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Eduardo Mosquera-Adell, Clara Mosquera-Pérez, Javier Navarro-de-Pablos, et al.



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The Urban Resilience of Monastic Architecture and the Heritage Management. The Case of Seville's Saint Augustin Convent

Eduardo Mosquera-Adell¹, Clara Mosquera-Pérez¹, Javier Navarro-de-Pablos^{2, a)},
Javier Ostos-Prieto², María Teresa Pérez-Cano²

¹*Heritage and Urban Territorial Development in Andalusia (HUM700). Department of History, Theory and Architectural Composition. University of Seville, Spain*

²*Heritage and Urban Territorial Development in Andalusia (HUM700). Department of Urban and Regional Planning. University of Seville, Spain*

a) Corresponding author: fnavarro@us.es

Abstract. The aim of this communication is to develop how to preserve the permanencies and losses of old convents and monasteries after urban transformations, as well as to review the instruments of heritage protection that have failed. It is a common process that has been experimented in many European cities and whose protagonist are the cloistered convents. Pieces that have served to make city and help to build its periphery. But, with the passage of time they were submerged in abandonment, fragmentation, forgetfulness and even loss their memory. This situation remains until a fresh impulse transforms it into a new object of patrimonial value, resource for tourist use, and rejoins the city. The methodology followed is based on the simultaneous use of different 2D and 3D assisted drawing tools, always supported by historical cartography and written documentary sources. In Spain, the city of Seville stands out as one of the settings for the development of religious orders, more than one hundred. As a result of historical events and developments, many of Seville's convents and monasteries have disappeared completely. The number of monasteries that have remained intact, preserving their use value as a religious institution are very small, only 15. However, it is common to find remnants in the present-day city where their remains are still visible. Saint Augustin monastery was founded in the 13th century outside the city walls, 15,016 m² next to the Carmona Gate. Its location was bounded by the city and the city walls to the west, the aqueduct to the south and the Tagarete River to the east. Both the aqueduct and the river allowed for the location of the building as well as the extensive development of its orchards. The importance of water in the conventual space is due to the need for irrigation and cultivation of the green area. In 1835, the convent was disentailed, and the building was divided up. New dwellings were also built on the site of the former convent, which was in a privileged location. New streets appeared, the site was completely divided and cloisters, parts of the old convent and its church disappeared. The remains of the building have not been adequately protected for decades. The convent of Saint Augustin is an outstanding example of urban resilience, how a building of great importance and size has managed to survive. Some valuable spaces of the original building are still preserved, such as the refectory, the staircase, and the main cloister. The understanding and protection of Seville's convent heritage requires specific planning tools to address the urban condition of the convents. In addition, their determining role in the morphological construction of the city and the configuration of the historic urban landscape will be established. Unpublished material of the urban and architectural research process will be provided under a methodological approach of renewed heritage management, clearly useful for European historic cities.

INTRODUCTION

The site occupied by the former convent of Saint Augustin is located on land that coincides with the current block bounded by the Plaza de San Agustín (Saint Augustin Square) and the streets Fray Alonso, Amador de los Ríos and Luis Montoto. The original limits of the convent's perimeter included a large area of orchards, gardens and other outbuildings, reaching approximately as far as what are now the two blocks between the Plaza de Carmen Benítez and the streets Fray Alonso, Recaredo and Amador de los Ríos, divided by Úbeda Street.

Founded in 1292 (1314, according to other authors) outside the city walls next to the Carmona Gate, the water entrance and one of the busiest exits from the city. It would be the first - Casa Grande - of the three Augustinian male religious foundations in the city: Saint Augustin, San Acasio and El Pópulo, established in the city of Seville in three different locations [1]. It is therefore necessary to frame the foundation and growth of this building within the urban evolution of the order, until it became an outstanding element of Sevillian conventuality. The building, which was declared a Historic-Artistic Monument in 1964 and is now an Asset of Cultural Interest, is quite deteriorated, if we consider what its original state was.

This study, in terms of historical, architectural, town planning and heritage research, is aimed at gaining knowledge and valuing the property, to provide a heritage basis for making design decisions with a view to its future intervention.

THE CONVENT IN THE CONTEXT OF SEVILLIAN CONVENTUALITY

The first material evidence of human occupation of the site now occupied by the remains of the convent of Saint Augustin dates to the Roman Imperial period. At that time the perimeter of the city in its eastern part did not reach this plot of land, since the wall that surrounded it ran along a similar route to that of the fence of the later Jewish Quarter, and had one of its gates in what is now Calle de San Esteban. From this point, a road to Córdoba called the Via Augusta started, and a water conduit known as the "Caños de Carmona" (Carmona Spouts) entered the town through this point.

During the Islamic period, the city and the line of its wall grew, but the wall reached the site of the convent of Saint Augustin. Thus, the convent was close to one of the gates, the bab Qarmuna or Carmona Gate, located at the end of what is now San Esteban Street. This position is also identified with the layout of the Islamic walls preserved in the vicinity: a section in Tintes Street and another in Muro de los Navarros Street.

The conquest of Seville in 1248 opened a new stage in its history. In the years following this date, the Islamic *madina* (city) was converted into a Christian city. Between 1248 and 1292, coinciding with the reigns of Ferdinand III of Castile and Alfonso X of Castile, numerous convents and monasteries were founded. The position and character of the orders was decisive, with a distinction being made between: foundations outside the walls (the convent of La Trinidad, the monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos, also known as San Benito, and previously Santa María and Santo Domingo de Silos) and others inside the walls (the convents of San Pablo el Real, San Francisco, San Clemente, Santa María de las Dueñas and Santa Clara). In addition, there are the religious establishments corresponding to the military orders [2].

The convent of Saint Augustin is part of this context of foundations. Ortiz de Zúñiga dates the establishment of the order in the city in 1249, without providing any data on its location, a fact that is taken up by Montero de Espinosa [3]. This second author cites the year 1292 as the date on which Arias Yáñez de Carranza and his wife Doña Peregrina de Ayala bought some houses "of virtuous women, who had a cloistered retreat there, under the title of Santiago", to be ceded to the Augustinian order, the place where they began to build the convent. The architect Barrau, when renovating the site of the convent, located the remains of the nuns' house on the part facing the Prado de Santa Justa [4].

In a short time, the convent of Saint Augustin benefited from royal privileges as well as the protection and monetary donation in exchange for preferential burial in its church by the Sevillian nobility, at that time, the Carranza and Ponce de León families. In fact, there is evidence of expansion work being carried out in the same year on the convent under the patronage of the Carranza family, consisting of the construction of the main chapel of the church to serve as a burial place for them. The influx of resources allowed the construction of a convent building of considerable extension, the most notable parts of which are the refectory built in the 14th century, during the regency of Fray Alonso de Toledo, and the main cloister, adjoining the previous part [5].

At the end of the 14th century, there is evidence of the construction of various outbuildings in the convent. The protection of the Augustinians by the Sevillian nobles allowed for the construction of side chapels in the convent church. As an example of the society related to the convent, archaeological excavations in 1984 revealed the remains of the Esquivel crypt [5]. It is known that in 1409 the Mayor of Seville, Luis Pérez Esquivel, was buried in one of the crypts of the church.

In 1497, the Catholic Monarchs abolished the cloistered orders, and the Augustinian friars thus became observants. The following year, on 12th March 1498, the Catholic Monarchs signed a Royal Decree granting the convent a sum of money from the water rights of the Caños de Carmona. The economic boom that accompanied the Seville of the 16th and 17th centuries did not go unnoticed by the convent, as it was during

these centuries that renovation work was undertaken on some of its buildings, as well as the construction of new ones. In this second major construction phase, the final formal appearance of the complex was achieved until it was abandoned. In the 18th century, improvement works were also carried out, especially in the church, reforming the floor of the nave of the church, which was in poor condition due to having suffered damage caused by flooding from the Tagarete stream. The reformation process was completed in 1749, when the reformed church was consecrated after the works and the clock brought from London was inaugurated, for the installation of which the bell tower located next to the main entrance was built. The Lisbon earthquake of 1755 affected the convent, especially the church, so work began on its reconstruction, which was completed in 1756 [6].

Subsequently, the French occupation had a significant effect on the convent of Saint Augustin, as the accommodation of the troops inside the convent caused great damage. During this period, from 1810 to 1814, some of the religious assets were moved to other sites, including the famous Christ that was venerated there, which was moved to the nearby church of San Roque, specifically on 19 February 1810, although it was to return shortly afterwards, on 4 August 1814 [6].

The confiscation of ecclesiastical property in 1835 led to the exclausturation of the Augustinian monks, specifically of the forty-seven who resided in the convent. The following year, the Carlist troops took possession of the convent and destroyed its church, so that it could not be rebuilt.

TYOLOGICAL PERMANENCIES

The good income of resources allowed the construction of a convent building of considerable extension. Its typological structure, of various chronologies, corresponds to the already experimented models of the male houses outside the walls. Finally, exclausturated in 1835, conventual spaces of great value such as the church, the refectory or the main cloister are still preserved or legible (Fig. 1).

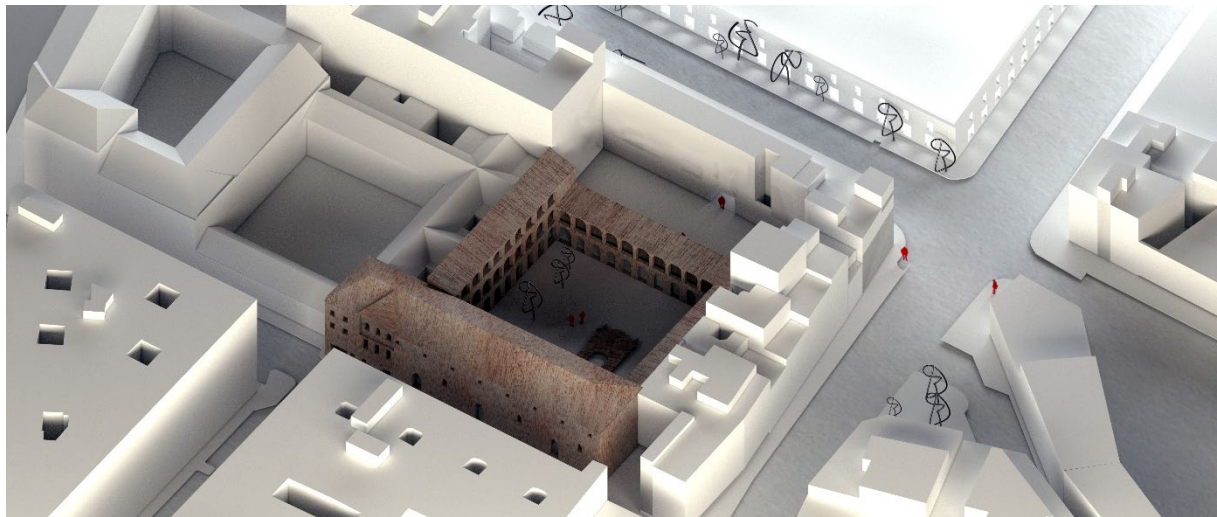


FIGURE 1. Permanencies of the convent of Saint Augustin. Authors' elaboration, 2019

The church, now disappeared, had three naves, separated by semi-circular arches, following classical proportions. The roof was vaulted, with barrel vaults in the central nave, and groin vaults in the Gospel and Epistle naves.

The refectory is one of the most interesting Gothic spaces in Seville. Built to the north of the cloister, parallel to the church, it maintains the usual location of the primitive monasteries. Its dimensions (41 m long and 9 m wide) are consistent with the size of the building. Its roof - a Gothic vault with carved ashlar edges and a height of 8 m - is evidence that its original location has been maintained over time. Likewise, if we contrast it with other monasteries that, when enlarged in later times, cover their refectories with wooden coffered ceilings, this hypothesis is plausible. Its walls are of mud mortar, tiled in the lower part (lost) and stone vaults. The library, located on the upper floor, acquired great importance because its collections were among the best in the city [7].

The main cloister, with a square floor plan of 33 m on each side, has 4 m wide galleries around it. Its elevations on the north and east sides have three sections, and on the south and west, two. The first of the bodies has been heavily intervened. The galleries of the second floor are supported by double marble columns with double capitals, which support semi-circular arches, which were ogival before the reforms made in 1611. The staircase, located in the northeast corner, is remarkable. It is a cloister of Mannerist typology, with Sevillian nuances, such as the use of brick throughout (except for the marble columns), the use of the bell arch or ceramics in the decoration [8].

The houses on Recaredo Street, built on the west front of the convent, house some conventual elements in two neighbouring properties. These permanencies are an arcade formed by four arches on columns and a wall with a stone doorway and various decorations, in the southernmost house and in the next one to the north, a doorway of Serlian composition and beams from the conventual period. In this property was located, since 1563, the entrance doorway to the old convent built by Hernán Ruiz II and that was dismantled in 1949 to be cornered in one of the nearby lots until the end of the century, when it was moved to the centre of the cloister [8], in the place previously occupied by a fountain in the interior (Fig. 2).

In the middle of the 20th century, although with a very deteriorated image, the convent still retained part of the solemnity of its architectural structures, which led to the declaration in 1964 of its refectory and cloister as a historic-artistic monument [9].



FIGURE 2. Doorway in the cloister of Saint Augustin. Photograph by the authors, 2019.

THE FRAGMENTATION OF THE CONVENT

Between 1843 and 1873 the building was occupied as the Peninsular Prison. The years of validity transformed the conventual space, which soon became obsolete due to the poor conditions of the prisoners [1]. In 1873 it became a market. Finally, on August 10, 1880, a public auction was held on the grounds that it did not meet the appropriate conditions to perform the functions of a prison. Before the auction, the area called the hostelry, whose owners were still the Dukes of Osuna during the period in which it served as a prison, was demarcated. The rest of the premises passed to the new owners, who changed the use of the building, destined from then on to multiple functions: quartermaster's quarters, a forge, a retail store, a mechanic's workshop or tenement houses. In the aforementioned auction, a new property was configured with the following spatial characteristics: 15,016 m², of which 7,391 m² are occupied by its buildings and the remaining 7,625 m² are those corresponding to the orchards. To this new property is added the house that forms the corner between Recaredo and Calzada de la Cruz del Campo streets, now Luis Montoto street. Its facades are 80 m and 85 cm to Recaredo Street, 52 m to Oriente Street and 228 m and 50 cm in front of the Ronda del Prado de Santa Justa.

The architect Leoncio Barrau was in charge of the project to divide the convent into two halves: the east, which occupied the cloister of novices, the sacristy and the crypt, was destined to military factory, with the name of "La

Provisión". The west side would become a market, and the part of the convent facing Recaredo Street would be used for social housing and stores [3]. A street in memory of Fray Alonso de Toledo was planned for the rear of the refectory, which would leave the orchard area isolated, an area that would gradually be urbanized. The entrance to the market required a second new street, the "Altar" street, so called because it crossed the space occupied by the church. It would start from Oriente Street (now Luis Montoto) towards the interior of the market square. A third road would consist of the extension of the previous one until reaching the area called "Explanada del Santo Tutelar", it would be called "Carranza" street in memory of the Sevillian lineage that protected the order.

During the 20th century, the main changes in the area surrounding the convent took place inside the two large blocks into which the original land of the former convent had been divided, separated transversely by Fray Alonso Street, now San Alonso de Orozco Street, respecting a large part of the road around it. Between 1905 and 1906 modernist-style residential buildings were built, two of them by Simón de Barris y Bes, and a third one by Aníbal González and Espiau, inside the block of the former convent occupied by the food market, formalizing the southern edge and creating a new facade on the avenue of Luis Montoto, constituting the current image that we have today of that side of the avenue, except for the building located on the corner with the Plaza San Agustín, which will be built in the second half of the century.

From 1930 until the middle of the twentieth century, the process of filling in the gaps that had existed until then, or by replacing buildings that had become obsolete, continued without interruption, thus completing the edges of the blocks on their fronts with Luis Montoto Avenue to the corner with Amador de los Ríos and Recaredo Street.

The building has housed within its walls the Quartermaster's Quarters, a forge, a retail store and a mechanical workshop. The cloister, after being a market, was used as a workshop and garage for vehicles, while in the refectory were located, until the 60s of the twentieth century, the offices of a commercial brand. Since then, however, the building has remained closed and unused, which has undoubtedly accelerated its degradation and deterioration, except for the first floor of the refectory bay, which is currently used by the brotherhood of San Esteban.

THE IMPACT OF URBAN PLANNING

The urban plans of the first half of the century coincided in recognizing the plot of land consolidated by building in the area of San Roque, although forms of occupation are proposed in the empty land of the Campo de Santa Justa, with various solutions for the widening of blocks to the east and northeast of Amador de los Ríos Street.

Between the 1960s and 1970s, as a result of the 1962 General Plan of Urban Development (PGOU) of Seville, all the land to the east of the ring road was zoned for intensive building and the blocks of open spaces planned in the 1946 PGOU disappeared. The result of this period was the opening of Úbeda Street, around 1971, which divided for speculative and building purposes the plot located immediately to the north of the remains of the former convent, which had belonged to the area of orchards and gardens of the former convent. Immediately afterwards, the blocks thus defined were filled with new intensive high-rise buildings with a total lack of respect for the site, which has resulted in the loss of values (Figure 3).



FIGURE 3. Former convent plot and permanencies of the convent of Saint Augustin. Planimetry by the authors, 2019

The adaptation of 1982, to the determinations of the reform of the Land Law approved in 1975, identifies a series of urban areas called "Conjuntos Urbanos de edificación Tradicional", in which the sector "San Bernardo, San Roque y La Calzada" is located. There are architectural and typological values, tradition in its location, strong presence in the historical process of construction of the city and that have lost their character as a result of a planning in contradiction with the maintenance of the values of the same.

Under these assumptions, is when the occupation of the plots included in the block of the former convent of San Agustín considered buildable by the current Management Plan is completed. Various archaeological investigations were carried out to extract fundamental information about possible remains, which forced the modification of the original project for the residential building to be constructed on the site once occupied by the novitiate cloister [8].

At present, Saint Augustin is patiently awaiting the execution of the rehabilitation project for hotel use that the team of Cruz y Ortiz architects has drawn up and that the economic crisis has temporarily put on hold. The lack of urban planning determinations derived from the fact of being an Asset of Cultural Interest has forced the drafting of the Special Plan for the Saint Augustin Sector, finally approved in 2019 [9], the last step for now in the long history of the convent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

On the legibility of the ensemble and the fragment: The physical continuity existing between the remaining object of the rehabilitation, fortunately makes possible a reading of the scale and entity of the original ensemble defined until 1835, when the exclaustation took place. The fragmentation and decontextualization of the property have their paradigm in the dismantling, oblivion and discovery in 1984 of the front of its atrium [8]. However, the bulk of the rest of the permanencies continues in its original position. The sequence of pre-existing elements facilitates the introduction of a functionality in accordance with the sense of home, of residential space that it had for almost six centuries, both inwardly, as a convent of an Augustinian community, and outwardly as a hostelry. We can understand that the traditional monastic inns are now, contemporarily speaking, hotel establishments.

Reading of the urban role: We must emphasize that it was a building designed as a landmark and presence next to the door of Carmona, a particularly busy daily axis, since always. This area outside the city walls was linked to the necropolis in ancient times. In addition, it has been always a nourishing entrance to the city and an enclave through which a significant supply of water has been arriving for centuries, through the Caños de Carmona. The so-called Via Augusta is a particularly ancient road, also known as the Calzada and qualified from the gate by the presence of Saint Augustin and other conventual landmarks, such as San Benito, which became an abbey, or Santa Teresa on the first site of the Augustinian site of San Acasio, or the shrine of the Cruz del Campo, another Asset of Cultural Interest damaged in its peripheral condition as a landscape reference. Germ of suburbs like that of San Roque, with the limit of Tagarete the convent of Saint Augustin built a strategic angle thanks to its special location in front of the door, underlining both the line of the Calzada and the pipes and that of the round of the wall.

About the planning and the possibility of inserting new uses: The urban planning of the sector, after the monumental declaration of the property, has produced uncontrolled growth in height, and an ineffective ordinance for the desirable careful intervention in the perimeter of the property. The results are clearly visible, and the deterioration of the landscape is evident. The aggressions of the party walls have occurred in the face of the historical respect for the non-invasion of the view of the conventual interior, something that must be recovered, with the visual sealing of the cloister, saving as far as possible the rights acquired by the perimeter buildings, where appropriate [9]. The recent Special Plan guarantees the incorporation of new uses and provides legal certainty [10].

Provisional interpretation of the process undergone by the building: The visual analysis of the building, the study of the planimetry of Saint Augustin located, tells us of a building made up of elements of different chronologies, a common issue in convents. We are faced with a building complex that historically has undergone a complex evolution, parallel to what has happened in other important convent enclosures. The building, like the equivalent large houses of the Dominicans or Mercedarians, or the lost one of the Franciscans, like the Cistercian monastery of San Clemente, underwent changes and reforms in the way conventual architecture developed in Seville.

CONCLUSIONS

A convent like Saint Augustin responds to the archetype of the micro-city, a legacy of monastic culture, and its keys to behaviour as such are basically urban. A convent mixes monumental and domestic spaces, and this is one of the most important typological keys of this type of building, therefore, in addition to those already mentioned, we would find other spaces necessary for convent life. Most of them have disappeared, some recently as was the cloister of the novitiate (two volumes with the same system of semi-circular arches on Tuscan marble columns) that was located in the current central courtyard of the adjacent block of apartments, or the exempt building in the orchard called Casa del Duque, temporary residence in Seville of one of the greatest patrons of the convent, the Duke of Arcos.

Since its foundation in 1292, the building has been growing and evolving, at the gates of the city. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the most significant. Some of its rooms underwent renovations, while others were newly built. It was at this stage that the building was transformed and reached its maturity. In the eighteenth century, improvements were made, completing the reform process in 1749, when the church was consecrated again after its reform and the clock brought from London was inaugurated, for whose installation the bell tower located next to the main entrance was built. From this moment on, the interventions in the building will change its patrimonial sign, as mentioned above, with the French occupation of Seville, the disentailment of 1835 and the destruction in 1836 of the church by Carlist militants.

The segregations of the original building resulted in changes of alignments and the opening of new streets. The highly developmental nature of the planning, in terms of its determinations of buildability and height, and very

attentive to road infrastructures, generated an indiscriminate and speculative growth, with a total lack of environmental approaches, existing building typology or the contemplation of pre-existing significant and interesting elements.

In general, the remains we have are decontextualized from an urban and functional point of view, given the fragmentation achieved by a set of unequal operations. A fact that motivates the necessary interpretation of what was the whole of the conventual establishment, and the subsequent uses of the building, both in terms of recognizing its material history, as well as understanding the evolution experienced through these uses and the meanings assumed in the different stages of the building's life.

Although considerable parts of the old convent complex have been lost, there are still considerable elements remaining. On the one hand, the permanence of those characterized by their own values, intrinsic from an architectural point of view (spatiality, construction techniques, formal codes, and other ornamental elements) and read from their individual entity, stand out. Likewise, these elements have a patrimonial value due to the role they play in the historical complex of the convent and, more precisely, in the set of vestiges that have come down to us and that constitute an Asset of Cultural Interest. All these historical values enrich the patrimonial entity of Saint Augustin. However, they are part of a cycle that is not yet finished and that can acquire a new phase of patrimonial qualification with its recovery for this new/old use. This would mean their enhancement in terms of heritage value.

Currently it is difficult to read its urban feature, of which the Plaza de San Agustín remains in the gazetteer as an urban record of that role. It should be considered that, except for the refectory, the rest of the ex-convent has been interiorized, after the urban operations of segregation and opening of new roads.

After many years of continuous postponement, to respond to a silent, but always questioning witness and at the same time protagonist of the urban evolution of the historical legacy of a Seville so many times made and remade, we can only share the desire that Saint Augustin change its destiny and be recovered to levels of dignity in which the encounter between past and present is fruitfully reformulated.

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