

Technical File

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under the presidency of Victor Frutuoso, completed in 2015.

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guide to the

MUNICIPAL MUSEUM OF MARVÃO

founded and renovated 1987 – 2015

Jorge de Oliveira





Municipal Museum of Marvão (Church of Santa Maria)

Church of Santa Maria – Photographic Documents XIX – XX c.









Background

Going through the minutes of the Town Hall of Marvão from the 40s of the XXth century, we already find references to several intentions of creating a municipal museum to be installed in this town's castle. This intention is surely related to the visits that some notable archeologists have made to the archeological sites of the municipality. Firstly Laranjo Coelho and later Eugénio Jallhay and Afonso do Paço, have highlighted the archeological richness of the municipality of Marvão suggesting the necessity to collect in a safe place inscriptions and other testimonies that were scattered around the different parishes. By the hand of these archeologists, in the middle of the XXth century, some materials that were initially stored in the old town hall and later in the Castle of Marvão, were given to the Town Hall.

Epigraphs of Ammaia, pre-historic pieces of Vidais, high-medieval pottery from Monte Velho, where there was the famous tile with the christian inscription, currently missing, and medieval gravestones have joined the weapons of the last garrisons of the square of Marvão, constituting a primitive core in exhibition in one of the houses near the keep of the castle.









In the beginning of the seventies, in Santo António das Areias, a group of young people starts a collection of archeological pieces from the surface recollections and some research that will eventually lead to, after the formalization of GDIC, Group for Cultural Promotion, in 1975, the Archeological Museum of that village. Besides having two exhibition rooms, this small museum promoted several temporary exhibitions in the county seat. Roughly at the same time, probably as an answer to the creation of the Archeological Museum of Santo António das Areias, where pieces collected in the ruins of Ammaia were incorporated, the parish council of Salvador da Aramenha manifests its intention of creating an archeological museum in that parish to harbor the pieces that were being discovered with the mining in the ruins of the old roman city. This intention seems to converge with the goals that the Town Hall had, two decades before, when inviting Afonso do Paço to promote mining campaigns with the Mocidade Portuguesa in the ruins of Ammaia.

In the letter exchanges between the town hall and this archeologist, a creation of a museum with the materials that would eventually mined from the future excavations to be held there, was referred.

In the middle of the eighties, the GDIC's Archeological Museum was closed,

GDIC Museum – Santo António das Areias (1975-1979)











in S. Salvador da Aramenha no museum nucleus had been created and in the Castle of Marvão the old exhibition space was also closed. In 1986 the Town Hall of Marvão, presided by António Moura Andrade, having has Councilor for Culture José Murta Ruivo, invites me to, in the Church of Santa Maria in Marvão, put together a museum of municipal characteristics, where the material memories of the municipality could be collected and displayed. Exclusively with the collaboration of the town workers and the ethnologist João Vidal and with a

total cost of not more than 2 500 000\$00 (12 500€) was possible to inaugurate, in

Putting together the Municipal Museum of Marvão (1986)





November 7, 1987, the Municipal Museum of Marvão.

From the Paleolithic to the Neolithic





Originally the Municipal Museum of Marvão was constituted by a vast collection of archeological pieces covering all periods from the Paleolithic to the Middle Ages. In this collection the central pieces were the materials coming from the extinct museum of Santo António das Areias, from the excavations in the dolmens of the municipality, from the roman necropolis of Herdade dos Pombais and the unique collection of epigraphs, mainly collected in the city of Ammaia. One of the sacristies of the Church held the weaponry collection from the last garrisons of the square of Marvão, framed with a set of reproductions of historic blueprints of the town of Marvão. A vast collection of religious sculpture, original from the churches of Marvão, from which the images of S. Sebastião and Nossa Senhora com o Menino, of the XV century are highlighted, in limestone, or even a S. Bartolomeu in marble, of the XVI century. A rich ethnographical collection from the recollection done by João Vidal was also a part of the permanent exhibition, from which we highlight the examples of old wives' remedies and litanies, or the traditional gowns of the council. In some corners of the museum there were also decorative pieces offered by the townsfolk, or printed documents with curious annotations about local history.

For almost twenty years the original collections of the Municipal Muse-

Inauguration of the Municipal Museum of Marvão – 07/11/1987















From the Chalcolithic to the Iron Age









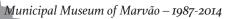




















um of Marvão were exhibited. In 1995 the excavation works in the Roman City of Ammaia began and after a while the museum in situ is put together, which was previously just another building of the Municipal Museum of Marvão. At that time and for that reason the epigraph collection that was exhibited in Marvão was moved to the new exhibition space, as were more artefacts original from that roman city, making the museum of Marvão lose one of its most emblematic collections. After a while, once again, the Municipal Museum of Marvão watches another of its most emblematic collections leave, armory. From here are taken all the weapons to incorporate an exhibition, which was deemed permanent, in the dependencies of the Castle of Marvão. The poor conditions of accommodation to which they were subject in the Castle of Marvão and the promulgation of the new weapons' law, forced the closure of those exhibition spaces and the historical weapons, property of the council, returned to the municipal museum.

The great exhibition disarray that was generated in the Municipal Museum of Marvão with the leaving of collections of epigraphs and weaponry, and the natural erosion of the exhibitors and communication materials, some of which were almost 30 years old, lead the Town Hall of Marvão, in 2013, to get the funds necessary for the making of a deep remodeling of the Municipal Museum of Marvão.















The Building

The church of Santa Maria of Marvão, the most ancient Christian temple of the town, probably built on an ancient mosque, if we pay attention to some elements that reveal two structural orientations, it is classified as a monument and as such subject to strong conditions in what concerns alterations. In this church, in the area of the altar, some architectonic elements attributable to the end of the XIII century, or beginning of the XIV century, are visible whereas the rest of the structure points to reformulations attributable to the XVII century and mainly to the XVIII century, as it happens in the lateral altar covered in azulejos. The fresco that is observable inside the church that portraits S. Bartolomeu besides Santa Margarida and Santa Madalena with two demons at their feet, dates back to the end of the XIV century. Its great state of conservation is due to the fact that it was closed behind walls for several hundreds of years until its discovery during the works of recuperation of the church, done by the National Monuments, in the 60's of the XX century. Inside the church, opposite to this fresco, a rocky outbreak elevated itself 20cm over the ground where there were several tombs, anthropomorphically irregular,









which were destroyed in the works that occurred before the opening of the museum, in the 80's. Other graves, contemporary of the ones located in front of the fresco are still visible in the body of the Church of Santa Maria of Marvão. Undoubtedly medieval they are contemporary of the construction of this temple. This church, dependent of the Order of Malta, tributary of the Convent of Maltesas in Estremoz, was opened to cult untild the end of the 30's of the XX century. At that time, due to the ruinous state in which the building was, and due to the depopulation of the town, it was practically abandoned, taking the majority of its images and implements to the other church of the parish, S. Tiago's, as well as to the Convent of Nossa Senhora da Estrela. In the end of the 50's works of conservation were done and it simultaneously was adapted to host, albeit temporarily, the seminarians of Portalegre, while the works were being done in the new seminar of that city. At that time the bell tower in danger of falling was demolished and new windows were made in the south wall, getting as well a new floor. With the return of the seminarians to Portalegre, the Church of Santa Maria was again abandoned serving as a storage room to the Town Hall.ervations and rehabilitation works was promoted by the National Monuments in several monuments of the town of Marvão where it was included the Church of Santa Maria. Its current look is the result of the works done at that time.



Medieval Fresco

Municipal Museum of Marvão – 1987-2014



















The museum reformation in 2015

In the sixties a vast program of conservation and rehabilitation works is promoted by the National Monuments in several Monuments of the Town of

Marvão where it was also included the Church of Santa Maria. The

aspect that it retains today is the reflex of the works then made. The expositive reformation done in the Municipal Museum of Marvão was very limited by the conditions that a building with this great history and heritage classifica-



Our Lady of Dormition

tion imposes. There were no structural changes. Over the brick floor from the sixties reformation another technical floor was added, easily disassembled, under which all the cables run. The ancient wooden showcases, already worn out and lit with "hot light bulbs" and of high energetic consumption were replaced by metallic furniture lighted by LED system. The central nave of the church now displays the temporary exhibitions leaving the side aisles, the main altar and the sacristies with the permanent exhibition. This permanent exhibition aims at, in a diachronic way, show through material testimonies, the main moments of the territory that today constitutes the municipality of Marvão.

Renovation of the Municipal Museum of Marvão – 2015











Megalithic Burial









Archeological Collection

From the Paleolithic to the Middle Ages, with special focus on the recent pre-history and the roman period, several thousands of years are covered in the right wing of the Church of Santa Maria. Nuclei, carved stones, strikers and splinters from several Paleolithic stations that border the River Sever open the archeological route. The following space is dedicated to the Neolithic and Megalithic where pieces coming from the excavations done in Lapas de Vidais and in several dolmens of the municipality are displayed, with special emphasis on the dolmens of Bola de Cera, Pombais, Castelhanas and Cabeçuda. The Metal Age is represented by pieces from Chalcolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages collected in excavations done in the 70's of the XX century, in the diverse cores of habitats of Vidais. The Iron Age is still represented by the rare head of a Verraco collected on a hill north of Marvão's mountain range.



Megalithic schist plaques



Renovation of the Municipal Museum of Marvão – 2015













In one sacristy of the altar a megalithic funerary space is reenacted. The visitor of this space, as it happened in pre-history, is invited to enter the funerary chamber through a discrete and low corridor. Once inside you can observe in an octagonal chamber the reenactment of a burial and a rich and rare set of funerary offerings collected in megalithic monuments from the municipality of Marvão.

From the roman villa of Pombais, located in the northwest of the municipality, partially excavated in the 80's by Isabel Cristina Fernandes, there are several everyday objects exhibited, as well as a skeleton belonging to a male individual of about 40 years of age that presents a deep cut on the left eyebrow which caused blindness in the same eye. Due to the strong body and signs of great violence that the skeleton displays, we may be in the presence of a legionnaire or a gladiator.

The backgrounds of the archeology showcases, to contextualize each of the time periods, were covered with reproductions of the beautiful and forgotten romantic paintings by M. Émile Bayard, published in the book of Louis Figuier, L'Homme Primitif, printed in France in 1870.













Religious Art Collection

In the altar and next to the medieval fresco there is a unique collection of statues and religious painting coming from several churches that are closed nowadays, property of the parish of Marvão, which gave them to be exhibited in this museum. Among these images, framed between the XV and VXIII century, emphasis on the sculptures of S. Pedro, S. Sebastião and S. Bartolomeu, all in limestone. A bit more recent, the sculptures of Santo António and S. José, both with Baby Jesus, deserve special attention, or the delicate images of Santa Catarina and Santa Bárbara. In the sacristy of the XVI century lateral chapel, dedicated to the virgin, is exhibited part of a collection acquired by the town hall to the heirs of the great collector Rui Sequeira, a son of this municipality. Here, part of the more than 50 images of diverse devotions to the virgin can me appreciated. Between school images or deliciously popular ones, dated to the XVII to XIX centuries, here the visitant may contemplate different forms of expression of the Cult of Mary, with special attention to the popular representation of "Nossa Senhora da Dornição" or the images, of equally popular nature, of "Nossa Senhora do Pé da Cruz".











Re-inauguration of the Municipal Museum of Marvão on June 10, 2015













Collection of Medieval Tombstones

Going back to the left wing of the church between the baptismal chapel, where a popular baptism from the XX century is reenacted and the lateral altar dedicated to Nossa Senhora do Rosário, the visitant can observe part of the collection of medieval tombstones collected around the church of Santa Maria and of Nossa Senhora da Estrela. Among them, emphasis on the two that present in one of the faces seven armed candelabra (menorahs) uniquely engraved. The tombstones with the candelabra, typically Jewish representations, are relatively rare when compared to the hexalfa representations, equally identifiers of tombs of the followers of the Torah. These deserve special attention because on the other side there are Christian symbols. Were they "cristãos-novos"?

Re-inauguration of the Municipal Museum of Marvão on June 10, 2015









Typical clothing from the end of XIX c.

Collection of popular traditions

Surrounding the space for temporary exhibitions, several showcases exhibit ethnographic inscriptions from the collections developed by João Vidal. Among these the showcases dedicated to old wives' remedies and superstitions, due to their richness and diversity, deserve special attention, still well remembered among the elders of the municipality. Old wives' remedies with local herbs, stones and scarves and the famous balls of blue soap, with well attested contraceptive effects, next to the "espera-maridos" and the ancient "coca" are unavoidable parts themes of our culture and tradition that can be observed within this museum.









Temporary exhibition

In this moment of the rebuilding of the Municipal Museum, we opt to exhibit in the central nave, dedicated to temporary exhibitions, a collection of identifying pieces of the municipal autonomy. The "Foral Manuelino of Marvão" from 1512 will be temporarily exhibited, next to the replica of the agreement of opening of borders signed between the Town Hall of Marvão and the Town Hall of Valencia de Alcantara, in 1313, and the original its ratification, dated of 1820. In the same showcase you can also observe the reproduction of the first "Foral" of Marvão, dated of 1226,

with the original being kept in Torre do Tombo in Lisbon. In the same space dedicated to temporary exhibitions there are several weapons of different garrisons of the square of Marvão, with special regard to the Martin Henry rifles that in the end of XIX century armed the last military guard of Marvão. In the central nave of the church, in an autonomous showcase a

set of bronze weights, melted in 1499, that accompanied the "Foral Manuelino" is exhibited. Still in this space dedicated to the municipal autonomy, in another showcase, there are several meter rulers and different weights, as well as other municipal identity elements, like the old white seal, license plates and animal identification, and different documents of municipal licensing.



Helmet XVII c.



License plate of a vehicle of animal traction(séc. XX)













Other Documents

At the entrance of the Municipal Museum of Marvão there are two pieces of naval artillery of the XVIII century, property of the municipality, obtained by forced exchange with other artillery pieces from the XVII century taken to the Castle of S. Jorge, in Lisbon, in the middle of XX century. In the exterior, near the lateral door of the museum, over the masonry basis is the top part of the Menhir of Corregedor. Two multimedia spaces enrich the visit to the museum, one of which is interactive, where the visitant is invited to discover other patrimonial values of the municipality of Marvão.

The archeological testimonies of the municipality, organized by chronological period, over a zoomed military chart, open the visit rout of the renovated Municipal Museum of Marvão, which reopened in May 15, 2015 and was reinaugurated by António Moura Andrade in June 10, 2015.



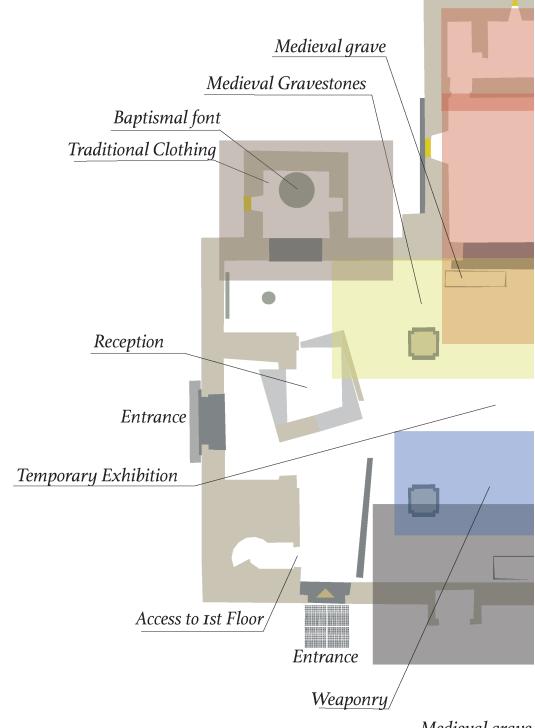




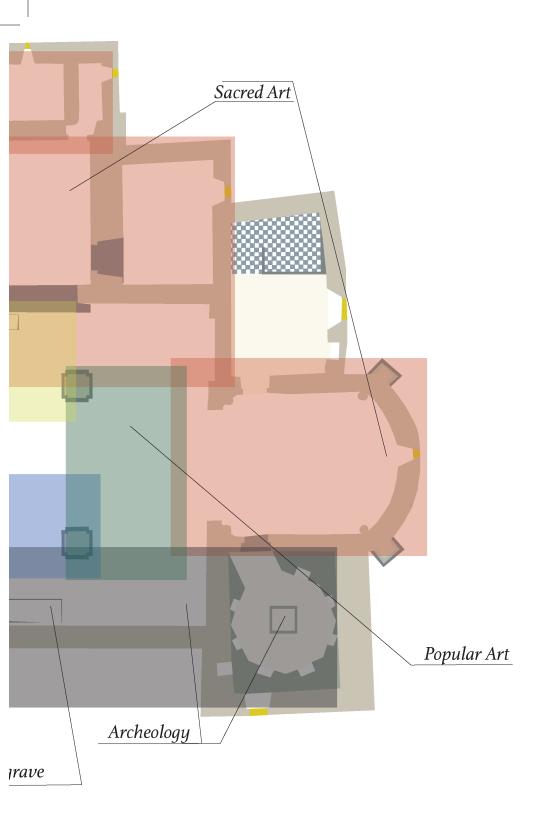








Medieval grave



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