

SAN SEBASTIÁN DE SILOS: THE CHURCH DEDICATED OR CONSECRATED AROUND 1088 THROUGH THE DOCUMENTATION AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the reconstruction of the church that was dedicated or consecrated around 1088. We have used the documents found in the monastery, mainly descriptions from the 16th and especially the 18th century, and other information provided by some monks from Silos in the 17th century. To this, we must add the reinterpretation of the archaeological remains, together with the information in the *Memoriae Silenses*. From all this, we propose the chronology of the church and its relation with the general plan of the Romanesque monastery.

Based on archaeological information from the north wall of the church and the foundations of the tower, together with the descriptions from when the building was demolished in 1761 and information from coins, we are able to conjecture about the date and characteristics of the building¹.

KEY WORDS

Lower Church, Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*, Consecration-Dedication, Archaeology, Money, Machuca and Bargas, Domingo Ibarreta.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Sacra aedes humilior, Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*, Consecratio-Dedicatio, Archaeologia, Pecunia, Machuca et Bargas, Domingo Ibarreta.

1. Used abbreviations: AMS, Archivo del Monasterio de Silos.



The aim of this article is to define the church that was dedicated or consecrated around 1088 in the monastery of San Sebastián de Silos. Based on the information from the historical and archaeological documentation, we will do a hypothetical reconstruction of this church and the monastery that seem to have been planned at the time. We are aware that this theme has already been dealt with by various historians, with varied and sometimes contradictory results. That is why we returned to this question some time ago, basing our work on the archaeological remains that are still *in situ* and the documentation in the monastery's archive. We have also taken the earlier studies on this theme as a necessary starting point.

A philosophical basis for our research is found in the words of the 13th-century French thinker Gilbert de Tournai, who stated: *Jamás encontraremos la verdad si nos contentamos con lo ya descubierto. Aquellos que escribieron antes de nosotros, no son señores, sino guías. La verdad está abierta a todos. Y no ha sido en su totalidad hallada*². So, respecting and participating in the concerns and searches of those who have worked on this theme before us, we understand that one can go a little further and forge a new stage of the path in this thorny and complex subject.

1. State of the question

1.1. Studies and approaches to the church of San Sebastián de Silos

The necessary starting point for our work is our predecessors who tackled the reconstruction of the monastery church of San Sebastián de Silos. The first approach to this dates from the Modern Era.³ In the 19th century, the pioneers were first Amador de los Ríos⁴ and then, the Benedictine monk Marius Férotin⁵. The latter, who lived in Silos, described the temple and presented a plan by the monk Jules

2. "Never will we find truth if we content ourselves with what is already known. Those things that have been written before us are not laws but guides. The truth is open to all, for it is not yet totally possessed." (Gimpel, Jean. "Villard de Honnecourt, arquitecto e ingeniero", *Villard de Honnecourt. Cuaderno. Siglo XIII*. Madrid: Akal, 1991: 31-32). This quote is taken from the contribution by the above author.

3. There has always been interest in the monastery of Silos for questions related to the history of the church and the cloister. We have manuscript and printed information by various authors since the 16th century, with J. Nebreda, passing to the 17th century with the monks Vergara, Castro, Yepes and Argaiz, to the 18th century when the church was destroyed, described in detail in the *Memoriae Silenses*, partly written by friar B. Díaz. We now only refer to these, but some of the other works are cited and used below.

4. de los Ríos, Amador R. *España: Burgos*. Barcelona: D. Cortezo y Ca., 1888: 913-941, dealt with the question although it is not relevant in our case.

5. Marius Férotin, archivist in Silos, was an important continuer of the work of the Silos monks with his notable works: Férotin, Marius. *Histoire de l'Abbaye de Silos*. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1897; Férotin, Marius. *Recueil des chartes de l'Abbaye de Silos*. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1897. He renewed the historical view of the temple.



Mellet. Later, in the 20th century, Vicente Lampérez⁶ proposed a church with three domes, three naves and a highly-developed transept based to a great extent on the contributions of Marius Ferotin and the description by friar Jerónimo Nebreda (16th century). Dom Roulin,⁷ a Benedictine monk who spent some time in Silos, presented a reconstruction of the two temples.

The research continued in the second decade of the 20th century.⁸ Worth mentioning are the works from the 1930s, especially the excavations in 1931-1933, which led to a new plan done friar Román Sáiz, published by friar Justo Pérez de Urbel.⁹

Probably the best approach to the study of the construction abbey church before the mid 20th century was the one by Walter Muir Whitehill.¹⁰ Later, friar Román Sáiz, followed by Jacques Fontaine, reconstructed a Mozarab-type church that must have been consecrated in 1088,¹¹ the low church. There are two more works on the subject from the 1980s and 1990s. The first is the one by professor Isidro Bango¹² and the second by various authors.¹³

6. For more details about his work, see: Lampérez, Vicente. *Historia de la arquitectura cristiana española en la Edad Media*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1908: 693-696, which also includes a plan.

7. This French monk spent two years in Silos and studied the church, reinterpreting the plan by: Machuca, Manuel. "Les églises de l'abbaye de Silos". *Revue de l'Art Chrétien*, 5 (1908): 289-299 and 371-379. He drew up plans of the temple following Manuel Machuca.

8. Isaac Toribios and Román Sáiz, monks in Silos, through their work in: Toribios, Isaac; Sáiz, Román. "Santo Domingo de Silos", *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1983: LIV, 377-393. And also in internal publications in the monastery, with their work: Toribios, Isaac; Sáiz, Román. "San Sebastián de Silos: Noticias sobre la construcción de la actual iglesia". *Boletín de Santo Domingo de Silos*, 18 (1915-1916): 558-560; *Boletín de Santo Domingo de Silos*, 19 (1916-1917): 16-18, 66-70 and 108-112, with one of the interpretations that many other authors like Gaillard, Whitehill, Fontaine, took as their own.

9. Pérez, Justo. *El claustro de Silos*. Burgos: Aldecoa, 1955. He reproduced this plan in his work and there are also copies in the archive in Silos. It is one of the most widely used by researchers.

10. This author has published two different works, the first titled: Whitehill, Walter M. "The destroyed Romanesque Church of Santo Domingo de Silos". *Art Bulletin*, 14 (1932): 316-343 and the second, in the third chapter of his work: Whitehill, Walter M. *Spanish Romanesque Architecture in the Eleventh Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1941: 155-193.

11. There are various examples of the plan by friar Román Sáiz in the Silos monastery archive. The Frenchman, Jacques Fontaine in his work: Fontaine, Jacques. *L'art préroman hispanique. 2º, L'art mozarabe*. Saint-Léger-Vauban: Pierre-qui-Vire, 1978: 211-212 and figures 48-50, reproduces it and his line follows that of the above-mentioned monk from Silos.

12. The most complete study that we know of to date is the one by this professor for the 1988 international symposium dedicated to the 9th centenary of the consecration of the church and cloister, 1088-1988. It is titled: Bango, Isidro. "La iglesia antigua de Silos: del prerrománico al románico pleno", *El románico en Silos. IX Centenario de la consagración de la iglesia y claustro*. Burgos: Abadía de Silos, 1988: 317-376.

13. Palomero, Félix et alii. *Silos: un recorrido por su proceso constructivo*. Burgos: Caja de Burgos, 1999: 37-41, 89-102 and 323-325. This work contains a reconstruction that proposes some new nuances, but that goes too far from the one by professor Isidro Bango. After this publication, Félix Palomero reinterpreted the churches in Silos and, especially, the plan that concerns us here, in the book: Palomero, Félix. *Alfonso VI: ¿del ocaso de lo hispano al mundo romano-francés?*. Madrid: Dyckinsons-Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, 2009: 95-180 and the most recent, a presentation titled: Palomero, Félix. "El mecenazgo en la corte castellano-leonesa de Alfonso VI: la catedral románica de Burgos y el monasterio de San Sebastián de Silos", *Evolución y estructura de la Casa Real de Castilla*. Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2010: II 645-668.



1.2. *Proposals about the church in Silos around 1088*

The first approaches supposed that the low church, from the monastery in Recaredo's times, was the one that Abbot Dominic had restored, while the high church was the one that this abbot had begun, as French monk, Marius Férotin, stated.¹⁴ Initially, it was accepted as a church with a chancel similar to the one in the old cathedral in Salamanca, based on the description given by the 16th-century monk from Silos, friar Jerónimo Nebreda, who suggested that the chancel and especially, the transept, in Silos were resembled those in the Old Cathedral in Salamanca. Vicente Lampérez¹⁵ also mentioned the similitude with Salamanca and the existence of three domes, resembling a Byzantine model. To all events, the church they were talking about is the one consecrated in 1088, under the mandate of the abbot who succeeded about is the restorer, Fortunius. This church included both the upper and lower ones.

Another reconstruction was the one by father Roulin, who, based on the plan by the 18th-century architect Manuel Machuca y Vargas, proposed a first church with three naves, separated by the corresponding columns, with a triple apse and straight headwall. According to him, this would have been the one that existed from the 6th century and that was extended to the east in Abbot Dominic Manso's times, with a large transversal nave, three news apses, and thus becoming a Latin cross shape. Later additions were the domes and the doorway of the Virgins, these being 12th century works.

Another proposal is the one by the Silos monks Isaac María Toribios and Román Sáiz,¹⁶ whose idea was the existence first of a Visigoth basilica seen by Saint Dominic of Silos, which he partially repaired and restored. They propose that the consecration of 1088 refers to the apses of the lower church and that the upper one was raised shortly after (first third of the 12th century) and they place the western parts in the decades of the 12th century.

Then Georges Gaillard¹⁷ indicates that, in Fortunius' times, in 1088, the church was probably not at a very advanced stage. In the plan he published, he indicates the existence of a transept in the church in the times of Abbot Dominic. Walter Muir Whitehill¹⁸ did a very complete study of the theme and tried to explain the presence of the coins in one of the altars of the lower church, indicating that these were used a crypts when the temple was extended to the east, thus making up the high church. This way, he solved the chronological problem that these coins posed, as they date from after 1085. He copied the plan found in the papers of the monk of Silos and Bishop of Segovia, Rodrigo Echevarría, which he took to be accurate.

14. Férotin, Marius. *Histoire de l'Abbaye...*: 345-363. This work contains the plan by Jules Mellet, mentioned above.

15. Lampérez, Vicente. *Historia de la arquitectura cristiana...*: 695.

16. Toribios, Isaac; Sáiz, Román. "San Sebastián de Silos..."

17. We refer to: Gaillard, Georges. "L'église et le cloître de Silos". *Bulletin Monumental*, 91 (1932): 39-80, in which he proposes his ideas and the reconstruction of the church that concerns us here.

18. See the studies detailed in note 8.



More recently, Isidro Bango,¹⁹ starting from the earlier proposals about the abbey church of Silos (that we have summarised above), using “historical-documentary sources”, the old prospectations, and plans and archaeological remains, proposed a building process that went from the “pre-Romanesque churches” to what he calls the “third extension”. It is possible that this interpretation of the evolution of the abbey church in Silos, being one of the latest and with a large quantity of information, was the closest to what must have existed and the most precise.

Despite the above, we have some doubts about the reconstruction of the process behind the building of the church. This has led us to rethink the question, not about all hypothetical building on this site, but rather focussing on the church that was consecrated or dedicated around 1088. These doubts arise from a new reading of the historical and documentary sources and archaeological remains. Some of these doubts have been expressed in various texts and the corresponding plans.²⁰ Thus, starting from what we have presented about the state of the question, we move on to our own proposal based on a revision of the information available and some recent findings²¹ that we believe can shed light on some of the more obscure aspects.

1.3. Our starting point

After presenting the state of the question, we now move on to define our initial posture regarding the abbey church of Silos that was consecrated or dedicated, perhaps together with the cloister, in about 1088. For the time being, we do not study this hypothetical church and the monastery that Abbot Dominic restored and renewed during his mandate but rather, based on what has been presented about this,²² we focus on the church that was supposedly built during Fortunius’ time as abbot. Similarly, albeit in a somewhat brief and succinct way, we link this temple with the Benedictine monastery that it seems was planned and whose building started during the abbacy of the above-mentioned Fortunius (1073-1100?).

19. Bango, Isidro. “La iglesia antigua de Silos...”: 342-362.

20. Palomero, Félix *et alii*. *Silos: un recorrido...*: 41 and 90-93; Palomero, Félix. *Alfonso VI: ¿del ocaso de lo hispano...*; Palomero, Félix. *La catedral románica...*: 649-659 and the corresponding sketches.

21. On of the recent findings related to this theme is the coins found on one of the altars of the low church when it was knocked down to build the current church. In 2001, the urn with the remains of Abbot Dominic Manso, in Santo Domingo de Silos was reopened. A coin was found that had been minted in Toledo for Alfonso VI after the city’s conquest in May 1085. The study of this coin has been published by: Vivancos, Miguel. “Hallazgo de un dinero de Alfonso VI en el monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos”. *Numisma*, 245/51 (2001): 169-174. This information has allowed us to resume the term *ante quem* on a surer footing, related it to the finishing of the low church and link it to the transfer of the remains of Abbot Dominic from the cloister to the church, as shown below.

22. Palomero, Félix *et alii*. *Silos: un recorrido...*: 39-41 and 90-93; Bango, Isidro. “La iglesia antigua de Silos...”: 341-351.



2. The church and cloister around 1088

Although the generic heading of this part of the article mentions the church and cloister around 1088, this is simply a reference to what we will address, the cloister as the centre of the monastery is simply used to place the church in the monastic context and as a basis for some of the data we present. This is not, however, a study of the cloister and the spaces built in each of the galleries in addition to the abbey church. Everything except the church itself will be treated briefly but only in relation to the church, which is the real subject of our study.

2.1. The abbey church dedicated or consecrated around 1088

Our approach to this church is based on historical-documentary, historiographic and archaeological information. The first fact that we must highlight is the place of the first burial of Saint Domingo, where he was buried in December 1073, as this is an essential reference for the church that concerns us. According to the monk Grimaldo, this tomb was placed, *intra claustrum fratrum ante portas ecclesie*.²³ We are sure this was in the north gallery of the current cloister, parallel to the southern wall of the abbey church (figures 1 and 2). On the other hand, on this occasion, the archaeological information allows us to discern some of the outline and the characteristics of the church. To all this, we must add the documentary information, especially the manuscript known as *Memoriae Silenses*.²⁴ This describes this church, which it calls the *ecclesia inferioris*, in great detail and which also appears in the plans drawn up in the mid 18th century. From this manuscript, today in the monastery archive of Silos and that deals with numerous aspects of the monastery and the abbey church, we are here interested in the part dedicated to the *Ecclesia antiquae declaratio Pars II*.²⁵ To this, we must add the contributions from the historiography²⁶ that, as mentioned above, has been dealing with this question since the end of the 19th century.

As mentioned, these plans were drawn up by Manuel Machuca y Bargas (figure 3) and friar Juan Ascondo (figure 4) in the 13th century, the latter being attributed to friar Juan Ascondo because it appeared among his papers.²⁷ The first presents the two churches, the *Yglesia primera que edifico, ó amplio, el santo. Grimaldo Cap.* and

23. Valcárcel, Vitalino. *La "Vita Dominici Siliensis" de Grimaldo*. Logroño: Servicio de Cultura, 1982: 308.

24. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*), f. 105r-136v. This part contains a description of the archaeological characteristics, of notable precision and puntualisation, that time has shown must be considered a reliable and precise source, especially this part. That is why we use it as one of our sources and proof of our proposals.

25. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 105-136.

26. The bibliographic reference to those who have dealt with this theme are above and in the bibliographic references in notes 2 to 12.

27. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 120. Given that this plan is the one cited in this work, we think it was done for the works that friar Domingo Ibarreta was doing, and the fact that it was later found among the papers of the monk from Silos, Rodrigo Echevarría is no reason to attribute



the *Adición de la Yglesia* (figure 3). The result is a church in the shape of a Latin cross, with a large transept. It shows the doorways, the stairs that linked them over their different levels and the position of the altars and tells us to whom these were dedicated. The second, titled *Planta Iconografica de la Iglesia de S^a Domingo de Silos, antiguo*, is a plan of the whole Romanesque church demolished in the 18th century (figure 4), with references to the orientation and relation with the cloister. As well as the different papers related to the destruction of the abbey church in 1751 from the archive in Silos,²⁸ the most important source is the description by the abbot friar Baltasar Díaz (*Memoriae Silenses* cited above), who describes the process of demolition with notable precision and detail with special note of what was found during this process.²⁹

Also of great interest is the above-mentioned description from 1580 by the abbot friar Jerónimo Nebreda. In this case, what is important is the references to the low church.

As mentioned above, the third source available is the archaeological remains. Only some partial remains from the church we are interested in have survived, and no great care these was taken in the different archaeological digs, so there are considerable doubts about some of them. We have been able to see and document some, others have been followed through photographs and these have been mapped³⁰ recently. A large part is under the existing church. These include the start of the left lateral apse (figure 9), the exact position of one of the doorways (the one of Saint Michael), the position of the *encapitelados* pillars (figure 10) that friar Baltasar Díaz mentions, the floor of the atrium to the north of the church (figures 6 and 7). There is also the base of the tower (figures 6 and 8), the doorway of the atrium that opened onto the village of Silos, part of the wall of this atrium,

it to the latter. On the other hand, the type of writing on the plan is closer to the former than the latter, who did not know the Romanesque church.

28. Palomero, Félix *et alii*. *Silos: un recorrido...*: 308-320. We refer to this work because all these documents are transcribed in it.

29. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 118-127 and 131v-136; Palomero, Félix *et alii*. *Silos: un recorrido...*: 308-320, which presents the data from the archive which covers these aspects fully. Perhaps the most complete and precise description of this church is the one by D. Ibarreta in his work *Bibliotheca Manuscripta Gothica De el Monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos* when he writes: ... *la línea recta que sigue desde el mediodía por la pared interior del claustro, del paño oriental de él ...porque en este sitio en que antes havia una escalera tendida, fabricada para comunicar el pavimento del crucero adicionado fundado en peña con el de la Yglesia primitiva inferior al plano de la peña...en dicho sitio pues devaxo del ancho de dicha escalera, se descubrió parte de una pared..., y la escalera a lo largo de ella, y que cerraba al oriente la primitiva iglesia, y en ellas estaban agregados los vestigios de tres altares, uno mayor en medio y dos colaterales menores iguales entre sí, en figura de semicírculos* ("...the straight line that follows from the south along the inside wall of the cloister, the eastern panel of this ...because in this place where before there stairs were laid, built to link the pavement of the transept added built on the rock with that of the primitive Church on the plane of the rock ...in this place below the width of said stairs, part of a wall was discovered ..., and the stairs along it, and that closed the primitive church on the east side, and in these were included vestiges of three altars, one bigger in size and two smaller collateral ones equal with each other, in the shape of semicircles"). These details from the aforementioned manuscript by fray Baltasar Díaz give a good idea of what *la Yglesia primitiva* was like.

30. Bango, Isidro. "La iglesia antigua de Silos...": 338.



part of the southern wall (in the entrance to the old museum from the cloister) and probably part of the west façade, where there was the so-called *porta magnifica et principalis*.³¹

Manuel Machuca's plan³² (figure 3) shows a church with three naves that leads to a triple chancel, semicircular inside and straight outside. Over this chancel, he drew the stairs that had to be built given the difference in level between the old church and the extension to the east, the upper church. We see how Machuca y Bargas denominates the church we are interested in as the *Iglesia primera que edificó o amplió el Santo* (the first church built or extended by the Saint), while the second is called the *Adición de la Iglesia* (Addition of the Church). The documentation and writings mention these as the "low church" and the "high church" or *ecclesia inferior* and *ecclesia superior* respectively. It also depicts the tomb of Saint Domingo and three doorways: one on the south wall, in front of the tomb, that leads out to the cloister (that of Saint Michael) and the other two on the north and west walls. It also explains who the altars were dedicated to: Saint Martin (gospel), Saint Sebastian (central) and Saint Mary (epistle). In Machuca's plan, in contrast, we do not see some elements that do appear in the "iconographic"³³ by friar Juan Ascondo³⁴ (figure 4). These include the bay with the *pilares encapitelados* that separated the naves, the existence of a *pórtico*, the tower, the apses of the transversal nave and, especially, the difference between the thickness of the west wall of the church and the others.

Up to here, we have presented the graphic portrayals of the church from the 18th century. One of the problems for the reconstruction of this low church³⁵ is its length and width. The different 18th-century documents, most written during the demolition of this church, are a necessary reference. The most precise of these, the *Memoriae Silenses*, which, on many occasions, presents an almost archaeological description with notable detail and precision, indicates that it reached as far as the west wall,

*Igitur Ecclesia inferior ab Occidente in Orientem extensa ad aequalitatem pavimenti juxta antiqui Claustri inferioris fundata est Architectura Romana,*³⁶

31. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 122.

32. Palomero, Félix et alii. *Silos: un recorrido...*: 53, which contains a reproduction of the plan from the monastery archive in Silos.

33. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 120. As *Ichonographia patet* it also appears in this work.

34. The iconographic plan from the AMS to which we refer was done for a work that collected the sources from Benedictine Archives, which was coordinated in Silos by the abbot Domingo Ibarreta. This plane made by the monk Fray Juan Ascondo was used to justify the demolition of the old churches.

35. Done in the times of abbot Saint Dominic according to Manuel Machuca y Bargas, who signed the plan.

36. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f.118.



where the steeple was,

Et quia in demolitione parietis ad pedes totius Ecclesiae versus Occidentem corporeitatis novem pedum... et supra quem Campanile (vulgo Espadaña) assurgebat, cujus manga declinatio a perpendiculari fuit causa ruina Ecclesiae.³⁷

and *in quo alia porta magnifica et principalis*³⁸ of the church, and that it was similar to the one in the cloister. The east wall (outside of the triple chancel) was aligned (according to friar Baltasar Díaz) with the east of the cloister and coincided with the start of the first bay of the naves of the high church

...tres que naves navibus Ecclesiae superioris correspondentes formabant; seu potius in correspondentiam illarum factae superiores: ita taliter ut capita harum tuum Navium pedes aliarum Ecclesiae superioris in muro utriusque divisorio tangerent. Vel clarius: ubi tres Naves Ecclesiae inferioris capita habebant in caeptâ fabricâ Ecclesiae superioris (multo illa posteriori) cum correspondentia ad inferiorem, in Navibus.³⁹

However, the author of this work goes further, as he later adds, *Ecclesia ergo inferior extendebatur in longitudinem ab angulo orientalis Claustri usque ad medietatem novi Chori superioris.*⁴⁰ He completes the information about the length of the low church with the expression *...inferiorique, cuius longitudo illam claustri solum excedebat in longitudine, quam semicirculus Cappellae maioris habebat...*⁴¹ With the above, if fray Baltasar Díaz's information is true, we now with precision that the low church only exceeded the cloister in length, in the chancel, the triple apse. Similarly, regarding the width of the church, the monk from Silos who wrote the description states,

Latitudo autem Ecclesiae antiquae a pariete Claustri ad parietem borealem, cui sepulchrum S.P.N. Dominici contiguum erat, ad quem lapis sepulchralis in signum loci et sitûs sepulchri positus, extendebatur.⁴²

37. "In the demolition of the wall situated at the foot of the church to the west, (it was seen to be) nine feet thick, where the magnificent and main door was, above which there was the bell tower (vulgarly called steeple) whose notable lean was the reason for the ruin of the church" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 121v).

38. "...the other magnificent and main door ..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f.121v).

39. "...its three naves corresponded to the naves of the upper church or rather, the upper ones were made in correspondence with these. Thus as the head of these naves, the foot of the upper church was on the wall that separated one from the other. More evidently; where the three naves of the lower church started off the architecture upper church (built much later) in correspondence with the lower one in the naves" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 118 and 118v).

40. "Thus the lower church extended in length from the eastern corner of the cloister to the middle of the new upper choir" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 120v).

41. "...and the lower one whose length only exceeded that of the cloister in the semicircle of the chapel..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 133v).

42. "On the other hand that width of the old church went from the wall of the cloister to the north wall, to which the sepulchre of our holy father Domingo was attached" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz,



These data about the length and width of the church can be corroborated archaeologically nowadays, so we can take it as accurate.

From reading this work, we obtain additional, and more precise, data, so much so that it almost seems like an archaeological report. Given the expression of its author, these were being discovered as the church was being demolished. Regarding what we are dealing with now he adds,

*... longitudinem claustrī, ut diximus, ab Occidente in Orientem non excessisse, nisi in longitudine Cappellarum, seu capitum navium supra memoratos semicirculos erectarum...*⁴³

As mentioned above, all this information can largely be checked against what the archaeology currently shows. This gives us greater certainty when reconstructing the low church in its true dimensions (figure 1). Comparing the different sources, the coincidence is of great interest, and this gives greater credence to the 18th-century descriptions and plans, as up to here, these are fully accurate and coincide with what has survived to the present day.

Another of the aspects that can be highlighted in the reconstruction of the church that was dedicated or consecrated around 1088 (partly mentioned above) is to find out how far the chancel reached, the number of apses and altars, its shape and its orientation relative to the cloister and high church. Nowadays, only the base of the left lateral apse, the one corresponding to the nave of the gospel, part of the north wall and the bottom of one of the cruciform pillars of the high church (figure 11), situated immediately behind the mentioned apse, have survived. These archaeological data can be checked against the 18th-century descriptions and plans and again we see that there is a notable coincidence (figures 3 and 4).

Both the descriptions and the plans, whether from the 16th or, especially, the 18th centuries, mention a triple apse. Everything also seems to indicate that there must have been a triple chancel, with three altars dedicated to Saint Martin (the one of the gospel), Saint Sebastian (the central) and Saint Mary (the epistle), as mentioned above, and which appear in the plans by Manuel Machuca and in the *Memoriae Silenses*.

Having reached this point, there are some aspects that require a closer examination through the information in the documentation. We are interested in the details from friar Baltasar Díaz regarding the triple apse in the church, partially uncovered and eliminated in 1767,

Anno sequenti prosequita demolitio Navis sinistrae, versus Cappellam S. P. Dominici: et in excavatione fundamentorum primae Cappellae, quae a Sachristia, et a nova S. Dominici Cappellae intratur in novam Ecclesiam inventi sunt duo semicirculi a postibus, seu columnis ultimis et orientalibus Ecclesiae inferioris, se versus orientem in Ecclesia superiori

Memoriae Silenses) f. 134v-135).

43. "...from east to west it did not exceed, as we said, the length of the cloister except in the longitude of the chapels built with the semicircles that we mentioned above ..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f.134 and 134v).



*extendentes, formantes que Capita, seu potius Cappellam utriusque navis, mediae videlicet, et sinistra; nec dubium, alium semicirculum subesse pavimento Navis evangelij: quod cum totum comprehensum sit in Navi novae Ecclesiae opus non fuit excavare.*⁴⁴

Such a detailed description can lead us to think that its author (again abbot in Silos from 1765) probably witnessed the demolition of this part of the church. From this, it can be deduced that the chancel of the church was a triple apse and that there was a semi-column from which the side arches of the naves spread out along the west face of the walls that separated the central apse from the lateral one. Through the text, we know that that year, 1767, during the demolition of the parts of the high church as far as the transversal nave, the central apses and that of the epistle were discovered. These were partly under the ten steps between the different levels of the two churches and another under the first two bays of the high church, corresponding to the lower choir.

However, with the demolition of this triple chancel of the low church, razed (figure 9) and partly under the steps, and the first two bays where the lower choir was located as mentioned above, some more data came to light that we wish to highlight. The first of was that the low church was attached to the high one (figure 11). The monk who described what was found stated,

*...Etenim certo certius constat, aedificatam fuisse supra inferiorem, ut ad oculum omnium in demolitionem claruit: Architectus que ante discooperationem semi-circulorum, et Mensae declaraverat: quippe parietes utriusque (the east of the low church and the west of the high church) contigui, non uniti essent.*⁴⁵

This information is of the greatest importance, as, if true, it would tell us that the churches were separate and the high one was attached to the low one. On the other hand, the author goes somewhat further in his description of what he saw, and adds,

Ecclesiae inferioris a superiori, ut prius ex rupturis, et arcibus infra positis credebamus; sed cum Ecclesia superior no solum ex maiori altitudine pavimenti, sed etiam ex longe majori ipsius Fabricae altitudine inferiori superemineret; ut utraque conjungeretur, et aequaliter inaequalitas altitudinis dissimularetur: arcus Cappellarum inferioris Ecclesiae Navium

44. "The following year the demolition of the left nave continued, towards the chapel of the S. P. Domingo and in the excavation of the foundations of the first chapel, which is close to the sacristy and through which one enters the new church near the new chapel of Santo Domingo, there were two semicircles with pillars similar to the end and eastern columns of the lower church; these continued to the east in the upper church, forming the head or perhaps the chapel of each nave, in other words the central and the left. There is no doubt that the other semicircle was below the pavement of the nave of the gospel so it is understood that it was not necessary to excavate in the nave of the new church" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 131v and 132).

45. "...Indeed it is known with certainty that it was built over the lower one as is clear to everyone during the demolition. The architect, faced with the discovery of the semicircles and the table declared, that both walls were next to each other, not attached" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 134).



*cum muro supra ipsos ruperunt, subtus que rupturas alij arcus positi sunt: quod cum clare videretur, occasione dedit credendi, in illa parte fuisse murum directum a Meridie in Boream, Ecclesiam inferiorem terminantem, et postea appertum, ut ex utrâque Ecclesiâ una fieret.*⁴⁶

Again, the precise information from the chronicler Baltasar Díaz confirms the fact that the church we are studying had three apses, part of whose structure was eliminated to build the high church, with the remaining part ending up under the first two stretches of the naves of the high church, and that the low church was closed off by a wall that went from north to south. This clearly shows the end of the edifice that we are now referring to.

The cited document (a precise description with valuable information for our hypothetical reconstruction of the church) supplied yet more relevant data about the organisation, sizes and shapes of these three apses, the chancel of the low church. Through it, we know the shape and sizes of one of the altars, which, when the structure on top of it was removed, appeared intact under the low choir of the high church. Firstly, it gives the width of the apse, referring to the central one. It states, *Ille ergo semicirculus Navis media latior pariter latior, et longior quatuordecim pedibus...*⁴⁷ Thus, we know that the central apse was around five metres in diameter and about the same in depth. However, the author goes further and informs us about the dimension and characteristics of the altar in this apse. He states,

*...in quo mensa Altaris longitudinis novem pedum, et trium latitudinis cum cornu Altaris ad ablutiones fundendas in latere epistola, sicut moris antiqui fuisse constat: ipsa vero Mensa Altaris a muro ex omni parte separata, commode circumiri poterat; altitudo vero illius regularis, supra quam quatuor lapide excussi superficiem superiorem formabant...*⁴⁸

From all this and the contributions obtained from the archaeology, we can suppose with a high degree of confidence, that the chancel of the low church (possibly the one consecrated in around 1088, as we shall see below) must have been aligned with the dormitory built over the east gallery of the cloister. We can also suppose that the three altars, each in its corresponding apse, were located there, and that

46. "We believe that the lower church compared with the upper one, before the rupture, had its apses placed below; the upper church, not only for the greater height of its pavement but also for the greater height of the structure, protruded over the lower one; to join them and correct any difference of height the arches of the chapels of the nave of the lower church were broken together with the wall that rose over them and the remains were placed below; which, when seen clearly, was reason enough to believe that there had been a wall in this area that ran from south to north in which the lower church ended and that was later opened so that from one church and the other, a single one was made" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 134v).

47. "Thus, the greater width of that semicircle was similar to the greatest width of the central nave and its greatest length was fourteen feet ..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 132).

48. "...and there was the altar table nine feet long with the protrusion of the altar so the ablutions could be poured on the side of the epistle as was said to be an ancient custom. In truth this altar table was totally separated from the wall so that one could walk round it easily; its height was also canonical (regular); placed over it four protruding stones made up the upper surface..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 132 and 132v).



on the west face of the walls that separated the lateral apses from the central, there was a semi-column from which the corresponding side arches must have sprouted to form the immediate part of the apse and that the three apses were semicircular in shape, probably somewhat banked.⁴⁹ The type of altar is equally significant, and, as the 18th-century monk supposed, this seems to correspond to the uses of the Hispanic liturgy.⁵⁰

Another point of interest is the western façade of the low church, as we have mentioned above. The wall was aligned with the western perimeter of the cloister. Again, the information that friar Baltasar Díaz supplies about this is of great importance. The first fact that draws our attention is the unusual thickness of the wall, also reflected in the plan by fray Juan Ascondo (figure 4). When the 18th-century abbot, who wrote most of the *Memoriae Silenses*, refers to this western façade, he states, *Et quia in demolitione parietis ad pedes totius Ecclesiae versus Occidentem corporeitatis novem pedum...*⁵¹

When we compare this wall with the others, it draws our attention that it was *nueve pies* (nine feet) thick (2.52 m.) against the 1.20 or 1.30 metres of the others. This difference in thickness, that also appears in the *planta iconográfica* (figure 4), could be explained because during the reforms of the first bays of church in the final decades of the 12th century, as shown by the remains that have survived, the another wall which the steeple was built on was built over first one. Moreover, judging by the characteristics of the *alia porta magnifica et principalis*, this must also have been built during these works, in a late-Romanesque style.

With his description of the demolition of west face of the church, as well as situating the *alia porta magnifica et principalis*,⁵² the 18th-century monk-chronicler also informs us about the existence of, *...ac in parte Occidentali ad pedes Ecclesiae novem pedum corporeitatis Campanile, vulgo Espadaña construxit...*⁵³

49. Bango, Isidro. "La iglesia antigua de Silos...": 344, 346 and 350.

50. Given that our aim is not to analyse this question, we supply bibliography about this and that deals with some aspects of this area of research. Vives, J. *et alii*. *La colección canónica hispana*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1984, there are four volumes. We refer to this to document each of the Hispanic rules we know about. The works by: Caballero, Luis. "La arquitectura monástica", *La comunicación en los monasterios medievales. XV Centenario de San Benito*. Burgos-Silos: Dirección General del Patrimonio Artístico, Archivos y Museos, 1980: 17-37; Bango, Isidro. *El monasterio medieval*. Madrid: Biblioteca Básica de Arte, 1990; Godoy, Cristina. "Arquitectura cristiana y liturgia: reflexiones en torno a la interpretación funcional de los espacios". *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie I, Prehistoria y Arqueología*, 2 (1989): 355-387; Sastre Isaac. "Altars de Extremadura y su problemática (ss. VI-IX)". *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, 11 (2005): 97-110; Caballero, Alejandro; Gimeno, Helena; Ramírez, Manuel; Sastre, Isaac. "Tablero de altar de época tardoantigua hallado en Baza (Granada): ¿Primer documento epigráfico del obispo Eusebio?". *Archivo Español de Arqueología*, 27/2 (2006): 287-297; Moreno, Francisco J. "El yacimiento de los Hitos en Arisgotas (Orgaz-Toledo). Reflexiones en torno a cómo se construye un monasterio visigodo". *Anales de Historia del Arte*, 18 (2008): 13-44.

51. "In the demolition of the wall situated at the foot of the church to the west, (it was seen to be) nine feet thick..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 121v).

52. AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 121v.

53. "...in the western part, at the foot of the church a bell tower, commonly called steeple..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 119v).



To the above, we must add more information that will help us to delve into some of the characteristics that the church dedicated around 1088 must have had. Following precise description by friar Baltasar Díaz, we have been able to propose that this church by Fortunius was similar in length to the north of the cloister, something that, to a great extent, can be documented archaeologically nowadays. We also know the width given in the information in the *Memoriae Silenses* and the archaeology, and these coincide.

The monk from Silos went beyond the aforementioned, as he gave us details of the type and number of pillars on which the side arches that ran along the church and gave access from the central nave to the laterals rested. Referring to the moment of the demolition of this western wall he wrote,

*Ergo in demolitione, in quam, talis parietis inventa sunt in caementis subtus terram capitella aliarum columnarum omnino similia alijs columnarum ejusdem Ecclesiae quae adhuc stabant, et cum quibus collata ejusdem omnino Architectura et magnitudinis absque ulla differentiâ erant; quod non obscure innuit partem Ecclesiae inferioris demolitam fuisse; ejusque lapides in hoc aedificio a S. P. Dominico constructo, in caementis adaptatos fuisse.*⁵⁴

The *Planta Iconográfica* by friar Juan Ascondo (figure 4), makes a clear distinction between the pillars of the last section of the church and those corresponding to this area. These pillars are circular in cross-section, like the others that remain *in situ* and those that friar Baltasar Díaz compared with the ones that were found on demolishing the church's west wall. The data we have been able to check is in line with what we can still see and, thus, although we cannot check this archaeologically, we can suppose that the rest can be accepted and given as valid. The pillars and capitals found are the ones that must have formed part of the structure of this part of the church until the major reform of this part of the church in the final decades of the 12th century or beginning of the following century.

The description of the church's west wall at the time of its destruction provides more data of great interest. It states that some capitals and columns were found in the foundations of the western wall of the low church,

...pro quo opere lapidibus partis Ecclesiae demolita usus: quippe in fundamento, et caemento parietis praedicti inventa Capitellia ejusdem omnino Architectura Jonica, ac erant illa sex columnarum, quarum tres medijs cratibus cappellam antiquam S. Dominici cum pariete

54. "Thus during the demolition of this wall (referring to the one of the west facade), in it, under ground between the stones of the building, the capitals of the other columns were found similar in everything to the ones from the columns that still remained in the others of the church and with which they fully resembled in their architecture and volume without any difference whatsoever; with that it was clear why this part of the church was demolished; and the stones belonging to the building erected by the holy father Domingo, were placed in its foundations" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 121v and 122).



*Boreali faciebant; sic que Navem dexteram scindebant, aliae tres columnae duas naves e regione formabant, sicut in Iconographia patet.*⁵⁵

The six columns found in this wall, together with their respective capitals, and related to the two that remained standing forming the chapel around the tomb of Saint Domingo, let us reconstruct a church with less than five bays. This is precisely what corresponds in length with the Romanesque cloister, as reflected by friar Baltasar Díaz in various passages of his much-cited work.

Another of the facts that we are keen to know about this church is its doorways. According to the 18th-century planimetry, there were three doorways. As mentioned above, there was the *alia porta magnifica et principalis* in the west wall and another near the middle of the north wall, as Baltasar Díaz explains,

*In parte vero interiori porticus, ac in pariete meridionali Ecclesiae Sancti Michaelis, alia erat porta, quâ immediate in Ecclesiam Sti. Sebastiani intrabatur ex varijs Columnis usque ad Capitella.*⁵⁶

The third is the one that connected the church directly to the cloister, which the aforementioned abbot, we believe erroneously, called “of the Virgins”, *...sic elevato pavimento per sex gradus ascendebatur ad Ecclesiam inferiorem per portam quae Virginum appellabatur: ...*⁵⁷

This information with the descriptions in both the *Memoriae Silenses* and the different reports about the demolition of the church in the 18th century can be compared with the description by friar Jerónimo Nebreda around 1580 and the archaeology. Of all this, the only surviving remains are of the north doorway, something from the west one and the reference to the one of Saint Michael that gave access to the cloister.

Having reached this point, let us present what we can reconstruct of the church dedicated or consecrated around 1088. With some doubts (that do not affect what we are about to present), our reconstruction of the hypothetical third temple is a church with three naves, five bays, three doorways and a chancel with a triple apse, circular inside, perhaps slightly banked and straight on the outside⁵⁸ (figure 1). The

55. “...together with what was demolished to use the stones in the works of part of the church; inasmuch as the foundation and between the stones of the aforementioned wall capitals were found, all of Ionian architecture, that were from six columns that were in it, similar to the three thick ones that were in the middle and formed the old chapel of Santo Domingo with the north wall; while three other columns made up two naves on the other side, as appears on the plan (we believe referring to the one we attribute to fray D. Ibarreta)” (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 119v and 120).

56. “On the inside of the porch, thus on the south wall of the church of San Miguel, there was another door which gave directly into the church of San Sebastián, with various columns and capitals” (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 120 and 120v).

57. “...given that the pavement was raised one ascended to the lower church through the door that was called of the Virgins up six levels ...” (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 123v).

58. The plan of this church and the space occupied by the atrium or church of San Miguel appears in: Palomero, Félix. *Alfonso VI: ¿del ocaso de lo hispano...?* 126; Palomero, Félix. “El mecenazgo en la corte



plan and execution of this church was directly linked to the Romanesque cloister and we believe that they were part of a single plan of works, as we shall see below.

As we have shown throughout this presentation, this reconstruction of the low church (dedicated or consecrated around 1088) is based on the data supplied by the history, especially the detailed and painstaking description by friar Baltasar Díaz and the information obtained from the archaeology. Through the historical information, we know both the length and width of the church, which can be corroborated archaeologically nowadays. Through the historical information (nowadays we only have part of the apse of the gospel, we know what the chancel was like, that it was situated below the low choir and its building coincided with the east gallery of the cloister. Similarly, through the history, from both the 18th century and through the documentation, we know that there were three altars and some of these could be described when the high church was destroyed in 1767. We must accept his description of the type of engaged columns that there were in the walls that separated the apses and from which the side arches between the central nave and the laterals branched out.

Of special significance, is the information he supplies about the columns and capitals found in the west wall. Its importance comes from the fact that it links the columns and capitals found with those that were still standing in the bays close to the tomb of the abbot Saint Dominic Manso. The 18th-century monk indicates that these were similar to the ones that were still *in situ* (figure 4). To the above, we must add that it indicates the number of capitals and columns found. From the number given, we deduce that the low church consecrated or dedicated around 1088 had five bays.

To the above, we must also add the important archaeological information from the north wall of the church (figure 5), the one that the tower abutted (figures 6 and 8) and the doorway (figure 6) built around the mid 12th century or perhaps somewhat later. This wall is built in stretcher bond (figures 5 and 7), with perfectly cut ashlars, hardly needed mortar and without packing. Its style, highlighted by the monk in the 18th century, is closer to the pre-Romanesque world, but could also have been done or reused to build the church we are interested in.

After having defined the supposed dimensions of the church we are concerned with, and before placing it in its monastic setting, we wish to mention other aspects about it. The first of these is related to the forms of the outside wall. Nowadays, the only part of this building that remains standing is part of the north wall between the tower and the doorway in the wall that gave access to the church of San Sebastián from the portico, the old church of San Miguel or of the nuns, depending on the information from the 16th and 18th centuries. They say,

*Verum hanc Ecclesiam Monialium, quae in parte Boreali Ecclesia Sti. Sebastiani sita videtur fuisse, a S. P. Dominico in atrium Ecclesiae S. Sebastiani conversam fuisse.*⁵⁹

castellano-leonesa de Alfonso VI...": 655 to which we refer as well as providing said sketch, cited in note 12. 59. "In truth this church of the nuns, that seems to have been placed in the north part of the church of San Sebastián, was converted by the Holy Father Domingo into the atrium of the church of San Sebastián..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 121).



The type of construction of this wall, that we can still see nowadays (figures 5 to 7), surprised friar Baltasar Díaz, who referred to this part of the wall of the church saying,

Insuper in fabricâ Ecclesiae antiquae valde notanda est collocatio lapidum scissorum, qui non de plano, ut communiter fit, et erant in aedificio â S. P. N. Dominico constructo, ac sunt adhuc in Ecclesia superiori pro Divinis Officijs nunc existente; sed duplici ordine superficies latitudinis a parte interiori immediate absque calce se tangentes in altum in utraque parte exteriori assurgebant: aliquâdo vero alij lapides desuper transversi illos ligabant; sic que nihil, aut parum calcis pro aquata (vulgus lechada) habebant;...⁶⁰

Thus, this wall is built in something similar to stretcher bond (figure 5), with very carefully cut ashlar that hardly required mortar (as mentioned above), only a narrow bond of slurry. The style of work and quality of the wall and the finishing of the ashlar places it sometime between the 6th and 12th centuries. The line of this wall fits perfectly with what could have been done in the final decades of the 11th century. Thus, this work could have been done in the times of Abbot Fortunius or perhaps earlier, as mentioned above.

We have presented the typology of the wall and how it was built, well defined by friar Baltasar Díaz, and the remains of which we have been able to document. However, if we observe it in greater detail, we see that above a certain height, here and there on its outer side, it goes in and out. This leads us to think about pilasters that could have been the bases for the corresponding arches that must have run along it (figure 8). This way of building the outer face of the wall is also visible at the base of the tower and in the area where a doorway was added around the mid 12th century. We believe that this must be related to the existence of blind arches, something not uncommon in buildings of the epoch. This can be seen in the church of San Pedro de Arlanza⁶¹ or the parish church of Santa María de Villavelayo⁶² (figures 13 to 15), where the arches ran the length of the church and seem closer to those in the church of San Sebastián. We also see these arches in Romanesque churches in the mountains near San Sebastián de Silos, like San Juan in Monterrubio de la Demanda or San Bartolomé in Canales de la Sierra. In both cases, there are only arcades in the apses, both inside and outside.

60. "Still in the fabric of the old church, our attention is drawn to the layout of the cut stones that were not placed flat as was habitually done and were in the building built by Our Holy Father Domingo and are still in the upper church now there for the holy services; but rather that the walls were erected with two layouts (collocations) in width: on the inside part without mortar and on one of the sides on the outside; sometimes other stones joined them from above placed transversally, in a way that they had no or almost no mortar:..." (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 122 and 122v).

61. This church only has these arcades in the outer walls corresponding to the lateral naves, not in the apses. Of these, only the central one has arcades in both the semicircular part and the straight part or presbytry.

62. The majority have survived in this church with the exception of the chancel. In the surviving sections of the north, south and west walls, there are the blind arches, in this case with almost horseshoe stilted arches and with pilasters between arch and arch as we suppose there were in the abbey church in Silos.



Archaeologically, another of the significant elements in this church is the tower. Nowadays, we can only document the foundations. With the information we have been able to document archaeologically, this was attached to the north wall. On analysing what remains and relating it with the north wall of the church, we see at the bottom (figures 6 and 8), that the walls of the two buildings are not joined, but rather abut each other. Another thing of note in this sense is that some of the ashlar in the wall of the church were worked to fit with those of the tower. This indicates that these two buildings were not built at the same time nor in the same plan of works, but that the tower dates from after the church. This leads us to conclude that they are from different stages of the building and thus, the base of the tower could not have been one of the spaces linked to this church.⁶³ The vestry of this church does not seem to have been here initially but very probably was moved here later on, when the tower was built in the second half of the 12th century. In the hypothetical and improbable case that there were a vestry here before the tower, no archaeological remains of it have survived, as the base we see belongs to the tower, and which everything indicates was built in the second half of the 12th century, as mentioned above, given the characteristics that friar Baltasar Díaz said it had. He states that,

*...In pariete vero boreali prope jam dictum parietem divisorium utriusque Ecclesiae in arcu inter sepulchrum P. N. Dominici, et memoratum murum divisorium erat Porta Sacristiae primitivae Ecclesiae Si. Sebastiani, supra cujus muros erectum fuit Campanarium satis altum in modum Castellii, Cylindris, seu parvis Columnis ad angulos, aliisque ornamentis terminatum.*⁶⁴

2.2. The church and its context

After reconstructed this third church, let us proceed to place it in the context of the monastery whose plan of works it is supposed to have been part of. The above does not mean that when work on it ended and this church was dedicated or consecrated, the rest was completely finished. We suppose that this was not so, but rather that it was completed following this plan, or with some changes, as happened with the church, in the 1130s or 1140s. This was also when it was decided to complete the cloister by adding the upper bays.

In the historical plans (understood as those dating from before the 19th century), we only find two plans or sketches in the archive in Silos, and only the one by

63. Bango, Isidro. "La iglesia antigua de Silos...": 346, 350 and 354.

64. "On the north wall close to the wall that separates the two churches, on the arch between the sepulchre of Our Father Domingo and the above-mentioned separating wall, was the door of the primitive sacristy of San Sebastián on whose walls a bell tower was built, quite high, like a castle finished with cylinders or columns on the corners and other decorations" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 118v).



friar Juan Ascondo (figure 4) situates the church: the cloister and atrium or portico abutting the north wall. In contrast, although the one by Manuel Machuca y Bargas shows the low church with its three apses, does not situate it (figure 3). On the other hand, the *Memoriae Silenses* and the description by friar Jerónimo Nebreda at the end of the 16th century⁶⁵ do describe the surroundings. To this we must add the archaeological information that we can see nowadays, and use as a decisive element in this approach to the surroundings of the Silos church.

One of the contemporary elements of this church is, according to all the sources, the one known as *...Ecclesiae Sancti Michaelis... Ecclesia Monialium erat*,⁶⁶ that was to the north of that of San Sebastián, the *portal grande*⁶⁷ as friar Jerónimo Nebreda called it. Nowadays, there is a space where this church of the nuns (figures 1 and 2) was supposedly found, with part of the floor, the foundations of its north wall that gave directly onto the village and two doorways, one facing the village of Silos and another that gave access from this apse to the monastery church we have just reconstructed. The only depiction of this space in a plan is in the one by Manuel Machuca,

Bibliotheca Manuscripta Gothica de Sto. Domingo de Silos (con alguna Noticia de los Códices del Mon' de Montes, de Sⁿ Genadio conservados hasta el tiempo de Morales, que allí los vio y después de acá no se encuentra allí, ni vna oja de ellos...

for the work by Abbot Domingo Ibarreta, an unpublished manuscript conserved in the archive in Silos.⁶⁸ Through this document, we know that the perimeter wall of this portico ran from the northwest corner of the transversal nave (north wing) and ended perpendicular to the western facade of the abbey church.

65. Férotin, Marius. *Histoire de l'Abbaye...*: 360. This author reproduces part of the manuscript work by the 16th-century abbot, friar Jerónimo Nebreda, which has not survived, so the reference must be to the work of this French monk. *Tiene este monasterio una portada que sale a la calle principal, toda de cantería con diversas figuras de bulto... Bajase a un portal grande donde solía haber gran número de sepulcros... En este portal hay muchas y diversas figuras, assi de bulto como de pincel; en el qual esta otra puerta, que es de la iglesia antiquissima con su postigo...* ("This monastery has a doorway that opens onto the main street, all stonework with various relief figures... It goes down to a large gateway where there were usually a large number of graves... In this doorway there are many and varied figures, both in relief and with brush; in which there is another door, which is from the very old church with its wicket...").

66. "Saint Michael or of the Nuns" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 119 and 119v).

67. Férotin, Marius. *Histoire de l'Abbaye...*: 360.

68. The plan by Manuel Machuca y Bargas, the figure friar Domingo Ibarreta talks about in the aforementioned work in the Monastery Archive in Silos, carpeta 115 f. 28v, states, *...la forma, y figura, que tuvo la Yglesia al tiempo de la Traslacion primera del santo y de la consagración de sus altares; la qual se diseña aquí para que se convezan los ojos de estas verdades innegables...* ("...the form, and figure, that the Church had at the time of the first Transfer of the saint and the consecration of its altars; which was designed here to convince the eyes of these undeniable truths..."). AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 120, also refers to this plan with the expression: *...sicut in Ichonographiâ patet.*



Friar Baltasar Díaz, who undoubtedly identifies this space as the church of San Miguel or of the nuns, also supplies the dimensions of this space, that was contemporary with the church we have described and defined above.⁶⁹

...non invenitur locus Ecclesiae Sancti Michaelis (olim, et ante Maurorum irruptionem Monialium) et quia statua Sti. Michaelis in atrio semper conservata fuit: ac insuper quia atrium longitudine nonaginta pedum et latitudine viginti septem; satis capax pro Ecclesia Monialium erat; cuius porta ad Boream, ubi usque ad haec tempora, etsi renovata permansit.

Latter, he have added: *...Sed etiam S. Parens Ecclesiam Sti. Michaelis in atrium pro Ecclesiâ Sti. Sebastiani novo convertisse videtur.*

It is clear that the space of the atrium that appears in friar Juan Ascondo's plan (which, as mentioned above, does not appear in the one by Manuel Machuca) is the result of the reforms and additions that it underwent over time. However, it is no less true that it coincides with what the local tradition identifies as the church of San Miguel. We can now document the doorways that connected this space to the church and one of the streets in the village. This fact (which we have been able to verify archaeologically) gives greater credence to the 18th-century information and lets us know part of the context of the church of San Sebastián, dedicated or consecrated in Fortunius' times, around 1088. Some of the elements of this wide space, converted into an atrium or portico and burial place, date from significantly later than the church that concerns us here. However, in any case, all the information we have been able to gather indicates that there were buildings here.

The other reference that contextualises the church is the cloister. As indicated above, the monk Grimaldo states that when Abbot Dominic died in 1073, he was buried *intra clastrum fratrum, ante portas ecclesiae*.⁷⁰ We have reliable information about the location of this first grave in the actual north gallery of the cloister (figures 1 and 2), excavated in the rock in an anthropomorphic shape, like many of the tombs in the church itself.⁷¹ Thus, when Abbot Dominic died, the cloister was already there. We cannot identify the forms of this monastic space, but we can state that all or part of it was built over the one that we can see nowadays.

Another aspect we must deal with is the relation between the church, dedicated or consecrated around 1088, and the Romanesque monastery, its adaptation to the uses of a Benedictine monastery, the date it was finished and whether the plan for the new monastery was the work of Abbot Dominic or his successor, Fortunius.

69. "... the location of the church of San Miguel (that of the nuns in other times, before the invasion of the Moors) is not recognised and the one in which the carving of Saint Michael was always kept on the atrium and especially because the atrium was ninety feet long and twenty-seven wide and fairly able for the church of the nuns; whose north door was still there when it was modified some while back"... "And this church of San Miguel with the new works seems to have been converted into the atrium of the one of San Sebastián" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 119- 119v and 120).

70. "in the cloister of the brothers in front of the doors of the church" (Valcárcel, Vitalino. *La "Vita Dominici Siliensis"....*: 234).

71. We believe that this antropomorphic tomb, carved out of the solid rock, must have been part of the existing necropolis, located south of the place of worship, the abbey church.



From the information in the different documents we have used, especially those from the 18th century, it can be deduced that the low church was perfectly adapted to the Romanesque cloister, as the part that corresponded to the naves was similar in length and only the apses protruded towards the east, as shown above. The information from the *Memoriae Silenses* (as well as other information supplied by other monks during the elimination of the Romanesque churches, especially about the low church we are interested in) is conclusive about the concordance between this and the cloister. On the other hand, the archaeology and the surviving remains of the church confirm what the different 18th-century sources indicate. Given all this, we believe that the church dedicated or consecrated around 1088 can be considered the same as the one built within the plans of the Benedictine monastery.⁷² This abbey church formed part of the same plan of works as the actual Romanesque cloister (figure 2), at least the one that was projected with it but modified over time, but that do not affect what we are concerned with here. Other annexes situated around the cloister formed part of the same plan of works. These included the east gallery with the first vestry, the chapterhouse and the monks', or work, room on the bottom floor, and the dormitory and the abbot's cell on the upper one. Then there was the refectory, with the kitchen and other rooms linked to this space that must have been built parallel to the south gallery. The rest of the monastery was built over time, but there is no doubt that the plans for it were drawn up at the same time as those for the low church and the cloister.

There are reasons, both archaeological and that follow logically from the building, that lead us to these proposals that we will only wish to sketch out here. The first notable fact is that the planimetry of the cloister and the church (the one dedicated or consecrated around 1088) coincide and fit perfectly (figure 2). On the contrary, given their links with the cloister and the low church, the surviving remains of the high church show that it was not part of the same plan of works.⁷³ There is a clear deviation of the south wing of the transversal nave in relation with the axis of the east gallery of the cloister and the low church.

To the above, we must add another fact that seems relevant to us. In the west wing of the monastery (in the part that corresponded to the south wing of the high church), the space known as the stairs of the Virgins seems to have been heavily reworked when the high church was built. This was when the lower part of this gallery (what was the vestry) was annulled, as was a portion of the upper floor that corresponded to the dormitory. This can still be seen *in situ*, with the two openings like loopholes that initially lit the dormitory directly and that lost purpose of illuminating the space when the upper cloister was built. This was also when the oculus on the north wall of the dormitory was eliminated —perhaps where the access stair was that led to the church first thing in the morning, when the monks descended from the common dormitory for the day's first prayer, matins. We also

72. Some time ago, we published a sketch of the Romanesque monastery that we understand was planned in the time of Abbot Fortunius, but was never completed. See: Palomero, Félix. *Alfonso VI: ¿del ocaso de lo hispano...?* 137.

73. Bango, Isidro. "La iglesia antigua de Silos...": 338, 356 and 358.



wish to highlight that the alignment of the church consecrated or dedicated around 1088 with the dormitory, the primitive vestry (we think it was initially located at the bottom of the actual stairs of the Virgins, as the dormitory was at the top, as shown by the loopholes (figure 12) that we can still see), the chapterhouse and the monks' room, is adequate and corresponds to a common plan of works.

2.3. *The chronology*

While it is complicated to reconstruct the church and relate it to the plans of the first Romanesque monastery in Silos, its chronology is more difficult given the lack of clear and precise data. As we only have a small part, despite what we can reconstruct regarding the planimetry, we cannot use its constructive forms to place it in time and we do not know the stylistic relation it could have with the cloister. From a reading of the *Memoriae Silenses*, we obtain relevant data about when it could have been finished. When it describes one of the apses, the central, it tells us what they found, its dimensions, its typology, the number of ashlar that made up the altar table and, especially, about some coins found inside it. The fact that they were deposited inside the altar leads us to suspect that this may perhaps have coincided with the consecration of this altar and, thus, very probably with that of the church we are interested in here.

The first relevant data is related to the dedication and consecration of the church. Fray Baltasar Díaz states,

*...deinde vero Ecclesia S. Sebastiano dicata, ac tandem anno MLXXXVI in honorem Sti. Sebastiani Martyris, et S. Dominici Abbatis cum Claustro, in quo adhuc Cruces Consecrationis, consecrata fuit.*⁷⁴

The aforementioned abbot echoed the information in the monastery and epigraph about it in the cloister, near its northeast corner. There are well-founded doubts about that tradition and the information the 18th-century monk supplied, some of which has been found to be false, others are only the expression of a tradition but without historical value. However, there is a part that time has shown to be of historical value and that can be used for the historical reconstruction. One piece of data of great historical value and interest is the finding of four copper coins, dinars, in the altar:

... supra quam quatuor lapide excussi superficiem superiorem formabant: quibus levatis, inventi sunt quatuor nummi aeris, quibus ex una parte Titulus Toletum, ex aliâ vero

74. "...in truth the church of San Sebastián, with cloister, was dedicated and consecrated around 1086 in honour of the martyr Saint Sebastian and Saint Domingo abbot, of whom there were consecration crosses there". (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f. 124v).



*Adefonsus: ex quo conjectare licet, illam Mensam reparatam saltem fuisse tempore, vel post Adefhonsi VI qui Toletum expugnaverit, Mauris que eripuit anno MLXXXV.*⁷⁵

These coins have not survived, which has given some authors more than a few doubts about accepting this information as true. If so, we would be faced with a date, 1085, of *terminus ante quem*. If we accept that these coins were placed in the altar at the time of its dedication or consecration, this would be a date before which the church could not have been dedicated or consecrated. The passing of time has shown that the information supplied by Baltasar Díaz, like most of what appears in his work, is accurate and we can accept it as valid. Some years ago, as part of the celebrations of the millennium of the birth of Saint Dominic of Silos, his remains (kept in an urn in the chapel that bears his name since 1733) were studied. According to the report by those who carried this out, on the 20th of January 2001, a copper coin was found among remains similar⁷⁶ to those that friar Baltasar Díaz so carefully presents and describes in his *Memoriae Silenses*.

This finding allows us to approach another of the problematic questions related to this church with a degree of certainty: the date it was finished and that of its dedication or consecration. The first thing we must highlight is that the same type of coin, made of copper and with the same minting, is found in both the central altar and the tomb of the Abbot Saint Dominic. This leads us to suppose that the dedication or consecration of the church and the transfer of the abbot's remains from the cloister to the church very probably took place at the same time. Moreover, this allows us to suppose that this event necessarily took place after the conquest of Toledo by Alfonso VI, in 1085. With this, we approach a date between 1086 and 1089, as different sources report.

The above leads us to the question of the consecration or dedication of this church. This refers to the low church, as the data we have indicate this.⁷⁷ It seems that the first piece of data that supports this supposition is the fact that the same type of coin has been found in the central altar and the remains of Abbot Dominic. This leads us link the transfer of the abbot saint and the dedication of the abbey church if we understand that it was finished as part of the same event. We now have the solidly-based suspicion that this event took place after the conquest of Toledo, as this is indicated by the minting of the coin found, as mentioned above, in both places.

75. "...on top of which four protruding stones formed the upper surface; on raising them, four copper coins were found, which had the inscription TOLETUM on one face and ADEFONSVS, on the other, with which one can suppose that this table was renewed at least at that moment, or if you like after Alfonso VI seized Toledo from the Moors in 1085 (MLXXXV)" (AMS, manuscript 31 (Baltasar Díaz, *Memoriae Silenses*) f.132v).

76. Vivancos, Miguel. "Hallazgo de un dinero de Alfonso VI en el monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos". *Numisma*, 245 (2001): 169-170. In this article, the author studies the coin, presents the inscription on both sides and puts it in its historical time.

77. Some of these aspects were dealt with in: Palomero, Félix. *Alfonso VI: ¿del ocaso de lo hispano...?*: 140 and note 95.



The dedication or consecration may have taken place, as indicated by the surviving epigraph (copied from the original in the 12th century), in 1086.⁷⁸ Friar Gaspar Ruiz de Montiano states that around 1615, given its poor state of the first stone, it was removed and stored and later disappeared. He informs us that a new one was made in 1645, and this is the one that has survived and which we have been able to see coincides with the details given by this monk from Silos in the 17th century and that Marius Férotin transcribed. Furthermore, he himself states that there was another “very old label or memorial written in the script of the Goths, which is found in an old manuscript book...” and he transcribed it as,

78. Férotin, Marius. *Histoire de l'Abbaye...*: 296; Palomero, Félix et alii. *Silos: un recorrido...*: 109. The transcription of this epigraph, conserved in the monastery of Silos, is found in said work and other later ones so we do not reproduce it here. Nowadays it is not where the French monk said it was but rather it has been transferred to the church and is placed in one of the absidiolos, the one near this access to what is left of the southern wing and the high church. However, the Silos monk, friar Gaspar Ruiz de Montiano, in his work in 1615: *Historia milagrosa de santo Domingo de Silos abad, de la orden de San Benito, que contiene...* AMS. ms 21, f. 44v and 45, supplies data of interest about the consecration of the church; It copies the text of the tombstone in the south wall of the low church, near the northeast corner of the cloister, where he reports there were signs of its consecration. In this respect, he states, *A los doce años mas o menos de la muerte de Santo Domingo auiedo inuiado el Sumo Pontífice Gregorio Séptimo por legado en España al Cardenal Ricardo de San Victor: fue luego electo Pontífice Urbano segundo, por muerte de Gregorio séptimo: y para negocios graues que se auian de tratar con el Rey don Alonso Sexto, ubo luego el Papa Urbano de inuiar otro legado suyo: que fue el Cardenal don Raymundo Obispo de Rodas, sin embargo del primer legado que ya estaba en España por Gregorio séptimo: Estos dos legados, juntamente con otros dos cardenales, don Sixto: y don Juan que a la sazón se hallaron en España y con ellos el grande Arzobispo de Toledo, y primado de las Españas don Bernardo, monge y abad que auia sido de San Benito el Real de Sahagun: y ansi mismo el obispo de Burgos don Gomez que sucedió en la dignidad al Stº Don Gimeno; y Don Pedro obispo de Palencia y otros obispos, se halla que hicieron junta en el monasterio de Silos por el año de mil ochenta y seys; que fue la era de mill ciento y veinte y quatro, vn año mas o menos: como costa indubitabilmente de tres testimonios ciertos. El primero es vn rotulo antiguo que ya el tiempo tiene casi borrado, que estaba en el claustro bajo del dicho Monasterio y en el que se leyeron estas palabras: “Hoc claustrum et ecclesia sunt consecrata et dedicata pro santísimo Patre Urbano secundo, in honorem Sancti Sebastián martyrís: et Beati Dominici Abatis: Facta era millessima centésima vigésima quarta. Presentibus in ea Bernardo Archiepiscopo Toletano: Gomecio Burgensi: Ioanne Episcopo Aquensi: Petro Palentino: Domnis Sixto et Ioanne Cardinalibus: Regente hoc monasterium venerabili patre Domino Fortunio Abate”. (“At more or less twelve years after the death of Saint Dominic having sent the Pope Gregory the Seventh as legate to Spain the Cardinal Ricardo of San Victor: he was later elected Pope Urban the Second, for the death of Gregory the Seventh: and for serious business that they had to deal with with King Alonso Sixth, there was later Pope Urban who sent another legate: who was the Cardinal Raimond, Bishop of Rhodes, however of the first legate who was already in Spain for Gregory the Seventh: These two legates, together with two other cardinals, Sixtus: and John who were in Spain at that time and with them, the great Archbishop of Toledo, and primate of the Spains Bernard, monk and abbot who had been Saint Benit the Royall in Sahagun: and likewise, the bishop of Burgos don Gomez who succeeded in the post Stº Don Gimeno; and Don Pedro bishop of Palencia and other bishops, travelled together to the monastery of Silos in the year one thousand and eighty-six; that was the era of one thousand and twenty-four, a year more of less: as is undoubtedly shown by three right witnesses. The first is an old sign that time has almost made illegible, that was in the cloister under said Monastery and in which these words were read: “Hoc claustrum et ecclesia sunt consecrata et dedicata pro santísimo Patre Urbano secundo, in honorem Sancti Sebastián martyrís: et Beati Dominici Abatis: Facta era millessima centésima vigésima quarta. Presentibus in ea Bernardo Archiepiscopo Toletano: Gomecio Burgensi: Ioanne Episcopo Aquensi: Petro Palentino: Domnis Sixto et Ioanne Cardinalibus: Regente hoc monasterium venerabili patre Domino Fortunio Abate”).*



*Anno ab Incarnatione Domini millesimo octuagessimo sexto: Regnante Rege Adefonso in Toletto et in Regnis suis: Bernardo Toleti archiepiscopo, dedicata est ecclesia altaris Sti. Sebastían, et Sti. Petri: et Sti. Andree a domino Petro Aquensi Archiepiscopo: et in dextera techa Sancte Marie, Sancti Michaelis archangeli: et Sancti Ioannis euangeliste a domino Gomessano, burgensi episcopo: et in sinistra theca Sancti Martini et Sancti Benedicti; et Sancti Nicolai, et Sancti Dominici, a domino Raymundo Rodense episcopo. Consecrati sunt in presentia Domini Ricardi, Cardinalis Romani: Regente Abba Fortunio. Era milesima centesima vegessima quarta.*⁷⁹

It seems to indicate that the codex referred to could be the *Las Etimologías de San Isidoro*, nowadays in the National Library in Paris. In modern times, another reading has been done of certain aspects of this text, including the date, 1088. The transcription states,

*Anno ab Incarnatione Domini millesimo D CCC VIII (sic), regnante rege Adefonso in Toletto et in regnis suis, B(ernardo), Tholeti archiepiscopo, dedicata est ecclesia altaris Sancti Sebastiani, et Sancti Petri: et Sancti Andre a domino Petro aquensi archiepiscopo; et in dextera techa Sancte Marie, Sancti Michaelis archangeli et Sancti Ioannis euangeliste, a domino Gomessano, burgensi episcopo; et in sinistra theca, Sancti Martini et Sancti Benedicti et Sancti Nicolai, et Sancti Dominici, a domino Raymundo rodense episcopo. Consecrati sunt in presentia domini Ricardi, cardinalis romani: regente abba Fortunio, era T C XXVI.*⁸⁰

With the information from Gaspar Ruiz de Montiano, in 1688, friar Juan Castro put the date back to 1089 alleging historical reasons,

*...y en esta ocasion se consagraron la Iglesia y claustros del monasterio...fue hecha esta consagración el año 1089” y añade “Pero advierto, que dicho autor (se refiere al autor de la obra que cita, El Moisés segundo, del que no cita el nombre) erró la fecha del año, porque aviendo de leer era de 1127, que corresponde el año de Christo 1089, leyó 1124 que ese año de Christo 1086, lo qual no puede ser por no aver entrado a gobernar la Iglesia Urbano II hasta el año de 1088, y así no pudo ser legado Raynero hasta este tiempo en España...”*⁸¹

79. *rótulo o memorial antiquísimo escrito en letra de Godos, que se halla en un libro antiguo manuscrito...* (“very old label or memorial written in the script of the Goths, that is in an old manuscript book ...”). See the work of: de Montiano, Gaspar Ruiz. *Historia milagrosa de santo Domingo de Silos abad de la orden de San Benito...*: f. 45.

80. We have not seen the copy in the mentioned codex personally and thus we have to accept the transcription that Miguel Vivanco presented in: Vivanco, Miguel. “El claustro de Silos y las fuentes documentales”, *Simposio Internacional de la Consagración de la iglesia y claustro de Silos (1088-1988)*. Burgos-Silos: Dirección General del Patrimonio Artístico, Archivos y Museos, 1989: 80. Despite everything, the coincidence with everything except the year is somewhat suspicious and that this mistake is the one that was passed in the epigraph done in 1645 and that the document said to have copied *El segundo testimonio* has not been taken into consideration. According to friar Gaspar Ruiz, this document shows that the church was consecrated in that year and that Saint Domingo was canonised according to the uses of the time, surely in the same year.

81. *y en esta ocasion se consagraron la Iglesia y claustros del monasterio fue hecha esta consagración el año 1089* (“...and on this occasion the Church and cloisters of the monastery were consecrated... this consecration was done in the year 1089”) and adds *Pero advierto, que dicho autor* (he refers to the author of the work he cites, *El second Moisés*, who he does not cite by name) *erró la fecha del año, porque aviendo de leer era de 1127, que corresponde el año de Christo 1089, leyó 1124 que ese año de Christo 1086, lo qual no puede ser por*



Given all the above, there are some doubts about the exact date of consecration of the church and the cloister, and this varies between 1086 and 1089. We have no certainty nor can we decide for any of the three that have been suggested, namely 1086, 1088 or 1089. However, what does seem to arise from the information supplied by the coins is that the church was consecrated (or we rather think was dedicated following the Hispanic tradition) is the one known as the low church and this event coincided with the transfer of the mortal remains of Abbot Dominic from the cloister to the church, when he was recognised as a saint. This is more so given that the 17th-century monks tells us that there were various crosses from the consecration on the south wall of this low church, on the wall facing the cloister (image 2).

3. As a conclusion

From the above, we can conclude that:

- The low church of Silos had three naves, five bays, a triple apse and was similar in length to the north gallery of the cloister.
- This church was dedicated or consecrated, during the abbacy of Fortunius, around 1088.
- This church was part of the plan of works for the Romanesque monastery and was built at the same time as part of the current cloister and the east and south galleries of the monastery.
- Everything indicates that the events of around 1088 were related to the end of the works and the transfer of the remains of Abbot Dominic as a saint to the church.
- The vestry of this church was not attached to the north wall, but rather the one located there, at the bottom of the tower, was a much later work.
- There is a series of blind arches on the outside of its walls.
- The length of the church to the west and its width north-south were not altered during the reforms and changes that took place from the mid-12th century.
- The three bays of the feet of this church were heavily reformed in the last decades of the 12th century or perhaps at the beginning of the following century.
- If we had to define the low church consecrated or dedicated around 1088 from the stylistic point of view, it would fall within the early Romanesque, or between this and the full Romanesque.

no aver entrado a gobernar la Iglesia Urbano II hasta el año de 1088, y así no pudo ser legado Raynero hasta este tiempo en España ("But I warn, that said author mistook the date of the year, because having to read it was 1127, that corresponds to the year of Christ 1089, he read 1124 that this year of Christ 1086, which could not have been for Urban II not having entered to rule the Church until the year of 1088, and thus Raynero could not have reached Spain until this time..."). See: de Castro, Juan. *El glorioso taumaturgo español, redemptor de cautivos, Santo Domingo de Sylós*. Madrid, 1688: 106.



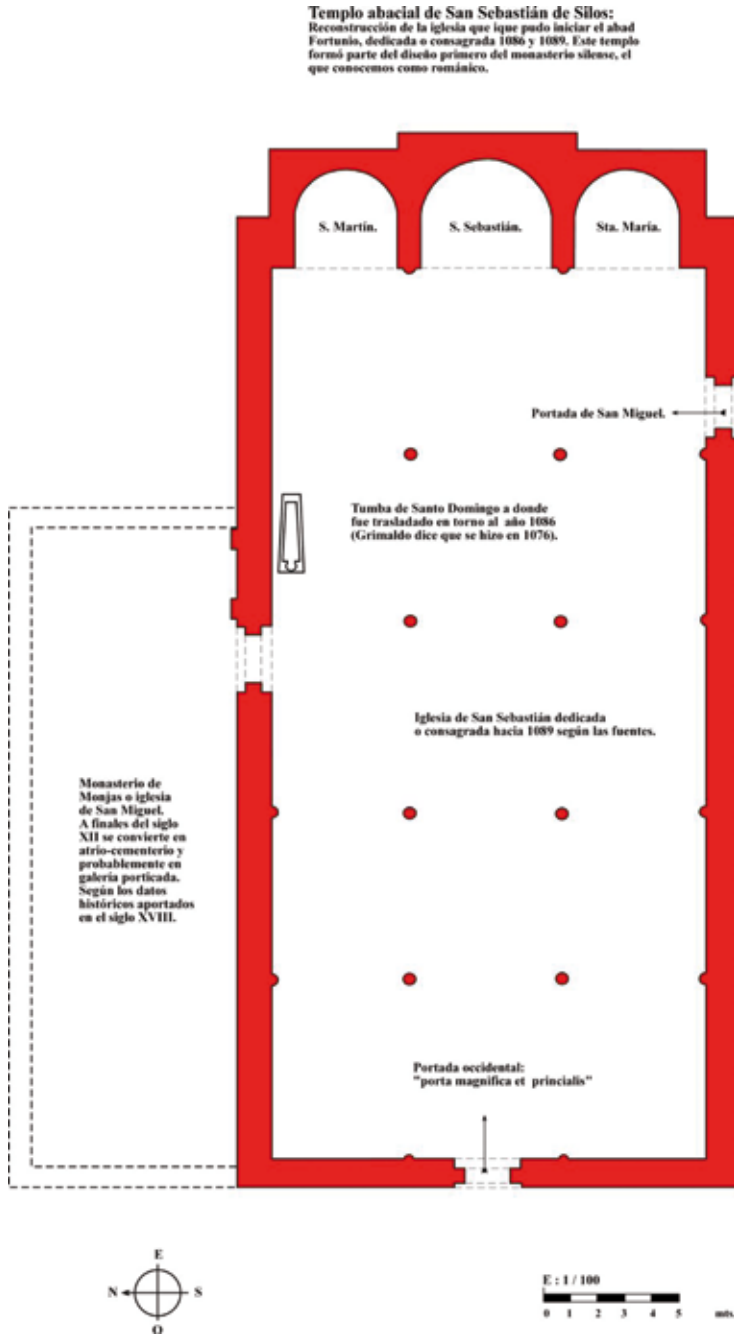


ILLUSTRATION 1. HYPOTHETICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH OF SAN SEBASTIÁN DEDICATED OR CONSECRATED AROUND 1088 (AUTHORS: FÉLIX PALOMERO AND IRENE PALOMERO).



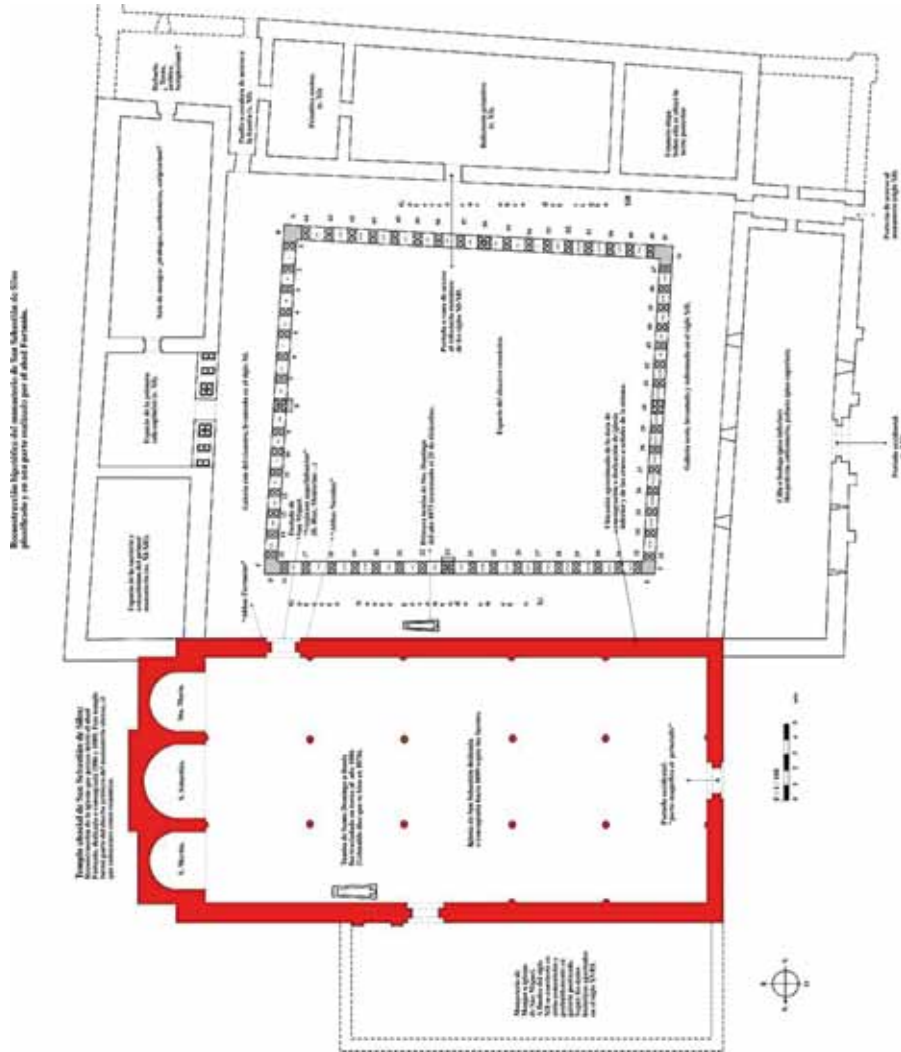


ILLUSTRATION 2. HYPOTHETICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PLAN OF THE MONASTERY OF SAN SEBASTIÁN ACCORDING TO FORTUNIUS' PROJECT (AUTHORS: FÉLIX PALOMERO AND IRENE PALOMERO).



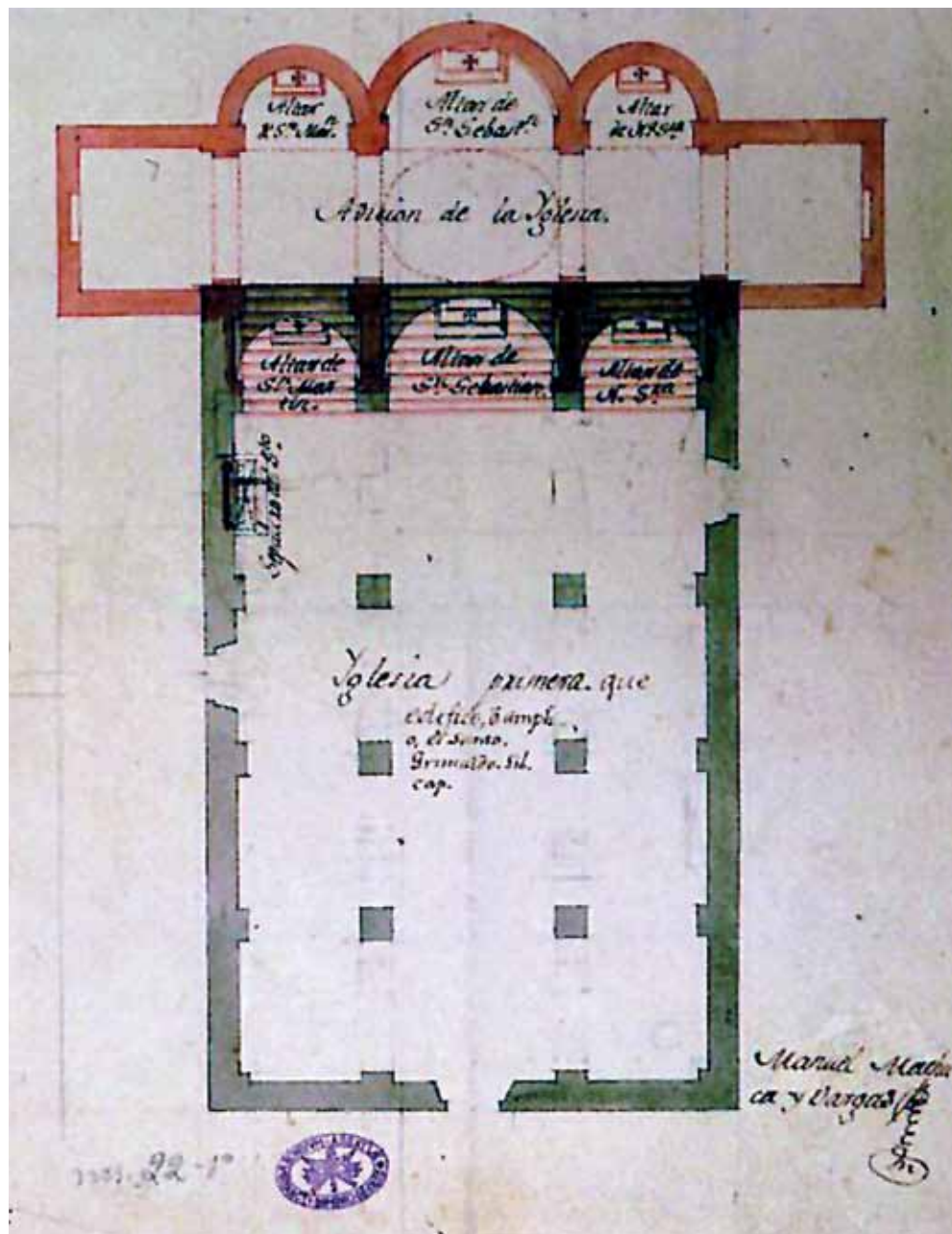


ILLUSTRATION 3. PLAN OF THE ABBEY CHURCH OF SILOS ACCORDING TO M. MACHUCA Y BARGAS (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO, AMS).



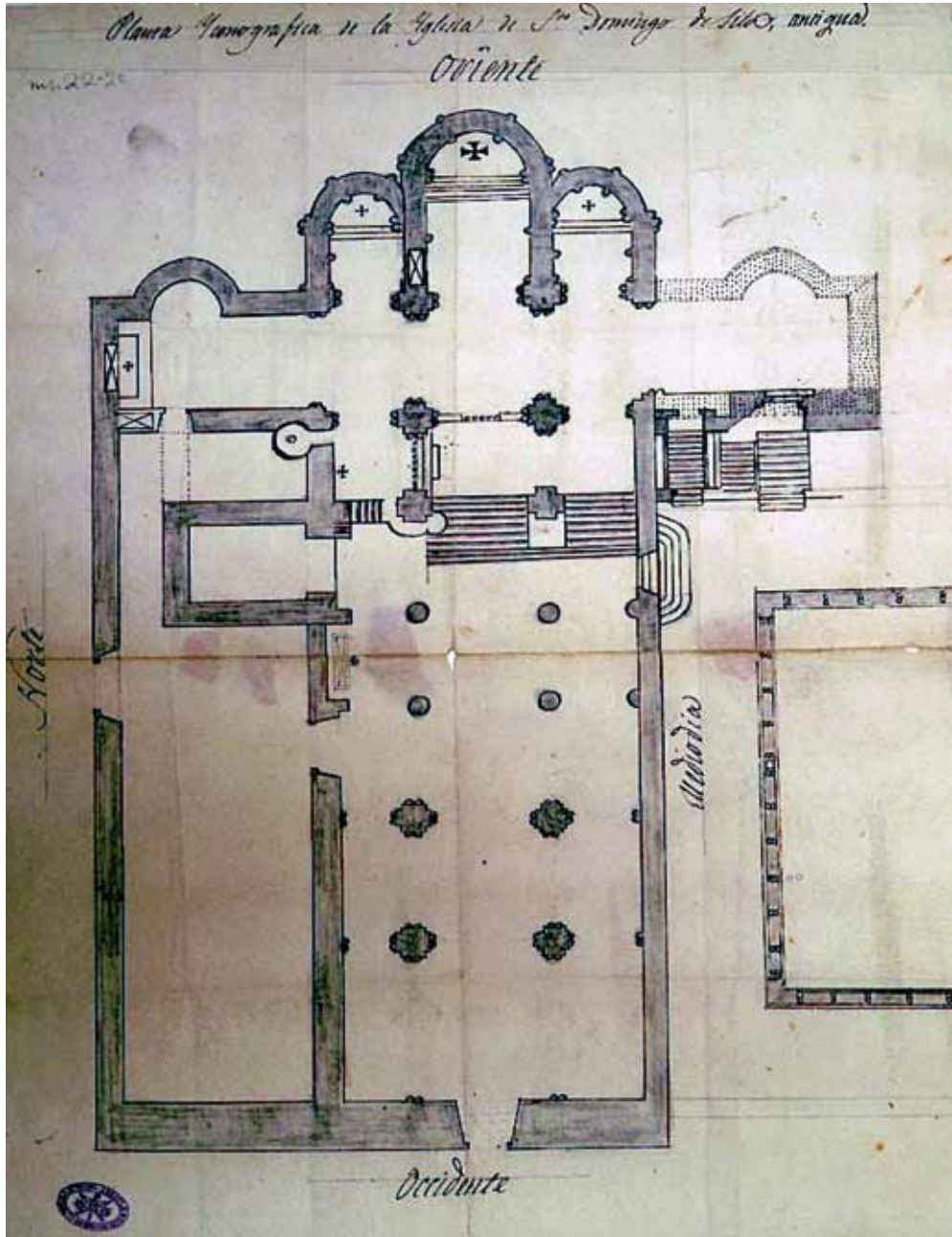


ILLUSTRATION 4. PLAN OF THE ABBEY CHURCH OF SILOS ACCORDING TO FRAY D. IBARRETA (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO, AMS).





ILLUSTRATION 5. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: NORTH WALL OF THE LOW CHURCH SEEN FROM INSIDE (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).



ILLUSTRATION 6. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: NORTH WALL OF THE LOW CHURCH AND FOUNDATION OF THE TOWER (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).





ILLUSTRATION 7. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: NORTH WALL OF THE LOW CHURCH, FLOOR OF THE ATRIUM AND BASE OF THE DOORWAY ADDED IN THE MID-12TH CENTURY (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).



ILLUSTRATION 8. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: NORTH WALL OF THE LOW CHURCH: DETAIL OF THE RECESS, BASE OF THE BLIND ARCHES AND FOUNDATION OF THE TOWER (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).



ILLUSTRATION 9. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: LOW CHURCH: REMAINS OF THE APSE OF THE SIDE OF THE EPISTLE (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).



ILLUSTRATION 10. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: LOW CHURCH: REMAINS OF ONE OF THE PILLARS WITH CAPITALS FROM THE LOW CHURCH (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).





ILLUSTRATION 11. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: PILLAR IN THE HIGH CHURCH (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).



ILLUSTRATION 12. SANTO DOMINGO DE SILOS: BAYS OF THE DORMITORY, NOW THE WEST WALL OF THE SPACE OF THE STAIRS OF THE VIRGINS (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).





ILLUSTRATION 13. SANTA MARÍA DE VILLAVELAYO: BLIND ARCHES THAT RUN ALONG THE WEST WALL (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).



ILLUSTRATION 14. SANTA MARÍA DE VILLAVELAYO: BLIND ARCHES THAT RUN ALONG THE SOUTH WALL. (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).





ILLUSTRATION 15. SANTA MARÍA DE VILLAVELAYO: BLIND ARCHES THAT RUN ALONG THE NORTH WALL (PHOTO: FÉLIX PALOMERO).

