

FROM RESEARCH TO THE EXPLOITATION OF MEDIEVAL PATRIMONY: THE CALAFELL PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the exploitation of a medieval monument, Calafell castle (Tarragona, Spain), through a system of didactic modules based on iconography. The first part of the article explains the problems related to the transformations that took place on a small sector of the coast of Central Catalonia, on the east coast of the Iberian Peninsula, between the end of the late Roman era and the high Middle Ages. This difficult historical period needs to be explained clearly and rigorously, as didactic intermediation should never mean a lessening of scientific rigor.

KEY WORDS

Didactic museography; Didactics of the patrimony; Medieval castles; Calafell; Didactic iconography.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Artes ad musea describenda; Ratio docendi de patrimoniis; Castella mediaevalia; Calafel; Ars docendi de imaginum descriptione.

Introduction: research and didactics

Didactics applied to patrimony is a complex discipline that attempts to make the secrets of monuments and patrimonial elements understood by all kinds of public, in a direct and agreeable way. Despite this, it is very clear that corresponding to each monument or element, there is normally an important bibliography that needs to be consulted.

Naturally, explanations have to be based on rigorous scientific concepts. It is not a question of "divulging" in the sense of "vulgarizing", but rather of transmitting concepts that are sometimes very complicated. That is why this study first presents a problem that is not at all easy, namely to show how a territory has evolved over almost 1,500 years. In the second place, the way the problem has been dealt with from the perspective of the didactics of the patrimony is explained.

1. The concepts that have to be transmitted

1.1. *Focus on a point*

The central Catalan coast, north of Tarraco, was naturally an intensely Romanised place. Nowadays, we know the process of transformation of the territory from the 2nd century BC to the end of the 4th century AD relatively well. However, our knowledge about what happened between the 5th and 10th centuries is scarce. The research done to date has been unable to show coherently the processes of socio-economic transformation of this significant sector of the northeast of the Iberian Peninsula, in the hinterland of such an important city as Tarraco. Moreover, the research is far from having an image of how this small country changed between the late Roman period and the High Middle Ages.

That is why it is important to approach our knowledge of these changes through the analysis of the micro-space. This means focussing on a specific point and analysing the model that appears with the aim of enabling it to be presented in a museum environment. This is the target of this study.

1.2. *The end of the Roman period and the transformations in the uncertain periods*

The place chosen as an example for didactic museography is Calafell, a town on the coast of the Baix Penedès district, in the Tarragona province. It has a population of nearly twenty thousand and an important set of archaeological sites, ranging from Palaeolithic settlements to a medieval fortification.¹ The advantage of working

1. Sanmartí, Joan; Santacana, Joan; Serra, Ramon. "Notes sobre el poblament protohistòric en la costa del Penedès". *Informació Arqueològica*, 40 (1983): 121-126. Also in Miret, Magí; Sanmartí, Joan; Santaca-

in this area is that in-depth research has been done into a fortified Iberian settlement from the Late Iron Age, known as the Iberian Citadel of Calafell, or Alorda Parc². There is also a Roman settlement known as the Villa of El Vilarenc and, finally the medieval castle with its surroundings, one of the few fortified settlements on the east coast of the Iberian Peninsula that has been fully excavated and studied³. We will concentrate especially on the sites that can supply answers to the questions posed by the Late Roman period and especially the High Middle Ages. Settlements such as the Roman villa of Vilarenc are important not only to help us to know about the territories of the Baix Penedès in the Ancient epoch, but also to know about the complex settlement forms of Roman *Hispania*.

Leaving aside this important Roman villa of El Vilarenc, there are a good number of archaeological sites scattered along the Baix Penedès coast. These settlements are identifiable thanks to the scattering of pottery, especially Hispanic terra sigillata pottery and Roman amphoras, many from Italy, and are found on the sides of small rises over looking the farmed plain. Their proximity to each other indicates a model of territorial occupation based on scattered settlements, made up of farmhouses or *fundus* and some villas, like the one mentioned above. Their locations are the same as those of the farms and farmhouses that constituted the basic network of land use in the Penedès in the modern epoch until the 19th century. These establishments were built on the highest points of the plain, facing south, with a well, pens and cellars.

A good part of these agricultural establishments were situated near the Via Augusta, the main axis for the movement of people and merchandise. However, the Calafell area, and thus El Vilarenc villa, lay off this route. The line of the road can be recognised by the milestones with the distance in Roman miles (1,490 metres) from the start of the road. Moreover, they are inscribed with the name of the emperor under whom the road was built, repaired or modified. This road, which was the main route from Rome to Cadiz, crossed the Penedès plain towards Tarragona. A complex network of secondary roads radiated from the Via Augusta. In the municipality of El Vendrell, barely five kilometres from the principal Roman settlement, a milestone was found that perhaps dated from the 3rd century AD. The most complete ones found from the Via Augusta are from Can Llopart, in Castellet-La Massuques, also some six kilometres from Vilarenc, nowadays in the Archaeology Museum of Catalonia. It is made of local stone and had been reused as a drinking trough. It has the following inscription "*Al nostre senyor, tant invicte, molt pietós i molt*

na, Joan. "From indigenous structures to the Roman world: models for the occupation of central coastal Catalunya", *Roman Landscapes. Archaeological Survey in the mediterranean region*. London: British School at Rome, 1991: 47-53.

2. Sanmartí, Joan; Santacana, Joan. "El poblat ibèric d'Alorda Park (Calafell, Baix Penedès) i el seu entorn. Anàlisi crítica". *Tribuna d'Arqueologia*, without number (1986-1987): 7-14.

3. Santacana, Joan. *L'excavació i restauració del Castell de la Santa Creu (Calafell, Baix Penedès)*. Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona, 1986.

victorios princeps Julià August" so it was dedicated to the Emperor Julian the Apostate and that has been dated from between 360 and 363.⁴

The presence of a milestone in Castellet, as well as the one found in El Vendrell, indicates that the road was in use and in good condition in the mid 4th century, although some of the Roman villas established at the start of Augustus' rule, had already been abandoned in the 1st century.

As far as we know, the settlement patterns of the population in this area during the first centuries hardly changed between the 4th and 6th centuries. We have little data about this period, not only from Calafell and the Penedès, but also, in general throughout the eastern peninsula, as it corresponds to such a badly known period as the barbarization of the Late Empire. In fact, the neighbouring municipality of El Vendrell is precisely one of the few places where ceramic material from the second half of the 4th century AD has been found. This was at the villa of Les Albardes, NW of the town, at the foot of the Puig Rodó hill, about three kilometres from the sea. The rural establishment was at the top of an area that is nowadays terraced, which stretched from this hill down to the coast, to a beach called Comarruga-Sant Salvador. At the foot of the site, there is a little stream called "Fondo de les Quatre Boques". In this place, in the middle of the 4th century the land was levelled in several places, probably for building on. The most interesting aspect of the place, apart from the pottery that allows it to be dated, is its location, as it exactly reproduced the settlement patterns of the first Romans in the area.⁵

What had changed? We do not know the structure of the buildings and thus cannot compare the house, although we can compare the commercial areas. The settlers in the El Vendrell villa traded with the north of Africa. This trade was probably limited, given that no large quantities of the typical containers have been found in the Roman settlement from the previous centuries. Nor were there manufactured products from southern Gaul, Sicily or central Italy. All that remained was the trade links with the old Roman provinces in the north of Africa, a commerce that probably continued up to the Muslim invasion and domination of the Maghreb.

The site at Les Albardes is one of the few that have been found. In Cubelles, also a few kilometres north of the El Vilarenc villa in Calafell, there is another from the same epoch by the name of La Solana. This one contains a good number of silos and pits with rubbish. It appears that these agricultural installations were in use between the 3rd and 7th centuries AD, until shortly before the African invasions. In this case, there is also an interesting range of African and Syrian pottery that allows

4. The milestones of the Via Augusta have been studied by R. Navarro Sáez. "Mil·liaris de la Via Augusta i els seus ramals", *Del romà al romànic. La Tarraconense mediterrània dels segles IV al X*. Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana, 1999: 125.

5. Macias, Josep Maria; Menchon, Joan Josep; Punche, Josep Maria; Remolà, Josep Anton. "Nous contextos ceràmics del segle IV i inicis del V en la província de Tarragona". *Arqueomediterrània*, 2 (1997): 155.

us to envisage this as an extra, not very large, but important trade between the coast of central Catalonia and the old Roman provinces of Africa.⁶

All these settlements, that is, El Vilarenc, La Solana or Les Albardes were agricultural establishments, two or three hours journey from each other. These were thus a model of settlement that had in common not being located far from the main lines of communication, maintained commercial relations with the north of Africa and certainly had a diversified agricultural economy.

To sum up, we can affirm that in the ancient times, on this part of the coast, an agrarian model was created, based on large and medium sized exploitations, centred on the production of wine for export and it lasted until the mid 3rd century AD. The convulsions that led the Late Roman Empire into crisis, with the upheavals resulting from the first invasions and the progressive interruption of exports to the Central Mediterranean, forced these agrarian communities to reorientate themselves. Many must have been abandoned and those that survived maintained links with the north of Africa, the only lands in the Roman world that were still prospering economically. In any case, the panorama on the plain of Calafell was not very different from that of the early Roman centuries —small farms and farmhouses along the secondary tracks; places in visual communication with each other, inhabited by farmers who probably found it increasingly difficult to sell their surplus wine and who would thus have diversified their crops, increasing the cultivation of cereals and especially olives, which were so characteristic of the Penedès area before the vineyards of modern epochs.

1.3. Towards a new model of occupation of the territory: from the coast to the hills

We know nothing of what happened in the 7th and 8th centuries. In any case, the place name "Calafell" has Arab roots and probably refers to a *qal'a* or fortification. Some authors believe that this word was mainly used in the early times of Al-Andalus, later being replaced by other forms. Thus, in line with these linguistic arguments, medieval Calafell is of Arab origin. That is not at all strange bearing in mind the large number of Arab-origin toponyms in the surrounding area, such as Albornar, Gelida, Lavid, Masquefa, Mediona, Múnia, La Ràpida, etc.

Apart from this toponymical switch, there was another important change. The coastal agricultural establishments that had been continuously occupied for almost a thousand years were gradually abandoned. What followed was a very different mode of territorial occupation. The inhabitants moved away from the coastline and up the more or less castellated hills, near streams, and orientated towards working the inland plains. This does not mean they were not interested in controlling the

6. On this question in El Vendrell during the Late Roman Epoch see the article by J. Macias, Josep Maria; Menchon, Joan Josep; Punche, Josep Maria; Remolà, Josep Anton. "Nous contextos ceràmics del segle IV i inicis del V en la província de Tarragona". *Arqueomediterrània*, 2 (1997): 153-177.



coast. Quite the opposite was true, given that the coast was lined with wetlands that, as we shall see, were very useful.

1.4. *A supply point for the Cordoba Caliphate?*

Although this shift is often attributed to the Muslims, we do not really know what caused it, as the archaeology does not show any clearly Muslim fortifications in Calafell from the 8th century. The excavations in Calafell castle failed to show any signs of this Muslim stage, although the working hypothesis of the excavation in the 1980s investigations was based on this.⁷ Later excavation works carried out around the fortified area at the turn of the 21st century have begun to present interesting possibilities for interpreting the remains from the Andalus epoch which are mentioned below.

We know so little about the time of the Muslim invasion of the area around Tarraco that it is impossible to draw up any kind of hypothesis. We know nothing about the time from the early years of the 8th century, when the first Muslim contingents presumably began to appear in this area, until two centuries later when a new centre was installed inside the fortified Roman enclosure of Barcino. However, at the beginning of the 10th century, the small area that we are analysing was right in the area disputed by the Caliphal power in Cordoba and the advance guard of the Carolingian empire in Barcelona. Thus, setting up a fortification with supply functions on the *Thagr al 'alà* or upper frontier of the Caliphate in Calafell would have been a sensible move by the Andalusians. The raids and incursions from Tortosa by Abu l-Mutarrif in the summer of 901, and Abd al Malik al-Tawil in the summers of 912 and 913 along the coastal routes made it necessary to have a support point, and Calafell was then the last safe place for the Emir's troops before penetrating into the lands under the magnates of Barcelona. The natural routes along the Bisbal stream, and especially the Cobertera stream, which meet near Calafell were the most important paths for penetrating towards the inland plain of the Penedès and towards the plain of the Llobregat, the ultimate target of the cavalry raid.

On the other hand, we know that the Andalusians prepared several larger punitive expeditions against the Catalan counties by sea, following the coast from Almeria between June and July of 935. The Muslim written sources, especially Al Makari, affirm that in 942 their control of *Tarrakuna* (Tarragona) was precarious or had been lost. Although it is possible that the Christians abandoned the city of Tarragona around 966 in virtue of pacts with the caliphate, the truth is that in the mid 10th century, the territory of *Thagr al 'alà* had already withdrawn far enough to leave Calafell as a kind of Muslim fortress on the frontier. Despite this, between May 985 and May of the following year, when the Cordoban vizier, Almansor undertook his famous campaign against the Barcelona of Count Borrell II and defeated him, oc-

7. Santacana, Joan. *L'excavació i restauració del Castell de la Santa Creu (Calafell, Baix Penedès)*. Barcelona: Diputació de Barcelona, 1986.

cupying the city and all the surrounding lands, the chronicle of Ibn Al-Hatib states that "he wanted to work to stock up on food for the raid on Barcelona...the quantity he gathered was a hundred thousand and something 'modis'⁸. He was amazed and exclaimed, "I've got more grain than Joseph, the owner of the granaries in Egypt". Naturally, places like that *qal'a* were essential from a strategic and military point of view for the assault on a fortified city like Barcelona.

We do not know what the Andalus establishments in Calafell were, but they probably include the fortified enclosure of the castle that controlled the strategic passes between the coast and the interior. On the southern side of the castle, a field of large silos has been found on the rock the fortification sits on. Similar deposits have also appeared in other parts of the hill. The large number of silos for storing grain gives the idea that such important reserves can only be understood in the context of a fortified area or *hisn*. On the other hand, it is well known that the grain storage structures in Andalusia were underground stores like those in Calafell. Although almost all these silos are incomplete, the upper halves having disappeared, their capacity for over two thousand litres of grain each suggests that this was unlikely to have been an initiative by the local peasants. Despite this, no remains of pottery from the emirate or caliphal periods have yet been found, which means that a certain degree of caution is still needed.⁹

During the first half of the 10th century, as mentioned above, these lands gradually slipped from the control of the Cordoba caliphs. The counts and bishops in Barcelona extended their jurisdictions. There are no literary tales, chronicles or documents that describe this process. However, there is little doubt that the process of military expansion was planned, leading to a full, dense and well-interlocking network of castles, each with its own district. Between 910 and 940, the Alt Penedès gradually fell under the power of the counts of Barcelona.¹⁰ Members of the principal vicarial families and the monastic and episcopal hierarchy benefited from this, in line with the general trend on the frontiers of all counties in the northeast of the Peninsula, in detriment to their Muslim neighbours¹¹.

Between 966 and the 974, a series of missions to Cordoba by emissaries from the counts attempted to set the frontiers, with promises of demolishing fortresses. The counts of Barcelona never fulfilled these. This led Almansor to carry out an *asseifa* between the 24th of May, 985 and the 12th of May the following year. As mentioned above, the Arab chronicles explain the stockpiling of grain prior to this attack. It is probable that that year, Calafell was still the last Muslim military position, while Castleet and Banyeres, a few kilometres inland, appear as county castles with dis-

8. The *modi* was a measure of grain equivalent to about 8.6 litres.

9. Santacana, Joan. *Història de Calafell. De la prehistòria al segle XIX*. Calafell: Editorial Raventós-Suau (Llibres de matricula), 2005: I, 57-76.

10. Batet Company, Carolina. *Els castells termenats i estratègies d'expansió comtal. La Marca de Barcelona als segles X i XI*. Vilafraça del Penedès: Institut d'Estudis Penedesencs, 1996.

11. Sabaté, Flocel. *L'expansió territorial de Catalunya (segles IX-XIII): Conquesta o repoblació?* Lleida: Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 1996: 68-76.



tricts from 977. Ribes castle appeared from 990 on and the one in Santa Oliva was cited in 986.

1.5. The unwritten stage ends. The written documents begin

The first document that mentions Calafell dates from 999. This is a title deed for the sale of lands dated 17th October, 999. The parchment informs us that the Count of Barcelona, Ramon Borrell I, and his wife Ermessenda, sold an allodium or piece of land to Gombau for the symbolic price of a mule (*una mula de 5 unces*). The beneficiary of the sale-donation was a noble of certain importance in the count's court who already owned many castles and had others built. This sale was a way for the count to ensure his dominion. Thus we enter into an epoch when written documentation became increasingly abundant and significant. The terrain mentioned in the document was a large strip in the jurisdiction of Olèrdola castle. This castle was a large fortification in the coastal range, from where the viscounts of Barcelona had commanded the offensive against the Muslims to the south. An authentic eagle's nest, Olèrdola was inhabited by repopulators. To the west, the terrain mentioned in the document referred to above faced "the *speluncua* that there is in *Calaphell*", i.e. the cave in Calafell. We know nothing about this cave except the 17th-century tradition that tells us that in Calafell castle a virgin is worshipped who "is called of the Cave, because she was in a kind of cave or crypt". Naturally, the temptation to identify the castle with the cave is evident.

Around the year 1000, these lands were divided into three great domains from the jurisdictional point of view. On one hand, there was the powerful monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallés, with the district of Santa Oliva and El Vendrell. On the other, the members of the count's house, who had Olèrdola, Castleví de la Marca and Castleet, and finally, there was the bishop of Barcelona who owned El Montmell and the district of Banyeres. Calafell formed part of the territory repopulated from Olèrdola—as the document states—although it was in the district of the castle of Sant Esteve de Castleet. It is not known when Calafell was segregated from Castleet, as Calafell is still mentioned as belonging to the latter in 1037. The background to the document was a dispute between Guitard, the abbot of Sant Cugat, and Bernat Odger, the lord of Castleet, about setting the boundary between the two domains or districts. In fact, what was split away was not so much Calafell castle, that first appears mentioned as such (*ipsum castrum que dicunt Kalafell*), but rather the wetlands on the coastal plain.

1.6. The dispute over control of the marshes

The case led to a *judici de Deu pels albats*. It was a relatively infrequent procedure. The document¹² relates how the tribunal was presided over by the countess

12. *Cartulario de 'Sant Cugat' del Vallés*, ed. José Rius. Barcelona: CSIC, 1945: I, 266 (n° 316).

Ermessenda and her grandson, Count Ramon Berenguer I, with the attendance of worthies and the judge and archdeacon, Gerbert. The two litigants, Bernat Odger of Castleet and Guitard of Sant Cugat, did not agree so the court decided to settle the case by trial by *albats* or infants, which consisted of putting the bodies of two dead babies representing the two parties into cold water. It was left to God to decide and he was considered to favour one of the parties if the body that represented it sank under the water. It was decided that the property under dispute would be awarded to the party whose infant disappeared under the water and that, if both sank or floated, it would be split between the two parties. This agreement was signed and both parties gave their pledges. The test was held on the set day. The result was that the water covered, but did not hold up, the baby who represented Sant Cugat, and the one that represented Bernat floated. The judges could no decide whether to divide the territory in halves or not. Finally, the largest part of the area was awarded to Bernat, while the monastery was left with the lesser part. The dividing line was drawn through the *montis de Kalafell*, that is, the Coll de Calafell.

As mentioned above, what was really under dispute was the ownership of the lagoons, which were thus split between the two litigants. These wetlands were on the coastal plain, between Sant Vicents de Calders and Calafell. They were the result of the upwelling of groundwater that formed marshes at the level of, and connected to, the sea. They were behind barriers of sand running parallel to the coast. This was a rich ecosystem, with a mixture of fresh-water and salt-water fauna. Moreover, it was a nesting site for birds, being a frequent stopping-off point on their migrations. The existence of the marshes had led to the appearance of prehistoric settlements and others from the Iberian period along the coast, and in the 11th century they were among the most sought after territories. The lagoon of Ollers, between Calders and Calafell was given to Bernat of Papiol by the Abbot of Sant Cugat in 1180.

1.7. *The peasants and the right to freehold*

The 11th century documentation about Calafell is scarce. In Guitard's will, dating from 1054, he left his son, Govan, a house "*et a truia et modietate of porcellos qui sunt in Kalafell*" (a sow and half the piglets that I have in Calafell) and that, according to the same document were looked after by one Bonusomo. The document thus talks about the occupation of the territory, although no mention is made of any fortification, which undoubtedly already existed, as it had been named from 1037.

Who were these occupants of Calafell during the 11th century? Naturally, the documents usually talk about the great lords. The first of these lords was the above-mentioned Bernat Odger of Castleet, grandson of Sunifred, abbot of Arles and brother of Count Guifré. Bernat Odger's brother, Guillem Amat, was also one of the great magnates in the Penedès in that century. These were family lines linked to the family of the Viscounts of Barcelona. Despite this, they were not the inhabitants of the area. One who did live there was Bonusomo, mentioned in passing in a will, and who had probably been an *aprisionador* or freeholder, one of those peasants who held



the right of the first settler and who had lived there a long time before the nobles and churchmen appeared with their registers, testaments and documents. The right to freehold is surely what the nobles took up and that led to the full ownership of vacant lands after 30 years of permanent occupation. These nobles certainly shared this right with their closest collaborators and some of the people who had inhabited the area for centuries. The latter did not appear in the documents, as the nobles often talked about "no man's land", to justify the appropriation of the territory. It is, however, clear that the country was never totally abandoned, given the continuity in the toponyms, as in the case of the Roman villa of Mas Vilarenc, which maintains its Latin root, despite the occupations by Al Andalus and the nobles. These inhabitants, often called "malefactors" in some abbatial documents, were considered as a sort of "bad people of the frontier".

These peasants are not mentioned in the parchments but are documented in the archaeology. The excavations carried out on the hill of Calafell castle give a good picture of what these 11th century castles on the frontier with Al Andalus were like. It was on a rocky outcrop with walls made of logs and stones to protect the most vulnerable places. It is not known why this castle was built, although it could be that because the network of castles with districts, like the one in Castlet, was probably insufficient to control the territory, Calafell became a subsidiary fortification. That does not mean that the *kastrum* built at the beginning of the 11th century did not have its own jurisdiction and surely some income, because if not, it would not have been maintained.

1.8. The first constructions and fortifications from the 11th century

The earliest medieval constructions have left enough scars in the rock to allow us to obtain a rough idea of what they could have been like. In fact, archaeological excavation on the site has revealed that the first wall or fortified enclosure was to the west, built around large trunks emplaced in the rock¹³. This was probably a more or less circular enclosure, although we do not have enough details to confirm this. The trunks were fitted into holes cut in the steps of the rock. A pear-shaped well was dug in the middle of the circular enclosure. The rest of the rock platform was taken up by very primitive buildings, built with logs and probably earth or adobe. These were cabins, some of which had silos underneath for storing grain. Although it is difficult to say how many cabins there were, there were at least a dozen on the upper part. On the other side, the entire hill was full of silos and similar constructions, even less well known. It is very likely that the large set of silos on the northeast of the site were in use during that century. In any case, in the first third of the century, work began on a church on the eastern part of the hill. Thanks to the archaeological excavations carried out between 1984 and 1986, we know that it is very likely

13. Santacana, Joan. "El conjunt alt medieval del castell de Calafell". *L'informatiu*, 1 (1991): 6-12; See also Santacana, Joan. "El conjunt medieval del castell de Calafell". *Fonaments*, 9 (1993): 38-52.

that before this building, there was an older one, of which few elements have survived, and are no longer visible. This early construction seems to have been linked to a primitive necropolis made up of tombs of the so-called bath type, dating from between the 9th and 10th centuries. In any case, the absence of identifiable pottery remains from this period makes it difficult to state this with certainty, although we consider it very likely.

The single nave church that was then built was Lombard Romanesque style, with a barrel vault and two transverse arches. The original building probably had a wooden roof and the barrel vault is a later addition. The apse was horseshoe shaped or slightly wider. On the outer part, there was the typical Lombard frieze of blind arches between pilasters. This apse has three windows with double embrasures. Under the apse, there is a small crypt, which is slightly off centre from the axis of the Romanesque nave, as is the apse itself. The crypt is not fully underground, so the chancel is higher. The altar is reached by a side stair. It is probable that the crypt forms part of the original pre-Romanesque structure, perhaps a sort of cave excavated in the hill. The Baroque religious tradition attributes to what is nowadays a blind window on the right of the crypt the finding of a miraculous virgin, called the Mare de Deu de la Cova (Mother of God of the Cave), a seated Romanesque woodcut, with a child in her lap that was destroyed in 1936. In fact, the first documented mention of the virgin was in the 12th century, specifically in a will from 1189, in "*Bargais i Almasura deixen a peça de terra a Deu i a la Verge Maria de Calafell*". Above the vault and at the foot of the church, there was a bell tower, which retains the holes for the bell ropes, visible from inside the temple.

The inside of the building was painted with al-fresco wall paints, which are still visible in the area of the apse. It is not easy to know the subject, although some authors have seen a winged figure and others, a bearded man on a boat who could be Noah. This set of murals reminds us of the style of painting in the church of Sant Sepulcre in Olèrdola. Nowadays, it is also possible to see the sinopia of the original drawing, especially in the hemispheric part of the apse. Although nowadays only the paintings of the apse survive (and probably those under the crypt, although that this part has not been uncovered) there are signs that the whole nave was painted in cold reds and blacks. Regarding their chronology, these works can be placed in the mid 11th century, although some authors, basing their opinion on the decorative motifs, believe that the style is closer to 12th century works. The church also has some inscriptions on the inside wall of the apse, to the left, or north. These are graffiti that have yet to be deciphered, with anthroponyms and perhaps religious invocations. In any case, from the palaeographical point of view, these inscriptions date from the 10th century or first half of the 11th. The base of the altar could also be from this time, with a very rough cross engraved on the frontal part and a christening font, without decoration, which should probably be situated in the 11th century.

Around the church, there is a necropolis with various types of anthropomorphic tombs dug out of the rock. Some are clearly pre-Romanesque and probably date from between the 9th and 10th centuries, as mentioned above, although the majority surround the Romanesque church and thus date from after the first third of the 11th



century. Beside the tombs, there was a tank, probably designed for washing bodies and which is nowadays covered over.

1.9. The feudalization of society and the prohibition of using the wetlands

During the 11th century, some changes appeared in medieval society in the counties that affected especially the relations between the lords and the counts and also those between the powerful and the peasants. In fact, in the period that ended around the year 1000, some lords were landowners or owners of allodia while others kept their power by acting as representatives or as the counts' men. After the turn of the millennium, and during the 11th century, many of these landowners began to confront the counts, disputing their authority. This fact, that upset political relations, was one of the reasons why many fortifications were extended and even new ones built. In many cases, that meant modifying the relations with the peasants, who saw their incomes confiscated and submitted to vassalage. In Calafell, that process is documented archaeologically thanks to the works in 1984-1986. In fact, on the upper part of the hill, the 9th and 11th-century cabins, specifically those that had silos, provided evidence for having been burnt down with all their poor household goods destroyed and thrown to the bottom of the pits. These were earthenware and other domestic utensils. Thanks to this excavation, we know that this was a population of very poor peasants, who still used fragments of Roman terra sigillata pottery cut up and holed to make decorations. They had no iron tools and fed themselves on wild fruit, and especially from hunting and gathering shellfish in the ponds near the sea, as well as fishing. We do not know what led to the violent fire in their poor homes. What is certain is that these cabins would never be rebuilt on the upper part of the castle rock. They now lived on the lower part. Where their homes had stood, the fortress was built towards the end of the 12th century and especially in the 13th century.

This violent event was followed by various prohibitions, such as the one on hunting in the forests, or hunting and fishing in the lagoons near the beach. The reason behind prohibitions in Calafell was probably an attempt to prevent access to certain kinds of food to force the peasants to produce goods that could be stored, and therefore taxed in the form of tithes and other seigniorial charges. These actions were probably linked to others, like the disappearance of the groups of farmers who, until the 11th century, had occupied peripheral areas of what had been the Roman exploitation of the Vilarenc plain. There was a rapid process of concentrating the population around the hill of the castle, probably with the intention of controlling their production.

If the peasants, old freeholders, had continued harvesting, fishing and hunting in the marshes and forests in the Marina area, it would have been very difficult to force them to farm the land to grow the cereals which were necessary for the feudal harvest.

This apart, from then on, the castle underwent big architectural changes. We do not know who owned the jurisdictions of the castle around the end of the 12th or



beginning of the 13th centuries, although in 1208, one Bernat de Calafell appears in the medieval documentation. He was one of those knights (*militēs*) who had just settled on the lands that became their fiefs and who were often behind these architectural transformations.

1.10. Towards the feudal castle. Lords and vassals: property and conflict

After the expulsion of the peasants from the upper part, the old wooden stockade was replaced by a stone enclosure. This was polygonal, adapted to the form of the rock and occupied practically all the western sector of the rock. We could say that the whole western part of the hill was walled in. These walls were built with angles formed by right-angled ashlar, like those in the Romanesque church and the stones on the corners were cut with saws, as was normal in the later Romanesque. A nearby example of similar ashlar can be seen in the lateral chapels on the north façade in the Sanctuary of Santa Maria de Foix, in Torrelles de Foix, which was built between 1263 and 1320. The enclosure built in Calafell had a central courtyard, where the well was. The loopholes, along the lower part of the walls were simple in design, but with dressed stones.

To the east, where there was only the primitive church, a second rectangular building was erected without a differentiated head. It seems clear that it was a strong house, linked to the church. Perhaps it was used as a hospital for the poor, as mention is made in the book of pastoral visits for 1303 that the previous rector of the parish, Bernard Rosanes had committed irregularities and misused the money from the church hospital. On this pastoral visit, the faithful complained about Ferrer Bassa, the rector at the time, that he was helped during mass by two of his sons, and moreover, lived with a concubine. The bishop fined him 50 *sous*. It must be mentioned that the income of the parish of Calafell castle cannot have been very low, as, in 1280 it paid a not insubstantial tithe of 30 *sous*. All this was castellated and fortified during these years. The primitive battlements are still visible on the eastern wall of the fortified complex.

It could be said that the territory was then newly distributed, with new owners, new laws and a very different landscape, dominated once again by cereals and where the wetlands gained a reputation for being as unhealthy, dangerous and prohibited places.

2. Patrimonial intervention

2.1. Criteria for intervention

The best place to transmit this complex history must be selected and there is every indication that it should be the Castle of Santa Creu in Calafell. It is located



on a small rise right in the middle of the medieval town centre, surrounded by narrow, medieval origin streets. This is a stone castle inside which there is Romanesque chapel, from the first third of the 11th century, an anthropomorphic necropolis from the High Middle Ages, a fortified enclosure that housed the lordly fortress, and an interesting set of silos excavated in the rock and which illustrate the problems mentioned in the previous chapter.

The basic resource proposed was iconographic. A project was drawn up that included a set of over 40 illustrations that allow the settlement to be reconstructed visually at three different moments of its past. The ideal reconstruction was studied carefully in line with the information from the archaeological excavations. The architectural evolution, the types of weapon, clothing, the reconstruction of the palaeo-environment, etc, were studied.

With this iconographic information, that put what the research had thrown up onto the drawings with the greatest possible care, a set of modules for didactic intermediation, appropriate for the situation, was designed. As Calafell is on the central Catalan coast, in a tourist area, there are large numbers of Spanish, French, German and English speaking tourists. It was thus necessary to have modules that explained the monument in four languages. On the other hand, it is not easy to protect against the vandalism that our monuments sometimes suffer, so the modules had to be vandal proof.

Finally, the place is a tourist site and thus, visitors come for pleasure, with no preconceptions and normally without any kind of prior information, so it was necessary to make a simple interactive system.

The modular system that was proposed is as follows:

- a. Simple iconographic modules, that contain a DIN A3-sized steel sheet, with a drawing. Underneath each, there is a quadrangular revolving prism with a brief text in four languages. These show static views of the past.
- b. Iconographic modules with triangular revolving prisms that offer a sequence of three drawing showing the evolution of a specific place. These drawings, the same size as the above, allow us to see what things changed and in a specific visual. Naturally, these face towards the point or sector of the monument in question. This is an iconographic evolutionary sequence that allows the changes the place has undergone over time to be seen.
- c. A simple wheel iconoscope. This is an optical instrument that focuses on a specific point. When the users look through the viewer, they see an iconographic sequence referring to the past of the point the lens is facing. The system is simple, but intuitive. The visitors can understand what images could be seen from that point in the past. Thus, it is like binoculars in time. It has a short textual explanation.

As well as these modular elements, there were two other small audiovisual elements in the castle, where, by means of a sensor that detects the presence of visitors, various characters begin to speak to each other, involving the visitors in these "conversations" and, helping them to understand times gone by.

Finally, the drawings were published in a small book aimed at those visitors, especially schoolchildren, who may need to work with the iconography *a posteriori* or in class.

2.2. Didactic bases for the proposal

The proposal is based on the fact that the interpretation of the architectural heritage normally presents two great difficulties. The first of these is the difficulty most people have to conceptualise space and time and the second derives from the fact that any old monument, is not only the result of its times but especially, of the changes wrought in it over the centuries.

With regard to the first of these difficulties, time is a complicated concept for the majority of people. The chronology is an abstraction, especially when there are no key elements of reference. The 12th or 15th centuries are meaningless for someone who lacks a clear structure of the evolution of time, and the changes and continuity in history. Thus, it is not always possible to explain the past, more so if the user's mind does not already hold a well-built framework of time. In this case, the framework has to be built and supplied with images and concepts. These elements can be of many types, although if there are advantages if these are iconographic. A drawing, if it is exact, provides elements of reference and allows mental relations to be established. The person who sees that drawing identifies some elements and these are "includers" for the mind, that is, they enable the image obtained to be interrelated with a prior set of images that we all carry around in our heads. The drawing established links with the whole system of stored images and concepts and similarities appear. This way, the user or visitor to the monument can easily relate it to what he or she already knows. Furthermore, given that we tend to learn on the basis of what we already know, elements of mediation based on iconography are usually more effective than others. On the other hand, there are even more difficulties involved in conceptualising time, although this is the most important. Many educators believe that the answer is to study history as "separate packets", but this is only valid for the youngest children.

With regard to the space, the problem for the public who come to visit is very different. In the majority of archaeological sites, whether these are prehistoric or medieval, only the foundations remain, especially when these are stone. These foundations obviously give a two-dimensional image of space: length and width. They do not give us volume. If, in addition to having superimposed structures, these spaces are subdivided into other sub-spaces thus creating a misleading image of the building. Envisaging volume from a plan is very difficult for those who are not used to doing so. In fact, anyone who sees a flat full of furniture or only its foundations has no notion of space. When we observe the foundations of a house it always seems small. These subjective elements make archaeological remains difficult to understand. On the other hand, although the visitors keep this factor in mind, the superposition of walls from various epochs in the archaeological remains converts



the visit into a kind of puzzle. In fact, there are recent studies that show that the visitors to archaeological sites without a volumetric reconstruction not only fail to understand or learn anything, but that also confusion is generated, as a kind of "unlearning"¹⁴.

Despite all this, the second problem with understanding castles and other old buildings is that of the later reconstructions. The interpretation of castles enables the visitor to see how each of these is the result of the multiple interventions done over time either to change its use or for restoration. The result is not always a building easily understood by the majority of people. What we see of an old building is very often not its appearance in the past but the hypothesis that its walls have acquired over time, as the result of historicistic restorations or functional rehabilitations.

That is why only a meticulous iconography, implemented in the right visuals makes it possible to understand the appearance of a fortress a thousand years ago.

2.3. The didactic iconography produced

The iconographic elements were made on the basis of the data supplied by the archaeological excavation and interpreted with the help of the artist Francesc Riart. These drawings show specific sectors of the fortress in successive phases. The images were generated in the following way: the archaeological excavation of the site supplied the evolutionary stages, especially those corresponding to the High Middle Ages (10th and 11th centuries) that of the 12th and 13th centuries and the one from the 15th century. The later stages, although well documented, were times with little new building and we have to mention these as basically a time of disuse of the fortress and its transformation into the parish cemetery.

The iconographic system consists of a set of twenty steel sheets, (DIN A3 format) engraved with a drawing. Underneath each of these, there is a revolving quadrangular prism with a short text in four languages. Visitors usually only see the language they want. However, to access the other languages, they only have to turn the prism to the corresponding face. This avoids visitors being confused by large panels.

This iconography presents and explains all the aspects of the fortress that have been analysed. Thus, for example, to explain what the whole site was like and how it evolved, there is an iconographic sequence of three successive sheets that present a hypothetical image of the place in the 10th-11th centuries, a second image from the 12th-13th centuries and a third image corresponding to the appearance of the same place in the 15th century.

Another example is that of an inside sector of the southern wall, which shows the same chronological stages with special emphasis on aspects of the technical evolution of armament. If we observe the details of each drawing, nothing is left to chance; everything corresponds to elements documented either during the excavation or in archaeological parallels. For example, in this second example, we can see

14. WOOD, LIZ; HOLDEN, CATHIE. *Teaching Early Years History*. Cambridge: Chris Kington Publishing, 1995.

the battlements, loopholes, different types of firearms, a barrel of gunpowder, the oven for keeping the fire ready to light the fuses, etc.

In any case, the basis for the didactic museography is the care used when constructing the iconography, in accordance with data from the scientific research carried out. Explaining things in an easily understandable way in no way means a loss of rigour. Thus, in this model, the iconography is the basis for correct interpretation.

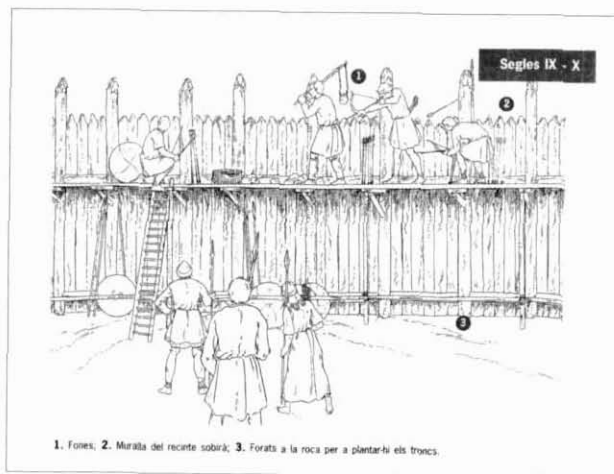
Moreover, from the didactic point of view, the iconographic basis¹⁵ for any museographic proposal is meant to:

1. Set the image of the concept
2. Transform this into an element of reference.
3. Attract attention.
4. Act to involve the mind.
5. Constitute a support for the memory.
6. Allow the generation of empathic situations.

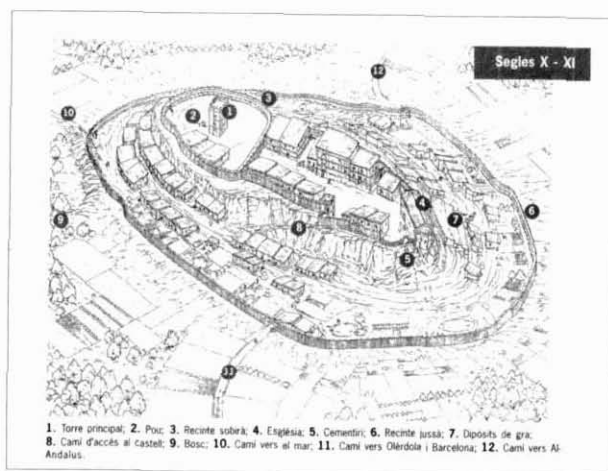
In this case, the didactic museography constitutes a clear and meticulous model of intervention.

15. MASRIERA I ESQUERRA, CLARA. "Presenting archaeological heritage to the public: ruins versus reconstructions". *EuroRea. Journal of (Re)Constructions & experiment in archaeology*, 4 (2007): 41-46.

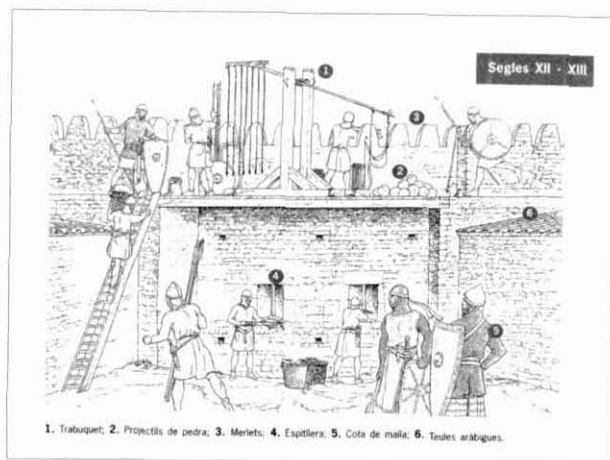




A

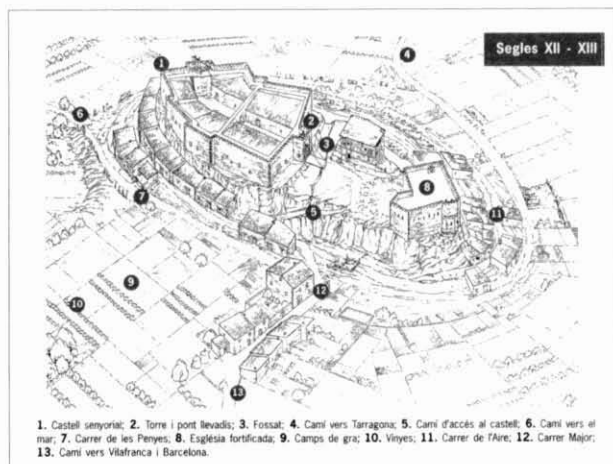


B

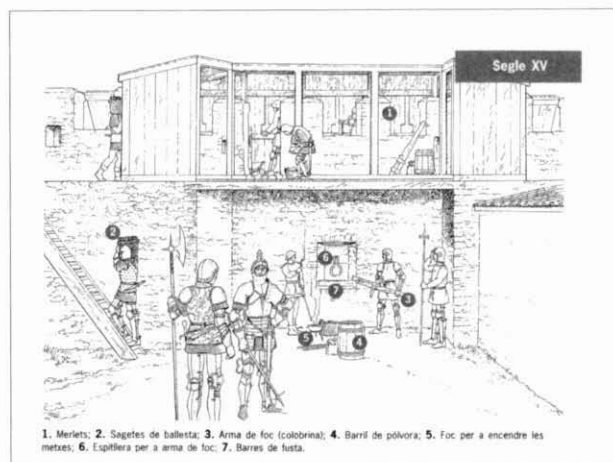


C

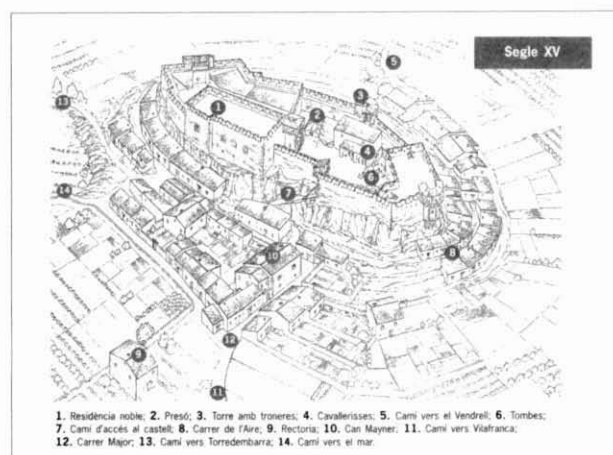
D



E

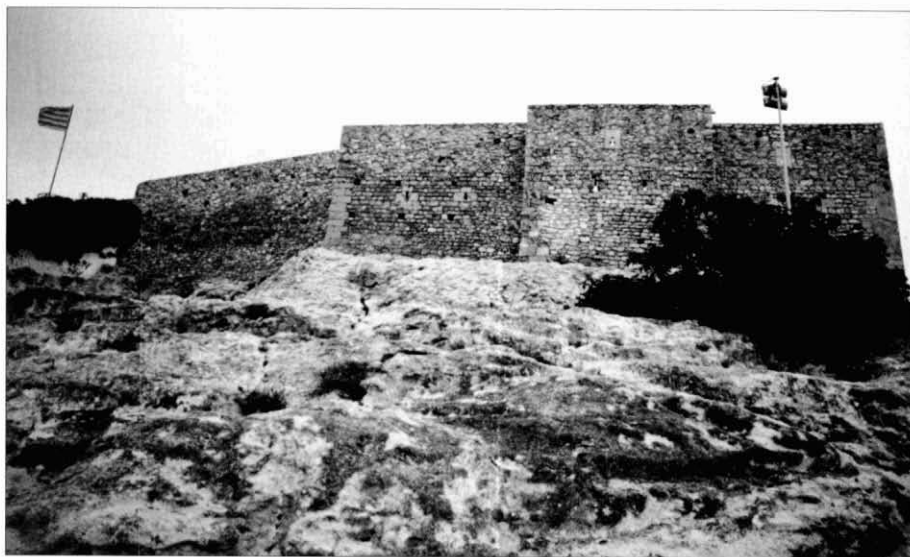


F



I (A, B, C, D, E, F). DIDACTIC ICONOGRAPHY SHOWING THE EVOLUTION OF THE FORTRESS.

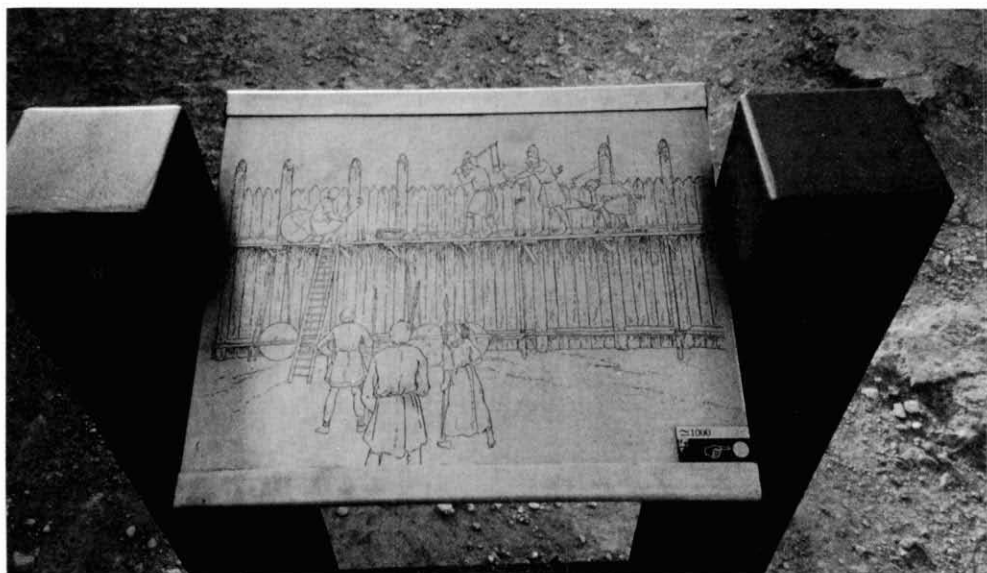




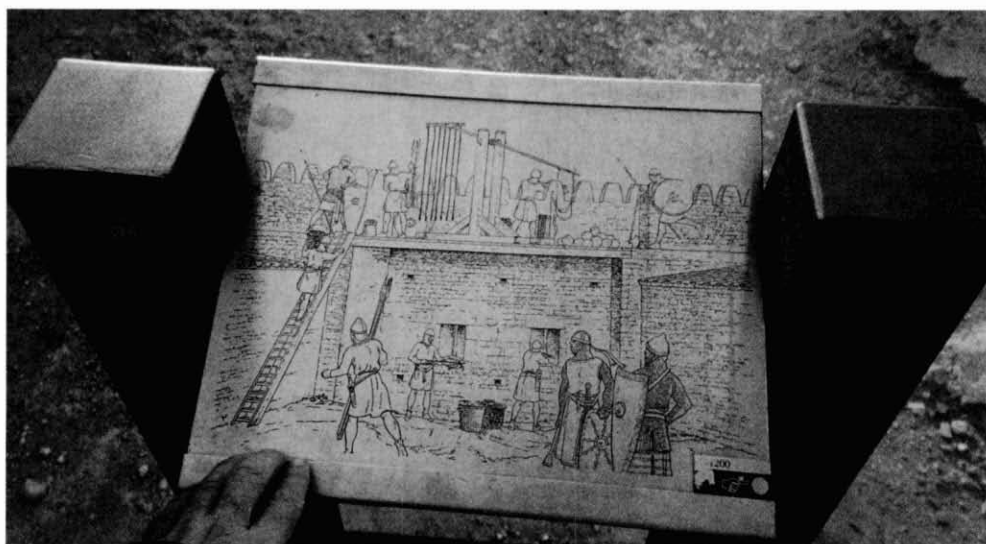
2. GENERAL VIEW OF THE WALL FROM THE SOUTH.



3. A STRETCH OF WALL AND, ON THE LEFT, A DETAIL OF THE INTERPRETATION MODULE.

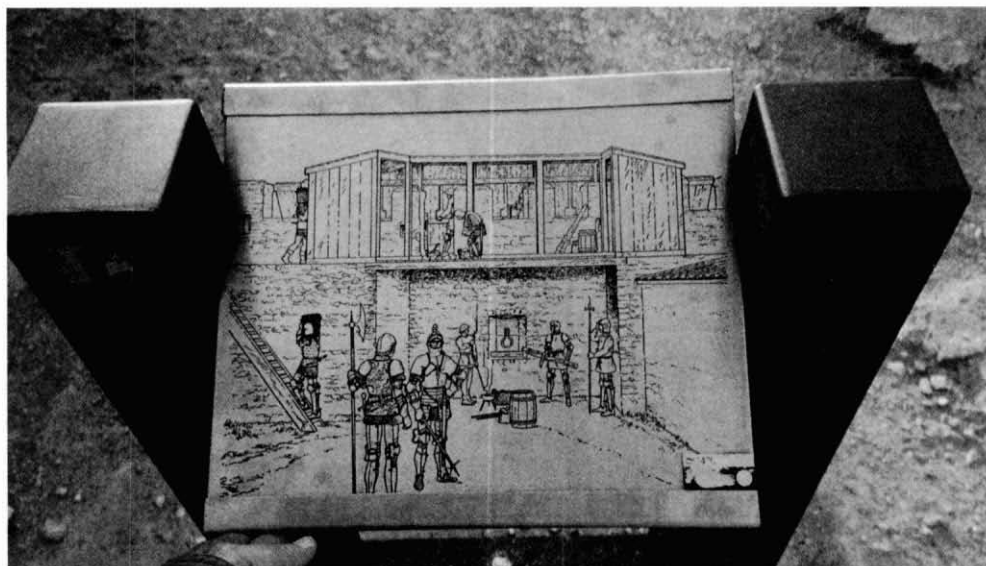


A



B



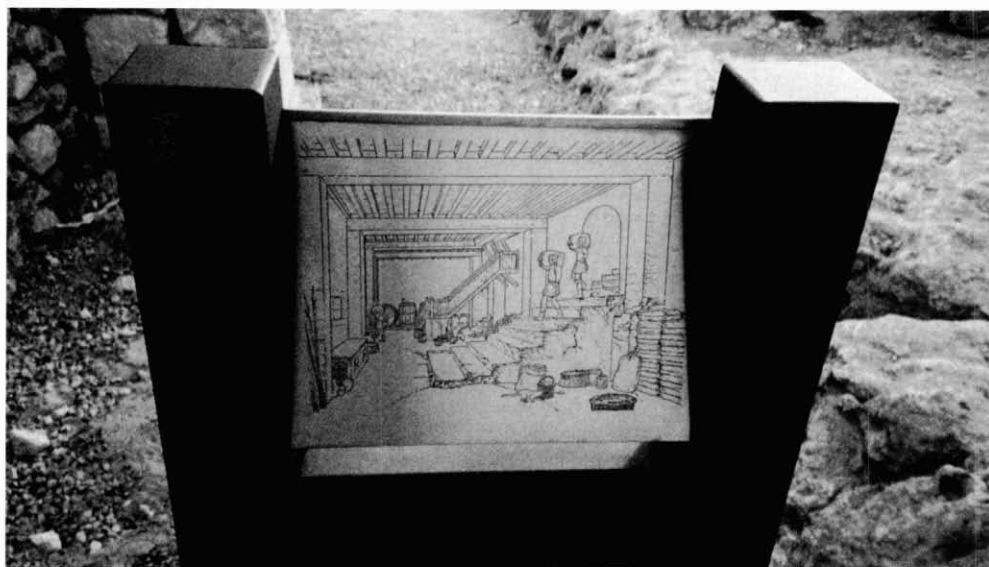


C

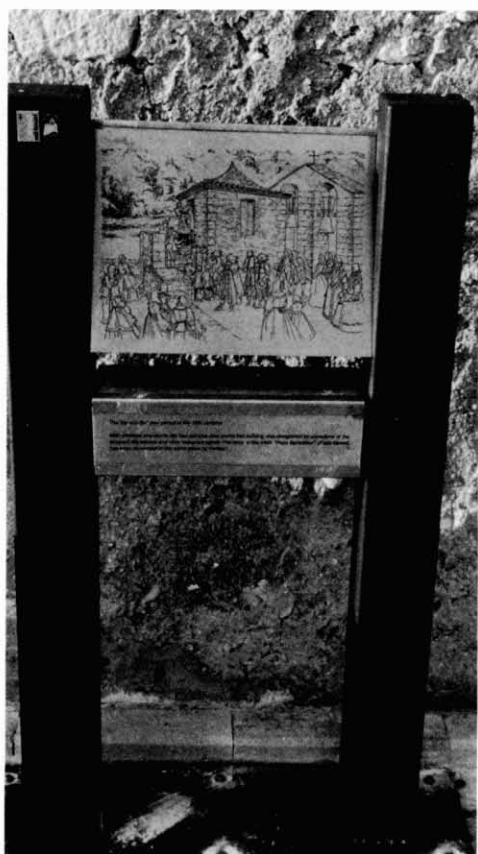


D





E



F

4 (A, B, C, D, E, F). EVOLUTIONARY SEQUENCES FROM THE INTERPRETATION MODULES.

