

# SPAIN

## Mudejar Architecture of Aragon

### Brief description

The development in the 12th century of Mudéjar art in Aragon resulted from the particular political, social and cultural conditions that prevailed in Spain after the Reconquista. This art, influenced by Islamic tradition, also reflects various contemporary European styles, particularly the Gothic. Present until the early 17th century, it is characterized by an extremely refined and inventive use of brick and glazed tiles in architecture, especially in the belfries.

### 1. Introduction

**Year(s) of Inscription** 1986, 2001

#### Agency responsible for site management

Directorate General for Cultural Heritage  
Centro de Gestión del Patrimonio Mundial en Aragón (World Heritage of Aragon Management Centre), under the Directorate General for Cultural Heritage, Department of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Aragon.

### 2. Statement of Significance

**Inscription Criteria** C (iv)

- Change to criteria proposed: C (ii)

#### Justification provided by the State Party

(1985) : I. L'ensemble des Tours de Saint Pierre, de la Cathédrale du Sauveur et de Saint Martin, joint a l'orne de caissons de la Cathédrale constituent une réalisation artistique d'ordre exceptionnel.

II. Du point de vue historique elles ont constitué un centre d'influence et à la fois la synthèse de la culture et architecture mudéjare.

III. Si individuellement chaque monument a une grande valeur architectonique, son ensemble acquis le grade d'unique.

IV. Elles sont l'expression de l'évolution des techniques constructives mudéjares, autant du point de vue de la structure comme de la forme. Elles sont un symbole d'intégration des arts, architecture, céramique, taille, peinture, comme procès esthétique vers la beauté.

(2000): In 1986, UNESCO included five [sic] monuments from the city of Teruel that represented Mudejar art in the Autonomous Community of Aragon on the World Heritage List. While the works referred to are magnificent examples of this style, subsequent research carried out into this matter, together with the changes brought about in the way of "seeing and understanding" Cultural Heritage, has led to the conclusion that it would be necessary to include in this declaration a limited number of Mudejar monuments with the aim of embracing and including in a more universal way the Mudejar phenomenon in all its complexity.

In our opinion, the extension requested would explain a sociological manifestation of several centuries' duration, which takes place mainly in the former Kingdom of Aragon during the period from the 12th to the 17th Century. This phenomenon is none other than the coexistence and interrelation between three cultures, the Muslim, the Christian and the Jewish cultures that coexisted peacefully over all that time, exchanging knowledge and experiences. The greatest testimony of all this today is to be found in architecture and the decorative arts, together with the large number etymologically Arabic words that still exist in the Spanish language.

The material Mudejar culture has survived in space and time thanks to the historical processes of conquest and colonisation of new lands. The building techniques were first passed on to the Canary Islands and eventually to Latin America, where there are numerous examples of buildings constructed in accordance with this architectural tradition. Not only have the traditions overcome geographical barriers but they have done away with time constraints too, since even today the kind of building techniques used are still alive, keeping our roots and cultural identities alive.

In short, the aim of this proposal is not merely to have some more buildings included on the World Heritage List, but, by means of them, silent witnesses of a time gone by, to exemplify a time in the history of Spain during which the Arabic and Christian cultures, and frequently the Jewish culture too, were capable of living peacefully together. The spreading of knowledge of these phenomena may contribute to the development of the universal values of culture and of peace, which are also objectives shared by UNESCO.

#### As provided in ICOMOS/IUCN evaluation

(1986): After examining the Spanish government's nomination, ICOMOS had expressed some minor reservations regarding this proposal:

1) Could not the city of Zaragoza offer as full a panorama of Mudejar art with the Aljaferia Palace, the Seo and the Tower of the church of San Pablo ?

2) As it stood, the nomination was either too broad (it could have been limited to the towers, which form an outstanding array), or too restrictive. ICOMOS wished to see it expanded to include the following:

- Tower and apse of the Church of San Pedro
- Tower and "artesonado" ceiling of the Cathedral
- Tower of San Salvador
- Tower of San Martin;

3) The Teruel towers, and especially that of San Pedro, were seriously damaged during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and are now in a precarious state of preservation. Some of them are the object of restoration projects whose details are lacking in the nomination file.

Since the Spanish government agreed to extend the nomination to include the apse of the Church of San Pedro (letter of 16 May 1986), ICOMOS expresses a favourable opinion for inclusion of this property on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (iv).

(2001): *Qualities*: The development of Mudéjar art was the result of particular political, social, and cultural conditions in Spain after the Reconquest, a coexistence of Islamic and Christian societies. This art contains influences from the Islamic world as well as from European Gothic and is characterized by the extremely refined and inventive use of brick and glazed ceramics in architecture, particularly marked in the bell towers. Other elements include painted coffered ceilings made in wood. The outstanding universal value of Mudéjar art has already been recognized by the World Heritage Committee at the time of the first nomination of the monuments of Teruel in 1986.

A characteristic feature of Mudéjar buildings is that they are often built on an existing building site. The same buildings have generally also been subject to later changes and additions. While the principal attention of the present nomination is the Mudéjar phase of construction, it is noted that such features should be seen as an integral part of the historic context where they belong. The nominated sites are considered a fair representation of the different qualities of Mudéjar art and architecture, both in terms of types of structures and the historical development.

ICOMOS Recommendation: That the proposed sites be accepted as an extension to the existing World Heritage site, Mudéjar Architecture of Teruel, inscribed in 1986, and that the extension should be referred to criterion iv, the same as the original. The State Party is urged to complete and implement the required management plan as soon as possible, and to take the necessary measures to guarantee that the relationship of the monuments with their historic setting be maintained.

It is further recommended that the name of the nomination be revised as "Mudéjar Architecture of Aragon."

#### Committee Decision

Bureau (1986): The Bureau noted with satisfaction that the nomination of this property had been extended to include, in particular, the whole of the church of San Pedro, including its apse.

Bureau (June 2001): The Bureau decided to refer this nomination back to allow ICOMOS an opportunity to examine the revised version of the nomination recently submitted by the State Party. Assuming that the ICOMOS review panel gives a favourable opinion on the nomination, the Bureau would recommend to the Committee that the extension be approved under the existing criterion (iv). It is further recommended that, with the agreement of the State Party, the name of the site be revised to: Mudéjar of Aragon.

The Delegate of Morocco considered that, bearing in mind the effort that the Spanish authorities had made to prepare it, the revised nomination should illustrate the most representative of cases and serve as a model for future nominations of a similar type.

Session (December 2001): The Committee decided to approve the extension of the Mudejar Architecture of Teruel, maintaining the existing criterion (iv). The State Party was urged to complete and implement the required management plan as soon as possible, and to take the necessary measures to guarantee that the relationship of the monuments with their historic setting be maintained. The State Party agreed to the change of the name to "Mudejar Architecture of Aragon."

This serial inscription will henceforth include 10 structures:

DATE INSCRIBED	TOWN NAME
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1986	Teruel Torre, techumbre y cimborrio de la catedral de Santa María de Mediavilla
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1986	Teruel	Torre e iglesia de San Pedro
1986	Teruel	Torre de la iglesia de San Martín
1986	Teruel	Torre de la iglesia del Salvador
2001	Calatayud	Abside, claustro y torre de colegiata de Santa María
2001	Cervera de la Cañada	Iglesia parroquial de Santa Tecla
2001	Tobed	Iglesia de Santa María
2001	Zaragoza	Restos mudéjares de palacio de la Aljafería
2001	Zaragoza	Torre e iglesia parroquial de San Pablo
2001	Zaragoza	Abside, parroquieta y cimborrio de La Seo

- Statement of Significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site

#### **Boundaries and Buffer Zone**

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- Buffer zone: adequate
- Change to buffer zone proposed by State Party

#### **Status of Authenticity/Integrity**

- World Heritage site values have been maintained

### **3. Protection**

#### **Legislative and Administrative Arrangements**

- State legislation, National Monuments or Historic-Artistic Monuments, Properties of Cultural Interest
- Urban development legislation
- The protection arrangements are considered highly effective

### **4. Management**

#### **Use of site/property**

- Visitor attraction, religious use, administrative centre

#### **Management /Administrative Body**

- Overall management responsibility of the Directorate General for Cultural Heritage of the Department of Education, Culture and Tourism of the Government of Aragon
- World Heritage of Aragon Management Centre since 2003
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: regional, local, religious entities

- The current management system is sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- Drafting of a management plan

### **5. Management Plan**

- Management plan is under preparation

### **6. Financial Resources**

#### **Financial situation**

- Government of Aragon; Catholic Church of Aragon; Parliament of Aragon
- Appropriate districts: Appropriate town/city governments
- Collaborating savings banks
- Sufficient

### **7. Staffing Levels**

- Number of staff: 2

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Good: conservation, management
- Average: promotion, interpretation, education, visitor management

### **8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques**

- Scientific institutions. In addition to a number of (Institución Fernando el Católico, Instituto de Estudios Turolenses, Instituto de Estudios Altoaragoneses, Fundación Uncastillo, Fundación Santa María de Albaracín, etc.)
- Universities; Master's program and Diploma Program on Restoration and staff training both fields
- World Heritage of Aragon Management Centre and the different teaching workshops and restoration centres or laboratories existing in Aragon

### **9. Visitor Management**

- Visitor statistics: 325,428 in 2004
- Visitor facilities: guides, information material, handicapped access, "Mudéjar Route" program
- Visitor needs: guided tours, dissemination material, handicap access where possible

**10. Scientific Studies**

- Studies related to the value of the site, condition surveys, archaeological surveys
- Interdisciplinary technical studies, management information and documentation

**11. Education, Information and Awareness Building**

- An adequate number of signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities, local authorities
- World Heritage Day, placement of commemorative plaques at declared monument, Aragonese Mudejar at FITUR 2002. (International Tourism Trade Fair), Mudéjar tapas route involving a number of taverns in the city of Zaragoza in collaboration with the Association of Café and Tavern Owners, concerts at World Heritage buildings, Colloquium of Aragonese Art", International Symposium and conferences, exhibits
- Course on restoring Mudéjar churches
- Web sites available: ([www.aragob.es/edycul/patrimo/arte\\_mudejar.htm](http://www.aragob.es/edycul/patrimo/arte_mudejar.htm), [www.redaragon.com/turismo/mudejar](http://www.redaragon.com/turismo/mudejar), [www.aragoneria.com/mudejard.htm](http://www.aragoneria.com/mudejard.htm), [www.patrimonio-mundial.com/mudejar](http://www.patrimonio-mundial.com/mudejar), [www.zaragoza-ciudad.com/mudejar](http://www.zaragoza-ciudad.com/mudejar), [www.eltorico.com/turismo/mudejar](http://www.eltorico.com/turismo/mudejar), etc.).

**12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)****Reactive monitoring reports**

- N/A

**Conservation interventions**

- Extensive list of conservation and restoration works
- Present state of conservation: Good

**Threats and Risks to site**

- Environmental; urban development pressures
- Emergency measures taken: periodic monitoring of humidity levels and temperature.

**13. Monitoring**

- No formal monitoring programme
- Measures taken: supervision by the Directorate General for Cultural Heritage, reviews of the structural state of the buildings and movable property

**14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions**

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation
- Strengths of management: completed conservation and restoration interventions
- Weaknesses of management: several different owners and therefore different management methods, making it difficult to design a uniform management plan, since different interests need to be coordinated

**Future actions:**

- Agreement with the Municipality of Tivoli for the control on building activities and abuses. Starting 2007