



## Queretaro

### Conservation and restoration of the exteriors of the Temple of Santa Cruz

The project aimed to conserve the architectural and historical jewel of the Temple of Santa Cruz, a 17th-century building, the construction of which began during the conquest authorized by King Felipe. The authorization to found the convent was again issued by King Felipe IV in 1653. In 1660, with the temple and the convent being completed, the province's novitiate was installed there. In 1683, Fray Antonio Linaz de Jesús María obtained papal authorization from the Order and founded the Evangelical College.

The Temple of Santa Cruz is one of the buildings most visited by local tourists as well as by foreigners because, in our traditions, the Chichimecas were defeated by the Spaniards on the hill of San Gremal, a cruel battle in 1531 where the natives surrendered when they saw in the sky the great cross and the image of the apostle Saint James. The temple and the convent were built on this site in the 17th century.

This place derives its relevance from the fact that it is a strategic center for the inhabitants and the society that visits it. According to the history, it is there that began the evangelization of the natives of our city who did not accept the wooden cross that the Spaniards had put in place. This cross was replaced by another one in stone, known today as Santísima Cruz de los Milagros. This place was also the headquarters of the barracks of Maximiliano de Habsburg to lead the remnants of the Mexican Imperial Army in the face of the Republican troops who besieged them.

Inside the convent is the so-called aquatic patio, or "Patio de Aguas", where there are pools for domestic use, with water from the city's aqueduct, using clay tubes covered with glass.

### Introduction

Currently, the Historic Monuments Zone is recognized as the historical space gathering multiple cultural expressions. In this context, immovable cultural heritage is given a fundamental value to shape the city's identity. The importance of the historic core of the city of Santiago de Querétaro lies in the century-old heritage of a rich and unique mix of Otomí, Tarascan, Purépecha, Mexica, Chichimeca, Spanish and Métis cultures, its religious architecture of historical significance. These aspects must prevail and be maintained within the framework of the history of the founding and development of the city of Querétaro. The traditional understanding of immovable heritage underlines the material significance of built heritage. The recognition of the technical, constructive, aesthetic, artistic, social, religious or functional values of a monument is essential not only for its preservation but also to identify the needs and resources necessary for its conservation.

### History

Local historians assume that the word **Querétaro** comes from the Tarasque word *querenda*, which means "ball game" because there was a ball game in this area. "In the place called **Loma del Sangremal**, where it is assumed that there was a small pre-Hispanic sanctuary and a ball game, the first Franciscans who arrived around 1531 decided to build a small Franciscan hermitage, which was the first church built in Querétaro ". On one side of this hermitage, a temple and a Franciscan



convent were built in 1650. The Assumption Chapel and the cloakroom were built at the expense of Don Juan Caballero y Osio.

In 1666 the temple and convent were completed. In 1683, the first apostolic Fide propaganda college in America was erected by its founder Fray Antonio Linàez. In 1821, it was the last stronghold of Spanish forces. In 1861 a wall, and in 1867 the barracks of Maximiliano and later his prison, were demolished.

#### General description of the property

**FAÇADE.-** The facade of the convent complex is made up of three elements: an entrance in the center giving access to the temple of La Santa Cruz, with a tower to its left; a chapel, called La Asunción, to the left of the entrance, and a third wing to the right of the facade, which is the Franciscan cloister of Las Cruces.

The facade of the temple has a portico in the form of a narthex that receives the choir's body, and its facade is divided into three levels. The first, made of stone, has a large portico formed by an elliptical arch or a carpanel. On the sides, paired rectangular pilasters whose capitals reach the smooth entablature surmounted by a cornice. On the sides, arched buttresses protrude from the front panel. On its second level, separated from the previous entablature, there are two rectangular windows with stained glass. In the middle thirds of the panel and on the sides, pilasters matched to the axes of the lower pilasters; in the center, at an upper level of the windows, the Franciscan coat of arms of the "crossed arms", and at the lower level an elliptical vertical rose window flared with stained glass windows with a cross. The third level is an entirely smooth triangular pediment with a tympanum, in the center of which is the other Franciscan shield of the "five wounds".

**TOWER.-** The temple tower is also composed of three bodies, perhaps from different eras: the first with a square base, two openings on each side, the arch of each of the openings of the tower is semi-circular, with pilasters sectioned on its sides, three on each side, the capitals of which form part of a peripheral entablature. Higher is the second body, octagonal, with the same pattern as the openings in the lower body but with a bell on each side and pilasters broken because they are on the edges. The entablature, which is part of the third body, is cylindrical and serves as a drum for the dome with tile finish, a square lantern and a dome.

#### Before and after

**FAÇADE.-** On the main facade, you can see a significant deterioration caused mainly by climatic factors. Stains of dampness, fungi and efflorescence are visible in the stones of the railing and the pilasters of the portico. It is dirty due to pollution and human factors; gaskets are also missing. The paint, in general, is deteriorated and missing in some areas due to the detachment.

**DOMES.-** In the domes, you can see the stone cladding with stains and fungus, missing joints and damaged cornices. The tiles show a loss of glaze, which is why they no longer perform coating. The stained glass windows of the dome drum are dirty, damaged or with missing parts.



ROOF OF THE NAVE. The apse's slab is covered with a worn acrylic waterproofing in which there are some cracks, reasons for which its intervention is essential. The electrical installations are in poor condition, with damaged pipes and exposed cables, leading to poor lighting performance. There are also broken lights and many others that are not adequate as they overheat building materials causing them to deteriorate.

#### Project foundations

- Within the framework of its Operational Guidelines, the World Heritage Convention has defined three important elements: the protection of the values of authenticity, integrity, and the management system.
- In this perspective, the **Management Plan for the area of Historical Monuments of Santiago de Querétaro** must consider the conservation of the values which led the site to be declared World Heritage; and not lose them.
- In accordance with the above, the **Management Plan for the area of Historical monuments of Santiago de Querétaro** should be understood as a management mechanism for a heritage site where a set of normative, strategic and operational instruments is grouped together. The plan aims for concerted action by the public, private sectors and society in general, through a planning process in which a participatory, systematic and comprehensive approach is promoted for the conservation, research and dissemination of the outstanding universal values of the site, within a framework of sustainable development, and which takes into account the improvement of the quality of life of the society, thanks to strategies that lead to the establishment of a management system guaranteeing the conservation and the safeguard of the heritage site and its long-term cultural values.
- In this case, management should be understood in a broad sense as a process capable of strengthening technical and legal protection mechanisms and at the same time promoting social and governmental participation. To this end, there is a catalog of projects in which conservation actions are envisaged in the short, medium and long term.

*Courtesy translation*