

# Palace of the Earl of Padul, Granada, Spain. A Milestone in a Crossroad

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**Abstract.** The Palace of the Counts of Padul is the most emblematic building of Padul, Province of Granada in Spain, being one of the most remarkable buildings of the region of the Valley of Lecrín. It is a building of undoubted historical value. It is classified as one of Cultural Interest, which means maximum level of protection of the Spanish legislation in historical heritage. In spite of being a historical symbol of Padul, most of the citizens ignore its importance.

It was built in the first part of the XVII century. D. Antonio de Aróstegui y Zazo (knight of the Santiago order and a secretary of Felipe III) was its developer. He gave the building a noble character with an unusual design for this shire. The ground floor has an L shape. Besides, it has two floors and two squared towers, and standing out there is a third floor covered by a pitched roof. Also, it has load-bearing walls of masonry. Only the corners are built with carved stones. Deck is built with logs, and bricks, and wooden roof trusses. It looks like a solid simple house of civil architecture at the beginning of the Baroque style. Analyzing the urban morphology of Padul, the uniqueness of the plot is important related to the urban fabric. It is also remarkable its strategic position with respect to the historical roads that crossed there: The royal road that came from Granada heading to the Alpujarras, and leading to Motril and the road that starting in Malaga crossed through Alhama and arrived in Padul. It is clear the function of controlling the necessary passage towards the Lecrín Valley, the Alpujarras and the Mediterranean coast. Immediately after its declaration in 1981 as a National Monument, and despite this, it suffered an unfortunate intervention which has been maintained until today. The council of Padul would like to acquire it presenting a project for its recovery. This situation provoked the invitation of the council to the University of Granada to help with that. And this would allow the students of Final Project Degree of the Higher Technical School of Building Engineering to have it as a real object to work. By focusing our attention on this building, it is intended to preserve its valuable heritage, showing its history, proposing technical solutions for preservation, and finally, to make the Casa Grande popular for the residents of Padul and all visitors.

## 1. Introduction

The Castle-Palace of the Counts of Padul, known by its citizens as "Casa Grande", is located in the town of Padul, in its historic center, on a 3,744 m<sup>2</sup>-lot site, practically quadrangular, closed by a great wall located between the streets Schools, Cubes, Mills and Saint Thomas. On its eastern side a gate opens to the complex and through this vain you can enter to a wide esplanade, which precedes and borders the northern side of the palace. In the southwest corner the house rises with an L-shaped plan, its major side facing north and the smaller one, being the main façade, to the east.



Padul is a town belonging to the province of Granada, Andalusia (Spain). Located in the region of Valle del Lecrín, in the south-central part of the province, this territory borders with the Vega of Granada to the north, the Alpujarra to the east, the Grenadine coast to the south and the region of Alhama to the west, being the most populated place of this region with 8,442 inhabitants according to the census of 2016. (National Institute of Statistics, 2016).

There are two main objectives for this research developed by the students of the Higher Technical School of Building Engineering: (1) the study of the historical constructive and architectural evolution of the Castle-Palace of the Counts of Padul and (2) to analyse the building in the urban context of that time revealing the importance of its location for the region of Lecrín Valley. The ultimate aim is to preserve heritage proposing technical solutions and uses, and finally to make it known to local citizens and foreign visitors.

## 2. Historical context

Padul dates back to Roman times, its toponymy is thought to be derived from the Latin word *palus-paludis* and *paludem*, meaning "swamp" or "lagoon" in reference to the still existing Padul lagoon. There are documents written in Castilian that go back to the sixteenth century referring to the people who confirm their antiquity. From Roman times there are no known written references, but there is a complete Roman portico with its columns and lintel preserved in a particular house of the town. In turn, in different points of the town there have been found numerous Roman tombs, in addition to the existence of a road excavated in stone that connected Sexi (Almuñécar) and Lliberri (Granada). In Muslim domination, Padul was considered as the main farm of the Lecrín Valley and source of supply for the south of the city of Granada. The old mosque occupied the central space of the present parish church and part of the tower belonged to the minaret.

During the reconquest, the Catholic Monarchs, from the hands of the Marquis of Villena, conquered the fort of Padul to the king of Granada Boabdil. Already in Christian times, back in 1569, the Moorish exiled in the Alpujarras revolted and tried to retake Padul. They say that, in a small house on the outskirts of the village, the natural Basque of Vergara, Don Martín Pérez de Aróstegui, heroically defended himself with four servants and three Moorish friends, from morning until sunset, finally they killed eight of them, shot by arquebus. The news arrived in Granada, which sent the cavalry and infantry forces to help the village, already blown to smithereens. Here the legend of Don Martín Pérez de Aróstegui is born, and our point of departure with reliable data of the existence of this building. It is put on a marble plaque on the main front of the building.

We should highlight on the other hand, the numerous vestiges found in the municipality that belong to different prehistoric times. The most outstanding are the remains of mammoth which appeared on land of the old lagoon in 1982, dating to the oldest traces that have been found in the Middle Paleolithic.

## 3. The Castle-Palace of the Counts of Padul

According to Linares Palma [1], there must have been three buildings erected in this place. The oldest belonged to the Arab era and as mentioned earlier, in "1491, the Zagal, *owning the castle of Padul, surrendered it to the Marquis of Villena for the Catholic Monarchs ...*". Later it had to become strong house with the revolt of the Moriscos in 1569, arriving thus to the third and definitive construction dated in 1613, being the last one raised by D. Antonio de Aróstegui and Zazo, which in the marble stone (figure. 1) located on the entrance porch to the palace gathers everything that happened in this square, "*In 1569, in August, being the owner of this house Martin Pez. Of Aroztegui Vergara, originally from Lava Vergara, in the province of Guipuzcuoa, defended it against a large crowd of Turks, Moors and Moorishs when they raised, with only six people and during the battle, which was from dawn until afternoon, That perhaps the aid came, he killed by his person with his shotguns eight of the most important that governed those people.*"

*Which was done so that He did not lose this place and in memory of this fact was rebuilt by Antonio de Aroztegui, his son, Secretary of State of King Don Felipe III in year 1613. "In honor of such a valiant feat, the Aróstegui family was granted to wear in their coat of arms, the eight heads of the eight Moors slaughtered in the Moorish rebellion. Today we can find it on the main front of the building.*

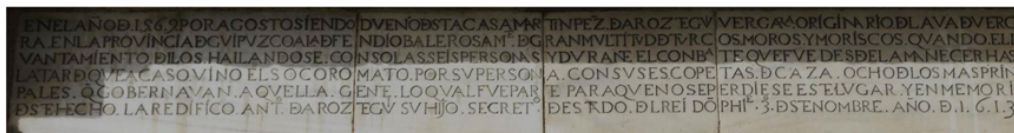


Figure 1 Marble stone located on the entrance porch to the palace gathers

We should emphasize the historical episode, which happened in the middle of September of 1810, where the famous Mayor of Otívar, Antonio Fernandez and his fierce men, chose the square of Padul to initiate the reconquest of Granada in the power of the Napoleonic troops led by General Horacio Sebastiani. In this arduous battle, General Sebastiani receives 15 wounds, eight of them mortal. The projectile holes in the walls of this house remain, up to the height of the windows of the first tower and on the main door. Today, the Castle-Palace of the Counts of Padul, belongs to D. Ramón Pérez de Herrasti and Narváez, Count of Padul. The family cedes the house to the city council to hold diverse cultural activities in some festivities.

### 3.1. Description of different uses and functions

In the southwest corner of the plot the house is raised, with an L-shaped plan, with its major side facing north and the smaller one facing east. It is a sober and elegant construction, with masonry walls made of plastered small blocks of stone, which includes limestone blocks in the walls of windows, corners and external doors.

In the design of this building the volume of its two noble towers stand out. They are aligned with the circular turrets that overlook Cubos Street. The access cover is located on the east façade, facing the exterior entrance gate. It is a rather monumental example that stands out as the only decorative element of the factory, lined with smooth lateral pilasters that hold thick cushioned blocks. The door is an old piece of wood that shows various repairs in its planking with rhomboidal nails to decorate it. Over this span it is the previously reproduced marble plaque and the family coat of arms. Through this doorway you entry to a hallway and to another room that is a distributor, giving way to the noble rooms of the ground floor and to the upper floor. A staircase now lost, makes it impossible to access the high level. The main body of the building is to the right of the entrance, is rectangular with east-west directionality and to its end the two square towers are located. This zone is divided in three adjoining rooms, of great one is the central one. The same distribution shows on the second floor, with a third height in the rooms that correspond to the tall bodies of the towers.

From the hallway and the rooms on the ground floor there is a rectangular patio, in the middle there is a well with a circular ring. In this area a series of openings of the different floors are opened, they are decorated with a sober profile of masonry, also present in the cornice that marks the separation between the two levels in height. In its western wall a small back door is open in ashlar and ornamented with a shield. From this patio and through a door located on its wall, you access a second patio of larger dimensions that has at its angles the two circular turrets previously mentioned.

### 3.2. Description of the constructive process

As more significant constructive elements, we find the foundation of this building executed by strip footing under the load walls, being the most likely material river pebbles joined with lime mortar. The execution of this foundation is done by means of a trench, approximately 50 cm wider than the thickness of the wall, and one or two meters deep (until a firm bottom is found).

The load walls are unmasked masonry walls, mortared with a mixture of lime, sand and water in the same way as the foundation was constructed. The width of the wall, in the case of the "Casa Grande" is one meter. The stone used in the building is limestone. It can be found in two ways: one, irregular and coarse in the interior of the wall; and in the fencing of doors and windows, at the height of the floors and in the corners, are carved stones, squared and worked perfectly. Also in the corners that are seen from the exterior of the factory. The slabs of this building are built with wooden logs embedded in the walls and vaults created from massive brick and plaster. The wooden logs, at first glance possibly from the poplar tree, were nailed with wooden planks to the part that is seen underneath to give its square appearance. In this way, seen from the floor, we will have the appearance of a forge of wood beams and among them, semicircular lines fulfilling an aesthetic function. The top of the floor was filled with a layer of compacted sand, and the floor was laid on it.

The hollows of the building are constructed with ashlar masonry that form the jambs of doors or windows, in some cases with two, three or even four pieces, depending on their height. The lintels of these are formed by three pieces or vases, with two of the ashlar supported on the jambs and the central block stone, as a key, supports on these two as if it were an arch.

The roof of the building at first consisted of a pair of timber armor with its corresponding braces and square beams. In the "Casa Grande" the cover is solved with a hipped roof of two and four sides. Four for the turrets and two for the central body that join them. Some significant details are, for example, details of the main façade such as the cushioned door or shield, the type of scaffolding used for the construction or the final facades. (Figure 2)

We might think that the cushions on the front door are composed of 16 perfectly carved stone blocks. But it's not like that. The idea comes from the central stone of the lintel, the key. We can observe how with the time it has yielded a few centimeters, being a little lower than the others. In this way, we can affirm that the lintel of the main door is formed by three perfectly worked stones, as well as the jambs, which are three blocks of stones worked in quarry. They give it a solid body appearance, as if it were carved in situ.

Another peculiar characteristic of the building to analyse is whether the plaster of the facade is original or, on the contrary, the Palace was planned to have the exposed masonry. In order to solve these doubts, we have the photographs that were taken in the reform of 1984. In this reform all the plaster - original or not - of the facades was removed revealing the masonry. Here are the clues to know the most probable original state of the completion of the facade. From the analysis of these photographs we deduce that, there are load walls on the two imposts and on the Aróstegui family coat of arms. This is placed to protect both details of the facade, and to convey the loads that must be beared around these and avoid possible cracks due to stresses. This makes us think that the arches of discharge were not executed to be visible, but the facade would be a lime mortar and sand lining, giving a smooth and unblemished appearance to the whole set.

#### **4. Historical-constructive evolution**

##### ***4.1. Stage I, origins of the building. (figure4)***

This stage corresponds to the origin of the house built in 1613 by D. Martin Pérez de Aróstegui y Zazo. This construction is not far from what we know today except for some details such as: the roof over the main façade, the pinnacles and towers of the south facade.

From the study of the existing images, we can see that there is an opening enclosure in the wall of the first tower that gives access to the covered area that corresponds to the nave of the main facade. We know that this cover was built in the last reform that underwent the building of 1984 on another cover of the same characteristics. It seems to be that, when it was built, it was part of the opening exposed, this makes us think that the cover did not exist in the original design of the house. Analysing this detail we can conclude that the cover did not exist in origin and instead there would be a terrace, so that the opening in the wall of the tower would make sense,

being a gateway to the terrace overlooking the urban core and the roads leading to both the coast and the Alpujarras, which passed just a few meters from the "Casa Grande" and which would be analysed in the point 5 of this paper.



Figure 2. House Palace of Padul's Earl. Current status

We do not know that there were originally pinnacles that currently crown the walls that surround the courtyards. They are of a different material from the rest of the house, which gives us the idea that they are not from the same period. They were constructed of concrete by means of a mold and not carved on the same stone; these constructive techniques are of a time closer to the present one, reason why we can conclude that they did not exist in origin, or at least, not those that we know now and were added later to have a military and defensive look.

As time passes and based on the drawings that the architect Antonio Puchol made in the nineteenth century, [2] (on which we base our investigation of the second stage of the building), we can observe the appearance of five mansards on the decks. Three of them in the north nave and the other two, one for each tower, all facing the courtyard of the building. In the current roofs we do not find any of them, however, there are two new ones on the other slope of the roofs, so we think that these elements belong to the original roofs of the building and that have been modified in later interventions.

In the southern façade, two stone towers of a little higher height than the crowning of the courtyard wall can be seen at present time. Based on the same drawings, we can see that these cubes have a much higher height than the current one. It could be said that they had two heights, with openings in its enclosure like windows and a terrace in its high part. It is logical to think that in the original state of the building there were already these towers of greater height to give that defensive feeling to the enclosure. Moreover, in the accounts of Marmol Carvajal [3] we are told how in the town of Padul there was a military fort in the vicinity of the Church. Therefore, the place where the house was it should give a sober and strong appearance to any enemy that could attack it. Thus we understand the construction of such stone towers on the façade just where the road came from Malaga and entered in the village. Following this hypothesis of work, we can conclude that the original state of the construction, is very similar to the one that we know at the moment saving these details previously mentioned.

#### 4.2. Stage II, analysis of the drawings of the architect Antonio Puchol, (figure 4)

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the architect Antonio Puchol made a series of drawings of the Casa Grande. In them we are shown the evolution of the house and you can see a series of buildings added in both the courtyards and the site surrounding the building. All these additions we understand that were maintained until the restoration of 1984, when they were demolished to resemble the house to the original state



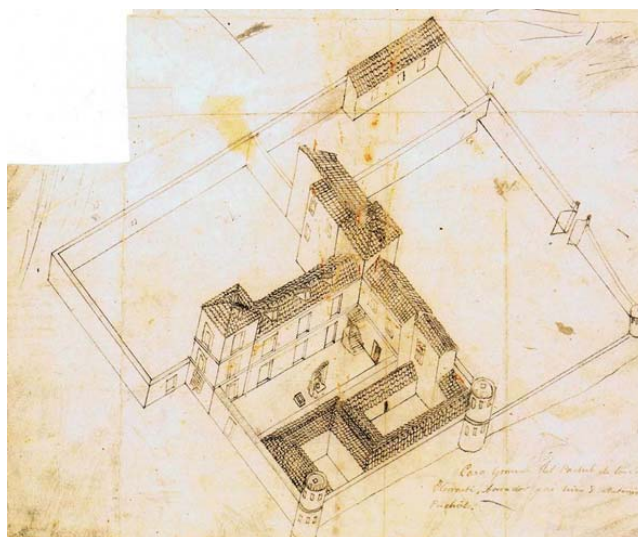


Figure 3. Antonio Puchol Architect's sketch. Ariztondo Acarregui, S; Moya Morales, J; Grenadian Architectonic Drawings of the Legacy Gomez – Moreno. Foundation Rodriguez Acosta. Granada. 2004

Firstly, continuing with what was commented in the previous stage and based on Puchol (figure 3), the mansards continue in this stage, until the performance of 1984 where the previous covers are removed and replaced by the current ones. The towers of the patio keep going with two heights and access to the terrace until 1884 when the Alhama earthquake demolished them. These towers were completed with a kind of tower-gate on the same corner of Cubos street, being already in this stage surrounded by a perimeter fence all the site of the Great House. Originally, we believe that there was no fence in the lot, and it is on this second stage, when the entire perimeter is close and this box is added to complete the defensive aspect. A door is placed in the East part of the perimeter and a path between two low walls that gave access to the lot and led to the main door of the house.

Two more buildings were built on the plot. The first one, of minor importance and of a single plant in the northeast. It was used to store the implements used in the tillage of the lands. The second building, with two floors and a single body, almost as high as the Casa Grande, attached to the northern part and destined to a nunnery. It is a building adjacent to the main building, which had interior communication with it. Through the front façade six window openings plus a main door were open, and in the back we see how they are annexed a couple of modules, one and two floors built at a later time. The entire north-western plot of the lot was fenced for this convent, and in the back it had its own patio which also communicated with the "Casa Grande". It is in the courtyards of the "Casa Grande" where we find the greatest performance of this stage, and the one that gives meaning to that immense patio currently unused. In the main courtyard, where the cubes are, there are a series of one and two storey buildings, with two bodies, each with its own distribution yards to access the rooms. They were destined for blocks and the rooms of the house. In the first yard, the well we know today in a circular way, was rectangular and next to it was a watering hole. In this same patio there are ladders with a roof that gave access to a kind of mezzanine. It was considered as hypothesis that from here it was acceded directly to the first tower, although the certainty of this one remains without confirmation.

#### 4.3. Step III, reform of 1984. (Figure 4).

The reform of 1984 is financed by the present owners of the house, the Perez Herrasti family, as a consequence of the declaration in 1981 of National Monument. Restoration works start in summer 1984. The perimeter fence surrounding the entire plot is arranged as well as the clearing and cleaning of the house and the surrounding land. The purpose of this reform is to eliminate all

the buildings added to it and its poor state of conservation and thus it would resemble as much as possible to the original building. To do this, all the buildings of the courtyards, the annex building in the northern part of the house, and all the separations that existed in the lot were demolished.

The works continued with the replacement of a large part of the old wooden structure cover with a metallic one, the closure of non-original holes, such as all the doors to the convent, and the removal of all the plaster of the building to be refurbished with cement mortar in an unfortunate way



Figure 4. Recreation evolution set House Palace Condes of Padul. From left to right, Stage I, Stage II, Stage III

Inside the house the repair of floors began, the cement mortar lining of all interior walls, stopping the works in this state and failing to execute the staircase that gave access to the upper floors of the house. The cubes of the corners, demolished in the earthquake of Alhama in 1884, are also repaired and its reconstruction begins. It is believed that they will be executed for a plant and covered by a dome, remaining unfinished and as we know them today: circular towers of a single body of height and without cover. We find the Castle-Palace of the Counts of Padul like this today, the reform began in 1984 was unfinished, leaving the building as a mere architectural container without functional use.

## 5. Crossroad

Another of the main objectives of the research was to consider possible traces that a building like this leaves in the urban plot of a town. A building of these characteristics, due to its own essence and representativeness, is the result of a constructive, functional and evolutionary process and divergent to the rest of civil works of an area.

To the town of Padul three main routes of great antiquity came: the royal road that came from Granada towards the Alpujarras, the road that led to Motril and finally the road from Malaga passing through Alhama and its lands, Padul and the farmhouse of el Fraile and joined together with the former in the vicinity of the Chaqueta farmhouse and the Cross of Santa Elena, forming a single path that came directly to the village, just where the southwest face of the "Casa Grande" is. It is therefore a key the situation of the site with respect to the transit of these roads, since the natural entrance to the population from them was realized here, being possible to carry out an efficient control of the traffic from the original building. This fact evidently was very important because Padul acted as the master key of the south of Granada, that is to say, as an irreplaceable step if someone wanted to accede to the Valley of Lecrín, the Alpujarras or the coast. Likewise, it should be pointed out that the road coming from Granada reached the village on the western side and from there was divided into two branches; we pointed out that one was going to Motril passing through Cozvíjar without entering the locality, and another was the Real Street that was heading towards the town and ran through the north face of the "Casa Grande" and the church. It mediates between the main urban nucleus and the Dílar neighbourhood. Finally, this road, once it had crossed Padul, went to Durcal passing through the hamlet of Marchena and joined with the royal road to the Alpujarras. Considering the proximity of this main street to the building and that until a few years ago the surrounding plots were mainly threshing grounds, we can think that from this location this main passage could be controlled. In this way, we observe that the position of

the plot of the Casa Grande occupied a centralized place around the main links that communicated the town with Granada, Motril, the area of Alhama and the Alpujarras. (Figure 5, right).



Figure 5. From left to right. Land parcels of 1897; Recreation of the villa of Padul in the seventeenth century, J.F.GarciaPerez (2013); Approach to the village of the medieval Padul and its royal roads on current planimetry 2016

Having verified this interrelation, the next step was to analyse how the building behaved with respect to the population. Considering again the roads mentioned, we observe how both entered the town by its southwestern side, meeting in this point with the plot of the building. In this sense, it is interesting to make an approximation to the possible original orientation of the house, today with its main façade facing east (Street Schools) direction to the center of the village. It is true that the current façade of the main house does not respond to strategic and defensive parameters, as it turns its back on the entrances. Rather, this directionality could be related to a language of power, in which the lords of Aróstegui - possibly the most influential family in the village - looked from their aristocratic dwelling to the rest of the neighbours, marking with the temple a clear architectural hierarchy with respect to the rest of the urban set.

We must fix our attention on the southern and western flanks of the lot, because the old access to the building was possibly here. Once on the southern façade of the "Casa Grande", located on Cubos Street, we discovered two circular towers that, although rebuilt during the last restoration in 1984, are certainly very different from the rest of the complex.

If we understand that the entrance to the town from Granada and Malaga was done approximately by this face of the site, the presence of these towers would take on a greater meaning. In our days there is no existent entrance in this flank. However, on the west side of the complex (Molinos Street), near the entrance to the mentioned roads, there appears a secondary door of rectangular shape crowned with the familiar coat of arms, which gave access to the first courtyard of the palace. This same door corresponds to the one drawn in the Cadastre of Ensenada of the population [4]. In this design we see how the building gained a prominent role, together with the church, the two largest constructions of the urban nucleus. Occupying a first line of entrance to the town, as we have said, the draftsman shaped the west façade of the complex, which distinguishes one of the side circular towers, its crenellated profile wall and the mentioned door. The detail is significant, as it certifies the old presence of an access in this point, faced to the current orientation of the house and near the old access roads to the town. (Figure 5, center)

Although today the house is located within the town and relatively close to its square and church, according to Marmol Carvajal [3], in the sixteenth century was on the outskirts of the urban set, [5] next to this building there existed some small dwellings and a place dedicated to crops. Until the middle of the 20th century, the space adjacent to the building had a rustic nature that gradually disappeared as a consequence of the continuous urban growth. It is interesting to look at how the streets of the nucleus were distributed from this neuralgic area. (Figure 5, left).

The site is going to function as a filter or spatial decanter, once the palace was passed, a series of streets were opened, all of them intersected by a main transversal road, formed by the present Alcarceres, Iglesia and San Rafael streets, more or less at the height of the area called Ramblilla, in order to leave the village heading Dúrcal.



These urban roads that crossed the town from west to east, started from a common reference point: the site of the "Casa Grande", to open giving access to the different points of the town, grouping again at the end of the old urban perimeter. This expanding layout of the local roads would also be reinforced by the existing slope in this area, thus making transit and space intercommunication more comfortable.

In this way we have a first path of communication located in the northernmost part of the primitive Padul, Cura Street reaches the town square or Purísima, and continues along Carmen's Street. Further to the south was the Horno Street, which, arriving below the church, found its continuation along the Santa Ana and Pintor Julio García Villena roads. Finally, under this there is a third one that interrelates the space of Pósito Street with those of Abenhamar and Lavadero. Likewise, more lanes could be traced along the outskirts.

Once it was stated that the space of the "Casa Grande" functioned as a distributor of the roads that covered the central urban center, generated around the church, it is necessary to observe that it also had a prominent role in the interrelationship of this settlement hillside with the next Dilar neighbourhood. This second space was located in the most northwestern part of the town, in a very divided land at the foot of the mountain of the place, which has caused urban morphologies different from the lower group. The connection of both settlements was made around the Real Street of the locality and the plots surrounding the property Aróstegui, which made this place particularly strategic to ensure the interconnection of the two settlements.

## 6. Results

Urbanistically in the first place it highlights the urban importance of the "Casa Grande" for the municipality and its area of influence. Padul's "Casa Grande" was built on the outskirts of the village, in a half-hillside location and at the crossroads of royal roads. It served as an urban decanter and gateway to the Lecrin Valley, a crossroads leading to the Alpujarras and the Coast. The urban plot of the municipality, logically, is gaining ground with the passage of time. In this way, the building, which originally was located on the outskirts of the village, now, due to its growth, has located in the very center of the historic town. Until the middle of the XX century the space next to the building is of a rustic nature, which is gradually disappearing as a consequence of the continuous urban growth. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, was only surrounded by some nearby houses, in the middle of the 20th century, with an excessive urban growth in the following decades, it is completely absorbed by the development of the municipality. Secondly, we can conclude that one of the main tasks of the "Casa Grande" was to control the traffic of the roads giving a defensive aspect to any stranger who entered the Valley. It connected with the rest of the town and was a filter of royal roads, the one of the Alpujarras and the one of the Coast.

An important aspect that stands out is the action that took place in 1984, the last reform known up today. The building today, gives us the impression of neglect and abandonment. The action carried out outside was to demolish the non-original buildings of the palace, as well as the restoration of the decks, part of the plaster of the facade and all interior walls of the building. At present, starting with the surrounding land, the weed grow uncontrollably. The façade of the Casa Grande is covered by a completely improper mortar cement plaster, in poor condition and with numerous dampness in its facades. The covers, seen from the outside and obviously because of the poor maintenance they have had in these 30 years, are not in their best state, appearing blooms, as well as the deterioration of numerous ceramic pieces. The interior of the building does not improve the outside. Not because of the poor state of this action, but because of the action itself. We entered a half-finished building, with a renovation that is far from a good job and what a building of this importance requires. The walls are lined with a vast mortar of cement and the floors with a layer of concrete half finished. From the stairs to the upper floors, the most we can find is its layout on the walls. Material conservation status may be acceptable today, but far from a good performance. Apparently before this performance the building was in a half-ruinous state.

After being classified as of Cultural Interest (B.I.C.) by the Andalusian Government in 1981, it is the owners' obligation to keep the building in good condition, enabling a day of visits to the public each week. Hence, this reform, with no more interest than giving the building a facelift and being able to cope with the mandatory day of visits. A building of these characteristics, endowed with classification of B.I.C., is not deserving of this unfortunate reform. A reform without criterion, which leaves the emblematic building the most important for the history of the municipality in very bad place, wasting any opportunity of tourist attraction towards the town.

## 7. Conclusions

The treatment required by the Castle-Palace of the Counts of Padul is not more than a favourable performance based on a criterion of conservation and rehabilitation, respecting the historical artistic heritage of the municipality of Padul. All heritage conservation must be carried out according to a restoration project. A work of collecting information that identifies the historical, artistic and cultural meaning that a building of these characteristics means for the municipality. It is obliged sooner than later to act on the building, providing it with a use that guarantees its conservation and avoiding the reconstruction in style of whole parts of it. This means that, based on the intended use of the building, it is necessary to incorporate new spatial and functional parts, or to restore whole parts, the performance must be clearly differentiable from the rest of the building. The intervention must respect the original distribution and ensure compatibility with existing materials and structures. In this work it is proposed a cultural use for the building that can be useful for the inhabitants of the municipality.

The old town of Padul contains a dense urban plot, with few open spaces and scarce green areas. The Casa Grande has a large plot of land around it, now surrounded by a fence and unused, which could be a great opportunity to oxygenate this part of the city. A space of almost 4000 m<sup>2</sup> that could give life to a place by means of green and recreational areas. For the building itself, following the above mentioned steps, it is proposed to continue with the idea of the performance of 1984, leaving the Castle-Palace in the most similar way to what it was originally. To do this the terrace should be returned to the body of the main facade and the restoration of all walls of the exterior of the house. The inside would be for the inhabitants of Padul so that they can use it and enjoy it. In this way, what we have today that is nothing more than an empty container with a blurred beauty, can become once again an emblem for the people and a pride for its inhabitants.

By focusing our attention on this building, we have tried to preserve its valuable heritage, to show its history, propose technical solutions that help to preserve its values, and finally make it known to the residents of El Padul and all visitors to the "Casa Grande" as it is popularly known. We are convinced that the process of preservation of those values begin now, with knowledge, contributing to the respect and conservation of the rich heritage inherited.

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