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BUENAS PRÁCTICAS

Actuaciones Cofinanciadas

Conservation and enhancement of the monumental complex of the Monastery of Santa María in Sobrado dos Monxes

General Directorate of Cultural Heritage

Programa Operativo de Galicia

Año 2020

Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional

Conservation and enhancement of the monumental complex of the Monastery of Santa María in Sobrado dos Monxes

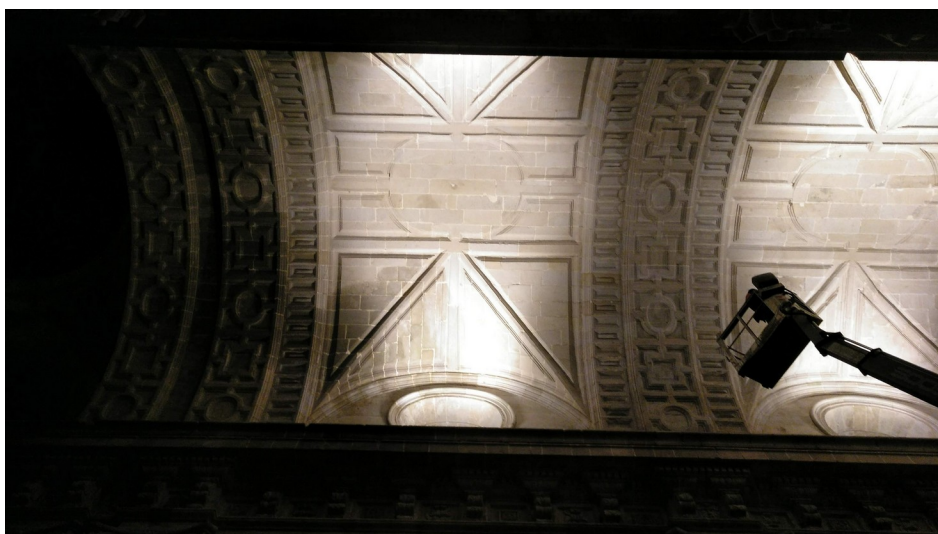
The General Directorate of Cultural Heritage has carried out actions for the conservation and value enhancement of the Monastery of Santa María de Sobrado dos Monxes. It is a monastery listed as an Asset of Cultural Interest and listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

In the first place, a project was developed to assess the initial state of conservation of the monastery. In it, the actions necessary to ensure the ongoing use of the monastery in optimal conditions were detected. The tasks to be carried out in the surrounding public spaces, so they could be further enjoyed, were also specified.

The intervention consisted of a series of actions of a different nature. In the first place, it was essential to eliminate the leaks and dampness that were damaging the monastery and that were occurring through the roof and walls. It was also necessary to clean and restore the walls and floors of the monastery, since they were in poor condition. In order to avoid, as far as possible, the accumulation of water in unwanted areas, the drainage system was also repaired; in this way, the water will be channeled to areas further away from the monastery and will not accumulate near it, thus avoiding further accumulation of humidity in the monument. The roof of the monastery was also damaged by the passage of time and inclement weather, so it was necessary to restore it. Lastly, the electrical installation was also completely replaced, since the existing one was very old and presented dangerous faults that needed correction in order to increase the safety of the users.

Once works are finished, all those who want to visit this monastery will find a monument in a perfect state of conservation and will be able to enjoy a pleasant visit. The visit will also be pleasing to the eye, since the decorative elements found throughout the monastery have been thoroughly cleaned and restored by expert personnel.

The total cost of the operation amounted to 1,540,489 euros, of which 1,232,391 have been provided by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). With this investment, a monastery with an area of more than 2,300 square meters has been returned to a suitable state of conservation.



This intervention constitutes a Good Practice since it meets the criteria established to that effect:

1. The intervention has been properly publicised among beneficiaries, potential recipients, and public at large

Both the work and the services related to it have been publicised in accordance to the regulations about information and communication of interventions co-financed by ERDF, placing in a conspicuous location a billboard or poster with reference to the funds that support the operation.



During the execution of the operation, the public was also informed of the support obtained from the funds, making a brief description of the operation on its website, with its objectives and results, and highlighting the financial support of the Union, as in the following example:

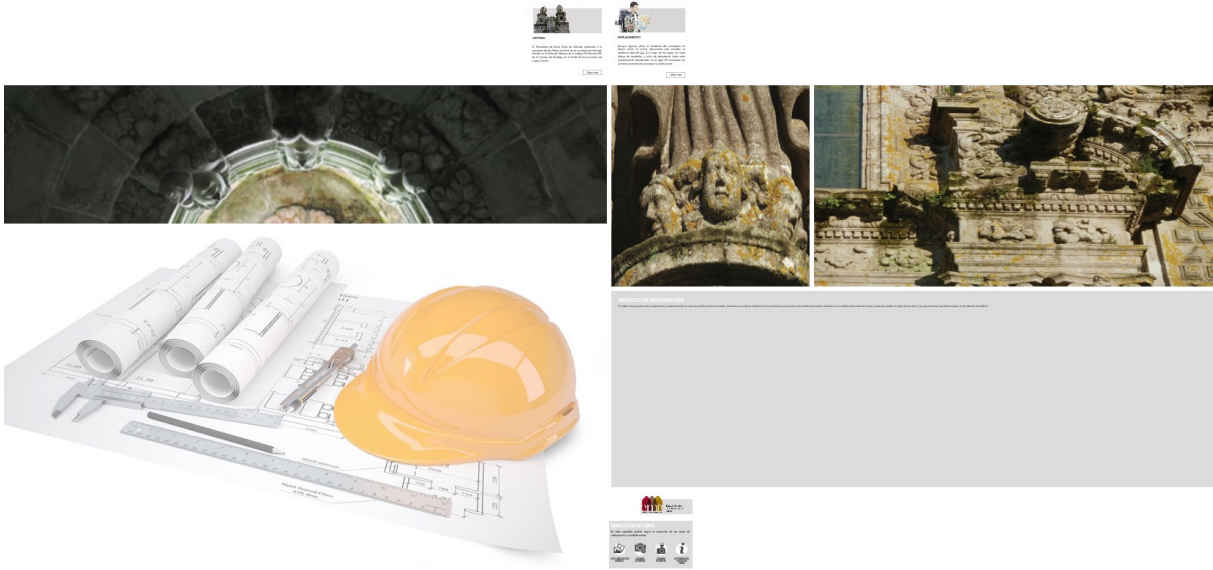
<https://www.cultura.gal/es/conservacion-puesta-valor-conjunto-monumental-santa-maria-sobrado-monxes>

Likewise, a specific web page has been designed,

<https://restauracionmonasteriosobrado.es/>,



which incorporates, between the data and the monitoring of the work, the reference to the European funds that finance it.



This website also includes the data of the open days.

<https://restauracionmonasteriosobrado.es/jornadas>.

The first one, held in September 2019, was attended by about 100 people. In these sessions, explanatory panels of the intervention with reference to the financing by European funds were used.



SOBRADO DOS MONXES: INTERVENCIÓN E DESCUBRIMIENTOS NA RESTAURACIÓN.

Un centenar de persoas asisten a la Jornada divulgativa sobre el proyecto de restauración del monasterio de Sobrado dos Monxes.

Fundado en el año 924 forma parte del Camino de Santiago del Norte Peninsular, y fue destacado como bien individual en la lista de Patrimonio Mundial de la UNESCO.

Tras dicho estudio se ha procedido a aplicar un primer tratamiento en seco retirando las restas con espátula de mortero, un segundo tratamiento en húmedo con brocha para molarlo y por último lavado de la piedra para eliminar los restos del bioácido.

Durante estos trabajos de restauración la Iglesia ha dado varias 'sorpresas' que han puesto de manifiesto:

- La cornisa existente a nivel del arranque de la parte alta de las Torres, en realidad no es tal sino que se trata de sencillos balcones que rodeaban las torres tal y como se aprecia en los cajados existentes en los sillares que responden al lugar donde se ubicaban los balaustrados barrocos de la barandilla de dichos balcones.
- Las imágenes existentes a ambos lados del escudo estaban policromadas, y también se han descubierto restos de policromía en el frontal de la capilla del Rosario (antiguo retablo de piedra) y la Capilla de san Pedro, lo que nos lleva a concluir que tanto la fachada como los paramentos interiores poseen policromía.
- En la restauración del monumento llevado a cabo por Pons Sorolla en los años 70, se han detectado dos actuaciones especialmente interesantes. En la torre Sur dejó constancia de la restauración a través del despiece y labrado de los diferentes elementos, plasturas etc. y en la Linterna y el capillino mediante la ejecución de piezas de prefabricadas de mortero de cemento con vidrio macado para lo que previamente construyó abajo una maqueta 1/1 para a posteriori desmontar sus piezas y colocarlas en la linterna y el capillino; y por otro lado la calidad y peculiaridad del sistema en esta restauración se han mantenido dichas piezas rellenando las dañadas y protegiendo todo el conjunto con una lámina impermeable y transparente para evitar la entrada de agua, y dotando a los huecos de lamas que faciliten la ventilación por efecto Venturi tal y como ya se ha expuesto.
- Se ha descubierto el sistema de acceso a la parte superior de las torres, así desde el coro de la Iglesia mediante escalera interior de caracol se accede en la Torre Sur hasta la primera cornisa a través de la cual se accede a la Norte y a partir de ese nivel ambas torres poseen escaleras interiores de piedra a través de las que se accede hasta el final de las mismas.
- Por último se ha puesto en evidencia que ambas torres a partir de esta primera cornisa estaban exentas y ella las cubría una gran estofa; reforzando la idea de coronarse al cielo/Dios.



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Contribuir á conservación de medio ambiente e do patrimonio cultural

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2. The intervention brings in innovative features

In the project drafting phase, the work began with a study of old archives and various books that made possible to date the construction of the different parts of the current Monastery. Initially, photos were taken and a computer model of the monastery was made. Subsequently, the building's pathologies were exhaustively analysed by a large team of architects, archaeologists, restorers, researchers, biologists, etc.

A team of experts from the University identified all the existing plant species growing outside and inside the monastery to determine the best solution in each case without damaging the building. In the church, a study using thermographic cameras (that take photos where colours depend on temperature) was carried out, which made possible to locate where the water entered each of the areas of the walls and roofs and to detect that there was very little ventilation. This inevitably implied that moisture was concentrating and thus deteriorating the building. These data led to a new design for the exterior carpentry: the ventilation surface in the entrance door and in the openings of the transept and the dome was increased.



During the restoration work on the church, knowledge of the building was completed based on the new data obtained. New things were learned about its architecture and about the wide range of colors that appeared on the decorative elements engraved in the stone of the walls.

For example, the cornice that nowadays starts from the upper part of the towers, was not like that initially, but instead there were two balconies that surrounded said towers. For its part, colour images were discovered on both sides of the shield and on the front of the Chapel of the Rosary (formerly a stone altarpiece) and in the Chapel of San Pedro, which leads to think that both the facade and the interior walls were full of colour. It was very interesting to discover the access system to the top of the towers (see image to the right). And it has also been revealed that the two towers were free from the first cornice, which made them appear more slender and reinforced the idea of wanting to get closer to heaven and/or God.



3. Compliance of the results with the set objectives

With the execution of this work, it has been possible to stop the filtration of water into the building and the accumulation of fungi, lichens, algae, etc. on its walls. The appropriate works to provide the building with the necessary conservation conditions for its cultural use, have been carried out.



On the other hand, and equally important, scientific and historical knowledge about the building and about previous restorations has been greatly expanded, in a way that contributes to improve and expand its possibilities of dissemination. With the newly obtained data, it is possible to plan other ways of carrying out the cultural visit to the monumental complex in a more enriching and informative way, since it will be possible to design and execute new routes and accesses (for instance, to the towers).

4. Contribution to the resolution of a problem or weakness detected within the territorial scope of intervention

The Monastery of Santa María de Sobrado dos Monxes is an asset of cultural interest. It is a significant element of the Galician and Spanish cultural heritage that is located in a rural area of the interior that is part of the Northern Way of Saint James. This European itinerary has been recognized as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

In this rural context, it is of great interest for this significant element of Galician heritage to be in good condition so as to be a dynamic focus of the cultural policies that can be developed in its territory of

influence. The church that follows the medieval Cistercian layout (demolished in 1620) was built between 1630 and the first years of the 18th century. The area of the monastery in which the intervention takes place (2,367 square meters), in particular the church, can be used as a stage for various cultural uses (concerts, conferences, etc) by the local population and by those, within this European itinerary, approaching Sobrado as pilgrims or visitors.

5. High degree of coverage of target population

The improvement of conservation conditions that this intervention entails, brings an immediate benefit both to the population of Sobrado and to the visitors/pilgrims who travel to see this monument.

In addition, it is a benefit for society in general, as it is a significant monument of the cultural heritage of Galicia and also of the World heritage of humanity recognized by UNESCO, being a prominent landmark of the Northern Way of Saint James.

6.- Observance of horizontal criteria of equality of opportunities and non-discrimination, as well as social responsibility and environmental sustainability

The intervention has taken place with a scientific approach across all fields, also the environmental. That is why the nesting of birds and the colony of bats has been monitored. In the case of protected species, care has been taken not to destroy their habitats.

For the contracting of the required works and services, these criteria have been considered, which are incorporated in the different specifications of specific administrative clauses as elements to take into account in case of eventual ties in the final evaluation process of the offers. Specifically, there is a preference in the first place for companies that have more than a 2% of permanent workers with disabilities in their workforce, secondly, for companies that have implemented an equality plan, and thirdly, for companies that certify obtaining the Galician Mark of Excellence in Equality.

Equal opportunities are expressed in the texts because a neutral language has been used, taking special care not to use sexist language, not using images with human faces or infrastructures that favour one or the other gender. It should be noted that the technical team of the work (and this is also reflected in the credits of the website) has a women to men ratio of 8:13. The human teams that have carried out a significant part of the restoration also included the participation of women.

For the execution of the work, there has been a specific waste management plan in accordance with the regulations in force, which incorporates selective collection on site as well as communication measures and environmental training on site.

On the other hand, it should be noted that since it is a restoration work with conservative criteria, the decisions on site reduced demolitions (waste) to the essential minimum, valorizing existing materials as much as possible. It should also be noted that this restoration work mainly used traditional and sustainable materials such as lime, tile or wood, which have a high life cycle and favour a circular economy in the construction sector. These materials generally come from sustainable farms (wood) and a local market, thus reducing the emission of CO₂ and greenhouse gases.

7.-Synergies with other policies or instruments of public intervention.

As previously mentioned, this monument is located on the Way of Saint James, specifically, on the Northern Way. So the good conservation of the monastery will bring in one more tourist attraction to the promotion of this alternative route of the Way of Saint James.

This action is complementary to the development of the Strategic Plan for the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage of Galicia, framed within the **Galicia 2015-2020 Strategy**.

The cultural heritage object of this plan is defined in article 1 of Law 5/2016, of May 4th, on the Cultural Heritage of Galicia, and is made up of all tangible and intangible assets that, due to their recognized intrinsic value, must be considered as of relevant interest for the permanence and identity of Galician culture over time.

It is also collected in art. 3 of said law, that to the autonomous community belongs the duty of promoting actions that guarantee access to the cultural heritage, and its protection, research and recovery.

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