



THE MEMORY
OF THE
MUSEUM

MuVIM's MEDIIEVAL TOWER

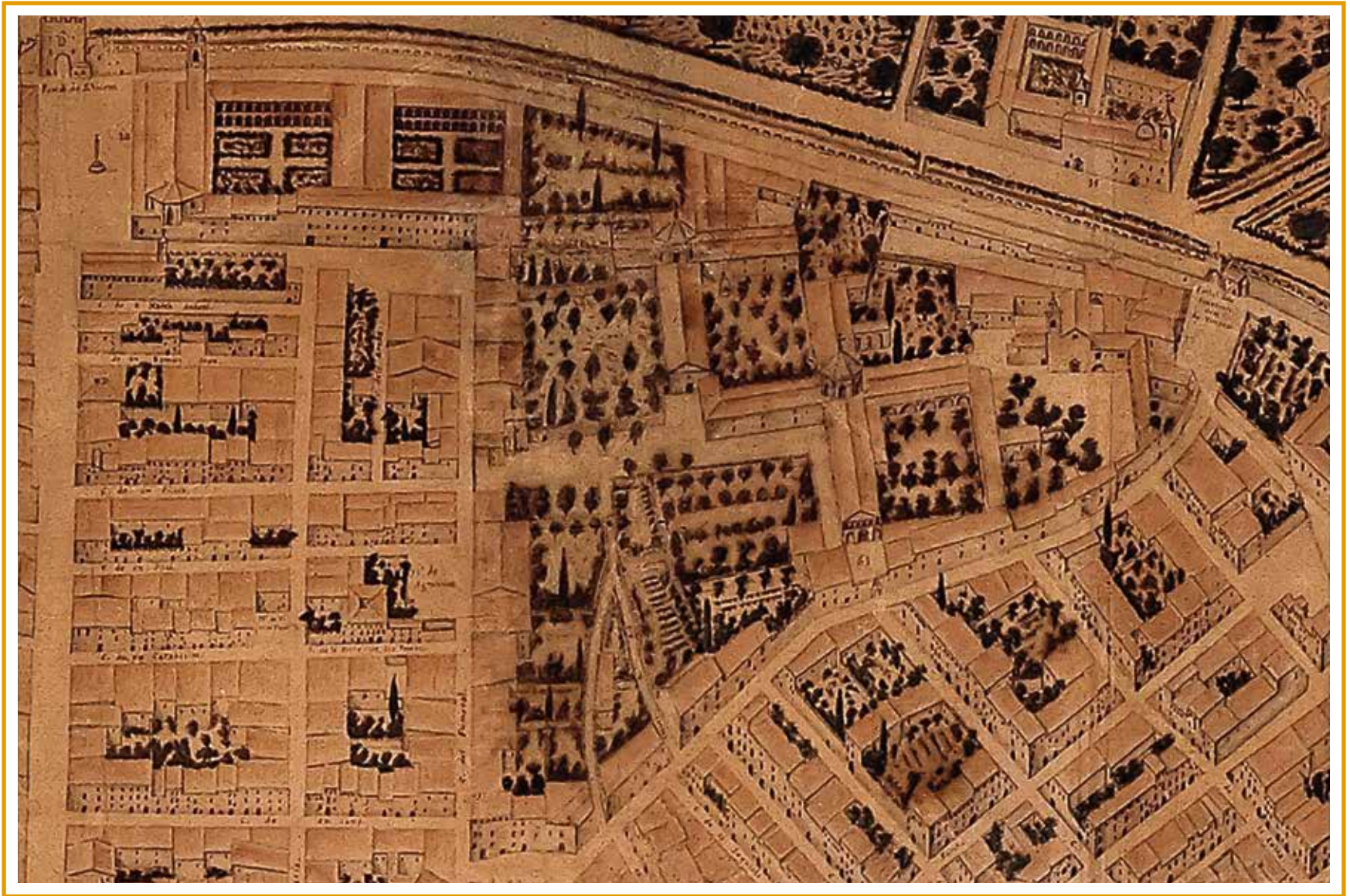


English

THE MEMORY
OF THE MUSEUM

MuVIM's MEDIEVAL TOWER





The map by Father Tosca of Valencia showing the Valencia General Hospital location, and toathe place where was built the MuVIM.
(MuVIM. Valencia Provincial Council. Photo: Rafael de Luis).

MuVIM's MEDIEVAL TOWER

THE MEMORY OF THE MUSEUM

A MUSEUM WITH AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

THE MEMORY
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MuVIM's MEDIÉVAL TOWER

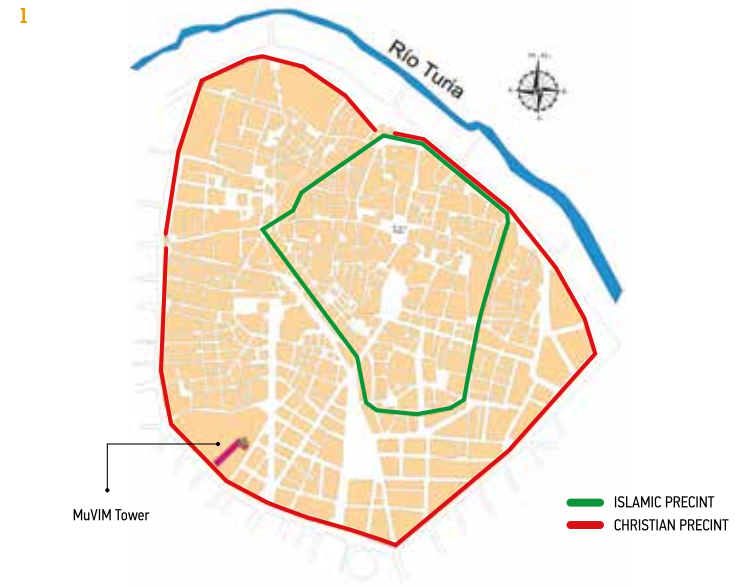
The medieval tower became an integral part of the museum, which opened in 2001 and, being part of the old hospital, was declared a Cultural Heritage Asset (Bien de Interés Cultural, BIC) in 2007. Now, in 2022, given its significance as archaeological and historical heritage, liable to be visited as one of the permanent exhibitions in MuVIM, a project to exhibit it appropriately in a museum environment was carried out through this project, and also thanks to field work and the research of all the professionals. We have mentioned in previous sections, a space has been created, intending for it to be appealing, educational and modern from a museography point of view. We also believe that we've restored the historical content to these ruins which, in their silence and their imposing presence, awaited an interpretation that citizens could enjoy. That's how we aim at carrying on the spirit of Age of Enlightenment: to persevere on the struggle to spread knowledge and promote public education and scientific progress. Not in vain is this medieval tower exhibited in the heart of an institution called the Valencian Museum of Enlightenment and Modernity.

THE ORIGIN

The current location of the Valencian Museum of Enlightenment and Modernity —MuVIM— was far from the urban area of Valencia in times of the Roman colony of Valentia, in Late antiquity (138 a. C.-713), and in the Islamic period's Madina Balansiya (714 - 1238). In any event, it was always a busy area, as is well documented from the findings made during the archaeological interventions carried out in 1997-1998 before construction of the MuVIM building was to begin.

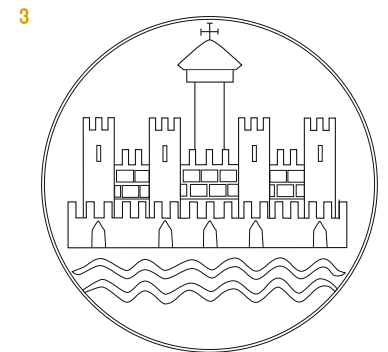
This isolated position would change after Jaime I's conquest of the city in 1238, which led to the distribution and Christian transformation of Valencia's urban and metropolitan areas. By the Via Augusta -present day San Vicente street-, construction of the tower that now sits in MuVIM began even before the medieval Christian wall was erected in 1356-1370.

1 Plan of Valencia showing the Medieval Tower location and both Islamic and Medieval Christian walled precincts. (MuVIM, Valencia Provincial Council. Draw: Isabel García Villanueva).



2 Black wax pendant seal from the Valencia City Council, depicting the city over the waters, walled and barbicanned, with 4 towers and a taller one in the middle, topped by a cross. Inscription: S[IGILLUM] : CVRIE : ET : CONCILII : VALENCIE (Valencia Cathedral Archives, ACV, PArchments 430, 27 May 1312. Valencia).

3 Interpretive drawing of the seal's motif. The stamp's interest lays in its depiction of the Islamic wall around the city in the early 14th century. It probably shows the view from the other side of the Guadalaviar river, near the Ibn Sajar gate, also called the Great tower, and later the Templar tower. (MuVIM, Valencia Provincial Council. Draw: Isabel García Villanueva).



This time in history brought some events related to Marinid Sultan Abū-l Hasan' Alī's arrival in the peninsula in 1339, which led the Consell de València (Valencia Council) to command the repair of the old Muslim city's walls and the building of towers, entrance gates and moats around the outskirts and suburbs of the city: all of this in preparation for any attempt at recovering the Islamic city, thus assuring an advanced defence to protect the city's southern entrance through the Via Augusta.



Model of the city of Valencia according to the map by Father Tosca. Located in MuVIM's hall, this shows the medieval Christian wall's whole outline. Overall view from the South.

(MuVIM, Valencia Provincial Council. Photo: Rafael de Luis. Authors: Vicente Gómez Herráiz and Lucas Gómez).

*Tomás Vicente Tosca - 1704
VALENTIA EDETANORUM aliis
CONTESTANORUM, vulgo DEL CID*



THE MEDIEVAL TOWER

Archaeological remains kept at MuVIM allowed us to learn a bit more about our city's history. Thus, excavations and studies from specialists in medieval history and architecture of the era let us on into clues of the tower's past.

The construction technique of this free-standing building has been researched by medievalist architects Arturo Zaragozá and Rafael Marín. The remaining foundations of the towers suggest Roman construction practices, which prevailed throughout the Middle Ages in some areas of Europe, especially those territories under Byzantine rule. This tradition would make a strong resurgence with the Crusades, promoting the quick development of early medieval Christian building.

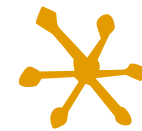
Northwest point of view of excavations on MuVIM's Medieval Tower with its four stonecutter marks featuring a radiated star with six arms.

(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).



Overall view of excavations on MuVIM's Medieval Tower.. 1997-1998

(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).



Two lesser walls of the tower remain, as well as a 22-metre wide vertical face built with three-layered walls, a technique that is executed with two sides of isodome ashlars -that is, pieces of equal size evenly placed in rows of the same height-. These came from quarries no less than 12-15 km away from the site. The space between both outer sides of the wall was then filled with mortar made from slaked lime and river aggregate of carefully-sized particles that was poured in successive tiers, following Christian tradition. Given the building's size, quality and complexity, its construction involved the participation of specialized labour from different trades and with very defined functions (lime workers, stonecutters...), consistently with work done for Christian military structures of the 13th and early 14th centuries.



Overall view from the North of excavations on MuVIM's Medieval Tower. 1997-1998
(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).



Overall view from the South of excavations on MuVIM's Medieval Tower. 1997-1998
(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).

We should point out the presence of a certain stonecutter mark appearing on 4 of the 12 ashlars, made with a bit or compass, and which is identical to those found in the 13th century Castellote (Teruel) fortification, related first to the Templar Order and later to the Knights Hospitaller. It is also similar to marks found in San Miguel de Foces Church in Ibieca (Huesca), consecrated in 1259 and donated to the Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem. Several elements of this church have been linked to San Juan del Hospital Church and the Valencia Cathedral (García-Valdecabres et al.2007; García-Valdecabres 2010).

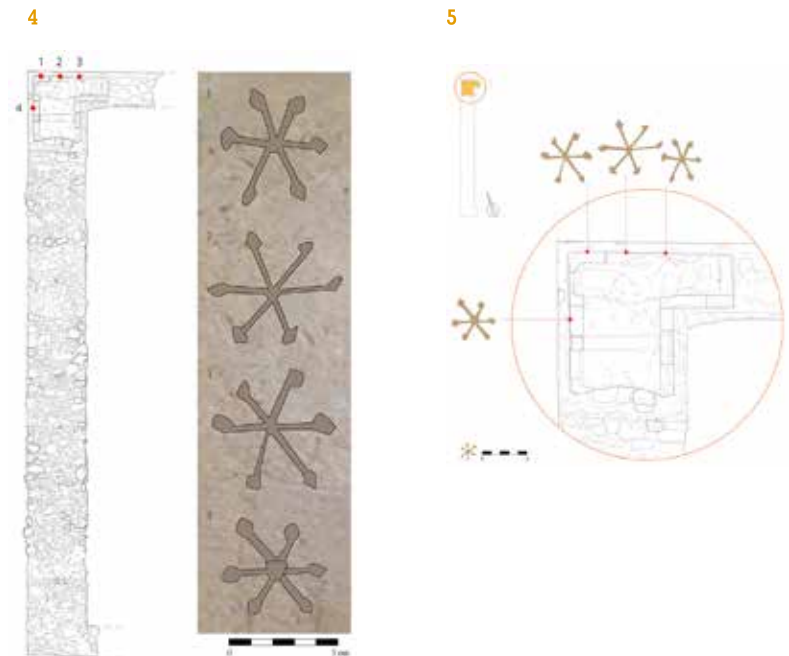
The surface finishing technique used on the ashlars also circumscribes the tower to the Christian technological context. Its outer face displays abundant subtle lengthwise grooves with a 45-60 degree slant, systematically appearing on all faces. These are unmistakably cutting traces, and the coarse finish they produce comes from tools such as tooth axes or crandall hammers, the latter being a piece of wood holding several metallic plates. Tooth axes were kept for harder stones, while the hammers, very similar to those used in England and France, were very useful when the material was easier to work with.

Regarding the likely typological traits of the building, the size of its ground plan and the roofing system it might have had, as well as the presence of a thick wall and two others perpendicular to it which are roughly half its thickness, it could be hypothesized that it was closed by two parallel barrel vaults on a quadrangular ground plan of 22 × 15 m. at most.

The archaeological excavation showed that these remains were covered in order to build houses in the mid 14th century, and medieval documentation shows no evidence of the tower's name, which would point to its construction being interrupted and never carried through.

Nonetheless, visitors to the MuVIM underground, with a plain look and due to a marked line on one of the walls beside to the Tower, you can check where the ground level was when the Tower was built after the incursion of the Crown of Aragon's troops in the area and the creation of the Christian Kingdom of Valencia. All the centuries gone by since its building not only erased the memory of it, but added a remarkable amount of strata and buildings on it, considerably raising the ground level beyond the surface of the area back in the Early Middle Ages.

- 4 *Ground plan of MuVIM's Medieval Tower with its four stonecutter marks featuring a radiated star with six arms.*
(MuVIM, Valencia Provincial Council. Draw: Isabel García Villanueva).
- 5 *Overall view from four stonecutter marks featuring a radiated star with six arms of MuVIM's Medieval Tower.*
(MuVIM, Valencia Provincial Council. Draw: Isabel García Villanueva).



ORCHARDS AND GARDENS

On top of the tower and its surroundings, on the occasion of the distribution of properties after the Christian conquest, the *En Mercer* hamlet was founded, one of many planned with an evenly laid plots both inside and outside the walled enclosure. This was widely researched by medievalist historian Josep Torró.

Likewise, the Augustinians' conventual complex in Valencia laid very near MuVIM's current location, and was considered non-urban, orchard land at least during the first three decades of its existence. Back then, arable land prevailed considerably over built elements. The Augustinian conventual complex' "final" surface in the second decade of the 14th century added between 22425 and 27408 square metres to the initial plot – whose original dimensions remain unknown-. Thus, the area added to the complex was around three hectares, spreading south of the conventual complex with adjoining orchards, and well beyond the line defined by the new wall in 1356.

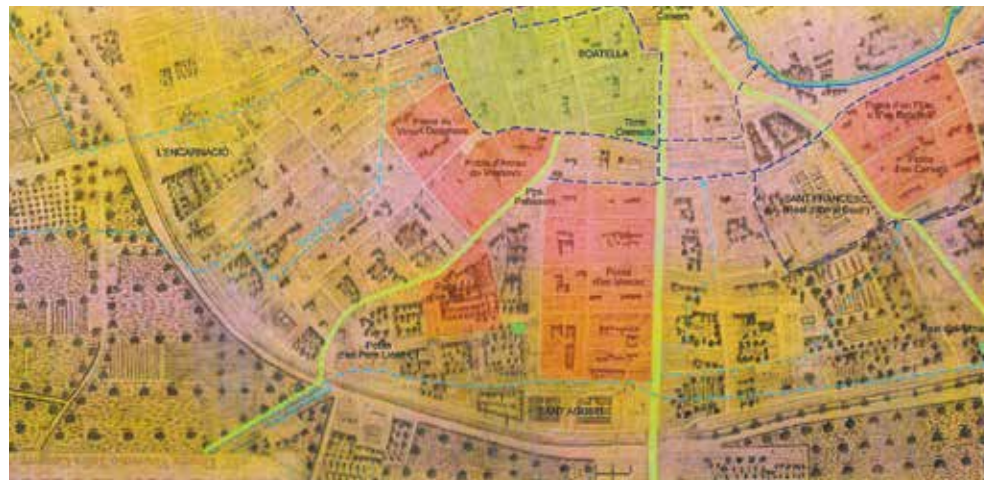
Therefore, the *En Mercer* hamlet, the biggest in the southern extramural area, whose building started before 1299 with an important spread of land by San Vicente road, between St. Augustine's convent and the albarran Cremada (burnt) tower.

Archaeologists Josep Burriel and Miquel Rosselló's work documented patios with their façades lined on Fumeral street -now Quevedo street-, with long plots of orchards and gardens adorned with pavements, benches and porches, paved luxuriously (some displayed their owners' coats of arms). The orchards or gardens were located in between pavement bits, and were divided into square flower beds full of orange, citron and mulberry trees, watered by canals, pipes and reservoirs fed by the Favara irrigation canal. A considerable stretch of this irrigation canal was also documented during these excavations.

6 Map of Christian medieval hamlets around Valencia with the d'En Mercer hamlet and MuVIM's Medieval Tower (University of Valencia. Author: Josep Torró).

7 Reconstruction of the 15th century medieval gardens, from archaeological documents. (Archaeology department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall. Author: Pilar Mas).

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Hypothetical reconstructions of these orchards and gardens by archaeologist Pilar Mas and Valencia City Hall's Archaeology Department bring us a likeness of the area at this time. Among the objects found, a panel of 16 heraldic tiles in blue with alternating motifs and framed by tiles with acanthus motifs and the Català-Torres and Arrufat- Codinach coats of arms. Another remarkable find was a game of Qirkat on one of the benches of the gardens: this was already played in Roman times and was very popular in Medieval period. Qirkat is a more complex version of three-in-a-row, where players have to align nine pieces in the intersections of three concentric squares crossed by perpendicular axis: the player that builds a line can remove a piece from the other as long as this is not part of a simple (three in a row) or double (five in a row) windmill, and the player left with only two pieces on the board loses the game.



Tile panel comprised of 16 heraldic tiles, with two alternate designs and framing tiles decorated with acanthus motifs, Català- Torres and Arrufat- Codinach coats of arms.
(Rosa Alcaide. Archaeology Department, Historical and Artistic Heritage Service, Valencia City Hall).

- 8 *Virtual reconstruction of the medieval gardens in the 15th century.*
(Archaeology Department, Historical and Artistic Heritage Service, Valencia City Hall).
- 9 *Tile panel from the 15th century gardens found during archaeological excavations in 1997-1998.*
These were built on top of MuVIM's Medieval Tower.
(Archaeology Department, Historical and Artistic Heritage Service, Valencia City Hall).

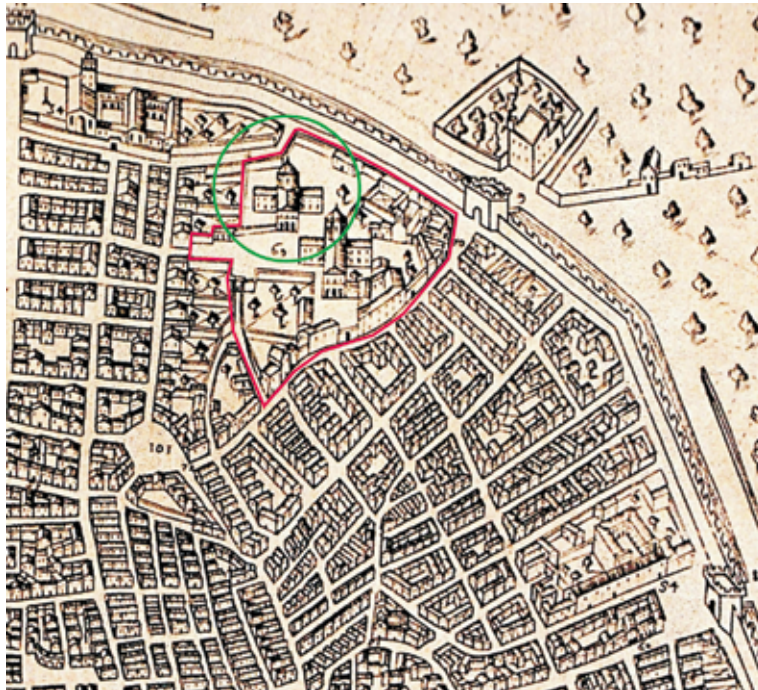


THE QUADRA DEL MAL DE SIMENT

Valencia General Hospital

The medieval gardens that laid on top of the tower disappeared in 1512 as work on the construction of the Valencia General Hospital begun, laid out with several rooms or "halls" depending on the type of illness that was treated in them. MuVIM sits on top of what used to be the mal de siment (great pox or French disease) hall, intended to attend those suffering from syphilis or, in some cases, gonorrhoea, etc. Work on this hall started in 1588 and ended in 1603.

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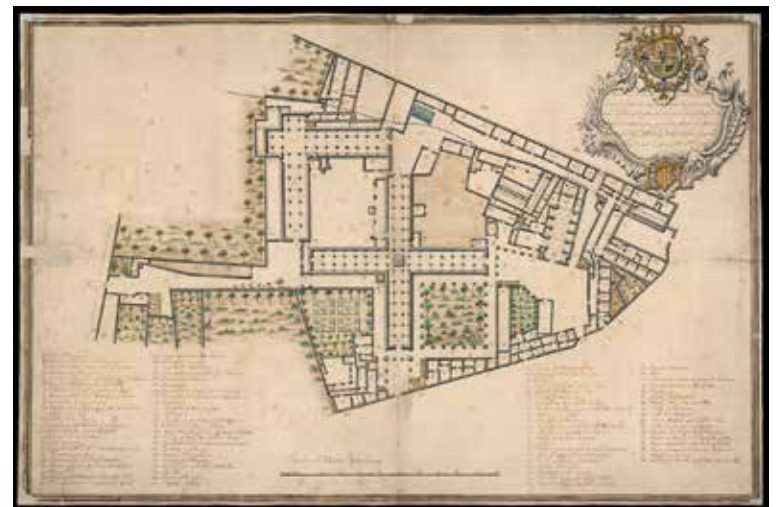


10 Location of the «Quadra del Mal de Siment» (Great Pox Hall) of the General Hospital in 1608's plan by A. Mancelli. (MuVIM, Valencia Provincial Council. Draw: Isabel García Villanueva.)

11 «Plan of the whole facility containing the Royal General Hospital» by appointment of the Malaespina Marquis, General mayor of the realms of Valencia and Murcia, year 1749. (Realm of Valencia Archive. Valencian Government).

The building, initially planned to follow the model of the Quadra de Febres (Fever Hall, currently Valencia Public Library), had to adapt to the little space available. This would lead to a peculiar layout, with only two of the original's naves, joined by an octagonal dome. The layout of each nave was in time comprised of three separate naves, split by two rows of thick columns with pedestals and capitals. It had an upper floor and a ground floor of three naves separated by two rows of thick columns with decorated stone pedestals and capitals supporting the dome, as well as engaged columns on the walls -which were made of brick shuttering and lime-. It also had a cistern fed by the nearby irrigation canal.

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The French disease or syphilis, an infectious illness also known as “great pox” (and also as siment, “semen” in Modern Age Valencia) has an infectious aetiology and had a special impact in the 15th century, coinciding with the discovery of America. It affected port cities – such as Valencia- especially.

The kind of therapy used by Valencian doctors, consisting of mercurial anointments combined with hot baths, attracted patients from all around Europe. By the late 16th century, a less aggressive therapeutic alternative from America was introduced, using guaiacum and lignum- vitae.

This hall kept its hospital function until the hospital was moved in the 1970s and the building was demolished, its remains kept buried until archaeological excavations prior to the construction of Valencian Museum of Enlightenment and Modernity —MuVIM— could be carried out in full.

Virtual reconstruction of the «Quadra del Mal de Siment» (Great Pox Hall) of the General Hospital.
(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).



- 12 *1927 photograph of the interior of one of the rooms in the “Quadra del Mal de Siment”.*
(Great Pox Hall) (MuVIM. Valencia Provincial Council).
- 13 *Inside view of the «Quadra del Mal de Siment» (Great Pox Hall)'s dome. Virtual reconstruction.*
(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).
- 14 *Cistern inside the «Quadra del Mal de Siment» (Great Pox Hall). Virtual reconstruction.*
(Archaeology Department. Historical and Artistic Heritage Service. Valencia City Hall).



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*Detail of the model of the city of Valencia according to the map by Father Tosca, located in MuVIM's hall.
This shows the old Valencia General Hospital.*
(MuVIM. Valencia Provincial Council. Photo: Rafael de Luis. Authors: Vicente Gómez Herraiz and Lucas Gómez).



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José Antonio Granell

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Mercedes Aguilar · Elena Rosa Peña

PERMANENT EXHIBITION

«MuVIM's Medieval Tower. The Memory of the Museum»

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Miquel Rosselló

Josep Torró

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Vicente Gómez

Lucas Gómez

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Teresa Ferrer

English translation

Carlos Cuesta

Exhibition mounting production

Simbols

Collaborations of the Valencia Provincial Council

Valencian Museum of Enlightenment and Modernity, MuVIM Library

General and photographic archive

Linguistic Standardisation Unit

The following public institutions collaborated

Archaeology Department. Historical and artistic heritage service.

Valencia City Hall

Municipal Historical Archive. Valencia City Hall

Archive of the realm. Valencian Government

Valencia Library. Valencian Government

Valencia Cathedral Archive. Metropolitan council of canons

Holy Cathedral Church of Saint Mary of Teruel

Archive of the Crown of Aragon. Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports

CRAI. Rare Book and Manuscript Library. University of Barcelona

MNAC, Catalonia National Art Museum

Alcañiz City Hall

ACCESS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Visiting the permanent exhibition of the archaeological remains in the Medieval Tower Room is free, with no restrictions other than the opening hours of the museum:

Open from Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Closed on Mondays and on 1 January, 19 March, 1 May and 25 December.

The location of the Medieval Tower Room enables access for wheelchair users.

HOW TO GET TO THE MUVIM

By train, it is a 5-minute walk from the Estación del Norte railway station and a 15-minute walk from the Joaquín Sorolla RENFE/ADIF railway station.

By bus:

EMT bus lines C1, 28, 60, 62 and 72 (via Calle Guillem de Castro)

EMT bus line 27 (via Calle Quevedo)

By underground:

Lines 3, 5 and 9 (Xàtiva station), lines 1 and 2 (Plaza de España station)

Nearby car parks:

Calle Guillem de Castro and Plaza de San Agustín



MORE INFORMATION

From its beginnings, the MuVIM has been defined as a museum of ideas. Its permanent exhibition —The Thought Adventure— is a surprising and daring museographic and communicative experience that explains, through new technologies, how Western society has evolved from the Middle Ages to the present day: you will visit a medieval monastery, go through the insides of a machine, open the doors to modernity, discover a typical 18th century hall and attend the birth of modern science. It is an immersive experience that helps us to better understand today's world. The visit is available in four languages (Valencian, Spanish, English, French) and must be booked by phone (+34) 96 388 37 30.

What is more, in the museum lobby, there is another permanent exhibition —The Model of the City of Valencia according to Tosca's Map— where you can see a threedimensional model of the city of Valencia in the 18th century, as it was drawn at the time by Father Tosca.




However, the museum's area of interest also allows it to offer temporary exhibitions and a varied complementary programme with conferences, musical performances, film series, workshops for children or adults and much more. All activities, such as visiting the permanent exhibitions, are always free.

Phone number for information and to book a visit to the permanent exhibition:
(+34) 96 388 37 30.

Web page:
www.muvim.es

E-mail:
muvim@dival.es

Social networks:

-  <https://twitter.com/muvim>
-  <https://www.facebook.com/elMuVIM>
-  <https://www.instagram.com/muvim.es/>
-  <https://www.youtube.com/user/MUVIM>
-  <https://issuu.com/muvim>

THE MEMORY
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**MuVIM's
MEDIEVAL
TOWER**





MuVIM
Museu Valencià
de la Il·lustració
i de la Modernitat



CULTURAL VALÈNCIA