica Portuguesa; Lisboa, 2006; pp. 375-431

destroyed, by the new imposed Baroque.³⁸ From the 17th century until the end of the 18th century, there was a brief period of relative peace and prosperity.³⁷

The extinction of a small number of Cistercian monasteries began long before 1834. After the euphoria and desire of renewal, caused by the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça creation, many monasteries (either by the physical or economic states presented, either by the “human” state of the monk’s community) were suppressed and their incomes attached to other monasteries of the same Congregation.

D. Frei Manoel de Mendonça, General Abbot of the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça and nephew of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis of Pombal, in a pastoral letter dated of the 7th of May of 1774, addressed to the Cistercian religious, refers to the demise of religious fervour as well as the existence of a too high number of religious within the Congregation. D. Manoel Mendonça believed to be better “to have fewer monks but more enlightened and committed” than many “with slight utility”.³⁸ He also reminds the essential duties of the monks of the Congregation: obedience, poverty and chastity. He appeals to the study of the Sacred Scriptures and to the reading of the life and work of the blessed Fathers.

After the great earthquake of 1755 it was necessary to carry out works on many of the monasteries destroyed greatly by the tragic event. The destruction of this earthquake was inexorable, reaching the Congregation a little everywhere but especially in the monasteries closest to the epicentre of tragedy: Nossa Senhora do Mocambo, Nossa Senhora do Desterro, S. Dinis de Odivelas, Santa Maria de Alcobaça and the College of Conceição. The interest showed in the reconstruction of this last college was high. Consequently, on the 2nd of December of 1775, by Royal Charter, D. Manoel Mendonça is honoured with the title of founder of the Real Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Conceição, with authorization (confirmed by the Pope), to unite and to extinguish monasteries and incomes to each other. The powers he was invested on were unlimited and applied not only to what was mentioned above, but also applied to visitations and reforms of all the Cistercian monasteries, that is, to the Autonomous Congregation of Alcobaça: “(...) *with the same authority with which the Abbot of the Cistercian Order did by brief of Eugene IV ... likewise in the*

³⁷ Cfr. LEKAI, Louis J.; *Los Cistercienses – ideales y realidad*; Biblioteca Herder - Sección de Historia; vol. 177; Editorial Herder; Barcelona; 1987; pp.359-360

³⁸ Cfr. MOTA, Salvador Magalhães; *A ação de D. Frei Manoel de Mendonça à frente dos destinos da Congregação de Sta. Maria de Alcobaça da Ordem de S. Bernardo (1768-1777)* in “Estudos em Homenagem a Luís António de Oliveira Ramos; Ed. FLUP – Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto; Porto 2004; p.773 e p.775

*Spiritual and in the Temporal using his own ordinary jurisdiction and full omnimo of the apostolic authority that for this purpose was conferred to him...*³⁹

As a result, in 1775, the monasteries of small incomes as S. Pedro das Águias, S. Cristóvão de Lafões, Santa Maria de Seiça, Santa Maria de Maceira Dão are extinct and attached to the College of Conceição. Using the argument to reduce the waste and concentrate monks and nuns in larger monasteries, he also extinguishes the monasteries of S. Bento de Cástris, S. Bernardo de Portalegre, Santa Maria de Almoester, Nossa Senhora do Mocambo and Nossa Senhora da Assunção de Tabosa.⁴⁰

However, in 1777, with the enthronization of Queen D. Maria I and the fall of D. Manoel Mendonça, the monasteries extinguished two years before, were restored.

The 19th century brought strong anti-monastic doctrines arising from principles and ideals of the French Revolution of 1789. Therefore, new times of sorrow and destruction arose to the Cistercian Abbeys, being followed by their secularization.

In Portugal the Napoleonic Invasions disseminated a trail of destruction and looting of the monasteries which contributed even more to intensify the deplorable state of crisis on which the Cistercian monasteries were already in.

As a consequence of the civil war between Liberals (supporters of D. Pedro) and Absolutists (supporters of D. Miguel), the Cistercian monks from Alcobaça left the Monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaça in 1833, with fear of expulsion, because of the support and affinities with the Miguelists' cause, therefore anticipating in one year the suffering caused by the extinction of the Religious Orders.

In fact, the 19th century was characterised by a growing anticlericalism that culminated in the extinction of the Religious Orders, by Decree of the 28th of May of 1834, destined to the secularization of ecclesiastical possessions, draft by Joaquim António Aguiar, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Justice, and promulgated by D. Pedro, the Regent, against the express judgment of the Council of State.⁴¹ This Decree determined the total and immediate extinction of monasteries, convents, colleges, hospices and all religious houses and regular orders, independently of its denomination, institute or rule as it is stated by the first three articles of that Decree. To the nuns, unlike the monks, it was allowed to remain in their monasteries until the death of the last religious woman of each monastery.

³⁹ Cfr. *ibidem*; p.776

⁴⁰ Cfr. *Ibidem*

⁴¹ RAMOS, Luis A. de Oliveira; *A extinção das Ordens Religiosas: antecedentes e consequências* in “Perspectivas do Portugal Contemporâneo – As Ordens Religiosas da extinção à herança”. Actas do II Encontro Cultural de São Cristóvão de Lafões; Ed. Sociedade do Mosteiro de São Cristóvão de Lafões; São Cristóvão de Lafões, 2007; pp. 36-37

In the 19th century and at the dawn of the 20th century, in Europe, the monks returned and the taste of Romanticism for ruins generated a new feeling and awareness for the Cistercian Abbeys, inhabited again by monks or simple ruins to the delight and admiration of the 19th century and 20th century populations. To Portugal, the Cistercian monks, never returned as a result the Cistercian architectures stayed in possession of private individuals, State, or where simply abandoned.

Since the introduction of Constitutional Monarchy until the 1st Republic, the times lived in Portugal were to some extent troubled regarding the Religious Orders and Congregations, either by the concomitant contradiction between the persecution and destructive impulses of power and politics of that time; or by a dynamic which was at the same time apologetic and restorative committed to revitalize the Church. Accordingly, as Machado de Abreu refers: “(...) *clashed during nearly a century the anti-congregationalist and anti-clerical promoters of a campaign and the intrepid defenders both of the rights of orders and congregations as the valuable contribution given by it to the Portuguese society.*”⁴² In addition, Frei Geraldo Coelho Dias states: “*It's a regret that Portugal, in 1834, in such a demandable way, by mere «monkphobia», has destroyed what the King Founder, religiously, had begun to do to ensure the soundness of nationality. The Cistercian soul, that for eight centuries was, for Portugal, an irradiator center of spirituality and culture, lies dead in our country. At the very most, we can find here and there some monumental remains, depreciated vestiges of a beneficial presence, which we were not able neither to defend nor thank.*”⁴³

The last Cistercian nun was Madre Carolina Augusta de Castro e Silva who died in 1909 with 93 years of age. She was a nun from the Monastery of Nossa Senhora de Nazaré do Mocambo today known as Convento das Bernardas, in Lisbon. With her death, the Cistercian Order in Portugal also disappeared, at least by about eighty years, because, in 1989, was founded the Cistercian Monastery of Nossa Senhora de Maranathá, in Algarve (by now extinct, because it was an ephemeral attempt with a short number of nuns) becoming again far from Portugal the Cistercian Order.

The Cistercian spirit and its ideals are perceptible throughout and each of the exemplars of its architecture subsisting today a few everywhere. “*When the monks, for centuries and centuries, / impressed with its trace a land, / though it would not remain from the home of the monks / nothing but a disunited stone, / nothing but a grain of sand that crumbles into dust, / the stone, the sand speak of the monks. / Even if the stone and the grain of sand / vanished into thin air / the land, old and noble land / the land over which the monks leaned, / the valley where they prayed, / the trees they planted / would still*

⁴² ABREU, Luis Machado de; *Presença das Ordens e Congregações Religiosas na Ciência e na Cultura em Portugal* in “Ordens e Congregações Religiosas no contexto da I República”; Ed. Gradiva; Lisboa 2010; p.30

⁴³ DIAS, Geraldo Coelho; *A marca de São Bernardo na espiritualidade e na cultura cistercienses*, in Separata de; “Tarouca e Cister: Espaço, Espírito e Poder”; Câmara Municipal de Tarouca; 2004; p.222

*be speaking of them. / Because for centuries and centuries, / the monks impressed with their mark a land.*⁴⁴

THE CISTERCIAN LEGACY IN PORTUGAL 1834 – (...)

The monasteries have provided the contemporary city, especially from the 19th and 20th centuries, expectant spaces or new fields of experimentation as diverse as: rehabilitation, reuse, renovation, conversion, etc.⁴⁵ These are new spaces which adapt to new situations, new uses, in short, update, including and integrating, in its history, the values of the present.

With the 20th century the campaigns of restoration, reconstruction, renewal, and rehabilitation begin under the responsibility of the DGEMN (Directorate General for National Buildings and Monuments) as well as the IPPAR (Portuguese Institute of Architectural Heritage) highlighting the cases of the monasteries of Arouca, Santa Maria de Salzedas, S. João de Tarouca, Santa Maria de Aguiar, Lorvão and Alcobaça. This action was extended to this century, now through IGESPAR (Institute of Management of the Architectonic and Archaeological Heritage).

The Municipalities also invested on the rehabilitation of the Cistercian architectures as it is the case of the City hall of Lisbon with the Monastery of Our Lady of Nazaré do Mocambo, known as well as Bernardas' Convent which is located in Madragoa, a Lisbon neighborhood. It was founded in 1653 above pré-existences, was totally destroyed during the great Lisbon earthquake in 1755 and reconstructed later on by G. Azzolini. The recent rehabilitation project was elaborated by the architectural office ARCHI III. Today in this former monastic space are coexisting the Puppet's Museum, 34 habitations, shops and a restaurant (before that, it was a “*villa operária*” and the “*Cine-Esperança*” theatre, during the first half of the 20th century, of which still remains the stage (kept from decay) where the Church's altar use to be). The Cistercian legacy was also taken in consideration by the City hall of Coimbra that was interested in the revitalization and landscape reconversion of the encircling walls of S. Bernardo's College integrated in the city's urban fabric, in Rua da Sofia. Today is used for residential and commercial purposes. The landscape redevelopment was in charge of the Architect Mendes Ribeiro.

The contemporary rehabilitations are sometimes executed by a few private institutions and persons as it is the case of Monastery of S. Cristóvão de Lafões, having been acquired by a

⁴⁴ Cfr COCHERIL, Dom Maur; *Cister em Portugal*; Edições Panorama; Lisboa; 1965; p.17

⁴⁵ Cfr PÉREZ CANO, María Teresa y Eduardo Mosquera Adell; *Arquitectura en los Conventos de Sevilla*; Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura y Medio Ambiente; Sevilla; 1991

family that rehabilitated it, rescuing it from destruction. The Church of the monastery was given to the parish. Other times the contemporary rehabilitations have the support of the State and they are assigned to private entities as it is the case of the Monastery of Santa Maria do Bouro, now a *Pousada* (which is a State-owned hotel of very high standard usually integrated in an historical building or built from the remains of one) with rehabilitation project of the Architects Souto de Moura and Humberto Vieira. The rehabilitation project was designed in order to adapt the stones of the old monastery, which were available, to build a new building. This means a new structure in which various assertions and functions intervene as Souto de Moura say's: "*I'm not restoring a monastery; I'm building a Pousada with the stones from a monastery*"⁴⁶ Others were adapted to schools or to State institutions: Monastery of S. Dinis de Odivelas or the Monastery of Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Portalegre (known as S. Bernardo de Portalegre) which is nowadays the Portalegre's Practical School of the Grouping of Instruction of the National Republican Guard (GNR). There are certain parallelisms related to its initial use, that is, the church continues to be a church, the dormitory gave place to the soldiers' quarters and the Chapter-house is the room assigned to the officials' meetings.

Others were adapted to hospitals as it is the case of the Monastery of Lorvão and of the Monastery of Nossa Senhora do Desterro.

The Tavira's Monastery, after the extinction of the Orders, was used as a factory and it will be now transformed in a residential condominium by the architect Eduardo Souto de Moura. However, this wasn't the only monastery which had industrial use. Another Monastery, the Monastery of Santa Maria de Seça, had a factory installed in its interior. It was a rice peeling factory and it had such importance, as industry, that had a railroad passing next to the monastery with the privilege of having a private specific wayside-station for its own purpose.

The Cistercian monastery, that St^a Maria de Alcobaça is an example, born of an ideal of monastic life, being assumed as an ideal city by a plan of unity and simplicity, man's habitation but also of God, creates a city, non planned, being integral part of the urban fabric and assuming the characteristics of another reality very different from that for which it was planned.

However, it will never cease to cause admiration and its ideal remains alive, in the present times, for the whiteness of its stones, for the grandeur of its configuration and for the functionality of its spaces which still subsist today, having been even adapted the actual

⁴⁶ Cfr MOURA, Eduardo Souto de; *Reconversão do mosteiro de Santa Maria do Bouro numa pousada* in "Santa Maria do Bouro"; White & Blue, lda.; Lisboa; 2001; p.44

times, carrying out other functions but not preventing from affirming its almost minimal origins.⁴⁷ In the dawn of the 21st century the Monastery of Alcobaça was object of rehabilitation of its southern wing, transformed into a cultural space where temporary exhibitions take place. It's the “Ala São Bernardo” that means St Bernard’s wing which project of rehabilitation has a minimalist feature and is of the responsibility of the architects Gonçalo Byrne and João Pedro Falcão de Campos. The ground-floor was consolidated allowing the creation, on this floor, of versatile spaces and a parochial space on the first floor.

It's up to the 21st century to demonstrate the best this legacy has to offer, preserving its memory as a national asset which deserves to be loved and preserved. So it is referred on the 9th article of the European Charter for Architectural Heritage: *“every generation has only one life to be interested in its heritage and is responsible for passing it on to future generations.”* And adding the thought of Manuel Antunes: *“Religious life can be a sign of contradiction to the world but cannot be a sign of disappointment for men.”*⁴⁸



Fig.5 – Monastery of N. Sr^a da Assunção de Tabosa (author’s photography)

⁴⁷ MARTINS, Ana Maria Tavares F; *The Monastery as the City of God: Ideals and Reality. Sr^a Maria de Alcobaça, a portuguese case* in “THE PLANNED CITY?”; Ed. Attilio Petruccioli, Michele Stella, Giuseppe Strappa; vol. III; Union Gráfica Corcelli Editrice; Bari 2003.pp760-764

⁴⁸ ANTUNES, Manuel.; *Obra completa*; T. IV; FCG – Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian; Lisboa 2007; p.28